



Empowering water consumers through smart metering: evidence from a field study in a residential suburb of Montpellier (south of France)

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An increasing water scarcity (less supply – more demand) \leftrightarrow A need to save water

Smart metering: a technology with many advantages

Advantages	For users* / for water managers**
	A water leaks' detection (* + **)
High meter reading frequency	An alert to inform users in case of suspicion of water leaks (*)
Figh meter reading frequency	To design water pricing taking into account water scarcity and other
	managerial constraints (**)
	A precise knowledge of individual water consumption (* + **)
Better water consumption	Benchmarking (*)
monitoring	Configuring alerts (SMS or Email) to inform users when water consumption
	exceeds a pre-defined threshold (*)
	An absence of disturbances (*)
Automated remote meter reading	Productivity gains (**)
	A bill on real data, an opportunity to increase billing frequency (*)





Smart metering: a technology with many advantages ...

... but a low subscription rate (even if free of charges)



2% of the 23,000 water subscribers (*February 2015*)

Why a such gap?

Looking forward factors determining the adoption:

INTRODUCTION

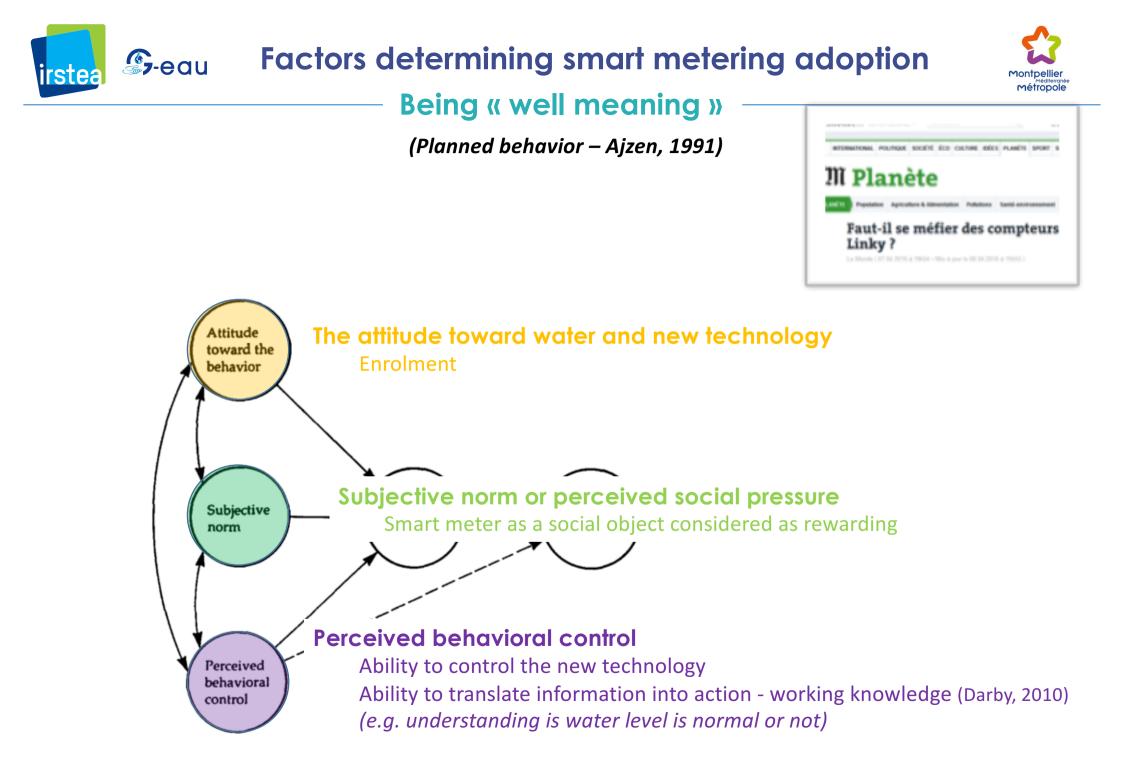
- 1. Information
- 2. Intends to take action (the theory of planned behavior, Ajzen, 1991)

