Introducing our new strategy

by being brand-led, digitally enabled and insights-driven

Why now? Why is it Time to Win? Let's find out
At the core of the strategy is delivering on what being brand-led means. We need to deliver great service to customers, and have a strong brand that people love and are passionate about, but to show true brand leadership we need to take this one step further and really think about what each of us can do in our own roles to be more focused on delivering our brand promise. Everyone, in every location, can have an influence on our customers and their experience with the brand. For customers to consistently rate us 10 out of 10 – that’s what being a winning brand means and we can all influence that.

What’s the thinking behind the four pillars? The pillars themselves shouldn’t be surprising because they represent what we do as an airline. “Operational Excellence” relates to the safety and reassurance we provide our customers, and the efficiency with which we deliver a superior experience. “Customer Centric” is a pillar that’s about putting our customers at the centre of everything we do. Customer insights will frame what we do going forward, which is a fundamentally different approach.

The “Productivity and Value Focused” pillar is absolutely critical. A company that’s not relentlessly focused on enabling a Life Well Travelled for our customers will not survive in today’s competitive marketplace. Finally, “High Performance Culture” is about ensuring that we provide our people with the tools, the experience and the support they need to deliver great service to customers, directly or indirectly.

Why do we need an organisational redesign in parallel with the strategy rollout? Our current structures support the current way of working, but to effectively deliver on our new strategy we need to be organised differently. We need to be quicker to make decisions and break down silos. Realigning our structure behind the strategy will free us of many of these frustrations.

There are four areas of the business being reviewed already – customer, operations, commercial and people – that will determine the structure we need to reorganise ourselves around the customer. Our strategy is about building a structure for success, and will affect some areas more than others, but will have an impact on everyone to some extent. More will be shared as information becomes available.

Should our people be concerned about job security? It’s unavoidable to have a certain amount of ambiguity; this comes naturally with any change programme of this nature and scale. The teams are working through the structures quickly and methodically. Please don’t let this distract you; stay focused during this period.

Is the strategy relevant to everyone in the organisation? Definitely. There isn’t one person in this company who doesn’t have an impact on the brand. Just to give one example, a pilot can have a huge impact on our brand through the way they interact with the customers during the journey, the way they make their announcements. They can also fly efficiently and productively.

The strategy is also about building on the amazing culture we have. A culture such as ours takes decades to build and many organisations would be envious of what we have. But unless we can get our culture aligned, and get all our people realising that they can make a huge difference and be part of this change, then our strategy is never going to be as successful as it needs to be.

How will the strategy be communicated across the organisation? At the Leadership Conference, the 350 leaders who attended were all tasked to come up with plans to engage their teams. Every single leader needs to reach 80% of their people by the end of the second quarter of this year, and it’s their responsibility to ensure their teams understand the strategy and make it meaningful to them.

How will we know that people understand our strategy? We’re going to be measuring the success by doing temperature checks – asking people how much they know about the strategy. Every quarter we will publish a bulletin listing things that have been done that are directly linked to the strategy and the pillars. We will also be launching a new alignment and engagement measurement process later this year which will help to track our progress.

What can people do now to get behind the strategy? I ask everyone in the organisation to take time to understand what Time to Win is all about and what it means to you. And begin to think in a different way - put the customer at the centre of everything you do and every decision you make. Question your current ways of working and assess what needs to change, and understand your own role and how what you do impacts the brand. Ask yourself what can I do differently to deliver a Life Well Travelled for our customers?
We will become more customer-centric, changing our organisational structure to put the customer at the centre of everything we do, and the decisions we make will be driven by deeper customer insights. To hammer this point home, the voice of the customer was brought into the room at the recent Leadership Conference.

Announcing Time to Win to colleagues, Chief Executive Ivan Chu stressed that things simply cannot stay the same. "The time is now. We need to become more customer-centric, changing our organisational structure to better serve our customers," Ivan said.

Ivan also emphasised the need for a leaner, simpler and more agile organisation. "We need to ensure that everyone, in every role, clearly understands what Life Well Travelled means and how they can impact our customers' experience. Getting our culture aligned behind the pillars of Time to Win will be my team's priority in the months ahead.""}

Participants watched a series of videos in which customers gave frank, honest accounts of their experiences with Cathay. Each video was related to a different pillar of the strategy—and each customer interview was conducted by a different director. "Manning the microphone and getting up close and personal with our customers at Hong Kong International Airport were COO Rupert Hogg, Director Sales & Marketing Dane Cheng, Director Service Delivery James Ginns and Director Corporate Affairs Arnold Cheng, while Director People Tom Owen spoke to our people at Cathay City and Cathay Dragon House.

The point was not to elicit positive feedback but to get candid insights on how we are doing and where we need to improve, and a lot was gained through the experience.

"Hear’s what our leaders have to say:

**Director People Tom Owen**
When talking to our people about the brand, and what they can do to be more focused on our customers, it became clear that we still have work to do internally. But clearly we have a positive culture to support this change. We need to ensure that everyone, in every role, clearly understands what Life Well Travelled means and how they can impact our customers' experience. Getting our culture aligned behind the pillars of Time to Win will be my team’s priority in the months ahead.

**Director Service Delivery James Ginns**
I was steering myself for some pretty strong feedback but was relieved at the level of appreciation customers expressed for our service. It was great to get out and hear directly how they felt. We seemed to score 7-8 out of 10, which is good but not excellent and reflects what our customer research says. It made me all the more convinced we’ve got to raise our game to really win.

**Director Sales & Marketing Dane Cheng**
I really enjoyed the experience of talking to our customers directly – it’s not very often we’re able to do this. What stood out for me were the positive comments about our people who serve customers. This is fantastic to hear and reminds us of our biggest core strength as a business. However, there are clearly areas where we are not doing the right thing, and there is a lot we can improve on, especially in the area of brand awareness.

"Time to Win is very explicit about what type of company we’re trying to become, and a new structure will only take us so far… ultimately it’s the talent, energy and courage of our people that will ensure we succeed."

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Building a structure for success

Announcing Time to Win to colleagues, Chief Executive Ivan Chu stressed that things simply cannot stay the same within the airline.

"To deliver our Time to Win strategy we need an organisational structure that will allow us to succeed," Ivan said, emphasising the need for a leaner, simpler and more agile organisation, driven by real insights into what customers want. The initial focus will be on four key Head Office areas: Customer; Operations and Service Delivery; Commercial; and People. Running in parallel to the design of these core areas will be the development of a Group Shared Services organisation.

A group of four directors led by Chief Operating Officer Rupert Hogg is governing the process, with other directors leading each of the four areas. Supporting this and leading the implementation of Time to Win, including the organisational redesign, is General Manager Strategic Transformation Alex McGowan. Alex will head a small team that will work across the Group.

"I think most would agree that while we are in many ways a great airline, we are not nimble enough and too internally focused," Alex says.

"We must craft enriching end-to-end travel experiences – viewing each of moment of interaction with our brand through the lens of our customer. This will require deep empathy and understanding of customer pain points and greatly improved collaboration between different parts of the business to solve them."

"This exercise is not just about renaming departments – we will focus on our purpose and ambition as an airline and create the best structure, processes and governance to deliver these."

"The restructuring process will follow a "tried and tested" methodology, using a best practice organisational methodology that has been specifically adapted to Cathay Pacific’s needs."

In each of the core streams, Alex’s team will support six or seven experienced senior managers who are all open-minded and customer-centric in their approach.

