Shout Communications
Dare to shout bigger

When Shout Communications first approached UCL Advances, the media industry was in a very different state from when they first began their broadcasting PR consultancy firm over ten years ago. Budgets had been cut in the wake of the recession and radio content production was no longer bringing them the same amount of business. Owners and long-standing friends Catherine Bayfield and Keren Haynes felt that their company had become stagnant over the past couple of years, and turned to UCL Advances to see how they could turn it around.

The SMILE team matched them up with mentor Peter Hicks. Peter has mentored the SMILE initiative, and comes from a background in engineering and technology development. With extensive experience in a wide range of sectors, Peter was able to apply his knowledge to the obstacles facing Catherine and Keren.

Catherine and Keren had always taken a hands-on approach to the running of Shout Communications, actively involved in the day to day running of their business, but with Peter’s guidance they were able to step back and assess their long term goals. Peter asked them to look at what they wanted to achieve over the next five years and the growth they thought was possible for their company. From their discussions, Peter was able to see that to achieve this level of growth they would need to bid for larger projects with better margins. He encouraged them to submit tenders for much bigger contracts, which Catherine and Keren had previously doubted their capacity to carry out. With Peter’s support they secured their first large local government contract and they have thoroughly benefited from the exposure this has brought to the company.

They subsequently hired a new member of staff to help them deliver this and future projects, and now have a team of eight working from their Covent Garden office. Working with Peter and SMILE has given the team greater drive and experience with which to push the business forward, even in a period of economic uncertainty. They were also inspired to bid for bigger contracts in the future, with the knowledge that they could successfully acquire such projects.

“We really didn’t think that companies hosting bids of this size would consider an organisation of our size to deliver projects of this scale; we are very glad that Peter encouraged us that this is possible!”

Catherine Bayfield, Director, Shout Communications

After successfully completing this new contract, they have been commissioned to undertake further work for the same organisation. Catherine and Keren have established a fantastic partnership with Peter as a result of the SMILE scheme, and have continued working together beyond the initially agreed commitment of 12 hours collaboration.

They have since made it onto the 10,000 Small Businesses programme.
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
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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

For more information see:
www.ucl.ac.uk/enterprise