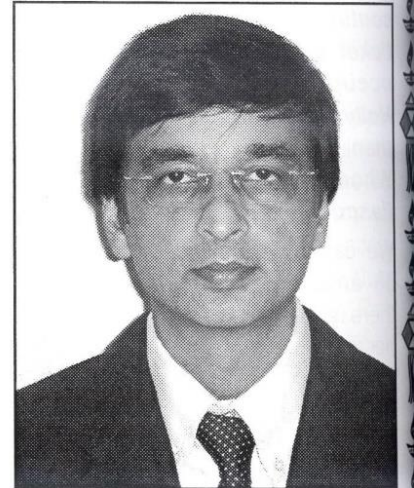


PANKAJ JAYSINH

COO, UFO MOVIEZ

UFO Moviez is India's leading digital platform provider for Indian films. Year after year, the services rendered by UFO digital are becoming more popular and UFO's reach now covers more than 5000 cinemas all over India. Business of films has multiplied from lakhs to crores and is now running into multiple crores mainly due to the penetration of digital cinema. Pankaj Jaysinh, as the prime mover of UFO Moviez, is one of the revered names in film business today. Here is Pankaj Jaysinh in a brief conversation with Ayyer Mohan of COMPLETE CINEMA.



How has the journey been so far for UFO Moviez?

As we all know, Digitization has redefined the way the business is being done. We had to put in a lot of efforts and we faced many challenges to educate the various stake holders as we tried to define and refine the business practices.

Why are many filmmakers and distributors complaining about the cost of digitization which they feel are too much of a burden to bear?

Yes, this is the general feedback that many new distributors have and that is one of the challenges that we had to face in our journey. But the cost of a digital print is a fraction of the cost of the analog print. The other great advantages have been the reduction in the cost it cuts of logistic expenses, eliminating the piracy from the movies, getting the transparency in the business etc. So, not only has the cost of the prints reduced but so have the expenses. Digitization has ensured widespread delivery of first day, first show films across geographies, which in-turn has helped to curb piracy as inaccessibility of the films was the major reason which was allowing piracy to flourish. Therefore, the accessibility of film content at a theatre near the audience has brought them back to the theatres, which in-turn has increased the box-office collections.

Every year we are bringing in new

technology to improve the standards of Cinema. What according to you will be important factors for the filmmakers to adapt so to ensure the entertainment value add?

As the time passes more and more new screens are opening. These screens are economical to maintain. These new screens have the latest offerings in the sound system and projection, and these features are also economical to maintain and these systems are enhancing the viewer experience.

Do you feel we have enough screens in A,B, and C class centres of all India territories? Do you think the villages in the interiors of our country also need cinema halls for their entertainment? What kind of cinema halls should be constructed for them for example, is there scope for a 'Janata Cinema' which will charge only Rs.30 or even less per ticket?

'Value for Money' is the mantra. Acha Bhi Chahiye Aur Sasta Bhi. No doubt, footfalls are price sensitive and beyond a particular price point, the audience does not wish to go the cinema. But the sound and projection must be good. The only option is to cut the cost of the aesthetics in the cinema halls so as to keep the ticket prices at reasonable levels, especially in the tier 2 and 3 locations.

UFO has been providing digital

services to all language films. So far, in the non-Hindi section, which other regional language cinema has been prospering and which sector is sliding downwards? Also what are the reasons for the phenomenal success of regional language films? We all know that 'Content is King'. Digitization has given a huge platform for the regional films to get an access to a larger number of screens and as a result, more and more producers in all regions are getting attracted towards production of regional content. If the content is good, then the collections will cross the average collections of the mainstream movies.

What future do you see for the Indian audiences who come to the cinema hall to watch a film? Will the footfalls increase in the cinema halls or decrease? If the footfalls show a decreasing trend, what measures will you suggest cinema owners to adopt to lure the audiences to enter their cinema halls?

Over the last few years, many corporates in the distribution field have lost a lot of funds. The corporates came in with a lot of funds, but unfortunately, the infusion of funds did not result in production of good content. We now need to be very particular in choosing the right talent in the production sector. Good content will definitely ensure higher footfalls but the vice versa is also true.