

2.2 CONSUMER STUDIES

2.2.1 CONSUMER CHOICE

FACTORS THAT AFFECT CONSUMER DECISION MAKING – 2004 Q4(B).

A : HOUSEHOLD INCOME

- The amount of disposable income available will vary between different families.
 - Those on a **limited income** will have less money to spend on luxury items. They will look for “Special Offers”, may buy “Own Brand” goods, buy in discount stores etc.
 - Families with a **large disposable income** have greater choice when shopping, they are not restricted to any one type of shop. They can afford designer labels in clothes, expensive food and buy bespoke products.

B : MERCHANDISING

- Retailers have a number of ways of trying to increase sales of particular items/products. Examples of these include :
 - **Special offers** (eg) : Buy 3 for 2 (boots pharmacies), the consumer buys three items and the cheapest item is free, 2 for the price of 1, buy one and get the second item half price, special weekly offers (eg) : meat on offer in an butchers shop.
 - **Own brand goods** (eg) : SuperValu have many food items for sale that are their “own brand”, these food items are cheaper than “branded” products (SuperValu pasta is less than 1 euro per bag compared to branded dried pasta which is twice the price at least).

- In theory, this is how own brand goods work (ie) : cheaper! However, In recent years many “own brand” food items can be expensive and excellent quality (eg) : Tesco “Finest” range and Dunnes Stores “Simply Better” range. Own brand goods are kept in a separate section to branded foods in the store unlike a few years ago when they were placed next to branded goods on shelves. They were supposed to stand out as being cheaper! Today, the selling point of own brand goods is that they are exclusive to that store only! (Originally, Marks & Spencers did this, charging extra for their own brand of food products, it worked so other food stores started following this model.

C : ADVERTISING

- Adverts may appear in magazines, newspapers, on radio, on television, on the internet (media)
- They may also appear on billboards, bus shelters, shop windows.
- Sometimes customers may receive mail/post advertising products.

FUNCTION OF ADVERTISING (ROLE)

- **(1) : To sell products and services** (eg) : new car – Tesla Electric Car 2021.
- **(2) : To increase sales** (ie) : remind consumers of a product that has been around a long time (eg) : Cadburys milk chocolate, Coca Cola (Christmas Advert)
- **(3) : To promote new products** (eg) : 2019 Apple AirPods, 2020 PS5 console.



ADVANTAGES OF ADVERTISING

- It **creates interest in a product** which increases the sale of that product (people buy out of curiosity) (eg) : New Dyson hairdryer, Magic Cream by Charlotte Tilbury.
- **Encourages competition between companies** which can lead to lower prices (eg) : mobile phone companies, if Vodafone advertise a new phone plan or reduced price texts etc, this usually follows by another mobile phone company (eg) : Three, trying to “out do” the proposed plan!
- **Provides employment** (ie) : for people with qualification in marketing.

DISADVANTAGES OF ADVERTISING

- **Adds extra cost** to a product (eg) : if a company pays a lot of money for elaborate advertising, this cost is passed on to the product by adding a little extra to its cost/price (famous actor/celebrity is paid to endorse product – Chris Pine for Boss)
- **Puts pressure on consumers to purchase goods** (eg) : parents are pressured to buy certain toys at Christmas because of “intensive marketing” aimed at children – PS5 2020.
- **Can cause stereotyping** (eg) : L’Oreal always uses “beautiful” people when promoting their beauty products or Kellogs Special K adverts use “very thin” women to “look well” in their adverts.

D : PACKAGING

- The shape, colour, materials used in packaging can influence shoppers to buy products. It is probably the first thing we notice about a product.
 - **Beauty products** : companies like Chanel, Yves St. Laurent, Tom Ford charge a lot of money for their beauty products but they also use very “exclusive” packaging so the consumer feels they have got a luxury product for their money.
 - **Shape of Products/Packaging** : the shape of the product helps consumers to recognize products (eg) : bottle water regardless of brand (Evian, Volvic, Ballygowan etc.) has a similar shape plastic bottle, ridge, slight blue hue and a deep blue top. Dairy spreads (eg) : Dairygold, Dawn light etc. are always in rectangular plastic cartons.

