

How OpenSpace Helps Sino Group Enhance Operational Efficiency and Increase Productivity

The Hong Kong-based Property Developer Found that 360 Construction Photo Documentation Helps Field and Project Management Teams Save Time and Operation Costs

Goal: Improve Site Photo Documentation to Save Time and Reduce Man-Hours

As one of the leading property and real estate developers in Hong Kong, Sino Group is committed to nurturing startups and is always looking for a competitive edge by leveraging practical construction- and property-tech. Specifically, the company's leadership was interested in how they could best utilize tech to improve construction processes with a focus on saving time and enhancing operational efficiency.

They were hoping to find a flexible and customizable AI-based solution that would provide smart, autonomous reporting and monitoring alerts to both the field team and project management team and be well integrated inside the company, instead of only being used by specialized roles and scenario conditions.

After receiving a recommendation from global partners to try OpenSpace and completing their own market research and benchmarking, Sino Group decided to move forward. They eventually expanded their OpenSpace relationship and began using the product on two other large projects.

Strategy: Deploy OpenSpace on a 500,000 Square-Foot Project in Hong Kong

In June 2021, Sino Group began piloting OpenSpace on their Tung Tau Yuen Long Town Lot No. 532 project, which broke ground in 2019. The project consists of two 14-story office towers above a landscaped podium block with a shopping mall and basement car park—totaling about 500,000 square feet.

The field team was able to spin up quickly because of how easy and flexible OpenSpace is to use, according to Gary Chan, General Manager (Building Services) at Sino Group. “The field team thought they needed GPS to use OpenSpace at first, but I explained that all they needed

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was to strap a 360 camera to their working helmet and walk as usual in their daily work, and the 360 imagery would automatically be pinned to the floor plan,” he said.

By having someone capture the jobsite twice a week using OpenSpace, the project management team found they could review project designs and monitor progress remotely from a digital device, such as a smartphone, iPad or computer. This was especially helpful because of COVID-19, which led to sudden losses of manpower and logistical complications.

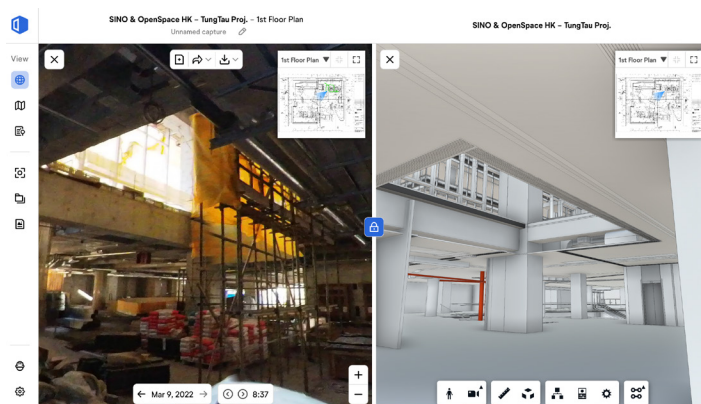
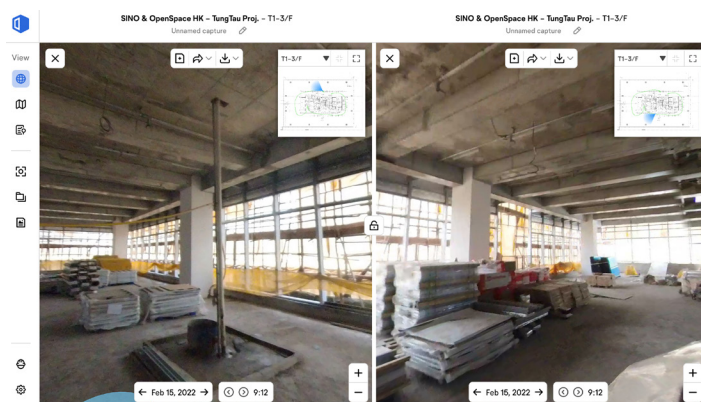
“We were very impressed by the power of OpenSpace’s video processing and how the AI technology stitches 360 imagery together into one immersive 3D virtual walkthrough,” Chan said. “After imagery captured in the field is auto-uploaded, anyone from the project management team can enjoy it as if they’re watching a movie or walking on-site as usual by themselves.”

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Sino Group plans to continue using OpenSpace for the duration of the Yuen Long project, which is scheduled to be completed by 2022. While the Registered General Building Contractor (RGBC) on the project was initially skeptical of adopting a new AI technology, it’s also become an outspoken advocate for the platform.

Meanwhile, Sino Group plans to start leveraging OpenSpace on upcoming residential projects.



Results: Savings on Manpower and a Key Competitive Advantage

“OpenSpace’s usability and flexibility are the key reasons we use it,” Chan said. “It is an integrated solution that suits every tier of construction projects, from the client, project management team and design consultant down to contractors, inspectors and field workers, who get smart benefits and precious time savings on their daily tasks.”

Sino Group noticed impact in the following areas:

Enhanced Operational Efficiency: In the initial phase of the project, Sino Group discovered that OpenSpace helps reduce the number of supervising staff stationed on-site, which brings down costs. For example, five different inspectors might have once been required to visit the same



floor at different times to focus on their respective areas of expertise, such as MEP installation, concrete work and fitting-out works. With OpenSpace, one inspector can walk the site/floor and then share an OpenSpace capture with their counterparts, better utilising the time of the other four staff for other tasks unless they spot an issue that requires further investigation.

Time Savings: Project executives at Sino Group used to conduct their own regular site walks to understand how projects were progressing, which was time-consuming; OpenSpace's 3D virtual walkthroughs have helped make their time on-site more efficient. By initially visiting the site remotely via a digital device and effectively getting a preview of site conditions, executives can plan ahead and fine-tune the route they want to walk on a given day, reducing the amount of time they spend in the field. "Since OpenSpace renders a 3D experience instead of a collection of 2D images, our project executives can understand what's happening on the ground and choose what they want to see before setting foot on-site," Chan said.

Improved Handover to Operations Team: Sino Group views OpenSpace as an end-to-end solution and is anticipating a huge benefit for future property management and operation teams once a project is delivered—especially for commercial buildings that may require uplifting or retrofits in the future. "OpenSpace is a true record to let them know what's inside the false ceiling and behind the walls and what's the best headroom or floorspace they can achieve. This can help accelerate the process of making necessary leasing decisions or business layout improvements," said Chan.

A Competitive Advantage in Pursuits: Chan anticipates incorporating different language about OpenSpace in new proposals to detail how it helps ensure accountability and transparency. (For example, clients would have the ability to remotely visit a project from wherever they are to understand how it's progressing and compare actual site conditions to the BIM model via another key OpenSpace feature.) "I see this as a competitive advantage to position our Group as more innovative, and I am very much looking forward to trying out OpenSpace Track, which uses AI to automatically track project progress and provide insights to different stakeholders and project management team members," he said.