



KongTone 港通

The Cantonese Self-Learning Site

Submitted for

New York University

Master of Science in Publishing: Digital and Print Media

Fall 2025 Capstone

Kelly Leung Yi Yan

梁以忻

謹以此文哀悼 2025 年 11 月 26 日大埔宏福苑火災中的所有罹難者及其家屬。願
逝者安息，生者平安。

*With my deepest condolences to everyone affected by the tragic fire at Wang Fuk
Court, Tai Po on November 26, 2025. May the souls of the departed rest in peace, and
may their families and our city find healing and hope.*

Table of Contents

<i>前言</i>	5
<i>Executive Summary</i>	6
<i>Market Backdrop</i>	8
<i>Competitors</i>	8
Duolingo	8
LingQ	10
Language Drops	11
Other Products Made by Hongkongers	12
Hello Cantonese	12
Dr. Chaak-Ming Lau	13
Canto.hk (Cantonese Fonts)	15
<i>Customer Needs and Preferences</i>	16
Interest in Hong Kong Language and Culture	16
Emigration Waves and Diaspora	17
Survey Results	18
Interview Findings	25
<i>Company Description and Concept</i>	27
<i>Sample Content</i>	29
Content Calendar	29
Website and Web App	30
Social Media Posts	34
<i>Sales and Marketing</i>	35
Launch Marketing Strategy	36
Go-to-market Strategy	38
<i>Operations</i>	39
<i>Financials</i>	42
Revenue	42
Advertising	43
Branded Content	44
Currency (Tokens)	45
Digital and Subscription Costs	46
Operations	47
Fixed Assets	48
Capital Stock	48
<i>Owner Expectations and Conclusion</i>	49
<i>Appendices and Sources</i>	51

AI Usage Statement	51
Appendix I: Bibliography	51
Appendix II: Survey Responses.....	55
Appendix III: Interview Synopsis	61
Linguistic Justifications.....	72
Appendix IV: Sinitic Languages in Major Chinese-speaking Areas	72
Appendix V: Difficulties in Cantonese Teaching and Learning	73
Appendix VI: Existing Cantonese Online Tools and Resources.....	73
Marketing	74
Appendix VII: Visual Content	74
Appendix VIII: Potential Topics	79
Appendix IX: Expat and Polyglot Influencers.....	79
Appendix X: Hong Kong-based Companies for Potential Collaboration....	82
Finance	83
Appendix XI: Financial Modeling	83
Appendix XII: Monetization on Rummikub Game App.....	87
Appendix XIII: Staffing Cost Projections.....	88
Appendix XIV: Web Cost Projections	89

前言

香港是我的家鄉。我父親的祖先は香港仔原居民——水上人；我的母親是九龍城寨出身。這特殊的家族歷史背景，驅使我認為自己肩負要將香港文化傳承下去的重任。但從普教中開始，至國安法施行，中港文化衝突連年。廣東話雖是香港的官方語言，隨着人口變遷，香港的語言政策慢慢開始向普通話傾斜，令許多熱愛本地文化的人都感覺廣東話的地位備受威脅。

截至 2021 年，在美國國內的漢語族群當中，約有 39.7% 的人是廣東話使用者，是普通話以外最多人使用的漢語語言¹。世界各地廣東話人口眾多，跟他們來往或多或少會刺激人想學習廣東話的慾望，加上很多移民後代都有尋根的想望，皆可見廣東話學習的市場潛力之大。可惜市面上廣東話學習產品良莠不齊，令自學廣東話難度倍增。

「港通 (KongTone)」因此應運而生。它是一個廣東話自學網站，其語料融合了對香港文化、歷史、語言等的紀錄，務求令使用者在學習廣東話之餘，能同時加深對香港的認識。除了適用於廣東話學習者外，我們的網站亦適合移民人士使用。他們在向下一代傳授香港文化的時候，可以利用我們製作的內容，來幫助下一代了解我們的文化根源。

使用者可以自由選擇支持我們的方式。每個課程的定價為\$9.99 (10 個代幣)，使用者也可以選擇以觀看廣告的方式，來免費獲得代幣，用以解鎖課程

¹ US Census Bureau. “Detailed Languages Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and over: 2017-2021.” Census.gov, June 2025.
<https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/language-use/2017-2021-lang-tables.html>.

內容。這些代幣和廣告的收入將會成為我們未來繼續製作更多內容的投資本金，
希望能持續為香港語言文化的傳承出一分力。

Executive Summary

As a descendant of the Tanka, the ‘boat dwellers’, I was taught that my ancestral home is a historical county in southern China—Bao’an County, and that the ancestors from my father’s side were fishermen that have long inhabited in Aberdeen, Hong Kong. On my mother’s side, as bedtime stories, she would always share with me her experience growing up in Kowloon Walled City, the once most densely populated residential area on Earth. I did not realize how special that made me, until seeing my classmates traveling to Mainland China to visit their relatives, and speaking in Chinese dialects that I could not understand. It was that moment I understood how deep I am tied to Hong Kong, and how privileged I am to say that my roots is in Hong Kong.

Seeing the culture that defines me under threat has never been easy. From the ‘using Putonghua (Mandarin) as medium of instruction’ controversy, through the 2014 and 2019 protests, to the National Security Law, the Chinese central government is trying to suppress the voice of the local people. As I now have the ability to contribute, the least I can do to help preserve local culture is to capture what

I experienced, and to promote it. This is what gave birth to KongTone, the Cantonese self-learning website that aims to promote both the Cantonese language and the Hong Kong culture that fostered the beautiful language.

Focusing on promoting Hong Kong Cantonese², KongTone is a website designed to target intermediate and advanced learners of Cantonese as a Foreign Language (CFL) learners, as well as second- or third- generation Asian immigrants to learn the language as they learn about the fascinating Hong Kong culture and history. It responds to the demand for Cantonese learning material as an alternative to existing products like Duolingo.

During the Gold Rush Era, many Cantonese-speakers from southern China moved to San Francisco for a better fortune, and created the first Chinatown in the US. Nowadays, over 39.7% Chinese speakers in the US are Cantonese speakers³, and our survey has shown that the descendants of Cantonese speakers are eager to learn more about their roots. This phenomenon proves that there is a huge market potential for Cantonese learning materials, in which we believe that KongTone will work both conceptually and financially. Our revenue streams will include displayed video ads,

² Hong Kong Cantonese is a variant of Cantonese language, with its distinctive characteristics formed mostly from British colonization.

³ US Census Bureau. “Detailed Languages Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and over: 2017-2021.” Census.gov, June 2025.
<https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/language-use/2017-2021-lang-tables.html>.

branded/native content, and token sales. It is projected that our business break even in Year 3, and reach a profit margin of 26% in Year 5.

Market Backdrop

Competitors

KongTone is designed to fill the gap in existing learning apps. Our main competitors include Duolingo, LingQ, and Language Drops. These products are language learning apps that offer content on multiple languages.

Duolingo

Duolingo is a publicly traded⁴ company language learning platform that offers lessons for 43 languages, including Cantonese and Mandarin, and also offers non-language courses like music and math. The app aims to make language learning approachable by bite-sized content and gamified learning experience. The platform operates on a freemium business model, their revenue streams include subscription, advertisements, in-app-purchases, Duolingo English Test (DET), and merchandise sales.

⁴ Duolingo, Inc. “Form 10-K.” February 28, 2025. <https://investors.duolingo.com/sec-filings/sec-filing/10-k/0001562088-25-000042>.

Duolingo is famous for its viral marketing, gaining attention through short-form videos and the wild app icon designs with Duo the owl, the brand mascot. It contributed its huge success as one of the most well-known language learning apps. Duolingo has noted a 100M monthly active users, among them are 8.8% paid subscribers⁵. The strategy of push notifications ('emotional blackmails') has created a high retention rate, as they reported to have 32M daily active users with 7-day streak, and 10M users with over 365-day streak⁶.

However, there are multiple reports on social media platforms claiming that the expressions they teach on the app is unnatural and unpractical. This does not only happen in Cantonese courses, but a universal problem that Duolingo users face. Even though users can report to the team, these errors are still hurting their trustworthiness.

A SWOT analysis for Duolingo:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong social media presence• Interactive learning• AI personalized learning• Free content	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of longer passages• Unnatural expressions• Cantonese course is only available in Mandarin/ Simplified Chinese⁷
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diversify course formats• Diversify content• Hire linguistic expert to ensure content quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emerging start-ups• Change of learning habits with GenAI• Vibe coding can make free and personalized learning apps

⁵ Duolingo, Inc. "Form 10-K." February 28, 2025. <https://investors.duolingo.com/sec-filings/sec-filing/10-k/0001562088-25-000042>.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ See Interviewee 5, Appendix III.

LingQ⁸

LingQ (pronounced as “link”) was co-founded by polyglot Steve Kaufmann and his son, Mark, in 2007, having the headquarter in West Vancouver, Canada. The platform offers over 40 languages and more than 50K lessons. Other than in-house created content, they also imported real linguistic examples from YouTube, and developed a browser extension to import and create lessons using video contents on Netflix.

It operates on a freemium model, with the Premium and Premium Plus subscription tiers. The Premium tier allows users to unlock all premium features, save unlimited vocabularies, and import unlimited lessons. On top of that, the Premium Plus plan offers 6x Audio Transcription, AI voices (Cantonese yet to be supported), AI chatbot, and AI simplified lessons.

A SWOT analysis for LingQ:

Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Polyglot founder: convincing for new users• Unlimited outsourced content• Longer passages	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Traditional Chinese UI content is machine translated from Simplified Chinese (noticeable bugs)• Only has one Cantonese tutor
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social media marketing campaigns• Diversify content across social media platforms• Consistent brand image	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competition• Hard to monitor quality of imported contents

⁸ LingQ. Accessed September 1, 2025. <https://www.lingq.com/en/>.

Language Drops⁹

Language Drops is a language learning platform under the Kahoot! Company, originated in Estonia. It is one of the few companies in Europe to offer Cantonese courses, and also include Jyutping. The content is published in flash card format. It is the only non-Hong Kong competitor that includes Jyutping. On the language choice page during registration, it shows that there are 130K Cantonese learners on the platform.

The company generates revenue through a freemium model, offering monthly, yearly, and lifetime subscription plans, also a family plan. Subscribers get unlimited learning time every day, enjoy ad free and offline environment, and also exclusive gameplay.

A SWOT analysis for Language Drops:

Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Significant brand icon and palette• Good reputation among language learners• Flashcard format	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weak social media presence• Not for intermediate and advanced learners
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blogs to introduce grammar/linguistic rules• Social media campaigns for brand awareness	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intense competition• GenAI vibe coding can make similar flash card apps

⁹ Language Drops. Accessed October 28, 2025. <https://app.languagedrops.com/>.

Other Products Made by Hongkongers

Cantonese learning products in Hong Kong focus on the linguistic aspect, and is weaker in terms of commercial competitiveness. There is a growing trend for the invention of these products and tools after the 2019 Hong Kong Protests, and are mostly made by local language conservation enthusiasts or linguists.

Hello Cantonese¹⁰

Hello Cantonese, launched in 2025, is a Hong Kong Cantonese learning platform for non-Chinese speakers. This project aims to tackle the problem for Cantonese learning that there is a lack of high-quality teaching and learning materials. It is a direct competitor since it shares a similar cause and approach with KongTone.

Other than the online lessons, Hello Cantonese plans to publish printed textbooks by the end of 2025, with 3 levels including beginner, intermediate and advanced. The project operates from individual donation, offering one time donation and monthly subscriptions that offers free printed textbooks.

¹⁰ Hello Cantonese. Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://hellocantoneshk.com/>.

A SWOT analysis for Hello Cantonese:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free content • Clear level structure for contents • Printed materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of significant brand image • Unclear target audience • Lack of linguistic justifications • Not attractive subscription perks
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media marketing with editorial calendar • Diversify content format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intense competition • Course page does not load • No monetization strategy

Dr. Chaak-Ming Lau

Dr. Chaak-Ming Lau (劉擇明博士) is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Linguistics and Modern Language Studies at The Education University of Hong Kong. His research focuses on developing digital tools for language learning and teaching, and has created multiple tools and learning materials for Cantonese speakers and learners. Dr. Lau's tools and insights have laid an invaluable foundation for the KongTone project. His significant projects include:

Project	Description
Cantonese Braille to Jyutping Converter ¹¹	Bidirectional converter for Cantonese Braille and Jyutping
Graphical Cantonese Generator (Hambaanglaang) ¹²	Graphical typescript generator for Cantonese text, indicating tones as if on a music sheet

¹¹ Lau, Chaak-Ming. "Cantonese Braille to Jyutping Converter." Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://chaaklau.github.io/b2j/>.

¹² Hambaanglaang Cantonese Graded Readers. "跳跳紮拼音轉換器 Graphical Cantonese Generator (v.2.7.8)." Accessed September 1, 2025. <https://test.hambaanglaang.hk/>.

Hambaanglaang ¹³	Open-source Cantonese learning material for non-Chinese-speaking learners
Hong Kong Waitau and Hakka Text-to-Speech ¹⁴	Open-source tool for Waitau and Hakka ¹⁵ learning Government funded: Intangible Cultural Heritage Funding Scheme ¹⁶
Stories in Hong Kong Indigenous Languages ¹⁷	Companion site for <i>Waitau and Hakka: A Story Collection in Indigenous Languages</i> (Scone Publishing, 2024) ¹⁸
TypeDuck ^{19 20} (Desktop/ iOS/ Android keyboard)	Open-source Jyutping input method targeting ethnic minorities in Hong Kong; includes translation in five languages Government funded: SCOLAR (Standing Committee on Language Education and Research) Language Fund ²¹
Words.hk ²² (ZH-HK) CantoWords.com ²³ (EN)	Open-source Cantonese dictionary with over 400 volunteer editors (crowdsourcing method)

The biggest difference between Dr. Lau's projects and KongTone is that they are funded by external resources, like government fundings, or with support from universities. He has taken a linguistic approach to preserve local languages, and tried

¹³ Hambaanglaang Cantonese Graded Readers. "About Us." January 21, 2023. <https://hambaanglaang.hk/about-us-2/>.

¹⁴ 香港圍頭話及客家話文字轉語音 (Hong Kong Waitau and Hakka Text-to-Speech). Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://hkilang.github.io/TTS/>.

¹⁵ Waitau and Hakka are two southern Chinese dialects recognized by the Hong Kong Government as intangible cultural heritage.

¹⁶ Association for Conservation of Hong Kong Indigenous Languages. "Text-to-Speech App for Hong Kong Indigenous Wai Tau and Hakka Dialects." Intangible Cultural Heritage Office, n.d. https://www.icho.hk/documents/Funded-Projects--2-/2021/Record_of_Completed_Project_AC19_2021_EN.pdf.

¹⁷ Lau, Chaak-Ming, and Yee-Kai Tang. 圍頭與客家 (Waitau and Hakka). <https://chaaklau.github.io/hki-stories/>.

¹⁸ Scone Publishing. "《圍頭與客家－香港本土語言故事集（修訂版）》." Accessed November 24, 2025. <https://www.scone.com.hk/product-page/hki-stories>.

¹⁹ TypeDuck. "About." Accessed September 1, 2025. <https://www.typeduck.hk/about/>.

²⁰ TypeDuck. GitHub. Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://github.com/TypeDuck-HK>.

²¹ EdUHK Research Repository. "Cantonese Phonetic Input Method (Jyutping) with Minority Language Prompts." Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://repository.eduhk.hk/en/projects/cantonese-phonetic-input-method-jyutping-with-minority-language-p/>.

²² words.hk 粵典. Accessed September 1, 2025. <https://words.hk/>.

²³ CantoWords. Accessed September 1, 2025. <https://cantowords.com/>.

to make Cantonese learning accessible to disabled or non-Chinese learners. His projects are inspirational for new features or course directions on KongTone.

Canto.hk (Cantonese Fonts)

Cantonese Fonts (formerly Visual Fonts) is a Cantonese tool that automatically adds Jyutping romanization annotation to Traditional Chinese texts. The font is developed by Jon Chui, initially as a tool for teaching his Argentinian wife Cantonese²⁴. It is described to be an all-in-one Cantonese learning and teaching tool, since it has a built-in translator for learners, also allows teachers to edit the Jyutping annotations when the tone changes in different contexts.

The font provides a lifelong commercial license with pass purchases²⁵, and will be used as the interface typography for the Traditional Chinese site²⁶, providing linguistic aid for users to grasp the pronunciation of the Cantonese text.

²⁴ Cheng, Mandy. “Hongkonger Creates Colourful Cantonese Font to Foster Learning.” Hong Kong Free Press, July 30, 2024. <https://hongkongfp.com/2023/05/16/hongkonger-creates-colourful-cantonese-font-to-foster-language-learning/>.

²⁵ canto.hk 香港粵語. “Membership Levels.” August 21, 2024. <https://canto.hk/membership-account/membership-levels/>.

²⁶ See mockups in Sample Content, Appendix VII.

Customer Needs and Preferences

Interest in Hong Kong Language and Culture

Hong Kong has a distinctive cultural landscape as an ex-British colony and a Chinese city. It is a place where diverse people and cultures live peacefully together, and has quietly played an important role in world history. Our history background had given birth to the compelling culture and linguistic landscape, which is always attractive to culture enthusiasts and Hong Kong Studies researchers. The general interest in Hong Kong culture would somehow spark interest for learning the Cantonese language.

1980s was the Golden Age for Hong Kong. Besides of being an international economic hub, Hong Kong was then the lead in Asian pop culture, taking over trends with movies, Cantopop songs, and TV dramas. The infamous Leslie Cheung, rock band Beyond, and Jackie Chan were the most significant figures of this era, which they are still celebrated as representative faces for Hong Kong pop culture.

Nowadays, the impact of Hong Kong popular culture has been overshadowed by K-Pop and J-Pop, but it is still impactful. Modern pop culture is made of few pillars: internet culture (9GAG²⁷, LIHKG forum²⁸, YouTube channels JFFT²⁹ and

²⁷ 9GAG. Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://9gag.com/>.

²⁸ LIHKG 討論區. Accessed October 2, 2025. <https://lihkg.com/category/1>.

²⁹ JFFT. YouTube. Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://www.youtube.com/@JFFTHK>.

Trial & Error³⁰), pop culture (boy group Mirror³¹, girl group Lolly Talk³², singer Terence Lam³³), and movies (animation *Another World*³⁴, actor Suet-Ying Chung³⁵). Some of them are internationally known, and have drawn people to ponder the Hong Kong culture that gave birth to these cultural figures.

Food culture in Hong Kong is also a theme of general interest. Because of the special historical background, it is common to see East-West fusion food in local restaurants. Cha Chaan Tengs (Hong Kong-style cafes) and Soy Sauce Western Cuisine (Hong Kong-style Western Cuisine) are perfect examples for how historical events has shaped the way we live.

Emigration Waves and Diaspora

There were two emigration waves in Hong Kong in recent years: in 1990s after the signature of Sino-British Joint Declaration, and an ongoing wave after the 2019 protests and the implement of the National Security Law. People fled Hong Kong to escape from Chinese rule, which many have moved to Taiwan, the UK, Australia,

³⁰ 試當真 Trial & Error. YouTube. Accessed November 23, 2025.
<http://youtube.com/@trialanderror924>.

³¹ MIRROR. YouTube. Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEuQ-0x3uMk1KghGiO1kTHg>.

³² Lolly Talk. YouTube. Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://www.youtube.com/@LollyTalkHK>.

³³ 林家謙 Terence Lam. YouTube. Accessed November 23, 2025.
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5NMESRUXEIpoi5GzGiHEDA>.

³⁴ IMDb. “Another World (2025).” Accessed November 23, 2025.
<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt36639436/>.

³⁵ Chung (@csy). Instagram. Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://www.instagram.com/csy/>.

and Canada, forming huge diaspora communities in these countries. Seeking for better education environment for their children, parents are struggling to find ways to introduce their roots and mother language. Thus, there is a huge opportunity for Cantonese learning material that include knowledge on the history and culture, so that the story of our hometown can be passed on to the next generation.

Survey Results³⁶

Two surveys were conducted to collect potential customers' learning motives and to learn about their experience using existing Cantonese learning tools. Since the surveys are available in bilingual Chinese and English version, there were in total four surveys distributed. The first set of surveys aimed to understand broad Cantonese learner profile, and were distributed through Reddit (English), Threads (Chinese), and Dcard (Chinese). The follow-up survey were distributed to first survey respondents who were willing to be interviewed.

³⁶ See Appendix II for full data.

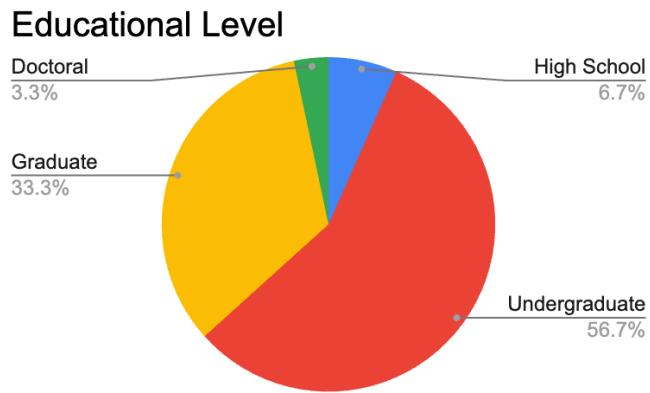


Figure 1. Educational Levels

A total of 30 responds were collected for the first survey. The results show an interesting trend: even though they come from different country and age groups, 93.3% of respondents have received tertiary education, hinting that they might possess stronger researching skills and ability to understand complex history and culture topics. We can deliver complex concepts without fearing that users are unable to understand.

