

# CTRL + ALT + DEL

## Your Old Marketing Plan



Let me paint a picture. It's 2007. You've got your first smartphone, your ringtone is probably "Low" by Flo Rida, and your marketing strategy? A yellow pages ad, maybe a billboard, and—if you were really ahead of the curve—a website that looked like it was designed by your nephew in high school.

Fast forward to today. AI is writing love poems, algorithms decide who sees what before they've even thought about needing it, and TikTok® influencers are selling everything from shampoo to caskets (seriously). So, let me ask you this: has your marketing plan kept up with the times ... or is it still buffering?

If your strategy could use a reboot, don't worry. It's not too late to Ctrl + Alt + Del your old plan and embrace what's next.

### The AI Elephant in the Room

We have to start with AI. Everyone's talking about it—and not just in a "Will robots take my job?" kind of way. In marketing, AI is already reshaping how we gather data, create content, and connect with consumers.

Think of AI as your new digital assistant (not to be confused with Rosey from The Jetsons, though wouldn't that be amazing?). It's helping funeral homes and cemeteries do more with less—automating follow-ups, personalizing outreach, even optimizing Google Ads with uncanny-but-effective precision.

What you can do now:

- Use AI tools like ChatGPT to brainstorm content ideas or write blog posts (just don't copy-paste—add your human touch).
- Explore AI-driven email marketing platforms that can auto-personalize based on a family's stage in their grief or pre-planning journey.
- Test AI chatbots on your website to answer common questions after hours.

Just remember, it's not about replacing your team as our profession thrives on our ability to make human and emotional connections with the families we serve—it's about giving them superpowers.

### The Algorithm Never Sleeps

Algorithms are like that one high-maintenance friend who keeps changing plans last minute. We all have one....and sadly, I have been guilty of this. One day, the algorithms love short videos, the next they're obsessed with carousels, then suddenly it's all about "meaningful engagement" and replying to comments like your life depends on it.

But here's the thing: in the digital world, the algorithm is the gatekeeper. You can have the most beautiful content

in the world, but if the algorithm doesn't like it, no one's going to see it—I also have been the victim of this!

#### Tips to stay in the algorithm's good graces:

- Consistency is key: Post regularly. Set a cadence and stick to it.
- Mix up your content: Combine videos, photos, testimonials, and educational posts.
- Engage back: Respond to comments, use polls and questions, and act like a real human (not a marketing bot).
- Ride the trends: Not saying you have to do a TikTok® dance in the prep room—but staying aware of what's popular can help you create timely, relatable content.

### Short-Form Video: Not Just for Teenagers

Let's be honest—video can feel intimidating. But short-form video (think Instagram® Reels, YouTube® Shorts, TikToks®) is dominating engagement right now. And no, your funeral home doesn't need to go viral to see results.

#### Ideas that work well in our profession:

- A 30-second video explaining your preplanning services.
- A behind-the-scenes look at how your team prepares for a service.
- A quick tip on grief support from your aftercare coordinator.
- A time-lapse of your grounds team beautifying the cemetery before a memorial event.

I have said this time and time again (even at DEAD Talks 2025!), people connect with people and people buy from people. It is all about your connection! Use video to humanize your brand and show the compassionate professionals behind the scenes.



## Don't Be Afraid to Be Seen

If marketing is dating, then your online presence is your Hinge® profile. You wouldn't show up to a first date in cargo shorts and talk only about embalming fluid (hopefully)—so why would you let your website or social media make a blah first impression?

This is your sign to give your online presence a glow-up.

### Quick wins:

- Update your Google® Business Profile with fresh photos and accurate hours.
- Make sure your website is mobile-friendly (over 60% of traffic is mobile!).
- Check that your contact info is easy to find and clickable.

Your goal is to be the business that looks professional and approachable. Modern, but warm. Basically: less haunted house, more HGTV®.

## Embrace the Data (Even If You're Not a Numbers Person)

I always say that “I don't MATH, I MARKET,” but one of the best parts of digital marketing is how trackable it is. You don't have to guess what's working—you can know. And honestly? The data does not lie, even when it hurts a little.

Not getting engagement on Facebook? Time to tweak. Email open rates dropping? Try a new subject line or segment your audience better.

### Simple metrics to watch:

- Website traffic: Are people finding you organically?
- Click-through rates: Are your calls-to-action doing their job?
- Form fills or contact page visits: Are people reaching out?
- Review ratings: What are people saying (and not saying)?

Even reviewing your top-performing posts can guide your next strategy.

## Employee Advocacy: Your Secret Weapon

I have said it before, but it's worth repeating: Your people are your best marketers.

**You don't have to master every trend. You don't need to hire a 20-person marketing team or become a social media influencer. You just need to be present.**

In today's world, content shared by actual humans (aka your staff) gets way more reach and credibility than your business page ever will. Why? Because the algorithm favors authenticity—and so do people.

### Encourage your staff to:

- Share company content on their personal pages.
- Post behind-the-scenes moments (with permission, of course).
- Highlight the work culture and the “why” behind what you do.

*Pro tip: Give them tools and examples so they feel confident posting and always lead by example.*

### Human > Hype

In the age of AI and automation, the biggest differentiator you have... is you. Your voice. Your care. Your ability to look someone in the eye and say, “We've got you.”

Consumers are craving authenticity. They want to feel like they're being served by real people who actually care—not by faceless brands or perfectly polished marketing robots.

### Ways to bring the human touch:

- Share handwritten thank-you notes as testimonials.
- Feature team members on social media with fun bios.
- Show the why behind what you do—not just the what.

Marketing doesn't have to feel “salesy” when it's centered around connection.

## Keep Your Strategy Fluid (Like, Yoga-Instructor-Level Flexible)

Here's the truth: What worked six months ago might not work next quarter. Marketing isn't a set-it-and-forget-it kind of deal—which in my humble opinion is a blessing and not a curse! You need to adapt, adjust, and sometimes toss that beautiful campaign you spent weeks on into the “no” pile because it flopped.

But you know what? That's okay! The key is staying flexible, curious, and open to change. Go with the flow, as past-Nicole once wrote in a previous *Memento Mori* article.

## It's Not About Being Perfect—It's About Showing Up

You don't have to master every trend. You don't need to hire a 20-person marketing team or become a social media influencer. You just need to be present. Be aware of the tools available. Ask for help where you need it. And most importantly, be willing to change what isn't working.

Because, let's be honest—you don't want your current marketing plan to resemble a Blackberry®. We all know how that turned out.

So here's your nudge to hit Ctrl + Alt + Del on the outdated stuff, clear the clutter, and reboot with confidence. 📌

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