

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 at-home teeth whitening strips says “doctors hate this trick” because a peer-reviewed study proves strips whiten just as well as a dentist.

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.