

Ethics Matrix Assignment

1. The technology being analyzed in this ethics matrix is the current app being developed for the company I am interning for, called SocialTech Labs. I'll say as much as I can about the app without violating my NDA (I hope). The app, currently titled BestFriends (still a WIP), is a closed networking social media app that is used to communicate with 5 of your closest friends. There are no profiles, no posts, and no open networking. All messaging, including photos, is shared between you and as many of your 5 friends as you want. Users have the ability to interact with their network individually or with particular groups. This closed network app attempts to mitigate the amount of toxicity that comes with having an open network app. All of the user's "followers" are (ideally) friends in real life as users cannot search for profiles, but must add others to their network via in person by scanning a QR code or via email invite. The app promotes social positivity and encourages users to check in with their friends or be there for them in times of difficulty, as well as being used as a messaging app to chat in everyday life.

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3. For this ethics matrix, the Environment stakeholder was left out since the development of this app does not directly impact the environment. For producers, the main benefits and risks to highlight are that by creating this app (which has not yet been released) poses a potential solution to the current national mental health crisis and negative social media environments (recently addressed in the president's SOTUA). However, with the restrictive nature of the app and unknown benefits as well as being a start-up company, the odds of success are relatively low statistically. For the consumer stakeholder, some highlights include the freedom to communicate, express, and share thoughts and feelings without the worry of being judge by anyone outside of your network. However, because nothing similar in nature exists in terms of focusing on the promotion of social positivity by restricting factors of negative social environments, there is no known benefits or harmful effects of being in such an environment. For the wider society, important takeaways would be the possible increase of cliques with the limitation of 5 friends within the app, meaning an increase in exclusion among smaller societies (i.e. a high school student population). This is all speculation on widespread popularity of the app, however. Highlights for future generation stakeholders would include a push towards using the app and pursuing social positivity, as opposed to the toxicity created by larger open networking apps like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. An improvement in the national mental health crisis would also be a factor for future generations. Again, however, this is all pending on the success of the app itself. To conclude, I believe the benefits of creating the app and pioneering an environment of social positivity outweigh the costs, and development should push forward.

2.

	Autonomy	Wellbeing	Justice
Producers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Freedom to develop the app -Risk of app being unsuccessful and company closing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Fulfill goal to help friends and promote social positivity -Stress/anxiety of app failing and work being for nothing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Promotion of social positivity to address national mental health crisis (addressed in SOTU) -Restrictive nature of closed networking app being unreasonable or used to hide communications
Consumers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Freedom to communicate and express feelings in a safe place -Restricted community/ limited audience to communicate with (~5 friends currently) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Encouraged social positivity with closed network and no judgement from outsiders, strangers, or those you wish to keep out of your network -Friends that are added may still promote social negativity if they choose to do so 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Unknown nature of effects of app, may improve or worsen users' mental health and effect crisis
Wider Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Closed network may restrict or exclude others in society -May increase cliques and cause unknown effects: increase of freedom within groups but reduced in between groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Allowing an environment for social positivity may decrease conflicts and improve communication with network -Creation of small friend groups through app may increase exclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Promotion of social positivity to address national mental health crisis (addressed in SOTU) -Restricted access to communications within groups may be seen as unfair or suspicious
Future Generations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pushed towards social positivity and seeing the benefits (or costs) it has on past generations -Choice to use a safe, positive environment as opposed to toxic environments of other social media apps (Twitter, FB, IG, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Exposed to a socially positive environment (or are aware of the app's existence) -May also be exposed to potential exclusion effects the app creates from closed networking -Benefits and harmful effects to ones wellbeing may exist depending on how current generation utilizes and perceives the app 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Improvement of the mental health crisis -Increased secrecy and possible violation of privacy if closed network communication develops to be seen as a threat