

HTTPS Migration Checklist

HTTPS is an imperative in 2017. There are multiple advantages:

1. Security and Privacy- Security benefits your overall goals in a few ways:
 - Authenticates the website and server communication
 - Avoids damage by third parties
 - Encrypts data and communication, like browsing history and credit card information
2. Increased Rankings – Not a major boost, but most migrants see a lift in rankings.
3. Referral Data – In Google Analytics for your HTTP site, the traffic passing through referral sources can appear as “direct” traffic. Through an HTTPS site, the security of the referring domain is preserved.

Steps and best practices

- Determine if you require a single, multi-domain, or wildcard certificate
- Use 2048-bit key certificates for Certificate Signing Request (CSR) on your webserver
- Make sure to maintain a current SSL certificate
- Get and configure the required TLS certificates on your server
- Use relative URLs for resources that reside on the same secure domain
- Redirect to HTTPS pages by server-side 301 HTTP redirects (mod_rewrite is common)
- Update your robots.txt to allow your HTTPS pages to be crawled
- Check that your website returns the correct HTTP status code
- Avoid irrelevant redirects
 - Don't redirect many old URLs to one irrelevant destination, such as the home page of the new site. This can confuse users and might be treated as a soft 404 error.
- Provide errors for deleted or merged content
 - For content on the old site that will not be transferred to the new site, make sure those orphaned URLs correctly return an HTTP 404 or 410 error response code.
- Ensure correct Google Search Console settings
 - After the move, add the URL to Search Console. If you haven't already, verify you own both the old and new destination sites in Search Console.

If you would like to discuss the topic, please contact your customer success manager, call us at 800-678-8023, or email us at info@brightedge.com.