

Consumerism features and evolution



AN ASSESSMENT OF THE LITERATURE

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Introduction - 1



- Consumerism studies have their roots at the very beginning of the marketing discipline. Buskirk and Rothe (1970) stated that consumerism can be related “to what has been popularly accepted as the marketing concept for the past 20 years, which suggests that the purpose of a business is to provide customer satisfaction” (p. 61).
- Kotler (1972) defined consumerism as the "social movement seeking to augment the rights and power of buyers in relation to sellers" (p. 49). The power of buyers has become central to marketing and customer-centric strategies and a “must” for firms oriented to customer satisfaction and long-term profitability (Kaufmann & Khan Panni, 2013).
- From a customer perspective, consumerism can be “defined as the organized efforts of consumers seeking redress, restitution and remedy for dissatisfaction they have accumulated in the acquisition of their standard of living” (Buskirk & Rothe, 1970, p. 62).

Introduction - 2



- Today customers play a decisive role in firms' decisions, their satisfaction and loyalty is vital for firm survival, even more so when competition is a hypercompetitive worldwide game.
- Customers are aware of their role in firm success and of their power in affecting firm decisions about new products and strategies. These aspects represent both an opportunity and a threat for firms.
- Considering customer willingness to participate in the firms' decision as an opportunity firms, at an early stage, have used web 2.0 features to create blogs, forums, chats and communities in which customers can express their opinions, exchange information, thus creating a new and ever updated source of information and knowledge, sometimes with the firm's support. Although Open Innovation nowadays represents a different frontier.
- On their own, customers have generated their own blogs, forums, chats and communities developed by or around them which have become a valuable source of information and suggestions for firms, sometimes despite their wishes.

Consumerism in literature



- Scholars have used many approaches and lenses in studying this argument as there are different definitions for this word and especially:
- Consumerism as “exaggerated consumption”;
- “Consumerism” as consumer discontent (this led to the birth of the “consumer movement”);
- Consumerism as firms’ continuous attention to consumer needs, wants and satisfaction.

Consumption as overconsumption



**CONSUMERISM AS “EXAGGERATED
CONSUMPTION” OR “CONSPICUOUS
CONSUMPTION” (VEBLEN, 1899)**

Definitions - 1



Source	Conceptual Definition
Murphy (2000, p.636)	The doctrine that the self cannot be complete without a wealth of consumer goods and that goals can be achieved and problems solved through proper consumption.
Keller and Kalmus (2009, p.355)	Bauman (1992), refers to consumerism as the “production and appropriation of symbolic goods with the aim of constructing identity and relations with other people”.
Abela (2006, p. 11)	“Excessive” attachment to material possessions. The word “excessive” in this definition is important, because it indicates attachment to possessions that goes beyond those possessions’ ability to provide satisfaction commensurate with the investments (both economic and psychological) made in them.
Yani-de-Soriano and Slater (2009, p. 459)	The authors consider that the growth of consumerism equates “personal happiness with material consumption”.
Packard (1957)	Strategies for persuading customers to quickly expand their needs and wants.
Lodziak, (2000, pp. 114-115)	The “ever-expanding range of available goods”.

Definitions - 2



- Following this approach consumerism can be understood as “the doctrine that the self cannot be complete without a wealth of consumer goods and that goals can be achieved and problems solved through proper consumption” (Murphy, 2000, p. 636).
- From an economic perspective consumerism represents “a shift in the basic emphasis of economies from exchange or production to consumption” (Yani-de-Soriano & Slater, 2009, p. 457).
- From a social perspective it can be understood as a way to acquire or enhance status thanks to widely displayed material possessions (Gorn, 1998), because the “possession and/or use of certain objects add to their use value a powerful status-defining element” (Migone, 2007, p. 183) or as “an increasingly hegemonic discourse that equated individual expression with material possession” (Migone, 2007, p. 176; Scitovsky, 1976; Schor, 1996; Ritzer, 2004) for products which are also “communication devices [people use] to signal to others their social standing or power” (Yani-de-Soriano & Slater, 2009, p. 457) because of their “highly symbolic value” (Migone, 2007, p. 183).

