

# VYNSLEY FERNANDES: STEERING THE FUTURE OF DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT & CONNECTIVITY

In an era where media and technology are evolving at an unprecedented pace, Vynsley Fernandes, Whole-time Director of Hinduja Global Solutions Limited and Chief Executive Officer of NXT Media Group stands at the intersection of innovation and execution. A veteran in the media & entertainment industry, Vynsley has been the driving force behind the media businesses of Hinduja Global Solutions Ltd (HGS) across digital television, broadband & technology solutions. On the eve of NXT Media Group's 30th anniversary, Vynsley share his vision, the evolving industry, and the road ahead.



**VYNSLEY FERNANDES**

*Director, Hinduja Global Solutions Limited &  
Chief Executive Office, NXT Media Group*

**Q: You hold leadership roles across Hinduja Global Solutions, ONEOTT ENTERTAINMENT Ltd., and NXTDIGITAL. How do you manage these responsibilities effectively?**

**VF:** It's all about clarity of vision and an exceptional team. Each entity has a distinct mandate, yet they are all interwoven within the digital ecosystem. For instance, whilst the overarching HGS focuses on customer engagement and technology-driven solutions, OneOTT Entertainment or OIL is pioneering broadband connectivity across retail & enterprise segments, often leveraging NXTDIGITAL's expansive national digital television presence via satellite. By ensuring that the leadership in each vertical is empowered and aligned, we create synergy rather than silos.

**Q: What is your overarching vision for these organizations?**

**VF:** The goal has always been to make digital connectivity and entertainment seamless, accessible, and future-ready. At the heart of it all is a robust customer experience. Whether it's offering high-speed broadband through OIL or revolutionizing DTV via NXTDIGITAL, we are committed to making technology intuitive and empowering. Our customers will always remain a priority, so an enhanced customer experience is on the agenda to attract and retain subscribers. We're working towards providing our customers with better and more diverse service options, including faster speeds and more reliable connections.

## CEO INTERVIEW

**Q:** NXTDIGITAL has been a pioneer in digital solutions. What recent innovations are you most proud of?

**VF:** As we enter our 30th year since inception, our philosophy still rings solid – to align our incredible legacy with future innovation. Going back in time, we were easily India's first Multi System Operator – bringing television to millions of homes in India and setting the bar for others to follow. We launched India's first and only HITS (Headend-in-the-Sky) platform, which provides unparalleled reach to even the remotest areas – truly bringing our Government's vision of digitalization to underserved and poorly connected areas. There is no better feeling than to know your service is available from Kargil to the far reaches of the north-east of India to the southernmost tip of our country and then across to the Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Then there is the award-winning concept of NXTHUBs, especially in semi-urban and rural areas – offering a plug and play service for television & broadband. This is a key differentiator, allowing faster market penetration and service delivery compared to our competitors. It's about using technology to bridge gaps and create opportunities.

**Q:** With the rise of OTT platforms, how is ONEOTT ENTERTAINMENT positioning itself to meet the evolving consumer demands?

**VF:** The OTT boom has led to a shift from traditional content consumption to on-demand viewing. We have redefined our broadband offerings to be OTT-ready, ensuring seamless, high-speed connectivity that meets the demands of streaming, gaming, and work-from-home requirements. Globally, the average broadband speed is around 72.4 Mbps, but users in advanced economies demand significantly higher speeds, often in the range of 100-500 Mbps when it comes to seamless connectivity. We have also embraced several strategies to ensure that the user is at the centre of our service delivery. We have endeavoured to provide enhanced personalization through advanced technologies like AI-powered analytics and omnichannel engagement. Beyond infrastructure, we're also working on content partnerships to enhance value for our customers.



**Q:** How is NXTDIGITAL leveraging advancements like AI, IoT, and 5G to enhance customer experiences?

**VF:** We've always been a tech driven business and in fact HGS is premised on the principles of automation & AI. Some of the solutions developed for our enterprise venture CelerityX - like NetX and OneX have AI at their very core. AI helps us not just personalize content and customer interactions but also address challenges of scaling up solutions that customers demand. Notably our broadband-over-satellite solution SkyX is already supporting IoT devices – in providing mission critical connectivity for factories or plants operating in poorly connected areas. Needless to say, we remain committed to upgrading our infrastructure periodically to support faster speeds and more reliable connections and are integrating these future technologies into our roadmap to ensure we remain ahead of the curve.

