PLOTBOX

The Importance of
Digital Mapping

We're moving up in the digital world, and cemetery maps are coming with us!

True digital mapping is an accurate visualisation of your inventory on a device that is connected to your data. Investing in true digital mapping can reduce the likelihood of errors, save you time, money and maybe even a lawsuit!
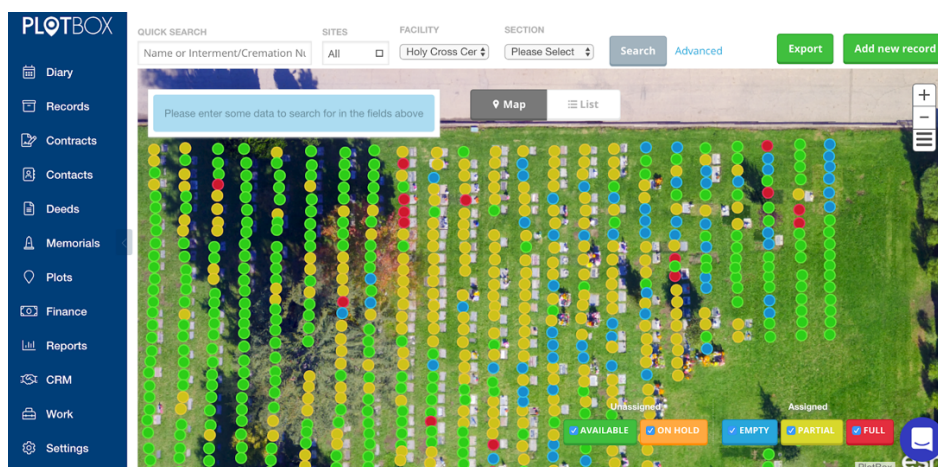
Further benefits include better communication between grounds crew and admin staff, increased visibility for future planning in your cemetery and the potential to increase pre-need sales and revenue.

Throughout this eBook we'll cover:

- The importance of digital mapping
- 5 signs you should upgrade your cemetery maps
- Full software and mapping integration

Why is digital mapping so important?

It's essential to digitize your cemetery or crematory maps for 3 reasons:

#1 Protecting Cemetery & Crematory Records

From fires, floods and any other natural disaster… record protection is vital to preserving the history of the cemetery, whilst also ensuring your cemetery is operating efficiently. Lake Park Cemetery, New Jersey, found themselves amidst a crisis back in April 2016, when a suspicious fire destroyed the office building, along with thousands of paper burial records and locations. 140 years' worth of records gone overnight, a frightening predicament for any cemetery or crematory manager. Unfortunately, these essential records and maps weren't backed up and with the fire everything was lost.

For cemeteries all over the world, protecting old historical records and ensuring the history of the cemetery is preserved for future generations is a must! Whatever the crisis, having your data stored in the cloud ensures it's backed up and protected in a secure and safe location. Being able to access your data allows you to conduct business as usual, minimizing any loss of productivity, especially when your records are key to unlocking opportunities within the billion dollar industry that is genealogy.

Storing records and maps in the cloud will eliminate this risk as files can be accessed from any mobile device, at any time via secure login.
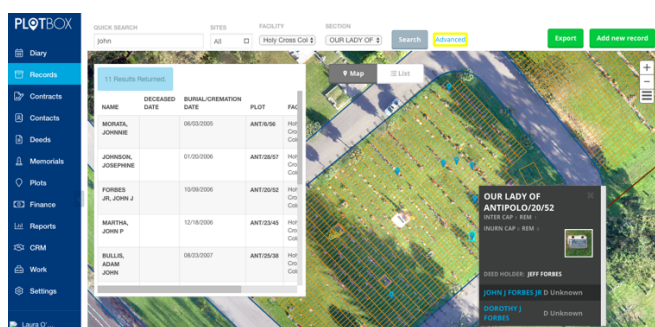
#2 Accuracy:

Another week, another lawsuit!

