Report On [Product Life Cycle of Airtel]

By

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An internship report submitted to the BRAC Business School in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Business Administration

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The internship report submitted is my own original work while completing degree at Brac

University.

2. The report does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except

where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.

3. The report does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other

degree or diploma at a university or other institution.

4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Letter of transmittal

Ms. Mahreen Mamoon
Assistant Professor
BRAC Business School
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Subject: Submission of Internship report

Dear Mam,

With due respect I am submitting my internship report on "Product Life Cycle Management of Airtel". I have tried my best to maintain the guidelines and prepare the report with information as much as I can.

I have given as much effort as I can to make this report fruitful so I hope you would be kind enough to receive my internship report.

If you have any query, I will be pleased to answer them.

Farhan Redwan
15104014
BRAC Business School

Date: September 12, 2019

BRAC University

Non-Disclosure Agreement

[This page is for Non-Disclosure Agreement between the Company and The Student]
This agreement is made and entered into by and between Robi and the undersigned student at
BRAC University

Acknowledgement

First of all, I would like to thank Almighty Allah for giving me the strength to complete this internship report in due time. This report is an outcome of help of many people and I am very grateful to them for helping me with their guidance and suggestions. I am very thankful to all of them.

I am very grateful and my cordial thanks to my internship supervisor Ms. Mahreen Mamoon for her valuable advices and suggestions to complete this report. Moreover, her constant guidance throughout the internship period was very valuable which helped me to prepare this report.

Moreover, I would also like to thank my office supervisor, Ms.Novara Binte Noor General Manager Airtel Business Unit at Robi Axiata Limited who had helped me a lot in gathering information and has given me an inner sight to the Market operations of Airtel Unit of Robi.

Executive Summary

Robi Axiata Limited (Robi) is a subsidiary company of Axiata group It is a joint venture between Axiata Group Berhad of Malaysia, <u>Bharti Airtel</u> Limited of India and <u>NTT DoCoMo</u> Inc. of Japan. <u>Axiata</u> holds 68.7% controlling stake in the entity, <u>Bharti</u> holds 25% while the remaining 6.3% is held by <u>NTT DOCOMO</u> of Japan. Robi being the second largest network operator operating in Bangladesh just behind Grameenphone.

Moreover, the report entails about the 12 weeks of working period of understanding the product lifecycle of Airtel. To add, I worked at the Airtel voice unit, which is the main operational unit of market operations how it works and my work responsibilities during my tenure. The report took in to consideration of the whole networking community of Bangladesh. Grameenphone is the market leader, and the biggest competitor of Robi, with the vision of becoming the leader of telecommunication service provider in Bangladesh is striving to get to the level of Grameenphone. However, the report is mainly done to give the idea of the product life cycle of Airtel which is a part of Robi now, having the benefit of market position staying with Robi.

The report will entail with chapter 1 which starts with organizational overview, then will talk about the products, will give brief idea of the management team of Robi. Then the chapter 2 will talk about the divisions and market operations unit of Robi and the SWOT analysis. To add, then the report part starts that is chapter 3 having rationale of the study, limitations of the study, scope and delimitation of the study, objective of the study, research question, role during internship and the literature review.

The chapter 4 entails about the product lifecycle with it's several parts detailing about the products going through several stages before finally being launched. The 5th chapter entails the USSD and the daily voice tracker this chapter mainly gives an insights about the revenue generation and the USSD channel check. Moreover, the sixth chapter mainly talks about the experience in networking company and the recent talk between Telenor and Axiata in coming to operate together. In the last chapter of the report, there will be recommendation and conclusion which will finally give an end of the report. However, I tried to finish the report with any unwanted mistakes if there is any please go through with kindness.

