BUSINESS

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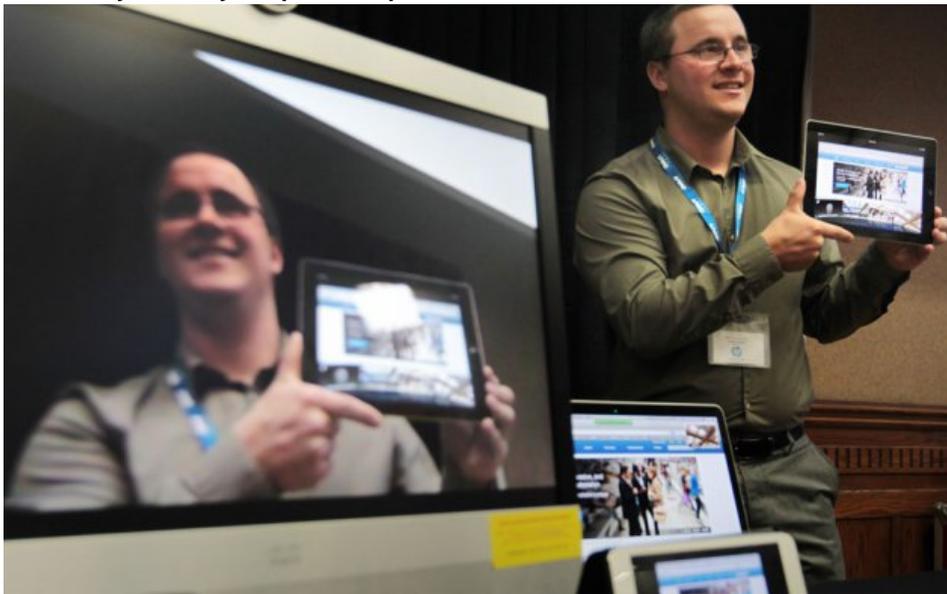## Windsor's tech sector building, says

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Mark Lula, a system engineer with Cisco Systems demonstrates video conferencing on multiple platforms during the Windsor-Essex Chamber of Commerce Tech Show held at the Caboto Club in Windsor, Ontario on October 29, 2013. (JASON KRYK/The Windsor Star)

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Dave Hall
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Daedas is one of a growing number of companies enhancing Windsor's reputation as a technology hub.

University of Windsor graduates Paolo Piunno, Naiel Samaan and Brad Colthurst started the company in January to help commercial and industrial enterprises track their energy consumption.

The trio were among more than 300 business leaders and technology experts attending Tuesday's Windsor-Essex Technology Show organized for the second year by the Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce.

"The tech sector in our region is burgeoning and with the entire global economy morphing into high-tech industries, Windsor needs to show it's in the game," said Matt Marchand, CEO and president of the chamber. "Windsor already has companies spending millions of dollars on research and development in sectors such as automotive and pharmaceuticals and this show is a perfect complement.

"We're trying to create a critical mass of companies in this sector so we can keep our best and brightest minds at home."

Piunno, who has a master's degree in civil engineering, said Daedas was borne out of an analytical project he worked on while in university and he recognized an opportunity to turn it into a business idea.

From left, Paolo Piunno and Naiel Samann from Daedas talk about their business during the Windsor-Essex Tech Show held at the Caboto Club in Windsor, Ontario on October 29, 2013. The two former University of Windsor students have started up a tech company and were at Windsor-Essex Tech Show to network their company. (JASON KRYK/The Windsor Star)

"While not everyone understands the analytical processes we use, everyone understand the bottom line and our technology helps businesses become more efficient and translate that increased efficiency into cost savings," said Piunno, who is the company's director of business development.

Samaan, who is in charge of research and development, said the company's technology tracks real-time energy usage and analyzes the

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data to show companies how they can better use their resources.

The three entrepreneurs are currently working out of the Downtown Windsor Business Accelerator. They are part of the organization's DeskUp program which subsidizes startups and provides them with office space and access to mentors and other business professionals.

Some of what's being done in Windsor is modeled on Kitchener-Waterloo's successful efforts at nurturing young and local high-tech talent. There more than 300 technology companies have been launched in the past 20 years through the support of Communitech.

Despite the much-publicized travails of Blackberry, which announced 300 more layoffs at its Waterloo head office Tuesday, the technology sector is expected to survive and grow.

"The region's hub is larger than just Blackberry and it has become the centre for innovation where business, academia, private sector, public sector and startup relationships continue to grow," said Bob Embleton, director of network partnerships for the Canadian Digital Media Network which is a division of Communitech.

Communitech was launched by the CEOs of high tech companies so they could develop talent and keep growing.

"Our division's part of that ecosystem is to connect more than two dozen organizations across the country, such as WEtech (Alliance in Windsor), and provide technical, business, mentoring and networking opportunities to startups and young companies seeking to take their business development to the next level," said Embleton.

WEtech Alliance vice-president Yvonne Pilon said there was plenty of evidence on display Tuesday that Windsor is headed in the right direction.

"You're seeing a lot of students and young entrepreneurs at this event as well as many companies which could be considered competitors in their sectors," she said. "That says a lot about our community and the fact people are willing to help nurture young talent."

Tags: Daedas, technology, WEtech Alliance, Windbsorn Essex regional Chamber of Commerce

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