

VIEWS TO BUYERS · READER BONUS

The Old Video Revival Playbook

A step-by-step refresh for back-catalog videos with weak or missing click paths

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Turn videos that already get views into videos that give viewers a clear next step.

A companion bonus to Views to Buyers by Nathan Conner (Snowball Affiliate)

How to Apply (Your First 30 Minutes)

You do not need to read this whole playbook before you start. Do this first:

- 1 Open YouTube Studio → Content.** Sort your videos by views, using the last 90 days as the date range.
- 2 Pick the top 10 that mention or could mention a product, tool, or recommendation.** Ignore the rest for now.
- 3 Open one video and run the 60-Second Click Path Test (Section 2).** Check whether the link, pinned comment, and first two description lines each give a viewer a clear next step.
- 4 Fix one video using the Patch Kit (Section 5).** Write a pinned comment and rewrite the first two lines of the description. That is a complete first win.
- 5 Log it** in the Revival Tracker (Section 8) with today's date and the current numbers.

Everything after that is about doing this in a smart order, at small scale, without breaking what already works.

What this playbook is not. It is not a promise that updating old videos will raise your income. It is a method for removing friction and stale information from videos that already have viewers. Whether that pays off depends on your topic, your offers, and your audience. You will measure it yourself, and Section 8 shows you how.

1. Overview: Why Old Videos Are Your Cheapest Opportunity

Most small channels treat publishing as one-directional. You upload, you move on, and the video sits there. Meanwhile, some of those videos keep attracting viewers, often through search and suggested placement, and nobody is checking whether the path from that video to a useful next step still works.

Common symptoms:

- The description links to a product page, offer, or version that has changed.
- The description has no link at all, because you made the video before you had an affiliate relationship.
- The pinned comment is missing, or it points to something outdated.

- The video says "link below" but the link sits under a "Show more" fold, buried in a wall of text.
- The title promises something the video no longer delivers, such as a "2022 guide" that is clearly stale.
- The video recommends a product that has since changed, and you now wouldn't recommend it.

The Bridge Lens

Views to Buyers describes the **Viewer-to-Buyer Bridge: Intent → Match → Evidence → Trust → Action → Access → Conversion**. An old video is a bridge with some planks missing. Here is where each stage typically breaks.

Bridge Stage	What it asks	How old videos fail
Intent	Is the viewer here with a buying or deciding mindset?	The topic attracts browsers, not deciders.
Match	Does the video match what they came for?	Title and content have drifted apart.
Evidence	Does the video show, not just claim?	Footage or facts are outdated.
Trust	Do they believe you?	Missing disclosure, hidden downsides, stale claims.
Action	Is the next step obvious?	No spoken CTA, no pinned comment, vague description.
Access	Can they actually get there?	Dead, buried, or outdated links.
Conversion	Can you tell what happened?	No tracking, no way to learn from it.

The key insight: Most revival work lives in **Action and Access**, which are fast and cheap to fix. **Evidence and Trust** problems decide whether a video should be updated at all or retired. **Intent and Match** tell you which videos deserve your time first.

The Revival Order of Operations

- 1 **Audit** the catalog (build the list).
- 2 **Triage** with a score (pick the few that matter).
- 3 **Decide** update or retire (don't polish something that should be replaced).
- 4 **Refresh in sequence:** accuracy check → pinned comment → description → title → spoken mentions.
- 5 **Batch** the work in short sessions.

6 Measure with before-and-after windows.

2. The Audit: Build Your Catalog Sheet

Create a simple spreadsheet. One row per video. Don't audit everything. Start with your **top 25 videos by views over the last 90 days**, plus any older video you know recommends something.

