



Powerhouse Marketing with Welton

By Welton Hong

New Google Requirements for Email Marketing

Email marketing has evolved into an indispensable tool for businesses across various industries, and this certainly includes funeral homes.

However, Google is making some changes to its email marketing requirements in February. Although they currently only affect businesses that send emails in very large quantities, it's useful to consider them in the context of your email marketing plan going forward.

Google's New Email Marketing Standards

In an effort to combat spam and enhance email security, Google has set forth stricter rules for entities sending large volumes of emails to Gmail accounts.

These changes, which take effect next month, will impact any sender who dispatches more than 5,000 emails daily to Gmail addresses.

One of the most notable changes is the requirement for bulk email senders to authenticate their messages using protocols such as SPF, DKIM, or DMARC. This authentication process ensures that the emails are indeed sent by the claimed sender, establishing a foundation of trustworthiness.

Additionally, Gmail now mandates that high-volume emailers provide recipients with an easy, one-click option to unsubscribe, with senders obliged to honor these requests within two business days.

Lastly, bulk senders must adhere to a specific spam threshold set by Google to avoid having their emails flagged as spam.

Now, I realize that very few funeral businesses (if any, honestly) send marketing emails to such a large quantity of recipients. Frankly, it's hard to imagine many firms sending emails to a recipient body even a tenth of that size (500).

However, Google's known for limiting its changes to a certain portion of its advertisers and then broadening its scope later on. Even if you don't send a lot of emails for branding or pre-planning awareness, these restrictions might include your process down the line.

For the record, I always strongly recommend staying clear of anything that could be considered spamming in email outreach, no matter how large your recipient list might be.

Having a one-click unsubscribe option is beneficial as well. So I suggest keeping those in mind if you do send out marketing emails regularly.

Here's a reminder of three ways email marketing can benefit your firm:

- 1. Community Engagement:** Email marketing helps funeral homes stay connected with their community. By sending newsletters, updates, and condolences, you can maintain relationships with past clients and foster a sense of community support.
- 2. Promotion of Services:** Funeral homes can use email marketing to highlight services such as preplanning, provide information about different funeral options, and offer support resources. This can help families make informed decisions during challenging times.
- 3. Feedback and Surveys:** Email surveys can help funeral homes gather valuable feedback from clients, allowing you

to continuously improve services and better meet the needs of grieving families.

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.

FUNERAL HOME & CEMETERY NEWS
Monthly Columns online at
www.NomisPublications.com