

Objective

Build awareness and promote understanding and inclusion for questioning, progressive, and secular Mormons.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Faith Crisis Defined

A state of intense emotional distress resulting from the discovery of “uncorrelated” Church history facts that do not align with the traditional LDS narrative. This distress—and ensuing analysis of LDS truth claims—often results in members losing literal belief in the LDS truth claims.

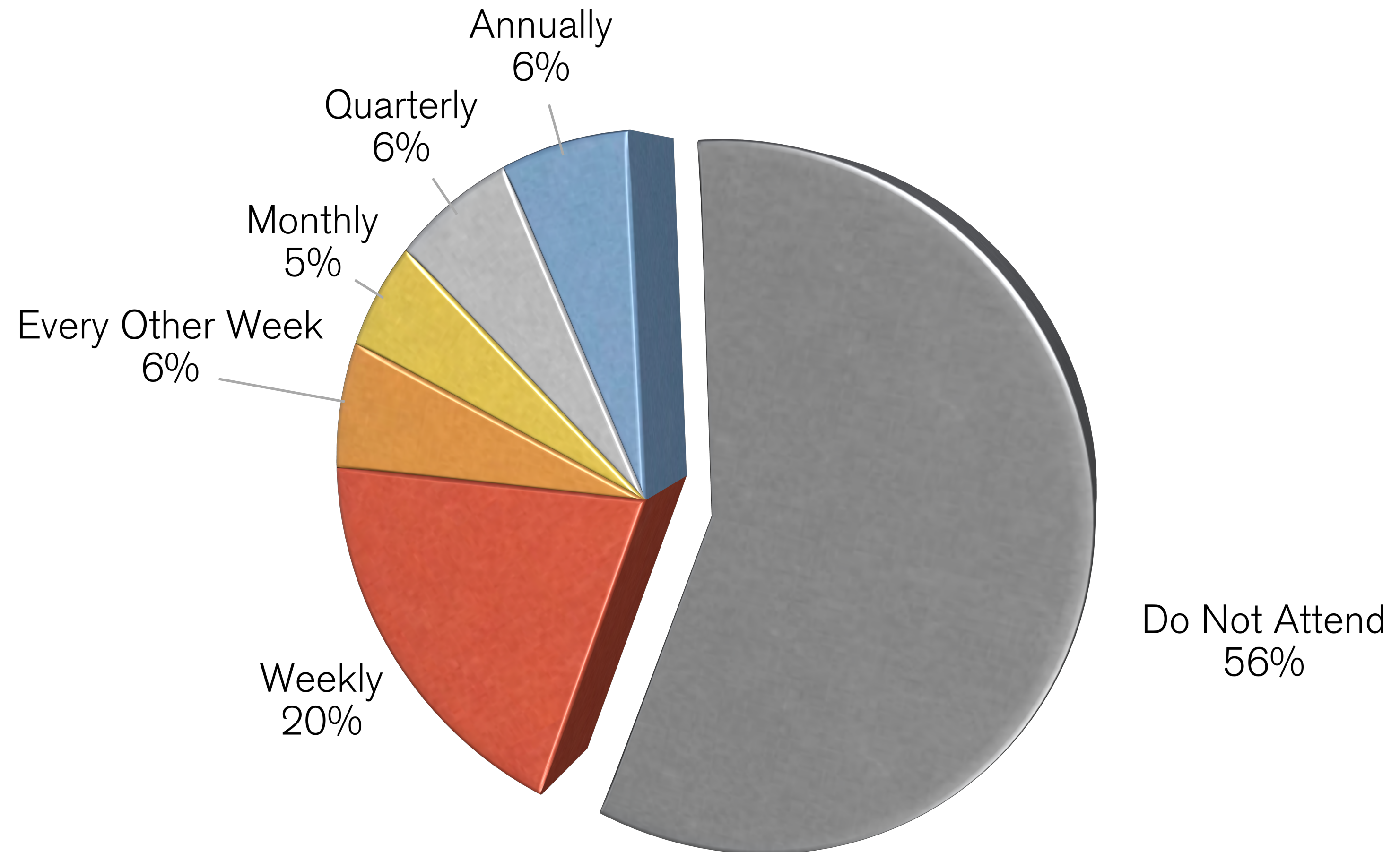
Research Methodology

- Interviews and strategic guidance from 20+ LDS subject-matter experts
- In-depth interviews conducted between 2011 and 2013 with 40 members (active, less-active, believing, doubting, non-believing).
- Ethnographic survey in 2011 of 3,388 doubting / non-believing members
- Qualitative narratives solicited from 1,500+ doubting and non-believing members collected in 2013
- 18 months of review and refinement by LDS subject-matter experts and presentations to senior LDS leaders.

FIVE KEY LEARNINGS

1. Many Doubters & Unbelievers are Active LDS

A little less than half of surveyed unbelievers remain active in the Church, while over half no longer attend.

