TA'LIM VA O'QITISH METODOLOGIYASI

APPLIED IMPROVEMENT ANALYSIS FOR INTERNET MARKETING AND SEO OPTIMIZATION STRATEGIES OF ISFT INSTITUTE

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KALIT SO'ZLAR	ANNOTATSIYA
Internet marketing, SEO optimallashtirish, raqamli strategiya, STP yondashuvi, SMM strategiyalari, ISFT instituti.	Globalizatsiya jarayoni, internetning keng tarqalishi va raqamli qurilmalarning tezkor tarqalishi raqamli marketingning alohida fan sifatida rivojlanishiga sezilarli ta'sir ko'rsatmoqda. An'anaviy bosma reklama hozirda raqamli takliflar bilan birgalikdagina samara bermoqda. Ushbu maqolada ISFT institutining internet marketing va SEO optimallashtirish strategiyalari tahlil qilingan. Maqolada raqobat muhitining tahlili amalga oshirilgan bo'lib, loyihaning maqsadlari va STP (segmentatsiya, targetlash va o'zini namoyon etish) yondashuvlari belgilangan, shuningdek, eng mos SMM strategiyalari va vositalari ko'rib chiqilgan.

КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА	АННОТАЦИЯ
Интернет-маркетинг, SEO-оптимизация, цифровая стратегия, подход STP, SMM-стратегии, институт ISFT.	Процесс глобализации, широкое распространение интернета и быстрое распространение цифровых устройств способствуют значительному развитию цифрового маркетинга как отдельной науки. Традиционная печатная реклама теперь эффективно работает только в сочетании с цифровыми предложениями. В этой статье представлен прикладной анализ интернет-маркетинга и стратегий SEO-оптимизации института ISFT. В статье проведен анализ конкурентной среды, определены цели проекта и подходы STP (сегментация, таргетинг и позиционирование), а также рассмотрены наиболее подходящие SMM-стратегии и инструменты.

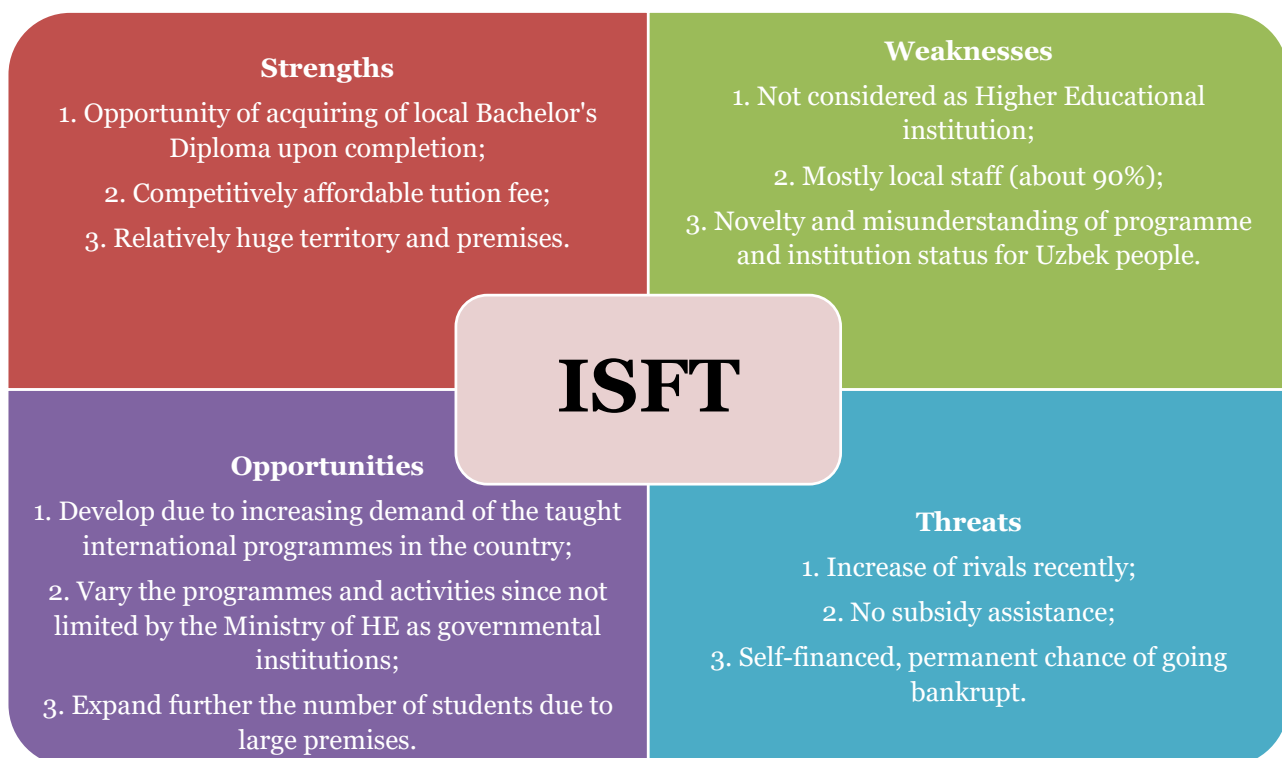| KEY WORDS	ABSTRACT
Internet marketing, SEO optimization, digital strategy, STP approach, SMM strategies, ISFT Institute.	The process of globalization, the widespread availability of the internet, and the rapid spread of digital devices significantly contribute to the development of digital marketing as a distinct science. Traditional print advertising now works effectively only in combination with digital offerings. This paper presents an applied analysis of internet marketing and SEO optimization strategies for the ISFT Institute. The paper conducts a competitive environment analysis, defines project objectives and STP (segmentation, targeting, positioning) approaches and considers the most suitable SMM strategies and tools.

