



Who We Are

Consumer Reports WebWatch is the Internet integrity division of Consumers Union, the nonprofit publisher of Consumer Reports Magazine, ConsumerReports.org, the Consumer Reports on Health and Money Adviser newsletters, BestBuyDrugs.org, and a variety of sites advocating consumer rights in the marketplace.

We assist Consumer Reports' editorial division in evaluating the credibility of Web sites, we investigate and research Web sites on behalf of consumers, and we advocate for consumer focused Internet policy and governance. Consumer Reports WebWatch accepts no advertising or outside funding, other than from nonprofit foundations.

Consumer Reports WebWatch is a member of the W3C consortium for developing Internet standards; the Internet Society, a grassroots group focused on Internet policy; and is an at large structure (ALS) in the user community of ICANN, the Internet Corporation for Assigning Names and Numbers.

WebWatch also serves as an unpaid special adviser to StopBadware.org, a "Neighborhood Watch" initiative led by Harvard University's Berkman Center and the Oxford Internet Institute devoted to helping Internet users avoid downloading malicious spyware, adware and malware programs.

Consumer Reports WebWatch acknowledges these organizations that helped create us: The Pew Charitable Trusts, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, and the Open Society Institute.

Our Mission

Consumer Reports WebWatch will investigate, inform, and improve the quality of information published on the World Wide Web. To achieve that mission, Consumer Reports WebWatch will:

- Provide unbiased and practical research on Web site publishing and business practices; help devise guidelines for credibility; expose practices that are a cause for consumer concern; and recognize good practices.
- Promote consumer awareness of important issues on the Web that relate to our mission.

Our Achievements

In recognition of its efforts, WebWatch has received the following honors:

- Winner, 2004, National Magazine Award (as part of Consumer Reports magazine reporting team) for Leisure Interests "Veterinary Care Without the Bite."
- Finalist, 2004, Online News Association award for Enterprise Journalism Small Sites for "Booking and Bidding Sight Unseen."
- Finalist, 2003, Online News Association award for Service Journalism Affiliated for "Spyware."

WebWatch's credibility guidelines have been published in the U.S. State Department publication eJournalUSA. The March 2006 issue, "Media Emerging," links to the guidelines from the heading "What Every eConsumer Should Know: A prominent U.S. consumer advocacy group offers guidelines for avoiding fraud and deception online." The journal is translated into French, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Arabic, Persian and Chinese.