



18 Feb 2013

Parliamentary Committee

IT Pricing Inquiry

Dear Members

I am a web designer and have been purchasing computer softwares for the past 12 years. I am particularly an Apple product user for the same period so I guess I am often confronted with high prices for use on an Apple OS.

I think it is welcome news to know that finally the Australian government is examining the issue of IT prices that is often high and unexplained, particularly for Australian consumers.

Apart from widespread consensus that we in Australia are being charged unfair and high prices for computer products and softwares, we may have missed the opportunity to examine closely the methods in which new OS are introduced that often render a software just recently purchased ineffective and useless. That's because computer makers such as Apple insists that you have to update your OS or buy a new computer in order to accommodate your software version. Or sometimes, they require you to upgrade your software in order to meet a current or new OS.

Many softwares that I have bought are not cheap eg the Final Cut Pro when it first entered the Australian market (video editing). Yes I was willing to upgrade but there is absolutely no discount offered to consumers in such circumstances. This is considering that FCP was very expensive when it first came on the market. My concern however is that when new OS are introduced, the computer companies simply use this opportunity to pop up their bank account, and ignored the negative impact of the upgrade on consumers who have to foot more money in order to purchase the upgrade software or OS.

In the early 1990s I believe these issues were so frequent that I raised this matter with the federal Minister responsible for IT at the time. I just think that if you have to upgrade softwares because a new OS is being introduced, there ought to be mechanism in place to offer advantage discounts to consumers who will be directly negatively affected by the upgrade. In addition, I agree that software applications are extremely expensive in Australia and there are huge price differences between Australia and the US, particularly for Apple products.

John Uri