

# "There should be less niches in GE space"

*Sameer Nair, CEO of NDTV Imagine, feels the general entertainment space has lost its mass appeal, and that he could herald the return of the classic GE era. Nair opens up to Ajita Shashidhar on his new challenges.*

**We already have five-to-six channels in the general entertainment (GE) space. Do you think there's room for newer channels?**

There is plenty of space for new players. The number of single TV homes is growing, the existing single TV homes are becoming multiple TV

the category is expensive. Running a general entertainment channel is like making a blockbuster film.

**Shouldn't new players coming in look at niches?**

On the contrary, there should be fewer niches. The mass market has become a mass of niches, which is not good. Programming on a GE channel should attract masses from 6-60 years. Viewership had become fragmented. At NDTV Imagine, we hope to herald the return of the classic GE era where families watch a programme together.



**"India is a large country and it is only fair to have 3-4 players swapping the top slot"**

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homes and the audience is expanding. There is a desire to consume fresh content. Moreover, the advertising industry is also booming. More brands are being launched. This indicates more revenue for channels.

**Do you think the new channels would do well commercially?**

India is a large country and, I think, it is fair to have three-to-four players swapping the top slot. I would definitely like to believe that all the channels do well because if that happens it makes advertising work, and it would generate more revenue for the industry. But it is also true that

**In the next one year, 500 channels are likely to go on air. This will create a distribution crisis. How will the newer players handle this?**

Distribution and marketing are like conjoined twins. Since we are a part of the NDTV group, which is already a great name in media, we are going to use it to our advantage.

**Do ad rates cry for a correction?**

With the audience base growing from 25 million in 2000 to 75 million in 2008, even the 25% hike advocated by the broadcasters is too less. But if the hike is imposed on an ad hoc basis, the advertisers will question it ■