

# SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION MARKETING STRATEGY AND VISIBILITY OF TOUR AND TRAVEL COMPANIES BRANDS IN GLOBAL MARKETS: A CASE OF TOUR AND TRAVEL BRANDS IN ARUSHA REGION, TANZANIA

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## Abstract

*The tourism industry is a key driver of economic growth for many countries, including Tanzania. However, in the competitive landscape of global tourism, Tanzanian tour and travel brands face significant challenges in achieving adequate market visibility due to inability to harness the online and offline marketing strategies and this has led to stagnation of tourism arrivals in Tanzania as compared to other African and Asian destinations. Therefore, the main objective of the study is to investigate the effect of online and offline search engine optimization marketing strategy on tours and travel companies' brand market visibility. The target population encompassed twenty-four (24) tour and travel enterprises located in the Arusha Region, specifically those possessing active websites and engaging in Search Engine Marketing. The research employed an explanatory research design to explain the relationship between search engine optimization marketing strategies and the brand visibility of tour and travel companies. Descriptive statistics mean and frequency distributions were used to establish the Characteristics of the variables under examination and inferential statistics were used to establish the relationship between search engine optimization marketing strategy and brand visibility. The study established that on-page search engine optimization marketing strategy (Mean score of 4.0266 and SD of 1.0756); off-page search engine optimization marketing strategy (mean of 4.3663, SD of 0.9892;  $B = 0.540$ ,  $\text{Beta} = .597$ ;  $P < 0.001$ ) affect visibility of tour and travel companies' brands in global markets. The study recommends that tours and travel companies invest in enhancing on-page and off- page Search Engine Marketing, to increase their exposure on search engine results pages' to enable their customers to access their brand information and increase brand visibility in the market.*

**Key words:** On- Page & Off page Search Engine Optimization, Search Engine Optimization Strategy, Brand Visibility, Tour and Travel Companies

## Introduction

Tourism landscape is undergoing a profound transformation characterized by the digital connectivity which the tour and travel sector has harnessed to redefine how destinations engage with travelers, shape perceptions, and drive visibility in the market (Kamsar et al., 2023). Today, the use of digital marketing has come to be not just a trend in the industry but a significant change in destination marketing (Mariani et al., 2021). Digital marketing is a tool of invaluable opportunities to increase visibility, gain tourists, and optimize firm revenues and profitability due to the availability to reach an extensive and diverse population of people and the feature of real-time interaction (Niziaieva et al., 2022).

Tanzania has its tourism sector in a highly competitive global market as most of the overseas visitors come either out of Europe, America, and other continents (Asians, in particular) (GoT 2012). Hence for Tanzanian tour companies, gaining global visibility is essential to stay competitive in this global market (WTTC, 2020). However, in this competitive landscape of global tourism, Tanzanian tour and travel brands face significant challenges in achieving adequate market visibility due to their inability to harness the various online and offline marketing strategies and this has led to non-competitiveness of the travel and tour companies' brands as compared to other African and Asian destinations (Buhalis & Law, 2008). Some tour companies do not rank on the first page of search engine results, limiting their exposure to potential international customers (Kinyanjui et al., 2020). This limited visibility directly affects their ability to attract visitors, which is crucial for the sustainability and growth of the tour and travel sector (Dogra, 2018). Travel and tour companies in Tanzania can leverage on On-Page and Off-Page Search Engine Optimization (SEO) marketing to enhance their current global market visibility, attract more potential customers, and ultimately drive bookings. Thus this study aims at establishing whether the adoption and use of on- page and off-page search engine optimization strategy by Tanzanian tour and travel companies can provide the much-needed solution of increasing their brand visibility in the global markets

## **Literature Review.**

### **On-Page and Off-Page Search Engine Optimization Marketing Strategy and Brand Visibility**

Rissa et al. (2025) conducted a meta-analysis of fifty studies on the search engine optimization (SEO) subject and its impact on consumer psychology and online purchases related to marketing between 2019 and 2024. Nagpal and Petersen (2021) highlight the importance of the keyword optimization. They show that search result and user interaction is improved through the use of relevant keywords in the form of organic inclusion in the headers and the content which enable consumers to greatly access information pertaining to them. Jusuf (2023) notes that the positive impact of good content on user retention and trust are lower bounce rates and better customer perception as positive outcomes of quality content that is easily understood. Research by Mohan Goel et al. (2016) showed that the conversion rate was higher on product pages with feature-oriented keywords when compared to the generic description of the product. The report continues by indicating that the off-page SEO techniques such as social signals and back links enhance the social validation and credibility of business and the technical SEO variables such as mobile responsiveness and speed of the site enhance the trustworthiness and user experience. The paper reveals that the application of SEO is useful in amplification of customer awareness and conversion through psychological theories such as the Stimulus-Organism-Response model and the Theory of Planned Behavior. It indicates that subsequent studies need to be carried out on culture, neurocognitive and experimental levels.

