Information: Truth or Fiction?

FIT 100

How do you know?
For that matter, what is truth?

FIT 100 Why Do We Search for Information?

- ❖ Information is that which reduces uncertainty in our lives
  - ❑ One could say, then, that misinformation can be information (temporarily) because it can reduce uncertainty for someone at the time-even if it isn't correct

- ❖ Information gives us a deeper understanding of the world or changes our knowledge on some topic
  - ❑ Misinformation may give us a skewed view of the world
  - ❑ But remember, information to one person/culture may be misinformation to another

- ❖ We have an immediate need for information
  - ❑ A research paper, a project, etc.

FIT 100 Where do we go to find the Information we need?

- ❖ Our friends

- ❖ An expert

- ❖ A bookstore
  - ❑ Either in person or through the web

- ❖ The library
  - ❑ Again, either in person or through the web (e.g. UW Gateway)

- ❖ The Internet
  - ❑ Search Engines (Google)
  - ❑ Directories (Yahoo)

FIT 100 What is Truth? Knowledge?

- ❖ Truth to you may be fiction to a person in another class, another culture, another city, etc.

- ❖ Knowledge?
  - ❑ One definition could be:

**Justified
True
Belief**

FIT 100 Trust and Credibility

❖ You decide to go to the Web to get your information

❖ The Web consists of billions of Web pages

❖ These Web pages are written by several million individuals
   ❑ Professional Web Designers
   ❑ Researchers, doctors, scientists, lawyers and other professionals
   ❑ High school students, elementary school students
   ❑ General Public

❖ Who decides what gets published? Nobody.
   ❑ If you have access to web server space and an IP address-you're on!
   ❑ There are no controls for who publishes, what is published or the quality of the content put out on the Web

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FIT 100 Problem Solution?

❖ The billions of pages that are out there are searched by several hundred million users

Question:

How does a user know which sites to believe?

FIT 100 What is Credibility?

❖ According to BJ Fogg and his research partners at Stanford, credibility is a perception based on 2 factors:
   ❑ Trustworthiness and Expertise
      http://www.webcredibility.org/

❖ Highly credible web sites have high levels of *perceived* trustworthiness and expertise

❖ Different kinds of credibility:
   ❑ Presumed
   ❑ Reputed
   ❑ Surface
   ❑ Experienced

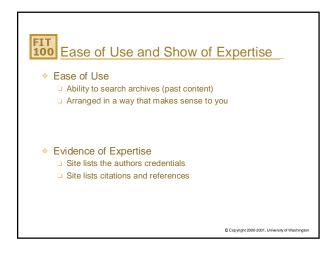**FIT 100** What do People think makes a web site credible?

❖ In 2001, a report* was released by BJ Fogg and his colleagues from Stanford University

   ❑ Web survey results were studied to identify what is people think makes them think a web site provides credible information

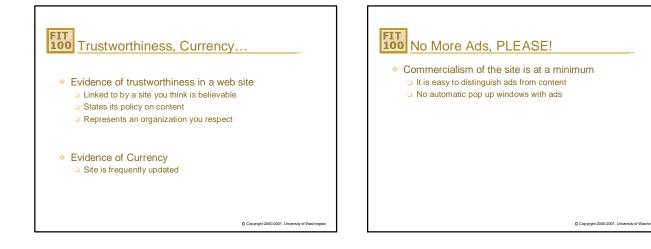   ❑ The results broke down into the following categories…

*Fogg, BJ, et al. (2001). What makes Web sites credible? A report on a large quantitative study. Conference Proceedings of CHI 2001. NY, New York: The ACM Press.

Is anybody there or am I just talking to myself?

