

Dark Pattern: Opt-in above the fold, but opt-out below the fold



Raymond Chen

One of my colleagues reminded me of a Dark Pattern employed by the installer for the media player for that internet protocol that got the rug pulled out from under it.

When you got to the shovelware portion of the installer, it showed you this:

We have partnered with other companies to bring you these valuable offers. Select the ones you wish to install.

- LitWare Deluxe Trial Edition

By LitWare, Inc.

- ProseWare Search Toolbar

By ProseWare, Inc.

- Toy Shopping Toolbar

By TailSpin Toys

▲

▼

Next

You see that everything is unchecked, so you click *Next*.

You have fallen into the trap.

Look at that scroll bar on the right hand side. It's scrolled only partway through the list. And if you had scrolled down the list, you would have seen this:

We have partnered with other companies to bring you these valuable offers. Select the ones you wish to install.

Toy Shopping Toolbar

By TailSpin Toys

Fabrikam Ad Network

By Fabrikam, Inc.

Web Speed Boost

By Trey Research, Inc.

▲

▼

Next

That's right. All the items you could see without scrolling were unchecked by default, but everything else was checked by default.

As my colleague noted, "This may be one of the few times where it cost more to be placed *below* the fold."

Bonus reading: One of the pieces of bundled software was [an app that wants to crash](#).

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