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## Local product a winner on the British TV show, The Apprentice

by Andrew Keeley

The Litebook Elite, a product of Medicine Hat's The Litebook Company, was recently highlighted in a British episode of The Apprentice. The BBC program attracts over 5 million viewers, and follows a similar format to the hit US show, with candidates competing for a high-salaried position with one of the country's top business moguls.

The task for the ninth week would require the teams to introduce innovative foreign products to British retailers. The show's producers invited representatives from eleven countries to pitch three of their nation's products that were not yet readily available in Britain. They would then select five of those representatives to participate in the show.

Canada was represented by Michelle Gartland, a trade commissioner at the Canadian High Commission in London. While traveling home from work one day, Michelle happened to read an article on Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), which reminded her of the Litebook, the light therapy product she had first been introduced to at a trade fair in 2002. She realised it would be a perfect choice. Michelle also picked a heat-moldable shoe insert and a self-assembly rug to showcase Canadian innovation.

From the original eleven countries, the producers selected the products of Australia, Canada, Singapore, South Africa and Sweden to feature in the show. During the program, the five representatives demonstrated their products to the two candidate teams, who then had to each choose one country's products to try to sell. The team with the highest sales revenue would win but they would be penalised if they failed to generate orders for all three products, or returned to the boardroom late. Team Stealth chose Canada while Team Eclipse chose Sweden.

The all-female Team Stealth instantly recognized that Kristina Grimes, a 36-year old Pharmaceutical Sales Manager, was the obvious candidate to pitch the Litebook. She worked alone and used her expertise of the market to impress her target and make an appointment for that day. The Litebook Elite was the team's highest value product, so a lot was at stake. They needn't have worried though; the client was very enthusiastic about the Elite from the start. "Oh, it is neat," he said when Kristina first revealed the unit, "and the fact that it is portable is a strong selling point." Kristina explained the clinical research that supports the effectiveness of the Litebook technology, and had no difficulty securing an order for six Elites at £97.50 (~\$206) each. The Litebook sale helped Team Stealth win the task and earn Kristina and her team the reward of £500 (~\$1055) each to spend in a top London department store.

Litebook Company's founder, Larry Pederson, commented that "our patented LED light therapy products have been sold in 45 countries to date, and the exposure generated from The Apprentice program will serve as a springboard to launch the Litebook into the UK market this fall."

For more information on Litebook products, visit [www.litebook.com](http://www.litebook.com). For more information on the show, visit [www.bbc.co.uk/apprentice](http://www.bbc.co.uk/apprentice).



**The Product:** Litebook Elite, produced by The Litebook Company Ltd. of Medicine Hat.



**The Demonstration:** Michelle Gartland of the Canadian High Commission in London demonstrates the Litebook Elite to the teams.



**The Pitch:** Kristina Grimes had no trouble selling six Litebook Elites to a pharmaceutical retailer.



**The Boss:** Sir Alan Sugar, a self-made billionaire and founder and CEO of Amstrad, a British-based consumer electronics manufacturer.