Singapore Exchange Study Tour
28 October – 1 November 2008

Submitted by:
A delegation of postgraduate students,
Lee Shau Kee School of Business and Administration,
The Open University of Hong Kong
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1. Introduction

Media have been accustomed to place Singapore and Hong Kong as rivals. While both cities are small in size and have very limited resources, they play a significant role in the international stage of different sectors, as a centre of finance, logistics, services and as a gateway connecting the West to the East. This race has always been tight and trophies change hands between the two. In the 2008-2009 Global Competitiveness Report, Singapore surpasses Hong Kong in ranking. And the race just goes on.

This five-day Study Tour Visit (28 Oct – 1 Nov 2008) to Singapore organized by Lee Shau Kee School of Business and Administration with the assistance from the MBA Student Association of The Open University of Hong Kong has given us a very unique opportunity to take a closer look at Singapore through different angles and perspectives trying to unveil her ambition and strategies in positioning the country as the regional commanding height. This is the university’s second study tour visit to Singapore after a lapse of five years. The destination was worth another visit due to recent developments in various segments of the country, in particular when we considered the versatile influence of the changes in Asian economic landscape including the hike of China’s economic strength in the global stage. We think it was also the right time to conduct this study tour while Asian countries were and still are under the devastating strain of the global financial tsunami originated in the U.S. subprime mortgage crisis. As nearly no country or industry would be spared from it, this tour brought our delegates into the field to explore and learn the magnitude of this unprecedented crisis and to think about its effect on the future development path of the Asian region.

The report that you are reading is not merely a travel log of our five-day journey in Singapore. It is a collection of our reflections and insights upon visits and exchanges with academics, experts from a spectrum of fields as well as encounters on the streets during this tour. Highlights of our visit points are as follows:

SIM University – a visit point to demonstrate the nation’s emphasis on education and management professionalism. The Provost Professor Tsui Kai Chong’s inspiring exchanges gave us a better understanding on Singapore’s past and future development with great insights. The valuable relationship was further cemented between SIM and OUHK.

Housing and Development Board illustrates Singaporean government’s consistent long-term planning on satisfying her citizen’s basic need and maintaining cultural harmony by mixing Chinese, Indians, Malays and Eurasians within every housing community in the nation.

NEWater Visitor Centre demonstrates how fresh water could be a strategic resource to safeguard the livelihood of a country. The project is also a role model of sustainable clean water conservation which arouses our concern about fresh water that is indeed scarce in supply in our world.

Singapore Press Holdings publishes 14 newspapers in 4 languages and also more than 100 magazines titles in Singapore. Everyday their printing house is a battlefield in ensuring both quality and efficiency.

Jurong Town Corporation has been contributing to Singapore’s economic takeoff by planning, promoting and developing industrial landscapes not only to meet existing demand but to actively create demand by inviting multinational corporations to establish their operations in Singapore.
Singapore Airlines is a legend in today’s troubled airlines industry. The company is one of the most profitable airlines in the world and operates the first Airbus A380 aircraft in the market. It proves to us ‘less is more’ while many big airlines are experiencing losses or even turning to bankruptcy.

Urban Redevelopment Authority maintains a skillful and deliberate balance of historical conservation and modern development in the restless urban landscape of Singapore while making the best use of the nation’s scarce supply of land.

Cultural visit to the Merlion, Chinatown and the Little India brought us to the streets to gain an up-close experience of the local way of life. We learnt how genuine cultural experience could be the most valuable resources to promote tourism-another most important source of income of Singapore. Obviously, Singaporean government has successfully nurtured a favorable business environment with high sustainability that is vital to the country’s success and international competitiveness. It is a poignant reminder to Hong Kong for focusing on our strengths and gearing the direction of our future development path.

2. Acknowledgement

The five-day Singapore study tour has broadened visions and perspectives of all delegates through visits and various exchange sessions. Firstly at all, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to our donor, CASH Education Fund for their generosity and also to SIM University for their invaluable assistance in the circumspect arrangement of the itineraries. We would also like to thank Dr. Irene Siaw of our School for her diligent guidance and support throughout the process. Finally we would like to thank all the host organizations for their hospitality and all the rewarding experiences. Last but not least, the tour would not have been possible without the co-ordination and preparatory groundwork undertaken by The MBA Student Association of the Open University of Hong Kong and the endorsement of our School - Lee Shau Kee School of Business & Administration of The Open University of Hong Kong.

3. Objectives Expected and Achieved

Through the study tour, all delegates were facilitated to acquire an understanding of a multitude of Singapore government agencies and business organizations. Besides the enrichment of knowledge in tertiary business and administration education through sharing with academics in SIM University, delegates also gained insight of the management strategies and experience from a broad spectrum of organizations as well as the dynamism of the business environment through submersion into rich social, financial, technological and economic context. Also delegates appreciated the administration philosophy of close collaboration between the government and its government-linked organizations. Through these visits, the delegates were exposed to and fully comprehended the richness and diversity of Singaporean culture in promoting a productive and nurturing business environment.
### 4. Itinerary of Activities

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<td>Departure to Singapore via SQ863</td>
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<td>29 Oct 2008 (Wed)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0945-1015</td>
<td>Tea Break @ Boardroom</td>
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<td>Campus tour</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1100-1200</td>
<td>Talk by Professor Koh Hian Chye - Dean, School of Business, UniSIM</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1210-1400</td>
<td>Lunch hosted by UniSIM @ HQ Staff Lounge</td>
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<td>1430-1630</td>
<td>Orientation visit at Housing &amp; Development Board (HDB)</td>
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<td>30 Oct 2008 (Thu)</td>
<td>0900-1100</td>
<td>Orientation tour at NEWater Visitor Centre</td>
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<td>Lunch hosted by Singapore Press Holdings (SPH)</td>
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<td>Watch print of Xin Min Daily Newspaper/ Wan Bao</td>
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<td>1 Nov 2008 (Sat)</td>
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<td>Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) Cultural Visits: the Merlion Park, Chinatown and Little India</td>
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<td>1430-1600</td>
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5. Visits to Organizations

5.1 SIM University

SIM University was established in 2005 and is the first privately funded university in Singapore. Approved by the Ministry of Education, SIM University offers recognized degree and qualifications. Its fore-establishment, Singapore Institute of Management (SIM) was formed in 1964 and already aimed to enhance managerial and organizational effectiveness in Singapore. Today SIM Group is operated under four core areas offering both full-time, part-time programmes and short courses. Being one of the major cores, SIM University has around 8,000 full-time and part-time students in pursuing degrees and qualifications offering from four schools namely: Arts & Social Sciences, Business, Human Development & Social Services, and Science & Technology. Today SIM primarily aims to provide opportunities for professionals and adult learners to upgrade their qualifications, knowledge and skills by providing a flexible learning path. Our visit started with Ms. Serene Lim (Director of the Office of Admissions) and Ms. Eileen Tan (Manager of Student Recruitment) who greeted us warmly at the main entrance of the SIM University.

