

THE SHOUT GUIDE TO

Maintaining your Umbraco web estate.

December 2022



Time to upgrade your Umbraco website?

In September 2023, Umbraco 7 will officially become 'end of life' (EOL) meaning the version will no longer receive updates – or crucially, security patching – from Umbraco HQ.

While it's theoretically possible to continue using the platform after this date, it would leave your site open to security vulnerabilities and a system that will degrade over time.

Released in 2013, Umbraco 7 will be ten years old by the time it reaches EOL. It's also more than 4 years since Umbraco 7 had any updates other than security patching – between HQ and the open source community, that's a lot of years of bug fixes and new features you're missing out on.

With typical builds taking several months from conception to public release, now is definitely the time to get your Umbraco 7 site updated.



Version 11

v. 11.0.0
Thu Dec 01 2022



Version 10

v. 10.3.2
Thu Oct 27 2022



Version 9

v. 9.5.4
Tue Sep 06 2022

<https://our.umbraco.com/download/releases>

What's the latest version of Umbraco?

As we write this, we're starting new Umbraco builds on version 10.3, and we expect to start building on the newly released Umbraco 11 imminently.

As Umbraco Gold Partners, we get early access to new versions too, so we can help our clients minimize upgrade costs early in the life of their new platform.

Umbraco 10 is a long term supported version, so by using this you'll have a supported version until 2025.

What are my upgrade options?

Technically there is no such thing as an upgrade from v.7 or 8. The underlying codebase that powers Umbraco changed to .NET Core from v.9 onwards, meaning code can't be shared between the versions.

This comes with plenty of advantages, including faster, more performant sites, and Umbraco have now aligned their release cadence (how often they bring out new versions) with the .NET release program, meaning your whole tech stack stays in step.

However, this does mean that a true upgrade path doesn't exist and you're effectively recreating a site if it's on Umbraco 7, and you want to move to 10 or 11.

Despite there being no 'upgrade now' button, there is a repeatable process we follow to streamline the migration process, and mitigate the risks of creating a new digital platform.

Although there is a tried and tested path to move data and content from an older site, whether this is a practical approach depends on how old your site is, how much data you have and how much of your content you want to keep.

The answers to these questions are different for every organisation.

No matter whether you choose to migrate, or go for a fresh build, any custom code will need to be recreated, and you will need to make sure that any packages that you are using are available for the latest version of Umbraco.

[Read Umbraco's Guide to Migrating a v.8 Site to the new version >](#)

My Umbraco site is on version 8 or version 9, do I need to do anything?

Because there is an easier upgrade path from version 9 to versions 10+, support for v.9 ends earlier – so you should be getting your site updated now or very soon.

For version 8, you have a little longer in terms of support and bug fixing, but we'd still recommend getting your site on to Umbraco 11 to benefit from improvements like bug fixes, new features and better browser compatibility.

The newer versions are also easier for developers to work with and extend, so being on the up to date version means more efficient use of your budget as you build new custom features and extend your digital estate.

