TATA COMMUNICATIONS
media

When the Broadcast Moved Faster Than the Machine

From Baseband Bottlenecks to IP-Powered Broadcast Brilliance Where Every Frame Finds Its Moment

The Game Behind the Game

On screen, this broadcaster delivers India's most watched moments. Off screen, the action was getting harder to hold together.

Their channels were still running on a legacy technology- baseband signals which was built for a simpler era of broadcasting. It had served its time. But sport had evolved. The pace had changed. And the technology behind the scenes was struggling to keep up with the unpredictability of live events.

In cricket, a bowler tying a shoelace isn't downtime, **it's a monetisation window.**

A third-umpire referral? Another window.

A mid-over reset? Yet another.

But only if your playout can react in **frames**, not seconds.

Where the Struggles Became Real

The system was still stable, still functioning, just not fast enough for a world where seconds were revenue.

- Break opportunities surfaced and disappeared faster than the baseband workflow could respond.
- Operators were juggling **three separate systems** (playout, automation, graphics) in high-pressure, high-stakes situations.
- Every micro-pause on the field became a missed chance because the tech couldn't fire commercial cues on time.
- With **one vendor controlling all their playout technology for over a decade**, a single point of failure shadowed the entire operation.
- • And with sports rights worth nearly ₹**2,000 crore**, agility wasn't optional anymore, it was survival.

Sport wasn't slowing down. The playout chain was, and the gap was widening.

The Turning Point

Our customer looked at the landscape with a simple realisation: a patch or a software update wouldn't fix this.

They needed a broadcast engine built for live sport's heartbeat, not for yesterday's schedule-driven television.

Multiple global platforms were evaluated, stress-tested and BroadStream emerged as the right automation backbone.

But the leap from baseband to IP (Internet Protocol), especially for premium sports channels, required a partner who understood playout, understood scale, and understood the stakes of missing even **seven frames** of opportunity.

That's where Tata Communications stepped in.

Together, the broadcaster and Tata Communications set out to build something the Indian broadcast industry had never seen before:

India's first fully IP-based sports playout system, engineered for live agility.
A production-grade, frame-accurate, revenue-critical, 24/7 sports engine.

Re-Engineering the Broadcast Backbone

Moving to IP wasn't the story. What customer could do because of IP, that was the story.

Suddenly:

- Crash-to-live and live-to-crash became instant.
- Ads could be inserted with only **7 frames** of available window.
- Graphics, secondary events, promos, and playout ran from **one unified automation engine.**
- Operators had control, not chaos.
- The system's reflexes finally matched the game's speed

But the technology was only half of the transformation.

A New Home for the broadcaster's Live Channels

Tata Communications went beyond just deploying the platform, we built an **entire playout universe** around it.

Operations Floor, where the channel goes on-air (5325 sq. ft.)

- Purpose-built operator pods handling both **manual and automated break executions** during live sports.
- **Real-time monitoring** of clean feeds, dirty feeds, and backup paths to ensure seamless channel output.
- **Master Control Room (MCR) operations** overseeing playlist execution, reacting to live changes on the field, and managing **break timing, graphics/secondary event triggers, and overall on-air continuity.**

Data Centre Floor, the technical backbone (5325 sq. ft.)

- IP routers, automation servers, redundancy stacks.
- Always-on monitoring of channel health.
- Designed for seamless failover and 24/7 reliability.

