Student experience and expectations of technology

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Why this research?

- The evolving opportunities technological change provides requires the frequent evolution of services and curriculum to facilitate engaged learning.
- The resources and costs involved need to be carefully weighed up against the potential benefits of the affordances.
- Important to have an evidence-based approach to inform strategy and planning.
- Understanding how and what students' use and what their expectations of technologies for both life and study is clearly essential.
- The technologies explored here included, institutional systems (email, LMS), Web2.0 technologies (social networking, cloud & shared spaces) and personal devices.
- This presentation provides some initial findings and reflects on some implications for emerging learning environments and meeting expectations for 'todays' student.

The tool and method

- Methodology: Mixed Methods
  - Students' Experiences and Expectations of Technology Survey (SEETS)
    - It contained 127 questions, coving student's access and use of technologies
    - Plus four open-ended response questions
  - Online focus groups (n=34) using Blackboard Collaborate
- Five main sections
  1. Technologies currently used in everyday life for social and work purposes.
  2. Current & preferred use of technologies for learning and communicating with the wider university.
  3. The services and support provided for learning.
  4. The technologies used to interact with the university for administrative purposes.
  5. General demographic information

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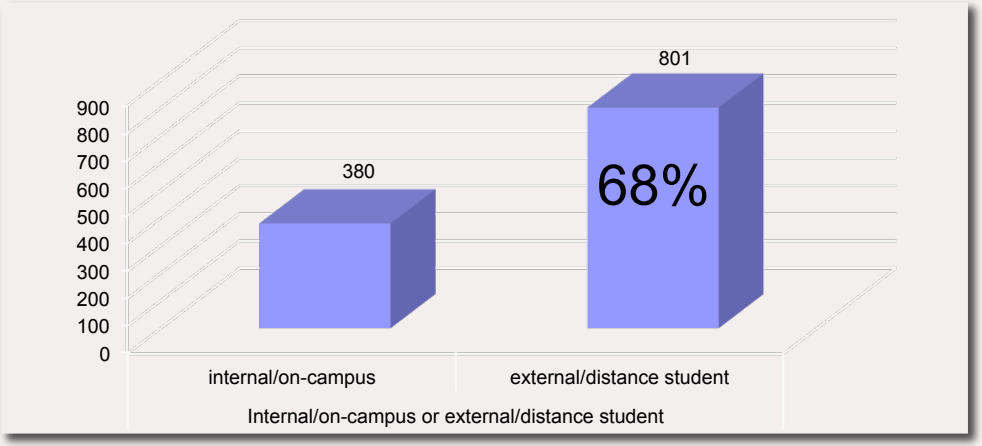
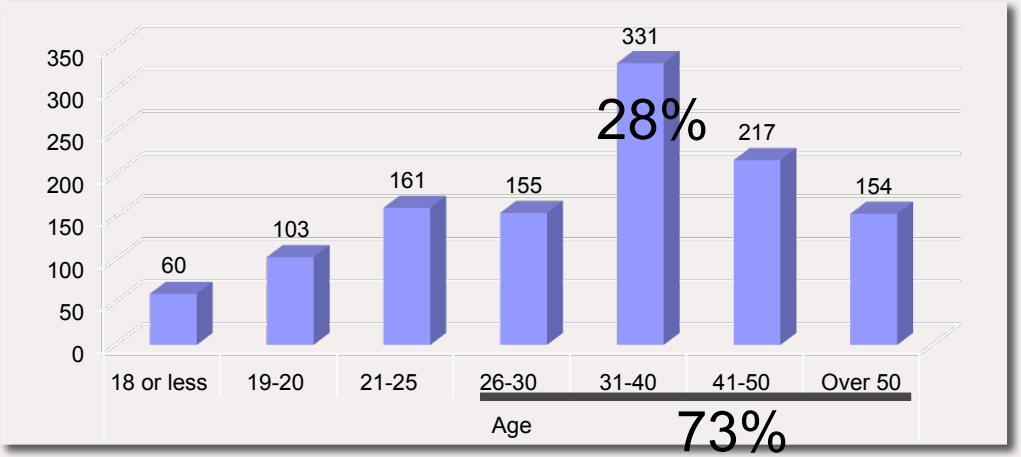
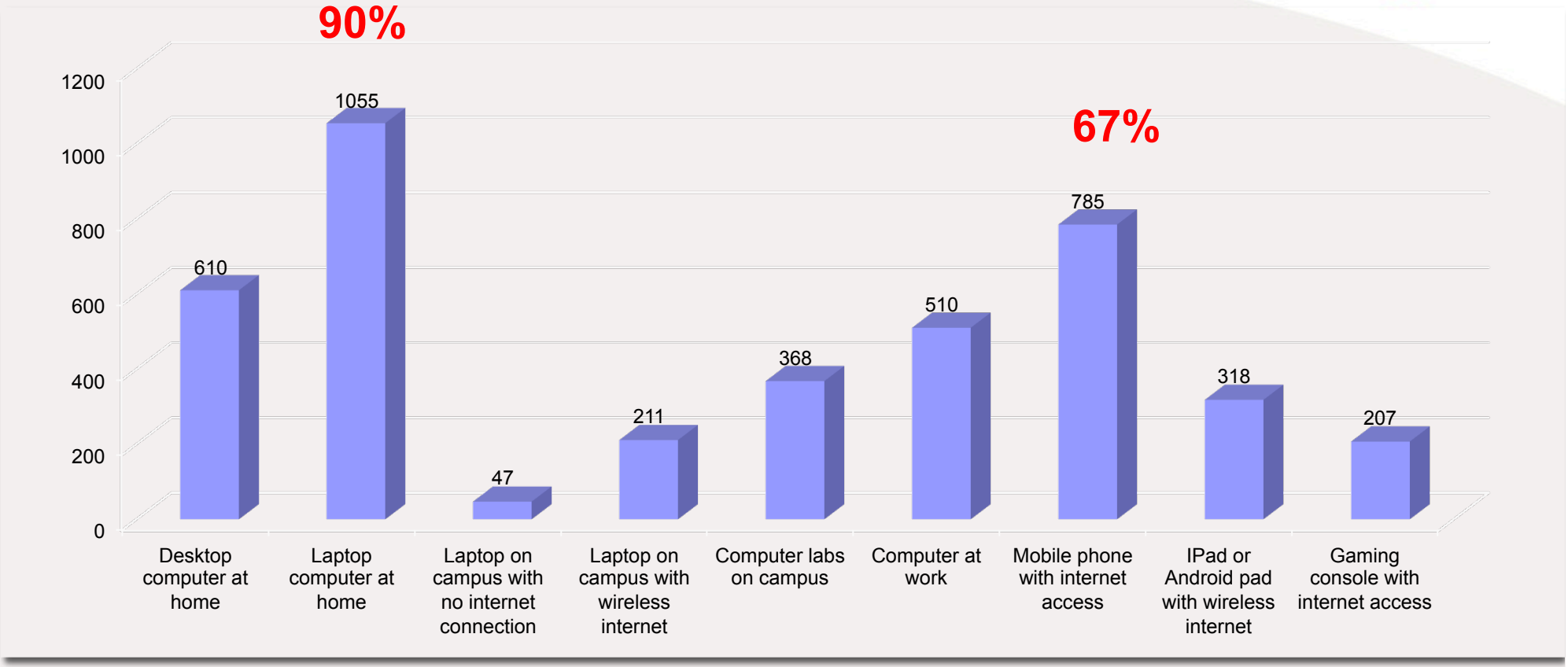
Base demographics



