

A Legacy For A Lifetime

How Famous Studios is reinventing its services for a creative world that is more cohesive and integrated than ever before

Famous Studios, like the name suggests, is a famous destination for music artists, recording/mixing/mastering/production/postproduction engineers, and creative talent looking to elevate their content with quality audio and acoustic tech/equipment, CGI, and VFX. Now, as **Anant Roongta** takes over the reins at the studios, he aims to continue the legacy of Famous Studios while envisioning a future where the studios turn into an enabler of crème-de-la-crème audiovisual craft and creative solutions. **PALM Expo Magazine** reports.

Famous Studios, founded in 1946 by J.B. Roongta, have expanded its reach to several parts of the country with its goal to deliver integrated content services - today, it has a presence in Mahalaxmi, Khar, and Andheri in Mumbai and in Hyderabad

Famous Studios first opened its doors to the world in 1946 in Mahalaxmi, Mumbai, where founder **J.B. Roongta** built a legacy of bridging the gap between demand for ADR/Music production and postproduction services and a state-of-the-art studio that delivers on the demand brought to life a seamless

space housing cutting-edge tech, infrastructure, and talent in order to offer, as the official website says, "a canvas for storytellers".

The legacy continues.

In the span of 77 years, Famous Studios has expanded from its original space in Mahalaxmi to locations in Khar, Mumbai in 2012 to Andheri in 2022 and the latest addition in Hyderabad in 2023.

After Covid, with a rise in demand for content in theatres and on OTT platforms, the team at Famous Studios witnessed the growing acceptance of these segments and began to focus more on them in terms of service and delivery.

In 2022, the team launched a new facility in Andheri, Mumbai, which is a modern-day postproduction and visual effects facility. The studios in Khar and Andheri cater to LF, OTT, Advertising, and Music Videos. In 2023, the team opened a facility in Hyderabad to focus on high-end computer-generated images (CGI) and VFX.

What sets the studios a class apart is the fact that they are all **Dolby Atmos HE** compliant and house the latest equipment, tools, and software to nail their service delivery to perfection.

Famous Studios' Atmos 7.1.4 HE Mix & Dub Room in Andheri is equipped with **AVID S6 M60** mixing console, speakers, subwoofers, and condenser microphones from **Neumann**, and

headphones from **Sennheiser**. A standout feature of the studio was the combination of **Chord Audio Amplifiers** and **Dynaudio M3** Custom Main Speakers along with Dynaudio surrounds. The 5.1 Mix & Dub Studio is fitted with **SSL Big Six Super Analogue Mixer**, speakers, subwoofers, condenser microphones, and boom microphones from Neumann, headphones from Sennheiser, and audio equipment from **Focusrite** among other equipment.

The **Studio at Galactica - A - Ramee** in Khar houses control surface from AVID, speakers and amplifiers from Dynaudio and Genelec, microphones and headphones from Neumann, Schoeps, Behringer, DPA Microphones, Audio Technica, AKG, and Shure, while the studio at Galactica - B - Ramee is elevated by control surface from AVID, speakers and amplifiers from Dynaudio, microphones and headphones from Neumann, Pulse, Sennheiser, Behringer, and Shure.

Famous Studios' various branches across the country are supervised by independent artists and the VFX department at the Famous Studios are spearheaded by Creative Director **Jayant Hadke**.

Some of the most noteworthy projects in which Famous Studios has lent its expertise to are Dream Girl 2 (ADR), The Night Manager/The Night Manager 2 (ADR), Thank You For Coming (ADR), Ujala Liquid Detergent (TVC ADR), Zomato Everyday (TVC ADR), PI Meena (The Girl) (Mixing), and more.

