

CHAPTER 1 COMPETITIVE & SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRY

In championing the development of a competitive and sustainable media industry, MDA aims to create a conducive environment in Singapore for companies to create quality content and to nurture media talent.

With these goals in mind, MDA streamlined the funding schemes from 46 to five in 2011 to better serve the industry. During the year in review from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013, MDA supported 965 projects through various grants, to help companies develop and produce content, upskill talent as well as market their content overseas to international buyers, across all media sectors. This translated to a commitment of S\$16.28 million. More significantly, Singapore media companies have created content that continue to touch the hearts and minds of audiences worldwide, while binding the nation through Singapore stories.

During the year in review, MDA also sharpened its focus on content development and capability building under the Singapore Media Fusion Plan. To achieve this, MDA is working with bodies such as the Association of Independent Producers (AIPRO) and Six-Degrees to strengthen engagement with the industry and freelancer community.

MDA also introduced initiatives to raise media sector productivity such as the Talent Allowance and Enhanced Apprenticeship schemes to plug manpower gaps and enable media professionals to advance their skills, both locally and overseas.



Jack Neo, Director
Ah Boys to Men



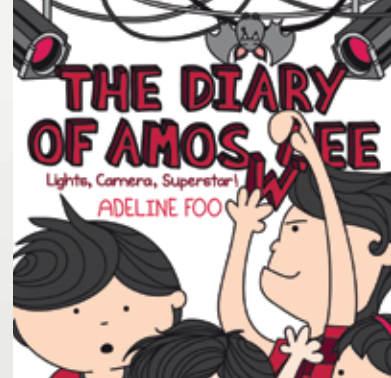
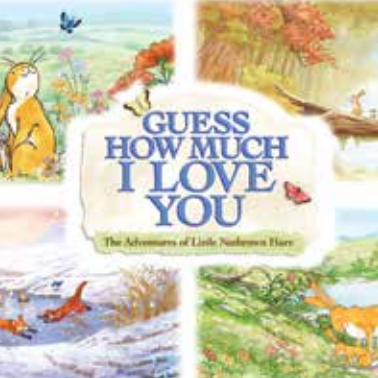
Serangoon Road



Elie Belly



Eliza Teoh, Author
Elie Belly



Boo Junfeng, Director
Keluar Baris (Homecoming)



Angeline Swee, Executive Producer
The End/Beginning



SUPPORTING LOCAL CONTENT AND TALENT

To raise productivity in the media industry, MDA enhanced the Talent Assistance grant scheme with the introduction of Training Allowance for freelancers in July 2012. The Enhanced Apprenticeship, which supports experienced media practitioners for work attachments, was also introduced. These new initiatives were made possible with the support from the National Productivity and Continuing Education Council. As of 31 March 2013, these two initiatives have benefitted 76 media practitioners and freelancers.

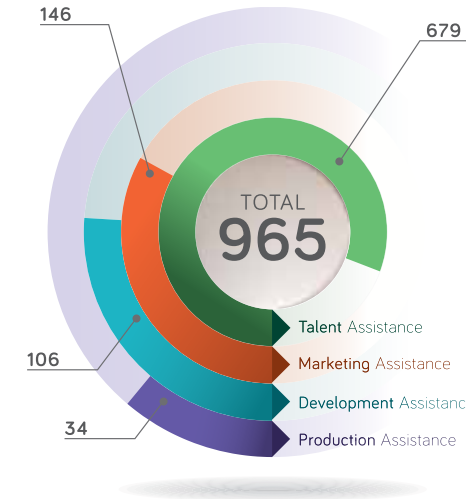
Two of the 76 recipients are Josh Yong, a Ngee Ann Polytechnic graduate and freelancer; and James Phang from Tiny Island Productions. Josh was supported by the Enhanced Apprenticeship, and was attached to the London 2012 Olympic Games as a sports video editor, editing 'live' coverage of the games for worldwide audiences. He was the only Singapore video editor to be selected for the position. Since his return, he has worked on editing projects in Australia and Singapore including for the reality TV programme, *Asia's Next Top Model*.

