

Malaysia

Animating an International Brand

Developing a country's most popular animated characters is no easy feat, but Les' Copaque Production Sdn. Bhd. has done just that. Taking an approach to develop characters and stories that incorporate local culture but have broad international appeal, the independent studio has become the only one that has spun-off its IP assets into a total value chain of multiple businesses. Leveraging a brand with international charm and a solid IP protection strategy, the studio is now successfully competing on a global scale.

Background

When it comes to animation, what characters first come to your mind? Is it the classic Walt Disney Studio characters such as the Little Mermaid, Mickey Mouse, and the Lion King? Or is it Shrek from DreamWorks or Buzz

LES' COPAQUETM
P R O D U C T I O N S D N . B H D
(718084-T)

The studio's logo, registered as a trademark in Malaysia (Photo: Les' Copaque)

Lightyear from the Toy Story series? Perhaps Studio Ghibli's Princess Mononoke from Japan, CCTV's Tortoise Hanba from the People's Republic of China (China), or Kai the falcon from Zambezia of the Republic of South Africa (South Africa) come to your mind first. Although globalization has brought international animated films to audiences all over the world, chances are your association with this art form depends on where you grew up and where you have lived.

In Malaysia, the most popular animated characters in recent memory have emerged not from a big Hollywood studio, but a small, homegrown, and independent animation studio. Formed in December 2005, Les' Copaque Production Sdn. Bhd. (Les' Copaque) has spearheaded the growth of Malaysia's animation industry by producing original, high quality animation with popular characters that incorporates Malaysian culture but also has international appeal. With a solid branding strategy at its base, Les' Copaque serves as a platform for Malaysian animators to showcase their talents – and develop new intellectual property (IP) – in the form of animated media.

Creating a Malaysian Icon

At first glance, the studio's name – Les' Copaque – does not seem very Malaysian. Indeed, this is the French transliteration of the Malay phrase “Last Kopek.” Roughly translated, this phrase means the last card that one can take when playing a card game, thus placing all of your hopes and dreams on that final card. The name suits the studio's goals well, as it infuses a unique Malaysian phrase with an international

flair and solidifies Les' Copaque as a place where young Malaysian animators can bring their dreams and imagination to life.



The award-winning Upin & Ipin series is produced at Les' Copaque's studio in Shah Alam, Malaysia (Photo: Les' Copaque)

Creating award-winning animation might not have been what the husband and wife team of Haji Burhanuddin Md Radzi (Managing Director) and Hajah Aion Ariff (Creative Content Director) had in mind for their retirement. A petroleum engineer by training and oil-man by trade, the entrepreneurial Mr. Burhanuddin and Ms. Ariff entered into the animation industry by chance. "I wanted to do something different. My wife suggested that we make better films and believe it or not, [it was] just for fun," explained

the film producer.

The result was the development of an idea to create simple, lighthearted stories based on something uniquely Malaysian, but also one that anyone could relate to, no matter their age or background. This was realized through the creation of Malaysia's most popular homegrown animated characters – *Upin & Ipin* – and a full-length feature animated film, *Geng: the Adventure Begins (Geng)*. The popularity of these creations quickly put Les' Copaque on the map and spurred of growth in the Malaysian animation industry.

Developing an animated film with a creative environment populated with inspiring characters is no easy task. In the animated film industry, this represents a studio's IP (protected through copyrights, trademarks, and industrial designs), which is crucial to maintaining a successful business. Before Les' Copaque was first formed, Mr. Burhanuddin and Ms. Ariff were toying with the idea of making their first movie. By chance the couple was introduced to a group of film and animation graduates who aspired to make an animated feature film in the manner of those from the Walt Disney Company (Disney), but had difficulties finding an investor.

Mr. Burhanuddin was attracted to the graduates' idea, as the development process of an animated film was different from that of a typical live-action film. Furthermore, the entrepreneur found Disney's successful spinning-off of one IP (such as a character) into a large and prosperous business to be an attractive strategy. Mr. Burhanuddin therefore agreed to finance the graduates' project, provided they follow his business model and that his talented wife would handle creative control.