Reasons to learn Cantonese

- My parents speak Cantonese
- I am dating someone who speaks Cantonese
- I plan to work in Hong Kong in the future
- I plan to study in Hong Kong in the future
- I am challenging myself with one of the most difficult languages in the world
- 3 more

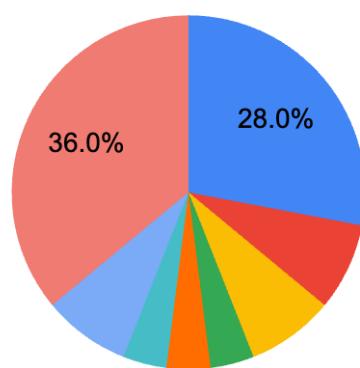


Figure 2. Reasons to learn Cantonese

Learners learn Cantonese because they have connections with Hong Kong. Common reasons to learn Cantonese include having Cantonese-speaking parents (28%), having a Cantonese-speaking partner (8%), and future plans to work (8%) or study (4%) in Hong Kong. While 36% of learners decided to learn Cantonese because they love Hong Kong culture, the learning motive originated from the connection and base knowledge and experiences in Hong Kong should always be reminded as we design the content for our target audience.

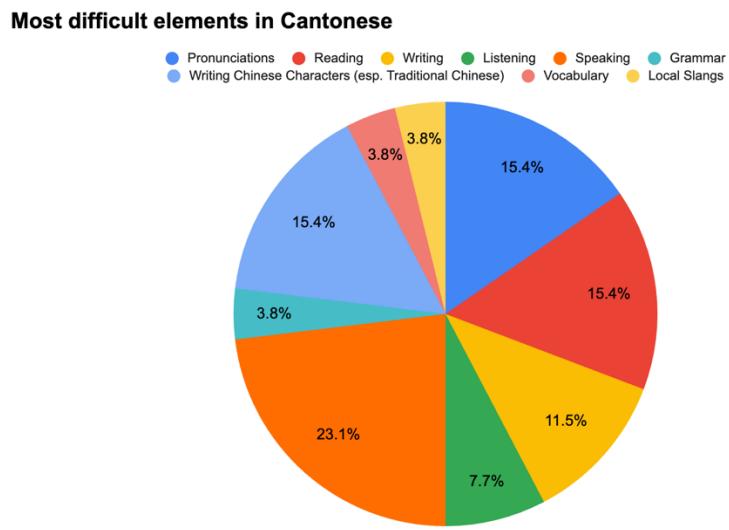


Figure 3. Most difficult elements in Cantonese

There are multiple difficulties identified by Cantonese learners as they learn the language. 23.1% survey respondents find speaking the most difficult, and 15.4% respondents in respectively reported they find Cantonese pronunciations, reading, and writing Traditional Chinese Characters difficult. We can create more exercises in respond to these learning needs identified in the survey.

Ways to learn Cantonese

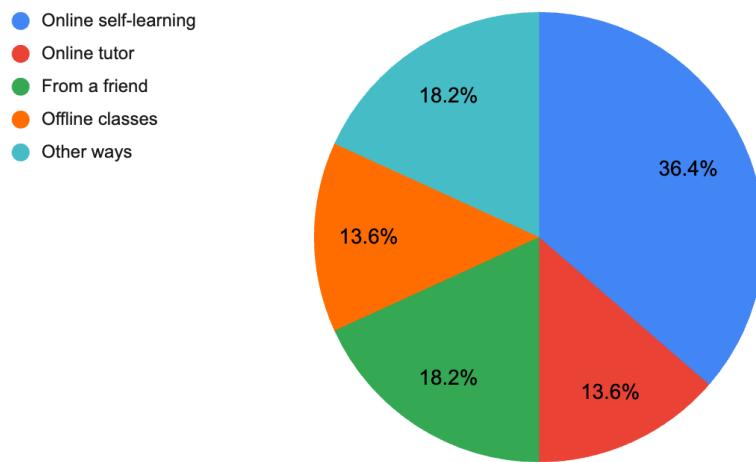


Figure 4. Ways to learn Cantonese

In the digital era, it is common for learners to look for learning materials online. 36.4% learn Cantonese through online self-learning method, and 13.6% would look for online tutors. But some learn in a traditional way: 13.6% respondents take offline classes, and 18.2% respondents learn Cantonese from a friend. Still, the high proportion of online learners indicates a demand for quality online learning materials.

Have you learned Cantonese on any of these platforms?

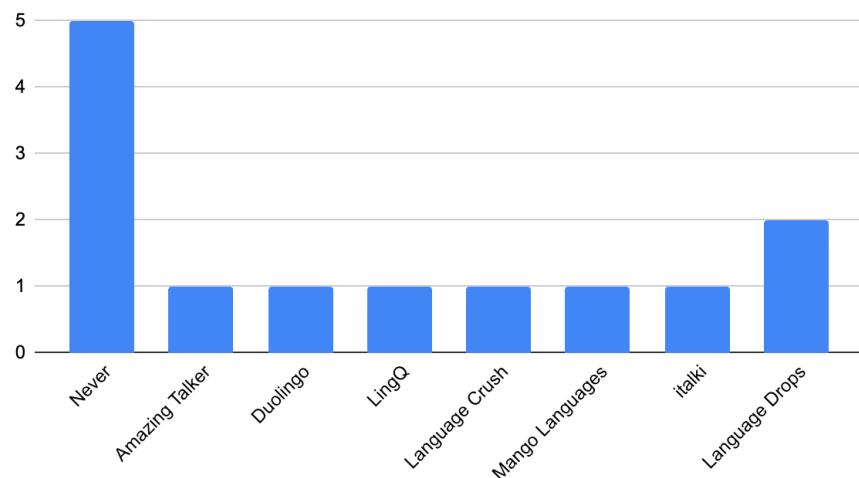


Figure 5. Platforms used to learn Chinese

Even though many would learn Cantonese through the internet, not all of them would learn through existing online platforms. Five learners said that they have never used any platforms to learn Cantonese, and surprisingly, only one respondent said they have used Duolingo to learn Cantonese. Given the large market share for Duolingo, somehow it is not the first choice for learners among all learning methods and online learning platforms.

What do you expect learning on KongTone?

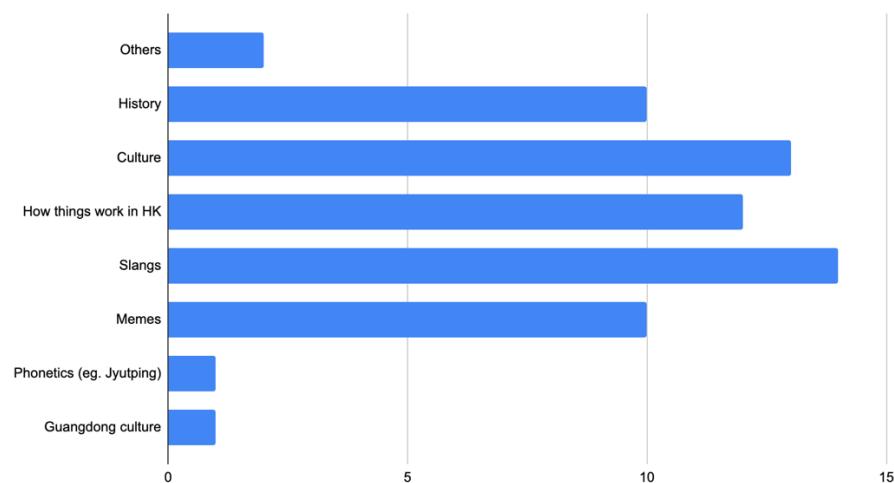


Figure 6. Content expected for KongTone

Content wise, 14 respondents would expect to learn about the slangs spoken in Hong Kong. Because of the internet culture, the trend for slangs changes very quickly, it is imaginable that learners would struggle to understand what local people are saying, and the demand for content that explains these inside jokes. 13 respondents are interested to learn about the culture of Hong Kong through our platform, and 12 respondents wonder how different things, like the weather signals, works in Hong

Kong. Combining the three most demanded themes that potential customers are asking for, we would summarize that people need a ‘survival guide’, essentially the principle of Hong Kong living, blended with language learning.

Do you pay for Cantonese learning platforms?

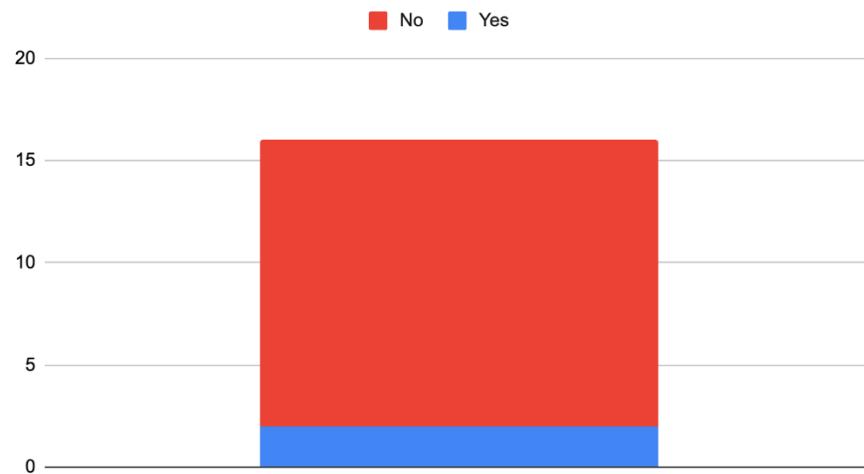


Figure 7. Number of Cantonese learners paying for online platforms

How do you expect paying for KongTone premium contents?

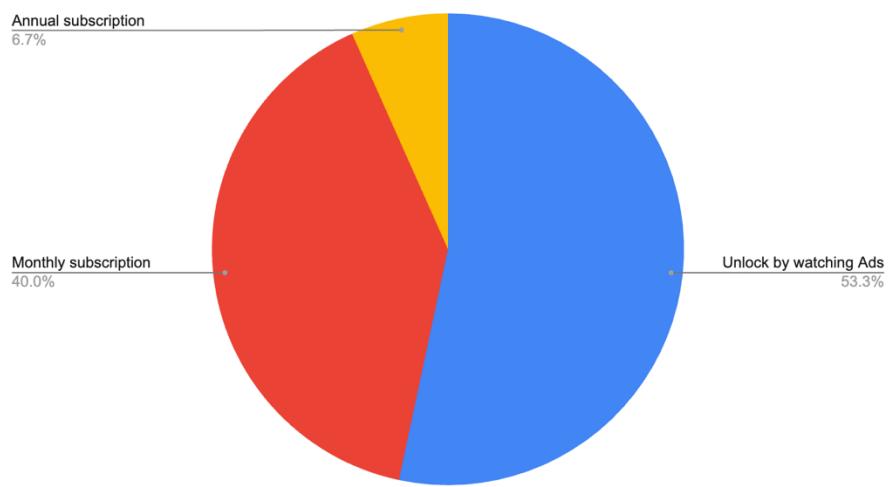


Figure 8. Willingness to pay for KongTone content

In Figure 7, among the Cantonese learners that responded to the survey, only two out of sixteen people have paid to learn Cantonese on online learning platforms. The number translates to 1.25%, that is even lower than the average 2% conversion

rate for website products³⁷. Moreover, in Figure 8, 53.5% respondents said they are more willing to unlock contents by ads, then to pay for the contents. It is expected that monetizing directly from the users will be difficult, thus there is a need to discover more revenue streams so as to sustain the company and cover the costs.

How much are you willing to pay for each token?

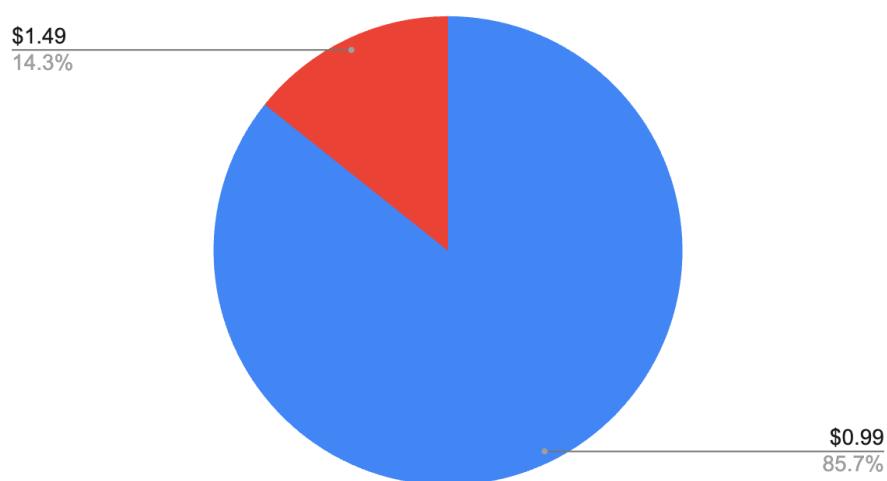


Figure 9. Pricing for tokens

Even though the users might be hesitant to pay a large sum of money on subscriptions, micropayments seem to be attractive. 85.7% respondents are willing to pay for \$0.99 for each token to unlock a minute-long content. \$0.99 is the smallest monetization amount on App Store, and when designing the payment units, we would expect that users are used to micropayment expenses, and the survey results matches the presumption.

³⁷ CleverTap. “Average Website Conversion Rate: Benchmarks by Industry.” June 20, 2025.

<https://clevertap.com/blog/average-website-conversion-rate-benchmarks/>.

Interview Findings³⁸

There were four follow-up survey respondents and two interviewees reached through Threads. The responses from follow-up survey respondents were matched with the data of the first survey to create a rounder character for the interviewees.

The two interviewees reached on Threads were the people who commented under a Chinese Threads post where the first survey was distributed. They provided valuable comments on the survey and expressed interest in the project. The conversation was then moved to Instagram direct messages for a longer interview, questioning their Cantonese learning journey and views on existing Cantonese learning products.

The follow-up survey was built on the initial survey, asking several questions about their journey in Cantonese learning, and their experiences in using online tools. It is less extensive than the direct messages as we could not ask follow-up questions, still we were able to collect valuable data and stories for designing our platform.

Except Fung Tsam³⁹, a learner who lives in Northeast China, all the interviewees have more or less experienced Cantonese or Hong Kong culture by living in the city, or are connected to the culture through their family or partners.

³⁸ See full interviewee profiles and conversations in Appendix II.

³⁹ See Interviewee 4, Appendix II.

Other than reading and writing the language, they are more focused on colloquial communications, for the need to communicate with Cantonese-speaking people.

Some of them are churned Duolingo users⁴⁰, and the reason why they left the platform was that the Cantonese content is limited. It became repetitive after some time. They have also noticed some unnatural expressions on the platform and decided to look for alternative learning materials. As mentioned, they focus on the speaking aspect when learning Cantonese, therefore other than self-learning platforms, they have chosen online tutorial platforms like Amazing Talker and iTalki, and language exchange platform like Hello Talk. The tutorial platforms provide 1:1 tutorial service that they can practice their speaking skills with a real person, besides speaking to their family and friends. On Hello Talk, users can practice a foreign language through voice call game sessions.

The interviewees also mentioned learning the language through popular culture. TV dramas, YouTube, and podcasts were choices that costs no money. As their background and experiences have already provided them with linguistic foundations, they were pondering into higher-level issues, such as the pronunciations and communication skills in work settings. As a platform targeting intermediate and

⁴⁰ See Interviewee 5, Appendix II.

advanced learners, these patterns and views will always be useful as we design the course content and decide what to mention.

Company Description and Concept

Popular online Cantonese learning platforms are mostly products made outside of Asia. Inevitably, these products would describe Hong Kong in a rather orientalist point of view and with a limited, stereotypical scope. At KongTone, we hope to tell the story of Hong Kong as local people, showing the depth of our culture as we work on preserving the local culture and language.

The name ‘KongTone (港通)’ contains multiple layers of meanings. It is made up of ‘Kong’ and ‘tone’, highlighting the Hong Kong theme and the six tones of Cantonese. It is also a pun on ‘Canton’ and also echoes to the Cantonese phrase ‘講得通 (gong2 dak1 tung1, to make sense)’, highlighting our goal to publish Cantonese courses that both linguistically and conceptually makes sense. The Chinese name has a similar pronunciation, that it means ‘going through/ being knowledgeable about Hong Kong’.

Targeting global CFL and Asian American learners, KongTone is a Cantonese self-learning site for intermediate and advanced learners. Through a gamified experience, we deliver Cantonese courses surrounding themes in Hong Kong history,

culture, and Cantonese linguistics. With the founder's personal connections in Hong Kong, sources for oral history would come handy, allowing us to publish unique and eye-catching content. The courses will offer Cantonese content in multimedia formats, including reading passages, audiovisual content, as well as exercises to facilitate learning. We aim to bring an interactive learning experience that users can learn Cantonese, rated as one of the most difficult languages on Earth, in a fun and relaxed way.

Users have to use ten tokens to unlock a course, that can be gained through micropayment and/or bulk purchases, or watching a video ad. In exchange, they will gain knowledge in Hong Kong, as well as a badge after they complete a ten-minute course.

We aim to create a safe community for learners and scholars. We will make use of the Discord platform as a forum where users can discuss questions, deep dive in cultural phenomenon, and connect with other learners. It will also serve as a channel for customer service, where users can directly reach us to report site bugs or possible content errors.

Sample Content

Content Calendar



Figure 10. Year 1 Content Calendar

By the end of the first year, there will be in total 24 published courses, including 12 pre-launched courses, and 12 monthly-published courses. They cover most of the foundational knowledge about Hong Kong, divided into three main topics: history, culture, and linguistics. Two seasonal topics include the Chinese New Year special in February and Intangible Cultural Heritage special in June, which we hope to align our content to real-life events, as well as to hop on the keyword search trends to boost our site visits. The courses published in Year 1 will roughly cover the bigger topics of

interest reflected in the surveys, and more niche topics coming up in the following years to deepen and diversify our content.

Website and Web App

The concept of courses was inspired by Codédex⁴¹, a coding self-learning site. Through breaking down content into interactive units, users can learn a new skill without being overwhelmed. On their site, they apply an image-first design principle, using pixel art vectors to mark site elements. These added up inspired the visual design of the KongTone website and web app.

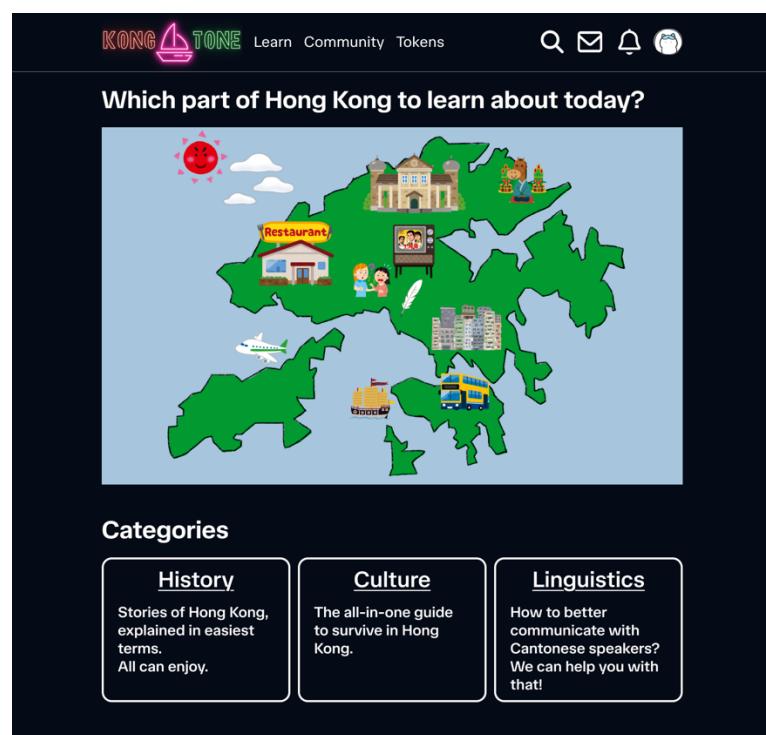
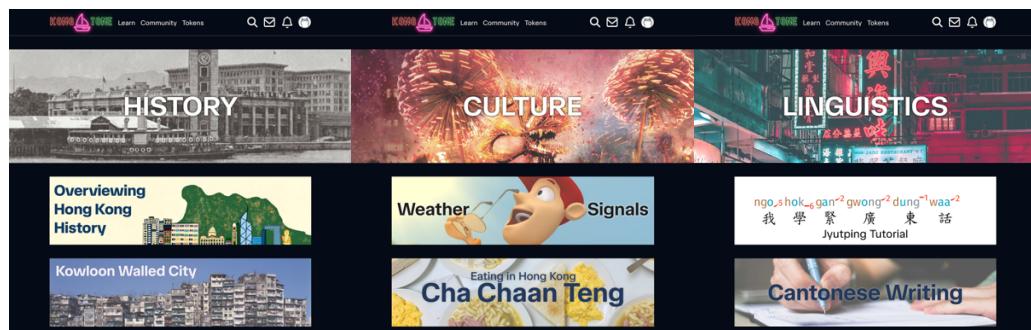


Figure 11. Desktop landing page

⁴¹ Codédex. Accessed September 1, 2025. <https://www.codedex.io/home>.

