Three conclusions

Theater, music and film projects are the most successful categories on kickstarter, all with over 50% success rates. They also account for 64% of all projects. The most successful sub-category on kickstarter is plays. There were 1066 plays (26% of projects) and 694 succeed, a 65% success rate (compared to all of kickstarter at 53%).

Both the number of projects and the success rate varies widely across countries. The United States accounts for 75% of all projects (3,038), the next highest country is Great Britain at 604 (15%).

Tracking the number of prjects per year, kickstarter projects in 2014 surpassed those from 2009-2013 (907 vs 787). Success rate also decreased significantly (76% vs 51%). After 2014 success rate stayed near or below 50% and the number of projects per year hovered around 1,000. Based on the year data I would conclude that the increased popularity of kickstarter has led to an increase of lower quality projects.

Limitations

The data as it is structured has no way to identify the individual or company running the campaigns so there is no way to see if there are any correlations between number of campaigns and success/failure. There is clearly a large number of successful theater projects so either kickstarter is a great platform for theater funding or a few theater companies are using the platform very successfully to replace traditional fundraising. There is also no way to see if cancelled campaigns have been re-started after being rewritten.

3. Other possible graphs/data sets

Comparisons between Staff Picks and regular campaigns. Comparisons between successes/failures and number of backers (similar to the bonus chart of success/failure compared to goal amount). Average length of campaign per category/sub-category. Would be interesting to compare usage of kickstarter vs newer websites like gofundme which can also be used for charity purposes, to see if there were any declines in users or shifts in the categories. It would be interesting to compare success rate for first-time users to established users as well as how many repeat users there are.