



Funeral services expertise for Jim Metzger's Whitmore Group

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Jim Metzger, left, welcomes Harry Pontone to The Whitmore Group
Credit: Franklin Square Photographers

A critical component of successful [marketing](#) is to ensure that a company has the best people with the appropriate expertise to manage the business and effectively serve clients. These ingredients are key for sustaining existing business and for growing any operation to attract more business and to expand into new areas.

One Long Island company that continues to add to its expertise, even during this underperforming economy, is Jim Metzger's The Whitmore Group, Ltd. A leading insurance services and [estate planning](#) company headquartered in Garden City, Metzger joined with Louis D'Agostino's Iron Cove Partners, LLC, earlier this year to create a new insurance and financial services team. Now, Metzger has announced the addition of the consulting services of Harry Pontone, a long-serving executive from the funeral services industry.

A dynamic and passionate member of the funeral services sector locally and across the country, Pontone is a licensed funeral director who graduated from the New York School of Embalming. He offers more than 60 years of business and management expertise that will support Whitmore Group's insurance underwriting and management programs for companies (funeral homes, other funeral-related businesses and businesses in other industries) in the New York area and nationwide.

"I like what The Whitmore Group has done and continues to do in the funeral services area," said Pontone. "But it is more than that. They bring their expertise and personal commitment to a wide range of industries. They surround themselves with quality people who have developed specific areas of expertise in a wide range of businesses. That is why I was an early client and why I appreciate this opportunity to join the Whitmore team."

Pontone started his career by working for his father, Thomas, who founded the South Brooklyn Casket Company during 1931. The oldest of eight children, Harry Pontone, along with his brothers, eventually owned, operated and expanded their father's business to include additional services such as personalization, merchandising and business planning. Mr. Pontone dedicated his entire career to providing services in the death care industry with compassion.

According to Metzger, Pontone is one of the most highly experienced, well-liked and deeply connected executives within his industry of expertise and across all business sectors. His advice and guidance, according to Metzger, will support The Whitmore Group's creation of new products and services that address today's commercial insurance underwriting requirements.

The Whitmore Group provides insurance products that meet the needs and concerns of clients and builds relationships that stand the test of time in a number of industries. As a full service insurance agency, one of its specialties is the placement of insurance protection for the funeral business, becoming the sector's largest provider of commercial property and casualty insurance. The Whitmore Group's nationwide Funeral Services Insurance Program identifies specific exposures of the industry and addresses each with proper insurance coverage.

Marketing and Client Service

“Harry is the greatest salesman I ever met,” said Metzger. “He’s been a mentor to me and, for many years as one of our earliest clients, he has believed in the insurance program we developed for the funeral industry. His marketing and client service expertise, whether for the funeral business or for any line of business, along with his commitment to ensure that people’s wishes and needs are understood and respected, have been a tremendous asset to us since we first met. His experiences will be even more valuable to us now as we continue to improve our underwriting programs and services for all business sectors locally and across the country.”

Even during tough economic situations, one proven strategy for success has been investment -- in people, new operations, or new products. Sometimes, when scanning the bottom line, investment is difficult to justify. However, when hesitation or inaction stifles investment, clients and potential clients eventually disappear to become associated with other companies that are strengthening customer service, product availability, benefits and pricing.

[The Whitmore Group](#) has shown that it knows how to invest continuously in its future and in the future of its clients.