Catalog Sheet Columns (copy these headers)

Column	What to enter
Video title	
URL	
Publish date	
Views (last 90 days)	
Top search terms (if any)	From Analytics → Reach → Traffic source → YouTube search
Product(s) mentioned	Use your own labels
Link in description? (Y/N)	
Link works and is current? (Y/N/Unsure)	
Link visible above the fold? (Y/N)	
Pinned comment? (Y/N)	
Spoken CTA in video? (Y/N, timestamp)	
Content still accurate? (Y / Partly / No)	
Disclosure present? (Y/N)	
Notes	

The 60-Second Click Path Test

Open the video as a viewer would, ideally on your phone, and answer in order:

- 1 Without tapping "Show more," can I see what to do next?** (Action)
- 2 If I tap the link, does it land where the video promised?** (Access)
- 3 Does anything shown or said look outdated?** (Evidence)
- 4 Can I tell this creator earns from the link?** (Trust)

5 Is there a pinned comment that helps me? (Action)

Any "no" is a logged gap.

The Search-Term Shortcut

Before you change anything, look at what people typed to find the video. In YouTube Studio, open the video's Analytics, then Reach, then Traffic source: YouTube search. This is a free window into **Intent**.

- Terms like "best," "vs," "worth it," "review," "alternative to," or "[product] for [use case]" suggest people are comparing options.
- Terms like "what is" or "how does [thing] work" suggest early-stage curiosity. The video can still earn a soft next step, but it's lower priority.

Write the top 2-3 terms in your sheet. You'll reuse them in the title, description, and pinned comment.

The Revival Score

Rate each video from **1 to 5** on three factors:

- **D (Demand):** How many views it gets now, compared to your own typical video. 5 = among your best. 1 = barely moving.
- **I (Intent):** How decision-oriented the search terms and topic are. 5 = comparison or "should I buy" energy. 1 = pure curiosity.
- **G (Gap):** How broken the click path is. 5 = no link, no pinned comment, no CTA. 1 = already solid.

Formula: Revival Score = $(D + I) \times G$

Fill-in line for each video: $(__ + __) \times __ = ______$

Tiers

- **30-50 = Tier A.** Work on these first.
- **18-29 = Tier B.** Work on these after Tier A.
- **Under 18 = Tier C.** Leave alone, or batch only the simplest fixes.

Gate check (before you spend time): Rate **F (Fit)**, which is how accurate and worth keeping the content still is. If F is 2 or lower, **do not patch it. Go to Section 3.**

3. The Update-or-Retire Decision Guide

Not every old video deserves a facelift. Putting a fresh link on a video that recommends the wrong thing makes things worse, not better. Use this guide before you touch a Tier A or B

video.

The Five Outcomes

Outcome	What it means	Use when
Patch	Fix pinned comment, description, and links only.	Content is accurate. The click path is the problem.
Refresh	Patch plus title adjustments and possible added context.	Content is mostly accurate and the title or framing is dated.
Supersede	Make a new video, then point the old one to it.	The topic still draws views, but the old video can't be fixed with text edits.
Disclaim	Keep the video, add a correction note, remove the push.	Something is outdated but the video still helps in a general way.
Retire	Stop sending viewers anywhere from it.	The recommendation is wrong, misleading, or no longer something you stand behind.

The Decision Questions (answer in order)

Q1. Do I still stand behind the main recommendation?

- Yes → Q2.
- Partly → Q3.
- No → **Retire** or **Disclaim** (Q5).

Q2. Is what's shown on screen still accurate? Look at interfaces, features, versions, and offers.

- Yes → **Patch**.
- Mostly, with small gaps → **Refresh** (with a clarifying pinned comment).
- No → Q3.

Q3. Could a pinned comment and description note fix the gap honestly?

- Yes → **Refresh** or **Disclaim**.
- No → Q4.

Q4. Is the search demand still real? Check whether the video still gets steady views and whether the search terms are still relevant.

- Yes → **Supersede**. Make the new video, then link the old one to it.
- No → Q5.

Q5. Would a viewer be harmed or misled if they followed this video's advice today?

- Yes → **Retire** (stop pointing to the offer; consider changing visibility only after weighing the tradeoffs below).
- No → **Disclaim** and leave it.

