

# Overview

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Spronk & Sons Construction Ltd. opened their ICF Showcase home in early January, 2001. Located in Edmonton's Sherwood Park neighbourhood, this 1,500 sq. ft. home featured full-height ICF walls and in-floor radiant heating in the basement.

This project was the first ICF Showcase home event to be carried out in Alberta. The builder received support and assistance in organizing the event from the Cement Association of Canada and the Alberta Ready Mixed Concrete Association.

Promotion of the Showcase open house involved both newspaper advertising, direct mail invitations and use of a Web site offering a virtual tour.

Total consumer exposure in the Edmonton market area was estimated at 306,580. Over 800 visitors toured the home during the official open house period.

To date, nine full-height ICF sales have resulted from the Showcase home: three firm sales, three sales pending, and three sales awarded to another builder.

At the time that Spronk & Sons were building their ICF Showcase home, they also constructed an identical wood frame house in the same subdivision to determine the actual ICF cost premium. Following completion of both homes, Spronk determined that the ICF home had cost 6% more than the conventional wood-frame house.



# Builder Profile

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Spronk & Sons Construction Ltd. Is an Edmonton custom home building firm that caters primarily to move-up buyers. The company was founded in 1980 and currently builds an average of 15 homes per year.

## The Builder's Experience

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Ed Spronk, President of Spronk & Sons Construction Ltd. provided the following assessment of the project four months after the Showcase home opening:

### Why did you decide to develop a Showcase Home project?

*"We were approached by our concrete supplier Stel-Mar that was promoting ICF construction. They invited us to attend a Home with a Difference meeting put on by the Alberta Ready Mixed Concrete Association(ARMCA)/ Cement Association of Canada where we learned more about the construction method and heard about the Showhome program. Building the Showcase home seemed like a great opportunity to learn something new and building with an ICF system seemed like a neat idea. Ed Kalis with the ARMCA encouraged us to do the project and introduced us to various ICF suppliers and we chose the people from Advantage Wall Systems."*

### How did the building process work out?

*"Because this was our first ICF home, it was a bit of an unknown at the beginning. Advantage provided us with on-site support and training and once we got into a bit, everything worked well. I'm very comfortable working with ICF now, it's really a breeze—light, clean and easy to handle."*



### How did the Showcase event and the open houses go?

*"Very good. There was a lot of traffic through the home, a lot more than we expected given our location in the subdivision. The advertising seemed to be really effective and we made a number of sales."*

*"The neighbours who live immediately behind the home got really interested as we built the home and actually asked about buying it, but we had already sold it at that point. So we're building them an ICF home in another area of the subdivision right now. A couple who read about the project in the newspaper phoned us asking about ICF and we're*

*building a home for them as well. We've gotten a lot of calls because of the Showcase home. All in all, it's been a real success for us".*

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

*"We'll keep building ICF homes. We're building another ICF showhome now in a subdivision that is a bit more central than the last site. Already I find that people are stopping by the site to watch the construction process and ask us questions. There seems to be a lot of interest in this type of construction.*

*"The cost on the first one was about 6% extra compared to wood construction but this is starting to come down now as we get more experienced. I think that if you compare an ICF home to a wood frame one that delivers the same type of performance—say an R-2000 home—ICF really isn't any more expensive to build, there's really no extra cost."*



# Partners' Experience

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## **Lorne Clark, ReMax Advantage Realty**

*“From my perspective, the showhome was very successful. The attendance by the public was outstanding—way above the norm for this type of event. In terms of results, it was also excellent, Spronk are now building a number of ICF homes that were sold because of the Showhome.*

*“The ICF construction was extremely interesting to visitors and they made a lot of positive comments about this aspect of the home. The radiant heating was also a major hit—as soon as people stepped onto the floor they were amazed. People really loved the warm floors.*

*“Another really positive aspect of the Showhome were the people from Advantage Wall Systems who were on site during the Open House. They explained the whole ICF system to visitors and this was really a big help. The visitors were very interested in how the home was built.*

