



Time to Put Third-party Media Content Distribution Center Stage

— An Interview with **Lovinia (LuLu) Chiu**

Chairman and CEO of Medialink Group Limited

是時候聚焦

第三方媒體內容發行

— 專訪 **羚邦集團有限公司**

主席兼行政總裁 **趙小燕**女士

As the first distributor of third-party owned media content to list on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange (HKEX), clocking up pioneering accomplishments is nothing unusual for Hong Kong-headquartered Medialink Group Limited, which by revenue (according to the Frost & Sullivan Report), is the biggest distributor of Japanese anime (animation) in Mainland China.

“We are proud to be a Hong Kong company with an international business network and outlook,” says Lovinia “LuLu” Chiu, founder, chairman and CEO of Medialink Group Limited, which commenced trading on the Main Board of the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong in May 2019. With presence and operations in Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, Medialink has been at the forefront of media content distribution and the brand licensing business for more than 25 years. “Our business model is underpinned by an established platform which facilitates the crossover of content distribution, content development, brand licensing and merchandise commercialisation opportunities,” explains Ms Chiu. Recognised for its achievements, Medialink has received a string of awards including “CLE Awards 2018 – The Best Oversea IP Awards – PJ Masks” and “Jade Monkey Awards – Top 10 Licensing Team Awards” in 2018.

While Medialink is responsible for introducing popular animated series such as Fullmetal Alchemist, Pokémon and the TV classics series Dae Jang Geum to Hong Kong, the company’s role as a successful distributor is not widely known because only the content is promoted and not the company explains Ms Chiu. “There are those that are familiar with the terms intellectual property, trademarks and copyright, but they seldom understand the commercial value – and even less – as a distributor of third party intellectual property (IP), how a business can be viable,” says Ms Chiu who hopes that, as a publicly listed company, Medialink can help to create more awareness about the commercial value of third-party media content and the merchandising licensing business it generates. She says that, compared to tangible “bricks and mortar” assets which is easily understood, IP assets, which are intangible, can offer flexible business opportunities and generate higher commercial value. “We want to take the industry from behind the scenes to a position where the commercial value of intellectual property as a business asset is better understood,” says Ms Chiu.

作為首間在香港聯合交易所（香港聯交所）上市的第三方擁有媒體內容發行商，總部設在香港的羚邦集團有限公司對於其取得開拓性的成就不過是輕鬆平常的事情；根據弗若斯特沙利文報告，按收益計，該公司是中國內地最大的日本動漫（動畫）發行商。

羚邦集團有限公司創辦人、主席兼行政總裁趙小燕表示：「我們很榮幸能成為一間擁有國際業務網絡及視野的香港公司。」羚邦集團有限公司於2019年5月在香港聯合交易所主板上市。25年來，羚邦一直站在媒體內容發行及品牌授權業務的前沿，業務遍及印尼、日本、馬來西亞、新加坡、台灣、北京、上海及廣州。趙女士表示：「我們的業務模式建基於完善的平台，有助促進內容發行、內容開發、品牌授權以及商品商業化機遇之間的跨領域合作。」羚邦所取得的成就備受認可，於2018年榮獲多個獎項，包括「中國授權金星獎」、「2018優秀海外原創授權IP獎 — 睡衣小英雄」及「玉猴獎 — 十佳授權團隊」。

趙女士說道，雖然羚邦負責向香港引入深受歡迎的動畫系列，例如《鋼之鍊金術師》、《寵物小精靈》，以及經典電視劇《大長今》等，但公司作為成功發行商的角色卻並非廣為人知，這是因為推廣的只是內容而並非公司本身。趙女士說：「部分公司對知識產權、商標和版權等術語頗為熟悉，但當中很少公司能了解作為第三方知識產權發行商的商業價值，甚或不了解企業能如何生存。」她希望，羚邦作為一家上市公司，可協助提高人們對第三方媒體內容的商業價值及隨之產生的商品授權業務的認識。她亦提及，相比較易理解的有形「磚頭」資產，知識產權資產是無形的，既能提供靈活商機，亦可創造更高的商業價值。「我們希望將行業鮮為人知的一面展現人前，讓人們更明白知識產權作為商業資產的商業價值。」趙女士說。





Leveraging Expertise

It is the company's in-depth knowledge of the commercial value of third-party distribution and merchandising licensing opportunities, and how to effectively capitalise on them in different Asian markets, that has enabled Medialink to grow its business and reputation as a media content pioneer. A prime example is the way the company changed TV drama viewing preferences in the Philippines. In 2003, Ms Chiu's company convinced a Filipino TV station to air Meteor Garden. "It was an immediate success and achieved record-breaking ratings," recalls Ms Chiu. Following the initial success, in just a few months Medialink sold more than 60 Taiwanese dramas to the Philippines. The trend also broke the mode in the Philippines of airing drama series' with few hundred-plus episodes to screening programming series with closer to 10 to 60 episodes.

