

Michael Weinberg (Shapeways)

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Hi Marco. I'm in charge of the content policy here at Shapeways, so I wanted to open a direct line of communications with you about this. I can assure you that we are aware of the broad range of meanings of the swastika, and have had significant internal discussions about how we handle models that incorporate swastikas.

We are aware that the swastika has a long history that predates its adoption by the Nazis, and hope that it will have a rich future drawing on that history going forward. However, at this point we have concluded that for a significant portion of our users the primary association that a swastika brings to mind is with the Nazi party. The history of the Raelian "galaxy" symbol suggests that Raelians themselves recognize the ease with which the swastika - especially one embedded in a Star of David - can be interpreted in a negative light. As such, we have currently implemented a categorical ban on swastikas on our site.

None of this is done out of animus for any of the individuals and groups who use the swastika in non-Nazi related ways, to suggest that those individuals and groups are using it out of hate, or to suggest that those groups are not positive forces in the world. Instead, the decision is a judgment call that we made related to the current popular understanding of swastikas in many parts of the world. This is admittedly a judgment call where reasonable minds can differ, but it is a decision we have made at this time.

As with all aspects of our content policy, we are constantly reviewing this guideline to make sure that it is still appropriate. If and when the popular understanding of swastikas in the west evolves, we will be happy to reevaluate the policy.

Thanks,

michael