

Report from AISAM 2007

'What better way to study business in Asia than to do it in Asia and particularly in Penang. A thoroughly insightful and enjoyable two weeks of theory, practical examples, guest speakers and company visits. Add to this the great Hotel and INTI College facilities and I can't think of a better way to complete 2 MBA units!' Derek Price (AISAM 2007: Deakin University)

This year 48 postgraduate students were taken to Penang (Malaysia) to complete the two week Asian Intensive School for Advanced Management (AISAM) program. In the first week students studied 'Business in Asia' and an elective in the second week.

This year's group of AISAM students reflected the profile of the 500 students who have so far completed the AISAM program. Participants were typically middle-level managers within the 25 - 40 year age group who were toward the end of their MBA or Business Masters program (such as in International Business or Commerce). While the majority of this year's participants were Australian Residents, approximately one third came from Asia, Europe or North or South America. The latter students are usually completing a postgraduate Masters degree in Australia and wish to enjoy another international experience that adds a valuable 'international credential' to their CV.

AISAM 2007 was incredible! The learning experience in and out of class was invaluable to those wishing to conduct any sort of business in Asia.

Brinton Reed (AISAM 2007: Portland State University, USA)

AISAM participants not only received an intensive range of lectures, seminars and discussions, but also visited firms in the Free Industrial Zone -- Optus Opto, Eng Teknologi and Motorola -- received addresses from prominent local and expatriate corporate leaders and were offered insights into Malaysia by local State Councillors, representatives of the Penang Development Corporation and Austrade.

On the first day students were welcomed by YB Dato' Dr. Toh Kin Woon, State Executive Councillor and State Minister for Education whose forthright comments on Malaysian political and economic development are always welcomed: As were the insights into overall Asian development provided by Professor Mahani Zainal Abidin.

First week highlights included addresses by Dato' Alfred Teh, John Federoff and Mery Girsang. Dato' Teh is the Executive Chairman of Eng Teknologi, one of Malaysia's most successful international high-tech companies. John Federoff is an Australian expatriate who has built an extremely successful mining industry service business in Indonesia. John's experiences were added to by his wife, Mery Girsang, who is one of Indonesia's foremost litigators and offered participants her insights into the causes of corporate failure offshore.

AISAM was a completely worthwhile experience. I was a bit hesitant given my five years plus work experience already in Asia as to what I could learn. The

AISAM approach far exceeded all expectations! Would happily recommend to my colleagues. Practical, insightful, rewarding!
Karina Ho (AISAM 2007: Monash University)

In week two, students undertook studies in one of three electives -- Strategic Negotiation, Living Supply Chains or Intellectual Capital Development. Supplementing classroom discussions and case studies, students visited an organisation directly relating to their chosen elective --MEI Project Engineers, DHL and Motorola respectively. Full and frank discussion between Malaysian senior executives and AISAM participants proved to be another highlight of this year's program.

AISAM 2007 was an excellent experience. The mixture of lectures, company visits and group work provided important knowledge and skills for my future career. AISAM 2007 has been the highlight of my Master of International Business (MIB) course. Tip for every student enrolled in Masters courses: don't miss AISAM 2007
Ina Rietzschel (AISAM 2007: University of Wollongong)

But AISAM is not just hard work. AISAM 2007 participants enjoyed a 'Welcome Barbecue' around the pool at the Hotel Equatorial, a 'State Dinner' at the famous Eastern and Oriental Hotel, and a 'Farewell Dinner' at the Bukit Jumbal Country Club. There was a 'ban' on academic work during the middle weekend of the AISAM program. This gave students time during the day to relax, shop and site see. In the evenings Penang's famous cuisine was enjoyed as was partying in Georgetown -- where *Slippery Senoritas* and *Soho* proved enormously popular!

AISAM 2007 is a program that I would recommend to any MBA student... The social and business contacts I developed while in Penang I expect to last a very long time and benefit my career immensely.
Gary Parkin (AISAM 2007: Griffith University)