“Some of these issues include making sure our code meets and conforms to all standards and validation tests from the W3C, making sure there are no obtrusive or obscene advertisements inundating users accessing the site, no illegal or malicious cookies being added to user’s computers, as well as avoiding data mining.”

Hi Jeremy,

What is your opinion on ads appearing based on cookies? For example, a couple of months ago, I was in the market to buy a new car, and was frequently doing research on potential cars I would buy. Even though I have already acquired a car and haven’t visited any car websites, I still to this day get car ads appearing on websites I visit; even to this day. Do you think this is unethical? I’ve thought of disabling them, but some websites seem to require them.

Emanuel

“Various other features as well as the strict mode that help programmers to create secure programs & fewer errors. Strict mode could be functional to individual functions within a script or a entire script.”

Hi Rony,

Thank you for taking the time to ready my post and for your comments. I haven’t finished this week’s reading assignments yet, so I had to look up what strict mode is. I’ve done a lot of Perl programming and the purpose of “use strict” is to “restrict unsafe constructs” (Perl Programming Documentation, n.d.), which I think is just another way of saying “force good programming technique”. It looks like its implementation in JavaScript is pretty similar. According the engineer who developed the JavaScript Library, using strict “allows you to place a program, or a function, in a “strict” operating context” and it “prevents certain actions from being taken and throws more exceptions” (Resig, 2009)

References:

Perl Programming Documentation (n.d.) *Strict* [Online]. Available from: <http://perldoc.perl.org/strict.html> (Accessed: 2 June 2014)

Resig, J. (2009) *ECMAScript 5 Strict Mode, JSON, and More* [Online]. Available from: <http://ejohn.org/blog/ecmascript-5-strict-mode-json-and-more/> (Accessed: 2 June 2014)

“Unlike Java, which was intended for professional computer programmers, JavaScript was aimed at web designers and other non-programmers.”

Hi Buya,

That’s an interesting statement. I’ve got a lot of programming experience, but this module is my first exposure to HTML, and web design in general. I’ve heard many people say that HTML is not really a programming language, but I’m finding it somewhat tricky. Maybe it’s because just like Perl’s motto states, “there’s more that one way to do it” (Perl Programming Documentation, n.d.).

What do others here think? Are good programming/coding skills necessary to be a good web designer?

Regards,

Emanuel

References:

Perl Programming Documentation (n.d.) *Perl* [Online]. Available from: <http://perldoc.perl.org/perl.html> (Accessed: 3 June 2014)

“According to the EU Cookie law, web sites are compelled to inform the users about information about them which is used online and give them the opportunity to allow it or not (Cookie Collective, n.d). This would be one of the measures that I would implement and it is not only restrict to cookies as it mentions, but also to the HTML’s technology “local storage”.”

Hi Turay,

I never knew of this law. Here in the United States, we have no such law. We instead rely more on reputable websites to adhere to some sort of ethics and actually publish their privacy policies on the web page. Though recently, a report was recently released by the White House which presented the findings of a study on how data collected including those from cookies could impact privacy in society today. The report made the following recommendations:

* Advance the Consumer Privacy Bill of Rights.
* Pass national data breach legislation.
* Extend privacy protections to non-US persons.
* Ensure data collected on students is used for educational purposes.
* Expand technical expertise to stop discrimination.
* Amend the Electronic Communications Privacy Act.

(Welsh, 2014)

While I do applaud the administration bringing some attention to this matter, I would rather have more attention be focused on restraining the government from collecting data, rather than private entities. After all, these private businesses cannot force these individuals that they are collecting data on to buy their products. The government on the other hand, has the power to tax, imprison, and after the Supreme Court ruling on Obamacare, the power to force citizens to purchase a product.

Regards,

Emanuel

References:

Welsh, W. (2014) ‘White House Big Data Report Earns Praise, Skepticism’, *Information Week* [Online]. Available from: <http://www.informationweek.com/government/big-data-analytics/white-house-big-data-report-earns-praise-skepticism/d/d-id/1235067> (Accessed: 3 June 2014)

Hi Ala,

Great post. We both addressed similar issues. I was a little bit worried because after submitting my initial post, I read some of the other posts, and it looked like I went in a different direction. So I’m a little relieved to see you also mention that an organization’s website can be used to publish their “good deeds”.

“Apart from openly publishing and communicating the positive side when efforts to towards social responsibilities succeed, it is recommended to follow through and fully adapt openness strategy when the downside materializes (Chand and Hussain, 2012). This level of disclosure will show full commitment to ethical behavior and build solid level of company integrity that can be trusted by the society. In addition, it is important to give priority and clearly accept responsibility for social issues that the company has direct contribution to (Fitch, 1976). This shows the commitment to presenting solutions and paying back to the society that support the company existence through consumption of its products and services.”

For the most part, I agree with this. From a public relations point of view, I think that it is beneficial for a company if as many people as possible know about their commitment to transparency. Besides the press, I can’t think of a better way of doing this than broadcasting through the organization’s website. I’m not so sure about the “paying back” society phrase. I think that it implies that the company “owes” something back to society, or that its success is due to ill-gotten gains. Nevertheless, I do commend the generosity of successful companies.

