Report On

Implementing automation in customers' journey and obstacles to overcome for GoZayaan

By

Ashfaqur Rahman
Student ID: 17204080

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

BRAC Business School
BRAC University
June, 2023.

© [2023]. BRAC University
All rights reserved.

Table of Content

Declaration ---------- 3

Letter of Transmittal---------- 4

Non-Disclosure Agreement ---------- 5

Executive Summary ---------- 5

1.1 Student Information ---------- 6

1.2 Internship Information ---------- 6

1.3 Internship Outcomes ---------- 7

2.1 Company Overview ---------- 9

2.2 Management Practices ---------- 9

2.3 Marketing Practices ----------12

2.4 Financial Performance and Accounting Practices ---------- 15

2.5 SWOT Analysis ----------16

2.6 Porter's Five Forces Analysis ----------19

2.7 Summary and Conclusions ---------- 21

2.8 Recommendations ---------- 21

3.1 Introduction ----------22

3.2 Methodology----------23

3.3 Literature Review ---------- 23

3.4 Findings and Analysis ----------24

3.5 Competitive Analysis ---------- 26

3.6 Summary of Challenges and Conclusions ----------27

3.7 Recommendations ---------- 29

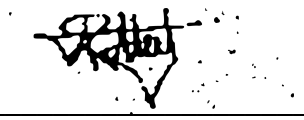
Reference ---------- 31

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.

Student's Full Name & Signature:



Ashfaqur Rahman
Student ID: 17204080

Supervisor's Full Name & Signature:

Md. Shamim Ahmed
Senior Lecturer, BRAC Business School
BRAC University

Letter of Transmittal

Md. Shamim Ahmed
Senior Lecturer,
BRAC Business School
BRAC University
66 Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212

Subject: Submission of Internship Report.

Dear Sir,

I respectfully submit my internship report on GoZayaan Ltd. as a requirement for the BUS400 course during the Spring semester of 2023. Throughout the report's preparation, I made every effort to follow the instructions provided and adhere to the outline provided by the BRAC Business School office.

In order to present the information and recommended proposals in a concise and comprehensive manner, I have endeavored to include all essential data. I am confident that this report will meet your expectations. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Ashfaqur Rahman
Student ID: 17204080
BRAC Business School
BRAC University
Date: June 20, 2023

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 GoZayaan Ltd. and the undersigned student at BRAC University…….

Executive Summary

The world of travel and tourism has undergone a rapid transformation over the years with the advent of technology. Online travel agencies (OTAs) have played a crucial role in this transformation, making it easier for customers to plan and book their trips from the comfort of their own homes. GoZayaan, an OTA platform based in Bangladesh, has been at the forefront of this transformation, providing customers with a one-stop-shop for all their travel needs. In this internship report, we will explore the implementation of automation in the customers' journey by GoZayaan and the obstacles faced by the company in the process. The report will examine the benefits of automation and the challenges that GoZayaan encountered while implementing it, as well as potential solutions to these challenges.

Chapter 1: Overview of Internship

1.1 Student Information

Name: Ashfaqur Rahman

Student ID: 17204080

Program: Bachelor of Business Administration

Major: Human Resource Management

1.2 Internship Information

1.2.1 Period: I joined GoZayaan on April, 2022 as a 'Customer Experience, Executive' (full-time) and currently working there.

Company Name: GoZayaan Ltd.

Department: Operations

Address: Level 5, House: 1/A, Road: 16/A, Gulshan 1, Dhaka 1212.

1.2.2 Internship Company Supervisor's Information:

Name: Md. Ahasan Ullah

Position: Manager, Customer Experience

1.2.3 Job Scope: As a Customer Experience Executive at GoZayaan Ltd., my primary responsibility is to ensure that our customers have a seamless and enjoyable experience from the moment they book their travel until they complete their journey. This involves working closely with our customers to understand their needs and preferences, as well as identifying areas where we can improve our services.

My duties include handling customer inquiries, resolving customer complaints, and providing personalized support throughout their journey. I am also responsible for analyzing customer

feedback and identifying trends, as well as working with our product and marketing teams to develop strategies that improve the customer experience.

In addition, I am responsible for maintaining accurate records of customer interactions, ensuring that our customer database is up-to-date and that customer information is protected. I am also responsible for maintaining up-to-date knowledge of industry trends and best practices, as well as staying informed about changes in the regulatory environment that may affect our business. Overall, my goal as a Customer Experience Executive is to ensure that our customers are satisfied, loyal, and willing to recommend GoZayaan to others.

