



# SEO

## ANALYSIS

## NFL 2020



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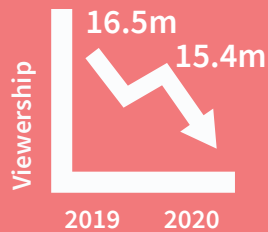
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# INTRODUCTION



135

Brands &  
Sponsors

**Hi fellow marketers, leaders, and strategists,**

The NFL is a reflection of American values: diversity, liberty, and equality. And an opportunity for brands to pursue the American dream: opportunity for prosperity and success.

It has become a place where football franchises aka teams come together to play and win. And most importantly, **grab attention of the American eyes**. It has become one of the biggest sporting events in the world that runs for over three months reaching its crescendo with the Super Bowl.

However, the **NFL 2020** saw a dip in the viewership. This year the event clocked 15.4 million viewership compared to 16.5 million in 2019. At the same time, there were millions of queries on the search engine too about NFL and Super Bowl. That too, all across the globe making it a big opportunity for the **NFL advertisers**.

While we see brands spending millions of dollars on ads and building landing pages for the campaign, there are other marketing activities that are often ignored.

One such channel is: **Search Engine Optimization.**

Users searched for more than **117 million** queries related to the NFL & Super Bowl this year. Even more interesting was to find that while many advertisers and sponsors tapped into these opportunities, most of them didn't extend their efforts to go beyond TVCs or in-stadium ads.

We analyzed **135 brands and sponsors** to find how well these brands planned for addressing user queries on search engines and attract traffic once people were away from the TV screens.

To evaluate SEO plans of the brands, we analyzed three key SEO pointers:

- 🏈 Campaign landing page and website
- 🏈 Technical, On-Page, & YouTube SEO
- 🏈 Discoverability on search engines

We used SEO tools to analyze these three parameters. After evaluating them and scoring them on each parameter, we were able to rank them from the first position to one hundred and thirty-fifth!

Hopefully, you will find insights in this report that will be valuable for you and help you plan your next sporting event campaign better.

## Key Takeaways

- 🏈 Out of 135 brands that we analyzed, 117 brands had no mention of their NFL sponsorships on their website home page.
- 🏈 Only 44% of brands created a dedicated landing page for NFL 2020.
- 🏈 98.5% of brand websites had poor loading speed on a mobile device with below 50 scores on Google PageSpeed Insights.
- 🏈 Many the NFL 2020 official sponsors didn't optimize for search queries to acquire users searching for brands' the NFL commercials, ads, offers, or any other the NFL related queries like the NFL 2020 merchandise, etc.
- 🏈 Most of the brands did not optimize for technical and on-page SEO elements and consequently, were not able to generate any traffic from the search engines.



## BRANDS TRACKED



Mercedes-Benz



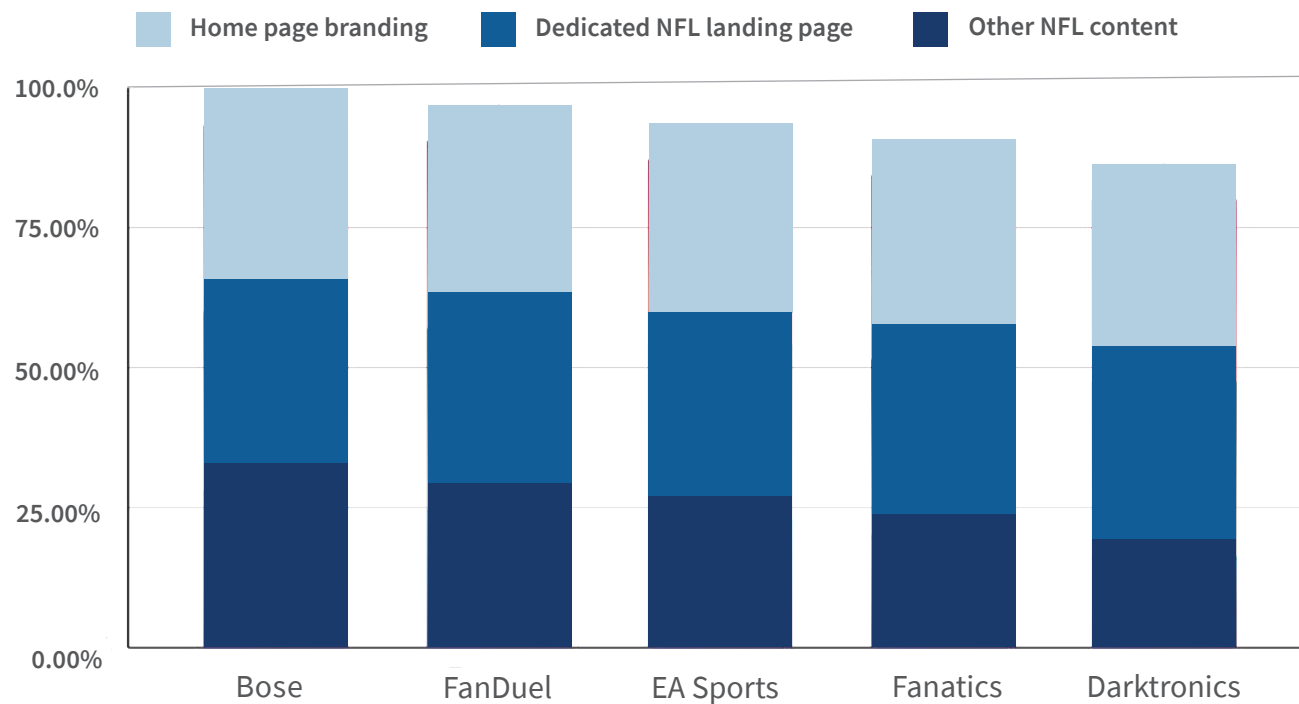
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MORE

