

COC Summary for Ad Interim Meetings – February 2025

The COC meets regularly, typically every other month virtually. Our last in-person meeting was February 7-8, 2025, and we have our next virtual call on April 8, 2025.

Below are the Consumer Awareness Program & Member Marketing highlights for FY25.

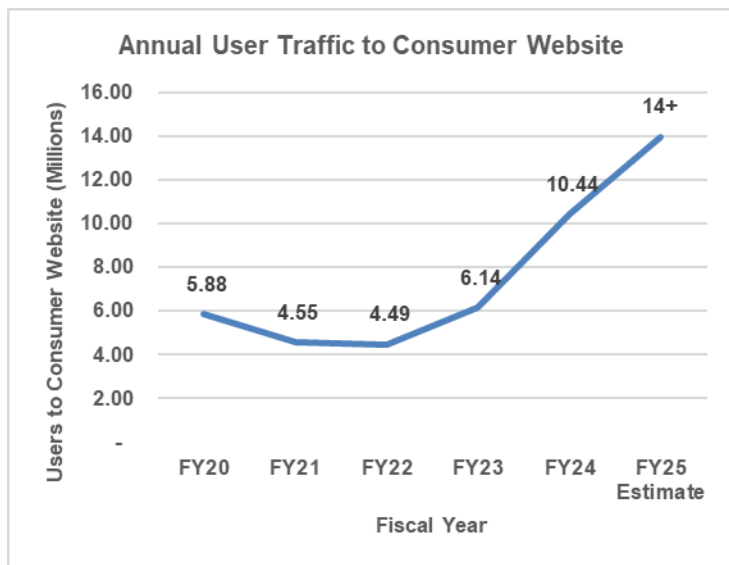
CONSUMER AWARENESS PROGRAM (CAP) UPDATES

The CAP is the only mass advertising campaign promoting orthodontists as specialists and educating the public to see an orthodontist in person. The CAP program currently focuses on digital marketing, with the goal of driving quality traffic to the consumer website.

FY25 Performance June 1, 2024 – January 31, 2025:

- **451MM+ impressions served** – CAP ads appear across platforms like Google display, Paid Search on Google and Bing, YouTube online video, Facebook, and Instagram, a 51% decrease over last year.
- **11MM+ ad clicks**, a 76% increase over last year.
- **12MM consumer website page views**, a 15% increase over last year
- **3.3M+ Find an Orthodontist locator page views**, a 138% increase over last year
- Overall, the campaign has driven over **9.6 million users to the consumer site** and is on pace to hit another record-breaking high of over 14M visitors for FY25.

Despite the drop in impressions year over year, the increase in ad clicks and visitors to the Consumer Website represents more qualified users engaging with the content and finding an orthodontist in their local area. Below represents the total number of visitors by fiscal year, with FY25 not yet completed (as of 1/31/2025):



FY24 highlights so far:

1. **The Science of Smiles Campaign:** Launched in April 2024 and will continue through FY25. The campaign positions orthodontists as the ultimate authority through a series of engaging and educational videos highlighting their unique education and training and establishing them as the go-to experts sought after for their exceptional knowledge and skill. This campaign is seeing impressive results on all paid digital channels, with additional episodes being released bi-monthly.
2. **Digital Agency:** We continue to optimize our CAP outreach with our digital media agency, Steady Rain. They continue to help AAO significantly improve key metrics, with noteworthy year-over-year increases in traffic to the consumer website, page views, ad clicks, and video views. Despite maintaining flat spending, our cost per user has declined, highlighting the efficiency of our investment. Proper oversight is in place, and AAO staff monitors the agency dashboard daily, meets with the agency bi-weekly, and provides ongoing reports to COC.
3. **Search Engine Optimization (SEO):** This is an ongoing focus throughout FY25. COC continues to

enhance and refine landing page content and develop new content for the consumer website to ensure we optimize organic traffic. We continue to attract visitors through Mewing and Fashion Braces-related content. Plus, we are making content updates to better align with AI in organic search and AEO (Answer Engine Optimization), ensuring the AAO is the accurate and reliable authority for search engine queries.

