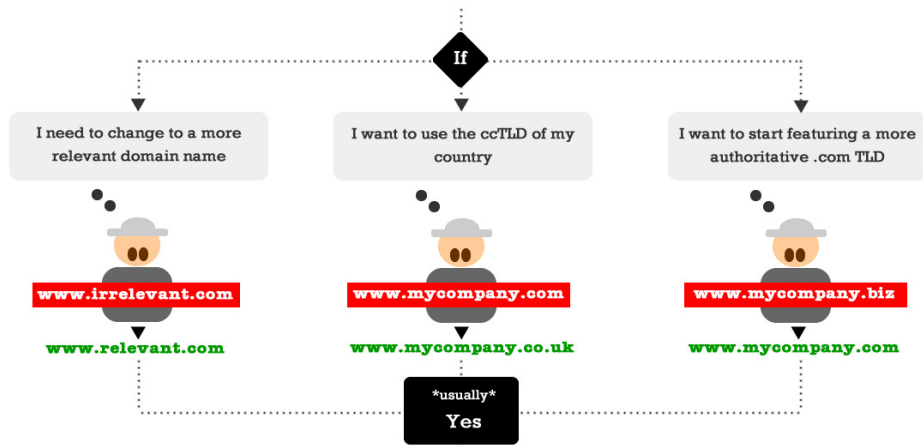


Should I migrate my Website to a new domain?



Beware of parallel changes

Avoid to change at the same time

Change only if necessary

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| Platform (CMS, language) | Structure (URLs naming) | Design (Look & Feel, Organization) | Content (Text information) | Hosting (whois data, IP) |
| | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * To geotarget * Have low performance * Suffer from downtime issues |

Warning: These add a higher complexity to the migration process and make it harder to identify possible issues.

Check the new domain history

Verify its authority, age, backlink profile (volume, type, growth over time), if it has indexed content, previous owners (whois and ip changes), etc.

1 Plan the Migration

- Configuration:** Identify the site settings, sitemaps, links, crawl stats and problems in Google Webmaster Tools
- Organization:** Create a site map of your site, building a hierarchical list of all of your site pages (also images, videos, etc).
- Crawling:** Verify blocked content with robots.txt and those pages returning 404 errors.
- Indexing:** Identify the number and type of indexed content (pages, images, videos) for each of your site structural areas.
- Rankings:** Verify the achieved rankings per pages and related keywords.
- Traffic:** Get the organic traffic information (visits, bounce rate, conversions, etc.) per pages and related keywords.
- Links:** List the incoming internal and external links (source, amount, authority, anchor text, etc.) to your site pages.

Prioritize

List your pages by prioritizing them by best rankings, more links, highest traffic and conversions

Correlate

Along with your prioritized pages list add their updated URL version in the new domain

2 Implement the Migration

- Prepare:** Program and test the 301 redirects at a page level (for all your text, images, videos) from your old domain to the new one.
- Protect:** Avoid the new domain from being crawled by requiring authentication and enabling robots.txt blockage.
- Publish:** Launch the site content in the new domain.
- Verify:** Following the prioritized pages list, check they exist, show correct information, status codes and are effectively internally linked.
- Open:** Disable the authentication requirement to access the new domain content.
- Redirect:** Implement the 301 redirects at a page level from your old domain to your new domain.
- Check:** Following the prioritized pages list, verify that the pages from the old domain are effectively 301 redirected to the new one.
- Allow:** Eliminate the robots.txt blockage and allow search engines to crawl the new domain.
- Configure:** Register and configure -as you had done with the old domain- the new domain in Google Webmaster Tools.
- Inform:** That you have moved through the "change of address" option in the old domain Google Webmaster Tools console.
- Crawl:** Select "Fetch as Googlebot" in Google Webmaster Tools and submit to index the most important pages of the new domain.
- Index:** Generate a XML Sitemap of the new domain and submit it to Google Webmaster Tools.
- Update:** Modify external links to go to the URLs in the new domain instead of the old one.
- Link:** Create new external links to the most important pages -according to the prioritized list- of the new domain.

3 Monitor the Migration

- Crawling:** Check regularly for crawling errors in the Google Webmaster Tools console of the new domain.
- Indexation:** Measure indexation levels of the different zones of the new site (should increase) and old site (should disappear from index).
- Rankings:** Track the rankings you had already achieved and watch for the keywords and URLs correlations in the new domain.
- Traffic:** Monitor organic traffic volume and behavior from tracked rankings and possible new keywords driving visits to the new domain.
- Conversions:** Follow-up conversions volume and rates per keywords and pages, compare them with the previously gathered data.
- Linking:** Verify which of the most important external links still go to the old domain and ask those sites to update them.
- Retention:** Maintain control and 301 redirects from your old domain at least until it stops indexing, referring traffic and attracting links.

What SEO tools do I use?



www.screamingfrog.co.uk/seo-spider/



www.opensiteexplorer.org/



www.google.com/webmasters/tools



sescout.com



www.google.com/analytics/



semrush.com