

Wow Adobe !!

Written by Philip Roy
Saturday, 19 April 2008 01:00 -

Greetings from Singapore. I started this post on a fairly state-of-the-art bus just outside of Kuala Lumpur, with my laptop plugged in to the power adaptor provided at every seat...and am finishing it in a hotel in Singapore with free wi-fi access. Why is it that when you go to amazingly expensive hotels they charge you for broadband, but drop down to a cheaper location overseas and access is often free!?

I'm on a 5-day holiday in Singapore, after being invited to attend and present at the Adobe Education Leadership Forum in Kuala Lumpur. It was a real delight and honour to be invited to present and I was amazed by the conference. My thanks to Adobe.

It was a delight to meet so many people from the Asia-Pacific region, but even more so, to meet so many important people from Adobe. I'm not trying to patronising when I say that...the people I met from Adobe were people with significant roles in many of the applications that were being discussed, and we also got to see a sneak peek at Acrobat 9 (sorry, we had to sign a Non Disclosure Agreement so can't say much) and learn more about the next version of Adobe Connect and Adobe Presenter. My presentation was about these two functionalities (part of the Adobe Acrobat Connect Professional server system) that I introduced into Massey University and have responsibility for.

The effort they put in to entertaining us meant that we were very well looked after. Of course I had to take advantage of the shopping in KL and am now the proud owner of a completely fake and unnecessary Rolex that cost me around \$28 NZ and three DVDs that cost around \$2.40 each. One of the most amusing discussions was with a stall owner over what type of DVD I would like....I was offered a cheap version of a movie filmed by a camera in the cinema, a slightly better DVD quality version or the full featured DVD we'd mostly expect.

It wasn't until I got back to the hotel and looked at the cover of one of the DVDs that I cracked up. It is a very recent movie, but the cover states that Siskel and Ebert (famous Film Critics in the U.S.) gave the movie two thumbs up.....which is pretty amazing considering Siskel died in 1999!! I've not actually tried the discs as I think just the cost was hilarious, so I'm not overly concerned if I've been done.

Last night we visited a well-known plaza for IT gear and a chap from Adobe came with us.....we kept hassling him as to what he would do if he found illegal Adobe products on sale, and he commented he'd be even more surprised if it was a future release. As it was, software was scarce as it was all hardware.

I did see a number of authorised Apple dealers selling genuine products, as well as a few iPhones for sale for about \$740 NZ....I didn't buy one. But what surprised me the most was a few shops claiming to be an Apple resellers, with iPod lookalike products in their window. Unfortunately I forgot to take a picture of them, but they looked like old and new Nanos, as well as shuffles...complete with the menu and click wheel layout.

I can't really go into detail on what we saw with regards Acrobat, but I'm thoroughly impressed with what is coming. PDFs are something that have always been on the periphery of my interest. I use them, make them...and even 4 years ago read a 500 page book about how you

Wow Adobe !!

Written by Philip Roy
Saturday, 19 April 2008 01:00 -

could use Acrobat. I was amazed....but hardly did much with the possible functionality beyond that point. That started to change recently when I started playing with the embedding of multimedia in to PDFs (yes, that's right...multimedia into PDFs) and things in that area are going to advance considerably in the next version.

What really impressed me with the Adobe staff was their enthusiasm for their products and the understanding of the education needs of the institutions that were present...and their absolute willingness to listen. This perhaps couldn't have been highlighted to me any more significantly by being asked by someone heavily involved with the development of Adobe Presenter (a PC only plugin to PowerPoint that enhances presentations significantly) to sit and chat for 45 minutes at the end of the conference on what I would like to see come out in the version after the next (the next version about to come out soon).

Do you get the significance of that? That's the equivalent of someone at Apple asking me to sit down and spend 45 minutes saying what changes I'd like to see in Keynote!

The depth of organisational detail and the desire of the Adobe staff to communicate, chat and debate their software in an open, friendly, fun and professionally rewarding way, was worth the trip alone.

So thank you Adobe. The invite, the organisation, the conference, the company, the food, the fun, the contacts I hope will be established and the valuable discussions all just staggered me.

Wow Adobe.....keep up the amazing good work. I'm looking forward to what you're bringing out next!!