CCC CCC (ten Cs) for evaluating Internet resources.

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**CCC CCC (ten Cs) FOR EVALUATING INTERNET RESOURCES**

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**1. Content**

What is the intent of the content? Are the title and author identified? Is the content "juried"? Is the content "popular" or "scholarly", satiric or serious? What is the date of the document or article? Is the "edition" current? Do you have the latest version? (Is this important?) How do you know?
2. Credibility
Is the author identifiable and reliable? Is the content credible? Authoritative? Should it be? What is the purpose of the information, that is, is it serious, satiric, humorous? Is the URL extension .edu, .com, .gov or .org? What does this tell you about the "publisher"?

3. Critical Thinking
How can you apply critical thinking skills, including previous knowledge and experience, to evaluate Internet resources? Can you identify the author, publisher, edition, etc. as you would with a "traditionally" published resource? What criteria do you use to evaluate Internet resources?

4. Copyright
Even if the copyright notice does not appear prominently, someone wrote, or is responsible for, the creation of a document, graphic, sound or image, and the material falls under the copyright conventions. "Fair use" applies to short, cited excerpts, usually as an example for commentary or research. Materials are in the "public domain" if this is explicitly stated. Internet users, as users of print media, must respect copyright.

5. Citation
Internet resources should be cited to identify sources used, both to give credit to the author and to provide the reader with avenues for further research. Standard style manuals (print and online) provide some examples of how to cite Internet documents, although standards have not yet been formally established.

6. Continuity
Will the Internet site be maintained and updated? Is it now and will it continue to be free? Can you rely on this source over time to provide up-to-date information? Some good .edu sites have moved to .com, with possible cost implications. Other sites offer partial use for free, and charge fees for continued or in-depth use.

7. Censorship
Is your discussion list "moderated"? What does this mean? Does your search engine or index look for all words or are some words excluded? Is this censorship? Does your institution, based on its mission, parent organization or space limitations, apply some restrictions to Internet use? Consider censorship and privacy issues when using the Internet.

8. Connectivity
If more than one user will need to access a site, consider each user's access and "functionality". How do users connect to the Internet and what kind of connection does the assigned resource require? Does access to the resource require a graphical user interface? If it is a popular (busy) resource, will it be accessible in the time frame needed? Is it accessible by more than one Internet tool? Do users have access to the same Internet tools and applications? Are users familiar with the tools and applications? Is the site "viewable" by all Web browsers?
9. Comparability
Does the Internet resource have an identified comparable print or CD ROM data set or source? Does the Internet site contain comparable and complete information? (For example, some newspapers have partial but not full text information on the Internet.) Do you need to compare data or statistics over time? Can you identify sources for comparable earlier or later data? Comparability of data may or may not be important, depending on your project.

10. Context
What is the context for your research? Can you find "anything" on your topic, that is, commentary, opinion, narrative, statistics and your quest will be satisfied? Are you looking for current or historical information? Definitions? Research studies or articles? How does Internet information fit in the overall information context of your subject? Before you start searching, define the research context and research needs and decide what sources might be best to use to successfully fill information needs without data overload.

WEB PAGE EVALUATION
Title of Web Site: URL:

Directions: Use your judgment in allotting points for the various categories. Total the points for score.

Currency (0 to 15 Points)
The site has the date of last revision posted.

The site has been updated recently.

Frequency of planned updates and revisions is stated.

Content (0 to 15 Points)
The information will be useful to our curriculum and/or student interest.

This information is not available in any other format elsewhere in my library.

The information on the topic is thorough.

The information is accurate.

The purpose of the page is obvious.

The information is in good taste.

The page uses correct spelling and grammar.

Authority (0 to 10 Points)
The authors and/or maintainers of the site are authorities in their field.

There is a way to contact the author(s) via e-mail or traditional mail.

You can easily tell from the domain name where the page originates.

**Navigation (0 to 10 Points)**
You can tell from the first page how the site is organized and what options are available.

The type styles and background make the page clear and readable.

The links are easy to identify.

The links are logically grouped.

The layout is consistent from page to page.

There is a link back to the home page on each supporting page.

The links are relevant to the subject.

The icons clearly represent what is intended.

**Experience (0 to 10 Points)**
The page fulfills its intended purpose.

The page is worth the time.

The page's presentation is eye-catching.

The site engages the visitor to spend time there.

**Multimedia (0 to 10 Points)**
Sound, graphics or video enhance the site's message.

**Treatment (0 to 10 Points)**
Any biases towards the subject matter can be easily identified.

The page is free from stereotyping.

The page is age appropriate for content and vocabulary for its intended audience.

**Access (0 to 5 Points)**
You can connect quickly to the page.
The page loads quickly.

You can choose whether to download smaller images, text-only, or non-frame versions.

**Miscellaneous (0 to 15 Points)**
The page has received an award(s).

There are no per-use costs involved.

Interactions asking for private information are secured.

Information can be printed without the need to change your system configuration.

Information is presented in short enough segments so it can be printed out without backing up the system for other users.

The page has its own search engine for searching within the page.

**TOTAL:**

**Scoring:**  
90–100  Excellent  
80–89  Good  
70–79  Average  
60–69  Borderline Acceptable  
Below 60  Unacceptable

**Comments:**

--Nancy Everhart

**Bibliography on Evaluating Internet Resources**

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Note: dates given in brackets indicate when each site was visited.

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**Useful Listservs**

NETTRAIN--send email to listserv@ubvm.cc.buffalo.edu subscribe NETTRAIN <your name>

Info-Quality-L-send email to: majordomo@coombs.anu.edu.au subscribe infor-quality-1 <your email address>

Web4Lib--send email to listproc@library.berkeley.edu subscribe web4lib <your name>

BI-L--send email to listserv@bingvmb.cc.binghamton.edu subscribe BI-L <your name>
Net-Happenings--send email to listserv@lists.internic.net subscribe net-happenings

Libref-L--send email to listserv@listserv.kent.edu subscribe libref-1 <your name>

I began this bibliography in 1996 because I perceived an increasing need to include evaluation skills in my instructional sessions when talking about using the Internet for research. Librarians and information professionals have written extensively about this topic and I am sure that I have included only a fraction of what is actually out there. I would be very interested in hearing about other relevant resources. Please contact me at auern@vt.edu with suggestions.

The URL for my site is: http://ref server.lib.vt.edu/libinst/critTHINK HTM and the last update was March 16, 1998.

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