Behaviour Change

IRRV
North and Mid Wales
December 2017

Andrew Stevens - EK Services







HOME » FINANCE » ECONOMICS

Whitehall won't be 'nudged', finds National Audit Office

David Cameron's "Behavioural Insight Team" – billed as the answer to achieving social change without resorting to regulation – has failed to convince a single Whitehall department to make use of its services, a National Audit Office report reveals.

News > Politics

Cameron's 'nudge unit' should be given the elbow, says Labour MP

Yet the news that David Cameron has a Behavioural Insight Team inside Downing Street, and what's more that it is increasingly influential within the Lib-Con coalition, has been treated as if were a perfectly normal, even admirable thing. Have we lost our minds?

The unit was criticised by Labour MP Luciana Berger when it emerged last year that staff had spent about £750 a month on travel. Calling the scheme the "prime minister's vanity project", Ms Berger said: "It is hard to see how ministers can justify this extravagance when they are cutting spending for our police and schools."

A message to the illiberal Nudge Industry: push off

Behaviour Change: MINDSPACE

MINDSPACE neatly summarises these nine key nudge techniques in behaviour change as it is used in public policy

Messenger - We are influenced by who communicates information

Incentives - People tend to avoid losses rather than seek gains

Norms - We are strongly influenced by what others do

Defaults - People will tend to go with the flow

Salience - We act on information that seems novel and relevant to us

Priming - Using sub-conscious cues to influence decisions

Affects - Emotions strongly influence decisions

Commitments - Public commitments are more likely to be honoured

Ego - People do things that make them feel good



ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: MESSENGER (I)

Messenger suggests we are influenced by who communicates information

Example scenario:

The Budget recently took place!

Who did you trust more on the impact to your own finances?







ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: MESSENGER (II)







ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: INCENTIVES

Incentives is the idea that people tend to avoid losses rather than seek gains

Example scenario:

 Our responses to incentives are shaped by predictable mental shortcuts, such as strongly avoiding losses.

Pay before 31st March to receive a 10% discount





INCENTIVES (II) - The power of the anchor!

	Sales Promotion Summary	n
Summary Quotation		
	islam to products and services agreed between the MINION Edward Dooks & W	alfu
GROSS LIST PRICE Includive of VAT	£11637	
SCRAPPAGE	e 300	
NET BALANCE	i (1) 337.	H
LESS QUANTITY DISCOUNT	sel. 1135/	\equiv
NET PRICE Inclusive of VAT	E 791L	=
	1136	=
LESS 10% HOME ACCOUNT	e 793	_
BUB BALANCE	e 7143	
LESS 10% IMMEDIATE ORDER DISCOUNT* Must phone Head Office for Author	e 7/1ς	
TOTAL DISCOUNT PRICE CASH PRICE	= =7143 HA = 6429	
LESS DEPOSIT 756 CASH DEP	OSIT #1795 - HA E 642	
Home Account Document Fee	= 110	
ACCOUNT BALANCE	e 5617	
EVEREST HOME ACCOUNT EXAMI Balance x 120 monthly payments - maximum		
120 month minimum payment	= 123:17	
to clear (24) month accordinated payment	E 306.8)	
To clear 36 month accelerated payment	€ 226-20	
AMOUNT YOU WILL BE SAVING BY ORDER	NO TODAY = E 711c.	
CASH BACK DISCOUNT	+ E 578-	
A further 10% cashback dividend will be paid	after the payments have been made.	_
Representative's signature	and 4 August 2	011
H50004 (Fair (0)/10)		91777





ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: INCENTIVES (III)

The Speed Camera Lottery - The Fun Theory -

YouTube





ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: NORMS

Norms mean that we are strongly influenced by what others do

Example scenario:

- A hotel chain was encouraging visitors to re-use their towel to save the
 environment. They tried three interventions.
- Placed a sign up in the bathroom asking visitors to re-use their towel. 35% of visitors did so.
- When using norms they changed their sign to read 'most guests re-use their towel'. This increased the number to 44% of visitors who did so.
- The third intervention was rewording their sign again to say 'most previous occupants of this room re-used their towel during their stay' the numbers rose to 49% compliance.





ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: NORMS (II)



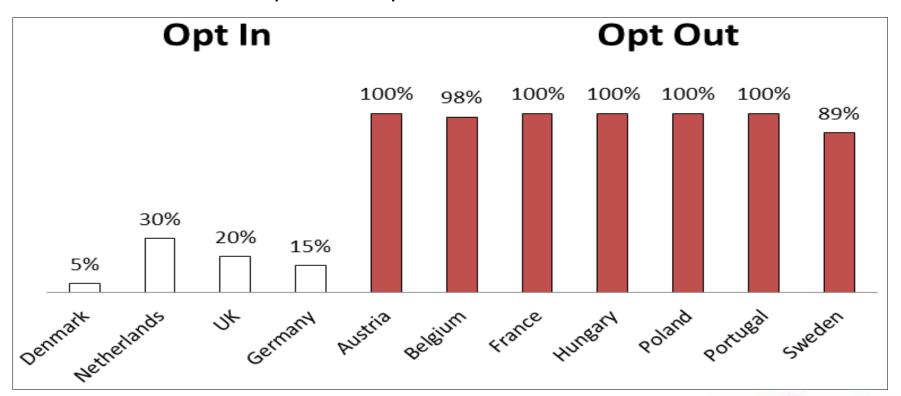


ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: DEFAULTS

Defaults suggest that people tend to go with the flow

Example scenario:

- This can be as simple as making people 'opt out' instead of 'opt in'.
- An example is comparing the Organ Donor Register from different countries that use opt in and opt out:





ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: DEFAULTS (II)





Is car insurance auto-renewal the best option?