Making this decision was a bold move, as at the time the Malaysian animation industry was very small. In the year that Les' Copaque launched, not a single feature-length animation film by a domestic studio was released in Malaysia. Locally produced animation could not compete with larger studios, and creating a full-length animated feature film would be a significant investment in time and resources. Being an engineer, Mr. Burhanuddin studied in detail the process of animation production and concluded that the studio should be modeled after a factory. This requires a

structured pipeline for production and a unique training module for new staff. Doing so would make the studio viable and not too dependent on a few creative personnel, whose departure could cause difficulties for the studio. Before a movie could actually be made, Mr. Burhanuddin and Ms. Ariff spent 8 months carrying out R&D in order to develop the desired production process and training module.



The studio created Upin & Ipin, Malaysia's most popular homegrown animated characters (Photo: Les' Copaque)

Seeking advice from industry experts, Mr. Burhanuddin was told that a successful homegrown Malaysian animated film would only be possible if it was based on a setting, characters, and story that had global appeal. To find out the best approach, the new film studio owner attended industry trade shows and film festivals throughout the world. “We visited Cannes to get some ideas,” the producer said, “and many persuaded us to produce high quality animation for the world. But we had other ideas because the global market is not easy to enter. [The United States of] America is a closed market and Europe is difficult to enter.” Everywhere Mr. Burhanuddin went, he saw that most studios desired to copy popular European and American animation formulas when it came to setting, characters, and stories.

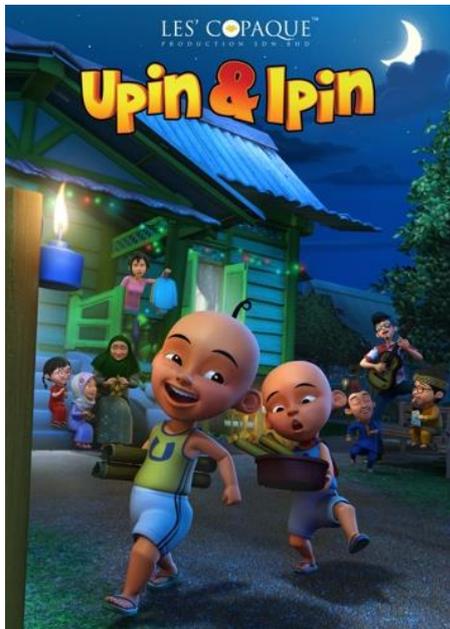
Being a new, independent studio with no proven IP (such as characters, names, stories, and settings, all of which are protected by the IP system), Mr. Burhanuddin concluded that Les' Copaque could not be successful if it took a similar approach to the studios he saw in Cannes. “Our capabilities can be proven only if our product is accepted by Malaysians,” he said. “That means it must have local characteristics that audiences can relate to in a more meaningful way.” Mr. Burhanuddin recognized that in order to market a production internationally, a question must first always be asked: “What is the production's rating in its home country?”. The producer concluded that for Les' Copaque to also be a success internationally, the correct formula was not to copy others but to create something uniquely Malaysian and focus first on making it a domestic hit.

Taking a Traditional Approach

Returning to his studio, Mr. Burhanuddin and his team continued their research. “We found that Asia was hungry for animation that is tailored to our culture and that would benefit the children,” explained the producer. Employees at the new studio agreed that their best chance of success would be to develop an animated film with an adventurous story that highlights Malaysian traditional cultural expressions and folklore.

To do so, the studio decided upon a traditional Malaysian *kampung* (village) setting for their stories. Themes would include traditionally important cultural expressions and folklore that most Malaysians can relate to, such as fasting during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan or taking part in *kampung* festivals, which showcase cultural aspects of local villages such as traditional performances, food, and crafts.

