

Abu Dhabi fund to release first iPhone gaming app

AppsArabia, the mobile application fund backed by Abu Dhabi's twofour54, is hoping it will land a triple word score to make its first app a winner in the region's video gamers.

The fund's first app will be called Kalimat, or "words" in Arabic, a Scrabble-like iPhone game that can be played in both Arabic and English. AppsArabia was founded earlier this year to improve the amount of mobile applications for the Arab world under the auspices of twofour54 ibtikar, the business incubation arm of Abu Dhabi's media zone.

AppsArabia developed the Kalimat game with Fares Fayad, a Dubai-based entrepreneur who successfully pitched the fund his idea, and Piranha Byte, a software firm based in Dubai Silicon Oasis who programmed the application.

Kalimat is scheduled to be available on Apple's iTunes App Store next month, pending approval, and will be sold for \$1.99 (€1.5).

It allows gamers to play words using a seven-letter tile rack similar to Scrabble but with variations on game play and the point system.

David Ashford, the general manager of AppsArabia, hopes the game will sell 50,000 copies over the next six months to help recoup its investment and help generate a revenue stream for the developer.

"It's Scrabble with a difference," said Ashford. "We are also doing a feasibility study about migrating it for Nokia and BlackBerry devices. Our marketing will focus on the MENA region but we will be extended that to the global audience because it has appeal to Arabic speakers around the world."

