

Mr Chong Shing-hum, BBS

Honorary Fellow

Citation

Mr Chong Shing-hum started out making woolen sweaters in 1966, but later exported a variety of products around the world, to Europe, the United States, Canada, and to Japan, until 2013.

He established Wah Gar Group in 1986, enlarging the business scope to include garment processing, dyeing, knitting, and more. Also in that year, he set up a joint venture in Huzhou City, Zhejiang Province, handling not just woolen garments, but also dyeing and printing, including on silk, scouring, spinning, and frozen food packaging.

He then set up another joint enterprise, Wah Gar Industrial Company Limited, with Guangdong Heyuan Economic Development Corporation in 1992, and started to develop the Wah Gar Industrial Park with a surface area of two square kilometres operating waterworks and sewage treatment plants.

Meanwhile, Mr Chong also founded a sole proprietorship with three factories: Wah Gar Fashion Factory, Wing Wah Dyeing Factory, and Top Green Foodstuff Factory, which produced frozen food products.

In 1994, he contracted with the American company "TCBY" (The Country's Best Yogurt) to franchise frozen yogurt outlets, successfully obtaining the authority to operate the popular brand in Mainland China and Hong Kong, in terms of store opening and product distribution to the mass market.

In 2003, as part of a manpower redeployment plan, Mr Chong transferred partial garment production procedures to factories in Henan Province. There, half-finished goods were turned into ready-made garments, which were ready for export.

Under Mr Chong's visionary leadership, Wah Gar Group expanded by leaps and bounds. It had more than 6,000 employees across Guangdong, Zhejiang and Henan by 2010. Textiles were mainly exported while frozen products were distributed domestically. Thereafter, Mr Chong decided to get out of the textile business at the end of 2013 and the frozen yogurt business at the end of 2014, due to labour cost increases and industry saturation.

But he was not done yet. He has been in the toy industry since 2014, when he founded Soap Studio Company Limited. He has translated his insight into imagination, creativity, and innovation.

The launch of The Batman - The Dark Knight Radio-Controlled Tumblers in the same year is legendary, as are tumblers, becoming the hot topic amongst the global toy industry. These are finely crafted 1:12 scale Batmobiles with more than 20 interactive smartphone functions, not to mention the amazing restoration of the archetype. The success of the RC Tumblers has turned Soap Studio into a Radio-Controlled vehicle pioneer. Consequently, Soap Studio has made a mark in the entire toy industry with its profound influence.

The Soap Studio also cooperates with many different world-class and best-in-class brands in product development and event planning, such as Disney, Pixar, Warner Bros., Aniplex, 21st Century Fox, Osamu Tezuka, SpongeBob SquarePants, Moomin, and The Smurfs.

Moreover, with Mr Chong's distinctive insight, Soap Studio began to develop its own IP "Unbroken Island" in 2018, rolling it out in early 2022. It was another milestone.

Mr Chong has enthusiastically participated in social welfare in Mainland China and Hong Kong, and dedicated his time and energy to giving back to society. In particular, through the Hong Kong Rope Skipping Federation, China (HKRSF), he has encouraged young people to realise their athletic potential by adequate trainings. By driving the development of the HKRSF, he has taken young talents to international competitions, and raised public awareness of the sport.

Mr Deputy Chairman, for his exceptional contributions to the manufacturing industry and the community, I present Mr Chong Shing-hum for the award of the title of honorary fellow of Lingnan University.

Citation written and delivered by Professor Eric Lam Tak-ming