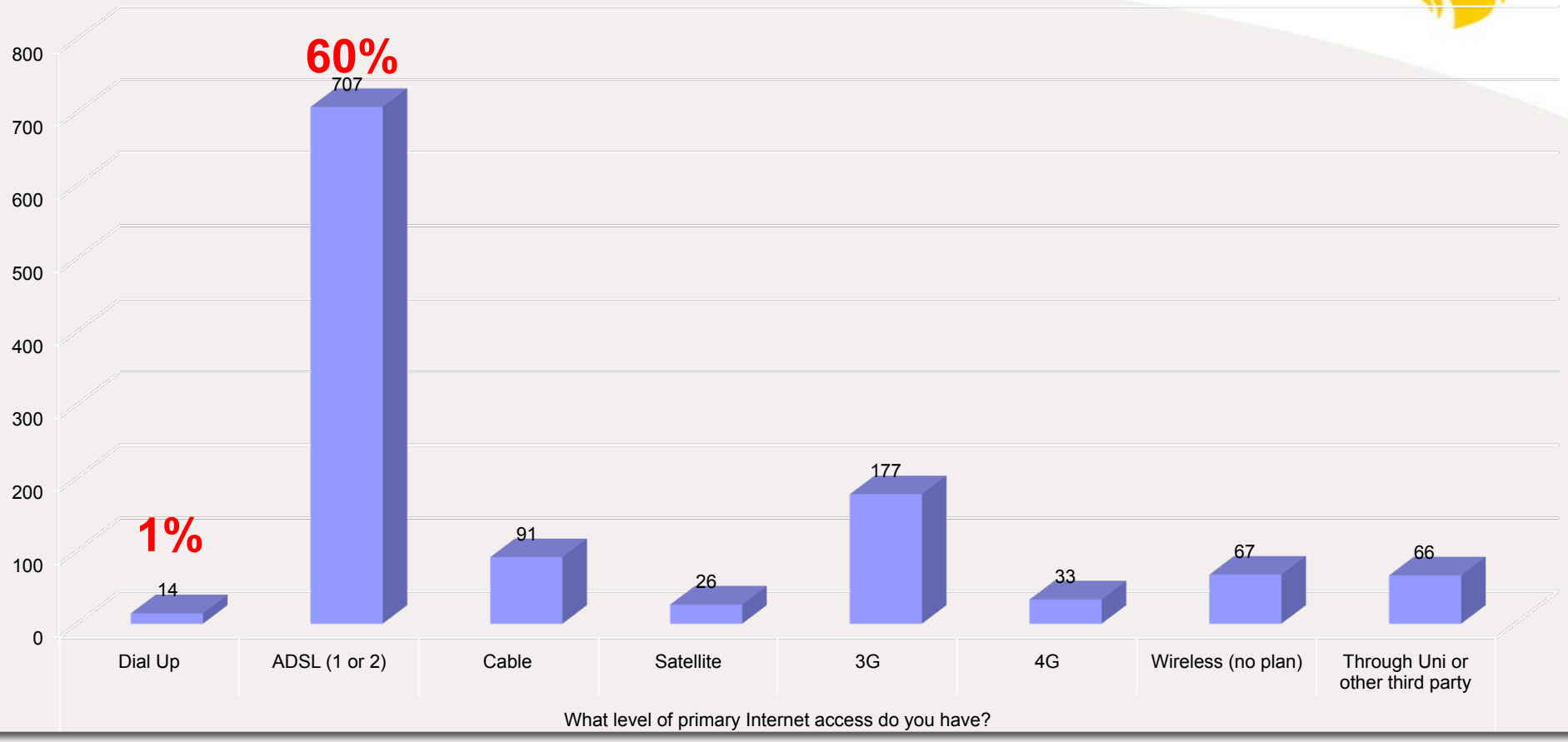


- N = 1181
- 68% external/distance
- 56% Part-time
- 65% Female
- 73% Mature age
- 67% Undergraduate
- 40% In their first year
- 40% work Full-time
- 29% No paid employment

