Hangbot Video Transcript

Jack Boland: Hi. My name is Jack Boland, and I’m a mechanical engineer here at UW-Madison. This is my fourth year. I’ve been working here at the Wisconsin Institute for Discovery on the Hangbot Project.

The Hangbot is a vertical plotter that basically is a stylus that rides along the wall. It is controlled by two-step motors with two strings that hang from it. Basically you can take an image and convert it to a bunch of lines, those lines into a bunch of commands and send those commands over to the controller of the steppers to draw your image on the wall.

We’re targeting it mainly as a replacement for window-signage. So instead of spending $100 for a banner that you put in your window for a week for a sale or something along those lines, you can draw whatever image you wanted, custom, right on the spot. It’s an alternative for the actual materials that go behind the signage but also the transportation costs.

Beyond just drawing cool artwork, it could be a physical message board. You see a lot of times that a lot of buildings around campus will have flat screen TVs of “this is what’s going on in the building that day,” and it seems absurd you would be feeding those electricity perpetually just so that people can see those ten bullet points.

It’s so much more impactful to learn stuff by doing it yourself. It’s been really great being able to run things by our mentor in the WID who can really understand these things and verify that our thoughts are actually correct.

It’s great having a whole bunch of different backgrounds in here in this very public place where I’ve been testing it out. Being in this prominent location you receive inflow from every single person, which is really nice.