

# Web Site Evolution

## FuneralNet's new strategies for increasing service calls

This was not true 10 years ago, but in many markets today the majority of people pre-shop and compare funeral homes online before deciding which businesses they wish to investigate further with a phone call or personal visit. The Web has become the first place to compete for the business of many families, on a scale too large to ignore.

FuneralNet, the oldest and largest provider of custom Web sites in America, is employing new strategies to help funeral homes and cremation societies leverage this recent shift in shopping behavior and compete more effectively on the Web. We know that unless you win at least a phone call from a shopper, your chances of winning their business are minimal. We also know that to drastically increase your chances of winning that phone call, there are key things you must accomplish.

### Prerequisites to increasing calls:

Engaging Web site visitors successfully still includes the prerequisite factors it always has. Obviously, search engine optimization (SEO) is a prerequisite. A Web site not found in a Web search is a Web site not often being considered. While we won't discuss all the SEO features FuneralNet Web sites incorporate, nearly all of our clients come up on the first page of search engine searches.

Good content is another prerequisite. Content is the reason people always have and always will come to your Web site. Yes, they are hoping to find prices, but they want more than that (request your free copy of "The 12 Most Important Funeral Home Web Pages" at: [freeinfo@funeralnet.com](mailto:freeinfo@funeralnet.com)). When they find important information on your Web site that they weren't aware of or considering, their perception of your value and quality goes up. That's why FuneralNet provides a library of copy-

written content pages at no extra cost to help clients that don't have the time to write their own content.

While content that actually generates awareness and answers important questions is critical, an engaging delivery of that content is more essential than ever to winning calls from your Web site.

### New strategies:

FuneralNet's new strategies to win increased calls from Web sites stem from two recent developments: research into the types of audiences coming to death-care Web sites, and technology advances that have made engaging media tools more effective and affordable.

Did you know there are basically four primary audiences that come to death-care Web sites? For at least three of those audiences, 65-75% of the visitors are women. Taking that into account has much to do with your ability to engage your Web site visitors. Aesthetics and the ability to make a personal connection typically matter more to women than to men (which perhaps explains why the male-dominated funeral industry has so many Web sites that are somewhat informative but unattractive and unappealing). Without a contemporary, attractive Web site that projects a definite sense of capacity and professionalism, the sense of security and trust you generate in viewers goes down, especially among women. Applying the following strategy without an appealing Web site will not accomplish as much.

We are now building funeral home Web sites around design fundamentals that simultaneously engage all four primary death-care audiences, and which make



a specific effort to engage women. Each of those primary audiences is quickly channeled to the appropriate section of your Web site. This increases conversions (a Web site visitor doing what you want them to) and decreases bounces (someone leaving your site without becoming a conversion).

Engaging and channeling these audiences can be effectively accomplished through properly used static page elements. However, recent technology advances have made affordable the use of floating video or embedded multi-media elements that can drastically increase your power to engage and persuade. Through proper use of these elements on the landing page and other key pages of your Web site, these tools engage and inform families like static-text pages never could, thus maximizing your response potential. Audiences are seamlessly routed from your landing page to key pages for starting a conversion.

Rather than being passive, this proactive approach of reaching out and engaging families as they land on your Web site heightens the personal connection you



have with them. The strategic flow of audiences through the pages they need, provides them an increased volume and quality of information. This information generates awareness of decisions and choices the family will need to make when they contact you, which engenders trust toward your professional capacity. All these things add up to make it far easier to win a phone call from a family that is impressed with and hopeful about how you can help them.

One key advantage our clients experience with this new strategy comes from one of our strategic partnerships. While there are several companies today that create plain video for the Web, our partner company, Celebrities!™, is the only interactive media specialist in death-care. Their technical expertise allows us to provide these floating video eHosts, or embedded multi-media pieces, with interactive capacity.

Interactivity is a special advantage in

terms of viewer engagement. Families not only see your special capacities for funeral service, cremation, personalization or reception services, they can be given the opportunity during the infomercial-like presentation to grab or ignore more details as suits them. At the conclusion of the presentation, they are prompted onto related Web pages containing more specific information about decisions they will need to make or services you provide.

#### **Revenue generating programs and strategies:**

Increasing At-need and Pre-need business is not the only focus of new FuneralNet strategies. FuneralNet has pioneered new ways to tastefully increase flower and merchandise sales to Obituary readers and Guest Book signers. Along with other ecommerce

programs, FuneralNet offers ecommerce versions of genealogy or death certificate request forms that can charge requesters a fee that feels fair and helps balance your books.

Families view most of these offerings as a positive convenience, and the rest as a fair exchange for your time. All together, the revenue-generating abilities FuneralNet Web sites can leverage, often mean that your Web site pays for its yearly maintenance fees, while earning a small profit. When was the last time your most powerful image and lead-generating tool paid for itself?

To learn more about getting a Web site that helps you increase your service calls and ecommerce revenue, call FuneralNet Sales Support today at 1-800-721-8166 or e-mail [sales@funeralnet.com](mailto:sales@funeralnet.com)!

## **Cremation Arrangement Websites** *Changing Cremation Sales Forever*

### **What are Cremation Arrangement Websites (CAWs)?**

A CAW is a Website that not only provides information, but allows people to build a cremation package through a 7-10 step process, adding options, selecting merchandise, completing paperwork, ordering death certificates, and *paying* online.

### **Why do you think CAWs are changing cremation sales forever?**

CAWs benefit the sizeable segment of the population that wants to plan their cremations online, on their own time. CAWs also help business owners increase their market size and market share, while controlling labor costs. This is a valuable combination that is already affecting various markets around the country.

### **How does a CAW increase the size of one's market?**

Simple: shoppers will consider providers from further away for a cremation. Since people shopping for cremation services are even more likely to shop on the Internet, and since the Internet lets them reach into multiple markets, a firm's market size automatically increases with a CAW for very little cost.

### **What kind of sales are your clients seeing?**

The most aggressive firm we serve reached over half a million dollars in revenue in each of the last two years from just their CAW.

### **What does a Cremation Arrangement Website cost?**

That depends. Obviously, these sites are far more complicated to build than standard Websites. The pages are dynamic, meaning that depending on the choices made on each page, the Website is programmed to know what choices and options to show next, requiring far more programming than what is needed to launch standard static-page Websites. Of course, after 40-50 cremations, you have your investment back. CAWs are great ROI opportunities if done right.

### **What are some good examples of CAWs?**

[csofhr.com](http://csofhr.com), [affordablecremationsny.com](http://affordablecremationsny.com), and [csnh.com](http://csnh.com)

### **How can I get more information about getting a Cremation Arrangement Website?**

Call FuneralNet Sales Support at (800) 721-8166 X517, or email [sales@funeralnet.com](mailto:sales@funeralnet.com).