

POWER TOOLS

3 ways today's digital technology can enhance job satisfaction and company culture.

BY BILL WILLIAMS JR.

One of the biggest challenges companies face in this hyper-competitive world is building and sustaining a healthy company culture. After all, it's your team members who keep families happy with superior service during their time of need. Frontline and back-office employees are the heart and soul of every successful funeral home or cemetery.

How can deathcare leaders nurture an appealing culture that reflects the company's core values and keeps employees engaged? One secret weapon at hand is embracing and leveraging the power of technology to enhance sales and consolidate recordkeeping and other administrative tasks, which in turn benefits your employees.



Think it through for a minute. People are increasingly using digital tools to simplify their lives and become more productive. These days, most consumers (including your employees) use a multitude of digital services, including social media, cloud storage, online payment, videoconferencing and food delivery, to name a few – and all with just a few clicks on a tablet or smartphone.

Funeral directors and cemeterians must adopt new technologies to meet the demands of the increasingly digital-savvy consumer. If they don't, they risk seeing families go elsewhere and, just as important, employees (especially younger generations) growing frustrated with doing business the old-fashioned way, with mountains of paperwork and contracts stuffed into filing cabinets.

Deathcare firms that transition to new technology will be better positioned to help their employees become more productive and happier with their work. Following are three reasons why embracing digital tools can enhance your company culture.

1 HAPPY CUSTOMERS = HAPPY EMPLOYEES

When families are happy about the quality of service they receive, it's a safe bet employees will feel more satisfied that their efforts make a difference – and that can have a material impact on a funeral home or cemetery's reputation. For example, Gallup research found that employees who feel good about their work are more committed to providing quality service and helping their organization improve customer relationships. Gallup also noted that companies with highly engaged, happy employees earn 10% higher satisfaction ratings from their customers.

In addition to enhancing services to families, digital tools can help foster greater employee collaboration, improve communication, boost employee confidence and ultimately enhance company culture. Neglecting upgrading technology could negatively impact staff morale when employees become frustrated that they do not have the tools to do their job efficiently.

Today's digital technology makes it easier for deathcare professionals to provide families with the information they want – when they want it. These new platforms often have built-in workflows that help funeral directors and cemeterians in a variety of ways, such as generating and signing error-free, compliant preneed contracts digitally; accessing client records 24/7; and managing an entire trust program in one location.

2 ENHANCE EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY AND MORALE

The average funeral home has several back-office processes to manage as part of maintaining accurate family documents and records, but many of the tasks involved can be automated.

A survey by Smartsheet found that about 40% of employees spend at least a quarter of their time each week doing repetitive and manual work, such as data collection and entry. The same survey noted that 60% of employees believe they could save six or more hours each week if many of the repetitive tasks could be automated. Providing employees with tools that eliminate their manual, routine work can effectively contribute to building a positive company culture.

The good news is that robust digital recordkeeping and administration platforms that can significantly speed up many back-office tasks are readily available. With a few clicks of a mouse, these tools can help your team quickly complete contracts, process preneed trust payments from families, send and obtain client and vendor approvals, and accelerate data collection and entry.

3 REDUCE EMPLOYEE STRESS OVER COMPLIANCE RISK

Sustaining a positive public image in the community and with families is essential for success in the deathcare industry, and nothing can tarnish that reputation faster than bad press because state or federal regulators penalize your firm following an audit. Having to respond to queries from regulators can also burden your employees with unnecessary stress and potentially affect the quality of service provided to families.

Upgrading your technology to the latest digital platform can help to ensure that records are properly updated and safely stored, and contracts and agreements are compliant per state and federal regulations. Digital tools can also make sure trust accounts are reconciled correctly and that transactions are recorded in accordance with state law. The platforms can mitigate the risk of human error in calculating trust earnings or misplacing a hard-copy file.

Technology has revolutionized our world, our daily lives and how we interact with each other, and it has paved the way for making our workday easier and more productive. Companies that embrace modern tools provide their employees with the resources to succeed professionally and the opportunity to spend more time on what's really important – caring for families in the community. ☰