

SPHERE

23



*Happily
Ever
After*

Hong Kong weddings:
where East meets West

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NUMBER 23 DECEMBER 2008

A Few Words from the Editor

WELCOME to the latest issue of Sphere in which we serve up an interesting mixture of topics – everything from the presidential election campaign in the US and getting married in Hong Kong to luxury cruise ships and volunteers in hospices for the terminally ill. The cover story looks at how good forward planning can make the big day go without a hitch and allow the bride and groom to really enjoy the moment. We then move on to a remarkable project called Campaign Coverage '08 that sent seven intrepid Chinese print and broadcast journalism students from Shantou University to cover the 2008 US presidential campaign.

We also examine how port operators are dealing with the challenges of catering for the world's larger and increasingly luxurious cruise ships. Finally, our hospice story features the kind-hearted volunteers who ease the physical pain and mental anguish of terminal cancer patients by providing them with counselling and spiritual care.

We hope you enjoy the magazine. Please send feedback and suggestions to info@hutchison-whampoa.com

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Newsbites



OPEN FOR BUSINESS

NETHERLANDS Europe Container Terminals celebrated the official opening of the Euromax Terminal and the Delta Barge Feeder terminal in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. The new facility has a total area of 84 hectares with a quay length of 1,500 metres and an annual capacity of 2.3 million TEUs (Twenty-foot Equivalent Units). **P**



From Strength to Strength

ITALY 3 Italia just keeps getting bigger and better.

The company has just launched the new BlackBerry® Bold™ smartphone in the Italian market and has signed an agreement with Microsoft Online Service

Group to give customers

access to web services on the MSN portal. It has also

teamed up with Yahoo! Italy to offer

customers broadband navigation from their PCs and other new services include online access to the Sisal Matchpoint betting service and content from the leading motoring magazine *Quattroruote*. **T**



Green Goal

PHILIPPINES Watsons Philippines not only looks after its customers' health and beauty needs but also supports the environment by helping to rehabilitate and protect the La Mesa Watershed, a favourite eco-park for students and families. **R**

HOTEL AWARD

HONG KONG The Harbour Plaza Hong Kong was voted Best Independent Hotel at the TravelWeekly (Asia) Industry Awards. "This award will inspire us to work even harder to exceed expectations and reach new heights," said Jonathan A Wilson, the hotel's general manager. **H**



Top TOM

HONG KONG TOM

Group's flagship magazine, *Business Weekly*, won the "Best Editor" award in the magazine category at the 32nd Golden Tripod Awards in Taiwan. It also won an award at the 22nd Vivian Wu Journalism Awards for its excellent in-depth reporting. **I**





Heading for Success

THAILAND Hutchison CAT Wireless MultiMedia Limited has presented 800 specially-designed helmets to motorcycle taxi drivers in the Thai city of Pattaya. Apart from promoting the Hutch brand's popular post-paid services, the generous donation will also help to boost road safety in the resort. **T**



APPLAUSE!

HWL picked up prizes in the Galaxy and ARC Awards that recognise excellence in annual reports.

NEW CABLE SYSTEM OPENS

HONG KONG Hutchison Global Communications (HGC), the fixed-line operating unit of Hutchison Telecom Hong Kong, has inaugurated its new cross-border fibre optic cable system at the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor. HGC now operates four cross-border routings and is well positioned to cater to high-end customers' demand for high quality telecom services. The system provides Hong Kong's biggest cross-border capacity, which is expected to accommodate the future growth in market demand. **T**



HELPING HANDS

HONG KONG It's been a busy time for the HWL Volunteers. They took Yan Oi Tong and Caritas Hong Kong students to watch the Olympic equestrian events at Shatin and also helped a group of elderly people at the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals go through their exercise routines. What's more, staff at the Department of Clinical Oncology at the Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital presented the team with a certificate in recognition of all their valuable help. **C**



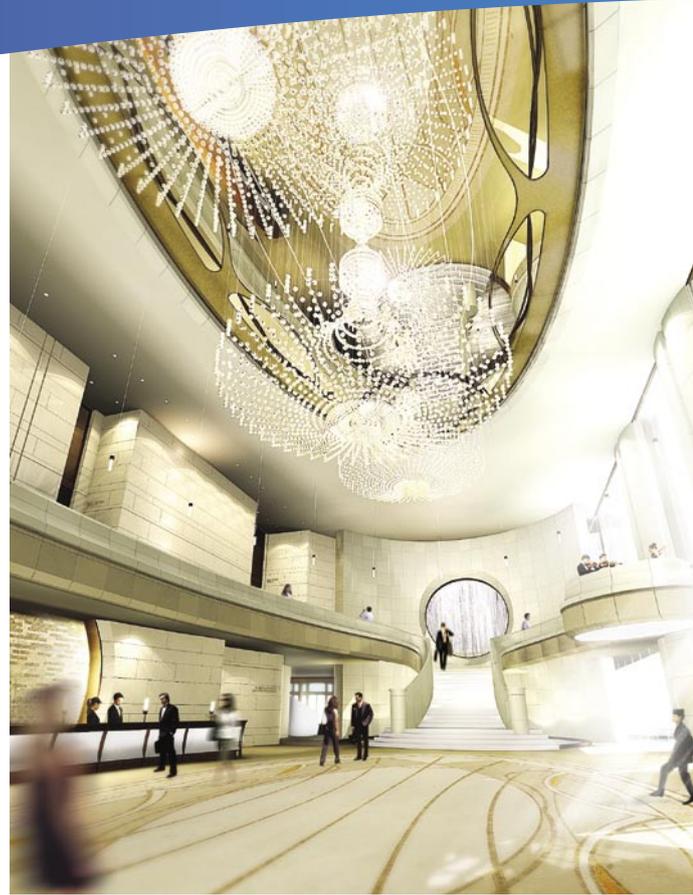
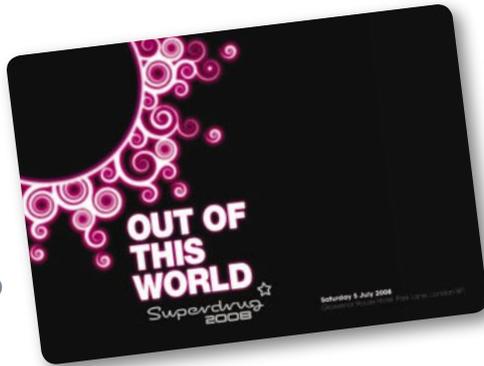
Special Day

HONG KONG The Window Café at The Kowloon Hotel marked Hungary's National Day on 23 October with a special promotion. The menu was designed by Executive Chef Robert Fontana with the help of the Hungarian Vice Consul General, Béla Németh. More than 100 guests attended. Pictured is Mr Németh (right), trying out his hand in cooking with Chef Fontana. **H**



AN OUT OF THIS WORLD EXPERIENCE

UNITED KINGDOM The biennial Superdrug "Out of this World" charity ball in London was a huge success, with guests enjoying fantastic food and wine as well as avant-garde entertainment. The event raised more than GBP100,000 (about HKD1.2 million) for each of three UK charities – Kids Company, The Prince's Trust and the Teenage Cancer Trust. **R**



Dublin Calling

IRELAND Ireland was the main patron of the annual Telecommunications and Internet Federation Conference at Dublin Castle. The conference, the most important event in the industry's calendar, saw operators and service providers come together to discuss key developments in the Irish market. **T**



