

Apple Teaches Russian Siri to Tolerate Gay People

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A video posted on YouTube over the weekend by a Russian man in London, Alex, showed Siri responding to questions about nearby gay clubs by saying: "I'd blush if I could."

Apple said it has fixed a bug in the Russian-speaking version of its iPhone voice-activated assistant Siri, after users accused it of providing homophobic responses to questions about gays.

The assistant for smartphones and iPads, which responds to questions spoken into the devices, has recently added Russian to its array of foreign languages, and also, it seems, picked up homophobic attitudes, according to videos posted online. But Apple said the responses were the result of a bug that has since been fixed, the BBC reported Wednesday.

A video posted on YouTube over the weekend by a Russian man in London, Alex, showed Siri responding to questions about nearby gay clubs by saying: "I'd blush if I could."

The application's responses prompted online speculation that Siri may have been influenced by a Russian law passed in 2013 that bans providing minors with information about homosexuality.

Asked “how to register a gay marriage in England,” the Russian-speaking application responds: “I will pretend I didn't hear that.”

In his video, Alex says that he was “quite excited to learn that Siri became available in Russian. However, in Russian, it turns out to be quite homophobic.”

A Russian LGBT website, lesbiru.com, reproached Apple for tweaking Siri's responses “quietly, without apologies.”

“We are in shock,” the website said. “After all, Apple has been the flagship of gay-friendly business, and even the company's CEO Tim Cook has come out as gay.” Cook came out as gay in an essay posted to news agency Bloomberg in October of last year.

While Siri's responses appeared to have changed since, replies to Alex's online post showed that virulently anti-gay sentiments remain widespread among Russian-speaking Internet users. Many comments were filled with crude obscenities, derogatory remarks against gays and, in at least one case, an accusation that homosexual people simply failed to see how “advanced” Siri's answers were.

Watch the video here:

Original url:

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