

Connection Sharing Ethics Paper

IT 280 – Data Communications Systems

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The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate your understanding of the ethical issues involved in connection sharing on the Internet, and particularly on wireless networks.

Specific formatting and submission requirements are stated at the end of this assignment sheet. It is expected that the body of your paper will be about five pages in length, but longer or shorter is okay as long as you meet the other requirements. (If your paper is very short, make sure you understood the requirements properly.)

The title of the paper shall be “Connection Sharing Ethics”. Below the title, your name should appear as the author of the paper, together with the due date.

Your finished paper may be shared, with your name removed, as an anonymous example of student writing from this class, or as an example of student beliefs on this subject. Therefore, for ease of name removal, this is the one and only place that your name should appear in your paper. To protect their privacy, your paper should not identify other private individuals, but you can identify the sources of information you got from the Internet or the library.

1 Connection Sharing

There is some debate and some rationalizing that goes on with Internet connection sharing. The sharing goes like this: Someone acquires Internet. Someone else connects to it. The people may or may not know each other. Here is a list of scenarios. Try to identify what factors make it okay or not okay in your mind.

* I get Internet. I add a switch so my roommate can share my connection. My contract with the ISP says

I must pay an extra \$10 per month for additional computers. I pay the fee. My ISP gives a separate IP address to each computer on my network. Is this okay?

* I get Internet. I add a router so my roommate can share my connection. My contract with the ISP says I must pay an extra \$10 per month for additional computers. I believe by “computers” they really mean “IP addresses.” I do not pay the fee. My ISP gives one IP address to my router. My router gives separate local IP addresses to each computer on my network. Is this okay?

* I get Internet. I add a router so my roommate can share my connection. My contract with the ISP is silent on additional computers, but their advertising shows an example of someone running a home network. My ISP gives one IP address to my router. My router gives separate local IP addresses to each computer on my network. Is this okay?

* I get Internet. I add a router so my roommate can share my connection. My contract with the ISP is silent on additional computers, but their advertising shows an example of someone running a home network. My ISP gives one IP address to my router. My router gives separate local IP addresses to each computer on my network. Some students live at my house. I let them use my Internet connection for free. Is this okay?

* I get Internet. I add a router so my roommate can share my connection. My contract with the ISP is silent on additional computers, but their advertising shows an example of someone running a home network. My ISP gives one IP address to my router. My router gives separate local IP addresses to each computer on my network. Some students live at my house. I charge them \$10 per month to share my Internet connection. I use the money to help pay

for my connection, which is \$40 per month. Is this okay?

* I get Internet. I add a wireless router so my roommate can share my connection. My contract with the ISP is silent on additional computers, but their advertising shows an example of someone running a home network. My ISP gives one IP address to my router. My router gives separate local IP addresses to each computer on my network. I put a password (WEP key) on my wireless router so only my friends and family can connect. I don't keep track of who is sharing my connection. Is this okay?

* I get Internet. I add a wireless router so my roommate can share my connection. My contract with the ISP is silent on additional computers, but their advertising shows an example of someone running a home network. My ISP gives one IP address to my router. My router gives separate local IP addresses to each computer on my network. I don't put a password on my wireless router. My wireless router lets anyone close connect. I don't keep track of who is sharing my connection. Is this okay?

* My neighbor gets Internet. My computer can connect to his wireless router which does not have a password. I chat with my neighbor and ask if I can connect. He says okay. I routinely connect and do my email using his Internet. Is this okay?

* My neighbor gets Internet. My computer can connect to his wireless router which does not have a password. Without asking, I routinely connect and do my email using his Internet. Is this okay?

* My neighbor gets Internet. My computer can connect to his wireless router. It has a password which I eventually guessed. (It is his wife's name.) Without asking, I routinely connect and do my email using his Internet. Is this okay?