Another recipient, James Phang, an employee of Tiny Island Productions was attached to FremantleMedia Enterprises in Los Angeles to learn story and concept development under the mentorship of experienced Hollywood development specialists. He has since returned to Tiny Island Productions, assisting the company with strategic planning.

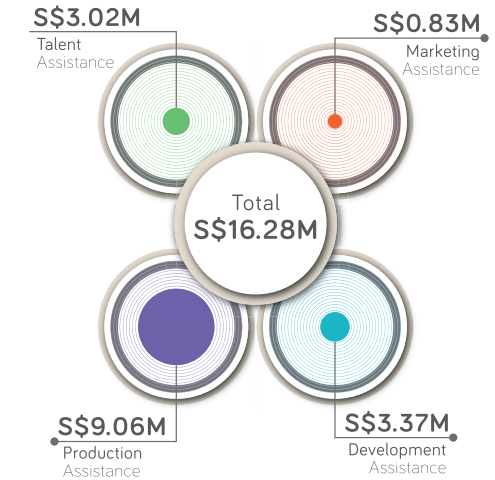
To ensure a constant pipeline of talent, MDA revamped its Media Education Scheme (MES) in 2012 to foster closer collaborative relationships with the industry. By tying up with the industry to co-sponsor scholarships, MDA hopes to achieve the twin goals of nurturing media leaders and professionals, while at the same time meeting industry's need and demand for talent with specified skill sets. Six scholarships were awarded jointly with established media companies to Wendy Wong Shumin, Yunita Santoso Ong, Chan Mei Yu, Jethra, Kenson Tan Kian Seng, Aemilia Mariani Widodo and Jodie Pang Li Juan. Upon graduation, the six will be attached to media companies like MediaCorp, Starhub, Tiny Island Productions, Singapore Press Holdings and Viacom International Media Networks. From 2003 to 2012, MDA supported 182 individuals to pursue their media studies through the MES scheme.

This year, MDA introduced a film category under MES, MES (Film), to nurture talent pursuing independent film careers. Recipients of MES (Film) will be mentored by local film-makers for two years, after their studies.

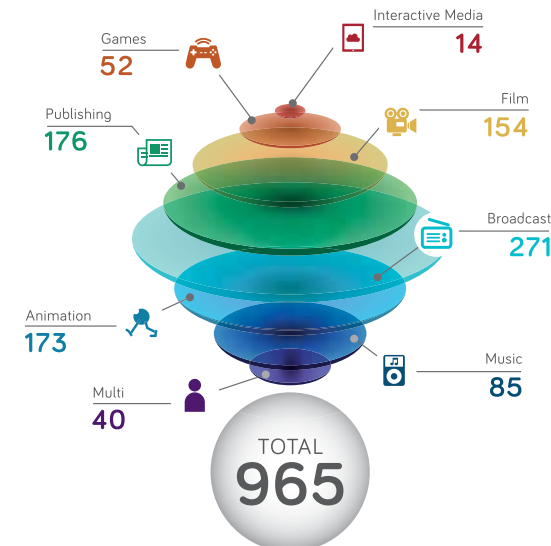
NUMBER OF PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY EACH GRANT SCHEME



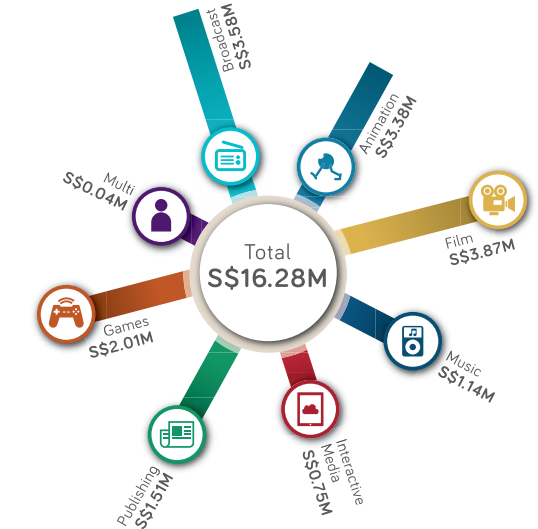
AMOUNT COMMITTED UNDER EACH GRANT SCHEME



