

Evaluating Mode Sequence When Email is used as the Initial Contact in Establishment Surveys

Josh Langeland

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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Disclaimer

The opinions expressed in this presentation reflect the views of the author, and not necessarily those of the Bureau of Labor Statistics



Motivation

- Survey costs are up, budgets are not
- Additional effort is required to maintain response rates
- Two Experiments
 - ▶ Email vs Paper mail invitations (production)
 - ▶ Mode sequence Email augmented with paper at different contact attempts (non-production)
 - Save money
 - Increase or maintain response rates
 - Increase electronic reporting



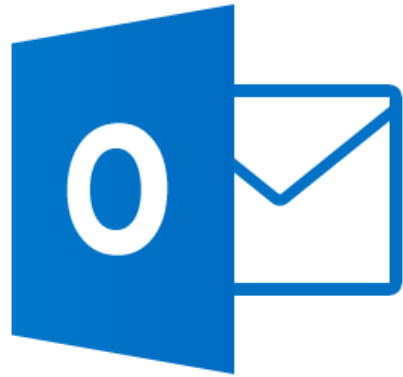
Motivation

■ Cost

- ▶ Sample 200,000 units twice per year
- ▶ \$1.44 (€1.23) to mail survey forms
- ▶ \$0.73 (€0.62) to mail letters

