



CONTENT: The Most Critical Factor for Your Online Marketing Campaign

by Welton Hong

Content. Content. Content. I hope you'll excuse me for repeating the same word three times, but there's a reason for it. (And it's not to make "Content" magically appear like Beetlejuice. Although that would be pretty cool.)

No matter what business you're in, content is the fuel that runs an online marketing campaign. Just like the fundamental aspect of real estate value is "location, location, location," the fundamental aspect of online marketing is "content, content, content."

Granted, you might be skeptical that content is just as important in the death care industry as it is for other business types. I understand that. Funeral homes have always been more traditional in nature, and I haven't met a lot of owners or funeral home directors who can't wait to start blogging.

Regardless, I need to be straight with you about a few things:

- In this digital age, online marketing essentially is marketing — even for funeral homes.
- No online marketing campaign can run without high-quality, original content.
- Even funeral homes can produce this type of content, whether they do so in-house or (quite often) by using an outside contractor.
- There's plenty of relevant information about death care that can fuel content for your website — and that will attract clientele, help you rank highly in searches, and improve your funeral home's reputation.

With that said, let's step back for a minute. I know what many people reading this article are thinking:

You must be kidding. I have a business to run. I'm not going to spend my time writing a bunch of content for my website. I'm certainly not going to blog regularly about death care.

I know. I'm certainly not asking you to take time away from your day-to-day responsibilities to become a content writer. That would be ridiculous.

However, the very simple truth is if you find a way to majorly ramp up original content on your funeral home site, it will rank much higher in local searches for your services. It will greatly increase conversions among people who visit your site for pre-need and at-need care.

And the very simple truth is if you find a way to add a blog to your funeral home website and update it fairly regularly, your search engine optimization (SEO) will increase substantially. You'll gain authority with both search engines such as Google and with the general public, increasing case counts and average revenue for each case.

So how do you go about this? If you have someone on staff who writes well and can devote some time to increasing content, that could work. Just make sure all the content is original (nothing copied from other sites), relevant and grammatical. Misspellings and grammatical mistakes can even be picked up by computer code these days, and that will hurt your reputation. It also will turn off human visitors.

Another choice is to work with an online marketing professional and/or with a professional copywriter. The writer should have a solid handle on proper SEO and be capable of producing compelling, thoughtful copy.

For subject matter, consider blog posts and articles that inform and educate people who would use

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your services. What are all the considerations for pre-planning a funeral? What do families need to do first following an unexpected loss? How would you walk them through this process?

You can also look at recent trends in death care and funeral services. Also look at subject matter that's generally related to death care, such as health and wellness advice, lists of accidents that cause fatalities (and how to avoid them), how to pick out a receptacle when pre-planning, etc.

Again, always make sure the content is original. If the search engines determine the copy has been swiped wholesale from another site — or even if it's just been tweaked a bit — that will severely hurt your SEO. They no longer need humans to figure this out. The programs they designed do it automatically. If

there's stolen content on your site, they'll definitely find out.

Also, keep in mind that your funeral home content doesn't have to be limited to text. Both search engines and human visitors want to see images and video as well. These elements can be installed in a way that make them searchable for particular relevant keywords, increasing your SEO and authority.

Similarly, any text you include should organically blend in relevant keywords to improve your SEO. Always err to the side of making the copy read well and be informative, instead of just stuffing it with a bunch of keywords. That's why a seasoned copywriter can be a big benefit: He or she will know just how to craft the copy, so it sounds great and gives you great SEO bang for the buck. **FBA**



Welton Hong is the founder and marketing director of Ring Ring Marketing, which specializes in helping funeral homes convert leads from online directly to the phone line. The firm has helped many funeral homes, cemeteries and combination operations bolster their online marketing. Welton also is a speaker at funeral home conferences and the author of Making Your Phone Ring with Internet Marketing for Funeral Homes. Contact him at welton@ringringmarketing.com or 888-383-2848.

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