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Background

Who are today's consumers?

► An individual who buys products or services for personal use and not for manufacture or resale. A consumer is someone who can make the decision whether or not to purchase an item at the store, either online or offline and someone who can be influenced by marketing and advertisements.

Consumers are now more demanding of products, services and brands than before and are using digital tools to articulate and fulfil their needs.

There are as many consumers as there are people. However, there are trends that must not escape retailers as they enable them to classify consumers and market new product lines.

I How do we consume?

Consuming is about trends, quality, health and taste and **money**. Trends especially in clothing come and go more rapidly. The cosmetic shop, Kiko, has based its business model on the same principle: products go out of trend rapidly at affordable prices. So if price is one criterion, quality is another. The trend for organic, vegan and glutenfree products is moving fast and sometimes generating nutritional debates pointing out excesses of all kinds.

Social networks, especially if you are a millennial or a linkster also known as generation Z, have become the main trend-setters.

II What do we buy?

It depends much on disposable income but it seems that in developed countries more and more is spent on new digital devices and digital-related services. Less is spent on food but quality and variety are more popular than before.

For an increasing number of consumers, buying name-brand items has stopped being a priority when there is an affordable alternative. Some shoppers refuse to pay a "luxury" premium.

Others might think it is worth the additional cost as long as the quality is superior.

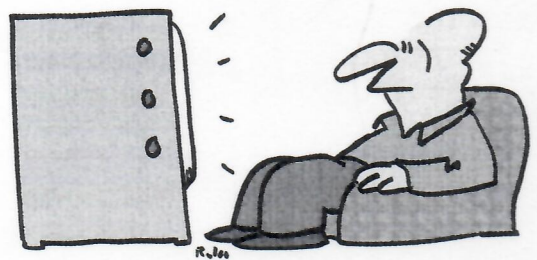
III Who do consumers buy from?

Consumers are getting more sensitive to the environment, sustainability, animal welfare, and health issues. That is why marketers need to keep a clear focus on the needs and expectations of their customers while following stricter ethical principles. Nevertheless, consumers are a group that's diverse and fragmented, with high expectations and little patience that requires companies to be always on the lookout. To stay competitive you need to be visible, and that's no easy feat. Businesses need to measure sentiment and loyalty of their clients and must come up with **customized** products to meet their audience's needs and interests.

Consumers are being offered a purchasing experience that is facilitated by all sorts of new technological devices increasingly available. Shopping has to be easy, instantaneous and fun.

Conclusion

Consumers are often **unpredictable** but also more and more ethically-oriented. So the retail landscape is difficult to predict in wealthier countries.



"Consumer alert! Consumer alert!
— If it tastes good, spit it out!"

Test

**I Say if the following statements are true or false.
Write a sentence supporting your answer.**

1. The consumer is not necessarily the person who buys the product or service. ☐ T ☐ F
2. There is just one type of consumers. ☐ T ☐ F
3. Consumers are only interested in the price. ☐ T ☐ F
4. Generation Z often decide the trends through social networks. ☐ T ☐ F
5. Retailers must keep up with the new trends if they want to keep their customers. ☐ T ☐ F
6. Kiko is a new clothes brand. ☐ T ☐ F
7. Consumers shopping experience is more and more difficult. ☐ T ☐ F

**II Give a detailed answer to each question using
the information you learned from the document.**

8. What can influence consumers?
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9. What are today's consumers more sensitive to?
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10. What must brands do to remain competitive?
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11. What impact do new technologies have on consumers?
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