The link between culture and consumption



- “A culture that is permeated by consumerism can be referred to as a “consumer culture” (Yani-de-Soriano & Slater, 2009, p. 457) or a “material culture” in Wells’ (1972, p. 43) words in which hedonistic consumption emerges and “reflects high producerism and high consumerism” (Migone, 2007, p. 177).
- Producerism is the “increased mobilization of a society’s population to work and to work more productively in the non-consumerist sector of the economy” (Wells (1972, p. 45).
- Consumerist patterns in post-Fordism reflect excessive consumption (hooks, 2012), often superimpose alien consumption patterns onto specific societies (Norberg-Hodge, 1999) extending the notion of commodification to incorporate more social elements, and determine ever larger differences between those who can afford to consume and those who cannot. (Migone, 2007, p. 178).
- The debate on exaggerated consumption is once again up for discussion and especially on some of its features which are strictly related to each other, such as: (i) the role of marketing in generating or not this “consumer culture”/“ideology”/“way of life”; (ii) the ability, awareness and consciousness or not of consumers to choose freely; (iii) the relationship between consumerism and wellbeing; (iv) the relationship between consumerism and individual personality formation and emotions.

I - The role of marketing in generating or not this “consumer culture” / “ideology” / “way of life” - 1



- Authors defending marketing:
 - “Marketing does not create or invent wants” (p. 545; O’Shaughnessy & O’Shaughnessy, 2007) .
 - Thurow (1981) and Twitchell (2000) both agree with O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy (2002; 2007): material prosperity on the one hand enhances marketing activities and on the other consumerism, where there is no causality between them.

I - The role of marketing in generating or not this “consumer culture” / “ideology” / “way of life” - 2



- Authors against marketing and advertising:
 - Consumerism is the result of “marketing villainy” (e.g., Shapiro, 1973, p. 173).
 - The “apparent co-development of marketing and consumerism is worth noting although it does not demonstrate causality” (Abela’s, 2006, p.8 grounding on e.g., Stearns, 2001)
 - “Causal relationship between advertising and materialism” has been demonstrated (Belk & Pollay, 1985; Pollay, 1986; Zinkhan, 1994; Zinkhan & Prenshaw, 1994).
 - Some studies demonstrated causality between watching TV advertising and materialism (e.g., Sirgy et al., 1998; John, 1999; Ahuvia & Wong, 2002), even if the reverse causality has not been demonstrated (Kinsey, 1987; Abela, 2006).

I - The role of marketing in generating or not this “consumer culture”/“ideology”/“way of life” - 3



- **Authors against marketing and advertising:**

- Packard (1957) was the first scholar who “linked consumerism with strategies for persuading customers to quickly expand their needs and wants” (Day & Aaker, 1997, p. 44; Day & Aaker, 1970); he condemned marketing in general and advertising in particular because of the firm’s manipulative use of them (Yani-de-Soriano & Slater, 2009).
- “Advertisers, it was believed, via the use of clever psychological techniques, creates desires and wants which were expressed as consumer demand” (Lodziak, 2000, p. 113).
- “Excessive marketing in terms of product differentiation and segmentation in mass consumption societies [creates] anxieties for consumers” (Straver, 1977 in Lysonsky, Durvasula & Watson, 2003, p. 388).
- Firms were accused of forcing product proliferation, of fixing prices to signal great differences between brands in terms of quality/price that do not exist, to plan product obsolescence (see for example Apple and Samsung in 2018) and not to protect customers in a wide sense, including labeling and all elements of the marketing-mix (Lysonsky, Durvasula & Watson, 2003).
- Some firm practices are “manipulative” or can be understood as “wild” marketing ; these practices aim to put the “emphasis on selling at the expense of meeting consumers’ needs and expectations” (Lambin, 1997 in Yani-de-Soriano & Slater, 2009, p. 454).

II - The ability, awareness and consciousness or not of consumers to choose freely



- “People do not have to be persuaded to consume – they *want* to buy things”; consumers are not “passive” (Lodziak, 2000, p. 113).
- The great variety of goods, services and experiences made available by firms doesn’t push people towards continuous consumer choices, but these opportunities create and enhance consumer sovereignty which involves a free decision-making process able to generate greater or lesser satisfaction (Bauman, 1992; Lodziak, 2000).

