



Holiday Celebration Survey

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WCBC Western Compensation
& Benefits Consultants

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Canadian employers are in a festive mood this holiday season!

Organizations are throwing a party and providing employees with time off that goes above and beyond the required statutory holidays. They are also feeling charitable as many organizations are making donations to various charities or causes. However, the traditional “Christmas Bonus” is again on the decline with only one-in-ten organizations providing cash bonuses this holiday season.

Each year, there are questions regarding what other employers are doing for employees over the holiday season. As in other aspects of total rewards, employers want to remain competitive. However, are these holiday celebrations improving staff morale, appreciated by staff, helpful in attraction and retention or are some not achieving their objectives and viewed as an entitlement by employees?

In November 2016, Western Compensation & Benefits Consultants (“WCBC”) surveyed 142 Canadian employers on how they expect to celebrate the holidays with their employees.

The Holiday Party

A large majority of Canadian employers (96%) celebrate the holiday season with their employees by having a holiday party. The typical organization pays 100% of the costs for staff and a guest to attend a dinner that includes door prizing/raffles, entertainment and dancing. The parties typically include alcohol and a taxi ride home. Most employers pay 100% of the costs associated with the holiday party, with the tab being paid by 86% of private sector companies, 75% of not-for-profit organization and 62% of public sector employers.

While private sector companies tend to spend a little more than public sector or not-for-profits, organizations typically spend between \$50 to \$100 per person on food, drink, transportation, rental of the facility, etc.

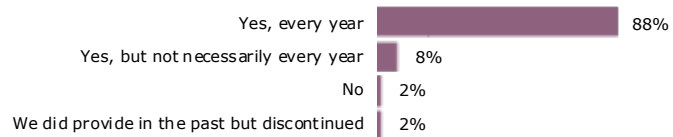
Canadian employers feel that the expenditure on the holiday party is worth it. Ninety-six percent of organizations feel that the event is appreciated by staff and 77% find it a tool for improving staff morale. To a much lesser degree 23% of organizations even feel the holiday party is helpful in attracting and retaining staff. Eighteen percent felt that while employees appreciate the holiday party it is viewed as an entitlement.

96%

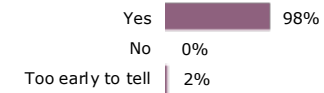
of Canadian employers
celebrate the holiday season
with their employees by
having a holiday party

The Holiday Party

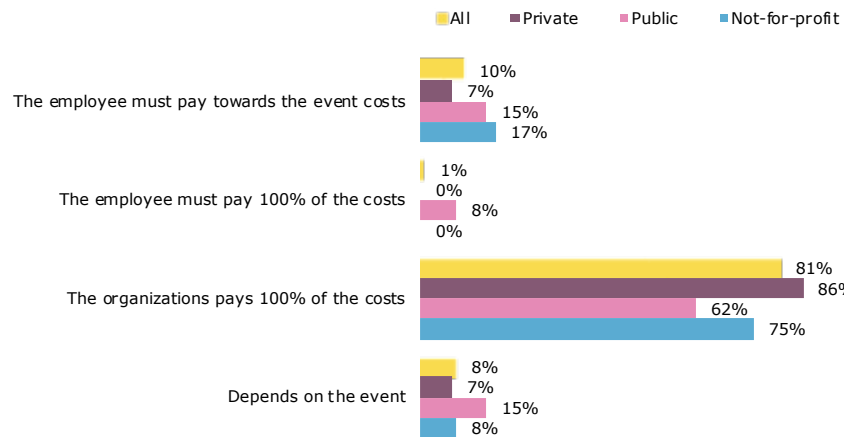
Will there be a holiday party?



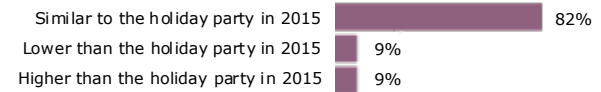
Will there be a holiday party in 2016?



