

Five Criteria for Evaluating Web Pages

Evaluation of Web documents

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?

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?

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?

4. Currency of Web Documents

- When was it produced?
- When was it updated?
- How up-to-date are the links (if any)?

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?

How to interpret the basics

Accuracy

- Make sure author provides e-mail or a contact address/phone number.
- Know the distinction between author and Webmaster.

Authority

- What credentials are listed for the author(s)?
- Where is the document published?
- Check URL domain.

Objectivity

- Determine if page is a mask for advertising; if so information might be biased.
- View any Web page as you would an infomercial on television.
- Ask yourself why was this written and for whom?

Currency

- How many dead links are on the page?
- Are the links current or updated regularly?
- Is the information on the page outdated?

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?

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 you!

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