

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



EFG Companies, Northwood University Announce F&I Innovator of the Year Competition Winner

*- Quantum Integration lives up to name with Watchdog,
a mobile app providing complete asset protection -*

DALLAS, TX (December 16, 2015) EFG Companies, the innovator behind the award-winning Hyundai Assurance program, together with Northwood University, today announced the selection of *Team Quantum Integration* as the winner of the first annual F&I Innovator of the Year Award competition, and recipient of \$25,000.

Quantum Integration team members applied consumer research, industry and mentor input, and millennial sensibilities to create their unique F&I product, Watchdog, which takes three consumer needs and meets them in one simple mobile app. In addition to the team's monetary reward, they will potentially see Watchdog developed by EFG for market availability. Quantum Integration team members include:

- Collin Ulvund from Boyne, MI;
- Jon Vollmuth from Lake Barrington, IL; and,
- Richie Durso from Annville, PA.

During the semester-long contest, team members leveraged Twitter, produced YouTube video diaries and campaigned for their winning submission. "This Innovator contest was important for me," said Collin Ulvund, a senior automotive marketing management student at Northwood University. "Northwood has taught me to always look for opportunities to better myself as a student and as a person. Northwood and EFG have helped rekindle my passion to be part of the retail automotive space."

Quantum Integration was mentored by Caleb Hargreaves, Finance Manager at Hanlees Auto Group in Davis, CA. "Since day one, this team was confident they would win. Their vision was clear," said Hargreaves.

Three-in-one Watchdog mobile app targets consumer needs

Quantum Integration developed the Watchdog product with millennials in mind. Team members wanted to provide consumers with a convenient way to stay current on vehicle maintenance, prevent theft or recover their vehicle.

Tackling theft prevention, Watchdog monitors the status of a vehicle and alerts the owner when their vehicle is stolen or being towed. It also provides remote start for the owner's car alarm.

The Watchdog app delivers convenient notifications when scheduled maintenance is approaching. Consumers can check the maintenance code when a dashboard warning light comes on, saving on average \$50 per service charge to check the code, as well as thousands of dollars of vehicle repair by observing the manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedule.

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In addition, Watchdog provides a direct communication link to the selling dealer to schedule maintenance. This added level of convenience makes it easier for consumers to ensure their vehicle is in working order, and gives dealers a powerful tool to increase service drive retention and repeat business.

Contest pairs students with F&I industry leaders

In addition to experienced team mentors, the contest was judged by some of the F&I industry's leaders. The eight-member panel brought over 100 years of F&I expertise from automotive dealerships and corporations from across the country, encompassing all major automotive brands. Each judge was pleased with their participation, with several commenting that the entries provided a fresh perspective and challenged their thinking about their own dealerships and operations. The judging panel was comprised of the following:

Lisa Copeland	Managing Partner/General Manager	FIAT of Austin, a Nyle Maxwell Family Dealership
Alvin Heggs	Dealer Principal	Superstition Springs Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram
Kurt Hornung	Vice President of F&I Operations	AutoNation, Inc.
Tiger Lester	Regional Finance and Insurance Director	Group 1 Automotive
Patricia Lindseth	Western Region Financial Services Manager	Penske Automotive Group
Anthony Patterson	Vice President of Operations	Patterson Auto Group
Fernando Somoza	Executive Manager	Central Houston Cadillac, Central Houston Nissan, & Baytown Nissan
John Stephens	Senior Vice President	Dealer Services, EFG Companies

"Each of the teams competing in this inaugural event had the unique opportunity to take their education beyond the classroom and individual dealership rooftops to create an industry impact," said Keith Pretty, President and CEO, Northwood University. "Each of the participating students will be able to take the experiences from this semester, learn from them, and apply them to their future success as leaders."

The contest winners were announced on Thursday, December 10, during a ceremony at Northwood University. Quantum Integration team members received their \$25,000 cash winnings, which was split evenly among the team members.

F&I Innovator contest designed to boost development, reach consumers

In its inaugural year, the F&I Innovator of the Year Award competition pit six teams of Northwood undergraduate automotive marketing and management students against one another to conceptualize and build a new F&I product, while earning course credit. EFG and Northwood created the F&I Innovator of the Year competition to stimulate another level of innovation in the F&I space.

“With changing market demographics, increased compliance, and an evolving dealership model, everyone is asking what new developments will be made in the F&I space,” said John Pappanastos, President and CEO, EFG Companies. “At EFG, we understand that in order to lead the industry we need fresh sources of inspiration on how to morph or develop new products to meet new demands. This competition allowed us to jump-start this process and we expect to see more unique products unfold in the coming year.”

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About EFG Companies

EFG Companies combines almost 40 years of experience serving as an industry innovator of consumer and vehicle protection programs with the company’s commitment to raising the industry bar in providing superior client engagement. With their field and administrative teams AFIP and ASE certified, EFG’s professionals provide world-class product development and administration, go-to-market strategies, training and auditing support across a multitude of channels. www.efgcompanies.com

About Northwood University

Northwood University is committed to the most personal attention to prepare students for success in their careers and in their communities; it promotes critical thinking skills, personal effectiveness, and the importance of ethics, individual freedom and responsibility.

Private, nonprofit, and accredited, Northwood University specializes in managerial and entrepreneurial education at a full-service, residential campus located in mid-Michigan. Adult Degree Programs are available in seven states with many course delivery options including online. The DeVos Graduate School offers day, evening, weekend programming in Michigan and Texas, and online. The Michigan-based Alden B. Dow Center for Creativity and Enterprise provides system-wide expertise in family enterprise, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and new business development. International education is offered through study abroad and in Program Centers in Switzerland, China (Changchun and Wuxi), Malaysia and Sri Lanka. For additional information regarding Northwood University, go to www.northwood.edu.