Meeting Professor Tsui Kai Chong (Provost of SIM University)

We were pleased that Professor Tsui Kai Chong, the Provost of SIM University, hosted a sharing session with us. He started by giving us a comparison between Hong Kong and Singapore. While both cities have their own strengths and pursue their own advantages, Singapore is more a government driven economy with individual development path well-planned by the government. Though citizens might have complaints of different sorts, they are quite happy with their lives in this safe house. In recent years, Singapore has been becoming more and more open and tolerant in terms of listening more to its citizens’ voices and embracing the fast changing global landscape. He advised us that during our study tour in the coming days, it would be interesting to see that many local aspects of Singaporean life have picked up influences of Hong Kong’s living and pop culture.

Through sharing with Professor Tsui, we had a better understanding about Singapore and its people in terms of economic and social development. Singaporeans are pride of the achievement of the country though they might complain about their “big brother” and his most caring “grand plan” which deducts quite a bit on their paychecks. Living in one of the most prosperous economies in the world, we think they do have to agree that there is no free lunch.
Seminar presented by Professor Koh Hian Chye (Dean of School of Business)

After the sharing and a short touring of the campus, we were directed to attend a seminar about business analytics and data mining by Professor Koh Hian Chye (Dean of the Business School). Data mining is the process of analyzing large amount of data in order to reveal previously unknown and potentially useful information. For instance, better understanding of shopping patterns would help retailers to manage their inventory and sales programmes more effectively.

Other than understanding shoppers’ behaviours and improving relationship with customers, data mining could be applied to other business activities as well. It is, however, necessary for the management to understand that human behaviour does change and data mining models and applications should be constantly reviewed and reappraised in order to provide satisfactory and quality results.

Lunch hosted by SIM University

SIM University was so kind to treat us a buffet lunch at their campus with Associate Professor Yip Woon Kwong (Registrar) and Ms. Alicia Ho (Manager of Communications of the President's Office) joining us. Professor Yip told us that the admission office and the registrar have been extremely busy lately due to the government subsidy on tuition fees of undergraduate degrees (a maximum of 40%) starting from July 2008 in order to encourage Singaporean working population to further their tertiary education. Besides, SIM University was able to attract large number of foreign students from Indonesia, Vietnam and China in recent years. The increase in number of both full-time and part-time students have turned the campus into a place of energy and international encounters. Ms. Ho also shared with us that other than coming for educational reasons, an increase number of Chinese tourists also came to visit Singapore in recent years. It is believed that the number would further increase with the completion of more tourist attractions in the coming years.

The visit to SIM University enlightened us that Singapore government is putting lots of effort in upgrading the education level of its working population. Direct government subsidy is surely a powerful tool to bring the busy working adults back to classrooms. Over the years, Singapore has been striving to position as an educational centre in the region. We believe we could see the result reflected at the campus of SIM University. Some Asian countries in the region have been enjoying very rapid economic growth in recent years. Singapore is successfully developing its educational sector to offer parents, who are anxious to provide better education for their young ones, and adults, who are seeking to advance their career path, a good and reputable choice. As almost every business is considered to be a unit in the international network in today’s global economy, the nature of business schools is not merely imparting knowledge and skills but developing global mindset and interaction for their students. SIM University is certainly on this right track.
5.2 Housing & Development Board

Housing and Development Board (HDB) is the statutory board of the Ministry of National Development responsible for public housing in Singapore. It has been credited for resettling residents into low-cost government built housing from squatters and slums around the city in the early days of Singapore. Governments around the world have been amazed at the fact that HDB has successfully assisted a majority of Singapore citizens to own their own flats. Today more than 80% of the Singaporeans own their own flats built by HDB.

We visited the HDB headquarter in Toa Payoh which is located in the central region of Singapore. We were led to the conference room, and we could see it was an all-in-one facility with banking services on the ground floor, numerous counters of all sorts providing services for buyers of their dream homes. Families with their children were everywhere in the building. Mr. Ignatius Lourdesamy and Ms. Ag Dy of Estate Administration & Property Department were kind enough to provide us an informative presentation of the history and development of HDB. The presentation informed us that alongside the rapid development of the country, the mission of HDB has transformed from merely satisfying basic housing needs to designing and providing quality living to Singaporeans. In recent years, HDB has been spending great efforts in rejuvenating and upgrading living conditions of their older housing estates on one hand and designing and constructing dream house type executive condominiums on the other. The organization also strives to tailor for rising expectation of customers by bringing in private developers into development projects to enhance innovativeness of HDB housing. HDB also pays attention and responses to the changing landscape of Singapore population. Like Hong Kong, the aging population is one of the challenges faced by the Singapore government. Influenced by the individualism of the western culture, children are becoming less willing to live with the parents under one roof. While oriental piety still influences them with a preference of living together with parents in the same community, studio apartments were built in housing estates to accommodate senior citizens in response to the Singapore's aging society.

While singles and unmarried parents are not allowed to purchase HDB flats, it was interesting to know that “HDB marriage” is a popular way for a man to propose in Singapore. A new couple gets married in order to become eligible to submit an application for a HDB flat and waits for its completion to house the new family. Considerations for granting the application of a HDB flat also include the priority given to citizens based on income level, number of children and social status ranked according to professions. Other than solely concentrating on owning their own flats, HDB also plays a crucial role in promoting social cohesion and ethnical
integration within the country by carefully planning different ethnic groups to live together following the composition of the population.

After the meeting, Ms. Ag led us to the visitors’ centre to view HDB show flats which ranged from three bedroom size of 65 square metres to four bedrooms of 110 square metres. We found that HDB flats were generally more spacious as compared with ours in Hong Kong, not only in terms of their sizes but also their layouts. One of our delegates even enquired with Ms Ag about immigrating to Singapore in order to buy a HDB flat.

HDB housing estates also serve as an effective mechanism connecting citizens to their voting behaviour. Parliament members through constituencies oversee all HDB estates in the country. The welfare of the estates depends on the experience of the parliament members as well as the majority of the party they represent so as to facilitate effective deployment of necessary resources. Delays in the maintenance of the HDB and enhancement of local facilities might occur if non-majority party members are elected. Singaporeans are pragmatic and therefore the dominance of People Action Party in the political scene is thus further ensured.

Housing needs is one of the elementary needs in a society. Being short of land supply and expensive cost in land reclamation from the sea, Singapore government is successful in having a high ratio of flat ownership and with only about 5% living in government rental flats - a big difference comparing to 48% in Hong Kong. Unlike the Housing Authority in Hong Kong which solely serves as a provider of rental public housing and a facilitator to assist citizens to own their own flats through “Home Ownership Scheme”, HDB plays a crucial role in the grand plan of the government in ensuring both social and political stability. The organization is in the centre of a web to ensure harmony, accumulate wealth, encourage birth rate and solicit votes. Apart from seeing housing property as a major avenue to accumulate wealth as is the case in Hong Kong, it is a major part of the grand plan of Singapore government.

