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## ADVERTISING DO'S AND DON'TS

With the many methods in which to advertise a dental practice, the options and choices can be overwhelming. Creating an eye-catching advertisement can be challenging enough without the concern of whether the advertisement or promotion abides by the law. This resource provides helpful advertising tips as well as examples of “Do’s” and “Don’ts” to make sure your advertisement follows the guidelines as outlined in the California Dental Practice Act.

### Advertising “Do’s”

Although there are many high-tech ways to advertise today through your practice website and the internet, in most communities it is still important to have a presence in the phonebook, yellow pages, and/or local print media. A print media presence may be as simple as listing your practice name, title, and contact information or your community might be more responsive to the full-page or half-page advertisement. You may find the yellow pages offer the best result or you may choose publications with targeted audiences that align with your patient demographics.

Due to the high level of exposure print media offers your practice, it is best to seek professional marketing advice and design. A professional advertising company or marketing consultant should know how to gain the best return on your investment for your particular market and region. Factors such as the design quality, size, dimension, placement, and advertising message vary for each market and can be very specialized. Please note, with print media, measuring your results is the only way to determine success. Because of the often high cost of print advertising, it is crucial to know the volume of new patients and the production per patient that resulted from your print advertising efforts. Additionally, you will want to measure whether the new patients that were generated established long-term relationships with your practice. In other words, did an advertisement generate a significant amount of new patient interest, but those new patients failed to return for their recall appointments? Tracking and measuring marketing efforts will help you budget and create a strategic marketing plan for your practice.

When designing your practice's advertisement, consider including the following information:

- ▶ Practice logo and/or branded color/text scheme.
- ▶ Practice name, provider name(s), address, phone and website. Fax numbers are optional, depending on your preferred method of contact.
- ▶ Designated titles, certifications, relevant affiliations, and special recognitions that may separate you from the competition.
- ▶ Indicate if the practice is limited to a recognized specialty.
- ▶ The practice niche. For example, “Cosmetic Dentistry” or “Family Dentistry.”
- ▶ Include the practice slogan or mission statement in order to let the community know your focus and what differentiates you from other practices in the area.

- ▶ Highlight several benefits of the practice, such as “A Focus on Education” or “Provide Convenient Evening Appointments.”
- ▶ You may choose to indicate that the practice is accepting new patients.
- ▶ You may choose to include a brief patient testimonial if space allows. Be sure to obtain written authorization from your patients to publish or display their testimonials.
- ▶ Include a patient photo or a photo of the practice/providers/dental team if space and budget allow.

Below is a sample advertisement for a general dentist. On the next page is a sample advertisement for a specialty practice.

**Sunny View Dentistry**

STRIVING TO EXCEED YOUR EXPECTATIONS!

**Dr. Ben Smith** is currently accepting new patients and invites you to visit our state-of-the-art practice.

- Emphasis on education
- Accept most dental benefit plans
- Provide convenient day and evening appointments.

Please contact us to schedule an appointment and visit our website for more information.

321 Longshore Rd., Talisman, CA 99423  
751-555-5201 [www.sunnyviewdds.com](http://www.sunnyviewdds.com)

# HORIZON VIEW ORTHODONTICS

CREATING HEALTHY AND BEAUTIFUL SMILES



Come visit our new state-of-the-art practice conveniently located off Interstate 5.

- Currently accepting new patients – no referral necessary!
- Practice specializing in and limited to Orthodontics
- Relaxed and comfortable setting for both children and adults
- Provide convenient day and evening appointments.

About Dr. Alice Benoit:

- Earned the unique distinction as Diplomate, American Board of Orthodontics
- Member of the American Dental Association and American Association of Orthodontics

Please contact us to schedule your complimentary new patient consultation and visit our website for more information.

2031 Grantsmith Ave, Onclave, CA 99923  
245-555-5201 [www.horizonviewortho.com](http://www.horizonviewortho.com)

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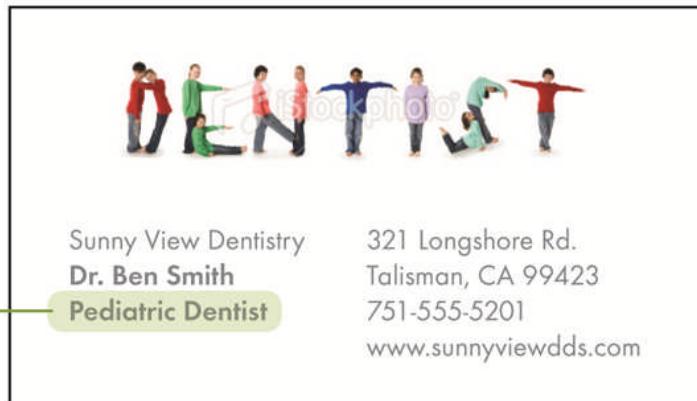
The following pages have “do’s” and “don’ts” examples of advertising. The examples reference specific sections of the Business & Professions Code or the California Code of Regulations (CCR) that are part of the state Dental Practice Act. Summaries of the code sections are included below and can be found in the CDA Practice Support Center article, “[Dental Practice Marketing & Advertising 101](#).” The actual sections can be found on the [Dental Board Web site](#).

