Plan and design an interactive video path

Last Modified on 08/19/2026 11:16 am IDT

This article is designated for all users.

About

Learn how to plan and design an interactive video path that provides a smooth viewing experience. This article covers recommended practices for structuring nodes, timing interactions, optimizing playback, and preparing captions.

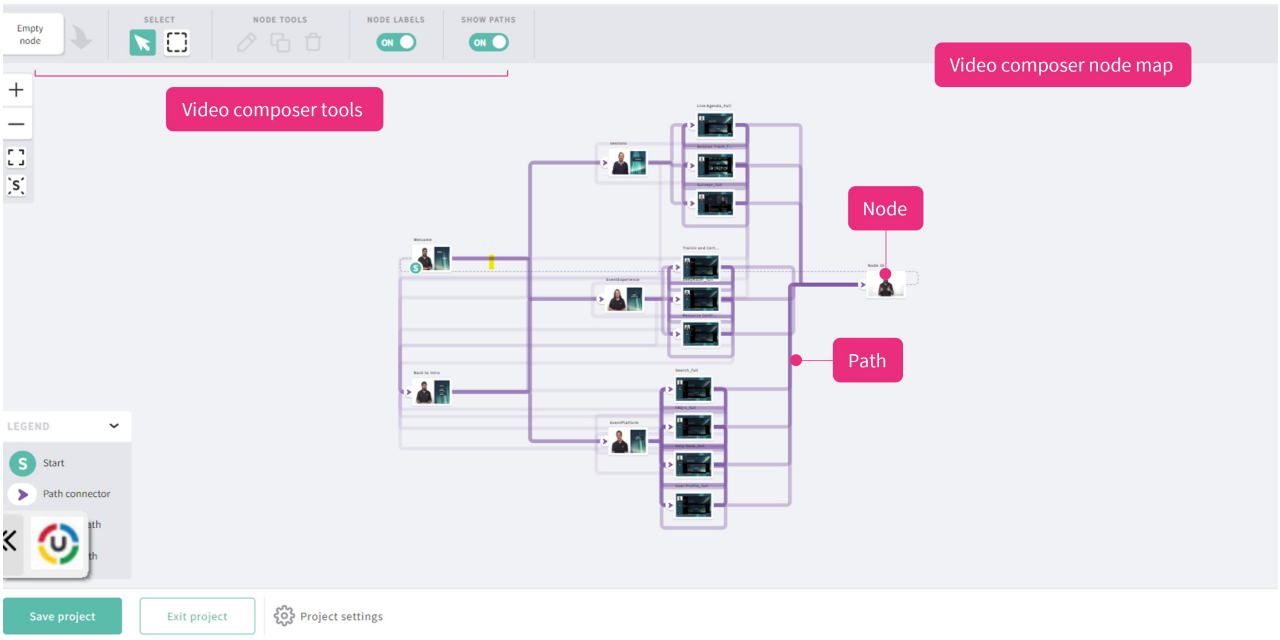
New to Interactive Video Paths? See Introduction to Interactive Video Paths to learn how nodes, paths, and hotspots work.

Plan your video path

Unlike a traditional video, an interactive video doesn't have to be watched from start to finish. Viewers make choices that determine where they go next, so it's important to plan the structure before you start building.

- **Use the node map to plan your structure** - Add empty nodes and arrange them on the node map to map out possible paths before assigning videos.
- **Limit the number of paths from each node** - Keep the number of outgoing paths to five or fewer so viewers aren't presented with too many choices at once.
- **Consider the viewer's journey** - Think about where each choice leads and whether viewers have a clear way to move forward or return to a familiar point.

