

Winning Space Race with Data Science

10 July 2025



Outline

- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Methodology
- Results
- Conclusion
- Appendix

Executive Summary

Summary of methodologies

- SpaceX Data Collection using SpaceX API
- SpaceX Data Collection with Web Scraping
- SpaceX Data Wrangling
- SpaceX Exploratory Data Analysis using SQL
- Space-X EDA DataViz Using Python Pandas and Matplotlib
- Space-X Launch Sites Analysis with Folium-Interactive Visual Analytics and Ploty Dash
- SpaceX Machine Learning Landing Prediction

Summary of all results

- EDA results
- Interactive Visual Analytics and Dashboards
- Predictive Analysis(Classification)

Introduction



Project background and context

SpaceX advertises Falcon 9 rocket launches on its website with a cost of 62 million dollars; other providers cost upward of 165 million dollars each, much of the savings is because SpaceX can reuse the first stage. Therefore if we can determine if the first stage will land, we can determine the cost of a launch. This information can be used if an alternate company wants to bid against SpaceX for a rocket launch.

Problems you want to find answers

In this capstone, we will predict if the Falcon 9 first stage will land successfully using data from Falcon 9 rocket launches advertised on its website.



Methodology

Executive Summary

- Data collection methodology:
 - Describes how data sets were collected
- Perform data wrangling
 - Describes how data were processed
- Perform exploratory data analysis (EDA) using visualization and SQL
- Perform interactive visual analytics using Folium and Plotly Dash
- Perform predictive analysis using classification models
 - How to build, tune, evaluate classification models

Data Collection

- Description of how SpaceX Falcon9 data was collected.
 - Data was first collected using SpaceX API (a RESTful API) by making a get request to the SpaceX API. This was done by first defining a series helper functions that would help in the use of the API to extract information using identification numbers in the launch data and then requesting rocket launch data from the SpaceX API url.
 - Finally to make the requested JSON results more consistent, the SpaceX launch data was requested and parsed using the GET request and then decoded the response content as a Json result which was then converted into a Pandas data frame.
 - Also performed web scraping to collect Falcon 9 historical launch records from a Wikipedia
 page titled <u>List of Falcon 9 and Falcon Heavy launches</u> of the launch records are stored in a
 HTML. Using BeautifulSoup and request Libraries, I extract the Falcon 9 launch HTML table
 records from the Wikipedia page, Parsed the table and converted it into a Pandas data frame

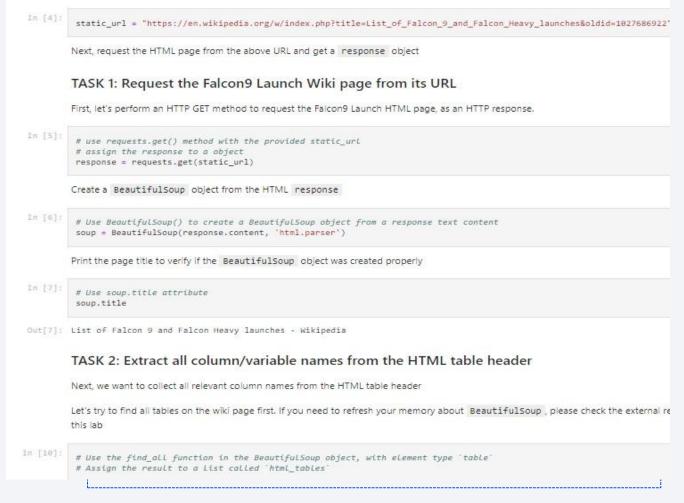
Data Collection – SpaceX API

 Data collected using SpaceX API (a RESTful API) by making a get request to the SpaceX API then requested and parsed the SpaceX launch data using the GET request and decoded the response content as a Json result which was then converted into a Pandas data frame



Data Collection - WebScraping

 Performed web scraping to collect Falcon 9 historical launch records from a Wikipedia using BeautifulSoup and request, to extract the Falcon 9 launch records from HTML table of the Wikipedia page, then created a data frame by parsing the launch HTML



Data Wrangling

- After obtaining and creating a Pandas DF from the collected data, data was filtered using the BoosterVersion column to only keep the Falcon 9 launches, then dealt with the missing data values in the LandingPad and PayloadMass columns. For the PayloadMass, missing data values were replaced using mean value of column.
- Also performed some Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA) to find some patterns in the data and determine what would be the label for training supervised models

TASK 4: Create a landing outcome label from Outcome column

Using the Outcome , create a list where the element is zero if the corresponding row in Outcome is variable landing class:

```
# Landing_class = 0 if bad_outcome
# Landing_class = 1 otherwise
df['Class'] = df['Outcome'].apply(lambda x: 0 if x in bad_outcomes else 1)
df['Class'].value_counts()

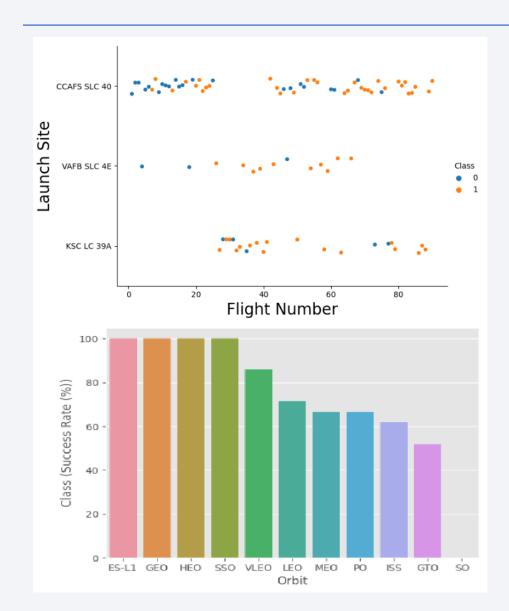
1 60
0 30
Name: Class, dtype: int64
```

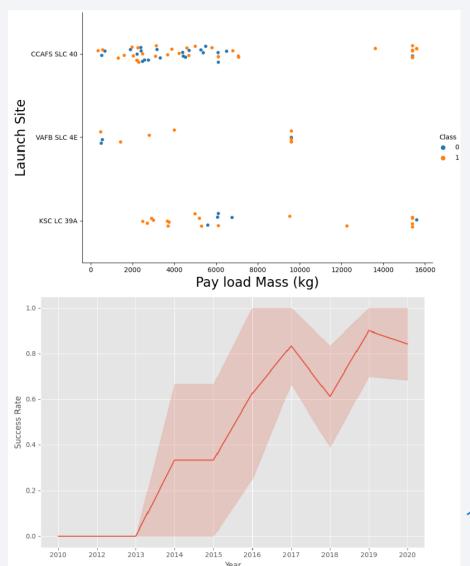
This variable will represent the classification variable that represents the outcome of each launch. If the first stage landed Successfully

EDA with Data Visualization

- Performed data Analysis and Feature Engineering using Pandas and Matplotlib.i.e.
 - Exploratory Data Analysis
 - Preparing Data Feature Engineering
- Used scatter plots to Visualize the relationship between Flight Number and Launch Site, Payload and Launch Site, FlightNumber and Orbit type, Payload and Orbit type.
- Used Bar chart to Visualize the relationship between success rate of each orbit type
- Line plot to Visualize the launch success yearly trend.

EDA with Data Visualization (Plots Cont....)