5.3 NEWater Visitor Centre

Singapore is an island and urban city state with no rural hinterland. Conflicts with the neighboring country made it necessary for Singapore to find a sustainable solution to find a reliable substitute for the life-saving fresh water supply. Singapore Government has been investing in research and technology to build a robust, diversified and sustainable water supply from four different sources known as the Four National Taps strategy. The Four National Taps consist of water from local catchment areas (reservoirs), imported water (from Johore in Malaysia), NEWater (or reclaimed water), and desalinated water. Public Utilities Board (PUB), Singapore’s national water agency, built the first NEWater plant back in May 2000. Currently, there are four NEWater plants in Singapore; and the fifth and the largest NEWater plant at Changi will start operation very soon.
Uncle Martin led us to tour around the NEWater Visitor Centre and we had a great learning experience about the amazing technology behind NEWater and its uses. It was an educational and entertaining tour with multimedia presentations, hands-on interactive experiences to provide us a comprehensive knowledge of the water treatment technology as well as to have a taste of NEWater personally. We were glad that a group of kindergarten students joined us during the tour. They reminded us of our happy childhood and just brought more fun to the visit.

NEWater is the product from a multiple barrier water reclamation process. The first barrier is the conventional wastewater treatment process and the second, third and fourth barriers are from NEWater production process to use micro-filtration, followed by reverse osmosis and subsequently ultraviolet disinfection to produce reclaimed water from secondary effluent. The water is good for personal use and its high purity makes it also suitable for application in semiconductor and wafer fabrication plants.

NEWater is safe for direct human consumption but Singapore government treats it for indirect potable use by blending it with reservoir water where there are minerals and chemicals, and further treatment before supplying to households. The production of NEWater has proven to be more cost-effective and viable alternative.

NEWater is planned to meet about 30 percent of Singapore’s total water demand by 2010. Water management policies in Singapore have been increasingly moving towards an adoption of cost-effective technologies. The introduction of NEWater has placed Singapore to achieve a higher degree of self-sufficiency and a less dependent position on Malaysia for fresh water. From a strategic and national security perspective, NEWater allows Singapore to enjoy greater leeway in future negotiations with Malaysia on many bilateral issues by putting both countries on a more equal footing.

We all know that fresh water has become a valuable resource in many parts of the world today due to the increase in population and degradation of our natural environment. The research and technology development of NEWater creates a timely sustainable water industry which raises Singapore’s international standing on water resource management.

Singapore government should encourage major international players in the industry to anchor their R&D, manufacturing and headquarter operations in Singapore; and assist Singapore-based companies in marketing their mature technologies to the many needy markets. We tasted NEWater at the end of the tour and found it no special as compared with regular drinking water. In Hong Kong fresh water just comes so easy from Dong Jiang River from Guangdong with strong support of our motherland. Who knows one day when our mother nature becomes so barren, barrels of fresh water might be traded in the international market as of oil today. By then, maybe, people shall find it special.
5.4 Singapore Press Holdings

We visited the Singapore Press Holdings (SPH) Print Centre in Jurong. SPH has invested more than S$500 million in various printing assets. All its newspapers are printed in-house in SPH Print Centre. The centre is capable of producing about one million copies a day and full-colour pages for any newspaper edition. Also, it prints regional editions of international newspapers including the Financial Times and the International Herald Tribune.

Mr. P. Kumar (Manager of Production Department) showed us the printing factory, which is huge comparing to similar factories in Hong Kong. The printing machines were imported from Germany. He also explained about the printing process in details as well as some technical issues such as paper feeding, colour identification and on-site control and adjustments for ensuring smooth and timely production. We were glad to witness the printing of one of its popular newspapers, Xin Min Daily News right on spot in the printing shop. As Mr. Kumar has worked for this centre for more than 30 years, he is very experienced and familiar with every single step of production including graphic designing, packing and channel distribution. We were impressed by Mr. Kumar’s knowledge and passion in his profession that enabled us to understand more about this industry within such a short visit.

More than 1,000 journalists are responsible for delivering news and information for 17 newspapers in four languages and approximate 100 magazines titles in Singapore and the region. We consider that one of the critical success factors for a newspaper is its reporting and editorial policy. The newspaper contents and its point of view are more important than the printing works that can be outsourced. We also found the quality of its printing is not as good as that of most newspapers in Hong Kong. This could be due to the lacking of market competition in the publishing media industry in Singapore. It is thus quite natural for a monopolized organization to adopt the ‘Push’ method for promoting its products to the market and SPH is apparently not an exception.

Our visit only concentrated on the operational facilities of SPH. Although we would see Singapore media as the voice of the big brother, it would be interesting to know if the government is releasing its grasp to promote a more open society. As we were in the printing factory to read the freshly printed Shin Min Daily News, we were surprised to notice that it had an image of the Apple Daily of Hong Kong. The large fonts of the headlines on entertainment news, colourful pictures replacing words were newspaper format so familiar to us from Hong Kong. We wondered if this was a good sign for the development of Singapore news media and our feeling was mixed. It could be a sign that the government is relaxing her grasp on the industry while we also worried that the trend could foster a societal atmosphere of scandalous innuendos as in Hong Kong.
5.5 Jurong Town Corporation

Jurong Town Corporation (JTC) is a Singapore state-owned enterprise which aims to plan, promote and develop a dynamic industrial landscape, in support of Singapore’s economic advancement since 1968. It manages 38 industrial and specialized parks, including 4 wafer fabrication parks, an advanced display park, 2 business parks, a chemicals hub at Jurong Island and a bio-medical park at Tuas as well as logistics hubs for aerospace, chemical and general warehousing industries. Jurong Island is home to over 94 leading petroleum, petro-chemical, and supporting companies. Two logistics parks, Banyan LogisPark & Meranti LogisPark, were created to provide an equally exhaustive spectrum of integrated logistic and supply chain. The list is just impressive considering a country of only 707 square kilometres.

Ms. Carin Leong and Ms. Tham Lai Pui (Deputy Manager and Senior Manager of the Communication Department) gave us a insightful presentation on the current developments of JTC as well as its role in facilitating industrial development in Singapore. JTC plays a catalytic role in introducing leading-edge real estate solutions. The organization is truly revolutionary in planning and constructing the huge floating structure for oil storage in the sea and the underground rock cavern for liquid carbons storage. These new and innovative approaches allow the country to develop industrial land use by utilizing spaces never imaged before. JTC strives to further upgrade industrial development by consolidating and enhancing existing industries to create new opportunities. For the growth of Singapore’s aerospace industry, a designated park will be established at Seletar to expand what has been set foot at Changi. One-north at Buona Vista – a new science hub development incorporating research laboratories, offices, homes, parks and education institutions for entrepreneurs, scientists and researchers, was established.

