

REBATE AGENTS

By
Garrick Wahlstrand
&
Mary Sutter

C&I Customer Practices

Construction

“For retrofits, many of our customers are picking equipment that they believe will qualify in the majority of territories... We’re providing them with rebate estimates and they’re looking at them and saying, ‘Ok how does this affect our ROI?’ And in (utility) areas where it’s not acceptable, they’re just not doing their retrofits at all.” –Rebate Agent

“For the most part I try to get (my clients) to target all the (high incentive, low energy cost utility) areas first because that’s where they’re going to get the most bang for their buck. And once they see the savings in these areas then they normally release the other rollouts or the other projects in the other states.” –Rebate Agent

Pros to Collaborating with Rebate Agents

Program Promotion

“If a customer calls us or we call them, the first thing we do is ask ‘Who is your utility?’ and then we go onto that website and look for incentive programs.” –Rebate Agent

“If there is a good incentive, we’ll sell that program, in hopes of getting that business.” –Rebate Agent

Program Development

Rebate agents can provide perspective on how a program compares to others, especially in how it can be improved.

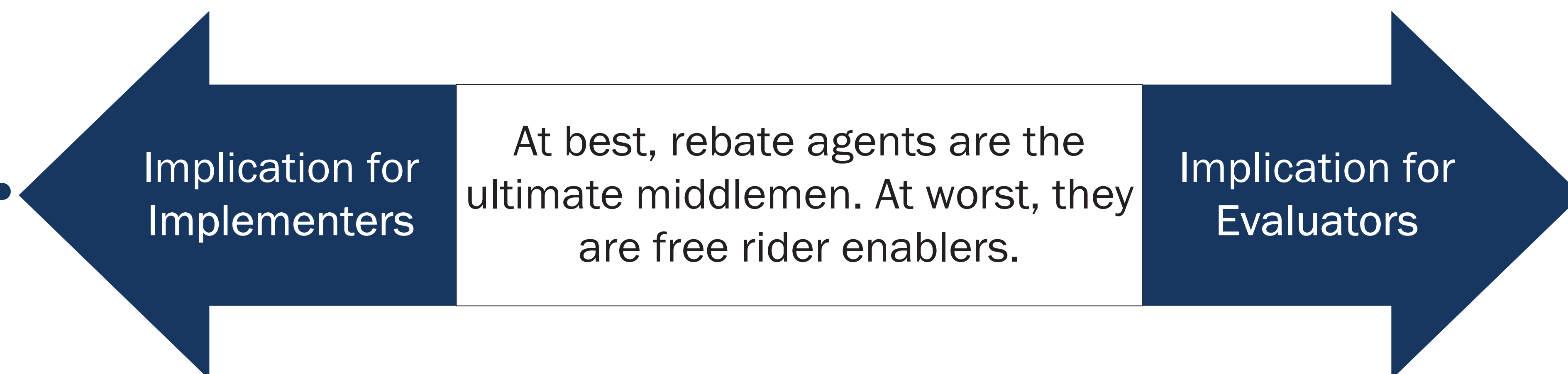
Cons to Collaborating

Sacrifices Local Trade Ally Development

Participation and savings represented by rebate agents may overshadow the focus on local trade ally development.

Encourages Free-Riders

It is important to understand how free ridership will be measured especially in regards to national customer



Issue:

National retailers use proto-typical designs which are influenced by utility programs across the nation. Thus, the local utility program may indirectly influence the project as one of many programs.

Solutions:

(1) Design questions that distinguish direct and indirect effects of the program; (2) consider algorithms that incorporate indirect effects; and (3) if using the standard NTG battery, evaluators may have to throw out the Program Influence score, since it may be difficult for agents to distinguish between direct and indirect effects.

Issue:

National retailers use proto-typical designs that may leave little room for design modifications.

Solution:

Design questions that clarify how much room there was in the project for modification.

Retrofit

Issue:

Retailers sometimes use territories with relatively high incentives as a way of pilot testing measures before rolling them out in other territories.