EDA with SQL

- The following SQL queries were performed for EDA
 - Display the names of the unique launch sites in the space mission

```
%sql SELECT DISTINCT LAUNCH_SITE as "Launch_Sites" FROM SPACEXTBL;
```

Display 5 records where launch sites begin with the string 'CCA'

```
%sql SELECT * FROM 'SPACEXTBL' WHERE Launch_Site LIKE 'CCA%' LIMIT 5;
```

Display the total payload mass carried by boosters launched by NASA (CRS)

```
%sql SELECT SUM(PAYLOAD_MASS__KG_) as "Total Payload Mass(Kgs)", Customer FROM 'SPACEXTBL' WHERE Customer = 'NASA (CRS)';
```

Display average payload mass carried by booster version F9 v1.1

```
%sql SELECT AVG(PAYLOAD_MASS__KG_) as "Payload Mass Kgs", Customer, Booster_Version FROM 'SPACEXTBL' WHERE Booster_Version LIKE 'F9 v1.1%';
```

EDA with SQL (Cont....)

• List the date when the first successful landing outcome in ground pad was achieved %sql SELECT MIN(DATE) FROM 'SPACEXTBL' WHERE "Landing Outcome" = "Success (ground pad)";

- List the names of the boosters which have success in drone ship and have payload mass greater than 4000 but less than 6000 (%sql SELECT DISTINCT Booster_Version, Payload FROM SPACEXTBL WHERE "Landing _Outcome" = "Success (drone ship)" AND PAYLOAD_MASS__KG_ > 4000 AND PAYLOAD_MASS__KG_ < 6000;)
- List the total number of successful and failure mission outcomes

```
%sql SELECT "Mission_Outcome", COUNT("Mission_Outcome") as Total FROM SPACEXTBL GROUP BY "Mission_Outcome";
```

Build an Interactive Map with Folium

- Created folium map to marked all the launch sites, and created map objects such as markers, circles, lines to mark the success or failure of launches for each launch site.
- Created a launch set outcomes (failure=0 or success=1).

Build a Dashboard with Plotly Dash

- Built an interactive dashboard application with Plotly dash by:
 - Adding a Launch Site Drop-down Input Component
 - Adding a callback function to render success-pie-chart based on selected site dropdown
 - Adding a Range Slider to Select Payload
 - Addeng a callback function to render the success-payload-scatter-chart scatter plot

SpaceX Dash App





Predictive Analysis (Classification)

- Summary of how I built, evaluated, improved, and found the best performing classification model
- After loading the data as a Pandas Dataframe, I set out to perform exploratory Data Analysis and determine Training Labels by;
 - creating a NumPy array from the column Class in data, by applying the method to_numpy() then assigned it to the variable Y as the outcome variable.
 - Then standardized the feature dataset (x) by transforming it using preprocessing.StandardScaler() function from Sklearn.
 - After which the data was split into training and testing sets using the function train_test_split from sklearn.model_selection with the test_size parameter set to 0.2 and random_state to 2.

Predictive Analysis (Classification)

- In order to find the best ML model/ method that would performs best using the test data between SVM, Classification Trees, k nearest neighbors and Logistic Regression;
 - First created an object for each of the algorithms then created a GridSearchCV object and assigned them a set of parameters for each model.
 - For each of the models under evaluation, the GridsearchCV object was created with cv=10, then fit the training data into the GridSearch object for each to Find best Hyperparameter.
 - After fitting the training set, we output GridSearchCV object for each of the models, then displayed the best parameters using the data attribute best_params_ and the accuracy on the validation data using the data attribute best_score_.
 - Finally using the method score to calculate the accuracy on the test data for each model and plotted a confussion matrix for each using the test and predicted outcomes.

Predictive Analysis (Classification)

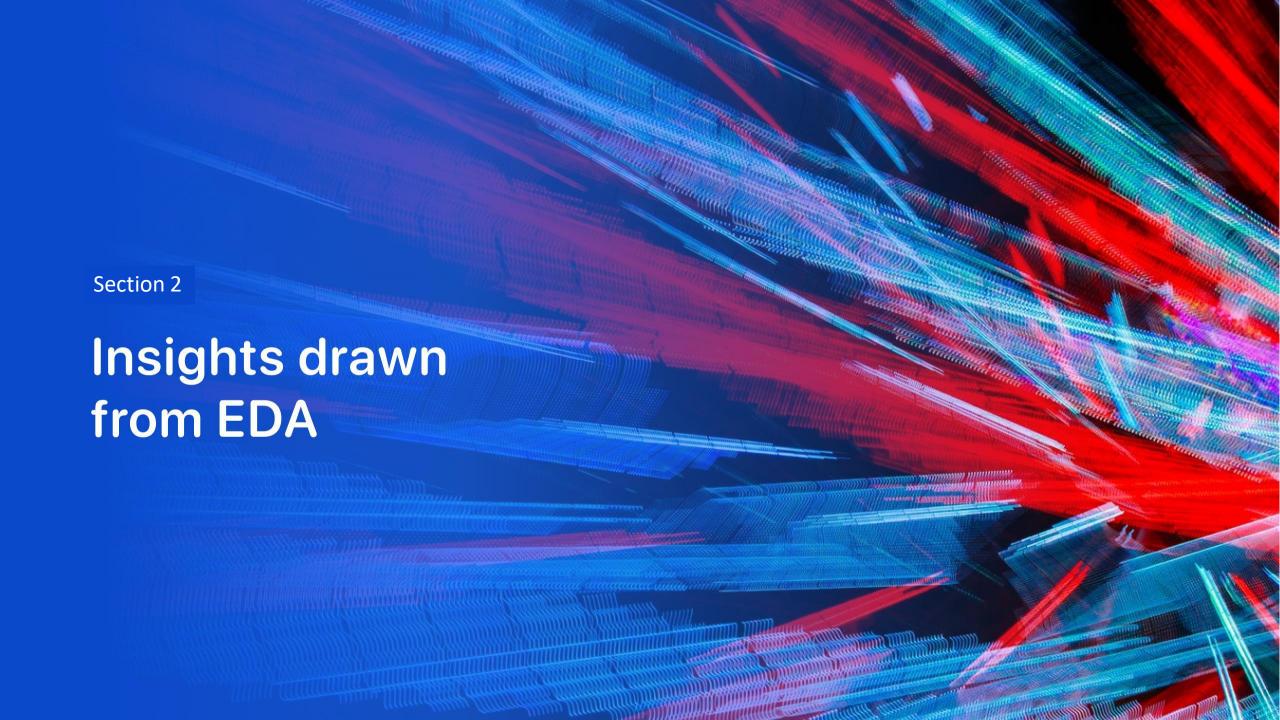
 The table below shows the test data accuracy score for each of the methods comparing them to show which performed best using the test data between SVM, Classification Trees, k nearest neighbors and Logistic

Regression;

ut[68]:		0
	Method	Test Data Accuracy
	Logistic_Reg	0.833333
	SVM	0.833333
	Decision Tree	0.833333
	KNN	0.833333

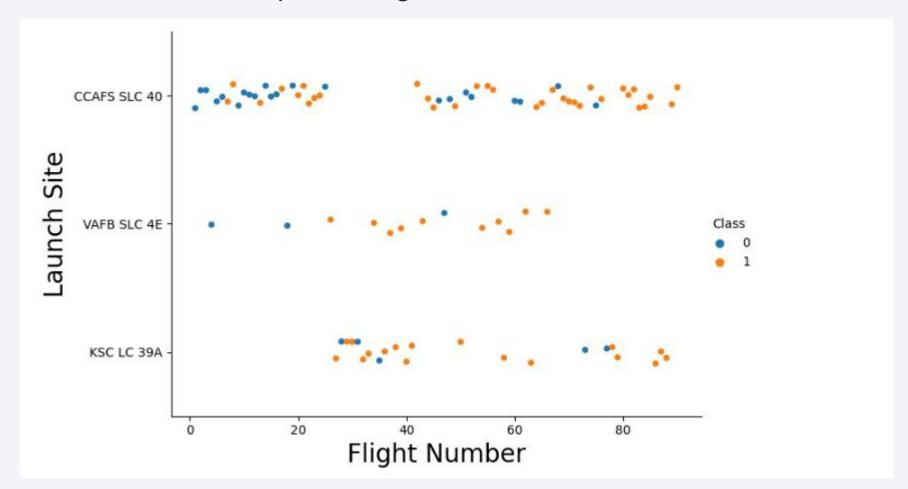
Results

- Exploratory data analysis results
- Interactive analytics demo in screenshots
- Predictive analysis results

