Keith Jones Capstone Project: Introduction

One of the most recent rising trends in the world of so-called ‘experiential entertainment’ is the increase in popularity of going to ‘escape rooms’. Channeling the video game experience of searching through a virtual location and solving puzzles to collect needed objects, escape room experiences physically put small groups of people into a themed room that is filled with locks and puzzles that need to be solved somewhat sequentially so that the group can officially “escape the room”. Though still unknown to a large portion of the population, escape rooms are gaining in popularity. Due to low start-up/variable costs and strong margins, they can be an excellent business to enter into, as well. However, with growing popularity of them, these businesses seem to be popping up all over, and for someone to enter into this business market now the core question is one of whether or not the geographic market is already saturated, and what the level of saturation is.

This analysis will delve into several major US locations (Phoenix, Salt Lake City, and Houston) to analyze the venues in the neighborhoods of the most successful escape rooms (as measured by # of likes, since many escape rooms have not yet been rated on Foursquare), and determine what zip codes are similar to the zip codes of successful escape rooms, and how saturated those neighborhoods are relative to each other. This analysis can then be used to find if there are other neighborhoods that would be equally supportive of successful escape rooms that are not as saturated with escape rooms or are not currently being serviced by escape rooms, to help determine what might be strategic locations to open up a new escape room.