

Great News for HO Trolley Modelers! Bachmann Announces HO scale Ready-To-Run streetcar!

Bachmann displayed the pre-production model of their new ready-to-run Peter Witt streetcar at the National Train Show in Detroit in July. They have chosen to produce a model of a pre-PCC streetcar manufactured between 1928 and 1932, which to our knowledge had not been previously modeled. Peter Witt was a Cleveland Street Railway commissioner and designed a type of streetcar, known by his name, used in many North American cities and also Milan, Italy. San Francisco operates many of these Milan cars on its "F" line today. This design was distinguished from other streetcars of the era by its use of front and center doors rather than doors at both ends. The center door was used as an exit only, with a conductor stationed inside just before the door. Passengers could board through the front doors without waiting to pay, thereby reducing time lost at car stops. They could either pay fares immediately and sit in the rear of the car, or wait in front and pay just before they exited.

The production car is to have full interior and lights and will be DCC and flywheel equipped. It will be able to be powered from both track and overhead wire. In addition to Baltimore colors, the car is to be available in Chicago Surface Lines, Brooklyn & Queens Transit, Los Angeles Railway, and Saint Louis Public Service schemes along with undecorated. The Bachmann choice underscores the difficulties manufacturers face when attempting to produce a model streetcar or light rail vehicle. Except for the PCC car, every city designed their own trolley cars and as a result they were all different. They were designed in-house by a team of competent company forces without outside consultants. The last cars done in this fashion were the Kawasaki cars designed for Philadelphia's trolley lines in 1981. So although all cities listed above had Peter Witt cars of one type or another, none of them were identical. The car is a 1930 Single Ended Peter Witt streetcar based on the 6001-6150 class cars built for Baltimore. The pre-production Bachmann car is shown in the next photo.



It should be clear to all that the model shown is a Baltimore car, most likely based on car 6119 which exists today at the Baltimore Streetcar Museum (see below).



Baltimore's United Railways & Electric purchased 150 Peter Witt streetcars of a then very modern design in 1930 as part of a modernization program. Cars 6001-6050 and 6101-6150 were built by J. G. Brill while 6050-6100 were built by Cincinnati Car Co. they were all scrapped between 1949 and

KND Enterprises Lehigh Valley Transit Car 812 Kit!

A few years ago, we were introduced to John Kennedy, who had just taken the HO scale Bowser Lehigh Valley Transit (LVT) Jewett interurban and cast a model of that car after it had been converted to an Express Car and re-numbered in the C15-C19 (High C) series. We began to note that there were many fans of the LVT in eastern Pennsylvania as ardent as the Southern California fans of the Pacific Electric Railway (PERY). The more we were exposed to the LVT, the more we saw the similarities to the PERY. Both roads had unique equipment used nowhere else.



John had made only a few models of the High-C car and the shells that we obtained were at the end of the run when the mold was starting to deteriorate. We obtained one of the rejected shells and liked the car so much that we went ahead and painted and lettered it after we corrected as many of the shell defects as possible. Because of the great cooperative spirit of KND Enterprises, a Custom Traxx decal set, CN-014, was produced for that car and the C-5/C-6 Express car.



Both the C-5 and C-6 used the Bowser 125120 mechanism. KND provided us with a completed body and we painted and lettered it. We added the Bowser mechanism and have been operating it at shows since September 2002. Since we have been evaluating traction kits that use the Bowser traction mechanism, we acquired the latest offering from John, now called KND Enterprises, the LVT 812. This is a cast resin one piece body with a laser cut wood floor designed to accept the Bowser 125120 mechanism.



While some manufacturers advertise that they welcome customer feedback and really don't, John openly discusses development and production of his kits in an open and honest manner. John also cooperates with other traction manufacturers as his kit is designed for Bowser mechanisms and Custom Traxx truck sideframes.

The story of the prototype car 812 is even more interesting. The car was constructed in 1914 at the Gordon Street Shops on the frame of St. Louis Car 159.