In their study on enhancing ranking and visibility of websites in the field of digital marketing using the Generative AI and large language models, Nektarios et al (2025) examined strategies of search engine optimization. The paper employed a quantitative study to evaluate how well on-page SEO, technical SEO, user engagement parameters and off-page SEO can be used to ensure that a site ranks and appears higher in AI-based and LLM search results. The research employed statistical methods in determining the effectiveness of the old SEO methods in visibility of new AI application environment. The findings proved that semantic keywords use, quality and structured content is important to AI-powered searches ranking. it was also found that there is also a substantial move toward user engagement measures. The AI models that are more important in evaluating content according to its relevance and quality. Findings

provide practical guidance to digital marketers and webmasters who are interested to optimize their web sites to Generative AI and LLMs.

Morais et al. (2025) conducted their study in Terras de Tras-os-Montes in Portugal and investigated how search engine optimisation (SEO) is utilised in promoting online presence of rural tourism business. SEO has become an essential instrument of creating online awareness, attracting qualified traffic, and boosting conversion rates because the online marketing becomes even more critical to the survival of companies. This paper considers 21 websites related to rural tourism and their performance based on SEO using the tools of Ubersuggest and other secondary indicators, such as organic traffic, position of keywords, backlinks, technical performance, and on-page SEO rating. The information indicates that there is a huge difference between the effective ways of doing SEO and awful errors that will make the site less visible on the Internet. Some of the issues that are alive include low word count, lack of meta description and slowness in loading speed. The research also states that effective SEO technique should be employed to enhance the ranking of search engines and the experience of the user on the results page. These plans involve content creation and maintenance, connection to the topical external sources and on-page maintenance. Further, the analysis reveals an insight on how the rural tourism companies need to ensure that their studies of rural tourism keep abreast with the constantly evolving digital business world, specifically, the trends in optimization of local and voice search engines. The conclusions would mean that online marketing of rural tourist businesses needs to be reinforced, and there should be an effort to enter the world of digital marketing.

In the article, implementation of on-page and off-page seo to improve tourism promotion websites (Ahmed et al., 2022), a thorough assessment of On-Page and Off-Page SEO Optimization Techniques to Enhance tourism promotion of Kota Pari Village is introduced. The strategies of on-page SEO were researched, particularly, the investigation of keywords, the optimization of the pages, the mobile-friendliness of the site, and the feature of internal connecting. Further, the paper mentioned off-page SEO tactics, which includes link building, local citation, social media marketing, online reviews, guest posting and local synergies. Findings of the study revealed how the Kota Pari Village tourism stakeholders could apply the techniques to market the attractions, events and experiences of the site resulting in organic traffic and the sustainability of tourism industry development in the area.

### **Research Methodology.**

The research employed an explanatory strategy when it sought to determine the influence of on-page and off-page SEO marketing strategies by tour and travel companies on their brand visibility in global markets. The target demographic is comprised of 24 (24) travel agencies in the Arusha Region; all of them are businesses with websites or they do SEO. The subjects of the observation were those in the managerial and promotional positions. A combination of stratified and basic random selection was used to get the final sample size of 120 respondents in the study. The primary information was collected through administering a questionnaire of Likert scale to the respondents using a drop and pick approach. Descriptive and inferential statistics were applied in the research to analyse the data.

