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**ASSIGNMENT:** Roles of consumers in marketing.

In marketing, when developing a market plan, it is important to note that the consumer is the central element in taking decisions relating to marketing. In other words, in order for a market plan to be considered as effective, the role of consumers cannot be overemphasized and has to be understood and considered. Basically, there would be no demand of goods if there are no consumers to make those demands.

Before going into details about the roles of a consumer in marketing there has to be an insight on who a consumer is.

**Who is consumer?**

The term “consumer” is often used interchangeably with the term “customer” the definition of a consumer is more distinct than that of a customer. A customer is simply a buyer while a consumer buys and uses the product or service. A customer buys but does not use a product or service. A consumer is a customer but a customer is not necessarily a consumer. A consumer is also called the “end user”. The following are roles of a consumer in marketing

1. Product feedback: more often than not, when a product is launched or released into the market, feedbacks are required in order to know if there are adjustments to be made. In the light of this, a consumer plays an important role in the feedback-gathering process should there be any need for improvement after a product is released and also to ensure that these products are monitored. A good example of this point is software developers who seek feedback from consumers regularly to help them develop new versions of the program or to update their programs. This also applies to other products and services.
2. Marketing research: a consumer plays a major role in the marketing research before a product or service is released to the public. In order to achieve this, the target consumers have to be known. Also, the price to charge for the product about to be released should be made in consideration of the consumers of that particular product or service. Consumers role is major in terms of market research before a product is released to the public. Whatever medium of dissemination of information about that product should appeal to the target market of that product. A consumer determines the demand of a product and without a consumer, supply of a good is thrown into complete limbo as there is lack of direction. Concerning the choice of price of a good, in the sale of goods, price fluctuations have to be made with the knowledge of the target market and consumers of that product as businesses are doing themselves a favour by making consumers aware because it’s the sole aim to satisfy the taste of consumers. The above listed to be clearly scrutinized especially when releasing a new product into the market.
3. Bringing in new consumers: previous consumers who have used a particular product through the word of mouth can refer new consumers to use this product. By doing this consumers can act as agents to further the effects of your market plans. This form of advertisement concerning a product by an old consumer to a new one usually proves effective as individuals tend to trust the word of people who have made use of a particular product they want to also try that product.

In essence, the role of consumers is important as without their demands for gods and the supply of these goods, the aim of exchange of goods and services is defeated. Also due to the demands of consumers, other people are also charged with the jobs of making goods and delivering services. This way consumers are important by creating jobs for other through their demands