

Value Sensitive Design Assignment - Nisarg Patel

[General]

1. Briefly describe the website you are building (its purpose/functionality/etc.)

My website is about restaurant and food related content. The website caters to three types of users, restaurants, its employees and its customers. Through this website, customers or employees can engage with the public through likes, comments or posting reviews about restaurants' services or quality of the food items that these restaurants serve. They can also search for any food item using a third party API to find out which restaurants have that item in their menu. The website is useful for restaurants to add food items to their menus.

2. What problem is your website meant to solve? (If your website wasn't intended to solve a problem, instead answer the following: what problem or problems *could* a website like yours solve?)

As more and more restaurants open up near an individual's living area or their city, people tend to face a hard time deciding where to dine. Customers are also always in dilemma about whether the same quality food is served at different prices. A website like the one I developed caters to all kinds of people, those who like to dine out regularly and would like to share their experience, those who can critique and review the food, and people new to an area or a particular cuisine and looking for recommendations. Customers can easily search the food items they are interested in, identify and compare the costs, post reviews and ratings to help fellow customers gauge an idea of how well the restaurant is. At the same time, based on customer engagement on this website, it is useful for restaurant owners to collect information about what cuisine or kind of restaurant customers are usually attracted to, so that they can improve their services and provide better experience to their customers.

3. Identify the stakeholders (direct and indirect) whose interests are relevant to your website.

Direct stakeholders mainly include users who are looking for information related to details of a dish, reviews and recommendations, or compare costs. Restaurants and its employees are also direct stakeholders as customer reviews are important for them to evaluate their services and food quality. Indirect stakeholders might involve potential startups that might generate data based on customer engagement on the website in form of likes, comments or reviews, for research purposes to see which restaurants are successfully running and what cuisine the majority of the population prefer to eat.

4. What values are at stake for these stakeholders?

The values that are at stake for these stakeholders are,

- Autonomy: Freedom to share opinions freely
- Privacy: User information not subject to identification.
- Information Sharing
- Trust: Information is provided to the best of abilities and truthfulness.

5. Is your website likely to undermine or compromise any of these values? Which ones, for which stakeholders, and how?

I believe that the value of trust can be compromised in my website. Since the website does not ask for any identifying information to confirm an individual's identity, people can easily make dummy accounts with a different email id and date of birth to deflect or enhance a restaurants' ratings. This can misguide the users to gather accurate information about any restaurant and breach trust from the website.

6. Which values does your website promote, for which stakeholders, and how?
- Autonomy: Users are free to share their opinions about a particular item or restaurant without being forced to do so.
 - Privacy: Users can use website's services without having to identify themselves other than the services which require authentication to do so.
 - Information Sharing: The information about various foods and restaurants is shared to all the users so they can acquire information about whatever they like and make an informed decision about where and what to eat, at what cost, what ingredients are included, the number of calories.
7. What counts as "success" for the website you are building? Given the relevant problem(s), stakeholders, and values that are at play, why is this account of success reasonable?

Like any other information providing website, the success of my website also depends on the amount of user engagement I get. This involves input from users to like restaurants, their services and food items which will be helpful for other users and increase engagement even more. Similarly, the restaurants can provide the list of their food items to the customers. As more restaurants register, it will give customers more options to choose from and make an informed decision. Since the site caters to gathering and spreading information about restaurants and customer experiences, the more these parties engage in the website, the more chances it has for success.

8. How does the broader social context surrounding your website affect the likelihood it will succeed?

Social contexts like small neighborhoods, fewer restaurants, low economy putting restaurants out of business or hindering new restaurants to open up can indirectly affect the success of the website by limiting the users available.

[Privacy]

9. What user data will you have access to, and what might this data reveal about its subjects?

For a customer or employee, the website will have access to personal information like Name, Date of Birth and Email address. Restaurant Employees will further need to share their restaurant they are working in. Restaurants will need to provide information like name, address, email and date of opening. Public information includes the ratings and reviews made by the user along with the menu of the restaurant.

10. What values are relevant to your website's privacy policy? (Note that the relevant values will depend in part on the kind of website you are building).

Values relevant to website's privacy Policy:

- Autonomy: Users can comment and rate a food dish or restaurant if they wish.
- Privacy: Users not logged in can still search food items and restaurants.
- Information Sharing: Menus of Restaurants and details of items can be viewed by anyone visiting the website.
- Profit: The website is made in a sense to profit from the services provided.

11. Describe how you took the relevant values into account in writing your privacy policy (e.g. what decisions and tradeoffs were made, and why).

Relevant values were put into consideration while writing the privacy policy. Eg.: For Profit, while writing privacy policy, The sharing of information with ad-providers was added. The tradeoff being that only the public information available is shared with the ad-providers. This way the user's private information is safe and public information can be used for ad purposes and thus the website making profits from ads.

[Autonomy]

12. In what ways might your user interface “nudge” users? Analyze a minimum of 3 features.

- 1) A user can be nudged to comment on the restaurants and dishes liked by the user.
Eg. User liked Falafel Burger, then before navigating back to profile, a popup can occur to leave a review of the food item.
- 2) If a user is sharing a review, more details could be asked for more information like when user visited the restaurant or tried out a food Item.
- 3) A coupon system can be established to do certain reviews in a restaurant and get a coupon for food items in that restaurant.

13. Do any of these constitute “dark patterns”? For each previously identified feature, explain why it does or does not.

From these nudges, Eg.2 is a Privacy Zuckerberg dark pattern as it takes in other personal information which is not relevant to the comment or the website.

Eg1. Can also be a dark pattern(Confirm Shaming) if in popup a guilty sentence is put like “Please comment or else the food will taste worse next time.” Something like this.