Kickstarter Analysis Report

By Nate Witte

1. First, looking at the timeline data, we see an interesting trend for successful campaigns versus unsuccessful and canceled campaigns. The amount of successful campaigns goes down later in the year, while the number of unsuccessful and canceled stay relatively the same. This could potentially be due to people saving money at the end of the year to pay for holiday gifts, or barely scraping by and waiting for their year-end bonus. These claims would both require more investigation before being sure they were true. But, either way, this finding would lead me to believe that if I wanted to start a kickstarter campaign, I would prefer to start it earlier in the year as opposed to later.

Second, looking at subcategory data, some categories have terrible track records for kickstarters. One such example is “Food Trucks,” which have not had a single successful campaign, having 120 fails and 20 cancels. Others of these include “animation”, “fiction,” and others.

Third, an extension of the previous point, there are categories that fare much better or worse than the average. For these, good categories include music and film/video, while bad categories include games and food. If I were thinking of starting a kickstarter, I would certainly check to see if my desired category is “good” or “bad.”

1. One limitation of this dataset is that it never mentions how the categories are set up. If the kickstarter campaigns self-select their categories and subcategories, then errors could happen and lead to worse performances. Secondly, this dataset never mentions other components of success, such as advertising. If someone tries really hard to promote their kickstarter, or if a celebrity mentions a kickstarter, then that project will have more success than projects that are just posted and nothing additional happens. In this scenario, the successful project was not due to its category or sub-category or time it was started, but due to outside forces. Another limitation of this dataset is that it doesn’t take into account what is happening in the world at the time of these campaigns. Maybe there’s a recession happening, or the stock market is doing poorly, so people are less likely to support a campaign. This again has nothing to do with the category/subcategory, but of outside forces.
2. One other table could be looking at time, including years. Instead of lumping all January’s together, we show a timeline for January 2009 to the present. This would allow us to see how the campaigns have performed throughout time. We could also look at different amounts of goals. For example, a project with a modest goal of $1000 would be in a “low” goal category, while a project asking for $250,000 would be in the “big” goal category. This would be interesting to look at because maybe one category would be more prone to fail than the others.