

Axicon 6000 Application at Procter & Gamble – Coupons.

The Issue

P&G, at its world headquarters in Cincinnati, Ohio, identified the need to ensure that when coupons are designed and printed, there is complete correlation between the value of the coupon in human readable text and the value of the coupon as expressed in the coupon barcode add-on part of the symbol.

The Problem

P&G tried to validate this correlation with the use of a regular hand held computer with built-in barcode scanner. It was to no avail. The suppliers of these devices were not able to get the application right, although the two look-up tables were simple to install. The application consisted of comparing the scanned symbol with two files, one for the coupon value and one for the product family. After many attempts P&G gave up and contacted Axicon's distributor Symbology Inc. who have been supplying P&G with film masters and electronic barcode files for many years.

The Solution



The picture on the left shows a typical page of a coupon newspaper insert.

The barcode symbol consists of two parts, the basic UPC code on the left and the US coupon code in Code 128 on the right.

Symbology Inc. sold P&G a number of Axicon 6000 verifiers. The strong selling argument was the standard product feature of look-up tables or text. In fact P&G staff at that time were more interested in the validation capability than in verification. Axicon developed a simple plug-in named Family Code and one called Value Code. These two, in combination with the standard Look-up plug-in, provided P&G with the ability to validate the coupon value and family name with the human readable text on the printed coupon.

P&G supplied two Microsoft® Excel files for the Look-up facility. These were labeled Family Code and Value Code. These two files were then transformed in .CSV files and stored in the verifier software folder. When the appropriate plug-ins are selected in the setup section of the Axicon software, each time the coupon part of the symbol is verified, the family name and the coupon value will appear in the decoded number part of the Axicon screen when the appropriate tab is selected. See sample below for the Family Code:

	Average	This Scan
Grade (Pass=1.5)	A (4.0)	A (4)
Average Bar Gain (tolerance)	-4% (±13.5%)	-4% (±13.5%)
Magnification	80% (0.0104*)	80% (0.0104*)
Check Character	OK (1)	
Structure	1	OK
Left Margin	1	OK: >=10 (>= 9)
Right Margin	1	OK: >= 9 (>= 9)
Aperture	0.006"	59 bars + spaces

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The Benefits

Although P&G, in this instance was not looking for a verifier, the Axicon 6000 completely met their requirements and provided print quality verification at the same time. In hindsight this then became the major reason for buying the Axicon products.