

CS/PHIL 201 Discussion Prompt Response

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Response to Prompt for Module # 4 on topic Privacy Assignment

Make an argument about the ethical permissibility of Looc4u's business model. Evaluate using two ethical theories and be sure to begin with your conclusion. If the theories give different answers be sure to point that out. Be sure to give supporting reasons when justifying your conclusion

I do not think that Looc4u's business model is ethically permissible. From what I understand of the scenario, a client of Looc4u could obtain the handful of photos unethically and possibly illegally. Persons using these services could have gotten these photos of someone else in a private location or even through a private social media outlet. If a person posts information, photos, or videos through a private profile, that information should only be viewable to those with the proper permissions.

Persons who agree with the virtue ethical theory would agree that Looc4u's business model does not fall within their reasoning for being ethically permissible. A virtuous person would trust individuals and by considering Look4u's business model they would agree that this virtuous trait would be broken. The company's services clearly show a lack of trust between the person approaching the company and the person who is in the photos which are being analyzed.

Deontologists would also likely argue that Look4u's business model is not ethically permissible. It is becoming more and more universally agreed that privacy should be respected. Thus, if an individual is compiling private photos and information from someone else, they are stealing that information and lying to the other individual by not getting their permission and not telling them what they are doing. Therefore, this would break the virtuous theory of permissibility.

Play devil's advocate. What reasons speak against your analysis? What does the third ethical theory say? These may be reasons your group members presented, or if your group is in agreement, they may be reasons you have to work together as a group to discover.

One of the reasons at would agree with the ethical permissibility of Look4u's business model would be the use of the product to find dangerous persons who are a threat to others. The services Look4u offers could allow law enforcement to find fugitives.

Utilitarianists may agree with Look4u as an ethically permissible business model because the overall happiness of individuals would increase. Although a single person's happiness may decrease, it would be significantly more likely that the happiness of the customer and Look4u employees and business would be higher than the one individual. Thus, the maximum happiness would be positive, making the utilitarianist view ethically permissible.