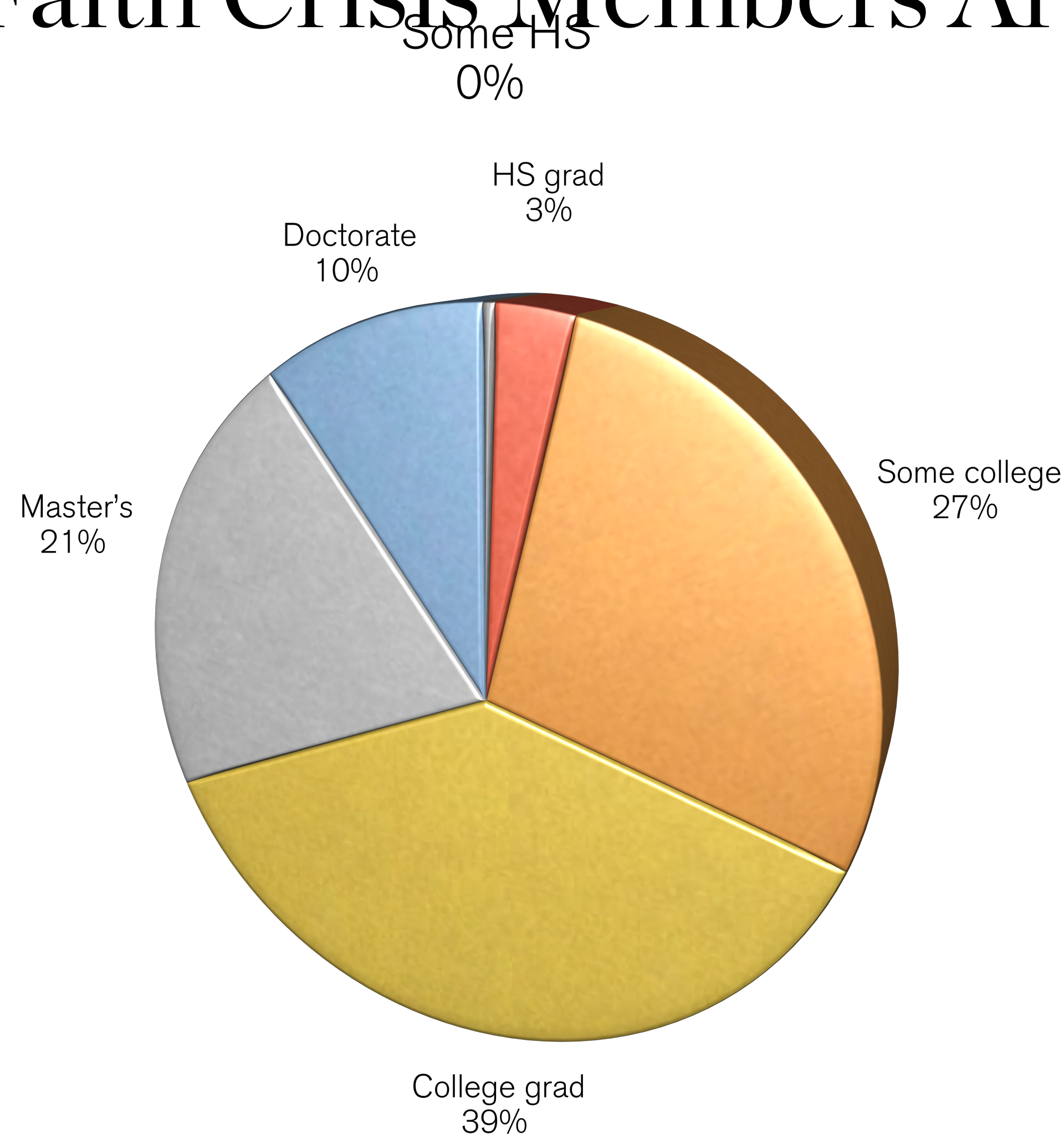


CHURCH INVOLVEMENT

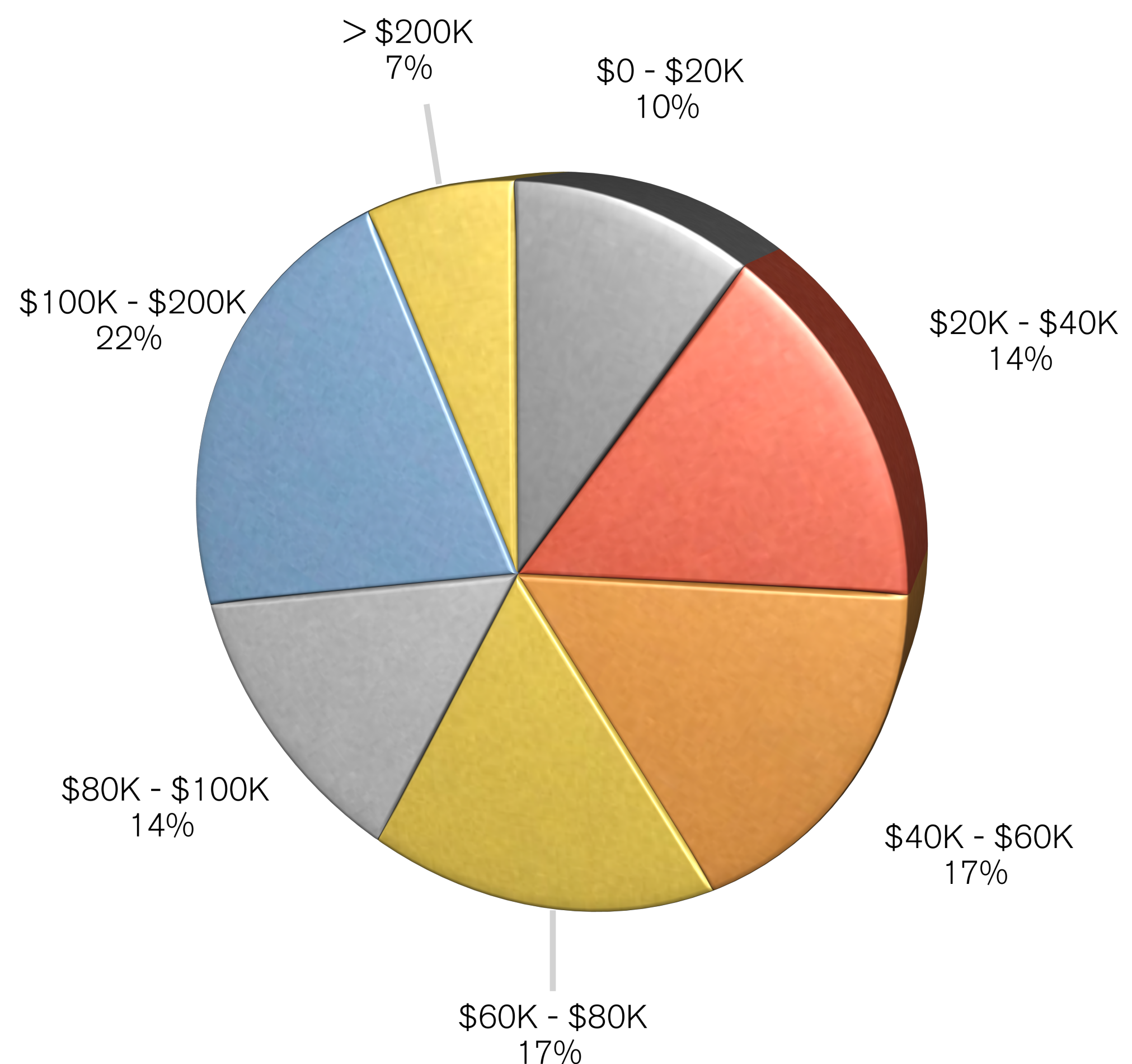
2. Disbelief Typically Not Shared With Leaders

- Spouses tend to be aware of Faith Crisis issue.
- Church leaders and friends tend to be less aware.
- Church typically not viewed as a “safe place” to share doubts and concerns.
- Believing members often ascribe insensitive labels for member unbelief (e.g., sin, desire to sin, offense, “hard-heartedness,” lack of adequate study, low intellect, etc.)

