

M&A Guide:

Unlocking acquisition value with successful website integrations.

Unlocking acquisition value with successful website integrations.

Contents.

01 Introduction.	3
02 What's covered in the download?	4
03 Pre-acquisition: Uncovering hidden value online.	6
04 Strategic synergy or separate strengths?	8
05 Retaining trust through clear communication.	10
06 Merging the acquired into the acquirer.	12
07 Separate but connected.	14
08 Simplify your martech stack.	15
09 Summary.	16
10 About Appeal.	18

Unlocking acquisition value with successful website integrations.

01

Introduction.

M&A is a key strategic growth lever for organisations in both the private and public markets, yet 48% of deals perform below expectations according to research from PWC¹.

As the due diligence becomes ever more sophisticated, understanding the value of your web assets and how to integrate them effectively is critical to value creation.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

1. PWC, 2023 – Time to go further, faster: Transacting to create value and accelerate transformation

02

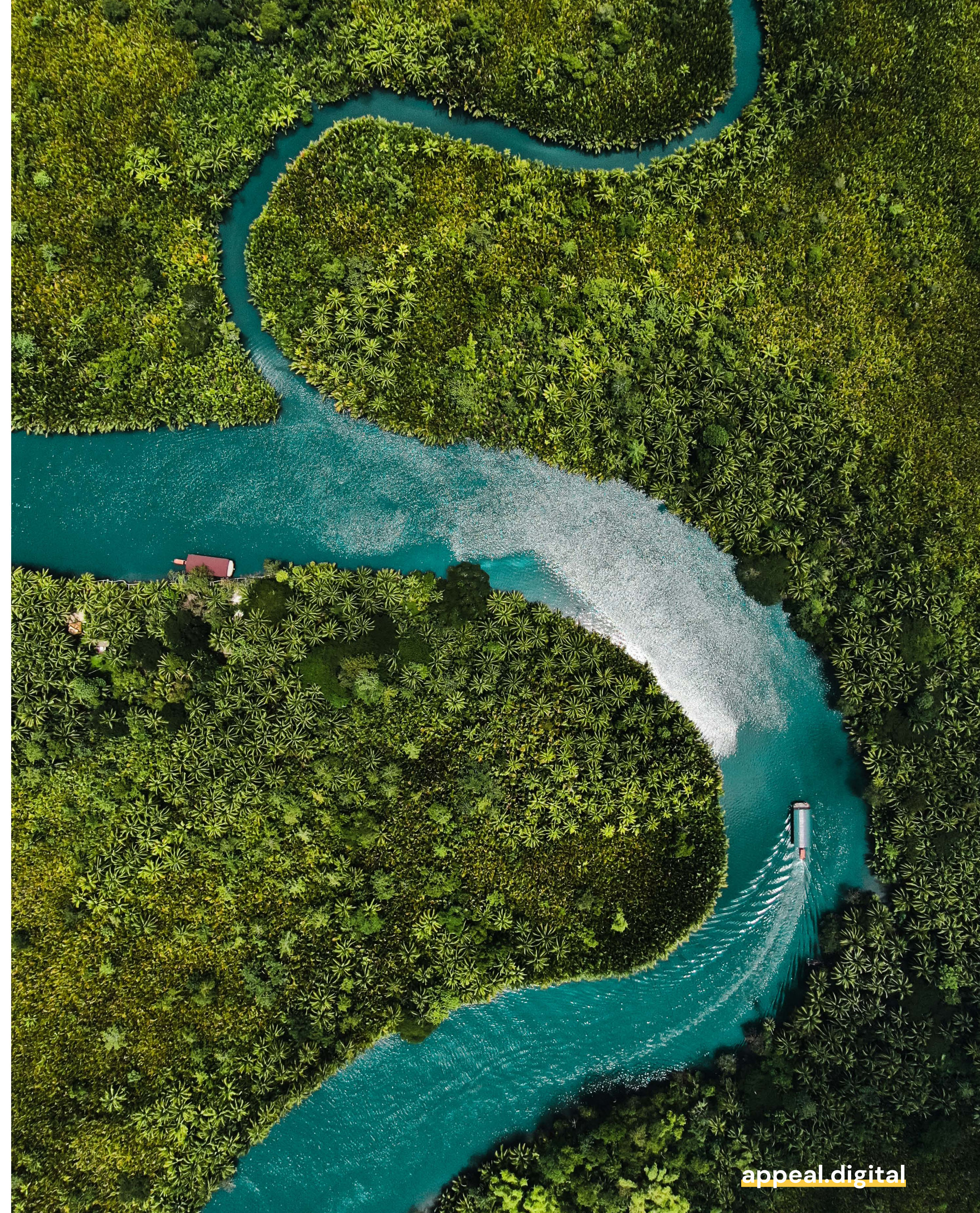
In this guide.

