

COUPON TICKET ISSUING DEVICE AND SALES PROMOTION SYSTEM

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a technique for
5 sales promotion, and more particularly, it relates to a
technique for sales promotion by using a device for issuing
a coupon ticket on which incentives to be awarded are
listed.

Background of the Invention

10 A terminal what is called multimedia kiosk is
installed in a convenience store, at a station square, busy
streets, and the like. This terminal issues a coupon
ticket which awards incentives, such as discounts on
merchandise or service. A customer obtains the coupon
15 ticket from this terminal, and brings thus obtained coupon
ticket to a store, whereby he or she can receive the
incentive listed on the ticket. Then, it is possible for
the store to promote the sales with the coupon ticket.

Summary of the Invention

20 However, even if the Multimedia kiosk issues the
coupon ticket, there are quite a number of cases that the
coupon ticket is not actually utilized at the store. In
other cases, a customer may obtain the coupon ticket for

the meantime, and just leave it without using for a long period of time. Since the sales promotion at the store can be ensured only after the coupon ticket is actually utilized, there is a desire to enhance a usage rate of the coupon ticket.

One feature of the present invention is to provide a technique for ensuring the sales promotion by enhancing the usage rate of the coupon ticket.

One of the other features of the present invention is to provide a technique to enhance the usage rate of the coupon ticket.

Further, one of the other features is to provide a technique to shorten the time from the coupon ticket issue to the actual utilization thereof.

A coupon ticket issuing device according to one embodiment of the present invention comprises,

a sales promotion information storing means which stores a plurality of sales promotion information, incentive contents of which change in accordance with elapsed time from a time when a ticket was issued,

a receiving means which receives an issuing request as to the coupon ticket on which one sales promotion information is listed,

an obtaining means which obtains the one sales

promotion information from the sales promotion information
storing means, based on the issuing request received by the
receiving means, and

a ticket issuing means which issues the coupon ticket
5 on which the time when the ticket was issued and the one
sales promotion information obtained by the obtaining means
are listed.

With the configuration above, it is possible to
motivate the customer who has obtained the coupon ticket to
10 use it early.

In a preferred embodiment, the ticket issuing means
may further list on the coupon ticket, a bar code for
identifying the time when the ticket was issued and the
sales promotion information item. With the bar code, it is
15 possible to read the time when ticket was issued and the
sales promotion information item by a bar code reader, at
the time of using the coupon ticket.

In a preferred embodiment, the present invention
further comprises a changing means which changes the sales
20 promotion information item obtained by the obtaining means,
based on a distance from the ticket issuing device to the
store, and the ticket issuing means may issue a coupon
ticket on which a sales promotion information item changed
by the changing means is listed, instead of the sales

promotion information item obtained by the obtaining means.
With this configuration, it is possible to change the sales
promotion information in accordance with the distance from
the ticket issuing device to the store.

5 In a preferred embodiment, the present invention
further comprises a changing means which changes the sales
promotion information item obtained by the obtaining means,
if the time when ticket was issued belongs to a
predetermined time frame, and the ticket issuing means may
10 issue a coupon ticket on which a sales promotion
information item changed by the changing means is listed,
instead of the sales promotion information item obtained by
the obtaining means. With this configuration, the sales
promotion information during busy hours may be changed from
15 the information during not busy hours.

 In a preferred embodiment, the present invention
further comprises weather information storing means which
stores weather information for the surroundings of the
ticket issuing device, and a changing means which changes
20 the sales promotion information item obtained by the
obtaining means, based on the weather information stored in
the weather information storing means, and the ticket
issuing means may issue a coupon ticket on which the sales
promotion information item changed by the changing means is

listed, instead of the sales promotion information obtained by the obtaining means. With this configuration, it is possible to change the sales promotion information in accordance with the weather condition.

5 In a preferred embodiment, the present invention further comprises a per-time-frame number of issued ticket sheets storing means which stores past performance of per-time-frame number of issued ticket sheets, and a changing means which changes the sales promotion information item
10 obtained by the obtaining means, based on the past performance corresponding to the current time and the current ticket issuing status, and the ticket issuing means may issue a coupon ticket on which the sales promotion information item changed by the changing means is
15 listed, instead of the sales promotion information item obtained by the obtaining means. With this configuration, it is possible to change the sales promotion information based on a result of comparison between the ordinary ticket issuing statuses around the same time frame.

20 In a preferred embodiment, the sales promotion information item stored in the sales promotion information storing means may be updated from an information processor that is connected to the ticket issuing device. With this configuration, it is possible to flexibly change the sales

promotion information, whereby the sales promotion effect can be enhanced.

