

Evaluating Digital Evidence

Extra diligence must be applied when evaluating digital evidence, because any individual or organization can post information online and it may be difficult to tell the difference between fact-based information posted by credible authors and opinion- or ego-based information posted by individuals.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:	WHAT CLUES WILL HELP YOU DECIDE IF THIS EVIDENCE IS CREDIBLE AND MEETS THE CRITERIA?
Authority and Reliability: <i>Is the author an authority on your specific topic? Can you rely on this author/publisher to present high-quality information?</i>	
Accuracy and Credibility: <i>Is the factual information accurate and are any opinions supported by credible evidence? Is this an opinion piece like a blog, personal video, personal rant?</i>	
Comprehensiveness: <i>Does this evidence add depth, valuable additional information, or corroboration for your research? Does the site provide links to other sites with information that can be trusted?</i>	
Currency: <i>Is the information up-to-date? How can you be sure that the information has been vetted and is not viral misinformation that is circulating rapidly?</i>	
Point of View and Bias: <i>What is the point of view of the author/creator? Is that point of view biased and based more on emotion and persuasion than on logical evidence and argument? How has that point of view influenced the credibility of the information or the type of information included? What information has been left out that might be offered by an author with a different point of view?</i>	