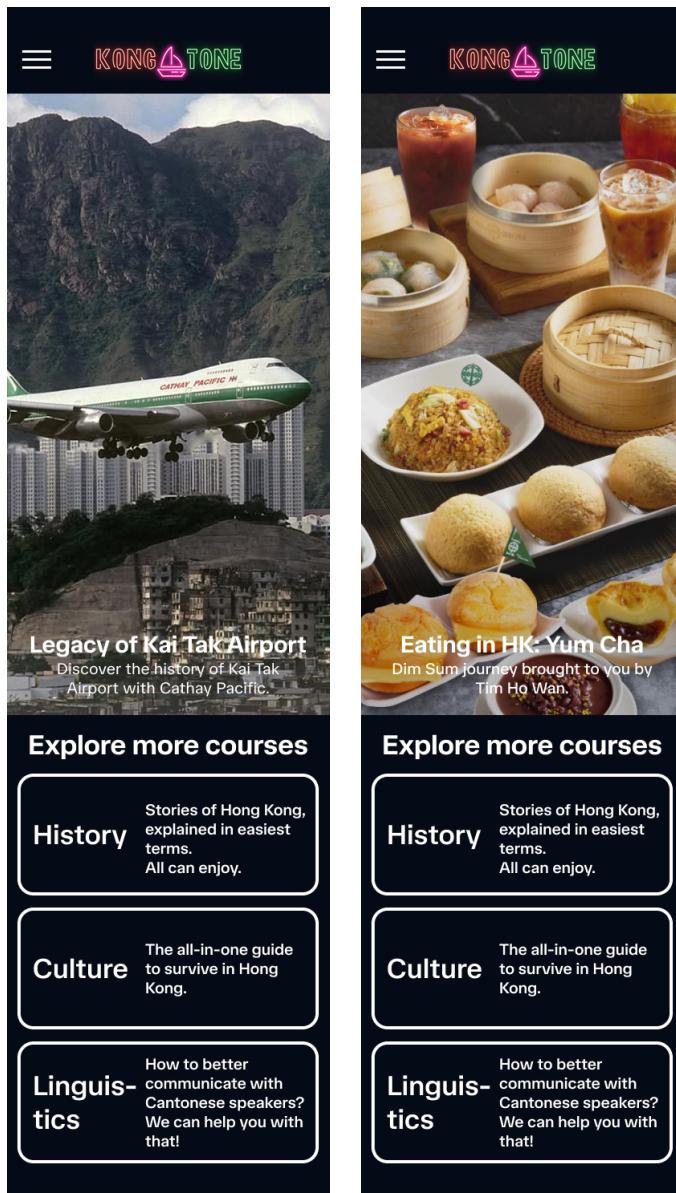
KongTone is a bilingual website⁴², having an image-based landing page. The map on the desktop landing page is an interactive map, with the clickable vectors (icons) leading to different course theme pages. These image vectors match the emojis on the content calendar in Figure 10.



Figures 12-14. Topic Pages with banner for each course

Three topic homepages are designed to hold the courses for the big themes. The hero highlights the essence of each theme, below the hero are the course banners, where users can click into course introduction page before deciding whether to unlock with tokens. First entrance for a course requires users to unlock with tokens.

⁴² See Appendix VII for written Cantonese version for site mockups.



Figures 15-16 . Web app landing page

The format of mobile web app is adopted to save development costs on iOS and Android apps. It has a different interface design with the desktop site, because the vectors on the map would be too hard for users to interact with. Instead, the mobile landing page is filled with a big poster for featured courses—those courses that contain native contents. This is to highlight the contributions of our advertising

customers; to boost clicks for these courses so the site click rate will be attractive enough for potential advertisers.

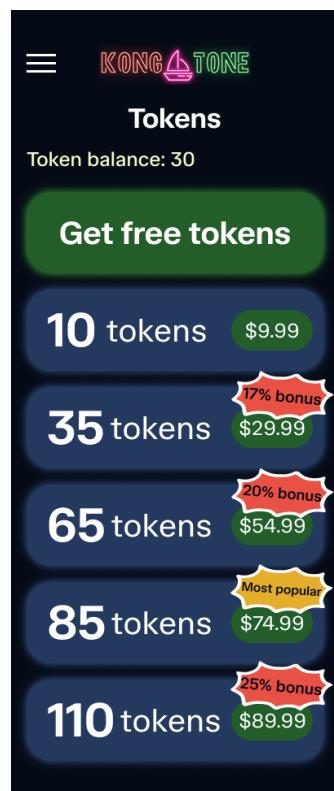


Figure 17. Token sales page

The token page is designed to attract token sales. On top of the bundles, there are tags indicating how they can get extra tokens the more they purchase. The use of sharp red and yellow color is visually impactful, and hopefully could create more sales in token bundles so as to generate in-app currency sales revenue.

Social Media Posts



Figure 18. Sample Instagram Post Image

Figure 18 is an example for Instagram post. “Tell good stories of Hong Kong” is a sarcastic remark of The Chief Executive’s 2022 Policy Address⁴³, but it is also a meme that fits our purpose—to tell the story of Hong Kong through showing the world the way we live, the way we communicate, and how it makes Hong Kong a unique city. By blending inside jokes with our goals, we are showcasing our passion in promoting the Cantonese language, and telling our target audience that we are trying to do it differently.

⁴³ The Chief Executive’s 2022 Policy Address. “Policy Address (Paragraph 143-148).” Accessed November 10, 2025. <https://www.policyaddress.gov.hk/2022/en/p143.html>.

Sales and Marketing

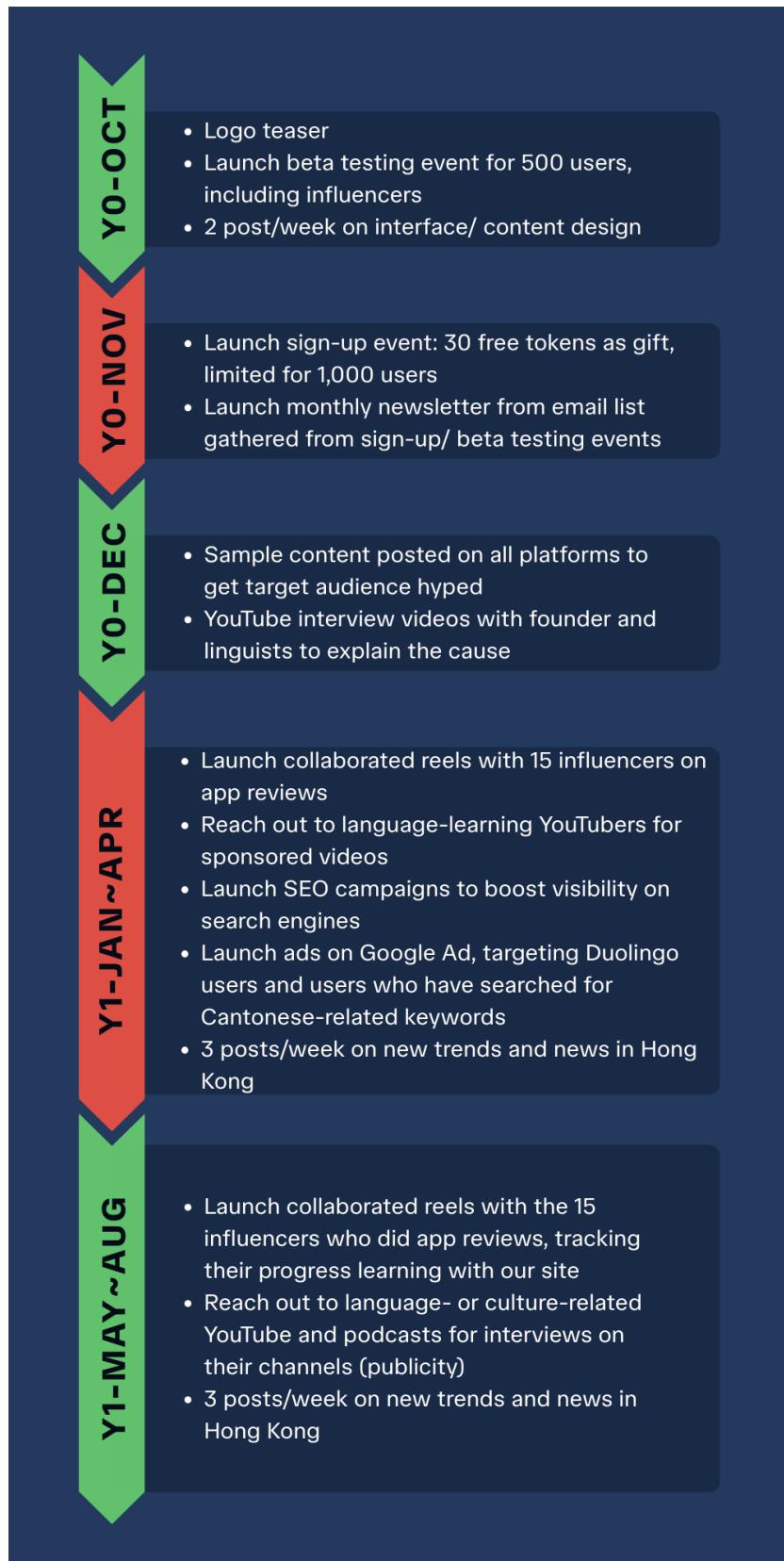


Figure 19. Marketing timeline

Launch Marketing Strategy

The launch marketing will be done by our in-house marketing and sales department, with a \$300K budget in Year 1. The goals for launch marketing are to build brand awareness and attract early adopters. Since we are fully digital, we will rely heavily on various social media platforms, including Instagram, TikTok, Threads, X, and YouTube, tailoring content for each platform depending on their nature and user demographics. For instance, the posts on Threads will be written in Traditional Chinese to reach audiences in Taiwan, short form videos to be posted on Instagram and TikTok, and longer form interviews to be posted on YouTube.

Taking lessons from Duolingo, we will also adopt a viral marketing strategy as a long-term social marketing approach, so as to remain on the trend and maintain consistent brand awareness. For example, on Threads, a page for Hwa Yua Foods (Oyster Pancake-flavored Potato Chips) has gained 24K followers in less than a week through making itself an iconic meme⁴⁴. These are successful stories for us to follow, and also source of inspiration to as we decide on our brand image, encouraging us to consider every marketing possibility.

Three months before the launch, we will launch beta testing event to gather user feedback and attract adopters. Besides of users from the general public, we will invite

⁴⁴ Future Commerce. “創帳 7 天漲粉 2.4 萬！華元小編如何靠一句「蚵仔煎洋芋片」經營 Threads？” August 8, 2025. <https://fc.bnnext.com.tw/articles/view/3999>.

Cantonese-learning expat influencers and polyglots⁴⁵, like Kazu Languages and Keisuke Suzuki, to join the event, and invite them to participate in later social media collaborations.

The sign-up event in two months before launching is a way to get our target audience hyped. By an attractive free 30-token bundle, we are attracting customers to sign up for our platform. We will take this chance to collect contact information for creating a mailing list, which we can start publishing a newsletter covering KongTone company news, snippets of new contents, and e-blasts for limited time sales.

One month before the site would launch, we will post sample content on our social media platforms to attract our potential customers. Also, we will post long-form videos on YouTube, interviewing the founder and some linguists, explaining our aims and method, so as to increase our credibility.

In the first quarter after launch, we plan to publish collaborated short-form videos with the influencers that participated in the beta test event, encouraging them to post user reviews. We will also reach out to YouTubers⁴⁶ to seek opportunities for a sponsored video, reaching our target audience through their platforms.

⁴⁵ See Appendix VIII for list of potential influencers.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

In the second quarter, we plan to reach out to YouTube and podcast channels of relevant themes for opportunities to be interviewed on their channels. This is one of the publicity strategies, also to reach our target audience through others' platforms.

Go-to-market Strategy

In Year 2, our marketing budget is \$250K; in Year 3 and beyond, the marketing budget will take up 8% of our revenue. This is to maintain and replace churned users, continue growing our audience, and to build a consistent brand awareness.

Email marketing is the first strategy. We will launch a monthly newsletter starting from the contacts we gather in the pre-launch beta testing event, it will contain snippets of upcoming courses, new language trends, and will also work as a potential ad space. E-blasts will also be sent to our email list subscribers for time-limited token sales, so that we can boost token sales and generate more revenue than just selling them on the site. Large number of bulk token sales would also mean increasing our cash flow.

Our second strategy is SEO. We have an annual budget of \$12,000 spent on search engine marketing. This is to ensure that our site is on the first few searches' results on search engines like Google, Yahoo, and Bing, so that we can maintain a high site click rate. That would roughly include metadata (code) enhancement, keywords included in content, and landing page enhancement.

The third strategy is Google Ads. We will buy ad spaces targeting users of our competitors, namely Duolingo, and users that search for Cantonese contents. Through targeting users of Duolingo, we hope to attract a portion of their users to our platform, as we aim to be a competitive alternative for their Cantonese product.

We will continuously create engaging posts on our social media platforms, inspired by news events and new social media phenomenon. We will try to maintain a long-term collaborative relationship with the influencers through video projects that tracks their learning journey on our platform, making them our brand ambassadors.

Operations

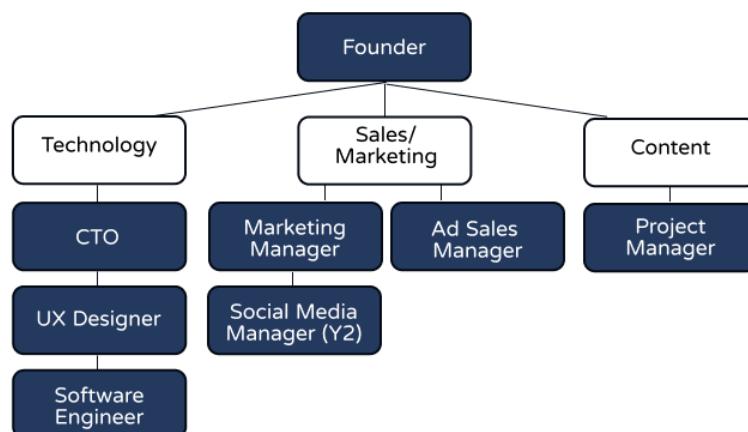


Figure 20. Organizational chart for KongTone

Since KongTone publishes a new course once a month, we have only a limited need for a large full-time team. We do not specifically target talents with a Hong Kong background, but preferable if they have knowledge in the city's culture and

trends. In the first five years, there will be eight full-time employees in total, including the founder. Since we are a digital-first company, all of our employees will work remotely, and only meet in person on events or important meetings. The founder overlooks the three departments in the company: content, sales and marketing, and technology.

The position of Project Manager in the content team will contact and manage the freelancers' work progresses. The Project Manager will also work with the founder to edit and compile the content, ensuring the linguistic quality and that the content is on brand. Since it is hard to source content writers that are passionate about Hong Kong language and culture in the US, KongTone will outsource these positions to (overseas) freelance writers. There will also be freelance graphic designers in the content team to create graphics for the website and marketing materials. All these freelancers will be reached through freelance platforms like Upwork and Fiverr. In the future, KongTone will expand our creative team, creating an in-house content and design team to continue deliver high quality Cantonese content.

The sales and marketing team will start with two members: the Marketing Manager and Ad Sales Manager. The Marketing Manager will design and launch marketing plans, and work with external PR firm for the launching events. From Y2 and beyond, we will add a position of Social Media Manager, a position to manage

the social media accounts and design social media campaigns to maintain our brand awareness. The Ad Sales Manager will be in charge of liaison for branded content, and manage the prices for display ads.

For the technology team, it will be overlooked by the CTO. Under the CTO, an UX Designer will be in charge of the overall visual and interface design of the KongTone site, and a software engineer who works with the external software engineers to build and maintain the website. The building of the MPV, website, and maintenance will be accomplished with help from external technology consultancy, Thoughtworks.

Professional services like HR, accounting, and legal are to be outsourced. This is because as a startup, KongTone does not have enough financial resources to support these professionals onboard. Also, since the company scale is small, there is yet need to have full-time legal, HR, and accountants on the team. For bookkeeping and accounting, we will use services from Bench; Gusto for HR and payroll, and Upwork to source lawyers.

Financials

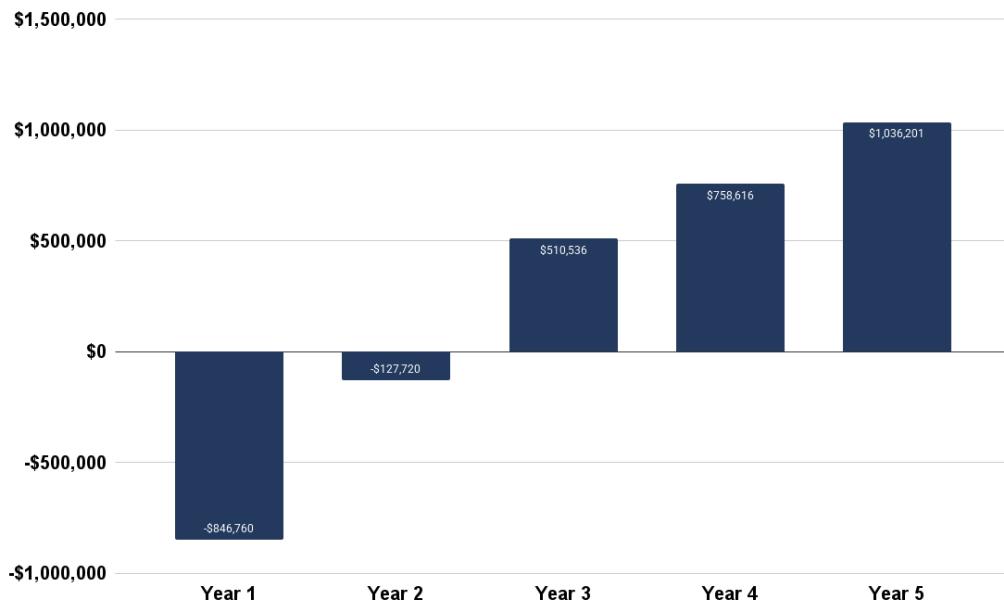


Figure 21. Net income assumptions

Revenue

The number of site visitors was calculated based on competitor data. According to Duolingo's Form 10-K, the app have 100M monthly active users in 2024⁴⁷. Another competitor, Language Drops, also claims to have 130K Cantonese speakers on their site. We aim to attract 0.1% of Duolingo's audience, 100K monthly visitors to our platform in Y1. The monthly visitors will grow by 103%, reaching over 203K by the end of Y5. This huge number of audiences means potential to generate huge number of revenues.

⁴⁷ Duolingo, Inc. "Form 10-K." February 28, 2025. <https://investors.duolingo.com/sec-filings/sec-filing/10-k/0001562088-25-000042>.

Advertising

Total Advertising Revenue					
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Sponsored Content	\$750	\$750	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
% of Total Revenue	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Display Advertising	\$1,036,800	\$1,451,520	\$1,741,824	\$1,916,006	\$2,107,607
% of Total Revenue	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Podcast Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$2,016	\$2,661	\$3,903
% of Total Revenue	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	\$1,037,550	\$1,452,270	\$1,744,840	\$1,919,668	\$2,112,510
Display Advertising					
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Page Views					
# of Monthly Non Subscriber Visitors	100,000	140,000	168,000	184,800	203,280
Total # of Website Visitors Per Month	100,000	140,000	168,000	184,800	203,280
Average # of Pages Viewed Per User	6	6	6	6	6
Average # times User visits site per month	4	4	4	4	4
# of months	12	12	12	12	12
# of Page Views	28,800,000	40,320,000	48,384,000	53,222,400	58,544,640
Total %/# of Desktop Page Views	50%	14,400,000	20,160,000	24,192,000	26,611,200
Total %/# of Mobile Page Views	50%	14,400,000	20,160,000	24,192,000	26,611,200
Average # Ad Desktop	3	43,200,000	60,480,000	72,576,000	79,833,600
Average # Ad Mobile	3	43,200,000	60,480,000	72,576,000	79,833,600
Total Average Website Impressions	86,400,000	120,960,000	145,152,000	159,667,200	175,633,920
Website Impressions					
Direct Ad Impressions %	50%	43,200,000	60,480,000	72,576,000	79,833,600
Programmatic Impressions %	50%	43,200,000	60,480,000	72,576,000	79,833,600
Total Monetized Impressions	86,400,000	120,960,000	145,152,000	159,667,200	175,633,920
Website CPM					
Direct eCPM Costing		13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00
Programmatic eCPM Costing		11.00	11.00	11.00	11.00
Direct Revenue		561,600	786,240	943,488	1,037,837
Programmatic Revenue		475,200	665,280	798,336	878,170
					965,987

Figures 22-23. Advertising revenues

Advertisements on KongTone site will be full-page modals and in video form.

