BUSINESS

Martin Klimek / New York Times

**Neville Boston leads Reviver Auto, a company that makes digital license plates. It has permission to sell a limited number in California as part of a pilot program, and test runs are launching soon in other states.**

# The ordinary license plate: Its days may be numbered

## California cars try out digital displays with Internet, GPS — even ad rebates

**By Eric A. Taub**
NEW YORK TIMES

The mundane vehicle license plate, along with the windshield wiper a virtually unchanged vestige from the dawn of the automobile, is in the midst of a 21st-century makeover.

Several companies are applying digital technology to what has long been just a slab of metal, in hopes of making it cheaper to update your vehicle's registration — and turning it into a portal to the connected world.

Such changes benefit the vehicle owner as well as state motor vehicle regulators, according to Reviver Auto, a company in Foster City, Calif., that has developed technology to swap old-fashioned stamped plates for digital screens.

"This is not about a license plate," Reviver's chief executive, Neville Boston, said. "It's about connection. With a digital plate, you can be all connected in just one place."

Reviver Auto's RPlate can be validated via cellular signal when registration fees are paid, saving a state the cost of postage and materials for paper renewals.

The screen can display anything, making it easy to switch designs if an owner wants to buy a vanity plate. Amber Alerts can be flashed on the plate; if the vehicle is stolen, the plate can be changed to display that fact.

San Francisco Chronicle

**Reviver's digital license plates require Internet and are GPS-enabled.**

When the vehicle is parked, businesses can display advertisements on the plate, even targeting a vehicle's particular location because the plate is connected to GPS. The GPS would also allow commercial fleet owners to track their vehicles.

And an included RFID tag, for the radio frequency identification used to pay automated tolls, means there's no need for a separate E-ZPass transponder.

To make it work, Reviver uses the E Ink technology that's in tablet book readers like the Kindle and Nook. The system produces a bright black-and-white image.

The 2-pound unit is able to withstand strong winds and rain, and can operate between minus-40 and 185 degrees. The image will remain even if the unit runs out of power.

Reviver has permission to sell the plates in California as part of a pilot program. The test will run through this year, with a report due in 2020. State legislation authorizing a pilot program for alternatives to traditional plates and stickers was signed in 2013, and Reviver was the only bidder.

"The purpose of the pilot is to identify and detail potential benefits, so we are still in the evaluation phase and won't make any determinations until the pilot concludes," said Marty Greenstein, a spokesman for the state's Department of Motor Vehicles.

As part of the program, the city of Sacramento has already affixed digital plates to 24 of its Chevy Bolts and will display various messages on them. No more than half a percent of the registered vehicles in the state, about 170,000, will be allowed to use a digital rear plate. The front remains standard issue, and the driver must carry a regular rear plate in the vehicle in case the digital version malfunctions.

There should be no problem keeping the number of takers low, as the high price of the plate is sure to suppress sales.

The consumer version of the RPlate, sold through auto dealers, will cost $699, plus $99 for the first year and $75 a year after that to connect to the system's cellular network. (The fleet version costs $299, plus a $20 monthly fee.) Boston expects the upfront cost for consumers to drop by 30 percent in less than a year, and the company's goal is to eventually get it down to $150.

Once advertisers come on board, drivers could get a rebate.

Reviver will start testing its RPlate in Arizona in August and Nevada and Pennsylvania later this year; by next year, it expects to expand its pilot programs to Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan and Washington. The company is also conducting a test in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, where drivers will be able to use the plate to alert other drivers to road conditions.

TOYS

# Despite a terrible quarter for Mattel, bold marketing brings Barbie dolls back

**By Matt Townsend**
BLOOMBERG NEWS

Hidden within Mattel's announcement of plunging sales and massive layoffs were two bright spots that may be the key to the toymaker's turnaround — and they've been around for a combined 100-plus years.

Barbie, the 59-year-old doll that's Mattel's biggest brand, had a 12 percent jump in sales in the second quarter, its third straight gain. Hot Wheels, which just celebrated its 50th birthday, had a 21 percent surge in revenue.