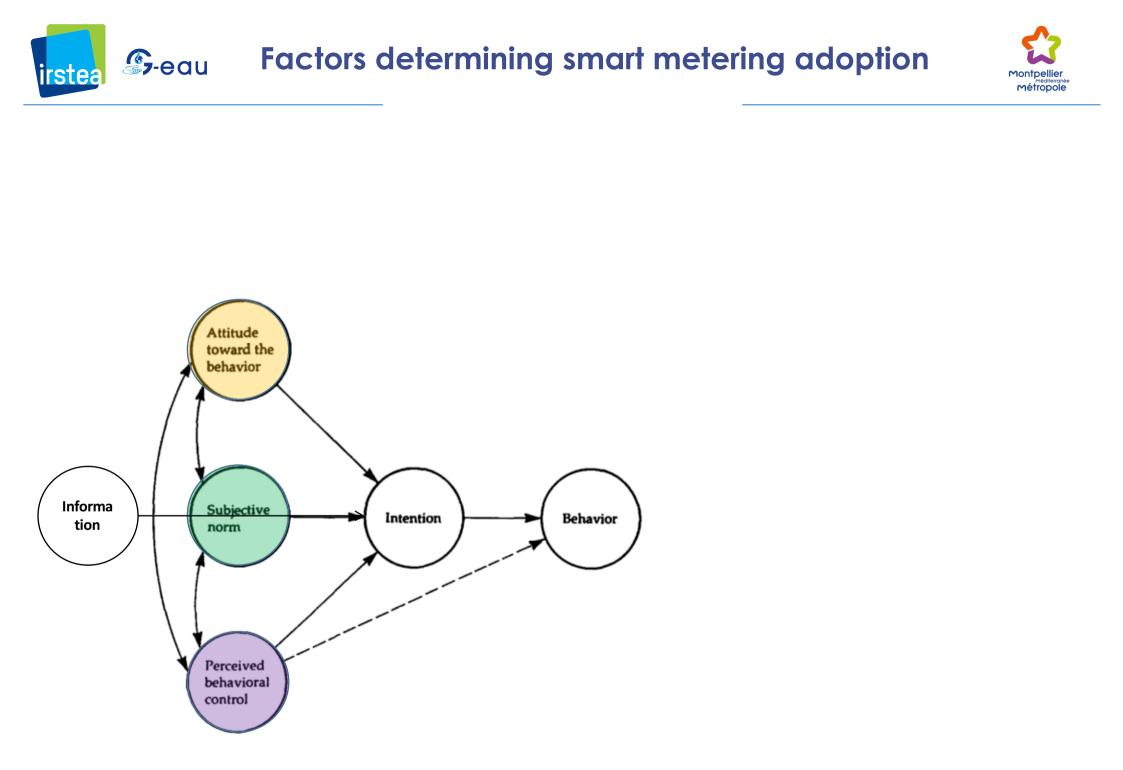




Who says What to Whom in Which channel with What effect (Lasswell - 1902-1978)

Media of communication	CODAH	Metz	Mulhouse	SEDIF	SMGC		
Directly: to water subs	criber or v	vater u	ser				
Persona	lized						
Mail	х	x	×	х	х		
Flyer	х	x	×	x	х		
Target	ed						
New subscription	х						
Meter inspectors	х			x			
Neighborhood council		x	Х	х			
Mayor communication			x		1 district		
Genera	Generalized						
Web page	х		х	х	х		
Newspaper article				х	х		
Municipal newsletter	х	x	Х	х	х		
Indirectly: through local authorities or mayors							
Mail				х			
Oral communication				х			









A residential area

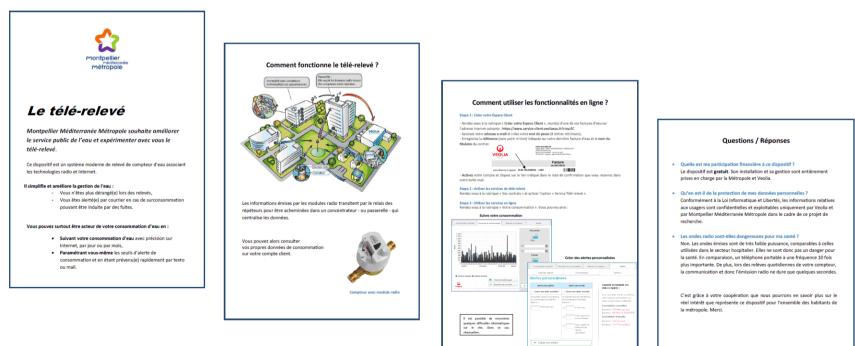


261 households with smart meters of Montpellier Métropole (2015) A natural field experiment

Being informed

Individual information: face to face and/or by letter (signed by the Mayor in charge of water) Directly done by Montpellier Métropole staff (and not by the water operator: Veolia) A leaflet explaining the smart metering service