Solution:

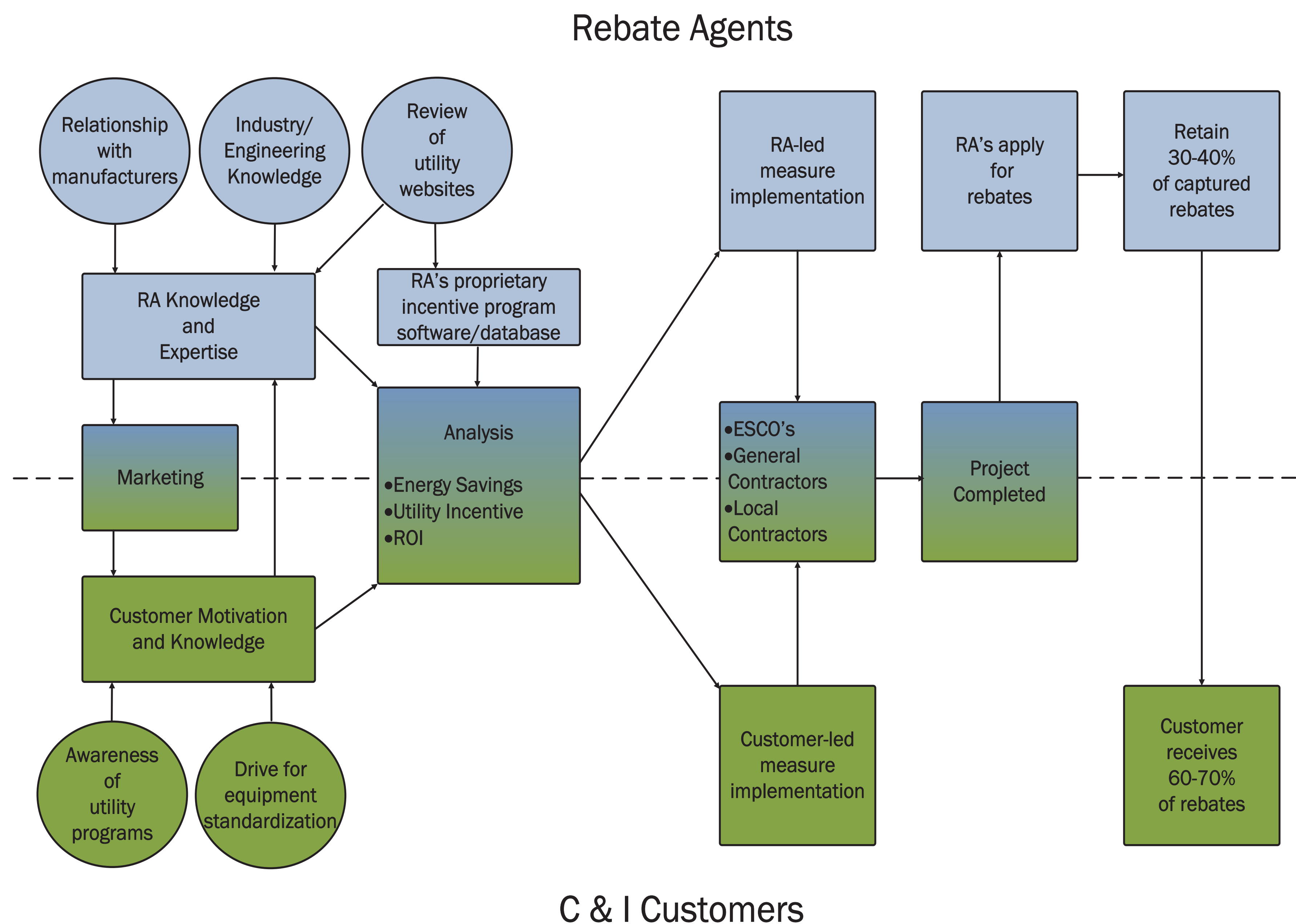
Design questions that clarify if measure implementation was part of pilot testing.

