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## Hong Kong's Telecommunications Story

### *Hong Kong... the Pearl of the Orient...A City of Superlatives...*

This hustling, bustling metropolis, perched on the edge of the South China Sea, is the Gateway to China, an international commercial and financial centre, a global transportation hub, a haven for tourists and a shopper's delight, a gourmet's paradise, as well as a leading world city – where east meets west, fortunes can be made, and people are always out and about. Truly one of the world's great success stories.

This success would not have been possible without the city's excellent infrastructure – its extensive transportation systems, effective judicial processes, excellent public services, as well as its state-of-the-art communications. Hong Kong today leads the telecommunications world in a number of areas. It was an early user of optical fibres and one of the world's first major cities to enjoy the benefits of a fully digital network, it has one of the world's highest penetrations of mobile phone users with some of the cheapest usage rates, the broadband penetration rate into homes ranks among the topmost countries in the world and the territory has a regulatory environment that is universally acknowledged as being in the forefront of the global industry. Receiving the ultimate accolade, ITU Telecom World 2006, the Olympics of the telecommunications world, took place in Hong Kong in December that year – the first time ever the event has moved out of its usual location in Geneva.

Despite these successes, this was not always the case. Telephone services were slow to take off in the early years and Hong Kong has experienced its share of problems on its journey to becoming the sophisticated and successful telecommunications market that it is today. The transition has taken vision and talent, time and enormous investment, trial and error, as well as the collective efforts of the thousands of people who have worked in the industry. This book aims to tell the story of Hong Kong's telecommunications development. The pride and glory achieved, as well as the blood, sweat and tears expended, to get to where the industry is today.