



**NOW
RELEASING**

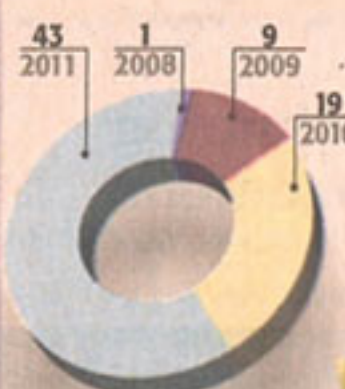
2010

Legend of the Guardian
Mega Mind
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows- Part 1
The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader
Tron
Gulliver Travels
Yogi Bear

2011

Lions Gate
My Soul To Take
A Monster In Paris
The Cabin in the Woods
Sactum
Drive Angry
The Three Musketeers
Spy Kids 4
Journey To The Centre of the Earth 2
Puss in Boots
Jackass
Beauty and the Beast
XXX: The Return of Xander Cage

**Charting 3D
In India**



**NON
DCI FILMS**

Piranha 3D
Vertige
Prey
Crank : High Voltage
The Expendables
Fire Ball
Bitch Slap
The Twilight Saga : Eclipse
DayBreakers
Hot Tub Time Machine
Flood
The Hurt Locker
Gamer
Universal Soldier: Regeneration
The Hangman
Spy Next Door
Paranormal Activity
Twilight Saga : New Moon
Haeundae
Twins Mission
The Unforgettable
I Can't Think Straight
Quick Gun Murugan
Shadowless Sword
Flash Back Of Fool
Raging Phoenix
Outlander
In the Name of the King: A Dungeon Siege Tale
Transporter 3
Journey to the Centre of the Earth
Righteous Kill

Cinema has taken on a new avatar across the globe as technology marries content and sweeps the viewer off to a visual world, that is breaking all barriers of imagination. As 3D gains momentum, Indian entrepreneurs, producers and exhibitors are all betting big bucks on the new viewing experience to grow both the platform and the content. Nandini Raghavendra reports



SHUBHRA DEY

IT WAS sheer co-incidence that Ranjit Thakur's first 3D movie experience — *Chicken Little* — was at a theatre in Burbank, California, home to some of the biggest boys of Hollywood-Disney, Warner, Universal and Paramount. The depth of Disney's hilarious egg-stravaganza, the audience reactions to the 3D experience, combined with its box office success, (\$314.4 million in '05) set the 31-year-old Thakur's mind onto the path of entrepreneurship. Of course, though Disney's film was the first fully computer-animated movie distributed in digital 3D format, it came on the back of more than seven years of in-field usage and commercial testing. Going forward, Thakur was confident that 3D was set to create box office history not only in the US but also in India and no, he had no clue of James Cameron's dream then.

Rewinding to a couple of years before Thakur's Burbank cinema experience—another young entrepreneur was ready to embark on a digital journey, though of a different kind—Sanjay Gaikwad—to develop a digital technology which was affordable for the Indian exhibitor and propelled the Indian producer to slate for 3D production as well. So even as Thakur dreamt of building a platform for Hollywood's six big boys (Disney, Warner, Universal, Paramount, Sony and Fox) of the studios to roll out their 3D celluloid fare, Gaikwad was busy putting his engineering skills to developing the same quality of experience but cheaper, to ensure a wider roll-out and faster. Both set out, Gaikwad got a early start, while Thakur moved back to California in '07 and began intermingling with Jack Kline, President of Christie Digital, widely acknowledged as the man who pushed the Hollywood studios to pursue the digital dream and unleashed the power of 3D across the US and other parts of the world. Christie's was also one of only three licensees of the 2K chip from Texas Instruments. "It was clear that both digital and 3D held huge scope in India, but if India was to become a strategic market it had to be Digital Cinema Initiatives (DCI)-compliant to ensure that they could play content from the six big Hollywood studios," says Thakur.

Created in '02, DCI, is a joint venture of Disney, Fox, Paramount, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Universal and Warner Bros. Studios with a primary purpose to establish and document voluntary specifications for an open architecture for digital cinema that ensures a uniform and high level of technical performance, reliability and quality control. In DCI lay the seeds of Scramble Entertainment. With ₹5 crore as seed money, Thakur signed with Christie's to set up 200 screens in India in '07 and one year later released the first 3D movie, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* in PVR Gurgaon and Fun Republic Mumbai.



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RANJIT THAKUR
CEO, SCRAMBLE ENTERTAINMENT



There is enough non-DCI content to pick up. For Hollywood, India is an incidental market

SANJAY GAIKWAD
FOUNDER & MD, UFO MOVIEZ

"The results set the ball rolling and its gathering momentum fast," says Thakur who will by end 2011 have invested close to ₹100 crore and set up 520 screens of which at least 200 will be 3D enabled. Of course, the fact that Journey, ran for seven weeks at Fun Republic and added a tidy sum to their kitty. Of course, the success saw Thakur's dream being picked up by none other than industry veteran Manmohan Shetty whose Walkwater Media picked up a 51% stake in Scramble and put his experience and money both behind Thakur. Meanwhile, Gaikwad and his team ramped up on their digital roll out — what was met with scepticism versus analog prints, has today spread to 2,000 screens across the country. Exhibitors and consumers, who were unsure, do not know or ask the difference and the huge impact on the industry is a huge bonus. Wider release for films, cost savings for producers and exhibitors, day and date releases for smaller towns and a small way to fight piracy as well. Of course, others joined in Gaikwad's dream. So there was Real Image and Reliance Mediaworks (RMW).

