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INTERNATIONAL

Technology News

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Reliance expands reach

From Indian film firm to global player

By TODD LONGWELL

In 2005, when Reliance ADA Group acquired the controlling stake in Adlabs Films to create Reliance MediaWorks, it was a smaller player in India's vast film industry, with 24 cinema screens in the state of Maharashtra and a motion-picture processing lab in its capital, Mumbai.



Today, just after its fifth anniversary, it's a showbiz conglom, operating more than 500,000 sq. ft. of facilities spread across India, the U.S., the U.K. and Japan offering a comprehensive array of film and TV production and post-production services. These include image processing (DI, restoration and 2D-to-3D conversion), vfx, animation, and studio and equipment rentals.

"India is a hugely growing market in terms of the domestic industry, not just in films, but in television and commercials," says Anil Arjun, CEO of Reliance MediaWorks since 2008. With its labs already handling 80% of the processing and printing for the Hindi film industry, RMW "saw a great opportunity (that included both) backward and forward integration," he adds.

RMW's other holdings include more than 550 Big Cinemas screens spread across India, the U.S., Malaysia, Netherlands and Nepal, and Big Synergy, a major player in Indian non-fiction television with such programs as "India's Got Talent" and "Big Money."

But the shiniest addition to what Anjun refers to as RMW's "string of pearls" is its Reliance MediWorks Studios, which opened for business in January. When the second phase of construction is completed later this year, it will boast eight soundstages spread across seven acres with a built-up area of 200,000 sq. ft. -- enough to handle 25% of the studio work in India.

More on Reliance MediaWorks at 5

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