"The role of the transformation office will be to keep things moving in the right direction at the right pace,” Alex says, adding that the first stage of the transformation will be completed in mid-2017.

"Asked about the eventual outcome, and the company’s statement that "some jobs will no longer be needed, some will be created and others may be redefined", Alex says that organisational change will inevitably bring uncertainty for a period.

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Beefing up the network

A350s help to support a more agile approach to network growth

- Two new long-haul destinations to launch in 2017, namely Tel Aviv and Barcelona
- Flexibility is key as Airline Planning adopts a more agile approach to network planning
- More in the pipeline as 2017 progresses

The news that Cathay is adding flights to Barcelona from the summer has been well received – but with some curiosity around the fact that the service will only operate from July to October. This is the first time for Cathay to operate a seasonal service on long-haul routes, and General Manager Airline Planning Lavinia Lau says it is part of a new strategy for the airline.

“We believe that adopting a more agile approach towards network planning is the way forward,” says Lavinia.

“In an increasingly competitive market, we aim to be more experimental and flexible when we see the right opportunities.

“Barcelona is a good start to test this model and I must thank the various operational and commercial teams for their enthusiasm and great support to set this route up and start selling within a short period and at minimal fixed costs.”

Barcelona will follow on from Tel Aviv, which launches next month, as the second new destination to be added in 2017 – with another seasonal service to be announced soon for winter.

“Our team is always looking for new and upcoming destinations to complement the existing network and generate more revenue opportunities,” Lavinia says, and the ability to add new destinations in an agile way is being helped by the progressive arrival of new A350s.

“The capability and economics of these new-generation aircraft allow us to launch new routes – especially in the “long thin” category – and step up existing frequencies with more confidence,” Lavinia says.

As well as being used for the Tel Aviv and Barcelona services, the A350s will also help beef up services to the UK and Canada.

Gatwick will become an all-A350 daily flight from June while Manchester will go up to five flights a week. At the end of March, Vancouver will get an extra three flights a week while Toronto will go double daily during the summer peak (though still with Boeing 777-300ERs).

“Canada has always been an important market with significant VFR [visiting friends and relatives] flows,” Lavinia says. “Load factors have persistently high and it was just a matter of timing when capacity would be added.”

As for the UK, “the three airports attract slightly different passenger segments and will complement each other in giving us a comprehensive UK offering.”

Most of the recent network changes have been for long-haul but Lavinia says that various frequency additions to existing Asian ports are also under evaluation now as connecting traffic from the region will be crucial in supporting our long-haul expansion.

Our magazine moves into the future

Fans of CX World will get a big surprise next month when we launch a brand-new publication for our colleagues.

For the first time, our in-house magazine will be for the people of both Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon – and there are plenty of other changes in store in terms of both design and editorial approach.

Director Tom Owen, publisher of the magazine, says the revamp is much more than a cosmetic tweak.

“Our people are at the heart of everything we do and we understand the return to winning ways in our airlines,” says Tom. “It’s important that we all understand and are aligned behind our new strategic direction, and this new magazine will help in this goal.”

One of the four pillars of the new strategy is to build a High Performance Culture, “and part of that is offering a richer employee experience where we communicate more effectively with our people,” Tom explains.

“Through this magazine we can be clearer about what behaviours we value in our business, communicate more clearly about our direction, and share stories demonstrating what we aim to achieve across our team of over 26,000 people.

“The magazine will also be a good channel for direct feedback as well as providing a wider perspective on our complex industry.”

The new magazine, which will come in a handy and easier-to-read A4 size, is just one of a number of new or improved communication channels in the pipeline.

“We will endeavour to produce more interesting and relevant stories that appeal more widely to all our diverse groups of people out there,” says Tom.

Circulation will be increased with an effort to reach out to the remote workforce of pilots, cabin crew and frontline airport colleagues, helping to get everyone more engaged and more aware of what’s going on around both airlines.

More details will be announced through Daily News and Dragonet soon.

Telex transition

Another key communication channel is due for a revamp, with the longstanding Friday Telex set to be replaced by another weekly update.

The new update will take a different approach to communicating with our people, including messages from different directors each week and the use of infographics.

As well as appearing on our intranets, the update will also be sent directly to all colleagues by email. Keep a look out for the new and improved Telex coming soon!
Cathay Pacific branding effort recognised

Cathay Pacific’s branding effort has been recognised by the leading airline brand and design website, The Design Air.

The airline scooped three gongs in the site’s annual awards, namely Best Airline Brand, Best New Lounge, and Best Premium Economy Design.

“To be called out and recognised by readers of a website, recognised for its knowledge and coverage of airline branding and design, is a fantastic feeling given the effort we’ve made in the past few years,” says Manager Brand Ruaraidh Smeaton.

“Many airlines are doing more and paying more attention to design, and everyone in the industry is upping their game. As branding is at the heart of our new Time to Win strategy, our task now is to look at ways to further improve our customer proposition at every touch point.”

Nurturing ops leaders

The Operational Leadership Programme shows our commitment to investing in frontline talent, building our operational expertise

The careers of three colleagues took an important step earlier this month when they began working as the first appointees under the Operational Leadership Programme (OLP).

The programme was announced last year as a way to give high-potential operational employees the chance to gain management experience across different operational areas.

“At the same time it will develop an internal pipeline for our future management needs. We will need this type of operational expertise to ensure business continuity and succession planning,” says Cassady Winston, Manager People Development & Change.

Close to 400 applications were received and the three candidates selected – Matthew Tsoi, Eva Fan and Cherry Wong – took up their new posts as Operational Leadership Trainees on 1 February.

Matthew and Cherry, both previously Flight Attendants, have started two-year placements in the Cargo Hub team and HKIA, respectively, while Eva – formerly a Customer Services Officer at HKIA – is working at HAS.

Each host operational team has developed an internal rotational programme for these first two years to ensure the trainees get a hands-on understanding of how that department works.

The trainee programme will last eight years in total, with more trainees joining in future years.

Participants have the opportunity to move into frontline and managerial positions as they build experience across different operational areas.

“While the core of the programme is based upon immersion and ‘learning through doing’, participants will also benefit from dedicated development in the form of targeted training and mentorship from senior management,” says Cassady, who oversees the OLP along with graduate programmes in Engineering and Information Technology.

“All participants have been successful in their past roles, but the OLP programme will certainly challenge them afresh and push them out of their comfort zones,” says Cassady (above).

Director People Tom Owen adds: “This programme is meant to give new opportunities to highly talented and motivated frontline talent. These and future OLP trainees have a great opportunity to become change agents for the future – a team of people that can help us improve the operation in the long term.”

Meet the OLP trainees

Cherry Wong

I learnt about the OLP from IntraCX and it seemed like a fascinating and challenging job, with the opportunity to work in different departments across the Group. I expect that it will be very challenging, but also fun and enjoyable, and the training and guidance from colleagues will equip me with the knowledge I need. I expect to grow not only in the practical skills needed to handle my duties, but also in the soft skills required to bond with colleagues and build a better network.

Eva Fan

I have worked as a Customer Services Officer for three years, which has confirmed my passion for aviation. I believe the OLP will give me strong operational knowledge to further develop my career. I was extremely happy when I found out I’d been successful, then excited about the numerous challenges I am about to encounter. I am most excited by the opportunity of rotating in different operational departments, giving me deeper insights and a broader picture of our operations.

