Discussion 1 – Summary Post

Summary Reflection: Dark UX Patterns Analysis

While awaiting peer feedback, this reflection offers a critical self-assessment of my initial forum post on dark UX patterns, identifying both strengths and areas for development.

Strengths: My work demonstrates solid application of professional codes (ACM and BCS) to the case study, and is well supported by academic literature. The integration of empirical research by Mathur et al. (2019) and Luguri and Strahilevitz (2021) strengthens my claims about cognitive bias exploitation and vulnerability of certain populations, while the structured approach (moving from code violations through legal implications to professional responsibility) maintains a logic flow and is easy to follow as a reader.

Areas for Improvement: Reflecting on my own peer feedback to David and Chih, I recognize similar weaknesses in my work. Like David's analysis, mine would benefit from deeper engagement with systemic factors that complicate ethical decision-making. I identified Stewart's failure but offered limited critical reflection on the organizational pressures, economic incentives, and power dynamics that make such failures likely. Drawing from Chih's workplace abuse case, I could have explored how unethical design practices become normalised within organizational culture and how leadership sets ethical tone.

Additionally, my analysis remains largely descriptive. While I successfully identified code violations, I missed opportunities to critically examine the adequacy of existing professional codes for addressing dark patterns, or to propose actionable frameworks for designers facing similar dilemmas. The piece would also benefit from discussing whistleblowing obligations or industry-wide accountability mechanisms, as I proposed in the context of Chih's organisational behaviour analysis.

Moving Forward: My future ethical analyses would be strengthened by a more critical examination of the structural barriers to ethical practise, as well as evaluate of solutions for practitioners navigating competing pressures.

References:

Luguri, J. and Strahilevitz, L.J. (2021) 'Shining a light on dark patterns', Journal of Legal Analysis, 13(1), pp. 43–109.

Mathur, A., Acar, G., Friedman, M.J., Lucherini, E., Mayer, J., Chetty, M. and Narayanan, A. (2019) 'Dark patterns at scale: findings from a crawl of 11K shopping websites', Proceedings of the ACM on Human–Computer Interaction, 3(CSCW), pp. 1–32.