The click of a mouse was all it took to tell the $400 million rover Spirit to drive off its lander onto Martian soil.

And the man behind the computer, 100 million miles away, was Chris Lewicki, a former UA student.

Lewicki is the senior flight systems engineer and Mars Exploration Rover flight director at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif. The JPL is the mission control for both Mars rover missions.

Lewicki was just following his dreams by doing what he loved. After receiving both his undergraduate and graduate degrees in aerospace engineering at the UA, he is now an important part of the team at the JPL.

"He’s the go-to man at the JPL for the Mars missions," said Michael Drake, the director of the Lunar and Planetary Lab and professor and department head in the planetary sciences department.

While dozens of scientists are involved in the missions, Lewicki has had several duties. For the last year and a half, he has been an electrical systems engineer who helped put the rover together and make sure everything on it was safe and working properly.

As flight director, he is responsible for the rover for the time it hits Mars until the time it drives off the lander. During that period, the rover bounces at least 20 times, deflects the balloons that cushion it to fall, and then unfolds and sets up its cameras and solar panels.

"The scariest time for me is the moment we know we landed but before we know it is safe. While everyone else in the control room is jumping up and down, that is when I start to worry," Lewicki said. "Once we get the first pictures, I am back to being on the top of the world."

He has only been out of school for three years, but thanks to his time at the UA, Lewicki has become a big part of the Mars exploration team.

"Chris was unique in that he was very interested in doing things, opposed to just sitting in the classroom. He was someone who realized that here at a major research university, there are opportunities for undergraduates to get involved in real world research," Drake said.

William Bryson, UA researcher and planetary sciences professor, remembers when Lewicki came up to his office to ask him to speak at the Students for the Exploration and Development of Space undergraduate club.

"It’s nice to have a place where faculty can look at. But some students say the magazine represents only a small portion of the UA campus, namely the social and party-going portion. It has flawlessly looking people from picture to picture and lacks content.

"My first impression was that boys and sororities. It’s the beautiful people’s magazine," said Jimmy Matthews, psychology sophomore.

Tim Rehrmann, publisher of Campus Magazine, said the fact that the models are good-looking is because advertisers want beautiful people to wear their clothes.

Kenny Gaub, a pre-business sophomore who has seen two issues of the magazine, said it is written by people who party for people who party.

"It has less to do with academia and more to do with socializing," Gaub said.

Since its debut, with 5,000 issues last year, the magazine has published four issues this month, reaching a publication of 15,000 issues.

"It’s nice to have a place where faculty can congregate, bring guests and eat at the end of the day," said Nick Adamakis, the student union’s marketing director.

"Because the survey is ongoing, Adamakis wouldn’t discuss the tone of the responses. But faculty chairman John Hancock said his colleagues have told him over the years they would be interested in developing such a club, said Nick Adamakis, the student union’s marketing director.

"More than 400 faculty have already responded to a questionnaire that asks whether they would be interested in developing such a club," said Dan Adams, director of the student union.

"It’s nice to have a place where faculty can