On each visit, users watch at least two programmatic ads, which displays before and after a course. The CPM for online digital video ads is \$11-\$13⁴⁸. The higher range, \$13 is applied for Direct eCPM Costing, and Programmatic eCPM Costing is \$11, the lower price in the range.

The survey and interview results shows that people usually spend one to two hours (once a week) learning Cantonese, so we would assume that each user will come to our site 4 times a month. According to the data on Similarweb, Duolingo has

⁴⁸ Solomon Partners. “Solomon’s 2025 Major Media CPM Comparison.” Accessed October 28, 2025. <https://oaaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/2025-Solomon-Partners-US-Core-Media-CPM-Comparison.pdf>.

6.08 page per visit⁴⁹, we assume we'll have a similar page view on our site. The calculation concludes that we could generate \$2.1M of ad revenue by Y5.

Branded Content

Advertising Rate Card							
Sponsored Digital Content							
	Price Per Post	Premium Content/mo	Frequency				
Branded Content - 1	\$ 750	1					1
Branded Content - 2	\$ 750		1				1
Branded Content - 3	\$ 1,000			1			1
Branded Content - 4	\$ 1,000				1		1
Branded Content - 5	\$ 1,000					1	1
Total Sponsored Digital Content Revenue		750	750	1,000	1,000	1,000	

Figure 24. Branded content revenue

We plan to work with local Hong Kong businesses to produce one branded content every year. This is to connect the US and Hong Kong markets through introducing local Hong Kong businesses to the international audiences. It will be incorporated in the course, for example using the menu of Red Tea Cafe⁵⁰ in a course that introduces cha chaan teng (HK style cafes) jargons. The branded package sample on David Arkin Consulting⁵¹ suggests that the costs start at \$750, and we can charge up to \$1,000 for each collaboration when the brand further grows, as we will have more resources and customer base to bargain for a higher charge for branded content.

⁴⁹ Similarweb. "Duolingo (DUOL) Analysis & Market Share Overview." Accessed October 16, 2025. <https://www.similarweb.com/company/duolingo.com/>.

⁵⁰ TripAdvisor. "Red Tea Cafe." Accessed October 16, 2025. https://www.tripadvisor.com/Restaurant_Review-g294217-d10396891-Reviews-Red_Tea_Cafe-Hong_Kong.html.

⁵¹ David Arkin Consulting. "'What Do We Charge for Branded Content?' How to Form Packages and Determine the Right Price." September 6, 2024. <https://www.davidarkinconsulting.com/how-to-price-branded-content/>.

Currency (Tokens)

# of Tokens	Price	Price per course (10 tokens)	% of monthly users that purchases
10	Ad/ \$9.99	\$0.99	2%
35	\$29.99	\$0.86	2%
65	\$54.99	\$0.85	1%
85	\$74.99	\$0.85	1%
110	\$89.99	\$0.82	0.5%

Figure 25. Token pricing model and conversion rate assumption

Users will need ten tokens to unlock a ten-minute course, meaning that they will need at least 120 tokens to unlock all the courses published over the year. The design of token bundles is inspired by mobile game Rummikub⁵². The pattern which bulk sales gets more than single sales shows that this pricing model values one-off, bulk sales over micropayments. A lower single price can also attract users to pay more at once, providing us a stable revenue from token sales. 53.3% of survey responders⁵³ rather watch an ad instead of paying, matching the 2%, very low average conversion rate for website products⁵⁴. We assume that paid users are most likely to choose the cheaper bundles, therefore the conversion rates lowers as the bundle price increases.

⁵² See Appendix XII.

⁵³ See Appendix II.

⁵⁴ CleverTap. “Average Website Conversion Rate: Benchmarks by Industry.” June 20, 2025.

<https://clevertap.com/blog/average-website-conversion-rate-benchmarks/>.

Digital and Subscription Costs⁵⁵

Costs of Goods Sold		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Web Costs	\$ 724,370	\$ 624,520	\$ 464,107	\$ 478,093	\$ 493,521	
TOTAL COGS	\$ 724,370	\$ 624,520	\$ 464,107	\$ 478,093	\$ 493,521	
Direct Expenses		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Development Costs						
Content Freelancers		109,200	109,200	109,200	109,200	109,200
Web Development and Maintenance		300,000	250,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Other Direct Technology Costs						
SSL Certification		240	240	240	240	240
Marketing Costs		300,000	250,000	139,587	153,573	169,001
Mail Chimp		680	680	680	680	680
Adobe Creative Suite		1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Microsoft 365 Business		1,050	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
SEO		12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Total Web Costs		724,370	624,520	464,107	478,093	493,521

Figure 26. Cost of Goods Sold

Web development projects for medium-complex site with gamification is estimated to cost about \$300K⁵⁶ with outsourced companies like ThoughtWorks. In Y1, we will have a \$300K budget to build the MVP, and \$250K budget in Y2 to add new functions to the site. In Y3-5, the budget to developing and maintaining the site will be \$200K a year.

Other direct technology costs including SSL certification, Mail Chimp, Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft 365, and SEO budgets will cost around \$15,000 each year to support the operation of the site as well as the company.

⁵⁵ The assumption of the budget came up after discussions and brainstorming with xAI Grok.

⁵⁶ Appinventiv. "App Development Cost 2025: Complete Pricing Guide." October 28, 2025.

<https://appinventiv.com/guide/mobile-app-development-cost/>.

For marketing, we will have a large budget of \$300K in Y1, and \$250K in Y2 to grow the brand. To maintain the brand awareness as well as attracting new users, we will budget the marketing at 8% of revenue, aligning to the industry benchmark⁵⁷.

Operations⁵⁸

Total Staffing and Overhead Costs					
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Operations Salary	422,000	428,660	435,520	442,585	449,863
Sales Salary	448,000	555,440	572,103	589,266	606,944
Technology Salary	747,000	769,410	792,492	816,267	840,755
Total FLD Salary	\$1,617,000	\$1,753,510	\$1,800,115	\$1,848,119	\$1,897,562
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Professional Services	\$12,656	\$13,289	\$13,953	\$14,651	\$15,383
Benefits & Taxes	\$485,100	\$526,053	\$540,035	\$554,436	\$569,269
Total Additional Overhead	\$497,756	\$539,342	\$553,988	\$569,087	\$584,652
Total Overhead	\$2,114,756	\$2,292,852	\$2,354,103	\$2,417,205	\$2,482,214

Figure 27. Staffing and overhead costs

Since KongTone will only publish 12 courses each year, the team will be kept lean with minimal full-time staff. In the beginning, there will be seven employees in total, with staff members to support daily operations and producing new content each month. The design and salaries of the positions are all inspired by Duolingo's open data on LinkedIn and Glassdoor. Core activities requiring full-time employees include project managing, marketing and sales, and site maintenance. In Y2, we will hire a new Social Media Manager to manage our social media platforms and reach our target audiences. Other than full-time staff members, we will also work with

⁵⁷ upgrowth. "Edtech Marketing Costs: Spend Smart in 2026." Accessed October 28, 2025.

<https://upgrowth.in/how-much-does-edtech-marketing-cost-how-much-to-spend-without-breaking-the-bank/>.

⁵⁸ See Appendix XIII for full operation cost breakdown.

freelancers to produce the course contents, as we can foresee the difficulties to find writers and graphic designers that are familiar with the language and culture of Hong Kong.

Professional services like legal, HR, and accounting will be outsourced. The total budget in Y1 will be \$12,656, and will grow by 5% every year as the company grows.

Fixed Assets

Asset	# of Units	Single Unit Price	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Year Five
Laptop	5	\$1,599					
		Value - Beginning of Year	\$7,995	\$6,396	\$4,797	\$3,198	\$1,599
		Depreciation Expense	\$1,599	\$1,599	\$1,599	\$1,599	\$1,599
		Accumulated Depreciation	\$1,599	\$3,198	\$4,797	\$6,396	\$7,995
		Value - End of Year	\$6,396	\$4,797	\$3,198	\$1,599	\$0

Figure 28. Fixed assets

The fixed assets include five Apple M5 MacBooks⁵⁹ for every full-time staff member, to better fit the needs in graphic/ UX design and coding, which costs \$1599 for each laptop. The founder will use her own laptop.

Capital Stock

We ask for \$1.5M of shark tank investment to balance the company's cash flow. The investment will cover development, marketing, and staffing costs in the first few

⁵⁹ Apple. "14-Inch MacBook Pro – Space Black." Accessed October 25, 2025.

<https://www.apple.com/shop/buy-mac/macbook-pro/14-inch-space-black-standard-display-apple-m5-chip-with-10-core-cpu-and-10-core-gpu-16gb-memory-512gb>.

years. We will negotiate with the investors on paying them a portion of our revenue, as a return of their investments.

Owner Expectations and Conclusion

As a daughter of Hong Kong, preserving and promoting my mother language is always my passion, and I treat it as one of my life purposes. Even though the financial assumptions show a potential for exiting, there is yet a plan to sell the business and allowing other people to take over the KongTone project.

Other than the Guangfu Cantonese (variant spoken in Hong Kong, Macau, and Guangzhou), there are a diverse variant of Cantonese and Southern Chinese languages spoken in Hong Kong, like Waitau dialect and Hakka, which these two languages are also intangible cultural heritages in Hong Kong. Preserving Hong Kong languages does not mean limiting the scope into the most popular variant, thus after scaling up, KongTone will discover the possibility of introducing Waitau dialect and Hakka to our audiences.

There is potential for future growth of the company. To further support the development of the site and increase retention, we plan to switch to a subscription system in Year 6, offering member exclusive contents, and premium features like

feedback for writing pieces and tutoring. Introducing a more stable revenue stream means we can have more resources, allowing us to grow our company.

Appendices and Sources

AI Usage Statement

Specific parts that were done with AI suggestions are marked in the footnotes. The grammar and linguistic clarity are edited with the suggestions from xAI Grok 4.

Appendix I: Bibliography

- 9GAG. Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://9gag.com/>.
- Adobe. “Creativity and Design Plans for Teams.” Accessed October 16, 2025. https://commerce.adobe.com/store/segmentation?cli=acom_biz&cs=t&co=US&pa=ccsn_direct_individual.
- Amazon Web Services. “Amazon Route 53.” Accessed October 16, 2025. https://aws.amazon.com/route53/?nc1=h_ls.
- Apple. “14-Inch MacBook Pro – Space Black.” Accessed October 25, 2025. <https://www.apple.com/shop/buy-mac/macbook-pro/14-inch-space-black-standard-display-apple-m5-chip-with-10-core-cpu-and-10-core-gpu-16gb-memory-512gb>.
- Appinventiv. “App Development Cost 2025: Complete Pricing Guide.” October 28, 2025. <https://appinventiv.com/guide/mobile-app-development-cost/>.
- Association for Conservation of Hong Kong Indigenous Languages. “Text-to-Speech App for Hong Kong Indigenous Wai Tau and Hakka Dialects.” Intangible Cultural Heritage Office, n.d. https://www.icho.hk/documents/Funded-Projects-2-2021/Record_of_Completed_Project_AC19_2021_EN.pdf.
- Bench Accounting. “Bookkeeping Pricing Packages & Plans.” Accessed October 16, 2025. <https://www.bench.co/pricing>.
- canto.hk 香港粵語. “Cantonese Font.” Accessed September 1, 2025. <https://canto.hk/>.
- canto.hk 香港粵語. “Membership Levels.” August 21, 2024. <https://canto.hk/membership-account/membership-levels/>.
- CantoWords. Accessed September 1, 2025. <https://cantowords.com/>.
- Cheng, Mandy. “Hongkonger Creates Colourful Cantonese Font to Foster Learning.” Hong Kong Free Press, July 30, 2024. <https://hongkongfp.com/2023/05/16/hongkonger-creates-colourful-cantonese-font-to-foster-language-learning/>.
- Chung (@csy). Instagram. Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://www.instagram.com/csy/>.

- The Chinese University of Hong Kong. 粵語審音配詞字庫 (Chinese Character Database). Accessed November 2, 2025.
<https://humanum.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/Lexis/lexi-can/>.
- CleverTap. "Average Website Conversion Rate: Benchmarks by Industry." June 20, 2025. <https://clevertap.com/blog/average-website-conversion-rate-benchmarks/>.
- Cloudflare. "Cloudflare Free SSL/TLS: Get SSL Certificates." Accessed October 16, 2025. <https://www.cloudflare.com/application-services/products/ssl/>.
- Codédex. Accessed September 1, 2025. <https://www.codedex.io/home>.
- Curry, David. "Duolingo Revenue and Usage Statistics (2025)." Business of Apps, March 3, 2025. <https://www.businessofapps.com/data/duolingo-statistics/>.
- David Arkin Consulting. "'What Do We Charge for Branded Content?' How to Form Packages and Determine the Right Price." September 6, 2024.
<https://www.davidarkinconsulting.com/how-to-price-branded-content/>.
- DesignRush. "How Much Does SEM Cost? (2025)." Accessed October 16, 2025.
<https://www.designrush.com/agency/digital-marketing/trends/sem-costs>.
- Duolingo. "Cantonese." Accessed September 1, 2025.
<https://en.duolingo.com/course/zh-HK/zh/Learn-Chinese%20Cantonese>.
- Duolingo Careers. "Senior Growth Marketing Strategy Manager." Accessed October 16, 2025.
https://careers.duolingo.com/jobs/8154723002?gh_jid=8154723002&gh_src=aiwjiqq02us.
- Duolingo, Inc. "Form 10-K." February 28, 2025. <https://investors.duolingo.com/sec-filings/sec-filing/10-k/0001562088-25-000042>.
- EdUHK Research Repository. "Cantonese Phonetic Input Method (Jyutping) with Minority Language Prompts." Accessed November 23, 2025.
<https://repository.eduhk.hk/en/projects/cantonese-phonetic-input-method-jyutping-with-minority-language-p/>.
- Future Commerce. "創帳 7 天漲粉 2.4 萬！華元小編如何靠一句「蚵仔煎洋芋片」經營 Threads ?" August 8, 2025.
<https://fc.bnnext.com.tw/articles/view/3999>.
- Glassdoor. "Duolingo Product Manager Salaries (10,300 Salaries Submitted)." Accessed October 16, 2025. https://www.glassdoor.com/Salary/Duolingo-Product-Manager-Salaries-E629348_D_KO9,24.htm.
- Glassdoor. "Duolingo Social Media Manager Salaries (10,240 Salaries Submitted)." Accessed October 28, 2025. https://www.glassdoor.com/Salary/Duolingo-Social-Media-Manager-Salaries-E629348_D_KO9,29.htm.
- Glassdoor. "Duolingo Chief Technology Officer Salaries." Accessed October 28, 2025. https://www.glassdoor.com/Salary/Duolingo-Chief-Technology-Officer-Salaries-E629348_D_KO9,33.htm
- Glassdoor. "Duolingo Software Engineer Salaries (92 Salaries Submitted)." Accessed

- October 28, 2025. https://www.glassdoor.com/Salary/Duolingo-Software-Engineer-Salaries-E629348_D_KO9,26.htm.
- Glassdoor. “Duolingo Product Designer Salaries (10,240 Salaries Submitted).” Accessed October 28, 2025. https://www.glassdoor.com/Salary/Duolingo-Product-Designer-Salaries-E629348_D_KO9,25.htm.
- Gusto. “Pricing.” Accessed October 16, 2025. <https://gusto.com/product/pricing>.
- Hambaanglaang Cantonese Graded Readers. “About Us.” January 21, 2023. <https://hambaanglaang.hk/about-us-2/>.
- Hambaanglaang Cantonese Graded Readers. “跳跳紮拼音轉換器 Graphical Cantonese Generator (v.2.7.8).” Accessed September 1, 2025. <https://test.hambaanglaang.hk/>.
- Hello Cantonese. Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://hellocantoneshk.com/>.
- Hung, Eva. Tai Po Stories. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 2023.
- IMDb. “Another World (2025).” Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt36639436/>.
- JFFT. YouTube. Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://www.youtube.com/@JFFTHK>.
- Kinkajoo Ltd. “Rummikub.” App Store. March 7, 2018. <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/rummikub/id1015322991>.
- Language Drops. Accessed October 28, 2025. <https://app.languagedrops.com/>.
- Lau, Chaak-Ming. “Cantonese Braille to Jyutping Converter.” Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://chaaklau.github.io/b2j/>.
- Lau, Chaak-Ming. Chaak-Ming Lau 劉擇明. Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://chaak.net/index.html>.
- Lau, Chaak-Ming, and Yee-Kai Tang. 圍頭與客家 (Waitau and Hakka). <https://chaaklau.github.io/hki-stories/>.
- Lingnaam Jyutjam. “Extended Jyutping Scheme (Jyutping++, J++).” Accessed November 2, 2025. https://jyutjam.org/en/j++/#_1-abstract.
- LingQ. Accessed September 1, 2025. <https://www.lingq.com/en/>.
- LIHKG 討論區. Accessed October 2, 2025. <https://lihkg.com/category/1>.
- Lolly Talk. YouTube. Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://www.youtube.com/@LollyTalkHK>.
- Mailchimp. “Email Marketing Pricing.” Accessed October 16, 2025. <https://mailchimp.com/pricing/marketing/>.
- MIRROR. YouTube. Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEuQ-0x3uMk1KghGiO1kTHg>.
- Newor Media. “CPM Benchmarks by the Industry,” by Rutvi Parekh. April 16, 2025. <https://newormedia.com/blog/cpm-benchmarks-by-the-industry/>.

The Chief Executive's 2022 Policy Address. "Policy Address (Paragraph 143-148)." Accessed November 10, 2025.
<https://www.policyaddress.gov.hk/2022/en/p143.html>.

Tripadvisor. "Red Tea Cafe." Accessed October 16, 2025.
https://www.tripadvisor.com/Restaurant_Review-g294217-d10396891-Reviews-Red_Tea_Cafe-Hong_Kong.html.

Shutterstock. "Pricing." Accessed November 18, 2025.
<https://www.shutterstock.com/pricing>.

Similarweb. "Duolingo (DUOL) Analysis & Market Share Overview." Accessed October 16, 2025. <https://www.similarweb.com/company/duolingo.com/>.

Similarweb. "Duolingo.com Traffic Analytics, Ranking & Audience." Accessed October 16, 2025. <https://www.similarweb.com/website/duolingo.com/>.

Scone Publishing. "《圍頭與客家－香港本土語言故事集（修訂版）》." Accessed November 24, 2025. <https://www.scone.com.hk/product-page/hki-stories>.

Solomon Partners. "Solomon's 2025 Major Media CPM Comparison." Accessed October 28, 2025. <https://oaaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/2025-Solomon-Partners-US-Core-Media-CPM-Comparison.pdf>.

Trial & Error 試當真. YouTube. Accessed November 23, 2025.
<https://www.youtube.com/@trialanderror924>.

TypeDuck. "About." Accessed September 1, 2025. <https://www.typeduck.hk/about/>.

TypeDuck. GitHub. Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://github.com/TypeDuck-HK>.

Upwork. "27 Best Freelance Graphic Designers for Hire in January 2025." Accessed October 28, 2025. <https://www.upwork.com/hire/graphic-designers/>.

Upwork. "Cantonese Content Writers." n.d.
<https://www.upwork.com/nx/search/talent/?nbs=1&q=cantonese%20writer>.

upgrowth. "Edtech Marketing Costs: Spend Smart in 2026." Accessed October 28, 2025. <https://upgrowth.in/how-much-does-edtech-marketing-cost-how-much-to-spend-without-breaking-the-bank/>.

US Census Bureau. "Detailed Languages Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and Over: 2017-2021." June 2025.
<https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/language-use/2017-2021-lang-tables.html>.

words.hk 粵典. Accessed September 1, 2025. <https://words.hk/>.

林家謙 Terence Lam. YouTube. Accessed November 23, 2025.
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5NMESRUXEIpoi5GzGiHEDA>.

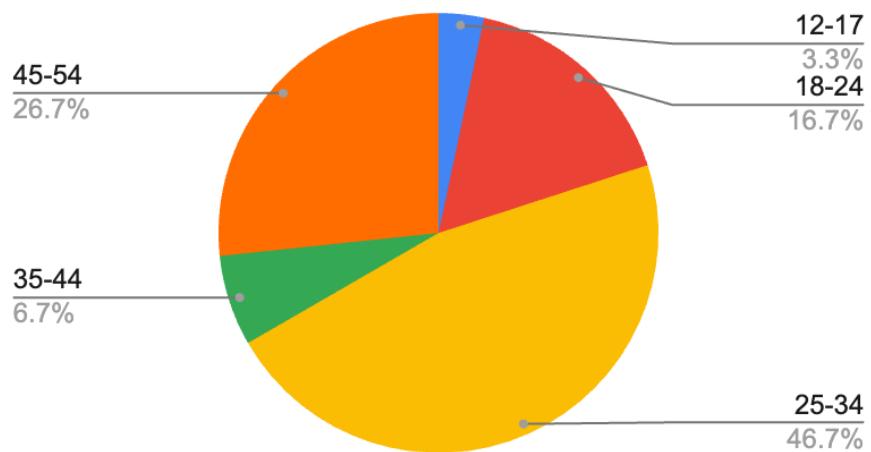
香港圍頭話及客家話文字轉語音 (Hong Kong Waitau and Hakka Text-to-Speech). Accessed November 23, 2025. <https://hkilang.github.io/TTS/>.

