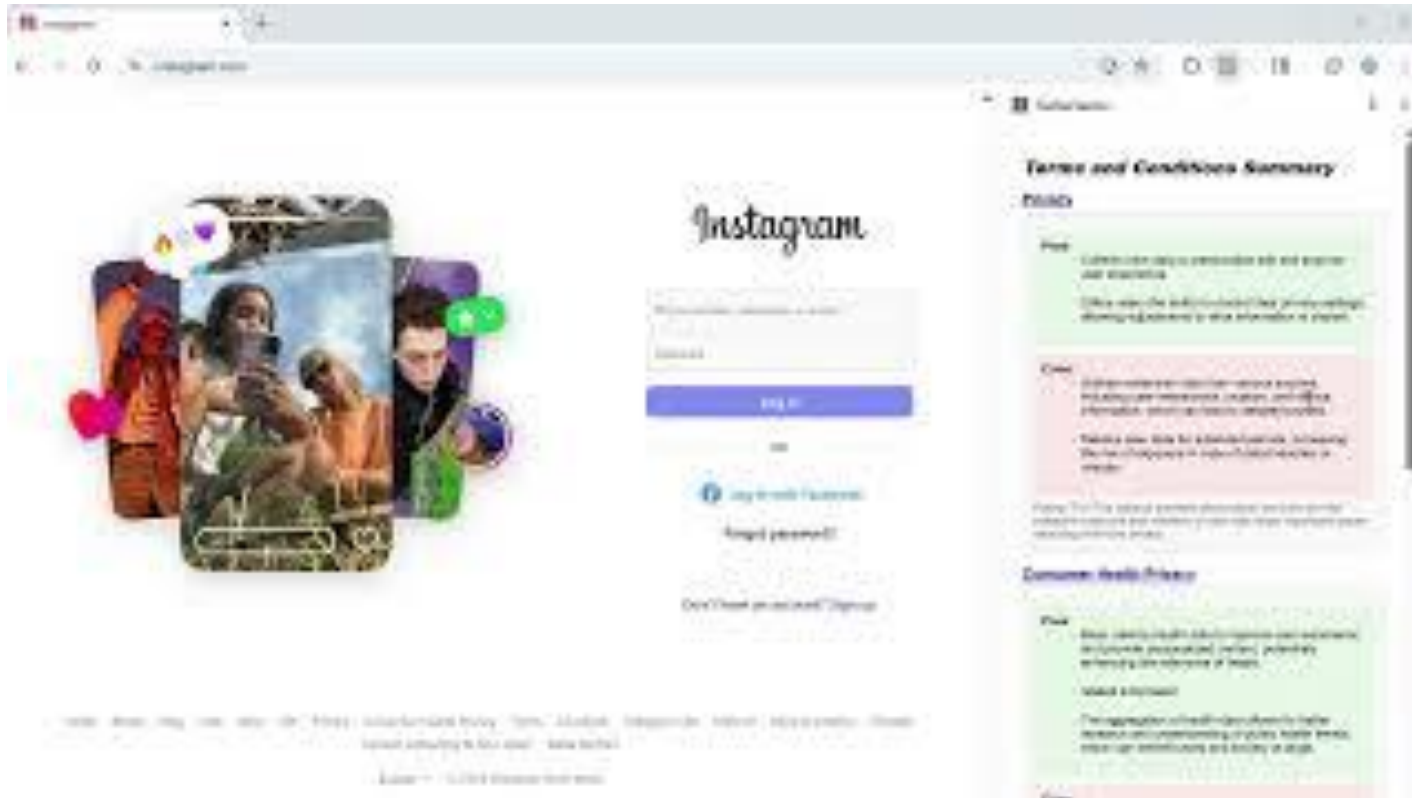# TurboTerms:

