

# A New Strategic Plan for CAO

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In 2005, the CAO Council approved a four year Strategic Plan for CAO that included several key strategic directions in the following areas: Government Policy and Legislation; Standard of Care for Canadians, Stakeholder Influence, Public Education and Internal Infrastructure/Governance. Strategic actions and objectives were established in each area. To maintain consistency, we restructured CAO's organizational structure to reflect the strategic plan. CAO Council also organized its meeting agendas in the same way.

For the past four years, CAO Council tracked the progress on the strategic actions. At every council and executive committee meeting an updated report was circulated and reviewed. In addition, CAO members heard about strategic activities at provincial Annual General Meetings, CAO General Business Meetings

and in the Canadian Journal of Optometry. At the recent CAO Congress, outgoing President, Dr. Len Koltun took pride in reporting that, on average, CAO had implemented close to 80% of its strategic plan.

As the new CAO President, I wanted to renew the CAO strategic plan as soon as possible and we held a special council planning session on October 16-17. We even used the same facilitator that we did in 2005. Most of the strategic directions will be retained; we focused our energies on updating the actions, objectives and accountabilities for the next four years.

The planning session also included a full day review of CAO communications/branding strategies. This session was in response to an independent audit of our current communications/branding programs that were completed in 2008. CAO Council considered whether our national television advertising program continues to be justified and effective and how does the CAO and the profession build upon that significant investment? How do we communicate with other markets beyond the core target market for the television campaign (female head of household)? How do we maximize our public relations efforts beyond Eye Health Month? How do we build our 'brand' for the benefit of CAO members and the public?

The review of communications/branding also involved seeking feedback of members, provincial associations and other stakeholders.

I look forward to having a clear CAO strategic plan to guide me during my presidency. In an upcoming issue of CJO we will publish the new plan for the benefit of all CAO members.

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