



# **Search Engine Optimization of the website fut- bugio.com**

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Degree Thesis  
International Business  
2017

DEGREE THESIS	
Arcada	
Degree Programme:	Business Administration
Identification number:	5175
Author:	Nguyen Thi Dieu Thuy
Title:	Search Engine Optimization of the website futbugio.com
Supervisor (Arcada):	Niklas Eriksson
Commissioned by:	
Abstract:	
<p>Futbugio struggles with problems regarding poor online visibility of its website on the search engines. Low rankings on Google results in poor number of visitors to the website. Therefore, this thesis was conducted to determine an optimal strategy and process for how to implement SEO effectively for futbugio.com. The research methodology follows a case study approach, utilizing the qualitative data gathered through discussions, observations and secondary documents. The study provided an in-depth analysis of a four-stage SEO process at futbugio.com, including keywords research, on-page optimization, off-page optimization and measurement of the performance. By measuring the effectiveness of the campaign, SEO seems to be a promising approach for Futbugio to improve its online visibility as well as attract larger audiences. In addition, Futbugio owners have had the chances to review their marketing strategy and determine to combine both SEO and paid advertising for the next campaign.</p>	
Keywords:	Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Organic traffic, search rankings.
Number of pages:	54
Language:	English
Date of acceptance:	

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the topic

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the world of communication and computing has been revolutionized thanks to the emergence of the Internet. According to the data from a research by Statista (2016), the number of Internet users worldwide was around 3.5 billion in 2016. It means that more than 40% of the entire global population are participating in online activities. It is also highlighted that the primary purpose of people using the Internet is to search for information. Search engines such as Google, Bing, and Yahoo were invented as very helpful tools, allowing Web users to locate the information they are seeking. Although search engines have been designed to provide a list of web pages for a particular keyword, how they are displayed on search result pages differs based on the importance and relevance. Consequently, modern marketing methods are motivated to get involved in the concept of building a strong online presence and gaining top positions on the result list. Specific techniques and strategies for attracting more visitors to a website compose two main concepts: search engine optimization (SEO) and paid advertising. SEO aims at assisting webmasters in getting higher ranking through organic traffic. Thanks to its variability and cost-effectiveness, SEO has been preferably implemented by small and medium-sized companies. Instead of investing a large budget in paid-traffic, search engine optimization is a successful alternative to attract the audience's attention and increase online visibility for a website.

**futbugio.com** is a new-born football blog founded and managed by two young writers. Futbugio aims to convey the latest international football news as well as in depth analysis to Vietnamese based audiences aged from 15 to 50. The founders specialize the content by addressing interesting untold stories about football stars presented as series published every week. Plain language combined with the vivid, unique and high quality photos are chosen as the consistent style of the website.

Online visibility plays a critical role in determining the competitiveness of Futbugio among football blog communities. However, when analysing its ranking on search engine, poor performance was recorded. Google displayed futbugio.com on the first page

only when the exact search term “futbugio” was presented. Otherwise, Futbugio seems invisible in comparison to other blogs when correspondent to general search terms. The author (also website’s co-founder) figured out the problems and realized that it is critical to implement a proper SEO strategy to attract visitors to the site.

## **1.2 Research aim**

This research is carried out to examine and illustrate different aspects related to search engine optimization (SEO). The main objective that the author aims to achieve from the study is to determine an optimal strategy and process for how to implement SEO effectively into futbugio.com. The SEO plan should enhance the website’s online visibility as well as improve its ranking position in search engine results.

## **1.3 Research questions**

Based on the main objectives of this study, two research questions are raised:

1. How is SEO implemented in futbugio.com?
2. Is the SEO strategy effective for Futbugio?

## **1.4 Focus and limitations**

This thesis focuses mainly on the process of using SEO as a marketing tool. Since the paper is aimed at business-oriented audiences, it excludes unnecessary technical factors of SEO. More specifically, the detailed example discussed is SEO implementation in futbugio.com. Although the marketing strategies used to promote the site varies among different online marketing tools, the research neither examines the role of social media marketing nor how effectively Pay-per-click performs.

In addition, there are a lot of search engines available in the market. Among those, Google undoubtedly takes the highest popularity with its market share accounting for more than 72.48% (Netmarketshare, 2016). Therefore, in this research, the author only focuses on discussing SEO applied in Google.

## **1.5 Research structure**

The introduction part presents the background to the topic, research objectives, research questions as well as demarcation of the research. The theoretical framework reviews general knowledge of digital marketing and different aspects related to search engine optimization. In chapter 3, three SEO models are presented and analysed to gain a SEO process for futbugio.com. Chapter 4 explains the methodology that is designed for the study. This research will be conducted through observation of a case study. Case study in chapter 5 demonstrates the implementation of SEO to futbugio.com. The statistics from Google Analytics are calculated to measure the performance of the campaign. Finally, the thesis concludes with the valuable findings and gives appropriate suggestions for further research.



## **2 DIGITAL MARKETING**

In the era of the Internet with billions of people around the world consuming digital content, consumer behaviour studies and marketing strategies have changed dramatically. Digital marketing alters old rules to become an essential tool for business to connect with the mass and generate marketing leads.

### **2.1 Definitions of Digital marketing**

The Internet and World Wide Web are changing the way of exchanging information between businesses and consumers (Jobber, 2001). Chaffey, et al. (2003, p. 8) generally defined digital marketing as “*the application of Internet and digital technologies, combined with traditional media, to attain marketing objectives*”. Companies try their best to market products and services, as well as build relationships with the customers over the Internet (Phillip Kotler, 2013). In another study, Smith (2013) defined E-marketing as the way of thinking and embedding customers at the heart of all online activities. As a result, the distance between suppliers and consumers is shortened and interactive communication is developed. Also, more value is added to products and services, which helps boost sales and widen distribution (Chaffey & Smith, 2013).

### **2.2 The role of digital marketing**

In aspects of business, marketing seems to face the most radical changes after the global acceptance of the Internet as a new tool of communication. Kotler (2013) points out the role of Internet in changing customers’ perceptions of convenience, price, speed, product information and services. Online marketing is believed to be more efficient and targets more prospective consumers than traditional marketing. Undoubtedly, digital marketing brings benefits for both sellers and buyers.

Firstly, Internet can be used as a sales tool (Chaffey & Smith, 2013). More and more existing products and services from clothes, kitchen gadgets to computers and cars can be sold in markets by using Internet as a useful platform for advertisements. The more popularity of the products increases, the more volume of sale the companies receive. (Chaffey, et al., 2003). Brand value and brand awareness influence the purchase deci-

sions and help firms to earn customers trust. The second advantage of online marketing is cost reduction. An interactive website reduces many expenses in selling activities because physical stores are replaced by online shops and printed commercial materials are now transformed into electronic form. Kotler & Armstrong (2004, p. 498) suggests that “Because customers deal directly with sellers, e-marketing often results in lower costs and improved efficiencies for channel and logistics functions such as order processing, inventory handling, delivery, and trade promotion”. Thirdly, the Internet can fulfil consumers’ needs in convenient and private ways to access information available at any time, in any location, no longer having to compare the quality and price of products in the physical stores. Additionally, close connections among customers, staff, suppliers and distributors have empowered thanks to the Internet. Via social media channels like Facebook and Twitter companies are able to invite every kind of client to their events or surveys with only one mouse-click. Beyond this, buyers can research the sellers, promotion programs, ask for consulting, make complains and give compliments. According to Chaffey and Smith (2013), marketers also use Internet as a brand-building tool. It provides new chances to enhance a brand image through many online communication tools, for example, banner advertisements, online games, video clips and soundtracks...

### **2.3 Digital marketing tools**

When creating an e-marketing plan and implementing it into reality, it is critical to choose the right marketing tools. Nowadays in the marketing battlefield, the trend is towards investment in three main media buckets: owned, earned and paid media (Chaffey & Smith, 2013).

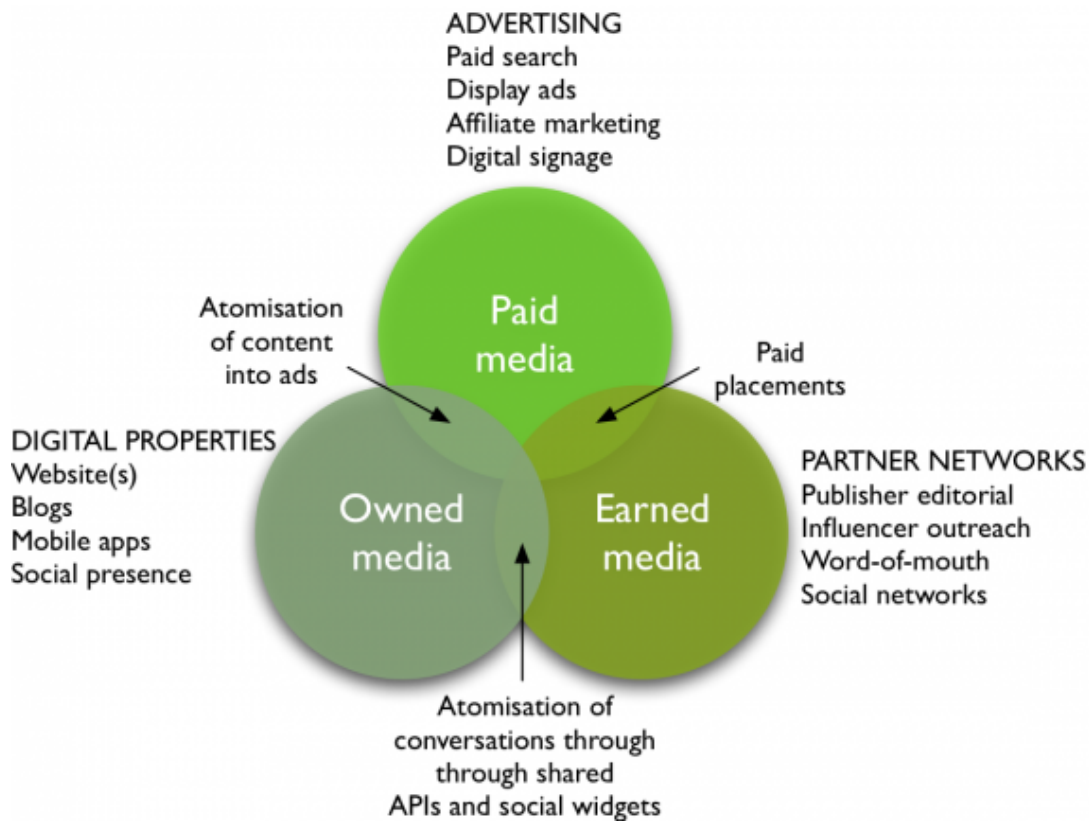


Figure 1. Categories of media: paid, owned and earned (Chaffey & Smith, 2013)

### 2.3.1 Paid media

Paid media consists of any marketing forms that a brand pay to promote its website content and drive exposure. There are various paid techniques to drive traffics to earned and owned media including paid search marketing, display ads or social media sponsored advertising (see Figure 1).

