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BUS 208

Consumer Behavior

Question

The role of a consumer cannot be over emphasized. Explain these roles

**WHO IS A CONSUMER?**

Any individual who purchases products or services for his personal use and not for manufacturing or resale is called a consumer. A consumer is one who is the decision maker whether or not to buy an item at the store, or someone who is influenced by advertisement and marketing. Every time someone goes to a store and buys a shirt, toy, beverage or anything else, they make a decision as a consumer. Consumer refers to any person who purchases some goods for a consideration that has been either paid or promised to pay or partly paid and partly promised, or found under any system of deferred payment and does include any user of this type of goods other than the person who purchases these types of goods for consideration paid or promised or partly paid or partly promised, or under any type of system of deferred payment when this type of use is done with the agreement of such person, and does not include a person who gets such goods for resale or for any business purpose or hires or avails of some services for a consideration which has been paid or promised or partly paid and partly promised, or under some system of deferred payment as well as includes some beneficiary of such services other than the people who ‘hire or avail of the services for consideration paid or promised, or partly paid and partly promised, or under any system of deferred payment, when such services are provided having the approval of the first described person and does not include a person who takes such services for any business purposes.

**THE ROLES OF CONSUMERS IN MARKETING**

A business can never place too much emphasis on its customers. The customer is the foundation of any business' success. One of the primary goals of any marketing strategy should be to identify and meet the needs of the consumer. Considering customer importance at all stages of the marketing process helps your company to ensure greater customer satisfaction and increase its long-term goal of repeat business. The following are some of the roles of the consumer in marketing:

**Psychological Considerations**

The psychological makeup of consumers plays a crucial role in developing a product and a marketing campaign that identifies and addresses consumer needs. According to Lars Perner, assistant professor of clinical marketing at the University of Southern California, some of these considerations include how consumers "think, feel, reason and select between different alternatives." These considerations can be influenced by environment, such as culture, family and media. The purpose of marketing research is to identify these variables and to incorporate them into the campaign.

**Marketing Considerations**

Some of the considerations to take into account when marketing to your customers are honesty, integrity and clarity. Keeping consumer needs in mind is also an integral part of effective marketing. Sneaky advertising campaigns can generate quick sales, but those sales will falter as consumers realize they've been duped. Selling a good product marketed with integrity brings back customers. To do this, a company needs to build customer confidence in its product over time. Customer confidence is what brings consumers back to your product and ensures long-term success.

## Word of Mouth

Underestimating the power of customer word of mouth is detrimental to your success. Consumers like to talk, whether they are talking about a product they enjoyed or a product that left them wanting. Word of mouth has a snowball effect, particularly in an age when fast worldwide communication is common. Your company can't afford not to consider how quickly its product and reputation can be badmouthed or blacklisted. This is why marketing a product honestly and with integrity is important.

## Customer Service

Considering customer needs during the development and promotion of a product is not the only way to emphasize customer needs. Customer considerations after the product has been marketed are important as well. Customer service and interaction with the consumer after the product has been sold not only build strong relationships with the consumer but offer companies valuable information that will help to design more effective marketing efforts in the future.

**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.

**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.