

香港

Hong Kong City Guide

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By Jamie Bennett for Sage Corps 2018



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1. Introduction

Welcome to Hong Kong!

This is one of the most dynamic and safest cities in the world. With its iconic skyline and East-meets-West cultural fusion, Hong Kong has captured the hearts of millions.

This guide is designed to provide some basic information on living in Hong Kong, but is in no way definitive. If there is anything more you would like to know or if you are after some more personal recommendations, please do not hesitate to get in touch with your Country Managers.

2. Information

2.1 Important Numbers

Emergency services 999 (police, fire, ambulance)

Country Managers

Aymeric Vollant	+852 9090 5235	aymeric.vollant@gmail.com
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2.2 Important Dates

Public holiday

Monday July 2 Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Establishment Day

2.3 Money

There is no way to avoid it: Hong Kong is an expensive city. Expect to spend HK\$150 (approx. US\$20) on a regular day with minimum travel, no activities and basic food.

To stay on top of your finances, make yourself aware of the exchange rates and be conscious of it when making purchases. Consider downloading a **foreign exchange app** like XE to help manage your spending,

Although Hong Kong is a very safe place, it is always best to be cautious with your money and valuables. Avoid flashing around large amounts cash. Also avoid carrying HK\$1000 notes as vendors will often not accept them.

2.3.1 Exchanging Money

When exchanging your currency to Hong Kong dollars, keep in the mind the following:

- Do not accept HK\$1000 notes from anywhere other than a bank. There have been some fake notes on the market so they are best avoided.
- Do not exchange at the airport – the rates there are much more expensive than in town.
- Avoid exchanging cash at banks or hotels as their rates tend to be worse than money

changers.

- Shop around for the best rate. Often money changers can be found in clusters so you can easily look around before deciding.
- Most people in Hong Kong are very honest. However, it pays to be careful when using money changers. A common scam is using a similar, but much worse rate. For example, the exchange rate for USD is around HK\$7.75 but sometimes you will see 7.075 or 7.175 advertised. Avoid these changers.
- If using an ATM, first research which banks in Hong Kong, if any, are recommended by your local bank for withdrawing in order to avoid fees.

If you are exchanging cash there are several districts you can visit:

- **Tsim Sha Tsui:** On Kowloon side, you will find money changers on almost every major street. The best place to look is on Kimberly Road. Avoid the changers out the front of Chungking Mansions, although the changers inside usually have fair prices.
- **Wan Chai:** There are numerous exchanges around O'Brien Road under the pedestrian bridge between Hennessy Road and Lockhart Road.

2.3.2 Using Credit Cards in Hong Kong

★ VERY IMPORTANT ★

Before your departure, be sure to alert your bank you will be going overseas so your cards do not get blocked.

Most major retailers in Hong Kong accept credit cards. However, casual restaurants and smaller retailers, street food vendors and taxis only accept cash. When using a credit card in Hong Kong, you may be presented with the option to pay in HK dollars or your local currency. *Always choose HK dollars* as you will receive the bank's rates, which are typically much better than the merchant's rates.

2.4 Electricity

★ VERY IMPORTANT ★

Electricity in Hong Kong is supplied between 220 and 240 volts, which is double the standard voltage of North America (110 volts). As such, you need to be aware of whether your electronics are equipped with dual voltage capacity or if you need to bring an **electrical converter**. Here is a guide to deciding: www.hong-kong-traveller.com/hong-kong-electricity.html#.V1Y2k763tT8

North America Grounded NEMA 5-15	Japan Non-grounded JIS C 8303	Europe German style CEE7/4 Schuko	Europe French style Schuko	Europe/Russia Non-grounded CEE7/16 Europlug	Great Britain Grounded BS-1363	Great Britain "Shaver socket" BS-4573
Australia/China Grounded AS-3112	Italy Grounded CEI 23-16	Switzerland Grounded SEV-1011	Denmark Grounded SRAV 1962/DB	Israel Grounded SI 32 (IS 16A-R)	India Grounded BS-546 "Small"	South Africa Grounded BS-546 "Large"

The vast majority of wall sockets are British "G type" with only a very few being Indian "D type". Adapters are relatively cheap and easy to find should you forget to pack one.

