

— INGENIOUS IDEAS —

— D E P A R T M E N T —

How To Stamp Out Payment Problems

(NAPSA)—Here's good news for everyone who's ever been short on cash. You can forget your wallet and still have government-issued, fully negotiable, legal tender on hand.

That's because you can now use First-Class stamps to pay for non-postal goods and services, under the U.S. Postal Service's new USPS MicroPayment™ program.

For example, Guido Karp of a musical act representative company called FansUNITED, which works with such acts as Back Street Boys and 'N Sync, likes to accept stamps for shipping and handling of photos of a concert or other event. He says, "Having now used the new USPS MicroPayment for a number of months and with several musical acts in many venues, we have enjoyed..."

- Responses from concert-goers at concerts offering USPS MicroPayment increased by at least 10 percentage points compared to those offering checks or credit cards.

- Demand for concert photos increased.

- Lower processing costs compared to checks or credit cards.

- It offers an extremely safe form of payment.

He's called the program "a versatile, convenient and valuable business tool."

John Ward, vice president of Core Business Marketing, says the program offers an innovative use of an existing postal product—



Mail order and other transactions can now be made using postage stamps for money.

courtesy reply mail—and a new use of postage stamps for currency. FansUNITED gives reply cards to concertgoers who want photos of the band performing. The fans return the card with postage stamps affixed to it. The company turns in the postage stamps to the Postal Service and redeems 90 percent of the stamps' face value.

Ward also notes, "companies that offer low price-point items or premiums between \$1 and \$10—such as those sold in comic books or on the backs of cereal boxes—should take advantage of the USPS MicroPayment option."

"These low-cost premiums don't really lend themselves to cash, credit card or checks," he adds.

Other possible ways to use this system include non-profit contributions, accessories, subscription trials and trial memberships.

For more information on the program call the Postal Service at 1-866-617-7706.