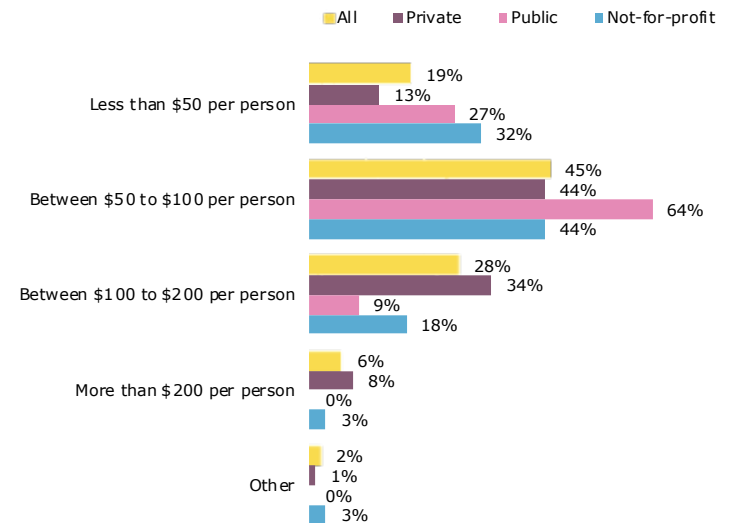
Cost sharing



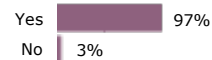
Monetary value for the employer in 2016 will be



Money per person spent by the organization

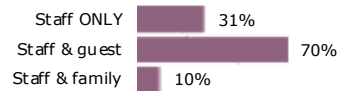


Was there a holiday party in 2015?

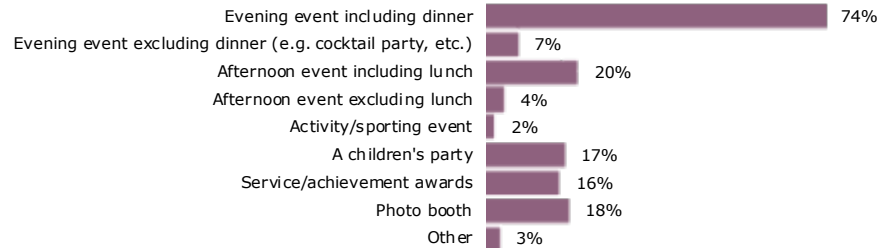


The Holiday Party

Events are for (multiple answers allowed)



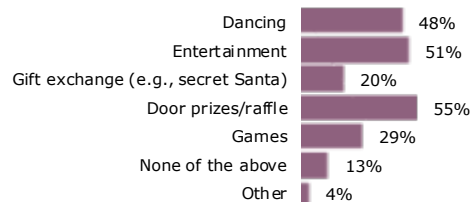
Types of event(s) (multiple answers allowed)



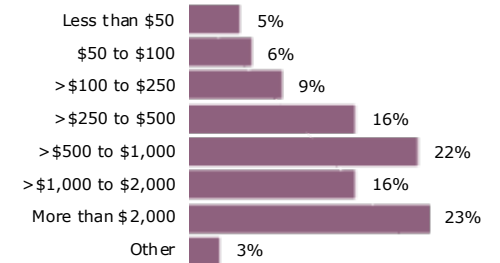
Venues (multiple answers allowed)



The holiday party(s) includes (multiple answers allowed)



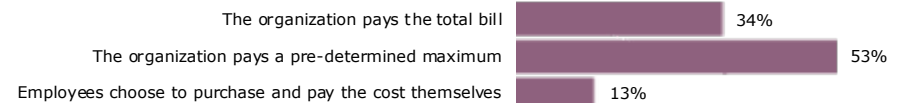
The approximate value of the door prizes (in total) is:



Is alcohol available at any of the holiday party(s)?



Who pays for the alcohol?

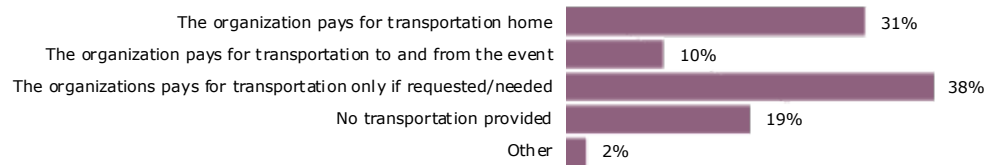


The Holiday Party

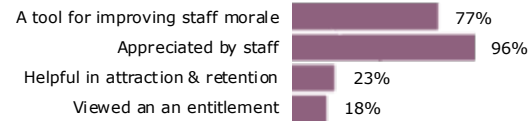
Have there been negative consequences from serving alcohol at the holiday event?