E : LABELLING

- **Designer Labels** : Armani, Chanel etc. are often enough to sell a product. People expect excellent quality if they pay a lot of money for items. Many young people like brand names like Superdry, Gym King etc.
- **Football Clubs** : like Manchester United, Barcelona FC get massive revenue from the sale of items with the club logo (eg) : Jerseys, t-shirts, tracksuits, mugs etc.
- **Food Labelling** : it is a legal requirement since December 2016, that all prepackaged foodstuffs have nutritional labelling on the packet cover. Consumers are very nutritionally aware so if there are high quantities of sugar, saturated fats listed on a label, they may not buy this particular product (Traffic Code System used on food labelling)
 - Food labelling is important to many consumers who are concerned about eating healthy food.
 - Other labels include care labelling (See “Textiles” Handout).



F : QUALITY MARKS

- Many consumers will look for quality marks before they purchase a product.
- These marks indicate quality, reliability and in many cases safety.



← Q Mark – Approved Quality System

(eg) : Brennan’s Bread, Avonmore Milk



← Guaranteed Irish Mark



PURE NEW WOOL

← Pure New Wool Mark



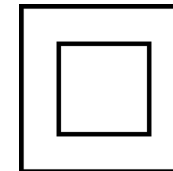
← Irish Mark of Electrical Conformity



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← Fire Safety Swing Label (Square)



← Double Insulated (Electrical Safety Mark)

OTHER FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE CONSUMER DECISION MAKING

- Loyalty schemes (eg) : “Tesco Clubcard”, “Dunnes Value Clubcard”
- Good sales staff.
- Trends (eg) : blue tiles!, the colour teal.
- Peers/friends.
- Time available to shop.
- Easypay (ie) : where the consumer is allowed to pay for the item in instalments (eg) : ESB – electrical appliances.
- The shopping channel (ie) : QVC where special offers are given and demonstrations on the use of the product are given.

CLASSIFICATION OF RETAIL OUTLETS

1 : DEPARTMENT STORES

- **EXAMPLE** : Brown Thomas, Arnotts.
- Consumers can buy a wide selection of goods in one store(+) (eg) : clothes, electrical goods, furniture, kitchen equipment, cosmetics.
- Whole “floors” or large sections of the store are designated to selling one type of product (eg) : cosmetics section. Despite this, consumers may feel pressure to buy (-)
- Department stores often have other branches around the country (eg) : Brown Thomas Dublin, Cork and Galway(+).
- Usually self service but trained staff are on stand by to give advice.

2 : SUPERMARKETS

- **EXAMPLE** : Tesco, Centra, SuperValu.
- Supermarkets can range from the small “local corner shop” to very large supermarkets (eg) : Tesco stores.
- They sell a large range of products : bakery/food products/clothes/coffee machines/deli counters(+)
- Large supermarkets will sell “own pizza brand” goods as well as branded goods.
- They buy products in bulk and therefore are in a position to sell food at slightly cheaper prices than smaller shops(+)
- Open plan design is the norm for these shops. Customers use shopping trolleys (provided by the store) and purchase goods (self service).
- Usually long opening hours (ie) : 24 hours.
- Many provide facilities like free car parking.

- More impersonal way of shopping than buying from a ‘local shopkeeper’(-)
- Long queues (peak times)(-)

3 : HYPERMARKETS

- **EXAMPLE** : Lidl, Aldi.
- Popular in continental Europe.
- The German store (hypermarket) has opened many branches around Ireland.
- Large, warehouse style stores(-)
- Goods are much cheaper(+)
- Lidl and Aldi have increased their purchase of Irish Artisan products, great support.
- Usually provide free car parking(+)
- Speed at checkout cashiers (quota)(-)

