Report on

Navigating the Digital Landscape - bKash's Endeavour to Carve its Online Presence

By:

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21204241

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/our 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/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

Student's Full Name and Signature:

Saniya Ahmed

21204241

Supervisor's Full Name and Signature:

Ms. Takmilla Tabassum

Lecturer

Brac Business School

Letter of Transmittal

Ms. Takmilla Tabassum

Lecturer,

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

Kha 224, Bir Uttam Rafiqul Islam Ave, Dhaka

Company: bKash Limited

Subject: Submission of Internship Report

Dear ma'am,

Please accept this letter as a formal transmittal of my internship report titled, "Navigating the Digital Landscape - bKash's Endeavour to Carve its Online Presence". This report details my experience and learnings during my internship at bKash Limited from 10th January, 2024 till now.

In this report, I have covered all the crucial knowledge I have gathered regarding the company and the MFS industry at large while particularly taking a focus on their Marketing. I have strived to provide a comprehensive overview of my internship experience, including the tasks I performed, the challenges I faced, and the knowledge I gained. My opportunity to work at bKash has been really humbling and impactful to my personal development. I have tried to reflect my learnings on this report. I hope this is what you were expecting from my internship report.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss this report with you in more detail at your convenience and incorporate any further instruction you have for me. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind regards,

Saniya Ahmed.

Non-Disclosure Agreement

This report has been created and is jointly agreed upon by bKash Limited and the undersigned student, Saniya Ahmed, ID- 21204241, from BRAC University for the purpose of an internship. Throughout my internship at bKash Ltd. I may have access to confidential information and will be familiar with bKash's internal processes and management practices. I understand that this confidential information must not be disclosed without prior approval and notification from both bKash Ltd. and myself.

Student's Full Name and Signature:

Saniya Ahmed

21204241

Supervisor's Full Name and Signature:

Uzma Zaman

Assistant Manager (Digital Marketing, Marketing)

bKash Limited

Acknowledgement

I want to thank bKash Limited from the bottom of my heart for giving me the chance to finish this internship. I have gained practical skills in the field and have been able to apply classroom knowledge to real-world circumstances thanks to this experience, which has been beneficial.

My sincere gratitude is extended to Takmilla Tabassum, my academic supervisor, for her leadership and assistance during the internship. She has been constantly supportive and encouraging throughout the internship. Her insightful comments on the report were really beneficial in completing the paper.

My appreciation extends to Uzma Zaman, my on-site supervisor at bKash Limited, for providing me with constant support and having my back throughout my internship period. The knowledge she has to share and her inputs for my work helped me develop significant progress over the course of the past four months. She went out of her way to make space for me in this foreign environment and offered me guidance whenever I needed it. Additionally, I would like to use this opportunity to thank the entire bKash Limited Digital Marketing team for everything they have taught me and for creating a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere at the workplace.

I am grateful to the peers I have come across during my tenure. The co-interns from diverse university backgrounds brought in new ideas and have given me insights regarding potential career prospects. I have grown a fresh outlook with regards to my major. I would not have been able to complete this internship without the bond I have formed with all of these individuals.

Executive Summary

The following piece details my internship with bKash Limited, a renowned mobile financial services provider in Bangladesh. In my internship, I have tried to find out how these digital marketing means of bKash affect the dynamics of this mobile financial service. I tried to study bKash's digital marketing strategies in great detail during the period of my internship. The increasing use of smartphones among the people of Bangladesh opened a way for the mobile financial services (MFS) business to flourish. This is because people were eagerly searching for financial inclusion. The research paper analyzes how bKash is using digital marketing in order to be competitive in the industry. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to investigate the digital marketing strategies used by bKash for customer acquisition, brand awareness building, and user engagement.

I learned about bKash's operations by creating campaign ideas, conducting market research, and using digital marketing all throughout my internship. My team at bKash has provided me with extensive knowledge regarding the decision-making processes and the subsequent impact they hold. Therefore, I was able to apply that knowledge in constructing this paper. On the other hand, I carried out primary research through a questionnaire and collected insight from bKash users firsthand. bKash makes a well-rounded approach in covering all grounds of the digital network but despite all the measures it sometimes falls behind in leaving a substantial mark in the minds and memories of its younger customer base with a rather fleeting attention span.

The following paper attempts to capture the gaps in bKash's current strategies and offers feasible methods through which it can overcome and strengthen its connections with Generation Z.

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Chapter 1

1. Introduction

1.1 Student Information

Name	Saniya Ahmed
ID	21204241
Program	Bachelor of Business Administration
Major	Marketing

1.2 Internship Information

1.2.1 Period, Company Name, Department, Address

Period	4 Months (10 January 2024 to 9 May 2024)
Company Name	bKash Limited
Department	Digital Marketing, Marketing Division
Address	Shadhinata Tower, 1, Bir Sreshtha Shaheed Jahangir Gate,
	Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka, 1206, Bangladesh

1.2.2 Supervisor's Information

Name	Uzma Zaman
Position	Assistant Manager, Digital Marketing, Marketing Division

1.2.3 Job Scope – Job Description/Duties/Responsibilities

I began my internship there on January 10, 2024 following my acceptance to the position within the Digital Marketing department of bKash Limited's Marketing division. During my stay here, I was blessed with the opportunity to investigate the inner workings of intricate marketing campaigns for well-known brands such as bKash. I was able to attain a sense of familiarity with the company as a whole and get a peep into the brains of the seasoned experts thanks to the collaborative culture that weaved the marketing division together as a whole. There were several members in the Digital Marketing department with whom I have worked alongside to get a speck of their job responsibilities hands-on, and I have successfully accomplished a broad variety of tasks under their guidance, including the following:

Creative projects

I was assigned to create original TikTok content for our young adult audience as I may bring the needs and wants of this demographic to the table. This required looking into the contents published by our competitors and studying the current trends to find chances for original brand messaging in the short-form video format on the platform. I collaborated with my seniors to build the framework of a possible project that would be released.

