

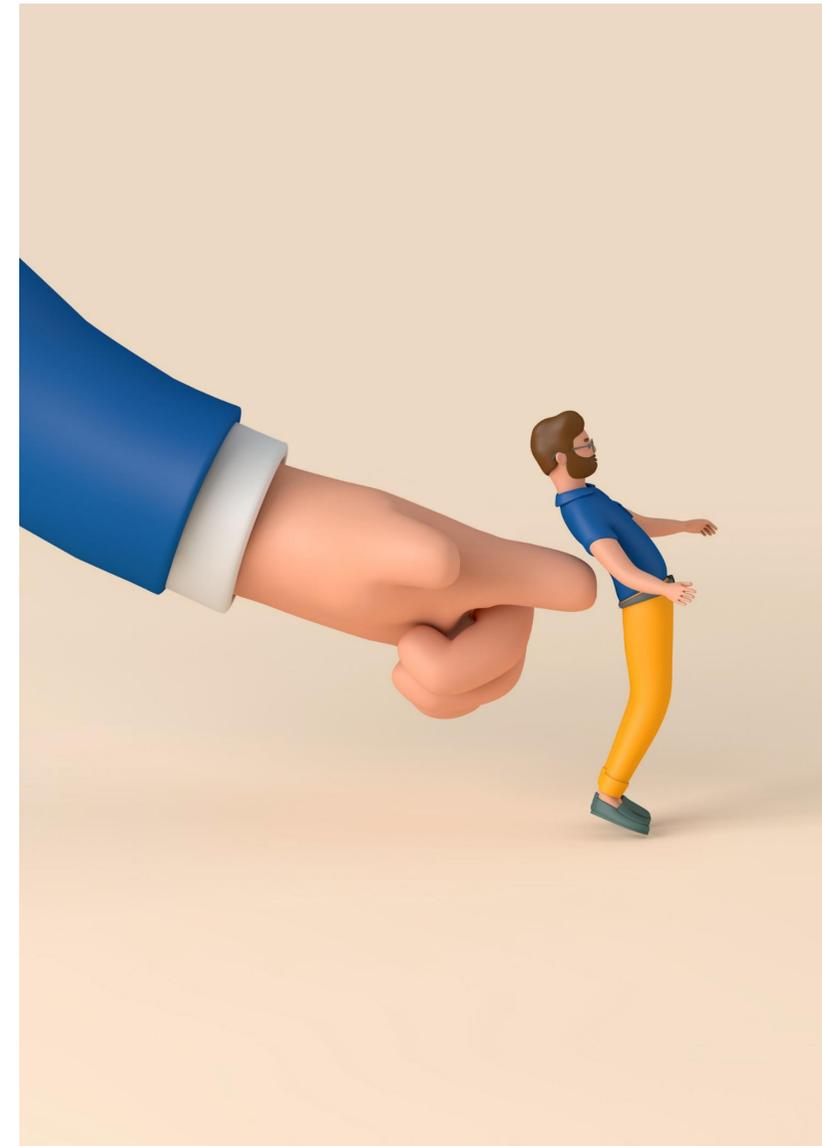
Nudging in Alpine tourism: Getting visitors on the right track

**Nudge me if you can –  
Gray areas and challenges of an application in tourism**

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**Wirtschaft**  
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FH Zentralschweiz



## Short Introduction



### **Lucerne University of Applied Sciences Institute of Tourism and Mobility (ITM)**

ITM conducts research in the areas of tourism, mobility and sustainability. It provides degree programs for those wishing to embark on a career in the tourism sector as well as those moving into the field from other backgrounds. Additionally, ITM offers consultancy services for practicing tourism professionals.

<https://www.hslu.ch/de-ch/wirtschaft/institute/itm/dienstleistung/dienstleistungsangebot-stupsen-oder-verbieten/>

## What is Nudging?

- Nudges are one (but not the only) design element of choice architecture.
- Nudging means designing a decision environment in such a way that the decision or the behavior of a person is systematically influenced.
- However, this is done without restricting freedom of choice and by avoiding (purely) monetary incentives.



## Nudging as part of the Emotional Economy

Lobo (2019) emphasizes the importance of Homo Emotionalis, which is symbolic of an Emotional Economy.

Homo Emotionalis is characterized by the following ideas:

- **Enthusiasm**
- **Impatience**
- **Convenience**

# Applications in tourism I

## Littering



Figure 1. Voting with cigarettes (Hubbub, n.d.).  
Figure 2. Shark bin (Mouldman, 2005).  
Figure 3. Hopscotch bin (Scott, 2011).  
Figure 4. Recycling basketball (University of California Merced, n.d.).

## Sustainability

Hotel  
Placard

75% of the guests in this hotel participated in our new resource saving program by using their towels more than once.

75% of the guests in this room participated in our new resource saving program by using their towels more than once.

Results



Adapted from data of Goldstein, Cialdini & Giskevicius, V. in J of Consumer Research V. 35, Aug 2008

## Applications in tourism II

How do bans affect A) the behavior of guests and B) the image of a destination?



