

*Practical*  
Our Greatest Ever <sup>^</sup>Guide To  
YouTube Optimisation:  
Myths Busted,  
Secrets Revealed!



## Intro

The mainstream marketing world is finally catching on to the fact that YouTube is no longer just for watching Gangnam Style and for learning to tie a double windsor. Nowadays YouTube is an integral part of many companies marketing mix.

For those businesses interested in or already involved in Video Content Marketing, take a bow, you already understand the game changing influence this new media is having on the future of marketing.

So whether you are a newbie trying to get your videos ranking or a seasoned expert just wanting to clarify your existing knowledge, we have put together our exhaustive and comprehensive list of Video SEO factors that for us has been a work in progress for some years now.

## Before getting started...

There are many so called 'tips & tricks' out there that promise to boost your rankings. Things include how many likes your videos have, how many subscribers your channel has, even how many views. These things are actually relatively insignificant. Think about it, if you could boost your video ranking by getting views it would be too easy to outsource this task to a company overseas who could get you thousands or even millions of views and send your videos straight to the top! Unfortunately or probably fortunately this will not work.

Remember when optimising videos, optimise them for users not for search engine rankings, the better you are able to do this, the better your videos will perform in the long run.

### A case study

For this guide, I'm going to use the example of a client of ours, Hatch Financial, a home mortgage broker in Melbourne, Australia for the purpose of explaining things throughout this guide.

If you are producing videos specifically for the purpose of ranking them on YouTube then start thinking about optimisation from the get go. This means produce videos based on your research, dont produce videos and then try and optimise them.

### Talk with key stakeholders to research topics for the video

Being an agency, we talk to our clients, whether they be marketing managers, product managers or business owners. If you're an agency you will do the same, if you're an internal resource you may also talk to these people within your own corporation or perhaps even interview yourself.

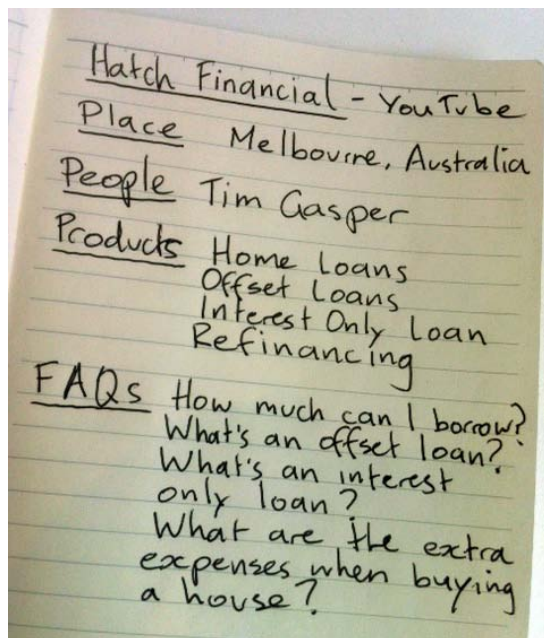
Ask the following questions;

- What are your FAQs? (These will help establish what prospects want to know before they purchase)
- What are your SAQs (Questions your prospects should ask but may not)?
- What are the buying triggers? (What prompts your prospects to take the plunge?)
- Names of people in the video or that will be in the video (staff, director etc)

- Names of places (Melbourne, Australia)
- What are the names of some competitors brand/products

## Keyphrase research

If you're an agency, spend some time doing research on the company's website. Learn about the products, what they do, where they do it, how they do it and for whom do they do it. By now you are starting to get a pretty good idea of what the content of the video should be and what questions need to be answered. Start jotting potential keyphrases, keywords and tags down. For Hatch Financial the list looked something like this.



### Keyword research tools

The next step is to brainstorm as many keywords and keyphrases as possible around your research and validate it through a keyword research tool. Keyphrases will usually be in the form of questions, such as **'what is..'**, **'how can..'**, **'where is..'**, **'how much..'** etc.

There is a keyword research tool for YouTube but we don't recommend it. As far as tools go we still believe the best is the Google Keyword Planner in Adwords for finding search volume and keyword suggestions, but remember this tool is built for Adwords, not YouTube content optimisation so will usually not offer you great keyphrase suggestions.

For keyphrase suggestions, try Google's Related Search. Type in a relevant keyphrase in to Google and scroll down the very bottom of the page to see similar searches people have been typing in, you may find some real gems!