**Q:** What key trends are shaping the media, entertainment, and telecommunications sectors today?

**VF:** The industry is witnessing rapid digital transformation. From the growing demand for hyper-personalized content to the shift towards cloud-based infrastructure and AI-driven analytics, we are undoubtedly at an inflection point. The integration of future technologies will further accelerate changes, making connectivity faster and smarter.

Let's start with streaming services, online gaming, and high-definition content. Data consumption is expected to rise significantly. This will drive demand for higher-speed broadband connections. Smart home devices will become more prevalent, leading to a greater need for robust and reliable internet connections to support these technologies, including IoT devices. Fibre optic broadband will likely see increased adoption due to its superior speed and reliability compared to traditional copper-based connections. Efforts to expand fibre infrastructure will continue, especially in underserved areas. As internet usage grows, so will concerns about cybersecurity. This will lead to increased investments in security technologies and practices to



protect users and data. Emerging applications, such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), will require higher bandwidth and lower latency, influencing the demand for advanced internet infrastructure.

**Q: What are the major challenges you foresee in these industries, and how are your companies preparing to address them?**

**VF:** Regulatory dynamics, infrastructure scalability, and evolving consumer expectations are constant challenges. However, the key here is how well we can adapt to the evolving landscape. We can tackle these through agility and strategic investments. Whether in expanding fibre networks, upgrading digital security, or ensuring compliance with new regulations, it's all part of our larger strategy and view for the future. We are working on providing retail and enterprise customers with better and more diverse service options, including faster speeds and more reliable connections.

**Q: What roles do partnerships and acquisitions play in your growth strategy?**

**VF:** "Partnership for Growth" is actually one of the five principles of the Hinduja Group and we embrace it, without exception. Our growing family of Last Mile Owners across India – providing digital TV and broadband is a case in point. To help them keep pace with the digital evolution, we even launched NXT Sangram, a curated training programme for all our partners – focused on helping them understand and leverage the changing digital landscape for growth. Another unique partnership model is our Strategic Alliance Partners (SAP) who allow us to expand our wired broadband capabilities rapidly. Whether through acquiring local ISPs to enhance broadband reach or forging tech partnerships for AI-driven solutions, collaborations are fundamental to our expansion. We will continue to seek partnerships with networks, technology providers, content creators, or other telecom companies to enhance our service portfolio and market presence while endeavouring to expand our services

to underserved or rural areas, bridging the digital divide while capturing new markets.

**Q: How are you addressing the challenges and opportunities of expanding into new markets?**

**VF:** The digital divide is a reality, and bridging it is an opportunity. We're already expanding beyond Tier 2 and Tier 3 markets, ensuring that cutting-edge connectivity reaches beyond urban hubs. We tend to leverage our unique

technologies and business strategies to gain a competitive edge. We're the only platform with HITS technology, eliminating the need for significant ground infrastructure, empowering us to penetrate rural and remote areas. We also tend to offer customers unique bundled service packages that includes digital TV, broadband, OTT platforms, and other value-added services like CCTV & VoIP through our partners. We've managed to build an extensive network of NXTHUBs across India, especially in semi-urban

and rural areas. This is a key differentiator, allowing faster market penetration and service delivery compared to our competitors. While many of our industry peers focus primarily on urban and metro markets, we are heavily centred on addressing the connectivity gap in rural India. We believe in adapting to changing consumer demands and align ourselves to ensure we're not just providing connectivity but also enhance the user experience.

**Q: Reflecting on your career, what has been the most fulfilling moment in your professional journey?**

**VF:** Interestingly, the most fulfilling moment was when we launched HITS in 2015 –bringing digital content "from the sky" literally overnight into rural markets that had virtually no access before. And being a part of that journey as rural entrepreneurs using innovation, limited resources and sheer grit battled and built out networks to connect rural homes in the most challenging of terrains, bringing TV to all. That is the indomitable spirit of our nation and what really sets us apart. And it's that passion that drives all of us at HGS, without exception! ■