*“If I were building a home for myself today, I wouldn't build any other way, and I've been in the real estate business for 26 years.”*

## **Kevin Bornia, Advantage Wall Systems**

*“For Advantage, the Open Houses were phenomenal. We had people driving for an hour to see the home. It was awesome.*

*“We benefited from being at the Open houses as much as the builder—we met so many people who wanted to build with ICFs and we were really able to connect with them. Attending the Open Houses was a direct benefit for our firm.*

*“Having a Showcase home offers a valuable opportunity to promote ICF construction. Once the home is finished, it doesn't look that different from other houses, but we were able to show visitors exactly how the home was built. We had a display and samples of the wall system and this made it much easier to explain and demonstrate.*

*“As a result of the Showcase home, we are now talking to a major building products retailer who wants to carry our product. We are also now working with a commercial builder who wants to use the Advantage system in their work.*

*Ed Spronk was the perfect builder for this type of thing. He has a very positive attitude and he went into the project determined to make it a success. Because he is also building identical house plans in wood frame, he has been able calculate the extra cost in the Showcase home more accurately; it's 6%—peanuts compared to the benefits the system provides.”*

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# Visitor Profile

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A visitor exit survey was conducted during the Spronk Showcase event to determine visitor characteristics and monitor reaction to the home. During the survey period, approximately 800 people toured the home. The survey response rate was 17%.

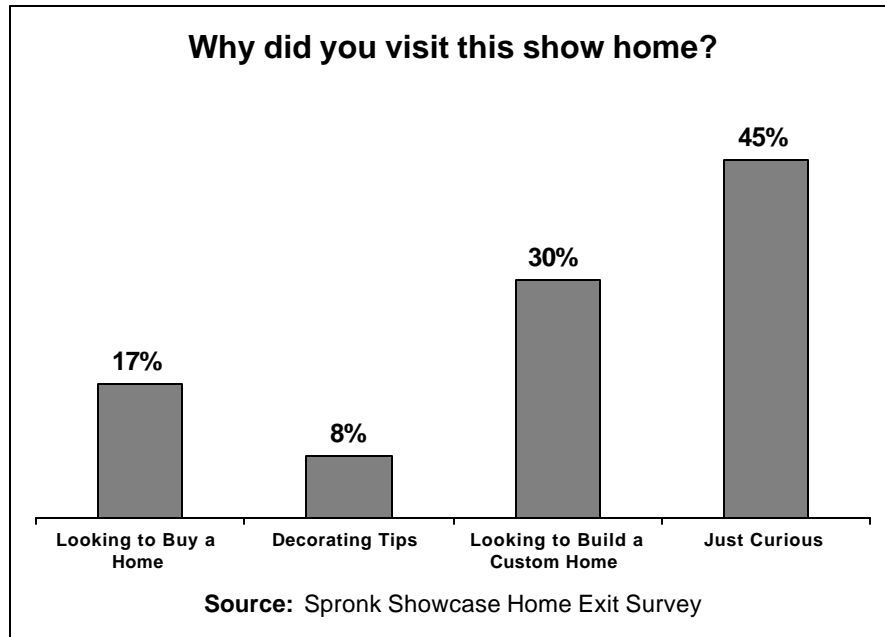
Key findings from the survey were as follows:

- **92%** of respondents reported an annual household income of between \$50,000 and \$80,000 (Cdn.), **36%** have a household income of \$80,000 or more.
- **41%** had a university degree.
- **23%** were between 35 and 45 years of age.
- **42%** were between 45 and 54 years of age.
- **47%** of respondents plan to buy or build a new home.
- **36%** of respondents were aware of ICF and **64%** were aware of in-floor radiant heating before visiting the show home.
- The two most important features of the home were cited as energy efficiency (**71%**), and warm floors (**38%**).
- **59%** of potential buyer respondents are looking to buy their third home.
- Two-thirds of respondents will consider both ICF and radiant in-floor heating in their next home.

