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Subject: Re: Firmware updates?

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Wed, 02 Jun 2021 16:16:02 GMT

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I've seen a huge change in manufacturing direction over the years.

Prior to around the year 2000, manufacturers of electronics rigorously tested their products before packaging them for delivery. They were very concerned that the products worked as intended. Not only did they want this for reasons of customer satisfaction - but even prior to that - they don't want to package and ship the product and have a bunch of stuff on the shelves that doesn't work right. That would involve warranty service or possibly even a product recall. Both are extremely expensive and could bankrupt a company. So testing was typically pretty exhaustive prior to Y2K.

During the 2000s, I saw a manufacturing trend of less thorough testing because of an expectation that firmware updates could be applied after delivery. Electronics manufacturers began to risk putting buggy stuff on the shelves in order to try and get product out to market. Some did it as a race to be first, others did it as a race to get revenues going. Some did it for both reasons. But the point is the manufacturers started taking short-cuts in testing and sometimes even in completing the initial firmware coding, all in the race to get products out.

The risk, of course, is that firmware of new devices on the shelves might be botched enough that it wouldn't take an update. Developers call this "bricking a device," with the inference being that the device was then made as worthless as a brick. So focus is on making sure the firmware update mechanism is solid. Another risk is to customers that purchase a device and then attempt to use it in an environment that is isolated from connectivity. A modern device may or may not perform well, and is probably lacking functionality if it doesn't do a firmware update right away, as soon as it is first used.