



DATA Project

Welcome to play with real data!



Question

Suppose that you have a brilliant idea, and you believe that your idea can change the world.

But you need resources to implement the idea and turn it into reality. This may cost you hundreds of thousands of dollars.

But you do not have much money yourself. What should you do?





Question

If you have a rich dad, then ask him to fund you.

If you have a rich friend, then ask him/her to support you.

If you are famous in the industry, then you can seek help from venture capitalists or private equities.

But what should you do if you do not have any of the above?





Solution

Now, you have a new option: crowdfunding (in Chinese: “众筹”). Crowdfunding is the practice of funding a project or venture by raising small amounts of money from a large number of people, typically via the Internet.

Many hands make light work. ---English proverb





Understanding Crowdfunding






Product Categories in Kickstarter

Kickstarter supports almost all kinds of product categories including Art, Comics, Crafts, Dance, Design, Fashion, Film & Video, Food, Games, Journalism, Music, Photography, Publishing, Technology, and Theater.

Within each category, there are also several subcategories. For example, within the technology category, we have subcategories including gadgets, hardware, DIY electronics, flight, 3D printing, apps, camera equipment, etc.





Pebble Watch

Pebble Watch was a smartwatch developed by the Pebble Technology Corporation. Funding was conducted through a Kickstarter campaign running from April 11, 2012 to May 18, 2012, which raised \$10.3 million; it was the most funded project in Kickstarter history, at the time.

Let's visit Pebble Watch's initial crowdfunding webpage to know more about here. Click [here](#) to go.

Recall that it is in 2012.



Pebble Watch

PERSONAL TECH

The New York Times

GADGETWISE

A Smartwatch Gains Some Style, but Few New Tricks

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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Harvard
Business
Review

Pebble: Wearables Pioneer



Pebble Watch

In 2015, Pebble launched its second generation of smartwatches: the Pebble Time and Time Steel. The devices were similarly funded through Kickstarter, raising \$20.3 million from over 75,000 backers and breaking records for the site. See the Kickstarter webpage [here](#).


In 2016, Pebble shut down their subsequent Time 2 series watches and refunded Kickstarter backers, citing financial issues. It was purchased by Fitbit later.





Life on the Line


Cristian Barnett is a professional photographer living in Cambridge, England. Mr. Barnett was so fascinated with the Arctic Circle that in 2006 he started visiting the countries intersected by the circle. After seven years and a dozen trips to that area, he decided to create a book called *Life on the Line*, which would contain a selection of portraits he had taken over the years. See [here](#) for more details about the project.





“All-Or-Nothing”

Most crowdfunding platforms like Kickstarter strictly implements an “all-or-nothing” policy. That is, the creator (entrepreneur) must set up a target for the project. If the collected fund exceeds the target, the project is successful, and the creator uses the fund to run the project. Otherwise, the project fails, and all the money will be fully refunded to the investors (backers, consumers).





LEARNING ABOUT KICKSTARTER






THE DATA

I started to collect data from Kickstarter in its early age. At that time, crowdfunding was growing very fast, and many people wanted to figure out how crowdfunding really works.

I was one of the first a few people analyzing online crowdfunding using scientific methods.

Kickstarter has updated several times later and much of the data is no longer available to us. So the dataset is pretty unique.





