

# Evaluating Web Sources: A Checklist

Here are a few tips to use in evaluating resources on the Web:

- ✓ **Authority** - Is there an author? Is the website signed? Is it clear who is responsible for content? Is there contact information?

The domain can determine several key pieces of information. Some common URL domains are:

**.org** - advocacy or noncommercial organization, including nonprofit groups  
**.gov** - government agencies  
**.com** - commercial or marketing sites, generally for profit  
**.edu** - educational institutions  
**.net** - Internet networks  
**.int** - international organizations  
**.ca, .uk, .jp, etc.** - country domains



- ✓ **Purpose** - What is goal and purpose of website? Who benefits? Why was it created? The reliability of the information can be affected by the motivation of the site sponsors.
- ✓ **Accuracy** - Does the information seem accurate from what you already know? Is it documented? Is there a bibliography?
- ✓ **Currency** - A credible website should include the date it was created and the date it was last revised. Is the data up-to-date? Do the links work? Is there contact information for who is responsible for content and also for who is maintaining the site?
- ✓ **Objectivity** - Is the information presented without bias? Are the statements or opinions presented trying to sell, manipulate, or persuade you? Is there advertising on the page? Are there games, contests, giveaways, or celebrity endorsements? Assume that a commercial website (.com) will present information on the products or corporation in a positive light.

The following websites have more information on evaluating Internet resources:

- Evaluating Information Found on the Internet - from the Sheridan Library of The Johns Hopkins University (<http://www.library.jhu.edu/researchhelp/general/evaluating/>)
- Checklist for Evaluating Web Resources - from the University of Southern Maine (<http://library.usm.maine.edu/research/researchguides/webeval.php>)
- Thinking Critically about Web 2.0 and Beyond- by Esther Grassian from the UCLA College Library ([http://www.library.ucla.edu/libraries/college/11605\\_12008.cfm#section1](http://www.library.ucla.edu/libraries/college/11605_12008.cfm#section1))



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