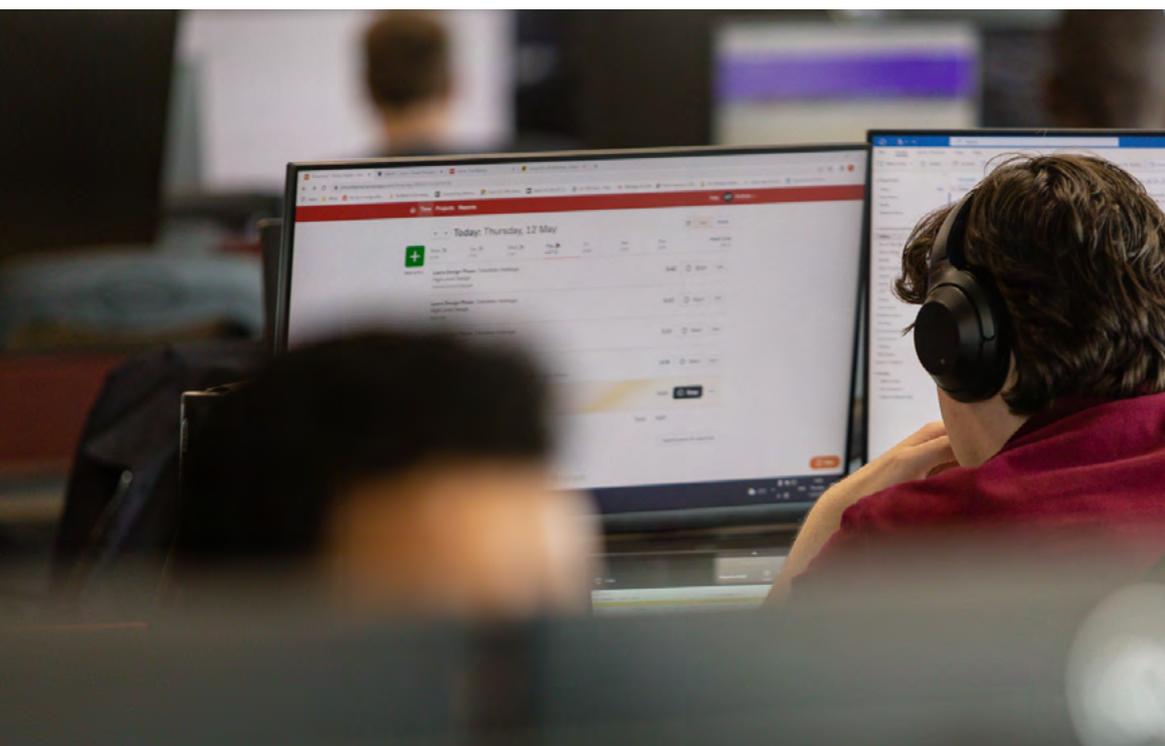
Will I notice the difference?

Clients are often concerned about the impact of upgrades on their team, whether they love the current content management experience or not, they have got used to it and any change can feel like a disruption.

Users on an Umbraco 7 site will notice a change when they are upgraded, but this should feel like a positive experience.

Not only is the most up to date version of Umbraco faster and has better compatibility with modern browsers, if you're coming directly from v.7 you'll notice an overhauled content management interface, improved content workflows, and new tools like multilingual support

From a behind the scenes perspective, the rework done in version 9 to get Umbraco CMS running fully on .NET and .NET Core was revolutionary, allowing developers to do more, and more quickly. Our engineers get excited about the ability to use modern tech like Razor TagHelpers, Microsoft Dependency Injection, and View Components in their developments.



Welcome to the latest Umbraco experience.

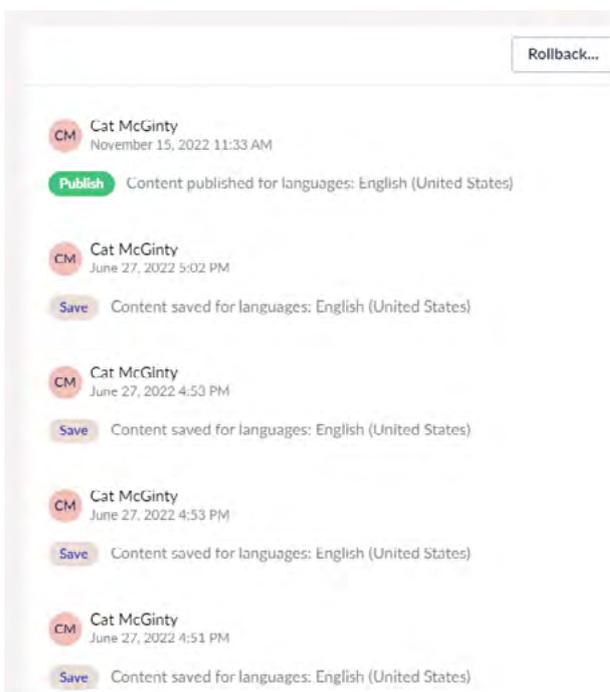
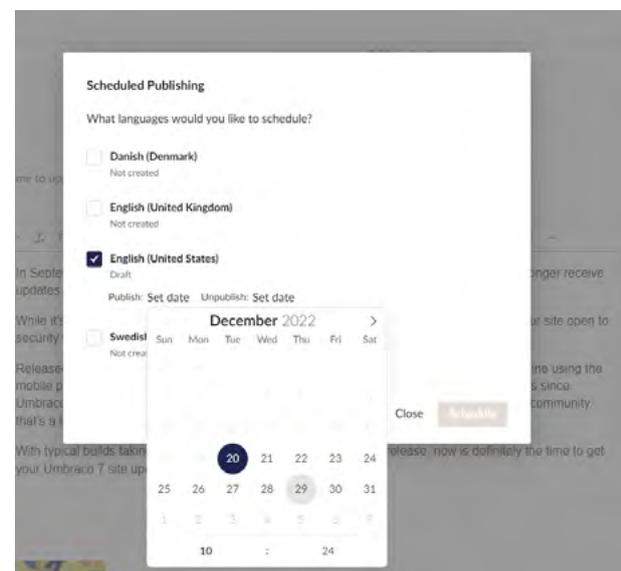
Fuss free and flexible CMS. Beautiful user interface and smooth workflow.

