

Universal eCommerce Migration Checklist for Store Owners



Your ultimate DIY migration checklist



Use this step-by-step checklist to keep track of your migration progress and maximize the chances of a successful migration.

Pre-Migration steps

Decide on the platform you want to host your business

Pause your new store from search engine indexing

Find the stores' access credentials

Audit your current store database

Consider the new store design

Migration itself

Connect your existing & new stores

Select the data entities to migrate

Customize the migration

Map the corresponding fields

Run a Demo migration

Check Demo migration results

Launch the Full migration

Post-Migration steps

Perform a post-migration data audit

Check your SEO configurations

Prepare email notifications

Transfer customers' passwords

Expand the new store

Test your new store

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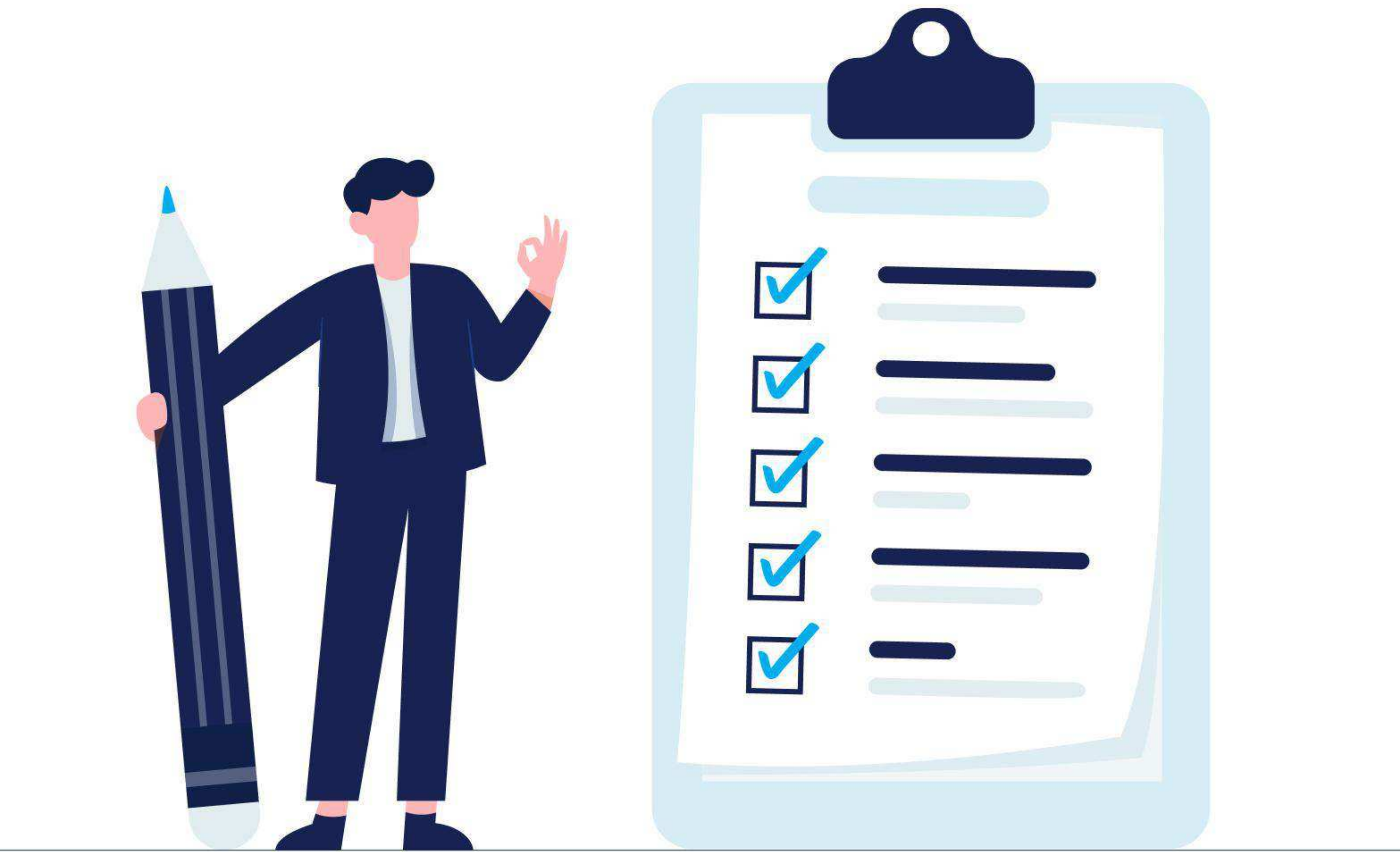
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Introduction

This checklist has been prepared by Cart2Cart migration specialists for store owners, product managers, freelancers, and anyone who wants to move to a new eCommerce platform but doesn't know where to start. It is designed to help you prepare, go through, and successfully complete re-platforming your business website without downtime for your current store or a negative SEO impact.



