



PLAQUES&LETTERS.COM

Don Baker dba Designs&Signs aka Plaques&Letters.com
3205 Arthur Drive, Ruston LA 71270

Website: <http://www.plaquesandletters.com/> Email: admin@plaquesandletters.com

Local Phone: 318-251-9693 Local Fax: 318-251-9680

Toll-Free Phone: 1-866-336-4135 Toll-Free Fax: 1-866-336-4650

THE TRUTH ABOUT ARCHITECTURAL PLAQUES & LETTERS ACQUISITION:

A Cheryl Walker emailed us out of the blue with: "*I noticed on your web site that you have other competitors websites that we should check out so we did that. We went to www.bronzememorials.net and I noticed on that web site that they have pictures of "How we make our plaques". The problem is that these are pictures of Matthews Foundry in Pennsylvania not Bronze Memorials which is located in Florida. Isn't this false advertising? Apparently they are not manufacturers but are claiming to be. Are all bronze plaque sites false? Is this industry wide?"*"

Our Reply: "'*Bronze Memorials*" also offers Gemini products. "*Isn't this false advertising?*"? Yeppers. "*Apparently they are not manufacturers but are claiming to be.*"? Yeppers. "*Is this industry wide?*"? Yeppers. If one didn't know better they'd think there was a foundry located in every third state. "Not Really." "*Are all bronze plaque sites false?*"? NO, because we're not...We're about the only ones out there who tell the truth."

These are the major manufacturers in this industry, *few of which work direct with end users (unless special circumstances like "grandfathering" exist):* 1) A.R.K. Ramos, 2) Matthews Bronze, 3) Gemini, 4) Southwellco, 5) International Bronze, and 6) Trigard. Other smaller, reputable providers exist. Largely the rest are simply poseurs, and/or provide inferior product.

THE FACTS ARE: Most manufacturers don't sell direct to the public. **We and other Distributors** are their sales force. As sign companies who have "been there, done that", we're supposed to know the various aspects of the business, as opposed to starting from scratch (like most end users are). That makes manufacturers' lives much easier. We're compensated by being able to buy wholesale, then retailing. We specify, after sometimes lengthy and often arduous discussions & indoctrination with customers, i.e. "end users". Manufacturers "simply" make.

The ones listed below either manufacture things other than the plaques and letters we offer, but lead you to believe they also actually make them; or give no reason to believe they aren't manufacturers; or blatantly lie & actually claim they are. They-and we-are Distributors of plaques and letters. That's how this industry is structured. If manufacturers wanted to deal direct to the public, they'd have to hire a huge staff to deal with the public, paying them not only their salaries but also parental leave, sick & vacation days, and provide for a larger building, office parties & unemployment insurance. Most elect not to, leaving the chance of a project to materialize to their Distributors.

A few (3-4) manufacturers do sell plaques & letters (catchy name eh?) direct to the public... but that doesn't mean you'll get a lower price. In fact it'll likely be higher because they rarely negotiate; Distributors do. Manufacturer-directs' salaried sales force is internal,

affecting their pricing. It's anyone's choice who they care to deal with. If one wants to understandably report that they "hit the jackpot" and found a manufacturer who'll "deal with us direct" —"with enormous savings"—they can pursue the links below upon such premise...& pretense. "Caveat Emptor." I reject the deceptions being flung around in this realm, so I offer:

<http://www.cotteradvertising.com/index.html> <http://www.signsbyweb.com>...which is the same as previous link, a different guise. <http://memorialplaquesonline.com/>
http://www.able-engravers.com/sdp_plaques_signs.htm <http://impactsigns.com/>
<http://www.baybronze.com/?OVRAW=bay%20bronze&OVKEY=bay%20bronze&OVMTc=standard>

Here's an interesting group: <http://www.getplaques.com/>, <http://www.kbronze.com/> <http://www.militarybronze.com/>, <http://www.custombronzeplaques.com/>,
<http://www.donorrecognitionplaques.com/> & <http://www.bronzeplaques.co.uk/>

The above links lead to the same outfit with the same contact info (when provided), masquerading as a "network of manufacturers". "They" are actually run by a Matt Kieffer, primarily a Trigard Dealer.

<http://www.c-dtags.com/bronzeplaques/castplaquedirectory.html> They "specialize" in everything. http://www.architecturalbronze.com/cast_bronze_plaques.asp

<http://www.bellcoinc.com/> <http://www.thesignshop.com/Metal-Letters/>

<http://www.saxtonbronze.com/> <http://www.innovativesigns.com/> They do make DuraBronze™ plaques...which are faux bronze/plastic. Everything else...they outsource.

<http://www.alphabetsigns.com/> <http://www.signprofessionals.com/>

<http://www.lettersandsigns.com/> "We have the fastest manufacturing process of plaques on the internet (10-12 working days)." No faster than any other Gemini dealer, such as...

