

Overview

Kensington Master Builders opened their Edmonton-area ICF Showcase home on June 16, 2001.

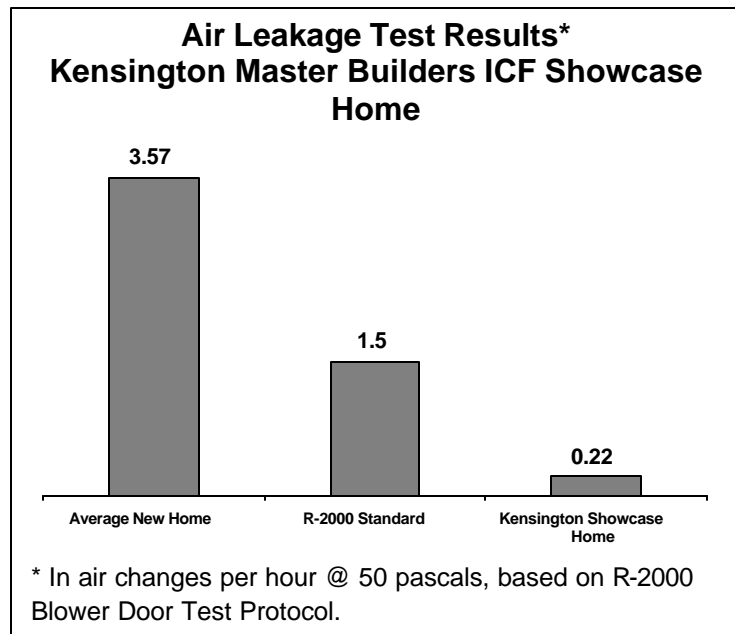
Located in the Waterton Estates neighbourhood of Sherwood Park, this 3,900 sq. ft. bungalow featured a walk-out basement, full-height ICF walls and in-floor radiant heating in the basement, kitchen and bathrooms. The home was custom-built for a Kensington client who agreed to have it serve as the company's ICF Showcase home.

Since the construction of this home, Kensington Master Builders have built a number of additional ICF homes and now offer ICF construction to all prospective clients.

Of special note were the results of the Kensington Showcase home's R-2000 "blower-door" test to measure air leakage. This home—the first ICF unit constructed by the builder—exceeded the R-2000 requirement by 85%.



Few R-2000 homes achieve this low a test result. This is an indication of both the inherent energy efficiency advantage of ICF construction as well as a testament to the builders expertise.



Approximately 1,000 people visited the home during the four weekend Open Houses. The promotional campaign for this Showcase home involved both direct mail, media coverage and paid newspaper advertising in Edmonton-area media.

This campaign generated approximately 2.8 million media exposures in the Edmonton market area.

Builder Profile

Kensington Master Builders is an Edmonton-area homebuilder specializing in custom construction.

The company was established in 1986 and builds up to 12 homes per year.

Kensington has been a licensed R-2000 builder for the last six years and has earned Master Builder designation from the Professional Home Builder's Institute of Alberta.



The Builder's Experience

Marilyn Kaz, President of Kensington Master Builders, provided the following comments about the project three months after the Showcase home opening:

Why did you decide to develop a Showcase Home project?

"There were a couple of reasons. I'm always open to innovative and energy efficient technology. Although ICF construction has been around for a number of years, it's still something fairly new in this area, so I was interested in trying it out. I think ICF construction is a good way to go, particularly in terms of energy efficiency.

"As well, with this particular home, our clients were interested in ICF construction. They had seen an ICF display at the home show and asked us about using this system to build their home. As a custom builder, it can be difficult to use new technology, because our homes are not built on spec or from a standard plan. In this case, using ICF suited everyone involved."



How did the building process work out?

“It was very much a learning experience. I’m a very hands-on builder, so I was at the work site a lot. Since building this home, we’ve applied what we learned on the next house, and we’re continuing to learn new tricks about working with ICF.”

How did the Showcase event and the open houses go?

