

HKUST International Business Plan Competition 2007 is the only Business Plan Competition in China open to graduate teams from universities from around the world. In early March, I teamed up with two MSc students in the Maths Department at LSE and Warwick Business School, respectively, to take part in it. We submitted our business proposal, Project iKnow!, a business venture based on the existing Web 3.0 business models of eBay and YouTube where Internet users can use our Internet platform to trade and transfer user-generated video content.

The competition was fierce. Fortunately, we were among the 13 teams, out of more than a hundred, invited to the semi-finals in Hong Kong in May. Unfortunately, we also had exams in May! Nothing could be more stressful and demanding than flying a long way to Hong Kong for 4 days between two final exams. Nevertheless, we worked hard on our proposal during many sleepy yet sleepless nights powered by caffeine. We didn't want to give it up at this stage despite the hectic and challenging schedule.

I flew to Hong Kong right after taking my AC444 exam in the morning and rushed to the competition only to find that the other teams were mainly MBA students from the USA, having completed their exams at least a month earlier. They were much better prepared... Eventually, the UC Berkeley team, consisting of two PhD and two MBA students, had the edge and won the award. We tried our best and had no regrets.

The competition has provided us a unique entrepreneurial opportunity: dealing with all the punchy and sharp questions asked by judges who are experienced bankers and venture capitalists. Inevitably our exams were affected, yet we have learned a lot. This experience has supplemented my studies as well. Applying theory and business ideas into practice is one good example. It has also helped me to hunt for a job in the financial industry.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the Departments of Accounting and Finance for the financial support to our expedition to Hong Kong. Besides, I am grateful for the guidance of Professor Bhimani, my supervisor, throughout the year. I am glad my year at LSE has been very fruitful.

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