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August 15, 2020

Vivian Yang
Strata Manager
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Dear Ms. Yang,

I hope all is well with you. Thank you for accepting my interview and all the help you provided when I was writing the report.

This report mainly discusses how to increase Monte residents' participation in AGM (Annual General Meeting). According to the number of people attending the AGM in recent years, the participation rate of residents in AGM has been very low, which affects the internal management of apartments and residents effectively exercising their civil rights. To effectively solve this problem and increase the number of participants, this report starts with survey data and discusses several key factors. At the same time, based on interviews and survey data, several practical and effective solutions are proposed. Hope that with your help, the practice of the solution will be implemented more effectively.

The attachment includes the report itself, consists of the data interpretation, feasibility analysis, the solution, and the conclusion. It also adds the survey and interview in the appendix for your information.

I hope this report can effectively solve the current situation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at mandysu@students.ubc.ca. Thank you!

Sincerely,



Jie Su
Resident of Monet Community



Increasing the Participants of the Annual General Meeting in Monet Community

for

**Vivian Yang
Strata Manager
Monet Community
Richmond, British Columbia**

by

**Jie Su
ENGL 301 Student
Resident of Monet Community
Richmond, British Columbia**

August 15, 2020

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Abstract

This report shows the journey from discovering the phenomena and problems of low attendance for the Annual General Meeting (AMG) in the Monet Community, carrying forward the research and exploration of residents' willingness to participate in meetings, to working out effective methods to improve the attending proportion and substantive role of meeting participants through scientific methodology and statistics.

It is worth noting that this methodology is also applicable to a wider range of similar scenarios, similar statistics can be used to analyze the absence of various recurring events and meetings, and use similar solutions in the report to increase attendance. Through the analysis of the data, the main reasons for the low participation rate are analyzed. For the proposed solution, through an interview with Strata Manager, the technical feasibility and ethical feasibility analysis are conducted.

Based on the analysis above, to increase the participation rate of AGM, the following methods are recommended:

- Choosing a more appropriate time to hold the meeting
- Setting up virtual/online meeting to deal with the time conflict and covid-19
- Diversifying notification methods, giving notice in person and sending emails to owners
- Advancing notice timeline, giving enough reaction time for residents

Introduction

Situation

The Annual General Meeting (AGM), normally held in the last week of November, generates the administrators to manage and utilize the strata's funds and facilities, driving and managing the strata affairs on behalf of the residents. According to the meeting minutes of 2019, 30 voters represented last year, with 14 qualified voters and 16 proxied voters. In the case where the total number of residents with voting rights is 143, this means that the participation rate is only 20% (30/143).

Problems

Residents being unclear about the managing representatives of this community induces a loose control of strata management; Thus, residents lack knowledge of who is utilizing the funds and facilities of the strata for the residential community. Furthermore, weakening strata self-management may result in less involvement in important council activities, progressively community participation and integration will reduce accordingly in turn.

Significance

Participation in a democratic election is one of the most effective ways to exercise residents' democratic rights. Effective promotion in the number of participants has a vital impact on the decision-making of democratic affairs within the strata.

Research Methods

To promote the number of participants and increase the attendance rate, this report explores the reasons for the decline in the attendance of the Annual General Meeting. A survey containing ten questions was distributed to community volunteers. The residents passing by the lobby of the residential buildings were given the survey form to collect an effective survey input. The survey used a random sampling method to sample weekday and weekend in July in summer 2020, and the sampling time was 9-11 am, 2-4 pm, 6-8 pm, so as to cover people of various ages and genders, different working status, and even diverse life clocks as far as possible.

Analyzing the reasons merely from the survey feedback may not be sufficient. Subsequently, an interview with the strata manager was conducted to confirm the feasibility of the potential solutions.

Scope of Inquiry

Through the statistical analysis of the survey, this report will outline the reasons for absence, and the degree of acceptance of possible optimization for the meeting. Finally, these analyses will be summarized, and the conclusions and feasible suggestions will be given.

Data Section

Demographics

The data is divided into two parts: a survey to residents of Monet Community and interview feedback with Strata Manager, in which survey is multiple, and manager interview is singular.

Survey collected 45 valid feedback in total, of which 25 (55%) were female, and 20 were male. The survey was primarily conducted in Monet Community's main building (35 units in main buildings), while ten were performed at villa buildings (side building). Weekday has more input, which is 28 (62%) and weekend has only 18 input.

The survey takes more at daytime, which leads to 27 (60%) inputs collected during daytime hours and only 18 volunteers at night.

Data Limitations

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, wearing masks and trying to keep social distance make it difficult to communicate with volunteers. This also leads to collecting less feedback, and the time volunteers received interviews tend to be shorter.

For safety reasons, more surveys were carried out during the daytime, which makes the statistics with some bias. One argument could be that residents who travel at daytime may have more leisure time, and they tend to have different reasons for being absent in annual meetings than residents that travel at night after work.

In the interview with the manager, because of the single quantity, there may be the manager's subjective judgment, with a certain degree of bias.

Key Factors

1. Meeting Time Conflict

One of the factors affecting participation in the Annual General Meeting is the unreasonable schedule of the meeting. The AGM is held on the weekday evening in November. However, some owners and residents who travel to work have not yet commuted back home from work.

Meeting Significance vs Low Attendance: The questionnaire collected 45 valid questionnaires, ninety-five percent of the residents felt that AGM was important, with over half of them (51% percent) felt that AGM was extremely important (Figure 2). However, eighty-two percent among them have not attended the Annual General Meeting once, and only 18% have participated (Figure 1). These data indicate that people have realized the importance of AGM for community management, but for certain reasons, the gap between recognition and participation occurs. Thus, it is necessary to explore the reasons for this inconsistency.

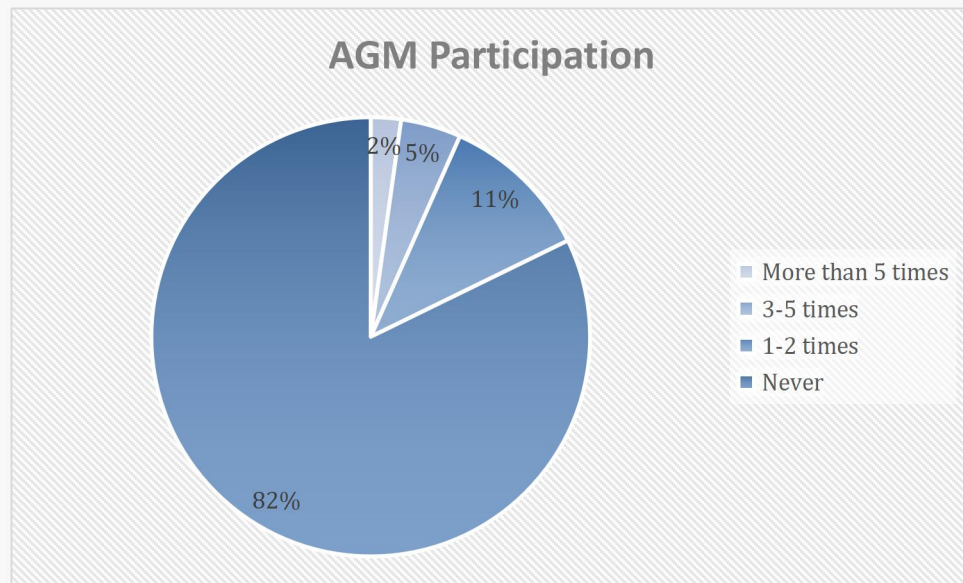


Figure 1 Residents' Participation of AGM Distribution.