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

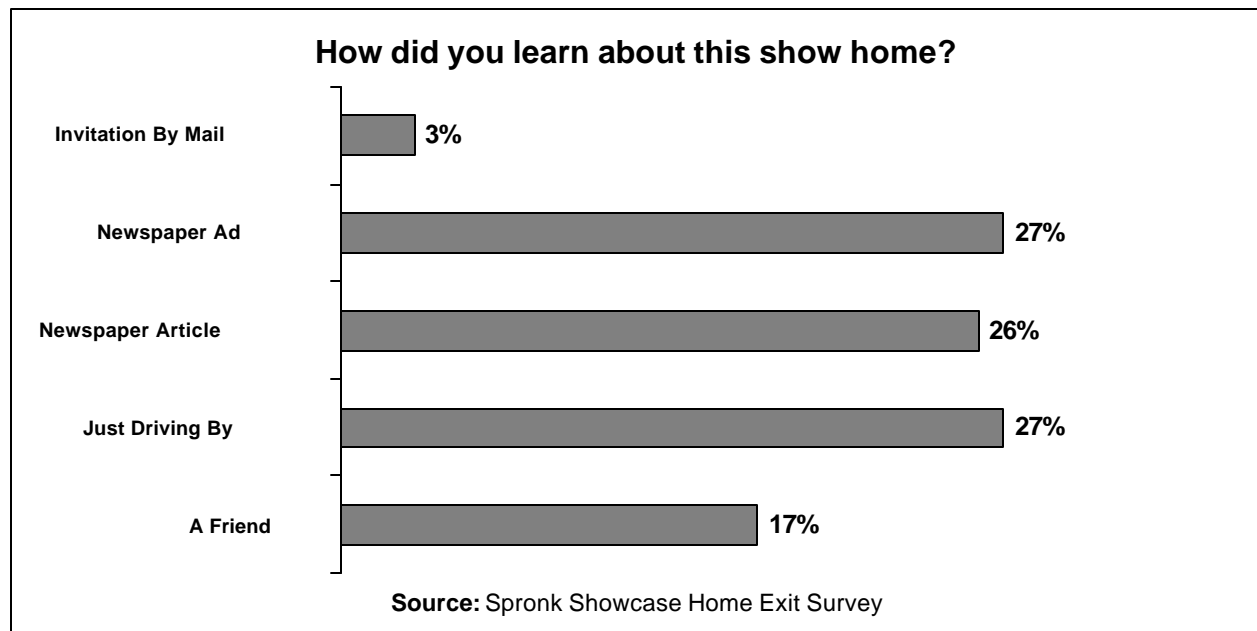
## Reason for Visitor Interest

47% of visitors to the Spronk Showcase home were actively considering a new home, the remaining visitors were curious about the home or interested in décor.



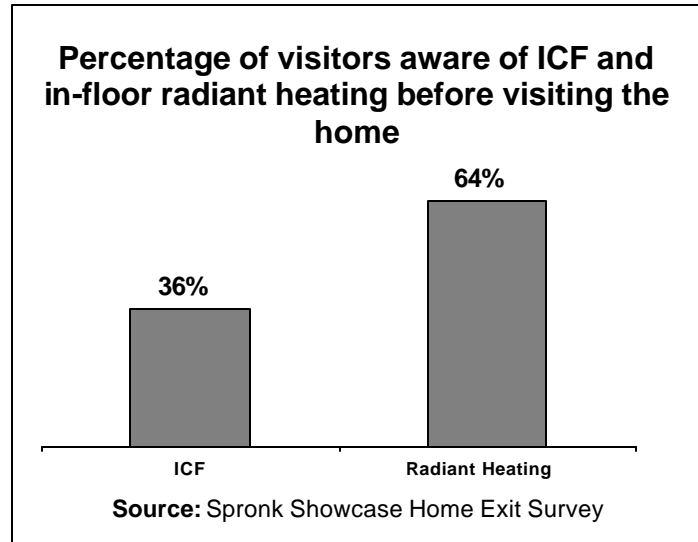
## Source of Awareness of ICF Showcase Home Event

Promotion of the Spronk Showcase home involved newspaper advertising and coverage and this was reflected in the survey results. As with other Showcase events, a significant number of visitors learned about the home from friends who had visited during one of the open house weekends.