“We got a very positive reaction to the Showcase home. We had a lot of people through the home—probably 1,000 over the entire six weekends. The visitors asked a lot of questions about the construction methods. They were really interested.”

Based on your experience with the Showcase home, what are your future plans for ICF construction?

“I definitely think ICF is catching on. And it makes a lot of sense for our company because we emphasize energy efficiency in our homes.

We’ve built two more ICF homes since the Showcase home and are working on the designs of additional ICF homes for spring construction next year.”



Partners' Experience

Ed Kalis, Alberta Ready Mixed Concrete Association (ARMCA)

"The Showcase home went very well. The opening day, there were a lot of people through the home and visitors asked good questions. There were also a number of company representatives taking part—the radiant heating supplier, the window supplier, people from the cabinetry company, etc. The traffic through the home was quite steady and there was a lot of interest from consumers.

"I understand that the number of visitors remained steady through the rest of the open house weekends as well. Overall, it was an excellent response.

"We got a lot of exposure for the industry from this event and we are quite pleased with the results. There were also a number of home builders who came and asked us questions. And the media coverage, particularly from the local paper, was good.

"I know that both the ICF supplier and the builder got good leads from this event.



"We think that the Showcase Home Program has been very successful in the Alberta market. We have some more events coming up in other areas of the province and look forward to seeing how these go."

Lloyd Bertschi, Enervision

(R-2000 Program operator in Alberta)

"I really like the open house approach. There were lots of displays and information for visitors. There were good demonstrations of how the ICF and heating systems worked. It was really good.

The advertising was well focused on ICF and in-floor radiant heating and people were very interested in these aspects of the home. Marilyn has the right approach to building houses and this was the right approach to marketing this type of home."

Greg Doren, Advantage Wall Systems
(ICF supplier)

“We were really happy with the response we got from this event. Kensington is already building another ICF home and more are being planned. Visitors to the home were very interested in ICF. With energy costs increasing, the first question visitors asked was whether they would save energy. This is a really hot topic right now, and consumers are associating ICF construction with lower energy bills, which is great.”

“The Showcase Home Program that the Cement Association backs is definitely helping to build the ICF market. These events really get people out. In Alberta, we used to get one home with full-height ICF walls for about every 10 ICF basements. Now it’s about one in four.”



Visitor Profile

A visitor exit survey was conducted during the Kensington Showcase home event to determine visitor characteristics and monitor reaction to the home. During the survey period, approximately 1,000 people toured the home. The survey response rate was 13%.

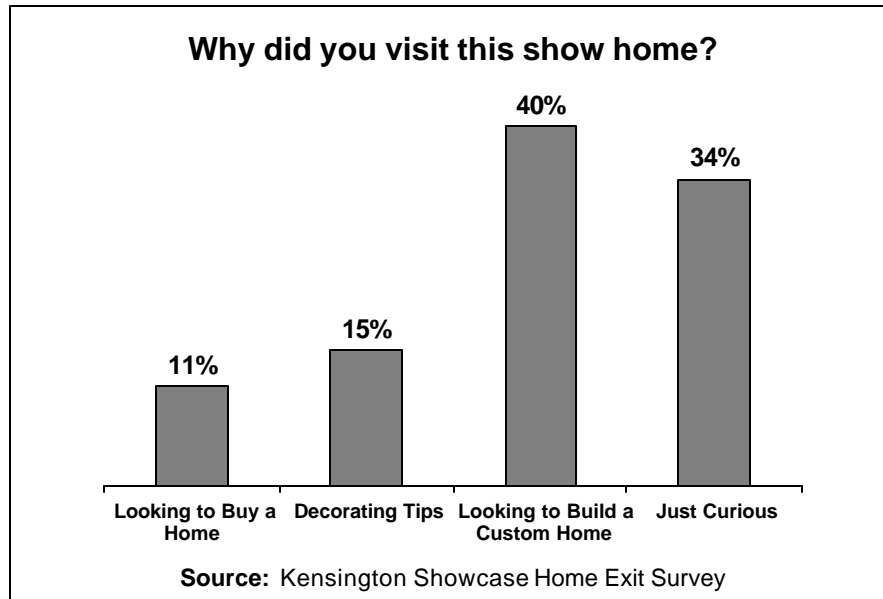
Key findings from the survey were as follows:

