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MIND OF A LAWYER. HEART OF A CONTRACTOR.

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Is the Better Business Bureau Worthless for Contractors?

Every now and again, we have a client contact us because one of their customers made a complaint with the Better Business Bureau, and they need it cleared up. It's a big dispute, they explain to us, and they don't want a negative mark with the BBB.

A complaint with the Better Business Bureau is a strange predicament. To avoid a negative mark with the BBB, all a contractor is really required to do is *respond* to the complaint. That's right, just respond. It doesn't matter how right or wrong you or the customer is, if the BBB gets a complaint *and* a response, they shut the book.

Another problem exists with the BBB's dispute resolution program, which binds business and consumers with cryptic contract language that - when read completely - usually doesn't bind anyone at all. The language is so sloppy that I once had a contractor client stuck having to go through the motions (and expense) of a BBB arbitration, only to get an award that was unenforceable.

All in all, in the age of Yelp! and other online reviewing companies, the BBB has become a bit of a laughing stock. This article from the Atlantic Wire demonstrates this point literally, as [the BBB was caught giving positive reviews to a neo-Nazi group and to Hamas!](#)

The disintegration of the BBB is something for contractors to keep in mind, as it seems the construction industry is still subjected to BBB complaints and heart-ache from time to time.

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