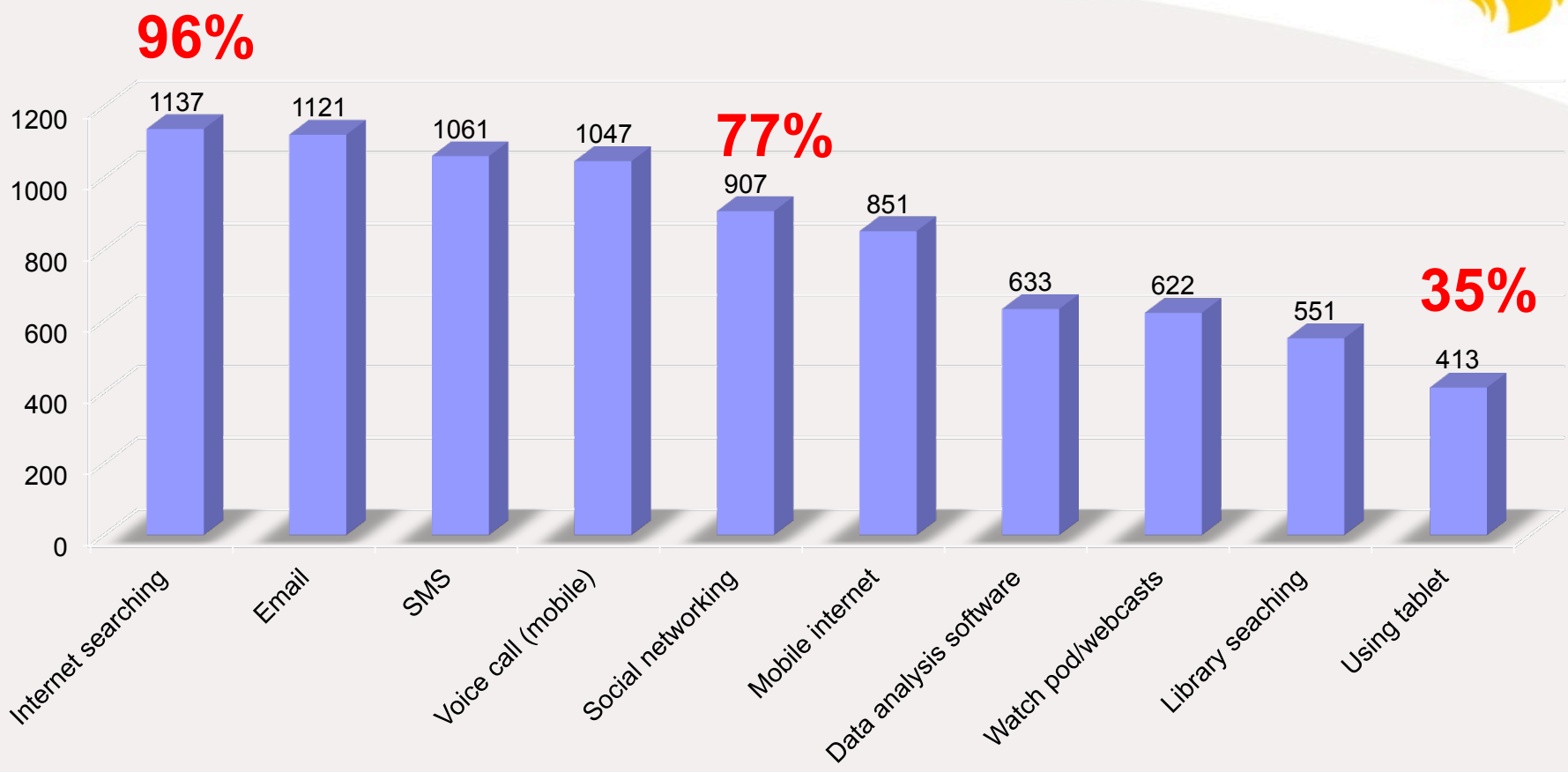
The computing equipment they have access to