1.3 Internship Outcomes

1.3.1 Student's contribution to the company: As a Customer Experience Executive at GoZayaan Ltd., my contribution to the company is significant. By providing exceptional customer service and support, I help to build strong and long-lasting relationships with our customers, increasing customer loyalty and retention rates. Through my work, I also help to identify areas where we can improve our services, providing valuable insights to our product and marketing teams. By analyzing customer feedback and identifying trends, I am able to make recommendations that improve the overall customer experience, helping to drive growth and profitability for the company. Overall, my work is critical to the success of GoZayaan, as it ensures that we meet and exceed our customers' expectations, and deliver on our promise of providing exceptional travel experiences.

1.3.2 Benefits to the student: Being employed as a Customer Experience, Executive at GoZayaan Ltd. has proven to be an exceptionally fulfilling opportunity for me as a student. Not only have I gained valuable skills and knowledge in the travel and tourism industry, but I have also had the opportunity to work with a team of experienced professionals who are passionate about their work.

Through my work, I have gained valuable experience in customer service, problem-solving, and data analysis, which will be invaluable in my future career. Additionally, working at GoZayaan has provided me with the opportunity to network with industry professionals, which will be helpful in my future job search. To sum up, my experience at GoZayaan has been a valuable and rewarding part of my student journey.

1.3.3 Problems and Difficulties: I have faced several challenges during my employment at GoZayaan Ltd. as a Customer Experience Executive. One of the biggest difficulties I have encountered is managing customer expectations in a highly competitive industry. Additionally, I have faced challenges in dealing with difficult customers and resolving their complaints effectively while maintaining a positive attitude. Another challenge has been managing high call volumes and multitasking, which can be overwhelming at times. Lastly, keeping up with industry trends and staying informed about regulatory changes can be challenging, but it is critical to providing excellent customer service. Despite these challenges, my experience at GoZayaan has been incredibly rewarding and has helped me to grow both personally and professionally.

1.3.4: Recommendation to the company on future internships: Based on the challenges I have faced, I recommend that GoZayaan should invest in more training and development programs for its employees. These programs can help employees stay up-to-date with industry trends and regulatory changes. Also, create a structured evaluation system to maintain the quality of the work on every level, which is critical to providing excellent customer service. Additionally, the company can consider implementing tools and technologies that can help employees manage high call volumes and multitasking more effectively. This can help reduce employee stress and improve their overall job satisfaction. Finally, the company can consider offering opportunities for career growth and advancement, which can help retain talented employees and improve employee morale.

Chapter 2: Organization Part

2.1 Company Overview: GoZayaan Ltd. is a leading online travel agency (OTA) based in Bangladesh that specializes in providing a range of travel services to customers (only B2C). Founded in 2016, the company has rapidly grown to become one of the most trusted and reliable online travel service providers in the country. GoZayaan offers a comprehensive range of services that includes flight and hotel bookings, tour packages including EMI facilities and more. The company's mission is to provide its customers with exceptional travel experiences, and it achieves this by offering affordable prices through a user-friendly website and app, and exceptional customer service. And the vision of GoZayaan is to provide seamless travel solutions online by breaking the traditional travel agency syndicate where travelers will be the beneficiary and in control of their desires.

GoZayaan has a team of experienced travel professionals who are passionate about their work and dedicated to providing their customers with the best possible service. The company also partners with a range of airlines, hotels, and other travel service providers to offer its customers a wide range of options to choose from. GoZayaan is committed to delivering on its promise of providing exceptional travel experiences to its customers, and its growth rate and success (currently holding 8% market share; largest in Bangladesh) is a testament to its commitment to excellence and customer satisfaction.

2.2 Management Practices

2.2.1 Leadership Style: Participative management is embedded in GoZayaan culture which is a leadership style that involves employees in decision-making and encouraging their participation in organizational activities. This leadership style creates a sense of ownership among employees and encourages them to take responsibility for their work.

In a participative management style, leaders encourage employees to share their ideas, opinions, and concerns, and they take these inputs into consideration while making decisions. This approach can create a sense of teamwork and collaboration among employees, which can lead to increased job satisfaction and motivation. In the case of GoZayaan, if the company keeps on practicing such management style, it could potentially create a more engaged and motivated workforce. By involving employees in decision-making and empowering them to take ownership of their work, the company can create a culture of innovation and continuous improvement.

