

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA
TALLAHASSEE DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

JOSEPH SIDES
_____ /

**SEALED
INDICTMENT**

4:18 cr 57 / MEW

THE GRAND JURY CHARGES:

COUNT ONE

A. INTRODUCTION

At all times material to this Indictment:

1. Amazon.com, Inc. ("Amazon") was a corporation that supplied merchandise to customers through internet purchases and shipped this merchandise to its customers using the United States Postal Service, the United Parcel Service ("UPS"), and other private and commercial interstate carriers.

2. Amazon customers created accounts using an e-mail address and a delivery address. Orders of Amazon's products were placed using Amazon's website. The customer paid Amazon when the order was placed using a credit card, debit card, gift card, or other form of online payment.

Returned in open court pursuant to Rule 6(f)
September 18, 2018
Date _____
[Signature]
United States Magistrate Judge

3. When customers complained that an Amazon order had not been received, was delivered in a damaged condition, or was defective in some respect, Amazon would provide the customer a refund or replacement. Amazon referred to these refunds and replacements as “concessions.”

4. **JOSEPH SIDES** was a customer of Amazon, who created numerous accounts with Amazon to order a variety of products.

B. THE CHARGE

Between on or about March 1, 2016, and on or about June 15, 2018, in the Northern District of Florida and elsewhere, the defendant,

JOSEPH SIDES,

did knowingly and willfully combine, conspire, confederate, and agree with other persons, to devise, and intend to devise, a scheme to defraud and for obtaining money and property by means of material false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises, and for the purpose of executing such scheme, to cause mail to be delivered by the United States Postal Service and a private and commercial interstate carrier, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1341.

C. MANNER AND MEANS

The manner and means by which this conspiracy was committed included the following:

1. **JOSEPH SIDES** created approximately 501 different Amazon accounts using false names and multiple email addresses.
2. **JOSEPH SIDES** used these accounts to order merchandise through Amazon's website.
3. **JOSEPH SIDES** used gift cards, and prepaid credit and debit cards to purchase merchandise from Amazon and to conceal his identity as the purchaser.
4. **JOSEPH SIDES** caused the merchandise to be shipped to UPS stores, the addresses of his co-conspirators, and other locations, via the United States Postal Service, UPS, and other private and commercial interstate carriers.
5. **JOSEPH SIDES** altered and varied the street names and descriptions of the actual shipping addresses in order to conceal both his identity as the purchaser and the volume of merchandise he was ordering.
6. **JOSEPH SIDES** and his co-conspirators took delivery of the merchandise at the UPS stores, and other addresses to which the merchandise had been shipped.
7. **JOSEPH SIDES** fraudulently obtained refunds and replacement merchandise from Amazon by falsely claiming that the merchandise he had ordered had not been delivered, had been damaged, or that the order, merchandise, or delivery was defective in some respect.

8. **JOSEPH SIDES** used eBay, Craigslist, Gameflip, and other online retail services to sell the merchandise he fraudulently obtained from Amazon.

9. During the period of the conspiracy, **JOSEPH SIDES** placed and caused to be placed approximately 1227 orders from Amazon. During the same period, **JOSEPH SIDES** obtained and caused to be obtained approximately 821 concessions from Amazon related to those orders.

10. By this conduct **JOSEPH SIDES** fraudulently obtained approximately \$229,391.42 in merchandise, merchandise replacements, and refunds from Amazon.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1349.

COUNTS TWO THROUGH NINE

A. INTRODUCTION

The allegations of Section A of Count One are hereby realleged and incorporated by reference as if fully set forth herein.

B. THE CHARGE

Between on or about March 1, 2016, and on or about June 15, 2018, in the Northern District of Florida and elsewhere, the defendant,

JOSEPH SIDES,

did knowingly and willfully devise, and intend to devise, a scheme to defraud and for obtaining money and property by means of material false and fraudulent

pretenses, representations, and promises, and for the purpose of executing such scheme, did cause wire communications to be transmitted in interstate commerce.

C. SCHEME TO DEFRAUD

It was part of the scheme to defraud that:

1. **JOSEPH SIDES** created approximately 501 different Amazon accounts using false names and multiple email addresses.
2. **JOSEPH SIDES** used these accounts to order merchandise through Amazon's website.
3. **JOSEPH SIDES** used gift cards, and prepaid credit and debit cards to purchase merchandise from Amazon and to conceal his identity as the purchaser.
4. **JOSEPH SIDES** caused the merchandise to be shipped to UPS stores, the addresses of his accomplices, and other locations, via the United States Postal Service, UPS, and other private and commercial interstate carriers.
5. **JOSEPH SIDES** altered and varied the street names and descriptions of the actual shipping addresses in order to conceal both his identity as the purchaser and the volume of merchandise he was ordering.
6. **JOSEPH SIDES** and his accomplices took delivery of the merchandise at the UPS stores, and other addresses to which the merchandise had been shipped.

7. **JOSEPH SIDES** fraudulently obtained refunds and replacement merchandise from Amazon by falsely claiming that the merchandise he had ordered had not been delivered, had been damaged, or that the order, merchandise, or delivery was defective in some respect.

8. **JOSEPH SIDES** used eBay, Craigslist, Gameflip, and other online retail services to sell the merchandise he fraudulently obtained from Amazon.

9. During the period of the scheme, **JOSEPH SIDES** placed and caused to be placed approximately 1227 orders from Amazon. During the same period, **JOSEPH SIDES** obtained and caused to be obtained approximately 821 concessions from Amazon related to those orders.

10. By this conduct, **JOSEPH SIDES** fraudulently obtained approximately \$229,391.42 in merchandise, merchandise replacements, and refunds from Amazon.

