

Headline	Polytechnics unleash new offerings		
Date	6 Jan 2010		
Media Title	TODAY	Section	News
Page No.	Pg 10	Size	N.A.
Description	Ngee Ann Polytechnic launches <i>m:idea</i> , its student-run media conglomerate which has already worked with the Speak Good English Movement, Singapore Sports Council and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.		

FACILITIES UPGRADE

Polytechnics unleash new offerings

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SINGAPORE — It is that time of the year when the polytechnics roll out new diplomas, some of which are firsts here. But besides these, the institutions have been working on several unique teaching facilities, from laboratories to a “village” and even a “conglomerate” — to engage their industry partners as much as for the benefit of the 2010 student intake.

One example is a training facility for both industry professionals and Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP) students in digital and precision engineering.

The first-of-its-kind \$21-million Centre for Digital and Precision Engineering, was launched yesterday by NYP, Spring Singapore and the Economic Development Board. It is part of a \$76-million initiative announced in 2007 to train 2,000 professionals over five years for the sector.

Last month, Singapore Polytechnic also sought to keep pace with industry demands through the completion of its InnoVillage — a multi-disciplinary platform where students and partners in academia, industry and research and development all converge.



m:idea, Ngee Ann Polytechnic's student-run media conglomerate, gives students real-world experience in executing projects for external clients. PHOTO COURTESY Ngee ANN POLYTECHNIC

NEW DIPLOMAS THIS YEAR

Republic Polytechnic

- Renewable energy engineering
- Health management and promotion
- Wellness, lifestyle and spa management

Ngee Ann Polytechnic

- Arts business management
- Sustainable urban design and engineering
- Veterinary bio-science

Singapore Polytechnic

- Perfumery and cosmetics
- Materials science
- International business
- Digital animation
- Visual effects & motion graphics

Temasek Polytechnic

- Early childhood studies

Nanyang Polytechnic

- Electrical engineering
- Social sciences (social work)



It contains, for example, laboratories for industry partners to sponsor an emerging technology for a collaborative R&D project.

And on Saturday, Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) will launch *m:idea*, its student-run media conglomerate, which has already worked with the Speak Good English Movement, Singapore Sports Council and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The centre, where students can spend their internship, allows some 30 students at any one time to work on services such as photography, public relations and radio production.

But even without actively engaging industry players, the polytechnics' new facilities do provide students with industry-related training. For example, NP's Biopharma Lab, which opened this month, replicates industry cleanrooms and allows students hands-on training in making drugs out of micro-organisms.

It is the only one of its kind among polytechnics here and is open to about 200 students each academic year.

Meanwhile, Temasek Polytechnic (TP) has three new specialised culinary laboratories to simulate “real-world” commercial kitchen setting, so “students gain intensive hands-on training in fundamental baking and culinary skills”, said the school.

Some new facilities are meant to benefit the public, too.

TP's Glycemic Index Research Unit, officially launched last month, conducts regular workshops for the public.

Given the limited GI information available for local Asian food, the unit aims to raise awareness on low-GI food, which releases glucose slower into bloodstream, and to also produce this healthier type of food.

Other than facilities, some institutions are also rolling out new programmes.

With the opening of its new centre, NYP, the only polytechnic to offer precision engineering training, has launched a scholarship programme to fund a three-year diploma in digital precision engineering for students and a five-year, in-employment upgrading programme for working adults.

About 300 students have been awarded the scholarship, while 220 working adults from 71 companies have participated in the upgrading programme.