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African-savvy UCT students win coveted Pernod Ricard competition in Paris

Three UCT students have won the hotly contested Pernod Ricard International Business Game for their digital marketing strategy. They tied for first place with a team from Russia.

Business Science students Tetlanyo Lekalake and Thembeke Setlogile from UCT's Commerce faculty, together with computer science student Sizwe Ndlovu, wowed the judges at the recent finals in Paris.

Their storytelling technique and passion for the African market helped to secure them the top slot and internships in Europe.

Deputy Managing Director of Pernod Ricard Europe, Noel Adrian, said: "The South African winning team was simply outstanding in terms of content and presentation skills. We were blown away by their understanding of African trends and consumer insights, their ability to present their pitch at agency standard and by their creative idea."

The UCT team beat competitors from Sweden, the UK, Turkey, Spain, Poland, Romania, Germany, the Czech Republic, Greece, Italy and the Netherlands.

UCT marketing lecturer Gillian Rightford said: "Tetlanyo Lekalake was my head tutor and has a great affinity for marketing. Our briefing meetings for each tutorial allowed us to discuss the subject in more depth than the usual lecture format, so I hope that helped, although, with her ability, the credit is absolutely all hers."

Professor Don Ross, the Dean of the Faculty of Commerce, congratulated the team: "Thanks to these sharp students of ours, perhaps when people think 'hip brand of vodka' they'll think 'UCT'. It's good to be associated not only with earnest and solemn things, but also fun things. Fun sells."

Managing Director of Pernod Ricard South Africa, Conor McQuaid, also applauded the UCT trio: "We are extremely proud of Tetlanyo, Sizwe and Thembeke, who have

proven themselves to be amongst the top graduates in the world. What makes their win even more exciting is that they are not traditionally trained marketers but comprehensive business students. The international internships they receive will most certainly set the foundations for extremely successful careers.”

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