

# UI/UX Analysis – Kaizer Chiefs Football Club Website

(<https://www.kaizerchiefs.com>)

Interaction design (IxD) is more than just designing usable digital interfaces. Fundamentally, it is a human-centered field that integrates aesthetics, usability, function, and ethics. As technology becomes more embedded in our everyday lives, the role of ethical considerations in UX/UI design has grown exponentially. This essay examines the ethical considerations inherent in interaction design through the lens of the Kaizer Chiefs Football Club website as a case study. Grounding our method in theoretical models such as Mok's ethical UX design and the "Values at Play" (VAP) model of Flanagan and Nissenbaum, we discuss how user experience can be respectful of user autonomy, inclusivity, and transparency.

Ethical interaction design refers to creating interfaces that are not just interactive and user-friendly but also uphold significant moral principles. Ethical UX, Joseph Mok says, is about "intentionally designing experiences that put the user's interests first," emphasizing autonomy, transparency, and respect for privacy (Mok, 2023). Mok recommends avoiding the use of dark patterns—design techniques that trick users into doing things like unintentional subscriptions or data sharing. Similarly, Flanagan and Nissenbaum introduce the Values at Play (VAP) methodology, a process of infusing values into design across three phases: Discovery, Translation, and Verification. VAP ranks values such as gender equity, inclusivity, trust, and user authorship as central to its practice, arguing that ethical concerns should be embedded within the design process right from the start (Flanagan & Nissenbaum, 2007). Toni Robertson (2005) adds that design inevitably embeds assumptions about human activity, and thus carries moral weight: "Some solutions enhance the possibilities for human agency, others diminish it." This notion places a responsibility on designers to actively shape technologies that empower rather than constrain users.

Kaizer Chiefs is one of South Africa's top premier football clubs that is internationally recognized. With its rich history, the club has recognized the importance of a robust digital presence, not only in its social media but its website as well. The official Kaizer Chiefs website is a fan multi-purpose website that offers news, match detail, ticketing, merchandise, team news, and community interaction. The website is visually emblematic of powerful branding, rich imagery, and dynamic layout reflecting the passion of South African football. The homepage of the website is dynamic with hero banners, calls-to-action, and rich media. While pleasing to look at, its ethical interaction design needs a critical look. We look at the extent to which it adheres to ethical UX best practices through the VAP framework and recommendations from Mok (2023) and Robertson (2005).

Transparency in online interactions forms the cornerstone of ethical UX design, ensuring users maintain control over their personal data through clear communication about collection, storage, and usage practices. As Mok (2023) asserts, *"Users must be fully aware of how their data is used and given genuine choices over their consent."* The Kaizer Chiefs website demonstrates partial compliance with this principle through its published privacy policy, which outlines

adherence to South Africa's POPIA (Protection of Personal Information Act) regulations. However, the implementation of cookie consent mechanisms falls short of ethical best practices. Currently, the site employs a standard cookie banner that appears upon entry, but it lacks granular controls for users to customize their data preferences. The absence of accessible preference management tools—such as toggle options for different cookie categories (e.g., analytics, marketing)—effectively steers users toward automatic acceptance rather than informed consent. This design choice, while common, contradicts the ethical ideal of empowering users with meaningful control over their data. To align with global standards like GDPR and build greater trust, the website should introduce a layered consent interface: a clear, concise initial banner with an easily accessible "Manage Preferences" option leading to detailed settings. This approach would respect user autonomy while maintaining compliance—demonstrating that ethical design and regulatory requirements can coexist harmoniously.

Robertson (2005) argues that technology can hide its ethical impact when design decisions are made invisible to users. A more ethical design would be a cookie dashboard in detail—with granular toggles for different categories of data (e.g., analytics, advertising)—rather than an "accept or leave" binary choice. The website's current design prioritizes convenience over empowering the user, which may be undermining trust. Greater transparency through more explicit consent mechanisms would be more aligned with international best practices, e.g., GDPR's requirement for explicit, revocable permissions. Absent these changes, the site danger is compliance taking precedence over meaningful ethical interaction with its viewers.

Respecting user autonomy involves giving users meaningful choices. The Kaizer Chiefs website largely avoids dark patterns—users are not tricked into subscriptions, and shopping or newsletter signups are voluntary. Flanagan and Nissenbaum (2007) advocate for value translation where respect and agency are designed into the interface. This appears evident in areas like ticket purchases and browsing experience. However, the site's occasional pop-ups (such as for newsletter signups) lack a clearly visible "no thanks" option, potentially infringing on user control. Designers should ensure that every interaction allows for effortless opt-out, as advocated in Mok's ethical UX criteria.

Inclusivity is another pillar of ethical interaction design. Mok (2023) argues, "Inclusive design doesn't mean designing for the majority and fixing for the minority—it means designing with diversity in mind from the beginning." While the Kaizer Chiefs website is visually engaging, it lacks accessibility enhancements such as screen reader compatibility, high contrast modes, or font size adjustments. Moreover, despite South Africa's multilingual population, the website offers content only in English. A commitment to inclusivity would involve translating content into isiZulu, Afrikaans, or other local languages.

