

VIMOMA

Experience design and nature conservation via Visitor Monitoring and Management in protected areas

Communications tools and approaches to promote natural areas and attract visitors

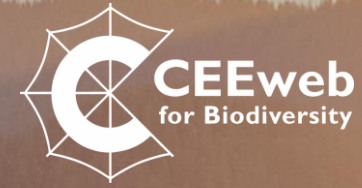
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- Visegrad Fund



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Outline

01 General information

02 Strategic Communications

03 QR Coding

04 Geocaching

05 Practical Implications

General information



Communication tools and approaches to promote natural areas and attract visitors - 23-24th of April – Pomáz, Hungary

Main themes:

1. **Introduction** to communications, **Comms strategies** to promote natural areas – **András Sztaniszláv**
2. **Target groups and messaging**: introduction and group work
3. **Communication tools** for protected areas: QR coding, geocaching, geotagging – *Thor Morante & Joseph Oppong Wiafe, CEEweb*
4. **Field Trip**: Borbás Gerinc & Boldog Özséb Lookout Tower – Duna-Ipoly National Park



Communications 101



Communication tools and methods can **support conservation efforts** of natural environments, preservation of biodiversity, and ecological balance.

Moreover:

- Can increase visitor experience and management
- Can improve perception of protected areas

Primary objective: to have a meaningful impact in the audience and connect.