## Nudging – gray areas I

- Consumers see nudging as a manipulative mind trick.
- Nudges can work for or against the decision maker's objective.
- Risk of deception and limitation of decision sovereignty (e.g., artificial scarcity).
- Dark Nudges (e.g., self-serving default rules).



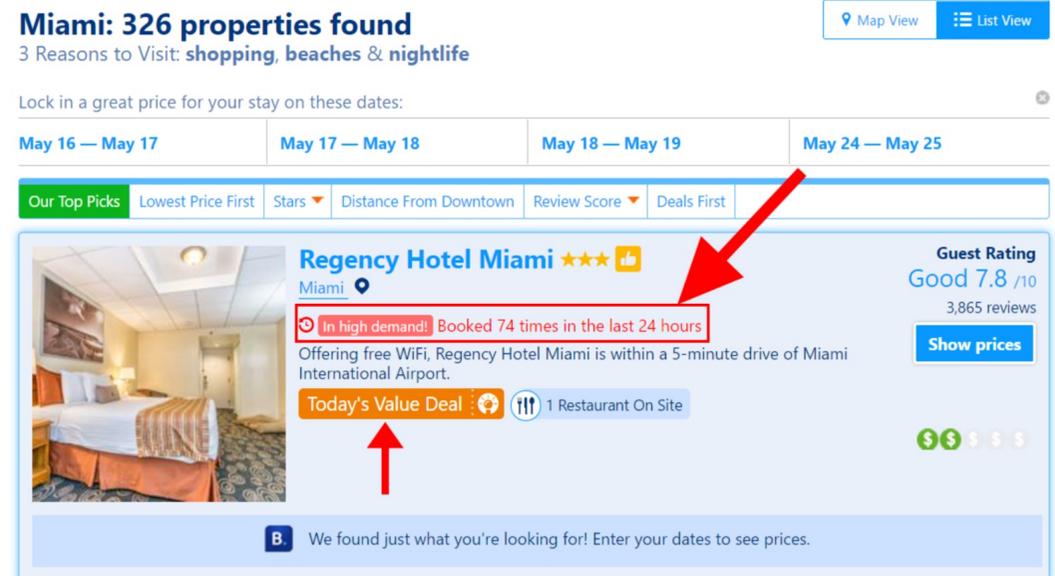
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## Nudging – gray areas I

- Sludge - makes a process more difficult in order to arrive at an outcome that is not in the best interest of the customer.
- Examples include product rebates that require difficult procedures, subscription cancellations that can only be done with a phone call or highlighting negative consequences.
- Sludges frequently in line with aspects of the emotional economy (impatience and convenience).

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## «Nudge for Good» (Thaler, 2015)

### Nudging Good Practice

- Make nudges transparent and avoid (deliberate) misleading/deception.
- It should be as easy as possible to decide against the nudge (preferably with just one mouse click).
- There should be good reasons that the nudge will improve the well-being of the decision maker.

Take human nature into account



«Desired Path»: Ohio State University



## Activate own value beliefs



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TRAINING

PROGRAMS

RESOURCES

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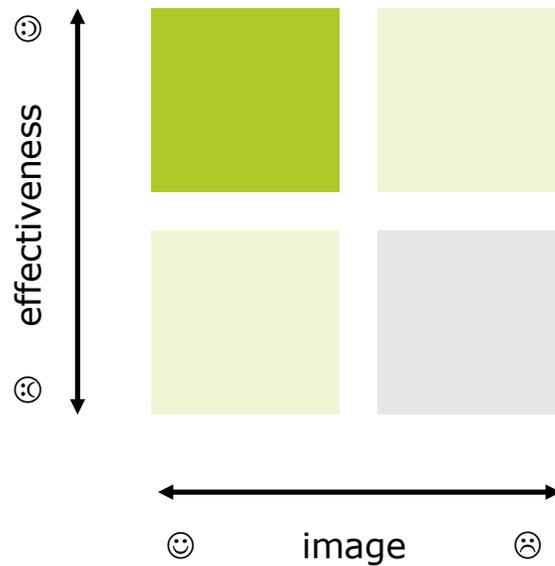
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## Bans versus Nudges

Ideally, interventions are found that fit the image of a destination (or strengthen the positive image) and achieve a high level of effectiveness (positive change in guest behavior). If this does not happen, effectiveness versus image must be prioritized. Interventions that serve neither effectiveness nor image should be avoided.



## Recommended reading

- Basel, J. & Meier, M. S. (2020). Nudging: rechtliche Grauzonen und moralische Fallstricke. *Jusletter*. September.
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- Thaler, R. H. & Sunstein, C. R. (2008). *Nudge*. Yale University Press.
- Thaler, R. H. (2015). The power of nudges, for good and bad. New York Times. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/01/upshot/the-power-of-nudges-for-good-and-bad.html>

Thank you!

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