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Rebranding of Dragonair as Cathay Dragon will create a more powerful Group proposition

Thursday, 28 January was a red letter day for the Cathay Pacific Group as it was announced that Dragonair will be rebranded as Cathay Dragon.

The news was announced to the world at a press event at the Convention & Exhibition Centre in Wan Chai, where Chief Executive Ivan Chu and Dragonair CEO Algernon Yau explained the importance of the rebranding to the Group’s future.

Ivan said the move would build on the work that has been done since Dragonair became a wholly owned subsidiary of Cathay back in 2006 – a partnership he called a “phenomenal success”.

“Aligning the two brands closer together will enable us to provide greater convenience and a more seamless travel experience for our passengers, underlining our promise of a ‘Life Well Travelled’,” Ivan told reporters.

“This rebranding will help to sharpen our competitive edge and capture the fast-growing passenger flows across the two carriers, helping to further strengthen Hong Kong’s position as an aviation hub.”

A key point made at the press event was that the two airlines were not being merged, and that both will continue under separate Air Operator’s Licences.

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And although Cathay Dragon will carry a new livery, adapting the distinctive Cathay brushwing on its tail, the airline will still retain the same touches that helped it to build such a loyal customer base, said Algernon.

“We will still be a premium carrier offering the best products and services to our customers, and we will have the same dedicated team providing the highest levels of operational and service excellence,” Algernon said.

“This rebranding gives Cathay Dragon and Cathay Pacific the opportunity to become stronger than the sum of our parts.”

Staff were told about the rebranding at packed briefings held in Cathay City and Dragonair House, with special displays mounted in both locations.

The next visible sign of the rebranding exercise will be in April, when the first A330 in the new Cathay Dragon colours comes out of the hangar.

The actual cutover to the new Cathay Dragon identity will be in the fourth quarter of 2016. Until that time, the rebranding Project Management Office and the Brand team will be working closely with various business units on the application of the new design ethos and logo.

A350 delivery delay
Cathay is now expecting delivery of its first A350 in late April – a little later than the original delivery date of February.

The delay is the result of a cabin product issue.

The Cathay team is working closely with Airbus and the product supplier to minimise the risk of any further delays.

HK$670,000 to Red Cross
The Cathay Group has raised a total of HK$670,000 for the Hong Kong Red Cross to aid victims of the Chennai floods.

Shortly after the severe floods hit Chennai, the Group and its seven wholly owned subsidiaries launched a two-week staff appeal to raise funds for the people affected.

Together with the company’s pledge to match the final amount donated by staff, the total cash donation has been rounded up to HK$670,000, all of which go to support the Red Cross’s relief efforts in affected areas.

ISPY stars
It was a big night of success for Cathay Pacific at this year’s 2016 Inflight Salesperson of the Year (ISPY) Awards, held in London on 29 January.

Flight Attendant Janet Wong was named Inflight Sales Person of the Year and along with her fellow crew Jack Yip was awarded with the Inflight Sales People of the Year championship – the first time for Cathay Pacific to get both top awards at the event.

Fellow cabin crew Lucia Yeung and Kevin Nguyen were gold medallists in the product knowledge category.

More on the achievements of our winners in the next CX World!
Joining in the fun!
Youngsters get hands-on experience for sixth Community Flight

On 17 January, the latest Community Flight took 250 children and their families over the South China Sea on a 90-minute journey.

The event was officiated by Guest of Honour Chief Executive CY Leung, who was accompanied by Cathay Pacific Chief Executive Ivan Chu, Executive Director Algernon Yau and Director Corporate Affairs James Tong.

At the gate ceremony, CY said that he had clocked more than enough miles to go round the world 100 times; but he still remembered the excitement of his first flight – a feeling that was shared by those onboard, many of whom had never flown before.

For the first time in the Community Flight’s history, children were involved in various duties with the help of Cathay staff. Participant Lau Kas-ho was tasked with scanning boarding passes at the gate. “It was fun! When the green lit up on the barcode scanner, the passenger could go ahead, but red meant no-go,” he smiled.

As the Boeing 777-300 gathered speed on the tarmac, the cacophony inside the cabin was replaced with a sense of awe and anticipation. The moment when the plane lifted off, children gasped excitedly. Seeing this, many staff and Cathay Pacific Volunteers were moved by the happiness they saw.

The event also marked Boeing Chief Pilot Gus Larard’s fourth Community Flight. He says: “The children reminded me how lucky I am to be able to pursue my own dream of flying.”