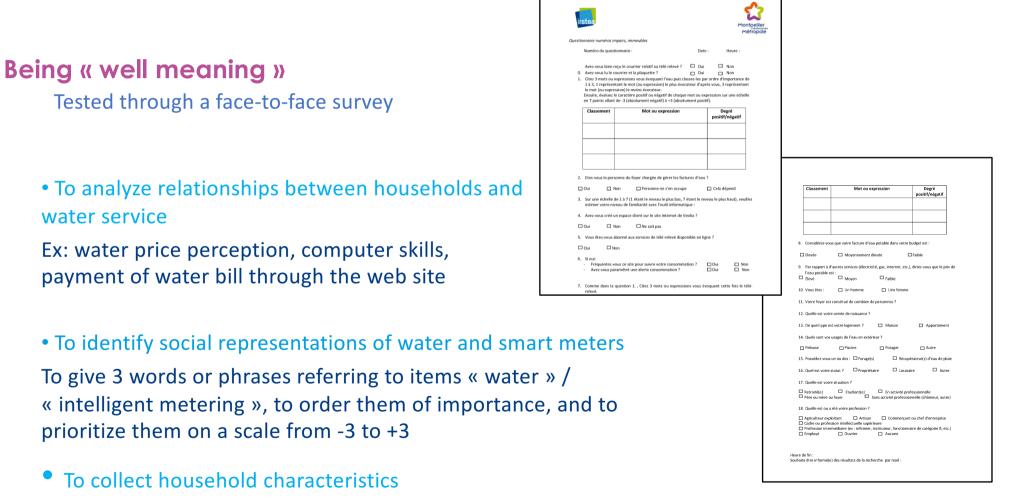
Pour toute information supplémentaire sur le télé relevé, rendez-vous sur le site www.service-dient.wollaesu.fr for réléphone: Duind au vendre 16:0-19h Sound au vendre 16





A residential area

261 households with smart meters of Montpellier Métropole (2015)



Ex: size, housing type, socio-professional category ...



The subjects



	Targeted households	Surveyed households	Media of communication
House (even-numbered)	123	35	Face-to-face (for surveyed pop., letter to others)
House (odd-numbered)	68	25	
Apartment (social building)	16	6	Letter M3M
Apartment (other)	54	11	
Total	261	77	

Average water consumption	Targeted households			Surveyed households		
(liters/day/household) (jan-june 2015)	Apartment House		Total	Apartment	House	Total
- Mean	211	403	354	247	402	374
- Median	187	304	278	168	324	318
Observations (number)	54	157	211	11	50	61

Surveyed households' characteristics

2,7 people per household Average date of birth of the surveyed respondent: 1961 Retired people : 31% Profession: managers (47%), employees (31%) Renters : 27% Houses : 60% with swimming pool, 12% with rainwater collector, 33% with borehole





Social representation



Through prioritized evocations' method

	Nombre	Fréquence de		
Mots associés à l'eau	de citation	citation	citation	mot
Zone du noyau de la représentation				
la vie	27	12%	1,11	2,9
lavage	27	12%	1,81	2,7
Zone de première périphérie				
plaisir détente	22	10%	2,45	2,1
Eléments contrastés de la représentation				
boisson et alimentation	20	9%	1,75	2,5
nécessité	16	7%	1,69	2,7
pureté	11	5%	2,00	2,4
rare et précieux	5	2%	2,00	1,4
soif	4	2%	1,50	0,8
eau potable	3	1%	2,00	2,3
qualité	3	1%	2,00	2,7
liquide	2	1%	1,50	0,0
manque d'eau	7	3%	1,86	-2,6
inégalité de partage	2	1%	2,00	-2,5
Zone de seconde périphérie				
la nature	13	6%	2,46	1,8
fraicheur	12	5%	2,50	1,8
économiser l'eau	10	4%	2,20	2,0
environnement	7	3%	2,57	1,9
abondance débit accès à l'eau consommation	6	3%	2,17	1,0
arrosage	5	2%	2,40	0,8
relaxation purification	4	2%	2,25	2,5
banal	1	0%	3,00	0,0
coût de l'eau	10	4%	2.30	-1.8
mauvaise qualité de l'eau (calcaire, goût,			,	
odeur)	4	2%	2,50	-0,5
inondation pollution	2	1%	2,50	-3,0
gaspillage	2	1%	2,50	-1,5
de moins en moins naturel	1	0%	3.00	-2.0

To give 3 words or phrases referring to items « water » / « intelligent metering » To order them of importance To prioritize them on a scale from -3 to +3				
	Level of interest			
	High (rank<2) Low (rank ≥			
	Frequency of High (≥ 10%)		The core: quantitative and qualitative centrality area	First perimeter
•	occurrence	Low (<10%)	Contrasting elements	Second perimeter





