

# CMS Migration Checklist

A comprehensive, practical checklist to guide seamless CMS migrations involving digital asset management and media pipelines.

## Purpose

To ensure all critical technical, SEO, and content considerations are covered for a smooth migration with minimal disruption.

## When to use

Use this checklist when migrating websites from one CMS to another, especially when DAM and media pipelines are involved.

## How to use

Follow each section in order during planning, execution, and post-launch phases. Assign tasks, track completion, and customize based on your project's specifics.

### 1. Planning & Preparation

- Perform full content audit (pages, posts, media, metadata) across all sites
- Identify all stakeholders, assign clear roles and responsibilities
- Define scope, timeline, migration milestones
- Schedule and communicate content freeze period to all content owners
- Backup entire CMS databases, files, media libraries
- Document current site architecture, URL structure, CMS features, workflows
- Audit user roles & permissions; plan equivalent setup in new CMS
- List all third-party plugins, APIs, integrations; verify compatibility or alternatives
- Confirm DAM & media pipeline integration points and requirements
- Record baseline SEO metrics (traffic, rankings, backlinks) for benchmarking

### 2. Content Mapping & Migration Strategy

- Map old content types and fields to new CMS equivalents for all sites
- Map URL structures including subdomains or subfolders
- Map media assets with metadata and DAM references

- Assign content owners for migration verification
- Identify obsolete or duplicate content for cleanup/archiving pre-migration
- Define migration method (manual, bulk import/export, scripts, API)
- Prepare data transformation scripts for metadata normalization, URL slugs
- Plan media pipeline processing: transcoding, optimization, CDN integration
- Define handling for unsupported/deprecated content
- Track media asset versions to avoid overwrites or duplicates

### **3. Redirect & URL Strategy**

- Build comprehensive 301 redirect map for all old → new URLs
- Include redirects for renamed, merged, or removed content
- Implement redirects at server, CDN, or CMS level as appropriate
- Verify correct canonical tags on all new pages
- Prepare updated sitemap(s) reflecting new URL structure for submission

### **4. Technical SEO Setup**

- Migrate meta titles, descriptions, OG tags, and SEO metadata
- Update robots.txt and other crawl directive
- Verify hreflang tags for multi-language or multi-region sites
- Implement structured data/schema markup on new CMS
- Generate and submit XML sitemaps to search engines
- Confirm site speed optimizations: image compression, caching, minification
- Review internal linking and navigation for consistency
- Conduct SEO benchmarking to track post-launch impact

### **5. Testing & QA (Pre-launch)**

- Validate migrated content accuracy and completeness per site
- Test all redirects with crawl and redirect checking tools
- Confirm media assets load properly and metadata is preserved
- Verify DAM/media pipeline workflows and integration points
- Test SEO elements: metadata presence, canonical tags, structured data
- Test accessibility compliance (WCAG standards)
- Test all forms, interactive elements, search, filters, user-generated workflows
- Conduct broken link scans on new site
- Perform cross-browser and device compatibility testing
- Load and performance testing under expected traffic
- Run security audit: access controls, authentication, SSL certs

## 6. Launch & Post-launch QA

- Final content sync after content freeze lift
- Enable redirects and monitor logs for 404s and errors
- Monitor indexing and crawl status via Google Search Console, Bing Webmaster Tools
- Run SEO audits regularly, fix critical issues promptly
- Verify media delivery, asset rendering, and content display across all sites
- Track user analytics for traffic drops or unusual behavior
- Fix broken links, missing assets immediately
- Confirm backup integrity and rollback plans are ready
- Train CMS users and content editors on new system workflows
- Set up monitoring alerts for downtime, broken links, media delivery failures
- Schedule SEO performance reviews at 1 week, 1 month, and 3 months post-launch