Who is Flat Club?
Flat-Club, co-founded by Nitzan Yudan, is an online marketplace to help alumni and students of top universities find short-term accommodation by leveraging existing social networks and creating a strong trust for the person renting the room or property. Based in London, Flat-Club grew in its first year from five flats in London to 2,000 in 20 cities. Flat-Club is a member of the London Business School Incubator Program.

How did UCL help?
In the summer of 2012 Flat Club engaged the help of two student interns over two eight week periods. Their tasks were business development - looking at potential partnerships, targeting student publications and blogs, and customer engagement to manage content for emails, blogs and enewsletters.

The second project used UCL’s HELO programme for a student consultancy project to review the feasibility of expanding the Flat Club model into another niche market which targets corporate clients.

A team of five students participated in the project and using the vast UCL network, gathered quantitative and qualitative market research through interviews and surveys to test the feasibility and gather critical feedback.

What were the results?
The results showed how Flat Club should position the service in the marketplace and what customers perceived as real benefits. The research was also used in the successful pitch for funding.

The work done by the interns increased revenues by 30%, with one blog post generating 10 times more traffic than any other and achieving a first place Google listing. The interns continued to work as paid employees for 4-6 months after their internships.

HELO found a way to access the $20bn global potential

The final word
Working with the HELO team had a significant impact on the company that will help Flat-Club to continue its growth, without their input, any growth would have taken much longer, it was, in Nitzan’s words “an outstanding service.”
About UCL

UCL (University College London) was established in 1826 and is ranked as one of the world’s top-ten universities. The university is a modern, outward-looking institution, with more than 4,000 academic and research staff committed to engaging with the major issues of our times. It has a global reach, with 34% of its students coming from outside the UK, from almost 140 countries.

www.ucl.ac.uk

About UCL Advances

The centre for entrepreneurship at UCL, UCL Advances, offers training, networking and business support for staff, students and external entrepreneurs to encourage and enable new enterprises to get going. Unique in the UK Higher Education sector, its primary role is to promote a culture of entrepreneurship on campus and engagement with entrepreneurs and small businesses beyond UCL’s boundaries, and currently delivers over 30 activity programmes.

UCL Advances is affiliated with UCL Enterprise, which provides UCL’s structures for engaging with business for commercial and societal benefit.

www.ucl.ac.uk/advances
www.ucl.ac.uk/enterprise

About Student Engagement

UCL is keen to help those students who are entrepreneurial to develop their ideas further. This is supported through the UCL Advances’ Student Venture Program – a complete programme of support for UCL students that wish to start or learn about a business. It includes access to training, mentoring, one-to-one business advice from our in-house advisor, access to loans and grant funding, placements and the use of our Hatchery space.

www.ucl.ac.uk/studentventures

About Business Support

UCL Advances provides direct business support for internal and external organisations through a variety of programmes and activities such as 1–1 advice, problem solving through student consultancy, student internships, mentoring and others.

• We help London-based businesses grow and develop by analysing business needs and connecting them to relevant interventions such as industry mentors;
• Through pairing teams of UCL and LBS students with businesses we deliver short-term consultancy projects addressing specific organisation needs;
• We broker relationships and fund exchanges between new and aspiring entrepreneurs with experienced entrepreneurs in another member state of the European Union;
• Individual angel investors connected to UCL provide seed investment to SMEs engaged with UCL Advances programmes; and
• We offer fully funded SME Internships where UCL students spend eight weeks in a London SME working alongside the director(s) to deliver real results and lasting impact in the host organization whilst learning about enterprise.

www.ucl.ac.uk/advances/business/support