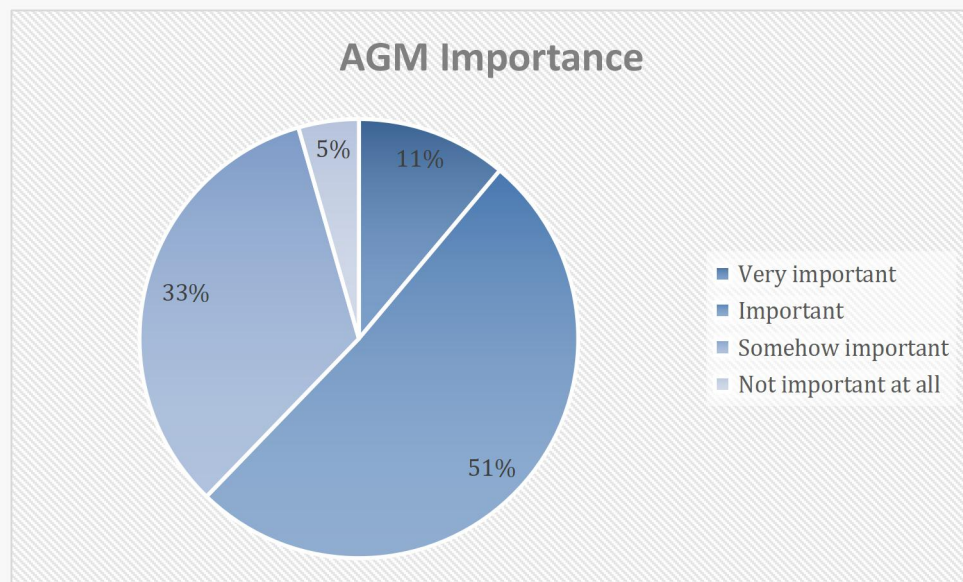


Figure 2 AGM's Importance to Residents

Time Conflict: In order to investigate the discrepancy between the recognition of the importance of the annual general meeting and the degree of participation, this survey puts forward some potential reasons, including the influence of time conflict. Eighty-eight percent of residents believed that time conflict hindered their participation, and more than one-third considered that time conflict seriously affected their participation in AGM, according to Figure 3.

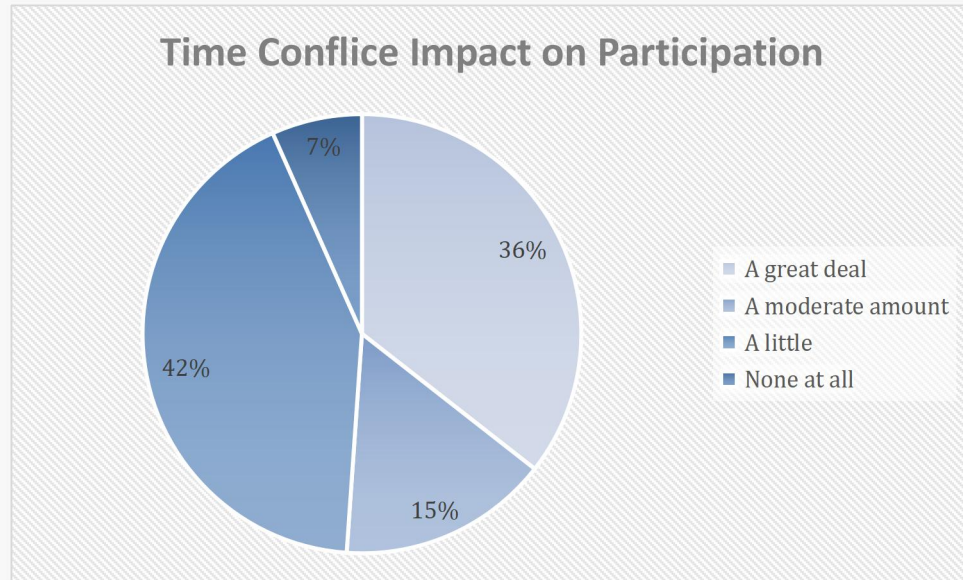


Figure 3 The Impact of Time Conflict to AGM's Participation

AGM Time Preference: AGM's general meeting time is the weekday of the last week of November. As compared to the normal meeting time, residents tend to be more inclined to weekend time. The table shows that only eight people want it to be held on weekdays, and thirty-four people of the remaining, accounting for 75.6%, hope it to be held on the weekend.

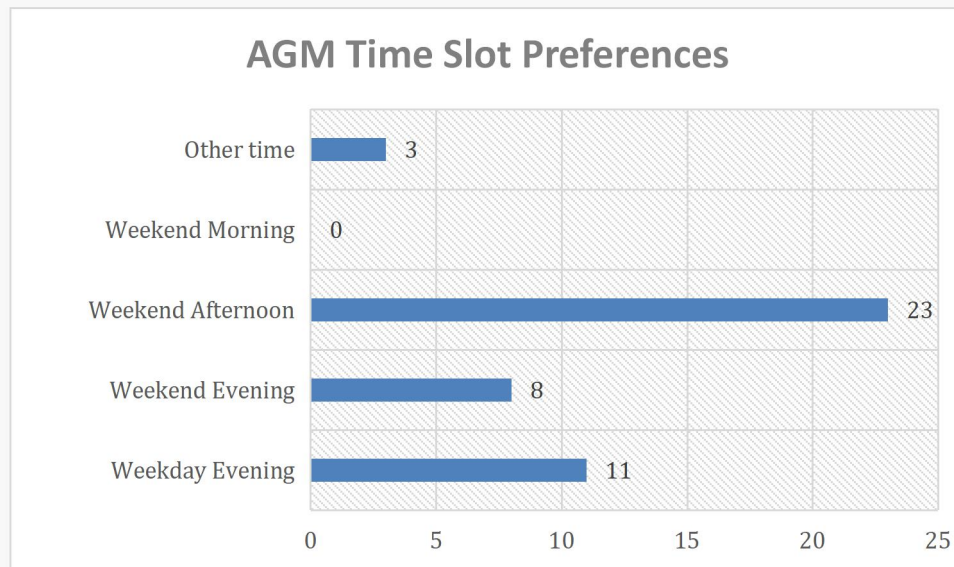


Figure 4 AGM Time slot Preferences

2. Means of Sending Notice

Another factor that may affect the participation in the giving of AGM Notice includes the time of giving and the form of distribution. The form of giving notice consists of two types, "Deemed Notice" and "Actual Notice." Deemed refers to the use of posters, e-mails, and mails to notify. It only confirms that the notice is issued, not affirming residents know the notice. The actual notice refers to the delivery to the resident in person and confirms the residents notice the meeting.

