WEBSITE MIGRATION CHECKLIST

There are three parts to a successful SEO migration.

1. Part One: Planning
2. Part Two: Migration
3. Part Three: Review and Analysis

PART ONE: PLANNING | TIME FRAME: 1-2 WEEKS BEFORE LAUNCH

1. Generate a list of all the URLs that make up your website. Your developer might be able to provide this to you. Alternatively, you could use a tool like Screaming Frog.
2. Import the list into an excel spreadsheet and match these pages to the best page on the new website. Don't re-direct all the pages to the homepage. Take the time to map old pages to new pages. Sometimes, old or irrelevant pages should be left without being redirected and that's OK.
3. Generate a record of your keyword rankings for all major terms. For a free tool try 'Rank Checker', a plugin for Firefox.
4. Generate a list of websites that link to your current website. We'll be trying to contact these people so try and include contact details. You may also want to include services that you've setup yourself, such as your social media profiles, Google Places/Google My Business, online directories.
5. Have a chat with your developer and ensure that there is a friendly 404 page in the works for visitors that have gotten lost. The 404 page should have the goal of re-orientating lost users and allowing them to continue their browsing with little distraction.

PART TWO: MIGRATION DAY | TIME FRAME: LAUNCH DAY

Today your website developer should kick that re-direction list you made above into action. Once your website developer has confirmed this has been done, follow these steps.

1. Test a few of your most important pages manually by going to your old URLs and seeing what page you get re-directed to.
2. Ensure your other old URLs have the correct response code (301) with a tool like Screaming Frog. (Seriously, this tool is awesome)
3. If you have Google Search Console (GSC) setup on your website, you should register your new website URL in there.
4. If you have Google Search Console (GSC)setup on your website, you should inform Google using the 'change of address' option that your domain has now moved.
5. Through GSC, you can also submit the most important pages of your website to Google immediately, these are pages like your homepage and your main service or category pages, about us page.
6. Using a tool like Screaming Frog, you can create an XML sitemap of your new website. Get your developer to upload it to "www.example.co.nz/sitemap.xml" and you can also submit the sitemap in GSC.
7. Ensure the new 404 page is up and looking good.
8. Review the list of websites linking to yours. Ty to contact each of the websites if necessary and ask them if they could update your link to your new website address.

PART THREE: REVIEW AND ANALYSIS | TIME FRAMCE: 4 - 6 WEEKS AFTER LAUNCH

1. Every week or so in Google Analytics, keep an eye on your traffic and conversion levels for any unreasonable drops. Google can take up to 6 weeks to crawl and re-index your website.
2. Check Google Search Console every week to see if there are any crawl errors or important messages.
3. Keyword ranking list for your major search terms: Re-check your keyword rankings every month or so to see if there are any issues.
4. Chase up and verify that those websites you contacted to update their links to your site have done it.
5. Maintain control of your old website domain and 301 re-directs for about 6 months after the website migration.

NOTES

- If you haven't migrated to Google Analytics 4 yet, this is also a good time to set that up.
- If you need any support, feel free to contact us at Insight Online, kim@insightonline.co.nz or give us a call on 022 173 9131