Our domain, evaluating the startup industry with regards to education, offices, investments, IPOs, and acquisitions has led us to discover various similarities and differences of “successful” and “unsuccessful” startups. By analyzing the results of our queries, we have achieved various conclusions from our data. It is important to note that correlation does not mean causation, and due to our deletion of data to reduce overload on the lab servers, we will not achieve holistically accurate results without further research or analysis.

Question 1: What effect does the background education (specifically post-secondary degree) of the startup members have on the success of the start-up?

For this question, we defined success of the start-up by how much money was invested in the company. We defined 2 categories (Above Average and Below Average) based on the average money that was invested in all companies which is 18673046$. Usually, we found that at the above average startups, there were more individuals who had higher education. This can be seen in our results in Label 6. However, the difference in employees with higher education is not large.

We also wondered which post-secondary majors lead to the greatest number of successful startups and we found they were Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, Economics and Business which can be seen from Label 11.

In addition, this led to a new question of whether or not startup employees work in companies that are similar to the subject area they got their degree. Specifically we were interested in the web industry. We found that the greatest number of people working in the web industry had degrees in Computer Science, Business, Electrical Engineering, and Economics respectively.

Question 2: What aspects (city, company type) lead to a successful start-up capable of being acquired?

As seen from Label 13, we found that the top 10 cities where the greatest number of startups get acquired are San Francisco, New York, Seattle, San Diego, Cambridge, London, Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Los Angeles, and Sunnyvale. It is interesting to note that 80% of these cities are in the United States of America, with 75% of those being in the state of California. The top “category” of startups that are the most likely to get acquired are web, game/video, advertising, mobile, and network hosting. This led to a follow up question regarding which aspects such as city, or company type that led to the closure of the company. We found that the cities that had the most start-ups getting acquired also had the most closures and the same for company type.

Question 3: Which investors consistently invested in startups that ended up being successful?

For this question, we defined success in a startup as a company that was acquired, or who have an IPO. From Label 24, we see that there are 132 investors that invested in startups that were successful, with notable investors being Sequoia Capital at 17 investments, Greylock Partners at 12, Draper Fisher Jurvetson at 11, First Round Capital at 10, and Mayfield Fun at 10. In total, over $3,995,950,000 was invested into successful startups, as seen in Label 25.

This enabled us to question what the average amount of money was invested into unsuccessful startups. Here, we defined unsuccessful startups as companies that were “closed”, and did not ever have an IPO. From Label 32, we see that from 18 ‘failed’ startups, the average amount invested in those startups was $17,327,777.78. In addition, we wanted to find which investors consistently invested in startups that ended up ‘failing’. Using Label 35, we see that there are 40 investors, with notable investors being Massachusetts Technology Development Corporation at 3 investments, SAS Investors at 3, CramerOnline at 3, and Venture Capital Fund of New England at 3.