



Mittagong and Bowral , NSW 2575

Monday 18th January 2021

## Re: Right to Repair of Electronic devices

To whom it may concern,

I'd like to take this opportunity to show my appreciation to the productivity commission for giving a retailer like me the opportunity to voice my opinion on the right to repair and the current threats that my business is facing.

Just to give a bit of context about myself I am a business owner that currently has two storefronts in regional NSW. These storefronts offer the sale and repair of mobile phone accessories and associated devices.

Over the past 7 years I have seen the tech industry shift dramatically in terms of difficulty and barriers in repairing devices. Each year with the release of a new iPhone we are constantly seeing the serialisation of different components within the phone meaning that each part is coded to the motherboard and if that part were to be changed you would not be able to receive any or restore the full functionality of that component. Examples include

- **True Tone Features** - the ability of the brightness to shift automatically into warmer colours so it is less harmful on your eyes especially during the night)
- **Fingerprint Recognition** - As security has increased on these mobile devices we are finding that people are constantly using their biometrics for things such as banking, making in store payments and password retrieval
- **Home button functionality** - the use of the main button to navigate the iPhone.
- **Main camera portrait feature** - Being able to use the camera to its full potential and not limiting certain modes.
- **Battery** - being able to review the health of your battery
- **Facial Recognition** - another biometric feature similar to fingerprint recognition in its use.

All the features above are those that are limited on an iPhone if a certain part is changed and the serial number is not copied over that matches the motherboard. Apple has not and I believe will not give anyone access to a machine of some sort that will allow you to code parts.

Given the limitations that are imposed on the device after repair I am constantly finding that as a business I am losing customers slowly each year as these devices are expensive and people continue to upgrade they hope to sell off their old devices but limited functionality of the device obviously affects resale value.

Not to mention the burden the repair has on a consumer as they are paying money to repair their phone as a result of an accidental drop or a malfunction in the parts that are installed in the phone and they cannot get the full functionality of their device back.

Furthermore, I would like to cover the issue of pricing and what makes a repair worth it in the customers eyes. Pricing of parts vary in our industry according to supply and demand which is completely normal, however there is the case of Samsung and how they deliberately impact the third party repair industry. They make their LCD screens that are used to repair mobile devices available but at a price that is too high that makes it hard for a consumer to justify the repair.

I am finding that the same price I am purchasing a part for Samsung offers the repair to the customer at the same cost. This is an indirect method of putting a stop to third party repair. After quoting a customer on a repair of X amount of a Samsung phone, we are constantly told that "that's almost the price of the phone, ill just get another one." This is another way that these companies monopolise the repair market and are pushing out small businesses like myself.

There is definitely a gap in the market that repair businesses such as myself have filled and contributed towards consumer satisfaction. Apples repair program includes 2 options for repair. Screen damage and other damage. What this means is that there is set price for a screen repair but if there is any other fault with your phone you will be charged the "other damage cost" which is almost the same price as a replacement phone.

For example if you had an issue with the camera on your phone or one of the volume buttons you will have to hand in your phone for a full replacement and pay the "other damage cost" (see image for example)

iPhone X	Other damage (out of warranty)
iPhone XS Max	A\$ 939
iPhone XS	A\$ 859
iPhone X	A\$ 859
iPhone XR	A\$ 629

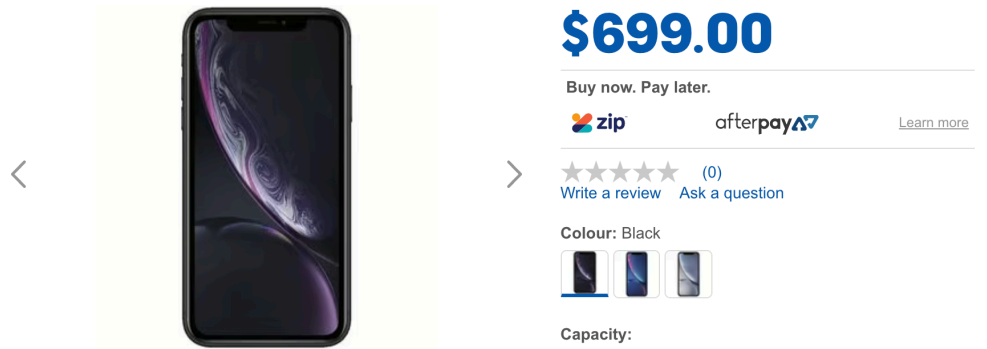
Source: Apple website <https://support.apple.com/en-au/iphone/repair/service#otherrepairs>

## iPhone XR 64GB Black

Product Code: IPXR64BK

Category Links: Apple iPhones

Brand: Apple



Source:

[https://www.officeworks.com.au/shop/officeworks/p/iphone-xr-64gb-black-ipxr64bk?cm\\_mmc=Google:SEM:OW%7CShopping:PLA&istCompanyId=0403b0ba-0671-498f-aeb7-e2ff71b61924&istFeedId=ea709c9a-279e-40be-951f-2668243ec753&istItemId=wliaixpim&istBid=t&s\\_kwcid=AL112073!3!433088516158!!!g!908881842667!&ds\\_rl=1290240&ds\\_rl=1290240&gclid=Cj0KCQiAx9mABhD0ARIsAEfpavTWbh0nsp81RDGc-umSI0emPMZhrpk5PwPpruoufTsQxjSYZkJYEUaAkLgEALw\\_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds](https://www.officeworks.com.au/shop/officeworks/p/iphone-xr-64gb-black-ipxr64bk?cm_mmc=Google:SEM:OW%7CShopping:PLA&istCompanyId=0403b0ba-0671-498f-aeb7-e2ff71b61924&istFeedId=ea709c9a-279e-40be-951f-2668243ec753&istItemId=wliaixpim&istBid=t&s_kwcid=AL112073!3!433088516158!!!g!908881842667!&ds_rl=1290240&ds_rl=1290240&gclid=Cj0KCQiAx9mABhD0ARIsAEfpavTWbh0nsp81RDGc-umSI0emPMZhrpk5PwPpruoufTsQxjSYZkJYEUaAkLgEALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds)

The image above depicts the price difference between the other damage repair for the iPhone XR versus the price for a whole new handset from Officeworks who are an apple authorised reseller. This shows the gap in the market that third party repair fills and aids consumers in relation to pricing and the cost of repairs.

As a consumer technology continually develops and grows in my life by making things more convenient and gives me access to many things at the touch of a finger. This increases my dependency on technology in my life personally. The big companies repair programs (Apple and Samsung) involve you attempting to make an appointment that is never readily available and prior to attending your appointment you must ensure that your personal data is backed up which is somewhat difficult on a phone that has been accidentally damaged.

My business offers repairs to customers at a cheaper price than a replacement phone with the ability of them to still keep there personal data at a much faster rate. Our quick repairs are turned around in approximately 30 minutes.

In Summation, all the above points depict how the right to repair benefits businesses and consumers in many different situations and how the big companies are attempting to monopolise the repair industry and push out small businesses like myself.

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The Phone Spot