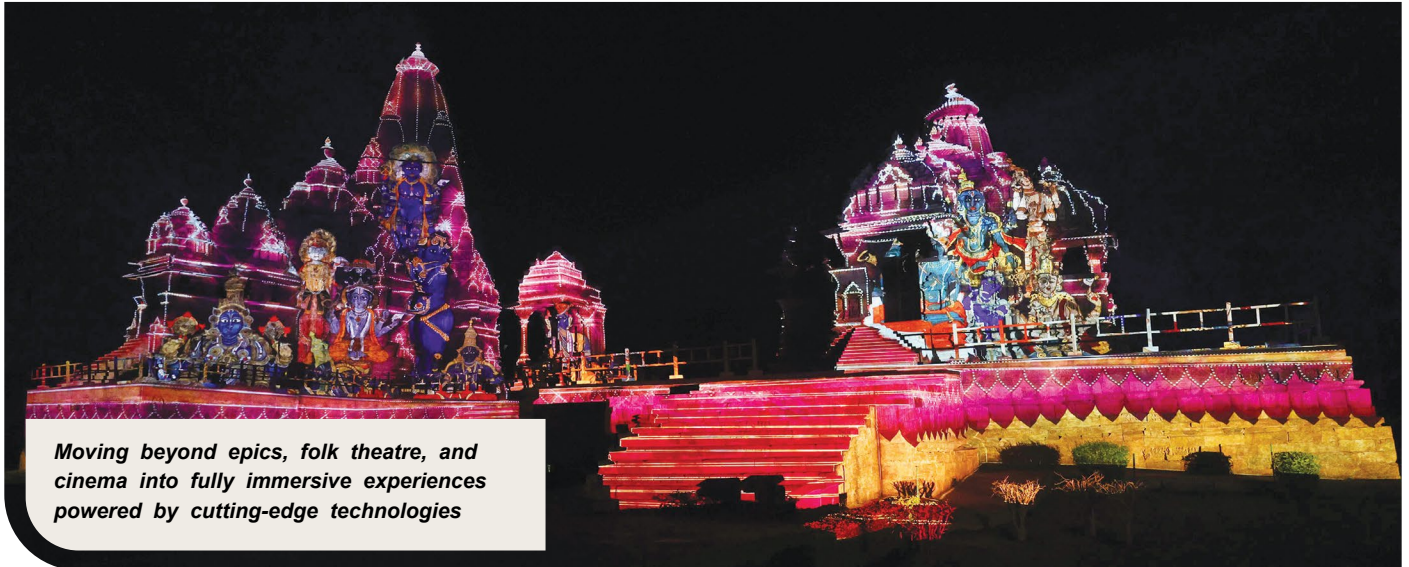


*From projection mapping on historic monuments to interactive exhibitions in cultural spaces, audiences today want to step inside the narrative rather than just watch it. This special feature shared by **Rishubh Nayar**, Sales Director for India, **Christie Digital**, highlights how this convergence of art and technology is not just enriching culture but also unlocking powerful new economic opportunities, positioning India at the forefront of immersive storytelling worldwide.*



Moving beyond epics, folk theatre, and cinema into fully immersive experiences powered by cutting-edge technologies

IMMERSIVE STORYTELLING IN INDIA: HOW TECHNOLOGY IS TRANSFORMING ART AND EXPERIENCES

Contributor: Rishubh Nayar, Sales Director for India, Christie Digital

India has always been a land of stories. From the grand epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata to the timeless traditions of dance, folk theatre, and cinema, storytelling has shaped how we share culture, history, and identity. But today, storytelling looks very different from even a decade ago. Audiences no longer want to view stories through traditional formats. They want to step inside the narrative, to feel moved by it, and to be completely immersed in the moment.

This transformation is not just cultural but economic. In 2023, India's

immersive technology market was valued at USD 1.26 billion, and is projected to soar to USD 7.82 billion by 2030, growing at nearly 30% annually. Alongside, immersive content creation is expected to quadruple in value over the same period. Clearly, the appetite and opportunity for new ways of storytelling have never been greater.

Across the country, museums, festivals, heritage sites, and even shopping malls are reimagining themselves through projection mapping, AR/VR, and large-scale installations. From light-and-sound shows at historic monuments to interactive exhibitions in malls, immersive storytelling

is rapidly redefining cultural spaces, blending art and technology into unforgettable experiences.

THE ROADBLOCKS TO IMMERSION

Creating immersive experiences in India is an exciting opportunity, but it doesn't come without challenges. For many cultural institutions and organisers, the first obstacle is often the budget. Immersive technology is still perceived as more costly than more traditional formats.

Even when resources are available, technology is frequently introduced too late in the process. Creative directors may shape

their vision first and bring technologists in only at the execution stage. This mismatch often results in higher costs, compromised outcomes, or experiences that flatter to deceive.

Infrastructure adds another layer of complexity. From centuries-old temples to intimate galleries and bustling open-air spaces, India's cultural landscape is as diverse as its stories. Each venue presents its own technical demands, requiring solutions that are flexible, lightweight, and able to adapt to challenging environments without compromising impact.

Finally, awareness remains a significant hurdle. Many decision-makers still view immersive projection, AR, or interactive installations as "nice-to-have" additions rather than powerful storytelling tools capable of transforming audience engagement.

A FRAMEWORK FOR SUCCESS

The solution lies in rethinking how projects are planned. This starts with a simple yet powerful four-pillar framework: space, budget, audience, and timeline. By evaluating these factors and involving technology partners early in the creative process, creators can ensure that vision and feasibility move in step, saving both

time and resources.

When technology is treated as a creative partner, entirely new formats emerge, whether that's AR overlays during a heritage walk, digital recreations of folk art, or immersive festival installations that blend tradition with innovation.

Equally important are solutions tailored to India's diverse environments. For instance, compact and omnidirectional systems can elevate audience experiences. Through improved brightness, colour accuracy, power requirements, and form factor, audience experiences are natural and true-to-life whether the space is a limited gallery, an outdoor festival, or the uneven surfaces of historic architecture.

A NEW ERA FOR INDIAN STORYTELLING

We've already seen how immersive technology is transforming storytelling in India. At Khajuraho, projection mapping has brought ancient temples to life. Light-and-sound shows are redefining heritage tourism, while digital art exhibitions attract younger audiences to museums. Festivals, too, are blending folklore with modern visuals, proving how technology can

preserve culture, bridge generations, and captivate audiences in ways traditional formats cannot. The annual Ayodhya Deepotsav celebration is one such example.

As demand for immersive experiences continues to rise, the way forward lies in collaboration and accessibility. Artists, technologists, and cultural institutions must work together, aligning creative ambition with technical expertise to reimagine how stories are told. Expanding immersive spaces beyond metros into Tier-2 cities will make these experiences more inclusive and further fuel the appetite for innovation.

Sustainability is just as important. Energy-efficient RGB laser projection, for instance, can save nearly 20 GWH of electricity annually, making immersive installations more environmentally viable and financially practical over the long term.

India is uniquely positioned to lead in this space. With its rich storytelling heritage, government support for smart tourism and digital preservation, and audiences hungry for new experiences, the country has the potential to become a global hub for immersive cultural tourism and next-generation art.