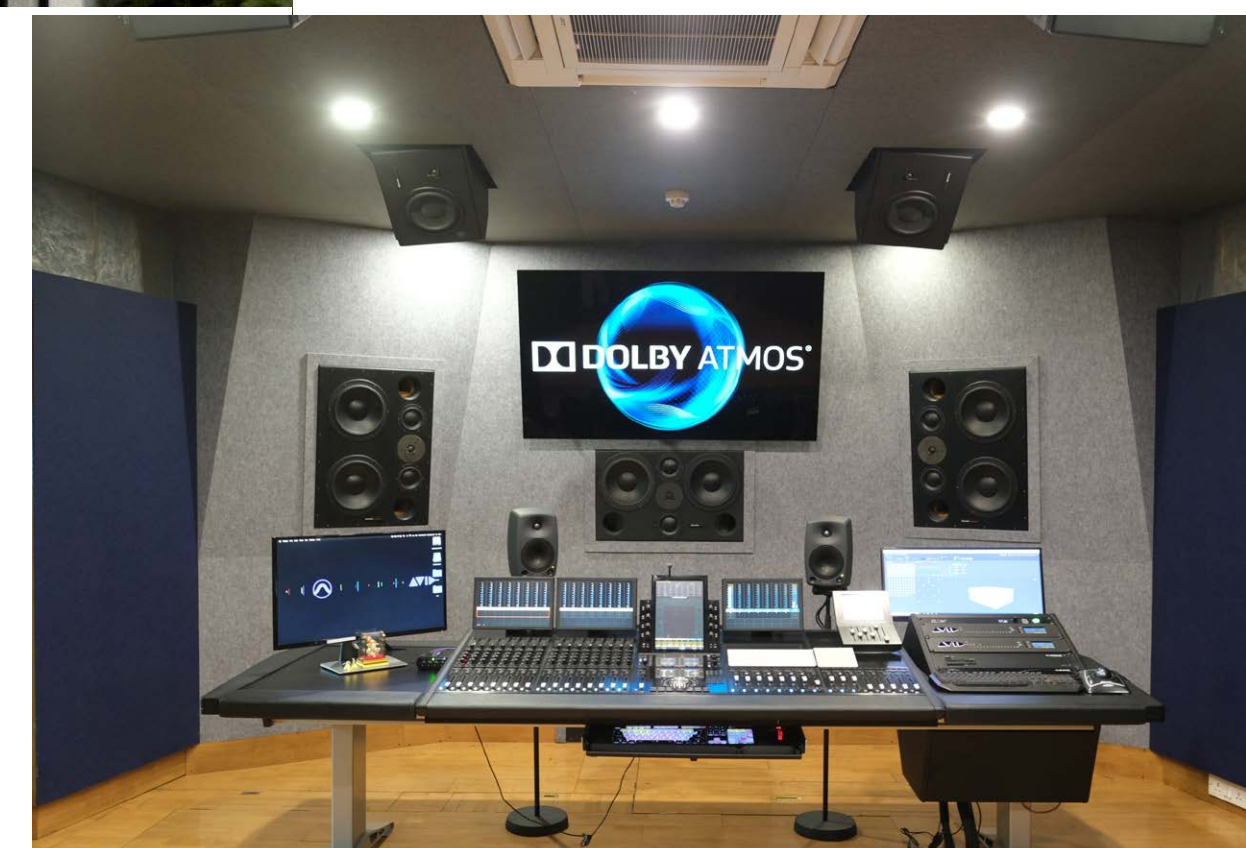
The Acoustic Design: Opportunities & Challenges

Since 1994, the team at Famous Studios have entrusted acoustic consultant **Munro Acoustics** to oversee the acoustic design of the studios. The newly opened branch at Andheri is no exception.

Speaking about his experience of working as an acoustic consultant for Famous Studios' Andheri studio, **Cyril Thomas**, Senior Acoustic Designer, Munro Acoustics commented, "What worked in our favour at Famous Studios was the height of the rooms in the studio. With respect to designing an Atmos Studio, height is a big factor because you need certain dimensions to ensure that the studio is compliant with Dolby standards. Although there were still massive beams that run through the structures, the height definitely helped. We tried to maintain the sonic signature as that of the Santacruz studio as well. At Famous Studios, we were at the liberty of doing the architectural design intent, with architects **Malhar Ambekar** and **Rachel Jacob**. Malhar specifically designed the studios and Rachel oversaw the design of the DI room, the lighting, and more."

Recounting the challenges, which were albeit almost non-existent, Thomas added, "In terms of challenges, I don't think there was anything noteworthy like you have in certain studios. With the design aspect and intent of the space, **Anant Roongta** had certain ideas about the colour palette, which he wanted to employ

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The Atmos 7.1.4 HE Mix and Dub Room at Famous Studios in Andheri is equipped with cutting-edge technology - mixing console from AVID, speakers and amplifiers from Dynaudio and Chord Audio, Analogue Mixers from SSL, microphones from Neumann, and more



In Conversation With **ANANT ROONGTA,** **MD,** **Famous Studios**

What motivated you to join Famous Studios as a Managing Director?