Transportation



The practice of providing a holiday party(s) is *(multiple answers allowed)*



Time Off

Typically, organizations allow employees to leave early on Christmas Eve. In 2016, Christmas Eve falls on a Saturday yet 72% of employers will still be closing early on Friday December 23rd.

Not-for-profit employers are most likely to reward employees with some additional days off over the holiday season with 59% closing operations on some or all days between Christmas and New Year's Day.

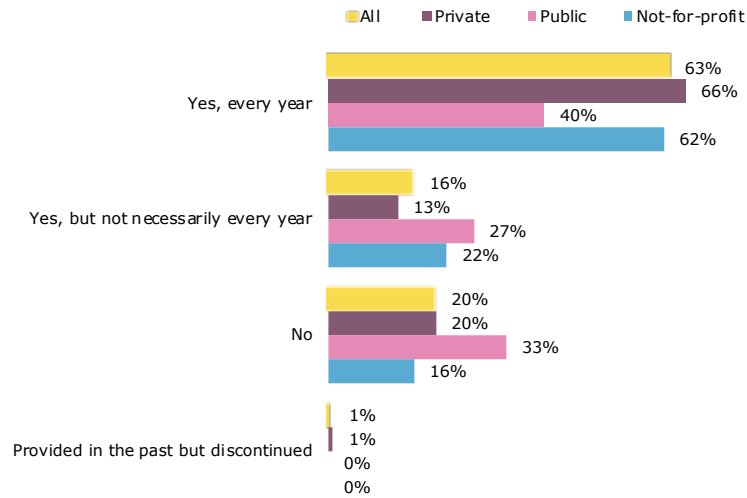
In contrast, the majority (66%) of private sector employers operate as business as usual on all days between Christmas and New Year's Day. In the 34% of private sector companies that do provide some additional time off, 21% of the employees must use their vacation days to cover any office closure while in 13% employees are given the additional time off. In companies where employees are required to use their vacation days, 21% of companies advise that some employees have complained about not having an option but the majority (79%) of the companies feel that most of their employees don't mind.

Ninety percent of organizations feel that employees appreciate the extra time off, 65% feel the practice of giving time off over the holidays improves staff morale and 33% of organizations think it is helpful in attraction and retention. Just under one-third (31%) feel that the additional time off is viewed as an entitlement by employees.

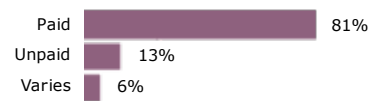
65%
of Canadian employers
believe giving time
off over the holidays
improves staff
morale

Time Off

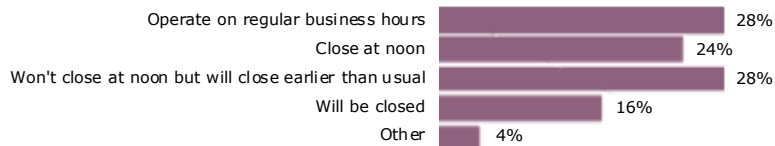
Do organizations give additional time off over the holiday season?



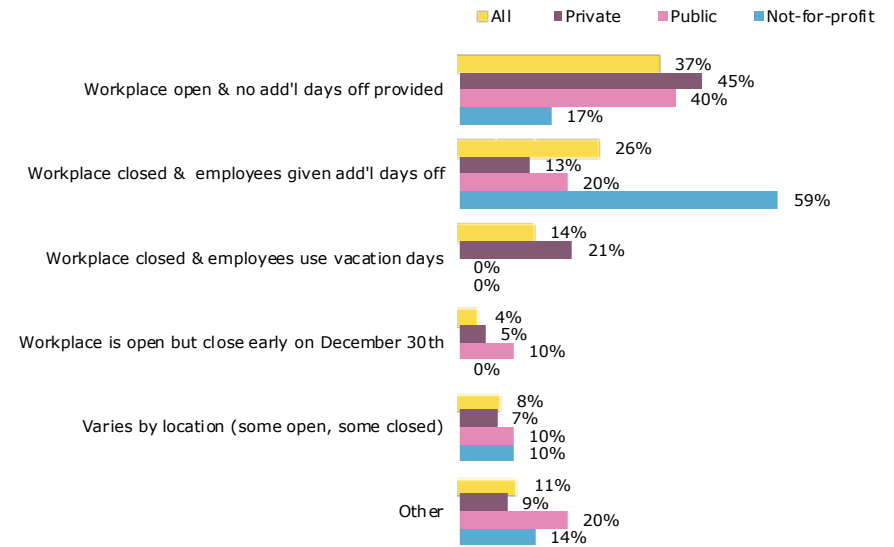
Is additional time off paid or unpaid?



