One Click to Sign Your Life Away

I am choosing the topic of terms and service agreements, specifically how terms and service agreements in online services are too difficult to understand. Leading to the idea of them giving informed consent about how the users data is being used null. I think this topic is pertinent because I click through terms and service agreements very quickly, and when I have tried to read them get lost and confused very quickly which has led me to have no idea what rights I have signed away when signing up for online services.

Sources

This topic is important because how online services use our data can be very different from service to service. It is important to understand how they are going to use your data when you sign up, but complex terms and service agreements can hide the services true intent of how they are going to use your data.

I want to answer the question does an overly complex and long terms of service and privacy policies violate giving the user informed consent when they agree to an online service. My audience will be the average internet user, someone who uses online services often.

My position will be that over complex terms of service and privacy policies do violate giving the user informed consent. That a service needs to give people a reasonable opportunity to read and understand what they are signing up for when they do sign up for a service. A TLRD in non-legal jargon.

References

Fowler, L. R., Gillard, C., & Morain, S. R. (2020). Readability and Accessibility of Terms of Service and Privacy Policies for Menstruation-Tracking Smartphone Applications. *Health Promotion Practice*, *21*(5), 679–683. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839919899924>

Chang, Y., Wong, S. F., Libaque-Saenz, C. F., & Lee, H. (2018). The role of privacy policy on consumers’ perceived privacy. *Government Information Quarterly*, *35*(3), 445–459. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2018.04.002>

Tang, J., Shoemaker, H., Lerner, A., & Birrell, E. (2021). Defining Privacy: How Users Interpret Technical Terms in Privacy Policies. *Proceedings on Privacy Enhancing Technologies*, *2021*(3), 70–94. <https://doi.org/10.2478/popets-2021-0038>

Obar, J. A., & Oeldorf-Hirsch, A. (2020). The biggest lie on the Internet: ignoring the privacy policies and terms of service policies of social networking services. *Information, Communication & Society*, *23*(1), 128–147. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2018.1486870>

O’Connor, Y., Rowan, W., Lynch, L., & Heavin, C. (2017). Privacy by Design: Informed Consent and Internet of Things for Smart Health. *8TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EMERGING UBIQUITOUS SYSTEMS AND PERVASIVE NETWORKS (EUSPN 2017) / 7TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CURRENT AND FUTURE TRENDS OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN HEALTHCARE (ICTH-2017) / AFFILIATED WORKSHOPS*, *113*, 653–658. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2017.08.329>

Steinfeld, N. (2016). “I agree to the terms and conditions”: (How) do users read privacy policies online? An eye-tracking experiment. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *55*, 992–1000. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2015.09.038>

Government of Canada, D. of J. (2017, February 10). *Proposed Legislation - Canada’s Sytem of Justice*. Www.justice.gc.ca. <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/pa-lprp/modern.html>

Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada. (2018). *Summary of privacy laws in Canada - Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada*. Priv.gc.ca. https://www.priv.gc.ca/en/privacy-topics/privacy-laws-in-canada/02\_05\_d\_15/