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Get Your Message Out with Google Posts

By Welton Hong

Let's be real right from the start: I know that not a lot of funeral homes—at least not midsize, independent ones—blog on a regular basis. Or even an occasional basis. Or, frankly, at all.

They should, but they don't. And I get it. For a funeral home owner, it seems like there are a dozen reasons not to blog for every reason there is to do it. I know all the obstacles that come to mind: Who on earth would read a funeral home's blog anyway? Who would write this thing? We run a funeral home. We're not writers. What sort of content would be appropriate to put on a funeral home blog? We might find time to write a couple of posts, but we can't do it regularly. Blogs are for other industries. They make no sense for us.

...And so on. And if we're being honest, yes, those concerns are fair. Blogging and death care just don't seem to go together. Other than posting obituaries—the one piece of go-to content for every funeral home—it seems like nothing fits the bill.

In reality, a funeral home could blog about a lot of things. It could promote pre-needs by talking about the importance of planning and noting cautionary tales of families that faced huge financial burdens because their loved one didn't have a plan.

It could provide lots of information about new trends in funeral services. It could share information about living well in your sixties, seventies, and eighties, connecting with a core demographic.

And there's plenty more to cover. But again, I get it: That seems like it will take a lot of time and work. You have enough on your plate just running your funeral home in an increasingly competitive environment.



Welton Hong

But what if I told you there's actually an incredibly easy way to publish blog posts on a regular basis, and they would help promote your business on the search engine that dominates the market—for free?

I'm talking about Google Posts, a relatively little-known feature of the world's leading search engine. (Nine out of ten Americans choose Google for searching for services online, which is why it's so important that small businesses—including funeral homes—work hard to rank well in local search results and promote themselves there.)

The posts are part of Google My Business (GMB), which I hope I don't have to explain here. On second thought, I'd probably better:

Your business gets a free listing with GMB, and if you haven't claimed yours and completely filled it out, just stop reading right now and do that. It's fine, I'll wait.

My point is that you're missing out on a massive promotional opportunity on Google if you don't take full advantage of GMB. There's little point in taking on any other search engine optimization efforts if you don't start with the foundation, and that's your GMB. I wasn't kidding earlier: If you get nothing else from this article, at least go optimize your GMB now.

Google Posts is a way to get even more juice out of your GMB. It lets you create posts very easily. You can just write a couple of paragraphs and (preferably) add an image. It takes no more than a couple of minutes, and it goes "live" online virtually immediately.

The information from your GMB appears on the Google knowledge panel. That's the box about your funeral home that appears next to search results when people search for your business.

The most recent Google Posts you've written will appear inside the knowledge panel. That is, searchers will see the image, headline, and the start of a given post.

What's important to remember is that a Google Post doesn't

have to be long. Frankly, it shouldn't be long. It could be a paragraph or two. Maybe three. That's it, you're done. It's always better to upload, for example, five posts of 100 words each than one post of 500 words. Quantity is the key factor here.

So how do these posts help? For one, they're essentially free advertisements for your funeral home. You completely determine the messaging you want to put out there. You can communicate your selling points—particularly your unique selling proposition (USP)—very easily with a post.

It also appears that submitting Google Posts provides your website some improvement in local search engine rankings, which is critical as funeral homes deal with competition from direct cremation providers.

Additionally, it helps your business appear in the Google Local 3-pack, some of the most important real estate on the search page.

Ultimately, you don't have any major time investment in blogging to get some Google Posts going. Start by ensuring your GMB is ready to rock, and then go ahead and put up some posts.

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.

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