Website Content **Migration**

A comprehensive guide for mastering content migration.

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Starting with Content Migration

Diving into the website migration strategy
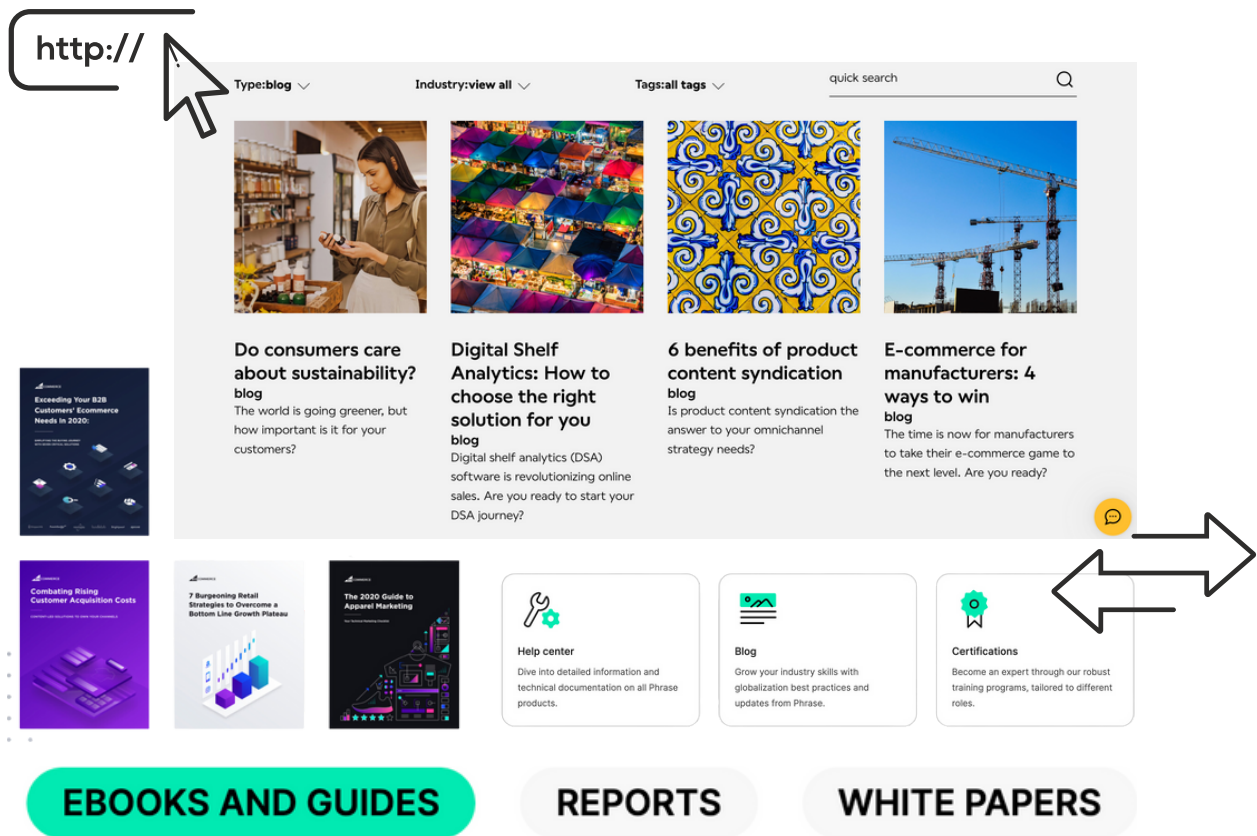
Are you planning to switch to a different platform and thinking of how to move your content?

Whether you are redesigning your website, upgrading your content management system, or merging multiple websites, content migration plays a vital role in ensuring a seamless transition while preserving your website's SEO value and performance.

In this comprehensive guide, we will outline the steps to successfully migrate your website content, address common concerns and pitfalls, and provide valuable insights to make the process more manageable and efficient.

By following these best practices, you can minimize the risks associated with content migration and maximize the benefits for your online presence.

In this guide, you will learn

Set Migration Goals & Scope

Moving your content from one platform to another presents an excellent opportunity. It allows you to demonstrate to search engines that your new site has improved and can rank higher in search results. It's like moving from one house to another: you can revise the things you have collected over the years, decide what to keep and throw, and finally start fresh.

But before you start moving your content, you need to know why you're doing it and what you want to achieve.

