

MORE WAYS FOR CONSUMERS TO RENT OUT UNUSED SPACE



WORK & LIFESTYLE

There's nothing like a sudden flurry of like-minded contenders to suggest an idea is a good one. Case in point: The proverbial ink had barely dried on our story last week about [Spareground](#), the site that helps UK consumers rent out unused space, when we were alerted to not one but two similar services. Los Angeles-based [Homstie](#), for example, bills itself as a community marketplace for storage space. Launched by a team of UCLA students, Homstie aims to provide an alternative to the USD 22 billion storage industry and its rental fees of USD 700 per month or more. Listing and searching for space on Homstie are both free; the only fees the company charges are for making listings featured or highlighted—priced at USD 3 and USD 2, respectively—and for a custom lease agreement, which is priced at USD 19. Homstie does not facilitate rental payments, but it does offer member profiles, identity verification and a feedback system. Users of ad-supported Homstie can browse for listings by proximity to major California universities or by region across the United States. [Store at My House](#), meanwhile, also serves US consumers with listings of parking and storage space nationwide. Users can search the ad-supported site by ZIP code for the space they need; if they can't find it, they can also create a request. Reputation ratings for space providers on the site, meanwhile, help ensure safety. Enough said? The economy doesn't look to be making any dramatic improvements anytime soon, so there's still plenty of opportunity to spread this concept around the globe. So far, just the US and the UK seem to be covered; one to bring to cash-strapped consumers in a market near you? Spotted by: May Almero-Cruz and Susannah Haynie

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Website: www.homstie.com, www.storeatmyhouse.com

Contact: www.homstie.com/contact, www.storeatmyhouse.com/contact.php