3. Faith Crisis Members Are Educated / High Earners

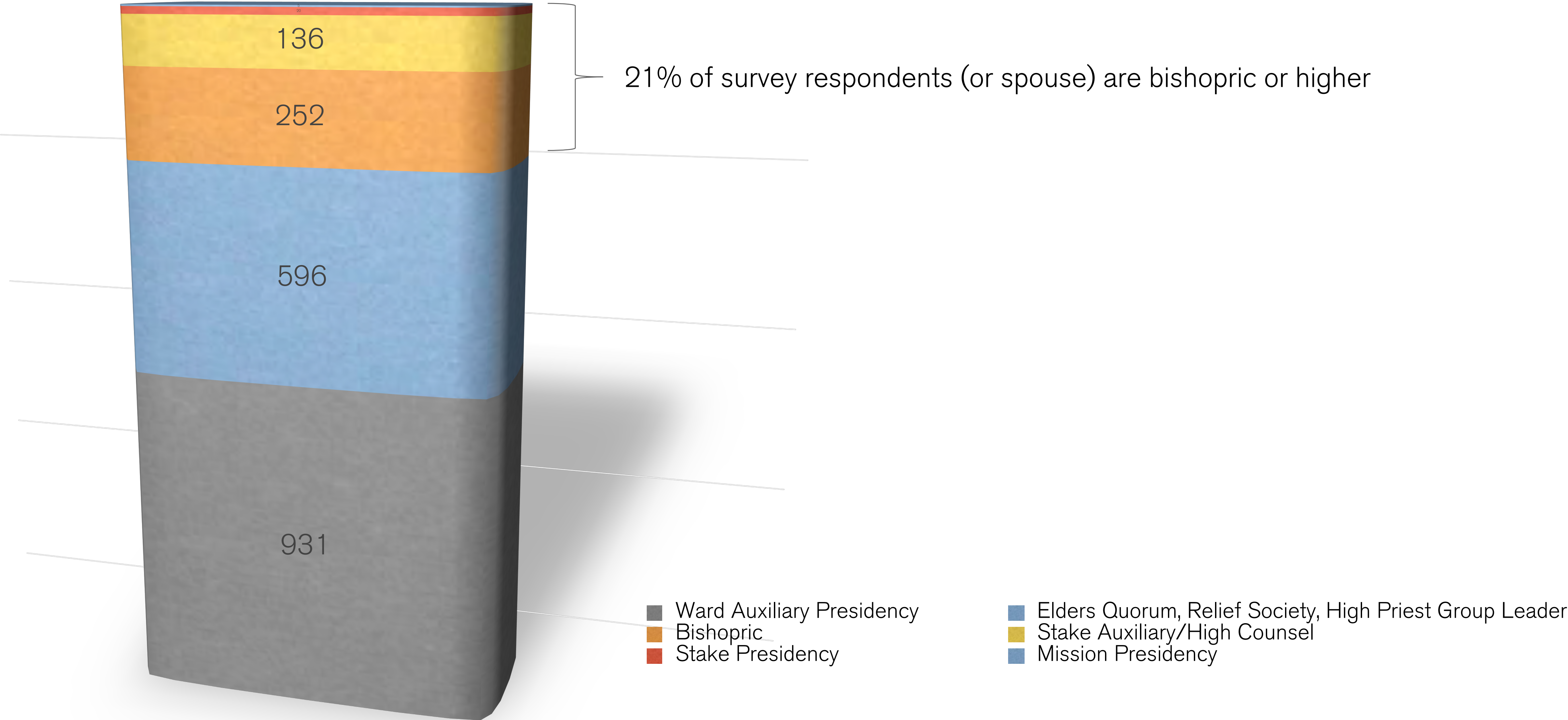


EDUCATION



INCOME

4. Even Members in Leadership Roles Included



5. Primary Drivers of LDS Faith Crisis

1. Internet-based access to uncorrelated information (e.g., Google)
2. Constant availability of uncorrelated information via mobile devices
3. Member exposure to uncorrelated information via traditional and social media
4. Ability to discuss and debate alternate points-of-view with like-minded people in social media

“The church leadership doesn't match the level of honesty they preach about in Church manuals. I have no faith or trust in them anymore, and for all they have done to me and my relationship with my wife, I consider them my enemy.”

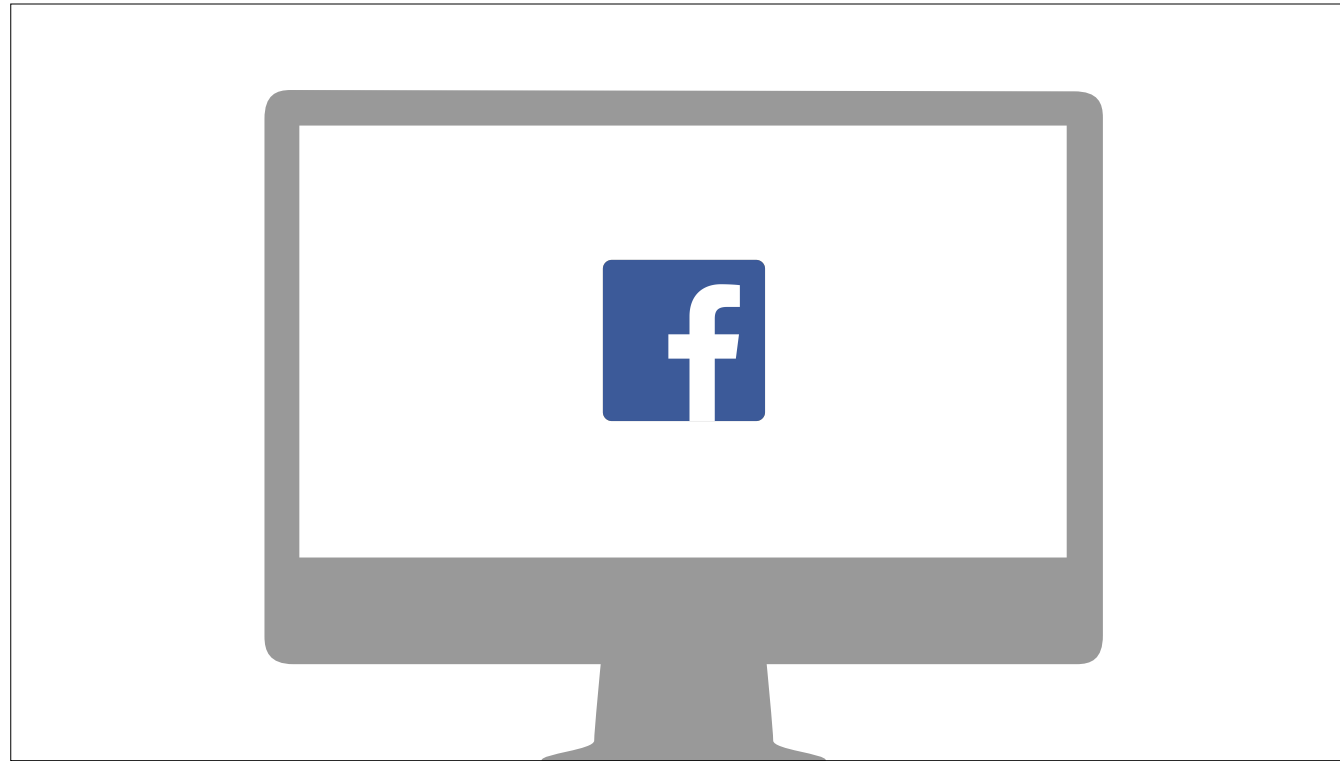
RESPONDENT #1208, ANONYMOUS MALE, IN HIS 30'S