# Campaign Landing Page And Website

Sponsoring events, like the NFL, generate brand awareness and visibility for a brand. All those fans who see your brand logo appear on the jersey of their favourite team need to discover your brand on other platforms.

Adding your brand's association with the NFL or the team that you sponsor leads to a good brand recall.

Some brands did an excellent job in using the NFL branding on their homepage and also created unique content and landing pages to drive more traffic during the NFL.



## Key Takeaways

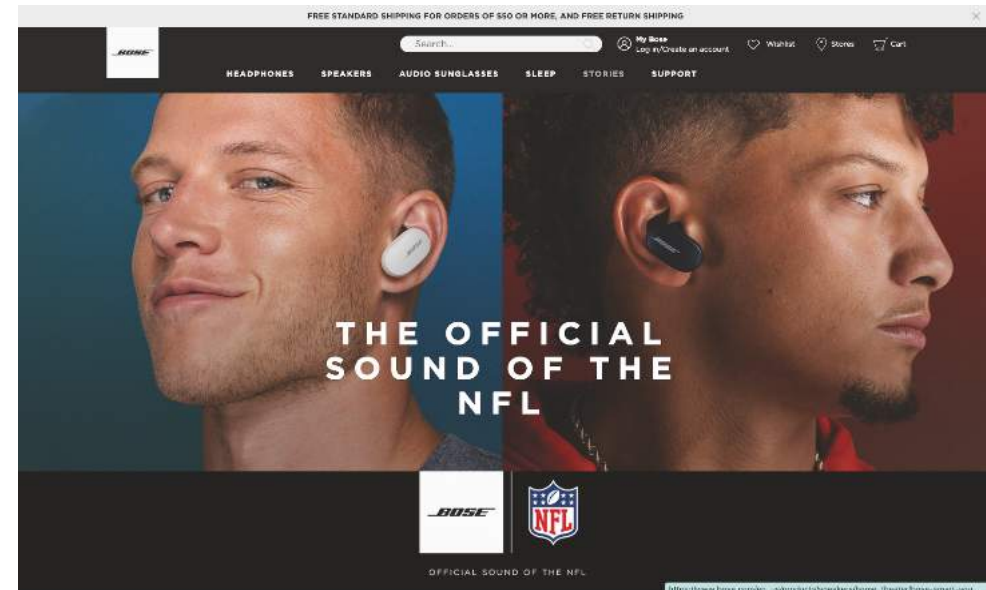
- 🏈 All the winning brands had the NFL branding on the home page, a dedicated NFL landing page, and a unique NFL content and product page.
- 🏈 Fanatics proved to be the real king and stood first followed by EA Sports by creatively blending the NFL with their brand image.
- 🏈 Only 9 brands and the NFL sponsors used the NFL branding on their homepage and created dedicated content and landing pages for the NFL.



