



Max
Vancouver, Washington
U.S.A.

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Consumer Comment

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I've never been terribly impressed with the BBB, given their total lack of clout or any ability to enforce their standards. However, I always felt that they served a useful purpose for consumers and had some ability to help limit the damage an unscrupulous business could do to a community.

I don't feel that way anymore.

I own a VERY small business. It's just me, no employees. I put a display ad in this year's Yellow Pages for the first time, which I suppose is how they found me.

One morning about a month ago, I came into the office to find a message from the local BBB on my answering machine. The caller gave no details what the call was about, so I assumed the worst: that a customer had called the BBB with a complaint. So I immediately returned the call.

What I got was a ten minute sales pitch proposing that I join the BBB. It took her ten minutes to get to the price for a one year membership: \$698, if I recall. That was when I hung up.

Maybe I am naive, but I am disillusioned with the BBB for the following reasons:

- 1) They took advantage of their own reputation and tricked ME into calling THEM in the first place.
- 2) That they take money from businesses makes them lose credibility as a consumer protection organization.
- 3) \$698 is more than I spend on advertising in a typical YEAR.

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