What's behind the revival in old-school brands? A strategy that's summed up in company Power Point presentations as "giving them a new view of what they've been watching all along." The "them" refers to today's young parents, who may have grown up with Barbies and Hot Wheels only to snub them in favor of educational apps and fancy gadgets for their own kids. Mattel is trying to lure those customers back by recasting the toys' image to play up not only the nostalgia but a newer notion: they're beneficial to child development.

The sales gains indicate this new view may be taking hold.

"When you apply the right strategy behind these brands, you cannot just turn them around, you can put them on a path of accelerated growth," said Ynon Kreiz, who in April became Mattel's fourth chief executive officer since 2014. "We're going to take this same approach with the rest of the company."

Justin Sullivan / Getty Images

**Barbie's features, including body proportion and skin color, have shifted recently to appear more natural.**

A broader turnaround is still a challenge. Mattel's total revenue declined 14 percent to $841 million in the second quarter, missing Wall Street projections, as other major brands, like Fisher-Price and American Girl, sank. The company, hit hard by the liquidation of retailer Toys 'R' Us Inc., also said it was eliminating more than 2,200 jobs, or about 22 percent of its corporate workforce, as part of a cost-cutting plan started last year.

Mattel shares fell as much as 10 percent on Thursday, wiping out gains for the year.

But the growth of Hot Wheels, the second-largest brand, and especially Barbie, which has seen sales decline in three of the past four years, is encouraging, according to Gerrick Johnson, an analyst at BMO Capital Markets.

"Everything they reported on Barbie and Hot Wheels was positive," said Johnson, who recommends buying Mattel's stock. "They have two brands really working."

And the foundation of those gains is this new view, according to Chief Operating Officer Richard Dickson, who's spearheaded this strategy..

It may seem far-fetched that an 11 1/2-inch doll could engender creativity and ambition, while a miniature car is a hot bed for critical thinking — and that parents would believe such a concept. But there is a growing movement of academics and educators pushing mounds of research that show open-ended play is paramount to developing these essential skills. Something as seemingly mundane as playing house is really role-playing that builds empathy, teamwork and communication.

"Play was absolutely crucial to human evolution," said Peter Gray, a professor of psychology at Boston College who studies childhood. And the decline of play time from all the structured activities that have been hoisted on kids is "clearly having harmful effects" like less resiliency and not being able to solve their own problems, he said.

A shift began in October 2015 with the "Imagine the Possibilities" ad campaign. In it, girls teach neuroscience and coach a men's soccer team. The ad spot ends with the viewer realizing these are just scenarios a girl is playing out in her bedroom with a Barbie doll.

"That was the turning point for Barbie and the perceptions about what it means," Johnson said. "It's a 180-degree turn. It used to be 'ick, I don't want my daughter to idolize Barbie,' to my daughter can use Barbie to live out her aspirations."


# Legal Notices

To place legal notices
email legals@chron.com or call 713.224.6868.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS | NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**Notice To Creditors Ad**
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BIDS & PROPOSALS | BIDS & PROPOSALS | BIDS & PROPOSALS

**REQUEST FOR COMPETITIVE SEALED PROPOSALS**

**2018 ISC TECHNOLOGY & FALCON ANNEX IMPROVEMENTS**
**CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**
**Cypress-Fairbanks ISD Proposal No. 18-06-5423R-RFP**

The Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District will accept Base Competitive Sealed Proposals until 2:00 P.M. and Alternate Competitive Sealed Proposals until 3:00 P.M. on Thursday, August 23, 2018, at the Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District Windfern Administrative Annex, 12510 Windfern Road, Houston, Texas 77064 for the 2018 ISC Technology & Falcon Annex Improvements project. A Pre-Proposal Conference will be held on Wednesday, August 8, 2018 at 10:00 A.M. at the above location. Proposal Evaluation Criteria are published in the "Instructions to Offerors" section of the proposal documents. Plans and specifications will be released on Friday, August 3, 2018, and are available to general contractors from the following address upon deposit of $150.00 per set: PBK Architects, Inc., 11 Greenway Plaza, 22nd Floor, Houston, Texas 77046, 713-965-0608. The Owner reserves the right to waive any informalities and to reject any or all proposals.

