

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT) AN MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT SECTOR

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Role of information and communications technology in the media and entertainment industry ICT is bringing in a lot of changes in the media and entertainment industry. The industry has moved from radio to TV and now to smartphones. People do not have to download music or videos anymore, which can be streamed live or on demand. Cloud infrastructure has been instrumental in facilitating streaming. Now, people are moving to

the "internet of anything" concept, wherein any or and every form of content can be attached to the internet or to a digital network and accessed from remote places.

ICT solutions adopted by UFO Moviez and how they have benefitted business performance and efficiency

Earlier, the movie business was running on cel-



luloid print, which we referred to as the analogue format. Movies were shown using a print projector. On the commercial side, every print had a cost – distributors had to pay producers for content rights and bear the costs of print material, logistics, storage and safety. Further, there were commercial arrangements between theatre owners and distributors.

We enabled the industry to move from print towards digital format using ICT. While the modus operandi and the commercial arrangements broadly remain the same, there has been a reduction in costs as well as a significant improvement in reach. Piracy has also lost its market.

At the company level, we convert the print or digital intermediate file into digital format, which is then encrypted. We install a server, which has a mechanism to deal with the content and playback on the screen. We also provide a digital projector to the theatre, which is compatible with the server and the sound system. We use a satellite-based network to transfer the content from our lab (where it gets digitized) to all the theatres. To this end, we have installed a satellite dish at each theatre. The encryption of files also means that the process is more transparent and the

digital file cannot be exploited or misused. A theatre can play a file only as many times as the license permits, after which it gets encrypted again. The systems have also addressed the issue of piracy. If someone tries to take a camera print from the UFO server and convert it into a DVD, it is possible to track the culprit down based on the information of the theatre from which it has been copied and time of theft through the water-marking system that all our content is enabled with.

Key challenges in the deployment of new technologies and management of the existing IT and telecom infrastructure

The key challenges are technology adaptation and migration cost. Technology is changing so fast that it is difficult to upgrade infrastructure at the same pace. It is required that we build infrastructure that can be easily transformed as per future needs. However, designing such infrastructure is a big challenge both expertise- and cost-wise. Further, the advent of new technologies may bring some hesitance on the part of people who have to deploy it. For instance, when we moved from print to digital projectors, theatre cinema operators were hesitant to use the technology as they were not computer literate. So, we modified our interface to make it more user-friendly.

Additionally, the power conditions are bad especially in rural areas resulting in failures of the equipment and we have to put the additional equipment to protect them from bad power conditions.

Lastly, the cleanliness of environment also poses an issue as dust is an enemy of the electronic equipment. We have to educate the theatre staff about keeping the cleanliness of projection room, to put an AC, etc. We have to show the measurement of dust using the dust meter which we specially bought to show the amount of dust and its effect on the equipment.

ICT trends that will shape the media and entertainment industry going forward

The obvious trend we see going forward is that digital content will reach users even in the remotest corners of the country. In fact, we have been using technology to reach to our consumers in media dark areas ourselves with our initiative called Caravan Talkies. But in the years to come, it's going to be all about advancement in digital technologies, although the scale of their impact on the entertainment industry is going to be huge there is no quantifying it.