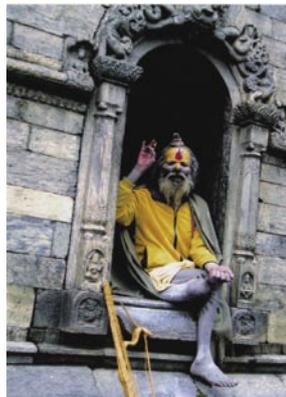
GRAND OPENING PLANNED

HONG KONG The Harbour Grand Hong Kong, Harbour Plaza Hotels & Resorts' new five-star hotel, will open in spring 2009. Ideally located in the heart of Hong Kong Island and enjoying unobstructed harbour views, the 41-storey hotel will provide 828 guest rooms and suites, spacious meeting and banquet facilities, five restaurants and bars, an outdoor heated swimming pool, a fitness centre and a spa. **H**



TOP AWARD FOR CKI

HONG KONG Cheung Kong Infrastructure Holdings Limited (CKI), the largest publicly-listed infrastructure company in Hong Kong, received the International Stevie Award for Best Multinational Company in Asia (China, Japan and Korea) at the 2008 International Business Awards. **I**



In the Picture

INDIA More than 200 staff took part in a photo competition organised by 3 Global Services. This is one of the winning entries. **T**



Prize Ports

CHINA Yantian International Container Terminals, Shanghai Container Terminals and Shanghai Mingdong Container Terminals have been named among the Top 10 PRC Container Terminals by the Container Branch of the China Ports and Harbours Association. Additionally, Shanghai Pudong International Container Terminals was designated as China's most economically efficient container terminal. **P**



Good Sports

CHINA To get into the Olympic spirit and also celebrate its 10th anniversary, the Harbour Plaza Chongqing staged a mini-Olympics for the staff. **H**



IN THE FAST LANE

AUSTRALIA **3** Business and V8 Supercar legend Dick Johnson have been working together to help Australian small businesses get in the fast lane for success. A series of "race day" seminars around the country attracted more than 1,000 small business owners. **T**

The Power of Education

HONG KONG The HK Electric Clean Energy Fund has sponsored another 12 school renewable energy projects for the coming year. They include a stepping device that generates energy, an array of wind turbines on a rooftop and a solar-powered waterfall that combines renewable energy education with religious studies.

To record the achievements of the last year's 12 projects, HK Electric has produced a Cleaner Energy, Cleaner Hong Kong 2009 desktop calendar for all schools in Hong Kong. **I**



CHANGCHUN FIRST

CHINA Regency Park Changchun, a spectacular villa development with a luxury clubhouse, was launched in September. It is the first Hutchison Whampoa Properties Limited project in the city. **H**



Caring for the Elderly

HONG KONG To encourage senior citizens to lead more active lives, HK Electric has launched a new programme – CAREnival for the Elderly – in association with the Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare Association and the St James' Settlement. The programme includes carnivals where participants have fun and also learn more about electricity subsidies as well as get useful tips on electrical safety and energy conservation. **I**



Good Cause

SWEDEN 3 helped raise money for the Swedish Cancer Society's Pink Ribbon breast cancer campaign by making a cash contribution for every "pink" product sold. Employees also did their bit by selling pink ribbons outside 3 stores. **T**

FAIR DEALS

CHINA Hutchison Whampoa Properties Limited introduced a series of new developments at the 31st China (Shenzhen) Autumn Real Estate Fair. The new properties are in Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Changsha and Chengdu. **H**



YEAH!

3 UK's mobile broadband package was named tariff of the year at the Mobile Choice Consumer Awards 2008.



Metro First

MACAU Metro Finance has launched the first multimedia channel to be broadcast simultaneously in Hong Kong and Macau. The Macau Cable TV: Metro Finance Multimedia Channel, co-developed with Macau Cable TV, is simulcast on the Metro Finance Portal (www.104mfonline.com.hk) and Macau Cable TV's Channel 12. It provides programmes in both Cantonese and Putonghua. **I**



FOOD SAFETY FIRST

HONG KONG PARKnSHOP Hong Kong's Food Safety Laboratory is the first supermarket laboratory to be awarded ISO 17025 certification under the Hong Kong Laboratory Accreditation Scheme. The award is recognition that the laboratory meets the highest international standards. **R**

WHITE ROSE BLOOMS

CANADA Husky Energy's White Rose oil field has reached an important milestone – it has produced 100 million barrels of crude oil. The current production capacity of the oil field situated off St John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, is 120,000 barrels per day. **I**

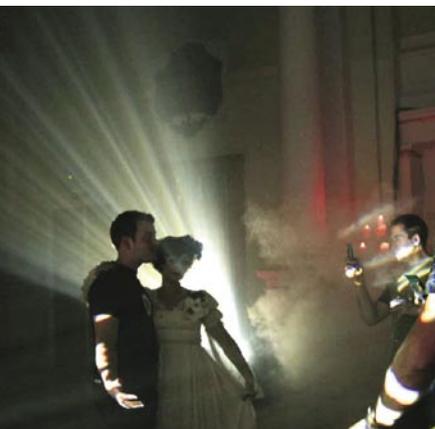
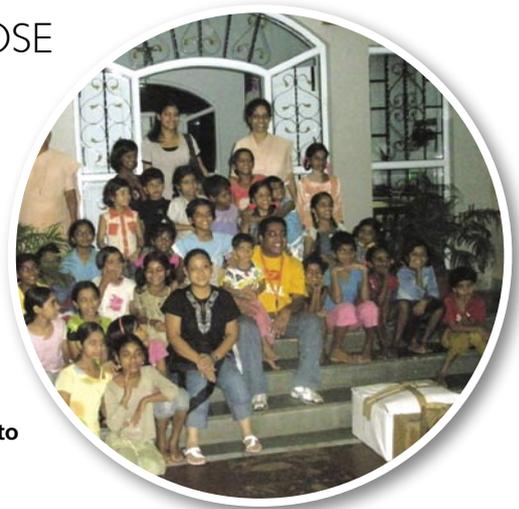


Open House

CHINA Regency Park in Shanghai staged Regency Rendezvous 2008 to mark the opening of phase seven of the luxury project. Guests had the chance to view a show house and the new clubhouse and were also treated to music, a wine tasting and a jewellery show. **H**

HELPING THOSE IN NEED

INDIA 3 Global Services employees have donated pens, erasers, crayons, school bags and books to an orphanage. The children were thrilled to receive the gifts and staff members were happy to be able to brighten their day. **T**



WELCOME TO THE DARKSIDE

UNITED KINGDOM 3 UK unveiled its latest must-have handset, the Sony Ericsson W595, at a Halloween themed launch. Journalists were invited to cross over to The Darkside and film their experiences on the W595, which has an exclusive YouTube upload application as well as a Walkman player and FM Radio. **T**



Show Time

HONG KONG | PMW staff and the Warner Bros Consumer Products team enjoy themselves at the 2008 Hong Kong International Licensing Show. **I**

FUTURE SPORTS STARS

HONG KONG Thirty lucky winners of the A S Watson Group Hong Kong Student Sports Awards (SSA) were given an exclusive preview of the fantastic Olympic facilities in Beijing this summer. The delegation visited the Bird's Nest, the Water Cube and the National Sports Training Centre and also got to meet Chinese athletes in training for the Olympics. The SSA provides recognition and encouragement to students nominated by their schools for their outstanding performance or great potential in sports. **R**



PHOTO: DAVID CANNON/GETTY IMAGES/AFP

Just Champion

IRELAND 3 Ireland ambassador Padraig Harrington capped a great year by winning the USPGA Championship at Oakland Hills Country Club, Michigan. The Irishman also won the British Open. **T**

Flying High

HONG KONG Russian gymnast Sergei Charkov, a former Olympic gold medallist, and his team stunned the crowd at Wonderful Worlds of Whampoa with a brilliant performance on a set of triple high bars. **H**



POWER SAVER

HONG KONG An energy-saving project at the PARKnSHOP on Tin Hau Temple Road has proved to be a big success. The store saved 20 per cent on energy costs by using lighting products provided by HWL subsidiary bigboXX.com that have a special nanoflex coating. There are plans to expand the scheme to other retail stores. **I**



CONGRATULATIONS!

