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**QUESTION:**

**WHAT ARE THE ROLES OF CONSUMERS IN MARKETING?**

Although the company is the main catalyst in the marketing of its own products and services, the consumers also play a role in the marketing process. A business can never place too much emphasis on its customers. The customer is the foundation of any business’ success. It is essential for marketers to understand consumers to survive and succeed in these competitive marketing environment. The following reasons highlighted on the role of consumers in marketing:

1. **PERTINENCE TO DECISION MAKING**

The role of consumers in marketing is very essential,as some decisions are significantly affected by their behaviour or expected actions. The two perspectives that seek application of its knowledge are micro and societal perspectives.

The micro perspectives involve understanding consumer for the purpose of helping a firm or organization to achieve its objectives. The people involved in this field try to understand consumers in order to be more effective at their tasks.

Whereas the societal or macro perspective applies knowledge of consumers to aggregate- level faced by mass or society as a whole. When developing a plan, one should realize that the consumer is the central element of all decisions related to marketing. One should understand the roles consumers play so as to maximize the effectiveness of the marketing plan.

1. **ENHANCEMENT OF MARKETING RESEARCH:** Consumers play a major role in marketing research before a product or service is released to the public. 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.
2. **PRODUCT FEEDBACK:** The consumer also plays a role in the feedback-gathering process, after a company’s products hits the market. After implementing your marketing plan and releasing the product or service, you need to track results and continually monitor consumer needs so you can improve the products in future. For instance, software developers seek feedback from consumers regularly to help them develop new and improved versions of programs.
3. **CREATION OF AWARENESS:** Consumers also act as agents to further the effects of marketing plan. With word of mouth, consumers who have used your product review it, both online and offline, 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.
4. **CUSTOMER SATISFACTION:** Consumers respond favourably while evaluating the products that beat satisfy their needs. A marketer studies how consumers spend their available resources on the consumption of related items. It includes the study of what they buy, when they buy it, where they buy it and how often they use it. Therefore, consumers serve as an agent of immense help to the marketers, which enables them understand the consumers’ reaction to a firm’s marketing strategies.

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