

The New T-Mobile G1 Android Has A Remote Kill Switch For Apps

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G1 Android

The new T-Mobile G1 phone with Android goes on sale October 22nd. A sneak peak at the first phone to run Android reveals a notice to users that goes as follows: "Google may discover a product that violates the developer distribution agreement ... in such an instance, Google reserves the right to remotely remove those applications from your device at its sole discretion."

The Google upfront remote kill notice is unlike the Apple 3G iPhone remote kill switch that was inadvertently discovered by a developer after the phone had been released. Google may have learned something from Apple that these type of surprises can backfire. Whether it will make a difference to prospective G1 buyers remains to be seen. Google appears to be making a good faith effort to make up for the possibility of a user getting burned by a no-go application.

According to Google, every attempt will be made to get the application download fee refunded to G1 phone users. In the event there is a recovery Google will evenly divide up the proceeds among effected users. The Android Market unlike the Apple Apps Store is not pre-approved. In order for an application to appear in the Apple Apps Store it has to be tested and approved by Apple.

The Android Market appears to allow all applications to appear without an approval. Thus, there may be some applications that Google finds problematic. In fact, no guarantee exists at the present time by Android Market that the applications contained therein are free of malicious quirks. It is a very egalitarian market place which includes the basic buyer beware inherent warning. If it looks weird forget it.

One advantage of the Android Market is the ability to return the application within 24-hours if for any reason the application is unsatisfactory. If no trial version is available a user may return it within 24-hours and receive a full refund. Android users may download the same application as many times as desired. This feature is designed to assist buyers of an application in the event the application for any reason does not download. Initially, the applications are no charge because Google is still working on the mechanisms for allowing developers to charge a fee.

The notices and kudos for individuals and companies that contributed to the development of the G1 Android phone may be found in the "About Phone" section of the phone. While a remote application kill switch may seem a bit Orwellian to some users, at least Google was a bit more upfront than Apple.

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