

# ETHICS IN COMPUTING INDUSTRY





# Introduction

**Ethics in the computing industry** means using technology in a responsible and honest way. It helps protect people's data, privacy, and rights while ensuring that computer systems are used fairly and safely.

## Objective

At the end of this course packet, the student will be able to:

- To understand the importance of ethical behavior in computing.
- To identify common ethical issues in the use of technology.
- To promote responsible and fair use of computer systems.
- To protect user privacy and data security.

# Introduction

**Ethics in the computing industry** refers to the moral rules and responsibilities that guide how technology is created and used. It focuses on doing what is right when developing software, handling data, protecting user privacy, and ensuring technology is used safely and fairly. As computers and digital systems become part of everyday life, ethical practices help prevent harm, misuse, and unfair treatment of users.

# **Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues**

Legal, ethical, and societal issues are crucial considerations in any field, especially in technology and software development.

Understanding and addressing legal, ethical, and societal issues is essential to fostering trust, inclusivity, and fairness in technology development and deployment.

# **Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues**

Legal issues revolve around compliance with laws, regulations, and policies that govern the use of technology, personal data, intellectual property, and digital content.

Ethics concern the moral principles guiding technology use, focusing on what is “right” or “fair” rather than what is legal.

Societal issues relate to the broader impact of technology on communities, culture, economies, and individual well-being.

# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues



# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues

## **COPYRIGHT**

A **legal** mechanism that grants the only right to publish and sell a literary, artistic, musical, or other creative work to its **creator**. Owners of copyrights have the right to regulate how their work is reproduced, as well as the right to be paid for it.

Others, such as publishers or recording corporations, may be granted or sold those rights by an author.

**Infringement** is the term used to describe the act of violating a copyright.

# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues

## Court Cases about Copyright

### Capitol Records, LLC v. ReDigi Inc. (2013)

- **Background:** ReDigi created a marketplace for users to resell legally purchased digital music files. Capitol Records argued that reselling digital files infringed on its distribution rights.
- **Outcome:** The court ruled against ReDigi, finding that copying digital files, even for resale purposes, constitutes reproduction, which is exclusive to the copyright owner.
- **Significance:** This case highlighted the difficulty of applying the "first sale doctrine" to digital goods, establishing that the resale of digital content may infringe copyright without permission.



# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues

## Court Cases about Copyright

### Apple Computer, Inc. v. Microsoft Corp. (1994)

- **Background:** Apple sued Microsoft, claiming that Microsoft's Windows operating system copied Apple's graphical user interface (GUI) used in its Macintosh computers.
- **Outcome:** The court ruled largely in favor of Microsoft, finding that many elements of the GUI were not protected by copyright because they were "functional" or "commonplace" and, thus, not subject to copyright protection.
- **Significance:** This case established that software interfaces can be protected only to the extent they demonstrate original expression rather than functional elements, influencing later cases involving software GUIs.

# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues



# **Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues**

## **PLAGIARISM**

The act of adopting or closely replicating the language and concepts of another author without permission; the portrayal of that author's work as one's own, such as by failing to acknowledge the source.

# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues

## Court Case against Plagiarism

### Silicon Knights v. Epic Games (2012)

- **Background:** Silicon Knights, a video game company, sued Epic Games, claiming that Epic withheld resources related to the Unreal Engine and failed to provide proper support. Epic counterclaimed that Silicon Knights had plagiarized and used its code without permission in other games.
- **Outcome:** The court ruled in favor of Epic Games, finding that Silicon Knights had indeed used parts of Unreal Engine's code without permission and improperly integrated it into their own software.
- **Significance:** This case emphasized the importance of respecting licensing terms and copyright, particularly in gaming, where code reuse and modifications are common. It also highlighted the serious financial consequences of plagiarism within proprietary software development.

# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues

## Court Case against Plagiarism

### Facebook and Divya Narendra & Cameron and Tyler Winklevoss (2004)

- **Background:** The Winklevoss twins and Narendra accused Mark Zuckerberg of using their ideas to create Facebook while they were working on a similar project, ConnectU, at Harvard. They argued that Zuckerberg copied their concept without permission, which led to allegations of plagiarism in the project.
- **Outcome:** Although the case settled for a substantial amount, with the Winklevoss twins receiving a payout, Facebook denied any wrongdoing. The case was significant due to the ethical and legal questions it raised around idea plagiarism, particularly in the startup world.
- **Significance:** This case emphasized the importance of agreements and proper documentation in startup collaborations to protect intellectual contributions and minimize the risk of idea theft.



# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues



# **Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues**

## **CYBER BULLYING**

Bullying that occurs through the use of electronic technology such as mobile phones, laptops, and tablets, as well as communication tools such as social networking sites, text messages, chat rooms, and webpages.

Text messages or emails intended to humiliate or degrade; rumors or false assertions circulated by email or uploaded on social networking sites; and humiliating images, videos, websites, or phony accounts purposefully shared throughout social media are all examples of cyberbullying.

# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues

## Court cases against Cyber Bullying

### People v. Austin (New York, 2012)

- **Background:** Four high school students in New York were accused of creating a "Burn Book" Facebook page where they posted offensive and harassing comments about classmates. The victims were subjected to humiliation, and some experienced psychological distress.
- **Outcome:** The students involved were charged under New York's laws prohibiting cyberbullying. They were sentenced to probation and required to complete counseling and community service.
- **Significance:** The case highlighted the legal consequences of using social media for bullying and harassment, setting a precedent that minors can face legal action for cyberbullying in New York.

# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues

## Court cases against Cyber Bullying

### Tyler Clementi Case (United States v. Dharun Ravi) (2012)

- **Background:** Dharun Ravi used a webcam to secretly record his roommate, Tyler Clementi, during a private moment with another man. Ravi then shared the video and encouraged others to watch, leading to Clementi's public humiliation and eventual suicide.
- **Outcome:** Ravi was convicted of invasion of privacy and bias intimidation. He was sentenced to 30 days in jail, probation, and community service. However, the bias intimidation charges were later dismissed on appeal.
- **Significance:** This case underscored the severe impact of cyberbullying and invasion of privacy, leading to anti-bullying laws (like New Jersey's Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights) and stricter policies to protect LGBTQ+ youth from harassment.

# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues



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# **Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues**

## **PHISHING**

Phishing is the effort to gain sensitive information such as usernames, passwords, and credit card data (and, indirectly, money) by impersonating a trustworthy entity in an electronic conversation, usually for malevolent purposes.

Phishing cases have become increasingly prominent as cybercrime rises, involving scams where attackers deceive individuals into sharing sensitive information, such as login credentials or financial data, often through fake websites, emails, or messages.

# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues

## Court cases against Phishing

### United States v. Michael Persaud (2020)

- **Background:** Michael Persaud, a U.S. resident, was charged with running a large-scale phishing scam targeting individuals with fraudulent emails. Persaud sent millions of emails through compromised accounts to trick victims into sharing personal and financial information.
- **Outcome:** Persaud was convicted of wire fraud and unauthorized access to computers and was sentenced to prison. His conviction highlighted the legal consequences of using compromised email accounts to carry out phishing scams.
- **Significance:** This case demonstrated the U.S. government's commitment to prosecuting phishing even on a smaller scale. It also reinforced laws that make unauthorized access to computers a federal offense.

# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues

## Court cases against Phishing

### United States v. Nigerian “Yahoo Boys” (2020)

- **Background:** Several Nigerian nationals, commonly referred to as “Yahoo Boys,” were part of an international phishing and Business Email Compromise (BEC) scheme that targeted U.S. businesses and individuals. The phishing attacks tricked employees into transferring funds, resulting in losses of millions of dollars.
- **Outcome:** The U.S. Justice Department, in cooperation with Nigerian law enforcement, arrested and prosecuted several members of this group. The convicted individuals received varying sentences based on their roles in the phishing and BEC scams.
- **Significance:** This case highlighted the global nature of phishing and fraud schemes, as well as the increasing international cooperation in fighting cybercrime. It also raised awareness for businesses to be vigilant against BEC scams and phishing attacks.

# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues



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# **Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues**

## **DIGITAL PIRACY**

Unlawfully duplicating and selling digital music, film, computer software, and other media.

This activity infringes on copyright laws, impacting both creators and the industries involved by reducing potential revenue and often leading to legal action against those who facilitate or participate in digital piracy.



# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues

## Court case against Digital Piracy

### Nintendo v. ROM Sites (LoveROMS.com, LoveRETRO.co) (2018)

- **Background:** LoveROMS.com and LoveRETRO.co provided downloadable copies of classic Nintendo games without permission. Nintendo filed a lawsuit against the operators, accusing them of infringing on Nintendo's copyrights and trademarks.
- **Outcome:** The court ruled in favor of Nintendo, ordering the operators to pay \$12.23 million in damages. This effectively shut down both sites and sent a warning to other ROM-hosting websites.
- **Significance:** This case highlighted Nintendo's aggressive approach to protecting its intellectual property and served as a warning to other ROM websites. It reinforced that the distribution of copyrighted video game ROMs without permission is illegal.

# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues

## Court case against Digital Piracy

### RIAA v. Napster, Inc. (2001)

- **Background:** Napster, a peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing network, allowed users to share MP3 music files for free, resulting in widespread copyright infringement. The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) filed a lawsuit against Napster for enabling users to share music without authorization from artists or record labels.
- **Outcome:** The court ruled that Napster was liable for copyright infringement, leading to an injunction that required the service to cease operations. Napster eventually filed for bankruptcy and shut down its platform.
- **Significance:** This case marked one of the first major legal battles against digital piracy, setting a precedent for holding P2P platforms accountable for facilitating copyright infringement. It paved the way for future copyright cases and increased legal protections for music and other digital media.

# **Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues**

## **CYBERSEX**

A virtual sex experience in which two or more individuals (connected remotely through the internet) communicate each other sexually explicit contents or sexually explicit behaviors is known as computer sex, Internet sex, or netsex.

# **Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues**

## **COMPUTER ADDICTION**

Excessive computer use that interferes with day-to-day activities. Excessive usage can disrupt work or sleep, cause social interaction issues, and have an impact on mood, relationships, and thinking processes, among other things.

# Legal, Ethical and Societal Issues

## Digital Divide

The **digital divide** refers to the gap between individuals, communities, or countries that have access to modern information and communication technologies (ICT) and those that do not or have limited access.

This divide can encompass various factors, including differences in technology access, digital literacy, and the ability to benefit from digital tools and resources.

# **R.A. 10175**

## **Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012**

- Represents a significant effort by the Philippine government to address the growing threat of cybercrime in an increasingly digital world.
- While it aims to enhance cybersecurity and protect individuals and organizations from various online threats, the law continues to be a subject of debate, particularly regarding its implications for free expression and the potential for abuse.
- As technology evolves, ongoing discussions about the effectiveness and fairness of the law remain essential for ensuring a balanced approach to combating cybercrime while protecting civil liberties.



# R.A. 10175

- **Illegal Access** - Unauthorized access to computer systems and networks.
- **Illegal Interception** - Unauthorized interception of data transmissions.
- **Data Interference** - The unauthorized alteration or destruction of data.
- **System Interference** - Disruption or interference with the functioning of a computer system.
- **Misuse of Devices** - Use of devices or software designed to commit cybercrimes.
- **Cybersex** - Engaging in cybersex or any similar activities that involve sexual acts online for profit.
- **Child Pornography** - Production, distribution, and possession of child pornography.
- **Identity Theft** - Unauthorized acquisition and use of identifying information of another person.
- **Libel** - The online publication of defamatory statements against individuals or entities.

# Media Law and Regulation

There is no universal rule that applies to the whole media industry. Nonetheless, existing rules and regulations usually focus on controlling material availability, such as age limitations for movies, age advisories for television shows, and ownership restrictions and consumer protection. In addition, legislation governing press freedom, intellectual property, privacy, criminal law, and general civil law all have an impact on the media industry.

The **Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB)**, the Optical Media Board, and the National Council for Children's Television are among the government bodies in charge of content control.

# **Significance of Electronic Media**

- **Information Dissemination** (Real-time News, Access to Diverse Content)
- **Communication** (Connectivity, Interactive Communication)
- **Education and Learning** (E-Learning Platforms, Resource Availability)
- **Entertainment** (Diverse Media Formats, Streaming Services)
- **Cultural Exchange** (Global Reach, Promotion of Cultural Arts)
- **Social Change and Awareness** (Advocacy and Activism, Citizen Journalism)
- **Economic Impact** (E-Commerce, Advertising and Marketing)
- **Political Engagement** (Informed Citizenry, Campaigning and Mobilization)