

Increasing Electronic Reporting for the 2012 Survey of Business Owners and Self-Employed Persons

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*2015 Federal CASIC Workshops
March 5, 2015*

Purpose and Objectives

- Provide an overview of the strategy, planning, and implementation efforts to reduce costs by significantly increasing the use of electronic reporting
- Cover the SBO initial mailout and follow-up procedures, electronic reporting usability testing, and preliminary analysis of check-in rates and paradata.

Background

- Part of the Economic Census – Conducted every 5 years under the same budget area
- Collects business and business owner data by
 - Gender
 - Race
 - Ethnicity (Hispanic origin of any race)
 - Veteran status

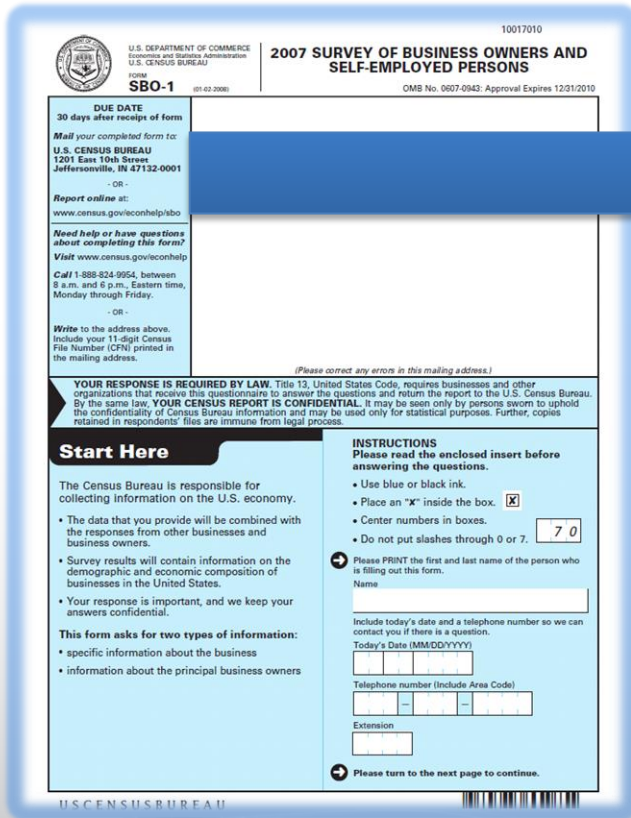
2012 SBO Data Collection

- Two-phase mailout to 1.75 million firms
 - Phase I employer firms (850,000) mailed in September 2013
 - Phase II nonemployer firms and new employer firms (900,000) mailed in May 2014

2007 SBO

- All businesses received mailback paper forms.

➤ Offered electronic reporting option.



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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

SBO-1 (01-02-2006) OMB No. 0607-0943; Approval Expires 12/31/2010

DUE DATE
30 days after receipt of form

Mail your completed form to:
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
1201 East 10th Street
Jeffersonville, IN 47132-0001

- OR -

Report online at:
www.census.gov/econhelp/sbo

Need help or have questions about completing this form?
Visit www.census.gov/econhelp
Call 1-888-824-9954, between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., Eastern time, Monday through Friday.

- OR -

Write to the address above.
Include your 11-digit Census File Number (CFN) printed in the mailing address.

(Please correct any errors in this mailing address.)

YOUR RESPONSE IS REQUIRED BY LAW. Title 13, United States Code, requires businesses and other organizations that receive this questionnaire to answer the questions and return the report to the U.S. Census Bureau. By the same law, **YOUR CENSUS REPORT IS CONFIDENTIAL.** It may be seen only by persons sworn to uphold the confidentiality of Census Bureau information and may be used only for statistical purposes. Further, copies retained in respondents' files are immune from legal process.

Start Here

The Census Bureau is responsible for collecting information on the U.S. economy.

- The data that you provide will be combined with the responses from other businesses and business owners.
- Survey results will contain information on the demographic and economic composition of businesses in the United States.
- Your response is important, and we keep your answers confidential.

This form asks for two types of information:

- specific information about the business
- information about the principal business owners

INSTRUCTIONS
Please read the enclosed insert before answering the questions.

- Use blue or black ink.
- Place an "X" inside the box.
- Center numbers in boxes.
- Do not put slashes through 0 or 7.

➔ Please PRINT the first and last name of the person who is filling out this form.
Name

Include today's date and a telephone number so we can contact you if there is a question.
Today's Date (MMDDYYYY)

Telephone number (Include Area Code)

Extension

➔ Please turn to the next page to continue.

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

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30 days after receipt of form

Mail your completed form to:
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1201 East 10th Street
Jeffersonville, IN 47132-0001

- OR -

Report online at:
www.census.gov/econhelp/sbo

2012 SBO

- Instructs using electronic reporting only; no mention of the paper versions of the form.

880-1/2 L1
7-2013

In an effort to conduct the SBO in a cost-effective manner, we have developed an online reporting system for completing the questionnaire that we are confident you will find easy to use. **To complete the survey online or get assistance from the Business Help Site, go to econhelp.census.gov/sbo.** Use the following User ID and Password:

User ID: _____ Password: _____

FROM THE
U.S. CENS

You have b
Employer
and provid
composition
characteristics of U.S. businesses and their owners, and **information from your business is critical** to providing reliable data for your industry and geographic area.

In an effort to conduct the SBO in a cost-effective manner, we have developed an online reporting system for completing the questionnaire that we are confident you will find easy to use. **To complete the survey online or get assistance from the Business Help Site, go to econhelp.census.gov/sbo.** Use the following User ID and Password:

User ID: _____ Password: _____

This report is **MANDATORY** and must be completed **by October 29, 2013.**

Title 13, United States Code, Sections 131 and 224, **requires your response** and Section 9 guarantees that **your response is confidential** and will only be used for statistical purposes. Applicable provisions of the law are provided on the Business Help Site. You may use reasonable estimates if book figures are not readily available.

THANK YOU in advance for ensuring that the results of the 2012 Survey of Business Owners and Self-Employed Persons are comprehensive, timely, and reliable.

Sincerely,
William D. Bote Jr.

Visit econhelp.census.gov/sbo
• To Report Online
• To Get Help With Reporting

Toll-free help: 1-888-824-9954, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Eastern time.
Si necesita ayuda, llame libre de cargos: 1-888-824-9954, de lunes a viernes, de 8 a.m. a 6 p.m., hora del Este.

Online Reporting and Self-Service Options through the Business Help Site

- “Survey Log-in”
 - Complete in 8-12 minutes
 - Save the form and complete over multiple sessions, if needed
- “Self-Service Log-in”
 - Grant time extension
 - Check filing status
 - Update mailing address

U.S. Department of Commerce
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Census
Bureau

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You are here: [Census.gov](#) > [Business Help Site](#) > [Survey of Business Owners and Self-Employed Persons \(SBO\)](#)

Survey of Business Owners and Self-Employed Persons (SBO)

Business Help Site

[Main](#) | [About the Survey](#) | [Forms & Letters](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Videos](#) | [Contact Staff](#) | [Other Surveys](#)

DUE DATE
October 29, 2013

TOOLS

- [Survey Log in](#)
- [Self-Service Log in](#)
- [Secure Messaging Center](#)

DATA PRODUCTS

- [Publications and Data](#)
- [Using Economic Data](#)

ADDITIONAL LINKS

- [Is this Form Legitimate?](#)
- [Legal/Confidentiality](#)
- [Quotes from Title 13](#)
- [Glossary](#)
- [Site Map](#)

Welcome to the main page for the Survey of Business Owners and Self-Employed Persons. If you are ready to report, please use the "Survey Log in" button below. If you are looking for information about this survey, please browse through the information on this page or use the tabs above to find additional information.

Ready to start?
[Survey Log in](#)
This survey should take approximately 8-12 minutes to complete. If needed, you can save and complete your survey over multiple sessions.