<http://www.discountsignletters.com/> <http://signletteronline.com/>

<http://www.interiortech.com/castmetal.html> <http://metalfacedletters.com/>

<http://www.dimensionalleaders.com/index.html> <http://www.castbronzeplaques.com/>

<http://www.lettersandsigns.com/> <http://www.neon-das.com/dimensional.html>

<http://www.oldemillimpressions.com/pages/castbronze/castbronze.html>

<http://www.buysignletters.com> <http://www.fireawards.com/bronzecast.html>

<http://www.signshopofrc.com/cast2.html> <http://www.lettersandsigns.com/>

<http://www.ccproducts.com/> <http://www.spectrumawards.com/products/cast-bronze-plaques.html>

<http://castplaque.com/> : "the leader in fabricated interior and exterior signs"?

<http://www.metallicarts.com/index.html>: Primarily a Gemini dealer, perhaps even "owned by", who also uses other manufacturers.

<http://www.berntsen.com/GoShopping/Surveying/EngravedBronzePlaques/tabid/1919/Default.aspx> <http://www.shinersigns.com/> <http://www.zipsignletters.com/index.htm>

<http://www.pacificarchitectural.com/index.html> PA offers claims in their "ABOUT OUR COMPANY", "A COMMITMENT TO QUALITY" & "The Pacific Bronze advantage" which leads most to believe they're something more than simply a Matthews & Gemini distributor. PA's lengthy list of their "team of professionals" who "specialize in the areas of manufacturing, procurement, transport, product and graphic design...technology, engineering and finance."... holds as much currency as a three dollar bill. Their vendors take care of the vast majority of those.

<http://www.signlettersontheweb.com/> offers a comical talking female apparition, indicating: "We are among the largest manufacturers in the country with decades of experience manufacturing letters and signs ... Take advantage of our experience and size by buying direct from a manufacturer and enjoy some of the lowest prices on the web..." Truth is: They're actually Scott Sign Systems itself, who is selling via distributors as well as direct.

<http://www.usbronze.com/> They may make something, but it's curious why they post so much Matthews, Trigard & The Griffon stuff.

<http://cast-bronze-plaque.com/>: Simply A.R.K. Ramos & Matthews Bronze distributors.

<http://www.bronzememorials.net>.....is one of the most risible websites in this realm, particularly when they offer their "How our plaques are made" link: If they make them, why did we recently exchange via email: "Thanks for clearing this up. I [P&L] just focused on your "**OTHER DISTRRBUTORS**" [sic] revelation... Where'd you EVER come up with this???: <http://www.bronzememorials.net/manufacture.htm> They have been taken to the Federal Trade Commission for False Advertising: FTC Ref. # is 23073235.

<http://www.thebronzeplaque.com> This outfit is one of the worst offenders in this industry. We lose business because of that, but also gain business for the same reason with those who see through their sham. Please see: <http://www.thebronzeplaque.com/schedule.html> Given that they use the same resources that we do...their "US & THEM" competitive claims are vapid. They are simply distributors of Matthews Bronze, an actual foundry. Their "The Bronze Plaque - The Internet's Most Complete Site about Bronze Plaques." claim is also vapid. Taking time to compare our site to theirs would demonstrate that. Their "NO OTHER COMPANY CAN PLACE A BRONZE PLAQUE INTO PRODUCTION AS QUICKLY AS WE CAN!!" is fantasy. 1) Manufacturers rarely curry favor for any particular Distributor, and 2) The foundry they use is slower than most. Their "Lowest Price" allusions are shattered when comparing their posted prices to ours. While they don't baldly state that they are a foundry, their "you are speaking to someone who understands bronze casting and not just a middle man who will pass your request to a foundry design department." sure makes it sound like they are. All of their specifications details & (virtually) all original project images are Matthews Bronze's. They have also been taken to the Federal Trade Commission & State AGs for False Advertising, along with Metallic Arts, Pacific Architectural, Bay Bronze, Architectural Bronze, signlettersontheweb.com, Impact! Signs...For more, visit: http://www.plaquesandletters.com/ftc_false_adv_complaints.htm

Some might consider our "outing" our competitors to be either "unprofessional" or "tacky". We consider people who "dissemble" about themselves and this industry—**and to you**—that. I—PlaquesandLetters.com—am seeking a level playing field, & am trying to clean up this signage distribution industry. I'd prefer to be non-confrontational but these boys & girls linked above have gone beyond the pale for many years. Other distributors think they are in some sort of club where their "*dirty little secret*" is to be held confidential.

<http://www.bronzememorials.net> even offered: "I AM GOING TO SEND THIS TO EVERY LINK THAT YOU HAVE LISTED IN THIS EMAIL AND MAY BE THEY WILL JOIN ME IN EVEY [sic] EFFORT TO STOP YOUR ACTIONS". Sounds like a cartel?



Since we didn't "drink the Kool-Aid"...we'll pass on "compliance". Use this information as you will.

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