



MEDIA RELEASE

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START-UP GAMURAI SHAPES FUTURE OF THE HAIRDRESSING INDUSTRY WITH NOVEL WEB APP

Web application developed by local start-up Gamurai will help hairdressing industry enhance customers' experience and improve business management

Singapore—Hair salon owners can now easily manage customers' hairstyling requests and their own business needs, with help from a new web application developed by Gamurai, a local start-up. The new app, "VEON@HairExperience" (VEON), comprises hairstyling and business management features and will allow the hairdressing industry to cost-efficiently harness technology for productivity, efficiency, and customer experience improvements.

A key component in Gamurai's new app is a 3D Face Modelling Technology licensed from ETPL (Exploit Technologies Pte Ltd), the technology transfer arm of the Agency of Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR).

The new app addresses two key challenges confronting the hairdressing industry today. One issue hair salon owners face is showing customers how they would look with a certain hairstyle or colour. The other is the challenge of handling administrative tasks such as organising customer information, booking appointments and tracking inventory.

How VEON@HairExperience Can Help

Gamurai's VEON@HairExperience utilises 3D Face Modelling Technology to allow customers to preview how they would look with different hairstyles and hair colours. The app, which works on a touch screen tablet, can also help hair salon owners better access customer information, track and manage appointments as well as staff resources (Full details of the app are available in Annex A).

The app was successfully developed with support from ETPL and the Institute for Infocomm Research (I²R), a research institute under A*STAR.

“The potential of this app is immense. While it addresses many unmet needs of this industry and helps hair salons improve their productivity and overall business processes, this application can also be adopted by other fashion-related industries,” said Mr Philip Lim, Chief Executive Officer of ETPL.

“When sufficient data like hairstyles or hairstylists’ performance is collected, Gamurai can apply data mining or even simulation to provide analysis and statistical support to help pinpoint areas for improvement and help further grow this industry,” he added.

Following the launch, Gamurai will work closely with the Singapore Productivity Centre and the Hair and Cosmetology Association of Singapore (HACOS) to extend the reach of VEON@HairExperience to more salons in Singapore.

“The researchers from I²R have helped us understand the complexity of the technology, and enabled us to further tweak and enhance it during the year-long test bedding trials with partners in the hair industry. With strong support from HACOS and the Singapore Productivity Centre, we truly believe that our product will revolutionise this industry,” said Mr Woo Sze Ming, founder of Gamurai.

There are some 3,000 hair salons in Singapore currently and Jawed Habib, Spakks and Urban Hair will be the first in the industry to adopt Gamurai’s new app.

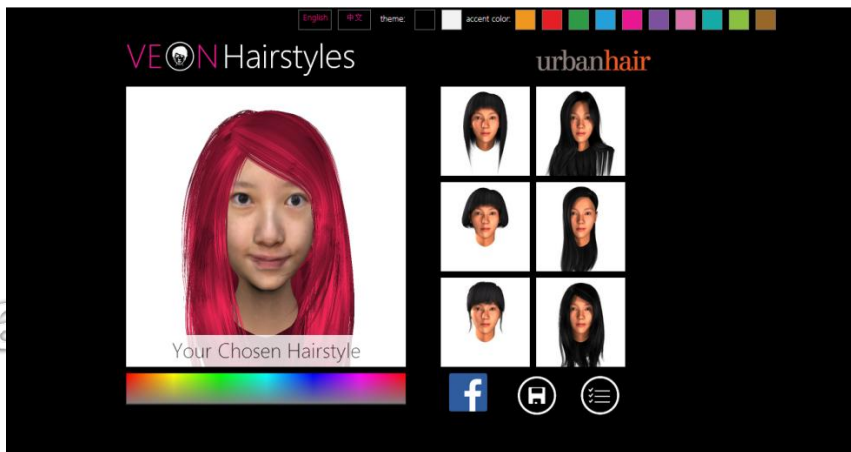
Mr James Wee, Managing Director of Spakks Hair Studio, said, “With the advent of technology and so many apps developed daily, I have always wondered why there isn’t one that is tailored for hairstylists? During the trial, my stylists and I were pleased with the fluidity of VEON. It is so intuitive and easy-to-use, like an extension of our craftsmanship.”

Mr Simon Lee, Founding President of HACOS, commented, “In our industry which essentially started off as low tech as a pair of scissor and comb, we are now gradually seeing a huge transformation in not only our hairstyling equipment and hair care products but also high tech systems and apps that could help this industry improve our professionalism in terms of our customer service and productivity.”