What are your business goals, user needs, and content requirements? How will you know if your migration is successful? What risks and dependencies are involved? And how much time, money, and resources do you have?

By setting clear goals, you can prioritize, plan, and align your content migration strategy with your overall content strategy.

Start with:

- Setting clear migration goals and scope to guide your content migration process.

- Defining success criteria and identify risks and dependencies associated with migration.

- Aligning your content migration strategy with your overall content strategy for effective planning and prioritization.

Audit Your Current Content

Before embarking on the content migration journey, start with a thorough audit of your existing content. This step allows you to assess quality, relevance, and performance of your content assets.

When conducting the audit, evaluate your website's structure, individual pages, blog posts, images, videos, and other elements. Start by asking yourself: Is the content receiving page views? How old is it? Are there any existing links pointing to it?

Leverage analytics tools to gather insights into the performance data. If the content isn't generating views, is older than two years (keep industry variations in mind), and lacks internal links, it's not worth the time or effort to migrate. At the same time, if the content is high performing, prioritize it during the migration process.

Additionally, consider the level of effort required to achieve your goals. Does the content need a complete rewrite, or can it be quickly updated?

Keep in mind that the effort needed for a complete rewrite is usually equivalent to creating new content altogether. Decide whether you want to include that topic in your content rotation. If not, it's best to let go of that outdated content.

This audit will provide you with a clear understanding of your content landscape and guide your decisions throughout the migration.

Remember, the content audit step is crucial, but don't overcomplicate it. Focus on the key factors such as page views, age, and linking. By keeping it simple and straightforward, you can streamline your migration process and ensure that you invest your time and efforts where they truly matter.

Content that shouldn't be migrated

Old content | Low value content | Malformed content | Illegal content | Illogical terms and characters

takeaways

■ Assess quality, relevance, and performance of your content assets.

■ Prioritize high-performing content during the migration.

■ Determine the level of effort required for content updates or rewrites.

■ Keep the audit process simple and focus on key factors.

Create a Detailed Content Migration Plan

Once you have drafted the migration process and gained a deep understanding of your content landscape, you can make informed decisions and set the stage for a successful migration. To ensure a smooth and efficient process, create a detailed content migration plan that covers every step of the journey.

Start by documenting every step of the migration process. Break it down into the key milestones:
- performing content audit,
- designing the new site structure,
- mapping old content to the new system,
- moving the content,
- performing post-migration testing.

When designing the new site structure, visualize how your content will be organized and presented in the new platform. Consider user experience and search engine optimization.

Next, map out the migration process by linking old content to the new system. Preserve metadata, images, and internal links to maintain the integrity and functionality of your content. Create a list of old and new URLs, it will help you track and check the changes afterward.

Post-migration testing is crucial to identify and resolve any issues that may have arisen during the migration. Check for broken links, missing images, and formatting discrepancies.

Throughout the entire process, adhere to a well-defined timeline. Set achievable milestones and allocate responsibilities to team members. Regularly communicate and collaborate with stakeholders to maintain alignment and accountability.

This plan will serve as a roadmap, keeping everyone aligned and focused during the migration process.

takeaways

- Create a master sheet and document each step of the migration process.

- Visualize the new site structure, considering user experience and SEO.

- Conduct thorough post-migration testing to identify and resolve issues.

- Set achievable milestones and keep clear communication.

Keep in mind that migration usually takes longer than you think it will. Something can always go wrong, no matter how detailed your plan is. Schedule your migration accordingly & add an extra week or two to the project timeline.

Prioritize SEO to Maintain Website Performance

During content migration, prioritizing search engine optimization (SEO) is crucial to uphold your website's visibility and organic rankings.

One essential aspect to consider is maintaining consistent URL structures whenever possible to minimize disruptions.

In cases where URL changes are unavoidable, implementing 301 redirects becomes imperative. It ensures a seamless transition and prevents the occurrence of broken links that could negatively impact your website's SEO.

Updating your XML sitemap is another vital step in the content migration process. Make sure to accurately reflect the new site structure in the revised sitemap and submit it to search engines. This helps search engine crawlers to efficiently index your new site and make your content discoverable in search results.

Don't overlook the significance of optimizing meta tags & schema markup. Craft relevant meta titles and descriptions for each page, incorporating appropriate keywords naturally.

Utilize schema markup to provide search engines valuable context about your content, enhancing its visibility and potential for rich snippets.