Senior Training Captain Patrick Lau and Senior Captain Hank Cheng volunteered to provide an inflight commentary. They talked about aviation facts and the geography outside the window as the plane circled over the South China Sea. Hank says: “Flying is my career, and the children’s enthusiasm reminded everyone onboard the extraordinary feeling of being in the air.” Patrick adds: “The children also asked many interesting questions and demonstrated a keen interest in aviation.”

After the meal service, CY, Ivan, Algernon and James visited the Economy Class cabin to distribute gift boxes and offer their best wishes to the families. They also posed for photographs and autographed Community Flight passports, with which the children could collect ‘stamps’ for each milestone they achieved on the journey.

Volunteer Violet Poon, Customer Services Officer at HKIA, who escorted children before takeoff and after landing, said she was happy to be part of such a meaningful event. “It was nice to see the big smiles on so many faces!” Violet says. “The children were excited to be in amongst the guests and they thanked each of us with genuine appreciation. It was good to see!” James says: “Thank you to every staff who were involved in making the Community Flight a great success!”

Applause for top service
Cathay and Dragonair’s superior service was recognised at the Hong Kong Association for Customer Service Excellence (HKACE) Awards 2015, which took place on 26 January. The Group scooped six awards, including two top accolades in the team award category for Internal Support Service.

In this category, Dragonair’s Inflight Services Development & Standards team received the top honour of the Gold Team Award. The team was commended for the development of a “tiered high tea stand”, which serves to help frontline staff deliver efficient service.

Cabin Service Delivery Manager Humphrey Huen explains the design of the stand: “It resembles what is offered by luxury hotels, and can warm food and withstand the occasional turbulence.”

Another gold award winner was Dragonair Flight Attendant Alex Cheng, who took the top honour of Field & Special Service in the individual category. Alex says: “I’m very happy that my efforts are being recognised! I have learnt a lot throughout the evaluation process, which will definitely be very useful in my career.”

Other winners include the Cathay Online Team at HKIA, and three HKIA frontline staff. To find out more about their work, visit the CX World Yammer group.

Chief Executive Message
It was another proud and exciting moment for the Cathay Pacific Group when we announced that Dragonair is to be rebranded as Cathay Dragon.

Our two airlines have been working very closely together since 2006 and what we have already achieved is a true Hong Kong success story. Now, with the brands of Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon in much closer alignment we can really work to deliver on our promise of a Life Well Traveled. We will be able to provide greater convenience to our passengers and offer them a more seamless travel experience on two airlines that are quite clearly part of the same Group.

We can leverage on Cathay Pacific’s strong brand recognition around the world and Cathay Dragon’s unique connectivity into rapidly expanding markets in Mainland China and within the region. Our customers will benefit, the Hong Kong hub will benefit, and in the long run staff of both our airlines will benefit, too.

The announcement was just the beginning of this new journey for the Group. A huge team effort went into getting us ready to unveil this landmark development, and another concerted effort will go into bringing different elements of the brand merger together throughout the course of 2016. The next big landmark will be the first aircraft in full Cathay Dragon livery coming out of the hangar in April. Later this year, we launch a major international marketing campaign that will promote recognition of Cathay Dragon, highlight the connection between our two carriers, and emphasise the benefits this rebranding will bring to our customers.

Over the past 16 months we have seen three very significant developments for the Cathay Group, all of which are closely connected. First came the introduction of the new Cathay logo and a cleaner, fresher brand; then we saw the launch of a new aircraft livery for Cathay Pacific; and now we have this important brand alignment for our two world-class airlines. These three things together will put us in a much stronger position to succeed in this hugely competitive industry.

Ivan Chu
Inflight viewing options increase

Movies available on all flights for the first time

There's some good news for movie fans travelling on Cathay and Dragonair flights over the next couple of months. From 1 February, both airlines have begun showcasing a selection of movies on all flights, irrespective of the length of the journey.

Previously, the movie selection was not available on regional flights.

“We think passengers will appreciate this additional viewing option, which has been made possible due to the inflight entertainment system being activated while the aircraft is still on the ground,” says Daisy Chan, Product Manager, Entertainment & Media Sales.

Another enhancement from February is the addition of two more New Release movies into the library each month.

“We have some good titles including Spectre, Steve Jobs, Legend (2015), The Peanuts Movie and Pan,” says Daisy.

There is more to come in March including the Star Wars Series that will showcase the full original trilogy – Episode IV: A New Hope, Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back, Episode VI: The Return of the Jedi – along with the latest Star Wars outing, Episode VII: The Force Awakens.

“Another thing that is exciting is the introduction of 3D surround sound for the 3D surround sound technology is available to all passengers, whether they use their own headphones or a pair provided by us, and it will add a new dimension by adding greater audio depth that will make passengers feel more immersed in action films and adventure dramas,” Daisy says.