## Pre-Visit Awareness of ICF construction and Infloor Radiant Heating

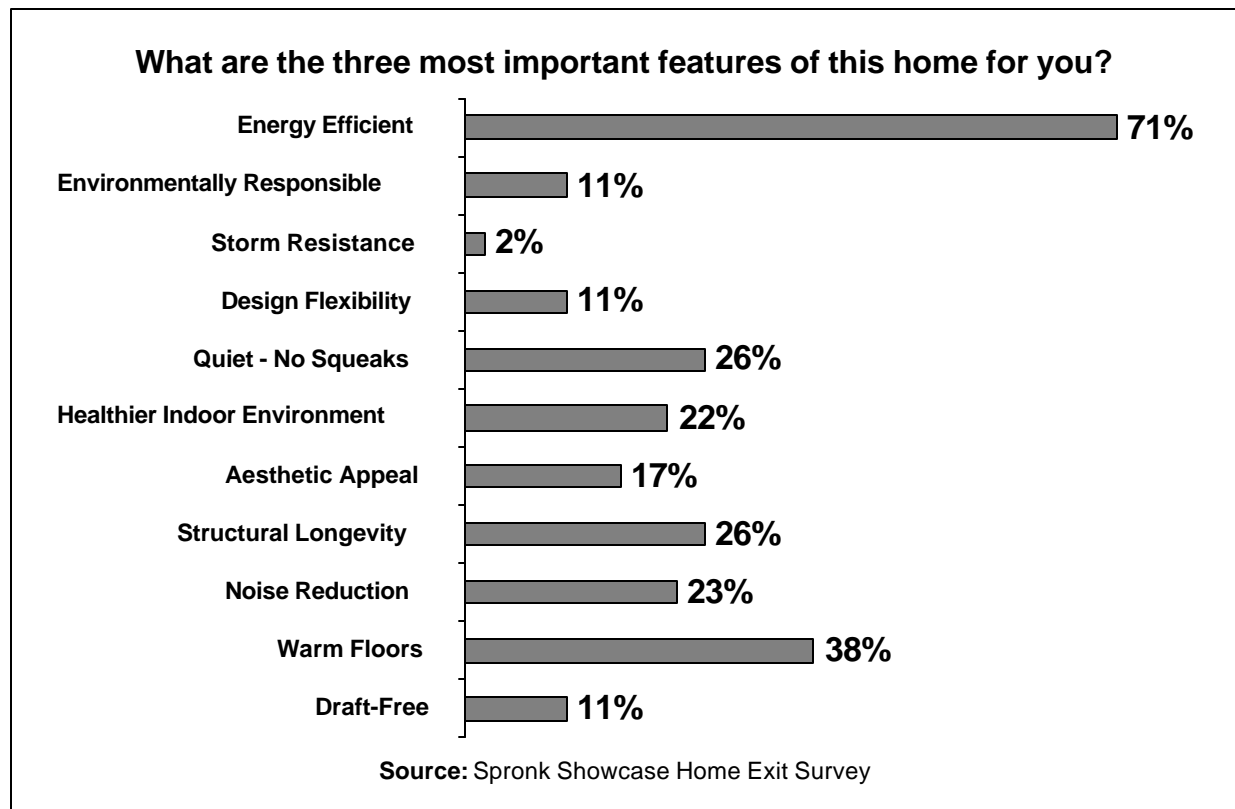
Just over one-third of the show home visitors were aware of ICF construction prior to visiting home. Nearly two-thirds were pre-aware of in-floor radiant heating.



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## Visitor Preferences of the Showcase Home's Features

Energy efficiency was clearly the most significant home feature for visitors. Warm floors also appealed to visitors while most other features were ranked as preferences by one-quarter, or less, of the visitors.