Les' Copaque's first project would turn out to be *Geng*, which took three years and RM 4 million (approximately US\$ 1.3 million) of investment from Mr. Burhanuddin, and another RM 1 million (approximately US\$300,000) through a grant from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation of Malaysia, to complete before it was released in early 2009. Before the film's release, Les' Copaque started work on the creation of a short related series with two characters from the main film: *Upin & Ipin*.



Upin & Ipin stories take place in a traditional village setting (Photo: Les' Copaque)

The creation of the *Upin & Ipin* series served a number of important purposes. First, it would gauge the reaction of the Malaysian audience to a computer-generated animation series by a domestic firm. Second, it would be a test to see the acceptance a domestic and international audience would have to a story that is uniquely Malaysian. Third, it would give animators at Les' Copaque an opportunity to hone their skills at creating Malaysia's first homegrown computer animated feature film. Lastly, *Upin & Ipin* were chosen due to technical reasons. Because they are twins with nearly identical features, they are easy to model and animate. Besides the small strand on top of *Upin's* head, they have no hair, further easing the technical animation challenges (realistic hair is a taxing animation process).

Creating something that would appeal to most Malaysians, Les' Copaque combined the *kampung* setting with the traditional Muslim holiday of Ramadan and developed a story about fasting during the holy month. As the series is meant to appeal to children, *Upin & Ipin* are five-year-old twins living in a *kampung*. After losing their parents in infancy, the twins live with their elder sister Ros and maternal grandmother Uda in a wooden house. The stories revolve around *Upin & Ipin's* adventures in the village of Durian Runtuh and often include humorous elements.

Working out of a room the size of a closet and with a minimal budget, Les' Copaque had to take some cost-cutting measures. One was the loss of the twins' parents, since having fewer characters to animate meant that the studio could keep costs down, allowing them to complete their work and tell the stories they envisioned.

The first season, released in conjunction with Ramadan, told the story of the twins during their first fasting months and the challenges and adventures they faced during their move to their ancestral village. The studio felt that this was the best way to catch the Malaysian market, as the majority of the population is of the Islamic faith and children can relate to what *Upin & Ipin* go through during their first Ramadan experience. "Once we put the *kampung* environment [in]," explained Mr. Burhanuddin, "the children love it, because they think they are actually friend[s] of *Upin & Ipin*."

Children and adults alike who were used to typical Western animation (such as Disney characters) found *Upin & Ipin* to be very refreshing and accessible. Not only

was it in Malay (the official language of Malaysia), but it also encompassed a familiar environment. The timing, setting, and story of the first *Upin & Ipin* episodes proved to be a resounding success. Each of the seven initial *Upin & Ipin* episodes were only five minutes long, but the company's strategy paid off. The characters became a huge hit, quickly becoming the most popular animated series in Malaysia.

Broadening Appeal

Mr. Burhanuddin knew early on that if his studio were to be successful it would have to create brands that attract a global audience. *Upin & Ipin* quickly spread to countries that also have a sizeable Muslim population such as the Republic of Indonesia (Indonesia), Brunei Darussalam, and the Republic of Singapore . However, Mr. Burhanuddin knew that the *Upin & Ipin* stories that made it so popular in these countries would not guarantee the series the same level of success in other international markets. "Everyone says to break in to the global market your product must look global," he said, "but nobody answers what is global." *Upin & Ipin* continued for a second season in 2008 and its 12 episodes were again aired in conjunction with Ramadan.

The following year, with the *Geng* film and second season of *Upin & Ipin* complete and a staff of 40 skilled employees, the studio needed a new project if it were to survive. The entrepreneur then decided that the studio would develop *Upin & Ipin* into a full television series, rather than starting all over again with new project.

This decision brought a change to *Upin & Ipin* – stories were developed with a more universal appeal and specifically targeted both Malaysian and international audiences. "We decided to make the story more universal, [while] maintaining the basic value [of the stories]," said Mr. Burhanuddin. Les' Copaque portrays *Upin & Ipin* as content that promotes values common to cultures throughout the world. Furthermore, the film studio ensured that dialogue was simple and easy to understand, and focused on *Upin & Ipin* getting into a precarious yet lighthearted adventure and then getting out of it through the advice and wisdom of the elders in their community. This is a situation that many children all over the world can relate to.