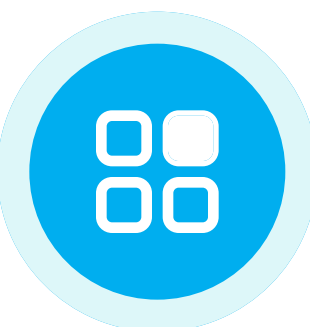
Planning stage



Identify your migration goals

Start by clearly defining the migration goals and success criteria for changing your shopping cart. The most frequent pain points that store owners experience include cost, slow page speed, SEO optimization errors, integration limitations, lack of features for further business growth, etc.

It is also critical to get input from key stakeholders such as SEO specialists, developers, and marketing teams to discover what exactly they lack in their current shopping cart solution and what features they'd like to have in the new one. When ready, make a list of business needs and requirements that will form the starting point for choosing the right eCommerce solution for your e-business.



Decide on the platform you want to host your business

Next, choose the shopping cart software that provides the necessary functionality to fulfill your requirements. Below are the most in-demand shopping carts that store owners migrate to:



[Shopify](#)



[OpenCart](#)



[Shopware](#)



[BigCommerce](#)



[PrestaShop](#)



[WooCommerce](#)



[Magento](#)

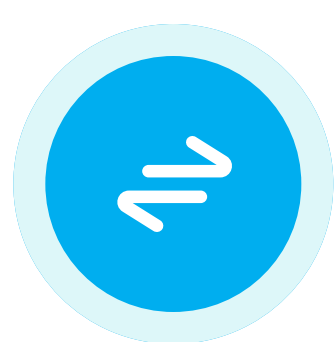


[Wix](#)



[etc](#)

These platforms have evolved to become eCommerce giants not just because of their top-notch features but their customization capabilities as well, allowing them to adapt to any specific business needs and requirements.



Define your migration plan

- *Make sure you have access credentials to your current and new stores.*
- *Determine the store configurations (plugins, languages, shipping options, etc.) you want to transfer to the new store.*
- *Determine the types of content that should be moved to the new store.*
- *Identify the components of internal store SEO optimization that you want to save on the new store.*
- *Decide on the new hosting solution and domain name (in case you're going to change it).*
- *Engage a Technical Engineer and SEO expert to make sure that all technical and SEO requirements are met and implemented in the new store.*



Get your employees and clients ready

Explain to your colleagues the reasons for re-platforming and the benefits the company will derive from it. Remember, changes can be stressful for employees, so try to minimize their impact by providing them with a list of potential benefits for the company in general and the employees in particular.

Once the migration date is set, notify your customers and partners that you've rebranded. Let them know that you've done it for their convenience and ask them to inform you of any problems they encounter. That way, your clients and partners become your store testers.

Preparation stage



Host your new store (optionally)

If you want to change your hosting solution and/or domain, you need to prepare. Take the time to choose the hosting provider that meets all your business needs and host your new store on it.

If you want to use the same domain, we recommend doing it on a subdomain first. Once the migration process is complete and the post-migration audits and tests are done, you can go ahead and transfer the subdomain to your target domain.



Make sure you have the required access credentials

To connect your shopping carts, you must provide access credentials to your current (source) and new (target) stores. Identify all the required details (hosting, domain, and store access credentials) to initiate the re-platforming process. Each platform has its own specifics, so depending on the type of integration you have (API-based or **bridge-based**), you'll need to provide the corresponding access details.



Cart2Cart guarantees your security and privacy during and after the migration process. It provides access to a dedicated Hetzner server and a restricted physical address to enhance migration success. It incorporates network security through access restrictions and firewalls to prevent potential breaches in security. Cart2Cart is also safeguarded by HTTPS protocol directives and 128-bit encryption. Access to your data is restricted, recorded, and logged for transparency.



Pause your new store from search engine indexing

Temporarily suspend your newly created store from Google indexing. That way, once you transfer data to it, search engines will not consider your new store a duplicate of the previous one. Failure to do this can negatively affect your search rankings. Open the store for indexing after the Post-migration audit point of this checklist.



Many shopping cart software provide a maintenance mode feature. If your eCommerce solution has this functionality, we recommend using it.



Review the store extensions

Make a list of your current store's extensions. Rank them in the order of their importance and exclude those that you may no longer need. Do a quick Google search and prepare a list of extensions (marketing, payments, PoS, shipping, accounting, etc.) to expand the new store. Decide whether you want to bring your existing PSP (payment service provider) and payment methods or if you would rather choose new ones.



Audit your current store's database

Conduct a store data analysis to create an accurate inventory of all the site data you have (such as product details, categories, customers, passwords, orders, reviews, etc.). Determine the types of content that should be kept, deleted, or rewritten. This audit will help you uncover content gaps and determine any new content that needs to be integrated into the new store.



Backup your current eCommerce store data

Before you start the migration process, we strongly recommend backing up your store data to safeguard against any unforeseen anomalies that may occur during store migration. Some common ones include incorrect info from your side, or you may simply want to revert to your previous shopping cart provider.



