

Cora Yim, Benjamin Lin unveil new production venture

S11 opens HK Filmart with three Chinese- language film projects

Veteran Chinese-language producers, Cora Yim and Benjamin Lin, have tied up on new production venture, S11 Partners, backed by Hong Kong-listed Medialink Group. The Hong Kong/Taiwan-based venture will develop, finance, produce and distribute original Chinese-language content for global audiences. Three movie projects were included in this morning's announcement.

The full story is on page 4



Taiwan, Japan forge new production links

TV Tokyo/GagaOOLala's At 25:00, in Akasaka follows Boys Like Boys int'l dating format pick up

Taiwan-based global LGBTQ+ streaming platform, GagaOOLala, has moved, along with its owner, Portico Media, into a whole new international universe this year, adding the first gay dating format to Warner Bros International Television Production catalogue, and unveiling its first production partnership with Japanese free-TV broadcaster, TV Tokyo.

The full story is on page 8

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New KBS boss unveils vision for rebirth

Korean pubcaster follows bruising year with three-axis reorg



Park Min, President/CEO, Korea Broadcasting System (KBS)

Following a bruising year in 2023, Korean public broadcast giant, Korea Broadcasting System (KBS), has unveiled a strategy that appears to draw a line under last year's troubles and offers a "reborn" vision in time to celebrate the company's 51st anniversary this year.

The "KBS 3 Future Vision", unveiled this month by new president and chief executive Park Min, promises that the broadcaster will be "reborn as a comprehensive public media group".

The reorg, which will be implemented by the middle of this year, involves three central axes – public broadcasting, production and infrastructure.

The public broadcasting axis carries the original mission – news, current affairs, education and international broadcasting and other public services – and will be supported by TV licence fees collected from Korean households.

Production includes the establishment of a high-quality centralised production facility that integrates all of KBS' production and distribution capabilities; and infrastructure, which involves the establishment of a new complex to promote Korean culture, including K-pop and K-content, with exhibitions, concerts and events.

Min said the broadcaster would be "reborn as a world-class public media by mobilising all its tangible and intangible assets".

He also underscored KBS' responsibility to viewers, and said all efforts would be made to minimise viewer inconvenience as last year's hotly debated licence fee separation decree comes into effect.

The licence-fee uproar was rooted in accusations that KBS had failed to live up to its public broadcasting responsibilities.



Aiming “to return PLDT and Smart to their premier positions, where they rightfully belong”, Philippines’ telco boss Pangilinan declares after record quarter

The Philippines’ telco/communications giant, PLDT, ended December 2023 in what looks like a happy place.

For the fourth quarter of 2023, the company reported its highest revenues in nine quarters since the end of 2021; consolidated EBITDA was up 4% year-on-year to a record Ps104.3 billion/US\$1.9 billion in 2023; EBITDA margin was at 52% for the period; and company bosses said sustained growth signalled recovery. Reported net income grew by 154% to Ps26.6 billion/US\$479 million in 2023 from 2022.

Showing no sign of regret for the sudden exit of a deal to acquire the broadband business of ABS-CBN’s Sky Cable Corporation, PLDT/Smart chairman/CEO, Manuel Pangilinan, said the company was “aiming not just for higher profits but to return PLDT and Smart to their premier positions, where they rightfully belong”.

No further light has been shed on the sudden collapse of the deal with ABS-CBN. Both parties continue to insist that the 11th hour decision was mutual and the result of failure to agree on undisclosed revisions to commercial terms.



Japan’s Space One delays first satellite launch

Tokyo-based space startup, Space One Corp, delayed the planned weekend launch of the country’s first privately owned satellite to Wed (13 March). Company execs said a ship in the area caused the launch from Kushimoto in Wakayama Prefecture to be aborted at the last minute.

Yim, Lin tie up on new production venture S11 opens Hong Kong Filmart with three film projects



Photo credit: Mirror Weekly

S11 Partners founders Benjamin Lin (left) and Cora Yim (right)

Veteran Chinese-language content producers, Cora Yim and Benjamin Lin, have tied up on new production venture, S11 Partners, partially backed by Hong Kong-listed Medialink Group.

Based in Hong Kong and Taiwan, the venture, announced this morning just ahead of the opening of Hong Kong Filmart, will develop, finance, produce and distribute original Chinese-language content for global audiences.

The initial focus will be on film production and distribution.

