

Incentives for Waste Sorting: Signage Experiments at Recycling Bring Points

Kimberley Girardon*, Patrick Gabriel* and Mickaël Dupré**

*IAE Brest, LEGO research unit (France)

**University of French Polynesia (UPF)

Abstract

- **Objective**

Nudges are commonly used to incite a behavior, but how effective are they in a reflective task such as waste sorting? The objective is to compare the effect of nudges to the transmission of information alone in a context of low level of knowledge.

- **Methodology**

A benchmarking, a qualitative study and the application of an experimental methodology allow us to explore the behavioral effect of three forms of incentives in voluntary waste collection points.

- **Results**

The results suggest a correlation between the type of incentive and the complexity of the behavior perceived by the target. More specifically, informative displays led to an increase in the weight of waste sorted and were more effective than nudges, which did not significantly increase the amount of waste sorted.

- **Managerial and societal implications**

Nudges are not always effective, even within a framework of responsible behavior. Consistency should be sought between the type of incentive, the perceived complexity of the task and the level of practice of the users. Our study proposes an approach to identify the type of incentive to use, taking into account the behavior to be encouraged and certain characteristics of the target population with respect to this behavior (perceived complexity of the task, prior knowledge).

- **Originality**

The experimentation, through a “before and after” design with a control group, was conducted *in situ*, i.e. in real conditions.

- **Keywords:** nudge, information, communication, environmentally responsible user behavior.

The authors would like to thank the reviewers of the journal, whose invaluable advice helped to improve the proposed article. They would also like to thank SYVADEC, the Corsican waste recovery syndicate.

To contact the authors: kimberley.girardon@gmail.com ; patrick.gabriel@univ-brest.fr ; mickael.dupre@upf.pf

Girardon K., Gabriel P. and Dupré M. (2022), Incentives for waste sorting: signage experiments at recycling bring points, *Décisions Marketing*, 105, 231-248.