



“Hong Kong has always been a bridge between the world and China commercially.”

A Matter of Trust: A 3G version of ITU TELECOM WORLD

When ITU TELECOM WORLD 2006 closed its doors on 8 December 2006, the Geneva-based International Telecommunication Union (ITU) knew its trust in Hong Kong and China had been fully repaid. After all, the ITU had accepted China's bid to host the world's biggest telecommunications trade show in 2003 at a time when the venue nominated by host city Hong Kong had not even been built.

From the organiser's standpoint, there were major challenges ahead. After hosting this monumental event at its home base in Geneva, it was now to be held half a world away, making the organisation process that much more of a challenge. This meant that all the major players involved – the ITU as organiser, AsiaWorld-Expo as the show's venue and the Hong Kong government as coordinator and facilitator – were on a very steep learning curve. And, of course, for at least half of the preparation time after contracts were signed in 2003, the venue did not exist.

For Fernando Lagraña, French-born Executive Manager of ITU TELECOM and a 17-year veteran of the ICT industry, life was to become more interesting. “When the show was held in Geneva, if I had to discuss anything

regarding the show, I would take the bus,” he recalls. “All of a sudden, I have to get travel authorisations and to deal with long flights and tiredness. Plus we didn't know the venue and the venue management didn't know us. But we were very pleased with our WORLD 2006 event.”

Background on ITU (International Telecommunication Union)

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the leading United Nations agency for information and communication technology (ICT). As a membership organisation, it provides a global platform for governments and the private sector from around the world to develop and coordinate networks and services. Founded in 1865, ITU has a track-record in coordinating the shared global use of the radio spectrum and satellite orbits, working to improve telecommunication infrastructure in the developing world and establishing the worldwide standards that foster seamless interconnection of a vast range of communications systems.

ITU TELECOM WORLD is a global event that takes place every three years showcasing state-of-the-art



information and communication technologies. The event attracts the world's most influential and significant names across the ICT industry from service providers to government decision-makers and regulators. By bringing together the full spectrum of ICT players, the event provides a unique platform for the most innovative minds across the industry to network, brainstorm on policies, technologies and ideas that will shape the nature, direction and future of ICT.

From broadband internet to latest-generation wireless technologies, from aeronautical and maritime navigation to radio astronomy and satellite-based meteorology, from phone and fax services to TV broadcasting and next-generation networks, ITU continues to play a central role in helping the world communicate.

On With the Show at AsiaWorld-Expo!

ITU TELECOM WORLD 2006 was launched in Hong Kong on 3 December 2006 at a glittering opening ceremony in the presence of Wu Bangguo, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, Donald Tsang, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, then-ITU Secretary-General Yoshio Utsumi, and Nobel Laureate Professor Muhammed Yunus, the Managing Director of Grameen Bank.

All the industry's top names were in evidence at the Show floor and Forum, including Alcatel-Lucent Technologies, AT&T, China Mobile, China Netcom, China Telecommunications, China Unicom, Cisco Systems, Ericsson, Fujitsu, Hitachi, HP, Huawei, IBM, Intel, LG Electronics, Microsoft, Motorola, NEC, Nortel, OKI, Orange, Qualcomm, Samsung, Siemens, SK telecom, Toshiba, Verizon, ZTE and more. Quite simply, anybody who is anybody in the telecom industry was there.

Under the theme of Living the Digital World, the event explored the trends, ground-breaking technologies and policies that are driving today's world and will be driving tomorrow's. As it was the first time that this event was held outside Geneva, it was fitting that it should be held at Hong Kong's AsiaWorld-Expo, the city's largest exhibition and events venue.

Hosting an Event to Remember

ITU TELECOM WORLD 2006 is the largest trade exhibition and forum event ever to be held in Hong Kong. The show utilised the venue's entire 70,000 sqm of available floor space. During the 5-day event, some 62,000 participants, including 1,543 members of the media, attended to view the new products and services showcased by 695 exhibitors from 37 countries, and take part in key industry-shaping debates at the Forum.

