



NBS Business Clinic students Aine Connolly, George Allen, Emma Stephenson and William Cooke with Jill Hopkirk from The Cycle Hub.

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Business students wheel-out expertise to guide bike hire business on route to growth

With rental forming the backbone for many bike businesses, The Cycle Hub, a bike friendly independent café in Newcastle, recently enlisted the marketing expertise of students from [Newcastle Business School](#) to grow its cycle hire division.

‘Sage Professionals’ a team of four final-year International Management

students have been working with The Cycle Hub to research and develop a comprehensive marketing strategy to enable the company to tap into new markets and increase revenue.

The team carried out extensive primary and secondary research into the current cycle hire market within the city. Their analysis of competitors identified four key markets The Cycle Hub should target, along with a range of potential strategic business partners to enable them to grow their presence quickly and efficiently.

The project culminated in a full report and recommendations to grow the business' cycle hire offering and a detailed two-year marketing strategy.

Jill Hopkirk, from The Cycle Hub, said: "I think the Business Clinic programme at Newcastle Business School is of very high quality and has a real role to play in the commercial marketplace.

"Bike rental continues to grow in popularity as people are realising that renting bikes is a very convenient way of getting around without having to travel with their own bike and they also get the opportunity to try out different types. This is why we chose to team up with the Business School as we were keen to get a fresh insight into how we could further develop this arm of the business.

"I'm in no doubt that the team's research into untapped potential markets and how we can grow our current customer base will prove valuable to our business as we look to promote and facilitate cycling across the region's hotel, student and tourism sectors.

"It has been a great experience and I wouldn't hesitate to recommend the group of students we've worked with. They've been well organised, insightful and charismatic throughout our working partnership."

[The Business Clinic](#) at Newcastle Business School, which currently holds the title UK Business School of the Year in the prestigious Times Higher Education (THE) Awards, is an education scheme whereby a group of business students participate in a 'consultancy firm' to provide advice for clients.

The service is available to all types of businesses from SMEs and multinationals through to not-for-profit organisations. Students are encouraged to get to the root of the problem, deliver results and provide a detailed report and presentation of their recommendations.

William Cook, 22, one of the Sage Professionals consultancy team working with The Cycle Hub, said: “Taking part in the Business Clinic has really helped me because I can provide a real-world example of working in business when I graduate. The Cycle Hub project has given me something to show and tell potential employers which will only serve to improve my employability prospects.”

Fellow student, Aine Connolly, 22, said: “Working on behalf of a real client is an experience you wouldn’t normally get from other academic courses and this is what will make us stand out among other graduates. It’s been a fantastic experience.”

The Cycle Hub is located on the banks of the River Tyne at the bottom of the Ouseburn Valley in Newcastle. In addition to bike hire its café is a great meeting place with some of the best views along the Newcastle-Gateshead quayside. The company aims to promote cycling in the local area by helping people get out and about on two wheels. It provides access to cycle training, cycling lessons, bike maintenance courses and hosts regular guided rides.

Newcastle Business School at Northumbria University has an enviable global reputation for delivering some of the best business management education in the UK which enables individuals to achieve leadership, management and career potential through research-rich, business relevant academic education.

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focused, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

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