Paid search marketing allows businesses to buy traffics through the sponsored area of a search engine. There is a variety of paid search efforts but the most popular method is pay per click (PPC). With a PPC campaign, the fee is only charged when the viewers click to the website through sponsored links. PPC reflects a targeted SEM campaign and only specific results in term of geographic or demographic area are displayed (Wise, 2016). Normally, PPC links are displayed in the top or bottom positions of the search result pages. Google PPC platform is called Google AdWords. AdWords brings targeted traffic to a website by creating ads and choosing keywords that related to the business.

Google AdWords enables business or individual to reach their audiences through Google search, YouTube or other partners (Google, 2016). Google compares bidding for specific keywords to decide the orders how to display results based on the auction and the relevance of landing page. The foremost benefit of Google AdWords is that it helps sites to look up potential viewers both new and returning visiting. Additionally, Google provides a document reporting the effectiveness of the campaign.

### **2.3.2 Owned media**

Simply stated, this media is created and owned by the brand. It can be seen from Figure 1 that organizations hold the control of the content in a variety of forms: company website, blog posts, mobile apps or its social presence on Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube or Twitter (Chaffey & Smith, 2013). The more owned media a company have, the better chances they get to extend their brand presence.

### **2.3.3 Earned media**

Earned media covers all the media influence and publicity that a brand gained through online marketing campaign (Chaffey & Smith, 2013). Earned content are generated from online word-of-mouth, which can be usually seen in the form of “viral” tendencies, shares, reposts, retweets, reviews, recommendations or the contents picked up from 3<sup>rd</sup> parties. If owned media is considered as the destination, earned media is the vehicle directing the audiences to get there.

### **2.3.4 Organic search marketing and how it relates to owned and earned media?**

Organic search marketing is a method when businesses want to rank higher on the search engines without investing in paid advertising. Traffics generating from the search engine optimization (SEO) campaign is natural and free. By optimizing keywords, website content or link building, search marketing professionals can improve their sites' online visibility. Organic search lists show all web pages that are relevant to the query in the middle of the results page. SEO process involves lots of efforts and takes time.

When integrating owned media into an SEO strategy, the businesses take advantages of controlling the entire content, driving attractiveness to the website through keywords and links. A successful SEO plan requires owned media to build relevant and helpful content that search engines prefer to index. Comprehensive content with proper keywords, links, interface, images should be taken into careful consideration.

With earned media, the brand depends on customers, followers and fans to promote its awareness. Search engine ranking and organic traffic can improve when brand's name, links, hashtags, keywords are mentioned, reposted or shared widely. For utilizing the use of earned media, a website should have a strong online presence on social media, merging with press releases and blogger outreach.

The days of relying solely on single and simple digital marketing tool are gone. Business with combined use of various content is usually earning higher rankings. The balance and combination of these online media can significantly contribute to the effectiveness of an SEO campaign.

Futbugio.com has developed as a personal football blog, for which the allowance investing in paid advertising is limited. Moreover, its competitors in the market are willing to set a large budget on Google AdWords for bidding a keyword. Therefore, its owners decide to implement SEO as the first campaign for their site in order to gain Google's attention through its owned and earned media.

The next chapter will focus on Search Engine Optimization (SEO).

## **3 SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION**

### **3.1 The Search Engine**

From their research, Ben and Alex (2008) states that about 80% of Internet users regularly use search engine on the Web. In essence, the search engine acts as a filter sorting out enormous amounts of information available on the Internet. It allows users to find and categorize information fulfilling their needs and interests without wasting time surfing numerous sources. Therefore, it is necessary for marketers involved in the digital marketing field to have fundamental knowledge about the concept of search engines.

#### **3.1.1 Definition and short history of the search engine**

A search engine is defined as “a system that uses automated techniques to create indexes of the Web, allowing those indexes to be searched according to certain search criteria, and delivers a set of results ordered by relevancy to those search criteria.” (Ledford, 2009). Hence, a search engine is a piece of software that uses algorithms to find and collect information about web pages.

The history of search engines on the web began when Archie was introduced as the first ever search engine in 1990. Three years later, following the success of Archie a similar search engine Veronica was developed by the University of Nevada. At that time, there was no World Wide Web, so the data and compiled files were managed by a FTP server. In 1994, the first advanced robot called WebCrawler came out. WebCrawler indicated the full text of an HTML page, allowing users to search through keywords so that more relevant search results were displayed. Quiet soon Lycos, Infoseek and AltaVista emerged in to the “search engine world”. In 1998, the timeline of search engines witnessed a breaking point with the launch of Google. Google introduced a different method of ranking sites, through link analysis and its PageRank algorithm. Google has grown and now dominates the search engine market, mainly owing to its ease of use, the number of indexed pages and the relevant results (Micheal & Salter, 2008). Also in 1998, Microsoft launched its own search engine MNS and then changed the name to Bing in 2009. More recently, Yahoo! was introduced and developed as a direct competi-

tor of Google. Today, search engines are developing in a fast pace, which enables users to search all kinds of documents and files using short and simple words or phrases.

### 3.1.2 Search engine market shares

During the whole timeline of search engines from the first introduction in 1990, there have been a hundred kinds of search engines available in the market. However, there are several giants dominating over 95% of the search engine market. The bar charts below illustrate the market share for the top search engines worldwide (see Figure 2) and in Vietnam (see Figure 3).

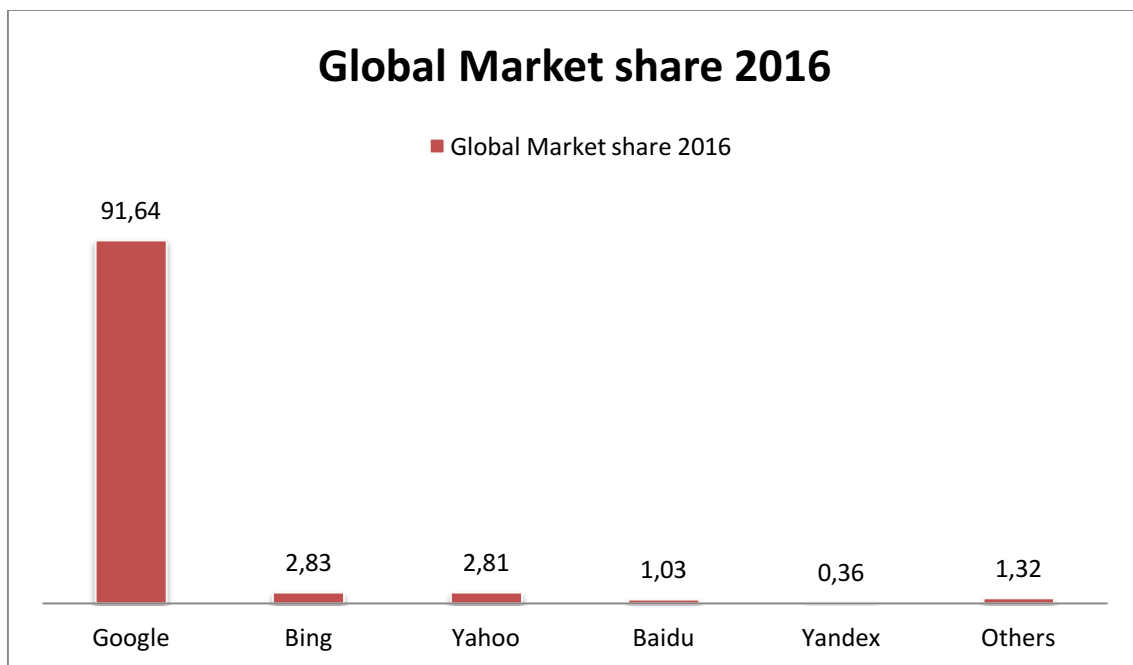


Figure 2 Global Search Engine Market Share 2016 (Statcounter, 2016)

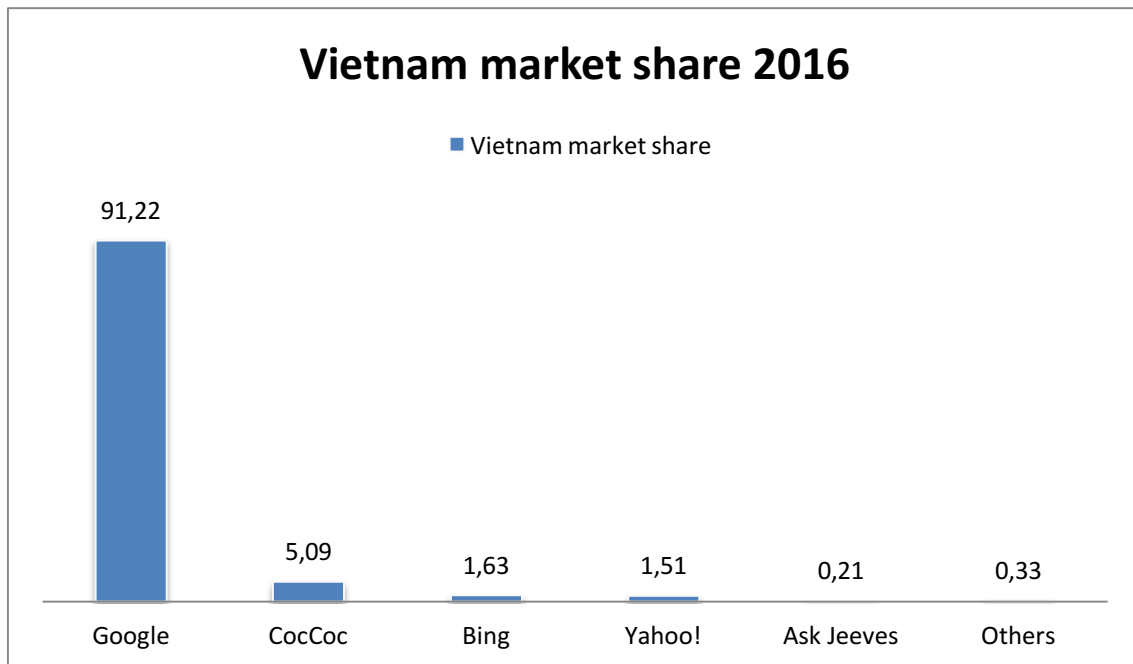


Figure 3 Vietnam Search Engine Market Share 2016 (Statcounter, 2016)

According to Figure 1 and 2, it is undeniable that Google is dominating the search engine market worldwide and also in Vietnam. In 2016, Google possessed about 91.64% of the global search engine market share and no exception was seen in Vietnam, where 91.22 % of Internet users chose Google as a primary search tool (Statcounter, 2016). The two biggest rivals competing with Google globally are Bing and Yahoo! However, their shares at the market are so small that this thesis will not concentrate on them at all.

This thesis focuses mainly on Google but Futbugio targets audiences living in Vietnam, this thesis will discuss CocCoc to some extent. First released in 2013, CocCoc has become the second most popular search engine in Vietnam, counting for 5.09% of market share (Statcounter, 2016). It is developed with the aim to provide Vietnamese Internet users with a search engine that understands the local language better. CocCoc is able to notice Vietnamese search terms without the need of Unikey or Vietkey.



### **3.1.3 How does Google work?**

Basically, the operation of search engine composes of three basic stages: crawling, indexing and serving results. As stated in the scope of the study, this study will focus on the process how Google finds web pages and determines orders of search results.