Another exciting experience for passengers starting from March is the introduction of 3D surround sound for two movies – Creed and The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part 2.

“The 3D surround sound technology is available to all passengers, whether they use their own headphones or a pair provided by us, and it will add a new dimension by adding greater audio depth that will make passengers feel more immersed in action films and adventure dramas,” Daisy says.

Are you security-vigilant?

This month’s IT security column is about identifying “social engineers”, who manipulate people to perform actions or divulge confidential information. We are all susceptible to their lures. Can you spot three such techniques in the article below? Email answers to IMT@RNS to win a HK$100 Sogo department store voucher.

Jane spotted a USB key with the word “Confidential” in the staff canteen. Being a helpful employee, Jane assumed that a colleague had lost it and decided to plug the USB into her work laptop to see if she could identify to whom the USB belonged.

In one of the files, there was a name and a phone number. Jane dialled the number and somebody answered. He was very appreciative that Jane had found the USB. He said that he needed the files urgently, and since he couldn’t pick up the USB right away, he asked if Jane could send the files via email. As he seemed to be in a rush, Jane obliged. Afterwards, the USB owner sent Jane an email to thank her. Jane spotted a link in the email. Curious as to what it was about, she clicked on the link, which directed her to a web page that displayed the following message:

“Look how easy it is to be susceptible to social engineering attacks. Don’t pick up and plug in USBs that you find in your office and don’t click on any suspicious links in an email.”

Which three social engineering techniques were used?

1) Urgently asking someone for their help
2) An unknown individual asking you to donate to their charity
3) Baiting – Giving away a free USB key, a free CD or music download, or offering a great deal on a purchase
4) Creating artificial distrust by getting angry with you
5) Abuse of sexual attraction (wanting to impress you)
6) Sending phishing emails that contain links to malware-infected websites

Yammer

happenings

Staff around the network are posting photos showing the harsh wintry conditions they face. Let it snow...

Blast from the past
San Francisco Airport Services Manager Erik Saywack posted a series of old photos from his EWR days, saying: “trying to get CX899 away”

Marshmallow ULD
Newark Airport ASM Mark Flug posted the effect of 28.6 inches of snowfall in 24 hours! Mark and his team were also trying to get... CX899 off the ground!

Various icing and de-icing shots...

Frosty Frankfurt
by Cargo Officer
Patrick Otto

Freezing Haneda
by Assistant Manager
Operations Performance
Anderson Leung

Sub-zero Anchorage
by Captain
Anthony Fesche

‘Prospects’ ready to go
Approximately 80% of Cathay passengers in 2014 weren’t members of the Marco Polo Club or Asia Miles. Yet, traditionally little has been done to deepen the relationship with these customers. The Prospects Project aims to change this.

Led by Cathay Pacific’s Customer Relationship Management team, Prospects is a major initiative focused on nurturing relationships with these non-member passengers by allowing them to create a registered account. Free, fast and easy to sign-up for, a registered account will be a basic eCommerce account enabling all customers to enjoy faster bookings, easier option, allowing all customers to enjoy faster bookings, easier check-in, and simpler booking management, as well as a more personalised customer experience.

Prospects will be going live later this year. So stay tuned for announcements on IntraCX and the next issue of CX World.

Free registered account for all Cathay and Dragonair customers
New services available online
Personalised offers and communications

MOVIE MAGIC: Highlights in March include Star Wars, Oscars winners and 3D surround sound.

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Cathay goes on parade for Year of the Monkey

In 2016, Cathay Pacific is again the official sponsor of the Hong Kong International Chinese New Year Parade. This year marks the 18th consecutive year the airline has been the official sponsor of this vibrant event.

On the evening of 8 February – the first day of the Year of the Monkey – Cathay’s float leads the way in ushering the Chinese New Year with the people of Hong Kong. Cathay’s float design features a giant, stylish number 70 at its centre signifying seven decades of enabling “Life Well Travelled” experiences. The double-sided LED display embedded in the centre of the number ‘0’ displays a 90-second Cathay history image montage commemorating “70 years in Hong Kong”.

Escorting the Cathay float are our pilots, cabin crew, airport frontline staff, and ground staff. They will take selfies with the spectators lining the parade route and share them in real time on the float’s built-in LED screens – mimicking the new travel habit of taking selfies to share favourite Life Well Travelled moments.

The parade starts at 8pm at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre with a route around Tsim Sha Tsui. Hundreds of thousands of spectators, including local residents and tourists, are expected to flock to the streets to experience the festive atmosphere. A total of 13 festive floats as well as 22 international and local performing troupes are taking part in this year’s parade. There are marching bands, cheerleaders, cultural performers, mascots, groups on a reciprocal basis on its international performers from all over the world.

