

Sustainable Access Partners

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Santa Clara University '10

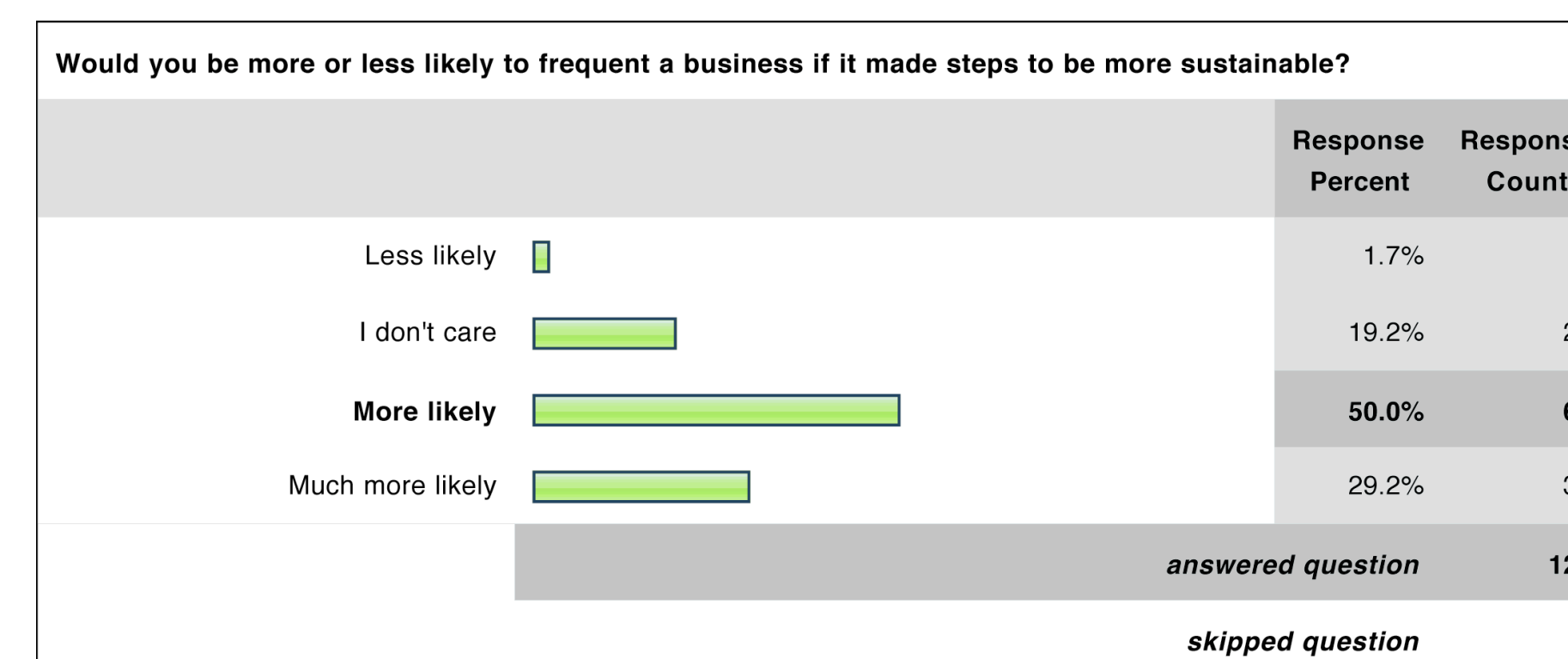
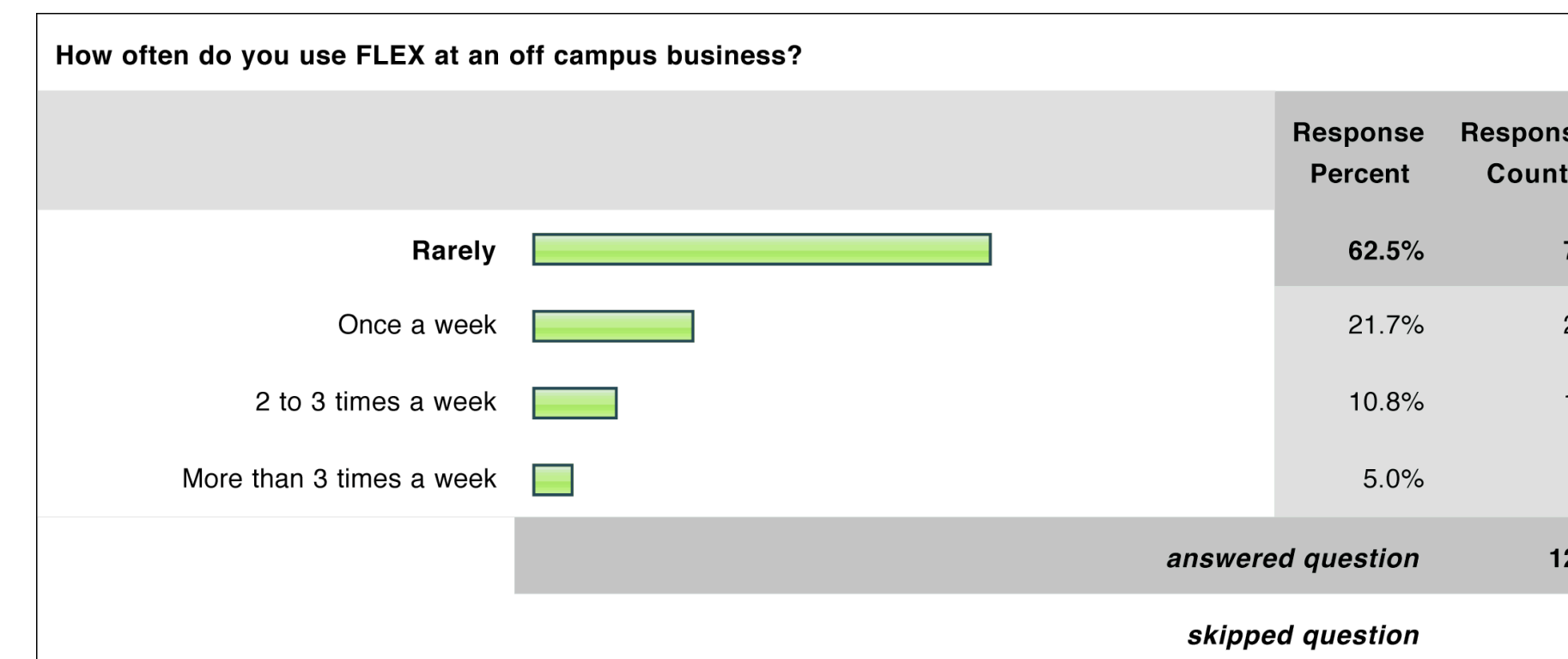


