

In Good Company: Alternative Content Distribution Network Unlocking Content Through Digitisation

The Singapore-based company's cutting-edge digitisation services are giving new life to old filmed content.

What is ACDN?

Alternative Content Distribution Network (ACDN) is a wholly owned subsidiary of gaming technology company TQ Global. ACDN's main business is the distribution of content across the globe through its own portal. Supported by R&D facilities at the Nanyang Technology University in Singapore, ACDN is able to digitise all tape-based recorded media.

The services it offers include:

- * Digitisation of analog contents and capture of digital content
- * Aggregation, repurposing and distribution of digitised and stored content
- * Logistical and playback support
- * Reporting
- * Safe and secure storage with offline, online and near-line retrieval options

FOUNDER and Director of Alternative Content Distribution Network (ACDN) Raymond Neoh is on a mission to unlock "prisons" – content "prisons", that is.

He noted that any filmed content – movies and videos, for example – that was created before the digital wave is now locked in "prisons", unable to be viewed and accessed by most audiences, and unable to be distributed by its owners. Such content can only be viewed by using machines that are expensive and not easily available.

"The content is stuck. You need to take it out of its prison," Mr Neoh said. He explained that the only way to do this is through digitisation. "When you digitise content, it becomes available for other platforms such as television, mobile and the internet."

Armed with this vision, Mr Neoh founded ACDN in 2007, with support from the Media Development Authority of Singapore (MDA). Setting itself apart from other media conversion and digitisation firms from around the world, ACDN uses proprietary technology to record and store digital signals.

After content has been digitised, ACDN stores it on a secure network while its web portal makes the stored content available to its clients at any time and ready to be distributed anywhere around the world.

At its laboratory at the Nanyang Technological University, ACDN also undertakes research on compression technology as well as encryption technology to prevent piracy.

In barely three years, the company has made significant strides. Although it started out with just

two employees, ACDN now employs 12 people. Last year, it won a major contract to convert more than 8,000 hours of content in MDA's library into digital format. By April this year, it had already completed more than 1,000 hours and the content is now available on ACDN's portal for distribution and commercialisation.

This homegrown company has also been attracting the attention of clients globally. It is now in talks with Dutch partners to set up a European office within the next 12 months.

ACDN has also made inroads into China. It signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Shaanxi Broadcast Media Ltd in November last year to digitise its content, which Singapore audiences will be able to access for viewing. It has also teamed up with China-based mobile distribution company Temobi, which aims to introduce its services to Singapore.

In April this year, the company announced a new initiative – a mobile digitisation lab. Aimed at clients that do not want to part with their tapes for security reasons, the lab, which is housed in a 40-foot container, will take ACDN's services directly to their doorsteps around the world.

Despite the challenges of being practically the first in the world to offer such a comprehensive range of services – from R&D and digitisation services to storage and distribution – Mr Neoh feels positive.

He said: "There are literally hundreds of millions of tapes out there to be digitised. The work never ends."