IT-plus courses a hit with students

SMU started its School of Information Systems two years ago, offering a degree in business-focused information system management.

Ngee Ann Polytechnic re-worked its IT programme so that, from this year, students will get a grounding in areas such as business analytics, wireless technologies and networking, among others.

The IT-plus courses is keen, the institution's spokesperson said.

Ms Agatha Wee, director of Ngee Ann Polytechnic's School of Infocomm Technology, said: "IT has an increasing demand for people who can excel in and add value even to non-IT fields such as marketing, event organisation and business administration."

IDA director of manpower development Seah Ee Khim said that previous IT graduates who moved into banking, health care or digital media had to learn about their industry on the job.

More employable

"I think people trained in both areas are definitely more employable," Professor Loo said.

Programmers and marketeers are schooled differently, so maybe that's why they are on different wavelengths, he said.

"We believe that such courses will enable our graduates to be more employable," Professor Loo explained.

SMU undergraduate Stephen Heng, 23, who is pursuing a double degree in information systems and business, says university and polytechnic students are choosing "hybrid" courses that combine information technology with another subject.

NUS undergraduate Stephen Heng, 23, sees the hybrid course as a way of giving himself more options instead of being "stuck for the rest of my life as an engineer."

He chose a business-computing mix. "It combines both business acumen and technical knowledge, and is more diversified," he explained.

But while hybrid courses might be in vogue, not everyone is rushing to sign up.

NTU computer engineering student Melvin Lee suspects that the hybrid course students might find themselves more boxed in than those who choose hardcore IT programmes.

"Computer engineering is a general IT degree, with specialisation of course, but still allows us to handle any jobs that are IT-related," he said.

"From there, we just need to pick up the relevant skills our job requires."