

Google Street View map is a tool we've come to accept as being part of modern society. It has proven to be a helpful tool for multiple with a variety of uses. From planning road trips to the development of buildings and communities. During its initial rollout this was not the case. It was seen as an intrusive tool, taking pictures of areas without the owner's consent or the consent of those captured in the images. Google had reassured the public that faces, license plates, and other identifying personal features would be blurred. However, this blurring software is not completely infallible, allowing some images to make it unblurred to the public. While receiving much criticism throughout the world at the start, I personally believe that there were other more ethical ways of initially deploying Google Street View. Utilizing the Contractarianism tool, Floridi concepts on the importance of privacy, and Grimmelmann concept of product liability. I will argue within this Case Analysis how it would have been more ethical for Google to have gotten the consent of the community before deploying Google Street View.

Floridi in his work points to a need for a combination of informational friction and anonymity in order to have privacy in the fourth revolution with our need for information growing. What he means by this is that as technology advances connecting individuals. The informational friction, or what slows down the rate of information received is slowly starting to disappear. As technology connects us more through the internet with social media. What is needed to perceive privacy in the modern age is a combination of this informational friction and anonymity, or the absence of personally identifiable information. Google Street View is a representation of an erosion of the information friction, by taking pictures of geological areas and intruding on people's private area. While this new technology promised a method of providing anonymity through blurring of any personal moments caught on camera, or requests made by individuals. This technology is not perfect and there still remained that possibility of captured private moments slipping through the cracks. Losing this anonymity and erosion of informational friction has shown that we are slowly losing our privacy. Knowing this Google proceeded with deploying the technology. In order to circumvent this loss of privacy either the technology must not allow for uncensored private images to surface restoring anonymity, receive consent from all participants, or not have the service at all restoring the information friction there once was. Floridi makes the point that forcing an individual without consent, is in a sense altering one's identity which is a breach of that individual's privacy. If I was to force upon someone my own beliefs rather than have them formulate their own. Then those beliefs they have are not their own altering who they are breaching their privacy. We are a society more reliant on information, and that information is becoming part of us defining who we are.

Society has accepted the fact that technology is changing our perspective on privacy, and in order to adapt to this change those providing technology must consistently reassure that their security is adapting as well. This mutual understanding is part of contractarianism where privacy is a concern, it is inevitable to raise the question of how it is secured. Contractarianism relies on the unspoken agreement for those within society to have a functioning society. A simple example of this would be two individuals' having a conversation, and a third-party individual having no relation to the two instinctively not getting in the middle of the conversation. Allowing individuals, a level of privacy they deserve without having to explicitly state this. Applying contractarianism to Floridi's work, as the perception of privacy evolves so do the unspoken rules concerning privacy evolve along with it. Google Street View at

the time of deployment, was a new technology many did not understand. So, it was only natural for many in society to show some apprehension. Google informally assumed that society would agree with the technology immediately and begun rollout the technology. In their eyes using the contractarianism tool, they saw more benefits from the technology and felt that the majority of society would just accept it. The problem with this however is that they should have taken societies input at first before the deployment. Having consent first would have mitigated societies apprehension and resistance to the technology. Allowing society to accept the technology over time, rather than shoving it in their lap would have been morally appropriate. Problems may arise from its unintended use, and Grimmelmann work makes a good point about holding business accountable with product liability.

Grimmelmann discusses at length the importance of product liability within his work, "Privacy as product safety." Organizations selling products to consumers have a certain amount of liability when it comes to their product and consumer safety. If a product can be proven dangerous to the consumer without full disclosure of the risks to the consumer, the organization can be held liable for any harm to the consumer as a result of the product. This can be applied to privacy concerns that Google Street View presents. Since Google did not get the consent of each individual, while fully disclosing possible risks associated with privacy concerns. Google may be liable for any harm that comes to that individual. For example, a possible burglary occurring resulting in the death of the property owner. Suppose that Burglar utilized Google Street View in order to plan out how they would commit their crime resulting in harm coming to the owner. The victim in this case did not consent to having his property be photographed, nor was he made aware of possible risks or privacy concerns Google Street View would present. Having consent from the owner would avoid any possible liability Google would have if any harm came to the owner. Even after the fact if they did not consent and chose to opt out after the image is posted. There still remains the possibility that before the image is taken down, another entity online may have already archived a copy of the image. There is no guarantee that it can be removed entirely from the internet. As Grimmelmann points out with his example of a hammer being inherently dangerous, but a necessary tool. It is still the responsibility of policy makers to ensure that product is utilized appropriately for its intended use. Google Street View can be a useful tool used appropriately, but it should be scrutinized in order to ensure its appropriate use.

Applying Contractarianism to the initial rollout of Google Street View and Grimmelmann work. Google has the moral unspoken contract to protect users and society that interface with their tool in some shape or form. Again, utilizing a Veil of Ignorance and being placed into a society unaware of our position in society. It can be universally agreed that at each level of society we treasure our privacy. Even those who work at Google treasure their own privacy. In order for Google and their tool to coexist in a society that inherently treasures their privacy. It is implied for Google to inherently seek each individual's consent. Understandably, getting the entire worlds consent and tailoring the tool to everyone's unique request can be a monstrous task. However, from a moral perspective this would be the appropriate action to take. Individuals within society should be given the choice and provided with the facts about possible security risks that this tool may have. While contractarianism works through unspoken agreements in society for a society to operate. This same concept cannot be applied to Google Street View. It is not a necessity for society to continue operating, and it goes against an already established mutual respect of each person's privacy. If an individual should not want their property

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included within Google Street View, Google should take this into account during the initial implementation. Not after the fact when images have already been captured. Having the option to opt out after the fact is not sufficient enough to justify their actions.

To summarize, with modern society and technological advances information is what defines us. Attaining this information without consent can be viewed as a breach of our privacy. Floridi stresses this and the need for informational friction and anonymity in order to protect our privacy. Applying the Contractarianism tool there is a mutual unspoken understanding of securing our privacy, and how society instinctively guards what they treasure in this case privacy. Grimmelmann's work argues for product liability in the event that the product causes harm to society. If an organization produces a product and that product causes harm to society even through its unintended use. Applying Contractarianism to Grimmelmann's work, it is safe to assume that the product causing harm is the responsibility of the organization providing the product. Before the deployment of Google Street View, it would have been morally ethical to seek out the consent of society or of those who had themselves or property captured by the vehicles. Providing consent prior would have alleviated many of these worries and provided society a means of controlling their sensitive data in an age where privacy is slowly eroding. For the final time using a Veil of Ignorance, no matter where you are in society you will always seek to treasure your own privacy. Stripping away a piece of this privacy without consent will always be morally wrong.