



# How to **ROCK** A Web Migration

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In 2016, the initial groundwork was laid to begin the migration of Providence College's mix of on-premise SharePoint 2010 and WordPress web servers- providence.edu and all subdomains- to cloud-based, WordPress multi-site servers.

After thorough research, a cloud host – CampusPress - was selected and the process began in earnest

## Timeline

- February 2017 – standup of two CampusPress multisite servers – 1 for peripheral sites & blogging environment, 1 for the main providence.edu sites
- March-September 1, 2017 – migration and retirement of 13 on-premise WordPress servers to the CampusPress peripheral, multisite server
- September-December 1, 2017 – Build phase of new, scratch-built WordPress theme for the main providence.edu sites
- December 1-15th, 2017 – Test migration sprint #1
- December 15-22nd, 2017 – Test migration sprint #2
- January 2, 2018 – Start of migration of all www.providence.edu sites to CampusPress using the new WordPress theme.
- July 18, 2018 – Planned conclusion of migration of www.providence.edu to CampusPress.
- **Actual conclusion of migration was March 13, 2018 – over four months ahead of schedule!**

# PLAN

## Create a formal project plan/charter

This clarifies scope, stakeholders, timeframe

## Perform a Site Audit

#of sites, #of pages, who owns the content on them and their contact info

## Prioritize your Site Migration

Traffic, size, institutional priorities

## Create your Project Schedule

Based on # of team members and amount of content. We divided up the project into 34 week-long development sprints from January 1 to Mid-July 2018. That's 1 site per person - me and my two developers per week.

## Domain names

Plan ahead- we went from subdirectories to subdomains, so needed roughly 100 new subdomains to be created.

**Buy your sysadmin lunch!**

## SEO

Plan for A LOT of 301 redirects to minimize impact on your search rank

## HELPFUL TOOL

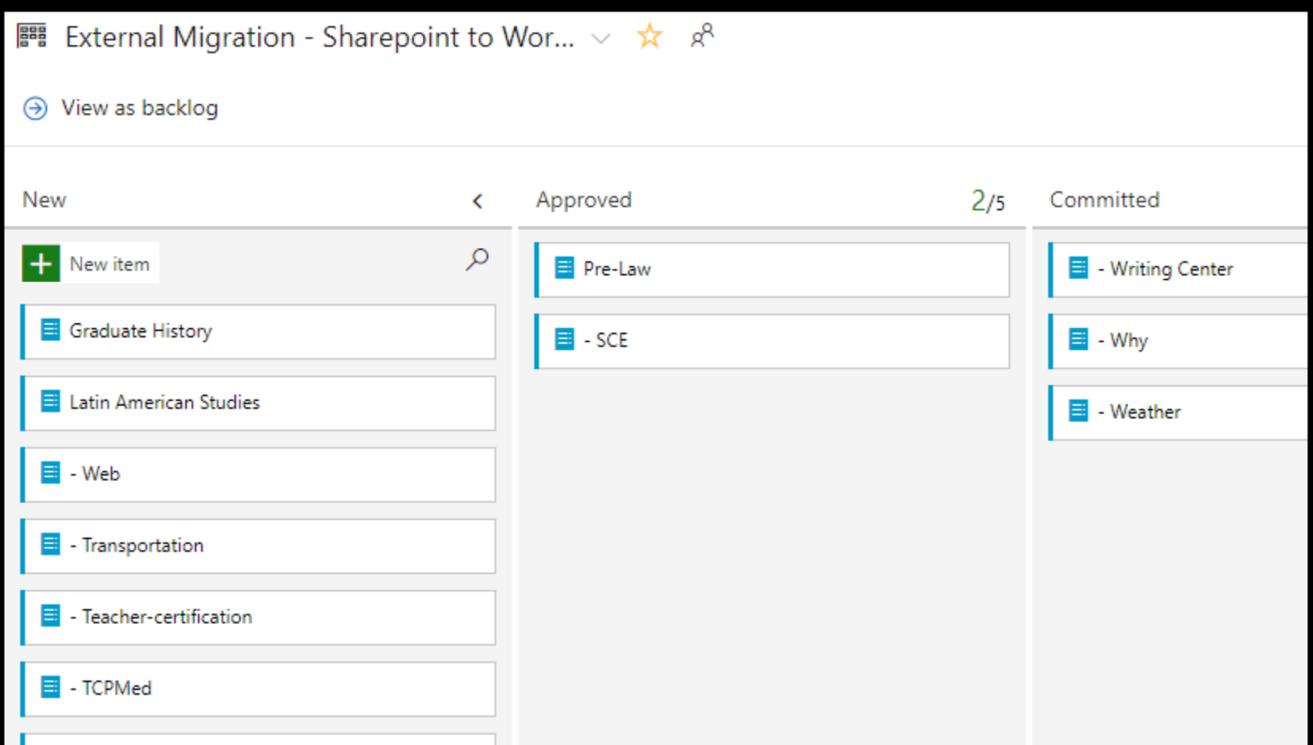
<https://wordpress.org/plugins/safe-redirect-manager/>

## Training

Set aside time to train the trainers (or if you are responsible for training your editors, to practice training on willing victims err, subjects) and give them early access to the site (if you can, get them involved with migration so that have true, hands on experience!)