Data analysis and reporting

I helped with this work, making sure that the right public personalities are chosen for relevant joint venture prospects. In order to determine important indicators and produce reports that guide campaign optimization tactics, this required gathering and evaluating data.

Marketing campaigns

Developed marketing programs and plans that are in line with current events in order to guarantee that the company remains relevant through relevant channels. I contributed my own perspective and worked in groups to generate creative campaign concepts.

Market Research

To learn what our rivals are doing, I obtained intelligence. Throughout my internship, I was always required to provide in-depth analyses of current trends and the needs of our target audiences. My experience at bKash also included in-person interviews and market surveys conducted through internet portals.

Collaboration

I work closely with my team to complete a wide range of tasks like data entry, data collection, content curation, publishing ads, sending invoices, obtaining references, etc. to support daily operations and piece together the overall picture of how a dynamic, cross-functional team operates in real time.

1.3 Internship Outcomes

1.3.1 Contribution to the company

During my internship, I had the opportunity to dive into a variety of projects and campaigns that not only honed my skills but also significantly contributed to the company's marketing efforts. One of my key roles was in developing creative campaign ideas for Boi Mela, which helped boost our audience engagement and broadened our reach.

During the holy month of Ramadan, I also took on the challenging responsibility of conducting market research by travelling to actual fields. This provided us with the opportunity to acquire significant information that assisted us in the development of our strategic marketing initiatives and in the enhancement of our relationships with our clients.

I was able to put my love for social media trends to good use by creating interesting content for TikTok that enhanced our online presence and significantly increased the number of interactions we had with the demographic we were trying to reach.

In addition to my creative contributions, I have worked hard to accomplish a lot of operational tasks. These tasks ranged from data input to gathering productive insights and information, and I made sure to pay attention to accuracy as these duties are data sensitive. As a content curator, it was my responsibility to select and improve material in order to keep our digital platforms interesting and up to date when they were being used.

I committed to accuracy and efficiency in the performance of my administrative responsibilities, which included publishing advertisements, sending bills, and obtaining references. Despite their seeming banality, these duties were essential to ensuring the integrity of our processes and the progress of our initiatives.

1.3.2 Benefits to the student

My growth as a student and as a future marketing professional has been greatly aided by my internship with the company. Every assignment I completed improved both my academic and practical knowledge of the topic and helped the organization achieve its objectives.

Practical Implications

I have been able to apply the theoretical knowledge I have learned in my studies to a real-world context by working on a variety of projects like the Boi Mela campaign and assisting my senior in the digital marketing department for a large-scale upcoming project. This has helped me understand the practical implications of marketing strategies. This hands-on experience, which textbooks could not match, helped close the knowledge gap between classroom instruction and real-world business realities.

Market Research

Knowing more about Ramadan's market was helpful. It made me appreciate market research—a subject I had studied extensively in class—and the need to use data-driven insights to construct focused marketing strategy. This firsthand experience with the market and its customers has improved my consumer behaviour and market segmentation knowledge.

Content Creation

Making content for TikTok and other social media platforms has helped me grasp how crucial engaging content is and how fast digital marketing moves. My digital literacy improved along with my creativity and analysis. I learned how to analyse and evaluate user engagement indicators, which will improve my academic work and career.

Operational Tasks

Operational tasks taught me rigour and detail. These tasks helped me understand the backend processes that ensure marketing campaigns and company operations work well.

Online Ad Publications

Managing billing and posting ads improved my organisation and gave me insight into marketing campaigns' administrative and financial aspects. I am glad I learned about Facebook and Google Ads. Learning about these technologies directly has humbled me during my internship. This vast experience has given me a broad understanding and appreciation for the sector.

Overall, my internship has been immensely fulfilling. Working in a professional environment where the culture is formal yet friendly has removed the existing intimidation and apprehension I had felt towards my impending entrance to the corporate scene. Putting forward existing knowledge and being able to tailor it to match our needs has been crucial learning from my experience at bKash's marketing division. Although my team was Digital Marketing, the welcoming nature of the entire marketing division made me comfortable to explore all the concurrent processes that go on behind the scenes.

1.3.3 Problems/Difficulties (faced during the internship period)

Initially, I found it quite challenging to find my footing within the team. Interacting comfortably with coworkers and feeling like a part of the group was daunting. Each day presented an opportunity to improve my communication skills and build confidence in my social interactions, which gradually helped me feel more integrated and valued within the team. Another significant challenge was the intimidation I felt due to the knowledge and passion of my fellow interns. Witnessing their expertise and enthusiasm sometimes left me feeling threatened and questioning my own capabilities. But this also served as a motivation to push myself harder and embrace a mindset of continuous learning. I learned to see my peers not just as competitors but as partners in learning, which enriched my experience and expanded my knowledge base. Presenting my ideas was also an awkward and nerve-wracking experience initially. However, with each presentation, I gained more confidence. I learned to value constructive criticism as it provided me with insights into how I could refine my ideas and think more like a professional.

1.3.4 Recommendations (to the company on future internships)

The bnext internship programme that bKash provides is an exceptional example of the industry's one-of-a-kind offerings and is very well-designed. It has a strong reputation not just in the industry in which it operates but also in the business community of Bangladesh as a whole. I have a few suggestions for improvements that are rather simple and will help the programme become even more refined. The implementation of a rotational internship programme that provides interns with the opportunity to work in other departments within the division is something that might be something that bKash might want to consider. By doing so, interdepartmental cooperation would be encouraged, and a better understanding of the business's activities would be available. A further possibility is that bKash will organize training sessions or seminars with the purpose of assisting interns in honing specific skill sets that are required for their positions. The training sessions could be specialized for each department such as teaching digital marketing tools, hosting creativity workshops for branding interns and ways to elevate writing skills for communication interns. Additionally, a formal networking event could be arranged in order to provide the interns with the opportunity to become acquainted with the current employees of the bKash. This would be beneficial because it may be difficult to approach people at work for advice or a conversation when the permanent employees are already swamped with their own work. These are a few interesting ways in which this prestigious internship programme can be further enriched.

