Evaluating Internet Resources
Finding information on the Internet is just the first step. It is important that you also evaluate the information you find. There is "virtually" no control over the placement of sites on the Web, nor over the accuracy of the information they contain. Researchers therefore must carefully consider the source, and content of Internet sites. Here are some suggestions:

Source of Information:

- Is the name of an author, organization, company or institution indicated? These can often be found at the beginning or end of the Web page.
- Is information provided about the author or group responsible for the site?

For an individual — look for information about their professional qualifications, educational background, publications, etc.
For a group — what type of organization is it? The last part of the Internet address (called the domain) will give you a clue. For example:
  .com
  Commercial organization or business: Some, but not all of these, are trying to sell a product.
  .edu
  Educational institution: These sites could be from colleges or universities; also from other schools at any grade level (K - 12). Careful: some education sites contain student term papers and other assignments.
  .gov
  Government agency (federal, state or local): These are often good sites for statistics, laws and legislation, consumer information, etc.
  .org
  Organization: These could be non-profit, for-profit, political, professional, advocacy groups etc.

Content

- How current is the site? The last update is often noted at the bottom of the page.
- What audience is this information intended for — the general public, students, professionals?
- What is the purpose of the site?
- Does the site present differing viewpoints on an issue, or does it promote one view. For most types of research, you will want to investigate differing viewpoints.
- Is the information available in other sources or formats? Everything is not on the Internet. For certain topics it may be more efficient and appropriate to use other library resources (such as reference books, periodical articles, etc.)

If you have any questions about using the Internet, please ask a reference librarian.