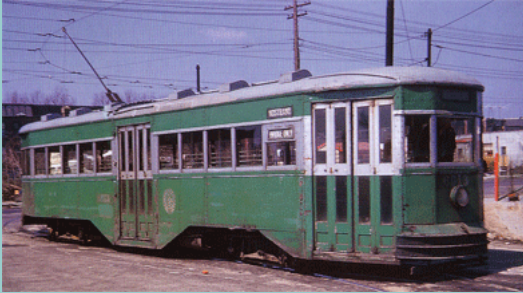
as private car 999. Car 159 had been seriously damaged in a derailment at Nazareth Junction in 1903. The car was electrically equipped similar to the 800-811 Jewett class and could 'train' with them. As a private car it was equipped with a kitchen, dining area, club room and lavatories. In 1921, it was converted to a passenger car and renumbered 812 with an interior resembling the 800-811 Jewett-built cars. It outlasted all twelve of them and was around at the end of the LVT in 1951. The view below is of the rear end of car 812:



The car was scrapped on November 14, 1951 at the Bethlehem Steel Works. More information can be found in Trolley Talk #70, September 1968 or "The Liberty Bell Route's Heavy Interurban Cars" published July 1, 1969 by the Lehigh Valley Chapter, NRHS, Inc Allentown, PA.

1956 with only car 6119 being saved and sent to a museum. They were all four motor cars, 46' long, seated 52 patrons and rode on Brill 177-E1X trucks.

Brooklyn had very similar but not identical cars as shown in the next photo. They were the 6000-6199 series built in 1930-1931. Cars 6000-6099 and 6150-6199 were built by J. G. Brill and 6100-6049 by Osgood Bradley. Car 6054-6099 were scrapped in the 1930s, while the rest were scrapped in 1951. Car 6013 is shown in the next photograph. None survive.



Chicago also had 100 Peter Witt cars, called Rail Sedans. These cars, series 3322-3381 were built in 1929 by CSL themselves (3322-3341 & 6199-6218), J. G. Brill (3342-3361); Cummings (3362-3381) and the Lightweight Noiseless streetcar Co (6219-6238). They were all scrapped from the late 1940's to 1953. Car 3330 is shown in the next photo. None survive.



The Saint Louis Peter Witt cars were a little older in design and one of them, Car 707, is shown next:



Los Angeles Railway had only two Peter Witt cars, 2601 & 2602, both double end cars built by St. Louis Car Co, as experimental cars in 1930. Both cars were considered "odd" cars on the system, having tremendous overhang on curves. They were used mainly on one line with few curves, the '7', although they did run with PCC cars on Pico Boulevard from 1939 to 1941. Car 2602 is shown below, but 2601 survives at the Orange Empire Railway Museum.

We obtained our copy of the LVT 812 kit at the East Penn Meet in May 2007 and proceeded to begin to assemble it. We were immediately impressed with the laser cut wood floor. The wood detail of the underside of the floor was so beautiful that we refused to paint it. We merely sealed it and only painted the cross members, leaving the planking untouched. We were in the process of completing the kit at press time. It was capable of overhead operation and had run on the club test track but finishing was not yet completed. There were some issues with the kit but it was a pleasure to discuss the issues with KND Enterprises. So we will be reporting about assembly of this car in the next issue.

KND Enterprises provided a set of detailed instructions with the kit. The eight page instruction booklet is accompanied by HO scale drawings of the car in both the 1936 and 1942 configurations, interior floor plans, underbody equipment layout and a list of paint colors, translated into normal modeling paints such as Floquil, Scalecoat, Testors, Pactra, etc. In addition, photos of a painted model in the 1942 configuration are shown on the [KND web site](#).

(John Kennedy, from column 1)

Our grandchildren, Cody (left) and Cindy (right) are also shown in the office. Cindy is holding an O-scale shell of the LVT 812. Some of you have seen them supporting KND at the East Penn Meet and other shows.



With my wife and grandchildren helping me and all the legal stuff out of the way, my attention could be turned back to trolley car manufacturing of the LVT C5 freight motor kit.

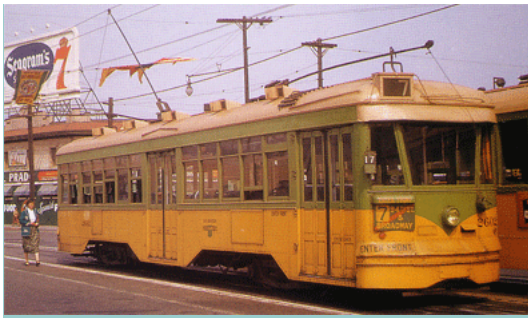
George: Is kit making difficult? Are there pitfalls that you can share with us?

