

Submission to the Productivity Commission

Subject: Right to Repair

From: Brendan Norris – founder of Fixable.co (soon-to-be-launched online repair platform)

I only learned about this enquiry recently, so please forgive the lack of verified research in my submission.

I am just about to launch a social enterprise called Fixable (fixable.co) which is a community-based repair directory and marketplace. The goal of Fixable is to make getting something repaired as convenient and affordable as possible. Some comments:

- It will be an online directory/marketplace of repair businesses, to help give the industry a boost.
- On the same marketplace we will encourage skilled hobbyists, retirees, CALD residents, unemployed, and others who are great at fixing things but don't do it as a job, to sign up as well.
- The idea is that there are certain high value items that people would only ever get a professional to fix (computers, TVs, hi-fi equipment, smart devices, etc), and there are lower value items that most people would not pay a professional to fix, however for which a skilled hobbyist would likely be more affordable. These are the items that often end up in landfill, so we will aim to stop that.
- Fixable.co will also be an online resource for both professional and amateur repairers to share information, trade spare parts and tools, host lessons, etc.

I follow the right to repair movement closely as I am, frankly, terrified that in running Fixable I will be targeted by a multinational corporation for daring to help people prolong the life of their belongings by having them repaired outside of said corporations' constraints. Trying to formulate the guidelines for fixers about what they can and shouldn't do is a minefield. And insurance for copyright breach may well be prohibitively expensive for a social enterprise start-up.

I would hope that common sense prevails over corporate greed and the right to repair laws are strengthened in favour of consumers. Some suggestions for the commission to consider:

- Repairability scores on all products – how easy, where the repair can be done (e.g. shipped offshore vs done locally)
- Expected lifespan of products – all manufacturers have this detailed information. Consumers and organisational purchasers need to be able to make informed decisions
- Spare parts to be guaranteed for minimum time period
- CAD files for spare parts made open source so 3D printing can provide the long tail of spare parts if manufacturers won't
- Repair manuals made open source
- Circular design practices made mandatory on consumer products
- Tax incentives for repair (e.g. reduction in GST on repair services)

Best,

Brendan Norris