



NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION THREAT INTELLIGENCE CONSORTIUM

March 6, 2019

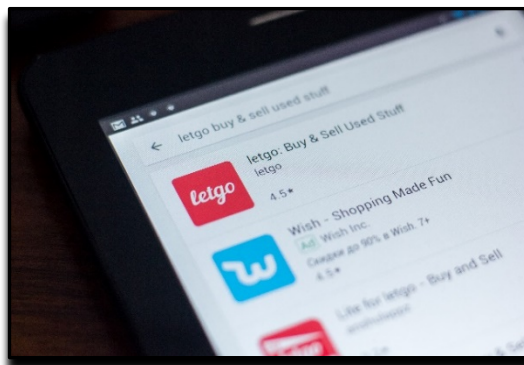
Intelligence Bulletin

Product No. 2019-02-045
NTIC SIN No. 2.7

NCR: Risks of Using Mobile Resale Apps to Buy/Sell Items

Buyers and sellers should take safety precautions when using resale applications—such as Facebook Marketplace, LetGo, and OfferUp—to exchange goods in light of several robberies in the National Capital Region. As more people choose to use mobile resale or “e-commerce” apps to buy and sell items—the market is currently estimated at \$2 billion—there are rising concerns about the potential risks of in-person exchanges of goods and money. These risks to physical safety include possible robbery, armed robbery, and assault.

- Individuals may demand cash or attempt to steal items from buyers/sellers. Exchanges of popular items, such as smart phones, electronics, designer sneakers, and vehicles, have frequently been linked to fraudulent or risky transactions.
- In November, a Southeast District resident, Tykel Wilson Jr., was arrested for a string of armed robberies using LetGo. Wilson brandished a handgun and demanded cash from prospective buyers in three separate incidents.
- In December, Davon Moore, a Montgomery County resident, was arrested for armed robbery after he pulled a handgun on an individual that he had scheduled to purchase sneakers from using the OfferUp app.



Resale or “e-commerce” apps allow mobile users to buy/sell new or used items online

The NTIC encourages the public to be aware of the potential dangers of using mobile resale applications, remain diligent regarding personal safety, and report any suspicious activity.

Safety Recommendations When Using Mobile Resale Applications

Protect Your Personally Identifiable Information

- Speak to the buyer/seller on the phone—avoid relying solely on the application messaging option or text messages;
- Keep your personal address private;
- Avoid meeting at personal residences or businesses; and
- Sell/buy from verified users only.

Protect Your Physical Safety

- Inform family and friends of your plans to meet;
- Bring a friend with you to the exchange; and
- Meet in well-lit public places (i.e. coffee shops, malls, gas stations, grocery stores)—preferably during the day; and, if possible,
- Use “[e-commerce exchange zones](#)” at your local police departments.

Review safety tips from [LetGo](#) and [OfferUp](#).