Strategic Communications



PREDICTABILITY



ADAPTABILITY



Strategy Approach



Strategy Approach



Strategy Approach



STAKEHOLDER
MAP

COMPETITORS

CHANNELS

CREATIVITY,
CONTENT

MEASURE,
ANALYSE

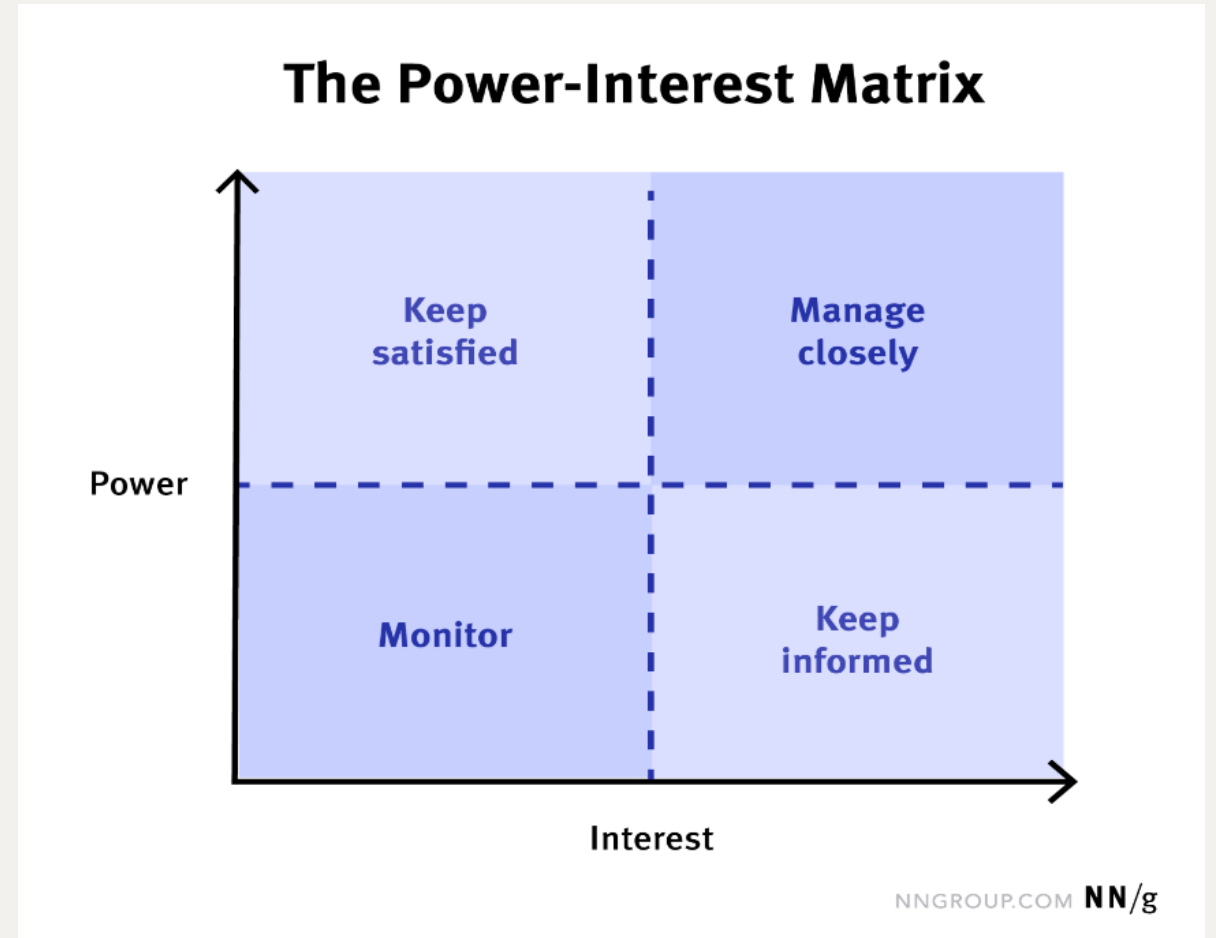
The Strategy Itself




Target Audience



- Target groups consist of relatively homogeneous people
- A customized approach is essential for each group
- Should be tailored to their specific characteristics (Hesselink 2007).
- Upon mapping, prioritise.
- Persona crafting



Target Audience: Persona Crafting



**COREY R.
COOL**

35
Single
Restaurateur
New York

BIO

Corey is a foodie who owns a small restaurant, but wants to grow and do things well. He wants to promote his business, but has little budget for it. He believes that good communication is essential to reach your potential audience and to be able to fill his restaurant with more and better customers every day.

"Eat an experience"

USER PERSONA

GOALS

- Publicize his restaurant
- Communicate in the best way
- Focus his your main objective: the restaurant's service and food.

SKILLS

SKILL 1

SKILL 2

SKILL 3

FRUSTRATIONS

- Not knowing how to design
- Not having time to design
- Not having a budget for these designs

MOTIVATIONS

- Create menu designs, offers and promotions for his restaurant
- Affordable alternatives for creating these designs
- Used this User Persona example template for his business. Customized it online in the graphic editor EDIT.org"

Communications Channels



- Digital (e.g. social media, websites, newsletters)
- In-person promotion
- Prints (e.g. leaflets, brochures, giveaways)
- Gamification (e.g. geocaching, over-layering)
- On-site interactivity (e.g. QR coding)
- Etcetera.