Need assistance?
[Self-Service Log in](#)
Wait! Don't call if you need to request a time extension, check your filing status, or update your mailing address. Log in to complete the request(s) yourself.

Survey Log-in Screen

- Re-enter 11-digit SBO User ID and case-sensitive Password
- Sessions expired after 50 minutes of inactivity
- Added OMB Number and Approval Expiration Date for Phase II

AN OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Survey of Business Owners and Self-Employed Persons

United States Census Bureau Economic Statistics

Welcome to the Survey of Business Owners and Self-Employed Persons

This website provides businesses an opportunity to complete the Survey of Business Owners and Self-Employed Persons online.

- To access electronic reporting, re-enter your User ID and Password issued to you by the Census Bureau, then click "Login".
- Note: Your session will expire if you remain on one screen for 50 minutes without navigating to another screen.

User ID:

Password:
(case sensitive)

Login

For help, use our [Business Help Site](#) or call 1-888-824-9954, between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., Eastern time, Monday through Friday.

**** WARNING ****
You have accessed a UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT computer. Use of this computer without authorization or for purposes for which authorization has not been extended is a violation of Federal law and can be punished with fines or imprisonment (PUBLIC LAW 99-474). System usage may be monitored, recorded, and subject to audit. Use of this system indicates consent to monitoring and recording.

Electronic “Owner Dashboard” Dilemma

- Confused where to go next
- Sole owners did not understand why they needed to see this screen
- Status column confusing

AN OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

United States Census Bureau
Economic Statistics

Survey of Business Owners and Self-Employed Persons

Logout | Instructions | Contact Us | Help

Percent Ownership

For the person(s) owning the largest percentage(s) in this business as of December 31, 2012, please list the percentage owned by each person and his or her position title.

- Do not report percentages owned by parent companies, estates, trusts, or other entities.
- If more than 4 people owned this business equally, select any 4 people.
- Round percentages to whole numbers. For example, report 1/3 ownership as 33.0%.

Percentage Owned (Estimates are acceptable)	Position Title (Example: sole owner, co-owner, shareholder, president, vice president, etc.)
Owner 1: <input type="text"/> .0%	Title: <input type="text"/>
Owner 2: <input type="text"/> .0%	Title: <input type="text"/>
Owner 3: <input type="text"/> .0%	Title: <input type="text"/>
Owner 4: <input type="text"/> .0%	Title: <input type="text"/>

Previous Next

Main Menu

Form: SBO-1 OMB No. 0607-0943

• Accessibility
• Privacy
• Legal/Confidentiality

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United States Census Bureau
Economic Statistics

Survey of Business Owners and Self-Employed Persons

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Owners Dashboard

You reported the following percentage(s) owned and position title(s) for the owner(s) owning the largest percentage(s) of the business as of December 31, 2012.

Please use the buttons below to answer questions about each owner reported.

After answering questions for each owner, please click the "Next" button to continue the form.

Owner #	Buttons	Status	Percentage Owned	Title
1	<input type="button" value="Enter"/>	✗ Not Started	50%	Owner Lin
2	<input type="button" value="Enter"/>	✗ Not Started	50%	Owner Dent
3	<input type="button" value="Enter"/>		No Data Entered	No Data Entered
4	<input type="button" value="Enter"/>		No Data Entered	No Data Entered

Previous Next

Main Menu

Form: SBO-1 OMB No. 0607-0943 OMB Expiration Date: 11/30/2015

• Accessibility
• Privacy
• Legal/Confidentiality
• Burden Statement

Business Owner(s)

Please use the action buttons below to answer questions about each owner reported.

Action	Status	Percentage Owned	Title
Answer Questions about Owner 1	Not Started	50%	Owner Un
Answer Questions about Owner 2	Not Started	50%	Owner Deux
Answer Questions about Owner 3			
Answer Questions about Owner 4			

When you finish answering questions about **each owner**, use the **Next** button below to proceed with additional questions about this business.

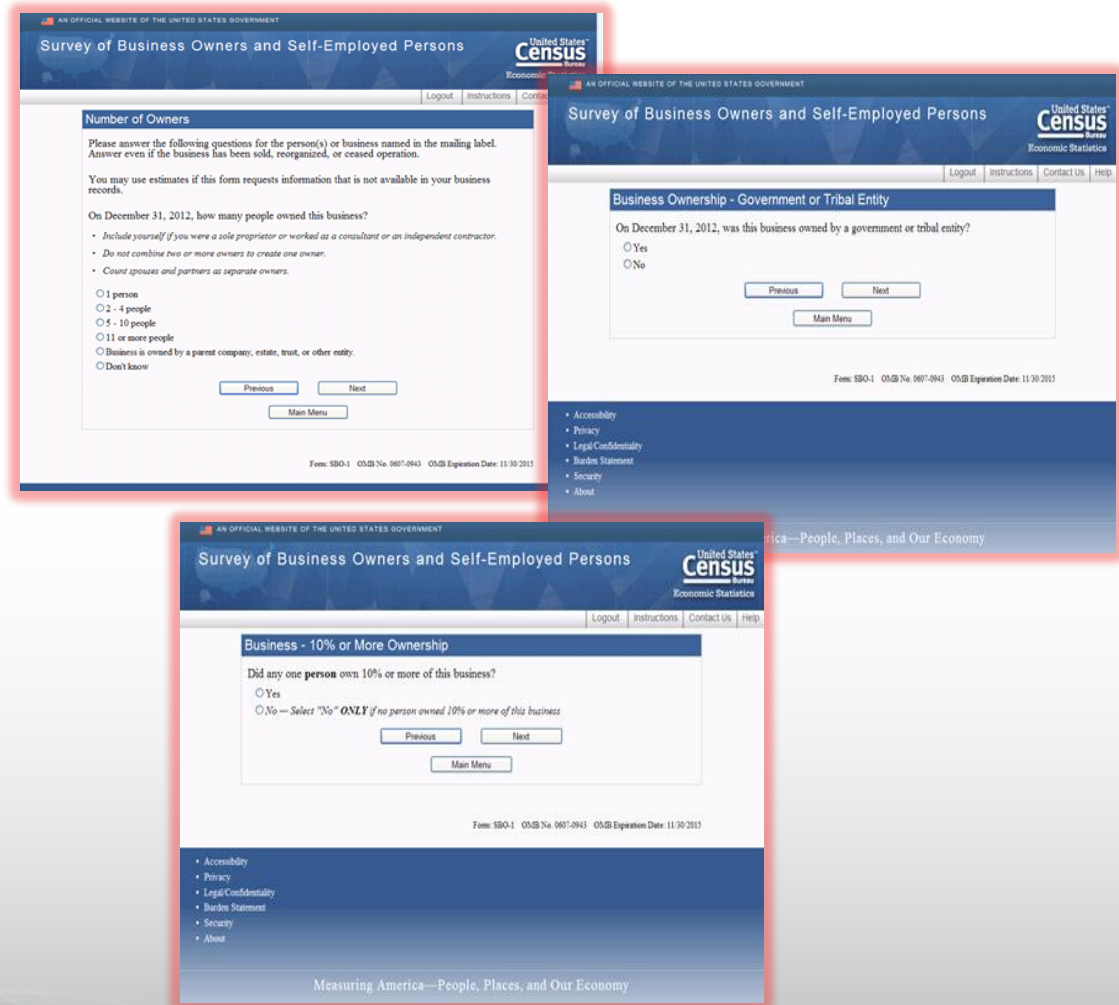
[Previous](#) [Next](#)
[Main Menu](#)