Making privacy policies more accessible

Tristan Burchett, Leilanie Lewis,
Mia Szczesniak, Jayden Wong
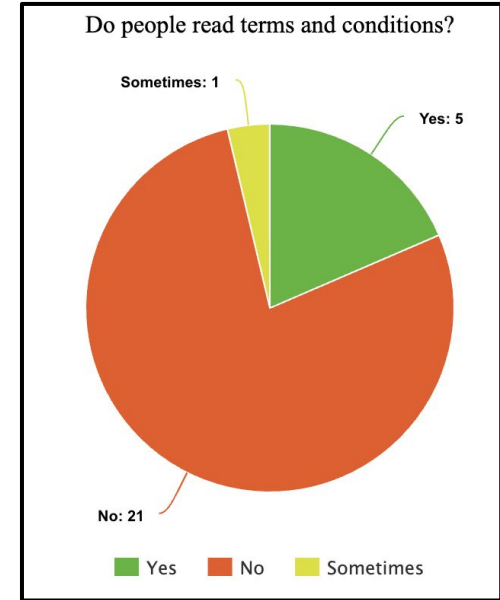
August 14 2025

Demo

The Problem

> No one is going to read all this!

- Average T&C: 27,105 words
- Average privacy policy: 7,958 words (Obar, 2019)
- TikTok's Privacy Policy: 7000+ words

Privacy is being breached… but no one cares to stop it

Do people read terms and conditions?

Sometimes: 1
Yes: 5
No: 21

Yes   No   Sometimes

Involving the Community

Research Question:

"To what extent can we help individuals regain agency in mobile, web, artificial intelligence, and surveillance privacy within Harlem communities?"

Privacy tools often fail because people don't use them

Use social science to understand real attitudes, concerns, and behaviors

Research Approach
- interviews & surveys
- asked about trust in technology, awareness of risks, and privacy habits

Social Science

Engineering

Key Findings

Terms and Conditions

People do not understand the document due to lengthy and obscure legal terms.

Trust

Helplessness to combat mass, consensual surveillance.

Tracking

Feel their personal information will be used against them eventually.

Key Findings

Terms and Conditions

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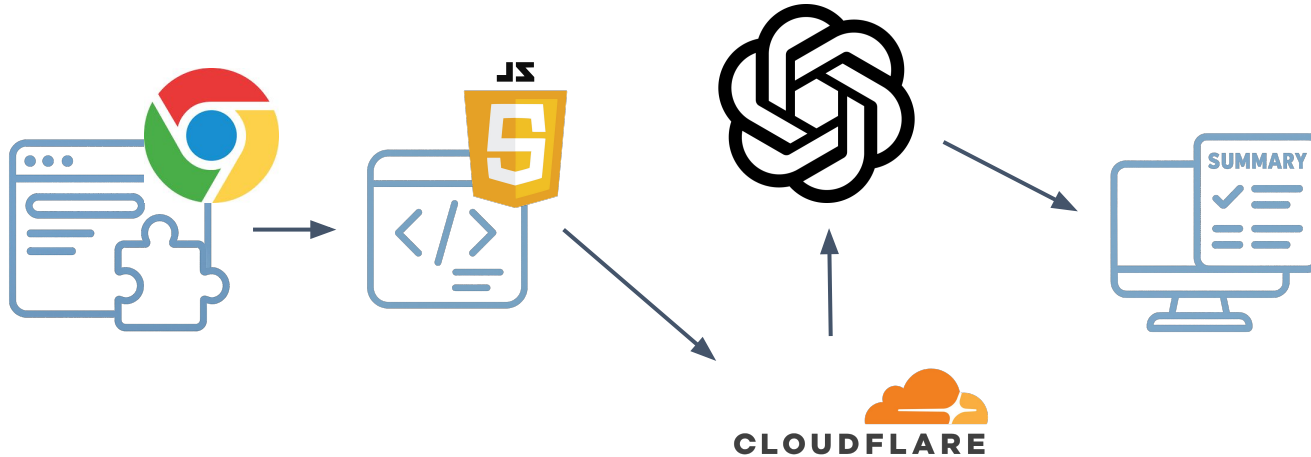
Trust

Helplessness to combat mass, consensual surveillance.

Tracking

Feel their personal information will be used against them eventually.