Across different channels and delivery platforms, Medialink has achieved success in other markets, for example by entering the in-flight entertainment content business; becoming the first non-Japanese company to co-invest and join the production committee of Japanese anime Seisen Cerberus; and partnering with TVB to introduce Medialink's own Ani-One streaming service on myTV Super. The Ani-One OTT platform has also been rolled out in Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, Taiwan and Singapore with local partners. Plans are also underway to offer the service in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand.

The key to growing the business, Ms Chiu reveals, is to continuously "innovate to differentiate". "We leverage on our expertise and experience to discover and deliver unique and creative content," explains Ms Chiu. She also emphasises that creating value for both the company and business partners is a strategic priority. By leveraging on market knowledge and linking brand merchandising licensing business with well-known characters such as Garfield, Popeye, Little Prince, Thomas and Friends and Pokemon, Medialink

善用專業知識

正是公司對於第三方發行的商業價值和商品授權機會有深入的認識，也了解如何在不同的亞洲市場中有效運用這些知識，使得羚邦能以媒體內容先驅的身份發展業務，建立聲譽。當中一個最佳示例就是公司改變了菲律賓電視劇觀看喜好的方式。2003年，趙女士說服一家菲律賓電視台播放《流星花園》。趙女士憶述：「這部劇的成績立竿見影，更創下收視紀錄。」初見成效後，羚邦在短短數月就向菲律賓出售了超過60齣台灣劇集。這種趨勢亦打破了菲律賓播放數百集以上的電視劇的模式，轉而播出近10到60集的節目系列。

羚邦在其他市場的不同渠道與播放平台均斬獲成功，例如進軍機上娛樂媒體內容業務；成為首家共同投資日本動畫片《龍心戰紀》及參與其製作委員會的非日本公司；及與電視廣播有限公司合作在myTV Super加入羚邦自家品牌的「Ani-One」串流服務。公司亦與越南、馬來西亞、汶萊、台灣以及新加坡的合作夥伴合作，在當地推出「Ani-One」的OTT平台。亦正計劃向柬埔寨、印尼、菲律賓和泰國提供該項服務。

趙女士透露，發展公司業務的關鍵在於要持續不斷地「創新以致出類拔萃」。「我們善加利用我們的專業知識和經驗，以發掘並提供既獨特又有創意的內容。」趙女士解釋。她亦強調，為公司及商業合作夥伴創造價值是優先戰略。羚邦利用市場資訊，將品牌商品授權業務與加菲貓、大力水手、小王子、湯瑪士火車頭及寵物小精靈等知名角色連繫起來，為香港引進了玩具、服裝及鞋履、健康與美容產品以及食品和飲料。趙女士說：「我們一直在尋找新的方式來探索雙贏的可能性。」為慶祝加菲貓這個角色誕生40周年，羚邦邀請了加菲貓的創作者吉姆·戴維斯來港參與推廣活動。另外，該公司收集的40件加菲貓藝術品會於亞洲巡迴展覽時展出，並最後會拍賣作慈善用途。

has brought toys, apparel and footwear, health and beauty products and food and beverage to Hong Kong. “We always look for new ways to explore win-win possibilities,” Ms Chiu says. To celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Garfield character, Medialink arranged for Garfield’s creator, Jim Davis to visit Asia to take part in promotional events. In addition, the company assembled a 40-piece collection of Garfield artworks, which were displayed at roadshows across Asia and eventually will be auctioned for charity.