Introduction. The omnipresent process of globalization, widely accessible internet and rapid spread of digital devices among individuals have been considerably contributing into development of digital marketing as a separate science. Now, physical printing, traditional advertisement and etc. work efficiently only in combination with digital field offers, which are of relatively lower costs. A huge advantage of digital marketing is that the tools provide various opportunities of precise customer segmentation and evaluation of clients' actions on their every step during the process of

marketing. To succeed in running a digital marketing campaign, a sound online marketing strategy is vital.

Within this paperwork, the company chosen is suggested with a digital strategy that is aimed to boost its both online presence and offline activities. First, the digital situation analysis has been conducted to elucidate the competitive atmosphere and then extract the focus points for further analysis; to clarify, the official websites of the company and its rivals have been considered to acquire a clearer view of the situation. Second, the project objectives and STP (segmenting, targeting, positioning) implications have been defined with the purpose of targeting the right e-audience with the right digital approach. Third, a range of SMM strategies and tools have been considered to apply the most suitable ones alongside with proper platforms in order to pursue the placed objectives. Finally, the work suggests a detailed plan on traffic building to attract the right customers that are likely to consequently bring the preferred results out of the whole digital strategy.

"International School of Finance Technology and Science" LLC, branded and hereafter referred as ISFT, currently operating as a private higher educational institution, used to be a financial school specialized in professional teaching of ACCA (The Association of Chartered and Certified Accountants, accaglobal.com, 2024) international accounting programme and Preparation/Foundation for ACCA courses in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Established in 2016, the number of students rose from 46 in the beginning to 1100+ in the 2019-2020 academic year. Starting from 2021, ISFT acquired its license for higher education services from the Ministry of Higher Education of Uzbekistan having achieved the private higher educational institution status. Due to its rapid expansion, being now home to more than 23,000 full and part time students within 4 premises, ISFT feels to be in need of this appraisals and quality checks delivered in this paper.

To evaluate the competitive potential of ISFT, the following brief SWOT analysis has been presented:

Strengths
1. Opportunity of acquiring of local Bachelor's Diploma upon completion;
2. Competitively affordable tution fee;
3. Relatively huge territory and premises.

Weaknesses
1. Not considered as Higher Educational institution;
2. Mostly local staff (about 90%);
3. Novelty and misunderstanding of programme and institution status for Uzbek people.

ISFT

Opportunities
1. Develop due to increasing demand of the taught international programmes in the country;
2. Vary the programmes and activities since not limited by the Ministry of HE as governmental institutions;
3. Expand further the number of students due to large premises.

Threats
1. Increase of rivals recently;
2. No subsidy assistance;
3. Self-financed, permanent chance of going bankrupt.

1.1. Contemporary Presence in Digital Media

ISFT facilitates its digital presence and recognition in Uzbek market via the following sources:

- Official Website: www.isft.uz;
- Telegram Channel: https://t.me/isftash with 14,000+ subscribers;
- Instagram Page: @isf.tash with 15,400+ subscribers;
- Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/isftash with 1,300+ followers.

2. Website Overview, Competitive Analysis via Seoptimer

ISFT is a relatively new educational institution in comparison with other governmental and international ones in Uzbekistan. For this reason, not only recently established educational institutions with similar majors, namely British Management University (BMU) and Kimyo International University in Tashkent (KIUT), have been chosen for this competitive analysis of websites, but also Westminster International University in Tashkent (WIUT) have been included.

While conducting the comparative overview, the websites audit results run via Seoptimer.com have shown the followings:

Criteria \ Name	ISFT	WIUT	BMU	YTIT
Website Name	isft.uz	wiut.uz	bmu-edu.uz	ytit.uz
SEO	C+	B	C-	B-
Usability	D	D-	D-	D-
Performance	D-	D	B+	F
Social	F	C	B+	D+
Links	F	C+	C+	F
OVERALL	**D+**	**C**	**C**	**D+**
(Research evidence is provided as Screenshots attached in Appendix I)				

2.1. SEO Results

SEO, or Search Engine Optimization, means "making the company website appear in search engines" (Muller, 2020). In other words, the term implies for combination of tags, keywords and content which induce search engines to find the webpage rapidly.

Muller (2020) informs that the first targets of search engines while sorting are title tags and related meta description tags (HTML Headers), a sort of "brief labels" of the webpage; these two should be concise yet informative. The Seoptimer.com analysis reveals that isft.uz enjoys proper title tag, yet the descriptive meta tags are absent; "a meta description is important for search engines to understand the content of your page, and is often shown as the description text blurb in search results (Seoptimer.com, 2020). As to the other observed sites, only WIUT is shown to have proper meta tags that ease the cases of being rapidly found by descriptive search inputs. For instance, finding WIUT webpage would not require input of specific title keywords and may be additionally reached by associated wording as well, e.g. 'international university' or 'university tashkent'.

Moving to body content, the research illustrates considerable lack of content on ISFT site in comparison to the others. Although the Header Tags are used well on isft.uz, the body keyword consistency and word-image numbers and proportions of it seem to be totally outcompeted by the other:

Criteria \ Name	ISFT	WIUT	BMU	YTIT
Word Count	283	1372	139	108
Image Alt Attributes	10/3	140/80	31/4	118/81

Result	thin content	good level of textual content	thin content	thin content

It worth mentioning that all of the observed websites have been characterized by the tool as having 'thin content', except for WITU, in comparison to the wide range of other audited websites by Seoptimer.com., 2024

These drawbacks for already 10 years are considered as leading to low performance in "persuasion to deliver commercial results ... design should emphasize <u>specific content</u> and customer journeys through the site in order for the site to meet its objectives such as conversion rate optimization (CRO)" (Chaffey, 2013). In other words, limited content not only impedes finding specific information, but also denies the chance to acquire full information upon finding it. By this, OVP (online value proposition) is not provided to the visitors in full value which may end up in insufficient message of the product/service offered to potential customers.

