



# The Silver Snail

## THE ULTIMATE ROAD TRIP

*Celebrating the beauty of America and exploring the art of nomadic living.*

August 22, 2011

Dear Peter Orthwein and Christian Farman,

I am writing to you because of a significant concern I am having with Airstream. In 2007, I purchased a new Airstream. Since then, I have had continuous problems with it, and most recently the floor has rotted out, at 3.5 years of ownership. Please read the attached letter that was originally directed to Larry Huttle and Bob Wheeler, dated June 15, 2011, outlining my experiences and complaints.

I have been dealing with Larry Huttle and feel that I am not getting the proper attention that a member of the Airstream family deserves. I have not received basic, timely professional courtesy and it appears that unfair pricing tactics are now being presented to me. This issue has been grossly neglected and deserves proper attention.

Mr. Huttle and I wrapped up our face-to-face communication when I was in Jackson Center on June 24, 2011. He offered me my full purchase price in trade for a new model, fresh off the line. He also agreed to give me an extended 4-year warranty on the floor. He was about to start traveling and assured me he would be available by phone and email and that his staff would get me the appropriate pricing and scheduling information quickly. It was not until July 20, FOUR WEEKS LATER, that I finally received the purchase order for the unit I requested.

This was an unacceptable amount of time to delay a corrective measure.

I had decided on a 25' model with some small special requests and many options. The final trade value was approximately 8% off MSRP and I confirmed with my bank that I was pre-approved for the additional cost. The new model was scheduled to come off the line September 6. I thought the price was high, but agreed to the deal in order to get the trailer into production. The trade involved an additional investment in Airstream, but I was willing to take the risk just one more time. Remember, I purchased a brand new Airstream trailer in 2007 because I believed they were built to last. Mine failed, but I had heard that *others had not*. I was willing to make this deal and give Airstream a second chance to prove that my failed model was not representative of Airstream's standards.

With the purchase order finally in hand, I was able to finalize the arrangements of my loan. Once the bank received the p.o., I was informed that there was an error and the bank would not finance the full amount necessary for this larger, newer trailer. So, a week after I had received the final p.o., I sent an email to Larry Huttle explaining the situation and requesting pricing on smaller models with less options. I sent that email on July 31. Ten days later, on August 9, I received a response stating a ballpark trade value for a 23' would be just *over* the MSRP. An additional nine days after that, on August 18, I received a response that a trade value for a 20' model would be close to *\$2k over* the MSRP. I immediately responded with an email to Mr. Huttle requesting all options be removed to bring the price down. It is now August 22 and I am still waiting for fair pricing on a base model 20'.

It should be noted that a salesperson at a major Airstream dealership informed me that a discount of 12-15% could be expected off the MSRP of new models.

I would like to resolve this issue quickly and fairly and I would like to remind you of Thor Industries Business Ethics Policy with regards to Fair Dealing:

*"We are committed to maintaining the highest levels of integrity and fairness within our Company. You must not take unfair advantage of anyone (customers, employees, contractors and even competitors) through manipulation, concealment, abuse of privileged information, misrepresentation of material facts, fraud or any other unfair-dealing practice."*

The deal that Larry Huttle and I agreed on was the full purchase price of my trailer applied to trade for a 2012 model, with a 4-year extended warranty on the floor. A fair price on a current model should be 12-15% off MSRP.

I have been keeping an online travel log of my life on the road ([www.thesilversnail.com](http://www.thesilversnail.com)) that has been gaining an audience exponentially. Many of the 1000+ subscribers are very interested in the Airstream brand and my experience with it. This negligent delay has caused me to cancel reservations, change strategic marketing plans, and put my business projects in an extended holding pattern, losing valuable revenue.

Please contact me to resolve this matter immediately and fairly.

Thank you,

Sharon Pieniak  
[www.TheSilverSnail.com](http://www.TheSilverSnail.com)