

Business

uConnect finishes on top in 2014 TechOut competition

◆ **Recent startup:** Company first worked with founder's alma mater when it opened its doors last year.



By DOUG ALDEN
New Hampshire Union Leader

MANCHESTER — A company that helps lead college graduates to entry-level jobs by expanding the use of on-campus career centers is the winner of the 2014 TechOut competition.

uConnect beat four other finalists Thursday night for the first-place prize of \$50,000 and the exposure that comes with winning New Hampshire's biggest competition for tech-based startups.

"It was kind of amazing. The companies we were competing against were all really strong and great entrepreneurs," uConnect co-founder David Kozhuk said Friday.

Kozhuk said the idea behind uConnect, which has offices in Boston and Manchester, was to better prepare students in search of jobs after graduation and upgrading the resources available at on-campus career centers.

"What we found was students were just really unprepared for the job-search process," Kozhuk said.

Kozhuk said students were graduating with little knowledge of what industries and companies would be a good fit as well as the hiring process. He said resources that could

have helped the students had been right there on campus at the school career center, which was often overlooked.

"If you're not going to your career center, there's really no other place to get really sound career advice, counseling support and strategy," Kozhuk said. "What we're doing is creating tools and technology for the career center to more effectively keep students engaged in their programming."

Kozhuk started uConnect in spring 2013, working with the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, his alma mater.

Kozhuk said he was a regular at the UMass career center as an economics student before he graduated in 2008. He got a job with a private equity firm and was surprised at the low turnout when he returned to Amherst on a recruiting trip for internship candidates.

Kozhuk added Bentley University after dropping by from his office in Boston, and uConnect's client list has grown to include the University of Connecticut, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Boston College.

"We've got a lot of momentum, but we're a really small team," he said. uConnect and the other finalists all had to make a presentation to the panel of judges during the finals Thursday at Dyn, then waited for the announcement. The prize for second place was \$30,000 and \$20,000 for third. TechOut is co-presented by the New Hampshire High Tech Council and Alpha Loft, formerly known as abHUB in Manchester.

Matt Cookson, executive director of the New Hampshire High Tech Council, said more than 300 people attended Thursday night, one of the largest turnouts in the history of the event.

The competition is open to companies that are in business for less than three years that have raised less than \$250,000 in funding and have less than \$250,000 in revenue.

uConnect identified needs from the perspective of both students and the career centers and addressed both, providing a service that is accessible to the current generation of college students with current technology that works on cell phones and other portable devices.

"I think uConnect has latched on to that. A lot of this kind of work doesn't need to be done face-to-face in this digital age," Cookson said. "He's framing uConnect as an extension of the school's career center, not a replacement. That's certainly a much better way to build partnerships."



KOZHUK



President Barack Obama speaks about jobs and the economy during a visit to Millennium Steel Service as part of Manufacturing Day in Princeton, Ind., on Friday. U.S. employers stepped up hiring in September and the jobless rate fell to a six-year low, bolstering bets on a Federal Reserve rate hike in mid-2015. Friday's report on employment is the most significant gauge of the economy's health ahead of Nov. 4 congressional elections.

REUTERS/KEVIN LAMARQUE

U.S. jobless rate falls to six-year low in September

By JASON LANGE
Reuters

WASHINGTON — U.S. employers stepped up hiring in September, and the jobless rate fell to a six-year low, which could bolster bets on a Federal Reserve rate hike in mid-2015.

Friday's report on hiring is the most significant gauge of the economy's health ahead of Nov. 4 congressional elections.

While President Barack Obama's message of an improving economy has been hampered by persistent drops in family incomes under his watch, the hiring data underscored the strides made in the labor market this year.

U.S. non-farm payrolls rose by 248,000 last month and the jobless rate fell to 5.9 percent, two-tenths of a point below its level a month earlier and the lowest since July 2008, the Labor Department said. The results showed a stronger labor market than analysts had anticipated.

Most investors are betting the Fed will wait until July to raise its benchmark interest rate, which has been near zero since 2008, although bets on a June hike increased following the release of the data. Yields on government debt and prices for U.S. stock futures rose.