TurboTerms

- **Evaluation**: large corporations to privacy-oriented websites
  - link detection, content coverage, retrieval speed
  - summary accuracy, Q&A accuracy
- *Technical Flow*

Technical Details


```javascript
sync function summarizeText(text, familiarityLevel) {
  const resp = await fetch(`${WORKER_BASE}/summarize`, {
    method: "POST",
    headers: { "Content-Type": "application/json" },
    body: JSON.stringify({
      text: text.slice(0, 4000),
      familiarityLevel: familiarityLevel || "none",
    }),
  });
  const data = await resp.json().catch(() => ({}));
  if (!resp.ok) {
    console.error("Summarize worker error:", data);
    return `Summary failed (${data.error || resp.status})`;
  }
  return data.content || "Summary failed (no content)";
```

sidebar.js

```javascript
y {
  // --------- /summarize ---------
  if (url.pathname === "/summarize") {
    const { text, familiarityLevel } = await request.json();
    if (!text) {
      return new Response(JSON.stringify({ error: "Missing text" }), {
        status: 400, headers: { "Content-Type": "application/json", ...cors }
      });
    }

    const level = familiarityLevel || "none";
    const prompt = `Knowledge level is: ${level}. Tailor your response directly based on this knowledge le
Summarize this text in under 170 words, highlighting the privacy concerns, but also be extremely extremely det

    const r = await fetch("https://api.openai.com/v1/chat/completions", {
      method: "POST",
      headers: {
        "Content-Type": "application/json",
        "Authorization": `Bearer ${env.OPENAI_API_KEY}`
      },
      body: JSON.stringify({
        model: "gpt-4o-mini",
        messages: [{ role: "user", content: prompt }],
        temperature: 0.6
```

worker.js

Terms and Conditions Summary

Ticket Terms & Conditions

Pros:
- The ticketing terms provide clear guidelines on ticket purchasing and usage, ensuring customers know their rights and responsibilities.
- The policies outline specific conditions for different types of tickets, which can help users understand the nuances of their purchases.

Cons:
- Personal data collected during the purchasing process may be shared with third parties without detailed explanations of how it will be used or safeguarded.
- There is a lack of specific information regarding user consent and the extent to which their data might be utilized for marketing or other purposes.

Rating: 5/10 Lack of clarity on data handling practices leaves users vulnerable to potential misuse of their information.
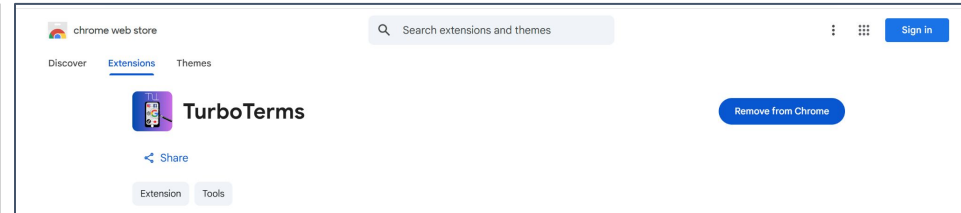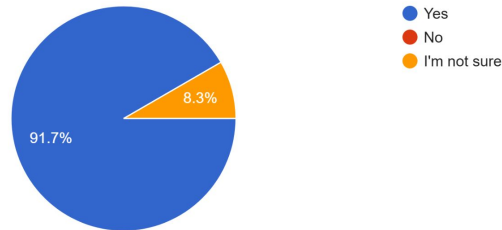
Conclusion

Community gave positive feedback for TurboTerms
- 91.7% would use TurboTerms
- Shaped different features
- need for easy-to-read summaries T&C

Would you ever use a browsing extension that will summarize the terms and conditions of an app or website to tell you in easier terms if your data is protected?

12 responses

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

91.7%

8.3%

chrome web store

Discover Extensions Themes

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Sign in

TurboTerms

Remove from Chrome

Share

Extension Tools

Acknowledgments

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Program Organizers: Fernanda Martinez and Trey Greene

THANK YOU!

Content Slides

Make sure to MAKE A COPY of this template for your team's use. You must include slides on:

- Your Team
- Your Mentors (Engineering & Social Sciences)
- Project Overview
  - Engineering
  - Social Sciences
- Final Outcomes
- Acknowledgements

All slides must contain the E.N.G., CS3, and Columbia Engineering logos. You can duplicate this slide to maintain the logos. You're welcome to be creative with the colors, backgrounds, fonts, and font sizes of your slides, as long as the logos are consistent.