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[The App Store Has Issues](#)

App Store
Apple

Apple has fallen short of its promise to offer a good experience with the App Store

It's not just [MobileMe](#) that's had a rocky start, but the App Store as well. The latest issues reported by users concern the "brief" availability of a Nullriver app that seemingly conflicts with AT&T's policies. While some managed to snag in time, others, who had been anxiously waiting for the release, were left out in the cold. Today we're going to try and explain why this, and other similar mishaps, can be considered real issues with Apple's new distribution service for iPhone / iPod touch apps. When it first announced the service, Apple was extremely optimistic about how it would handle the pricing, distribution and eventual updating of the applications making their way onto the venue. Things would not be that way, though. **￭** One of the first problems reported just after the service was set up and given the go-ahead regarded [developers trying to "cut-in-line"](#) by assigning certain "sneaky" characters to their apps' names. Besides using spaces in front of an app's name, some developers went as far as adding things like \$.99 in front of the title, to jump ahead in the "Sort By Title" category. It is not known exactly how much damage this caused to other developers, or how many profits the cheaters actually made. Given that it was just a couple of days' worth of cheating, no one suffered serious damages. Nevertheless, Apple should have thought ahead of this problem. Some may even speculate Apple willingly let this one slip to give some developers a head start, which brings us to our next App Store "issue." **￭** Earlier this week we reported that Apple was seemingly [favoring certain iPhone developers](#), while neglecting others, based on an iPhone Central report. The report claims that the lack of communication from Apple is making it extremely difficult for iPhone developers to track the progress of their apps, or have updates distributed on time. Back to where it all started, when Apple introduced the App Store at its iPhone Software Roadmap event on March 6, the company revealed to the ecstatic public that not only would developers be able to throw in their apps for free, or as paid downloads, but that they would also be able to issue bug fixes and various kinds of updates on a regular basis. This would enable the end-user to simply tap on the new update, install the fix, and continue using the improved application. The problem with this service, however, is that Apple is seemingly taking way too long to send out the updates to some applications, while other app makers are getting their updates on devices just fine. Again, Apple should have done a much better job at handling the immense flow of apps that were sure to hit the App Store upon launch. **￭** Most recently, "in an unexpected twist of events, Nullriver has officially released NetShare, an Apple-approved iPhone tethering application, onto the App Store," reads an iPhone Alley [report](#). "The purpose of the application is to share an iPhone's Internet connection with other devices over Wi-Fi, essentially making the iPhone into an on-the-go Wi-Fi hotspot." This, however, seemingly forces AT&T to pay for more bandwidth. The application was available for a short while (for \$9.99) on the App Store, meaning Apple had given its approval for it. Later, however, NetShare was taken down, leaving hundreds of tethering-hungry mouths crying on Mac-based forums. While AT&T is most likely behind the move (and probably right about it, too), this only counts as another App Store issue - Apple simply can't handle the proper testing of such a huge and diverse amount of apps hitting from all sides of the globe. Also, Apple's and AT&T's limitations regarding tethering apps should have been more properly disclosed in the agreement with developers registered with the iPhone Developer Program. For its part, Nullriver issued a response to fans, claiming they themselves had no idea what had happened (although it was pretty obvious a tethering app like theirs would cause some stir). "We're not quite sure why Apple took down the application yet, we've received no communication from Apple thus far," Nullriver says, thus

confirming (once more) the complaints about the lack of communication with iPhone developers on behalf of Apple. "NetShare did not violate any of the Developer or AppStore agreements," the company claims. "We're hoping we'll get some feedback from Apple tomorrow. Sorry to all the folks that couldn't get it in time. We'll do our best to try to get the application back onto the AppStore if at all possible. At the very least, I would hope Apple will allow it in countries where the provider does permit tethering," ends the note [posted](#) on MacRumors' forums. What are your impressions of Apple's way of managing such an important service for such an important pillar of its business?