## Results and discussion of findings

### Descriptive Statistics for on- Page and Off Page Search Engine Optimization Marketing Strategy & Visibility of Tour and Travel Companies' Brands in Global Markets

*Table 1.1: On-Page Search Engine Optimization Marketing Strategy & Visibility of Tour and Travel Companies' Brands in Global Markets*

Statement	n	Mean	SD
Our potential customers spend a long time actively interacting with our website pages and brand	73	4.215	1.1050
Percentage of visitors who leave our website after viewing our pages and brand information have decreased	73	4.137	1.1464
Average number of pages our potential customer view during a single visit has increased	73	3.749	1.251
There is an increase in brand impressions and clicks in our company website and this has increased our brand visibility in the market	73	4.151	1.1864
More potential customers are currently directly searching for our brand name online thus enhancing our brand visibility in the market	73	3.881	1.190
<b>Composite</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>4.0266</b>	<b>1.0756</b>

*Source: (Author, 2025)*

Table 1 indicates that most of the respondents, based on a mean of 4.0266, and a standard deviation of 1.0756, appear to think that on-page marketing of tour and travel firm's brands is influenced by the worldwide marketplace marketing strategies of on-page SEO. The results of the study indicate that tour and travel companies that adopt on-page SEO as a marketing framework experience growth in the global brand visibility. The reason behind this is that the number of customers who look up these companies online and navigate their brand information and pages increases. Also, when customers engage the websites of such companies, they view more pages and brand information, brand impressions and clicks, and a reduced percentage of visitors abandon these pages and information. In his work on SEO (Search Engine Optimizing) strategy to raise the visibility rate and meet the marketing aims, Jusuf (2023) is supported by this research, which proves that the visibility of a web page and organic traffic is significantly raised when an efficient SEO strategy is applied to the site. This leads to an increase in brand awareness.

*Table 1.2: Off-Page Search Engine Optimization Marketing Strategy & Visibility of Tour and Travel Companies' Brands in Global Markets*

Statement(s)	n	Mean	SD
There are more brand mentions without a direct link back to our website and this has enhanced our brand visibility in the market	73	4.260	1.0412
We actively respond to reviews on our website and other linked websites and this has influenced our brand perception and market brand visibility	73	4.425	.9416
There is increased referral traffic from high-authority and relevant sources implying enhanced our brand visibility in the market	73	4.438	.9572
There has been an increase interest for partnership from global brand influencers on our brand and this has led to increased brand mentions and social shares thus increasing our brand visibility	73	4.342	1.0168
<b>Composite</b>		<b>4.3663</b>	<b>.9892</b>

*Source: (Author, 2025)*

According to the data presented in Table 3, most of the surveyed respondents felt that off-page search engine optimization marketing strategies determine the visibility of tour and travel organizations in global markets. The mean score of 4.3663 with a standard deviation of 0.9892 was a composite. The research shows that when tour and travel companies are engaging in off-page SEO efforts, brand mentions, social shares, and referral traffic (traffic that does not go to the site) increase, more global brand influencers are interested in establishing partnerships, and brand visibility in global markets improves due to their responsiveness to reviews on their own and other affiliate websites. On-page and off-page SEO was found to be effective in terms of promoting tourism websites by Ahmad et al. (2022) and provided rural tourism businesses in the Portuguese Terras de Tras-os-Montes area with an opportunity to create a positive online image as found by Morais et al. (2025). According to the findings of this study, search engine optimization (SEO) is a very important aspect of any effective marketing strategy.

### **On-Page Search Engine Optimization Marketing Strategy and Tours and Travel Companies' Brand Market Visibility**

*Table 1.3: Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	RStd. Error of the Estimate
1	.742 <sup>a</sup>	.551	.544	.55715

*Source: (Author, 2025)*

As the summary of the model suggests, the on-page search engine optimization marketing strategies play a significant role in the dependent variable, which is the market exposure of tours and travel firms brands. The value of R-squared of 0.551 shows that on-page

SEO marketing plan accounts for approximately 55.1% of the change in on-page SEO marketing strategy. Additionally,

*Table 1.4: ANOVA Test Results*

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	27.024	1	27.024	87.056	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	22.040	71	.310		
	Total	49.063	72			

*Source:* (Author, 2025)

On-page search engine optimization marketing approach is the independent variable and the brand market visibility of tours and travel organizations is the dependent variable in the regression model. The outcomes of ANOVA indicate that this correlation is statistically significant ( $F = 87.056$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This indicates that there is a close relationship between the brand exposure of the travel firms in the market and on-page SEO marketing strategies.

*Table 1.5: Coefficients*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.355	.327		4.146	.000
On-page SEO Marketing Strategy	.690	.074	.742	9.330	.000

*Source:* (Author, 2025)

The constant and the coefficient of on-page search engine optimization marketing approach have a significant influence on brand market exposure of tour and travel firms, as indicated in the regression coefficients of Table 5. In the absence of an on-page marketing plan of SEO, the projected brand market visibility score of tour and travel organizations is 1.355. The on-page search engine optimization marketing strategy coefficient of 0.690 indicates that tours and travel organizations would experience a 0.690-unit increase in brand market visibility increase with every one-unit increase in on-page search engine optimization marketing strategy. The standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.742) also indicates that on-page SEO marketing strategies would result in a substantial improvement in the market exposure of the tour and travel company brands.