2.5 Water

Hong Kong water is very clean. However, it is recommended to first boil it before drinking it. This is because many of the buildings have old pipes that may contaminate the fresh water just before it comes out of the tap.

Alternatively, you can purchase bottled drinking water. Take note though, many brands are “distilled”, meaning all of the beneficial natural minerals have been filtered out. The best bottled drinking water is “mineralised”. Simply read the label to check if it is distilled or mineralised.

2.6 Weather

During summer (May to September), Hong Kong is hot and humid, with most days exceeding 30°C/90°F and the nights rarely dropping below 26°C/80°F. Be sure to drink plenty of water and wear sun protection. Also expect morning showers, occasional thunderstorms and perhaps even a typhoon. Download the **Hong Kong Observatory app** for up-to-the-minute weather developments.

2.6.1 Typhoons

Hong Kong is well prepared with a reliable warning system in place should a typhoon hit. All TV stations, MTR stations and most buildings put up signs to let people know about any oncoming storms using the typhoon rating system, which is as follows:



T1: A storm has been spotted. Be aware but do not worry.

T3: Expect rain and strong winds.

T8: Time to go home! All offices, many shops, bars and restaurants will shut. Should a T8 hit, your workplace will alert you and let you leave in time to get transport home, as public transport will stop for the duration of the T8. Many taxis will also stop service during T8, or only agree to take customers off the meter and charge exorbitant prices.

During a T8 you should stay indoors and away from windows for your own safety. It is quite dangerous to go outside as you cannot predict what sort of debris might get thrown around in the storm, whether a tree will topple over or an awning collapse under the extreme conditions. Check out this YouTube video “Deadly Flying Debris - The Dangers Of Hurricane / Typhoon Winds!” to better understand the seriousness of danger: <https://youtu.be/Rdhrq-truck>

T9/T10: This is a direct hit. Do not go outdoors. Even if it appears calm outside, stay indoors because you may just be experiencing the eye of the storm with more gale-force winds and lashes of rain to come.

3. Staying Connected

Hong Kong is all about networking and keeping in touch. As such, you will need a local number. This should be one of your *very* first priorities upon your arrival.

3.1 Mobile Phone Networks

★ VERY IMPORTANT ★

Make sure your phone is unlocked and can work in outside of your home country. Here is the link to a guide explaining what you need to know, including how to ensure your phone will operate in Asia: www.hktravelblog.com/sim-cards/cell-mobile-phones-work-asia/

Remember to bring along your key for popping opening the SIM card tray.

3.1.1 *Choosing a Carrier*

Generally speaking, all carriers offer at least one affordable option so getting a local number with reliable data should not impact too greatly on your daily budget. This website provides a useful guide on selecting which service provider best suits your needs: www.prepaid-data-sim-card.wikia.com/wiki/Hong_Kong.

3.1.2 *Buying a SIM Card*

It is very easy to purchase a prepaid SIM card. No ID is required. 711 is the most convenient store to buy one and they also sell kits to convert nano SIMs into micro SIMs if necessary. Alternatively, you can go directly to any telecommunications company retail store. They can be found all over Hong Kong.

3.2 Messaging Apps

The most popular messaging app in Hong Kong is **Whatsapp**. You may find that most of your professional communication is performed over this app. It is perfectly acceptable to keep your home country number as your Whatsapp ID. Just be sure to give out both your HK and home numbers when providing contact details.

WeChat is also popular but is mostly used for communicating with Mainland Chinese.

3.3 Wifi

There is free WiFi all across Hong Kong. You can get online for free at every 711 and HSBC bank and by standing near the “Free Wi-Fi Hotspots” in MTR stations. You will notice some stations even have public computers for commuters to jump online. Many buses also have free Wifi and free Wifi can be found in many public places, even at the beach! This website lists all the locations provided by the government: <http://theme.gov.hk/en/theme/wifi/location/>



4. Transportation

Transport in Hong Kong is exceptionally convenient and cheap. The entire region is connected 24 hours by a vast network of trains, buses, ferries and trams, making it incredibly easy to get around. The simplest way to navigate the system is to input your destination into **Google maps** and follow the directions for taking public transport from there.

4.1 Octopus Card | www.octopus.com.hk



Essential to Hong Kong's highly efficient transportation system is the Octopus Card. This can be bought at any MTR station customer service booth and can be used not only for taking transport but also at many retailers including convenience stores, supermarkets, bakeries, fast food restaurants, etc.