- **66%** of respondents reported an annual household income \$80,000 (Cdn.) or more, while **31%** have a household income of between \$50,000 and \$80,000.
- **57%** had a university education.
- **26%** were between 35 and 45 years of age.
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- **57%** of respondents plan to buy or build a new home.
- **49%** of respondents were aware of ICF and **71%** were aware of in-floor radiant heating before visiting the show home.
- The three most important features of the home were cited as energy efficiency (**74%**), structural strength (**38%**), and a healthier indoor environment (**35%**).
- **58%** of potential buyer respondents are looking to buy their third home.
- Two-thirds of respondents will consider ICF construction in their next home; three-quarters will consider buying radiant in-floor heating.

Detailed results from the exit survey are presented on the following pages.

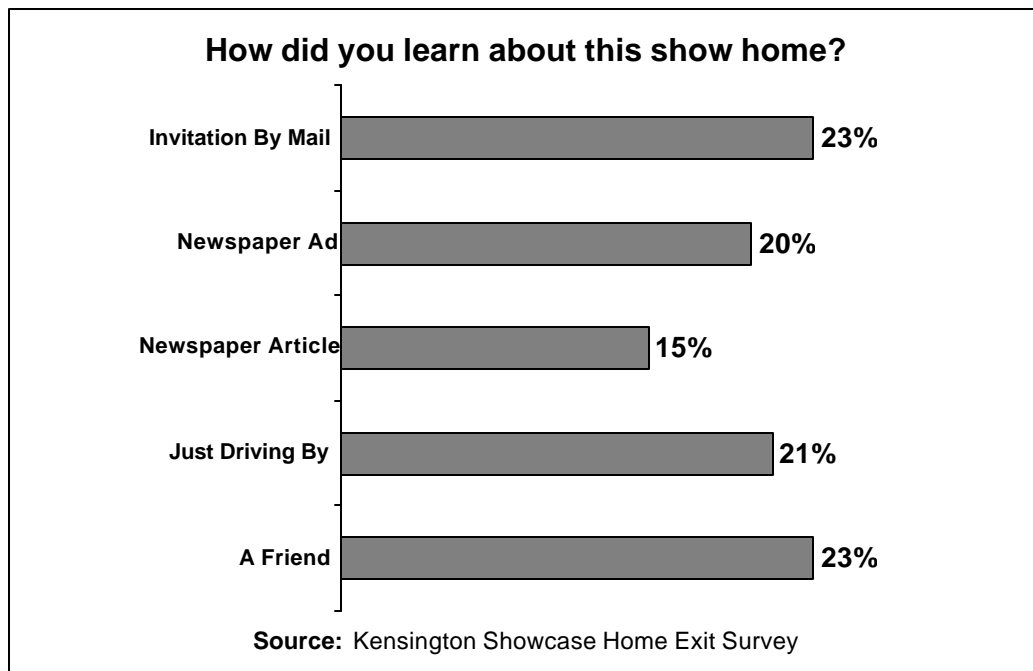
Reason for Visitor Interest

More than half of the visitors to the Kensington Showcase home were actively considering a new home. The remaining visitors were curious about the home or interested in décor.



