



## No slowdown here: In-cinema ad rates up by at least 50% for 3 big Diwali releases

Housefull 4, Made In China and Saand Ki Aankh ready to hit the silver screen this week, with the hopes of giving brands the eyeballs they look for in theatres



Mr. Siddharth Bhardwaj (UFO Moviez)

It's that time of the year again when theatres gear up to pocket maximum gains. Diwali is here and there are three films ready to hit the silver screen this week--Housefull 4, Made In China and Saand Ki Aankh. The festive period brings much joy to exhibitors, distributors and theatre owners because it ensures footfalls, giving brands the eyeballs they look for. In fact, industry experts don't feel that economic slowdown this year has impacted in-cinema advertising. While they are concerned about three movies clashing during Diwali, they predict 50-100 per cent rise in ad rates during this period.

### Advertising moolah

Mohan Umrotkar, CEO, Carnival Cinemas, is expecting 60-70 per cent surge in advertisement topline compared to last year. "Going by the buzz and advance booking for these three releases, market is bullish. Advertisers have booked most of the advt-slots during the festival period. Housefull 4, Made In China and Saand Ki Aankh all combined together should generate around Rs 350 crore topline at the box office during the festival week. We are expecting 60-70 per cent surge in the advertisement topline from last year. Also, this year we have added around 14 per cent new advertisers, and 4 per cent of them are first-time cinema advertisers," he says. But according to Siddharth Bhardwaj, Chief Marketing Officer - Head of Enterprise Sales, UFO Moviez, things have changed a lot in the last couple of years. "Since some films have not really lived up to their expectation, advertisers are spreading the spends all through the year. They are picking up far more number of titles in the year rather than focusing only on Diwali or Eid."

"It is good for the industry because you can monetise the inventories beyond just big weeks. A lot of content-driven films have come up which has given us the opportunity to monetise more markets. It has put lesser pressure on Diwali. Most of the cinemas are sold out for Diwali. It becomes difficult to accommodate everything," Bharadwaj opines. He also reveals that for this week, the inventories are already full.

### Diwali ad rates

Experts reveal that ad rates differ from property to property and depends on location as well. But Diwali surely sees a massive hike in rates. This year, theatre owners are expecting 100 per cent rise in ad rates. While Umrotkar revealed

that for Diwali, they are charging 100 per cent higher than the regular card rates, Girish Johar, trade analyst and film producer, shared that even the rates for putting up kiosks of brands go up during festivals like Diwali.

“It’s based on property. On a ballpark, ad rates double up. So if you are putting up a kiosk, they charge say Rs 50,000-25,000 for a month. During Diwali, they charge almost double because of the kind of footfalls theatres witness,” Johar revealed.

### **Economic slowdown? Not for Cinema!**

This year, brands have been pulling back their spends on other mediums due to economic slowdown, but cinema seems unaffected. Calling entertainment business recession-proof, Johar explains, “If you see the other side, box office is up by 15-20 per cent. Yes, it is a bit subdued because the brands are in a wait-and- watch scenario. They are increasing their focus around consumption rather than awareness.”

Bharadwaj too seconded it by saying, “These are challenging times but our medium is very efficient. If you see economy has slowed down, but the cinema has grown instead.”

### **Clash cover**

Three movies are clashing this Diwali which means shared screens and box office gains.

“It’s never good for us when two or more big-ticket films release together. If they would have come on different dates, there are chances that more advertisers will take advt. inventory in those weeks separately instead of that one particular week,” shares Umrotkar.