

In-App Sales and iPad: The Killer Combo to Save Publishing?

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Editor's Note: What do you think will save publishing? Frankly, just because print may be falling out of vogue doesn't mean that journalism is dead. A dominant media for ~~print~~ 2-dimensional information presentation will emerge, and journalists will adapt their content to it, and advertisers will figure out a way to monetize it.



([Wired](#) [1]) - Apple on Thursday made a subtle yet major revision to its App Store policy, enabling extra content to be sold through free iPhone apps. It's a move that immediately impacts the publishing industry, and it could pay even bigger dividends if the Cupertino company indeed delivers its highly anticipated touchscreen tablet.

While the most obvious beneficiaries would be app developers, a market segment that can also benefit from the new in-app commerce model are people and companies that create content and need to set up shop in a way that doesn't, in effect, charge someone for just walking in — like media publishers.

Newspapers and magazines are reportedly in talks with Apple about repurposing their content onto a “new device,” presumably the rumored touchscreen tablet Apple will deliver in early 2010. Numerous reports suggest an Apple tablet would have a strong focus on redefining print media. Enabling in-app commerce through free apps was a crucial move to help make this goal a reality.

Apple's earlier in-app sales model wasn't ideal for publishers. Previously, in-app commerce was a feature exclusive to paid apps; free apps were not permitted to sell content. Newspapers and magazines already struggle to sway readers to pay for content to begin with, and charging for apps cuts off potential customers. By allowing commerce within free apps, Apple creates the opportunity for a free media

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app to serve as a gateway for readers to get hooked on a newspaper's or magazine's content, which could help lure them into paying for exclusive premium content.

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