



When should you 'go live'?

Planning your new school website project, but not sure when your site should go live? This resource aims to help establish the best time of year for your project to go live, and the ways you can promote your launch.

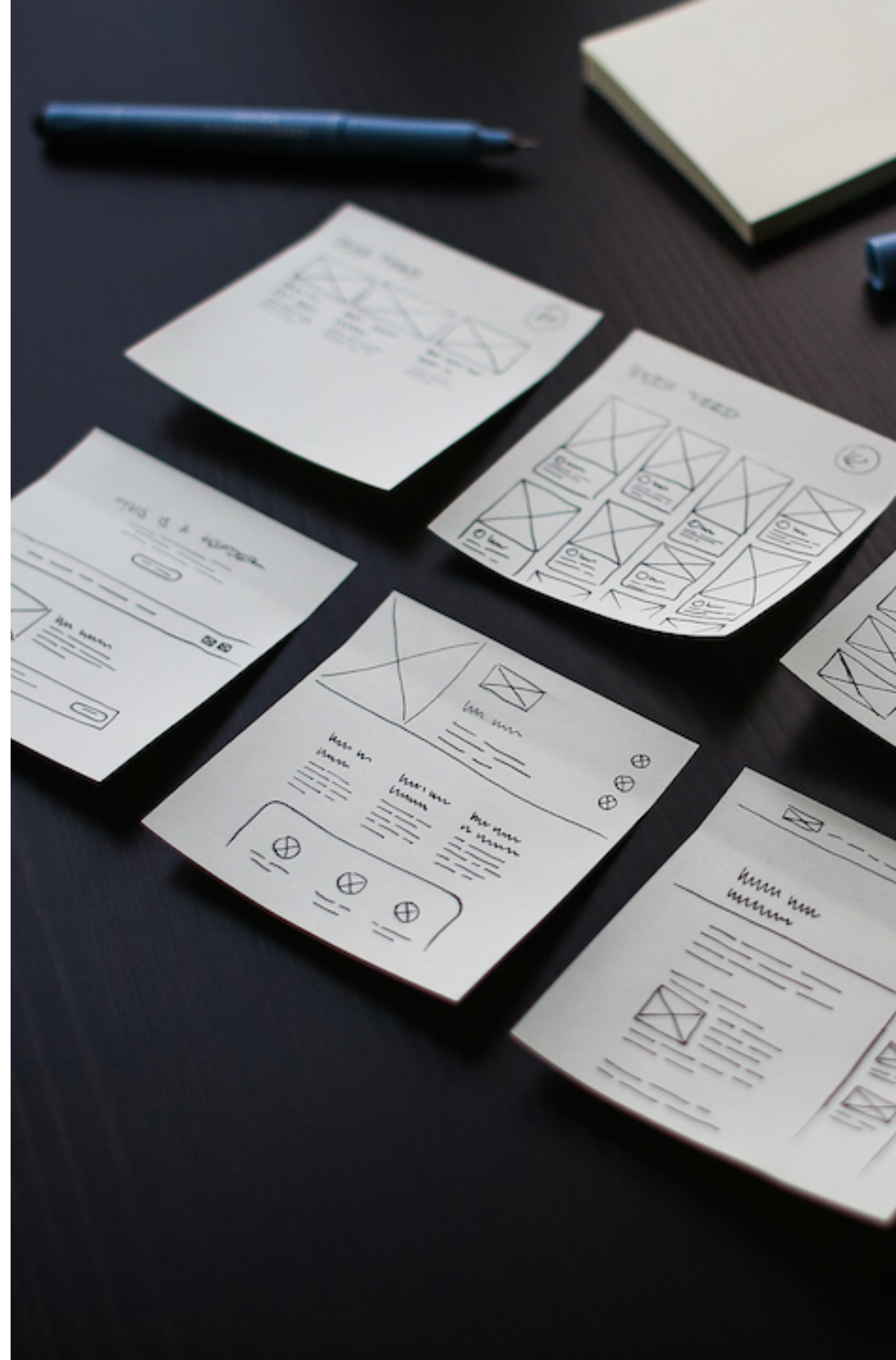


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As you're probably aware, quality websites aren't made over night. To ensure your website project is delivered to the highest possible standard there can be several planning sessions and design meetings, all leading up to a deadline in the near future.

But when should your go live date be? It's often common for schools and academies to pick September as their launch date, to coincide with the start of the academic year. However this can also be the busiest time of the year, and it can be hard to launch a site when there is so much else going on.

In this resource, we'll look at how you can determine the best launch date for your site, and how you can ensure maximum exposure for your site.



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Is there a best time of year to put your site live?

Your school website doesn't just have to go live at the start of the school year. There are several opportunities throughout the school year to launch a new site, some of which are listed below.

- **Open day season.** Traditionally, schools host open days in waves each year, and depending on the years you're recruiting for, these can either be held in the Autumn or Spring term. Launching your new website to coincide with your open day can ensure there is plenty of information available, and prospective students can continue researching your school with your beautiful, new site.
- **School anniversary.** A new website can help celebrate reaching a landmark year at your school, or even the first year in a new building.
- **Recruiting for new teachers.** It's not just students that need to be recruited, but new teachers too. If you're heading for a particularly large recruitment drive, or you're opening a new school which requires several new staff, a new website launch can really help drive traffic and interest in your school.
- **Launch at the start of a new calendar year (not academic year).** Thought about going live in January, rather than September? It could help generate further interest in your school following the winter break, and could alleviate stress of launching a new site in September.
- **Important and exciting news.** Changing to academy status, partnering with another school, a new headteacher, or school extension plans? These are all great reasons to launch a new website, and may not necessarily coincide with the new academic year - so don't wait!



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How to promote your new website

You've got a new site and you've set your go live date. Now, you just need to promote it to your students, prospective students, teachers and the local community.

- **Social media.** Posting links to your new school website on your Facebook and Twitter can quickly spread the message, and make it easier to share.
- **Share it with an email.** Do you send regular emails updating parents on school events? Sharing an update on your new website can help drive traffic, as well as make it easier for your parents to get important school information.
- **Post some posters.** Sometimes the best way to share something is by print advertising. Posters around your school, highlighting your new site, and how it is to use, can draw more users to your site, regardless of the time of year.
- **Speak to the press.** Launching your website as part of a big event? If you're already bringing the local press in for a launch day, it's a great opportunity to share details about your new site. You could also write a press release detailing your new site, and how useful it will be for new students and their parents.





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