Chapter 2

2. Organization

2.1 Introduction

Bangladesh has taken a lead with respect to mobile financial services with the growth of this technology. It was this growth that has enabled the users to transfer funds to a family member or a friend to pay off their debts, or for that matter transact every type of routine financial transaction possible in this world commercially. This has revolutionized everything, giving power to people living in isolated areas who cannot gain any access to conventional financial institutions. The market is growing fast right now, and most institutions are now starting to compete in introducing MFS to the market. The easy access to finance through this mechanism has placed millions of Bangladeshis inside the formal financial system, and hence economic growth is highly enhanced. There are also others players which are currently in the markets as well, although bKash, Nagad, and Rocket are three major players already.

2.2 Overview of the Company

bKash Limited, a company launched in 2011, has completely changed the scenario of mobile financial services in Bangladesh. People in Bangladesh who do not have bank accounts or do not have sufficient money to justify the need for bank accounts can use bKash, a cooperative service that offers several different easy-to-reach banking services, each at a low price. Among the partner organizations are the International Finance Corporation (IFC), Money in Motion, BRAC Bank Limited, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The organization makes use of an extensive network of neighborhood stores that are outfitted with point-of-sale systems and banking capabilities. As a result, access to financial services has increased significantly, particularly in physically distant areas without traditional banking infrastructure. The extensive capacity of millions of users to safely transmit and receive money, make transactions, and obtain airtime has sparked a significant conversation about this technological progress.

Due to its customer-centric innovation and wide range of services to fulfill the needs of its diverse clientele, bKash is a bedrock of financial inclusion in Bangladesh. Thus, bKash has transformed how people communicate and empowered individuals nationwide economically.

2.2.1 Values

Customer Centric: bKash is for their customers. They value their needs and provide reliable, affordable and convenient solutions.

Innovative: They encourage new ideas and push towards changes. bKash consistently challenges the existing conventions of creativity and curiosity.

Collaborative: bKash nurtures an open and trusting environment for its employees to bring their full potential to the table. The culture is respectful and believes in sharing resources to bring collective results into fruition.

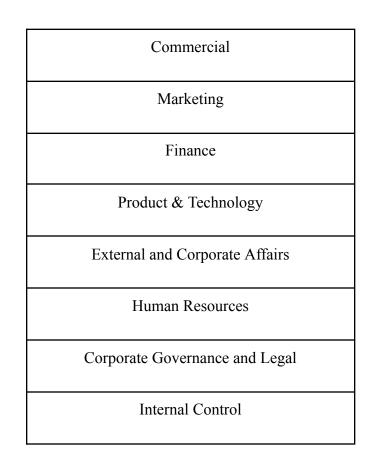
Agile: The MFS company is quick to adapt to changes. They rapidly meet the changing aspect of customer needs and expectations.

Ethical: bKash is substantially fair and consistent in all of their dealings. Integrity is a vital pillar of bKash's existence and it is never compromised upon. All codes of conduct are strictly adhered to by the firm.

2.2.2 Corporate Divisions

bKash has several divisions working simultaneously to keep the company moving forward. These divisions are further divided into different departments. I have been a part of bKash's Digital Marketing department within their Marketing Division.

The following chart shows the breakdown of all of the corporate divisions within the firm:



Customer Service

Communications

Enterprise Resource Management

2.2.3 Products and Services

Send Money: Transfer funds instantly to any bKash user.

Mobile Recharge: Top up mobile phone balances directly from your bKash account.

Payment: Make secure payments to registered merchants using bKash.

Cash Out: Withdraw cash from your bKash account through authorized agents. Add Money:

Easily deposit money into your bKash account from a bank account or card.

Pay Bill: Conveniently pay utility and other bills directly from your bKash account.

Savings: Securely save and earn interest with a bKash account.

Loan: Get microloans quickly with bKash.

bKash to Bank: Transfer money between bKash and a bank account easily.

Request Money: Use bKash to ask other users for money.

Remittance: Receive foreign funds directly into your bKash account.

Microfinance: Use microfinance for smaller loans and savings.

Education Fee: Payment for college and school tuition is easy with bKash.

Donations: Support charities with fast contributions.

Insurance: Pay premiums and obtain insurance services instantly with bKash.

2.3 Management Practices

The participative and laissez-faire leadership styles practiced together at bKash create a creative work atmosphere. The top management initiates encouraging employee participation and drives a culture of decision-making by consensus. They tend to make keen teams highly autonomous by putting maximum trust in their knowledge and encouraging independent decision-making in given fields. In such a scenario, there is a very lively atmosphere where strong individual drive and teamwork lead to a constant mix. The top management strategy has allowed bKash to concentrate its effort on innovation, customer needs, teamwork, change, and ethical behavior. The bKash management team uses the "STEER" code of leadership— referring to strategic thinking, talent development, execution, enabling others, and resilience.

2.3.1 Recruitment Process

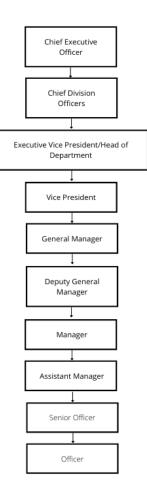
The Product & Technology division uses a different recruitment process compared to the rest of the divisions with a focus on assessment results over interviews. Generally, a headcount is taken for how many new recruitments are required in each department at the beginning of the year. Then the human resource division begins the recruitment process according to the feasibility of the demand. The openings are disclosed through job post portals, bKash's career page and platforms like bdjobs.

2.3.2 Training and Development

bKash's bAcademy is an initiative that is the first of its kind in the corporate climate of Bangladesh. It is a thorough programme for all of its employees where they are familiarized with 12 core trainings. Other yearly and/or quarterly training sessions are conducted after assessing the needs of specific departments.