2.2.2 HR Planning Process

2.2.2.1 Recruitment and Selection Process: To attract and hire top talent, GoZayaan's HR department follows a recruitment and selection process that includes a range of activities. This includes creating an attractive job advertisement with a clear job description and job specification, which can help potential candidates understand the requirements of the role and decide if they are a good fit.

Instead of traditional interview, HR and Manager of relevant department conducts discussion sessions with candidates to get a better understanding of their skills, experiences, and personal values. This helps HR and organization to evaluate candidates based on more than just their qualifications and experience and get a better understanding of how they would fit into the company culture. HR also conducts a thorough background check on potential hires to verify their qualifications, experiences, and references. This helps to ensure that the candidate has the necessary skills and experiences to succeed in the role and can contribute positively to the company.

2.2.2.2 Training and Development: GoZayaan's HR takes hands-on training approach, which provides employees with practical experience and help them develop specific skills relevant to their roles. This includes job shadowing, mentoring, and apprenticeships.

Another important aspect of training and development is succession planning, which involves identifying and developing employees who have the potential to take on leadership roles within the company in the future. By providing training and development opportunities to potential future leaders, GoZayaan ensures that the company has a strong leadership pipeline and can continue to grow and succeed.

HR also organizes "Leaders101: sit with leaders" sessions, where employees have the opportunity to interact with leaders one to one and learn from their experiences. This can help to inspire and motivate employees, while also providing them with valuable insights into leadership and management.

Finally, inter-departmental discussion sessions are also arranged which is an effective way for employees to share knowledge and best practices across different departments within the company. This can help to foster collaboration and innovation and ensure that the company is able to leverage the diverse skills and experiences of its employees.

2.2.2.3 Performance Appraisal: One common practice is biannual evaluation, where employees are evaluated by their immediate supervisors and HR twice a year. This provides employees with regular feedback on their performance and areas for improvement. Additionally, this helps managers identify high-performing employees who may be eligible for salary increments, festival bonuses, or promotions within the same department or inter-department.

GoZayaan also have a "Performer of the Year" award at the end of every year to recognize and reward outstanding performance. This is a powerful motivator for employees and encourages them to continue to perform at a high level.

2.3 Marketing Practices

2.3.1 Marketing Strategy: GoZayaan adopts a multidisciplinary marketing approach and has a small in-house marketing team comprising 12 people who work closely with other teams like product and sales to develop and implement communication strategies. The company has partnered with several banks, including Standard Chartered, City Bank, BRAC Bank, UCB, EBL, LankaBangla, MTB, and Mobile Financial Services (MFS) such as bKash, Nagad, Rocket, Tap, and Upay, to offer discounts to customers. Moreover, GoZayaan has collaborated with Aarong, Grameenphone, Lotto, and other companies to launch various campaigns aimed at strengthening the brand. In April 2022, the company unveiled a new brand campaign, 'Go Limitless', to address the changing needs of modern-day travelers. The campaign emphasizes personalization, flexibility, and choice, and includes measures for brand safety, customization, seamless service experience, and attractive deals across services. Also, in the middle of 2022, GoZayaan provided sponsorship to three Bangladeshi mountaineers who aimed to scale the highest peaks in the country. GoZayaan's marketing strategy has consistently involved a combination of deliberate differentiation and incorporating genuine product innovation. Their adeptness in communicating effectively has been evident in their marketing efforts in recent years. By implementing these changes, GoZayaan intends to not only impact the Bangladeshi travel scene but also the entire South Asian travel industry.

2.3.2 Brand Positioning: The "Go Limitless" brand campaign of GoZayaan is crucial to the brand and its values. It is not tied to any particular festival or season, but rather a continuous message for adventurers who have boundless aspirations for travel. GoZayaan is motivated by these explorers and desires to encourage more travelers to chase their dreams and go beyond limits with this campaign. This campaign is evidently a product of GoZayaan's profound comprehension of customers' desires and the present market trends. GoZayaan utilizes both situational positioning and perceptual positioning to market its products. This entails

highlighting the product's ability to address the particular needs of its targeted customers, as well as changing customers' perceptions of their situation. Expanding a larger market to operate.

2.3.3 Marketing Channels: Social media marketing, influencer marketing, email marketing, and SEO are effective marketing channels that have positively impacted GoZayaan's promotional efforts.

Social media marketing plays a crucial role in expanding GoZayaan's online presence and engaging with a wider audience. By leveraging platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, GoZayaan can share captivating content, promote travel experiences, and interact with customers directly. This enables the company to build brand awareness, foster customer loyalty, and generate leads.

