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EVENTS VFX

CII Summit FX 2020 concludes on a high note, setting a new benchmark in the AVGC landscape

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Bringing under one virtual roof, various stakeholders, global heads, pacemakers, policy makers and international delegates, Confederation of Indian Industry's (CII) SummitFX 2020 saw an unprecedented sharing of ideas, imagination, solutions and services across dozens of sessions over the past three days.

Never before has AVGC (Animation, Visual Effects, Games and Comics) ever been given as much impetus. Testament to it was the global fervour seen in the Summit FX 2020 even as the world trains its eyes upon the Indian subcontinent.

Day 4 of the global Summit FX 2020 broke a new ground, starting with panelists pondering the future of the AVGC business and the areas that must be worked upon to achieve the dream of global imminence.

Moderated by Manoj Vidwans Global Head, Cable Media & Entertainment Tech Mahindra, the panel saw heavyweights and lynchpins of the content industry like Blaise Fernandes President – The Indian Music Industry, Gaurav Gandhi Director & Country General Manager Amazon Prime Video, Karan Bedi CEO, MX player, Manish Vyas President Communications Media & Entertainment Business & The CEO Network Services Tech Mahindra Technology, Punit Misra CEO- Domestic Broadcast Zee Entertainment Enterprises, SivaKumar Sundaram Chairman Executive Committee Bennett Coleman, Shridhar Rajgopal Managing Director, Accenture Interactive

While Fernandes opined that *'the rising tide raises all boats'*, Gandhi extolled the importance of VFX in the post pandemic age of social distancing. Gandhi shared that *'50 to 70 per cent of animation is international. We need more domestic home-grown content. 20 to 30 per cent of our shows are based on VFX like period drama & sports. AVGC will be boosted with the domestic demand. Post covid, these sectors can fundamentally solve the problems that content creators are facing.'*

Bedi echoed the demand for homegrown content. He shared that *'there has been an uptick in mobile gaming since the pandemic as India is a smartphone country first'*. Vyas appended the notion by alluding to the statistics that a whopping *'54 per cent of all gamers are on mobile so AVGC industry is indeed on a rise'*.

Envisaging the future of AVGC through the lens of experience, the next **session** saw AVGC leaders of India leveraging their experience and providing fresh perspectives about the indicators of opportunity in the years ahead. Panelist included Rajesh R. Turakhia Founder & Director, Frameboxx, Ashish Kulkarni Founder & CEO, Punnaryug Artvision, A K Madhavan Founder & CEO, Assemblage, Kireet Khurana Indian Filmmaker Storyteller & Ad-film Director & Founder Director, Climb Media (I) Pvt Limited, Merzin Tavarria Creative Director & General Manager DNEG | Co-founder, Prime Focus, Munjal Shroff Director & COO, Graphiti, Nitish Mittersain CEO & Founder, Nazara Technologies, P Jayakumar CEO TOONZ, Media Group, Rajiv Chilaka Founder & Managing Director, Green Gold Animation, Manvendra Shukul CEO, Lakshya Digital.

With the dust settling on the new normal, talent has been challenged to continue AVGC production in the trying circumstances. The next panel saw people managers and talent managers reflect on the paradigm shift, the consequences and emerging trends in future talent hiring, training and engagement.

Panelist included Ms Kranti Sarma Head of Studio Film & Episodic Visual Effects (FEV), Technicolor India, Jimmy Kuriakose Head HR, Technicolor, Delna Dhamodiwala Head of HR & Talent Acquisition- DNEG, Saurabh Dalmiya Head of Business Development Anibrain, Maurice Patel Senior Director, Industry Strategy & Marketing – M&E Autodesk.