香港史讀本. Hong Kong: Chung Hwa Book Co., 2024.

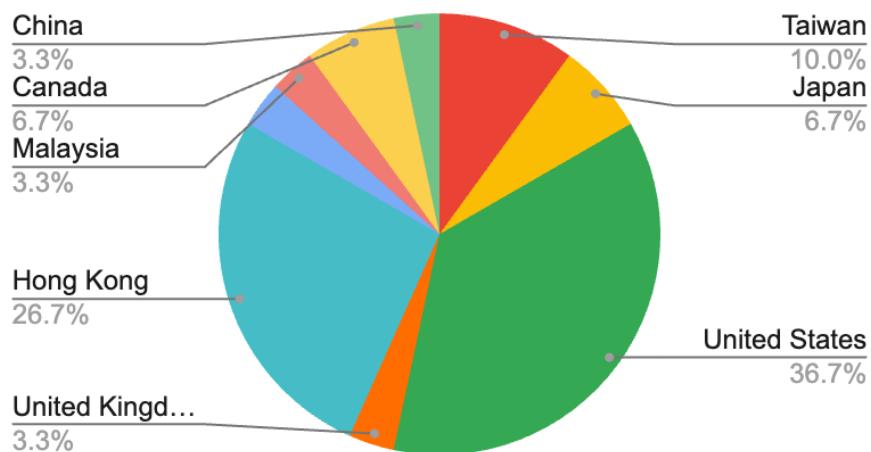
Appendix II: Survey Responses

Raw data: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1-NvenibwExg7uoPI0hI12YNQI8wDRYsH555SZhjj0/edit?usp=sharing>

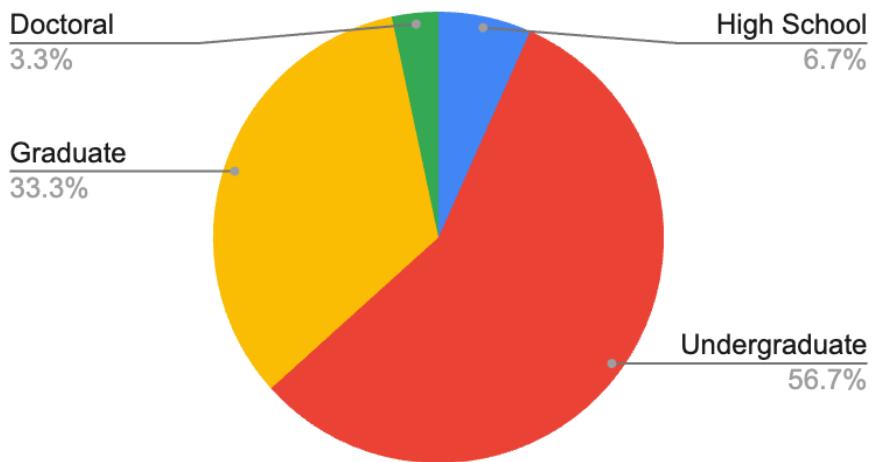
Age



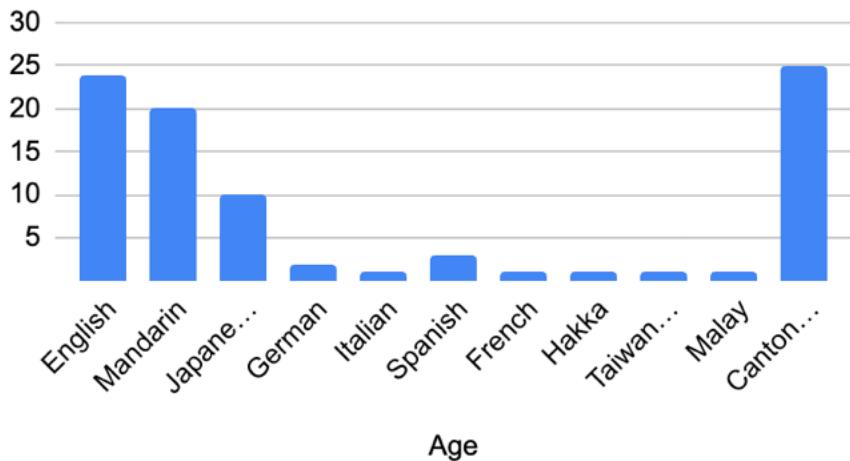
Country



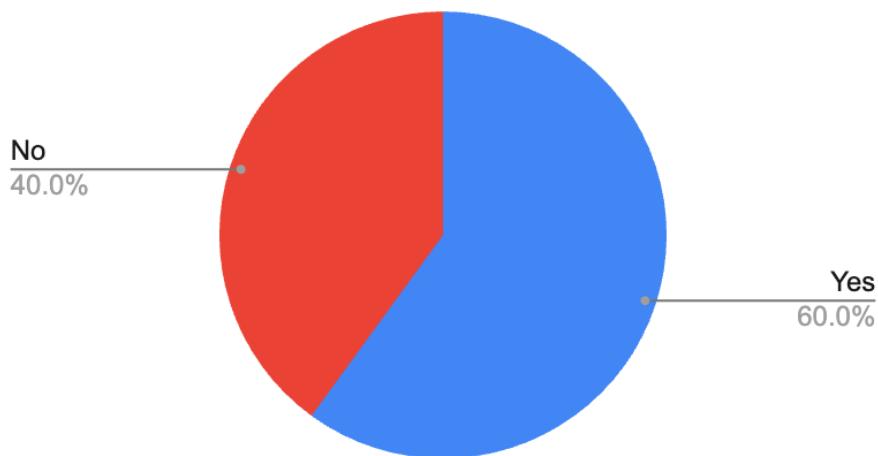
Educational Level



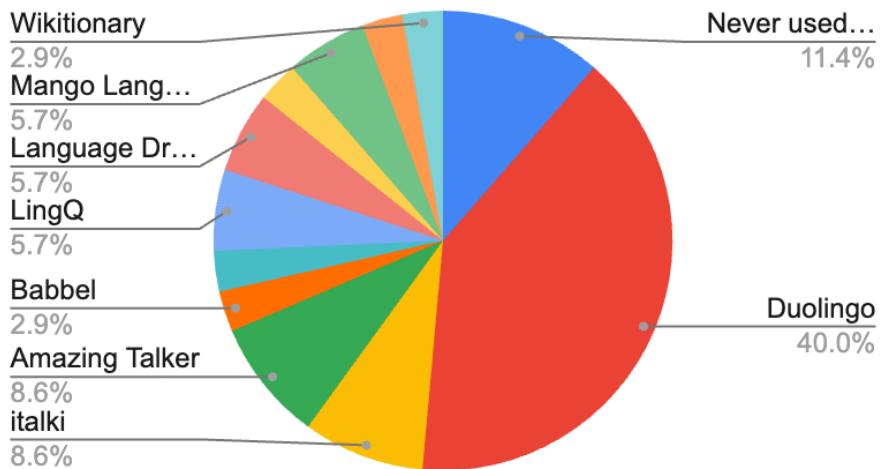
Languages



Are you a Cantonese learner?

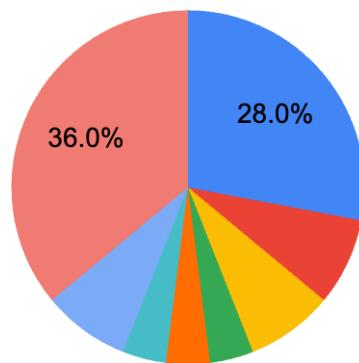


Overview of Language Learning Platform Usages



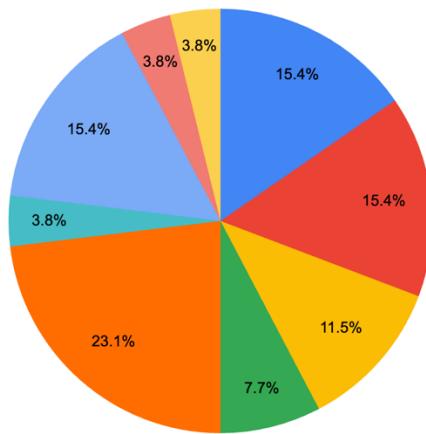
Reasons to learn Cantonese

- My parents speak Cantonese ● I am dating someone who speaks Cantonese
- I plan to work in Hong Kong in the future ● I plan to study in Hong Kong in the future
- I am challenging myself with one of the most difficult languages in the world 3 more



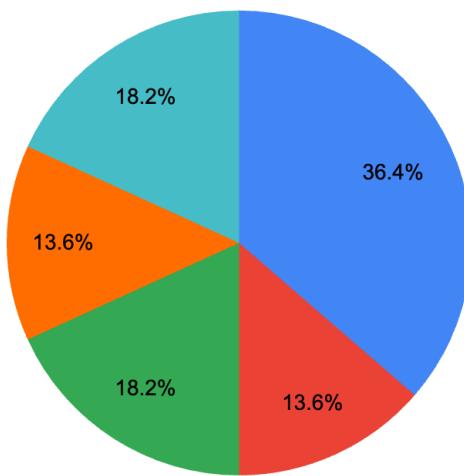
Most difficult elements in Cantonese

- Pronunciations ● Reading ● Writing ● Listening ● Speaking ● Grammar
- Writing Chinese Characters (esp. Traditional Chinese) ● Vocabulary ● Local Slangs

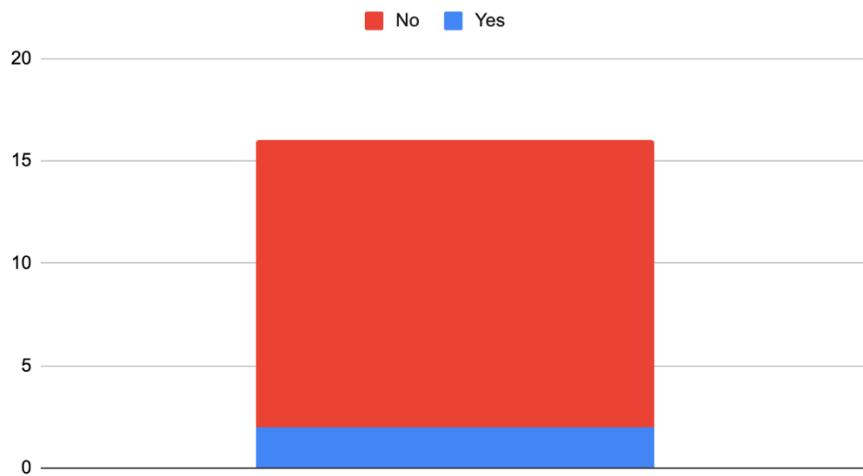


Ways to learn Cantonese

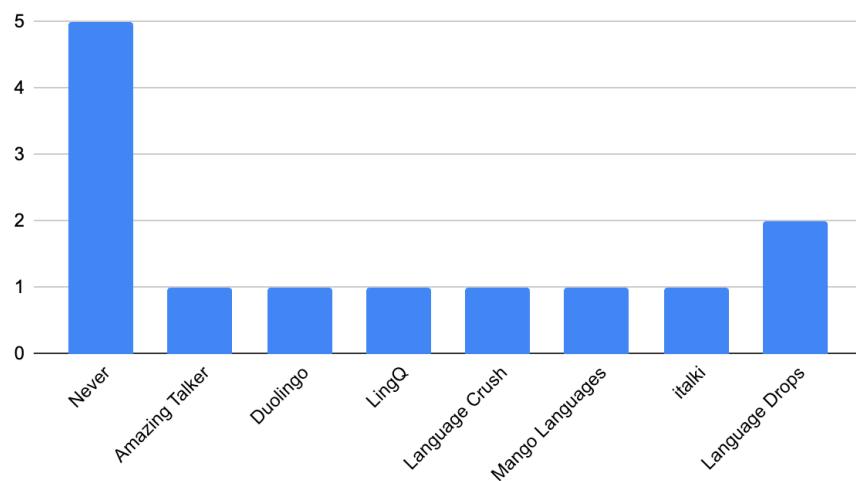
- Online self-learning
- Online tutor
- From a friend
- Offline classes
- Other ways



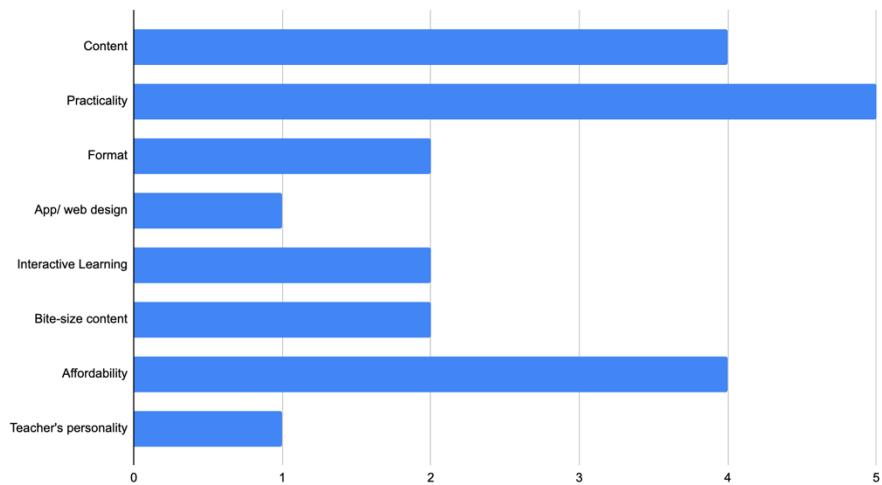
Do you pay for Cantonese learning platforms?



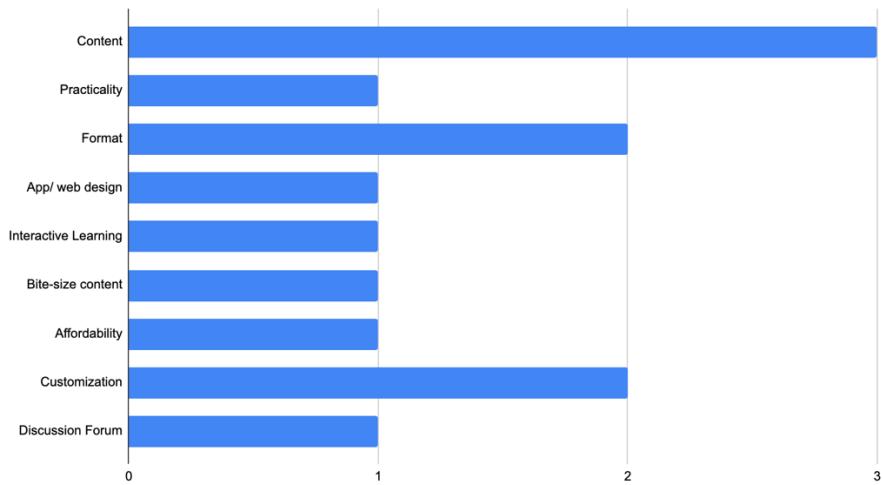
Have you learned Cantonese on any of these platforms?



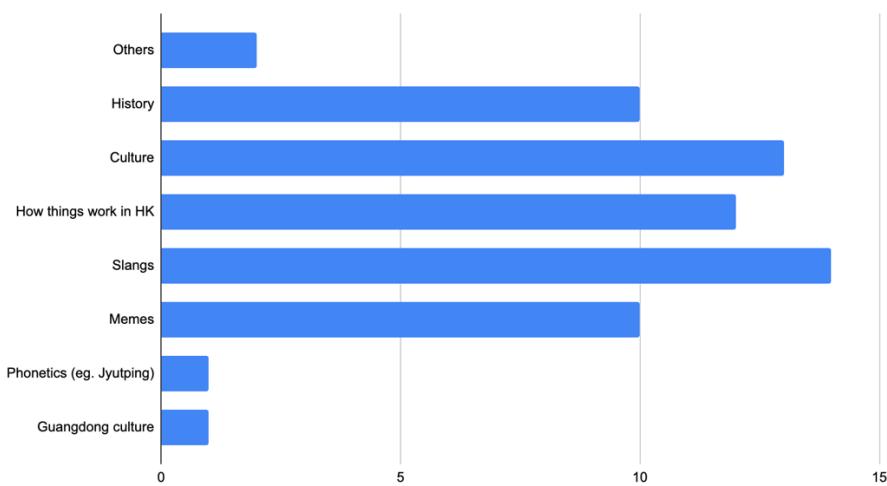
What do you like about the Cantonese platform you used?



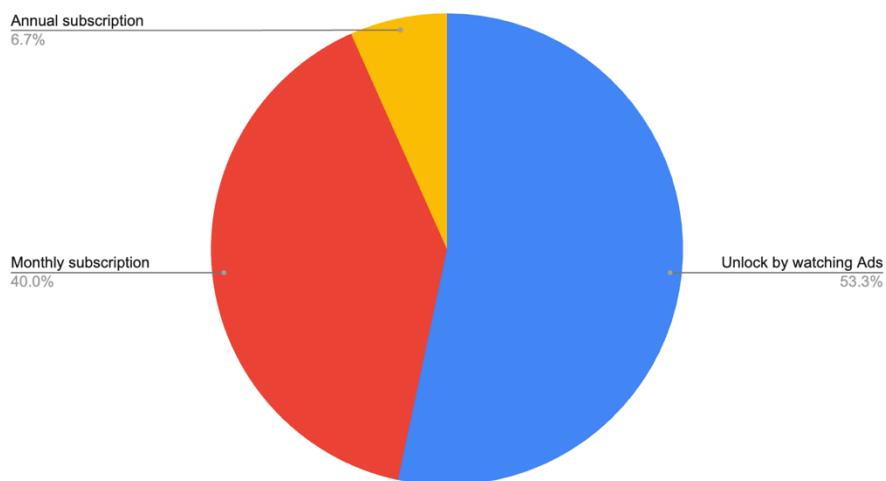
What do you not like about the Cantonese platform you used?



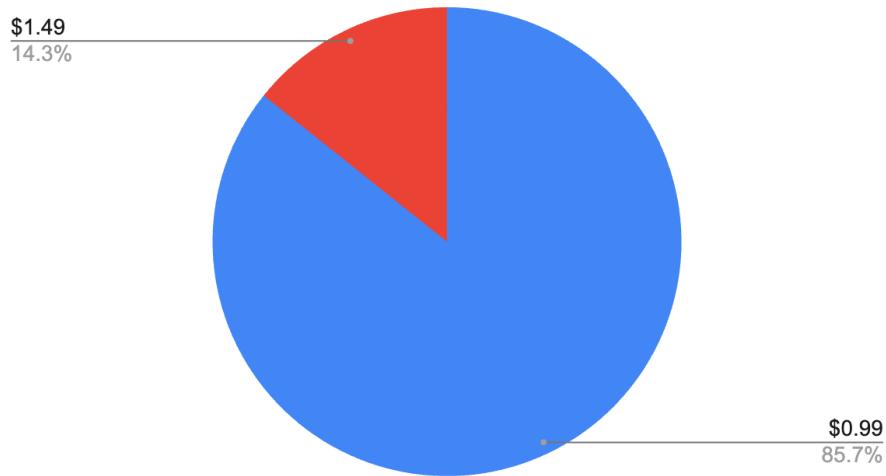
What do you expect learning on KongTone?



How do you expect paying for KongTone premium contents?



How much are you willing to pay for each token?



NoWish7507 · 13 小時前
no where to comment but I use the following websites the most:
<https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E6%95%B4>
<https://languagecrush.com/reading/course/258>
youtube channels like comprehensiblecantonese and manki (most reliable with intermediate content)

chiefgmj · 11 小時前
Students learn it from duolingo then get lost. most end up dropping. a few move to watch HK drama and movies to pick up random words.

 CarelessDragonfly455 · 57 分鐘前

1. <https://www.cantoneselearning.com/>

I go through the lessons+ play the jyutping game. however the lessons are pretty basic right now, i hope they add more intermediate content someday.

2. <https://hambaanglaang.hk/> this has a lot of great beginner stories with audio! but the jyutping color and sizing drives me a little crazy 😅 I understand that it helps others but i want to learn to read characters. it's also only video or pdf so there's no option to toggle jyutping on/off.

3. 5m cantonese with Amanda on YT

Self learning definitely feels more possible nowadays for beginners. The only thing is pronunciation and tones are hard to practice by yourself without paying for a tutor.

it would be amazing to have an app or website where you could speak a word or sentence and get feedback that compares it to a native speaker, like those karaoke/singing apps that show the audio wavechart/pitch. If it got even more advanced, it could even include karaoke with Cantopop songs. Just an idea!

good luck on your capstone!

↑ 1 ↓ ○ 回覆 ...