JTC works closely with the Economic Development Board (EDB) to provide salient policies to retain investors. Under such arrangement, JTC only serves as landlord provider and enjoys the liberty to tailor necessary developments in response to global manufacturing opportunities. The visit leaded us to compare the philosophy of “Big Government, Little Organization” in Singapore contrasting with Hong Kong’s “Little Government, Big Corporation”. Singapore government invests huge amount to develop and explore land resource, enhances strengths in deploying advanced infrastructure as well as technologies. JTC is a major hub in magnetizing and nurturing the dynamic industrial landscape of Singapore.
One thing that surely Hong Kong people envy Singapore is the strong industrial segment in its economy. Manufacturing sector surely has its merit in providing a large number of jobs, sustaining long-term investment commitment and serving as a stabilizer along the boom and bust cycle of an economy. JTC is the stabilizer to ensure manufacturing maintains a significant portion in the economy of Singapore (currently accounts for about 26%). JTC and the government of Singapore understand they are facing intense competition in attracting prominent industrial projects to settle in a country where land is scarce and cost is surely not low. While moving to engage in more high-end projects including bio-technology and aerospace, JTC has been developing various highly innovative and revolutionary projects to show its commitment to sophistication and rigorous in both technical advancement and unmatched professionalism. Before we left JTC, we had our group photo taken together with Ms. Leong and Tham in front of a ceremonial display of the 40th anniversary of JTC. The numbers four zero inspired us that Hong Kong surely needs a rebirth of industrial sector but a government with a strong belief and long-term view is the prerequisite.
5.6 Singapore Airlines

Singapore’s national carrier Singapore Airlines (SIA) was incorporated in 1971. SIA is now acclaimed as the best airline and consistently profitable despite severe competition in the airline industry and economic fluctuation. It is now ranked first in the world. Today SIA employs approximately 30,000 staff across the group and has 23 subsidiary companies, with shareholdings in 18 other companies. It has a fleet of 101 aircrafts, another 74 on orders, with options on 59 of them.

Though big corporation surely SIA is, we were warmly welcomed at the entrance of the SIA Training Centre by Mr. Moses Ku (Public Affairs Executive). Mr. Ku gave us a brief history of SIA development by going through the exhibits displayed at the atrium of the building.

We were then directed by Mr. Ku to a training room where Mr. Stephen Forshaw (Vice President of the Public Affairs) was ready to give us a presentation on the success and most recent development of SIA. Mr. Forshaw is truly an expert in the airline industry. His presentation did not simply list out various success factors of SIA that includes the timeless brand of “Singapore Girls” in sarong kebaya costume, young fleets with superb service quality that we could and have already learnt in business school cases. He shared with us that the main driving forces behind SIA’s success formula is the knowledge of its customers and the flexibility of its management.

Mr. Forshaw told us that upon the decision to purchase and be the first airline in the world deploying the Airbus A380 super-sized jets, SIA management sent out invitations to their frequent flyers worldwide inviting them to come together in brainstorming weekends held in different cities around the world. These brainstorming sessions facilitated SIA in understanding the kinds of setup and services passengers would prefer in a jet which both the company and passengers had no previous experience working in and traveling on it. It is this kind of customer-care mentality and the close collaborations of both hardware and human software that differentiates SIA. Also SIA loyalty programme database enables cabin crews to know their customers’ needs and preferences in first and business classes to ensure luxury and comfort with highly tailored flying experience. It is, therefore, no surprises at all to know that SIA receives 34 compliments versus 1 complaint per 10,000 passengers.

Big corporation like SIA could also successfully maintain a well-balanced system of scale and swift. In the wake of the global financial crisis and the sharp downturn of the performance of airlines worldwide, SIA took initiative to cut back and combine services of some unpopular destinations. As the current crisis is likely to get even worse before better, SIA’s healthy balance sheets could provide more rooms for maneuverings. In addition, SIA’s effective crisis management proves fruitful. Fuel saving measures, e.g. A380 saves 20% of fuel, only two to three water tanks of each flight are filled.
instead of four, replacing thick and heavy magazines with thin ones, cleaning engines every three months, rescheduling flights to stop over at airports that supply cheaper fuel all work together to help the company sailing through the storm.

Numerous examples today could be found to conclude that national airlines could be anything but profitable. With its healthy balance sheets and continuous superior returns, SIA tells us a totally different story. Support of the government on providing the sophisticated and efficient Changi Airport, good education system, valuable geographic location, a visionary, innovative management team and efficient operations are all major functions contributing to the SIA’s success formula. In the first quarter of 2008, SIA reported an outstanding profit of HK$2.5 billion against soaring fuel prices while Cathay Pacific reported a loss of HK$600 million in mid term.

After Mr. Forshaw’s presentation and a productive Q & A session, we were invited to tour and experience some of the training facilities for flight attendants at the premises. Evacuation training module with aircraft model built on swimming pool with man-made waves, the in-flight service training module for A380 cabin were all eye-openers for our delegates. While we walked back to our bus, we saw a large crowd of ladies in the building waiting for their interviews of applying for SIA flight attendants. We noticed that the nature of the job does attract young people and allows airlines to keep their cost low in this labour intensive industry.

Debriefing discussion among delegates after the tour indicated some of them did not favour SIA, particularly in reference to their economy class flight from Hong Kong to Singapore. Some of them missed Cathay Pacific for its efficiency as Hong Kong people usually prefer fast paced in-flight services while SIA performs a relatively slower one. Also Chinese entertainment channel was not available in-flight. Some believe they do need one if they want to tailor for the fast growing Chinese tourists coming to Singapore.

We took a SIA flight back home using the latest Terminal 3 of Singapore Changi International Airport. The new terminal became operational in January 2008 and equipped with eight gates capable of servicing the Airbus A380 aircrafts. The stylist ambience and robust facilities further strenghten the busy service hub of SIA. We think government support is certainly one of the crucial elements behind SIA success in the industry.
5.7 Urban Redevelopment Authority

Considering the scarcity of land and its vast area of urban landscape in Singapore, we could imagine the important role of Urban Redevelopment Authority which is responsible for planning and facilitating the physical urban development of the whole country. URA’s challenges lie not only in maximizing the effective use of the very limited 707 square kilometres of land, but also striving to conserve historical buildings and areas (including Chinatown and the Little India) to make Singapore “a great city to live, work and play in”. Achieving both require skillful and ingenious tradeoffs. Apparently, URA is doing an excellent job with what we witnessed in the Bugis area, Chinatown and the Little India where urban land use was a judicious mix of historical conservation and thriving modernity. URA also takes a long view and is currently engaging in the strategic planning of the development of new commercial and business centres outside the existing Central Business District in order to prepare for future economic needs of the country.