4.1.1 Cost

Deposit \$50 + Stored Value \$100 = Price HK\$150

When leaving Hong Kong, you may return the card at any MTR station customer service booth and receive back the deposit (minus a HK\$9 fee) plus any remaining value. You may also keep the card as it will remain valid for three years after the last top-up date.

4.1.2 To Use

Simply wave or tap your card over the reader and the payment will be automatically deducted.

4.1.3 Topping-Up

Topping-up your card is as convenient as using it. You can add value at any 711, Circle K, Wellcome, Parknshop, MacDonald's or Starbucks, any public transportation company's customer service centre or by using the Octopus Add-Value machines at MTR stations. Take note, you can only add amounts in multiples of HK\$50, with a maximum stored value of HK\$1000.

4.2 MTR | www.mtr.com.hk



The Mass Transit Railway is the most efficient way to get around Hong Kong. The closest station to Harbour Plaza is Quarry Bay (exit C). During peak hours there are trains every two minutes and throughout the day trains usually come every 5-8 minutes depending on the time and the line. A handy rule of thumb, on average it takes two minutes to travel from one station to the next. So if you are travelling 5 stops, the train trip should only take around 10 minutes plus 5 minutes either side to enter and exit the station. You can download the **MTR Mobile app** for exact times.

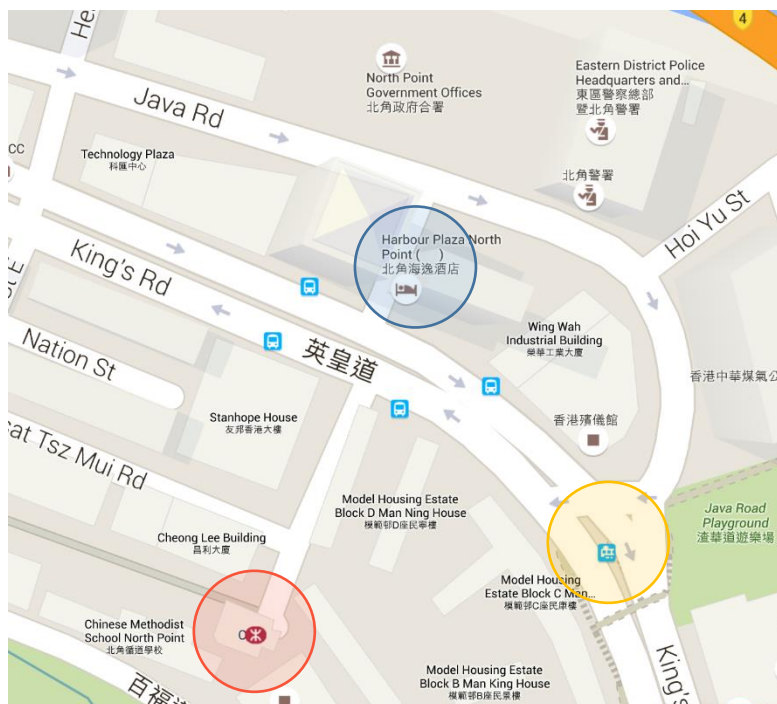
4.2.1 Tickets

The best way to travel on the MTR is by using your **Octopus** card. Simply tap it on the reader at the barrier on your way in and out. If you have not yet bought one, or perhaps forgotten it, tickets are easily purchased from vending machines in the stations. If you require change, visit the Customer Service desk, but note you cannot buy tickets directly from staff. Tap your single-journey ticket to enter and feed it into the slot to exit.



4.2.2 Operating Hours

Each line is different, but typically the first train is around 06:00 and the last is approximately at 01:00 the following morning. On Friday and Saturday nights the trains run slightly later.



- Harbour Plaza North Point
- MTR Quarry Bay Exit C
- Tram Stop

4.3 Light Rail | www.mtr.com.hk/en/customer/services/more_light_rail.html



The Light Rail is a tram system that connects the North West of Hong Kong to the MTR. It can only be found in the New Territories. Do not forget to tap your Octopus card when entering and exiting the platforms.