# The Winners: Top Five

## 1. Bose

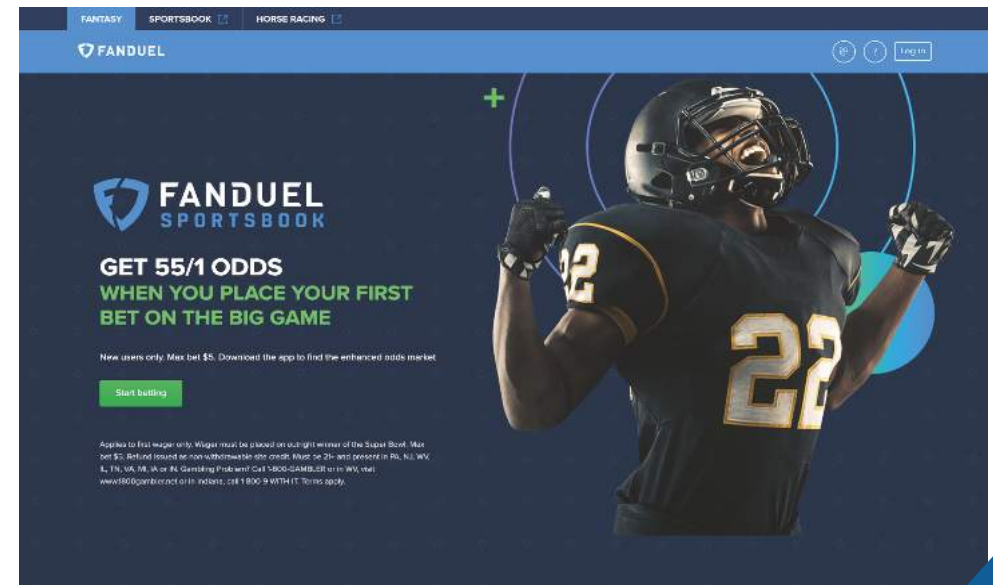
Bose, NFL league sponsor & one of the key sponsors of New Orleans Saints stood as the winner. The audio electronics brand outperformed many heavy media buyers in the NFL 2020 with creative use of their sponsorship and leveraged the opportunity with a dedicated landing page using NFL branding which also featured their products.



- 🏆 Used high-quality images with catchy taglines to connect with the users.
- 🏆 Used NFL team players along with their products on the homepage.
- 🏆 Created small creative videos showing their connection with the NFL.
- 🏆 Optimized NFL themed pages on the website.

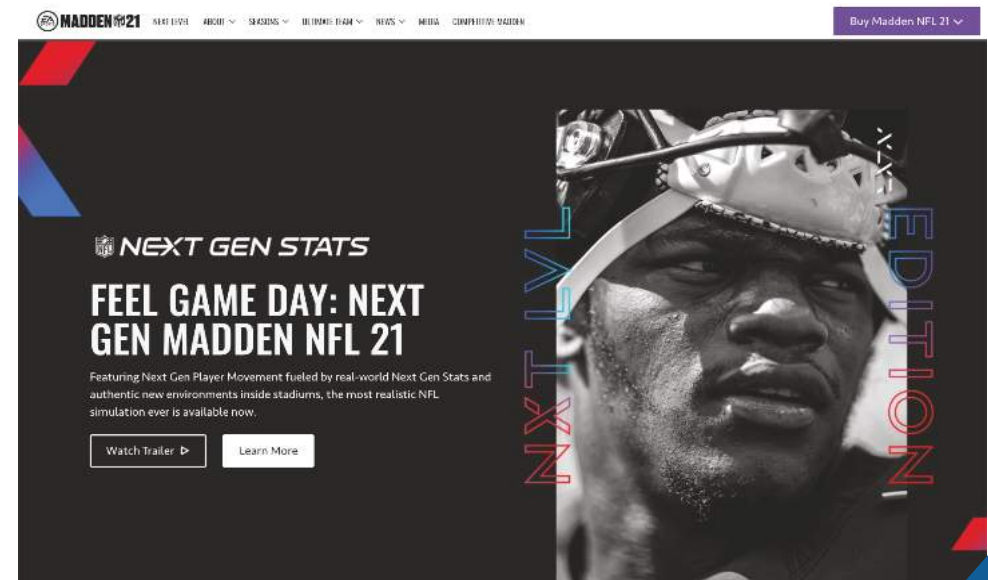
## 2. Fanduel

- ❌ Used a high quality banner but without a partner's logo (Pittsburgh Steelers, Cleveland Browns, Indianapolis Colts) or info.
- ❌ Created a dedicated NFL landing page showing their product connection with the NFL.
- ❌ Created NFL landing page which was optimized for NFL queries but not for the NFL queries.
- ❌ Failed to create unique and creative content to connect with users in a unique way.



