‘Newsroom of the future’ to be set up at NTU

A CENTRE dedicated to creating the “newsroom of the future” will be established at Nanyang Technological University's Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information by September.

Jointly set up by the university and the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (Wan-Ifra), the centre, called NewsPlex Asia, will cost $500,000.

A memorandum of understanding was signed between the two parties yesterday. The ceremony was also attended by Mr Patrick Daniel, editor-in-chief of the English and Malay Newspapers Division of Singapore Press Holdings (SPH), and Mr Walter Fernandez, editor of Today and managing director of Mediacorp Press.

The centre – Wan-Ifra’s fourth NewsPlex but its first in Asia – will take up 160 sq m of space at the Wee Kim Wee School.

The centre will have a prototype “newsroom of the future”, in which different facilities producing different types of news products – such as magazines, newspapers and radio broadcasts – are all brought together under one roof, said the school’s chairman, Associate Professor Benjamin Hill Deventer.

“It will have a lot of the same equipment in our facilities right now, just upgraded and brought together. A lot of what we’re trying to do is look at new ways of workflow being done. When information comes in – and is processed, repurposed and put into different packages – that works better in a centralised facility,” he said.

The new facility will have equipment such as computers, news feeds, an audio studio and a server room. This integrated newsroom will allow journalists, editors and other types of news producers to work together and be aware of stories that are coming in.

“It becomes a more tightly knit news organisation,” he said.

In his speech, Mr Daniel said that the Wee Kim Wee School had produced many well-trained and talented graduates, and that SPH had been a beneficiary of that.

“I think it is among the best journalism schools in Asia, and the NewsPlex Asia will further help the Wee Kim Wee School to establish itself as the best mass communications school in the region,” he said.

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