Matthew Tsoi

My first placement will be the Cargo Hub team for two years. I expect it to be challenging and exciting, and I am excited to absorb all the information I can during my time there. The most exciting part about being in the OLP for me is getting strong support from our management teams and being given the opportunity to connect with people across different areas. We can’t win unless all of us in Cathay join hands and walk together in the same direction.
More fun on our IFE

New content is being added to StudioKX and StudioKA by the Product team throughout January and February. Here’s a glimpse of what’s available...

- Exclusive Oscars content
  - February is Oscars month. A series of Oscar-winning films from previous years is now available onboard.
  - Passengers can view 2017 Oscar-nominated titles in the next few months!

- Chinese New Year curated content
  - Watch a Chinese Odyssey (西遊記之月光寶盒) and the newly launched Guardians of the world!

- Watch Chef Nic & Someone
  - Cathay is the first airline to screen Chef Nic season 3 starring Cantopop sweetheart, Nicolas Tse. Catch the Japanese Movie Someone & Chef Nic season 3 before its official theatrical release in Hong Kong. It stars Takuya Satoh and is about five university students sharing the difficulties they face while job hunting.

- Smart podcasts
  - Quench your thirst for knowledge with the newly launched Freakonomics and the Guardian podcast series.

All in a good cause

Cathay continues to demonstrate its commitment to the community

- Our long-standing commitment to helping the less fortunate in society has been highlighted through a number of recent activities.
- Various community efforts – at both the corporate level and through our own people – have helped others both in Hong Kong and overseas, while one donation has even helped disadvantaged dogs locally!
- Here’s a round-up of some recent activities.

Change for Good field trip
Fourteen of our people joined a Change for Good field trip in December, flying to Chongqing in China to visit a kindergarten and families supported by UNICEF.

Participants, all of whom are connected with making Change for Good happen in the airline, were able to learn more about their early childhood education programme, which includes creating a child-friendly space for learning and playing, and providing support to the teachers.

Helping hounds
Cathay donated around 6,000 used blankets to the SPCA in Hong Kong to provide animals in need with comfort and warmth this winter.

Every blanket means a lot to animals that are injured, distraught, requiring medical treatment or waiting for adoption.

Some 4,000 of these blankets were passed onto other animal organisations to spread the love and care.

A new IT self-service portal
My IT is a new service management portal launched as part of an ongoing drive to modernise IT services. My IT is aimed at providing our people with a seamless experience when using IT services.

- My IT has many improved features that are designed with our business users in mind. It incorporates a user-friendly interface for our people to make IT service requests and incidents; an extensive knowledge database for self-service IT assistance; as well as live chat capability with IT Service Centre agents to provide real-time support.

- Once collected they are all transferred to the UNICEF HK office where our volunteers gather to help sort out the various currencies.

- Everyone had fun learning about interesting currencies from around the world!

- As changes like these can be tricky, the IT team has written some simple-to-follow user guides for Outlook and the new Outlook Webmail which can be viewed on the IT & You intranet page.
Welcome!
Year of the Rooster

It was a very warm welcome for the Year of the Rooster from the people of the Cathay Pacific Group.

Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon senior leaders toured offices, and roamed both land- and airside at HKIA to thank teams in the morning on the First Day of Chinese New Year.

Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon ground colleagues at HKIA came together for their debut performance, where 20 colleagues drummed and sang pop tunes to passengers in the Arrivals Hall.

In the evening, Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon uniformed staff chaperoned a specially designed float to usher in the Rooster with the public of Hong Kong, at the annual Cathay Pacific International Chinese New Year Night Parade.

Hong Kong Office held a Kung Hei Fat Choi Cocktail Party for business partners and members of the travel trade on 3 February.

The God of Fortune showed up at the Cargo Sales Kung Hei Fat Choi party on 6 February, where 250 agents were thanked for their continuous support.

On 7 February, the Cathay Martial Arts Team brought a splash of noise, colour and excitement to all floors at Cathay City.

Kung Hei Fat Choi, everyone!
Wednesday, 1 March will be a red-letter day for Cathay Dragon when the carrier operates its first-ever service into Kuala Lumpur.

Of the four Cathay Pacific flights currently operating to KUL, two will be operated by Cathay Dragon from 1 March while the remaining two will switch from 1 May.

“We are already working with Malaysia Airports to host a welcome reception for the first KA724 upon its arrival at KLIA,” says Country Manager Malaysia & Brunei Anna Choi.

The Kuala Lumpur team is now working at full tilt to get ready for the transition.

“In terms of getting the message out to customers, Anna says that the Sales team has been briefing travel agents since mid-December and also coming up with special promotions to push the new flights.

On the marketing side, a tactical advertising campaign is being run in February, with another planned in conjunction with a major travel fair happening in mid-March.

“There’s a lot more in the pipeline with a brand campaign launching from April, a social media campaign later in the year and general awareness-raising activities that will drive traffic to our website and mobile platforms,” Anna explains.

The Cathay Pacific name has been known in Malaysia for 60 years and the challenge for the team is to make people aware that Cathay Dragon provides the same premium products and services.

“We believe the Group brand will continue to grow stronger in Malaysia as, with 70% of our customers flying to destinations beyond Hong Kong, they will have the opportunity to fly with both airlines,” Anna states.

The willingness of the Cathay Pacific Group to invest in the future is being highlighted by its commitment to replace the aircraft in Cathay Dragon’s narrow-body fleet and bring new opportunities of growth.

A request for proposal (RFP) was issued in October, with the airline going to market for a number of aircraft to replace Cathay Dragon’s existing 23 Airbus A320s and A321s, along with “an element of growth.”

Among the aircraft being considered are the new-generation A320/1 Neo and Boeing 737 Max, “though we are open to other options, including aircraft coming off lease,” says Jamie Carter, Manager Aircraft Procurement & Trading.

Two key factors are driving the need to replace the existing fleet: the age of the aircraft, and the expiration of operating leases that will occur broadly between 2019 and 2023.

“Replacing aircraft cannot happen overnight. It’s a long process and typically we will begin the replacement exercise up to eight years in advance,” says Jamie.

“We are working within a tighter timeframe for the narrow-body replacement programme because we wanted to make sure we went to market at the right time. There is a solid commercial reason for issuing the RFP when we did.”

Proposals from manufacturers and leasing companies came back in December and Jamie’s team and Airline Planning are now going through a rigorous evaluation process, using a complex model that assesses costs over the lifetime of each aircraft.

The Procurement team, as well as extended supporting teams, will be seeking input from a wide range of business units, including Engineering, Flight Operations, Inflight Services, Product and Finance.

“We expect to complete the process this year, assuming the aircraft selected meet our business case,” says Jamie.

“New aircraft can bring benefits in terms of fuel efficiency, environmental impact and lower maintenance costs, but they can come at a premium. We need to look at the value these aircraft bring and make sure that the economics make sense.”