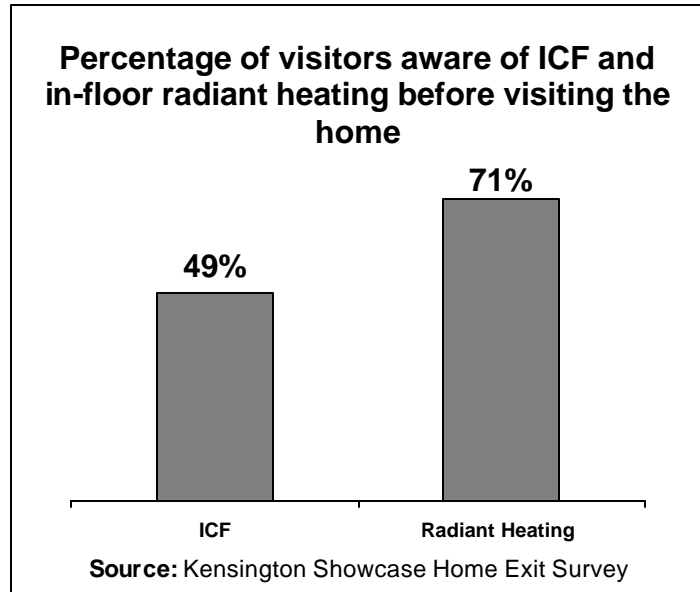
Source of Awareness of ICF Showcase Home Event

Promotion of the Kensington Showcase home involved direct-mail invitations, paid newspaper advertising and unpaid media coverage.



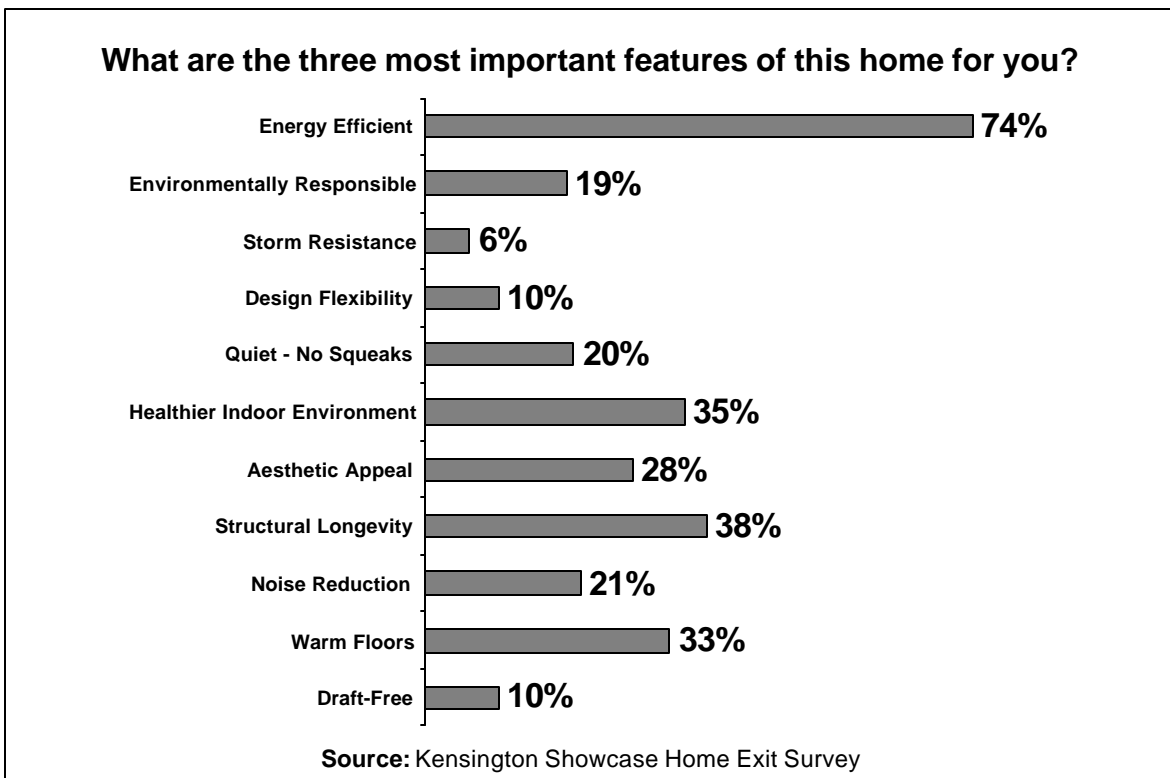
Pre-Visit Awareness of ICF Construction and Infloor Radiant Heating

Almost half of the show home visitors were aware of ICF construction prior to visiting the home. Nearly three-quarters were previously aware of in-floor radiant heating.



