**NAME; EDIDIONG JOSEPH OKON**

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**COURSE; CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR**

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QUESTION; What are the roles of consumers in marketing.

 **INTRODUCTION**; A consumer is one who pays to consume the goods and services produced. As such consumers play a vital role in the economic system of a nation. In the absence of their effective demand, the producers would lack a key motivation to produce, which is to sell to consumers. Sometimes consumer and customers are also used interchangeably but there are different. A customer isn’t always a consumer in a business transaction. A consumer also is called the end user.

 **ROLES OF CONSUMERS IN MARKETING**

1. **MARKETING RESEARCH**; Consumers play a major 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 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.
3. **EMERGENCE OF NEW CONSUMERS**; 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.
4. **THEY DETERMINE THE DEMAND FOR A PRODUCT**; Their role is very significant, they are those that determine the demand for goods and services. Without the consumer, issues of supply are thrown into complete limbo as there is a lack of direction. Additionally a consumer’s ability to spend helps to determine cost. Through the consumer’s purchasing power, the entire notion of business is accomplished and without the consumer, this important aspect of the exchange of goods and services is lacking.
5. **QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**; It is the examination, analysis and interpretations of observations for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationships, including classifications of types of phenomena and entities, in a manner that does not involve mathematical models. A qualitative researcher helps obtain in-depth understanding of human behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior. Example; storytelling, classical ethnography, interviews etc.
6. **QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH**; It is defined as the systematic empirical investigation of social phenomena via statistical, mathematical or computational techniques, to develop and employ mathematical models, theories and/or hypothesis pertaining to phenomena. It is conducted using methods such as generation of models, theories and hypothesis.

**CONCLUSON**; It is important that consumers play a vital role in the marketing system of an economic nation.