2.3.3 Chain of Command

bKash operates with a defined chain of command that establishes clear roles and responsibilities within the organization. However, it's important to note that bKash's corporate culture is fundamentally collaborative and not strictly bound by hierarchy. The setting nurtures a culture of open communication and teamwork in solving issues, empowering employees at all hierarchical levels to autonomously make decisions. The chart displays the hierarchical structure of the titles:



2.4 Marketing Practices

2.4.1 Marketing Strategy

The bKash marketing strategy emphasizes financial inclusion. The plan prioritizes security, usability, and accessibility. Their technique appeals to urban and rural residents by emphasizing how easy financial transactions are at any time, from anywhere. Their undifferentiated strategy uses mass market communication, while targeted campaigns use specialized methods to reach certain demographics.

2.4.2 Targeting and Positioning Strategy

bKash communicates with individuals in Bangladesh who do not have access to banks and are seeking a straightforward method to accomplish their financial activities. Thus, one of the primary target segments of the digital financial service is the unbanked population of Bangladesh. bKash simultaneously serves the needs of middle class and upper middle class demographics. These segments can utilize bKash for a wider range of services. Ultimately, bKash is a product for the masses and goes on to be useful to the undifferentiated population of the country. Their positioning strategy is to establish themselves as the mobile financial service provider in Bangladesh that is both the most dependable and the most simply accessible. They position themselves as a vital component of day-to-day financial activity by highlighting the numerous ways in which their services may simplify a variety of transactions, including payments, remittances, and other forms of transactions.

2.4.3 Marketing Channels

bKash uses a blend of traditional and online marketing channels. Traditional media includes print, radio, and TV ads, which are heavily in use to reach the masses. They go for social media, online sites, and their mobile app for digital services to interact with people, offer customer care, and share information on new offerings.

2.4.4 Product Development

bKash has a product line that is continuously innovated for the sake of staying competitive. They have extended the service offerings from only money transfers to bill payments, phone air-time top-off, online shopping payments, and many others. Meanwhile, the enterprise puts a lot of weight and emphasis on developing the relationships that are mutually beneficial to the firm such as international money transfer providers and financial institutions like banks to further extend their coverage of service offerings. bKash has to continuously improve its platform in respect of usability and security features to remain competitive with rival companies like Nagad and Rocket.

2.4.5 Branding Activities

Convenience and trust lie at the core of branding strategies for bKash. Its branding is very visual, with the mainstay - the logo and color combination - being ubiquitous across all media sites. Themes in messaging reflect bKash as secure, user-friendly, and committed to helping each and every person in Bangladesh to take authority over their finances. There is no identity inconsistency; displaying a simple yet appropriate design for each specific target group.

2.4.6 Advertising and Promotion Strategies

bKash employs a wide array of advertising methods, varying from television commercials to print advertisements, billboards, and comprehensive internet marketing campaigns. The BTL

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team at bKash participates physically in numerous sponsored events, where they construct cool and visually eye-catching booths to attract foot traffic from passersby and provide immediate connections with consumers. The MFS firm works in conjunction with the most trending public figures of the zeitgeist, like Afran Nisho, Mehazabien Chowdhury, and Bidya Sinha Saha Mim, providing them with opportunities to serve as brand ambassadors as well as with curated influencers matching the mood for specific campaigns. bKash publishes targeted advertisements and marketing campaigns on social media sites including Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, where they have a considerably large audience. Since the release of their আমার বিকাশ (ঠকায় কে song and video, the company has been stepping up its efforts for sustainable branding.

2.4.7 Marketing Issues and Gaps

bKash's marketing strategy, particularly in their promotional materials, has been notably focused on specific campaigns and offers rather than cultivating a deeper emotional connection with the brand. This approach primarily highlights the functional benefits and transactional aspects of their services. The emphasis on short-term promotions can overshadow opportunities to build lasting relationships with consumers. Engaging customers on a more personal and emotional level—by aligning the brand with values, lifestyles, or social impacts—could enhance loyalty and brand affinity.

The written and graphic content of bKash's articles and banners can be congested and uninteresting. While the objective may be to retain a cohesive brand, doing so may deter visitors who are seeking fresh material. The creative agency working with bKash on these items are not as efficient and provide basic materials.

2.5 Financial Performance and Accounting Practices

2.5.1 Financial Performance

i) Now, before moving on to the details of financial performance, first I will look at the current ratio of bKash. This measures the company's capability to pay off existing current liabilities by using current assets. To determine the ratio, the sum of all current assets is divided by the sum of all current liabilities. The higher the ratios, the better the liquidity position, or in simpler terms, shows the firm's ability to honor their short-term debts owed. Now let's discuss the current ratios to get a better insight into the liquidity position of bKash.

Current Ratio for 2023:

Current Ratio = Current Assets/Current Liabilities

= 107982994670/ 85712392583

= 1.259

Current Ratio for 2022:

Current Ratio = Current Assets/Current Liabilities

= 94445349712/ 73831924091

= 1.279

Current Ratio for 2021:

Current Ratio = Current Assets/Current Liabilities

= 88499445819/ 62928023360

= 1.406

The current ratio of bKash over the last three years shows a declining trend, suggesting the company's moving liquidity position. First, the ratio of the company was strong, much higher than the industry averages. If that were the case, it should have demonstrated that the corporation maintained strong liquidity to meet its short-term obligations through its existing assets. However, the ratio declined slowly with time due to the increased restrictiveness of liquidity.

ii) Gross profit margin is an excellent measure of financial metric that shows the excess of revenues over the costs of goods sold (COGS). This basically serves as important information regarding the company's pricing approach and operation's efficiency, which includes efficient use of labor and materials during the manufacturing process. The gross margin is directly related to the capability of the corporation to sustain a higher amount of money per dollar of sales. This money may be spent to finance other costs or liabilities payoff.

Now let's examine bKash's gross profit margins to assess how the company has recently managed pricing and costs.