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List of Acronyms

UAT User Acceptance Test

USSD Unstructured Supplementary Service Data

MOU Minutes of Usage

APPM Average Price Per Minute

GPRS General Packet Radio Service

Introduction

1.1 Organizational Overview

The company started in Bangladesh in 1997 as Telekom Malaysia International (Bangladesh) with the brand name 'Aktel'. In 2010, it was rebranded as 'Robi' and the company changed it's name to Robi Axiata Limited. Robi Axiata Limited is the venture of the Axiata group, the giant telecom of Asia operating in 11 countries with 150million subscribers in total. Moreover, Robi holds 46.88million subscribers at the end of December 2018 as the report suggests, to add it is the second largest mobile operator in Bangladesh. Furthermore, the biggest ever merger in the history of telecom industry in Bangladesh came with the hands of Robi merging with Airtel Bangladesh and it started it's commercial operation from 16th November 2016. To add, Robi was the first one to add GPRS and 3.5G services in the country, also the first one to launch 4.5G services all around the country in all 64 districts.

Moreover, with the merger of such stature Robi and Airtel looks to pass miles with enormous technological advances, with the hope of becoming the largest network operator in Bangladesh. Moreover, with Airtel merging with Robi has helped them to attach the progresses of Robi too such as Robi has clearly pioneered in the domain of mEducation with the creation of the largest online school of the country, Robi-10 Minute School, which is providing quality educational content to millions of students across the country for free of cost. Furthermore, Robi has introduced many apps such as sports app, healthcare apps which Robi did not launch for them only, they introduced it for airtel too.

To add, the marketing team of Robi and Airtel are separate, they may have merged but the operations remain independent of the way, in a way it can be said they compete internally though they are of the same base. It is evident they want to improve every now and then, and the competition among the different individual units shows it.

Nonetheless, before the merger Robi had an approximate market share of 22percent and Airtel 7percent, saying that Robi and Airtel were both even behind Banglalink in terms of market share. Though after the merger at the end of 2017, it is been seen the market share of Robi has been approximately 28percent just behind Grameenphone which is holding 46percent of market share being the market leader in Bangladesh, Banglalink is in 3rd position holding 23percent market share and Teletalk holding 3percent market share. So the merger has been fruitful they had been able to leave behind Banglalink. Moreover, in May there has been talks between Telenor(parent company of Grameenphone) and Axiata to operate in merge business, though it's not going to happen in Bangladesh market. So the future of Axiata looks promising with saying that, may be later down the lane Grameenphone and Robi may merge in Bangladeshi markets as well.

Vision

To be a leader as a Telecommunication Service Provider in Bangladesh

Mission

Robi aims to achieve its **vision** through being number one not only in terms of market share, but also by being an employer of choice with up-to-date knowledge and products geared to address the ever changing needs of our budding nation.

Core Values

Three core values that mainly Robi is committed towards is **Exceptional Performance** and **Uncompromising Integrity (UI-EP)** to ensure creation of value, putting the **Customer at the Center.**

1.2 Products

As I have worked in the Airtel market operations unit of Robi, I know the products that Airtel deals with. Airtel mainly deals with bundle offers, rate cutters and bonus deals. These offers are available for both postpaid and prepaid users. These offers are mostly available for personal users, for corporate users the packages and payment methods are different. However, there are packages in the name of best deals, internet offers and super deals. There are entertainment offers as well moreover, Airtel offers many value added services (VAS) as well such as healthcare tips, government information, providing emergency balance and many more.

The product ranges are divided into two categories:

- Personal Users
- Corporate Users

Personal packages

Personal packages are offered both for prepaid and postpaid users of Airtel. Airtel starts it's numbering with 016XXXXXXXX, currently Airtel offers bundle offers, internet offers and entertainment offers. These offers are available for both prepaid and postpaid users. Moreover, before the merger Airtel had their own postpaid community but after the merger with Robi it merged the connections as well. Moreover, for the merge operation now Airtel and Robi both operates in bundle packages for postpaid users.

Corporate packages

Corporate packages of both Robi and Airtel offers extra services for corporate users.

Nonetheless, for the corporate users both Robi and Airtel provides excessive speed internet plans. Moreover, if corporate users require or make applications for international roaming, the users are gifted pretty less expensive tariff charges. To add, for further convenience of corporate

users connections are furnished in accordance to business groups and as per as their requirement, so usually is to make the users feel they are being prioritized.

Vehicle and Mobile tracking services

Both Robi and Airtel offers vehicle tracking services, these services encompasses GPS tracker or a new connection. This service mainly helps to track vehicles, from vehicle ignition to track down the speed monitoring using the tracker. Same as the automobile monitoring solution, monitoring tracking solutions are also supplied by Robi and Airtel.