Staff travel takes a step forward

Enhancements introduced ahead of new unified scheme in 2017

The week following the announcement of the closer alignment of the brands of Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon, the company revealed that it will merge the travel schemes of the two airlines.

CX World spoke to Director People Tom Owen about the changes in prospect and what other work is being done to improve the overall travel experience for colleagues.

Why has the Group taken the decision to merge the travel schemes?

Just as by merging the brands more closely together will give tremendous advantages to our customers externally and help give the Group a stronger identity, we also want our own people in Cathay Pacific and Dragonair – and later Cathay Dragon – to realise the benefits of a close brand alignment.

The way to do that is by unifying an area that is dear to the hearts of everybody, staff travel, making it more accessible for both staff groups on a reciprocal basis on each other’s airline.

What are the key highlights of this merger?

The two programmes will become one, the Cathay Staff Travel scheme, effective from 1 January 2017 and travel benefits will be equalised for both airlines.

So Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon employees will have the same priorities on each other's metal. For instance, now KA staff who travel on a CX flight for leisure travel have priority 26; in future it will be 25 – the same as Cathay staff, and vice versa. Priorities will also be equalised for family members, companions and retirees.

CX staff will benefit from having equal access to a bigger network courtesy of Cathay Dragon. Cathay people will have more opportunities to fly regionally, particularly Taiwan, Mainland China and other parts of Asia, while the Cathay Dragon people will have better access to Cathay's regional destinations and long-haul routes too.

Will it be harder for some staff groups to get on flights?

It's fair to say that under a unified scheme we are creating a bigger pool of potential travellers to compete for staff travel seats. We are, however, at the same time expanding the opportunities for travel across the combined network of our two airlines.

Individual staff will have different views on the impact of this unified scheme depending on the routes and regions for which they use staff travel. Most of our most popular destinations are around the region and in China, and the merger of the schemes will add more access here for many of our staff.

On longer haul routes where space is always challenging at peak times, staff reaction could be more mixed. I would point out though that we are adding capacity this and next year to several of the popular long-haul destinations, which will provide more opportunities for all.

Have staff opinions been taken into account?

In considering this change, we also wanted to make sure we were listening to the feedback of our people about how we could improve the current schemes. So while we will align the two programmes from next year, we are also going to be introducing some enhancements to the existing programmes for the benefit of all.

There are three enhancements that will be introduced from 1 March 2016. The first is to pool an allotment of 48 sectors for use by family travel nominees instead of the current 24. The second is that siblings of married staff will be given access to one world travel. And the third is that children from the age of 12 will be able to travel in Business Class on either airline.

What are the next steps?

We are going to be looking at the whole experience staff get when they travel, from the booking process to the visibility of availability and the actual inflight experience. By the end of this year we will have built up a good picture of where we are in terms of usage and formed a clearer idea on how we can improve. I’d caution that we will not be able to deliver everything that everyone wants, but staff can expect to see more positive developments ahead.

Brand Design column

“Continuous effort – not strength or intelligence – is the key to unlocking our potential.”

– Winston Churchill

Our logo, the “freed brushwing” was one of the most significant changes to our brand during the brand launch in October 2014. The smooth transition from the boxed logo to a symbol of freedom and flight is a subtle yet meaningful evolution.

Our logo is an extremely important aspect of our brand. Not only does it help us stand out from the pack, it differentiates us from our competitors and helps our customers remember us.

Above are some examples showing how clear space has been neglected whilst applying our logo. It’s either placed too close to other content elements – eg other logos, images, headers – or the trim edge.

Maintaining consistency and professionalism requires strict adherence to our visual identity guidelines. We are therefore asking for your help in maintaining a consistent application of our logo, across all the internal and external communication materials, by respecting the space around the freed brushwing.

Further guidance on the exclusion zones around the logo can be found in Brand Architecture Guidelines on IntraCX.

The Brand Team

QUESTIONS?
If you have any special requests which you’d like us to cover, please email brand@cathaypacific.com
Out with the old?

Dragonair provides excellent inflight services, and the youngest aircraft in the fleet is B-LBD. However, the Airbus A320s and A321s are reaching their 20s. While our sister airline gets new A350s and Boeing 777s, I would like to know if there is a fleet renewal programme in place for Dragonair?

Raymond Ho, Dragonair

Paul Barwell, Manager Airline Planning, replies: Dragonair does indeed provide excellent inflight services, and the aircraft operated by Dragonair contribute significantly to the company. As you know, an aircraft is an expensive asset that needs to work hard on a daily basis throughout its useful life in order to justify the investment. Twenty years is not considered old for a modern airframe, and many operators are looking to extend the operating life of their fleets, some even considering investing in second-hand aircraft to meet their fleet needs.