Other supplementary features such as 'robots.txt' file and Sitemap, which perform instructive role for search engine (Seoptimer.com, 2020), are present on ISFT web page yet the latter needs updates. Whether the websites have Analytics tool applied was challenging to identify since Seoptimer.com was noticed to recognize only internationally used tools, e.g., Google Analytics; isft.uz is monitored via free Yandex.Metrika, however was not reported to have one. In any cases, WIUT was found to have Google Analytics applied to its website for traffic tracking – what is an obvious advantage due to this particular tool being the world leader within its function and efficiency (Muller, 2020).

All the above-mentioned factors related to isft.uz contributed to its low rankings in monthly traffic volume and keyword positions:

Criteria \ Name	ISFT	WIUT	BMU	YTIT
Monthly Traffic Volume	168	8,870	650	1,789

2.2. Usability

User-centred design of a website and its usability measure the total user-friendliness, in other words, it measures whether "visitors can find the information they are seeking, have a satisfactory experience and complete actions efficiently" (Chaffey, 2013). The research shows comparatively

slightly improved adaptation of ISFT website to various digital devices such as mobile phones, tablets or PCs with different browsers; web standards and rendering across devices show positive results; positive results due to most visits being via the devices other than PCs (Screenshot 1). The only disadvantage in comparison to the competitors' website is usage of 'illegible' font sizes in several parts which may cause inconvenience for particular users to perceive/understand (Seoptimer.com, 2024). Website search tools are integrated in each one.
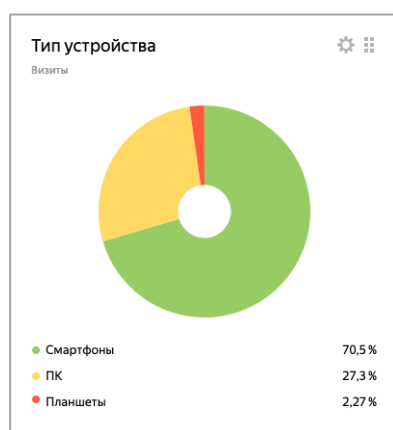
Screenshot 1, Accessed Devices Types, YandexMetrika on isft.uz, 2024

Translation: Device Types; Visits; Smartphones, PC, Tablets.

2.3. Performance

In accordance to a UK SEO Service study, more than 60% of their population expect a website to load in 2-3 seconds in maximum, otherwise the site is considered to lack proper performance (Hobo-

web.co.uk). Due to increasing improvement of internet in Uzbekistan, similar requirements are likely to suit.
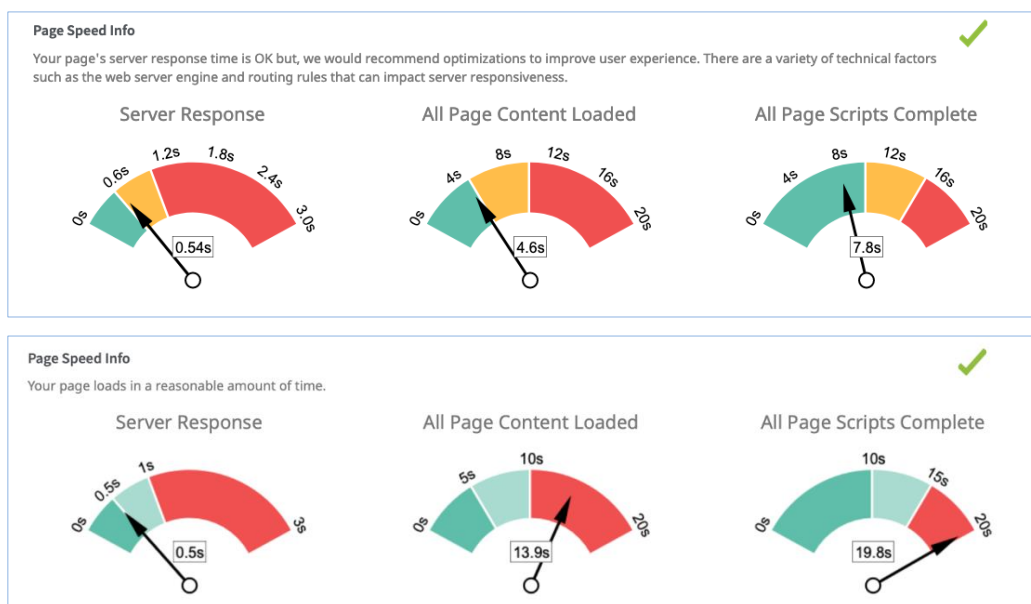
2.4. Social Results

Presence of direct links to related SMM platforms is vital on the website which is the basement of the whole digital strategy sourcing in this particular case (Muhohen, 2017). Although the links to Telegram, Facebook and Instagram are present on isft.uz due to their relatively higher popularity in Uzbekistan, the international platforms accounts, such as LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube, are absent (Screenshot 3). This implies narrow concentration on local marketing and limited concern about widening of the e-audience internationally; this tendency is related to the other observed companies and their websites as well. Nowadays, this issue is recommended to be remade with the aim of grasp more conversion rates.
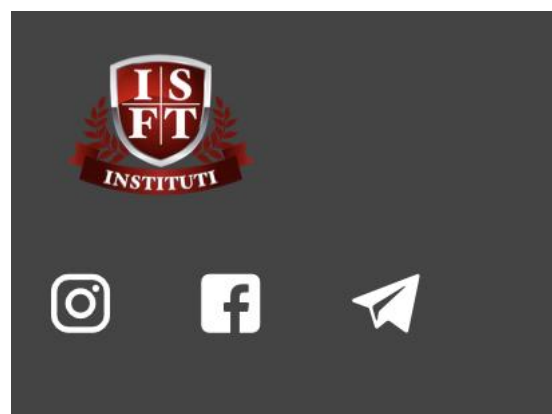
Screenshot 3, www.isft.uz, 2024

2.5. Summary

The analysis sums up that the official ISFT website demonstrates low level in achievement of the objectives placed in front of an ordinary website. The functions of delivering the positioning, proposed values and product information to the online users are provided inefficiently – what requires substantial transformation. A frequent reason why companies do not succeed in digital marketing is that they commence when "objectives are not clearly agreed, and companies keen to get on with it jump straight to tactical e-tools (such as web sites and banner ads) without first agreeing clearly defined objectives and razor-sharp strategies" (Chaffey, 2013).

