SAFETY BY DESIGN

The right thing to do | The smart thing to do

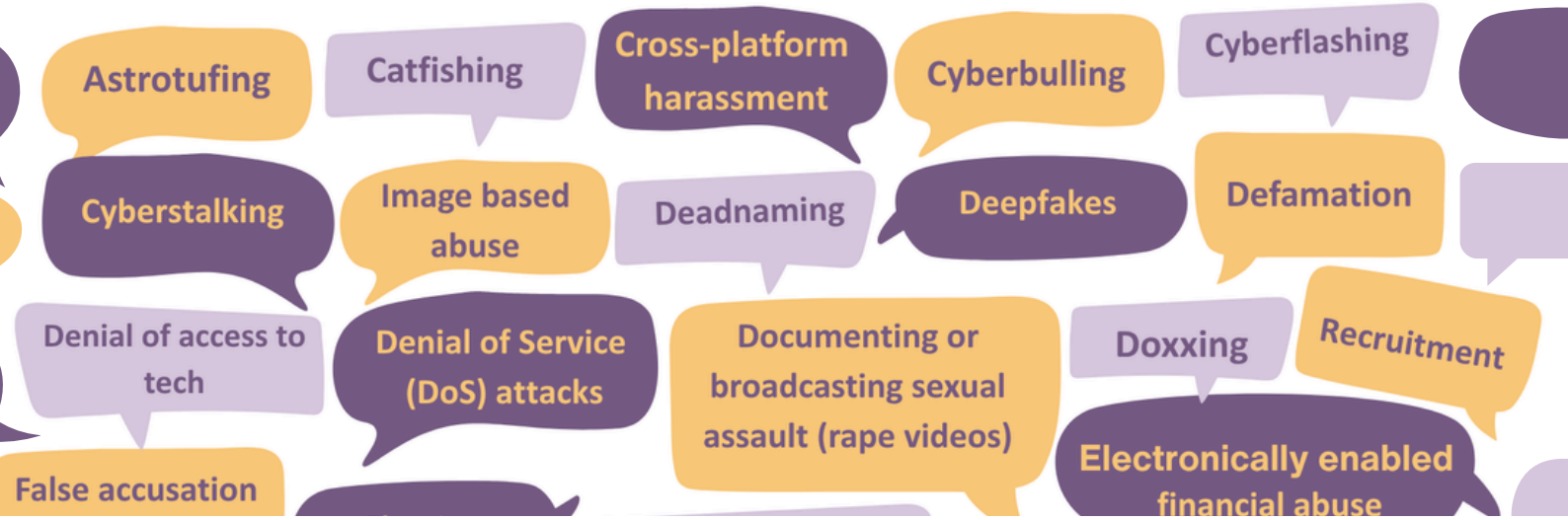
How does Safety-by-Design work?

Safety-by-Design (SbD) helps digital innovators understand what common digital harms exist for different groups of users and how to prevent them. It does this by translating insights from experts who work with survivors of digital harms and the regulators who create rules to protect online users into the entire product lifecycle. As a result, safety for all isn't an add-on but a core feature.

Common Digital Harms

Digital developers are accustomed to thinking about user needs and preferences. SbD helps expand their awareness of the many—and constantly evolving—specific types of digital harms that users face. Our SbD approach assesses potential risks for different categories of users, including children, users with accessibility needs, new digital arrivals and individuals with varying levels of digital literacy, and others who face disproportionate risks, such as women and girls.

SbD not only improves outcomes for users; digital innovators who employ SbD boost their commercial potential by attracting users who value safety, and strengthening user trust and loyalty.



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What does Safety-by-Design look like in practice?

In product planning meetings

- The team maps where harm could happen (e.g., onboarding, messaging, reporting flows)
- Product managers ask: “How could this feature be misused?”
- Teams identify 1–2 simple safety improvements before launch

In feature design

- Designers change defaults to safer options (e.g., limit visibility)
- Add content warnings or friction points before sensitive actions
- Build clear, step-by-step reporting flows instead of hidden or complex ones

In privacy and data decisions

- Sensitive information is:
  - Hidden by default
  - Time-limited (auto-disappears)
- Users must re-authenticate before viewing or sharing sensitive data

In user experience (UX)

- Interfaces use plain language (not legal/technical jargon)
- Products give users:
  - Choice (e.g., view or skip sensitive content)
  - Control over their data and interactions

In everyday product decisions

- Safety is checked alongside usability and growth, not after
  - Teams use tools (like risk assessments) to fix spot gaps and prioritize fixes
- Improvements are small and continuous, not one-time overhauls

In testing and iteration

- Teams test features by asking:
  - “Who might feel unsafe using this?”
  - “What could go wrong when in use?”
- Adjust features based on real user feedback and lived experience

What Safety-by-Design look like in real features?

Reporting flow that guides users step-by-step	App that limits how long sensitive info is visible	Platform that warns users before showing harmful content

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