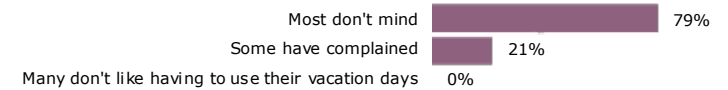
Hours of operation on Friday, December 23



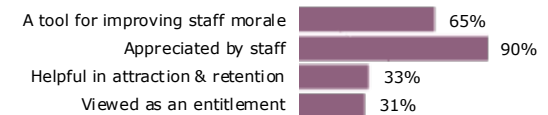
Additional days off on December 28, 29 and/or 30



Are employees resentful of having to use vacation days if the office is closed?



The practice of giving additional time off over the holiday season is (multiple answers allowed)



A woman with blonde hair, wearing a red hat with a large red flower, red gloves, and a dark green coat, is blowing colorful confetti into the air. The background is a soft, out-of-focus bokeh of light and color.

36%

of employers give
staff a gift at holiday
time

Holiday Gifts

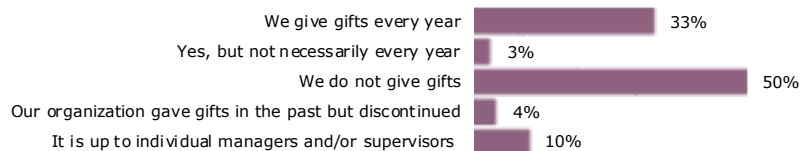
Just over one-third (36%) of organizations show appreciation to employees by giving a gift at holiday time. Gift certificates are popular as are corporate logo items, candies, chocolates and electronic items. The value of the gift tends to be under \$100 while there are a handful of employers (9%) who expect to give gifts of more than \$250 per employee.

Ninety-one percent of organizations feel that employees appreciate the gesture, 46% feel it improves staff morale and 17% think it is helpful in attraction and retention.

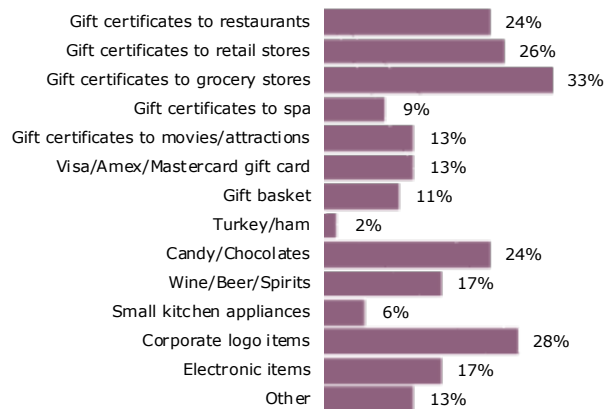
Twenty-two percent of organizations feel that employee view the holiday gift as an entitlement. One company noted: *“We would prefer our rewards be based on performance, however, the gift is a tradition and it is hard to change it.”*

Holiday Gifts

Does your organization give employees a holiday gift?



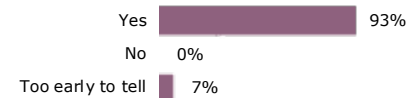
Types of gifts given (multiple answers allowed)



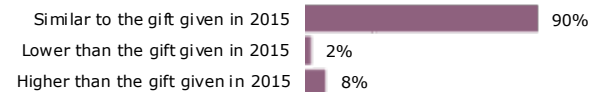
Did employees receive a holiday gift in 2015?



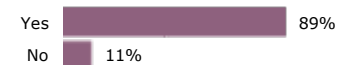
Will employees receive a holiday gift in 2016?



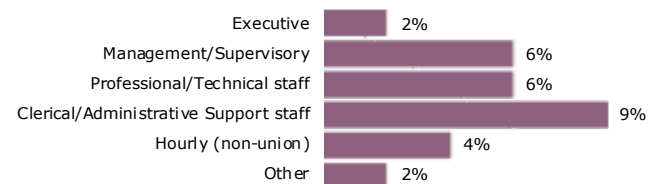
Monetary value of the gift in 2016



Are all staff eligible for a holiday gift?