4.4 Trams | www.hktramways.com/

Known locally as *ding dings*, trams run from Kennedy Town along the north of Hong Kong Island to Shau Kei Wan. They are slow, overcrowded pretty much all the time and do not have air conditioning. However, they are the cheapest form of transport and make for a nostalgic tour of the Island. Board from the rear doors and pay a flat fee of HK\$2.30 when exiting from the front of the tram either with exact change or your Octopus card.



4.5 Buses | www.nwstbus.com.hk/

Double decker and regular buses run all over Hong Kong. Hong Kongers are very orderly and wait in line next to bus stop signs for buses. Pay when you board either with Octopus or with exact cash and press the red “Stop” button to alert the driver when you wish to alight at the next stop. Although the buses have English signs announcing the stops, they are not always accurate. The more familiar you become with Hong Kong geography, the easier the buses will become to use. Signs at bus stops list the first and last bus times and the frequency, with some routes running 24 hours.



4.6 Minibuses | www.16seats.net/eng/

Minibuses are typically much faster than the big buses. However, they only accommodate a maximum of 16 people.



Green minibuses are operated by the government and have fixed routes. You can hail them at dedicated bus stops or along the side of the road and you pay when you board either with exact cash or Octopus. These bus routes are included in Google maps transport searches.



Red minibuses are typically operated by individuals, do not have fixed routes or fixed stops and you pay when you alight. The price is listed in red writing on small white boards propped up on the dash board and you can only pay with cash. The driver will give you change. These minibus routes are not included in Google maps.

In both cases, you will need to yell out to the bus driver “next stop please!” or “stop here please!” when you wish to alight. In Cantonese this sounds like “yaow loh, mh goi”. Certain green and red minibuses operate 24 hours.

4.7 Ferries

Not to be missed is the **Star Ferry** that crosses Hong Kong harbor connecting Central and Wan Chai to Tsim Sha Tsui. Feel free to grab a few drinks and some snacks to enjoy while taking the ten-minute journey. For more information visit: www.starferry.com.hk/en/

Hong Kong's outlying islands are all connected by a vast fleet of ferries. Favourite day trip destinations include Lamma Island and Cheung Chau. The majority depart from Central Ferry Pier. Use **Google maps** to find out departing times and frequency.

4.8 Taxis | www.taxihongkong.com/

Starting with a flag fall fee of HK\$24, taxis are cheap, very safe and plentiful. You can easily hail a cab on any street pretty much any time of day or night as long as there are no double yellow lines on the side of the road. That said, between 3:30 and 4:30 both morning and afternoon, taxis can become scarce as the drivers swap shifts during these hours. If you cannot seem to find one, or have run out of cash, try using the taxi hailing app **HK Taxi**, which has the option to pay by credit card as well as cash.

Most drivers can speak at least some English. You can easily hail a cab on any street pretty much any time of day or night as long as there are no double yellow lines on the side of the road. That said, between 3:30 and 4:30 both morning and afternoon, taxis can become scarce as the drivers swap shifts during these hours.

Taxis can accommodate either 4 or 5 passengers depending on their license, which will be clearly stated on a big, round, green sticker typically located on the bumper below the headlamps and rear brake lights. If you require a receipt, you must ask the taxi driver upon payment. Also note, large items of luggage will incur an extra HK\$5 fee per piece and you will have to pay double the toll fee when travelling through the tunnels connecting Hong Kong Island to Kowloon.

Be aware, drivers from Kowloon tend to be unfamiliar with Hong Kong Island and may refuse to take you. If you see a cardboard sign covering the red "available" light on the dash board, it means the taxi is only accepting passengers crossing over from HK Island to Kowloon.



Taxi drivers *must* use the meter. If a taxi driver tries to barter with you, do not take that taxi. If you arrive at your destination and the driver attempts to charge you more than what is on the meter, or has not used the meter, call the police (999). (This is a very rare occurrence but may happen if you take a taxi from The Peak or very late at night from Lang Kwai Fong.)

This taxi can take four passengers.

This red light indicates that the taxi is available. It will drop down once the driver turns on the meter.

4.9 Uber | www.uber.com/cities/hong-kong/

Uber is currently operating in Hong Kong, though somewhat tentatively. (It is coming up against some serious opposition because of the threat it poses to the HK\$7 million price tag of a registered taxi license.) Typically Uber is not much cheaper than regular taxis but usually provides better value for longer rides, especially trips including toll ways. They do not provide a ride share option.

