

## New! BBB Accredited Businesses Exclusive Web Site

**W**e have added a new section to our Web site designed with you in mind. The BBB Accredited Business (AB) Pages contain many features to help you get the most from your BBB accreditation and get real time activity stats about your business.

To visit the AB Pages, simply go to [www.cleveland.bbb.org](http://www.cleveland.bbb.org) and click on the orange "Login" button in the upper left hand corner.

You will need your company ID# and your primary business contact's e-mail address in order to log in and request your password. If you don't know your ID# or need to verify the e-mail address, please contact Laura Fitzgerald at (216) 623-8964 x107 or send a request to [yourbbb@cleveland.bbb.org](mailto:yourbbb@cleveland.bbb.org).



At this site, you will be able to review your BBB report, notify us of any changes or corrections to your company information, view real time statistics (such as the numbers of times potential customers viewed your report and obtained lists of accredited businesses in your industry, how many times online shoppers clicked on the BBBOnLine seal from your Web site and the number of e-quote requests you received), view recent fraud alerts, get information about events, and much, much more. Try it today. □

## Watch for Calls from Super Business Yellow Pages

**B**usiness Owner Tom Spencer said he knew something was suspicious five minutes into the call. **Super Business Yellow Pages** contacted the small business owner in Peoria, IL in mid-March, demanding payment for an Internet advertisement listing. When Spencer responded that he had never authorized any listing, the company threatened him with collection procedures.

"It's always the same thing. They say that [my business] has a listing on their Web site, but we never authorized it," says Spencer. "When we tell them that we're not going to pay them for the listing and that we want to cancel, they say, 'Then you owe us money.'"

And Spencer is not alone. BBB has received 10 complaints in the past few weeks from businesses across the country. Most complaints echo Spencer's – a representative from Super Business Yellow Pages calls, asks for payment for an ad placed on [superbusinessyellowpages.com](http://superbusinessyellowpages.com) which they claim the owner authorized. When the owner asks for more information or to cancel, the calls turn nasty.

A Sidney, NE, business owner told BBB, "We have been contacted by Super Business Yellow pages demanding \$1,382.19 for some type of Internet advertising which we have never ordered; they have no signed contracts, no details of services that they say they have provided. They call many times a day and are very harassing and threatening... I have asked them to cease the harassing calls, but they keep coming, many times a day." (continued inside)

## Greater Cleveland BBB Activity Report January – March 2010

### Service to the Community

Reports issued on companies/charities.....	151,916
Complaints closed.....	3,232
Callers assisted by phone.....	14,040
www.cleveland.bbb.org visits.....	167,253
Advertising review cases initiated.....	116

### Top 10 Inquiry-Generating Industries

1. Roofing Contractors
2. Work-at-Home Companies
3. Mortgage Brokers
4. Construction & Remodeling Services
5. Insurance Companies
6. General Contractors
7. Health & Medical
8. Auto Dealers - New Cars
9. Auto Dealers - Used Cars
10. Plumbing Contractors

### Top 10 Complaint-Generating Industries

1. Magazine Sales
2. Banks
3. Extended Warranty Service Companies
4. Auto Dealers - New Cars
5. Insurance Companies
6. Collection Agencies
7. Auto Dealers - Used Cars
8. Auto Repair & Service
9. Retail Furniture

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## Root for the Home Teams!

Discount tickets for **Akron Aeros**, **Cleveland Gladiators** and **Cleveland Indians** are on tap for the next few months.

Catch The Tribe on June 12th (Choo Bobblehead day), July 29th (Dollar Dog Night), or August 29th (Kids Fun Day). Ticket prices range from \$12 to \$20.



Watch the AA Cleveland Indians affiliate, the Akron Aeros, and catch some great fireworks. \$7 tickets are available for two Friday evening games - June 25th and August 13th.



Cleveland's arena football team, the Cleveland Gladiators, is offering discounts to several games throughout May, June and July. Discounts range from \$5 to \$10 per ticket.



Go to [www.cleveland.bbb.org/tickets](http://www.cleveland.bbb.org/tickets) for order forms and complete details on dates and prices. You can also call Laura Fitzgerald at (216) 623-8964 x 107.

**P.S. Go CAVS!!!**

## Classes for Ohio Workers

The Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation is offering more than 60 occupational safety, health and ergonomics courses online and at Cleveland-area sites.

For more information, call 1-800-OHIOBWC or go to [www.bwclearning-center.com](http://www.bwclearning-center.com) to register online.