4 : CHAIN STORES

- **EXAMPLE** : Dunnes Stores, Penneys.
- Stores usually have a uniform style, consistent layout and a distinctive appearance (ie) : Dunnes Stores shops all “look the same”.
- Prices are quite low/reasonable.
- Some stores have improved the quality of products (Dunnes Stores)
- Many people may have the “same” item(-)
- Dunnes & Penneys buy in bulk to keep costs to the consumer at a minimum(+)
- These stores often lack personal service(-)
- Wide range of sizes to suit all body sizes(+)



5 : DISCOUNT STORES

- **EXAMPLE** : Deals, TK Maxx, Argos
- Turnover is rapid, chaos!(-)
- Not much emphasis on personal customer service, usually long queues(-)
- These stores usually sell household goods at cheaper prices than other stores (usually last season's stock – TK Maxx)(+)
- No elaborate store design.
- Customers fill out a docket, pay for goods and queue for item at collection point (Argos)
- Very broad selection, good for sale(+)

6 : SALE TRADERS/INDEPENDENT SHOPS

- **EXAMPLE** : Clothes Boutique.
- Often family run businesses.
- Personal service is priority(+)
- Goods are more expensive than larger stores (bought in smaller quantities)(-)
- They may offer credit.
- Goods can be specially order so not many people will have the item (exclusive)(+)

RETAIL PSYCHOLOGY (2015 Q4)

- Retailers (shopkeepers) use a variety of techniques to influence the subconscious mind of the consumer.
- Some of the techniques include ... **LEARN 5!**

A : PRODUCT PLACEMENT

- By placing products on certain shelves or at eye level on certain sides of aisles, retailers can notice huge differences in the sale of a product.
 - Essential or **basic food items like bread are always placed at the back of the shop** so consumers have to pass through the whole shop to get them. On the way, they may spot other products and put them in their shopping basket.
 - **Luxury goods are usually at eye level** and easy to reach. Cheaper goods or more essential items are usually higher as consumers tend to go for the product that is easiest to reach.
 - **Complimentary products are placed near each other** (eg) : Pizza, chops, garlic bread on one side of the aisle, ice cream and frozen desserts on the other side.
 - Sometimes **shops deliberately change the position of items** so customers go looking for a product and come across "new products" which may tempt them!



B : IN STORE STIMULI

- If there is a **bakery section** in the store “Maltol” is often sprayed around this section giving a “freshly baked odour” to entice customers to purchase baked goods.
- **Background music** is usually soft and relaxing in food supermarkets to give a feeling of “calm” in the store, however loud music is often played in jeans stores where a younger audience is being targeted.
- **Free food samples** are sometimes given out by food demonstrators (eg) : samples of new types of yoghurt, pasta sauce, sausages etc. The samples are free plus a “money off voucher” is usually given to encourage customers to buy the product.

C : PRICING

- How an item is priced can make customers feel they are getting a better bargain than they actually are getting :
 - €9.99 is cheaper/less expensive than €10
 - Multiple buys (eg) : 4 Muller rice pots for €3.00

D : MERCHANDISING (see pg.1)

- Special offers & Own brand goods.
 - 2 for the price of 1.
 - Buy 1 get the 2nd item half price.
 - 3 for the price of 2 (Boots)

E : LOYALTY SCHEMES

- Some stores offer loyalty cards (eg) : Dunnes Stores Clubcard. Points are earned with every purchase, these points convert to money vouchers that can be spent in store.
- If €X is spent in store, tokens may be collected and used to buy household items at a much cheaper price (eg) : token for every €10 spent, a Pyrex casserole worth €100 could be purchased for €24.99 with 20 tokens.



2.2.2 CONSUMER RESPONSIBILITY

NB : CONSUMER RIGHTS

- Consumers have the following rights :

1 : THE RIGHT TO QUALITY

- All goods must be of merchantable quality, fit for purpose and as described.

2 : THE RIGHT TO ACCURATE INFORMATION

- It is illegal to give false information about a product (The Consumer Protection Act 2007)
- Clear and accurate information must be given on goods (eg) : food labelling, care labelling, date stamping, quality & safety marks etc.

3 : THE RIGHT TO CHOICE

- Consumers have a wide choice of goods to choose from, they choose the product most suited to their needs. Choice encourages competition between companies as they compete with other products so the consumer chooses their brand.