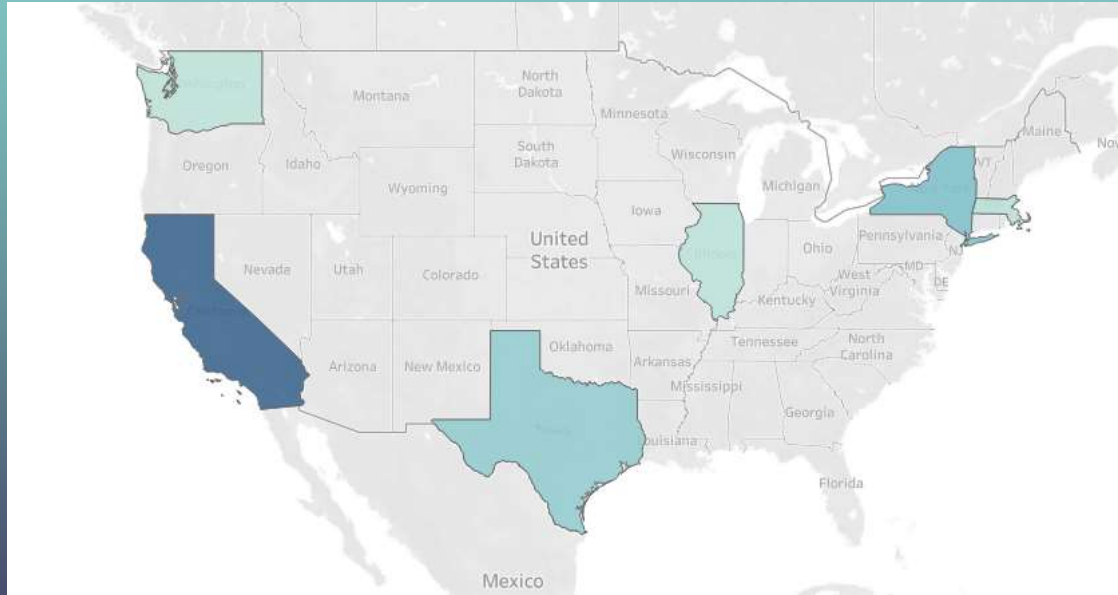
The Data is Available at the Course Website



Subtype



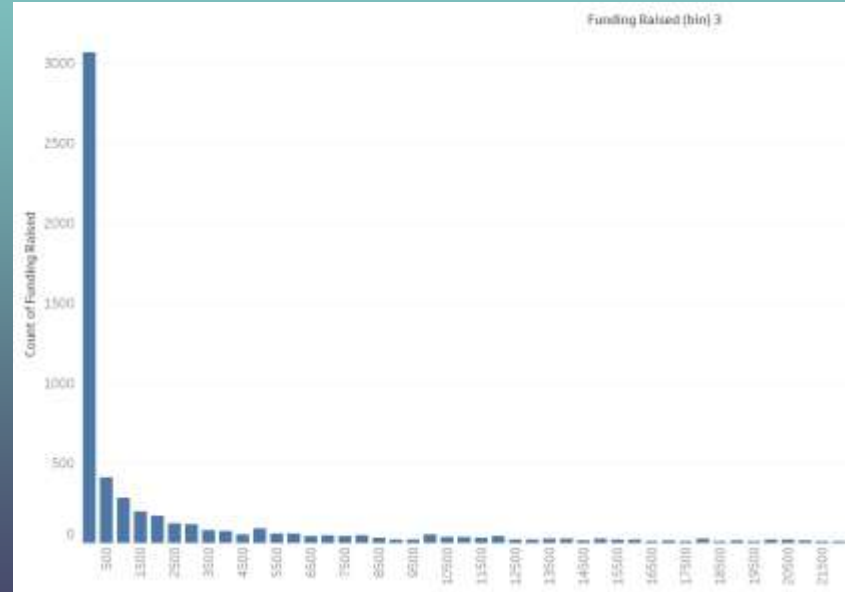
Location



The dataset covers projects from six US states: California (CA), New York (NY), Texas (TX), Massachusetts (MA), Washington (WA), and Illinois (IL).

