

Murfreesboro Police Department

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Murfreesboro man plead guilty in fraudulent bar code shoplifting ring

Murfreesboro, TN – A Murfreesboro man accused in a multi-state fraudulent bar code shoplifting ring has plead guilty to the charge against him in the City of Murfreesboro. His wife has been cleared of charges.

James Adkins, 36, plead guilty to one-count of criminal simulation between \$60,000 and \$250,000, before Rutherford County Circuit Court Judge Barry Tidwell Jan. 17. He received a sentence of time served, probation for 10 years and agreed to forfeit all seized assets.

Adkins was accused of operating The 7 Towers, an online eBay business, out of a Murfreesboro home owned by his wife, Taylor Melvin. The home also served as a distribution center. Detectives served a warrant on the home December 13, 2019. They confiscated more than 6,600 toys (mostly Star Wars), action figures and Lego sets valued between \$300,000 and \$400,000. A lot of the items were purchased using fraudulent Universal Product Codes (UPC), according to detectives.

Melvin was originally implicated in the fraudulent case, but due to her cooperation with investigators, and Adkin's guilty plea, the charges against her were dropped.

Adkins still faces Theft of Property charges in Lincoln County Tennessee, Madison, Alabama, and Dalton, Georgia.

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PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

December 17, 2019

Fraudulent bar code shoplifting ring busted

Murfreesboro, TN – Murfreesboro Police and authorities in Alabama have dismantled a shoplifting ring where fraudulent UPC bar codes were used to purchase Star Wars theme toys and other action figures for pennies on the dollar, throughout the Southeast and reselling them online.

Madison Alabama Police Department officers arrested James Adkins, 36, of Murfreesboro, and a co-conspirator, Daniel Germany, 44, for Theft of Property in the Fourth Degree, Dec. 10. Adkins was also charged with Theft of Property in the Third Degree.

Adkins and Germany are accused of going to a Walmart store in Madison, Alabama and replacing bar codes on toys with fraudulent ones, for a much lower price. They would make the

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purchases at self-checkout registers. The two are accused of similar crimes in other parts of Alabama, Tennessee and Georgia.

The Alabama investigation led to a search warrant being executed at Adkins' Murfreesboro home, 1633 Ursuline Drive, Dec. 13. Adkins' wife, 29-year-old Taylor Melvin, was arrested and charged locally for Theft and Criminal Simulation.

The couple was operating The 7 Towers, an online eBay business, out of the home which also served as a distribution center. Detectives confiscated more than 6,600 toys believed to be valued between \$750,000 to \$1 million. According to detectives, a lot of the items were purchased using homemade bar codes. Computers, label printing material and business documents were also seized.

Adkins and Germany also have pending charges of Receiving Stolen Property in the Third Degree in Madison, Alabama. They face Theft of Property charges in Huntsville as well. Additional charges for all three suspects are pending.

Germany and Adkins remain in the Madison County Alabama Jail without bond. Melvin was being held on a \$50,000 bond. She was released from the Rutherford County Adult Detention Center Dec. 16, after having a Source Hearing to prove her bond money didn't come from illegal funds.

The investigation is on-going.

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