

**Adapted from "Evaluating Web Sites: Criteria and Tools"**

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**Context: The Primary Factor**

The User Context: The most important factor when evaluating Web sites is your search, your needs. What are you using the Web for? Entertainment? Academic work? Hobbies or avocational interests? Scholarly sources are traditionally very strongly text-based. Compare the appearance and the content of an academic journal with a popular magazine. Some of the visual distinctions that signal the nature of content in print sources hold true on the Web as well; although, because the Web encourages wider use of graphics, Web versions of printed works usually contain more graphics and more color than their print counterparts. Color graphics appeared on the New York Times Web site before they appeared in the printed New York Times, for instance.

**Evaluation Criteria**

from: "Critically Analyzing Information Sources" from the Cornell University Library.

- Author
- Date of Publication
- Edition or Revision
- Publisher
- Title of Journal
- Intended Audience
- Objective Reasoning
- Coverage
- Writing Style
- Evaluative Reviews

from: "Questions to Ask & Strategies for Getting the Answers" from the UC Berkeley Library.

- What can the URL tell you?
- Who wrote the page? Is he, she, or the authoring institution a qualified authority?
- Is it dated? Current, timely?
- Is information cited authentic?
- Does the page have overall integrity and reliability as a source?
- What's the bias?
- Could the page or site be ironic, like a satire or a spoof?
- If you have questions or reservations, how can you satisfy them?

### **Evaluations by Librarians**

Librarians' Index to the Internet [UC Berkeley]

Internet Reference Resources [Cornell University]