Messaging



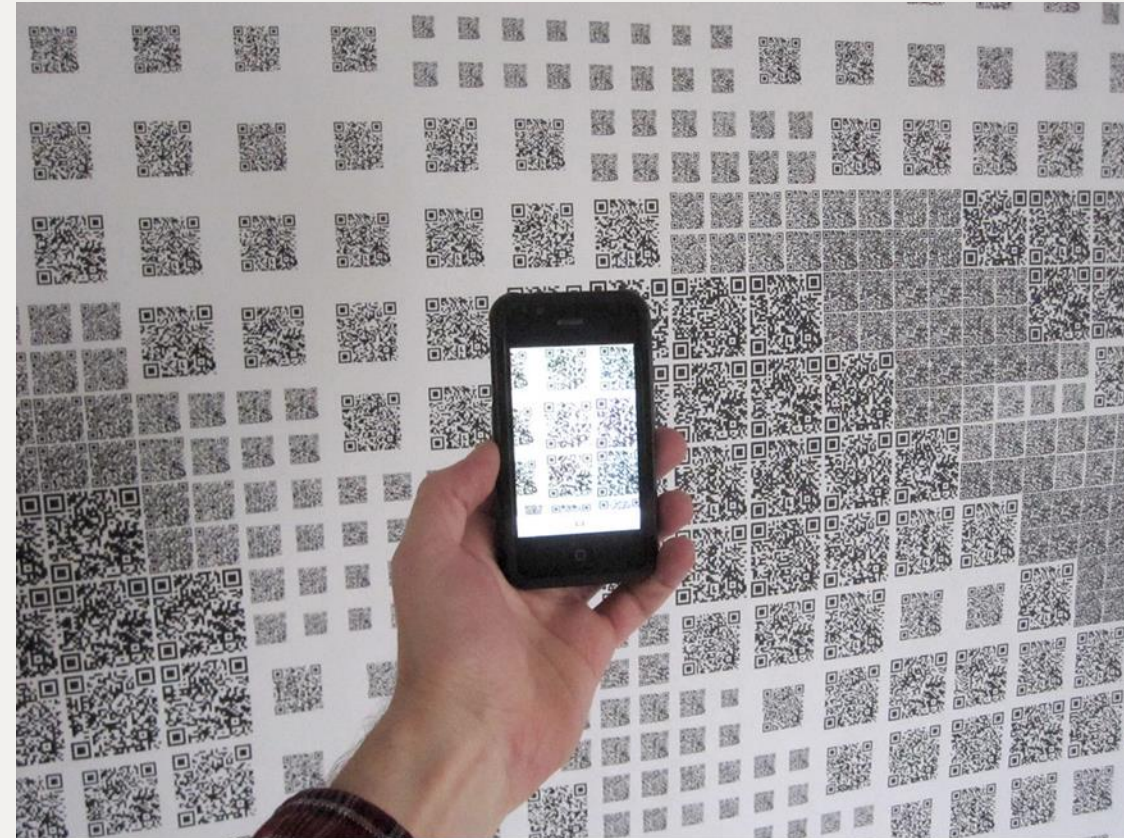
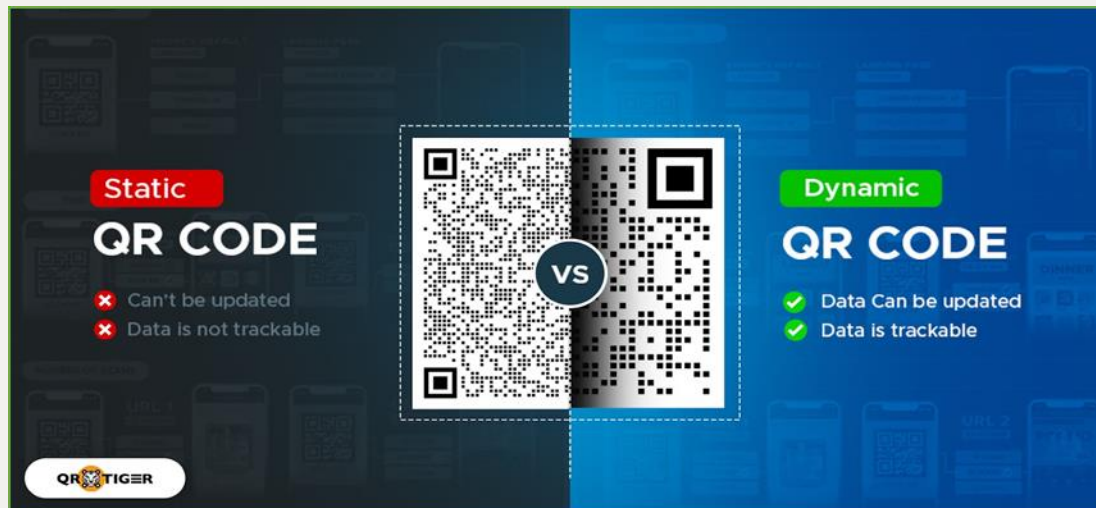


Case study methods

QR Coding



- Types: Static and Dynamic
- QR codes are easy to use and cost-effective
- Easy to create (e.g. QR Stuff & QR Tiger)



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Benefits



For visitors:

- Allows quick access to information
- Easy to use
- If giving a map, allows for visitors for constant checking of routes/paths chosen
- Recordable information (URLs stay in the phone browsers for later check)
- Increases involvement levels
- Improves visitors' experiences

Benefits



For managers/management of the centres:

- Provides data of visitors' interest points → **traceability**
- Makes it easy to communicate necessary information to visitors (in real time)
- Makes it possible to communicate in diverse formats – texts, videos, audios & images, etc.

