# Analysis of E-ticket sales Websites of Sports Competitions based on Webometric Indexes

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The present study was to analyze the e-ticketing websites of sports competitions based on the webometric index. The method is descriptiveanalytical in terms of applied research results. Data collection was observational and objective. The statistical population includes six Iranian ticket sales sites (Samaneforoshmeli, Sepahan, gesh3, pin 90, ticket football, tractor) and six foreign ticketing sites (Real Madrid, asroma, mancity, Liverpool, AC Milan and Paris Saint-Germain) The research tool is made by the researcher's checklist. This checklist includes the quality of ticket order, reaction time, site specifications, site visual appearance, technical, cost and method of sending tickets and site security, which were designed a total of 30 questions. A number of sports management professors confirmed the formal validity and content of the questionnaire. Friedman and Croscal Wallis tests and Spss22 software were used to analyze the data. The Results is Iranian websites have a lower performance in designing the visual appearance of the site and the speed of the site. The club performs better among the agents in terms of site appearance, site speed, seat selection and three-dimensional stadium view. The is Competition ticket sales sites need to be sold through the clubs' official websites themselves, and there is no need to design and create a separate site.

Keywords: Ticket, Electronic, Speed, Security, Webometric

#### Introduction

Buying and selling goods and services has come to a new form in recent years with the development of science and technology and changed from the traditional to an electronic model (Hafezi et al, 2017) The advancement of ecommerce and e-services has empowered people to do their business and work via the Internet without wasting time and spatial constraints (Masri et al, 2020) The development of e-businesses has led to the development of virtual markets, reduced communication costs, increased returns in cost and time, and improved virtual communication with customers (Scupola, 2009) Different websites have been used for more than two decades for numerous purposes, including a source of information, entertainment, and other things and have turned into an essential part of our daily lives (chroeder et al, 2020) Online consumers do not just visit websites to buy products. Rather, they visit different websites due to their motives and goals (Choi & Nam, 2019) Accordingly, continuous website evaluation has become highly important in determining the usability of websites considering the changes occurring in the nature of technology and the users' need for the Internet (Hassan, 2020)

The revenue of sports is nowadays generated by different methods, one of which is to sell tickets to sports matches (Burton & Cornilles, 1998) Many attempts are made nowadays to sell tickets via the Internet; thus, most sporting events will change their ticket sales from traditional to electronic methods in

the future (Street & Smith, 2020) People are more likely to compare buying tickets from two different channels (physical and online) from different angles. Hence, they may tend to use the Internet for buying tickets because of more convenience, spending less time, and receiving better services (Lee et al, 2019) Most printed tickets have caused potential misuses and created black markets currently. Therefore, using websites seems to be a good solution to buy sports tickets (Salamah & Maulana, 2020)

The fans somehow support their favorite clubs by buying tickets. The factors affecting online shopping behavior include financial risk, innovation, mental norms, instant purchase, information exchange, and timely delivery of the purchase. If any of these factors fail to be done properly, i.e, failure to ontime delivery, lack of innovation in products and services, and insecurity of the websites will cause people to have a negative attitude in online shopping (Domina et al, 2012) According to Zakizadeh & Atqia (2019): the use of new technologies in the field of ticket sales for sports matches can prevent the emergence of the black market, provide more security for events, increase the security of participants' information, generate more revenue, and accelerate the ticket sales.

The ease of displaying the full view of the stadium through the ticket sales site allows the visitors to easily choose their favorite chair to watch the game based on their needs and desires. The feature to display and view the stadium from different angles and easy access to select seats can enhance the development of ticket sales through the Internet (Sunshine et al, 2020)

There are also disadvantages concerning buying tickets online in addition to its benefits. The barriers to the development of online sports ticket purchases may include low internet speed, the complexity and difficulty of understanding and application of online ticketing technology, lack of technical support, disconnection and connection of the Internet, and the lack of adequate capacity for Internet bandwidth. The tickets for sports matches are sold directly through the football association boards and the league organization in Iran, while in other countries, the clubs are responsible for selling tickets, which requires the possession of a dedicated club. However, most clubs in Iran do not benefit from this important feature. By setting up a special website to sell match tickets, the club generates further income and makes it easy for fans to buy tickets (Talebpour et al, 2013)

