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Consumers take control of what location-triggered offers retailers send to their mobiles

Submitted by [paulskeldon](#) on March 3, 2010 – 11:09 am [One Comment](#)

The sending of special offer vouchers to consumer mobile phones as they near certain retailers looks set to overcome its biggest hurdle – spamming people – as [Placecast](#) in the US and now [MePlease](#) in the UK look to let consumers take charge of what offers they actually receive on their phones.

Placecast, which went live last week in the US with its ShopAlerts, and MePlease, which is in trial mode in the UK, both allow offer texts to be triggered as consumers near certain stores. However, unlike most location based discount services, both allow the consumer to pre-determine which retailers' offers they receive.

Placecast is working with leading US retailers [Sonic](#), [American Eagle Outfitters](#) and [REI](#) to set up 'geo-fences' around stores, so that as opted in consumers enter these virtual areas, money off offers are texted to their phones. So far, so location-based vouchering. What makes the service different is that consumers can opt in to which brands they want to receive offers from if they do enter the 'geo-fences', reducing the negative effect of spam.

The UK's MePlease aims to take this even further, signing up as many high street brands as possible, but allowing consumers to predetermine, via a website, which offers they receive. Brand names are a bit thin on the ground as the company claims to be in 'stealth mode' currently, but more details when it launches in April.

And it seems to be working. Placecast has been running trials of its shop alerts in various US cities since September 2009 and has found that 60% of participants found the location-triggered messages to be "cool and innovative", while 79% said it increased their likelihood to visit a store. More than 65% made a purchase as a result of a ShopAlerts message.



Click [here](#) to see how Placecast's ShopAlerts works

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