



Cataloging and Assessment

of Film condition for the Largest
Government Archive in India





About the Client

The client is the largest government film archive in India set-up with the primary objective of acquiring and preserving Indian cinematic heritage.



Business Need

The government archive had more than 1,50,000 film reels in 27 vaults spread across many facilities. The need was to catalog and assess the condition of the films for future digitization and preservation for the access of the upcoming generations. The scope of the project included:

- Cataloging and assessment of film condition by experts
- Checking of films and classify them as A, B, and C
- Repair of films by experienced film editors
- Implement RFID tagging along with the asset tracking and management solution
- Film storage assessment



Challenge

This was the first of a kind project for the client and hence involved logistical issues, required manual and automated cataloging as the process evolved. The films were of legacy content and hence not easy to inspect and repair. This was time-consuming and hence required detailed planning.

Prasad's Solution

Each film can was accessed and basic details were captured in the system. An evaluation was done manually and chemically to determine the physical condition of the film based on several parameters. The inspection phase involved unwinding / winding the film material to check and ascertain the category. Depending on the status, the films were categorized as A, B, or C. The details were captured and tagged to the film's metadata.



Category A - Winds perfectly, requires only cleaning and very minor physical repair

Category B - Slightly difficult to wind, having major physical repair activity

Category C - Very bad condition, may require physical restoration. and chances of recovering the film could be minimal



RFID Tagging

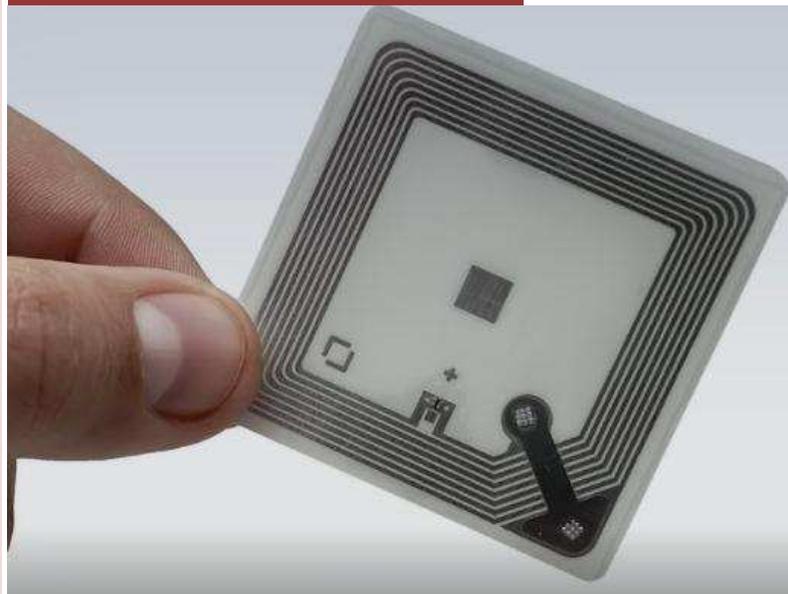
All the assets were RFID tagged for tracking film movement. RFID Handheld readers were provided for conducting convenient and frequent inventory audits. RFID - Asset Management Software provides complete tracking information and necessary MIS reports.

The RFID tagging process involved:

- Fixing of unique UHF RFID Tag to each of the film reels and cans
- Deploy UHF RFID Readers/Antenna to record asset movements
- Deploy UHF Handheld Reader for inventory management
- Reporting on asset movements and issues managed by the asset management system

Metadata Tagging

Detailed information related to technical and aesthetic metadata of every film reel was entered into the asset management software. This metadata information was tagged to UID/RFID and hence could be retrieved easily by punching in the relevant details.



Film Storage Assessment

The functioning of the vaults in each season i.e. summer, winter, monsoon etc. was assessed as the climatic conditions vary in each of these seasons.

- Data loggers helped provide readings on temperature and relative humidity 24X7
- The condition of the vault was assessed and presented to the client for improvement
- Inputs provided on the HVAC system and how it should be maintained throughout the seasons



Key Benefits

- The complete cataloging and assessment of the films were completed onsite
- Data and the system provided made discovery of media assets easier
- Also provided all necessary information for future management and storage

