

Hit or No Hit for Entertainment Industry during COVID -19

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Abstract

Contemporary time calls for understanding the Impact of the Global Pandemic on almost all the sectors and taking corrective measures to deal with them. Amongst all the sectors being hit by the global emergency Entertainment Industry is no exception. Almost all the TV channels are running back their most popular shows since the further recording and telecasting of fresh episodes cannot take place in the current scenario. People are feeling reluctant to read newspapers believing they might have passed through several hands. This makes the picture doubtful that the entertainment industry and the various associated platforms are certainly being hit by COVID- 19. The study explores various perspectives of the effect of this global pandemic on the entertainment industry, along with getting an insight into the impact of the same on various platforms of the said industry.

Keywords: - *Entertainment Industry, COVID-19, Telecom, global pandemic.*

INTRODUCTION

Outline of the threat posed by COVID-19:

Almost every particular industry is facing the threats posed by COVID – 19 and researches have already begun to find solutions against the odds being created by this outbreak. Entertainment industry is no exception to this current scenario.

Entertainment industry is one that calls for regular functioning and caters to the public fresh news, shows, conferences and more. The global outbreak of COVID-19 lead to giving a pause to most of the popular TV shows since the shooting of the episodes cannot take place in order to follow no human contact as a safety norm. Radio

shows are also running on loop as only few of the Radio stations are able to broadcast their shows with the Radio Jockeys sitting at their homes and delivering the shows. Print media in terms of newspapers has been hit adversely as people do not feel safe in touching them assuming that the same must have passed through several hands, hence the sales of the newspapers have declined. As far as magazines, comics and journals are concerned their sales are declining at a more rapid pace than the newspapers. On the other hand the only segment that is facing skyrocket increase is the streamed and live contents of the OTT (Over the top media) services. People going through Lockdown 3.0 are sitting idle at home and with no fresh shows being telecasted on the TV, a good number of them have turned towards the currently popular OTT.

THE EFFECTS:

Current outbreak of COVID – 19 is having multiple faceted effects on the entertainment industry and is having an impact on all the people and sides associated with the industry.

- **Living or livelihood :** As per a popular news site amongst the 60 million people having connection with the said industry 10 million have been hit directly and are facing difficulty in carrying on with their livelihood. Most of the low income and wage earners of the industry have hard effects of the outbreak since no fresh telecasts and broadcast are taking place currently. So for them it's a time to choose either of one "to live or to think of livelihood".
- **Huge Losses:** As per Events and Entertainment Management Association postponement and in some cases cancellations of major national and international events of the industry resulted in occurrence of huge losses to the stakeholders. TV channels earning huge revenues are also facing a crash in their revenues being generated from the industry. The theatres and Multiplexes on the other side are not witnessing any footfall giving a major setback to all the concerned parties. 107 companies are facing a revenue loss of nearly Rs. 1 Crore, says economic times.
- **Major events postponed:** The support system of the industry that generates highest of the revenues is suffocated since the quarantine is in existence

due to the global emergency and hence is affecting major events of the industry. A good number of award shows pertaining to the industry falls in the initial months of the year, says a popular news site. Due to the pandemic the industry is witnessing retard in generation of good amount of revenues, which otherwise would have been generated by now. Also in the near future there seems no possible way out to organize such big events at a larger level that could relief to the industry. As per economic times, 52.91% of the associated companies have cancelled almost 90% of their big events which were otherwise supposed to take place in the months of March & April.

- **Choked lifeline of the industry:** There is an uncertainty as to when the lives would be back on track till then the industry is just facing some major issues with no solution to the arising problems. As per the report of KPMG the events, films and TV are the segments of the entertainment industry which have been hit hard by COVID -19 and these segments forms the lifeline of the industry so it would be not wrong to say that the lifeline of

the industry is choked due to this global outbreak.

- **People Glued to TV but no money:** No fresh content on the TV channels and gaining popularity of OTT has further declined the revenue of the industry. A big issues posed is that the advertisers are scaling back which is scaling down the level of monetization leading to further setback of the industry, says KPMG report. The only TV channels which are generating good revenues, which are saving the industry from being suffocated, are News Channels. Sports channel not telecasting fresh content has also lead to decline in the rate of viewers.
- **Reverse for OTT:** OTT and online gaming are the only segments which are making the most of the current scenario. People sitting idle at home are pretty much devoted to go for binge watching the webseries. As per KPMG report, the least affected segments of the entertainment Industry by corona outbreak are OTT and online gaming. Rather it would not be wrong to say that these are the

only sectors which are turning profitable in the quarantine period.

SECTOR WISE IMPACT:

- **Films:** The box office is facing a disastrous scenario as no footfalls have lead to crash and closures of the cinema halls and the connected revenues have also dried up. The rental charges for the cinema hall, theatres and multiplexes are further adding to the associated ill effects. Above all this there is no scope of the projects in the pipeline and on-hold projects to get featured in the near future, which worsen the situation.
- **Television:** Retelecasting of the older popular shows came up as a solution to get a hold of the number of the viewers. But the monetization connected with the advertisements is scaling down increasing the problems for the stakeholders of the television sector.
- **Print:** A good number of news websites and social media are posing a threat to the print media and people being reluctant in touching the newspapers and magazines adds up to the problems of the concerned parties

starting from the editing team to the one who distributes the papers every morning.

- **OTT:** The only segment of the entertainment industry which is witnessing blossom is OTT. Although pipeline contents cannot get featured in the upcoming days but the existing libraries and subscription offers during lockdown has resulted in not only increasing the number of subscribers but would also help in developing habits of the subscribers.

THINGS THAT COULD HELP:

Innovations: Innovations have mostly proved themselves to be the savior in the pitfalls of the economy and the present times also calls for using this tool. This might not completely save the industry but could at least turn down one or two negative challenges posed by this global emergency.

IPL could save: If in near future when the authorities remove the norms of social distancing holding IPL could bring back a good number of sports lovers back to the screen and could gear up the revenues.

Animated Content: Some of the researches states that even animated versions of some of the popular TV shows might help to overcome the situation and would rather be a creative idea.

Live streaming of Celebrities: Live telecast of the celebrities from their homes might persuade a good number of people to way back towards their favorite TV channels.

In nutshell: Like all the other industries M&E (Media and Entertainment) industry is also facing many challenges but rather than focusing upon the issues posed due to COVID-19 the industry must come up with some innovative ideas to recapture the audiences.

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