FAITH CRISIS USE CASE

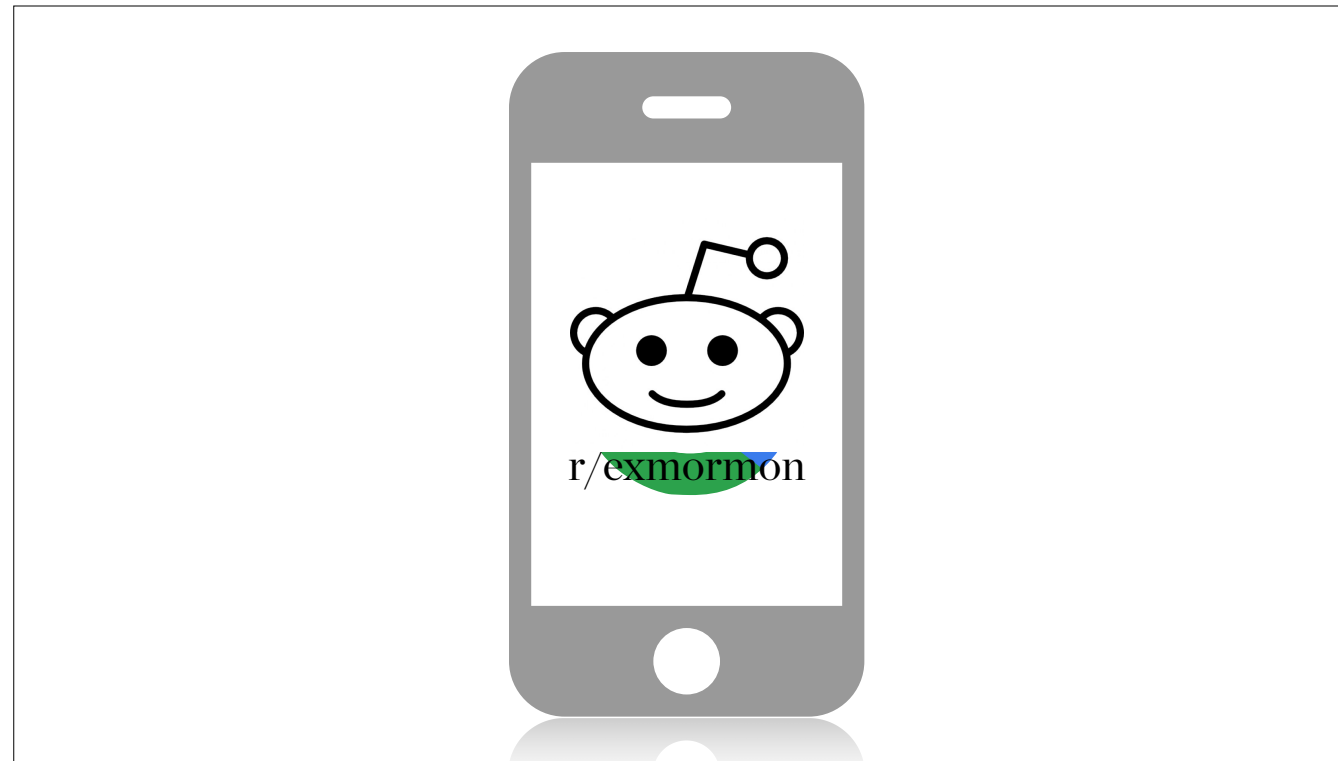


Brian

- Age: 30
- Married with 2 children
- Graduate Degree
- Life-long member
- Elder's Quorum President
- Full tithe payer, regular church attendee, temple-recommend holder.



1. While checking his Facebook feed at work, Brian, a literal believing member, sees a FB friend has commented on a FB post discussing a recent NYT article written about the LDS Church.
2. In the comment section of the article, the member learns about a troubling aspect of Church history (written by a disaffected member.)

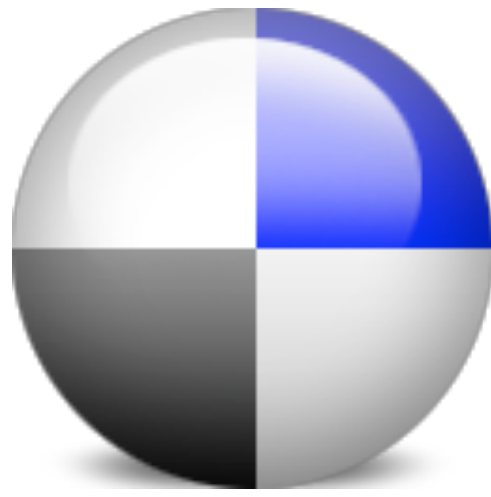


1. A few weeks later, while attending Sunday School, Brian is reminded of the troubling things he read at the NYT.
2. He decides to Google the topic on his smart phone to refute the ideas.
3. He lands on the r/exMormon subedit, finds the troubling information is factually correct.
4. And then discovers a trove of other troubling topics and a community of other members who are learning to cope with this newly discovered information.
5. Explain reddit.

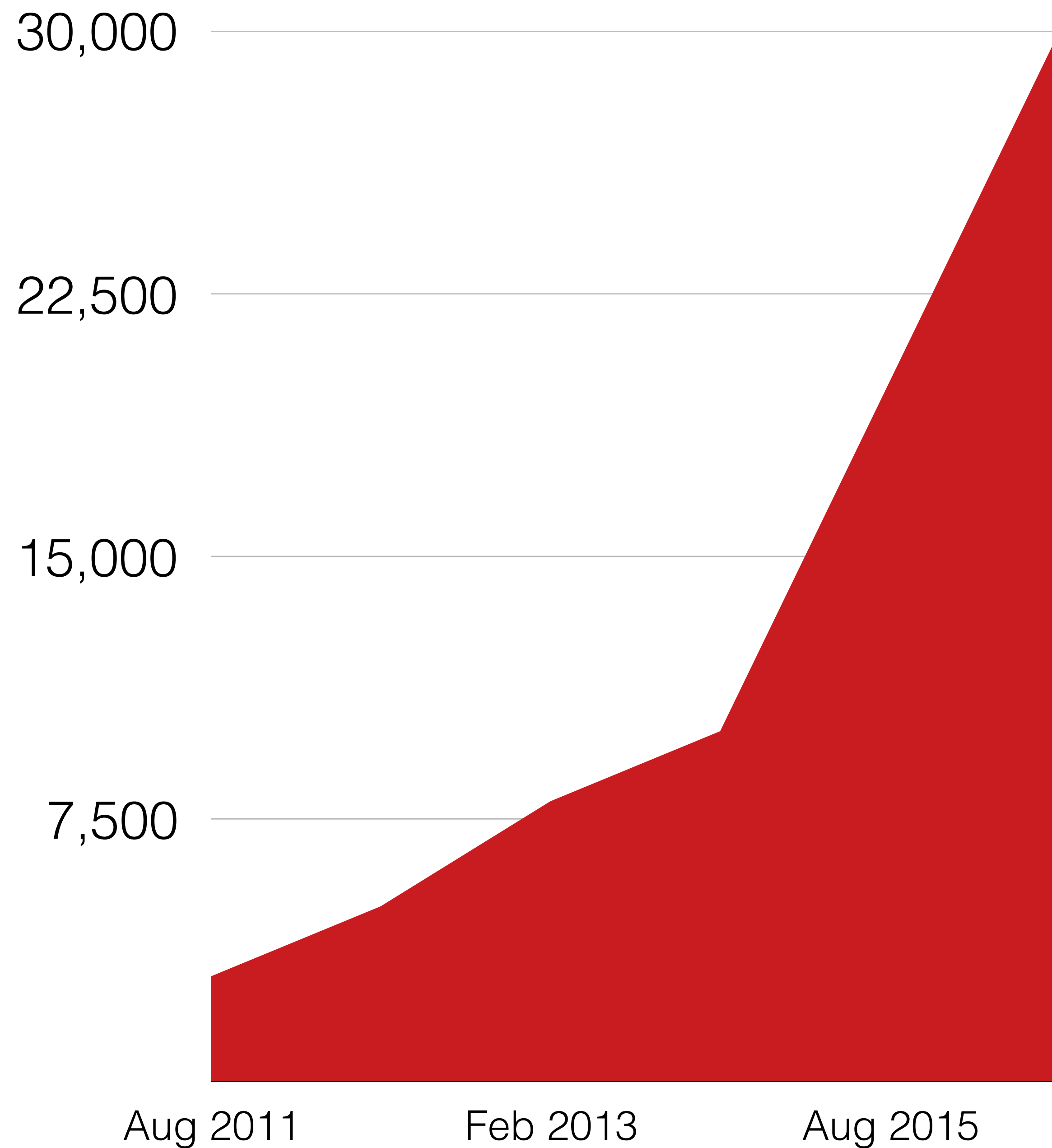


1. Dark night of the soul.
2. Extreme feelings of betrayal
3. Loss of trust in the leadership
4. Begins viewing the church through a more critical lens.
5. Often becomes a disaffected member who seeks to share their pain and knowledge with believing members.

