



Are you a local or regional authority in charge of waste prevention and litter reduction? A brand that wants to encourage customers to choose products and packaging that produce less waste? Or an organisation that advocates for better waste management and reduction? Whatever your ambition is, make sure you rely on science rather than chance.

The growing issue of waste management

- Waste generation and management are both social and environmental issues. Open burning and waste dumping in landfills contribute up to 12% of global GHG emissions, and the harmful pollutants released endanger human health.
- High-income countries account for only 16% of the world's population yet generate about 34% or 683 million tonnes of the world's waste.
- Encouraging consumers to reduce unnecessary consumption, reuse existing products and recycle whenever possible is crucial.
- **Interestingly, the rate of recycling in the EU has tripled as of 2020. However, there is more work to be done because 60 tonnes of waste are still produced every second globally, and this is expected to double by 2050.**

The science of waste disposal behaviours

Before trying to get people to adopt sustainable waste behaviours, it is important to understand the many barriers that get in the way. For instance, the lack of knowledge on whether or not a product can be recycled. Or the intention to recycle, which may be restricted to specific places, e.g. more so at home than outdoors.

This is why Behaven has created a behavioural science-based methodology for encouraging sustainable behaviours. This means we examine conscious and unconscious influences and enable change using the right combination of proven interventions.

Our toolbox include the Rainbow Wheel (TM), which is comprised of 66 proven behaviour change interventions, including for instance:

- 'Being watched' or adding an image of 'watching eyes' near bins could motivate putting the right items in the right bins due to a sense of social pressure to do so.
- 'Salience' or highlighting the exciting new products the recyclable ones could transform into, helps visualise the benefits of waste sorting and recycling and could therefore encourage the behaviour.

From science to practice

Here is how Behaven is helping Brussels Environment encourage sustainable waste behaviours:



Challenge

Following the Covid-19 crisis, the number of visitors to Brussels parks increased, as did the volume of waste. Brussels Environment wanted to run a summer-long campaign to encourage visitors to properly dispose of their waste.

Solution

Behaven devised a campaign strategy that linked proper waste disposal to community strength and respect, and that focused on providing visitors with tools and guidance near and in parks, instead of prioritising traditional media.

Results

The campaign message was correctly understood and perceived to be effective, including in terms of collective responsibility. Visitors' observations were confirmed by a 30% reduction in litter following the campaign.

"Behaven's in-depth analysis and innovative communications strategy based on a scientific approach to behaviour change particularly impressed us." Corentin Tassignon, Brussels Environment

Get in touch

Rely on science rather than chance. And make your projects more effective using the science of sustainable behaviours. Contact Fred Dorsimont, our Managing Director, at fred@behaven.com or visit www.behaven.com