

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Republic Polytechnic's new integrated customer experience facility boosts authentic learning for hospitality students**

*Three specialised labs spanning retail, customer relationship management and contact centre operations to further enhance hands-on learning experience*

**Singapore, 9 June 2016** – Republic Polytechnic (RP) School of Hospitality today launched the integrated Customer Experience Laboratories to enhance authentic learning for its students and nurture a retail and customer experience-focused workforce well-equipped for the fast-evolving industry.

The new facility, which comprises the **Contact Centre Learning Laboratory, Customer Relationship Management Laboratory and Retail Laboratory**, will provide students with a realistic, simulated environment to develop customer experience and relationship management skillsets. Around 1,000 students, mainly from the Diploma in Customer Experience Management with Business (DCXB), will benefit from the Customer Experience Laboratories each year.

**Mr Seto Lok Yin, Republic Polytechnic's Deputy Principal (Industry Services), said, "The new integrated Customer Experience Laboratories will provide opportunities for students to immerse in realistic customer experience and retail environments, interact with the latest software and technologies, and learn industry best practices. Through our collaboration with industry partners, students will also benefit from learning retail operations and management according to specific brand standards."**

Each lab has its own distinct set-up that meets industry standards for contact centre operations, customer relationship management and retail management, and comes equipped with industry-standard software and hardware to optimise customer communication, and nurture long-term customer relationships.

**An inaugural collaboration between RP and partners ASICS, Cumulus Nimbus, ZA and Ma Cherie, the Retail Laboratory** comprises beauty, lifestyle and sports sections – closely modelled after the industry partners' stores – in a 110m<sup>2</sup> shop in shop concept. Through this space, students will have access to up-to-date hardware and software applications used in the retail industry, and acquire practical retail sector-specific skills such as visual merchandising and merchandise management. RP and its industry partners also inked a three-year MOU at the facility launch to offer offsite visits, joint projects and internship opportunities for RP students.

The 26-seat **Contact Centre Learning Laboratory** allows students to hone their contact centre management skills in a simulated environment. Specially designed with flexible workstations, the lab caters to a variety of learning methods including call simulations and interactive lectures, and incorporates state-of-the-art contact centre technology capable of handling multi-channel customer engagement.

The **Customer Relationship Management Laboratory** provides a 300m<sup>2</sup> space segregated into three zones, each with a unique set up to allow students to apply Customer Relationship Management (CRM) strategies through a variety of operational fronts and customer interactions. CRM technologies will be used in the lab in conjunction with operational tools to help students manage customer experiences and nurture relationships.

## About Republic Polytechnic

The first educational institution in Singapore to leverage the Problem-based Learning approach for all its diploma programmes, Republic Polytechnic (RP) has seven schools and one academic centre offering forty-two diplomas in Applied Science, Engineering, Enterprise and Communication, Hospitality, Infocomm, Sports, Health & Leisure, and Technology for the Arts.

Republic Polytechnic is committed to nurturing innovation and entrepreneurial learning in an environment that develops problem-solving skills and lifelong learning opportunities. Its holistic and broad-based curriculum prepares students for an active and meaningful role in society as problem solvers, respected professionals and passionate citizens.

Republic Polytechnic strives for excellence by achieving various international and national accreditations, including ISO 9001, ISO 14001, OHSAS 18001, ISO 22301, Singapore Quality Class, People Developer, Innovation Class, and Service Class.

For more information, visit <http://www.rp.edu.sg>

### For media enquiries, please contact:

**Republic Polytechnic**  
**Office of Corporate Communications**  
Patrick Seng / Julian Soh  
+65 9767 6701 / +65 9018 0719  
[patrick\\_seng@rp.edu.sg](mailto:patrick_seng@rp.edu.sg)/  
[julian\\_soh@rp.edu.sg](mailto:julian_soh@rp.edu.sg)

**MSLGROUP in Singapore**  
Danny Tan / Serene Chow  
+65 6327 0287 / +65 6327 0284  
[danny.tan@msslgroup.com](mailto:danny.tan@msslgroup.com)/  
[serene.chow@msslgroup.com](mailto:serene.chow@msslgroup.com)

## APPENDIX

### **Factsheet - Customer Experience Laboratories**

The Customer Experience Laboratories will be used predominantly by students from the School of Hospitality who are taking the following three discipline modules for the Diploma in Customer Experience Management with Business:

- Contact Centre Operations
- Customer Relationship Management
- Retail Management

Each lab for the respective modules has its own unique set-up to provide learning environments that match up to industry standards for each discipline.

