

Fnac Darty reveals the main insights from the sixth edition of its After-Sales Service Barometer

- The ‘repair reflex’ has been growing since the first barometer in 2018;
- While replacing a faulty item is still the main trigger for purchases in many product categories, the proportion of purchases made for this reason has decreased significantly since 2018. Repairing a product, rather than replacing it, is becoming more popular, and this has a measurable effect on our customers’ purchase decisions;
- Although the increasing repair trend is clear, there are still blockers — particularly cost. Along with an analysis of Darty Max subscriber behaviors, the Barometer shows that repairs increase significantly when these blockers are removed;
- Two years after the Repairability Index (RI) was launched and a few months before the Sustainability Index (SI) is to be added, Fnac Darty compared Repairability Index data with its After-Sales Service data. The results show a disparity between product categories: The RI of large domestic appliances is a closer match to the Fnac Darty After-Sales Service data than that of smartphones and televisions.

Fnac Darty, which is France’s leading repairer having repaired more than 2.3 million products in 2022, has published the [sixth edition of its After-Sales Service Barometer](#) and now presents its main findings. This tool is a big help to the general public because it allows them to make informed purchase decisions based on the repairability and reliability of more than 150 brands, summarized by their associated sustainability scores. Drawing on a unique wealth of information collected by the 3000 Fnac Darty repairers and analyzed by the Group Sustainability Department, the After-Sales Service Barometer also aims to play an important role in supporting industry operators and public authorities in their work to extend product life spans.

Among its new features, this edition of the Barometer goes beyond brand classification to break down repairability index scores within the Darty range for each product category. The Barometer has also been enriched with new categories, making a total of nearly 100 product families available. Finally, an analysis of consumers’ reasons for purchase is given for each product type: replacing a faulty item, replacing a working item, and acquiring new equipment.

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The French repair more than before...

Corroborating observations of after-sales service teams, the first major insight from the Barometer is that our customers look to repair their products more than they did when the Barometer was launched in 2018. The reasons given by French consumers for purchasing products confirm this: **the proportion of products replaced due to a fault is falling**. In 2018, 87% of French people who bought a new washing machine said this purchase was due to their old machine breaking down, compared with 77% in 2023, a decrease of 10 percentage points. The drop is dramatic for laptops and phones: 36 and 21 points respectively. Although the proportion of replacements that are due to faults varies greatly depending on the nature of the products, the decrease is seen across the board. The proportion of replacements due to faults is much lower than average for multimedia products. One reason for this is new, more technologically innovative product ranges.

This repair reflex is notably fueled by the general public's greater sensitivity to the notion of lengthening product life spans. While 63% of the Group's customers (sample: 2000 people) are now aware that product maintenance is key to extending the life span, they admit to a lack of diligence: 35% say they do not service their products. In order to improve customer awareness, Fnac Darty has provided updated maintenance tips on nearly 100 product categories in this new edition of the After-Sales Service Barometer.

... but there are still blockers

Although the French are repairing more than before, there remains significant room for improvement because there are still blockers to product repair. This is the second major insight from the Barometer. According to Fnac Darty Group customers, the main blockers are firstly repair costs vs. purchase prices, and secondly repair timeframes.

Darty Max subscriber behaviors show that when these blockers are lifted, French consumers are inclined to have products repaired. For example, the Group found that the average age of the products repaired for Darty Max customers was 5 years and 2 months, well beyond the legal warranty, compared with 1 year and 4 months for customers who did not subscribe to the service. In

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In addition, extending a product's life span reduces its total cost of ownership. Darty Max is the first unlimited repair service and now covers 12 million products. Spare part availability and cost are also important. The Barometer shows us that availability has improved, with lead times of 4 months, supported by the increased commitment of suppliers and the positive impact of regulations. This progress has been seen every year since the launch of the Barometer and ensures products purchased today can be repaired for longer.

Progress on the cost of spare parts has been mixed: The ratio of the cost of spare parts to product price increased slightly this year (+1 point). However, the situation remains varied, with 'highly repairable' products maintaining a low ratio of the cost of spare parts to overall product price. For example, for large domestic appliances, the ratio is 8%. On the other hand, televisions have a ratio of 31%, which is above the threshold deemed by consumers to be acceptable for repair. The Barometer details this information for all product categories and brands. Within the same product family, considerable differences exist between brands: for example, the ratios for front-loading washing machines vary between 10% (Indesit) and 3% (LG).

Repairability Index reflects some real repairability levels seen by Fnac Darty's after-sales service teams

Almost two years after its launch and ahead of inaugurating the Sustainability Index on January 1, 2024, the Group conducted its first review of the Repairability Index. It noted, in certain categories, a discrepancy between the after-sales service repair data and the Repairability Index of a product, which is calculated on the basis of manufacturer statements. This discrepancy is particularly evident for televisions and smartphones. On the other hand, for large domestic appliances, there is indeed a correlation.

"We firmly believe that the Repairability Index, and the forthcoming Sustainability Index in particular, are critical tools for encouraging French consumers to extend product life spans. While the Repairability Index needs to be improved in some cases, we will continue to work with manufacturers and public authorities to ensure that the forthcoming Sustainability Index becomes an accurate reflection of product sustainability," commented Vincent Gufflet, Director of Services and Operations at Fnac Darty.

Toward a Sustainability Index

As of January 1, 2024, a new government index will be applied to certain categories. In addition to repairability, the Sustainability Index will take into account product reliability and upgradability.

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Fnac Darty has been studying product sustainability for several years, notably via the Barometer: overall, sustainability scores are improving, with contrasting results across categories. Some have made good headway, such as smart watches (+19 points), brush vacuum cleaners (+13 points) and dishwashers (+ 4 points). Others have seen their sustainability fall: This is the case for true wireless noise-canceling earbuds (-14 points), all-in-one inkjet printers (-4 points), and hair straighteners (-2 points). The most sustainable products were in more or less the same categories as last year, with bagless vacuum cleaners, front-loading washing machines and bottom-freezer refrigerators as the top three.

Some suppliers find themselves atop the Barometer podium in several instances this year. For large domestic appliances, for example, Liebherr, Bosch and Miele consistently top the rankings. For small domestic appliances, Moulinex, Tefal and Rowenta prevail. Finally, for multimedia, Apple, HP and Lenovo prove themselves worthy of the top spots.

Fnac Darty sponsors the first French National Repair Days

In a bid to help consumption models make the necessary transition toward a more circular economy, Fnac Darty is sponsoring the first **National Repair Days** in France, which will take place from October 20 to 22. Organized by HOP (Stop Planned Obsolescence) and the Make.org Foundation, they aim to raise awareness among elected officials and citizens of the stakes involved in repair work through various workshops, conferences and debates. The Group will organize close to 250 events in its stores and workshops in France (big repair event, diagnostic workshops and demonstrations). See all Darty events [here](#).

“The National Repair Days are a way for us to increase public awareness of the stakes involved in repair work, and in particular the various careers available in this sector within Fnac Darty. As a leading repairer, with 2.3 million products repaired by our technicians in 2022, we are embracing our role as the driving force for transforming consumer behavior,” explained Vincent Gufflet.

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