



In digital marketplaces, user interface (UI) and user experience (UX) design can colour schemes and calls-to-action, profoundly influences consumer perceptions of products/services and their decision-making processes. Every website interaction, from layout to colour schemes and calls to action, can be carefully engineered to shape user behaviour and drive engagement.

Brands are increasingly engaging directly with consumers through personalised and tech-enabled experiences. While effective designs and interfaces can facilitate ease of use, the proliferation of **'dark patterns' or tactics that mislead consumers into unintended purchases or subscriptions needs to be addressed.**

In response, the regulators are stepping up. The Department of Consumer Affairs has increased its supervision over e-commerce operators to restore informed decision-making powers to consumers. In July 2020, the **Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) rules** were added to the Consumer Protection Act, 2019. Adding to this, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) issued guidelines on **Prevention and Regulation of Dark Patterns in November 2023**, wherein it **identified about 13 unethical practices** which include:

- False urgency
- Basket sneaking
- Confirm shaming
- Forced actions
- Interface interference
- Disguised advertisements
- Subscription traps
- Bait and Switch
- Drip Pricing
- Nagging
- Trick questions
- SaaS Billing
- Rogue Malware

**All e-commerce businesses are now mandated to adhere to the prohibition of such instances. The government will penalise any violations as per the rules of the Act.**

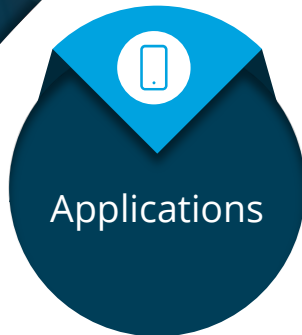
## What's new for e-commerce companies?

In June 2025, the CCPA re-issued advisory letters for compliance, strict adherence to the prohibition of dark patterns and prevention of misinformation to consumers, along with the formation of a joint working group to enforce regulations.

The recent notification dated 5 June 2025 mandates these companies to review their platforms for dark patterns and conduct a self-audit within three months of issuance of the guidelines, i.e., by September 2025. These interventions ensure ethical growth, reinforcing India's commitment to a fair and transparent e-commerce ecosystem.

# Detect and dismantle dark patterns with speed and accuracy (1/2)

Our services offer a comprehensive approach to identifying dark patterns across user interfaces, which include:



We focus on areas suited to the evolving requirements of e-commerce platforms across:

	<b>Application and website pages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Login and registration flows</li><li>• Home/category/ product pages</li><li>• Carts</li><li>• Payment and checkout</li></ul>
	<b>Pricing and discounts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visibility</li><li>• Surcharge and other fees,</li><li>• Offer applicability and coupons</li></ul>
	<b>User communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Application pop-ups</li><li>• In-app notifications</li><li>• Sale and other email communications</li></ul>
	<b>User policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Terms and conditions of usage</li><li>• Returns, cancellations, and refunds</li><li>• Customer personal information policies and privacy settings</li></ul>

# Detect and dismantle dark patterns with speed and accuracy (2/2)

Ethical design and regulatory compliance are essential. We can help you meet the CCPA's mandatory requirements. We provide enhanced visibility and monitoring across UI/UX platforms, facilitating timely interventions, effective control mechanisms, and greater transparency throughout the user journey.

## Our three-step approach ensures end-to-end reviews, compliance, and monitoring:

### Deloitte India's solution for assurance around dark patterns



#### UI/UX process diagnostic review

Identify dark patterns across user interface and user experience (UX) platforms for website, mobile app, progressive web app and third-party integration for all operating systems through customized checklist basis CCPA guidelines and UI/UX pattern testing.



#### Risk-hotspot mapping

Risk grading across identified dark patterns along with actionable insights and process improvement recommendations for creation of compliance roadmap to ensure transparency to consumers.



#### Compliance readiness review

Assistance in performing self-audit around dark patterns before Sep'25 deadlines along with periodic follow-up reviews post audit for implementation status and prevention of future regulatory breaches.



We also help organisations build awareness around various types of deceptive design tactics that may constitute regulatory breaches. Through **regular follow-ups and periodic reviews** of new campaigns, product listings, pricing strategies, and feature rollouts, we assist the management for them to **ensure continuous vigilance**, while identified deficiencies are validated and addressed with quick, actionable fixes.

# Our framework



**Our customisable framework offers comprehensive coverage across UI/UX platforms, helps in detecting potential regulatory breaches, and assists with continuous review.**



## Platform mapping and process diagnostic review

- Identify key internal stakeholders (Product, UX, Legal, Marketing, Tech).
- Map all relevant customer-facing interfaces like website, mobile app, progressive web-app, third-party integrations.
- Gather existing user experience (UX) flows, promotional materials, consent language, T&C references, and design system documentation.
- Conduct manual walkthroughs of all mapped user flows across devices and operating systems and identify UI/UX process improvement opportunities.



## Dark pattern detection and scoring

- Apply customised audit checklist across defined dark patterns per CCPA guidelines to each screen and user flow.
- Identify interface risks for user deception and potential regulatory breaches.
- Assign score to each interface as compliant, needs review and non-compliant.
- Provide actionable UI/UX insights and policy recommendations to eliminate non-compliant patterns.



## Reporting assistance and follow-up review

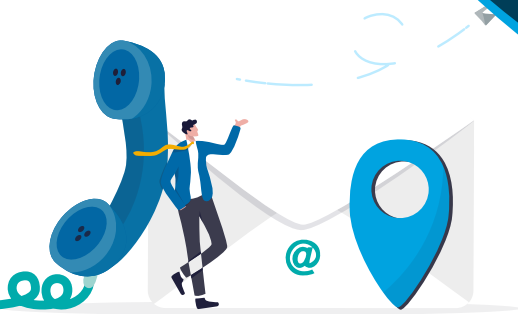
- Assist in preparing and submitting the CCPA audit report.
- Conduct a workshop with firm employees to align objectives, clarify CCPA expectations, and finalize control remedies.
- Conduct re-audit post implementation to validate fixes.
- Periodic reviews to continuously monitor adherence to guidelines.

**As part of the compliance timeline, we also support a review process through September 2025 to facilitate self-audits and prepare platforms for regulatory reporting and declarations.**



## The Deloitte India difference

Empower your platform to meet compliance and build trust, one transaction at a time. With deep industry experience across e-commerce in apparel, FMCG, consumer durables, and others, our team brings specialised expertise in strategy, process design, and delivery excellence. We operate as an extension of our clients' teams, nurturing long-term partnerships built on trust and collaboration. The value we provide goes beyond risk identification: we support seamless integration across platforms and user interfaces, assist in implementing necessary controls, and conduct follow-up reviews to ensure continuous monitoring and enablement.



## Connect with us

### Anthony Crasto

President, Assurance  
Deloitte India  
[acrasto@deloitte.com](mailto:acrasto@deloitte.com)

### Peeyush Vaish

Partner, Assurance  
Deloitte India  
[peeyushvaish@deloitte.com](mailto:peeyushvaish@deloitte.com)

### Nimish Malhotra

Partner, Assurance  
Deloitte India  
[nimishm@deloitte.com](mailto:nimishm@deloitte.com)



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