

## **Língua Estrangeira: INGLÊS**

Leia o texto a seguir.

### **Planned obsolescence**

Adapted From: Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Planned obsolescence is the conscious decision on the part of an agency to produce a consumer product that will become obsolete and/or non-functional in a defined time frame. Planned obsolescence has great benefits for a producer in that it means a consumer will buy their product repeatedly, as their old one is no longer functional or desirable. It exists in many different products from vehicles to light bulbs, from buildings to software. There is, however, the potential backlash of consumers that become aware of such obsolescence; such consumers can shed their loyalty and buy from a company that caters to their desire for a more durable product.

Estimates of planned obsolescence can influence a company's decisions about product engineering; there is little business reason to make a product that lasts longer than anyone is expected to use it. Therefore the company can use the least expensive components that satisfy product lifetime projections. Such decisions are part of a broader discipline known as value engineering.

#### **Types of planned obsolescence**

Technical or functional obsolescence

The design of most consumer products includes an expected average lifetime permeating all stages of development. For instance, no auto-parts maker would run the extra cost of ensuring a part lasts for forty years if few cars spend more than five years on the road. Thus, it must be decided early in the design of a complex product how long it is designed to last so that each component can be made to those specifications.

Planned obsolescence is made more likely by having the cost of repairs being comparable to replacement costs, or by actually refusing to provide service or parts any longer. A product might even never have been serviceable. For instance Microsoft no longer provides customer support for Windows 95, creating a greater incentive to buy a more up-to-date version of Windows.

Creating new lines of products that do not interoperate with older products can also make an older model quickly obsolete, forcing replacement.

## **Economics of planned obsolescence**

Before introducing a planned obsolescence the producer has to know that the consumer is at least somewhat likely to buy a replacement from them. In these cases of planned obsolescence there is an information gap between the producers, who knows how long the product was designed to last. When a market becomes more competitive, product lifespan tend to increase. When Japanese and European vehicles with longer life spans entered the American market in the 1960s and 1970s, the American carmakers were forced to respond by building more durable products.

However, there are some industries where there is significant competition and consumers have chosen to go for products that will fail more quickly anyway. For instance, light bulbs that last many years can easily be made for a price that would be considerably lower per hour of lifetime than conventional ones. These bulbs are used by almost all businesses and industries. Homeowners, however, tend to balk at paying two or three times as much even when it might save them money in the end (cf. false economy). Some consumers are also perfectly content with planned obsolescence.

Others have defended planned obsolescence as a necessary driving force behind innovation and economic growth. Many products, such as DVDs, become both cheaper and more useful the more people have them. Planned obsolescence will also tend to benefit those companies with the most modern and up-to-date products, thus encouraging extra investment in research and development that often has large positive externalities. There is a tendency for people towards conservatism in their purchases, a predilection some economists believe to be excessive and harmful to the economy. These economists would argue, for instance, that Microsoft's efforts to encourage consumers to move from Windows 95 to Windows XP by withdrawing support and interoperability for the older operating system is a necessary corrective to people's natural aversion to change.

The phrase was made popular by Brooks Stevens the American industrial designer, in 1954. In 1960, a pop culture critic Vance Packard had a book published called "The Waste Makers". In it he criticized Stevens for having a sinister strategy behind his theory of planned obsolescence. To justify himself, Packard then hijacked the term Planned Obsolescence in his book and sub categorized it into two sections. The first one was Psychological Obsolescence and the second was Functional Obsolescence.

Psychological Obsolescence was more or less in keeping with Stevens' original definition, though Packard's interpretation was that there was a sinister motive behind it. He said that the approach behind Psychological Obsolescence was to make the product "old-fashioned, conspicuously non-modern." In other words, he said that Stevens was brainwashing the customers into believing that the old product they owned was no longer good enough, now that there was an updated, modern and more desirable version available.

The second one, Functional Obsolescence, was equally manipulative of the consumer, in Packard's view. He said that Stevens was designing products deliberately so that they would wear out or break in the future - the consumer would be forced to buy another one and keep Stevens in business. Brooks Stevens had never intended his definition to be interpreted in this way, and he found himself having to defend himself against Packard's definition of functional obsolescence.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/planned\\_obsolescence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/planned_obsolescence) em 15/03/2006.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE NEXT 2 (TWO) QUESTIONS

- 1 - BASE YOUR ANSWERS ON THE TEXT PROVIDED.
- 2 - USE CLEAR, OBJECTIVE AND COMPLETE ANSWERS.
- 3 - ANSWER QUESTIONS 1 AND 2 **IN ENGLISH ONLY**; ANSWERS IN PORTUGUESE **WILL NOT** BE ACCEPTED FOR THESE ITEMS.

### **PRIMEIRA QUESTÃO**

Based on the text, what happens to consumers who are not favorable to planned obsolescence?

### **SEGUNDA QUESTÃO**

Based on the text and according to Vance Packard, describe fully the subcategories of planned obsolescence.

**INSTRUÇÕES PARA AS PRÓXIMAS 2 (DUAS) QUESTÕES**

- 1 – RESPONDA SEMPRE DE ACORDO COM O TEXTO.
- 2 – USE RESPOSTAS CLARAS OBJETIVAS E COMPLETAS.
- 3 – RESPONDA AS QUESTÕES 3 E 4 **EM PORTUGUÊS**; RESPOSTAS **EM INGLÊS** NÃO SERÃO ACEITAS PARA ESTAS QUESTÕES.

**TERCEIRA QUESTÃO**

Based on the text, what makes a product become obsolete?

**QUARTA QUESTÃO**

Based on the text, what is the strategy of Microsoft to promote technical obsolescence?