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QUESTION

The role of consumers in marketing cannot be overemphasized. Explain these roles

Introduction

The role of consumers in marketing cannot be overemphasized. This is because every producer intends that his product is consumed (ie used) by the intended population for which it was created and the job of a marketer is to ensure that the product meets the need of the consumer in order for them to use such product. This essay justifies the aforementioned assertion that the role of consumers in marketing cannot be overemphasized.

What is marketing?

Peter Drucker (1954) described the concept of marketing as the only valid definition of business purpose: to create a satisfied customer. It is the customer who determines what the business is. Because it is its purpose to create a customer, any business enterprise has two basic functions: market and innovation… marketing is the whole business seen from the point of view of its final result, that is, from the customer’s point of view.

Similarly, Theodore Levitt (1960):

Marketing focuses on the needs of the buyer… with the idea of satisfying the needs of the customer by means of the product and the whole cluster of things associated with creating, delivering and finally consuming (using) it.

Therefore, marketing deals with the process of identifying and satisfying the needs of a particular consumer.

Who is a consumer?

A consumer is the one who buys personal products for personal consumption. It entails business buying also.

Krishnamurthy (2001) describes the roles of consumers in marketing thus:

1. Firms exist to provide value to consumers. Therefore, when consumers disappear, so does the firm.
2. 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.
3. Each consumer is different
4. Consumer service is an investment, not a cost.
5. Every customer deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.
6. 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.
7. You must devote resources to listening to the market conversation.
8. Marketing must now adopt a collaborative approach with the consumer rather than trying to dictate how consumers must behave.
9. Transparency of marketing operations enhance consumer trust. If you are collecting personal information from the consumer, full disclosure is the way to go.
10. I believe in win-win marketing. You can enhance your profits by obsessing about serving your consumers well

In conclusion, based on the roles of consumer in marketing adumbrated above, it is obvious that the consumer has control of the production process of a particular product to the extent that it is what the consumer needs, the producer produces which will in turn determine the marketing strategy the marketer will employ. This is predicated on the premise that every product is meant to be consumed. The marketer must therefore be dynamic to understand consumer needs and ensure that its products aligns with such needs. In essence, the role of the consumer in marketing cannot be emphasized as it is the consumer that defines and determines what products the producers produce and what strategy the marketer employs.