Well, that depends on what you mean by 'best'. If you're relying on auto-renewal to take away the irritation of searching for car insurance, then yes – it probably is the best option; but sitting back and doing nothing could be costing you £289** that you could save by comparing.

Aarrgghh! We're wasting £2.37 billion a year* by 'auto-renewing' our car insurance



ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: SALIENCE

Salience is the principle that we act on information that seems novel and relevant to us

Example scenario:

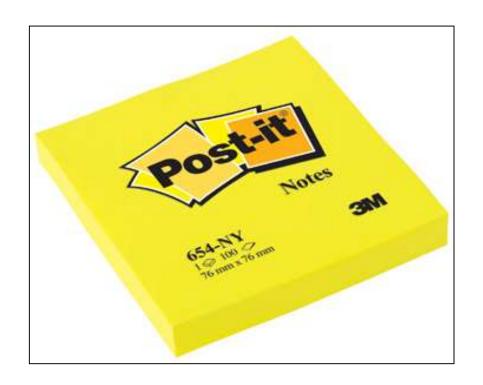
- Sutton council wanted to reduce litter in the borough
- The council embarked on a campaign which included a high impact public event to raise awareness of the issue



- For the event a team from the council created an 11 tonne pile of litter, representing 1 day's worth of dropped litter in Sutton, in the middle of High Street
- Over the course of the anti-litter campaign the amount of litter dropped on Sutton's streets fell by 8% during the campaign a saving of £80,000



ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: SALIENCE (II)





ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: SALIENCE (III)



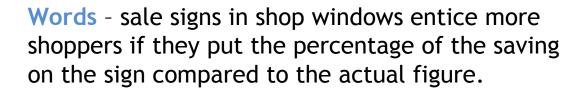


ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: PRIMING

Priming means using sub-conscious cues, like sights, words and smells, to influence decisions

Example scenarios:

Sights - the flashing lights of the emergency services Instantly hits our sub-conscious cues. We always move out of the way to let them through.



e.g. 30% off compared to £10 off.

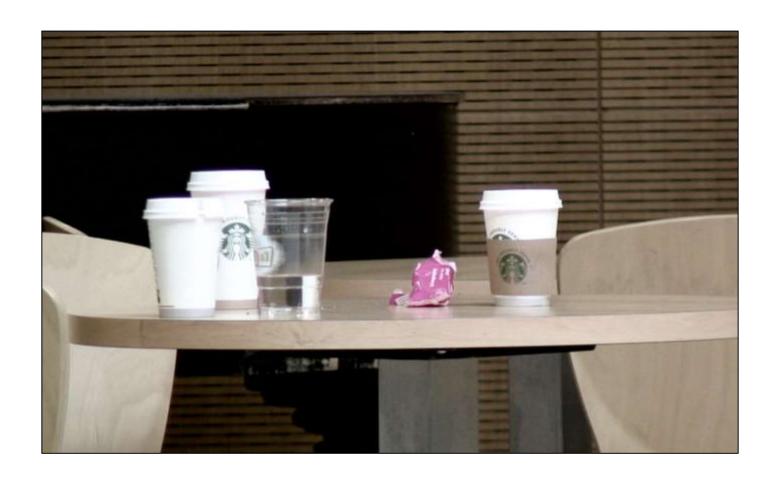
Smells - freshly baked bread put out at lunchtime in a supermarket will entice shoppers further in to the shop and fill their baskets.







ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: PRIMING (II)





ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: PRIMING (III)





ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: AFFECTS

Affects suggests that emotional associations strongly influence decisions

Example scenario:

Emotions can powerfully shape our behaviour.

A road sign to warn of workers in the road is expected to remind drivers to take care as they pass.





ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: AFFECTS (II)





ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: COMMITMENTS

Commitments means that public commitments are more likely to be honoured

Example scenario:

An innovative commitment product has been used to help smokers quit.

Individuals were offered a savings account in which they deposited funds for six months, after which they took a test for nicotine.

If they passed the test (no presence of nicotine) then the money was returned to them, otherwise their money was forfeited.

Surprise tests at 12 months showed an effect on lasting cessation: the savings account commitment increased the likelihood of smoking cessation by 30%*.





ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: COMMITMENTS (II)





ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: EGO

Ego is the idea that people do things that make them feel good

Example scenario:

- We all have a tendency to associate ourselves with things we like, and disassociate ourselves from things we dislike
- Take football fans, for example. An experiment was carried out, calling up fans after their team had played a match. What they said was interesting
 - When their team had won, fans were happy, naturally, and told the interviewer - we were brilliant, or we played really well
 - When their teams had lost, however, their language was different they were rubbish, they threw it away, etc.
- This understanding of how people define themselves influences choice.
 This is why brands try to create an image of success, so people can feel a personal connection to abstract ideas

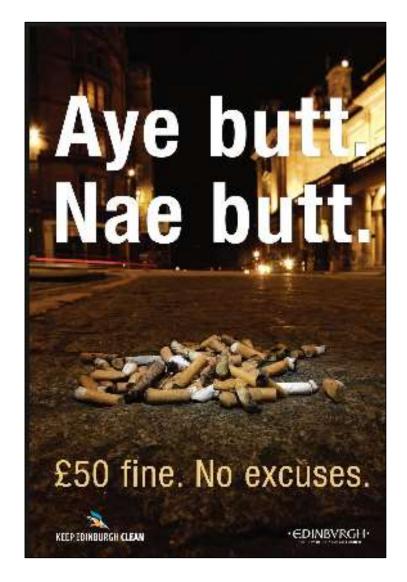


ABOUT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE: EGO (II)





What do you think of this message?