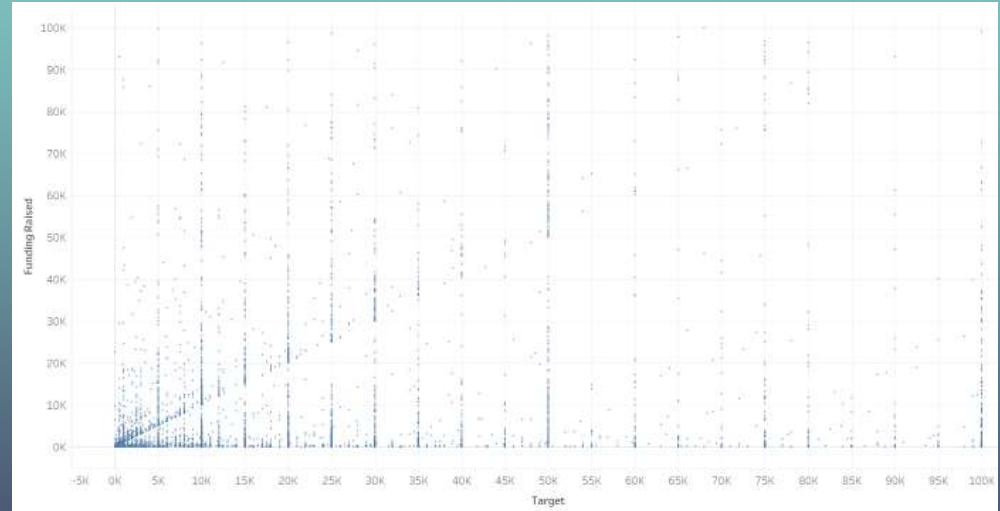
Total Funding Raised

The total funding raised by an individual project, measured by US\$. You can see from the histogram that the total funding raised is really an L-shaped distribution: Most projects received almost \$0 while some projects are very successful.



Target

At Kickstarter, each entrepreneur needs to specify a target for the project. The project is successful when the funds raised exceeds the target. Otherwise, the project fails and all the funds will be returned to the consumers.






Other Measures of Project Result

Outcome: Whether or not the project succeeded. It is a binary variable (1 = success, 0 = failure).

Backers: Number of people supporting the project. If you divide funding raised by the number of backers, you will get the average fund contributed by a backer.





Entrepreneurs' Personal History

Created: Number of projects created by the same entrepreneur in the past. For example, 4 means the same entrepreneur had already created another 4 projects on Kickstarter.

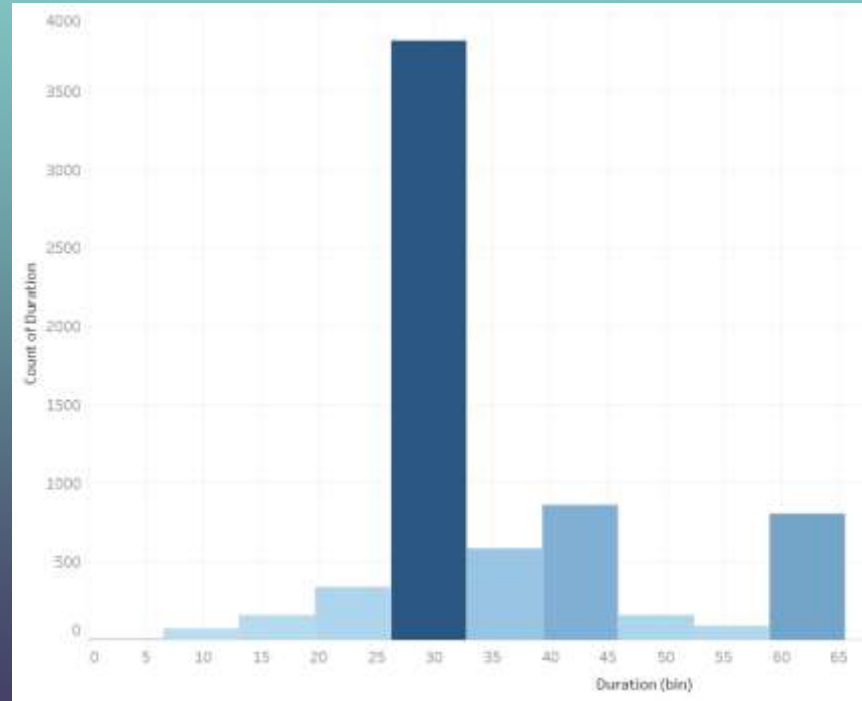
Backed: Number of projects backed by the same entrepreneur in the past (i.e., the entrepreneur supporting others' projects on Kickstarter).

FbNumber: Number of Facebook friends the entrepreneur has.

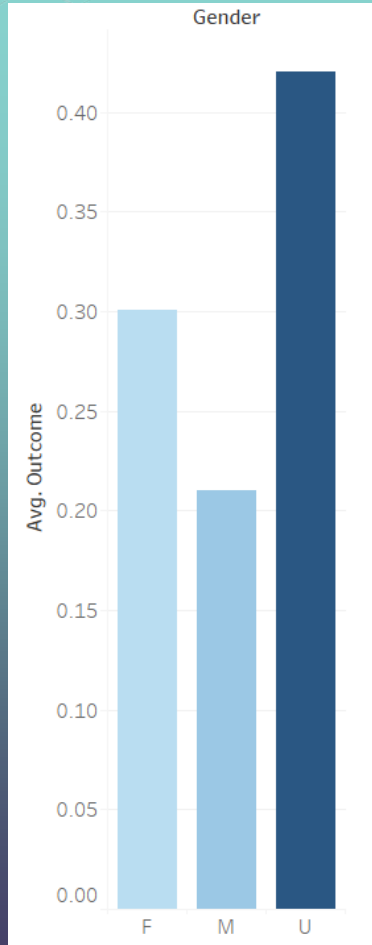


Duration

The duration of a project's fund raising period (in days). Most projects have a duration of around one month.