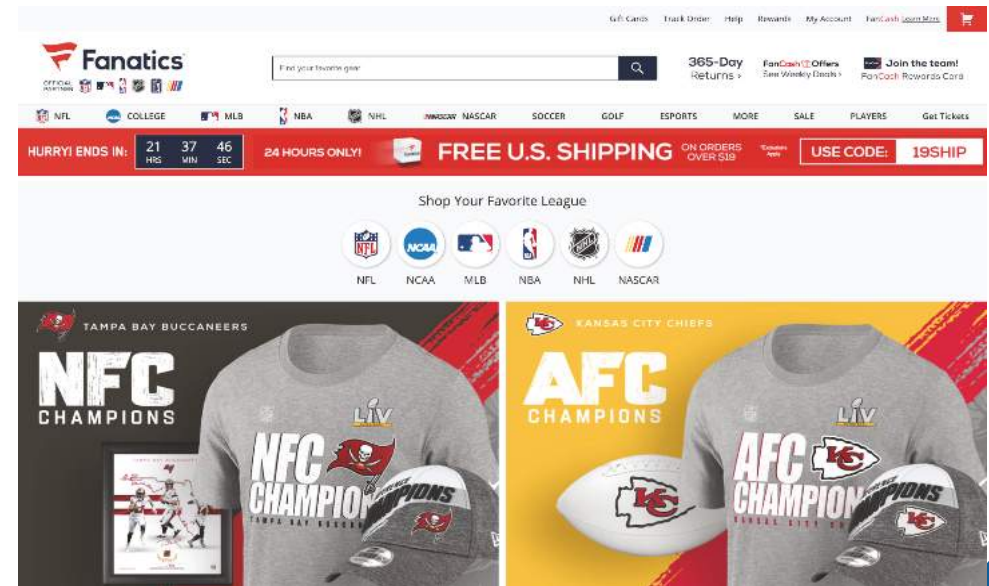
### 3. EA Sports

- ❌ Used a high-quality banner related to NFL, and obviously, because of NFL 2021 game. However, they didn't mention their partner's logo.
- ❌ Used NFL 21 on the dedicated NFL landing page to promote EA Sports' latest NFL 2021 game.
- ❌ The home page could have been optimized better for showing their connection with NFL 2020 and with **Kansas City**.
- ❌ Created NFL product page filled with NFL content but failed to optimize it especially for the NFL 2020 queries.



## 4. Fanatics

- Used NFL branding on the home page and created a dedicated NFL product page to attract users looking for NFL or NFL Team Merchandise.
- Created special merchandise for the NFL.
- Created a dedicated NFL League shop and had optimized it for NFL merchandise related queries.
- Association with the team as a sponsor was not clear on the home page as well as on the landing page.
- Messaging and association with the Washington Football Team & Indianapolis Colts was not clear on the website.