Airbus is currently offering life extension programmes that will take the A320/1 and A330 useful life well beyond 25 years. As the average age of the Dragonair A320 fleet is below 10 years, the A321 below 13 and the combined Cathay and Dragonair A330 fleet also below 13, we have some way to go before we need to evaluate these programmes.

In addition to the airframe, the cabin is also a significant area for investment and arguably more important to the delivery of excellent inflight service. In this respect, the Dragonair fleet has undergone a complete interior overhaul in the past two years. Only a few A320s remain in the queue for reconfiguration.

While Cathay is having new long-haul aircraft delivered in the next few years, Dragonair, both aircraft and cabin, is comparable in every way with the Cathay regional fleet.

On the broader question of fleet plans, we will continually review our aircraft requirements in order to deliver value to the business, while managing the various challenges we face.

Food for thought

I would like to comment on the choice of food available in the Cathay City canteen on the weekends. It seems that the only food Maxim’s serves is instant noodles, and there is no other hot food available on the weekend.

Instant noodles are unhealthy and carcinogenic. On the other hand, during tea time, the sandwich the canteen serves has so little filling that I feel cheated to have to pay HK$523 for it – almost the same amount as a cooked meal.

Can Maxim’s provide more healthy choices of hot food on the weekend? If they are unable to do so, can another caterer do it?

ISD staff

Public service

My New Year’s resolution is to eat less and be a little healthier. With the price of an average salad increasing by 25% and a basic sandwich by 35%, Public’s offering is certainly helping me to meet my resolution. With the subject of sandwiches, the original 2015 twin-pack tuna sandwich was offered at HK$26. They are now available as two single packs for HK$34. A 31% increase for the inclusion of more packaging that gets thrown in the bin. Not the greenest or the leanest.

I am sure that I am not the only member of staff to have these concerns. Looking at the sand-
Letters to the Editor

Secretary to seven KA CEOs

In February, the ever elegant PA to Dragonair CEO Algernon Yau is retiring from the post she took up 24 years ago. During that time, Nancy Leung has served seven CEOs and witnessed the airline’s growth from five aircraft and 800 staff to more than 40 planes and 3,000 employees today.

“One thing that hasn’t changed is the work ethos and the good relations between colleagues,” Nancy says. “Everyone’s always been very hands on. When we were a much smaller team, we would take on additional work on top of our normal duties.”

For this, Nancy says it has been a long time since she can go on holiday totally care-free. “I used to take short or impromptu trips. I don’t remember a time when I didn’t have to work well into the night before a holiday because I needed to get all my work out of the way and make sure everything was properly handed over to my colleagues!” she says.

Before Nancy’s last day, she is going to Japan with her family. “It’s the first time in many years when I can truly relax and enjoy myself abroad,” Nancy says excitedly.

Looking back on her career, Nancy says that she feels most proud about Dragonair’s expansion. “I feel very proud to have served this amazing airline,” Nancy says. “From a nascent company when I first joined to winning the Skytrax Best Regional Airline four times, Dragonair has done so well in such a short time!”

From overseeing the airline’s office move from China Hong Kong City to Devon House, to recently taking up some Assistant to CEO duties, Nancy thinks that her job description fits well with her personality, as she doesn’t like an unchanging nine-to-five role.

Nancy says: “I always gravitate towards jobs that entail a bit of creativity and flexibility. When Dragonair moved office, I had the opportunity to visit different departments and meet people to understand their needs. I also met with contractors from whom I learnt much about decorating! I still enjoy working on my own projects at home!”

Nancy is now looking forward to spending more time with her nonagenarian parents. Nancy also shares with us her life mantra: “My retirement will be guided by two Hs: Healthy and Happy. We have lovely people at Dragonair and they all contribute to a harmonious working environment. Let’s keep that up, and I wish them the two big Hs and the Dragonair ICAO code: H for Harmony, D for Diligent, and A for Adaptable!”

New future for Dragonair ISD

In view of Dragonair’s rapid growth and an expanding cabin crew population, the airline’s Inflight Services Department (ISD) underwent a reorganisation recently in order to cope with the changing operating environment.

“We review departmental structure from time to time with an aim to provide full support to our cabin crew,” says Brian Yuen, General Manager Inflight Services. “Our goal is to help them to deliver the best possible service to passengers.”

“It was clear that some roles needed a different focus, while others needed more clarity regarding their responsibilities. We also realised that some teams needed to work more closely together.”