URA Centre, located in the downtown area, is equipped with an impressive City Gallery with numerous exhibits telling the story of how Singapore’s city landscape evolves through its history. Like Gulliver traveling to the land of little people, we were impressed with the details of numerous three-dimensional scale models displaying different Singapore’s urban models. The scale down three-dimensional map of Singapore gave us a vivid visual image of the compact country.

We were told that female Guangdong Samsui (三水) immigrants contributed a lot to the development of Singapore by working as labourers in construction sites during the early 20th century. URA and the government pay great respect to their contribution by establishing three stone sculptures of Samsui ladies (noticeable with the fabric headgears they worn), each carrying on their shoulders two full load baskets of earth with bamboo poles. We should be proud that laborious Chinese does make a difference in many places on earth.

6. Cultural Visit

On the day of leaving Singapore, we have visited the places of the Merlion, Little India and Chinatown that gave us great impression of Singapore as a country of cultural richness in diversity. The different cultures and ethnic groups form an inseparable part of Singapore and we appreciated different building designs, arts and foods that were integrated with the Chinese, Malays, Indians and Eurasians cultural legacy.

6.1 The Merlion

The Merlion is a beautiful hybrid of a lion and a fish. It is the international icon of Singapore. This prominent icon of Singapore was first built is an eight metre tall sculpture in 1972, and was placed at the mouth of the Singapore River. In 1996, it was reproduced on a larger scale and was placed on Sentosa Island and the Merlion continues to represent Singapore.
We admired the scenery of the Merlion Park at Marina Bay and the enigmatic atmosphere there was complemented by sounds of crashing waves, howling winds, foghorns, and the squawks of seagulls that made the area so welcoming and relaxing. We could see lots of tourists from China and remembered what Professor Yip and Ms. Ho told us at SIM University.

6.2 Chinatown

Since Chinese is the ethnical group in Singapore with the highest composition, there are a lot of Chinese specialties of Fujian, Hakka and Chaozhou, Guangdong origin. Chinese prospectors came to Singapore as far back as the 14th century. The China town is a nicely conserved cultural spot with quaint and heritage buildings painted in red. It is also a popular place for tourist shopping. Although Chinatown is quite small, we were surprised to know that 80% of people in Singapore lived in this area in the past. The well-conserved buildings allowed us to imagine the bustling scene that once thrived in the narrow streets of Chinatown in the early days and visualized how the Chinese immigrants made their living there. Shopping at heritage stores with their lacquer trade signs of gold painted Chinese characters still hanging on the walls selling Chinese specialties, we noticed how much we need this in Hong Kong for both our tourist industry and collective memory. Instead of bigger malls and taller buildings, visitors do treasure unique and memorable traveling experiences in an authentic cultural environment.

6.3 Little India

The Little India is a relatively compact area that preserves the essence of Indian heritage. Like Chinatown, many of the buildings there are conserved under government policy and most of them were built before the Second World War. Apart from the well-decorated temples, it was also a vibrant commercial area and one of the nation’s most colourful districts occupied by descendants of Indians who arrived in Singapore in the mid 1800’s. Although vast majority of Indians now live in high-rise HDB housing estates in a multi-racial environment, we could still easily recognize the legacy of India edifice in the area of unique Indian architectures together with temples that tell about their religious rituals. There were a variety of Indian shops and businesses selling traditional fabric merchants, gold smiths and costume jewelers.

All in all, the culture visits offered us a close encounter of the local experience. The Merlion, China Town and Little India provided us a chance to explore and appreciate the history, multi-culturalism and social harmony in Singapore. We admire Singapore making best endeavor and go to such great length to preserve different heritages by respecting and accepting different cultures. Making all of them work perfectly together in contributing to the good of the country and all her citizens. Therefore, we were not surprised to find a Chinese-style market centre in the area of Little India with a church and a mosque located just nearby. It all proves that different cultures have proudly put their own unmistakable stamps in this small Asian country and together they form the sturdy backbone of a vibrant and robust economy in the world.
7. Conclusion

Singapore declared its independence in 1963. Under the leadership of Mr. Lee Kuan Yew and his successors, Singapore went through immense difficulties and achieved great economic prosperity in front of the whole world in dismay. A country so tiny in size and with hardly any resources at all, striving to be self-sufficient to sustain a living is inevitable from day one. The difficulties lie not only in overcoming scarcity but also diversity of the ethnical composition of its population. Facing tremendous challenges from both external and internal environment, the margin of error is always so narrow. Singapore has been demonstrating that top-down parentalistic leadership could be the best key to open the door to stability and prosperity. Since independence, Singapore’s development is truly an epic story and its standard of living has been on the rise ever since. By continuously strengthening all available, though very limited, resources in hand, Singapore has been able to attract huge inflow of foreign investment that drives the country through industrialization to the later stage of service industry development. Today, Singaporeans could be proud of themselves that their country is the fifth wealthiest country in the world in terms of GDP per capita.

The pattern of the grand plan and big brother culture could be found in many parts of Singapore. We could weave purposes of different government institutes together to form a big picture of the grand plan of the leading party. With government subsidies, Singaporeans are encouraged to further their tertiary education in enhancing the competitiveness of its labour force. HDB housing policies assist majority of Singapore citizens to own their flats without forgetting the importance of the promotion of ethnical integration and harmony. With difficulty of ensuring a secure fresh water supply from neighbouring country Malaysia, Singapore decided to strengthen its bargaining power by employing sophisticated technology to pursue self-sufficiency. JTC aims to nurture a favourable environment to continuously promote an industrial sector in order to sustain stability in the overall performance of the economy. Tight control of the media industry monopolized by government-linked publishers, SPH is an example to display how government could saturate public media coverage. Majority-owned by the national investment company Temasek Holdings, SIA could not walk away from the shadow of the big brother. Successful company surely as SIA, we find competitiveness of the national airline built partly on the continuing government support including the superb infrastructure of Changi International Airport.

Hit hard by the current global financial tsunami, Singapore’s GDP has declined by 0.5 percent in the third quarter of 2008 and its economy has been undergoing two consecutive quarters of negative growth. It is believed that things are likely to get even worse before they get better. Like all other responsible governments in the world, Singapore’s Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong is launching various relief measures to weather the downturn and reduce the unemployment rate. Inevitably, the recent credit crunch could affect several project developments in Singapore. We expect pieces in the chessboard could be affected but the whole game would not easily fall apart considering the strength and vigour of Singapore.

