

Apple's Ban on Sexy Apps is Selective

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Publicado: 23 Feb, 2010 - 04:35 AM

COMMENT: WHO DRAWS MORAL NOWADAYS?

Sarah Jacobsson, PC World

Feb 23, 2010 6:32 am

Apple has banned sexy apps from its app store -- but the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit app, the Playboy app, and the FHM app (which features sexy "girl of the week" photos) are still hanging around.

Last Thursday, Apple revealed a new policy for its app store: applications with "overtly sexual content" are no longer allowed. The policy was not officially announced, but rather relayed through an e-mail to app developer Jon Atherton, who sent it along to TechCrunch.

Atherton is the developer of Wobble iBoobs, an application that lets you add "wobble zones" to photos of bikini models (the zones then move when you shake your iPhone). This functionality was classified as "overtly sexual" by Apple (hate to say it, but I can see why), and thus the app was removed from the app store.

Atherton has since spoken with Apple about the exact details of the ban, and has posted a list of the new rules on his blog:

1. No images of women in bikinis (Ice skating tights are not OK either)
2. No images of men in bikinis! (I didn't ask about Ice Skating tights for men)
3. No skin (he seriously said this) (I asked if a Burqa was OK, and the Apple guy got angry)
4. No silhouettes that indicate that Wobble can be used for wobbling boobs (yes -- I am serious, we have to remove the silhouette in this pic)
5. No sexual connotations or innuendo: boobs, babes, booty, sex -- all banned
6. Nothing that can be sexually arousing!! (I doubt many people could get aroused with the pic above but those puritanical guys at Apple must get off on pretty mundane things to find Wobble "overtly sexual!")
7. No apps will be approved that in any way imply sexual content (not sure how Playboy is still in the store, but . . .)

It appears that the new rules are pretty straightforward -- but only when it comes to app "unknowns" such as Wobble iBoobs, SlideHer: Tera Patrick, and Dirty Fingers: Screen Wash. Big companies such as Sports Illustrated and Playboy apparently have a bit more pull when it comes to the app store -- as the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit app is being promoted on the app store homepage, and is ranked number one in sports applications.

Playboy, FHM, and Victoria's Secret also have apps that feature bikini- and lingerie-clad women, and all are still available for download at the app store.

I can see arguing for the SI app as a sports app (er. . . sort of), and arguing for the VS app as a shopping app, but I really want to know how Apple is justifying the Playboy app as not "overtly sexual."

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