Three movie projects were included in this morning’s announcement.

The Marriage Drive (紅棉路), a sweeping Hong Kong romantic drama written and directed by Lawrence Kan (簡君晉) from *In Broad Daylight* (白日之下). The project won last year’s HAF IDP Award.

The second film is *Mrs. Killer* (殺神太太), a Hong Kong-Taiwan-Malaysia co-production with Imagine Entertainment about a retired assassin-housewife forced back into action. *Mrs. Killer* is written and directed by Liao Ming-yi (廖明毅), whose directorial debut, *I Weirdo* (怪胎),

was nominated for six Golden Horse Awards.

K-culture satirical comedy *Oppa, I Hate You* (韓劇我恨你), a Taiwan-South Korea co-production with Imagine Entertainment and Warner Music Group, reunites scriptwriter Liao Min Kai (廖敏凱) and script consultant Sharon Wu (吳瑾蓉) from *Marry My Dead Body* (關於我和鬼變成家人的那件事).

S11 Partners this morning described its priority projects as “high-concept, genre-driven and gender-dynamic narratives”, and said the new prodco would adopt a producer-centric approach.

The venture runs alongside Yim’s 60 Percent Productions, which produced crime thriller series, *Taiwan Crime Stories*. Yim was previously behind Chinese-language originals, *The Trading Floor* (2018, 東方華爾街) and *Stained* (2019, 心冤).

Taiwan-based producer and CEO of CalFilms Asia, Lin’s portfolio includes *Peace Breaker* (2017, 破·局), *The Gangs*, *The Oscars and the Walking Dead* (2020, 江湖無難事) and *Plurality* (2021, 複身犯).



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Indonesia's Vidio unveils less-is-more drama slate

Fewer titles, higher budgets, more focus and differentiation in 2024, streamer says



Cast at the Vidio's House of Star-Studded Stories showcase in Jakarta

Timo Tjahjanto

Tommy Dewo

Ginanti Rona

Monty Tiwa

Sidharta Tata

When Vidio premiered crime action series *Ratu Adil* two weeks ago, the Indonesian streaming platform kicked off its less-is-more original premium production era.

The new slate, unveiled at a Hollywood-style "House of Star-Studded Stories" showcase in Jakarta at the end of February, follows the quiet exit of Vidio managing director, Monika Rudijono, the arrival of new content boss Mark Francis, and a low-key/hi-impact rethink of the whole approach to streaming.

Vidio talks about launching more than 15 new original titles this year.

In numbers, this seems like a long way from the 40-something titles the company presented during a regional industry showcase in Singapore only a few years ago. In streaming years, it's a lifetime.

Seven of the titles, including both new and returning series, were unveiled during the 2024 showcase.

Vidio CEO, Sutanto Hartono, said dur-

ing the event that release strategies had been adjusted based on evolving consumer behaviour and engagement.

Hartono added that the new slate involved bolder storytelling and plot lines related to social issues facing Indonesia.

Although he didn't talk about production budgets, part of Vidio's strategy is higher spend/production values and differentiated story telling.

Vidio's latest showcase caps almost 80 original series released since 2019.

Hartono said of the 77 titles released over the past five years, 51 titles (406 episodes) were released in 2022-2023.

Vidio closed 2023 with more than four million paid subscribers, making it

Indonesia's top SVOD platform.

"Vidio's success in being able to beat the dominance of global and regional OTTs as the platform with the most subscribers in Indonesia has inspired us to provide... the best and highest quality shows," Hartono said.

Among other things, this involves greater A-lister involvement in front and behind the camera, in addition to opening broader opportunities for local talent.

For instance, *Ratu Adil* offered Dian Sastrowardoyo (*Gadis Kretek*, Netflix) her first crime-action role.

"I've been waiting for this kind of opportunity, a break away from the highly emotional drama I've been doing," she says.



Sutanto Hartono



Dian Sastrowardoyo in *Ratu Adil*

Excerpts from *ContentAsia* magazine, published in April for MIP TV 2024 (8-10 April).

Taiwan, Japan forge new links in first production partnership

TV Tokyo/GagaOOLala's *At 25:00, in Akasaka*, follows international pick up for *Boys Like Boys*

Taiwan-based global LGBTQ+ streaming platform, GagaOOLala, has moved, along with its owner, Portico Media, into a whole new international universe this year.