One of the major changes includes the transfer of the Dragonair Catering Team to Cathay ISD for better co-operation. All other staff in ISD are now divided into two streams: Cabin Crew and Inflight Services.

Brian explains: “Roles and responsibilities have been reshuffled under these two streams to increase work effectiveness and to enable better results. For example, Crew Communications has been grouped with other crew-facing teams so that we are able to better engage our cabin crew at different touch points.”

Strategic Planning & Operations are also grouped closer together to facilitate a more holistic manpower planning cycle.

“I’d like to thank Manager Operations & Crew Relations Alvin Yuen for his contributions,” Brian says. “Alvin is retiring this month after serving the Group for 40 years!”

Meanwhile, Eugene Swinton joins Dragonair as Manager Cabin Crew Operations Support. He is tasked with handling operations-related matters.

“We should diversify our approach, and get our heads together – in this fast-changing operating environment,” Brian adds.
The formation of the Cathay Club is set to enrich the lives of colleagues working for Cathay and Dragonair (and, from later this year, Cathay Dragon), Director People Tom Owen told CX World more about this new way to get staff more engaged.

What exactly is the Cathay Club? It’s an expansion and relaunch of the existing Sports & Recreation (S&R) Club, which has been running for many years. The S&R Club has undoubtedly been successful but it was felt there is more we can offer as an organisation than just sports and recreation. The Cathay Club is going to be covering a much wider remit of activities.

So are we going to disband the existing sports teams and clubs? Not at all! Sports will remain at the core, riding on the great facilities we have in Cathay City.

We currently have individuals coordinating activities for more than 30 different teams. The latest to be formed is the Cathay Chinese Martial Arts Club, which already has 18 members from Cathay and Dragonair (see story below).

There will be no change for existing sports and recreation teams – in fact we hope to expand the number of clubs and their remit – but we will provide the opportunity for other sorts of clubs to flourish and also run events in various areas, such as wellness, community and educational activities.

In fact anything that enriches the lives of our people will be channelled through the new Cathay Club.

Can we expect to see a broader range of activities soon? Definitely. We have just given the go-ahead for setting up the Farm in the Sky – a rooftop farm run by the Cathay Farmers Club on top of Cathay City.

This project is being nurtured by a group of staff who are very passionate about urban farming but it wouldn’t have been possible if it hadn’t been facilitated by the Cathay Club, providing advice and support to take the process through. Another example is a wine appreciation club that we hope to launch soon.

Who will run the Cathay Club? The club will be coordinated by the Benefits Services Centre. We have set up a Cathay Club steering committee run by a group of managers from various areas in the company. This committee will manage the club to ensure that it goes in the right direction, that its charter is adhered to, and that it receives the funding needed to generate greater engagement across the organisation.

But at its heart, the Club will still have our own people voluntarily running activities in their particular area of interest.

Will the company make more money available? A budget is already allocated, but if we want to do more we will need more resources. We are now looking if we can generate that internally.

Why are we launching the Club now? Both Cathay and Dragonair have become much bigger in recent years, and with the alignment of the brands it’s an opportunity to further engage all of our people in the Cathay by building on the structure we already have.

The S&R Club goes back to the Kai Tak days and it’s been terrific, but the time is right to change what we’re doing to make it more relevant.

How do outports fit into the picture? The Cathay Club is based in Hong Kong and most of the activities will be geared around Cathay City and Dragonair House, but there is always an opportunity to get outports involved as well – particularly around sporting activities. We will be open to various suggestions to get our outport teams more engaged through the Club.

How can staff with ideas get involved? We will have a governance process so that if someone approaches us with an idea about a club they’d like to set up, we will assess whether it can come under the wing of the Cathay Club and then help to nurture the growth and communicate the events of that particular club. There’ll be a proper process to build engagement activities and use our facilities more effectively.

The Cathay Club promises a broader range of activities for staff from both airlines.
A club for everyone
The Cathay Club promises a broader range of activities for staff from both airlines

Freighter fleet gets new look

Aviation fans around the world can now spot another plane in the new Cathay livery flying around the world. B-LIA, a Boeing 747-400ERF freighter, recently became the second Cathay aircraft – and the first in the freighter fleet – to be adorned with the new paint job.

Director Cargo Simon Large is happy to welcome B-LIA: “We are very excited to see the extended range freighter in its new livery re-entering service. It looks fantastic. The difference between the freighter livery and the passenger livery is the size of the wordmark. On the freighter we don’t have windows, which enables us to have larger lettering – making it even more visible. It looks strong and bold – in keeping with the characteristics of the aircraft itself.”

