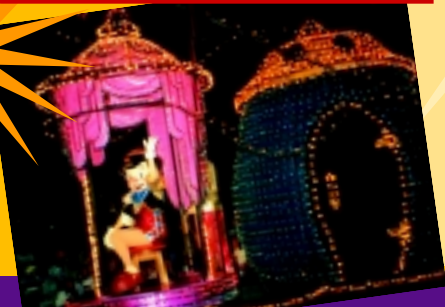


# Tourists' opinions on Hong Kong Disneyland

At the "Preparing for Hong Kong Disneyland" Conference organised by the HKSAR Government's Tourism Commission held in February, Dr John Ap, Associate Professor of the Department of Hotel and Tourism Management, presented the results of a survey which identified the general perceptions of tourists towards Hong Kong Disneyland. Dr Kevin Wong is also a key member of the research team.



## Results of the survey indicated that:

- ✿ The majority of respondents (77%) considered Hong Kong to be an attractive destination. First time visitors (84%) and those visiting for vacation purposes (80%) gave higher ratings than repeat visitors (75%) and business visitors (72%).
- ✿ Nearly three quarters of respondents (72%) were aware of the Hong Kong Disneyland project.
- ✿ Ninety-three percent (93%) of respondents considered that Hong Kong Disneyland would increase Hong Kong's attractiveness as a tourist destination.
- ✿ Eighty-two percent (82%) of respondents indicated after the opening of Hong Disneyland in 2005, they would regard Hong Kong as an attractive destination. Only four per cent indicated that Hong Kong would be unattractive.
- ✿ Most respondents (66%) did not consider that Hong Kong would lose its cultural identity with a Disney attraction. Nonetheless, one fifth of respondents (19%) considered that there would be a loss of Hong Kong's cultural identity.
- ✿ Over one third of respondents (38%) indicated a Disney attraction would introduce more American influence on Hong Kong Society. Forty-five percent (45%) indicated that it would not. Seventeen percent (17%) gave a neutral response.
- ✿ One third of respondents (32%) considered that Hong Kong Disneyland does not contribute to Hong Kong's uniqueness as a tourist destination. While just over half of respondents (52%) considered it would.
- ✿ Seventy-one percent (71%) of tourists participating in the survey indicated they would support the development of a Disney theme park in Hong Kong while 11% indicated they would not. Eighteen percent (18%) gave a neutral response.

The results released were obtained from 590 tourists who were departing from the Hong Kong International airport during October and November last year. Tourists from the Chinese Mainland, Taiwan, Southeast Asia and Australia — who would be regarded as target markets of Hong Kong Disneyland — were surveyed. A non-random sample was used for the survey because it was not practical to obtain a random sample. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalised to all tourists. Despite this limitation, the survey provides some valuable information and insights about tourists' opinions towards Hong Kong Disneyland.

In commenting upon the results, the researchers observed a good degree of support for the project among the tourists who were surveyed. "This level of support is comparable to those found in a previous survey conducted among Hong Kong residents, during which 75% of the respondents indicated they would support the development of Hong Kong Disneyland."

# Biometrics solutions for authentication in e-world

Recently the Internet and its related technologies and services such as the world wide web (WWW) are posing increasing impacts on the global trading services, producing a revolution in commercial transactions. It is predicted that e-commerce could reach tens of billions of dollars in total by the turn of the century.

In e-world, there is an ever-growing need to identify individuals. E-commerce applications require high security with reliable identification of users who access to the services. The process of identifying or verifying a user's identity is known as authentication. Currently, there are two popular ways to solve such security problems. One is related to "something that you have", such as credit cards, physical keys, etc., and the other depends on "something that you know", for example, passwords and Personal Identification Number (PIN). However, the traditional authentication methods cannot meet the security requirements on computer networks, especially the Internet, where attackers can monitor network traffic and intercept passwords or PINs. Such information can also be lost, stolen, forged or forgotten easily. To maintain its status as an international financial centre, it is particularly important for businesses in Hong Kong to satisfy such need to ensure the great potentials of its Internet commerce.

Using a human being's unique physical or behavioural features, automatic biometrics technologies and systems may be the most promising way. Biometrics can provide a new and more reliable means, which recognises the true identity of an individual based on his or her biological or behavioural characteristics, such as fingerprints, iris patterns, facial characteristics and speech patterns. It relies

on "something that you are" to make personal identification and therefore can inherently differentiate between an authorised person and a fraudulent impostor. Due to the fact that one's unique characteristics cannot be stolen, forgotten, duplicated, shared or observed, the biometrics-based security system in e-world is nearly impossible to fraud. In fact, Microsoft's Bill Gates has pointed out that biometrics technologies would be the most important IT innovations in the next several years. Many security applications in e-world can be dealt with by biometrics, which involves access control, lock, airport check-in, banking, cheque cashing, credit card, ATM, WWW and electronic purse, stock market, on-line shopping and other commercialised services.

To focus on biometrics solutions, a biometrics research centre, supported by the University Grants Committee, has been established in the Department of Computing in PolyU. The Director, Prof. David Zhang, and his research team in the centre have been studying various biometrics technologies and systems to explore different solutions for authentication in e-world.