Gross Profit Margin for 2023:

Gross Profit Margin = (Gross Profit/Revenue) X 100

= 29.7

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Gross Profit Margin for 2022:

Gross Profit Margin = (Gross Profit/Revenue) X 100

= (6696920087/25024275377) X 100

= 26.7

Gross Profit Margin for 2021:

Gross Profit Margin = (Gross Profit/Revenue) X 100

It has been stated that bKash has achieved some promising financial outcomes, including a perceptible improvement in gross profit margins from the year 2021 to the year 2023. Because of this, we can assume that the organization's main business processes are getting better at turning costs into profits.

iii) The operating profit margin is a financial measurement that indicates the percentage of revenue remaining after subtracting operating costs from gross profit.

Operating Profit Margin for 2023:

Operating Profit Margin = (Operating Profit/ Revenue) X 100

= (123067716/30503140599) X 100

= 0.40

Operating Profit Margin for 2022:

Operating Profit Margin = (Operating Profit/ Revenue) X 100

= (-609051954/ 25024275377) X 100

= - 2.43

Operating Profit Margin for 2021:

Operating Profit Margin = (Operating Profit/ Revenue) X 100

= (-1104020208/20347098207) X 100

= -0.05

iv) Let's assess the financial risks of bKash by utilizing financial tools such as the leverage ratios to see how much debt the company has compared to its assets and equities.

Debt to Equity Ratio 2023:

Debt-to-Equity Ratio = Total Debt/Total Equity

= 86736587993 / 31483374596

Debt to Equity Ratio 2022:

Debt-to-Equity Ratio = Total Debt/Total Equity

= 2.45

Debt to Equity Ratio 2021:

Debt-to-Equity Ratio = Total Debt/Total Equity

= 64089766600 / 30427030067

Examining bKash's debt-to-equity ratios over the past three years reveals that the firm is more committed to using loans and debt than shareholder equity to fund operations. This suggests that bKash may be using debt financing strategically in order to fund expansion or investments. However, we must also remember that a high debt-to-equity ratio indicates a higher level of financial risk for the business.

v) Another useful leverage ratio would be debt ratio which would give us insight to the extent of bKash's reliance upon debt to finance their assets.

Debt Ratio 2023:

Debt Ratio = Total Debt/Total Assets

= 86736587993 / 118219962589

= 0.73

Debt Ratio 2022:

Debt Ratio = Total Debt/Total Assets

= 74982079408 / 105584425552

= 0.71

Debt Ratio 2021:

Debt Ratio = Total Debt/Total Assets

= 64089766600 / 94516796667

= 0.67

A look at bKash's debt ratios for the last three years demonstrates that it is increasingly reliant on financing its assets through debt.

vi) While the debt ratio is very insightful, the equity ratio brings out the counter-argument in it; it shows what percentage of bKash's assets are funded directly by shareholders, therefore giving a wider view of the capital structure.

Equity Ratio 2023:

Equity Ratio = Total Equity/Total Assets

= 31483374596 / 118219962589

= 0.26

Equity Ratio 2022:

Equity Ratio = Total Equity/Total Assets

= 30602346144 / 105584425552

= 0.28

Equity Ratio 2021:

Equity Ratio = Total Equity/Total Assets

= 30427030067 / 94516796667

= 0.32

2.5.2 Accounting Practices

bKash, which is one of the major providers of mobile financial services (MFS) in Bangladesh, is aware of how critical it is to maintain transparency and adhere to sound financial standards. One can have full faith that bKash adheres to the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) to the letter, which ensures that its financial reporting is in accordance with the principles that are generally recognized. In addition, the company makes sure that all transactions, agent commissions, and fees are correctly accounted for by diligently following the criteria that have been established by the Bangladesh Bank. Depending on the circumstances, bKash employs both the accrual and cash bases of accounting, with the principal emphasis being placed on the accrual basis. The straight-line method is the one that is adopted for depreciation the majority of the time; nonetheless, it can be performed in a variety of different ways depending upon the object.

2.6 Operations Management and Information System Practices

Since bKash was one of the first companies to enter the mobile financial services (MFS) sector in Bangladesh, the company is well aware of how important it is to have a robust IT service management (ITSM) framework in place in order to successfully manage and resolve issues that revolve around information technology. For the purpose of ensuring that operations are not disrupted and that high service availability is maintained, the company has made an investment in a dedicated IT service management team that employs cutting-edge methods and tools. It is the responsibility of this team to manage incidents, problems, and continuous improvement for information technology services. All of these aspects are critical to ensuring that customers are satisfied and that the integrity of the system is maintained.

Further, in bKash, Oracle Database enables the management of its huge databases. This is feasible due to the adaptable and stable architecture of Oracle, allowing bKash to maintain its operations while efficiently handling their substantial transaction volumes. This allows bKash to handle a good deal of transactions daily with high efficiency in performance and less downtime, all through the use of Oracle databases. In addition, bKash takes care to protect financial data from online threats otherwise, this industry's integrity and confidence would have been compromised. All this is possible only through the provision of strong security features enabled in bKash by Oracle.

2.7 Industry and Competitive Analysis

2.7.1 Porter's Five Forces Analysis for bKash Limited

1. Threat of New Entrants:

• Low to Moderate: The financial sector, especially mobile financial services, requires high capital investment and regulatory restrictions, making entry difficult. However, the success of bKash may attract new competitors, especially foreign fintech companies seeking to expand in underdeveloped countries.

- 2. Bargaining Power of Suppliers:
 - Low: The main sources of bKash's dependence are technology platforms and telecommunications infrastructure. As a result of a few major telecom companies' dominance in Bangladesh, their purchasing power is somewhat constrained. bKash has sway over its suppliers thanks to its big customer base and high transaction volumes.
- 3. Bargaining Power of Customers:
 - Moderate to High: Due to the availability of alternatives like Rocket, Nagad, and traditional banking services, customers have a great deal of influence. Because consumers have relatively low switching costs, bKash must constantly innovate and enhance the quality of its services in order to keep its user base.
- 4. Threat of Substitute Products or Services:
 - High: With a number of alternative mobile financial services and traditional banking options available, there is a high threat of substitutes. bKash is also at risk from services like online banking and other cutting-edge fintech solutions.
- 5. Industry Rivalry:
 - High: The competition in the mobile financial sector in Bangladesh is intense with major players like Rocket and Nagad. These competitors are continually improving their service offerings, which intensifies the industry rivalry.