Form: SBO-1 OMB No. 0607-0943 OMB Expiration Date: 11/30/2015

- Improved Owner Dashboard for better navigation

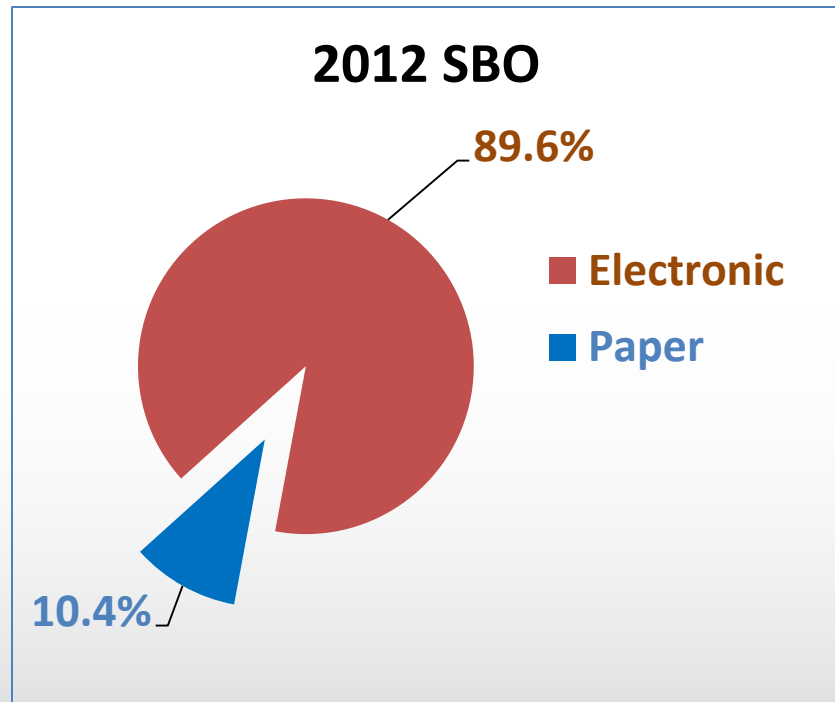
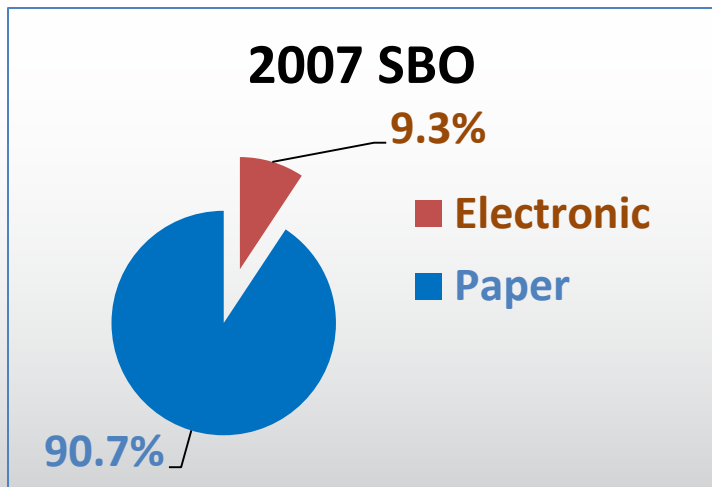
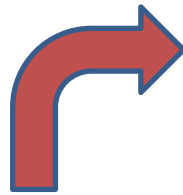
Minimizing Reporting-related Problems

- Devices, operating systems, and Web browsers affected how the screens loaded in testing.



Survey of Business Owners: 2007 vs. 2012

The Transition to Electronic Reporting



As of conclusion of the data collection on 11/13/14.

Data Collection: 2012 SBO Phase I

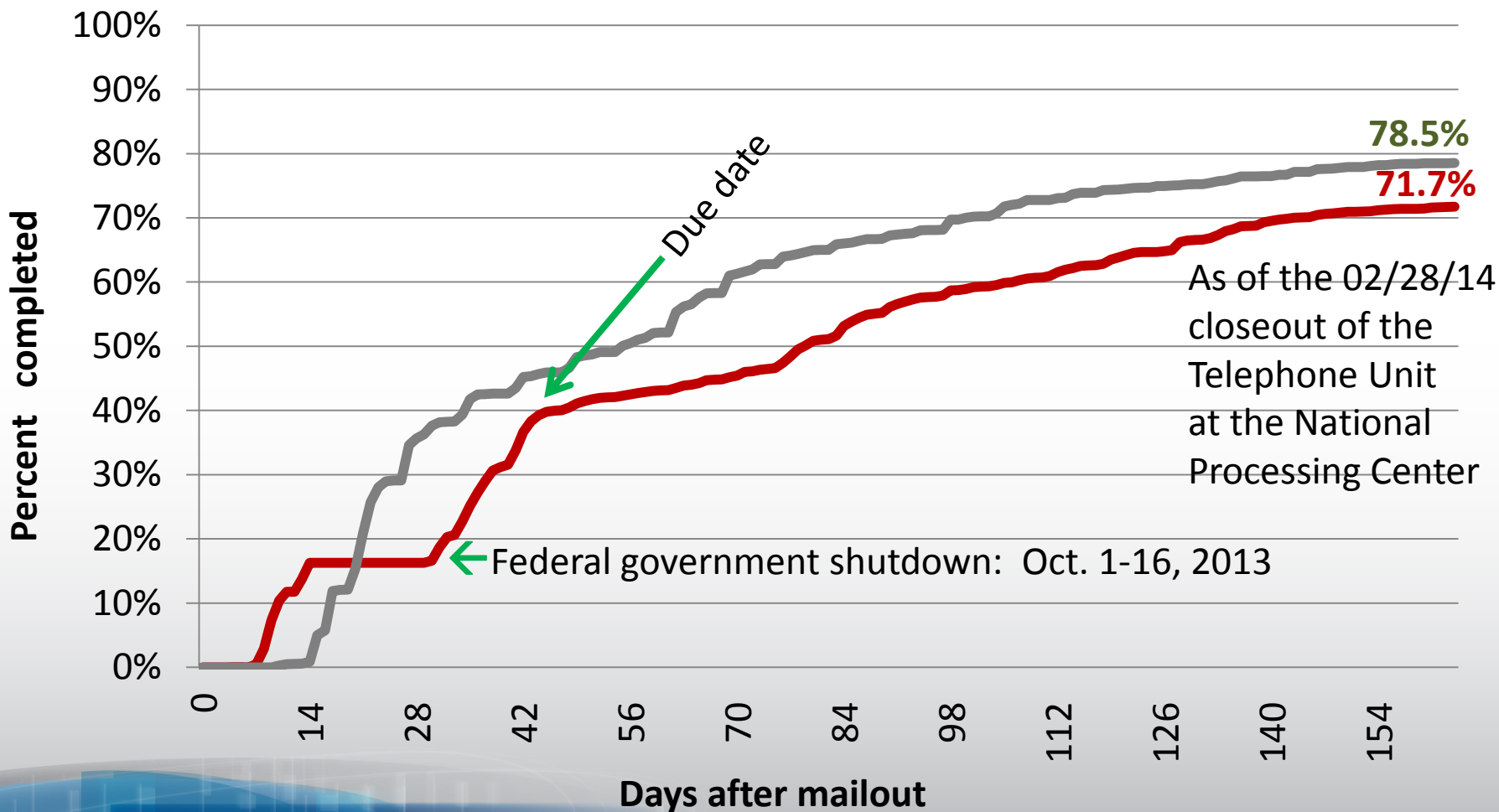
Mailout to employers

Mailout Operation	Dates from 2013 to 2014	No. in Sample	No. of Letters Mailed w/o Forms	No. of Letters Mailed w/ Forms
Initial mailout	Sep. 18 - 21	849,050	849,050	0
Due date	Oct. 29			
1 st follow-up	Nov. 11 - Dec. 9	453,530	312,117	141,413
2 nd follow-up*	Dec. 23 – Jan. 13	311,939	205,360	106,579
Closeout	Nov. 13			

* Estimates are provided in this row.

