Criteria for Evaluating Resources (Internet- and Print-Based)

A³BCD

Authority of Source

- Is a personal or organizational author identified?
- Does the author provide contact information, e.g., e-mail address, telephone number, street address?
- Does the personal author provide any credentials...
  - organizational affiliation?
  - education?
  - occupation?
  - years of experience?
- Do the credentials suggest an inherent bias of particular point of view?
- Is the author the creator of the document or a compiler of information resources?
- Can you find other material by or about the author, either on the Internet or using library resources, e.g., reference materials or indexing publications?

Accuracy

- Are the sources of facts documented?
- Are there links to the documented sources?
  - Are the links relevant?
  - Do the links work or are they “broken”?
- Can you corroborate the facts, either using Internet sources or using library resources, e.g., reference materials or indexing publications?
- Has the author put in the effort to use good grammar and correct spelling?

Audience

- Who is the intended audience for this work?
  o General audience - written for people with an 8th - 12th grade education
  o Professional - written for those with an undergraduate college education
  o Specialized - written for those with an interest in a specialized area of study
- Is the language and the word selection understandable and appropriate for the intended readership? Is it too simple or too difficult?
Bias/Point of View

- What is the purpose of the document...
  - to inform/explain?
  - to persuade/advocate a position?
  - to sell?
- Does this reflect a particular bias in viewpoint?
- Who is the intended audience, e.g., professionals, students, consumers, advocates, etc.?
- Does this affect the scope or bias of the information presented?
- Does the author distinguish facts from opinions?
- Are sources or viewpoints missing that you might expect to be present?

Currency

- When was the document created and when was it last updated? (This is often specified at the end of the document.)

Design

- Do pages take a long time to load?
- Is the site well organized and logically arranged?
- Can you navigate the site without confusion?
- Is the text easy to read against the background?
- Are links helpful and relevant?
- Do graphics enhance (or distract from) the utility of the site?

Adapted from:


Webliographies of sites that discuss the evaluation of Internet resources http://www.vuw.ac.nz/~agsmith/evaln/evaln.htm

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