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**QUESTION**

DISCUSS THE ROLES OF CONSUMERS IN MARKETING

To begin, there needs to be an understanding of the definition of consumers and a brief explication of marketing would also be given. The consumer is the one who pays something to consume goods and services produced i.e. one who trades money for goods as an individual. Moving on, marketing is basically the promotion, distribution, and selling of products or services.

The question therefore is to ascertain the major roles and functions of consumers in relation to marketing

**THE CHOOSER**

Choice is a core value at the heart of consumer behavior. The underlying belief is ‘the more choice the better’ for consumers, the economy and society at large. But it has its limitations. Choice without information is not real choice, yet how can consumers get all the facts they need? Choice is also not absolute. Surely choice should not just be a matter of which product to select, but also of whether and how to consume. In its widest sense, only the consumer has the ability to make a decision i.e. to choose between what to purchase and what not to purchase, where to purchase the said goods, mode of consumption etc.

**MARKETING RESEARCH**

Consumers play a major role in marketing research before a product or service is released to the public for consumption. Once you identify your target consumers, you can invite these people to participate in focus groups or send them surveys to quiz them on key elements of your marketing plan. Questioning them about the right price to charge and what marketing message appeals to them as a consumer can help guide your entire plan, particularly when releasing a new product or service.

**PRODUCT FEEDBACK**

The consumer also plays a role in the feedback gathering process after a company’s offer hits the market. After implementing your marketing plan and releasing the said product or service, you need to track results and continually monitor consumer needs so you can improve on the offering in the future. For instance, software developers seek feedback from consumers regularly to help them develop new and improved versions of programs.

**BRING IN NEW CUSTOMERS**

Consumers also can act as agents to further the effects of your marketing plan. With word-of-mouth marketing, consumers who have used your product review it both offline and online and can refer other consumers to the product. This marketing is free and very effective, as individuals tend to trust the word of people they know when it comes to trying new products and services.