**Airbnb: The story behind the $1.3bn room-letting website**

Airbnb started in 2007 when Joe Gebbia and Brian Chesky, then both 27, who had met five years earlier at Rhode Island School of Design, were struggling to pay their rent. There was a design conference coming to San Francisco and the city’s hotels were fully booked, so they came up with the idea of renting out three airbeds on their living-room floor and cooking their guests breakfast. The next day they created a website, airbedandbreakfast.com; six days later they had a 30-year-old Indian man, a 35-year-old woman from Boston and a 45-year-old father of four from Utah sleeping on their floor. They charged $80 each a night. ‘As we were waving these people goodbye Joe and I looked at each other and thought, there’s got to be a bigger idea here.’ (…)

Part of their success is good timing. They created a company that at its core is based on sharing, just as the movement dubbed ‘collaborative consumption’, or the sharing economy, was developing as a trend (‘When we started no one had heard the term yet,’ Gebbia said. ‘We were just living it’.) (…)

While the idea of collaborative consumption instantly appeals to young people who have grown up sharing books, music and film online, it is not restricted to them. Much like the first-ever guests who stayed in Gebbia and Chesky’s apartment, the average age of Airbnb users is older than you might expect. ‘We’ve got more people aged 55 and over on the site than those aged 18-25”. (…)

What the founders seem most pleased about, and what stops them being just a tour operator, is the personal connections that their community forms. ‘When you share your space with somebody it is a personal, meaningful experience,’ Chesky said.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk>

**Vocabulary:**

Dubbed: surnommé

**Questions:**

1. Give information on Airbnb? (nationality, headquarters, sector, activity, founders)
2. How did the company start?
3. On what kind of consumption is Airbnb based? Why is it such a success?
4. Who are the competitors of Airbnb?

**Links :**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dA2F0qScxrI