By prioritizing SEO during the content migration process, you can maintain and potentially improve your website's visibility in search engine results, attract valuable organic traffic and support your overall business objectives.

takeaways

- Use consistent URL structures and 301 redirects for smooth transitions.

- Update the XML sitemap & submit it to search engines.

- Optimize meta tags & schema markup for better visibility and rich snippets.

Backup Everything for Data Security

Data security is crucial during content migration. Prioritize thorough backups of all website data, including content, databases, images, videos, and other functional files.

A comprehensive backup is like a safety net that protects against unforeseen issues or data loss during migration. It will serve as an insurance policy, allowing you to restore your website to its original state if needed.

When creating backups, ensure secure storage. Use encrypted external hard drives, secure cloud storage, or offsite backup servers. Multiple backup options enhance data redundancy and protect against threats or disasters.

To maintain data integrity, verify the backups before proceeding with the migration. Regularly test the backups to confirm their functionality. This ensures you have reliable & intact copies of your website data ready to be used if needed.

takeaways

- Prioritize backups and data security to safeguard website's integrity.

- Create multiple backups, encrypt them, and store them securely.

- Regularly verify the backups to ensure completeness and functionality.

Risks and Common Mistakes

Content migration is a crucial aspect of website improvement, but it comes with its fair share of risks and common mistakes. One common pitfall is underestimating the time required for the migration process. This can result in rushed tasks and increase the likelihood of errors.

Allocate sufficient time and resources to ensure a smooth and error-free migration.

Another mistake is focusing solely on the technical aspects of migration while neglecting the quality of the content being migrated. Paying attention to the quality and relevance of the content during migration is vital to maintain user engagement and drive positive user experiences.

Insufficient post-migration testing is yet another risk that can have detrimental effects on your website's performance. It's crucial to thoroughly test the migrated content, functionalities, and user experiences to identify any issues or discrepancies and ensure a seamless transition for your users.

Communication within the team is also paramount during the migration process. Lack of effective communication can lead to confusion, potential delays, and mistakes. Establish clear lines of communication, ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities, and maintain open channels for collaboration and information sharing.

takeaways

- Allocate ample time & resources to avoid rushed tasks/errors in migration.

- Prioritize content quality and relevance for effective user engagement.

- Conduct thorough post-migration testing to resolve issues.

- Foster clear team communication to prevent confusion and delays.

- Proactively address potential pitfalls for successful migration and improvement.

"Content migration is a complex task that requires careful planning, attention to detail, and a comprehensive approach. Understanding the potential pitfalls can help you navigate the migration process more successfully."

Matej Capla, Content Operations Consultant at ACTUM Digital

Test and Optimize Post-Migration

Once the content migration is complete, thorough testing is paramount to ensure a seamless transition. By testing, you can verify that all content has been accurately migrated and appears correctly formatted on the new platform. Check internal and external links to ensure they are functional and lead to the intended destinations. Additionally, validate the availability and proper display of images, videos, and other media files.

To provide a consistent UX, conduct extensive testing on different devices and browsers. Testing ensures your website functions optimally regardless of the device or browser used.

Perform SEO and performance tests to optimize your website for speed and search engine visibility. By doing so, you enhance user satisfaction and increase the likelihood of attracting organic traffic.

Seek user feedback to identify usability issues and make improvements. It reveals pain points and areas for improvement, allowing you to make necessary adjustments and enhancements to enhance user experience.

Continuously monitor website traffic, rankings, and performance after migration to promptly address any issues. Thorough testing and optimization are vital for a seamless transition and optimal user experience on the newly migrated website.

takeaways

- Thoroughly test the migrated content for accuracy, proper formatting & functionality.

- Conduct testing on different devices and browsers for a consistent user experience.

- Gather user feedback to identify and address usability issues.

Making Content Migration Work

Content migration can be a daunting process, but with proper planning and execution, you can navigate its complexities and achieve successful outcomes.

By following the steps outlined in this comprehensive guide, you can mitigate risks and ensure a smooth transition.

One critical aspect for you to consider is conducting a thorough Technical SEO Analysis to identify any potential issues and address them proactively.

Additionally, pay careful attention to redirect mapping to ensure that all URLs are correctly redirected to their new counterparts, preventing losing the website traffic or SEO value.

