RESULTS YOU CAN MEASURE

A WORKING CHECKLIST

The website launch checklist.

The checks that stand between an approved design and a website that is ready for business. Record owners, results and evidence, then make the launch call.

Looks finished is not the same as ready.

resultsyoucanmeasure.com

BEFORE YOU START

How to use this checklist

For each row, mark **Pass**, **Fail** or **N/A**, name an owner and keep evidence of the test: a screenshot, a delivered email, a report. N/A needs a reason. Repeat the critical journeys on the live site after the switch. Adapt the list to your platform, business and risk; it is not a full security, accessibility or legal audit.

WEBSITE

LAUNCH DATE

LAUNCH LEAD

BUSINESS APPROVER

Launch blockers

Do not launch with unresolved critical failures: a broken enquiry or payment journey, private data publicly reachable, accidental search blocks on priority pages, or no tested route back to the previous version. Record lesser issues with an owner and a deadline. **Do not let a cosmetic snag hide a commercial failure.**

What is inside

1. Before launch: business and customer journeys
2. Before launch: visibility, data and recovery
3. The 20 technical SEO checks
4. Launch day: verify the live site
5. After launch: monitor, maintain and hand over
6. The launch decision record

Companion article, with the reasoning behind every section:
resultsyoucanmeasure.com/blog/website-launch-checklist/

SECTION 1

Before launch: business and customer journeys

Start from what the website must achieve for the business, then prove a customer can achieve it. Test journeys, not just pages, and follow every enquiry to the inbox.

Purpose and content

Confirm the audience, the offer, the primary action and the success measures. Approve copy, claims, contact details, prices and downloads.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Navigation and journeys

Complete real journeys from landing page to enquiry, booking or purchase. Check menus, search, telephone links and error pages.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Forms and delivery

Submit every form. Check validation, spam controls, attachments, the confirmation, the destination inbox and the CRM record. Test failure handling.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Transactions, if applicable

Test successful and declined payments, tax, delivery, discounts, stock, confirmations and refunds. Confirm production payment credentials.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Devices and accessibility

Test real phones and browsers. Check keyboard navigation, visible focus, labels, error messages, contrast, zoom and media alternatives.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Performance

Test the key templates and journeys, not only the homepage. Review image sizing, scripts, fonts and loading on a mobile connection.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

SECTION 2

Before launch: visibility, data and recovery

Protect what the old site has earned, make sure the new one can be found and measured, and prove you have a way back before you need it.

Existing-site baseline

Save current URLs, important landing pages, search performance and conversion data. Identify content and links worth preserving.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Redirect mapping

Map changed URLs to relevant replacements as permanent redirects, without chains. Do not send everything to the homepage.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Search readiness

Review titles, headings, internal links, canonicals and indexing rules against the 20 technical SEO checks on the next two pages.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Privacy and tracking

List every cookie, script, embed and the data collected. Review notices and consent or exception requirements. Test choices and withdrawal.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Measurement

Verify the correct accounts and containers, remove duplicate tags and test meaningful events. Distinguish clicks from completed submissions and sales.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Security and recovery

Review permissions, authentication, updates and secrets. Back up files, database and configuration. Test a restore and write down the rollback steps.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

SECTION 3 · TECHNICAL SEO

The 20 technical SEO checks

Run every item against the production site, not staging. Tick it only when you have seen the evidence. Section owner: _____

- [ ] **1 Build sitemap.xml**
  Generate it from the live site, list only canonical, indexable URLs and reference it from robots.txt.

- [ ] **2 Add robots.txt**
  Allow the crawlers you want and block admin paths. Remove any leftover blanket Disallow from staging.

- [ ] **3 Remove noindex tags**
  Strip temporary noindex rules from pages that should rank. Keep deliberate exclusions and record why.

- [ ] **4 Add canonical tags**
  Every page declares its preferred URL, pointing at the live domain, never at staging.

- [ ] **5 Add meta titles**
  Unique and specific, one per page, front-loaded with what the page is about.

- [ ] **6 Meta descriptions**
  A specific pitch for the click on every important page, not a keyword list.

- [ ] **7 One H1 per page**
  Exactly one, matching what the page is actually about and the title it carries.

- [ ] **8 Fix heading order**
  H2s under the H1, H3s under H2s, no skipped levels. Headings are structure, not styling.

