

Queensland university student restores retro records

UniQuest Pty Limited

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An entrepreneurial student from James Cook University has turned up the volume on the commercialisation of his research project with an appearance last week on the ABC's *The New Inventors* program.

Cary Stoddard (JCU Cairns) has developed a novel cleaning solution that can make old vinyl records sound like new. The technology, which won a Student Runner Up prize in UniQuest's 2009 Trailblazer innovative ideas competition, will make it possible for music enthusiasts to enjoy their cherished but previously thought un-listenable vinyl records once again.

The technology, **Record Revirginizer**, works by sticking to mould, dirt, dust and other matter stuck within the grooves of the vinyl. Mr Stoddard says that it is this material - not scratches - that often distorts the sound of the vinyl.

Record Revirginizer is a liquid for pouring onto the record's surface and then massaging into the grooves to create a 1mm thick coating. After leaving the product to dry for a few hours it can be peeled away, taking the ground-in debris with it.

"It is a bit like giving your records a facial!" said Mr Stoddard.

In his pitch to the judging panel the inventor highlighted the innovation's unique benefits.

"Unlike many record cleaning products that use brushes to get into the grooves, which may actually push the dirt deeper, the Record Revirginizer sticks to the debris and lifts it out of the record," said Mr Stoddard.

"The viscous, non-toxic liquid also doesn't damage the precious vinyl, and the product has been formulated so that it doesn't create static when removed from the record. This is essential, as static is one of the major causes of dust and dirt adhering to vinyl records."

JCU-based UniQuest Manager of Innovation and Commercial Development, David Ireland, said the promotion of the Cairns-based technology on a program such as *The New Inventors* could generate significant interest for the student's enterprise.

"Cary has used his innovative thinking and technical expertise to create a solution to a problem that musicians and music enthusiasts have been battling with for some time now. It's terrific to see that his success in our Trailblazer Ideas competition gave him a much needed boost to push the development of Record Revirginizer closer to the market. With the exposure on *The New Inventors* I am sure Cary's product will do very well", Dr Ireland said.

UniQuest Managing Director, David Henderson, said the promotion of such a

Contact Profile

James Cook University

Ranked in the top five percent of the world's tertiary institutions by the respected Academic Ranking of World Universities produced by the Shanghai Jiao Tong University, James Cook University is dedicated to creating a brighter future for life in the tropics world-wide, through graduates and discoveries that make a difference. The University conducts nationally significant and internationally recognised research in areas such as marine sciences, biodiversity, tropical ecology and environments, global warming, tourism, and tropical medicine and public health care in under-served populations. A research commercialisation agreement with UniQuest was launched in November 2008.

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practical new technology for a century-old problem was also a boost for the commercialisation partnership between UniQuest and JCU.

“We have been running our Trailblazer innovative ideas at other universities for about eight years, and there’s usually at least one new technology revealed each year that really captures the public’s imagination and support,” Mr Henderson said.

“We are delighted to see such wide recognition for one of the student finalists in our very first Trailblazer at JCU last year. Cary’s technology is indicative of the wide range of innovations we are working on with JCU researchers to optimise their commercial potential.”

The vinyl restoration technology was featured on Episode 4 of *The New Inventors*, shown on ABC television across Australia on Wednesday 24 February at 8.00 pm: <http://www.abc.net.au/tv/newinventors/>

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