2.7.2 SWOT Analysis for bKash Limited

Strengths:

- Common advantages include a sizable user base, a strong network of agents throughout Bangladesh, first-mover advantage, and strong brand awareness.
- Innovative services like QR code payments and international remittance, along with an easy-to-use mobile platform, are its imitable strengths.
- Standout Strengths: Strong support from BRAC Bank and international investors including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, as well as strategic alliances with banks and international remittance providers.

Weaknesses:

- Reliance on cellular network providers.
- Restricted penetration in some rural regions.
- Occasional outages and malfunctions with the service.

Opportunities:

- Providing specialized services and growing into more rural locations.
- Utilizing technology to provide financial products that are more individualized.
- Possibility of global expansion, particularly in areas with a sizable Bangladeshi diaspora.

Threats:

- Growing rivalry from foreign and domestic fintech companies.
- Modifications to regulations that can impose stricter operating requirements.

• Hazards related to technology, such as security lapses.

2.7.3 Competitive Advantage of bKash

There are a number of distinctive characteristics that set bKash apart from its competitors. These advantages include its extensive agent network and strategic connections, both of which are difficult for competitors to quickly replicate. In the process, it has also been able to develop a big and committed customer base due to its first-mover advantage and strong brand presence. That would call for bKash to pay heed to further developing its technological capacity, improving user experience, and rolling out new offers of financial services if it is to retain and increase its competitive standing.

2.8 Summary and Conclusions

I had a profound internship at bKash Limited, a leader in Bangladesh's mobile financial services (MFS). Working for the digital marketing team taught me the most recent techniques bKash has to keep ahead of the competition in this ever-changing industry.

I learned how bKash uses digital media to promote brand awareness by generating and selecting TikTok videos and releasing remittance advertising. I now understand bKash's success after seeing these approaches' effects.

The internship helped me grasp bKash's impact outside the digital world. Their broad agent network shows their commitment to financial inclusion, especially for rural and unbanked people. This network fills the gap created by electronic payments over cash transactions, boosting Bangladesh's economy. The influence of bKash extends beyond its users. The MFS sector has grown rapidly due to their success, encouraging innovation and competition that benefits all Bangladeshis. This snowball effect has helped the country go cashless.

2.9 Recommendations

bKash has a thriving atmosphere with some of the sharpest corporate minds working in synchrony to bring revolutionary ideas to the table. The company has outdone itself to extend its offerings for all imaginable services from a Mobile Financial Service. As a firm focusing on an undifferentiated strategy to accommodate the needs of the general public of Bangladesh, the minimalist and easy-to-understand user experience may reflect lack of innovation and ingenuity in terms of its perception as a technology-driven business. bKash would highly benefit from utilizing data analytics, machine learning and AI to personalize user experiences within the app. Recommend relevant services, offer targeted promotions, and tailor the interface based on user preferences. During my tenure I have come to understand users' frustrations towards the convoluted transaction fee structure, especially with regards to discount coupons. A more transparent and easily accessible information availability could help sustain trust and build confidence within the app's users. Another recommendation from my end would be for bKash to have a more hands-on approach in getting smaller business pages to employ the use of bKash rather than simply focusing on large e-commerce sites. This will integrate the use of bKash payment in a more non-traditional setting while establishing bKash as the standard for future transactions for casual, regular purchases.

Chapter 3

3.1 Research Project

3.1.1 Introduction

In the current climate of Bangladesh, bKash is a household name with a country-wide prevalence and acceptance. It can be a daunting task to outdo its own previous performances and introduce information or acquire new objectives through regular promotions. However, bKash still makes persistent efforts in communicating through various digital channels while simultaneously utilizing traditional marketing tools such as banners and prints. With the depleting attention economy taking over, the following project makes a deliberate attempt in figuring out what efforts from bKash have made an impression so far and what opportunities are still untapped by bKash. The paper aims to provide suggestions backed by the findings of the study that can help to bring innovative tactics under bKash's radar.

3.1.2 Objectives

Broad Objective: In order to gain a deeper understanding of bKash's positioning and efficacy within Bangladesh's competitive digital finance sector, this study will examine a number of critical components of its marketing strategy.

Specific Objectives:

• To investigate how bKash sets itself apart from competitors in the industry with its curation-based marketing strategy by identifying distinctive tactics.

- To examine bKash's marketing strategy and evaluate if it prioritizes acquiring short-term engagement metrics over establishing a lasting brand image.
- To look for ways to make bKash's material more unique and appealing to Gen Z viewers, who are recognized for having refined media consumption preferences.
- To examine Bangladeshi Gen Z audiences' favorite platforms and resources. This will provide valuable information that can be used to design more targeted and effective marketing strategies.

Through these objectives, the study will give a full picture of how bKash's marketing works right now and suggest ways to improve engagement and brand success.

3.1.3 Significance

Taking a close look at the previously stated objectives could help bKash become much more effective in its marketing. It could potentially alter the digital marketing scene of Bangladesh by introducing ideas that cut through the noise. Figuring out what distinctive attributes differentiate bKash from its competition will allow the company to consistently capitalize on its competitive edge and maintain the distinct brand within the competitive marketplace of MFS. By looking at whether its strategies focus more on long-term brand development or on engaging customers, bKash can find the best mix between short-term success and long-term growth, which will ensure brand loyalty for a long time.

By recognising Generation Z as a powerful target audience and essentially the future of the company, bKash can revolutionise its advertising approach. It will heighten the impact of commercials among this significant demographic, who are known for craving originality and

genuineness. By understanding Generation Z's preferred channels and tailoring ads that resonate with them can facilitate the appropriate use of marketing resources, leading to maximum impact.

