

# South China Morning Post

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2018

南華早報

WWW.SCMP.COM

## 'LAND SUPPLY IS NOT THE ANSWER'

Calls for more affordable housing as Lantau reclamation work starts

> LEADING THE NEWS A3



## T20 CRICKET BLITZ IN TEST OF POPULARITY

KPMG signs on as sponsor in wake of record number of broadcast deals

> SPORT

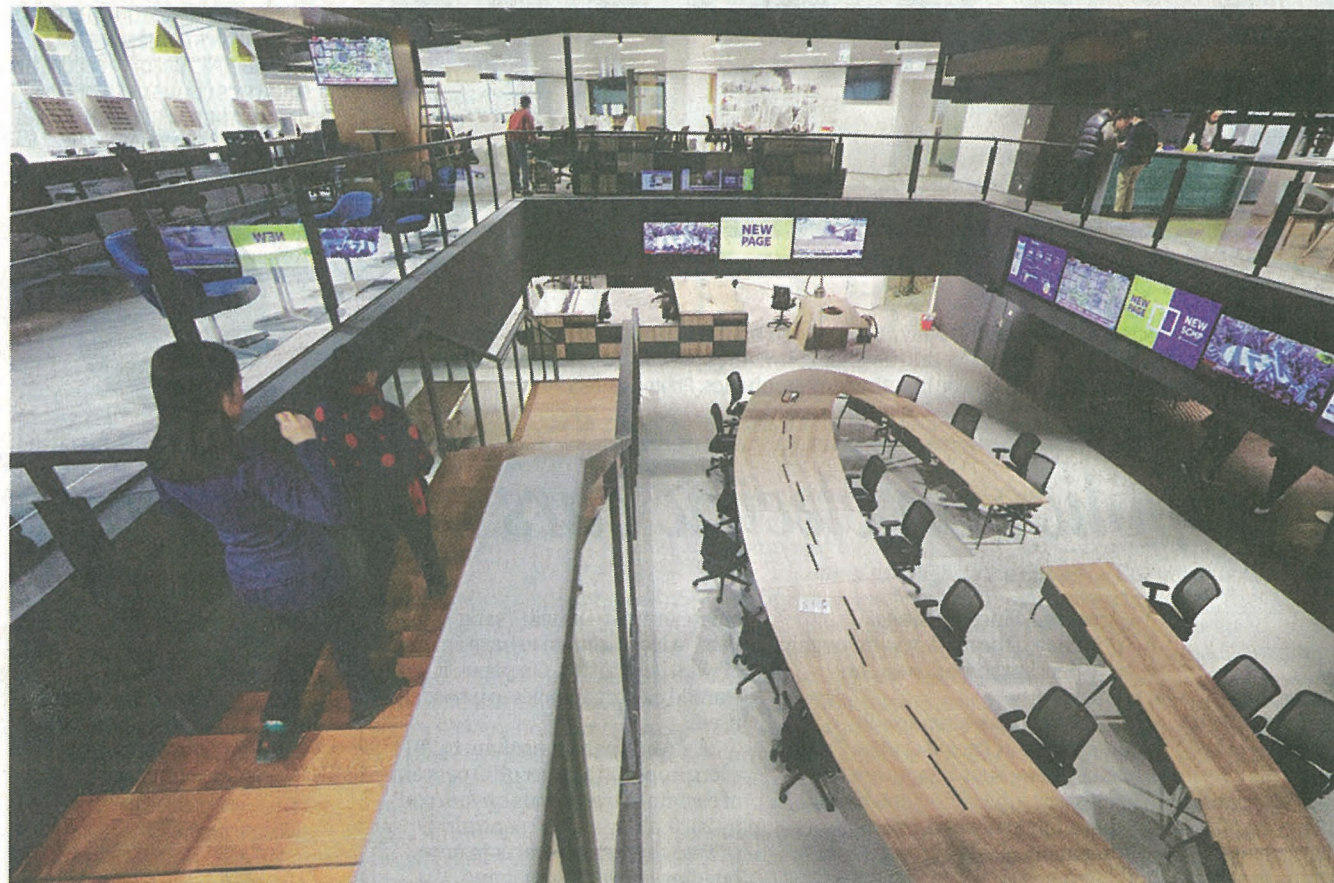


## CYBER RULES 'AN INFILTRATION RISK'

US business group urges Beijing to ease limits on data flow, storage

> CHINA A6

## New home for your new-look Post



A glimpse of the new *South China Morning Post* headquarters at Times Square, Causeway Bay. The company's new offices will occupy six floors of the building, with purpose-built, state-of-the-art facilities to embrace the digital age. The newspaper itself, as readers will notice today, features a new design with a yellow and blue logo

as part of a company-wide branding change. After 114 years as Hong Kong's newspaper of record, the *South China Morning Post* continues to forge ahead to lead the global conversation about China, with truth and fairness as its core editorial values. Photo: Felix Wong > FOCUS A4, EDITORIAL A10

## FINANCE

# BEIJING TO BLOCK SITES IN DIGITAL CURRENCIES FIGHT

Attempt to finally choke cryptocurrency market comes after recent efforts to shut down domestic exchanges failed to eradicate trades made online

Xie Yu  
yu.xie@scmp.com

Beijing will block all websites related to cryptocurrency trading and initial coin offerings (ICOs) – including foreign platforms – in an attempt to totally quash the market.

"To prevent financial risks, China will step up measures to remove any onshore or offshore platforms related to virtual currency trading or ICOs," said an article published by *Financial News*, a publication affiliated with the People's Bank of China (PBOC).

The article acknowledged that recent attempts to stamp out digital currencies by shutting down domestic exchanges had failed to eradicate trading.

"ICOs and virtual currency

domestic investors' participation in overseas transactions of ICOs and virtual currencies, as risks were still high in the sector.