For the AsiaWorld-Expo team, the seamless running of the event was the result of two years' planning and the



forging of a close partnership with the organiser and the other parties involved. With its top quality hardware and raft of world-class services, AsiaWorld-Expo more than met all the requirements of the organiser, exhibitors and visitors and played its part as a key partner in the success of the event.

During the 4-week set-up period, more than 2,000 trucks converged on the venue, loading and unloading vast amounts of booth and high-tech equipment. A detailed traffic management scheme coupled with ground floor access to column-free halls with high floor and ceiling loading capacity, made life easy for all parties concerned.

All 10 halls have a clear ceiling height of 10-19 metres, offering exhibitors much more creative licence to construct spectacular exhibition booths. Some of the booths' unique designs were extremely eye-catching. Indeed, 56 of the booths were two-storey constructions while three were even larger at three storeys. One even had its own elevator!

Extensive temporary trusses had been installed to rig exhibitors' hanging structures, some weighing up to 23 tons! On the ICT front, more than 35 kilometres of ICT cables were used to support a sophisticated technology infrastructure with venue-wide broadband connections that linked the event with cities across the world. The power supply enabled at the venue throughout the event was equivalent to supplying a city of more than half a million people!





On catering and F&B services, AsiaWorld-Expo provided a range of retail food and beverage outlets with a combined seating capacity of more than 3,000 as well as a wide variety of stand catering services.

Security issues were also a top priority with a considerable number of high-level business and government representatives attending, as well as millions of dollars' worth of high tech equipment on show. Over 230 security personnel were deployed during the event.

A Versatile and Convenient Venue

AsiaWorld-Expo offers an impressive spectacle within and without. With 70,000 sqm of exhibition space, the

flexibility and functionality of the huge ground level, column-free exhibition and events halls, and a wide range of state-of-the-art infrastructure and facilities, the centre has quickly become a choice venue for organisers worldwide.

The well-designed hardware and efficient infrastructure, coupled with teams of seasoned professionals providing comprehensive service support are some of the key ingredients of success of major global events such as ITU WORLD TELECOM 2006.

The excellent connectivity of the venue is also a major draw card. Visitors can reach AsiaWorld-Expo conveniently by air, train, bus, taxi and private car. Its strategic location next to the Hong Kong International Airport allows for easy connectivity to the rapidly growing China market and key business capitals of Asia and the rest of the world. It is serviced directly by Hong Kong's Mass Transit Railway (MTR) with direct and seamless linkage to the rest of the city. It is also well supported by a comprehensive road network offering quick and direct access to all of Hong Kong and key cities in Southern China.

Staunch Support from China

The job of coordinating the bid to bring ITU TELECOM WORLD 2006 to Hong Kong was handed to the Hong Kong government's Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau (CITB). Part of their job was to come up with a strategy for bidding, as competition between prospective host venues to host the prestigious ITU TELECOM WORLD events can be fierce!

Marion Lai Chan Chi-kuen, Deputy Secretary of the CITB's Communications and Technology Branch, was one of the senior figures involved. She pinpointed 3 of the reasons that ITU chose to bring the event to Hong Kong, "There are three key reasons. The main reason that ITU made this momentous decision to move the world event from Geneva is that Asia is where the market for telecommunications business is. We are at the epicentre of the world for telecom and ICT in general. The focus of the business has shifted from the US and Europe to Asia, and Hong Kong is on the doorstep of the biggest potential market in the world. So it is natural to want to be close to where the market is. And Hong Kong has always been a bridge between the world and China commercially."

"Then there was the staunch support by the Chinese Central Government. China is a member of the ITU and without its support, we would not be in a position to file a bid and then win it," she affirms. In fact, China took a number of major steps to attract the ITU to bring the world show to Hong Kong including the introduction of a Business Facilitation Programme designed to provide participants with appropriate business contacts in China not just for the duration of the show but in the preparation period leading up to it."

"And of course there is Hong Kong's position as the event capital of the world," Mrs. Lai adds. "The quality of the city's infrastructure and our experience in playing host to a number of key events previously, were key factors. The WTO conference in December 2005 and ITU TELECOM ASIA held in 2000 and 2002 were all very successful and this track record gave the ITU confidence to trust Hong Kong with an event on a world scale."