Timeline of Notice: According to the requirements of BC Strata Management, 14 days' notice in advance is required (VISOA 2013). Monet Community adopts the way of deemed notice to give our notice. Figure 5 shows the time when the residents were notified of the notice. There are 74% of the people learning the AGM time for less than 10 days.

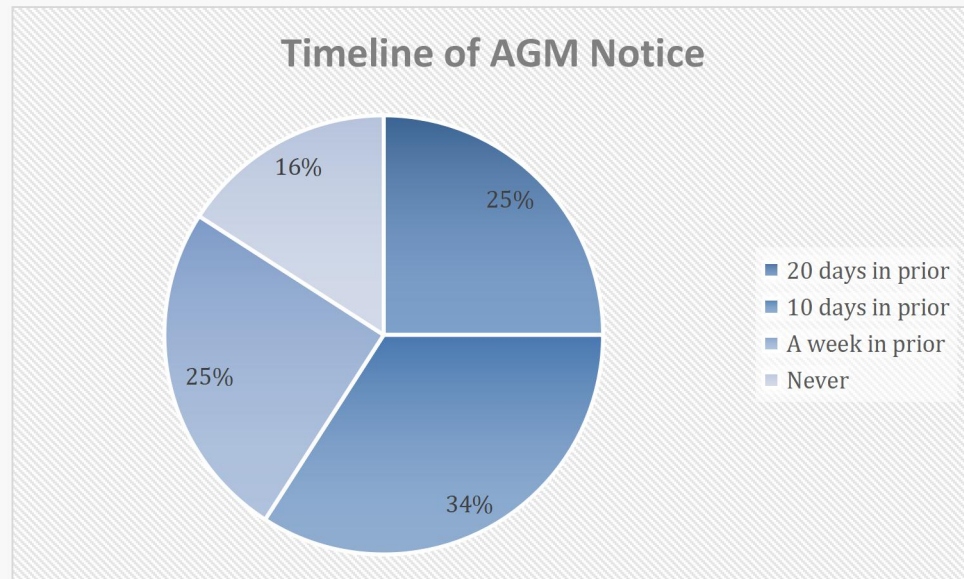


Figure 5 Timeline of Resident Got Notified of AGM

Deemed Notice vs Actual Notice: As stated in Figure 6, the main way for residents to get notified is by notices placed at the main hall or in the elevator. Under Figure 7, over fifty percent of residents want to get noticed by more than one single way. According to Figure 8, one of the two more preferred ways is to add one actual notice way of sending notices, which is Monet Concierges hand out the notice form in person. The other is to utilize email notification; people would like to have the notification via email from Strata Manager.

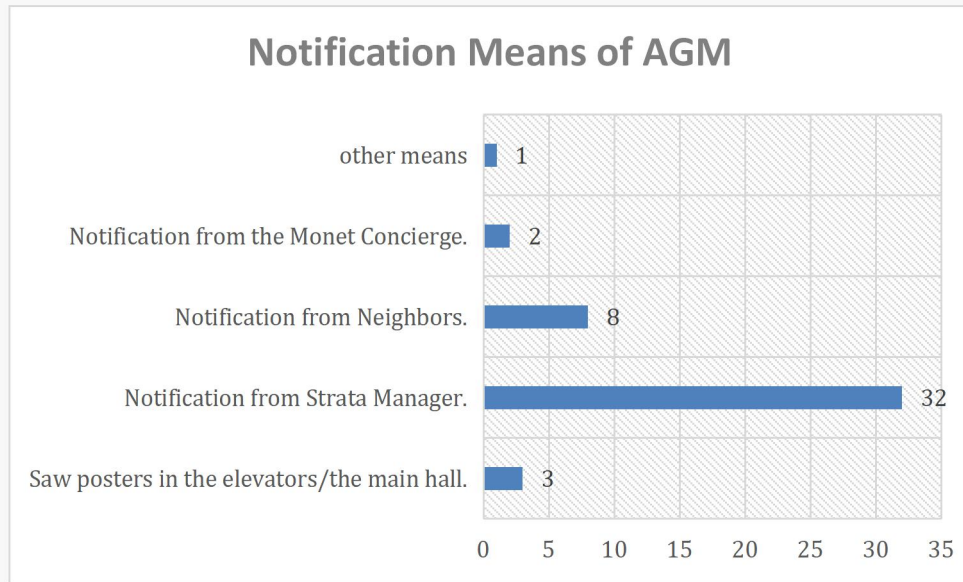


Figure 6 Ways of Notice Residents Received.