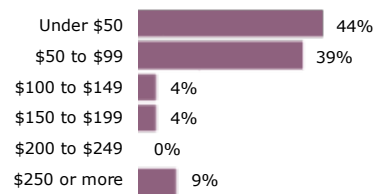


If no, employee group(s) eligible for a holiday gift (multiple answers allowed)

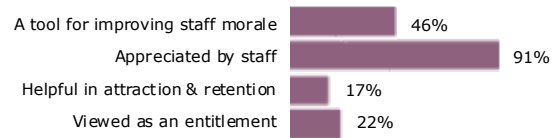


Holiday Gifts

Average or typical amount spent on a gift per employee



The practice of providing a holiday gift is *(multiple answers allowed)*



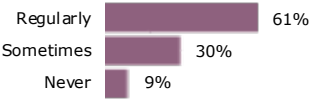
Charitable Giving

Overall, Canadian employers are charitable at holiday time. Sixty-one percent of organizations regularly participate in charitable events over the holidays. Activities cover a wide range of charities and causes but collecting donations for local food banks is the most common charitable activity with just under three-quarters of organizations doing so. One half of the organizations surveyed make cash donations to charities. Other popular charitable activities include collecting clothing donations such as Coats-for-Kids, donations for the toy bank and/or sponsoring a family or similar type program.

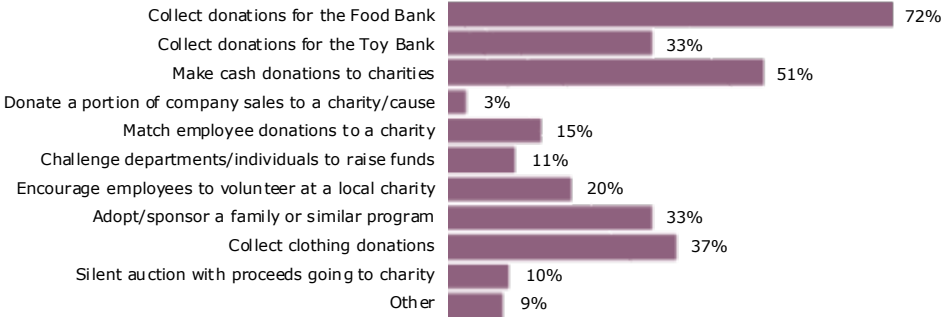
61%
of organizations
regularly participate in
charitable events over
the holidays

Charitable Activities

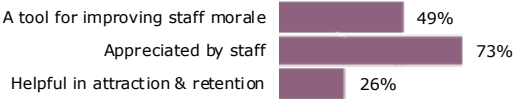
Does your organization participate in charitable events over the holidays?



If so, what types of charitable activities (multiple answers allowed)



The practice of participating in charitable activities is (multiple answers allowed)



Holiday Bonus

The tradition of companies paying a “Christmas” bonus has declined over the years. This year only 11% of companies reported regularly giving employees a cash bonus at holiday time. This is down 9% from last year.

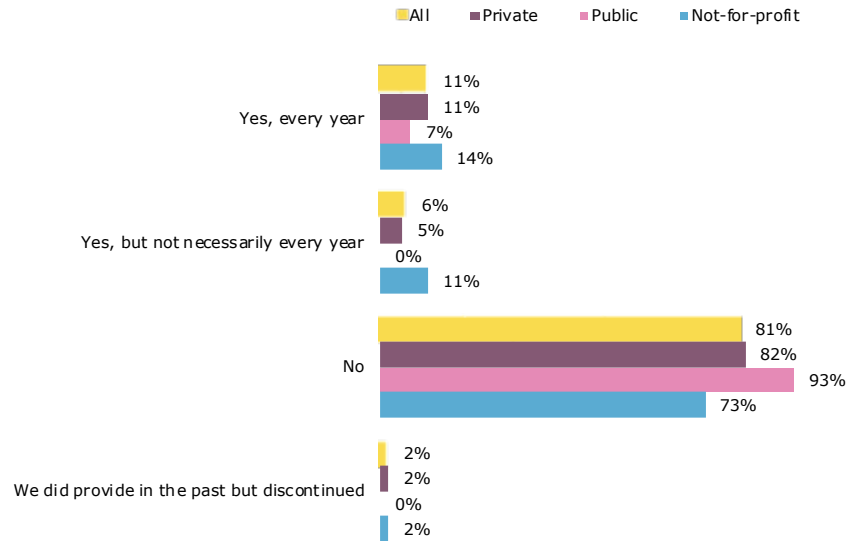
Only 7% of public sector employers, 16% of private sector companies and 25% of not-for-profit organizations pay a “Christmas” bonus to their staff. The bonus is typically between \$100 and \$300.