❖ Evidence that they are connecting to a real person or organization…

- ❑ Site provides quick response to users (e.g. sending an email to confirm a transaction)

- ❑ Physical address is listed

- ❑ Phone number is listed

- ❑ Email address is listed

Ease of Use and Show of Expertise

❖ Ease of Use
- ❑ Ability to search archives (past content)
- ❑ Arranged in a way that makes sense to you

❖ Evidence of Expertise
- ❑ Site lists the authors credentials
- ❑ Site lists citations and references

Trustworthiness, Currency…

❖ Evidence of trustworthiness in a web site
- ❑ Linked to by a site you think is believable
- ❑ States its policy on content
- ❑ Represents an organization you respect

❖ Evidence of Currency
- ❑ Site is frequently updated

No More Ads, PLEASE!

❖ Commercialism of the site is at a minimum
- ❑ It is easy to distinguish ads from content
- ❑ No automatic pop up windows with ads

FIT 100 — Professional Feel

- No typographical errors

- Site is always available

- All the links work

FIT 100 — Trust and Deceit on the Web

Big Al's Investments

P.O. Box 83737
Bahamas

Make a Million in a Month

We did it, you can too!

Invest now!
Type your credit card #
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Trusted Securities

On the web since 1993
Approved by SEC

Visit our 240 investment centers
or online service assistants
or call 1-800-TRUSTED
Over 80,000 customers - see
their ratings and comments

Read our Customer Protection
and Privacy Policy

FIT 100 Trust online

- Researchers (Rand) checked out 6 health Web sites and 12 sites dedicated to specific diseases.

- How frequently Web sites are complete and accurate:
  - Breast cancer   63%
  - Depression   44%
  - Obesity   37%
  - Childhood asthma   33%

FIT 100 Misunderstanding = Misinformation?

- One sees misinformation passed in many forms. Some might be:
  - Incorrect facts regarding historical information
    - But who writes history?
  - Inaccurate financial information related to "scams" and other shady business dealings
  - Gossip/Partial Facts
    - A fact starts out accurately and is slowly skewed each time it is repeated
  - Not enough depth to the coverage of the topic
  - Inaccurate associations based on lack of understanding of the environment….

Bert is Evil !

Bert & Osama bin Laden

Previous rumors of Osama bin Laden (the man believed to be behind the World Trade Center in New York City, Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia, and U.S. embassies bombings in Kenya and Tanzania) and Bert being Partners in terrorism have now been Confirmed!
This TOP SECRET picture obtained by MSNBC and now in sole possession by the U.S Government was intercepted by My Man in the field, J-roen.
The U.S Government believes that Bert is an informant for Bin Laden, telling Him when and Where to attack. U.S officials have not been able to talk to Bert about this possible connection cause of His Muppet Immunity.

Thanks to,
J-roen
for risking his life to get us this picture

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Taliban mobiliseren steun in Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD (AP) - Het Taliban-regime van Afghanistan heeft vertegenwoordigers het land in gestuurd om zich te verzekeren van de steun van lokale bestuurders, vooral die van invloedrijke stamhoofden. Tijdens een bijeenkomst in de oostelijke provincie Khost hebben Taliban-functionarissen gedreigd de huizen in brand te steken van iedereen die de voormalige koning Mohammad Zaher Shah steunt, zo meldde de radiodienst van de Taliban donderdag.

Na het wekelijkse vrijdaggebed is er in Bagladesh tijd voor een gezamenlijk protest en steunbetuiging voor Bin Laden
(foto ANP)

FIT 100 Truth or Fiction?

Rent-A-Stalker

Aluminun Foil Deflector Beanie

Pol Pot Exile

Aids Facts

Americans with No Abilities Act

The Taxonomy of Barney

FIT 100 Summary

- Information is NOT Democratic.
  - Not all equal
  - Some Information IS better than others (more credible)
- Take into consideration WHY you want the information when you go out to search for it
- Since there are no checks on general web content, if you REALLY need accuracy, double check it against other sources
- We have ways to evaluate sites using criteria covers all forms of credibility
  - But many of these can be exploited
- Misinformation spreads like wildfire, on and off the web
- We judge two things on sites:
  - The information provided
  - The person or organization represented