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ENGL 181

Analysis of Ethics

Team & Organizational Ethics :

As a team of four members, we plan to distribute work equally and make sure everyone has a say in the implementation of our project (WeJ). We have weekly meetings on top of weekly scheduled advising where we get together to work on the project as well as discuss how each of us are feeling at the current stage of the project. Although there are situations in which multiple people have an approach and only one is implemented, we take everybody's ideas into consideration before making a decision.

Socially :

Our application is geared towards users over the age of 13 who want to listen to music collaboratively. A potentially ethical problem we could face would be that underage users listen to explicit material using WeJ. Due to the fact that our initial implementation does a direct query of a database out of our control, we are not able to restrict the age limit. To mitigate this problem we might have a popup that alerts users there is explicit music content and have them input their age before gaining access to the application.

Another socially ethical ramification of our project includes cyber bullying. Cyber bullying might occur when a group of people target one person and always down vote the music they've added to the playlist. This will be prevented by only allowing one

down vote per track per user, as well as a limit of down votes a user has over a duration of time.

Product :

Being an application revolved around music, the primary ethical concern we have is distributing unlicensed music to the public. We want to offer the largest possible music coverage while keeping it within legal limits. The way we plan to mitigate this concern initially is by using a 3rd party API (Application Programming Interface) to share data with a company that has licensed all of their music and allows developers to query their databases with certain restrictions. To abide by the API usage for the provider we have selected, SoundCloud, we must always have a “powered by SoundCloud” logo visible on any page with media. Until we have a large enough user base to trigger the API usage limit, this solution will be adequate.

The nature of creating a web based consumer application is moderately forgiving in the sense that unethical aspects and/or potentially illegal aspects will likely result in a warning from a 3rd party. Although we do not plan to incorporate any unethical and definitely not any illegal aspects of the application, there is a possibility that something we are unaware of is added. At this point we will likely get a warning email from the target of this unethical activity, and will provide an alternate solution.