Not surprisingly, the majority (92%) of employers which provide cash bonuses feel that employees appreciate the extra cash at holiday time and 68% feel it improves staff morale. To a much lesser degree 36% feel it is helpful in their attraction and retention endeavours. Approximately 1-in-3 companies feel that the practice of giving holiday cash bonuses was viewed by employees as an entitlement. In this regard, one company stated *“We have been paying Christmas bonuses for so long that most staff do see it as an entitlement at this point”*.

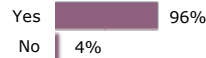


Holiday Bonus

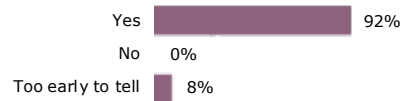
Is there a cash bonus?



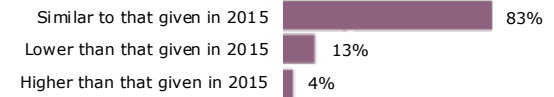
Did employees receive a holiday bonus in 2015?



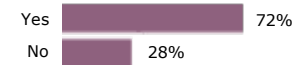
Will employees receive a holiday bonus in 2016?



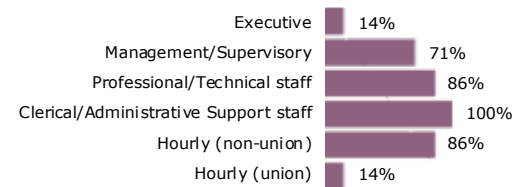
Amount of holiday bonus to be paid in 2016



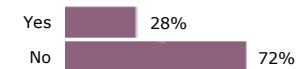
Are all staff eligible for a holiday bonus?



If no, employee group(s) eligible to receive a holiday bonus (multiple answers allowed)

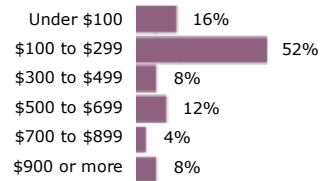


Does length of service (seniority) affect the amount of the holiday bonus?

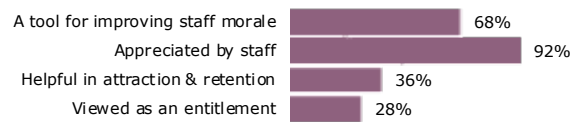


Holiday Bonus

Average, or typical amount paid to each employee

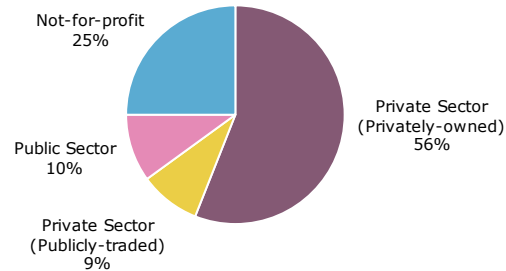


The practice of giving holiday cash bonuses is (multiple answers allowed)

