

PLAQUES & LETTERS.COM

Following is an email string between Robert Barber, President, Franklin Bronze & Alloy Co. (<http://www.franklinbronze.com/> makers of “investment castings”; he didn’t say president of Franklin Bronze Plaques <http://www.franklinbronzeplaques.com/>, where Cynthia Linnon is ostensibly President, and P&L. Franklin Bronze Plaques purports they manufacture all the products they offer online (with two scant attributions in “()”); that the images they post are their own work...many of which still certifiably are not.

This has been reformatted in chronological order (instead of the standard email-reply format, where one reads in ascending order). I wrote (in part), after Bob caught wind of the FTC filings (I’d already directly apprised their Cynthia Linnon of it):

From: Robert Barber [mailto:rbarber@franklinbronze.com] **Sent:** Tuesday, September 29, 2009 4:00 PM
To: admin@PlaquesandLetters.com **Subject:** [SPAM] FW: False Statements on you [sic] web site

Mr. Don Baker:

I am president of Franklin Bronze, and **major owner of Franklin Bronze Plaques**. I am very upset at the appearance of false statements about my company on your web-site. Franklin Bronze & Alloy has been in existence since 1878, and **has been in the plaque making business since that time**. [NOTE: Visit http://www.plaquesandletters.com/FTC/Franklin%20Bronze/False%20Advertising%20Complaint%20Against%20Franklin%20Bronze%20Revised%20Post-Outing_updated_dec.pdf focusing on the “Design Options” section: “What “*manufacturer*” who has ostensibly been “**Manufacturing Bronze Plaques since 1878**”, as Franklin claims in their header, *uses someone else’s specification diagrams? They’ve had 131 years to create their own.*”.] **In 2006 I created Franklin Bronze Plaques as a division** to take our sales presence beyond N/W Pa. to the entire country. At this time I hired Cindie Linnon to do marketing, and Bernie Becker to be in charge of manufacturing. We opened a new facility with upgraded design capabilities, pattern manufacturing, and plaque finishing equipment. This was all done in a new and separate facility, into which we invested hundreds of thousands of dollars. [NOTE: **If true, that’s an amazing bargain, ‘all things considered’.**] Our plaques, as always, are still poured in our sand casting foundry, **completely under my ownership and management**. We completely manufacture, from design to finish, **almost all** of the plaques we sell. [NOTE: **With the POSSIBLE exception of “The Galena Building”, FBP made NONE of the plaques on their Homepage: <http://www.franklinbronzeplaques.com/> Found elsewhere on Franklin Bronze Plaques for instance, Matthews Bronze actually cast these plaques: <http://www.franklinbronzeplaques.com/memorials-big.html?pid=132> & <http://www.franklinbronzeplaques.com/plaques-big.html?pid=283> and they’re not “image cast plaques”. Franklin surely makes no Donor Trees, ImageCast™, AlumaColor™, (all Matthews) MetalPhotos, (Metal Photo Service) Memorial Grave Markers (Centec); nor I believe even **etched plaques offered online. Nor do they make bronze letters...but it’s listed as one of their Products.**] **The few we don’t, are the image cast plaques**, which a nearby foundry makes for us and we re-sell. These re-sold plaques represent only about 2% of our work. Conclusion being: We are a complete and established manufacturer of bronze plaques.**

It is a total insult to my integrity and life’s work that you have posted on your web-site un-truths about my business. [NOTE: **Everything I post was well-researched. Franklin’s pulled several images which weren’t their work because of all this.**] I am asking you now to remove any reference of Franklin Bronze Plaques from your web-site, as what you have posted is slanderous and costing us a lot of business. You talk pretty big **for a ‘salesman’** [NOTE: **He neglected to mention “knowledgeable distributor”, “proficient designer” & “successful, honest entrepreneur”.**] who does not have to worry about the real operation of a manufacturing business. [NOTE: **While mildly sympathetic, that’s his problem.**] If you want proof- come up

her [sic] and I will show you **my** facilities. We have over 70,000 sq. ft of manufacturing space in 4 separate buildings. **[NOTE: He's clearly lumping in his "investment castings" which isn't Germaine here.]** I started with nothing but an engineering degree in the seventies, and my business has taken over 30 years of hard work and investment to build it to where it is now- a proud & prosperous company with over 120 employees **[Note: He's lumping in his "investment castings" again.]** I will not stand for a salesman with a web-site **[Note: It's nearly 2010.]** slandering my business. I want to hear back from you soon. Please plan some quick action on re-mediating this problem. If not we will be forced to take immediate legal action.

