



Powerhouse Marketing with Welton

By Welton Hong

Improve Organic Search Rankings with PPC

If you've read my previous columns on pay-per-click advertising (specifically Google Ads) and search engine optimization (SEO), the headline above might sound a bit odd.

Here's why: On Google, the search engine with about 90 percent of the search engine market (and thus your top priority when marketing your deathcare business), purchasing PPC ads will not directly improve your SEO.

I'll explain further: Google doesn't want any business to think it can "buy" better positioning in organic search results by purchasing Google Ads. While you can ensure you appear atop search results for local deathcare firms by investing in Google Ads, they will be clearly identified as ads—not as organic search listings.

That's okay, because in recent years, internet users have become much more accepting of ads on search engine results pages (SERPs). I'm sure you've noticed this.

When ads first started appearing on SERPs, people were extremely wary of them. These days, virtually no one notices the difference between ads and organic listings. Those who do notice largely don't care. They've come to expect ads when they search and accept them without question.

So purchasing PPC ads is a great way to jump to the top of SERPs while waiting for your SEO efforts to kick in and raise your organic profile when people search for deathcare services in your area.

But here's the thing: Although you can't directly affect your site's organic ranking on Google by purchasing Google Ads, there's a great indirect effect that adds to the PPC ads' value.

That's wonderful, because PPC is also one of the most cost-effective ways of marketing your funeral home. You only pay when someone actually clicks on the ad, taking that searcher to your website. And PPC ads can be tweaked on the fly, going "live" almost immediately, ensuring you're never "locked in" to an ad that isn't sufficiently effective.

Again, Google won't provide your website a better organic ranking just because you're advertising. That's an area where Google wants to be abundantly clear. It wants the sites with the best content and most authority to get the top rankings, regardless of whether they choose to pay for ads.

Excellent SEO gets you better organic rankings. Having spectacular reviews of your funeral home (and a high quantity of them) gets you better organic rankings. Packing your site with high-quality, entirely original content gets you better organic rankings.

With that said, while there's no direct connection between investing in Google Ads and getting high organic ranks, here's the reality: If you do invest in Google Ads (as you certainly should), you very likely will see an improvement in unpaid search rankings.

It's not something Google does to reward businesses who advertise. Instead, it's an indirect effect—an organic one, in every sense.

When you contract with Google Ads (previously called Google AdWords), in addition to all the benefits you get from PPC, the following things occur:

Searchers who happen to notice a PPC ad for your business are much more inclined to click on your organic listing. The PPC ad alone creates authority in the searcher's mind, and

even if that person usually avoids clicking on a paid ad, they might well click on your "standard" (organic) link.

Paid ad clicks very often lead to an increase in links, sharing, citations, etc., for your deathcare website. All these developments improve your funeral home website's authority with Google, and thus create an improvement in its organic ranking.

People who have previously encountered a PPC ad for a business site are far more inclined to engage and convert with that site, even when that engagement is through your organic listing.

Essentially, while Google doesn't game the system in any way to take better care of websites that invest in PPC ads, your site almost certainly will get a better organic ranking if it's run a PPC campaign, just in a roundabout way.

That's why I strongly recommend PPC advertising through Google Ads to my funeral home clients. Not only is PPC one of the best ways to drive at-need contracts by itself, it also has a real (albeit indirect) effect on your organic search rankings.

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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