

# Nothing Changes If Nothing Changes



**Diligent business owners must adapt to meet their clients where they are because it's clear consumers aren't going back.**

BY NICOLE VULLO

I first stumbled onto the phrase “nothing changes if nothing changes” while scrolling through Instagram in May 2023. As an older millennial, Instagram is where I get most of my daily laughs and content, as opposed to TikTok. (Boy, do I feel old saying that TikTok is too young for me... but I digress.)

When I first saw the saying, my immediate response was, “Well, obviously!” Little did I know at the time, however, that this would become my personal mantra the following month as I began a new lifestyle journey after deciding to finally get into shape. (If anyone needs Pilates studio recommendations or suggestions on plant-based protein powders, I'm your girl!)

After first reading the expression, it might seem like a bit of a brain teaser. But as you keep reading and repeating it, you realize that what it boils down to is if you keep doing what you are doing, you are going to keep getting what you are getting. Some might say this also correlates to the definition of “insanity,” where you keep doing the same thing over and over and expect different results.

Now, while this phrase directly tied back to my health and fitness journey, I also realized that another area where this idea plays a major role involves how funeral homes and cemeteries market their businesses. Through five consecutive years of consumer outreach, we know that today's funeral and cemetery consumers are very different from the past. What's even more obvious is that they are not going back.

Therefore, what diligent business owners need to do is adapt to meet their clients where they are. Why? Because if you do not do that, ladies and gentlemen, they will go somewhere else. Again, nothing changes if nothing changes.

I am fully aware that marketing is not your area of expertise, and that is okay! Fortunately, there is an abundance of vendors and suppliers that are here to help you effectively and efficiently craft a marketing plan, as well as implement it.

The digital landscape continues to evolve, and the need for a strong digital presence has never been more critical for funeral service businesses. I cannot stress enough

that funeral homes and cemeteries must adapt to changing consumer behaviors and expectations. To help you make the transition, consider the following marketing trends and strategies for your funeral or cemetery business in order to stay both competitive and relevant in your market.

## PERSONALIZED MARKETING

Personalized marketing has become more than just a trend – it is a *necessity*. Consumers expect businesses to understand their unique needs and preferences. For funeral service providers, this means creating tailored content and services that resonate with individuals during their time of need. Consider the following strategies:

**Segmented Email Campaigns:** Use customer data to segment your email list and send targeted messages. For instance, you can send different emails to families that recently experienced a loss compared to those preplanning for future services.

**Customized Content:** Develop content that speaks directly to different segments of your audience.

Blog posts, videos and social media updates should address the specific concerns and questions of various demographics.

## SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

SEO remains a cornerstone of your digital marketing efforts. Ensuring that your funeral business appears at the top of search engine results is crucial for reaching potential clients. To accomplish this, try:

**Local SEO:** Optimize your website for local search queries. Include keywords related to geographic area and make sure your business is listed on Google Business Profile (formerly Google My Business) and other local directories.

**Content Marketing:** Create high-quality, informative content that answers common questions related to funeral planning, grief support and memorial services. Education has become a major need for funeral service consumers and these steps not only improve your SEO but also help establish your business as a trusted resource.

## SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Social media has become a very powerful tool for building relationships and engaging with your community. Funeral homes and cemeteries need to leverage social media to connect with their audiences and communities on a more personal level. Strategies include:

**Facebook Groups:** Create or participate in local community groups. Offer support and share helpful information related to funeral planning and grief management.

**Instagram Stories:** Use Instagram Stories to share behind-the-scenes looks at your funeral home, introduce your staff and provide tips on coping with loss.

**Livestreaming:** Host live Q&A sessions on Facebook or Instagram to answer questions about funeral planning and the services your firm offers.

## PAY-PER-CLICK ADVERTISING

PPC advertising can drive targeted traffic to your website and increase awareness of your brand. Funeral businesses should invest in PPC campaigns to reach potential clients who are actively searching for funeral services. Consider using:

**Google Ads:** Use Google Ads to target specific keywords related to funeral service. Create compelling ad copy that highlights the unique aspects of your business.