Call me or E-mail me with your response.

PS: I tried to click on the complaint you filed against us- it did not open into anything. Please send me a copy of what you filed against us. I need to see it.

Robert Barber

President, Franklin Bronze & Alloy Co.

Tel: 814-437-6891 X-102

Fax: 814-432-3781

E-mail: rbarber@franklinbronze.com

My Reply:

From: Plaques&Letters [mailto:admin@plaquesandletters.com] **Sent:** Tuesday, September 29, 2009 9:03 PM

To: 'Robert Barber' **Subject:** False Statements on "you" meaning Franklin Bronze's web site

Dear [Bob]:

- "I am very upset at the reality of false statements about your company on **your own** web-site." Where the hell do you get off posting missives about your "fine architectural letters offerings"...Testimonials page: <http://www.franklinbronzeplaques.com/testimonials.html> offers in the first entry: "I recieved [sic] the letters for the USS New Mexico. After inspecting these I'm very pleased with the final product. Your Company did an outstanding job **manufacturing the letters...**", when NOWHERE on [your] website does Franklin mention making or even offering letters except this one-line entry "highest quality bronze plaques and letters **[NOTE: "letters" has now been removed]**" and "Bronze Letters" in a Product Types chart, posted on <http://www.franklinbronzeplaques.com/products.html>. **An actual letters manufacturer would "sure as heck" mention more than that. They show NO images of, nor any other information about any letters on their website.....**when you don't even MAKE ANY?
- "Franklin Bronze & Alloy has been in existence since 1878, and has been in the plaque making business since that time.".....Then don't post Matthews Bronze numerous specifications [images] on your pages. OR their project images. You've had plenty of time to create your own in 100 + years. You posted many of Matthews work as your own...until I apprised Cynthia of all this, **at which time they were pulled within 48 hours. Quit protesting when someone shows you to be LIARS.**
- "We have over 70,000 sq. ft of manufacturing space in 4 separate buildings." Who gives a [ex. del.] about your "investment castings"??? That's not the issue. Your **bogus** online cast metal plaques [NOTE: They do cast plaques, but show others' work] & letters offerings IS.
- "as what you have posted is slanderous".....Learn the difference between "slander" & "libel". "Slander" is said; "Libel" is written. The truth is an "absolute defense" in either case.....
- "You talk pretty big for a salesman who does not have to worry about the real operation of a manufacturing business."..... Please see above. Your overhead is not my problem...
- "I will not stand for a salesman with a web-site slandering my business.".....You pretty much will until you start telling the.....TRUTH.
- "Please plan some quick action on re-mediating this problem.".....Absolutely no need, at least on my part. There is on yours however. Just cease lying.
- "If not we will be forced to take immediate legal action.".....Go for it BOB.

Please see attached and: http://www.plaquesandletters.com/ftc_false_adv_complaints.htm & http://www.plaquesandletters.com/FTC/Franklin%20Bronze/False%20Advertising%20Complaint%20Against%20Franklin%20Bronze%20Revised%20Post-Outing_update_dec.pdf [Note: Updated since original submission.] ...

Please advise if we can be of further assistance.

Thank You,
Don Baker
Plaques&Letters.com
[etc.]

From: Plaques&Letters [mailto:admin@plaquesandletters.com] **Sent:** Tuesday, September 29, 2009 9:18 PM
To: 'Robert Barber' **Subject:** RE: False Statements on "you" meaning Franklin Bronze's web site

TIP: "Finally, Franklin posts on their "About Us" Page: "Franklin Bronze Plaques is a woman-owned business (WOB) under Federal and State guidelines." That's interesting, given that Cynthia has emailed us (under a different guise) before: "Even though most of the family members have passed on the son continues to run and operate the business." Now how does this "family owned business" receive whatever benefits are inherent in being a "woman-owned business" if a man actually owns it?"...