D. WIRE COMMUNICATIONS

On or about the following dates, for the purpose of executing the scheme to defraud, the defendant,

JOSEPH SIDES,

knowingly did cause wire communications to be transmitted in interstate commerce as set forth below:

COUNTS	DATE	COMMUNICATION
TWO	October 16, 2016	Order of Xbox One 1TB Console and DualShock 4 Wireless Controller for PlayStation 4 from Amazon
THREE	October 25, 2016	Order of Xbox Wireless Controller and Xbox One S 1TB Console from Amazon
FOUR	November 18, 2016	Order of Sony PlayStation 4 Pro Console from Amazon
FIVE	November 27, 2016	Creation of Amazon account in the name of "Jamsie"
SIX	January 9, 2017	Creation of Amazon account in the name of "lane kiffin"
SEVEN	January 13, 2017	Creation of Amazon account in the name of "blake t"
EIGHT	January 13, 2017	Creation of Amazon account in the name of "matthew mitchell"
NINE	January 17, 2017	Order of PlayStation 4 Slim 500 GB Console from Amazon

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1343 and 2.

COUNTS TEN THROUGH THIRTEEN

A. INTRODUCTION

The allegations of Section A of Count One are hereby realleged and incorporated by reference as if fully set forth herein.

B. THE CHARGE

Between on or about March 1, 2016, and on or about June 15, 2018, in the Northern District of Florida and elsewhere, the defendant,

JOSEPH SIDES,

did knowingly and willfully devise, and intend to devise, a scheme to defraud and for obtaining money and property by means of material false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises, and for the purpose of executing such scheme, did cause mail to be delivered by the United States Postal Service and by a private and commercial interstate carrier.

C. SCHEME TO DEFRAUD

It was part of the scheme to defraud that:

1. **JOSEPH SIDES** created approximately 501 different Amazon accounts using false names and multiple email addresses.
2. **JOSEPH SIDES** used these accounts to order merchandise through Amazon's website.
3. **JOSEPH SIDES** used gift cards, and prepaid credit and debit cards to purchase merchandise from Amazon and to conceal his identity as the purchaser.
4. **JOSEPH SIDES** caused the merchandise to be shipped to UPS stores, the addresses of his accomplices, and other locations, via the United States Postal Service, UPS, and other private and commercial interstate carriers.
5. **JOSEPH SIDES** altered and varied the street names and descriptions of the actual shipping addresses in order to conceal both his identity as the purchaser and the volume of merchandise he was ordering.

6. **JOSEPH SIDES** and his accomplices took delivery of the merchandise at the UPS stores, and other addresses to which the merchandise had been shipped.

7. **JOSEPH SIDES** fraudulently obtained refunds and replacement merchandise from Amazon by falsely claiming that the merchandise he had ordered had not been delivered, had been damaged, or that the order, merchandise, or delivery was defective in some respect.

8. **JOSEPH SIDES** used eBay, Craigslist, Gameflip, and other online retail services to sell the merchandise he fraudulently obtained from Amazon.

9. During the period of the scheme, **JOSEPH SIDES** placed and caused to be placed approximately 1227 orders from Amazon. During the same period, **JOSEPH SIDES** obtained and caused to be obtained approximately 821 concessions from Amazon related to those orders.

10. By this conduct **JOSEPH SIDES** fraudulently obtained approximately \$229,391.42 in merchandise, merchandise replacements, and refunds from Amazon.

D. MAILINGS

On or about the following dates, for the purpose of executing the scheme to defraud, the defendant,

JOSEPH SIDES,

knowingly did cause mail to be delivered by a private and commercial interstate carrier as set forth below:

COUNTS	DATE	MERCHANDISE	DELIVERED BY
TEN	September 4, 2016	PlayStation 4 500GB Console and DualShock 4 Wireless Controller for PlayStation 4	United Parcel Service
ELEVEN	September 12, 2016	Xbox One S 1TB Console and DualShock 4 Wireless Controller for PlayStation 4	United Parcel Service
TWELVE	October 5, 2016	Xbox One S 1TB Console, DualShock 4 Wireless Controller for PlayStation 4, and Xbox One Wireless Controller	United Parcel Service
THIRTEEN	December 8, 2016	GoPro HERO5 Black	United Parcel Service

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1341 and 2.

CRIMINAL FORFEITURE

The allegations contained in Counts One through Thirteen of this Indictment are hereby realleged and incorporated by reference for the purpose of alleging forfeiture. From his engagement in the violations alleged in Counts One through Thirteen of this Indictment, the defendant,

JOSEPH SIDES,

shall forfeit to the United States, pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 981(a)(1)(C), and Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461(c), any and all of the defendant's right, title, and interest in any property, real and personal, constituting, and derived from, proceeds traceable to such offenses.

If any of the property described above as being subject to forfeiture, as a result of acts or omissions of the defendant:

- i. cannot be located upon the exercise of due diligence;
- ii. has been transferred, sold to, or deposited with a third party;
- iii. has been placed beyond the jurisdiction of this Court;
- iv. has been substantially diminished in value; or
- v. has been commingled with other property that cannot be subdivided without difficulty,

it is the intent of the United States, pursuant to Title 21, United States Code, Section 853(p), as incorporated by Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461(c), to seek forfeiture of any other property of said defendant up to the value of the forfeitable property.


A TRUE BILL:

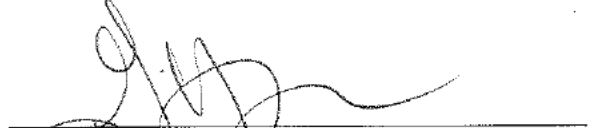
[REDACTED]

FOREPERSON

9-18-18

DATE


CHRISTOPHER P. CANOVA
United States Attorney


GARY MILLIGAN
Assistant United States Attorney