## How to Reach Us

P (216) 241-4476 / (800) 233-0361

F (216) 861-6365

W [www.cleveland.bbb.org](http://www.cleveland.bbb.org)

E [yourbbb@cleveland.bbb.org](mailto:yourbbb@cleveland.bbb.org)

## Watch for Invoices and Calls from Super Business Yellow Pages *(continued from front)*

The company's Web site lists their address at 3401 Enterprise Parkway in Beachwood. The leasing agent for this property, however, told BBB the location is not an office, but rather, a mail forwarding service. He added that services for Super Business Yellow Pages had been suspended for "payment issues."

A Super Business Yellow Pages representative insisted that the Beachwood address is a physical office that employs two people. The company also claimed its main office is located on Madison Avenue in New York. A public records search, however, failed to turn up any listings of a business by that name at either the Beachwood or the New York addresses.

Spencer did eventually find his listing on the company's directory. "Once we talked to them and told them we didn't authorize the ad, they took it off," he said. After filing complaints with the Better Business Bureau, the Federal Trade Commission and the Illinois Attorney General, the harassing calls eventually stopped.

To avoid paying invoices for unauthorized yellow pages listings, other advertising or office supply products, BBB advises:

- Delegate one person with the authority to purchase and approve advertising;
- Review all invoices carefully and verify their legitimacy;
- Train your staff. Train everyone how to respond to telemarketers. Advise employees who are not authorized to order supplies to tell the caller they must speak to someone else. ☐

## Local Companies Lose BBB Accreditation

**B**BB Accreditation is a privilege given to businesses which agree to comply with BBB Standards. Accreditation is suspended by BBB staff when a company fails to live up to those standards. Suspensions are referred to the Accreditation Committee of the BBB's Board of Directors, which rules on revocation. The following actions were taken in March, 2010.

**Sky Roofing, Strongsville** - The company failed to resolve a customer complaint concerning dissatisfaction with the installation of a new roof. The consumer sought BBB assistance after the roof leaked and caused damage inside her home. Sky Roofing blamed the leak on ice damming and was not willing to offer a resolution despite a building official's determination that the installation was faulty. Efforts to get the company to mediate or arbitrate the dispute were unsuccessful. Accreditation was revoked based on the BBB standard that requires BBB Accredited Businesses to make a good faith effort to resolve complaints.

**Margus Company Inc., Cleveland** - Jeffrey G. Baker, the firm's president, pleaded guilty to one count of misprision of a felony that stemmed from activity concerning contracts entered into with the U. S. Postal Service. According to the U. S. Attorney's Office's press release, Baker admitted he paid a Postal Service employee approximately \$50,000 in cash over a four-year period to get Postal Service construction contracts. Accreditation was revoked based on the BBB standard that BBB Accredited Businesses be free of government action that demonstrates a failure to support ethical principles and to avoid activities that reflect unfavorably on BBB. As is its right under BBB regulations, the company has appealed the revocation.

**Urban Active Fitness, Lyndhurst** - BBB accreditation was revoked due to the company's failure to maintain a minimum "B" rating locally and at its headquarters location in Kentucky. Additionally, BBB files reflected a pattern of complaints concerning contract disputes, billing issues and dissatisfaction with sales practices. BBB standards require BBB Accredited Businesses to eliminate underlying causes of complaints and to maintain a BBB rating of "B" or higher. ☐

## Use Caution When Buying Luxury Items Online

Fake Tiffany Web Site Latest to Dupe Consumers

**A** Broadview Heights woman became the unsuspecting victim of an online scammer when she purchased jewelry from what she believed was Tiffany & Company, the famous New York jeweler. Instead, she later discovered after submitting her \$228 payment, that she had been duped by a Tiffany counterfeiter doing business as Tiffany & Company On Sale.

Tiffany & Company On Sale's Web site ([www.tiffanyco.mn](http://www.tiffanyco.mn)) looks very similar to the real Tiffany site ([www.tiffany.com](http://www.tiffany.com)) even down to the color scheme and type fonts.

The Broadview Heights consumer realized she had been deceived when she searched online to find a phone number to contact Tiffany about her order and was led to the real Tiffany & Company. "The nice lady with the actual Tiffany & Company informed me that I had been taken by a fraudulent company," she told BBB, "...the REAL Tiffany & Company has a short order number on their items. (My order) had about 15 digits."



Although she was able to get the order cancelled, Tiffany & Company On Sale would not give her a refund. "This ... scammer cancelled my order on Mar 3, 2010, after me yelling and screaming....but would NOT refund. Then they told me I had to return the cheap, Model T-like chrome jewelry to get the refund, AFTER they had cancelled the order. This would cost an additional \$25 to return this cheap crap." (Jewelry pictured above)

BBB contacted a representative from Tiffany & Company in New York who told BBB they had been getting many calls from consumers about this fake site. She confirmed that, even though Tiffany & Company On Sale states on its site that "... This website (Tiffany & Co. on Sale) is a (sic) Online Jewelry Store to provide Tiffany & Co. silver jewelry Overstock products at discount prices, all products are new & unused", Tiffany never has overstock items available for resale.