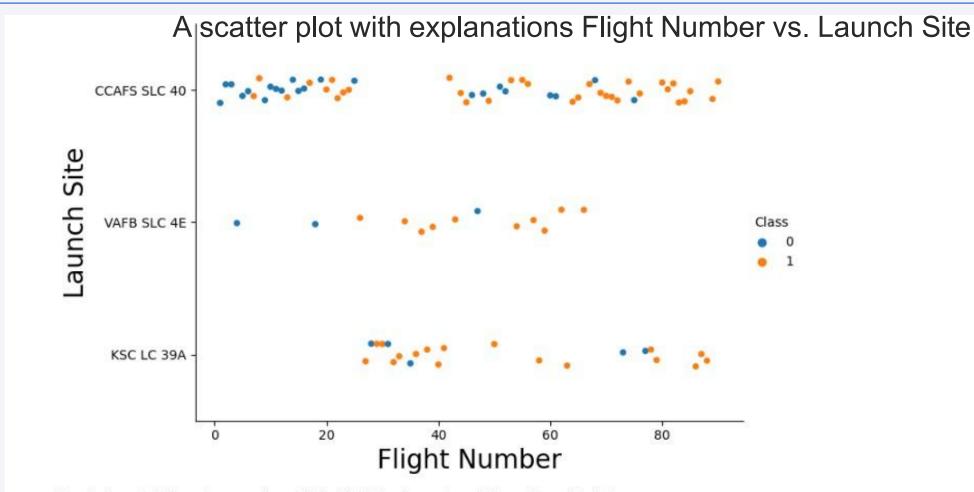


Flight Number vs. Launch Site

A scatter plot of Flight Number vs. Launch Site



Flight Number vs. Launch Site with explanations

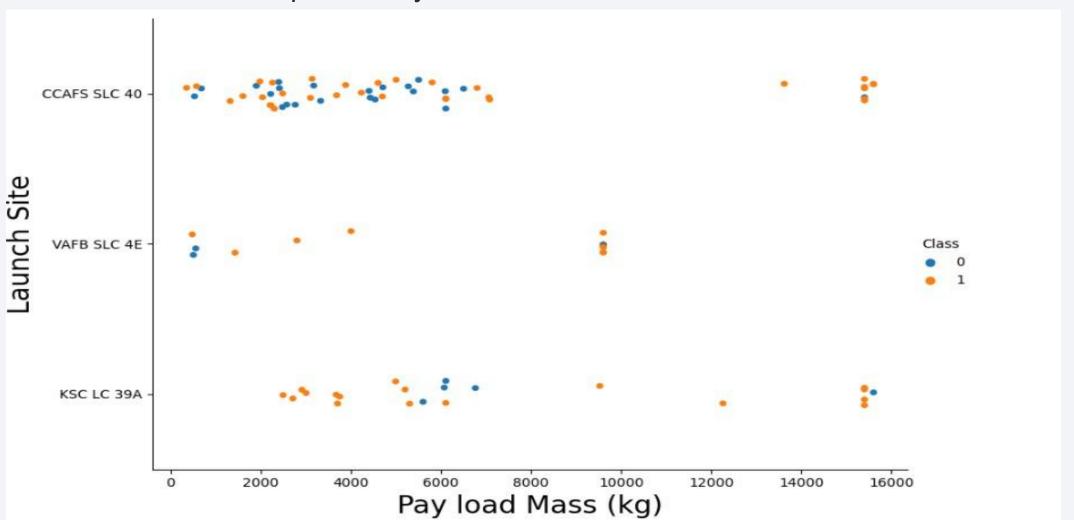


Now try to explain the patterns you found in the Flight Number vs. Launch Site scatter point plots.

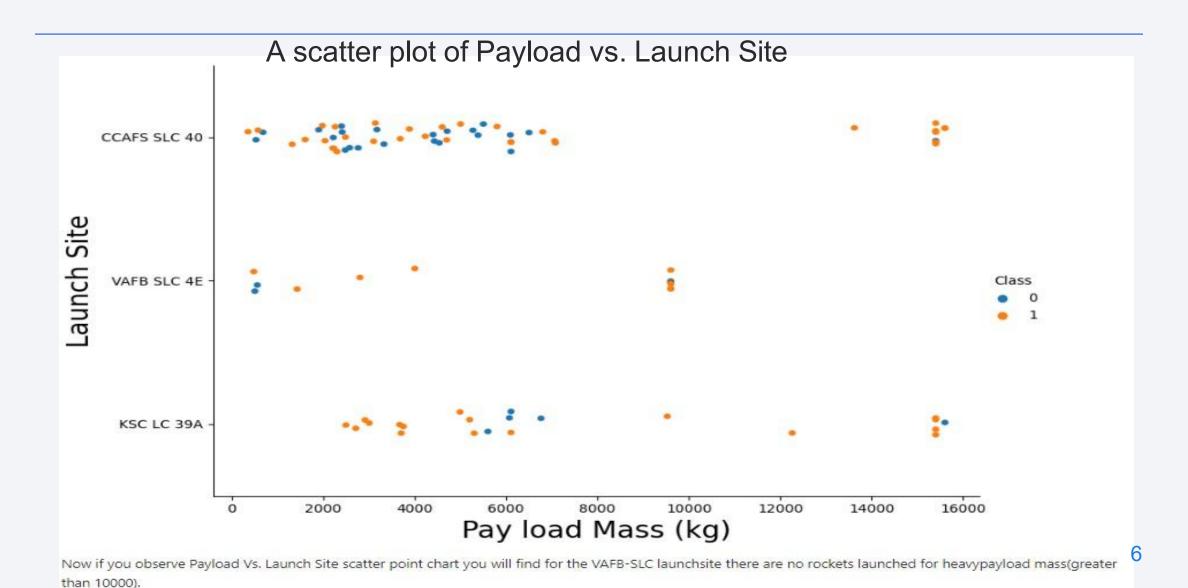
We can deduce that, as the flight number increases in each of the 3 launcg sites, so does the success rate. For instance, the success rate for the VAFB SLC 4E launch site is 100% after the Flight number 50. Both KSC LC 39A and CCAFS SLC 40 have a 100% success rates after 80th flight.

