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Preparing for a traffic spike: a campaign, a launch or a live event

Resources & Limits

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Preparing for a traffic spike: a campaign, a launch or a live event

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A traffic spike is not solved on the day: **it is solved in the days before**. What brings a site down in a campaign is not the total number of visitors, it is the crowd that arrives at the same time. With page caching on, light images and a plan that fits, most sites cope. Without those, the server starts refusing requests and those who arrive see an error page.

Before the day, step by step

1. **Know the date and the kind of visit.** An e-mail campaign, an advert, a press mention and a live event behave differently. Almost all bring the crowd in the first minutes.

2. **Switch page caching on and check that it works.** It has the biggest effect. See **LiteSpeed Cache for WordPress: the first settings** or, on another platform, **installing and tuning a page cache**.

3. **Make a light landing page.** One page, with few images and nothing that queries the database on every visit, carries far more than the full site. The heaviest requests (search, account, cart) are kept away from the entry page.

4. **Rehearse with several people at once**, and watch **Resource Usage** in cPanel while they do. See **how to monitor your site performance in cPanel**.

5. **Review the plan in good time.** A plan change only applies once the invoice is paid, so do not leave it for the eve: **changing plan and how the amount is settled**. After the event you can go back to the earlier plan.

6. **Check that e-mail goes out.** Confirmations, receipts and replies to a campaign add up messages per hour. Your plan's ceiling is on the **plans** page.

What can go wrong	What prevents it
A 508 error or refused pages	Cache, a light page, and a plan that fits. See **entry processes**.
The site is slow only during the peak	Small images and fewer plugins. See **what eats CPU on a website**.
Forms and e-mails that do not arrive	Test sending beforehand and read **why your e-mail is not sending or receiving**.
Nobody noticed the site was down	An automatic failure alert. See **getting an alert when your site goes down**.

If the peak comes from a live broadcast or video
, a hosting plan is not the place to serve it. Use a video service and embed it. See **online radio or video: which plan**.

You can put Cloudflare in front of the site
to ease the server of static files (images, CSS, JavaScript). See **Cloudflare: what it is, what changes, and what stays the same**. Do it beforehand, never during.

NEED A HAND?

Have a launch or a campaign planned? Tell us the date and what will happen, and we will go through the plan with you before the day.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- How many visitors can a hosting plan handle →
- LiteSpeed Cache for WordPress: the first settings →
- Changing plan: how to do it, and how the amount is settled →
- Hosting plans →

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