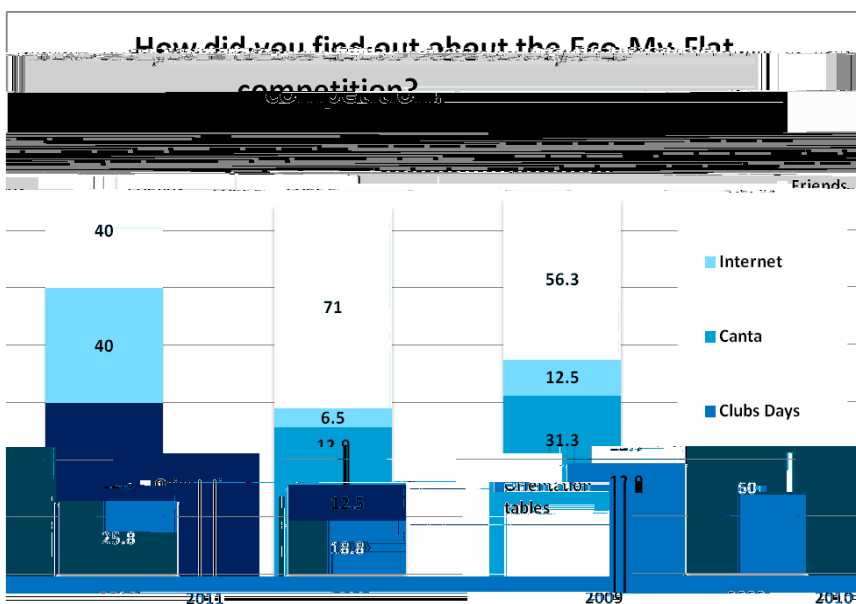
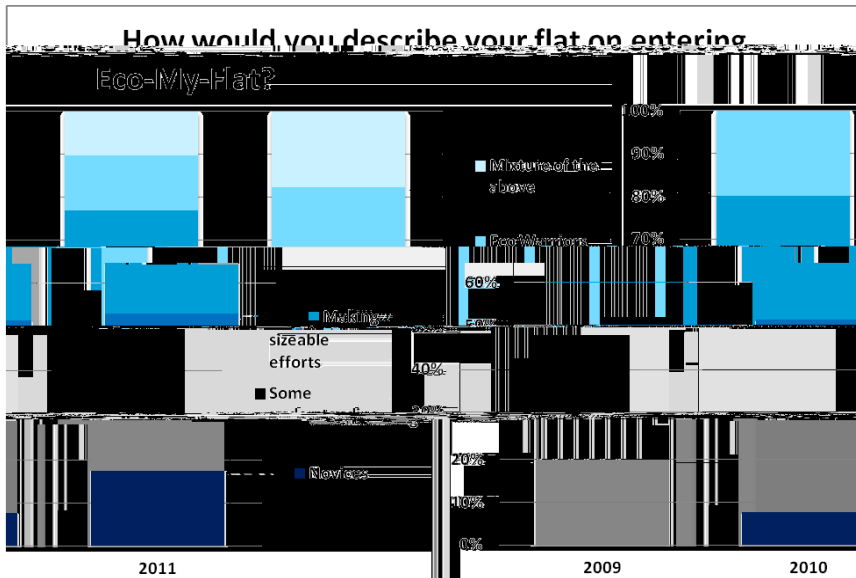


By Alicia Sudden, for the UC Sustainability Office

Based on the last three years of Eco-My-Flat, the demographic of participating students has varied considerably.

There is an increased diversity in the current sustainability levels participating



whole flat to participate. While orientation tables are now having a much smaller influence on sign-ups, promotion through Canta is proving more influential. Canta is one of the most important media sources on campus, and Figure 2 helps to illustrate the wider audience that can be reached through it.

The reasons for entering the Eco-My-Flat competition have remained relatively stable over the last three years. In 2010 and 2011, prizes have been of the lowest importance, while learning about sustainability is consistently the number one reason for entering. Saving money is also slowly building up momentum as is shown in Figure 3

think it is a great competition and we are all more aware of living more sustainably than we were before even if we didn't finish this time".