Online Recharge facilities

Moreover, online recharge facilities has brought an ease for any prepaid subscriber. online cellular recharge is the new best thing, at any place literally anywhere where there is no close recharge point the subscriber can recharge by themselves using debit/credit cards and bkash debts on the user. Moreover, this service is available for both Robi and Airtel prepaid users.

1.3Management team



Fig1: Management Team

The hierarchy of management is same of Airtel and Robi as Airtel is a brand of Robi Axiata Limited after the merger between Robi and Airtel. As the structure it is a tall organizational structure rather than a flat one the top is the CEO or managing director which is Mr. Mahtab Uddin Ahmed and the hierarchy ends at the junior assistants. Moreover, the hierarchy may be a tall structure but the team is quite friendly and it's only in the designation but the work environment is super friendly, everyone is there for a helping hand if you need one. Nonetheless, my stay over there made me realize an organization could be such friendly too.

Inside view of the marketing department and SWOT analysis

2.1 Divisions and Market Operations of Robi Axiata Limited

Divisions of Robi Axiata Limited is given below:

- ➤ People & Corporate
- > Market Operation
- Digital Service
- > Finance Division
- > Technology
- ➤ Enterprise Project Management Office
- > Internal Audit Division
- Corporate Strategy
- > Internal audit

Moreover, as Airtel is a part of Robi Axiata limited the divisions of operation is same as well.

Market Operations of Robi Axiata Limited

There are six teams operating under this divisions they are Data, Voice, Customer loyalty Management (CLM), device and International Roaming team along with VAS team. Airtel unit also got the same number of six teams operating under this division. Moreover, final and last work of agreement is done by another team named MO Buying team. To add, this teams are internally connected. Furthermore, market operations division helps to make good communication bridge with other companies, promotes products as in packages, organizes campaigns even new innovative promotional ideas comes from this division.

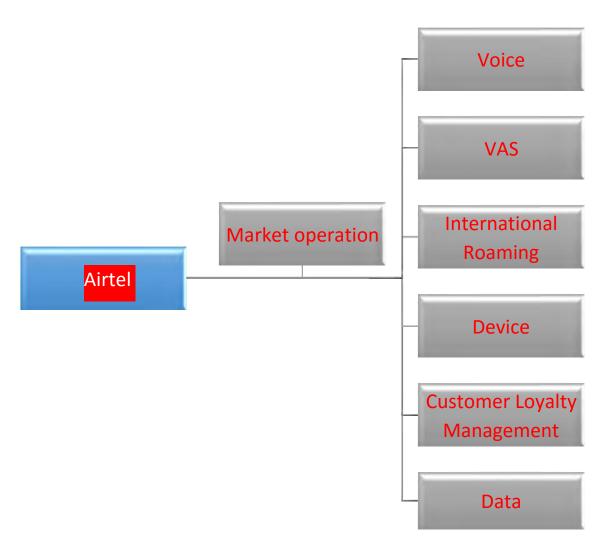


Fig2: Organogram of Market Operation

2.2 SWOT Analysis

STRENGHTS

- Strong Capital base
- Experienced management team
- Diversified funding sources
- Outstanding market share
- Diversified business exposure

WEAKNESSES

- Not enough credentials for prevention of external issues
- Developing advertising strategy with less output
- Competitors are bigger threats
- Lack of service production unit
- Lack of customer support operations

OPPORTUNITIES

- Business expansion opportunities
- Fund raising through new financial products
- Capital market operation
- Scope of product diversification

THREATS

- Inadequate input for successful budgeting and strategic business plan
- Opportunities and risks are higher found through reviews of industry trends, regulatory changes and major deals, projects and investments.

Report Part

3.1Rationale of the study and Limitations of the study

Rationale of the study

The main rationale of the study is to find out how the telecommunication network operators developing their offers in terms of packages and value added services they are offering. Moreover, the idea is how Airtel develops it's packages, mainly the product life management they have, recent updates, comparison with it's rivals. To some extent, this report would give idea of the market share of different operators compared to Robi and Airtel. Here, doing my internship at Robi Axiata Limited allowed me a good experience to connect the dots between theories and practical knowledge. During my internship my supervisor suggested me to work on the topic "Product Life Cycle Management". With my supervisor's instruction I surveyed on the topic and prepared the report.

