

From Andrew Henderson
In relation to smartphones and tablets

As a software developer and user of smartphones and tablets, the ability for an end-user to operate their hardware in the manner they deem appropriate is paramount to future innovation.

Currently technology is on a dangerous trend towards preventing consumers from being able to use their property in the way they deem fit.

On my desktop, if I want to change or reconfigure my operating system, I am able to do so.

Mobile devices such as iPhones, iPads, iPods and Android devices are effectively the same as a computer. They are complex computational devices which allow the user to perform a variety of tasks.

The user purchases these devices and to ensure greatest innovation is possible, the user must be able to use the hardware they have purchased to the fullest potential.

One size does not fit all in technology and it is impossible to make an ideal solution for all users for the particular hardware. The ability to customize the hardware that the user purchased is paramount to ensuring the most innovative outcome.

The trend towards manufacturers trying to restrict the use of the hardware they sell through legal means is at best anti-innovation and at worst, highly anti-competitive. For example, Apple uses the lock in on their phones to require an entry fee from any developer that wishes to sell, or even give away, software to the hardware they have sold to other users.

Effectively, Apple seeks to, as a third party, interfere in the valid business transaction between a software vendor and a hardware owner. The only interest Apple has in the deal is to act as a toll collector on a transaction they are not involved in as they have sold the device to the user and they need not have any relationship with the software developer.

Continue the exemption for smartphones, extend it to tablets and other electronic devices, make the exemption permanent and protect the future of technological innovation.