Visitor Preferences of the Showcase Home's Features

Energy efficiency was the most popular home feature, selected by 74% of Showcase home visitors. Structural strength and a healthier indoor environment, the next most popular features, were about half as popular.

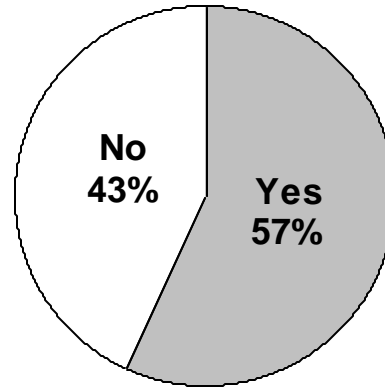


Visitor Buying Intentions

57% of visitors expressed the intention to buy a new home at some point in the future.

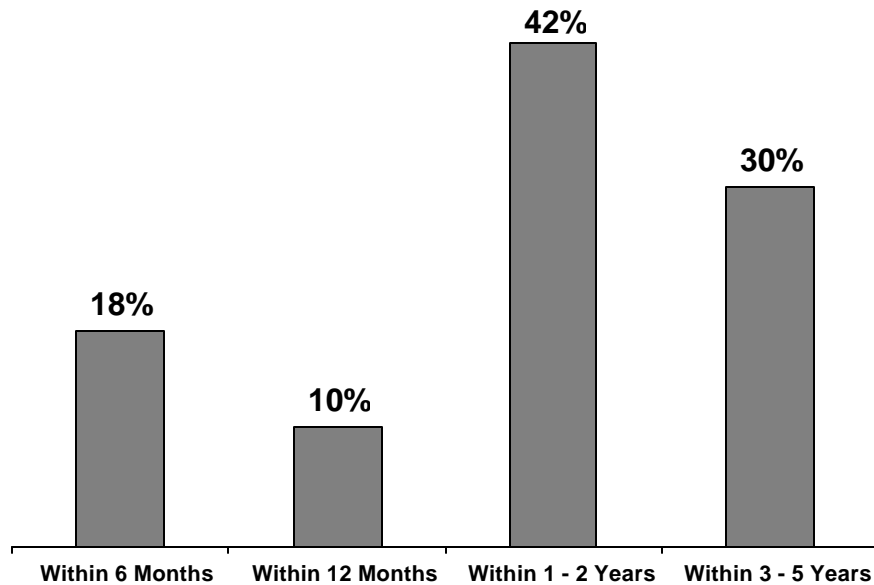
Of those intending to buy, 28% expect to be living in a new home within the coming year. The remaining visitors have less defined intentions.

Do you plan to buy a new home or custom-built home?



Source: Kensington Showcase Home Exit Survey

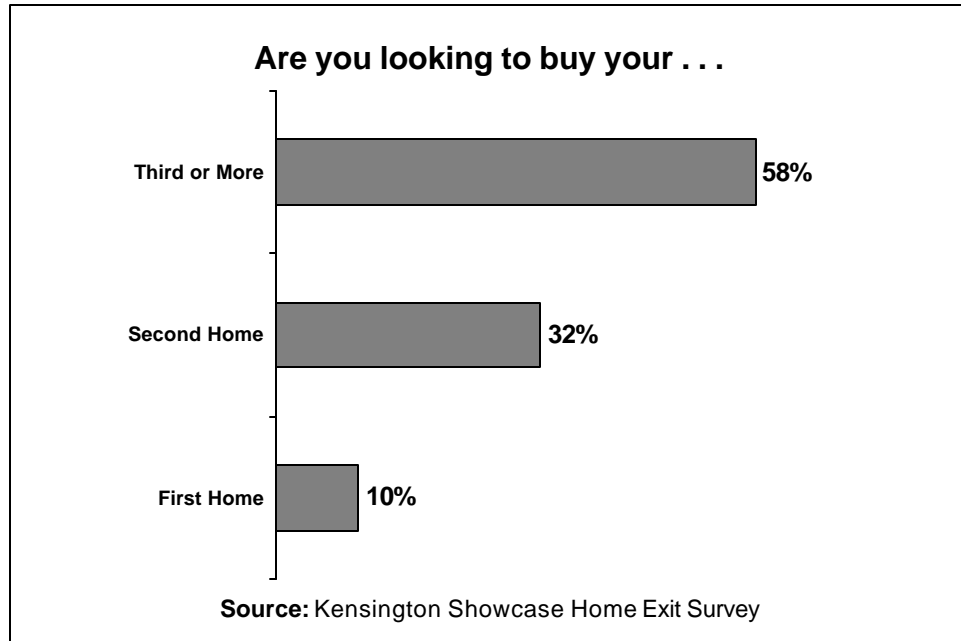
If YES, when do you plan to move in?