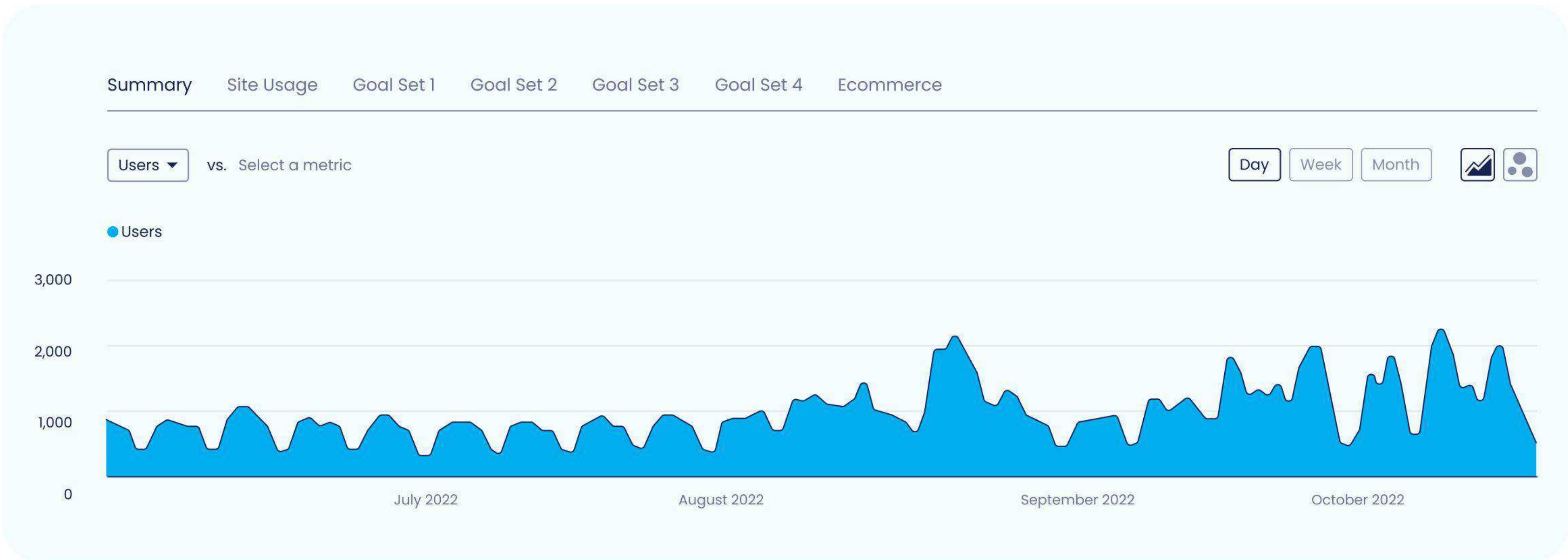
Cart2Cart does not interfere with your current store’s performance and does not affect its data in any way. The service simply copies the data from your existing store and pastes it onto the new platform.



Set a time to initiate the transfer

The best time to carry out site migration is when your store has the lowest traffic volume. You can dig into the channels that deliver the highest and lowest traffic volume and their respective timings by going to Google Analytics -> All Traffic -> Channels. You can also use the Secondary Dimension relating to Time.

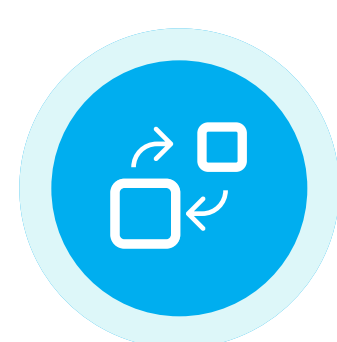
It should look something like this:





Implement the new store design

You have two options to choose from. On the one hand, you can make a new store design from scratch. Alternatively, you opt for the default template. The migration can be done to the default template provided by the shopping cart solution you pick, and then make design adjustments if need be.



Choose the migration method

At this stage, you must identify an appropriate migration method to transfer your store. There are various options to choose from (*manual, assisted, automated*), each with its own set of unique benefits, requirements, and limitations. Here's a brief overview of each.



Manual migration entails copying each product and its respective details from the existing platform and pasting it onto the new website. The process is technically complex and involves multiple intricate configurations on both the source and target carts.

If a small business store with a handful of products listed on the website is to be transferred, the manual method of data migration can be a way to go. Alternatively, if there are dozens of products to migrate, with massive amounts of associated backend info and ongoing orders, you're better off going a different migration route.



2

Assisted migration is another version of manual transfer, only that, in this case, the job is outsourced to a third-party developer or team of migration experts. Since the process is carried out and controlled by a team of pro developers, you can expect to pay a significant amount of money (\$1,000+) to get the job done.



3

Automated migration of eCommerce data is conducted by specialized migration tools (like Cart2Cart) and, as a result, requires no technical skills whatsoever.



[Cart2Cart](#) – the first tool of its kind on the market. With 12+ years of migration experience, it has proven to be the most efficient and trusted method to switch eCommerce platforms. It analyzes all the source data entities (products, customers, orders, reviews, images, etc.) and then transfers them to the target site without any human intervention in the process.