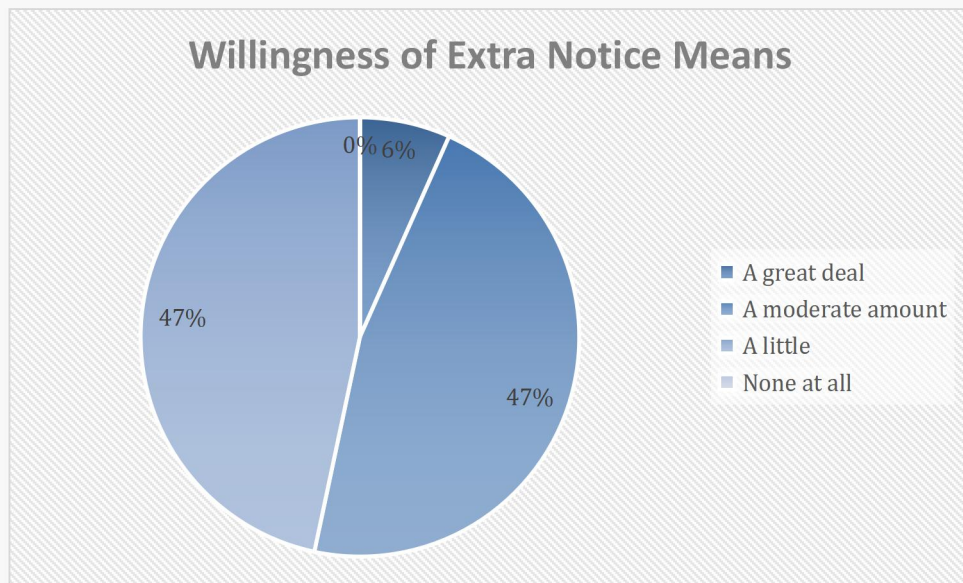


Figure 7 Residents' Willingness to be Offered Different Means of Notice

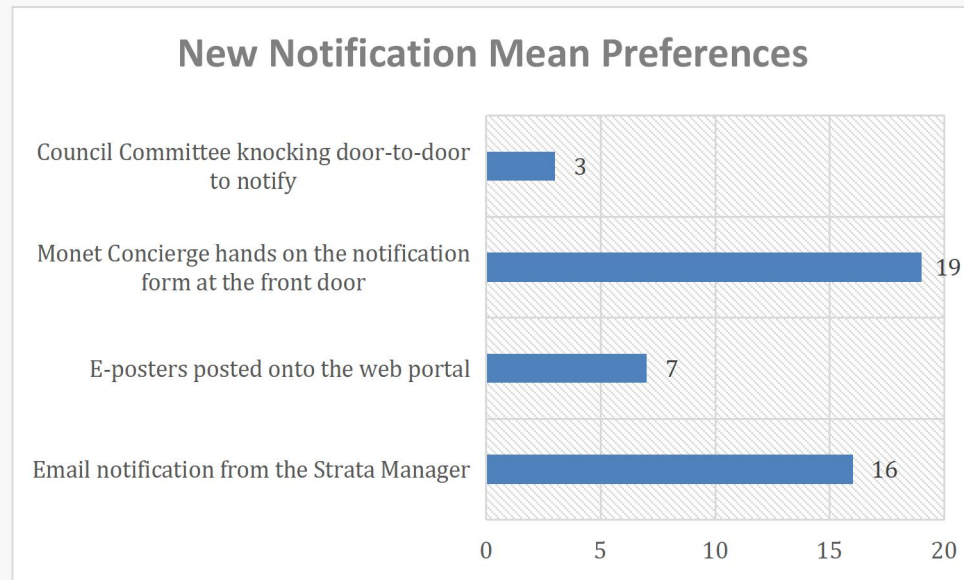


Figure 8 New Notice Form Residents Prefer

Feasibility Analysis

The feasibility analysis is mainly based on the results of the questionnaire survey and the interview content of Strata Manager, and it is a the process of screening and filtering the proposed solutions corresponding to the key factors.

1. Virtual Meeting

Figure 9 shows that people's acceptance of a virtual online meeting is particularly high. More than 35 people hope to conduct online meetings, accounting for 77% of the total.

Technical Feasibility: According to Strata Manager's interview, due to COVID-19, the plan for 2020's AGM will be held online. Setting up a means of electronic meeting for communication is fairly easy. Possible ways include online meeting platform and instant messaging app. Therefore, the technical difficulty of online/ virtual meetings is addressable.

Ethical Feasibility: On the one hand, electronic communication is only permitted if the strata have a bylaw that permits general meetings being held electronically and addresses the issues of voter registration identity, proxies, and counting votes (Gioventu 2020). On the other hand, online meetings are approved and supported by 77% of the residents agree or strongly agree, as reported by the statistics in Figure 9. Therefore, the feasibility of online meetings at an ethical level can also be realized.

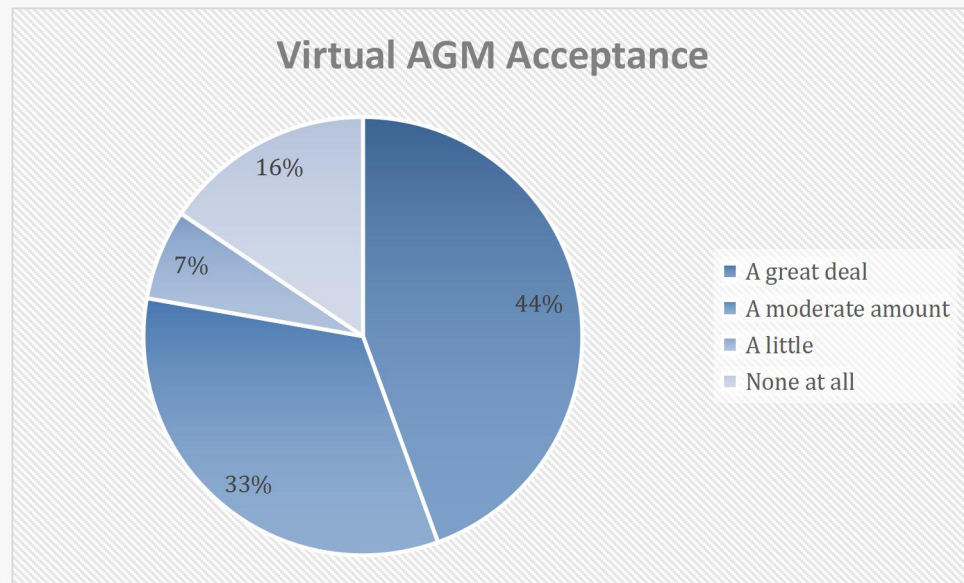


Figure 9 Online/ Virtual AGM Acceptance

2. Web Portal Notification

Web portal is a platform of strata-own, providing different features to facilitate the operation and management of the apartment

Technical Feasibility: In conformity with the functionality currently used by the web portal (Figure 10), it only allows users to view past meeting minutes, download strata-related forms and files, see the current schedule through the calendar, and there is no way to publish e-posters. Simultaneously, according to the feedback from the interview with the strata manager, the development of the new feature may require the approval of the strata council committee, of which the process is complicated, and the budget is limited. Based on the judgment of the above, technical feasibility is difficult to achieve.

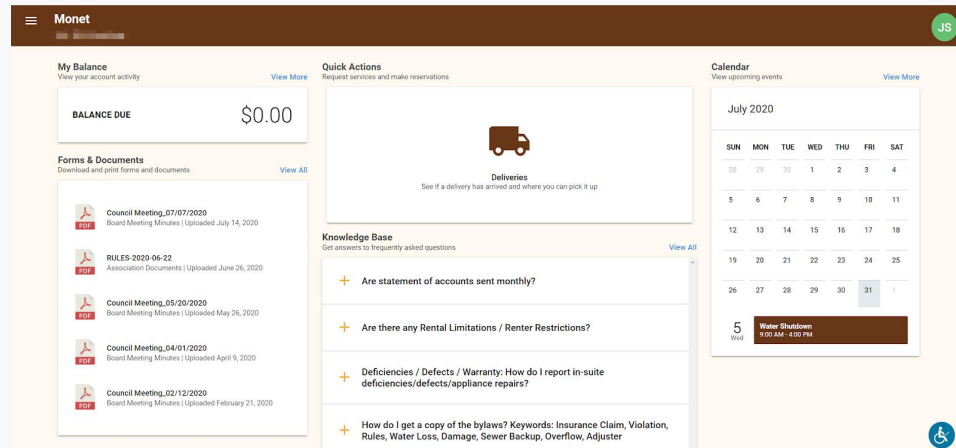


Figure 10 Strata-own Web Portal

Customer Habits: According to Figure 11, the frequency of using Web Portal is very low. Eighty-two percent of residents have never used it before. At the same time, with feedback from Strata Manage, few users know about the existence of the web portal because it is an internal tool, and residents will be notified only when they ask.