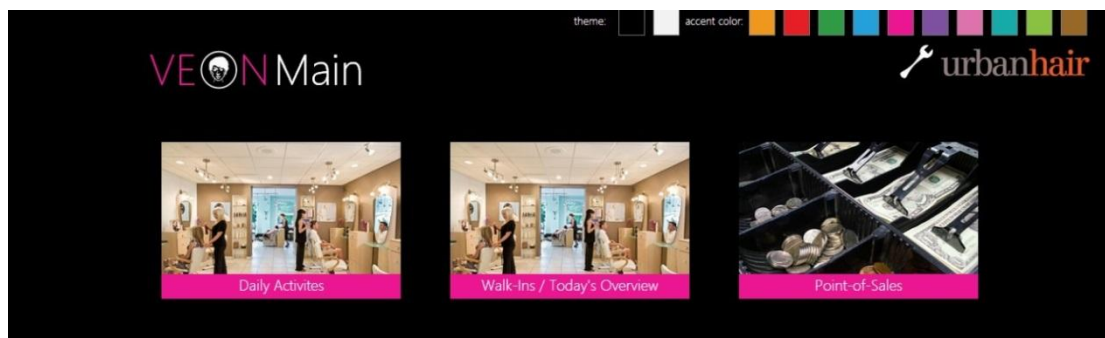
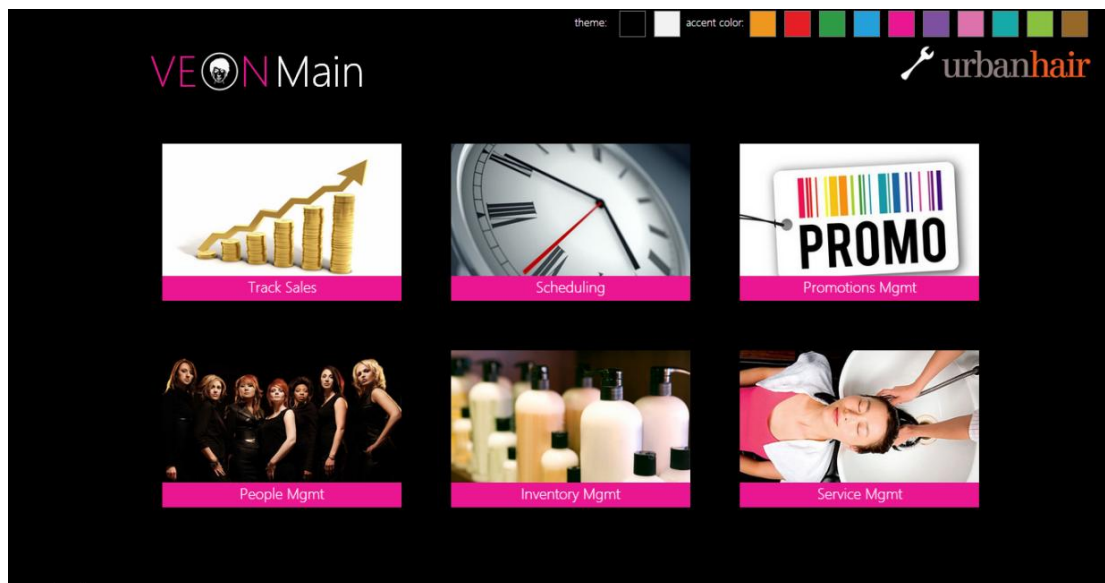
Images



After importing her customer's portrait photo to the app, a hairstylist explores hairstyle options for her customer using the 3D face modelling technology.



A customer is able to instantly see how she looks with different hairstyles and hair colours.



The app comprises branch and company management features which enable hair salon owners to manage appointments, access customer records, evaluate employees' performance, manage inventory and generate sales reports.

Enclosed:
 Annex A – About VEON@HairExperience App

For media queries and clarifications, please contact:

Ms Tan Hwee Har
 Assistant Vice President, ETPL
 Tel: +65 6478 8459 (DID), +65 9049 1319 (HP)
 Email: tan_hwee_har@etpl.sg

Mr Woo Sze Ming
 CEO, Gamurai
 Tel: +65 97619340
 Email: szeming@gamuraitech.com

Mr Simon Lee

Founding President, Hair and Cosmetology Association of Singapore (HACOS)

Tel: +65 98462247

Email: synerget@singnet.com.sg

About the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (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 18 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.

For more information on A*STAR, please visit www.a-star.edu.sg.

About ETPL National Archives of Singapore

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. As a one-stop resource, ETPL supports A*STAR in transforming the economy through driving innovation and commercialising 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://www.etpl.sg>

About the Institute for Infocomm Research (I²R)

The Institute for Infocomm Research (I²R) is a member of the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) family and is Singapore's largest ICT research institute. Our strategic thrusts are in the spheres of intelligence, communications and media and our research capabilities are in shared sensor networks, public-public/public-private data-sharing platform, big data analytics and visualisation solutions.

For more information about I²R, please visit www.i2r.a-star.edu.sg

About Gamurai

Gamurai is a young fledgling technology enabler company founded in tiny island, Singapore to encircle and impact people's lives. We work closely with research institutes, industry partners, governmental bodies and world class investors to help change and make a difference to the industry that we set our eyes upon. One of our Flagship technology products is VEON@Hair Experience, targeting the Hair Fashion Industry.

VEON@HairExperience is a suite of visual tools, specially crafted and designed to empower our Hairstylists and Hair salons in their business operations.

For more information, please visit www.gamuraitech.com

National Archives of Singapore

About HACOS

HACOS stands for Hair and Cosmetology Association (Singapore). It is set-up to unify the Hair and Cosmetology Industry players with the eventual aim to provide a platform to nurture our next generation for the industry.

To achieve that, we are focusing on 3 main key areas: **P**artnership, **E**ducation and **T**echnology. We will work with the different organisations as needed to continue driving the industry forward.

For more information, please visit www.HACOS.com.sg

ABOUT VEON@HAIR EXPERIENCE APP

The app's hairstylist tool can transform an image of a person's face to a 3D avatar, enabling a customer to virtually see how he or she looks in different hair styles and hair colours. By storing snapshots of their customers' past and current hairstyles in the app, hair salon owners can easily access customers' records and evaluate the performance of their employees' hairstyling skills. These functions are performed using the app's branch and company management tools which can also organise information to manage inventory and generate sales reports. Another highlight of the app includes an appointment booking module which helps hair salon owners manage their resources.

Gamurai won the first prize at a 3D Face Modelling Technology crowd sourcing competition organised by ETPL, the technology transfer arm of the Agency of Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) in 2011. The competition served to crowd source for application ideas of the 3D face modelling technology which was developed by the Institute for Infocomm Research (I²R), a research institute under A*STAR. Gamurai subsequently worked with ETPL and I²R to develop the app for use in the hairdressing industry.