

Apple cuts French App Store's 'Jew Or Not Jew' App

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Apple Inc. has removed a mobile app, called "Jew or Not Jew?", from its online App Store in France.

The app let users consult a database of celebrities and public figures to determine if they are Jewish or not. Its removal follows a complaint from a French anti-racism group that threatened to sue the [iPhone](#) and iPad maker.

The app, "Juif ou pas Juif?" in French, was selling for 0.79 euro cents (\$1.08) in France until it was cut on Wednesday. SOS Racisme had argued that the app violated France's strict laws banning the compiling of people's personal details without their consent.

Apple spokesman Tom Neumayr said the app did violate local law, so it was removed from the French App Store. It is still available outside France, however, and currently sells for \$1.99 through Apple's U.S. App Store.

Under the French penal code, stocking personal details including race, sexuality, political leanings or [religious affiliation](#) is punishable by five-year prison sentences and fines of up to euro300,000 (\$411,870).

Such laws were enacted in the decades following the Holocaust, which saw some 76,000 [Jews](#) deported from Nazi-occupied France to concentration camps. Fewer than 3,000 returned alive.

In a statement, SOS Racisme had called on Cupertino, Calif.-based Apple to remove the app from its online store and be more vigilant about the applications it sells.

In an interview, published Wednesday in Le Parisien newspaper, app developer Johann Levy said he developed the app to be "recreational."

"I'm not a spokesman for all Jews, but as a Jew myself I know that in our community we often ask whether a such-and-such celebrity is Jewish or not," Levy, a 35-year-old Franco-British engineer of Jewish origin, is quoted as saying.

"For me, there's nothing pejorative about saying that someone is Jewish or not," he said. "On the contrary, it's about being proud."

He said he compiled information about famous people around the world from various online sources.

Developers that offer apps through Apple's App Store are responsible for making sure their apps are in line with local laws.

Apple has removed numerous apps from the [App Store](#) since it launched in mid-2008 for violating myriad restrictions it imposes on developers. In June, it shunned an [app](#) called "ThirdIntifada" following complaints that it glorified violence against Israel. Apple said it violated developer guidelines by being offensive to large groups of people.

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