Annotated Bibliography Assignment

# Overview

Part of good writing and presenting is gathering information that supports the argument (or counter-argument) that you are putting forth. Whether writing a white paper, report, presentation deck, recommendation or proposal, good information is the foundation upon which to build your argument/counter-argument. Just as important, it demonstrates your ability to reason, i.e. your logic. This assignment asks you to research your topic and find information that validates and supports your argument. Also, you are required to rank the information according to various dimensions that help you think about the information and its value to your overall argument. Understand that not all information is perfect. Therefore, finding various sources to support your argument allows you to see different points of view and understand how sources fit together to make an argument solid.

In addition to finding and ranking the information, you must cite, summarize and justify how you will use the information in your document. These steps help you further consider what the information is and where it will be most helpful in building and validating your argument.

# Dimensions for Evaluating a Resource

When evaluating resources, there are five major dimensions to consider: reliability, accuracy, currency, bias and context.

* ***Reliability***-The source comes from authors/publications that distribute accurate, valid information. (Does this author or journal have a reputation for presenting accurate, valid information? What are the author’s credentials? Is the author known in the field and published widely in this subject?
* ***Accuracy***-The source contains arguments that make logical sense and are based on evidence. (Does the source construct a coherent, fact-based argument? Is this source making judgments based on evidence? Is the evidence being used properly?)
* ***Currency***-The source has been published recently enough to still be relevant, especially when it includes a “hot” topic, where information changes quickly. (When was the article/source written? Has other research emerged since then?)
* ***Bias***-An unbiased source is written by an author who is not manipulating data to benefit his/her own positions. (What perspective is the author taking on the topic? Does the article include language that indicates bias? What is the audience for this source? What reasons does the author have for presenting this argument?)
* ***Context***-A source with appropriate context was written about the same issues/circumstances that you are addressing in your White Paper. For example, a report on poverty in China may be out of context when discussing U.S. poverty. (What are the characteristics of the author’s culture? How and why might the author’s perspective differ from mine? What are the circumstances surrounding the author’s arguments?)

# Using The Dimensions Chart

One constant problem is measuring “apples to apples” and applying the same standard to all resources. Therefore, online resources may have slightly different standards than text-based resources (although they may be available online). For example, Foreign Affairs Journal is available online and it is a peer-reviewed text. Others in the same field review and ask questions and help validate it before publication. Therefore the reliability and accuracy may have a different rank than a video clip from Fox or MSNBC news or a blog from the Huffington Post.

This chart (think rubric) has a 1-5 scale that allows you to consider that value of each piece of information in light of the various dimensions. Using the Dimensions Table, you can then assign a numeric ranking to each resource. Once assigned, you will then explain why you chose that number for each dimension.

For purposes of the research, you should evaluate your information on the following:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1**  **Poor** | **2**  **Fair** | **3**  **Adequate** | **4**  **Good** | **5**  **Excellent** |
| **Context** | Source material is inappropriate or unrelated to the topic. | Source material is related to the topic but the information is not useful for discussion. Lacking required depth. | Source material is useful for the subject. Provides a general overview of topic and background for research. | Source material is useful and related to topic. Insightful information that generates interest in the topic. | Material is useful and provides all the information needed to understand and discuss topic in a well-informed manner. |
| **Currency** | Source information is out of date.  The publication  and/or copyright date is not indicated. | Source date is indicated, but information is more than 5 years old.  No recent updates. | Source date is indicated but information is more than 3 but less than 5 years old. Information provided is relevant. | Source is updated with new references, which were added recently. Information is less than 2 years and relevant. | Source data is shown and content is updated regularly. Information provided is current and relevant. |
| **Accuracy** | Content is off-topic. No support for subject matter is provided. Source contains numerous errors and is unverifiable. | Source material is mentioned but not provided for verification. Links to references don’t work but source is stated. | Material is mostly factual and supported. Opinions are based on industry related knowledge. Sources re provided but not cited. | Material can be proving and makes logical sense. Little opinion provided. Arguments are supported with evidence and verifiable references | Material is all formerly cited. Sources are professional and accredited. Evidence is used to support argument. No opinion provided. All facts |
| **Reliability** | Information is difficult to understand and is irrelevant. Includes errors and inaccurate information. No author or publisher to reference | Publication is not recognized and no author is provided. Links to some sources are unverifiable or don’t work. | Source is not recognized but author is identified. Information provided is current and majority of sources are verifiable. | Source and author is recognized and references are provided however the author does not provide complete references. | Reputable publication. Author is recognizable and/or provides where the information was obtained. Sources are listed. |
| **Bias** | Source uses statistics to suit a self-interested agenda. Suppresses contradictory views and presents information out of context to support belief. | The information is prejudiced and opinionated. Author presents information factually but unable to provide verification for point of views stated. | Information is factual but there is evidence the author is biased to the subject matter. Subject matter expert using experience as a source. | Material is presented in a factual manner with proof. Author is opinionated but uses facts to argue point of view. | Information is non opinionated. Presents accurate accounts and provides alternate viewpoints for consideration. Material is relevant to subject. |

