

I've been where you are now: skimming the reviews for Karl Business Machines, reading the testimonials on their web site, and perhaps entertaining the notion of contacting this small business. You might even wonder if all the glowing reviews are legit; one can scarcely find any negative comments or feedback concerning Rick and his team of experts. As it turns out, there is a reason (several reasons, actually) Karl Business Machines has a chorus of praise from its' patrons.

For starters, you will not find a better typewriter shop anywhere in the region, possibly in the world. Everything you've heard about Rick's legendary customer service, professionalism, and the quality of their work is real. It is a pleasure and an honor to join others in expressing appreciation and gratitude for Karl Business Machines in the hopes of promoting this exceptional company.

I've owned more than a dozen manual typewriters in my lifetime. Some were inherited, others I've purchased secondhand in various states of neglect or disrepair. I've bought enough machines that I'm confident I can differentiate between a typewriter that merely "looks good" and one that is, in fact, good: a reliable tool you can sit down with and pour page after page of scriverings into, seamlessly and smoothly, without issue.

Let me clear: when you buy a machine from Rick, you're not getting a worn-out typewriter somebody dusted off with a bit of compressed air, sprayed with rattle-can paint from the local hardware store, and over-lubricated with (dare I say it) WD-40. Perish the thought! What you're getting from Karl Business Machines is a lovingly handcrafted hot-rod of a typewriter with buttery-smooth carriage movements and snappy keystrokes that can keep up with high-speed, caffeine-fueled bursts of creative writing. You're also getting a machine with a custom, durable, baked-on finish that (adequately cared for) will last for generations. Finally, you're getting a typewriter that looks exceptional and works just as hard as the writer.

A typewriter from Karl Business Machines is not a disposable commodity like the expensive, unreliable portable computing devices commonly used today. The typewriters Rick sells are heirlooms; these machines will outlive their owners with mindful use and storage. Try finding a writing instrument of this caliber on Amazon or eBay; once you discover how scarce and special this is, call Rick.

In addition to making fantastic writing machines, Rick is a genuine customer-focused businessman. He surprised me with his playful honesty and generosity. For example, I first met Rick after a 7+ hour drive from my home to his shop in central New Jersey to bring my beloved 1949 Royal Quiet De Luxe typewriter to him for service. Rick and his team of experts carefully inspected the machine and found the issue was most likely not the machine, but how I was using it.

Rick taught me that manual typewriters have a "personality" of sorts; they don't all work the same way or respond to the same technique equally as well. For example, consider the variety of ways in which musical instruments are played, like guitars. The way one plays a classical acoustic guitar differs from the approaches one might use with electric jazz or rock guitars. A good musician knows which techniques work best with which instruments; likewise, a good typist knows which methods work best with which typewriters.

Rick knew this and was kind enough to communicate it to me in a way that preserved my... "dignity." His insight helped me approach my Royal QDL from a new perspective, and I'm pleased to say his diagnosis was both accurate effective. My beloved old typewriter and I are writing better together than we ever have.

Now for the surprising part: I live in southeastern Virginia, many hours of driving from Karl Business Machines. Rick offered to ship my typewriter home free of charge. FREE! I would say that *never* happens in this day and age, but it did, and I owe it to Rick's astounding generosity.

A month or so later, I ran into a problem with another one of my typewriters: an Olivetti Lettera 32. These machines use a unique ribbon knob (flanged nut) to secure the spools and advance the ribbon. My typewriter was missing one, and I needed a replacement to get it working again. Rick said he would send me one free of charge. He did more than that: he sent me two! I was pleasantly surprised (again), and while I appreciated Rick's incredible generosity, I wanted to support his small business; free services and parts do not "keep the lights on."

When Rick called to make sure I received the parts he sent me at no cost, I mentioned how fond I was of the custom typewriters on the Karl Business Machines website. I shared with him the volume of writing I do and my fast-paced "style" of typing. Rick promptly suggested the Olympia SM3 I am presently using to draft this review. Having spent some time with this typewriter, I'm pleased to report his recommendation was spot-on. It would seem Rick can pair a typist with a typewriter in the same way a renowned chef can pair foods and drinks into a delectable meal.

Rick walked me through all the options, and after a couple of months of waiting, I was beyond excited to finally receive my custom writing machine. I've included pictures here to give you a sense of how beautiful this typewriter is. I believe this machine is in better condition now than it was the day it came off the factory assembly line.

The Olympia SM3 De Luxe Rick and the team at Karl Business Machines put together for me is distinctive; it makes writing an absolute pleasure. It has a "touch" unlike any of my other typewriters. Somehow it managed to displace my beloved 1949 Royal Quiet De Luxe as my prized typewriter—the crown jewel of my small collection. If you order a custom typewriter from the artisans at Karl Business Machines, it will be worth every penny you pay for it and then some.

If there is one thing about Karl Business Machines that concerns me, it is the dread of a world without Rick and his team of experts. I can hardly imagine how many decades of combined experience they have in the art and science of servicing and restoring manual typewriters. Even so, I hope they find some passionate young apprentices devoted to learning their uncommon yet exquisite craft. If you want an heirloom-grade typewriter, I strongly recommend getting your order in sooner rather than later; this is a rare opportunity to own a world-class, high-caliber writing machine.