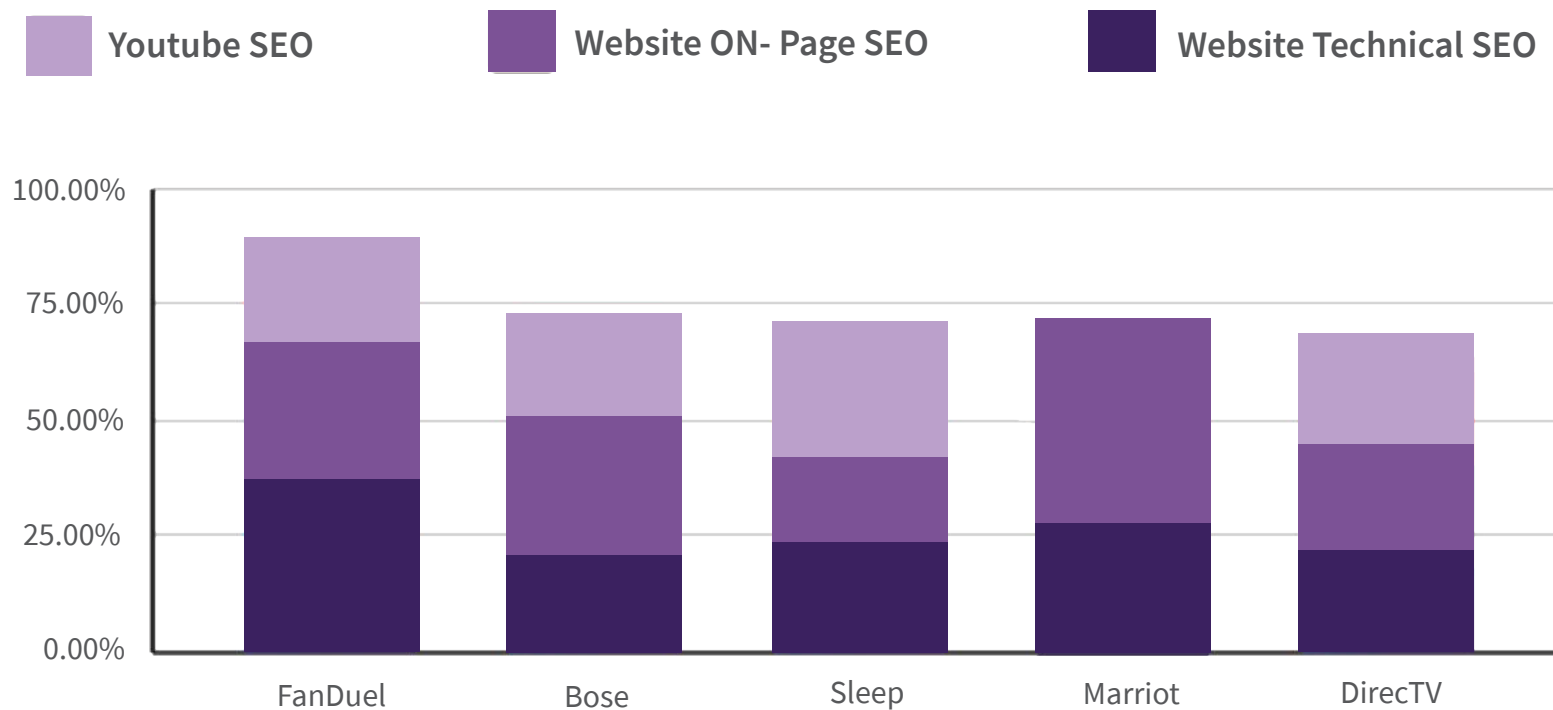
## 5. 97.9 FM Rock Baltimore

- ❏ Baltimore Ravens Logo present on home page.
- ❏ Promoted Baltimore Ravens by creating a dedicated landing page sharing the latest information on NFL and Baltimore Ravens.
- ❏ They could have done a better job in showing their partnership with Baltimore Ravens and could have thought of a unique way to engage users showing interest in NFL content.



# Technical, On-Page, & YouTube SEO

SEO 101--create a website that's easier to crawl by the search engine, index, and works well on mobile devices with a good PageSpeed score. Apart from that, the on-page elements including title and meta description and YouTube videos' SEO are key to increasing organic reach.





## Key Points

- 75 NFL sponsors had no landing page for the NFL 2020.
- FanDuel won this category for their brilliant work in optimizing their website and also their YouTube channel for the NFL-related queries.
- Barclaycard US, an official NFL sponsor, created unique NFL landing pages but failed to make it to the top five as their content strategy was not optimized for Youtube SEO.
- Fanatics gave a tough fight to DirecTV in terms of website loading speed and YouTube channel optimization but failed to make it in the top 5 due to poor content optimization on the landing page for the NFL queries.
- Except for Century Link, all brand websites failed in website loading speed on mobile devices.
- 75 brands showed no landing page optimization for the NFL-related queries.

## The Winners: Top Five

All the winning brands as well as the rest of the brands on the list ensured that their landing page was crawlable, indexable, and mobile-friendly. One stark contrast between the winners and the rest was how proactive were the winners to optimize the website for the target keywords, which in this case were related to NFL, the NFL and team franchisees.

### 1. FanDuel

- 🏈 Landing page loading speed is up to the mark on the desktop (80+ Score on Google Page Speed Insight) while on mobile it's slow and has scope for improvement (32 scores on GPS).
- 🏈 The NFL landing page was perfectly optimized for NFL championship keywords/queries as they used target keywords in page URL, title, meta description, page heading, & content.
- 🏈 FanDuel's YouTube channel was optimized with the NFL branding on the channel and had the NFL content that was optimized for the NFL-related searches.

## 2. Bose

- 🏈 Bose gave a tough competition to FanDuel but failed to score the first position due to slow landing page loading speed on desktop as well as on mobile devices.
- 🏈 Their NFL Landing page was perfectly optimized for NFL related queries and keywords as they used target keywords in page URL, title, meta description, page heading & content.
- 🏈 Bose's YouTube channel was optimized with the NFL branding on the channel & had the NFL 2020 commercials but they could have done a better job in optimizing these videos for NFL/the NFL related searches.

