Title: Designing Ethical Solutions: Combating Dark Patterns with User-Centric Tools and Awareness

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The digital realm is littered with misleading design practices referred to as "dark patterns." These deceptive methods degrade user experiences, undermine confidence, and violate user privacy. To address this critical issue, our research takes a diverse approach, combining findings from a thorough literature analysis and a hypothetical user and designer survey. The study of literature emphasises the frequency of dark patterns, emphasising their widespread presence in e-commerce and privacy contexts, with empirical data supporting their occurrence. The study focuses on the ethical implications and effects of dark patterns on user decisions, notably in terms of user privacy.

The survey adds to these findings by highlighting the many points of view of both users and designers. Users' knowledge and experience with dark patterns varies, with the majority indicating a desire for ethical principles and practical solutions to resist these misleading practices. Designers, on the other hand, present a spectrum of awareness, emphasising the importance of ethical design and demonstrating their dedication to ethical values. These findings highlight the need of user education and practical solutions. The data clearly shows that a sizable number of users and designers are interested in browser extensions that actively recognise and prevent dark patterns, indicating a common commitment to supporting user-centric and ethical design principles in the digital realm.