

Letters to the Editor

Cleveland homeowner scammed

To the editor:

I just read your article on GDS. My family just got scammed by that company. We needed a new spring, and we found their company in a coupon book, advertised as Cleveland's Overhead Garage Door.

The tech (Alex) came out and first wanted \$800 to \$1,000 to replace the spring. When we said we had a spring changed by another company last year for \$350, he finally agreed to a price of \$450.

After Alex changed the spring, he pressed the button to test the door. That's when the opener rail crashed down on my mother-in-law's car, parked below it (I have photos). The tech acknowledged the damage, but he still gave me a bill for \$421.97. I then noticed that his invoice came from "Fox Overhead Garage Doors, LLC" of Independence, Ohio.

The damage estimate to the car is \$673.92. I have called GDS more than 20 times about their liability, and I've emailed their rep named Breanna at clientservices@leaddriverllc.com. Breanna says that they won't pay for it because the damage was done by a part of my garage door that was not installed by Alex.

After the damage was done, I had another door company come out because after the rail fell down, the opener wouldn't work. The new company did a balance test, and the door failed (I have video of the test). They said that Alex's spring was wrong and that it caused strain on the opener. They then installed the correct spring and a new opener for \$600.

Can you help me? This company is advertising all over. I cringe at the thought of how many people are being scammed by them.

Matt Furnish
Aurora, Ohio

Update: We gave Matt a few suggestions, and he later told us that GDS finally got back to him after he filed a complaint with the Better



Business Bureau. GDS offered to refund \$450 for the spring, but they still refused to accept liability for the damage to the vehicle. Matt reported that his next step is the Ohio Attorney General.

Seattle homeowner scammed

To the editor:

I just read your article about the GDS company, and I am still so frustrated that they are in business. I was scammed last week by them. I called their customer service department, but they hung up on me. Now, it seems that they send me to voicemail every time they see my name on caller ID.

Where can I file a complaint?

(Homeowner)
Seattle, Wash.

Here are suggestions of places to contact.

1. *The BBB. You can complain to the Better Business Bureau (www.bbb.org) for your area. While certain companies are notorious for ignoring complaints, some will issue reimbursement after complaints are filed with the BBB. (See Matt Furnish's letter above.)*
2. *The media. You can call a consumer or investigative reporter for a major television station or newspaper in your area. If this doesn't get the company to respond to you, it will help others to avoid them.*
3. *The advertising company. If you found the bad company by reading an ad or a coupon, complain directly to the advertising source (e.g., Yellow Pages, Val-Pak coupon books, Groupon, Google, etc.). You might not get money back, but that medium may stop running the scammer's ads.*
4. *Contractors bureau. If your state licenses contractors, you can file a complaint with the appropriate state agency. Do a Google search for "[YOUR STATE] contractor complaints." With enough complaints, such a company can lose its contractor's license.*

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5. *The FTC. You can file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission (<https://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov/#&panel1-1>).*
6. *Review sites. You can post your complaint on online review sites such as www.angieslist.com, www.yelp.com, www.ripoffreport.com, as well as Google and Facebook. None of these will get your money back, but your complaint will help to warn others.*

Important: Be sure to keep copies of any evidence of your interactions with scammer companies. That includes their ads, a screen shot of their website, any records of telephone calls (including voicemail), and a copy of the invoice.

GDS technician tells his story

To the editor:

I was a technician for Garage Door Services in Orlando for the last year. I'm aware of your efforts to expose all of the nonsense, scams, and poor business practice of "The Worst Garage Door Company," and I thought you should hear my story.

I ran more than 850 jobs last year for GDS. I didn't have the \$400 average ticket that they want from a tech. Mine was more around the \$200 range, and I heard about it every single Monday at our weekly meetings. I don't believe in ripping people off or taking their Social Security check to fix their door. But I did so much work for GDS, they kept me around. In the end, I was tired of what they were doing to customers and their constant lack of respect for techs, so I quit.

Like many other GDS techs, they screwed me over when I left. GDS didn't pay me for my whole last month of work or give my deposit back for my parts. All in all, I figure they owe me somewhere up to \$5,000.

Thank you for trying to make things right for GDS customers as well as the GDS techs who get caught in their web.

*Frank Riggio
Orlando, Fla.*

Embracing IDEA

Tom,

Thank you for your recent editorial about IDEA. In my opinion, IDEA's best days are still ahead.

I'm glad to hear about the financial support from various manufacturers. If there had been adequate funding over the years, I believe the "E" in IDEA could be so much further along, up to and including a year-round, multi-curricular training program including hands-on and online courses. After 20 years, it is good to know that the industry is finally embracing the institute.

*Dan Apple
The Apple Group LLC
Bonita Springs, Fla.
(Dan Apple was the first president of IDEA.)*



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