Common themes of *Upin & Ipin* episodes include cross-cultural values such as responsibility, honesty, and loyalty, and through animation Les' Copaque aims to convey to children the important role they play in their family, community, and society. "The *Upin & Ipin* series that we've produced," explained Mr. Karyabudi Mohd Aris, Head of International Marketing, "promotes child participation



Common themes and diverse characters helped broaden the appeal of *Upin & Ipin* (Photo: Les' Copaque)

and social values of mutual respect, a sense of family and community, as well as the strong bond of friendship." Stories also center on topics that are accessible to

children and adults all over the world. For example, an episode released during the 2008 FIFA Club World Cup, an international football tournament, explored *Upin & Ipin*'s dreams to become football players, which many people can relate to no matter their age, nationality, or ethnic background.

Even the most appealing stories and characters would not guarantee success in international markets unless the local audience can understand the language in which they are told. Because children make up the primary audience for *Upin & Ipin*, subtitling is not always desirable since much of the audience would be too young to read. Broadcasting *Upin & Ipin* in local languages solved this problem. Released in 2009, season 3 included 42, seven-minute episodes and was aired on Disney Channel Asia with dubbing in English and Mandarin. This first effort at global inclusiveness brought in millions of new viewers in the form of Disney Channel Asia subscribers from countries within the Southeast Asian region, and this paved the way for Les' Copaque's international presence.

The characters populating the *Upin & Ipin* universe have also helped to broaden the animation's appeal. Mirroring Malaysia's diverse population, recurring characters include Ehsan, Mei Mei, Jarjit Singh, and Susanti, representing various ethnicities in the country such as Malay, Chinese, Indian, and Indonesian, respectively. Emphasizing the importance of this diversity, Mr. Burhanuddin said "We needed to evolve. The themes became more universal with multi-ethnic characters; the series now has a broader appeal." With new stories, characters, and release in local languages, *Upin & Ipin*'s popularity soared and consumers, international organizations, and the film industry took notice.

While the evolution of the stories and characters in the *Upin & Ipin* series have contributed to the series' international success, the creators have not changed the village setting. For many of the series' viewers (particularly those from Southeast Asian countries), the village environment and surroundings are more similar to their own than those in series from other countries. This has resonated strongly with young children, especially those within the 10-country Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region, which includes Malaysia. It is therefore very easy for many children in this region to see themselves or their friends going through the same adventures as *Upin & Ipin*.

These strategies proved successful, and Les' Copaque soon found that its fans, domestic and international, were clamoring for new *Upin & Ipin* episodes and had high hopes for the studio's other work, such as the *Geng* film. Through an inclusive approach, the evolution of *Upin & Ipin* and other Les' Copaque IP has given the studio a strong brand that has reverberated with viewers throughout the world.

IP in Action

In a few short years, *Upin & Ipin* became an international success. While the accessible stories and world of the twins is what makes them so popular, it is Les' Copaque's IP strategy that has set



The Upin & Ipin name and logo are protected by the IP system
(Photo: Les' Copaque)

the characters apart and driven their popularity across the world.

Firm Ground for a Brand with International Charm

Integral to Les' Copaque's success is the protection of its character names, story titles, and logos – their IP portfolio. The studio protects these through trademark registrations. In Malaysia, Les' Copaque has 11 trademark registrations in various classes, which include [Upin & Ipin](#) (#08005969; registered in November 2009), the logo for the [Upin & Ipin Carnival](#) (#2011005809; registered in March 2012), [Geng](#), (#07010971; registered in May 2012), the logo of the studio's merchandising store, [World of Geng](#) (#08015365; registered in February 2012), and the [studio name](#) (#2010012167; registered in December 2011) itself.