The process begins with the acquisition of data about the website, where an automated software called “web crawler” works as a detector, automatically surfing the Internet and looking for links (Micheal & Salter, 2008). Google uses “Googlebot” to crawl and navigate publicly web pages available. Crawlers check from link to link in order to obtain data and bring them back to Google server. Googlebot takes careful notice of new sites, changes on existing sites and dead links (Google, 2016).

In the next phrase, Google gathers all crawled data then store them in the index. Google index is a library containing different aspects of a web page such as its location or content. As explained by Google (2016), when users perform a search, algorithms look up search terms in the index database to find appropriate pages.

It is the final stage where phrases typed in a search query are examined and ranked. The algorithms look up the index and return the most relevant results determining by more than 200 factors, one of which is Page Rank (Google, 2016). Page ranking indicates the importance of a page based on a mathematical formula, measuring the numbers and quality of internal and external links to a specific website. Finally, the best qualified-content links will be sorted out.

The developers from Google also try to fight with spam by examining the questionable documents manually. As a result, web owners can notify the caution and fix their sites as soon as possible.

## **3.2 Search engine optimization (SEO)**

### **3.2.1 Definition**

The term “Search engine optimization” (SEO) is believed to be introduced publicly first time in 1997 by two specialists Danny Sullivan and Bruce Clay. The first content they discussed was about search engine algorithm and how the results were organized, which encouraged marketers’ concern about increasing their results ranking.

In definition, Search Engine Optimization is the technique of customizing all elements of a website in order to attain best possible search engine ranking (Ledford, 2009). In other words, SEO refers to a set of practice that helps the website rank higher in the search results. Normally, searchers tend to pay attention to the information displayed on the first page. Due to many reasons, very few jump to the next page of the search. According to Ledford (2009), users don’t usually navigate further than the third page. Therefore, being noticed in the first page is ideal for a web site to increase the traffic volume, leading to more potential customers.

### **3.2.2 SEO benefits**

First of all, SEO supports the search engine to index and rank a website. Normally, users will not enter all pages displayed in the results list. Based on the F-shaped pattern (the finding discovered by Jacob Nielsen, stating that users read and scan a web page in two horizontal movements followed by a vertical movement) and Google analysis, three first ranking pages are visible 100% while from the fourth the visibility goes down dramatically. Another record from Moz (2016) noted that 67% of users’ clicks belong to the first five results. Consequently, businesses are able to take advantage of SEO to attract more visitors to their websites. It is also emphasized that users vote top-positioned page high points for trustworthy and reliable criteria. Therefore, a strong SEO campaign can guide business to improve their image by building better brand awareness.

Besides, SEO is inexpensive and its outcomes are long-term. Being considered as an inbound marketing, SEO is definitely cost-effective, compared to other traditional mar-

keting methods. SEO camps on the doorstep of new customers, increasing sales and maximization of contacts.

It can be seen from Figure 4, which illustrates the Return on Investment (ROI) of different channels that SEO is rated as “excellent” (20%) and “good” (47%) performance in terms of ROI (Marketing Chart, 2014). These numbers mean that SEO returns higher revenue to investment, in comparison to traditional outbound marketing such as television, newspapers, etc.

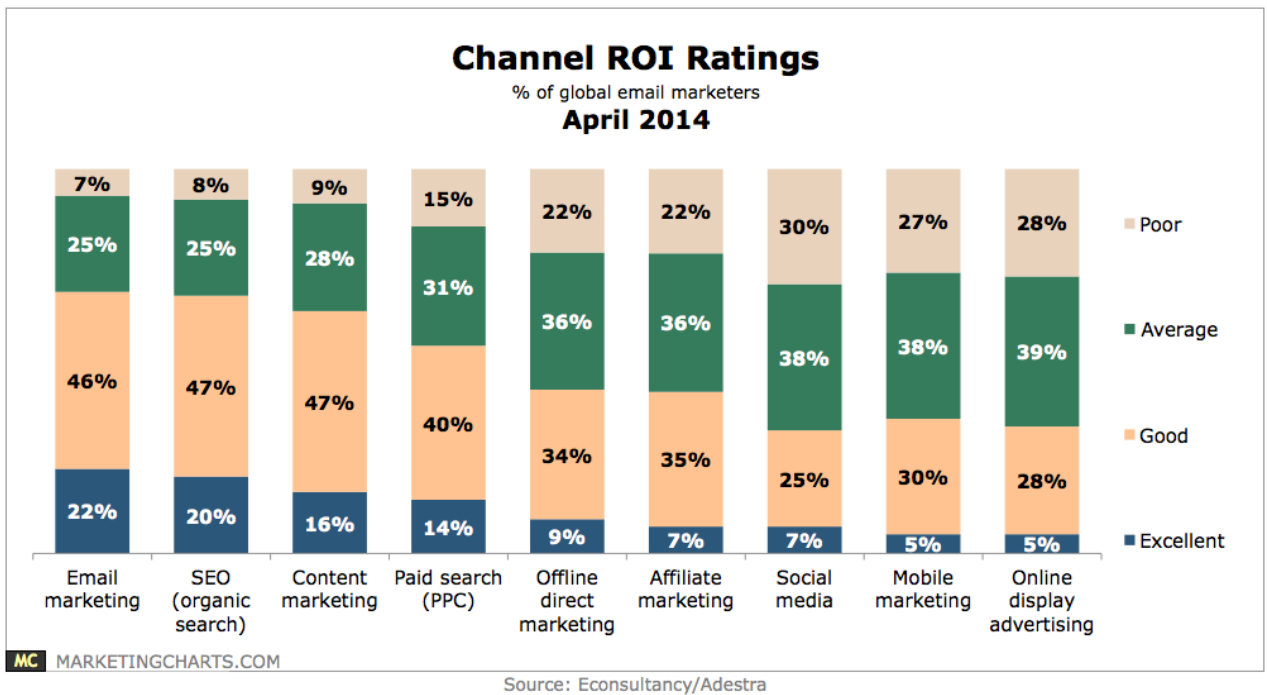


Figure 4 Channel ROI ratings (% of global email marketers) (Marketing Chart, 2014)

Lastly, SEO simultaneously helps the web masters build a friendly and attractive web user interface. SEO includes the process of redesigning the site’s architecture and links to make the page easier to navigate (Eric Enge, 2015).

### 3.2.3 SEO techniques

#### *White hat SEO*

White hat SEO is considered as an ethical search engine optimization because it obeys the guidelines by the search engines and involves no tricks in order to improve a web-

site's online visibility. The main purpose of white hat SEO is to create a friendly user experience and to make the content easily accessible to the search engine spiders (Micheal & Salter, 2008). Google (2017) highly recommends web owners to optimize a site for the search engine through white hat techniques including:

- Choosing descriptive and smart keywords or phrases
- Creating unique and high-quality content
- Optimizing HTML code
- Optimizing social media marketing

### ***Black hat SEO***

Black hat SEO refers to the disapproved techniques that are used to get higher search rankings by cheating search engines' rules and regulations. Those practices focus only on the search engines and they bring no benefits to the users, therefore no natural popularity is built up. Black hat SEO is typically used by those who want to obtain quick return to their website. Agrawal (2015) listed several techniques that are considered as unethical ways of applying SEO:

- Cloaking is a process in which the content provided for the visitors is different from that presented for search crawlers.
- Meta tags stuffing shows the method of repeating keywords on Meta tags or writing unrelated Meta descriptions to a site's content.
- Keywords stuffing
- Page hijacking

Normally, black hat method works within a limited period of time and escort temporary improvements. After two or three months, they are uncovered and banned by the search engines. Despite being unwelcomed in the Internet community, black hat SEO is still applied by many web masters due to its effectiveness (Micheal & Salter, 2008).

### 3.3 SEO models

Search engines are complicated, and therefore different models have been developed to guide an SEO implementation. A number of tasks and steps are undertaken to establish a connection with the search engines and allow the website to be more visible on the search displays. In recent studies and researches, many authors have tried to figure out the best process for implementing SEO.

Rand Fishkin (2008) introduced the SEO pyramid that is used for obtaining optimal result, starting from a strong base then building it up like a pyramid (See Figure 5)



Figure 5 SEO Pyramid (Fishkin, 2008)

This SEO process starts off from the bottom of the pyramid where all basic things like high quality content, well-structured site, etc. are prepared. The next step carries forward with the most important tasks. It is the time for keyword brainstorming, on-page targeting and internal linking. Link building to other sites requires manual requests and link creation as well as content-based link strategies. In the top of the pyramid, social media and viral marketing join the process.

Rand Fishkin’s pyramid is noticed as a useful recommendation for SEO professionals and as an inspiration for other SEO researchers. Matt McGee (2008) has developed an enhanced version of the pyramid, called “the SEO success pyramid” (see Figure 6). Nevertheless, his model is quite sophisticated and only suitable for professionals that have good knowledge of the key concepts of SEO.

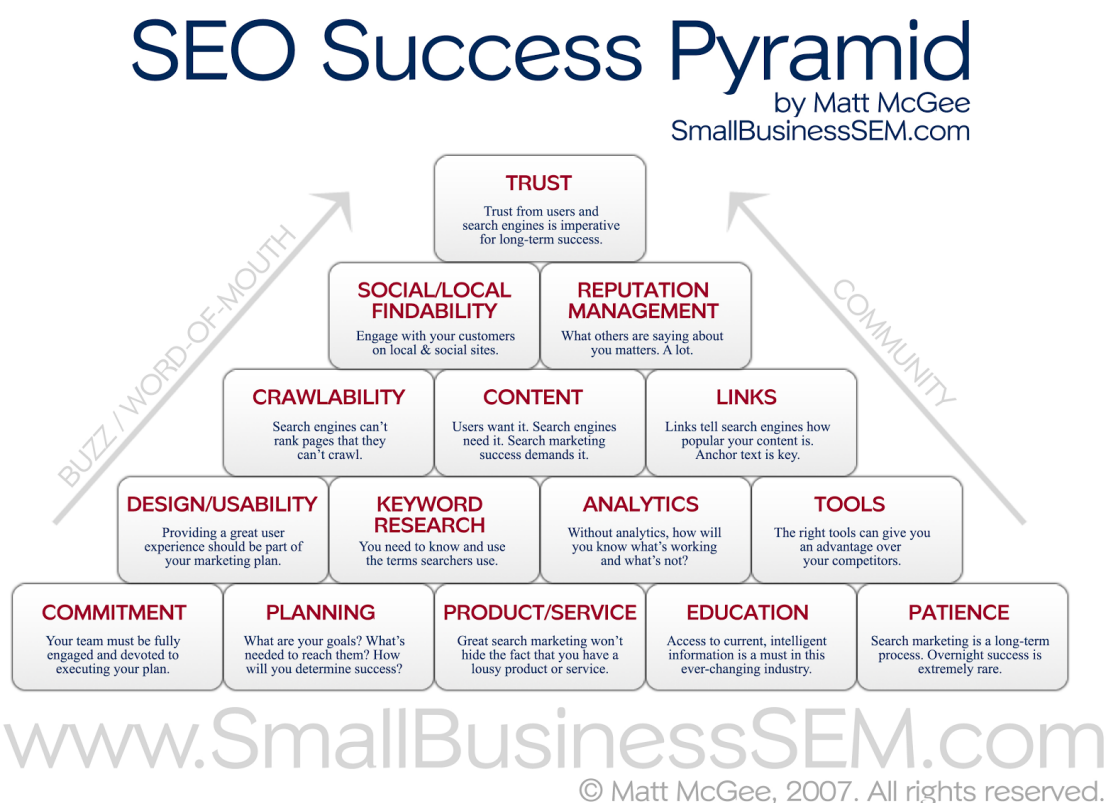


Figure 6 SEO success pyramid (McGee, 2008)



*Figure 7 DIY SEO process (Jason, 2010)*

Figure 7 illustrates a simple SEO model which was composed by Jason (2010) to SEO practitioners who want to try “do it yourself” SEO. His process is divided into seven stages, starting with setting key goals and objectives that businesses aim to achieve. After having a general evaluation and an overview of recent SEO statistics from the second stage, Jason advises to research keywords and the market. On-page optimization and content link building in the next two steps are the most important factors determining the outcome of this SEO process. Finally, the marketers collect data such as conversion rate and numbers of traffic to measure the campaign’s performance.