NUMBER OF PROJECTS SUPPORTED UNDER EACH SECTOR

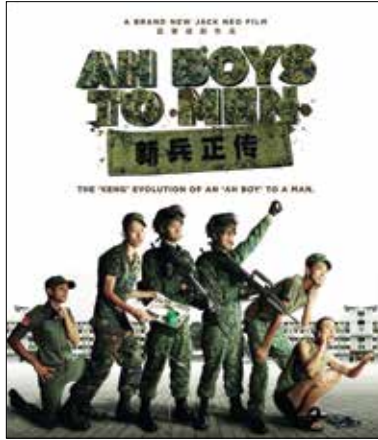


AMOUNT COMMITTED FOR EACH SECTOR



NURTURING A VIBRANT FILM SECTOR

2012 saw a record 12 local films hitting the big screen in Singapore, bringing the total box-office takings for the year to S\$12 million, with the top five local films earning a total of S\$10.8 million, 32 per cent more than in 2011.



Ah Boys to Men was one of the biggest local box office hits in Singapore, earning S\$6.2 million in its 13-week run.

The feather in the cap was the success of *Ah Boys to Men* in 2012. It was one of the biggest local box office hits in Singapore history. Developed with the support of MDA's Production Assistance grant scheme, the Jack Neo comedy about the trials and tribulations of National Service boys set the record as the top-grossing local film of all time, earning S\$6.2 million in its 13-week run, second only to its sequel released in January 2013, *Ah Boys to Men 2*, which made almost S\$8 million as of March 2013. The films have also travelled to Malaysia and Taiwan.



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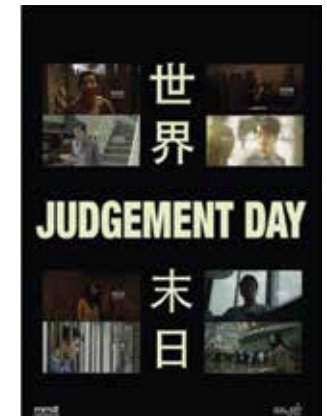
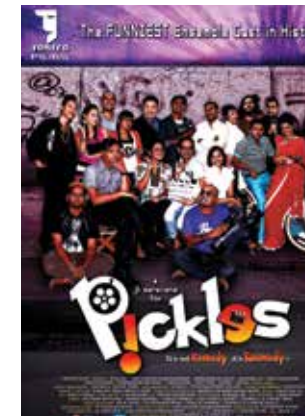
Besides receiving strong endorsement from local audiences, Singapore films also left their mark on the international stage last year.



Innocents by Wong Chen-Hsi, is a story about two lonely kids set in 1980s Singapore.

Innocents by Wong Chen-Hsi which premiered at the Rome International Film Festival 2012 was nominated for the "Asian Netpac" award at the Jeonju International Film Festival 2013. Local writer-director, Han Yew Kwang's *The Flying Postman* won the "2nd HAF/Fox Chinese Film Development" award at the Hong Kong International Film and TV Market held in March 2013, receiving a cash prize of S\$16,000 and a development contract with Fox International Productions.

37 Singapore media companies also made their way to the Hong Kong International Film and TV Market where they collectively secured some S\$19 million in business deals. All these point to a growing local film sector and more importantly, a strong pipeline of good Singapore stories.



A showcase of local films was presented at Sneak Peeks during the 13th ATF/SS Market.

