

AV-ICN CONFERENCE: THE RISE OF DOOH IN INDIA

Featuring expert perspectives from leading display companies, the conference session held at AV-ICN Expo 2025, titled “DOOH: Catalyst for AV Active LED Growth in India”, unpacks market growth, technology evolution, and the structural challenges that continue to define the industry’s trajectory. This feature presents a short excerpt from the session where industry leaders - **Sanket Rambhia**, Managing Director & Founder, Xtreme Media; **Vineet Mahajan**, Director, Unilumin India; **Gangasagar Amula**, Director, Absen India; and **Sandeep Mali**, came together to discuss how Digital Out-of-Home (DOOH) is shaping the future of India’s Active LED market.



L to R: Sanket Rambhia - Xtreme Media, Vineet Mahajan - Unilumin India, Gangasagar Amula - Absen India, and Sandeep Mali at AV-ICN Expo Conference and Seminar 2025

BEYOND BILLBOARDS: THE RISE OF DOOH IN INDIA’S LED GROWTH MARKET

An Excerpt from AV-ICN Conference and Seminar 2025 - “DOOH: Catalyst for AV Active LED Growth in India”

India’s LED display market is no longer emerging. It is accelerating. With rapid urbanisation, increased digital adoption, and a growing appetite for high-impact visual communication, the sector is witnessing sustained momentum. DOOH, in particular, has emerged as a critical growth engine,

redefining how brands interact with audiences in public spaces. From transit hubs and highways to retail environments, digital displays are becoming integral to modern infrastructure. The shift is not just about visibility, but about delivering dynamic, real-time, and targeted content.

The session marks its beginning where **Sanket Rambhia** states, “LED display market is growing at a rapid pace. Post-COVID, it has seen growth of over 25% CAGR. One of the key growth drivers has been digital DOOH, which has transformed the urban landscape”.

The numbers reflect this transformation. With the DOOH segment projected to grow significantly in the coming years, its share within the broader out-of-home ecosystem is steadily increasing, signalling a clear shift in advertiser preferences.

A MARKET ON THE MOVE: UNDERSTANDING THE DOOH ECOSYSTEM

To fully grasp the growth of DOOH, it is essential to understand its structural components. The ecosystem broadly spans outdoor billboards, transit advertising, and retail or in-mall displays, each contributing differently to adoption and innovation.

Outdoor billboards offer scale and visibility, transit advertising benefits from high dwell time, and retail environments enable immersive brand experiences.

Vineet Mahajan explains, "When we talk about DOOH, there are three components: outdoor billboards, transit advertising, and retail spaces, and each of them is growing in its own way."

Despite this progress, the industry is still evolving. "India is still at a very nascent stage. It is just the tip of the iceberg," adds Mahajan.

INNOVATION DRIVING ENGAGEMENT

DOOH is rapidly transforming into an experiential medium. Today's displays are interactive, intelligent, and visually dynamic designed to capture attention and create impact.

From curved LED installations to kinetic displays, brands are actively pushing the boundaries of creativity. **Gangasagar Amula** notes, "Customers want to do something different. They are talking about curved LEDs and kinetic displays. A lot of innovation is happening in the market".

Technological advancements are further enhancing capabilities, particularly with AI integration and improved display performance. "Technology is evolving rapidly. AI is getting integrated into hardware, enabling displays to perform in real time based on content," adds Amula.

THE COST V/S VALUE EQUATION

While innovation continues at pace, cost sensitivity remains a defining characteristic of the Indian market. Balancing performance with affordability is an ongoing challenge for both manufacturers and buyers.

There is a growing need to shift focus from upfront cost to long-term value and return on investment. Amula highlights,

"Technology is evolving rapidly. AI is getting integrated into hardware, enabling displays to perform in real time based on content."

**Gangasagar Amula, Director,
Absen India**

"India is a price-sensitive market, but we need to move from cost discussions to ROI and value. There is no parity, you can get quotes at very different price points, and customers don't always know what they are getting."

The absence of standardisation adds another layer of complexity, often leading to inconsistent pricing and confusion among buyers.

REGULATORY AND OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

Regulatory inconsistency continues to impact the pace of DOOH adoption, particularly in outdoor environments where permissions vary across regions. Mahajan points out, "Government policies are not uniform and that makes advertisers a bit cautious when investing in outdoor DOOH. Even the best LED won't perform unless it is installed properly, and skilled manpower is a major challenge."

Operational challenges, especially around installation and execution, also play a critical role in performance outcomes. These issues underline the importance of building stronger frameworks and improving technical capabilities across the industry.

BRIDGING THE AWARENESS GAP

Lack of awareness among buyers remains a key concern. Many decision-makers are still unfamiliar with technical specifications, leading to choices driven more by cost than quality. **Sandeep Mali** observes, "Customers are not always aware of what they are buying, even basic specifications are not fully understood."

To address this, industry stakeholders are encouraging hands-on evaluation and real-world comparisons. "Seeing is believing. Customers should compare and experience different solutions before making a choice," adds Mahajan.

THE PUSH FOR LOCALISATION

Government initiatives and global supply chain shifts are driving conversations around local manufacturing. While progress is being made, the ecosystem is still developing. Mali explains, "We are moving towards local manufacturing, but we still depend on imports for key components."

The development of domestic semiconductor capabilities is expected to play a crucial role in strengthening the industry. "Semiconductors are the backbone of LED technology. Once we have local production, it will be a game changer," notes Mahajan.

WHAT LIES AHEAD

The future of DOOH in India will be shaped by a combination of technological innovation and market readiness. Emerging solutions such as COB and advanced optical systems are expected to enhance performance, particularly in controlled environments. However, practical challenges, especially in outdoor conditions, influence the pace of adoption.

Mali points out, "New technologies will come into the mainstream, but their application will depend on practicality, especially for outdoor use."

India's DOOH market is at a pivotal stage, with strong growth potential but several structural challenges to address. The coming years will be critical in determining how effectively the industry can scale and standardise. The opportunity is significant, but so is the need for collaboration, innovation, and education. Amula concludes, "The industry is growing at a fast pace. What we are seeing today is just the beginning."

CONCLUSION

DOOH is evolving into a powerful medium that goes far beyond traditional outdoor advertising. With its ability to deliver dynamic, data-driven, and immersive experiences, it is redefining the role of display technology in modern communication.

While challenges remain, the direction is clear. With the right mix of innovation, policy support, and market awareness, DOOH is set to become a cornerstone of India's digital infrastructure, driving the next phase of growth in the active LED industry.

View the entire conference session
on AV-ICN Expo YouTube Channel.