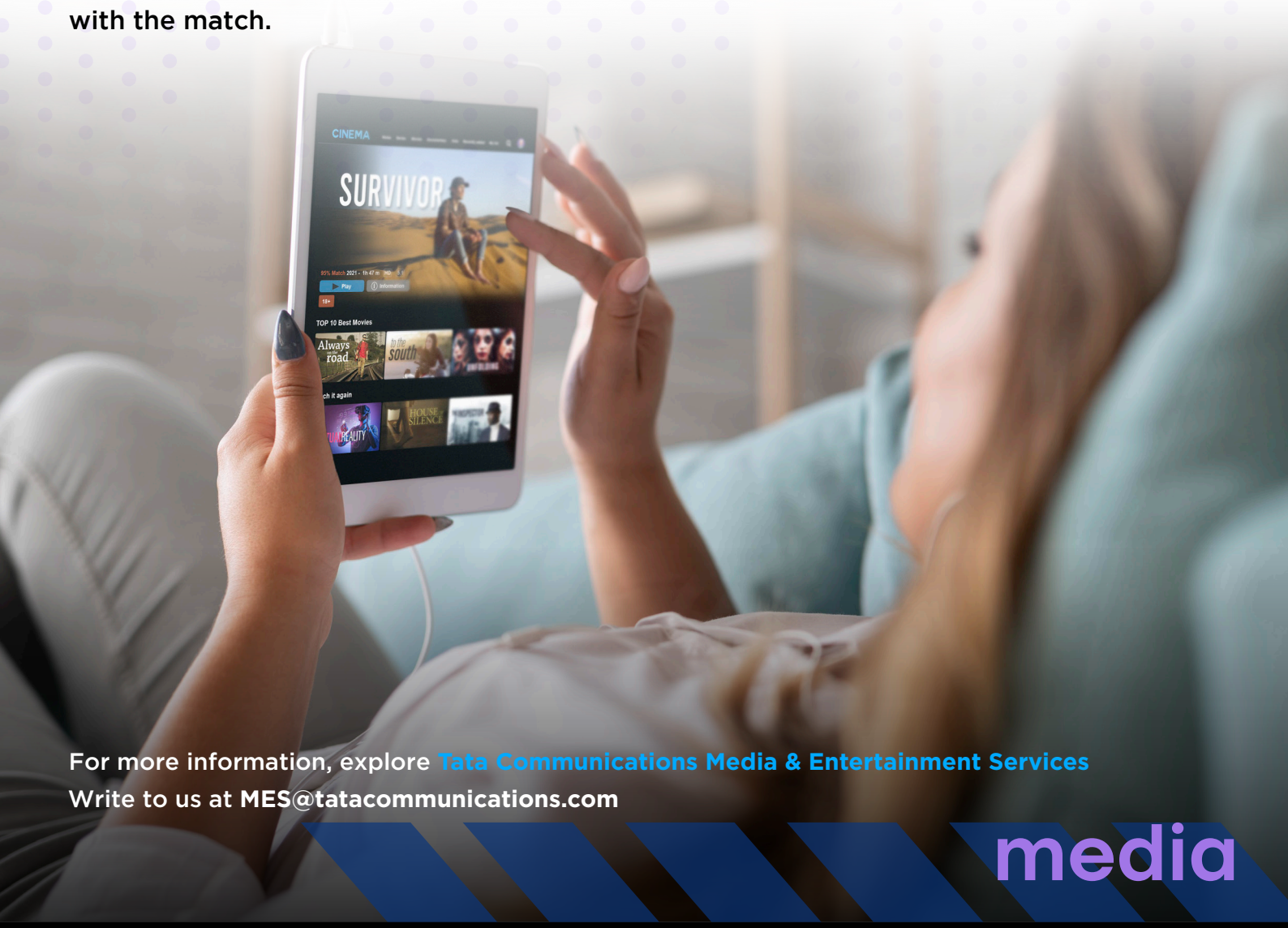
The Crack Team

Staffed by ~88-90 broadcast specialists, powering the playout of 51 operators, 9 QC / preview resources, 10–12 engineers and 18 secondary graphics experts.

The Broadcast Rebound

When the IP playout went live, the shift was structural. Breaks stopped being stressful and instead became opportunities. Operators moved from firefighting to orchestrating, and the on-air workflow no longer resisted the rhythm of the sport—it learned to read it. The long-standing dependency on a single vendor was no longer a looming risk; the playout backbone had become resilient, scalable, modern, and ready for the next decade of sports broadcasting.

India's one of the largest broadcasters got a control room that could finally keep up with the match.



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