Les' Copaque also places a great deal of importance on its company logo, which is a small frog that is perched on top of a coconut shell. The logo comes from a Malay proverb – *Bagai katak di bawah tempurung* – and translates as *a frog under a coconut shell*. The proverb is meant to motivate people who remain stagnant and do not take the initiative to venture out into the world; just like the frog staying under the coconut shell. Les' Copaque's logo, however, has the frog and on top of the coconut shell, which, according to the studio, symbolizes their "...eagerness to dream big and our abilities to think outside of the box."

Beyond Les' Copaque's brands and trademarks, copyright law (both in Malaysia and other international markets) protects its characters and stories. This is very important for an animation studio such as Les' Copaque, where its main products are its animated films and series. The company also maintains a healthy presence on the Internet by working through two main channels: purchasing domain names and social media. Les' Copaque owns a number of domain names, including its corporate website ([lescopaque.com](#)), domain names for its popular products ([upindanipin.com.my](#) and [padazamandahulu.com](#)), and its restaurant chain ([kedaimakanupinipin.com](#)). The studio also has an online store at its *Upin & Ipin* domain name where official merchandising can be purchased.

Social media was one of the first ways in which Les' Copaque spread the word of Upin & Ipin, and the studio continues to maintain a strong presence on this medium. The company maintains an official [You Tube channel](#), a Facebook page for its [company](#) and [Upin & Ipin](#) (which has earned over eight million "likes"), and a presence on the micro-blogging social media website [Twitter](#). Combined, this strong social media presence has continued to give more exposure to Les' Copaque, its brands, and goals.

Putting it Together

Being a small studio and working in the field of animated film production, commercialization of Les' Copaque's IP did not occur right away. Work on *Geng* started in early 2006, and it wasn't until February 2009 – around three years later – that the film was released. In the lead up to *Geng*, the studio decided to develop and release short animated episodes featuring *Upin & Ipin* to test the market. The five-year old twins were not the stars of the *Geng* film in development and the studio did not intend for them to be its most popular characters.

Les' Copaque employed many modern commercialization strategies that led to the success of *Upin & Ipin* both at home and abroad. For example, the studio uploaded episodes to the popular video sharing website YouTube, receiving millions of hits each. The media picked up the series and its popularity quickly spread. Seeing the overwhelmingly positive response, Les' Copaque was confident that *Upin & Ipin* could be marketed successfully.

With the popularity of *Upin & Ipin* rapidly spreading on the Internet, Les' Copaque created a series of six five-minute *Upin & Ipin* episodes for airing in 2007 on TV9, a popular Malaysian television station, during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. The series became an instant hit. "A lot of people commented about it online," said Mr. Burhanuddin. "That boosted our confidence and we recruited more production staff." Les' Copaque soon found itself producing more *Upin & Ipin* episodes along with *Geng*, its original film goal.

The enthusiastic reception of *Upin & Ipin* made the decision to continue to develop and release *Geng: the Adventure Begins* that much easier. Featuring the already well-known *Upin & Ipin* twins as side characters, the film generated a lot of buzz prior to its release in early 2009. By the end of 2008, the studio had produced twelve more *Upin & Ipin* episodes for TV9 and was riding the success of the *Geng* film. Les' Copaque continued to develop more *Upin & Ipin* stories for the domestic and international market, selling episodes to television stations and entering into partnerships and licensing agreements.

When the studio develops *Upin & Ipin* episodes, it pitches them directly to television stations in Malaysia and in other countries. In some markets, Les' Copaque partners with local television stations or enters into licensing agreements. For example, in Indonesia Les' Copaque has an advertising revenue sharing agreement with national television stations for commercialization of the *Upin & Ipin* series.



The studio has also developed new series, such as *Pada Zaman Dahulu* (Photo: Les' Copaque)

In 2011, the studio released a new animated television series – *Pada Zaman Dahulu* – a collection of famous local animal folklore being told in Les' Copaque style but deviating from the animation and composition style of *Upin and Ipin*. The new series focuses on the lives of two siblings, children Aris and Ara, who travel to live with their grandparent's in their village when their parents have to leave the country. As of 2013, Les' Copaque was developing another series, *Puteri*, to be aired in 2014 and an *Upin & Ipin* film, *Upin & Ipin the Movie*, to be released in 2016.