Appendix III: Interview Synopsis

Interviewee 1: Wren (interviewed through follow-up survey)

Profile	
Name	Wren
Age Group	25-34
Country	United States
Educational level	Undergraduate
Languages spoken	English, Cantonese
Learning period	2 years
Cantonese proficiency	Beginner
Reasons for learning Cantonese	I plan to work in Hong Kong in the future I love Hong Kong culture My parents speak Cantonese I plan to study in Hong Kong in the future
Ways to learn Cantonese	Online tutor, In person group discussion
Most difficult elements in Cantonese	Grammar, Vocab
Online platforms	Italki

Expenditure	I pay for a big 15 lesson package on iTalki. It's around \$30.60 per lesson, and I do 2-4 lessons per month
Good things about italki	Content, Practicality, Teacher's personality is great!
Bad things about italki	Affordability
Expected content on KongTone platform	Culture, How things work in Hong Kong (e.g. typhoon warning signals, educational systems, etc.), Slangs, Memes

Q: What's the hardest part(s) in learning Cantonese?

A: Getting more comfortable speaking. I sometimes take a long time to form sentences or find vocab. I have a hard time explaining myself since I don't always have the vocab. And I don't have enough vocab to try to explain concepts.

Q: Have you overcome that difficulty? If yes, how did you do that?

A: Practicing with my tutor. Speaking to myself. But it's still a work in progress. Also gathering more vocab, so I have more words I can use to explain things. It's also a lot about consistency. I don't get to speak that often, so sometimes I forget words. It's about building the muscle in my brain.

Q: Can you name a tool/ way that's most helpful when you learn Cantonese?

A: iTalki classes with my tutor. YouTube channels like Manki Cantonese or Comprehensive Cantonese to listen and get more vocab

Q: What makes it so helpful to you?

A: They posted pretty often, so there's something to listen to almost every day. And they're short, so I have short consistent listening practice. The channels are also kinda weird the topics they choose. It's a lot of random stories or video games, so it's hit or miss on the content. Sometimes I'm interested, sometimes I'm not. But the classes are great. My tutor does a quick convo in the beginning, and I learn relevant vocab to my life and interests. We also go through a textbook, so I build the basis for broader vocab.

Q: How much did you spend on the class/ tool?

A: iTalki is around \$30 per session. I have a 15-class bundle

Q: Why did you pay for it?

A: I tried it and it was helpful; I get to practice in a safe environment. I don't feel bad if I don't remember words

Q: Have you tried any online tools to learn Cantonese? How was the experience?

A: I tried this AI app called Cantonese AI. It's not bad, but I feel bad for using AI (I disagree with it ethically). And it also speaks really fast. It doesn't feel like a good fit for a beginner since it uses more advanced vocab, and reading the explanations is a lot of effort since they're very long.

Q: How can my product be better?

A: As a beginner, I think it's really important for things to be adjustable. Sometimes intermediate conversations or learning materials are daunting to me. But I find it great to do more speaking practice. It can get repetitive talking to myself about my daily tasks since I do the same things over and over. I want more variety in conversation to spice things up.

Interviewee 2: Calvin (interviewed through follow-up survey)

Profile	
Name	Calvin
Age Group	25-34
Country	Hong Kong
Educational level	Undergraduate
Languages spoken	Mandarin, Japanese, English, Cantonese
Learning period	29 years
Cantonese proficiency	Native (mother tongue)
Reasons for learning Cantonese	I'm a Chinese in Hong Kong, though Cantonese is my mother tongue, I never learned it systematically
Ways to learn Cantonese	Online self-learning
Most difficult elements in Cantonese	Grammar, Vocab
Online platforms	N/A
Expected content on KongTone platform	Slangs Dictionary-like word origin & definition

Q: How much time do you spend learning Cantonese each week?

A: 1-2 小時

(1-2 hours)

Q: What's the hardest part(s) in learning Cantonese?

A: 字典收錄唔夠字詞、欠缺語源追索

(There's not enough vocab in dictionaries, and lack of word origin tracks)

Q: Have you overcome that difficulty? If yes, how did you do that?

A: 靠 google，但都好多流料。例如唔正確嘅「正字」

(Googling, but there's a lot of false data, like using wrong characters for "correct wordings"⁶⁰)

Q: Can you name a tool/ way that's most helpful when you learn Cantonese?

A: 同人類溝通、影視音樂娛樂

(Talking to real people; audiovisual programs, music, entertainment)

Q: What makes it so helpful to you?

A: 因為可以學最自然嘅溝通方式

(Because you get to learn the most natural way to communicate)

Q: How much did you spend on the class/ tool?

A: HKD\$400

Q: Why did you pay for it?

A: 有些付費功能很有用 (粵拼字體)

(There are some paid functions I love — Cantonese Fonts (Cantonese Fonts by canto.hk))

Q: Any comments or recommendations?

A: 我認為最快學語言其實係睇、聽、講多啲。自己有上堂去學日文，平時都係睇吓 Facebook 嘅啲教日文專業，聽同睇主要都係電視、音樂、新聞。講就打字、唱 K

(I think the fastest way to learn a language is to read more, listen more, and speak more. I'm also self-learning Japanese, and I usually look at the Facebook Japanese-teaching pages; for listening and reading I watch Japanese TV shows, music, and news. For speaking it's through texting and singing karaoke.)

⁶⁰ In Cantonese, there are terms/ vocab that the "correct wordings" are hard to write and contain rare characters, so conventionally people would use characters that has a same/ similar pronunciation to make the term readable for most people. e.g. king1 gai2 謂歎 (chatting) is conventionally written as 倾偈/傾計, also pronounces as king1 gai2.

Interviewee 3: Sharon (interviewed through follow-up survey)

Profile	
Name	Sharon
Age Group	18-24
Country	China
Educational level	Graduate
Languages spoken	Mandarin, English, Cantonese
Learning period	3 months
Cantonese proficiency	Beginner
Reasons for learning Cantonese	I'm a Chinese in Hong Kong, though Cantonese is my mother tongue, I never learned it systematically
Ways to learn Cantonese	Online self-learning
Most difficult elements in Cantonese	Grammar, Vocab
Online platforms	N/A
Expected content on KongTone platform	Slangs Dictionary-like word origin & definition

Q: How would you describe your proficiency?

A: 聽 80-90% 講 50% 慢慢講能被聽懂 但流利程度唔係好好

(Listening 80-90%, speaking 50%. People can understand what I say if I talk slowly, but I'm far from fluent)

Q: How much time do you spend learning Cantonese each week?

A: 60 分鐘？ 唔會特別去學 因為有廣東話環境 所以更重要是和 local 對話
(60 minutes? I don't particularly spend time to learn since I have the language environment. I think it's more important to talk to local people)

Q: What's the hardest part(s) in learning Cantonese?

A: 最大的困難是自己吧，從一開始害怕講只能聽懂少少，到後來進入了廣東話對話為主的公司，一開始不適應，因為工作原因不得不逼自己聽懂了，到現在可以在日常生活場景使用廣東話，但還是會害怕對方聽不懂，還有隱秘的「害怕被歧視」的心裡，開口講廣東話總是有少少困難。

(I'd say the hardest part is myself. At first I was afraid to speak Cantonese, and my listening skills were bad, but later I entered a company that mainly speaks Cantonese. I spent some time to get used to the environment, and forced myself to understand

what people are saying because of the job. Now I can use Cantonese in a daily context, though I'm still afraid that other people won't understand; plus, there's a bit of "fear to be discriminated" mentality, so it is not easy to speak in Cantonese.)

Q: Have you overcome that difficulty? If yes, how did you do that?

A: 還沒有完全，在一個有很多香港人的陌生環境還是會害怕，但是和香港人一對一的交談已經不害怕了，大多數的交談者都會很耐心聽我講話，我也得以有空間練習我的口語，我只能說對我來講慢慢來吧，一步一步踏出我的舒適圈。(Not really. It's still intimidating in a foreign environment full of Hong Kongers, but I'm not afraid of 1-on-1 conversations with a Hong Konger. Most people I've talked to are patient when they listen to me, that I get opportunities to practice my oral skills. I'd say I'll slowly make progress and step out of my comfort zone.)

Q: Can you name a tool/ way that's most helpful when you learn Cantonese?

A: 我是大陸人，看得最多的是 b 站。之前有看過課，但後來覺得有點沒意思，因為我喜歡麥兜，所以最多的還是跟著麥兜學；其次是 podcast
(I'm from mainland China and I watch videos on Bilibili most of the time. I tried online courses but later find that boring. Because I like McDull (a HK animation), so learn mostly from watching the animation. Second way is to listen to podcasts)

Q: What makes it so helpful to you?

A: 最重要的還是我本來就對這個主題感興趣，比如麥兜和 podcast 論論主題
(I'm interested in the topic, like McDull and the themes of the podcasts I listen to)

Q: Have you tried any online tools to learn Cantonese? How was the experience?

A: 多鄰國，但效果很一般
(Duolingo, but it wasn't helpful)

Q: How can my product be better?

A: 對於我這樣的用戶可能比較在意能否定製化自己的學習素材，比如是否能上傳我自己的想學的語音素材然後讓系統幫我識別粵拼+自動跟讀？在這之前我都要用 ChatGPT 逐次識別
(Users like me may care more about whether I can customize my learning materials, like if I can upload audio material and the system can transcribe that into Jyutping & read aloud? Before that I have to use ChatGPT to identify them every time)

Interviewee 4: 沈鳳 Fung Tsam (@tsamfung88815) (reached through Threads and interviewed by Instagram messages)

Profile	
Name	沈鳳 (Fung Tsam)
Age Group	25-34
Country	Nanyang, Henan, China
Educational level	Undergraduate
Languages spoken	Mandarin, Japanese, English, Cantonese
Learning period	4-5 years
Cantonese proficiency	Advanced
Reasons for learning Cantonese	I love Hong Kong culture Love Cantopop, love the pronunciations of Cantonese, love phonology
Ways to learn Cantonese	Online self-learning
Most difficult elements in Cantonese	Pronunciations
Online platforms	Hello Talk LSHK Jyutping resources Phonicavi
Expected content on KongTone platform	History Culture How things work in Hong Kong (e.g. typhoon warning signals, educational systems, etc.) Slangs Memes Knowledge on Cantonese phonology and linguistics

In the Instagram text message interview, Tsam responded in written Cantonese and voice recordings in Cantonese. Since China and New York has 12-hour time difference, I dump questions to amend for the delays in responses. His spoken Cantonese has a strong Northeast Chinese accent. He has never visited Hong Kong before. He thinks \$0.99/ token is too expensive, and the only time he paid for Cantonese material was purchasing a Hong Kong style Cantonese book by linguist Cheng Ting Au.

It was a long conversation that Tsam shared his passion in phonology because of Japanese, and his love for Cantopop. His journey with Cantonese started in high school, when he would listen to Cantopop songs, but never thought about learning

Cantonese. Later in college, he started to learn Japanese, and learned that some ‘weird’ pronunciations in some Japanese consonants and Kanji (Chinese-like characters) were originated from Ancient Chinese, all these ‘check tones’ are still kept and used in Cantonese. That was why he started to learn Cantonese from a linguistic perspective.

Since Tsam lives in Northeast China, meaning it’s rare to meet and practice Cantonese with people from the South, he uses Hello Talk, a language exchange app to join online activities to practice his Cantonese speaking skills. He mentioned that even though he knows the linguistic rules in pronunciations, it is still hard for him to master the Cantonese accent. He agreed that it is confusing for self-learners because there are so many sets of rules for Cantonese romanization, and every app/ platform/ material would adopt different sets of rules, making it hard for learners to follow, and they will easily make mistakes because of the confusion.

He also shared about a friend who tried to learn Japanese using Duolingo. After months of learning, his friend still remained in the beginner stage and still struggling to remember the Japanese alphabets. He commented, “If one uses Duolingo to pick up a new language, there’s a high chance that they are not taking language learning seriously.”

The conversation ended as he closed his account in early October, 2025.

Interviewee 5: Hei Sensei (@haa_hei_in_hk) (reached through Threads and interviewed by Instagram messages)

Profile	
Name	Hei 先生 (Hei Sensei)
Age Group	25-34
Country	Japan
Educational level	Undergraduate
Languages spoken	Mandarin, Japanese, Cantonese
Learning period	N/A
Cantonese proficiency	Intermediate/ Advanced
Reasons for learning Cantonese	I am dating someone who speaks Cantonese I love Hong Kong culture
Ways to learn Cantonese	Online self-learning, from a friend
Most difficult elements in Cantonese	Pronunciations
Online platforms	Duolingo

Expenditure	\$0
Expected content on KongTone platform	Culture How things work in Hong Kong (e.g. typhoon warning signals, educational systems, etc.)

Hei Sensei was a Japanese teacher based in Hong Kong, and she is now a graduate student. She lived in Hong Kong for 2 years, and moved back to Japan recently because of family reasons. In the interview, Hei Sensei texted with me in full Cantonese texts, some of her answers were written in Japanese, and translated into Cantonese with Gemini when responding to my text messages.

Our text message conversation focused on her difficulties when she self-learned Cantonese, and her comments/ complains on Duolingo. Following is her thorough analysis:

Difficulties in learning Cantonese

- There are no unified romanization schemes for Cantonese learners [there's no Cantonese equivalent of IPA]
- The written form and colloquial forms are inconsistent
 - Many TV programs in Hong Kong use Written Vernacular Chinese in their subtitles, that are not [grammatically] aligned with the spoken Cantonese dialogues
 - E.g. Have you eaten yet? Colloquial: 食咗飯未呀; Subtitles: 吃飯了嗎

Problems with learning Cantonese with Duolingo

I started to use Duolingo the moment I learned about their Cantonese course, but the longer I used, I noticed the app was problematic:

- The courses are designed for Mandarin speakers
 - The only UI language for Cantonese is in Simplified Chinese, so one has to have prior knowledge in Chinese before they can learn Cantonese with Duolingo. If the company can launch the course English or Japanese, it might attract more Japanese people to learn the Cantonese language
- Lack of dynamic content
 - I felt boring at the later stages with the app, because after a certain stage, the content becomes repetitive and there's no new content to learn. This is probably the biggest reason for why I stopped learning Cantonese on Duolingo
- Incorrect content
 - There are wrong and unnatural expressions in the Cantonese course. It's nice to learn some new vocabularies, but if one wants to learn longer

sentences and practical use, Duolingo is not the best app to use.

Interviewee 6: Lemang Lim (interviewed through follow-up survey)

Profile	
Name	Lemang Lim 林竹昇 (pseudonym)
Age Group	18-24
Country	Malaysia
Educational level	Undergraduate
Languages spoken	Mandarin, Malay, English, Cantonese
Learning period	10 years
Cantonese proficiency	Advanced (can read, write, and speak)
Reasons for learning Cantonese	My parents speak Cantonese
Ways to learn Cantonese	From a friend, Online self-learning, Discussions with others; Speaking the language with others
Most difficult elements in Cantonese	Pronunciations, Speaking
Online platforms	Duolingo, Memrise; Wiktionary
Expected content on KongTone platform	History, Culture, Slangs, Memes

Lemang responded to the English survey at first, and answered the second survey in written Cantonese.

Q: How would you describe your proficiency?

A: 識聽，識讀，仲識寫添。但係啲聲調就覺得冇咩掂哦

(I can listen, read, and even write in Cantonese. But the tone part is not as good as other skills)

Q: How much time do you spend learning Cantonese each week?

A: 除咗傾偈之外，就有咩特登去學

(I didn't specifically learn it except talking with others using Cantonese)

Q: What's the hardest part(s) in learning Cantonese?

A: 啲聲調同埋啲高級詞語

(Phonetics (tones) and advanced vocabularies)

Q: Have you overcome that difficulty? If yes, how did you do that?

A: 可惜仲有啲問題。慢慢學囉
(Sadly, there's still some minor problems, I will learn that slowly)

Q: Can you name a tool/ way that's most helpful when you learn Cantonese?

A: Wiktionary + 分韻撮要
(Wiktionary + 《分韻撮要》(a book on Cantonese pronunciations and phonetics written in Qing Dynasty))

Q: What makes it so helpful to you?

A: 有得去查啲發音同意思
(You can look up for pronunciations and meanings)

Q: Have you tried any online tools to learn Cantonese? How was the experience?

A: 無特登去搵，但係如果有問題就即時上網，尤其是 Reddit 嘅度搵
(I didn't look for them, but I go on the internet, especially on Reddit, whenever I have questions)

Q: How can my product be better?

A: 如果可以嘅話，可以包括埋其他啲亦都有廣府文化嘅地方，比如話吉隆坡、三番、怡保
(If possible, include other places that also have Canton culture, like Kuala Lumpur, San Francisco, and Ipoh)

Linguistic Justifications

Appendix IV: Sinitic Languages in Major Chinese-speaking Areas

The idea of written and spoken languages is separated in Sinitic languages—most languages share the same set of (regardless of Traditional or Simplified) Chinese characters. Thus, it is important to divine the terminology used in the design of content and the business to avoid confusion. This table includes the major forms of Sinitic languages used in Chinese-speaking areas, but excludes non-Sinitic languages that were historically brought to these areas, such as English (Hong Kong), Portuguese (Macau), Japanese and varieties of Formosan languages (Taiwan)⁶¹.

	Hong Kong/ Macau	Mainland China	Taiwan Main Island (Formosa)
Written Characters	Traditional Chinese	Simplified Chinese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional Chinese Hokkien: Pēh-ōe-jī / Tâi-lô Hakka: Phák-fa-sṳ
Written Grammar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official: Written vernacular Chinese Daily: Written Cantonese 	Written vernacular Chinese ⁶²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written vernacular Chinese Hokkien: Pēh-ōe-jī/ Tâi-lô Hakka: Phák-fa-sṳ
Spoken	Cantonese (Yue)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mandarin (Putonghua) Regional Dialects⁶³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taiwanese Mandarin Hokkien⁶⁴ Hakka
Phonetic Notation Systems	Romanization: LSHK Jyutping/ Yale	Romanization: Pinyin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zhuyin (Bopomofo) Hokkien: Pēh-ōe-jī/ Tâi-lô Hakka: Phák-fa-sṳ

⁶¹ Formosan languages are the Austronesian languages spoken by the indigenous clans in Taiwan. In 2025, the Taiwanese government recognizes 16 tribes, 16 Formosan languages and 42 dialects.

⁶² ‘Standard’, Mandarin-based form of written Chinese that most people treat as a common ground for written Chinese communication.

⁶³ The use of dialects can vary even in between villages in the same area, yet still under the umbrella of a dialect. Cantonese as well.

⁶⁴ Hokkien (a.k.a. Taiwanese/ Southern Min) and Hakka are languages spoken in Southern China. During the White Terror (1947-1987) martial law period, Mandarin replaced them to become the lingua franca in Taiwan, yet still spoken widely by the descendants of these Chinese immigrants. Instead of having one official language, Development of National Languages Act (2019) recognized all three languages as equally important ‘National Languages’ in Taiwan, and include them in public spoken announcements such as station arrival announcements.

Appendix V: Difficulties in Cantonese Teaching and Learning

The foreseeable difficulties in course content design and quality control are mostly originated from the lack of linguistic standards in Cantonese linguistics:

- The subtle difference in between different variants of Cantonese spoken in different areas in Guangdong Province (including Hong Kong and Macau) makes it almost impossible to come up with a universal language standard
- Lack of standardized dictionary and grammar guidelines that confuses Cantonese learners
 - Romanization systems: LSHK Jyutping, Yale, ILE scheme, Sidney Lau, S. L. Wong; Hong Kong Government Cantonese Romanization—LSHK
Jyutping is popular for daily use/ keyboards, but most use HKG Cantonese Romanization for people and place names
E.g. 梁以忻⁶⁵ loeng4 ji5 jan1 (LSHK) vs. leung yi yan (HKG)
LSHK scheme takes the initial ‘j’ from IPA, but HKG somehow transforms the pronunciation into English to make names easier for British officials to pronounce
 - Existing authoritative Chinese dictionaries are Mandarin-based, and does not include distinctive, colloquial Cantonese characters
- Lack of standards to measure proficiency (e.g. CEFR for European languages, JLPT for Japanese)—existing Cantonese test adopting similar standards are the Read-aloud Test (CRAT) and Oral Proficiency Exam (COPE) by Hong Kong Cantonese Applied Linguistics Association (HKCALA). Other Chinese tests, like HKDSE, GCSE, though offer Cantonese listening recordings, the question paper is not written in written Cantonese, meaning students have to translate the answer into written vernacular Chinese (HKDSE) and English (GCSE) to complete the test.

Appendix VI: Existing Cantonese Online Tools and Resources

Name	Description
0243.hk	Lyric collocation site created based on 0243 method ⁶⁶ (pairing melodies to Cantonese tones as numbers, then look for words/phrases that match the numbers)
Cantonese Font (former Visual Font)	Trad. Chinese font with Jyutping on top, best for creating learning materials

⁶⁵ ‘梁以忻’ is Kelly’s Chinese full name, ‘Leung Yi Yan’ is her English name on ID, Romanized with HKG Cantonese Romanization.

⁶⁶ 0243 method became well-known after ‘The Lyricist Wannabe (填詞 L)’ (2023).