**REQUEST FOR COMPETITIVE SEALED PROPOSALS**

**KISD EHRHARDT and SSC PROJECT**

Klein Independent School District will accept competitive Sealed Proposals from Qualified Contractors until 2:00 PM on Thursday August 16, 2018 at the Klein ISD Administration Building, 7200 Spring-Cypress Road, Klein, Texas 77379, Room 214. The Scope of work for Ehrhardt Elementary School project consists of removal & disposal of approximately 2,225 LF of 30 inch RCP storm pipe and replacement with 42 inch HDPE storm pipe with manholes, concrete paving removal and replacement two Harris County Road crossings. Scope of work for Student Services Center project includes approximately 12,930 SF of new reinforced concrete parking area, trash enclosure, parking lot lighting, 18 inch – 24 inch HDPE Storm Pipe, and regrading a 1.45 acre reserve. A Pre-Proposal Conference will be held Wednesday August 8, 2018, at 9:00 AM KISD Administration Building, Room 215 with a site visit after. Plans and specifications will be released Monday July 30, 2018. Plans and specifications can be obtained with a $350.00 deposit per set, with a two (2) set maximum, from BrewerEscalante, Inc., 13430 NW Freeway, Suite 350, Houston, Texas 77040 (713)-688-3530 or (832) 615-0331. The Owner reserves the right to waive any informalities and to reject any or all proposals.

**COMPETITIVE SEALED BIDS WILL BE RECEIVED BY PROCUREMENT SERVICES, PORT OF HOUSTON AUTHORITY EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ATTN: BID/PROPOSAL RECEIPT DEPARTMENT, 111 EAST LOOP NORTH, HOUSTON, TEXAS 77029 UNTIL 11:00 A.M., ON AUGUST 15, 2018 FOR THE FOLLOWING:**

**PURCHASE OF REPLACEMENT SPARE PARTS FOR OTTAWA YARD TRACTORS AT BARBOURS CUT AND BAYPORT CONTAINER TERMINALS**

**THERE IS NO PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING SCHEDULED FOR THIS PROJECT.**

SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE PORT OF HOUSTON BUYSPEED WEBSITE at: https://buyspeed.poha.com/bso/login.jsp.

BIDS WILL BE OPENED AT 11:30 A.M. OF THE DAY DUE IN THE PROCUREMENT SERVICES OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING, 111 EAST LOOP NORTH, HOUSTON, TEXAS. THE PORT AUTHORITY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS OR RESPONSES.

**REQUEST FOR COMPETITIVE SEALED PROPOSALS**

**CFISD RENOVATIONS TO CYPRESS RIDGE HIGH AND WALKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, PAGE PROJECT NO. 417147 PROPOSAL NO. 18-02-5420R-RFP CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District will accept Competitive Sealed Proposals until 2:00 P.M. on Tuesday, August 28, 2018 at the Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District Windfern Administrative Annex, 12510 Windfern Road, Houston, Texas 77064. A Pre-Proposal Conference will be held Tuesday, August 14, 2018 at 2:00 P.M. at the above location. Proposal Evaluation Criteria are published in the "Instructions to Offerors" section of the proposal documents. Plans and specifications will be released Wednesday, August 01, 2018 and will be available both digitally and printed with a refundable deposit at ARC, 2900 Smith St, Houston, TX. (713) 782-8580 upon request. The Owner reserves the right to waive any informalities and to reject any or all proposals.

**NOTICE TO BIDDERS**
**The Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Texas (METRO) is planning to issue the procurement documents listed in this advertisement.**
**IFB No.** 4018000173: Repair of Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) 319. Solicitation will be available on or about 07/23/18.
**IFB No.** 4018000209: Main Street Traffic Signals Upgrades. Solicitation will be available on or about 07/24/18.
**RFP No.** 4018000188: Joint Development Texas Medical Center Transit Center. Solicitation will be available on or about 07/23/18
Prospective bidders/proposers can view and download these solicitations by visiting METRO's website at https://www.ridemetroapp.org/procurement/
If you are unable to download the documents or are having difficulty, please contact METRO Plan and Bid Room at (713) 739-4881.