This guide outlines a framework for sales and marketing leaders to generate more value from the M&A process by effectively integrating web assets post-acquisition.

It's just a domain change though... isn't it?

A frequent mistake is to assume that integration of website and digital assets is a simple switchover.

While the principles of a domain migration apply, integrating an acquired business is more complex. And if you're leveraging a buy and build strategy, you'll need robust processes to move fast and maximise value for marketing, sales and shareholders.



Whether you're on the cusp of your first deal, or you're looking to build a more systemised process for value building in your deal flow – this guide is for you.

Challenges this guide helps you solve:

01

Retaining digital equity

Maintaining position within search engines to build momentum and support an inbound flow of qualified leads.

02

Moving at speed

Marketing and sales teams typically get involved later in the due diligence process. Timelines are compressed and workloads are considerable. Process and systemisation is key.

03

Account retention and growth

Ensuring that communication and CX is clear, coherent and supports the M&A objectives to retain and build value.

03

Pre-acquisition: Uncovering hidden value online.

As the due diligence process becomes more sophisticated, it's important that marketers are playing their part in uncovering hidden value in a deal.

Armed with a clear framework and process, marketers can inform the decision on how an integration will work, what is adding value and what can be removed. This all starts with a comprehensive audit to identify digital value drivers.



Audits should focus on:



High-value content

Identify the high-value assets, pages and articles that are driving conversions. Ensuring these are rebranded and migrated will be key.



Marketing environment

What are the trends and growth areas within your sector? These should be identified and be front-of-mind in migration planning.



User experience (UX)

Speed, performance and usability of the site will determine whether it is integrated or continues as a separate entity.



Topic clusters

Assess whether their content strategy aligns with your own topic clusters. Consider whether content from the acquired company complements your own content, or if there's an opportunity to integrate it.



Search engine visibility

An audit of SEO metrics will help to understand top keywords, domain authority and high traffic pages. This will play a significant role in designing your integration plan and approach.

