

Project 2 Questions  
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- a. Another way to verify that the business license is valid for short term rentals in San Francisco is to limit the types of inputs that are allowed into the system. For example, as seen on the air bnb page, each lister had to input their policy number, but there wasn't a specific format they had to follow. This allowed one lister to put an invalid number in without it being checked. If the input was limited to the specific formats that were verified in that city, the amount of invalid licenses would decrease. Further, companies such as airbnb could create a program that cross checks the entered policy number with a verified database of policy numbers provided by the planning office. If the lister had to get the policy number approved by the planning office first, it would reduce errors in the long term. While these options might fix the verification process, Airbnb might disagree with the implementation. While they might want to fix the process, if it's too rigid they could lose a lot of business and profit. More mistakes might be created by limiting the types of inputs if someone has special circumstances or a different policy number than expected. Another issue that might occur is privacy. Many might argue that creating a system that forces them to verify their identity and policy might make people weary to join the platform. Some people might not want their information readily available by others, reducing business for airbnb. There are many possibilities to help strengthen policy verification but it's difficult to make changes when it could impact one's privacy or impact the success of airbnb and other rental services.
- b. Potential research question: How has an influx in short term rental housing impacted adequate housing, and in specific, the value and quality of the homes that surround rental properties?
- c. One factor that is important to consider when discussing the legality of web scraping is intentional and unintentional discrimination described by the EFF article. A lot of companies believe in the restriction of web scraping as it could interfere with their business practices and knowledge, however, by restricting the right to access information, individuals lack the knowledge of potential discrimination and inequality. Being able to scrape web data, especially when it's meant for education and knowledge, is an essential right for researchers and journalists. By having the ability to scrape, individuals can see how information is built, who it's intended for, and if there're flaws within the system. Often when thinking of web scraping, the concept comes off as hacking and revealing, pushing many to make it illegal and limited. However, the reality is that web scraping is another form of accountability and research that must remain legal to ensure that everyone's rights and freedoms are being upheld.
- d. When deciding whether to use or not use public data, certain guidelines must be put in place to ensure that private information isn't being abused. If an individual's private information that easily identifies them is displayed publicly, the data shouldn't be used unless permitted by the specific individual. While people might have given private data to a website, that information if directly attached to their identity could lead to harm or cause privacy concerns. Further, public data should not be used if the results are collected

with the intention of manipulation or harm. Web scraping and access to public information should be used solely for education, researching, and knowledge. People offer their information to companies with the expectation that it will be protected and used properly. While public data has many benefits, if the scraping and use of public data does not uphold expectations of protection and privacy, it shouldn't be used.