Market
The advent of cable and satellite television sowed the seeds of the electronic media revolution in India fifteen years ago. From those initial grainy images of the first Gulf War beamed on CNN, television has truly come a long way with more than 150 channels available at the flick of a remote control button. Television now reaches more than 12 million households and is growing at the rate of 32% per year. Satellite television alone reaches 68 million households (Source: NRS 2006).

The TV channel market is growing constantly. A Media Partners Asia (MPA) report estimates that advertising revenues will touch US$ 1.8 billion (Rs. 8100 crore) by 2010. Subscription revenues are also on the rise, especially with the advent of Direct To Home television (DTH) systems. The MPA report has also estimated that subscription revenues for the industry will touch US$ 2 billion (Rs. 9000 crore) by 2015.

Irrespective of the yardstick of measurement, Star remains the unquestioned leader in the market. In an achievement that has not been equalled anywhere else in the world, Star entered its sixth straight year of dominant leadership in the satellite television space, especially in the Hindi Speaking Markets (HSM) – the cluster of markets that make up the core target group of Star’s bouquet of channels.

No wonder then, that Star India is the jewel in the crown of media baron Rupert Murdoch’s Asian operations.

Achievements
Star India drives growth and profitability for all of Star’s Asian operations. The network’s bouquet of entertainment and news channels boasts of a viewership share that is higher than both the Zee-Turner and Sony-Discovery networks.

Each of the network’s channels has carved out a distinct position in the hearts and minds of the audiences. Star Plus continues to be the undisputed number one general entertainment channel in the country for an astonishing sixth straight year.

Not content with having just the number one position in the market, Star embarked on a bold strategy to capture the number two position as well. It launched Star One in 2004 and within just a year propelled it to the number two slot.

This strategy bore fruit on the successful launch of a bouquet of entertainment channels. Star Plus went Hindi; in a series of initiatives and in quick succession, the path-breaking Kaun Banega Crorepati, as well as the unique stand-up comedy show The Great Indian Laughter Challenge, Star One is known today for offering an alternative viewing experience for millions of audiences.

Its other channels too, continue to perform robustly; the English entertainment channel Star World is the first port of call for anyone looking for the best in global entertainment.

Star’s foray into regional television, the Tamil language Vijay, continues to reap rewards – it is today established as a strong contender to the behemoth of Tamil television, Sun TV.

Star is also a leading player in the television news business. Star News, a joint venture with the ABP group, is a serious contender for the number one position in the highly competitive Hindi news channel space. Star Ananda, the first national news channel in Bengali, was launched in June 2005, again in a JV with the ABP group and became the number one in the very week of its launch.

In addition, its creative excellence continues to fetch accolades and recognition from all corners of the globe. The Star One show ‘Siddhant’ was the only Indian drama to be honoured with a nomination to the prestigious World Emmy awards in 2006. Star already holds the distinction of being awarded India’s first Emmy at the International Children’s Day of Broadcasting, UNICEF and the International Academy of Television Arts & Sciences jointly conferred this award.

History
Star set its first footprint in 1991. Owned at that time by Hong Kong based business mogul Li Ka Shing, it began beaming Star Plus (then in English), Prime Sports, MTV and BBC in the country. In 1992, Zee entered into a joint venture with Star to launch Zee TV. The following year Star’s ownership changed hands and Star became a part of the global Newscorp Empire, owned by Rupert Murdoch.

By 1995, MTV and BBC had moved out and Newscorp had acquired complete ownership of the company. In 1996, Star Sports formed a joint venture with ESPN called ESPN-Star Sports. The subsequent years saw the launch of Star News – India’s first English news channel – and Star World. When Star and Zee parted ways in 1999, it marked a new epoch for the company.

Under new CEO Peter Mukerjea, the company set about chalking a fresh blueprint to redefine television viewing in the country. Star Plus went Hindi; in a series of initiatives and in quick succession, the path-breaking Kaun Banega Crorepati, as well as the unique stand-up comedy show The Great Indian Laughter Challenge, Star One was introduced. Star Plus became the number one channel in the country.

