

Development and research of system to revitalize shopping districts through the use of eco bags with IC tags

Eco bags with IC tags distributed in a shopping district in Kami-Itabashi, Tokyo to promote visits to the shopping district

As part of a the JKA's project to supplement promotion of bicycle and other industries, Toppan Printing Co., Ltd. has been contracted by the New Media Development Association to conduct research and development of a system to revitalize shopping districts through the use of eco bags with IC tags. The experiment will be conducted at 30 stores from the approximate 140 in the Kami-Itabshi Minami-Guchi Ginza Shopping District in Tokyo's Itabashi Ward starting December 7, 2009.

A total of 300 eco bags with IC tags attached will be distributed free of charge to shoppers. PCs connected to IC tag reader/writers will be lent to the 30 participating shops. Shoppers will be able to receive visitor points by holding the eco bags with IC tags up to the IC tag reader/writers. Points awarded are stored on the IC tag as accumulated visit points and the IC tag's individual ID and time and date of the visit are stored on the PC. After the shops points period ends, a prize drawing will be held based on the number of points accumulated on IC tags. These can be exchanged for gift tokens.



Image of the experiment in a shop (left) and an eco bag with an IC tag (right)

Background

As global warming progresses, there is a focus on approaches to environmental problems in everyday consumer activities. Due to the success of large-scale suburban shops, the decline of shopping districts in urban areas has become a problem. It has also been an issue that with point card and regional money systems implemented in some shopping districts, the points have remained accumulated and unused in many cases.

In tackling these 3 challenges of “environment”, “regional revitalization” and “regional money”, Toppan Printing will examine the development and operation method of a distribution system that reduces the use of shopping bags by distributing eco bags to local consumers, promotes visits to shopping districts and returns points accumulated on the IC tag to the community as regional money.

Overview of the experiment

Name: Development and research of system to revitalize shopping districts through eco bags with IC tags

Implementation period: Monday 7 to Wednesday 23 December, 2009 – points awarded at shops
Thursday 24 to Wednesday 30 December, 2009 – exchange of points via draw

Location: Kami-Itabashi Minami-Guchi Ginza Shopping District (Itabashi Ward, Tokyo)

Objectives: The main purposes of distributing eco bags with IC tags to local consumers and having them carry them, are to reduce the use of shopping bags, promote visits to the shopping district, and return points accumulated on IC tags to the local community as regional money. Through this experiment, Toppan Printing will examine development and operation methods for regional money distribution systems based on eco bags.

Details of the experiment:

(1) Distribution of eco bags with IC tags to local shoppers

During the period in which points are awarded, eco bags with IC tags will be distributed free of charge to 300 shoppers (monitors) in the Kami-Itabashi Minami-Guchi Ginza Shopping District. Ten bags will be distributed by each of the 30 shops participating in the experiment.

For the IC tags attached to the eco bags, coin tags for linen (*1), which were developed by Toppan Printing in August 2007, will be used.

Continued use of the eco bags with IC tags will be promoted through a high quality design provided by “HIROCOLEDGE”, the product brand with which Hiroko Takahashi(*2) is involved.

(2) Awarding of points to monitors

During the period in which points are awarded, monitors that take their eco bags with IC tags to the shopping district will be awarded points from participating stores that they visit. Points can be collected by holding an eco bag with an IC tag over an IC tag reader/writer connected to a PC and accumulated visiting points are written on to the IC tag. The IC tag's individual ID and the date and time of the visit are recorded on the PC.

(3) Exchanging accumulated points for gifts

During the point exchange period, prize draws will be held in the shopping district according to the number of points accumulated by the monitors and points will be exchanged for gift tokens.

(4) Analysis and verification of results

In addition to the research data obtained from the experiment, the results from sources such as literature and web-based research, interviews, and information gathering will also be analyzed.

Specifically, consumer attitudes to eco bags and the potential for revitalizing shopping districts through the use of regional money will be examined.

(*1) Coin tag for linen

This tag can be attached to linen and uniforms and left on during industrial washing. It also does not set off metal detectors or other meters easily. It conforms with international standard ISO15693 and is compatible with reader/writers produced by various companies.

(*2) Hiroko Takahashi

An artist who has produced works such as craft, fashion and art that push forward Japanese traditions. One of her most famous pieces is the national costume for Riyo Mori, the Japanese representative for the 2007 Miss Universe contest.

JKA's location: Chiyoda Ward, Tokyo; Director: Minoru Harada

Toppan Printing; head office: Chiyoda Ward, Tokyo; President & CEO: Naoki Adachi

New Media Development Association location: Bunkyo Ward, Tokyo; President: Takehisa Okabe

NOTE: This product is not available in the United States. For more information, please contact Ron Ens at 732-469-8400 ext. 2505.