ETOKUDO UTIBEIMA-ESTHER EVENTUS

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The consumer is the one who pays something to consume goods and services produced. As such, consumers play a vital role in the economic system of a nation. Without consumer demand, producers would lack one of the key motivations to produce: to sell to consumers. The consumer also forms part of the chain of distribution. Before you examine the role of the consumer in your marketing plan, make sure you understand exactly who the consumer is. People sometimes use the two terms interchangeably, but the term “consumer” has a more distinct definition compared to “customer.” A customer is simply a buyer, while a consumer is the individual who both buys and uses the product or service. A consumer is a customer, but a customer isn’t always a consumer in a business transaction. A consumer also is called the end user.

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.

The consumer also plays a role in the feedback-gathering process after a company’s offering 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 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.

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

. Each individual consumer, consciously or unconsciously, determines the fate of. The goods and services on the market each time he chooses one product instead of another. Each penny that is spent on any one product is the equivalent of an economic vote in favor of that particular product and against its competitors. Therefore, a single consumer and his choices are important, for each consumer’s economic vote, when added to the votes of other consumers, determines which consumer goods will remain on the market. Obviously, the entrepreneur will not want to manufacture product A if the consumer does not like product A and prefers to purchase product B.With the possible exception of the very rich, the individual consumer has limited monetary resources and must budget his expenditures. How he determines his marginal utility will determine how much he will spend, how much he will save or invest, and on what he will make his expenditures.

 Illustrations abound. If Mrs. Segun buys a new spice brands for the first time, if she likes it she keeps on buying and goes ahead to tell Mrs. Chukwudi of the good taste of the spice. We see here that Mrs. Segun has marketed the product to Mrs. Chukwudi. From here Mrs. Chukwudi goes on to tell others. Also Dangote Company when they started, it was their consumers that helped in promoting their products. If the consumers didn’t like what they tasted and consumed, the production would have stopped ever since. Dangote is what it is today because of its customers and consumers.