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# Your Website Isn't Working Anymore. Here's Every Way to Fix It.

An honest guide to your migration options — what each one costs, how long it takes, and who it's actually for.



Here's the moment most business owners recognize: something on the website needs to change. Maybe it's slow. Maybe your team can't update it without calling a developer. Maybe you just found out AI search engines can't read half your pages.

Whatever triggered it, you're now staring at a big decision. And the internet is full of people trying to sell you their platform.

So let's skip the sales pitch. Here are your actual options, with honest trade-offs for each one.

# What are your actual migration options?

here are really only five paths. Everything else is a variation of one of these.

**Option 1: Stay put and patch what's broken.** Sometimes the answer is: don't migrate at all. If the core platform still works and the problems are specific (slow load times, outdated design, a few missing features), a targeted fix might be enough.

**Option 2: Move to another all-in-one.** This means swapping one closed platform for another. WordPress to Webflow. Wix to Squarespace. You get a fresh start with a different set of strengths and weaknesses.

**Option 3: Go headless.** This separates your content from your website. Your content lives in a system like Sanity, and your website is built separately in something like Next.js. They talk to each other through APIs.

**Option 4: Full custom build.** Hire a development team to build everything from scratch. No platform, no CMS, just code.

**Option 5: Incremental migration.** Move your site piece by piece. Migrate the blog first. Then the service pages. Then the homepage. Keep the old site running until the new one is ready.

## When should you stay put and just fix what's broken?

This is the cheapest and fastest option. And sometimes it's the right one.

If your current platform basically works — your team can publish content, the site loads reasonably fast, and you're not facing security nightmares — then maybe you just need a tune-up. New hosting, a caching layer, a design refresh, some SEO cleanup.

**Costs:** \$5K–\$20K depending on scope. **Timeline:** 2–6 weeks.

**When this makes sense:** You're a small business with a simple site, under 50 pages, and your main complaint is that it looks outdated. A redesign on the same platform gets you 80% of the benefit at 20% of the cost.

**When this doesn't make sense:** Your problems are structural, not cosmetic. If your team can't publish content without a developer, if your site takes 4+ seconds to load despite optimization, or if you need your content to work across more than just a website — patching won't fix it. You're putting lipstick on a pig.

## What about moving to Webflow, Squarespace, or another all-in-one?

This is the option that looks simplest on paper. Swap one platform for another. Fresh templates, included hosting, no server management.

Between December 2024 and December 2025, Wix grew 28.9%, Squarespace grew 9.7%, and Shopify grew 3%. Search Engine Journal 2026 Meanwhile, WordPress contracted 2.9%. People are leaving WordPress. But where they're going matters.

**Webflow** is the strongest option here. It gives designers real control without writing code. Hosting is included. Performance is solid. For a design-driven marketing site, it's a legitimate upgrade from WordPress.

But it has real limits. **Webflow caps CMS items at 10,000.** You can't export your site to another host — you're locked in. Custom integrations are limited. And if your business needs content to flow to more than just a website (mobile app, AI search, internal tools), Webflow can't do that. Your content is trapped inside the platform.

**Squarespace and Wix** are simpler still. Great for small businesses, portfolios, restaurants. But for an established company with complex content needs? They'll feel limiting within months.

**Costs:** \$10K–\$40K for the build. \$14–\$39/month for Webflow hosting. Webflow Pricing 2025 **Timeline:** 4–10 weeks.

# What does "going headless" actually mean?

This is the option that sounds complicated but is actually pretty simple once you get the concept.

Right now, your content and your website are probably stuck together. When you type a blog post in WordPress, it lives inside WordPress. It can only be displayed on your WordPress site. If you want that same content in a mobile app or an AI assistant, you'd have to copy and paste it.

**"Headless" just means you separate the two.** Your content lives in one system (the CMS — like Sanity). Your website is built separately (the "head" — like Next.js). They talk to each other through APIs. The content doesn't care where it's displayed. It's just structured data that any system can consume.

This is the approach used by Nike, Figma, Shopify, Cloudflare, and Condé Nast with Sanity. Sanity GitHub 2025 It's also how you become visible to AI search engines. AI crawlers like GPTBot need structured data they can parse — not WordPress pages rendered in JavaScript they can't execute.

The headless CMS market reached \$816.9 million in 2024, growing at 22% annually. Future Market Insights 2025 This isn't a niche approach anymore. It's where the industry is heading.

**Costs:** \$30K–\$80K for the build, plus \$3K–\$8K/month ongoing. **Timeline:** 10–16 weeks.

# What about building everything from scratch?

This is the "burn it down and start over" approach. No platform constraints. No CMS limitations. Just a development team building exactly what you need, line by line.

It's rare that this makes sense. But sometimes it does.

If your business has highly custom requirements — a proprietary booking engine, complex data processing, unique user interactions that no CMS can handle — a full custom build gives you total control.

