



Mar 10, 2014 00:00 GMT

Shining a light on student enterprise

Enterprising Northumbria University students are celebrating business success after winning awards for their innovative products.

The students behind The Stable Cable Company and Get Lamped will showcase their products and highlight their achievements to industry professionals at the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art during a celebratory networking event next week.

The Stable Cable Company – made up of six final year Northumbria University students – has designed and developed a 3D printed component that protects Apple Lightning charger cables from costly breakages.

The product has already proved popular with customers at trade fairs as well as online and last month scooped three awards at the North East Young Enterprise Trade Fair. The students walked away with the 'Best Product or Service', 'Best Start-up Programme Company' and 'Overall Winner' titles and will now take part in the Young Enterprise Regional Finals at the Northern Design Centre in April. Get Lamped, also a six-person business, specialises in the design and sale of contemporary, laser-cut wooden desk lamps, with an emphasis on local manufacture and hand assembly. The team won 'Best Sales and Marketing Award' and will also go through to the Young Enterprise Regional final.

Both companies were formed as part of the University's Graduate Enterprise module in association with Young Enterprise which gives students from a variety of courses the unique opportunity to run their own live business for a year.

Students on the module, which marks its tenth anniversary this year, sell their products online and at trade fairs held at the University and other venues in the region. They are supported throughout by excellent research-informed teaching as well as guest lectures by industry professionals. The businesses are disbanded at the end of the academic year, with students sharing any profits made between them.

Senior Lecturer in Business Information Systems, Steve Ball, is a co-leader of the module. He said: "This module is quite unique in that it brings together students with skills and knowledge from several disciplines across the University. It gives students an opportunity to apply their specialist skills in a cross-disciplinary applied business scenario."

The Stable Cable Company – made up of Product Design Engineering students Paul Robinson and Christian Usher, Engineering Management student Anthony Burnell and Fashion Communication students Ola Ebiti, Jodie Lancaster and Sarah Winslett – was created after the students realised that many people were having to replace their expensive chargers several times due to wear and tear. Managing director Anthony Burnell said: "Why look for a job when you can create one? This module is a great way to utilise skills gained from previous years of study and working in industry and to enhance entrepreneurial flair."

The company's sales director, Ola Ebiti, added: "Taking part in the Graduate

Enterprise module has taught me the demands of a real business and given me the confidence to think outside the box when new challenges arise.”

Get Lamped benefits from the talents of students from a mix of product design, business and IT courses: Sophie Hardy, Ben Chipping, Tom Briscoe, Christian Harvey, Richard Reynolds and Stephen Murphy.

Ben Chipping, the company’s marketing director, said: “I have never really been interested in business before doing this module. It has made me consider starting a business of my own after university.” Both companies will attend an event at the BALTIC River Terrace on Monday 10 March to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Graduate Enterprise module. Guests attending the networking opportunity will include Northumbria academics and executives as well as a range of industry professionals and regional business leaders.

Senior lecturer in Fashion, Catherine Glover, is a co-leader of the module. She said: “We hope through this Enterprise Event to continue to build rich and rewarding relationships with the industry partners and individuals who contribute to the success of the Graduate Enterprise programme.”

To find out more about The Stable Cable Company or to purchase a cable protector, visit <http://thestablecableco.com/>.

Visit www.getlamped.com for more details about Get Lamped.

For more information about studying at Northumbria University, visit www.northumbria.ac.uk.

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focussed, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

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