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

Campaigns are highly dependent on promotion by staff picks. The average funding of campaigns in less popular categories jumps from 74 percent funding without staff pick promotion to 807 percent of the original goal with staff pick promotion. The dependence on staff picks promotion is further evidenced by a failure rate of 10.68 percent with an average funding percentage of 8.77 percent as compared to a failure rate of 1.34 percent with an average funding of 22.08 percent of the goal. This does not hold true given average values for the popular games and technology sections which contain significant outliers for campaigns that have not been backed by staff picks, resulting in over 4000 percent average funding of the original goal. Specifically, concerning the outliers, the technology and game categories contain campaigns not promoted by staff picks with a funding percentage of 2,260,300 percent and 930,250 percent funded over the original goal respectively. These outliers are obviously not legitimate attempts at crowdfunding but rather publicity generation as the campaigns needed a mere $1 to succeed.

Campaigns started in December and to a lesser extent, September are more likely to fail, while campaigns beginning in May have the highest success rate. December campaigns are the only month in which there are more failed campaigns than successes, featuring a mere success rate of 48.47 percent as compared to 58.82 percent for the year. September campaigns, with a success rate of 53.65 percent, are next lowest average, while May boasts the greatest success rate for campaigns at 65 percent. Given September being the start of the school year and December featuring Christmas, the increased failure rate of campaigns can be attributed to the lack of disposable income in those months, resulting in a campaign’s inability to pick up steam.

1. What are some limitations of this dataset?

The dataset fails to properly assess a campaign’s momentum. For example, a campaign could start strong and then falter at the end or the opposite, pick up momentum toward the tail end of the campaign. Furthermore, successful campaigns are more likely to gain more backers as they receive more publicity from other backers. Another limitation is the small sample size of certain categories creates more chance for error in any conclusion concerning that category. The dataset also does not have information on backer demographics, limiting our ability to accurately infer the cause of trends.

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

A scatterplot comparing length of each campaign to the percentage of goal met might result in clusters by category or similar findings.

A boxplot of each category’s success rate given staff pick status.