Retire Without Regret: Tradeoffs to Weigh

- **Deleting** a video removes it permanently, along with its watch history and any links pointing to it. Think twice.
- **Unlisting or making it private** removes it from search and recommendations, but breaks any place you linked it (other descriptions, playlists, end screens, outside posts).
- **Leaving it up with a correction** keeps traffic flowing but sends people to something you've flagged. This works only if the correction is prominent.

A simple rule: if the video is merely outdated, **disclaim and redirect**. If it's misleading, **remove the push at minimum and consider hiding it**. Decide based on how you'd feel if the viewer found out later.

Outdated-Video Disclaimer Templates

Pinned comment (disclaim):

Update [month/year]: Since this video, [what changed, in one plain sentence]. The general advice on [part that still holds] still applies, but [part that no longer holds] has changed. My current recommendation is here: [link or video].

Pinned comment (supersede):

This video is older. I made a newer, more complete version: [title and link]. If you're deciding on [topic], start there.

Description top line (disclaim):

⚠ Some details in this video have changed. See the pinned comment for what's current.

4. The Refresh Sequence: What to Change First

The order matters. Work from **lowest risk and highest leverage** to **highest risk**.

Step 1: Verify Accuracy (5 minutes)

Before writing anything, list what could be stale:

- Product names, versions, or features shown

- Offers, trials, or conditions you mention
- Anything time-bound ("this year," "right now")
- Competing options that have changed

Mark every claim as **Confirmed, Unsure, or Wrong**. Never publish a refresh on top of an unchecked claim.

Step 2: Pinned Comment (5 minutes, no risk)

This is the safest edit. It doesn't change how the video is indexed or shown, and you can swap it any time. Use it as your update layer: a place to say what's current without re-uploading anything.

Step 3: Description Top Two Lines (5 minutes)

The first lines are what most viewers see without expanding. They must do three things: state what the viewer gets, give the next step, and say where the link is.

Step 4: Description Body (10-15 minutes)

Fix links, add chapters, add disclosure, and add related videos. Keep one primary action. A description with fifteen equal links has no action.

Step 5: Title (5-10 minutes; change last)

The title influences how viewers find and choose the video, so changing it can shift performance either way. That's why it comes after everything else. **Change one thing at a time and log the date**, so you can learn from the result. If your channel has access to title or thumbnail testing in Studio, consider using it instead of a straight swap.

Step 6: Spoken Mentions (ongoing)

You can't easily re-record audio in a published video, so handle spoken mentions in two ways:

- **In the old video:** If a spoken line is now wrong, use the pinned comment to correct it. If a short section is the problem, Studio's editor may let you trim or mute that section. Check what's available, and make a backup decision before editing, since editing affects the live video.
- **In new videos:** Add a short verbal pointer to the old video when relevant. This sends fresh viewers to proven content.

Sequence Summary

Order	Task	Risk	Time
1	Accuracy check	None	5 min
2	Pinned comment	Very low	5 min

Order	Task	Risk	Time
3	Description top 2 lines	Low	5 min
4	Description body and links	Low	10-15 min
5	Title	Medium	5-10 min
6	New-video callbacks	None	Ongoing

5. The Patch Kit: Templates and Prompts

5A. Pinned Comment Templates

Fill in the brackets. Keep it short.

Template 1: The Direct Next Step

If you're deciding on [topic or product category], here's the [resource/tool] I mention in the video: [link]. Disclosure: I may earn a commission if you use it, at no extra cost to you. Questions about [specific use case]? Ask below and I'll reply.

Template 2: The Comparison Pointer

Comparing [Software A] and [Software B]? I broke down how they differ for [use case] here: [link to video]. The short version: [one honest sentence about who each fits].

Template 3: The Update Note

Updated [month/year]: [One sentence on what changed]. Current link: [link]. If anything here doesn't match what you see, tell me and I'll fix it.

Template 4: The Question Hook

What are you trying to do with [topic]? Tell me in one line and I'll point you to the part of this video that fits.