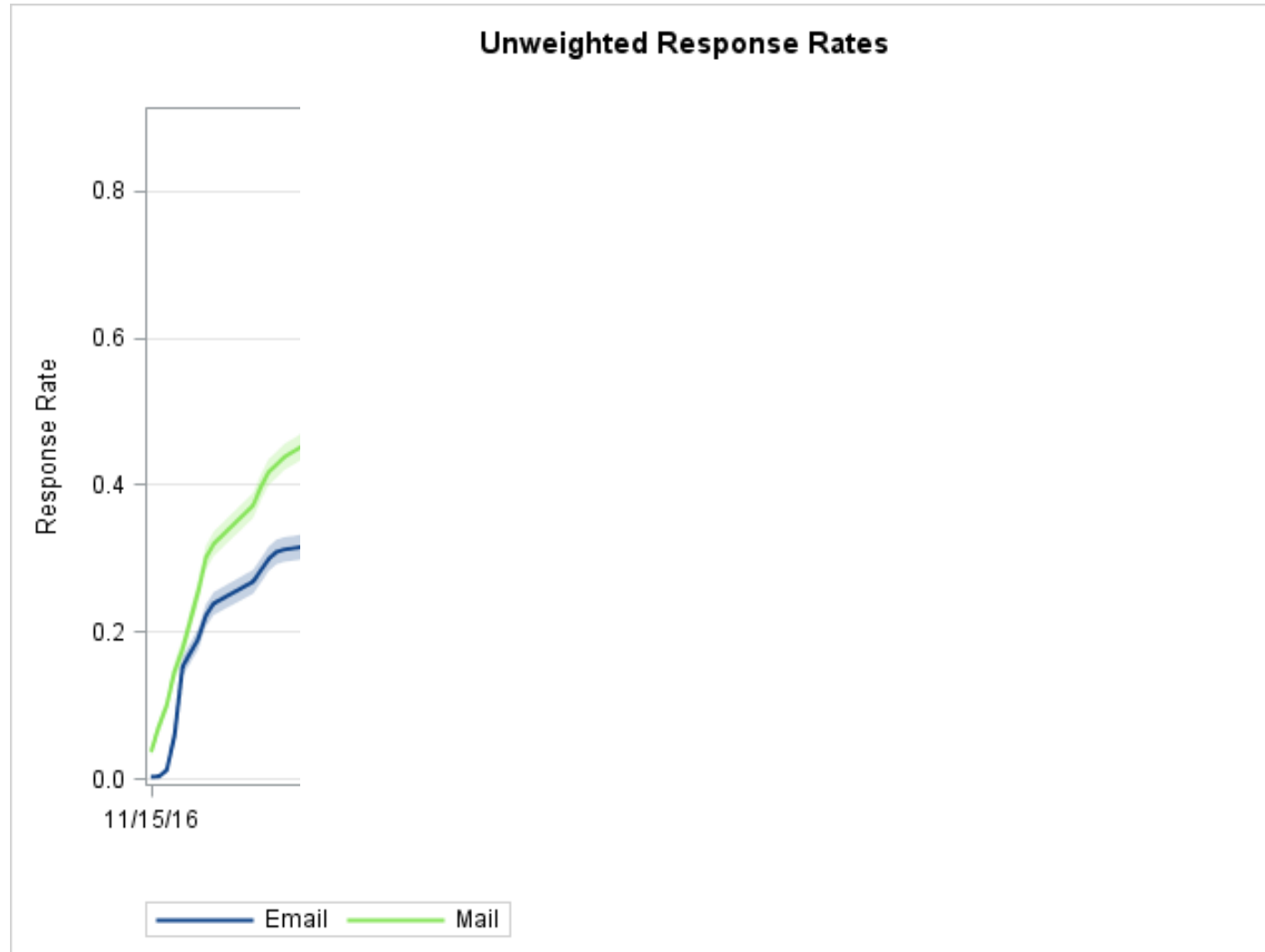


Experiment 1: Email vs Mail Invitations

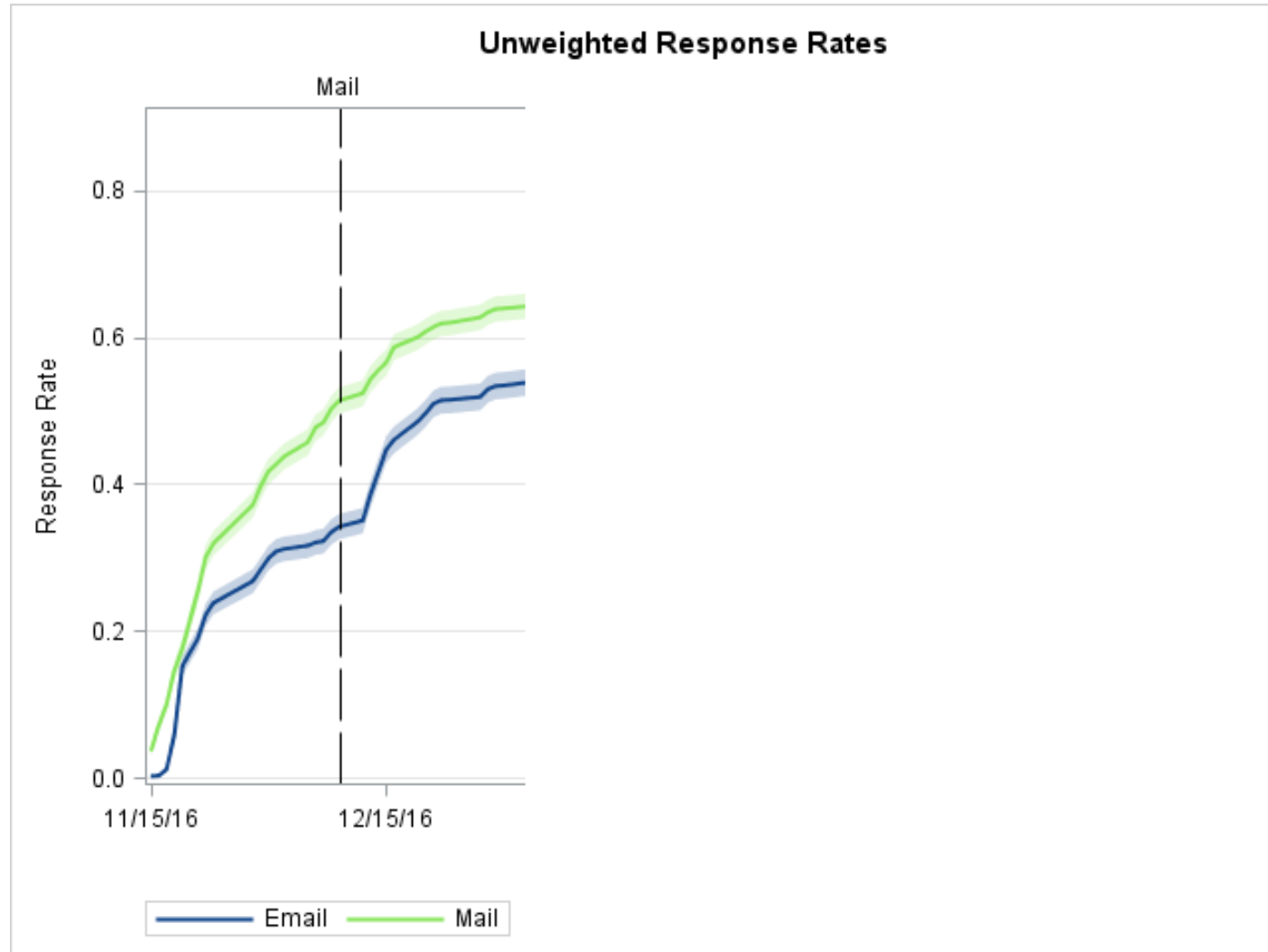


- Initial survey invitation sent through **mail** or **Email**
- The six follow-ups were sent to **all** units