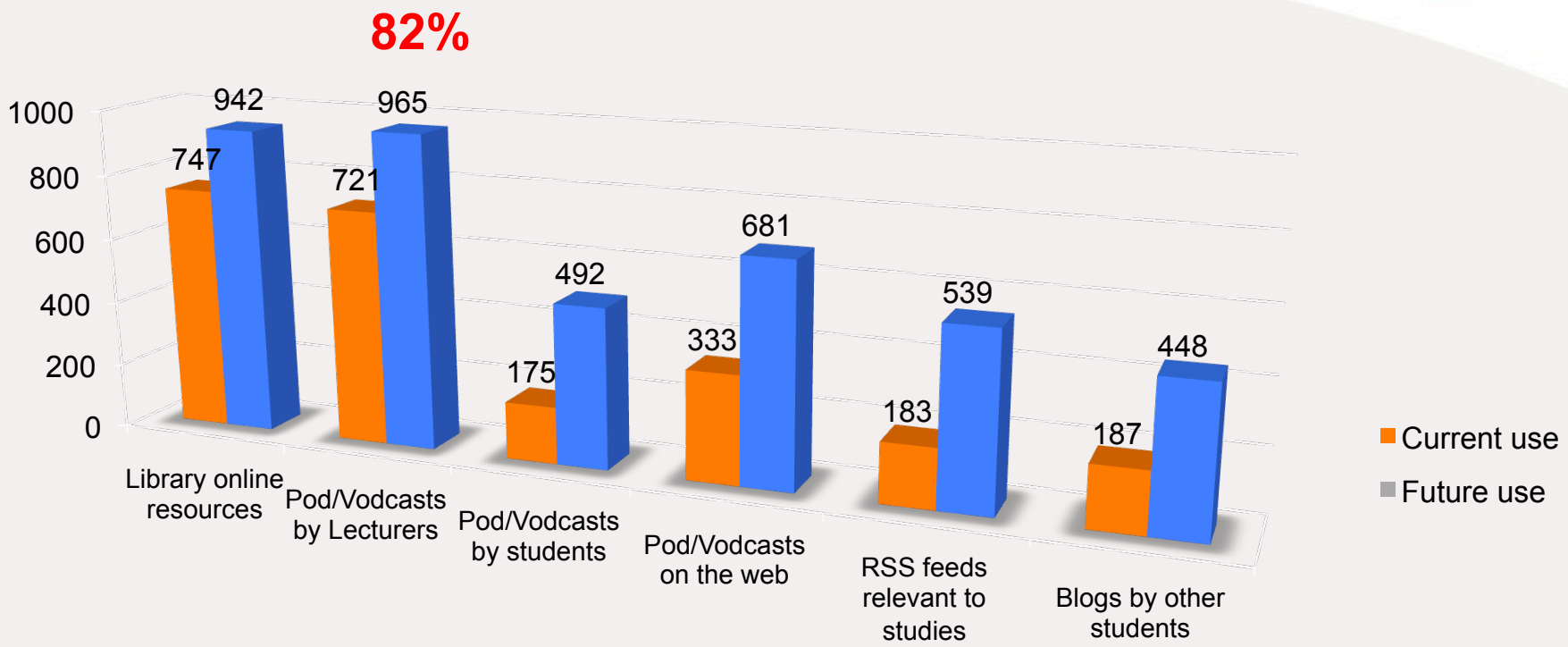
Primary Internet access



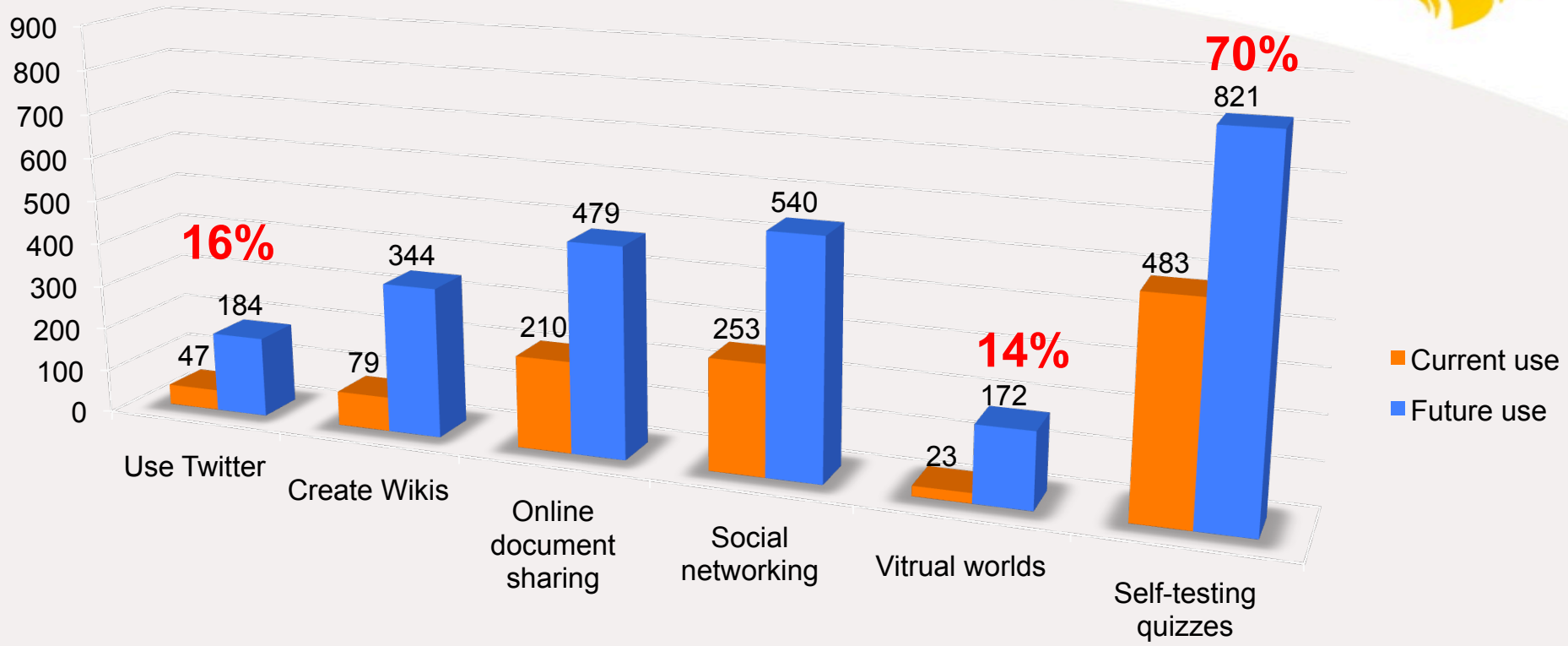
Top 10 tools used outside study



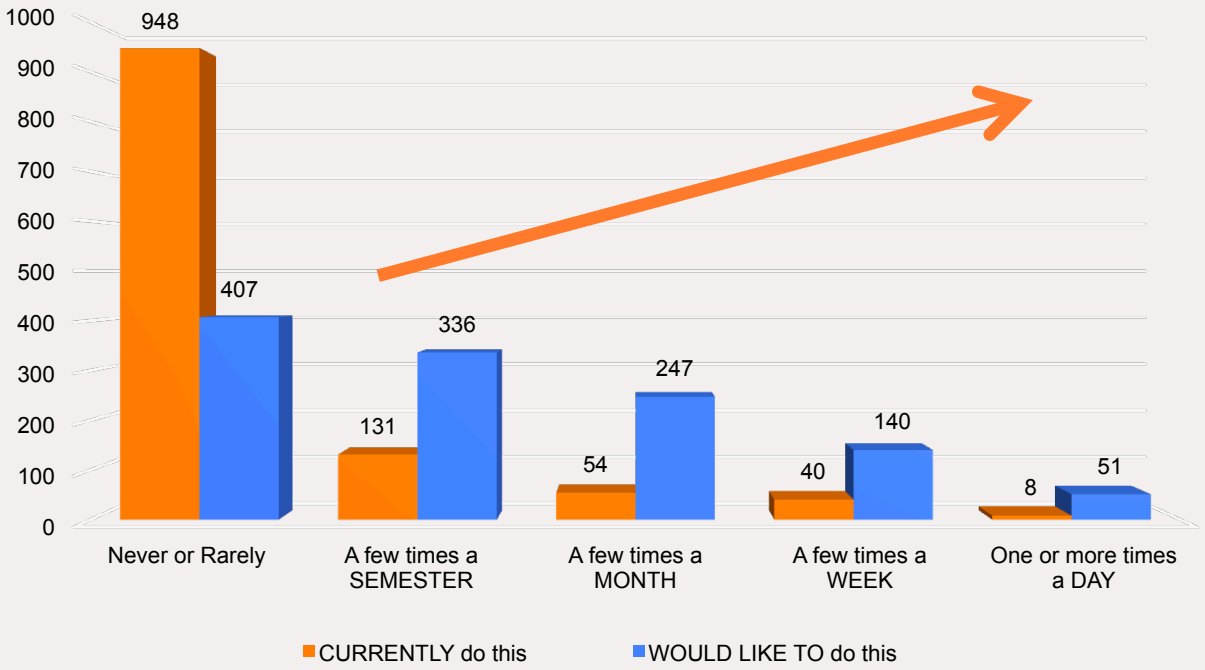