In a preferred embodiment, the ticket issuing means may list on the coupon ticket, identification information
5 for identifying the coupon ticket. With this configuration, it is possible to give an additional incentive such as drawing lots with the identification information of the coupon ticket.

In a preferred embodiment, the present invention
10 further comprises a sales data storing means on which information regarding sales amount or number of visitors are stored, and a changing means which changes the sales promotion information item obtained by the obtaining means, based on the information stored in the sales data storing
15 means, and the ticket issuing means may issue a coupon ticket on which a sales promotion information item changed by the changing means is listed, instead of the sales promotion information item obtained by the obtaining means.

20 Even more particularly, at the timing above, the changing means calculates a discount limit rate or a discount limit amount, and the sales promotion information may be changed based on this calculated information. With this configuration, it is possible to change the sales

promotion information in accordance a condition such as sales, and the sales promotion effect can be enhanced.

A coupon ticket issuing device according to one embodiment of the present invention comprises,

5 a sales promotion information storing means which stores a plurality of sales promotion information items incentive contents of which change in accordance with elapsed time from a time the ticket was issued,

 a receiving means which receives an issuing request
10 of a coupon ticket on which one sales promotion information item is listed,

 a time obtaining means which obtains current time,

 an obtaining means which obtains one sales promotion information item from the sales information storing means,
15 based on the issuing request received by the receiving means,

 a calculating means which converts based on the current time, the elapsed time from the time when the ticket was issued included in the one sales promotion
20 information item, and calculates a final time until when each incentive is available, and

 a ticket issuing means which issues the coupon ticket on which the incentive contents included in the one sales promotion information item and the final time until when

the incentive is available are listed.

Accordingly, it is possible to know by what time the customer has to go to the store, in order to receive the incentive listed on the coupon ticket, whereby it is
5 possible to promote a usage of the coupon ticket.

In a preferred embodiment, the calculating means further calculates the final time, based on a predicted time required to arrive at the store from the ticket issuing device.

10 A sales promotion system according to one embodiment of the present invention comprises,

a sales promotion information storing means which stores a plurality of sales promotion information items incentive contents of which change in accordance with
15 elapsed time from the time when a ticket was issued,

a first receiving means which receives an input of customer identification information,

a second receiving means which receives an issuing request of a coupon ticket on which one sales promotion
20 information item is listed,

a customer information storing means which stores the customer identification information and customer usage performance in such a manner as associated with each other,

a changing means which changes the one sales

promotion information item as to which the second receiving means receives the issuing request, based on the customer usage performance of the customer identification information received by the first receiving means, and

5 a ticket issuing means which issues the coupon ticket on which the customer identification information received by the first receiving means, the time when the ticket was issued, and thus changed sales promotion information item are listed, and

10 an updating means which receives the input of the customer identification information listed on the coupon ticket and based on the customer identification information, updates the customer usage performance stored in the customer information storing means.

15 A sales promotion system utilizing a coupon ticket according to one embodiment of the present invention comprises a coupon ticket issuing device, an input device which receives an input of information listed on the coupon ticket, and a customer information storing device, wherein,

20 the customer information storing device comprises, a storing means which stores customer identification information and customer rank in such a manner as associated with each other, and

 a customer rank updating means which updates the

customer rank,

the ticket issuing device comprises,

a sales promotion information storing means which
stores a plurality of sales promotion information items
5 incentive contents of which change in accordance with
elapsed time from the time when the ticket was issued,

a first receiving means which receives an input of
the customer identification information,

a second receiving means which receives an issuing
10 request of a coupon ticket on which one sales promotion
information item is listed,

a customer information storing means which stores the
customer identification information and customer past usage
performance in such a manner as associated with each other,

15 a changing means which changes one sales promotion
information as to which the second receiving means receives
the ticket issuing request, based on the customer past
usage performance of the customer identification
information received by the first receiving means,

20 a ticket issuing means which issues a coupon ticket
on which identification information identifying the coupon
ticket to be issued, a time when the ticket was issued, and
thus changed sales promotion information are listed,

a coupon ticket issuing history storing means of

which stores the identification information of the coupon ticket, the customer identification information received by the first receiving means, and information indicating the coupon usage status, and

5 a updating means which updates the information indicating the coupon usage status, based on a notification from the input device, and

 the input device comprises,

 a third receiving means which receives an input of
10 the identification information of the coupon ticket, and

 a notifying means which notifies the ticket issuing device of the identification information received by the third receiving means, wherein,

 the customer rank updating means updates the customer
15 rank, based on the information indicating the coupon usage status of the issuing history storing means.

