Valid Internet Coupons?

Cashier Tips to Assist in Recognizing Legitimate Internet Coupons*

ASSOCIATION OF COUPON PROFESSIONALS

No Free/High Value Coupons
Most manufacturers *do not issue* coupons for "Free" products, and *avoid* high value coupons. Look for values disproportionately high relative to the price of the item (e.g., 75% or more).

Customer Identifier(s)
Some Internet Coupons may include customer name, identification number (PIN) and/or additional identifier barcode for an added level of security. If applicable, check for these identifiers on the printed coupon.

Consistent Offer Value
Offer value should be the same if printed in different areas on the coupon. Make sure offer value is consistent in all areas.

Expiration Date
Check for unusually long expiration periods or dates that appear to have been altered. Valid Internet Coupons often have short expiration periods (e.g., less than 3 months).

Legal Language
Manufacturers include legal language to protect against fraud and/or misredemption. Words such as "coupons are not to be altered, copied, transferred, purchased, sold, etc." are included on most Internet Coupons.

Easily Scanable Barcode
Proper Internet Coupons use technology that creates clear barcodes. Look for barcodes that are unusually fuzzy or appear to have been altered.

Color or Black & White
Internet Coupons can appear in color or black & white. Use other guidelines here as your primary reference for recognizing a valid Internet Coupon.

Multiple Coupon Prints
Look for multiple prints (more than 2) of the exact same coupon. Most valid Internet Coupons provide print controls that limit customers to 1 or 2 prints of a coupon.

Obvious Alteration
In addition to the tips included here, in general look for coupons that appear to be obviously altered. Common sense goes a long way!

* These guidelines were developed by the Association of Coupon Professionals (ACP) to assist store personnel in recognizing legitimate Internet Coupons, and help minimize inconsistencies in procedures that may result in manufacturer chargebacks and/or disgruntled customers. While there is no guarantee of the legitimacy of any coupon received by the retailer, including Internet coupons, the ACP recommends these guidelines to help ensure acceptance of, and reimbursement for, valid coupons.

Sample Vendor-Specific Coupon Designs: Different vendors may have their own design, yet maintain many of the key elements described above.