

The 7 "Redeeming" Values of Coupons

by Michelle Keegan, *Email Marketing Diva®*, *Constant Contact®*

1. Increased Traffic

Introduce your business to new customers and send a reminder to your existing customers, driving traffic back to your store, office or website. Coupons give both current and prospective customers a reason to choose your business over the competition.

Online coupons can also translate to offline activity. According to Prospectiv, 66 percent of consumers polled said they plan to use their online coupons for in-store purchases. Ten percent will use the coupons while shopping online, and 23 percent will use coupons for both venues.

Tip: Email coupons can help drive customers into your physical stores during these last weeks of the season.

2. Increased Sales and Repeat Sales

Remember, when customers visit your store, office or site to redeem a coupon, they will very likely buy more given the discount. Plus, both new and existing customers may be motivated to try a new product or service they would not have considered otherwise.

Tip: To up the ante, consider increasing the coupon discount for multiple purchases (e.g. Save \$25.00 on a \$100.00 or more purchase, \$50.00 on a \$150.00 or more purchase and \$100.00 on a \$200.00 or more purchase).

3. A Larger Email Marketing List

Make collecting the email address a part of redeeming your coupon by adding a line for the customer's email address on the coupon and/or asking the customer to sign up for your email list at checkout.

Place your email list signup prominently on your website and collect opt-in email addresses from new visitors who click-through from your coupons.

4. Viral Marketing

Take advantage of word-of-mouth referrals by encouraging your customers to forward your coupons to interested friends or family members. Especially in this season of gift giving, people feel good about being able to pass savings along to friends and family. Failing that, you can appeal to your customers' year-round desire to be "in the know." People love to be the ones with the inside scoop and the ability to pass on a good deal to their friends. (Oh puh-lease - you know it's true).

5. Increased Customer Loyalty

Make your customers feel special. Develop stronger relationships with your customers by offering them added value, letting them know how much you appreciate their business. Keep their minds on you, and they'll forget about the competition.

6. Affordability

Save your marketing dollars! Emailed coupons are far less expensive than traditional coupon advertising because they require no production expense or mailing costs. For

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example, coupon inserts into newspapers typically cost about \$45 to \$55 CPM plus printing, while an email marketing campaign including the same coupon can cost as little as pennies on the dollar.

7. Targeting

According to Prospectiv, about 32 percent of coupon users said they would like to receive coupons online in the future -- especially via email (21 percent). And that number jumps to almost 55 percent if online offers were specifically tailored to consumer's interests.

Tip: Targeting with email is a piece of cake! For example, take a recent campaign, look at who clicked on which links, and email a coupon to that targeted group for a certain percentage discount. This is just one of the many ways you can segment your list for better targeting.

And finally, give your customers a truly valuable offer. Make it worth their while to open and click on your email. You can use online coupons to offer savings of money (e.g. a dollar amount or a percentage off), time (e.g. free shipping or gift wrapping) or to promote any aspect of your business. For example: a restaurant may offer a "Buy one entrée and get the 2nd at half price." A B2B consultant may offer a "Free 30-minute consultation." A retail or online store may offer "\$25.00 off any purchase of \$150.00 or more."