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Zavers' service lets shoppers access coupons from phones

Kansas City Business Journal - by [David Twiddy](#) Staff Writer

Zave Networks is teaming up with Northeastern grocery store chains to provide coupons customers can collect and manage on their mobile phones.

The Kansas City, Kan., company, which operates as Zavers, said it began the service this month with the A&P, Waldbaum's, SuperFresh, Pathmark and The Food Emporium chains. The chains already use Zavers' digital coupon technology, which lets shoppers save online coupons that are applied when they check out using their supermarket loyalty cards.

The tool immediately reports redemptions to manufacturers and advertisers, letting them measure the effectiveness of their promotions.

Shoppers who sign up for mobile coupons receive text messages offering various coupons. They click on the ones they want, which are stored in their Zavers accounts. Shoppers can use their phones to check their coupons while shopping and have them redeemed at the store just like online coupons.

"This experience adds additional value for the retailers, product manufacturers and the consumers because it has the potential to really drive a phenomenal in-store experience," Zave Networks CEO Thad Langford said. "The consumers in the store about to make their purchasing decisions, they now have the ability to interact with these coupons at the moment of truth."

Forrester Research analyst Julie Ask said that only about 3 percent of wireless customers have used a mobile coupon but that interest is growing.

Target has begun offering coupons that customers can store on their mobile phones with a bar code that cashiers scan at checkout. Other systems let shoppers use their cell phone's camera to take a picture of special product bar codes, which then takes them to a Web site to collect coupons.



Thad Langford

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“Many marketers believe that appearing to be a technology leader is good for their brand,” Ask wrote. “They also believe that mobile coupons are inevitable — that it is only a question of ‘when’ they will be mainstream, not ‘if.’”

Anita Newton, chief marketing officer for Zave Networks, said the key to increasing adoption is making sure consumers and cashiers “don’t have to learn a new behavior” that could slow down the purchase.

She said consumers receive two or three texts a week, and Zavers will later tailor the offers to what the user buys.

Although the service currently is limited to Zavers’ partners in the Northeast, Langford said the company plans in the second quarter to sign up two more chains, doubling its national footprint.

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