



EDS HELPS LAUNCH FIRST NATIONWIDE FUNERAL PLANNING AND CONCIERGE SERVICE

EVEREST FUNERAL PLANNING AND CONCIERGE SERVICE

/// CASE STUDY



To help consumers manage the financial and emotional stress of a funeral, Everest Funeral Planning and Concierge Service relies on EDS, an HP company, for a leading-edge Web solution that compiles, compares and reports prices across more than 20,000 funeral homes nationwide, helping clients negotiate better prices for personalized funeral services. EDS contact center agents provide consulting services that help clients and their families manage every minute detail with speed, simplicity and care.

CLIENT PROFILE

www.everestfuneral.com

Everest is the first nationwide funeral planning and concierge service. Everest was founded in 2001 and provides services in the United States and Canada.

Industry:

Consumer Industries & Retail

Headquarters: Houston, Texas

Business Needs Addressed:

Growth
Innovation
Productivity

"I made a phone call to determine what the cost would be for the service and had been quoted around \$10,000. Once we visited with Everest, it became clear that we could have the whole service for between \$1,200 and \$1,500. So the savings were incredible for us. More importantly, it was much less emotional."

Kevin Whalen
Everest client

Everest wanted to launch the first nationwide funeral planning and concierge service

In 2001, a group of funeral industry professionals embarked on a vision to create the first nationwide funeral planning and concierge service. Everest mirrors a growing trend toward personalizing one's final services, while sparing loved ones the burden of funeral planning at or near the time of death.

Typically, families have to make funeral arrangements within 48 hours of the death of a loved one. This often involves making complex, costly decisions during an emotional, stress-filled time. Everest set out to simplify and streamline this process by enabling consumers to plan and document their last wishes in advance, thus sparing families from having to make difficult, costly decisions while they are grieving.

In an industry that has seen little change over the last 100 years, Everest proposed to revolutionize funeral planning services in the United States and Canada through the use of technology and innovative processes. Since its inception, Everest entrusted EDS, an HP company, to design, deploy and manage an all-inclusive funeral planning solution that transforms the way clients interact with funeral homes.

EDS delivered a complete solution, from business strategy to start-up

EDS worked hand-in-hand with Everest to develop the business strategy and model that became the foundation of the company. With no existing operations in place, EDS built the entire solution from scratch. During the initial launch of Everest's business, EDS created a temporary site complete with a 24-hour, EDS-managed customer care center to get the business up and running as quickly as possible.

The core of the solution is an EDS-built customer contact center that provides consumers with on-demand research capabilities and consultation services. In addition to the customer contact center, EDS built an end-to-end operations environment that included a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and Web portal for storing funeral planning tools and other funeral-related information.

EVEREST PRICEFINDER HELPS AGENTS PROVIDE COMPLETE CONCIERGE SERVICE

One of the unique tools Everest offers to clients is the EDS-developed Everest PriceFinder. Through a dedicated contact center, EDS manages price information for more than 20,000 funeral homes nationwide, which clients or their families can search by ZIP code online. The PriceFinder tool allows clients to compare detailed pricing information for up to eight funeral homes at one time, producing a comprehensive report in just minutes.

Services featured

- Applications Development Services
- Applications Management Services
- Composite Application and Portal Services
- Contact Center Outsourcing Services
- Web Hosting Services

Driven by EDS' leading-edge technology tools, the all-inclusive funeral planning service is the first of its kind.

Today, consumers can sign up for the Everest Funeral Package on the Everest Web site or through one of Everest's life insurance partners who offer individual and group life insurance policies that include Everest's services. Clients gain access to online funeral planning tools, informative documents and contact center advisers who can help customize their funeral services to their personal needs and wants. Everest works to ensure every last detail is resolved in advance or at the time of need, depending on the client's wishes.

This is handled in part by Everest advisers who provide 24/7 client consultation services from the EDS contact center. These advisers are equipped with the compassion, knowledge and resources to help clients and their families craft personalized funeral services to fit their budgets and personalities. When a death occurs, a licensed Everest funeral director works with the client to find the most suitable funeral home and then works with the funeral home to make final arrangements on behalf of the deceased's family.

Everest negotiates better prices for personalized funeral services

Functioning as a consumer advocate, Everest has helped create unprecedented visibility into the funeral services industry, compelling funeral homes to become more competitive in their pricing. Today, Everest, on behalf of its clients, negotiates better prices for individualized services rather than the more expensive, general one-size-fits-all funeral packages of the past.

Beyond accountability, EDS' solution ensures scalability. That means Everest can ramp up contact center resources to meet increased demand, as well as expand its database refresh operation to accommodate millions of new clients with as little as a 30-day notice. Everest CEO and President Mark W. Duffey sums it up best. "EDS transformed our dream into a reality and continues to foster Everest's growth through innovation and the solution's inherent scalability. If it weren't for EDS, Everest wouldn't be here."

Most importantly, EDS' Web portal and contact center solutions create a more positive, customized and convenient customer service experience for Everest clients as they manage one of the most difficult and stressful life events.

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