B-LIA’s maiden voyage after her facelift took her to Hong Kong from Xiamen, where she received her paint job at HAECO Xiamen.

“The Engineering team drafted the engineering drawing and design documentation before going into technical review with HAECO Xiamen,” says Alvin Yip, Senior Cabin Projects Engineer. “A great deal of hard work, from procuring sufficient supplies of paint materials to arranging aircraft ground slots and manpower, went into this project.”

The painting for B-LIA was carried out under close supervision by ENG. The HAECO Xiamen technicians tackled numerous difficulties during the 28-day repaint work, including battling Xiamen’s low temperature in winter that made aircraft painting even more challenging. In addition, painting the gradient on the tailfin was also a new experience for the technicians.

“The steps and the way are we the paint mask, especially for creating a colour gradient on the tail, are much different from the work that was done on the old livery,” says Alvin. “The new design is cleaner, but the total time spent on painting was around the same. The reason was that the colour gradient involved more sophisticated handling.”

According to Brand Design Manager Daniel Heung, the “new cargo livery is a key part of the company-wide rebranding plan, featuring an updated and streamlined brushwing, simplified corporate colour palette and a more prominent display of the words Cathay Pacific Cargo.”

After getting its new look, B-LIA has already been dispatched to various destinations including Mumbai, Chennai, Sri Lanka and Dubai.

“All the aircraft in both passenger and freighter fleets will be repainted progressively. For now, the paint team is working on B-LIB which is scheduled to fly out of Xiamen on 11 March,” Alvin adds.
HKIA team commended for good service

Cathay was recently voted by passengers as the Top Most Helpful Company in a courtesy campaign organised by Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK). The campaign aimed to strengthen customer service within the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) community.

The Give Me 5 in the Airport campaign was organised by AAHK, and a ballot was opened in November 2015 to let passengers vote for companies and frontline staff that epitomised service excellence in six award categories.

The results were revealed on 11 December, at an award presentation ceremony held at the airport.

“The award serves to recognise our airport staff’s effort and reflects the appreciation of our passengers – indeed, all other passengers going through the hub,” says General Manager HKIA Lisa Ng, who accepted the Grand Award trophy on behalf of the airline.

In the individual category, Baggage Services Officer Martha Yu was voted as the Most Helpful Staff. Martha says that getting customers’ recognition is the most rewarding part of her job.

“The business nature of the baggage services counter means that people only come to us when their luggage is missing or damaged,” Martha says.

“To me, service excellence means turning their frustration into a heartfelt experience. Therefore, I always try to put myself in passengers’ shoes. I listen to them carefully and address their needs as soon as possible, and best as I can.”

Martha adds: “There is always a sense of satisfaction that comes with doing my best to ensure passengers’ belongings are well-handled and are returned safely and efficiently.”

Congratulations to all our airport staff!
Music for the needy
The Auckland team booked a day away from the office to support the Raukatauri Music Therapy Centre, an NGO that works to improve the lives of those who struggle with special needs.

In January, a small group from the Auckland team, including Country Manager Mark Pirihi, rolled up their sleeves to help to tidy up the centre’s grounds.

The Auckland team intends to provide ongoing support to the centre, which has expressed its appreciation to the hard-working gardeners.

Mumbai Marathon
Fourteen runners from the Mumbai team took part in the Mumbai Marathon on 17 January to raise funds for the ATMA Foundation, a charity that works towards the betterment of children.

The team took part in the 6km run, with first-time runner Regional Sales & Marketing Manager South Asia Rajesh Menon (inset) being the only one to take on the 21km half marathon. Rajesh managed to complete the race in two hours 45 minutes.

“We are Paris
The France team held a Christmas Party on 22 January at Hotel Relais and Spa at Charles De Gaulle Airport.

The theme of this event was “Nous sommes Paris”, meaning “We are Paris”. Everybody wore blue, white, and red which symbolised the French national flag. Of course the béret was de rigueur too!

Country Manager France Selina Miao was joined by 58 staff. Selina was thrilled to see many faces gathered together to enjoy good food and wine, saying: “Thank you everyone for putting in the hard work to make 2015 a fruitful year for the France team!”

Cathay goes on show
The Vakantiebeurs is one of the world’s largest annual exhibitions for the travel industry. This year, more than 1,200 exhibitors took part in the event that was hosted in the Netherlands.

General Manager Europe Neil Glenn and Country Manager Benelux Winnie Tong were on site on the opening day on 13 January. They unveiled the booth, presenting the new livery and the Life Well Travelled philosophy to more than 50 travel agents and journalists.

The Amsterdam team also ran a lucky draw at the Vakantiebeurs, in which visitors could win a free return ticket to Hong Kong by matching stunning photographs with the correct destinations, in addition to subscribing to the CXpecials newsletter.

