



GUIDE
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WordPress Site Migration

Migrating a site from a server (or service) to another is a process that may cause worry: can migration result in data loss? Will the website experience downtime? Will the site's search engine ranking drop?

In order to succeed in migrating a WordPress site – and avoid the aforementioned pitfalls – the migration process must be planned carefully. With the help of this guide and its tips you will be able to navigate through a site migration without big worries or pesky downtimes, avoiding the most typical problems of a migration altogether!

Many existing guides about migrating a WordPress site will only tell you how to transfer the site data from a WordPress installation to another. The process is actually a bit more complicated than this, and usually involves many steps one ought to consider beforehand. In this small guide, we'll reveal the most quintessential things you need to know before and during a site migration, and how to successfully transfer your site from an old server environment into a new one.

You don't have to be an IT guru nor understand absolutely everything about how a website works in order to benefit from these tips, as Seravo's guide for WordPress site migration is suitable for each and everyone interested or involved in planning and executing a site migration. Here you'll find useful tips for the migration process in its entirety, no matter how much prior experience you have!

Before You Begin

Most likely your website is used and accessed by many other stakeholders other than its regular visitors: your organization's IT department, web developers, digital agencies... So, prior to any technical changes, don't forget to communicate your plans to migrate a site. A small website can be migrated rather effortlessly, but especially larger websites with lots of integrations and additional services may require a lot more time and careful planning with stakeholders.

When it comes to migration, it's not a good idea to bite more than you can chew: migrate the site as it is right now. Site updates, small fixes, domain or URL structure changes or any

other web development not directly related to the migration are best to be taken care of at a time when no data is being transferred.

What Needs to Be Transferred?

The site migration is a process that can be divided into two separate but equally important parts: transferring the domain, and transferring the site's data (its files).

Domain Transfer

Domain

The domain is how your website's visitors access it by writing it in their web browsers – such as **seravo.com**. The same domain can be used, even if the site's data is transferred from a location to another. In a migration process it may be needed to transfer the domain from a registrar to another.

Data Transfer

Database

Perhaps the most essential part of the site's contents is the database, in which crucial information such as user credentials, posts or orders (if you have an e-commerce site) are stored. A database is an SQL file, size ranging from a few megabytes to several gigabytes.

WordPress Content

WordPress is a Content Management System (CMS), which has its own structure: for example, in the **wp-content** directory reside all necessary plugins and themes for your site. At Seravo, WordPress is pre-installed, so you don't need to take care of deploying it yourself. This way you'll only need to migrate the wp-content directory (and the site's database) to Seravo.

If your site has non-WordPress content, such as files or static HTML pages in separate subdirectories, these ought to be taken into account so that they may be migrated also to the new server location. Check in with your website's developer or current admin whether or not your site has such content.

How to Succeed in Migration – Step by Step

1. Make sure there's enough time! Even if the site is migrated with a short notice, it's good to reserve at least a week for the entire migration process, so that any and all domains can be transferred to Seravo. Domain transfer is required before Seravo can make DNS (Domain Name System) changes and direct the web traffic into your new WordPress server. At Seravo, the upkeep of one domain is always included in the plan's price.
2. Find out when the contract of your current web hosting service is about to expire. Ensure that your site does not have copyrights or other such limitations that would prevent you from migrating its contents. Ask from the site's developer or admin if your site has non-WordPress content in subdirectories, or if your site has integrations to external systems.
3. If you don't have the credentials for your website, you'll be able to get them from the site's current admin. In order to migrate the WordPress site you'll need admin access into the WordPress installation. In addition, you'll need information for transferring the domain: find out who is the domain's current registrar and ask for the **domain transfer key** and **DNS records**. If your site has SSH or FTP access, it's a good idea to have those credentials at hand.
4. Let your organization, web developers and any other stakeholders know that your site is being migrated into a new environment. Come up with a date when the actual migration happens, and ask that no updates are being done on that day. This will prevent the possibility of data loss. It is not recommended to carry out a site migration during a sales campaign or other such event on your website. In the case of e-commerce sites, a **maintenance mode** is briefly activated to prevent anyone from accessing your site and thus attempting to place an order during the migration. This is to ensure your customers end up on the fresh copy of your live site, and not the old one about to be closed down!
5. Place an order for the new hosting and upkeep. If you have ordered a plan from Seravo but you haven't ordered a migration for it on the order form, worry not! You can always send a message to our customer service (help@seravo.com) and let us know that you wish to book a migration for your site.

