Next Facebook craze could come from NUS

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COMING up with the next big hit on social-networking sites is on the minds of a group of undergraduates here.

And while such applications – better known as “apps” – developed by the National University of Singapore (NUS) undergraduates may not become lucrative hits eventually, the young developers are not letting it stop them.

Their lecturer, Assistant Professor Ben Leong, said NUS is the second school in the world to offer a Facebook programming course. The course, which started last year, has drawn 77 students to date.

While it is still possible to develop successful money-making Facebook apps, they are not growing exponentially as they did a year back, said Prof Leong.

He said: “There are many more apps now compared to two years ago – there’s a sense of “app fatigue” among Facebook users. Other newer technologies are also emerging, like Google’s Friend Connect.”

Aspiring game developers Tan Kian Boon and Justin Lye, both 23, are part of a team of six tertiary students who have come up with a university-themed Facebook game, Varsity Chronicles, for their course.

In the game, players choose a faculty and battle against players from other faculties to take over the university. If it is successful, they plan on setting up a game studio in future.

Prof Leong said: “Given that our population is only so big, there are only so many developers that we can have locally. But talent-wise, Singaporeans are capable of developing the next (version of) Facebook.”

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