



Business Development Internship

Context

AC-Sport, a French company specialized in high performance composite materials and accessories for professional car racing, invented a new and revolutionary pedal and gear mechanism, called PROrace. Based on a dynamic adjustment of the length of the leverage during the pedalling cycle, it enables to reduce the effort made by the cyclist by factors ranging from 10% (for standard bicycles) to 60% (for bicycles with dedicated frames).

Two main market segments are targeted : (1) existing bicycles, to increase their performance ; (2) alternative to cars means of transportation for small routes in big towns.

Several prototypes of PROrace have been made. They have enabled to completely validate the concept : (1) measurements carried out by researchers on cyclists using bicycles equipped with PROrace have experimentally confirmed that PROrace reduces effort by 10% ; (2) over 10 000 km have been covered with PROrace prototypes, on road as well as in cross-country, and no wear problem have appeared ; (3) around fifty cyclists – amongst which 4 champions – have tested PROrace, and 84% of them have adopted it after a few tens of kilometres only.

PROrace is now at its pre-industrialization phase, in the framework of the ESA space initiative. We are seeking for trainees to help us : (1) refine our initial market study and to extend it to the most promising European and developing countries ; (2) define criteria aimed at helping us identify our future partners ; (3) prepare the final business plan of the company, when PROrace is launched.

Job description

At the beginning of a promising and challenging opportunity carried out by a flexible and reactive structure, and envisaged in an international context, we are looking for a candidate willing to take responsibility with strong autonomy and a good sense of initiative. He/she will participate to the activities described above, in particular:

- Market study (*ie* collection and extraction of the main characteristics of the bicycle market in Europe, the Netherlands and France, combined with analysis of towns, companies and administrations that would greatly benefit from PROrace, in order to determine which market sectors and partners should be targeted),
- Elaboration of the pos-incubation Business Plan and deployment strategy,
- Contribution to the technical interface between ESA engineers located in the Netherlands and AC-Sport engineers located in Montpellier, in France.

He/she will also have the responsibility of the management and organization of the AC-Sport office located at the ESA incubator, and will coordinate and supervise all the work done with ESA.

Educational level

Engineering/Business school or post-graduate university diploma.

Required skills

- Must demonstrate business acumen
- Good communication skills
- Good analytical skills
- Customer oriented and entrepreneurial-minded
- Able to work on his/her own initiative
- Familiarity with new technologies (in particular telecommunications) would be an asset

Required languages

- Excellent working knowledge of English (written and spoken)
- French and/or Dutch knowledge would be an asset

Other

- Full time work
- Starting date : flexible, from January 2008 on
- Location : ESA business incubator (Noordwijk, the NL)
- Duration : flexible, from 4 months up to 1 year
- Candidate must arrange own housing
- Remuneration : up to € 650/month

The training period is expected to lead to the creation of a permanent position. Additional information can be downloaded at <http://www.pro-race.eu/>.

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