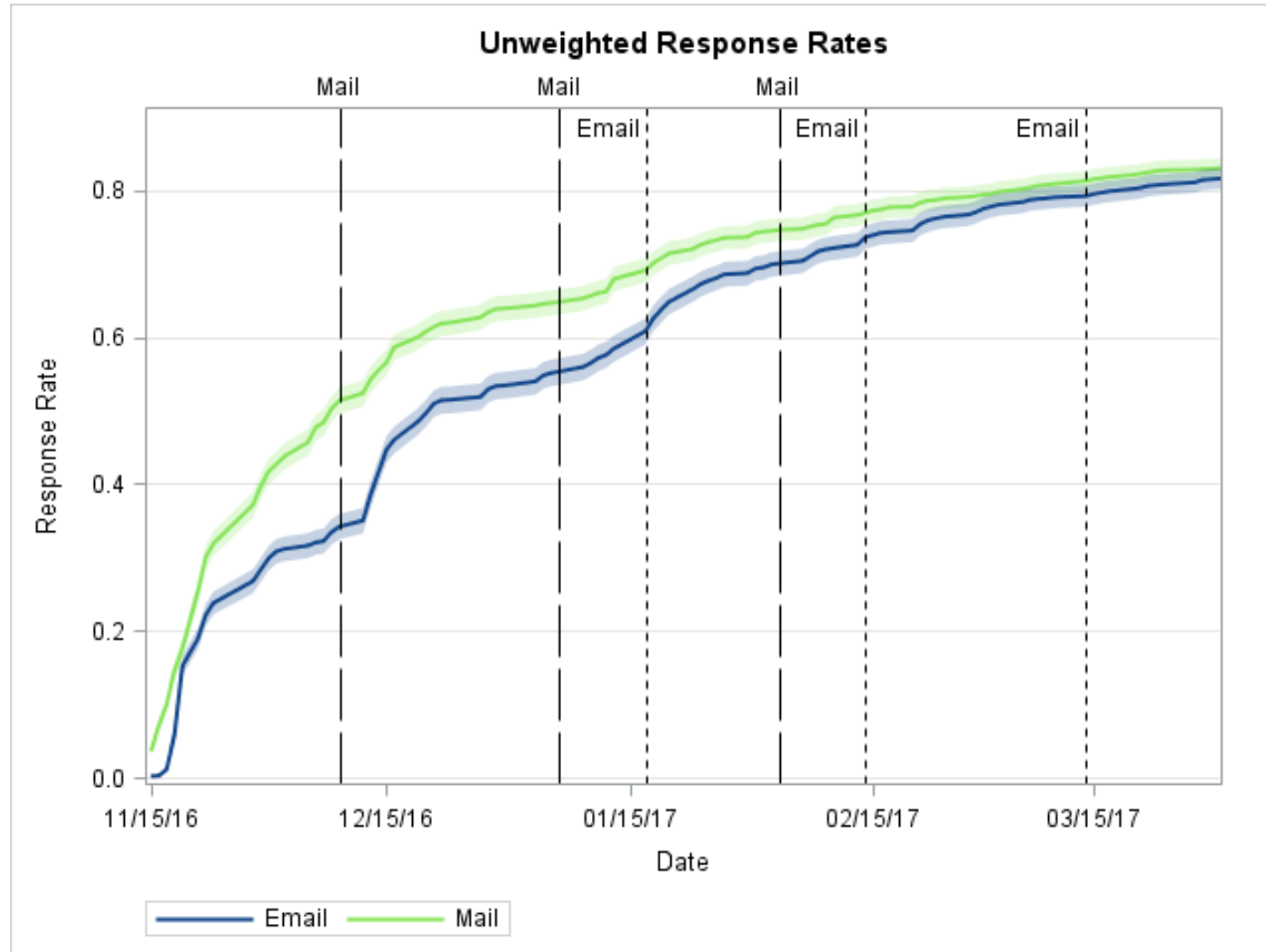
Experiment 1: Email vs Mail



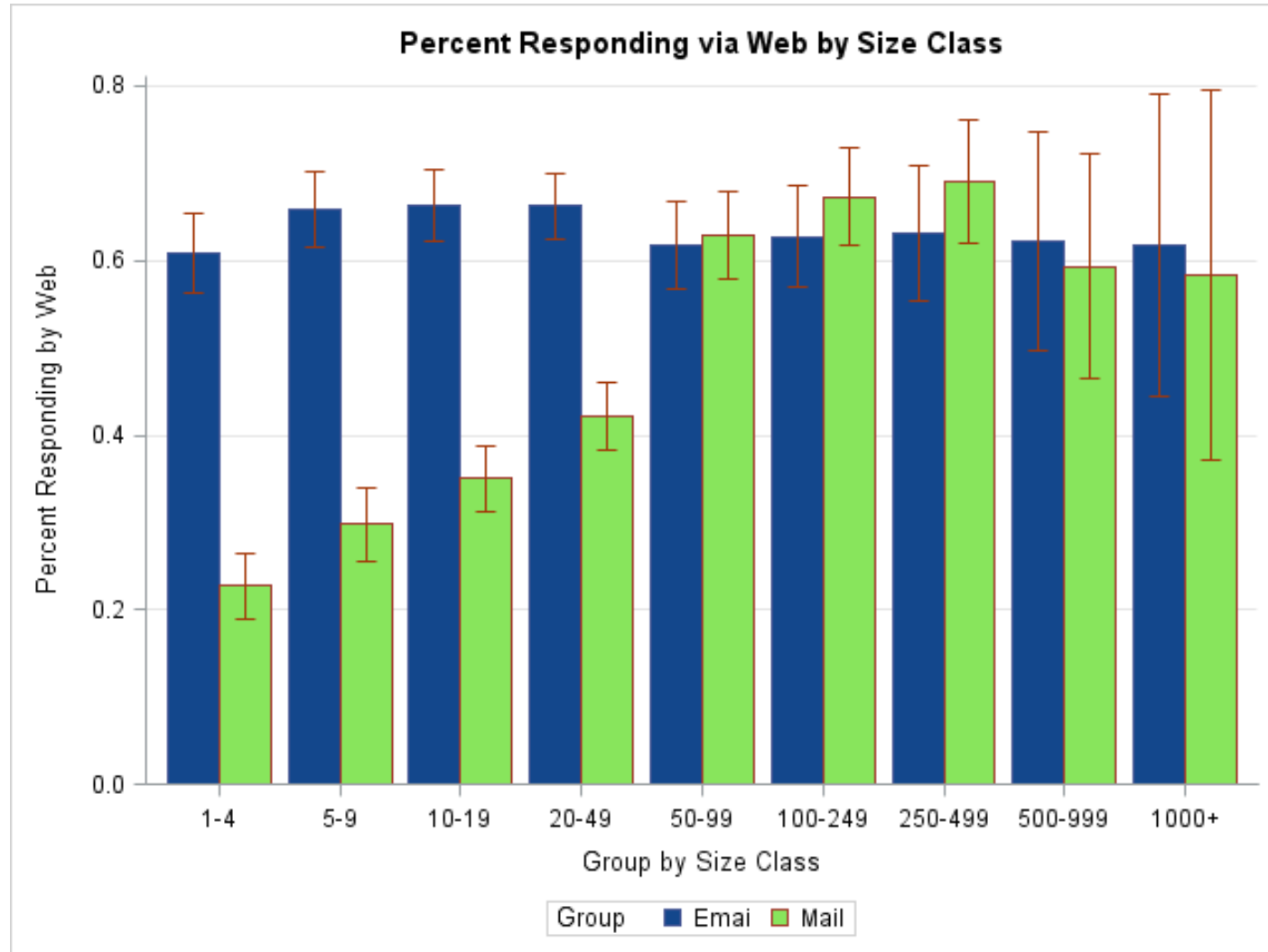
Experiment 1: Email vs Mail



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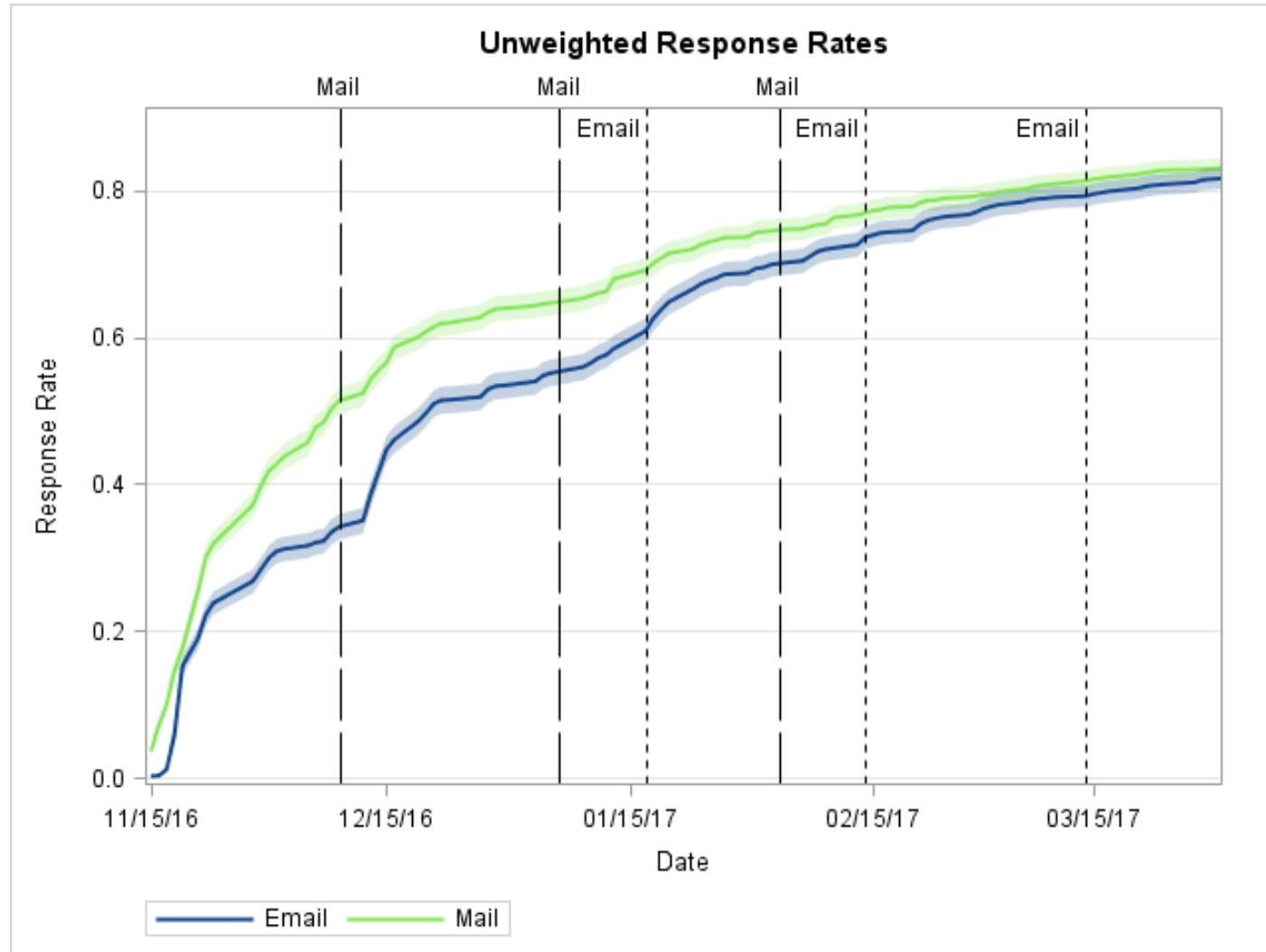


