

Predicting the Success of Altruistic Requests

Semester project

Keywords: *Machine Learning, Altruism, Crowdfunding*

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1 Description

If you are among those who use StackOverflow to resolve their "fatal" coding errors, and you also enjoy competitions involving pizza, this project might be just right for you. The project is closely related to the study of [1] that investigates which factors contribute to the success of altruistic requests, such as asking for: answers (*StackOverflow*), donations (*DonorsChoose.org*), or help (*Reddit.com*) on online social networking services. Inspired by this study, *Kaggle* has posted a challenge of automatically predicting "which requests will garner an act of kindness" [2]. As a part of the semester project, a student is asked to create a competitive machine learning algorithm for predicting the success of altruistic requests.

2 Tasks

- Design and implement a machine learning algorithm suitable for the task.
- Evaluate a method on the given data set.

3 Skills

- Good programming skills in Python or Java
- Background in machine learning
- Some knowledge in probability and statistics

4 Benefits

- Improve your machine learning skills
- Compete against experienced data scientists
- Find out how to ask for a favor

References

- [1] Tim Althoff, Cristian Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil, Dan Jurafsky. *How to Ask for a Favor: A case Study on the Success of Altruistic Requests*. AAAI ICWSM 2014.
- [2] <https://www.kaggle.com/c/random-acts-of-pizza>