4 : THE RIGHT TO REDRESS

- Consumers have the right to return products or complain about services if they are not up to standard.

5 : THE RIGHT TO SAFETY

- Consumers have the right to buy safe goods which will not cause harm to them when in use.
- Many products carry warning symbols, electrical safety marks.
- There are laws to protect the consumer against unsafe food.

6 : THE RIGHT TO VALUE FOR MONEY

- Consumers are entitled to value for money. Higher prices usually indicate better quality

CUSTOMER RESPONSIBILITY (2006 Q4)

- Consumers have a responsibility to :

1 : READ INSTRUCTIONS AND FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY

- They cannot blame the manufacturer for a fault if they did not read the instructions.

2 : COMPLAIN ABOUT POOR QUALITY GOODS/SERVICES

- They should also report unsafe products to protect other consumers from getting hurt.

3 : KNOW THE RESULT OF THEIR ACTIONS

- Consumers must protect the environment (ie) : do not dump batteries carelessly in domestic bins (they contain cadmium)

4 : UNDERSTAND THE VARIOUS CONSUMER LAWS

- That are there to protect consumers (eg) : Sale of Goods and Supply of Services Act 1980, the Consumer Protection Act 2007. The laws cannot be used effectively if members of the public do not know their rights.

5 : ENSURE THEY ARE WELL INFORMED

- About various products or services before choosing to buy a product like provide impartial information on products (ie) : electrical appliances.

6 : TO KEEP RECEIPTS AND GUARANTEES

- In a safe place in the event of a problem or fault occurring in the item.



2.2.3 CONSUMER PROTECTION

- Consumers are protected in a number of ways.

A : GUARANTEES

- A guarantee is a contract usually between the manufacturer and the consumer in which the manufacturer accepts responsibility for any (or certain) faults which occur in a product within a reasonable time.
- Most manufacturers of good quality products offer a guarantee (eg) : watches, electrical appliances, TVs etc.
- The length of time the product is under guarantee varies (eg) : 3-5 years (large electrical appliances, washing machines, freezers etc.), some products have a lifetime guarantee (eg) : Tupperware.
- Some guarantees only cover “parts” of a product (eg) : watch strap may not be covered.
- Guarantees are free, the manufacturer confirms they will repair or replace an item if something goes wrong.
- Guarantees should be kept in a safe place if needed at a later date, receipts are often accepted or can act as a guarantee. Many shops email receipts now so they are easier to keep safe.

B : CONSUMER PROTECTION AGENCIES : STATUTORY (GOVERNMENT)

1 : OMBUDSMAN

- Office of ombudsman investigates complaints from members of the public who feel they have been unfairly treated by certain public bodies (eg) : local authorities, An Post, government departments and offices.
- Complaints must first try to resolve dispute before contacting ombudsman.
- ombudsman can request any information relating to the complaint and if he/she feels the complaint is justified both parties will be notified.
- Findings by ombudsman are not legally binding.
- There is no charge for dealing with complaints.
- 18 Lower Leeson St Dublin 2.

2 : CCPC (COMPETITION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION COMMISSION)

- Replaced the National Consumer Agency (NCA), set up in October 2014.
- **1** : Inform customers of their customer rights, they have a website (CCPC.ie). Consumers can access information on how to complain to a business, how to complain about financial services and the small claims procedure.
- **2** : They carry out investigations into suspected breaches of competition or consumer protection law.
- **3** : Enforce Product Safety regulations - ensure Product Safety guidelines are being complied with. They share information about dangerous goods across the EU.



3 : EOLAS (IRISH SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AGENCY)

- **1** : This agency is concerned with research, development and control of areas such as technology and energy.
- **2** : It contains patents - if a consumer has a unique design for a product/service , they can “copyright” their idea.
- **3** : They carry out product testing for industries.