III - The relationship between consumerism and wellbeing - 1



- Authors are not agree on the existence and fall-outs of this relationship.
 - The existence and effects of consumerism and/or materialism (for Abela (2006) they are equivalent), on modern society have not been proven (O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy, 2002; 2007).
 - On the contrary, even if these authors “are correct in claiming that the harms of materialism have not been proven [...] it is equally correct to say that materialism has not been proved harmless, either” (Abela 2006, p. 7).
 - Some authors highlight the relationship between materialism and reduced consumer wellbeing, “in terms of the quality of human relationship and levels of happiness” (eg. Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Kasser, 2002, both in Abela, 2006, p. 6).
 - “Consumerism not only does not promote consumer wellbeing but it has damaging consequences for consumers and society at large” (Yani-de-Soriano & Slater, 2009, p. 458; Kasser & Ryan, 1993; Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002; Abela 2006; Deckop, Jurkiewicz, & Giacalone, 2010).
 - We live in a *joyless economy* (Scitovsky, 1976).
 - Consumerism can be considered as “equating personal happiness with material consumption”; this “has led to the over-use of marketing, creating a wider range of social problems that are being fuelled by the internet” (Yani-de-Soriano and Slater , 2009. p. 459).

III - The relationship between consumerism and wellbeing - 2



- **Social aspects**
 - “It is function of businesses [...] to satisfy a social need and at the same time serve themselves by making resolution of a social problem into a business opportunity” (Drucker, 2001, p. 55).
 - Reciprocal relationship between consumers and society on the one hand and firms and their marketing practices on the other are hard to understand and empirical analysis in this domain still lacks.
 - Overconsumption sometimes enables people to formulate themselves as “social identities” (Slater, 1997, p. 31), while Bauman (1992), refers to consumerism as the “production and appropriation of symbolic goods with the aim of constructing identity and relations with other people” (Keller & Kalmus, 2009, p. 355).
 - “Businesses have moved away from selling products to selling brands which constitute identities and represent a way of life, a personality, an attitude, a set of values, a look, or an idea” (Yani-de-Soriano and Slater, 2009, p. 459).
 - “It is nowadays no longer the instrumental utility value but a psychological utility value that influences the decision to buy a commodity” and adds “when individuals are mainly narcissistically structured, an “identity of commodities” can be found, that is, a non-personal identity formation mediated by commodities” (Zepf, 2010, p. 144).

IV- The relationship between consumerism and individual personality formation and emotions - 1



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- “It is nowadays no longer the instrumental utility value but a psychical utility value that influences the decision to buy a commodity” and adds “when individuals are mainly narcissistically structured, an “identity of commodities” can be found, that is, a non-personal identity formation mediated by commodities” (Zepf, 2010, p. 144).
- “Consumption is turning into hedonistic consumerism [...] because it is based on the psychological process of daydreaming” (Migone (2007, p. 183).
- Lodziak (2000, p. 114) challenges this view, indeed today “self-identity is chosen”, therefore “quite simply the individual who freely chooses what to consume (for whatever reason) is, himself or herself, freely chosen and expressed via consumption”.

IV- The relationship between consumerism and individual personality formation and emotions - 2



- Consumerism can be also understood as an element of personality construction in that the “ever-expanding range of available goods would seem to be particularly suited to accommodate the individual’s pursuit of “difference from others”(Lodziak, 2000, p. 114-115; Leadbetter, 1989; Smart 1992).
- The relationship between materialism and emotions.
- The focus is often on the “product-evoked emotions among high- and low-materialism consumers” (Richins, 2013, p. 1).
- “Firm responsibility” in adopting marketing practices which are not “manipulative”.