Brief Description of Drawings

Fig. 1 is an overall block diagram of a sales
20 promotion system concerning one embodiment to which the present invention is applied.

Figs. 2A to 2B are diagrams showing an example of coupon information database.

Fig. 3 is a diagram showing an example of customer

database.

Figs. 4A to 4B are diagrams showing an example of ticket issuing database.

5 Figs. 5A to 5C are diagrams showing an example of weather information database.

Fig. 6 is a diagram showing an example of sales database.

Fig. 7 is an illustration showing an example of coupon ticket.

10 Fig. 8 is a flowchart showing a procedure of a first ticket issuing process.

Fig. 9 is an illustration showing the first embodiment concerning the present invention.

15 Fig. 10 is an illustration showing the first embodiment concerning the present invention.

Fig. 11 is a flowchart showing a procedure of a second ticket issuing process.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

20 Hereinafter, a sales promotion system concerning one embodiment to which the present invention is applied will be explained with reference to the attached drawings.

Overall configuration of the present system is shown in Fig. 1. The present system comprises a coupon ticket

issuing device 1, and a store terminal 8 which is installed in each store. The coupon ticket issuing device 1 and the store terminal 8 are connected with each other via a network 9. The coupon ticket issuing device 1 comprises a ticket issuing main unit 10, an input device 2, a display device 3, and a printer 4.

Both the ticket issuing main unit 10 and the store terminal 8 are configured, for example, by computer systems of general purpose, and individual elements or functions within the ticket issuing main unit 10 and the store terminal 8, which will be described below, are implemented by executing a computer program, for instance.

The input device 2 may be integral with the display device 3, such as a touch panel. The printer 4 prints a coupon ticket and output it as described below.

The ticket issuing main unit 10 further comprises a control section 11 which controls each processing as described below, a clock section 12 which announces the current time, a coupon information database 13, a customer database 14, a ticket issuing database 15, a weather information database 16, a sales database 17, and a map database 18.

The coupon information database 13 includes a coupon table 21 and a store table 22. The customer database 14

includes a customer table 23. The ticket issuing database
15 includes a ticket issuing history table 24 and a per-
time-frame ticket issuing counter table 25. The weather
information database 16 includes a region table 26, a
5 weather code table 27, and weather table 28. The sales
database 17 includes a sales table 29.

The coupon table 21 stores, a plurality of sales
promotion information items, incentive contents of which
change in accordance with elapsed time from the time when
10 the ticket was issued, by each store. A customer who
brings the coupon ticket to the store can enjoy this
incentive. For example, as shown in Fig. 2A, the coupon
table 21 includes, as data items, a coupon code 211
indicating a coupon ticket type, a store code 212,
15 incentive information 213 for sales promotion, and the
number of issued ticket sheets 224.

The incentive information 213 is information such as
bonus, which a customer having brought a coupon ticket to a
store can enjoy at the store, and this incentive
20 information is intended to motivate the customer to take a
certain purchasing action. In the present embodiment,
elapsed time (minutes) from the ticket issue and a discount
rate (%) during the elapsed time are stored in the
incentive information 213. There may be several

combinations between the elapsed time and the discount rate. Specific contents of the incentive information 213 (for example, how many minutes are set for the elapsed time and how much is the discount rate) may be determined uniquely in each store. The incentive information 213 may be updatable. For example, the incentive information 213 of one's own store may be updated by accessing the coupon table 21 from the store terminal 8, a mobile phone possessed by a store manager (not illustrated) or the like, via the network 9.

The store table 22 stores information regarding a target store for which the ticket issuing device 1 issues a coupon. For example, as shown in Fig. 2B, the store table 22 includes, as data items, a store code 221, a store name 222, a store address 223, a store telephone number 224, comments from the store 225, and a time frame coefficient 226. The time frame coefficient 226 indicates a coefficient to enhance the incentive during a predetermined time frame when the incentive is to be enhanced.

The customer table 23 stores information regarding a customer who obtains and utilizes a coupon ticket. For example, as shown in Fig. 3, the customer table 23 includes, as data items, a customer code 231, name 232, a customer address 233, a customer phone number 234, age 235,

gender 236 and a customer rank 237. This customer table 23 may exist on an information processor other than the ticket issuing main unit 10, if the information processor can be accessed from the ticket issuing main unit 10 via a network
5 and the like. The customer rank 237 is determined, as described below, based on the number of issued coupon ticket sheets and usage number of times (or usage rate).

