ethics of copying code

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This paper explores the ethical considerations involved in the creation and usage of software from a copyright perspective, analyzes the impact of these activities on society, and discusses the responsible course of action based on professional codes of ethics such as those from ACM and IEEE.

There is an urgent need for a strong ethical framework because computer science is changing so quickly and there are so many people making software. “There was little need for copyright (or patent) protection for early computer programs. There were few computers, and most software was custom-developed for inhouse applications” (Patry,2000). Professional ethics rules set by groups like the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) must be followed at all times. These codes help you find your way around the complicated world of intellectual property, especially when it comes to software rights, licensing, and using code again and again.

The U.S. law system says that copyright in computer science is a way to protect the people who write "original works of authorship," which includes software programs. Both the ACM and IEEE Codes of Ethics stress how important it is to be honest and fair and support intellectual property rights. These rules say that people who work in computing shouldn't claim ownership of other people's work or try to make money off of it without giving credit and paying them. “There are two ways in which copyright law can deal with works where human interaction is minimal or non-existent. It can either deny copyright protection for works that have been generated by a computer or it can attribute authorship of such works to the creator of the program” (Guadamuz, 2017). This commitment encourages new ideas, makes sure competition is fair, and protects the profession's reputation for honesty.

The MIT License is a license that I think is fair and would use for my software because it fits with these professional standards. This choice is ethical according to both the ACM and IEEE because it lets anyone use, change, and share the work for free as long as the original author is recognized. This license makes it easier for people to work together and come up with new ideas because it lowers the barriers to entry. This is good for society as a whole. Depending on the use case, like for business or community projects, I would think about using the GNU General Public License or Apache License 2.0 to protect participants' rights and keep derivative works open, which is what these professional codes are all about.

The ACM and IEEE Codes of Ethics say that people who work in computers should be fair, honest, and appreciate other people's ideas (ACM,2018). When you use code from the internet again, whether it's for work, school, or a business product, you have to follow the licensing rules that came with it. This follows the rules of the professional community and makes sure that people who make derivative works are fairly shared and that the rights of the original creators are honored. Such moral behavior has a huge effect on society: it builds trust, encourages people to share information, and, in the end, speeds up progress in technology for everyone.

Making software, licensing it, and reusing code all have big social effects. As was shown, the ACM and IEEE Codes of Ethics are useful ethical guidelines that are in line with the law and social norms. By following these professional rules, people who work in computing not only follow the law, but they also help make society more responsible and technologically advanced (IEEE, 2020). The decisions we make have a big effect on society. They build trust in the digital ecosystem and help technology keep getting better.

Works Cited

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