## Lead web editors

If you have ace editors, give them early access and have them assist you in migration. Free labor and it gives them early access!



Screenshot of Microsoft Visual Studio project board

# SHAREPOINT TO

# PLAN SOME MORE

We gathered traffic information using both Google Analytics and Siteimprove and then we compiled all of this information in a spreadsheet, rating each site with a color code. This gave us a rudimentary plan of attack, while also giving us a reasonable and logical system we could use to communicate with the stakeholders & community.

**Numbers are hard to argue with.**

## Green

- o Institutional Priority sites – Admission, Residence-Life, Academics etc
- o High traffic sites getting the most exposure (so that a migration sees the quickest/biggest initial benefit)

## Yellow

- o High traffic, small site size
- o Easy, quick migrations
- o Rewards content owners who've efficiently maintained their sites

## Orange

- o Mid-traffic, large to mid-size
- o Longer migration processes due to more content
- o The bulk of the sites

## Red

- o Low-traffic, big sites
- o Big, bloated sites that need pruning/re-envisioning, possible deletion

## Root pages

- o Pages within the root directory, as well as the college home page and in the case of SharePoint, vanity urls/redirects
- o The absolute LAST pages to migrate over

## Pages/sites to be deleted

- o Through the audit process we identified several sites that could potentially be deleted entirely. We contacted their content owners and in many cases, we were indeed able to do so, saving us unnecessary migration time.



	A	B	C	D	E	
1	Subsite Name	Pages	External Traffic	Notes	Status	EDIT
2	/admission and admissions	83	505000		COMPLETE	YES
3	/academics	14	310000		COMPLETE	N/A
4	/residence-life	62	177000		COMPLETE	YES
5	/about	45	159000		COMPLETE	N/A
6	/alumni	282	133000		COMPLETE	YES
7	/continuing-education	100	132000		COMPLETE	YES
8	/financial-aid	68	103400		COMPLETE	YES
9	/academic-affairs	103	75000		COMPLETE	YES
10	/Momentum	29	68000		COMPLETE	YES
11	/recreation	45	61800		COMPLETE	YES
12	/mission-ministry	71	60500		COMPLETE	YES
13	/ihelp	28	58000		COMPLETE	YES
14	/orientation-transitions-leadership	46	49500		COMPLETE	YES
15	/bursar	21	49000		COMPLETE	YES
16	/enrollment-services	51	47300		COMPLETE	YES
17	/athletics	3	43000		COMPLETE	N/A
18	/center-for-international-studies	76	39000		COMPLETE	YES
19	/college-events	13	38000		COMPLETE	YES
20	/student-life	2	36000		COMPLETE	YES

Screenshot of our prioritized subdomain list

# WORDPRESS

# COMMUNICATE

You cannot communicate with your stakeholders enough! I made it a point to talk with EVERYONE who would listen about the upcoming migration any chance I could bend an ear. The more you communicate and the more transparent you are about upcoming changes the better.

## Communications throughout the project

- Daily meetings with the immediate team
- Weekly meetings with my supervisor to update on project progression
- Monthly emails to the web editing community – updates, what to expect, training info. This includes web editors, VP's and department heads
- Monthly or as needed meetings with our trainers to inform them of changes to the theme, hands-on info/use of new widgets, web parts etc
- Semester meetings with the Web Governance committee

As sites migrated over to the new system, two emails would be sent:

1. When the site begins migration to the new system, to let the web editor know that a moratorium on new content needs to happen. Also an invitation to RSVP for training with our IT Trainers.
2. When the new site is live.

# MIGRATE

I've lead two other major web migration projects- both of which were manual/cut & paste/publish situations. Using SharePoint as our external CMS complicated matters as it is a big, bloated beast.

We investigated several cloud-based migration tools – <https://cms2cms.com> tested ok and probably would work very well with other systems. In the end, one of our developers wrote a custom wordpress plug-in to scrape the html from our SharePoint pages, that pulled in all images and basic html structure for our sites. Afterward, our process was mostly a navigation-building and linking process.

**Though still a somewhat manual process, our migration time was reduced by almost 4 months!**

## Tools

- <https://google.com/analytics>
- <https://siteimprove.com>
- <https://campuspress.com> – our cloud wordpress host
- <https://www.visualstudio.com/> - visual project management board system
- <https://cms2cms.com/> - automated cms to cms migration tool
- <https://basecamp.com> – used for several site redesigns that we encountered through the process
- <https://migrateanything.com> - our migration tool
- <http://blogs.providence.edu/web/rock/>- download this presentation and related materials