Payload vs. Launch Site

A scatter plot of Payload vs. Launch Site

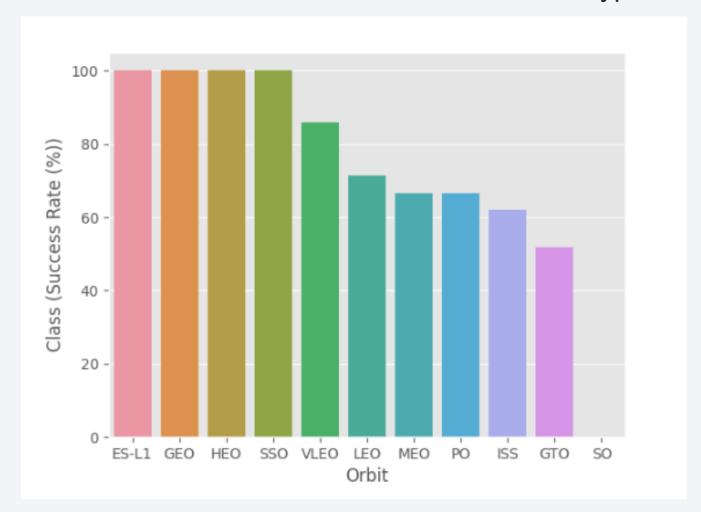


Payload vs. Launch Site with explanations



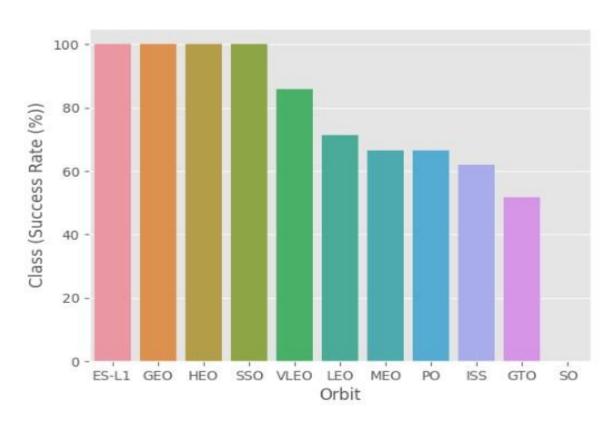
Success Rate vs. Orbit Type

Show a bar chart for the success rate of each orbit type



Success Rate vs. Orbit Type with explanations

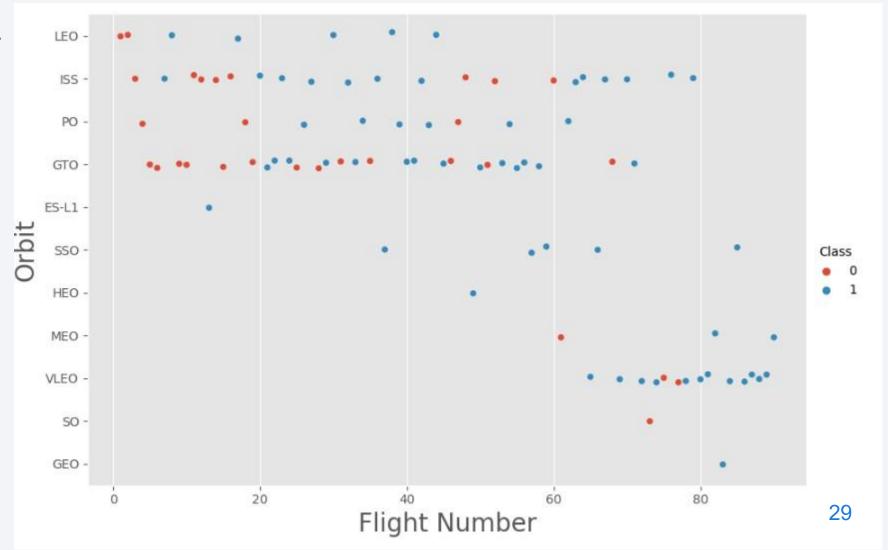
Show the screenshot of the bar chart with explanations



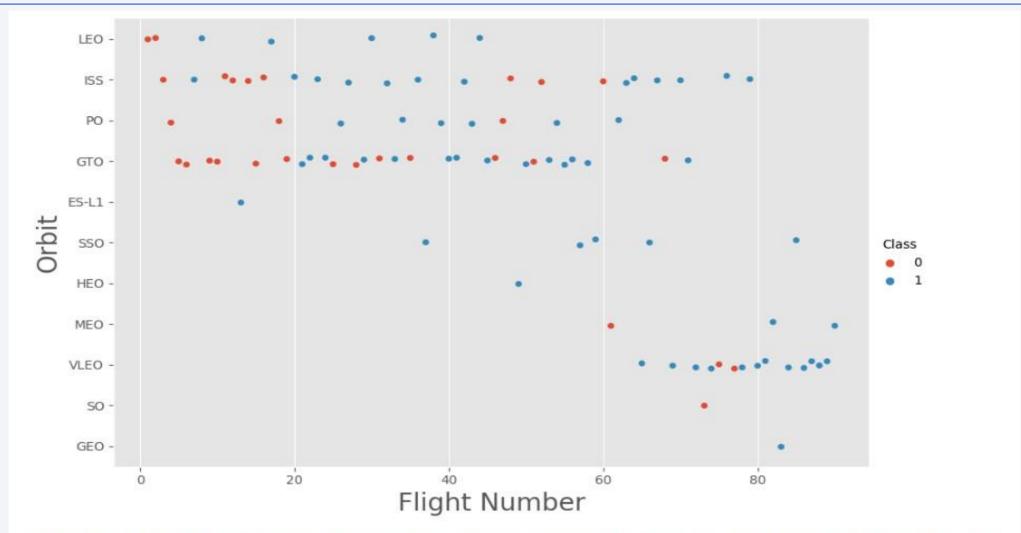
Analyze the ploted bar chart try to find which orbits have high sucess rate.

Flight Number vs. Orbit Type

 A scatter point of Flight number vs.
 Orbit type

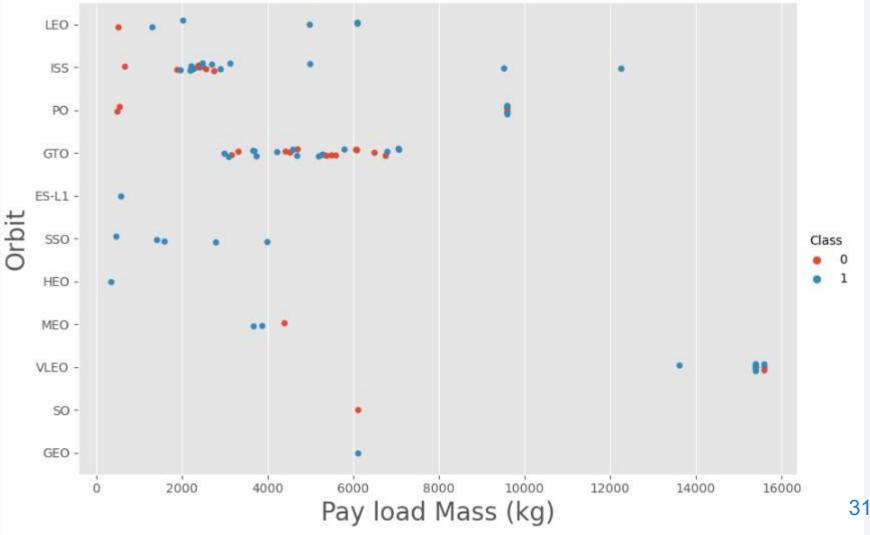


Flight Number vs. Orbit Typewith explanations



Payload vs. Orbit Type

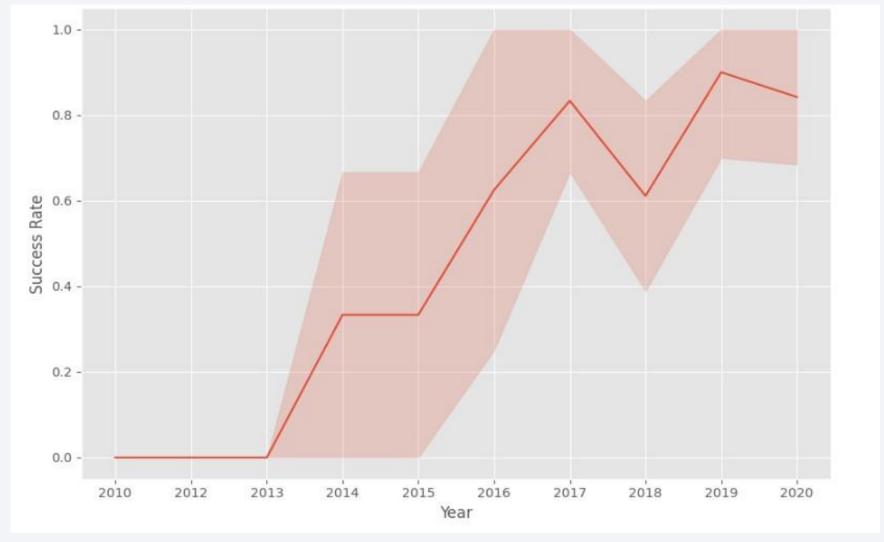
- With heavy payloads the successful landing or positive landing rate are more for Polar, LEO and ISS.
- However for GTO
 we cannot
 distinguish this well
 as both positive
 landing rate and
 negative
 landing(unsuccessfu
 l mission) both have
 near equal chances.



