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**QUESTION**

**WHAT ARE THE ROLES OF A CONSUMER IN MARKETING?**

 Although the company is the main catalyst in the marketing of its own products and services, consumers also play a role in the marketing process. When developing your plan, remember that the consumer is the central element of all decisions related to marketing. Understand the roles consumers play so you can maximize the effectiveness of your marketing plan.

 **Who Is the Consumer?**

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. 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.

**Roles of a consumer in marketing.**

**1. Marketing Research:** Consumers play an important 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. Reviews for Improvement** :Consumers help to perform product reviews. When consumers make use of a particular product, they give reviews which help the makers of the product know what they are doing wrong and what they can do to improve.

Basically, without consumers there would be no economic system. Without consumers to purchase the goods, there would be no demand for the goods. This has an effect on the entire economic system as well. It includes everything from the product itself to marketing.

**3. Product Feedback:**The consumer also plays a role in the feedback that is 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.

4**. Publicity:** Consumers have the duty of publicizing the business. When consumers are treated like kings, they would spread good news about the business and this would bring more people to patronize the business.

 In addition to all these, 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.

Without the consumers the distribution process isn’t complete. They form an important part of the chain of distribution. They are the final process in the chain of distribution.