

DS 760

Alignment of Values and Actions, Ethical Protections in Context

Rick W. Lentz, M.S., M.S.

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Aligning Corporate Values and Actions

This short paper focuses on several questions that view corporate values and actions under the lens of ethical and practical frameworks. The questions are:

- Do we need government protections as we enter into the big data age?
- Do we have the right to explanations for decisions, even when companies are using "black box" algorithms?
- What would be the impact be if companies followed Davis's advice on the need for such regulations?

I watched former FTC Chairman Wheeler's remarks on the recent repeal of Net Neutrality (before I knew about this week's assignment). As a technologist, I understand the importance of Net Neutrality on Freedom of Speech in the United States of America. Its repeal speaks volumes about weaknesses in our democracy and in the ability to provide governance that is in the majority interest. In context, governance is an ongoing process, where laws ebb and flow around the narration of the dominant party. Up next, the US court of appeals...

Davis's insights would likely form a view on opt-in that encourages continual dialog, in-depth analysis, and inquiry/action on the long-term risks and impacts on broadband providers collection activities. In the end, protection of the weak would likely warrant regulatory restrictions on collection activities.



Regarding the Right to Explanation, enforcement technicalities and complexity introduce subjectivity that could measurably weaken the law's achieved protections. Davis would encourage the same process described earlier. This process would likely focus on the law's enforceability. Since business operates in a global market, differing laws create regional advantages. Iceland, a non-EU member, would be viewed as a better location for the business activities governed by these new EU laws.

For businesses keeping “Right to Explanation” operations inside the EU, other complexities remain. The current state of the art machine decision systems continually improve, making any relevant, truthful, and specific system description outdated when communicated. Thus, by following Davis's advice, businesses will likely conclude that "Right to Explanation" regulations should not come into being due to enforcement challenges.

Davis would reiterate the positive benefits of adopting “Right to Explanation” without regulation. He would say that companies could achieve higher and faster customer adoption, speedier innovation and collaboration through commonly shared values, reduced business risks, and increased leadership status relative to competitors.