

International SEO migration checklist

A practical checklist for protecting visibility during multilingual domain, subfolder, platform or structural migrations.

1. Pre-migration planning

- ☐ Create a full old-to-new URL map for all important international pages.
- ☐ Map each localized URL to the closest equivalent page, not a generic homepage.
- ☐ Export current rankings, traffic, clicks, impressions and indexed-page data by market.
- ☐ Identify high-value backlinks pointing to international URLs.
- ☐ Crawl the current site to capture canonicals, hreflang, internal links, status codes and sitemap URLs.

2. Redirect and signal planning

- ☐ Define 301 redirects for every mapped international URL.
- ☐ Avoid redirect chains, redirect loops and wrong-language destinations.
- ☐ Plan hreflang updates for all new URLs.
- ☐ Confirm canonical rules for each localized page.
- ☐ Prepare clean XML sitemaps with only final indexable URLs.
- ☐ Update internal links to point directly to new URLs.

3. Launch-day QA

- ☐ Test priority redirects and status codes immediately after launch.
- ☐ Validate hreflang, canonicals, noindex rules and sitemap availability.
- ☐ Check language selectors, navigation and internal links.
- ☐ Look for wrong-language pages, unexpected 404s and blocked pages.
- ☐ Submit updated sitemaps where appropriate.

4. Post-launch monitoring

- ☐ Crawl the new international structure.
- ☐ Monitor rankings, traffic, clicks, impressions and indexed pages by market.
- ☐ Check Search Console coverage, crawl errors and sitemap processing.
- ☐ Review backlinks to ensure important old URLs resolve to relevant new URLs.
- ☐ Triage lost rankings, missing redirects, hreflang errors and unexpected indexation changes.

5. Stabilization review

- ☐ Compare performance against the pre-migration baseline.
- ☐ Prioritize fixes by business value and visibility risk.
- ☐ Confirm that key international pages are ranking and being served correctly.
- ☐ Document unresolved risks and next-step recommendations.

Note: A migration is not complete on launch day. It is complete when the new structure has been crawled, monitored and stabilized.

Prepared as a support asset for the International SEO Consultant page. Use this checklist before, during and after international SEO migrations.