



WHERE JAPANESE POP CULTURE COMES ALIVE!

Anime Festival Asia 2009 incorporating Animation Asia Conference 2009

It's time for South East Asia's BIGGEST event celebrating all things related to Japanese animation and popular culture.

(Singapore, September 1st, 2009) – The organizers of **Anime Festival Asia 2009 (AFA09)** are excited to announce the region's most impressive festival targeting fans of Japanese animation and popular culture. Taking place at Suntec International Convention and Exhibition Centre (Halls 403 and 404) from 21st to 22nd November, *AFA09 will incorporate a one-day business conference, Animation Asia Conference 2009 (AAC09)* held on 20th November at the same venue.

ANIMATION ASIA CONFERENCE 2009

The one day business conference aims to help develop and nurture a regional IP ecosystem by tapping on renowned speakers and talents from Japan and the region, with an **IP 360° Content Conference** focused on three themes: *Create, Manage* and *Engage*. Speakers will provide in-depth knowledge and expertise on how brands and

marketers can work with content from Japan to connect with the digital generation of youths who seek to be entertained and engaged.

“The new Animation Asia Conference will provide an opportunity for international businesses and animation-related companies and organizations to network and learn from the best in the business. We are confident that **Animation Asia Conference 2009** will grow to become a “must-attend” conference for directors, producers, creators as well as brand marketers, agencies and students. Our ultimate long term goal is to build and nurture a sustainable IP ecosystem for Singapore and the region,” said Anthony Kang, President, Dentsu Singapore and Co-Chairman of AFA09.

AFA09 will span over 5,000 sqm of space where highlights confirmed so far include the *Akiba Town Marketplace*, *Anime Blockbusters*, *Kids Land*, *Regional Cosplay Championships*, *Moe Moe Kyun Maid Café*, an *AFA Exclusive Specialty Shop*, and live acts straight from Japan.

FAMILY ATTRACTIONS AT KIDS LAND

A new highlight this year will be *Kids Land*, especially for younger children ages above 4 years old. Designed to maximize fun for families, *Kids Land* will have hands-on interactive sessions to learn how to make sushi, dumplings, sandwiches, etc. There will be workshops on how to assemble model kits at Bandai’s *Gundam Caravan* where participants will be able to take home what they have assembled during this event.

Children aged 4 to 8 years old can participate in a lucky draw to win a collection of *Ben 10* toys on display at AFA09. There will be photo-taking opportunities with popular superheroes, including the new *Power Rangers*, *Masked Rider* and *Ben 10 Alien Force*. Popular animation and live action programmes will be screened live.

Bandai will celebrate the 30th anniversary of *Gundam* at AFA09 where visitors can walk through *Gundam Time Tunnel Showcase* featuring items and memorabilia from the *Gundam* franchise through the years.

ON EMBARGO TILL 1 SEPT, 2009, 2.00pm

“We are proud to be celebrating the 30th anniversary of *Gundam* on such a big occasion, along with fans across the region. Apart from AFA09 exclusive merchandise featuring Gundam model kits and collectible toys, we will also showcase new toys like our *Harumika* range of toys and *Power Rangers Jungle Fury*, the latest iteration of the *Power Rangers* story, and the creations of the top 10 winners from Singapore for this year’s *Bandai Action Kit Universal Cup (BAKUC)* at AFA09,” said Wong Kah Fai, Deputy General Manager, Bandai South Asia.

NEW ATTRACTION - ‘I LOVE ANISONG’ MEGA MUSIC CONCERT

“AFA09 Music Concerts will be collectively themed as ‘I Love Anisong’ and will feature a power-packed list of Japan’s top music performers. We wanted to take our music component this year to the next level and this year’s line-up of guests at “I Love Anisong” will thrill both anime fans and music lovers. They have performed at sell-out concerts and have a huge fan base not just in Japan but internationally,” said Shawn Chin, Executive Director, SOZO and Festival Director of AFA09.

By popular demand, **Ichirou Mizuki**, Japan’s “King of Anime Songs will return with Japan’s Singing Sensation, **May’n** who performs as Sheryl Nome in *Macross Frontier*. May’n and Mizuki performed to impressive sell out crowds last year at AFA08.

Performing for the first time in Singapore and South East Asia will be multi-talented J-Pop performer and popular TV personality **Shoko Nagakawa** who is familiarly known by her fans as “**Shokotan**” and “Blogger Queen”. Her popular blog has achieved phenomenal success with a total number of more than 1 billion hits to her site. Using her own unique slang, her blog is described as one of the most popular celebrity blogs and garners over 1.8 million hits a day. Her long list of credits includes her singing the theme songs for *Pokemon* and popular TV anime *Tengen Toppa Gurren Lagann*.

Also making his South East Asian debut will be **Yoshiki Fukuyama**, acclaimed guitarist, singer, and songwriter and member of JAM Project (Japan Animation Song Makers Project). As a member of JAM project, Fukuyama has produced numerous opening and ending theme songs for anime series and games. He had previously performed in

Taiwan, San Paolo, Baltimore, Korea, Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Mexico, Paris and Barcelona. Fukuyama also played the singing role and guitar of “Macross 7” main role Basara Nekki and will perform live “unplugged” at AFA09.

SPECIAL APPEARANCE BY TOP JAPAN BLOGGER

Asian top blogger Danny Choo, whose blog covers Japanese pop culture, was covered by Forbes as “Best Japan Blog” this year (July 2009), will meet his readers at AFA09. One of his more famous acts was dressing up as a Stormtrooper from Stars Wars and dancing in Tokyo. As the CEO of Mirai Inc. an e-commerce solution firm he started in 2007, Danny's clients include major Japanese companies like Good Smile Company and Kotobukiya amongst others.