Tiffany & Company On Sales Web site address has an .mn suffix, which indicates it is registered in Mongolia. Consumers can confuse the .mn as meaning the site is registered in Minnesota.

Online shoppers should always be alert to cybersquatters and sites that claim to sell well known brand named goods at discounted prices. Check the company's BBB rating at [www.cleveland.bbb.org](http://www.cleveland.bbb.org). □

## Meet A New BBB Director

**I**n 1949, John Barnard's grandfather made TV history when he filmed the first infomercial to hawk his Vitamix blender. The 30-minute program aired in several markets and made the blender a household word. Barnard, who currently serves as Vitamix Executive Chairman and CEO, helped to develop the first commercial Vitamix blender when he headed up the Engineering Department in the early 1980's.



Vitamix, which started as a family owned business in 1921, ships its products to over 80 countries. The company has distribution warehouses in Reno, Canada and the United Kingdom.

Barnard serves on the board of trustees of the Olmsted Falls Alumni Association and was a finalist for the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the year contest two years. He holds a BSME from Case Institute of Technology and an MBA from the University of Buffalo. □

## B2B Discounts for BBB Accredited Businesses

### Credit/Debit Card Processing

FirstNational Merchant Solutions rates as low as 1.51% on retail transactions and 2.09% for mail and phone orders (plus a nominal fee per transaction). Small monthly fee. Call (888) 562-6737 for details.

### Document Shredding

All Ohio Secure Shred will shred documents on site for \$22/month for one container. Also, one-time bulk purge for 10 cents/lb. \$50 minimum. Call (216) 332-9850 or (888) 747-3394.

### Phone Service

Easton Telecom - Rates ranging from 2.5¢ - 3.5¢/minute for long distance calls, toll-free lines as low as 1.79¢/minute. 10% discount off all retail services. Contact Jim Butler at (800) 222-8122.

### Pre-Employment Background Reports

Intellicorp - Instant online background checks for under \$10 per report. Monthly fees waived. Call Chris Hughes for a FREE trial at (888) 290-0634.

### Payroll Service

Heartland Payroll Co. - Savings of as much as 50% on payroll fees. Call Brian Nelson at (440) 371-5245.

### Many More Discounts Available!

These are just a few of the many discounts on products and services that are available for you and your employees. See the complete list online at the new Accredited Business Web site (see story on Page 1) or call Laura Fitzgerald at (216) 623-8964 x107 and she will mail you a copy.

### Want to Offer a Discount?

Offer a discount to other BBB Accredited Businesses and their employees. We also feature discount offers for the general public on our Web site. Call Jan Stagneth at (216) 623-8964 x206 to add yours to the list.



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### BBB Request-a-Quote Brings Customers to You

Consumers who visit [cleveland.bbb.org](http://cleveland.bbb.org) can contact Accredited Businesses to request an estimate or information with a few easy clicks of a mouse. These requests are sent to you by e-mail for your response. We must have your e-mail address on file, however, for you to get these quote requests. Go to the new BBB Accredited Business pages (see story on Page 1) and review your report. You can update or provide your e-mail address online.

One more way we help consumers find trustworthy businesses - like yours.

### Using BBBOOnline?

Online shoppers have clicked on BBBOOnline seals found at Accredited Business Web sites over 250,000 times from January - March, 2010. If you are not using this free tool to promote your accreditation, call Laura Fitzgerald at (216) 623-8964 x107 and sign up today.

## Cleveland BBB Wins Best BBB in Cleveland Award (Wink Wink)

**B**BB president, David Weiss, received this e-mail last month: *"Congratulations Cleveland Bbb (sic), The Small Business Commerce Association (SBCA) is pleased to announce that Cleveland Bbb (sic) has been selected for the 2009 (Cleveland) Best of Business Award in the Better Business Bureau category."*

The message went on to say that the SBCA selection committee chose us based on nominations from surveys and other consumer input. Call us skeptics – but we weren't ready to congratulate ourselves. After all, being awarded the best BBB in Cleveland isn't such an honor when you are the ONLY BBB in Cleveland.

Our award came complete with a press release we could distribute and an attractive plaque (pictured above) and "faceted" award to display – at a purchase price of \$157.97.

SBCA is one of many business vanity offers that routinely contact companies with claims of being chosen for some sort of honor. These offers prey on a business' desire to look good and typically require "winners" to purchase their award products. Some vanity offers select multiple businesses to receive the same award within the same category and the categories can also be so specific that only a few businesses would qualify for the award.