The fusion of Asia Television Forum and ScreenSingapore

In 2012, the 13th edition of Asia Television Forum was held together with ScreenSingapore (ATF/SS) at the Sands Expo and Convention Centre, Marina Bay Sands. The joint event presented greater trading possibilities and networking opportunities, with ScreenSingapore carrying a stronger Asian theme.

The three-day market, which included three premieres and four days of conferences, attracted nearly 4,000 film and television trade participants, some 1,000 companies from 52 countries and served as the platform for some S\$255 million worth of deals to be closed.

At the market, MDA also organised a number of business events to provide opportunities for collaboration. These included a business matching session which attracted some

100 local and international attendees and China-Singapore dialogue session where Singapore TV producers had the opportunity to network with representatives from China's broadcast stations for collaboration in dramas and documentaries.

Promotion of local films was also a priority. MDA organised Sneak Peeks to show upcoming Singapore feature films to buyers and media at ScreenSingapore. Nine films were showcased: *Ah Boys to Men 2*, *Ghost Child*, *The Wedding Diary II*, *Menstrual Man*, *Red Numbers*, *Taxi! Taxi!*, *3.50*, *Pickles* and *Judgment Day*. The session was attended by some 60 trade delegates. Daily networking sessions were also held for international players to meet with local media companies.

Singapore content for Singaporeans

To build a strong local film industry, the Singapore Film Commission (SFC) in MDA continuously grooms new filmmakers by creating opportunities for them to experiment and create a broad range of genres that include documentaries, arthouse, fiction, comedy and dramas.

In December 2012, SFC awarded eight filmmakers who were directing their first and second films with the New Talent Feature Grant. The inaugural batch of recipients included Ric Aw of *Building Waves*, Abbas Akbar of *Singapooru*, M Raihan Halim of *Banting*, Jason Lai of *Ms J Contemplates Her Choice*, Kesavadas S/O Rajagopal of *A Yellow Bird*, Tan Ai Leng of *Sinema Paradiso*, Tan Pin Pin of *Hinterland* and Teo Eng Tiong of *The Confinement Nanny*.

SFC's Film Mentorship Initiative which provides grants to help local filmmakers sharpen their skills in film directing, producing and writing in overseas film labs, also supported

five filmmakers. They are Anthony Chen and Feng Kexin for Golden Horse Film Academy, Boo Junfeng for Jerusalem International Film Lab as well as Tan Pin Pin and Tan Bee Thiam for Rotterdam Lab.



Where The Road Meets The Sun is one of the films featured in Watch Local, a programme aimed to deepen support for local films.

During the year under review, the SFC also introduced new initiatives to deepen the support and appreciation of local films in Singapore. In October 2012, SFC introduced Watch Local, a programme that brought back more than 20 classic local films for reruns. The partners for this initiative are Objectifs Centre for Photography and Film, Sinema+GV, The Arts House and MediaCorp.

Watch Local features rare Singapore films which have not been commercially released as well as iconic films of the 1990s. These films include *Army Daze*, a Michael Chiang movie about National Service; *The Teenage Textbook* starring Melody Chen and Caleb Goh; *Eating Air*, Kelvin Tong's coming-of-age feature and *Where The Road Meets the Sun* by Yong Mun Chee which won the "Best Director" and "Special Jury" awards at the Houston International Film Festival 2011.

In February 2013, SFC launched the SGFilm Channel which is hosted on YouTube to stream Singapore short films and trailers of upcoming local releases. The channel will feature at least 40 films by end 2013.

Among the channel's offerings are award-winning titles such as Boo Junfeng's *Keluar Baris (Homecoming)*, as well as experimental works such as *Wrong Turn* by Charles Lim, and defining ones such as Anthony Chen's noteworthy short film *Ah Ma* which received a "Special Mention" award at the 60th Cannes Film Festival in 2007 and Edward Khoo's *Late Shift*, a 10-minute work about an elderly taxi driver's encounter with a drunk passenger. *Late Shift* was in the running for "Best Short Film" at the 17th Busan International Film Festival in 2012. The channel has attracted more than 1,000 subscribers, and over 40,000 video views.