The journey also provoked us to rethink a vital question of decision-making: centralized or decentralized? - a question that has been seriously studied in all business schools. We, from Hong Kong, are used to respect wisdoms of the street. In Singapore, people are accustomed to follow the tune of the commanding height. The top-down directive model surely proved its worth in the past. We wonder how effective the model still is in respect to the fast changing pace of today’s interconnected world and the possibility of a shifting in tomorrow’s world political landscape. The U.S. economy could take much longer time before it could go over the current recession. Rather than dancing around one single global super economy, the world economy will likely be becoming increasingly multi-polar when the global economy recovers. To profit from an economic environment with multi-polarity, countries would have to further diversify their competence portfolio. For sure, we could see Singapore is trying its best to accommodate for changes. The
determination to develop the gaming industry, the satirical tabloid-style of some of their Chinese newspapers, the large influx of Chinese tourists all indicate changes are happening in many areas. Some of these could deviate quite a bit from the established value since the founding of the country. We are interested to trace the development further. In a world of astonishing diversity, we wonder how well would the top-down decision making process be able to accomplish what it had in the past. Maybe, in future circumstances, Singapore government does have to accept there is more than one best answer.
Appendix I: Personal Sharings from Delegates

Au Kit Ching Maria 區潔貞 (MBA student)
It’s great! We had a wonderful time throughout the Singapore Exchange Study Tour. Through this unique opportunity, we have gained better insight of the Singapore public and private service environment.

The management philosophy of Singapore Airlines (the most market valued operator in the aviation industry) imparts upon me the utmost impression. The vision of Singapore Airlines is to be on the move and keep abreast of its peer competitors. Moreover, Safety and Security are priority concerns for SIA. Other successful factors are the “3 Pillars” of the Singapore Airlines brand: Service-Excellence, Product-Innovation and its Global-Network. Singapore Airlines’ pioneer flight of the Airbus A380 in October 2007 attracted global publicity and media coverage. Cabin design (mega seats and double-sized bed) at the SIA new First Class is a product innovation in response to customers’ needs and desire. All in all account for SIA’s industry leader status during the tough financial tsunami crisis. Yes, she can do it!

Chan Hing Tai Jimmy 陳興泰 (DBA student)
This was my third visit to Singapore. This study tour was truly educational and inspirational in the sense that it allowed me to witness and experience the challenges of growth through sharing with local expertise and casual encounters. The construction of the huge casino resort project right across the Merlion Park in the city centre, waitresses on work permits from China labouring in Chinese restaurants as well as the satirical tabloid entertainment revelation of Hong Kong celebrity artists in the local Chinese newspapers – garden city still it is, metamorphosis were evident everywhere. It was a peculiar feeling finding many of these new things deviating quite a bit from what Singaporeans have been used to, but were somehow instantly familiar to us from Hong Kong. The tour allowed me to discover what brought about these changes and to see how Singaporean reacted to them. For both countries and individuals, changes are certainly inevitable and the questions often come down to “how well?” and “how much?” I hope Singapore continues to uphold an orderly and sturdy global status. I would like to thank CASH and OUHK for offering me this unique learning opportunity and the privileges of visiting the organizations.

Check Siu Fun Karen 植笑芬 (MBA student)
Surprisingly, I was impressed by the Singapore current outlook in comparison with those of my last visit in 1997. My recollection of Singapore was a ‘boring city’ and no interest for re-visiting. My thanks to CASH and OUHK for granting me an opportunity to witness Singapore’s present attractiveness as an international transport hub (Changi Airport, Singapore Cargo Terminal), a visionary and innovative city (NEWater), an education cradle (SIM University), an integrated industrial cog with wafer manufacturing, bio-chemical, information communication & media, petroleum-chemical, science & engineering parks (Jurong Town Corporation), a welcome destination for holiday makers as well as a green city. There are many more under construction or planning which will give Singapore a transformation in future.

Blue sky with white cloud is rarely witnessed in Hong Kong but is a common phenomenon in Singapore. This is obviously resulting from Singapore’s continuous effort in energy saving, water and woodland conservation, control on carbon emission, green buildings and public education. Hong
Kong government should expedite environmental protection initiatives not only for the sake of its people but also to reinforce its international competitiveness. As a whole, Singapore focuses on development and growth and simultaneously emphasizes on sustainability which is a critical element of success. I felt very much at home in Singapore on account of its cultural diversity, safety, harmony and history which in all culminated in my fond memory.

Cheng Siu Yee Alice 鄭紹儀 (MBA student)
I am glad to have this opportunity of joining the five-day Singapore Exchange Study Tour. I want to thank CASH, OUHK and MBASA for sponsoring and organizing the tour and express my appreciation to SIM University and its representatives for their kind hospitality and arrangements.

The visit to the Singapore government agencies as well as the briefings provided by Professor Tsui of UniSIM enabled me to gain some in-depth understanding of Singapore’s political and economic environment. I was so impressed by the country’s long term planning in industry and economic development, public housing policy, urban planning and the government’s effort to nurture a cohesive community. The Singapore government cares for its fellow citizens and exercises utmost endeavour to satisfy their physiological, safety and social needs. Officials have transferred Singapore into a well organized and beautiful green island engulfed in fresh air.

Cheung Shuk Wan Gloria 張淑韻 (MCG student)
“Exchange Study Tour” in my mind implies exchange of knowledge, information, opinion and culture. I would suggest that each sub-group capitalize on their professional backgrounds for prior preparation of the question & answer session; experienced teammates to be assigned to coach new joiners and hotel room allocation to accommodate a mélange of delegates from different groups, industries and backgrounds. This would provide opportunities to widen our scope of view and networking.

I always believe that Hong Kong is the most ideal place for me with better opportunities, more choices, degree of freedom, level of modernity, convenience and comfort. Not surprising, Singapore is a great place which is absolutely worth re-visiting. However, observation is totally different from being a tourist to an exchange study tour delegate. It was an interesting trip with memorable experiences to share.

Thanks to the course coordinator and teammates’ unfailing assistance and passions – their works and contributions impressed upon me. As a matter of fact, learning to care for and communicate with others is comparably difficult and useful to taking a Master Degree programme. Should I have a chance to participate in the next exchange study tour, I would appreciate to assist in preparation works and coach new joiners.