Water social representation

Water-related words	Frequency of occurence	Citation average ranking	Word average scale
Core area			
Life	12%	1,11	2,9
Washing	12%	1,81	2,7
First perimeter			
Pleasure and/or relaxation	10%	2,45	2,1
Contrasting elements			
Drink and food	9%	1,75	2,5
A need	7%	1,69	2,7
Purity	5%	2,00	2,4
Scarce and precious	2%	2,00	1,4
Thirst	2%	1,50	0,8
Drinking water	1%	2,00	2,3
Quality	1%	2,00	2,7
Liquid	1%	1,50	0,0
Water shortage	3%	1,86	-2,6
Inequity of sharing	1%	2,00	-2,5





Intelligent metering social representation

	Frequency	Citation	
	of	average	Word
Intelligent metering-related words	occurence	ranking	average scale
Core area			
Useful	18%	1,49	1,94
Improved consumption monitoring	11%	1,77	2,05
Simple	10%	1 <i>,</i> 95	1,58
Contrasting elements			
Realtime alert	7%	2,00	2,15
Leakage or overconsumption alert	6%	1,73	2,45
Modernity	6%	2,00	2,00
Water saving	4%	1,57	2,00
A bill based on real consumption	2%	2,00	3,00
Effective	1%	1,50	2,00
Indifference	1%	1,50	2,00
Environmentally friendly	1%	2,00	1,50
Have to be paid by water manager	1%	2,00	3,00
Assistance	1%	2,00	3,00
Bill management	1%	1,00	2,00
Unemployment	4%	1,75	-3,00
Unuseful	3%	1,40	-1,60
Manipulation	1%	2,00	-3,00
A need to be connected on Internet	1%	1,00	-3,00
Privatisation	1%	2,00	-3,00







Still a low subscription rate (2 months after being informed)

Media of communication	Number of households
Before being informed	2
Letter communication only	6
Face-to-face communication	4
Total	12

Low income High water users

... but not because of a negative representation: a need to explore the last step that one which goes from intention to action

- > A need to be perceived as an important issue:
 - Water bill level

Informa tion Inten tion Beha vior

A French water law which protects water users against exceptional leakages (debt cancellation when plumber invoice proving leakage repair)

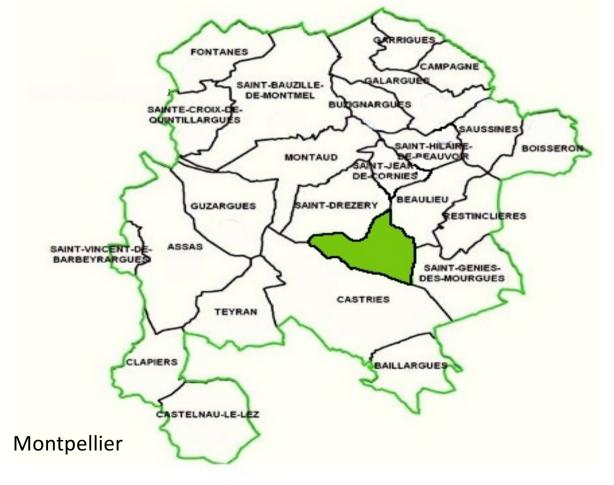
- Enhanced billing (e.g. a water pricing linked to intelligent metering): Like electricity where time-of-day pricing (Ehrhardt-Martinez et al., 2010)
- A need of a feedback (Schleich et al., 2013) or of an automated program which informs water user when he overconsumes (Lafaye et al., 2013)





Further researches:

Exploring a data set of 23,000 water meters (number of observations from 2012 to June 2016: 44,000,000): detection of trends and breaks, exploration of potential correlation with the subscription or not to intelligent metering service or type of water user ...







Many thanks for your attention

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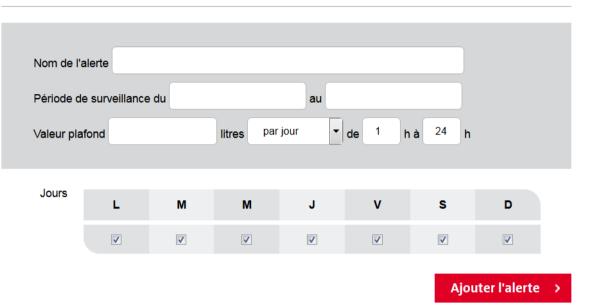
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