LIVE: APEX FTE EXPO 2026 officially kicks off with ribbon cutting

Last updated: Wednesday, November 18, 10:16 a.m. Singapore Standard Time (GMT+8). Find updates below.



The ribbon cutting marked the official open of APEX FTE EXPO 2026 in Singapore

The ribbon is cut and the conversations have begun. APEX FTE EXPO 2026 officially opened its show floor this morning at Marina Bay Sands in Singapore, bringing delegates together to explore the next chapter of passenger experience.

The opening keynote speeches kicked off on an optimistic note, with Dr. Joe Leader, Group CEO, APEX/FTE/IFSA, reflecting on the aviation industry's resilience and the opportunities ahead for passenger experience innovation.

"It is always the cycle: We go down, and then we go back up. It is sort of the story of aviation," Leader said.

Turning to the future of inflight entertainment and passenger engagement, Leader highlighted the anticipated growth of seatback screens, noting that the current global installed base of approximately

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1.8 million to 1.9 million screens is expected to expand significantly in the 2030s.

He emphasized the importance of creating a connected passenger experience that extends beyond the aircraft cabin, with digital touchpoints integrated throughout the journey.

"If you want to be the airline that is a high service, high touch airline you must connect the passenger through every stage of the digital journey, from the airport through to the digital touch points," he said.

Leader also encouraged airlines and industry stakeholders to consider how artificial intelligence can strengthen brands and enhance the passenger experience.



Dr. Joe Leader, Group CEO, APEX/FTE/IFSA

He then welcomed Max Gosney, Managing Director of Future Travel Experience, who emphasized the importance of industry-wide collaboration in addressing bottlenecks across the passenger journey.

Gosney described aviation as a complex system of interconnected processes, highlighting the need for airlines, airports and technology providers to work together to improve efficiency and create a more seamless travel experience.

In the opening keynote, Jayson Goh, Executive Vice President of Airport Management at Changi Airport Group, turned the conversation toward the rapid growth of air travel across Asia-Pacific and the implications for airport infrastructure and passenger expectations.

"When time flies, it means that the time in between was a great experience, and that is what we want

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to do for passengers when they move through the airport," he said.



Max Gosney, Managing Director, Future Travel Experience

With passenger traffic continuing to grow across the region, Goh stressed that airlines and airports must prepare to accommodate increasing demand while maintaining service quality. However, airport infrastructure expansion takes time, making strategic investment, operational efficiency and innovation essential to managing growth.

He also noted that passengers are traveling more frequently and becoming increasingly familiar with airport environments, raising expectations for journeys that are both efficient and enjoyable.

"The passenger experience is increasingly important in helping us to stay relevant," he said. "I wish everyone a fruitful and enjoyable APEX FTE EXPO 2026. Thank you!" he concluded before leaving the stage.

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Jayson Goh, Executive Vice President of Airport Management, Changi Airport Group

IFSA Inflight Services Zone debuts on show floor

This year also marks IFSA's return to Asia with the launch of its dedicated IFSA Inflight Services Zone, putting onboard hospitality firmly on the agenda.

The exhibition and networking space brings airlines and suppliers together to discover products, exchange ideas and explore opportunities across inflight catering, retail, passenger amenities, connectivity and service innovation.

From the menu to the connected cabin, visitors can explore food and beverage concepts, catering and provisioning solutions, passenger comfort products and onboard retail offerings. Digital cabin technologies and tools for improving service and operational efficiency round out the mix.

With the show floor now open, the focus turns to meeting the people behind the products and discovering what could make a difference to the passenger journey.

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