TOM Outdoor Media Group emerged as a multiple winner at the Great Wall Advertising Awards, the 15th China International Advertising Festival and the China Advertising Association's 5th Media Planning Awards.



Bigger and Better

UNITED KINGDOM The Port of Felixstowe held a ground-breaking ceremony to mark the formal commencement of the Felixstowe South Reconfiguration project. Whilst the port can already accommodate the largest vessels in the market, the project will enable it to handle more vessels simultaneously, securing its position as the UK's number one port. **P**

Good Brews

Organic beer goes down a treat

THE RANGE OF ORGANIC products available to the public grows wider every year and now even includes that most popular of beverages – beer. The biggest market is in the US and in June some 75 organic ales and lagers were showcased at the North American Organic Brewers Festival in Portland, Oregon, the world’s largest gathering of its kind.

Most operators tend to run small businesses serving a small geographical area but public demand for these products is growing rapidly and now even giant global brewers like Anheuser-Busch and Carlsberg are producing organic beers of their own.

In Hong Kong, the market is still at an early stage, but several organic beers are now available at PARKnSHOP International stores, TASTE and GREAT. Most interest comes from expatriate customers but as these beers become more popular, PARKnSHOP will look to source additional brands.

According to Produce Green Foundation, an environmental group which has set up the first organic farm in Hong Kong, this is another sign that Hong Kong people are becoming much more aware about green lifestyles.

“Like other organic products, organic beer is a step in the right direction. It’s good for people’s health and it’s good for the planet. It’s a welcome development,” says founding chairman Simon S C Chau. “Total sales of organic products in Hong

Kong are doubling every few months. It’s very encouraging.”

The big question on the tip of everyone’s tongue is, of course, does organic beer taste better? Brewers say that organic hops typically offer a better and stronger aroma and that organic malts and hops have no chemical residues to interfere with the fermentation process.

But let the last word go to some people who should know what they are talking about, the team at the authoritative website www.BeerExpert.co.uk, who have this to say on the subject: “The demand for organic beer and lager has prompted a real interest amongst beer lovers about the way that their beers are made and how the ingredients are grown.

“Being in its relative infancy, organic beer brewing is limited in variety, but what it lacks in range it makes up for in consistent high standards. As there is currently no big money to earn in organic beer, its makers do it for the pure love of it. This dedication and love shows up in the final product.”

Cheers!

The question on the tip of everyone’s tongue is does organic beer taste better?





Wedding Belles

How to get the most out of your big day

By Helen Dalley





Discovering the love

of your life is a major milestone for anyone. As Harry Burns noted in the romantic comedy “*When Harry Met Sally*”, after it finally dawned on him that his best friend Sally was the woman of his dreams: “When you realise you want to spend the rest of your life with somebody, you want the rest of your life to start as soon as possible.”

For most, this journey begins with a wedding, a day that for many married couples is the happiest day of their lives. Everyone naturally wants their big day to be as close to perfection as is humanly possible, and engaged couples can ensure that everything goes without a hitch by planning ahead. Good forward planning allows the bride and groom to carefully research every detail of their wedding, from the bridal bouquets and the band, to the guest list and the honeymoon. It’s a complicated business that should never be underestimated.

“We require a minimum of six to nine months to plan a wedding, although we recommend that clients ideally give themselves a year,” says Hong Kong-based wedding planner Evelyn Mills, founder and creative director of Marriage Maestros.

Bernard Chan, Senior Vice President at ComPass Visa, the first credit card in Hong Kong to offer wedding related services, agrees. “It’s best to book the venue at least a year in advance, as auspicious dates in particular are all too quickly reserved,” he says. Indeed, some couples are already booking venues for 2010 via the newly launched ComPass Visa Wedding Portal.

Ms Mills notes that the main problem couples experience is working within their budget. “It’s always creative versus budget, but creativity and costs do not always go hand in hand,” she laughs. Ensuring that her customers get what they want – within their monetary limits – is a challenge she thrives on. “We really cater to every

HAPPY MEMORIES

BILLY WAN, Senior Sales Manager at the Harbour Plaza Hong Kong, chose to get married in his place of work, tying the knot at the group's flagship hotel in December last year. Almost a year on, it is a day he remembers with obvious enthusiasm.

"One of the best things about the hotel is the grand ballroom, which has a huge stage and is also big on atmosphere," he says. "Plus the foyer is a great location for photographs, as the harbour views and the staircase provide the perfect backdrop."

Mr Wan chose to decorate the hotel's grand marble stairs with crystal lights for added effect. Besides having the freedom to select their own décor inside the hotel, and the arresting views from its harbour side location, the couple enjoyed a traditional Chinese banquet on their big day. "It was all delicious!" he says with a smile. "Everyone had a great time!"




The skyline view at the Harbour Plaza Hong Kong provides the perfect setting

single whim of our clients, and we try to make it fun for them. It requires a huge amount of trust on both parts. We need to be able to read them really well. The bride and groom should both be happy and relaxed, not worrying about little details."

That is often easier said than done in Hong Kong, where weddings can present more challenges than in other countries. For example, wedding dates have to be booked more than a year in advance to guarantee auspicious dates and the availability of the desired venue for the banquet. Weddings also tend to mix traditions from both the East and the West, so the big day may feature a flowing white wedding dress and matching bridesmaids as well as a series of Chinese rituals such as the traditional picking up of the bride and the tea ceremonies.

And let's not forget the banquet, which may include hundreds, even thousands of guests. According to an online survey by the *ESDlife* wedding portal, Hong Kong's most comprehensive source for wedding-related information and services (wedding.esdlife.com), the average Hong Kong wedding banquet now costs HKD140,200 (USD17,975). The survey also revealed that the to-

tal amount of money spent on weddings in Hong Kong in 2008 would be a staggering HKD11.2 billion (see tables on Pages 14 and 15).

Once a couple has made the decision to get married, they will need to think about how they will finance it, which is where ComPass Visa comes in. The co-branded credit card of DBS and Hutchison Whampoa, the card offers exclusive merchant promotions, ComPass Dollar instant cash rebates and financial consultation services. In addition to enjoying ComPass Visa's many benefits, couples can also log onto the ComPass Lifestyle Club (club.compassvisa.com.hk).

Launched this year, it is an online portal specifically aimed at young couples, and is the first in Hong Kong to combine wedding-related information with innovative online tools and a variety of financial services within one online platform. The banquet search, for example, provides members with details of over 450 different wedding venues, and the budgeting tool allows couples to keep an eye on every area of spending, from invitations to the honeymoon (according

Wedding traditions from around the world

Chinese

✿ The colour red is a central theme, signifying love, joy and prosperity. The bride's wedding gown is often red, as are the wedding

invitations and wedding gift boxes or envelopes for cash gifts. Even the bride and groom's homes are decorated in red on the wedding day.

✿ It is auspicious for the wedding ceremony to take place on the half hour. This way, the couple can begin their new lives together on an upswing.



✿ Just after the ceremony and before the wedding reception, the bride serves tea to her new in-laws in a formal ceremony.

Korea

✿ After the newlyweds have exchanged their vows, the groom's father throws red dates at his daughter-in-law to bring her luck in fertility.

Thailand

✿ The bride and groom sit together on the floor, each with their hands pressed together, fingers pointing up under their chins. The

couple's hands are also linked by a chain of flowers. The oldest relative dips his hands in a conch shell containing water. Parents and guests then do the same.

to ESDlife, the average wedding budget in Hong Kong is HKD234,00). For those looking for a little extra cash, application forms for credit cards, loans and mortgages are also available online.