John: How do you make a kit? That's a good question! And I did not really know. I had to find manufacturers or suppliers that make the necessary parts to go into a kit? I have a friend, John Green of Bethlehem Car Works, who produces Railroad Head End car kits in both wood and brass. I was making his car drawings for his instruction sheets and photo etching layouts for the brass sides of the railroad cars. We joined forces to make the LVT C5 kit. He did what he does best and I did the rest. With this co-operative venture, I learned a lot about kit making. It sometimes overwhelmed me but it all came together somehow. The kit was done and KND had its first car to sell.

If your readers care to know, it takes about one year to bring a kit to the point of sale. This is all money up front. Hopefully, previous kits sold will help with the start up costs. But DO NOT COUNT ON IT!

Developing a kit is a challenging but extremely rewarding activity. Having firmly decided on providing models of LVT vehicles as a company goal, the process consisted of the following steps.

1. Gathering all the information you can using books, photos, plans or any other data available from any source.
2. When deciding whether to make a freight or passenger car, freight is usually the easiest.
3. Decide whether the model should be of a steel or wood prototype! Wood car prototypes can often be the easiest because the wood is laser cut. Steel cars usually have rivets and are more complicated to do. In addition, they need to be photo-etched. This means a large expenditure.
4. The major problem with making a model of any kit, wood or steel, is that the drawings and specifications must be correct. You get back from the manufacturers and subcontractors what you submitted, whether it was right or wrong. Checking drawings, sketches and photos should be done with the help of as many qualified associates that you can muster. You can not check everything or even remember to check everything. Remember, you will get back from the manufacturers what you submitted. Changes will cost you. A wrong model will cost you more. I am aware of more than one excellent model that while the casting techniques used were world class, the final model had errors in it that



In pointing out the differences in the cars in the various cities, we intend absolutely no criticism of Bachmann's decision to market the car in colors other than Baltimore, we just wanted to show the actual cars and the variances that streetcars had from city to city. This made streetcars so colorful. In our discussions with Lee Riley of Bachmann, he made us aware that last year Bachmann had upgraded the power truck in their HO scale PCC and Brill trolleys. We had not yet seen one of these but will be looking for one of those also to test. We applaud the decision to make a ready-to-run streetcar with DCC. We hope that other manufacturers will make other cars to provide more variety. There are a ton of trolley lovers out there and many more cities that used Peter Witt cars, such as Cleveland, Detroit, Indianapolis, Philadelphia & Pittsburgh. Plus San Francisco today operates a few ex-Milan Peter Witt cars on its fabulous "F-line".

A Frank Conversation with a Resin Kit Producer!

During the East Penn Traction Club meet in May 2007, we were fortunate to have a conversation with John Kennedy of KND Enterprises. We first met John when he cast the first of his kits, a resin cast shell for the LVT Jewett after some of them were converted to C15-C19 series Express Motors. It was such a nice model that Custom Traxx agreed to develop and produce a set of decals for it and the subsequently issued wooden kits of the C5-C7 series Express Motors. We wanted to know what motivated a person to produce resin kits and why models of Lehigh Valley Transit vehicles. John always was the type of person that discussed all aspects, both positive and negative, of his kits in a frank manner. So, since the Times believes strongly that resin kits are essential to the survival of the HO scale model traction hobby, Trolleyville reporter George Huckaby interviewed John and the following was that conversation:

George: What got you started in trolley modeling in the first place?

John: I have always been interested in trolley cars. My father was a motorman at the PTC Germantown Car Barn and later on the Broad Street Subway in Philadelphia, Pa. However, my main interest in trolleys is because of my use of them going to and from high school. It was an hour ride using the Route 23 trolley on Germantown Ave and the Route 56 trolley on Erie avenue.

The primary cars used were the 1947 PCC cars on Route 23 but on the return trip sometimes older cars were used for the school trippers. One did not appreciate the trolley cars until one did not come when scheduled to pick you up, especially when going home (i.e. a traffic accident or blinding snow storm). I lived a few blocks from the Germantown Car Barn, so I saw all kinds of equipment in those days. You could walk up and touch one then without being shot as an assumed terrorist.