## Format of a Completed Dimension Chart (when all resources presented together)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Source** | **Context** | **Currency** | **Accuracy** | **Reliability** | **Bias** | **Score** |
| *Name of Article*  *Report (text)* | 5 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 19 |
| Why | Why | Why | Why | Why |  |
| *Name of Website.*  *Website (online)* | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 22 |
| Why | Why | Why | Why | Why |  |
| *Name of Article*  *Article (text)* | 4 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 19 |
| Why | Why | Why | Why | Why |  |

# Summary, Cite, and Justification

For each piece of information, you must summarize, cite and justify it.

## The Summary

A summary must include the standard information of a good summary (think research writing classes and how an article is referenced). A good summary should be between 50 and 100 words.

If you are unfamiliar with summary writing, use the Writing Center at Baruch (VC 8th Floor) or the OWL at Purdue (listed in the assignment) or another reference demonstrating how to write summaries.

## The Cite

Business documents use APA formatting. Your cites must conform to the APA standard, unless otherwise directed. To better understand APA formatting, see the Purdue OWL at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

Additionally, when using Baruch library resources, the cite can be found on the right-hand side of the article in most databases. Once you click the “cite” link, you can choose the correct format and then copy and paste it into your document.

Note: If you are using library resources, there are errors in the APA cites in some of the databases. For example, some databases use all capital letters for a title, and the APA cite uses the title as it appears in the database. APA format states it must be initial capitals conforming to Standard English rules for titles of works. Therefore, use the OWL at Purdue or another online resource that generates APA cites to check your cites.

## Justification

The way in which this information supports your research must be included. This is not an “opinion”, but rather it must be stated objectively. Using “I think” or “my feeling is that it” shows opinion and will result in a deduction of points. Therefore, using objective language is necessary. The support paragraph must be at least three sentences and minimum 50 words. If you are unfamiliar with writing in the way, please go to the Writing Center (VC 8th floor) or refer to a research writing text used in composition classes. (Recommended: Diane Hacker’s *Writers Handbook*)

# Putting It All Together

When you submit the annotated bibliography, it must:

* Be complete in one document
* Contain an introduction to the topic and why it was chosen (one paragraph for shorter assignments, possibly more for research-length papers)
* Contain formatting that allows the reader to differentiate between different sections and/or cites etc. (i.e. the formatting must create ease of reading).
* Contain a dimensions chart that ranks each resource numerically and gives a reason for the ranking
* Contain a summary, cite and justification for each resource
* If a group assignment, contain the name of each researcher with each resource

Example of a Completed Source

*Municipal Solid Waste Generation, Recycling, and Disposal in the United States: Facts and Figures 2011*. (2012) United States Environmental Protection Agency. Retrieved from: <http://www.epa.gov/osw/nonhaz/municipal/pubs/MSWcharacterization_508_053113_fs.pdf>

In this report, the U.S. Environmental and Protection Agency reports data on the generation and disposal of waste in the United States. It measures the success of waste reduction and recycling program across the country. It also explores the benefits of recycling, including the elimination of GHG emissions.

