

*Please tell us in 250 - 750 words how you could use your degree to contribute to the technology economy in Ashland, WI. Some examples include: starting a technology business, consulting local businesses, organizing remote work between national/international employers and local employees. Ideas will be judged based on practicality and impact, so please include as much detail as possible in describing how your idea would come to life and how it will help the community.*

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**DAVID WALLIS:** The best way to boost the technology economy in Ashland is to increase what is sold to outside customers. Selling to people outside the community will bring money in, while a business that only sells to this area is simply circulating funds and buying supplies from outside the community. I don't know how to augment sales in another business, but I do know how to start my own.

The business would feature one of the tools I am already familiar with 3D printers. One product that would hopefully be a staple seller is nylon runners for snow scoops. Snow scoops are great until they hit concrete, and then it is like putting on the brakes. Bolting nylon runners on the bottom that push the scoop in above the concrete would allow it to slide more easily. Kaufman Custom Sheet Metal & Fabrication out of Ironwood, as well as Silver Bear Manufacturing and RJ Metal Specialty, make high quality snow scoops. The runners could be sold to these companies as a consumable add on because, while nylon is tough and slick, it will eventually wear out.

Another more prestigious product idea is custom handles for tools as well as full prosthetics and pieces. This would take advantage of the fact that 3D printers are good with prototyping, and a new software that wasn't available until recent years. 3DSOM is a software that can take 2D pictures and create 3D models. This way a person can send in a series of pictures of their hand cupped to use a tool, as well as the tool itself. With those a custom grip can be made. In the same way someone without a hand could take pictures of their arm, have a measurement for reference, and have a prosthetic made without ever traveling to have it fitted or manufactured.