

CASE STUDY



Linking Beyond The Grave

Metalcraft's metal barcode nameplates help memorialize loved ones

Gravesites and other memorials are static places for visitation and reflection; most of these locations offer little about the person memorialized. [Monumark](#) is a Kalamazoo, Michigan-based business working to bridge grave sites to Web sites – promising to provide a richer way to remember history and share stories.

"It's a logical step to connect the tombstone to the web," says founder Brandon Willard. "We want to keep everything connected to that person and make it accessible from the gravesite."

Willard says they were waiting for the right technologies to come together to make their idea work. Quick Response (QR) codes – two-dimensional bar codes scanned with a smart phone camera to link to a website – were a central component. "QR codes have become recognizable to most people," says Willard. "The QR code gives a visual cue to seek more information."

Monumark's QR code tags connect a final resting place and the story of the person buried there, linking a visitor to a webpage that shares a story with pictures and allowing visitors to sign a guestbook. A visitor to the monument scans the QR code (or types in a shortened URL) with a smart phone or tablet computer and is redirected to a Monumark webpage for the memorialized person. Each scan is recorded as a visit and shared, too.

Conversely, Monumark provides a way for family and friends to visit and experience the gravesite or place of significance; photos and geographic coordinates of the site are shared on the webpage. For the solution to work, Monumark needed durable, readable QR codes.

Willard went to monument makers first. They could embed QR codes into the stone faces, but it was prohibitively expensive. So, he went searching for an alternative – something that would last for decades and could be made ahead of time – and found Iowa-based Metalcraft's metal nameplates.

"I needed to be able to stick tags to granite and marble that withstand weather and sunshine," said Willard. "I had lots of questions about adhesives and durability, and Metalcraft came back with all the answers."

Metalcraft's [metal bar code nameplates](#) are photographically reproduced to ensure accurate and reliable reads. The anodizing process protects the QR code, and Monumark ordered the nameplates intensified to withstand decades of environmental exposure. A foam adhesive is used to make these tags nearly impossible to remove. Monumark offers the tag and Web service directly to individuals at [monumark.com](#) and through resellers at a retail price of \$55, including five years of Web service. Reselling monument companies typically install the tag at the gravesite. Web content is added by the purchaser.

Monumark is growing quickly – helping people preserve, connect, and share their own stories and history. Still, Willard encounters resistance with some in the tradition-laden funeral industry.

"It's like the "why would a funeral home need a website?" question from a few years back," says Willard. "Breaking tradition can be hard for some."

Nevertheless, Monumark is building relationships with cemeteries and others, backed by the performance of Metalcraft's nameplates and a service that transcends traditional memorialization.

For more information about using Metalcraft tags for your application visit [idplate.com](#) or call 800-437-5283 or 641-423-9460.

"I had lots of questions about adhesives and durability, and Metalcraft came back with all the answers."

**BRANDON
WILLARD**

Monumark