Launch Success Yearly Trend

 Since 2013, the success rate kept going up till 2020





All Launch Site Names

 Find the names of the unique launch sites

 Used 'SELECT DISTINCT' statement to return only the unique launch sites from the 'LAUNCH_SITE' column of the SPACEXTBL table

```
Task 1
          Display the names of the unique launch sites in the space mission
In [31]:
           %sql SELECT DISTINCT LAUNCH SITE as "Launch Sites" FROM SPACEXTBL;
           * sqlite:///my_data1.db
          Done.
Out[31]:
          Launch Sites
           CCAFS LC-40
           VAFB SLC-4E
            KSC LC-39A
          CCAFS SLC-40
```

Launch Site Names Begin with 'CCA'

• Find 5 records where launch sites begin with `CCA`

	Task 2 Display 5 records where launch sites begin with the string 'CCA' **sql SELECT * FROM 'SPACEXTBL' WHERE Launch_Site LIKE 'CCA%' LIMIT 5;												
[72]:													
	* sqlite:///my_data1.db Done.												
ut[72]:	Date	Time (UTC)	Booster_Version	Launch_Site	Payload	PAYLOAD_MASS_KG_	Orbit	Customer	Mission_Outcome	Landing _Outcome			
	04-06- 2010	18:45:00	F9 v1,0 B0003	CCAFS LC- 40	Dragon Spacecraft Qualification Unit	0	LEO	SpaceX	Success	Failure (parachute			
	08-12- 2010	15:43:00	F9 v1.0 B0004	CCAFS LC- 40	Dragon demo flight C1, two CubeSats, barrel of Brouere cheese	0	LEO (ISS)	NASA (COTS) NRO	Success	Failure (parachute			
	22-05- 2012	07:44:00	F9 v1.0 B0005	CCAFS LC- 40	Dragon demo flight C2	525	LEO (ISS)	NASA (COTS)	Success	No attemp			
	08-10- 2012	00:35:00	F9 v1.0 B0006	CCAFS LC- 40	SpaceX CRS-1	500	LEO (ISS)	NASA (CRS)	Success	No attemp			
	01-03- 2013	15:10:00	F9 v1.0 B0007	CCAFS LC- 40	SpaceX CRS-2	677	LEO (ISS)	NASA (CRS)	Success	No attemp			

• Used 'LIKE' command with '%' wildcard in 'WHERE' clause to select and dispay a table of all records where launch sites begin with the string 'CCA'

Total Payload Mass

Calculate and Display the total payload carried by boosters from NASA

 Used the 'SUM()' function to return and dispaly the total sum of 'PAYLOAD_MASS_KG' column for Customer 'NASA(CRS'

Average Payload Mass by F9 v1.1

Calculate the average payload mass carried by booster version F9 v1.1

Task 4 Display average payload mass carried by booster version F9 v1.1 %sql SELECT AVG(PAYLOAD_MASS__KG_) as "Payload Mass Kgs", Customer, Booster_Version FROM 'SPACEXTBL' WHERE Booster_Version LIKE 'F9 v1.1%'; * sqlite:///my_datal.db Done. Payload Mass Kgs Customer Booster_Version 2534.666666666665 MDA F9 v1.1 B1003

 Used the 'AVG()' function to return and dispaly the average payload mass carried by booster version F9 v1.1

First Successful Ground Landing Date

Find the dates of the first successful landing outcome on ground pad

Task 5

List the date when the first succesful landing outcome in ground pad was acheived.

Hint:Use min function

```
%sql SELECT MIN(DATE) FROM 'SPACEXTBL' WHERE "Landing _Outcome" = "Success (ground pad)";

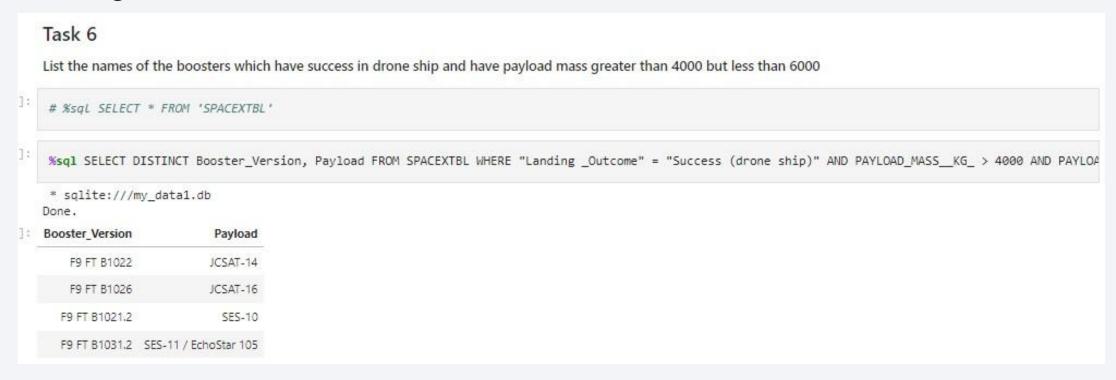
* sqlite://my_data1.db
Done.
MIN(DATE)
```

01-05-2017

• Used the 'MIN()' function to return and dispaly the first (oldest) date when first successful landing outcome on ground pad 'Success (ground pad)' happened.

Successful Drone Ship Landing with Payload between 4000 and 6000

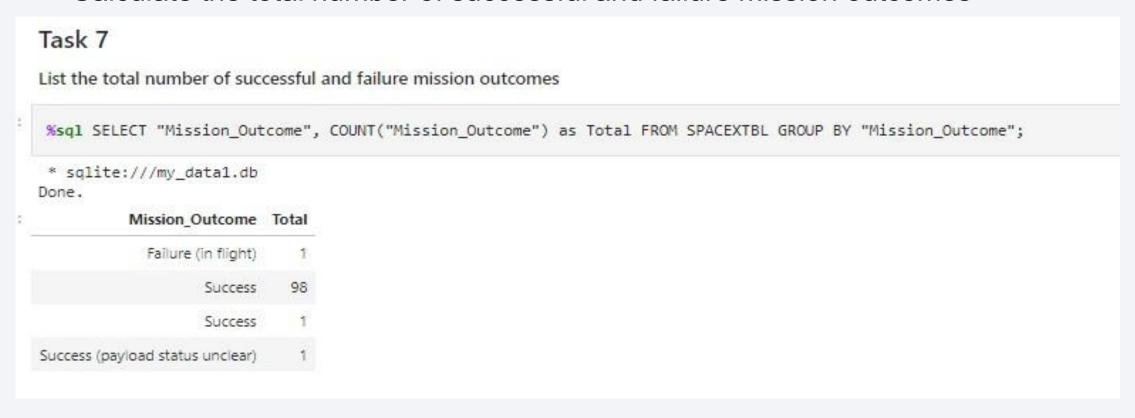
 List of Boosters which have successfully landed on drone ship and had payload mass greater than 4000 but less than 6000



• Used 'Select Distinct' statement to return and list the 'unique' names of boosters with operators >4000 and <6000 to only list booster with payloads btween 4000-6000 with landing outcome of 'Success (drone ship)'.

