Website Evaluation

Since anyone can publish anything on the Web, it is important to develop your ability to examine a website critically to determine whether the information presented there is accurate and authoritative. When evaluating a website, try to answer as many of the following questions as possible:

**Authority**
Who created the site? What kind of credentials do they have? Do their credentials verify that they have expertise on the topic?

**Accuracy**
Is the information accurate? Are the sources documented?

**Objectivity**
Is the information presented in an objective manner, or can you detect a bias? Why was the site created – to persuade, to sell, to inform?

**Currency**
Is the site current? Can you locate a date when it was last revised? Do all the links work?

**Content**
Is the content comprehensive, and is it presented in a professional manner?

Online tutorials:

“The Good, the Bad & the Ugly: or, Why It’s a Good Idea to Evaluate Web Sources”
For additional help in evaluating a website, take a look at the Evaluation Criteria (http://lib.nmsu.edu/instruction/evalcrit.html) created by Susan Beck at the New Mexico State University Library.

“How to Evaluate Information”
This site was created by a law firm to help legal professionals evaluate information, but their checklist applies very well to information in general.