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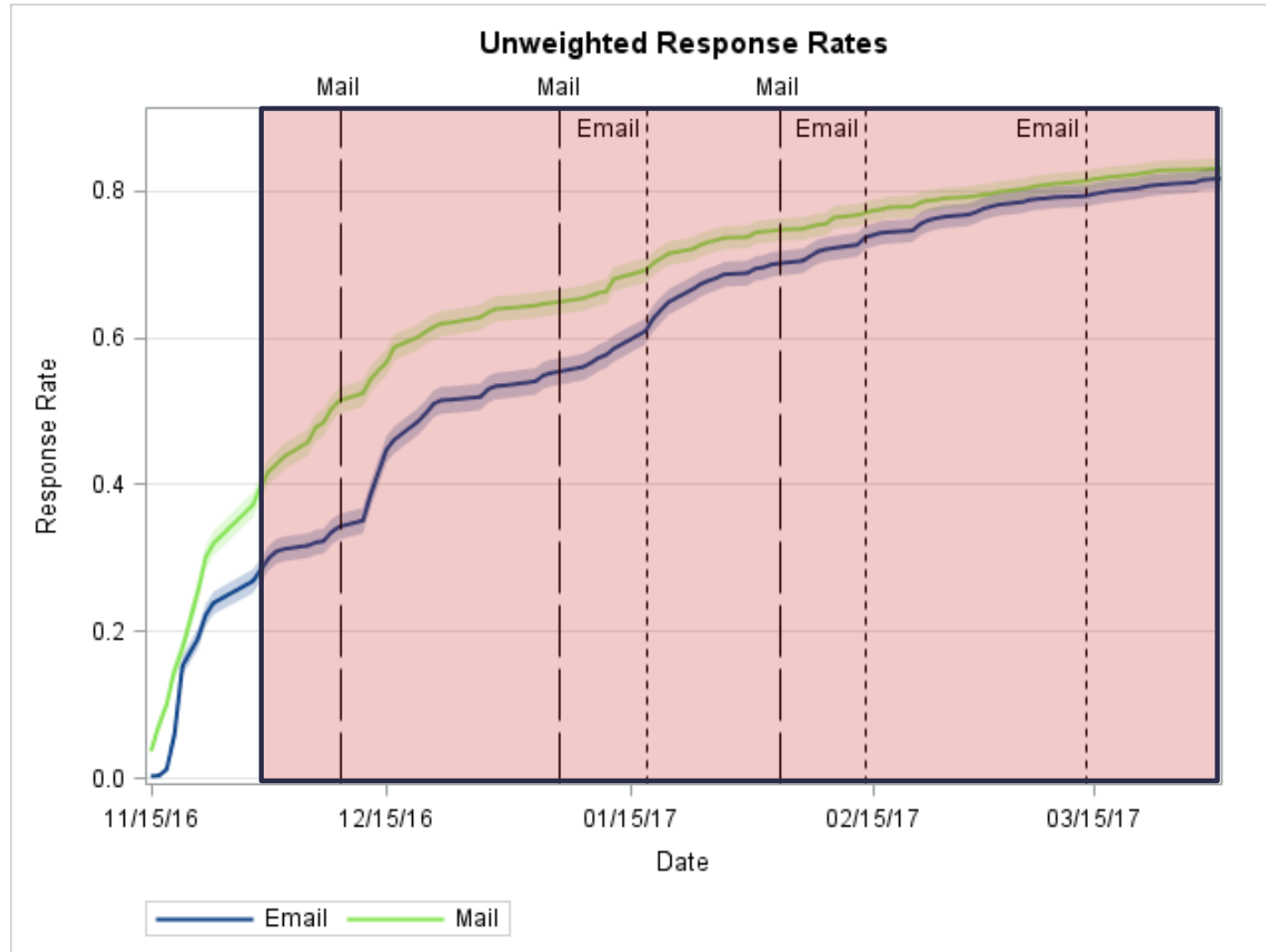
- Units that received initial Email invitation:
 - ▶ Achieved an equivalent response rate
 - ▶ Were more likely to respond online
 - ▶ Responded at a slower pace
 - ▶ Were cheaper to collect per response