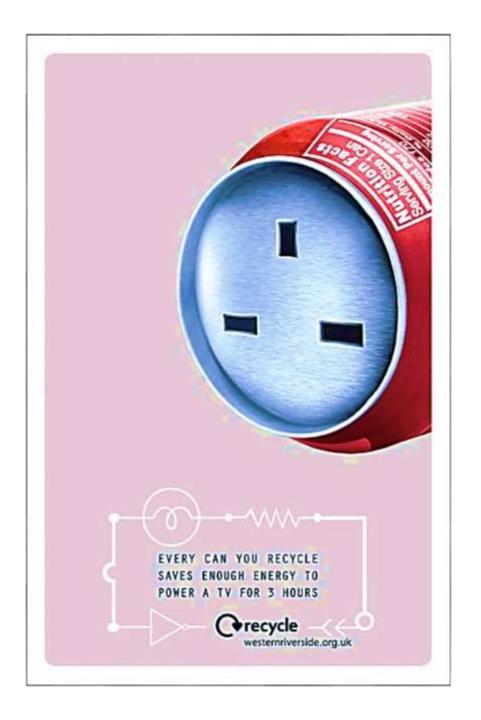
What do you think of this message?

























<u>Piano stairs - TheFunTheory.com - Rolighetsteorin.se - YouTube</u>

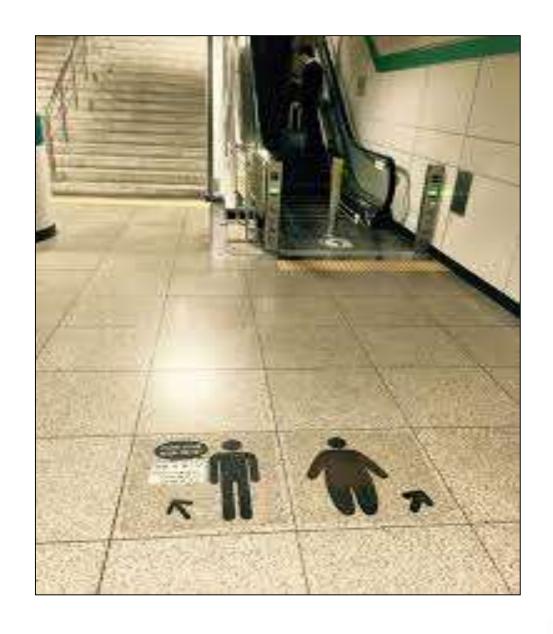




More stairs!























This week, in a sad day for feminism, Air New Zealand introduced new safety videos for their flights that include models in bikinis. It was an attempt to get passengers to pay attention to the much-neglected yadda yadda just get the plane moving already I want a drink.







Apotek | Hair-Raising Subway Ad | Wind Train Arrives | Swedish Pharmacy Commercial Trains Billboard



CASE STUDY 1 - COUNCIL TAX PILOT



COUNCIL TAX PILOT: CHANNEL SHIFT

Channel shift is based on the premise that online transactions are cheaper for the council than phone, post and face to face

Channel	Industry Standard Cost*
Face to Face (F2F)	£8.62
Phone	£2.83
Web	£0.15
Post	£15.00

- By encouraging customers to contact the Council online, the Council can save money
- During times of economic constraint, this type of cost saving can allow the Council to allocate resources elsewhere thereby preserving valuable front line services
- Council tax was chosen for the pilot because it is an area which generates high contact levels and is a good area for us to target with the behaviour change pilot



^{*}Source: SOCITM. Cost to serve figures, except Post which is based on EKS experience

COUNCIL TAX PILOT: INTERVENTIONS

We suggested the following interventions:

- Reduce the prominence of telephone numbers on correspondence and the Council website
- 2. Remove the prominence of email addresses on outward bound council tax correspondence and on the council tax pages of the website
- 3. Simplify the content, structure and layout of:
 - a) Council tax web pages
 - b) Outward bound correspondence
- 4. Change phone scripting for both the automated payment line and contact centre scripts to use the behaviour change technique of positive reinforcement
- 5. Send a Direct Debit application form in the post with every cheque receipt sent out



COUNCIL TAX PILOT: INTERVENTION

EK Services carried out an exercise to rewrite the content of their council tax correspondence

Further information to help you

Making your payment

<u>Direct Dabit</u>.—You can choose from five instalment dates either 1st, 7th, 15th, 20th or 26th of the month. All you have to do is call us on 0.1227 662 300 and we can make all the hoscossary arrangements white you are on the phone. Your bank or building society will make your payments each month, year on year. You will get at less! 10 days notice of any change to your instalments. There is nothing more for you to do. Any refund can be paid directly into your account.

