Homework 1 – Excel Kickstarter spreadsheet

1. What are three conclusions we can make about Kickstarter campaigns given the provided data?

Based on the data, music- and theater-related Kickstarted campaigns have a significantly higher rate of success than campaigns related to food, technology and film/video. While more than 77 percent of the 700 music-related campaigns successfully reached their fundraising goals (and more than 60 percent of the 1,393 theater-related campaigns), 70 percent of food-related campaigns and more 63.64 percent of games-related campaigns failed to reach their targets.

When analyzing the data by sub-category, it becomes clear that Play-related campaigns are the driving factor for the high levels of success shown in the Theater parent category. Over 65 percent of more than 1,000 play-related campaigns successfully reached their funding goals, but only 45.5 percent of the campaigns in the spaces subcategory of Theater reached their funding goals.

As one might expect, the portion of Kickstarter campaigns across all categories that fail after 6 weeks is much greater than the portion that fail after the first 2 weeks. As campaigns carry on past four weeks or so, there appears to a large jump in the number of campaigns that are shuttered because they have not yet met their goal. It may be that those running the campaigns give up after about a month because they feel they have seen enough.

1. What are some of the limitations of this dataset?

Though they are more than 4,000 Kickstarter campaigns included in the data, there are still limitations stemming from the size of the dataset. For example, of those 4,000+ campaigns, there are only 24 journalism-related campaigns, making it difficult to draw any broad conclusions about campaigns in that subcategory. As such, I would be wary of making a statement like “All journalism-related campaigns fail,” even though all 24, in fact, failed.

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

I think it would be very helpful to create a graph that shows trends in the length of Kickstarter campaigns. Being able to view the data by category on a chart that showed the length and success of each campaign may point to some trends showing certain “lightning bolt” campaigns or categories that are highly successful in a short amount of time. There could be easily identifiable trends from these charts that show potential Kickstarter campaigns how to reach their fundraising targets.