Chiu Sin Poon 趙善本 (MBAC student)
1981 年我曾在新加坡工作，今次卻是來學習，發現新加坡進步了不少；交流團造訪多間企業，令我增廣見聞，從了解一些政府相關企業的運作，得知值得參考和借鏡的地方甚多，有助改善我主事公司的營運，並可滿足我對管理學的求知慾。當中各機構如何善用資源、怎樣配合政府的政策，與及令人民生活得更滿意等，對我有很大的啟發。我更發覺這個交流團較以往我曾參與其他學會舉辦的考察團使我獲益更多。當中最大的得着要算是認識了一班高質素的同學團友，各人有不同的專業、社會和人生經驗，又有獨立的見地；在旅程中大家互相學習，對我的人際網絡增添了不少良師益友。
**Chiu Wing Yee Winnie 趙詠怡 (MBA student)**

I must say it was a fruitful programme that combined cultural, academic and vocational learning opportunities. Orientation visits and exchanges with expertise from different government sectors and business organizations, not only broadened my horizons and enhanced insight of the Singapore business environment but also offered me an exposure to different cultures and livelihood; science and technology as well as the educational systems.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to CASH for their sponsorship; those Singapore host organizations for their warm hospitality; Dr. Irene Siaw for her guidance and advices; Jimmy, Eileen, Kennes and Charles (our volunteered photographer) for their endless assistance as well as all fellow delegates for their inspirations and experience sharing throughout the whole trip. This 5-day exchange tour, although brief, was really an invaluable and unforgettable experience for me. I shall look forward to the next exchange programme!

**Fan Yau Woon Charles 范有垣 (MBA student)**

During this trip, the most unforgettable experiences were the evening brainstorming sessions with my group members to discuss the compilation of the report. Within our group members apart from MBA students, there are also postgraduate peers from other programmes. During the few days of this journey, we exchanged our thought and shared our work experiences. Despite the exhaustive nightly preparatory works on the group report, each day started afresh discarding the stressful bygones. All of our group members enjoyed this exercise, I feel we have a group unanimously delivering the “Work Hard Play Hard” motto.

Amongst those exchange activities we have undertaken, the most memorable is that of Singapore Airlines which encompassed the wonderful moments of photo shooting with the Singaporean female crew attendants as well as the inspirational presentation with the ensuing Q&A session delivered by their Vice President Mr. Stephen Forshaw.

On the return flight to Hong Kong, Dr. Irene Siaw seeked my opinion on acquiring Singapore nationality versus retaining Hong Kong citizenship. In view of the different social infrastructure between the two cities, I think it would be comfortable to live in Singapore but on the other hand Hong Kong offers opportunities to excel one’s potential. As such, I choose to remain status quo as a Hong Kong resident. In conclusion, this trip is a unique inspirational experience that was not listed in the School’s course prospectus.

**Fung Wai Man Raymond 馮偉文 (MCG student)**

A tropical metropolis, Singapore is a clean and orderly place that we love very much. It is vivid blessed with fresh air and lined with trees sheltering against the sunlight. We also enjoyed the delicious cuisine.

Singapore nurtures a multi-cultural harmonious fusion of Chinese, Malay, Indian and Tamil through implementation of the Housing & Development Board habitation programme. Adult training programme is encouraged with a view to increase the literacy rate by establishing more educational institutions like SIM University. All newspapers are put to press within the sole printing house Singapore Press Holdings whose media coverage can be tightly monitored by government bureau.
Through Jurong Town Corporation, government offers land and advanced technology and infrastructure to facilitate the establishment of multi-industrial sectors like petrol-chemical, biochemical, information-communication & media (so-called “infocomm”), wafer fabrication, logistic and aerospace. So as to rid of reliance on Malaysia, Singapore initiated the NEWater Centre to substitute the current water supply. The controversial pioneer “A380” flight propelled its national carrier – Singapore Airlines towards outperforming its competitors. On the other hand, Singaporeans are habitually introverts who rarely criticize its political system. Everything is commendable in Singapore other than its nationals who blindly succumb to the paternalistic government guidance. In conclusion, Singapore has already in place its robust infrastructure superior to that of Hong Kong. Our government and people ought to conduct an introspection of our predicament.

**Hon Hoi Lun Helen 韓海倫 (MBA student)**

I have been to Singapore both for business and leisure for a number of times, but couldn’t visualize what I had overlooked of the green and dynamic spirit of Singapore could be brought to light by this tour.

The study tour introduced us to a harmonious blend of culture, cuisine, arts and architecture of Singapore as it is. The study tour enabled me to gain an in-depth understanding of the local culture, infrastructure of the local regulatory authorities and government, the latest development of some enterprises.

I was so impressed by the presentation of SIM University, Singapore Airlines and Jurong Town Corporation as well as the facility of the kid centre in UniSIM for their staff. It would be quite helpful to single parents and couples with children to concentrate on their jobs.

The tour provided not only the knowledge and experience beyond academic study, but also the friendship I established amongst the fellow delegates who come from different background. With the expanding network, we may have opportunity to seek future business cooperation and exchange our successful endeavours. I believe this is a compound valuable benefit I gained from the tour. Thanks to CASH and OUHK for offering me such good opportunity of joining the study tour.

**Hui Ying Chi Christina 許英姿 (MBA student)**

新加坡是亞洲四小龍之一，而新加坡與香港無論在教育、文化、旅遊、地理環境、城市規劃、基礎建設及金融地位等多個方面都有類似的地方，兩地甚至經常被傳媒互相比較。

透過這次的學術交流讓我深入了解新加坡的傳統文化及特色；更喜見當地不少傳統建築物得以保存，實有助多元文化的融合。交流團又使我認識新加坡的工業、經濟、科技、人才培育等多方面的最新狀況及未來發展方向。

我想香港的確擁有不少的競爭優勢，如果港人可以把這些優勢善加利用定可使國際金融中心地位及人材質素等方面得以持續發展，令香港保持競爭力。

最後交流團讓我感受到新加坡人的熱情及他們親切的笑容，我更十分享受當地美食及宜人的天氣。
Kam Wing Kwong 甘榮光 (MCG student)

I have visited Singapore on a number of occasions since 1990. The main purposes were to meet with clients or attend business related conferences. Normally, each journey would be for about 2-3 days. It was seldom for me to patronize other places outside the hotels district and Orchard Road where shops and restaurants are located. However, this exchange tour allowed me to see much more of the city closely, in addition to the official orientation visit organized by the SIM University. Other than the cultural visits, the itinerary covered the areas of education, housing, water supply, industrial development, media and airline. I was able to grasp a better comprehension of the Singapore government’s determination to develop the country towards self-sufficiency and sustainability so as to accommodate the dynamic changes arising from the advancement of internet technology especially the shorter and faster market and product cycles. Despite adopting the controversial methodology of “Big Government, Small Citizen”, apparently the vision of Singapore government is more explicit than that of Hong Kong.

As a patriotic person, it is not difficult to find countless reasons substantiating that Hong Kong is better. However, I must say that there are still many issues such as town planning and policy formulation which we should bear reference from Singapore except its dictatorship. All in all, a tale of two cities is still commanding interest.

Kung Kin Chung George 鞏健聰 (MCG student)

We are welcomed by the trees orderly planted along the highway. The woody vegetation shares one common character – slender trunk. From the explanation of the local tourist guide, the trees are called instant tree. To avoid eroding the structure of the highway, the plantation is attire with proper trousers. By the virtue of these green fellows, blue sky, clean fresh air and safe environment greet all visitors arriving at Singapore which explain it as being one of the best living places in the world. Everything is orderly planned and carefully decided. Its nationals enjoy safety and thorough protection provided by the government whereas adversely such environment offers little incentive for entrepreneur which may explain why the government is now injecting elements like F1 and casinos to the city.