5. Daily Life

While no day is ever the same in Hong Kong, there are some basics daily needs you will require.

5.1 Groceries

Everything you want and need can easily be found in Hong Kong. The closest supermarket to Harbour Plaza North Point is **Market Place by Jasons** (734-738 King's Road, North Point). However, it is a little more expensive than other super markets. Other, more affordable options not too far away are:

- **Wellcome** Shop B, Healthy Village I Development, 188 Tsat Tsz Mui Road, North Point
- **Parknshop** Shop U14A, Upper G/F, Fitfort, Healthy Garden, 560 King's Road, North Point

TIP: Remember to bring your own shopping bag as plastic bags incur a 50 cent levy.



○ Harbour Plaza North Point

5.1.1 Food Delivery

For those times where you just cannot face going outside to look for food, Hong Kong has some very reliable food delivery service providers:

- **FoodPanda** | www.foodpanda.hk
- **Deliveroo** | www.deliveroo.hk/en/
- **Uber Eats** | www.ubereats.com/hong_kong/
- **24-Hours McDonalds** | www.mcdonalds.com.hk/en/24-hours-mcdelivery.html

If your delivery person comes all the way up to your room/apartment, consider giving a HK\$10-20 tip.

5.2 Health

Healthcare in Hong Kong is of a good standard and is relatively affordable. Be sure to familiarise yourself with your insurance policies on seeking medical care and their requirements.

Remember, if you are ill, let your supervisor and country managers know *as soon as possible*.

5.2.1 Hospitals

There are two types of hospitals in Hong Kong: public and private. As your health insurance should cover your medical costs, it is recommended to go to a private hospital for any emergency. You can find a list here: www.privatehospitals.org.hk/en/hospitals.htm

The closest private hospital to Harbor Plaza is:

St. Paul's Hospital

No. 2 Eastern Hospital Road
Causeway Bay
Phone: +852 2830 3709

5.2.2 Doctors

Going to the doctor in Hong Kong is a straight forward procedure. Usually you can just walk in and see a doctor relatively quickly. Take note, many have limited opening hours with doctors choosing to start late, take long lunches and finish early. While most doctors here are from Hong Kong, the majority have received their degrees abroad. Even so, you might find their bedside manner somewhat abrupt. Consider it a cultural experience.

Here is one recommended doctor:

Lam Paul Clinic

14/F, Li Dong Building,
9 Li Yuen Street East, Central
Phone: +852 2525 8158

Alternatively, this website is a useful search engine for finding a local doctor:
www.finddoc.com/en

5.2.3 Pharmacies

Pharmacies in Hong Kong stock most Western over-the-counter and prescription drugs. Big chain pharmacies including **Mannings** and **Watsons** can be easily found as well as other small independent dispensaries.

5.3 Fitness

Be warned, private gyms are expensive in Hong Kong. Unfortunately, without a local Hong Kong ID, you will not be able to make use of any free trials on offer. That said, there are many free or pay-as-you-feel public classes happening around Hong Kong (i.e. yoga, running, etc.). You can usually find out about these through **Facebook** or **MeetUp**. You can also find more affordable gym sessions, hotel pools and fitness classes on **KFit** (www.kfit.com).

5.4 Beauty

Salons, spas and beauty shops are found all across Hong Kong, catering to all needs and all budgets. Check out **HoKo Buy** (www.hokobuy.com) for special deals. The startup app **Bloom Me** (bloomme.com.hk) also has some great offers.

Here are some recommendations for massage parlors that are clean, fairly priced and definitely only for massages:

Thai Retreat

Room B, 1 Floor, ChiPing Building
38 Hau Wo Street
Kennedy Town
Tel: 2882 2396

Tai Pan Reflexology Beauty & Foot Spa

Basement
83 Nathan Road
Tsim Sha Tsui
Tel: 2301 1990 / 2301 3820

6. Etiquette

Making a good impression in Hong Kong is key to getting the most out of your time as an intern. The following guides provide a solid introduction to Hong Kong etiquette:

- **Commisceo Global Hong Kong Guide** | www.commisceo-global.com/country-guides/hong-kong-guide