Powerful toolkit. Multi-device previews, scheduled publishing and multilingual support.

Control access and track changes. Built-in editing change log, and the ability to roll back to any previous version of your content. Granular user access – control who can edit what.

Intuitive, folder based media library. Keep your image files and downloads organised.

Focal point based image cropping. No more heads chopped off on certain screen sizes. Tell Umbraco where the most important part of your image is with a click, and ensure correct presentation on any device.



True multi-channel delivery. Use Umbraco to power anything. Responsive websites, mobile apps, digital signage and IOT devices.

Built using headless principles. Your developers keep full control of their mark-up and frontend code.

Designed for agile teams and processes. Editors can publish anytime, without the need for content freeze windows. Supports CI/CD pipelines. Developers can deploy updates at a time that suits your workflows and business.

API-driven integrations. With a full API for both frontend and backend, integrate Umbraco with anything. Add ecommerce platforms, data from an internal CRM system, whatever you need.

Developer-friendly experience. Umbraco has its roots in open source, and a modern MVC based architecture. Great .NET and REST APIs support integrations. The back office is built using Angular JS, and is designed with extension in mind. The platform is flexible and fun to use for developers, and works with the development flow, not against it.

OK, we've convinced you... what's next?

Each project we tackle follows a tried and tested approach to the discovery process. Product Selection, CX Audit and Technical Audit are essential when a project includes upgrading an existing estate.



Product selection

Confirm you want to continue with the content platform, and identify any major systems or platforms that form your digital estate.



CX Audit

Understand the role the web estate plays in your customer experience.



Technical Audit

Review your existing codebase, feature set and technical architecture to inform the new design and architecture.

Product Selection: Confirm you definitely want to continue with Umbraco.

Most of our clients want to stick with Umbraco as they love the open source, template driven system and the flexibility of the platform. It's also suitable for more complex estates, as it has the option of enterprise-level features like multilingual sites, and scalability. Multi-site Umbraco estates mean the ability to pool investment in a single platform, while still allowing individual brands or divisions control over their own digital assets.

However, some organisations may want to explore an enterprise digital experience platform like Sitecore. This can be an appropriate option for sites with high volume online sales, or vast amounts of content to maintain, especially where this can be supported with a strong ROI model and a well-resourced internal team.

For complex solutions, now could also be the appropriate time to move from a monolithic CMS+website approach, and move towards a decoupled set up, perhaps a full API-first microservices architecture.

Umbraco supports this approach, as it can be used as a headless CMS.

[Learn more about choosing the right CMS for your project >](#)

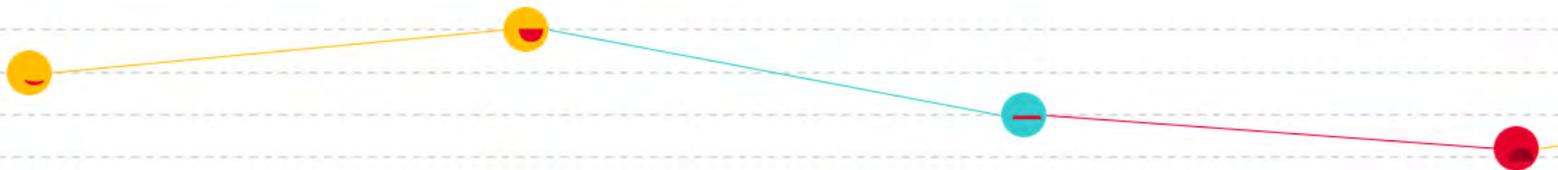


CX Audit: Analyse your content, visual design and user journeys.

