

Bollywood is Lord of the Rings

IMImobile reveals which Movie stars are as popular on the mobile screen as on the big screen

March 11, 2008, Hyderabad, India: Shahrukh Khan and Katrina Kaif are officially the King and Queen of Mobile Content according to new research out today. With Bollywood's popularity at an all time high, IMImobile; a global provider of mobile content and value added services, commissioned a study to find which movie stars are as popular on the mobile screen as they are on the big screen.

Salman Khan, Hrithik Roshan, Akshay Kumar and Sanjay Dutt all make up the male Top 5 most downloaded movie star in terms of mobile content. Deepika Padukone, Priyanka Chopra, Lara Dutta and Aishwarya all feature in the Top 5 of the female category. The movie 'mobile content' ranges from ring tones of the film's big hits to graphics and wallpapers of the stars and the study from IMImobile takes into account all the Bollywood blockbusters from the last year. King Khan and Queen Kaif's dominance at the Box Office is translated to the mobile screen with their official coronation as 'the most downloaded movie stars to mobile' in India.

IMImobile has provided foot tapping Bollywood & Tollywood ring tones for the global mobile community for the last 7 seven years but sales are apparently higher than ever. Movie ringtones generate Rs. 200 crore annually; with the 50 million mobile phone subscribers downloading approximately 3 lakh ring tones daily, according to trade experts.

Mr. Vishwanath Alluri – CEO and Founder of IMImobile said "India has the fastest-growing mobile population in the world and is projected to reach 400 million by 2010. Mobile music downloads top the bill and are currently valued at Rs 160-180 crore (Rs 1.6-1.8 billion) in the domestic market. The music content market is mainly driven by the passion for Bollywood & Tollywood; we see a spike in downloads around the big movie releases of the year. IMImobile has always striven to provide quality mobile content and the movie section of our catalogue has always been very successful with thousands of downloads a week. We expect mobile music videos to really take off this year."

Bollywood producers like King Khan & Farhan Akhtar have used the mobile value-added service (VAS) route and made phenomenal profit even before the release of their latest films DON & Om Shanti Om. Om Shanti Om, with a budget of Rs 45 crore, starred Khan and newcomer Deepika Padukone, and was sold to Eros International for a whopping Rs 74 crore, according to industry sources.

Royalties worth approximately Rs 50-60 crore (Rs 500-600 million) were paid to the music industry in the past 18 months, and value added services - of which music with full song downloads, music videos and ring tones forms the bulk - are estimated to contribute 15-20 per cent to the overall telecommunication company revenues. About 400,000-500,000 ring tones are downloaded daily. Mono and polyphonic ring tones currently sell at a 75/25 ratio, while the fastest-growing ring tone genre is ring back tones with about 3.5 million users.

According to the research Mobile Music, ring tones and downloads are particularly popular with the youth. The IMImobile study into their own content downloads shows that when it comes to

downloading mobile graphics (from WAP sites), Priyanka Chopra is the most popular! More images of Priyanka are downloaded than of her co-star, "King of Bollywood", Shahrukh Khan! Kishore Kumar officially has silkiest voice as is downloaded more than any other Bollywood actor or actress for voice recordings of answer phone messages and other voice prompts..

The trends vary from state to state. Delhi, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh Punjab and Maharashtra are amongst the top in terms of content downloads. You would think that Mumbai's Maharashtra would top the list when it comes to movie content downloading, but you will be surprised to know that it is Rajasthan that is most hungry for movie content followed by Tamil Nadu and Punjab. Maharashtra lies back in 7th position.

New opportunities lie in the exploitation of live content via handsets, song recognition services, digital audio broadcasting, visual radio and mobile TV. Ultimately, the mobile music market will allow artists to reach a wider audience as well as win the younger audience by reaching them in a new way.