



Launch Planning Guide

VISION[™]

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All of the hard work put into your new site is about to be introduced to the public. While the actual mechanics of the launch are relatively simple, they do require forethought and planning to avoid surprises on launch day that hinder your visitors from experiencing the site.

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Roles and Responsibilities Guide

The following guide is intended to help you identify who should be involved and in what capacity. Keep in mind it might make sense for multiple people to fulfill a specific role, or for one person to fill multiple roles.

Project role ...	Takes care of ...	Typically filled by ...
Decision Maker (Approximately 3-7 hours/week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deciding final launch date Signoff on Punch List items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrator Communications Director IT Director/Chief Information Officer IT Project Manager / Consultant
Project Manager (Approximately 10-15 hours/week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinating content migration, DNS adjustments, and completion of Punch List Primary contact for all Vision communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications Director Public Information Officer IT Director Webmaster Assistant Manager IT Project Manager / Consultant
IT Contact (Approximately 4-6 hours/week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email questions / setup DNS Set-Up Possible SSL configuration Possible integrations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT Director Webmaster
Content Contributors (Approximately 5-8 hours/week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migrating content to the website which is not covered by Vision Reviewing previously migrated content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications Coordinator Department Staff Clerk Intern
Billing Contact (Approximately 2 hours/week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closing final billing milestones Resolving questions about the billing of the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistant Manager Finance Director Clerk

Risk Management Plan

A risk is an uncertain event or condition that can have a positive or negative effect on a project's objectives such as scope, schedule, cost and quality. Vision can help you mitigate the most common launch risks by utilizing the Risk Management table below:

What is the risk?	How severe is it?	What does it entail?	How to mitigate it...
Unrealistic timeline	High	Not allowing sufficient time for major task completion	Coordinate all dates with your Vision PM to ensure that the dates can be achieved.
Sign off / Approval process	High	Punch List items can cause a project to proceed slowly, delaying launch; limited time to review site with key stakeholders	Decide which tasks are the highest priority, resolve those and then work with Vision to identify which issues can be resolved post-launch
Insufficient team resources	Medium	A lack of resources, especially around Content Migration	Be realistic about availability and plan timelines accordingly to balance workload with project deliverables
Team availability	Medium	Key project members are unavailable for various reasons (i.e. competing projects, turnover, etc.)	Make sure all of your launch dates are set up with your Vision PM, especially making sure your launch day is on a Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday
Scope changes	Medium	Adding new feature requests at the end of the project increases the likelihood of an extended timeline	Work with your Project Manager to refine scope to limit the impact on your timeline

Training Expectations

Can you describe a “day” of training?

Typically, Vision training days are broken down into two parts: a CMS introductory lesson and a customizable advanced lesson. The first part is attended by all individuals who plan to interact with the CMS. An advanced lesson best suits people managing settings and the nuances of each CMS component.

What is covered in the basic training?

The introductory lesson is more rigid to support everyone’s basic understanding of core functionality. For example, we cover items such as dashboard buttons and practice transitioning from the site’s back-end to the front-end.

Once comfortable with navigating around the CMS, we transition to covering functionality such as mega menus, site homepage, and basic page creation.

We finish our training by discussing some of the most utilized CMS components: Image Library, Document Central, Calendar, and News.

What determines the advanced lesson’s agenda?

Each client may customize the agenda by choosing five “must have” components and three “nice to have” components to be covered by the technical trainer. The advanced session is guaranteed to cover the top five most important items and will cover the next three if time allows.

How do I best scale my training across our organization?

Vision offers different training options to meet your organization’s unique needs. Some clients will schedule additional paid-training days on-site. Others rely on Vision’s extensive online resources available directly from within the CMS. For example, written user guides and video tutorials are included throughout the product.

3rd Party Integrations

What are the most common integration methods?

There are a number of ways to integrate a 3rd party product. Each method comes with individual pros and cons. Please note that Vision cannot directly modify 3rd party applications, but we can advise you on the best way to integrate.