3. Digital Marketing Objectives, Identification

3.1. 5S Model. The following step within this work is to be identification of further objectives for the new Digital Marketing Strategy with the aim of building an appropriate set of actions to reach them. 5-Ss will contribute into exact identification of the objectives. As Chaffey and Smith (2016) present this model, it assists in defining and summarizing the primary objectives of a company's digital performance, and is divided into the following compounds which define the way a company:

• Sells – operates its sales and distribution; aiming growing sales and product information;
• Serves – supplies its customers with values; aiming to add value;

- Speaks – communicates with its online audience; aiming to engage with clients;
- Saves – attempts to save its costs; aiming to economize the expenses;
- Sizzles – spreads its digital presence and improves its branding; aiming to boost and popularize the brand online.

As it was previously mentioned, ISFT operates the next platforms:
- Official Website;
- Facebook;
- Telegram;
- Instagram.

The analysis below is directed to identification of main objectives and contains observation of what has been done already; further recommendations on SMM strategy are provided in Section 5.

3.1.1. Sell – Grow Sales

Being a prominent call to action (Chaffey and Smith, 2017), Sell is to attract the e-customers' interest to the main product of ISFT – education. Since ISFT is currently specialized in traditional way of learning, the marketing model of online advertisement and offline sales are applied. However, as the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and rapid digitalization are dictating their own tendencies on the ways of learning, launch of new courses that are taught online with the provision of digital materials have been prepared by the Academic Department of ISFT (ISFT, 2024). Taking all these into account, the following Sell Objectives are defined:
- Maximal increase of conversion rate, increase the number of visitors to maximally spread the information about the educational programs within the people of Uzbekistan.
- Expand the e-audience from existing students and aware users to fresh ones, not related to the sphere directly.
- Introduce and increase the sales of online lessons (in case of soon launch of online lessons).

The research reveals that ISFT is mainly using the website and partially the Telegram channel to 'sell'. Since teaching the programs is currently the only product specialized and offered, complete and informative content is vital to follow the objective. However, the website is seen to contain only history and general description of the programs without any info on its benefits, future perspectives and etc – the value it offers (isft.uz, 2024). To emphasize, although the website (and other platforms at most) is in four languages (Uzbek Latin/Cyrillic and Russian) and pays low attention to English content – what is a weighty disadvantage since it limits attraction of international online audience and the international programs are taught in English (Ibid).

The other platforms have been observed to lack the info highlighted above, except for Telegram channel which contains limited posts about it (Screenshot 4).
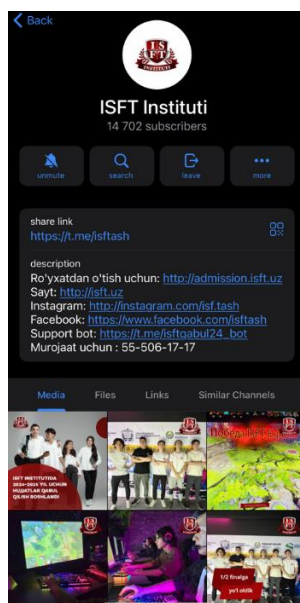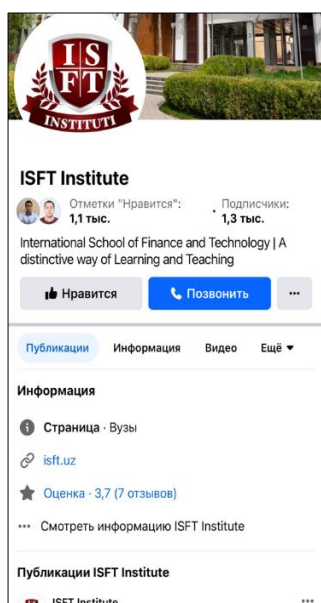
Screenshot 4, ISFT Facebook, Telegram, Instagram, 2024

3.1.2. Serve – Add Value

Serve or adding value is "achieved through giving customers extra benefits online or inform product development through online dialogue and feedback" (Chaffey, davechaffey.com, 2020). In case of ISFT, the further 'serve' objectives have been identified:

• Facilitate prompt and informative Q&A;

• Inform about latest news on the product, discounts/offers or changes and improvements of the course and teaching methods, etc.

At present, ISFT operates E-mail subscription for latest news, E-mail and SMM platforms Q&A accounts, and a huge Telegram Discussion Group (management representatives in it as well) run by activists to add value to the information provided and products offered (Evidence and Q&A samples included). The response is usually provided within 24 hours (Screenshot 5, ISFT, 2024).

2.3.1. Speak – Get Closer to Customers

Chaffey (2020) characterizes 'speak' as the way how a company creates dialogue, runs conversation marketing with its customers. The objectives have been identified:

• Receive up-to-date feedback and rating from applicants, students and their parents on the service provided;

• Run research surveys and forums aimed to enunciate particular topics inducing online users interaction.

The current tools used by ISFT for this are similar to 'Serve' adding Comments on Instagram and Facebook to find out reaction of e-audience on actions undertaken. For years, the responsible staff is noticed to address the questions and reviews promptly and provide informative answers (Screenshot 6).

Screenshot 6, ISFT Instagram Post on October 23, 2020.

3.1.4.   Save – Save Costs

"Reducing physical and operating cost" is the advantage granted by worldwide digitalization (Gola, 2019), this is the main feature of 'Save'. The following objectives are to be pursued by ISFT here:

• Enlarge online audience on the website and SMM platform to 'domesticate' advertisement and save costs for posts on external sources;

• Address the advertisement materials to the targeted audience via SMM platform PR-tools to replace expenses on traditional advertisement.