Check-In Rates: Phase I

— 2012 Phase I (n=849,050) — 2007 Phase I (n=969,936)

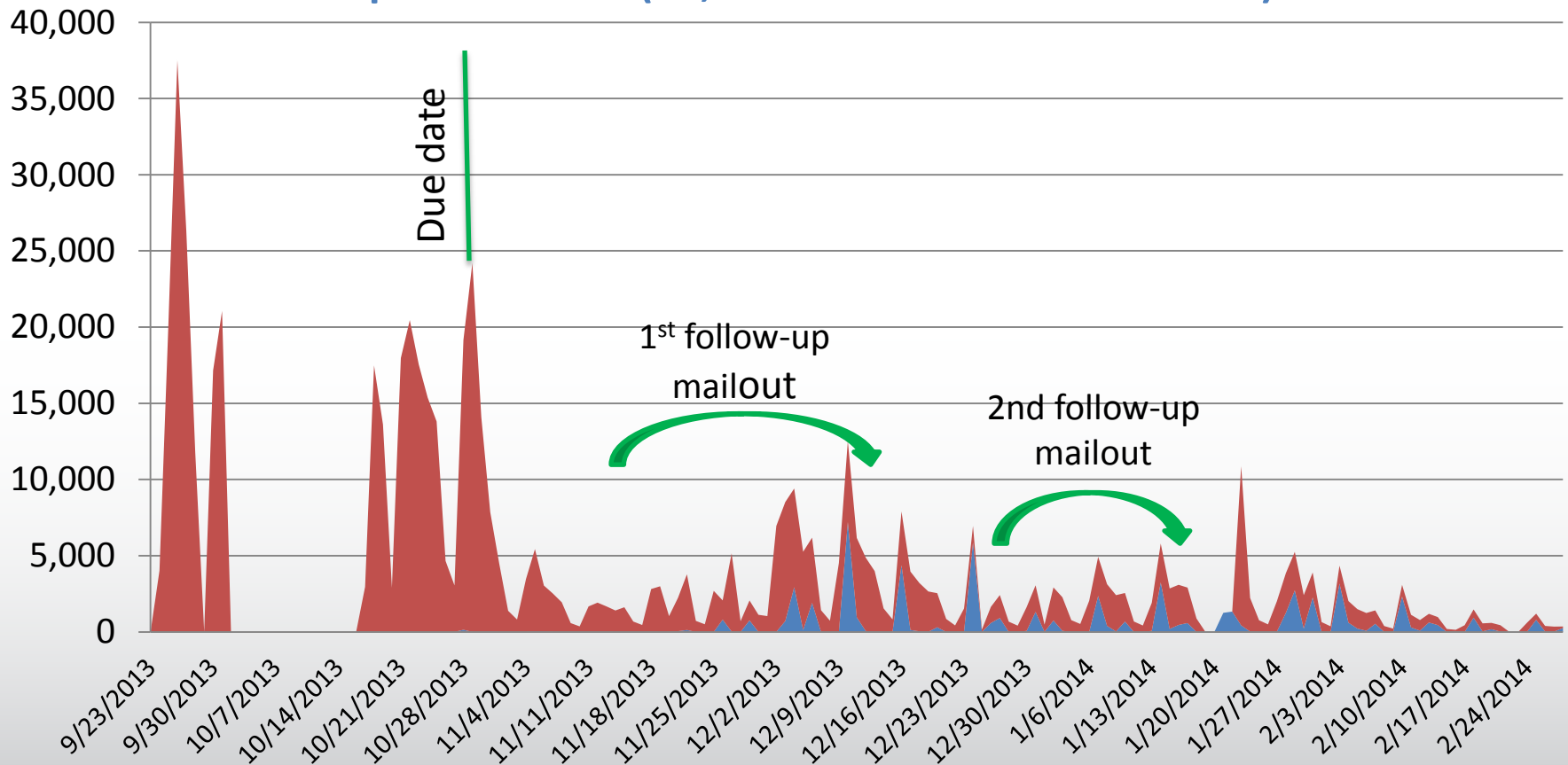


Top Reasons for Calls to SBO's Toll-Free Number: 2012 Phase I

Primary reason recorded by JCC interviewer	Number
Completed online survey by telephone interview	4,397
Needed inactive, closed, or out-of-business certification letter	2,751
Had a log-in problem that could be resolved by the interviewer	1,699
Cannot provide business data	1,620
Confused SBO with the Economic Census having an earlier due date	1,152
Requested a paper report form	1,085
Needs letter acknowledging receipt of form	987
Website issue (Able to resolve by phone)	623
Confirm filing status	608
Deceased owner	518

Electronic vs. Paper Check-ins: Phase I

- Electronic check-ins (550,869 or 64.9% of total mailout)
- Paper check-ins (58,580 or 6.8% of total mailout)



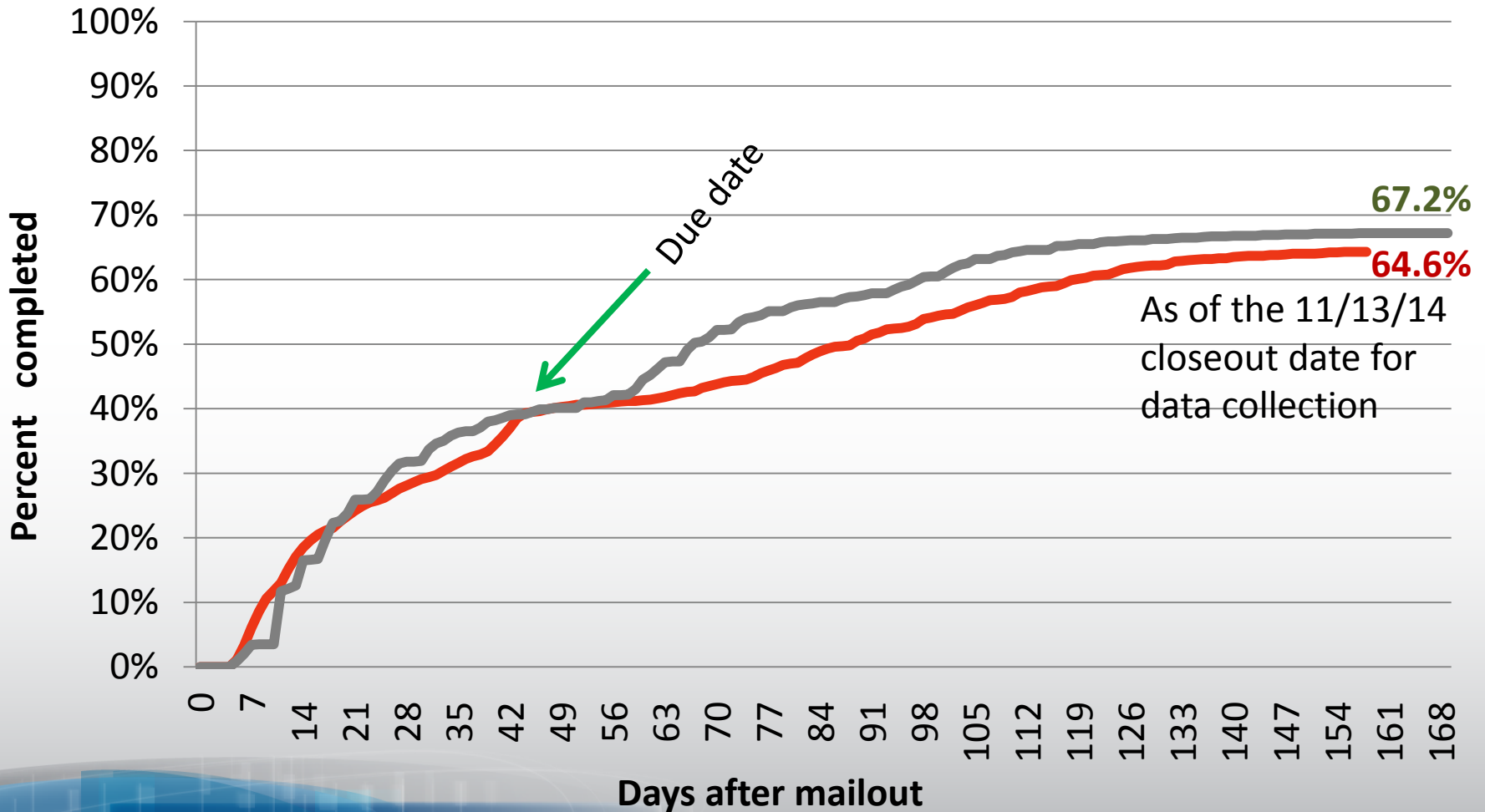
Data Collection: 2012 Phase II

Mailout to nonemployers and employer births

Mailout Operation	Date in 2014	No. in Sample	No. of Letters Mailed w/o Forms	No. of Letters Mailed w/ Forms
Initial mailout	May 27 - 30	901,030	900,726	0
Reminder letter	June 18	1,000	1,000	0
Due date	July 10			
1 st follow-up	July 22 - Aug. 15	493,010	325,746	167,264
2 nd follow-up*	Aug. 22 - Sept. 11	379,393	244,135	135,258
Closeout	Nov. 13			