* I am visiting friends far from home. My computer can connect to his neighbor's wireless router which does not have a password. Without asking, for several days I routinely connect and do my email using his Internet. Is this okay?

* I am visiting friends far from home. The public library has wireless Internet inside. My computer can connect without a password. Without asking, for several days I routinely walk into the library, sit in full view of the librarians, connect and do my email using their Internet. Is this okay?

* I am visiting friends far from home. The public library has wireless Internet. My computer can connect without a password. Without asking, for several days I routinely sit in my car in the Library parking lot and connect and do my email using their Internet. Is this okay?

2 Analysis of Ethics

This topic was chosen because (a) ethics is important but difficult, (b) the area of Internet Connection Sharing still seems to be in the gray area where right and wrong are not generally agreed upon, and (c) you should be able to understand and skillfully argue both sides of the question.

It is probably okay for me to stand below my neighbors street light and look at a map. It is probably not okay for me to plug in an extension cord to my neighbors garage and use it to power my house. Is it okay to connect a cable to my neighbor's TV cable to watch TV?

What are the factors that make Internet Connection Sharing right or wrong, okay or not okay? Are there any laws relating to "theft of services" that would apply? When would it be theft?

In days gone by, it was forbidden to use your office telephone to conduct personal business. Now the courts have held that is an unenforceable rule, and many people so use their office telephones. Is there a problem?

In days gone by, it was forbidden to use your office computer for personal activities. In a famous case some years ago, before personal computers were common, an employee was fired for updating his resume using the computer at his job. Now the courts have held that is an unenforceable rule, and many people use their office computers for all kinds of things, including shopping on eBay. Is there a problem?

What does it mean in this context to say that you are honest in your dealings with your fellow man?

3 Section 1: Introduction

Start your paper with a brief introduction of the problem: when is it okay to share Internet that someone else has paid for. Include the following sections.

4 Section 2: Pro Sharing

In this section of your paper, outline a position in favor of freely sharing the Internet. Assume that if a connection is available without a password, it is okay to connect and use it.

Defend this position (whether you personally believe it or not). You should search the Internet for what others have said in support of this position, or what actual laws might exist in various places, and include brief excerpts (quotations) properly attributed to the original author and giving the URL where you found their comments.

5 Section 3: Anti Sharing

In this section of your paper, outline a position against freely sharing the Internet. Assume that even if a connection is available without a password, and your neighbor says it is okay with him for you to use it, it is still wrong.

Defend this position (whether you personally believe it or not). You should search the Internet for what others have said in support of this position, or what actual laws might exist in various places, and include brief excerpts (quotations) properly attributed to the original author and giving the URL where you found their comments.

6 Section 4: Personal Ethics

In this section of your paper, explain where you currently think you should draw the line between okay and not okay. Use your own personal best judgment. Remember that this is not a settled issue. Remember that you may change your mind in the future after thinking more about it.

Explain your reasoning for drawing the line where you did.

7 Section 5: Response by Friends

In this section of your paper, include comments by friends.

Have at least two friends read your paper, with special emphasis on the personal beliefs section. Make a note of their comments. On which points do they agree with you? On which points do they differ. Summarize their comments in this section. Tell whether and how their comments influence your feelings.

Do not identify your friends by name.

8 Grading

This paper is worth 50 points, which is 5% of your final grade.

Points are earned for completing major parts of the assignment.

Clarity: Can I understand what you are saying? (Clear, a little confusing, a lot confusing)

Pro: Did you skillfully support the pro-sharing position?

Con: Did you skillfully support the anti-sharing position?

Personal: Did you skillfully express and support a personal position?

Friends: Did you clearly express and respond to comments by at least two of your friends?

Redaction: Did you avoid identifying yourself and your friends except right below the title of the paper?

9 Formatting and Submission

For uniformity your document must follow these formatting instructions. We will assume that you are writing your paper using Microsoft Word, although

you are welcome to use something else. If you use something else, it is your responsibility to figure out how to do those things in the text editor you select.