**COMPETITIVE SEALED PROPOSALS WILL BE RECEIVED BY PROCUREMENT SERVICES, PORT OF HOUSTON AUTHORITY EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ATTN: BID/PROPOSAL RECEIPT DEPARTMENT, 111 EAST LOOP NORTH, HOUSTON, TEXAS 77029 UNTIL 11:00 A.M., ON AUGUST 22, 2018 FOR THE FOLLOWING:**

**CONSTRUCT RAIL SPUR AT BAYPORT TERMINAL - CSP**

**A PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD AT THE PORT AUTHORITY EXECUTIVE BUILDING – BOARDROOM, 111 EAST LOOP NORTH, HOUSTON TEXAS 77029 ON AUGUST 7, 2018, 8:30 AM SO THAT THE PROSPECTIVE PROPOSERS MAY ASK QUESTIONS CONCERNING THIS PROJECT.**

SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM PORT HOUSTON'S ePROCUREMENT WEBSITE https://buyspeed.poha.com/bso/.

PROPOSALS WILL BE OPENED AT 11:30 A.M. OF THE DAY DUE IN THE PROCUREMENT SERVICES OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING, 111 EAST LOOP NORTH, HOUSTON, TEXAS. THE PORT AUTHORITY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL PROPOSALS OR RESPONSES.

LEGAL NOTICES | LEGAL NOTICES | LEGAL NOTICES

The Houston Housing Authority ("HHA"), is soliciting competitive fees for Comprehensive Legal Services in accordance with the requirements and terms and conditions specified in RFP 18-13 Comprehensive Legal Services.

Interested parties who wish to respond to this solicitation must submit the required documents in a sealed envelope by 4 P.M. CDT, Aug 22, 2018 to Houston Housing Authority Attn: Orfelia Altuna. Subject: RFP 18-13 Comprehensive Legal Services - DO NOT OPEN 2640 Fountain View Drive Houston, T exas 77057.

RFP 18-13 can be obtained by going to the doing business with HHA section of HHA's website at www.housingforhouston.com, or by sending an e-mail to HHA's Procurement Dept. at Purchasing@housingforhouston.com with RFP 18-13 in the subject line.

A Fair and Equal Employment Opportunity Agency. For assistance: Individuals with disabilities may contact the 504/ADA Administrator at 713-260-0528, TTY 713-260-0574 or 504ADA@housingforhouston.com

The Houston Housing Authority ("HHA") has a solicitation with the intent t o establish a pool of qualified Property Management Companies ("PMC's"), who may be selected on an "as needed basis" to manage various apartment communities in accordance with the requirements and terms and conditions specified in RFP 18-16.

The due date for the receipt of sealed responses is 4 P.M. CDT August 15, 2018, and they should be delivered in a sealed envelope to HHA Attn: Orfelia Altuna, 2640 Fountain View Drive Suite Houston, Texas 77057 Subject: RFP 18-16 Property Management Companies - DO NOT OPEN.

RFP 18-16 can be obtained by going to the doing business with HHA section of HHA's website at www.housingforhouston.com, or by sending an e-mail to HHA's Procurement Dept. at Purchasing@housingforhouston.com.

A Fair and Equal Employment Opportunity Agency. For assistance: Individuals with disabilities may contact the 504/ADA Administrator at 713-260-0528, TTY 713-260-0574 or 504ADA@housingforhouston.com

BIDS & PROPOSALS | BIDS & PROPOSALS

**Sealed Bid Solicitation #CM02-19**
**Houston-Galveston Area Council**
**Cooperative Purchasing Program**
**Portable Construction & Maintenance Equipment**
Pre-Bid Conference: 08/14/18 @ 9am
Response Deadline: 10/18/18 @ 1pm
Public Opening: 10/18/18 @ 2pm
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX.
Per ADA, reasonable accommodation provided with 24 hour prior notice.
832-681-2514 or www.hgacbuy.org for info.

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**
Riverbend Water Resources District (Riverbend) will receive qualifications for Legal Services Specific to Water Law at the Local, State (Texas) and Federal Levels until 3:00 p.m. on Tues. August 7, 2018. For details visit www.rwrd.org.