PURPOSE

Every day the green movement grows. Many people have made efforts to reduce their carbon footprints through recycling and decreasing energy use around the home. According to the United States Energy Information Administration Independent Statistics and Analysis report on energy use in 2008, 19% of energy use comes from commercial sources, while 22% comes from residential, 28% from transportation, and 31% from industrial. Though the commercial sector is not the largest source of energy consumption, it should not be ignored. In the calculation of commercial energy usage, the EIA takes into account cooking, computers, refrigeration, office equipment, ventilation, water heat, cooling, heating, lights, and other miscellaneous items. With so many categories influencing energy usage, there is a great opportunity for change.

Integrating business with sustainability, our project involves work with Santa Clara University ACCESS partners to develop sustainable practice guidelines. Our goal is to educate businesses about the benefits of sustainability, with a focus on those directly associated with the university; it is a positive reflection on the university's sustainability initiative. In the long run, we look to craft a 'green partner' policy rewarding community businesses for adopting our guidelines. This year our project involved showing the businesses resources (suppliers, cost/benefit analyses) and models (City of SF, etc.) of entities adopting these policies. Our ultimate objective is to provide solutions to becoming a more sustainable business while considering the bottom line—profit.

DATA



A special thank you to Dr. Sherry Booth and the team over at the Environmental Studies Institute

METHODOLOGY

Survey: Because the ACCESS partners located around Santa Clara University rely heavily on students for business, the opinion of students on the importance of sustainability was an integral part of our case for a sustainable business plan. Thus, we created an online survey of the campus community which yielded optimistic results.

Brochure: Using findings from project research, we created a brochure of simple and quick solutions for sustainably bettering their businesses. The main purpose of brochure is to help business owners begin thinking in terms of sustainability while recognizing their limited resources and time.

Booklet: The booklet is a comprehensive case for businesses to become sustainable. It includes a summary of our project, statistics obtained through the survey, interviews with already green businesses, and a collection of resources with simple energy saving tips.

FUTURE

This, however, is only the first phase of the project—the ultimate goal being the implementation of this research as a viable case for sustainability within the business model. With the partnership of the university, we have an outstanding opportunity to positively change the ways of businesses in the Santa Clara area.