My first stint with Famous was in 2009, which lasted about 5 years. In 2014, I decided to move away to continue my entrepreneurial journey in a sports company, which lasted for 4 years. I rejoined as a Managing Director in Famous in 2018. When I was in my sports tourism business, the entrepreneurial bug bit me and it gave me a very good sense of how to spot opportunities and scale a business. Around 2018, the entire business of content had seen a seismic shift. So, I decided to come back to the company to make certain radical changes in the business, which has now led to many new introductions of products and services across the board for multiple segments in media and entertainment.

What are your day-to-day responsibilities at Famous Studios?

It's a unique responsibility, which ranges from leading strategic growth of the business to sometimes troubleshooting when working long drawn, long format projects. So, my usual day at Famous Studios is packed with constant meetings with the clients and constant internal meetings with our senior management, artists and line producers who are responsible for various services that we offer to our clients. Also, because the industry is changing so quickly, I do spend a couple of hours daily looking at how we can transform the business. My day usually starts at around nine in the morning and ends around six thirty in the evening. The days are usually power-packed, filled with fun and excitement; sometimes obviously, it could get overwhelming, but it is part of the journey of any business.

As the third-generation entrepreneur hailing from a family that established the legacy of Famous Studios, what is your strategy for continuing and elevating it to bigger, better heights?

I believe any studio that is offering a product or a service to content creators must look at it as a holistic solution – not only the processing part of it, but also how or what is the right way of entering the market with a creative

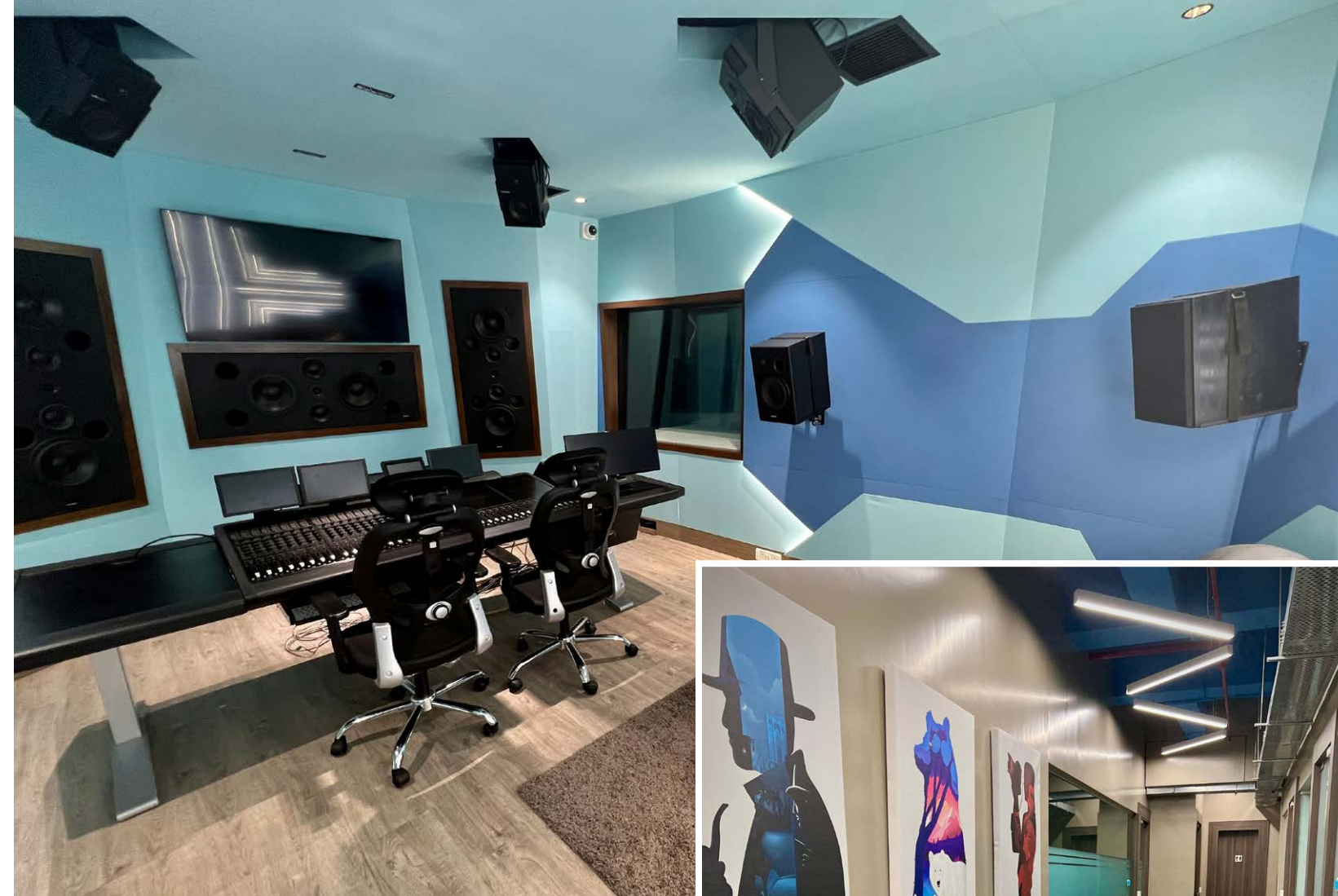
approach, where you would be able to add value to your client all the way from pre-production to delivery. So, this is where our focus is right now. In addition to what we possess in technology, infrastructure, talent, and tech, we're also building new products for the next generation, which boil down to things like pre-vis, virtual production & other immersive technologies.

