

## COUNCIL ON COMMUNICATIONS (COC)

The Consumer Awareness Program (CAP) continued to crush our goals for FY2019. The program amassed over 1.2 billion impressions. This means that AAO ads were seen by users over 1.4 billion times. The COC set a goal of 5 million views for our newly redesigned website and had 7.3 million page views. During the past year, we reached over 100 million unique consumers and our ads have appeared in over 9.7 million search results for a variety of orthodontic topics.

As listed on the AAO members page: Digital marketing platforms currently being utilized by the Consumer Awareness Program include, but are not limited to

- Paid search (Google, Yahoo! and Bing)
- Website banner ads
- Social media outlets (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat)
- Online video
- Email marketing

The AAO's digital paid advertising is behaviorally targeted to individuals who are researching orthodontic treatment topics online. In addition, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) work is underway and is generating additional organic (unpaid) search traffic to the AAO consumer website, [aaoinfo.org](http://aaoinfo.org). We continue to reach consumers through a wide variety of digital platforms. This year, our ads appeared on Facebook/Instagram, Snapchat, Google search and display, YouTube, AdRoll and BuzzFeed.

Our website has become a trusted and key resource for online searches. Our consumer website was redesigned and relaunched during the fall of 2018. This redesign has greatly improved customer experience. This is measured via decreased bounce rates and an increase in time spent on the site and an increase in page views. We are constantly improving the site and adding new content to our blogs. These improvements have also led to an increase in organic (unpaid) visits to our site. Our *Parents Guide to Orthodontics* is a huge draw to our site, with consumers spending several minutes on the pages. In addition to our website, you may have seen some of our informational alerts. We recently put out a consumer alert on the dangers of using at home aligners. Our goal is to become "THE" source for orthodontic information online.

Why are visits to the website important? 90-95 percent of today's consumers conduct research online before making any purchase decision – including an investment in something like orthodontic treatment. The increase of traffic to our website tells us the CAP is successful at making the AAO more visible and easily found online; and more patients are being educated about the importance of seeing an orthodontist. With the robust amount of patient education materials on the consumer website, we want consumers to find it and learn the importance of seeing an orthodontist.

Did you know that 75% of all Americans perform online searches for healthcare related topics? Adult orthodontic patients often research long and hard before they embark on their treatment journey. They search not only for hard data but many search for reviews.

Recent Google research indicates that some adults take years before they initiate treatment.

### **CAP stats in Canada**

At the start of this year, the AAO initiated an intensive social media campaign in Canada, targeting parents and other adults and using the “That Feeling When...” video series. From January 1 - May 31, the CAP in Canada reached more than 7.3 million consumers and brought more than 342,000 to the AAO website. These results compare with Canadian results of 3.5 million and 21,000, respectively, for all of 2018.

Another goal of the Council on Communications is to better inform our members. We have not only redesigned our member website but have started to provide updates to our members via private orthodontic Facebook groups. Group administrators have graciously allowed us to share “breaking news” with our members, which allows us to reach many members quickly when needed. We continue to search for better ways to keep you informed. Please feel free to reach out to me directly with any questions or suggestions.

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