The ticket issuing history table 24 stores an issuing history of the coupon ticket that the ticket issuing device
10 1 has issued. For example, as shown in Fig. 4A, the ticket issuing history table 24 includes, as data items, a ticket issuing number 241, a coupon ID 242, a coupon code 243, a ticket issuing date and time 244, a customer code 245, and a usage flag 246. The usage flag 246 is a flag indicating
15 whether or not an issued coupon ticket has been used. At the time of issuing a ticket, "zero" is set to the flag, which indicates the ticket has not been used yet.

The per-time-frame ticket issuing counter table 25 stores a ticket issuing performance per time frame. For
20 example, as shown in Fig. 4B, the per-time-frame ticket issuing counter table 25 includes, as data items, a coupon code 251, a ticket issuing year-month-date 252, the per-time-frame number of issued ticket sheets 253 and total number of issued ticket sheets 254. Here, the number of

issued ticket sheets per one hour is stored.

The region table 26 is a table to allocate a region code per region. For example, as shown in Fig. 5A, the region code 261 and the region name 262 are associated with
5 each other.

The weather code table 27 is a table to allocate a weather code and the like to a weather condition. For example, as shown in Fig. 5B, the weather code table 27 includes as data items, a weather code 271, a weather
10 condition 272, an incentive coefficient 273, and a time coefficient 274.

In the weather table 28, for example, as shown in Fig. 5C, there is stored a weather forecast 282 per time frame by region code 281. The weather forecast (predicted
15 weather) is represented by the weather code. The incentive coefficient 273 is for raising a discount rate if the condition is worse than a fine weather condition, so as to enhance the incentive. The time coefficient 274 is to allow the time when the incentive is effective to be
20 longer, than the effective time in fine weather condition.

The information stored in the weather table 28 may be obtained from a weather forecast information providing server, not illustrated, which is connected via the network

9 to the ticket issuing main unit 10, for example.

The sales table 29 stores sales amount and number of visitors at each store. For example, as shown in Fig. 6, the sales table 29 includes as data items, date 291, a
5 store code 292, sales amount 293, and number of visitors 294. Data of the sales table 29 may be obtained, for example, via a network from the store terminal 8.

Next, a process performed by the coupon ticket issuing device 1 having the above configuration will be
10 explained. At first, information listed on the coupon ticket will be explained with reference to Fig. 7. In the present embodiment, the information is managed by dividing a listing area into three parts in accordance with the information items to be displayed on the coupon ticket 50.
15 In other words, the coupon ticket 50 includes a store area 51 to list information items regarding the store, such as a store name, store address, and phone number; a sales promotion area 52 to list incentive information items for giving the incentive to a customer in response to his or
20 her visiting the store and/or purchasing merchandise; and an additional area 53 to list a coupon ticket issuing time, a coupon ID, a bar code and the like.

As for the coupon ticket issuing device 1 concerning to the present embodiment, it is preferable to install the

device on a busy street, such as in front of a station,
downtown area, and the like. With such installment, a
passing customer can obtain a coupon ticket from this
coupon ticket issuing device 1. With reference to the
5 flowchart in Fig. 8, a first procedure of the ticket
issuing process will be explained.

<Ticket issuing process 1>

The control section 11 displays a selection screen
for selecting a store or a coupon ticket on the display
10 device 3. At this timing, a customer selects one of the
stores or the coupon tickets by using the input device 2,
and makes a request for issuing a coupon ticket (S11). It
is to be noted that if a customer is allowed to input a
customer code in step S11, management by customer as
15 described below may be possible. For inputting the customer
code, a card on which the customer code is previously
recorded is given to the customer, so that it is read by a
card reader which is not illustrated.

The control section 11 obtains the incentive
20 information 213 from the coupon table 21, based on the
store code 212 of the selected store, or the coupon code
211 of the selected coupon ticket (S12). Next, using the
store code 212 as a key, the control section 11 obtains
from the store table 22, the store name 222, store address

223, store phone number 224 and store comment 225 (S13).
Then, it obtains the current time from the clock section 12
(S14). The control section 11 generates a unique coupon ID
(for example, arbitrarily combines the coupon code and the
5 number of issued ticket sheets). The control section 11
stores the ticket issuing history in the ticket issuing
history table 24. The control section 11 updates the
number of issued ticket sheets 214 in the coupon table 21
and the per-time-frame number of issued ticket sheets 253
10 of the per-time-frame ticket issuing counter table 25
(S15). Finally, upon receipt of an instruction from the
control section 11, the printer 4 prints the information
obtained from the store table 22, the incentive
information, and the issued time, respectively in the store
15 area 51, the sales promotion area 52, and the additional
area 53, and subsequently outputs a coupon ticket (see Fig.
7) (S16).