Request for proposal to replace Cathay Dragon’s narrow-body fleet has been issued

Amongst the aircraft being considered are the Airbus A320/1 Neo and Boeing 737 Max

Rigorous evaluation process will assess aircraft based on a large number of factors, such as fuel efficiency, and environmental impact

The search begins for Cathay Dragon’s A320 and A321 replacements

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Wedded on cloud nine

CX World interviewed the Chinese couple who wedded onboard a Cathay Dragon flight, whose nuptials helped to boost the awareness of Cathay Dragon in the Mainland

- Following the rebranding of Cathay Dragon in November, the Marketing department ran a highly popular social campaign to invite online influencers to exchange vows on a Cathay Dragon flight
- Winning couple was popular Chinese travel bloggers “Mr Ha” and “Ms Zhen”, who were joined by 160 relatives, friends, media and fans onboard KAA877 on 6 January
- Event was part of Marketing’s Marriage in the Air social media campaign in China. The Chinese hashtag #空中婚礼_为爱翱翔 # was viewed 372 million times over the wedding weekend.

Nice to meet you. Can you tell us something about yourselves?
We each have our own travel blog on the Sina Weibo social media network, with close to one million followers combined. We’re both global travellers by trade, and we love sharing our travel stories and photos online. It is fate that we met and we’re lucky to be able to share our travels with millions of people around the world.

Why do you want to get married in the air?
Travelling is our career and we fly very frequently. Airports and aircraft have become part of our lives. Getting married in the air, we thought, was perfect for marrying our hobbies, careers, and our lives together.

How did you prepare for this special wedding?
In a bid to win, we reviewed our memories from our travels again and again to pick the best moments to share as a video. We then called on our fans to vote for us so that we could come out as winners and get married in the skies.

We feel honoured to have won!

What was the most moving part of your wedding?
The ceremony onboard touched us very much. When we marched in, walked down the aisle, and saw many of our friends and family onboard, we could not believe that our wedding at 35,000 feet was actually happening. We took many flights before and this was certainly the most memorable one.

Do you have anyone whom you’d like to thank?
We have flown with Cathay Pacific for a long time and have always been amazed by the detailed-oriented manner. This time, they were like old friends to us, they did their best and put all their efforts to make our dream come true. Every detail counted, and I believe every guest who attended our wedding could feel the heart that went behind this too!

We want to thank Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon for creating this wonderful opportunity for us. We will never forget our nuptials in the air – a lot of meticulous planning went into creating precious moments for us, which will serve as our inspiration to keep travelling and move upwards and onwards in life.

Making every cent count

The transition to Cathay Dragon in November had an unexpected consequence for a group of young people in Nepal.

Before the rebranding, a silent auction of three large Dragonair aircraft display models raised an impressive HK$51,500 – and all the funds have now gone to help the Buddhist Child Home (BCH) in Kathmandu (buddhistchildhome.org.np).

BCH has provided care for around 300 orphans and destitute children since 1996, with over 50 young people currently in its care.

The home has been “adopted” by many of our cockpit and cabin crew who offer regular support through donations, goods or visits on what is one of the most popular layovers in the Cathay Dragon network.

“We felt it was very appropriate that the money be donated to this charitable organisation with a strong link to our crew community,” says Peter Healey, General Manager Flying.

Captain Keven Tate, who has been instrumental in supporting BCH and other charitable organisations in Nepal, is overseeing the expenditure of the donation, with the majority of the money being spent on renovation work along with some new appliances and daily supplies.

“The kitchen will be given a much-needed makeover including tiling the concrete floor, replacing the rusted single burner gas ring with a new three-burner stove, a pressure cooker, water purifier and assorted kitchen utensils,” says Keven.

Other work will include tiling the dining room floor, bathroom renovations and painting the interior and exterior walls.

“We have also purchased three new computers to assist with the educational needs of the children, and daily toiletry and stationery supplies have been replenished,” Keven adds.

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The Marriage in the Air video has accrued an aggregated total of more than 510 million views. Take a look via: tiny.cc/MITA
Ice station Cathay

Our Anchorage outstation colleagues put an enormous effort into ensuring our operations run smoothly across the North Pole

- Remote, windswept and mostly dark in winter, Anchorage in Alaska is a vital technical stop for Cathay’s transpacific freighters
- It is here that the Cathay Pacific Boeing 747 freighter fleet get refuelled and crewed to optimise efficiency and payload
- The Anchorage Cargo team performs a range of roles from sales, operations and selling booking space for a locally caught seafood delicacy – geoducks

Anchorage in Alaska can be a hostile place. Come the depths of winter, snow will fall, winds will howl – and all on days with 20 hours of darkness. It could be as bleak as that sounds but Duty Manager Aaron Freeman says it’s all worth it for the summer – “20 hours of darkness. It could be as bleak as that sounds but Duty of winter, snow will fall, winds will howl – and all on days with 20 hours of daylight and a balmy 21°C.” Little wonder much of the small team are keen hikers, anglers, hunters and kayakers. This is genuinely the great outdoors. But irrespective of the season and Anchorage’s remote location, the station is vital to Cathay’s transpacific freighter service, running 24 hours a day. Around 70 Cathay Pacific freighters touch down each week – along with competitors, Cargo Manager Kevin Miller says: “There are around 1,700 freighter movements a week here.”

The mountains and Alaskan wilderness may seem an unlikely setting for the world’s fourth-largest cargo airport, but as Vice-President Cargo, Americas, Fred Ruggiero, explains, it’s about maximising the range and payload of the state-of-the-art freighter fleet. “We could fly our aircraft from North America to Hong Kong non-stop,” he says. “But with the fuel needed we wouldn’t be able to carry the full payload of around 120 tonnes – and load more freight too.”

Kevin’s team manages a roster of “tech stops”, much like a splash in dash pit-stop during a Grand Prix. With any luck this process takes no more than an hour, assisted by the aircraft entering and exiting the remote stands under their own power. “It’s a lot more than kicking the tyres and checking the oil,” says Kevin. “We do a walk around the cargo deck to make sure nothing has shifted, check the paperwork, add dry ice to temperature-controlled containers, and engineers carry out a basic service.

The flight crew also swaps here, and they are very limited in terms of their duty times, so one little incident can derail this process.”

More often than not, the “one little incident” is the weather. Never mind the wind, it’s snow, which if it accumulates on the runway, can affect takeoff performance, which may require some cargo to be removed, while the low temperatures mean de-icing delays. The ultra-cold fuel in the tanks means frost and snow can freeze fast to the wings. One more problem for the team to sort out – and hopefully to time.

In the office in the deserted international passenger terminal (modern airliners no longer need to stop and refuel), a screen updates the status of the operation, showing everything from flight numbers, aircraft registrations, arrival and departure times, to the names of the captain on the inbound and outbound flights.

Cargo Sales and Service Agent Adebayo Carew, or AC as he likes to be known, is sorting out the paperwork that each flight generates and updates the screen, which also appears as an app used by the airport vendors and even pilots downroute. “I look after the crew, make sure the hotel wakes them at the right time and also prepare a NOTOC (Notification to Captain) that will describe any dangerous goods and where they are on the aircraft.”

But it’s not a desk job: “Our strength is that we can all perform the function from sales, the paperwork, to working on the ramp and the aircraft. Our on-time performance means revenue, so we all have to be working to the same beat.”

It’s a pioneering attitude from a pioneering team.
Cathay Pacific Lean Academy launches for smarter working

Workshops now available for colleagues to learn leaner ways of working

- Lean will help colleagues work smarter, achieve more with less, and make their careers more rewarding
- New Lean Academy to impart Lean thinking and methodology; participants will be formally recognised for their improvements to business processes

Our new Time to Win strategy has recently been unveiled, and one of the four pillars is Productivity and Value-Focused, which highlights the importance of working ever smarter, achieving more with less, and making your time invested in work more rewarding.

