

CATEGORY

Media

CLIENT

HOOQ Digital Pte Ltd

DESIGN CONSULTANCY

Elmwood

DATE

June 2016

For publication

HOOQTM

ENTERTAINMENT UNLIMITED



elmwood

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After the mobile internet revolution, Singtel needed to embrace data, future proof its business, and stake a claim in the burgeoning 'on-demand' content market. So, in partnership with Sony Pictures Television and Warner Bros. Entertainment, the communications company established a joint venture start-up, to offer a regional over-the-top (OTT) video service.

Given the number of global players offering streaming services, the joint venture needed a strong brand, in order to establish its platform ahead of competitors entering the market. To do this, its 'on-demand' service would need to appeal across 6 countries, to 1.7 billion people, speaking 8 major languages.

With a business strategy that relied heavily on the design strategy, our job was to help create a brand for this service that has wide appeal, and that leveraged their ability to offer local and regional content.

We created a bold, vibrant name and identity that incorporated an infinity sign to represent what the brand was about – great, unlimited content. Our launch platform and strategic toolkit, which contained a moving ident, helped position the platform as progressive, and made the joint venture a credible player in the digital market.

What happened? Despite a multitude of competitors, HOOQ got people hooked. It's Asia's largest video streaming service, and the number one paid 'over-the-top' (OTT) video service in the Philippines. At only a year old, it was named the Best Mobile App in the Media, Film, TV or Video category at the GSMA's GLOMO Awards, 2016. It has more than achieved its target conversion rate, and continues to thrive – it's already ahead of its targets for this financial year.

THE BIGGEST CONTENT-ON-DEMAND SERVICE IN ASIA

FROM LAUNCH TO THE
Nº1 POSITION
IN FIRST YEAR
FOR PAID V.O.D.
SERVICE IN ASIA

TARGET NO. OF USERS
REACHED AHEAD OF 12
MONTHS SCHEDULE

TARGET MONTHLY
CONVERSION RATE
EXCEEDED BY 25%





PROJECT OVERVIEW

OUTLINE OF BRIEF

Singtel has the ambition to transform itself into a communications company operating in a data-centric digital world. Under increased pressure from the mobile internet revolution threatening its traditional revenue streams from voice and SMS, it needed to put data at the centre of its business and stake its claim on the burgeoning 'on-demand' content market. So, it joined up with Sony Pictures Television and Warner Bros. Entertainment, to launch a joint venture start-up, to offer a regional over-the-top (OTT) video service.

The advent of global players delivering disruptive streaming services also, meant that the joint venture had to develop the strongest platform before the new entrants appeared, quickly taking market share. With its superior distribution network, and unrivalled knowledge of such a diverse region, the group was perfectly placed to capitalise on its existing assets to develop a thriving service and gain competitive advantage.

With a proliferation of cheap DVDs, piracy and illegal downloads, the joint venture needed to create a brand that appealed to a wide audience, which played on its ability to offer locally, and regionally, relevant content. And at the same time, capitalise on the growing demand for this content, seamlessly integrated with the biggest blockbuster television and feature length movies from the US, UK and beyond.

The ultimate goal was to launch a branded content delivery platform across 6 busy and competitive markets: Thailand, Philippines, India and Indonesia in year one, and Malaysia and Singapore in year two.

These markets represent 1.7 billion people speaking 8 major languages. Not to mention 500+dialects and 10+ religious groups, just to make it even more interesting. We needed to quickly define this new offering, create a 'brand for me' that consumers would adopt as their own and develop a brand identity to appeal across all key markets, in order to meet its launch objectives:

1. Sign up to, and adoption of, Singtel's new business and brand by associate partners in key markets
2. Launch a new platform to key identified markets in Asia covering a total audience of 1.7 billion
3. Achieve target monthly conversion rate of paid subscribers in year 1

To set up the brand for success, it was imperative that we developed;

- a clear positioning that would define the meaning of the brand in a single word
- a naming strategy that captured the excitement of that ALSO had universal appeal across quite diverse markets
- brand colours that didn't conflict with any of the cultural signifiers in the region and specifically in the identified markets
- an identity that would not alienate any single consumer group
- a design language that could communicate an evolving list of service offerings from; music, movies to sport

All delivered in a tone of voice that would position it as an upbeat, engaging entertainment brand.



