
THE ROLE OF AN ECO DESIGN ADVISOR: HOW EFFECTIVE HAS IT BEEN?

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In response to the need for independent and personalised advice on sustainable design solutions from an easily accessible and centralised source, the Eco Design Advisor (EDA) scheme was created as an initiative by BRANZ Ltd. The Eco Design Advisors are building experts working from the council and provide up to two hours of free eco-design advice on residential building projects. The three primary functions of the EDA are to: provide a free supply of information; actively promote, network and facilitate between clients, the design and construction industry and stakeholders; and to act as a feedback loop enabling the industry to respond to the growing needs of homeowners. The scheme is currently being piloted in three New Zealand councils. Ten more councils are intending to join the scheme in mid 2007.

A core part of this project is to evaluate the success of this scheme and its impact on the values and long-term behaviours of the homeowners and designers. There are two main components to this schemes evaluation: a survey measuring the attitude and behaviour changes, and a Green Home Scheme based scoring system of the design changes made. This paper describes the extensive evaluation of the schemes pilot year and presents the trends emerging from these results.

It is the future objective of the scheme to achieve mainstream awareness and acceptance by homeowners and industry and as a consequence, transform the original initiative into a stable, self-sustaining and self-funding service. The extensive evaluation of the scheme will thus ensure that it is responsive to the demands of industry and homeowners and also allow for the collection of representative up-to-date market and industry intelligence.