“The budget calculator lets couples regularly check if they are still on budget. In essence, it’s a one-stop shop for all things wedding-related, meaning that couples don’t have to go from one merchant to another to evaluate their services and their respective costs,” Mr Chan explains. “Members can even send out ‘e-vites’ to their wedding via the portal, but one of the most popular aspects of the site is the guest seating planner, which allows members to work out the best seating arrangements for their wedding guests.”

The Phase II enhancement has just been rolled out, and one new initiative that members will be able to benefit from is the Wedding Angel, a hot-line service offering advice on all things wedding-related. A chat room is another feature that may be added at a later date, so members can compare wedding notes with other couples.

Another developing trend is location, as the regulations have been relaxed in Hong Kong to allow couples to get married in places other than traditional registry offices and churches. According to ESDlife, about 12 per cent of couples now prefer to have their wedding ceremony in a hotel.

One hotel group that has plenty of experience in catering for wedding parties is the Harbour Plaza Group, which has hotels in several areas across the city (North Point, Hung Hom, Whampoa Garden, Tin Shui Wai and Tsim Sha Tsui).

“We’re most busy with weddings around September to December because of the good weather, and also before Chinese New Year. That is our peak season, particularly the month of December,” says Director of Catering Ada Ho, who is based at the group’s flagship hotel, the Harbour Plaza Hong Kong in Whampoa Garden. “We also offer competitive packages during our low season to entice couples, so it can make financial sense to consider getting married off season.”

Based in Hung Hom, the Metropolis Harbour Plaza’s major selling point is its outdoor marquee, whereas both North Point and Tin Shui Wai Resort

HK WEDDINGS: BIG BUSINESS			
	2008 (HKD) in millions	2007 (HKD) in millions	Increase
Banquet	6,660	5,270	26%
Honeymoon travel	1,300	990	31%
Pre-wedding photo	870	960	-9%
Jewellery	830	620	34%
Gowns rental/purchase	440	620	-29%
On site photography video shooting	380	540	-30%
Make up and hair styling	240	350	-31%
Venue decoration	150	200	-25%
Others	250	390	-36%
Wedding Market	11,120	9,940	12%

Data is based on ESDlife’s online survey of 1,738 people preparing to get married in 2008-10.

The budget calculator lets couples regularly check if they are still on budget

City have sizeable grand ballrooms. “Our flagship hotel in Whampoa Garden also has an impressive grand ballroom, with high ceilings; it’s pillarless and, at 4,500 square feet, it’s a great space that’s able to accommodate a lot of people,” says Ms Ho. “Then there’s our famous marble staircase with a stunning harbour view. Many couples don’t ask about the capacity of the ballroom once they’ve seen this. They select us purely on this feature.”

Most couples also request the hotel’s help when it comes to planning other aspects of their wedding and, from the photography to the wedding gown, this is a service the hotel is only too happy to assist with. “We have to build a very good relationship with merchants and we are on hand to give our clients suggestions with anything wedding related,” says Ms Ho.

In a vibrant city like Hong Kong, trends are always changing, even when it comes to weddings. “Clients are becoming more environmentally aware; they don’t want to have shark’s fin soup on the menu, so we have to give them alternatives,” she says. “For the banquet, many couples take a ‘fusion’ approach; they may follow the traditional menu for the main course, but then have a dessert buffet, for example, which the chef can design according to their culinary tastes.”

Philippines

✿ As a symbolic promise of faithfulness and prosperity, the groom presents his bride with 13 gold coins which have been blessed by priests.

England

✿ The term honeymoon comes from the tradition of the bride drinking mead (a fermented drink made of honey) to encourage fertility.

Colombia

✿ The bride and groom each light a candle, representing their lives. They then light another candle and blow out the other two.

Denmark

✿ The groom disappears during the reception so the unmarried young men can kiss the bride – then the single girls kiss the groom.



*A host of
photographers
descended
on the hotel
to snap
the happy
couple*

The hotel also has an in-house ice sculptor, who can craft stunningly intricate displays that are personalised for each couple. Swans, hearts and the Chinese characters for “Double Happiness” are the most requested.

“We also host wedding fairs at the hotel, and we had a catwalk show and wine-tasting at our most recent one, which was held this October. Each couple that attended also left with a photo of themselves,” says Ms Ho. Fifteen couples were so impressed that they booked their wedding receptions on the spot, with many more expressing interest in holding their receptions at the Harbour Plaza Hong Kong.

There is no doubt that more and more couples are choosing to say “I do” at the Harbour Plaza Hong Kong in Whampoa Garden, perhaps because the full harbour view provides the perfect setting. Its popularity is not surprising as it has been a much sought after venue for many years. For example, in 1998 the Hung Hom venue hosted the lavish nuptials of former Miss Hong Kong Amy Kwok and

actor Lau Ching-wan. And, in true Hong Kong style, a host of press photographers descended on the hotel to snap the happy couple and the large numbers of celebrities in attendance.

But whether a couple decides on an intimate affair for close family or a sumptuous reception attended by a host of friends, family and business associates, they should do well to remember that the wedding is just the beginning of a lovely union. For as the American writer Richard Bach, the author of the best-seller “Jonathan Livingstone Seagull”, once observed: “True love stories never have endings.”



AVERAGE WEDDING COSTS				
	2008 (HKD)	2007 (HKD)	Increase	%
Banquet	140,200	110,900	29,300	26%
Honeymoon travel	27,400	20,900	6,500	31%
Pre-wedding photo	18,200	20,100	-1,900	-9%
Jewellery	17,500	13,100	4,400	34%
Others	30,700	44,000	-13,300	-30%
Total Wedding Expense	234,000	209,000	25,000	12%

Source: ESDlife survey

Finland

☞ The unmarried girls dance around the bride, who wears a golden crown and a blindfold. The one she places the crown on will marry next.

Fiji

☞ It is traditional for the man to present the bride's father with the tooth of a whale, which symbolises status and wealth.

Hawaii

☞ To symbolise love, the bride and groom are decked out in flower leis consisting of 40 to 50 fresh flowers strung on a colourful ribbon.

Germany

☞ To bring good luck, some days before the wedding friends smash old porcelain on the ground in front of the bride and groom.



ON THE

FRONT

*Shantou University students
bit the US campaign trail*

By Drew Conrad



IT STARTED AS A BOLD AND VISIONARY IDEA: Send seven intrepid Chinese print and broadcast journalism students from the prestigious Shantou University to the United States and partner them with five, hand-picked University of Utah academic all stars to cover the 2008 presidential campaign.

The project, Campaign Coverage '08, supported by the Li Ka Shing Foundation, was designed to give select Chinese journalism students the opportunity to experience an American presidential campaign, to grow as hard news journalists, to share cultures and perspectives with American students, and expose



Election special: Interviewing a demonstrator in St Paul, Minnesota; Barack Obama campaigning in Dayton, Ohio; the Campaign Coverage '08 team (from left to right: Sara Hua Qi, Eliot Gao Wenhuan, Nightingale Zhang Yan, project supervisor Tony Li Zixin, Mr Li Ka-shing, Masa Ma Jing, Daisy Feng Miaolan, Yamaha Gong Jietong and Jelen Zheng Jialiang); John McCain and Sarah Palin wave to the crowd in Media, Pennsylvania.

LINE

them to experiences they will cherish all their lives.

