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Ethical Review

Scenario 1

A positive effect of this change is that trip planner users will see businesses that are better for them (users pay less).

This change may cause negative experiences for trip planner users if they don't understand how discounts influence search results, or they want to ignore discounts. Then trip planner users would receive less useful or misleading results. Suppose that a trip planner user needs to send money ASAP, but search results consist of banks with lower commissions which are farther than other banks. The proposed change has a vulnerability which allows businesses to distort search results for their benefit. A discount is a relative change in price. Customers care about absolute prices. The price of 100 discounted at 50% is higher than the price of 50 discounted at 10%, but the discount rate is higher in the first case. A business may lead a trip planner user to believe that their prices are lower when they are not.

I would implement this change because it does not cause serious ethical or legal issues. This change may turn the trip planner less useful, but it's a headache of the company that sells the trip planner. Before implementing this change, I would propose to communicate clearly to users how discounts influence search results and explain how businesses can distort search results.

Scenario 2

A positive effect of this change is that a trip planner administrator can conceal illegal or unethical businesses. Deleting a business entry is less secure because then the owner of the business will notice it and will try to add their business again.

A negative effect of this change is that a trip planner administrator may ban a business at their own discretion, hurting competition and equality.

I would implement this change if I was certain that it would only be used for legal or ethical reasons.

Scenario 3

I chose business photos (outside and inside).

A positive effect of this change is that customers will see more information about businesses. For example, is the business big or small, whether its owner cares about the style (if it's a fashion business), whether it has accommodations for disabled people, etc. Another positive effect is that it's easier for some customers to remember businesses by their outlook than by their names.

This change may turn the trip planner less reliable because photos require more storage and network bandwidth. This change, especially inside photos, makes it easier for criminals to plan their attacks on businesses. If photos of businesses show people (for example, random customers), they may hinder the privacy of these people.

I would implement this change because it does not cause serious ethical or legal issues. Before implementing this change, I would warn about the negative effects and propose my ways to remedy them.