Check-In Rates: Phase II

— 2012 Phase II (n=900,726) — 2007 Phase II (n=1,313,492)



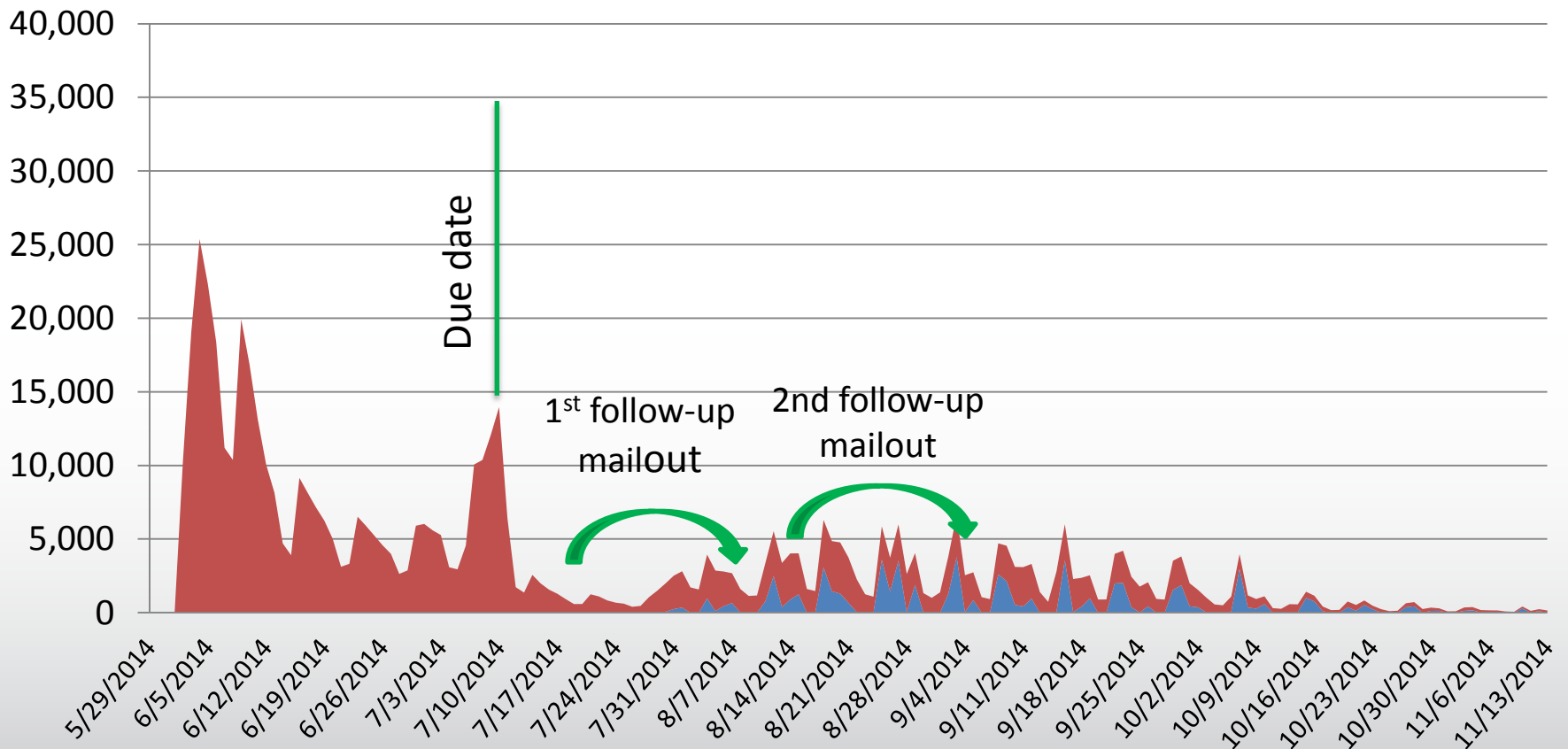
As of the 11/13/14 closeout date for data collection

Top Reasons for Calls to SBO's Toll-Free Number: 2012 Phase II

Primary reason recorded by JCC interviewer	Number
Request for paper report form	14,184
Explained why in survey	3,341
Needs inactive, closed, or out-of-business certification letter	2,417
Cannot provide business data	2,273
Confirm filing status	1,739
Convinced caller of self-employment or had an active business in 2012	1,435
Had a log-in problem that could be resolved by the interviewer	1,415
Needs "Never owned a business" certification letter	1,307
Deceased owner	1,091
Website issue (Able to resolve by phone)	964

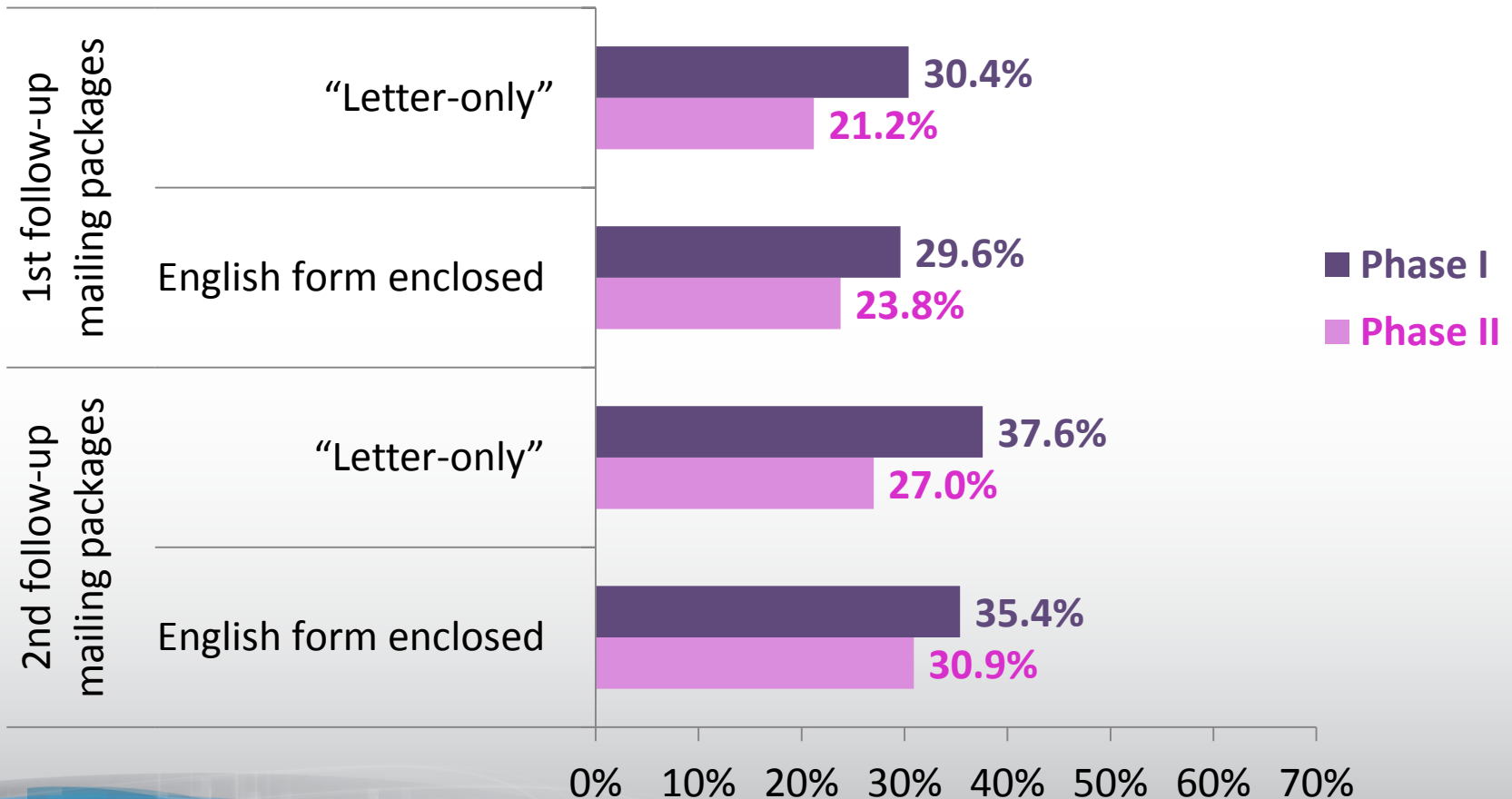
Electronic vs. Paper Check-ins: Phase II