## Off-Page Search Engine Optimization Marketing Strategy & Brand Market Visibility

Table 1.6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.847a	.717	.713	.44215

**Source:** (Author, 2025)

The findings in Table 6 indicate that the market visibility of the brand is well correlated with the independent variable, off-page search engine optimization marketing strategy, when the tour and travel firms are considered. The off-page marketing strategy of SEO has a considerable predictive value of brand market awareness and this factor accounts about 71.7% of the variation (R-squared = 0.717). Considering the number of predictors, the predictive consistency of the model is demonstrated by the value of adjusted R-squared of 0.713. The standard error of the estimate (0.44215) is used to determine the average difference between the predicted and actual values of the brand market visibility of tour and travel firms and is used to show the extent to which the model would be accurate in making predictions.

Table 1.7: ANOVA Test Results

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	35.183	1	35.183	179.968	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	13.880	71	.195		
	Total	49.063	72			

**Source:** (Author, 2025)

The regression model, with the Off-page search engine optimization marketing technique as an independent variable, and the brand market exposure of tour and travel firms as a dependent variable has strong statistical significance based on the ANOVA results (F = 179.968, p < 0.001). This indicates a strong correlation between the market exposure of the brands of tour and travel firms and off-page marketing strategy of SEO.

Table 1.8: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1 (Constant)	.996	.255		3.908	.000
Off-page SEO Marketing Strategy	.766	.057	.847	13.415	.000

**Source:** (Author, 2025)

Table 8 reveals that constant and the coefficient of the Off-page search engine optimization marketing strategy, played a significant role in the brand market exposure of the tour and travel organizations. It is expected that the brand market exposure of tour and travel enterprises would increase by 0.766 units of every one unit change in Off-page search engine optimization marketing strategy (0.766). The standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.847;  $P < .000$ ) indicates that the Off-page search engine optimization marketing technique promotes the brand market exposure of tour and travel enterprises considerably. These findings indicate that brand market exposure in tour and travel organizations is significantly enhanced when their marketing plan of search engine Off-page optimization is on a better level.

The results of the study are supported by those of Ologunbe and Taiwo (2023), who examined the impact of SEO and SEM on brand awareness in the e-commerce business. They discovered that these two digital marketing strategies when used together form a more powerful marketing strategy in building brand awareness and online conversions. However, the research elaborates on the findings of Setiawan et al. (2020) with respect to maximizing web presence and traffic by applying Search Engine Optimization (SEO) to Palembang Polytechnic of Tourism. These scholars have shown that the main goal when creating SEO tactics is to increase the visibility of the content and branding of websites of Google by creating keywords in the form of backlinks and developing content.

### Hypothesis Testing

*Table 1.9: Hypotheses Testing*

Code	Hypothesis	P- Values	Conclusion	
H0 <sub>1</sub>	There is no statistically significant relationship between on-page SEO marketing strategy and travel companies' brand market visibility in Tanzania	$P < 0.001$	Reject Hypothesis	Null
H0 <sub>2</sub>	There is no statistically significant relationship between Off-page SEO marketing strategy and travel companies' brand market visibility in Tanzania	$P < 0.002$	Reject Hypothesis	Null

*Source: (Author, 2025)*

### Conclusion

From the study results, it can be concluded that: On-page search engine optimization marketing strategy affect visibility of tour and travel companies' in global markets as it enables more customers to directly search for their brands online and actively interact with the companies' website pages and brand information; experience average increase in the number of pages and brand information these customer view during a single visit and brand impressions and clicks on company website. Off-page search engine optimization marketing strategy affect visibility of tour and travel companies in global Markets as it enhances brand mentions, social shares, referral traffic without a direct link back to their website and increased interest for partnership from global brand influencers.



## Recommendation

The study recommends that tours and travel companies invest in enhancing On-page and Off-page Search Engine Marketing to increase their exposure on search engine results pages' effective keywords. Develop websites that adapts and displays correctly across various devices and screen sizes efficiently and effectively improving the quality and variety of digital content in their websites so to ensure that so as to optimize their marketing efforts across various devices

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