

# **Consumer Education**

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## **Abstract**

This is the first work about consumer education published in China.

## **I. Consumerism and the role of consumer education**

Consumerism is an eternal issue for humanity. It is not about the behaviour of a limited number of people, but something that is fundamental, part of the daily for life of each and every one of us. Consumer education encompasses association-based social activities aimed at equipping people with consumer skills and know-how. Consumer education is geared to instill skills such as responsible or reasonable consumerism and emphasize the importance of respecting consumer rights. Developing consumer education is a means of changing mindsets and boosting demand. Such education also enhances consumer awareness of rights and promotes more moral consumerism; it also makes it easier to protect consumer rights and legal interests. This action coincides with the need to establish more sustainable consumerism and an environment that is more respectful of individual rights.

## **II. The nature of consumer education**

Basic principles of consumer economics: income, population, environmental impact on consumerism. The establishment of appropriate consumer concepts: Consuming is not synonymous with waste and it is not essential to curb high levels of consumption. Training people to consume better means increasing their capacity to consume; promoting healthy, modern and active consumer habits; making quality of life a priority, evaluating and reviewing standard setting systems. Staying on the track of sustainable consumerism and sustaining the principles of profit, savings, moderation and equality in sustainable consumerism. The ten major obstacles to consumerism in China and their respective response measures; to encourage and reinforce the cult of consumerism, defining its nature in China today and the dangers it represents. Spending tomorrow's money to realize today's dreams: the advent of consumer credit in China. Training in consumer decision making: the consumer decision making process, influencing factors in decision making as well as ways to increase gain as a result of the decision taken. Consumer education via associations; context and means of protecting consumer rights as well as increasing their awareness of the legal aspects of consumerism; evaluation of the effect of education on consumer activity.

## **III. Consumer education expectations and guidelines**

1) What is expected from consumer education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? Opportunities and challenges of consumer education: changing mindsets and consumer behaviour to provide a setting that is conducive to consumer education, whereas irrational consumerism prevents it. New roles of consumer education: accelerating modern production, raising consumption levels and related benefits. Consumer education is compatible with the protection of consumer rights. Innovation in consumer education: establishment of rational consumer standards, promoting freedom of choice and consumer moderation. Encourage sustainable consumer activity, develop the information and internet culture, eradicate 'information pollution' and 'Internet dumping'. Establish an education system that takes into account internationalisation and the legal system. Fundamental principles of consumer education: the home and school are the two favoured locations for consumer education.

The government's role in consumer education; joint action between popular media and consumer associations will give a new dimension to consumer education; consumer education has a central role in company strategy. The modernisation of consumer education means: placing emphasis on knowledge and information.

2) Measures aimed at building a consumer education plan for all.

1. Establish a network to allow the population to help itself by means of consumer education.
2. Fully exploit media channels for passing on consumer education messages.
3. Utilise the leadership offered by consumer associations and establish a consumer centre (or hub).
4. Clearly define government objectives and protect consumer rights.
5. Accelerate the legal process and reduce the cost of applying consumer protection laws.
6. Urge companies to take an active role in promoting consumer education.

[End]

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