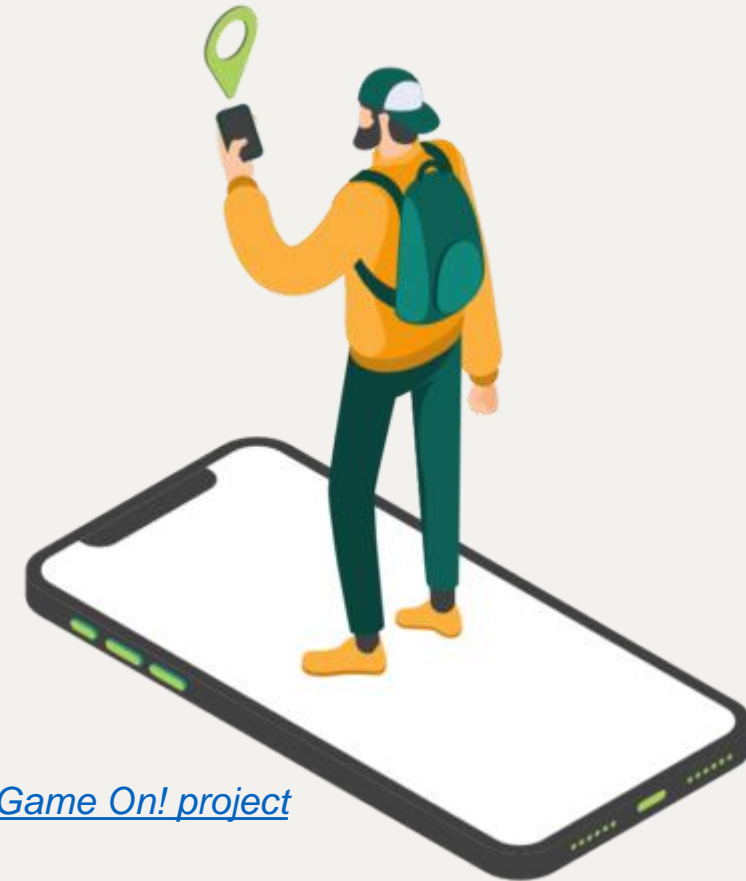


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Geocaching



- World largest treasure hunt game
- The goal → to find a cache (i.e. the hidden treasure) using GPS
- A cache is a container of various sizes that contains:
 - A log-book
 - Pen or pencil or stamp
 - SWAGs (“stuff we all get”) → the “treasure”
 - Small items for exchange (left by geocachers)
- A cache has its own unique geocaching code



Source: [Climate Quest](#), [Game On! project](#)

How to geocache?



1. Create a user profile on www.geocaching.com
2. Download a geocaching app (e.g. [C:Geo](#) or [Locus](#))
3. Download offline vector maps and caches for chosen locations



Geocaching in Protected Areas



- Geocaching, as an outdoor activity, has been concluded to have positive correlations with natural areas (Mendes et al. 2013)
- Protected Areas (PAs) are of special interest in geocaching (Mendes et al. 2004)
 - Opens PA to new/larger audience
 - Improves visitor experience
- Challenges: deterioration of the vegetation through trampling has been regarded by most researchers as a major challenge. (Leung & Marion 2000)



Source: [Fihu](#)



Practical implications

— Strategising Practical Implications



- By adopting a strategic approach to communications planning, national parks and protected area managers can achieve several benefits, including fostering a sense of responsibility and support for conservation, raising awareness of conservation goals, and enhancing visitor experiences.
- A well-designed communication strategy contributes to an enhanced visitor experience and the overall attractiveness of protected areas.
- By utilizing technology-driven communication methods, protected area managers can create a balance between promoting tourism and conservation, ensuring a sustainable and enriching experience for both visitors and the environment.