Presently, the online audience of ISFT mainly consists of its existing students and their parents, more than 80% (ISFT, 2024). In order to use the ISFT digital marketing tools as substitutes for external sources, the audience should expand to fresh attracted users who are not related to ISFT directly (interested users).

3.1.5.   Sizzle – Extend the Brand Online

Enhancing the brand name and awareness online, inducing positive and prompt brand recognition among the targeted users is chased by 'Sizzle' (Gola, 2019). For ISFT, these are:

• Improve OVP and presence of fully informative content accessible to the users;

• Boost brand favourability and purchase intent;

• Enhance the brand name of ISFT itself, not focusing on educational aspect only.

Within this criterion, ISFT has not been noticed to conducts sufficient activities online. Almost no new experiences or projects that would expand the audience and brand recognition. Probably, several attitude surveys on Telegram channel in regards to some events are the only moves undertaken.

3.2. STP Analysis, Objectives Aimed

The research required some primary data to be included with aim of identifying the preferred positioning of ISFT within its marketing campaign. The observation of online segmenting and targeting are discussed in the following Section 4 while this sub-section deals with positioning.

The section is crucial since the way how ISFT wants to position its product/service for the most valuable customer segments will form a suitable e-marketing strategy (MTM Team, 2020).

During the interview with the marketing director of ISFT Sobirjon Pulatov (ISFT, 2024), the interviewee provided further details regarding its preferred positioning:

• A new and innovative educational institution that plans to integrate internationally recognized educational programmes and techniques to boost the level of education within the institution and in Uzbekistan as a whole;

• A peculiar/distinctive approach to learning and teaching which is to replace the traditional ways;

• Affordable and easily accessible top-level education in comparison to international higher education pricing;

• Diversified social life of students and the organization as whole, including new social projects and experiences for stakeholders.

To notice, the positioning objective of the top management seem not to be directly pursued by marketing objectives, though are attempted to be achieved for some extent (Screenshot 7).
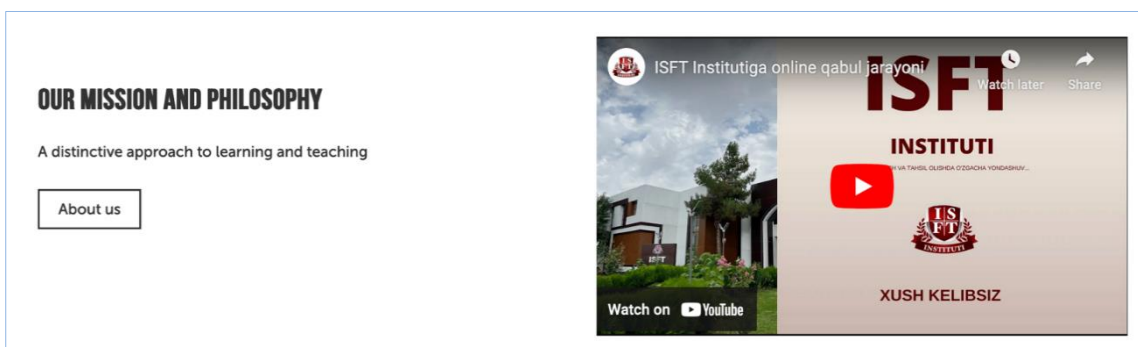
Screenshot 7, isft.uz, Main Page, 2024

4. Segmentation for Targeting E-Audience, Client Profiling

Segmenting the audience for subsequent targeting is ordinarily divided and shaped by the following variables/factors:

• Demographic (Age, Gender, Ethnicity, Education, Occupation, etc);

• Geographic (Dwelling place);

• Psychographic (Personality, Values, Religion);

• Behavioural (Products Attitude, Preferences, Product features valued) (MTM Team, 2020).

4.1.   Detailed Segmenting

The overview implies ability to access the internet.

4.1.1.   Demographic

ISFT is ready to offer its products/services to the following type-range of customers (ISFT, 2024):

- Age: older than 16 with no maximum age limit;
- Gender and Ethnicity: Regardless;
- Education: complete secondary education level at minimum, meeting the requirements of the educational programs for Uzbekistan;
- Occupation: Regardless.

4.1.2.   Geographic

- Tashkent as a place of living, several Regions of Uzbekistan in case of application for Pre-Foundation course;
- Regardless the place of living in case of soon launch of online way of learning.

4.1.3.   Psychographic (generally)

- Open-minded and positive attitude to novelties and innovations;
- Willing to self-develop;
- Interest in taught programs.

4.1.4.   Behavioural

- Awareness of the international education standards;
- Awareness of the structure and flow of the program taught.

Percentage

- 25-34 years
- 18-24 years
- 35-44 years
- Under 18 years
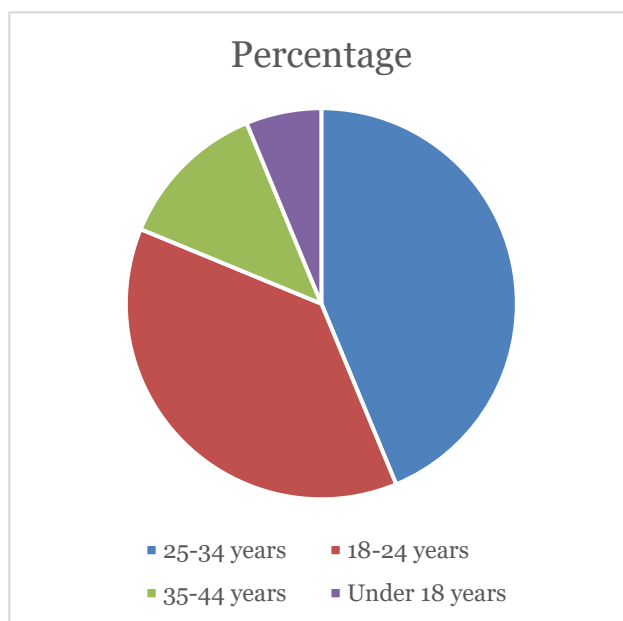
4.2.   Contemporary Situation

According to statistics by YandexMetrika installed for isft.uz and SMM platforms results, most of the visitors are aged of 18 to 34 years old (Screenshot 8). These are young people who recently graduated from secondary education institutions and their elder relatives/acquaintances assisting them to choose place to study (ISFT, 2020).

