Discussion Topic: Codes of Ethics and Professional Conduct

Pick a case study from the examples provided by the Association of Computing Machinery (**[ACM](https://www.acm.org/code-of-ethics/case-studies)**).

Review the application of the ethics code to the situation described and highlight the impact on any relevant legal (jurisdictional or non-jurisdictional) and social issues, as well as on the professionalism of the computing professionals involved. You should provide comparisons to the British Computer Society **[(BCS) Code of Conduct](https://www.bcs.org/membership/become-a-member/bcs-code-of-conduct/)**.

You should demonstrate that you understand the topic covered and ensure you use references to academic literature (including journals, books, and reports). This activity will provide evidence of your personal growth and your summary post is required in your e-portfolio.

Your initial posting should respond to the question and be at least 200 words long. Your initial post should be labelled "initial post".

The ethical dilemma on the use of Dark UX Patterns is interesting, as it comes down the personal ethics and client or even company ethics. Usually the old saying is that the client is right but if the ethical standard in which a design makes it difficult to navigate and the buttons automatically add products to your choices, it definitely does not apply.

To stand a chance against such unethical behaviour are usually terms and conditions which most people do not even read. Most of these T&Cs must have the option for you the user to have the ability to cancel subscriptions for example but dark patterns may even make this difficult by sending the user on a goose chase. The Federal Trade Commission states that dark patterns are unfair and deceptive under section 5 of the FTC act (Tan.2024).

Developers once aware of such dark patterns are ethically bound as computing professionals to report their findings. This is were the BCS standard makes sense and provide guidance to computer professionals, but if you are not a member of BCS does that mean the standard does not apply to you ? I think the moral compass question I use is ‘what would my mother say?

The underlying issue is deception and greed. Most people though are not going to go a legal root but an option in South Africa is the Ombudsman process, in which complaints can be sent, but due to this being a free service the timeline for resolution may be years. I would think that people that have lost money due to dark patterns can complain to the National consumer commission which receives complaints about shops , businesses or companies for compliance issues against the Consumer protection act (Ombuds. 2023).

Reference:

Tan, A.L. (2024) *Illuminating dark patterns: US regulators crack down on deceptive practices targeting consumers*, *| Science and Technology Law Review*. Available at: https://journals.library.columbia.edu/index.php/stlr/blog/view/593#:~:text=The%20FTC%20considers%20dark%20patterns,Trade%20Commission%20(FTC)%20Act. (Accessed: 03 November 2024).

Ombuds (2023) *A basic guide to ombudsman schemes in South Africa*, *LAW FOR ALL*. Available at: https://www.lawforall.co.za/consumer-rights/ombudsman-schemes-in-south-africa/ (Accessed: 03 November 2024).