

Is it Legal, or Ethical, to Receive Compensation from your Recycler for your Post Cremation Metal?

By Ron Bowman

The answer may surprise you. First, let me start with a disclaimer, I represent **Cremation Metal Recycling**, a recycler of post cremation metal and I am not a lawyer. Recently I was contacted by a Tennessee crematory, asking me about the legality of receiving compensation for post cremation metal. I then reached out to the *Cremation Association of North America*, who referred me to the Tennessee Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers.

Here is the Tennessee state law as posted in Chapter 0660-09-01 – Requirements for a Crematory, Section (13). “While the funeral director, embalmer, or crematory operator may receive compensation from a recycling company for retrieving these materials and shipping them to the recycling company, the funeral director, embalmer, or crematory operator shall not receive a fee for doing so that exceeds the actual cost to the crematory facility for performing or assisting in the removal and shipping costs of those materials.” March, 2019 (Revised)

To the best of my knowledge, there are no federal laws, regulating compensation received from a recycler. However, it is clear that at least one state does prohibit compensation, subject to the provision stated above. To help ensure that your crematory is in full compliance with state law, I recommend that you contact your appropriate state agency. If your crematory is in a state like Tennessee,

which prohibits compensation beyond the cost of removal and shipping, I would still reach out to them for clarification on donating settlement money entirely to a charity.

If your state does not prohibit compensation, then the question some might ask, is it ethical to receive compensation from a recycler for your post cremation metal? Webster’s Dictionary defines ethical, as “pertaining to or dealing with morals or the principles of morality; being in accordance with the rules

and standards for right conduct or practice, esp. the standards of a profession.” As a recycler, we do not take a stand regarding the ethics of compensation. Some would say that accepting compensation gives the appearance of profiting from recycling materials, while others believe that donating all settlement proceeds to a charity, absolves them of any ethical dilemma. Some crematories who accept compensation use this money to operate the crematory and keep down expenses. Others donate their settlements to one or more charities and some even create a reserve fund, which is then used to help pay the funeral expenses of those disadvantaged in their community. I have met crematory owners who are adamantly opposed to receiving any form of compensation for their post cremation metal, but today they seem to be in the minority. With respect to how you notify clients of your policy, you must remember to disclose your recycling program on your Cremation Authorization and Disposition Form.

Recycling has now become the standard for the handling of post cremation metal and most people have a very favorable opinion of recycling in general. If your crematory donates 100 percent your settlement compensation to a charity, or you use it to pay the funeral expenses for the disadvantaged in your community, then you should proudly make these policies known to your clients.

Cremation Metal Recycling, along with *Responsible Recycling Charitable Foundation* (our non-profit recycling company), are family owned and operated and support the recycling needs for over a hundred funeral homes, crematories and cemeteries throughout the United States. For more information about their new customer loyalty rewards supply program, free crematory operator training video, free post cremation screen and their recycling programs, contact Ron Bowman at cmrandrrcf@gmail.com or visit www.cremationmetalrecycling.com.



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Powerhouse Marketing with Welton

By Welton Hong

How Long Should Your Deathcare Marketing Blog Posts Be?

This month, I'd like to dissect some data points to illustrate how long a marketing blog post should be for a funeral home, cemetery, or other funeral services provider.

Yoast is a plug-in app for websites that helps take some of the guesswork out of technical SEO. It's popular with WordPress users. The reason we should consider what Yoast says about blog post length is that this app has access to a huge amount of website and SEO performance data.

According to Yoast data, the minimum effective length for a post depends on the type of post. For a standard post or page, Yoast recommends a minimum of 300 words. For *cornerstone* content, the minimum recommendation is 900 words.

What Do Others Say About Ideal Word Count?

Yoast isn't the only app or site that can turn to data to answer this question. Here's what other players in the digital marketing industry suggest:

- HubSpot says the ideal length for optimal SEO performance is 2,100 to 2,400 words.
- SEMrush notes that articles with 7,000 or more words drive 400 percent more traffic than articles with 900 to 1,200 words.
- Databox puts the ideal blog post length in 2021 between 1,500 and 2,000 words.

So What's the Actual Ideal Length?

There's no singular answer. A perfect one-size-fits-all blog post length doesn't exist, because it depends on:

- **What you have to say.** If you're showing up on your blog to explain the difference between a casket and a coffin for curious consumers, thousands of words would be overkill.

- **Your audience.** Not all people want to sift through long-form content. Your audience might prefer short content or videos, and it's up to you to test various content types and check out your analytics so you know these things.
- **Your brand style.** If your firm is known for posting short, easy-to-read pieces and you suddenly switch to 2,000 words on every topic, you could alienate the audience you've built.

So why do so many experts seem to call for larger word counts? In some cases, those pushing long-term content have something to sell, and it might be good for them if you're writing more words.

But in most cases, the answers are based on data, such as the average word count of pages showing up in the number one spot on search engine results pages (SERPs).

On the surface, it's tempting to buy into this analysis and start churning out long blog posts. After all, you *also* want to show up at the top of search results, so mimicking what's already there is the way to go, right?

Not exactly. Word count is only one factor among hundreds of things that go into a blog post. And one factor alone won't drive positive SEO performance.

Even the experts calling for long posts know this is true. HubSpot points out that even though it puts the sweet spot at 2,100 to 2,400 words, 16 of its own top-performing posts have fewer than 1,500 words.

Analysis of random data also doesn't tell you about what's performing in *your* industry. Neil Patel looked at word count breakdowns by industry and found that the top performing pages in various industries had different word count averages.

In financial tech, for example, top performing pages clocked in with average word counts of 2,000-2,150, while

top home and garden pages only had 1,100-1,200 words on average.

Some of those analytics are also based on total words on page and not the actual content, and that can make a big difference. Consider this quick demonstration:

I googled “burial types” and looked at the top three pages (that weren't ads). Here are the results:

- The top page—the one winning the featured snippet—only had a total of 466 words. It was a landing page with links to other pages covering each type of burial, and when you strip out menus, CTA buttons, and those lists, there were fewer than 200 words of content.
- The next page had 1,968 total words. Stripping out menu elements and other non-content words brought the total to around 1,730.
- The third page had 1,508 total words, but taking out menu and other elements brought that to 1,300 words of actual content.

As you can see, the word count here varies, and it's typically a couple of hundred less if you're only counting the content.

It's Not the Word Count That Counts

Google doesn't care how many words are on your page. It cares that the words are *expert, authoritative, and trustworthy*—that they're relevant to the keyword and do a good job of answering the intent of the searcher.

How long does your content have to be? Just long enough to tick all those boxes well.

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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