

## HipCricket rolls out fully trackable SMS mobile coupons

By Jordan Crook

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**Eric Harber is president and chief operating officer of HipCricket**

Mobile marketing firm HipCricket has introduced an SMS mobile coupon service targeted toward retailers and quick-service restaurants.

The mobile coupon service from HipCricket gives brands and retailers a greater reach than mobile coupon services that require added technology and hardware for both the retailer and the consumer. Instead, HipCricket's mobile coupons take advantage of the reach and measurability of SMS.

"The strategy is to make mobile coupon solutions simple and straightforward," said Eric Harber, president and chief operating officer at HipCricket, Kirkland, WA. "Sometimes simple is elegant."

"This new measurable solution puts mobile couponing in the reach of 240 million or more Americans who have text messaging on their phone," he said. "It allows retailers of all shapes and sizes to use mobile coupons and measurably increase customer loyalty and sales and they don't have to upgrade at point-of-sale terminals."

"Many mobile couponing solutions that are being talked about in the market are predicated by large-scale changes for the consumer or large scale changes by the retailer, which is incredibly expensive."



**Jeff Hasen is chief marketing officer of HipCricket**

[HipCricket](#) is a software and services mobile marketing company dedicated to driving sales and generating revenue for clients using SMS, mobile Web/WAP and mobile advertising services.

HipCricket touts some big-name clients such as [Clear Channel Radio](#), [NBC](#), [CBS](#), [Nestle](#), [Macy's](#), [Staples](#), [Hershey's](#) and [Jameson](#).

The new mobile coupon offering from HipCricket gives consumers single-use promotional codes that are trackable by any point-of-sale system that accepts Visa or MasterCard.

The service also features a specific offering for quick-service restaurants called QSR Plus, which adds continuous consulting to help businesses maintain and increase customer loyalty, establish a dialogue with consumers and increase customer spend and frequency.

The mobile coupon service is built on a software-as-a-service platform.

The offering from HipCricket requires no new hardware, servers or infrastructure and eliminates production and distribution costs by getting rid of paper coupons altogether.

The mobile coupon service also delivers real-time analytics and reporting to give retailers instant measurability and the option to make changes mid-campaign.

The coupon offering fits in with existing membership and loyalty programs and integrates with packaging, point-of-sale and traditional advertising.

From a consumer perspective, the process is very similar to most other SMS campaigns involving a keyword and short code.

Upon seeing the call-to-action, the consumer can text-message the keyword to a short code to receive a mobile voucher that includes a unique eight-digit code and promotional message.

Then the user shows mobile voucher to the employee at the point-of-sale terminal, who then inputs the unique eight-digit code into the register system.

The validity of the voucher is checked in real time with the coupon server and, if valid, the voucher is redeemed.

The HipCricket coupon platform also works as a customer relationship management tool, giving retailers the opportunity to remarket to those who have texted in for a coupon, provided that they follow the double-opt-in standard.

"During the recession the interest in receiving offers and coupons was astounding," said Jeff Hasen, chief marketing officer at HipCricket, Kirkland, WA. "Have you met anybody out there these days who's not looking for a deal?"

"In the fourth quarter of 2008, coupon redemption moved up 10 percent," he said. "Mobile coupon offerings are here to stay and even as the economy gets better, people will still be looking to stretch their dollars in the most convenient way possible."