- ✕ 7 countries
- + 1.7 billion people
- ✕ 8 major languages
- + 10+ religious groups

KEY OBJECTIVES:

1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE HOOQ BRAND
2. LAUNCH NEW PLATFORM TO 1.7 BILLION PEOPLE ACROSS ASIA
3. 200,000 MONTHLY CONVERSIONS/SUBSCRIBERS

DESCRIPTION

Headquartered in Singapore, Singtel has more than 130 years of operating experience and played a pivotal role in the country's development as a major communications hub. Leveraging their scale in networks, customer reach and extensive operational experience to lead and shape the communications industry, the group serves over 600 million mobile customers around the world.

Singtel, in partnership with Warner Bros Entertainment and Sony Pictures Television, saw an opportunity to launch HOOQ as the first regional premium paid OTT video service providing both local and international content that customers can stream, download, and enjoy from their phone, laptop, PC, or tablet.

Geographically HOOQ was planned for launch across 6 markets across two years, within key urban areas matching the identified highest demand in the SEA region – India, Thailand, Philippines and Indonesia in year one, and Malaysia and Singapore in year two. A robust distribution strategy was developed tapping into Singtel's

established associates in each market, in order to accelerate user acquisition via bundling and direct OTT billing.

OVERVIEW OF MARKET

Entertainment is a broad category and within that, watching television and film content is now something that 4 out of 10 people nominate as being their 'favourite' thing to do.

Until the launch of HOOQ, broadcast TV (scheduled/recorded) was still overwhelmingly the key channel to access content from the US and further afield: Indonesia 93%, Malaysia 83%, Philippines 84%, Singapore 86%, Thailand 69% and Vietnam 100%. Internet streaming, official OD TV or 'catch up' TV services had significantly lower penetration in the identified markets and there was a proliferation of cheap DVDs, piracy & illegal downloads.

Lately there has been a resurgence of interest in television due to blockbuster programming such as House of Cards, Game of Thrones, Mad Men, Breaking Bad, etc. leading to an increase in desire for video on demand services globally. People adopting new streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime, which enable them to consume content when, and where they like, is changing the consumer landscape rapidly. The Netflix's of the world create their own content – many of them blockbusters like the ones mentioned above, but in the diverse region that this joint venture will operate in, these are solely western characters, in western countries, facing problems from the perspective of a western mindset. It can't begin to represent a cultural mix that HOOQ aimed to reach.

Product launch date: March 2015

Size of design budget and production costs:
£208,409



OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTION

The business strategy relied heavily on the right design strategy, and provided a clear set of objectives that guided our approach. The design task ahead was significantly important, as there was no test market, no regional beta phase to refine and tweak. If the branding didn't engage across the region, it would pose a significant problem.

Through our immersion in the proposals for the new brand, we helped shape its name, its values and mission, as well as the brand essence and personality, which were all incorporated into a strategic toolkit and guidelines document.

