COC Summary for Fiscal Year 2024

The COC met four times virtually in fiscal year 2024 and had two in-person meetings – September 2023 & February 2024.

CONSUMER AWARENESS PROGRAM (CAP) – FISCAL YEAR 2024

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.

FY24 Performance June 1, 2023 – May 31, 2024:

- **1.2+ Billion impressions served** – This means that CAP ads appear across platforms like Google display, Paid Search on Google and Bing, YouTube online video, Facebook, and Instagram.
- **Over 143MM video views**, a 70% increase over last year.
- **14MM+ ad clicks**, an 80% increase over last year.
- **15MM consumer website page views**, a 15% increase over last year
- Overall, the campaign has driven over **10 million users to the consumer site** (the highest recorded for the AAO) and **2.6MM visits to the Find an Orthodontist locator**.

FY24 Consumer Awareness Program highlights:

1. **Straight Talk Campaign:** The campaign rolled out in May 2023 and continued through April 2024. Aimed at educating consumers while dispelling common myths about orthodontics, it featured real orthodontists who delivered straightforward insights and tackled common consumer misconceptions.
2. **Steady Rain:** our digital media agency has played a pivotal role in the success of our Consumer Awareness Program (CAP), focused on educating the public about the importance of orthodontic treatment. We have witnessed significant improvements in key metrics, with noteworthy year-over-year increases in traffic to the consumer website, page views, impressions, ad clicks, and video views. Despite maintaining a flat spend, 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. **The Holderness Family Collaboration:** A well-known influencer family with over 6 million subscribers on Facebook and YouTube collaborated on a video and blog post about the importance of seeing an orthodontist. The video, titled Good Things Come to Those Who Wait, is a heartwarming and relatable portrayal of how braces can be a rite of passage for many teenagers and how they can help improve smiles, bite, and self-confidence. The video was seen by over 1.2 million users and received overwhelmingly positive feedback.
4. **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Partnership:** AAO partnered with Paramount Pictures and the movie Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem. The AAO created various marketing resources for members to use in their marketing outreach and social media. The partnership helped to raise awareness about the importance of orthodontic treatment and portrayed braces as trendy and approachable, particularly among children and teenagers.
5. **Bullying Bites:** For the fifth year, the AAO's #BullyingBites campaign coincided with National Bullying Prevention Month. This initiative empowers both members and patients to act by creating awareness and spreading the message of kindness. The campaign saw a surge in engagement, with over 7,000 visits to the Practice Marketing Tools page and 65,000+ social media impressions.
6. **The Closure of SmileDirectClub:** In December 2023, the AAO distributed media advisories and press releases to provide key messages about patient health and safety related to mail-order orthodontics. We offered guidance to SDC customers, shared the risks associated with other mail-order orthodontic

companies and stressed the importance of an in-person examination and x-rays before starting any orthodontic treatment. We saw over 672 stories that ran from AAO interviews and press release pickups with over 1.41 billion potential audience impressions.

7. **Mewing Awareness:** January 2024 brought renewed interest in an old TikTok trend, Mewing. “Open Wide,” the subject of a Netflix launch on January 23, examined "mewing," a theory and practice to reshape jaws, developed by an orthodontist but not based on scientific evidence and research. The AAO developed a consumer blog, organic social media posts, press releases, and some paid search keyword terms via the Consumer Awareness Program. The AAO developed these additional consumer-focused materials on mewing to inform the public about the inflated promises and complicated treatment issues that can arise from this practice. From January 16-31, 2024, the press release had 369 total mentions, garnering more than 1.5 million potential audience impressions.
8. **Taryn Newton, Influencer Program:** This program launched in mid-February. Taryn is a mom of five kids, aged 1 to 17, with an Instagram following of over 1M. Her audience is 99% women, and our in our target demographic of women between 25-44. She created a series of engaging Instagram posts informing her followers on the importance of seeing an orthodontist by age 7, increasing brand awareness for the AAO, and helping drive traffic to the consumer website. The AAO was featured in multiple Instagram stories, an Instagram post, and featured in her weekly newsletter, which is emailed weekly to her subscribers. Our posts received an overwhelming response from this campaign. More than any other campaign she has EVER done!
9. **The Science of Smiles Campaign:** Launched in April 2024. The *Science of Smiles* campaign will position 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, while still new, is seeing impressive results in all paid digital channels, and we are looking forward to launching additional episodes throughout the next fiscal year.
10. **Search Engine Optimization (SEO):** This was an ongoing focus throughout FY24. The Website Subcommittee and Steady Rain continue to enhance and refine landing page content, develop new content, update technical functionality, improve integrations, and make further improvements to the consumer website to ensure we are optimizing organic traffic that comes to the consumer website.

MEMBER MARKETING UPDATES – FISCAL YEAR 2024

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 topics 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), representing over 10,000 members. Each of the weekly eBulletins is also turned into an Instagram story and shared each week.
3. **Member Minute**: Starting this fiscal year, our AAO member influencer program allows members to hear straight from their colleagues about important AAO news and benefits each month on social media and in the eBulletin. In recent months, Drs. Trista Felty, Neal Kravitz, Kyle Fagala, David Harmon, and the entire Council on Communications have helped us spread the word about Annual Session

registration, TechSelect, our new Volunteer Outreach landing page, the AAO Mental Health Task Force, and the Consumer Awareness Program. We plan to continue this program into the fiscal year 2025.

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 currently have a list of over 1,000 office staff contacts. AAO Staff plans to collect this information twice a year and develop a quarterly communication plan for Ortho Staff members starting in September 2024.
5. **Social Media Outreach:** In late 2023, we launched a new strategy to increase the frequency of posts across our AAO-owned channels (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram) and integrate key messages for members into our content plan. We consistently find ways to improve our presence on social media, especially through Instagram. The AAO Staff has been creating Reels to deliver messages around events, CAP initiatives, and member benefits. We have increased views, reach, and engagement metrics this fiscal year through our focused strategy.
6. **Texting Initiative**: We increased texting with members to highlight AAO news, benefits, events, and programs.
7. **Member Website**: The Member Website remains the single source of truth for member benefits and information. However, in FY 23/24, we continue improving the user experience, searchability, and content accuracy on the Member Website. By the end of FY24, ensure content on the website is updated and accurate, and search functionality has been revamped to improve user experience.