Some interesting shifts



Technologies for learning

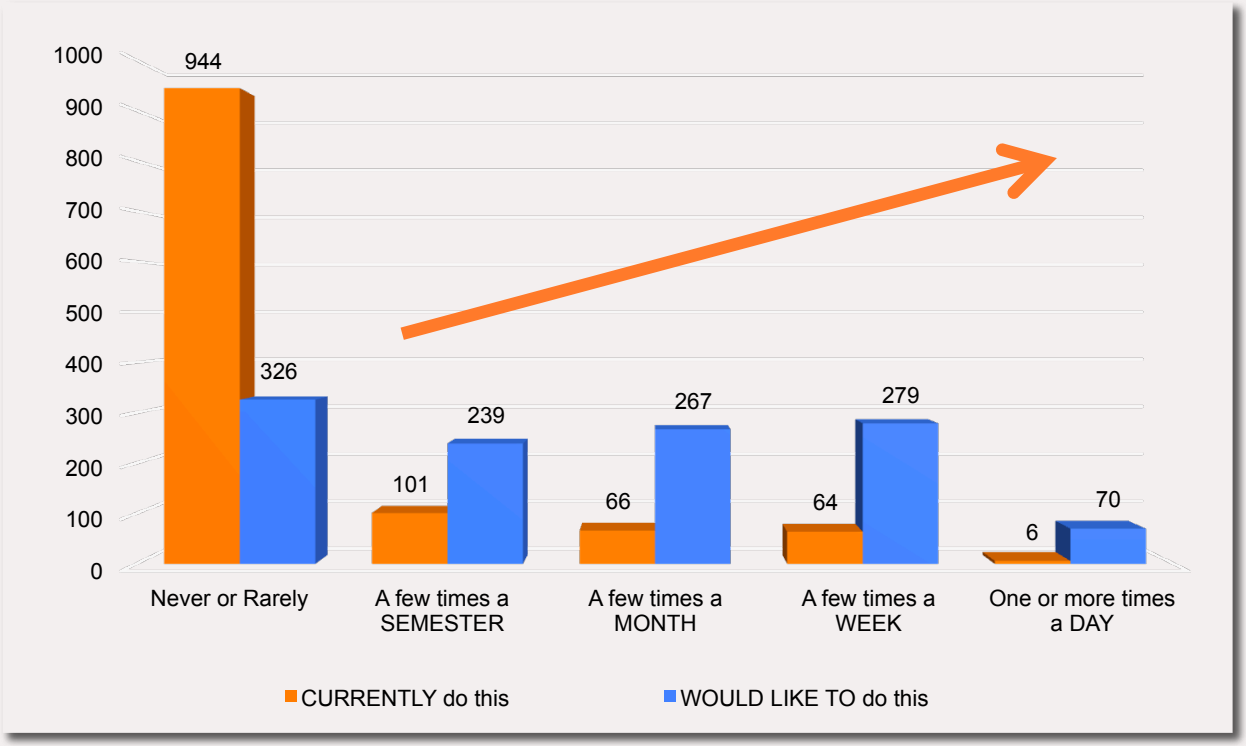


Develop an ePortfolio as a record of learning and experiences for professional or employment purposes



