

PROMOTION AND ADVERTISEMENT: ARE RURAL MINNESOTA BUSINESSES USING THE INTERNET TO THEIR ADVANTAGE?



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Minnesota Intelligent Rural Communities Initiative

www.extension.umn.edu/community/mirc

A partnership between the Extension Center for Community Vitality and...



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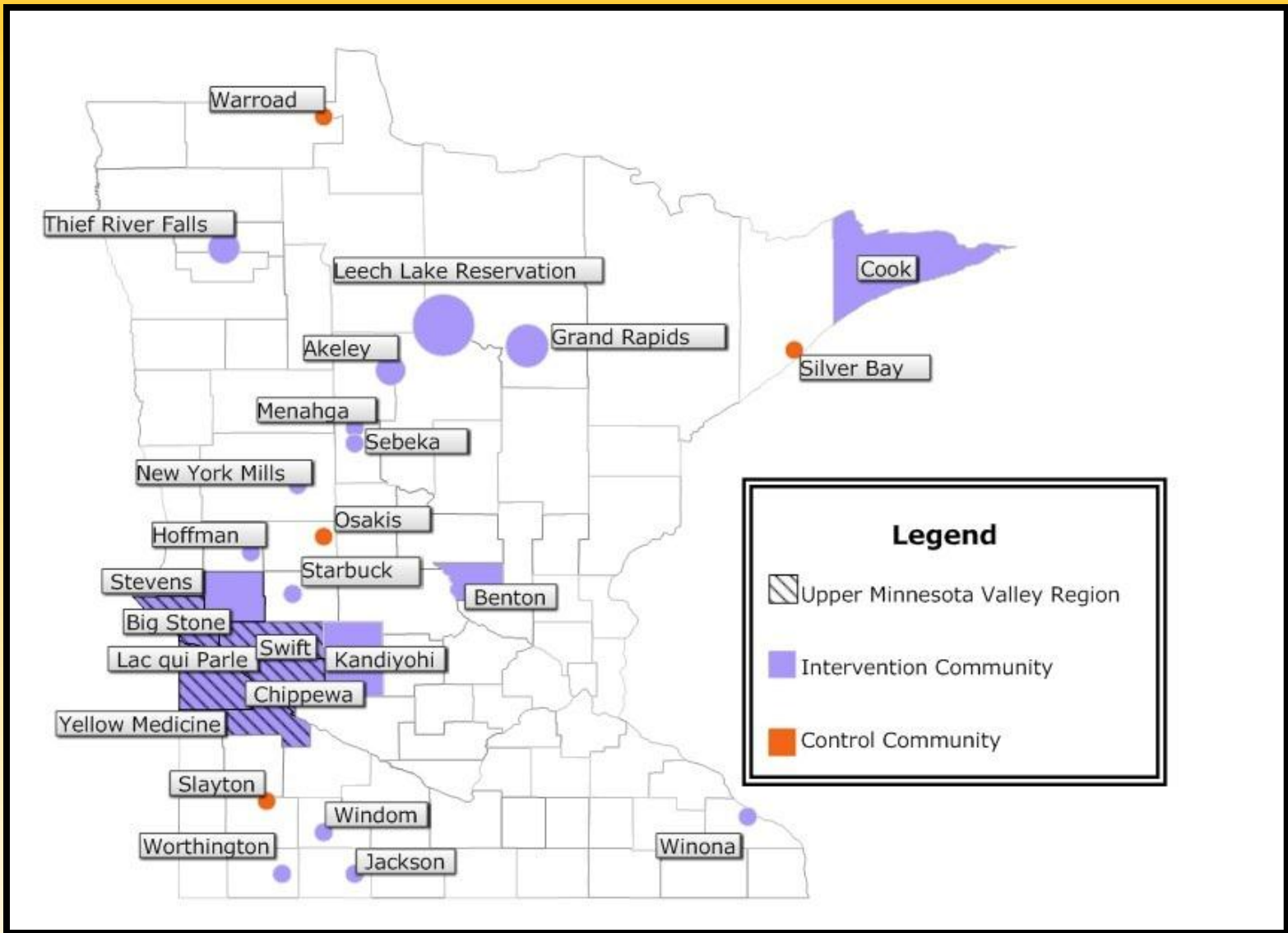
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Assessing Digital Presence



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Defining Digital Presence

- Digital Presence refers to a business's own online content.
- Any locally controlled websites, social media, or GooglePlace pages devoted to an entity within the community
- Using Google as the search tool



What Was Searched For?

