

# Project Ethics and Sustainability

Improving the Grand Prix experience  
for F1 viewers at home

S8 Graduation FHICT

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# Introduction

In the concepting phase, we decided to use the livetiming API from Formula 1 as a data source. RN365 already uses this data source for its live timing stats. However, there are some ethical and sustainable considerations to keep in mind.

During the project, I spoke to several people to get their opinion of the use of the Formula 1 API. Based on these talks, I was able to shape my own ethical opinion on the issue and also consider the sustainable impact in case this data source would suddenly become unavailable.

# What are the exact flaws of this data source?

This data source is an undocumented API from Formula 1 that is used to display timing stats on their website, but also for information in the official tv broadcast.

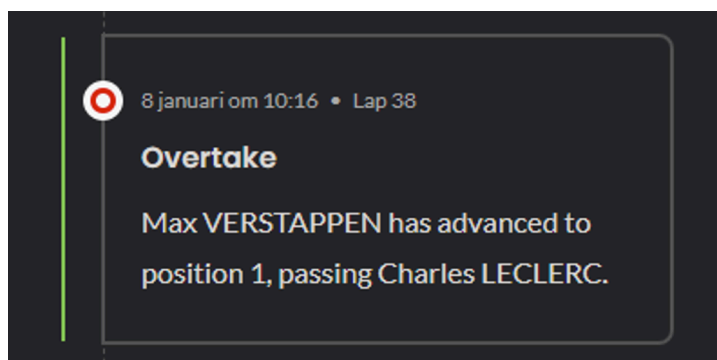
Undocumented means that there isn't any official documentation from Formula 1 of how to use this API. This indicates that Formula 1 doesn't intend on making this data publicly available and that this could lead to potential copyright infringement. Although this data source is undocumented, it's also unsecured. This makes the API appealing for hobbyists who want to experiment with the data, but also for RN365 who would like to display some interesting stats on their website.

Undocumented also means that we simply don't know anything about this API, including the future of it. This makes this API risky to use. Not only can Formula 1 shut this API down at any time or install some kind of authentication to prevent unwanted access, but small changes in the data structure can also result in features of an app that stop working, resulting in work to adapt to these changes.

# Sustainable impact on the new liveblog

The main question to ask is what if this data source becomes unavailable for whatever reason.

My internship project only added features to the liveblog. This means that there were no features discarded and that the old features will always work, whether the data needed for the features I added is available or not. The liveblog does require some extra information however. Each liveblog item now displays the current track status and lap for example. However, the form that is originally used to make a liveblog item is modified so the editorial from RN365 can also manually input this information.



Therefore, only a few small things will change if the data source fails. These are:

- The liveblog user won't get the true live experience anymore. Because the data source is 25 seconds ahead of the broadcast, the editorial has 25 seconds to make or edit a liveblog item before it's displayed on the broadcast.
- The liveblog user will receive less updates. Concept liveblog items are generated based on the data source. RN365 can post these items straight away or edit them before posting. This saves time for the editorial, allowing them to publish more liveblog items during a racing event.

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# My ethical opinion on the use of this data

My ethical opinion is about copyright and legal concerns. I don't have any concerns about data privacy and security, because the data doesn't contain any personal details of the drivers, except for their names, but these are widely known of course.

For my internship, my interests are with making a successful project by making something cool so I can enjoy learning. I don't want any parties to end up in any legal troubles. RN365 is always responsible for the content on their website, not TDE or an intern at TDE.

I think this issue is very similar to the ethical opinions around the use of ChatGPT. ChatGPT scrapes the internet for data to construct an answer, without providing any data sources or crediting the original creator of the content. Essentially, this is the same as what the new liveblog does.

I also expect that Formula 1 knows about the unauthorized use of their API. Although there isn't any official documentation available. There's plenty of information about this data source on Reddit for example. There's even an entire python project built on this data source, called FastF1, <https://docs.fastf1.dev/>. This also indicates that Formula 1 doesn't mind others using their data. Because if they did mind, they would have some kind of responsibility in securing their own data by installing some authorization on the API.

Then there's the fact that the data shared with the end user is already widely available on the internet, even through F1's own website. And the data in the new liveblog can be added manually. Therefore, the data is only used to make life easier for the editor of the liveblog. not to directly make money with it.



# Conclusion

The way the data source is used doesn't provide any major sustainability or ethical risks. This is because the liveblog will still function like it's used to function if the data isn't available. Next, the data from the data source isn't used to directly make money off it. It only makes the process of keeping the liveblog up to date more easy for the editorial of RN365. And the data that is shared, is widely available on the internet anyway. Add this to the fact that Formula 1 has a responsibility in securing their data if they don't want others using it, doesn't make me think that using the data source is ethically wrong for the project and by only sharing data that's widely available, RN365 doesn't risk running into any legal troubles.

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# Summary

In the concepting phase, we decided to use the livetiming API from Formula 1 as a data source. RN365 already uses this data source for its live timing stats. However, there are some ethical and sustainable considerations to keep in mind.

During the project, I spoke to several people to get their opinion of the use of the Formula 1 API. Based on these talks, I was able to shape my own ethical opinion on the issue and also consider the sustainable impact in case this data source would suddenly become unavailable.

The way the data source is used doesn't provide any major sustainability or ethical risks. This is because the liveblog will still function like it's used to function if the data isn't available. Next, the data from the data source isn't used to directly make money off it. It only makes the process of keeping the liveblog up to date more easy for the editorial of RN365. And the data that is shared, is widely available on the internet anyway. Add this to the fact that Formula 1 has a responsibility in securing their data if they don't want others using it, doesn't make me think that using the data source is ethically wrong for the project. And by only sharing data that's widely available, I don't expect RN365 to run into any legal issues.



# Learning Outcome Clarification

- Learning Outcome 3: Future-Oriented Organisation

Learning outcome 3 applies for this deliverable as I considered ethical and sustainable aspects of the project.