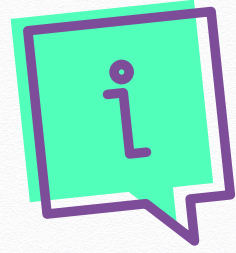


Using the EAST framework.

Understanding what drives people to make decisions is key to changing their behaviour.



Introduction.



Understanding what drives people to make decisions is key to changing their behaviour. We don't make all of our decisions rationally, instead we can be biased by a whole host of factors. The EAST framework accounts for all of these heuristics and suggests how we can best present choices to maximise on people's willingness to change. The framework combines insights from behavioural science and psychology and overall explains that we are more likely to get results by making the desired choice easy, attractive, social and timely. This quick guide explains how we can use these 4 simple steps to produce effective marketing for behaviour change initiatives.



1 Easy



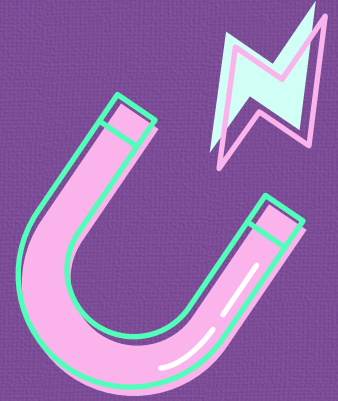
- The less effort people need to put into a behaviour the more favourable it appears, so reducing the hassle involved in making a choice is a useful method of directing behaviours
- People find quick decisions easier, so make messaging clear and concise, and break complex goals into simpler actions
- Reducing hassle includes considering how the information is delivered. Make it easy for people by using images and video rather than lots of text, and always start with your bottom line
- People like to stick with things as they are because it's more effortful to change, so setting the desired choice option as the default makes people more likely to select it

AN EXAMPLE EASY INITIATIVE:

Making organ donation an opt-out service in the UK increased the number of people on the organ donor list (desired behaviour) because it was set as the default option.



2 Attractive



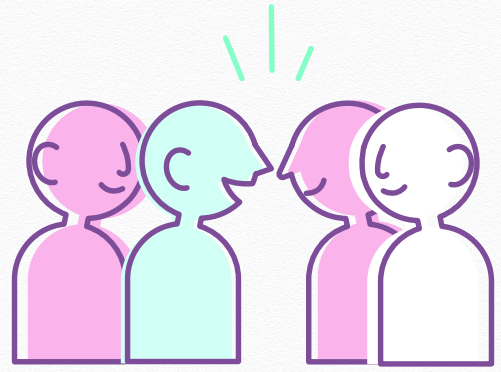
- Your message is competing with many other messages, so it needs to be relevant, appealing and personalised to attract attention
- Present your message as visually attractive using images and bold colour, and use emotive language to ensure that your messaging is effective
- People are motivated by reward, so making incentives and sanctions known to people can encourage them to engage in the desired behaviour
- Design rewards for maximum efficiency and consider that not all incentives need be financial – for example, people may value a sense of pride, or social connectedness from their engaging in exercise, making a financial reward less effective

AN EXAMPLE ATTRACTIVE INITIATIVE:

Including a picture of the offending vehicle on letters to non-payers of road tax increased payment rates (desired behaviour) because it captured their attention and made their personal case more salient.



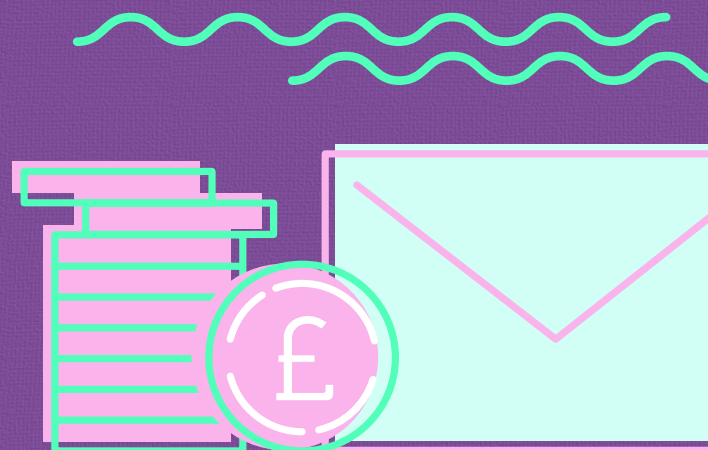
3 Social



- People are strongly influenced by the behaviour of their social networks, so presenting a behaviour as the norm and making norms salient can motivate more people to engage in it
- Equally, people are motivated to avoid social disapproval, so presenting the current problematic behaviour as opposing the norm can discourage people from continuing it
- On the other hand, caution must be taken not to inadvertently reinforce a problematic behaviour by emphasising how common it is – for example suggesting that many students misuse alcohol can actually encourage people to do the same, because they are motivated to conform to social norms
- Social networks can also generate large-scale behaviour change through peer-to-peer motivation and message transmission, so grounding an intervention in a person's social life can be a catalyst for social change
- People are more likely to engage in a behaviour if they have made a commitment to friends or in public, because they want to be seen as consistent

AN EXAMPLE SOCIAL INITIATIVE:

Letters from HMRC stating that most people in the local area pay their tax on time increased payment rates (desired behaviour) because a norm was made salient.