4 : CITIZEN INFORMATION CENTRES (STATUTORY)

- **1** : These centres are located in towns and cities all over Ireland, over 215 centres approximately nationwide. They provide free, confidential impartial information on topics such as social welfare, housing, health services, redundancy, consumer affairs.
- **2** : Each center is independent but all citizen information centers are registered with “Comhairle” (a public service body that promotes information and access to social services for all citizens in Ireland)
- **3** : They have a website also www.citizensinformation.ie providing a wide range of information on all of the topics listed above.

5 : EUROPEAN CONSUMER CENTRE IRELAND (STATUTORY)

- ECC Ireland provide feedback to the European Commission on key cross border consumer problems (eg) : January 2021 they wrote on their Twitter account advising consumers to take precautions when shipping in/from the UK online post Brexit.
- Provide free advice and information to the public on consumer rights when shopping in another EU state.
- provide a free legal service to members of the public involved in small claims court actions.

NB : SMALL CLAIMS COURT

- Included in the summary of statutory consumer protection agencies.
- A consumer who cannot sort out a dispute with the business can take the business to the small claims court.
- The aim of the small claims court is to handle consumer claims cheaply without involving a solicitor.
- The consumer cannot Sue for an amount greater than €2000.
- The consumer fills in a special application form outlining the complaint and pays a small fee (€25) to the local District Court.
- If the business contests the claim, both sides are brought together for a meeting by the small claims registrar to try to solve the dispute. This meeting is as informal as possible and private. The small claims registrar may question both parties to clarify the issue.
- If the small claims register I cannot solve the complaint , he/ she will bring the complaints to the District Court for a hearing. The District Court hearing is held in public. Evidence must be given under oath. Witnesses can be summoned to attend. Both sides can bring a solicitor (but win or lose, they paid the solicitor themselves). Legal costs are not awarded to either side.
- The judge listens to the evidence and makes a ruling. If the ruling is in the customers favor , the shop/ business has four weeks to pay the compensation awarded.
- Appeals can be made to the circuit court if either side is unhappy with the judgment.



NB : CCPC (CONTINUED)

- The CCPC is an independent statutory body (government body) set up in October 2014. It took over the functions of the National Consumer Agency (NCA).
- **Main Function** : promotion consumer welfare and is responsible for investigating, enforcing and encouraging compliance with consumer law.
 - Consumers can email complaints about anticompetitive behavior to the CCPC or complain in writing or by phone.
- Enforce competition and consumer protection laws in Ireland .
 - The CCPC have a website where consumers can access information and see comparisons on various different mortgages, personal loans, credit cards , personal current accounts etc. In Ireland.
 - They also provide consumers with information on consumer rights, managing money and give advice on what to do if a complaint needs to be made regarding consumer rights.



C : CONSUMER PROTECTION AGENCIES : VOLUNTARY

1 : ADVERTISING STANDARDS ASSOCIATION IRELAND (ASAI)

- An independent, self regulatory body set up and financed by the advertising industry.
- Promotes good Advertising Standards in order to protect consumers from dishonest and illegal advertising of products and services.
- Their aim is that all advertising should be “legal, honest and truthful”

2 : CONSUMERS' ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND (CAI)

- An independent, nonprofits, non governmental organization, registered with charitable status and working on protecting and promoting the interests of Irish consumers.
- The CAI publish impartial reports on finance, health, safety and the environment.
- They have a website (www.thecai.ie) where consumers can find information on consumer rights and responsibilities and ways to solve consumer issues/problems.



CONSUMER RESEARCH (2005 Q4B, 2016 SQ9)

WHAT IS CONSUMER RESEARCH?

- Consumer research is gathering information on the likes and dislikes, needs and wants of customers.
- This information is then processed and analysed, usually by independent marketing companies to give unbiased results.
- The results of consumer research are used by companies, shops /retailers and manufacturers to give them a better understanding of what consumers want from specific products/ services they provide.

TYPES OF CONSUMER RESEARCH

- **A : Field Research**
 - **Aim** : To gather information on consumers reactions to new products a company might have just launched, would consumers recommend a particular product. How much money are consumer will pay for a product?
- **B : Desk Research**
 - **Aim** : to gather information on key trends (eg) : new fashion trends for a season. Collect information from surveys and reports already published

A : FIELD RESEARCH

- This is the collection of information first hand (ie) : getting information directly from the consumer by using questionnaires, interviews etc.
- More expensive than desk research (cost of processing information – time)
- Qualitative research.