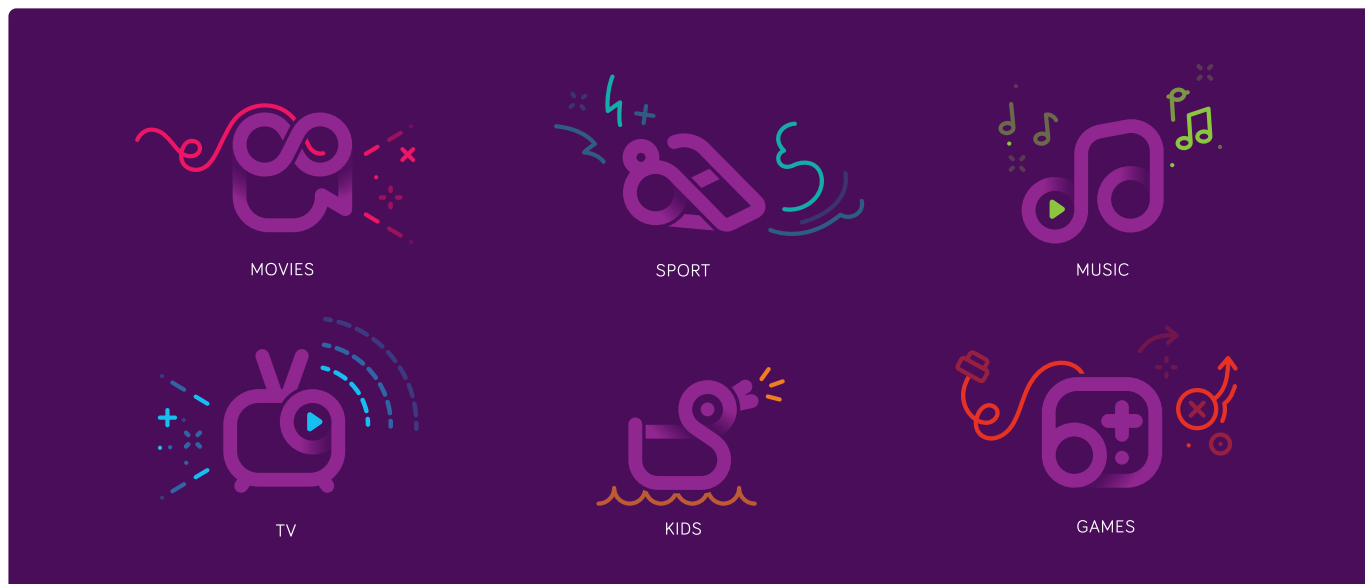
We kicked off with the insight that this new platform would change the way people in Asia view entertainment. Only HOOQ would offer locally specific content, such as Bollywood Movies, Korean Drama, Thai Horror Movies, that would resonate with consumers in Asia in a way that no international player with only Hollywood content could.

BRAND IDENTITY

The name HOOQ was born out of the idea that only HOOQ's competitive advantage of being able to offer locally relevant content would get consumers truly 'hooked on entertainment'.

Adding the 'unlimited' dimension reflects the sheer volume of exciting content, as well as the many ways in which this content can be enjoyed.

This unique strength and key differentiator of HOOQ's 'Entertainment Unlimited' is brought to life in a bold and vibrant identity through the iconic 'Infinity' sign at its heart.



OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTION CONTINUED

BRAND COLOUR

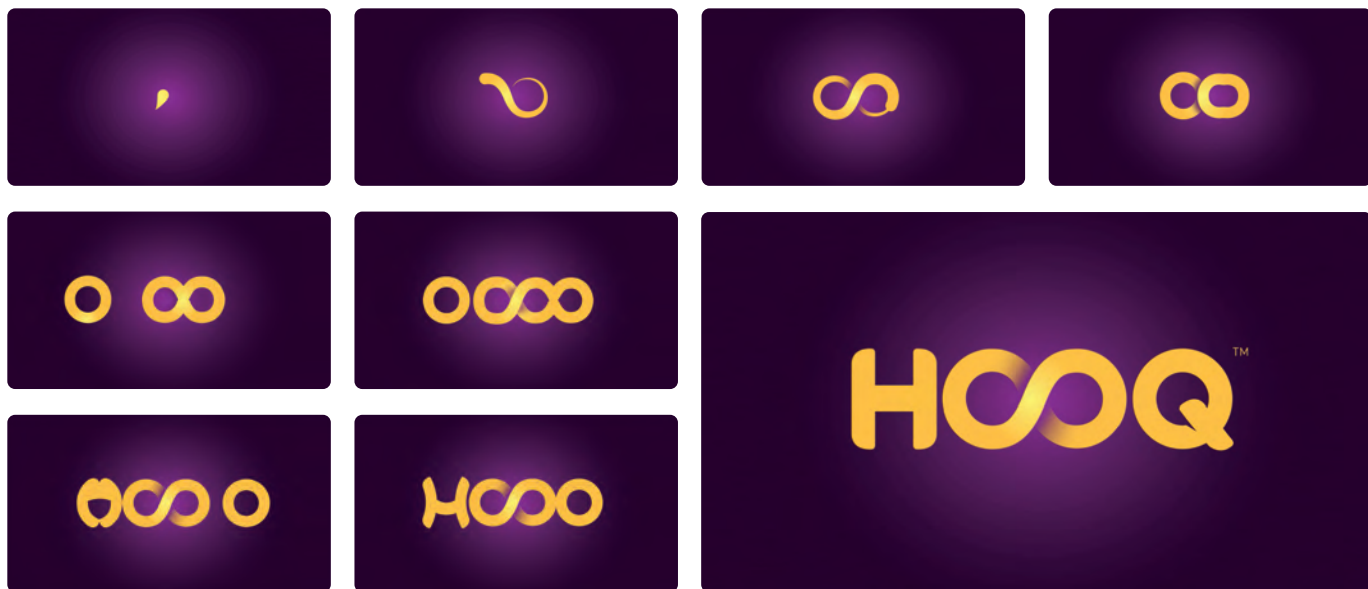
The brand colours 'Celebrate Vivid Entertainment' and resonate culturally while not alienating any specific region. They are celebratory colours that appear in festivals and holidays and reflect the vibrancy and optimism of the region. Additionally, each platform was given a distinctive colour to help navigate media and content. Most importantly, the colours deliver an optimistic and vivid tone of voice for the launch of a truly engaging entertainment brand.

BRAND ICONOGRAPHY

To deliver the best combination of international and local content, as well as access to TV and Movies, live events, music and kids content and gaming, a progressive roll-out strategy was developed. Core content at launch would focus on Hollywood TV and movies combined with local TV series and movies, later moving on to music, sports and kids channel content. We developed core icons and a colour palette for each 'channel' within the HOOQ design language.

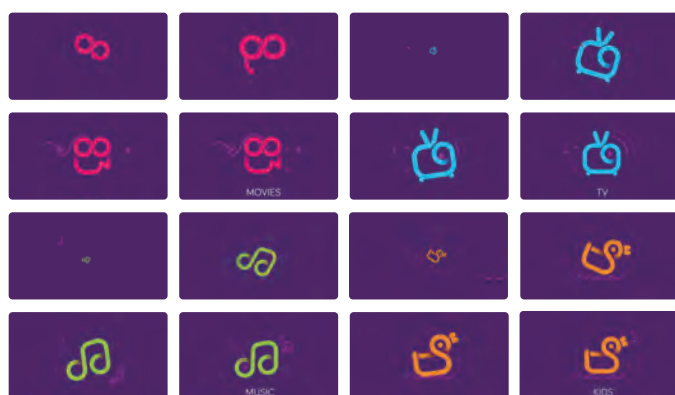
Developing simple and clearly understandable icons was also key to communicating in a region with such diverse languages. We expanded the design language to create instantly recognisable icons for each of the category platforms. Building on the HOOQ infinity loop, each of these platform illustrations incorporates the loop, resulting in a truly ownable equity, full of personality. The secondary illustrations further expand on this design language, adding a creative and inspiring dimension to the brand.





MOVING IDENT

Our moving ident and sonic branding brings the identity to life in a friendly and approachable way, and helps to create a media experience and emotional engagement. Each of the platform icons is also animated to further create excitement and interest.



