Kickstarter Analysis

1. Given the provided data, what are three conclusions we can draw about Kickstarter campaigns?

In general, campaigns that started with a lower initial goal were more likely to be able to successfully reach their goal. Campaigns that launched at the beginning of summer have been more likely to succeed than those that started later in the summer. Some product types rarely fail while others rarely succeed. For example, every board game campaign was successful, while every video game campaign failed to meet its funding goals. US based campaigns have been far more successful than international projects. Campaigns launched in December were more like to fail than succeed.

Motivated by the high rate of success of campaigns in 2011-2013, Kickstarted experienced an explosion in interest and new campaigns in 2014-2015. However, this explosion of campaigns meant that on average, campaigns were more likely to fail. Before the surge, about a third of campaigns failed, but in 2015, there were more campaigns failed or were canceled than those that succeeded.

1. What are some limitations of this dataset?

The data is not the most recent, so we do not know if the maximum funding year 2015 was when the service peaked in popularity or if it has grown further since. We do not know the distribution of backer’s amounts; we only know the average donation for each project. We do not know the distribution of the backer’s timing; it would useful to know how quickly interest peters out or if it builds over time.

1. What are some other possible tables and/or graphs that we could create?

We could explore the impact of being a “staff pick” or “spotlight”. We could compare the length of a campaign to how close it was to becoming successful.

1. Use your data to determine whether the mean or the median summarizes the data more meaningfully.

Because of how skewed the distribution of backers is, the mean is a better summary of the number of backers per campaign, whether we look at the set of campaigns that were successful or not. About 80 percent of campaigns had fewer than the “average” number of backers.

1. Use your data to determine if there is more variability with successful or unsuccessful campaigns. Does this make sense? Why or why not?

The variability in the number of backers was far greater in the set of successful campaigns than in the failed campaigns. I suspect this is because successful campaigns fell mainly into two categories: widely popular campaigns and campaigns with small, static goals—requiring fewer backers to succeed, while failed campaigns have a natural limit to the number of backers