Source: Kensington Showcase Home Exit Survey

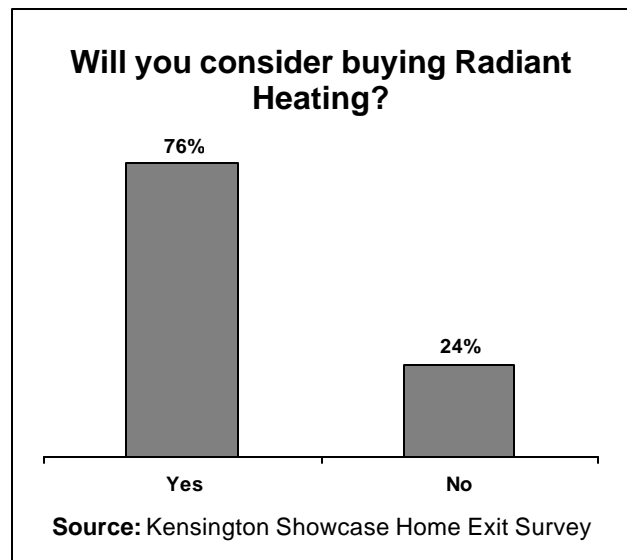
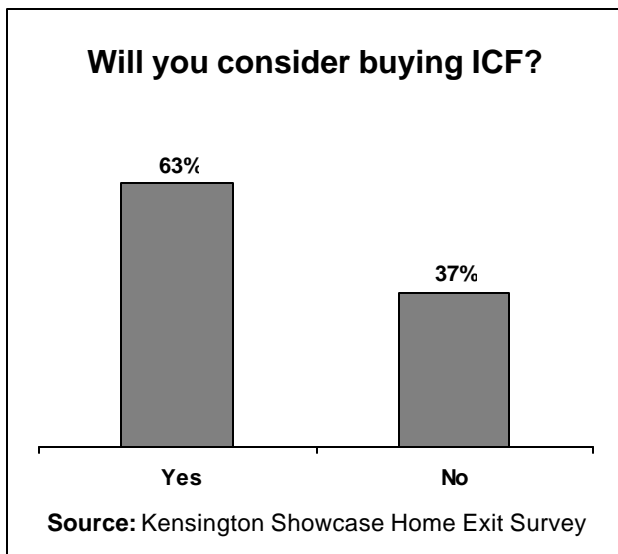
Buyer Experience

Of those visitors who expressed an intention to buy a new home, only a small number were first-time buyers, 32% were second-time buyers and 58% were third- or more-time buyers.