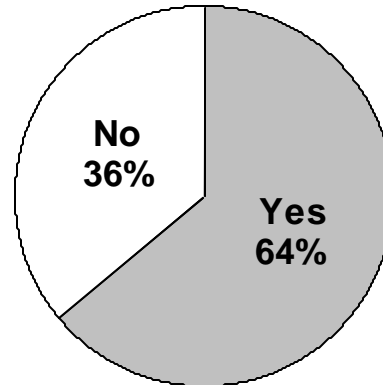


## Visitor Buying Intentions

64% of visitors expressed the intention to buy a new home at some point in the future.

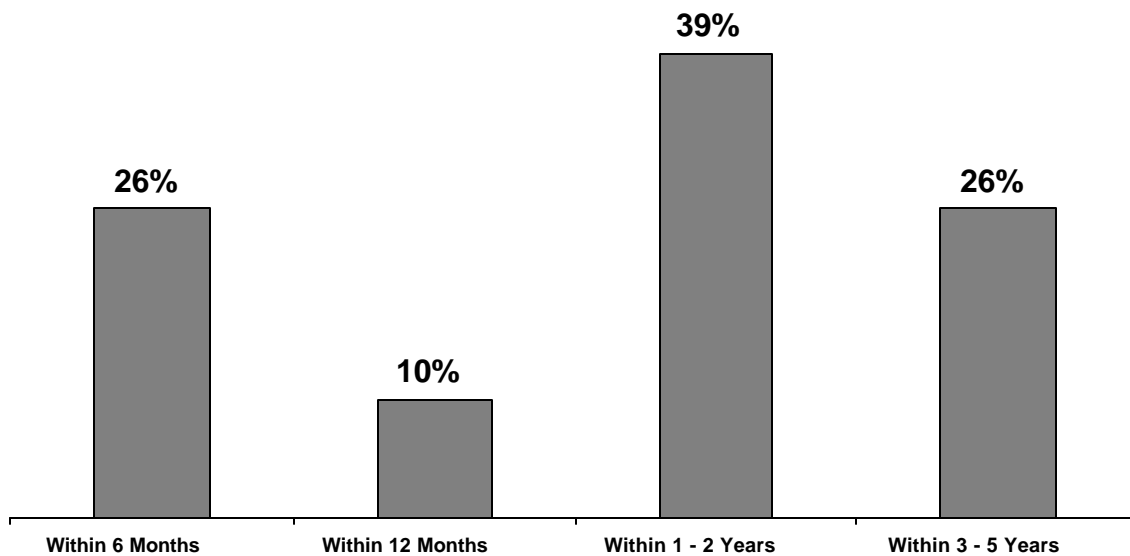
Of those intending to buy, 36% expect to be living in a new home within the coming year. The remaining visitors have less defined intentions.