Influencer marketing has proven to be a valuable strategy for GoZayaan. Collaborating with travel influencers and bloggers allows the company to reach their followers, who are often highly engaged and interested in travel-related content. Influencers can create authentic and compelling content, showcasing their experiences with GoZayaan's services, which helps in increasing brand visibility and attracting potential customers.

Email marketing is another effective tool for GoZayaan to communicate with its existing customer base and nurture relationships. By sending personalized and targeted emails, GoZayaan can share exclusive deals, travel tips, and updates, keeping customers informed and engaged. This helps to drive customer retention and encourage repeat bookings.

SEO (Search Engine Optimization) plays a crucial role in improving GoZayaan's visibility in search engine results. By optimizing their website and content with relevant keywords, meta tags, and quality backlinks, GoZayaan can rank higher in search engine rankings. This increases organic traffic to their website, improves brand visibility, and attracts potential

customers who are actively searching for travel services.

2.3.4 Critical Marketing Gaps: GoZayaan plays a significant role in filling several marketing gaps in the Bangladesh's emerging travel industry. These gaps include:

1. Access to a Wide Range of Options: An OTA platform like GoZayaan bridges the gap between travelers and a vast array of travel options. It provides a centralized platform where customers can conveniently compare and choose from various airlines, hotels, tour packages, and transportation options. This eliminates the need for travelers to visit multiple websites or physical locations, saving time and effort.

2. Simplified Booking Process: It simplifies the booking process by offering user-friendly interfaces and intuitive search engines. Customers can easily enter their travel preferences, view available options, and make bookings with just a few clicks. This streamlined process eliminates the hassle of dealing with multiple vendors or contacting individual service providers separately.

3. Transparent Pricing and Deals: It provides transparency in pricing by displaying comprehensive information about fares, taxes, and additional charges. And also offers competitive deals, discounts, and promotional offers that may not be easily accessible through other channels. This allows travelers to make informed decisions and find the best value for their money.

4. Customer Reviews and Ratings: GoZayaan integrates customer reviews and ratings, providing valuable insights into the quality of services offered by various providers. Travelers can read authentic feedback from fellow travelers, helping them make more informed choices and avoid potential issues.

5. Personalized Recommendations: By analyzing customer preferences and behaviors, it can provide personalized recommendations and suggestions tailored to individual travelers. These

recommendations enhance the customer experience by offering relevant options based on their interests, past bookings, and search history.

2.4 Financial Performance and Accounting Practices

As per GoZayaan's company policy and being a privately held limited company, the specific details regarding their financial performance cannot be disclosed. However, one piece of information that can be shared is that GoZayaan generates an average daily revenue of approximately BDT 80 lacs and currently holds an 8% market share. To maintain transparency and provide information to investors, GoZayaan keeps a record of all service sales on Google Sheets.

When it comes to vendor payments, GoZayaan follows a specific accounting practice. To create a vendor payment cheque, certain documents in a prescribed format need to be submitted to the accounts and finance department. The process begins with sending an email to the head of the accounts department, with the COO, the manager of the Fulfillment/Sales team, and a member of the accounts department copied (CC'd) on the email. This email includes essential details such as the invoice number, customer's name, customer payment amount, vendor payment amount, and an Excel file displaying the breakdown of the customer's purchase.

The next step involves printing out the email, Excel breakdown, customer invoice, vendor invoice, money receipt, and proof of customer payment. All these printouts are then stapled together, and the relevant team manager signs each page, along with the signatures of the COO and the head of the accounts department on the front page. Finally, the documents are submitted to the accounts department to receive the vendor payment cheque. This summarizes the general process followed by GoZayaan.

Additionally, GoZayaan undergoes an annual audit conducted by an audit firm chosen by the company's investors, further ensuring transparency and adherence to financial regulations.

2.5 SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis is a fundamental and significant tool for assessing the strengths and weaknesses of a company, as well as identifying potential opportunities and threats. Here are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of GoZayaan outlined below.

Strengths:

- Extensive Network: GoZayaan has established a wide network of partnerships with banks, mobile financial services, and other companies, allowing them to offer attractive discounts and collaborations to customers.
- Multi-disciplinary Marketing Approach: The company adopts a multi-disciplinary marketing approach, collaborating with various teams such as product and sales to design and execute effective communication strategies.

