Types of websites defined by subject matter.

There are many varieties of websites, each specializing in a particular type of content or use, and they may be arbitrarily classified in any number of ways. A few such classifications might include:

- **Archive site**: used to preserve valuable electronic content threatened with extinction. Two examples are: Internet Archive, which since 1996 has preserved billions of old (and new) Web pages; and Google Groups, which in early 2005 was archiving over 845,000,000 messages posted to Usenet news/discussion groups.
- **Blog** (or **weblog**) site: site used to log online readings or to post online diaries; may include discussion forums. Examples: blogger, Xanga.
- **Business site**: used for promoting a business or service.
- **Commerce site** or **eCommerce site**: for purchasing goods, such as Amazon.com.
- **Community site**: a site where persons with similar interests communicate with each other, usually by chat or message boards, such as MySpace.
- **Database site**: a site whose main use is the search and display of a specific database's content such as the Internet Movie Database or the Political graveyard.
- **Development site**: a site whose purpose is to provide information and resources related to software development, Web design and the like.
- **Directory site**: a site that contains varied contents which are divided into categories and subcategories, such as Yahoo! directory, Google directory and Open Directory Project.
- **Download site**: strictly used for downloading electronic content, such as software, game demos or computer wallpaper.
- **Game site**: a site that is itself a game or "playground" where many people come to play, such as MSN Games, Pogo.com and the MMORPGs Planetarion and Kings of Chaos.
- **Information site**: contains content that is intended merely to inform visitors, but not necessarily for commercial purposes; such as: RateMyProfessors.com, Free Internet Lexicon and Encyclopedia.
- **News site**: similar to an information site, but dedicated to dispensing news and commentary.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pornography (porn)</td>
<td>A site that shows pornographic images and videos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search engine</td>
<td>A site that provides general information and is intended as a gateway or lookup for other sites. A pure example is Google, and the most widely known extended type is Yahoo!.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shock site</td>
<td>Includes images or other material that is intended to be offensive to most viewers. Examples: rotten.com, ratemy poo.com.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanity site (or &quot;personal site&quot;)</td>
<td>Run by an individual or a small group (such as a family) that contains information or any content that the individual wishes to include.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web portal</td>
<td>A website that provides a starting point, a gateway, or portal, to other resources on the Internet or an intranet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiki</td>
<td>A site which users collaboratively edit (such as Wikipedia).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>A website on which people may voice political views. Example: New Confederacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rating</td>
<td>A site on which people can praise or disparage what is featured. Examples: ratemycar.com, ratemygun.com, ratemypet.com, hotornot.com.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some questions for evaluating site quality:

1. **Subject matter**—
   - Will this information enhance your research?
2. **Content**—
   - Is this information biased or balanced, based on facts or opinions?
   - Can the information be verified by other sources?
   - Is the information well researched with supporting documentation?
   - Is the author objective and impartial?
   - Is the author qualified to present the information?
     - What are the author’s qualifications and background?
     - Is the author expressing his point of view or an organization’s?
3. **How current or timely is the information?**
   - Is it up-to-date or does it need updating?
   - Is there a date given for the latest version?
4. **What is the writing style and how is the page organized?**
   - Do you find the information easy to read and logically presented?
   - Are there advertisements or is the page laid out in a professional manner?
   - Are there graphs and charts to explain statistics or to justify the text?
   - Does the author include his name or email address on the page?
5. **Is the work significant?**
   - Is the material likely to found elsewhere in print or on the Internet?
   - Is the Internet the best source for this information?

**External links**

- **World Wide Web Consortium**: As W3C describes itself: “The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) develops interoperable technologies (specifications, guidelines, software, and tools) to lead the Web to its full potential. W3C is a forum for information, commerce, communication, and collective understanding.”

- **The Internet Society (ISOC)**: ISOC defines it members and function as “a professional membership society with more than 100 organizations and over 20,000 individual members in over 180 countries. It provides leadership in addressing issues that confront the future of the Internet, and is the organization home for the groups responsible for Internet infrastructure standards, including the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) and the Internet Architecture Board (IAB).”

- **Internet Corporation For Assigned Names and Numbers** “(ICANN) is an internationally organized, non-profit corporation that has responsibility for Internet Protocol (IP) address space allocation, protocol identifier assignment, generic (gTLD) and country code (ccTLD) Top-Level Domain name system management, and root server system management functions. These services were originally performed under U.S. Government contract by the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) and other entities. ICANN now performs the IANA function,” and “as a private-public partnership, ICANN is dedicated to preserving the operational stability of the Internet; to promoting competition; to achieving broad representation of global Internet, and to developing policy appropriate to its mission through bottom-up, consensus-based processes.”

*Sources used in preparation of this guide included: Wikipedia, and Miller Library.*

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