- Websites
 - Quantitative Level
 - Qualitative Level
- Social Media
 - Website Link
 - Search Engine Display
- Google Places
 - Verification



Qualitative Assessment

Digital Presence	Scoring System	Contact Info	Services Score	Aesthetics Score
Website	7 point scale if found on 1 st Google search page or linked	4 Points: email, phone, describe location, map	1 Point: services clearly listed	2 Points: organization, aesthetics
Google Place Page	5 point scale	NA	2 points: description of biz, hours of biz	3 Points: owner verification, picture, positive review
Social Media	Presence noted if active page found by Google or on WS	NA	NA	NA
Errors	Noted if discrepancies exist between digital sources	NA	NA	NA
Community Links	Note presence of links to other website related to the community.	NA	NA	NA



Some Basic Results



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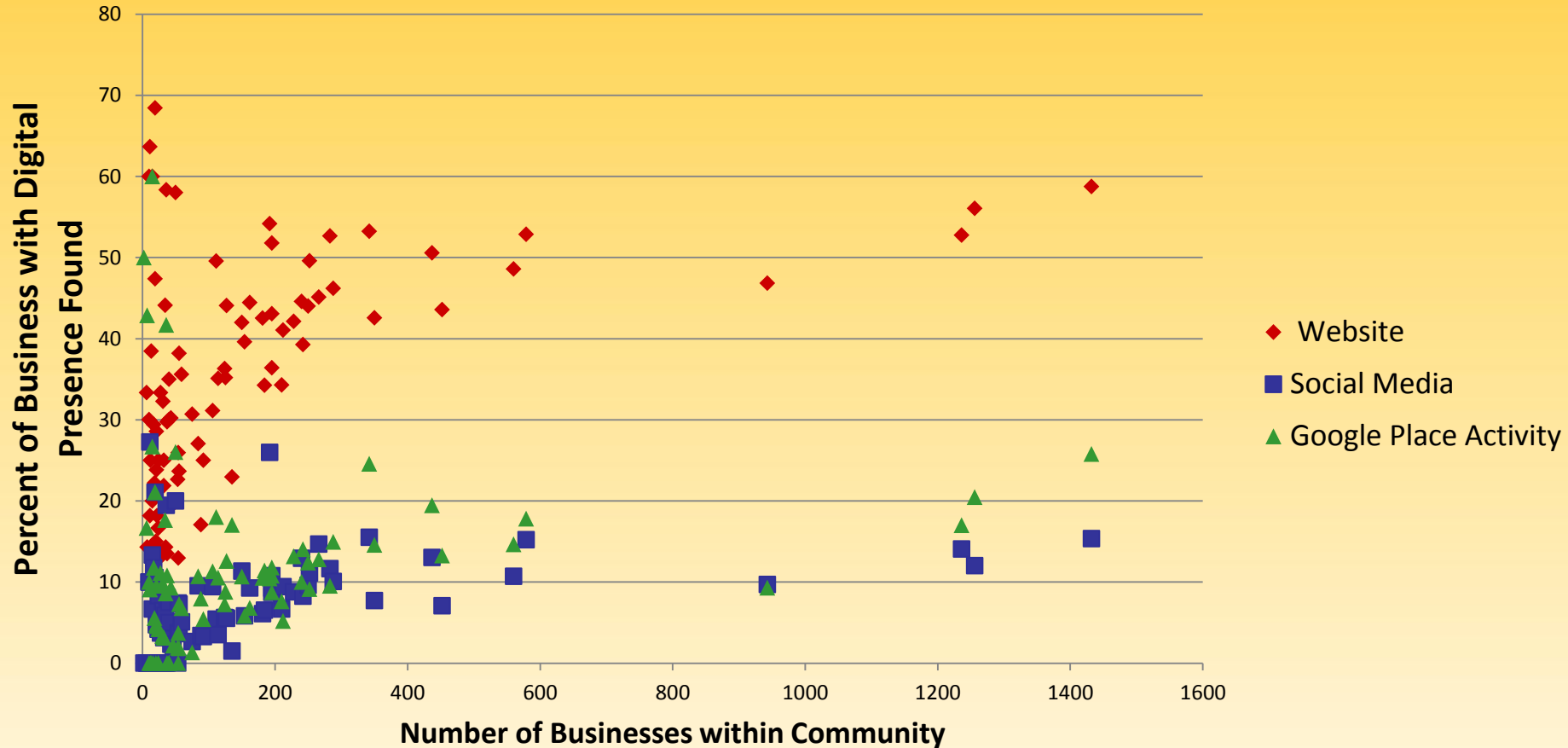
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Control vs. Intervention

