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**Question.**

**What is the role of consumers in marketing?**

**Answer**

**Introduction**

**To begin with, before this question can be properly answered it is necessary that the meaning of consumer behavior is properly explained. Consumer Behavior is the study of how consumers select, purchase, use and disposal of products, goods and services in order to satisfy personal needs. Consumer Behavior** refers to the study of **buying** tendencies of **consumers**. **Marketers** need to understand the **buying behavior** 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**. 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.

Marketing Research

Consumers play an important role in marketing research before a product or service is sent to the public. Once you recognize 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. Enquiring from them about the right price to charge and what marketing message petitions 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 customers

Consumers also can act as representatives to further the effects of the marketing plan. With word-of-mouth marketing, consumers who have used the product review it both offline and online and can mention other consumers to the product. This marketing is free of charge and very efficient, as persons tend to trust the word of people they know when it comes to trying new products and services.

Alternative evaluation:

Once the information and need is identified it the time for the consumer to evaluated the alternatives that are available in the market. This is an important step for the marketers because at this stage the consumer will differentiate your products with other products to see which product satisfy the need of the consumer.

In conclusion, the role of consumers in marketing is very important and can’t be over-emphasized, apart from the fact that it completes the chain of production, as without them, production isn’t complete, because someone needs to consume the produced goods or service. Consumers play a very important role in marketing

Information Search

In this step when the need has been identified and the consumer will seek information to satisfy the needs to do this will reveal information from two option: Internal information and External information in internal information consumer will search in his/her memory that is already present about a product or a brand. External information gained from the product or speech or advertisement or by the products given to the consumer by friends or family.