Leung Mee Ying Mandy 梁美瑛 (MCG student)

It was my first trip to Singapore. This exchange programme was indeed an eye-opening experience because I have the opportunity to observe the Singapore public services and private sectors environment.

Despite not having had mutual exchange with local peers in Singapore during the 5-day exchange, my knowledge had been enriched through the great time interacting with the 19 fellow delegates’ diversified professional background and individual attitudes.

I was particularly impressed by firstly Singapore is a beautiful garden city and secondly its policy governing the four ethnic groups. Similar to Hong Kong, Singapore is a well developed society, fast pace, perpetual growing economy and well educated population which I believe in all are attributable to the government. However, Singapore differs in that it emphasizes on research and development and adopts a proactive approach. Finally, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Siaw and all SGtrip Project Coordinators for their efforts in this tour.
Lee Ka Wai Flora 李嘉慧 (MBA student)
The study tour was a wonderful experience for me. Singapore is a clean and
green city with numerous achievements. From the sharing with local
expertise, I acquired a more in-depth understanding of Singapore’s
development – building of active and cohesive communities through the
Housing & Development Board housing programme, good city planning to
improve the industrial landscape, constructing efficient business centre,
serene gardens and sleek skyscrapers, building a robust and sustainable
water supply, cultivating children with a firm foundation in English at a
cosmopolitan city.

I also witnessed a city with a harmonious blend of culture and cuisine. There are traditional Chinese
temple, Muslim mosque, Hindu temple and Christian church in the neighbourhood as well as down
the Orchard Road where we can pick up the latest fashion trends. The delicacies of Singapore,
Malaysia, Chinese, Indonesia, India could conveniently be found at the hawker centres and food
courts. The Singapore government has put immense effort to establish the country as a competitive
and dynamic city. I really want to thank OUHK and CASH for letting me have this invaluable
experience to acquaint with fellow teammates who participated in this study tour.

Leung Lai Wah Lisa 梁麗華 (MCG student)
以往新加坡給我的印象就如中國傳統家庭般，是一個家長式管治的國家。但這次交流活動，加深了我對新加坡政府的了解，如透過房屋政策令多元種族的新
加坡人民能和諧地一起生活。

另政府又制訂環保規畫，用心貫徹減少 (Reduce)、循環 (Recycle)、再用 (Reuse)、
更新 (Rejuvenate)、再發現 (Rediscover) 等 5R 概念，讓這個大都會能與自然環境
永續發展，創造出一個可供舒適生活及工作的國際大城市。感謝時富的贊助、
大學學院和 MBA 同學會的安排，給我一次踏足新加坡的學習機會，令我了解這
個炫麗動感的美麗花園城市。

Tang Wai Chi Ivan 鄧惠志 (MBAC student)
今次有幸參加了香港公開大學 MBA 同學會舉辦的新加坡交流團，透過企業參訪，
見識到不同的專業管理策略、商業運作模式及可親身感受當地社會不同種族的文
化。從參訪中發現新加坡的發展策略之一就是透過精英教育與在職教育，建立更
強的國際競爭力，創造了令世界矚目的經濟奇蹟，在交流會期間更認識了就讀 MBA
課程，來自不同領域的在職同學，對許多自己不熟悉的行業有了新認識。透過這
次學生交流活動培養個人的國際視野觀，增廣我的人際關係網絡，獲益實在良多。

Lam Wai Man Ronnie 林偉文 (MBAC student)
新加坡和香港在許多方面都有類近相似之處，可作相互比較，借鏡和學習之用。
今年有幸再隨大學交流團出訪新加坡 (上次為 06 年到訪杭州)，在參訪各機
構的同時，能與不同行業背景的同學們交流，對個人視野和思想的啓迪，都有
所裨益。

在參訪中感覺最深的是新加坡政府對競爭力發展可持續性的重視和專注。相比之下，香港政府這方面的表現就顯得捉襟見肘，也難怪曾落得“議而不決，決
而不行”的批評。交流溝通時曾聽說“新加坡人缺少歡樂的笑臉”，對此我個
人並不感覺奇怪，因爲在前數次到新加坡旅遊時，都聽到一些新加坡人有類似的埋怨。細想，這或許就是過度專注於經濟發展的代價。此行中不足的是行程中未能多參訪一些私人機構作觀摩和學習。
Wong Wai Na Kennes  黃慧娜 (MBA student)
Before the tour, many friends commented that Singapore is a boring city with many restrictions that is not much worth visiting. Being my first visit, I observed many differences between Hong Kong and Singapore which is quite a special country.

I was impressed by its city planning – green outlook with countless trees being planted along the roads. The open air quality is superior to Hong Kong as everywhere is clean without any sight of rubbish and pollution. It’s a safe city to wonder about as we seldom see policeman patrol on the roads. I was attracted by its infrastructures such as the new Changi International Airport and the innovative recycling water treatment plant – NEWater. I also appreciated the Singapore government’s policies offering provisions for its citizens such as public housing policy, harmonious cohabitation of different nationalities within the same building compound and without any street beggar in sight.

My heartfelt thanks to CASH and OUHK for the opportunity to have this invaluable exchange study tour that is very different from simple sightseeing which rendered it meaningful and fruitful. A special culturally diversified city with multi-languages and popular education opportunity through the guardian of its “Big Brother” – the Singapore government, no wonder the small nation can be so successful and still continue to sustain its competitiveness in the global arena

Yim Ho Wah Eric  嚴豪華 (DBA student)
Singapore is a small country of about 700 square kilometres with limited natural resources. During the 5-day visit, I appreciated the effort of the Singapore government invested in the infrastructures such as the port, the MRT, the airport and the highways. The government, by all means, educates and encourages its citizens to accustom to a sense of conservation: saving in the consumption of energy, fresh water as well as land resources. Sustainable development is a long-term policy carried out by different statutory authorities. For example, the Housing & Development Board will rejuvenate the public housing through redevelopment and redeployment of youngsters to avoid old housing estates drifting to elderly communities. The NEWater Visitor Centre is responsible for the compulsory education of their next generation in saving of fresh water and the acceptance of its treated end product. The Jurong Town Corporation is to utilize lands for the highly innovative and value-added industry / projects.

Amidst other wealth deprived countries of different race, culture and religion; the Singapore government has always been on the alert to ward off any neighbouring hostile rivals and / or chaotic upheavals. Race, religion and politics are sensitive issues for public debate. Media freedom and individualism are either non-existent or discouraged in Singapore. After this short trip, I wholeheartedly treasure the real freedom enjoyed in Hong Kong.