

TACO BELL SUES SMITH ADVERTISING



The owners of the biggest Taco Bell franchise in all of Fayetteville have filed a lawsuit against Smith Advertising & Associate, along with its principals. They claim that the company and the principals, Gary Smith and Todd Smith, were fraudulent and ended up getting over \$700,000 worth for work that was not finished and checks that bounced and were bad. The advertisements agency closed its doors on the 6th of March. The allegations made against them by the Taco Bell franchise owners in Fayetteville are not the only allegations and controversy that the Smiths are dealing with. There are also pending lawsuits against them that are taking place in Florida and in North Carolina. The couple that owns Taco Bell and Long John Silver's Franchises in the Fayetteville area, Ron and Sharon Matthews, is claiming in their lawsuit that the Smiths duped them into this scheme, which has cost them thousands of dollars. They trusted the Smiths because they were not only business associates; they were also friends with one another on a personal level and they thought they could trust them. They said that they loaned the Smiths over \$450,000 within the span of a month, between the 27th of January and the 29th of February. These loans had been guaranteed by both Gary and Todd Smith, who happen to be father and son. The Smiths told the couple that having to pay the loans up front was common in the world of advertising. The couple is also claiming that the Smiths wrote several bad checks, worth more than \$33,000, between the span of two months, between the 9th of January and the 1st of March. The couple's son, Brett, has also decided to file a lawsuit separately from his parents. Aside from his parents, he also loaned money to the Smiths, worth \$120,000. He was told that the Smiths would pay the money back short-term. In the meantime, a lawyer for the Smiths could not be reached for comment and it is not exactly clear as to where Gary Smith has been since the closing of his advertising business took place back in March. It is believed that both Gary and Todd Smith may be out of the country, as this is what deputies from Cumberland County were told. An investor from Florida, Charles Taylor Spruill, is also upset, since he filed a lawsuit on March 19th, claiming that the Smiths agency owes him around \$600,000 and they have not responded to his lawsuit at all. Spruill says that he loaned the advertising agency that money on the 27th of February, with a set agreement that he would be repaid in regular installments of \$200,000 by Smith's Advertising Agency.

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