

# Would You Know This Old Copywriting Trick?

Here's a puzzle for you.

In February 2004 a billboard advert for Domestos bleach had the strapline, "No bleach lasts longer." But soon after seeing the billboard, I discovered Tesco's and Sainsbury's own-brand bleaches were just as good as Domestos. So my question is, how come nobody is suing Domestos for false advertising?



Any ideas?

Well the answer to this true-life puzzle is as sneaky as a Tapeworm in a bowl of spaghetti Bolognese.

The Domestos February 2004 billboard used an old copywriter's trick called **Parity Advertising**. If you look carefully, Domestos hasn't actually claimed superiority to Sainsbury's, Tesco's or any other brand of bleach. What Domestos has claimed is that it is NO WORSE than any other bleach! In other words, "Our competitor's bleach doesn't last longer than

ours, but it MAY last the same!”

This is a right old ploy. Well done to those who got the answer right.

Parity Advertising is an old copywriting technique that, at first glance, appears to claim superiority. But when you look closely it only states equivalence. In other words, “Our product is as good as theirs.”

The best Parity Adverts usually begin with the word “No”. e.g. “No other juice has more vitamin C” or “No bleach lasts longer”!

As an aside, do you remember a previous Domestos bleach slogan that ran “Domestos kills all known germs dead”?\* That Copywriter knew exactly what she was doing. A great example of sacrificing correct grammar in order to communicate a more powerful message.

(\* See the bad grammar? Ever wondered what else germs would be after they’re killed other than dead?)