When I was finally old enough, I joined the Buckingham Valley Trolley Association (BVTA) and operated trolleys on the New Hope and Ivyland Railroad. Later, I operated cars on the Delaware Avenue Penns Landing Line in Philadelphia until it was closed in 1995. About 2002, my employer decided to shut down his business due to lack of work at the time. No

detracted from the overall work. In other words, if you have some good friends familiar with the project, they are worth their weight in gold. I have a fellow trolley modeler, Jim Maurer, who builds the first car of each new kit. He also paints and decals the kit. He makes comments on improving the kit or the instructions. The corrections are made and then the kit is turn over to another person to photograph the car and add it to the web site. Jim is shown below at the workbench with two KND assembled kits.



Also, both my grandson and granddaughter help me with the kits. They attend shows and assist me in staffing the sale table. They make the show much more enjoyable, especially during those "slow" periods. In other words, working with others increases the fun of the hobby and lessens the possibility of big mistakes. Working alone is not as enjoyable and is just not usually smart!

5. When you have everything manufactured outside and bring the parts in house to make kits, you are at the mercy of the outside suppliers. This is when you learn who not to use and how to use those that you do. Also, you need to keep stock on hand for additional kits. It is amazing how much work is done after hours or on Saturday or Sunday. Besides kit making supplies, you also need the normal office equipment to run a business.

6. Some of the skills you need to have or acquire to ensure success are:
 ---Knowledge and Understanding of manufacturing practices;
 ---Willingness to get Educated on various methods of kit manufacturing;
 ---Understanding laser workings, white metal castings and resin castings;
 ---Ability to write and edit instructions that will work in assembling a kit;
 ---Management Ability - As a small business in a small hobby, you have got to make sure that it all gets done and done correctly. If you don't have a skill, you acquire it, rent it or buy it!

George: I presently have three of your kits. You provided one for me and I am building the other two. What kits are in your future?

John: I have about six LVT kits that need to be finished including two brass models, three Philadelphia and Western car kits and two Red Arrow (Philadelphia Suburban Transit) cars. I am also looking at various PRT freight motors but no specific cars have been picked.

One of the more important things to always pay attention to the customer's suggestions and critiques. Their suggestions are usually helpful in the area of kit manufacturing or to ease future customers in navigating/understanding the Web Site.

George: Thanks for the time. It has always been a pleasure to talk with you! Now to get back to completing your LVT 812 kit!

Customer Gripes about Internet Vendors!

In our last issue, we asked our readers about their gripes with internet suppliers and vendors. We were especially interested in your inputs. A group of model railroaders and hobbyists had been discussing this earlier in the year and we thought it would be interesting to hear from more of you. We asked that you tell us your gripes about internet vendors but not mention the name of any specific dealer. We intended to try and ascertain what the largest gripes were

one was hiring due to a slow economy, so I had plenty of free time on my hands and looked for something to do. Due to suggestions from my modeling friends, I decided to make some of the trolley cars that I always talked about. The more I thought about it, the more my interest grew. The problem was what car to make and how to make it. I figured making trolleys should be done as a small business. But I had no knowledge on how to run a small business, or even how to create a small business.

George: So what finally got you over the hump?

John: Back in the late 70's I worked for a well known small appliance manufacturer. I was in the manufacturing sector and noticed the model shop using RTV molds to produce parts for their new products in development. This made me wonder how I could use this technology for possible model making. The model shop showed me how it was done and I was on my way. I purchased some RTV and resin materials and was ready to mold. That was the easy part, another EAST PENN member, Ed Torpey, had car masters that I could borrow and try to mold a car. He used auto putty in single sided molds but I was going to mold in one piece we made about 15 castings of the 5200 class double ended Philadelphia city car. Flushed with success I built a wood model of a Philadelphia snow sweeper and casted more cars. These units looked OK for the time but still could be improved upon. Next I modified a BOWSER LVT 800 car into a high C (C15-C19) freight motor and molded a shell using a different type of resin. Previous to this, the 5200 car and the snow sweeper had been sitting around for about six months when one was picked up to show a visitor of our progress. Disaster struck as the persons fingers went right thru the window posts as the resin had become brittle as glass. Thus that night we destroyed what was left of the remaining car bodies about a year of work and a lot of dollars went into the trash can in many small pieces. The new resin high C's did much better and some were sold to other modelers on an as is bases.

George (interjecting): Now I know where those three 5200 bodies that I have had for years came from. I also have one of your "as-is" LVT Hi-C shells. Ed Torpey was one of my dearest friends from 1962 until he passed away in 2004. I really miss him every time I work on a model trolley car.

