Guide to Evaluating Web Pages

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| **Evaluation of Web documents** | **How to interpret the basics** |
| **1. Accuracy of Web Documents*** Who wrote the page and can you contact him or her?
* What is the purpose of the document and why was it produced?
* Is this person qualified to write this document?
 | **Accuracy*** Make sure author provides e-mail or a contact address/phone number.
* Know the distinction between author and Webmaster.
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| **2. Authority of Web Documents*** Who published the document and is it separate from the "Webmaster?"
* Check the domain of the document, what institution publishes this document?
* Does the publisher list his or her qualifications?
 | **Authority*** What credentials are listed for the author(s)?
* Where is the document published?
* Check URL domain.
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| **3. Objectivity of Web Documents*** What goals/objectives does this page meet?
* How detailed is the information?
* What opinions (if any) are expressed by the author?
 | **Objectivity*** Determine if page is a mask for advertising; if so information might be biased.
* View any Web page as you would an infommercial on television.
* Ask yourself why was this written and for whom?
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| **4. Currency of Web Documents*** When was it produced?
* When was it updated?
* How up-to-date are the links (if any)?
 | **Currency*** How many dead links are on the page?
* Are the links current or updated regularly?
* Is the information on the page outdated?
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| **5. Coverage of the Web Documents*** Are the links (if any) evaluated and do they complement the documents theme?
* Is it all images or a balance of text and images?
* Is the information presented cited correctly?
 | **Coverage*** If page requires special software to view the information, how much are you missing if you don't have the software?
* Is it free, or is there a fee, to obtain the information?
* Is there an option for text only, or frames, or a suggested browser for better viewing?
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| **Putting it all together*** **Accuracy.** If your page lists the author and institution that published the page and provides a way of contacting him/her, and...
* **Authority.**If your page lists the author credentials and its domain is preferred (.edu, .gov, .org, or .net), and...
* **Objectivity.** If your page provides accurate information with limited advertising and it is objective in presenting the information, and...
* **Currency.** If your page is current and updated regularly (as stated on the page) and the links (if any) are also up-to-date, and...
* **Coverage.** If you can view the information properly-not limited to fees, browser technology, or software requirement, then...

**You may have a higher quality Web page that could be of value to your research.** |