The Ultimate Website Launch Checklist

Pre-Launch

Content & Style	
Typography and layout	☐
‣ Check for incorrect punctuation marks, particularly apostrophes, quotation marks and hyphens/dashes	☐
‣ Check headings for where you could potentially use ligatures	☐
‣ Check for widow/orphan terms in important paragraphs	☐
Spelling and grammar	☐
Consistency	☐
‣ Capitalisation (especially of main headings)	☐
‣ Tense/Style of writing	☐
‣ Recurring/common phrases (e.g. 'More about X' links)	☐
‣ Variations in words (e.g. Websites vs Web Sites, or UK vs US spelling)	☐
‣ Treatment of bulleted lists (e.g. periods or commas at end of each item)	☐
Check for hard-coded links to staging domain (i.e. ensure all links will change to 'live' URL/domain when site is launched)	☐
Ensure no test content on site	☐
Check how important pages (e.g. content items) print	☐
For re-designs, ensure important old/existing URLs are redirected to relevant new URLs, if the URL scheme is changing	☐
Check all 'Hidden Copy' (e.g. alt text, transcriptions, text in JavaScript functions)	☐

Standards and Validation	
Accessibility	☐
HTML validation	☐
JavaScript validation	☐
CSS validation	☐

Search Engine Visibility, SEO and Metrics	
Page Titles are important; ensure they make sense and have relevant keywords in them	☐
Create metadata descriptions for important pages	☐
Check for canonical domain issues (e.g. variations in links to http://site.com http://www.site.com http://www.site.com/index.html should be reduced to a consistent style)	☐
Ensure content is marked-up semantically/correctly (<h1>, etc.)	☐
Check for target keyword usage in general content	☐
Check format (user/search engine friendliness) of URLs	☐
Set up Analytics, FeedBurner, and any other packages for measuring ongoing success	☐

Create an XML Sitemap	☐
Configure Google Webmaster Console and Yahoo! Site Explorer	☐

Functional Testing	
Check all bespoke/complex functionality	☐
Check search functionality (including relevance of results)	☐
Check on common variations of browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari, Chrome etc.), version (6, 7, 2.2, 3.1 etc.) and platform (Windows, OSX, Linux)	☐
Check on common variations of Screen Resolution	☐
Test all forms (e.g. contact us, blog comments), including anti-spam features, response emails/text, etc.	☐
Test without JavaScript, Flash, and other plug-ins	☐
Check all external links are valid	☐

Security/Risk	
Configure backup schedule, and test recovery from backup.	☐
Protect any sensitive pages (e.g. administration area)	☐
Use robots.txt where necessary	☐
Security/Penetration test	☐
Turn-off verbose error reporting	☐
Check disk space/capacity	☐
Set-up email/SMS monitoring/alerts (e.g. for errors, server warnings); consider internal and external monitoring services	☐

Performance	
Load test	☐
Check image optimisation	☐
Check and implement caching where necessary	☐
Check total page size/download time	☐
Minify/compress static (JavaScript/HTML/CSS) files	☐
Optimise your CSS: use short image paths; make full-use cascading nature of CSS, etc.	☐
Check correct database indexing	☐
Check configuration at every level (Web server, Database, any other software e.g. Content Management System)	☐
Configure server-based logging/measurement tools (e.g. database/web server logging)	☐

Finishing Touches	
Create custom 404/error pages	☐
Create a favicon	☐

Post-Launch

Marketing	
Social Marketing: Twitter, LinkedIn, Digg, Facebook, Stumbleupon, etc.	☐
Submit to search engines	☐
Set-up PPC/Google Adwords where necessary	☐
Check formatting of site results in SERPs	☐

Ongoing	
Monitor and respond to feedback (direct feedback, on Social Media sites, check for chatter through Google, etc.)	☐
Check analytics for problems, popular pages etc. and adjust as necessary	☐
Update content	☐

For an updated list, check: http://www.boxuk.com/blog/the-ultimate-website-launch-checklist