The appearance of sites for sports event ticket sales is the first step to draw the attention of customers. Thus, one can say that website design is a major visual component of the content strategy (Xu & Schrier, 2019) The websites with more visual information that are designed based on standard principles seem to be more attractive (Lazard & King, 2020) According to BadriAzin et al (2015): the quality of electronic ticketing services is subject to the ease of use of the site, the usability, and the enjoyment of the site services. Accordingly, the visual appearance of the site seems to be one of the most important factors in designing ticket sales sites. Graphics highly matters in designing a site. The clarity of the information on the website creates information transparency (Prasetia & Syah, 2020) During the purchase process, the speed and

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performance of the sites reduce due to the low bandwidth, low speed, and the users' traffic; thus, the site technicians should be capable of quickly supporting the site and fix the occurring problems since users are less likely to visit sites with poor performance and disruptions (Rizun et al, 2020) DeheshtiShahrokh and Mobarhan (2012) stated that if webmasters can offer potential capabilities, they would be able to attract many users for Internet purchasing (online shopping) According to Zakerian et al (2017): the factors effective on online shopping of sports consumers may include proper advertisements on the Internet, information content, and diverse products. Feizi et al (2019) suggested that according to spectators' opinions, the intention to buy online depends on the trust, quality of information, and site's security. Al-Husseini Al-Modarresi and Mohammadi (2016) concluded in a study that in Internet purchases, the consumers' value, security, privacy, and innovation significantly affect the intention for online shopping. Protecting credit card information by using the latest encryption technology can also increase people's trust in online shopping (Saridakis et al, 2016) Accordingly, a software design may have a major impact on the overall security of the site. The increased number of sites' vulnerabilities increases the level of security requirements (Alenezi et al, 2020)

Some errors occur sometimes on sites due to the designer's mistakes or the content. Users typically visit websites that are free of error or less error-prone. Such errors may include page breaks, link errors, under repairing pages, and so on. When an error occurs on the site, users tend to believe that the site does not benefit from good security and content to provide services Singh et al, 2016) Kazi Paul et al (Khazaei Pool et al, 2016) suggested that trust, ease of use of the site (user-friendliness): and a convenient shopping system have a positive effect on people's attitudes towards new techny. According to Mohammadi et al (2016): factors such as risk in online shopping, shopping process and stages, characteristics of sports products, customers' perception of Internet purchasing, and the characteristics of customers themselves have a significant impact on the development of online shopping. Talebipour et al (2012) demonstrated that the most important obstacles to online tournament ticket sales are technical, financial, organizational, and behavioral barriers. Therefore, with principled supervision and interaction between themselves and customers, club officials seem to be able to meet the needs of people to buy e-tickets for sports events.

Most clubs try nowadays to use the online shopping strategies to sell match tickets and look for solutions, by which, individuals can buy tickets easily and without worries. It should be noted that buying tickets have been done manually for consecutive years through ticket counters and this process is still operating in different clubs. It should be also kept in mind that for Internet purchasing, people need to log in to a site to easily choose the location and ticket price without wasting much time. However, as we see today, despite launching smart systems for an online purchase by some clubs, they fail to manage and support them properly. As a result, these sites have better speed and performance in the early times of ticket sales; but once a large number of users refer to the site to buy tickets, the site's speed slows down. One reason for such problems is the unprincipled site management and site supporting

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process, which fails to manage the process properly. For example, the site may remain open at the end of the matches and people can still buy tickets. This implies the poor management of the club over the ticket purchase site, which makes many people unable to buy tickets, and thereby, they cannot participate in the tournament. However, by setting up a ticket sales site, the clubs actually aim to provide the opportunity for many people to buy the tickets they need and come to the club to watch the matches, which can increase the club's revenue. Another problem with online ticket purchasing is the characteristics of the people. Many individuals coming to watch sports matches are from different walks of life, including the young, the old, and the youngster, who may not be familiar with the basics of online shopping and cannot buy tickets via the Internet. Therefore, proper guidelines and online shopping tips regarding the buying process should be included on the site so that people can buy their tickets by following the process instructions. Thus, club managers need to sign contracts with those sites that have strong supporting procedures to make it easier for people to shop online. Accordingly, we decided to examine and assess some selected Iranian and foreign ticket sales sites in this study.

