

Does Persistence Payoff?

Analysis of “Persistence” During Telephone Recruitment for an Establishment Survey

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Background

- Survey of sick leave policies at LA County restaurants
 - Sponsored by LA DPH
- Goal: 300 restaurants
 - 20 from 15 jurisdictions
- Goal: 900 interviews
 - 3 from each restaurant
- 7 weeks to complete
- Sample frame: 954 restaurants



Focus of Presentation

- Recruitment efforts
 - For an establishment survey
 - Short duration
 - Small sample frame
 - Improving recruitment and overcoming obstacle

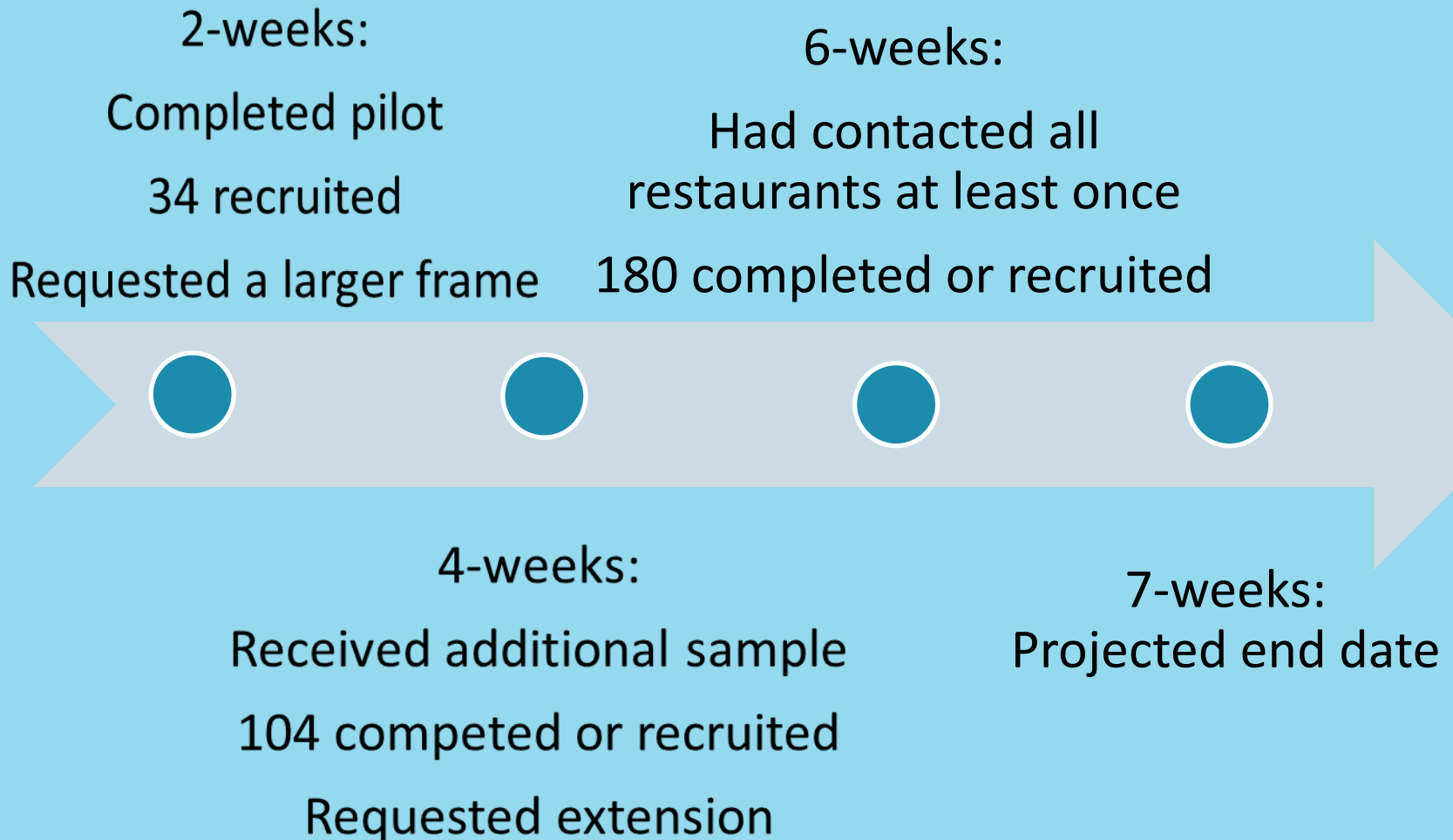
Data Collection Methods Plan

- Sample frame from health inspectors
- Telephone recruitment.
- In-person interviews
 - Owner or manager and two food preparers
 - English, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese
 - 10-15 minutes
 - \$20 gift card incentive

Recruitment Plan

- Three call attempts to reach management
- Restaurant replaced if refused
- Restaurant replaced if ineligible
 - Too few staff
 - Opened less than 6 months
- Restaurant replaced if unreachable

Timeline



Barriers to Recruitment

- Sample frame assumed an engaged population.
- Survey not mandatory
- Restaurants frequently scammed
- Environmental Health officers not actively engaged