Your fill-in version:

- Viewer goal: _____
- Primary link: _____
- Disclosure sentence: _____
- One honest caveat: _____

5B. The Description Skeleton

LINE 1: [What the viewer gets] + [where to find the link]
LINE 2: [Primary link with a plain label]
LINE 3: [Disclosure, one sentence]

[1-2 sentence summary using the viewer's search language]

CHAPTERS
00:00 [...]
[...]

MENTIONED IN THIS VIDEO
[Product label]: [link]
[Product label]: [link]

RELATED VIDEOS
[Title]: [link]
[Title]: [link]

[Optional: update note with date]

Fill-in practice:

- Line 1: "See [what] I used for [use case] — link below □"
- Line 2: "[Label]: [URL]"
- Line 3: "Disclosure: Some links are affiliate links; I may earn a commission at no cost to you."

Follow whatever disclosure rules apply to you and your platform and region. When in doubt, make the disclosure clearer, not subtler.

5C. Title Refresh Formulas

Keep what makes the video findable. Change what makes it stale or vague.

Formula	Example (illustrative)
[Product] Review: [Specific Verdict or Use Case]	"Software A Review: Who It Fits and Who Should Skip It"
[Product A] vs [Product B]: [Deciding Factor]	"Software A vs Software B: Which Fits a Small Channel?"
[Outcome] Without [Common Pain]	"Edit Faster Without Extra Gear"
[Topic]: What I'd Do Differently Now	"Gear B Setup: What I'd Do Differently Now"

Title rules:

- Remove year references unless you will maintain them.
- Don't promise what the video doesn't deliver (Match).

- Keep the main search term near the front.
- Don't change the title and thumbnail on the same day if you want clean learning.

5D. Rewrite Prompts for Old Descriptions

Paste these into your AI tool of choice. **Always paste your actual transcript or notes. Never let the tool invent features, prices, or claims.**

Prompt 1: Top Two Lines

Here is the transcript of my YouTube video: [paste]. The viewer's likely search terms are: [terms]. Write 5 options for the first two lines of the description. Line 1 should state what the viewer gets. Line 2 should direct them to the link. Use only facts stated in the transcript. Plain language, no hype.

Prompt 2: Full Description Rewrite

Here is my old description: [paste]. Here is the transcript: [paste]. Rewrite it using this structure: two-line opener, one-sentence disclosure, summary, chapters, mentioned products with my link labels, and related videos. Do not add any feature, price, or claim that is not in the transcript. Where information may be outdated, write [VERIFY] instead of guessing.

Prompt 3: Pinned Comment

Write 3 versions of a pinned comment under 60 words for a video about [topic]. Goal: help the viewer take one next step. Include a one-sentence affiliate disclosure. Tone: friendly, direct, no pressure. Do not make claims about results.

Prompt 4: Chapters From a Transcript

From this timestamped transcript, create chapters with short, plain labels (max 6 words each). Start at 00:00. Use the viewer's language, not insider jargon: [paste].

Prompt 5: Honesty Check (run on every rewrite)

Review this draft description and pinned comment. List every sentence that states a fact, benefit, price, or result. For each, mark whether it is supported by the transcript below. Flag anything exaggerated, unsupported, or missing a needed caveat or disclosure. Transcript: [paste]. Draft: [paste].

Prompt 6: Staleness Scan

Read this transcript and list every statement that could become outdated (versions, features, offers, time references, "latest," "new"). Output as a checklist I can verify manually: [paste].

Your edit after the AI's draft is where the quality comes from. Cut anything you wouldn't say out loud.

5E. Spoken Mention Scripts (for New Videos)

Use these in future videos to send viewers back to proven older content.

- **Callback (natural):** "If you're still deciding on [topic], I covered [specific angle] in [video title]. I'll leave it pinned in the comments."
- **Update bridge:** "I made a video on this a while back. Some things have changed, so here's what's different now, and the old video is linked if you want the full walkthrough."
- **Question prompt:** "If your situation is [specific case], the [older video] fits better. I'll point you there."