[TRY NOW](#)

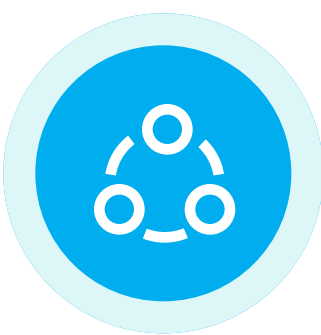
If you don't have time to handle the data migration on your own, Cart2Cart offers a comprehensive support system through its [Data Migration Service Packages](#). It is an all-inclusive service that combines the technical support of experienced migration gurus with store data transfer. All you need to do is enter the access credentials of your source and target stores, and the Cart2Cart migration specialists will do the rest.

There are [4 Migration Packages](#) available, each of which varies in price. Even the most expensive package in the bouquet will still cost less than you would pay a third-party agency.

[LEARN MORE](#)

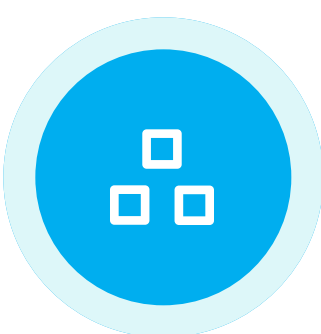
If you don't have a solid technical background in web development or would rather focus on running your business instead of dealing with the migration hassle, Cart2Cart is exactly what you need. If you encounter any issues when going through the migration process, the [Cart2Cart support staff](#) will be more than happy to answer any migration-related questions you might have.

Launching stage



Connect your existing and new stores

Set up the automated database transfer by first configuring your current (Source) cart and then specifying the new (Target) cart. At this stage, you'll only need to provide your stores' access credentials before connecting them via the Connection Bridge. Alternatively, you could install the Cart2Cart plugin. [More info.](#)



Select the entities

Specify the store entities you want to transfer to the new platform. Cart2Cart allows you to migrate every possible eCommerce data type and its accompanying attributes. Simply click on the All Entities checkbox, and the tool will migrate them.



PRODUCTS

- Name, SKU, Short Description, Full Description, Status, Manufacturer, Country of Manufacturer, Tax Class, Sort Order in Category.
- Price, Special Price, Special Price From-To Date, Group Price, Tier Price, MSRP.
- URL, Meta Title, Meta Keywords, Meta Description.
- Weight.
- Related Products, Product Tags, Up-sells, Cross-sells.
- Attributes (Name, Values), Custom Options (Drop-down, Radio Buttons, CheckBox, Multiple Select, Date, Text Field, Text Area, Time, Date & Time, File).
- Downloadable Products (Price, Files, Max Downloads), Grouped Products (Associated Products), Bundle Products.

- Variants (SKU, Weight, Attributes, Quantity, Images, Price, Special Price, Special Price From-To Date, Name, Tier Price, Group Price, MSRP).
- Base Image, Thumbnail Image, Additional Images.
- Quantity, Stock Availability, Manage Stock, Backorder.



PRODUCT CATEGORIES

- Name, Description, Status, Is Anchor.
- Image, Thumbnail Image.
- URL , Meta Title, Meta Description, Meta Keywords.



MANUFACTURERS

- Name, Image.



TAXES

- Tax Class (Name), Tax Rates (Country, State, Percent), Tax Rules (Tax Class, Tax Rate).



CUSTOMERS

- ID, First Name, Last Name, Email, Customer Group, Newsletter, Gender, Date of Birth, Passwords, Created Date.
- Billing Address (Company, Address 1, Address 2, Country, State, City, Zip Code, Telephone, Fax).
- Shipping Address (Company, Address 1, Address 2, Country, State, City, Zip Code, Telephone, Fax).



ORDERS

- ID, Order Date, Order Status, Order Products (Name, SKU, Option), Product Price, Quantity,

- SubTotal Price, Discount Price, Tax Price, Total Price, Order Comments.
- Customer Name, Email, Billing Address (Company, Address 1, Address 2, Country, State, City, Zip Code, Telephone, Fax).
- Invoice.
- Credit Memo.
- Shipment.
- Shipping Address (Company, Address 1, Address 2, Country, State, City, Zip Code, Telephone, Fax).
- Transactions.



COUPONS

- Name, Description, Status, Coupon Code, Coupon Date, Customer Groups, Uses Per Coupon, Uses Per Customer, Type Discount, Discount Amount.



REVIEWS

- Created Date, Status, Rate, User Name, Description, Summary, Product, Title, Type.



MULTISTORE

- Yes.



CMS PAGES

- Title, Created Date, URL, Description, Meta Description, Meta Keywords, Status, Content Heading.



Choose additional migration options

Cart2Cart offers a list of additional options that allow you to expand the migration possibilities. They make the process of data transfer flawless and the results accurate.

The most popular migration add-ons among store owners include:



Preserve Product/Customer/Order IDs on the Target store

This option provides the ability to migrate *product/customer/order IDs* to a Target store without making changes. For instance, customer #3 in your Source store will be moved to the Target store as customer #3. This capability will come in handy in future store admin work.



