



**AirAsia** teams up with Plug and Play to find the best startups in the travel industry

*Partnership marks world's best low-cost airline's first foray into Silicon Valley*

SEPANG, 28 March 2018 - AirAsia today announced a partnership with Plug and Play Tech Center, a global startup innovation platform headquartered in Silicon Valley.

AirAsia will work as an anchor partner of Plug and Play's Travel and Hospitality programme to mentor new businesses and collaborate with emerging technologies.

This will allow AirAsia to identify, observe and support relevant startups as they develop new products and technologies for the travel sector.

AirAsia Deputy Group CEO (Digital, Transformation and Corporate Services) Aireen Omar said, "This partnership - the first of many to keep a finger on the pulse of innovation - will allow us to identify leading edge technologies that will help maintain our leadership in cost and customer experience and transform AirAsia from an airline into a global digital company."

Plug and Play Founder and CEO Saeed Amidi said, "We are here to help AirAsia engage with the most promising startups in the industry and bring new ideas into their business. Their expertise will be a great addition to our ecosystem and we welcome them to Silicon Valley."

AirAsia is a pioneer in adopting new technologies to improve travel experience. The airline was one of the first to introduce SMS booking in 2003, followed by its airasia.com website - which allowed flight booking, check-in and booking changes - and mobile app, which clinched the World's Leading Low-Cost Airline Website and World's Leading Low-Cost Airline App at the 2015 World Travel Awards.

At the airport, AirAsia was an early adopter of self-service kiosks that allow guests to check in, print their boarding pass and bag tags, and also introduced home bag tags and self bag drop functions. Recently, AirAsia debuted

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its Fast Airport Clearance Experience System (FACES) facial recognition boarding gates, making it the first airline in Asia to be fully automated from check-in to boarding.

AirAsia has also invested heavily in digital services as it embarks on a transformation process to become a truly digital airline, including BigPay financial services app, ROKKI inflight entertainment and connectivity, AirAsia BIG Loyalty programme and RedBox logistics.

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### **About AirAsia**

AirAsia, the world's leading low-cost carrier, services an extensive network of over 130 destinations across Asia Pacific. Since starting operations in 2001, AirAsia has carried more than 400 million guests and grown its fleet from just two aircraft to over 200. The airline is proud to be a truly Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) airline with established operations based in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines as well as India and Japan, servicing a network stretching across Asia, Australia and New Zealand, the Middle East and the US. AirAsia has been named the World's Best Low-Cost Airline at the annual Skytrax World Airline Awards nine times in a row from 2009 to 2017. AirAsia was also awarded World's Leading Low-Cost Airline for the fifth consecutive year at the 2017 World Travel Awards, where it became the inaugural recipient of the World's Leading Low-Cost Airline Cabin Crew award.

### **About Plug and Play Tech Center**

Plug and Play is a global innovation platform. Headquartered in Silicon Valley, we have built accelerator programs, corporate innovation services, and an in-house VC to make technological advancement progress faster than ever before. Since inception in 2006, our programs have expanded worldwide to include a presence in 28 locations globally giving startups the necessary resources to succeed in Silicon Valley and beyond. With over 6,000 startups and 220 official corporate partners, we have created the ultimate startup ecosystem in many industries. We provide active investments with 200 leading Silicon Valley VCs, and host more than 700 networking events per year. Companies in our community have raised over \$7 billion in funding, with successful portfolio exits including Danger, Dropbox, LendingClub, PayPal, SoundHound, and Zoosk. For more information, visit [www.plugandplaytechcenter.com](http://www.plugandplaytechcenter.com).

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