ClosetSwap

Ethical issues identified:

1. Data Privacy and User Security

The platform requires users to share personal information such as names, addresses, payment details, and private messages. Protecting this data is an ethical responsibility, as misuse or data breaches could lead to identity theft or harassment. The system must therefore follow data protection principles such as data minimisation, secure storage, and transparency in how user data is processed and shared.

2. Scams, Fraud, and User Trust

As a peer-to-peer marketplace, there is a significant risk of fraudulent activity, including fake listings, misleading item descriptions, or sellers failing to send items after payment. Ethically, the platform should prioritise user safety by providing clear guidance, in-app payments, reporting tools, and fair dispute resolution processes to protect both buyers and sellers.

3. Sale of Counterfeit or Illegal Items

Users may attempt to sell counterfeit branded goods or stolen items, which is unethical and illegal. Allowing such listings would undermine trust and harm buyers and legitimate brands. The platform has an ethical obligation to clearly prohibit counterfeit items, enable reporting of suspicious listings, and act promptly to remove unethical or illegal content

4. Accessibility and Inclusion

If the application is not designed with accessibility in mind, it may exclude users with disabilities or lower digital literacy. Ethical software development requires inclusive design choices such as clear navigation, readable text, and support for assistive technologies, ensuring that the platform is usable by a wide and diverse audience.

5. Transparency of Fees and Platform Practices

Hidden fees or manipulative interface designs can mislead users and reduce trust. Ethically, the platform should be transparent about any charges, promotions, or prioritised listings, ensuring users clearly understand costs before committing to transactions and can make informed decisions.

Reference Links:
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- OECD (2022) *The role of online marketplaces in protecting and empowering consumers*. Paris: OECD Publishing. Available at: https://www.oecd.org/consumer/online-marketplaces-protecting-consumers/ (Accessed: 3 February 2026), pp. 14–18, 21–24, 26–31.
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