New Website Launch SEO Checklist

Protect your rankings and traffic when you launch or redesign a website.

A redesign can boost results, or wipe out years of rankings overnight. Use this checklist with your web designer before, during and after launch.

Before Launch

- Crawl the old site and export every URL (including PDFs and images that get traffic).
- Record current rankings, traffic and top landing pages from Search Console and Analytics.
- Map every old URL to its closest new URL.
- Keep high-performing content; do not delete pages that bring traffic without a plan.
- Write unique title tags and meta descriptions for every page.
- Use one H1 per page and logical H2/H3 headings.
- Add alt text to meaningful images.
- Compress images and use modern formats (WebP/AVIF).
- Add structured data (Organization/LocalBusiness, BreadcrumbList, FAQ where appropriate).
- Test the staging site on mobile and desktop.
- Make sure the staging site is blocked from indexing (and remember to unblock it at launch).

Launch Day

- Remove any "noindex" or staging password.
- Check robots.txt allows crawling of important pages.
- Set up 301 redirects from every old URL to its new URL.
- Confirm http, https, www and non-www all resolve to one version.
- Install Google Analytics 4 and test conversions (forms, calls).
- Verify the site in Google Search Console and Bing Webmaster Tools.
- Submit the XML sitemap.
- Test every form and click-to-call link.

First 30 Days

- Monitor Search Console Page Indexing and 404 reports weekly.
- Fix broken links and missing redirects.
- Compare traffic and rankings with pre-launch numbers.
- Update your Google Business Profile, Bing Places and Apple Business Connect website links if URLs changed.
- Update internal links that still point to redirected URLs.
- Check Core Web Vitals in PageSpeed Insights.

Common Launch Mistakes

- Forgetting to remove noindex from the new site.
- Redirecting every old page to the homepage.
- Losing tracking codes or conversion tags.
- Changing URLs unnecessarily.
- Launching on a Friday with no one available to fix problems.

About the author: Jon Crain founded Pittsburgh SEO Services in 2001 and has helped businesses across Western Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia with SEO, local search and websites for more than two decades. Want help putting this into practice? Call 412-250-7965 or visit pittsburghseoservices.com.

Last updated: November 2026. Platform features change often; check each official help center for current details.