



Powerhouse Marketing with Welton

By Welton Hong

The Basics of Growth Marketing for Deathcare (Part 1)

Growth marketing is a type of marketing that's becoming more prevalent across all types of industries. Born of *growth hacking*, which refers to measures startups and software companies take to grow quickly, growth marketing focuses on driving success through better customer relationships, increased loyalty, and loops that inherently grow your business.

It might sound like a trendy marketing buzzword, but growth marketing includes a set of solid tools that deathcare firms can use to create future success.

In some ways, growth marketing works like other marketing tactics, although the focus is specifically on growth—such as getting more clientele or increasing the value of the services existing clientele choose.

For most businesses, growth marketing efforts sit between other marketing arenas. For example, your funeral services firm might engage in brand marketing, which builds awareness about your firm and its products. Blog posts, radio ads, and billboards are common examples of brand marketing.

You might also engage in product marketing. These are efforts that help you position existing or new goods and services to clientele or prospective clientele so they understand the benefits and can make an educated purchasing decision. A downloadable guide to preplanning or a checklist for memorial services that explains all the products someone might want are examples of product marketing.

Growth marketing sits between brand marketing and product marketing, helping to drive more conversions and increase the value of those conversions.

On the surface, growth marketing appears to be a process that aligns better with startups and product companies, such as Slack or Netflix. But some of

the tools of growth marketing can help deathcare firms drive more success, especially in competitive or challenging markets.

One of the main tools of growth marketing is the *growth loop*. This occurs when you take the outputs of your marketing process and convert them to inputs that drive more outputs. (Granted, that's a lot of marketing speak that's meaningless on its own, so let's explore an example.)

You might have used or heard of Slack, a team messaging and communication app. Slack's growth runs primarily on a growth loop that works like this:

- **The Slack marketing team triggers an input.** Someone does a Google search online for team communication tools, for example, and finds Slack's website. They sign up, becoming an output of Slack's marketing process.
- **The customer engages in trigger activity too.** That person invites their team and business partners to join them on Slack. At this point, the person is now creating input into Slack's growth loop.
- **That activity creates more outputs.** Some of the people who sign up to collaborate with this person eventually create their own paid Slack accounts and invite other people to collaborate on different efforts.
- **The cycle continues**, resulting in constant growth.

Growth loops for most deathcare businesses look a bit different, but you *can* foster them to help drive organic growth for your firm. Here are some examples:

- **Google reviews.** When a satisfied family leaves a positive review on Google or another website, that encourages other people to choose you for their preplanning or at-need services. That's technically a growth loop, and it doesn't cost you anything more than a little time asking for reviews.

- **Preplanning referrals.** You might create a process that lets preplanning clientele refer others, perhaps gaining a small discount or free upgrade on their own service by doing so. Referral programs are tried-and-true examples of growth loops.

- **Follow-up cycles.** Sometimes, the growth loop is less about bringing in new clientele and more about maximizing the value of the clientele you already have. For example, you may set up an annual check-in with early preplanners, knowing that their income and wishes might change as they grow careers or experience life changes. Such check-ins can lead to additional purchases that increase the value of each preplanning contract.

Next month in this space, I'll delve deeper into how growth marketing works, other core principles of this tactic, and how funeral homes, cemeteries, and cremation services firms can employ it for greater success.

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