- Strong Brand Awareness: GoZayaan has built a strong brand presence in the tourism industry of Bangladesh, gaining recognition for its innovative services and customer-centric approach.
- Technology-driven Solutions: The company utilizes advanced technology to provide seamless online booking experiences, personalized recommendations, and efficient travel arrangements.

Weaknesses:

- Limited Market Share: GoZayaan faces competition from other OTAs and traditional travel agencies, which may limit its market share and growth potential.
- Dependence on Partnerships: While partnerships offer benefits, GoZayaan's success may rely heavily on the performance and reliability of its partner banks, service providers, suppliers and other collaborators.
- Technological Issues: Since, GoZayaan is a bridge between customers and product owners (Airlines, Hotel/Resorts. Tour Operators etc.), sometimes various technological issues may arise due to API connectivity or limitations.
- Regulatory Challenges: The tourism industry in Bangladesh is subject to various regulations and policies that may pose challenges to GoZayaan's operations and expansion.

Opportunities:

- Growing Tourism Industry: Bangladesh's tourism industry is experiencing growth, presenting opportunities for GoZayaan to expand its customer base and market reach. Also, as GoZayaan is looking forward to expansion in South-East Asia (already started operations in Pakistan), the market here is very lucrative.

- Increasing Digital Adoption: With the increasing digital literacy and smartphone penetration in Bangladesh, there is a growing opportunity to attract more customers to book travel services online.
- Untapped Niche Markets: GoZayaan can explore untapped or less focused niche markets within the tourism industry, such as adventure travel, eco-tourism, or cultural experiences, to cater to specific customer segments.

Threats:

- Intense Competition: The online tourism industry in Bangladesh is highly competitive, with both local and international players vying for market share, which may pose a threat to GoZayaan's growth.
- Economic and Political Instability: Economic fluctuations, political instability, or adverse events can impact the tourism industry, affecting travel demand and potentially affecting GoZayaan's business operations.
- The Industry's Instability: Exemplified by the disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, can pose a potential threat.
- Changing Consumer Preferences: Evolving customer preferences and behaviors, such as the shift towards alternative travel accommodations or booking directly with service providers, may pose challenges to GoZayaan's business model.

2.6 Porter's Five Forces Analysis

1. Bargaining Power of Suppliers:

The bargaining power of suppliers in the online tourism industry is relatively moderate. GoZayaan relies on partnerships with airlines, hotels, and other service providers. While these suppliers have alternative distribution channels, GoZayaan's established network and customer base provide some leverage in negotiating favorable terms and discounts.

2. Bargaining Power of Customers:

The bargaining power of customers in the online tourism industry is high. Customers have access to various OTAs and can easily compare prices, services, and reviews. Switching costs are relatively low, giving customers the flexibility to choose alternative platforms based on their preferences and needs. GoZayaan needs to continuously offer competitive pricing, attractive deals, and exceptional customer service to retain its customer base.

3. Threat of New Entrants:

The threat of new entrants is moderate. While the barrier to entry is relatively low in terms of setting up an online platform, establishing a strong brand presence, building partnerships, and gaining customer trust require significant investments and expertise. GoZayaan's existing market presence and established relationships with suppliers provide some competitive advantage against new entrants.

4. Threat of Substitutes:

The threat of substitutes in the respective industry is high. Customers have the option to book travel services directly with service providers, utilize traditional travel agencies, or explore alternative travel platforms. GoZayaan needs to differentiate itself by offering unique value propositions, personalized experiences, and seamless booking processes to minimize the threat of substitutes.

5. Competitive Rivalry:

The competitive rivalry within the industry is intense. GoZayaan faces competition from both local and international OTAs, as well as traditional travel agencies. Competitors may offer similar services, pricing, and promotions, making it crucial for GoZayaan to continuously innovate, enhance its technology, and differentiate its offerings to gain a competitive edge.

To sum up, while GoZayaan benefits from its established network and partnerships, it must navigate the high bargaining power of customers, the presence of substitute options, and the intense competitive rivalry within the online tourism industry. Continual focus on customer satisfaction, technology advancements, and strategic partnerships will be key to maintaining its position in the market.

2.7 Summary and Conclusions

In summary, OTAs have a relatively short history in the travel industry. Their services and customer bases tend to be similar, leading to high competition among them. With the emergence of new OTAs, competition is expected to intensify over time. However, GoZayaan holds a competitive advantage with its early establishment and strong brand reputation. The company's vision and creative approach set it apart from other OTAs. By focusing on building a robust brand image and introducing innovative campaigns, GoZayaan aims to differentiate itself and maintain a leading position in the market.

