

BEYOND AUDIO AND PROJECTORS: AN INTERVIEW WITH **YUSUF GALABHAIWALA**, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS – **LUMINA SCREENS**

*Despite rapid innovation in projectors and audio systems, projection screens are still an overlooked element. In an exclusive interview with AV-ICN Expo Magazine team, **Yusuf Galabhaiwala**, Director of Operations, Galalite Screens, shares insights and his perspectives on the projector screens market and his focus towards educating customers and the industry about the importance of the screens.*

Q1. What inspired Lumina's decision to localise manufacturing, and how has this aligned with the brand's long-term strategic vision?

With our history spanning around 60 years, from manufacturing cinema screens to studio, Galalite relaunched its home cinema segment with the brand name – **Lumina Screens**. However, what we noticed back then and even now, is that the screen is often considered the least important aspect of a home cinema setup. But here's the thing: if you're investing in a good projector like a 4K HD projector that starts at around 1-1.5 lakhs and you're projecting onto a wall, you're losing a lot of that value. While a proper screen is engineered to reflect light with accurate colours, walls are generally designed to diffuse or absorb light; they're not made to reflect it accurately.

At Lumina, even our base-level fabric, called **Matte White**, is com-

pletely textureless. It doesn't have a visible structure, so the focus-enhancing capability of that surface increases significantly. These may seem like small details, but they make a huge difference in the complete home cinema experience. In fact, the screen is actually the least expensive component in a home cinema setup. So, with Lumina, my long-term strategy is to bring screen quality and the importance of the projection screen into mainstream of the home cinema setup.

Q2. As Director of Operations, how do you cultivate a culture of innovation and quality within Lumina — balancing operational efficiency, product development, and hands-on R&D?

Lumina, as a brand, is of course focused on cinema screens. But as an organisation, we also manufacture projection screens specifically for cinemas. My R&D team and production team are separate for different segments, but



we're essentially leveraging the same expertise that we've developed from the research and development for the cinema industry. We know exactly what audiences expect.

When people watch content in a cinema, the screen surface plays a crucial role in delivering the experience. That's the same philosophy we apply when we say, 'Bring your cinema home.' Whether it's a commercial cinema or a home cinema setup, the principle remains the same.

In both environments — cinema halls or home theatres — 90% of the time, viewers' focus is on the screen. Any compromise in screen quality spoils the experience, regardless of how good the rest of the setup is. Therefore, both our R&D and operations teams know what the customer expects when it comes to a good display, and that's exactly what we aim to deliver.

Q3. Lumina's products emphasise technologies like ALR, RGB boosting, and HDR luminosity. How do these surface technologies translate into real-world advantages for segments like home cinema and corporate?

If we talk about ALR specifically – Ambient Light Rejection, it behaves very differently depending on the application. In a commercial cinema, users would generally want the lights completely off to focus solely on the film with majorly unknown audience around. However, in a home cinema setup, the scenario is different. Viewers know the people around them and prefer to keep slight ambient light on. That's where ALR comes in.

While, grey surfaces help to a certain extent, they also compromise the white levels. White channels end up looking grey because of the matte grey texture. Therefore, Lumina's ALR screens for long-throw projectors are slightly silverish in colour. They have a gain of 1.2, which means they're 20% brighter than a traditional grey or even matte white surface, yet they still retain a dark grey tone to boost contrast levels. That's how our ALR technology works, and it's very different from what is generally available in the market today.

Q4. With India shifting towards immersive setups, what market trends are you tracking to guide product strategy? Any regional adoption patterns that surprised you?

As of now, I would say we are still relatively new to the home cinema setup in terms of regional patterns and consumer

behaviour. However, what has surprised me the most is that even today, majority of people don't fully understand the role of projection screens.

Most of the focus tends to be on speakers, projectors, seating, acoustics, and comfort — but not on the screen itself.

The lack of attention toward projection screens is something that genuinely surprises me. That's why my strategy moving forward is to continue focusing on educating customers and the industry about the importance of the screen. Until that happens, I'll keep working on raising awareness, because the projection screen is a critical part of the home cinema experience.

Q5. How is the adoption of premium screen types evolving across verticals like residential v/s corporate? Which product innovations are most sought-after?

Corporate segment has witnessed more surprising turns lately. As online collaboration has increased with the changing trends, the demand for larger display sizes has also gone up. Mainstream options like 65-inch and 75-inch displays are widely available, but when companies require much larger screen surfaces, projection screens become the go-to solution.

At the same time, ambient light is always a factor in corporate setups, because users don't typically have the option of turning off all the lights in a boardroom or a meeting room. That's why ALR screens are being normalised in corporate spaces. Premium ALR screens are now increasingly being used in boardrooms and meeting rooms to deliver better visual performance under ambient lighting conditions.

Q6. According to you what major trends are currently shaping the Pro AV landscape in India? Whether it's increased investment in hybrid collaboration, the rise of experiential retail, or government-led digital infrastructure projects—what shifts do you believe are defining the next phase of AV growth in the country?

When it comes to the pro AV landscape,

we're noticing a few key trends. There are essentially two segments within home cinema right now. More and more people are looking for larger screens even in their regular home setups. With televisions, you can typically go up to about 98- or 100-inches diagonally. But when people want something beyond that, like a 120-inch, 133-inch, or even larger diagonal, they turn to projection screens – catered by ALR technology effectively. The demand for better ALR screens is only increasing, and we're continuously innovating in that space, actively working on developing newer, brighter screen surfaces with improved ambient light rejection capabilities.

At the same time, there's another trend we're seeing, especially in the southern parts of India. In regions outside of cities like Mumbai, people often have second homes with dedicated home cinema setups. In those setups, customers are increasingly looking for speaker placements behind the screen to create a true cinematic experience. That's exactly why we launched the Accupix Pro. The screen caters to this need with an acoustically transparent, textureless surface that doesn't compromise on image quality.

Q7. Accupix Pro has recently gained attention as one of Lumina's flagship offerings. What distinguishes this screen fabric in terms of performance and application?

Accupix Pro Screen was recently launched by Lumina Screens with the aim to create a true cinematic experience. The screen comes with a tighter weave and is virtually invisible. Even though it's an acoustically transparent surface, it remains completely textureless. This ensures that the image quality isn't compromised — there's no distortion or interference caused by the screen texture. So, across each product segment, whether it's corporate, residential, or cinema, we continue working on premium experiences. We constantly strive to innovate, making sure that the technology matches the evolving needs of different use cases.