



# *Return of*

## **P.O.S. Enterprises and Roger's Favorite Things**

When I owned EDM Today magazine, I penned two irregular features which alternately expressed my disdain for things that gave me grief and my admiration for things that brought me joy. Unfortunately, for reasons of political correctness and to avoid antagonizing advertisers, these features are no longer part of the magazine. However, I still come across these exceptionally poor and wonderful items, and in this month's *Rant* these two features return.



There's a burgeoning, worldwide conglomerate of unrelated companies that burden both industrial and retail consumers alike with poorly designed, poorly executed products. Because the inferior products that they occasionally foist upon me cause this anal quality professional no end of aggravation, I call them collectively – P.O.S. Enterprises which stands for Piece Of S..t – you can fill in the blanks so this blog doesn't lose its PG rating. No doubt, you too, have been victimized by their products, which, distressingly, seem to be proliferating at a disturbingly increasing rate.

I'm hoping that sharing my experiences with a representative array of P.O.S. products will prove cathartic, if not entertaining.

## Lift 'n' Peel™ Closures



This exasperating “safety” seal is utilized on an increasing number of consumer products. In theory, it’s a great idea. Lift up the tab and pull to peel off the seal. In practice, however, it’s an extremely frustrating experience. Here’s what usually happens to me:

- I lift up the tab, pull and the tab breaks off, leaving the seal firmly in place and removable only with a sharp object which often is not at hand, especially when I’m traveling.
- I lift up the tab, pull on its slippery surface with all my might and the tab remains firmly in place.

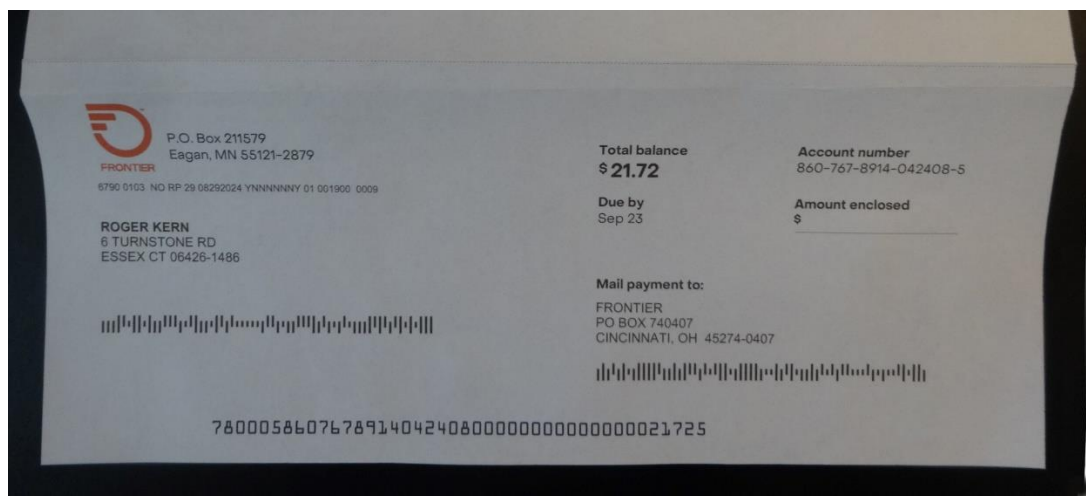
## Protruding Table Legs



The pictures above were taken at my favorite coffee shop in Old Saybrook, Connecticut. The cheap Chinese table and chair on the left have their legs splayed outward beyond the table top surface, ostensibly to increase stability. However,

when human beings pass by objects such as these, our eyes judge our proximity to the object based upon the position of the top of the object. Thus, what usually happens when we pass by an object with splayed legs, we'll invariably trip over the leg extended into our walking path. Over the years, almost every time I frequent this establishment, at least one patron collides with and trips over the extended leg. The revised design of the table on the right precludes this problem.

## Fold Does Not Match Perforation



When you receive an invoice in the mail (yeah some institutions still utilize snail mail), the invoice often includes a return stub that you must include with your remittance. However, in almost all cases, the fold line on the invoice does not match the tear off perforation resulting in the following two frustrating scenarios:

- You try to tear the stub off, and it rips.
- You crease the paper by the fold, and when you tear it off the address no longer lines up with the return envelope window.

Only by tediously refolding on the perforation line can one resolve this annoying situation.

This automatic folding folly is not limited to invoices. I once received a form from the American Society for Quality that I need to fill out and return in the supplied envelope. You guessed it: the folded form would not fit in the envelope supplied. Quality indeed!



In the "P.O.S. Enterprises" feature above I gave a list of items for which I lamented their poor design or quality. Lest I be branded as a totally disgruntled curmudgeon who finds fault with everything, I produce a similar list of items I adore rather than deplore.

If that idea for an article sounds like a shameless knock-off of an Oprah Winfrey idea....well, it is! However, I can assure you that things on my list will be quite different than hers, being a red-neck gear head type. Besides, I don't get the big bucks for paid endorsements that she does!

So, here it is.....my 2024 tribute to items that are distinguished by their outstanding design, utility or quality. Enjoy!

## Braun Shaver



Over my more than sixty years of shaving, I've tried innumerable shaving methods. While nothing matches a blade shave, my sensitive facial skin always erupted in a sea of pimples when I tried it. Thus, I have been relegated to the world of electric shavers, almost all of which result in remaining stubble rather than a close shave.

Recently, I had the opportunity to try my brother's Braun S9 PRO+ shaving system. This remarkable shaving system includes a shaver with floating head with openings to address long and short beard hairs and a charging/cleaning station that washes the shaver head. This system undoubtedly produces the closest electric shave I've ever experienced and is enhanced by legendary German engineering and quality.

## Grilled Cheese Sandwich



When I'm working at the ITP lab in New Britain, Connecticut, I always look forward to having lunch at C J's Restaurant, which offers a home cooked menu that's a far cry from the fast food outlets in town. My favorite entree is their grilled cheese sandwich. The bread is toasted on a buttered grille, and the multiple layers of cheese melted perfectly between the bread is a comfort food delight. The fresh pickle slices are the icing on the cake. And, all this for a price that's less than a meal at McDonald's.

## Honeywell Programmable Thermostats



Yes, being of a certain age, I remember the old Honeywell T87F mercury bulb thermostats that were ubiquitous in the sixties. Then came the mechanically programmable thermostats in the seventies which still utilized the mercury bulb technology.

When I built my most recent home about ten years ago, the builder installed Honeywell programmable thermostats like the one shown on the left above. More recent iterations now look like the one on the right above.

These thermostats are the greatest thing since sliced bread! They feature digital seven-day programming with multiple temperature periods for each day and hold the set temperature to within less than one degree.

However, the greatest feature of these thermostats is the built-in machine learning algorithm that learns the heat up and cool down responses of your home so that when you utilize setback temperature periods to maximize energy efficiency, it anticipates the next scheduled temperature period and automatically and dynamically adjusts the new period start times to assure the house is exactly at the right temperature when the new scheduled period begins.

Truly remarkable!