

New **Polo.** The final frontier

The sky is no longer the limit for the New Polo

By Tanja Van Wie Photography: Sandy Coffey



The Polo Skylab was a unique space station concept to launch the New Polo early in 2010



The New Polo was launched from out of this world to South Africa in February 2010. The Polo Skylab was a one-of-a-kind space station launch concept that reflected the New Polo's many innovations, cutting-edge technology and benchmark status in its class.

The New Polo is a car built for the future. To reflect this, the launch concept (Polo Skylab) took its cue from space. Often referred to as the final frontier, space represents some of mankind's greatest achievements and challenges. Conquering space requires innovation and ingenuity of the highest order – and to reflect this, Polo Skylab showcased the very best in cutting-edge digital and technological advancements, with many new technologies on display for the first time in South Africa.

ENTER POLO SKYLAB

The ice white Polo Skylab venue was a sparkling setting for the complete range of New Polo models on display in individual docking stations for visitors to explore and experience from every angle. A bold move was to include competitor products, displayed alongside the New Polos, that customers could investigate and directly compare to the New Polo. Price, quality and technology, design and safety, sportiness and performance, precision build and options could be evaluated and compared.

Carrying the space experience through to the catering, visitors could enjoy a refreshing rocket juice at the interactive iBars with touch sensitive surfaces, and read over the product brochures in white pop art bubble chairs, reminiscent of the 60s love affair of all things from outer space. >

HOLOGRAPHIC TECHNOLOGY SHOWCASE

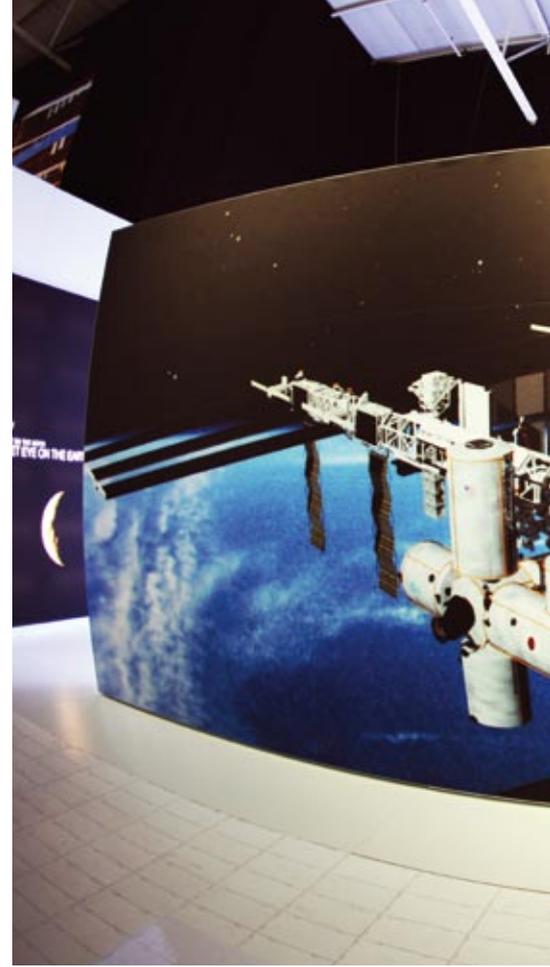
“The New Polo launch was the single largest showcasing of holographic and three dimensional (3D) technology ever in a single South African venue and housed two thirds of the available holographic technology in the world,” said Paul Ingram, Managing Director of Imajinn Perceptions, the digital company who supplied the out of this world technology at the Polo Skylab.

Visitors were able to interact with a host of 3D holograms of the New Polo, such as the visuals projected through uTouch screens, where guests could digitally navigate their way through the New Polo specifications, prices, brochure and leaflet.

The Augmented Reality kiosk merged live

video with 3D virtual components to produce a 3D version of the New Polo, which popped up from a hand held brochure. As the brochure page was turned the car would magically drive across the page. Other visually engaging elements included the Cheoptics booths with swirling 360 degree 3D holograms of the New Polo and the Dreamoc towers showcasing a holographic video display of the car. Polo Skylab was a venue truly out of this world.

The highlight of the technological innovations on display was the incredibly real 3D holographic consumer presentation, projected on a delicate gauze free-format screen. The presenters, projected as 3D holograms – appeared to be real, along with the 3D car that leapt off the screen during the presentation. >



Each New Polo model was displayed on individual 'docking stations' providing visitors with complete access to all models



Images from space provided the backdrop for the Polo Skylab



The 'Cheoptics' hologram booth formed part of the cutting-edge technology used to present the New Polo



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Ready to serve at the interactive iBars

Visitors to Polo Skylab were impressed by these unique technologies. Comments from visitors included: “No way, how is that possible?”; “How did they do that... where’s the camera?”; “Oh My Word – is this magic or what?” and the unforgettable “I need more sleep – this cannot be happening”.