Which hat will you wear?
Team UAE hosted a themed party in Dubai to kick off 2016. Country Manager UAE & Oman Ashish Kapur thanked the staff for their hard work in ensuring that 2015 was a resounding success.

More than 40 employees from various departments turned up to the mad hatter party along with their plus-ones. They wore imaginative hats, and enjoyed a fun-filled evening with a scrumptious BBQ dinner. Foot-stomping music kept the dancefloor busy.

There were plenty of prizes on offer. Sabatini Fialho and Ivan Lanuza won the Mad Hatter Prize for their creative hats. Edwin Gudino and Ivan Lanuza won the Nutty Professor Prize for being the life of the party!

Life on the ocean wave
The annual Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race is one of those great Australian traditions. Every Boxing Day, more than 600,000 spectators cram the shores of Sydney Harbour to watch more than 100 yachts set off on the 1,170km course to Tasmania. As you can imagine, the race is not for the faint-hearted, and sailors often face high seas and strong winds in treacherous weather conditions.

This year, Australia’s Sales Planning & Pricing Manager Sandra Garrie (below) was amongst the many brave yachtspeople who competed the race.

Remarkably, Sandra began sailing only three years ago in Sydney Harbour. In just three years, she has developed a clear talent and a real passion for the sport.

Sandra’s 45-foot Benateau – dubbed the Black Sheep – arrived into Hobart after four days at sea. Her team (including yacht owners Derek and Martin Shepherd) found themselves finishing a highly respectable 43rd overall, in addition to claiming third in its division and 15th overall in the handicap-adjusted field of 108 yachts.

“The last day was absolutely perfect,” Sandra says. “Seeing the magnificent Tasmanian coastline for the first time while being accompanied by a huge pod of dolphins as we sailed down the Derwent River into Hobart... only to be greeted by hundreds of cheering onlookers!”

After a few days in the Tasmanian capital, Sandra joined a smaller crew to sail the Black Sheep back to Sydney.

Asked if she would like to do it again in 2016, Sandra said she would love to, and recommended the experience to anyone who enjoys a little adventure.

SEA CHANGE: Sandra joined the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race – three years after setting sail for the first time.
Tiger canyon

Captain Brenton de la Harpe visited an Asian tiger sanctuary in South Africa and observed a dire need to conserve these beautiful animals.

Remember Hope and Cathay, the two tiger cubs that Cathay brought to South Africa for the Save China’s Tigers charity in 2003? Well, if you are wondering what happened to them, it pains me to tell you that both cats have sadly departed this world. The good news is, however, right next door to where they were originally sent for rewilding in South Africa, now exists a thriving Asian tiger breeding sanctuary.

Tiger Canyon, an 8,000-acre reserve situated about 600km south of Johannesburg, is owned and run by renowned conservationist and wildlife filmmaker John Varty. It is home to some 24 Asian tigers, including the only existing wild white tiger today.

Imbued with natural beauty, Tiger Canyon encompasses thick riverine bush, spectacular canyons, rugged mountains, dramatic rock formations and savanna grassland. Perfect habitat, it would seem, for big cats.

While on vacation in South Africa with my family, I took the opportunity to pay this extraordinary place a visit. We enjoyed a quick coffee with John before setting out in our game-viewing vehicle. These vehicles were protected by cages, since the felines are prone to jumping on cars.

Less than five minutes into our drive we already spotted our first tiger, loping leisurely over a rocky outcrop, not 100m from our position. With a small herd of springbuck in sight, the tiger did not seem in the slightest bit interested; instead, he continued strolling on to where he finally settled under a nearby thorn tree. Moments later, a second tiger appeared from behind some riverine scrub and joined him. They rubbed their faces together in greeting, as cats do, before settling down in the tree’s shade. It turned out that these particular two tigers are brother and sister, named Mahindra and Indira respectively. And yes, there was a tiger named Tata too!

We observed these regal cats for about half an hour before moving on. It wasn’t long before our driver suddenly stopped and pointed to our right. There, lying in the bush on the banks of a small stream, was Tibo, the one and only wild white tiger. Very shortly thereafter appeared her three normally-coloured cubs; the female cub was quite shy and retreated back into the thick bush out of sight, but the other two male cubs playfully proceeded to tackle each other before nuzzling up to their mother. John told us that there were only 1,000 tigers left in the world, and one of them dies every day.

As we left this magnificent wildlife refuge, John’s parting words to us were, “I don’t mind if this project becomes known as the Cathay Pacific Tiger Canyon Project.” Would Cathay mind?