CS338: ETHICAL ANALYSIS

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1 RESPONSIBLE REPORTING OF SECURITY VULNERABILITIES

A. Identify the main ethical question or questions faced by the main character ("you") in the scenario. This will certainly include "what should you do?", but there may be other interesting questions to consider.

- Should I put the company's and its customers' interests before my risk of getting into a legal battle?

B. For each stakeholder (or category of stakeholders) in the scenario, identify the stakeholder's relevant rights.

- Company: the right to its private intellectual property, and the integrity thereof;
- Company customers: the right to be in control of their security (expecting absolute security from a company is a privilege, but to be in control is a right imo)
- Me: The right to conduct ethical research; the right to express concern without legal fear.

C. List any information missing from the scenario that you would like to have to help you make better choices.

- DMCA's penalty for breaking that statue, and more past legal cases for case laws.

D. Describe your possible actions, and discuss the likely consequences of those actions.

- I would probably talk to a lawyer. A consultation won't cost too much. Alternatively, there's gotta be some NGO that can help me and those customers with better resources. The worst case from this would be inaction from me, harm to the customers, and injury to the company.
- Depending on the legal side of things, I can cover up my tracks and do an anonymous tip/media expose, or reach out to the company with my own legal backing. This will put me at risk; I can get found out and sued. The customers however are safe from the bug.

E. Discuss whether the ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct offers any relevant guidance.

- Reporting the bug to the company is an action that the ACM CoE would command under "1.2 Avoid harm", and "1.1 Contribute to society and to human well-being, acknowledging that all people are stakeholders in computing".

- ACM CoE states "1.3 Be honest and trustworthy", but in our case actions out of such principle can wind me up in a costly lawsuit.
- "1.5 Respect the work required to produce new ideas, inventions, creative works, and computing artifacts"... The company suing ethical hackers who are kind enough to tip the company definitely goes against this.
- "2.9 Design and implement systems that are robustly and usably secure" is also a principle that the company grossly broke.

F. Describe and justify your recommended action, as well as your answers to any other questions you presented in part A.

- Consult with an attorney and see what options I have; if the cost to me is similar between tipping the company and doing nothing, I'd follow through and tip the company so people are better off with my action.
- Should I put the company's and its customers' interests before my risk of getting into a legal battle? It depends on how big the risk is. Am I risking spend supercar money on litigation just so I can provide heroic service to strangers? Not right now. However, if there's a more welcoming way around the risks, I'd happily do the society good.

2 YOUR COMPANY'S CUSTOMERS' PERSONAL DATA

A. Identify the main ethical question or questions faced by the main character ("you") in the scenario. This will certainly include "what should you do?", but there may be other interesting questions to consider.

- Is my project and career advancement more important than the company's principal about privacy?
- Is the company's principal and promises of privacy something I and the company can break?
- Is the CTO and leadership group trustworthy now that it's attempting to break promises?
- Should I really be helping sell people's data?

B. For each stakeholder (or category of stakeholders) in the scenario, identify the stakeholder's relevant rights.

- The users may only have a privilege to privacy according to a service contract, but they have a right to expect privacy and have the chance to refuse to share location.
- The company has a right to make money legally such as by selling data legally.
- The leadership has a right to make different business decisions.
- I have the right to quit taking part in the project or job.

C. List any information missing from the scenario that you would like to have to help you make better choices.

- The details in service contracts that users signed.
- Relevant ethics research/debate that can inform my decision and thinking.
- How and where those location data will be sold.

D. Describe your possible actions, and discuss the likely consequences of those actions.

- I will talk to the CTO again about the data privacy side of things and his/her promise.
- I will also talk to more people responsible for the project and strategy to get the images in their minds and why they made the decisions.

E. Discuss whether the ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct offers any relevant guidance.

- "3.1 Ensure that the public good is the central concern during all professional computing work". Selling location data really may not harm the public, but is it really for their good? The company's plans makes me ponder.
- "2.3 Know and respect existing rules pertaining to professional work". The CTO made a promise that the CEO is about to break. That's against that principal.
- "2.5 Give comprehensive and thorough evaluations of computer systems and their impacts, including analysis of possible risks". This would be useful in the implementation of the CEO's idea.

F. Describe and justify your recommended action, as well as your answers to any other questions you presented in part A.

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