

How to migrate web hosts without losing SEO

Migrating your website is never an easy task. It requires a lot of careful planning and execution. Even though migration can be hard, if done right, it can open up new opportunities and also solve the problems that you were having with the old hosting platform.

In today's article, we will be focusing on migrating web hosts without losing SEO. In this guide, we will show you how to migrate to a new web host without losing any SEO value.

1. Revisit your decision to migrate

First things first, you should be clear in your mind about why you are making the migration. A site migration is never an easy thing to do, and it can also result in a temporary traffic loss. With time, your new website (host) will work, and your site will be back where it is. That's the best possible result you can get.

However, there are a lot of complexities that can arise which can hamper website growth and presence. If you are not able to do things properly, you can land in trouble and lose some precious ranking. In short, revisit your decision and see if the problem can be solved without migration. A migration is worth if you are doing a big rebranding, your hosting is just not providing the required service to sustain, or you are moving to HTTPS. There are other scenarios that you should migrate, and it all depends on what do you think about the situation you are in.

2. Choose the right hosting platform

Now that you have completely made up your mind, the next step

is to find a good hosting provider. You can start by reading web host providers reviews. A hosting platform with good technical features will be able to handle your SEO requirements. However, before you pick one you need to make sure that it fits your requirement completely. For example, you can check the following things.

- Server's technical specification such as the operating system, system version and so on.
- The bandwidth of the server
- Good technical support and documentation
- Low downtime.

3. Select the server location carefully

Next step is to choose the right server for your website. Geographical advantage can be a deciding factor in your SEO. For example, if you were targeting the USA before migrating and used a server near to it, you also need to find something similar to that. In short, the location of the server matters and affect your SEO rankings. It will also impact your target audience as well. In short, you should know which server your website will be hosted. Anyone who is beginning as a blogger knows the importance and you should not forget it during web host migration as well. Almost all the hosting providers let you choose the server of your choice. If they don't, you might want to choose a different hosting altogether.

3. Create a backup

Before you start the migration, you need to back up your website completely. You can backup using plugins such as BackupBuddy, BackWPup or using premium backup service such as VaultPress. This step will ensure that you can revert to the original website in case something goes wrong.

4. Move the WordPress website

With proper backup complete, you are now ready to move your website to the new web host. You can do it by yourself or by using professional service. You can also ask the web hosting provider that you chose to do it for you. Many web hosting provider do it for free, so you will save not only money but also time.

If you decide to do it yourself, you can also use the Duplicator plugin. It's easy to use, and all you need to do is follow a step to step guide available online.

5. Test the new website

Once the migration is done, it is now time to test the website. Check every page or file on your new host. Ensure that everything is working fine before moving to the next step. If you want to be sure on how your website will perform on the new host, it is recommended to test it out before doing the actual migration.

6. DNS records TTL needs to be updated

DNS or domain name server is a way of mapping your website domain name to the server IP of your website. As humans cannot remember numbers and that's why we map the server address to DNS. When you change your web host, the server IP address changes. To make the new server IP live, you need to update the DNS so that it redirects to the new server ID. However, this process can take up to 24 hours which might be too much for your users and search engines.

The solution is TTL (Time-To-Live). This is the time that DNS records to be updated. The good news is that you can speed up the process by changing the TTL value from 24 hours (86400 seconds) to just 5 minutes(300 seconds). Also, this needs to be done one day before you migrate. However, the web hosting

provider needs to support this feature to work properly.

7. Now change your DNS records

The final step is to update DNS records and let the world know about the new server. Also, many apps or services that you are using take time to update their DNS records. In that case, you need to make sure you keep your old server online for a couple of days. SEO facts state that you should properly set up your DNS records for maximum benefit.

Conclusion

If you follow all the steps correctly, your website SEO will not be hampered if you migrate. Also, you should wait for two days to see the correct picture. Keep both the old server and new server live to ensure that the transition takes place correctly.

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