Regards,

Emanuel

Hi Rony,

Thanks for the elaborate response. Ever since we’ve started this course, I’ve been paying more attention to websites that I visit, and sometimes I will look at its HTML code by viewing its page source. I wonder how much of it is actually manually coded versus designed using some type of WYSIWYG editor such as Adobe Dreamweaver. Even though I’m just a beginner in web programming, I can’t help but feel somewhat insecure when I see how the many beautifully designed websites. It’s been my experience with all things (e.g. architecture vs. engineering) that the most creative designers usually don’t possess much technical ability, while the best “engineers” don’t particularly excel at design. A good example of this would be Steve Jobs. According to the other Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak, Jobs “didn’t ever code”, “but he was technical enough” (Love, 2013).

Regards,

Emanuel

Reference

Love, D. (2013) ‘Steve Jobs Never Wrote Computer Code For Apple’, *Business Insider* [Online]. Available from: <http://www.businessinsider.com/steve-jobs-never-wrote-computer-code-for-apple-2013-8> (Accessed: 4 June 2014)

“So in my opinion, if websites clearly state and provide information about their cookies policy this would help users make a decision about using their tools or viewing their information while being conscientious about their use of cookies.”

Hi Anibal,

I believe that because of the cookie law in the EU, all European websites are required to publish their cookie policy. However, here in the United States, since no such law exists, we’re more on the “honor system”, which relies more on people behaving honestly. I think that for the most part, it works. Since the Internet has been pretty much self-regulating and seems to police itself through “word of mouth” (Rand, P., 2009). Websites with bad reputations will eventually get little traffic and lose advertisers. Often times, the market is the best regulator.

Regards,

Emanuel

Reference:

Rand, P. (2009) ‘Internet Polices Itself on Blogger Advertising Better Than the FTC Ever Could’, *U.S. News & World Report* [Online]. Available from: <http://www.usnews.com/opinion/articles/2009/09/15/internet-polices-itself-on-blogger-advertising-better-than-the-ftc-ever-could?page=2> (Accessed: 4 June 2014)

“There is wide-ranging acceptance that the most applicable web application design concept today is the notion of separating website appearance and web pages lay out processes from the actual webpage article contents such as “unobtrusive JavaScript” methodology.”

Hi Albert,

That’s an interesting way of putting it. In software engineering, we are regularly instructed to build in as modular as possible, or what is often known as “cohesive”, rather “coupled”. For those here that might now know, highly cohesive programs have fewer dependencies, and therefore more easily maintained (Poornima and Suma, 2014). Tightly-coupled programs on the other hand, have more dependencies, and are much more difficult to maintain. Modification to even the tiniest unit of these types of programs often has ripple-effects. I’m not so sure that the terms cohesion and coupled apply to Internet programming, but I think at best, the analogy works.

Regards,

Emanuel

Poornima, U. & Suma, V. (2014) 'Significance of Coupling and Cohesion on Design Quality', *arXiv*, EBSCOhost, (Accessed: 4 June 2014)

“As technology continues to build, develop, and reinvent itself the need for new innovation will always be present, but making a standard off these innovations can really help technology move forward.”

Hi Albert,

I’ve often heard that standardization and innovation can many times be at odds with each other. On one hand, the need to innovate does push better and more effective technology forward. However, on the other hand, the latest technology is impractical if it will be obsolete soon or no one is using it. There are those that also suggest that certain organizations can gain an unfair advantage because if their innovations become accepted as standard, their products will gain market share. Some of these organizations are able to influence the standardization process because they “participate in standardization bodies” (Van Wegberg, 2010). Perhaps one solution for this is to have many competing standardization bodies, though this may lead to fragmentation. I think that if technological organizations want to push their innovations to be accepted as standard, voluntary collaboration is required with other competing firms.

Regards,

Emanuel

Reference:

Van Wegberg, M. (2010) 'Standardization Process Of Systems Technologies: Creating A Balance Between Competition And Cooperation', *Technology Analysis & Strategic Management*, 16, 4, pp. 457-478, Science Citation Index, EBSCOhost, (Accessed: 4 June 2014)

“Jamaica’s access to information act allows any citizen within Jamaica the right to access any information pertaining public related matters except those information that are exempt from disclosure (jamentrust.org, n.d). This is the right of all citizens within Jamaica and this means of transparency is the citizens of the country can use to keep the government accountable (scu.edu, 2009).”

Hi Adrian,

This is very similar to the “Freedom of Information Act” that we have here in the United States which makes federal government information accessible (FOIA.gov, 2011). On the state level, many have their own version of this to varying degrees. What’s interesting though is that the state of Florida has at times invoked the copyright of “agency-created software” as a means of restricting the access (Peterson, 1992). The law that enables this was passed in 1990, and I strongly believe that it should be repealed. Citizens of Florida should be concerned if their government is reluctant to show software they have created.

Regards,

Emanuel

References:

FOIA.gov (2011) *What is FOIA?* [Online]. Available from: <http://www.foia.gov/about.html> (Accessed: 4 June 2014)

Petersen, B. (1992) 'Copyright and State Government: An Analysis of Section 119.083, Florida's Software Copyright Provision', *Florida State University Law Review*, 2, p. 441, HeinOnline, EBSCOhost, (Accessed: 4 June 2014)