## 3. Sleep Number

- 🏈 Sleep Number landing page was optimized for crawling and indexability but failed in the website loading test on desktop and mobile devices (Below 40 score on Google Page Speed Insight)
- 🏈 Their YouTube channel was also optimized with NFL branding on the channel and had the NFL 2020 commercials that were optimized for the NFL related searches.
- 🏈 The reason why they failed to score the first position was poor landing speed and average On-Page SEO strategy to grab attention in the NFL 2020. Their landing page content was superb and showed their connection with NFL but failed to optimize the landing page from an SEO perspective.

## 4. Marriott International Inc.

- 🏈 Landing page loading speed was up to the mark on the desktop (80+ Score on Google Page Speed Insight) while on mobile it was too slow.
- 🏈 Their NFL Landing page was perfectly optimized for NFL related queries and keywords as they used target keywords in page URL, title, meta description, page heading & content.
- 🏈 Apart from this, their YouTube channel was missing the NFL 2020 videos, branding on the channel page and their videos were missing landing page URL in the description which made them slip to 4th position in this category.

## 5. DirecTV

- 🏈 The media company's NFL landing page was optimized for the NFL keywords and queries but the brand probably missed adding the target keyword in the H1 heading.
- 🏈 They also had a poor landing page loading speed on desktop and mobile devices (Score below 20 on Google Page Speed Insights)
- 🏈 Apart from this, their YouTube channel had content related to the NFL which was optimized for the NFL related queries but they failed to generate website traffic from these videos as they didn't have van NFL website landing page URL in the description.

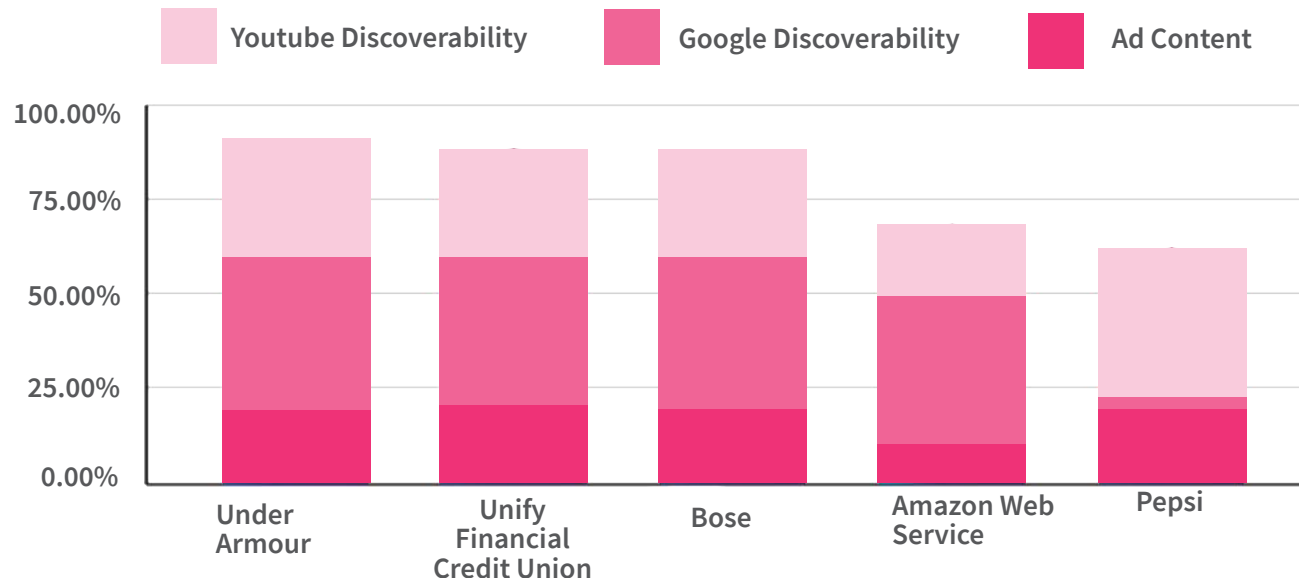
# Discoverability

Discoverability refers to how your content can be found all over the web. Here we will be considering Google and YouTube for discoverability.

To get more discoverability on Google & YouTube, you will need to make sure that you optimize your landing page or video so that it lands on the first page because 90% of people do not visit the second page of search results.