“Consumerism” as consumer discontent



**THE BIRTH OF THE “CONSUMER
MOVEMENT”**

**TO SOLVE CONSUMER ISSUES IS ESSENTIAL
TO FIRM SURVIVAL**

Definitions



Source	Conceptual Definition
Kotler (1972, p. 49)	Social movement seeking to augment the rights and power of buyers in relation to sellers.
Kotler et al. (2005, p. 633-634)	An organized movement of citizens and government agencies to improve the rights and power of buyers in relation to sellers.
Buskirk and Rothe (1970, p.62)	As the organized efforts of consumers seeking redress, restitution and remedy for dissatisfaction they have accumulated in the acquisition of their standard of living.
Berry (1970, p. 6)	Consumerism refers to the rising discontent of consumers with the products and services they buy and the stores in which they buy them.
Lyonsky, Durvasula and Watson (2003, p. 388)	McIllhenny (1990) “identifies consumerism as a citizens’ movement with widespread demands on suppliers of goods and services with social, ecological and political implications”.
Lyonsky, Durvasula and Watson (2003, p. 388)	Maynes (1989) “suggests that it represents the voice of consumer discontent and subsequent corrective actions”.
Cravens and Hills, (1973, p. 164)	A multitude of group actions concerned with such issues as consumer protection laws, the availability of products and price information, fraudulent and deceptive business practices and product safety.
Lyonsky, Durvasula and Watson (2003, p. 388)	Consumerism deals with consumer issues about a range of marketing related issues.
Sheth and Mammana (1974, p. 65)	The organized efforts by or for consumers to promote consumption welfare in a mass consumption technological society.
Day and Aaker (1970, p. 13)	The most common understanding of consumerism is in reference to the widening range of activities of government, business, and independent organizations that are designed to protect individuals from practices (of both business and government) that infringe upon their rights as consumers.

The consumer movement: a definition



- The consumer movement was first named *consumerism* in 1970 by Buskirk and Rothe.
- It can be understood as “the organized efforts of consumers seeking redress, restitution and remedy for dissatisfaction they have accumulated in the acquisition of their standard of living” (Buskirk and Rothe , 1970, p. 62).
- Consumerism has also been defined as the "social movement seeking to augment the rights and power of buyers in relation to sellers“ (Berry, 1970;Kotler, 1972, p. 49).
- Aim and way the movement acts: :“in a more or less organized ways, articulate and energetic consumers groups have not only demanded safer products and more truthful advertising, they have also pressed for improvements in promotional activities, repair services, product warranties, and complaint handling procedures” (Barksdale et al., 1982, p. 71).
- The focus is on consumer protection, safeguard and wellbeing.

The consumer movement: hystory



- First wave: in the 1930s, following an economic orientation rather than a social resurgence (Bloom & Greyser, 1981, p. 131).
- Second wave: in the 1960s in the U.S.A. with President Kennedy's call for a "Bill of Consumer Rights" (1962).
- Factors responsible for the emergence of the movement in the 1960s (Berry, 1972, p. 15-17):
 - "an increasingly educated consumer";
 - "more and more evidence of shoddy workmanship in the manufacture and service of various kinds of products";
 - "increasingly complex products, that are more apt to break down and that the consumer cannot repair himself";
 - "the substantial amount of political gain to be had through involvement in consumer protection";
 - "certain abusive tactics in business that have affected consumers adversely";
 - the great influence of Nader;
 - "inflation";
 - "the rising expectations of consumers (due in part to advertising), expectations that are, from time to time, violated";
 - "the inadequate mechanism in marketing for consumers to redress legitimate grievances when they have them".

The consumer movement today - 1



- “The consumer movement has learned from business and has become as sophisticated, if not as prosperous, as the businesses it was created to combat” (Belkin, 1985, p. 48).
- “In spite of early predictions by industry that consumerism is but a political gambit that will quickly fizzle out, the phenomenon continues to widen its scope and support in almost geometric proportions” (Gaedeke, 1970, p. 7).
- “Consumerism is part of a more complex and pervasive change in society. Consumerism has substance, and tangibility, and clout. It is not a fad, it is not going away tomorrow” (Berry, 1972, p. 15).
- “It is just at a mature stage of its life cycle”; not in the declining one and it’s supposed not to decline (Bloom & Greyser, 1981, p. 131; Stern, 1971);
- Consumer movement importance “would be greater in the future” (Kangun et al., 1975, p. 8; Chamber of Commerce of the United States, 1970).
- Consumerism, as Kotler said, is enduring, it is inevitable, but also beneficial, pro-marketing and pro-social (Verma & Nanda, 2007, p. 76).

The consumer movement today - 2



- Consumers will always have new and/or different requests (eg. green, sustainability, etc.).
- Consumer changes towards better awareness, consciousness, education (e.g., Buskirk & Rothe, 1970), a great amount of leisure-time (e.g., Buskirk & Rothe, 1970) and concern about long-term effects of customer actions.
- “The consumerism movement of recent years has contributed more than any other single factor to the development of a meaningful concern with customer needs and opinions” (Shapiro, 1973, p. 175).
- Consumers dissatisfaction has to be continuously addressed by firms but some essential consumers rights exist.