The reasons for the drop in competition completion have varied over 2010 and 2011 as we can see in Figure 5. The major factor in 2011 (although not a category in itself in the survey) would have been earthquake related stresses. The majority of Christchurch residents had a lot of other issues to deal with at this time, University of Canterbury students being no exception, and understandably finishing the competition may have just been too much to handle on top of that. Also, the competition was delayed due to the earthquakes and the university being closed and was instead held over the winter months, which are much busier in terms of study and harder to come

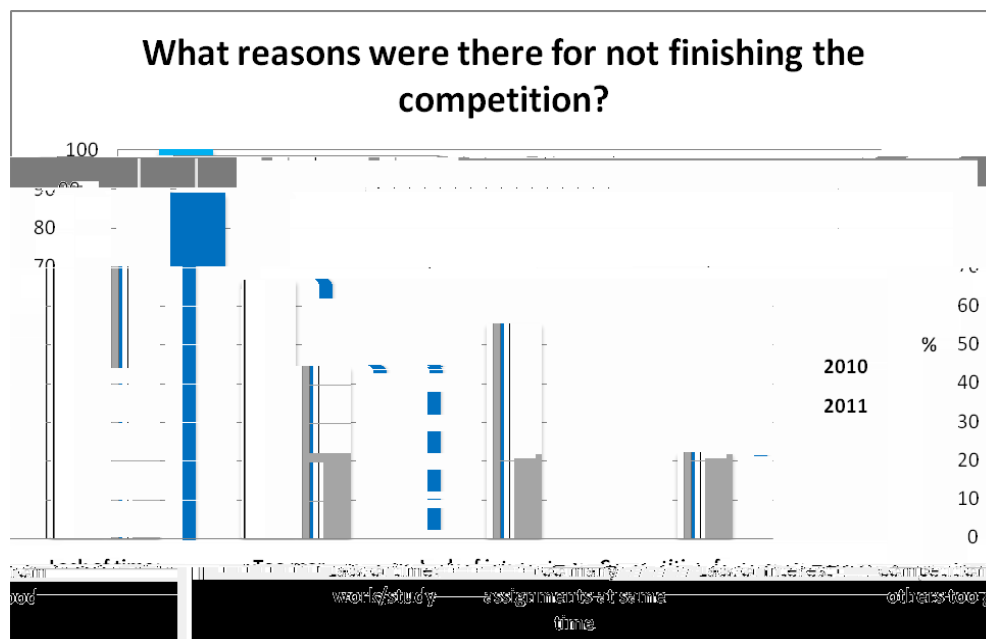


Figure 5

in voluntarily for workshops etc. This was noted by one student who felt "it was hard this year with the earthquake but I think it would work better

at the start of the year" and "having it in winter was a bit rough". One thing to note is the influence of flats that were considered too advanced in their sustainable practices. This was off-putting to 22.2% of those who did not complete the competition. Each year a lack of time was the dominating factor for not completing the competition. With 47% of those who completed the survey in 2011 not finishing Eco-My-Flat due to a lack of time, this is a major constraint, though likely caused by issues related to the earthquakes.

This has been a major influence on the overall restructuring of Eco-my-Flat for 2012. Instead of it being a head to head time-consuming competition, it will be more flexible in levels of participation. This way flats can attend the workshops of their choice, rather than having to attend all and make the appropriate changes. The competition then will be able to reach more people, enabling them to make sustainable changes to their flats,

and overall lifestyles without the pressures and time constraints. Those who

Workshops are a key part of the Eco-My-Flat experience, and have undergone a major overhaul over the last few years based on student

several flats, one respondent saying “I only knew half of the flats and would have liked to know more of them”. This social night will be to encourage a sense of community within the participants, a component we all know to be vital to sustainability efforts.

The information in the workshops was well received all three years. In Figure 11 we can see a significant jump from 2009 to 2010 in

favourability. This is in response to the broadening of topics the workshops were on. While 3.2% of participants in 2010 felt they didn't learn anything new

Figure 12

Another part of this overall behaviour change is the ability for sustainability to be passed onto friends and family. This has been steadily increasing since 2009, as can be seen in Figure 13, and is likely to do so further in 2012 following the workshop on being an agent of change. One student said the competition made them want “to inspire the change in others”.

Figure 13

This and the above question have particular resonance given the state of Christchurch. As we start to rebuild our city centre and our homes, themes of sustainability are becoming increasingly important. Through all the destruction we have a real chance to re-grow our city in a way that is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable. This is no better fostered than through community understanding and discussion.

For future ideas within workshops we asked participants if they would like to present some of their ideas in one of the workshops. Unlike 2009 and

2010, 2011

participants

overwhelming

would not like

to do a

presentation

(see Figure

14), and

hence we

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