



PLAQUES&LETTERS.COM

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1/22/2010

Mr. Brian D. Walters
Matthews Bronze VP & General Counsel
Architectural Division
2 North Shore Center
Pittsburgh PA 15212

Hi Brian,

I was disinclined to reply, as it will alter nothing. However, I do so out of principle.

In your "*Additional follow-up*" (?; there wasn't a predecessor), you offered that Matthews Bronze decided to terminate our relationship "*for business reasons*". That's a purpose, not a rationale. I urge your company to finally provide one in writing.

In the meantime, I'll provide the real answer: You let a bunch of liars (one miscreant in particular who will go nameless) coerce you into doing so. There was nothing "*independent*" about your decision, although I find it interesting you felt compelled to use that term. Those liars are the ones I've taken to the Federal Trade Commission for False Advertising, as posted on http://www.plaquesandletters.com/ftc_false_adv_complaints.htm. These are largely Matthews's distributors who pretend to the public that they manufacture the products they post online, when it's actually Matthews making the items. That does a significant disservice to honest distributors like myself. End users also disdain being hoodwinked, regardless of any bargain they might have received, when they discover that's happened.

In your original dismissal letter of 12/31/09 you offered in part: "*...please immediately cease from referencing yourself and/or your company as an authorized dealer of Matthews...*". That hasn't been stated for some time; the only realm it semi-recently reappeared in is on my FTC/False Advertising Complaints Page, where I divulge Matthews was a supplier.

I've never understood why so many elect to use Matthews as their *sole source*, when there are superior vendors out there. Your company offers slow, inferior work at inflated prices. As I **now post online**: "Matthews Bronze decided that as a result of these efforts, I am no longer a customer. Those about whom Complaints have been filed may believe they've done something. The majority of P&L's work was going elsewhere anyway, to those who are quicker, more efficient and provide a cleaner product."

Everything that I say online about those you seek to favor is well documented. If it weren't, I'd be inundated with lawsuits. You have enabled a *de facto* cartel. That's a Federal offense. Your actions contradict Matthews International's own published Code of Business Conduct and Ethics: "It has been the longstanding policy of Matthews International Corporation to maintain the highest ethical standards in the conduct of Company affairs and in its relationship with customers, suppliers, employees, advisors and the communities in which our operations are located."

"It's not nice to screw with ..." the one distributor who collectively has the most superior industry search results, as well as knowledge and broad resources. It's finally dawning on some, although obviously not Matthews yet, that it's distributors, not manufacturers, who control the plaques and letters industry. I'm "simply" cleaning up an industry which has become risible. Many consider it a public service: Customers. Many see through other distributors shams anyway.

Be advised that I will continue to sell items Matthews offers—in the rare instances I would need to—by using any number of others as the purchasers. You've accomplished nothing with your actions except giving Matthews a black eye. This correspondence, as well as yours, is posted online.

I *"appreciate your past 'vendorship' and wish you and your company continued success in all future endeavors. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation regarding this matter."*

Thank You,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Don Baker".

Don Baker

Copy: CEO Joe Bartolacci; President Jim Doyle