### Method

The methodology used in this research is a descriptive-analytical approach, which is an applied one in terms of objective. The data collection method was an observational and objective approach. The statistical population included domestic and foreign e-ticket sales websites, from which, we selected the available sites with the highest ticket sales, containing six domestic electronic ticket sales websites (Ticket Sales System websites of the Football Federation Islamic Republic of Iran, Sepahan Club, Gisheh3, Pin90, Football Ticket, and Tractor S.C.) and six foreign websites (Real Madrid, AC Milan, Manchester City, Liverpool, AC Milan, and Paris Saint-Germain) The tool used in this research was a researcher-made checklist, including ticket order quality, response time, site specifications, site visual appearance design, technical factors, the cost and method of sending the ticket, and the security of the site. A total of 29 questions were designed for the checklist. The questionnaire had been approved by sports management scholars to determine its validity. The reliability of the research questionnaire was also confirmed using the agreement of the evaluators. The researcher visited each of the selected sites to collect data and rated each of the components using the checklist. Following data collection, descriptive statistics (mean, minimum, maximum, and standard deviation and inferential statistics (Friedman and Kruskal-Wallis test) were used to analyze the data by Spss22 software.

# **Results Respondents' characteristics**

The selected online e-ticket stores and the addresses of websites are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** The list of selected websites

Ticket Sales Site	Offical Website of Ticket Sales
gishe3	www.gishe3.com
Football Federation Ticket Sales System	www.ticket.ffiri.ir
.pin90	www.pin90.ir
tractor-club	www.tractor-club.com
sepahanscticket	www.sepahanscticket.com
football ticket	www.footballeticket.ir
realmadrid	www.realmadrid.com
acmilan	www.acmilan.com
asroma	www.asroma.com
.liverpoolfc	www.liverpoolfc.vom
Paris Saint-Germain	www.en.psg.fr
Manchester-City	www.mancity.com

As can be realized from Table 2, among the factors in Iranian ticket sales sites, security and technical factors obtained the highest average rating (6) and the lowest average rating (1): respectively. Also, among the selected foreign sites, security and response time (6) and technical (1) factors obtained the highest and lowest average ratings, respectively.

**Table 2.** Ranking of the selected ticket sales sites

Facrot	Reaction Time	Ticket Order Quality	Site Profile	Site View	Cost and Shipping Method	Technical
Iran Site Ranking	5	4	4	2	2	1
Foreign Site Ranking	6	5	5	5	2	1

According to Table 3, in Iranian sites and concerning the factor of the quality of ticket order, the full view of the club map (with score 6): easy selection of the required seats (with score 6): and the display of the purchased ticket after completing the process (with score 6) obtained the highest average rating, while the ticket refunding (with score 1) achieved the lowest average rating. In the selected foreign sites, the full view of the site map (with score 6.08): easy selection of the required seats (with score 6.08): and the display of the purchased ticket after the completion of the process (with score 6.08) along with the ticket refunding (with score 1) were the most effective factors in designing ticket sales sites based on web assessment index.

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**Table 3.** Ranking of the components of the factor of quality of ordering tickets for selected sites

Row	Ticket Quality Components	Average Ranking of Iranian Sites	Ranking	Average Ranking of Foreign Sites	Ranking
1	Full View of the Club Map	6	1	6.08	1
2	Easy Selection of the Desired Seat	6	1	6.08	1
3	View the Received Ticket After Completing the Process	6	1	6.08	1
4	Simplicity of the Registration Process	5	2	5.08	2
5	Ticket Purchase Quide	5	2	5	2
6	Online Operator to Answer Questions	2	3	2	3
7	Different Payment Options	2	3	2	3
8	Refund the Ticket	1	4	1	4

According to Table 4, the most influential components in Iranian ticket sales sites in the context of response time factor were ease of access to the site with the highest average score (3.08) and the convenient speed of purchase at all times with the lowest average score (1) Also, in the selected foreign sites, the ease of access to the ticket purchase site (with score 3) and the appropriate shopping speed at all times (with score 1) obtained the highest and average rankings, respectively.

**Table 4.** Ranking of the components of the response time factor of the selected sites

Row	Reaction Time Components	Average Ranking of Iranian Sites	Ranking	Average Ranking of Foreign Sites	Ranking
1	Ease of Access to the Ticket Purchase Site	3.08	1	3	1
2	Site Speed for Registration	2	2	2	2
3	Convenient Shopping Speed all the Time	1	3	1	1

According to Table 5, optimization using different browsers (with score 3) and site rules and regulations (with score 3) obtained the highest rank in the

domestic sites, while these two components obtained the average rank in the foreign sites.

**Table 5.** Ranking of the components of the specifications factor of the selected sites

Row	Site Profile Components	Average Ranking of Iranian Sites	Ranking	Average Ranking of Foreign Sites	Ranking
1	Optimizarion Using Different Brosers	3	1	3	1
2	Site Terms and Conditions	3	1	2	1
3	Site Communication Channels	1	2	2	2
4	Site Contact Methods	1	2	1	3

According to Table 6, concerning the visual view of the site in Iranian sites, the website's display in mobiles (with score 3.08) and the use of images (players, club) (with score 1) obtained the highest and average rankings, respectively. Among the foreign sites, the website's display in mobiles (with score 3) and the use of images (players, club) (with score 1) obtained the highest and average rankings, respectively.