Cantonese Language Teachers Association (CantoLTA)	U.S.-based nonprofit organization to promote Cantonese education
Chinese Character Database 粵語審音配詞字庫 (by CUHK)	Cantonese phonetic dictionary available in 7 romanization systems
Gboard (by Google)	Trad. Chinese keyboard that allows input with Yale, Jyutping, and Cantonese Pinyin
Hambaanglaang Cantonese 冚唪唥粵文 (by Dr. Lau Chaak Ming)	Open-source Cantonese learning material for non-Chinese learners, covering software tools, printed books, videos, etc.
IG @lingtsi_linguistics	Cantonese linguistics reels
Jyutping.org	Jyutping learning site
Shyyp.net 羊羊粵語	Cantonese phonetic dictionary
TypeDuck (by Dr. Lau Chaak Ming)	Open-source Jyutping input method; includes translation in five languages for non-native speakers
words.hk 粵典 (ZH)/ cantowords.hk (EN) (by Dr. Lau Chaak Ming)	Cantonese dictionary created with crowd-sourcing method.

Major Traditional Chinese input methods used in Hong Kong:

- Handwriting
- Dictation (speech to text)
- Character-based: Cangjie, Quick (simplified Cangjie), Stroke, Q9
- Romanized: Yale, Jyutping, Pinyin⁶⁷

Marketing

Appendix VII: Visual Content

Figma Design drafts:

<https://www.figma.com/design/jBImgYWSnC76YdQjoRf3AR/Design-Drafts?node-id=2-2&t=l8aQGME0p9IixtJQ-1>

Figma clickable prototype for website and web app:

<https://www.figma.com/design/ZfvLHqg9ESb3mFWhteauAH/KongTone-prototype?node-id=1-62&t=asBsSsT7QbN3taQR-1>

⁶⁷ Mandarin-based input method that does not support Cantonese distinctive characters.



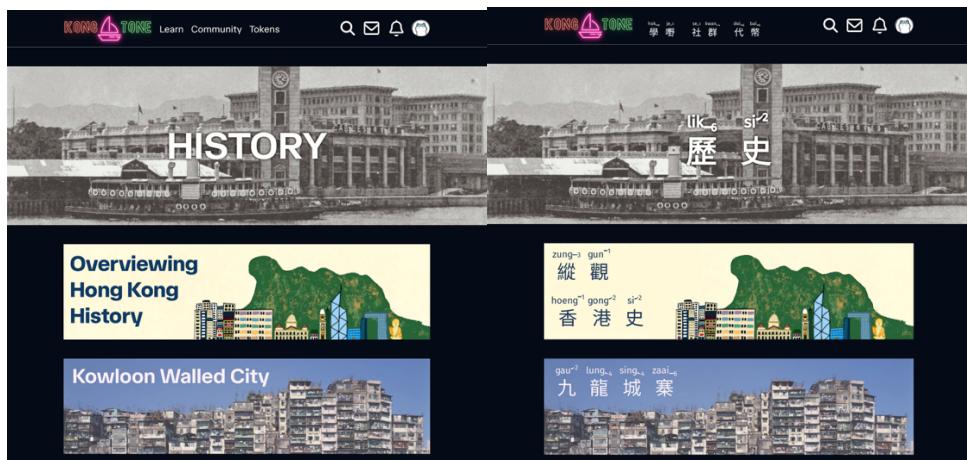
Mood board



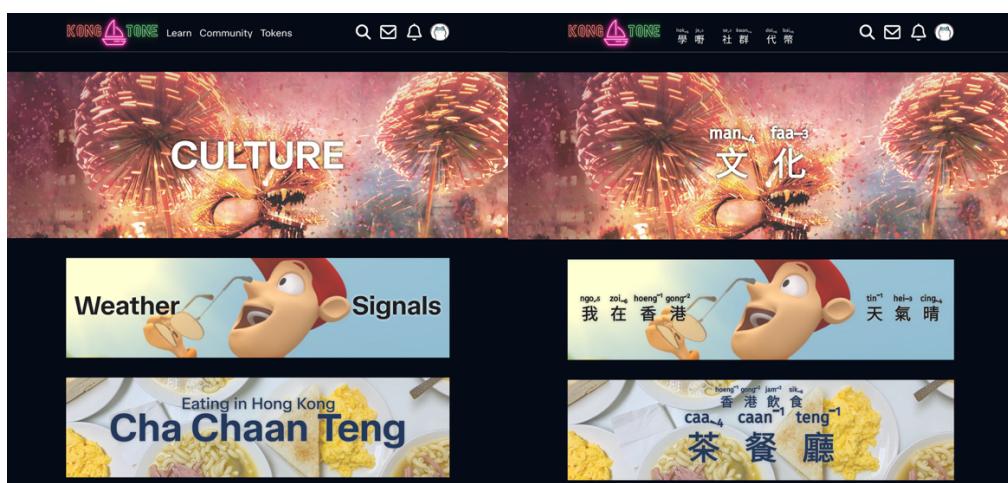
Logo design

The image shows two side-by-side desktop screenshots of the KongTone website. Both versions feature a map of Hong Kong with various icons representing different categories like food, culture, and landmarks. The left version is in English, and the right version is in Traditional Chinese. Both pages include navigation links for 'Learn', 'Community', and 'Tokens', as well as search and notification icons.

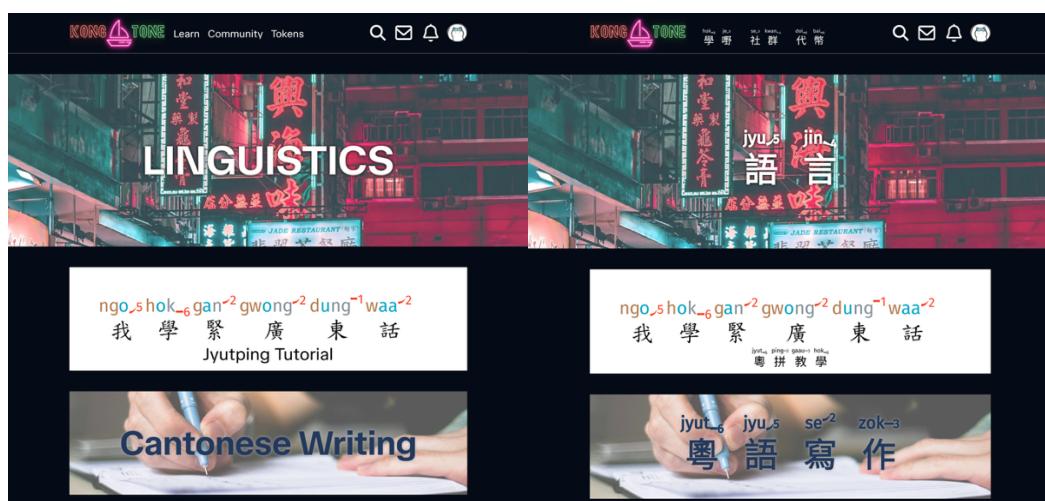
Desktop: landing pages (left: English; right: Traditional Chinese)



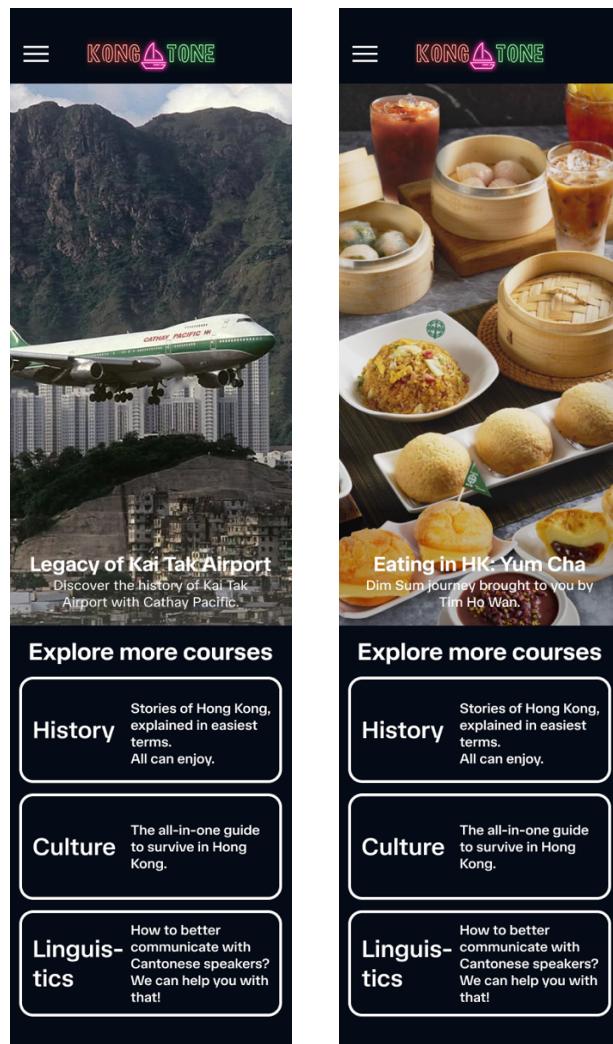
Desktop: History theme homepage (left: English; right: Traditional Chinese)



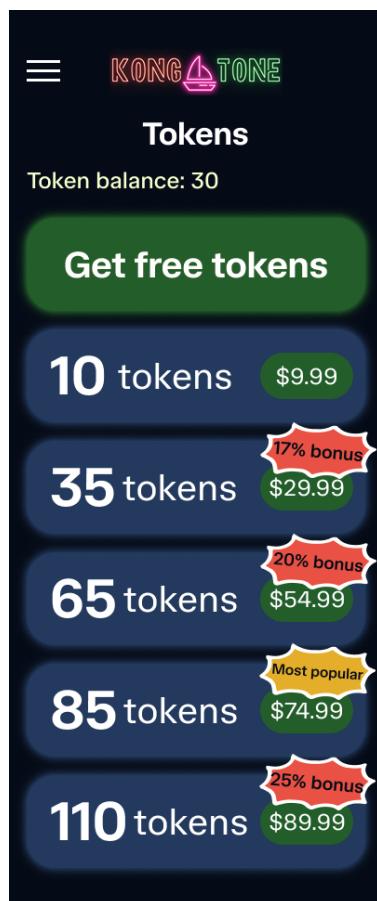
Desktop: Culture theme homepage (left: English; right: Traditional Chinese)



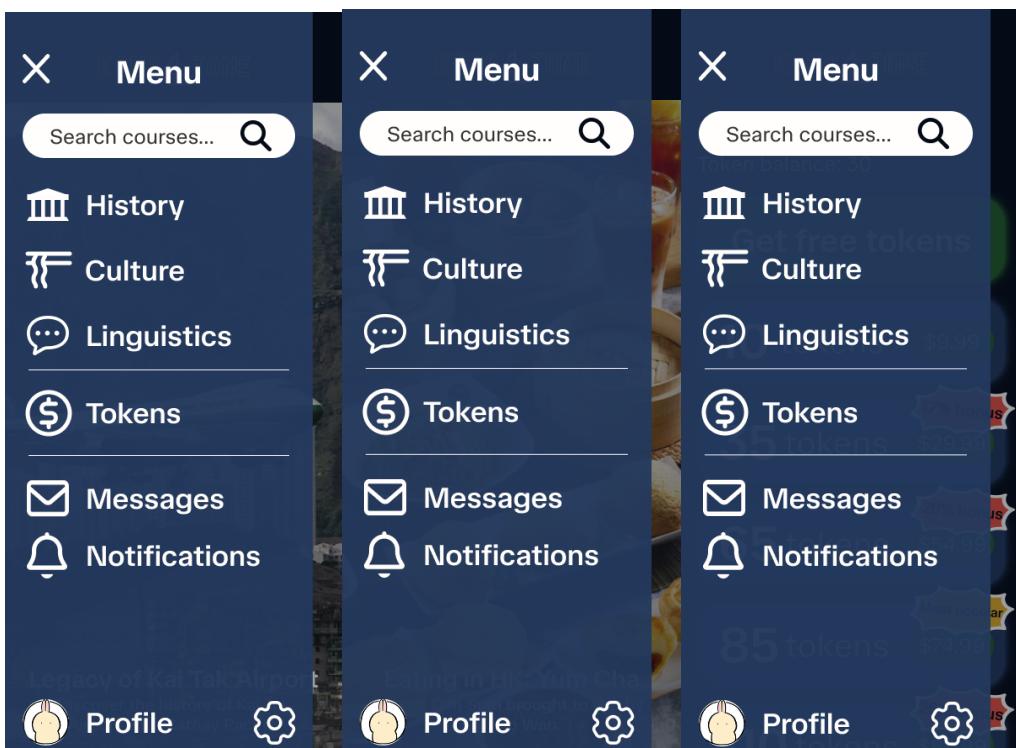
Desktop: Linguistics theme homepage (left: English; right: Traditional Chinese)



Mobile: landing pages (two versions of cover pages as carousel)



Mobile: token purchasing page



Mobile: hamburger menu mockup for three mobile pages

Appendix VIII: Potential Topics

Topics to be covered in Y2 and beyond:

- Biodiversity in Hong Kong (Wet land/ endangered species)
- Hong Kong literature (canon: Hong Kong four wit/ Xi Xi/ Dung Kai Cheung/ modern literature)
- MK culture
- Chinese word formations (from oracle script to modern Chinese characters)
- Understanding Cantonese undertones
- Hong Kong superstitions
- Grave sweeping practices
- Hungry Ghost Festival
- Origin of Dragon Boat Festival
- 24 Solar Terms 廿四節氣
- Oral history
- Folklores

Appendix IX: Expat and Polyglot Influencers

A list of influencers for potential collaborations.

*Social media platform abbreviations: Instagram (IG), YouTube (YT), TikTok (TT), Twitter (X), Facebook (FB), Threads (Th), Xiaohong Shu (Little Red Book, XHS)

*ViuTV is a free TV broadcasting channel owned by PCCW Limited (publicly traded in HK and US)

Name (Country)	Handle (Platform)	Followers
Adekunbi Salako 非洲王子 (Nigeria) <i>HK-based influencer</i>	@kunbifusion (IG) @kunbifusion (Th) Adekunbi Salako 非洲王子 (FB) @kunbifusion (YT)	150K (IG) 11K (Th) 9,709 (FB) 988 (YT)
Brendan 莊家朗 (Australia) <i>HK-based influencer</i> <i>ViuTV host</i>	@gddtv (YT) @gumdoughduck.tv (IG) @gumdoughduck.tv (Th)	83.4K (YT) 76K (IG) 9,350 (Th)
CHUCHUMEI 啾啾妹 (Taiwan) <i>Illustrator/ YouTuber</i> <i>Married to HK husband</i>	@chuchumei.byLIIN (FB) @chuchumei (YT) @chuchumei (IG) @chuchumei (Th)	900K (FB) 567K (YT) 544K (IG) 170K (Th)
Fragrant Sausage 香港德國腸 (Germany x France) <i>HK-based influencer</i>	@fragrantsausage (IG) @fragrantsausage (FB) @fragrantsausage (Th) @sausagenueka (YT)	223K (IG) 37K (FB) 36K (Th) 3,490 (YT)
Gordon Lau (Nigeria x HK)	@gordonlau (IG)	126K (IG)

<i>HK-based influencer</i>	@gordonlau1010 (YT) @gordonlau (Th)	117K (YT) 37K (Th)
Hanna Vanharanta (Finland x HK) <i>HK-based influencer, model</i>	@HannaVanharanta (YT) @hannavanharanta (IG) @hannavanharanta (Th)	236K (YT) 179K (IG) 30K (Th)
Heiri Jun (S. Korea) <i>HK-born influencer, interpreter</i>	@junheiri (IG) @junheiri (Th)	208K (IG) 28K (Th)
Innocent Mutanga (Zimbabwe) <i>Asylum seeker</i> <i>Africa Center HK (CUHK)</i>	@innocentmutanga (LinkedIn) @innocent_mutanga (IG) @innocent_mutanga (Th)	6K (LinkedIn) 1,363 (IG) 332 (Th)
Jacopo Only Friends (Italy) <i>HK-based influencer</i> <i>Boss of Jacomax Pizza</i>	@jacopoonlyfriends (YT) @jacopo_only_friends (IG) @jacopoonlyfriends (FB) @jacopo_only_friends (Th)	9.23K (YT) 41K (IG) 15K (FB) 1,724 (Th)
Jimmy O Yang (United States) <i>HK-born Hollywood actor, comedian</i>	@jimmyoyang (IG) Jimmy O Yang (YT) @funnyasiandude (TT) @funnyasian (FB) Jimmy 歐陽 (XHS)	2.7M (IG) 2.04M (YT) 4.3M (TT) 850K (FB) 811K (XHS)
Kazu Languages (Japan) <i>Polyglot</i>	@KazuLanguages (YT) @kazu.languages (TT) @kazulanguages (IG) @KazuLanguage (FB) @kazulanguages (Th)	1.39M (YT) 973.6K (TT) 248K(IG) 65K (FB) 24K (Th)
Kebbeth (Hong Kong) <i>Australia-based Cantonese influencer</i>	@kebbeth (IG) @Kebbethh (YT) @kebbeth (Th)	238K (IG) 34.1K (YT) 20K (Th)
Keisuke Suzuki (Japan) <i>HK-based influencer</i> <i>ViuTV host</i> <i>NNA Asia columnist on HK</i>	リンモク 鈴木 Lingmuk 【廣東話學習 Vlog】 (YT) @lingmuk.hk (IG) @Lingmukhk (X) @Lingmuk.hk (FB)	38.8K (YT) - 32K (IG) 13K (X) 1,643 (FB)
Luna Lin 林路娜 (Taiwan) <i>HK-based influencer</i> <i>Int'l student at HKAPA</i>	@lunalin.ju (IG-1) @lunalin.ju (Th-1) @lunaluvhk (Th-2) @lunaluvhk (IG-2)	2,971 (IG-1) 2,118 (Th-1) 784 (Th-2) 255 (IG-2)
May in Hong Kong (Japan) <i>HK-based influencer</i>	@may.in.hongkong (IG) @mayinhongkong2655 (YT)	48K (IG) 9.84K (YT)

	@may.in.hongkong (Th)	6,255 (Th)
Moe (Japan) <i>Japanese college student, exchanged in HK</i>	@moegonzo (Th) @moegonzo (IG)	13K (Th) 5,567 (IG)
Newdellily 新德莉莉 (India) <i>HK-based influencer</i>	@newdellily (FB) @Newdellily (YT) @new_dellily (IG) @new_dellily (Th)	80K (FB) 66.1K (YT) 27K (IG) 5,563 (Th)
Oshima Den (Japan) <i>HK-based influencer</i>	@ryu_den0141 (YT)	191K (YT)
Siobhan Haughey (Ireland) <i>Team HK World champion swimmer</i>	@siobhanhaughey01 (IG)	354K (IG)
Steve Kaufmann (Canada) <i>Polyglot</i>	@TheLinguist (YT-1) @lingosteve (FB-1) @lingosteve (IG-1) @lingqcom (FB-2) LingQ (YT-2) @lingosteve (X-1) @lingosteve (Th) @lingq_central (IG-2) @LingQ_Central (X-1)	1.4M (YT-1) 94K (FB-1) 50K (IG-1) 40K (FB-2) 31K (YT-2) 18.4K (X-1) 7,836 (Th) 7,391 (IG-2) 1,197 (X-2)
Vivek Mahbubani 阿 V (India) <i>HK-based comedian</i> <i>ViuTV host</i> <i>Co-founder of Hambaanglaang</i>	@funnyvivek (IG) @funnyvivek (Th) @vivek.mahbubani (FB)	58K (IG) 20K (Th) 9,244 (FB)
Yohei Akiyama (Japan) <i>Polyglot</i>	@YoheiAkiyama (YT) 秋山 照平 (FB) @ya.polyglot (IG) @ya.polyglot (Th)	453K (YT) 150K (FB) 20K (IG) 6,814 (Th)
Yuji Beleza (Japan x Ireland) <i>Polyglot</i>	@yuji_beleza (TT) @yuji_beleza (IG-1) @yuji_beleza (YT) @yuji_beleza (Th) @zero.to.fluent (IG-2)	7.3M (TT) 5.96M (IG-1) 770K (YT) 270K (Th) 19K (IG-2)
羊人 Young Man (Taiwan) <i>HK-based influencer</i>	@youngman_626 (IG) @youngman_626 (Th) @youngman0626 (YT)	53K (IG) 11K (Th) 13.5K (YT)

Appendix X: Hong Kong-based Companies for Potential Collaboration

A list of Hong Kong brands that have potential to be (or already) globalized:

Name	Industry	Social media (Followers)
<u>Camel</u> 駱駝牌	Insulated Bottles	IG @madebycamel (8,255)
<u>Casetify</u>	Phone Accessories	IG @casetify (2.7M)
Cathay Pacific	Aviation	IG @cathaypacific (899K)
<u>Chicks</u> 雞仔嘜	Fashion/ Underwear	FB @hkchicks (28K) IG @chickslifestyle (1,468)
<u>Cookies Quartet</u> 曲奇 4 重奏	Food/ Bakery	FB @cookiesquartetltd (22K) IG @cookiesquartetltd (4,200)
<u>Factiv</u>	Skincare	IG @factiv.hk (38K) Th @factiv.hk (13K) FB @factiv.hk (11K)
<u>Garden</u> 嘉頓	Food/ Bakery	FB @gardenhongkong (59K) IG @garden.hongkong (12K)
<u>Giordano</u>	Fashion	IG @giordanokr (78K) IG @giordanohk (12K)
HSBC	Finance	IG @svnsseries (872K) IG @hsbc (76K) IG @hsbc_hk (61K)
<u>Lee Kum Kee</u> 李錦 記	Food/ Soy sauce	IG @leekumkeeusa (106K) IG @leekumkeeglobal (19K) IG @leekumkee.hk (11K) Th @leekumkee.hk (2,372)
<u>Pair Pair Full</u>	Fashion/ Socks	IG @pairpairfull (13K)
<u>Tim Ho Wan</u> 添好運	Restaurant	IG @timhowanusa (30K)
<u>TINY</u> 微影	Toy/ Model	FB @tinyhk (79K) IG @hktiny (41K)
<u>Vitasoy</u> 維他奶	Drink	IG @vitasoy (44K) IG @vitasoy_usa_ca (11K)
<u>Wing Lok Noodle</u> <u>Factory</u> 永樂粉麵廠	Food/ Noodle	FB @wingloknoodle (53K) IG @wingloknoodle (7,467) Th @wingloknoodle (2,230)

Finance

Appendix XI: Financial Modeling

Total Advertising Revenue	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Sponsored Content	\$750	\$750	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
% of Total Revenue	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Display Advertising	\$1,036,800	\$1,451,520	\$1,741,824	\$1,916,006	\$2,107,607
% of Total Revenue	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Podcast Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$2,016	\$2,661	\$3,903
% of Total Revenue	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	\$1,037,550	\$1,452,270	\$1,744,840	\$1,919,668	\$2,112,510

Advertising Rate Card						
Sponsored Digital Content						
	Price Per Post	Premium Content/mo	Premium Content/mo	Premium Content/mo	Premium Content/mo	Frequency
Branded Content - 1	\$ 750	1				1
Branded Content - 2	\$ 750		1			1
Branded Content - 3	\$ 1,000			1		1
Branded Content - 4	\$ 1,000				1	1
Branded Content - 5	\$ 1,000					1
Total Sponsored Digital Content Revenue		750	750	1,000	1,000	1,000

Display Advertising					
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Page Views					
# of Monthly Non Subscriber Visitors	100,000	140,000	168,000	184,800	203,280
Total # of Website Visitors Per Month	100,000	140,000	168,000	184,800	203,280
Average # of Pages Viewed Per User	6	6	6	6	6
Average # times User visits site per month	4	4	4	4	4
# of months	12	12	12	12	12
# of Page Views	28,800,000	40,320,000	48,384,000	53,222,400	58,544,640
Total %/# of Desktop Page Views	50%	14,400,000	20,160,000	24,192,000	26,611,200
Total %/# of Mobile Page Views	50%	14,400,000	20,160,000	24,192,000	26,611,200
Average # Ad Desktop	3	43,200,000	60,480,000	72,576,000	79,833,600
Average # Ad Mobile	3	43,200,000	60,480,000	72,576,000	79,833,600
Total Average Website Impressions		86,400,000	120,960,000	145,152,000	159,667,200
Website Impressions					
Direct Ad Impressions %	50%	43,200,000	60,480,000	72,576,000	79,833,600
Programmatic Impressions %	50%	43,200,000	60,480,000	72,576,000	79,833,600
Total Monetized Impressions		86,400,000	120,960,000	145,152,000	159,667,200
Website CPM					
Direct cCPM Costing		13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00
Programmatic cCPM Costing		11.00	11.00	11.00	11.00
Direct Revenue		561,600	786,240	943,488	1,037,837
Programmatic Revenue		475,200	665,280	798,336	878,170
					965,987

Advertising Revenue

Total Subscription Revenue	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Subscription Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
% of Total Revenue	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Website Currency Purchases	\$956,415	\$1,338,981	\$1,606,777	\$1,767,455	\$1,944,200
% of Total Revenue	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total Revenue	\$956,415	\$1,338,981	\$1,606,777	\$1,767,455	\$1,944,200

Website Purchases	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Total # of Website Visitors	100,000	140,000	168,000	184,800	203,280
% of active users that buy Currency Option #1 - \$9.99	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Average Price of Option #1	\$9.9	\$9.9	\$9.9	\$9.9	\$9.9
Average # of Times Purchased Per Year	12	12	12	12	12
Monthly Web Currency Revenue	237,600	332,640	399,168	439,085	482,993
% of active users that buy Currency Option #2 - \$29.99	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Average Price of Option #2	\$29.99	\$29.99	\$29.99	\$29.99	\$29.99
Average # of Times Purchased Per Year	7	7	7	7	7
Monthly Web Currency Revenue	419,860	587,804	705,365	775,901	853,491
% of active users that buy Currency Option #3 - \$54.99	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Average Price of Option #3	\$54.99	\$54.99	\$54.99	\$54.99	\$54.99
Average # of Times Purchased Per Year	2	2	2	2	2
Monthly Web Currency Revenue	109,980	153,972	184,766	203,243	223,567
% of active users that buy Currency Option #4 - \$71.99	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Average Price of Option #4	\$71.99	\$71.99	\$71.99	\$71.99	\$71.99
Average # of Times Purchased Per Year	2	2	2	2	2
Monthly Web Currency Revenue	143,980	201,572	241,886	266,075	292,683
% of active users that buy Currency Option #5 - \$89.99	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
Average Price of Option #5	\$89.99	\$89.99	\$89.99	\$89.99	\$89.99
Average # of Times Purchased Per Year	1	1	1	1	1
Monthly Web Currency Revenue	44,995	62,993	75,592	83,151	91,466
Annual Web Currency Revenue	956,415	1,338,981	1,606,777	1,767,455	1,944,200

Subscription Revenue

Costs of Goods Sold	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Web Costs	\$ 724,370	\$ 624,520	\$ 464,107	\$ 478,093	\$ 493,521
TOTAL COGS	\$ 724,370	\$ 624,520	\$ 464,107	\$ 478,093	\$ 493,521
Direct Expenses	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Development Costs					
Content Freelancers	109,200	109,200	109,200	109,200	109,200
Web Development and Maintenance	300,000	250,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Other Direct Technology Costs					
SSL Certification	240	240	240	240	240
Marketing Costs	300,000	250,000	139,587	153,573	169,001
Mail Chimp	680	680	680	680	680
Adobe Creative Suite	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Microsoft 365 Business	1,050	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
SEO	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Total Web Costs	724,370	624,520	464,107	478,093	493,521

Cost of Goods Sold

Asset	# of Units	Single Unit Price	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Year Five
Laptop	5	\$1,599					
		Value - Beginning of Year	\$7,995	\$6,396	\$4,797	\$3,198	\$1,599
		Depreciation Expense	\$1,599	\$1,599	\$1,599	\$1,599	\$1,599
		Accumulated Depreciation	\$1,599	\$3,198	\$4,797	\$6,396	\$7,995
		Value - End of Year	\$6,396	\$4,797	\$3,198	\$1,599	\$0

Fixed Asset

Total Staffing and Overhead Costs					
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Operations Salary	422,000	428,660	435,520	442,585	449,863
Sales Salary	448,000	555,440	572,103	589,266	606,944
Technology Salary	747,000	769,410	792,492	816,267	840,755
Total FLD Salary	1,617,000	\$1,753,510	\$1,800,115	\$1,848,119	\$1,897,562
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Professional Services	\$12,656	\$13,289	\$13,953	\$14,651	\$15,383
Benefits & Taxes	\$485,100	\$526,053	\$540,035	\$554,436	\$569,269
Total Additional Overhead	\$497,756	\$539,342	\$553,988	\$569,087	\$584,652
Total Overhead	\$2,114,756	\$2,292,852	\$2,354,103	\$2,417,205	\$2,482,214

Staffing Costs					
Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	
Operations					
Founder	200,000	Editorial Founder	200,000	Editorial Founder	200,000
Project Manager/ Editor	222,000	Project Manager/ Editor	228,660	Project Manager/ Editor	235,520
Sales/ Marketing		Sales/Marketing		Sales/Marketing	
Marketing Manager	206,000	Marketing Manager	212,180	Marketing Manager	218,545
Ad Sales Manager	242,000	Ad Sales Manager	249,260	Ad Sales Manager	256,738
Technology		Technology		Technology	
CTO	345,350	CTO	355,350	CTO	366,011
Software Engineer	200,000	Software Engineer	206,000	Software Engineer	212,180
UX Designer	262,660	UX Designer	268,060	UX Designer	274,302
TOTAL	1,617,000	TOTAL	1,753,510	TOTAL	1,800,115
					TOTAL
					1,848,119
					TOTAL
					1,897,562

Staffing and Overhead Costs

Income Statement	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Subscription Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Advertising Revenue	1,037,550	1,452,270	1,744,840	1,919,668	2,112,510
Currency Purchases	956,415	1,338,981	1,606,777	1,767,455	1,944,200
Merch Sales	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL SALES	1,993,965	2,791,251	3,351,617	3,687,122	4,056,710
Costs of Goods Sold.					
App Development Costs	\$724,370	\$624,520	\$464,107	\$478,093	\$493,521
Merch Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Podcast Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
License Costs	0	0	0	0	0
COGS	724,370	624,520	464,107	478,093	493,521
Gross Profit	1,269,595	2,166,731	2,887,510	3,209,029	3,563,190
	64%	78%	86%	87%	88%
Rent	0	0	0	0	0
Utilities	0	0	0	0	0
Office Supplies	0	0	0	0	0
Professional Fees	12,656	13,289	13,953	14,651	15,383
Salary and Benefits	2,102,100	2,279,563	2,340,150	2,402,554	2,466,831
Total Overhead	2,114,756	2,292,852	2,354,103	2,417,205	2,482,214
EBIDTA	(845,161)	(126,121)	533,407	791,824	1,080,975
Depreciation	1,599	1,599	1,599	1,599	1,599
EBIT	(846,760)	(127,720)	531,808	790,225	1,079,376
Interest Exp	0	0	0	0	0
EBT	(846,760)	(127,720)	531,808	790,225	1,079,376
Taxes	0	0	21,272	31,609	43,175
Net Income	(\\$846,760)	(\\$127,720)	\\$510,536	\\$758,616	\\$1,036,201
	-42%	-5%	15%	21%	26%

Income Statement

Starting Balance Sheet			
Assets	LIABILITIES		
Cash	\$1,500,000	A/P	\$0
A/R	\$0	Note Payable	\$0
Inventory	\$0		
Prepaid Expenses	\$0		
		OWNER'S EQUITY	
Gross Fixed Assets	\$0		
Less: Accum Dep	\$3,198	Retained Earnings	\$0
Net Fixed Assets	\$0	Capital Stock	\$1,500,000
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,500,000	TOTAL L+OE	\$1,500,000
Year 1 Ending Balance Sheet			
Assets	LIABILITIES		
Cash	\$382,091	A/P	\$176,229.67
A/R	\$332,327.50	Note Payable	\$0
Inventory	\$0		
Prepaid Expenses	\$108,656		
		OWNER'S EQUITY	
Gross Fixed Assets	\$7,995		
Less: Accum Dep	\$1,599	Retained Earnings	(\\$846,760)
Net Fixed Assets	\$6,396	Capital Stock	\$1,500,000
TOTAL ASSETS	\$829,470	TOTAL L+OE	\$829,470
Year 2 Ending Balance Sheet			
Assets	LIABILITIES		
Cash	\$152,908	A/P	\$191,071
A/R	465,209	Note Payable	-
Inventory	-		
Prepaid Expenses	93,678		
		OWNER'S EQUITY	
Gross Fixed Assets	7,995		
Less: Accum Dep	3,198	Retained Earnings	(974,480)
Net Fixed Assets	4,797	Capital Stock	\$1,500,000
TOTAL ASSETS	\$716,591	TOTAL L+OE	\$716,591

Year 3 Ending Balance Sheet

Assets	LIABILITIES		
Cash	\$600,814	A/P	\$196,175
A/R	558,603	Note Payable	-
Inventory	-		
Prepaid Expenses	69,616		
		OWNER'S EQUITY	
Gross Fixed Assets	7,995		
Less: Accum Dep	4,797	Retained Earnings	(463,944)
Net Fixed Assets	3,198	Capital Stock	1,500,000
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,232,231	TOTAL L+OE	\$1,232,231

Year 4 Ending Balance Sheet

Assets	LIABILITIES		
Cash	\$1,308,272	A/P	\$201,434
A/R	614,520	Note Payable	-
Inventory	-		
Prepaid Expenses	71,714		
		OWNER'S EQUITY	
Gross Fixed Assets	STARTING 7,995		
Less: Accum Dep	Accum Dep 6,396	Retained Earnings	294,672
Net Fixed Assets	1,599	capital stock	1,500,000
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,996,105	TOTAL L+OE	\$1,996,105

Year 5 Ending Balance Sheet

Assets	LIABILITIES		
Cash	\$2,287,577	A/P	\$206,851
A/R	676,118	Note Payable	-
Inventory	-		
Prepaid Expenses	74,028		
		OWNER'S EQUITY	
Gross Fixed Assets	STARTING 7,995		
Less: Accum Dep	Accum Dep 7,995	Retained Earnings	1,330,873
Net Fixed Assets	-	capital stock	1,500,000
TOTAL ASSETS	\$3,037,724	TOTAL L+OE	\$3,037,724

Balance Sheets

Cash Flow Statement					
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Net Income		(\$846,760)	(\$127,720)	\$510,536	\$758,616
Plus non-cash charges		\$1,599	\$1,599	\$1,599	\$1,599
= operating cash flow		(\$845,161)	(\$126,121)	\$512,135	\$760,215
+ Sources	A/P	\$176,230	\$14,841	\$5,104	\$5,259
	Capital Stock	\$1,500,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
		\$1,676,230	\$14,841	\$5,104	\$5,259
- Uses	A/R	\$332,328	\$132,881	\$93,394	\$55,918
	Invnt	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	F/A	\$7,995			
	Ppd Exp.	\$108,656	(\$14,978)	(\$24,062)	\$2,098
		\$448,978	\$117,904	\$69,332	\$58,015
= Net Cash flow		\$382,091	(\$229,183)	\$447,906	\$707,458
=Accumulated Cash Flow		\$382,091	\$152,908	\$600,814	\$1,308,272

Cash Flow Statement

Appendix XII: Monetization on Rummikub Game App⁶⁸

- **Display ads (programmatic):** video ad before and after a game
- **Rewarded ads (direct):** before claiming login streak award; exchange for free coins to enter a game

In-app Currency—Coins

Game entry fees (average 5-6 minutes/ game):

- 100 coins
- 500 coins
- 1K coins
- 5K coins
- 10K coins
- 25K coins
- 50K coins

If one wins, they get all the coins that everyone paid as game entry fees.

Login streak daily bonus	Free coins (obtained after watching video ad)
Day 1	100
Day 2	200
Day 3	300
Day 4	400
Day 5	500
Day 6	600
Day 7	1,000

# of coins	Price	Price per game (if entry fee = 100)
200	Video Ad	\$0
10,000	\$2.99	\$0.0299
18,350 (10% bonus)	\$4.99	\$0.0273
40,000 (most popular)	\$9.99	\$0.025
87,000 (bonus 30%)	\$19.99	\$0.023
250,000 (bonus 40%)	\$49.99	\$0.02
750,000 (best value)	\$99.99	\$0.0133
Remove Ads	\$3.99	N/A

⁶⁸ Kinkajoo Ltd. “Rummikub.” App Store, March 7, 2018.
<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/rummikub/id1015322991>.

Appendix XIII: Staffing Cost Projections

Full-time Employees

Department	Position	Salary
-	Founder	\$200K/ year (fixed)
Content	Product Manager	\$222K/ year ⁶⁹
Marketing & Sales	Marketing Manager	\$206K/ year ⁷⁰
	Social Media Manager (Y2)	\$94K/ year ⁷¹
	Ad Sales Lead	\$242K/ year ⁷²
Technology	CTO	\$345K/ year ⁷³
	Software Engineer	\$200K/ year ⁷⁴
	UX Designer	\$202K/ year ⁷⁵

⁶⁹ Glassdoor. “Duolingo Product Manager Salaries (10,300 Salaries Submitted).” Accessed October 16, 2025. https://www.glassdoor.com/Salary/Duolingo-Product-Manager-Salaries-E629348_D_KO9,24.htm.

⁷⁰ Duolingo Careers. “Senior Growth Marketing Strategy Manager.” Accessed October 16, 2025. https://careers.duolingo.com/jobs/8154723002?gh_jid=8154723002&gh_src=aiwjijqq02us.

⁷¹ Glassdoor. “Duolingo Social Media Manager Salaries (10,240 Salaries Submitted).” Accessed October 28, 2025. https://www.glassdoor.com/Salary/Duolingo-Social-Media-Manager-Salaries-E629348_D_KO9,29.htm.

⁷² LinkedIn. “Duolingo Hiring Ad Sales Lead in New York, NY.” Accessed October 16, 2025. https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/view/4313295089/?eBP=NON_CHARGEABLE_CHANNEL&refId=JJlmHf2MOwOkUIFBiFzF6g%3D%3D&trackingId=Gm2vGRHCFWoPljGOjhMISA%3D%3D&trk=flagship3_search_srp_jobs.

⁷³ Glassdoor. “Duolingo Chief Technology Officer Salaries.” Accessed October 28, 2025. https://www.glassdoor.com/Salary/Duolingo-Chief-Technology-Officer-Salaries-E629348_D_KO9,33.htm

⁷⁴ Glassdoor. “Duolingo Software Engineer Salaries (92 Salaries Submitted).” Accessed October 28, 2025. https://www.glassdoor.com/Salary/Duolingo-Software-Engineer-Salaries-E629348_D_KO9,26.htm.

⁷⁵ Glassdoor. “Duolingo Product Designer Salaries (10,240 Salaries Submitted).” Accessed October 28, 2025. https://www.glassdoor.com/Salary/Duolingo-Product-Designer-Salaries-E629348_D_KO9,25.htm.

Freelancers and professional services

Nature	Position	Cost
Freelancers	Graphic Designers *3	\$15/h ⁷⁶ ; 20h/ week
	Cantonese Content Writers	\$20/h ⁷⁷ ; 20h/ week
Professional Services	Bench—bookkeeping & accounting	\$339/m ⁷⁸
	Gusto—HR & payroll	\$49/m ⁷⁹
	Legal Assistants on Upwork	\$40/h ⁸⁰ ; ~200h/ year

Appendix XIV: Web Cost Projections

Significant items identified in the projection of web cost:

- Cantonese Font—Complete Pass (lifelong commercial license): \$60⁸¹
- SSL Certification on Cloudflare: \$20/ month⁸²
- Annual subscription Adobe Creative Cloud for small business: \$1200/ year⁸³
- Mailchimp for newsletters costs \$680/ year for 100K contacts⁸⁴
- SEM Budget: \$1000/ month⁸⁵
- Hosting: AWS offers various web services depending on the site purpose, size, and number of users. AWS Route 53⁸⁶ starts with the free tier that we can try in the beginning stages.
- Stock images licensing (Shutterstock): from \$24.92/ month⁸⁷

⁷⁶ Upwork. “27 Best Freelance Graphic Designers for Hire in January 2025.” Accessed October 28, 2025. <https://www.upwork.com/hire/graphic-designers/>.

⁷⁷ Upwork “Cantonese Content Writers.” <https://www.upwork.com/nx/search/talent/?nbs=1&q=cantonese%20writer>.

⁷⁸ Bench Accounting. “Bookkeeping Pricing Packages & Plans.” Accessed October 16, 2025. <https://www.bench.co/pricing>.

⁷⁹ Gusto. “Pricing.” Accessed October 16, 2025. <https://gusto.com/product/pricing>.

⁸⁰ Upwork. “Legal Professionals.” Accessed October 16, 2025. <https://www.upwork.com/nx/search/talent/?nbs=1&q=legal>.

⁸¹ canto.hk 香港粵語. “Membership Levels.” August 21, 2024. <https://canto.hk/membership-account/membership-levels/>.

⁸² Cloudflare. “Cloudflare Free SSL/TLS: Get SSL Certificates.” Accessed October 16, 2025. <https://www.cloudflare.com/application-services/products/ssl/>.

⁸³ Adobe. “Creativity and Design Plans for Teams.” Accessed October 16, 2025. https://commerce.adobe.com/store/segmentation?cli=acom_biz&cs=t&co=US&pa=ccsn_direct_individual.

⁸⁴ Mailchimp. “Email Marketing Pricing.” Accessed October 16, 2025. <https://mailchimp.com/pricing/marketing/>.

⁸⁵ DesignRush. “How Much Does SEM Cost? (2025).” Accessed October 16, 2025. <https://www.designrush.com/agency/digital-marketing/trends/sem-costs>.

⁸⁶ AWS. “Amazon Route 53.” Accessed October 16, 2025. https://aws.amazon.com/route53/?nc1=h_ls.

⁸⁷ Shutterstock. “Pricing.” Accessed November 18, 2025. <https://www.shutterstock.com/pricing>.