Kickstart My Chart Report

Question 1: Three Kickstarter Campaign Conclusions:

1. Slightly over 50% of campaigns (2185/4114) are successful. (Formula based on Number successful to Grand Total).
2. Music (77%), theater (60%), and film & video (58%) campaigns appear the most successful. Several other categories, including food, games, publishing, and technology are well below 50% successful. Journalism has no successful campaigns. Small sample of 24 but all cancelled!
3. Kickstarter is primarily a US phenomenon, with 74% of projects (3038/4114) and a slightly higher success rate (54.3% or 1651/3038) versus the rest of the world with 26% of projects and a 49.6% success rate (534/1076).
4. Bonus Conclusion from the Bonus Sheet! Percentage Successful seems to correlative higher with smaller project size. Goals of less than $1000 were 71% successful; goals of $50,000 or greater were 19% successful.

Question 2: Some Limitations of the Data Set

Whenever I see a data set like this, I always think “batting average versus slugging percentage.” For the most part this exercise focuses on batting average. While most of the stats that are the most obvious are Percent successful, average donation, etc., I think it is very important to look at the distribution of the campaigns a bit. For example, one really large campaign with a lot of backers probably has a higher chance of succeeding that one small campaign. However, if they both hit their fundraising goal, and one is $100 and one is $100,000, they are both “successful.” Finally, success in this case is getting funded, not in the end result of business success! Perhaps this implies that people give to Kickstarter for altruistic purposes more than financial ones. The larger projects are much less successful in percentage terms but much more significant as a percentage of funds raised (which is most important to Kickstarter, the true end user of this data)!

I also am always slightly skeptical of regional data given preferences, social norms, and laws. For example, if contributions were considered donations for tax purposes in the United States and not England, my hypothesis would be that more projects would be funded in the United States!

Finally, there are so many ways to dissect the data that I find there is the chance of getting confused by all the possible iterations.

Question 3: Other Tables & Graphs

Dovetailing on my comment above, I would love to look more into the distribution of successful projects by project size and dig into the Bonus section in more detail. The Bonus section just calculates Percentage successful. Given how much lower the success rate is for larger projects, if all the successful larger projects are in a given category, that is really meaningful. I would note 83% of the successful projects are under $15,000 (1803 of 2105 from the Bonus Section).

I also think some greater statistical analysis on these categories beside Percentage successful and Average donation would also be helpful. For starters, median donation would also be meaningful as it would normalize all the really small campaigns and the really large campaigns.

Also some analysis of the total funds raised which would be another way to look at the “small project/higher success rate” phenomenon. The larger campaigns have a lower success rate but have raised a much higher percentage of total funds raised!