SOCIAL UGC

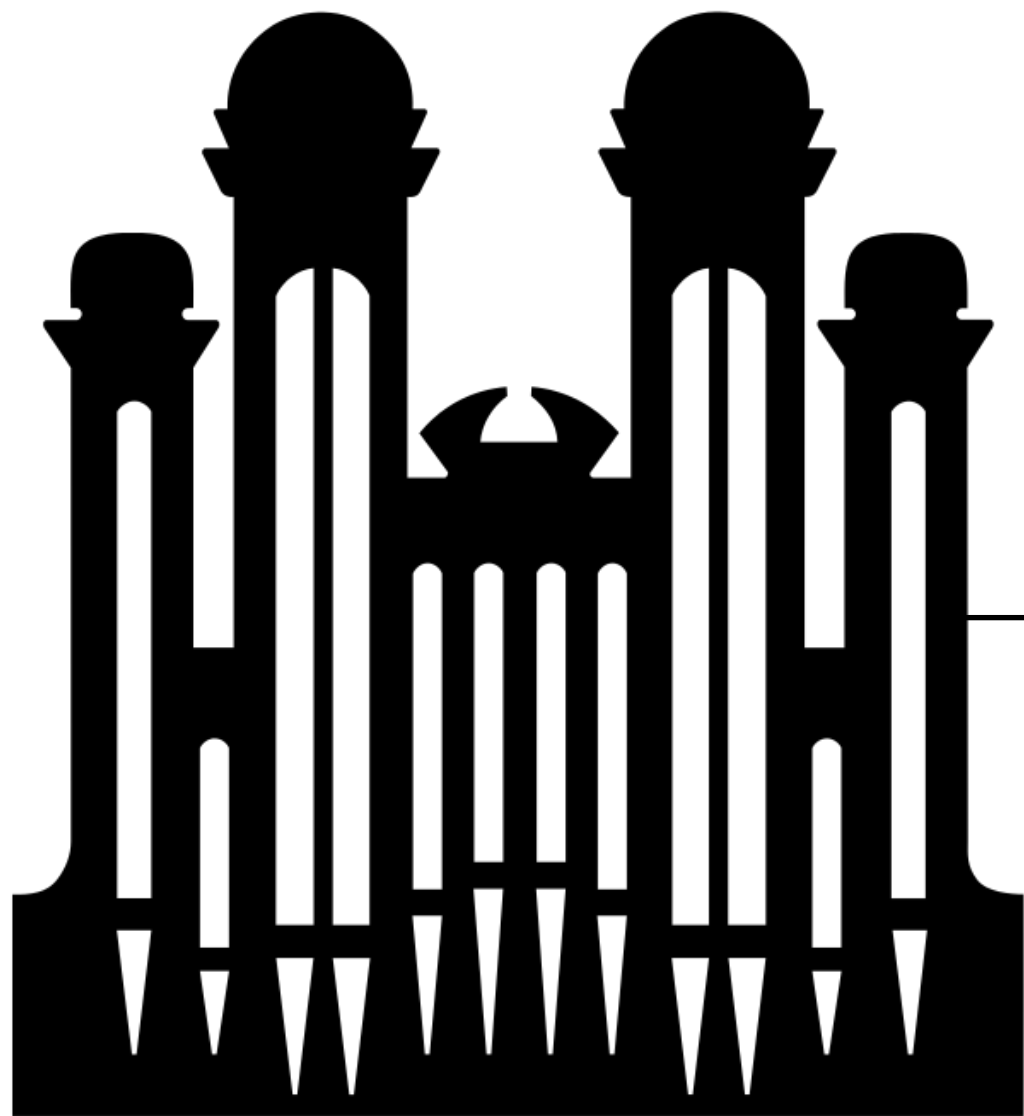




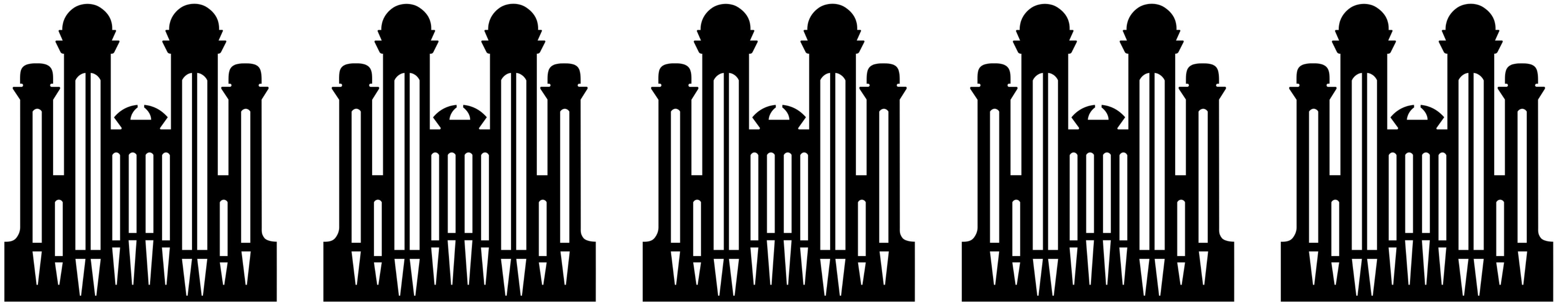


R/exmormon
Sub-reddit growth
*30K+ members in
five-years time*

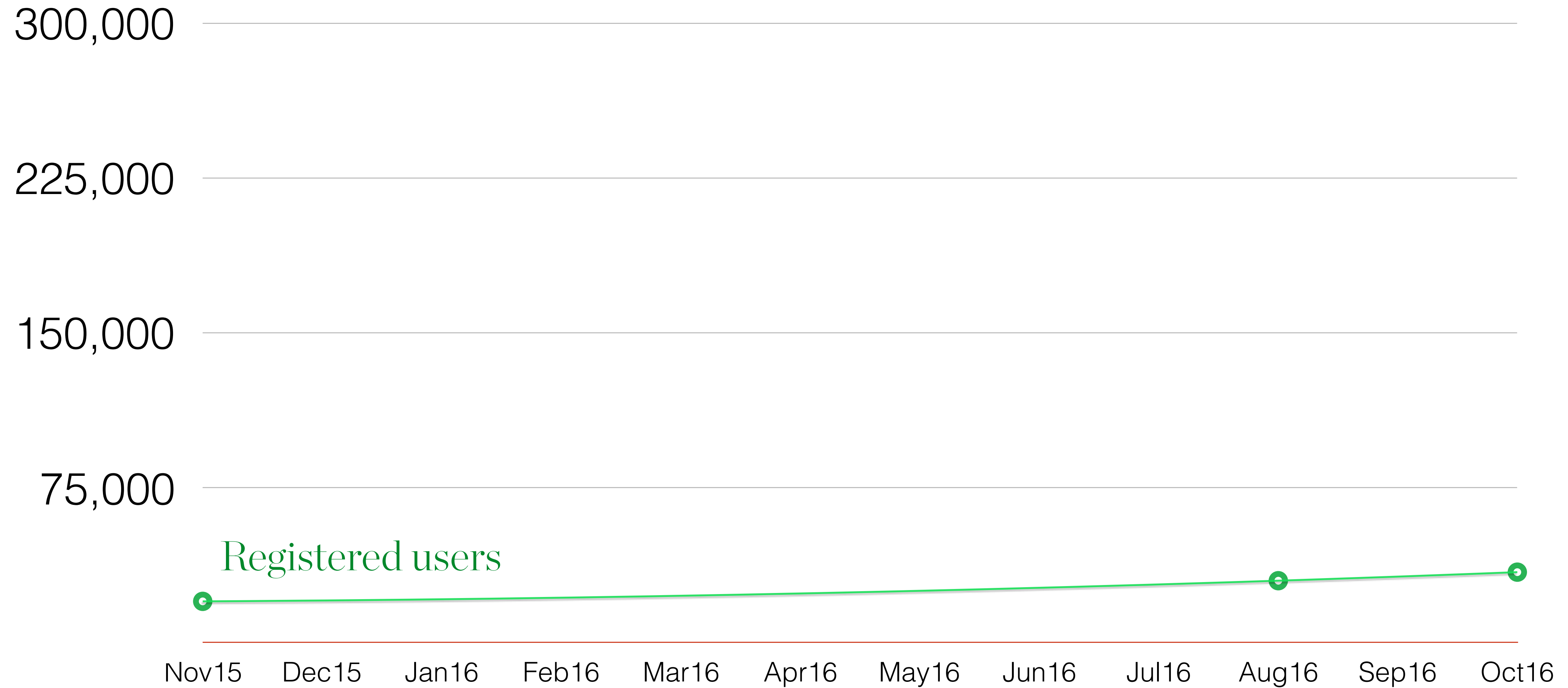
Tabernacle capacity: 7,000



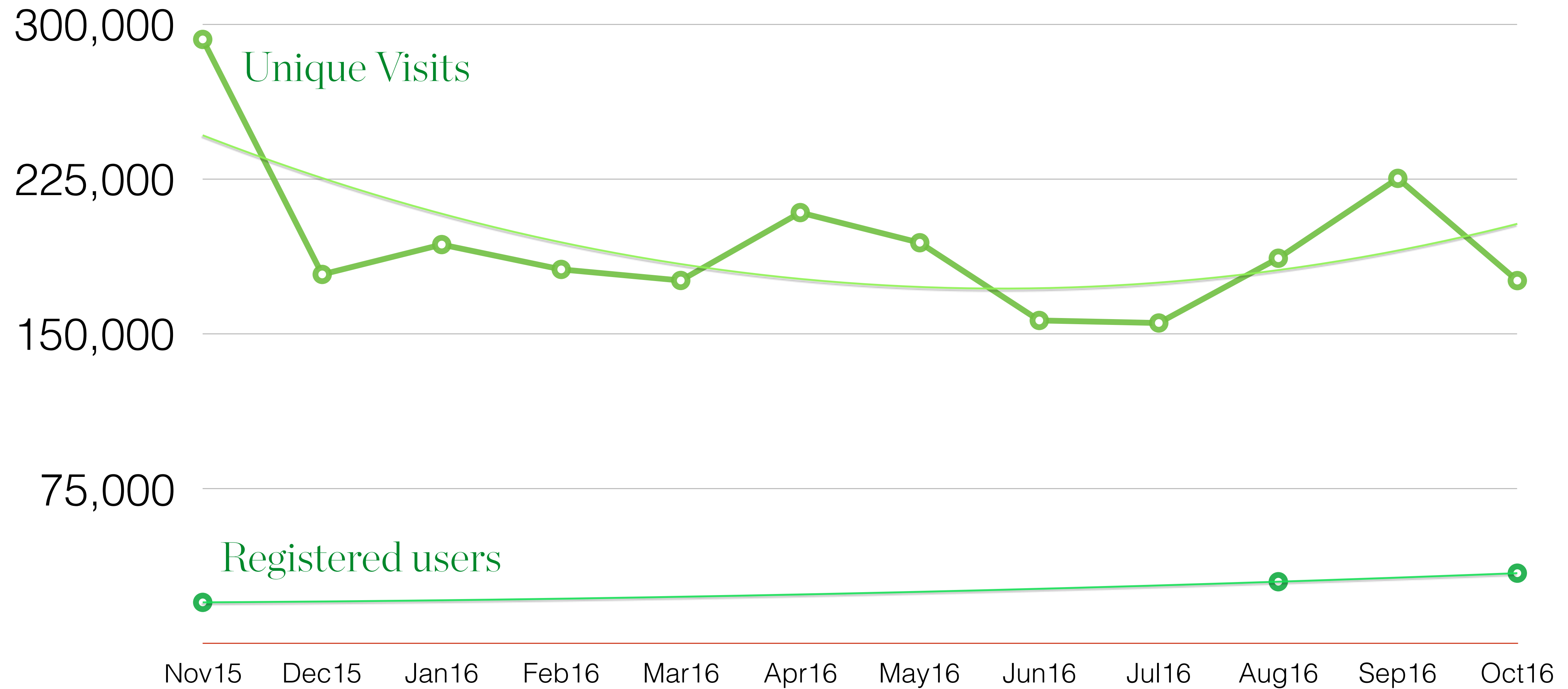
Registered users of r/exmormon: 34,775



