

## Hong Kong Observation Wheel launches world-first AR App presented by AIA

*Brand new entertainment experience offers historical perspectives on the Hong Kong skyline at one of the city's most loved attractions*

- World-first AR experience on a moving platform takes visitors on an immersive journey through the city's most distinctive eras
- A Hong Kong innovation created through worldwide and industry specialist collaboration
  - Available now on the [Apple App Store](#) and [Google Play](#)



Caption: The Hong Kong Observation Wheel AR App gives visitors the opportunity to see Hong Kong from three perspectives: *Beyond the Beginning* (1890-1920); *City in Transition* (1960-1980); and Present Day.

(HONG KONG – 19 NOVEMBER 2020) - The iconic **Hong Kong Observation Wheel and AIA Vitality Park** have launched the **Hong Kong Observation Wheel AR App**, which elevates the visitor experience through never-before-seen Augmented Reality (AR) technology. Through visual immersions of Hong Kong in the 1890s and 1960s, the App encourages visitors to unlock the beauty of the harbour and learn about the city's development. Officially launched today, the free mobile application now available on IOS and Android, in English, Traditional Chinese and Simplified Chinese.

One of Hong Kong's most loved attractions, the Hong Kong Observation Wheel and AIA Vitality Park have welcomed nearly four million visitors since their reopening with AIA in 2017. Known for major entertainment and wellness events, the Hong Kong Observation Wheel and AIA Vitality Park continues to be a vibrant destination that is constantly evolving, helping Hongkongers live Healthier, Longer, Better Lives.



**Stuart A. Spencer, Group Chief Marketing Officer, AIA Group Limited**, said: *“We are excited to support the introduction of this world-first technology that will provide an enriching customer experience for people of all ages and ensure that the Hong Kong Observation Wheel remains an iconic destination for many years to come. Our continued investment is a symbol of our deep commitment to the people of Hong Kong, where we have been proud to operate since 1931. The Wheel and AIA Vitality Park provide an important channel to promote health and wellness, which are at the core of our purpose. We look forward to bringing more bold new innovations to AIA Vitality Park that will enable us to engage the people of Hong Kong and help them to live Healthier, Longer, Better Lives.”*

Produced by venue operators The Entertainment Corporation, a multitude of community partners and overseas technology experts have been engaged in introducing this world-first AR App to Hong Kong’s iconic Harbour front. Celebrating the city’s rich history and heritage, the new Hong Kong Observation Wheel AR App gives visitors the opportunity to see Hong Kong from three perspectives: *Beyond the Beginning* (1890-1920); *City in Transition* (1960-1980); and *Present Day*. When riding the Wheel, the App overlays a full 360-degree visual recreation of bygone eras onto current sights:

- The **1890s-1920s** presents landmarks such as the original Peak Tram, Lion Rock, and first-generation Star Ferry Pier.
- The **1960s-1980s** showcase Hong Kong’s economic progress and expansion of manufacturing, with squatter villages of Lion Rock, The Hilton International, and Kai Tak Airport.
- The journey culminates in the **present day**, including modern-day visualisations of the city’s classic landmarks and newer developments around the harbour.

Speaking of the launch, **Alex Gibbs, Commercial Director at Hong Kong Observation Wheel** said: *“We are delighted to bring this world-first technology to Hongkongers. The AR App is a result of industry-wide collaboration, thanks to the investments by AIA, dedication of global and local technology experts, and support from the people and institutions of Hong Kong. Using this cutting-edge technology, we enhance the experience of one of Hong Kong’s most loved attractions, and we look forward to presenting more developments in the future that continue to celebrate Hong Kong.”*

Neighbour to the Wheel, the **Hong Kong Maritime Museum**, has been a key source of inspiration from the onset, providing maps, photographic references, and multiple ship models, that have all been recreated digitally in the App. The historical journey was mapped out and authenticated by established Hong Kong historians **Ko Tim-keung** and **Jason Wordie**, who have both played an integral role in identifying and telling the stories of the territory’s transformation. Crowd sourcing amongst the Hong Kong community to find relevant historical images has also been pivotal in creating a unique and accurate representation of Hong Kong’s past.

The interactive experience has been made possible due to bespoke technology that combines both gaming and AR technology. Developed by industry experts, ***the App is the first AR experience on a moving platform***, where the movement of the Wheel is reflected on the users’ device. The gaming technology is showcased in 3D scenes in the historical eras, whilst the AR mode in *Present Day* is used to overlay the points of interest over the actual view. To ensure the highest level of accuracy, the App receives several sources of data at one time, including GPS data, camera scans, and compass data to track the gondola’s location, supplemented by telemetry data to pinpoint the gondola’s angle.

-END-

All images are courtesy of Hong Kong Observation Wheel:



Caption: Visitors can scan the QR code at the waiting area to begin the AR App experience



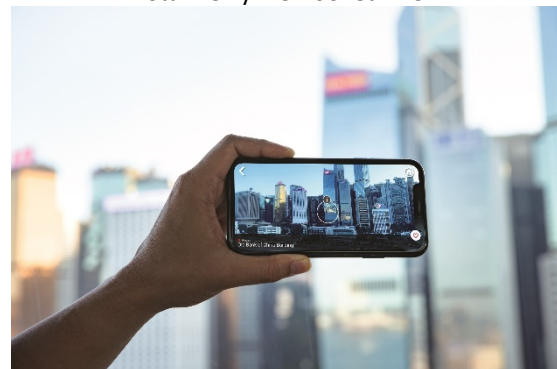
Caption: In the *Beyond the Beginning* mode of the AR App, images of Hong Kong in the 1890-1920's will overlay what is seen today



Caption: In the *Beyond the Beginning* mode of the AR App, visitors will see what the first generation Star Ferry Pier looked like



Caption: In the *City in Transition* mode of the AR App, images of Hong Kong in the 1960-1980's overlay what is seen today



Caption: The *Present Day* mode of the AR App presents modern-day visualisations of the city's classic landmarks and newer developments around the harbour

**AIA Vitality  
PARK**



Caption: Hong Kong Observation Wheel AR App is something the whole family can enjoy



Caption: Hong Kong Observation Wheel welcomes people to take in the views of the city from their private gondola

### **Key Details**

Address: 33 Man Kwong St, Central, Hong Kong

Opening Hours: 11:00am – 11:00pm (Last ride at 10:30pm)

Website: <https://hkow.hk/>

Facebook: [@hkowofficial](#)

Instagram: [@hkowofficial](#)

### **About Hong Kong Observation Wheel AR App**

Celebrating the city of Hong Kong and its rich heritage, the iconic landmark has innovated its experience to include the Hong Kong Observation Wheel AR App. As visitors travel the wheel with the AR App in hand, they will have the opportunity to see Hong Kong from three perspectives: *Beyond the Beginning* (1890-1920); *City in Transition* (1960-1980); and *Present Day*. A fun and educational activity for the whole family to enjoy, the advanced user friendly technology presents an opportunity for Hongkongers and visitors to learn more about Hong Kong's rich history and heritage, through vivid visual immersions.

### **About Hong Kong Observation Wheel and AIA Vitality Park**

Hong Kong Observation Wheel and AIA Vitality Park is operated by The Entertainment Corporation Ltd (TECL), offering visitors spectacular day and night time views of both Hong Kong Island and Tsim Sha Tsui. With its spacious 42 gondolas, this 60-meter tall attraction offers exciting 15 minute rides for guests. TECL and AIA are committed to leveraging the Hong Kong Observation Wheel and the AIA Vitality Park as a destination to promote healthy living and making this iconic landmark an experience which everyone in Hong Kong can enjoy.