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Ideas to help visitors click with Chinatown

'Hackathon' participants moot ways to liven up attraction with tech aid

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Android developer Cheryl Liew and education start-up founder Lho Chen Yang presenting their winning idea at the event yesterday. -- ST PHOTO: DESMOND FOO

BY MELODY ZACCHEUS

Most people think of Chinatown as a place with one foot in the past, but some 60 people gathered over the weekend to bring it forward with the creative use of technology.

The ideas mooted included adding a virtual version of the 87-year-old Majestic Theatre in Eu Tong Sen Street to the mobile version of popular block-building game Minecraft. Another idea was to use interactive billboards that can capture the emotions of tourists and tell the stories of Chinatown's past and present.

The suggestions came from the 60-plus urban planners, developers, students and heritage enthusiasts who took part in a hackathon, or tech-brainstorming event, held by the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) from Friday to yesterday.

Called Chinatown coLAB 2014, it aimed to gather ideas for digital programmes and applications that can enhance visitors' experience and help businesses in Chinatown better understand and use consumer data such as footfall.

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