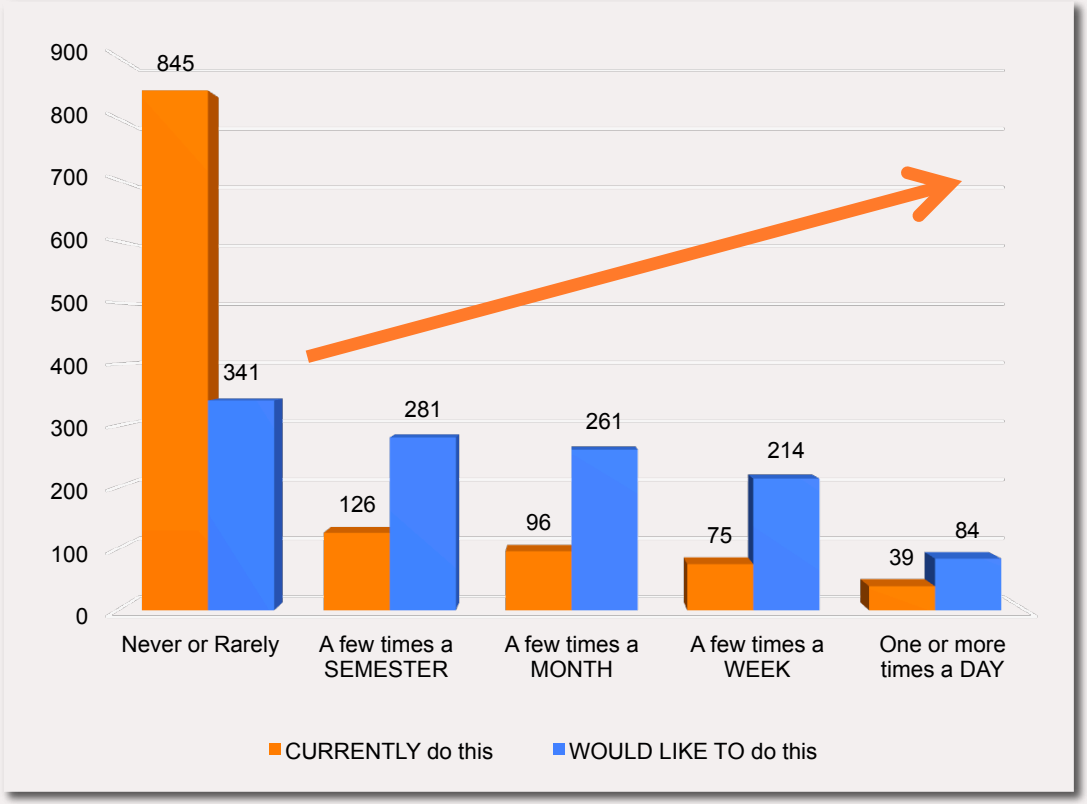
- While 8.7% reported current regular use of ePortfolio for professional or employment purposes, 37.1% reported wanting to use this more often.
- 541 students (57%) who had selected 'never to rarely' moved their preference to wanting some level of engagement with this technology.

Use web conferencing or video chat (eg Skype, Wimba, FaceTime) to join in remotely to lectures or tutorials



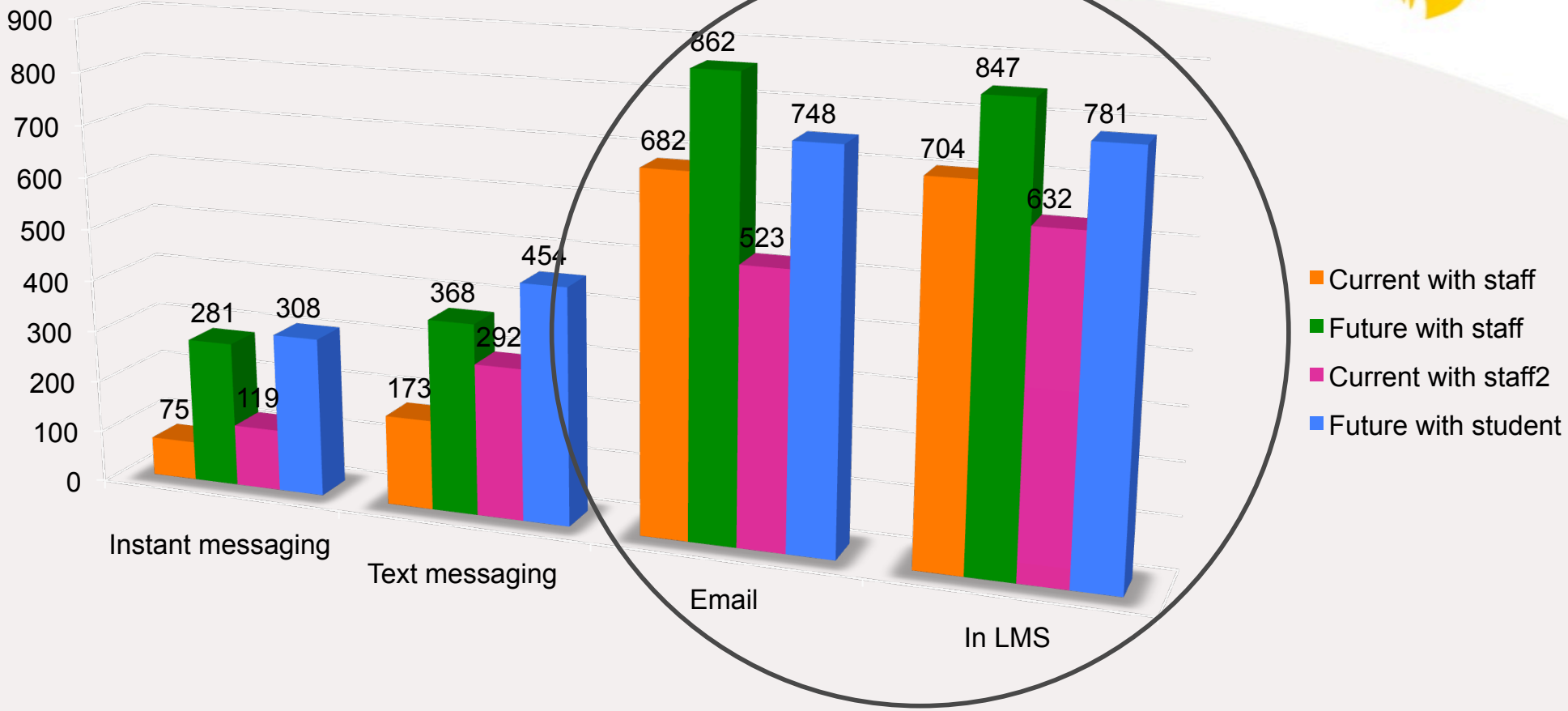
- 80% (944) of students have not used web conferencing to join in with lectures or tutorials in the past
- 65% (618) of these respondents said that they would like to in the future.
- This has significant implications as to how USQ may look to engage with this type of technology in the future