Four of the most common integration methods we support include:

1. *iFrames*: a method to frame external pages within the body of your webpage
2. *HTML Template*: a method to make external pages match your site's design
3. *Embed Code*: a method to paste compatible code into the content area

Can you provide examples of embedded script types?

Examples of embedded script types include Video Players (e.g., YouTube, Vimeo), Windows Media Player (e.g., WMV), QuickTime Videos (e.g., MOV MP4), and Java Applets as well as others.

Are you able to integrate with social media platforms?

Yes, Vision's CMS is deeply integrated with both Facebook and Twitter. Custom integrations with Instagram and LinkedIn are also available.

Does Vision support advanced integrations?

Yes, we work directly with our clients to achieve custom integrations. Examples of larger integrations include Granicus, NeoGov, ESRI, Swagit, Municode, Laserfiche, and IQM2. If you have a particular integration approach in mind, let your Project Manager know and they can help facilitate a discussion about possibilities.

Domain Name System (DNS) Initialization

Step 1: Gather all domains used for your site

Many organizations use multiple domains for their site to help with branding. Vision needs a list of all of your domains so they can be directed to your newly launched site.

Primary Domain – This is the official URL for your site that will be used on branding or promotional materials.

Vanity Domains – These other domains are either considered legacy or for special use. You will get the best SEO and analytics if these are all redirected to the primary domain.

Once gathered, send the list to your Project Manager as soon as possible to prepare for launch day.

Step 2: Prepare DNS

Each domain has a Domain Name System (DNS) record that tells people where to find your site. You will need to identify the company (or companies) that manage these records and verify your team has access.

Once you have access, change the Time-to-Live (TTL) to 5 minutes or the minimum allowed by the provider. This is important for launch day because the world will not know your new location until they look for a new record when the TTL expires. Do this for any domains you are pointing to the site.

Step 3: Verify Sender Policy Framework (SPF)

Vision's email server must be an authorized sender of emails on behalf of your organization so that spam filters do not block the emails. This is done by adding the address of our server to the SPF record in your DNS. This is usually listed as a text record and will look like this: `v=spf1 mx a ip4:38.106.5.33/32 ~all`. The "ip4:38.106.5.33/32" is our server and this needs to be added to the existing record. Do not add a second record since this will confuse the email providers when checked.

Day of Launch

On launch day, the only thing you will need to change is the "A" record in the DNS for each domain. This will point all visitors to your new site.

After changing the "A" record to the new IP verify it is propagating around the world. See this in action here: <https://www.whatsmydns.net/>.

Search Expectations (I / II)

Google Search Console

How can residents efficiently locate my newly launched site?

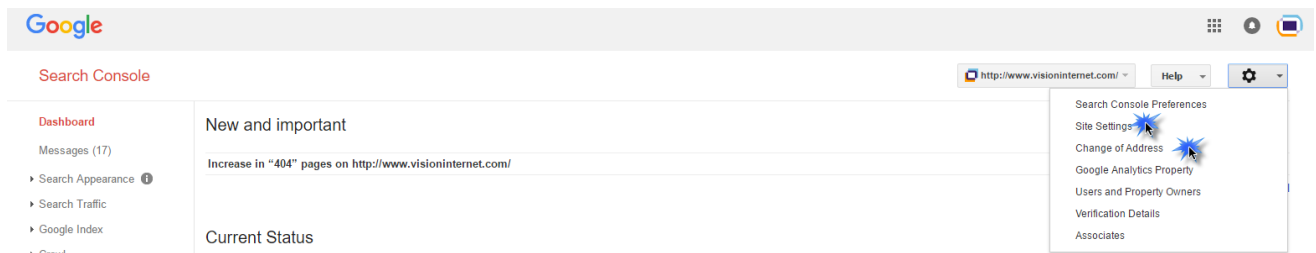
To return the best search results, Vision can help configure settings in the Google Search Console (<https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/home>). This tool will be the key to returning current Google search results as quickly as possible. If Vision has access, we can submit the site for indexing and add the new site map to accelerate this process.

If verification is needed, using the linked Analytics account is the easiest way to accomplish this, but if this is not possible due to the current site not having Analytics then use the system of adding a file to the new site.

