

Warning: This image has been digitally altered: Consumer reactions to alteration disclaimers

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Cite as:

Kim Kacy, Park Sohyeon, Park Seolwoo, Yoon Sukki (2024), Warning: This image has been digitally altered: Consumer reactions to alteration disclaimers. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 53rd, (119382)

Paper from the 53rd Annual EMAC Conference, Bucharest, Romania, May 28-31, 2024



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Abstract

Advertisements digitally alter the images of models through photoshopping, enabling nuanced changes that can cast the images in more or less favorable lights. In Study 1, student participants view ads for a fictitious fitness app in which depictions of physiques have been altered to appear more fit or unfit, presented with and without disclaimers. In Study 2, student participants view ads for a fictitious dental clinic in which depictions of teeth have been digitally altered to appear aligned or misaligned, with and without disclaimers. The findings indicate that the inclusion of a disclaimer label increases (decreases) brand attitudes and purchase intentions when the ad features undesirable (desirable) images. Moderated mediation analyses suggest that the internalization of appearance ideals plays a significant role in these effects. The study has implications for marketers and consumer advocates.

Subject Areas: *Advertising, Attitude*

Track: Advertising & Marketing Communications