



Shanghai residents confused about where to recycle their newspaper can now get help from an Alipay mini-program | Photo source Pixabay

ALIPAY LAUNCHES GUIDE TO SHANGHAI RECYCLING



COMPUTING & TECH

An Alipay mini-program helps Shanghai residents avoid fines with advice on recycling

Spotted: A new mini-program for Chinese fintech application Alipay helps users in Shanghai sort their rubbish. This follows Shanghai's new, strict rules on waste-sorting, with high fines for those who do not use the correct bins.

Alipay users can log into the Garbage Sorting Guidelines mini-app, type of their queries or take a photo of the rubbish in question, and receive an answer. Early questions included, "Does a cosmetic mask count as wet waste?" and, "Is a newspaper used to clean up after your pet hazardous or recyclable waste?"

Another Alipay mini-program offers a garbage pick-up service that allows users to place orders to sell their waste paper, clothes, glass bottles, and plastics.

Both [Alipay](#) and [WeChat](#) now include the ability for developers to insert mini-programs into the payments ecosystem. These allow users to, for example, hail a [ride](#) in other countries, order in [restaurants](#) or [rent bicycles](#) within the app, rather than using a separate app. However, the mini-programs are increasingly branching out into more general areas.

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Takeaway:

Sustainability has become a major focus of governmental campaigns in China. Over the next few years, the Chinese government plans to invest more than 21 billion yuan (around \$3.1 billion) in constructing recycling facilities in 46 cities. Given this, and the fact that more than 500,000 users consulted the app in its first three days, trash sorting mini-programs are set for huge growth. Around 58 of them are under development for Alipay alone, some of which plan to use voice and image recognition, and AR. In fact, the popularity of these programs may tell us less about rubbish and more about the future of mini-programs in China's fintech ecosystem.