In many ways, Campaign Coverage '08 embodies Mr Li's philosophy that, "A person who is adept at learning can foresee and seize the future, able to meld observation, experience and knowledge into wisdom and apply it in such a way that enables him to hold steadfast to his dreams and make short work of the most arduous tasks." Campaign Coverage '08 started with the Shantou students arriving in Washington DC in August to participate in intense planning and training sessions to hone their print, photography and broadcast journalism skills, and





Throughout the campaign, the team interviewed people on the streets, at rallies, in restaurants and bars, and on Capitol Hill

to learn about covering American politics.

Frank Folwell, former photo editor of *USA TODAY*, and Professor Sherry Ricchiardi of the University of Indiana were their American tutors. Frank accompanied the group on their entire journey along with a former reporter Tony Li Zixin who acted as Chinese editor and tutor.

Ready for action, they travelled to Denver, Colorado to meet their American teammates. Almost immediately, the Campaign Coverage '08 team was standing amidst convention delegates in the Pepsi Center, the location of the Democratic National Convention, observing and reporting on the events alongside some of the most seasoned reporters in the world.

While serving as a learning experience, the students worked tirelessly as real journalists and were responsible for reporting and filing their stories with their advisors acting as editors. Their stories, pictures and video were posted in Chinese at www.usastory.net and in English at www.campaigncoverage08.org and read by

911 AND SICHUAN

"I felt it," I whispered to myself as I was one block from Ground Zero, former site of the World Trade Center. I sensed that my nose smelled something like disinfectant, the same thing I smelled while working as a reporter at the epicentre of the Sichuan earthquake. I can't imagine that 108-storey twin-tower buildings stood here. Seven years have passed and the whole place is being rebuilt. "Evil people can never beat good things," a Danish tourist in his seventies told me. He said the rebuilding of Ground Zero is the symbol of standing up again after tragedy. "People from around the world need to work together and accept each other," he said. Yes, I promise to treasure, appreciate and love life more from now on.

— Gao Wenhuan

people all over the world. Indeed, *The Wall Street Journal* recommended the websites to readers as part of the newspaper's online "Best of the China blogs" service. Four edited excerpts from the Shantou students' reports are printed with this article.

The team interviewed delegates, recorded events and speeches, and also had a once-in-a-lifetime experience. They reported from INVESCO Field where some 75,000 supporters witnessed the historic nomination of Barack Obama, the first African-American to be named a party candidate for President and who, of course, went on to claim a famous victory.

The students also had an experience outside both conventions for which, perhaps, they were not completely prepared: a barrage of protests on issues as varied as the war in Iraq, the

Democratic and Republican parties, education, and abortion.

As police patrolled to ensure order among the protesters, Shantou student Zheng Jialiang noted the differences between American and Chinese law enforcement. "I don't get many chances to talk to police in China, and in Denver I was able to talk with a lot of them," he said. "Although the police were cautious because of the political figures, they would still engage in conversation and talk about their gear and weapons. I also saw a lot of helicopters patrolling in the sky. This was another security measure that I had not seen much of in China."

Without time to catch their breath, the students packed their bags in Denver and headed to the Excel Energy Center in St Paul, Minnesota, the site of the Republican National Convention, where delegates experienced the effects of two storms, one named Gustav and the other Sarah Palin, the Governor of Alaska and Republican candidate for Vice President.

FINDING OBAMA

Barack Obama talks about his favourite restaurant, MacArthur's, in his book *The Audacity of Hope*. The restaurant is on West Madison Street, on Chicago's northwest side. This Sunday morning MacArthur's is filled with black churchgoers from a local church and families from afar. Maurice Gaiter, the restaurant manager, said before Obama's presidential bid the family often dined here. "We've known each other for four years now and we would talk on the phone once every two months and ask how the other's doing." Gaiter believed this presidential election would have the biggest African-American turn-out yet. "They will help him make history," he said

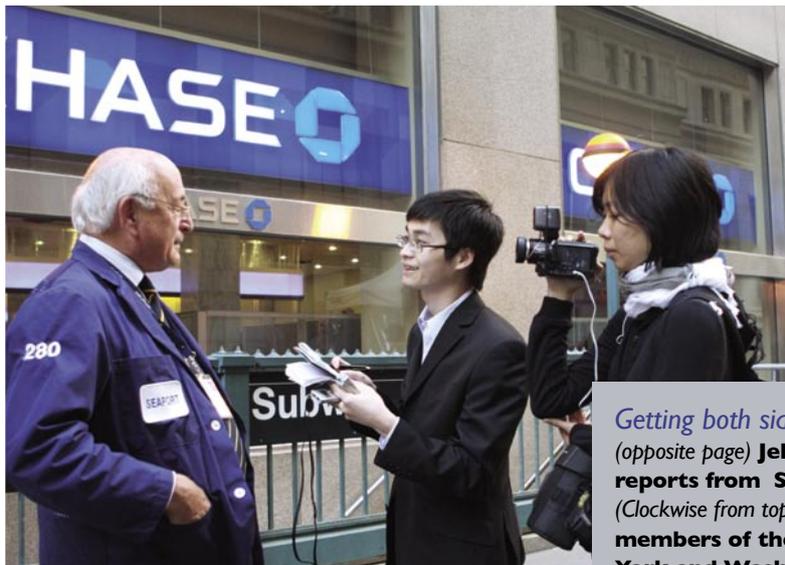
— Hua Qi, Zheng Jialiang,
Gao Wenhuan and Gong Jietong

was surprised by John McCain's choice but was more surprised by the overwhelming positive reception from the Republican National Convention. She created a change in the political atmosphere, more than Hurricane Gustav would have if it had struck St Paul."

Hurricane Gustav reached land on the first day of the convention in the Gulf Coast and caused damage in the states of Louisiana and Texas, and Mississippi. Before the storm hit, Republican Party leaders decided to modify and delay activities out of respect to those who were at risk.

While the hurricane put the convention on hold, it failed to dampen the spirits of delegates for long, particularly after Governor Palin arrived and, as one student observed, electrified the convention with her acceptance speech.

"Sarah Palin created a reaction that was unlike anything I had ever seen in my short time watching the political system," said Utah student Jed Layton. "I



Getting both sides of the story:
(opposite page) **Jelen Zheng Jialiang reports from Strongville, Ohio.**
(Clockwise from top left) **Interviewing members of the public in New York and Washington; Joe Biden with Shantou student Masa Ma Jing; a Republican rally in Sterling, Virginia.**



The day after Senator McCain gave his acceptance speech at the convention, the students found themselves packed in a van heading east to set up base on Washington, DC's famous K Street, just blocks from the White House.

Throughout the campaign, the team interviewed people on the streets, at rallies, in restaurants and bars, and on Capitol Hill, to get their perspectives on the campaign and their reactions to the presidential and vice-presidential debates.

They were particularly interested in listening to and reporting on the observations and opinions of American students attending academic institutions such as Johns Hopkins, George Washington University, American University and Georgetown University. This connection with students has been an invaluable learning process for Shantou student Gong Jietong.

"I noticed that young Americans are so excited

to support the candidates from both parties," she said. "During their voting process, they had problems with registering people to vote. I listened to their problems, talked to them and saw how they attempt to solve the problems. These discussions were good experiences for me. It helped me to learn and when I return to China, I can explain the process to my peers and broaden their understanding of democracy."

OHIO WATCH

Jim Locke used to be a lifelong Democrat but changed his mind. So it goes in Chillicothe, Ohio, a bellwether town in a bellwether state. Locke said he is voting for McCain because his strong character and record as a leader could deliver the country, and the city of Chillicothe, out of the economic meltdown. The economy is a priority in Ohio, a manufacturing centre that lost a quarter of its manufacturing jobs in the past seven years. "I am really concerned about the current economic situation," said the Chinese-American owner of Chinese fast food restaurant in Chillicothe who would only give her last name of Wang. "Business is getting worse. If the economy can get better, I don't mind paying more taxes."