## Business Card for General Dentist Who Is Not a Specialist

*Reference: Business & Professions Code §651(h)(5)(A)(iii) and 16 CCR 1054.1*

A dentist who lacks membership in or certification, diplomate status, other similar credentials, or completed advanced training approved as bona fide either by an American Dental Association recognized accrediting organization or by the Dental Board, may announce a practice emphasis in any other area of dental practice only if the dentist incorporates in capital letters or some other manner clearly distinguishable from the rest of the announcement, solicitation, or advertisement that he or she is a general dentist.

DON'T



DO



**Before/After Photos in Magazine Ad***sample ads on page 6*

*Reference: Business & Professions Code §651(b)(3)*

A misleading or deceptive image includes a statement or claim that

“(A) Is intended or is likely to create false or unjustified expectations of favorable results, including the use of any photograph or other image that does not accurately depict the results of the procedure being advertised or that has been altered in any manner from the image of the actual subject depicted in the photograph or image.

“(B) Use of any photograph or other image of a model without clearly stating in a prominent location in easily readable type the fact that the photograph or image is of a model is a violation of subdivision (a). For purposes of this paragraph, a model is anyone other than an actual patient, who has undergone the procedure being advertised, of the licensee who is advertising for his or her services.

“(C) Use of any photograph or other image of an actual patient that depicts or purports to depict the results of any procedure, or presents "before" and "after" views of a patient, without specifying in a prominent location in easily readable type size what procedures were performed on that patient is a violation of subdivision (a). Any "before" and "after" views (i) shall be comparable in presentation so that the results are not distorted by favorable poses, lighting, or other features of presentation, and (ii) shall contain a statement that the same "before" and "after" results may not occur for all patients.”

**Patient Endorsement on a Practice Web Site***examples on page 7*

*Reference: Business & Professions Code §§651(b)(8), 651(b)(6), 1680(i) and 1680(l)*

A false, fraudulent, misleading, or deceptive statement or claim includes any statement, endorsement, or testimonial that is likely to mislead or deceive because of a failure to disclose material facts. It is unprofessional conduct to make a claim either of professional superiority or of performing services in a superior manner, unless that claim is relevant to the service being performed and can be substantiated with objective scientific evidence. Advertising to guarantee any dental service, or to perform any dental operation painlessly is unprofessional conduct.

*Note:* This law is not limited to patient endorsements or testimonials.

## Before/After Photos in Magazine Ad

DON'T

THIS PATIENT LOVES HER NEW SMILE!  
WE CAN GIVE YOU A HOLLYWOOD SMILE TOO!

**HORIZON VIEW**  
DENTAL PRACTICES  
STRIVING TO EXCEED YOUR EXPECTATIONS!

Dr. Alice Benoit  
2031 Grantsmith Ave, Onclave, CA 99923  
245-555-5201 [www.horizonview.com](http://www.horizonview.com)

DO

SHE LOVES HER NEW SMILE!

This patient wanted to brighten her smile, which had been dulled by years of drinking coffee and smoking. Our in-office whitening procedure accomplished her goal in just over one hour.\*