If your landing page and website don't have any discoverability or do not show in the top 10 search results, you will get little to zero traffic on your landing page.

Here, we will be analyzing the NFL sponsors and see if they rank for branded + the NFL commercial keywords to see if they are discoverable for these keywords or someone else is taking their discoverability share.



## Key Factors for ranking:

🏆 Discoverability On Google Search Engine    🏆 Discoverability on YouTube    🏆 Ad Ranking

## Key Points

- 63 NFL sponsors had no discoverability on YouTube and were not in the top 10 results for keywords related to the brand the NFL ads.
- 68 the NFL sponsors had no discoverability on Google and were not in the top 10 results for the keywords related to the brand the NFL commercials.
- Under Armour won in this category as they were easily discoverable on both Google & YouTube Search. Apart from strong competition from other websites and YouTube channels that copied and posted Under Armour content on their website, they were able to maintain their position in the top 10 searches.
- Some brands like Hyundai and Xfinity gave a tough fight for the fifth position to Pepsi but due to lower search ranks on the first search page and poor discoverability on YouTube when compared to Pepsi, they failed to make it in the top five.



# The Winners: Top Five

## 1. Under Armour

Under Armour was not only outstanding with the “The game has changed and the future is still ours” campaign but also came out as a winner on the discoverability parameter. They were able to make sure that they rank in the top 10 for their NFL ads or commercials keywords.

## 2 & 3. Bose and Unify Financial Credit Union

Both brands stood second together as they fought for the second position in our discoverability ratings. They did pretty well with their NFL ads and ranked in the first position for their brand queries related to their NFL ads.

To finalize 2nd Position winner, we had to look at their ad content as it also played a major role in SEO.

The better the content, the better will be the average view duration, and better the engagement.

Unify scored the second position for creating a the NFL ad that starred Los Angeles Team Player and talked about the product in a unique way.

Bose scored the third position with their NFL Ad starring the Kansas City player Patrick Mahomes with short videos of 7-10 seconds in their social media ads but didn't have any unique content to connect users to their product.

## 4. Amazon web services

Amazon web services, one of the biggest global cloud platforms in the world, scored the fourth position in the discoverability category.

Their NFL ads were easily discoverable on Google and YouTube Search and ranked in the top 10 spots for a brand + the NFL commercial keywords.

They failed to make their spot in the top three winners due to poor discoverability on YouTube.

## 5. Pepsi

Pepsi, one of the largest food, snack, and beverage corporations in the world failed to make an impact when it came to the discoverability of its NFL promotion initiatives and scored the fifth position in the discoverability category.

Their NFL ads were easily discoverable on YouTube Search and ranked in the top 10 spots for a brand + the NFL commercial keywords but got no traction and discoverability from Google search.

They failed to make their spot in the top three winner due to poor discoverability on Google as well as on YouTube due to poor Search Engine Optimization.



## SEO Most Valuable Player Of The Season: Bose

SEO is probably the most dynamic and fluid marketing technique. A lot of variables are not in your control. At the same time, SEO is so vast in nature that insights driven from the same set of parameters may vary.

With this report, we have tried to give our view on how well brands were prepared for the NFL to generate organic traffic and increase their brand awareness apart from simply buying ad spots.

We were shocked to see that most of the brands didn't participate with their best **Quarterback** on the organic side and spent most of their budget and time to get benefit from paid advertisement only.

**One such brand was Oakley.** It launched one of the most creative, popular, and talked about the NFL campaigns this season. But it failed to make a connection with users on search engines and lost that organic traffic. They were not able to score rank in the Top 10 SEO brands this year and lost traffic from keywords like “the NFL 2020 Commercial” having a search volume of more than 193,000 in the month of January.

**SEO is like a puzzle, where each and every piece matters to get the desired result.**

Many brands like Xfinity, Daktronics, Marriott and Pepsi planned well for SEO but they were not able to come up with a clear plan to generate traffic and build a connection with their users. They also failed to optimize their landing page and YouTube channel for search and had poor discoverability.

The brand which was able to make a touchdown this season was **Bose**.