In February, Warner Bros International Television Production announced the acquisition of LGBTQ+ series, *Boys Like Boys*, for its worldwide formats catalogue, followed a few weeks later, on 5 March, with the premiere of the original unscripted Taiwanese series on Warner Bros Discovery channel, TLC, in Taiwan.

The dating series is WBTV's first gay relationship format, and gives Portico Media/GagaOOLala's original creation an international berth along with *The Bachelor*, *First Dates* and *FBoy Island*.

WBTV launched the format, which eschews manufactured drama and traditional eliminations in favour of "real reactions to real situations", to the international market during the London Screenings.

What does the pick-up mean for Portico Media, which maintains its traditional channel distribution business in Taipei alongside its fledgling original production unit?

Portico Media/GagaOOLala founder and CEO, Jay Lin, says *Boys Like Boys*' success is "recognition that Portico Media possesses the creative and production capabilities to reach the global standard in the non-scripted space".

WBTV's decision to add the *Boys Like Boys* format to its global catalogue has a broader significance too.

"Boy's Love (BL) has been one of the key content exports from Asia to the rest of the world in the past several years," Lin says.

Boys Like Boys takes that further, ushering in "an exciting era where Asian LGBTQ people sharing their real personal stories is just as appealing as famous Asian actors playing fictional BL stories. Both content increases the awareness and representation of Asian LGBTQ in media, and we are eager to continue to forge new paths with our partners," Lin adds.

On 8 March, three days after TLC



Copyright: At 25:00, in Akasaka Film Partners

Taisuke Niihara and Kiita Komagine in *At 25:00, in Akasaka*

Taiwan premiered the original Taiwanese version, GagaOOLala added another first to its calendar, announcing its production partnership with Japanese free-TV broadcaster, TV Tokyo.

The live-action series, *At 25:00, in Akasaka*, is also envisioned as the first of a series of collaborations that characterise growing cross-border content relationships between Asian creators, Lin says.

The eight-year-old GagaOOLala will stream the series in a global exclusive (ex Japan) from 11.30pm on 18 April. New episodes, in the original Japanese with subtitles in traditional & simplified Chinese/English/Bahasa Indonesia/Spanish/Thai, will be released weekly.

Describing Japan as the undisputed cradle of BL culture, Lin says the joint production created a "formidable Japan-Taiwan alliance that leverages the unique strengths of both entities".

At 25:00, in Akasaka fuses gay/boys love drama with a Taiwan-Japan storyline infused with the tastes of Taiwan's night market food culture.


Based on the popular manga by Hiroko Natsuno, the 10x 30-mins episode series is

a 'what-if' story about two actors, known for their roles as a BL couple, being in a romantic relationship in real life.

The series was in discussion with Natsuno since 2020, says TV Tokyo drama producer, Satoshi Egawa.

At 25:00, in Akasaka stars Taisuke Niihara (*Nare no Hate no Bokura*) as Yuki Shiroasaki, a rookie actor who seizes his chance during an audition and lands a role opposite popular senior actor, Asami Hayama, played by Kiita Komagine (*Avataro Sentai Donbrothers*).

As Shiroasaki grapples with the pressure of his first major role, Hayama proposes that they enter into a "relationship for the sake of their roles" until filming ends.

Egawa, who produced the show along with Takaya Chiba (TV Tokyo) and Ayano Kimura and Miyako Furubayashi from production house The Icon, says the series aims to capture intricate love stories within the creative industry. "The original setting, deeply connected to our reality of creating drama and films," he says, "is both a familiar world and a crucible for crafting fiction." 

What's on where...