Beijing's tougher stance, which effectively bans all forms of activity related to digital currencies, aims to put the brakes on the ICO and virtual-currency trading mania that has been sweeping the mainland.

Many exchange platforms relocated to Japan or Singapore

DONALD ZHAO, BITCOIN TRADER IN TOKYO

ARTS had tumbled to 0.13 yuan in two weeks from 0.66 yuan after its ICO and listing on an exchange in late January.

Following reports of the latest crackdown, advertisements for cryptocurrencies have stopped appearing on Baidu, China's largest search engine, and social media platform Weibo.

"It is common for people to use VPNs [virtual private networks] to trade cryptocurrencies, as many exchange platforms relocated to Japan or Singapore," said Donald Zhao, a bitcoin trader who relocated to Tokyo from Beijing late last year, following the ban.

The tighter regulation from the PBOC will "definitely weigh on the cryptocurrency universe", said Wayne Cao, who runs a company that recently offered 10 billion tokens in an ICO.

"Most of the Chinese ICO projects are taken up by Chinese investors. So if they are blocked, the whole cryptocurrency market will be dragged down," he said.

Until now, offerings of new

DEFENCE



## FOCUS

## Post moves with the times



This is the beginning of a new era for the *South China Morning Post* with changes to its design, company branding and a move to Times Square among signs of a revamped corporate culture, chief executive officer Gary Liu says

Mark Sharp  
mark.sharp@scmp.com

The traditional Lunar New Year clear-out has come early for the *South China Morning Post* this year, as staff embark on the first stage of a historic move that will reunify the company in state-of-the-art offices designed to reflect and facilitate a makeover of its corporate culture.

The new year in the Chinese calendar marks an exciting new era for the 114-year-old Hong Kong newspaper publisher, which is undergoing transformation into a digital media company as it remains committed to telling the story of a rising China to the world. The move to new offices, in the bustling heart of Causeway Bay, will strengthen the *Post's* ability to do just this.