Use web-based document tools (eg Google docs) to work collaboratively on activities and assignments

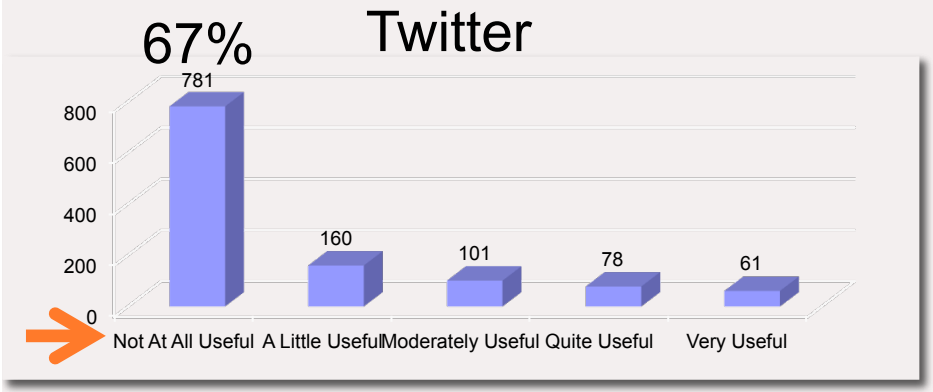


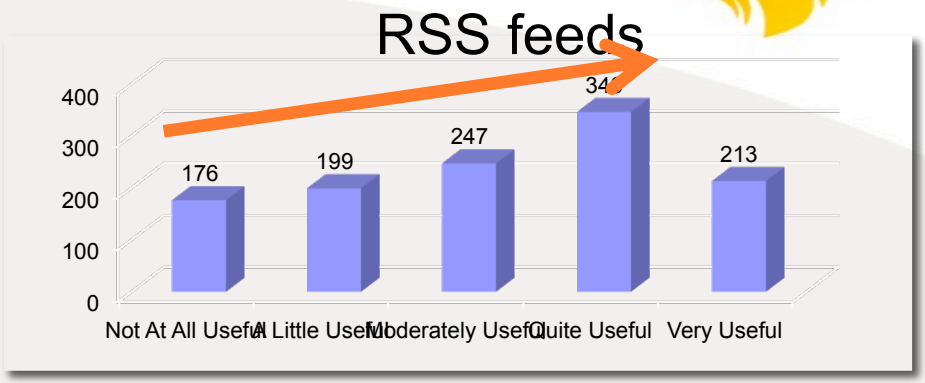
- 17.8% of students reported current regular use of web-based document tools,
- 47.3% reported wanting to use these more often.
- 504 students (43%) moved their preference from 'never to rarely' to wanting some level of engagement with this technology

