

Ethical and Social Issues in the Digital Firm

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What do you think about ethical issues?

	ETHICAL	UNETHICAL
1. A company requires employees to wear badges that track their whereabouts while at work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. A supervisor reads an employee's e-mail.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. An employee uses his computer at work to send e-mail messages to a friend.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. An employee sends an e-mail message to several co-workers and blind copies his supervisor.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. An employee forwards an e-mail message to a third party without permission from the sender of the message.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. An employee uses her computer at work to complete a homework assignment for school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. The vice president of your Student Government Association (SGA) downloads a photograph from the Web and uses it in a flier recruiting SGA members.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. A student copies text from the Web and uses it in a research paper for his English Composition class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. An employee sends political campaign material to individuals on her employer's mailing list.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. As an employee in the registration office, you have access to student grades. You look up grades for your friends so they do not have to wait for delivery of grade reports from the postal service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ethics

- The principles of right and wrong that can be used by individuals acting as free moral agents to make choices to guide their behavior.

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Ethical Issues

- Confront individuals who must choose a course of action, often in a situation in which two or more ethical principles are in conflict (a dilemma).

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Social Issues

- Societies must develop expectations in individuals about the correct course of action, and social issues then are debates about the kinds of situations and expectations that societies should develop so that individuals behave correctly.

Political Issues

- Political issues spring from social conflict and have to do largely with laws that prescribe behavior and seek to use the law to create situations in which individuals behave correctly.

Five Moral Dimensions of the Information Age

- Information rights and obligations
- Intellectual (Property rights)
- Accountability and control
- System quality (to product individual rights and safety of society)
- Quality of life

Information Rights and Obligations

- Privacy and Freedom in an Information Society
- Privacy
 - ◆ The claim of individuals to be left alone, free from surveillance (monitoring), or interference from other individuals, organization, or the state.

Ethical Issues to Information Rights

- Under what conditions should I invade the privacy of others?
- Do we have to inform people that we are eavesdropping (偷聽)?
- Do we have to inform people that we have using credit history information for employment screening purpose?

Social Issues to Information Rights

- It concern the development of “expectations of privacy” as well as public attitudes.
- In what areas of life should we as a society encourage people to think they are in “private territory” as opposed to public view?
 - ◆ Should we encourage people to develop expectations of privacy when using email, mobile phone, bulletin boards, postal system, workspace, street etc.?

Political Issues to Information Rights

- It concerns the development of statutes that govern the relations between record keepers and individuals.
 - ◆ Should direct-marketing firms require to obtain the consent of individuals before using their names in mass marketing?
 - ◆ Should email privacy be protected by law?

Intellectual Property (智慧產權)

- Created by individuals or corporations that is subject to protections under trade secret, copyright, and patent law.

Intellectual Property

- Trade Secret (商業祕密)
 - ◆ Any intellectual work or product used for a business purpose that can be classified as belonging to that business, provided it is not based on information in the public domain.
- Copyright (版權)
 - ◆ A statutory grant that protects creators of intellectual property against copying by others for any purpose for a period.
- Patents (專利權)
 - ◆ A legal document that grants the owner an exclusive monopoly on the ideas behind an invention.

Ethical Issues to Intellectual Property

- Should I copy for my own use a piece of software protected by trade secret, copyright, or patent law?

Social Issues to Intellectual Property

- People routinely violate minor laws such as taking paper clips from work and copying software.

Political Issues to Intellectual Property

- It concerns the creation of new property protection measures to protect investments made by creators of new software.
 - ◆ Apple, Microsoft and 900 hardware and software firms formed the Software Publishers Associations (SPA) to lobby for new protection laws and enforce existing laws.

Responsibility

- Accepting the potential costs, duties, and obligations for the decisions one makes.

Accountability

- The mechanisms for accessing responsibility for decisions made and actions taken.

Liability

- The existence of laws that permit individuals to recover the damages done to them by other actors, systems, or organizations.

Ethical Issues to Liability

- Whether individuals & organizations who create, produce, and sell systems are morally responsible for the consequences of their use?

Social Issues to Liability

- It concerns the expectations that society should allow to develop around service-providing information systems.
 - ◆ Should individuals be encouraged to develop their own backup devices to cover system failures?
 - ◆ Should organizations be held strictly liable for system services they provide?
 - ◆ Should information service companies become self-regulating, self censoring?

Political Issues to Liability

- Should legislation impose liability or restrict liability on service providers?

Crime

- The commission of illegal acts through the use of a computer or against a computer system.
 - ◆ E.g. Hacking, jamming, malicious software, sniffing and spoofing.

Health

- Repetitive Stress Injury (RSI / 重複性使力損傷)
 - ◆ Occupational disease that occurs when muscle groups are forced through repetitive actions with high impact loads or thousands of repetitions with low-impact loads
 - ◆ E.g. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS / 腕管綜合症)
- Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS / 腦視力綜合症)
 - ◆ Eye strain condition related to computer display screen use, with symptoms including headaches, blurred vision, and dry, irritated eyes.
- Techno Stress (科技壓力)
 - ◆ Stress induced by computer use whose symptoms include aggravation, hostility toward humans, impatience, and enervation (衰弱).

Quality

- What is an acceptable, technologically feasible level of system quality?
- Three principal sources of poor system performance are
 - ◆ Software bugs and errors
 - ◆ Hardware facility failures
 - ◆ Poor input data quality

Ethical Issues to Quality

- At what point should you release software or services for consumption by others?
- At what point can you conclude that your software or service achieves an economically and technologically adequate level of quality?
- What are you obliged to know about the quality of your software, its procedures for testing, and its operational characteristics?

Social Issues to Quality

- Do you want as a society to encourage people to believe that systems are infallible, that data errors are impossible? Or people are at least informed of the risk?

Political Issues to Quality

- It concerns the laws of responsibility and accountability.
 - ◆ Should quality standard impose on industry?
 - ◆ Should industry associations be encouraged to develop industry-wide standards of quality?

Ethical Principles

- Putting yourself into the situation of others
- Immanuel Kant's Categorical Imperative
- Descartes' Rule of Change
- Utilitarian Principle
- Risk Aversion Principle
- Ethical "No Free Lunch" Rule

Immanuel Kant's Categorical Imperative

- A principle that states that if an action is not right for everyone to take it is not right for anyone.
- Ask yourself, "If everyone did this, could the organization, or society, survive?"

Descartes' Rule of Change

- A principle that states that if an action cannot be taken repeatedly, then it is not right to be taken at any time.
- "Small change is acceptable, but if repeated ..."

Utilitarian Principle

- This principle assumes one can put values in rank order and understand the consequences of various courses of action.
- "So, take the action that achieves the higher value."

Risk Aversion Principle

- This principle states that one should take the action that produces the least harm or incurs the least cost.

Ethical “No Free Lunch” Rule

- It assumes that all tangible and intangible objects are owned by someone else unless there is a specific declaration otherwise and that the creator wants compensation for this work.
- “Creator want compensation for his work.”