



Nanyang Polytechnic's School of Interactive and Digital Media students (from left) Rachael Ng, Lau Kevin, Shazana Yazid, Valery Seng and Izz Irfan Sahlan with virtual-reality headsets in the bespoke Rolls-Royce Ghost.

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Rolls-Royce taps VR with Nanyang Polytechnic

The BMW-owned British marque works with students to create a simulated world that offers customers a glimpse of its signature Bespoke service

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If Rolls-Royce Motor Cars decides to offer its manicured clientele the option of customising their million-dollar cars with new-fangled virtual reality (VR) one day, the BMW-owned British marque has to thank students from Singapore's Nanyang Polytechnic.

In September, nine groups of students from the polytechnic's School of Interactive and Digital

Media were invited to create a simulated world that offered customers a glimpse of Rolls-Royce's signature Bespoke service through motion graphics videos.

On Wednesday, the company showcased the works of the two groups deemed "most promising" by a panel comprising Rolls-Royce and VR industry executives.

One group worked on a flower-based theme for the interior of a car, while the other focused on the streamlined profile of the Rolls-Royce Ghost.

Ms Rachael Ng, 19, from the group working on the car's interior, said "the most fun part of the project was seeing all the cars" up close.

"It was very exciting to see so many Rolls-Royces in one room," she says.

Ms Valery Seng, 20, from the other group, says the biggest challenge was to "uphold the brand identity" of Rolls-Royce.

"It was a whole new level of working," she says.

Rolls-Royce's regional spokesman Hal Serudin says Rolls-Royce sponsored the project to the tune of \$40,000, which includes Apple iPads for each member of the winning teams.

Mr Serudin says this is a first for Rolls-Royce, which has never used VR for sales and marketing purposes.

He says the new "immersive experience" will now be offered to Singapore customers, who can don Samsung Galaxy Gear VR headsets in the Bespoke section of the showroom.

The VR medium is currently not interactive, although Nanyang Polytechnic says it hopes to have the opportunity to make it interactive in its next project.

Rolls-Royce Motor Cars plans to roll out the VR experience to customers in its other Asia-Pacific markets from June.

A number of other carmakers are tapping VR technology to help sell cars.

In September, Audi announced that selected dealerships will offer VR. The following month, Jaguar Land Rover also said it would take up VR as a sales tool.

And at the Boston Auto Show in January, Porsche said it was exploring VR as a new way for potential customers to "test-drive" their models without leaving the showroom.