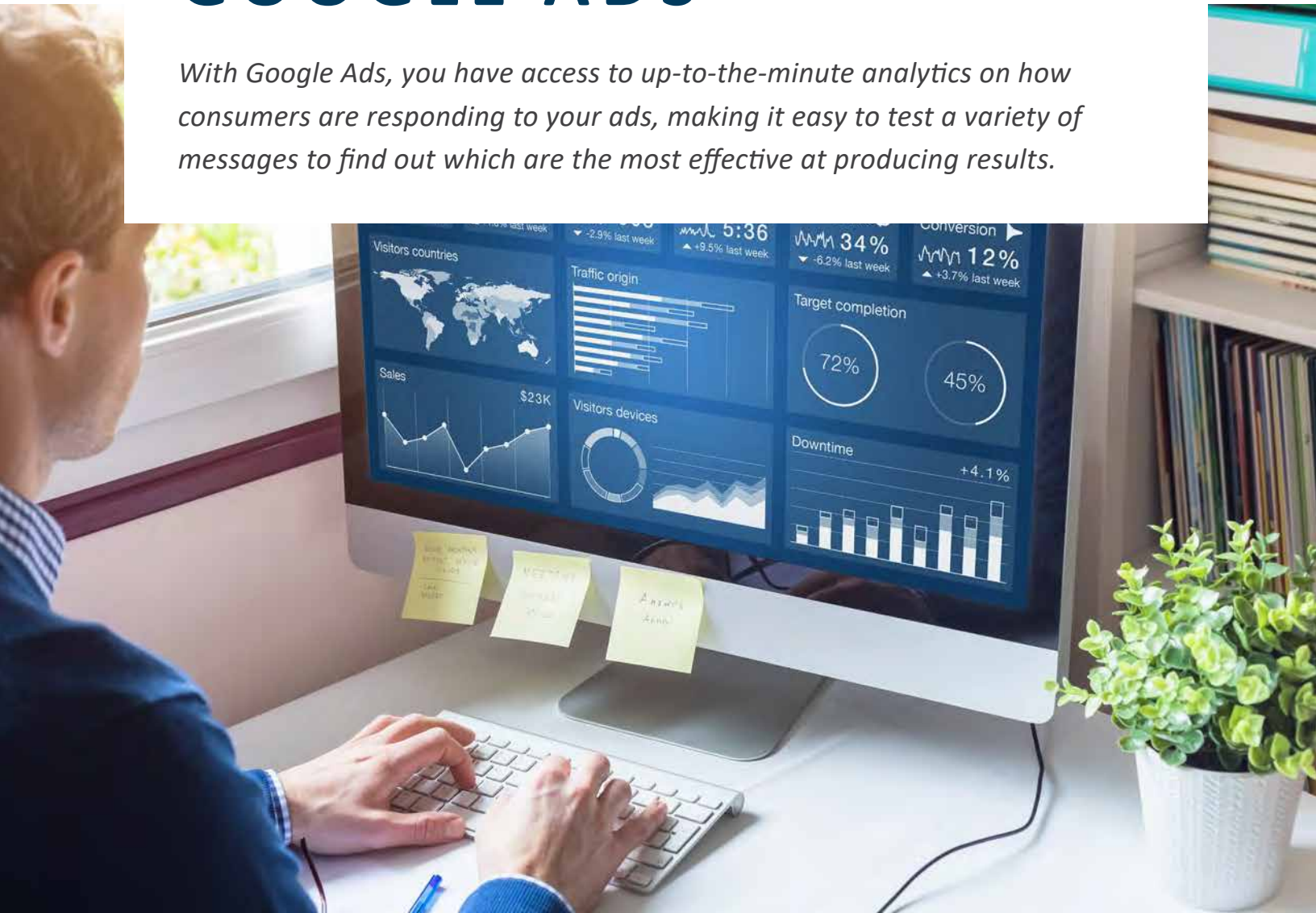


09

GOOGLE ADS

With Google Ads, you have access to up-to-the-minute analytics on how consumers are responding to your ads, making it easy to test a variety of messages to find out which are the most effective at producing results.





SEO can only go so far to get your funeral home ranked near the top of the page on search results. Paid search with Google Ads will take your visibility to the next level. Since your website has taken the place of the yellow pages for most consumers, it makes sense to advertise through Google to increase your brand exposure in your community. One of the biggest benefits over traditional marketing (television, newspapers, radio, yellow pages, etc.) is that you have access to up-to-the-minute analytics on how consumers are responding to your ads, making it easy to test a variety of messages to find out which are the most effective at producing results.

ORGANIC VS. PAID TRAFFIC

[Organic traffic](#) means users come to your website for free. If a customer searches for your funeral home name, your website is likely to automatically come up near the top of the search results because your website is relevant to their needs. But you can also pay for your website to show up in search results for keywords that are more competitive. For example, “cremation” tends to be a highly competitive keyword in the funeral industry and many low-cost cremation companies are spending a lot of money to show up on top for that word. Even though your funeral home may have better services and a better reputation than those direct cremation companies, you may be losing families to them simply because

families are regularly seeing those companies at the top of the list.

Google Ads offers different types of ads – including search ads, display ads, and YouTube ads – that can be valuable for reaching a variety of different types of audiences. To get the most out of the money you spend on Google Ads, you’ll want to tailor your ads and messaging to these different types of ads and the audiences most likely to see them.

SEARCH ADS

Google Search Ads allow you to pay to appear in the top three or four search results when users search for certain keywords. This comes in handy especially for smartphones, as [studies show](#) that 60% of smartphone users contact a business directly using the search results. By bidding on [strategic keywords](#), your website will appear to people who are actively searching for funeral or cremation services online.