Thank You,
Don Baker
Plaques&Letters.com
[etc.]

From: Robert Barber [mailto:rbarber@franklinbronze.com] **Sent:** Wednesday, September 30, 2009 10:07 AM
To: 'Plaques&Letters' **Subject:** [SPAM] RE: False Statements on "you" meaning Franklin Bronze's web site

Don: Franklin Bronze Plaques is a legally woman owned business. As I approach retirement I have sold 60% of my shares to Cynthia and Bernie: I turned the balance over to my wife. [NOTE: Now, Bob's no longer the "major owner of Franklin Bronze Plaques".] ... I still speak of it as my business, but I have nothing to do with its operation. I am personally communicating this and previous information to you because of the un-couth, vulgar, and prejudicial manner that you have used against Cynthia and Bernie. I still have pride in what I established, and when someone demeans what I set up- I will defend it to the end. You do not seem to be a rational person. I can tell by the tone of what you write and the low-class language you throw about. But- Please try to understand- we are not discussing our corporate make-up, which is perfectly legitimate. We are discussing your statement on your web-site that states Franklin Bronze Plaques is not a manufacturer of plaques. This is an un-true statement. We are a manufacturer of plaques. We manufacture 98% of the items we ship. Please make remediation.

I will discuss with the owners the issue of not clarifying that a few of our advertised products are not made by us. I do not think you will find a statement that says we do manufacture letters [Note: It's indeed posted.] and image cast. [Note: A parenthetical reference.] If there is mis-leading information, I will ask it to be removed. Our customers know us, and even sometimes visit us. We hide nothing from them.

If you would like to travel up here and visit us, we would be glad to show you what we do. We could also discuss the issues we have with each other. In the mean-time, I expect the statement that we are not a manufacturer to be removed from your web-site. If this does not happen, or any other un-truths are posted by you about us, you will indeed hear from the attorney for Franklin Bronze Plaques.

Robert Barber
President, Franklin Bronze & Alloy Co.
Tel: 814-437-6891 X-102
Fax: 814-432-3781
E-mail: rbarber@franklinbronze.com

From: Plaques&Letters [mailto:admin@plaquesandletters.com] **Sent:** Wednesday, September 30, 2009 10:19 AM **To:** 'Robert Barber'**Subject:** RE: False Statements on "you" meaning Franklin Bronze's web site

Bobbi,

You need to get a clue. You still have plenty of Matthews work posted, and at least one Gemini aluminum sample.

"the un-couth, vulgar, and prejudicial manner that you have used against Cynthia and Bernie" I think Franklin's LYING is "un-couth, vulgar, and prejudicial".

You do not seem to be a rational person. I can tell by the tone of what you write and the "politesses masquerading as professional" language you throw about. Please make remediation.

"I do not think you will find a statement that says we do manufacture letters"? **You do not even know what's posted on "your" website then. [Note: See**

<http://www.franklinbronzeplaques.com/testimonials.html> "I recieved the letters for the USS New Mexico. After inspecting these I'm very pleased with the final product. Your Company did an outstanding job **manufacturing the letters.**"

""Please plan some quick action on re-mediating this problem.".....Absolutely no need, at least on my part. There is on yours however. Just cease lying.

If not we will be forced to take immediate legal action.".....Go for it BOB."

This was the one FTC Complaint that I had some doubt about...*despite their several postings of clearly others' work.* I've concluded that Franklin Bronze Plaques does manufacturer some plaques. They simply *more liberally presented others' work as their own before this.* All but one of their Design Options images still reflect the work of Gemini (<http://www.franklinbronzeplaques.com/options.html?op=Standard%20Borders>) and Matthews Bronze (<http://www.franklinbronzeplaques.com/options.html?op=Specialty Borders>, <http://www.franklinbronzeplaques.com/options.html?op=Standard Background Colors>, <http://www.franklinbronzeplaques.com/options.html?op=Custom Background Colors>, <http://www.franklinbronzeplaques.com/options.html?op=Textures>, & <http://www.franklinbronzeplaques.com/options.html?op=Mountings>).

Don Baker