Credit/Debit Card, by phone or by internet — We accept Maestro, Delta, Mastercard and Visa. Use our automated payment line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by telephoning 0845 200 1784 or log on to waw.canterbury.gov.uk You will need your Credit/Debit card and your Council Tax account number. There will be a charge for payments made by Credit card.

At a PayPoint outlet - Use your plastic payment card to pay at any local shop displaying the PayPoint symbol. If you would like a payment card, please contact us on 01227 862 300.

Gash — If you wish to pay in person by cash you will need to use your plastic payment card at a local shop or Post Office. Payments over £200 should be made at a Post Office. If you would like a payment card, please contact us on 01227 862 300.

At the Post Office - Please use your plastic payment card to pay at the Post Office. If you would like a payment card please contact us on 01227 862 300.

Bank - To make payment by Standing Order you must arrange this directly with your bank. You will need the following details to set up a Standing Order.

Council's Bank: National Westminster Bank PLC Sort Code: 62-13-48

Bank account number: 00000000

Payee: Canterbury City Council Head Office Collection Account - Please quote your Council Tax account number.

By Post — Make your cheque payable to "Canterbury City Council", write your Council Tax account number, name and address on the reverse and send it to Canterbury City Council, Milliary Road, Canterbury, CT1 1YW. If you would like a receipt, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

Are you having difficulty making your payments?

If you need advice about making payment, it is important that you contact us immediately on 01227 862 300. The Councils officers are there to help you – we can discuss your circumstances with you and find suffable arrangements to pay any amounts owed.

If you are on a low income you may be entitled to Council Tax Support, more information can be found on our website www.canterbury.cov.uk

If you are of working age and in receipt of Council Tax Support, from 1 April 2013 you will have to pay something towards your Council Tax bill. If you are having difficulty meeting your instalments, please contact us.

Valuation Bands

If you think that your property band is wrong, you need to contact the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) and ask to have your band reviewed. Your local office can be contacted at cso.uth@voa.gst.gov.uk or by phone on 03000 501 501.

Appealing against liability

If you do not think that you should be billed for Council Tax, or the Council has made a mistake in calculating your bit, you can appeal. Appeals should initially be made in writing to the Council. The Council will look at your appeal first and by to resolve any issues. If you are not happy with our answer, we will provide you with details of how appeal to the Valuation Tribunal Service who are independent from the Council. You should keep paying your bill seven if you have appealed.

How to contact us

By telephone - 01227 862 300
By email - council tax@canterbury.gov.uk
Online - www.canterbury.gov.uk

in writing - to Council Tax, Canterbury City Council, Military Road, Canterbury CT1 1YW

In person - at the Council's enquiry offices as detailed on your bill.



Direct debit

Over 40,000 of our residents pay their Council Tax by shed debt. It's safe, around and the easiest way to pay

Saf

Secur



All you need to do is fill in the form sent with this letter and send it back to us. We will set up your direct debt. You don't need to anything else.

Online or by phone

You can pay online or by phone 24 hours a day. 7 days a week.

You will need your card details and your Council Tax account number ready. There is a 1.5% charge, for credit card payments which will be automatically added to your payments.

To pay online using our secure payment system please go to www.cacterburs.gov.uk/counciliae

To pay by phore please call our automated payment line on 0646 200 1764

If you can't pay by direct debit, online or by phone

If you can't pay any other way you can pay by cheque or cash. Please note these methods can be very along and you need to make your payment up to a week before your installment date.

Please make cheques payable to "Carterbury City Cound" and send to Military Road, Canterbury, CT1 11/W. You will need to write your account number, name and address on the back.

To pay by cash you need to take your payment cand to any Post Office or shop displaying the PayPoint symbol.

Appeals

If you disagree with the Council Tax band that your property is in, you need to contact the Valuation Office Agency, not the council Your local office can be contacted at co.sci.gov.uk or by phone on 2000 501 501.

If you think you shouldn't be bified for Council Tax, or that we have reade a mistake in calculatingyour tall, you can appeal. This must be done in writing. Please see our website for more information www.carrietten.go.ut/council tax.

Are you having difficulty paying your Council Tax?

If you owe Council Tax, you may be able to satup a special payment arrangement. Here agree a payment arrangement with you and you blok to it, we won't take further recovery action. To request a payment arrangement, please #Ill in the orinine form on our website www.conterbury.gov.

If you are on a low income you may be entitled to Council Tax Support. More information can be found at <a href="mailto:may.com/bet/may-be-state-fits-by-you-us/to-nefts-by-you-don't nave access to the internet you can prione us 01227-by-you-us/fits-by-you-us/fi





Over 40,000 people in the district pay their Council Tax by direct debit. Why not join them?

It's safe, secure and the easiest way to pay.

111

<%ISSUE_DATE%>

Council Tax Account No: <%ACC_NUMBER%>

<%ADDRESSEE%>
<%CORRES_LINE1%>
<%CORRES_LINE2%>
<%CORRES_LINE3%>
<%CORRES_LINE4%>
<%CORRES_LINE5%>

Property Address: <%PROP_LINE1%> <%PROP_LINE2%> <%PROP_LINE3%> <%PROP_LINE5%>

COUNCIL TAX REMINDER NOTICE

Issued under Regulation 23 of The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992 (as amended)

It appears from my records that as at <%ISSUE_DATE%> your monthly instalments for your current Council Tax Account are unpaid by £<%AMOUNT_DUE%>.

