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Netscape: Best of Class

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THE BEST OF CLASS

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Our ambition is to be the quality site on the Web. We're swimming upstream, since e-commerce today seems to be all about how to sell the minimum for a few dollars less than the next store down the virtual road. "Best of Class" may empty your purse, but we trust it will help you break away from Internet time and tarnished pleasure.

Best and Biggest Lists
We're coming across more best and biggest lists, some of which even promise to be helpful. As you know, there has been a lot of emphasis on finding the best prices for things on the Internet, rather than attending to quality. We hope that in time, the quality gap will be closed so that we can begin to find, on a worldwide basis, the mostus for the leastus. For now we think these rankings will help. We expect eventually there will be a worthwhile Michelin for everything--not just restaurants in France.

Decorators and such in New York City. See The Franklin Report (www.franklinreport.com), which has already created waves among interior decorators and home craftsmen in Manhattan. Like the Zagats (lawyers in their other lives), whose guides on restaurants now cover the nation, Ms. Franklin is an emigre from investing banking. I believe, who also uses a consumer-report approach to weed out shoddy craftsmanship and overcharging in the home trades. If students at some universities can rate their professors, why can't we rate every profession and trade, since licensing bodies have proved totally derelict in carrying out this kind of task?

Looking at websites. Be careful of www.gomez.com, since Gomez is a website consultant. If the truth be known, there are probably only fifty good websites around, but these fellows would have you believe they are breaking out all over. While this guide will not really help you find quality sites, it will help you build a better site by showing you what's judged to be acceptable now.

Supercomputers. Go to www.top500.org. This rates computers by GFlops and shows you who owns them.

Ranking Marketing Journals. But by academics, so don't necessarily rush to look at this [site](#).

-new- Ranking the Presidents. 78 imaginative academics were polled for this survey of the [Federalist Society](#) and the [Wall Street Journal](#). Washington is #1, Lincoln #2, and FDR #3. See www.opinionjournal.com/hail/math/math5.html.

Best Atlas of the Ancient World
Published in October, Dr. Richard Talbert's [The Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World](#) is the best thing going on the way things were way back when. Or so says John Wilford of [The New York Times](#), the author of a very fine book on map-making himself, [The Mapmakers](#). Dr. Talbert is at UNC-Chapel Hill, which is supporting the establishment of an Ancient World Mapping Center. See "An Atlas Unveils the Intricacies of Ancient Worlds," [The New York Times](#), December 12, 2000, p. D5.