The key objectives of the centre are to transfer multiple biometrics technologies from university to e-world, to provide a biometrics knowledge base and technological advancement, and to explore integrated biometrics solutions to practical e-world applications. In addition, the centre aims at enhancing the level of accuracy and reliability of authentication by integrating multiple biometrics features for personal identification. The research team will develop high-security technologies to quickly produce enormous economy benefits for e-world, including an



Prof. David Zhang.

infrastructure for using biometric techniques to offer more secured e-commerce services on the Internet; a biometrics-based security service system for e-commerce applications; a large biometrics database with 3,000 samples for each biometric technology, which will be available to government organisations and other sectors; a valuable sensor to capture biometric features, such as palmprint, signature, iris and fingerprint; consultancy to local industries; and a series of documents of various applications for potential users (e.g. banking and financial institutions). The success of the projects will have a great potential in market values.

Nowadays, more and more people are aware that biometrics will prove to be a promising solution in e-world. Various collaborations are well under way, such as the collaboration with HIT Group in Zhuhai, and a security service for internet commerce with the Sun Wah Group. The work will be very useful to developers of e-commerce applications like banking and on-line shopping. With the help of biometrics, more effective and efficient authentication can be achieved, which will deter crime and fraud, save critical resources and attract more customers to e-commerce. As Hong Kong's Internet commerce is growing rapidly, the centre's studies will no doubt bring tremendous benefits to companies in the e-industry. ❖

# Atmospheric research with NASA

The NASA project “TRACE-P” (Transport and Chemical Evolution over the Pacific) has brought two flying laboratories to Hong Kong in March. A press conference was hosted by NASA scientists, representatives of PolyU and the Hong Kong Observatory to provide details of the mission. Vice-President Prof. Philip Yeung Kwok-wing delivered a speech at the conference about scientific activities at the University.

The purpose of the project is to study how natural forces and human activities can affect the atmospheric environment and potentially affect the global climate. To make an adequate assessment of the situation over the Pacific, NASA has collaborated with researchers from international universities and other government labs.

PolyU’s Department of Civil and Structural Engineering participated in and contributed to the project by carrying out sampling and analyses of a comprehensive list of climate and air-quality related gases and particulate pollutants. The results will be used for comparison with the NASA aircraft results and for studying the transport of outside pollution and the impact on Hong Kong’s air quality.



**Representatives from Department of Civil and Structural Engineering pay a visit to the NASA aircrafts.**

From Hong Kong, the two airplanes flew over the Pacific Ocean for 45 days to measure gases and identify the chemical make-up of air coming across Asia and moving over the ocean.



# International conference on health sciences education and practice



The Department of Nursing and Health Sciences of the University has organised a conference entitled “Merging Tradition, Intuition, Empirics and Innovation” in January to make the best of traditional wisdom of the past and new opportunities of the future in the health care profession.

The conference was opened by University Vice-President Prof. Philip Yeung Kwok-wing and Dr Susie Lum, Senior Executive Manager (Nursing) of the Hospital Authority. To herald strategic collaboration between PolyU, Tianjin Medical University and Peking Union Medical College of the Chinese mainland, a contract signing ceremony was also held in the opening session.

Ms Kathleen Fritsch, Regional Advisor in Nursing, Regional Office for the Western Pacific of the World Health Organisation, delivered a keynote address on “Merging tradition, intuition, empirics and innovation”.

With participants from Hong Kong, Australia, the US and the UK, the three-day conference comprised keynote addresses, workshops, presentation sessions on the themes of traditional Chinese medicine, mental health, scholarly nursing practice, and information technology for teaching and learning.



# Enhancing teaching and learning occupational therapy on the mainland

The Department of Rehabilitation Sciences of the University has collaborated with the Rotary Club of Hong Kong and the World Health Organisation on an important rehabilitation project in China. The result of the hard work is a well-designed programme entitled “Effective Teaching for Rehabilitation Professionals”. Consisting of a video-and-teaching package, it provides training for doctors and therapists in China on how to effectively communicate skills and knowledge to



(from left) Mr Adrian Sank of the Rotary Club of Hong Kong; Mrs Kathleen Sinclair of PolyU; Sir Harry Fang of WHO Co-ordinating Office for Rehabilitation in China; Ms Sheila Purves, WHO Project Co-ordinator for Rehabilitation in China and Dr Yan Tie Bin of Sun Yat Sen Medical University in Guangzhou.

students, colleagues, clients and their families. With the generous support of Rotary, the teaching programme has been pilot tested in four workshops in China with overwhelming success.

“Effective Teaching for Rehabilitation Professionals” started out as a project funded by the University Grants Committee. As the programme was finalised in its current compact and comprehensive format, occupational therapy students of the University helped run the workshops in different parts of China by acting as facilitators in small group activities.

The components of the package include videotapes of four teaching sessions, a student’s workbook and a teacher’s guide with overhead transparencies.



## International conference on multilingual environment

A conference entitled “Plurilingual Hubs in the New Millennium”, which examined linguistic trends emerging in plurilingual hubs over the world, was successfully held in January. There were more than 60 participants and 26 papers presented.

Co-organised by Universiti Brunei Darussalam, The Vrije Universiteit Brussel and PolyU’s Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies, the conference brought together specialists in bilingualism and bilingual education to share experiences on two important linguistic trends: further spread of societal multilingualism in plurilingual hubs like Brunei, Brussels and Hong Kong; and the growing demand for skills in an additional language among their citizenry.



Participants from different parts of the world have gained insights from the lively discussions and sharing of ideas at the conference.