

JUSTICE NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, August 22, 2017

Second E-Commerce Company And Its Top Executive Agree To Plead Guilty To Price-Fixing Conspiracy In Customized Promotional Products Industry

E-commerce company Custom Wristbands Inc. (aka Kulayful Silicone Bracelets, Kulayful.com, Speedywristbands.com, Promotionalbands.com, Wristbandcreation.com and 1inchbracelets.com) and its top executive Christopher Angeles have agreed to plead guilty for conspiring to fix prices for customized promotional products sold online to customers in the United States.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Andrew Finch of the Department of Justice's Antitrust Division, Acting U.S. Attorney Abe Martinez of the Southern District of Texas and Special Agent in Charge Perrye K. Turner of the FBI's Houston Field Division made the announcement.

According to the felony charges filed today in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas in Houston, the conspirators attended meetings and communicated in person and online. The investigation has revealed that the conspirators used text messaging and other online messaging platforms to reach and implement their illegal agreements. Specifically, the defendants and their co-conspirators agreed, from as early as June 2014 until June 2016, to fix the prices of customized promotional products sold online, including wristbands. In addition to agreeing to plead guilty, Custom Wristbands has agreed to pay a \$409,342 criminal fine.

"Today's charges are yet another step in the Division's commitment to prosecuting collusion that affects the online marketplace," said Acting Assistant Attorney General Andrew Finch of the Department of Justice's Antitrust Division. "The Division, along with our law enforcement colleagues, will continue to hold companies and executives accountable for their unlawful collusive practices."

"Price-fixing schemes like these that are designed to give individuals and businesses an illegal advantage will not be tolerated," said Acting U.S. Attorney Martinez. "We will continue to prosecute those who conspire to cause financial harm to consumers and businesses in the Internet marketplace."

"The FBI works to ensure the integrity of our markets and eradicate price fixing and other unlawful business practices," said Special Agent in Charge Perrye K. Turner. "In open, competitive markets, customers get better service and lower prices."

Angeles is charged with price fixing in violation of the Sherman Act, which carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in federal prison and a maximum fine of \$1 million for individuals. The maximum fine for an individual may be increased to twice the gain derived from the crime or twice the loss suffered by the victims of the crime, if either of those amounts is greater than the statutory maximum fine.

Both defendants have agreed to cooperate with the Antitrust Division's ongoing investigation. The plea agreements are subject to court approval.

This prosecution arose from an ongoing federal antitrust investigation into price fixing in the online promotional products industry, which is being conducted by the Antitrust Division's Washington Criminal I Section with the assistance of the FBI's Houston Field Office. Anyone with information on price fixing or other anticompetitive conduct in the customized

promotional products industry should contact the Antitrust Division's Citizen Complaint Center at 888-647-3258 or visit www.justice.gov/atr/contact/newcase.html.

Attachment(s):

[Download Information -- Angeles](#)

[Download Information -- Custom Wristbands](#)

Topic(s):

Antitrust

Component(s):

[Antitrust Division](#)

[Federal Bureau of Investigation \(FBI\)](#)

[USAO - Texas, Southern](#)

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