

THE GAME CHANGER

Marina Bay Sands opens up a world of creativity, flexibility and possibilities to clients

It used to be that whenever one thought of exhibition space, the images of booths standing side by side, with their wares in proud display, came to mind.

Not anymore.

With the arrival of Marina Bay Sands, the traditional utilitarian usage of non-carpeted trade show space has gradually evolved into one that's more creative, fun and distinctive.

Take for example, the recent Men's Fashion Week (MFW) 2011 Singapore that took place from 30 March to 3 April 2011. Over five days, two stark and sprawling halls at the Sands Expo and Convention Center – measuring 100,000

sq ft – were transformed into a Fashion Metropolis featuring catwalks and concept stores displaying the hottest labels from Europe and Asia; intimate VIP lounges, a media hub with web-streaming capabilities; concerts and after-parties.

The fashion show area even had a 100 foot runway and 1,000 seat viewing gallery. Another section came complete with street lamps,

topiaries and columns for people watching.

Converting an empty space into a glamorous and glitzy affair that lives up to the top billing as the inaugural Men's Fashion Week Singapore – the first in Asia – was certainly a task that was relished by the 160-strong MICE Operations team at Marina Bay Sands.

Benny Zin, Marina Bay Sands' Acting Chief Operating Officer and VP of Conventions & Exhibitions, "Sands Expo and Convention Center can be compared to a blank canvas that holds a world of possibilities for our clients. Events such as Men's Fashion Week show that our venue has the capability and flexibility to transform two blank halls into a fashion metropolis with distinct and elaborate sections with a catwalk amidst them."

Because of the scale and elaborate set designs of Men's Fashion Week 2011, Marina Bay Sands put five event managers on the project, with a team of specialists and technical crew who worked from 9 am to 2am each day to make it a runaway success.

The entire run of events involved 20 fashion shows, gala dinners, pre-cocktail, post-cocktail and after-parties, some of which had a tight turnover time of three hours.

24 HOUR STANDBY, ONE-STOP SERVICE

Kimberly Vodopich, Marina Bay Sands' Director of Special Events and Exhibitions added, "What's unique about us is that we offer a one-stop service that makes it more convenient and seamless for our clients. They don't have to work with 20 different contractors because we have the required expertise in-house."

Marina Bay Sands' in-house teams include rigging professionals who will set up exhibition equipment, installations and other special effects; AV crew, video conferencing experts and lighting technicians, as well as a dedicated MICE kitchen that offers catering menus for networking sessions and individual booths.

Another unique touch: a floral service unit with its own cold storage room on premise to deliver fresh flowers to brighten up any event.

"Our event managers will string together all these in-house experts to put together the various logistics necessary for the client's specific requirements" added Miss Vodopich, "Because we have a team on site 24 hours a day, our turn-around time is very fast. This allows us to work on tight deadlines overnight and deliver the goods – literally the next morning."

Sands Expo and Convention Center also boasts one of the highest exhibition hall ceilings in Singapore, allowing exhibitors greater flexibility in constructing creative booth designs.

It is also the only venue in Singapore with an infrastructure built on top of the expo hall, allowing maintenance to be carried out without disrupting show days or setup.

GROWING MOMENTUM

Since the opening on 27 April 2010, Marina Bay Sands has experienced solid momentum on the MICE front, with over 1,155 deals sealed so far which will bring around 670,000 participants till 2012 to its property.

These comprise of a mixture of both intimate and marquee events – a signal that the integrated resort has the flexibility and capacity to handle events of varying sizes.

"There's a growing confidence in our services and multiple venue spaces – because our track record is now evident to all. Last year alone, we hosted 700 events within 8 months – that's equivalent to having nearly 90 events per month," said Mr Zin. "Happy clients are returning to us for their next installment, and are also exploring us for other types of corporate events."



INDEED, REPEAT TRADE SHOWS INCLUDE:

- Hospital Build 2011
- Singapore International Jewellery Show 2011 & 2012.
- Singapore Gift & Stationery Show 2011 & 2012
- Aesthetics Asia 2011
- Dye+Chem Asia 2012 International Expo
- Franchising & Licensing Asia 2011

These successful events are why Marina Bay Sands was named recently as "Asia's Best MICE Hotel" by CEI Asia, the leading MICE magazine. It also nabbed the second spot for "Asia's Best Convention and Exhibition Center". Both accolades came in before Marina Bay Sands crossed its first year mark.

It was also recently chosen to be the venue of the 67th Annual General Meeting (AGM) for the International Air Transport Association (IATA) this year after the organizer decided to shift its meeting to Singapore from Cairo, Egypt.

To be held from 5-7 June, the IATA AGM will attract about 800 delegates, including some 150-200 CEOs from airlines, manufacturers, airports and other industry partners.



"We remain nimble-footed to respond to event organisers who need to book venues with us at short notice, such as IATA," said Mr Zin, "We will not rest on our laurels and will continue to lead the industry with our unique touch and innovative solutions that define Marina Bay Sands as the place where possibilities are endless."

NEW SPACES AVAILABLE FOR RENT

With the opening up of more attractions such as the ArtScience Museum, Marina Bay Sands is also offering more creative venues for organizers. The ArtScience Museum is available for event organizers to rent the unique gallery spaces for five-hour blocks. What's available for rent: the entire museum; or Levels 3+4 as a package. Interested parties can contact: MuseumEnquiries@marinabaysands.com for more details.



With a meeting space of more than 1.3 million square feet over five floors of exhibition and convention space, the Sands Expo and Convention Center can host a variety of events such as cocktails, gala dinners, fashion shows, dinner and dance, weddings and concerts - the possibilities are endless. Some recent examples include:

OFFSHORE ASIA 2011

Marina Bay Sands played host to some of the world's most prolific leaders in the offshore industry during the Offshore Asia Conference and Exhibition 2011 from March 29-31, 2011. Sands Expo and Convention Center, Hall A was converted into a brightly lit exhibition hall with various oil and gas exhibitors such as Aker Solutions, Cameron E15 and China Petroleum Technology & Development Corporation. Apart from converging in the exhibition space, delegates carried on their conversations in the conference rooms on Level 4, which offered a distinctive change in environment throughout the duration of the show.

IFAI EXPO ASIA 2011

A first of its kind, IFAI Expo Asia 2011 made its debut at Marina Bay Sands from March 22-25, 2011. Organized by the Industrial Fabrics Association International (IFAI), IFAI Expo Asia 2011 was a much anticipated event among technical textiles experts and saw over 1,400 registered participants from 39 countries. Large buyer delegations came from Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, China, Australia and Japan. Visitors also came from North America, Africa, Middle East and Europe.

BMW WORLD SINGAPORE

In celebration of its 25th anniversary, BMW Group Asia brought together BMW World Singapore at Marina Bay Sands. Drawing inspiration from the iconic BMW Welt in Munich, this is the single largest Southeast Asia showcase of BMW cars and motorcycles past through present. The six-day event was held from 9-14 November 2010 at Sands Expo and Convention Centre Hall B, spanning a total of 50,000 square feet of exhibit space.

Key highlights of the exhibition included the Asia premiere of the all-new BMW X3, showcase of BMW Roadster heritage and the BMW GINA Light Visionary Model. Kids were not left out with BMW KidsWorld, where they had fun at organized junior workshops and the kiddietrack. The center part of the expo hall was a gourmet lounge operated by the banquet team from Marina Bay Sands, providing visitors a selection of quality food and drinks.