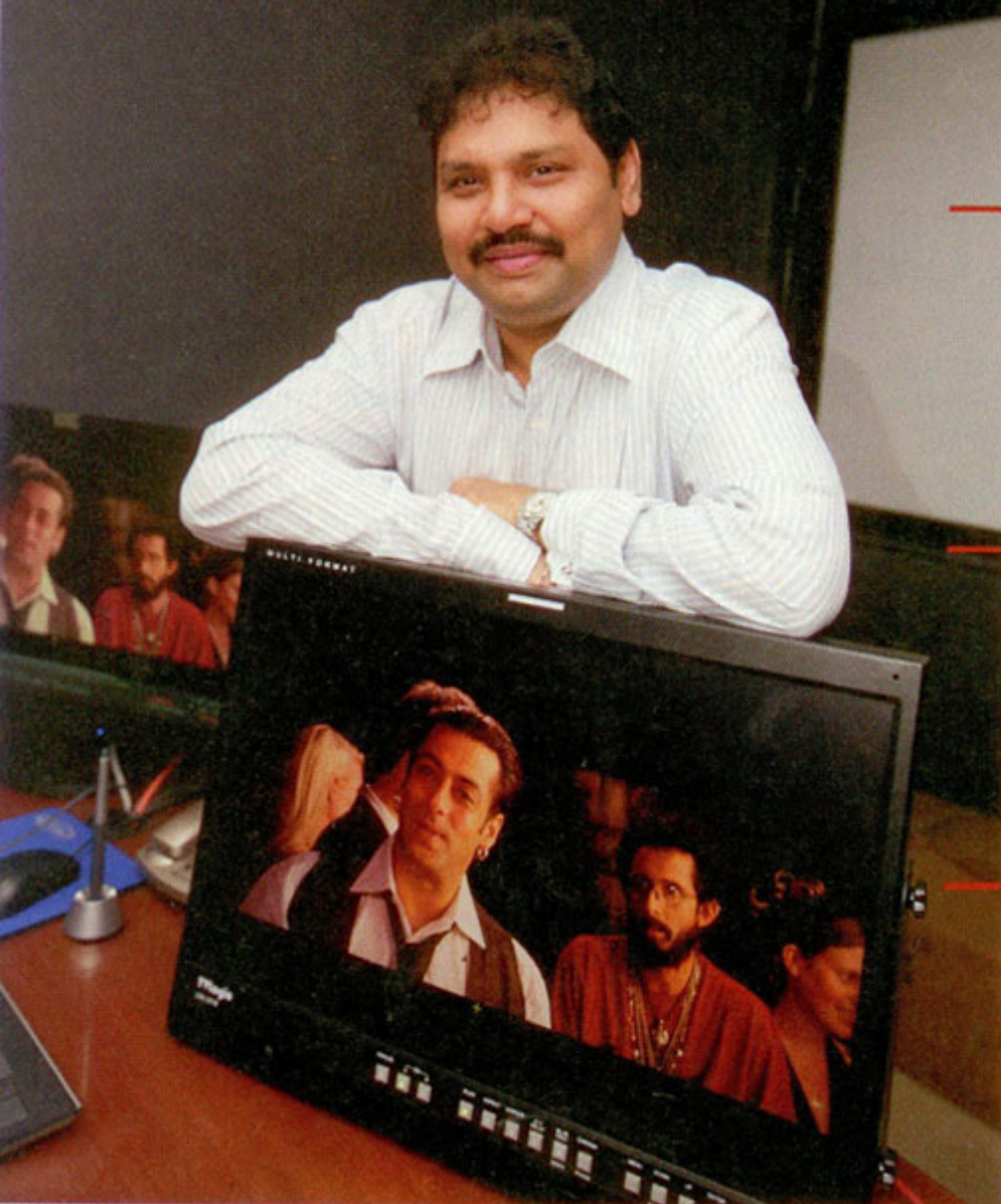




Unusual entrepreneurs INNOVATORS



BHASKAR PAUL

SANJAY
GAIKWAD

42, DIGITAL ENTREPRENEUR
MD, VALUABLE GROUP
INITIAL TURNOVER IN 2004 **Rs 7 crore**
CURRENT TURNOVER **Rs 150 crore**

SUCCESS MANTRA

Always create a new market system without disrupting the existing chain

turning POINT

Launching Zee's first online lottery, Playwin in the year 2001

role MODEL

His former bosses, Subhash Chandra of the Zee Group, and Vijay Jindal

A TECHNOLOGY BUFF, GAIKWAD SPENT HIS

CHILDHOOD INSPECTING THE INSIDES OF RADIO AND TELEVISION SETS AND CREATING DEVICES WITH ELECTRICAL KITS.

CINEMA PARADISO

It doesn't matter if you are in Dharwad or Delhi; you can catch the first show of the latest release, thanks to UFO Moviez's digital cinema network. Cutting out the staggered-release system, where films are released in Tier I cities first and then in other centres, the Valuable Group has introduced a system that allows movies to be simultaneously transmitted via satellite. "Producers can release films in multiple centres; theatre owners don't suffer losses because of piracy and the government gets higher entertainment tax," says Sanjay Gaikwad, MD, Valuable Group.

His journey from a student of a Marathi-medium school in suburban Mumbai, to being the proud owner of an Audi A6 has been eventful. Having studied chemical engineering from Mumbai's University Department of Chemical Technology, he joined the Zee Group's IT department. Here, he spearheaded the 1998 Zee Cine Awards and launched Zee's first online lottery, Playwin. He then launched the Valuable Group in November 2003 from a 500-sq ft office in suburban Bandra and set up Valuable Reserves India (VRI), an online lottery platform that provided technical infrastructure to

help paper lottery giants convert to the online mode. "It was a big achievement for me," says Gaikwad, sitting on a couch in his spacious Wi-Fi-enabled Thane apartment.

Gaikwad's next stop was movies. Bollywood's A-list producers were initially wary of allowing their prints to be digitised. But the lean season didn't last too long, and soon UFO released its first big film, *Garam Masala*, in 2005. Now, most of Bollywood's major releases, from *Om Shanti Om* to *Dostana*, are released through UFO. Gaikwad has 1,300 theatres linked to its satellite transmission, has released 878 films in 16 languages and screened 1.6 million shows.

The year 2008 has been rather inspiring. Valuable Group moved into the infrastructure space when Gaikwad tied up with the Gulf Finance House to develop a \$10-billion Mumbai economic zone near Panvel. The 1,700-acre complex will house an energy city to trade in hydrocarbons, a software city and an entertainment city, conceptualised on the lines of Hollywood. But the future, says Gaikwad, is in digital cinema. With a number of projects lined up, Gaikwad strives to change the way India sees movies.

by Aditi Pai