The pace of hiring in America's economy has

decidedly stepped up this year. The gain in payrolls over the last six months is now at its highest level since before the 2007-09 recession.

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Stocks, Mutual Funds

STOCKS
4 p.m. close for selected stocks, and others listed in the S+P 500 Index.

Name	Close	%Chg	Name	Close	%Chg	Name	Close	%Chg
Abbott Labs	41.79	+1.41	CenterPoint Ener	24.73	+0.82	Facebook	72.44	+0.47
AbbVie	58.69	+3.56	CenturyLink	41.00	+0.59	Family Dollar	78.22	+0.34
Accenture	80.32	+1.12	Cerner	59.80	+1.12	Fastenal	45.76	+0.63
ACE Ltd	106.44	+1.73	Charles Schwab	29.57	+0.32	FOX	32.32	+0.78
Activis	246.07	+4.27	Chesapeake Enr	21.75	-2.16	Fidelity Intl	56.49	+1.55
Adobe Systems	68.40	+2.00	Chevron	117.71	+0.51	Fidelity Third Ba	20.05	+1.31
ADP	74.85	+3.24	Chipotle Mexic	67.50	+1.80	First Solar	64.10	+0.42
ADT	34.92	+1.69	Chubb	93.24	+1.89	FirstEnergy	33.49	+1.23
American El.Po	52.87	+1.13	Cigna	90.59	+2.11	Fluor	50.47	+0.99
AES Corp	14.14	n.a.	Cinara Energy	120.82	+0.90	FLIR Systems	30.66	-3.11
Aetna	81.49	+2.65	Cincinnati Fin	47.63	+1.69	Fluor	50.47	+0.99
Affix Manager	198.77	+1.01	Cintas	70.34	+3.00	Fluor	50.47	+0.99
Aflac	57.84	+0.29	Citrix Systems	25.31	+2.09	FMC Corp	66.00	+0.47
Agilent Tech	56.91	+1.93	Citigroup	52.32	+1.00	FMC Tech	52.41	-0.17
AGL Resources	51.26	+0.61	Clorex	69.60	+0.96	Ford Motor	14.59	+2.11
Aimco	32.22	+0.97	CMS Energy	80.95	+0.66	Fortune Brand	40.74	+0.47
Air Prods Che	128.56	+0.89	CMS Group	29.99	+0.71	Fortune Brand	40.74	+0.47
Airgas	109.93	+0.58	CMS Energy	29.99	+0.71	Fortune Brand	40.74	+0.47
Akamai Tech	59.74	+2.84	Coach	35.11	-0.28	Franklin Resc	54.66	+1.08
Alcoa	15.60	+1.56	Coca-Cola Ent.	44.08	+0.05	Franklin Rcm	6.44	+1.10
Alexion Pharm	17.79	+6.03	Coca-Cola	43.00	+0.80	GameStop	40.46	-1.03
Allergeny Ther	34.24	+1.03	Cognizant	44.38	+1.09	Gannett	29.62	+1.33
Allergan	183.34	+3.66	Colgate	65.46	+1.05	Gap	42.00	+1.07
Alliance Data	251.86	+3.36	Comcast	53.65	+1.53	Garmin	50.45	+1.13
Allstate	61.73	+0.96	Comcast	53.65	+1.53	General Dynam	123.54	+1.43
Altria Corp	34.31	+1.52	Computer Scien	59.17	+0.78	General Electr	25.40	+1.11
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NH StockWatch

NAME	VOL	HI	LO	LAST	CHG	LOW	52 WK	HIGH	12MO
Bank of Am	110271917	17.30	17.06	17.29	+2.43%	13.7	18.0	23.5%	
Cisco Systems	29037384	25.37	25.04	25.31	+1.00%	20.2	26.1	10.0%	
General Electric	21656482	25.43	25.15	25.40	+1.11%	23.5	28.1	5.4%	
AT&T	20709971	36.16	35.08	35.36	+1.12%	31.7	37.5	5.1%	
Citigroup Inc	17714329	52.43	51.64	52.32	+2.09%	45.2	55.3	8.1%	
Oracle	15282857	39.12	38.40	38.89	+1.62%	32.0	43.2	17.0%	
Comcast	14501444	54.04	52.88	53.65	+1.53%	44.1	57.5	19.2%	
Coca-Cola	14045518	43.07	42.66	43.00	+0.80%	36.8	43.1	15.7%	