“We will win when we put our customer at the centre of what we do and deliver our brand promise of a Life Well Travelled. To do this we must excel at driving continuous improvement through identifying and removing waste from our business,” says Manager Group Lean Programmes, Norman Pipitone.

In response to ever-changing customer needs, we need a high-performance culture that is agile and ultra-efficient to respond to the rapidly evolving landscape. And the Lean team has launched the Cathay Pacific Lean Academy to equip our people with the capabilities to excel in whatever we do.

“It is going to be a structured development programme for our people to learn and apply Lean thinking on real-life projects at work,” says Norman. “This is an exciting opportunity for everyone to contribute to making the Time to Win strategy a success.”

A two-day training workshop to equip you with basic Lean concepts to complete a quick-win project in no more than two months.

Join this programme if...

You want to know more about Lean and are willing to commit sufficient time to complete a project.

Two three-day training workshops to acquire Lean tools and methodology to achieve a medium-scale project in no more than five months.

Join this programme if...

You are a certified Lean Yellow Belt from the Academy, and have the ability to lead projects and teams.

A 10-day training workshop to learn about advanced Lean tools to enable you to complete a large-scale project within nine months.

Join this programme if...

You are a certified Lean Green Belt from the Academy or equivalent external qualifications, have a strong performance track record, and a passion for coaching and mentoring.

Benefits for you and the company

You will make real changes to your current business processes and see your work’s impact on your peers, colleagues, and teams, and be recognised by peers and management on the tangible contribution you make to improving our business processes.

Rewards for your effort

Each Lean project will be assessed based on a scorecard which measures both project achievement and project team effectiveness. Projects will be classified into different categories. Small prizes in each category will be awarded to project teams as tokens of appreciation.

Year-end recognition

A Lean Recognition Event will be held at the year end to celebrate project successes and recognise project leaders who shine in leading and managing these. Top performing project teams will be invited to share their achievements and compete for awards and win prizes, including an overseas study tour.

What is the Lean Academy?

When you join the Lean Academy, you will learn about Lean thinking and methodology from experts in a fun and interactive environment. You will be assigned a dedicated mentor from the Corporate Lean Team, and be guided along the development journey. There is a structured development path which gives you transparency on how well you are progressing.

Start of your Lean journey

The Lean Academy is open for everyone. The first Yellow Belt/Green Belt training workshop will start in March 2017. Find out more about the Lean Academy from the Lean Team Website and sign up for the programme at portal.cathaypacific.com/sites/lean/
Niki & Betsy award nominees unveiled

Exceptional work on the frontline and in the back office has been recognised on the Recognition Wall. Congratulations to our 30 nominees, who have been shortlisted for 10 Niki and 10 Betsy awards.

Niki finalists

Our everyday heroes, people who work behind the scenes and who go above and beyond to make a difference to the business and their colleagues.

Betsy finalists

Those who take customer service to the next level, delivering Service Straight from the Heart. They embody our brand and know what it takes to deliver a unique Life Well Travelled experience.
HAVE YOU CONSIDERED A LUXURY INVESTMENT AND LIFESTYLE SHIFT IN THE HEART OF HONG KONG?

For some, the term ‘lifestyle’ is summarised by an equal balance of events, hobbies, work and personal voyages - yet for the sailing enthusiast, a new meaning is born when the opportunity to combine bespoke yacht craftsmanship and a place to call ‘home’ presents itself.

Designed in New Zealand and built by renowned shipyards in China, the new range of Kraken Yachts fulfills the aspirations of experienced sailors who are passionate about life on the open sea; yet are equally attracted to the charms of spacious and luxurious accommodation and the ability to entertain family and friends in style. A Kraken Yacht performs superbly under sail or power while additionally offering the facilities and comfort that make it a place to call a home.

Experienced blue water sailor and co-founder of Kraken Yachts, Dick Beaumont and his team operate Kraken from their headquarters at the Gold Coast Yacht and Country Club in Tuen Mun, Hong Kong.

No corners have been cut in the design of Kraken 50, 58 and 66 models. Elegant hull lines combined with moderate displacement guarantee a steady ride through rough seas. Fully protected and interior control stations make for easy navigation during bad weather while the zero keel system eliminates the use of fallible bolts - thanks to a fully encapsulated lead keel that quite simply ‘cannot fall off’.

Since the completion of the fleets’ flagship 66 model in 2016, Kraken has largely appealed to expats working in Hong Kong who often live within the confines of small apartment-style accommodation. Kraken Yachts offers a sea change in lifestyle luxury and peace on board a spacious and intuitively designed yacht.

Unlike junk and power boat cruisers, sailboats offer their owners the freedom to hit the high seas for the ultimate in blue water cruising, or, a leisurely weekend sail around neighbouring islands. Both choices incur operating costs that are far lower than motoring; thanks to Mother Nature’s ocean breeze.

Kraken MD Roger Goldsmith says:

“As passionate sailors ourselves, we have the unique opportunity to combine our love of sailing and the open ocean with comfortable marina-style living. We engage with a completely different community that shares our passion for sailing combined with the opportunity to wake up to the sound of water lapping on the side of the yacht. In my opinion, you can’t want for much more in a city that is starved of space and serenity.”

Exclusive and attractive finance options are available for Cathay Pacific staff interested in acquiring a Kraken 50, Kraken 58 and Kraken 66 blue water cruiser.

VISIT KRAKENYACHTS.COM OR CALL THE HONG KONG OFFICE ON +852 6055 0719.
To the rescue in Siberia

• Multiple teams worked together efficiently to rescue a Boeing 777 from Novosibirsk; the quick recovery earned praises from customers
• Collaborative efforts between FOR, ISD, IOC, HKIA, HAS and HAECO recognised in a luncheon hosted by senior leaders in January

“Attention, ISM to the cockpit.” On hearing this, Inflight Service Manager Manuel Rosales and his team onboard B-KPU from London on 22 November quickly sprung into action and did their well-trained best – they had only 10 minutes to prepare the cabin for landing in Novosibirsk, Siberia. Manuel was stunned by the efficiency of his team, who put customers at the centre of what they did. He says: “Without knowledge of the terminal condition, the crew advised passengers to disembark with their blankets. Our crew also grabbed supplies from the plane to prepare for any eventualities.” Earlier on the flight deck, a few hours into the flight, Captain Johnny Wu saw the warning message “FIRE CARGO AFT”. He, along with First Officer Jeff Pedersen, quickly initiated a diversion. In 10 minutes, the plane had landed safely with passengers disembarking normally.

Since B-KPU could no longer continue on to Hong Kong with passengers and cargo, a team from HKIA, HAECO and a set of relief crew were quickly assembled to depart with a plane-load of meals, tools and supplies.

Former Country Manager Russia Patrick Garrett was in Hong Kong working his connections to expedite the recovery; he even persuaded his wife, Tasha (a non-Cathay employee) to go along as a Russian interpreter. Putting our customers’ at the focus of the recovery, our people’s effort (see below), certainly did not go unnoticed. Upon landing in Hong Kong, passengers erupted into a round of applause.

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**In their own words**

**Captain Johnny Wu**

While we were in the terminal in Novosibirsk, many passengers came to us and passed on their appreciation to the pilots and cabin crew for getting them on the ground safely.

**ISM Manuel Rosales**

The incident showed how knowledgeable our crew really are and showed that SGSTP isn’t all talk. I’m just very proud of our cabin crew.