Say the video name once, say where the link is once, and move on.

6. Worked Example (Illustrative Only)

This example is made up to show the process. The product names are placeholders, and none of the details are real results.

The video: "Software A Review" from a small channel. It still gets steady search views.

Audit findings:

- Description: one link to Software A's homepage, buried under three paragraphs of general text.
- Pinned comment: none.
- Spoken CTA: none.
- Search terms: "Software A worth it," "Software A vs Software B."
- Accuracy: the interface shown has since changed in places. The core recommendation still holds.

Score: $D = 4, I = 5, G = 5 \rightarrow (4 + 5) \times 5 = 45 \rightarrow$ **Tier A. Fit check:** Core recommendation holds, so $F = 4$. Pass.

Decision: Q1 Yes $\rightarrow$ Q2 "Mostly, with small gaps" $\rightarrow$ **Refresh.**

Before (description opener):

In this video I take a look at Software A and share my thoughts after using it for a while. Let me know what you think in the comments!

After (description opener):

See who Software A fits (and who should skip it) — link in the next line □ Software A: [link]
Disclosure: This is an affiliate link; I may earn a commission at no cost to you.

Pinned comment (Template 3 + Template 2 blended):

Updated [month/year]: Some of the menus shown in this video look different now. The main points on [what holds up] still apply. Current link: [link]. Comparing it to Software B? Here's that breakdown: [link].

Title change (made last, a few days later):

- Before: "Software A Review"
- After: "Software A Review: Is It Worth It for a Small Channel?"

Why this order worked:

- Accuracy check caught the interface drift, so the pinned comment addressed it honestly (**Evidence, Trust**).
- The opener moved the link into view (**Action, Access**).
- The title now matches the "worth it" search language (**Intent, Match**).
- The tracker captured the date of every change (**Conversion** learning).

7. Applications: Four Common Old-Video Situations

Situation 1: The No-Link Video

You made it before you joined any program, but viewers clearly want a product recommendation. **Do:** Verify the recommendation, add one link in the opener, add disclosure, and write a pinned comment.

Situation 2: The Dead-Link Video

The link goes to a missing page. **Do:** Fix or replace immediately. This is a top-priority Access repair. A dead link wastes every view the video gets.

Situation 3: The "Best of [Year]" List

The year is in the title and the list is stale. **Do:** Decide first. If demand is still real, **Supersede** with a newer version (title it without a year if you can't maintain it), then add a pinned pointer on the old one.

Situation 4: The Tutorial That Quietly Recommends Something

The video teaches a task, and your tool is just there on screen. **Do:** Add a plain-language "Tools used in this video" block in the description, with disclosure. Add a pinned comment for

viewers who ask, "What are you using?"

Situation 5: The Video You'd Rather Forget

It recommends something you no longer believe in. **Do:** Remove the push, add a correction, and point to what you'd advise now. This protects trust (**Trust**) more than any optimization will.

8. Batch Schedule and Tracking

The 25-Minute Session Model

Short sessions get done. Long projects get postponed. Run **one task type per session** so you never switch gears.

Session	Task	Output
A: Audit	Fill the Catalog Sheet for 8-10 videos	A scored list
B: Patch	Pinned comment + description top lines for 3 videos	3 quick wins
C: Rewrite	Full description rewrite for 1-2 videos (use Prompts 2, 5, 6)	Complete refreshes
D: Title	Title updates for 2 videos that have had their descriptions fixed	Logged title changes
E: Link check	Click every link in your Tier A and B descriptions	Dead/outdated link fixes
F: Review	Compare before-and-after numbers for earlier changes	Learning notes

A 4-Week Starter Plan (3 sessions per week)

Week 1: Foundation

- Mon: Session A (audit)
- Wed: Session A (audit + score)
- Fri: Session E (link check on top videos)