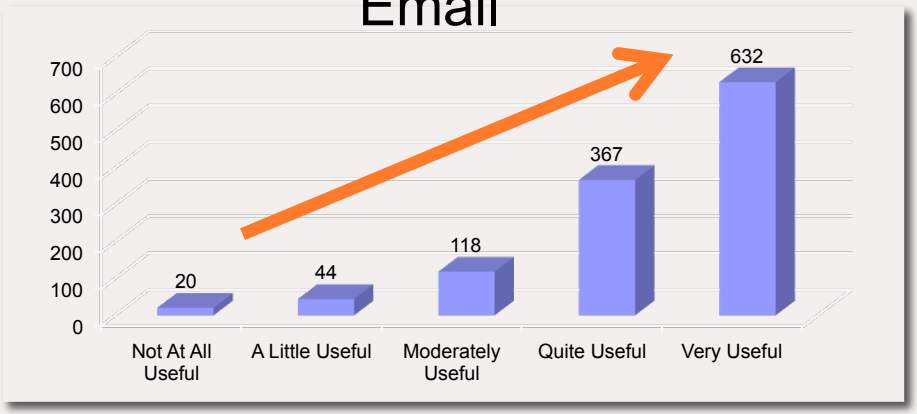
Student with staff
Student with student

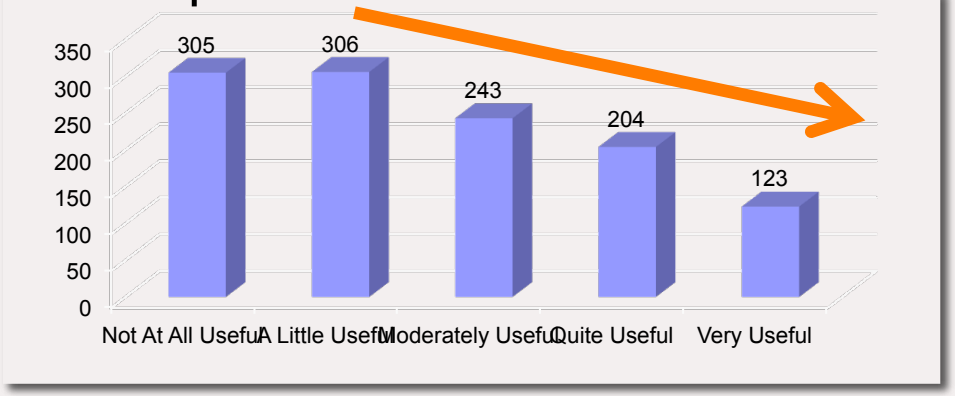


Technologies for Admin Purposes



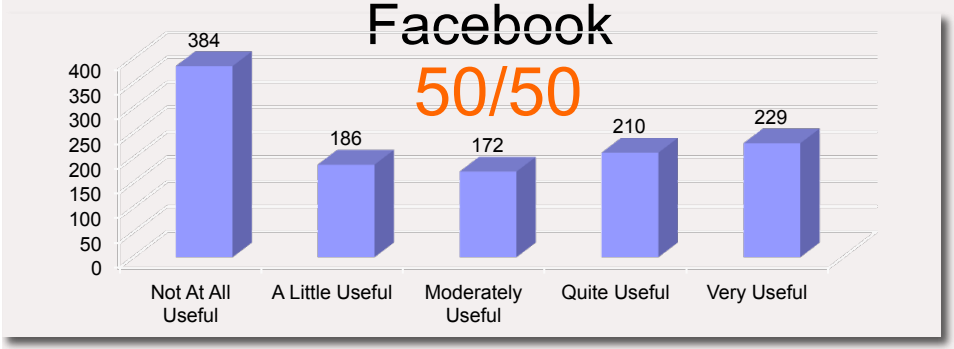




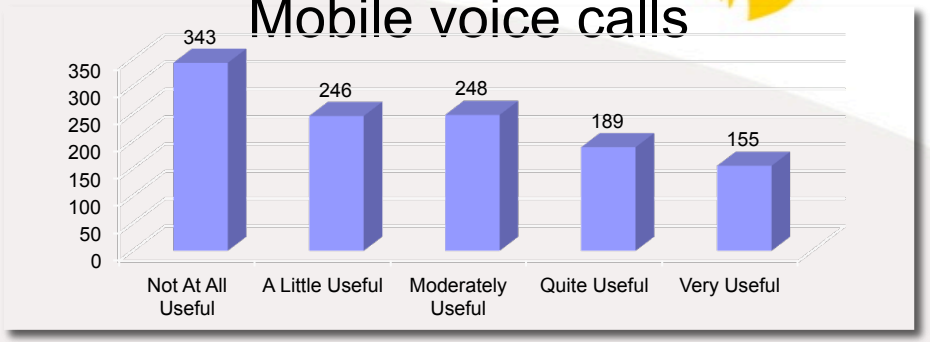


Technologies for Admin Purposes

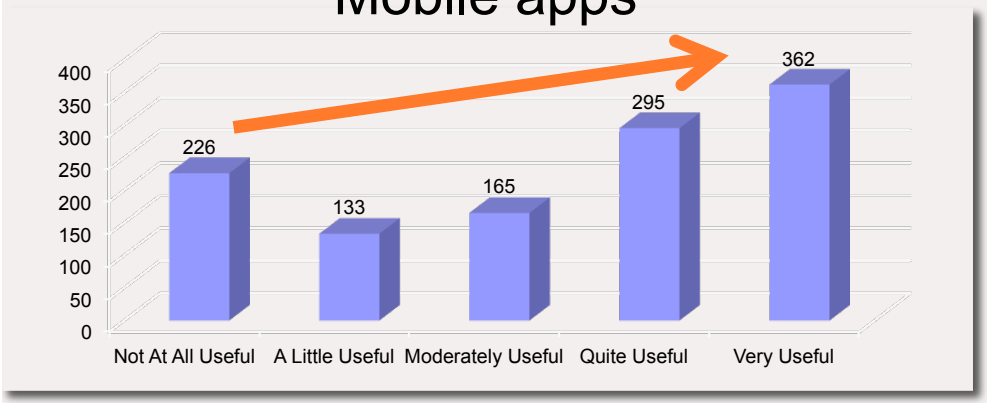
Facebook



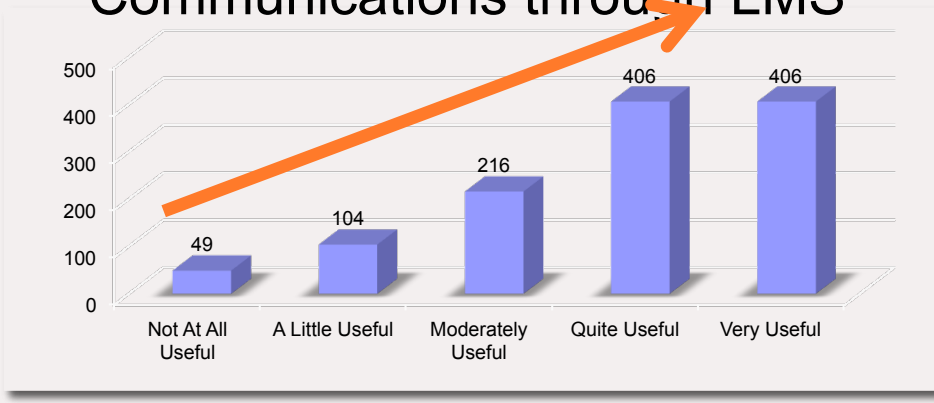
Mobile voice calls



Mobile apps



Communications through LMS



Take home messages from FGs

- They are starting to use iPads more but mainly still use laptops.
- Recorded lectures provide flexibility and mobility, eg. able to play on iPod and listen while travelling etc. Able to repeat sections. Hearing/seeing lecturer gives better 'feel' for information than reading on printed page. Other students ask questions during lecture, which can give additional information. Feel more connected to group.
- Respondents saw the USQ*StudyDesk* as adequate in contributing to their feeling part of a 'community of learners' and were opposed to using Facebook which they see as for personal use only.
- 'Consistency' was a main theme that has emerged both from this survey and Focus Groups. Consistency in the 'look and feel' of study desk, the quality of resources available, the staff interaction online. But not sameness.
- Strong preference for us to provide online training for technologies.