



Database Disaster | Information for Database Designer, *Krazy Kool Database Designs*

You are the founder and sole owner of Krazy Kool Database Designs; you are also the primary database designer. Several months ago you were contacted by Ballin' Brownies, a locally-based bakery that recently expanded from one to three stores and was looking to upgrade its database. You agreed to create a database for Ballin' Brownies, valued at \$40,000. The contract you signed specified that you would be paid \$20,000 up front and the additional \$20,000 upon completion of the project.

This was the biggest contract you had ever landed. You put a lot of time and energy into building the database. It was such a big project that you ran a few weeks over the agreed upon delivery date getting it done. A few days after you delivered the completed database, the owner of Ballin' Brownies called you and said that the database was late and wasn't working properly. The owner refused to pay you the \$20,000 you were expecting upon completion. Upon review, you noticed that the language in your contract was unclear about what effect either late delivery or glitches in the final database would have on final payment.

During the call, the owner of Ballin' Brownies told you something about the program freezing and deleting information. The owner kept saying that the whole project was a waste of money and time, and it was a huge mistake. You got frustrated and raised your voice because the owner would not give you any specifics about what was wrong and would not talk about ways to fix the database. You need the \$20,000!

You believe that you built a functional database based on the technical specifications you received from the Ballin' Brownies' IT person, John Hacker. You strongly suspect that if the database isn't working it is because you were given the wrong specifications. (Note: even if you had the specifications with you, which you do not, it would still be a matter of opinion as to whether they were right or wrong as you do not have access to all of the information about Ballin' Brownies' systems to verify them.)

You are very concerned about getting paid and the reputation of your business because the owner may be telling other potential clients that you built a bad database. In fact, you had hoped to get referrals from this project since it is the largest you have ever done.

You spoke to your attorney about suing for the \$20,000 and he suggested mediation because of your concern for your business reputation. You wrote an email to the owner who agreed to mediation. You could still go to court if the mediation is unsuccessful, but you really don't want to pay the legal fees or wait for the case to work its way through the courts.



Database Disaster | Information for Bakery Owner, *Ballin' Brownies*

You are the owner of Ballin' Brownies, a local bakery. For many years, you had only one location. Due to a recent spike in popular demand for delicious baked goods, however, you opened two new locations. You discovered that you could no longer keep track of inventory, orders, sales, calendars, tasks, customers and employees using only spreadsheets and decided to upgrade your database. You contacted a local database design company, Krazy Kool Database Designs, and ordered a database valued at \$40,000, an enormous investment for your company. You agreed to pay \$20,000 up front and the other \$20,000 upon completion of the database.

A new, functioning, and user-friendly database was very important for your growing business. You needed it to keep track of what you had in stock, how many baked goods you were selling, what orders you had, what was going on at each store each day, what each store had to get done, who your customers were and when your employees would be at work.

Krazy Kool Database Designs delivered the database almost a month late and, within a few days of installing it, you began noticing serious problems. The database was freezing, randomly deleting information and not generating reports, among other issues. Because of these problems, you refused to pay the second \$20,000. Upon review, you noticed that the language in your contract was unclear about what effect either late delivery or glitches in the final database would have on final payment. The database designer from Krazy Kool was insistent that the database matched the specifications that they were given; and therefore, it is not their fault. The database designer became so hostile on the phone that you do not want them coming back to your bakery.

You know that your IT person, John Hacker, sent the specifications to Krazy Kool Database Designs. You have no idea if the specifications were right or wrong, but you were recently forced to fire John for poor job performance. You imagine Krazy Kool would use this information against you if they knew it. You are concerned that if you work out some deal in which Krazy Kool fixes the database, they will charge you more than the remaining \$20,000 if the initial specifications were wrong. So, you are leaning toward hiring someone else with the \$20,000. However, this will probably take much more time than Krazy Kool fixing it.

You are very frustrated with the database, which is just increasing your headaches, and with Krazy Kool Database Designs. You are wondering if you made a mistake pursuing the project in the first place. The database designer sent you an email suggesting mediation regarding the \$20,000, to which you agreed. The email alluded to "avoiding filing a lawsuit..." You really do not want to pay legal fees or have your time taken over by litigation.