

KNOWLEDGE BASE · PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Purging a CDN cache: one file, a folder or everything, and when not to purge

Speed, Cache & CDN

CODE

RLX-MZ-KB-2116

VERSION

v2026.10.16

COUNTRY · LANGUAGE

Mozambique · English

Interweb Mozambique

RLX Holdings, S.A. · Group RLX Holdings

Tax ID (NUIT) 401 191 607 · Legal entity no. (NUEL) 105 045 974 · Economic activity code (CAE) 62022

<https://www.meu.interweb.co.mz/knowledgebase/2116>



The short answer: purging tells the CDN to throw away the copies it holds, so the next request goes to the origin for the current version. It is for when something changed **without its address changing**. There are three things a purge does **not** do: it does not clear your visitors' browser caches, it does not clear the server or plugin cache, and it does not fix a badly chosen lifetime (the new copy is kept just as long). We do not sell a CDN: what follows applies to whichever CDN you choose, on an account of your own, opened directly with that provider.

Which purge to use

Kind of purge	When to use it
One address	You changed one specific file and kept its name. Type the full address exactly as visitors request it: with or without www, with https, and with the query string if your CDN includes it in the cache key.
By prefix, folder or hostname	You changed a whole folder (the theme, the images for one section) or everything on one subdomain. Not every provider or plan offers it.
By tag (or surrogate key)	The site labels responses with tags (a product's, for example) and purges every page carrying that tag at once. It needs support in the CDN and in the site or plugin.
Soft purge	Instead of deleting, it marks copies as out of date: the CDN can keep serving the old one while it fetches the new. Easier on the origin. Not every CDN has it.
Everything	A theme change, a migration, or an error stored on many pages. The last resort, not the routine.

In what order to clear things when something changes

1

The site cache first (the cache plugin, LiteSpeed's cache). Purge the CDN before that and it goes back to the origin and stores the old copy the plugin was still holding.

2

Then the CDN: by address if it was one file; by folder or tag if it was a section; everything only if you do not know what changed.

3

Check the header: the first request after the purge should be a MISS with the new content, as in **origin and edge in a CDN**.

4

Test in a private window. Your own browser's cache is separate, and a CDN purge does not touch it.

5

If some visitors still see the old version, it is their browser, which kept the file for as long as the header allowed. The only way out is to rename the file: **versioned file names and cache busting**.

Purging everything at a busy moment sends every request to the origin at once. On a site that lives off its cache, that can leave the hosting short of breath and throw errors for a while (**error 503 and the rest of the 5xx family**). And a scheduled job that purges everything all the time cancels the CDN out: visitors get almost nothing but MISSes.

For things that change often, the best purge is none. A file with a version in its name (`style.3f9a1c.css`) has a new address that was never cached, and the old one dies on its own. Careful: some CDNs ignore the query string in the cache key, so a `?v=2` is not enough there; rename the file.

Purged and the site still shows the old version? Tell us the exact address and what you already cleared, in order.

[Open a support ticket](#)

SEE ALSO

Visitors still see the old CSS or logo: versioned file names and cache busting

Origin and edge in a CDN: HIT, MISS, BYPASS and what an origin shield does

Cache headers explained: Cache-Control, Expires, ETag and how a CDN reads them

LiteSpeed Cache for WordPress: the first settings

Cache rules for a WordPress site, without hiding the dashboard

Switching the CDN off, and confirming it really is off



Online version of this document

Interweb is a leading internet services company, with a mission to help businesses to be born and prosper through technology.

2020

FOUNDED

37,000+

CLIENTS

130+

SIGN-UPS A DAY

Interweb Mozambique

RLX Holdings, S.A. • Group RLX Holdings

TAX ID (NUIT)	401 191 607
LEGAL ENTITY NO. (NUEL)	105 045 974
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY CODE (CAE)	62022
REGISTERED OFFICE	Bairro 7 de Setembro Vilankulo 1304 • CEP 0411-02, Inhambane, Mozambique
CONTACT	info@interweb.co.mz • +258 84 635 1111 • +258 86 635 1111 • www.interweb.co.mz
OPENING HOURS	Monday to Friday - 08 AM to 04 PM Saturday & Sunday - Closed