Did you recently change your domain?

When changing domains it is important to alert Google so they can transfer the domain reputation from the old to the new. This supports search engine optimization and improves page rankings.

See the below screenshot for locations where you can manage these changes



What happens on the day of launch?

Vision will submit the following indexing requests on launch day:

- A request to index the homepage and all other direct links
- A request to index the sitemap (e.g., /sitemap.xml)

Search Expectations (II / II)

visionSearch

Once on our site, how do residents search for specific results?

By default, visionSearch will behave like Google by indexing all pages that are publicly accessible. If a page is hidden from showing in the navigation and there are no direct links to the page it will not show up in search results.

The system will regularly crawl the entire site each week. We will schedule a full crawl the first night of your launch to quickly populate the search results but this will result in the site being slow overnight as the process runs.

Here are a few things to think about before launch:

- You can populate commonly used synonyms within your organization by following this navigation path:

Site Settings → Site Configurations → Search Management:

- Make sure all pages and directories you prefer excluded from search results are not showing in the navigation.
- Let your PM know the URL of any other sites that you would like to be included in site search results.

Google Custom Search Engine (CSE)

Google may take up to two weeks before all search results are available. If your old site was very large, this may take longer because Google still needs to verify all prior links. Smaller sites may be able to index more quickly.

Post Launch Communication

Once your website launches, your main point of contact at Vision will transition from Project Management to our Client Success and Support teams. Below, we've identified key points of contact at Vision for your reference.

You may also hear from these staff directly over time regarding new services, products and other enhancements that will ensure your website remains relevant and innovative.

Have a question or need support?

These teams are focused on customer enablement across the full suite of Vision products. You may also hear important notices about upcoming site updates and the like from either team.

Have an idea or product request?

Product enhancements and best practice resources are best when developed in collaboration with our clients. You may hear from one of the following people in this regard.



Robert Schnelle
Client Success Manager
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Denise Petrulis
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Ashley Fruechting
Sr. Director, Marketing
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Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Domain Name System (DNS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The way internet domain names are located and translated into internet protocol addresses; the system by which internet domain names are tracked and regulated
Embed Code	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To place or incorporate a block of code, or essential object, due to non-standard internet technologies directly into the page source
HTML Templates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-built website composed of HTML pages that may include integrated images, text content, or support files for font styles and Javascripts
iFrame (inline frame)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An HTML document embedded inside another HTML document on a website; often used to insert content from another source, such as an advertisement, into a Webpage
Java Applets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A small Internet-based program written in Java, a programming language for the Web, which can be downloaded by any computer; can perform interactive animations, immediate calculations, or other simple tasks
QuickTime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apple Inc.'s multiplatform, multimedia technology for handling video, sound, animation, graphics, text, interactivity, and music; composed of a suite of applications, most notably QuickTime Player, an environment for media authoring
Sender Policy Framework (SPF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A simple email-validation system designed to detect email spoofing by providing a mechanism to allow receiving mail exchanges to check that incoming mail from a domain comes from a host authorized by that domain's administrator
Time-to-Live (TTL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of hops that a packet is permitted to travel before being discarded by a router
Vanity Domain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A subdomain of an ISP's domain that is aliased to an individual user account
Windows Media Player (WMP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A media player and media library application developed by Microsoft that is used for playing audio, video, and viewing images on personal computers running the Microsoft Windows operating system

Launch Checklist

You're now ready for launch! Use this checklist to track the completion of tasks in preparation for your final launch countdown. Though finishing every task in advance is not required, the more you are able to do, the better. We look forward to collaborating with your team.

Tasks	Completion Date
Domain Name System (DNS) Initialization	
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify primary domain	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify and list all vanity domains	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Send list of all domains to Vision Project Manager	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify DNS provider and verify correct access	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Update Time-to-Live to minimum allowed value	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Update SPF record to add Vision email server	_____
Launch Day	
<input type="checkbox"/> Change DNS "A" records to point to new IP	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Test domain redirects	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Choose a specific launch day	_____