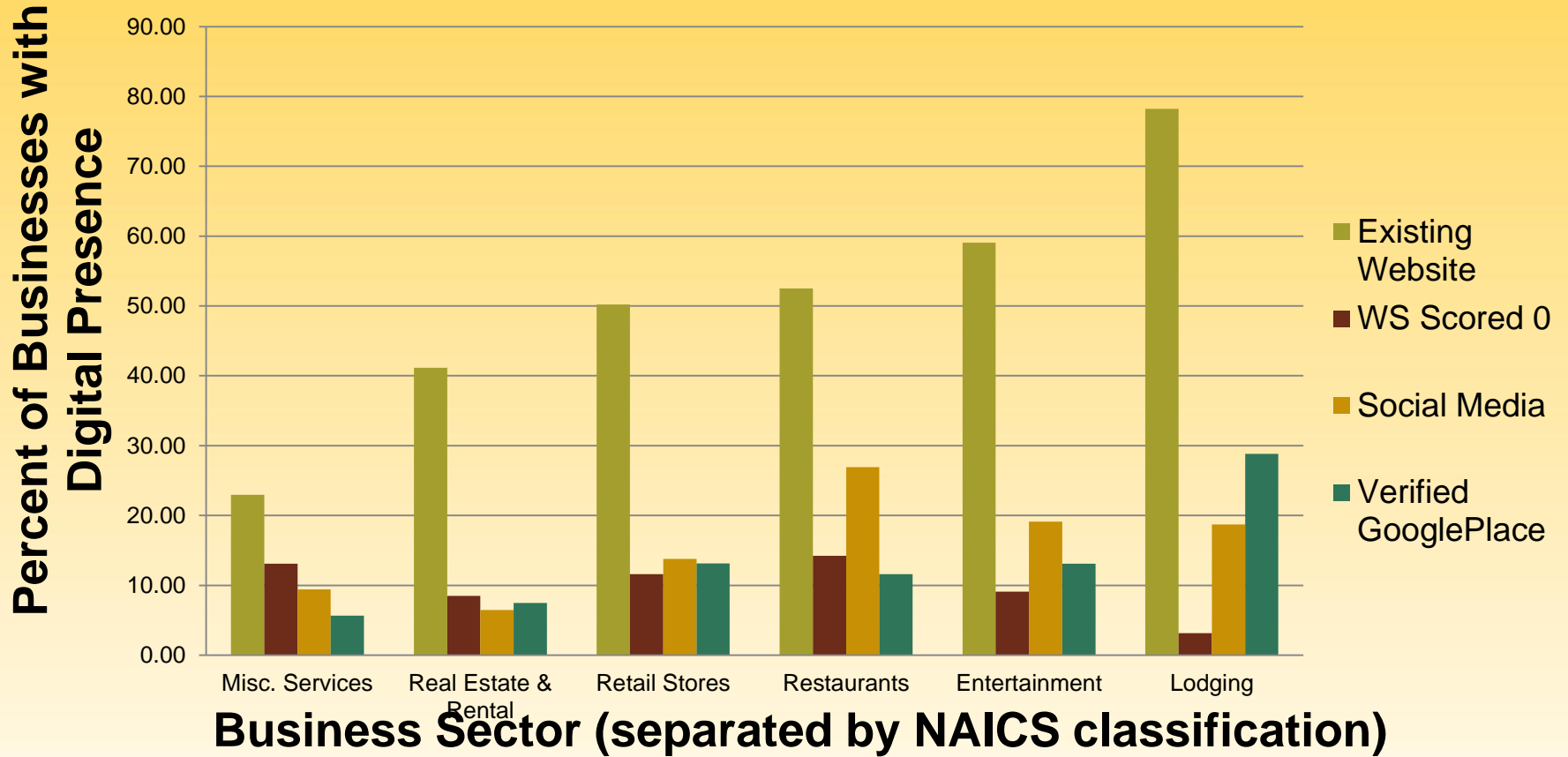
	MIRC	Controls
Websites	42.15%	44.79%
Social Media	9.49%	11.76%
GooglePlaces	13.17%	12.58%
Google Places (V)	7.25%	4.88%
Websites Score 0	17.01%	13.76%