Another common mistake to avoid is overlooking post-migration 404 errors, which can negatively impact user experience and search engine rankings.

With the right expertise and support, you can overcome challenges, optimize your website's performance, and succeed in your online endeavors.

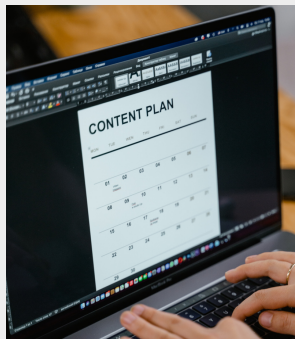Trust ACTUM Digital to be your reliable partner in making content migration a smooth and rewarding experience.

ACTUM Digital

Your expert partner in content migration

What we can help you with

Content migration

Content strategy

Content operations

SEO optimization

Content migration requires a technical specialist, and onboarding of employees can be challenging. Moreover, overseeing a migration process takes a lot of time and effort. To make your content migration journey a success, consider partnering with ACTUM Digital.

We have over 26 years of experience servicing international clients across Europe, North America, and Asia Pacific.

By streamlining content strategies, optimizing websites, and implementing cutting-edge SEO techniques, we help businesses achieve rapid and effective results in boosting their online visibility and search engine rankings.

Our team of experts has the knowledge and experience to guide you through the entire content migration process, ensuring a seamless and error-free transition.
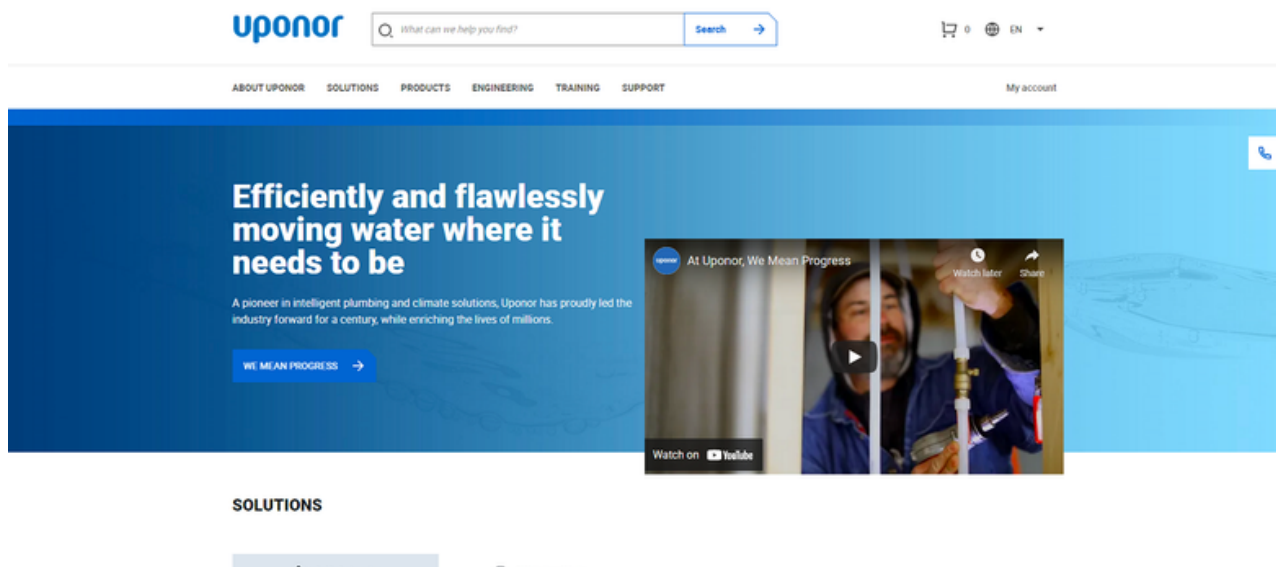
Expertise in all aspects of content migration:

- Audit
- Strategy
- Planning
- Creation
- Maintenance

With our support, you can maintain your website's visibility, preserve your rankings, and maximize the potential of content migration.

Content Migration Success Stories

Harmonized UX over 40+ websites for Uponor

A global pioneer in intelligent plumbing and climate solutions, operating in 26 countries in Europe and North America decided to optimize costs by migrating 40+ websites from Sitecore and Drupal to Kentico Xperience.

The key goal was to provide modern look & feel, harmonized user experience, and fully integrated solution minimizing manual work.