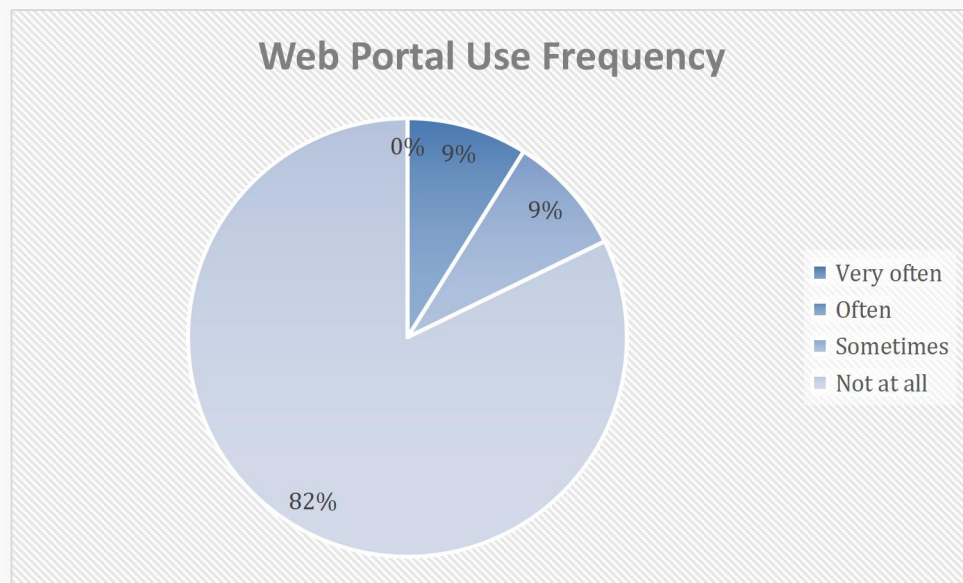


Figure 11 Residents' Use of Web Portal

Conclusion

Summary of Statistics

From the data analysis, it can be seen that the majority have not participated in annual meetings, but most of them believe that annual meetings are of importance. Most people (74%) agreed that they had been notified of the annual meeting at least ten days in advance.

Here are interesting figures. One third (36%) of residents claimed that meeting time conflict mostly prevented them from participating in the annual general meeting; While about half (42%) pointed out that meeting time caused the conflict to a moderate level. Statistics show that people have different views on the expected meeting holding time, with half of the people (75%) wanting to have meetings on weekends.

Most people (71.1%) made it clear that they received meeting notifications from poster notice in the buildings. If there is an alternative notification, people prefer email notification (35.6%) and apartment administrators to deliver a paper notice in person (42.2%). People generally say (77.8%) that they are very willing to participate in the online virtual annual meeting if it is possible.

Summary of Causes

From the analysis of the statistical results, it can be concluded that people are aware of the importance of annual meetings, some people fail to participate because of time conflict, and another main reason is the way of a notification, which is easy to be ignored by the residents.

Summary of Solutions

The Annual General Meeting can be held via electronic means as other alternative options. One reason is to avoid conflicts with work and meet the needs of most people; the other one is to make some shy people feel relaxed, primarily to deal with the exceptional circumstances of COVID-19.

Besides, make full use of as many notice forms as possible to notify owners because many owners may forget the time. One good way is to utilize the Monet Concierge to hand on paper notice in person. The other effective way is to let the Strata Manager send out the notice via emails.

It is very important to choose a more appropriate time to hold the meeting, which can be arranged in the weekend afternoon suggested by most people, or it is better to provide 2-3 time slots at a time for residents to vote. The way of adding notifications will undoubtedly increase attendance,

and people are happy to receive notifications from apartment administrators. After all, the meeting is an important thing.

Using the latest IT technology, live streaming offline meetings, and online virtually at the same time will greatly increase the attendance rate. This change not only provides convenience for residents but also saves each resident's time, which will be the best way to improve the attendance rate.

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VISOA Editor “How much notice is required before holding an Annual or Special General Meeting?” Visoa.bc.ca , June 11, 2013 https://www.visoa.bc.ca/?visoa_faqs=how-much-notice-is-required-before-holding-a-special-general-meeting

Appendix

Figures

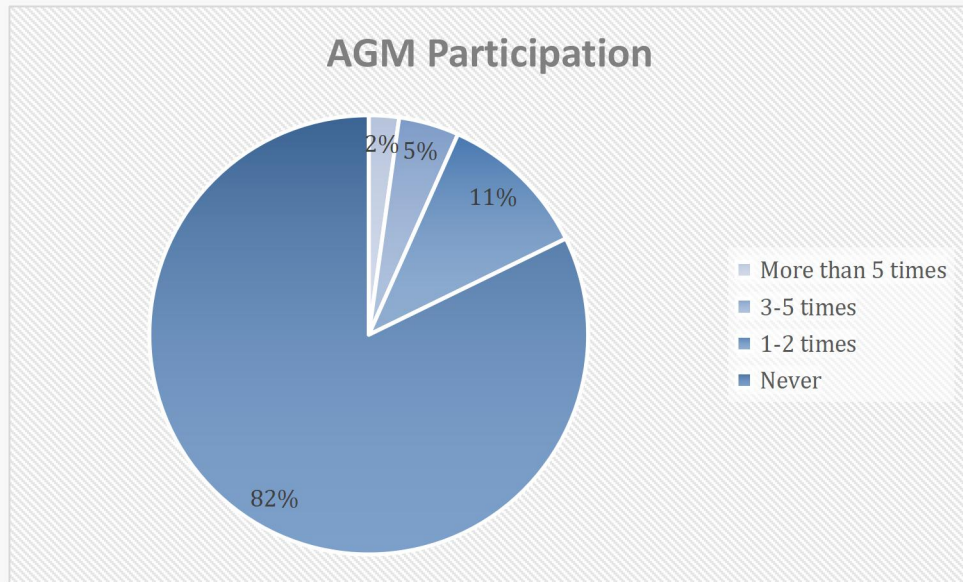


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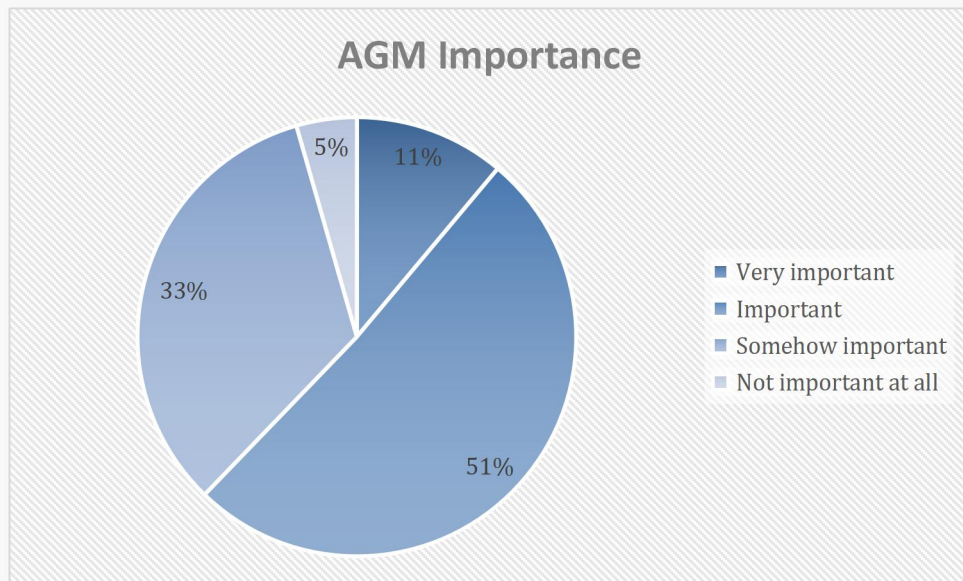


