

Reg, Tech, Jobs - 2017 Forecast



Technology and Ethics | Businesses today are technology and innovation driven. Every day we have innovative products and services that announce their arrival in the market place and others that go obsolete. The breakneck pace of technology and innovation leads to ethical issues because of the immense competition to stay ahead.

Threats | Sensitive issues like data brokers, privacy concerns, data theft and workplace monitoring are common and critical.

The more new technologies that come into existence, the more potential unethical applications there are. This creates greater awareness creates new policy & regulation in response and therefore new roles in such areas. Right now, for example, those needs/roles might be aimed at answering questions like, a) to what degree should algorithmic transparency be expected/enforced in the context of AI development. And, b) what degree of privacy risk is tolerable/intolerable in the development & use of IoT technologies.

New roles have emerged on a number of these topics in academia, government, think-tanks, and civil society organizations in recent years. At the moment there seems to be a particularly strong focus on ethical questions pertaining to 'big data' and automation/AI. More broadly, the ethical focus has tended to be on how technology manages people's information, whereas the coming shift will be to focus on how technologies manage people's attention. Companies such as Google are forming ethics boards to help monitor their own activities in areas such as artificial Intelligence. This is also seen through the creation and growth of jobs in Machine Ethics, Data Privacy, Robotics, Data Science, Design Philosophy.

Leaders, driving change – Regionally, Europe seems to be ahead of others in terms of giving academic & government funding and attention to tech. ethics issues in a way that that actually informs and stimulates public debate about the implications of tech in society. In the US, there are plenty of tech companies who express the right intentions, but have neither the in-house expertise nor the structural incentives to take it beyond a sort of tokenistic level of attention. The medical and auto industries are more attuned to, and rigorous about, addressing such ethical questions because there, the questions are often life-and-death ones (and they're used to having substantial regulation as well).

A **potential conflict** exists in the rapid development of sophisticated AdTech and it's impact on User Free Will – AdTech can be an enormous help to people, if advertising supports users' intentions, rather than merely trying to steal their attention.

In **Asia Pacific** mainstream discussion on **Ethics and technology** tends to be dominated by the central argument for the benefits toward economic empowerment and development.

Ultimately, evaluation of the net effect of new technologies on individuals and society is needed to identify appropriate rules and boundaries. No matter how we view artificial intelligence technologies, we know they carry certain consequences — some good, some bad.. but none neutral.