This includes any instalments due within the next 7 days, as permitted by Council Tax Regulations.

If you have not already made the appropriate payment then you must do so within 7 days of the date of this notice to avoid further action. If you think the amount is wrong, or your circumstances have changed, please let us know within seven days.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION - PLEASE READ

If you do not pay within 7 days, we may issue a summons for the whole sum due, which is detailed below.

If this happens, costs will be added and the total balance will be payable straightaway. (This is the whole of the balance that remains to be paid by instalments, and excludes any amount due for earlier periods that may be subject to separate action).

| Billing Year | Outstanding Debt | Company | Company | Outstanding Debt | Company | C

If this is your second reminder and you pay the amount overdue now, but do not pay on a THIRD occasion, the whole balance becomes payable straightaway.

Please note that payments are only included up to the date the notice was prepared. If you make your payment through a bank or post office, please remember to allow sufficient time before the due date to ensure that your payment can be processed to arrive on your account on time. It can take up to four working days for your payment to reach us.

Please read the information overleaf

111



Council Tax

Date of Issue 28-NOV-2013

Council Tax Account No: 10039452



COUNCIL TAX REMINDER NOTICE

You have not paid your monthly Council Tax instalment and you now owe £6.00. This amount includes any instalments due in the next 7 days.

Sometimes payments are received late. If you have paid your Council Tax and it is up to date please ignore this letter. It may be worth paying a little earlier to avoid these letters being sent or choose a date that is more convenient for you by paying by direct debit using the attached form.

If you haven't paid your latest instalment please do so within 7 days to avoid further action being taken. If you don't do this we will send you a court summons which will add extra costs of up to £100 to your account.

We will only send you two reminders in any one financial year. If you pay late a third time we will ask you to pay the rest of this year's Council Tax in one go.

Issued under the Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992 (as amended).



We understand that many people prefer to do as much as possible online so from now on you'll receive your bills directly into your email box like most of the other companies you may deal with. If you would prefer to wait for a paper bill please phone our contact centre and we will return you to the old style scheme.

Thank you for helping us save you time, money and paper.



If the prize winner owes Council Tax or other debt to one of the councils running the draw this sum will be deducted from the £1000 prize and only the balance will be issued.



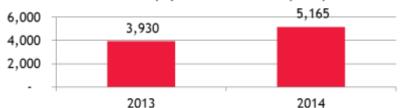
COUNCIL TAX PILOT: RESULTS

We used Messenger, Defaults and Ego to encourage customers to pay online

Promoted online as the best way to contact the council on their correspondence



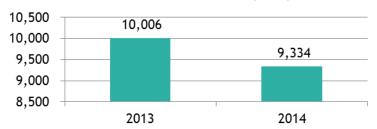




Provided telephone numbers only to customers having difficulty paying CT, or without internet access



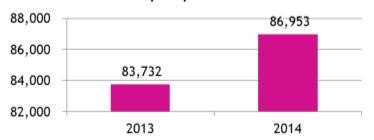
Number of Phone Contacts over pilot period



Changed phone scripting to promote direct debit as the main way to pay



Number of direct debit payments made over pilot period





COUNCIL TAX PILOT: OVERVIEW OF RESULTS

As a result of all the changes we saw an increase in direct debit take up, an increased use of online forms and an increase in the number of payments made online.

- DIRECT DEBIT: The most effective interventions were around direct debit we succeeded more here in increasing revenue
- ONLINE: The work done to promote online forms and payment was also successful - we increased both the use of online forms and the number of online payments
- PHONE & POST: The results for phone and post were less clear:
 - We saw this channel fall in the number of contacts made
 - Incoming post increased slightly



CASE STUDY 2 - REDUCING "DNAs" IN A BEDFORDSHIRE GP SURGERY



BEDFORDSHIRE GP SURGERY: THE ISSUE

Behaviour change techniques, if used appropriately, can have a major impact on the implementation of policy and initiatives

A study* was carried out with NHS Bedfordshire to try to reduce the number of patients that failed to turn up for an appointment (Did Not Attend, or DNAs)

- Over 6 million DNAs a year across the NHS
- Estimated direct cost to the NHS of £789m
- Contribute to lengthened waiting times, increased accident and emergency admissions and increased costs through the need to hire locum GPs

To try and tackle the problem, two GP surgeries tried to reduce DNA rate.



BEDFORDSHIRE GP SURGERY: INTERVENTION 1

In the case study example, a number of different interventions were used, each with a rationale for why it might have an impact.

Intervention 1

Reception staff were to ask patients to write down a four digit code to bring to their appointment.

Rationale:

- > Salience it is new, and unexpected. Patient won't remember the number, but will remember the appointment
- Commitment by involving the patient in noting down the appointment they are involved in making the commitment, so are more likely to attend



BEDFORDSHIRE GP SURGERY: IMPACT

Not all of the interventions may work and that it is why it is really important to have a carefully controlled and monitored pilot.

Intervention 1 - Effect

> 1.1% increase in DNA rate





BEDFORDSHIRE GP SURGERY: INTERVENTION 2

The interventions need to be specific and implemented effectively...

Intervention 2

Patients were asked to verbally repeat back the time of their appointment.

