

“Small Budget Movies Have Made Remarkable Contribution In 2019”

- PANKAJ JAYSINH

UFO Moviez is widely credited for developing a unique delivery model that played the decisive role that led to digitization of Indian cinema exhibition sector. UFO has add a derivative to its model, a movie-on-wheels concept billed as Caravan Talkies, that serves as a vehicle for creating monetisable demand in the deep rural space. Another offshoot NOVA Cinemas, is an initiative to introduce the masses to modern cinema viewing. Completing the revenue universe is UFO Framez, a revolutionary cloud based in-cinema hyper local retail advertising platform. Mohan Ayyer of COMPLETE CINEMA talked to COO of UFO MOVIEZ Pankaj Jaysinh to get more on his perspectives. Excerpts.

UFO has announced many affordable schemes for producers and distributors to screen the films in cinema halls.

UFO Moviez has always kept the interests of producers and distributors uppermost in mind. With that purpose UFO Moviez has been the pioneer in introducing affordable schemes for the producers and distributors. What you see today, the proliferation and growth of the film industry is the result of this commitment. When you have films releasing across 4000 screens today as against 700-800 screens in the past, remember it's UFO that makes it possible. Working on the similar lines to encourage wider releases, UFO has introduced schemes where the variable VPF/CDC is charged based on the actual collections.

UFO is now entering into distribution too....

Now that the variable VPF/CDC model has come into play, UFO Moviez is now in a position to assist producers who are seeking a wider release for their films given the established network of UFO Regional Offices across the country. With a professional approach and transparency as our hallmark, we find that the feedback from the producers who have released their films is positive.

Are the films released in 2019 so far collecting better than the films released in 2018 ?

Year 2019 started on a positive note for the overall cinema industry what with a cumulative collection of over Rs. 3800 crores made by the cinema industry from the Bollywood and Hollywood segments. As per the box office numbers, the industry has reported a collection of more than 25% vis a vis to the corresponding period of 2018. There are small budget movies too that made remarkable contribution in the overall growth of the Industry. Hollywood movies have made a tremendous comeback in India this year. Some of them have crossed the 300 crore bench mark. In this context, note that it is the first time in India that Marvel Studios is using India's large cinema network to widen reach. Unsurprisingly, that strategy contributed directly to the success their AVENGERS



ENDGAME which was released across 3000 theatres in India. *JIO has announced first day first show premiere which will come into effect in 2020. Will it affect the cinema business?* First and foremost, cinema-going has acquired a social context. This is apart from the immersive audience experience from watching cinema on the big screen. Question is, how does it compare with viewing a web series or a movie at home on a small screen? The arts of directing, acting, cinematography, etc., can be better appreciated and enjoyed if that experience is bigger in optics and sound, if it's larger than life. A lot many movies have already been appearing on various OTT platforms. Audiences went to watch films in movie theatres, whilst knowing that in 8-12 weeks of time, they'd get to see it for free. Secondly, content produced for cinemas is completely different in our view from the content for small screens, which is consumed at home. The likes of Netflix and Amazon have actually expanded the reach of content and have led to the emergence of short format content which has gained popularity on the OTT platforms. The preference for watching new movies in theatres is not only because of the immersive large screen experience, but it is also closely linked with family and social values. And, the other issue is, which we have also been repeating before this announcement about windowing of movie content which is always released in the cinemas first followed by other mediums. That is what creates relevance from a commercial point of view for the movie. The directors and actors aspire to be seen on the big screens first to showcase their art. So, the big screen cinema really establishes the equity of the movie content and further enhances the value of content when monetized on other mediums. The small screen viewing of film content will not be able to replace the ability of the cinema theatres which is a large format surround sound and big screen experience. We therefore, feel that the first day first show offering at home will only further expand the appetite for consuming content in cinemas, similar to what we have experienced in recent years.