To: Professor Forin

From: Aidan Sharpe

Subject: Engineering Ethics

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This memo will evaluate the ethics of a large electronics company's product shipping policy. At this company, Quality and Assurance will not ship products that "could malfunction and cause physical harm to the customer" and will ship the product that "has a higher likelihood of failure resulting in data loss for the customer."

As for the company's policy in regards to products that may be prone to causing physical harm to users, there is nothing ethically wrong. However, for many companies, every bit of data stored is valuable, and losing it could lead to failure across the board. For this reason, shipping products that are faulty in this manner is obviously not a tenable long-term solution.

It is not as clear cut as simply not shipping potentially faulty items, however. If products aren't shipped on time, the tight shipping schedules would give other companies the leg up. A fully implementable solution would keep shipping on schedule, while also maintaining transparency with the customer.

The simplest and possibly least effective solution would be to implement a warranty of some sort. While it would allow faulty machines to be replaced, the warranty would only be useful *after* a malfunction had occurred. Another simple solution would be to discount possibly faulty products. The most effective solution, however, would be to package testing software with the product to perform an in-depth quality analysis that would catch issues before they cause disaster.

References

Bartlett, Clare. (2022, February 16). *To Ship or Not to Ship.*
Available: https://web.archive.org/web/20210419155626/https://www.scu.edu/ethics/focus-areas/more/engineering-ethics/engineering-ethics-cases/to-ship-or-not-to-ship/