The Benefits of Being a Listed Company

Describing Medialink’s listing on the HKEX as “demanding” and a “proud milestone”, Ms Chiu says the “close examination” of the company — as required by the listing process — was a validation of the way Medialink operates its business. “We like to do things by the book,” says Ms Chiu who credits her late fireman father with inspiring Medialink’s leadership ethos, which centers on strong ethics, compliance, hard work and prudent oversight of financial responsibilities. For example, in 1994, with her sister Noletta as co-founder, Ms Chiu established Medialink with HK\$100,000 of her own money. “Medialink has never sought bank loans or business financing,” says Ms Chiu who explains the philosophy is based on the belief that the company will utilise its own finances wisely. She stresses the same ethos applies to utilising investors’ finances wisely.

New Horizons

While it is still early days as a publicly listed company, Ms Chiu has noticed an uptick in the number of companies interested in working with Medialink. “Being a listed company provides potential business partners with confidence,” she notes. Furthermore, while globally there is widespread underrepresentation of women on corporate boards, Ms Chiu is proud of the fact that Medialink’s board of directors is gender balanced with four females to three males. From a personal standpoint, as chairman of a publicly listed company, in her business dealings, Ms Chiu has noticed she is treated with a new level of respect, especially in situations where males are inclined to exert chauvinist tendencies.

Looking at the bigger picture, and going forward, Ms Chiu says Medialink will continue to leverage on its business model to realise growth both in terms of the breadth and depth of the company’s operations. This includes extending the company’s reach in Mainland China — Medialink’s largest market, as well as other markets in Asia. In its home market, the company aspires to become an ambassador of local brands and locally developed content with the objective of serving as a facilitator for them to expand their footprint outside of Hong Kong. With new technologies emerging at a relentless pace, Ms Chiu also sees valuable opportunities for local companies willing to explore technology-led creativity.

香港上市公司的裨益

趙女士形容聆邦在香港聯交所上市雖然「費時」，但卻是一項「引以為傲的里程碑」，她提及，上市程序要求對公司進行「仔細檢查」，也是對聆邦業務營運方式的一次驗證。趙女士表示：「我們喜歡依本子辦事。」她認為，其已故消防員父親為聆邦的領導理念帶來啟發，其核心思想是堅守道德、合規、勤勞及對財務責任實行謹慎監管。舉例而言，1994年，趙女士拿著港幣10萬元自立門戶，與胞妹Noletta以聯合創辦人的身份合力創立聆邦。趙女士說：「聆邦從來沒有尋求銀行貸款或商業融資。」她解釋道，當中的理念在於相信公司將能明智地運用其財務資源。她強調，同一理念也適用於要明智地運用投資者的財務資源。

嶄新視野

儘管聆邦才剛成為上市公司不久，但趙女士注意到，有意與其合作的公司略有增多。她認為：「作為一家上市公司能為潛在的商業夥伴帶來信心。」此外，雖然女性在全球企業董事會的任職比例普遍偏低，但趙女士對聆邦董事會（四名女性與三名男性）具有均衡的男女比例深感自豪。從個人觀點來說，作為上市公司的主席，趙女士在其業務往來中發現，她獲得了不一樣的尊重，尤其是在男性傾向於大男子主義的情況下。

宏觀來看，展望未來，趙女士認為聆邦將繼續善用其業務模式，在公司業務的深度和廣度層面上，實現增長。這包括擴展公司在中國內地（聆邦的最大市場）





The arrival of 5G, which will be the fastest mobile network ever, is going to open up new job opportunities in the creative industries, particularly for media and entertainment, says Ms Chiu. To embrace the potential 5G offers, and as a sustainable growth driver, she stresses it is crucial for Hong Kong to reposition and re-adapt itself by equipping people with technology skills and know-how. "We need to look beyond the traditional finance and bricks and mortar industries," advises Ms Chiu. **M**

— Chris Davis
Editor

以及其他亞洲市場。至於本地市場方面，公司矢志成為本土品牌和本土開發內容大使，致力協助這些品牌和內容擴大在香港以外的足跡。隨著新科技不斷湧現，趙女士亦認為，如果本地公司願意探索科技主導的創意，將能擁有寶貴的機遇。

趙女士表示，5G的到來不僅是有史以來最快的流動網絡，亦將為創意產業帶來新的就業機會，尤其是媒體和娛樂行業。為配合5G帶來的發展潛力，作為可持續增長的驅動因素，她強調，香港必須要讓人們具備技術才能和知識，從而重新定位，重新適應。趙女士建議：「我們需要放遠目光，不局限於傳統的金融和地產行業。」 **M**

— Chris Davis
主編

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