This report supports the increased using recycling programs to reduce waste across the country. It provides graphs and charts on the success of the programs and shows geographic breakdowns of where recycling programs are used. Also, timelines show how the country has increased recycling programs overall. It supports the white paper contention that increased funds for recycling will have long-term benefits. (For a proposal: It supports the proposal’s request for funding to create an advertising program to raise recycling awareness in the Philadelphia public school system and partner with teachers to present recycling.)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Source** | **Context** | **Currency** | **Accuracy** | **Reliability** | **Bias** | **Score** |
| *Municipal Solid Waste Generation, Recycling, and Disposal in the United States: Facts and Figures 2011* | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 24 |
| Directly talks about the success of recycling programs | 2012 is current for government documents but other agencies or organizations may have more current data | Government documents tend to be compiled by field professions and cross-checked with independent sources which increase accuracy. | Gov’t reports may be reliable because experts generally prepare reports and are peer reviewed before publishing | Document presents statistics and charts that support the arguments concerning recycling |  |

Annotated Bibliography Sample (Group)

Note: if individual, the name of the person providing the source can be omitted.

Note: some APA cites are not in the correct format and group had points deducted.

## Name: Jonny Appleseed Group

## Name of Paper: Snapping up Profits in a Gig Society

## Thesis: Foto on the Fly allows customers to cut technology while using it to create memories.

**Source 1**

John Smith

**Citation  
Is the Gig Economy Working?**

Nathan Heller - <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/05/15/is-the-gig-economy-working>

**Summary**

This article provides an in-depth look at a newly emerging economy, often called the Gig Economy. The Gig Economy is an entire labor market built on freelance workers offering their goods and services at a market rate. These individuals are often foregoing permanent jobs and rely solely on their temporary assignments to make a living. The article describes the author’s experiences in hiring individuals from websites like TaskRabbit, who are contracted to perform simple tasks around the author’s home for an hourly rate. The author considers how this new hiring mechanism (done through apps and exclusively online) will disrupt the current model of hiring from local businesses or national chains.

**Support**

The article shows a clear demand for interest in hiring services direct from individuals, which is what our company aims to offer. By describing the successes and experiences of the companies profiled in the article, it shows Foto on the Fly a clear path to market. Such examples include Uber, AirBnB, TaskRabbit and Handy. Foto on the Fly is marketing itself to a young audience who is accustomed to these types of platforms, and expects this type of person-to-person service level.

**Source 2**

John Smith

**Citation**

<http://firstround.com/>

**Summary**

This source is the homepage of First Round Capital, a premier Silicon Valley venture capitalist firm that specializes in pre-seed and seed funding for new technology startups. The home page provides details on the philosophy of First Round Capital, as well as descriptions of the team members working at the company and the companies it has invested in. It also provides a hiring service where interested candidates can apply to be introduced to the companies that First Round Capital invests in.

**Support**

Foto on the Fly is looking to perform in the same markets as companies like Uber, Birchbox and Blue Apron. These ground-breaking startups rely on technology, user-generated content and unique branding to set themselves apart. By identifying First Round Capital as our first choice for an investor, we’ve set the tone for how we view our company’s potential future growth and ability to create a niche market in the crowded technology startup landscape.

**Source 3**

Grace Yu

**Citation  
Global Digital Photography Market will reach USD 110.79 Billion by 2021: Zion Market Research**

Zion Research - https://globenewswire.com/news-release/2016/12/27/901767/0/en/Global-Digital-Photography-Market-will-reach-USD-110-79-Billion-by-2021-Zion-Market-Research.html

**Summary**

This article documents the continued growth of the digital photography marketplace, which includes the profound impact of social media in addition to rising availability of photography editing and storing software and websites. These segments combined make up the almost $78 billion industry it is today. The article describes how mobile phones are impacting digital photography, and how various regions are all experiencing this rapid growth of the industry in slightly different ways. The article goes on to state that the market is expected to grow to $110 billion by 2021.

