

Queue Management Optimization: A Case of Ngong Ping 360



Source: Unsplash (2023)

Background

Established in 2006, Ngong Ping 360 is a subsidiary of the MTR Corporation, whose principal business is to manage and operate Ngong Ping Cable Car and Ngong Ping Village (NP360, n.d.). As one of the leading attractions in Hong Kong, Ngong Ping 360 served 1.38 million visitors in 2023, achieving a 95% recovery from pre-pandemic visitor levels (SCMP, 2024).

To accommodate the growing number of visitors, Ngong Ping 360 introduced an electronic queueing system to streamline the ticketing process. Through the use of online chatbot, visitors can now collect an EQ-Pass via Ngong Ping 360 Facebook Messenger or official WeChat account to join a virtual queue for tickets purchase. As their turn approaches, visitors receive a push notification from the system, prompting them to return to the ticketing counter to purchase their cable car tickets (NP360, n.d.). As a result, the implementation of EQ-Pass not only helps visitors save queueing time but also reduce on-site crowding and waiting time, contributing to a more organized and pleasant experience.

Challenges

Though Ngong Ping 360's electronic queueing system helps enhance visitor experience by shortening the waiting time, there is still a large room for improvements. Compare to its core competitors, both Hong Kong Disneyland and Ocean Park Hong Kong offer one-stop online ticketing service where transactions and issuance of admission tickets can be completed online, ensuring a seamless experience from online booking to entering the attraction. In contrast, Ngong Ping 360 requires guests to take an extra step to make purchase at the ticketing counter before entering the actual queue to board the cable cars.

In addition, requiring guests who have already arrived at the attraction to obtain the EQ-Pass before letting them queue is likely to cause frustration as not all visitors, especially for foreign

travelers, may be aware of the electronic queueing system before arriving, not to mention those who may struggle with using digital services.

While the EQ-Pass may help regulate visitor flow, there are still other factors such as speed of the ticketing counter staffs and the boarding pace of guests can still cause bottlenecks during peak periods. These inefficiencies limit the system's effectiveness in reducing overall wait times and may affect visitor perceptions of the attraction's service quality.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does the current EQ-Pass system impact overall visitor satisfaction, and what metrics can be used to measure this?
2. What strategies can be implemented to improve the user experience for both local and foreign visitors who may be unfamiliar or uncomfortable with digital services?
3. Given that Ngong Ping 360 has much lower visitor number than its competitors, i.e. Hong Kong Disneyland and Ocean Park, do you think Ngong Ping 360 should invest in one-stop online ticketing system like its competitors?
4. What future trends in digital ticketing and queue management should Ngong Ping 360 consider staying competitive in the tourism industry?

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Keywords

- Attraction
- Queue Management
- Ticketing
- Admission
- Visitor Flow
- Guest Experience

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