A Tripartite Partnership and a Great Venue

Mrs. Lai is delighted with the great success of ITU TELECOM WORLD 2006 and highlighted the key role that AsiaWorld-Expo played. "AsiaWorld-Expo performed very well throughout the entire event and it showcased to the world Hong Kong's first class convention and exhibition facilities," she asserts. "That will continue to be one of Hong Kong's big advantages. AsiaWorld-Expo coped extremely well and we've had very positive feedback from visitors. And it was vital that the telecom aspects of the show ran well. We achieved an excellent grade in that respect." In fact, at AsiaWorld-Expo's 1st anniversary celebration, the venue's "Best Service Partner Award" was conferred on PCCW, the venue's ICT partner and Hong Kong's leading ICT service provider, in recognition of its outstanding performance at the ITU TELECOM WORLD 2006.

The Bureau maintained a very close relationship with the top echelons of AsiaWorld-Expo management based on compatible working styles. "Taking into account the challenges that were presented by the bidding strategy and logistical arrangements, we forged a tripartite relationship between ITU, AsiaWorld-Expo and government which worked very smoothly," says Mrs.Lai.



“ The focus of the business has shifted from the US and Europe to Asia, and Hong Kong is on the doorstep of the biggest potential market in the world. ”

The event's economic benefit to Hong Kong was estimated at HK\$900 million. The main beneficiaries were the hotels, restaurants and the retail trade, of course, but many jobs were created locally, certainly numbering in the hundreds and perhaps in the thousands.

The Organiser's Perspective

The process of bringing ITU TELECOM WORLD 2006 to Hong Kong began when the ITU TELECOM Board issued an invitation to 189 member states to ask if they would be interested in hosting the event. Six countries responded and submitted an offer including China which proposed Hong Kong, the city considered to be the best option by the ITU Telecom Board.

“AsiaWorld-Expo performed very well throughout the entire event and it showcased to the world Hong Kong's first class convention and exhibition facilities.”

Location favoured Hong Kong in the eyes of the ITU. “With Asia now acting as an epicentre for the global ICT industry, ITU was keen that this new face of the ICT industry be reflected in its choice of host venue for WORLD 2006,” explains Fernando Lagraña. “In addition, the selection was made at the time when China was entering the World Trade Organization (WTO) so a number of exhibitors saw Hong Kong as a gateway to China.”

Then came the question of trust. “The decision to go with Hong Kong and

a venue that didn't yet exist was based on promises and we trusted China and we also trusted Hong Kong to have this new venue ready in time,” Mr. Lagraña explains. “We also had confidence in the AsiaWorld-Expo management and the Hong Kong government as they had already organised two regional ITU TELECOM ASIA events in 2000 and 2002 for us so we already knew some of the team that would be involved.”

“Despite the learning process, the dedication and support shown by the AsiaWorld-Expo team and management was very good. We recently had our debriefing at ITU headquarters and reviewed the analyst's reports from different units and what was very clear from our colleagues was that they got excellent support,” he continues. “I heard that PCCW got the award for best service provider and that's a fantastic choice because the ICT structure was top for this event. And having the train service stopping at the door of



the venue and the airport next door was very convenient. Would I be keen to select Hong Kong and AsiaWorld-Expo for a major show again? Certainly, without hesitation.”

ITU TELECOM WORLD 2006: The Only Place to Be

- Exhibitors: 695 exhibitors from 37 countries, including 21 pavilions of which 4 are Industry Pavilions.
- Registered Trade Visitors: 43,846 from 141 countries
- VIPs: Ministers / ministerial representatives at least at Director-General level, 68 from 48 countries
- Chief Executive Officers/CEO representatives: 540 from 44 countries
- Others: 347 from 32 countries
- Total VIPs: 955 from 92 countries
- Forum Speakers: 378 from 68 countries
- Delegates: 2,117 from 86 countries (excluding Youth Fellows)
- Total Forum participants: 2,866 from 86 countries
- Accredited Media: 1,543 from 455 organisations and 47 countries
- Total Participants: 61,958 from 141 countries