

Submission to Productivity Commission Right to Repair Inquiry

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I have founded multiple phone and tablet repair product/service businesses over the last 5 years.

During that time, tens of thousands of electronic device users have accessed the products and services provided by my companies, and we have trained and employed dozens of young Australians along the way.

The Right to Repair movement in conjunction with the impacts of planned obsolescence make this enquiry both an environmental and societal issue. I strongly believe the outcome of this enquiry will have long standing impacts on the way products are manufactured, their intended lifespan and the manner in which they are recycled.

The roadblocks in place to enable customers to easily find repair/maintenance solutions for their electronic devices are evident. There are problems with accessibility, convenience, high costs, unavailability of schematics and repair knowledge from the manufacturer, inability to access OEM parts, manufacturer enabled software blocks, and more.

The combination of the factors listed above make it comparatively attractive for a smartphone owner to opt to buy new instead of prolonging the life of their current, operational device.

It would seem that these barriers are in place almost on purpose, to force the hand of consumers into purchasing the newest iteration of the manufacturers device.

Realistically, these devices **do not** stop to function affectively after 1-2 years. In fact, many of the users who purchase my companies products/services are using devices that are 3+ years old. Over the last 5 years, tens of thousands of Aussies have sought solutions for repairability through my companies. Let alone the thousands of other independent repair operators around the country. This shows a significant and continued demand to extend instead of upgrade.

The most obvious evidence of planned obsolescence in our industry has been from Apple and their software implications of installing "third party" parts onto their devices. Apart from the daunting software warnings that Apple show to the user after installation, the parts and methods used by our customers are fully functionable.

Part failure is bound to affect you at some point during the time you own the device. Whether it's a damaged screen, a failing battery or a busted charging port. The failure of one part should not force you into replacing the entire device. We should be able to cheaply and easily access repair for these devices.

While OEM manufacturers like Apple do offer repair services, they are offered neither cheap or convenient. This leaves you facing the decision to upgrade to the latest device iteration instead of repairing the one you already own.