B : DESK RESEARCH

- Costs very little money as it involves the collection of secondary data (ie) : data which has already been collected. This data may be accessed from the Internet, published reports etc.
- Quantitative research.

TECHNIQUES USED TO GATHER INFORMATION FOR CONSUMER RESEARCH

1 : Questionnaires

- Consumers are asked a series of questions in a bid to obtain information on their likes or dislikes or opinions they may have on certain products or issues.
- Questionnaires may be given online or person to person.

2 : Loyalty Cards

- **Example** : Tesco “Clubcard”, Dunnes Stores “Value Club Card”, Brown Thomas Loyalty Card.
- Each time the consumer purchases items, their loyalty card is scanned therefore the shop/company has access to information on all the consumers purchases from the store/company.
- All this data is kept on record and the consumer received money off vouchers, store discounts for allowing access to this personal information.

3 : Interviews

- A consumer may be stopped on the street and asked a series of questions by someone or they may be interviewed by phone (eg) : A bank may carry out an interview by phone regarding the quality of their customer service.



4 : Customer Satisfaction

- Some shops print information at the end of the receipt (eg) : Marks & Spencers. They ask the consumer to participate in an online survey regarding their shopping experience. Usually there is an incentive to participate where the consumer will be put in a draw to win some money.
- Shops like Brown Thomas sell high end products from Gucci, Louis Vuitton etc. After purchasing one of these products, an email is sent to the consumer regarding feedback on their shopping experience for that product.

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY CONSUMER RESEARCH

- Key trends → (eg) : fashion trends Spring/Summer 2021 include Romantic dresses, short shorts, colours like silver and candy.
- Potential size of the market for a product (ie) : results of consumer research would indicate if the market is local (Ireland) or potentially global market → this will influence the marketing strategy for the product/service.
- The size of the current market → if consumer research results indicate the market share for a specific product/service is too small, they may discontinue it.
- The age group of the market → whether the product will be bought by younger or older people (eg) : consumer research results would indicate if a person with a young family or a single person would potentially buy a specific car.
- Consumers' response to new products → (eg) : if a consumer research results indicated a very positive response to the launch of a new fabric softener, they might broaden their range of fragrances for the new product.

BENEFITS OF CONSUMER RESEARCH (2005 Q4B)

RETAILER (SHOP)

- **1 : Reduces the risk of a product/service failing.** The huge Financial outlay involved in launching a new product could be avoided if consumer research indicates consumers do not actually like the product or would not buy it.
- **2 : Helps identify the type of person that will buy the product** which will give the company or shop assistance regarding what type of marketing campaign they should use (eg) : Chanel No5 perfume is targeted to older women (Nicole Kidman in Ad) Chanel Mademoiselle is targeted to a younger woman (Kiera Knightly in Ad)



CONSUMER

1 : Improves the quality of a product. consumer research can highlight flaws in a product (eg) : short battery life in a mobile phone. The phone manufacturer can then improve the battery life of the mobile phone therefore the consumer benefits greatly.

2 : Potentially save money for the consumer - consumer research might indicate a company's competitors are providing a similar quality product or service for less money. This in turn results in them lowering their prices for the product or service and there is more choice for the consumer also.

MODERN SHOPPING PATTERNS/PRACTICES (2012 Q1B)

- **Buying goods online, off the Internet** (eg) : books from Easons – www.easons.com or Amazon.
- **Many people shop around in a number** Of different shops every week looking for the best value (eg) : Dunnes Stores and Aldi and SuperValu etc. They are no longer loyal to one shop!
- **Many shops are open late at night** (eg) : Spar to 11PM or even 24 hours (eg) : large Tesco stores.
- **Home delivery of Fast Food/Restaurant food** – Since March 2020, a lot of restaurants are delivering full restaurant meals to homes as well as take away restaurants (eg) : Deliveroo, Just Eat, UberEats.
- **Retail Parks** have become popular with shops like TK Maxx, B&Q, Harvey Norman etc. (Usually provide free car parking) This has discouraged many people from shopping in town/city centres anymore.