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

This thesis approaches a descriptive case study as the research methodology.

Yin (2009, p. 2) defines case study research as an “empirical method that investigates contemporary phenomenon with a real-life context”. Case studies are applied in research methodology with the aim of generating findings beyond individual cases. Studying a case allows the researchers to obtain in-depth explanation, description or exploration of the social and behavioural problems. In addition, a case study indicates possible hypotheses and suggested idea for further research.

Jan (2008, pp. 24-25) emphasizes the situations when researchers consider case study as an effective strategy “(a) when the topic is broad and highly complex, (b) when there is not a lot of theory available, and (c) when “context” is very important”. In the field of Marketing, he also suggests interesting topics for case study research including marketing strategy development and implementation.

Yin (2009) categories case study in three main types: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory case studies. A descriptive case study focuses on a particular issue which occurs in a defined case in order to investigate answers for “how” and “why” questions. The results from this method are useful for gaining persuasive conclusions because descriptive studies are conducted based on previous theory and theoretical models.

In this thesis, the author examines the process of implementing SEO for futbugio.com based on three SEO models described earlier in chapter 3. An own model has been applied to guide the implementation process. The model is presented in the next part.

### **4.1 SEO model for futbugio.com**

In the case of Futbugio, Google is definitely the number one search engine that brings traffic to the site. As a new website, Futbugio does not want to be on Google’s blocked list by abusing unethical techniques. Therefore, its owners have decided to follow the white hat SEO method. Based on the concept from the three mentioned models in chapter 3, the author generated a four-step model (See Figure 8) using for Futbugio. The



own model was simplified because it was the first SEO campaign implemented for the website.



*Figure 8. Own SEO model for futbugio.com created by the author*

The process begins with **keyword research**. Based on the other models described before, keywords seem to be the most important and indispensable elements in any SEO campaign. A well-prepared list of search phrases from the first step will help the owners to implement SEO for Futbugio properly. Futbugio is designed in WordPress management system, combined with some modifications made by a senior UX web designer. Therefore, **on-page SEO** consists of code optimization and user experience optimization. The next step continues with **off-page SEO**. It is both suggested by Rand Fishkin (2008) in his SEO pyramid and McGee (2008) in SEO success pyramid that off-page supplements like link building, social media and social bookmarking are necessary to improve the search placements of a website. Finally, the SEO campaign finishes with the **measurement of the SEO performance**. The evaluation will help to analyse the effectiveness of the first SEO implementation. Owners of Futbugio can adjust the mistakes and keep developing proper tactics for the next campaign.

## 4.2 Data collection

Qualitative data is utilized in this thesis to get deeper explanation of the issues. Gillham (2000) emphasizes that qualitative analysis allows researchers to investigate what modifications could be made to existing theories. According to Gillham (2000), qualitative data can be gathered from different methods including:

- Interview: This method is designed to attain significant amounts of personalized information. Research interviews verbally approached both individuals and

groups through three kinds of questions including structured, unstructured and semi-structured (Hancock, 2006). Due to the lack of technical skills, the author asked for help from her friend who worked as a senior web developer to optimize on-page elements. She arranged several meetings and discussions to get proper understanding of the techniques he used in the on-page process. Additionally, data was also gathered through activities on online social forums.

- Observation: It is conducted to investigate answers to the questions. Responses are systematically recorded for later reviews and analysis. For this thesis, data from the observation was collected through the direct involvement of the author and different online tools using in the SEO implementation.
- Document: This is the form of reviewing existing documents from the Internet, private and public record to gather information relevant to the research questions. In this thesis, secondary data in the literature review section was valuable finding in previous studies that were gathered from reliable sources like textbooks, articles or journals through Internet database or school library. The author also used Google online SEO developer documentation and developer blogs to acquire relevant information, which is not found in text books, academic articles etc.

Table 1 below illustrates a detailed time schedule of how data was collected according to the four-step. The SEO implementation was conducted during the time period October-2016 to February 2017.

Phase	Time	Type of activity
Keyword research	- November, 2016	- Brainstorming and noting down all potential keywords
	- December, 2016	- Using mind map to present all keywords ideas.  - Finishing a table of preliminary keywords which provides each keyword's im-

		portant statistics including its search volume, competition and difficulties.
On-page optimization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- October, 2016</li>   <li>- December, 2017</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Observing the process of designing the website. Screenshot was taken to store all steps in the process</li>   <li>- Discussing with the senior web developer to understand how he modified HTML code and optimized user experience for Futbugio.</li> </ul>
Off-page optimization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- December, 2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participating in Facebook. Collecting the audiences' comments for analysis.</li>   <li>- Joining social forum and social bookmarking sites.</li> </ul>
Measurement of the performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- January, 2017</li>   <li>- February</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Starting Google Analytics to gather data for measurement of the SEO performance. A tracking code was added to the web page</li>   <li>- Analyzing snapshots from Google Analytics which shows the information tracking different aspects about the page, the browser as well as the user.</li> </ul>

*Table 1 Time schedule of collecting data from the implementation*

## **5 IMPLEMENTATING SEO FOR FUTBUGIO.COM**

### **5.1 Keyword Research**

*Researching keywords* is a crucial and fundamental component of search engine optimization. Understanding the trend of how people search provides a clear insight into what the visitors are looking for, directing to a proper design of targeted content with SEO. In other word, by analysing data and metric that are collected during the keyword research process, businesses are able to respond to shifts in demand and adjust their product, services or contents in order to adapt to the increasingly changing market (Ledford, 2009, p. 143)

The author researched relevant keywords for Futbugio through three steps: keyword discovery, keyword narrowing, and competitor research.

#### **5.1.1 Keyword discovery**

The initial step in the keyword research process is to come up with a very broad, general list of keywords for the website. The author brainstormed and noted down as many keywords as possible. A mind map was very useful to combine related words and thoughts during the brainstorming session. Figure 9 shows the brainstorming keywords map of Futbugio.

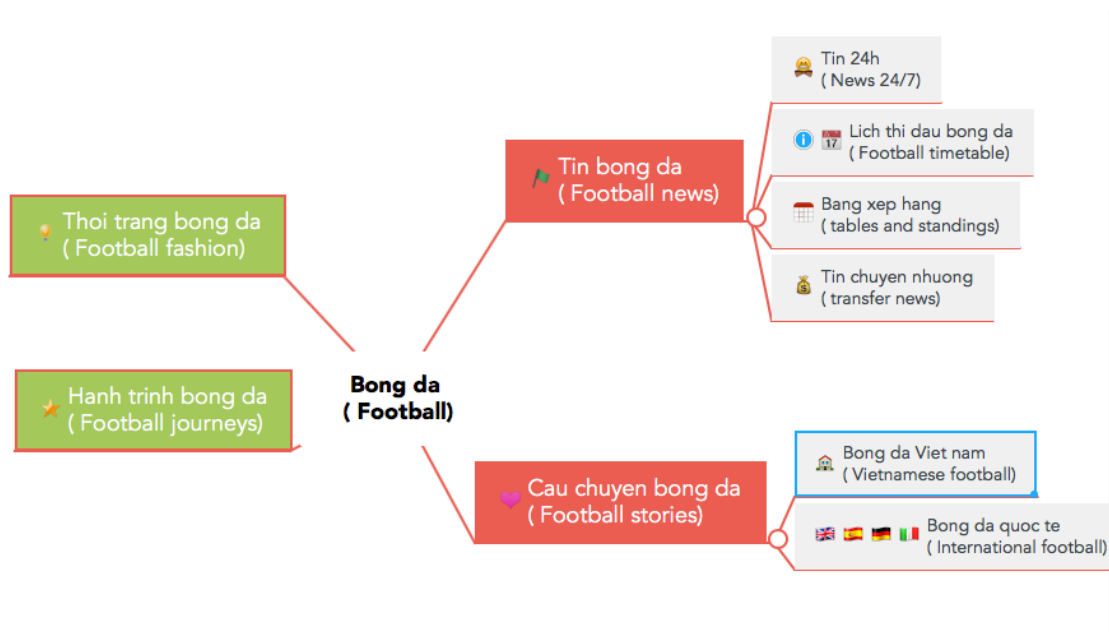


Figure 9 Brainstorming keywords map of Futbugio

In order to come up with proper keywords, the author put herself in the shoes of visitors, thought about probable topics the target audiences are looking for. It is essential to notice that those topics and keywords need to be relevant to the niche categories in the website. Futbugio was divided into four main archives, thus the author picked “tin bong da”, “cau chuyen bong da”, “hanh trinh bong da”, “thoi trang bong da” as core the keywords for Futbugio (See figure 9).

Different keywords can be explored by using the Google autocomplete tool. Key phrases from brainstorming session were typed in a search query, then the researcher scrolled down to the bottom until the related keywords were displayed (See figure 10). Thanks to those suggested search terms, the author came up with new ideas for a keyword list.

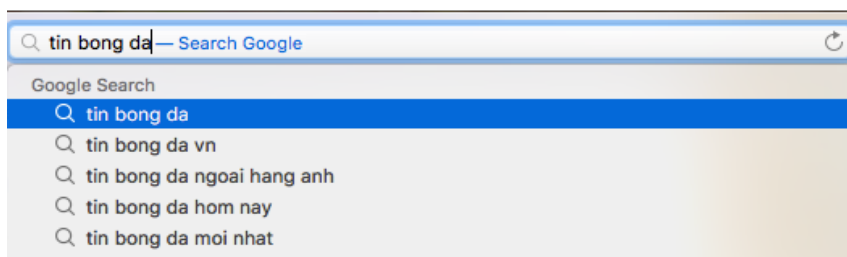


Figure 10 Suggested keywords in Google search tool

Another technique that can be applied to expand the range of keywords is using a keywords research tool. O’Toole (2013) considered the keyword research tools as the main source to generate key terms used for SEO. Both Google and Bing has developed their own keyword research tools: Google has AdWords Keyword Planner and Bing is known for their Webmaster tool. Technically, they are designed for the purpose of a pay-per-click campaign but they are also useful for suggesting more keywords.

