



Media Release

For Immediate Release

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ETPL AND ASIA NEWS NETWORK TO COLLABORATE ON DIGITAL SOLUTIONS FOR MEDIA AND ADVERTISING INDUSTRIES

*MoU aims to build ecosystem and help grow successes for local companies such as A*STAR start-up Knorex*

1. **SINGAPORE, June 14, 2013** – ETPL (Exploit Technologies Pte Ltd), the technology transfer arm of the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR), today signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Asia News Network (ANN) to collaborate on projects and solutions aimed at the media and advertising industries. Through this arrangement, ETPL and ANN, a network of national daily newspapers published in Asian cities, will look to collaborate via joint development, exchange of technological information, and marketing events. Key areas will include:

- Human language (speech and text) processing
 - Mobile imaging
 - Video processing
 - Analytics

2. The agreement aims to build a business and technology ecosystem around the media and advertising sectors and to grow more successes along the lines of A*STAR start-up Knorex. Knorex developed iSnap, an augmented reality application that has been implemented across eight major regional newspapers: Thailand's *The Nation*, Malaysia's *The*



Star, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Indonesia's *Jakarta Post* and *Kompas*, Myanmar's *Eleven*, Singapore's *The Edge* and Hong Kong's *China Daily*.

3. “Media owners and news organisations have expressed the need to more accurately target and profile users, to develop and deliver rich content with more speed and efficiency and to optimise delivery of content – hence our focus on human language processing, mobile imaging, video processing and analytics.”, said Lee Han Boon, Senior Vice President at ETPL. “With new business models comes the need for new technologies. ETPL has been working with A*STAR Research Institutes and partner organizations to develop portfolios of enabling technologies to help strengthen the sector’s competitiveness. As A*STAR’s technology transfer arm, we then work with licensees on commercializing the most promising research outcomes and bringing them to the marketplace – much like what we’ve done with Knorex.”

4. Knorex’s iSnap solution has been helping major regional publications gain reader engagement and tune content. Its smartphone-driven solution enables newspaper readers to scan editorial and advertisements in iSnap-enabled newspapers to get extra content, such as 3-D images, video clips, photo galleries, product catalogues and contest forms, on their devices.

5. Not only does this help newspapers better engage their readers, it also allows them to find out real-time what their readers are interested in and tune their content accordingly. iSnap-enabled newspapers have all seen their mobile app downloads and usage jump by over 100 percent in under three months from their respective launches. These newspapers have also generated new sources of revenue that amount to over S\$3 million in total to date.

ETPL and ANN Collaboration to Kick Off at Media Exploits 2013

6. ETPL and ANN’s collaboration will kick off on October 1 at Media Exploits 2013, ETPL’s annual industry networking event that showcases patented and patent-pending technology aimed at the media and advertising industries. For the first time, technology on



show will come from beyond A*STAR and include those from other Institutes of Higher Learning such as the National University of Singapore and the Nanyang Technological University.

7. The needs of the regional media industry will be a key theme at Media Exploits 2013. ANN members will get an early look at technologies brewing in laboratories and research institutes while researchers will be able to gain first hand understanding of market needs. Via this mutual exchange, ANN organisations will be able to influence the development of key technologies while researchers and start-ups will gain a deeper understanding of market needs and develop more commercially viable technologies and solutions.

8. “Industry input is key in helping the research community decide where to invest their resources, thus bridging the gap between science and commercial needs,” added Mr Philip Lim, Chief Executive Officer of ETPL. “We remain committed to driving a consistent pipeline of technologies for commercialisation through building clusters of industries around earmarked hotspots, or what we call innovation clusters. This strategic focus directs resources towards areas with market potential and maximises the strength and leadership of A*STAR’s research.”

9. Today’s conference, titled “Advancing the Next Frontier of Asian Media”, also included a technology preview. Technologies showcased included:

MIMAS

MIMAS is an on-device advanced mobile image recognition and augmented reality technology platform that does not require an Internet connection. It recognises the content of the image or scene using patent-pending image recognition methods and returns the relevant information in an augmented reality view on mobile phones and tablets. MIMAS is faster and uses less memory in recognising images and provides more accurate view tracking for image/video overlays when the mobile device is moved or rotated, compared to what is currently available. Sidestepping latency and stability issues caused by patchy mobile



and Internet connections, MIMAS enables developers to create apps that can truly be used anytime, anywhere.

ARISE Entity Search Engine

Current search engines such as Google and Bing organize information in terms of keywords and documents, rather than via deeper understanding or context. This means users not only need to formulate queries carefully and manually identify correct search results, they often need to go through multiple pages of information to get what they are looking for. ARISE's Entity search engine aims to take search beyond mere web pages. It also picks up disparate forms of information from online media including blogs, social networks, restaurant web sites and more. It then presents the information in a coherent, easy-to-read format.

Video Cutout

By automatically segmenting its "foreground layer" from a live VGA or HD video stream in real time using only a single webcam and a standard desktop or laptop computer, Video Cutout enables content developers to change backdrops or get rid of distracting backgrounds quickly when shooting an interview or video for example. While humans differentiate easily between a subject in the foreground and "noise" in the background, it is challenging to automate such a task with computer algorithms – thus making such content-editing a time-consuming process. With Video Cutout, this process is automated, which means content developers can now perform these edits speedily and efficiently.

Magic Touch

Magic Touch is a portfolio of advanced image/video manipulation technologies that enable easy creation of fun and eye-catching effects from photos and short video clips on smartphones. Publishers and advertisers can create quick content for eye-catching mobile and online advertisements without having to invest in expensive content authoring tools. With Magic Touch, users can perform the following tasks for example:

- Convert a still photo of a lake into an interesting moving image in which water flows and branches sway;



- Jazz up a short video clip by freezing a central image into a still image, while other selected parts of the video continue to be dynamic;
- Select parts of photos taken on mobile phones to be “cut”, coloured or edited with other filters.

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About ETPL

ETPL is the technology transfer arm of the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR), Singapore's lead agency for fostering world-class scientific research and talent. A*STAR oversees 14 biomedical sciences, physical sciences and engineering research institutes, and six consortia and centres. As a one-stop resource, ETPL supports A*STAR in transforming the economy through driving innovation and commercializing its research outcomes.

Also known as Exploit Technologies Pte Ltd, ETPL enhances the research output of A*STAR scientists by translating their inventions into marketable products or processes. Through shaping and facilitating licensing deals and spin-offs, ETPL actively engages industry leaders and players to commercialise A*STAR's technologies and apply them to building ecosystems that benefit business, industry and economy.

For more information, please visit <http://etpl.sg>

About A*STAR

The Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) is Singapore's lead public sector agency that fosters world-class scientific research and talent to drive economic growth and transform Singapore into a vibrant knowledge-based and innovation driven economy.

In line with its mission-oriented mandate, A*STAR spearheads research and development in fields that are essential to growing Singapore's manufacturing sector and catalysing new growth industries.

A*STAR supports these economic clusters by providing intellectual, human and industrial capital to its partners in industry.

A*STAR oversees 20 biomedical sciences and physical sciences and engineering research entities, located in Biopolis and Fusionopolis as well as their vicinity. These two R&D hubs, house a bustling and diverse community of local and international research scientists and engineers from A*STAR's research entities as well as a growing number of corporate laboratories.

Please visit www.a-star.edu.sg

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