Limitations of the study

Mainly the limitations were the datas and statistics of the packages were confidential and these packages had to be dealt very carefully so that the information does not leak. As I was an intern here so I was never been handed over with confidential data this was something I was restricted to. Nonetheless, I had to ask for each and every detail that I needed in order to write my report so I would used to get the verbal response from my onsite supervisor Ms. Novara Binte Noor who was always happy to help me with any detail I needed to know. With a very energetic workforce, there was time constraints here at Robi I tried to take my time out during lunch breaks in order to know about the insights about the company from different employees. Moreover, with limitations I tried to make the report as fruitful as possible with the details of products as in the packages I dealt with, this report will give you an idea about the packages that Market Operations Unit of Airtel mainly deals with.

3.2 Scope and Delimitation of the study, objective of the study and Research Question

Scope and Delimitation of the study

The topic I chose for my report is vast so I tried to make my report as precise and meaningful as possible. Moreover, the time was limited only 3months is just not enough to get each and every detail of product life management of Airtel though I tried to minimize my errors and make my stay here at Robi a fruitful one by doing primary research mainly through interviewing personally with the employees for the details I needed which I could only get from them. So the idea was to write up a good report with limited resources, and I tried my level best.

Objective of the study

The objective of the report are:

- ➤ How does the Airtel Voice Unit works
- Package update and UAT test
- ➤ Make SMS campaign
- Relate the theoretical knowledge with practical experience
- ➤ An overview of my internship journey with my work responsibilities

Research Questions

The research questions were basically done through primary research, mainly through interview sessions with the employees, and thoroughly taken further ideas from secondary research mainly datas and statistics.

3.3My role during internship and Literature Review

My Role during internship

My internship period commenced from June 2019, I have worked in the market operations unit of Airtel, specifically in the voice unit .Moreover, I got to work under Ms. Novara Binte Noor, who was the general manager of market operation division of the Airtel business unit, she was also my on-site supervisor. To add, working under her was a complete bliss had the opportunity to gather some insights of telecommunication industry and some knowledge which I previously did not had. Furthermore, she was always there to help me with anything I needed to know or any detail that I could add in my internship report. Moreover, the 3months period of my internship was great, never felt I was an outsider because of the friendly gestures shown by other employees and my supervisor too. While doing internship at Robi, I was handed with several tasks, a short brief of the tasks are as follows:

- Preparing daily Airtel voice tracker records
- Doing User Acceptance test (UAT)
- Preparing SMS campaign
- Comparing packages with other competitors
- Updating new packages
- Checking the USSD channel update

Literature Review

The report made mainly in order to understand the products of Airtel as in packages which they offers to their customers. Product lifecycle management (PLM) refers to the handling of a good as it moves through the typical stages of its product life: development and introduction, growth, maturity/stability, and decline (Segal. T 2019). Moreover, the report mainly talks about the bundle offers, bonus offers and the rate cutter offers that Airtel mainly offers to it's customers. To add, packages are made in accordance or in comparison to it's rivals. A marketing offer is a free product or service of value you give in exchange for people completing a call to action (Dyess. S 2019). The report will give an idea about how offers are made, how customers are attracted towards those offers through SMS, even how those SMS campaigns are done on a daily basis. Moreover, customers are at the core of every business, so developing PLC according to their needs is a necessity. To add, this report made with clear understanding of the networking industry as a whole, with proper comparison with other operators, how Airtel comes up with it's new products. As in every product's lifecycle the first stage is the development as in how product is made from scratch, this report would give idea of how important UAT is in terms of developing a new package, checking the USSD then uploading in the website. The idea of product life cycle this is a forecasting tool, planning tool

Moreover, before the packages are updated on the website or SMS are sent to individual subscribers how the packages are tested through UAT test will be mentioned in the report. All in all, the main idea is to understand how a package is going to the end user and how they get to know about it.