John: Ed was a great guy. We all miss him. He had a heart as big as the entire country. You have three 5200 bodies out in California that are still together? They probably are the only ones left. Needless to say after that mess molding any other cars was quickly forgotten. Now that I decided to make trolley car kits, they had to have the quality of the finest wood kits made for model railroading. These would have to be kits that I would buy myself and be proud to display to my friends, not leave in the box hidden away from view. My intent was to produce a quality kit that meets the standards of even the serious modeler. I wanted to produce a car that when assembled and finished could be entered into contests and hopefully winning at least honorable mention. But the kit should be able to be successfully built by a novice modeler who just wanted a good looking car for his layout. Now that I had decided in what direction I wanted to go, the next step was to formulate and implement a plan.

My trolley interest was in the Southeastern Pennsylvania area. The problem was that other manufacturers had already produced Philadelphia area trolley cars. What to do? The saying goes, "Go West Young Man, Go West". Noting the huge interest among certain East Penn Traction Club members for the Lehigh Valley Transit, why not model cars from that road. Ok! I went north! We considered this a good idea as other than the Bowser Jewett car and selected brass models, none were on the market. LVT had a Philadelphia Division which ran to 69th Street Terminal over the tracks of the Philadelphia & Western. We looked through my Library for LVT information looking for a car that would be interesting to model. Should it be a passenger or a freight car? We decided on a freight car. Needless to say, data was scarce.

George (interjecting): Tell me about it! Try getting accurate colors for a decal set on a car that has not run since 1930!

without any bias. The email responses were not surprising and we had some very interesting phone calls.

We have no idea if these comments applied solely to model traction vendors, mode train vendors or general internet vendors. We specifically did not want to hear the names of any vendors and most of you complied. But a few of the most irritated told us the specific offenders. Unfortunately, the Times is cognizant of all of those vendors mentioned. Many gripes were mentioned more than once. The gripes are arranged below in no specific order.

1. Listing a phone number as a "**contact**" that is hardly ever answered, always answered by answering machines or is only a fax number.
2. Not answering phone messages in a timely manner or not at all. Answering machines which have been allowed to fill up so no incoming messages can be recorded. Worse yet, stating up front that the owners of the business are too otherwise occupied for one reason or another to have time to talk to customers.
3. Listing products as "**Available Now**" or "**Available for Immediate Shipment**" that really are not and actually admitting that after orders are placed.
4. Refusing to acknowledge emails within two business days and/or answering with obvious "untruths" or blaming the problem on "computers".
5. Telling customers that they will accomplish some action, and then do something entirely different.
6. Selling items that require assembly but have unclear, complicated, poorly written, vague or inconsistent assembly instructions and there is no way to have a conversation with a 'live' person when a problem is encountered.
7. Claiming to encourage customer feedback about products but when customers attempt this, they are met with unwelcome responses, rudeness, open hostility or even worse unprofessional behavior.
8. Either not testing or insufficiently testing products prior to release for public sale or releasing a product with known problems and not warning the customer at the time of purchase.
9. Inadequately packaging products prior to shipment.
10. Taking excessive time in making deliveries and then blaming the U. S. Post Office, or concocting some other falsehood.

While we are aware that a lot of small manufacturers are conducting their businesses in their "spare" time and hold other full time employment, there simply is no excuse for gripes #1, #2 & #4, especially with all the excellent communication devices available today. These suppliers often have one-of-a-kind type products and so they get away with it. In some of these cases, you are better off not talking to the vendor. You do not get your problem resolved and you sometimes have a very unpleasant exchange. Fortunately in some cases, another vendor develops and markets a better product and we are rid of these folks.

Then there is gripe #3. With all the accidental and intentional misuse of English words today, Webster's Dictionary defines "available" as "present or ready for immediate use". Adding the word "now" just accentuates the claimed immediate access. Listing items as Available or Available now that are not "present or ready for immediate use" is just a way of appearing to have more product that is actually on hand. This is a method often used by dishonest supplier to appear larger than actually is the case.

In a small market such as the traction portion of the model railroading hobby, some of these practices can be very destructive to the progress of the hobby. One of many readers that mentioned gripe #7 discussed with us in great detail how he hesitated to give any feedback to any model railroad supplier due to the horrible reception that he had received at one. What suppliers do not realize is that the appropriate and correct response to any product suggestion, observed error or deficiency or complaint is "**Thank You**" not a ranting diatribe.

