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Business start-up success for international graduate

An international graduate who set up his own business with the help of Northumbria University has hailed the University as providing ‘the best support I could ever have wished for’.

Sadhu Kanakarajan, who graduated from Northumbria in 2013 with a MSc Business Information Systems management degree, is the first ever graduate to be sponsored by the University via UKBA’s Tier 1 entrepreneur visa scheme.

The scheme allows international graduates with genuine and credible business ideas and entrepreneurial skills to stay in the UK to develop their business under the supervision of their UK academic institution.

Sadhu, who is originally from India, took this opportunity to start his SEO and digital marketing agency Sadsisya Ltd with the support and guidance of the University's Student and Graduate Enterprise team, funded by the European Regional Development Fund. A year on, Sadsisya Ltd is now starting to have some real success with a number of new clients and business opportunities.

He explained "I approached Northumbria's Enterprise Manager, Graham Baty with my idea and he helped me to draft my business plan.

"Getting the business off the ground over the last year has been really hard work and without the support I received from the team, I would have had neither the courage nor the knowledge to start my own business. I simply would not be where I am today without the University's support."

Sadhu added "It's a really exciting time for the business. I now have two full-time and three part-time employees, and a number of clients in long-term contracts.

"One of our first clients was Summer Takeover, a small working holiday company and also a Northumbria University-supported start-up. After adopting our strategy, they have experienced a doubling in sales and a 400% increase in their lead generation. Over the next couple of years, I want to grow the business into one of the 'go-to' digital agencies in the North East."

Graham Baty, Enterprise Manager at Northumbria University, said: "Sadhu was confident that he had identified a market need for digital marketing services amongst small and medium sized businesses and to date, this has proved to be very successful. With an ever growing client base, I fully expect Sadhu to continue to expand Sadsisya Ltd."

Sadhu, who decided to study at Northumbria after a recommendation from his brother, added: "I am proud to have been a student at Northumbria University. My course was a fantastic mix of business and technical studies that provided me with key skills for life after graduation."

For more information about Northumbria's Student and Graduate Enterprise service, visit www.northumbria.ac.uk/sgenterprise

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