Not content to rest on its laurels, Star acquired a majority stake in the Tamil language Vijay TV soon after. In 2002, Star News was relaunched as a fully Hindi news broadcaster, completing its bouquet of unmatched offerings for the viewer.
Ananda in Bengali, provide the Star News in Hindi and Star has shown that infotainment as a and The History Channel (THC) channel in the country.

Koffee with Karan.

like Rendezvous with Simi Garewal and Friends, Seinfeld and The Simpsons, in calibre of Desperate Housewives, programmes of the Oscars).

Awards (the annual Academy calendar – the biggest event in television, including live mobile traffic in the country and has established landmarks like the first ever reverse auction on wireless in India.

The year 2006/07 should see Star reinforcing its leadership position with a slew of new shows launches across its bouquet of channels, cutting across genres.

Star Gold showcases the latest blockbusters from Bollywood and is noted for its innovative programming.

Star Movies brings to Indian viewers the best that Hollywood has to offer, including live coverage of the biggest event in the television calendar – the annual Academy Awards (the Oscars).

Star World brings to India, international programmes of the calibre of Desperate Housewives, Friends, Seinfeld and The Simpsons, in addition to popular Indian English shows like Rendezvous with Simi Garewal and Koffee with Karan.

Channel [v] has staked a strong claim to being the definitive youth channel in the country. The popularity of National Geographic Channel (NGC) and The History Channel (THC) has shown that infotainment as a genre has come of age in India.

Star News in Hindi and Star Ananda in Bengali, provide the most consumer centric news experience available.

Recent Developments

Of late, though Star has made serious strides into other media, switching platforms with ease and setting trends in new media. The portal www.indya.com is India’s largest television platform on the net and recognised for its home grown technological advances like indytube that are on par with the most cutting edge developments in the internet world. Today, it reaches out to a global audience, especially with the acquisition of rights to become the official internet partner of The ICC Champions Trophy and the ICC World Cup – the two biggest cricketing events in the world. Star’s wireless arm, 7827, is also at the forefront of the digital revolution. A critical support, in that it allows viewers to engage actively with Star and its content, 7827 has set records in mobile traffic in the country and has established landmarks like the first ever reverse auction on wireless in India.

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Star Gold continues to do what it is best at – more family dramas with shows like Thodi Si Zameen, Thoda Sa Aasmaan, Apna Apna and Karam. Apna Apna Star Plus has also lined up a mega show for kids – Antariksh. Star One is also launching new shows with universal appeal such as Resham Dhan, Paraya Dhan and Saathi Re. The biggest of them all is of course, Nach Baliye 2. The show that rocked the nation in 2005 came back in 2006 with its second season; and a whole new set of small screen performers had the nation in thrall once again. 2006 also saw the launch of the much awaited DTH service, Tata-Sky, in which Star has a minority stake and which promises to completely redefine the consumers television viewing experience.

Promotion

The string of successes in recent years has established a launch pad for Star to achieve even greater heights. Star’s high reach programming offers the best platform for promotion. This is coupled with innovative off-air marketing efforts that synergise with on-air efforts to ensure maximum impact during the launch of a new programme. Every new show is treated as a mini event in itself and is promoted through conventional and unconventional media.

Star’s creative excellence in promotions continues to be recognised around the world. At the Promax & BDA World Gold Awards (the highest honour for excellence in TV promotion), Star garnered an incredible twenty awards – the highest by far for an Indian broadcaster. While regular winter Channel [v] won twelve medals in all, Star Gold won five and Star Plus won for the much acclaimed Kaun Banega Crorepati campaign. It would appear that Star is not just attaining success on the screen but off it, too.

Brand Values

Star has a tangible impact on how the rest of the world looks at Indian television. It has been a pacesetter in programming in India. The cornerstones of the brand are innovation, creativity and relevance in content. At the heart of the brand is the belief that “viewers are the centre of our universe.”

www.indya.com

Star Plus has been India’s number one Cable & Satellite channel for the sixth year running (Source:TAM).

Star Gold premiered Swades by launching Project Swades, which actually electrified a village in real life.

Star Movies plays 100 hours of non-stop blockbusters every Diwali.

Star World’s ‘Koffee with Karan’ reached out to more than 15 million people in its first season; the episode featuring Akshaye Khanna and Preity Zinta became the highest rated English language show ever.