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



Source: Spronk Showcase Home Exit Survey

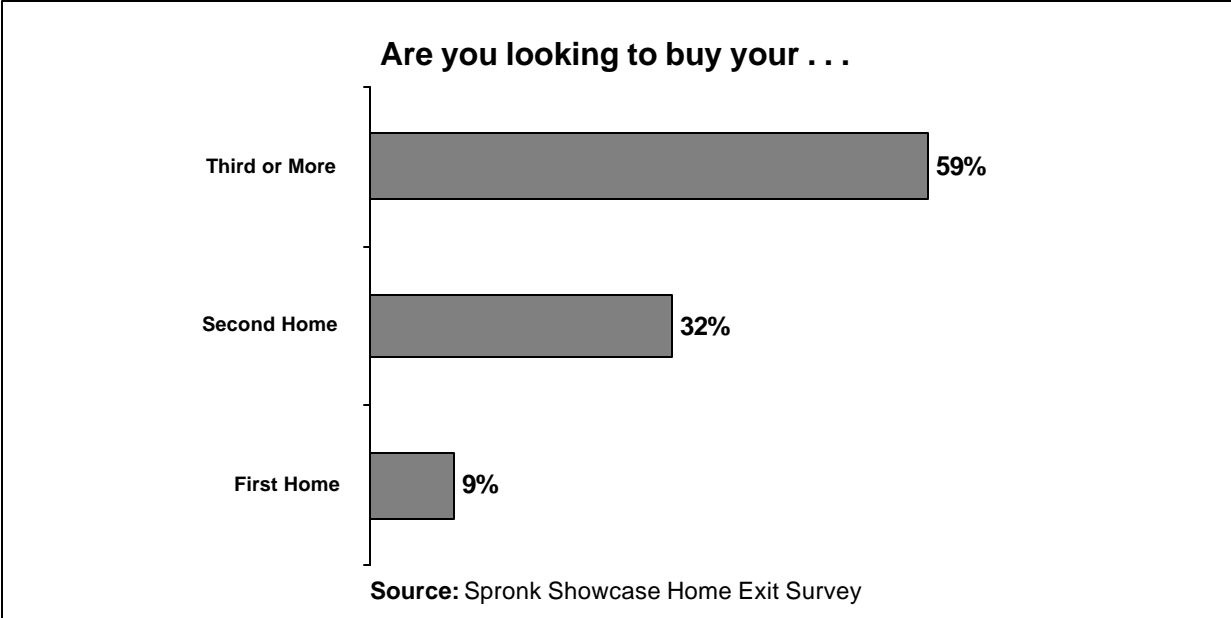
**If YES, When do you plan to move in?**



Source: Spronk Showcase Home Exit Survey

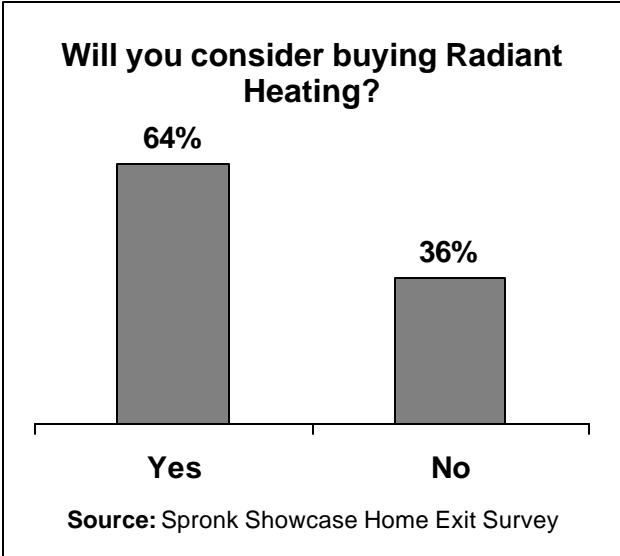
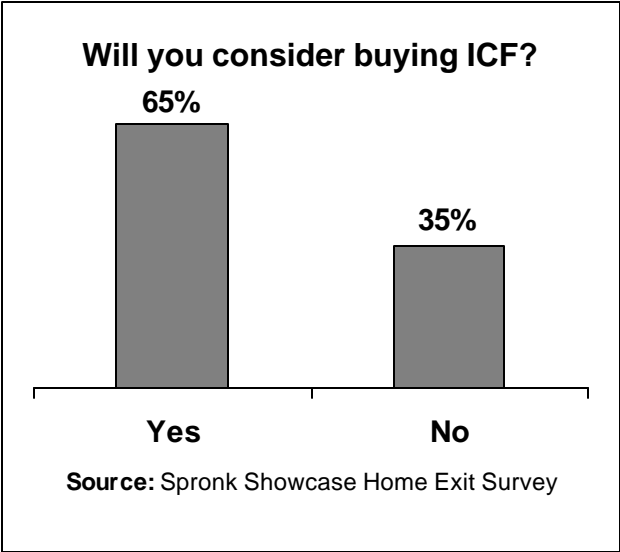
# Buyer Experience

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 59% were third- or more-time buyers.