3.1.4 Literature Review

Digital marketing has become increasingly central to business strategies globally, and this trend is only accelerating due to various technological advancements and shifts in consumer behavior. Several key factors illustrate why digital marketing continues to grow in importance. With the advent of smartphones and affordable internet, there has been a significant increase in digital content consumption. This shift has led businesses to focus more on digital channels to reach their target audiences effectively. 5.35 billion people, or 66% of the world's population, will have internet access by 2024, according to a Forbes report. The bulk of these users will do so using mobile devices.

Digital marketing therefore allows more precise targeting and complete personalization of the marketing experience when contrasted with traditional marketing. With the help of data analytics, the age group, hobbies, and tendencies to purchase the customers a business is targeting can be reached with personalized offers. According to a McKinsey study, companies that effectively leveraged consumer data saw five to eight times returns on their marketing expenditures when it came to data-driven customisation.

Moreover, it is a cost-effective tool for advertising as it can derive immediate return on investment through various analytical tools, allowing companies like bKash to study what is working and improvise further and quickly to cater to target consumers' preferences. In this approach, using technologies like Google Analytics, marketers would have complete information on the performance of their efforts, allowing them to develop even better plans and make decisions in their best interests. Another core aspect of digital marketing is how social media allows Word of Mouth to thrive as a key contribution from loyal customers (Yamin, 2017). These are channels that traditional marketing fails to provide.

Another factor accelerating digital marketing is the rapid increase of online buying. Because more people are shopping online, digital marketing is becoming an increasingly vital tool for e-commerce businesses to attract new consumers, engage with existing ones, and retain existing ones. Payment services such as bKash facilitate this need identification from viewing an ad to the immediate purchase of items. Thus call to action from e-commerce sites and business pages in return boosts the usability of bKash's built-in "Payment" feature. However, it is not efficiently put to use as only 4.5% of total MFS usage in the country accounts for merchant payments (*Bangladesh Bank*, n.d.). There is certainly potential for growth in this area as worldwide e-commerce sales were expected to reach 5.8 trillion US dollars in 2023, an evidence of the increasing significance of online transactions (Chevalier, 2024).

As with a service like bKash, where the company and the customers are inseparable due to the nature of the product, one of the vital ways the firm can establish real-time consumer interaction and engagement is through the use of digital marketing platforms (Mahtab & Abdullah, 2016). Due to the absence of the space between the delivery of a tangible product and the consequent use of it, digital financial services such as bKash may interact directly with consumers on social

media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, get quick feedback, and build a community around their brands.

These factors underscore the growing importance of digital marketing and its role in the modern business landscape. Businesses that adapt to these digital marketing trends often see improved visibility, higher engagement rates, and increased sales, confirming the critical role of digital marketing in contemporary commerce.

Similarly to the rest of the world, Bangladesh is making strides in adopting a digital lifestyle. The digital sphere is now an integral part of our daily existence, influencing nearly every part of our behaviour and interactions. As of 2020, 36 million of the the total 66.44 million internet users of Bangladesh happen to be active on social media sites as reported by DataReportal. With the target audiences spending more time on the internet, the companies are taking substantial initiatives to meet their customers where they can find them. Finding a window in this new yet seemingly permanent second space in our life can help firms develop brand awareness (Ramim, 2017). Younger internet users are attributed to be more well-acquainted to the know-hows of digital marketing with university-going students and fresh graduates occupying most of the spaces in digital marketing agencies (Maisha, 2021).

3.2 Methodology

Research Design: This research adheres to the quantitative method as the following findings are based on a questionnaire which received 48 responses. The structured survey helped to figure out the perception of bKash users regarding marketing strategies used online and get a deeper insight into what drives them to engage with related contents.

Sampling method: The sampling method used for this paper was non-probability sampling as the paper was actively distributed by me to deliberate audiences. The selection was not based on random chances but rather through a mix of convenience and snowball sampling.

Data: Both primary and secondary data were utilized. Primary data was the core of the investigation as firsthand knowledge was directly derived from respondents of the survey. To enrich the research and add to the context, secondary data entailing information from webpages, articles, published scholarly and journalistic papers, reports were included.

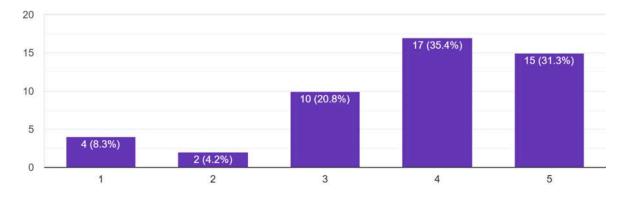
Collection and Analysis: The questions were written on a Google Form and were circulated amongst peers and acquaintances. Once the data collection period concluded, the responses were automatically compiled and summarized within the Google Form interface. By analyzing these response summaries, I was able to identify trends and patterns within the data, ultimately leading to the following conclusions.

3.3 Findings and Analysis

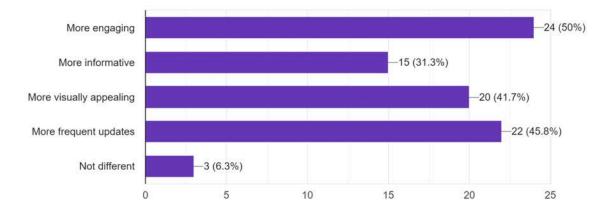
i) Differentiation in marketing

How familiar are you with bKash's marketing campaigns compared to other digital wallet services in Bangladesh?

48 responses



The poll results emphasised the efficacy of bKash's outreach activities, as respondents demonstrated a significant level of familiarity with the company's marketing initiatives. Almost all participants indicated their familiarity with all of bKash's marketing endeavours.

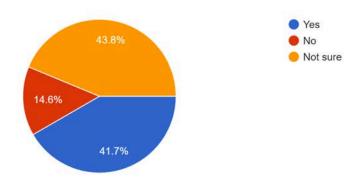


In what ways do you find bKash's marketing content different from other financial service providers?