From the film point of view, we encourage a collaborative approach with all stakeholders - producers, directors, cinematographers, and visual effects supervisors to launch new products in pre-vis, post-vis, tech-vis, because we believe if more time and effort is spent on these activities, there will be a significant positive impact on the eventual output, the look and feel of the film – and that is our eventual objective. Recently, we opened a facility in Hyderabad and are looking nationwide in areas where there is a good catchment area for talent.

You have spearheaded the expansion of Famous Studios' creative, VFX, and content production facilities both in Mumbai and in Hyderabad. What motivated you to expand and did you face any challenges along the way?

After Covid, we realized that the demand for content went up, not only from the theatrical point of view, but also on OTT platforms. Also, brands started getting a lot more wary, began to understand various mediums of making their content reach the final consumer, and have now started spending money on the entire customer journey process. So, we looked at both segments as a very important focus area and the pure demand and history (stats) that were presented to me by very senior personalities in the industry gave me a lot of confidence to take up multiple challenges and expand the business' cross facilities.

In 2022, we launched a new facility in Andheri, Mumbai, a classic postproduction and visual effects facility, but all with state-of-the-art technology and very good talent. Recently, we opened a facility in Hyderabad to focus on high-end computer-generated images (CGI) and VFX. Because we set foot in a new geography, it has also given us access to a new market down south, which has really helped us. I have always believed in the industry. I have always believed in the story of India. I believe India is one nation that has so many stories, deep rooted



Famous Studios at Andheri, which began its operations in 2022, is designed as a state-of-the-art facility that can work on and deliver the most modern forms of content, from OTT to advertisements

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for the studios, but otherwise, he gave us a free hand. In the end, he just wanted to be surprised, especially with the Atmos Studio's look and feel. For the 5.1 Studio, because we wanted to maximize space, we employed an inverted detail onto the booth. The booth is a little narrow and we also had to negotiate the server room, because when you look at the server room for the Atmos Studios, there is a dedicated server for the Atmos, which is inside the sound log for the booth. Basically, we had to ensure that none of the noise from the server room gets transferred into the booth as that is a critical space."

