iPhones slowed to tackle ageing batteries

Many customers have long suspected that Apple slows down older iPhones to encourage people to upgrade.

The company has now said it does slow down some models as they age, but only because the phones' battery performance diminishes over time.

Apple said it wanted to "prolong the life" of customers' devices.

The practice was confirmed after a customer shared performance tests on *Reddit*, a social site, suggesting their iPhone 6S had slowed down considerably as it had aged but had suddenly sped up again after the battery had been replaced.

"I used my brother's iPhone 6 Plus, and his was faster than mine? This is when I knew something was wrong," the customer wrote.

Technology website *Geekbench* then analysed several iPhones running different versions of the iOS operating system and found some of them did indeed appear to have been deliberately slowed down.

Apple has now confirmed that it made changes to iOS to manage ageing lithium-ion batteries in some devices, since the batteries diminish over time.

"Lithium-ion batteries become less capable of supplying peak current demands when in cold conditions, [when they] have a low battery charge or as they age over time, which can result in the device unexpectedly shutting down to protect its electronic components," the company said.

"Last year, we released a feature for iPhone 6, iPhone 6s and iPhone SE to smooth out the instantaneous peaks only when needed to prevent the device from unexpectedly shutting down during these conditions.

"We have now extended that feature to iPhone 7 with iOS 11.2, and plan to add support for other products in the future.

"Our goal is to deliver the best experience for customers."

Lithium batteries degrade over time because of what happens during the charging and discharging cycle.

During both those events, lithium ions migrate through the material forming the battery.

BBC

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