

METHODOLOGICAL STAGES OF THE TRAINING IN DIGITAL MARKETING AND SEO OPTIMIZATION

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Abstract. *SEO training takes learning of strategies and skill to improve both internal and external factors that influence website ranking. SEO includes dynamic changes, appearance of new search engines, new functions of SERP, new algorithms regular updates. This paper discusses some methodological stages and approaches in the training of digital marketing and SEO optimization for computer science students.*

Key words: SEO optimization, methodological approaches, training, digital marketing, search engines.

1. Introduction

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is the process of improvement of the visibility of the website in search engines which includes optimization of the HTML code, the structure and the texts in a website. [5] The aim is to improve the popularity of the web site – providing high ranking (page ranking) of the pages which search engines return SERP (Search Engine Return Pages). SEO of the website provides increased quantity users of the website by increasing its rank in the results of the search engines. Therefore, SEO is a process for which is used structure, technology and content that gives opportunity for the search engines to give higher rating for defined keywords [7].

For the past 20 years Internet search engines change the way in which we search information, carry out researches, shop products and services, entertain ourselves and connect with other people. Behind every website – no matter if it is website, blog, social media or application there is a search engine, good SEO optimization and digital marketing for advertising of that web project.

The history of the SEO includes dynamic changes – appearance of new or disappearance of old search engines, new functions of SERP, new

algorithms and regular updates. The relevance of SEO optimization and digital marketing determines the need for training students in these areas. SEO optimizers must research and understand: algorithms of work of different search engines; the ways of indexing of content; algorithms of searching and site rankings; different ways the users search information, etc.

In the current article we present the main stages of the education in digital marketing and SEO optimization for professional computer science students.

2. Main stages in the training of digital marketing and SEO optimization

Methodology of education of digital marketing is closely related with the SEO process of improvement of a web project. Therefore, the aim of the education in this discipline is to acquire knowledge and skills in the field of theoretical methods and approaches for digital marketing and SEO optimization, as well as practical skills for their application. Students get acquainted with modern methods for developing a business in the Internet space.

The stages that the training process goes through are the following:

1. Introduction to the main elements of the optimization process

Students get acquainted in detail with various optimization techniques, guidelines for SEO, as well as reasons for the effectiveness of SEO optimization. At the first stage, theoretical knowledge is provided and skills are built by providing a number of real sample projects. Emphasis is placed on allowed SEO techniques (white SEO) for optimization, excluding the use of prohibited methods for advertising and ranking resources.

2. Introduction to techniques for building a suitable online presence

After the first stage, you go through building a suitable online presence on Google and other search engines for your business or website. Optimization should be done in the major search engines: Google, Yandex, Bing, Yahoo, etc.

This stage is also related to getting acquainted with social networks

and tricks, providing the necessary knowledge and skills for the proper management of social profiles and online tools. An important stage is Facebook and Google Ads, which significantly increase the visits and engagement of the online audience.

Introducing students to social media is one of the most basic-looking stages for students. However, it involves extremely complex management tools for setting up advertising campaigns, as well as building skills for analyzing the process of digital marketing. It goes through business advertising managers, composing advertising campaigns, as well as proper presentation and tricks for an excellent brand presence in the web space.

3. Introduction to factors for internal optimization

Internal optimization factors are related to determining the desired audience and organizing the content. The core of the site is compiled taking into account the following:

- Website content;
- Browsing competing sites;
- Analyzing search keyword statistics (e.g. Google Ads);

Later analysis of competing pages is performed – their place in search engines, their structure and content.

- YouTube or the video platform stage;

The next focus is on creating and optimizing YouTube videos, as well as developing unique content. Practical knowledge is focused on ways and methods of advertising and popularization of the website or business.

Videos, mostly from YouTube, are a common feature in search engines. The first step is to create high-quality video material but what else students need to learn lies in the fourth stage. Creating a video that is optimized for SEO includes: Appropriate file name, choice of title and description of the uploaded content (choice of keywords) – all these elements affect the ranking in search results on YouTube. The compelling title of the video is important for more clicks. At this stage, groups are played with students for keywords or influential words that result to rank the video in Google's SERPs, but also to get more clicks on YouTube. Students are introduced to techniques and tools that turn the description of a YouTube video into a script for the entire video.

At this stage we include the creation of unique and SEO targeted texts to optimize the web project which in turn will improve several skills in the student. First the ability to write descriptive content, then the ability to saturate the content with the right keywords, and finally the verification of texts with several important tools for the optimization process [1].

During the practical exercises students compare their texts, exchange ideas and thus acquire skills for analysis and critical thinking of the results. Students learn to do basic on-page optimization of a project and work on monthly off-page optimization, as well as to build link-building campaigns [6].

4. Introduction to opportunities for external optimization

This stage of training includes the following elements:

- building an on-line reputation of the site;
- creation of external links to the web project from other sites;
- an advertising campaign to place these links;
- correct registration in the main search engines and catalogs;
- increase the citation index - exchange links between pages with similar content.

The penultimate stage of the training aims to build search skills and create links from external sites to our working project. Students create a discussion to exchange ideas for looking for opportunities for links and then in tasks for their implementation. Important for the stage is the conceptual part of the work on link building because here it is necessary to develop the creativity of the learners for the places from which links to the project can be implemented.

At this stage, we get acquainted with the opportunities that the LinkedIn platform provides for the professional presentation of the business [2, 3]. This professional social network ignites the interest of the trainer as he creates his own imprint (own profile) in the web space. It was then that the work on presenting the personal skills of the student and its implementation in the process of training for advertising a project on this social network began.

5. Compiling a properly structured and descriptive SEO audit

The next step is a joint work on creating an SEO audit or a complete description of all found problems with the tools for SEO optimization of the working project. This is one of the most difficult stages for the student, as it requires the development of skills to present the results of various tools, selection and analysis of the necessary information. Students get acquainted with tools for site analysis such as Google Analytics (GA), Yahoo Web Analytics, Real Time Web Analytics and others. Google Analytics not only allows you to measure sales and conversions, but also offers you new practical information on how visitors use your site, how they got to it, how to get them to come back, and more. Properly structured well-described SEO audit will help further the development of the web project.

6. Development of an independent project by the students

The main aim of the project is a complete SEO analysis of an existing web project with a description of its advantages and disadvantages according to all studied SEO / Digital Marketing criteria.

The stages for realization of the independent project for the studying students are the following:

- Creating quality content and descriptions with the right keywords;
- Optimization for voice search of the site and analysis of the user experience on the site;
- Design and adjustment of the mandatory design for mobile devices;
- Focus on placing whole topics instead of just keywords by inventing additional sections on the site to improve the semantic range in the platform;
- Take advantage of YouTube's potential for SEO Optimization;
- Creating quality Link building;
- Create advertising campaigns in Google Ads and create traffic campaigns;
- Preparation of a report for optimizing the code of the web platform and creating a final report on the activities of the SEO part.

The project is presented to colleagues through a presentation and ends with a discussion.

3. Conclusion

The education of SEO optimization and digital marketing is repeatedly held with students in different specialties in FMI as an elective discipline. The interest in the course is high, and we believe that the presented methodological approach through the development of real projects provides students with the opportunity to successfully lead SEO optimization of a web project. Other real practical knowledge which they learn:

- Creation of Facebook and Google Ads advertising companies;
- Dynamic management of social profiles for different businesses in Internet;
- Preparation of a marketing campaign for all types of business industries;
- Compilation of SEO reports, statistics, etc.

The acquired knowledge and skills provoke the creativity of the students and provoke ideas for methods of control and improvement of any kind of software projects.

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