As a funeral director, your first priority is helping the immediate family to honor the deceased through their time of grief. Your various service offerings are designed to help ease the decision making process and reduce unnecessary stress.

Instinctively you know that having friends and loved ones there for the celebration of life is comforting to the immediate family. You should also know from the obituaries that you publish and from the guest books that you manage, that most families have a number of extended family members and friends that come in from out of town for the services.

You likely already provide mechanisms, including the obituary itself, for the family to communicate the service times and locations to the circle of grievers. Yet, as individuals hear about the death, they are typically on their own when it comes to planning their travel. And many are in shock, already experiencing their own grief.

As a new value-added service to our Premier Funeral Home Partners, Tributes.com, in partnership with TripPlanz™, has created the travel-enabled obituary which allows guests to easily find an available hotel within a 15 mile radius of your funeral home directly from your online obituaries.
Why should you get involved in travel?

By integrating a basic Travel Care Program into your obituaries, you will ease the burden of this process for everyone involved. When someone becomes aware of the death of a friend or loved one, after the initial shock, the practical generally takes over. Their first response is often to call the family, both to share their condolences and then invariably to ask where they should stay.

While well-meaning, this can cause the family to have to apologize that they don’t have room at the house and put them in the role of local travel agent at a time when they are least equipped to do so. You may even get calls at the funeral home from those wanting to attend the service. The questions include:

- What is the closest affordable hotel?
- What is the closest airport?
- Will I need a rental car?
- What is the funeral home address?

With just the first question on this list, there are many possible answers, as “affordable” to one is often “not affordable” to another. And “close” is also relative. Even if you list hotels on your website and have a negotiated rate with one or more local hotels, there may not be rooms available, particularly since travel is being planned at the last minute.

This is clearly not what the family or your team should be focusing on. Tributes Travel in partnership with TripPlanz has professionals on call 7x24 that are poised to handle all of these questions, plus we offer highly competitive travel rates and a “compassionate service guarantee” on all bookings made. In addition to online booking, the travel care program also supports mobile and will soon add online chat and push to talk to make bookings by phone with one of our concierge team.
We help plan travel to the service, so you or the immediate family doesn’t have to.

**Hotel Booking**
- Best hotel rates guaranteed.
- Search within 15 miles of your facility.
- Traveler can sort by the top picks, price, rating, hotel name, area or landmark.
- View Customer Reviews.

**Airline Tickets**
- Search for best rates for up to three outbound and destination airports.
- The system provides a grid with results for multiple airlines.
- Package offer of air plus hotel is often the least expensive option.

**Car Rental**
- Search for by car type and rental car company.
- Grid with results for multiple car companies and car types.
- Traveler pays for car rental at the rental counter.