iPad ‘tour guides’ for visitors to S’pore

Tablet-rental company helps tourists make the most of their holidays here

By IAN POH

WHEN Australian couple Warren and Monica Gray were in Singapore last week, they used a “tour guide” — in the form of an iPad loaded with apps offering help to maximise the holiday experience.

The rental business, called TouristPads, was launched in July and helps those on the go to find information more easily via iPads which are 3G-enabled.

The idea came to co-founder Joshua Wong during a trip to Europe last year when he had difficulty finding his way to an opera performance in Vienna.

He founded the business together with his brother, Caleb, 25, with an initial investment of about $8,000, which came from their savings.

There are at least three other tablet-rental services here but they said TouristPads is the first to target primarily tourists.

The business is modelled on a similar service offered in Madrid. For a daily fee, $30 initially and $20 from the third day, visitors can use an iPad loaded with more than 70 apps.

They can buy a prepaid SIM card but have to go through the additional step of providing their passport and personal details.

The company offers a free personal delivery and pick-up service, usually at the hotel where the tourist is staying. Clients must indicate on an online form how many tablets they need, the dates required, and the time and place for delivery.

Upon delivery of the device, the booking information is checked against personal details found on passports and flight details. A picture is also taken of the passport.

Mr Wong, 27, said the service has been very punctual and hassle-free, and it is good to have all this technology on hand because it makes everything so much easier.