The Values at Play (VAP) process provides a structured procedure to gauge how well the Kaizer Chiefs site embodies its underlying values. Using the three-step method—Discovery, Translation, and Verification—we can measure both positives and areas for improvement. Discovery determines that the site successfully communicates and reinforces significant values like pride, community, and fan affiliation, which are at the foundation of the club's identity. These values are evident

in the site's mission statement and content direction. Translation depicts how such values are put into practice by means like podcasts, match previews, and highlight reels of footballers, which form emotional connections and guarantee fan interaction. The multimedia strategy effectively transfers the essence of the club to digital media. Nevertheless, Verification is underdeveloped. As Mok (2023) cautions, "If you're not measuring the experience, you're guessing the impact." Currently, there is little systematic user feedback to ascertain whether these features actually strike a chord. Using surveys, comment boxes, or extensive usability testing would strengthen value verification, establishing the site design more accurately aligns with actual user needs rather than assumptions. Without these measures, the club risks creating an echo chamber rather than a responsive, fan-led platform.

The Kaizer Chiefs website demonstrates exemplary ethical restraint in that it avoids dark patterns - those sneaky design tactics that induce users to perform unwanted behavior - to a significant degree. For Ramotion (2022), "Even small manipulations, like hiding the cancel button or using guilt messaging, erode user trust over time." This would be particularly important to sports club websites relying on fan loyalty and long-term engagement. E-commerce and account signup processes on the website are also clear, with clear pricing, cancellation links, and no subscription traps. Shopping cart flows are straightforward, eliminating common pitfalls like forced upselling or concealed recurring payments. Account management also respects user control, with preference controls and unsubscribe links that are well located. This ethical approach allies with Mok (2023) in claiming that "respectful design fosters lasting user relationships." All but the majority of commercial websites employ psychological manipulation to facilitate conversion, but Kaizer Chiefs appreciates fan experience - a step likely to enhance brand trust and customer lifetime value. The subtle UI adjustments that need to be made (such as more evident cookie preferences) are not dark patterns, but rather means of being even clearer.

Robertson (2005) makes an impassioned argument against technological systems that impose rigid, top-down control over user interactions, arguing that such approaches inevitably diminish user agency and autonomy. His perspective aligns with contemporary ethical design values emphasizing co-creation and participatory experiences. Most digital platforms dictate pre-determined user pathways, but truly ethical interaction design needs to facilitate users in actively shaping and personalize their experience. The Kaizer Chiefs website, while adequate in a functional sense, is ready to embrace this more democratic style of design. The site now acts to a great extent as a one-way information source, with limited allowances for fan input or customization. The incorporation of elements like customized dashboards—where fans are permitted to select preferred content types or arrange interface elements—would transform passive consumers into active co-creators of the experience. Similarly, regular fan polls would give fans significant input in club decisions, and user-generated content sections would allow viewers to upload stories, images, or videos. Such participatory elements would not only increase engagement but also represent the club's communal values more honestly. As Mok (2023) puts it, "The most resonant digital experiences come through dialogue, not monologue." By going beyond outdated broadcast models to embrace collaborative interaction paradigms, Kaizer Chiefs can forge a new paradigm of moral fan engagement for sports digital platforms—one that respects user agency while facilitating emotional connection to the club. These changes would demonstrate how technology can empower rather

than dictate human experiences, taking heed of Robertson's call for more humane, user-centered systems.

To fully embody ethical interaction design principles, the Kaizer Chiefs website needs to implement some major upgrades in terms of inclusivity, transparency, and user agency:

1. Accessibility Enhancements – The site has to implement high-contrast themes, keyboard accessibility, and screen reader accessibility to enable usage by people with disabilities. Compliance with WCAG 2.1 standards would mean a commitment to digital accessibility.
2. Multilingual Options – Due to the country's diverse linguistic profile, availability in isiZulu, Afrikaans, and other local languages would make it more inclusive and culturally attuned.
3. Feedback Channels – Having separate UX feedback channels, e.g., surveys or a public feature request board, would allow fans to provide comments on problems, suggest changes, and report accessibility problems—fostering greater participatory design.
4. Ethical UX Audits – Periodic ethical design reviews, just like security reviews, would find and eliminate dark patterns, manipulative marketing practices, or exclusionary design choices before they harm user trust.
5. Value-Driven Content – Besides selling products and match news, the site should feature social responsibility initiatives, such as gender equality in sport, youth projects, and community outreach—filtering digital presence through the club's broader ethical responsibilities.

Through the integration of these changes, Kaizer Chiefs could set the bar for ethics-based sports interaction design, in turn making its platform not merely practical but ethical, fair, and empowering for all parties concerned. Interaction design is no longer just about “ease of use”—it’s about ethical engagement. As Joseph Mok reminds us, “We’re not just designing interfaces—we’re influencing lives.” The Kaizer Chiefs website gets many things right: it's intuitive, on-brand, and avoids manipulation. Yet, opportunities remain for the club to step further into ethical UX by prioritizing inclusivity, transparency, and social values. By adopting such frameworks as “Values at Play” and ethical UX design principles, Kaizer Chiefs can rule not only on the soccer pitch, but also in the realm of creating digital experiences—with empathy, integrity, and accountability in mind.

## Reference

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