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Singapore Airshow 2008

Published February 18, 2008

All set for Asia's largest airshow

JIMMY LAU explains the hard work it has taken to make Singapore's vision of an all-new airshow a reality

THE scene is set for the opening of Asia's biggest-ever aerospace trade event - the 2008 Singapore Airshow. On Tuesday morning, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong will formally declare the event open, and more than 30,000 trade visitors and many hundreds of exhibitors and journalists from around the world will finally get the chance to experience this all-new airshow for themselves.

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3,104.31 ▲20.97

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| | | |
|---------------|-----------|---------|
| KLCI | 1,420.87 | +8.04 |
| HSI | 24,123.17 | +363.92 |
| NIKKEI | 13,757.91 | +122.51 |

US Indices

| | | |
|----------------|-----------|--------|
| Dow | 12,348.21 | -28.77 |
| Nasdaq | 2,321.80 | -10.74 |
| S&P | 1,349.99 | +1.13 |

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Mr Lau: 'Starting with a blank sheet gave us the opportunity to focus on the needs and expectations of exhibitors and guests.'

We sought extensive feedback from exhibitors and regular visitors to other trade events worldwide, and compiled a 'hit list' of the most common complaints about airshows. Most people said the number one problem was traffic jams and congestion getting in and out of shows, long queues for registration, security and food outlets.

The first step was to commission a purpose-built exhibition centre on the new 30-hectare permanent airshow site at Changi North. This fully air-conditioned exhibition hall, which was completed on schedule late last year, is one of the largest single structures of its kind in the region and will accommodate all our exhibitors in one continuous space. The massive hall is 180 metres long and 228 metres across, with a ceiling height between 8 and 11.2 metres.

The site also includes a 90,000 square metre static display area and space for up to 100 sea-facing chalets, all of which have roof gardens that give exhibitors a 360-degree view of the show site and the aerobatic displays. The mezzanine level of the exhibition hall features floor-to-ceiling glass panels overlooking the waterfront, so even guests inside the hall will be able to see the flying displays.

We also decided to use 'smart' technology wherever possible to ease the registration and badging process and smooth the passage of guests

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through security checks. For example, we will have mobile e-ticket booths positioned around the registration gateway. Exhibitors and guests will be encouraged to pre-register online and will receive their confirmation by e-mail and SMS text message. On arrival at the airshow site, they can either take a printout of the booking confirmation to a ticket desk to get their badge, or scan the SMS message on their cell phone at one of the e-ticket booths.



Another unique feature of the 2008 Singapore Airshow will be a 'dress smart casual for business' dress code, which was announced last year in a series of full-page advertisements in the global aviation trade press. The campaign features the CEOs of the world's largest aircraft leasing company, International Lease Finance Corporation, and of two of the region's leading airlines, Cathay Pacific Airways and India's Kingfisher Airlines, and drives home the message that Singapore will be the place to do 'serious business' in comfort.

Of course, we haven't forgotten the tens of thousands of aviation enthusiasts who will flock to the airshow on the public days next weekend, when they will have the chance to admire the very latest aviation hardware on display. The thrilling flying displays, headlined by Singapore's very own Black Knights aerobatic team, will hopefully inspire a new generation of young people to seek careers in this exciting and dynamic industry.

After all the hard work it has taken to make our vision of Asia's largest aerospace event a reality, we are all looking forward to the opening day. But it's also worth remembering that the day after the 2008 Singapore Airshow closes next Sunday, preparations for the 2010 airshow will begin.

Jimmy Lau is the managing director, Singapore Airshow & Events Pte Ltd

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