### [Interest-Only Mortgage Tutorial - Mortgage Professor](http://www.mtgprofessor.com/tutorials2/interest_only.htm)

[www.mtgprofessor.com/tutorials2/interest\\_only.htm](http://www.mtgprofessor.com/tutorials2/interest_only.htm) ▾

This tutorial assesses the costs and benefits of the **interest-only** option, the situations where it might make sense, and the situations where it doesn't.

#### Searches related to **what is an interest only loan**

[interest only loan calculator](#)   [bankwest interest only loan](#)  
[define interest only loan](#)   [anz interest only loan](#)  
[westpac interest only loan](#)   [advantages of interest only loans](#)  
[quicken interest only loan](#)   [how do interest only loans work](#)



A good keyword list will have a combination of phrases and keywords. We then need filter the gems from the duds.

The best keyphrases are;

- Questions: Ones that people are searching for the answer in YouTube/Google
- Relevant: To the product or service we have decided to target
- Low in competition: Are there tons of videos already targeting this phrase in YouTube with thousands of views? Are you likely to be able to beat them? Perhaps try another phrase if this is the case
- Decent search volume: Don't obsess over this factor. A phrase with lower search volume but higher relevancy and less competition may be better than a phrase with higher search volume. Also, only look at international search volume if it's relevant to your service area
- Appear in universal search: When you type this phrase in Google, do videos appear? If yes you may well be able to leverage Google's traffic as well as YouTube for this phrase
- Relevant to the purchase cycle: Remember, you are targeting prospects. A phrase such as 'tips to pay off home loan sooner' is relative to people who have a home loan already and are not necessarily looking to refinance. This probably isn't the audience you want to target so phrases like this can be removed.

The best keywords are;

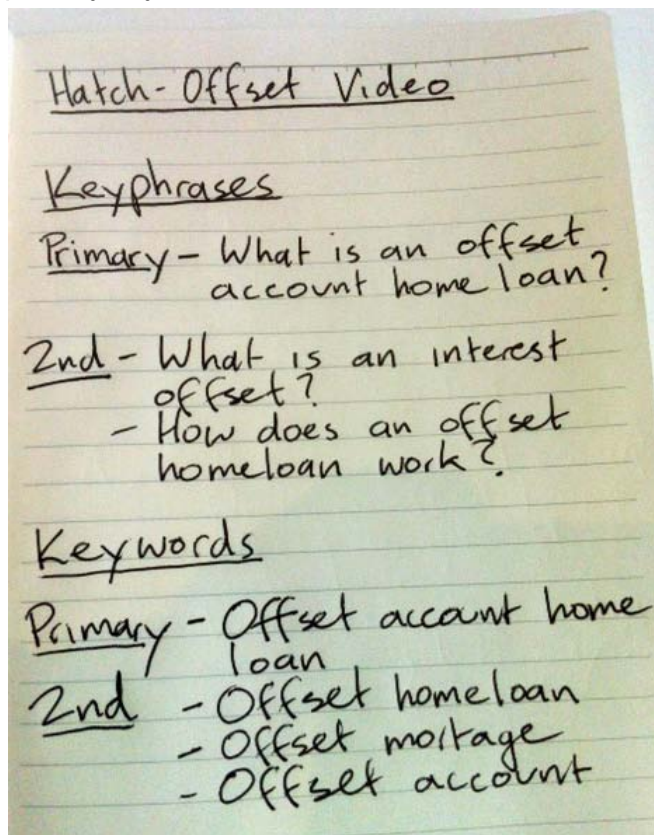
Relevant to the business, the product/service, location, industry. They won't always have search volume yet. Tim Gasper from Hatch Financial for instance is not a household name and won't have much search volume, but adding his name in the keywords works well for reputation management and helps boost his online profile.

Also localising the keyword by adding the city, state or country can help to reduce irrelevant competition and focus on the viewers that are most likely to become customers.

**TRICK: Traffic Piggybacking-** Are there any really big videos on YouTube relevant to the

one you are producing? If so, this video probably has it's own search traffic, people who are actively looking for the video. If you include variations of the name of the video in your keywords & phrases it may very well rank underneath the original video giving you awesome bonus exposure!

Once you have completed filtering out the keywords and phrases you don't want to target you should be left with a tight shortlist. From this you need to establish your primary and secondary keyphrases and keywords. You can only have one primary keyphrase but may have up to 3 primary keywords. Your primary keyphrase will consist of at least one of your primary keywords.



## Optimising the video

There are multiple factors the YouTube algorithms uses to rank videos. We will take you through them one by one.

