

Quick Guide :: NAVIGATING THE INFORMATION-SCAPE

Information is organic. As time passes, it migrates through different formats. Depending on where your topic lies, certain types of information sources may be more useful than others.

Event Happens	Day(s)	Week(s)	Month(s)	1-2 Years	Several Year(s)
TV/Radio/websites	Newspapers	Magazines	News & Trade Magazines	Journals	Books Reference Sources

Types of Information Sources

Refer to the information timeline above & the guidelines below to determine the sources most likely to contain information on your topic.

WEBSITES

- : **Author(s)**- anyone
- : **Audience** - general public
- : **Content** - variable—brief introductions to in-depth analyses

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

- : **Author(s)** - reporters
- : **Audience** - general public
- : **Content** - concise reports consisting primarily of facts & statistics

MAGAZINE ARTICLES

- : **Author(s)** - journalists
- : **Audience** - general public
- : **Content** - summaries & analyses based on initial factual reports

JOURNAL ARTICLES

- : **Author(s)** - professors/researchers
- : **Audience** - students/professors/researchers
- : **Content** - specific & in-depth scholarly analyses that include bibliographies

BOOKS

- : **Author(s)** - professors/researchers
- : **Audience** - professors/researchers & general public
- : **Content** - comprehensive & detailed treatment of issues surrounding a topic

REFERENCE SOURCES

- : **Author(s)** - professors/researchers
- : **Audience** - professors/researchers & general public
- : **Content** - background information on a variety of associated topics

Accessing Information Sources

The paths that lead to information sources call for the use of various **research tools** accessible through the MU Libraries webpage, <http://mulibraries.missouri.edu/>

- : **MERLIN Catalog:** search for reference sources & books in the MU Libraries
- : **Databases:** identify articles published in newspapers, magazines & journals
- : **Web Search Engines:** locate websites & online reference sources