A user experience review should include goal identification and journey mapping for customers or end-users of the platform, as well as the internal staff who manage the content, support the customer journeys or otherwise interact with the platform. A twin focus on both customer experience (CX) and employee experience (EX) will help ensure a scalable approach.

This process helps define the scope of your new project. Do you want to keep the same user journeys, overall feel, and site architecture, or do you need to go back to basics and do a complete overhaul of your UX & UI? What do your internal users need from your digital estate?

Through user interviews and testing, you can develop an understanding of how successful your current services are and where there are opportunities for improvement and engagement.



The Shout Approach to a CX Audit

Business Analysis Workshops

- Understand your business culture
- Document and contextualise business goals
- Ascertain core brand product/offering
- Generate high-level business requirements
- Create a shared definition of success

Customer Research

- Review current research and audience understanding
- Map your current product structure and critical user flows
- Undertake original user research, if required

Market & Competitor Analysis

- Comparison with best-in-class competitors
- SWOT analysis to identify challenges, risks and opportunities
- Cross-industry insights

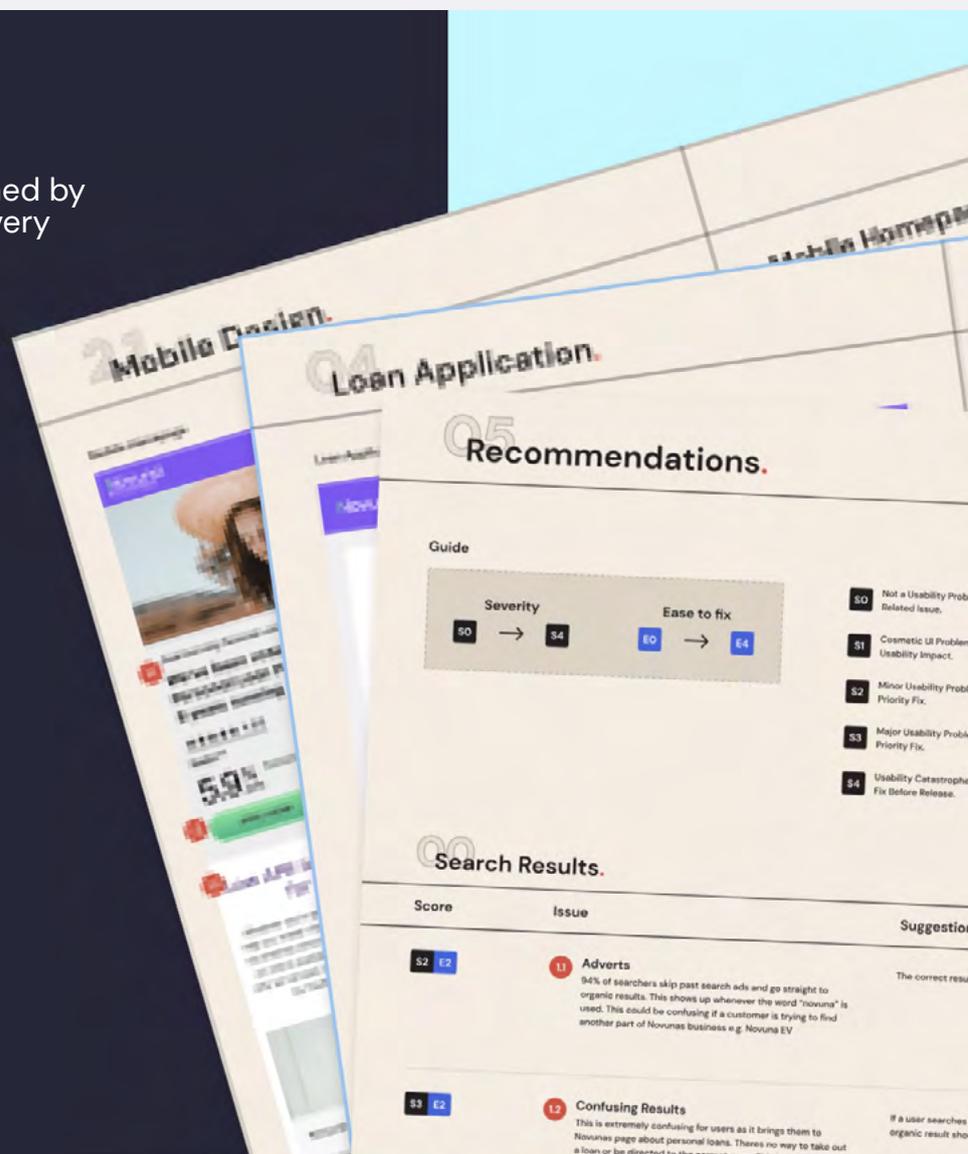
Customer Requirements

- Persona Generation
- Define user goals
- Conduct User interviews & User Testing
- Heuristic evaluation check-lists
- Documented & prioritised feature list

Delivery Phase Outcomes

The following outputs are informed by a CX Audit and fed into the delivery phase:

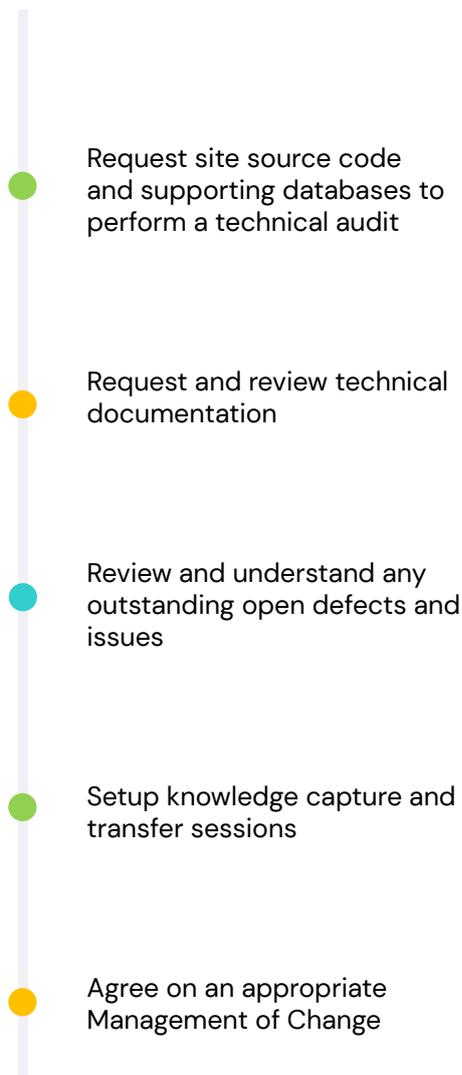
- Defined user flows
- Architecture design
- Solution wireframes
- Clickable prototypes
- User testing
- Prioritised backlog of user stories



Tech Audit: Reviewing your digital ecosystem.

Whenever we're working with an existing digital estate, a technical audit is recommended to understand the state of the current ecosystem, assess any gaps or weaknesses, ensure the set up is secure, performant and future proof.

The audit process considers technical architecture and infrastructure, coding standards, and security best practice.



How do I stay on the latest version of Umbraco?

Once you have your shiny new site out in the world, you'll want to keep it up to date.

