Immigrant-smuggling game rejected by Apple

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(AP) -- An iPhone game that allows users to drive a truck full of immigrants through the desert while trying to prevent them from getting thrown out of the vehicle has been rejected by Apple Inc., the software's developer announced Thursday.

Owlchemy Labs, the Boston company that developed "Smuggle Truck: Operation Immigration," said that the Apple App Store turned down the game three weeks ago, but it did accept the company's "Snuggle Truck" app, a game that allows players to "bring cute animals from the wilderness to the comfort of a zoo."

Owlchemy Labs Developer Alex Schwartz said the immigration game's rejection was "content-related" but couldn't give details based on a contractual agreement.

"Smuggle Truck" lets players navigate through what appears to be the U.S.-Mexican border. As the truck drives over cliffs, mountains and dead animals, immigrants fall off the truck's bed. Scores are calculated by the number of immigrants helped across the border.

The company drew fire from immigrant advocates after it announced the game's creation in February. Advocates said the game was in poor taste and trivialized how immigrants risked their lives under what the advocates call a broken immigration system.

But Schwartz said developers actually wanted to bring attention to

immigration reform and tried to make sure the game's characters weren't stereotypical.

"There were definitely some misconceptions," said Schwartz. "We went with the satire and we were kind of half way through development when news picked it up ... and inferred what we were going for."

Schwartz said the [game](#) recently won an award at an independent gaming convention and was showcased in front of hundreds of users.

"Smuggle Truck" can still be downloaded on PCs and Macs for $5. It includes for a limited-time a "legal immigration mode." According to company, this mode "gives players the opportunity to sit in a waiting room and stare at a clock that counts down over the next 20 years" and is meant to highlight the "efficiency of the modern immigration process."

  More information: Smuggle Truck: http://smuggletruck.com

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