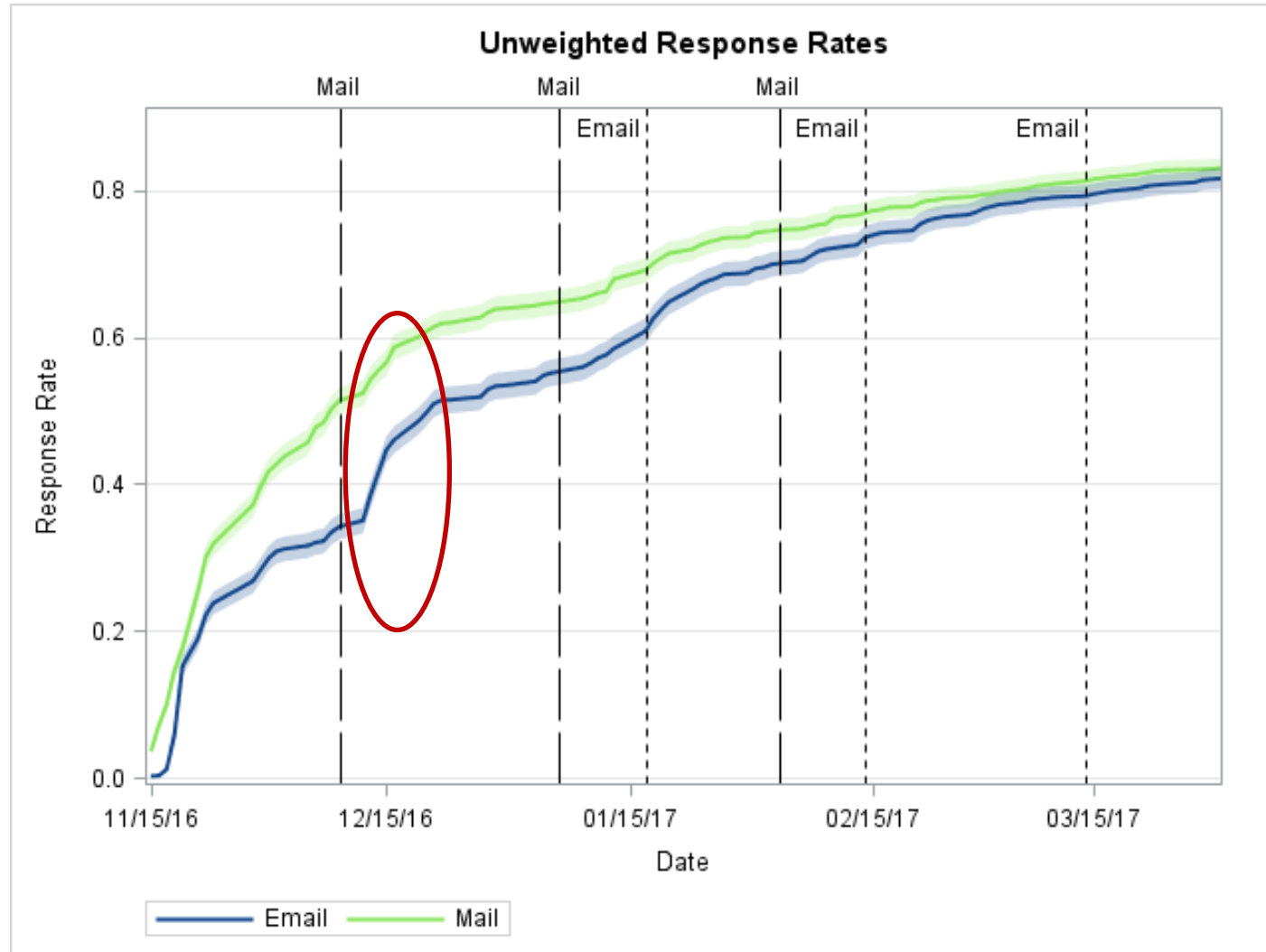
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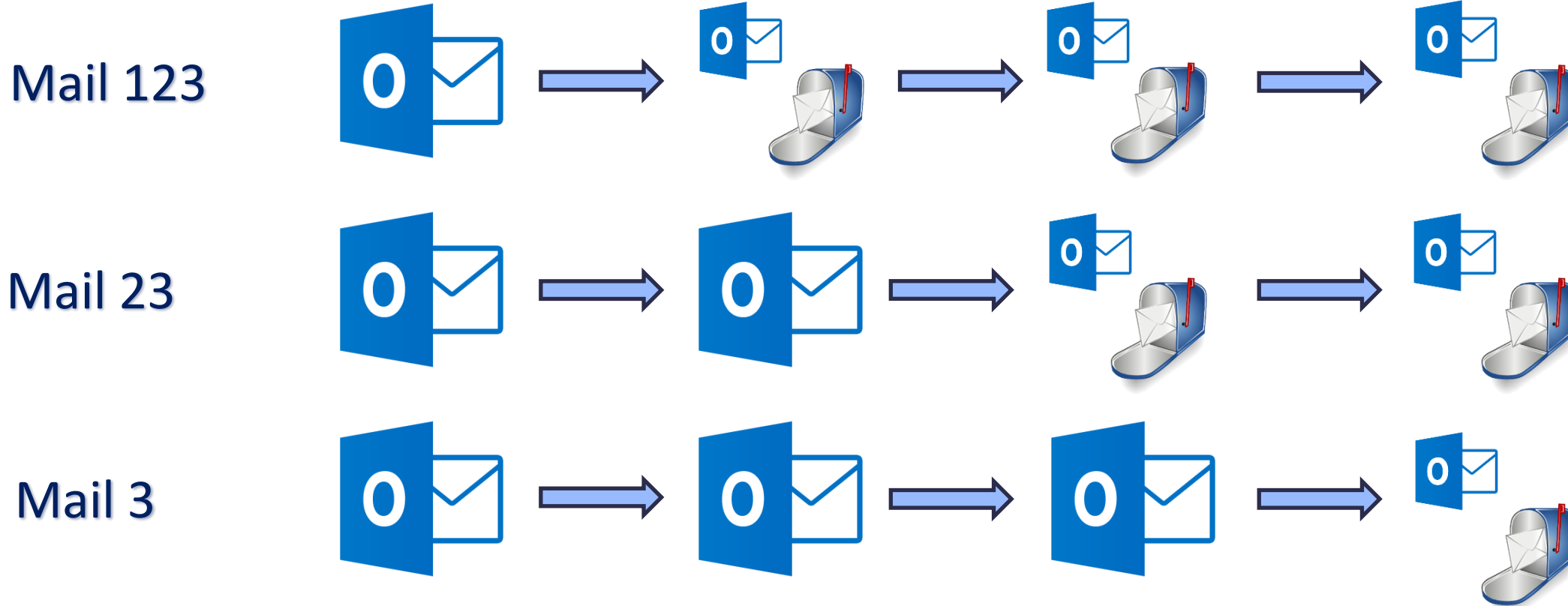


Experiment 2: Mode Sequence

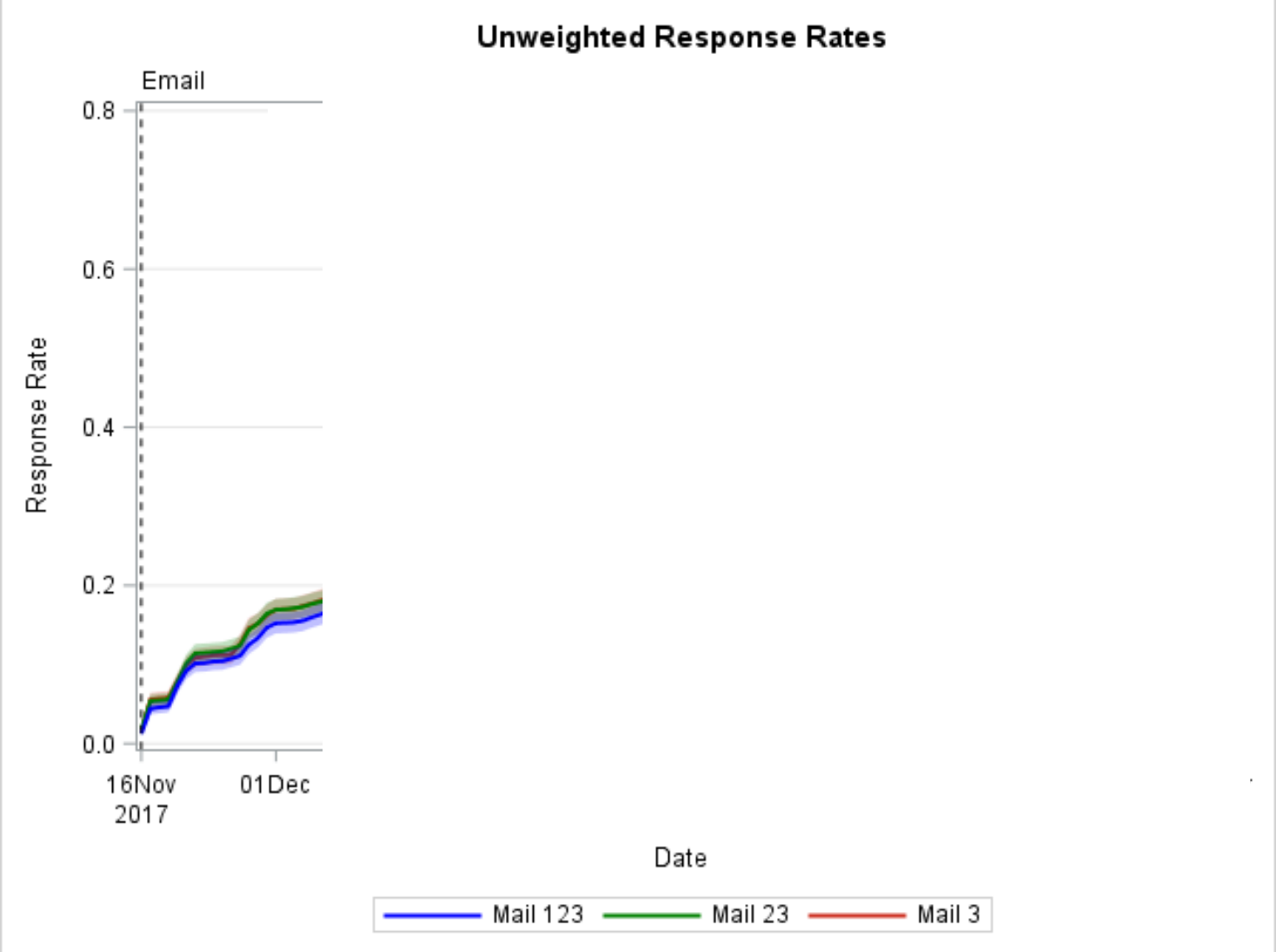
- Experiment outside of production environment, sample randomized into three groups ($n \sim 2,900$ each)
- All units received initial survey invitation through Email
- All units received follow-up reminders through email
- Treatments vary when the Email follow-up is augmented with a paper mail