Total Number of Successful and Failure Mission Outcomes

Calculate the total number of successful and failure mission outcomes



 Used the 'COUNT()' together with the 'GROUP BY' statement to return total number of missions outcomes

Boosters Carried Maximum Payload

List of the boosters which have carried the maximum payload mass

* sqlite:///m Done.	ny_data1.db	
Booster_Version	Payload	PAYLOAD_MASS_KG
F9 B5 B1048.4	Starlink 1 v1.0, SpaceX CRS-19	15600
F9 B5 B1049.4	Starlink 2 v1.0, Crew Dragon in-flight abort test	15600
F9 B5 B1051.3	Starlink 3 v1.0, Starlink 4 v1.0	15600
F9 B5 B1056.4	Starlink 4 v1.0, SpaceX CRS-20	15600
F9 B5 B1048.5	Starlink 5 v1.0, Starlink 6 v1.0	15600
F9 B5 B1051.4	Starlink 6 v1.0, Crew Dragon Demo-2	15600
F9 B5 B1049.5	Starlink 7 v1.0, Starlink 8 v1.0	15600
F9 B5 B1060.2	Starlink 11 v1.0, Starlink 12 v1.0	15600
F9 B5 B1058.3	Starlink 12 v1.0, Starlink 13 v1.0	15600
F9 B5 B1051.6	Starlink 13 v1.0, Starlink 14 v1.0	15600
F9 B5 B1060.3	Starlink 14 v1.0, GPS III-04	15600
F9 B5 B1049.7	Starlink 15 v1.0, SpaceX CRS-21	15600

 Using a Subquerry to return and pass the Max payload and used it list all the boosters that have carried the Max payload of 15600kgs

2015 Launch Records

 List of failed landing outcomes in drone ship, with their booster versions, and launch site names in 2015

Task 9

List the records which will display the month names, failure landing_outcomes in drone ship ,booster versions, launch_site for the months in year 2015.

%sql SELECT	substr(Date,7,4)	, substr(Date,	4, 2),"Boo	ster_Version	", "Launch_Site", P	ayload, "PAYLOAD	_MASSKG_", "Mi
* sqlite:///							
substr(Date,7,4)	substr(Date, 4, 2)	Booster_Version	Launch_Site	Payload	PAYLOAD_MASS_KG_	Mission_Outcome	Landing _Outcome
2015	01	F9 v1.1 B1012	CCAFS LC-40	SpaceX CRS-5	2395	Success	Failure (drone ship)
2015	04	F9 v1.1 B1015	CCAFS LC-40	SpaceX CRS-6	1898	Success	Failure (drone ship)

• Used the 'subsrt()' in the select statement to get the month and year from the date column where substr(Date,7,4)='2015' for year and Landing_outcome was 'Failure (drone ship₁') and return the records nmatching the filter.

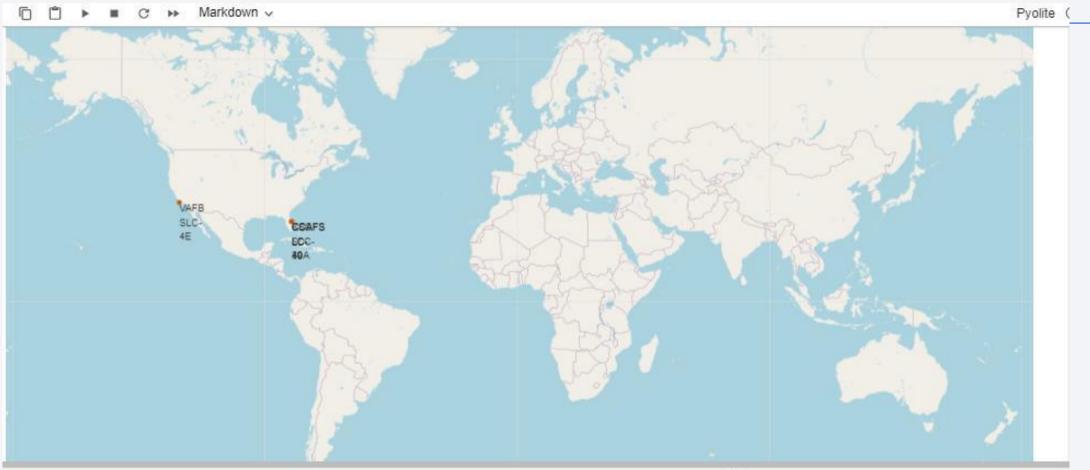
Rank Landing Outcomes Between 2010-06-04 and 2017-03-20

• Rank the count of landing outcomes (such as Failure (drone ship) or Success (ground pad)) between the date 2010-06-04 and 2017-03-20, in descending order

Task 1	0									
Rank the count of successful landing_outcomes between the date 04-06-2010 and 20-03-2017 in descending order.										
% sq1 S8	ELECT * F	ROM SPACEXTBL	WHERE "Landi	ng _Outcome" LIKE 'Suc	cess%' AND (Date BET	WEEN '0	4-06-2010' AND '20-03-2017	') ORDER BY Date D	ESC;	
* sqlite:///my_data1.db Done.										
Date	Time (UTC)	Booster_Version	Launch_Site	Payload	PAYLOAD_MASS_KG_	Orbit	Customer	Mission_Outcome	Landing _Outcome	
19-02- 2017	14:39:00	F9 FT B1031.1	KSC LC-39A	SpaceX CRS-10	2490	LEO (ISS)	NASA (CRS)	Success	Success (ground pad)	
18-10- 2020	12:25:57	F9 B5 B1051.6	KSC LC-39A	Starlink 13 v1.0, Starlink 14 v1.0	15600	LEO	SpaceX	Success	Success	
18-08- 2020	14:31:00	F9 B5 B1049.6	CCAFS SLC- 40	Starlink 10 v1.0, SkySat-19, -20, -21, SAOCOM 1B	15440	LEO	SpaceX, Planet Labs, PlanetIQ	Success	Success	
18-07- 2016	04:45:00	F9 FT B1025.1	CCAFS LC-40	SpaceX CRS-9	2257	LEO (ISS)	NASA (CRS)	Success	Success (ground pad)	
18-04- 2018	22:51:00	F9 B4 B1045.1	CCAFS SLC- 40	Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS)	362	HEO	NASA (LSP)	Success	Success (drone ship)	



Markers of all launch sites on global map



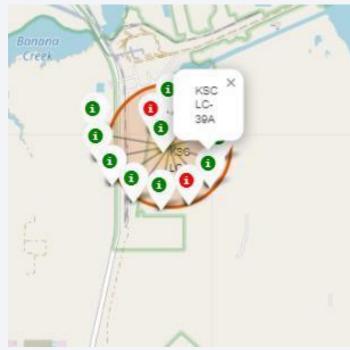
• All launch sites are in proximity to the Equator; (located southwards of the US map). Also all the laumch sites are in very close proximity to the coast.

Launch outcomes for each site on the map With Color Markers

Florida Sites



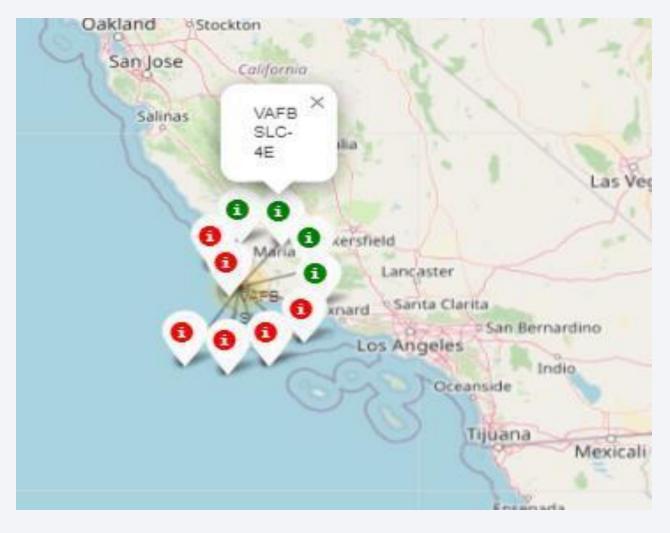




• In the Eastern coast (Florida) Launch site KSC LC-39A has relatively high success rates compared to CCAFS SLC-40 & CCAFS LC-40.

