Criteria for Evaluating Tools and Services

Introduction

In order to follow through with our [long-term anti-racist plan](#) at Skillcrush, the product team established the following process and criteria for our current and future evaluating tools and services.

The goal is to ensure that our tools and services are created and maintained by independent developers and companies whose anti-racism and inclusive values align with those of Skillcrush.

How We'll Evaluate Tools and Services

The criteria below are what we will take into consideration when evaluating our tools and services. This is very much a WIP!

Each tool / service starts at a baseline of zero and is awarded the associated number of points for each criteria it passes.

If the final score is **above x** (TBD), we'll consider the tool or service **aligned** with our anti-racism values and mission.

If the final score is **below x** (TBD), we'll consider the tool or service **misaligned** with our values and begin exploring the feasibility and risk of replacement.

Criteria for Values Alignment

1. What are their company values and mission statement? Are they clearly stated? Do their values align with ours? (+x points)
    a. If we need to inquire about the company's anti-racism stance, what is their response? Do we get a response? Does their response give us confidence or do the opposite?
    b. Do the company's values NOT align with ours? (red flag, stop the evaluation)
        i. Supportive of or striving to be an Amazon (remember, we're a Ben & Jerry's!)
        ii. ~~No mention of inclusivity, anti-racism, or supporting underrepresented groups~~ → this is vague, we can only really focus on what they clearly DO support
        iii. Support groups or initiatives we clearly do NOT support based on our company values
            1. Support anything in direct conflict with our values (blue / all lives matter support?)
            2. Donate to charities / causes we don't support
            3. What if the company uses Facebook / Instagram heavily?? Seems complicated…
        iv. If the company does not align with us, do they have a plan to improve their values?
2. Does the company fall into any of these categories?
    a. BIPOC owned (+1 point)
    b. Small business / independent developer (+1 point)
    c. Diverse employee base (+1 point)
3. Is the company transparent about how they store and protect our data, who has access to it and what they do with it? (+1 point)
4. Has the company made any public statements re: their anti-racism initiatives? (+1 point)
5. What kinds of testimonials does the company promote? Are they inclusive of BIPOC? (+1 point)

Critical Tools and Services

We recognize that assessing every single tool, service and plugin is a tall order. Therefore, we're planning to start with our most critical tools and services.

While these will most likely be harder to replace (very disruptive to day-to-day business, less options for replacement, etc.), we feel that the value and importance of these tools and services reflects the importance of them aligning with our company values.

How We Identify Critical Tools and Services

These criteria are how we decide whether or not a tool is critical. They focus primarily on business impact.

- Is the tool critical to money-making (specifically sales pages and purchase flow) or students doing their work?
- Is the tool critical to our internal processes? If we were to simply turn it off or stop using it, how disruptive would it be? How long would it take to replace the tool?

How We Replace Tools and Services

Process

- Evaluate other tools that have the same core / required features as the one that needs to be replaced
  - Feature requirements would need to be clearly documented first
- Evaluate the risk / impact of replacing the tool
- Evaluate the tool based on our Criteria for Values Alignment

Checklist
1. Email them about their anti-racism stance
   a. Need an email to use for all
   b. Include a couple questions survey style?
2. Go to the company's website and look at their About page
3. Look for Terms of Service (really looking for any unique language added around anti-racism / inclusivity)
4. Look for Privacy Policy (for data privacy only)
5. Social media platforms

a. Did they make any statements on anti-racism or anything about their values as a company?
b. Have they been vocal about supporting things in direct conflict with our values? (see 1b above)
c. Also look for diverse testimonials / user representation
d. Company blog
e. If they've donated money is it an amount that seems proportional to the size / revenue of the company?

6. Sales pages (for testimonials)
7. Categorize them as B&J or Amazon
8. Approved lists of anti-racist companies / have pledged to fight racism
    a. https://www.businessinsider.com/tech-executives-racism-diversity-black-lives-matter-protests-2020-6

What if we can't find a suitable replacement, or replacing it would be incredibly disruptive or expensive?

● Does this bubble up to mgmt team / Adda?
● Periodically reevaluate for replacements (or if the company has made improvements on their values)?