

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

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Established by The University of Queensland in 1984, UniQuest is widely recognised as one of Australia's largest and most successful university commercialisation groups, benchmarking in the top tier of technology transfer worldwide. From an intellectual property portfolio of 1,500+ patents it has created over 60 companies, and since 2000 UniQuest and its start-ups have raised more than \$400 million to take university technologies to market. Annual sales of products using UQ technology and licensed by UniQuest are running at \$3 billion. UniQuest now commercialises innovations developed at The University of Queensland and its commercialisation partner institutions: the University of Wollongong, University of Technology Sydney, James Cook University, University of Tasmania, Mater Medical Research Institute, and Queensland Health. UniQuest also provides access to an expansive and exclusive network of independent academics to tailor a consulting or project R&D solution to meet the diverse needs of industry and government, facilitating some 500 consulting, expert opinion, testing, and contract research services each year. UniQuest is also a leading Australasian provider of international development assistance recognised for excellence in technical leadership, management and research. Working with agencies such as AusAID, NZAID, the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank, UniQuest has developed and implemented more than 400 projects in 46 countries throughout the Pacific, South-East Asia, the Indian sub-continent and Africa.

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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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