Rationale:

- > Salience people are more likely to remember having stated this out loud
- Commitment stating appointment time aloud acts as a public commitment, which acts as a strong psychological motive to follow through on that commitment

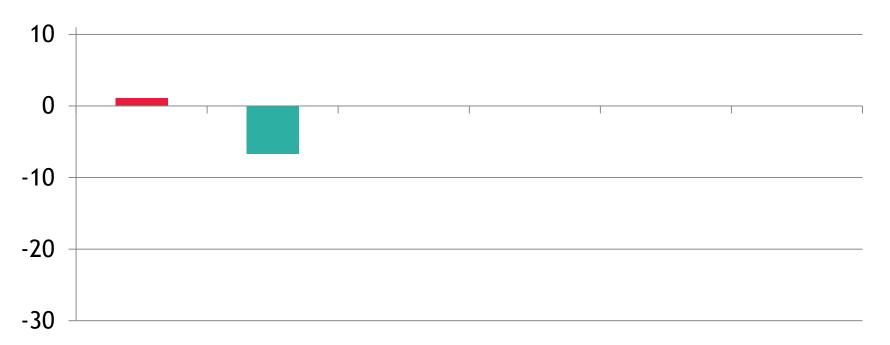


BEDFORDSHIRE GP SURGERY: IMPACT

...and then monitored and tracked so that you are able to isolate the intervention that has had the desired impact

Intervention 2 - Effect

➤ 6.7% decrease in DNA rate





BEDFORDSHIRE GP SURGERY: INTERVENTION 3

Different interventions will have different levels of impact...

Intervention 3

> Get patients to write appointment cards themselves

Rationale:

- Salience people are more likely to remember things they have written
- Commitment contract with the surgery



BEDFORDSHIRE GP SURGERY: IMPACT

...by analysing this it is possible to identify which intervention has the most positive impact for the least effort or cost

Intervention 3 - Effect

> 18% decrease in DNA rate





BEDFORDSHIRE GP SURGERY: TRIAL & ERROR

This sign was displayed in the waiting room. What is wrong with it?

114 people did not turn up for their appointments last month



BEDFORDSHIRE GP SURGERY: INTERVENTION 4

You can also implement more than one intervention at the same time to see whether it has a cumulative effect...

Intervention 4

Message changed to reinforce good behaviour, showing the true number of patients who did turn up for appointments on time

Rationale:

Norms - Reinforcing good behaviour

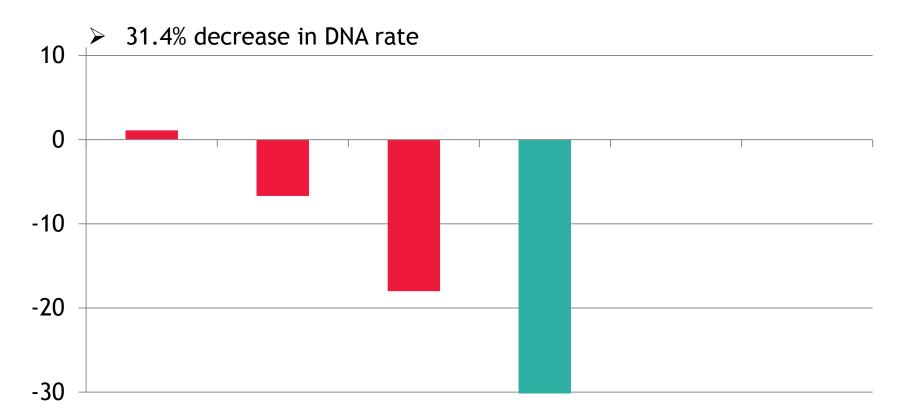
This was run in addition to the first two interventions, so all three were in place simultaneously.



BEDFORDSHIRE GP SURGERY: IMPACT

...this "norm" intervention had exactly that effect

Intervention 4 - Effect





Eye Tracking





Which image was male and female results – I will take your votes...



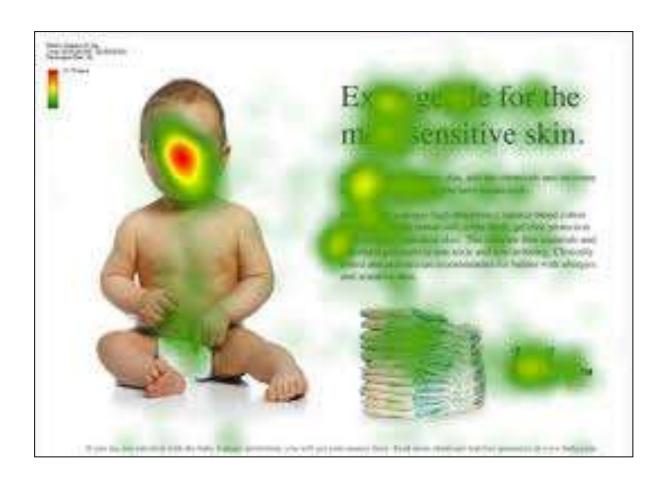


And your votes again..?