- Electronic check-ins (519,721 or 57.7% of total mailout)
- Paper check-ins (58,580 or 6.9% of total mailout)



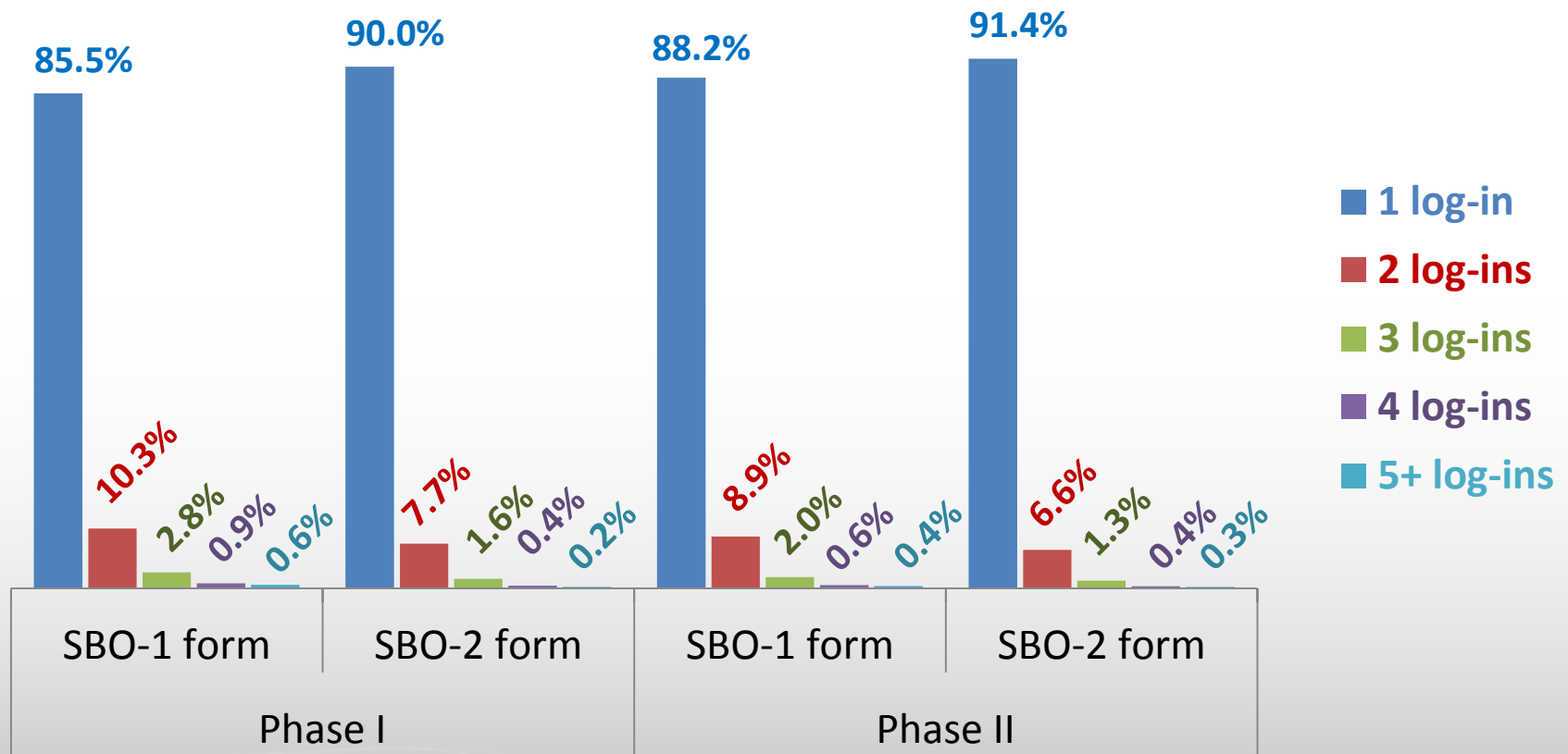
“Letter-Only” vs. Enclosed Paper Form: 2012 SBO Phase I and Phase II

Check-ins by Follow-Up Mailing Package



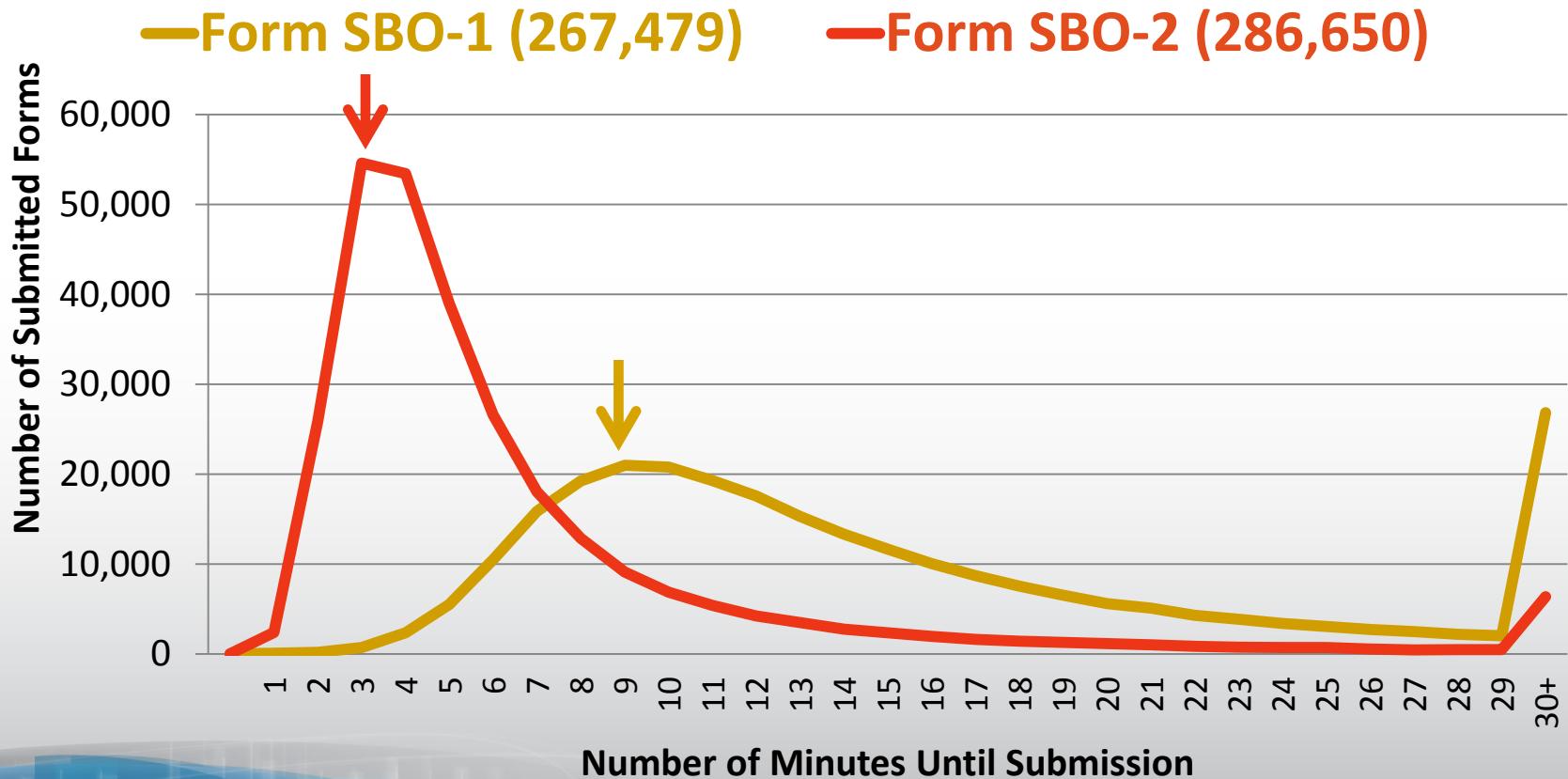
Paradata: 2012 SBO (Compiled from Centurion)