The team of three content editors from Actum helped with fast and reliable content migration and supported the client with continual content operations on the new websites.

The new solution enabled rich and personalized user experience through integration with multiple external systems and is ready to support Uponor's future digital journey.

"The Uponor-Actum team has done amazing work in completely 100% remote working model during the deepest COVID-19 pandemic period and has successfully launched fully rebuilt corporate & investor pages, merged our business divisions under one CMS platform and launched major business sites successfully on two continents." - Keimo Laakso, IT Director at Uponor.
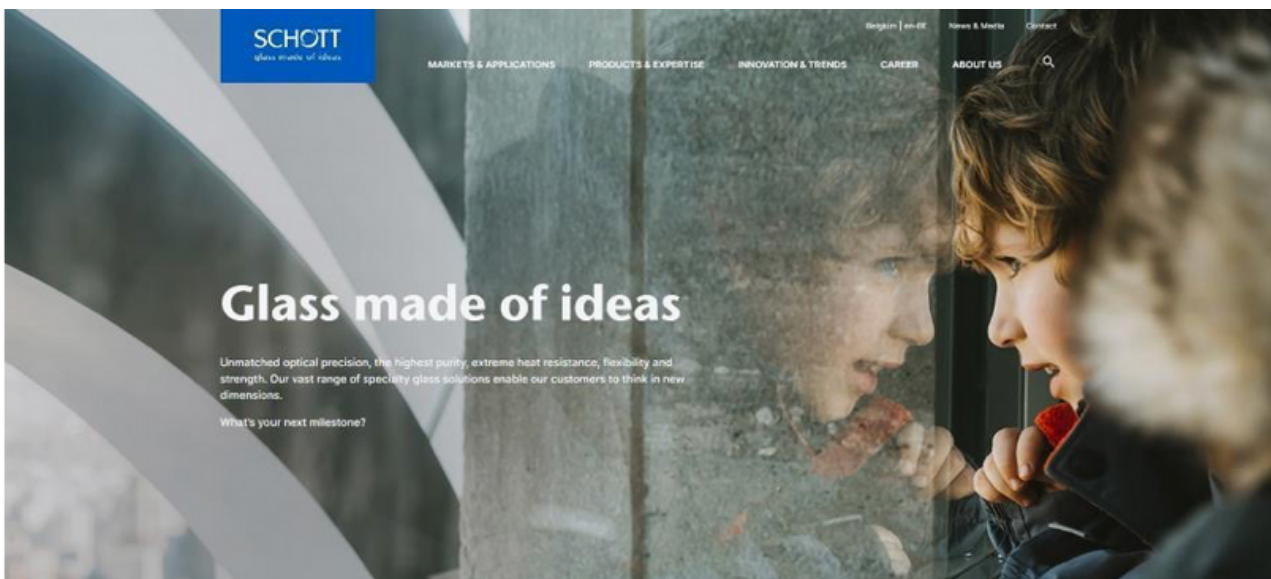
40+	different websites
40	widgets
5000+	articles migrated

Content Migration Success Stories

An all-round solution covering all the client's needs

Schott AG is a German multinational company specializing in the manufacture of glass & glass-ceramics was rebuilding its digital presence, with one of the main pain points being a large amount of outdated content.

Schott expected a modern responsive website which would deliver the right information to the right type of customer in an easily accessible way.

Besides an effective design and robust technical solution, Actum reviewed & migrated thousands of content items from the old to the new website in less than 3 months.

As a result, we provided Schott with a robust scalable digital platform with top customer experience and engaging content.

"The project for Schott started with a website but soon we could see that the ambitions of the client are higher, and that the new website is only a first step on a digitalization path. We were happy to share our experience in optimizing CX in manufacturing industry and worked with Schott on strategy how to achieve their ambitious goals." - Petr Lazar, CX strategy consultant at Actum.

600+ articles migrated

1000+ items reviewed, updated & placed in the correct location

100% responsive UX

When it comes to content migration, partnering with experts can make a significant difference in the success of your project. ACTUM Digital, with over 25 years of experience serving international clients, is a leading agency specializing in content migration, content strategy, and SEO optimization.

www.actumdigital.com

Ready to simplify your content migration process? Schedule a 30-minute consultation with our content operations experts at ACTUM Digital to get started on your migration journey. With the right expertise and support, you can avoid the pitfalls of content migration and ensure a seamless transition.

tell me more

ACTUM Digital