**Social Media Ads:** Run targeted ads on Facebook and Instagram to reach individuals in your local area. Use custom audiences to target people based on their interests and behaviors.

## ONLINE REVIEWS AND REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

In the digital age, online reviews can make or break a business. Positive reviews help to build trust and credibility, while negative reviews can deter potential clients. As a result, managing your online reputation is essential. Therefore, you should:

**Encourage Reviews:** After providing services and when the timing is right, kindly ask families to leave a review on Google, Yelp or your Facebook page. Make it easy for them by providing direct links.

**Respond to Reviews:** Respond promptly and professionally to all reviews – both positive and negative. Address any concerns raised in negative reviews and show appreciation for positive feedback.

**Monitor Your Reputation:** Use tools like Google Alerts and Meta Business Suite to monitor mentions of your business online. This allows you to address any issues quickly and maintain a positive image.

## MOBILE OPTIMIZATION

Having a mobile-friendly business website is not an option anymore; it is critical to providing a seamless experience across all devices. Elements include:

**Responsive Design:** Your website should be designed to adapt to different screen sizes. Test your site on various devices to verify that it looks and functions well on smartphones and tablets.

**Fast Loading Speed:** Optimize your website's loading speed to prevent potential clients from leaving due to slow performance. Use tools like Google PageSpeed Insights to identify and fix issues.

**Easy Navigation:** Simplify your website's navigation to make it easy for users to quickly find the information they need.

## VIDEO CONTENT

In the digital age, the way we consume content has drastically changed, with video emerging as a dominant medium. Video content is no longer just a supplementary aspect of a marketing plan but a central pillar that can drive engagement, enhance brand awareness, and boost conversions.

Unlike text-based content, video can convey complex information quickly and engagingly. This makes video particularly powerful in an age in which consumers have shorter attention spans and are bombarded with vast amounts of information daily. Effective videos offer:

**Storytelling:** Use videos to tell compelling stories that resonate with your audience. Stories are more memorable and can create an emotional connection with viewers.

**Visual/Auditory Elements:** Combine visuals, audio and motion to



create a multisensory experience that captures attention and keeps viewers engaged.

### DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING

Just as you use data to help you understand the financial performance of your business, data-driven marketing is essential for making informed decisions and optimizing your strategies. After all, the numbers do not lie. Use data to understand your audience better and measure the effective-

ness of your campaigns. Gather this data using:

**Analytics Tools:** Use such tools as Google Analytics to track website traffic, user behavior and conversion rates. This data can help you identify areas for improvement and measure the success of your marketing efforts.

**Customer Relationship Management Systems:** Implement a CRM system to manage and analyze your customer interactions and data. This can help you build

stronger relationships with clients and tailor your marketing strategies accordingly.

### INCLUSIVITY AND DIVERSITY

As society becomes more diverse, it is important for funeral businesses to reflect this in their marketing efforts. Focus on inclusivity and diversity to connect with a broader audience by incorporating:

**Inclusive Messaging:** Your marketing materials should reflect the diversity of the communities you serve. Use inclusive language and imagery that resonates with people from different backgrounds.

**Cultural Sensitivity:** Be aware of and respect the cultural and religious traditions of your clients. Offer services and resources that cater to various cultural needs and preferences.

The funeral service and cemetery professions are not immune to the marketing transformation sweeping all sectors. Funeral businesses must embrace marketing trends and strategies to stay relevant and competitive. By focusing on personalized marketing, SEO, social media engagement, content marketing, PPC advertising, online reputation management, mobile optimization, video content, data-driven marketing and inclusivity, funeral homes can effectively reach and serve their clients in this rapidly evolving landscape. Adapting to these trends not only enhances your presence but also helps build trust and connection with the families you serve during one of the most difficult times of their lives.

Remember: Nothing changes if nothing changes!

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