

Attributing Information

Written by Steve Marr
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Regular readers of this blog know that I suggest that all marketing should lead with the benefits and follow with the evidence. The evidence may be the study verifying the need for your product or service.

Frequently, I receive marketing emails which includes some vague phrase like “studies show” without any attribution. My first thought is *so what?*

In my blogs there are times when I use a general phrase. For example I might say that “studies show” that when somebody walks into a store they tend to go to the right unless they have a compelling reason to change direction. The point I make with it is that showcase merchandise should meet the customer where the customer goes initially. I don’t always quote a specific study in my blog although I do have the backup research available. And I’m not marketing these blogs.

Recently I was writing ad copy for a ministry responding to church violence. I footnoted research to back up the claims about the frequency and seriousness of violent risk for churches.

I was advising a client who installs alarm systems who was making general claims in their marketing material. My advice was to document records from the police department and other sources to demonstrate the number of homes likely to be burglarized in a year. There is quite a difference between someone talking about the likelihood of burglary and backing up the statement with police statistics.

Paul wrote, “but test everything that is said. Hold on to what is good.” (1 Thessalonians 5:21, NLT) Our customers will be testing everything in their minds when we make claims in our marketing and advertising. We want to give these prospects the opportunity to test our claims by giving attribution.

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