



Case Study: Reusable cup loan schemes

In recent years many food and drink businesses have offered a discount when customers bring in their own reusable cup or container. This is often seen as a way to minimise disposables and drive reuse behaviour.

Considering a discount?

As part of the Ditching Disposables project, several businesses trialled this type of discount ranging from 20p to 5% off.

However, four of the five businesses trialling a discount found it wasn't effective at encouraging customer to use reusables, despite two businesses running large campaigns on discount, there was no increase.

Malvarosa's cup charge

As an alternative, Spanish restaurant Malvarosa, introduced a charge alongside a Reusable cup loan scheme.

This gave customers the option to avoid the charge by accepting a reusable cup instead.

“20p more to have a disposable cup would motivate me more than 20p off if I brought a reusable one”

- Member of the public

Data from businesses in Portobello showed discounts weren't effective at encouraging customers to switch from disposables to reusables



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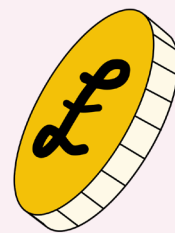
For many businesses that rely on takeaway orders, reducing the number of disposables can seem impossible. Even if you can't get rid of these items entirely there are still ways to reduce the amount that customers use.

Considering a discount?

Considering a discount to reduce your disposable items? Discounts aren't effective at changing customer behaviour. Using a Reusable cup loan scheme and/or a charge are far more effective methods.

Add a charge on disposables

Discounts are ineffective at driving reuse behaviour, while research shows disposable coffee cup charges can have real impact. Similar in nature to the Scottish Single Use Carrier Bag Charge, people are more sensitive to perceived losses than perceived gains when making decisions. Even a small charge can be effective at reducing the amount of disposables used.



Implement a Reusable cup loan scheme

Another way to reduce disposable cup or container use is a Reusable cup loan scheme, where customers pay a small deposit to borrow a reusable cup or container and return after use. This approach resulted in a much greater impact, cutting the use of disposable cups by more than 95%.



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