

Singapore Airline's first, business class cabins full

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Singapore: Singapore Airlines Ltd. is flying nearly full first- and business-class cabins even without the return of corporate travel, as more leisure-driven tourists take up its most expensive seats.

Chief Executive Officer Goh Choon Phong said the lag in corporate traffic "- a key staple of earnings "- was "not much of an immediate concern," as planes are still packed and keeping post-Covid profitability near record levels.

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"We are seeing some of that travel that didn't used to necessary travel premium classes move to premium classes, and they're all full," Goh said ahead of the annual Association of Asia Pacific Airlines meeting in Singapore, which the flag carrier is hosting.

Singapore was among the first countries in Asia to reopen its borders during Covid, helping its main airline recover faster than the likes of Hong Kong's Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd., which didn't also have a domestic market to fall back on during the pandemic.

Separately, Goh said Singapore Air is working on generative artificial intelligence developments that could boost revenue. The airline has found 90 uses for AI across the business, and a trial effort to respond to customers faster yielded time savings of 75 per cent, down to two days from eight.

Goh has a background in electrical engineering and computer science, and his graduate research studies were in AI, so he is familiar with the topic.

"I certainly think there are opportunities to improve productivity and therefore reduce costs," he said. "There are opportunities for revenue generation. Exactly what they are, I don't think I want to share at the moment. I wouldn't want to alert anyone about what we're doing."

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