As thus described, since the discount rate falls as
the time lapses from the time when the ticket was issued,
20 it can be expected that the customer who has obtained the
coupon ticket may be motivated to go to the store early.

In this ticket issuing process, various processes or
functions may be added. For example, bar codes 55a and 55b
are generated, respectively indicating the incentive

information and the issuing time printed in the sales promotion area 52, and they may be printed in the additional area 53. This example is shown in Fig. 9.

Alternatively, two-dimensional bar code indicating the incentive information and the current time may be used.

Further alternatively, the coupon ID 56 generated in step S15 may be printed in the additional area 53. This example is shown in Fig. 10. Moreover, the coupon ID may be converted to a bar code and printed in the additional area 53. It is to be noted that in the example of Fig. 10, there is described a possibility that additional incentive may be awarded using the coupon ID 56 as a lucky number. Further, upon receipt of a customer code input, the customer code may be printed in the additional area 53.

<Ticket utilizing process>

When the customer brings to each store, the coupon ticket issued as described above, he or she can enjoy the incentive as indicated in the sale promotion area 52. In this case, the store terminal 8 may have the following functions. That is, when a coupon ID or a customer code is printed on the coupon ticket, a salesclerk inputs the coupon ID or the customer code into the store terminal 8. Alternatively, the bar code indicating the coupon ID or the customer code is read with a bar code reader. The store

terminal 8 notifies the ticket issuing main unit 10 of the coupon ID or the customer code thus inputted. The control section 11 of the coupon ticket issuing main unit 10 changes the usage flag 246 of the ticket issuing history table 24, from "0" to "1" which indicates that the coupon
5 has been utilized, using the coupon ID or the customer code thus notified as a key.

Accordingly, it is possible to trace whether or not the coupon ticket issued by the ticket issuing device 1 has
10 been actually utilized, and it is possible to measure the effect of sales promotion activity by the ticket issuing device 1.

<Customer rank update>

Since a usage status of an issued coupon ticket can
15 be traced as described above, it is further possible to trace the usage status by customer, and based on the usage status by customer, the customer can be ranked. These functions will be specifically explained below.

At first, when a customer is registered with a unique
20 customer code, the lowest rank "3" is set as the customer rank 237. It is preferable to perform the following processes periodically (for example, once a month).

The control section 11 refers to the ticket issuing history table 24, and using the customer code 245 as a key,

counts the number of issued ticket sheets and the usage number of times by each customer, during a predetermined period or for the whole period. Then, the control section 11 determines the customer rank based on the number of issued ticket sheets and the usage number of times, or based on only the usage number of times. For example, a customer who has the number of issued ticket sheets being a predetermined number or more is set to rank "2", ranked up by one. Further, out of the customers of rank "2", a customer who has the usage number of times being a predetermined times or more, or a usage rate being a predetermined value or more may be ranked as rank "1", which is the uppermost rank. In this manner, it is possible to rank the customer. As described below, it is further possible to change the incentive information by using the customer rank.

<Ticket issuing process 2>

In the procedure of the first ticket issuing process above, the incentive information 213 obtained from the coupon table 21 is printed in the sales area 52 as it is. Next, as a second procedure of ticket issuing process, there will be explained a case where a change is made on the incentive information 213 and print thus changed incentive information in the sales promotion area 52.

A flowchart of the second procedure of ticket issuing process is shown in Fig. 11. As seen from the flowchart, a point different from the first ticket issuing process above is step S21 where the incentive information is converted.

5 After the incentive information is converted in step S21, the incentive information thus converted is printed in the sales promotion area 52 in step S16. In step S21, multiple processing modes are applicable, and each of them will be explained below. It is to be noted that the following
10 conversion processes may be combined arbitrarily.

The first conversion process is a process to convert elapsed time from the time when the ticket was issued to a final effective time. A final time until when each discount is available is calculated, based on the elapsed
15 time from the time when the ticket was issued included in the incentive information 213 and the current time obtained from the clock section 12. For example, if the current time is 7:00 p.m., the incentive information "10% off within 30 minutes from the time the ticket was issued." is
20 converted to "10% off until 7:30 p.m."

The second conversion process is a process to convert the incentive information 213 based on a distance from the ticket issuing device 1 to the store. For example, the distance to the store is obtained based on the current

position (installation location of the ticket issuing device) stored in the storage device which is not illustrated, the store address 223 of the store table 22, and map information in the map database 14. After the distance obtained, a distance coefficient corresponding to the distance is further obtained. Here, the distance coefficient is for enhancing the incentive according to the distance, and is stored in the map database 14. Then, each discount rate in the incentive information 213 is multiplied by the distance coefficient according to the distance, and up the discount rate. With this function, if it takes a long time to move from the ticket issuing device to the store, the discount rate is made larger, thereby enhancing the sales promotion effect.

