

Ethical and Social Issues in Information Systems Assignment

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The Cambridge Analytica Data Scandal is a great example of an unethical technology company. In addition to Cambridge Analytica, Facebook facilitated the data scandal by failing to abide by data privacy laws. This scandal was exposed in 2018 by a whistleblower named Christopher Wylie. Wylie was an employee of Cambridge Analytica doing data analysis. He would go on to expose how data privacy was breached as well as user consent being breached.

Cambridge Analytica came about by offering their improved targeted ad features that would better target ads to users. This was done by looking at user data and directing ads that would likely resonate with the user. In 2016, Cambridge Analytica made use of these features in order to attempt to influence the presidential election. This was done by attempting to push ads or fake news to users to influence their opinions or viewpoints about the election candidates. It was believed that the site was mostly attempting to influence users into voting for Donald Trump.

The issue that was present is Cambridge Analytica obtained user data from Facebook via an app Facebook called "This Is Your Digital Life". The data was being gathered due to the lack of third party data privacy policies Facebook had at the time. This allowed Cambridge Analytica to gather data from the app as well as Facebook. This was a breach of user consent and data privacy. Since users didn't know nor give consent for their data to be gathered by Cambridge Analytica. Additionally, the data that was gathered would then be used to further the goals of Cambridge Analytica in attempting to disrupt users' decisions.

This event had major consequences for both Facebook and Cambridge Analytica. In 2018, after being exposed Cambridge Analytica would file for bankruptcy. This was due to legal motions and lawsuits. Facebook would also be fined 5 billion dollars by the Federal Trade

Commission. Just as important Facebook would lose a large amount of user trust which would impact user activity on Facebook.

This event sparked concerns about the role companies play in protecting their data. The government would go on to enforce stronger policies as well as regulations on companies in order to ensure user data is being protected. Facebook would have to create stronger policies surrounding third-party app data privacy. This event would influence the importance of establishing the GDPR and the further development of data protection.

In order to prevent this type of incident from happening again in the future companies must realize the importance of data protection. It is apparent that companies try to skip around the data protection and privacy process. This results in many breaches and breaks the social responsibility companies have for users. Companies must be held to a higher standard and understand that the social responsibility they have to users is more important than anything else.

Overall, this behavior by Cambridge Analytica was an unethical breach of information. Resulting in Cambridge Analytica being exposed and having to stop operations. As for Facebook, they are still one of the most dormant social media companies but lost many users' trust after this incident.

References

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