

Mentorship for Intangible Asset Transformation (MINT)



School of Concepts: Empowering Global Education through Strategic IP Management with MINT

Introduction

Mint Lim is a social entrepreneur and the CEO of School of Concepts (SOC). Challenged by dyslexia growing up, she discovered a unique technique to learn English by coding words with colours, thus helping her excel in school. Driven by her own experiences and a mission to give every child an equal opportunity, Mint Lim developed the award-winning SOC method through working with underprivileged children and five years of self-funded research and development.

Today, SOC has benefitted over 200,000 children and expanded its suite of services beyond English to include math, financial literacy, STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics), wellness for children, and sustainability. For her work ensuring that no child is left behind, Mint Lim was named the 2023 Robb Report Thought Leader, 2024 GenT Leader of Tomorrow by Tatler Asia, and was the first Singaporean to be awarded the Cartier Women's Award.

Key Innovation

Mint Lim's proprietary SOC method relies on a VAK (Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic)-based approach, which engages different senses to suit each learner's optimal learning style. The company continually refines its VAK-based methodology and expands its curriculum to include different subjects and cater to different age groups.

SOC has also extended its methodology into educational toys, technology, mobile apps, learning management systems, and digital libraries. This venture into the education technology space is exemplified by the proprietary Alphabet Explorer app, enhancing the learning experience through interactive digital content.



IP Journey

IP has always been the foundations of SOC's business. That is why Mint Lim grew her knowledge about IP early on. To protect her proprietary curriculum and teaching method, she relied on trade secrets and copyright. She also registered her trademarks to protect the SOC brand, which is recognized for its profound social impact and pioneering educational solutions. Her IP portfolio helped protect SOC's core assets, laying the foundations for future innovation, expansion and success.

IP Management Challenges

With its IP portfolio secured, SOC joined the MINT programme to learn about how it can use its IP portfolio to expand via franchising and licensing. SOC aspires to become the "Disney of education" by licensing out its animated characters, curriculum, and brand to create more impactful education experiences.

SOC was also looking to expand internationally. But before entering regional markets, SOC first needed to learn how to effectively protect its IP overseas. This included how to effectively register its IP overseas and how to potentially respond to infringement – for example, if another party was pirating SOC's characters or copying its teaching methods.

Coming into MINT, SOC had also recently expanded into the educational technology space through its proprietary Alphabet Explorer app, which employs augmented reality (AR) technology to create interactive and personalised educational content. This was another area where SOC needed to learn how to protect its innovations in the app interface and software code.

Outcomes from MINT

The MINT mentor firstly helped SOC develop a franchising model to expand overseas. Under the mentor's guidance, SOC successfully secured international trademark protection under the Madrid system. This allowed SOC to quickly expand its presence to regional markets such as Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, and Vietnam. The MINT mentor also enhanced SOC's franchising negotiation strategy, which led to a new collaboration with a Japanese company to license and co-develop educational experiences, resulting in additional revenue stream and a platform to build brand recognition in a new market.

To secure SOC's IP in its Alphabet Explorer App, the mentor identified innovative features that were patentable and guided them throughout the patenting process. Overall, the enhanced IP management not only secured SOC's competitive advantage but made its IP more attractive to investors in the pre-Series A fundraising conducted during the MINT programme.



Looking Forward

Having kickstarted its expansion with MINT, SOC plans to further develop and exploit its IA/IP to continue fuelling its growth. This means further expanding its trademark portfolio, pursuing the patent applications initiated during the programme, and filing additional patents for derivative uses of their methodology. With its IP portfolio secured, Mint hopes to franchise and open more physical education centres. Franchising will not only be an important source of new revenue but would also bolster the recognition and valuation of SOC's IA/IP. Mint's impactful brand and valuable IA/IP has already

attracted interest from several family offices and impact investors, which SOC will raise funds from in its upcoming Series A round of investments.

Learning how to better manage our IP with MINT accelerated SOC's international expansion and opened doors with like-minded licensees and franchisees. This made SOC's quality educational programmes more accessible to children all around the world."

Mint Lim, Founder, School of Concepts

This case study was developed through the [IP Management Clinic Programme](#), specifically the Singapore edition known as [Mentorship for Intangible Assets Transformation \(MINT\)](#). MINT is a collaborative initiative between the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore (IPOS), aimed at promoting the strategic management of IP assets among businesses in Singapore.