15 The third conversion process is a process to convert the incentive information 213, in the case where the time frame during when the incentive is to be enhanced is previously determined, and the current time obtained from the clock section 12 belongs to the time frame. For example, the control section 11 determines whether or not the current time belongs to the predetermined time frame, and if it does, the control section 11 obtains the time frame coefficient 226 of each store, multiplies each discount rate by the coefficient, thereby raising the

discount rate.

The fourth conversion process is a process to convert the incentive information, based on the weather information that is stored in the weather database 16. For example, a
5 region code of the location where the ticket issuing device 1 is installed is obtained from the region table 26. Further, based on the region code, a weather code is obtained from the weather table 28, as to the current weather or a predicted weather in the future (for example,
10 one or two hours later). Then, the incentive coefficient 273 corresponding to the weather code and the time coefficient 274 are obtained from the weather code table 27.

Then, each discount rate included in the incentive
15 information is multiplied by the incentive coefficient 273 obtained here, as well as the elapsed time included in the incentive information is multiplied by the time coefficient 274 obtained here, and then the incentive information is changed. At this timing, as shown in Fig. 5B as an
20 example, the incentive coefficient 273 and the time coefficient 274 are set to "1" when the weather is fine, whereas it is larger than "1" when it is rainy or heavily snowy. In other words, when it is bad weather, the incentive is more enhanced to motivate the customer more

strongly.

The fifth conversion process is a process to change the incentive information so as to enhance the incentive, when the number of issued ticket sheets of the current time
5 (today) is less, comparing to the past ticket issuing performance during the same time frame. For example, the control section 11 refers to the per-time-frame ticket issuing counter table 25, and calculates an average ticket issuing performance, for example, for the last one week, as
10 the past per-time-frame ticket issuing performance. Then, this past per-time-frame ticket issuing performance is compared with the ticket issuing status of today up to the current time. For example, if the current number of issued ticket sheets is less, at a predetermined rate or more (for
15 example, 30% or more), comparing to the past performance as to the number of issued ticket sheets in the same time frame, the incentive information is changed, such as increasing the discount rate, so as to enhance the incentive.

20 The sixth conversion process is a process to change the incentive information according to the sales condition of each store. In this process, the incentive information is changed based on the sales information stored in the sales table 29. For example, the control section 11

calculates a limit discount rate or a limit discount amount by store, and changes the incentive information, based on the sales amount 293 and the number of visitors 294.

The seventh conversion process is a process to change
5 the incentive information by customer, in accordance with the customer rank. In this case, the control section 11 refers to customer rank 238, and then, changes the incentive information according to the customer rank. For example, if the customer rank is "3", the incentive
10 information is left as it is without changing. When the customer rank is "2", the control section 11 changes the incentive information to make it more advantageous to the customer than the customer of the rank "3". When the customer rank is "1", the incentive information is changed
15 so that the incentive is made furthermore advantageous than that for the customer of rank "2". As described above, the customer rank is updated in accordance with the usage number of times of the present system, whereby the customer having larger usage number of times may be given more
20 advantageous incentive.

According to the conversion processes as described above, the ticket issuing device 1 can issue a coupon ticket on which incentive information of various modes are listed. Consequently, an attractive incentive is given to

a customer, and it is possible to expect a promotion in utilization of a coupon ticket which has already been issued.

The embodiments of the present invention as described
5 above are examples for a purpose of explanation, and it is not intended that the present invention is limited only to the scope of those embodiments. Therefore, it is to be understood that various changes and modifications will be apparent to those skilled in the art to carry out the
10 present invention without departing from the scope of the present invention.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1

1 1. A coupon ticket issuing device comprising,

2 a sales promotion information storing means which

3 stores a plurality of kinds of sales promotion information,

4 incentive contents of which change in accordance with

5 elapsed time from a time when a ticket was issued,

6 a receiving means which receives an issuing request

7 as to a coupon ticket on which one kind of sales promotion

8 information is listed,

9 an obtaining means which obtains said one kind of

10 sales promotion information from said sales promotion

11 information storing means, based on the issuing request

12 received by said receiving means, and

13 a ticket issuing means which issues the coupon ticket

14 on which the time when the ticket was issued and the sales

15 promotion information obtained by said obtaining means are

16 listed.