As stated in the section on SEO, the kind of keywords you want to pay for are “transactional keywords.” These include phrases like “funeral home near me” or “nearest cremation services.” When people search for these things, they are in the mindset to purchase. They need a service, and you can provide that service, which is why these are the keywords you want to pay for on your Google Ads.

DISPLAY ADS

[Google Display Ads](#) often show up as a banner or sidebar on a site, and families can click on these images and land on your website. By using these ads, you can promote your brand by putting your logo or brand material in front of people. Consumers can see your ads repeatedly over time, and when the time comes for them to use a funeral home, they will know your name and who you are.

Display Ads can also be quite useful for educating families about what preneed is and why they need it as well as getting leads by offering eBooks or discounts. Display Ads reach people [while they're consuming content](#), like reading the news or a blog post, so you can choose what types of content you want your ads to appear on. For example, you might want a preneed ad to appear to people who are actively looking for information about financial planning, retirement, or end-of-life planning, like writing a will.

YOUTUBE ADS

Like Display Ads, [YouTube ads](#) allow you to reach your at-need audience visually, but this time through videos. People of all ages spend hours on YouTube, watching videos about everything from music and pop culture, to “how-to” videos and news. YouTube

ads can be short and non-skippable or longer and skippable. Either way, they reach an audience that is attentive and engaged in learning about a topic. For example, with YouTube ads, you can reach people who are watching videos about financial planning or retirement. You can educate them with videos about reasons to preplan, solutions for funeral funding, etc. This way, you are educating them about preplanning while they are in an education/learning mindset. They are much more likely to click on the ad because the ad reaches them at the right time and the right place.

YouTube is a great way to drive traffic and get preneed leads. You can create ads that have a clear call to action, like “Start Planning Now” or “Claim eBook,” and when they click on the ad, they will go straight to your website to take action.

YouTube ads are also a great way to get your brand name and mission in front of people. All you need to do is post a video on your YouTube channel (which is free to create), connect the channel to your Google Ads Account, and pick a video to turn into an ad. Even with a 6-second ad, [users are likely to remember](#) your brand. YouTube ads are also much more cost effective than TV ads. We'll dive deeper into the purposes for video in the video section later in this eBook.



A NOTE ABOUT GOOGLE MY BUSINESS

[Google My Business](#) is the way Google lists your business to all Google users. It provides customers with a snapshot of the most important information: contacts, website, address, reviews, and photos. It is how your business will appear in Google Maps and it's how all of your Google Reviews will be listed. And posting on it is completely free! Google automatically creates business listings for local businesses, so even if you haven't created a listing, your funeral home probably already has one.

Once you've claimed the profile (you can find instructions for how to do that [here](#)), you'll want to make sure all the information is updated. And at this point, the main purpose of Google My Business would be accomplished. But don't be tempted to leave it alone, because that's only the beginning of what Google My Business can do. To truly optimize it, you'll want to [respond to every review](#) (both good and bad), regularly post relevant photos, and post about offers and services. If you have a way for people to plan funeral services online, a Google My Business post is a great place to post a direct link to your planning tools. You can even offer a discount or savings certificate for a limited time, and Google will allow you to use an end date so the offer only appears for the timeframe that it is available.

[Google Reviews](#) are critical to building trust with consumers online. Even if people don't know the person who wrote a bad or good review, they trust it as much as they would a word-of-mouth review. Some Google Reviews will come in automatically as families log in to share their stories and opinions. But most success comes when you actively seek out Google Reviews. You can do this by sharing a direct Google Review link with the families you serve either via text or email. To learn how to create your own Google Review link, click [here](#).



NEED HELP WITH GOOGLE ADS?

Digital marketing can be pretty complex, involving choosing the right keywords so you aren't wasting money, setting up search ads, display ads, and YouTube ads, and deciding on the right message for the right audience. Funeral Directors Life's Google Ads service makes it easy for funeral homes to get set up with Google Ads, Google My Business, and conversion tracking, so that you can start seeing results within just a few weeks.

METRICS TO LOOK FOR

You may be wondering what metrics to look for in Google Ads to determine if your ads are working. With traditional marketing, it can be hard to know exactly which TV or radio ad led people to call your business. You might know how many times the TV ad was played and have an estimate of families who saw the ad, but you might not know for sure how many saw the ad or acted on the ad. With digital ads, you can know exactly who interacted with your ads.

Impressions are the number of times your ad appeared to consumers. This could mean your ad appeared multiple times to the same person or to different people. This is a good metric to look at if you're wanting more brand awareness. If your ad got 1,000 impressions, then that means your brand was visible and you reached families 1,000 times with your message.

Clicks are simply a click on your ad. For search ads, users click on the link to go to your site or landing page. For display ads, they can click anywhere on the image. For YouTube ads, they can click on the video or on the call to action button.

Views for YouTube ads are how many times people watched the video up to 30 seconds. Ads 30 seconds or longer are skippable because users have a choice to watch the video. If they [viewed the video](#) instead of skipping it, then that might indicate they were engaged with your video. That's why a view is considered a measurable action for skippable ads. For non-skippable ads, the user has no choice but to watch it, so those are measured by impressions, not views.

Conversions are important actions the user takes after they click on your ad. A conversion could be a phone call or filling out a lead generating form. If you have an online preplanning tool, it could even include buying a preneed entirely online! You'll want to find out which of your Google Search, Display, or YouTube

ads are getting the most conversions by setting up tracking that can be connected to Google Ads.

By looking at your impressions, clicks, views, and conversions, you can see if your ads are performing the way you want them to. For brand awareness, getting views and impressions is the key. For generating leads or customers, you'll want to get clicks and conversions. Although there are certain things that will make your ads more effective, like clear calls to action and eye-catching imagery, you'll get the most success if you test out different ads to find the ones that work best.

