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## Scenario 2 Ethical Analysis

- A. Identify the main ethical question or questions faced by the main character ("you") in the scenario. This will certainly include "what should you do?", but there may be other interesting questions to consider.

### Problems/Questions

- Beerz's promise to protect user's data and not participate in surveillance capitalism is at risk.
  - Users think their data is secure, when in reality it may not be.
  - Users probably did not give permission for the company to sell their location data.
  - As a new employee, you don't have much say, and if you disagree you may lose your job.
- Have to choose between continuing your job by building a new feature that you are very excited about or standing up for the customers to preserve the ethics of the company and risk losing your job.
- Should I let the users know that the company will start collecting data even though we promised not to do so? Who should I speak to?

### Potential actions

- You know the CTO shares your vision, so you may try to talk to her about the issue and what it would mean for the company's mission and user trust. The CTO may convince the CEO to not go down that path.
- Come up with other ways to get additional revenue and present that in a meeting (alternatives to selling user data).
- Directly convince the CEO that selling data would destroy the trust between the customers and the company. The customers that chose to use this app because of our data collecting policy will stop using our app which will affect the number of users in the long run.
- Try to find some regulation against getting user location data out of API's archived weblogs. For example, the company may have an agreement with the users to permanently delete this data after a week (which should include logs).
- If nothing works and that bothers you: quit and go work for a company that does not do this.

- B. For each stakeholder (or category of stakeholders) in the scenario, identify the stakeholder's relevant rights.

- Beerz: The right to use users' data to deliver their features.
- You (and the development team): You have the right to leave the company at any time (at will employment) and the right to suggest your ideas to the employees.
- CEO and CTO: The right to fire anyone from the company.

- Beerz users: The right to their own data (they could request a copy, or deletion of the data) and confidentiality (their personal information shouldn't be online).
- Local breweries: Same as users, could request that their data be deleted.
- The relevant app store: reserves the right to delete the app from the store if it doesn't follow its rules.

C. List any information missing from the scenario that you would like to have to help you make better choices.

- It would be helpful to know the CTO's position: does the CTO have a big influence on the company?
- Read the user agreement
  - Do they know logs are not being deleted?
  - What permissions did they give to the company to do with their data?
- Know which country this is taking place (local regulations). If it's Europe, harsher laws may apply.

D. Describe your possible actions, and discuss the likely consequences of those actions.

Potential actions (same as in question 1) and consequences

- You know the CTO shares your vision, so you may try to talk to her about the issue and what it would mean for the company's mission and user trust. The CTO may convince the CEO to not go down that path.
  - Potential consequence: Either the company agrees to not sell user data or now you know that the company doesn't share the same vision as the CTO's. You can either keep working there or quit.
- Come up with other ways to get additional revenue and present that in a meeting (alternatives to selling user data). Emphasize that not only is selling user data, not in the company's mission but also will make the users not trust the company.
  - Potential consequence: you have to work extra hard to develop new features, and they may still bring up the idea of selling data after the work is complete (assuming it does not make enough money).
- Convince the CEO that selling data would destroy the trust between the customers and the company. The customers that chose to use this app because of our data collecting policy will stop using our app which will affect the number of users in the long run.
  - Potential consequence: if the CEO agrees with you, you can keep working on your new features: end of the story. If the CEO doesn't agree with you, the CEO might not like you and make it harder for you to work there.
- Try to find some regulation against getting user location data out of API's archived weblogs. For example, the company may have an agreement with the users to permanently delete this data after a week (which should include logs).
  - Potential consequence: you may find a violation of the user agreement, and have another ethical dilemma (should you report to the authorities, if so, which ones?).

- If nothing works and that bothers you: quit and go work for a company that does not do this.
  - Potential consequences: not being able to find another job, losing out on the stock, and other compensation.

E. Discuss whether the [ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct](#) offers any relevant guidance.

### 1.3 Be honest and trustworthy.

Given that the company promised to the users and advertised itself by saying that they will immediately discard users' data when they are done using it, the company should honor that promise and not use users' data on something that we promised not to do.

1.6 Respect privacy - "Computing professionals should only use personal information for legitimate ends and without violating the rights of individuals and groups." and "Personal information gathered for a specific purpose should not be used for other purposes without the person's consent."

Getting more revenue from user location data is not a legitimate end and as the information was gathered without this specific purpose, it cannot be used without asking for user consent.

### 2.4 Accept and provide appropriate professional review.

It is clear that the CEO isn't as concerned about collecting users' data as the CTO does. It is important, in this case, to share your professional opinions on how collecting data can lead to something bad for the company.

F. Describe and justify your recommended action, as well as your answers to any other questions you presented in part A.

Our recommended action is to "convince the CEO that selling data would destroy the trust between the customers and the company. The customers that chose to use this app because of our data collecting policy will stop using our app which will affect the number of users in the long run". As it is the one that minimizes the personal consequences while also taking user rights into account. Doing so will also protect the trustworthiness of the company and allow the company to maintain customers. This option also aligns with the ACM code of ethics and professional conduct.

(Answer to question in part A)

- Maybe speak with people internally first before making the problem public, like with the CTO or CEO.