Introduction

In this reflective activity, I have been tasked to review (Stahl, et al., 2016) and (Bott, 2014) chapter 1. (Stahl, et al., 2016) refers to the many papers researching the ethics in computing fail to provide actionable advice to the relevant stakeholders.

For this task as a Software Engineer at Google, I shall review to examine one of the ethical issues that has been mentioned in (Stahl, et al., 2016) paper.

(Bott, 2014) provides an overview of the law and government that primarily focusses on the law and jurisdiction in the UK and US.

Ethical Choice

The ethical choice I chose for this task is privacy. Privacy relies heavily on trust, and it is difficult for organisations to build the trust and loyalty with their customers and ensuring that the customers feel secure (Lee, et al., 2016). There are risks to privacy where the ethics and laws come in and legal actions are taken that maybe punishable by the governing law (Lee, et al., 2016).

Effect of Ethical Issues as a Software Engineer

As a software engineer at Google, it is important for me to understand the security features being implemented in the software ensuring it is secure from potential cyber criminals and keeping in mind of the ethics and principles of data privacy.

Data Privacy involves personal data of users. With this in mind, as a software engineer, keeping users' data secure is one of the important factors to consider and should not be compromised prior to the software deployment to its end users. A qualitative assurance is required to perform the necessary tests and each test conducted is passed based on a certain criteria. If there are no criteria set by the organisation, I shall ensure that there are policies in place before deploying the final software to the end users.

After ensuring the privacy of data is secure and the information is protected there should be regular review of the information being collected and if the users have given their consent for

data collection. According to (Shah, et al., 2023), there is a huge significance not only to receive consent but also to ensure it is an informed decision. Therefore, as a software engineer, I shall ensure that there is a structure in place to review any changes on how information is gathered and analysed prior to storing, keeping in mind of the code of ethics. If there are no internal policies in place for the ethics within the organisation, I shall inform the management to create one.

Legal, Social and Professional Impacts

Legal Impact

The Data Protection Act 2018 (UK Government, 2018) in UK can fine Google for not adhering to the rules and regulation such as keeping the necessary data for as long as it is required. Failing to do so may result to a maximum fine of £17.5 million or 4% of its annual turnover, whichever is higher (IT Governance - UK, n.d.).

Social Impact

Ensuring the users have been provided with a clear informed consent in advance to collect their data can potentially increase the customer experience and improve the trust on the brand. This therefore creates a boost towards the brand awareness and customers can trust the brand with their data (Na, et al., 2023).

Professional Impact

Introducing new procedures and involving expert advice will involve costs. There will be delays in deployment of the software if it has to undergo additional tests. It is therefore important for the management to ensure that the correct policies and procedures are in place keeping in mind of the ethics and law. It is also important for the management to have some responsibility within the organisation as it ensures the polices are being governed correctly.

Summary

In this activity, privacy was discussed as an ethical issue related to ethics in computing. I tis to be noted that with the increase of the use of technology in our lives, it is important that our data is secure and can trust an organisation like Google with our data.

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