Keluar Baris (Homecoming) by Boo Junfeng



Wrong Turn by Charles Lim



Ah Ma by Anthony Chen



Late Shift by Edward Khoo

BROADCASTING IN NEW WAYS

2012 was a fruitful year for the broadcast industry, with more producers now tapping on new media platforms to attract and engage viewers. Local programmes and productions continue to make inroads outside Singapore, including recognition at prestigious industry awards. Programmes made for multiple platforms such as the Internet, mobile and television are catching on as local content producers now recognise that social media has the power to engage and entice viewers in new ways. Notable multi-media content created include MediaCorp's drama *96°C Café* and Beach House Pictures' *Hidden Cities Extreme*, a travel and adventure series.

96°C Café, supported under the Production Assistance grant scheme, was first telecast online on XinMSN.com and continued its run as a 20-episode series on FTA-TV. Local retail stores also carried *96°C Café* merchandise. *Hidden Cities Extreme*, which was supported by the same grant scheme, had viewers engaged on its Facebook page which shared videos, images and upcoming episodes of the programme. The programme's host, Simon Yin, also interacted with viewers on the social media platform.

Going abroad

During the year in review, local independent production houses from the broadcast sector did Singapore proud with their work gaining recognition at international award ceremonies. For example, *Very!'s The End/Beginning-Nepal* won the "Gold World Medal" in the Social Issues/Current Affairs category, the "Silver World Medal" in the Community Service Programs category and the "Silver World Medal" in the Biography/Profiles category at the New York Festivals International Television & Film Awards 2012. *Asia's Underworld* by Third Floor Pictures was also a Finalist for the Social Issues/Current Affairs category at the same festival.



The End/Beginning - Nepal won a total of three awards at the New York Festivals International Television & Film Awards 2012.



Asia's Underworld by Third Floor Pictures was a finalist at the New York Festivals International Television & Film Awards 2012.

Independent producers have also been collaborating with their international peers, enabling deeper penetration into key markets around the world. Recent co-productions include *Kakadu*, a documentary series on Kakadu National Park by Beach House Pictures, Northern Pictures and ABC TV; as well as HBO Asia's first prime-time television drama *Serangoon Road*. A detective drama series by Singapore company Infinite Studios, HBO Asia and ABC TV, *Serangoon Road* is shot on location in Singapore. It features a stellar cast including international artistes such as Joan Chen, Russell Wong and Singapore's very own Chin Han whose credits include Hollywood films such as *The Dark Knight* and *Contagion*. *Serangoon Road* is also supported by MDA's Production Assistance grant scheme.



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Kakadu by Beach House Pictures



Serangoon Road, a detective drama series shot on location in Singapore features cast such as Joan Chen and Chin Han.

To promote local content and services overseas, MDA led a delegation of 40 representatives from 21 companies to MIPCOM, one of the world's leading content markets. With the support from MDA's Marketing Assistance grant scheme, the participation rate from Singapore companies to this trade event increased by 18 per cent compared to 2011, making it the largest Singaporean representation at the market to date. Participation came from a wide mix of TV production, animation, and content distribution companies offering documentary, drama, animation content and digital technology services.

Local companies also strengthened industry relationships with their Malaysian contemporaries. National Film Development Corporation Malaysia (FINAS), Malaysia's film agency and authority hosted a matchmaking event for Singapore and Malaysian delegates at MIPCOM for them to explore business opportunities and new ventures. More than 180 guests ranging from producers, broadcasters, financiers and distributors attended the reception.

Other than MIPCOM, MDA's Marketing Assistance grant scheme also supported the participation of Singapore companies in broadcast markets such as World Congress of Science & Factual Producers and Asian Side of the Doc.