Gender



In the dataset, we have three genders: males, female, and unknown. The gender is obtained by analyzing the creators' first name. Unknow refers to the case in which the name cannot be identified (e.g., a team name such as “marketing”).




Some Other Variables

Video: Whether or not the project has a video. In the dataset, 76% of the projects have a video. Here, 1 means has video and 0 means no video.

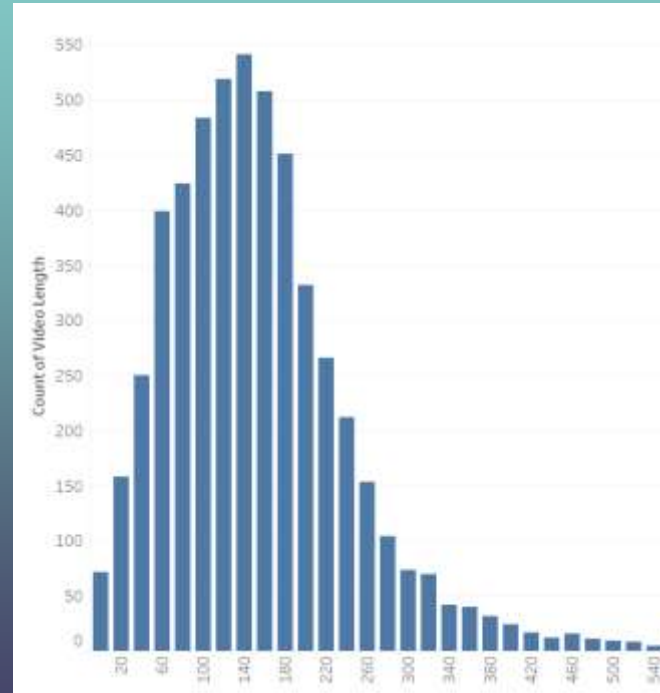
Human: Whether or not the project's video features human-beings (usually the entrepreneurs themselves). 1 means has human-beings and 0 means no human-beings. This variable is set to 0 if the project does not have a video.

Computer: Whether or not the project's video features a computer. 1 means has computers and 0 means no computers. This variable is set to 0 if the project does not have a video.



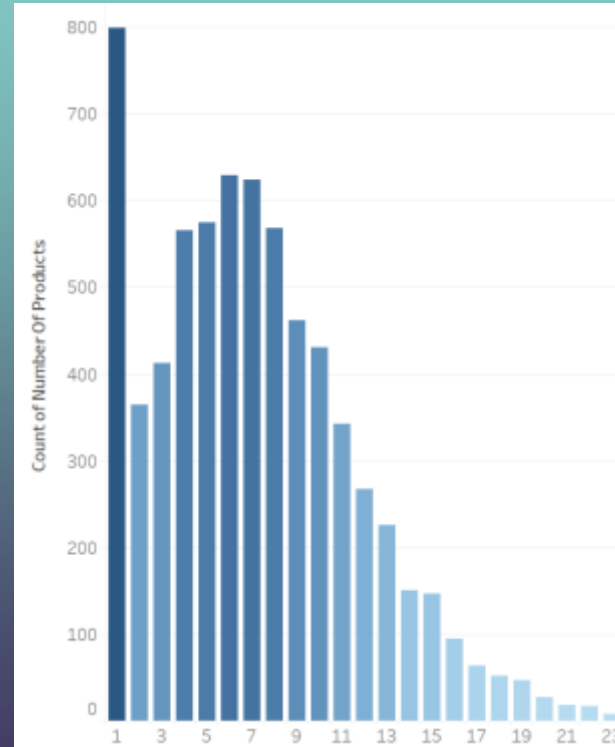
Some Other Variables

Video length: the duration of the video measured in seconds. For project without a video this variable is set to 0. The following is a histogram of video length (for projects with a video).