The trade-off is time, cost, and ongoing maintenance. **Everything is your responsibility.** Security patches. Performance optimization. Content editing interfaces. All of it has to be built and maintained by your team.

McKinsey found that large IT projects run **45% over budget** and deliver **56% less value** than predicted. McKinsey Custom builds carry the highest risk of any option on this list because there's no platform to catch you when things go sideways.

**Costs:** \$80K–\$250K+ for the initial build. **Timeline:** 6–12 months. **Ongoing:** Full-time development team or expensive retainer.

**When this makes sense:** You're a tech company with an in-house engineering team and requirements that genuinely can't be met by any existing platform. That's maybe 5% of businesses.

**When this doesn't make sense:** Almost everyone else. The headless approach gives you 90% of the flexibility of a custom build at a fraction of the cost, because the CMS handles content management so your developers can focus on what makes your business unique.

## What is incremental migration and why is it the safest option?

This is the approach we recommend for most established businesses, and honestly, it's just common sense.

Instead of rebuilding your entire website at once and doing a big dramatic launch, you move it piece by piece. Blog first. Then service pages. Then the homepage. Each piece gets its own mini-launch, its own testing phase, its own chance to catch problems before they spread.

**Why it's safer:** If something goes wrong with the blog migration, you fix it. The rest of your site is still running on the old system. Your SEO doesn't tank across the whole domain at once. Your team learns the new system gradually instead of being thrown into the deep end on launch day.

**Why it works for established companies:** You probably have hundreds of pages, years of blog content, complex URL structures, and external links pointing to specific pages.

A big-bang relaunch risks breaking all of that simultaneously. Incremental migration contains the risk.

Forrester's research on headless CMS implementations found **264–582% ROI over three years** with payback periods under six months. Forrester TEI Studies 2023-2024 Those numbers come from well-planned, properly executed migrations — not rushed relaunches.

**Costs:** Same as headless (\$30K–\$80K), spread over 3–6 months. **Timeline:** Longer overall, but each phase is lower risk. **Ongoing:** \$3K–\$8K/month retainer.

## How do these options compare side by side?

## How do you decide which option is right for you?

Forget the technology for a second. Answer these three questions and the right path becomes pretty obvious.

### **Question 1: Can your marketing team publish content without a developer right now?**

If yes, your current system might just need a refresh. If no, you need a new system — not a new design.

**Question 2: Do you need your content to work beyond just a website?** Mobile app, AI search visibility, internal tools, multi-location pages generated from the same data? If yes, headless is the only option that does this natively. All-in-one platforms trap your content inside the platform.

**Question 3: How big is your content library?** Under 50 pages with simple content? An all-in-one might be fine. Hundreds of pages, years of blog posts, complex content types? You need a real content model, not a page builder.

For most established businesses — companies with \$10M+ revenue, 10+ years of operation, and content that's become a real business asset — the answer lands on headless with incremental migration. It's more upfront investment, but the ROI data is overwhelming.

And more importantly, it's the only approach that solves the problem permanently instead of pushing it down the road three years.

## Frequently asked questions

### What are my options for website migration?

Five main paths: stay and patch what's broken, move to another all-in-one (Webflow, Squarespace), go headless (Sanity + Next.js), do a full custom build, or migrate incrementally section by section. Each has different costs (\$5K–\$250K+), timelines (2 weeks to 12 months), and trade-offs.

### Should I migrate from WordPress to Webflow?

Depends on your scale. Webflow is great for design-driven sites under 10,000 pages. But it has CMS item limits, hosting lock-in, and limited API access. For established companies with complex content needs or AI visibility goals, headless CMS options like Sanity offer more long-term flexibility.

### How much does a website migration cost?

Patching: \$5K–\$20K. New all-in-one: \$10K–\$40K. Headless: \$30K–\$80K build plus \$3K–\$8K monthly. Full custom: \$80K–\$250K+. Headless implementations deliver 264–582% ROI over three years per Forrester TEI studies, so the higher upfront cost often pays for itself fast.

### How long does a website migration take?

Simple platform swap (20-page site): 4–8 weeks. Headless migration for an established company: 10–16 weeks. Full custom build: 6–12 months. Incremental migrations take longer overall (3–6 months) but each phase is smaller and lower risk.

## Will I lose SEO rankings during a website migration?

You can if you're not careful. Map every old URL to its new location with 301 redirects. Preserve meta tags, canonical URLs, and structured data. Submit a new sitemap to Google Search Console after launch. Incremental migration reduces risk because you move sections one at a time.

## What is the best website platform for established businesses?

For companies with \$10M+ revenue and complex content needs, headless CMS (like Sanity + Next.js) offers the best long-term value. It separates content from presentation, gives your marketing team publishing independence, and makes your site AI-readable by default. Over 99% of headless CMS adopters reported improvements according to Storyblok's 2024 survey of 1,700+ users.