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Case Chosen: 'A retailer selling your personal information to others for profit'

Ethical Quandary	Customer Attraction	Competitiveness / fitness	Website / Application	Business Revenue	Marketing	Publicity
Customer Privacy	x	x	x			x
Application Security	x	x	x			
Business Integrity	x				x	x
Keeping the lights on for your business		x		x		
Employee quality of life		x		x		x
Legal Compliance		x	x	x		x
Who is buying our data?	x	x		x		x

Recently, privacy has become much more of a concern for the average consumer. In my own opinion, privacy was not emphasized nearly as much as a selling point before the Facebook-Cambridge Analytica scandal. As such, customer privacy practices are now, more than ever, a determining factor in the success of a business. Customers are necessary for a business to function and supplying attractive features (such as a basic guarantee that data will stay on the site) is necessary to keep and attract customers.

In the table, I indicated that customer attraction, business competitiveness, and application health are all contingent upon security and privacy. This indicates that there exists an obligation to the customer, to maintain reasonable levels of privacy and security; for the sake of maintaining customer relationships if nothing else. This obligation ought to outweigh many of the other ethical quandaries, as a business cannot exist without customers to serve.

Although it is not protected in the US, the EU has stringent regulations on customer data collection and storage and so there exists a legal obligation as well. This legal obligation ought to rank highly, as it will be impossible to serve or attract customers without a license to do so.

The quandary surrounding the purchasers of this data, should you choose to distribute it, can have cascading effects for the systems listed above. TikTok is a recent example of a company that was in hot water for sharing data with its questionably motivated parent company. Through their action, it seems that they are now at risk of alienating a large portion of their user base, thus violating their obligation to maintain customer relationships. In some cases however, data sharing or selling could be justifiable. It is all but a given today that targeted ads will be used on most free sites. From a business standpoint, choosing not to share this data with

advertisers, or not offering to allow targeted ads on your platform, is under utilizing a potential revenue stream. This leads me to conclude that there additionally must exist an obligation to profit, or 'Keeping the lights on' as it is summarized above. This profit obligation however, should weigh less than the aforementioned quandaries, as it is contingent upon having data to sell.