

Big Screen's Bigger Influence

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BACKBEAT



BIG SCREEN'S BIGGER INFLUENCE

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Cinema - the whole essence of it is more than just those famous, beautiful faces on the silver screen. To me, it's more than those melodious songs, a family sequence, an action-packed fight sequence or the romantic love story. It's all of it put together, an entertainment package full of glamour. Every movie has a story to tell - each character has a personality that contributes to the plot of the movie. I like certain kinds of stories - those which might not have a happy ending but can speak and stand up for the thought that is put forth. I believe that movies serve as a change agent for society and good cinema makes one think long after the movie is over and catalyzes a positive change in the world we live in. Since cinema is larger than life, over the years it has not only served as a means of entertainment, but has entrenched itself in the warp and weft of everyday lives of people. It chronicles history, records traditions, culture, dresses, food habits, etc., which blends to be our regional cinema and creates a sense of multiculturalism.

Cinema is the best medium of expression and since it's relevant to all age groups and demographics, it has developed into the biggest source of entertainment in the country. Until a few years back, we had a huge gap in the urban, semi-urban and rural consumer behaviour. However, over the last 10-15 years, the gap has dramatically reduced and this has been possible due to the revolution of electronic media in the country. Biggest content categories on electronic media are news, sports and movies, interestingly the aspirations of the population are highly influenced by the movies. Over

the last 10 years, this influence has been further catalyzed through digitization of cinemas, since all new movies are now available first day first show across India, we can now see boys and girls in smallest of towns replicating dance moves and fashion from Salman or Deepika's latest movies.

It was not the same a few years back, when the small towns got to see movies only after 6-8 months and as a result Mumbai was the capital of fashion and lifestyle. It has all changed, and cinema has truly democratized the lives of this generation.



Today, smaller towns are almost at par with bigger cities in terms of aspirations and lifestyle.

I grew up in a small town of North India and moved to Mumbai only a few years back. With each passing year, I feel the scale and impact of cinema increasing, and I am delighted to be a part of UFO Moviez, a game-changer in the cinema space. UFO has pioneered and digitized over 56% of Indian cinema screens, the rise of regional cinema and the multi-crore box office revenue of blockbuster films can be largely credited to UFO Moviez. Each week, more than 30 movies are released, in 29 different languages and over three crore walk into our UFO Network screens to entertain themselves and their families.

The cinema audience, while getting entertained, is in a positive state of mind. We have observed that many leading brands and advertisers have identified this opportunity and now that they have the convenience of using the digital route to access these screens and positively disposed movie audiences, they are actively using cinema as a medium to target their customers.

I strongly feel that digitization has helped Indian cinema achieve a tipping point and from now on, the quality and quantity of cinema and cinema advertising in the country will only become bigger and better.

Food for thought for us professionals working in the sector!

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