During the collection of this data, we became aware of some vendors that employ almost all of the practices above. These vendors have no idea of how badly they are hurting their businesses and how much money that they are losing. In some cases, the products are really "top-notch" and the

John: Right! Well we decided on the LVT freight motors built by Jewett. LVT had three units Car C5, C6, and C7. To our surprise, books showed plenty of passenger car plans but no freight motors. That put the brakes on things for a while.

At this point, my former employer called me and stated he was starting an engineering group for another company and would I be interested in joining the group. Of course I was. This put the LVT project on the back burner but not forgotten. Later as time permitted, the back burner was re lighted and I started asking people for help in finding LVT freight car plans.

I asked members of East Penn Traction Club if they knew of any LVT freight car plans that I could borrow or copy. No one had any knowledge of any LVT freight car plans. Next, I tried the Railways To Yesterday library based in Allentown. They also had no knowledge of the LVT freight cars. To the rescue, came one East Penn Club Member who lived in Allentown, Andy Maginnis, who had made sketches with measurements of some cars at the LVT Fairview Car Barn. He generously loaned us his sketches to make drawings. Luckily, LVT C5 was one of the sketches. Now we had the car chosen and plans to build it. With all of this done, it was time to start the company.

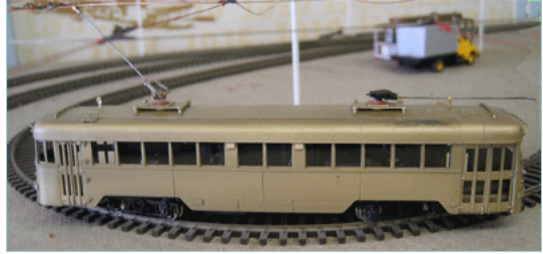
KND Enterprises Inc. was born in June 2002. However, it just was not going to be a strictly my business, but one that my wife could actively participate. Actually, she owns the business. This business is really a family-fun operation. My wife, in addition to handling some of the business operations spends some of her time with some of her friends making quilts for wounded veterans. I am shown below in the office along with my wife and her quilts in the two photos below:



(See John Kennedy, Col. 2)

The Philadelphia Suburban Transit (PSTCo) Double End "Brilliner" Model Arrives!

On Saturday, August 18th, Trolleyville acquired possession of one of the first production models of the PSTCo Brilliner model and immediately started to prepare it for operation for the September 8-9 display of the Southern California Traction Club (SCTC). Below is our car being tested on the six inch radius curve of the SCTC test track. It is a very smooth and quiet runner even at that tight a radius! The car runs at 22 to 25 scale miles per hour at 7.0 volts D.C. We are in the process of painting and lettering our car and we will show it when completed. More in our next issue but it is a smooth and quiet runner!



Coming In The Next Issue!
The MTS Imports, Inc. HO scale Philadelphia Suburban Trans'n Co 1941 Brilliner!
The HO scale SEPTA 1981 Kawasaki Single End Light Rail Vehicle kit with Bowser Power!
Coming In A Future Issue!
The Hollywood Foundry Lo Boy drive for HO scale Soho Los Angeles Railway Streetcars (and others)!

biggest drawback to their success is the lack of good business practices and the temperament of the owner/proprietors.

The overwhelming complaint that seemed to connect most of the responses was the inability to easily contact some of these people and getting little or no satisfaction when contact is made. We have even heard of a customer being belittled as not having sufficient intelligence to understand the instructions as supplied. We are aware of the ability of this particular modeler and the problem was not with the modeler.

The bottom line is that many of the smaller suppliers are **NOT** businessmen. They are sometimes hobbyists who decided to market products that they wanted, needed or had the knowledge and ability to make. Many of them never thought about or are incapable of the discipline and attention that running a business requires. If you read strange, unfriendly, out of the ordinary things on their "about us" page on their web site, be prepared to get strange, unfriendly or out of the ordinary responses. Once more thing. A fantastic web site does not always correlate into fantastic products or services. It just tells you that the company has a fantastic web designer.

More and more of our lives are being shifted to computer related activities and internet based businesses. Like any other business area, if you allow poor service, you will sometimes get even poorer service later. Caveat Emptor! If you demand good customer service, you usually get it. Eventually, those businesses, who are known for poor service, usually have to improve or go out of business. Many modelers work long and hard for their money. So spend it only with businesses that show their appreciation and respect for their customers. If in doubt about the reputation of any model traction vendor, contact the Times.