The first of six floors of the new Times Square offices was occupied by the *Post's* magazines department yesterday, while newsroom staff will move into two more floors this weekend. The remainder of the *Post's* staff – currently working elsewhere in Causeway Bay, and in Tai Po and Cyberport – will relocate in stages before the end of 2019.

Gary Liu, CEO of the *South China Morning Post*, said the move served four key requirements to push the company forward in its goals: fostering a digital culture, creating an integrated organisation, an agile environment and a joyful workplace.



“We wanted to make sure that the office space is a physical expression of our new culture, and provides the work space and optionality to ensure our employees can live out this new culture,” Liu said.

**That optionality is going to make our organisation much more productive**

GARY LIU, CEO

Digital culture is writ large in the two connected newsroom floors, with about 140 monitors and screens mounted on the walls, reflecting how analytics and data play an increasingly vital role in the way the newsroom operates.

The digital reorganisation ensures that staff are equipped with the latest technologies. For the first time, the *Post* has a video studio, and areas set aside for experimentation and R&D.

To create an agile working environment, various seating options have been provided: regular low desks, benches, and high standing and collaborative desks. Numerous meeting rooms across all floors, designed on Hong Kong themes, aim to encourage activity-based tasks, giving employees the opportunity to choose from a range of working environments.

“That optionality, we believe, is going to make our entire organisation much more productive and it’s going to give much more freedom to our employees,” Liu said.

To foster a more joyful workplace, each floor has a uniquely themed social hub – an arcade, games room, cafe and yoga area, for example. These spaces promote social interaction, allowing employees to collaborate cross-departmentally, or alternatively to find a quiet, comfortable space for rest and relaxation.

The overarching goal of creating an integrated workplace was achieved with a central, interior staircase that will eventually connect five of the six floors. This is further enhanced on the lower two floors – where the news teams will operate – by a huge atrium.

The *Post's* senior editors will be seated together at a large news

hub at the bottom of the atrium, to foster open communication. Here, multiple views and perspectives can be shared to refine the *Post's* editorial line, and the depth and breadth of its news coverage.

Alex Ho, the *Post's* general manager, who headed the project committee overseeing the move, said the spirit of open collaboration also extended to seeking input on the new office design from all staff members.

“We conducted surveys on a number of key features – for example, office chairs and theme of the meeting rooms. We provided a project email address for staff to give their input and carefully considered their comments, for example about pantry items, recycling facilities and shower rooms,” Ho said.

The design project was awarded to M Moser Associates, which had a first-rate reputation for workplace design, Ho said.

“In addition, the presentation and team they devoted to this project, plus their experience working on similar projects for media companies and offices in Times Square, won our trust,” he said.

M Moser Associates had worked extensively with digital and media companies, including Google, Bloomberg, Thomson Reuters, and Disney’s Industrial Light and Magic special effects unit, according to Allyn Dorey, the firm’s director of international design.

Dorey said the scale of the atrium was the most remarkable element of the *Post's* design project, in terms of the openness and connectivity that was central to the design brief.

“The expression, that grand gesture, the open communication, was inspired by the initial brief to create that visibility,” he said. “It’s also home for the newsroom, all the editors, and doubles up as a town hall space. It’s the heart, I guess, within those six floors. It’s a focal point and really represents the desire to be open. In terms of the connectivity, that was one of the key parts of the design.”

The *Post's* new corporate culture is also highly visible from today in the redesign of the newspaper, with vibrant signature colours of yellow and blue. Inspired by Hong Kong’s rich maritime history, the *Post's* new logo represents the signalling flag Kilo, standing for the letter “K” when flown in sequence. Hoisted

alone, its meaning becomes “I want to communicate with you”, which the signalling system is able to achieve across distance and languages.

“It represents two implicit things that are important to the *Post*. It can be seen as two panes of a window and therefore the way the *Post* views the world – two sides to every story, to maintain truth and fairness. It also represents the *Post's* legacy as a broadsheet newspaper, and an organisation turning a new page,” Liu said.

