

Facebook and Square pull failed apps from digital stores

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Facebook Camera, Poke and Square Wallet have been removed from app stores, bringing an end to three apps from notable tech companies that were never able to catch on.

The social network giant pulled Camera and Poke from the Apple App Store on Friday. The two apps were launched in 2012 and were clones of other popular apps that posed threats to Facebook's dominance in mobile social networking.

It seems Facebook developed Camera as a backup plan in case its efforts to acquire Instagram failed. Facebook purchased Instagram for \$1 billion in April 2012, but it went ahead and released Camera a month later.

The Camera app made it possible for users to edit their photos more thoroughly than they could with the [camera](#) feature on Facebook's main app. But since then, the company has integrated many of Camera's features into the Facebook app, and Instagram has continued to experience strong user growth. Essentially, Camera was an app with no purpose.

Poke, on the other hand, was released in December 2012 with purpose of stifling Snapchat, an app popular among teens and young adults. Snapchat lets users send photo and video messages that disappear within seconds. Poke had the same features as Snapchat, but the app was a failure almost instantly. It quickly fell out of the Apple App Store's top charts and was soon forgotten.

Earlier this year, Facebook Chief Executive Mark Zuckerberg played down Poke's failure, saying the app had been made as "more of a joke," but reports have said that Facebook has tried to acquire Snapchat with multi-billion-dollar offers multiple times.

Square, meanwhile, removed its app, Square Wallet, from the Apple App Store and Google Play on Monday. Square Wallet was introduced three years ago with the lofty goal of letting customers shop by simply giving their names to cashiers.

To get the app to work, users would first have to load it with their payment information. After that, they could head to a participating store and check into it using Square Wallet. Once customers were ready to pay, they would give their name to the cashier, who would process the payment by looking them up in the Square's system. The idea was that paying this way would be faster than taking cash or swiping a card.

Square Wallet did gain some users - Square says it will continue to support them - but the app did not find widespread success.

Now, Square is shifting its strategy by introducing Square Order, an [app](#) that lets customers place orders before arriving at participating stores. This way, customers can order, get to the store and instantly pick up the food or item that they bought.

For now, Square Order works only for customers in San Francisco and New York City.

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