



CASE STUDY

Strengthening demand for locally produced products

**Led by BehaviorSMART &
Hotel Internazionale**

BeST

Behaviour Smart community
for Tourism



Co-funded by
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CHALLENGE

The best way to increase the local economic impact of a traveller trip is to increase the consumption of locally produced foods and respectively, the share of their spend that stays in the local economy. Hotel Internazionale wanted to pursue this effect by encouraging hotel guests to consume more local products from the breakfast buffet and order more meals with local ingredients for lunch and dinner.



BEHAVIOUR

In most cases guests made their choices about what to pick from the buffet or what to order based on **shortcuts**.

In most cases they went with what is **close to their usual breakfast habits** (i.e. if they usually have yoghurt and oats at home, they opted for the same) and with products they were **familiar** with.

For lunch and dinner some guests made the effort to ask about local meals but in most cases they avoided meals that included products they were unfamiliar with.

BEHAVIOUR

MECHANISM

There are a few factors at play behind preferences for local meals and products:



Often guests make **shortcut-driven decisions** when they decide what to pick from the buffet or the menu so they are likely to be influenced by **familiarity bias**. A local cheese with a name that is new to clients may have less chance from being picked than an imported cheese that is better known.



Preferences for meals are driven by appeal and not by the conscious thought about which options has stronger positive effect on the local economy.

HOW DID WE GET THERE?

The behavioural factors that influence food choices were mapped based on **observation and short interviews with guests.**

INTERVENTION



In order to fuel demand for local products Hotel Internazionale undertook the effort to **strengthen the appeal of local products** and **make them the irresistible option** for guests.

Given the factors that powered guest decision making, this was deemed as the **more effective approach** than inviting guest to choose the local options because it was the right thing to do for the local producers and the local economy.

- The first step was to introduce a **small internal label marking local products** at the breakfast buffet and in the restaurant menu.
- The second was to **enhance the descriptions of local products** to make them more appealing.
- The third was to **introduce a “local plate” display at the restaurant**, which included a large plate presenting all local products that were used in meals listed in the restaurant menu. Guests could explore the products and ask waiters about product they were unfamiliar with.

TESTING

The hotel team is **currently observing** the effects of the intervention on the behaviour of guests but **initial observations registered a significant increase in the preference for local products** at the morning buffet and a significant increase of ordered meals with local ingredients for lunch and dinner.



RESULTS & LESSONS LEARNED

It was important to understand the **real factors that can influence choice** about what to pick from the breakfast buffet or what to order from the restaurant menu.

This led to the realisation that demand for **local products is more likely to be increased if they are presented as the more appealing options** (strengthened desirability) rather than if tourists are invited to do the right thing and support local producers (moral drivers).

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