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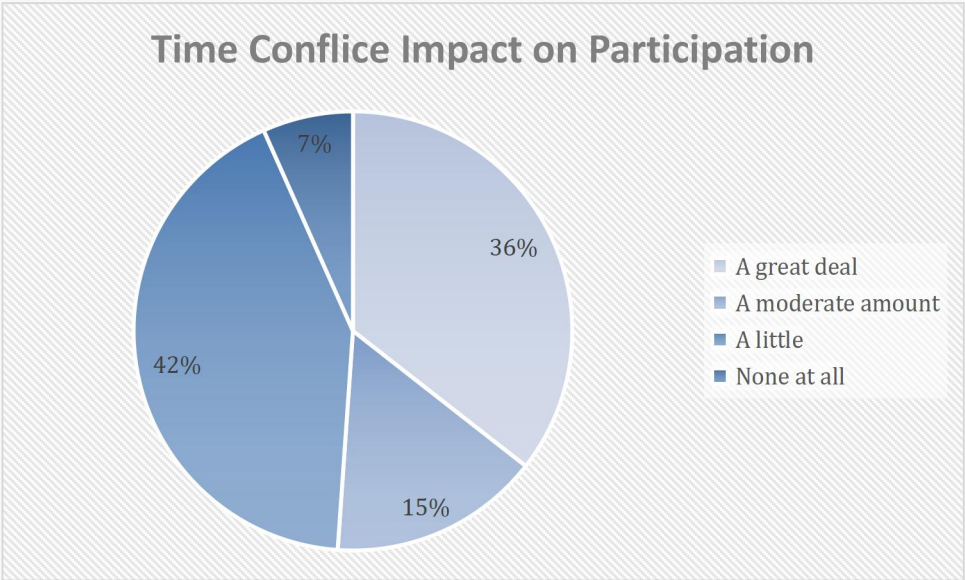


