

USERS' PERCEPTIONS OF COMMERCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS – KEY FINDINGS AND ISSUES FOR NEW ZEALAND

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Based on the author's questionnaire surveys of some 60 sustainable buildings worldwide, this paper documents some of the more important findings and discusses their implications for New Zealand's building industry. Issues covered include:

1. The key features of the buildings that rated best for comfort and satisfaction on the users' perception scales – ranging from the commitment of the client and the design team to the incorporation of features such as atria and mixed-mode ventilation.
2. The performance of refurbished buildings by comparison with new or established sustainable buildings from the users' point of view – refurbished buildings can rate very highly, and in some cases surpass new buildings.
3. The performance of sustainable buildings by comparison with conventional buildings – users' perceptions of sustainable buildings were significantly better than that of more conventional buildings in terms of operational and satisfaction factors, and most of the internal environmental factors.
4. User performance benchmarking for New Zealand buildings – here, the author outlines potential approaches to benchmarking and the incorporation of user perception scores into Building Rating Tools.

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