



Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year[®]

2010 Northeast Ohio

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Honorees

TECHNOLOGY

FINALIST

MITCH KROLL

co-founder
Findaway World LLC



TECHNOLOGY

FINALIST

BLAKE SQUIRES

co-founder
Findaway World LLC



Leading the way

How Mitch Kroll and Blake Squires keep Findaway World growing by never giving up

When Findaway World LLC's flagship product, Playaway, was introduced in 2005, it got a lot of national buzz. However, the retail channel proved to be a challenging one to navigate for the self-playing digital audiobook.

But Findaway's founders, Mitch Kroll and Blake Squires, never lost faith. Instead, they just kept trying to find a way. Within two years, and after pursuing new channels, their business strategy shifted from consumer outlets to institutions. Libraries and schools became evangelists for a product that they loved. Today, Playaways are circulating in more than 25,000 libraries and schools across the U.S. and Canada and are distributed to hundreds of military units across the world.

The company refers to its employees as Findawayers, and they dig in when others would have checked out. They get up when others would give up. And they take "no" as a personal challenge, not as a final answer. This value has been instilled and cultivated by the co-founders and the entire Findaway team.

One of Findaway's keys to success is the scalable business model that the co-founders

created to support current business demands as well as future growth. With state-of-the-art production capabilities and processes, all Playaway orders are produced on-demand and shipped from its headquarters in Solon.

When it comes to audiobook formats, Playaway tops the list with its collection of more than 10,000 titles and a simple, portable, all-in-one format. Unlike CDs, cassette tapes or downloads, Playaway does not need a separate player and is the only format that gives users the convenience of one simple player combined with best-selling content from more than 100 publishing partners.

In March 2010, Playaway innovated again with the launch of its collection in HD Audio, the first-ever audio player to lead the industry in superior audio quality and innovation. And it plans to continue to innovate based on its mission of delivering simple and immediate access to digital content with the introduction of a preloaded video format and a dedicated e-reader platform. <<

HOW TO REACH: Findaway World LLC, (440) 893-0808 or www.findawayworld.com

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