1

1 2. A coupon ticket issuing device according to claim 1,

2 wherein,

3 said ticket issuing means further lists on said coupon

4 ticket, a bar code for identifying the time when the ticket

5 was issued and the kind of one sales promotion information

6 obtained by said obtaining means.

1

1 3. A coupon ticket issuing device according to claim 1,

2 further comprising

3 a changing means which changes the sales promotion

4 information obtained by said obtaining means, based on a

5 distance from said ticket issuing device to a store which

6 accept the coupon ticket, wherein,

7 said ticket issuing means issues a coupon ticket on

8 which a sales promotion information changed by said

9 changing means is listed, instead of the sales promotion

10 information obtained by said obtaining means.

1

1 4. A coupon ticket issuing device according to claim 1,

2 further comprising

3 a changing means which changes the sales promotion

4 information obtained by said obtaining means, when the time

5 the ticket was issued belongs to a predetermined time

6 frame, wherein,

7 said ticket issuing means issues a coupon ticket on

8 which a sales promotion information changed by said

9 changing means is listed, instead of the sales promotion

10 information obtained by said obtaining means.

1

1 5. A coupon ticket issuing device according to claim 1,
2 further comprising
3 a weather information storing means which stores
4 weather information in areas around said coupon ticket
5 issuing device, and
6 a changing means which changes the sales promotion
7 information obtained by said obtaining means, based on the
8 weather information stored in said weather information
9 storing means, wherein,
10 said ticket issuing means issues a coupon ticket on
11 which a sales promotion information changed by said
12 changing means is listed, instead of the sales promotion
13 information obtained by said obtaining means.

1
1 6. A coupon ticket issuing device according to claim 1,
2 further comprising
3 a per-time-frame number of issued ticket sheets
4 storing means which stores past performance of per-time-
5 frame number of issued ticket sheets, and
6 a changing means which changes the sales promotion
7 information obtained by said obtaining means, based on said
8 past performance corresponding to a current time and a
9 current ticket issuing status, wherein,
10 said ticket issuing means issues a coupon ticket on

11 which a sales promotion information changed by said
12 changing means is listed, instead of the sales promotion
13 information obtained by said obtaining means.

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1 7. A coupon ticket issuing device according to claim 1,
2 wherein,

3 said plurality of kinds of sales promotion
4 information stored in said sales promotion information
5 storing means are able to be updated from an information
6 processor connected to said ticket issuing device.

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1 8. A coupon ticket issuing device according to claim 1,
2 wherein,

3 said ticket issuing means further lists on said
4 coupon ticket, identification information for identifying
5 said coupon ticket.

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1 9. A coupon ticket issuing device according to claim 1,
2 further comprising

3 a sales data storing means which stores information
4 regarding either of sales amount and number of visitors,
5 and

6 a changing means which changes the sales promotion
7 information obtained by said obtaining means, based on the

8 information stored in said sales data storing means,
9 wherein,
10 said ticket issuing means issues a coupon ticket on
11 which a sales promotion information changed by said
12 changing means is listed, instead of the sales promotion
13 information obtained by said obtaining means.

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1 10. A coupon ticket issuing device according to claim 9,
2 wherein,

3 said changing means calculates either of a discount
4 limit rate and a discount limit amount, and based thus
5 calculated information, changes said sales promotion
6 information.

1

1 11. A coupon ticket issuing device, comprising,
2 a sales promotion information storing means which
3 stores a plurality of kinds of sales promotion information
4 incentive contents of which change in accordance with
5 elapsed time from the time the ticket was issued,
6 a receiving means which receives an issuing request
7 as to a coupon ticket on which one sales promotion
8 information is listed,
9 a time obtaining means which obtains a current time,
10 an obtaining means which obtains, based on the

11 issuing request received by said receiving means, said one
12 sales promotion information from said sales information
13 storing means,

14 a calculating means which converts based on the
15 current time, the elapsed time from the time when the
16 ticket was issued, included in said one sales promotion
17 information obtained by said obtaining means, and
18 calculates a final time until when each incentive is
19 available, and

20 a ticket issuing means which issues a coupon ticket
21 on which the incentive contents included in said one sales
22 promotion information obtained by said obtaining means and
23 said final time until when the incentive is available are
24 listed.

1

1 12. A coupon ticket issuing device according to claim 11,
2 wherein,

3 said calculating means further calculates said final
4 time, based on a predicted time required to arrive at a
5 store which accept the coupon ticket from said ticket
6 issuing device.