**Tasha Garrett**

I think Deputy Flying Training Manager Stephen Wan was exceptional. He was the last man to leave when the relief flight departed OVB. He was very responsible, and wanted to make sure the passengers got away safely and contentedly.

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**Hand carry**

When passengers disembarked, they left all their hand luggage in the overheads. FO. Jeff Pedersen and SO Nelson Liu removed all bags from the overheads, tagged them individually, before loading each one laboriously onto the rescue aircraft – much to the delight and surprise of all passengers who did not expect this kind gesture.

**33-hour long duty**

FO Andy Spiret understood the repercussions of exposing an aircraft in extreme elements; and he, along with Nelson, ran systems and hydraulics all night voluntarily for 20 hours to avoid an extensive AOG in a non-Cathay port.

**Give it a push**

HAECO engineers Allan Tam and Arson Leung were working in the hangar when they were paged for the rescue. They soon discovered themselves working in the extreme elements in denims, when the challenging conditions – cold hands, thick snow, and language barrier – meant that “everything took four times the time to do”. The duo took over from Andy and Nelson to work all the aircraft’s systems until the plane was ready to go.

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**Language barrier**

When the team tried to disembark from the relief flight, the atmosphere was very tense. It took Tasha (pictured right) a long time to liaise with officials before everyone could get on with their jobs. Tasha was the busiest person throughout the rescue; she was needed in the terminal, above and under the wing. Without Tasha, the rescue would have been nearly impossible.

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**Sapporo snowstorm**

HKIA Customer Services Officer (CSO) Frankie Cheung was on vacation in Sapporo, and was among passengers who got stuck in New Chitose Airport (CTS) in December due to the unprecedented snowstorm that shut down the airport on 23–24 December. Frankie says: “CTS’s international terminal has only six parking bays, and Cathay has only three airport staff there who had been working 16 hours a day since 22 December.” Frankie went from passenger to part of the Support team on 25 December.

On the same day, Tokyo’s AirPort Planning Manager Yoshitaka Nagae – part of the Japan Support team – arrived at CTS: “Tension was high as passengers were hostile towards our crew.” Nagae-san empathised with their frustration; and it was teamwork that kept Nagae-san going.

He says: “There were members from the Japan team, SPK sales team, Japan ASMs, and Hong Kong’s CCC and HKIA. General Manager Japan Lionel Kwok’s presence was also a morale booster.” Many complications compounded the Sapporo recovery: an overhaul of airspace, equipment and manpower constraints, road and rail limitations, hotel shortages and crew duty hours.

HKIA’s CSO Timothy Lee says: “The support team made comprehensive service plans to get as many passengers out of CTS as possible. But there were system limitations – we had to accept passengers manually and it was a slow process.” The team also got personally involved to handle luggage and facilitate back-end arrangements for crew.

Service Leader Liam Li, who also went to OVB, says: “The OVB rescue was simpler in that only one ferry flight was needed. CTS involved a vast volume of passengers on many flights. Luckily, many of them sympathised with our challenges. A passenger even bought me a Doraemon doll after the disruption to review and implement recommendations to enhance operational excellence in the future.”
Black and white

Cathay City staff

I’ve noticed that the Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon boarding passes have turned black and white. Why are we doing this? Are we moving away from a premium proposition?

Charlotte Lim, Customer Experience Manager, Airports, replies: The boarding pass printers available at check-in desks are provided by the respective airport authorities, and this equipment can only feed in one kind of paper stock.

Given that we have more than 50% of our customers travelling with onward connections on Cathay Pacific or Cathay Dragon, it is not possible for us to interchange the stock for every check-in transaction.

Previously when we used a single stock, a customer travelling on a Cathay Pacific flight with an onward connection to Cathay Dragon would be holding a Cathay Pacific boarding pass for his or her next sector on Cathay Dragon.

With system enhancements we are now able to dynamically print the operating carriers providing more visibility to the brand throughout the journey.

As part of the Cathay Dragon rebranding in November 2016, we also took the opportunity to align all the different boarding passes issued through various channels: at the airport, online, mobile, and so on. We also benchmarked our boarding passes against other international carriers.

The Cathay Pacific or Cathay Dragon logos play a significant role on the boarding pass, in addition to its function for conveying key messages to our customers.

With this change, we also adjusted the position and increased the text size to highlight the key messages such as the flight number, boarding time and the gate.

We thank everyone for their feedback after the launch, and we are reviewing your feedback to look for further improvement opportunities.

Tissue issue

BOM Staff

I have seen the aircraft cleaning process and I’m quite surprised that the cleaners simply replenish all tissue rolls and boxes with new ones. I wonder if these tissue boxes are being dumped as waste, or if there are any procedures in place to get them recycled? If the latter is true, may I know where are they being used and how do we guarantee the hygiene standard?

Prian Chan, Assistant Environmental Manager, replies: We endeavour to recycle as much of our inflight waste as possible, with the help of the cabin crew. We are recycling bottles, cans and cups. However, different from printing and magazine paper, tissue from boxes and rolls are not suitable for recycling as they are generally produced from lower-grade paper.

On a separate note, we have moved to using recycled pulp for some of the paper products, such as the M-fold paper hand towel found onboard. By the end of this year, the tissue box itself will also be produced from recycled pulp.

Living and breathing Work Well Done

Two of our great Work Well Done stories from around the network... visit our Recognition Wall for more

Teamwork for customer centricity

He also kept me informed about the flight crew’s rest pattern, who’d had their meals and who hadn’t.

His effective communication skills made it possible for the rest of the cabin crew to deliver the best service possible without delay, even when a group of our crew was resting.

Malcolm also showed his genuine care for the passengers onboard our flight, especially for the twins who has never flown before.

I believe that Malcolm should have a place at our training school to teach our young colleagues.

Malcolm carries himself in a polite, humble and respectful way, and is an absolute role model for the frontline cabin crew.

Getting anything and everything done

Head of People Communications & Engagement Carly Nankin wrote on the Recognition Wall: Katy is the true definition of an unsung hero. She recently supported the Cathay Dragon internal campaign launch and worked above and beyond to ensure everything ran smoothly, to time and to budget. She even worked over the weekend to make sure everything was perfect for a fantastic launch event.

Recently, Katy has been given new projects and tasks to manage while juggles her usual workload. Nothing you ever ask of her is too much trouble – she just gets the job done without any questions and works in the calmest manner whilst under pressure.

She delivers excellent results and does it with passion and enthusiasm. Katy, thank you for your continuous commitment and support for our team. We have been able to deliver improved internal engagement activities because of you, and you should feel proud.

Have you nominated recently? It only takes two minutes... www.cathaypacific.com/workwelldone
Terminal change for the better

CX World spoke to JFK Airport Services Manager Jim Groark about the recent switch to Terminal 8

What’s the reason behind Cathay relocating from T7 to T8?

We are always looking to improve our services and create better value. Our long-term facility lease agreement with British Airways at Terminal 7 was coming to an end and we performed a comprehensive analysis studying the six passenger terminals at JFK. The initial quick study left our options as either to remain in T7 or relocate to American Airlines’ T8. We then went through a rigorous strategic cost benefit and risk analysis with feedback from all the teams that would be affected by the change. The conclusion was that the AA terminal could provide the best value and services to our passengers and our airline.

What makes T8 a better facility for Cathay?

