

Speed of advertisement disclaimer may have effect on consumers' intent to purchase product

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Do those lightening fast disclaimers at the end of radio and television advertisements scare you away or simply seem like white noise required by regulatory agencies?

According to Northwestern University and Wake Forest University research now online in the [Journal of Consumer Research](#), fast disclaimers can give consumers the impression that an advertiser is trying to conceal information. However, trusted brands (versus trust-unknown or not-trusted brands) are immune to the [adverse effects](#) of fast disclaimers.

"Speak slowly or carry a trusted brand," summarizes Kenneth C. Herbst, assistant professor of marketing at Wake Forest University Schools of Business and co-author of the study.

Eli J. Finkel, associate professor of psychology at Northwestern University and another co-author, offers concrete recommendations for marketers: "If you're promoting a brand consumers don't know or don't trust, use a slow disclaimer. Because consumers don't know whether they can trust you, you have to be careful to avoid seeming sneaky. Fast disclaimers can seem sneaky.

"In contrast, if you're promoting a trusted brand, feel free to save time by using a fast disclaimer. Use your precious [advertising](#) seconds

promoting your product rather than spending them on your disclaimer," he said.

The study shows that when consumers either lack trustworthy information about an advertised brand or believe that the brand is not trustworthy, fast disclaimers undermine their purchase intention. In contrast, when consumers trust an advertised brand, they are unaffected by the disclaimer speed.

These findings have practical implications for advertisers and [policymakers](#). For example, according to Herbst, policies that regulate disclaimer content but not disclaimer speed could systematically favor some companies over others.

More information: "On the Dangers of Pulling a Fast One: Advertisement Disclaimer Speed, Brand Trust and Purchase Intention", *Journal of Consumer Research*.

Provided by Northwestern University

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