

## **Improving readability of the terms of service**

### **Abstract**

Terms of service is a legally binding contract governing service use between a user and a service provider. European Union regulations require users to sign an agreement before using the service. However, users treat this extra step as a distraction from using the desired service. Moreover, the terms of service agreement is a lengthy legal text that is difficult to read, understand, and find the desired information. Users already used to useful services find it difficult to perform this step, so they try to simplify or avoid it. Therefore, users omit important information and cannot make informed decisions.

This paper aims to develop design guidelines that improve the terms of service comprehensibility and information processing rate. For this purpose, the analysis of the EU regulation was undertaken and resulted in requirements for the presentation of the terms of service. The requirements were applied by examining two popular social media. The evaluation identified the requirement violations and provided insights for the design guidelines. The guidelines also reflect legal visualization principles that aim to improve the readability of legal documents. Applying the guidelines, the medium-fidelity prototypes were developed. The prototype's usability evaluation found that the information processing rate and comprehensibility improved greatly.