Product life cycle management

4.1 Product comparison with competitors

It is more evident in this era of digitalization, before any launch of any product a product goes through several layers of research and then get's launched. Moreover, networking community is not outside of it either though first of all what Airtel do is compare it's products as in packages with competitors to understand about how they should approach. It was one of my tasks as intern there to find out how the competitors are behaving and make tables of comparison to understand where Airtel is lacking behind. 'Marketing Research is the systematic problem analysis, model building and fact finding for the purpose of improved decision making and control in the marketing of goods and services.' (Kotler, P, Marketing Management 2010). Furthermore here is a screenshot that would illustrate how I used to compare:

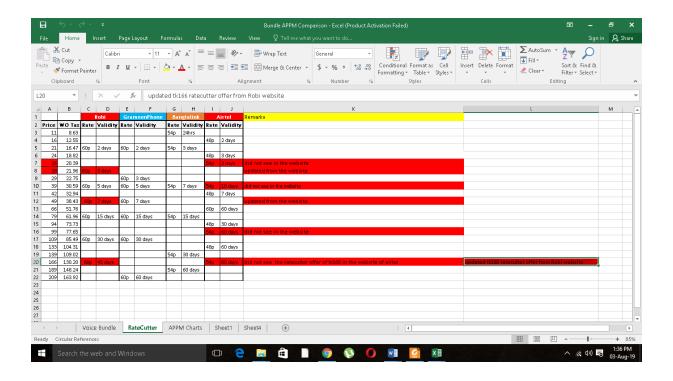


Fig3: Screenshot of competitor comparison

Nonetheless, the comparison had to be topnotch, as based on the comparison there would be a decision regarding whether there is a need of new product to be launched or not. These comparisons would really allow Airtel to understand to find the **market gaps** which could be fulfilled through something new. It was one of the essential tasks that I had been doing during my internship tenure.

1.2 Doing User Acceptance Test (UAT)

The User Acceptance test is basically done before any launch of any product as in packages in order to understand whether the packages are working as per as it is needed or not. Moreover, the criteria is simple the UAT test is done through UAT phones which is the research phone, whenever the technological team approves of any package the UAT phones are used to see the package is working as per as the offer or not. User Acceptance Testing is the last phase of the software testing process. During UAT, actual software users test the software to make sure it can handle required tasks in real world scenarios, according to specifications.(Setter. M) For example in the screenshot there is a new package that we checked for 93tk bundle offer before it's launched.

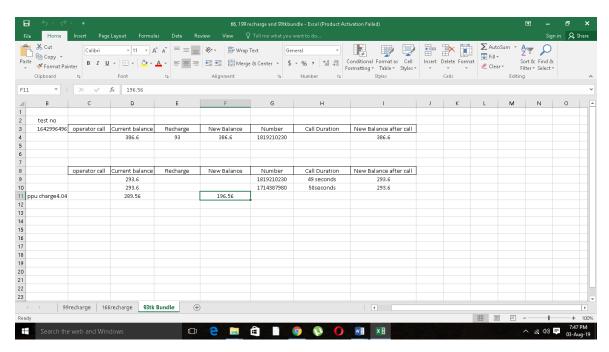


Fig4: Screenshot of UAT test

Here as it is seen in the screenshot there is a test no which is the UAT phone's no, operator call is the Airtel to Airtel call or Airtel to Robi call first to check how the bundle is behaving in on –net calls, then again we tried on Airtel to GP which is a off- net call. To add, after seeing both on –net and off –net the bundle offer is working fine it can be said it has been a perfect UAT and the product is ready to get launched.

1.3 Doing SMS campaign

A company that operates 24/7 requires proper marketing plans in order to execute them to get fruitful results. For networking brand such as Airtel, if you are an airtel user you may see you get lots of messages on a daily basis, it's not applicable for Airtel only all operators does this to market their existing packages as well as new packages to the subscribers. Moreover, this is a constant knock to every individual subscribers to have a better understanding of which packages is going to serve their needs the best. To state further, I would say it was one of my essential day to day task to properly send the SMS's to the customers. This task was not only limited to sending the SMS's to the subscribers rather to the retailers as well, retailers are the ones who does easyload, or recharge as we say they get commissions on every recharge or on any offer sold. Here, below is a screenshot of the SMS campaigns I used to send. This is just an example screenshot of the SMS campaigns I used to send.

