

Conducting Internet Research

Media Investigations

The Internet is one of the most widely used research tools available today. Most major news organizations have their own Web sites on which they reproduce news stories. Some media outlets are now available entirely online. Official organizations and lobbying groups also produce information online. To be a critical Internet user, it is important to seek out Web sites that you can confirm are reliable and that are the most useful for your purposes. Examine the results page from a Web search engine below and answer the questions that follow.

The screenshot shows a search engine interface with the word "WEBSTER" in large letters. A search box contains the word "immigration" and a "Search" button. To the right of the search box are links for "Advanced Search" and "Preferences". Below the search box are navigation links: "Web", "Images", "Groups", "News", "Local", and "more". The search results are displayed in two columns. The left column is titled "Web" and contains several search results: "News results for immigration - View today's top stories", "Immigration Smuggler Arrested - NYTimes.com - 2 hours ago", "US Citizenship and Immigration Service" (with a sub-headline "InfoPass eliminates waiting in line for immigration information; ... Notice to Individuals Granted Immigration Benefits by Immigration Judges Read more. ..."), "The Department of Immigration and Indigenous Affairs" (with a sub-headline "Official Australian Government migration and immigration website, with information and application forms for migration and temporary entry to Australia, ..."), and "Citizenship and Immigration Canada | Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada" (with a sub-headline "Citizenship and Immigration Canada / Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada. Welcome/Bienvenue. English Français Canada. Important Notices, Avis importants."). The right column is titled "immigration [definition]" and contains an "Advertisements" section with two ads: "Immigration Law" (with a sub-headline "Just Apply through an Online Form & Hire Lawyers for Less than \$1 a Day www.411-immigrationlaw.com") and "Immigration" (with a sub-headline "Free immigration law info from the experts at the Law Encyclopedia. www.TheLawEncyclopedia.com").

1. Based on the Web site results, which links offer the most up-to-date information? How can you be sure?

2. Which Web belongs to a news organization? How could you confirm that this is a reliable source?

3. For what types of research do you think the Web site of a news organization would be more useful than that of a government agency?