4.3.   Client Profiling, Identifying Preferred Customer for Targeting (in example of one IAAF Faculty)

This sub-section is to identify the picture of the 'Best Customer', the most preferred customer potentially bringing the "highest customer lifetime value", for ISFT (RFM Segmentation | Optimove.com, 2020). Worth mentioning, in regards to IAAF (International Applied Accounting and Finance) faculty, 'one of the main criteria during compilation of targeted audience was the fact that the offered programme is new for people of Uzbekistan and may be perceived differently in comparison to other countries where international is popular' (Pulatov, ISFT, 2024).

4.3.1.   Type 1

Most of the current students at ISFT are secondary education graduates with average level of English, aged 18-24 and residing in Tashkent. These are the primarily preferred clients for targeting since shape the most part of customers. Mr Pulatov (2024) also highlight the importance of this group being aware of international educational requirements, having "broad horizons and views on education"; "most of young people of this age are used to old-fashioned Post-Soviet (now Uzbek)

way of teaching and learning – what really impedes students' adaptation to the new pressures of international educational requirements", also added Mr Pulatov during the interview (ISFT, 2024).

4.3.2.   Type 2

Due to the peculiar mentality and values of Uzbek people, the following targeted group is to be the parents of Type 1 students, who also have modern views on education mentioned previously.

4.3.3.   Type 3

With the transformation of accounting standards of Uzbekistan from national (ex-CIS) to the internationally used ones (IFRS), workers of banks and huge companies are to re-qualify in compulsory manner (Lex.uz, 2020). "Accountants across the country should start their studies of international accounting standards – what brings high demand for our product", informs Mr Pulatov (ISFT, 2024).

4.4.   Summary

Taking into consideration all the findings from primary and secondary data, the general targeted segment should be groups of individuals connected with idea of finding, acquiring internationally high level of education and who are ready to put efforts on achieving such educational degree.

5. SMM Strategy, Supplementary Suggestion

Marketing team of ISFT is noticed to have been following the identified digital marketing objectives, however, a range of SMM activities may be suggested as supplementary one to boost the brand awareness. The followings are the list of currently used platforms and suggested ones to be applied:

- Website;
- Telegram;
- Facebook;
- Instagram;
- YouTube;
- LinkedIn;
- Twitter.

The content below provides suggestions on SMM Moves to be added to ISFT Digital Marketing Strategy. The Section concentrates on new activities available to be applied and does not content (or does superficially) traffic building and saving cost aspects of the proposed Moves; these details have been provided further in Section 6.

5.1. Website

In addition to the 'metrics' drawbacks extracted in Section 2 analysis that should be fixed:

Move 1, M1) ISFT website should be filled with more content related to the features of taught programs with inclusion of benefits upon completion, future perspectives and new opportunities. The content is recommended to be included on isft.uz having been translated to Russian and Uzbek to address the language barrier issues of targeted students' parents;

M2) Examples of success stories, professional insights and latest international events related to the taught programme will be highly efficient in informing about benefits

M3) Increase the frequency of posting news is needed. The current condition on the site is approximately 1-2 posts per month which does not suffice (isft.uz, 2024). In comparison to a newly opened institution, TEAM University (teamuni.uz, 2024) having posts twice a day at least, ISFT frequency is low. The content for this might be extracted internally from students social life and externally via scholarships, grants or contests from partners, etc.

M4) Inclusion of more English content on the website is important to expand internationally.

5.2. Telegram

Besides duplication of website news on the channel to ensure news coverage among the whole e-audience:

M5) Posting relatively minor news such as student community performances or students' successes at difficult exams – what occurs often (Pulatov S, 2024);

M6) Running polls/surveys or quizzes on related topics that are to use informative content. E. g: awareness of the product/course, rating, opinion, etc.

5.3. *Facebook*

Besides the Moves in Telegram Section that might be used for Facebook page as well:

M7) Use tags of other event participants or students profiles – what is likely to induce reposts by these; this is likely to result in expanding the awareness of related people about ISFT.

5.4. *Instagram*

Besides duplication of news on previously mentioned platforms:

M8) Create Instagram stories with 'swipe-up' links to the valuable information about ISFT – what is highly likely to result in public interest increase. In spite of traffic increase on more than one platform, the overall OVP is to rise as well;

M9) Run 'Live Videos' during events to attract extra online users.

5.5. *YouTube*

M10) Posting 'Live Videos' (not permitted by Instagram due to high sizes) and other videos about ISFT with aim of having adequate media content available for interested customers. E. g: Video Live campus tours, guest lectures

M11) A separate blog run by students who are to upload the ISFT life from their perspective; the content is likely to be attracting for potential new applicants.

5.6. *LinkedIn*

M12) Most of leading educational institution run LinkedIn page that gathers its various participants. Although the platform is unpopular in Uzbekistan, it would do a great deal of good to enhancing brand awareness internationally.

5.7. *Twitter*

M13) Similarly to LinkedIn, Twitter would contribute into improvement of brand awareness abroad. Moreover, twitting the ISFT news is likely to keep an adequate history record of events and provide the interested audience with relevant information

5.8   *Summy*

The table summarizes and illustrates how the proposed Moves are planned to address the digital marketing objectives set:

Move No. \ Objective 5S	Sell	Serve	Speak	Save	Sizzle
1	+			+	
2	+			+	
3	+			+	
4	+	+	+	+	
5	+	+	+	+	
6			+	+	+
7		+		+	+
8	+		+	+	+
9	+		+	+	
10	+	+	+	+	
11	+		+	+	+
12	+			+	+
13	+			+	+

The main suggestion to the strategy throughout the Moves is maximum publishing the content that ISFT obtains. The primary research has revealed that materials for creating digital content suffices within ISFT operation, however, marketing, or the extent of online presence and spreading, of this content shows unfavorable results; as a result, ISFT advantages and achievements are not noticed widely enough.