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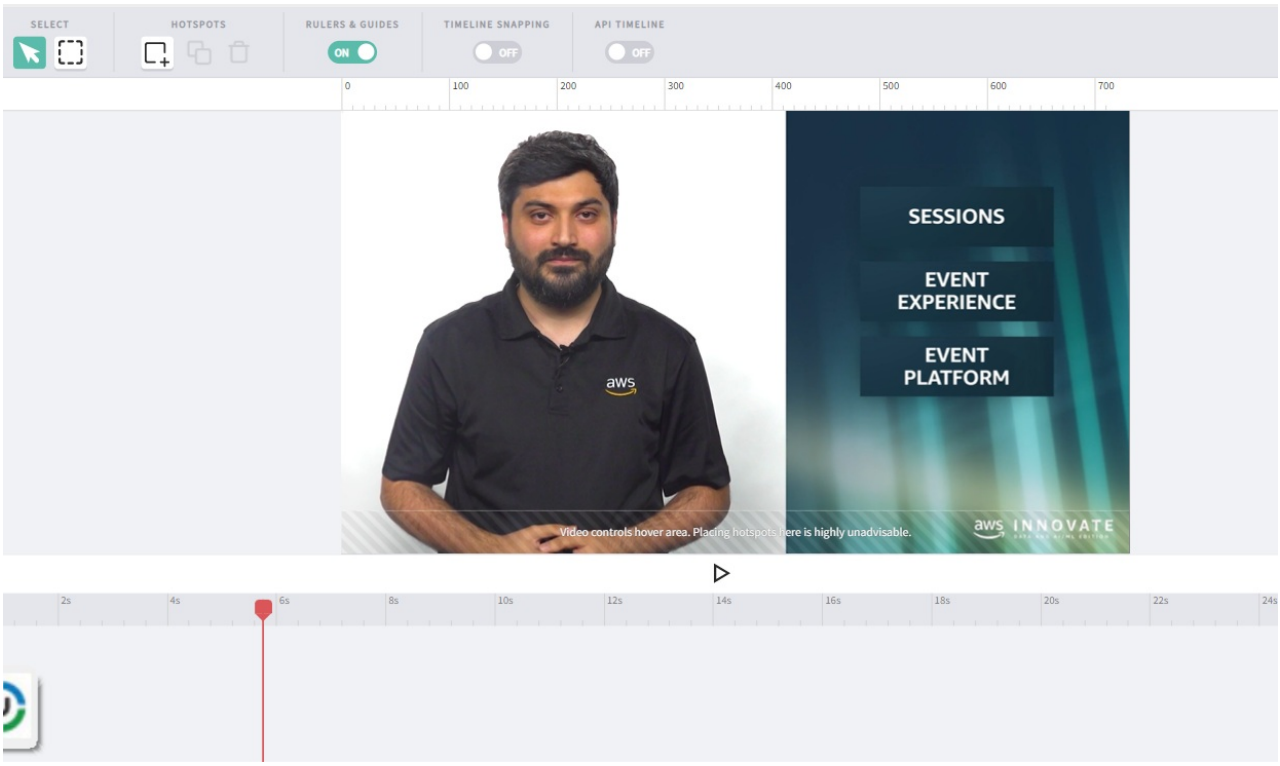


Keep viewers engaged

Consider the length and timing of your content when designing each part of the experience.

- **Keep nodes short** - Keep each video node to 60 seconds or less.
- **Add interactions early** - Add the first hotspot within the first 30 seconds.
- **Time hotspots carefully** - Hotspots are clickable as soon as they appear. Make sure viewers see any important content before displaying a hotspot.
- **Provide a way back** - Give viewers a way to return to the main menu or another familiar point in the path.
- **Keep some movement on screen** - After hotspots appear, subtle background movement can keep the video visually active without distracting viewers from their choices.
- **Use automatic navigation when needed** - You can configure nodes to continue automatically. Add a visible timer so viewers know when the next node will start.
- **Create smooth transitions** - Time transitions between nodes to match natural scene changes or changes in camera angle to avoid abrupt cuts.

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Optimize playback performance

Interactive videos preload linked videos to provide smooth transitions between nodes.

When a node links to multiple nodes, allow about 10 seconds before displaying the hotspots. This gives the player time to preload the linked videos.

If one path is more likely to be selected, you can make its hotspot appear slightly earlier than the others so its destination node starts loading first.

For more precise control over when hotspots appear, turn off Timeline Snapping and adjust the hotspot timing.

>
> To fine-tune button timing, disable the snap tool so you can adjust appearance times more precisely.

Set up captions

Enable captions before adding a video to your interactive video path.

In the captions editor, make sure **Display on Player** is enabled before adding the video. If it isn't enabled, captions might not appear in the interactive video.

For more details, see Upload and manage captions in Rich Media CMS.

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Understand thumbnail behavior

The thumbnail for an interactive video is automatically set to the beginning of the first node.

The thumbnail can't be customized.

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