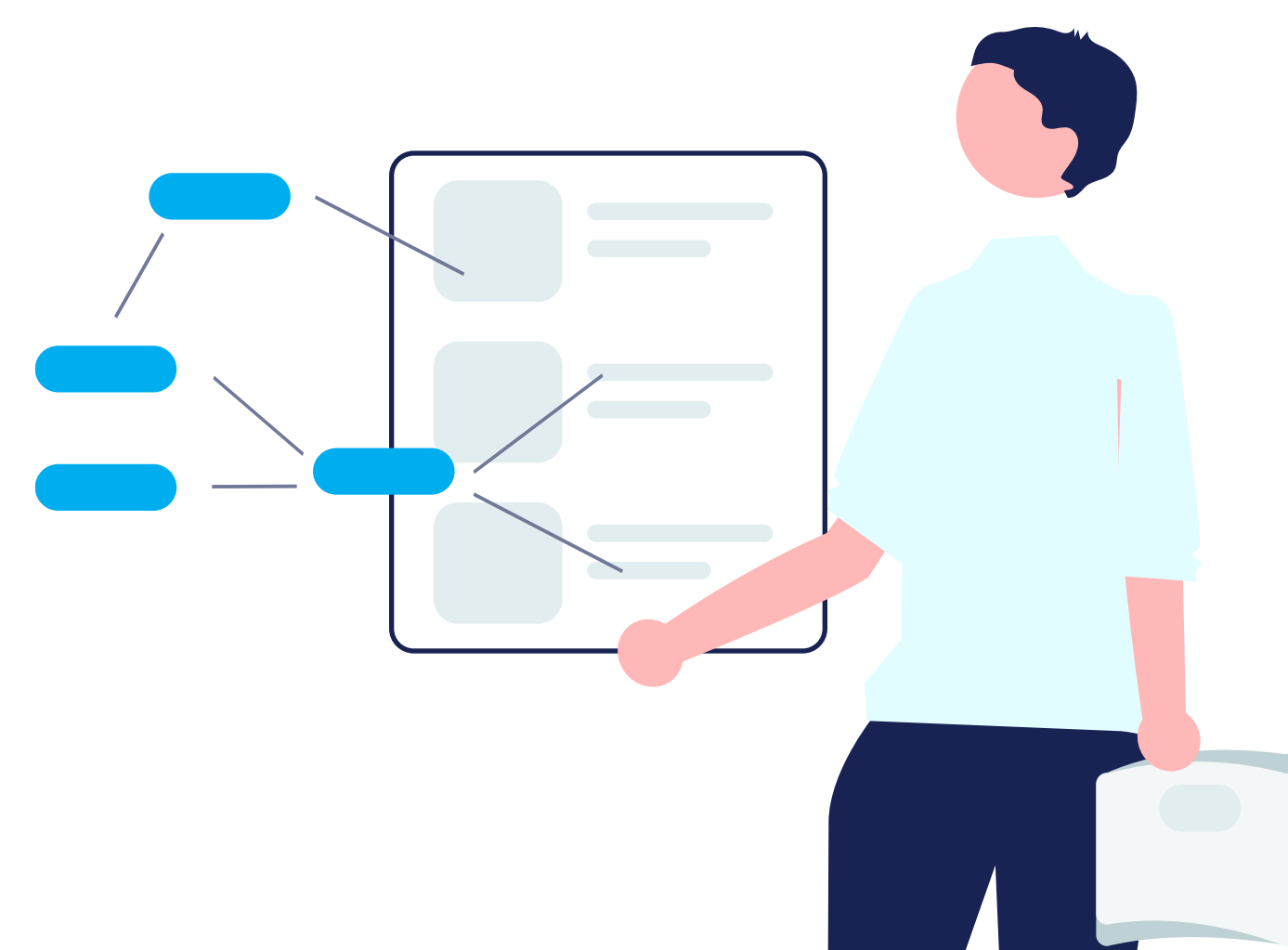
Delete current data from the Target store before migration

This option aims to help you avoid inconveniences during the migration process, allowing you to get an accurate result. It is worth noting that data will be deleted according to selected entities for migration. For example, if you've picked to migrate specific products on the Wizard, these are the only products that will be deleted from your Target store.



Create product variants based on the combinations of attribute values

This extra option will save you time by eliminating the procedure of setting product variants for each product in the catalog.



4

Preserve product image URLs

This option is available for some hosted shopping carts and allows users to migrate the image link structure. Upon activation, the unchecked images will be displayed from your Source store. When the site is down, the images won't show up on your Target store. You should only pick this option when the transfer is in progress. Once the migration completes, transfer the image folders manually to the new platform. You must save the image file names and respective folder structures.

