



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**20/06/06**

**Accommodation for Students founder wins  
BT's "UK Essence of the Entrepreneur"  
competition**

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*- William Berry finds himself hung in OXO Tower gallery -*

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# **ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS**

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## London 20/06/06

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Accommodation for Students ([www.accommodationforstudents.com](http://www.accommodationforstudents.com)), the UK's No1 student accommodation website, has been announced by BT Business as one of the UK's top twenty winners of the Essence of the Entrepreneur campaign. The initiative celebrates the achievements of small businesses that have demonstrated entrepreneurial spirit and found new directions to succeed in business with the help of technology.

To capture that unique essence the winners have had their photograph taken by renowned celebrity photographer, Perou, acclaimed for his individualism and unique perspective of the world. These photos were showcased at a high-profile exhibition at the Gallery@Oxo Tower from June 14-18, 2006.

William Berry, co-founder and director of Accommodation for Students was surprised to learn that, as part of winning, he was to go on show in a major London gallery.

*"I think it's a very unusual reward. Perou is a fantastic photographer and we had great fun taking the shots – even if I'm still slightly bemused at the content! I suppose the tent and baked beans represent the basic level at which students live. In fact, that's now far from the truth and students are increasingly demanding high level accommodation with broadband, satellite TV, even a swimming pool! And Accommodation for Students is at the forefront of helping them find such accommodation. We have 350,000 registered student users and 10,000 landlords advertising 30,000 properties across the country.*

*We are delighted to have won and be ranked alongside household names like Toptable.co.uk."*

William Berry very much embodies the 'essence of entrepreneurialship'. He has, at 29, already founded four successful businesses employing over 30 people in Manchester, London and Bangalore, and, in total, achieving over £1 million profit per annum. He founded his own web marketing company, Net121 ([www.net121.com](http://www.net121.com)) in 1999 while he was on University placement. He is also co-founder and director of Thomas Charles Ltd ([www.thomascharles.com](http://www.thomascharles.com)), a leading debt solutions consultancy helping 100 people a month get out of serious debt, and Conferences UK Ltd ([www.conferences-uk.org](http://www.conferences-uk.org)), a venue-finding website with over 2000 venues online. Last November William appeared on BBC's Dragons' Den on behalf of Accommodation for Students and gave the dragons some of their own fire when he turned down their investment offer.

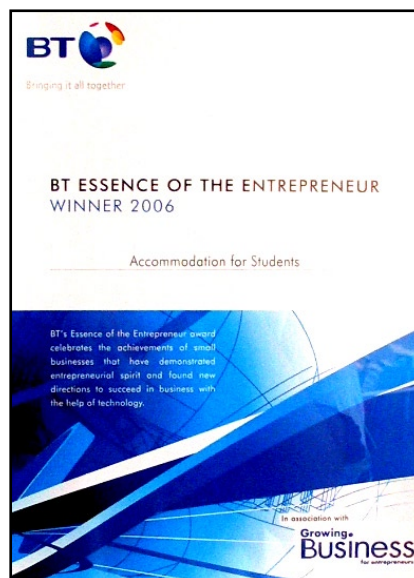


The 20 winning small businesses in the Essence of the Entrepreneur competition represent a diverse range of industries including garden design, extreme sports, diet deliveries, electricians, outdoor advertising, couriers and water leak detection.

More than 200 businesses entered the initiative; the final 20 were selected by panel of experts, including John Dunsmure, the managing director of British Chambers of Commerce Enterprises, Gavin Dollin, head of Business Link National Partnerships and successful entrepreneurs Anthony Maloney, David Lloyd and Mayank Patel. The Judges said of Accommodation for Students: *“This is an excellent example of a simple idea that has been perfectly executed.”*

Andrew McGregor, head of Marketing and Strategy for BT Business, said:

*“The quality of the entries was extremely high, and proves that the UK’s small businesses are thriving. We were looking for small businesses who could really demonstrate how they had brought technology together to create new business opportunities and new ways of working. The 20 winners are excellent examples of companies using technology to successfully operate in a changing business world.”*



▲ *BT Essence of the Entrepreneur Award*

◀ *BT Essence of the Entrepreneur winner, William Berry (right), with head of graphic design, Simone Poggiali.*



## Contacts

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