

FACT SHEET

About iFuture – a touch of tomorrow

iFuture is the latest collaboration between Singapore Science Centre (SSC) and the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA).

iFuture is part of IDA's student outreach efforts, as outlined in its Infocomm Manpower Development Roadmap¹ which was launched in November 2005. The Roadmap identifies a globally-competitive, and an entrepreneurial and infocomm-savvy workforce, which is critical to Singapore's continued leadership as the location of choice for infocomm business and innovation.

iFuture seeks to create an interactive and engaging experience for visitors. This is in line with SSC's vision to continually promote interest and learning in science and technology, and IDA's goal to excite youth about the power of Infocomm, and to encourage them to consider the industry as a career choice. Positioned as the 'clubhouse' for Infocomm Clubs, *iFuture* will also be a place where club members can look forward to participating in competitions and talks by world renowned infocomm experts.

iFuture will be a three-month long exhibition that will occupy more than 4,000 square metres and two major halls at the Science Centre's Annexe Building. It will showcase the latest cutting-edge technology, giving visitors a sneak peek into the future. This exhibition is also in line with Intelligent Nation 2015, IDA's 10-year master plan to grow the Infocomm sector and make Singapore a globally connected city, powered by infocomm.

The Five Specialty Areas of iFuture

To facilitate greater insight and better understanding of Infocomm Technology, the *iFuture* exhibition is divided into five specialty areas: **Gizmo Dome**, **iSpace**, **Mechanical Cabaret Theatre**, **The Singapore IT Story** and **Virtual World**.

1. Gizmo Dome

This section of *iFuture* showcases some of the latest gadgets, inventions and innovations from various technology and technology-related industries. Visitors will even be able to preview products that have yet to hit the shelves.

¹ IDA's Infocomm Manpower Development Roadmap is a five-year roadmap to develop Infocomm professionals into globally-competitive players, the general workforce into savvy Infocomm users, and students into the Infocomm talent of the future. For more information, visit talent.singaporeinfocomm.sg.

Exhibit example: **Magic Mirror**

Reminiscent of the Magic Mirror from Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, the Singapore Science Centre's technology-enhanced mirror doesn't just tell you that you are the 'prettiest Singaporean of them all', it augments your reflection with some rather spectacular effects. In this installation, the magic mirror becomes an interactive play area where butterflies and flowers 'magically' appear around a subject's reflection.

Using a two-way mirror, a camera is hidden in the mirror frame to capture the subject standing in front of it. The camera feeds the image to a computer that recognises movement and generates butterflies and flowers that are superimposed over the reflected image.

The Magic Mirror is an exhibit designed by Benedict Sheehan and was first seen at Siggraph 2006 in Boston. It is fine example of the future of Ubiquitous computing, also known as *things that think*.

2. **iSpace**

Part of *iFuture*, iSpace is the state-of-the-art arena which has been designed with a borderless design concept, innovative presentation style and interactive displays. It employs the intensive use of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology, and will feature the latest developments in infocomm in a way that is experiential and immersive. Here, visitors will be able to see, hear, touch and play with the some of the coolest exhibits in the industry.

Exhibit example: **Digital Touch Table** (Creators - Dr. Michael Haller of FH-Hagenberg in Austria and Hitlabz in New Zealand)

Computers of yesterday only allow one user to work on it at any one time but for teams to collaborate, we need to create a workspace where groups can work together. The Shared Workspace Design system is multi-functional and allows multi-users in one single space. Visitors can try to paint by "dipping" pens into the digital palette and drawing on the table. The pen senses how hard you're pressing and through the applied pressure the location is then sent to a computer and used to create the colour and the strokes.

Key Highlights of iSpace:

a) Digital Touch Table

Introducing, the Shared Workspace Design system. Multi-function, multi-user all in one space. Visitors can try to paint by "dipping" the pens into the digital palette and then draw on the table. The pen is able to sense how hard you're pressing.

The pressure and the location is then sent to a computer and used to create the colour and the strokes.

Dr. Michael Haller of FH-Hagenberg in Austria with Hitlabz in New Zealand created this exhibit.

b) Quasi Robot

Some of you may be familiar with the old computer programs that could chat with you and talk about your problems. And then, there was Aibo the dog that's almost lifelike. Now, we have a new kid on the block – meet Quasi, your newest buddy in the Science Centre.

Quasi is very intelligent and has the ability to interact autonomously with the visitors. It gazes at the visitors, can perform a set sequence like a dance or a speech to attract visitors. It can also express many emotions with its eye and eyelid movements. Quasi is a custom-built animatronic character from the Carnegie Mellon University.

c) Infocomm Live Living Room

The Infocomm Live room provides an immersive experience with the use of large rear projection screens, colour wash on the walls and surround sound.

The colours on the wall change when the average colour of the video you're viewing changes using a set of colour filters. This creates the effect of your being present in that location by enveloping your entire field of vision.

You can almost be in the presence of a concert happening in Korea or a football match in Spain. This is yet another example of telepresence where you can see, hear, maybe even smell the place you're at. In other words, you're *virtually* there.

3. Mechanical Cabaret Theatre

This highly interactive and fun filled section within *iFuture* consists of an inspiring and humorous collection of original automata from the United Kingdom. This collection showcases over 30 different unique pieces that visitors can participate in bringing to 'life'. Visitors will gain a new appreciation for the amount of innovative thinking and creativity put in for these exhibits.

Exhibit example: **The Barecats**
(Designed by Paul Spooner)

As the logo of the Mechanical Cabaret Theatre, the name 'barecats' is also interestingly an anagram of the word 'cabaret'. Automatas, or mechanical toys are essentially small machines that utilize most of the mechanical processes which can be found in almost every modern machine employing cams, gears, ratchets and cranks. The Barecats exhibit demonstrates a lovely action as it is a

piece of automata, within a piece of automata. While the large cat turns the handle of the piece of automata, the small cat points up and in response the large cat looks up to see what he is pointing at.

4. Virtual World

This specialty area will showcase all things virtual – i.e. things that exist in essence and not in actual fact or form - often they are created, simulated or carried on by means of a computer or computer software. Here, visitors can almost literally 'step' into the future.

Exhibit example: **Virtual Room**

The Virtual Room is a revolutionary 3-dimensional (3D) interactive and immersive environment that will engage visitors in a unique way. Simply put, the Virtual Room is a journey into another reality, another environment. Inside a pentagon-shaped advanced simulator, visitors will be able to experience a changing perspective as they walk around and interact with realistic images of dinosaurs, aliens and other spectacular sights around the room.

5. The Singapore IT Story

The Singapore IT Story traces the history of infocomm technology in Singapore. Visitors will be able learn about the pioneering efforts that went into making Singapore a leading user of Infocomm technology and gain a better understanding about its impact on our daily lives. This area also commemorates Singapore's successes of the last 25 years.

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