

AAO Policy Concerning Promotion of Commercial Products and Services from the Podium at AAO-sponsored Activities

The AAO encourages the exchange of knowledge and supports the dissemination of information pertaining to the advancement of the art and science of orthodontics. The AAO does this by providing its members a neutral forum for education and discussion opportunities. Preservation of the neutrality of this forum, fostering collaborative efforts among stakeholders such as academia, practitioners, patients, and industry partners is essential to the success of the AAO. The AAO draws a clear distinction between the dissemination of information and outright commercial promotion.

At AAO-sponsored activities, presentations by persons affiliated with commercial entities that provide services or products (whether declared or not) must be limited to scientific, technical or process issues. Presentations should not overtly endorse or recommend a specific product or service. Promotion of book and/or merchandise sales as well as non-AAO-sponsored continuing education (CE) activities, seminars, courses and/or meetings is no longer permitted during presentations without the AAO's written approval in advance. The theme and content of slides, handouts and other presentation aids should not promote a commercial product or service. Commercial entity logos are no longer permitted to be included in slide presentations identified as CE activities. In addition, speaker clothing may not carry commercial logos or other company specific emblems. In this way, AAO activities will be educational, rather than commercial and promotional.

The AAO will create and disseminate publicity pertinent to an AAO-sponsored activity. All such publicity will be distributed directly from the AAO office. Individuals and organizations can, at their discretion, make announcements of their participation in AAO-sponsored activities, but should refrain from doing so until confirmation of participation has been received from the AAO. Any advertising of participation in an AAO-sponsored activity by an individual or an organization shall not use any copyrighted material from AAO, the AAO trademark logo, or AAO-sponsored activity logo unless authorization from the AAO has been received.

Participants of AAO-sponsored activities are encouraged to provide feedback regarding potential violations of this policy. An investigation utilizing activity evaluations and other related tools will be conducted by AAO staff and the appropriate AAO member leadership committee(s)/council(s). Appropriate action will be taken, if necessary, and the following sanctions will be imposed based on the severity of the policy infraction:

1. Professional Reprimand – Infraction will be formally documented and made public to maintain transparency.
2. Professional Monitoring – Subsequent AAO-sponsored activity presentations will be monitored to ensure compliance.
3. Temporary Suspension – Speaker will be suspended from presenting an AAO-sponsored CE activity for a minimum of one (1) calendar year from the date in which the infraction is formally documented.
4. Permanent Ban – Speaker will be permanently banned from presenting future AAO-sponsored activities.