Going live: hosts, HTTPS and siteaccesses

Move a site to its public addresses - host matching for each siteaccess, SiteURL, DNS, HTTPS certificates with Velocity or your web server, redirects to one host, proxies, and the checks that prove each address reaches...

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This page is for website creators who put a site on its real host names. Three things must agree: DNS sends the host to your server, the server (Velocity or a web server) answers it with a certificate, and Exponential maps the host to the right siteaccess.

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Map hosts to siteaccesses

INI

```ini
# settings/override/site.ini.append.php
[SiteAccessSettings]
MatchOrder=host;uri
HostMatchType=map
HostMatchMapItems[]
HostMatchMapItems[]=www.example.com;site
HostMatchMapItems[]=admin.example.com;admin
```

The empty line clears inherited entries; list every siteaccess you need (10.2 Siteaccesses and site addresses). `HostMatchMethod=start` lets a test host like `www.example.com.test.local` reach the same siteaccess (Siteaccess by host prefix).

SiteURL

Set `[SiteSettings]` `SiteURL` in each siteaccess to its public host without scheme (`www.example.com`). Links in mail, feeds and sitemaps are built from it. Then clear the INI cache.

HTTPS

Served by	Certificates
Velocity	its own certificates, a self-signed fallback, or ACME (Let's Encrypt) as background jobs (Velocity HTTPS and certificates)
Apache, nginx	`mod_ssl` or nginx TLS with a certificate tool or your hosting panel (Serving the site)

Every host name of every siteaccess must be in the certificate. Add `Strict-Transport-Security` once HTTPS works everywhere (8.3.9).

One host, one scheme

Redirect `http://` to `https://` and the other spellings (`example.com`) to the one you chose (`www.example.com`) in the server, with a 301. One address per page is better for visitors and search engines.

Behind a proxy

When a load balancer or CDN terminates HTTPS, list its address in `[HTTPHeaderSettings] TrustedProxies[]`; otherwise the site believes every request is plain HTTP and records the proxy's address as every visitor's (8.8 Behind a reverse proxy).

Checks

Shell

```
php bin/php/ezcache.php --clear-tag=ini --allow-root-user
curl -s -o /dev/null -w '%{http_code}\n' https://www.example.com/
curl -s -o /dev/null -w '%{http_code} %{redirect_url}\n' https://admin.example.com/
curl -s -o /dev/null -w '%{http_code} %{redirect_url}\n' http://example.com/
```

Expect `200` for the site, a redirect to the login for the administration, and a `301` to `https://www.example.com/` for the other spelling. If two hosts answer the same, the host map does not match: the host must be exactly as the browser sends it, lower case, without port.

Related pages

- The launch checklist
- Setting up several sites in one installation
- Hosting requirements for a website
- Free documentation: this page is free to copy, translate and improve under the GNU FDL 1.3.

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