

Gramophone Company of India (A) (B): The Digital Distribution Challenge

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Introduction:



"His Master's Voice" is the title of the 1899 portrait of Nipper the dog, who was puzzled by the voice coming from the gramophone, an antique record player. Artist Francis Barraud believed that Nipper was waiting to hear his master's voice. The portrait, which became a trademark of the Gramophone Company in 1910, is still instantly recognized around the world and is considered one of the top 10 brands of the 20th century.

"Gramophone is the first company in India to come out of government-supervised bankruptcy and become profitable," declared Pradipta Mohapatra, president and chief executive officer of RPG Enterprises. RPG, the parent company of Gramophone, had played a key role in salvaging the company during the 1990s, in large part by tapping into Gramophone's rich catalog of Indian music that dated back to the early 1900s.

Although Gramophone had just come out of the most difficult period in its 100-year history, Mohapatra felt that the company could not afford to become complacent. Despite encouraging financial results in early 2000, Mohapatra and his management team at Gramophone readied themselves for the next sweeping change in the music industry--the digital revolution.

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