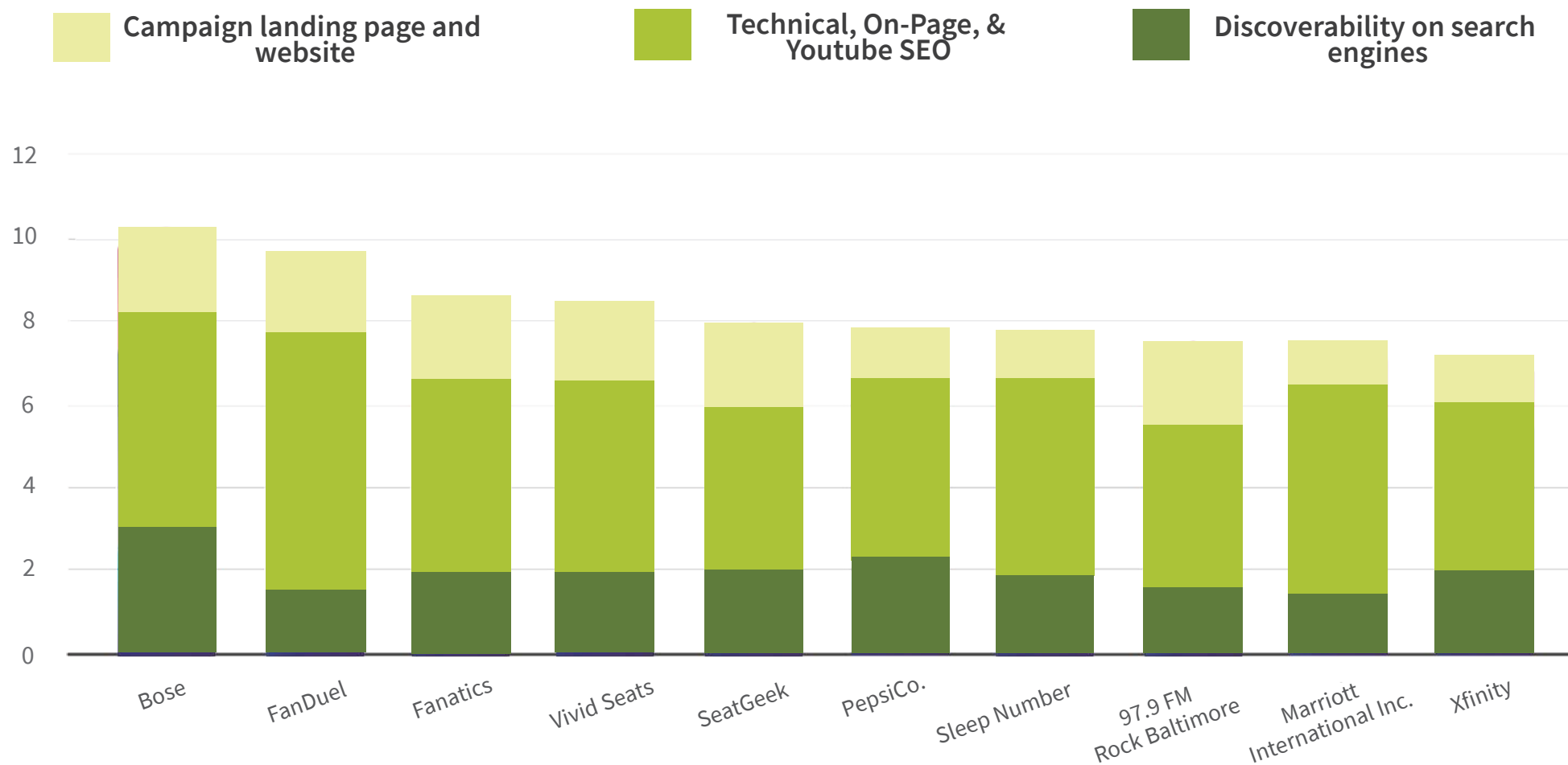
Bose not only worked in creating the NFL content but also focused on distribution and discoverability of that content on search engines and became the SEO winner for this year's NFL season.

**FanDuel** gave a tough competition to Bose and had optimized website content that was optimized for getting 10X more traffic than Bose but FanDuel page ranking in Google was not reachable and showed 404 error due to which they lost all the traffic to their search competitors such as iSpot.tv, media posts etc.

Bose's success proves that generating organic traffic during a mega event like NFL, you need a perfect mix of:

- 🏈 SEO Strategy to find keywords that a brand should target to catch the NFL traffic
- 🏈 Unique and dedicated the NFL content and landing page
- 🏈 Search Engine Optimization to improve ranking and increase discoverability.

## The Winners: Top Five



# WHO WE ARE

We are a data-driven marketing company specializing in performance marketing, search engine optimization, and analytics. We help businesses maximize ROI on digital advertising using analytics and data-driven techniques.

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