The screenshot shows the Google AdWords Keyword Planner interface. At the top, there are tabs for 'Ad group ideas' and 'Keyword ideas', along with 'Columns', 'Download', and 'Add all (701)' buttons. The main table displays search results for the term 'tin bong da'. The table has columns for 'Search Terms', 'Avg. monthly searches', 'Competition', 'Suggested bid', 'Ad impr.', and 'Add to plan'. The first row shows 'tin bong da' with 'football news' as a suggestion, 100K-1M searches, low competition, and a suggested bid of €0.03. Below the table, there are navigation controls including 'Show rows 30' and '1 - 1 of 1 keywords'. A second table, titled 'Keyword (by relevance)', lists several related keywords with their respective search volumes, competition levels, and suggested bids. The second row in this table, 'bong da so' with 'online football', is highlighted in yellow and has a blue 'Add to plan' button.

Search Terms	Avg. monthly searches	Competition	Suggested bid	Ad impr.	Add to plan
tin bong da <b>football news</b>	100K – 1M	Low	€0.03		»

Show rows 30 1 - 1 of 1 keywords

Keyword (by relevance)	Avg. monthly searches	Competition	Suggested bid	Ad impr.	Add to plan
bong da <b>football</b>	1M – 10M	Low	€0.03		»
bong da so <b>online football</b>	1M – 10M	Low	€0.14		»
ket qua bong da <b>football results</b>	1M – 10M	Low	€0.04		»
bao bong da <b>football newspaper</b>	1M – 10M	Low	€0.05		»
bong da 24h <b>24h football</b>	100K – 1M	Low	€0.02		»

Figure 11 Keyword Planner for term "tin bong da", planning for Futbugio (Google Adwords, 2017)

The author used Google AdWords to get more ideas for the search term “tin bong da (football news). A list of relevant keywords was presented plus average monthly search volume for each term (See figure 11). When using AdWords Keywords Planner, two columns “Competition” and “Suggested bid” should be paid attention to (See figure 11). “Competition” presents the number of advertisers that are bidding on particular keywords. As a result, the more people bidding on the keyword, the more valuable it is.

### 5.1.2 Keyword Narrowing

Once the long list of initial keywords is ready, it is time to narrow it down. To make it happen, SEO practitioners need to check the overall competitiveness of the search terms on the list. This evaluation determines how much traffic a keyword can bring and how it will be ranked on a search query. Google Trends enables its users to see the popularity of a specific search term (Moz, 2016). Thus, the author selected Google Trends to compare audiences' interest in each keyword over a period of time. The difference was illustrated clearly in a line graph. It can be seen from Figure 12 that searchers prefer the search term “ket qua bong da” and “bong da hom nay” to “tin bong da” or “bao bong da”.

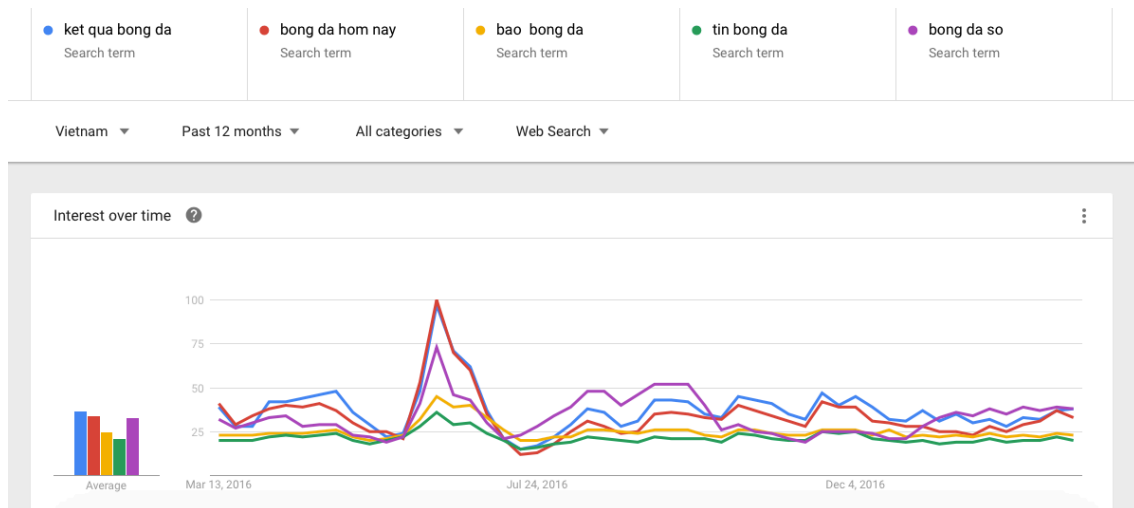


Figure 12 Compare of potential keywords for Futbugio, done in Google Trend

### 5.1.3 Competitor Research

After the list of qualified keywords that add sufficient value, attract in-market searchers and drive traffics to Futbugio was selected precisely, an examine on competitors' activities is essential. One more time, the Internet supported tools are applied to understand how competitors are targeting their keywords. Greg (2016) introduced two free com-

petitor research tools that are useful to get a good view of the competitive landscape: KeywordSpy and SpyFu.

Bongdaplus.vn, bongda.com.vn and 24h.com.vn/bongda are three big competitors against Futbugio in the market. SpyFu helps the author to understand the reason why they succeed in their SEO campaign. This was done by analyzing these websites' most valuable keywords, newly ranked keywords, and Page-one keywords.

Based on the analysis from the above steps, the author finalized the list of keywords for Fubutgio. (See Table 1)

Keyword	Avg. Monthly Search	Competition
Bong da	1 M -10 M	Low
Bong da hom nay	1M- 10M	Low
Ket qua bong da	1M- 10M	Low
Tin bong da	100K- 1M	Low
Bong da Viet nam	100K-1M	Low

*Table 2 Potential keywords list for Futbugio*

## **5.2 On-page SEO**

After the list of potential and significant keywords is created, the next important step was to implement them into the site properly, which took part in the on-page optimization process. Generally, on-page optimization covers all settings the webmasters can apply (code, text, images...) to a webpage. These factors are entirely controlled by web builders and carried out through two main activities: code optimization and user experience optimization (Ledford, 2009).

### **5.2.1 Code optimization**

Code optimization takes into account the practice of composing and modifying the HTML elements in order to upgrade the process how the search engines index and compile the ranking of a page. A set of core HTML elements conclude title tag, meta description tag, heading tag and image alt tag.



Title elements are placed on <head> section and appear in three key places: browsers, search engine result pages and external websites. Title tag or page tag has long been considered the most important elements of a web page since it provides users and the search engines a concise description of the website's content. As a result, they play a crucial role in the SEO process. An optimal title should be maximum 70 characters long (including spaces) since the search engines only allow a limited number of words to be displayed. In addition, title tag needs to contain the most important keywords (Moz, 2016).

Meta descriptions are HTML attributes that concisely explain the content of a website. In another word, it serves the function of website advertising driving readers from search engine result pages and helps them determine whether the content satisfy them or not. Meta description tag, despite not having an impact on search ranking, it does improve user click-through rate. According to data from SurveyMonkey (King, 2013) 43.2% of searchers choose which site they will click based on meta description. Consequently, compelling summary and intelligent keywords should be deployed so as to attract more viewers. The key to a successful meta description is the relevance of the page and the uniqueness among each page (Moz, 2016).

As mentioned above, Futbugio is powered by WordPress content management system that provides Yoast as SEO plug-in. Title tag and meta description of an individual page can be easily modified thanks to this SEO tool.

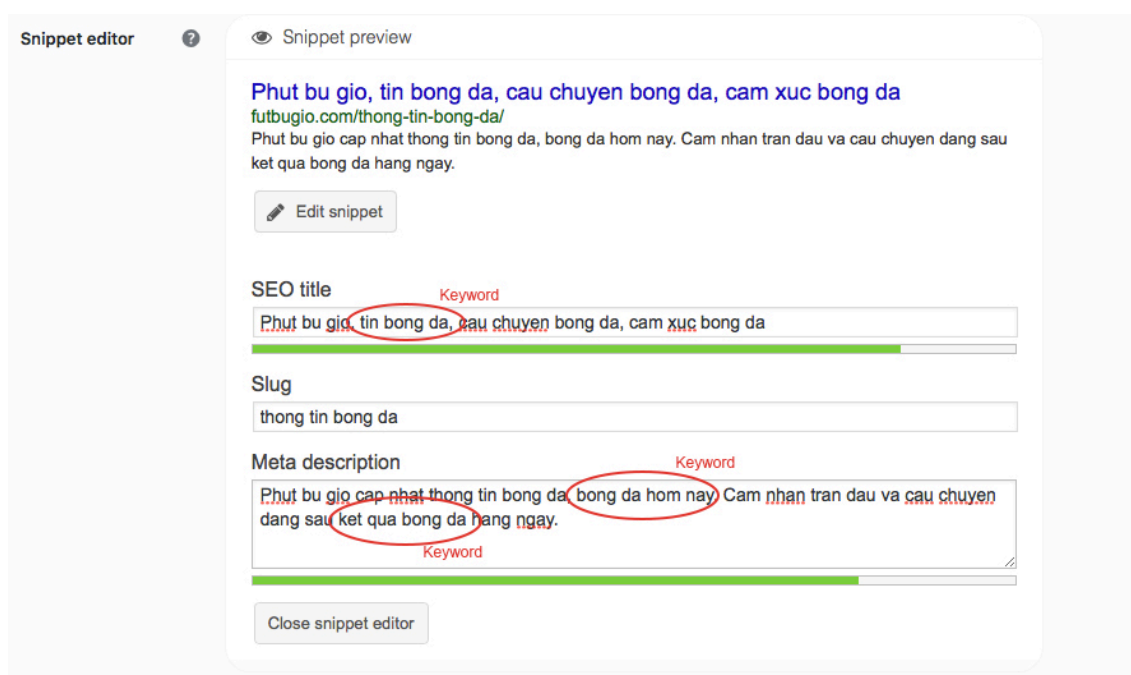


Figure 13 Title tag and meta description for one page of Futbugio

Figure 13 shows the title tag and meta description that the author designed for one specific page of Futbugio. Both the SEO title and the meta tag contain the important keywords: “bong da hom nay”, “ket qua bong da” and “tin bong da”.

Photos and illustration play a key role in improving attractiveness and vividness of a page’s content. Images, when added with a convinced consideration, can significantly contribute to the total number of organic searches (Yoast, 2017). However, search spiders and crawlers cannot understand images directly; they can only index the existence of the pictures. To solve this problem, SEO practitioners concentrate on the descriptive text provided by “alt” attribute. “Alt” text provides a concise description and function of the image. In case the images are not able to be displayed or visually disqualified, information from alt text assists the users and screen reader software in reading and understanding them. Optimally, a good alt attribute should be descriptive, rich-keyword phrase and connected with the content of pictures (Yoast, 2017). In practice for futbugio.com, the author directly added Alt attribute text for each image in the WordPress image uploader (See figure 14). WordPress supports its users with a description box, in which description of the images automatically becomes Alt attribute.