A template file (ethics.doc) is available for download from my website. You are encouraged to use it as a basis for writing your paper.

Page Setup: Your document should use the following page setup parameters. These can be specified by selecting File / Page Setup. Set margins to 1.0 inches top, 1.0 bottom, 1.25 left, and 1.25 right. This is normally the default setting. Set paper orientation to portrait. Set paper size to letter.

Format Font: Use Verdana, Regular, 9 point, black, no special effects. You can make this your default font. Headings can be bold.

Format Paragraph: Align justified. Indent left zero, right zero. Spacing before 6 pt, after zero, line spacing single.

Print the paper as a PDF and upload it through the Quiz.CIS Online Paper Submission website.

9.1 Cover Page

The first page of your paper is the cover page. The remaining pages are the body of your paper.

The cover page should present your name and other information that is not used in assigning a grade, but may be needed in recording your grade, such as the due date, your section number, and the name of your instructor. The person grading your paper will not be able to see your cover page. The person recording the grades will be able to see your cover page.

The cover page must include your name and this honor code statement:

I certify that this paper is my own work and meets the originality requirements of my professor. All work done by others has been appropriately identified.

You can follow that statement with any comments or clarifications you think appropriate.

Plagiarism is a form of dishonesty that centers on submitting work that was substantially created by someone else with the intention to deceive others into believing that it is your own work and represents

your own abilities and efforts. When you include in your paper wordings that were created by others, especially lengthy wordings, but even short quotations, academic standards require that you clearly identify the source of those wordings, or at least identify that the source is not yourself.

9.2 Body Pages

All pages after the cover page will be seen by the grader and other reviewers (including your classmates). On these pages, present your work. Do not identify yourself. This is called “blinding” your paper. Write the paper in such a way that the grader must base their grade on the quality of your work and not on knowing the identity of the writer. If the grader is able to identify you, they are allowed to penalize your work for failing to properly blind it.

9.3 Open Review

After the papers are graded, all papers, grades, and grader comments will be available to everyone for review. Generally this review is temporary, maybe for a few days, and is limited to persons that completed the same assignment. (Rarely a submission will be withheld from open review based on the judgment of the grader. This might happen, for example, if the author did not properly blind their paper, or if the content of the paper is felt to be objectionable, e.g., pornographic, threatening, or hateful.)

Open review serves four main purposes. (1) Fairness is promoted by letting you complain if someone else did equal or worse work and got a better grade. Open review gives you the data you need to establish your claim. (2) Examples of good and bad work help you understand how the teacher evaluates things. (3) Distribution of grades is visible so you can see whether yours is the top grade, bottom grade, or where it falls in the middle. This may help you decide how your level of performance compares with others in the class. Should you celebrate your brilliance? Should you work harder? Should you drop the class or change majors? (4) Accreditation evaluators check how teachers grade as they evaluate the quality of the education you are receiving.

9.4 PDF Submission

For uniformity of submission, ease of processing, ease of retention, and to possibly reduce the number of trees we kill, we require all papers to be submitted in the PDF file format, version 1.5 or lower. (Unfortunately I am currently unable to process PDF 1.6.) PDF is the Portable Document Format put forward by Adobe. By using PDF, you can write your document using any word processor you want without requiring me to use the same word processor to read it. To create a PDF file, install a PDF writer on your computer. I recommend PrimoPDF version 3.2, but I have also used version 4.0 and version 2.0 with success. You can download it free from http://filehippo.com/download_primopdf/.

Use any PDF writer that works. If you used PrimoPDF 3.2 and your upload fails let me know.

After installing PrimoPDF, when you do File / Print, PrimoPDF will show up as though it were a printer attached to your computer. Select it. You will then be able to specify the file name. The result will be a PDF file that you can submit by uploading. If you print to the same file twice (or more) it will allow you to append or overwrite as you wish.