The consumer movement today - 3



- The essential consumer rights are (e.g., Executive Office of the President, 1963; Estes, 1971; Kangun et al., 1975; Verma & Nanda, 2007):
 - the right to safety: the most important, injuries have to be avoided – consumer answer: boycotts;
 - the right to be informed: information is crucial to consumers to be protected - “consumerism is primarily the result of a lack of information on the part of the consumers which hinders their ability to buy certain products” (Buskirk & Rothe, 1970, p. 63) – communication and/or imagery is different from information;
 - the right to choose;
 - the right to be heard – a firm “*ombudsman*” (Buskirk & Rothe, 1970, p. 63) – Web 2.0 – CRM – basis for value co-creation.
 - Today two more issues have to be added.

Two more issues



- “Environmental imbalance and threats to humanity” (Sheth & Mammana, 1974, p. 66):
 - “excessive resource depletion and exploitation”;
 - pollution;
 - “standardization of human species”.
- Non-consumption as opposed to over consumption (Sheth & Mammana, 1974, p. 66):
 - “safety and protection from other consumers” (e.g., smokers *versus* nonsmokers);
 - low income families which are below the level of the “minimum mass consumption behavior”;
 - “safeguard of minorities”;
 - the effect of some TV programs on children;
 - “dehumanization” in terms of “lack of shock, concern or even interest in crime, poverty, and war”.

Effects of the consumer movement



- The consumer movement is “responsible for the positive change in the performance of business”, even if the performance “still falls short of consumer expectations” (Barksdale et al. 1982, p. 83).
- The consumer has had more attention than at any time in the past and his needs and opinions are now considered central to firm and especially to marketing strategies.
- “Consumerism will remain on the scene, much as it has in the past, as a social force” (p. 176) or as a “constructive tension and of socially-negotiated compromise between countervailing sources of consumerist and business power” (p. 177) even though the attention paid would fluctuate between periods of negligible attention, punctuated by some meaningful moments (Shapiro, 1973).

The life-cycle pattern of the consumer movement



- Four steps (Barksdale et al., 1982, p. 72) :
 - “crusading”;
 - “popular movement”;
 - “organization/managerial”;
 - “bureaucracy”.
- “According to the quantity and quality of information supplied to consumers, the extent of protective legislation, the authority of government consumer agencies, and public funding of consumer education programs”.
- Important to define this life-cycle are regulations and government actions in the defense of consumers at different levels:
 - Individual (eg. complaints);
 - Collective (eg. also boycotts);
 - Consumer advocate activities, as well as some business and industry self-regulation.
- Who should protect consumers?
 - Regulations;
 - Consumer actions;
 - Firm and industry self-regulation.

“Consumerism as firms’ continuous attention to consumer needs, wants and satisfaction



“THE CONSUMER BECAME KING”
(SORELL, 1994, P. 913)

“THE PURPOSE OF THE BUSINESS IS THE
CUSTOMER” (DRUCKER, 1989, P. 85).

Definitions



Source	Conceptual Definition
Drucker (1961, p.61)	Consumerism means that the consumer looks upon the manufacturer as somebody who is interested but who really does not know what the consumer's realities are. He regards the manufacturer as somebody who has not made an effort to find out, who does not understand the world in which the consumer lives, and who expects the consumer to be able to make distinctions which the consumer is neither willing nor able to make.
Sheth and Gardner (1982, p. 4)	Consumerism as a school of marketing thought.

F

First insights



- “Consumerism is the outcome of a mismatch between the perceptions of the manufacturers and the realities of the consumer”; the consumer movement developed because “the marketing concept [has not] been implemented properly” (Drucker, 1969 in Uslay, Morgan & Sheth, 2009, p. 54).
- “Is the customer who determines what a business is” (Drucker, 1954, p. 35) so customer satisfaction is of paramount importance.
- “Consumerism should be, must be, and, I hope, will be the opportunity for marketing. This is what we, in marketing, have been waiting for” (Drucker, 1969, p. 64).
- Over time it can be said that each of the actors involved, the industry, the firms, the consumer, the consumer advocates, and the government “has made its job” (Sheth and Mammana, 1974; Uslay, Morgan & Sheth, 2009), but improvements are still to be made.
- To Drucker, the quest for social responsibility “is the price of the success”, because it means the firm has some social power (Yani-de-Soriano & Slater, 2009, p. 455).
- In Drucker’s thought there is no incompatibility between firm economic superior performance, attention to social issues and the firm internal workforce, they can be all managed jointly and consistently (Yani-de-Soriano & Slater, 2009).