— Zheng Jialiang

The students also got a first-hand look at the candidates at rallies in Virginia and Ohio where the nominees appeared before a crowd to boost media coverage and energise their supporters. At a rally in Sterling, Virginia, Ms Gong and a fellow Shantou student, Ma Jing, had the opportunity to talk to and have their picture taken with Democratic Vice Presidential candidate, Joe Biden.

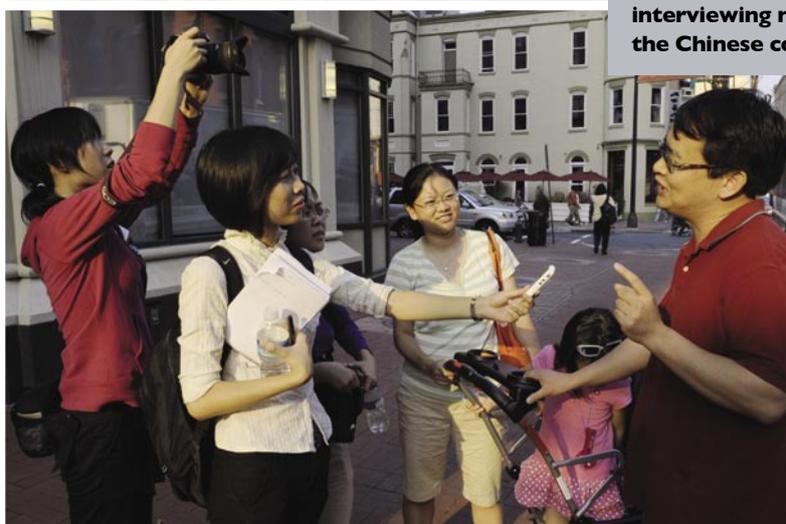
"I was initially surprised to see such a high ranking leader acting like an old friend to ordinary people," said Ms Ma. "He walked up to people and talked to

Police were out in force at both conventions to keep order among people protesting about a wide range of issues





Reporting from the front line: (opposite page) **A demonstration in St Paul, Minnesota.** (Clockwise from top left) **Gauging the public mood as the bears triumph on Wall Street; children celebrate on election night in Grant Park, Chicago; interviewing members of the Chinese community.**



them like he had known them for years. It was exciting to have my picture taken with him, he put his arm around me and I told him that I am a student from China here to observe the election. He was very kind and said that I should be proud of my country. It was a great moment, but the thing that stuck out the most was his friendliness.”

When the economic crisis became news during the campaign, some of the students travelled to Wall Street, the famous financial district in New York City, to get reactions from people about the crisis and observe activities at the New York Stock Exchange.

They also attended hearings on Capitol Hill where they heard Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson and Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke testify before the Joint Economic Committee in Congress as part of discussions about legislation designed to stabilise the American economy. The students had front row seats when President George W Bush signed that legislation into law.

Having the opportunity to observe the political process in the United States has given all the Shantou students a unique perspective on the democratic experience.

“When I was watching the election on TV at home I just looked at it as two parties competing to get into power,” said Zhang Yan. “Not until I arrived here and started reporting did I realise how active and involved the American people are in the political process regardless of race, age, or gender. They enjoy

participating and take it seriously because which candidate gets elected has an impact on their future lives.”

While the Shantou students received an education in American politics and the passion that many have in the process, the Utah students gained insights into Chinese culture and a deep appreciation for the impressive work ethic of the students from Shantou University.

“Living with the Shantou students has been one of the most educational and fulfilling experiences of my life,” said Utah student Christine Angstman. “They are the hardest workers I have ever met. They are driven, determined, and will stay up all hours of the night to perfect their articles, video and pictures.

“On the surface our cultures are very different, however at the end of the day we are all very similar. We talk about what girls in their young twenties talk about: our days, our lives back home, and our dreams and aspirations.”

For those lucky enough to have been part of it, Campaign Coverage ’08 was about the endowment of knowledge to students that will remain with them as they move forward in their careers. It also gave all involved a deep appreciation of the Li Ka Shing Foundation for making this unique opportunity possible. The students unanimously reported that the Foundation’s objective to “nurture a culture of giving and to foster creativity, constructive engagement, and sustainability through supporting empowerment focused projects,” was attained in Campaign Coverage ’08. 

LIFE'S A CRUISE

Bigger and better ships make a huge splash

By Mark Redvers



THEY ARE FLOATING HOTELS built on a scale and size never seen before. Today's cruise liners resemble the extravagant buildings of the Las Vegas strip, luxurious giants that can accommodate more than 3,000 people.

On board, the range of entertainment options is staggering, with a choice of restaurants, offering increasingly adventurous culinary choices, swimming pools, golf driving ranges, cinemas, casinos, cabaret shows and special-interest lectures from world-renowned authors, scientists and sportsmen.

The ever-larger size of cruise ships has brought with it particular challenges for port operators. For a start, they have to find ways of berthing, or at least mooring, monster vessels such as the Queen Mary 2, which is the length of 41 London double-decker buses; the other challenge is to move thousands of guests swiftly from ship to shore, ensuring that they spend as much time – and money – as possible during their spell on dry land.

It is claimed the USD800 million (HKD6.24 billion) Queen

Mary 2, or QM2, is the most luxurious and stable ocean liner ever built, designed so a trip across the notoriously rough Atlantic Ocean is no bumpier than rowing a boat across the local lake. Cunard recently added another luxury ship to its portfolio, the Queen Victoria, as it retired the grand old lady of the seas, the Queen Elizabeth 2, or QE2, from active service.

In today's cruising world, the decks are stacked higher and higher to allow more features and, in turn, more passengers. Royal Caribbean Cruises, which already has 2,000-passenger ships such as Rhapsody of the Seas and Legend of the Seas, recently debuted its Freedom class of cruise ships which can accommodate more than 3,600 people; on-board attractions include an ice skating rink and a full-size boxing ring. And next year will see the launch of the world's largest cruise ship, Oasis of the Seas, which will be able to carry 5,400 passengers!

Many of the new vessels – eight cruise ships were due to launch in 2008 – are bound for Caribbean waters, their tar-



get passengers mostly Americans. A favourite stopover is the Bahamas, where Freeport Harbour, part of the Hutchison Port Holdings Group (HPH), is well placed to benefit from the increased traffic and is able to dock even the largest of vessels such as the QM2 and the new Freedom class.

“As our port is strategically located, we think we can benefit significantly from the many vessels that will continue to enter the region,” says Sherry Rodgers, PA/Corporate Affairs Manager for Freeport Harbour Company. “We are also on ships’ itineraries which are making four-day sailings out of Florida, and vessels that call from the north of the US eastern seaboard from ports such as New York and Baltimore, sailing for at least seven days.”

The three-berth Lucayan Harbour Cruise Facility has plenty to occupy passengers, including a 26,000 sq ft complex that in-

Many of the new vessels are bound for Caribbean waters, their target passengers mostly Americans

cludes retail, dining and entertainment options, as well as the Bahamian Straw Market. Passengers can shop for local arts and crafts and dine on ethnic cuisine in the immediate vicinity, or go further afield by renting a scooter or car.

Every month sees an average of 12 cruise ships docking, usually for a stay of around eight hours. In addition, Freeport Harbour has 30 calls by ferries every month, taking the annual total of passengers to 588,000.

“Grand Bahama Island is strategically located close to Florida and therefore vessels which homeport in one of the many cities

Something for everyone: From hunting for bargains to local culture, there’s plenty to keep cruise passengers entertained in the Bahamas, Mexico and Panama.

of Florida visit our island either on their cruise departure or just before their return into port,” adds Ms Rodgers. “The port itself is beautifully landscaped and provides a very relaxing atmosphere for passengers. They also have the option of tours that include kayaking, dolphin-watching, snorkelling, coastal cruises around the island or going out on glass-bottom boats.”