SUMMARY OF RESULTS

In its first year since launch, HOOQ has become Asia's largest premium video streaming service, and is the number one paid 'over-the-top' video service in the Philippines. And this is in despite of a multitude of local players entering in the last year. Netflix launched in 18 markets, iflix in Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia and Voot, Hungama and Hotstar to name a few in India.

In addition, HOOQ was also recently named Best Mobile App in the Media, Film, TV or Video category at the GSMA's Global Mobile (GLOMO) Awards 2016 in Barcelona. A fantastic result for a brand in its first year.

Looking at how HOOQ has hit each of its key objectives:

Objective 1

Sign up to, and adoption of, Singtel's new business and brand by associate partners in key markets

- HOOQ business and brand has been well-received across the Singtel associate partners
- All markets launched in its first year (excluding Singapore and Malaysia) have used the HOOQ name, brand and brand language

Objective 2

Launch a new platform to key identified markets in Asia covering a total audience of 1.7 billion

- HOOQ has been successfully launched in its first 4 key markets, and has additional markets (Singapore and Malaysia) planned for 2017

Objective 3

Achieve target monthly conversion rate of paid subscribers in year 1

- Over achieved monthly conversion rate by 25%, making HOOQ the number 1 paid OTT service in Asia.
- Month-on-month growth in the past 3 months have surpassed target by double-digit percentage

What's more, for the 2016/2017 financial year, HOOQ is already ahead of targets.

AWARDS

GLOMO AWARDS 2016

Best Mobile App
Media, Film, TV or Video

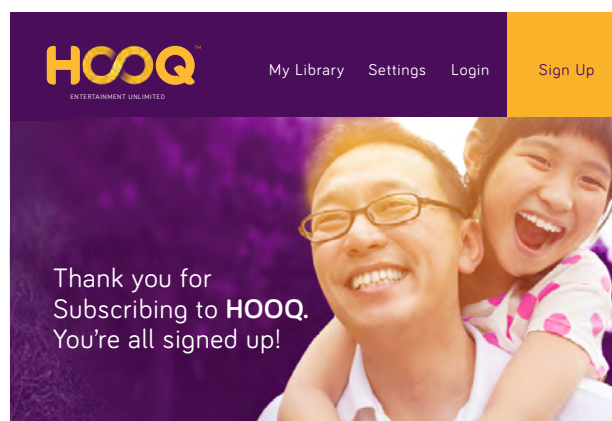
GLOMO
AWARDS
THE GLOBAL MOBILE AWARDS



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And a word from our client

"We originally chose Elmwood for their strategic approach to the brief and their creative work. Elmwood one team approach helped us to shape the business strategy along the course of the project. Their 'big idea' thinking, combined with regional sensitivity, delivered a brand which has been successfully deployed across different and varied markets, resonating with associate partners, carriers and customers alike."

Allison Chew, Head of Brand and Communications,
HOOQ



OTHER INFLUENCING FACTORS

FIRST IN, BEST DRESSED

As a start up by Singtel, Warner Bros Entertainment and Sony Pictures Television, HOOQ was the first regional premium OTT video service that provides both local and international content in the region. Of course, people would want to access it. But a large proportion of the population would not have been early adopters, and it would be extremely difficult to break into markets where the majority of people still accessed content through traditional broadcast TV. 93% in Indonesia, 86% in Singapore, etc.

THE WIDE CONTENT RANGE

Yes, the unique combination of content would be the main attraction to signing up, but this would be the case for any service of this kind. In order to hook people in, Singtel needed a strong brand that lived up to its promises to deliver and encourage growth in the market.

ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS

Yes Singtel supported the launch with advertising, as you would expect for a international telecoms business of this size launching any new brand. But certainly in Philippines, iflix had circa 5x more spend to promote its product.

RESEARCH RESOURCES

All information provided by HOOQ Digital Pte Ltd.