Findings: Kickstarter Data

I have been asked to report on my findings concerning a data set of Kickstarter data from 2009 to 2017. In addition to exploring certain aspects of the data, I was asked to analyze the visible trends in the data. My main focus has been what could possibly contribute to a Kickstarter project’s success or failure.

1. **What are three conclusions we can make about Kickstarter campaigns given the provided data?**
   1. In the United States, Music, Theater, and Film/Video campaigns are more likely to be successfully funded that any other parent category. The dataset provided also seems to say that Theater projects were some of the most popular projects to start up between 2009 and 2017, which might account for why they have the highest rate of success and also the highest rate of failure out of all the parent categories. Over 900 Theater projects were started between 2009 and 2017. 525 projects were successfully funded with 349 projects failed. This outpaces Music and Film/Television successes, with 490 Music successes and 261 Film/Televisions successes. Budget may have a large role to play in this, since theater productions usually operate on a community or small budget, making them easy to start and fund as opposed to Film/Television and Music projects, which require large production budgets for cast, equipment, expertise and technology.
   2. Demographic has a large role to play in the success or failure of certain projects. For example, in Great Britain, Theater productions are most popular start up projects and also have the highest rate of success, with 258 successes and 89 failures. While these numbers do not reflect the sheer number of projects begun in the US, they clearly show that people in Great Britain may favor theater projects over any other project in any parent category. This may be a result of the fact that the British still hold the institution of traditional theater in high regard.
   3. In the United States from 2009 to 2017, among the Theater sub-categories of theater spaces, plays, and musicals: plays were more likely to be started than any other sub-category of Theater on Kickstarter. However, among the theater sub-categories in the US from 2009 to 2017, theatrical spaces, plays, and musicals were 50% as likely to fund as they are to fail. For example, 85 musicals were Kickstarted between 2009 and 2017. 45 succeeded while 40 failed to fund. In addition to this information, there appears to be an overall decline in Theater projects started between January of 2016 and March of 2017. In the United States, this might coincide with the musical release of Hamilton, which has remained sold out since opening night on Broadway April 12, 2016.
2. **What are some of the limitations of this dataset?**
   1. Kickstarters often depend on reach, placement, and engagement with the event pages in order to succeed. Social media plays a major role in the success or failure of projects. Like GoFundMe and Patreon, Kickstarter projects with a large following on social media tend to carry that social media success into their project. For example, the band Avatar fully funded their Kickstarter project for their feature film *Avatar Country* in two hours. This is absolutely attributed to their extremely large international fanbase from previous albums and tours leading up to their current success with the Kickstarter. In light of this information, not having access to some social media KPIs drastically limits the conclusions we can draw about why a Kickstarter project succeeded or failed.
   2. I would also love to have seen a keyword set for each Kickstarter project. Each Kickstarter could have fallen into a set of keywords to describe their project to go along with blurbs. Those keywords could then be sorted according to whether or not their campaign succeeded or failed. Just glancing through some of the blurbs of the Kickstarter, I noticed some of the Kickstarters that exceeded their funding were creating art based on some sort of inclusiveness, such as a film about living with HIV, or a documentary about Native Americans.It can be reasonably assumed that certain content is favored over other types of content, which can directly impact whether or not there is a viable enough market for a Kickstarter to succeed. It’s hard to draw conclusions about what content is most likely to fund based on this data set.
   3. Also, tracking live statuses for data between 2009 and 2017 is not helpful, as by the time we are analyzing the data, a determination as to whether or not the funding succeeded or failed would already have been made. I would only be interested in the metrics for live accounts in the current month or quarter I am analyzing in. Having live project data in a dataset from more than a year ago is a moot point.
3. **What are some other possible tables/graphs we could create?**
   1. I created a pie chart on the fifth page of my assignment just to see what it would do. If one filters the data on country and state, takes the values of count of category and rows as category, one can filter down to a representation of each category based on success, failure, and cancelation. It’s interesting to see the relationship between the categories represented in a pie chart. However, it only works when filtering by the status of the campaigns. A bar chart is probably a better representation, though.
   2. A scatter plot could also be used to identify a trend in distribution of successful or failed projects over time in order to identify outliers quickly, like that one where the project was funded over 200% because its budget was $1**.**