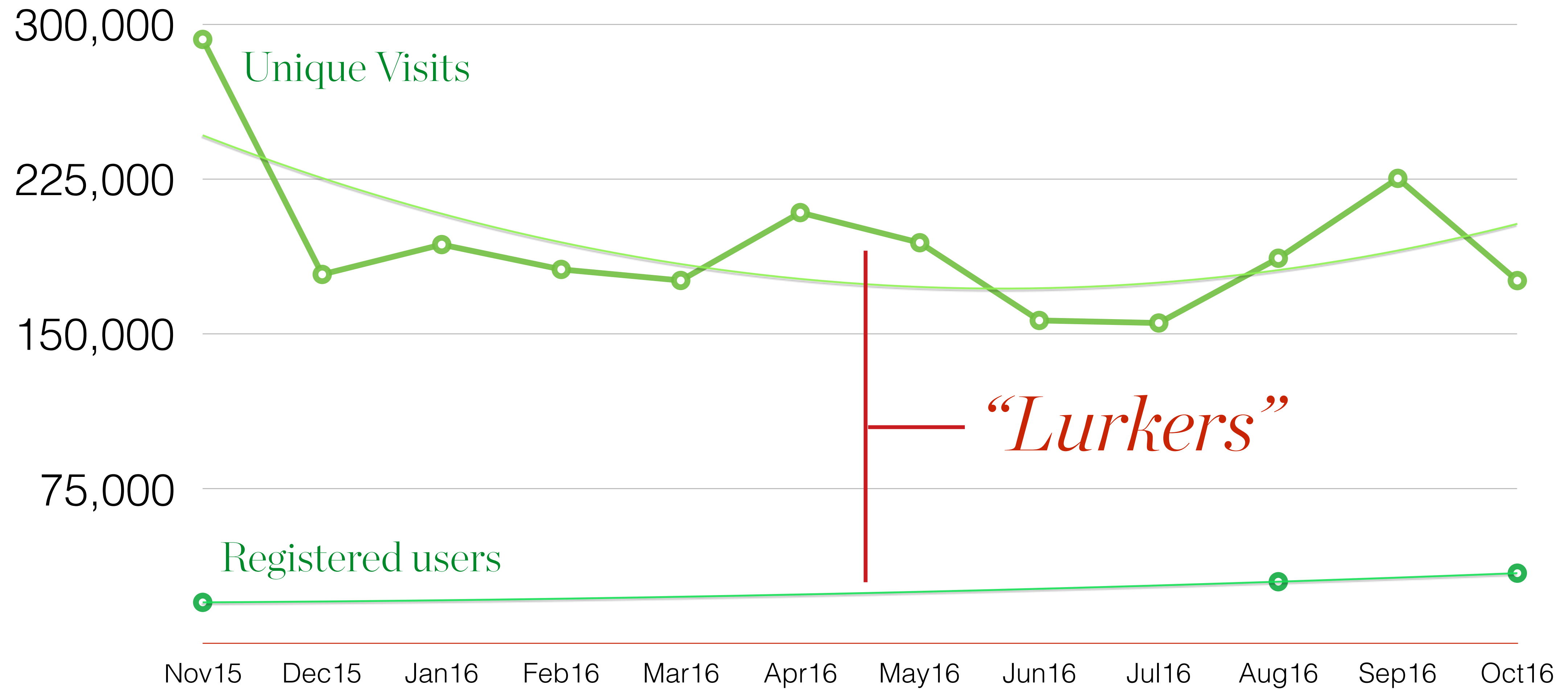
Registered Users Versus Unique Visits



Registered Users Versus Unique Visits



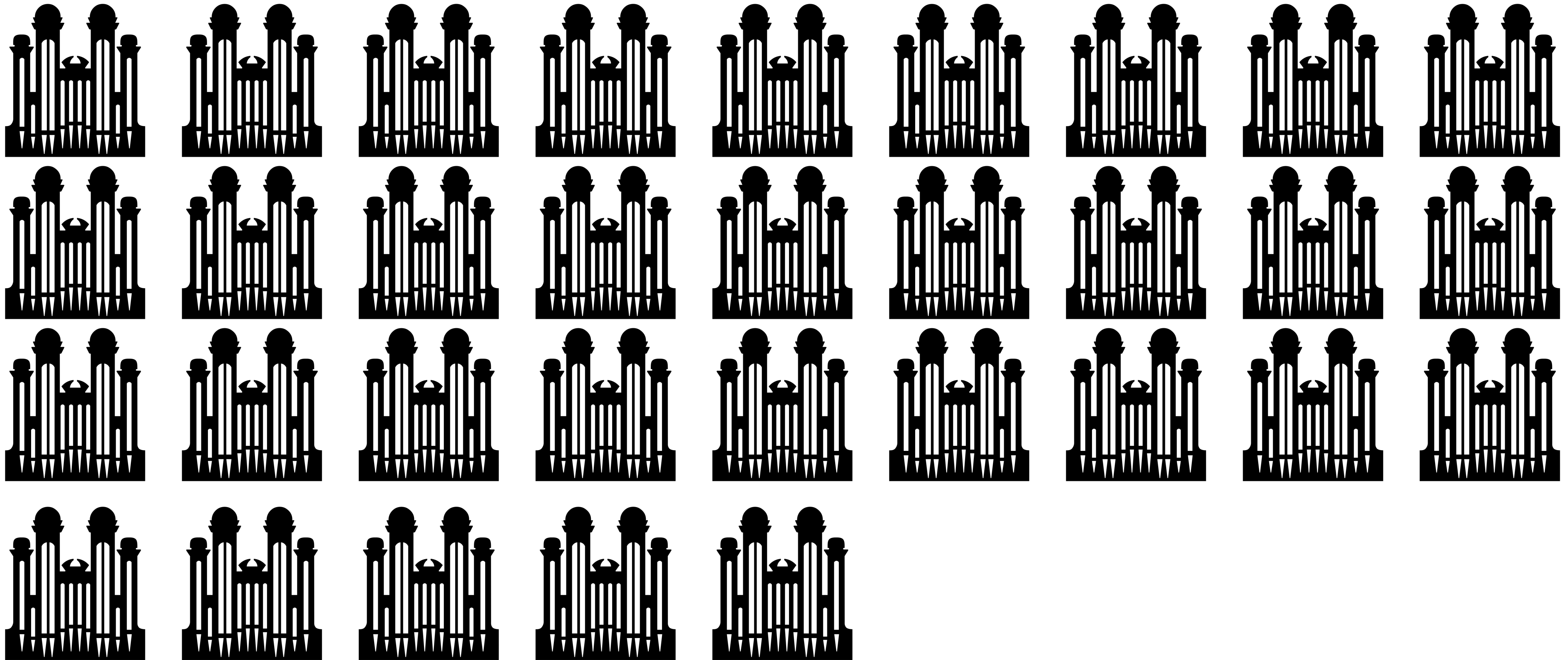
Registered Users Versus Unique Visits



September 2016 r/exmormon unique visits
225,322

September 2016 r/exmormon unique visits