The image shows a user interface for configuring advanced options. At the top, there is a section titled "ADVANCED OPTIONS" with a small upward-pointing triangle. Below this, there are several input fields and a checkbox. The first field is labeled "Image Title Attribute" and contains the text "ban thang san bang ti so". The second field is labeled "Image CSS Class" and is empty. Below that is a checkbox labeled "Open link in a new tab", which is currently unchecked. The next field is labeled "Link Rel" and is empty. The final field is labeled "Link CSS Class" and is empty.

*Figure 14 ALT attribute text for image using in Futbugio*

### **5.2.2 User experience**

In recent years, many leading search engines such as Google and Bing increasingly consider UX as their ranking factors. Google’s Webmaster guidelines emphasize the centre position of users “Make pages primarily for users, not for search engines” (Google, 2016). This user-centralized theory implies that SEO and UX should work together in order to generate positive outcomes for a web page. User experience is simply defined as the way users perceive one site, and in this section, essential elements that directly affect the UX of a website will be taken into further discussion, concluding page speed, page content and page layout.

In a research conducted by Walmart when comparing their site speed with Ebay or Amazon, they discovered that for every one second of improvement they experienced about 2% increase in conversions (Globaldots, 2012). Moreover, it has been announced by Google that the site speed is used by its algorithm as a signal for ranking process. The author uses Google PageSpeed Tools to test the speed of Futbugio. Futbugio gets 46 over 100 points which indicates that its performance is unpleasant. Following sugges-

tion from Moz (2016) as well as PageSpeed Tools, the author upgrades page speed for Futbugio through several practices:

- Optimizing images and videos for the website by reformatting and compressing these files to reduce their size. Every image using for Futbugio was run through a quick Photoshop edit including reducing size to exact dimensions and selecting “save for web” option.
- Eliminating blocking JavaScript and CSS in HTML that causes the delay in rendering Futbugio.
- Leveraging browsers caching so that visitors do not have to reload the entire page. As a result, they have more time to focus on the content.

W3 Total Cache is a very useful tool that the author used to improve page performance. After installing and activating this plugin, the author went to Performance > General and started to enable and modify individual settings such as page cache and minify. Figure 15 illustrates some changes made for Futbugio.

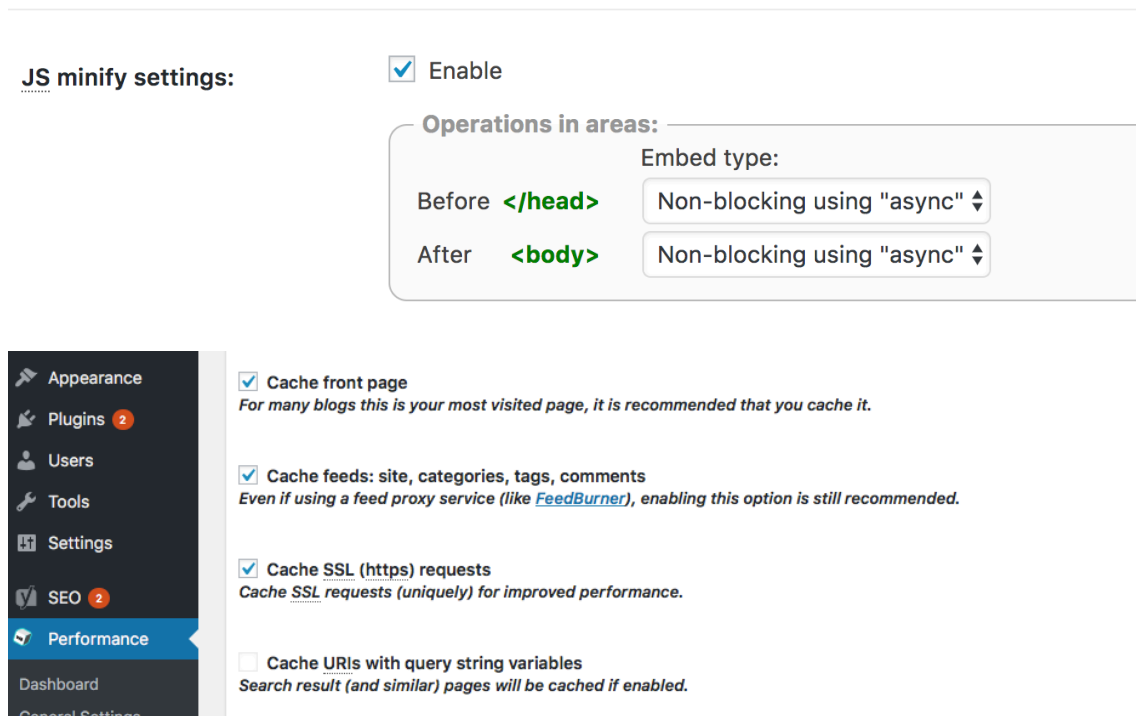


Figure 15 W3 Total Cache settings for Futbugio

Content is definitely the backbone of every SEO strategy. Creating a high-quality content website that is useful, interesting and engaging helps businesses not only to attract more visitors but also to bring them back. More traffic, lower bounce rate and higher click-through will impress Google's algorithms for the ranking process. Furthermore, well-written and appealing information enhances outbound linking from others which relays the sites' popularity to search engines. Steve Rayson (Buzzsumo, 2014) stated several factors that determine a good content. The content should be relevant to the whole topic, contain related keywords and guarantee quality in terms of usefulness and convenience for readers. Besides, findings from Buzzsumo (2014) found out that enriched media content such as images or videos contributes positively to the ranking results. At Futbugio, two editors combine plain language with "football idiom" to express their ideas in individual article. Important keywords or interesting phrases are highlighted by changing the font colour of the text. Additionally, lots of images and video are also attached to attract audiences' attention.

Another critical aspect that rewards a website with a better ranking position is the design of the page (Eric Enge, 2015). It is undeniable that content is the king, however, businesses are unable to convey the idea to targeted audiences if the content is not presented properly. A well-designed website should attract visitors' attention by using visually appealing elements.

Based on an available WordPress theme, Futbugio is customized with unique features in order to catch up with design trends and attract the audiences. Futbugio's landing page is supported with a featured content slider, which allows web owners to highlight the most important posts. This slider is located just below the header and displays content-related pictures (See figure 16), enabling visitors to navigate and obtain information more easily. The content pages are designed with a clean and uncluttered layout, featuring full-width pictures and bold headers.

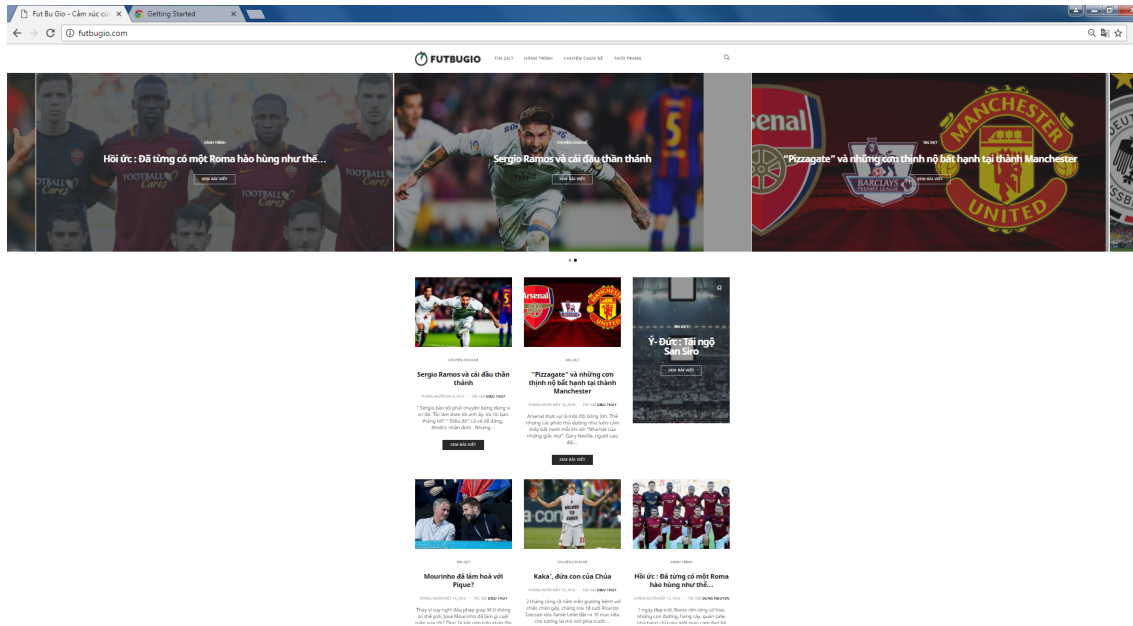


Figure 16 Futbugio home page

The usage of the mobile Internet has doubled within the past years and 30% of traffic comes from smart phones and tablets (GlobalStats, 2014). A mobile friendly website design is therefore a worthwhile effort. More importantly, in April 2015 Google officially confirmed to use mobile - friendly site as a ranking factor. Futbugio with its responsive design enables content and layout to adapt to any devices. Google already tested and stated that Futbugio is easy to use on a mobile device. Figure 17 shows the mobile version of futbugio.com.

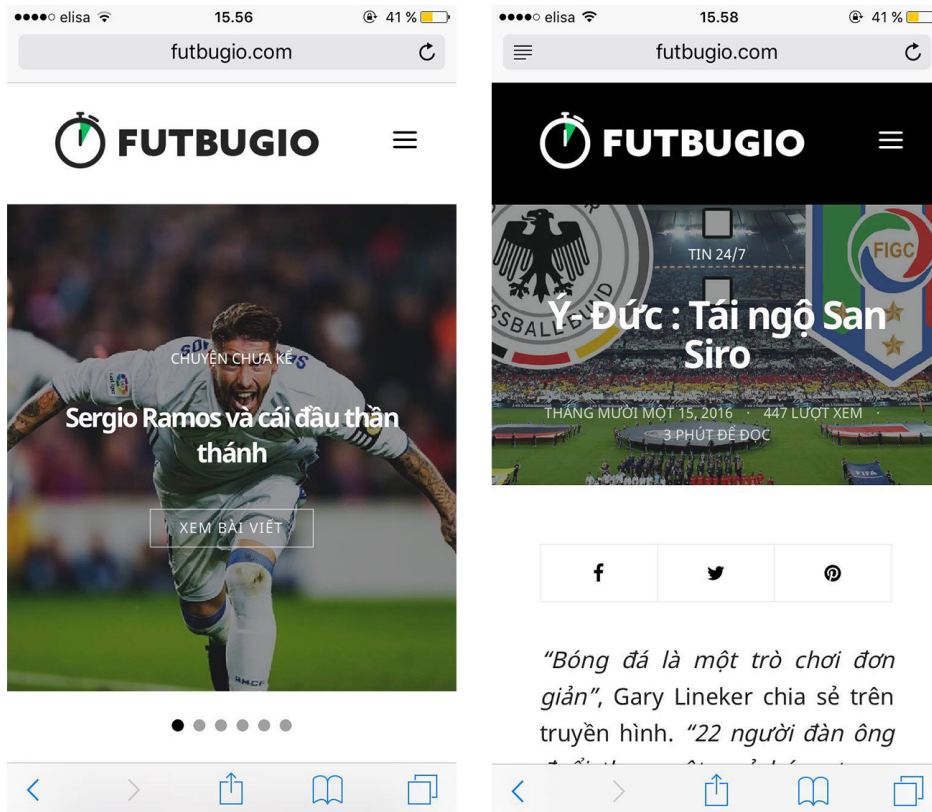


Figure 17 Mobile-friendly version of Futbugio

### 5.3 Off-page SEO

As earlier described, off-page SEO refers to the techniques that can be used to raise the ranking of a website through different tools outside the coding system and the design of a website. The core principle of which an off-page optimization operates is that it takes credit from the outside sources to encourage the traffic and ranking on the search results of a web page (Eric Enge, 2015). A successful campaign of the off-page SEO requires to establish a circle of profile and its outcome based on the quality of off page supplements such as link building, social media and social bookmarking.