2.8 Recommendations

GoZayaan successfully navigated through one of the most challenging periods for the global tourism industry during the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite these circumstances, the company has managed to sustain growth by operating at an optimal level. To maintain this positive trajectory, GoZayaan must continue prioritizing customer satisfaction through the delivery of personalized services, seamless booking processes, and responsive customer support. Additionally, establishing strategic alliances with additional banks, service providers, and travel-related businesses will enable GoZayaan to expand its offering with a wider array of discounts, promotions, and value-added services. Lastly, the company should embrace emerging technologies by staying abreast of the latest trends and investing in cutting-edge systems like AI-powered chatbots, data analytics, and machine learning. This will enhance operational efficiency and elevate the overall user experience for its customer.

Chapter 3: Project on implementing automation in customers' journey and obstacles to overcome for GoZayaan.

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Background: The travel industry has witnessed significant advancements in technology, transforming the way customers interact with online travel agencies (OTAs) like GoZayaan. In this project, the focus is on implementing automation in customers' journey and addressing the obstacles faced by GoZayaan in this process. The objective is to enhance customer experience, streamline operations, and gain a competitive edge in the dynamic OTA industry. This paper presents a comprehensive analysis of the benefits of automation and the challenges associated with its implementation. By leveraging automation technologies, GoZayaan aims to optimize various aspects of the customers' journey, such as seamless booking experiences, personalized services, and prompt customer support. The findings, conclusions, and recommendations derived from this project will guide GoZayaan in successfully implementing automation and elevating the overall customer experience.

3.1.2 Objectives:

Broad Objective: The broad objective of the research paper is to explore the implementation of automation in customers' journey and address the obstacles faced by GoZayaan in order to enhance the overall customer experience and operational efficiency.

Specific Objectives:

1. To examine the current customers' journey in GoZayaan and identify areas that can be automated for improved efficiency and customer satisfaction.

2. To investigate the potential benefits of automation in streamlining operations, reducing manual errors, and enhancing the overall customer experience.

4. To evaluate the impact of automation on key performance indicators such as customer satisfaction, operational efficiency, and revenue generation.

5. To assess the long-term implications and potential challenges associated with the implementation of automation in customers' journey for GoZayaan.

3.2 Methodology

The study will rely on secondary data obtained from interviews taken of GoZayaan officials and relevant articles. The exploratory method of research will be employed to gain insights into the online travel industry, customer expectations, and related aspects. Secondary data was gathered from GoZayaan to examine their automation practices aimed at enhancing customers' journey, to identify obstacles encountered during implementation, and explore the extent of their service offerings.

3.3 Literature Review

Automation has become a significant trend in the travel industry, enabling companies to streamline processes and enhance the overall customer experience. In the context of GoZayaan, an OTA platform in Bangladesh, the implementation of automation in customers' journey presents both opportunities and challenges. This literature review aims to explore existing research and articles related to implementing automation in customers' journey and the obstacles faced by the company in this process.

Several studies have highlighted the positive impact of automation on customer journey and satisfaction. According to Smith et al. (2020), automation technologies such as chatbots and virtual assistants can provide real-time assistance to customers, improving their experience and

reducing response times. Similarly, Lee and Lee (2019) emphasize that automation can streamline the booking process, making it more convenient and efficient for customers.

Despite the benefits, there are obstacles that companies like GoZayaan need to overcome when implementing automation. One significant challenge is the resistance to change from both employees and customers. Kaur and Tuli (2018) discuss how employees may fear job loss or feel uncertain about their roles in an automated system. Additionally, customers may be skeptical about relying on automation for personalized services, preferring human interaction. Another obstacle is the need for robust infrastructure and technological capabilities. Chen and Chou (2021) emphasize the importance of integrating multiple systems and platforms for effective automation implementation. This requires investment in IT infrastructure and ensuring compatibility between different technologies.

The literature review highlights the importance of implementing automation in the customers' journey for GoZayaan and the challenges associated with it. While automation can enhance customer experience and streamline processes, resistance to change and the need for adequate infrastructure are key obstacles to overcome. Understanding these factors is crucial for GoZayaan to develop effective strategies for successful implementation of automation in the customers' journey.

