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**Question:**

**Roles of Consumers in marketing cannot be overemphasized, Discuss.**

Before we can go into the discussion, we must first understand what a market is. A market is a meeting together of people for the purpose of trade by private purchase and sale and usually not by auction. It is also said to be an area of economic activity in which buyers and sellers come together and the forces of supply and demand affect prices. With this definition, we can now talk of marketing which can be said to be the study and management of exchange relationships. Marketing is used to create, keep and satisfy the customer. Marketing is defined by the American Marketing Association as "the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large." The term developed from the original meaning which referred literally to going to market with goods for sale.

From a Sales process engineering perspective, marketing is "a set of processes that are interconnected and interdependent with other functions" of a business aimed at achieving customer interest and satisfaction. Though the company is the one involved actively in marketing, the consumers still play the major role. The major role in the sense that the marketing process is designed around the consumers. Marketing done by various organisations is mean to impact a particular market section or bloc made up of consumers.

The importance of consumers in marketing cannot be overemphasized and the various roles they play of which some are as follows:

* 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.
* 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, make products that will be suitable for consumers.
* Information: The most important part of marketing should be considered. As stated so many times, information is power and same applies in the case of marketing and this information is present and be gotten from the customers which could be seen as the most important aspect of marketing because the entire existence of marketing revolves around them.
* 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.

With the above, it could be noted that consumers are very important to marketing as it is and by such they perform so many roles knowingly or otherwise. Some of these roles include provision of information, psychological needs, marketing considerations, word of mouth, etc.

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