

Austrian lands \$820 one-way A380 ticket



PHOTO: GEORG BURDICEK

HE WATCHED and waited for the right time to move in.

And when he made his bid, Lady Luck must have been smiling on him because Austrian Georg Burdicek (above) ended up paying just US\$560 (S\$820) for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be on the first Airbus 380 commercial flight from Singapore to Sydney on Thursday.

It was the cheapest ticket sold during a two-week long charity auction of 662 one-way seats Singapore Airlines had offered on both legs of the journey.

The average economy fare at the end of the exercise, which raised close to \$2 million, was about US\$1,000.

The 25-year-old engineer and aviation enthusiast said: "I was prepared to go up to US\$1,000 so I am very pleased of course. I have always been fascinated with planes so the chance to be on this very exciting flight is a real thrill for me."

SIA, which held the auction in August on global online marketplace eBay, had released the seats across all three classes in batches.

Once a seat was put up for sale, bidding would close after three to five days, with the highest bidder securing it.

Mr Burdicek monitored price movements for each economy seat as it was put up for auction and noticed the one he ended up with did not attract as much attention as some of the others.

"I decided to put my money on that one and I guess it was a lucky choice."

The total bill for the entire journey, which will take him from Vienna where he lives, to Singapore, then Sydney on the A380, before returning to Vienna via Singapore again, comes up to 1,200 euros (S\$2,500).

Mr Burdicek, who has visited Singapore several times but never Australia, said: "It's a good deal. A normal return fare would have cost me a bit more than that. My friends tell me I am crazy but this is a once-in-a-lifetime flight."