6. Make sure the WordPress specialist carrying out the migration has all the credentials. Let them know what is the desired schedule for the migration, and when the site should open from its new server location. Do note that the domain transfers or DNS changes are not instantaneous, and so they may limit the migration schedule. Your specialist may have an estimation of when the site is available from the new server.
7. After the data has been transferred and a temporary copy is set up on the new server, you can examine the copy and make sure everything looks as it should. Note that any changes in the PHP or WordPress core version may affect how the result looks. This is a last chance to ensure everything works, before your web visitors will see the new live site.
8. If everything looks just right, let the WordPress specialist know that updates to the DNS can be made. This means the web traffic gets directed to its new destination at Seravo. As soon as the changes propagate into DNS, your website's visitors will get directed to the new server instead of the old one. During this phase a maintenance mode may be temporarily enabled on your site. In addition, a warning of the expired SSL certificate may be briefly visible.
9. That's it! As your website resides in its new home, it's time to cancel the old web hosting services. This includes the domain (and DNS management), if your domain was transferred to Seravo and they won't be used for anything else. Do make note of where your email service is located and don't cancel them, though – unless they are being transferred elsewhere as well.

Let a WordPress Specialist Help You

Want the fastest possible environment for your WordPress site? Migrate it to Seravo! If you wish to migrate your site to Seravo on your own, see our [Knowledge Bank](#) for more instructions. For an additional fee, you can let Seravo's WordPress specialist take care of the migration for you.

When you order the migration from Seravo, our specialists will take care of transferring your data, domain as well as DNS changes, and will perform a thorough check on your site. After



the migration is complete, you will be sent a report of the site's current situation, with tips on how to further optimize its performance.

Typically a WordPress migration takes 1–2 hours of billable work, whereas migrating an e-commerce (WooCommerce) site will take 3–4 hours of billable work. If you have already ordered the migration from Seravo, our WordPress specialist will contact you shortly to begin the process!

Even if you are taking care of the migration yourself, our specialists will be there to support you and provide tips for migration. You can always contact our specialists and order a site migration or ask for assistance by sending us an email to help@seravo.com!

Things to Consider

SEO – Search Engine Optimization

If the site's domain and URL address structure remain the same, migrating the site into a new server environment won't negatively affect your site's SEO score. Even if the details of how search engines determine the SEO score of a site is kept mostly a secret, it has been deduced that site speed is one of the major factors that affect the search result ranking. As Seravo's hosting and upkeep is especially optimized for WordPress, we ensure your site loads as fast as possible!

Glossary

admin

In WordPress all users have been assigned a user role. In order to export site data, admin access to the site is needed. Never share anyone's existing username and password – best practice is to create an entirely new admin user account for the duration of the site migration process.

domain

Domain, such as seravo.com is a domain. A domain may also have subdomains – such as **www.seravo.com** or **example.seravo.com**. A website has one main domain, which remains visible in the browser's address bar. In addition, several other domains may also direct web traffic to the site. By default, all additional domains at Seravo direct website visitors to the site's main domain – no additional configuration required!

DNS

DNS or *Domain Name System* connects domains with **IP addresses**. Migrating a website into a new server location usually requires changes into the domain's **DNS records**, as the IP address changes.

After the records of a domain have been updated, the information will *propagate* into the system, and website visitors will be directed to the new server location. The updates to the worldwide system are not instantaneous, which is why transferring a domain beforehand is crucial in a site migration project.

maintenance mode

WordPress sites can be hidden from logged out users by setting the site into a *maintenance mode*. More often than not this is achieved by installing a plugin and activating it. When migrating a webshop, it is almost always necessary to momentarily utilize maintenance mode in order to prevent site visitors from ending up in the old version of the site during migration.

integration

An *integration* exists when data is being transferred or processed automatically between two or more separate systems. For example, your website could be integrated into your organization's own **CRM** or **ERP software**.

migration

Transferring data from a system to another, e.g. when transferring a WordPress site from an old server into a new one at Seravo.

