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FUNERAL HOME & CEMETERY NEWS online

# Leveraging Expanded Google Ads to Get Ahead

By Welton Hong

When it comes to business expense, if you can get more for less, that's great for your bottom line! Which is just one reason I thought a relatively recent update to Google's massively popular Pay-Per-Click (PPC) ad platform was so exciting.

The more-for-less part of the update was buried beneath public relations coverage of Google's rebranding, which brought some of the internet giant's digital marketing properties under a single umbrella. Google also renamed its AdWords PPC platform "Google Ads" to fit in with that rebranding effort.

But the change I think might be most important to your death care digital marketing efforts is an increase in text allowance for Google Search Ads. In short, advertisers now can include more text, and thus more information.

Prior to the change, you were limited to two headlines and one description line in Google Search ads: a total of 140 characters (including spaces) to get your message across.

By comparison, Google displays at minimum about 150-156 characters of text in Meta descriptions, which are designed to convince people to click on links to your site. You can probably see the challenge in only 140 characters to convince people to click on an ad.

But that's all different now. You get an extra headline (Headline 3) and description line (Description 2). Each headline allows for 30 characters. Descriptions used to be limited to 80 characters, but Google's bumped that to 90 characters each.

That's a total increase from 140 characters max to 270 characters in each ad (not including display URL path fields). When you put that extra text space to use,

you virtually double the amount of info you convey without increasing per-ad spend.

Historically, this expansion in ad size is good news for all types of brands, including funeral homes and other death care companies. Google reports that larger PPC ads tend to see click-through rates 15 percent higher than smaller ads. When Google last made a move to include more real



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estate in each ad, advertisers reported click-through increases of 20 percent.

So what does that mean for your business? It's an opportunity to connect with more families and individuals who are in need and searching for a provider or considering preplanning final arrangements.

You obviously still have to do the digital marketing work to convert that traffic once it's on your site, but with between 70 and 90 percent of people beginning most purchasing decisions online, the right Google Ad can make a difference in how many people consider your business as an option to begin with.

However, knowing how to leverage this extra ad space is critical to positive results. Here are some tips for getting the most out of the extra 130 characters:

Understand that the extra space won't always appear to searchers. Google's very big on responsive design (web pages that display in a friendly fashion on any type of device or screen), and it practices what

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it preaches. That means ads display differently when they're viewed on mobile devices vs. larger computer screens (in particular, the desktop user experience).

One way to accommodate disparate displays is to show a smaller version of ads, which means truncating Header 3 and Description 2. So make sure you use those spaces for extras that potentially drive more conversions and not for information that's critical to the meaning of your message.

With that in mind, how do you put the extra space to work advertising your business? First, consider how you can expand previous messaging to be more effective or clear.

Did you take out words or use acronyms in previous advertising? If so, you might be able to put that text back in to ensure meaning is more readily apparent to those outside the industry.

Second, you could add another feature or benefit message in your ad. If your primary message is compassionate, timely service for families in need, you might add a note that preplanning is available or list local cemeteries you've worked with.

For cremation providers, secondary messaging might include the availability of a large urn selection or assistance arranging unique final dispositions.

In short, expanded ads make it possible to share more about your business with searchers at the first touchpoint. Leverage it wisely, and you can increase traffic to your pages and subsequent conversions and revenue.

If you're not sure how best to put the extra ad space to work, I recommend conducting some A/B testing (aka "split testing") with your ads. Try out different text and formats with Google Ads in a controlled process and compare the results of each effort, indicating what works best for your business.

*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).*

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