

AI Video Tooling Decision Map

Fora Soft Learn · AI for Video Engineering

1 - Two tracks (sort every tool first)

Track A	AI inside the product - features users touch. On the product + compliance budget.
Track B	AI for building the product - tools engineers use. On the productivity budget.
The test	Does a paying customer experience the output? Yes = Track A. No = Track B.

2 - The five-stage lifecycle map (where a Track A tool attaches)

1 Plan & ingest	script / storyboard draft; archive tagging & search.
2 Produce / capture	LIVE, on a clock: captions, translation, noise & blur, moderation.
3 Post-produce	no clock, cheapest: clipping, dubbing, subtitles, voice-over, b-roll.
4 Deliver	per-title encoding, archive upscaling, personalization.
5 Operate & govern	eval rigs, cost control, provenance & disclosure.

3 - Four ways to source it + the buy-vs-self-host crossover

Buy a hosted API	fastest, per-minute cost, data leaves your walls; low / spiky volume.
Fine-tune	a small model beats a big one on a narrow domain; needs a labeled set.
Self-host	fixed cost, near-free per minute; high steady volume, strict privacy.
Build custom	only when the capability IS the product and nothing off-the-shelf fits.

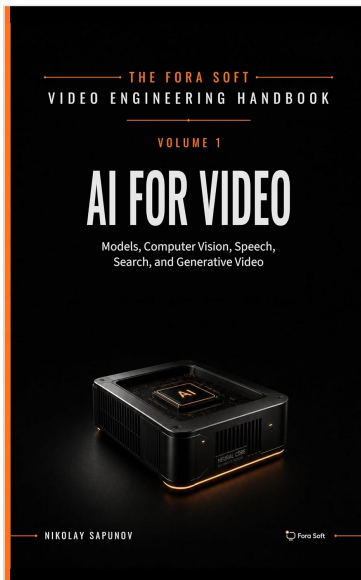
Crossover = fixed self-host cost / API per-minute price -> below it rent, above it own.

4 - Stable spine vs swappable model + the four cost lines

SPINE (years)	lifecycle stages, delivery standards, browser media, your own interfaces.
SWAP (weeks)	the specific model, the specific vendor, prices - wrap each in one interface.
Cost lines	model fee (smallest) + integration + evaluation & quality + governance.

5 - Governance + scoping gate - before you build (context, not legal advice)

- ☐ Sort every requested tool into Track A or Track B at scoping; budget them on separate ledgers.
- ☐ Place each Track A capability on a lifecycle stage; keep 'later' work off the live (clock) path.
- ☐ Pick a sourcing mode by real volume and privacy; compute the buy-vs-self-host crossover first.
- ☐ Wrap every model call behind your own interface so the vendor's name lives in exactly one file.
- ☐ Budget all four cost lines - the model fee is usually the smallest in year one.
- ☐ AI that generates or substantially alters video: mark output (EU AI Act Art 50, from 2 Aug 2026) via C2PA; sign at generation time.



GO DEEPER · VOLUME 6 OF 7

AI for Video: A Complete Guide to Intelligence in Video Products

From Models and Inference to Computer Vision, Speech, Search, and Generative Video

By Nikolay Sapunov, CEO at Fora Soft · 1,444 pages · Kindle & paperback on Amazon

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This map sorts AI tools into product features and build aids, attaches each to a lifecycle stage and prices the buy-versus-self-host crossover. Volume 6 lays out the full picture behind those choices: the AI feature lifecycle, deployment topologies, model artifacts, and the vision, speech, search and generative capabilities.

WHAT YOU WILL FIND INSIDE

- The lifecycle of an AI feature in a video product
- Model artifacts and ML basics for decisions
- Deployment topologies: device, server, cloud
- Vision, speech, search and generative video

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Vol. 3 · Video Streaming II — ABR, CDNs, players, WebRTC, DRM and the economics of delivery

Vol. 4 · Audio for Video I — PCM, codecs, loudness, accessibility, real-time voice processing

Vol. 5 · Audio for Video II — jitter buffers, lip sync, Atmos, quality metrics, neural codecs

Vol. 6 · AI for Video I — models and inference, computer vision, speech, search, generative video

Vol. 7 · AI for Video II — real-time pipelines, agents, serving, cost, compliance, verticals

Deciding which AI capabilities to buy, fine-tune or build for your video product?

We will sort your feature list into tracks, place each on the lifecycle and compute the self-host crossover for your volume. 250+ video products shipped since 2005.

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