Proximity to the United States also benefits ports on the Pacific coast. Ships leaving California can head down the coast from US cities and within a short time dock at destinations in Mexico and Panama that offer passengers a totally different cultural experience.

“The Port of Ensenada is conveniently located close to two major hub airports in the cities of Los Angeles and San Diego, therefore the passengers can travel from almost any part from the US to take a short cruise trip to Mexico,” says Rogelio Valenzuela, Marketing Manager at Ensenada Cruiseport Village,

traverse from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans instead of going down the coast, around Cape Horn and back up again.

Impressive engineering feat though it is, the Panama Canal is way too narrow to accommodate the colossal new cruise ships. Instead, the giant ships dock at facilities such as the Cristobal Cruise Terminal Pier 6, which has regular visits from 11 of the world’s major cruise lines.

“We are proud to have received approximately 1.8 million visitors and nearly 800 vessels since Pier 6 began operations,” says Lisa Ballesteros, Cruise Terminal Manager for the Panama Ports Company. “The cruise terminal, strategically located at the Caribbean entrance of the Panama Canal, is a favourite of the cruise market with two berths dedicated to cruise operations capable of handling the largest cruise vessels in the world. Since her maiden voyage in 2005, Cunard’s Queen Mary 2 is a frequent visitor.”



just 60 miles from the US border. “Cruise passengers can visit the main wine region of Mexico which is just 40 minutes away, visit a blow hole, or enjoy the high quality Mexican cuisine found in Ensenada.

“There is also the option of heading into the desert by quad bike, going on horse riding trips as well as many other sightseeing itineraries. The most special characteristic of Ensenada is that it is close to the United States. Ensenada allows a chance to experience a Mexican city, with its particular type of wine and cuisine and the local old cultures.”

Around four ships a week arrive on the shorter-trip itineraries and plans are being drawn up to expand and enhance the facilities at both the port and the cruise terminal.

On the other side of the Central American land mass lies the eastern entrance to one of the world’s most famous canals. The Panama Canal changed the face of shipping, allowing vessels to

Never a dull moment: Dancers in Panama, the Strawmarket in the Bahamas, docking in Panama and a Mexican Miriachi band.

Visitors disembarking for the day can choose a variety of daily tours, from visiting the Panama Canal to the Panama Canal Railway experience. Among the attractions within the Cristobal complex is an arts and crafts centre featuring some 300 craftsmen who sell their products directly to visitors. There are also 20 duty free stores, a concierge service and cultural exhibits.

These kinds of top-notch facilities are becoming essential for ports to lure modern cruise ships. Passengers are treated regally on board and have come to expect the same kind of luxury and efficiency when they walk down the gangway for their shore visit.

Most people opt for cruises that last from a weekend to a couple of weeks; a small minority are so hooked on the high-sea

life that they sign up for round-the-world cruises that can last for four months. Whatever the destination, the food on board is guaranteed to be sensational, with guests chefs a regular feature on the bigger cruise ships.

The improved fare has been accompanied by new on-board accommodation options – the word “cabin” hardly does justice to some penthouse suites that come with personal butler service, private verandas, open bars and a jacuzzi. The core of the market, though, is likely to remain people who book because they want to combine luxury with a spot of mild adventure. For example, staple itineraries for ships leaving the Harwich International Port in Britain feature the Norwegian fjords and the Baltic, a chance for passengers to experience radically different scenery outside, while forgoing none of the comforts of home below deck.

The much-loved QE2 recently made its final call to Harwich, marking the end of a long association with the east-coast port. The QE2, which will become a floating hotel and entertainment centre berthed in Dubai, made its last



journey some 40 years after being launched.

The world had never before seen a cruise ship quite so slick, sleek and fast. It was the trans-Atlantic vessel of choice for generations of pop singers and movie stars, the most elegant and indulgent way to go from Europe to New York City. Among those who have sailed on her are the late Princess Diana, the Emperor of Japan, George W Bush, Jimmy Carter, Nelson Mandela and Mick Jagger.

Britain, of course, has a reputation as a seafaring nation; its earlier adventurers such as Walter Raleigh, Francis Drake and James Cook, sailed far and wide into unchartered waters. British engineers also built the most famous ocean liner of all time, albeit one that came to grief when it hit an iceberg and sank. Thankfully, navigational aids and hull strengths have improved radically since the Titanic era, not to mention the on-board fare and port facilities. Today, not only are cruise ships safer, bigger, and better, people on board and on land work hand in hand to make these seafarers adventures’ unforgettable experiences.



The core of the market is likely to remain people who want to combine luxury with a spot of mild adventure



PHOTO: SING TAO DAILY

Hospice angels on a mission of mercy



THE ULTIMATE VOLUNTEERS



*The volunteers
lend a sympathetic
ear to their
patients while
keeping them
company on their
final journeys*



THEY ARE NOT healthcare professionals but they make patients feel better; they do not know how to administer medication, but they are their charges' "miracle drug".

They are Hospice Ambassadors, "angels" who lessen the physical pain and mental anguish of terminal cancer patients by providing them with emotional counselling and spiritual care.

Funded by the Li Ka Shing Foundation's Heart of Gold Hospice Programme, day care hospice centres were set up in Hong Kong's eight major public hospitals last year. At the same time, a team of Hospice Ambassadors was formed to tend to the needs of the terminally ill, ably assisted by 40 members of Hutchison Whampoa Limited's (HWL) Volunteer Team who lend valuable support to those in need.

Each year more than 10,000 people in Hong Kong die of

HEARTS OF GOLD

ACCORDING TO Dr Anne W M Lee, head of the Department of Clinical Oncology at Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital, plans for opening a day-care hospice centre began in October 2007 and the centre finally opened in August this year. The establishment of this centre involved a number of departments in the hospital, including physiotherapists, occupational therapists, nutritionists and volunteers.

"The centre organises various activities such as tai chi sessions, aromatherapy courses, cooking classes and birthday parties," said Dr Lee. "The aim is to relax the patients' minds and lift their spirits. We put notices in the newspapers to recruit more volunteers. We managed to recruit more than 70. As long as you have a willing heart, whether you are a homemaker, a cook or a white-collared worker, you can join us."

Before the HWL Volunteer Team members could serve at the hospice, they had to undergo a training course given by the hospital to learn about the principles of hospice volunteer service and the scope of their work. They also learnt about caring for cancer patients and the attitudes they had to adopt. To date they have organised two activities: a birthday party in the hospital for patients and their families, and a Mid-Autumn Festival party.

Alice Tang of the A S Watson Group is a group leader of the HWL Volunteer Team's Palliative Care Services Group. "Allowing patients and their families to forget their physical and emotional pain for just a few hours. Allowing them to enjoy the activities cheerfully, basking in the warmth of human kindness. That is something we find very meaningful," she said.

The volunteers provide non-therapeutic support. This involves chatting with patients, accompanying them on visits to the doctor and taking part in activities with them. These simple acts of kindness may seem trivial but they help patients forget their worries temporarily.

"A volunteer once told me that the reason why the food prepared by Dae Jang Geum (the protagonist in the Korean television drama series *A Jewel in the Palace*) was exceptionally good was because she had put her heart and soul into her cooking. It was the same dedication as that of the volunteers," said Dr Lee.

She said that although the food prepared by the volunteers might not be the same as those served in hotels, they put their hearts and souls into it – something that is deeply appreciated by the patients.



HOW IT ALL GOT STARTED

ALTHOUGH Hong Kong has one of the best public healthcare systems in the world, it lacks a palliative care service. For this reason, the Li Ka Shing Foundation launched the “Heart of Gold” Hospice Programme in Hong Kong.

