

you have to make sure to keep the site updated. "Our website has basically paid for itself from the sales we've been making," Killelea said.

But even if you keep your cemetery website updated, you might come across the dreaded thorn in your paw: the negative online review. According to Killelea, more people will take the time to write a negative comment online than a positive one. "You can't stop people from posting those negative comments, but you can help the public see the full picture of it all," he said.

Some of the ways that you can help to negate negative comments about your cemetery is (kindly) rebutting the comment on the website where it was posted. Some review websites, like Angie's List, provide complaint resolution departments that businesses can use to contact the unsatisfied customer and

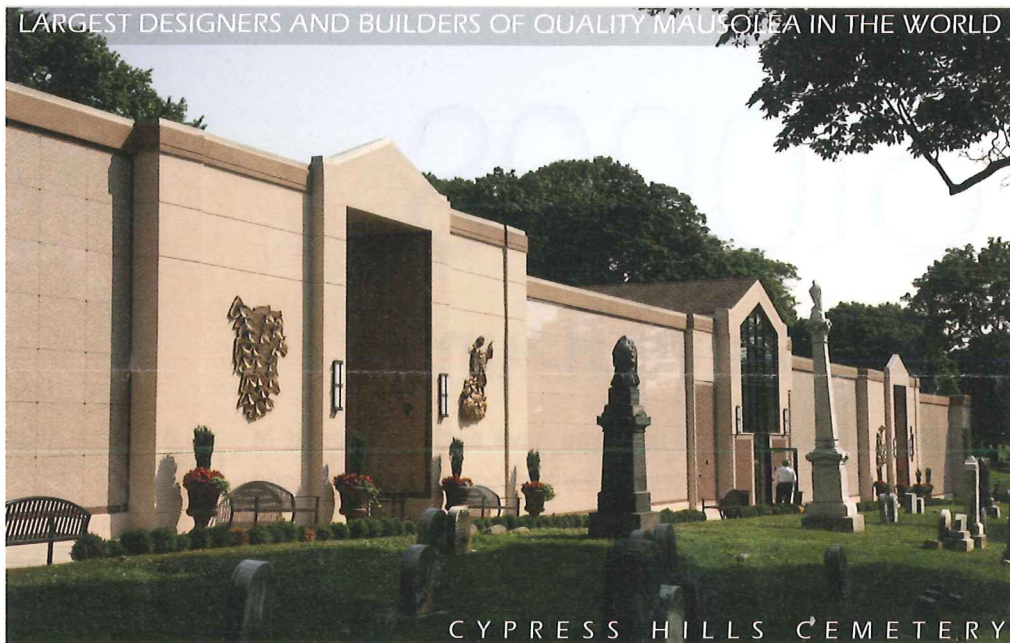
try to reach some kind of compromise.

Killelea added, "I am surprised at how many people will Google their names, but they don't Google their company or organization to find out what information is out there. The biggest thing is to go through the major search providers and search for your information, (to) see what kind of online reputation you have," he said. "Once you can start getting the feedback of what is out there, then you have a better way to combat that and to explain to the public what you do offer, and why you are good and why they should choose you, instead of letting those negative comments resonate through."

People don't usually go beyond the first two or three pages on a search engine, according to Killelea, so as long as you try and make your online

presence as strong as possible on these first few pages, you have a better chance of being seen in a positive light.

"By using the tools available to us, a Web presence can take on such a huge meaning to our organization. Watching Super Bowl commercials recently, I saw how some large companies use their Facebook page in their advertising, actually listing their Facebook page over their own website. Drawing back to referrals from friends and the social buzz surrounding marketing done through the stories told by friends and in a weird way, getting us back to word of mouth advertising," Killelea said. "We have all been told that the best advertising is word-of-mouth, and this beast that has no end in sight, as the Internet has opened that up in more ways than we could have ever asked for or hoped for." ♦



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