**Table 6.** Ranking of the components of the visual view factor of the selected sites

Row	Visual Components of the Site	Average Ranking of Iranian Sites	Ranking	Average Ranking of Foreign Sites	Ranking
1	View Site on Mobile	3.08	1	3	1
2	Use Appropriate Fonts	3	2	3	2
3	Use Different Colors (Cold, Warm, Neutral)	3	2	3	2
4	The Charm of the Site Appearance	2	3	2	3
5	Use Images (Players and Clubs)	1	4	1	4

As can be seen in Table 7, the site software errors (with score 2) and the direct connection to the clubs' system (with score 1) obtained the average ranking of 1.08 in the selected sites.

**Table 7.** Ranking of the components of the technical factor of the selected sites

Row	Components Technical	Average Ranking of Iranian Sites	Ranking	Average Ranking of Foreign Sites	Ranking
1	Existence of Site Software Error	2	1	2	1
2	Variety of Languages for Everyone to buy	1	2	2	1
3	Direct Connection to the Clubs System	1	2	1.08	2

According to Table 8, concerning the cost and method of sending tickets factors, both group of selected sites, the components of "sending via SMS (with score 4)" and "there is no other option for sending (with score 2)" had the highest and lowest impact on the quality of the selected sites.

**Table 8.** Ranking of the components of the cost and method of ticket sending factors of the selected sites

Row	Components Cost and Shipping Method		Ranking	Average Ranking of Foreign Sites	Ranking
1	SMS	4	1	4	1
2	Bike Delivery	2	2	2	2
3	Pishtaz Post	2	2	2	2
4	Does not Exist	2	2	2	2

As can be seen in Table 9, both components of "the existence of an abbreviation code (electronic symbol)" and "the existence of the Captcha security code" had identical average ratings (with score 1)

**Table 9.** Ranking of the components of the security factor of the selected sites

Row	Security Components	Average Ranking of Iranian Sites	Ranking	Average Ranking of Foreign Sites	Ranking
1	Existence of Abbreviated Cod (Electronic Symbol)	1	1	1	1
2	Existence of Captcha Security Code	1	1	1	1

According to Table 10, comparing the means of the factors with the Kruskal-Wallis test revealed that concerning the quality of ordering tickets,

two Real Madrid and AS Roma websites with a score of 11 and Sepahan site with a score of 2 had the highest and lowest rating, respectively. In the context of response time factor from the selected sites, Football Ticket, AS Roma and Real Madrid websites (with score 11) and Sepahan (with score 1) obtained the highest and lowest rating, respectively. Regarding the site specifications factor, Football Ticket, Real Madrid, and Paris Saint-Germain sites were the topranked (with a score of 11): while Sepahan ranked the lowest (with a score of 3) In relation to the site view, the Ticket Sales System of the Football Federation, Real Madrid, and Paris Saint-Germain sites scored 11, while the Sepahan site (with a score of 1) had the lowest rank. In the technical part, the Real Madrid site obtained the highest score (12) and Sepahan site (with a score of 1) got the lowest rank. The selected sites were found to have the same level in terms of cost, sending method, and security factors.

**Table 10.** The comparison of Iranian and foreign sites with Kruskal-Wallis test

Sits	Order Quality	Reactin Time	Site Profil e	Site View	Tachnical	Cost and Shipping Method	Security
Football Federation Ticket Sales System	5	2	9	11	2	6	6
sepahanscticket	2	1	3	3	1	6	6
gishe3	5	7	7	6	4	6	6
pin90	1	4	8	1	4	6	6
footballeticket	9	9	11	9	5	6	6
tractor-club	9	5	10	9	6	6	6
realmadrid	11	11	11	11	12	6	6
asroma	11	11	9	10	11	6	6
Manchester- City	5	5	10	9	11	6	6
liverpoolfc	5	5	10	10	8	6	6
asroma	5	9	8	11	8	6	6
Paris Saint- Germain	5	7	11	8	7	6	6

**Discussion** 

Online shopping (Internet purchase) is seen as one of the low-cost and fast options in all sectors. All kinds of products, from expensive to cheap, are sold on Internet websites and people can make their purchases anytime and from anywhere. Sports and sports products also have a special place in e-commerce. Sporting goods from sports equipment and sporting goods (shirts, shoes, balls, etc.) can be easily bought from internet sites. Selling e-tickets to watch sports matches is a new service that we see today alongside sports products. To avoid crowds at the time of holding matches and prevent the creation of black markets, clubs have managed to design websites for online ticket sales; hence, people can easily refer to the introduced sites in any place before the start of

the tournaments and buy their tickets and seats based on their own need and expense.