6 Traffic Building

To run a successful traffic building strategy, Chaffey (2013) emphasizes a list of tools which in case of balanced application will bring favorable results, they are "search engine marketing (SEO), PR-materials, online partnerships, interactive advertising, opt-in email and viral marketing."

1.1. Current strategy

ISFT tends to order online PR-materials during admission periods. Most of the sources applied for are popular news websites and SMM platforms. Pulatov (2024) highlights that the firm approaches the most authoritative ones since an educational institution should not let any cases that may affect its reputation negatively. Such popular online sources as UzNews.uz, Gazeta.uz and Daryo.uz contain several PR-articles and posts.

These PR-articles are aimed to refer the traffic to the official website and SMM platforms for further customer engagement (Chaffey, 2013).

ISFT also runs a range of offline and online partnerships with local and regional learning centers. According to their agreements, after obtaining sufficient level of English and Math, the students commence studies at ISFT. The online platforms of these centers assist in building traffic as well

Opt-in email tools have been explained not to be applied by ISFT due to negative attitude of local people to received unsubscribed news/notifications and low priority of Emails usage among people in Uzbekistan (Pulatov, 2024). The tool is applied only for internal users/existing students for notifications (Ibid).

Viral marketing content is currently being prepared by ISFT Marketing team as well. A social video comparing old-fashioned and modern styles/techniques of education is to be the plot (Pulatov, 2020).

In sum, digital marketing activities of ISFT use all the recommended tools besides SEO and interactive ads.

1.2. Search Engine Marketing

Chaffey (2013) defines two main techniques for resulting the products of a company to be easily found by search engines:

- Search Engine Optimization (SEO);
- Paid Search Marketing or Pay Per Click (PPC).

SEO implies "achieving the highest position or ranking practical in the *natural or organic listings* on the search engine results pages after a specific combination of keywords" (Ibid). Natural listing, without ad links, tend to invoke more trust from e-users in comparison paid rankings (Johnson, 2020).

He advices the following steps to be undertaken in order to run a sound SEO:

1. Define target e-audience;
2. Run keywords research;
3. Build optimized content;
4. Start link building;
5. Measure and track the results.

Step 1.

Identification and targeting the right segments of e-audience has been already done in Section 4.

Step 2.

Keywords or keyphrases are the "building blocks" of efficient SEO campaign (Johnson, 2020). To fill the website with necessary keywords, the ones targeted and not targeted should be identified with the aim of extracting the "easy win"/most used keywords.

Considering the brand "ISFT" itself via Wordstat.Yandex, the tool showed no close associations with it for the last month, yet was searched 165 times during the not advertised period (Screenshot 13). This signs that digital brand recognition is not developed.
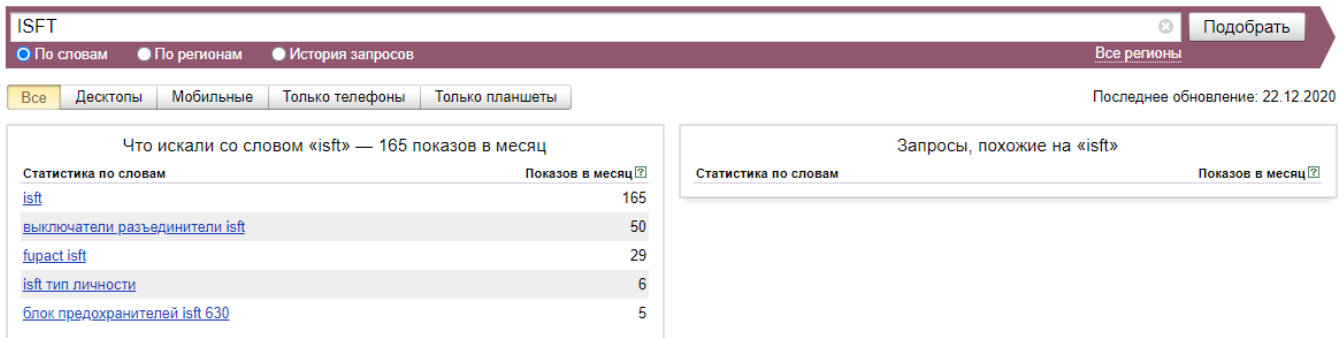
Screenshot 13, Wordstat.Yandex, 2024

Translation: switchers isft, isft personality type, isft preservation blocks.

However, Yandex.Metrika shows that isft.uz reached via website searches in 47.8% of cases for the last year (Screenshot 14).
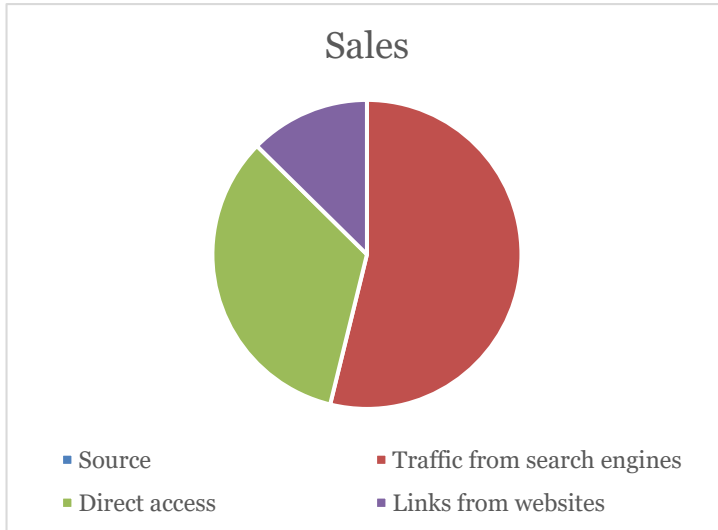
Screenshot 14, Yandex.Metrika on isft.uz, 2024

Translation: Search engine, direct,+ redirect, internal, SMM links, other.

