

## Carriage Services Announces 2017 Annual Results And Raises Rolling Four Quarter Outlook

HOUSTON, TX— Carriage Services, Inc. (NYSE: CSV) announced results for the year ending December 31, 2017.

Mel Payne, Chief Executive Officer, stated, "After eight consecutive years of record performance, our 2017 consolidated operational and financial performance did not meet our reported high performance expectations.

"Many of the reasons behind the decline in our operating performance were addressed in our Second and Third quarter earnings releases. We were encouraged by the fourth quarter results from our Acquisition Funeral Home and Cemetery segments as these businesses achieved year over year improvement in both organic revenue growth and Field EBITDA Margins. The momentum shown in these segments in the fourth quarter has accelerated into 2018."

"All of our leaders and employees have accepted the challenge of making 2018

a historic year of operating and financial performance for our Company. Additionally, all of our senior leaders have accepted the challenge of Executing on eleven 'Big Ideas' that will accelerate the Carriage Good To Great Journey during our second five year timeframe. And most importantly, each of our Managing Partners has accepted the challenge of leading the successful realization of a Ten Year Vision of growth and success for their individual business. Therefore I am pleased to announce our annual theme: Carriage Services 2018: Our Guiding Principles and Shared 'Being The Best' Ten Year Vision and Execution of Each Business!" concluded Mr. Payne.

Carriage Services is a leading provider of funeral and cemetery services and merchandise in the United States. Carriage operates 178 funeral homes in 29 states and 32 cemeteries in 11 states. For more information, visit [www.carriageservice.com](http://www.carriageservice.com).

## Marketing Your Funeral Home Online: the Basics

By Welton Hong



The digital revolution has been scary for many small business owners. While some have welcomed the challenges of learning how to market their businesses where consumers now search for services—the internet—many others still believe the sea change is too turbulent to navigate.

That fear, unfortunately, has led to inaction. And in 2018, failing to act can be devastating for your business. That's just as true now for funeral homes and other death care service providers as for any local business.

Yes, it's true that the burial and cremation industry was able to hang back a little longer than some other businesses, owing to its more traditional nature. But that time is over.



Welton Hong

Now, Americans everywhere from big cities to remote rural areas are connected 24/7 by high-speed internet, prevalent fast data and Wi-Fi networks, and the ubiquity of smart phones and tablets. Whether they're families quickly researching at-need services or individuals and families contemplating preplanning options, many of them now do so online.

It's reasonable to feel daunted by the digital age, but honestly, the basics of online marketing isn't that tricky to understand. Here are some of the main aspects:

### Employ a high-converting website

A successful website does not exist simply to provide an online presence for your funeral home. It must actively convert visitors into clientele. Your website must be specifically designed to increase case counts and promote revenue-producing services.

A skilled marketing expert can make your website much more powerful through conversion optimization techniques such as supercharging content and highlighting a persuasive call to action on every page—while always maintaining a professional, respectful tone.

### Use search engine marketing

Search engine marketing (SEM) is the optimal way to target at-need clientele online. This just means you're using major search engines, particularly Google, to promote your funeral home.

When a death occurs with no preplanning in place, a family member will often go online and do a simple search for a funeral home with the location, such as "Toledo funeral homes." The businesses most distinctly represented on that search will have a great advantage over competitors in getting that call. For the greatest advantage in search engine placement, a funeral home will make use of the following techniques:

- Pay-per-click advertising: PPC ads ensure high visibility on a search engine results page (SERP) for a specific query.

MOVALS

UR BACK!

ard

ON:

om

wit...

**SEND US YOUR NEWS**

PO Box 5159, Youngstown, OH 44514

Fax (800)321-9040

[press\\_releases@nomispublications.com](mailto:press_releases@nomispublications.com)



# FUNERAL PROFESSION NEVER CHANGING.

More than ever, you need to adapt to keep up. Are you making the change that will help your funeral home run smoother and not harder?

Stop Waiting

WEEKS or MONTHS

**SEND US YOUR NEWS**

PO Box 5159, Youngstown, OH 44514

Fax (800)321-9040

press\_releases@nomispublications.com

**NOMIS**  
PUBLICATIONS, INC.

# FUNERAL PROFESSION EVER CHANGING.

*More than ever, you need to adapt to keep up. Are you  
getting for change that will help your funeral home run  
easier or not harder?*

Stop Waiting

**WEEKS** *or even* **MONTHS**  
to receive payment on your insurance claims

**Choose C&J Financial And Get Paid Today!**

- **FAST FUNDING®** – most claims paid in 1 to 2 days with paperwork
- **NO RISK** – Non-Recourse Funding to your firm
- **SIMPLE & EASY** – many assignments only require 1 signed document
- **Revolutionary Online Assignment Funding Management System™**

Let us show you why so many of your  
colleagues trust C&J Financial

The Leading Provider of Assignment Funding in North America  
Serving 2500+ funeral home clients \$300+ million funded each year  
45,000+ assignments processed annually

 **C&J Financial, LLC**

www.CJF.com  
800.785.0003

specifically designed to increase case counts and promote revenue-producing services.

A skilled marketing expert can make your website much more powerful through conversion optimization techniques such as supercharging content and highlighting a persuasive call to action on every page—while always maintaining a professional, respectful tone.

## Use search engine marketing

Search engine marketing (SEM) is the optimal way to target at-need clientele online. This just means you're using major search engines, particularly Google, to promote your funeral home.

When a death occurs with no preplanning in place, a family member will often go online and do a simple search for a funeral home with the location, such as "Toledo funeral homes." The businesses most distinctly represented on that search will have a great advantage over competitors in getting that call. For the greatest advantage in search engine placement, a funeral home will make use of the following techniques:

- **Pay-per-click advertising:** PPC ads ensure high visibility on a search engine results page (SERP) for a specific query. They're cost-effective, because you're charged only when someone actually clicks on the ad, sending them to your website. PPC ads create immediate visibility and are excellent for securing at-need contracts.
- **Local search map advertising:** This ensures your funeral home appears on a map of search-specific businesses. At-need clientele virtually always prefer a nearby provider, and this lets them see your location at a glance. It also increases the visibility of your funeral home on apps such as Google maps.
- **Organic search results:** These are the regular unpaid results on a given SERP. By improving search engine optimization (SEO) on your website, your funeral home appears higher on this list, massively increasing the likelihood that you'll get that contract.
- **Mobile marketing:** This has become a very powerful tool in recent years. It lets you take advantage of location services on smart phones and tablets to target mobile users in specific locations, such as a hospital.

## Reputation management

Every business is now subject to online consumer reviews, and this includes funeral homes. It's obviously crucial for your business to have an impeccable reputation online, because trust is such a critical aspect of your relationship with families.

A skilled marketing expert can help you monitor your business's reputation on sites such as Google, Yelp and Facebook, mitigate negative reviews, and encourage positive reviews.

*Welton Hong is the founder of Ring Ring Marketing® and a leading expert in creating case generation from online to the phone line. He is the author of Making Your Phone Ring with Internet Marketing for Funeral Homes. For more information, visit [www.FuneralHomeProfits.com](http://www.FuneralHomeProfits.com).*