Figure 3 The Impact of Time Conflict to AGM’s Participation

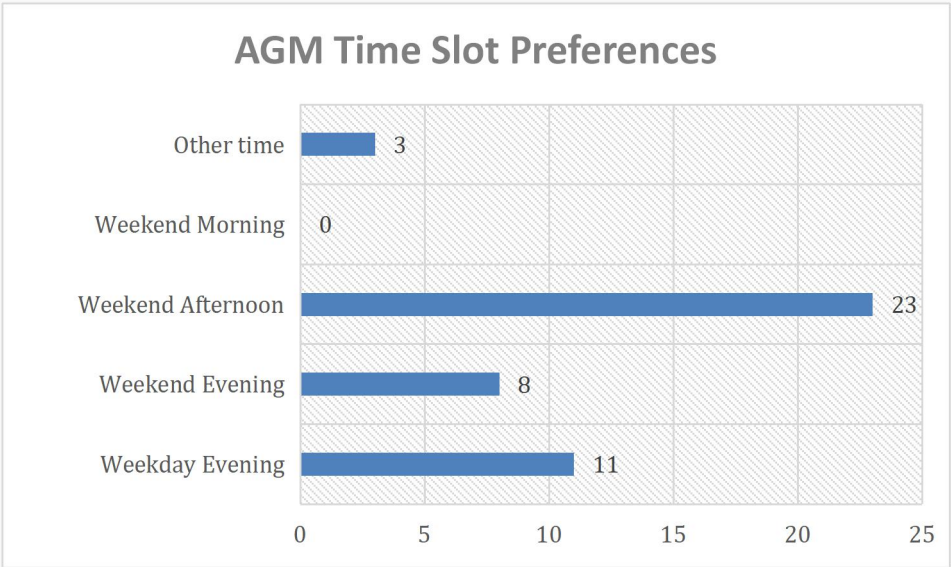


Figure 4 AGM Time slot Preferences

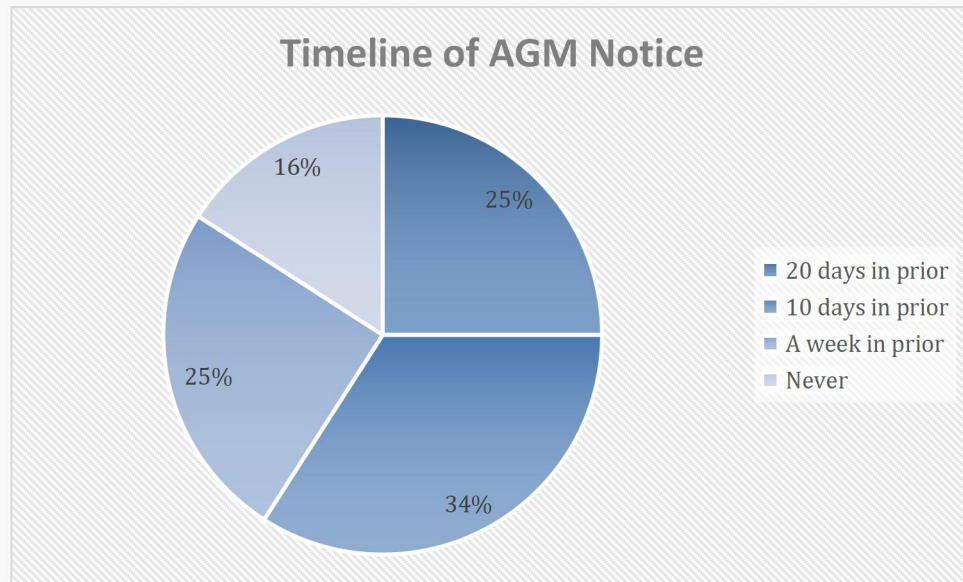


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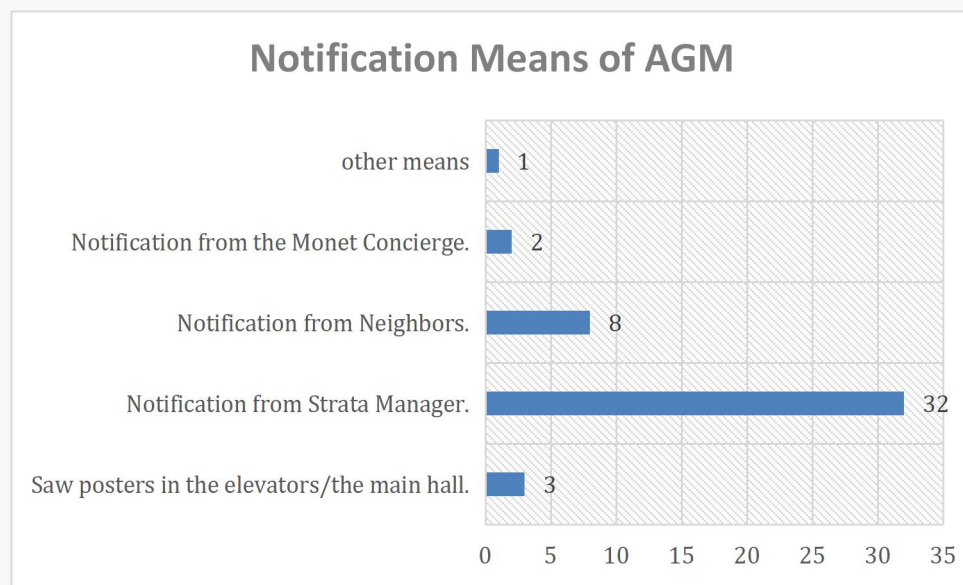