- [ ] **9 Add alt text**
  Describe what each image shows. Purely decorative images get an empty alt, not keywords.

- [ ] **10 Add schema markup**
  Organisation or LocalBusiness plus types that match visible page content. Test with a validator.

- [ ] **11 Add internal links**
  Link important pages from body copy with descriptive anchor text, not only from the menu.

- [ ] **12 Fix broken links**
  Crawl the site, fix 404s and update links that point at redirected URLs to go straight to the destination.

- [ ] **13 Compress images**
  Serve correctly sized images in modern formats, with width and height set to stop layout shift.

- [ ] **14 Core Web Vitals**
  Test the key templates on a mid-range phone, not just the homepage on the office connection.

- [ ] **15 Fix mobile layout**
  No sideways scrolling, tap targets large enough, forms usable with the on-screen keyboard.

- [ ] **16 Enforce HTTPS**
  Valid certificate, HTTP redirecting to HTTPS, no mixed-content warnings anywhere.

- [ ] **17 Clean up URL slugs**
  Short, lowercase, hyphenated, readable. Never rename an established URL without a redirect.

- [ ] **18 Add an og:image**
  A 1200 by 630 image per key page, so shared links show a proper card rather than a random crop.

- [ ] **19 Verify Search Console**
  Prove ownership, submit the production sitemap and check coverage once indexing starts.

- [ ] **20 Add llms.txt**
  A plain-text map of your key pages for AI assistants. Early days, cheap to add, worth having.

The instruction is not "remove every restriction". Some pages should deliberately stay excluded from search: record which, and why.

SECTION 4

Launch day: verify the live site

The staging version passing yesterday does not prove the production version passes today. Repeat the important tests on the live site, then watch it.

Ownership and go/no-go

Name the launch lead, the approver and the rollback decision-maker. Review open blockers. Agree a launch window with support available.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Domain and hosting

Verify DNS, HTTPS, the preferred hostname and production configuration. Preserve email records. Check external services and scheduled tasks.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Public access and indexing

Remove only the temporary access and indexing blocks. Retain intended exclusions. Keep staging protected and verify live canonical URLs.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Redirects and links

Test the priority old URLs, their destinations and internal links on production. Check missing-page handling and remove staging references.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Repeat critical journeys

Repeat the form, delivery, booking and payment tests on the live site after deployment. Check caches and production integrations.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Discovery and monitoring

Verify Search Console ownership and submit the production sitemap. Confirm analytics, uptime checks, error monitoring and alert recipients.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

SECTION 5

After launch: monitor, maintain and hand over

Launch is the beginning of the evidence. Plan checks for the first day, the first week and the following weeks, and finish the handover.

First working day

Review availability, errors, form delivery, transactions and analytics. Fix business-critical problems before cosmetic refinements.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

First week

Review customer feedback, key journeys, broken links, redirects and Search Console indexing reports. Investigate unexpected changes.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Following weeks

Compare search and business outcomes with the baseline, allowing for traffic levels, seasonality and migration effects. Assign improvements.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Access and ownership

Confirm the business holds access to the domain, hosting, CMS, analytics, search and other essential accounts. Store credentials securely.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Maintenance and support

Record updates, the backup schedule, the restore process, monitoring, support contacts, renewal dates and responsibilities.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

Review date

Agree the next performance review and prioritise further work by customer impact, risk and measurable business value.

PASS FAIL N/A

OWNER

EVIDENCE

THE LAUNCH CALL

Launch decision record

One named person makes the call, on the evidence in this checklist. Circle the decision, record the exceptions and agree the rollback before the switch, not during it.

Decision

GO	NO GO	GO WITH RECORDED EXCEPTIONS

OUTSTANDING ISSUES AND MITIGATION

ROLLBACK TRIGGER: WHAT FAILURE REVERSES THE LAUNCH

ROLLBACK OWNER: WHO EXECUTES IT

APPROVED BY

DATE AND TIME

A website does not need to be perfect before it launches. It needs to be ready for the job you are asking it to do: customers can use it, enquiries reach you, search foundations are protected, measurement is meaningful and somebody knows what to do if things go wrong.

Need a second pair of eyes before launch?

We review launch readiness against this checklist for you: customer journeys, enquiry handling, search visibility, measurement and the technical checks. The outcome is a prioritised view of what must be fixed, what can wait and what needs monitoring.

Book a pre-launch review

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