

*Funeral Home Resource
Case Study*

The Savino Funeral Home

Web Marketing Strategy Delivers Results

The Problem

Savino Funeral Home in Margate, Florida is owned by a funeral director who, until 2010, never owned a funeral home. The funeral home is located in an old Italian restaurant storefront and opened in March of 2010 only a mile away from a corporate location that had been there since 1952. Some of the issues the owner faced include:

- *New funeral home with no name recognition*
- *No existing referrals or families*
- *Strong, established corporate competition*

Starting any new business can create challenges. The problem Savino Funeral Home and Cremation Service faced was being a brand new establishment in an industry largely defined by trusted providers. To make matters more challenging the location chosen for the new home was a long time Italian restaurant in Margate Florida. Most funeral homes have been in business for generations, have decades of community name recognition, and have an established position in the community they serve.

Creating a brand name and starting a presence in the funeral home industry can be a problem that some say can only be solved by years in business. As this case study clearly demonstrates, the answer to the brand-creation roadblock can be cleared away with the right strategy. Turning a former Italian restaurant into a trusted provider of funeral services was one of the problems Funeral Home Resource helped their client solve.

The Solution

Establish an online web site brand presence and web marketing strategy that enhances and compliments a newly built physical location.

- *Created custom website complete with funeral home tour, staff pages, and pre-planning information*
- *Optimized website through search engine optimization, “SEO”*
- *Created premium directory listing advertising on www.funeralhomeresource.com*
- *Additional SEO package to optimize site visibility and increase market share*

“Build it and they will come,” might work for Kevin Costner in *Field of Dreams*, but not in the competitive world of the funeral home industry. All homes need a physical location. Savino built a state of the art, comforting, location in Margate Florida and opened the doors in March of 2010. However, in addition to the physical location, a virtual location was needed as well. To meet this need, Funeral Home Resource executed a three-part web marketing strategy: website build, online advertising, and search engine optimization services.

During the website build, special attention was paid to the look and feel of the website to reflect the special natural beauty found in the Florida natural environment. Because the Internet is the #1 source of business besides referrals, the design of any funeral home website is critical. Why? Because one of the primary elements Google looks for when determining page rank is something called “bounce rate.” This is simply how quickly a user goes from search results “back” to Google to look at more results. Google rewards sites with a low bounce rate. The reward granted by Google is higher listings for search terms that drive business, or in the case of Savino, the search term: “Funeral Home Margate.” The entire site built by Funeral Home Resource for Savino employed the latest search engine optimized (SEO) code specifically for the key words that drive the most pre-need and at-need traffic.

Once the visitors reach the site, the user interface layout is optimized for conversion. Conversion is

“As an entrepreneur that is setting up a business in a competitive area, having a website that not only received visitors, but also caused them to choose us over the competition was crucial. Funeral Home Resource has not only built us a beautiful website but more importantly, has built us a site that has literally placed us above our established competitors in online visibility and has directly resulted in our early success.”

—Bill Savino, Owner

a simple measure of how many Website visits turn into a “step that matters” to the business — phone calls, contact forms filled out, etc. In today’s competitive consumer environment, consumers shop on the Internet in a manner that puts buying decision wins and losses only a click away. Savino’s site was built to defend against users leaking away.

However, because nearly all users shop around for their funeral needs, Funeral Home Resource added a premium directory listing as an online advertising component. Because the directory advertisement also ranks highly in Google searches, more roads lead back to the Savino Website. And, because the site makes it easier for the user to stay on the site long enough to look at beautiful pictures of the new home, online tributes to the deceased, and compelling copywriting, those users turn into phone calls. Funeral Home Resource provided a full service Web marketing solution to Savino Funeral Home to drive potential customers from Website surfers looking for a funeral provider into real customers for the Savino Funeral Home.



The Results

Savino has taken market share away from established competitors in the market place and has a flourishing new business serving the community. The Web marketing strategy delivered by Funeral Home Resource drives at need and pre-need families to Savino Funeral Home.

- Brand new business is on track to do 250+ calls in year one
- Site appears as the #1 listing in Google’s “natural search” results (above all competitors) under the at need search term ‘Funeral Home Margate FL’, and appears in the #1 position for Google’s “map listings”
- July 2010 received 24 new family calls
- 2,600 site visits in March 2010 increased to 9000 visits in July 2010
- 50% of Website traffic sourced from search engines

Within 6 months, the Savino Funeral Home is on track to do over 250 new family calls in their first year in business, appears #1 in Google ranking for the #1 at-need search term “Funeral Home Margate, FL”, and the website is helping to convert traffic into

potential customers.

With the assistance of Funeral Home Resource, Savino Funeral Home understood the necessity and impact a fully optimized website can have. The website tracking information, combined with a tracking phone number, allowed Savino Funeral Home to see tangible evidence that their website was not only attracting new families online but also affecting visitor’s decisions to work with Savino Funeral Home. Through in-depth analysis, Funeral Home Resource assisted Savino Funeral Home to identify users coming to the site from various sources online and what keywords were most commonly used. This allowed Funeral Home Resource to target those keywords and increase site performance and increase market share. The results have been outstanding.

Lessons Learned

Web marketing is a crucial ingredient to gaining market share in the funeral home industry, and consumers who are in need of funeral arrangements are actively using the Internet to start the path towards buying decisions.

- Many funeral homes have the false impression that their home’s market share is completely defensible against current competitors or new market entrants.
- Ranking highly in Google is the halfway point. Never stop if you rank highly on Google, because the other half of the Web marketing winning equation is making sure your Website converts traffic to new business opportunities.
- A Great website is an investment in gaining more business, and an investment in serving the families who are now actively use the Internet. Monthly there are millions of searches for the term “Find a Funeral Home.”
- Directory advertising on www.funeralhomeresource.com drives more business, the listing combined with a great website and sound search engine strategy can lead to big market share wins.

About Funeral Home Resource

Funeral Home Resource’s mission is to help Funeral Homes grow their market share by identifying at-need or pre-need Families through on-line marketing, and to help Funeral Homes provide better service to their Families through the Internet. The Company operates FuneralHomeResource.com, the industry’s highest quality online directory of Funeral Homes, and develops industry leading websites (www.fhrwebsites.com).

For more information about Funeral Home Resource web marketing products and services, call: 1.866.468.7968