NAME: ASIBONG NSIDIBE IME

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ASSIGNMENT

What is the role of a consumer in marketing?

ANSWER

A consumer is an individual who buys goods and products for personal use and not for manufacture and resale. A consumer is someone who can make the decision whether or not to purchase an item at a store. A consumer is a person or organization that uses economic services or commodities.

Marketing includes all activities from the producer to the final consumer including processing and distribution systems.

Consumer behaviour refers to the study of buying tendencies of consumers. An individual who goes shopping does not necessarily end up buying the products. There are several stages a consumer goes through before he finally picks up things available in the market. Various factors; be it cultural, social, personal or psychological influence the buying decision of individuals.

A business can never place too much emphasis on its consumers. The consumer 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 consumer importance at all the stages of the marketing process helps your company to ensure greater consumer satisfaction and increase its long-term goal of repeat business.

Marketers need to understand the buying behaviour of consumers for their products to do well. It is really important for marketers to understand what prompts a consumer to purchase a particular product and what stops him from buying.

The following are the roles of consumers in marketing;

**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 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.

**References**

* [Consumer Daddy: Consumer vs. Customer](http://www.consumerdaddy.com/a-23-consumer-customer.htm)
* [Word of Mouth Marketing Association: WOM 101](http://www.womma.org/wom101/)