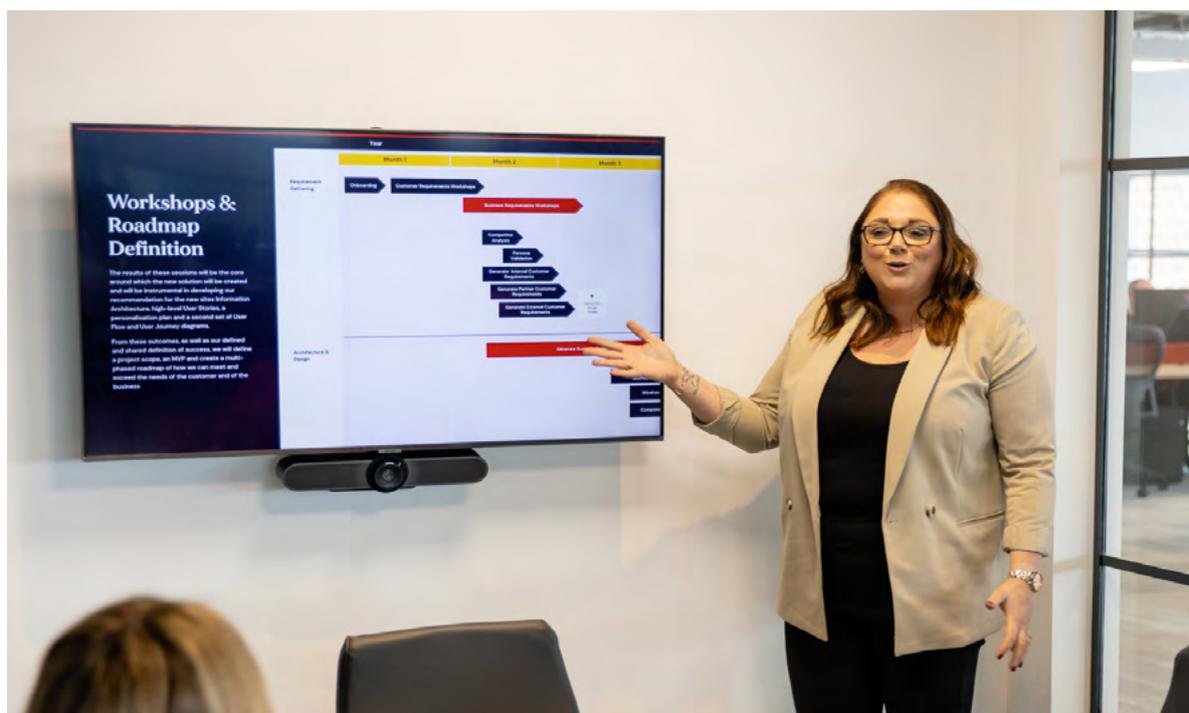
Umbraco have redesigned their release cadence in recent years, moving to a more regimented model, where releases are made on a predictable schedule, and they keep breaking changes to major versions only.

[If you're particularly interested, you can geek out on the release cadence plans here >](#)

The most important takeaway here is that security patches and bug fixes have been separated out from releases with 'breaking changes' which need more thorough testing and possibly reconfiguration of your custom code.

The regular schedule helps you and your development partners plan Umbraco updates into your roadmap, and de-risk the process. If you have ever been in the unfortunate situation where a CMS version update has broken a part of your site's functionality, you know how frustrating this can be.

Your development team should be planning ahead to build in appropriate time to integrate and test major versions promptly, ensuring your users have the best possible experience. The modern approach to releases makes that a more straightforward process to keep up with.



Thank you.

We hope you have found this guide useful.

If you have questions about how to take the next step in your upgrade, talk to us about our experience in CMS and DXP implementations, and our product selection advice service.

We have used Umbraco to power over 100 client projects. We have built brand new digital experiences, and retrofitted it as a headless CMS for existing estates. We have used it to create content management for apps, and as part of API-based integrations with legacy software and platforms.

Umbraco is a future-proof, flexible, and cost-effective open-source content management system. It combines engineering flexibility, and a powerful content editing experience.

Use Umbraco to create a digital experience your users will love.



Shout have been an Umbraco Gold Partner since 2015. Participation means we're committed to each of our team completing formal accreditation, to ensure they are working with the platform efficiently, and are up to date with the latest techniques in development, application architecture and security best practice.

We work closely with Umbraco HQ, enjoying early access to new versions and features – meaning our clients can stay a step ahead.

Discover more about our Umbraco development expertise at: shoutdigital.com/services/umbraco-development

Further Reading.

- [Umbraco's Guide to Migrating a v.8 Site to the new version.](#)
- [Read more about how we deliver our digital transformation and software engineering projects.](#)
- [Learn more about choosing the right CMS for your project.](#)
- [Read about Umbraco release cadence plans here.](#)



Experience, Engineered.

We create exceptional digital experiences that make a difference to everyday lives.

An award-winning team of experts, we pour our love of technology into creating web platforms, mobile apps and bespoke software and integrations.

Headquartered in Newcastle Upon Tyne, we unify complex engineering and elegant customer experience, enabling the businesses we partner with to transform and innovate.

