

Richard hourigan, inc.

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February 21, 2011

Association of Water Technologies
Attn: Mr. Trace Blackmore
9707 Key West Avenue, Suite 100
Rockville MD 20850

Dear Trace,

RE: CONFLICT OF INTEREST PROBLEM AND PROPOSED SOLUTION

I started my website in November of 2007. By 2008 I knew I would need to do something to increase my Google ranking. I began to study Search Engine Optimization (SEO) techniques, and found it was highly recommended that I get a Blog with and RSS feed. I reviewed half a dozen or more software packages, and settled on one with an RSS feed, a forum, a blog, and a calendar. I bought it, paid to have it installed, and bought a technical support package for it. At a total cost of \$1500.00 to \$2000.00.

Then I learned that the best way to be successful with a blog was to write something insightful or funny every day that people would want to read. That was not going to work for me. So I posted an article about boiler blow down in the forum instead. The instructions for the software were way too complicated. So, in February of 2009, I let www.MissedPerceptions.com become dormant though it was still functional. Over the next two years in would get one or two hits a month. I concentrated instead on developing www.TheWaterTreatmentStore.com. Thus far no conflict with AWT.

In January of 2011, I noticed a jump in hits to my website jump by 300 to 500 per day for no reason. I reviewed my stats to see where they were going. The answer was www.MissedPerceptions.com. I now had over 100 automatically approved members and 334 posts. To my horror the posts were for viagra, cheap Canadian drugs, women's clothing, and really graphic pornography. Plus, there were hyperlinks to sites from those posts. I did not know how to take this down, so I called my IT guy. He figured it out in 4 hours. The next day I had more new posts. I figured out over the next two days how block messages from members and guests from being auto-approved, how to approve/disapprove hyperlinks, and how to prevent members from being auto-approved. Good. I still want customers and potential customers to be able to ask questions, but now I have to approve them. Thus far no conflict with AWT.

I knew that Jobs was a big issue today. I also have friends that are "Head Hunters" and I am occasionally asked if I know anyone looking for a job by potential employers. I figured if I added that forum, it would also be a big draw to the site. Thus far no conflict with AWT.

Then I added a business site. That is to focus on creating a good environment for business. With my political connections I wanted to be proactive here. I hope to be able to go on offense. Rather than just report on what awful thing is coming our way, I wanted to be able to recruit 435 volunteers (one for each congressional district) to talk to lawmakers and educate them on the effect that pending legislation on water and energy policy will have on business (and jobs). Thus far no conflict with AWT.

Then I populated the site with PUBLIC forums on various aspects to include pool and spa applications and water softening applications, as well as boiler and cooling tower applications. It is all simple chemistry and I am a chemist. I should easily be able to answer questions from the general public in all of these fields. Thus far no conflict with AWT.

Now, www.MissedPerceptions.com was finally ready for promotion. I left for the Memphis BoD meeting.

While in Memphis I engaged Tim Keister in a heated debate (which most liked BTW) on solid versus liquid products. Bill Pierson told us to take it off ListServ. Mark Lewis tried to explain to me in many different ways what it was that his boss, Bill Pierson, meant and why it was inappropriate for the ListServ. So I got the bright idea: "What if I can host topics that AWT refuses to host on the ListServ?" Certainly that would be no conflict with AWT either, since they reject the topic as inappropriate. At the time I did not know if I could create "Member's Only" Forums. It took me a day after leaving Memphis to figure out that I could. So I did it. But now I needed a qualifier to decide who would get the privilege of being a trusted member. I had to separate the spammers from the desirable people. Members should be trusted. I decided that \$10.00 payable by credit card only would qualify you as a real person. It was a paltry sum, but still spammers would be unlikely to pony it up since it would reveal their true identity. I also came up with the idea of \$100.00 per company which was again very cheap. But now, I had to give them something for their money so it became the jobs and advertising of products (which originally would have been free to all, based on my approval). If I now had paying members, this would be free only to them. This, which only I created to deal with the objections of both Bill Pierson and Mark Lewis, ironically seems to have become the real problem of the conflict with AWT, based upon the letter the Executive Committee has sent to me.

I faxed your letter and the conflict of interest statement to my lawyer for review. He told me do not take www.MissedPerceptions.com down, and do not resign. He wants time to review the documents. Now, I know that I had said I could take this URL down, but that was before I got your letter and saw the true substance of your complaint.

If I strike membership option, which I never cared about in the first place, your table becomes:

	AWT	Missed Perceptions
Other Features:	Annual convention, online training tools, certification	Blog

That comparison as a "Conflict of Interest" is laughable. It seems to me to be a fairly reasonable way to resolve this issue without either of us having to spend any more money on lawyers.

Sincerely,



Dick Hourigan
Board Member

Cc: Mark Juhl, Mark Lewis, Casey Walton, Robert Lee, Heidi Zimmerman