USSD and Daily Airtel Voice Tracker

5.1 Checking the USSD channel Update

This task was not a everyday task for me rather, I had to see the **USSD** (Unstructured Supplementary Service Data) channel update when new packages been updated or there is changes in the existing packages. Moreover, if a new package has been updated I had to check whether that package has been updated on the USSD or not. For existing packages changes can come such as one package's validity can change from 15days to 10 days, or a package's terms may change such as previously a package may used to offer SMS with the bundle package but now everything is okay but the SMS criteria is not valid anymore. Furthermore, this USSD for Airtel has to be checked dialing *0#, after dialing every user will find the minute bundle packages on offer. So, what I had to do is to check the packages are all okay according to USSD as well as in the Airtel website too. Moreover, the idea is to find any faults if there is so that the technological team can configure it as fast as possible so that the users are not charged anything different to what they have seen in the website. To add further, in USSD the after dial layer description has to be checked and need to sured it is as per as the technological team wants it to be. Here is a screenshot of how it should be

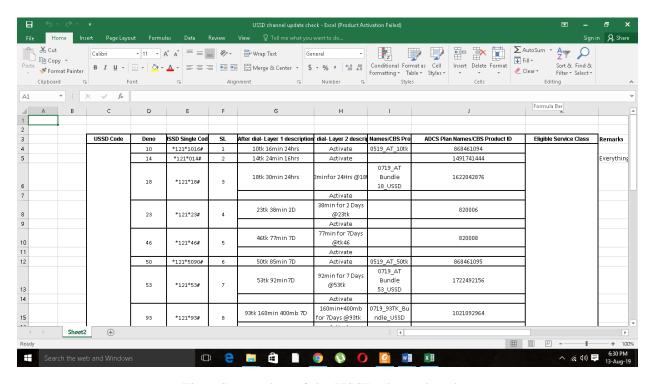


Fig5: Screenshot of the USSD channel update

Nonetheless, this was a task that needed accuracy to be spot on and the task had needed to be done in a spontaneous manner. Moreover, in a networking community every detail is precious to generating revenues, and packages are the most ideals of all. Nowadays, many people like to use packages that gives them the most benefit in terms of minutes, data usage, SMS usage and what not so the information what they are receiving should be as accurate to what they are getting.

5.2 Daily Airtel Voice tracker update

This was one of the day to day tasks of mine to update the Daily Airtel Voice tracker, this task was very simple. Firstly, I had to download the Airtel voice tracker daily from the Robi's server than I would had to analyze the figures. Moreover, what I found out from here was the revenue that Airtel makes from several different regions of Bangladesh. It had to be updated daily to understand the trend as well so that if any changes need to be made in the packages or not. Furthermore, I used to calculate the daily average of MOU(Minutes of Usage) to understand at which day of the week do customers talk the most and which day the least. This used to give us the idea of whether the existing packages are able to generate enough revenue for Airtel or needed of new packages. To add, the update been made from the start of the month till the last day of operations. Moreover, I used to analyze the APPM (Average Price per Minute) on a daily basis this would give me idea about the revenue generation. Here below is a screenshot just to show as an example

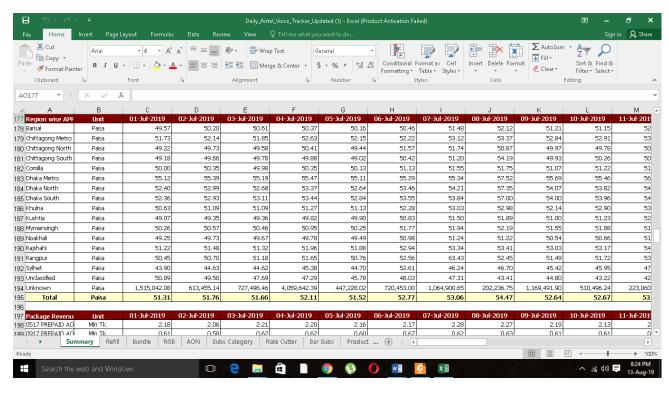


Fig6: Screenshot of Daily Airtel Voice Tracker Update

Networking Company and Telenor-Axiata talk

6.1Experience of working in a networking company

The experience of working here at Robi for 3 months was nothing less than a new journey to me, as previously I haven't worked at anywhere earlier before. However, during the earlier stages as in the first month I had simple tasks which I could do easily, but as time surpassed responsibilities increased. Moreover, often I had to do multitasking, pressure suddenly got increased I started facing tasks that were completely new to me. Nevertheless, firstly I was nervous but with time confidence grew as I got to understand the work styles and learnt few tasks as well.

