Types of Resources, Part 2: Websites

Websites can contain anything and can be created by anyone. The challenge is to evaluate them to determine which are suitable.

Here are 4 types you might use: Commercial, educational, governmental, or, informational. Let’s take a look at these different types of websites.

Commercial websites: Most companies have a website to provide information about the company and its products/services.

Commercial websites usually have a .com domain name.

When would you want to use a commercial website? To find information about companies. To find information about products.

Educational Websites: Many educational institutions will post information on the Internet, including research, citation style guides, and more. To tell if a website is educational, look for a prominently placed name of the educational institution. The also often have a .edu domain.

When would you want to use an educational website?

To find research done by a reputable research institution, or to find good-quality, reliable academic information.

Governmental Websites: All levels of government post information on their web sites about public safety, immigration, health, taxes, and much more. Government websites usually have a .gov domain, but Canadian government websites do not. Look for the name of a government ministry or department.

When would you want to use a government website? To find information about the government of a particular country, region, or city. To find information about plans, policies, research results, and statistics.

Informational Websites: Informational websites can be about anything and require lots of evaluation before you use them. Informational websites are very diverse, and difficult to identify. They are often also commercial sites, and may have a .com domain name.
When would you want to use an informational website? For opinions and alternate points of view on a topic. For current information from around the world. Blogs like the one on this site can be great sources of information and opinions. Writers post information and often create discussion on a given topic.

However, evaluate blogs carefully for their authority and credibility.

In this tutorial, we’ve explored the major types of sources and their application in research. We’ve also learned some tips on identifying the type of source you’ve found.

If you need more assistance, please ask at the LRC Service Desk.