After digital, Gaikwad's dreamt 3D and wanted the same-cheaper option for the Indian market. So, while Thakur and Real Image are ramping up on DCI-compliant (with RMW present in a small way with Barco projectors) platforms, Gaikwad is investing to ensure 1,000 3D screens by 2012. Of course, the biggest difference is these 3D screens, not being DCI-compliant, cannot show any of the movies from the big six studios. "UFO started its business when the DCI specifications were not even announced. Besides, we thought it was expensive technology and unaffordable for the Indian market. For Hollywood, India is an incidental market while once we have 400-500 screens, Indian producers get an impetus to make 3D content and that will, in turn, feed the content pipeline. Also, there is enough non-DCI content out there for us to pick up," says the founder and MD of UFO Moviez India.

STUDIO TO MARKET

For the Hollywood studios which had Indian arms, this was a golden opportunity as the platforms offered an opportunity to tap into a market which had found nothing new after exploiting the language market. "In the last year, Disney Movies in India have grown at a high double digit figure in the digital 3D cinema segment with a gradual increase in 3D cinemas across the country. The recent successes of Alice in Wonderland and Toy Story 3 provided audiences with a deeper, richer experience with our characters and stories," says Seshasaye Kanthamraju, director, marketing & distribution, Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures (India) as he looks forward to the release

of Tron this year, expected to be one of the most ground-breaking motion picture event of the year in 3D and Imax 3D.

In fact, almost all the Hollywood India studio heads are very gung-ho on the growth of Hollywood in India and, as Vijay Singh, CEO, Fox Star Studio says, there is a clear indication that all the elements in the mix are beginning to come together — be it greater focus behind day/date releases; larger marketing budgets; the roll-out of technology, including 3D, all of which will result in greater critical mass for the business of Hollywood in India. In fact, 2011's schedule reads more of Hollywood releases than Bollywood in India. As for 3D movies, while Hollywood has announced the release dates of 43 movies, possibly from the big six, there are more in the pipeline from the independent and studios which are outside the DCI agreement.

There is an Indian angle to this as well. Even as UFO announced its plans to invest ₹100 crore into converting screens to 3D, Indian producers also began making plans to produce 3D content. UFO says there are at least 11 projects underway. "We are in the process of developing 3D projects in genres like horror and science fiction. The projected growth in 3D-enabled screens is approximately 500 screens by the end of 2011, which makes it commercially viable for studios like us to seriously consider exploring the medium," says Sid-dhartha Roy Kapur, CEO, UTV Motion Pictures.

SHOWTIME...

Creating the platform was one part of the game and involved only the entrepreneurs. For the studios, it was one more market to tap. But the real game lay with the exhibitors, they had to be convinced and bite the digital bullet. While Thakur wooed the classes in the plexes, Gaikwad and his joint MD, Kapil Agarwal began with the masses and interiors of India, digitalizing it first and then moved to the metros and plexes. For the exhibitor, going digital was inhibiting initially, yet today, players like PVR and Cinemax have announced plans to go all digital. But the cream of the digital cake lies in 3D without a doubt. "Our data shows, five lakh people who have seen 3D across 12 movies in nine months. Compare this to any other Hollywood movie which has worked in 2D like Hangover or Knight and Day, which saw only 50,000 footfalls. 3D is the choice of the consumer," says president, Cinemax, Devang Sampat, who has nine 3D-enabled plexes.

While Sampat has chosen so far only to go with Scramble, CEO, Reliance Mediaworks, Anil as well as Inox Leisure's CEO, Alok Tandon feel the consumer is studio-agnostic. While Arjun's Big Cinemas has enabled DCI-complaint screens on their own, Tandon has chosen to go with both Scramble and UFO. "We have seen that for every show of the same movie in both 3D and 2D in the same multiplex, footfalls for the 3D screening tends to be three to four times higher than 2D," says Tandon who plans to set up UFO technology-supported 3D screens in some properties.

Pricing is also a very critical factor in 3D, specially for DCI-complaint screens. With at least 50% higher prices, they still enjoy higher occupancies. So, is the lure of the lucre which is pulling the exhibitor to 3D? "It is a mix of being a differentiator and the commerce factor. Cinema is an out-of-home experience and the consumer is paying for entertainment and 3D ensures you that — a spectacle, a visual treat for all," ends Arjun.

nandini.raghavendra@timesgroup.com

**ET
Multiplex
Tracker**

SEP 10 - 16, 2010



DABANGG

Net Collection: 1031.36
Audience: 991316
Occupancy (%): 56.80
Week: 1



RESIDENT EVIL...

Net Collection: 71.52
Audience: 66952
Occupancy (%): 23.07
Week: 1



WE ARE FAMILY

Net Collection: 53.93
Audience: 47900
Occupancy (%): 17.49
Week: 2



STEP UP 3D

Net Collection: 23.74
Audience: 18835
Occupancy (%): 35.47
Week: 2



INCEPTION

Net Collection: 1.20
Audience: 755
Occupancy (%): 15.61
Week: 9



PEEPLI LIVE

Net Collection: 0.95
Audience: 605
Occupancy (%): 7.28
Week: 5



ONCE UPON A TIME ...

Net Collection: 0.28
Audience: 219
Occupancy (%): 7.28
Week: 7



LAFANGEY PARINDEY

Net Collection: 0.20
Audience: 249
Occupancy (%): 8.75
Week: 4



DESPIicable ME

Net Collection: 0.15
Audience: 333
Occupancy (%): 94.60
Week: 6