

# Pioneering the Future of Event Experiences

Global communications powerhouse Havas launched its specialised event planning arm Havas Play in Hong Kong, leveraging the city's vibrant creative industry and the mega events boom.

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**Alex Brazendale**  
**Head of Havas Play**  
**Havas Media Hong Kong**



Founded in 1835 in France, Havas, recently listed on Euronext Amsterdam and under the French conglomerate Vivendi's strategic umbrella, is one of the world's largest communications and media agencies. Renowned for its integrated approach, Havas provides a full range of services including creative, advertising, digital marketing, events, public relations, and more. Havas Hong Kong, the local office with a strong focus on the regional market, draws upon its deep local and global expertise to deliver holistic campaigns to align brands with consumer passion points and transcend geographical boundaries, reaching both regional and global audiences.

In 2023, Havas offices across the globe began ramping up its events capabilities, a global network, named Havas Play, was set up to create brand experiences in entertainment, sports, technology, and fandom. It was the time that experience specialist Alex Brazendale joined Havas Media Hong Kong as Head of Havas Play. As the government continues to strengthen its tourism and mega events appeal, the timing of Havas Play scored a winner. From orchestrating the drone show above Victoria Harbour for a renowned insurance company in late 2023 to managing top international sports events such as the Hong Kong Rugby 10s and the Hong Kong Soccer 7s for the Hong Kong Football Club, Brazendale understands what excites people.

## Robust IP Regime Empowering the Creative Industry

After two decades delivering Hong Kong events, Brazendale has noticed a difference in recent years. "Since the pandemic, the government has taken on a 'how can we help?' attitude," he added. "A supportive government plus the city's vibrant creative industry enables us to build 'made in Hong Kong' intellectual properties (IP) that we can share globally. The mega events economy is not just about numbers. It's about having the right people in the right places. It's about creating IP we can export. When Kai Tak Sports Park opens this year, Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) residents across the border will be enticed with the easy access to upcoming events here. Our advantage is that we can look beyond borders and we are excited to discuss opportunities with brands."

## GBA Opportunities

Andrew Cawte, CEO of Havas Media Hong Kong, is enthusiastic about the opportunities that the GBA presents. "It changes Hong Kong from a seven million person market to an over 70 million one," he stated. And he is ready: Havas Hong Kong has grown between 30 to 50 percent year on year for the past four years. "Each year, we have employed new staff members," Cawte said. "We like working with people who are naturally curious and enjoy trying new things. Since we work with a lot of

international brands, the best recruits are the ones who understand east and west. Perhaps they have lived abroad or studied at international schools. And we also have a lot of local talent for different aspects of our business." This diverse talent pool in Hong Kong significantly enhances the innovative and dynamic works of Havas Hong Kong.

A resident of Hong Kong for 30 years, Cawte cannot imagine living anywhere else. "Hong Kong, highly accessible for all, is one of the most amazing cities in the world," he stated. "Its energy is incredible."

## Havas Hong Kong

- Havas, recently listed on Euronext Amsterdam, employs about 22,000 people in more than 100 countries
- Havas Hong Kong has grown its staff headcount from approximately 60 employees in 2022 to 100 employees currently
- In 2023, Havas Play launched in Hong Kong to augment Havas' services with customised event planning and execution

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