#### 5.3.1 Link building

With all recent changes in today digital marketing environment, links are still extremely essential to Google's algorithm since the search engine's robot see links as a path to

crawl and index every World Wide Web site. The search engines treat link as a vote for confidence and popularity of a webpage. In another word, Google counts the number and rates the quality of link among different websites as an endorsement and then decide the ranking position. As a result, link building is considered as a vital step in off-site optimization process which is beneficial to a website's search visibility. Link building is described as the action of increasing the number of inbound links to a webpage from external sites with the aim of improving organic search ranking (McSweeney, 2016)

Although the basic formula for link building strategies is “more links = higher rankings”, there are three main methods of obtaining links for a website: reciprocal linking, triangular linking and one-way linking.

1. Reciprocal linking, simply known as two-way linking, is the concept of exchanging hyperlinks based on mutual agreement between two websites in the attempt to increase back link performance for both (McSweeney, 2016). Two-way link building is popularly used among SEO practitioners since the process is simple, easy to understand and affordable.
2. Triangular or three-way linking is a modified and upgraded version of the reciprocal linking method. Under this technique, three websites exchange links among the group without cross-linking (McSweeney, 2016). Web masters the explored triangular links as means of tackling the search engine war against the reciprocal linking because links are manipulated into one-way clicking.
3. One-way linking happens when one site gets inbound links from other Internet locales without having to link back. This method is judged by the search engines as the most valuable linking strategies since it is natural and received a high vote of confidence. In 2005, Matt from Google (2013) recommended in his blog that site owners should keep away from the reciprocal link and make as many one-way link as possible because Google does weigh it as a high-valued ranking factor.

For Futbugio the following strategies are applied:

- Posting and sharing recent and outstanding articles with hyperlinks to futbugio.com in several websites and blogs that have a good relationship with Fut-



bugio such as doisong.vn and macdepdichoi.com. Although the concept of two-way linking is not highly evaluated by Google's algorithm, it allows a new website like Futbugio to reach more visitors.

- Submitting the website to some press release distribution, for example, prlog.org or bignews.biz. It is easy and free to sign up an account and place a story on those PR websites. The useful, interesting and unique content of those articles will determine the success of this method.
- Actively participating in several popular football forums. The author creates an account on tdp.bongda24h.com, which is a well-known community for the football fan with more than 500 million members. Then, she tries to spread out the existence and build up the reputation of Futbugio by replying to the threads.

Link building strategy is a long-term investment and positive result requires dedication and consistency. Webmasters should pay attention to some aspects of link building when carrying out the process: anchor text, the quality and the number of links. Anchor text refers to the visible, clickable word in the hyperlink which can connect one website to the other (Moz, 2016). The search engines use those texts to determine the pages' topics and choose keywords it should rank for. Link quality is the most important elements among link building issues. Although every link is counted by the search robot, the higher quality links receive more points. Those high-quality links usually come from popular websites, authorised pages and influenced blogs.

The more links a website obtains, the higher it will be ranked on search engine result pages. Furthermore, the links come from various sources gain more online visibility, compared to the one from a single website. Understanding the fact, web owners spam search crawlers by using automatic software to generate the link, which puts both positive and negative effect on search ranking.

### **5.3.2 Social media**

Matt Cutts from Google pointed out the relationship between social signals such as Facebook likes or Twitter followers and organic search ranking. According to his statement, Google does not look at social signals when ranking a web page. However, many

marketers still believe in the use of linking the content on social media channels to have an indirect impact on the search ranking. In fact, social media provide an amplified reach to the content through two concerned factors: social reputation and social shares, resulting in more inbound links (Eric Enge, 2015). If a social account is recognised as popular, an article or post on it is automatically opened up to hundreds or thousands of new readers, and even further shared, which is considered as another form of link building. Therefore, the owner of Futbugio has become a member of Facebook, the most popular social channels to spread content virally to a wide range of audiences.

- Creating and publishing a Facebook page named Futbugio (See figure). Description of the page summarizes the message that web owners want to convey and contains the keywords on the list from Table 1.
- Customizing Facebook URL and unifying it into <https://www.facebook.com/futbugio/>. Matching Facebook URL and website's name will improve the findability of the page both in Facebook search and the search engines.
- Posting interesting content in different formats such as articles, photos or videos several times per day. It is necessary to connect with audiences frequently so as to build up strong social engagement including like, share and comment.
- Responsively communicating with the audiences by answering their comments and messages as well as liking their posts.
- Joining popular Facebook groups for the football fan and posting Futbugio's articles regularly. This technique is a good way to reach more readers and promote the website to the community.
- Sharing appealing posts from other related Fb pages or websites. It is very helpful to develop the partnerships with other websites in order to ask for referencing in the future.

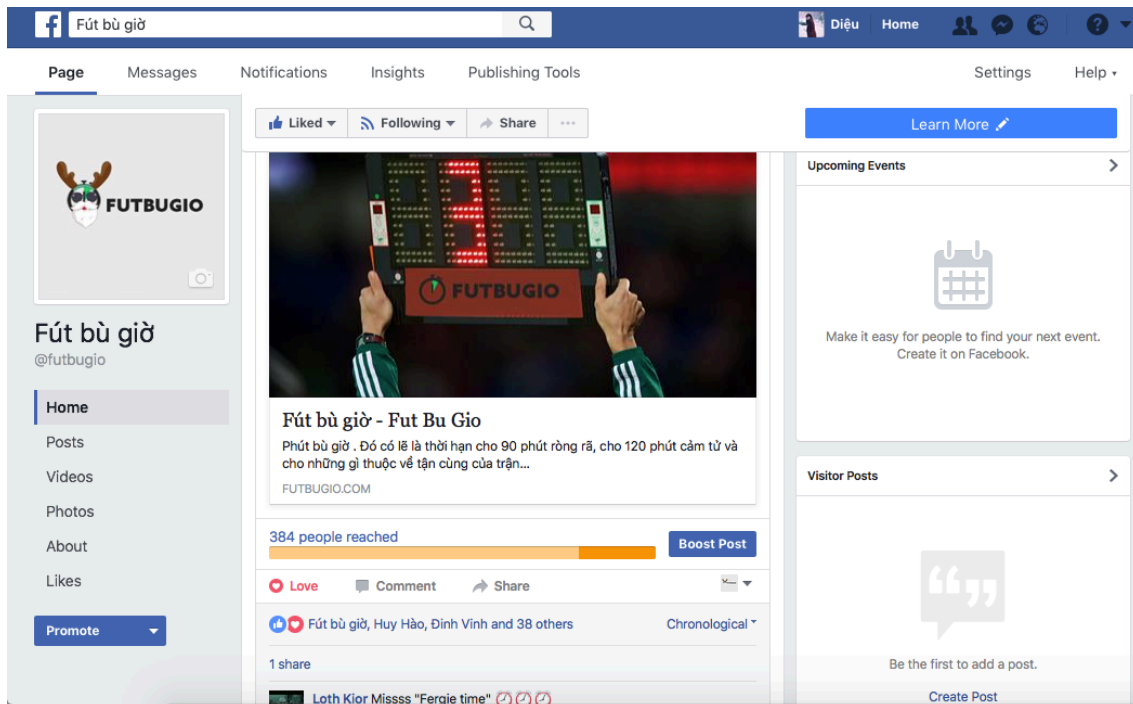


Figure 18 Futbugio Facebook page

### 5.3.3 Social bookmarking

Social bookmarking is defined as a web technology that is used to store, organize and share online the bookmark of the websites which readers find useful, valuable and interesting (Serp Rank , 2014). In the eyes of search engines, social bookmarking is considered as a good quality backlink, as a result, it helps website easily be crawled by Google. Besides, one way backlinks can also be generated thanks to social bookmarking. Link on popular social website helps to drive traffics and gain an ongoing stream of audiences.

Firstly, the author gathered available top rated and trusted social bookmarking sites, for example, Reddit, Digg, Scoop.it. After analysing carefully several different options, the author ended with using Reddit, a self-styled “front page of the Internet”. Like other social channels, it is easy and free to register an account on Reddit. Then, the author subscribed to “subreddits”. Subreddits are the communities centred around a specific topic. r/sports and r/football are selected because they are dedicated to the relevant topic of Futbugio. When having ready “subreddits”, the author started to bookmark by submitting URL with targeted keywords and providing a proper content description. To get

acquainted with the communities, the author is actively participating by leaving comments, posting interesting or strange things as well as up-voting and down-voting another link.

Although nowadays bookmarking channels are flooded with spams, many SEO practitioners are still interested in using this method due to its cost-effective and easy-to-do process (Serp Rank , 2014).

## **5.4 Measuring SEO performance**

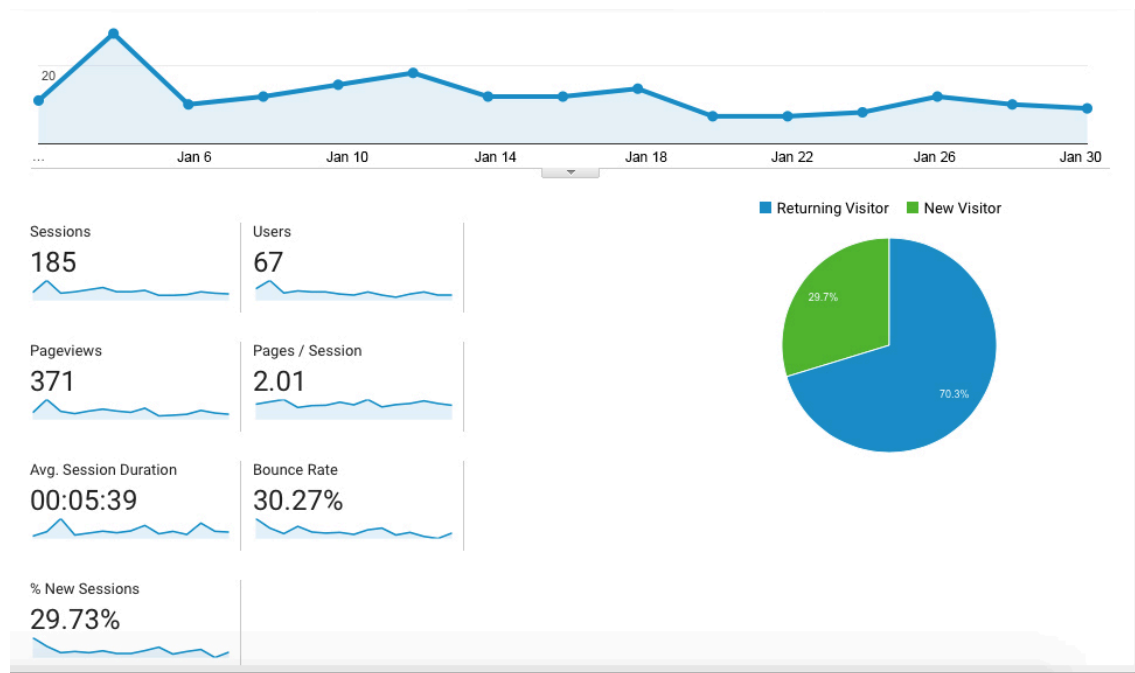
It is extremely important to measure the performance of an SEO campaign. An accurate evaluation of the SEO effort allows practitioners to review the tactics so that they can adjust the mistakes and focus more on the aspects that have proven to make improvements in traffics or rankings. Eric (2015) emphasized three key SEO-related metrics that should be tracked when measuring SEO performance: traffic volume, keyword ranking, and number of backlinks.

