CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

MDA believes in the power of stories. Well-crafted stories create lasting memories and connect people. As we look back at the year in review, one thing stands out: whether in the past, present or future, stories help make sense of where we come from and where we are headed. While much has been achieved for Singapore's media sector, even more stories are waiting to be told with the formation of the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA). We look forward to opening up a new chapter in Singapore's infocomm and media development.

MR NIAM CHIANG MENG

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

The year in review was a pivotal one. 2015 marked the nation's Jubilee and SG50 was a memorable chapter in the Singapore story. MDA contributed to the celebrations by supporting a diverse range of SG50 projects that lauded our past while inspiring us to forge the future ahead.

Singapore boasted an active film scene even before independence. To honour our cinematic history, MDA helped restore, digitise and subtitle five classic local films from the '50s to the '70s for Spotlight on Singapore Cinema. With a new lease of life, these films can now take Singaporeans through the sights and sounds of our nation's past.

Complementing Spotlight on Singapore Cinema was the film 7 Letters, which was produced by seven local filmmakers and funded by MDA. Each film was unique in its own right, and all of them tapped into our collective consciousness – with remarkable results. 7 Letters moved audiences so much that additional screenings were held so as to meet with demand.

SG50 was also a time to celebrate our uniquely Singaporean identity, which we did by supporting five SG50 games packed with a local flavour. One of the games, KAN-CHEONG! Kopitiam Saga, pays tribute to the formidable 'summon auntie'. When she appears in-game, players need to rush to their in-game cars to update their parking coupons. Out of 40 proposals, we shortlisted five games that eventually garnered more than 200,000 downloads as at 31 December 2015.

As the festivities concluded, SG50 served as a reminder for us to look ahead. With the growing convergence of infocomm and media technologies, we must be prepared to take hold of new opportunities and possibilities. This is why the industry development and regulatory functions of MDA and IDA will merge to form the Info-communications Media Development Authority of Singapore (IMDA). As one entity, IMDA will be able to develop and regulate the converging infocomm and media sectors in a holistic manner.

Putting the feather on the cap of an eventful 2015, MDA hosted the Singapore Media Festival (SMF), which gathered the region's leading media talents to converse and collaborate. Last year's event saw the biggest gathering of Asian storytellers, with over 20,000 industry players and members of the public. Focusing on digital content, SMF 2015 saw the launch of Digital Matters, a showcase of new media branding. Other strides were also made in film and TV through the Asia TV Forum and Market, ScreenSingapore, the Southeast Asian Film Financing Forum and Project Market and the 26th Singapore International Film Festival.

What are stories without the people behind them? This is why talent development is key. Last year, the introduction of programmes such as the FOX Formats Lab gave local media professionals an opportunity to learn from the world's best. Under this initiative, local producers partnered veterans in the documentary scene to craft compelling stories of their own.

Telling local stories is important because they help shape the Singapore identity and unite Singaporeans with shared experiences and common values. To further encourage local storytelling and to forge a connected society, MDA continues to fund Public Service Broadcast content. During the year in review, MDA supported the development of 11 productions hosted on Mediacorp's Toggle platform, leveraging new digital opportunities and reaching new audiences.

On the regulatory front, 2015 saw MDA strengthening its efforts on consumer empowerment, digital inclusion and media literacy. Key milestones include making it mandatory for Internet service providers to offer parental control tools to subscribers, ramping up MDA's Digital TV (DTV) Assistance Scheme to help low-income households transition to DTV, as well as working with the Media Literacy Council on fostering a safer Internet environment.

As the MDA chapter draws to a close, I want to thank everyone who has contributed to our success story in one way or another. 2015 also marks my last term as the Chairman of MDA and it has been a privilege to serve alongside our board members, advisory committees, industry partners and dedicated staff. With the opening of the IMDA chapter, I am confident that we can build on the strong foundation that has been laid to write a brighter and more exciting future for Singapore's infocomm and media industries.