### Title

There are various ways to structure your title, these are some important factors to consider;

- Include only the most important information
- Order it so the most important information is at the front and least important at the back
- Put the primary keyphrase at the front
- Include the business name & location (if relevant)
- Include a reputation management keyword

Remember, the title must sell the video!

## Description

As this is the meta description, it is what will describe the video in both YouTube and Google search results this isn't at all about keyword stuffing.

A good description must follow these rules;

- The first 2 lines have to be powerful! Describe what the video is about being careful to include keywords & phrases and include an irresistible call to action
- Include a link to a relevant landing page on the website where they can find more information or make an enquiry
- Beyond the second line include things like brand names and other secondary keywords and keyphrases, always making sure that it remains easily readable

Here is an example of how we have displayed the title and description for a Hatch Financial video.

### Title

How to choose the right home loan | Tim Gaspar- Hatch Financial Services, Melbourne

### Description

<http://www.hatchfs.com/>  
 In this video, Tim Gaspar from Hatch Financial Services explains how to choose the best home loan. Things such as the type of loan. Is an offset loan best for your circumstances or perhaps an interest only loan? Tim gives you tricks to help you

## Tags

The tags area gives you about 500 characters to add keywords relevant to your video. They are used to categorize your video and can help it appear in the suggested videos section. Create tags out of all your shortlisted keywords as well as more general tags relevant to the business, products, location, competitors. The more general ones can be used on all your videos where as the others will specifically be relevant to this video.

## Thumbnails

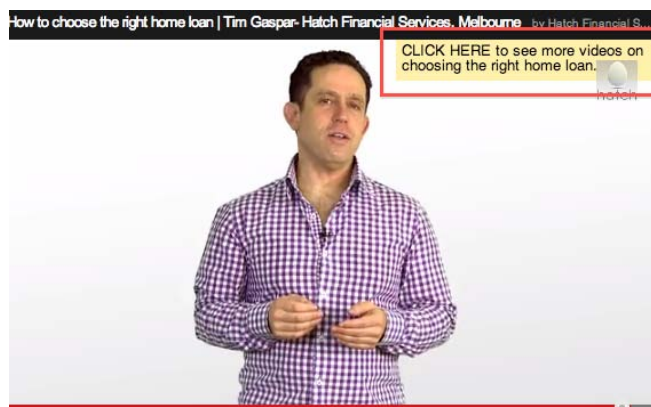
In most cases, YouTube will give you the choice of 3 thumbnails taken from the video for you to choose one. Choose one that visually represents your video while showing the presenter (without an awkward face) and another element such as a text overlay. Below are some examples from Hatch Financial.



**Customisable thumbnails:** In some cases your YouTube account may allow you to upload custom thumbnails. This is an awesome feature but you have to earn it. It allows you to create customised, graphical thumbnails and upload them instead of using clips from the video.

### Annotations

A great way to increase the average views of a single visitor to your channel. Annotations can be used as an overlay to your video with a call to action to watch another video. Best used at the end of a video, they appear like the image below and can link to another video within your channel.



### Location

If the business is targeting a local area, always add the location of the video under advanced settings.

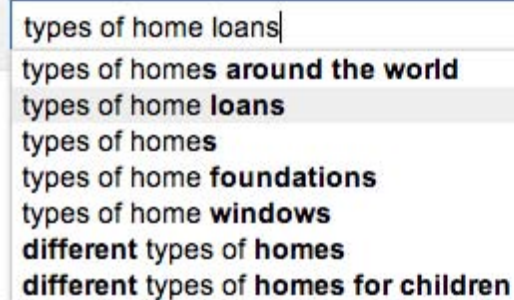
### We recommend

- Set the comments to 'approval only': This allows you to control what people are writing about your video in the comments and prevent harmful remarks
- Upload subtitles: If the subtitle files are available, you can add these to the video. YouTube will read the files so ensure you only do it if you have good keyword text within them

**TRICK: Create playlists-** A lot of people don't know that YouTube doesn't just rank videos; it also ranks playlists and channels. This means you get three chances to rank your video in the search results. It's like the bonus rounds! And it's especially helpful for targeting those more competitive terms.

## Creating playlists

Creating playlists is very similar to optimising your videos. Once you have multiple videos in your channel you can create playlists, or, you can even create a playlists of a single video. Catagorise your videos into various playlists. For Hatch Financial we may start with two playlists, types of loans and general info for home buyers. Once again we need to optimise these based on the existing video keyphrases and the more broad topic of the playlist. This will require some further research. I found the phrase 'types of home loans' the one most suitable for this first playlist.



types of home loans|  
 types of homes **around the world**  
 types of home **loans**  
 types of homes  
 types of home **foundations**  
 types of home **windows**  
**different** types of homes  
**different** types of homes for children

At the time of writing you will find playlists under the your Video Manager. In here you can add videos, set your title, description and tags similarly to individual videos.

