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# WHAT FUNERAL HOMES NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE FEATURED SNIPPET

BY WELTON HONG



Google's sole function is to connect people with pages that best match their searches, right? Actually, no. A quick Google news search about Google itself (yes, a "searchception") indicates that the internet giant is positioning itself to offer checking accounts. It's also already involved in medical data warehousing and providing products such as virtual customer service phone agent CallJoy—among many other endeavors.

With Google's tentacles so widely spread, no one should be surprised that it's regularly updating its own search pages to do more for consumers. Yes, Google wants to connect people with pages. But it's also making increasing efforts to answer search queries with content on SERPs. Examples of this include:

- Map results, which help users find local businesses or get directions without ever leaving SERPs
- Google My Business boxes, which appear on the side of search results if a single business is a good match for the query
- Local pack results, which provide the top three relevant businesses for queries with local intent
- Featured snippets, which give users a preview of page content that answers a specific question

Getting your funeral home listed in any of these places leads to more exposure and potentially more traffic and conversions. For this article, I'll cover everything deathcare firms need to know about the featured snippet.

## What Is the Featured Snippet?

Also called the Google answer box, the featured snippet is a box that appears at the top of search results. It includes a section from a page that answers the question behind a specific query. It also includes a link to the page as well as an image. Interestingly, the image doesn't always come from the same page as the text snippet.

Not every keyword search triggers a featured snippet, but Google is always adding more. And only one site can currently own the featured snippet for a query.

## Example of a Featured Snippet

I searched "cost of funeral," which triggered a featured snippet. As of November 2019, Lincoln Heritage Funeral Advantage (lhlic.com) owned the snippet with this answer:

The average funeral costs between \$7,000 and \$12,000. This includes viewing and burial, basic service fees, transporting remains to a funeral home, a casket, embalming, and other preparation. The average cost of a funeral with cremation is \$6,000 to \$7,000.

Google highlights the relevant keywords in the snippet so it's easy to see how applicable the answer is. This snippet also included an infographic from the same page that illustrates average funeral costs.

Other keywords that triggered this same snippet included:

- How much does a funeral cost
- Funeral costs
- Funeral costs 2019

You can see that Google lumps keywords together by intent when deciding which snippet to show. All of the above keywords indicate that the person wants to find out how much funerals cost.

Some other searches that bring up different featured snippets (from different sites) include:

- How much does cremation cost
- Ideas for funeral memorial
- How to choose an urn
- Types of caskets
- Veterans funeral benefits
- Cost of cemetery plot
- How to make funeral arrangements



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### Benefits of the Featured Snippet

The Google answer box gets position zero in the organic SERPs. That means it sits on top of organic search results, ensuring it's the first thing to capture user attention.

That provides the advantage of exposure. Plus, if your content is relevant and high-quality enough to win the featured snippet, there's a good chance your page shows up as one of the top organic results. That's double the exposure and chance that someone will choose to click on your page.

Aside from increased exposure and web traffic, other benefits associated with the answer box include:

- **Increased authority.** The featured snippet demonstrates Google considers your answer the best for the query at hand. That lends authority to your content.
- **Increased recognition.** Even if someone chooses to click another link, they likely read your content and saw your business name. That may help them think of your firm at their time of need.
- **Engagement in no-click searches.** Since Google is answering many queries with information on SERPs, searches aren't always leading to clicks. This is especially true with mobile searches. Landing featured snippets ensures people engage with your company even if they never leave search results pages.

### Tips for Winning the Featured Snippet

A guaranteed path to the answer box doesn't exist. But you can take some steps to create the type of content Google favors for this powerful spot. Even if you don't land the featured snippet, asking and answering questions that are popular with your target audience improves the relevance and quality of your content, which can boost both SEO performance and conversion rates.

Follow these tips for creating content Google might pull for the answer box:

- **Answer queries that already have a featured snippet.** You may be able to steal the snippet from your competition. Look for answer boxes during keyword research or start with some of the queries listed above.

- **Ask and answer the question.** Make it obvious to Google what you're doing by asking the question in a subheading or bolded text. Then answer it concisely, in about 40 words, which fits nicely in the answer box. You can go into more depth about the topic in paragraphs that follow your short answer.

- **Use markup language.** Clue the search engines in even further by coding your questions and answers with markup language. This tells the search bots exactly what type of content they're crawling.

- **Write for the future snippet.** Even if your keywords aren't triggering the answer box now, don't assume Google won't include one in the future. Whenever possible, include questions and answers in your content to put yourself in a strong position to win snippets later.

As with any SEO effort, featured snippets don't exist in a vacuum. A lot of businesses are making this a primary push for their content, but chasing the answer box without paying attention to other elements of SEO is a mistake. Always remember to take a well-balanced and comprehensive approach to funeral home marketing for the best results. **FBA**

Welton Hong is the founder and marketing director of Ring Ring Marketing (FuneralHomeProfits.com), which specializes in helping funeral homes convert leads from online directly to the phone line. Welton also is a speaker at funeral home conferences and the author of *Making Your Phone Ring with Internet Marketing for Funeral Homes*. Reach him by email at [info@ringringmarketing.com](mailto:info@ringringmarketing.com) or call toll-free at 888.383-2848.

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