The success of Les' Copaque's IP and its leveraging of its brand recognition has led to the company getting involved in a variety of other businesses through launching various subsidiaries. The studio embarked on its own merchandising business through their wholly owned subsidiary, LC Merchandising SB, in 2009. In 2012, Les' Copaque launched *Kedai Makan Upin & Ipin*, a theme-driven fast food restaurant chain that features *Upin & Ipin*'s

favorite dishes from the series, including fried chicken and traditional Malay cuisine like *Nasi Lemak*, *Laksa*, and *Curry Mee*. In less than two years, the restaurant chain had 15 locations and enjoyed significant success.

The studio is also trying to develop a theme park, which it proposed in 2012 to Malaysia Airport Berhad. Similar to popular theme parks such as Disneyland Upin & Ipin will be the central attraction. A land parcel of 80 hectares has been allocated within the vicinity of Kuala Lumpur International Airport for this purpose. With feature length films, animated television series, a popular online presence on social websites, a unique restaurant chain, and promising future projects, Les' Copaque's characters are never far from public view.

Finding the Right Partners

As *Upin & Ipin*'s popularity spread, the branding power of Les' Copaque attracted a number of partnerships. These became integral to the studio's overall business strategy because revenue from television stations alone was not sufficient enough to keep the studio afloat. One of the most common forms of partnerships Les' Copaque enters into is sponsorship. In 2009, the studio secured its first sponsorship deal with Telekom Malaysia Berhad, one of the country's largest communication companies, to sponsor the production of Season 3 of the *Upin & Ipin* series. "Telekom Malaysia was our first sponsor back in 2009," said Mr. Burhanuddin.

Les' Copaque was able to bring in additional revenue through the continuation of such sponsorship programs. Typically, sponsors pay a substantial fee to place their products in three *Upin & Ipin* episodes. According to Mr. Burhanuddin, the products are not mentioned directly by the characters, but the story is cleverly crafted to include promotion of the product(s). In addition, sponsors have the right to sell their products at the annual *Upin & Ipin Carnival* – which attracts over 100,000 attendees per year – and can use the *Upin & Ipin* characters at their own promotional events. In 2012, the studio also produced an *Upin & Ipin* musical that packed audiences into theatres for three weeks. KPJ Healthcare Berhad, one of Malaysia's largest private healthcare providers, sponsored the event, and a DVD of the musical shipped over 200,000 units in a few months.

Besides these sponsorships, Les' Copaque leverages the popularity of *Upin & Ipin* to develop many other successful partnerships. One important part of the studio's operations is its merchandising arm, which it started at the end of 2007 through selling *Geng* movie t-shirts. As the popularity of the film and *Upin & Ipin* increased, so did the demand for related merchandise. The studio's subsidiary, LC Merchandising, handles the entire merchandising business chain from product development, sourcing, and packaging, to distribution and selecting outlets through smart partnerships.

With over 300 products, the studio entered into a partnership with Carrefour, the French multinational



The studio's products have met with much success domestically and internationally (Photo: Les' Copaque)

retail giant, to sell its merchandise in Carrefour's retail location in exchange for the use of the *Upin & Ipin* characters in the retailer's promotional campaigns. Les' Copaque merchandise is also sold in Petronas fuel station convenience stores, Esso fuel stations, and international restaurant chains (such as fried chicken outlets operated by KFC Corporation, a fast food chain from the United States of America) through similar partnerships.

Licensing its characters has been another successful way for Les' Copaque to bring in more brand awareness. In November 2011, the studio entered into a licensing scheme with the organizers of the 2011 Monsoon Cup, one of the most popular and intense yacht races in the world that is held in the northeast state of Terengganu. Through this agreement, the 2011 *Upin & Ipin Carnival* was held in the Monsoon Cup Race Village, and live appearances of the characters brought joy and laughter to fans of all ages. The partnership served as a way to connect fans in the region with Les' Copaque's characters and promote Malaysia's most popular animated series at one of the world's premiere yacht races.