Not to be outdone, the animation sector also had a good showing during the year in review. The 3D animation series, *Rob the Robot* by Singapore's One Animation and Canada's Amberwood Entertainment, was sold to more than 57 territories, including broadcasters such as Disney Junior, ABC Australia and Al Jazeera Kids. *Rob the Robot* follows the adventures of Rob and his friends as they explore the Robot Galaxy.



Ask Lara by August Media Holdings was a 2013 Emmy nominee for "Best Kids Animation Series".



Guess How Much I Love You by Scrawl Studios won "Best 2D Animated Programme" at the 2012 Asian Television Awards.

Local animation productions also made waves at international award ceremonies. For example, *Ask Lara* by August Media Holdings was a 2013 Emmy nominee for "Best Kids Animation Series". At the 2012 Asian Television Awards, *Ben 10: Destroy All Aliens* produced by Tiny Island Productions and owned by Turner/Cartoon Network won "Best 3D Animated Programme" and *Guess How Much I Love You* by Scrawl Studios won "Best 2D Animated Programme".

POWERING UP MORE MEDIA PLATFORMS



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With media convergence and the rapid adoption of Internet-enabled devices as well as changes in media consumption patterns, digital publishing is quickly becoming a mainstay in the publishing sector. Riding on this trend, MDA collaborated with the Singapore Book Publishers Association (SBPA) to introduce initiatives to encourage publishers to venture into digital publishing.

In September 2012, SBPA launched the Content Digitisation Program which helped publishers gain experience in digital publishing by subsidising the cost of digitising their titles and hence enabling publishers to embark on new business activities.



With the support of MDA's Development Assistance grant scheme, Bubbly Books published the *Ellie Belly* and *Robozonic* series which are targeted at six to 11-year-old children.

In terms of content development, MDA supported Bubbly Books with the Development Assistance grant scheme to publish the *Ellie Belly* and *Robozonic* series which were targeted at six to 11-year-old children. Both series were made available in both print and digital formats with the digital versions being distributed worldwide to e-Bookstores such as Amazon, Lybrary, Feedbooks, eBook.de, and Kobo.

The Development Assistance grant scheme also supported Tien Wah Press in their development of two titles, book one of the animated children's book series the *Ouju Series*, and book one of the *Step One* series, a language learner, both in digital formats for the mobile platforms. The company, which started as a traditional print business, also began offering digital publishing solutions and re-purposing content for digital and interactive platforms.

Apart from distributing their works on digital platforms, authors are also exploring the option of delivering their content on other platforms such as TV and games to further exploit the Intellectual Property (IP) that they have created. Local author Adeline Foo's popular *The Diary of Amos Lee* book series which was adapted into a TV series and aired on MediaCorp's okto channel in the first quarter of 2012, was also made into a mobile game which is slated for release in 2013.

The year in review also saw publishers exporting their content to the international market. A total of 13 local publishers participated at the Beijing Book Fair and another 28 at the Frankfurt Book Fair, setting up booths and taking up space at the Singapore pavilion to promote their products.

In the music scene, MDA and MediaCorp held a joint call-for-proposal in September 2012 to invite local composers to score theme songs for seven MediaCorp TV dramas. The initiative aims to give national exposure to local musicians as well as uncover new talent. The call attracted 103 song demos by 55 local music producers and music production companies. Seven winners were selected and supported by MDA's Development Assistance grant scheme.



Mental was one of the seven winners of the MDA and MediaCorp joint call-for-proposal for drama theme songs.

Of the selected theme songs, *咖啡恋*, written for MediaCorp's web drama *96°C Café*, received airplay on XinMSN.com and Y.E.S. 93.3FM after the web drama went live on 4 February 2013. *啡情歌*, the theme song for the drama's 20-episode series on FTA-TV also went on air on 15 April 2013. In addition, *Mental*, written for Suria drama *Bingit*, also received airplay on XinMSN.com and RIA 89.7FM on 9 February 2013 when the drama began its telecast. In March 2013, MDA and MediaCorp made a second call for proposals, inviting composers to create original theme songs for nine dramas; five for Channel 8, two for Suria and two for Vasantham.