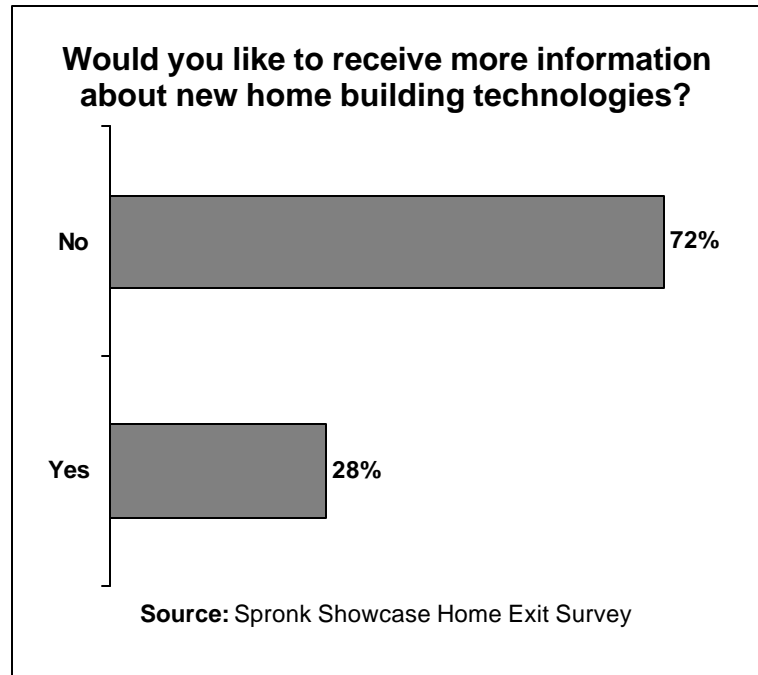
# Buyer Interest in ICF and In-floor Radiant Heating in Their Next Home

Among those visitors with home-buying intentions, about two-thirds stated that they would consider buying an ICF home. The same proportion indicated that they would also consider purchasing a home equipped with radiant heating.



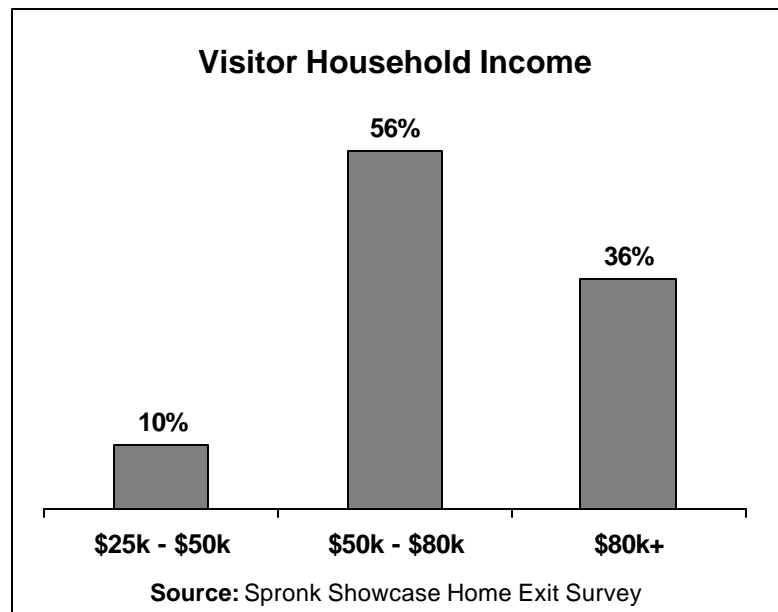
## Visitor Interest in Receiving additional Information

Slightly more than one-quarter of the Showcase home visitors indicated that they would like to receive more information about new home building technologies.