Issue:

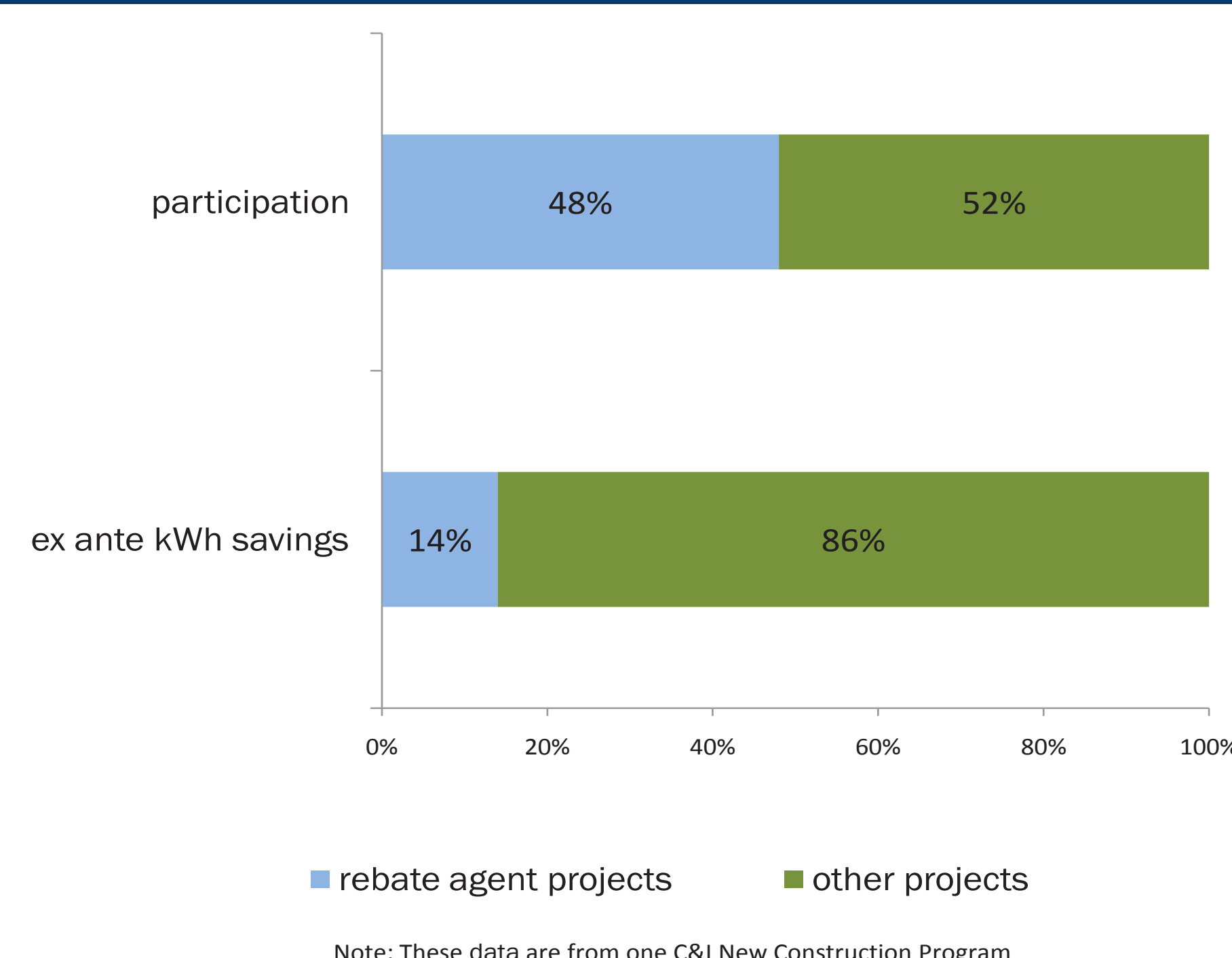
There is a tension between standardizing equipment across all a retailers’s sites and the ROI affected by local incentives.

Solution:

Design questions that clarify the role of standardization and local ROI.



Share of C&I Participants and Savings



Where They Operate