4. **2025 PSA Collaboration:** The AAO has partnered with the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (AAOMS) and the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) to create a PSA titled Milestones Met, Healthy Teeth Set. This PSA stresses the importance of seeing the appropriate dental specialist at ages 1, 7, and 15. This PSA launched in January 2025 and will run through the calendar year on 1,900 TV stations and 9,000 radio stations. The AAO participated in this PSA development and outreach at no cost.
5. **2025, the 125th Anniversary of the AAO:** From January 1 to December 31, 2025, we will celebrate the AAO's 125th anniversary with various programs, marketing initiatives, a landing page on the member website, press outreach, and events, honoring our legacy and commitment to excellence.
6. **Bullying Bites 2024 Recap:** For the sixth year, the AAO's #BullyingBites campaign coincided with National Bullying Prevention Month. This initiative empowered both members and patients to act by creating awareness and spreading the message of kindness. This year, we leveraged public relations in three local markets – El Paso, TX, Ann Arbor, MI, and Portland, ME - and garnered over 1.3M viewers through our outreach. Plus, we lit up landmarks around the country, offering additional resources for members, partnered with the AAO Advocacy team, encouraging members to support a bipartisan bill to improve access to mental health resources in schools, and launched a new partnership with Kind Lips lip balm, an organization who also supports anti-bullying efforts.

New initiatives for the balance of FY25:

1. **A new campaign is in development and will be launched in August/September 2025.** Building on the success of the *Science of Smiles* campaign, this initiative will feature a series of engaging animated videos designed to educate consumers by answering their most-searched questions. Topics will include why you should take your child to see an orthodontist at Age 7, the difference between an orthodontist and a dentist, the importance of in-person exams and X-rays, and more.
2. AAO is also **working with a new influencer, Charlotte Ann Tucker, in the Spring of 2025.** She is a 7-year-old actor best known for her roles in the TV shows *Cobra Kai*, *Sweet Magnolias*, and *High Potential*. Charlotte has a 2-million-member Instagram following, and her audience is primarily moms between the ages of 25-44. Charlotte will create engaging Instagram messages on the importance of her mom taking her to an orthodontist by age 7, increasing brand awareness for the AAO and helping drive traffic to the consumer website. The AAO will be featured in Charlotte's Instagram posts, Stories, and Reels.
3. **Search Engine Optimization (SEO) remains a key priority.** COC, the Website Subcommittee, and Steady Rain continue to refine landing pages, create new content, enhance technical functionality, and improve website integrations to drive organic traffic. Looking ahead, the AAO will focus on optimizing content for AI-driven search by providing clear, authoritative answers to consumer questions, addressing common orthodontic concerns, incorporating long-form and peer-reviewed content, and leveraging case studies and industry research to enhance visibility in AI-generated search results.
4. AAO Marketing will continue to work with Steady Rain to **drive users to the consumer website and ensure these are qualified engagements.** When consumers actively engage with AAO content, we emphasize the importance of informed decisions about orthodontic care. Throughout FY25, it is not just about clicks but about a deeper understanding of the significance of seeking an orthodontist for treatment.

MEMBER MARKETING UPDATES

The AAO Board of Trustees identified Member-Centric Marketing and Communications as one of three objectives the AAO should prioritize.

Below are updates on our marketing efforts being employed:

1. **Omni-Channel approach to membership marketing:** Our member-centric marketing and communications strategy puts our members first in what we communicate about. The strategy includes increased posting on social media, strategic solo emails on specific topics, oversight of the issues covered

in the eBulletin, increased texting, and keeping all volunteer leadership aware of all areas of the association.

2. **eBulletin:** Reading the weekly eBulletin is the number one action we would want members to take with the AAO, and we use this to communicate the important AAO and industry news happening each week. We regularly see open rates above 60% (well above the industry benchmark standard). Each weekly eBulletin is also turned into an Instagram story every Friday and stories from the eBulletin are shared out through social media the following week.
3. **Member Minute:** In FY25, we are continuing our AAO member influencer program, which has seen increasing awareness and engagement in organic social channels. These videos allow members to hear straight from their colleagues about important AAO news and benefits each month on social media and in the eBulletin. We will have videos around upcoming AAO Events, the Bullying Bites program, the Supplier Network, the new Simon Sinek – AAO Inspiring Leadership program, and much more.
4. **Ortho Staff Outreach:** Continuing efforts to connect with members' office managers to communicate more easily with offices about marketing campaigns or relevant educational opportunities. We launched a new quarterly communication in September 2024 targeted at ortho team contacts that reaches over 9,000 team members. AAO Staff plans to continue collecting team member contact information twice a year.
5. **Social Media Outreach:** We will continue our strategic focus on increasing engagement and views, capturing new followers and content development throughout the AAO organic social channels (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram) and integrating key messages for members. We consistently find ways to improve our presence on social media, especially through Instagram. The AAO staff will continue to create Instagram Reels to deliver messages about events, CAP initiatives, and member benefits.
6. **Texting Initiative:** We utilize AAO texts to highlight AAO breaking news, events, and benefit programs.
7. **Member Website:** We continue to make improvements to ensure the accuracy of the Member Website and enhance the user experience.