

CASE STUDY

EXTENDING THE USEFUL
LIFE OF PRODUCTS
THROUGH REPAIR



One planet
inform with care



CLUB DE REPARADORES

INITIATIVE: [CLUB DE REPARADORES](#)

SECTOR OF ACTIVITY: CONSUMER GOODS

IMPLEMENTATION AREA: ARGENTINA AND URUGUAY

STRATEGY FOR PRODUCT LIFETIME EXTENSION: REPAIR

Product lifetime extension is the postponement or reversal of the obsolescence of a product through deliberate intervention. The extension of products' lifetime makes a compelling case towards circularity as it enables a radical decrease in the use of natural resources and in waste generation, while preserving the economic value embedded in the products. This case study is part of a series that aim to showcase how consumer information tools can be used by organisations to address product lifetime extension.

WHAT?

The Repair Club ('Club de Reparadores') is a movement promoted by the non-governmental organisation [Artículo 41](#) that seeks to promote repair as a strategy for responsible consumption and sustainability practice. The rationale is that extending the lifetime of products is an effective way to combat the throwaway culture.

The initiative was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in November 2015, inspired by similar initiatives from other parts of the world, such as the Repair Cafes in Amsterdam and the Restart Parties in the United Kingdom.



HOW?

The Repair Club convenes voluntary and collaborative repair meetings where people of all ages and occupations exchange knowledge and tools in order to extend the useful life of products, thus fostering collaboration among citizens.

Meetings are usually organised in open and public spaces or in cafes and cultural centers. Individuals are welcome to join, support, disseminate, participate and collaborate in different ways. It is also possible to [apply to host a Repair Club event](#) in different cities, neighbourhoods or communities, for which the organizers share a series of materials and tools to make organizing the event easier. It is a non-profit project and all events must be voluntary and free. There should be no entry charge, nor a charge for repairs.

USE OF CONSUMER INFORMATION TOOLS

The Repair Club explores education and information tools to support consumers to extend the lifetime of their products. The initiative communicates to consumers using different communication channels, such as website, [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and a [YouTube](#) channel.



The objective of the consumer information tools is to induce a positive consumer attitude towards product maintenance and repair.

The Repair Club also promotes a series of dedicated initiatives with the aim to inform, involve and foster collaboration amongst consumers. Some of these initiatives are:

[Committee of Repair Club](#)

This is a Facebook group that functions as a space where repair enthusiasts and consumers share knowledge, information and advice on repair. Participants are also invited to share successful repair stories, and to provide step-by-step guides so other people can repair items at home by themselves. The call for joint action is a way of exercising the community aspect of the initiative, as well as recognizing the potential for a social group to achieve transformative actions.

[Repair Map: reparar.org](#)

The Club's proposal is to repair products collectively but also to promote and strengthen local repairers and businesses that sell spare parts and supplies for repair. Before each repair meeting, the organisers develop surveys to collect information on trusted repair specialists in each neighbourhood. The information collected is then shared with participants. This led to the creation of [reparar.org](#), an online platform that allows consumers to search and recommend repair services by category and location for free. With this, the project aims to create a network of trusted repairers that generates greater job stability for its members and makes their activities more visible.

Minor Leagues of Repair Club

Minor Leagues is a secondary school program with the objective of promoting circular economy through environmental education and activism among youngsters. The Repair Club organises talks, board games, and inter-school repair events for more than 10 schools in the city of Buenos Aires.

Online fair

Although a central part of the Club's proposal is gathering people, products and tools at the same time in a physical space, the initiative promoted its first online fair due to COVID-19 restrictions in 2020. The two-day online Club was streamed on YouTube and included a roundtable with experienced repairers followed by the launch of an online guide for commercial repairers. The event also featured a series of free tutorial meetings on how to repair carpentry, sewing, electrical appliances, bikes and adhesives.

RESULTS



Since 2015, more than 80 repair events were organised in Argentina, Uruguay and Mexico. In each event, the Repair Club rehabilitates between 50 and 80 kilos of clothing and other objects including electronic and electrical devices, music instruments, bicycles and accessories. The Repair Club received awards such as Shuttleworth Flashgrant, CCAB Award for Sustainable Leadership, Adriana Schiffrin Award of environmental and natural resources foundation and a Declaration of interest of the city of Buenos Aires.

Do you want to learn more?

The One Planet network's **Product Lifetime Extension Hub** collects resources and tools on the topic of product lifetime extension. You can access reports, case studies and other relevant materials on measures and processes to be taken by the private sector, governments and consumers, to accelerating the circular economy by extending the useful life of products.