The TAO of Trustworthy Design

Trust is not a single thing that can be added to a product or the design process; it's an outcome of many small moves coming together. Based on our research and interviews with academic and industry experts, we believe that the TAO of trustworthy design boils down to anchoring three core values- Transparency, Agency and Ownership. These values enable a safe and more human-centred experience in digital interactions.
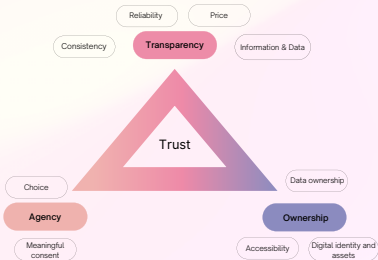
Our Tao Framework

Here is what Transparency, Agency and Ownership (TAO) mean in the context of designing responsibly:

Transparency: Transparency can be seen with respect to **information, data, and price.**

Agency: Values enshrined under agency can be clubbed under **choices** and **meaningful consent** which allows users to exercise their choice.

Ownership: Ownership with respect to **data, identity and digital assets.**

Reliability   Price

Consistency   Transparency   Information & Data

Trust

Choice   Data ownership

Agency   Ownership

Meaningful consent   Accessibility   Digital identity and assets

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Activity 3: Use the TAO Checklist

Use the checklist we created from the TAO framework

Transparency

Information and data

- [ ] The terms and conditions for the product are easy to understand

- [ ] Only data which is necessary for use is being accessed by the product

- [ ] Users are made aware of who else can see their data and for what purpose

- [ ] Information about data or terms and conditions is accessible to the user

- [ ] Text across the service does not manipulate the user to make some choices over others

- [ ] Your product is in compliance with WCAG guidelines for accessibility

Reliability and consistency

- [ ] The user relies on your service to remain true to the choices they make

- [ ] Language and messaging is consistent across the product experience

- [ ] Your product language does not communicate urgency, emotional

Pricing

- [ ] The pricing, inclusive of additional costs, is clearly presented to the user

- [ ] For differentiated pricing, users can choose any option without pre-selection or defaults

- [ ] Payment options make it clear if using them affects the credit score of individuals

- [ ] All information regarding rewards and discounts is clear and easy to access

ACTIVITY

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Agency

Choice

☐ The user can exercise choice in sharing of personal data

☐ Changing or altering preferences is easy

☐ There is visual and design symmetry between different options

☐ The user has some control over their experience of the product in terms of (eg. navigation)

Meaningful Consent

☐ Easy and clear design, and easy language is used to enable meaningful consent

☐ The user can go back to permissions whenever they want and change their consent settings

☐ Unsubscribing is as easy as subscribing to your product and does not take additional steps

☐ Consent boxes do not include pre-selection which may skew the customer in any way, thereby eroding choice

Ownership

☐ Your user is the final owner of their data, and you empower them in accordance with legal requirements

☐ Your product allows users to actionate on their ownership rights

☐ Your company ensures protection of personal, especially financial data of your customers

☐ You take steps to protect the digital identity of uses on your platform

☐ Security measures are ensured to safeguard digital assets owned by your users

☐ You ensure that the user solely owns the data, identity, or assets related to your product when they choose to leave, and you ensure the transfer of such information

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