CLAIMS

~~What is claimed is:~~

~~1. In a wireless communications network, a method for transmitting promotional content to a mobile electronic device, the method comprising:~~

~~determining that a mobile electronic device is within a range of a wireless communications network;~~

~~authenticating the mobile electronic device for the receipt of promotional content; and~~

~~transmitting the promotional content to the mobile electronic device.~~

~~2. The method of claim 1, wherein the wireless communications network comprises one or more of: an 802.11-based communications network; and a Bluetooth-based communications network.~~

~~3. The method for transmitting as defined in claim 1, wherein the wireless communications network is a network capable of transmitting digital information.~~

~~4. The method for transmitting as defined in claim 3, wherein the promotional content is an electronic coupon that is displayed on a display portion of the mobile electronic device.~~

~~5. The method for transmitting as defined in claim 4, wherein the electronic coupon includes a barcode that is scannable by a merchant associated with the wireless communications network.~~

~~6. The method for transmitting as defined in claim 4, wherein the coupon is redeemed from the mobile electronic device via infrared communication.~~

~~7. The method for transmitting as defined in claim 4, wherein the coupon is redeemed from the mobile electronic device via audio communication.~~

~~8. The method as defined in claim 1, wherein authenticating the mobile electronic device includes determining the amount of time the mobile electronic device has been within range of the wireless communications network.~~

~~9. The method as defined in claim 1, wherein a user of the mobile electronic device forwards the promotional content to a second mobile electronic device.~~

~~10. A mobile electronic device capable of receiving and displaying the promotional content transmitted to the mobile electronic device according to the method of claim 1.~~

1~~1~~. A~~In a wireless communications network, a~~ method for transmitting content to one or more mobile electronic devices in a wireless communications network according to their one or more respective locations, the method comprising:

detecting a mobile electronic device near a predetermined location by an access point of the wireless communications network, wherein the predetermined area comprises a coverage range of the access point of the wireless communications network, and wherein detecting further includes identifying a MAC address of the mobile electronic device by the access point of the wireless communications network;

authenticating the mobile electronic device for the receipt of content, wherein authenticating the mobile electronic device includes determining the

suitability of software or an operating system of the mobile electronic device for receiving the content;

comparing the MAC address of the mobile electronic device to stored MAC addresses, and authenticating the mobile electronic device based on whether the MAC addresses of the mobile electronic device is a stored MAC address; and

transmitting the content to the authenticated mobile electronic device by a content provider via the access point.

~~12. The method for transmitting as defined in claim 11, wherein the content is one or more of: promotional content, an extreme weather warning, a missing child alert, and a traffic or road condition report.~~

213. The method as defined in claim 111, wherein authenticating the mobile electronic device includes determining one or more of:

the suitability of software or an operating system of the mobile electronic device for receiving the content, wherein the suitability of the software or operating system is based on the ability of the software or operating system to display the content to a user of the mobile electronic device using one or more of: a ticker, an image, and a short message service ~~message~~; and

the amount of time the mobile electronic device has been within range of the wireless communications network.

314. The method as defined in claim 111, wherein the content comprises promotional content~~detecting a mobile electronic device near a predetermined location~~

~~comprises determining that the mobile electronic device is within a range of the wireless communications network~~.

4~~15~~. The method as defined in claim 3~~11~~, wherein ~~:~~

the promotional content is~~comprises~~ an electronic coupon that is displayed on a display portion of the mobile electronic device~~; and~~

~~the predetermined location comprises a locale of a merchant, wherein the electronic coupon can be redeemed within the merchant's locale by a user of the mobile electronic device~~.

5~~16~~. The method as defined in claim 4~~15~~, wherein a user of the mobile electronic device forwards the electronic coupon to a second mobile electronic device.

6~~17~~. The method as defined in claim 4~~16~~, further comprising receiving the electronic coupon from the~~a~~ user of the ~~second~~ mobile electronic device and providing a discount to the user ~~of the second mobile electronic device~~ on a purchase at the merchant's locale.

~~18. The method as defined in claim 15, further comprising receiving the electronic coupon from the user of the mobile electronic device and providing a discount to the user on a purchase at the merchant's locale.~~

7~~19~~. The method as defined in claim 6~~18~~, wherein receiving the electronic coupon comprises one or more of: viewing the display of the mobile electronic device; scanning a barcode included in the electronic coupon; receiving an infrared communication from the mobile electronic device; receiving a printed version of the electronic coupon; and receiving an audio communication from the mobile electronic device.

820. The method as defined in claim 618, further comprising recording that the electronic coupon from the mobile electronic device has been redeemed.

921. The method as defined in claim 820, further comprising preventing the electronic coupon from the mobile electronic device from being redeemed a second time.

1022. The method as defined in claim 111, further comprising detecting a second mobile electronic device near the predetermined location.

1123. The method as defined in claim 1022, further comprising not authenticating the second mobile electronic device, and in response to not authenticating the second mobile electronic device, not transmitting the content to the second mobile electronic device.

1224. The method as defined in claim 111, further comprising waiting a specified period of time prior to transmitting the content to the mobile electronic device after detecting that the mobile electronic device is near the predetermined location.

13. The method as defined in claim 3, wherein a user of the mobile electronic device forwards the promotional content to a second mobile electronic device.

14. A computer program comprising instructions for implementing any of the methods according to claims 1 – 13.