

**ITB Asia 2018**  
**17 – 19 October 2018**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**AI, biometrics and blockchain set to dominate discussion at ITB Asia 2018**

- *Microsoft, Egencia, Travelport, SITA, Fliggy, Tencent and more leading tech companies to discuss digitising the travel industry*
- *C-Suite Executives share insights on artificial intelligence (AI), biometrics, blockchain and latest travel technologies at Travel & Tech Conference Track*
- *New MICE Tech Showcase to unveil innovations to solve complex issues in MICE industry*
- *Key industry partners include Asian Development Bank, Innovel Travel Tech, Skift and Troovo*

**Singapore, 4 September 2018** - ITB Asia, 'Asia's Leading Travel Trade Show', will focus on the interdependence of travel and technology this year, under the overarching conference theme of "Travel Reimagined". Key leaders in travel and tech will provide profound insights on the major trends provoking disruption across the travel industry whilst analysing how companies are innovating to stay ahead. Hosted at the Sands Expo and Convention Centre in Marina Bay Sands, the conference will take place from 17 - 19 October 2018.

Impressive growth in the travel industry has been a result of travel tech start-ups launching and the speed of innovation in travel technology. According to 'The State of Travel Start-ups 2017', there were 1,497 digital startups around the globe which attracted nearly \$62 billion in funding, almost double from the previous year.<sup>1</sup> Technology in travel is thus growing fast and rapidly changing the way in which we travel. Taking 8% of global travel tech share, China has accounted for over a quarter of funding to the travel tech industry since 2013.<sup>2</sup> In light of this, ITB Asia will be hosting a series of talks on travel technologies which will take place at the Travel & Tech Hub, allowing delegates to immerse in the game-changing technology that is progressing travel, meetings and business.

Speakers from leading tech firms will demonstrate how emerging and innovative tech can offer meaningful connections between travel brands and customers for true ROI. At ITB Asia 2018, delegates will gain insights into what the future holds for the leisure, the MICE and corporate travel sectors and the industry's biggest challenges that can effectively be resolved through new tech.

Top technology and travel companies across the globe, including Booking.com, Egencia, Fliggy, Hotelbeds Group, KAYAK, Microsoft, Sabre, SITA, Skyscanner, Tencent, Travelport and Tujia will be joining the show with senior representatives, from Vice President to C-Level, on the stage talking about which technologies will truly transform travel. The show's agenda will be dominated by discussions from AI to virtual reality (VR), biometrics, blockchain and robotics utilising case study examples and practical application in travel management, business travel, hotel operations, travel photography, and dining experience etc.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.phocuswright.com/Travel-Research/Technology-Innovation/The-State-of-Travel-Startups-2017>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cbinsights.com/research/travel-tech-global-map/>

Launching the new MICE Tech Showcase, the conference will feature innovations that will help solve today's complex issues in the MICE industry.

[www.messe-berlin.com](http://www.messe-berlin.com)

This year, ITB Asia is proud to join hands with Asian Development Bank with the Mekong Innovative Start-up Tourism (MIST), Innoval Travel Tech, Skift and Troovo as the representative. Skift will be hosting a session at the Knowledge Theatre on 'Post Experience Economy: Innovators At The Edge of Travel'. This new term, the 'Post Experience Economy' will look at the travel economy where everyone is already marketing experiences and smart innovators are thinking about the post-experience economy.

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As a partner at the MICE & Corporate Hub, Troovo, a leading Robotic Process Automation solutions provider, will join ITB Asia to tackle the positive impact of virtualisation and robotics for the travel industry. Exploring the endless possibilities of the virtual world and utilising them to expand the possibilities of the actual world, Troovo provides solutions on virtual payments, automating workflow and simplifying data process in corporations. As a strong believer in automation to enable greater productivity and higher profitability, Troovo's Co-Founder and CEO, Kurt Knackstedt, will host a one-hour session on 18 October to discuss how we can take away the laborious task of data entry and grunt work of processing travel and payment transactions. Sharing further insights, he will draw on his experience which spans over 20 years and 4 continents, across technology, travel, procurement, leadership and marketing roles at multinationals, start-ups and his own consulting business.

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**For additional details**

[www.itb-asia.com](http://www.itb-asia.com)

Kurt Knackstedt, Chief Executive Officer of Troovo commented, "Troovo is excited to be a part of ITB Asia, as the Asian region is rapidly pushing ahead with new technologies and strategies for travel. As a technology company also driving a new direction for the industry, it's key for us at Troovo to help shape and lead the discussion about why travel needs to continue to embrace disruption and new ideas to keep our industry fresh and forward-thinking. We're looking forward to some amazing conversations in October in Singapore!"

ITB Asia's strategic partnership with Asian Development Bank and Innoval Travel Tech will reach out to the young, tech-savvy companies around the world that are innovating with breakthrough technologies. Both will be hosting a session on travel start-ups in the dedicated conference track at the Travel and Tech Hub.

Rom Hendler, Founder & CEO, Innoval noted, "TravelTech is the new black of the tech industry. Travel is one of the biggest industries in the world, and it is ready for innovation and disruption. Innoval bridges between the innovative start-up community and the traditional international travel industry, focusing on one of the hottest tech markets in the world, Israel. There is no better place than ITB Asia to showcase this innovation to the key players of the travel industry in the region."

Jason Lusk, Project Director of Mekong Innovative Start-ups in Tourism (MIST), Asian Development Bank said, "The MIST start-up accelerator is thrilled to join this year's ITB Asia programme. Our innovative start-ups are equipping Asia's travel industry to serve travellers better and more sustainably. What better place to show them off than at Asia's largest travel trade show?"

For more information on ITB Asia 2018, visit [www.itb-asia.com](http://www.itb-asia.com).

**About ITB Asia 2018**

ITB Asia 2018 will take place at the Sands Expo and Convention Centre, Marina Bay Sands, from 17 - 19 October 2018. It is organised by Messe Berlin (Singapore) Pte Ltd and supported by the Singapore Exhibition & Convention Bureau. The annual three-day B2B trade show and convention will feature hundreds of exhibiting companies from the Asia-Pacific region, Europe, the Americas, Africa and the Middle East, covering not only the

leisure market, but also corporate and MICE travel. Exhibitors from every sector of the industry, including destinations, airlines and airports, hotels and resorts, theme parks and attractions, inbound tour operators, inbound DMCs, cruise lines, spas, venues, other meeting facilities and travel technology companies are all expected to attend.

Now in its eleventh year, ITB Asia is the premier meeting place for the travel trade industry for forging new partnerships and strengthening existing business relationships with the most important players in the region. Whilst celebrating a decade of ITB Asia, last year, its huge success saw 940 exhibitors, 951 quality buyers, 6,140 minutes of conference, more than 11,000 attendees and 22,000 business appointments.

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