Societal marketing and the CSR pyramid



- Dawson's (1969) "human concept" theory encompasses three different levels of human needs to be fulfilled by the firm: "(1) people in the organization; (2) consumers, competitors, suppliers and distributors; (3) society as a whole" (Yani-de-Soriano & Slater, 2009, p. 456).
- Kotler and Keller (2006) defined the "societal marketing concept" (different from social marketing).
- Carroll (1991) proposes the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) "pyramid". "Here four kinds of social responsibilities constitute total CSR: economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic and they can be depicted as a pyramid" (Carroll, 1991, p. 40).
- Drucker and Carroll approaches can be reconciled through widening the strategic perspective to encompass "enlightened self interest" (Yani-de-Soriano & Slater, 2009, p. 457).

The firm social role and the definition of sustainability marketing



- The firm's competitive advantage and the health of the communities in which they operate are more and more intermingled (Porter & Kramer 2006; 2011).
- Firms represent the productive resources of the economy, without firm support, society will never achieve sustainable development (Bansal 2002, p. 124).
- "Sustainable marketing, [is] a more radical approach to markets and marketing which seeks to meet the full environmental costs of production and consumption to create a sustainable economy" (Peattie, 2001, p. 129).
- "In general, sustainability marketing involves building and maintaining sustainable relationships with customers, the social environment and the natural environment" (Peattie & Belz, 2010, p. 9 citing Belz, 2006).
- In a certain sense, sustainability marketing would sum up modern marketing, relationship marketing, eco-marketing and ethical marketing, with a focus on relationships and a broad view of the environment, not to be considered as the sole market (Peattie & Belz, 2010).
- For Peattie (2001, p. 129), sustainability marketing represents the third age and more recent approach to *green marketing*, following "*ecological marketing*", and "*environmental marketing*" approaches .
- Sustainability marketing can be defined as "the process of planning, implementing and controlling the development, pricing, promotion, and distribution of products in a manner that satisfies the following three criteria: (1) customer needs are met, (2) organizational goals are attained, and (3) the process is compatible with eco-systems" (Fuller, 1999 recalled in Peattie, 2001, p. 141).
- Sustainability is at the core of the green marketing philosophy (Charter, 1992) and at the heart of ethical marketing concept (Strong, 1996).

Sustainability: some insights



- Three dimensions of sustainability should be considered: “futurity”, “equity” and “an emphasis on needs” (Peattie, 2001, p. 140-141).
- Hence it’s necessary to move from a *primum non nocere* (Drucker, 2007, p. 65) to a *civic community* (Drucker, 1999),
- A new “social and business frameworks” (Yani-de-Soriano & Slater, 2009, p. 462) have to be developed, because ethical consumerism “is a source of competitive advantage for socially and ethically aware organizations” (Strong, 1996, p. 15) that cannot neglect technology.
- Indeed, “the more technology advances, the more deeply will marketing become involved in social issues” (Stern, 1971, p. 52).

Green versus ethical consumers



- *Green consumers*: those who avoid products able to “endanger the health of the consumer or others; cause significant damage to the environment during manufacture, use or disposal; consume a disproportionate amount of energy; cause unnecessary waste; use materials derived from threatened species or environments; involve unnecessary use or cruelty to animals; adversely affect other countries” (Elkington & Hailes, 1989).
- Ethical consumers go beyond and include “the “people” aspect of manufacture, use and disposal” (Strong, 1996, p.5).
- So it is supposed that when “green consumers become more actively ecologically and ethically aware, it is conjectured that there is a tendency for these caring consumers to become ethically responsive as well as environmentally responsive” (Strong, 1996, p. 7).

The consumer power



- The advent of internet opened up a new era in the way consumers could be protected, informed, heard and choose freely.
- “People around the world are discovering that, as consumers, they do in fact have the power to affect the way that large companies develop and produce their products” (Isbell, 2003, p. 47).
- Thanks to consumer support and ideas made available through Web 2.0 features firms can enhance their competitive advantage and innovate more easily and rapidly.
- It's time for firms to open up their boundaries!