



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF  
**COMMERCE**  
**NEWS**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20230

National  
Telecommunications &  
Information  
Administration

## **Commerce's NTIA Announces More Than 100 Retailers Certified to Participate in TV Converter Box Coupon Program for Digital Television Transition**

*Consumers May Request Coupons Jan. 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009*

*For Immediate Release: Dec. 11, 2007*

*Media Contact: Todd Sedmak, (202) 482-7002 or [tseadmak@ntia.doc.gov](mailto:tseadmak@ntia.doc.gov)*

**WASHINGTON**—The Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) announced today that eight of the largest consumer electronics retailers -- Best Buy, Circuit City, Kmart, RadioShack, Sam's Club, Sears, Target, Wal-Mart -- have been certified to participate in the TV Converter Box Coupon Program along with more than 100 other retailers, representing more than 14,000 stores throughout the nation, and additional Program details. Attached is a listing of certified retailers, to date.

Consumers may purchase converter boxes to keep their analog televisions working with over-the-air broadcasts after February 17, 2009, when full power television stations convert to all-digital signals.

"NTIA thanks these certified retailers who will participate in the TV Converter Box Coupon Program and we look forward to working with them in 2008 and 2009," said Acting NTIA Administrator Meredith Attwell Baker. "The TV Converter Box Coupon Program is on schedule and will be ready to take consumers' coupon requests starting January 1, 2008, as directed by Congress, to ensure the success of the nation's transition to digital broadcasting."

Additional TV Converter Box Coupon Program updates include:

Consumer-friendly name and logo tested nationwide by targeted audiences (see attachment);

Converters by DigitalSTREAM, Zenith, Magnavox, and Philco have been certified for purchase with coupons and more are expected in the next several weeks;

The program name, "TV Converter Box Coupon Program," and consumer-tested brand will help television viewers know that this is an official Government program;

A simple one-page application only requesting name, address, one or two coupons and if the household subscribes to cable, satellite, pay TV service (see attachment);

Coupons planned for distribution to consumers beginning February 17, 2008;

-more-

Starting January 1, 2008, households can request coupons when the program's toll free number, Web site, fax and P.O. Box go live (see background information below); and

More than 140 governmental and national organizations will work to ensure vulnerable communities are not left without broadcast television because of a lack of information about the transition. Examples include:

The NAACP and the Native American Journalists Association;

NTIA is working closely with the National Association of Broadcasters, the National Cable & Telecommunications Association, the Consumer Electronics Association and the Digital TV Transition Coalition, which consists of more than 180 national organizations and industry partners providing public service announcements and consumer education worth nearly \$1 billion;

The Veterans Administration (VA) will work with NTIA to ensure that digital transition information and Coupon Program applications are available in 155 VA hospitals and 1,000 clinics, and the VA will inform 240,000 VA employees; 1 million VA volunteers; and more than 1 million veterans not served by the VA about the transition;

The American Library Association's 65,000 members will work with NTIA to inform the public and librarians about the digital transition and will work with librarians to post information about the Coupon Program at their libraries and on their Web sites;

Univision has announced an extensive campaign to educate Hispanic TV viewers about the digital transition and the Coupon Program. NTIA is working closely with Univision to ensure its ads are timed appropriately for the distribution of coupons to the public.

NTIA, Panasonic Corporation, and the Southeast Asia Resource Action Center are providing information to the public in Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean and the Filipino language, Tagalog. The Center will distribute information and will encourage the Cambodian-American, Laotian-American, and Vietnamese-American communities to use the Government's multilingual call center to apply for coupons.

For more information about the TV Converter Box Coupon Program, go to [www.ntia.doc.gov/dtvcoupon](http://www.ntia.doc.gov/dtvcoupon) and for more information about the entire digital television transition, go to [www.dtvtransition.org](http://www.dtvtransition.org).

###

## **Background:**

The Digital Television Transition and Public Safety Act of 2005 requires full-power television stations to cease analog broadcasts and switch to digital after February 17, 2009. The Act also authorizes NTIA to create The TV Converter Box Coupon Program.

Digital television provides consumers with a clearer picture, more programming, and frees up spectrum for advanced wireless broadband services and interoperable communications among emergency first responders.

By February 17, 2009, consumers need to look at each analog television set in their home that is not connected to cable, satellite, or other pay television service and make a decision:

- They may connect it to cable, satellite, or pay television service;
- They may replace it with a TV with a digital tuner or
- They may keep it working with a TV converter box.

Coupons are worth \$40 each, to be used toward the purchase of up to two, digital-to-analog converter boxes. Between January 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009, households can request coupons while supplies last in one of four ways:

- Apply online at [www.dtv2009.gov](http://www.dtv2009.gov). **This website will be active on Jan. 1.**
- Call the Coupon Program 24-hour hotline 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009), TTY 1-877-530-2634
- Mail a coupon application to: PO BOX 2000, Portland, OR 97208-2000
- Fax a coupon application to 1-877-DTV-4ME2 (1-877-388-4632)

NTIA will provide consumers a list of eligible converters and participating retailers when coupons are mailed and on its Website. Coupons expire 90 days after they are mailed, and only one coupon can be used to purchase each coupon-eligible converter box.

NTIA encourages the voluntary participation of consumer electronics retailers. The application deadline to become a certified retailer is March 31, 2008. Consumer electronics retailers interested in participating in the program should go to [www.ntiadtv.gov](http://www.ntiadtv.gov) or call 1-866-296-1107 for additional information and to sign up as a participating retailer.

NTIA is responsible for the development of the domestic and international telecommunications policy of the Executive Branch.

###