SEO

SEO is an abbreviation of *Search Engine Optimization*. A website that has been optimized for search engines means the contents of a website (such as text and images) have been designed in a way that the site ranks high in search engine results, such as Google. The way in which search engines rank websites isn't always clearly disclosed to the public, but it has been deduced that short loading times positively affects the ranking of a site. As Seravo's premium hosting and upkeep has been especially optimized for WordPress, your site is guaranteed to load quickly and have good SEO in terms of speed!



certificate

SSL (short for *Secure Sockets Layer*) is a cryptographic protocol for making connections secure over the internet. Nowadays SSL may be used interchangeably with the newer *TLS* protocol. A digital TLS/SSL *certificate* ensures the communication between a website visitor and the web server is secure. By default, all websites at Seravo's premium WordPress hosting and upkeep have **HTTPS enabled** and use a **Let's Encrypt** certificate.

database

A *database* is where the site's information is stored in the form of *tables*. On a WordPress site, the database contains everything from posts and metadata to usernames and settings. A database is an SQL file and its size may range from a few megabytes into several gigabytes.

transfer key

Also known as *authorization key* or *EPP key*, this key is required for transferring the domain from an old **domain registrar** to a new one. It may be necessary to change your domain's registrar as your site's hosting service provider changes. At Seravo, the upkeep of one domain is included in the price of each plan.

hosting

Hosting or *web hosting* is a service in which a service provider offers server disk space for its customers to host a website, so that it may be accessible to the public on the internet. Compared to traditional web hosts, Seravo is different – we offer a plan which includes everything you need to maintain a fast and secure WordPress site. You don't need to buy more speed or pay extra to make your WordPress more secure. The plan includes everything: a domain, DNS, SSL/TLS certificate, and of course a WordPress installation ready to be customized. You only need to log in!



WordPress

The most popular **CMS** (*content management system*). About a quarter of all websites on the entire internet have been built with WordPress! What's more, the WordPress core is **open source** – which means it's free to use and developed by a worldwide community!



Seravo – Premium Hosting and Upkeep for Your WordPress

Seravo's premium hosting and upkeep for WordPress offers the best possible environment for your WordPress site. Seravo's service is a secure and scalable hosting solution for upkeep of any kind of WordPress site. At Seravo, WordPress specialists take care of your site's technical aspects: top performance, updates and security.

Premium-tason hosting ja ylläpito WordPress-sivustoille on ollut päätuotteemme vuodesta 2014 asti. Seravolta saat nopean, turvallisen ja vihreän WordPress-ratkaisun, jonka avulla voit keskittyä rakentamaan liiketoimintaasi.

WordPress – the Most Popular CMS

WordPress is an open source content managing system – and the most popular CMS in the world. At Seravo, WordPress is pre-installed, so you only need to login and start building your site.

WordPress Hosting and Upkeep

At Seravo's premium hosting and upkeep the plan includes monitoring of your site 24/7, automatic backups, and tested updates. We are the fastest WordPress hosting service according to Chrome user data! Find out more at ismyhostfastyet.com.

Seravo's Premium Hosting and Upkeep for WordPress

- ▶ Everything you need for WordPress in a single plan!
- ▶ Tested, automatic updates for WordPress core and plugins.
- ▶ Especially optimized for WordPress (Linux, Nginx and MariaDB) to ensure top loading times for your site.

- ▶ 24/7 monitoring with the latest technologies available (IPv6, HTTP 2.0).
- ▶ Automatic daily backups of your entire site, available for 30 days at a time.
- ▶ Server security guaranteed by professionals.
- ▶ Powerful servers with lots of bandwidth in multiple geographic locations.
- ▶ WordPress plugins and themes at your disposal.
- ▶ The possibility to use WooCommerce (WP Business plan).
- ▶ SSL/TLS certificate, HTTP traffic statistics and much more!

Our Customers

There are over 5000 websites currently in Seravo's premium hosting and upkeep, monitored 24/7. These include websites of all sizes, from small startups to listed companies and public administration. Our services suit all kinds of WordPress sites.

Read more about our customers and their stories on [Seravo's blog!](#)

Expert Services

In addition to web hosting and upkeep, WordPress specialists at Seravo can assist you in developing your site. For an additional fee the specialists can...

- ▶ Migrate your site
- ▶ Optimize your site's speed
- ▶ Enhance site security
- ▶ Offer standby support for an event or campaign

Seravo offers its customers technical support for WordPress sites of all kinds and sizes. For continuous web development and new bespoke web projects we can recommend the services of digital agencies Seravo has partnered with.

[Contact us](#) to find out more!