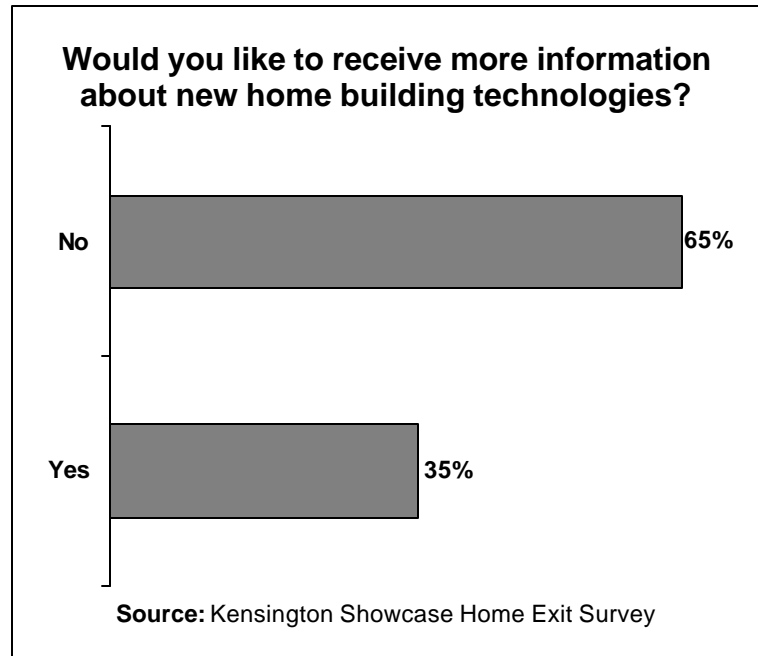
Buyer Interest in ICF and In-floor Radiant Heating in Their Next Home

Among those visitors with home-buying intentions, about two-thirds stated that they would consider buying an ICF home. Nearly 80% indicated that they would consider purchasing a home equipped with radiant heating.



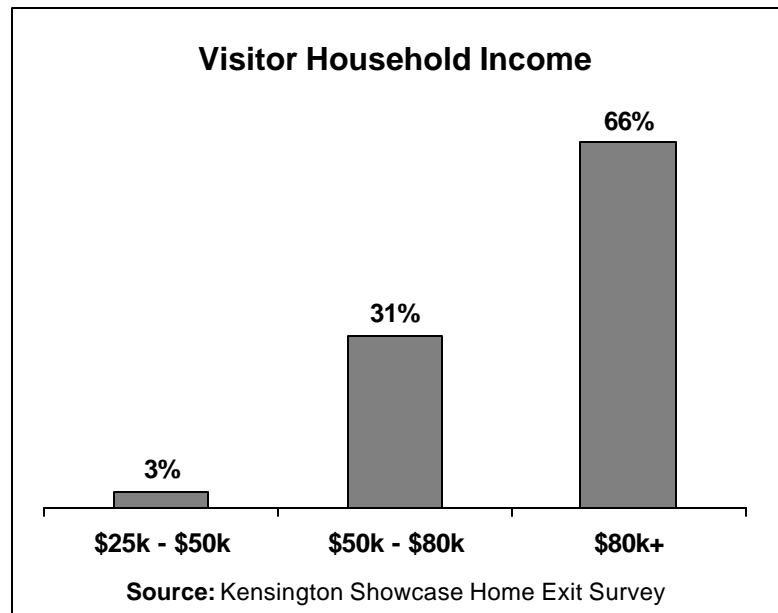
Visitor Interest in Receiving Additional Information

About one-third of Showcase home visitors indicated that they would like to receive more information about new home building technologies.