4

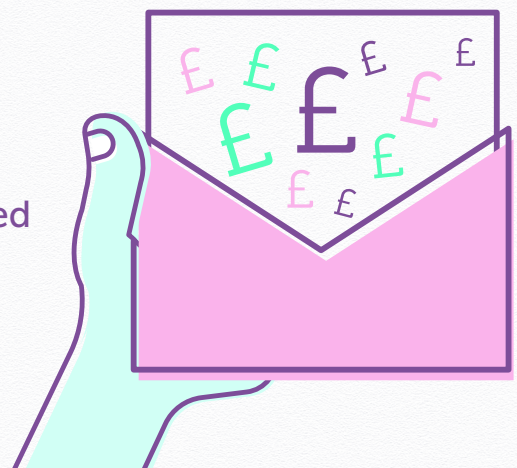
Timely



- There are a range of factors that influence how receptive someone may be to changing their behaviour, so it's important to take into account time of day, mood and personal circumstances for the initiative to have maximum impact
- People are more willing to change when other patterns or habits are already disrupted, such as during major life events and periods of transition
- Benefits and costs of a choice also have more significant effects on behaviour if they are to be immediately felt, whereas distant benefits and costs tend to be discounted – for example, people may not be particularly motivated to eat healthily because the cost of ill health is too distant and appears small in comparison to the immediate benefit of quick, tasty food
- Interventions should therefore play on increasing immediate benefits and decreasing immediate costs, even minimally, because this will motivate change – for example, showing them how to make quick, easy meals (reduced time cost) and encouraging cooking with friends (increased social benefit) could increase healthy eating (desired behaviour)
- Another useful approach to behaviour change is to help people bridge the gap between their intentions and behaviour by identifying their barriers to action and creating a personalised, specific and clear plan of action

AN EXAMPLE TIMELY INITIATIVE:

People who owed fines and were sent a text 10 days before bailiffs were sent drastically increased the value of payments made (desired behaviour) because the cost to them was imminent.



Using EAST.

When approaching any behaviour change problem, it's important to first identify the specific behaviours that need to be influenced or induced, and clearly define how they can be measured. The following example illustrates how EAST principles ensure the success of a popular gym's friendship membership scheme.

THE BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

They wanted more customers to their gym, to increase membership and encourage people to exercise more.

THE INITIATIVE

The gym started a scheme that allowed paying customers on a particular plan to add a friend to their membership to enable them to access the gym for free up to 4 times per month.

EASY

The scheme reduces the effort involved in going to the gym for the first time – you don't need to register or have an induction, just show up with your friend.

ATTRACTIVE

The scheme is attractive because there is no or minimal additional cost to be added as a guest or friend (depending on which plan the member is on).

As a guest can be added for free to their friend's membership, this feels more like a reward than a discount on a second membership where the individual still pays out.

The fact that the scheme can advertise using bold words like 'free' grabs people's attention more than competing offers.



SOCIAL

Accessing the gym through a friendship membership encourages people to use the gym together, which keys into our social motivation and makes the behaviour more desirable.

Allocating a particular friend for the scheme also has the effect of forming a commitment between the two friends that they now share a membership and are expected to go to the gym together.

The combination of the established member and the subsidiary friend member also encourages peer-to-peer motivation, particularly motivation for the 'new' member.

Further, the more successful their initiative is, the fuller their gyms are which reinforces the notion of going to the gym as a normed behaviour.

Potential negative reactions to a new gym user are also reduced because the scheme presents being new as an exciting opportunity, and suggests that many others will be taking advantage too. The expected presence of other novices may reduce nervousness about underperforming among perceived experts.

TIMELY

The benefits of the scheme are immediately felt: free access, someone to go with, no financial commitment and the perception that they're joining other novices.

The costs of the scheme are likely not that important to a beginner anyway: limited to 4 visits per month, reliant on friend sustaining their paid membership.

Compared to many other offerings, the scheme has much more immediate and desirable benefits and alternative costs such as joining fees are taken out of the equation.

The lack of immediate costs increases motivation to change because there are fewer reasons not to give it a go!



Summary.

The example gym scheme helps to demonstrate how EAST elements have been used to develop a successful marketing initiative. For behaviour change work we seek to study which behaviours are key in influencing the outcomes we wish to see and how they may be motivated by easy, attractive, social and timely intervention. Applying behavioural insights from research in the context of the EAST framework enables us to comprehensively understand and influence behaviour change.

The EAST framework can help you apply insights, generate marketing material and form policy. Considering these 4 key elements of the framework can make your social marketing more effective and help you to progress widespread behaviour change. Try examining social problems with solutions that are easy, attractive, social and timely; and think about how you could use the EAST framework to develop an intervention of your own.



We only work with organisations that want to bring about positive social change, and people who want to do good. This is you... let's work together.



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