

Case Study: Inappropriate Use of Surveys

The first domino to fall relating to the data hijacking scandal was when Facebook announced the launch of a platform called Open Graph to third-party apps. Which allowed external developers to access a large chunk of personal data from Facebook users (Meredith, 2018). Most of the time people don't read the terms and conditions in full when utilising online services, legal agreements are long and written in a complex language. It remains questionable whether users understand the terms and conditions and are aware of the consequences of joining such a network (Schneble et al., 2021). It was found that the data gathered by Cambridge Analytica was used to influence people's opinions for political campaigns, which is a huge ethical issue (Smith, 2018).

A similar case to the above involves another social media giant TikTok where they used personal data that belonged to children without parental consent which is required by law (ICO, 2023). It was found that this data was being used for marketing purposes. The company has the responsibility to handle data responsibly and to seek consent before gathering data. From a social and ethical standpoint TikTok would have has their reputation negatively impacted and public trust would've been lost.

Reference List:

ICO (2023). *ICO fines TikTok £12.7 million for misusing children's data*. [online] ico.org.uk. Available at: <https://ico.org.uk/about-the-ico/media-centre/news-and-blogs/2023/04/ico-fines-tiktok-127-million-for-misusing-children-s-data/>.

Meredith, S. (2018). *Facebook-Cambridge Analytica: A timeline of the data hijacking scandal*. [online] CNBC. Available at: <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/04/10/facebook-cambridge-analytica-a-timeline-of-the-data-hijacking-scandal.html>.

Schneble, C.O., Favaretto, M., Elger, B.S. and Shaw, D.M. (2021). Social Media Terms and Conditions and Informed Consent From Children: Ethical Analysis. *JMIR Pediatrics and Parenting*, [online] 4(2), p.e22281. doi:<https://doi.org/10.2196/22281>.

Smith, A. (2018). *There's an open secret about Cambridge Analytica in the political world: It doesn't have the 'secret sauce' it claims*. [online] Business Insider. Available at: <https://www.businessinsider.com/cambridge-analytica-facebook-scandal-trump-cruz-operatives-2018-3>.