Cemetery hit with second $5M lawsuit

Family found new headstone on loved

By Melissa Simon
melissa@theacorn.com

GRAVE SITUATION—The El Rancho Simi

Mom's missing grave site led to cemetery lawsuit

Published: Saturday, July 24, 2004
SEBASTIAN KITCHEN
AVALANCHE-JOURNAL

Jeanette Livingston went to visit her mother's grave every Sunday for 19 years. She moved away from Lubbock in 1961 and could not locate her mother's grave when she returned four decades later.

Livingston, who now lives in Mount Vernon, Wash., said she tried five years to find her mother, but the

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Grieving family says cemetery buried loved one in wrong spot

POSTED 10:00 PM, FEBRUARY 9, 2016, BY SCOTT HINES, UPDATED AT 10:51PM, FEBRUARY 9, 2016

FACEBOOK   TWITTER   PINTEREST   LINKEDIN   REDDIT   EMAIL

It's not uncommon to hear that cemeteries throughout the world have been faced with million dollar lawsuits as a result of avoidable mistakes and people being buried in the wrong plots. Back in 2011, two sisters sued Rosehill Cemetery in Linden for $25 million when they discovered, due to an administrative error, the grave they had been visiting for 20 years was not their mother's but contained the remains of a stranger. Using digital mapping (of the right kind!) can ensure accuracy and new technology can pinpoint exact locations which will not only give you peace of mind but can reduce the time spent on menial tasks of locating plots using old paper maps significantly.

#3 Increase Pre-Need Sales

Yes, we said it. Great digital mapping can increase revenue! To get the best sales potential, you need to invest in the best tools and cemetery management system. Good technology will show you inventory in real time, eliminating the potential for a duplicate sale or confusion over inventory availability. The time spent with a customer is reduced substantially by allowing you to skip a few of the time consuming steps of checking everything via paper, and close the sale faster. The use of a mobile device on site that clearly displays empty and full burial plots, size and cost is extremely beneficial for any cemetery salesperson. The hassle of sifting through the old paper records and maps is eliminated.

Adopting new technologies in your cemetery offers endless opportunities to increase workflow and improve efficiency. Moving to digitized maps isn't as daunting as you might assume and there are a few options available to choose from.
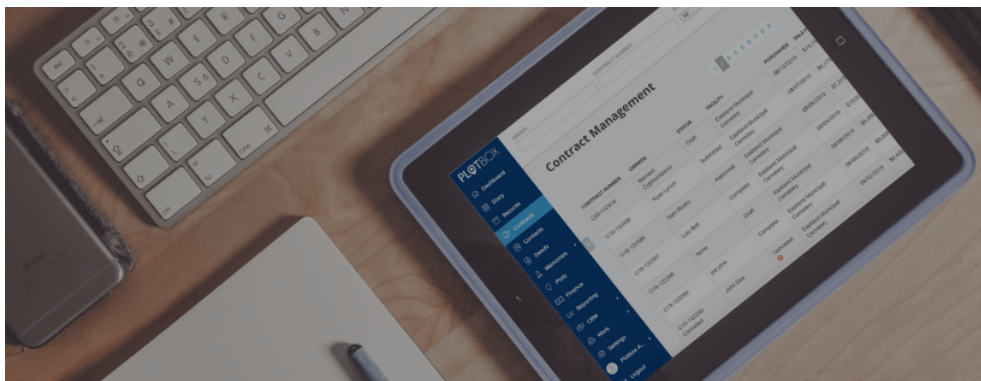
5 Signs You Should Upgrade Your Cemetery Maps

Is it time to upgrade your cemetery mapping system? Preservation issues, human error, inaccuracies... the list goes on! Let's take a look at 5 top mapping issues being experienced by cemeterians, and assess the potential impact these can have on your cemetery.

#1 Preservation Issues

If your current map is just on paper you'll find yourself facing the problem that you might lose records. We've seen all the horror stories about natural disasters, fires, floods, water damage, maps being completely lost or missing because something happened to them! Without digitally updateable maps you're at risk of losing data!