Arun Shenoy's *Rumbadoodle* was nominated for "Best Pop Instrumental Album" at the 55th Grammy Awards 2013.

MDA and the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) also partnered two established music companies – Ocean Butterflies Music and Funkie Monkeys Pop Music School – to offer local music training programmes in lyric writing, music composition and arrangement from April 2013. This is the first partnership between MDA, WDA and the music sector.

Notably, Singapore had its first nominee for the Grammy Awards – Arun Shenoy, whose debut world fusion record *Rumbadoodle* was nominated for "Best Pop Instrumental Album" at the 55th Grammy Awards held on 10 February 2013 in Los Angeles. His style weaves together "rock 'n roll", "world beat" and "New Age". His solo record is slated for release in late 2013. Arun attended the award ceremony with support from MDA's Marketing Assistance grant scheme.

VIBRANT INTERACTIVE DIGITAL MEDIA SCENE

The interactive digital media scene in Singapore continues to be abuzz, attracting new investments and international recognition.

Since 2006, the Interactive Digital Media Programme Office (IDMPO) in MDA has supported more than 400 research and development projects and some 2,000 researchers, scientists and engineers. The support resulted in the delivery of some 500 products and services, and the publishing of more than 1,000 research papers. Start-ups have also achieved follow-on funding from third party investors.

Two of them are Affle and KAI Square. Affle, a Singapore mobile advertising company secured over S\$13 million worth of investments from D2 Communications, Japan's largest mobile advertising company; while KAI Square, a company specialising in innovative technology-related surveillance services and monitoring solutions, ventured into overseas markets such as China, Taiwan and Bangkok after raising an investment of S\$3 million.

In 2012, Affle together with Garena Online, an online gaming services provider and distributor and JamiQ, a social media monitoring company were ranked among Red Herring's Top 100 Asia and Top 100 Global companies.

Separately, the Games Solution Centre (GSC), which was launched by MDA at Mediapolis Phase 0 in October 2011 to nurture local game companies, had since attracted 25 tenants. During the year in review, the centre organised events and networking sessions to help its tenants explore business collaborations. One of the games developed in the Games Solution Centre, *Rocketbirds: Hardboiled Chicken*



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by Ratloop Asia which was released on Sony PlayStation network in 2011, had developed a Sony PSVita version and was ranked third on the top-selling games in Asia on the Vita console in 2012.

In addition, Touch Dimensions' *Autumn Dynasty*, a game on the Singapore Game Box portal (www.singaporegamebox.com) offered by the GSC to raise awareness of Singapore-made games, was named one of the top five "New Ways to Play" iPad games in Apple's official Mac App Store Best of 2012 awards. It has also been downloaded more than 72,000 times since its release in May 2012 for the iPad.

MDA also supported Singapore game companies to participate in international game events such as Game Developers Conference and Electronic Entertainment Expo.



Rocketbirds: Hardboiled Chicken by Ratloop Asia was ranked third on the top-selling games in Asia on the Vita console in 2012.



Autumn Dynasty by Touch Dimensions is one of the top five "New Ways To Play" iPad games in Apple's Mac App Store Best of 2012 awards.

MEDIAPOLIS



Mediapolis@one-north - Artist's Impression of Infinite Studios.

The powering up of Mediapolis@one-north continues to be on track. Infinite Studios, a joint venture by Ascendas and Citramas and a key Mediapolis development, was ready to receive tenants in October 2012. Discovery, Namco Bandai Studios and AMX Audiophiles are among those that have moved into the new multi-tenanted facility with two state-of-the-art purpose built soundstages. Mediapolis is targeted to be fully developed by 2020.