

### **Ad Rewrite #3 – Social Proof**

#### **Engel & Volkers Ad in Urban St. Magazine, May/June 2021**

The book *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion* (Cialdini, 2007) quotes Cavett Robert saying “since 95 percent of the people are imitators and only 5 percent initiators, people are persuaded more by the actions of others than by any proof we can offer” (118). This explains why social proof is a weapon of influence. Social proof implies that when others are perceived as taking an action, more will follow. Laugh tracks in television shows are an example of social proof in action. TV executives know that the fake laughter causes the viewer to laugh, even when the content is poor. They want laughter because it brings higher ratings.

Another factor of social proof is that people are more likely to copy the behaviors of others they feel are like themselves. The book tells the story of a three-year-old child who was afraid of learning how to swim. His parents hired a professional swim coach to teach him and the child refused. The boy spent time with another three-year-old child who knew how to swim. During that visit, he learned to swim too. The boy explained “Well, I’m three years old, and Tommy is three years old. And Tommy can swim without a ring, so that means I can too” (143).

Social proof can be applied to advertising to improve results. By showing that others like the product or use the service, more people will engage in the call to action. Engel & Volkers has an ad in *Urban Street*, May/June 2021. The ad has an appealing, simple design that is to the point. It is focused on what the company does (sell real estate) and where (the Lake Michigan Shore). It shows how many advisers and locations they have. They appear to want to show their

strength in size and reach. The ad could be more effective by incorporating principles of social proof. As it stands, the company talks only about itself and the ad is not particularly relatable for potential customers.

Showing people in the ad would make it more relatable to the viewer. The headline in the ad is "Selling the Lake Michigan Shore," which means they are looking for new listings. So, their target audience is people who want to sell their homes. People with families are a demographic that sells and buys homes. Since people are more likely to copy the actions of others they feel are like them, a photo of a family and a real estate agent would be a way to create a personal connection with the ad. If the group is in front of a house by a for sale sign, the photo provides social proof that other families have chosen Engel & Volkers as their listing agent.

The target audience has goal when engaging with Engel & Volkers. They want to sell property. A successful customer experience ends in a closing. Social proof can be used to imply that a relationship with the company would bring success. Adding a SOLD icon and revealing the number of closings the company had in a previous timeframe would be social proof that others who chose this company experienced success.

# Original

**ENGEL & VÖLKERS**  
Selling the Lake Michigan Shore

E&V  
Shoreline

E&V  
Chicago North Shore

E&V  
Chicago

67+ Advisors Across Shops

3 Shops Along the Shore

240 Miles Between Shops

**Engel & Völkers Shoreline**  
269.331.3131 • shoreline.evrealstate.com • 23 Center Street #2 • Douglas, Michigan

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# Rewrite

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Selling the Lake Michigan Shore



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Chicago

67+ Advisors Across Shops

3 Shops Along the Shore

240 Miles Between Shops

**SOLD**

75 Clients Closed Last Month

**Engel & Völkers Shoreline**  
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Julie DeCook, June 6, 2021  
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