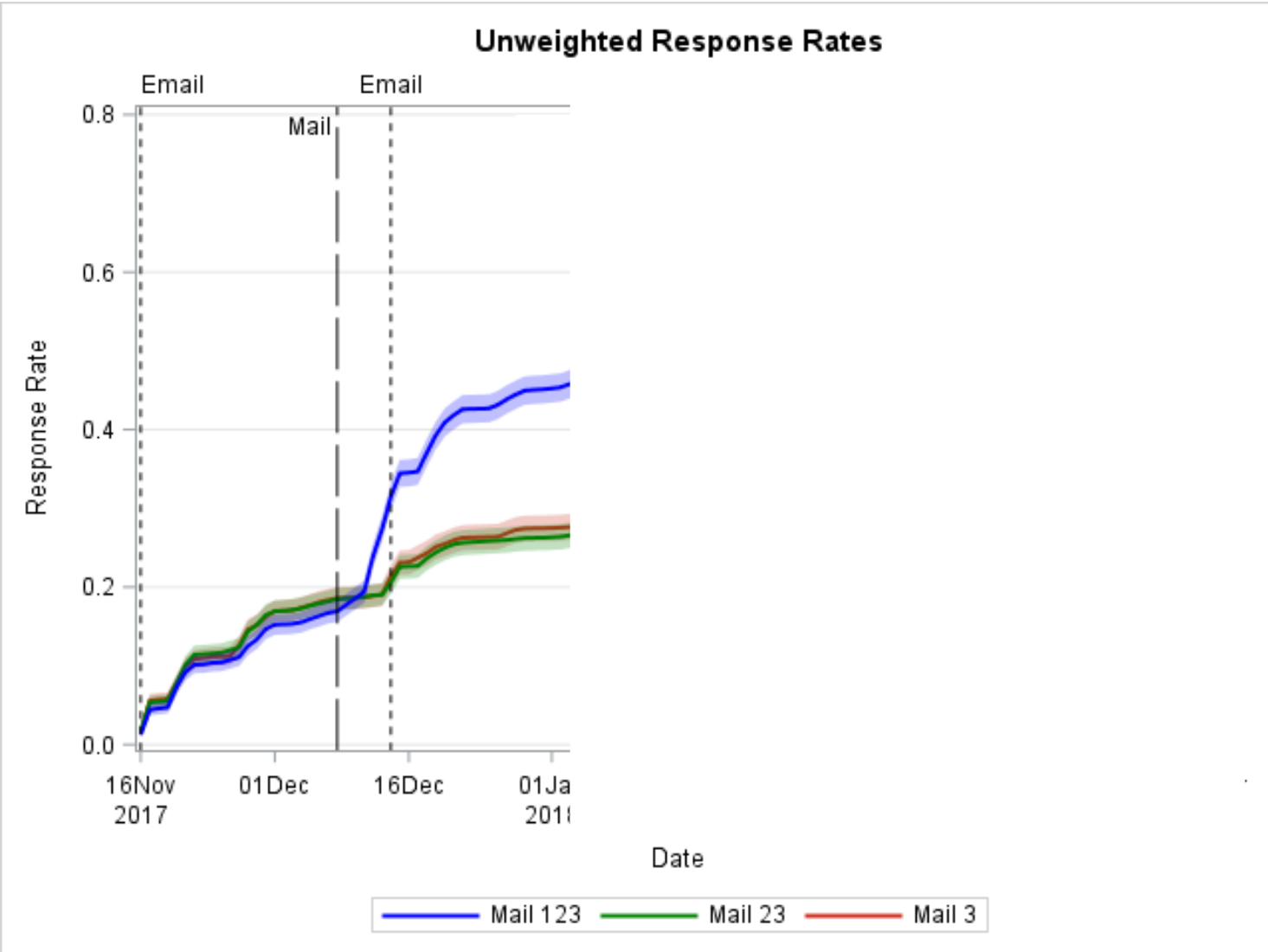
Experiment 2: Mode Sequence



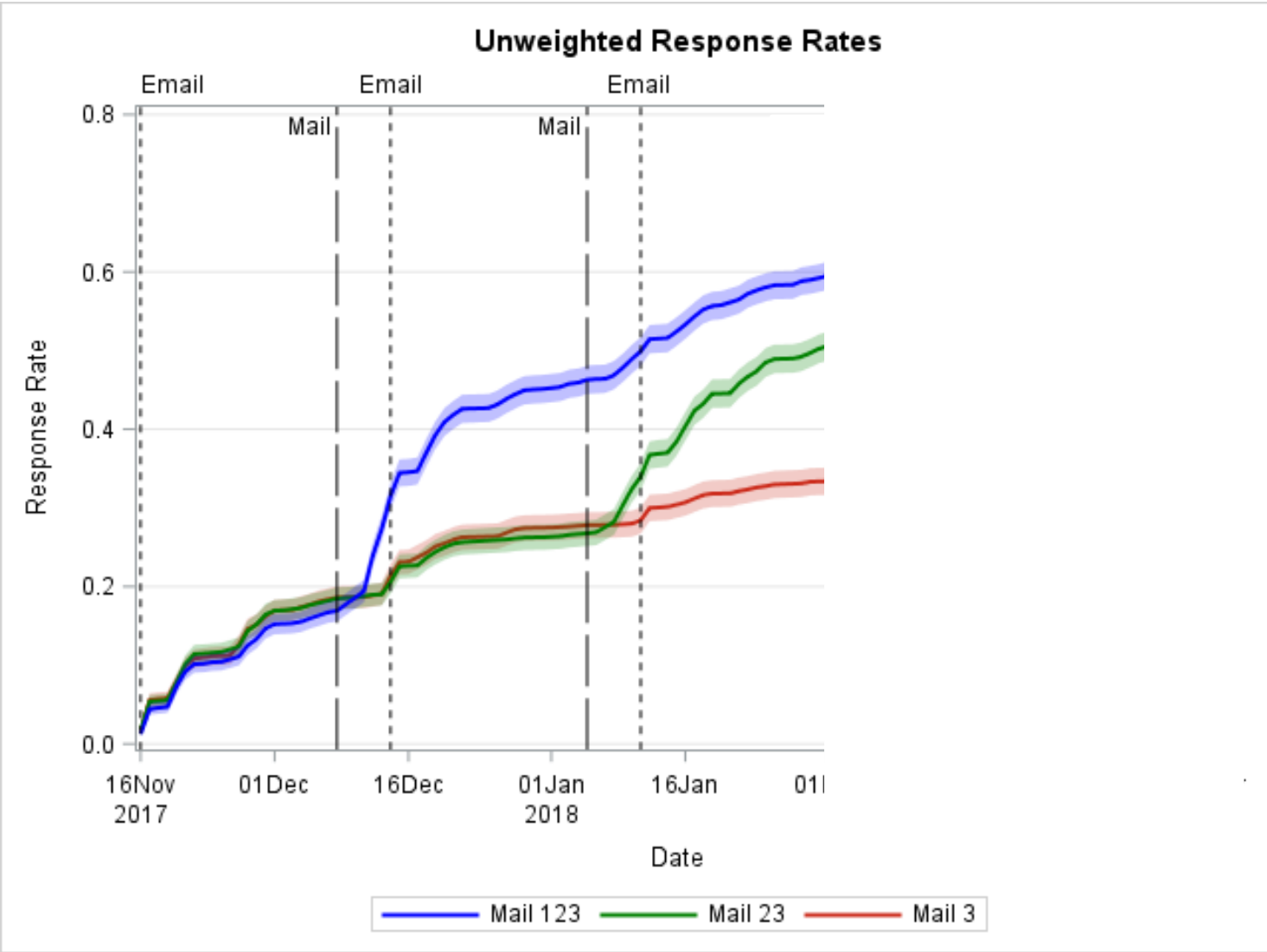
Experiment 2: Response Rates



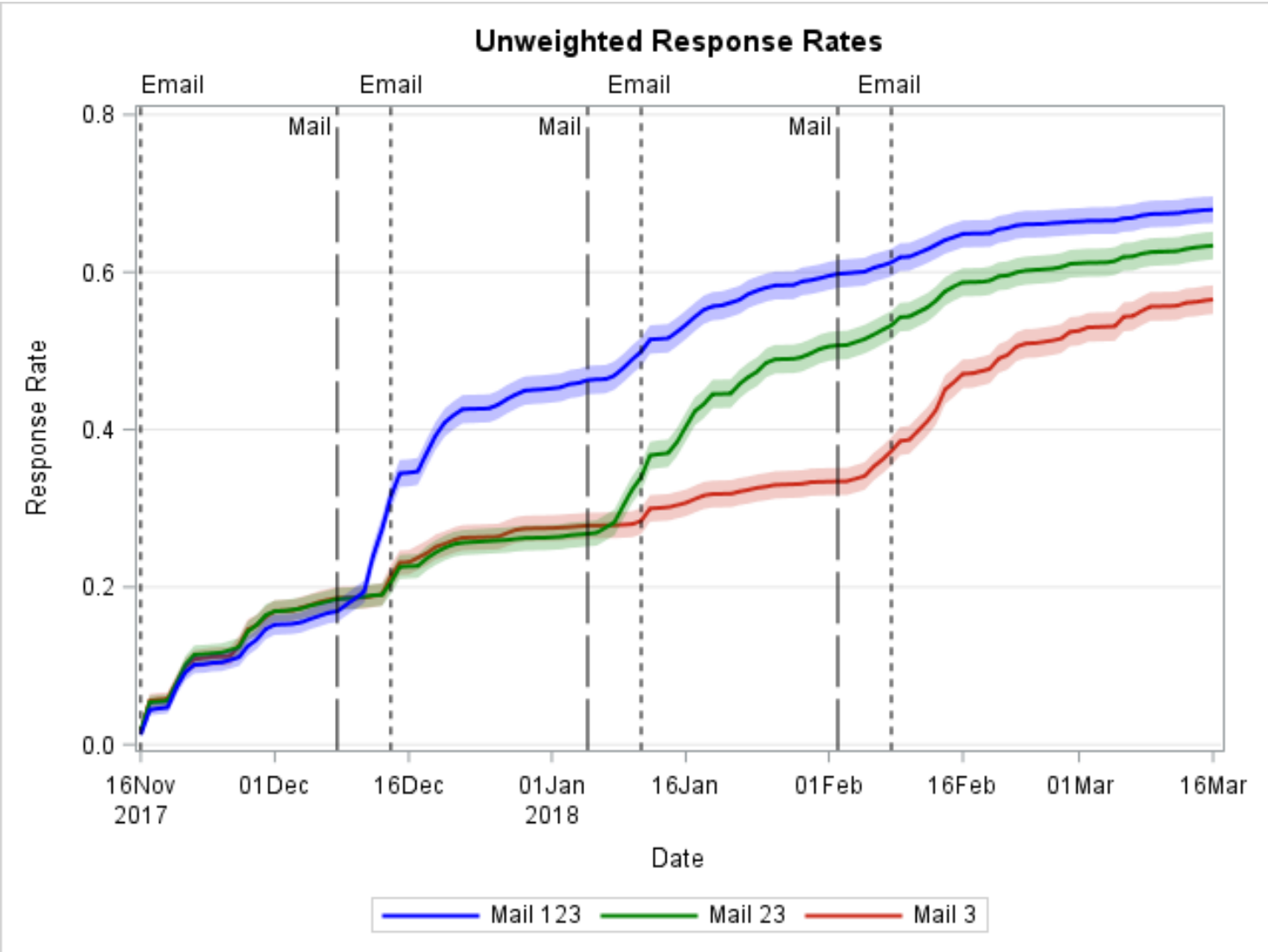
Experiment 2: Response Rates



Experiment 2: Response Rates



Experiment 2: Response Rates



Mode of Response

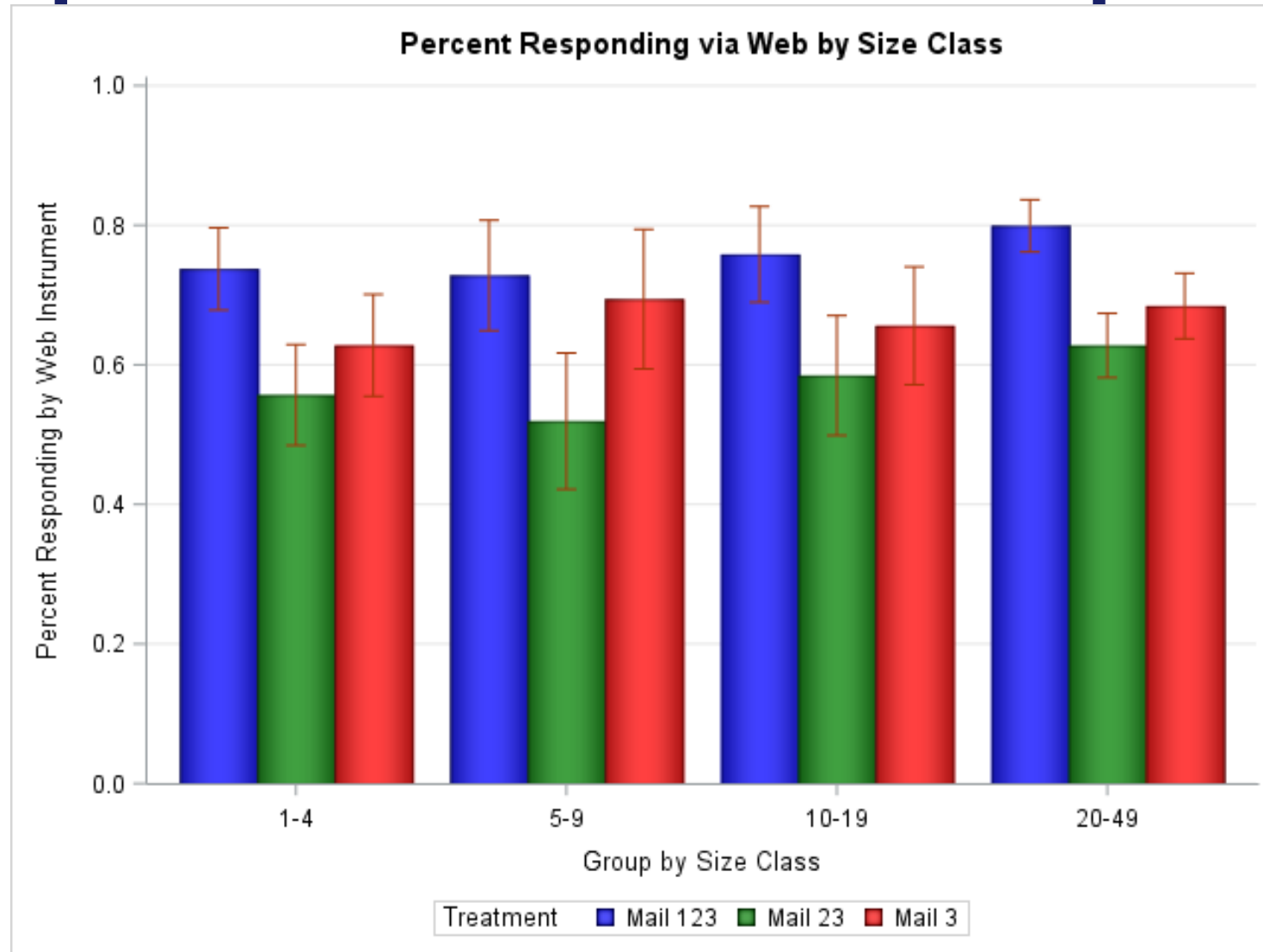


Experiment 2: Mode of Response

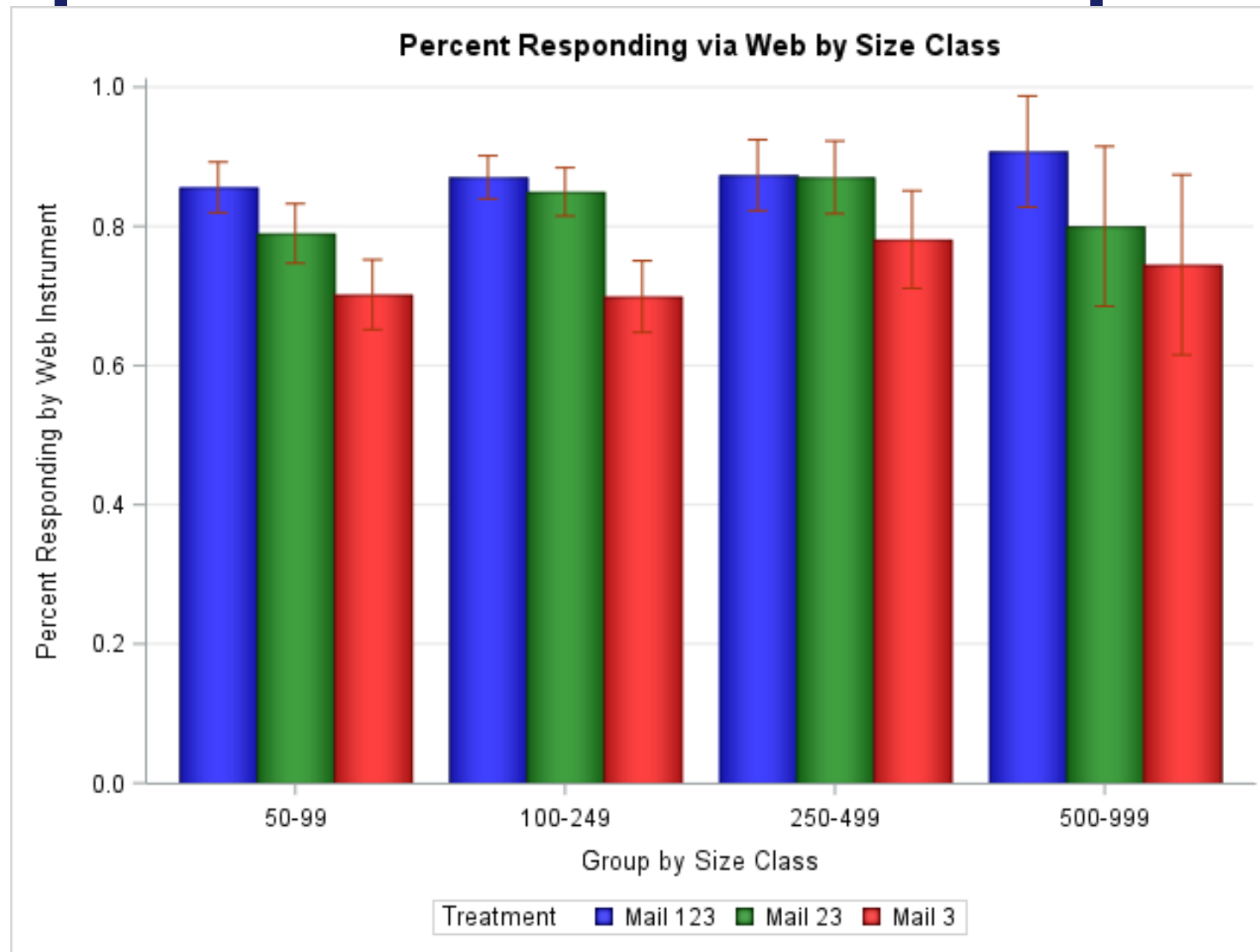
Collection Mode	Group		
	Mail 3	Mail 23	Mail 123
Web Instrument	69%	72%	82%
Survey Form	19%	18%	9%
Email	9%	8%	7%
Fax	2%	1%	1%
Phone	1%	1%	1%
	100%	100%	100%



Experiment 2: Mode of Response



Experiment 2: Mode of Response



Summary

- Email is useful but should be used as a supplement to mail, not as a replacement
 - ▶ First experiment suggests initial Email contact increases web reporting
 - ▶ In second experiment, all units received initial contact via Email and all three groups were reporting through web at 69% or above!

- Using Email alone will harm response rates

Contact Information

Josh Langeland

Research Statistician

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

langeland.joshua@bls.gov



Discussion Points

- Does anyone have any success stories / useful tips for contacting establishments with Email?
 - ▶ Follow-up, do you have Email information on frame data? If not, how do you acquire them?
- Is waiting 1-month too long when sending Email reminders?



Auxiliary