If using the website is simple and the purchase process is easy for users who visit the site to buy match tickets, most people will be encouraged to buy their tickets through online shopping. The principled application of programs, images, and logos will increase the speed of the site. The goal of increasing the sales of sports products requires the design of websites equipped with pages with up-to-date information, proper layout of products and pages, search engines, simple payment steps, and high security. Trusting a site is one of the most important prerequisites in buying sports goods online. Thus, the managers of sports product sales sites should provide the necessary tools for site security to encourage more people to shop online (Eidi et al, 2019)

The guiding instructions to buying electronic tickets for sports matches are known as one of the major options on the sites, which teach all the stages step by step. This guide needs to be provided on sites due to the fact that propel from any class and level of literacy may refer to these sites to buy tickets (Dennis et al, 2004) The display of the ticket after its purchase is also one of the most important factors to be considered. Since the page displaying the ticket after purchase may not be seen due to the site's traffic, it needs to be somehow addressed. Sometimes people make their ticket purchases online before the tournament, and for some reason, they are not able to attend the stadium and need to refund their ticket; however, there was no such item on the selected sites studied in this research. Thus, there is a need for further work on displaying the purchased match tickets and ticket refunding options in the selected Iranian and foreign sites. The results of this study are consistent with the studies by Koo and Ju (2010) and Mohammadi et al, (2016) Given that the purchase of electronic tickets in Iran is a newly emerged phenomenon, the quality of such websites should be improved by providing an easy shopping process to surpass the traditional purchase mode aimed at encouraging people to buy their tickets online.

The speed in the operation process was low in the selected Iranian sites, especially the Sepahan site, while the site speed was acceptable on foreign counterparts. Therefore, Iranian sites need to work on increasing the speed of their sites. The study results are consistent with the findings of Koo & Ju (2010) and Talebpour et al, (2012) The reason for this consistency may arise from the fact that nowadays, with the provision of high bandwidth and high internet speed, the required information can be searched and downloaded in few seconds. Therefore, these sites need to be fast to provide a pleasant and efficient ticket purchase process.

A positive attitude towards online shopping (Internet purchase) can be a very important factor in e-shopping. The ticket purchase process may sometimes face difficulty on ticketing sites due to heavy traffic. Therefore, these sites need to have available technical support on the site to solve such problems quickly in the event of any problem. Iranian sites seem to have lower performance in this regard and the frequently asked questions on the site

indicate poor performance in this context. The results of the study are consistent with Talebpour's findings (2012)

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One of the options to make the electronic purchase of match tickets a better choice is to display the club images on the first page of the website, which improves the appearance of the site. Since the Tractor S.C. site sells its tickets on the official website of the Tractor S.C. Club, thus, the users have to chance to see the important news and events of the Tractor S.C. Club on the site in addition to buying tickets. However, other Iranian sites had a separate site for ticket sales, while they could add to the attractiveness of the site by adding a ticket purchase menu so that people can easily buy their tickets by visiting the official website of the clubs. In contrast, in all selected foreign sites, the user only needs to visit the official website of the club to buy a ticket and do the purchase process in the ticket purchase menu. The research results are consistent with the studies done by Prasetia&Syah (2020) and Koo and Ju (2010) The reason for this consistency is the importance of showing the spectators' position from different angles.

The variety of different languages leads to more purchases. There was only Persian language on selected Iranian sites. This is probably because few spectators come from outside to watch domestic matches, while the selected foreign sites used several languages to display their websites. Another major reason is that the users have to go to another site to buy tickets on Iranian sites and no purchase is done on the official website of the clubs. The study results are consistent with the findings of Marquez (2020): Lee et al, (2019): Singh et al, (2016) and Ponte et al, (2015)

### Conclusion

Based on the surveys conducted, Iranian sites should make more efforts to obtain better rankings among foreign sites. Therefore, the selected Iranian clubs need to design a menu on their official website for easy purchase of tickets so that people can easily buy match tickets. They also should work on the beauty of the site appearance by embedding selected images of players and clubs and make the site purchase process more convenient.

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