

The quick website launch checklist

1. Has Google Analytics or equivalent software.

Why is this important?

You should be tracking how your pages are doing, which pages are popular and which of your pages are making money. Use Google Analytics or equivalent software. (haveamint.com, Kissmetrics.com or Mixpanel.com)

2. Has been tested with Pagespeed(http://code.google.com/speed/page-speed/) and Yslow(http://developer.yahoo.com/yslow/).

This is important as 70% of user visible speed improvements come via improving the client-side optimizations. Pagespeed and Yslow check your site's conformance to best practices and can suggest areas of improvement.

3. Has a usability testing done via <u>feedbackarmy.com</u> and <u>usertesting.com</u>.

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This is important as customers drop unusable websites to go to competitors. Even testing with 5 users can find 85% of the usability issues. These websites make usability testing simple and affordable.

4. Admins get error emails when site error happens.

No matter how much you have tested, users are going to do unexpected things to your website, which can cause site errors. If you get a email informing about this, you can fix this proactively.

5. Has monitoring setup with Siteuptime.com/Pingdom.com or equivalent.

No matter how good your infrastructure, sites crash. A site-monitoring service can inform you before your customers do.

6. Media and database are backed up.

Servers die, humans make errors. Your website data is too precious and backups are affordable.

Your web host can generally provide you a option to backup entire servers. You should also be backing up your database and media to a separate server from your main host.

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7. Backups are tested.

Doing backups is useless if you never test them. Too many people miss this obvious step when they setup their backups.

8. Has a sitemap.xml

Search engines are good at finding all your pages, but with sitemap you can guide and hint them, as well as guide about the relative importance of the pages.

9. Has a robots.txt

You may have a lot of things you do not want the world to know about. (Eg user uploaded media). Use robots.txt to hide them from search engines.

10. Has been tested in multiple browsers.

Your development team may have only tested a subset of browsers. Use a service like <u>browsershots.org</u> and you can ensure your site looks good in all browsers.

11. Users have a way to contact admins

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You should have a contact page and make it easy to contact you and email you.

12. Admins get emails on broken links.

Pages are moved around, and links break. These links can be extrnal or internal. If you are notified when a user gets a 404, you can respond. (For example put the redirect at the old url.)

13. Has a whats new section and/or a RSS feed.

Your customers would like to know about you. They should not have to search to get this info. If you use a blog software a RSS feed should be automatic.