The Problem

- Only 4% recruited after at most 3 calls
- 15% refused or ineligible
- 73% of sample frame was unreachable / not locatable
 - Too busy
 - Soft refusals
- Silver lining – only 8% completely unreachable

Possible solutions

- Increase sample frame again
- Increase call attempts
- Extend timeframe

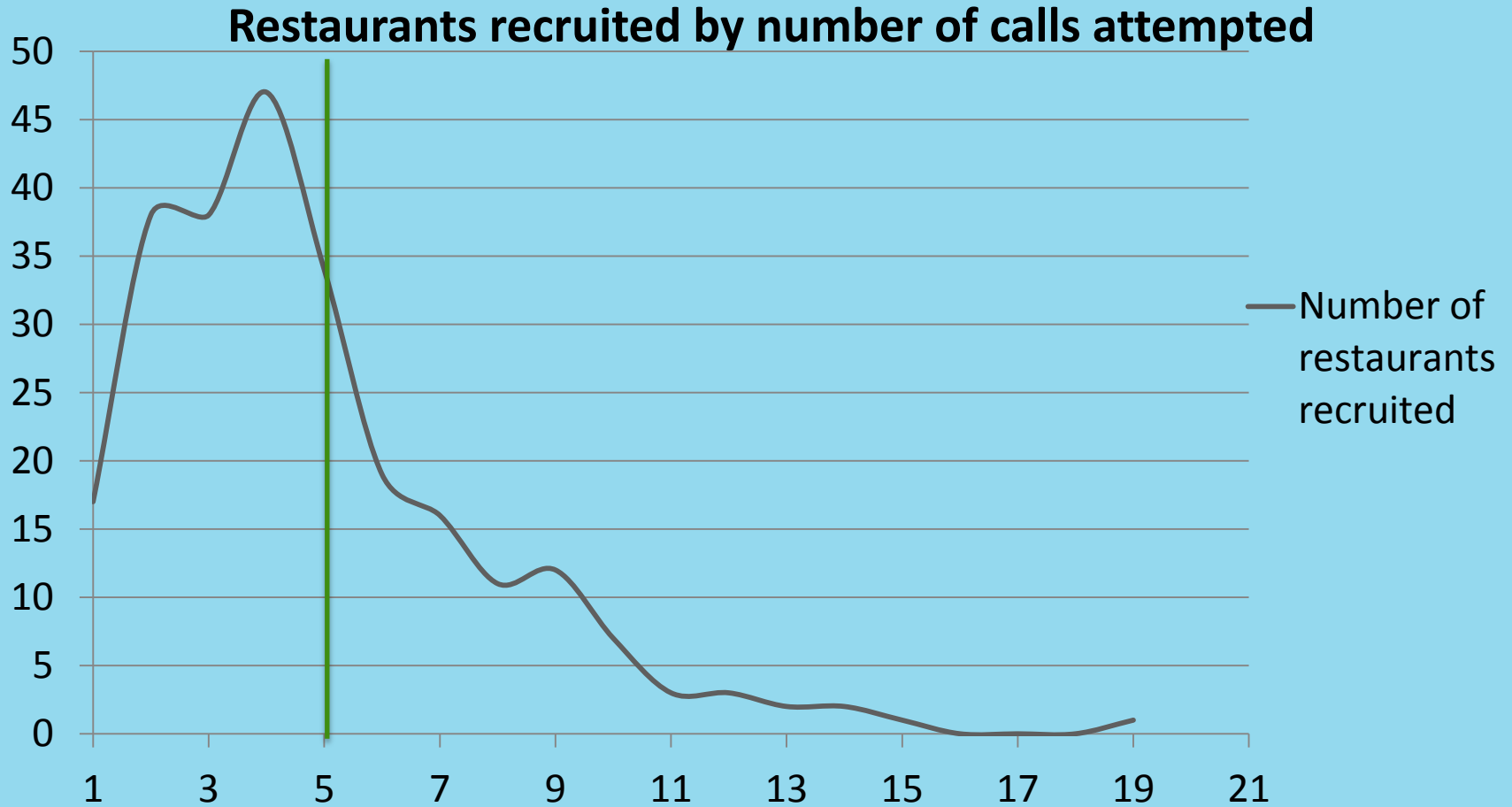
Increased call attempts

- Granted a 3-week extension
- Call attempts were increased to 5
 - Recruiters continued to call more than 5 times when they thought recruitment was possible
 - 7% recruited after at most 5 calls
- Almost half the sample frame (46%) called more than 5 times
 - 77 restaurants recruited during these calls

Persistence Pays Off

- 62% unreachable / soft refusals
- 13,080 calls made
- Advantages of calling more than 5 times
 - Less effort than a larger sample
 - 31% of completed restaurants were reached this way.
 - Data not limited to a quicker to reach sample.
- Disadvantages of calling more than 5 times
 - Not all unreachable given equal recruitment attempts.
 - Average number of calls 8.3

Call attempts



Conclusion

- Large number of not finalized/ soft refusals.
- Persistence
 - Targeted population for extra effort.
 - Possibly more representative than a sample capped at a specific number of calls.

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