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Ethics assignment

A. Main Ethical Question
1. The main ethical question revolves around the CEO becoming interested in using the users' data to make a profit. Should the company steer in this direction, and should you stand behind it? Originally this was not part of the company vision, and a lot of our motivation to work at this company stemmed from one of the CTO's quotes saying "We're not going to participate in surveillance capitalism. We protect our users' data while we have it, and we discard it when we're done with it," which emphasizes the company's commitment to the used privacy. This new possible development goes against the original company vision, and the CTO also seems to have noticed that.

B. Stakeholders and Their Relevant Rights
- Users of the Beerz App
    1. Right to Privacy: Users expect their personal data and their location data to not be shared without them knowing.
    2. Right to be Informed: Users have the right to know how their data is collected, used, and stored.
- Beerz Company
    1. Right to Make Business Decisions: The company has the right to do business as they please and explore different opportunities to make money.
- You
    1. Professional Integrity: You have the right to sustain ethical norms and to enforce responsible practices.
- CTO
    1. Responsibility to Advise Technical Decisions: She has the right to speak her mind on decisions about the company to the CEO and company
- CEO and Management
    1. Right to Seek Profit: The company has an interest in maximizing its revenue and look to grow their company.

C. Missing Information
- Privacy Policy: What does Beerz's privacy policy actually say about collecting and using data?
- Legal Rules: Are there any laws about collecting and selling location data where Beerz is operating?
- Company Rules: Does Beerz have any internal policies or guidelines about handling user data?
- CTO's View: How strongly does the CTO feel about this issue, and would she back you up in opposing the CEO's plan?
- User Awareness: Are users clearly told about how their data is handled, and would they be surprised if their data was sold?

D. Possible Actions and Consequences
- Advocate within the company for user privacy

1. Action: Talk about worries with the CTO and propose alternatives to the CEO's plans.
2. Consequences: Possibly convince the board to rethink their stance; risk being viewed as oppositional.
- Enforce Data-Scrubbing as Planned
    1. Action: go ahead with the plan to scrub data after one week
    2. Consequences: it might buy some time to address concerns but it might lead to conflict if its discovered
- Resign from the company
    1. Action: Leave the company as a protest due to ethical disagreements
    2. Consequences: You stand firm on your morals but you lose your job and influence in the company if you join back
- Leak Information
    1. Action: You anonymously inform users or authorities about the change in how user data is handled
    2. Consequences: You run a very high personal risk with legal consequences and risk harming the company's reputation
- Go ahead with the CEO's plan
    1. Action: Go ahead with the data retention
    2. Consequences: You compromise your ethical morals, and it may lead to future user back lash or future legal issues

The ACM Code of Ethics:
1.1 "Computing professionals should consider whether the results of their efforts will respect diversity, **will be used in socially responsible ways**, will meet social needs, and will be broadly accessible."

1.6 "Computing professionals should establish transparent policies and procedures that allow individuals to understand what data is being collected and how it is being used, to give informed consent for automatic data collection, and to review, obtain, correct inaccuracies in, and delete their personal data."

2.4 Computing professionals should also provide constructive, critical reviews of others' work.

I believe that these 3 quotes from the ACM Code of Ethics provide a good amount of guidance in what we should do. 1.1 explains how we need to consider the results of our work, and how it will be used. Hence, if we feel like removing an essential piece of our workflow like the data-scrubbing this could go against our product being used in a socially responsible way. 1.6 tells us that if we do decide to not scrub the data and use it, the user must be informed of this and must give consent to allow us to do such a thing. From what it seemed like, the CEO wanted to this is undercover, and this helps us go into the third quote. 2.4 tells us that professionals should give critical reviews of others' work. Having the CEO say this should result

in someone giving their professional opinion on the matter, explaining to the CEO the effects of this beyond money, and what actions would need to be taken to do this legally and ethically.

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

Recommended Action: Resign from the company if negotiations do not go well

Talk to your CTO and attempt to communicate to the CEO that the data scrubbing should remain a part of the workflow to ensure the user's privacy. If this does not go well and the CEO insists on keeping, we should resign. This is because the main reason we decided to join was because the CTO respected the user's privacy and went against surveillance capitalism. Since the CEO is attacking these principles, there is no reason to feel the need to stay, and losing the lead for Beerz 2.0 would definitely set back the invasion of privacy, hence giving time for reflection, and even potential warnings to the users.

Question: Should the company steer in this direction, and should you stand behind it? I believe if the company is doing well and does not need an extra revenue source, then it should steer away. If it does need an extra revenue source, it should be made very clear to the users of what is happening, and not hidden within a terms and conditions agree or disagree statement. If the CEO refuses to do this, then we should feel the need to stand behind it.