Figure 6 Ways of Notice Residents Received

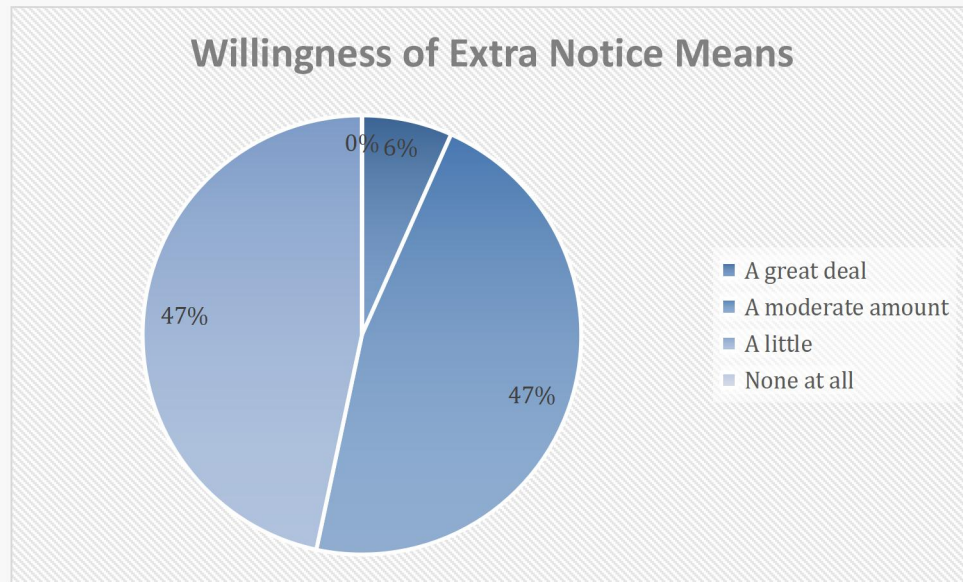


Figure 7 Residents' Willingness to be Offered Different Means of Notice

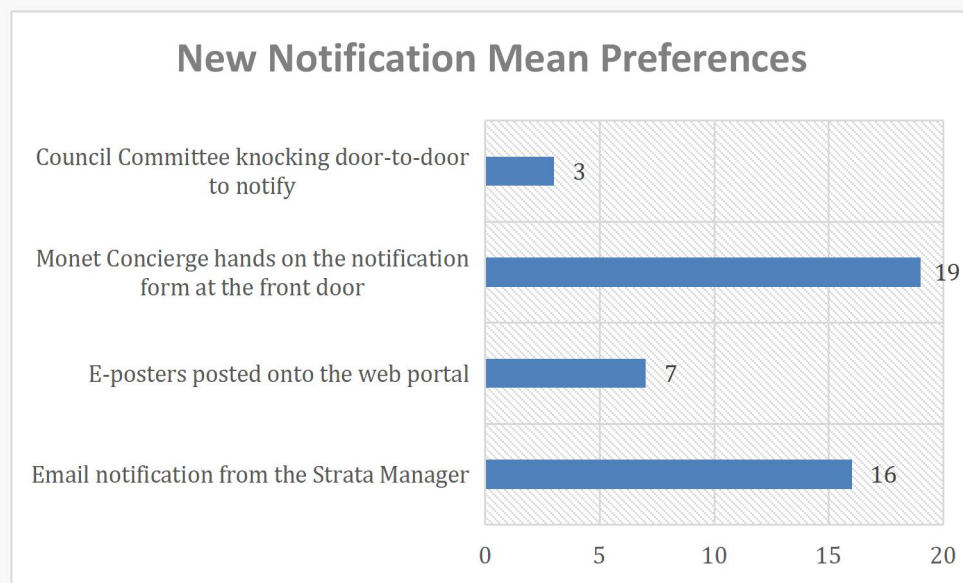


Figure 8 New Notice Form Residents Prefer

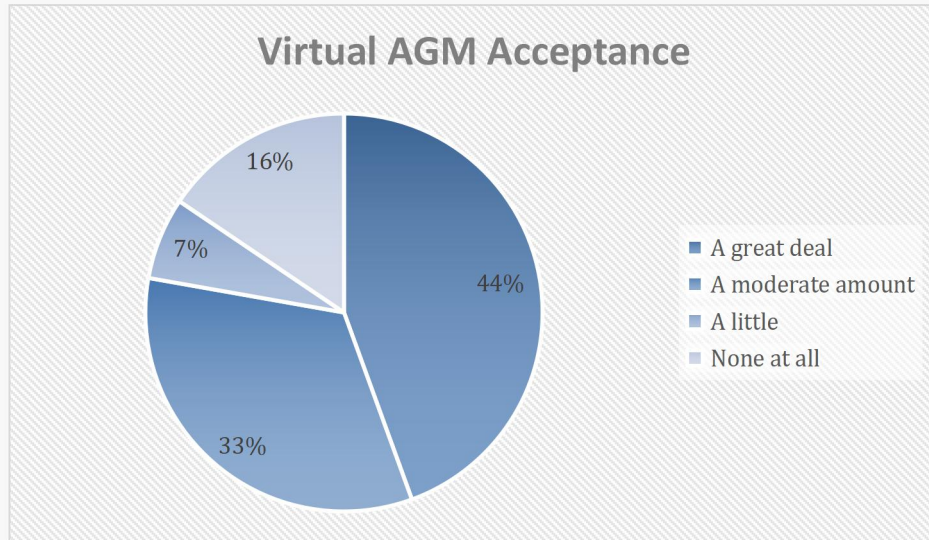


Figure 9 Online/ Virtual AGM Acceptance

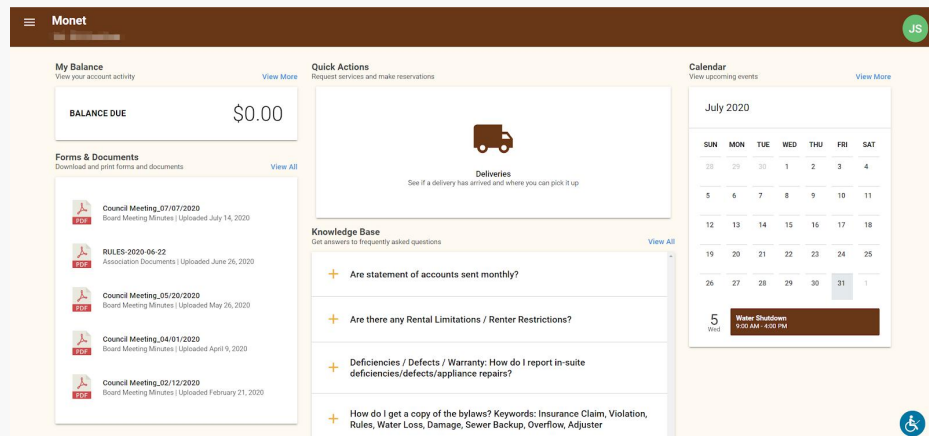


Figure 10 Strata-own Web Portal

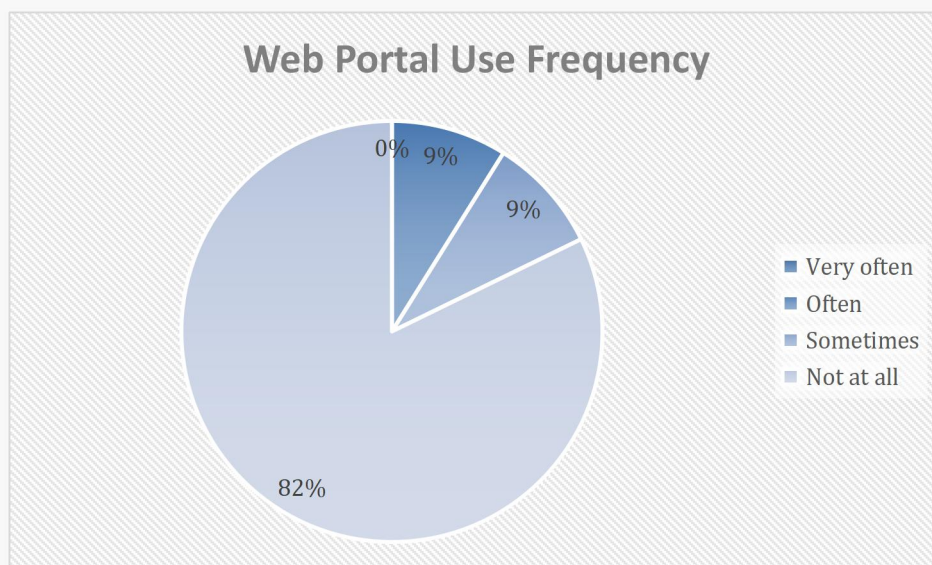


Figure 10 Residents' Use of Web Portal

Survey

ENGL 301 Formal Report Survey Questions

My name is Jie Su, a student at the University of British Columbia and a resident in Monet Community. I am now working on a project required in a technical writing course. The purpose of this formal report is to provide solid solutions to increase the owners' participation of the General Annual Meeting in the Monet community, aiming to build a healthy and effective community management environment as a long term goal. The final formal report will be submitted to the Strata Manager Vivian Yang and all members of the Council Committee of Monet community. The data collected in this survey is mainly to acquire validation and feasibility verification for the proposal. You will not be asked any personal questions and information during the survey process, and your responses are voluntary and anonymous. The questionnaire has a total of 10 questions, which takes up about 5 minutes of your time. Thank you very much for your participation in this survey and for your contribution to Monet Community.

1. How many times have you participated in the Annual General Meeting?

- ☐ More than 5 times
- ☐ 3- 5 times
- ☐ 1-2 times
- ☐ Never

2. How important the Annual General Meeting is?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Somehow Important
- ☐ Not important at all

3. When did you get notified about the time arrangement of the Annual General Meeting?

- ☐ 20 days in prior
- ☐ 10 days in prior
- ☐ A week in prior
- ☐ Never

4. How much are you willing to be notified multiple times/means about Annual General Meeting?

- ☐ A great deal
- ☐ A moderate amount
- ☐ A little
- ☐ None at all

5. How much do you think time conflict hinder your the participation of the Annual General Meeting?

Feasibility Analysis

- ☐ A great deal
 - ☐ A moderate amount
 - ☐ A little
 - ☐ None at all
6. Which time slot of the Annual General Meeting do you prefer?
- ☐ Friday Evening
 - ☐ Weekend Daytime Morning
 - ☐ Weekend Daytime Afternoon
 - ☐ Weekday Evening
 - ☐ Any other time: _____
7. Through what means did you get notified about the schedule time of the Annual General Meeting?
- ☐ Saw posters in the elevators/the main hall.
 - ☐ Notification from Strata Manager.
 - ☐ Notification from Neighbors.
 - ☐ Notification from the Monet Concierge.
 - ☐ Any other means: _____
8. Which of the following items, if added to the notification means, would you prefer?
- ☐ Email notification from the Strata Manager
 - ☐ E-posters posted onto the web portal
 - ☐ Monet Concierge hands on the notification form at the front door
 - ☐ Council Committee knocking door-to-door to notify
9. How often do you log into the owner web portal to see the event calendar?
- ☐ Very often
 - ☐ Often
 - ☐ Sometimes
 - ☐ Not at all
10. How much are you willing to have an online/ virtual Annual General Meeting?
- ☐ A great deal
 - ☐ A moderate amount
 - ☐ A little
 - ☐ None at all

Interview

ENGL 301 Formal Report Interview Questions

My name is Jie Su, a student at the University of British Columbia and a resident in Monet Community. I am now working on a project required in a technical writing course. The purpose of this formal report is to provide solid solutions to increase the owners' participation of the General Annual Meeting in Monet community, aiming to build a healthy and effective community management environment as the long term goal. The final formal report will be submitted to the Strata Manager and all members of the Council Committee of Monet community. The data collected in this survey is mainly to acquire validation and feasibility verification for the proposal. You will not be asked any personal questions during the interview process, and your responses are voluntary and anonymous. The interview has a total of 9 questions, which takes up about 10 minutes of your time. Thank you very much for your participation to this interview and for your contribution to Monet Community.

1. What is the total number of the attendants of last year's General Annual Meeting?
2. Based on the inner materials, I found that the participants is presenting a downward trend, what do you think are the main causes?
3. What is the normal time slot to held the General Annual Meeting?
4. What concerns you may have if shifting the on-site General Annual Meeting to be online/virtual?
5. Is it technically possible to make a e-poster onto the owner web portal in prior to the General Annual Meeting?
6. Is it possible to send a e-mail notification of the Annual General Meeting to all the owners?
7. Does the strata budget allow to make more posters?
8. Is the Monet Concierge able to send the notice in person?
9. Do you have any suggestions to increase the owner participation of the General Annual Meeting?