



Knowing when to launch a new or redesigned website takes as much planning as the actual design. Here are some tips you can use to help plan for the launch; plus, pitfalls to avoid.

#### Launch Plans

Prior to any website launch, testing is paramount. But, there are many moving parts in a website launch, including internal communications, external communications, client communications, domain and hosting considerations, and more. Here are several things to consider as you get close to launch.

- Pre-testing page load times. It's important to test page load times, accelerated mobile pages (AMP), and image clarification prior to launch – all of which impact SEO and user experience.
- Checking for broken links. Link checking is a key ingredient to fallen websites. Users do not want to search your new site for content when links fail.
- Ensure SEO is in place on all pages, posts, and images. This should be completed during the design phase, but some people leave it to the end of the build.
- If you have an existing site, view your website analytics to see what the slowest time of the week and time of day are to provide a launch window. If you have no idea when those time / days are, consider a pre-office opening or post-office hours to avoid daily activity interruption.
- Consider advertising options around the launch. If promoting the new design with AdWords or social media, review the best times of days for keyword buying and also social media posting. Both could impact the effectiveness of your communication.
- Coordinate client [email communication](#) around your best open rates, e.g., Tuesday

## When is the best time to launch my website?

around 10:00 a.m. is the best open rate time for any industry.

- Include the web team, site host, domain provider, your IT team, and any agency contacts about your plans.
- Create and test 301 redirects for existing page if they site domain structure is changing.
- Design a 404 page on the new site in case something does break. Provide helpful information on the page to guide people back to where they should be going.

## Launch Pitfalls to Avoid

Even with a ton of testing, some site launches hit snags. This short, pitfalls list might help you to avoid the snafus others have experienced when launching a site.

- Check that no marketing or social media campaigns are hitting the site at the time/day you plan to launch or the day after launch. This will help prevent broken links and poor user experience.
- Be sure you've used an [SSL Certificate](#) on the domain, or the new site will be marked as insecure on Chrome browsers come July. This may require additional record changes by the domain provider and will change your URL from http:// to https://, which could impact communications if proper 301 redirects are not in place.
- Steer clear of Friday launches and high-priority/busy season times, especially if scheduled later in the day when team members may not be available for testing and trouble shooting.
- Avoid distorting site launch analytics by filtering analytic visits to exclude company IP addresses.
- Trademark infringement - Check the trademark for any domain and company usage you plan to use in the first steps of the process.
- Copyright infringement - Using content you do not own or have permission to use on the site will cause you some legal hassles once online. Be sure to have this locked down well before the launch.

Website launches are complex and can be stress inducing. Planning ahead of time will help to make the site launch more effective for you, your clients, and prospects.

What do you plan to include in your next website design?

When is the best time to launch my website?

Disclaimer: This post originally appeared in the CPA Client Bulletin Resource Guide, © 2018 Association of International Certified Professional Accountants. Reprinted by permission.