225,322



Page Views

5,000,000

3,750,000

2,500,000

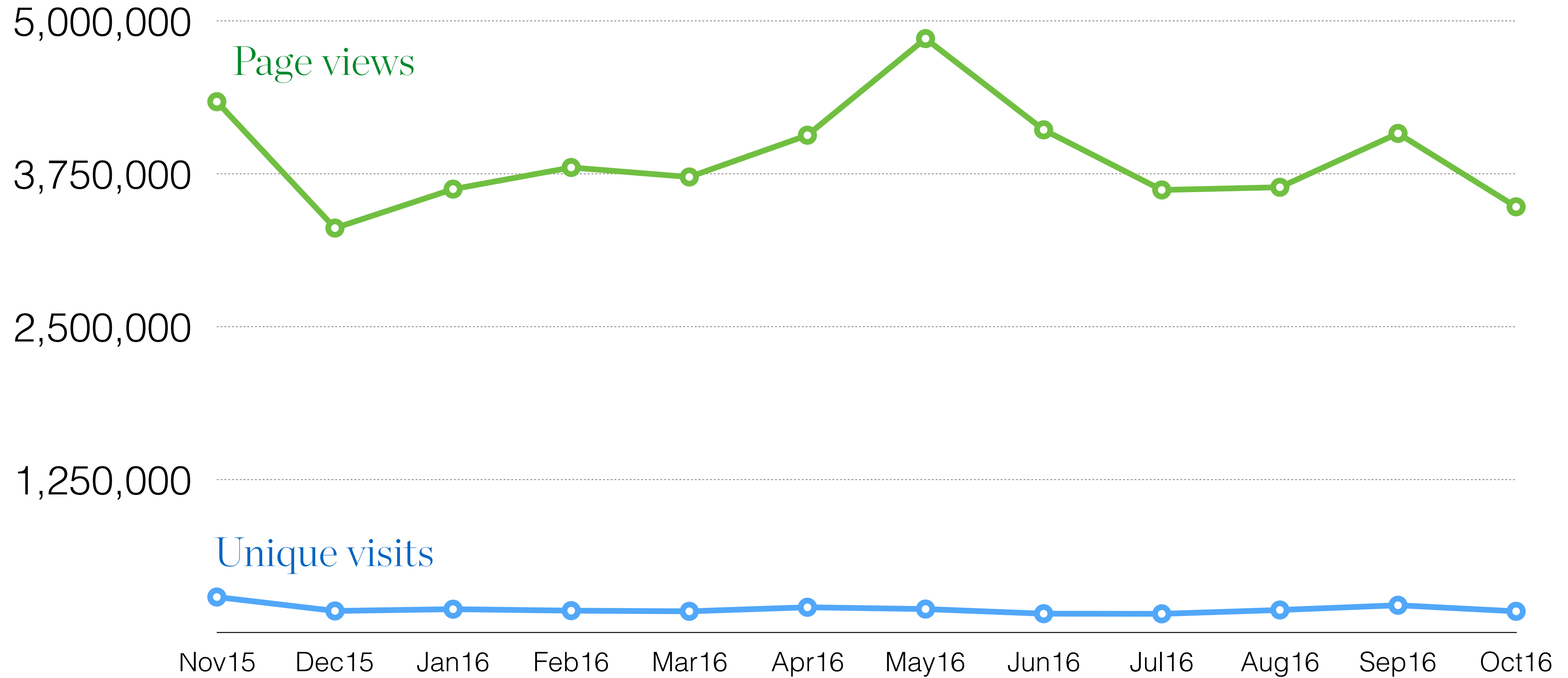
1,250,000

Unique visits

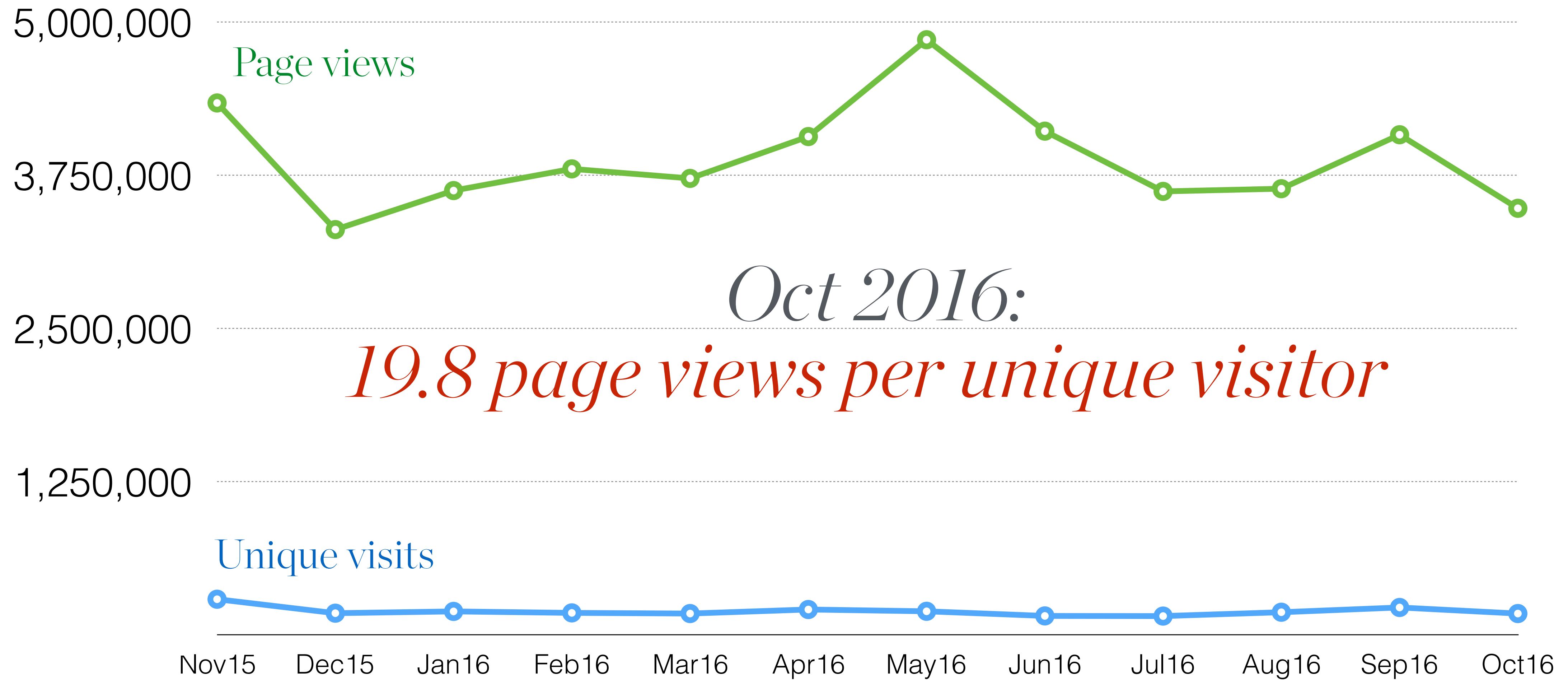
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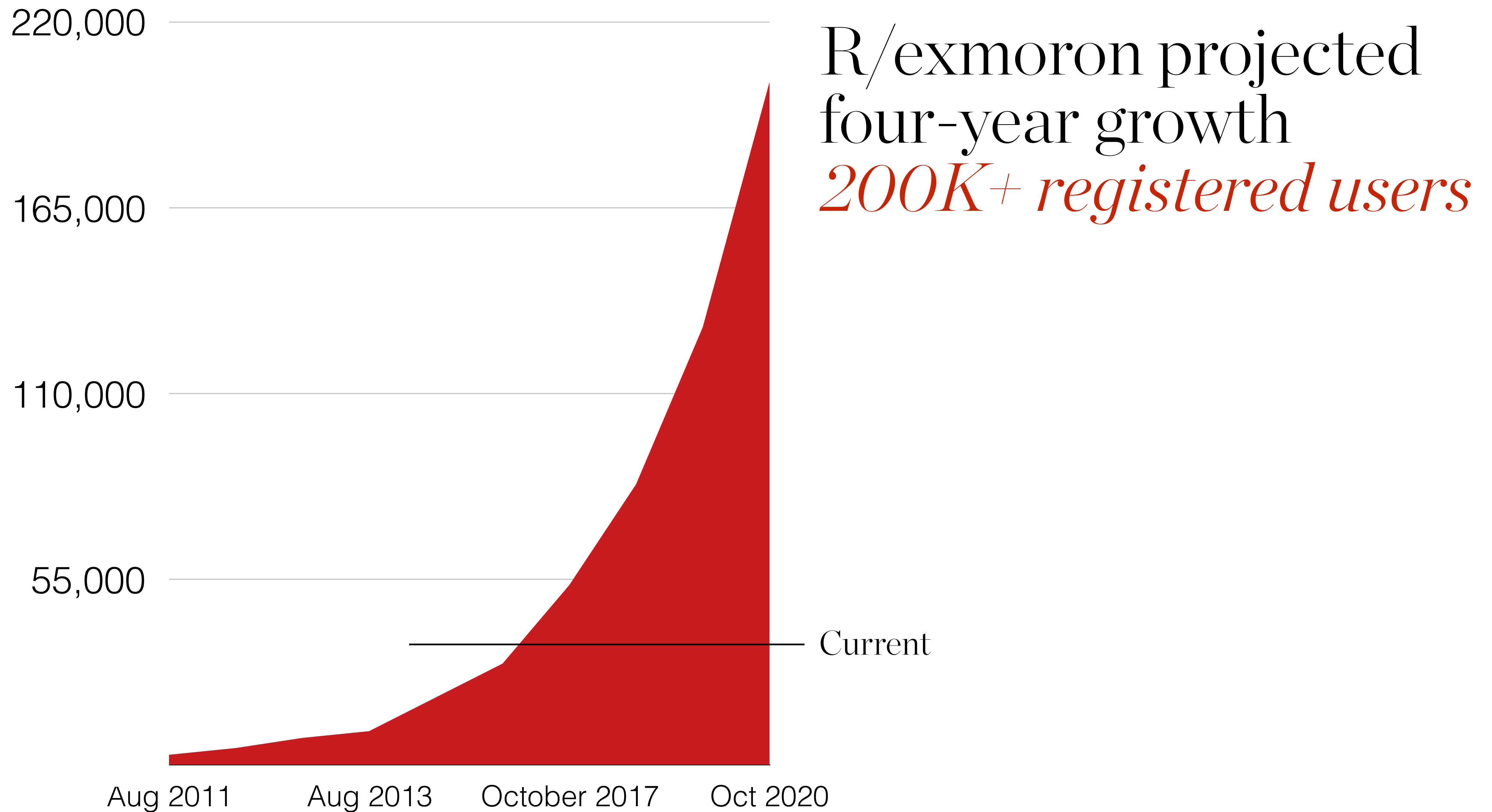


Page Views



Page Views





CONCLUSIONS

Through social media, hundreds of thousands of additional active members will become questioning and secular members.

The long-term effects of these transitions will be substantial.

Our challenge is less about how well we
answer tough questions and more about
how we treat questioning, progressive,
and secular Mormons.