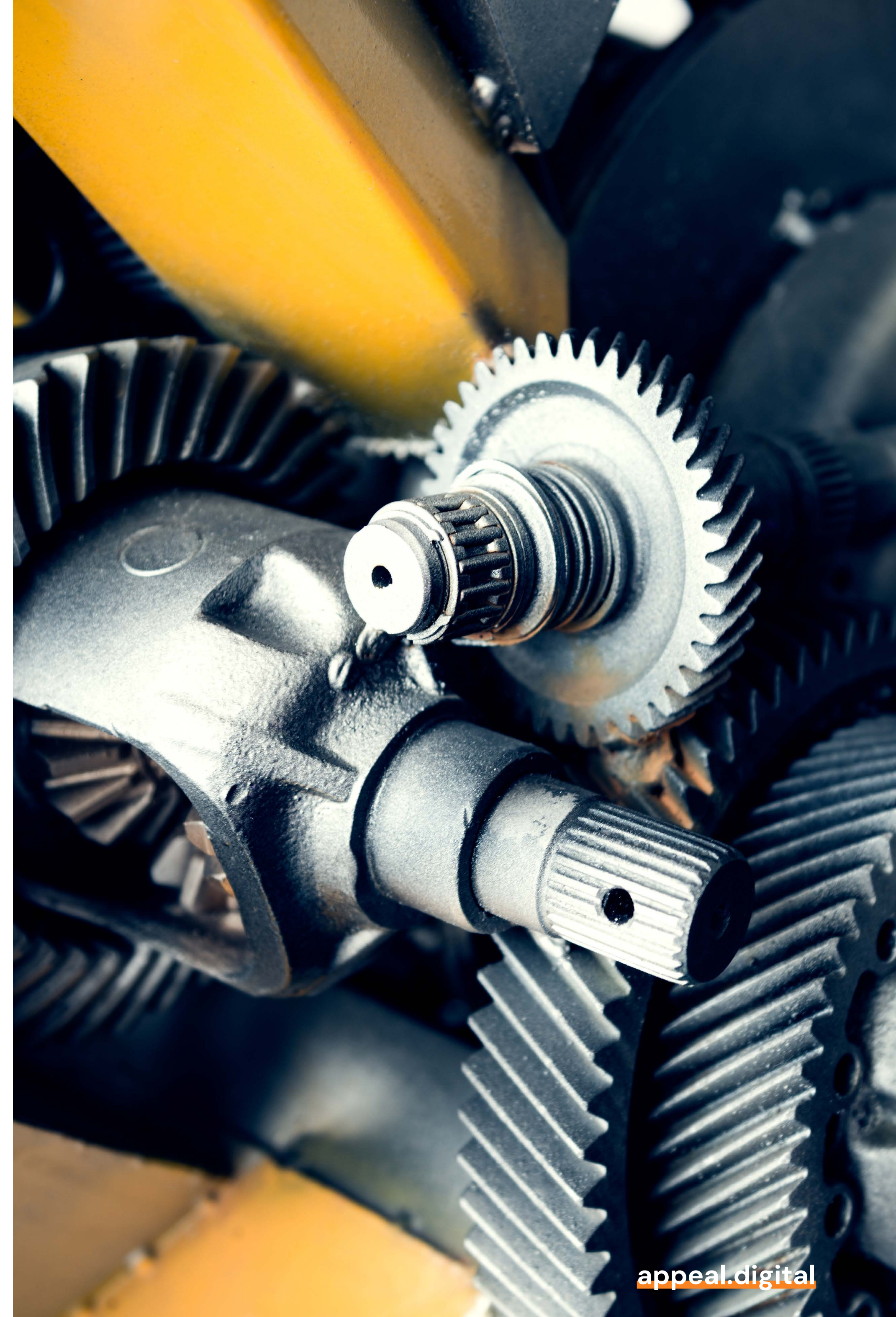
04

Strategic synergy or separate strengths?

Should you integrate or maintain two separate identities?

It's very likely this question will already have been answered in the due diligence process, with the outcome being dictated by the strategic objectives and what the acquiree will bring to the table.

But if it's still up for debate – your audit will answer the question.



When integrating external websites into your organisation there are three ways we typically see this done.



Subsidiary brand

The target company / acquiree has a unique and differentiated position that could be lost if merged into the acquirer. Digital assets and website remain operating on the existing domain under the subsidiary brand.



Absorbed / merged entity

Both acquirer and acquiree serve similar markets and customers. Consolidating the acquiree under the acquirer's brand, website and positioning provides the greatest potential upside, but also carries risk and complexity as you seek to fully integrate.



Combined entity

This works well when audiences and product lines align, and a new, unified brand identity strengthens or redefines market positioning.

Note: When we typically look at a combined entity, businesses generally opt to start with a clean slate. While the principles covered through this guide still apply, we're focussed primarily on the subsidiary and absorbed entities and how these are integrated and managed from a web and digital perspective.

Unlocking acquisition value with successful website integrations.

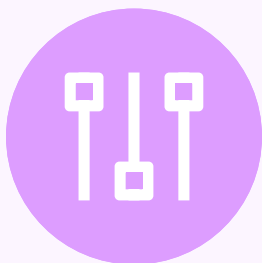
05

Retaining trust through clear communication.

Irrespective of whether you keep the entities separate or fully integrate, customers often have preconceptions about what an acquisition will mean for them, particularly when it relates to service levels.

Clear communication and a careful digital integration roadmap will help to manage concerns and retain key accounts.

Here are some tactics you can deploy to manage communication clearly, effectively and at scale:



Personalised landing pages

A press release is a given but the absolute minimum. Consider personalised pages that outline the changes, timeline and benefits for each of your customer segments.



IP tracking

Cross selling new services to existing clients is a regular KPI of a successful acquisition. IP tracking tools will show which clients are looking at other service lines post integration.



Redirect pop-ups

Configure pop-ups that display when a user is redirected from the acquiree to the acquirer domain. This prevents confusion and helps to reduce bounce rates.



Livechat

Use live chat tools to answer questions on the fly and handle objections from existing customers to ensure a smooth transition.



Frequently asked questions

Support Account Managers sharing the news with a clear FAQs. It helps to manage expectations and handle common objections.

06

Merging the acquired into the acquirer.

