

T & C

What is it?

According to research done at Carnegie Mellon, it would take about 76 workdays for the average American to read all the terms/conditions they click "Agree" on every year. This design, T & C, seeks to make users aware of the rights they may be giving up and the policies they mindlessly accept everyday by providing a brief AI generated plain-language summary of the most important and/or jarring terms in websites long, jargon-filled terms/conditions documents as soon as users hover over the terms/conditions. More than just providing a quick summary, which users are far more likely to glance over and understand than a full legal document, T & C also provides easy links so that users can choose the amount of detail they want to digest. They can either skim the summary, jump to the summarized points in the original document, or read the full document with a press of a button. Moreover, users can also easily find where to contact the websites about their terms/conditions with a press of a button, generated through AI parsing/searching mechanisms, which can sometimes be a tricky task and one most people do not have time for. While this program could theoretically miss an important term or misinterpret one in summarizing it, it provides multiple fail-safe links to the original document that users may double-check, and, altogether, it encourages people to educate themselves more than just pressing "accept" without reading any terms, as they usually would.



The screenshot shows the Facebook sign-up page. On the left, a T & C overlay is visible. It has a header with 'CONTACT US' and 'CONTACT FACEBOOK' buttons, followed by 'T & C'. Below this are three numbered points:

- Facebook will not directly "sell" your data but we will track your behaviour and share with advertisers so they can target their ads. A 'READ MORE' link is next to it.
- Nothing you do on Facebook is private -- we may use ALL information we receive about you (including messages you type up but don't post). A 'READ MORE' link is next to it.
- Facebook can track your web activity (including what you search and the sites you visit) anytime while you are logged in. A 'READ MORE' link is next to it.

 At the bottom of the overlay are two buttons: 'ACCEPT' and 'READ ALL'. A red box on the right side of the sign-up form highlights the text: "By clicking Sign Up, you agree to our Terms, Data Policy and Cookies Policy. You may receive SMS Notifications from us and can opt out any time." Below this box is a green 'Sign Up' button. A blue arrow points from the 'READ MORE' links in the overlay to the highlighted text box.

"[READ MORE](#)" links to the specific condition in the official terms/conditions document

"[READ ALL](#)" links to original terms/conditions document

"[CONTACT US](#)" links to the T & C "contact" page on the T & C website

"[CONTACT FACEBOOK](#)" links to the contact info provided on the original terms/conditions document

WAY OF LIFE??

LESS TIME READING
&
MORE AWARENESS
SURROUNDING POLICIES ON
THE APPS PEOPLE USE
EVERYDAY

=

MORE TIME USING THE APPS
FOR GOOD
&
LESS TIME/MONEY WASTED ON
LEGAL DISPUTES

Some Considerations and Consequences

Trust is a central pillar of this design, as clients rely on the algorithm not to miss any important terms; this is one of the biggest ethical considerations of the product.

There is the question of how the most "important" terms are decided by the algorithm -- what human/design biases will be present in this algorithmic decision? How will users remedy this with their own personal beliefs?

How will the companies (eg. Facebook) themselves respond to their terms being summarized by a third party? What are the larger legal implications?

Will a disclaimer in the terms/conditions of T & C be enough to protect the company from backlash? and will this be ironic/ unethical to 'hide' this term in the term of T&C whose central goal is transparency?