- **eDiplomat Cultural Guide Hong Kong |**
www.ediplomat.com/np/cultural_etiquette/ce_hk.htm

If you are ever unsure, watch how other, more experienced people are conducting themselves or simply ask your supervisor for advice. Some basic points to remember are:

- Use your right hand or, preferably, both hands to pass objects (especially business cards).
- Always greet more senior people first.
- Avoid calling Hong Kongers “Chinese” – this can be a sensitive topic and may elicit a negative response.
- There is no need to tip in local restaurants and many international restaurants already include a service charge, which will be made clear in the menu. However, some bars do not include a service charge so a 10% cash tip is always appreciated.
- Do not point at objects or people with your index finger or chopsticks – use an open palm instead.
- Keep an eye out for “No Smoking” signs. You cannot smoke anywhere indoors in Hong Kong and many outdoor public spaces, such as parks and beaches, also forbid smoking (along with spitting, ball sports, hawking and so on).

Remember, as long as you are polite, respectful and eager to learn, no one will hold slip-ups against you. After all, you are new to Hong Kong and still learning the customs.

6.1 Saying “Thank You”

Mh goi (*mm goy*)

This means “thank you” as well as “please” and “excuse me” when trying to gain someone’s attention or asking them to move out of the way.

Do jeh (*daw jeir*)

This form of “thank you” is used for when someone gives you a gift. It is inappropriate to use mh goi for gifts.

Mh sai (*mm sigh*)

This translates to “no need” or “not necessary.” Use it to say “you’re welcome” when someone thanks you or to politely refuse any unwanted item someone is offering you.

Check out this YouTube video “Learn Cantonese - Thank You & You're Welcome in Cantonese” to practice pronouncing the tones correctly: https://youtu.be/jFk_a019M1M

7. Hong Kong Guides

Hong Kong is a city in perpetual motion. Every day of the week something new and exciting is happening. To find out about what’s going, like these pages on Facebook, download their apps or sign up for their newsletters:

7.1 Things to Do

- **Time Out** | www.timeout.com/hong-kong
Lists, reviews and articles about the best Hong Kong events, things to do, restaurants, shops and nightlife
- **Sassy** | www.sassyhongkong.com
A guide to all things Hong Kong – dining, shopping, beauty, events, nightlife

7.2 Local News

- **South China Morning Post** | www.scmp.com/frontpage/hk
An English language newspaper covering domestic and international news
- **Coconuts Hong Kong** | www.hongkong.coconuts.co
Good for local news, more of a tabloid with local gossip
- **Hong Kong Free Press** | www.hongkongfp.com
A new, rather controversial news outlet focused on promoting freedom of the press

7.3 Dining

- **Foodie Magazine** | www.afoodieworld.com
A free magazine all about Hong Kong restaurants and bars
- **Open Rice** | www.openrice.com/en/hongkong
An online dining guide with customer reviews for pretty much every restaurant in Hong Kong
- **E_Ting** | www.e-tingfood.com/
A comprehensive, well-written food blog
- **That Food Cray** | www.thatfoodcray.com/category/cities/hong-kong/
A fun food blog that goes beyond Hong Kong
- Also see the guides listed under **7.1 Things to Do**

7.4 Nightlife

- **HK Clubbing** | www.hkclubbing.com/
Lists and reviews of all major nightclubs and entertainment events
- **Facebook** search “Hong Kong party” to find relevant posts and groups
- Try looking for events organised by **MeetUp** communities (www.meetup.com)

- Also see the guides listed under **7.1 Things to Do**

7.5 Hiking

- **Hike Hong Kong** | www.hikehongkong.blogspot.hk/
Easy to follow guides of Hong Kong's top hikes
- **Roz's Hiking Pages** | www.hkcrystal.com/hiking/index.htm
Organises hikes every weekend including night hikes, also provides comprehensive list of Hong Kong hikes

7.6 Travel

- **WikiShenzhen** | www.wikishenzhen.com/
Everything you need to know about Shenzhen
- **How to Plan a 1-Day Trip to Macau from Hong Kong** | www.chinahighlights.com/hong-kong/article-macau-hk.htm
An excellent guide for trips to Macau

7.7 Miscellaneous

- **Jumpstart Magazine** | www.jumpstartmag.com
A free magazine all about the Hong Kong startup scene

The end.