3.4 Findings and Analysis

The findings and analysis from interviews taken of GoZayaan officials (Chief Commercial Officer, Senior Vice President – Product & Business Intelligence, Manager – Customer Experience, Manager – Flight Support and many more), available articles and my personal observation as an employee, reveals that the OTA platform has already made significant strides in implementing automation to enhance customers' journey. Starting from the very first step of booking, it is completely automated and connected through API (Application Programming

Interface) with its suppliers. Customers purchase their flight tickets and book hotel/resorts by themselves where the tickets are issued, and rooms are booked automatically without any manual interference.

However, although some of the hotel cancelations can be done automatically from 'My Booking' option from customer's website/app, but for flight cancelation/rescheduling customers still have to reach out to customer experience and support team for the assistance. Which sometime can be very complex and time consuming that might lead to customer dissatisfaction considering the frequent fare fluctuation of flight tickets controlled by airlines.

One notable feature GoZayaan is currently working on which will allow customers to manage their flight bookings effectively on their own from the "My Booking" option available on their app and website. This feature will enable customers to easily cancel or reschedule their flights without the need for manual intervention, providing convenience and flexibility. This will be a remarkable step for GoZayaan as they are facing lots of challenges to implement this feature due to the range of flight options provided to customers. There are multiple ticketing systems connected through API with GoZayaan. Such as: Travelport, Sabre, Amadeus, Mystifly etc. The configuration is complex, and their requirement is also different from each other. But the product and tech team of GoZayaan is working tirelessly to eradicate all the setbacks and launch the feature very soon.

Furthermore, GoZayaan has focused on improving the refund process by leveraging automation. By integrating automated refund systems, customers experience faster and smoother refund transactions, reducing the overall time and effort required for the refund process. This automation not only enhances customer satisfaction but also reduces manual workload for the company's customer support and accounts team. GoZayaan has taken initiative where they release the refunds within 24 working hours. However, due to manual

processing time taken from the payment gateway sometimes the refund gets delayed. Even though refunds are released from GoZayaan in time. So, it's a major concern and impediment towards customer satisfaction. An own fully automated payment gateway instead of third-party gateway from banks can be a probable solution in future. For that, acquiring more investments is required which I'm sure of won't be a problem due the significant growth of the company which is very attractive for investors.

To further enhance the automation in customers' journey, GoZayaan can consider implementing additional automated services and features. One potential area for improvement is the automation of flight status updates and notifications. By integrating real-time flight information, GoZayaan can provide customers with automatic updates regarding any changes or delays in their flights, ensuring that they are well-informed throughout their travel journey.

Another future step could be the implementation of automated chatbots or virtual assistants to handle customer queries and provide instant assistance. Chatbots equipped with Natural Language Processing (NLP) capabilities can address common customer inquiries, provide personalized recommendations, and assist in resolving issues, thereby enhancing the overall customer experience.

Moreover, GoZayaan can explore automation in itinerary customization, allowing customers to personalize their travel plans based on their preferences and interests. By leveraging automated algorithms, the platform can recommend tailored itineraries, accommodation options, and activities, providing customers with a seamless and customized travel experience.

3.5 Competitive Analysis

In addition to GoZayaan, ShareTrip and Flight Expert are key players in the OTA industry in Bangladesh. As the OTA market is still evolving, there is ample room for all players to expand.

However, these OTAs are in direct competition with each other due to factors such as their customer base, ease of comparison, product similarity, and their offered properties.

ShareTrip has gained an advantage over GoZayaan by implementing automated flight rescheduling and cancellation options on their website/app. This poses a challenge for GoZayaan as ShareTrip offers a limited selection of airlines compared to the broader range of options available on GoZayaan's platform. Integrating such features with multiple API networks from different airlines and suppliers becomes a notable challenge for GoZayaan.

Both ShareTrip and Flight Expert currently operate in a semi-online travel agency mode, providing traditional B2B sales services and assisted booking facilities through human agents to generate additional revenue. In contrast, GoZayaan's focus is on future growth by revolutionizing the industry through increased online-centric facilities and creating a culture of self-reliance for customers. They aim to provide automation while ensuring premium customer experience by combining it with human support when needed.

It is important for GoZayaan to address the challenges posed by competitors like ShareTrip and Flight Expert by further enhancing their automation capabilities and providing unique value propositions. By continuously improving their platform, expanding their range of automated services, and balancing automation with personalized human assistance, GoZayaan can differentiate itself in the market and attract a loyal customer base.