The AA terminal officially opened in 2007 and is twice the size of Madison Square Garden. It offers dozens of retail and food outlets, 84 ticket counters, 44 self-service kiosks, 10 security checkpoint lanes and a US Customs and Border Protection facility that can process more than 1,600 people an hour.

By comparison, Terminal 7 was opened in 1970 with the last major upgrade completed in 2007. It operates 12 gates and is the smallest terminal at JFK.

What will improve from a Cathay customer point of view?

Moving our operations to Terminal 8 will improve passengers’ travel experience considerably. The relocation will provide our customers with a more seamless travel experience when connecting to flights operated by AA and other one world partners. The first-rate facilities and amenities available, in addition to the significant connectivity advantages, will definitely help us to deliver our brand promise of a Life Well Travelled.

What’s the current lounge experience in T8 and is that set to improve?

First and Business Class passengers, in addition to eligible Marco Polo Club members, have the option of relaxing in American Airlines’ lounges – the Admirals Club or the Flagship Lounge. The latter is set to be the most impressive in the airline’s network once extensive renovations are completed in April.

How did the transition go from the JFK team’s perspective?

The project was a huge undertaking as the terminal relocation impacted several departments and teams with significant risks and opportunities to set the stage for many years to come. The support and collaboration from everyone was outstanding. Throughout the study and relocation there were two champions that stood out as making a positive impact and really helped to ensure a smooth and successful outcome. Ajay Patel JFK Manager on Duty and Felix Chan from the Airports CCC team were always willing to step in and “roll up their sleeves” to ensure every task and detail was completed within the respective time period.
JAKARTA
Christmas flash mob surprises passengers
Nearly 40 Jakarta ground colleagues came together and greeted everyone at Soekarno-Hatta International Airport with a surprise Christmas flash mob dance on 19 December.

The six-minute choreography took three weeks to rehearse; and the performance was led by Airport Service Manager, Yaniarti.

For a clip of the performance, view the Jakarta Facebook and Instagram accounts via @cathaypacificID.

OSAKA
First A350 flight from Japan departs from Kansai Airport
On 8 January, the first A350 flight departed Japan as CX565 from Kansai to Hong Kong via Taipei.

The KIX Airport team, Osaka Sales team and Japan Marketing team commemorated this occasion by inviting media and Instagram social campaign winners to a special aircraft tour before boarding.

Uniformed ground staff took photos with passengers using Instagram photo frames and other props.

During boarding, special luggage tags were handed out to all passengers as a souvenir. The Osaka team looks forward to seeing the A350 in KIX again soon!

FRANCE
Students discover the world of aviation
The Paris Airport team welcomed a visit from the representatives of Maison de l’Environnement and the pupils and teachers from the Lycée Moissian de Meaux on 18 January, to help youngsters discover a world of professions that are unfamiliar to them.

The visitors enjoyed a reception organised by the France team. Shortly after, the visitors engaged with the engineers and paid a visit to the airport lounge, where snacks were served as a nice surprise.

The students enjoyed exchanges with Cathay Pacific professionals and showed a lot of interest in their career advice.

Outport people
Sankyu very much!
On 1 December, the Cargo team in Japan held a celebration to mark the upcoming retirement of Kunio Kosaka, Assistant Cargo Sales Manager in Nagoya.

Kosaka-san started his Cathay career in the Passenger Sales team 38 years ago. For 20 years, he worked as a sales representative in various ports including Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya and Fukuoka.

The latter half of his career was spent working in Cargo, where he was one of the few to witness the cutover of both the CUBIC and CSS cargo booking systems.

In his thank-you speech at the farewell party, Kosaka-san revealed that he was hired by Peter Sutch, then Country Manager Japan, in 1978.

Coincidently, Peter’s son, Mark, flew over for the retirement party in his capacity as General Manager Cargo Sales & Marketing.

To be welcomed into Cathay by Peter and farewelled by his son had a special significance for the retiree.

When Kosaka-san retired in mid-January, he had actually entered his 39th year in Cathay, which added extra poignancy.

“Thirty-nine is pronounced as ‘sankyu’ in Japanese, which sounds similar to thank you. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everybody in the Cathay Pacific teams.”

Outside of work, Kosaka-san has always been a passionate traveller, and in 2013 he became a Japan Association of Travel Agents-certified World Heritage Specialist.

Entering into retirement will give the Cathay Pacific veteran a chance to truly live a Life Well Travelled.

Cake queen
Colleagues in Kuala Lumpur often get the chance to tuck into a range of sweet treats, thanks to the culinary skills of Financial Services Supervisor Khim Yap.

Khim is an avid baker and cake-maker whose specialties include Indonesian layered cake, marble cake, cherry lemon cake, chocolate chip cookies, pineapple tarts, hazelnut drops, Malaysian chendol agar agar puddings, and her own version of seremban siew pau (sweet bun).

“I started attending baking classes a decade ago, under the influence of my sister,” says Khim, who joined Cathay 19 years ago.

She now devotes herself to making cakes and desserts because she finds it a great way to treat her families and friends.

“I bake all the birthday cakes for family birthdays and also prepare cakes and cookies for festive seasons such as Chinese New Year and Hari Raya,” she smiles.

The extent of Khim’s baking talent was highlighted when her family moved to a new house some years back.

“I was baking an Indonesian layered cake when a neighbour from another block dropped by. She was so tempted by the aroma that she followed it all the way to our apartment and asked for my recipe!”

Khim is always trying to take her culinary skills to the next level, and now spends time trying to recreate desserts she tries in hotels and restaurants.

“I’m also very happy to prepare things for my colleagues to try in our office pot-luck parties – it helps to ensure I won’t lose touch with my baking skills!”
One minute with...

Wilson Mak, Second Officer

You’ve recently fulfilled a lifelong dream...

Growing up, when I travelled to and from school in the UK, I took every opportunity to visit the flight deck. When I chatted to the pilots for the first time, I knew straight away that I wanted to be a pilot. I joined the Cathay Pacific Cadet Programme after spending seven years in Dispatch.

Any memorable moments at Dispatch?

I have many! But one that stood out was when I took a jump seat on the Jumbo for the first time on my annual route familiarisation flight.

Are there any similarities between being a dispatcher and a pilot?

The two roles are similar, as a dispatcher is sometimes referred to as a “captain on the ground”, which I think is quite true. A dispatcher always plans a flight with safety and efficiency in mind, and a pilot executes that with a kindled mentality.

Would you say your experience helped your pilot conversion?

It certainly did, as I knew full well how a computer flight plan is produced and the logical sequence involved for the end user.

Was the pilot training tough?

The learning curve was steep since a cadet needs to complete all the ground school and flying within the given timeframe. Managing stress was probably the toughest thing throughout the course.

Which fleet are you on right now?

I am currently on the 777. I love the Jumbo, but I knew the Jumbo fleet had no opening so 777 became my first choice – which I’m very happy about!

Any particular cities that pull your heartstrings?

I recently flew into London and it meant a lot landing at Heathrow as a pilot.

What’s your future plan?

To become a commander on the 747-8F, which I hope will be around by that time. These aircraft do have many years left in them, but you never know as the aviation industry is very dynamic.

Today, discussions about refugees choke the airwaves; but how many of us know truly how it feels like to live a nomadic life of danger and poverty? Director Corporate Affairs Arnold Cheng recently put himself in refugees’ shoes by attending a one-day simulation programme organised by NGO, Crossroads, to experience the devastating personal ramifications of war, poverty and homelessness.