Tasks such as UAT testing was one of the new things that I came across, I really liked this course of action. Moreover, thrill also got inside me thinking I am doing such task that based on my testing there will be a new product launch. To add further, I had tasks such as preparing the SMS campaign which was one of my daily tasks, tracking daily voice in order to understand which packages got more hit and which packages did not hit and should be removed. These tasks were something that made me feel as an insider of the company as if I was an employee here, working to attain something for the company. To add, my working hours here was 8 and a half hours, these all hours were productive I used to get tasks, passing idle time here is not considered to be anything great but during breaks I used to had conversations with different employees to understand more about the company, majority of the employees enjoys working here with such friendly environment, I did too.

6.2 Telenor and Axiata are in discussions to merge in operations in Asia

In May 2019, Telenor and Axiata group came together for discussions about merger to operate in the Asian regions. Moreover, the two great companies being pioneer for ages in the networking industry it is a great scope and opportunity to rule in Asia for both of them. Though, this discussions are really at the initial stage but there is hope of a great big Asian merge. With that being said, if the merge happens they will have a customers of around 300 million with approximately 60000 towers across Asia well that's huge isn't it?. Moreover, there is a great chance of some good news coming at the end of 2019. Furthermore, Telenor operating in Thailand, Malaysia, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar on the other hand Axiata operates in Malaysia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, Srilanka and Indonesia that's a huge market. To add, these two are established contenders in every countries they are operating. Moreover, as the discussions progressing if the merger happens according to plans there will be 56.5% of shares hold by Telenor and 43.5% hold by Axiata. Though, it is to be noted Robi And Grameenphone would be operating independently in Bangladesh, there will be no merge of operations here.



Fig7: Discussion of Telenor and Axiata

Recommendation and Conclusion

It was a great experience of 3 months for me, getting a first time experience of working at an organization. Robi Axiata Limited, was a great place for any workaholic, everyone loved their work. Moreover, due to my internship I had to do some survey as in I had to take interviews but due to the workload of each employees I just could not get enough time from them. To add, it was evident the employees are hardworking and love to give more than their 100 percent at times, the matter of fact is I used to take their opinions or gathered my needed information during lunch breaks which was 1hour, so it was a hectic task so during that little time I used to take in information from any particular employees, or else during any short breaks that they took during their favorable time I used to gossip and try to understand about the insights of the Product Life Cycle of Airtel which also helped to prepare my report. Moreover, as an intern working over there I found out there was no time limit of work, as an intern I was supposed to work 8hours and 30minutes, but due to huge work pressure I often had to stay beyond my working hours which was a little pressure for me because I also need to made sure that I give enough time to prepare my report. To add, I often saw employees having no time table of their own as in there were times they were in office working even after 9pm or even 10pm. So, this always raised question in my mind how do they balance their social and work life. Hence, I think the organization should see such things strictly because if employees are happy, there will be productive output and in my regards I feel they should maintain strict policy regarding day shifts and night shifts, as it is a telecommunication company it operated 24/7, so employees working hours should also be made flexible in order to bring the best output as possible.

Conclusion

Robi Axiata Limited is a great organization with having the second largest market share in Bangladesh, having getting Airtel to merge in has led them to this position this was a great move. Moreover, it had been heard Telenor and Axiata group are in discussions of merging too, if this happens this would be the best possible outcome of Axiata group. Moreover, it is also being heard in all other Asian markets both the companies going to work together, but in Bangladesh they are going to operate independently. To add, if the merging happens Robi should operte with Grammenphone as one single entity as this might out rule Banglalink from market and Robi can gather technological expertise from Grameenphone too. To conclude, the idea of merging looks productive from the point of Axiata group and if these haapens this should happen in Bangladesh too.

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