

# How to Use Topic Clusters for Digital Marketing

By Welton Hong



Google loves a good topic cluster, and you should too! Creating a cluster of blog posts and landing pages that cover all aspects of a funeral services topic helps your pages rank higher in search engine results, builds trust with your audience, and helps convert site visitors into clientele.

## *What Are Topic Clusters for Digital Marketing?*

Topic clusters are a series of pages about different aspects of a topic. They're typically heavily interlinked to provide readers with options for learning more about a topic.

Usually, topic clusters are organized with a long pillar page that links out to shorter pages on subtopics. The pillar page covers or mentions all relevant topics, providing an overview and a sort of index to the cluster.

For example, a topic cluster on preplanning cremation might include:

- A 2,000-word pillar page covering, at a high level, what preplanning cremation is, the benefits, the costs, and how to do it.
- Posts ranging from 500 to 1,000 words covering each subtopic in greater depth. Those might include how cremation works, the benefits of cremation over burial, costs of cremation vs. costs of burial, how to talk to your family about your wishes, etc.
- Landing pages that actually "sell" the services related to the content. Examples include pages for direct cremation and cremation with a funeral service.

## *Benefits of Topic Clusters for Funeral Content Marketing*

Quality topic clusters create clout that helps your site perform better in the search engines. Creating a comprehensive cluster means publishing a number of highly relevant pages, and that's automatically good for SEO.

But your clusters also help search engine AI better understand your site and how all the information relates. Google uses complex natural language programming to understand what sites and pages are about and how to rank them in relation to each search query.

A cluster effectively communicates concepts such as, "Here is a page about funeral services. Here's a page about costs of those services, which is highly related. And here's a page about caskets, which is a topic that's important to both funeral services and the costs of funerals."

Search engine AI on its own wouldn't know what a casket is and why it's important to funeral service costs. But cluster hierarchy offers this data.

Topic clusters are also convenient and practical for people who come to your site. They help keep people on your page, build trust while displaying your expertise, and increase the chance someone will turn to your deathcare firm when they're ready for preneed planning or have an at-need situation.

## How to Create Topic Clusters That Work

Implementing topic clusters isn't difficult, but it does require some organization and understanding the needs of your target audience. Follow the steps below to plan a topic cluster for your deathcare website.

- **Brainstorm categories.** Look at keyword research, clientele feedback, and the services you provide to come up with high level content categories that meet your audience's top needs. For example, a funeral home might have categories such as preneed planning, at-need services, luxury funeral services, and budget services.
- **Choose one category for your cluster.** Most small or midsize businesses can support up to around five content clusters because they have up to five major topics or service lines to cover. But it's easier to create these clusters one at a time, so start with one category. For example, a funeral home marketing team might begin with budget funeral services.
- **List all the relevant topics.** Look at keyword research, Google the topic yourself and see what others are covering, and check the People Also Ask box on Google results. Use that data to create a list of topics related to the category. For "budget funeral services," topics might include:
  - Cost of funerals
  - Cremation vs. burial cost
  - Tips for meaningful but inexpensive services
  - Cost of burial
  - How location impacts cost
  - What expenses are optional
  - How to prepare financially for a funeral
  - The value of preplanning in saving money on deathcare costs

- **Outline a pillar page.** Come up with a pillar page concept that covers all relevant topics at a high level. For example, a pillar page on budget funerals should include a section on the cost of funerals. That content could cover what contributes to funeral costs and the average overall cost of services. But the entire purpose of the pillar page isn't to inform the reader about exact funeral costs; the page should also cover options for savings, how to prepare financially, and all other relevant topics.
- **Plan subtopic pages.** Any relevant topic covered or hinted at in the pillar page can be covered by a subtopic page or blog post. The pillar page on budget funeral services might mention caskets, for example, so you can write a blog post on the cost of caskets. You might also create a post on how to select a casket.
- **Create the content.** Write and publish the content. You can write the content yourself or have it outsourced, but it's a good idea to have at least the pillar page and some of the supporting pages completed before you start publishing your cluster.
- **Create internal links.** The pillar page should link out to all the subtopic pages. But subtopic pages should also link to the pillar page and to each other as relevant.

Yes, creating content clusters takes a bit of work and a lot of content. But here's one piece of good news: Some of the subtopic pages from each cluster will be relevant to future topic clusters. For example, the casket content that's relevant to a budget funeral cluster would also be relevant to other funeral and burial clusters, so you won't have to create everything from scratch.

You might already have content relevant to potential clusters on your deathcare website. Reworking existing content to fit the proven cluster model is a great way to revamp your site for stronger SEO performance and conversions, so give it a try.



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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](http://FuneralHomeProfits.com).