READY FOR LIFT OFF

After the holographic presentation, guests had the opportunity to head for the ‘launch pad’ and test drive their choice of New Polo models. Getting behind the wheel of the New Polo, one understands Volkswagen’s chosen mantra for the car: Expect big things. The New Polo’s cutting-edge innovation delivers on its promise of being ahead of its time and benchmark in its class.

The New Polo may be a compact car, but it is packed with seriously big thinking. The



The entrance to the ‘launch pad’ where guests could test drive their choice of New Polo models

brand positioning for the New Polo is ‘Think Big’ – and when it comes to safety, design, technology and build quality, the New Polo delivers to a standard previously only available in much more expensive premium cars.

Packed with big ambitions and a bold new character, New Polo completely rethinks the compact car. Through timeless design, engineering excellence, and benchmark quality, it resets the standard in its class. The New Polo embodies Volkswagen’s global positioning, ‘Das Auto’ or ‘The Car’ and Volkswagen’s vision of becoming the most innovative high volume car brand in the world. 





Volkswagen South Africa's Sales and Marketing Director, Mike Glendinning stands with the one and only Commander Neil Armstrong (centre) and Volkswagen South African Managing Director, David Powels at the launch of the New Polo

NEIL ARMSTRONG AT POLO SKYLAB

One of the first people to walk into the Polo Skylab was the first man to set foot on the moon, none other than the commander of the Apollo 11 mission to the moon, Neil Armstrong! In July 1969 he stepped out of a strange looking spacecraft and into the pages of history. As his left boot sank into the moon dust he could never have imagined the dramatic impact the lunar landing would have on his life.

Volkswagen South Africa Managing Director, David Powels said, "When thinking about who an appropriate guest speaker would be at the launch of the New Polo at the Polo Skylab we knew we wanted someone who would complement our space theme – but we also wanted someone who would motivate and inspire all of us to reach for greater heights. And our special guest literally reached for the stars."

Commander Neil Armstrong was fascinated by flight from an early age. He obtained his pilot's licence at the age of 16 before he had even learnt to drive! He flew 78 combat missions in the Korean War from the age of 21. He has flown more than 200 different types of aeroplanes, rockets, jets and gliders, including flying the famous X15 at 4 000mph to the edge of the atmosphere.

All this, was to prepare him well for the greatest adventure of all time. In 1962 he became an astronaut when he joined the

NASA Space Programme. He stood out amongst his peers from an early age and clearly had 'the right stuff'. At age 38, his depth of experience and nerves of steel earned him the command of Apollo 11. The cool, confident Commander Armstrong was joined by his team-mates Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins to embark on the greatest human endeavour of all time.

He holds a Bachelors Degree in Aeronautical Engineering and a Masters Degree in Aerospace Engineering. He was Professor of Aerospace Engineering at the University of Cincinnati for almost a decade. Commander Armstrong holds honorary doctorates from a number of universities and he has served on the boards of many companies.

Now in the autumn of his life he lives a comfortable life on a farm in Ohio with his family. Famously humble and a very private man, for years he has shunned the media and the limelight, but now Neil Armstrong has finally authorised a biography of his life: *First Man*, by James Hansen.

In 1961 President John F. Kennedy laid down the challenge for an American to be the first man to walk on the moon and return safely to the earth during the famous Space Race – when the race between the USSR and the USA to land a man on the moon became as much about national pride and patriotism, and proving America's superiority over the Soviets, as it was about physics and engineering.

It became the most expensive adventure of all time. It took some 400 000 workers and \$24 billion (today's equivalent of about \$160 billion) to achieve President Kennedy's dream and, in the process, fulfil the hopes and dreams of a nation. In a world where there were no cellphones, or iPods, no internet or GPS systems, Neil Armstrong stepped onto the lunar surface and spoke those unforgettable words that he had dreamt up – calling the iconic 'one small step . . . one giant leap' phrase a 'simple correlation' that 'just made sense at the time'.

The ghostly image was beyond words and for a moment the world held its breath. Finally human beings could look at the night sky and know that mankind had conquered space, or a small piece of it anyway. Commander Armstrong delivered an inspiring speech about leadership, innovation and "being better than" to the Volkswagen Management team and Dealer Network and he also spoke emotionally about living with the 40-year legacy of being the first man on the moon.

For some meeting Neil Armstrong was the realisation of a childhood dream – others were simply speechless. It was an honour to host Commander Neil Armstrong at the New Polo launch, one of the most famous people on the planet and an ambassador for all mankind.



They had come in peace for all mankind and in landing on the moon they rendered the known world bigger.