1. Traffic volume is measured to understand the behaviour of visitors to a website. Web traffics are monitored through different parameters including the number of visits, page views, average page duration, bounce rate and the percentage of new visitors. Tracking that type of data helps SEO practitioners to measure the relationship between content and the quality of traffics they are driving.
2. Keyword ranking measurement indicates the efficiency of targeted keywords used in the SEO process. Data from this evaluation is helpful in determining the sets of keywords that are actually valuable for a website, enabling modifications for the next SEO campaign around those effective search phrases.
3. The number of backlinks is a necessary metric to check the success of an off-page SEO process.

Fortunately, there are a lot of tools available on the Internet supporting the web owners to track their sites' performance. Among those, Google Analytics is undeniably the most popular and irreplaceable analytic software since it is free, versatile and easy to implement. Google Analytics was installed into futbugio.com so that the author can collect data and analyse SEO key performance indicators. SEO campaign implementing to fut-

bugio.com is ongoing process, however in this research paper, the author collected statistics stored in Google Analytics within one month from 1<sup>st</sup> of January to 1<sup>st</sup> of February, 2017

To get an idea of how Futbugio is performing in general, the author collected data from Audience > Overview in the left-handed panel.



*Figure 19 Audience overview of Futbugio on Google Analytics from 2 Jan to 30 Jan*

It can be seen from Figure 19, Futbugio received 67 visitors with 185 sessions and 371 page views during one month. We can observe from the line graph that the number of visits has increased dramatically in the beginning and then remained constantly. About 30% are new visitors and 70% are returning visitors which shows that the retention rate of Futbugio is healthy. The average session time the visitors interact with Futbugio is approximately high (about more than five minutes), which indicates a good traffic quality and content relevancy of the website.

The primary goal of an SEO campaign is to gain organic traffic. Therefore, it is essential to compare how the traffic channels are performing in term of generating website sessions, attracting new users and delivering relevant content. Figure 20 illustrates the top four sources that bring traffics to Futbugio.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Default Channel Grouping	Acquisition			Behavior		
		Sessions ?	% New Sessions ?	New Users ?	Bounce Rate ?	Pages / Session ?	Avg. Session Duration ?
		<b>185</b> % of Total: 100.00% (185)	<b>29.73%</b> Avg for View: 29.73% (0.00%)	<b>55</b> % of Total: 100.00% (55)	<b>30.27%</b> Avg for View: 30.27% (0.00%)	<b>2.01</b> Avg for View: 2.01 (0.00%)	<b>00:05:39</b> Avg for View: 00:05:39 (0.00%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. <b>Social</b>	<b>77</b> (41.62%)	<b>7.79%</b>	<b>6</b> (10.91%)	<b>6.49%</b>	<b>2.16</b>	<b>00:08:10</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. <b>Organic Search</b>	<b>54</b> (29.19%)	<b>29.63%</b>	<b>16</b> (29.09%)	<b>35.19%</b>	<b>1.83</b>	<b>00:05:46</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. <b>Direct</b>	<b>41</b> (22.16%)	<b>78.05%</b>	<b>32</b> (58.18%)	<b>70.73%</b>	<b>1.49</b>	<b>00:01:04</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. <b>Referral</b>	<b>13</b> (7.03%)	<b>7.69%</b>	<b>1</b> (1.82%)	<b>23.08%</b>	<b>3.46</b>	<b>00:04:41</b>

Figure 20. Top channels bringing traffics to Futbugio

As presented in the figure 20, 30% of the total sessions are generated from organic search while social referral (Facebook) and referring sites bring about half of the traffic (48%) to Futbugio. Those referral metrics are included in the SEO report since they are backlinks that play an important role in improving the position in the search engine results pages (SERPs) and keyword ranking, thus resulting in more organic traffic.

Other metrics that the author observed are “impressions” and “clicks”, which help her to determine how relevant the keywords and website content are to Google. Figure 21 provides acquisition data for the top 7 landing pages.

Landing Page ?	Acquisition				
	Impressions ?	Clicks ?	CTR ?	Average Position ?	Sessions ?
	<b>79</b> % of Total: 100.00% (79)	<b>5</b> % of Total: 100.00% (5)	<b>6.33%</b> Avg for View: 6.33% (0.00%)	<b>11</b> Avg for View: 11 (0.00%)	<b>4</b> % of Total: 2.16% (185)
1. <a href="#">/thong-tin-bong-da/</a>	<b>13</b> (16.46%)	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)
2. <a href="#">/</a>	<b>12</b> (15.19%)	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)
3. <a href="#">/category/tin-tuc/</a>	<b>11</b> (13.92%)	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)
4. <a href="#">/sergio-ramos-hau-ve-voi-cai-dau-cua-tien-dao/</a>	<b>8</b> (10.13%)	<b>1</b> (20.00%)	<b>12.50%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1</b> (25.00%)
5. <a href="#">/tag/mu/</a>	<b>7</b> (8.86%)	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)
6. <a href="#">/kaka-dua-con-cua-chua/</a>	<b>6</b> (7.59%)	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b> (0.00%)
7. <a href="#">/robin-van-persie-mon-qua-cuoi-cua-cir-cay-sinh-tang-mu/</a>	<b>6</b> (7.59%)	<b>3</b> (60.00%)	<b>50.00%</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>2</b> (50.00%)

Figure 21. Impressions and clicks result of Futbugio

Generally speaking, the number of impressions on Futbugio is 79, indicating that the site has already shown up on the SERPs. However, the popularity of Futbugio on the search engines dissatisfy the website owners to some extent as the average position is 11. Besides, the click-through rate is relatively low which means that the visitors find the meta description and heading tags are not persuasive. As a result, the owner of Futbugio should strategically select valuable keywords used for meta description as well as optimize alt attribute for images. In order to measure the performance of the keywords used in the SEO campaign, the author used Keyword Rank Checker available on serps.com. Combining the results from Acquisitions > Search Console > Queries indicates that the term “tin bong da” is overwhelming other terms in getting impressions and clicks (See Figure 22). The author determines to invest in this term in the next SEO campaign as well as the Google AdWords campaign.

Search Query ?	Clicks ?	Impressions ?	CTR ?
	<b>5</b> % of Total: 100.00% (5)	<b>39</b> % of Total: 100.00% (39)	<b>12.82%</b> Avg for View: 12.82% (0.00%)
1. tin bong da	<b>5</b> (100.00%)	<b>30</b> (76.92%)	<b>16.67%</b>
2. cr7 ramos	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>1</b> (2.56%)	<b>0.00%</b>
3. mon qua cuoi cung	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>1</b> (2.56%)	<b>0.00%</b>
4. những đứa con của chúa	<b>0</b> (0.00%)	<b>1</b> (2.56%)	<b>0.00%</b>

*Figure 22. Search query performance in Futbugio*

Based on these metrics, the author concluded that the SEO approach used for Futbugio is on the right track.



## 6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis was to identify an optimal SEO implementation for futbugio.com in order to improve its online visibility and ranking positions on the search engines. The theoretical part provided a general overview of Digital marketing and different aspects related to search engine optimization. Moreover, it examined and analysed the differences among three SEO models, thus determining the necessary steps when designing a suitable SEO campaign for futbugio.com. The practical part of the research presented a detailed process on how SEO is implemented for futbugio.com

As stated in the introduction, Futbugio struggles with the problem regarding the poor online visibility of its website on the search engines. The matter of low rankings on Google results in the poor numbers of audiences visiting the website. As a consequence, it is noticed that Futbugio needs to follow a proper search engine marketing strategy to overcome these issues. By analysing the situation of Futbugio, SEO is selected as the suitable tool to apply for the site. Therefore, it is critical to embark an intensive study to identify an effective SEO model that Futbugio might invest in.

The research answered the two following questions:

1. How is SEO implemented in futbugio.com?
2. Is the SEO strategy effective for Futbugio?

The study demonstrates a four-step SEO process including researching keywords, optimizing on-page and off-page elements and measuring the performance. Each step requires different techniques to approach and put into actions in order to meet final expectation. The keyword research focused on gathering potential search terms that were relevant and valuable to the content of the website. The next phase, on-page optimization covered all settings that were directly modified within Futbugio to improve its position in the search rankings. In contrast, off-page optimization involves all strategies in the external area of the webpage. In Futbugio, off-page SEO was implemented in accordance with the creation of backlinks and social referrals that pointed back to the website. The final stage focused on using Google Analytics to track data and measure the performance of the SEO campaign.

Based on the key performance indicators, Google Analytics provided a clear evaluation of the statistics related to all concerns when practicing an SEO strategy for futbugio.com. The author, as well as the web owners, was able to identify the strong and weak areas of Futbugio. The constant increase in traffic volume, clicks and impressions indicated that the SEO approach applied for Futbugio succeeded in attracting audiences' attention as well as improving the website's position on the search ranking. In addition, valuable content and enjoyable user experience resulted in more referrals and returning visitors. The author was aware that social referrals is extremely important for Futbugio since about a half of total traffics to the site were originated from social channels. However, the weakness of the campaign was reflected in terms of duplicated keywords and unique content that the website possessed. Some specific keywords were repeatedly used for different meta descriptions, leading to a low click-through-rate.

It is important to note that that an effective SEO does not involve a single implementation. The findings from this thesis once again support the conclusion of Eric Enge (2015) that SEO is an ongoing process that requires constant updating of web content, backlinks building and social media management. A clear set of SEO efforts and techniques were defined and scheduled for the next campaign.

The author realizes that it is the slow time-frame for generating sustainable results from SEO efforts. Moreover, SEO strategy provides no guarantee on higher ranking of the website. This is due to the high competitiveness among the websites on the market as well as the unpredicted changes in Google algorithm. As a consequence, the first Google AdWords campaign is considered as the next step that the author applies for Futbugio. A budget of 7.5 million VND (about 300 euro) will be spent for a 30-day campaign, focusing on potential keywords that generated positive outcomes from the first SEO implementation

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