

Brand Wagon

Date: 09 February 2010; Supplement Page No.: 02; Edition: All

FACE OFF SANJAY GAIKWAD

“IPL will be a welcome relief to theatre owners across India”

One of the many screens on which Indian fans can watch IPL 3 this year is the movie theatre screen. Entertainment and Sports Direct (ESD), an investment advisory and private equity firm, has inked a nine-year deal with IPL to showcase matches in various public venues. ESD signed up with digital cinema venture UFO Moviez and Valuable Media for theatrical and public exhibition in India and key global markets. Sanjay Gaikwad, managing director, UFO Moviez, talks about IPL on the big screen.

How do you think IPL is going to benefit the theatre business?

It has been seen over the last two years that there are no big-ticket film releases during the IPL. This year also no big films are lined up for release during IPL 3. IPL will be a welcome relief to the theatres since they will now be able to secure some level of monetisation during this period when there are no releases happening. The theatre owners will benefit not only from ticket sales but from ancillary revenues such as food and beverages, parking tickets, sale of merchandise, etc.

How many screens have been blocked for the IPL matches?

We have already tied up with all the major multiplexes like Cinemax, Inox, Fame, Fun, PVR, Movietime and are in talks with the remaining chains such as Adlabs, Wave, etc. In addition to this, more than 300 single-screen theatres have already tied up across hundreds of towns in India such as Raipur, Baroda, Panipat, Nasik, Darjeeling, Ajmer and others. On a conservative estimate, we expect to carry the matches to 800-1000 screens across India.

How will you ensure footfalls?

In the initial period, the theatres will be creating various marketing packages to push the occupancy levels such as creating passes wherein a viewer can buy a pass for 10 matches at a discounted price. We expect to see 70-80% of occupancy in theatres during the league matches and expect the semi-finals and finals to witness almost 100% occupancy levels.

Tell us about the advertising plans?

Currently we are in advanced talks with major

media agencies like Group M who have agreed to offtake significant portion of the advertising inventory for their various clients. The sponsors are yet to be finalised. We intend to have one main sponsor and four to five associate sponsors. The main sponsor and the associate sponsor are expected to spend approximately Rs 15-20 crore across the cinemas screening the IPL matches.

The larger than life advertising coupled with high-definition image quality will provide a stadium-like unique experience to the audience. Since we offer a clutter-free platform there will be a premium for the advertising slots. Despite this, we are cost-effective in terms of value delivered and this will ensure that the advertisers get more bang for the buck in terms of value for money. The recall value on this advertising will be very high compared to other mediums. The advertisers are being given a 360-degree exposure with various properties being provided to them at the theatres such as on-screen advertising, banners, kiosks, media plug-ins, etc.

What kind of revenue you think IPL will generate?

This is the first year of the IPL in theatres and our primary intention is to make it a success. Viewers who will experience IPL in theatres will come again and again to experience a stadium-like atmosphere. In the first year of operations, we are looking to establish the media property, IPL, in theatres. We are readying the theatres to provide a fun-filled and carnival-like atmosphere to the audience which will include cinema jockeys, cheerleaders, entertainment stalls, etc. We expect to generate more than Rs 25 crore in gross box-office revenues in the first year of IPL in theatres.

