



Social Media's Ethical Responsibility

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What are Tech Ethics?

I am sure we are all familiar with the concept of ethics as it pertains to various aspects of our lives. Lawyers, doctors, financial service providers are all bound by a sense of what can be described as "doing no harm" to others. But what about technology professionals? Now that technology touches on every aspect of our lives at what point does ethics play a part in its creation?

Should social media companies step in to create and enforce guidelines within their platforms? Should internet of things (IoT) manufacturers anticipate product misuse and guard against that possibility? What about medical IoT device manufacturers? Does industry matter? Or do you believe that leaders should allow their technology to evolve organically without filters or manipulation? Which for many companies is the current state.

No matter your specific viewpoint on the subject I think we as professionals can cite examples of where just a little anticipation of how bad guys can cause havoc should have been done prior to some significant mishap. Or just a little added responsibility could have led to a different outcome. In just the past year alone we have seen an explosion of tech related snafus due to a lack of anticipation and/or flat out refusal to take responsibility. From something potentially as innocuous as "Zoom Bombing" to misinformation spreading about the election to full scale use in the planning of an insurrection. I think we all can agree that technology has reached a place where tech ethics should play a very important part in the development process from the beginning!

Cybersecurity Resume Workshop

[Registration open now!](#)

March 17, 2021
11:00-12:30 PM CT

MiC Community Calls have been moved to the 3rd Friday of the month. Next call: Feb. 19, 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Hello MiC Community,

At some point, you have to stop saying Happy New Year but since this is our first newsletter of the year, let me be one of the last to say welcome to 2021! There has been so much that has occurred in this short year that I find it very difficult to focus on just one idea. There are things like the coup attempt, disenfranchisement, racism, privilege, pandemic response, vaccines, wealth inequality, food insecurity, stock manipulation, depression, the lack of accountability, leadership, and lack of just plain hope that permeates our everyday lives. We didn't even get to, SolarWinds, which in my opinion was the largest identified act of cyber espionage to date! Needless to say, there is A LOT going on!



But if you have read any of these newsletters, watched a podcast, or read a post from me you are aware that I strive to remain positive. There are lessons to be learned in every experience and each individual reading this newsletter is living a shared and individual life experience at the same time. One of my life lessons is that our individual experiences shape our shared experience. Meaning if we are suffering individually, our perception of the world suffers. Thus spending some time changing our individual perceptions can change our views of the world! So this month I want to talk about looking at things differently or understanding that your perception is not a reality for anyone else.

I have said many times that working in technology is a very rewarding career but not all things about technology are good. Case in point social media and algorithms. We have various platforms out there and they have gone unchecked and allowed to grow organically. Or so they would like you to believe. All platforms are run by algorithms that were programmed/created predominately by young men so the algorithm itself thinks like a young male. Not only that but an introverted young male. Add to that the IT field itself is dominated by young white males and you can see how one-sided an algorithm can be created to be. Those algorithms are then allowed to run free on these social media platforms, the algorithm is also designed to amplify messages that are affiliated with certain ad partners, you like, comment, share, and now the social media company has your "profile" and you then receive messages that align to your previous like, share, comment beliefs. We are being "programmed" and manipulated by these algorithms to validate our own version of reality. The lack of diversity in this space is creating a one-sided "view" of the world and it is happening in real-time!

So where is the hope, Mary? Jobs!

My hope is in the opportunities for growth we have in this field. To create the perfect product we need to have other voices, other experiences baked into these technologies from the very beginning. One of the strongest benefits of investing in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives is getting the perspectives of varying individual experiences to expand our collective reality. We have a chance as technologists to improve upon these technologies to create a more holistic view of the world. Diversity in age, thought, social class, sex, religion, sexual orientation, etc. is required NOW! The current version, call it 1.0, is in need of a serious upgrade!

Sincerely,
Mary N. Chaney