

More than 8.6 Million Households Obtain Coupons via Text Messages and/or E-Mail

Americans continue to watch their spending and to look for good deals in the sluggish economy, and coupons are an important method of saving money. Consumer and media research firm [Scarborough Research](#) released an analysis highlighting the ways households are obtaining coupons.

The study found that text messages and/or e-mail are an emerging method for households to obtain coupons. 8.6 million (eight percent) of U.S. households currently acquire coupons via text messages and/or e-mail. While not the leading medium for household coupon obtainment – the Sunday newspaper holds this distinction, and other means such as in-store circulars and regular mail still surpass it – couponing via text messages and/or e-mail is gaining a following among American consumers. (For a full ranking of ways households are obtaining coupons, see chart.)

“We began measuring text/e-mail coupon usage in our most recent Scarborough study, and I am not surprised to see that households are taking advantage of this new couponing medium,” said Gary Meo, senior vice president of digital media and print services, Scarborough Research. “Coupons received via text messaging are typically sent only to consumers who have opted-in to receive them. This increases the relevancy of the offer and the potential for the consumer to act on that offer. An additional benefit is the mobility of cell phones and other personal communications devices, which allow consumers to access the coupon at the point of purchase.”

Those consumers who obtain coupons via text messages and/or e-mail tend to be young, affluent, educated and female. Scarborough data shows that they are 14 percent more likely than the average adult to be ages 18-24; 51 percent more likely to be a college graduate or have an advanced degree; and 6 percent more likely to be female.

Where do these consumers live? The top local market for text message and/or e-mail coupon users is Providence, R.I. Twelve percent of households in Providence typically obtain coupons via text message or e-mail. Washington D.C., Atlanta, San Diego, Austin and Chicago, where 11 percent of households get coupons via this medium, are also among the leading markets for this activity.

Scarborough Ranking: Ways Households Typically Obtain Coupons (%)

Coupon Source , (% hhlds)

Sunday newspaper, 51%
In-store coupons, 35%
Mail, 31%
Preferred customer card/loyalty card, 21%
In-store circulars, 20%
Weekday newspaper, 17%
Product packages, 16%
Magazines, 15%
Text Messages and/or Email, 8%
Internet Sites, 7%

(Source: Scarborough Research, Scarborough USA+ Study, Release 2 2008)