

Seven Ways to Make Your Social Media Shine

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Yes, social media makes sense for funeral homes—when employed in the right way.

More than 75 percent of Generation Xers are active social media users, and about 90 percent of Millennials can say the same. But even among Baby Boomers, social media adoption has become pervasive: More than half use social media (usually Facebook) on a regular basis.

This means a significant portion of the deathcare audience is spending time on social media—an average of two to three hours per day. Users who access the internet via mobile devices (which account for more internet users than desktop devices) spend 50 percent of their time on social media apps.

The point: If your firm isn't also investing some time into social media, you're missing out on a great opportunity to engage with families in your area and thus drive more calls.

Funeral homes that aren't already posting on social media might be avoiding these platforms because they're not sure what to post. But it's not as hard as you might think!

Here are seven ideas for social media posts funeral directors can publish to connect with local families:

1. Share website content

One tip I always give clients is to never waste marketing efforts. Always repurpose what you've done across various channels.

For example, if you write a blog post, pull a few quotes out of it and turn them into social media updates. Share them with links back to the blog post. You can post plain text or use a software program

such as Canva to turn the quote into a sharable image.

New landing pages, download offers, and even updates to your image gallery are all potential fodder for social media posts.

2. Create a poll

Asking questions is a great way to add content to your social page while increasing engagement with the audience. In general, people love to know their opinion matters, so they're more likely to interact with a post that asks for it.

You can ask an open-ended question to be answered in the comments. But most social platforms offer poll options, so you can ask people to vote.

Questions can range from the obvious (cremation vs. burial preferences or whether someone is considering preplanning) to the creative (color preferences for caskets or the best flower to send as a memorial).

On top of increased social engagement, you get some mini market research done.

3. Honor someone you served

With permission from the family, share a notable story or link to the obituary for someone that your deathcare firm has served. When handled with compassion and tact, these types of posts serve a few purposes:

First, they help a family honor the legacy of a loved one. Second, they position your firm as someone who cares about the people you serve. Third, they offer an opportunity for existing customers to share your posts and potentially recommend you to others.

4. Post tips for preplanning or families in need

Educational content can be extremely powerful on social media because people save or share it with others. Both of those behaviors indicate to the social algorithms that your content is valuable, which increases the likelihood the platform shows this content to others.

Create short posts with specific tips for preplanning (how much you can save, what documents you need, who can preplan) or families in need (what to do first, options for memorials, when you need a death certificate). For best results, share these tips via infographics, images, or even short video clips.

5. Repurpose review content and testimonials

Remember my tip for reusing content you create? You can also reuse content created by families you've served.

Peruse your Google reviews for positive statements or capture content from emails sent by previously served families that demonstrate your professionalism and compassion or the quality of your services.

Using those quotes, create eye-catching images with your brand colors and some of the text of the review. Share these testimonials on your social pages in moderation, doling them out a bit at a time.

It's important to keep it balanced — about 80 percent of your content should be helpful, educational, or entertaining, while 20 percent can be directly related to services you provide.

6. Repost or link to content from elsewhere

Speaking of balance, your social profile shouldn't be all about **your** firm. Share content from others within the community or industry (albeit not from your direct competitors, obviously).

This helps you put the **social** in social media and adds to the culture and community of your brand. It also helps build authenticity and trust, because when you share content from other reputable organizations, you humanize your firm.

A funeral home in a single city, for example, might share links about city events or the passing of an important local figure. A national organization might share relevant tips from tangential industries, historical links related to its niche, or thoughts on the deaths of major world figures.

7. Share original pictures/video

Pictures of your staff in action or participating in local events, video walkthroughs of your funeral home, or meaningful video messages from a funeral home director can be powerful content for social media.

Original images and videos make it obvious there are people behind the business. They also take some of the mystery out of the deathcare process, which can help at-need families and individuals looking to preplan feel comfortable reaching out to you.

The bottom line: conversions

One thing to keep in mind as you're creating and scheduling social media content is that the end goal is always **conversions**.

Yes, engagement numbers such as likes and shares can be important. They demonstrate that your content is connecting. But it's easy to fall into a trap of chasing likes and shares, and those don't always correlate to conversions. You want at-need calls and preneed contracts, not simply likes and shares.

Funeral firms aren't likely to be viral social brands, and going viral probably won't drive your business goals anyway. Instead, create authority and trust by being present, consistent, and helpful.



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Welton is a leading expert in helping funeral homes convert leads from online directly to the phone line. He's the author of the book *Making Your Phone Ring with Internet Marketing for Funeral Homes*. Learn more at FuneralHomeProfits.com.