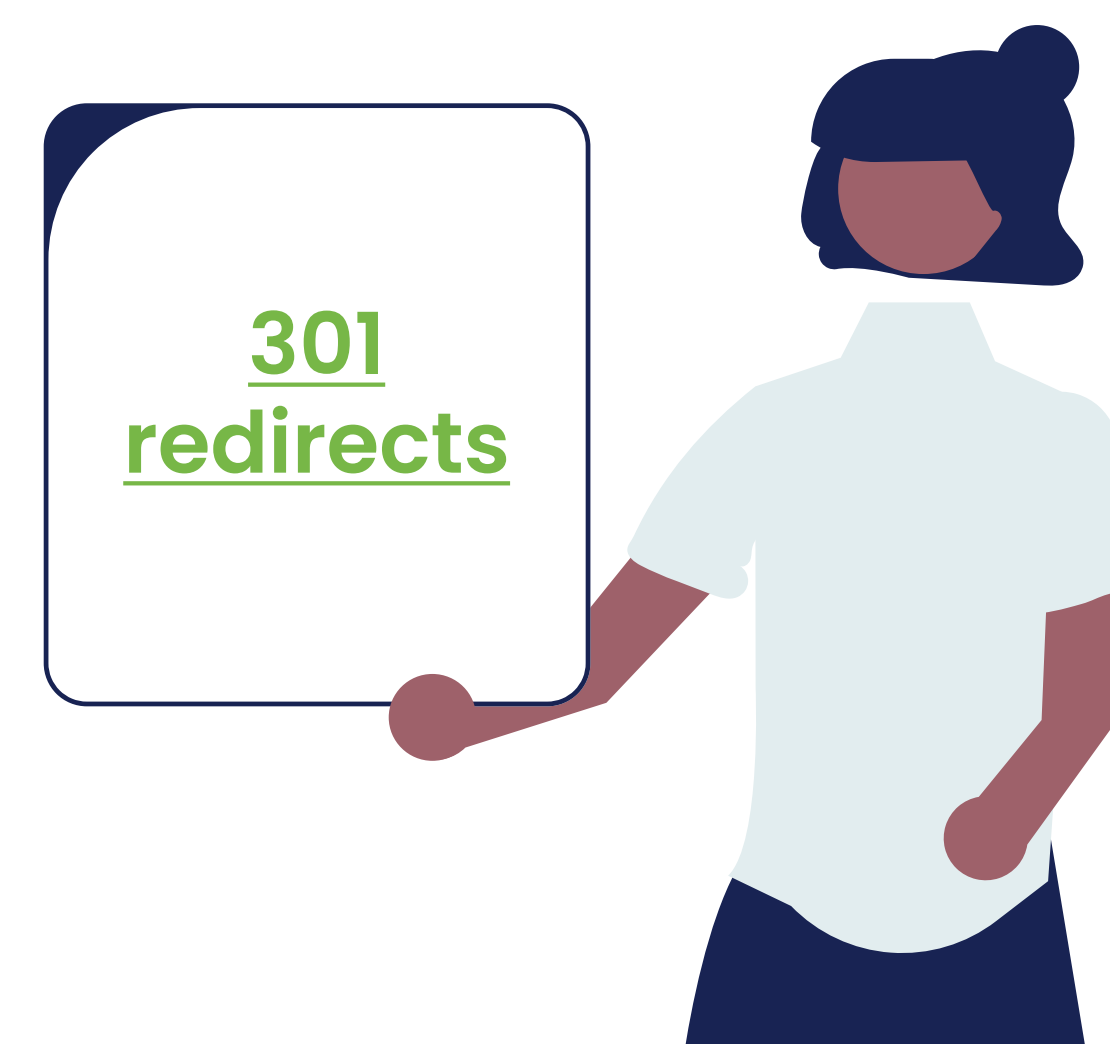


5

Create 301 redirects on your Target store after migration

The way it works is this: We create redirects on your target cart and take a URL of your source store product (or category) and the URL path to it without its domain name address. We then make it a Source URL in the redirect settings.

Next, we put the appropriate new product (category) page as the Target URL, at which point the redirection starts working. All you have to do is keep your old domain name, and customers and search engines like Google won't even notice the difference.



6

Migrate 301 SEO URLs of categories and products

301 redirects allow you to set up a permanent redirection from one link to another. These redirects can move a huge chunk of ranking power to the new link, making it the most suitable for SEO. Using this additional option lets merchants redirect previous product and category URLs to the corresponding new ones in the Target store.



7

Migrate customers' passwords

The option helps you transfer customer passwords to the Target store, therefore, preventing your clients from having to recreate them after migration. It helps you provide your clients with comfort and convenience.





Run demo migration



While it is possible to skip the Demo, we strongly recommend against it.

A Demo is simply a demonstration of the service in action aimed at showing users the basic functionality of the migration tool. You can set up the service, see how it works with a limited number of items, and make sure it is suitable for your needs. It is essentially a “minimized” trial version of the Full data migration.

If you want to preserve the store configurations integrated while in Demo mode, you can transfer them during the Full migration phase.

Demo migration can be utilized an unlimited number of times until you're satisfied with the outcome (it's free).



The process takes 10 to 30 minutes and allows you to transfer up to 10 products, customers, orders, and other data related to them. Once you migrate the specified data, you will get an email notification with a link to your new cart.



Don't close your browser window when the Demo migration is in progress. You can minimize your browser window if you need to work on something else while the Demo migration completes.