#### **Contact Centre Learning Laboratory**

**Collaboratory**, the Contact Centre Learning Laboratory is a 110 m<sup>2</sup> space that will allow students undertaking the module on H304 Contact Centre Operations to learn contact centre management skills in a simulated industry environment.

The 26-seat laboratory is specially designed with flexible workstations to cater to a variety of learning methodologies adopted by the module, such as call simulations, practical exercises, interactive lectures and group discussions.

As part of the first phase of the rollout plan, 138 Diploma in Customer Experience Management with Business (DCXB) students started using the new facility in AY2015 Semester 2 for their lessons. In the second phase, the software used in the laboratory will be enhanced to incorporate state-of-the-art contact centre technology capable of handling multi-channels such as voice, email, webchat and social media. This is expected to be rolled out in AY2016.

H304 Contact Centre Operations is a specialisation module offered to Year 3 students in the Customer Experience track of DCXB. This module aims to equip students with the knowledge, skills and tools to manage customer needs and interactions in the operation management of contact centres. Learning in this module is organised according to five core areas - Strategy, Technology, People, Processes and Systems, Standards and Measurements.

With the introduction of Collaboratory, students can look forward to a deepening of skills and authentic learning experience that emulates the standards and practices in the industry. To ensure relevance of our curriculum, we strive and work closely with leading contact centres in Singapore. This includes arranging off-site visits to actual contact centres and having industry guest speakers to enhance the learning journey. We are also a member of the professional industry body – Contact Centre Association of Singapore (CCAS). These active engagements have resulted in contact centre based scholarships from prestigious organisations such as DBS, Singtel and Teleperformance.

#### **Customer Relationship Management Laboratory**

H204 Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is a module taken by Year two students from the Diploma in Customer Experience Management with Business (DCXB) and Diploma in Integrated Events Management (DIEM). Students undertaking the module H204 CRM will be the main users of the CRM Laboratory.

The CRM Laboratory is approximately 300m<sup>2</sup> and able to accommodate up to three classes of students at any one time. The area is segregated into three zones – **AmPower**, **Zoom** and **Prestige** with each zone featuring its own unique set up. This will allow students to envision the application of CRM strategies through different operational fronts and customer interactions such as partial self-service interactions - **AmPower**, transactional-based interactions - **Zoom** and high customer involvement interactions – **Prestige**.

Students will be using the CRM system together with a customer web portal and Q-system which are some operational tools used by the industry to manage customer experiences as well as nurture relationships.

In today's competitive marketplace, managing customer relationships is critical to a company's profitability and long term success. This module is designed to equip students with the skills to strategically manage customers as well as foster greater customer intimacy and loyalty. Topics covered include market segmentation, customer experience planning, managing the customers through the customer lifecycle as well as the use of CRM technology and data to facilitate CRM. With the CRM Laboratory students can look forward to acquiring CRM skills in an environment that simulates industry settings for CRM on the operational front. The use of the CRM laboratory will facilitate several learning methodologies such as role playing, cognitive apprenticeship, interactive lectures and group discussions for the delivery of the H204 Curriculum.

### **Retail Laboratory**

**Retail Unlimited** is a realistic environment that was created by working with partners ASICS, Cumulus Nimbus, ZA and Ma Cherie. It is part of the Diploma in Customer Experience Management with Business (DCXB) and designed to provide students undertaking the module on H306, Retail Management (RM) with practical skills and knowledge in the development and management of retail strategies.

The laboratory marks an inaugural collaboration between our partners and Republic Polytechnic. From planning to execution, deliberate steps were taken to align to industry standards. The 110m<sup>2</sup> shop-in-shop concept comprises Beauty, Lifestyle and Sports categories. The Beauty section is modelled after the stores of ZA and Ma Cherie, cosmetics and haircare brands under Shiseido. Cumulus Nimbus, part of Known Group, contributes to the contemporary touch in the lifestyle category. The Sports section is a replica of the ASICS shop.

Retail Management students will start using the facilities in AY2016 Semester 1. Learning in this module is task and activity-driven. Students will engage in hands-on practice and apply new concepts to situations that they are likely to face in the industry.

The technology-enabled laboratory is equipped with Octopus, an integrated retail POS system that is accessible by computers, tablets and smart devices. The integrated system also provides inventory management and analytics capabilities. SenSource, a foot counter is mounted on the ceiling to record traffic data. Students will use these statistics to perform customer analysis.

With the introduction of Retail Unlimited, students will be exposed to the various hardware and software applications used in the retail industry and have hands-on sessions with these applications. They will also gain knowledge and develop practical skills required for the retail industry such as visual merchandising and merchandise management.