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1 13. A sales promotion system comprising,

2 a sales promotion information storing means which

3 stores a plurality of kinds of sales promotion information
4 incentive contents of which change in accordance with
5 elapsed time from the time when the ticket was issued,
6 a customer information storing means which stores
7 customer identification information and customer usage
8 performance in such a manner as associated with each other,
9
10 a first receiving means which receives an input of
11 said customer identification information,
12 a second receiving means which receives an issuing
13 request of a coupon ticket on which one kind of sales
14 promotion information is listed,
15 a changing means which changes the sales promotion
16 information as to which the second receiving means receives
17 the issuing request, based on the customer usage
18 performance of the customer identification information
19 received by the first receiving means,
20 a ticket issuing means which issues a coupon ticket
21 on which the customer identification information received
22 by the first receiving means, the time when the ticket was
23 issued, and thus changed sales promotion information are
24 listed, and
25 an updating means which receives the input of the
26 customer identification information listed on said coupon

27 ticket and based on the customer identification
28 information, updates the customer usage performance stored
29 in the customer information storing means.

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1 14. A sales promotion system utilizing a coupon ticket,
2 comprising a coupon ticket issuing device, an input device
3 which receives an input of information listed on the coupon
4 ticket, and a customer information storing device, wherein,
5 said customer information storing device comprises,
6 a storing means which stores customer identification
7 information and a customer rank in such a manner as
8 associated with each other, and
9 a customer rank updating means which updates said
10 customer rank,
11 said coupon ticket issuing device comprises,
12 a sales promotion information storing means which
13 stores a plurality of kinds of sales promotion information
14 incentive contents of which change in accordance with
15 elapsed time from a time when the ticket was issued,
16 a customer information storing means which stores the
17 customer identification information and customer past usage
18 performance in such a manner as associated with each other,
19 a first receiving means which receives an input of
20 the customer identification information,

21 a second receiving means which receives an issuing
22 request of a coupon ticket on which one kind of sales
23 promotion information is listed,
24 a changing means which changes the sales promotion
25 information as to which the second receiving means receives
26 the issuing request, based on the customer past usage
27 performance of the customer identification information
28 received by the first receiving means,
29 a ticket issuing means which issues a coupon ticket
30 on which the identification information of the coupon
31 ticket to be issued, a time when the ticket was issued, and
32 thus changed sales promotion information are listed,
33 a coupon ticket issuing history storing means which
34 stores said identification information of the coupon
35 ticket, said customer identification information received
36 by the first receiving means, and information indicating a
37 usage status of said coupon ticket, and
38 an updating means which updates the information
39 indicating the usage status of said coupon ticket, based on
40 a notification from said input device, and
41 said input device comprises,
42 a third receiving means which receives an input of
43 the identification information of said coupon ticket, and
44 a notifying means which notifies said ticket issuing

45 device of the identification information received by the
46 third receiving means, wherein,
47 said customer rank updating means updates said
48 customer rank, based on the information indicating the
49 usage status of the coupon ticket in said coupon ticket
50 issuing history storing means.

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1 15. A coupon ticket issuing method, comprising,

2 a receiving step which receives an issuing request of
3 a coupon ticket,

4 an obtaining step which obtains sales promotion
5 information which include incentive contents of which
6 change in accordance with elapsed time from a time when the
7 coupon ticket was issued, so as to list the sales promotion
8 information on said coupon ticket as to which the issuing
9 request is received, and

10 a ticket issuing step which issues the coupon ticket
11 on which said sales promotion information thus obtained and
12 the time when the coupon ticket was issued are listed.

1

1 16. A coupon ticket issuing method, comprising,

2 a receiving step which receives an issuing request of
3 a coupon ticket,

4 an obtaining step which obtains sales promotion

5 information which include incentive contents of which
6 change in accordance with elapsed time from a time when the
7 coupon ticket was issued, upon receipt of said issuing
8 request,

9 a calculating step which converts the elapsed time
10 from the time when the coupon ticket was issued included in
11 said sales promotion information thus obtained, based on
12 current time, and calculates a final time until when each
13 incentive is available, and

14 a ticket issuing step which issues the coupon ticket
15 on which the incentive contents included in the sales
16 promotion information thus obtained and the final time
17 until when the incentive is available are listed.

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17. A sales promotion method, comprising,

- a receiving step which receives identification information of a customer and an issuing request of a coupon ticket,
- an obtaining step which obtains sales promotion information which include incentive contents of which change in accordance with elapsed time from a time when the coupon ticket was issued, upon receipt of the issuing request,
- a changing step which changes said sales promotion information based on usage performance of the customer whose identification information is received,
- a ticket issuing step which issues the coupon ticket on which thus changed sales promotion information is listed, and
- an updating step which updates the usage performance of the customer whose identification information is received, after the coupon ticket thus issued is utilized.