Launch outcomes for each site on the map With Color Markers

West Coast/ Carlifonia



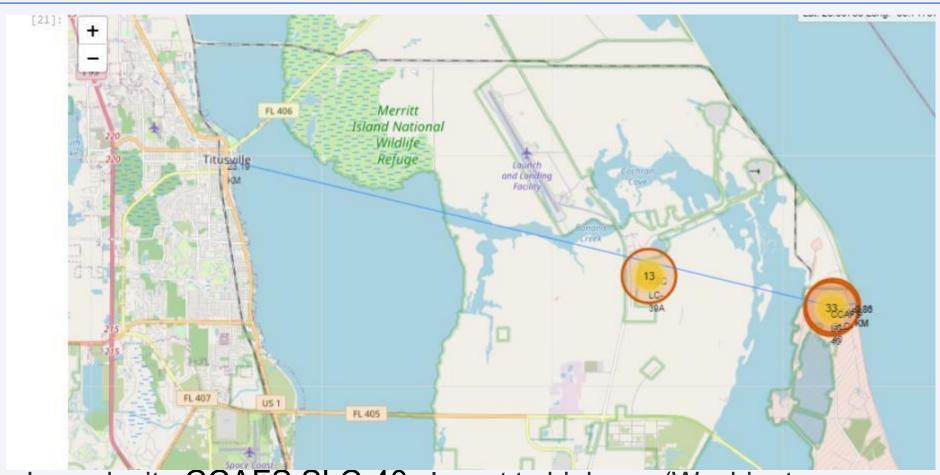
 In the West Coast (Californai) Launch site VAFB SLC-4E has relatively lower success rates 4/10 compared to KSC LC-39A launch site in the Eastern Coast of Florida.

Distances between a launch site to its proximities

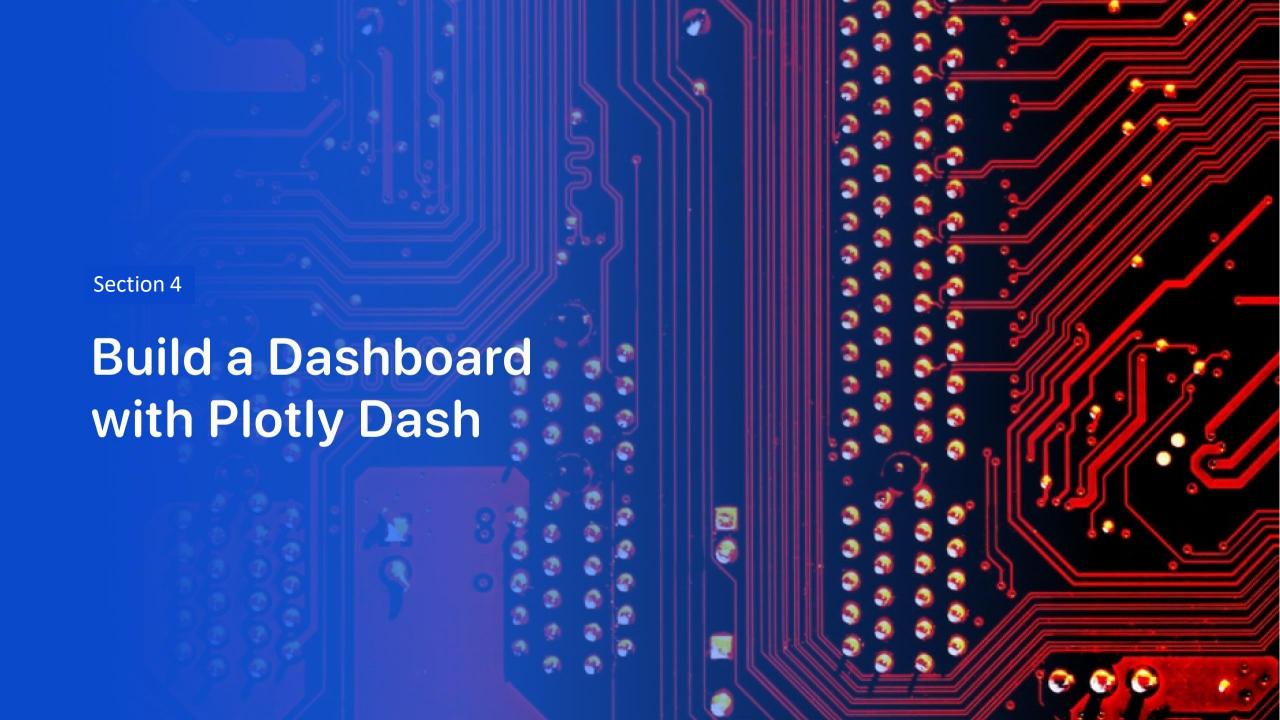


• Launch site CCAFS SLC-40 proximity to coastline is 0.86km

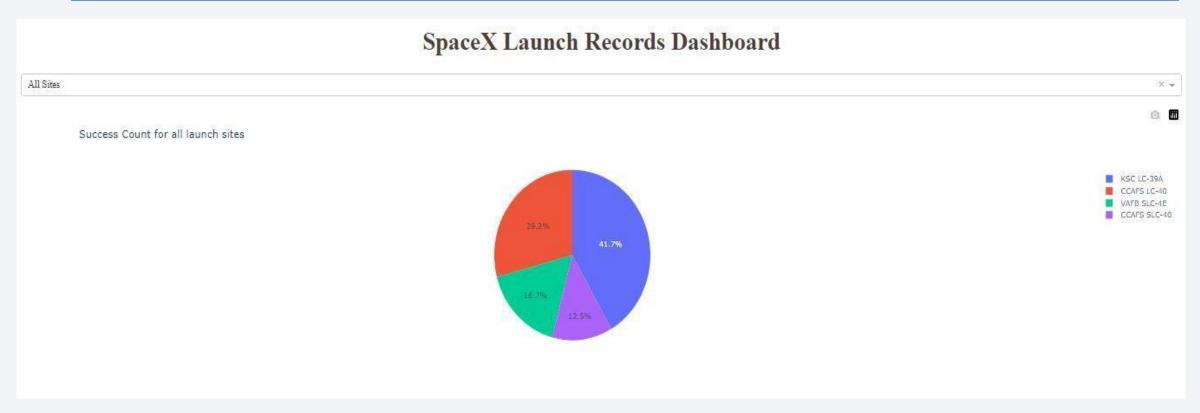
Distances between a launch site to its proximities



