Fact Checking Tips
Source: ePluribus Media

Documenting your review

- Read through the document and mark every fact that requires verifying.
- Use the footnote or endnote function to track all notes and/or confirmations. If you use multiple websites to confirm a fact, include the URLs for the confirming sites.
- If there is a fact that requires verification but is beyond your resources, make a note of this as well.
- Make sure any corrections/recommendations stand out in the text.

During your review

- Ask questions such as "Says who?" and "How does the writer know this?"
- Pay attention to descriptives (those pesky adjectives and adverbs) - "most", "all" - verify when possible.
- If an individual, title, organization, or brand is mentioned, check the relevant website to verify spelling.
- If a number, statistic, or figure is mentioned, check the relevant website/primary source to verify. Do the math (e.g. did event X occur 9 days later?).
- Avoid using secondary sources to verify facts, as you may be perpetuating an error.
  - If you have to use secondary sources, find at least three and make sure they agree.
- Verify all dates.
- Verify phone/fax numbers and email addresses.
  - Ring all phone numbers.
- Verify all web links.
  - Copy the URL from the document and paste it into a browser. Keep track of date/time weblink was accessed.
  - If there is a quote associated with the web link, verify that the text of the quote matches.
- Make sure your "millions" and "billions" don't get mixed up. Don't mix-up dollars, pounds, and euros.
- When possible, verify geographic details.