

Checklist for a Business/Marketing Web Page

How to Recognize a Business/Marketing Web Page

A **Business/Marketing Web Page** is one sponsored by a commercial enterprise (usually it is a page trying to promote or sell products). The URL address of the page frequently ends in **.com** (commercial).

Questions to Ask about the Web Page

Note: The greater the number of questions listed below answered "yes," the more likely it is you can determine whether the source is of high information quality.

Criterion #1: AUTHORITY

- Is it clear what company is responsible for the contents of the page?
- Is there a link to a page describing the nature of the company, who owns the company, and the types of products and services the company sells?
- Is there a way of verifying the legitimacy of the company? That is, is there a phone number or postal address to contact for more information? (Simply an email address is not enough).
- Is there a statement that the content of the page has the official approval of the company?
- Is there a statement giving the company's name as copyright holder?

Criterion #2: ACCURACY

- Has the company provided a link to outside sources such as independent product reviews or reports filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) which can be used to verify company claims?
- Are the sources for any factual information clearly listed so they can be verified in another source?
- Is the information free of spelling, grammatical, and typographical errors? These kinds of errors not only indicate a lack of quality control, but can actually produce inaccuracies in information.

Criterion #3: OBJECTIVITY

- For any given piece of information, is it clear what the company's motivation is for providing it?
- If there is any advertising on the page, is it clearly differentiated from the informational content?

Criterion #4: CURRENCY

- Are there dates on the page to indicate:
 - When the page was written?
 - When the page was first placed on the Web?
 - When the page was last revised?
- Are there any other indications that the material is regularly updated?
- For financial information, is there an indication it was filed with the SEC?
 - Is the filing date listed?
- For material from the company's annual report, is the date of the report listed?

Criterion #5: COVERAGE

- Is there an indication that the page has been completed, and is not still under construction?
- Are all of the company's products described with an adequate level of detail?
- Is the same level of information provided for all departments or divisions of the company?