MUTUAL FUNDS

Fund	NAV	Chg.	YTD	Fund	NAV	Chg.	YTD	Fund	NAV	Chg.	YTD
Alpine	3.79	+0.04	-1.6	Gro Company	127.54	+1.66	+6.4	Sentinel	20.33	+0.11	+3.2
DynDiv d	19.40	+0.12	+11.8	Growth Income	29.27	+1.04	+5.1	BaIa m	44.87	+0.39	+4.6
RelincGr d	19.40	+0.12	+11.8	IncGMMA	11.57	unch.	+3.2	CmtStkA m	10.10	+0.01	+1.3
American Centur	14.90	+0.09	+2.6	Intl Discv Int	10.42	-0.01	+2.6	GovtSecA m	18.85	-0.03	-7.5
OC Modt Inv	14.90	+0.09	+2.6	Intl SmCp d	25.36	+0.05	-6.3	MidCapG m	23.74	+0.11	+0.1
American Funds	14.90	+0.09	+2.6	Intl SmOp d	13.70	+0.02	-1.9	SmallCoA m	6.76	+0.03	-2.5
Gro R-5	45.54	+0.48	+6.0	Latin America	30.62	+0.53	-2.0	Sig	53.20	+0.69	+5.4
CWIG R-4	45.77	+0.27	+1.2	Low-Prd Stk	48.54	+0.32	-1.9	LCGR d	10.51	unch.	+5.8
Gro R-4	45.19	+0.48	+5.8	Lvrgd Co Stk	44.80	+0.38	+3.6	MNTaxFin	10.51	unch.	+5.8
Bal A	25.40	+0.16	+4.0	Magellan Fund	94.01	+1.22	+1.8	TRowe Price	10.51	unch.	+5.8
Bond A	12.73	unch.	+2.7	New Mkts Inv	16.21	-0.03	+4.0	Asia	17.27	+0.19	+7.9
CIB A	59.23	+0.25	+1.2	Puritan	22.63	+0.21	+6.6	Cap App	27.49	+0.18	+7.1
CWIG A	45.87	+0.27	+1.2	Sp Intl B Inv	10.85	-0.01	+2.7	CapOpp	23.22	+0.26	+6.9
EurPA	47.78	+0.21	-2.6	Strategic Income	11.00	unch.	+1.4	Emr Equ	15.93	-0.04	-19.7
Film A	53.70	+0.49	+3.3	StDivInc	14.83	-0.01	+5.6	Equi Stock	33.56	+0.23	+2.2
Gro A	45.50	+0.48	+5.8	US Bond Index	11.65	unch.	+2.6	EuroStk d	19.68	+0.07	-8.3
ICA A	39.42	+0.34	+7.4	S&S Fund	109.23	+0.93	+5.5	Fidelity Adv	54.88	+0.80	+4.4
ICA A	39.42	+0.34	+7.4	S&S Fund	109.23	+0.93	+5.5	Fidelity Adv	54.88	+0.80	+4.4
Mur A	36.44	+0.33	+4.7	NewsIA m	27.75	+0.29	+5.4	HY	7.10	+0.02	-0.7
Mur A	36.44	+0.33	+4.7	NewsIA m	27.75	+0.29	+5.4	IntlDisc d	55.14	-0.03	-1.1
NWP A	58.14	+0.27	-1.5	Defend d	112.66	+1.36	-7.9	IntlGrnc d	15.15	+0.01	-2.7
NWP A	58.14	+0.27	-1.5	Defend d	112.66	+1.36	-7.9	IntlGrnc d	15.15	+0.01	-2.7
SB A	10.00	unch.	+5.5	NaGas d	40.08	-0.21	+6.1	IntlGrnc d	15.15	+0.01	-2.7
TB A	13.05	-0.01	+5.5	NaGas d	40.08	-0.21	+6.1	IntlGrnc d	15.15	+0.01	-2.7
Wash A	41.62	+0.38	+5.6	NaGas d	40.08	-0.21	+6.1	IntlGrnc d	15.15	+0.01	-2.7