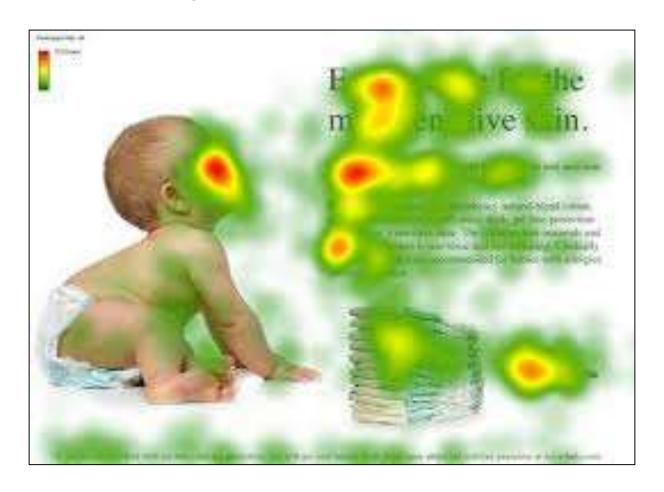


Check out the results of this ad...



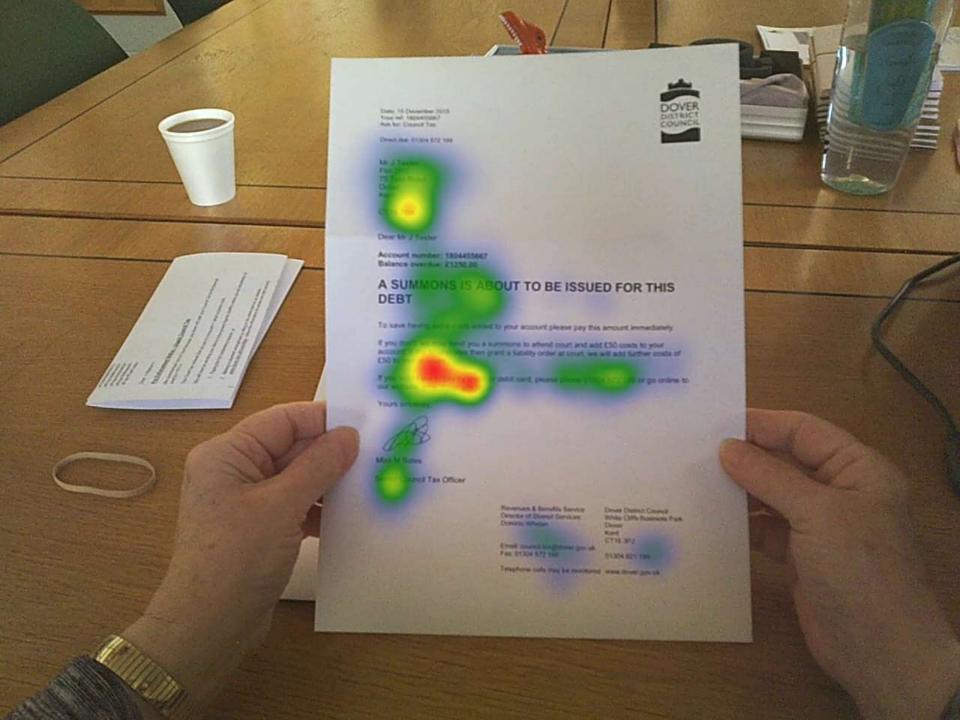


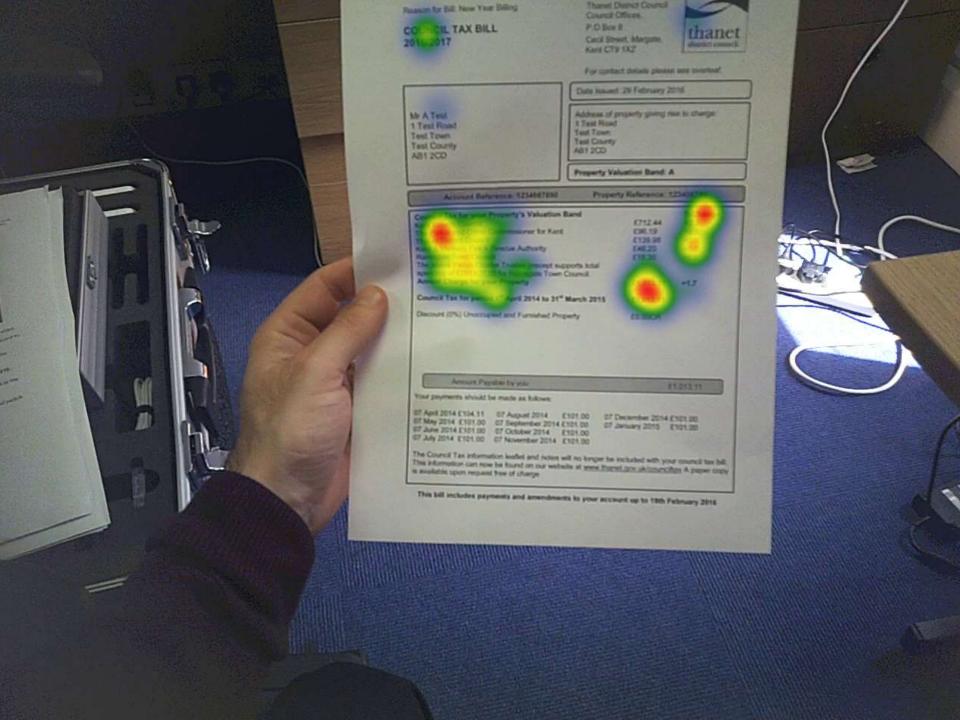
Now look at the different results – why do you think this is?