## Optimising your channel

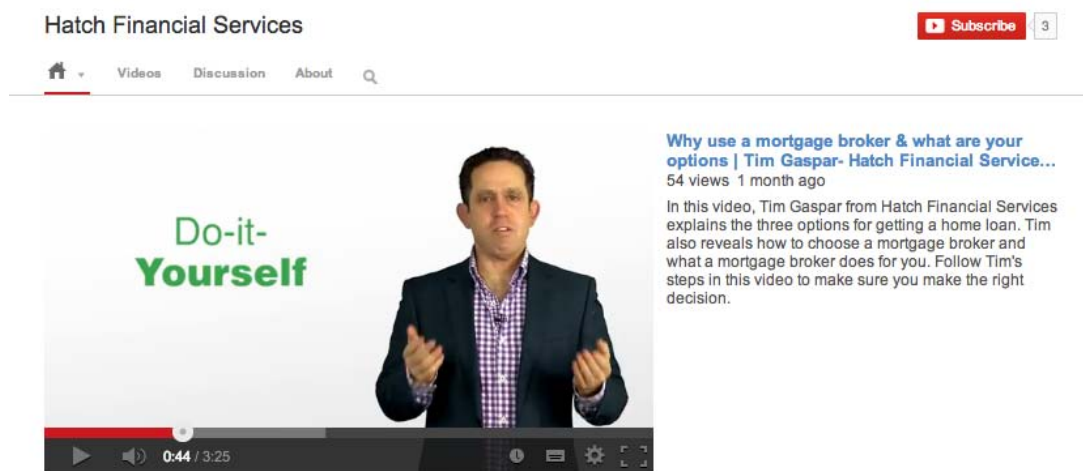
Although your channel is already setup, you may want to run through this checklist to ensure that it is optimised to the max. Most of these settings you will find in the Channel Settings area.

- Meta data: Once again, you need to set your title, description, tags and also a catagory from the drop down box. Be even more broad this time than in the playlists, your keywords and phrases have to be relevant across the whole channel
- Many of the items set in your Channel Settings such as as location and comments to 'Approval Only' are global and will change the default for future videos you upload
- Watermark: You may decide you would like to add a small watermark avatar to all the videos in your channel by default, it makes you look more professional and is good for branding
- Advertisements: Of course YouTube would love everyone to enable advertising on their channels but for most brands this should be disabled as not only is it distracting but the ads that appear may very well be for your competitors

### Channel homepage

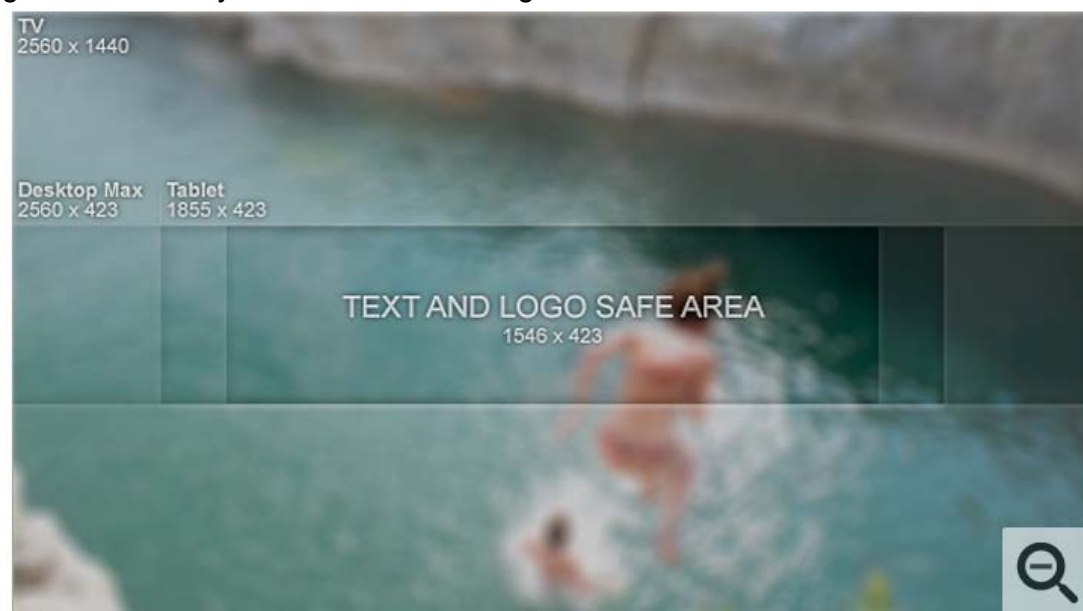
There are a few things that need to be set here for visitors directly visiting your channel homepage. You want your channel homepage to present a clear image of your business. It needs to look professional displaying your feature video prominently and your video playlists in order of importance below.