3.6 Summary of Challenges and Conclusions

The findings and analysis of GoZayaan's automation implementation reveal several challenges that the OTA platform is currently facing. While the booking process is automated and streamlined, flight cancelation and rescheduling still require manual intervention, leading to potential complexities and time-consuming customer support interactions. GoZayaan

recognizes the importance of addressing this issue and is actively working on a feature that will allow customers to manage their flight bookings independently through the "My Booking" option. However, implementing this feature is challenging due to the complexity and differing requirements of the multiple ticketing systems connected through APIs.

Another challenge lies in the refund process. Although GoZayaan has integrated automated refund systems, delays can occur due to manual processing time from the payment gateway. While the company strives to release refunds within 24 working hours, these delays can negatively impact customer satisfaction. To overcome this obstacle, GoZayaan can explore the possibility of developing its own fully automated payment gateway to expedite refund transactions.

Furthermore, to further enhance the automation in customers' journey, GoZayaan can consider additional initiatives. One such area is the automation of flight status updates and notifications, providing customers with real-time information on any changes or delays. Implementing automated chatbots or virtual assistants equipped with NLP capabilities can address customer queries and provide personalized recommendations, improving the overall customer experience. Additionally, exploring automation in itinerary customization can offer customers tailored travel plans based on their preferences and interests.

In conclusion, automation plays a crucial role in the success of GoZayaan, and by continually prioritizing and investing in automation initiatives, the company can stay competitive in the ever-evolving travel industry. With technology advancements and customer expectations on the rise, it is essential for GoZayaan to adapt and leverage automation to meet the changing needs of travelers and ensure continued growth and success.

3.7 Recommendations

1. Embrace automation strategically: GoZayaan should identify areas where automation can enhance efficiency and convenience without compromising the personalized touch that customers value. Automated processes such as booking, itinerary generation, and real-time updates can streamline operations, but human interaction should still be available for complex queries and personalized assistance.

2. Develop an intuitive and user-friendly interface: The implementation of automation should focus on creating an intuitive interface that is easy for customers to navigate. Clear instructions, seamless processes, and user-friendly design are essential for a positive user experience.

3. Invest in advanced technologies: GoZayaan should stay updated with the latest technological advancements in the travel industry. Investing in AI-driven chatbots, machine learning, and natural language processing can enhance automation capabilities and enable personalized recommendations, quick query resolution, and seamless customer interactions.

4. Continuously assess and improve automation processes: GoZayaan should regularly evaluate the effectiveness of automated services and gather feedback from customers. This feedback can help identify pain points, areas for improvement, and opportunities for further automation. Regular updates and enhancements should be made to ensure that automated processes align with customer expectations.

5. Maintain a human touch: While automation is valuable for efficiency, it's important to strike a balance and maintain a human connection. GoZayaan should offer customer support channels that allow customers to connect with a real person when needed. This human touch can provide reassurance, address complex issues, and build trust with customers.

6. Provide clear communication: It is crucial for GoZayaan to communicate transparently with customers about the automated processes in place. Clearly explain how automation benefits

their journey while also emphasizing the availability of human support when required. This will manage customer expectations and foster trust in the platform.

To sum up, GoZayaan should strategically implement automation to improve customer experience while maintaining a balance between automated services and human connection. By investing in advanced technologies, optimizing user interfaces, regularly assessing automation processes, and providing clear communication, GoZayaan can enhance efficiency, convenience, and customer satisfaction while preserving the personalized touch that sets them apart in the travel industry.

References:

Chen, C.-W., & Chou, S.-Y. (2021). *The influence of automation and service quality on customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry*. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 94, 102858.

Kaur, G., & Tuli, N. (2018). *Automation in the hospitality industry: Challenges and opportunities*. Journal of Tourism Research & Hospitality, 7(3), 1-5.

Lee, M., & Lee, J. (2019). *Investigating factors influencing customer satisfaction with hotel chatbots*. Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 36(7), 773-785.

Smith, A., Corti, K., Hantula, D., & Holbrook, M. B. (2020). *Service robots that communicate with consumers in human language: A review and synthesis of the literature*. Journal of Service Research, 23(1), 3-32.

Kader, R. (2022). *On Building Great Travel Products, Product Management, and Business Intelligence: Khondoker Mashuk Ibn Mahfuz, VP, Product and Business Intelligence, Go Zayaan* - Future Startup. https://futurestartup.com/2022/01/05/product-management-khondoker-mashuk-ibn-mahfuz-go-zayaan/

How GoZayaan has found a unique approach to marketing digital travel services in Bangladesh - Future Startup. (2022, December 28). https://futurestartup.com/2022/12/28/gozayaan-marketing/