Codes of Ethics and Professional Conduct

**Dark UX Patterns**

### Re: Initial Post

by [Nkosana Mlambo](https://www.my-course.co.uk/user/view.php?id=16924&course=9736) - Monday, 29 May 2023, 10:09 AM

Summary Post  
  
Dark UX patterns are deceptive user experience and user interface interactions designed to mislead or trick users into taking actions they may not want to take (Jaiswal, 2017). They violate ethical principles, professional codes of conduct, and user trust. Dark patterns manipulate users through design elements, misleading language, hidden information, and coercive prompts, all with the intention of prioritizing the interests of the company over the well-being and autonomy of users.  
In this scenario, Steward, a computing professional, is faced with an ethical dilemma as he is obligated to adhere to the code of conduct of his professional body (ACM, 2023).

The changes he made to the website design, which resulted in increased revenues but also escalated complaints and refund requests, indicate unethical conduct. The design elements, such as arrows and colour changes, mislead and discriminate against users with disabilities, violating ethical guidelines and the BCS code of conduct (BCS, 2023).

The management team's celebration of increased revenues while disregarding user complaints and refunds demonstrates a prioritization of financial gains over ethical considerations. Such behaviour goes against the duty of public interest, professional competence and integrity, and duty to the profession outlined in the BCS code of conduct (BCS, 2023).

Dark patterns not only harm users but also have negative consequences for businesses. They result in unhappy customers, loss of trust, and ultimately, loss of customers. Prioritizing business objectives through dark patterns leads to a poor customer experience, which directly impacts the success and reputation of the business (Picoult, 2020) (Blundell, 2018).

In conclusion, dark UX patterns are unethical and immoral shortcuts that sacrifice user well-being and trust for the sake of meeting business objectives. Computing professionals should prioritize professionalism, compliance with laws and regulations, avoidance of harm and discrimination, and the principles of honesty, integrity, and transparency in their work. Dark patterns not only violate ethical principles but also undermine the long-term success of businesses by alienating and dissatisfying customers.

**References**

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