### Channel art

This is the header banner you see above. You need to design it to fit a standard computer screen, mobile devices and tablets as well as TV screens. Use the below template as a guide to ensure your channel art looks good on all devices.



### Channel icon

Your channel icon is now taken directly from your Google+ account so if you need to change it, this is where to go.

### Website & social media icons

You can add your website and social media profiles as icons that sit above your channel art. We recommend doing this. It is accessible through the same area as where you edit your

channel art and is called 'Edit Links'

### Channel navigation

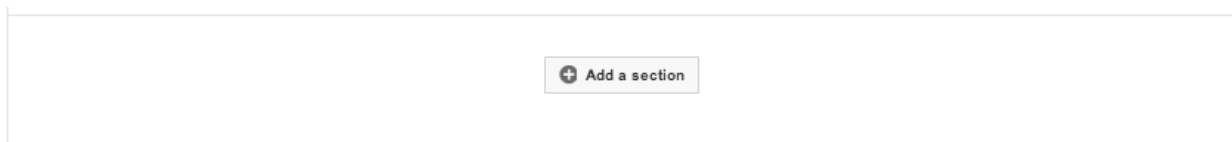
Under the right corner of your channel art you can set your channel navigation. You need to ensure the 'browse' feature is enabled here.

### Unsubscribed & subscribed trailer

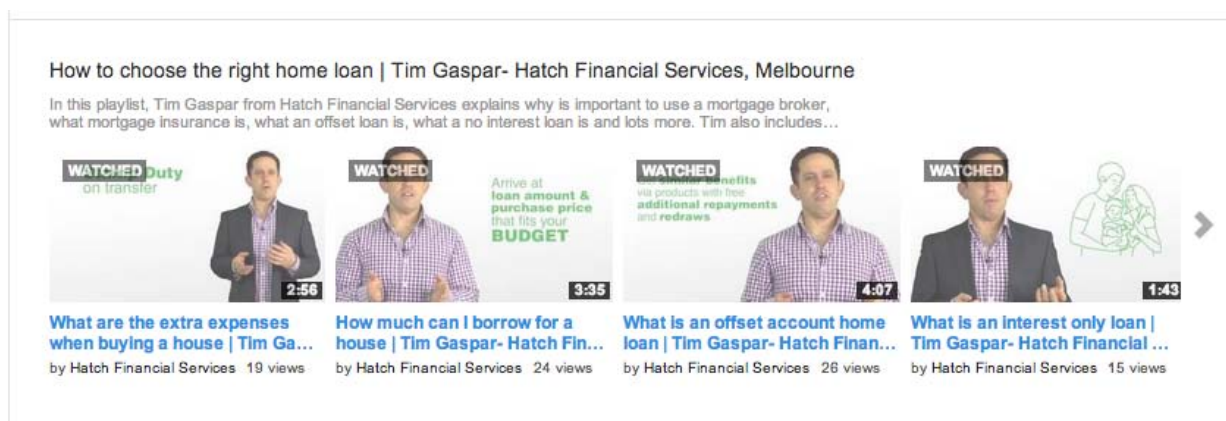
This is the feature video that will be displayed and that will automatically start playing when someone visits your YouTube channel. It can be set in the top right hand corner of the next section down from the channel navigation. It should be set differently for those who are and are not subscribed to your channel. For those unsubscribed you should set it to your best introductory video or business showcase video. For those already subscribed you don't want to show them the same video again and again when they return to your channel so instead set it to show 'Recent Activity'.

### Add sections

The section below your trailer is customisable depending on what you wish to display here and you can add as many customised sections as you wish.



We prefer to showcase the different playlists in order of popularity and relevance. We do this by adding a section for each playlist which looks like the below when complete.



For now, this is our definitive YouTube optimisation guide. The only thing we can say for certain is that YouTube optimisation will continue to evolve quickly and this guide will need to be updated before too long. Until this time we hope these tips and tricks bring you high rankings and many, many views.

Happy optimising!



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