**Ethical Analysis**

**Based on Ethical Theories**

# Case title: Dark UX Patterns

**From ACM code of Ethics**

**Case description:**

The change request Stewart received was simple enough: replace the web site’s rounded rectangle buttons with arrows and adjust the color palette to one that mixes red and green text. But when Steward looked at the prototype, he found it confusing. The left arrow suggested that the web site would go back to a previous page or cancel some action; instead, this arrow replaced the button for accepting the company’s default product. The right arrow, on the other hand, upgraded the user to the more expensive category; it also silently added a protection warranty without asking for confirmation. Stewart suggested to his manager that this confusing design would probably trick users into more expensive options that they didn’t want. The response was that these were the changes requested by the client.

Shortly after the updates were released into their production system, Stewart’s team was invited to a celebration. As a result of these changes, revenues at their client had increased significantly over the previous quarter. At the celebration, Stewart overheard some of the client’s managers discussing the small increase for refunds by users who claimed that they didn’t want the protection plan, but there weren’t many. One manager noted several complaints from visually impaired users, who noted that the mixture of red and green text obscured important disclaimers about the product. “So what you’re saying, then, is that the changes worked as planned,” quipped one of the managers.

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| comprehension | **Fact** | **Involved parties** | **Claims** | **Outcomes** | **consequences** | **Time critical?** |
| Description | 1. Stewart is UX designer and he had The change request from client. 2. Stewart suggested to his manager that this confusing design would probably trick users into more expensive options that they didn’t want. 3. Shortly after the updates were released into their production system, Stewart’s team was invited to a celebration. As a result of these changes. | 1. Stewart 2. Manager 3. Client 4. visually impaired users 5. Stewart’s team | 1. *The response was that these were the changes requested by the client.* | 1. revenues at their client had increased significantly over the previous quarter. | Stewart overheard some of the client’s managers discussing the small increase for refunds by users who claimed that they didn’t want the protection plan, but there weren’t many.  One manager noted several complaints from visually impaired users, who noted that the mixture of red and green text obscured important disclaimers about the product. | At the celebration |

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| Analysis | F1 | F2 | F3 | P1 | P2 | P3 | P4 | P5 | C1 | Out1 | Con1 |
| Egoism | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| Utilitarianism |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |
| Altruism |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Deontic logic:** Obligations |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Permission |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Overall deontology** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Human Nature:**   1. Anticipating the consequences 2. Value judgement 3. Choose an alternative |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Hedonism:**  Maximize pleasure  Minimize pain |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |
| **Emotivism:** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Relative environments:**  **Culture:**  **Society:**  **Individual:** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |