

# Testing Contact and Response Strategies to Improve Response in the 2012 Economic Census

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*\*The views expressed in this presentation are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau*

# Outline

- Economic Census Overview
- Contact Strategies
- Preliminary Results
- Conclusions and Next Steps

# Economic Census

- Conducted every five years in order to get a measure of American businesses and the economy
- Includes companies of all sizes in most economic industries with employees
- Contact strategy based on the size of the company

# Economic Census (cont.)

- Multi-Unit
  - More than one establishment
  - More complex
- Single-Unit
  - Only one establishment
- Response Modes
  - Mail
  - Surveyor Software (Multi-Units)
  - Internet (Single-Units)

# Contact Strategies

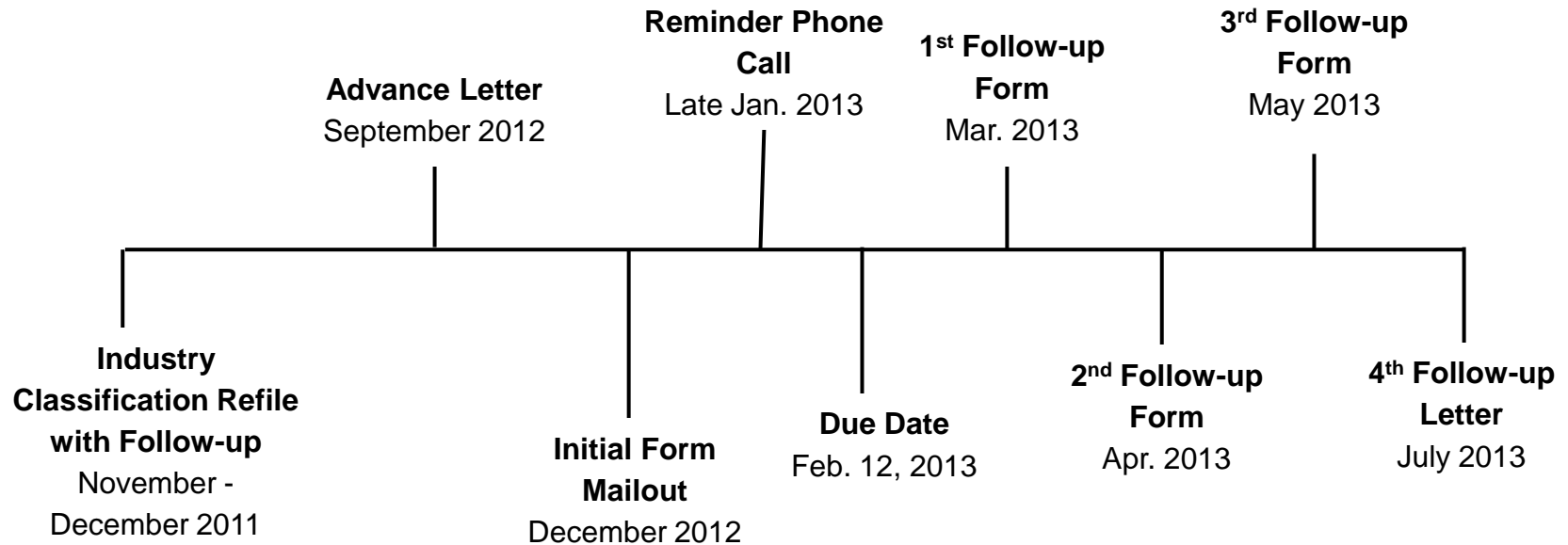
- Previous research on households
- Six tests originally planned, one additional test
- Conducted throughout Economic Census mailout

# Contact Strategies

1. Industry Classification Refile
2. Contact Exchange Form
3. Targeted Advanced Mailing
4. Reminder Phone Call
5. Letter-Only First Follow-up
6. Certified Mailing
7. Third Quarter Birth Letter-Only Follow-up

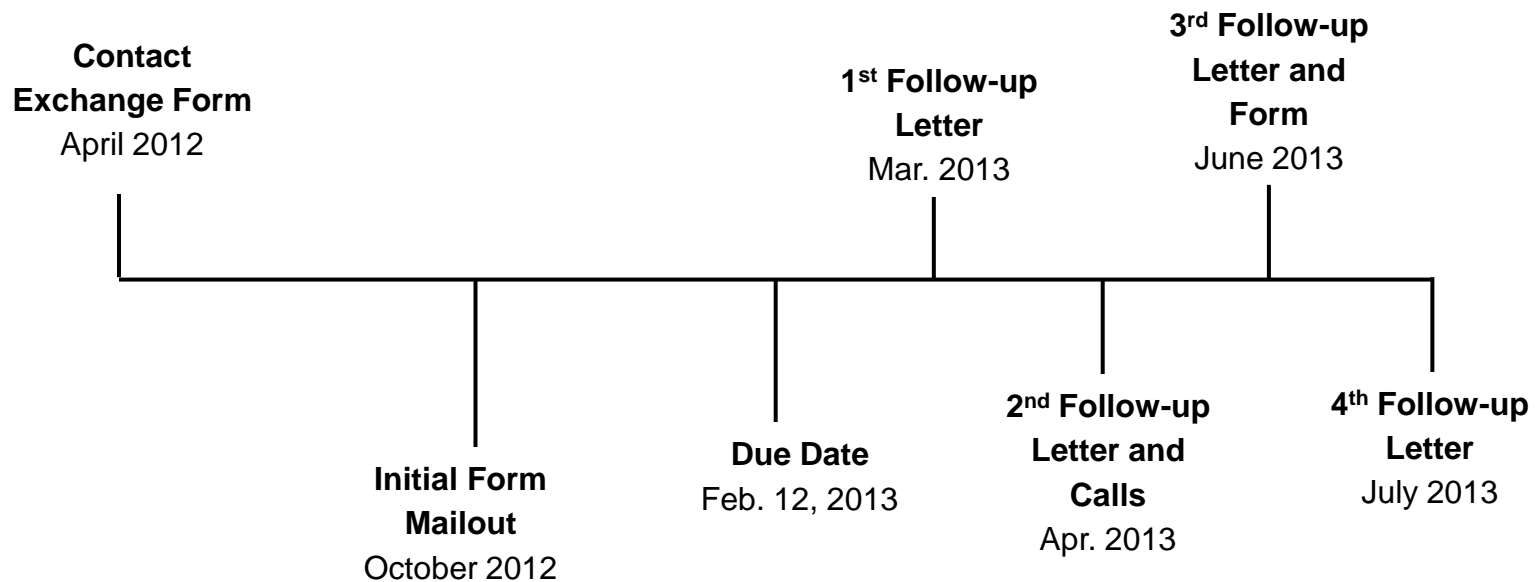
# Economic Census Mailout

## 2012 Economic Census Single-Unit Mailout



# Economic Census Mailout

## 2012 Economic Census Multi-Unit Mailout



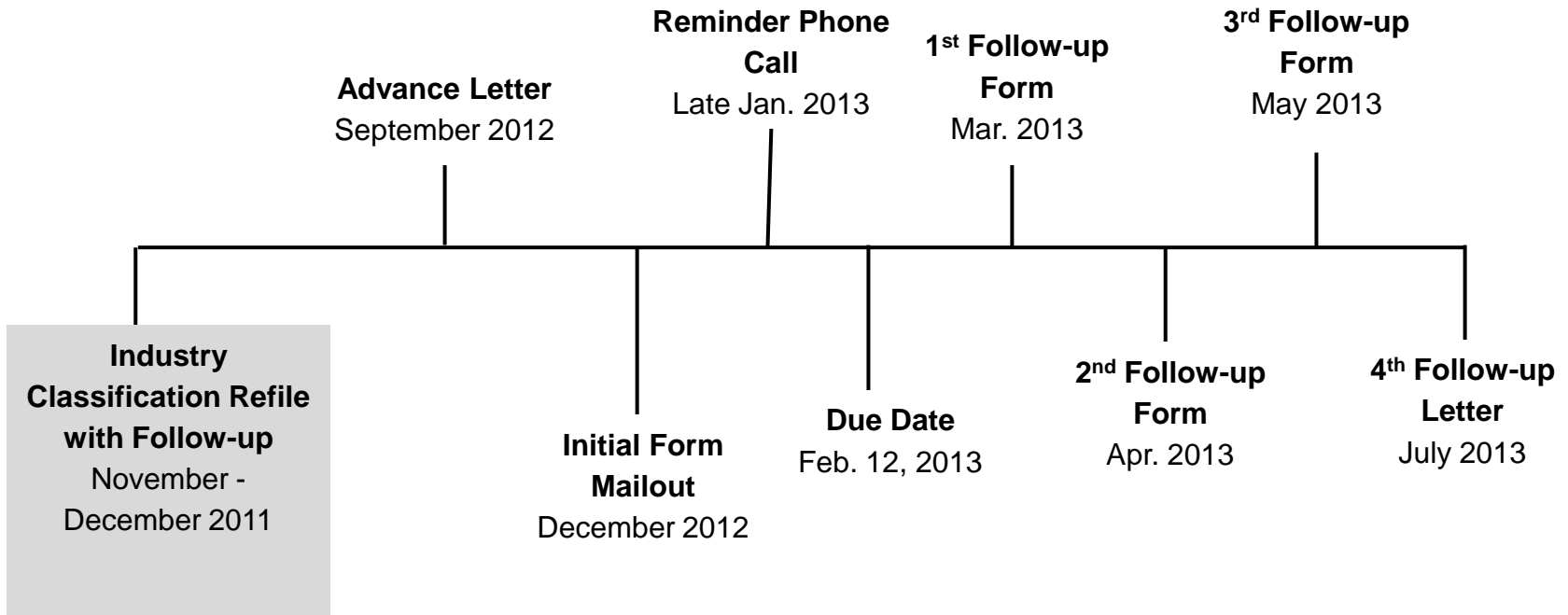


# Results

- As of August 31, 2013 – **NOT FINAL**
- Methods
  - Differences in check-in rates
  - Mean response time
- Not generalizable to the population

# Industry Classification Refile

## 2012 Economic Census Single-Unit Mailout



# Industry Classification Refile

- Identify company industry
- Letter-only to half non-responding companies in first follow-up
- Response over phone accepted

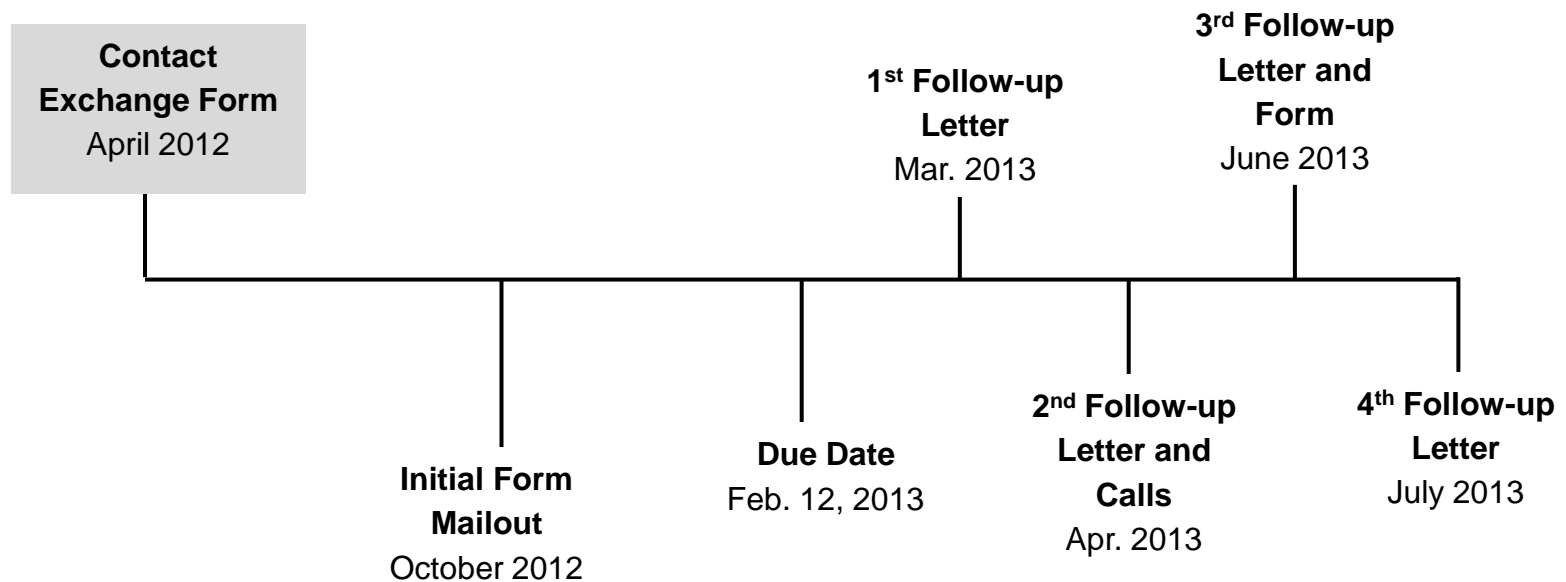
# Industry Classification Refile

	Treatment		
Response Mode	Letter-only	Form and Letter	Difference
Internet	23.83%	12.48%	11.35%*
Phone	2.99%	1.57%	1.42%*
Mail	7.36%	19.60%	-12.24%*
Overall	34.19%	33.65%	0.54%
Total Mailed	14,583	14,582	

\* Represents the difference was significant

# Contact Exchange Form

## 2012 Economic Census Multi-Unit Mailout



# Contact Exchange Form

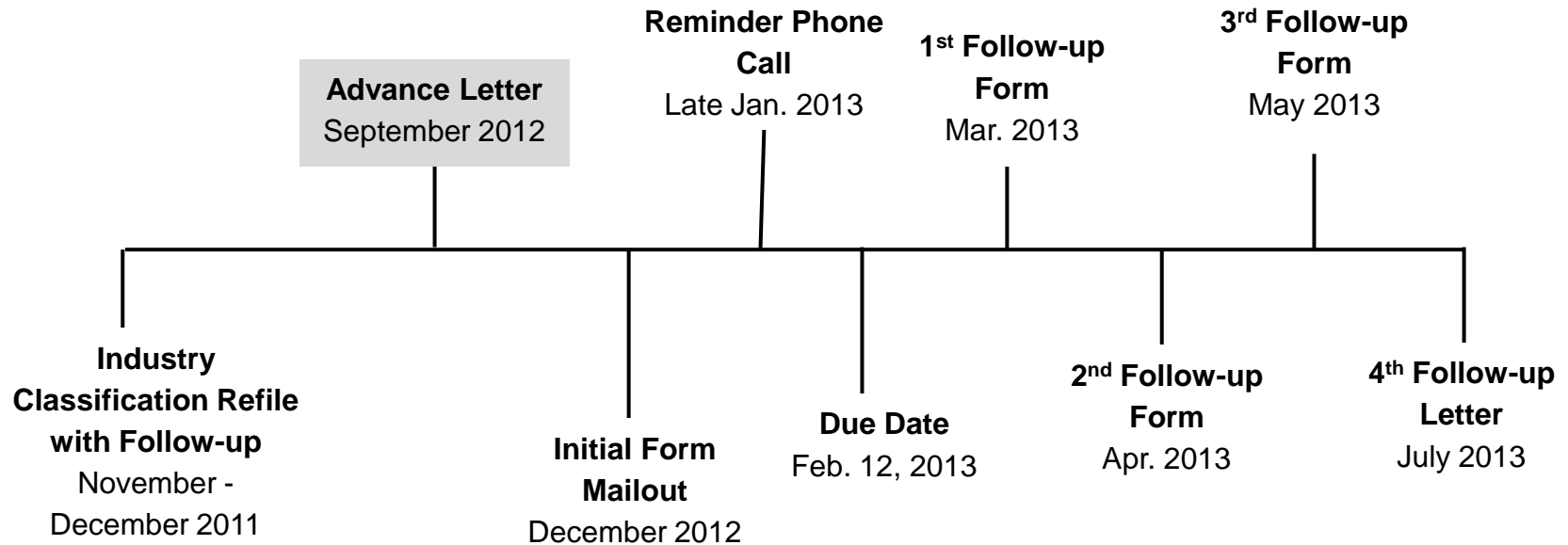
- Updated contact information
- Exclude 2,000 companies

# Contact Exchange Form

	Treatment		
Response Mode	Contact Exchange Form	No Contact Exchange Form	Difference
Internet	52.0%	51.4%	0.6%
Mail	32.4%	32.7%	-0.3%
Overall	83.6%	83.6%	0.0%
Total Mailed	607,992	17,964	

# Targeted Advanced Mailing

## 2012 Economic Census Single-Unit Mailout





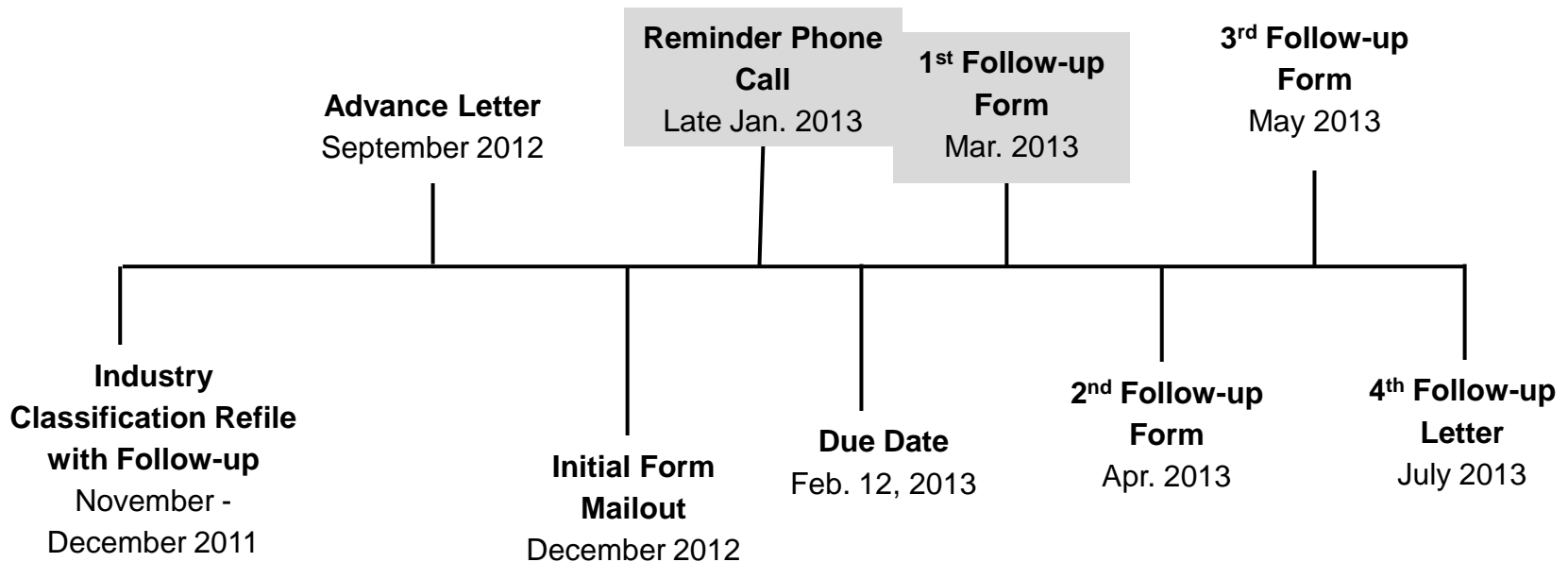
# Targeted Advanced Mailing

- Historically low responding industries
- Sent letter to 5,000 companies

	Treatment		
Response Mode	Received Mailing	Did Not Receive Mailing	Difference
Internet	29.5%	29.5%	0.0%
Mail	47.6%	47.9%	-0.3%
Overall	76.8%	77.1%	-0.3%
Total Mailed	3,467	3,509	

# Reminder Phone Call and Letter-Only First Follow-up

## 2012 Economic Census Single-Unit Mailout



# Reminder Phone Call and Letter-Only First Follow-up

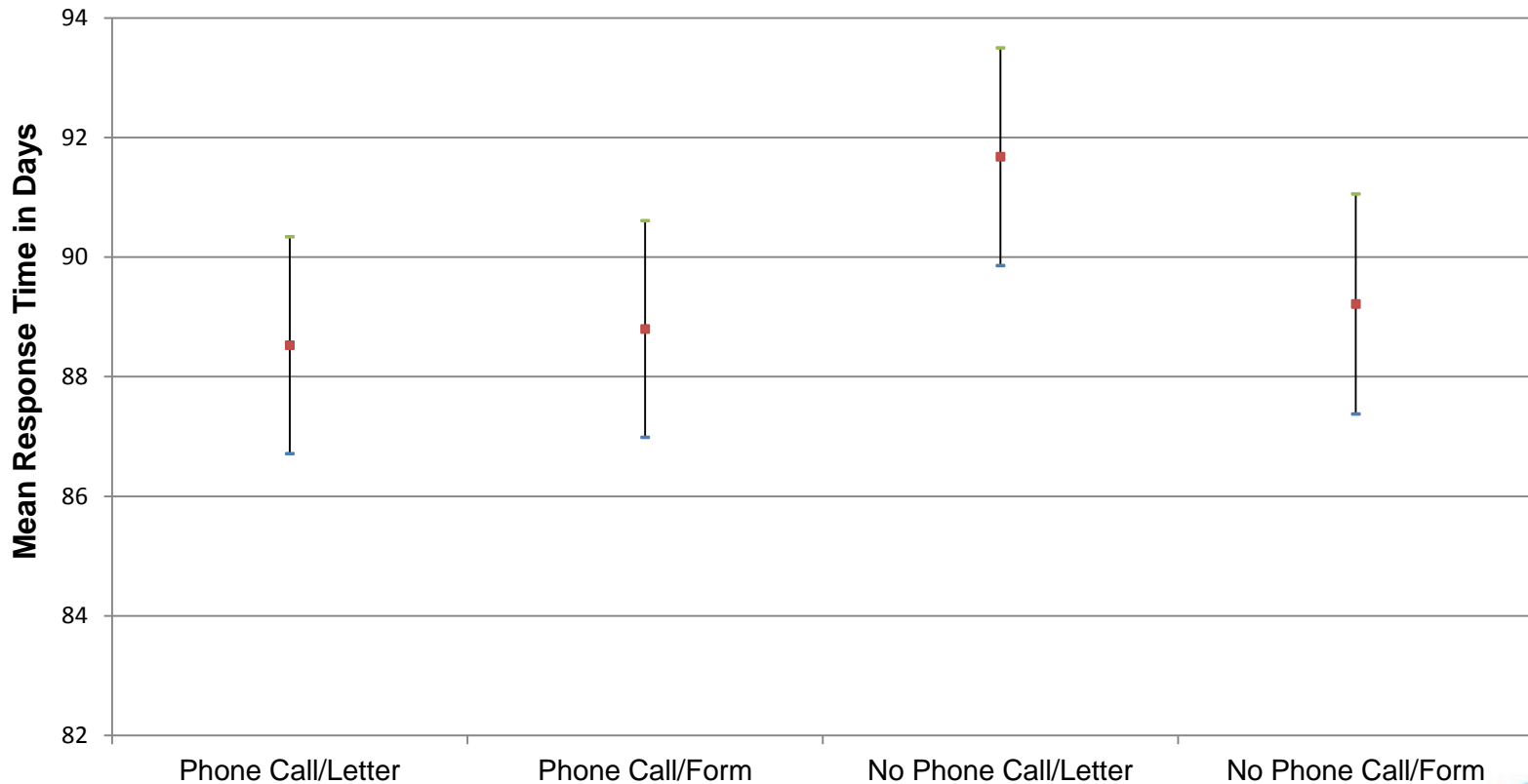
- Phone call reminding companies Census is due soon
- Letter-only follow-up pushing internet
- Four treatment options (~37,500 each)
  - Phone call and letter
  - Phone call and form
  - No phone call and letter
  - No phone call and form (no treatments)

# Reminder Phone Call and Letter-Only First Follow-up

- Evaluated in two groups
  - Received letter-only treatment
  - Received letter and inadvertent form
- Used mean response time in days for each of the two groups

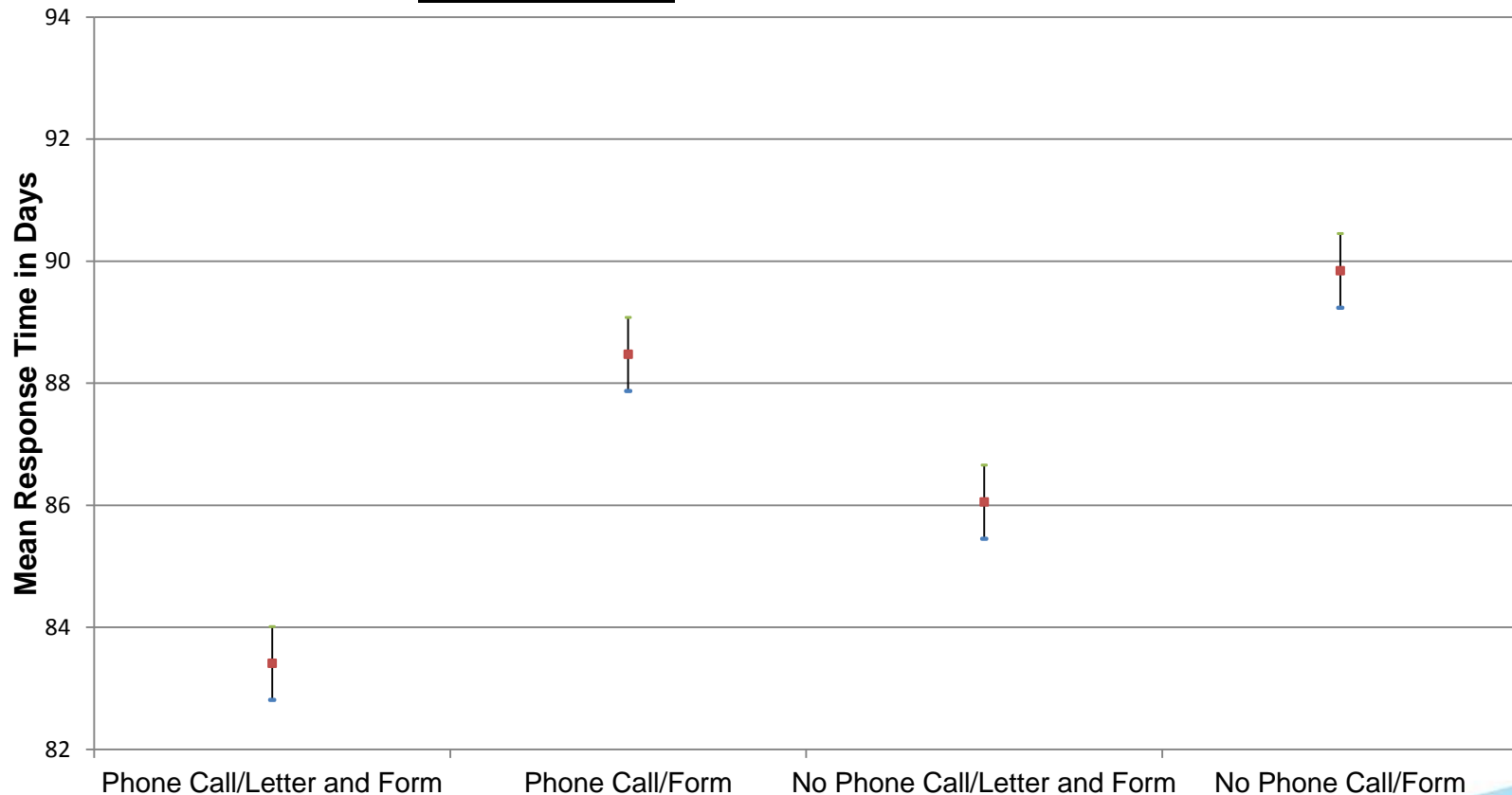
# Reminder Phone Call and Letter-Only First Follow-up

Mean Response Time for Companies in Industries that Received Letter-Only with 95% Confidence Limits



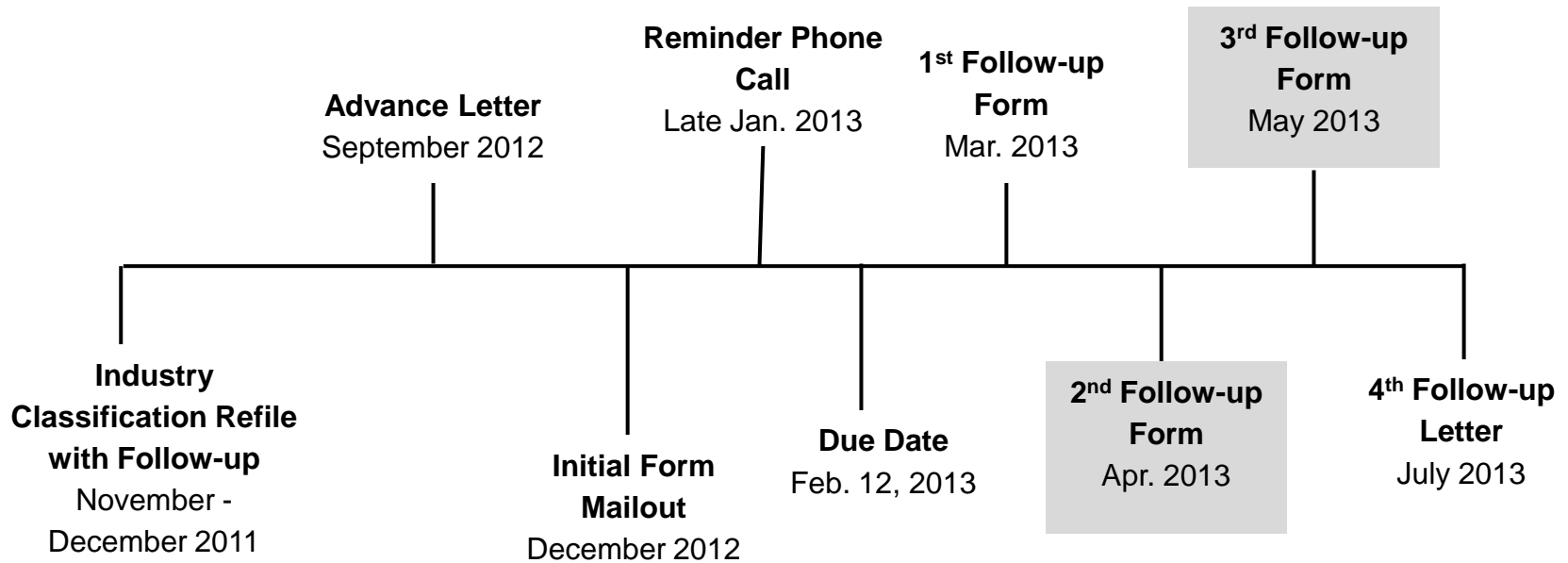
# Reminder Phone Call and Letter-Only First Follow-up

Mean Response Time for Companies in Industries that Received Letter and Inadvertent Form with 95% Confidence Limits



# Certified Mailing

## 2012 Economic Census Single-Unit Mailout



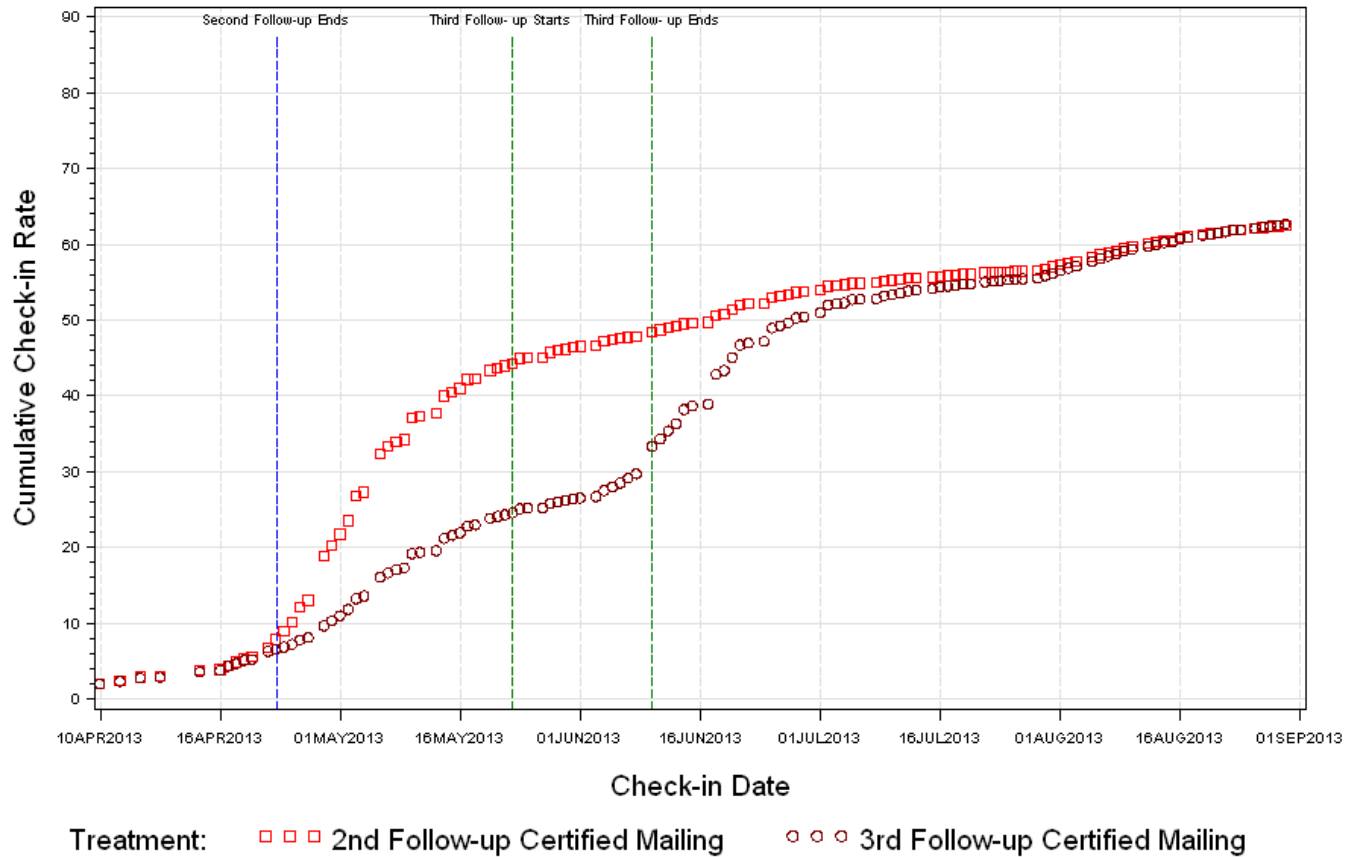
# Certified Mailing

- Signature required form
- Expensive
- Low responding industries
  - Half received certified mailing in 2<sup>nd</sup> follow-up
  - Other half received certified mailing in 3<sup>rd</sup> follow-up



# Certified Mailing

## Overall Check-in Rates by Date Second and Third Follow-up Certified Mailing



# Third Quarter Birth Letter-Only Follow-up

- New single-unit companies
- Letter-only follow-up pushing internet
- 10,000 companies

	Treatment		
Response Mode	Letter-Only	Form	Difference
Internet	31.8%	22.4%	8.4%*
Mail	22.4%	29.9%	-7.9%*
Overall	53.7%	52.0%	1.7%*
Total Mailed	9,491	41,541	

\* Represents the difference was significant

# Conclusions and Next Steps

- Currently see some differences
- Cause of differences researched
- Cost analysis
- Additional rates
- Detailed analysis

# Contact Information

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