

*Cherrie Tran*

# Made to Break?

Made to Last or Made for Money?



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## Is the iPhone deliberately made to break?

**Or is it made to last?** The use of planned obsolescence in products is not unusual, the "method of stimulating consumer demand by designing products that wear out or become outmoded after limited use." (*Definition of Planned Obsolescence | Dictionary.com, 2019*) Apple controls their products to last a certain amount of time so that their consumers either repair or purchase more of their newer products, creating this unethical loop of consume and throw away.

## Why does Apple do this?

The use of obsolescence in products is utilised solely for company profit and for consumers to purchase more.

## How do companies like Apple get away with it?

Apple can control the features of the iPhone, from the battery to the parts used to the warranty given. There are certain features in iPhones that we as consumers don't realise are monitored for obsolescence, thus allowing



companies not to be sued. The older the iPhone, the harder it is to receive repair parts due to their lack of production in about a year. Apple designs their phones to be highly irreparable by removing the home button, integrating their battery into the phone, and removing the headphone jack. These features are limited to iPhones, making repairing costs much more expensive. This causes the older phones to become further obsolete, driving consumers to want to have new devices rather than fix their current ones. Apple marketing is worldwide and is genius in the ways of the marketer as they constantly advertise new phones, adding more unnecessary features, removing physical characteristics, and making your current phone feel old and outdated. As surprising as it sounds, having the same iPhone for more than two years is known to be odd, as new phones are constantly released. Apple's marketing shows the unethical intentions of the brand by repeatedly trying to create a "better" phone.

In 2016, a new term was created: Batterygate. Batterygate was the deliberate downgrade of battery systems on older iPhones leading to them shutting down over time. Many believed that it was due to the planned obsolescence of iPhones, making consumers purchase newer models. "Apple withheld information about their batteries that slowed down iPhone performance, all while passing it off as an update." (Moskowitz, 2020) This was settled with Apple paying \$133 million to settle the allegations, leading us to believe that the obsolescence was deliberate and planned.

In 2018, Apple paid a \$27 million fine, admitting that older iPhones were deliberately affected negatively through software updates to increase sales. Through this, Apple has shown consumers that they have planned obsolescence for their consumers to continue purchasing, upgrading, and relying on their brand.

The impact of planned obsolescence is ethically negative, creating more consumer costs, creating more phones, therefore more waste. The constant replacement of iPhones from consumers creates a lot of waste with majority of them either left to the side or thrown away. If you can use an iPhone and the systems still work but you are planning to get a new one, a better option would be to donate the phone online or to lend it to another individual that may find a use for your phone.

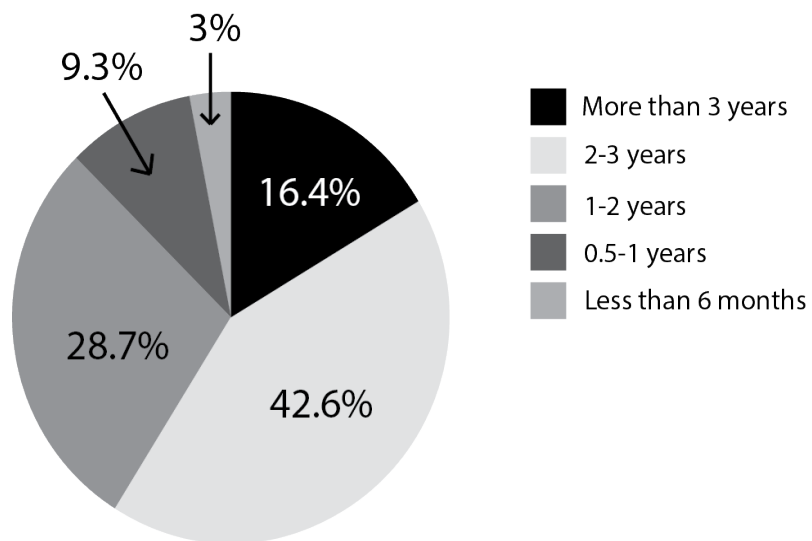
**However, this leads to the question: Are iPhones made to last, made for money, or made to break?**



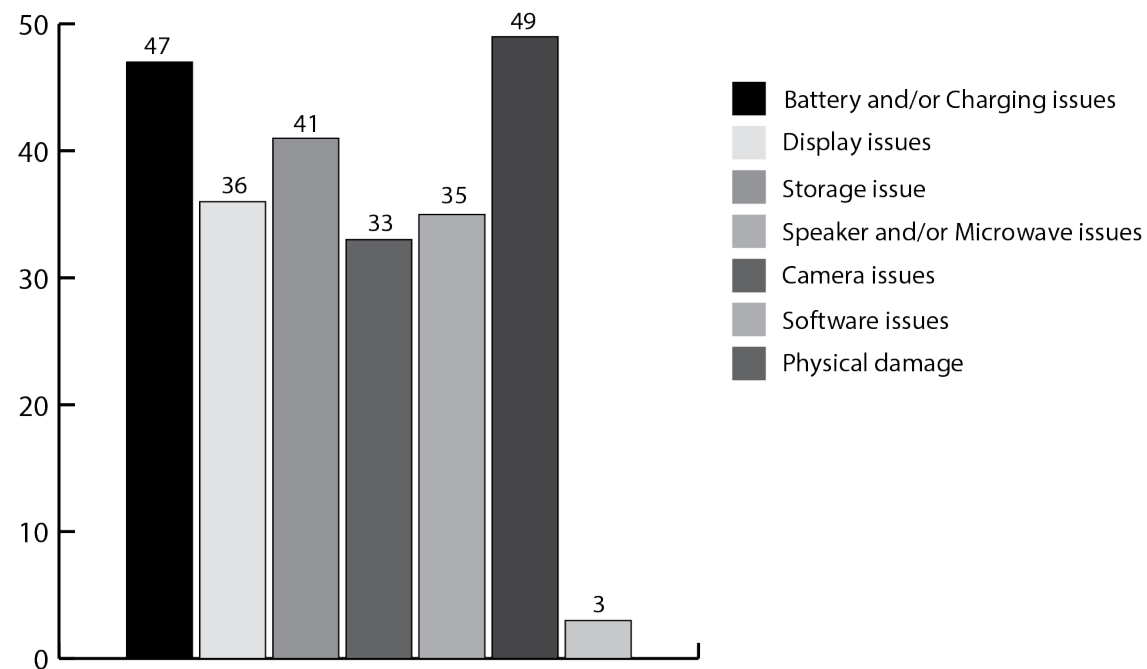
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How Long Did You Use Your Previous Smartphone?



Why Did You Discard Your Previous Smartphone?