“Part of my job is to look after our CSR initiatives, so I wanted to know how our help ends up benefiting the end-users,” says Arnold.

Arnold took part in the Global Survivor programme in November 2016, where company executives step out of their suits for 24 hours and get a very realistic refugee experience.

“We were all role playing – we were given identities, changed into ‘rags’, and were asked to find food and water and keep ourselves safe.”

After a quick briefing, the group was ushered into a mock-up, war-torn environment. He recalls: “We were shouted at, militants pointed their guns at us. We had to bribe ourselves to safety with whatever possessions we had. In the end, I even lost my glasses.”

“My strongest emotion was one of helplessness. There was no dignity when it came to survival. We needed to fight for basic necessities. And even when we found shelter, never for a minute did we feel safe. Evading the militants was exhausting, they would capture us and make our lives really miserable.”

Even though the simulation lasted only a few hours for Arnold, a real life conflict could last between six to eight years. And when a war is over, refugees making their way home often die on the road.

“Even if they make it back, they often find their homes in debris or already occupied by others. They’ve spent years battling for their own lives, and it’s heart-breaking that on return, they have to rebuild their lives from scratch.”

As a father of one, what struck Arnold the most was the fate of refugee children: “Those on the run grow up in bloodshed. There is no childhood for them. Their mental scars could very well stay with them forever.”

Arnold says that the programme has changed how he looks at wars: “At the most basic level, the programme helped me to ruminate on the ‘privileged’ war-free lives that we lead. I’m more thankful about the preciousness of safety and security.”

The winners were chosen by a judging panel included Tom Owen, Director People and Chairman of Cathay Club, Jessica Chan, Manager People Services, Perri Lam, Benefit Services Manager and Club Manager, Ruaraidh Smeaton, Manager Brand, Evelyn Chan, Head of Environment Affairs, Irene Ip, Head of Property and Services, and Liza Ng, General Manager Sales PRD & Hong Kong.

“In addition to the murals, the winners were able to transform their paintings onto the rooftop in the next two to three months. A competition was launched last year under the auspices of the Cathay Club and attracted 32 artwork entries in total.

The winners were chosen by a judging panel included Tom Owen, Director People and Chairman of Cathay Club, Jessica Chan, Manager People Services, Perri Lam, Benefit Services Manager and Club Manager, Ruaraidh Smeaton, Manager Brand, Evelyn Chan, Head of Environment Affairs, Irene Ip, Head of Property and Services, and Liza Ng, General Manager Sales PRD & Hong Kong.

“I’d like to congratulate the winners and thank all of our people who entered the competition,” says Tom. “The standard was very high indeed.”
I joined Cathay because I want to learn more about the airline industry and understand how ticket and seats reservations work.

As a Customer Contact Specialist, I help our customers travel well by listening to them and helping them where I can. I joined Cathay because of our great reputation and its long history.

Before I joined Cathay, I was an engineering specialist providing engineering support for business jet cabin systems, such as entertainment systems and connectivity.

In my new role, I provide technical support to both Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon planes.

My life philosophy is that you’ve got to give trust to get trust.

To succeed, I believe one needs to be a good listener and likeable!

The Cargo Services Office coordinates the incoming and outgoing shipments within our network, making sure timelines and safety requirements are met.

I’ve always considered Cathay Pacific at the top of the business hierarchy, and I’ve always wanted to join. And now, I’m here!

Personally, I enjoy living in the moment. Remember: past is history, tomorrow is a mystery but today is a gift – and that’s why we call it present!
Oceanic adventure in Balicasag

Beijing’s Digital Marketing Executive Gill Gong went on an oceanic adventure on the idyllic Balicasag atoll in the Philippines. Here are her tips...

Where? Balicasag is a small island off the coast of Panglao Island in Bohol. It is 600 metres in diameter and can be circumnavigated on foot within an hour.

What? It is a marine sanctuary teeming with reef life. Visitors must pay an entrance fee.

Getting there. Fly into Manila and take domestic flights to Bohol from there. You will need to hire a fishing boat out to the island – it’s not expensive, around HK$200.

Eat. Simple Filipino food is served at a premium but is generous in portion. If you are taking a day trip to the island, it may be a good idea to ask the hotel to pack your breakfast and lunch for you.

Do. Scuba diving is arguably better than the snorkeling (at least in the immediate vicinity of the island) due to coral damage as a result of booming tourism.

Dive sites. We dove at four dive sites that are considered the best on the atoll: the Royal Garden, Turtle Point, Black Forest and Divers Haven – and it really is a diver’s haven for the varied marine life! The Black Forest is eponymous for the “black forest” of corals. The Royal Garden is an underwater plateau with an average depth of 18 metres which is perfect for open water divers. You will find turtles, different species and schools of fish, corals, and plenty of sea plants.

Dolphin watching. Pods of dolphins inhabit the island, and one may approach the boatmen on the island for a trip out to see them.

Cash matters. My last advice is to bring plenty of cash with you and be ready to hustle with the locals for everything you may need!

“ Gill Gong, Digital Marketing Executive, Beijing
I took a lovely trip with my best friend Wendy. As novice divers, we could not ask for a better place to be introduced to the sport!

Balicasag island has white, sandy beaches and crystal clear water with very good visibility. The marine life is abundant and varied – we were shocked by the world of wonder in the ocean. I highly recommend this place for a weekend trip!

“

Top tips for Bohol

By Bohol native, Senior Purser Dyndyn Campbell Balbona

The island
Bohol is just 1.5-hour ferry ride from Cebu. It is home to the famous Chocolate Hills, a group of unusual limestone formations that actually look like giant mole hills. This landscape is unique to Bohol.

The people
The Boholanos are famous for their warmth and hospitality. No matter where they are, a true Boholano would try his or her best to go home for fiesta, a religious festival in honour of their patron saint.

In May, there are fiestas taking place all over Bohol. Should you visit during this time, you’ll never be hungry.

Food
Boholanos have a penchant for Lechon (roast pig stuffed with herbs and cooked over fire), and Kinilaw Nga Isda (raw fish cured in vinegar, coconut milk and spices). Boholano delicacies include Calamay (sticky glutinous rice made with coconut milk and brown sugar packed inside empty coconut shells) and Ube jam (dessert made from boiled and mashed purple yam). Do try the Peanut Kisses, which are peanut cookies shaped like our famous Chocolate Hills. They are light, crisp and delicious!

Do and see
The Loboc River Cruise is a floating restaurant which starts from Loboc town, travelling upstream towards Busay Falls. The locals, dressed in native attire, entertain guests with dances and music the entire time.

Most colonial structures on Bohol were built during the Spanish era. And do visit in July for Sandugo – a month-long celebration commemorating the friendships between the locals and the Spanish conquistador in the 16th century. This is a huge festival with motorcades and street dancing.

Nature
Bohol is home to the Philippine tarsier, the smallest primate in the world. To see them, visit the Tarsier Sanctuary where you get to see the tarsiers up close in their natural habitat.

Hinagdanan Cave is also a tourist’s favourite: stalactites and stalagmites surround a beautiful underground lake.

Quick trip to Panglao
The island’s laissez-faire ambience as well as its myriad waterfalls, natural springs and caves make it the ideal island for travellers who are less interested in sea adventures. Panglao is also very close to world-famous sites like the Chocolate Hills, Loboc River, and the Tarsier Sanctuary – see Bohol tips on the right.