

Case Studies: Conclusion

Case 1: Be My Eyes - Ethics Canvas

Scenario:

Be My Eyes is a mobile application designed to connect visually impaired individuals with sighted volunteers through a live video call. The app allows visually impaired users to request assistance with tasks that require vision, such as reading labels, navigating new environments, or identifying objects. Volunteers provide real-time guidance, offering an easy and accessible way to bridge the gap between sighted and visually impaired communities. This app uses community and technology to help improve the independence and quality of life for visually impaired people.

Source: <https://www.bemyeyes.com/>

Task :









The goal of this exercise is to evaluate the impacts this system has and to organize them by filling the Ethics Canvas.

Here is a reminder of the 3 stages of the strategy:

- Stage 1: Identify relevant stakeholders**
 Assessment question : Who might be affected by the technology?
 → fill out blocks 1 and 2
- Stage 2: Identify ethical impacts**
 Assessment question : What are the potential ethical impacts for these people and groups?
 → fill out blocks 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8
- Stage 3: Discuss remedial actions**
 Assessment question : How can we address these ethical impacts?
 → fill out block 9

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Ethics Canvas		Project Title:	Date:
<p>Individuals affected</p> <p>Identify the types or categories of individuals affected by the product or service, such as men/women, user/non-user, age-category, etc.</p> <p> 1</p>	<p>Behaviour</p> <p>Discuss problematic changes to individual behaviour that may be prompted by the application e.g. differences in habits, time-schedules, choice of activities, people behaving more individualistic or collectivist, people behaving more or less materialistic.</p> <p> 3</p>	<p>What can we do?</p> <p>Select the four most important Ethical impacts you discussed. Identify ways of solving these impacts by changing your project's product/service design, organisation, or by providing recommendations for its use or spelling out more clearly to users the values driving the design.</p> <p> 4</p>	<p>Worldviews</p> <p>Discuss how the general perception of somebody's role in society can be affected by the project.</p> <p> 5</p>
	<p>Relations</p> <p>Discuss problematic differences in individual behaviour such as differences in habits, time-schedules, choice of activities, etc.</p> <p> 4</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>Group Conflicts</p> <p>Discuss the impact on the relationships between the groups identified, e.g. employers and unions.</p> <p> 6</p>
<p>Product or Service Failure</p> <p>Discuss the potential negative impact of your product or service failing to operate as intended e.g. technical or human error, financial failure/ receivership/acquisition, security breach, data loss, etc.</p> <p> 7</p>		<p>Problematic Use of Resources</p> <p>Discuss possible negative impacts of the consumption of resources of your project, e.g. climate impacts, privacy impacts, employment impacts etc.</p> <p> 8</p>	

The Ethics Canvas is adapted from Alex Osterwalder's Business Model Canvas. The Business Model Canvas is designed by Business Model Roundry AG. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 unported license. To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>. To view the original Business Model Canvas, visit <https://strategyzer.com/canvas>.

You can find the [original PDF template of the Ethics Canvas here](#) and below is a corresponding table that you can fill out:

<u>1. Individuals affected</u>	<u>3. Behaviour</u>	<u>9. What can we do?</u>	<u>5. Worldviews</u>	<u>2. Groups affected</u>
	<u>4. Relations</u>		<u>6. Group Conflicts</u>	
<u>7. Product or Service Failure</u>		<u>8. Problematic Use of Resources</u>		

Case 2: Emotion Cancelling AI - Digital Ethics Canvas

Scenario:

Softbank’s “Emotion Canceling AI” is a tool designed to support call center staff by altering the tone of angry or emotional customer voices in real-time. The system uses advanced voice recognition and emotion-detection technology to identify aggressive or frustrated tones in callers’ voices and modifies the audio before it reaches the call center staff. This creates a neutral, less confrontational interaction, aiming to reduce stress and improve focus for employees handling challenging customer situations.

Source: [Softbank plans to cancel out angry customer voices using AI](#) (June 2024). *Ars Technica*.

Task

Your goal is to **apply the Digital Ethics Canvas** to evaluate the ethical implications of this system and identify ways in which ethical risks could be limited.

Follow these steps:

1. **Describe briefly:**
 - **The solution:** Briefly describe the software product. What services/features does it offer? How does it work?
 - **The context:** Who develops the software? Who uses it? Which other stakeholders are concerned?
2. **Evaluate the benefits:** list 3-4 expected benefits (1 sentence each).
3. **Evaluate the risks:**
 - A. Identify **potential risks** using the five ethical lenses: describe each risk you identify (1-2 sentences each).
 - B. **For each of the risks you identified, assess its level** by evaluating:
 - The **probability** of occurrence (low/ mid/ high) + 1 sentence justification.
 - The **severity** of impacts (low/ mid/ high) + 1 sentence justification.
 - Then determine the **overall level of risk** (low/ mid/ high) using the risk matrix from the cheatsheet:

		Severity		
		low	mid	high
Probability	low	low	low	mid
	mid	low	mid	high
	high	mid	high	high

4. **Reduce the risks:** For each identified risk, propose **one mitigation measure** (briefly describe it: 1-2 sentences).
 You can think about:
 - o Technical mitigations, that the companies developing the product could (or should have) put in place
 - o Organizational mitigations, that rely on human ways of reducing the risks (e.g. that users can put in place)

Here is the original [template for the digital ethics canvas](#) and you will find below a corresponding table that you can fill out.

WELFARE	
RISK	MITIGATION
FAIRNESS	
RISK	MITIGATION
AUTONOMY	
RISK	MITIGATION
PRIVACY	
RISK	MITIGATION
SUSTAINABILITY	
RISK	MITIGATION

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