

Behavioral Interventions to Promote Water Savings in Hotel Rooms

Sofía López-Rodríguez

Universitat de les Illes Balears

Bartolomé Deyá Tortella1 Deyá Tortella

Universitat de les Illes Balears

Dolores Tirado

Universitat de les Illes Balears

Tomás Lejarraga

Universitat de les Illes Balears

Acknowledgements:

Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities, Government of Spain, through the research funding call MICIU/AEI/10.13039/501100011033 - European Union “NextGenerationEU”/PRTR (project ref. TED2021-132639B-I00)

Cite as:

López-Rodríguez Sofía, Deyá Tortella Bartolomé Deyá Tortella1, Tirado Dolores, Lejarraga Tomás (2025), Behavioral Interventions to Promote Water Savings in Hotel Rooms. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 54th, (126456)

Paper from the 54th Annual EMAC Conference, Madrid, Spain, May 25-30, 2025



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Abstract

In many tourism destinations water is scarce. Hotels often implement behavioral interventions to promote in-room guests' water savings. However, they are mostly focused on indirect measures—towel and linen reuse. Evidence on their effectiveness is also limited. We conducted a field experiment in Mallorca, Spain, at 21 hotel rooms with showers equipped with digital water meters to examine the impact of two behavioral interventions on guests' direct water savings. Guests were randomly assigned to one condition: commitment—offering the possibility to commit to saving water; commitment with signaling—offering the possibility to commit to saving water, while also making this commitment public using a bracelet; and control. The results show that offering to commit did not save water. These findings contribute to the literature showing limits of the effectiveness of behavioral interventions to solve society's problems. Implications for hotel management and policy making are also discussed.

Key words: behavioral interventions, hotel guests, water consumption.

Track: Social Responsibility & Ethics