Jasper Chou

Data Visualization Boot Camp

June 14, 2021

Homework #1

Kickstarter Data Set Analysis/Report

1. Given the provided data, what are three conclusions we can draw about Kickstarter campaigns?
2. What are some limitations of this dataset?
3. What are some other possible tables and/or graphs that we could create?

INTRODUCTION:

Kickstarter is an American crowd-funding platform that allows individuals to establish campaigns to solicit monetary donations or pledges to fund their project or enterprise. In return, campaign authors will reciprocate the donation for actual product or services they are developing to bring to market. Kickstarter has successfully help 203,483 projects with over $5.8 billion dollars pledged to projects on Kickstarter[[1]](#footnote-1). Over the course of Kickstarter’s establishment, more than 19 million people have pledged funds to Kickstarter projects since the platform’s launch in 2009[[2]](#footnote-2).

OBJECTIVE:

The dataset obtained from Kickstarter for this class has about six years of data (from May 17, 2009, to May 3, 2017) to analyze for trends and patterns. The dataset will allow us to draw conclusions, based on statistics derived from the dataset, about various Kickstarter campaigns (i.e., what works best and what doesn’t) over a nine-year period.

DATA:

Data obtained from Kickstarter includes the following:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ID:** (campaign identification) | **Goal:** (set funding goal for campaign) | **Pledged:** (amount pledged from backers) | **State:** (campaign status) | **Country:** (country where campaign originated) | **Currency:** (local currency used by backers) |
| **Deadline:** (end date of campaign) | **Launched\_at:** (start date of campaign) | **Staff\_Pick**  (Kickstarter highlighted campaign) | **Backers\_Count:**  (number of backers pledged funds to campaign) | **Spotlight:** (successful campaign highlighted by Kickstarter) | **Category & Sub-category:** (campaign classified according to project or service) |

Complete dataset is in the excel file associated with this report (Homework\_01\_Instructions\_StarterBook\_jc.xlsx).

ANALYSIS:

Based on Kickstarter’s dataset, we can state three obvious conclusions about Kickstarter campaigns:

1. Many successful campaigns are in the parent category of theater (839 successful campaigns), followed by music (540 successful campaigns), and film & video (300 successful campaigns)[[3]](#footnote-3). This isn’t unexpected due to the nature of Kickstarter’s audience and users, in addition to Kickstarter’s emphasis on artistic creativity. Although Kickstarter puts a lot of weight on fine arts, some parent categories appear to not do too well. Categories in food, publishing, photography, games, and technology have a higher proportion of failed campaigns within its category. Reason for these categories to fail is uncertain with the current dataset on hand.
2. Drilling down the categories, there are sub-categories that show a more granular view of which types of projects are successful. The data[[4]](#footnote-4) highly suggests that the sub-category “theatrical plays” are highly successful with over 694 successful campaigns. As mentioned earlier, music is also another highly successful category with sub-categories in the music genres of Rock and Indie Rock appear to have a higher success to failure ratios (i.e., more successful campaigns overall within the sub-category). Documentaries and Hardware development projects also have higher success to failure ratios.
3. Lastly, the dataset[[5]](#footnote-5) suggests that there could be a correlation between the number of campaigns and the time of year. Many campaigns seem to escalate before summer and the winter season. Many theatrical and musical events are scheduled during the summer and require some funding, which would account for the surge in Kickstarter campaigns. This may be true as well for productions planned during the holiday season. We see a decrease in campaigns once summer and winter are in progress. Reasons may vary as to why certain campaigns do well and others fail during these times. But one hypothesis is that lower desire to start new projects during the summer, and disposable income are more directed towards holiday spending (i.e., gifts and travel), with less emphasis on crowdfunded projects.

POST ANALYSIS:

The dataset gives a high-level view of campaigns, but it limited as to how granular the data can be used to determine some questions. Why are some campaigns being more successful than others and why do others fail? How does “Spotlight” effect overall success of the campaign? How does Kickstarter decide on which campaigns should be a “Staff Pick?” The high-level observation of the reduction of the dataset doesn’t answer some fundamental questions as to why some campaigns were “canceled” despite some of them reaching their established goal. The outliers in the dataset need to be addressed, which the dataset doesn’t provide good information.

Additional charts that show relationships between “Staff Picks” and the state of the campaign would be helpful to shed some light on why a campaign succeeds, fails, or canceled. A pivot-table that compares the length of a campaign to each category or sub-category to show whether a campaign lasting 30 days or less has a higher rate of success or does a campaign that has a duration greater than 30 days is more successful or bound for failure would also be helpful. Tables that show the average, standard deviation, and variance of specific campaign categories can also help in having a clearing view of the overall dataset.

1. ,2 https://www.kickstarter.com/help/stats?ref=global-footer [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Excel file Homework\_01-Excel\_Instructions\_Starterbook\_jc.xlsx; Sheet “*Pivot Category Campaign State.*” [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Excel file Homework\_01-Excel\_Instructions\_Starterbook\_jc.xlsx; Sheet “*Pivot Sub-Cat Campaign State.*” [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Excel file Homework\_01-Excel\_Instructions\_Starterbook\_jc.xlsx; Sheet “*Pivot Date-Created.*” [↑](#footnote-ref-5)