

eBay, Executives Slammed With Lawsuit Over Alleged Death, Stalking and Torture Threats Against Couple



The 12-count civil suit accuses eBay and its former officials of engaging “in a systematic campaign to emotionally and psychologically torture” a Massachusetts couple.

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eBay and a number of its former executives are being sued by a Massachusetts couple who allege the company, along with Progressive F.O.R.C.E. Concepts, LLC, “engaged in a coordinated effort to intimidate, threaten to kill, torture, terrorize, stalk and silence” them to stifle their reporting on the company.

The complaint, filed in United States District Court, identifies David and Ina Steiner as a couple who run EcommerceBytes, a small trade publication. They “report about various ecommerce companies, including eBay, in an effort to assist ecommerce sellers,” per the complaint.

The 12-count civil suit accuses eBay and its former officials of engaging “in a systematic campaign to emotionally and psychologically torture” them and cites written instruction from Devin Wenig, then-CEO of eBay, telling other employees to stop the Steiners’ reporting and saying, “...I want to see ashes. As long as it takes. Whatever it takes.”

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What followed, the Steiners allege, was “an online intimidation campaign,” threats, and “disturbing package deliveries, which included live spiders, cockroaches, a bloody pig mask, a funeral wreath, and a book entitled, ‘Grief Diaries: Surviving Loss of a Spouse’ sent directly to David Steiner.”

The packages, they say, “often were accompanied by ominous simultaneous Twitter messages” that included vulgar language. The Steiners also accuse the defendants of stalking them and tailing them in rental vehicles as well as attempting to break into the couple’s garage to install a GPS tracker on a vehicle.

Ultimately, the Steiners say, they installed security cameras in their home and slept in separate bedrooms so that if one were attacked, the other could escape and call for help.

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Finally, per the complaint, the officials “plotted to destroy evidence, mislead the investigation, and divert attention away from eBay” on learning that the local police department in

Massachusetts was investigating the Steiners' concerns.

In addition to Wymer, the complaint names James Baugh, David Harville, Brian Gilbert, Stephanie Popp, Stephanie Stockwell, Philip Cooke, and Veronica Zea and an eBay contractor employed by PFC, "most of whom, on information and belief directly or indirectly reported to eBay's Head of Security and Operations." Cooke, Gilbert, Popp, Stockwell and Zea pleaded guilty to an Information in Federal District Court and Baugh and Harville were indicted as a result of what the suit calls their "conspiracy to intimidate, threaten, torture, terrorize, stalk and silence the Steiners, and for misleading and tampering with the investigation."

Wymer's eBay employment was terminated, the suit notes, but he walked away with a \$57 million severance package.

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