

PAPER TRAIL

Tracing Claims to Their Source

DOMAIN: MARKETING

TRAIL LENGTH: 4 hops, 5 exhibits

No dead ends — one exhibit is real

THE CLAIM (see Exhibit A)

An ad for an anti-aging face cream says it's "clinically proven" in a randomized trial to outperform prescription retinoid treatment.

YOUR TASK

Work backward through Exhibits A–E. At each hop, identify what the next exhibit actually is, and what kind of source it is. One exhibit is a real, independently verifiable reference — find it, and compare what it actually says to how the earlier exhibits describe it.

1 HOP 1: The product webpage see Exhibit B

What did you find, and where? What tipped you off?

Source type: Original research News article Press release Blog / opinion Social post Advertisement Website

2 HOP 2: The blog article see Exhibit C

What did you find, and where? What tipped you off?

Source type: Original research News article Press release Blog / opinion Social post Advertisement Website

3 HOP 3: The press release see Exhibit D

What did you find, and where? What tipped you off?

Source type: Original research News article Press release Blog / opinion Social post Advertisement Website

4

HOP 4: The underlying citation

see Exhibit E

What did you find, and where? What tipped you off?

Four horizontal text input fields for recording findings and locations.

Source type:

- Original research
- News article
- Press release
- Blog / opinion
- Social post
- Advertisement
- Website

FIELD NOTES

What changed between Exhibit E and the version you first saw? What got dropped, exaggerated, or reframed?

Seven horizontal text input fields for field notes.