



Erasmus for Young  
**Entrepreneurs**

**New Entrepreneur:** Ijjou Akentour

**From:** Italy

**Start up:** 1772 natural cosmetic

**Host Entrepreneur:** James Lister

**From:** United Kingdom

**Company:** Brain feed ltd

**City:** Manchester



Ijjou Akentour is an Italian young entrepreneur who spent 5 months in Manchester (UK), hosted by James Lister, the CEO of Brain Feed Ltd. Brain Feed provides isolated nutrients with credible health benefits grounded in strong scientific data; their products are the highest quality natural extracts from sustainable resources.

Ijjou's business project is simple and tangible : 1772 is a start-up that produces and sells natural and organic skin & hair care products. The aim of the project is to spread the culture of wellbeing and promote a natural lifestyle respecting both people and environment. 1772 offers natural cosmetic products using the best of each plant properties. For this purpose, Ijjous aims to combine an informative and interactive web platform available to the user pre, during and post sales.

Ijjou has decided to take part to the Erasmus For Young Entrepreneurs to get in contact with international experiences. Ijjou needs to acquire experience to learn from other entrepreneurs and work in diverse context. Through this program, Ijjou had the chance to grasp new ideas and learn new skills.

**Please Ijjou, could you describe your Erasmus For Young Entrepreneurs experience with a sentence?**

A great learning experience and an opportunity to grow as a young entrepreneur.



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**Could you describe your main activities and tasks during the Erasmus period?**

From the beginning to the end of the experience, the activities that I carried out have been: Google Analytics analysis, web development, Ecommerce management, Content marketing. In particular, during this experience, I had the possibility to deploy and update the new version of the website. I managed the complete end-to-end process with an external development. I also had the possibility to build a new webpage for a digital marketing campaign and sent the brain feed's 1st email campaign on Mail Chimp. In addition, the host entrepreneur gave me the opportunity to learn more about Amazon seller Central, so we collaborated to launch the brain feed's page on Amazon

**What did you learn from this experience? What are the key teachings you discovered?**

During this period, I learned more about the processes that characterize an e-commerce of natural products for personal care. In particular, I have learned how to improve the content marketing, the user experience and how I can use data to make better decisions. The Host entrepreneur gave me the possibility to learn how to use the website Magento, Amazon Seller Central, Google developer tools and other useful software. Collaboration is key if you are a young entrepreneur with limited resources.

**Could you describe the main challenge you faced during this period? What is the main success you achieved?**

The challenge I faced during this period was the lack of some technical skills, but after few weeks, I overcame that challenge achieving some new skills. Also, for the first few weeks, the language barrier was a challenge for me, but after some days I improved my English. The success that I have achieved was the development of my new product that I'm planning to launch in a few weeks here in the UK.

**Do you feel ready to startup your business after the Erasmus for young entrepreneurs experience? Please explain why.**

Yes, I do. It is not easy to start a business especially if you are abroad, far from your home. I arrived here UK to gain new useful skills and use them to develop further my business however after few months, I came up with a new product idea. I did a market research and after that, I decided to work on my "daily care Kit" a waterproof small pouch with a kit that can help people to be always ready.

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After the Erasmus, I had the opportunity to present my project on a local Radio channel(Reform Radio), this amazing experience allowed me to introduce my start-up in the UK market.

There is a lot of work to do, for example, I'm planning to launch a new website and also, I'm planning to build an online community here in UK. The host entrepreneur allowed me to use for free the coworking space, so now I'm working hard to achieve my goals in an exciting environment with other brilliant young entrepreneurs.

