

MBA student uses business, marketing knowledge to create hunting app

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University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Master of Business Administration student Chase Bouman knows a little something about marketing and innovation.

Recently, he combined what he has learned in pursuit of his degree with his passion for hunting and developed an Android application, or "app," designed to keep hunters safe. Bouman said he wanted to find a way to ease his wife's nerves by keeping himself safe while hunting, which led to the creation of a new company, Back Trail Tech LLC and the Android app that followed.

"Hunter Elite" allows outdoorsmen to relay their location via GPS to friends using the app, helping fellow hunters and rescue squads to find an individual quickly in the event of an emergency. Those without a smartphone can receive an individual's coordinates via text message. The GPS location feature also allows hunters to mark their favorite hunting spots.

Bouman said UW Oshkosh has been instrumental in providing the powerful knowledge necessary to create his own company and develop a mobile app.

"I have learned many strategies from my time at UW Oshkosh," Bouman said. "As my company transitions from the free beta test to the paid version of the app, I relied on my marketing classes to promote the app."

Bouman recently cut the app's price from \$3.99 to \$1.99 after noticing a decline in sales once Hunter Elite switched from the free version to the fully functional paid app. He said he enjoys applying business techniques learned from his education at the University.

"The lesson is it's all a learning experience," Bouman said. "It's great to apply topics in business to something I'm passionate about."

The UW Oshkosh MBA program provides a collaborative education that produces opportunities for students like Bouman to succeed. Through the use of the UW Oshkosh MBA Consortium, the University is able to partner with three other state universities to provide an online MBA program offered to students on all four campuses. The program is recognized for both its efficiency and popularity, growing to more than 400 students enrolled.

"The consortium especially was a big draw for me," Bouman said.

Kathy Hagens, the MBA program director, said the consortium allows the program to offer a number of electives, many of which can be customized to the student's interests. She said the program is also unique

in that it is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, a strict accrediting body that exclusively accredits a college's business program rather than the entire school. Less than 5 percent of schools worldwide have earned this accreditation.

Hagens said the MBA program at UW Oshkosh provides students like Bouman with entrepreneurial skills that will help them become "strong entrepreneurial and innovative thinkers."

"The MBA program really helps entrepreneurs look at it from various perspectives to make sure they are successful," Hagens said.

The team at Back Trail Tech enjoyed this year's deer hunting season but is still working to improve the company and the Hunter Elite technology.

"After the new year, keep an eye out for Hunter Elite on the iPhone market," Bouman said.

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