The transformation of the *Post's* culture is the latest milestone in its storied history. The newspaper was founded in 1903 by Tse Tsan-tai and Alfred Cunningham – after whom two of the new meeting rooms have been named – and the first issue rolled off the presses on November 6 of that year.

The company has continually strived to stay abreast of the latest technology in publishing, and this new chapter echoes a headline that appeared in the newspaper in April 1971 – “As modern as tomorrow” – when the *Post* moved into “one of the most up-to-date publishing centres in Asia”, in Quarry Bay.

That facility in Tong Chong Street was also “interior-designed for maximum efficiency”, with new presses that published “the best newspapers that modern offset equipment can produce”. The Goss press was capable of printing 28-page newspapers at a rate of 40,000 an hour.

Twenty-five years later, in 1996, the company made its first strides into the digital space with the website PostNet, which won

**Views of the new South China Morning Post offices in Times Square.**  
Photos: Felix Wong

the “Best Overall Non-US Newspaper Online Service” accolade at the prestigious Editor & Publisher awards of 1998.

Fast-forward to today, and digital technology has developed beyond recognition, with the advent of internet search engine giants such as Google, social-media platforms, and thousands of competing web-based media companies.

The *Post* made another milestone in cyberspace in April 2016, when Alibaba Group took down the SCMP.com payroll, offering free online and mobile access to readers as one of its first moves after acquiring the company.

**We are committed to having a print product that is a flagship of Hong Kong**

GARY LIU

The *Post* is now primed to launch groundbreaking new products to meet the needs of readers who are increasingly discovering news in different ways.

The first platform will be Abacus, a mobile, web-first product offering in-depth insight into technology developed in China. Abacus will explain who is who and shed light on key issues in the Chinese technology space, with an innovative, reader-friendly format.

Telling this story was important because “China is no longer following in the path of Silicon Valley. In many ways, it is now leading”, said Liu, who was appointed *Post* CEO in January 2017 and previously held positions at Google, Spotify, AOL and Digg.

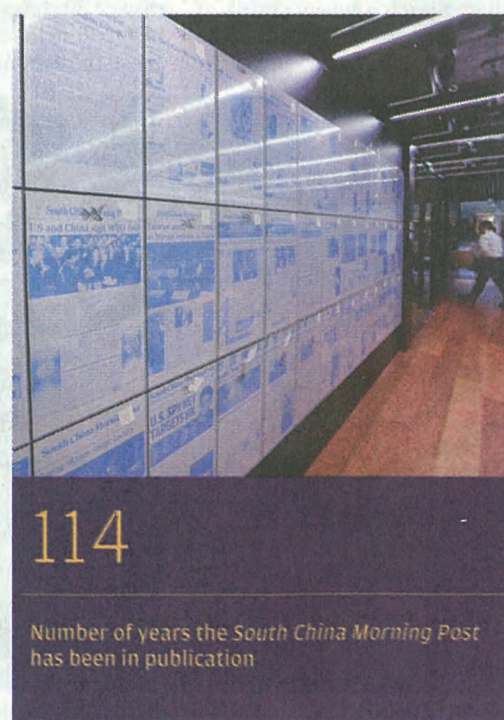
The *Post* is also exploring various possibilities for deploying artificial intelligence (AI) in its operations.

“We are currently focused on enabling data to make our business operation more effective and efficient – to give us a more detailed and precise understanding of our performance, of how the market is reacting to our content,” Liu said.

Despite the focus on digital media, Liu said the *South China Morning Post's* board remained committed to the heritage print product. “It has served Hong Kong and the region for over 114 years and we expect it to continue to serve the city and the region for many years to come. We are committed to having a print product that is a flagship product of Hong Kong,” he said.



Chief operating officer Elsie Cheung and editor-in-chief Tammy Tam officiate at the blessing ceremony of the new *South China Morning Post* offices at Times Square in Causeway Bay. Photo: Nora Tam



114

Number of years the *South China Morning Post* has been in publication