Number of Log-ins before Submission



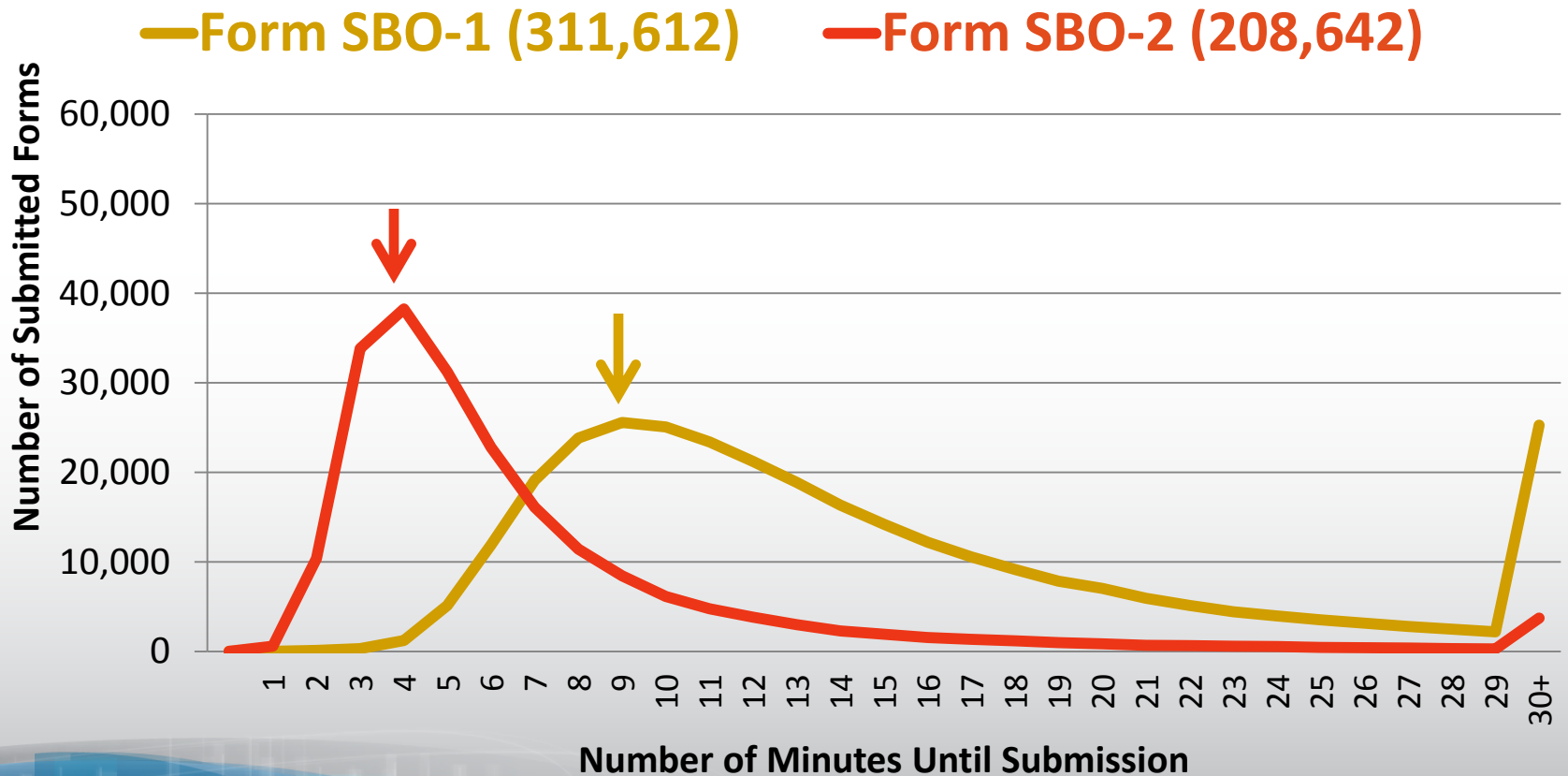
Paradata: 2012 SBO Phase I Time Logged into Centurion

Number of Minutes Spent Logged Into the System



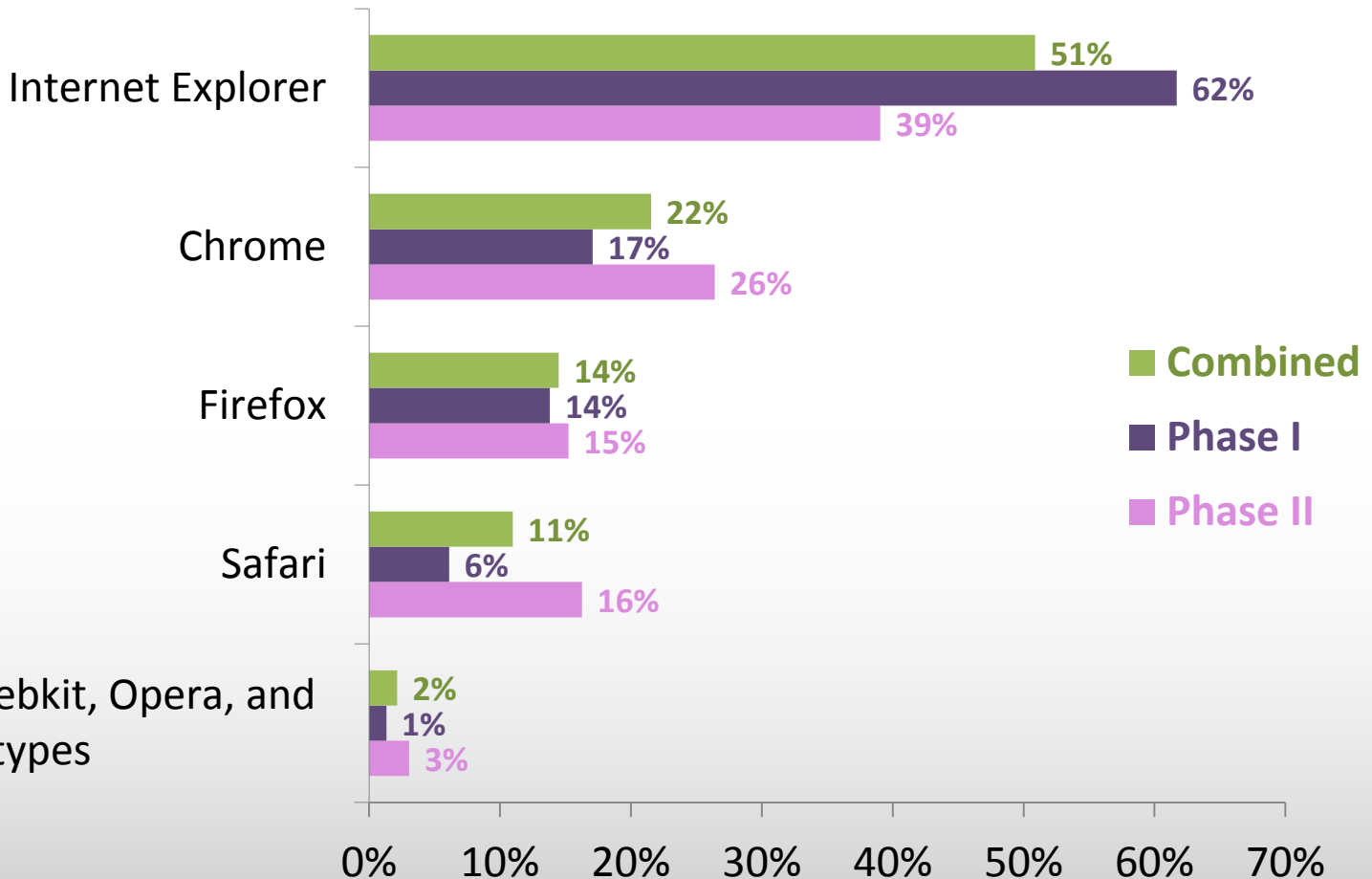
Paradata: 2012 SBO Phase II Time Logged into Centurion