| | | | |
|----------------|-------|---|---------------------------|
| March 2024 | 11-14 | Hong Kong International Film & TV Market 2024 | Hong Kong |
| | 13-14 | AVIA: Asia Video Summit 2024 | Hong Kong |
| | 19-21 | Series Mania Forum 2024 | Lille, France |
| April 2024 | 5-10 | Canneseries 2024 | Cannes, France |
| | 6-7 | Mip Formats/Mip Doc 2024 | Cannes, France |
| | 7 | Mip Drama 2024 | Cannes, France |
| | 8-10 | Mip TV 2024 | Cannes, France |
| | 25 | AVIA: Future of Video 2024 | Mumbai, India |
| May 2024 | 28 | AVIA: Satellite Industry Forum 2024 | Singapore |
| June 2024 | 6-8 | Telefilm Vietnam 2024 | Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam |
| | 17-18 | DW Global Media Forum 2024 | Bonn, Germany |
| | 24-27 | Sunny Side of the Doc 2024 | France |
| July 2024 | 3-5 | 15th Content Tokyo | Tokyo, Japan |
| September 2024 | | ContentAsia Summit 2024 | Taipei, Taiwan |
| | | ContentAsia Awards 2024 | Taipei, Taiwan |
| | 3 | AVIA: Korea in View 2024 | Seoul, Korea |
| | 5 | Japan: Korea in View 2024 | Tokyo, Japan |
| | 24-26 | APOS 2024 | Bali, Indonesia |
| | 26-29 | Gwangju Ace Fair 2024 | Gwangju, Korea |
| October 2024 | 10 | AVIA: Vietnam in View 2024 | Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam |
| | 18-20 | MipJunior 2024 | Cannes, France |
| | 21-24 | Mipcom 2024 | Cannes, France |
| November 2024 | 20-22 | 16th Content Tokyo | Chiba, Japan |
| December 2024 | 3 | The ATF Leaders Dialogue 2024 | Singapore |
| | 3 | AVIA: OTT Summit 2024 | Singapore |
| | 4-6 | Asia TV Forum & Market /ATF 2024 | Singapore |

Netflix wins Indonesia's digital heart

Avatar: The Last Airbender tops charts – Parrot Analytics

Netflix won the digital week in Indonesia from 27 Feb to 4 Mar, taking six of the top 10 most in demand titles, according to data science company Parrot Analytics.

The top programme of the week – *Avatar: The Last Airbender* – attracted enough demand to take top spot on the overall list with 22.8x more demand than the average title in the market.

Netflix's live action series about a young boy who has to master the four elemental powers to save the world,

premiered on 22 February. The show has already been renewed for another two seasons. Season one of *Avatar The Last Airbender* also topped Netflix's rankings in Indonesia for the weeks of 19-25 Feb and 26 Feb-3 March.

In line with long-held tradition, demand is high among Indonesian viewers for animated kids series, this week putting *Spongebob Squarepants*, *Boboiboy: Galaxy*, *Upin & Ipin* and *Didi & Friends* on the top 10 overall shows.

Top 10 overall TV shows: Indonesia

| Rank | Title | Difference from Market Average |
|------|--|--------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Avatar: The Last Airbender</i> | 22.8x |
| 2 | <i>Magic 5</i> | 21.63x |
| 3 | <i>One Piece</i> | 19.28x |
| 4 | <i>Spongebob Squarepants</i> | 17.52x |
| 5 | <i>Boboiboy: Galaxy</i> | 17.37x |
| 6 | <i>Upin & Ipin</i> | 17.13x |
| 7 | <i>Avatar: The Last Airbender (previous)</i> | 15.57x |
| 8 | <i>Didi & Friends</i> | 14.6x |
| 9 | <i>Jujutsu Kaisen</i> | 14.58x |
| 10 | <i>Naruto</i> | 13.79x |

Top 10 digital originals: Indonesia

| Rank | Title | Platform | Difference from Market Average |
|------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Avatar: The Last Airbender</i> | Netflix | 22.8x |
| 2 | <i>Hazbin Hotel</i> | Amazon Prime Video | 13.75x |
| 3 | <i>Bebefinn</i> | Netflix | 12.53x |
| 4 | <i>Loki</i> | Disney+ | 7.16x |
| 5 | <i>One Piece</i> | Netflix | 6.23x |
| 6 | <i>Reacher</i> | Amazon Prime Video | 6.16x |
| 7 | <i>BoBoiBoy Galaxy SORI</i> | Netflix | 5.38x |
| 8 | <i>Cigarette Girl (Gadis Kretek)</i> | Netflix | 5.14x |
| 9 | <i>The Impossible Heir</i> | Disney+ | 5.04x |
| 10 | <i>Comedy Chaos (Komedi Kacau)</i> | Netflix | 5.01x |

Date range: 27 February-4 March 2024

The total audience demand being expressed for a title, within a market. Audience demand reflects the desire, engagement and viewership, weighted by importance; so a stream/download is a higher expression of demand than a 'like'/comment. In this dataset we are comparing the demand that exists for each series in this market, against the average TV show. A difference of 1x represents the market average and 10x means a series is ten times more in demand than the average TV show in this market



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