Report

1. The first observations I can make is that theater productions, particularly plays, are by far the most numerous Kickstarter projects. They also boast a higher than average funding success rate with 61% (total average of 54%). The most successful Kickstarter category is music with a 79% success rate, particularly rock music, which boasted a perfect 100% rate of being funded with a sample of 260 projects. Thus my first conclusion is that if you are a band or theater troupe, a Kickstarter project is a very attractive option for funding, especially with an upfront cost of zero and little effort required. On the flip side, technology Kickstarters only have a 35% chance of being successful, so if I were looking to back a cool new project in hopes of actually receiving the product, I would be very hesitant to throw my money towards a Kickstarter. The second conclusion I formed is that Kickstarter is really only popular in English speaking countries. The Anglosphere represented 94% of all projects and had a 54% success rate, compared to the rest of the world’s 34% rate. Lastly, the most successful time to create a kickstarter for your theater project is late spring – early summer but none of the other categories have specific times where the success rates spike. The biggest and most relevant conclusion I can make is that getting the spotlight makes or breaks your project, with Kickstarters that get the spotlight with the median project receiving 112% of their funding goals (and an average of 1763%!) and those without get a median 1.2% and average 21% of their goals.
2. One limitation is the limited sample sizes for certain categories. It might be hard to fully conclude anything with 24 Journalism projects or 194 Food projects, if you are looking at the success rates for these specific categories. Another limitation is the US heavy bias of the projects, a little over 3 quarters of the projects were in the US, meaning these results might not be reflective of other countries.
3. I would be curious to see the box and whisker plot for average donations by category and sub category, showing the variations of donations per category. You could also filter this data by country. Another potentially useful chart would be to chart success rate by category, and filter it by whether it got the staff pick or the spotlight. Both of those filters would give a big insight into what can be the difference between success and failure for a Kickstarter. One more chart would be to look at the scope of the goal versus how successful the Kickstarter was.