If the Demo has been completed, you'll see the following information displayed on your Migration Wizard:

- *Details about the transferred entities, with links to the Source and Target stores.*
- *Demo survey.*

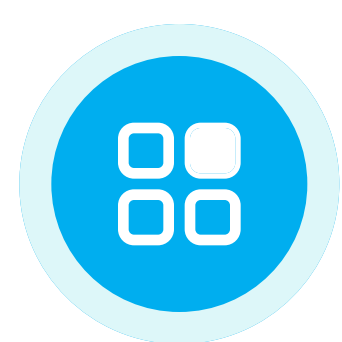


You'll also be able to view the following:

- **Entities counts:** View counts for each entity.
- **Additional options check:** Here, you can change the additional options.
- **Insurance selection:**
 - there are three types of insurance options, with different prices and conditions for remigration.
 - the "no insurance" option is also offered.
- **Total prices:** Shows the total migration price.
- **Coupon:** Offers the ability to use a coupon.

If you are happy with the outcome, you can proceed with the Full migration. If the Demo helped you detect some issues, contact the [**Cart2Cart Support Team**](#), and we will help you fix them before starting the Full migration.





Map the corresponding fields

Connect the data fields from the source store to the respective data fields in the target store. Doing this minimizes the potential for errors and standardizes your data, making it easier to understand it by correlating it with identities – for instance.

How to check demo migration results

Once your free Demo migration is finalized, you will receive an email alert. To check the results on your new store, go back to the Migration Wizard and follow the listed URLs to see what they look like:

- On the front page of the shop (if the migrated entity is to be displayed there),
- In the categories that were moved, and
- In the search results by title.

When done, log in to the admin panel of the new store and check out how your entities are displayed from the backend.

In case none of your products show up on the store's front end, you'll need to perform some additional configurations on your own. The number of things you'll need to configure ultimately depends on the platform you are using.

Once you're satisfied with the outcome, you can proceed with the Full migration. If the Demo flagged some issues, contact the [Cart2Cart Support Team](#) to get everything resolved before embarking on the Full migration.



Launch the full migration

Once you initiate the data migration transfer, you'll first need to fund your account balance and then finish the data migration to your new store. Keep in mind that you only pay for the data you transfer — you won't be charged any additional fees.

Check the full migration results

Even if you've gone through the migration procedure seamlessly and everything appears to be error-free, take the time to check whether all the data has been accurately imported to the new platform. Check each transferred entity, taking into account the data of the entity itself (e.g., *in products: name, descriptions, prices, discounts, etc.*) and links to categories, brands, reviews, etc.

We recommend comparing the fields of each particular entity on the admin side of the Source and Target stores.

The Migration details section shows a variety of migration information. You can also choose the [Recent](#), [Remigration](#), or [Smart Update](#) services at this step by clicking the matching buttons. Note that the Smart Update option is available for partners only.



Testing stage



Perform a post-migration audit

Before your new store goes live, you should test it thoroughly. Run multiple simulations, taking into account any issues that could arise. Make sure the domain name is active, and the navigational links are working as they should.

When done, check your store's front end by finding your products, customers, and orders in the various catalogs and checking that the search function works. Scrutinize your site for broken links and fix them by redirecting them appropriately or removing them entirely.



Mind your SEO

Once your eCommerce migration is complete, ensure that you evaluate your site's SEO indicators. There are a lot of tools that allow you to diagnose and resolve the website's technical SEO issues – [Screaming Frog](#) is just one of them. Here's what you need to do:



1 Point your domain to the new host (optionally)

If you're not performing a hosting/domain migration, you can skip this step. However, in case you're moving to a new hosting provider, make sure to point your domain to the new host's servers to make your store accessible. You can easily do that by changing the domain's nameservers.

To do this, simply get the details of your new nameservers, and copy them to the domain's DNS settings (*we recommend doing this when your site's traffic volume is at its lowest*). Then, wait for the DNS to propagate, a process that can sometimes take anywhere from a few hours to a few days.

In case you move your store from one domain or subdomain to another, remember to tell Google about the change. Doing this requires that you create a 301 redirect from your old domain to your new one. Correct any issues that may arise during this step so that search engines can begin crawling your site. Here are detailed instructions on the right way to do it.

2

Check your XML sitemap

If the structure of the website has changed significantly during the migration, it is vital that you submit your [XML sitemap](#). While most shopping cart platforms automatically generate XML sitemaps, ensure you re-submit it to Google Search Console and Bing Webmaster Tools. That way, you can get your newly migrated store re-indexed. This usually takes anywhere from a few weeks to a few months.

3

Test all redirects

Next, you need to check that search engines and prospective customers are directed to the right pages in your online store. To do this, you'll need to test each redirect to ensure it is working as it should. The best time to run these tests would be after you launch so that you can identify error pages and clean them up right away.

We recommend using a crawling tool to help you identify the 404 pages that may have been left out during the design phase.

4

Check if any of the content has been duplicated

This step involves checking your online store for duplicate content such as header usage, title tags, image attributes, meta descriptions, etc.

Google cracks down on websites with duplicate content. The reason for this is simple: its search engine bots end up taking more time crawling different versions of the same page, as opposed to crawling different pages on the online store. The best way to safeguard against duplicate content is through the use of canonical tags.

