

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



In many ways, 2013 was a remarkable year for MDA and the media sector. It was a year of sustained industry growth, and one which saw our Singapore content making headway on more platforms and gaining regional as well as international acclaim.

In 2012, the media sector comprised 7,000 establishments that generated S\$31.4 billion in operating receipts. This translated to a contribution of S\$8.4 billion in nominal value-added to the Singapore economy, an increase of 5.7 per cent from 2011¹.

One standout sector in 2013 was film. Ten local films were released with total box office takings for the year amounting to S\$13 million, an increase of 10 per cent from 2012. Jack Neo's sequel to his national service comedy, *Ah Boys to Men 2*, broke box office records for a local film, raking in S\$8 million. Not only was it the second highest grossing film of 2013, just behind *Iron Man 3*, it also topped the earnings of Hollywood blockbusters such as *Thor: The Dark World*, *Man of Steel* and animated feature film *Despicable Me 2* in the local box office takings. Beyond sales, these movies also gained regional and international recognition. Notably, Anthony Chen's debut feature film *Ilo Ilo*, a heartwarming story about the relationship between a Filipino domestic worker and a Singaporean family, bagged more than 30 international awards. This included the Best Feature Film Award at the 50th Golden Horse Awards and the coveted Camera d'Or at the 66th Cannes Film Festival.

¹ Source: Department of Statistics, Economic Development Board

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Our companies and content in other sectors also made their mark beyond our local shores. For example, *The Great Elephant Gathering*, a documentary produced by Beach House Pictures and shown on National Geographic Channel Asia, received a Silver Medal Award for the Nature & Wildlife category at the New York Festivals. *Sleepwalking Jack*, an episode within the TV animation series *Jack* co-produced by Sparky Animation Pte Ltd (Singapore) and PVP Animation Inc.(Canada) won the prestigious Youth Media Alliance's Award of Excellence for Best Television Programme, Animation (Ages 6-8 Category), which honours the best in TV and digital content in Canada. As a testament to the quality and popularity of made-in-Singapore games, *Autumn Dynasty Warlords*, a MDA-funded mobile game by Touch Dimensions was the number one top grossing game app on iTunes Store.

With TV being one of the media sectors under MDA's remit, 2013 took on special meaning for us as we celebrated local television's golden jubilee.



Anthony Chen's debut film *Ilo Ilo* won more than 30 international awards, including the Camera d'Or at the 66th Cannes Film Festival and Best Feature Film Award at the 50th Golden Horse Awards. (Photo courtesy of Fisheye Pictures)

From the first black-and-white transmission on 15 February 1963, to the commencement of colour about a decade later and now digital broadcasts, the local TV landscape has evolved rapidly. On 16 December 2013, MediaCorp commenced broadcasting all seven free-to-air (FTA) TV channels in digital format using the DVB-T2 (Digital Video Broadcasting - Second Generation Terrestrial) broadcasting standard.



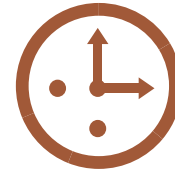
Minister for Communications and Information, Dr. Yaacob Ibrahim was given an update on digital TV during his visit to the Bukit Batok Transmission Centre. (Photos courtesy of Ministry of Communications and Information)

As we commemorate 50 years of television, MDA will continue to ensure that there is a strong pipeline of TV content which connects Singaporeans with our shared identity, social and cultural heritage. This is done through our support for Public Service Broadcast (PSB) programming. In the year of review, MDA's PSB funding supported a total of 6,039.5 hours of content on MediaCorp's FTA channels, attracting some 4.5 million viewers.

In 2013, MDA also announced plans to extend the reach of our local stories to more platforms beyond FTA TV channels. Pay-TV operator StarHub was appointed as the second commissioning platform for local PSB programmes under MDA's revamped PSB Contestable Funds Scheme (PCFS) in November 2013. Besides catching the new programmes on StarHub's pay-TV channels, viewers can also enjoy these on the go through the company's multi-screen offering, "TV Anywhere".

MDA's commitment to supporting the creation and development of quality content goes beyond TV. During the year in review, MDA supported 1,033 projects across seven media sectors – animation, broadcast, film, games, interactive digital media, music, publishing - and provided S\$12.32 million in grants to support our talent and companies across the different media sectors.

MDA also reviewed our regulations to help our local film and video players. The Simultaneous Rating System, which allows different versions of a film with different ratings to be screened at the same time, was introduced. This enables distributors to shorten their time-to-market and lower their operating costs. MDA also waived the requirement for qualifying film distribution and exhibition licensees to lodge security deposits.



**6,039.5 HOURS
OF PSB CONTENT**



**1,033 PROJECTS
SUPPORTED**



**S\$12.32 MILLION
IN GRANTS**

Significant developments also took place at one-north² in early 2014. Infinite Studios' multi-tenanted development, which houses two of the largest soundstages in the world, opened its doors at Mediapolis. In addition, Lucasfilm also unveiled its state-of-the-art production facility, the Sandcrawler, at Fusionopolis. A new five-hectare site, JTC LaunchPad@one-north, was launched to host an expanded cluster of start-ups, contributing to the vibrancy of the local media ecosystem.

² A 200-hectare development strategically positioned in the heart of Singapore, one-north is designed to host a cluster of world-class research facilities and business park space, all built to support the growth of Biomedical Sciences, Infocomm Technology (ICT), Media, Physical Sciences and Engineering.



Infinite Studios' multi-tenanted development, which houses two of the largest state-of-the-art soundstages in the world, officially opened in Mediapolis.

Even as we seize present opportunities, the ability to think long term is critical to growing our media sector. In 2013, the Ministry of Communications and Information (MCI) announced the formation of the 14-member steering committee to develop the ten-year Infocomm Media Masterplan, which seeks to establish Singapore as a Smart Nation that leads the world in tapping the potential of Infocomm and Media (ICM). MDA is working closely with the committee, MCI, the Infocomm Development Authority (IDA) and the Economic Development Board (EDB) to chart the next phase of the development of Singapore's ICM sectors into 2025.

While we embrace technological changes and new media trends, MDA must remain steadfast in our regulatory remit of ensuring fair competition and safeguarding the interests of the public. In the course of discharging our duty, we may be confronted with tough decisions but our calls must continue to be based on fair and thorough assessment of all the factors in play.

During the year in review, MDA issued a direction to SingNet requiring that the 2013/14 – 2015/16 seasons of the Barclays Premier League (BPL) be cross-carried on the StarHub platform, as our assessment was that its agreement with the Football Association Premier League contained clauses that prevent or restrict or are likely to prevent or restrict the BPL content from being acquired by other parties. Our decision was challenged by SingNet but it was upheld by MCI Minister Dr Yaacob Ibrahim after SingNet's appeal.

As a statement of our community values, MDA issued a notice to Internet Service Providers to block *Ashley Madison* on 8 November 2013, as the site aggressively promotes and facilitates extramarital affairs and had declared that it would specifically target Singaporeans. The move received strong support from many members of the public as they too felt the site goes against prevailing societal values.

2013 was a busy year for MDA on both the industry development and regulatory fronts. I would like to take this opportunity to thank MDA's board members, our various advisory panels and the Media Literacy Council, and our dedicated staff for their support and hard work.

Mr. Niam Chiang Meng

Chairman
Media Development Authority
Singapore