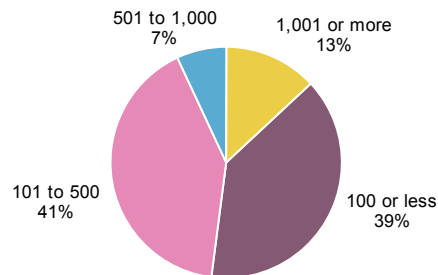


Survey Participants

Sector



Number of Employees



- 2Paths Solutions Ltd.
- Access Credit Union
- ACQBUILT Inc.
- Adecco Canada Inc.
- AG Hair
- Air France KLM Canada
- Airport Terminal Services
- Alberta Children's Hospital
- Alberta Medical Association
- Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund
- AMEC Foster Wheeler Ltd.
- Arthon Industries Limited
- Aspac Developments
- Assiniboine Credit Union
- Associated Engineering Group Ltd.
- Association of BC Forest Professionals
- Battle River Treaty 6 Health Centre Inc.
- BC Construction Association
- BC Public School Employers' Association
- Bishop & McKenzie LLP
- BlueShore Financial Credit Union
- Bosa Properties Inc.
- Bouthillette Parizeau & Associes Inc.
- BrettYoung Seeds
- Brian Jessel BMW
- Brick Group (The)
- Calgary Co-operative Association Limited
- Canada Metal Pacific Limited
- Canadian Dental Association
- Canadian International Grains Institute
- Carlson Construction Group
- Cascade Aerospace Inc.
- Cascades Recovery Inc.
- Chartered Professional Accountants of BC
- Chevron Canada Limited
- CIMA+
- City of Edmonton
- City of Maple Ridge
- Clifton Associates Ltd.
- College of Dental Hygienists of BC
- College of Pharmacists of BC
- College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta
- College of Physicians & Surgeons of BC
- College of Registered Nurses of BC
- Communitech
- Concord Pacific Developments Inc.
- Concord Sales Ltd.
- Cornerstone Credit Union
- COWI North America Ltd.
- DIALOG
- Doctors of BC
- Down Syndrome Research Foundation
- Dyna Holdings LP
- EaglePicher Energy Technologies
- Encorp Pacific (Canada)
- Energy+ Inc.
- Enns Brothers Ltd.
- Eramosa Engineering Inc.

Survey Participants (cont'd)

Family Services of the North Shore

FIRMA Foreign Exchange

Flair Airlines Ltd.

Gateway Property Management Corporation

Goodmen Roofing

Great Canadian Gaming Corporation

Group2 Architecture Interior Design Ltd.

Grouse Mountain Resort

Halifax Port Authority

Heritage Pointe Properites Inc.

HomeFront Society for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

Horizon Distributors Ltd.

Information Services Corporation

Insurance Brokers Association of BC

Insurance Corporation of BC

Interior Savings Credit Union

IPAC Chemicals Ltd.

Irwin & Billings Insurance Brokers

Kerr Wood Leidal Associates Limited

Killam Properties Inc.

Land Title and Survey Authority of British Columbia

Law Society of BC

Lawson Lundell LLP

LEA Consulting Ltd.

Ledcor Group of Companies

Lynden International Logistics Co.

MacKenzie Fujisawa LLP

Manitoba Blue Cross

Many Nations Financial Services Ltd.

Mayfair Diagnostics

McInnis & Holloway Funeral Home Ltd.

Monarch Industries Ltd.

Morrison Hershfield Limited

Neptune Bulk Terminals (Canada) Ltd.

New Car Dealers Association of BC

Nintendo of Canada Ltd.

North Ridge Development Corporation

OceanWorks International Corporation

OK Tire Stores Inc.

Ontario Securities Commission

Opus Stewart Weir Ltd.

Pacific Coast Terminals Co. Ltd.

Peterson Group Properties (Canada) Inc.

PH Molds Limited

Porter Airlines Inc.

Prince Rupert Port Authority

Protec Dental Laboratories Ltd.

Pryke Lambert Leathley Russell LLP

Pushor Mitchell LLP

Quorex Construction Services Ltd.

R.V. Anderson Associates Limited

RANA Respiratory Care Group

RC Pet Products

Ready Engineering Corporation

Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver

RHC Insurance Brokers

Ridley Terminals Inc.

Riversdale Resources

Salt Spring Coffee

Saskatchewan Association Of Health Organizations

School District No. 37 (Delta)

Seaspan ULC

SLR Consulting (Canada) Ltd.

Southridge School

Spectrum Society for Community Living

Stantec Consulting Ltd.

Teshmont Consultants LP

Tetra Tech EBA Inc.

Thompson-Nicola Regional District

Triton Environmental Consultants Ltd.

UAP Inc.

UBC Properties Trust

University of Manitoba

Urban Systems Ltd.

Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre

Vancouver Island Real Estate Board

VersaBank

Wakefield Canada Inc.

Wavefront Wireless Commercialization Centre

West End Business Improvement Zone

WorleyParsons Canada Services Ltd.

YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg

Zaber Technologies Inc.