In 1998, the Foundation made a donation to the First Affiliated Hospital of the Shantou University Medical College to set up the first free hospice on the mainland to assist financially strapped patients with terminal cancer. The hospice service programme now operates nationwide, benefiting more than 70,000 patients in 28 hospices.

In October last year, the Heart of Gold programme was expanded to include Hong Kong. The Foundation worked with the territory’s Hospital Authority to promote the Hospice Service Programme in public hospitals. The programme has now expanded to cover the whole of Hong Kong and, so far, eight day-care hospice centres have been set up.

To date, the Foundation’s total contributions to this programme in the Mainland and Hong Kong exceeds HKD240 million.

cancer. Many have to endure levels of physical pain and emotional strain that are difficult for families and friends to understand. Angela Lau does – she has had cancer.

Angela became a Hospice Ambassador at the Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital three years ago after retiring from the civil service. Then she discovered that fate had handed her an even greater challenge – she was to become a patient at the same hospital where she was doing volunteer work.

“In December last year, I got Stage II breast cancer,” she said. “I could not accept the reversal of roles. My emotions were on a roller-coaster ride. The therapy was a long and painful journey.”

Despite the surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy treatment, she faced those difficult times with optimism. “There were certain advantages in being a patient. I could behave like a spoilt child. I had always taken care of others and now it was the time to give myself a treat,” she said with a chuckle. Now, as a former patient, she has a complete understanding of how patients feel. For example, those receiving chemotherapy suffer from mouth sores, their sense of taste is altered and they can become irritable.

The Hospice Programme features important elements of modern cancer therapy. From the moment patients are diagnosed with terminal cancer, their physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs are all taken care of. Volunteers who take on the role of a “spiritual friend”, a comforter and supporter to the patient, are an indispensable part of hospice care.

Let your feelings flow

Human beings have no control over when they die, but they can choose how they die. One of the key concepts of palliative care is allowing patients to go through the final stages of their lives in peace and with dignity. Fiona Yu, another volunteer at the Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital’s day care hospice centre, has a profound understanding of this concept.



Fiona used to work in the government’s Judiciary Department. Court work was stressful and although her body was already sending out warning signs, she did not leave her job until her mother, who was over 90, was diagnosed with bowel cancer. “If I could not be by her side on her final journey, I would live to regret it,” Fiona said. In the last nine months of her mother’s life, Fiona was with her every day.

Mother and daughter talked about all sorts of things; they were even comfortable talking about death. Her mother gave detailed instructions about the kind of final rites she wanted and what she wanted to wear at her own funeral. “I came to the realisation that we ought to make good use of the time that is left to have good conversations with the person who is dying. Only then would there be no regrets when the time comes, both for the living and the dead,” she said.

After her mother passed away, Fiona began work as a Hospice Ambassador and it was then that she came to the conclusion that the Chinese are too emotionally reserved, which impedes their abilities to communicate with one another.

“We are very mean to our families. We only lose our tempers with those who are closest to us,” Fiona observed. “When members of our families help us, we seldom thank them because we

Day-care centres organise a variety of activities to help patients relax and lift their spirits.
Right: Dr Anne Lee talks to a volunteer.



feel that there is no need to be too polite to one's family?"

She constantly reminds herself to treasure every person, every experience and every object. She also hopes terminal cancer patients and their families will open their hearts to one another through their participation in the activities held in the centre.

"Although the patients are sick, they have the opportunity to put the rest of their lives in order. There are many who don't even have a chance to do that," Fiona said. "I hope I can help the patients make the most of their remaining time on earth."

Fiona's goal is also the key principle of hospice care. If we are able to walk towards the end of our lives at peace with ourselves and the world, then we have found true happiness!



One of the key concepts of palliative care is allowing patients to go through the final stage of their lives in peace and with dignity





TALENT SPOTTERS

Mobile platform for star performers

WHERE WILL THE NEXT music star be found? It could be on the mobile phone in your pocket.

While unlimited music download is helping to revolutionise the mobile scene, 3 is moving to the next level by turning your phone into a stage where artistes can show off their talents.

3 Denmark is the first telecom company in the world to launch its own digital record company.

Called 3some music, the bold new initiative is being seen as a key platform for upcoming stars who can now play their latest tunes direct to the mobile phone in your pocket.

3some music is recruiting its very own artistes to perform and release their hits via this platform. It has already seen the launch of the first new single "So Invincible" from artiste and DJ Funkstar De Luxe, featuring Danish singer Kristine Blond on vocals. While the first single available for download is with an established artiste, 3 also wants to help young, unknown talent and will help market their music.

This revolutionary step will bring many benefits. Established artistes can use the platform to reach out to 3's extensive subscriber base and its cost-effective approach will also help attract new talent. It should make customers happy too!

In fact, hearing your favourite tune is now becoming ever easier all over the world.

3 Hong Kong has pushed the envelope through its dedicated music portal 3MusicStation. The new service brings to Hong Kong music lovers a vast library comprised of both local and international music plus, a string of exclusive functions like smart search, high-speed downloads and music community based sharing of tracks. The "all-you-can-download" service enables mobile users to access their music everywhere, even when not connected to a network. The portal

allows videos to be played with HD clarity and there are also mobile fan clubs and blog sites for dedicated fans who want to follow the careers of their favourite artistes.

In the UK, the revamped 3MusicStore has something to appeal to every taste. Besides an extraordinarily wide selection to choose from, the store has also simplified the music download process; instead of buying your favourite songs for your PC and mobile phone separately, you can now do it all at once over your mobile phone.

The 3MusicStore has almost 1.5 million tracks and 10,000 music videos to choose, allowing customers to shop for their mobile music content under one central storefront. From there, consumers can select different music genres or focus on particular artistes. Other key features include an integrated search engine and the editorial content, including artiste biographies and album reviews.

This means that if there is a tune that catches your attention while you are on the road, you can buy it on the phone and download it to your PC for no extra charge. It's what 3 UK calls the "All tracks dual download" service.

3 Italia has also been busy. The Italian leader in the Universal Mobile Telecommunications System (UMTS) market, with over 8.2 million customers, has launched a new service that allows customers to download their favourite music whenever they want – minus the worries about extra charges.

The service offers subscribers access to interactive and personalised music streams and themed channels, as well as a catalogue of thousands of tracks from major record labels via an integrated music download storefront. Apart from music, 3 Italia also provides a wide range of multimedia, video communications and Internet services, as well as entertainment, information, cinema, sports and mobile TV.

Unlimited downloads will undoubtedly see the music market grow rapidly. Add the convenience of downloading music anytime and anywhere without having to worry about extra charges, and you can appreciate the tremendous benefits for the customer.

Hearing your favourite tune is now becoming easier all over the world





Sonic Boom

WAY BACK in the mists of time – we are talking the mid-1970s – the first boomboxes started to appear in the United States. These heavyweight stereo cassette radios meant that music was mobile for the first time – in the park, at the beach or wherever young people were gathered and needed some sounds. Thirty years on, music has never been more portable thanks to the digital revolution and the mobile phone.

Then... Boomboxes were easy to spot on account of their size, and the people carrying them normally looked capable of bench-pressing several hundred pounds. More sophisticated models came on the market but one thing stayed the same – the volume was always cranked to the max. Louder was cooler.

Now... Today, coolness comes in somewhat smaller packages in the shape of chic, lightweight mobile phones. Companies like 3 offer a huge variety of mobile music downloads. You can browse through a wide range of songs and select music from different artistes, genres and languages. What's more, the convenience of listening to your favourite songs anytime, anywhere is provided without you having to carry a boombox on your shoulders! 