A canonical tag identifies the pages on your website displaying duplicate or what appears to be similar content on more than one URL. It then consolidates those URLs into a single “master” version, which is what the bots will see when they crawl your site. The result: Your rank on SERPs goes up, and Google won’t penalize your site.

5

Analyze your metadata

Re-platforming your store to a new e-commerce provider gives you a unique opportunity to do a complete overhaul of your metadata. It allows you to optimize them for SEO by rewriting the page titles, product titles, and product descriptions.

6

Check the status of your links

Check your newly migrated internal links. Make sure they direct users to the respective pages. Get rid of any broken ones you encounter.

You might also need to create new pages from scratch (such as the About Us page) and create a custom 404 redirect for the pages you no longer need. Remember, the 404 page should contain a link to your new site’s main page, navigational aids such as drop-down menus and the site search function, and a link to your site map listing all your site’s pages.

7

Countercheck your analytics tools

The next step involves double-checking that your Google Analytics, Google Tag Manager, and Facebook Pixel are working as they should. Start by installing the code on your new store and then adjust the settings to match the previous ones you had on your old site. Doing this ensures that there are no gaps in reporting, so you can track your new store’s performance using the same parameters you had in your old store.



Prepare email notifications

Once you’ve launched the new store, we recommend that you notify your existing clients of the change. They need to know where to go to buy from you. Notify your customers that you’ve re-platformed and ask them to activate their accounts.



Transfer customers' passwords

An additional plugin may be required to import customers' passwords across various eCommerce solutions. The plugin should be installed only on the Target Cart. This is the one you import entities to. After Full migration, your clients will be able to log in to your new e-shop using the same credentials they had in your old one. In case you haven't transferred the passwords, we recommend you send a password recovery notification to each of your clients.



Expand the new store

Thanks to the numerous apps, modules, extensions, and plugins that most modern shopping carts provide their clients with, you can add any new functionality (or recreate previous ones) to the store to make it look and feel as desired.



Consider the store design

Since different shopping carts offer users different templates, migrating your store design might not be possible. However, you can recreate their current design with the help of a developer or leverage the Cart2Cart Service Packages.



Test your new store

To make sure your new store is functioning correctly, make a test purchase to see if your site works. Go through the typical shopping procedure and then select your preferred shipping and payment options to check that everything is working properly. Repeat the process with different products in various categories just to be safe.



Monitoring stage

Now it's time to ensure that everything in your new eCommerce store is in great working order. The monitoring stage of the eCommerce migration process involves tracking your site's performance for at least two months post-launch. You might need to do it for longer if you have a larger site.

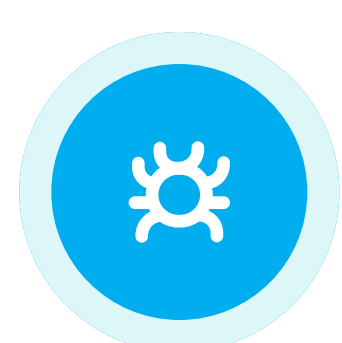
Below are some fundamental aspects you need to monitor and validate after executing a successful re-platforming process.



New vs. old web traffic

First off, you need to analyze the benchmark data you collected from your previous store. Compare it against the new analytics data from your current store and identify any discrepancies in organic traffic. If there's a spike, it means you're on the right track. However, if there's a dip, it might point to a deeper issue. Use this data to identify what could be causing it and why.

The specific corrective measures you take will depend on how widespread the issue is. Some questions to keep in mind include: Is the decrease in organic traffic to your store isolated to one section or category? Is it limited to a few pages? Is it affecting the entire site? The answers to these questions will help point you to where the problem lies.



New vs. old web crawling

Next, you need to establish whether search engine bots are crawling your store's URLs in its new location. You also need to check that the 301 redirects from your old site to your new URL locations have been properly implemented and tested.

Some useful SEO crawlers you can use include *SEMrush*, *Sitebulb*, and *Deepcrawl*. These tools simulate the behavior of search engine crawlers. You can use them to validate your store's URLs on the new platform.



New vs. old web indexing

Next, you need to monitor your store's new pages to see if a search engine has indexed them at their new location. You should also check whether the old ones are disappearing from SERPs.

The easiest and most convenient way to do this is through Google Search Console. That way, you can add the new and old store locations and monitor each of them on the Console as independent properties.



New vs. old web rankings

Here's what you need to remember: Any SERP rankings you lose from your old store should effectively be gained on your current one. Monitor traffic and web rankings in the new and old locations for both mobile and desktop search engine results.

[Google Search Console](#) is the perfect resource to use to track your site's performance in your targeted countries. While it might take a while to gain your old store's rankings in its new location, be sure to check that your new pages are ranking for the right result type (image, video, description, etc.) and the relevant keywords, particularly against the competition.



Bottom line

This Universal Migration Checklist covers all the critical points to keep in mind when migrating between shopping cart software. If any additional questions arise during the migration process, do not hesitate to contact us. We'll be more than happy to help.

CONTACT US



START MIGRATION







Join us at our website

JOIN US



Have a question? We're here to help

CONTACT US

