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**ASSIGNMENT: ROLES OF CONSUMERS IN MARKETING**

**WHO IS A CONSUMER?**

 Before we examine the role of the consumer in marketing, let’s make sure the term “consumer” is explained. 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 the consumer is the individual who both buys and uses the product or service. A consumer is a customer, but a customer is not always the consumer in a business transaction. A consumer is also called the end user.

**WHAT IS MARKETING**

 Marketing is the promotion, distribution, and selling of a product or service. A consumer is involved in marketing; as the producer has roles to play, so also does the consumer have roles to play when it comes to marketing.

 The consumer plays many roles in marketing which I will outline some:

* 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.

* 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.

* Bring in 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 product. This marketing is free and very effective, as individuals tend to trust the word of people they when it comes to trying new products and services.

* They are end products of the market as they are the final user of the product or service when it comes to marketing.
* Transparency of marketing operations will enhance consumer’s trust.

 In conclusion, I believe in win-win marketing, you can enhance your profits by obsessing about your consumers well. Firms exist to provide values to consumers. When consumers disappear, so does the firm. The consumer is a human being. He or she is not a number in a spreadsheet or a point on a graph. The consumer has feelings and emotions. Each consumer is different; customer service is an investment, not a cost every customer deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. Customers are talking to one another at unprecedented rates. If you are offering bad service to one consumer, it will not be long before others get to know this.