

# IS SLOWING DOWN OLDER IPHONES AN ECONOMIC DECISION?

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**Abstract:** *The iPhone is a line of smartphones made by Apple. The company has full control over its design and marketing as it develops its own hardware and software. Recently it was discovered that Apple is purposely slowing down older iPhones in order to extend the battery life. As the news broke out, customers started demanding explanations and suing Apple for not being transparent. Many people regard this action as an incentive to get consumers to buy a new device.*

**Keywords:** *Apple, iPhone, performance, device, battery, consumer, test, limit.*

## 1. The performance limit

For a long time now many people believed that Apple may be slowing down older iPhones as an effort to encourage the purchase of a new phone. The company has been silent in this regard until now. John Poole, the founder of Primate Labs has posted the results of a test that proves the lowering of the phone's performance over time. Apple admitted this for the first time. They gave however an explanation that this actions were taken last year in order to prevent battery related problems.

The news sparked a lot of negativity towards Apple. Some users are even suing the company for not disclosing its actions to the public. It also received widespread criticism for industry analysts. Mr. Poole's theory that the slowdown was accomplished through software changes was later confirmed.

Apple released another statement that overall performance and prolonging battery life is for their main goal to deliver the best experience for their customers [1].

Many long term iPhone fans are seeing the secrecy of performance limitation as a fraud stating that it was in indirect push to make them believe it's time to upgrade. Although the idea of saving battery life for those users that decided to stick to their smartphones for a longer period of time is plausible, many believe that albeit directly or indirectly at its core it forces them to consider a new device, thus for a better experience they are required to make another spending. It was also not helped by the fact that the phones got even more expensive.

## 2. Price and choices

The year 2017 took this trend to new heights. Consumers demanding new designs and features, companies pushing for new technologies, the upgrade in materials and so on, are driving the average price of a new smartphone up on a steady pace. Without any hesitation it can be said that 1000\$ for a new device is the current norm [2].

Of course the consumers have a wide range of products to choose from, yet the appeal of a premium smartphone has never been higher. This choice however is limited mostly to Android fans. Individuals looking for an Apple device have their choice range limited to the minimum.

## 3. An Incentive or not?

For those who were really unimpressed with Apple's actions it is easy to condemn the performance limiter based on the sole assumption that it was an economic decision. However, if more facts are taken into account, the results vary. Those who use older phones, do that mostly either for financial or accessibility reasons. Not being able to afford is self-explanatory while the fear of upgrading due to limited tech knowledge or any other reason is also a decidable factor.

Thus trying to prolong the battery life for these devices seems as a logical step. However, the inability to choose between battery and performance is a very limiting factor. On top of it not knowing the reasons your phone underperforms is a big damaging factor too. Does this matter for everyone though? A big percentage of consumers just don't care about numbers. As long as they can use the phone throughout the day without a second charge it is fine. A lot of performance is needed mostly for heavier operations like playing video games and editing media files.

A replaced battery will diminish the issue restoring a part of the performance. This operation however is a constraining factor in itself too as the batteries are not user replaceable. Years back some phones even came with 2 batteries in the pack and the ability to buy a new one was beyond easy. Apple however did not stick to the trend of those times. Instead they created their own and everyone else started to follow. Recently more and more companies went for a closed construction. This was in part to make the devices look better with a new freedom in design and material choice, the ability to make the phone water and dust proof more easy, etc.

Taking everything into account, shows that the smartphone industry improved a lot and continues to do so. New features require more spending for research and manufacturing. The pressure to deliver is pressing for more investment.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the current atmosphere, it is important to acknowledge the fact that slowing down the phone doesn't mean Apple is trying to make everyone buy a new one. The goal here is to get as much usability as possible out of older devices. Apple needs to be more transparent though, and inform its clients in the future if a similar action will be taken.

## **References:**

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