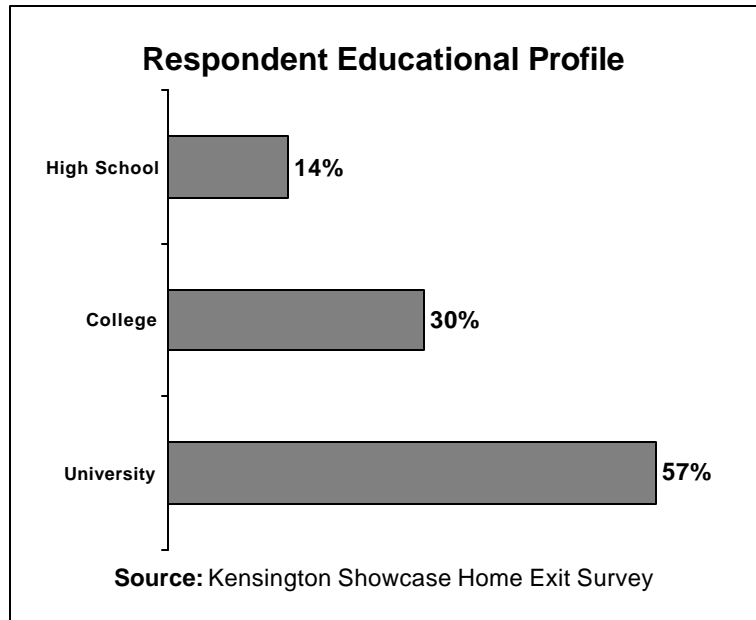
Visitor Household Income

Two-thirds of the Show case home visitors who stated their household income indicated that they earn \$80,000 (Cdn.) or more per year.



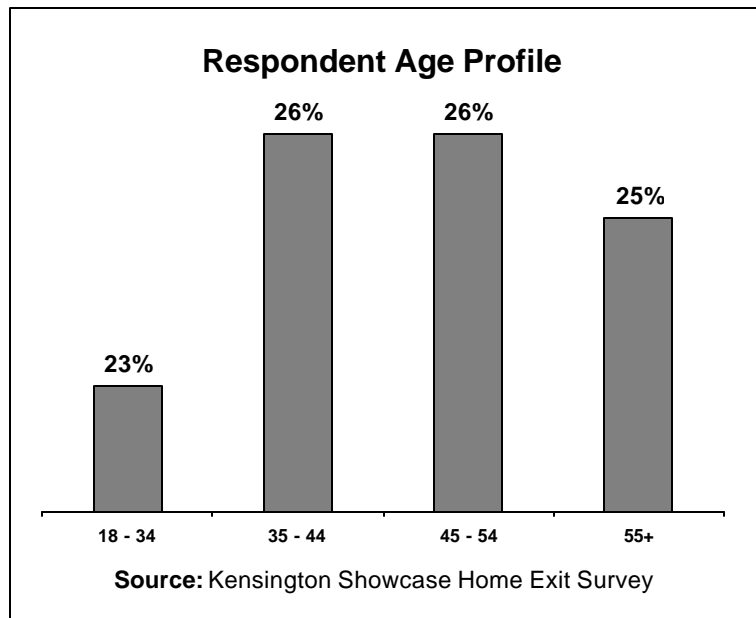
Educational Profile

57% of the survey respondents had completed university while another 30% had a college education.



Age Profile

Just over half of respondents fall within the prime home-buying segments of 35 to 55 years of age.



Appendix – List of Project Partners

The following companies and organizations participated in the Kensington Showcase Home project:

Kensington Master Builders

Alberta Ready Mixed Concrete Association

Accent Heating

Advantage Wall Systems

Burnco Rock Products

Coronet Electric

Empire Drywall

Equibuilt Windows

Great Canadian Roofing

Nortec Heating

The R-2000 Program, Alberta



MEDIA COVERAGE

Advertising

Circulation

This Week (8 weeks))	181,000
Edmonton Journal (8 weeks)	2,455,200
New Home Buyers' Guide (2 months)	167,200

Media Coverage

This Week (22,600 x 1)	22,699
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Paid media exposures: **2,803,400**

Unpaid media exposures: 22,699 x 2.5 = 56,747

TOTAL **2,860,147**

COMMON ADVERTISING TERMINOLOGY

Circulation: Of a print publication, the average number of copies distributed

Exposure: Consumers who have seen (or heard) a message. Calculation ranges from 2.5 to 4 times for editorial vs. advertisement.

Readership: The total number of readers of a publication (includes Primary and Pass-along readers).

Reach: The estimated number of individuals in the audience that are reached at least once during a specific period of time.

Frequency: Number of times an average person or home is exposed to a media vehicle (or group of vehicles), within a given time period.