

HOW TECHNOLOGY IS CHANGING THE MONUMENT INDUSTRY

Headstones have changed throughout the years to reflect the change in society and culture. Before the industrial revolution and the growth of technology, monuments were made from marble and were reserved for the wealthy. Everyone else had to use materials that were abundant in their local vicinity. New ways of transportation made other materials easier to obtain and easy to transfer between areas. Soon everyone was able to have a stone monument instead of wood or other deteriorating materials. By 1900, granite became one of the most popular stones for headstones because of its durability against the elements of nature. With the creation of the laser in 1960, laser engraving soon became implemented into stone working and transformed headstone design.

Today, the growth of technology has transformed the monument industry to create unique and creative headstone designs for every price range. Headstones and grave markers can also be created in a matter of days. In fact, if all the supplies and materials are in stock a headstone can be created and shipped within a week.

Computers have also made the process of engraving and etching much easier and more detailed. A computer can quickly scan an image and transfer it to a stone in a matter of seconds. In fact, engravings and designs that took months to create now take only a few hours or days. Even pictures of the person, like a ceramic picture or laser etched portrait, can be placed onto a headstone. A look to the future shows that there is interest in placing GPS units into gravestones or burial plots to help family members locate their deceased relatives. Special interest in this technology has been shown in cities that have limited amounts of land.

For older gravestones that are in need of replacing, scanners can now scan the surface of the stone and deliver the details of any indentations that may not be visible to the human eye. Technology today has made the process of designing and creating a headstone much easier than it was in the past. People have access not only to online retailers who are located all over the country, but also to different types of materials, designs, and colors that previously were not available.

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DID YOU KNOW?

As part of the Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) amended the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) to require commercial driver's license (CDL) holders, subject to the physical qualification requirements of the FMCSRs, to provide a current copy of their Medical Examiner's Certificate to their state driver licensing agency.

The new Federal regulations also require commercial drivers to self-certify the type of driving in which they operate or expect to operate. Commercial drivers are required to certify using PennDOT's Self-Certification Form (DL-11CD).

Please visit http://www.dmv.state.pa.us/centers/comdriver_selfcert_med_cer.shtml to review requirements of the Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act. Additionally, the Monument Builders of PA will continue to provide this updated information on its website at www.monumentbuildersofpa.com

IN MEMORIAM

The Monument Builders of PA would like to express its deepest condolences to long time member Franklin Granite Works and the Eakin family on the passing of Raymond V. Eakin on May 1, 2012.

The Monument Builders of Pa would like to thank Franklin Granite Work and the Eakin Family for being a proud member of this association and let them know we are here for them in their time of need.

2012 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Please be aware the 2012 Membership began on July 1, 2012. Brochures were sent out to all existing members along with prospective new members.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Ryan McGowan-Executive Secretary at ryanmc32@hotmail.com.

Monument Builders of PA would like to thank the following sponsors:



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13 WAYS TO PROMOTE YOUR LOCAL BUSINESS FOR FREE

By: Michael Gray from Graywolf's SEO Blog

Many local businesses struggle to find ways to promote themselves, get links, rank in search engines, and ultimately drive traffic to their websites. Most small businesses also have limited budgets making the task more difficult. For those businesses here are 13 ways you can promote your business online for free.

GOOGLE LOCAL: If you don't already have one Create an account on Google Local. Enter your company name, address, phone number and website. Verify the information with a postcard or telephone call. In a few weeks you will help you get a map listing for your company name or industry and town.

GOOGLE COUPONS: Coupons are a great way to bring new customers into your business or remind old customers that you're still around. Google has a free coupon tool that puts your coupon on relevant local searches.

GOOGLE BASE: Google base is part of Google's one box service. Google uses it to try giving the most appropriate answer from different data sources. If you are selling products you can upload feeds automatically into Google Base and often get preferential placement. You can also upload your business, or special event.

YAHOO LOCAL: Yahoo local is a directory organized by category and geographic location. You can get a basic listing in Yahoo Local for free. People searching for your business or industry can find your listing

GET REVIEWS: An integral part of the Yahoo Local listings are reviews. Ask your good customers to write reviews for you on Yahoo local. Businesses with higher ratings will get preferential listings.

YELLOWPAGES.COM: Yellow Pages have a strong brand name and recognition, and are still used by many people today. They offer a few levels of listings the most basic is free.

PRESS RELEASES: Doing something newsworthy? If you are you can always submit a press release to PRWeb or PRLeap.com. Be sure to check out their tips like 25 Action Words for Writing a Newsworthy Headline and Why Localizing a Press Release to a ZIP Code and City Matters.

FREE BLOG PROMOTION TOOLS: Does your company have a website or are you thinking of adding one? Websites like Technorati and mybloglog can help you gain exposure, visitors, readers, and subscribers to your blog.

FREE DIRECTORY ADVERTISING: It doesn't get any easier than trying free advertising. Go to BOTW.org and sign up for a free 60 day advertising listing.

CREATE A LENS AT SQUIDOO: Squidoo has a nice easy to use interface that allows you to give information to your visitors. You can talk about your business specifically or the services or products you provide.

LINKEDIN: Join LinkedIn and get connected with people you know and make connections with people you don't through introductions. Look at the new Questions and Answers section and try and be genuinely helpful. Follow the axiom of 'Givers Gain' and you may generate a few leads for yourself from your goodwill.

EMAIL SIGNATURES: Be sure to add your URL to all of your outgoing email. Try adding your mission statement, or a catchy phrase to help people understand what you do. Change it a several times a year so people notice it again.

SYNDICATE YOUR CONTENT AND IDEAS: Take advantage of article distribution Services like EZineArticles, ISnare, and IdeaMarketers to spread your message and approach. Use them to bring leads to your site by offering things like free ebooks or PDF's that they can download after entering their contact information.