 Launch site CCAFS SLC-40 closest to highway (Washington Avenue) is 23.19km

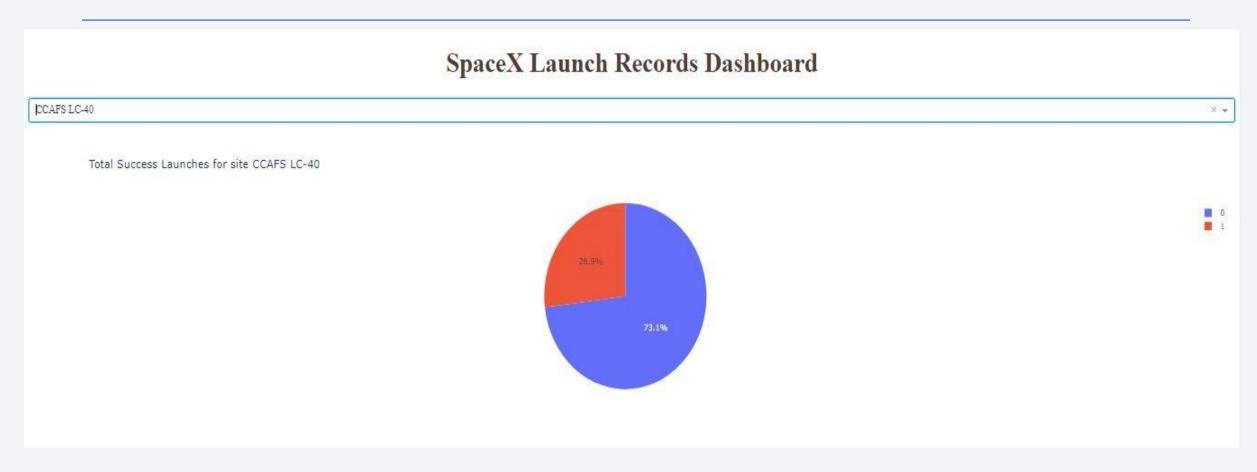


Pie-Chart for launch success count for all sites



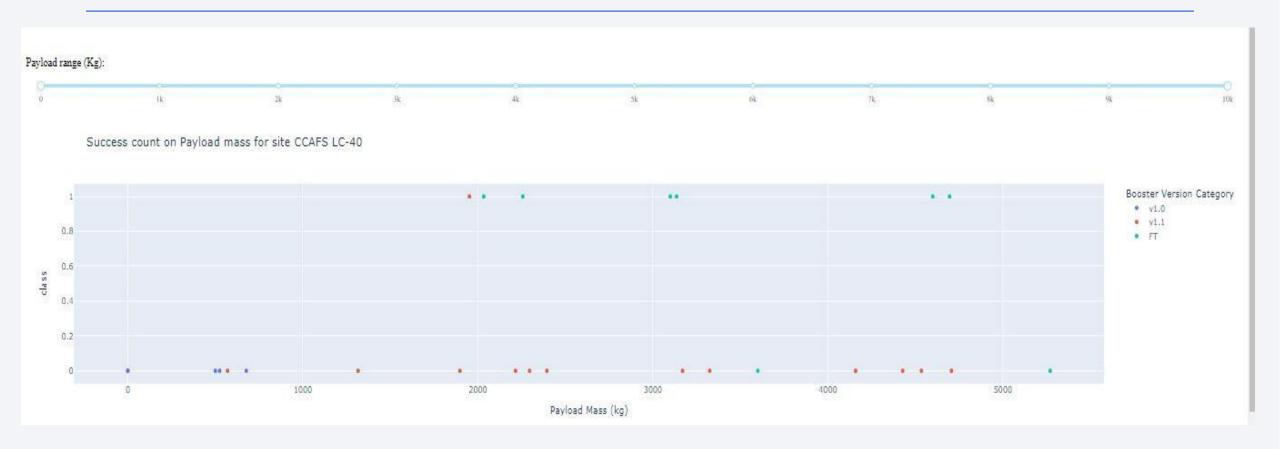
 Launch site KSC LC-39A has the highest launch success rate at 42% followed by CCAFS LC-40 at 29%, VAFB SLC-4E at 17% and lastly launch site CCAFS SLC-40 with a success rate of 13%

Pie chart for the launch site with 2nd highest launch success ratio



• Launch site CCAFS LC-40 had the 2nd highest success ratio of 73% success against 27% failed launches

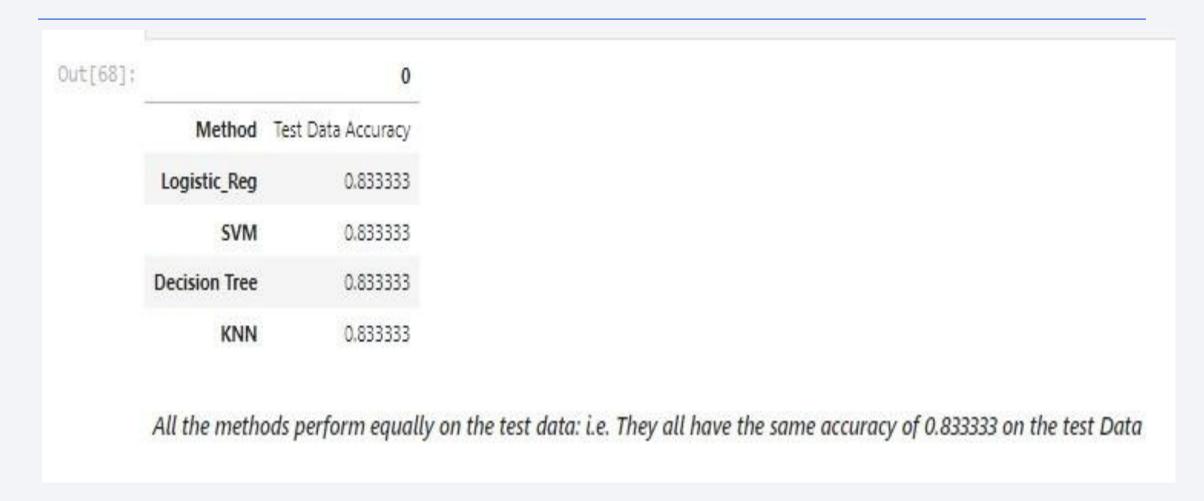
Payload vs. Launch Outcome scatter plot for all sites



• For Launch site CCAFS LC-40 the booster version FT has the largest success rate from a payload mass of >2000kg

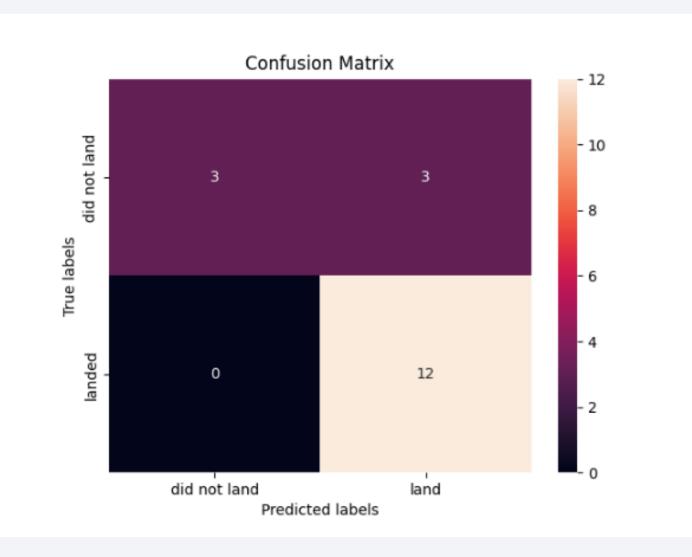


Classification Models Accuracy



Confusion Matrix

• All the 4 classification model had the same confusion matrixes and were able equally distinguish between the different classes. The major problem is false positives for all the models.



Conclusions

- Different launch sites have different success rates. CCAFS LC-40, has a success rate of 60 %, while KSC LC-39A and VAFB SLC 4E has a success rate of 77%.
- We can deduce that, as the flight number increases in each of the 3 launcg sites, so does the success rate. For instance, the success rate for the VAFB SLC 4E launch site is 100% after the Flight number 50. Both KSC LC 39A and CCAFS SLC 40 have a 100% success rates after 80th flight
- If you observe Payload Vs. Launch Site scatter point chart you will find for the VAFB-SLC launchsite there are no rockets launched for heavypayload mass(greater than 10000).
- Orbits ES-L1, GEO, HEO & SSO have the highest success rates at 100%, with SO orbit having the lowest success rate at ~50%. Orbit SO has 0% success rate.
- LEO orbit the Success appears related to the number of flights; on the other hand, there seems to be no relationship between flight number when in GTO orbit

Conclusions Cont....

- With heavy payloads the successful landing or positive landing rate are more for Polar, LEO and ISS. However for GTO we cannot distinguish this well as both positive landing rate and negative landing (unsuccessful mission) are both there here
- Anf finally the sucess rate since 2013 kept increasing till 2020.