"When you design Dolby Studios, you have a DARTD sheet, which is employed

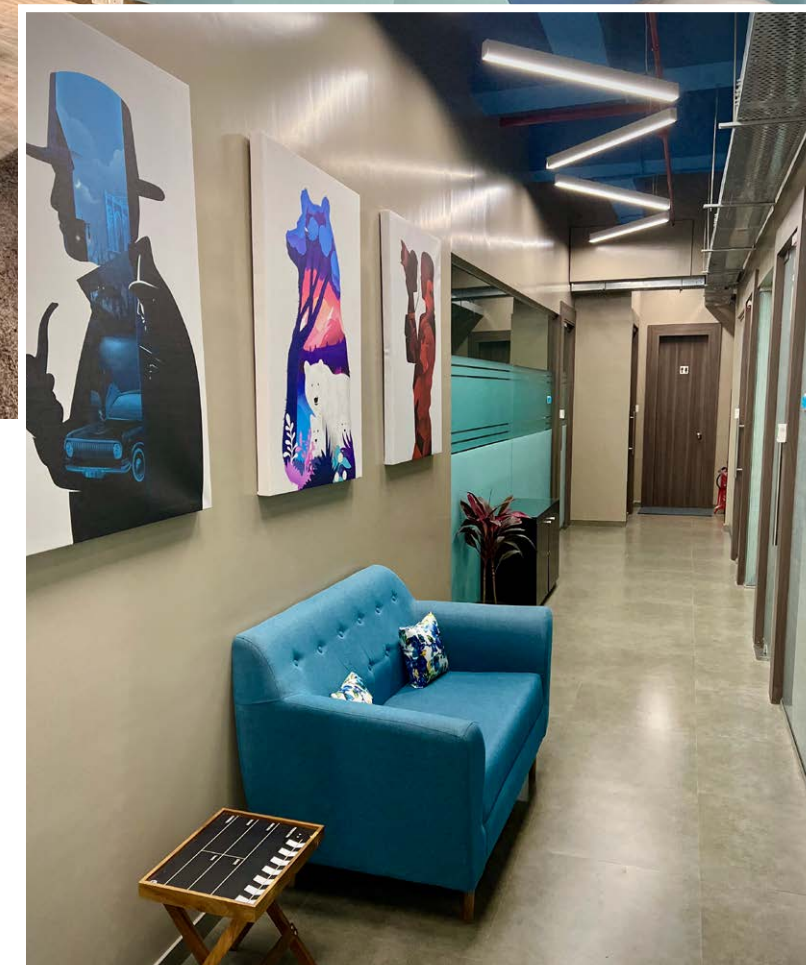
in its culture, and if we focus just on our own country, there is never going to be a dearth of content for generations to come.

Do you see a wide chasm between the technology used in recording/mixing/production and postproduction studios in India versus in international waters?

No, I think audio engineering is really consolidated. Maybe, three or four years back, sound designers would expect a massive, big 56 console to be a part of a studio's arsenal. But now, with tech advancements, designers and engineers are capable of mixing tracks and background scores, from the comfort of their homes. So, no, I don't see India having a technology that is lesser than a foreign studio. In fact, I believe in some cases we have as good or better tech than what foreign studios might have.

What is your long-term vision for Famous Studios and how do you plan on materializing it?

The long-term vision is for Famous Studios to be a global enabler of the audiovisual craft, creative solutions, and to ensure that anyone we collaborate with to create and deliver content, they have a seamless experience. Under that vision, every single segment that has a future or has a growth story will be on our radar as well.



The corridors of Famous Studios in Andheri offer an eclectic mix of tasteful, contemporary interiors - a reflection of its own identity, which is true to its roots and yet flexible enough to shape itself according to today's content trends

by Dolby," concludes Thomas while recalling how Munro Acoustics set up Dolby Atmos HE compliant studios in Andheri. "One has to fill in the details, which then generate certain angles for the products that are to be maintained. So, there are certain thresholds of angles that must be maintained for each speaker. Let's say you have a left and right speaker, you cannot go beyond certain angles and you cannot even be within certain angles. In terms of dimensions as well, we had some constraints. The room and speaker-to-speaker dimension was a certain way to clear Dolby standards. Otherwise, in terms of isolating all the bits, there was no challenge. It all went smoothly."

However, a studio is more than its acoustic design. It's also elevated to greatness by the legacy imbued within its walls – and how, generations after generations, the legacy is passed down and nurtured with great care. Anant Roongta, a third generation entrepreneur, in his role as the Managing Director at Famous Studios, aims to revolutionize the way Famous Studios creates and delivers content that comes in all shapes and sizes. *PALM Expo Magazine*, in a conversation with Anant Roongta, explores how Famous Studios, as an extension of its Managing Director's vision and mission, is adding onto its original identity with tried-and-tested acoustic layout and experiential equipment and tech.