QR Practical Implications

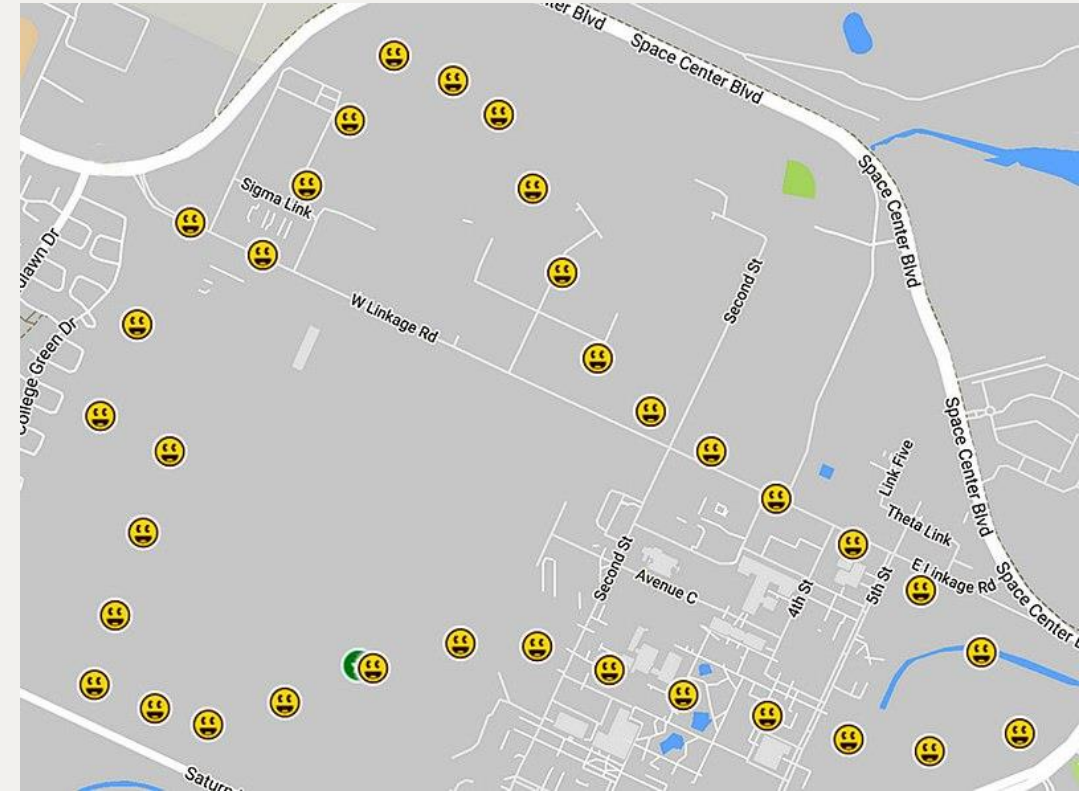


- QR coding needs low investment to leverage on (i.e. cost effective)
- Dynamic codes are more efficient because of their qualities
- Printed QR codes should be protected (e.g. from weather conditions)
- The QR code system has to be made known to the visitors (e.g. at the entrance)
- The QR codes are placed/displayed visibly and accessible to/by all (e.g. free internet accessibility)
- QR codes should be accompanied with brief description of its content

Geocaching Practical Implications



- Can help monitor visitors and visits
- Has the ability to promote conservation at protected areas
 - natural parks
 - forest reserves
 - wildlife sanctuaries
- Can serve to educate people or participants about the natural features of the protected area (Mendes *et al.* 2014; Zecha 2012).



Source: Geoart, by [Jim Evans](#).