Some Other Variables

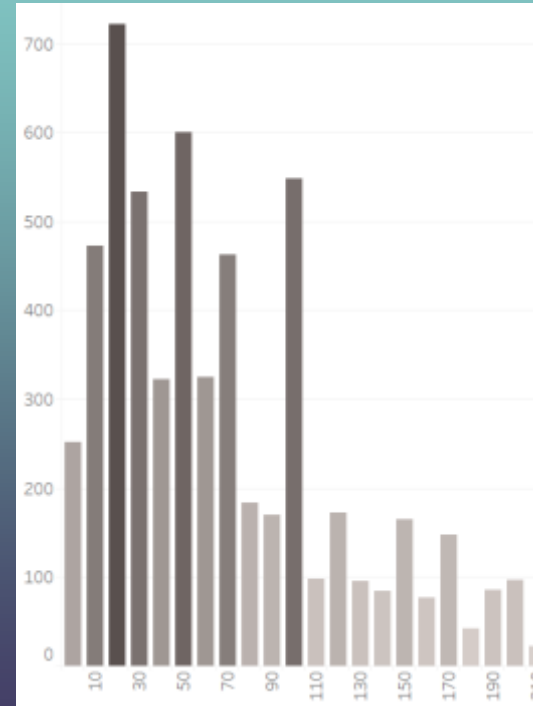
Number of Products: In a project the entrepreneurs often offer consumers a number of products to choose from. This variable measures how many products are offered in the project.



Some Other Variables

Price: A project may offer multiple products with different prices. Here, price means the median price among all product offerings.

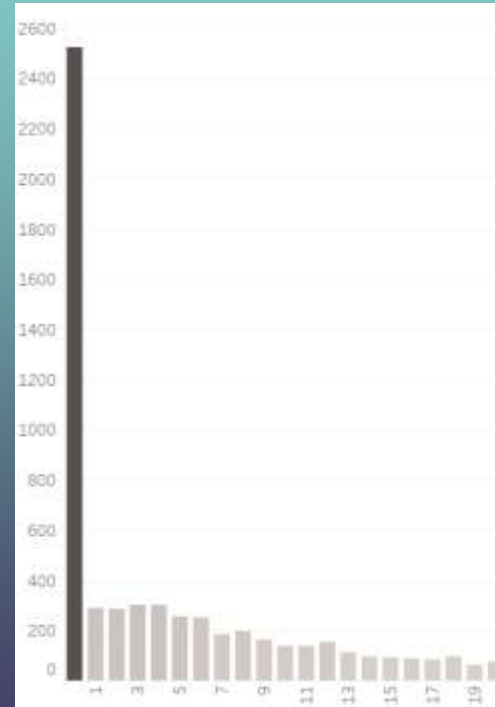
Comments: Number of comments posted by consumers



Some Other Variables

Photo Number:

Entrepreneurs often upload photos to their project description. This variable measures the number of photos uploaded to the project webpage.





Audio Measures

For projects with a video, we analyze their audio information:

Energy: Whether or not the audio pitch sounds energetic. A large number of an energetic audio pitch.

Content: Whether or not the audio pitch shows signs of content.

Upset: Whether or not the audio pitch shows signs of upset.

Angry: Whether or not the audio pitch shows signs of anger.


MaxAmpVol: The max sound volume. A greater number means louder sound.





What should we do?

Use the data to provide recommendations for the platform or the entrepreneurs. You can focus on **anything** that can be helpful for the platform or the entrepreneurs:

- How do males and females entrepreneurs behave differently on Kickstarter? (e.g., compared to females, males may be too aggressive in setting high targets.)
 - Which type of video is most productive in terms of generating funds? (e.g., is having a lengthy video always beneficial?)
 - What makes a successful crowdfunding project?
- 



You need to submit:

No more than 10 pages slides documenting your findings from the data project. **No presentation; no report.**

In the slides: Please illustrate:

- a. Your research question --- ONLY one question.
- b. The results from data analysis (including regression results)
- c. Implications: What can others learn from the project?
- d. That's all. Don't put anything extra in your slides.

Deadline: **Oct 23, 23.59 pm**

Next week is reading week (no class)
Oct 20 class is cancelled for group project