Week 2: Quick Wins

- Mon: Session B (3 videos)
- Wed: Session B (3 videos)
- Fri: Session C (1 video)

Week 3: Depth

- Mon: Session C (2 videos)
- Wed: Session D (2 titles)
- Fri: Session B (3 videos)

Week 4: Learn and Plan

- Mon: Session C (1-2 videos)
- Wed: Session F (review)
- Fri: Decide update/retire on remaining Tier B items, and plan next month

Session Rules

- 1 Set a timer. Stop when it rings.
- 2 Finish a video's edit before starting another.
- 3 Log every change before you close the tab.
- 4 No new ideas mid-session. Write them on a parking list.

The Revival Tracker (copy this)

Video	Change made	Date	Views (28 days before)	Views (28 days after)	Link clicks before	Link clicks after	Notes

How to read it honestly:

- Compare **equal-length windows** (28 days before and 28 days after).
- Change one variable at a time when you can.
- Account for seasonality and topic news. Views can rise or fall for reasons unrelated to your edit.
- Use your affiliate dashboard or link tracking for clicks, and your program's reports for outcomes.
- Don't call something a win until you've seen more than one window. Record what you see, even if it's flat.

9. Advanced Tips

1. Build a Hub-and-Spoke Click Path

Choose one **hub video** per topic (your strongest, most decision-oriented one). Point every related old video to it in a pinned comment. One strong destination beats five weak ones.

2. Mine Comments for Intent

Scan comments on your top videos for repeated questions: "Does it work for...?", "What do you use for...?", "Is there something cheaper?" Each repeated question is:

- A line for your pinned comment
- A chapter or description note
- A candidate for a new video

3. Match the Opener to the Search Term

If viewers find the video with "Software A vs Software B," the description's first line should say so. Viewers feel matched, and the page makes sense to them in two seconds.

4. Run a Quarterly Link Audit

Offers, pages, and programs change. Once a quarter, run a Session E on your Tier A videos. Put it on your calendar. It's the cheapest maintenance you'll ever do.

5. Use Dated Update Notes

A line like "Updated [month/year]" in the pinned comment tells viewers you're maintaining the content. It's an honest trust signal, and it only works if you actually keep it current.

6. Add a "Who This Is Not For" Line

Include one sentence about who should skip the product. This is a **Trust** move that tends to make a recommendation more believable, and it helps your viewers self-select.

7. Don't Stack Changes

If you rewrite the title, thumbnail, description, and pinned comment on the same day, you won't know what mattered. Space big changes at least a week or two apart on your best videos.

8. Keep a "Do Not Touch" List

Some videos perform well exactly as they are. If a video has strong, steady views and a working link path, leave it alone. Revival is for gaps, not for tinkering.

9. Pre-Write Your Disclosure

Save your disclosure sentence in a note and paste it every time. Consistency removes the temptation to skip it.

10. Update Your Spoken Habits

For new videos, add a 5-second line near the point of recommendation: what you're recommending, where the link is, and the disclosure that you may earn from it. Then your future videos won't need the same rescue.

10. Conclusion: The Revival Mindset

You already did the hard part: you made videos people watch. Revival is about respecting those viewers by giving them a clear, accurate, honest next step.

Remember the sequence:

- 1 **Audit** your top videos.
- 2 **Score** them with $(D + I) \times G$.
- 3 **Decide** with the update-or-retire guide.
- 4 **Refresh in order:** accuracy → pinned comment → description → title → spoken callbacks.
- 5 **Batch** in 25-minute sessions.
- 6 **Track** in equal windows and learn from what you see.

Return to the Bridge whenever you're stuck: **Intent, Match, Evidence, Trust, Action, Access, Conversion**. Find the weakest plank, fix that one, and move to the next video.

Your next move: Open your Studio list, pick one Tier A video, and give it your first 25 minutes.

This playbook is educational and describes a workflow, not guaranteed outcomes. Results vary by channel, topic, audience, and offer. Follow the disclosure and program rules that apply to you.