Proceedings were carried forward by a session focused on imagining the future of AVGC from the perspective of a State Government. Panelists included Jagadish Shettar Hon'ble Minister for Large & Medium Scale Industries Government of Karnataka, SivaKumar Sundaram Chairman Executive Committee Bennett Coleman and Sumit Malik COO & CTO, Technicolor

Karnatka has arguably been the frontrunner in the AVGC sector with *'growth-stimulating policies, start up provisions, center of excellence and incubation centers that are built to nurture talents including the presence of international powerhouses like Technicolor.'*

AVGC sector has witnessed the advancement of new technologies and faster rendering capabilities. Not limited to just entertainment, *'AVGC has seeped into many crucial sectors of the country including education, health care, aerospace and a variety of other industries that increasingly need simulation and imagery. STPI has a plethora of centers of excellence fueled through Government patronage and which will fuse convergence between new smart tech IOT, AI, AR, VR, XR, etc. & the traditional media industries leading to new outcomes.'*

The next panel saw an enlightening discussion on the steps taken to chart the future of the sector. Panelists included Subodh Sachan Director Software Technology Park of India, Meity and Managing Director & CEO AIC STPI-NEXT Initiatives, Omkar Rai Director General Software Technology Park of India, A K Garg Director, Ministry of Electronics, Information & Technology, Venkat Sitaram Geo Head & General Manager, South, Dell Technologies, Sridhar Muppidi Co-founder PurpleTalk

Panelists highlighted the initiatives and challenges. The session gave rise to significant take aways :-

- 1) Growth of gamings is at 41 per cent.
- 2) Animation & VFX are growing at 16 per cent.
- 3) During lockdown, India quickly resorted to digital platform. Media & entertainment and digital content form has seen multifold interest from the Indian viewers.
- 4) Conducive environment, ecosystem and adaptability has been seen in a significant manner which has created a lot of hope and given a background and foundation on which plans can be made on so many things in the times to come.
- 5) While we create digital content in terms of comics and other characters, we must also focus on developing these Indian content, Indian heroes and Indian themes.

Initiatives :-

- 1) One of the panelist, Mr Shridhar is closely involved with the kind of initiative that STPI has taken in Hyderabad in terms of Image Tower or Image Incubation Center focused around AVGC technology
- 2) This is not the only COE or incubation center. India has launched 12 centers of excellence wherein we are doing things at different levels.
- 3) Screenings to onboarding to somewhere startups are being nurtured now within incubators now in the ecosystem.
- 4) 12 centres are already launched and 6 centers are underway.
- 5) 18 COE (Centers Of Excellence) in pipeline and 12 already launched.
- 6) 6 of them are centered around AVGC technology.
- 7) 1 in hyderabad for AVGC directly, another center of excellence created in Bhuvaneshwar which is for AR VR and immersive visualisation, another in Mohali which is about computer vision- AI and Animation particularly, 3 centers in north east; 1st in Shillong for which Biren Ghose Head Of Technicolor India is the chief mentor, 2nd emerging technology-focused centre of excellence in Imphal, 3rd center of excellence is upcoming in mizoram which is directly about gaming.

Valedictory session saw dignitaries like K Madhavan Chairman CII National Committee on Media & Entertainment and Managing Director Star India Pvt Limited & Disney India, Chandrajit Banerjee Director General Confederation of Indian Industry and Piyush Goyal Hon'ble Minister for Commerce & Industry and Railways.

Shree Piyush Goyal's bullish remarks served as an encouragement for the attendees. Citing the example of *Chota Bheem*, he expressed a wish to see more Indian characters from mythology like Buddhism and Mahabharatha created for global audiences. From stimulus packages to growth rate to AVGC industry helping India become a soft power, he touched upon all aspects and lauded the efforts of the creative professionals. He shared that *'India's VFX and post production segment will reach about 127 billion rupees by 2021'*. According to him, *'National Education Policy 2020 will encourage innovative and out-of-the-box thinking which will be beneficial for the sector.'*

Sharing an anecdote about Prime Minister Modi, he shared how Prime Minister once suggested that *'train travel can be made fun with the help of stories being told through projections about the locations the train is passing through.'*

With 145 speakers including national, international experts, Oscar winners and 1000 plus attendees engaging in knowledge sessions, virtual exhibitions buyer-seller meet, masterclasses and workshops, CII Summit FX 2020 became a veritable connectivity platform to discuss the pressing need and stimulate growth in the Indian Media & Entertainment industry.