

India in Focus

By Rahul Nehra, Honorary National Secretary, SCTE India

Rahul Nehra chronicles India's digital growth story during the COVID-19 pandemic and announces new initiatives for SCTE India.



Rahul Nehra
Honorary National
Secretary, SCTE India

Rahul Nehra is the Founder/MD of Jadooz Media Solutions. He founded and successfully exited Moving Talkies.

In his financial career, he has taken various leadership roles in blue chip companies in India such as Irdeto, Latens, Intelsat and Exset.

He is also a director of Celebridge and the co-chair of TIE Global: Media and Entertainment SG.

The Indian broadband story may change forever with the announcement of the Indian Prime Minister to connect all 500,000 villages in the next 1000 days. The pandemic has rewritten the script of a connected India and has fast-forwarded India's growth story.

A sectoral view of India, posted at the onset of the pandemic, shows consolidation and flat growth in DTH (70 million subscribers) and Digital Cable (85 million subscribers). The DTH story has consolidated itself around Dish TV and Tata Sky while the Digital Cable story has consolidated itself around Hathway, In Cable and Citi Cable (to a smaller extent).

The Indian telecommunication space saw a tectonic shift with the emergence of Reliance Jio and has resulted in a three-player marketplace with Jio, Airtel and Idea-Vodafone driving most of India's telecom story. The broadband count in India reached almost 660 million subscribers, of whom more than 450 million are in the urban areas of India.

The 'Bharat Broadband' story continues to languish and I expect that the push of the Hon'ble Prime Minister should be able to change this landscape forever.

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There was some headline news on people movement – Puneet Goenka stepping down from the Zee Board; Ajit Mohan taking the reins of Facebook; Gaurav Gandhi moving to Amazon Prime; Ashish Chaudhary moving to Apple as the managing director and Pravin Kumar Purwar taking additional charge of MTNL were some of them.

Changes during the pandemic

The onset of the pandemic brought a few sectors to the forefront and created a new wave of multi-million-dollar brand entities in OTT; education technology; medical technology; e-retail and banking. By just saw 7.5 million new subscribers; Un academy recorded 1.4 billion watch minutes; Topper saw a 100 per cent growth and Upgrade moved into new areas and new sectors with a high double-digit growth rate, to name a few. Talentedge, a leading Indian platform in the executive learning space, saw a huge surge in its numbers across the board, driving growth.

With theatres, sports and amusement parks facing lockdown, the OTT market was bound to grow in leaps and bounds. The market grew at 80 per cent, daily active users by 33% per cent and app downloads by 44% .

There was ‘First Day First Show’ of Bollywood releases in this multi-screen space with ‘Gulabo Sitabo’, breaking the glass ceiling in many ways. The national space continued with Amazon, Disney-Hotstar, Jio and Netflix ruling the roost with Zee 5, Sony, Alt Balaji, Ullu and a few vernacular platforms with their own niches.

SCTE India recently announced its new governing council and three new chairmen. Aditya Malik becomes chairman of SCTE India’s Academy, Sandeep Bhargava is the new chairman of SCTE India Consulting and Vivek Kumar is the chairman of SCTE India Innovation.

SCTE INDIA ANNOUNCES ITS POWER PACKED GOVERNING COUNCIL & SG CHAIRMAN'S

ADITYA MALIK
MD Talentedge
Chairman - SCTE India Academy

VIVEK KUMAR
Founder CEO Venture Garage
Chairman - SCTE India Innovation

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EDITOR'S NOTE

SCTE India (based in New Delhi), with its own dedicated committee, focuses on the requirements of SCTE's members in India. The group has been granted registration as a non-profit organisation and is run by an Indian Executive. It regularly organises networking meetings and roadshows (sometimes hosted by local cable operators and manufacturers) as well as training activities in India. It also holds the SCTE India awards (for individual achievement and technology innovation).

SCTE India regularly disseminates news that is relevant to all SCTE India members and widely promotes further SCTE activities such as training and standards news. For further details, see www.scteindia.org



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A Rich Heritage

SCTE members can access SCTE's web-based archive - it is over 74 years old!

See www.thescte.eu