Managing the migration of two separate websites into a unified digital presence post-acquisition is a challenging task. This process involves meticulous planning and execution to ensure that both functional and strategic objectives are met.

The success of a digital integration post-acquisition hinges on clear, strategic planning and seamless communication. Review your existing plans against the steps outlined in this section to ensure you succeed in building a stronger business.



A successful integration should result in enhanced efficiencies, a broader reach, and an elevated customer experience.

01

Migrate

- Migrate high-value content (top-performing blog posts, resources).
- Refresh and align content with your main website's tone and brand.
- Archive or remove low-value, duplicate or outdated content to enhance SEO.
- Back up the old site on a staging environment so you can refer to content and information post-migration.

02

Optimise

- Develop a 301 redirect strategy for preserving SEO and guiding users.
- Maintain high-value landing pages or direct traffic to similar pages.
- Carefully monitor and manage the migration within Google Search Console.
- Ensure internal links on the site are correct as best practice.

03

Review

- Configure tracking to measure engagement of existing clients and prospects.
- Monitor key performance indicators (KPIs) to assess integration performance.
- Review Google Search Console in the days and weeks post-integration to measure and resolve indexing errors.

07

Separate but connected.

Maintaining a separate web presence post acquisition is a simpler process on a technical level, but poses different opportunities and challenges.

Share best practice

Promote sharing best practices across teams to ensure campaigns and assets are regularly reviewed and improved.

Cross promotion

Develop cross promotion within your websites assets as you would in your sales teams. Track users globally to measure interest.

Parent site

Consider a parent site or area on your existing sites to showcase the full breadth of service offerings available from your group of companies.

Monitor performance

Establish effective data and reporting to understand when things are going well and where there are instances of cannablisation or threats.

08

Simplify your martech stack.

Acquisitions and integrations are a good time to take stock and review which platforms, technologies and tools are working effectively and where costs, technical debt and old technologies can be removed.

By simplifying and streamlining your martech stack after an acquisition, you can better align different entities and leverage technologies that support a cohesive digital presence. This also helps save costs in the long run by eliminating redundancies and outdated systems.

- Consolidate email marketing tools into one platform.
- Streamline CRM systems for improved data management.
- Use automation software to reduce manual workload.
- Bring recruitment into a single Applicant Tracking System (ATS).
- Retiring legacy content management systems (CMS) or reducing complexity to reduce licence cost.
- Manage future redirections through a separate server. This will speed up your processes for the next acquisition.

09

Summary.

A successful integration of an acquired entity requires precise planning, clear communication and efficient execution.

Deals are often kept confidential until late in the due diligence process, making it critical for marketing and sales teams to have robust processes to manage integrations.

There's lots to do and very little time to manage the workload. Speed and accuracy are key.



Process summary checklist

01

Define integration approach

Choose between subsidiary, merged entity, or combined brand based on brand and market alignment.

02

Audit digital assets

Identify valuable content and key pages to determine what will stay and what can be retired.

03

Clear Communication

Use landing pages, FAQs, and live chat to guide customers through changes.

04

Plan and Execute Migration

Migrate high-value content, set up 301 redirects, and inform Google of your changes.

05

Optimize Martech Stack

Consolidate systems (CRM, CMS, email, ATS) to reduce costs and improve data management.

06

Post-Migration Engagement

Track traffic, measure conversions, and identify cross-sell opportunities.

07

Prepare for Future Acquisitions

Measure your performance, identify KPIs and then streamline processes for faster, smoother integrations next time.

Unlocking acquisition value with successful website integrations.

10

About Appeal.

Appeal Digital is a B2B focussed web agency.

We bring website performance, technical SEO and digital design under one roof, giving B2B teams the knowledge and skills to reach their destination faster.

10

A team of 10 digital experts supporting B2B businesses across the UK and Europe.

36

A track record of experience with 36 website integrations completed in 2024.

14

Proud to support 14 clients backed by VC or PE investment.



The Appeal Digital team deliver, each and every single time, and to the highest level of quality. Their expertise and professionalism sets them apart, and they will be our preferred digital agency going forward.



Alex Gevers

Head of Marketing, Rewire

Get in touch.

Speak to Luke to discuss how to optimise your website around an effective digital integration process that retains and builds value.



Luke Trimmings, Strategy Director
luke@appeal.digital



[Connect on LinkedIn](#)