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Making the impossible possible

In a world where humans so often use technology for frivolous or destructive purposes the story of [Mick Ebeling](#) and his [Not Impossible Labs](#) is truly heart warming.

Posted by [Nigel Bowen](#) on 14 April 2015

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The EyeWriter

Ebeling, 44, is a successful film and television producer. His philanthropic mission - to "make the impossible possible" by creating technology that can hugely improve the quality of life of the ill and injured - first took root in 2009.

A prominent LA graffiti artist called 'Tempt' had been rendered largely immobile by amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). Despite having no background in creating medical devices, Ebeling, an admirer of Tempt's work, determined he would try to invent a machine which would allow Tempt to paint again.

With the assistance of a number of computer programmers he flew in and put up in his own LA home, Ebeling oversaw a project that took some accessible and relatively inexpensive items - such as sunglasses and the camera from a PlayStation gaming console - and created the 'EyeWriter'. The device allowed Tempt to make art again, through his eye movements. All the intellectual property was then made available on the internet, allowing friends and relatives of similarly incapacitated individuals to cheaply and easily construct their own EyeWriters.

Don's Voice

Father-of-three Don Moir also lives with ALS, and since 1995 has relied on a ventilator, which allowed him to breathe, but took away his ability to speak. After hearing him interviewed about the EyeWriter, Don's wife Lorraine contacted Ebeling, who in partnership with Hewlett Packard, began to work on a way to give Don his voice back. Like the EyeWriter, the 'digital letter board' Not Impossible Labs created for Don uses eye-tracking technology, allowing him to form sentences by looking at sequences of letters on a screen, which are then spoken by a computer. Among his first words was a simple message to his wife: "[I love you](#)".

Project Daniel

At 14, Daniel Omar became a casualty of South Sudan's civil war, losing both arms to a bomb attack. "Without hands, I can't do anything," Omar told [Coastlines Magazine](#). "If I could have died, I would have."

Traditional prosthetics were prohibitively expensive, so Not Impossible got busy, using laptops and 3D printers to create affordable arms, which transformed Daniel's outlook and prospects.

Characteristically, Not Impossible Labs weren't satisfied with just transforming the life of one person, so they left their equipment behind and taught the members of Daniel's village how to make prosthetics for the

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many other amputees in the region, as well as making the relevant computer programs freely available online.

Not Impossible is currently working on low-cost machines to help people with cerebral palsy learn how to walk. As for Ebeling, he's keen for others to follow in his world-changing footsteps, encouraging those inspired by his story to adopt the philosophy that drives him: "If not now, then when? If not me, then who?"

Do you know of any organisations that use technology to transform lives? **Please comment below** or start a conversation over on the [Living Well Navigator forums](#).

Helpful links

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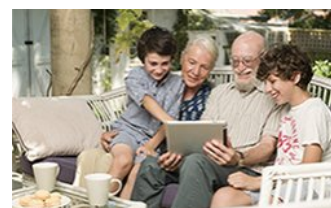
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