With more than two million unique users and twenty million page views a month, Danny will host several events at AFA09, including a showcase of his very own “Mirai-chan” mascot related merchandise. Danny will speak at the Animation Asia Conference on consumer generated media and will also host the “**Bandai x Danny Choo x AFA09 World Gunpla Competition**” via his Mirai Gaia Platform at www.dannychoo.com

REGIONAL COSPLAY CHAMPIONSHIP

Cosplay this year will have a bigger stage where AFA09 will host the first ever **Regional Cosplay Championship** in Asia. The top cosplay team from each South East Asian country will be sponsored by AFA09 to compete in the Regional Cosplay Championship during the two-day anime festival where they will perform and be judged by a panel of distinguished guests from Japan including internationally renowned cosplayer **Kaname☆** who is best known for portraying *Cloud Strife* from “*Final Fantasy VII: Advent Children*” and *Ichigo Kurosaki* from “*Bleach*”. Kaname☆ will also conduct a close-door panel session for cosplayers keen to learn more about how to improve their cosplay techniques.

“Animax Asia, the regional media partner for AFA09, will be producing a half-hour programme dedicated to the “Art of Cosplay”, said Gregory Ho, vice-president and general manager of Animax Asia. “With the rapidly growing popularity of anime across

Asia, more and more youth and young adults are engaging in cosplay as a means of expressing their passion. With top cosplayers coming from the region, and an impressive judging panel made up of celebrity cosplayers, we aim to produce a programme where these experts will provide valuable tips and insights into the art of cosplay. This programme will also demystify the concept of cosplay, and go behind the scenes to showcase this colourful expression of creativity that is capturing the hearts of many youths around the world.”

“This year’s festival, with its expanded content including I Love Anisong, Regional Cosplay Championship, Maid Café, Kids Land, exclusive merchandise, seeks to bring greater entertainment and value to our audience. It will undoubtedly place AFA09 amongst the best in the world,” said Michael Ng, Co-Chairman of AFA 2009 from I-PROMO Events & Marketing.

“In addition, the inaugural Animation Asia Conference will provide a platform for businesses from the region to network, develop deeper relationships and create business opportunities,” added Ng.

AFA09 will be held at Suntec International Convention and Exhibition Centre, Halls 403 and 404 from 10.00 am to 9.00pm. The festival targets children, youth, adults and industry visitors both locally and from around the region and having had a turnout of 46,000 visitors in 2008, organizers expect an even bigger number of visitors in excess of 50,000 to this year’s festival.

AFA09 is organized jointly by I-Promo Events & Marketing, SOZO and Dentsu Singapore. The festival is sponsored by Bandai, Japan’s leading toy manufacturer, with Animax as the official regional media partner.

For more information on AFA09, please www.afa09.com

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About I-PROMO

I-PROMO is a multidimensional marketing agency specializing in strategic and signature events. I-PROMO conceptualizes, develops, manages, and implements corporate and lifestyle events. The company's primary expertise lies in creating own branded, title events with local and regional sponsors and partners. With years of experience managing conventions, exhibitions, festivals, and gala events, I-PROMO produces events worthy of being called phenomenal rather than merely experiential.

As a subsidiary of Kingsmen Creative Limited, I-PROMO teams comprises of professionals with diverse talents such as conceptualization, marketing, sales, design, and construction. With streamlined operations and collaborative resources, I-PROMO consistently deliver results beyond the expectations of our clients.

I-PROMO's pool of talent are able to execute opportune, current, relevant, competitive, and profitable events that are critically aligned to clients' objectives. Over the years, the company have created events for the government and the arts, as well as the giants of retail, IT, finance, and petroleum industries.

About SOZO

SOZO represents a cutting edge entertainment and youth-marketing driven company. Made up of a diverse talented pool of industry professionals, SOZO is focused towards developing animation and entertainment content and service platforms geared at engaging young adults at both regional and global levels. SOZO's main mission is focused on delivering highly entertaining pop culture experiences, contents and products that will constantly engage, thrill and excite this young and restless market.

About Dentsu Singapore

A wholly owned subsidiary of Japan's Dentsu Inc. and an 'Asian-born' agency, Dentsu Singapore is a fully integrated communications agency, providing total communications solutions to both regional and local clients. The Dentsu network dates back to 1901 and has at its disposal powerful network support and resources. According to Ad Age Global, it is now the world's number one agency brand and the biggest among all major networks in Asia. Dentsu for many years has also ventured into many successful anime franchises and has a dedicated entertainment and contents division overseeing its operations.

About Bandai

Bandai is the third largest producer of toys in the world. Originally called "Bandai-ya", Bandai was founded by Mr Naoharu Yamashina in 1950. The origin of the word "bandai" comes from an old Chinese expression: "bandai fueki", meaning 'everlasting' or 'eternal'. Bandai's founder, Mr. Yamashina, felt that these words expressed his wish that Bandai be a company which, in his words, "makes products that please people of all generations, irrespective of the times - a firm that will develop and grow forever and ever". Today, Bandai has gone on to become firmly established as Japan's leading general toy manufacturer, and the company continues to blaze new trials in various fields of entertainment.

About Animax

Animax is the first pan-regional 24-hour cable and satellite TV channel dedicated to the fastest growing youth entertainment genre – Japanese anime. Watched by over 50 million viewers in 2007, Animax Asia is now seen in over 29 million homes and 20 countries across Asia. Wholly-owned by Sony Pictures Entertainment, Animax Asia broadcasts six dedicated, highly customized services for Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Philippines.

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