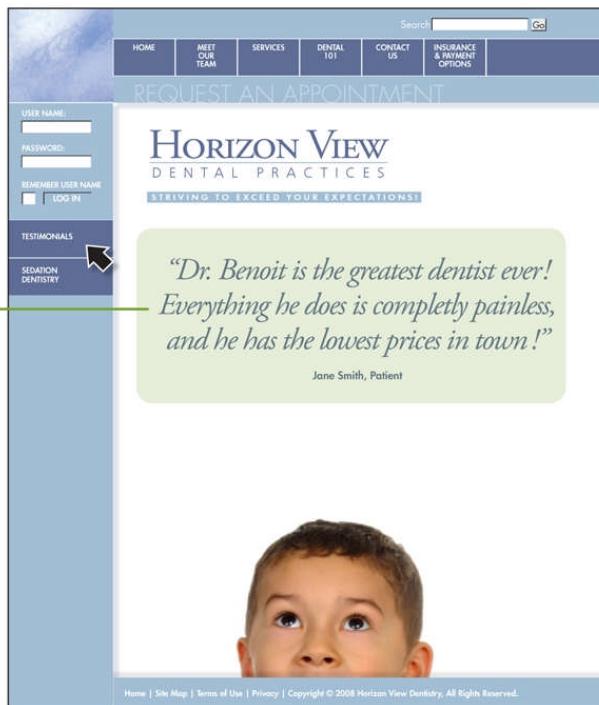
**HORIZON VIEW**  
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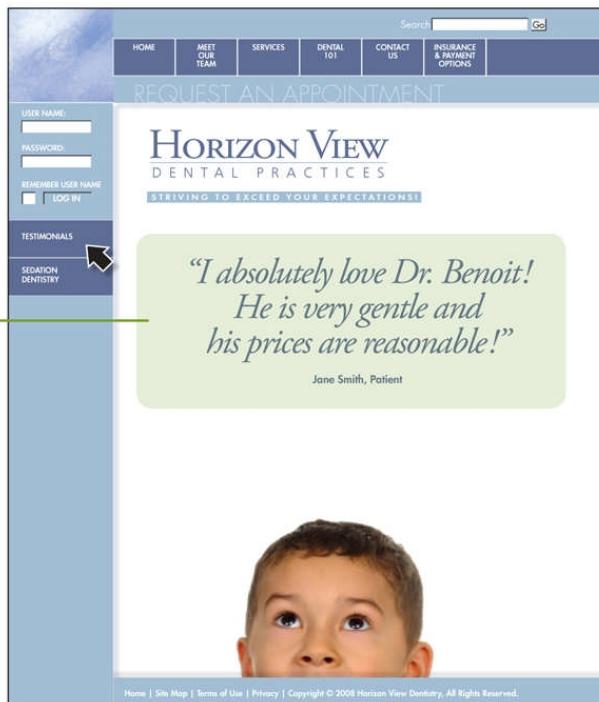
\* The same results may not occur for all patients.

## Patient Endorsement on a Practice Web Site

DON'T



DO



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## Discount Advertisement

*Reference: Business & Professions Code §651(c)*

Any price advertisement shall be exact, without the use of phrases, including, but not limited to, "as low as," "and up," "lowest prices," or words or phrases of similar import. Any advertisement that refers to services, or costs for services, and that uses words of comparison shall be based on verifiable data substantiating the comparison. Any person so advertising shall be prepared to provide information sufficient to establish the accuracy of that comparison. Price advertising shall not be fraudulent, deceitful, or misleading, including statements or advertisements of bait, discount, premiums, gifts, or any statements of a similar nature. In connection with price advertising, the price for each product or service shall be clearly identifiable. The price advertised for products shall include charges for any related professional services, including dispensing and fitting services, unless the advertisement specifically and clearly indicates otherwise.

DON'T

**Save with our "Grand Opening" Special Offers !**



**Sunny View Dentistry**  
Dr. Ben Smith  
321 Longshore Rd.  
Talisman, CA 99423  
**751-555-5201**  
[www.sunnyviewdds.com](http://www.sunnyviewdds.com)

DO

**Sunny View Dentistry**  
STRIVING TO EXCEED YOUR EXPECTATIONS!

**\$69 New patient special**

\$30 off your first visit, includes exam, x-rays and cleaning (Reg. \$99)\*

Dr. Ben Smith • 321 Longshore Rd. • Talisman, CA 99423  
751-555-5201 • [www.sunnyviewdds.com](http://www.sunnyviewdds.com)

\* Valid for new patients only. Patients with insurance coverage excluded. Offer expires 12-21-10.

## Patient Referral Program

*Reference: Business & Professions Code §650(a)*

The offer, delivery, receipt, or acceptance of any rebate, refund, commission, preference, patronage dividend, discount, or other consideration, whether in the form of money or otherwise, as compensation or inducement for referring patients, clients, or customers to any person, irrespective of any membership, proprietary interest, or co-ownership in or with any person to whom these patients, clients, or customers are referred is unlawful.

**Friends & Family Special!**

**DON'T** Refer a new patient to our office and we'll give you a \$50 gift card.

Dr. Ben Smith • 321 Longshore Rd. • Talisman, CA 99423 • 751-555-5201 • [www.sunnyviewdds.com](http://www.sunnyviewdds.com)

**Happy with our service?**

**DO** Now you can 'Like' us on Facebook or write a review on Yelp!

We like to hear when you're happy with our service, but we LOVE it when you tell others! We appreciate your referrals and your confidence in us. We look forward to providing the same excellent care and service to your friends and family!

Dr. Ben Smith • 321 Longshore Rd. • Talisman, CA 99423 • 751-555-5201 • [www.sunnyviewdds.com](http://www.sunnyviewdds.com)

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