#2 Human Error

If you're still depending on someone colouring in a paper map to show whether plots are available or on hold, it's time to make a change! We're all humans and as such we all make mistakes. Simple human error could lead to selling a plot twice and you don't want that!

We recently came across an article of a heart breaking story in Fresno, California where a couple had lost a young baby and they purchased the plot right next to the child for future use and changed this in the system. However, the person who sold the plot forgot to colour in the map originally and it had actually already been sold! This was heart breaking for the family – they had just faced the worst experience of the lives and that cemetery contributed to their pain by adding more trauma due to their processes being open to error. (Read article here.)

#3 Inaccuracies

Things change over time and quite often we know of inaccuracies in our maps simply because we've worked in the cemetery for so many years it's ingrained in our minds, and sometimes we don't know that the maps are inaccurate until it's too late. For example, the map shows a plot but on the ground there's actually not enough room for that plot. Perhaps there was never enough space or perhaps over time, neighbouring burials were incorrectly placed meaning the plot no longer exists. Inaccuracies can lead to wrong burials, disappointed families and lawsuits.

#4 Are your maps geographically correct?

Do you know if your map is geographically correct? Geographic location refers to a position on earth. Your absolute geographic location is defined by two coordinates, longitude and latitude. These two coordinates can be used to give specific and accurate locations of your cemetery plots. You can have a paper map or digital representation of your map on a screen.

However, it's important to know if your map is geographically correct as you're risking inefficiencies in your mapping process. Furthermore, if your maps aren't geographically correct you'll not be able to benefit from all the tools available to you and the public by being able to direct people accurately to a location.

### #5 Is your information shareable and editable?

Is your inventory and maps updated in real time? Are all of your sales staff seeing the status of a plot as soon as it changes? When maps aren't visible and shareable, you are, once again, at risk of mistakes like the ones we previously mentioned which resulted in unwanted headlines!

As well as this, you're limiting the potential of your cemetery.
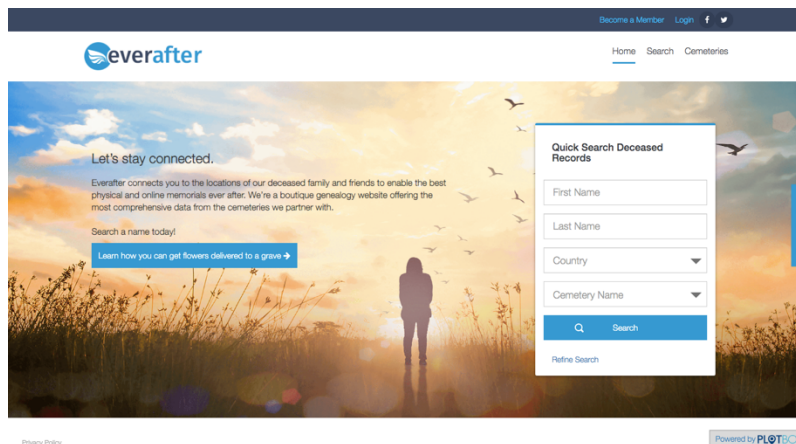
For example, when your maps are digitally shareable, there are more opportunities to:

- Sell outside of the cemetery gates
- Enhance the image of the cemetery by using iPads to show available inventory to families
- Save time in printing or carrying around paper maps onsite
- Open up the locations for loved ones to find graves and visit your cemetery
- Potentially open up the opportunities for online e-commerce
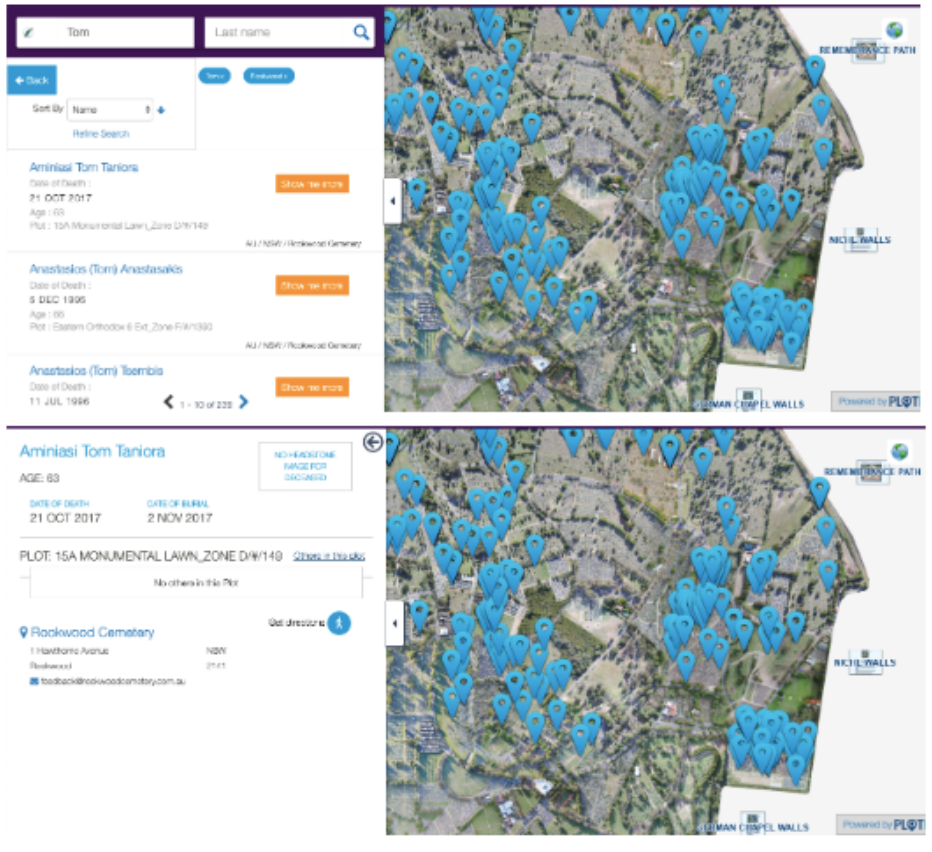
PlotBox: Full Software and Mapping Integration

PlotBox is a cloud based cemetery management solution that facilitates cemeteries and crematoria in operating to world class standards. Pull everything you need from your bookings diary, funeral director portal, finance, memorial safety inspections and mapping all into the ONE place, saving you time, money and reducing risk.

Problems that have traditionally been difficult to solve, are now possible with ease as you utilise leading administrative software and geo-rectified mapping modules that integrate seamlessly.

Why is full software and mapping integration so important?

Quite simply, it means we're able to increase the number and scope of problems we solve enormously. It puts PlotBox in a completely different space to other providers. Think of it like a more advanced software solution than anything on the market, fused with 1 inch accurate 'Google Maps for cemeteries'.

There's nothing else like it.

High resolution drone imagery and our verified mapping process creates a Digital Map showing real-time inventory status and links all record data to a location. Reducing risk and validating new inventory for sale.
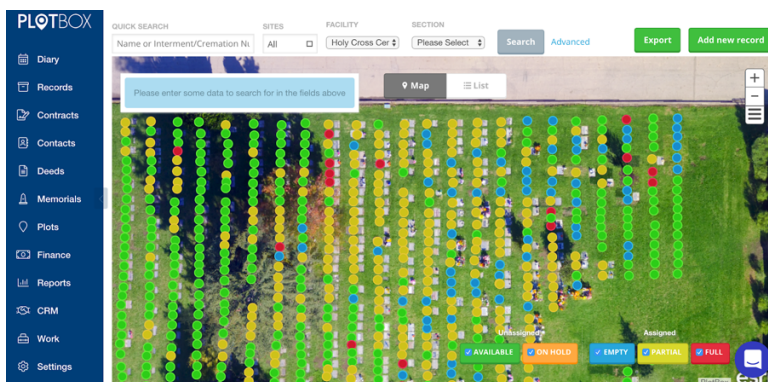
We have various mapping options depending on your needs and budget. Click here to speak to an expert for further information.