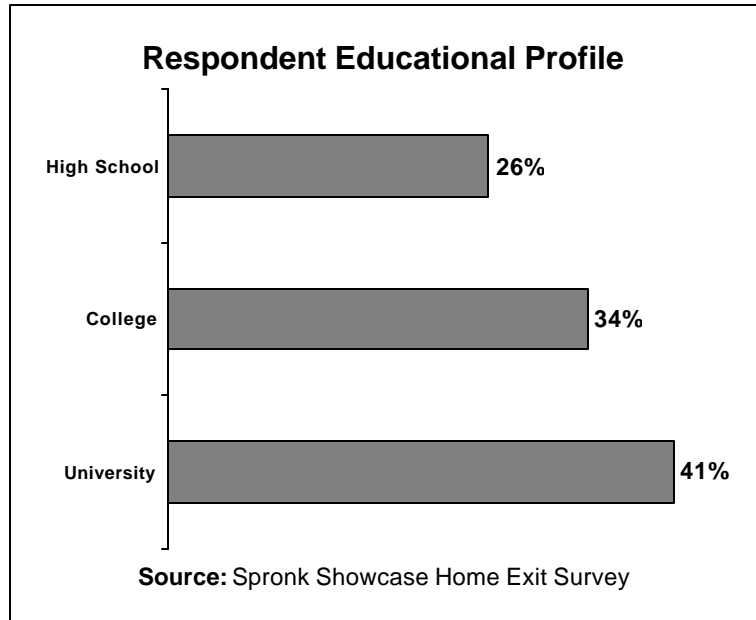
## Visitor Household Income

The majority of visitors who stated their household income indicated that they earn between \$60,000 and \$80,000 (Cdn.) per year.



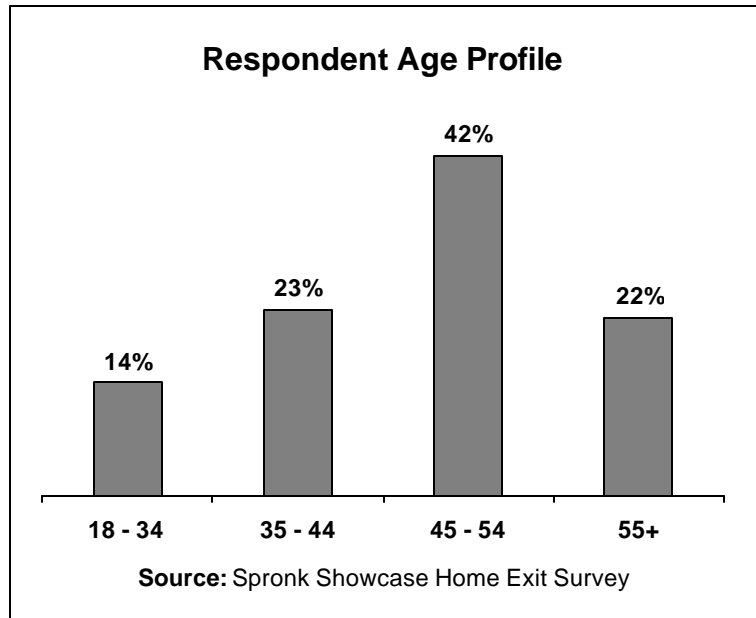
## Educational Profile

Just over 40% of the survey respondents had completed university.



## Age Profile

About two-thirds of respondents fall within the prime home-buying segments of 35 to 55 years of age.



# **Appendix – List of Project Partners**

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The following companies and organizations participated in the Spronk & Sons Showcase project:

**Alberta Ready Mixed Concrete Association**

**ReMax Advantage Realty**

**Advantage Wall Systems**

**Stel-Marr Concrete**

**Royal Exteriors**

**A & B Plumbing Ltd.**

**Jayson Roofing Ltd.**

**Willmar Windows**

**P & G Kitchens**

**Moen**

**Quality Electric & Alarm Systems**

**B.C. Scobie Mechanical Ltd.**

**Builders' Floor Centre**



## MEDIA COVERAGE

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### Advertising

	<u>Circulation</u>
Direct mailings	3,000
Sherwood Park this Week - 4 additions	136,200
Website Virtual tour	<u>380</u>
	139,580

### Media Coverage

Edmonton Sun Home Section	150,000
Home Builder Magazine	15,000
ARMCA Mixer	<u>1,200</u>
	166,200

**Total Exposures** **306,580**