

Colors targets young audiences with 'Chhoti Anandi'

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The Balika Vadhu-inspired animated series will be a first-of-its-kind for Hindi GECs.

The Hindi entertainment channel Colors' social drama Balika Vadhu has been one of the longest-running shows on Indian television, with its central character Anandi gaining huge popularity with the audiences. Drawing inspiration from Anandi's appeal as a child, Colors has associated with the production house Sphereorigins to launch a home-grown animated series called Chhoti Anandi, as a first-of-its-kind extension of a popular Hindi television show character. With the focus on building its Sunday morning programming, Colors and Viacom 18's free-to-air channel Rishtey will simulcast the show starting January 17, every Sunday at 10 am.



According to an official statement by the channel, the series aims to capture Anandi's childhood adventures, and focusses on the period before she becomes a child bride. Describing the show, the statement says, "Chhoti Anandi is an eight-year-old brave, righteous child and the apple of everyone's eye. She is wise beyond her years, and is known to find innovative and unique ways to solve problems faced by her village folks. The series will highlight her entertaining, yet mischievous side as she indulges in innumerable escapades in the company of her friends in the bylanes of a village in Rajasthan."



The audience will also get to see a similar backdrop, the same kind of colours, and the music as that of the original show *Balika Vadhu*, including an inspiring message for the viewers at the end of every episode.



Raj Nayak



Manisha Sharma



Sujoy Waddhwa

Commenting on the launch, Raj Nayak, chief executive officer, Colors, says, "Anandi's character has appealed to viewers across the globe over the last few years. This is the first time on Indian television that a popular fiction show character is being adapted into an animated series. We plan to engage and strengthen our bond with tiny tots through Chhoti Anandi, and present a show that is visually appealing and entertaining at the same time."

Manisha Sharma, programming head at Colors, adds, "With Chhoti Anandi, we plan to not only expand our viewer base to include the kids segment, but also engage with parents who have been entwined with the legacy of Anandi through Balika Vadhu and know of her intelligence in dealing with varied situations. We believe that the content of the show holds appeal not only for young children given the animated series, but will also appeal to parents, making it a wholesome and entertaining watch for the entire family on Sunday mornings."

Producer Sujoy Waddhwa, chief managing director of Sphereorigins, says, "It is a challenging prospect to translate a fictional character as part of an animated series. Chhoti Anandi is wise beyond her age, and questions society's regressive norms. The show will not be an animated representation of the story of Balika Vadhu, but will be that of Chhoti Anandi's adventures. Chhoti Anandi's tales will encourage young viewers to learn life's lessons in the simplest manner and put them to practical use."

Anish Patel, founder and chief executive officer, Hop Motion, (the firm that has created the animated characters), adds, "The brief was to maintain the inherent Indian-ness and the essence of Anandi's character in a fun manner, and we combined superior graphics with vibrant colours in the hope of providing viewers with an engaging proposition."

As Chhoti Anandi prepares to launch simultaneously on Colors and Rishtey, the channel has planned an extensive marketing and digital promotional strategy including digital outreach and activations across rural markets.