Further research revealed that the key words that lead to ISFT directly are related to Bachelor's Degree from Oxford Brookes University that may be achieved after the completion of ACCA course – which are of an old bond with ISFT during business school period (Screenshot 15).

Step 3.

Building optimized content and running great content marketing on the website comprises frequent mentioning of key words, user-friendly design (especially landing pages) and adequate blog posts; the website should be 'easily visually manipulated' (Johnson, 2020). The content should serve the customer needs for full information and feedback – grant the solution for the searching efforts of e-audience.

In case of ISFT, the website is suggested to be filled with content providing information about various activities and events addressed in Section 5 above, and of course containing the SEO keywords to increase the appearance of the site in search engines. The Hoth team (2020) informs that Google, and other search engines, decode sites with "long contents" as the right ones that are able to answer the searchers questions.

Step 4.

The same approach as in Step 3 applies here. The Hoth team (2020) recommends "high power links", backlinks on authoritative online sources, that are likely to guarantee getting the right e-users to the website.

Step 5.

Feedback is crucial, monitoring which keywords, separate pages/content parts and external source backlinks are more productive and exclusion of the others must be done.

As to PPC, unlike natural listing in search results, PPC links are listed in the top in case related key words are searched (Chaffey and Smith, 2017); these are paid ads that resemble conventional advertisement.

Due to positive level of ISFT SEO, focus on further development of its would be suggested as reasonable strategy.

6.3. Interactive Advertisement

Interactive ads, in usual, perform as microsites on another web source that requires a click for redirection to its main website (Chaffey, 2013). The ad type has been significantly developed with the introduction of RTB (real-time bidding) that facilitates more precise targeting of preferred e-audience and lowers costs for the advertiser (Ibid).

In case ISFT launches online lessons or expands internationally, application of this tools would be found helpful. However, if Uzbekistan is targeted only, the RTB system has not developed within the country yet. Nevertheless, more previous forms of interactive advertisements are present and frequently used by digital news agencies (Screenshots 16). ISFT is suggested to run such tools to keep the achieved level of brand awareness during the year and intensify them during admission times.

6.4. Summary

To recap, the resulting suggestion for ISFT is to adjust its SEO strategy and spend its resources on enhancement of traffic via currently used and recommended tactics during the admission periods due to relatively more expensive costs of frequent online PR-posts, interactive and viral ads. Subsequently, after sufficient online traffic on the website and SMM platforms is gained, maintaining this traffic via active marketing on its SMM tools is further recommended due to minimized costs (Screenshots 17).
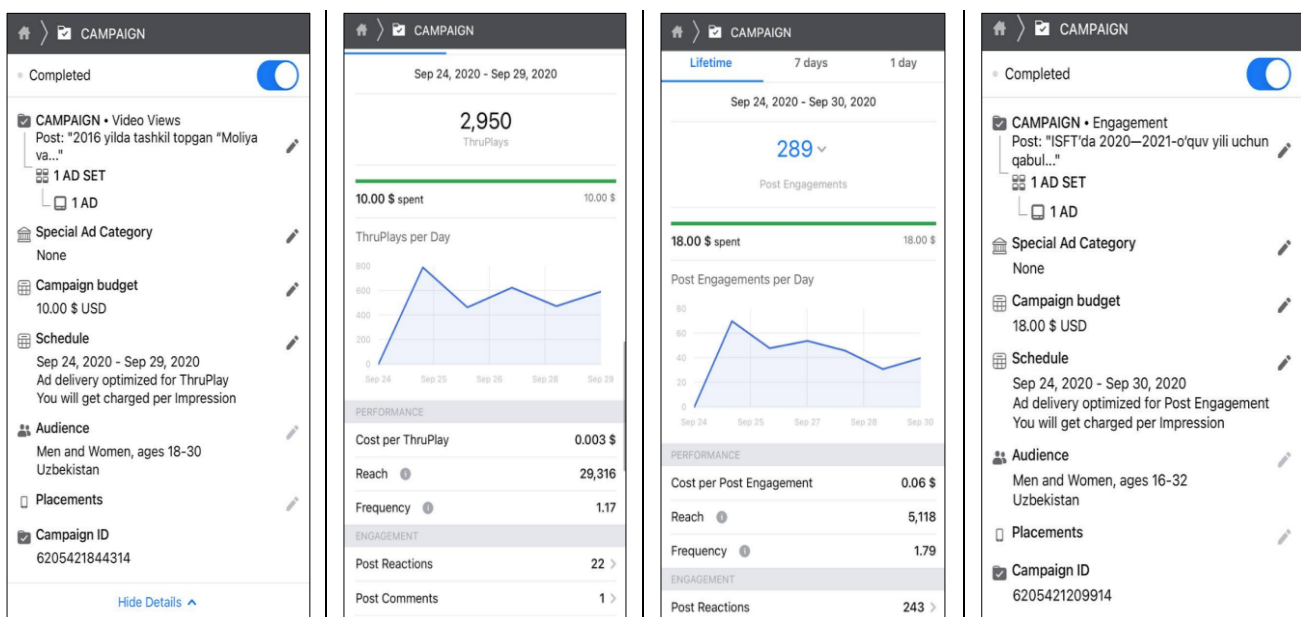
Screenshots 17, ISFT, SMM campaign details, 2024

Conclusion

To conclude, the analysis above has been conducted with the aim of providing a sound SMM and online traffic building. The proposed digital marketing analysis and further strategical hints are to address the placed ISFT marketing objectives constructively and to assist it in "getting noticed".

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