SHOPPING PATTERNS

- Shopping patterns refer to the way in which we shop and what we buy. These patterns are influenced by :

1 : TIME AVAILABLE

- Working parents with young children usually have very busy lives so to use time efficiently they tend to do one large food shop, once a week in a large supermarket and usually on the same day every week.

2 : INCOME AVAILABLE

- If income is limited, shoppers may regularly shop in stores where there are special offers on a weekly basis (eg) : Dealz, TK Maxx. Those with a high income may shopping high end stores regularly selling designer label goods.

3 : CUSTOMS/TRADITIONS

- Many families will shop in the same butcher shop, fishmongers, greengrocers that their parents shopped in. They like the personal service and consistent quality.

4 : TRANSPORT AVAILABLE

- If a person has no car, they cannot shop for a large quantity of items or products at one time. Therefore, they may visit the local shop on a daily basis.

5 : SINGLE PEOPLE

- Single people may not have family commitments, so their shopping pattern is irregular or erratic where they shop when they feel like it on no specific day.



WEE IRELAND



- WEE = Waste, Electrical and Electronic Equipment.
- The WEEE Directive 2002/96/EC is an EU Directive founded on the principle of “Producer Responsibility.
- It’s objectives are to prevent waste of electrical and electronic equipment & promote :
 - Reuse, Recycling and Recovering of waste electrical/electronic equipment.
- Since 2005, all producers and retailers of EEE must comply with WEEE regulations.
- WEE Ireland is a non profit making organization, it was founded by producers of EEE in order to comply with legal obligations of the WEEE Directive. They ensure WEEE is collected and recycled in an environmentally friendly way.
- Producer Recycling Fun (PRF) contribution applied to electrical equipment (€2 - €5) is used to fund collection (recycling of WEE).

CONSUMER LAWS

A : SALES OF GOODS AND SUPPLY OF SERVICES ACT (1980)

- According to this law, goods for sale must be of merchantable quality, fit for purpose and described.
- **Merchantable Quality** means the good must be of acceptable standard (eg) : an apple with a rotten core is not of merchantable quality, trousers with a faulty zip.
- **Fit for Purpose** : do the job it is supposed to (eg) : flame retardant fabrics should not be flammable.
- **As Described** : if a shirt is labelled 100% cotton, it must be made from 100% cotton.
- If you wish to return goods under this act :
 - **(1)** : If the fault is recognised immediately and you return it to the shop → entitled to a full cash refund.
 - **(2)** : If the goods are kept for a while (eg) : a couple of months, and a fault occurs, the consumer is entitled to a repair or exchange or credit note.
 - **(3)** : If the retailer does not deal with the faulty product within a reason length of time, the consumer is entitled to a full cash refund.
- **NOTE** : A sign saying “NO CASH REFUNDS” is against this law (usually the following is written beside this statement, “This does not affect your statutory rights”).



B : CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT 2007

- Previously called, Consumer Information Act 1978.
- **(1) : The law bans unfair commercial practices :**
 - **Misleading Practices** : Made in Ireland on the packet/shamrocks & harps on packaging and it is not made in Ireland.
 - **Aggressive Practices** : Using threatening or abuse language if you are a trader to get someone to buy goods or services.
 - **Prohibited Action** : Selling medicine that doesn't work or "closing down sale" and the shop isn't closing down.
- **(2) : This act also covers pricing and price display (ie) :**
pubs/price of drinks :
 - Grocery stores must supply/provide weighing scales in a prominent position to allow consumers to find out the weight and price of unpacked food products before they pay at the till.
- **(2) : This law gives the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) power to take a business to court if in breach of this Act.**
 - (eg) : Rugby weekends, concerts in Dublin on weekends, pubs will increase prices and they will not match the pricing display. The pub is said to be in breach of this law.

