

# RECRUITMENT Life Raft



*How digital marketing aided by AI can help attract the right employees.*

**BY WELTON HONG**

**W**hether you run a small or large funeral home, chances are at some point you've had a vacant role that needed to be filled – and not just by anyone but by the right someone. Maybe you're even in that position right now.

This situation may lead to searching for the perfect personality to fit the culture of your small team, or to finding someone who can work both independently and in groups to contribute to the big picture. And in certain cases – namely hurried ones – you might not feel like you can afford to be selective. But in deathcare, you have to be.

The recruitment process for funeral homes is uniquely challenging because of the sensitive nature of the services provided.

Now, I can't tell you the right person to hire, and even if I could, the reality is only you know from experience who will work best for your firm. What I can tell you, though, is how to find that person as I happen to be an expert on the methodology – digital marketing.

Often, I find that business owners forget what an effective digital marketing strategy can do to attract the right candidates; it is no one-trick pony. Digital marketing can do more than just promote funeral services to the ideal clients; it can promote your firm to the ide-

al employees. With the assistance of artificial intelligence (AI), that statement is even more true than if I'd written this a few years ago.

While you might be a little skeptical at first about how digital marketing can assist in this realm, I assure you it's a recruitment life raft.

So let's dig into how you can leverage effective digital marketing strategies supplemented with AI-driven technology to attract skilled, empathetic and dedicated funeral professionals.

## ***Anatomy of a Good Job Posting***

Likely the most obvious (but still incredibly important) way to reach a one-of-a-kind candidate is through the job posting. Before you jump right into employing AI for this task, I encourage you to think about the things you'd look for in a posting, from requirements to expectations to benefits. I guarantee at least a few of those will line up with those of your ideal candidate.

A well-crafted job posting also serves as a filter to ensure that those who apply are better matches for the role. It sets the stage for the recruitment process, reflecting your funeral home's professionalism and dedication to finding the right person for the job. The tone should be professional yet welcoming. It should reflect your firm's brand and appeal to the type of candidates you want to attract.

You may be well-versed in writing job posts, but I'll still share some insights into the anatomy of a good post and what separates it from a bad one. First, the posting should have a clear job title that accurately reflects the nature of

the position and level of seniority; nothing too creative that may confuse job seekers. It should provide a concise description of your firm that includes mission, values and culture. Highlight what makes it a desirable place to work; this could be an innovative work environment, career growth opportunities or any traditional/unique benefits.

Clearly outline what the job entails; be specific about daily tasks and long-term responsibilities. List how much professional experience candidates should have, as well as required and preferred skills. This helps candidates self-assess their suitability before either of you takes the next step toward employment.

When possible, provide a salary range as the transparency helps manage expectations and demonstrates fairness and openness. Don't hesitate to paint a picture of the work environment; expectations regarding workplace culture are critical down the road for retention.

It's also a great idea to include a statement affirming your commitment to equal opportunity employment. This promotes a positive image and encourages a diverse range of applicants.

Last, don't forget to provide clear instructions for applying and an application deadline. Ensure a straightforward, accessible process.

Employee recruitment isn't just about attracting the right candidates; it's also about not scaring them off. Leaving out any of the above information can be a red flag to the right candidate, even if it's unintentional. For example, omitting a salary range or health benefits might seem like your firm doesn't value its employees. A vague

job description might sound like your funeral home isn't clear about expectations. To double-check its thoroughness, run it through an AI writing software program to see if it has any suggestions.

An even more thorough application process uses AI, such as chatbots, for automated communications to provide a responsive, engaging candidate experience. These systems can answer FAQs, provide company info and guide applicants through the process. Integrating natural language processing ensures interactions are as human-like as possible, making candidates feel valued and supported throughout their journey.

Once you have a solid rough draft of the job description, AI, too, can do a lot to enhance the reach and relevance of postings by analyzing performance data from previous listings to determine what wording, format and distribution channels yield the best results. It can also be used to integrate search engine optimization (SEO) strategies into postings – using specific keywords used in job searches – to increase the likelihood that these postings appear in search engine results.

Over time, this approach can be complemented with A/B testing (control vs. variant) of different job descriptions to continually refine the effectiveness of the postings.

### **Beyond the Job Posting**

A strong job posting is critical. But alone, it might not be enough to attract the right candidate. There's myriad digital marketing strategies you can employ to expand your reach and further entice any already interested candidates.

A direct way to reach a wider audience is targeted advertising. Take advantage of sophisticated targeting tools available on platforms like LinkedIn, which allow ads to be displayed based on specific industries, job functions and even seniority levels. AI can opti-

mize these campaigns by analyzing which ads lead to applications and tweaking them for better performance. This might involve adjusting the demographics targeted, the ad copy used or the time of day the ads are shown.

Using retargeting campaigns can also help keep the firm top of mind for candidates who have shown interest but haven't yet applied.

If there's no room in your budget for ads, there are some indirect ways to send the right message to

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potential employees. For example, social media platforms provide a unique space to connect with candidates by showcasing company culture and community involvement. Creating posts that highlight employee stories, community service projects or even day-to-day operations gives insights into the workplace environment.

Video is an excellent medium for connecting emotionally with potential candidates; they can showcase the firm's compassionate environment, highlight services and feature employee testimonials.

AI can analyze social post and video engagement metrics to understand what content works best, providing insights that help refine video content strategies to better appeal to potential applicants. Regularly updating platforms and your website with relevant, engaging content keeps your firm attractive to prospective employees.

Another affordable option is content marketing, or creating articles, blogs and other materials that position the funeral home as a thought leader in the industry. AI can help tailor content to the interests of potential applicants by analyzing search trends and popular topics among the target demographic. It can even write the content for you,

although I highly recommend human oversight. This strategy helps attract candidates actively seeking career development and engagement in their field.

Email marketing can be a powerful tool in keeping potential candidates engaged. AI can segment email lists based on how candidates interacted with previous emails, their website behavior and their engagement with the funeral home's social media platforms. Personalized emails based on these

segments can address individual candidate interests and needs, increasing the likelihood of converting interest into applications.

As I mentioned earlier, it's equally important not to deter candidates as it is to appeal to them. An important way to do both is by managing your funeral home's online reputation, which it is hoped you're already doing. This involves monitoring and responding to reviews and actively encouraging happy employees to share their positive experiences. AI tools can alert to negative reviews quickly, allowing timely responses that mitigate potential damage and demonstrate the company's commitment to employee satisfaction.

All this might seem like a lot of trouble to go to for employee recruitment, but it's worth it for a funeral home to maintain its reputation for top-notch customer service in a field as sensitive in nature as deathcare. Putting in the work on the back end will help you maintain a healthy funeral home staff and indirectly improve your employee retention. ☰

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