Number of Minutes Spent Logged Into the System



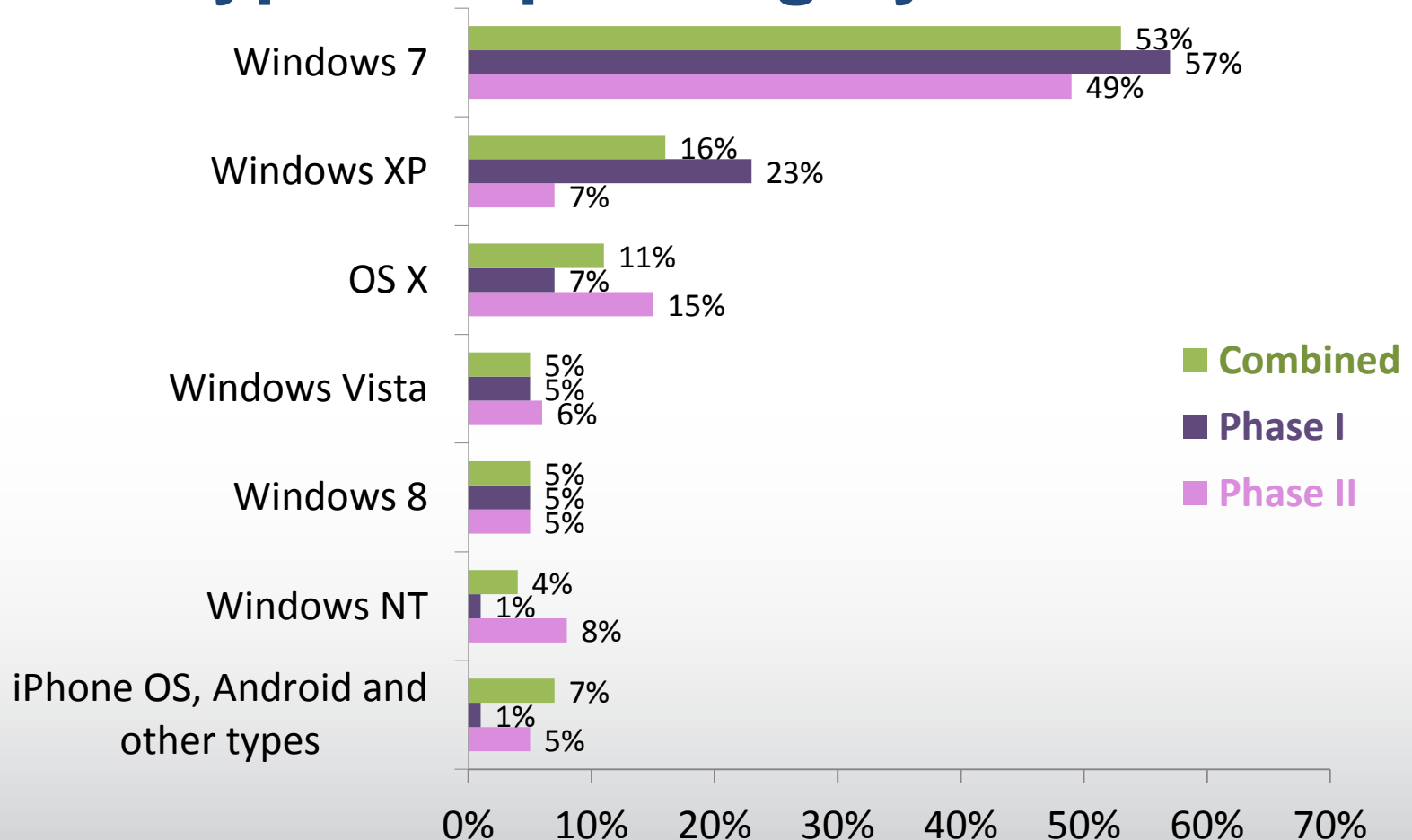
Paradata: 2012 SBO

Type of Web Browser



Paradata: 2012 SBO

Type of Operating System



Conclusions

Combined reporting modes	2007			2012		
	Economic Census	SBO Phase I	SBO Phase II	Economic Census	SBO Phase I	SBO Phase II
Check-in rates out of total mailout	86%	79.7%	67.2%	84%	73.1%	64.6%

Mode of reporting	2007			2012		
	Economic Census	SBO Phase I	SBO Phase II	Economic Census	SBO Phase I	SBO Phase II
Electronic check-in	28.6%	8.4%	10.1%	44.7%	90.0%	89.3%
Paper check-in	71.4%	91.6%	89.9%	55.3%	10.0%	10.7%

2012 SBO Data Products

- Publishing statistics by
 - Geography
 - United States, states, metropolitan areas, counties, places
 - Industry
 - 2- through 6-digit NAICS for selected geographies
 - Size of firm
 - Receipts
 - Employment
- Ten core releases covering races, gender, Hispanic origin, veteran status, and characteristics of businesses and business owners
- Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS)

2012 SBO Release Schedule

Data Products	Tentative Release Dates
Women-Owned Businesses	June 2015
Hispanic-Owned Businesses	July 2015
Black-Owned Businesses	August 2015
American Indian- and Alaska Native-Owned Businesses	September 2015
Asian-Owned Businesses	October 2015
Native Hawaiian- and Other Pacific Islander-Owned Businesses	October 2015
Veteran-Owned Businesses	November 2015
Company Summary	December 2015
Characteristics of Businesses	December 2015
Characteristics of Business Owners	December 2015
Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) file	2016

Contact Information

- General SBO inquiries
Phone: 888.225.4022 or 301.763.3316
Email: csd.sbo@census.gov
- Cynthia Hollingsworth, Assistant Division Chief – Cross Sector Programs, 301.763.3655 / Cynthia.Davis.Hollingsworth@census.gov
- Patrice Norman, Chief, Business Owners & Island Areas Branch, 301.763.7198 / Patrice.C.Norman@census.gov
- Elizabeth Goldberg, SBO Project Manager, 301.763.7705 / Elizabeth.J.Goldberg@census.gov
- Mary Frauenfelder, SBO Presenter / Survey Statistician, 301.763.6555 / Mary.G.Frauenfelder@census.gov

Acknowledgments

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- Victoria Garcia-Toutsis, Mathematical Statistician, Economic Statistical Methods Division, Financial and Business Owners Statistical Methods Branch