Business Community Size & DP



Digital Presence for Tourism Sectors



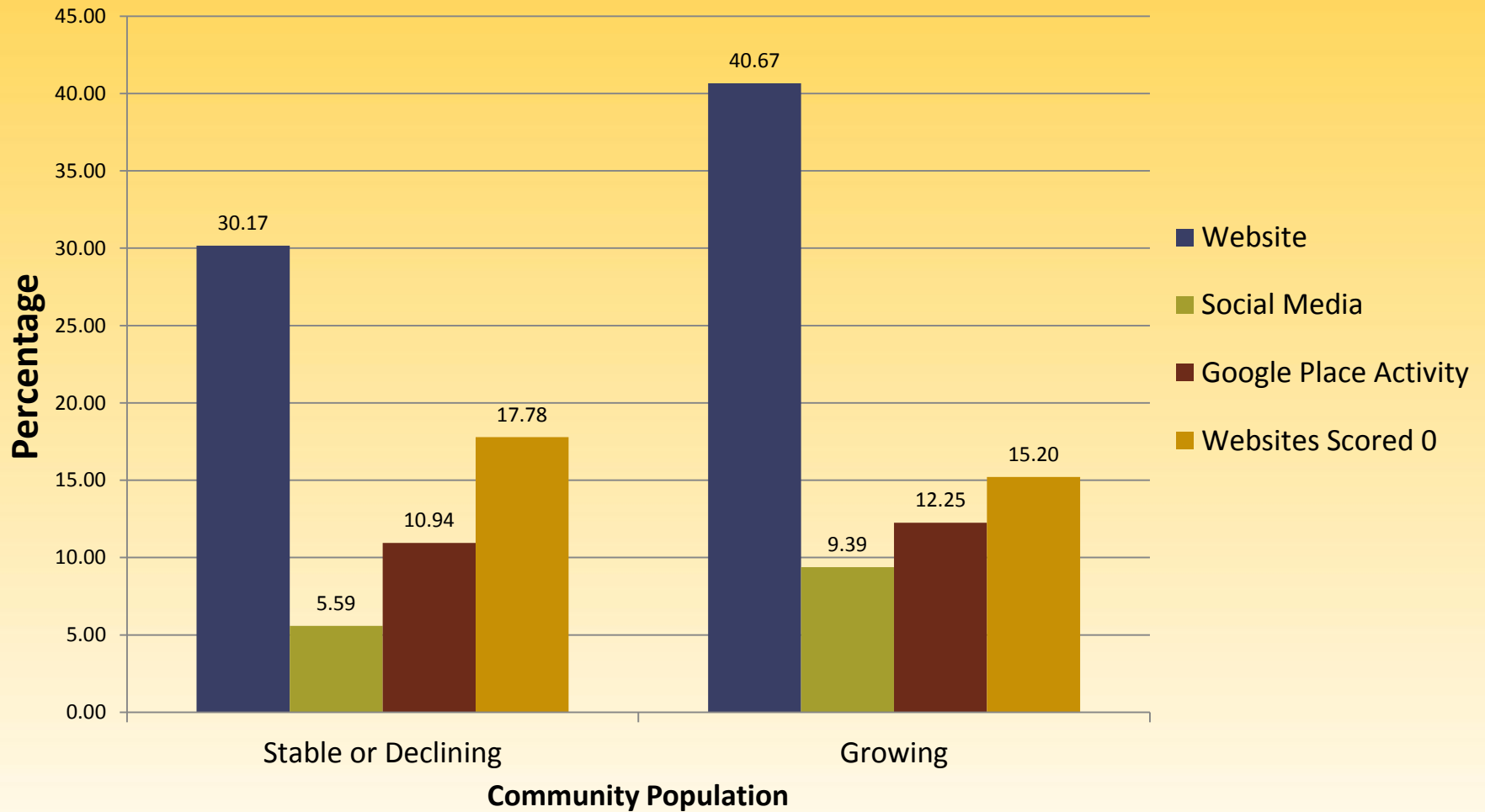
Community Factors



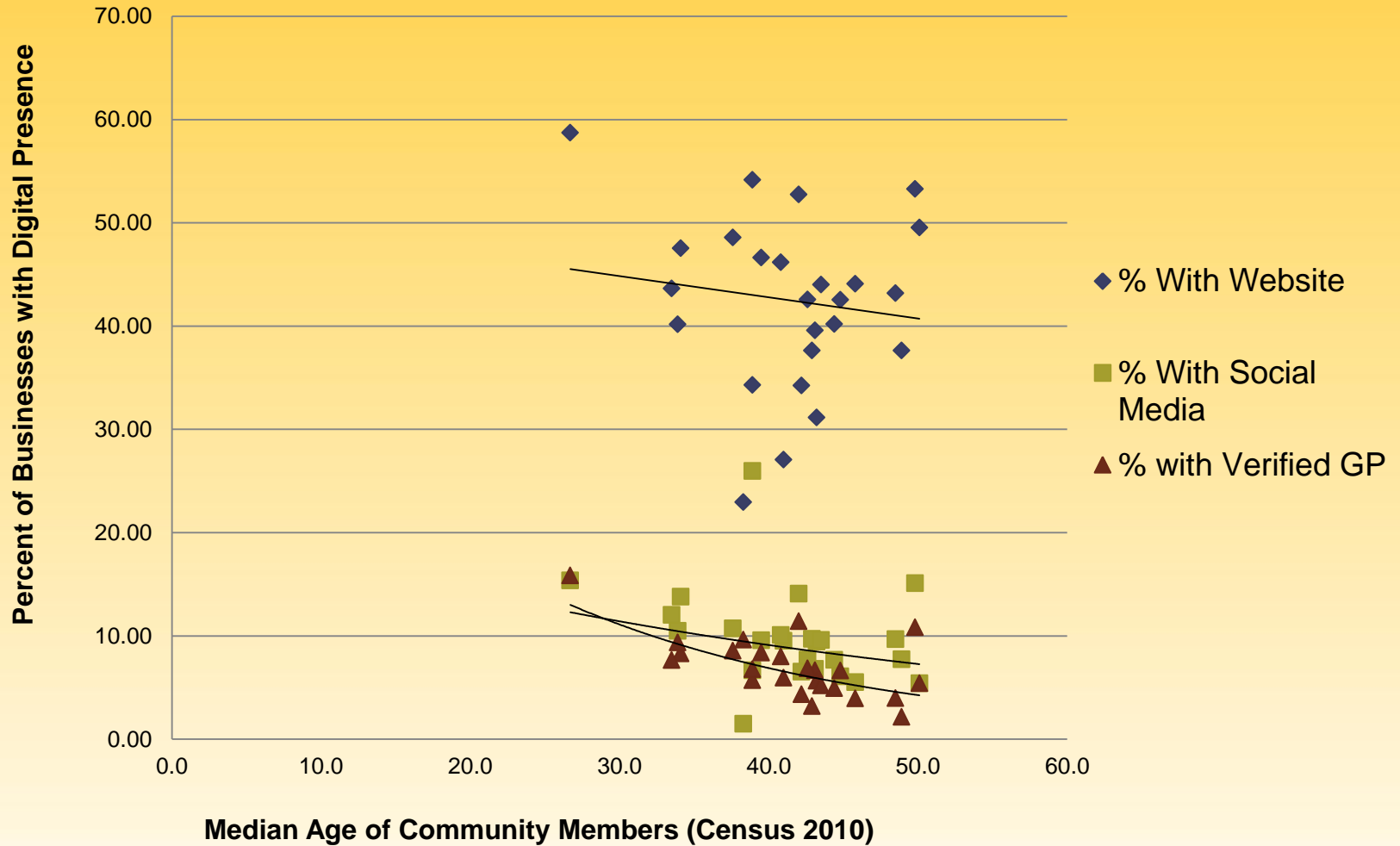
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Community Growth and DP



Community Age & DP



Community Implications

- The Correlation to Success
- Community Readiness for MIRC
- Improving Community Websites
- Changing Behaviors: What Works?



Future Research

- Post-MIRC Digital Presence Levels
- Community Readiness
- Long-Term Impacts



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Thank You

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