In August 2012, the studio partnered with Hong Leong Islamic Bank (HLISB) in Malaysia to release an *Upin & Ipin* themed reloadable debit card. Aimed at helping parents teach children the importance of money management and saving, the initiative proved to be an extremely popular marketing campaign. In the months following the launch of the new debit card, approximately 95% of HLISB's new deposits were related to this initiative. Not only did it bring in more customers for HLISB and increase the visibility of the *Upin & Ipin* characters, it also proved to be a useful educational tool for young children.

In just a few years, partnerships such as these have helped propel *Upin & Ipin* and Les' Copaque to the international stage. The studio has drawn on this success to also enter into important initiatives with international organizations. For example, in March 2013 the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) chose *Upin & Ipin* to be the Malaysian National Ambassadors for children. UNICEF National Ambassadors are chosen because of their popularity and demonstrated commitment to championing the rights and well being of children, and the five-year-old twins have done just that.

Working together, UNICEF and Les' Copaque have raised awareness on children's issues such as disabilities, bullying, safety on the Internet, and violence against girls. Indeed, their first initiative was a public service announcement on violence against girls, calling on boys to respect, love, and care for the girls and women in their lives. Explaining the importance of this initiative, Ms. Wivina Belmont, UNICEF Representative to Malaysia, said that "...*Upin & Ipin* are sending an important message, in their own special way [...] that real boys don't bully, hit, or hurt girls. It's not cool, it's not funny, and it's not right."

Going Forward

Thanks to its modern commercialization strategy, popular brand image, and cross-culturally engaging stories, Les' Copaque has become the most popular Malaysian animation studio. During its first seven weeks screening in local cinemas throughout Malaysia in early 2009, the *Geng* film took in a profit of over 6 million Malaysian

Ringgit (RM; over US\$2 million) and beat out popular international films such as *Slumdog Millionaire*, *Valkarie*, and *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*.

With domestic and international success secured, Les' Copaque's subsidiaries have also enjoyed popularity and growth. The merchandise business and *Kedai Makan Upin & Ipin* restaurant have augmented the studio's sales to ensure its profitability. "We are the only local animation studio that has proven it can spin off into other business," says Mr. Burhanuddin. "And we manage the business ourselves. We're sort of like a mini Disney."



The studio has been recognized for its achievements on numerous occasions, such as at the Kuala Lumpur International Film Festival (2007) where it won the Best Animation award (Photo: Les' Copaque)

Beyond financial success, Les' Copaque and its creations have won a multitude of awards. The studio received an award for Best Start-up Company at the Asia Pacific ICT Awards (2007), the Century International Quality ERA Award, Geneva (2013), the BrandLaureate Award (2010), the SMI Innovation Excellence Award (2011), and the President's Award at the Business Excellence Awards run by the Malaysia Canada Business Council (2008). *Upin & Ipin* alone have won many awards, including: Best Director (Animation), Best Animated Film (Animation), and Best Short Film at Anugerah Filem Pendek (2006); and Best Film (Animation) at the 2007 Kuala Lumpur International Film Festival. The *Geng* film won the Malaysian Film Board's Box office Film of the Year (2009), Viewer Choice Award at the Malaysian Kids Film Festival (2009), Best Editing and Best Music/Score award at the MSC Malaysia Kre8tif Digital Content Conference (2009), and was entered into the Malaysian Book of Records as the first 3D animated feature film to come from Malaysia.

An Adventure in Animation

Focusing on creating stories with meaning and relevance to its global audience, Les' Copaque went from a small studio working out of a closet into Malaysia's largest homegrown animation studio in a few years. Leveraging its characters, modern commercialization strategies, and award-winning brands, the studio has not only brought smiles to the faces of people through its animation; it has also worked to make a positive influence at home and abroad through its universally appealing yet particularly Malaysian stories. Les' Copaque is the only studio in Malaysia that has successfully spun-off their IP into a total value chain of business propositions, earning the studio admiration and respect from its competition within the region.