**Support**

Foto on the Fly is built to provide content to users of social media and those interested in digital photography. The article supports the premise of this business by outlining the growth and variety included in this quickly changing and rapidly growing market. Not only do users of Foto on the Fly need social media to post their photos to, but they also need an interest in high quality photography. This article supports both aspects of our business model.

**Source 4**

Grace Yu

**Citation  
Facebook Users Are Uploading 350 Million New Photos Each Day**

Cooper Smith - http://www.businessinsider.com/facebook-350-million-photos-each-day-2013-9

**Summary**

Social Media Insights is a daily newsletter from Business Insider that sends news about top social media updates each day. This article references the recent announcement from Facebook that users are uploading 350 million photos each day. Across their 1.15 billion users, that equals out to 217 photos per person. What’s also interesting is that Facebook’s new competitor Snapchat, as stated in the article, also reports approximately 350 million posts per day. The immense quantity of content being posted and published each day is staggering, and with Facebook acquiring Instagram, it supports the assumption that these industries will only continue to grow.

**Support**

Foto on the Fly aims to provide users of Instagram, Facebook and Snapchat with high quality photographs that can be shared across platforms and without the time investment of taking one’s own photographs. The article supports one important aspect of the business model, in that the social media industry is growing rapidly, and users are looking for more and more content to post on their personal sites. They need access to high quality photographs, which is what Foto on the Fly can provide.

**Dimension Chart**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Source | Context | Currency | Accuracy | Reliability | Bias | Score | Weight |
| 1: *Is the Gig Economy Working?* | 5 The article references the industry that we are looking to break into and provides positive examples of how these companies have succeeded. | 5 The article was published in last week’s issue. | 4 Most of this article is based on logical arguments and conclusion, but the author does recount a few personal anecdotes that could slant the perspective. | 5  *The New Yorker* is one of the most well-respected magazines in the business. The author frequently writes about tech and was a finalist for the National Magazine Award for essays and criticism. | 4 The author does not have an investment in any of the companies or a stake involved other than writing a compelling article so his bias is limited. He does include some personal stories which could sway the perspective slightly. | 23 | .92 |
| 2: First Round homepage | 5  We are pitching directly to First Round Capital so this is exactly in context with our goals. | 3  We assume that the website is up to date based on the companies they reference but we can’t say exactly when each section was updated. | 5  This is the company’s home page so we assume that everything is accurate, since they rely on it as a sales tool. | 5  They are a highly regarded company and are relied on by other companies to be a source of accuracy. | 3  The company’s reputation is at stake if they manipulate information, but they will be of course presenting everything in the best light possible because they are trying to sell their services. | 21 | .84 |
| 3: *Global Digital Photography Market* | 5  This article is directly applicable to Foto on the Fly’s business model. | 5  The article was written approximately 6 months ago so the information is current and still relevant. | 5  This article references surveys and statistics backed up with data, so it is extremely accurate. | 4  The company is known for producing these types of reports that summarize industries and demand of new technologies. However they do need to sell and publish content that is compelling so they could have an overly optimistic tone at some points. | 4  The author does not take a position on the data other than to present the findings and provide context for the rest of the industry information. | 23 | .92 |
| 4: Business Insider | 3 This article references how many pictures are posted on social media, which is relevant to some of Foto on the Fly’s business proposition. | 3  The article was published in 2013, which is a little out of date. | 5  The article references data and stats that can be verified. | 5  The website is known for providing accurate information and is a reliable source in the industry. | 5  The author has no stake in manipulating the data, he is only presenting the facts for the reader’s consideration. | 21 | .84 |