

Quote by Charu Malhotra, Co-founder & Managing Director, Primus Partners

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Kyunkis return: Can reboots breathe new life into TV's prime time?

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Kyunki's return: Can reboots breathe new life into TV's prime time?

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With *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* delivering record-breaking viewership on its comeback, and other classics like *CID* also returning, broadcasters are doubling down on nostalgia-driven reboots to revive engagement among linear TV audiences.

While some attempts, such as *Sarabhai vs Sarabhai*, failed to strike a chord in the past, experts remain divided on how far nostalgia, combined with fresh storylines and characters, can help fiction TV regain viewership in an era

where audience engagement continues to wane.

Eka Kapoor's *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* clocked 1.6 billion minutes of watch time across Star Plus and JioHotstar in its first week, drawing 31.1 million viewers on TV and millions more online. According to JioStar, it became the biggest-ever fiction launch on both platforms.

Sumanta Bose, head of cluster, entertainment (Star Plus and Bharat, Bengali, Marathi and Gujarati), at JioStar, said, "The return of *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* has proven that great storytelling never loses its power. We approached this launch with a two-fold vision: to reignite



Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi clocked 1.6 bn minutes of watch time across Star Plus and JioHotstar in its first week. @BTL_BALAJI/X

nostalgia while crafting a contemporary storyline that resonates with today's audiences."

Reboots are especially appealing to family audiences,

says Rupali Chavan, senior vice-president and head of business, Mudramax.

"Reboots give them something familiar, but if done well,

also offer a reason to stay hooked. If more such shows succeed, they could help make TV feel exciting again — not just a habit, but a choice."

The reason reboots actually make sense on paper is you are not starting from zero. The title already has recall, the tune probably lives rent-free in people's heads and there is less heavy lifting in marketing. That's a few

lakhs, or crores saved, said Charu Malhotra, managing director and co-founder, Pri-

mus Partners, a management consultancy firm.

"This is not just a content experiment, it is a program-

NOSTALGIA PLAY

EXPERTS split on whether nostalgia, fresh storylines can help fiction TV regain viewers

WITH reboots, the title already has recall, tunes linger & marketing costs are lower, saving lakhs

ming strategy. It may not reinvent broadcast TV entirely. But it can remind advertisers and broadcasters that family drama still works. Especially when there is familiarity. No need to re-educate the viewer. Just bring them something that feels like home, maybe with better lighting and slightly more progressive subplots," Malhotra added.

There's a clear attempt to bring back the loyal family-viewing audience that linear TV used to own, especially women and older viewers in tier-two and tier-three cities, said Rajnish Rawat, CEO and co-founder of Social Pill, a digital marketing agency.

But nostalgia can't be the only play.

"Not all nostalgia travels well. What worked once can feel dated unless it's reimagined for today's cultural rhythm. The shows that have a shot at success are the ones that had strong emotional recall and storytelling depth," Rawat added.

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