



## PLAQUES & LETTERS.COM

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False Advertising Complaint Against: Architarium aka cast-bronze-plaque.com, 4004 Woodbury Dr., Austin, TX 78704 Ph: 1-888-310-2038 • 1-512-441-8885 Fax: Unavailable. email: [sales@architarium.com](mailto:sales@architarium.com) Website: <http://cast-bronze-plaque.com/index.html> Contact: name unknown

Federal Trade Commission  
Consumer Response Center  
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20580

Dear FTC:

There's a dynamic that lies run rampant in the architectural signage industry—*False Advertising by my competitors*—particularly as it relates to cast and etched plaques, and cast & flat cut metal letters offerings. If people choose to work with liars, that's their option... but they should be able to know who they're dealing with. Please visit <http://www.plaquesandletters.com/FTC/THE%20TRUTH%20ABOUT%20ARCHITECTURAL%20PLAQUES%20&%20LETTERS%20ACQUISITION.pdf> for more. It is a simple fact that Matthews Bronze, A.R.K. Ramos, Gemini, Southwellco, International Bronze & Trigard are the major, reputable manufacturers in the bronze & aluminum plaques industry. (The first four also produce letters.)

[http://cast-bronze-plaque.com/about\\_us.html](http://cast-bronze-plaque.com/about_us.html) offers that "We are family owned and operated. Our company has been in business since 1926. **We are truly the manufacturer.** Our facilities are centrally located in Austin, Texas. We specialize in memorial related products **including the cast plaque.** We do not employ a sales force or independent sales representatives because we want you to have direct access [sic] to us and our expertise." **There's a fundamental problem with that: They don't cast any—or at least all—of the plaques posted on [http://cast-bronze-plaque.com/bronze\\_plaque.html](http://cast-bronze-plaque.com/bronze_plaque.html)** On Thursday, October 15, 2009 I emailed them in part with: "It's clear you didn't make the cast plaques that you post online, and it's clear to me which manufacturers actually did. I know this industry quite well, and easily recognize a foundry's work. I recommend you cease saying you make cast plaques, confining that to the columbarium realm. You didn't make the plaques which you post images of, despite your claims of "We are truly the manufacturer." as seen on [http://cast-bronze-plaque.com/about\\_us.html](http://cast-bronze-plaque.com/about_us.html) Columbariums perhaps; cast plaques, no." **That was never refuted or even replied to.**

<http://cast-bronze-plaque.com/index.html> has a **columbarium** link to <http://www.architarium.com/> where they offer: “Our columbarium is a highly engineered, 100% stainless steel system, designed to accommodate a wide range of shapes and designs, yet be

affordable to purchase, ship, install, operate and maintain.” That’s what they actually ‘manufacture’: Edifices ultimately made of steel, concrete and stone. That’s fine but **they don’t make the plaques that go on them...even though they claim to online**, as mentioned. The upper- and lower-left plaques they post here [http://cast-bronze-plaque.com/bronze\\_plaque.html](http://cast-bronze-plaque.com/bronze_plaque.html) are actually A.R.K. Ramos’, as seen on <http://www.arkramos.com/products/castplaques.asp>, one enlarged here: <http://www.arkramos.com/gallery/images/large/Picture%20074.jpg>. I can’t identify the source of cast-bronze-plaque.com’s other cast plaque images. However, a “foundry” who actually casts plaques should have no need to post anyone else’s work. They also wouldn’t use Ramos’ exaggerated-rectangle “leatherette texture” image <http://www.arkramos.com/products/castplaques.asp#3> as cast-bronze-plaque.com does on their Design Options page: [http://cast-bronze-plaque.com/bronze\\_plaques.html](http://cast-bronze-plaque.com/bronze_plaques.html)

Beyond the certifiable, but using logic: 1) cast-bronze-plaque.com’s website is extremely sparse in terms of information and cast plaque images posted, compared to what an actual foundry (and even most distributors, which is what they are) would have. 2) They wouldn’t use the “word” “casted” (as opposed to “cast”), as they use on [http://cast-bronze-plaque.com/vendor\\_cast\\_bronze\\_plaque.html](http://cast-bronze-plaque.com/vendor_cast_bronze_plaque.html) ...when it’s **not even a word**. 3) On their homepage <http://cast-bronze-plaque.com/index.html> their “About Us” entry offers “Architarium is a full service US manufacturer of a highly engineered columbarium system: start-to-finish project guidance, complimentary products, delivery, installation.” That’s it. No mention of casting any plaques there. (Their “About Us” “More Info” link does then address plaques.) This is yet again one more example where someone indeed makes “something”, then erroneously extrapolates that to mean that they *make everything* that they post online.

#### Here’s why all of this matters:

1. From experience, buyers like to know who they are buying from, **and disdain being hoodwinked**, regardless of the price or product they receive(d); it’s a service to no one when lying prevails,
2. Distributors masquerading as manufacturers put honest distributors at a significant competitive disadvantage, and,
3. For those end users thinking they “hit the jackpot” by ostensibly buying “manufacturer-direct”, looking no further, **they may never realize they might have received a better deal elsewhere**.

True, “It’s a Free Country.” People are allowed to lie. Others are allowed...to call them on it. Architarium aka cast-bronze-plaque.com should be compelled to tell the truth online: 1) They will NOT be making the cast plaques that customers order from them, and 2) They didn’t make any of the samples that they already post.

Production Note: A digital copy of this letter is included. Upon usage, you can click on the hyperlinks found there and immediately access the webpages offered here.

Thank You,

*Don Baker*

**Don Baker**

**PS: I had no need to contact the actual manufacturer about this; the evidence speaks for itself.**