

# Ethical Analysis of Security Scenario

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## Scenario #1:

- 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.

The main ethical decision is whether or not you should report the bug to the company. On one hand, you (should) care morally about whether their users' data remains safe, but on the other, the company will likely respond with legal action since they have in the past and depending on if you are in the United States you might be in violation of Anti-circumvention.

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

You, the bug finder: I have the right to remain anonymous by not disclosing any information.

InstaToonz: In the United States, they have the right to prosecute anyone who reportedly pen-tested their software due to the Anti-circumvention laws.

InstaToonz users: I have the right to demand InstaToonz protects all my personal information and message/usage history.

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

I'm curious about how I discovered this bug in the first place. Perhaps I can escape any blame for "circumventing security systems" if there is plausible deniability involved. I.e: I discovered it by accident somehow...although that might not persuade a jury or something.

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

Regardless of the presence of Anti-circumvention laws, I would not share the information I have learned. I am appealing to the philosophy of "not my circus, not my monkeys," or it's not my problem. Certainly, if I could guarantee there would be no recourse, I would happily share my

findings with InstaToonz. The fact that they are primarily a music sharing app does not make me think the stakes are high in this scenario; it seems unlikely to me that large amounts of highly sensitive information are in those messages. If I could guarantee that the release of that information (in the event someone nefarious discovered the bug) would be devastating to those involved, I would consider it more deeply.

- E. Discuss whether the [ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct](#) offers any relevant guidance.

While I agree with their general ethical principles, a corporation with a lot of money and power is likely not held to the same standards, so the ACM's guidance does not change my decision.

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

Without repeating myself at too great length, the stakes are not high enough for me to justify the almost certain legal action InstaToonz would take against me.