Passon for Bill New Year Billing .

COUNCIL TAX BILL 2016/2017

Thanst District Council Council Offices. P.O. Box 9 Carol Street, Margana. Karo CTS VKZ



For coreact decade please see invested.

Date Issued: 29 February 2016

NF A Text Road 1 Text Road Text County AB1 200 Abbess of projectly giving rise to charge to Teel Roset Teel Taux Teel County AB1 200

Property Valuation Band. A.

Account Reference: 1234947090 Frozerts Reference: 123404799

Council Fax for your Property's Valuation Band nent County Council The Notice and Clime Commissioner for Kent Theres District Council Name S Medicay Fire & Restor Authority Remagns Town Council	£712.44 £38.19 £139.96 £42.20 £19.30	%Change +20 +20 +00 +20 +00 +00
The atone Parish Charter Trustee precept supports total abending of \$201.837.00 for Ramegate Town Council.		

Council Tax for period 1" April 2014 to 31" March 2013 61.313.11

Discourt (th) Unonsuped and Furnished Property EO 300R

Amount Payable by you

£1,212.11

the mount

Your payments should be made as follows:

Annual Charge for your Property

07 April 2014 E104 11 07 August 2014 E101 00 07 December 2014 E101 00 07 January 2015 E101 00

57 July 2015, £101.00 - 07 November 2014 - £101.00

The CountyTax information leaflet and notes a line target be included with your county tax bill. This information can now be found on our website of vivo. Hence you undownstitle Apaper casy is available upon request fee of charge.

This bill includes payments and amondments to your account up to 19th February 2016

Date Insued, 29 February 2016. Reason for bit. New Year Billing. Thans District Council PO Box 5, Carol Street Warpers CTS 192



NA Sect 1 Sect Road Sect Sect Sect County ABY 200

Council Tax Bill 2016/2017

Address of property charge misses to 1 Test Road, Test Town, Test County, ABC 2000.

Property Valuation Stand: A.

Account Reference, 12345067080

Francy Reference, 120/06/10

0.0040006	ERRH.	April 2016 by J Inner Date A. Viso ET-00-2016	£101.00	27.0622HB	£101.00
nananie.	£101.00	67/06/2016	E101.00	01092018	£101:00
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Hex is the Bill made up?

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And here is a video of how the eye fixates on certain words/areas...



EK Services examples (2).avi



HOME » FINANCE » ECONOMICS

Whitehall won't be 'nudged', finds National Audit Office

David Cameron's "Behavioural Insight Team" – billed as the answer to achieving social change without resorting to regulation – has failed to convince a single Whitehall department to make use of its services, a National Audit Office report reveals.

News > Politics

Cameron's 'nudge unit' should be given the elbow, says Labour MP

Yet the news that David Cameron has a Behavioural Insight Team inside Downing Street, and what's more that it is increasingly influential within the Lib-Con coalition, has been treated as if were a perfectly normal, even admirable thing. Have we lost our minds?

The unit was criticised by Labour MP Luciana Berger when it emerged last year that staff had spent about £750 a month on travel. Calling the scheme the "prime minister's vanity project", Ms Berger said: "It is hard to see how ministers can justify this extravagance when they are cutting spending for our police and schools."

A message to the illiberal Nudge Industry: push off



Behavioural science is the future of effective policy-making. Although it is being increasingly adopted by countries, faith in this science remains small. Developing countries are yet to realise its potential, but more and more success stories and coverage by think-tanks will make positive reinforcements worldwide.

The strong social media presence of almost all nudge networks makes the outreach easier and more interesting. Success or full-scale utilization of behavioural science will also be dependent upon participation; more scholars and scientists who dedicate their research to behavioural science are needed. It is likely that behavioural science will be one of the fastest-growing academic trends of the decade.

OPINION

Simple 'nudges' in the UK have had notably positive effects on people's lives

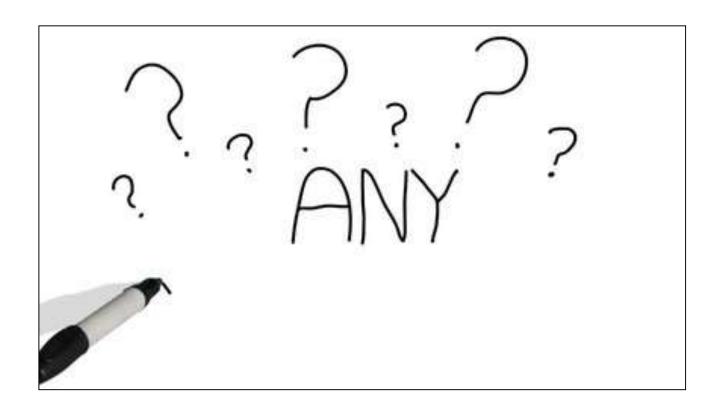
The private sector is increasingly enlisting behavioural insights and saving people money while improving health in the process

27 OCTOBER 2017 - 05:44 by CASS SUNSTEIN



Picture REUTERS

Just a few days after Richard Thaler won the Nobel Prize in economics earlier in October, the UK's Behavioural Insights Team released its annual report. What good timing — Thaler helped inspire the creation of the Behavioural Insights Team in 2010, not only with his academic work, but also by numerous (and continuing) discussions with the team.



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