48 responses

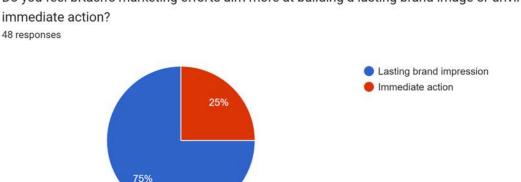
50% of the participants expressed that they perceive bKash's marketing content as more captivating compared to that of other organisations, as per their description. In addition, according to the respondents, bKash maintains more frequent communication with its clientele compared to its competitors. This feedback emphasises bKash's proactive customer engagement approach and suggests that its consistent and captivating communication strategy effectively attracts and retains client interest.

Can you identify any unique themes or messages that bKash uses in their marketing that you do not commonly see with other brands? 48 responses



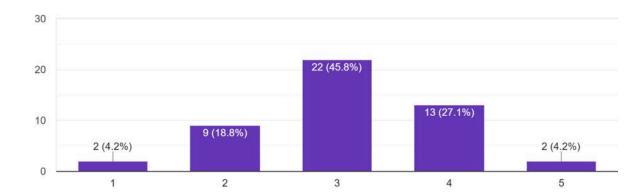
The majority of respondents expressed uncertainty on the uniqueness and effectiveness of the marketing messaging from bKash. This feedback suggests that buyers may see bKash's messaging as lacking distinctiveness or memorability. Following the poll, those who were interested were asked to describe what they liked. Responses ranged from citing specific taglines to emphasising the persistent usage of bKash's vibrant colour throughout all content. Several respondents expressed an attraction for theme-oriented marketing during specific events and cultural occasions, such as the World Cup and promotional materials relating to Eid.

ii) Long Term Vs Short Term



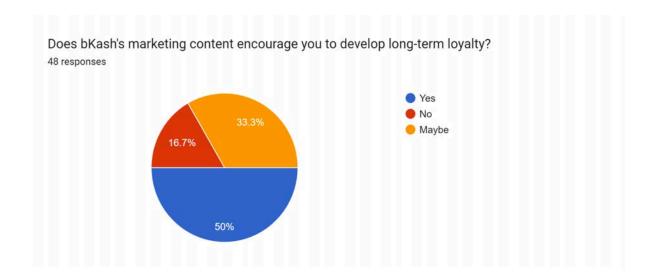
Do you feel bKash's marketing efforts aim more at building a lasting brand image or driving

Most survey participants believe that bKash's marketing content is designed to establish a durable and enduring impact rather than encouraging immediate action. Therefore, it may be inferred that bKash is allocating resources towards developing a strong and recognizable brand image and establishing a relationship with its intended audience, with a particular emphasis on continual involvement.



How often do bKash's marketing campaigns include messages about the brand's vision or community involvement? 48 responses

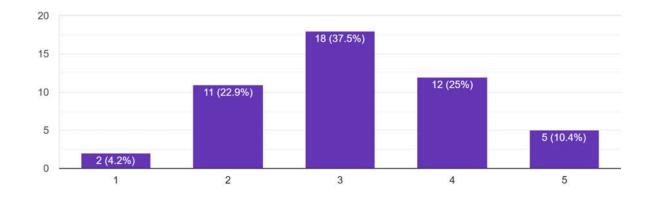
In this question, the rating scale ranged from 1, representing 'Never', to 5, representing 'Always'. Upon analysis of the responses, it is evident that individuals hold a neutral stance regarding this question. This implies that the respondents have not developed any concrete viewpoint regarding the statement provided.



The responses to the question indicate that the majority of participants hold the view that bKash's advertising methods have been successful in instilling brand loyalty. This shows that bKash's marketing campaigns are carefully constructed to connect and build trust. The company's marketing content aims to establish lasting relationships with consumers by prioritising customer value, ensuring consistent brand message, and showcasing a strong commitment to delivering high-quality service.

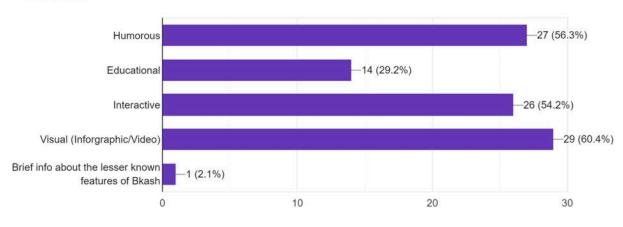
iii) Resonance with Gen Z

48 responses



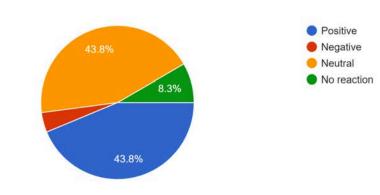
How relevant do you find bKash's marketing content to your interests and lifestyle as a Gen Z individual?

In this scenario, the number 1 represents "Very Relevant," whereas the number 5 represents "Very Irrelevant." According to the study's findings, the majority of participants are indifferent about bKash's marketing efforts, which are aimed primarily toward Generation Z. This ambivalence suggests that bKash's marketing initiatives, despite their popularity and visibility, may not be properly meeting the specific preferences and values of Generation Z. This generation prioritizes social impact, authenticity, and creative digital experiences, therefore typical marketing strategies or messaging geared at wider audiences may not work as well.



What type of content would make bKash's messages more appealing to you and your peers? 48 responses

The findings above indicate the preferred genre of material that the survey respondents, who are generation Z audiences, would want to see from bKash. Visual content, such as infographics and videos, seemed to be the preferred option among the majority.

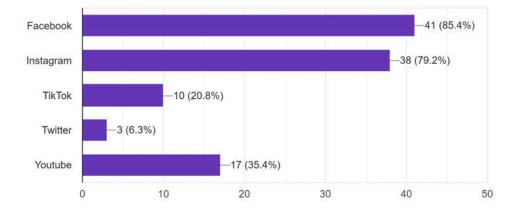


What emotions or reactions does bKash's current marketing invoke in you? 48 responses

Approximately 88% of the participants indicate that bKash's marketing evokes feelings that range from favourable to neutral. This suggests that most of the individuals questioned have

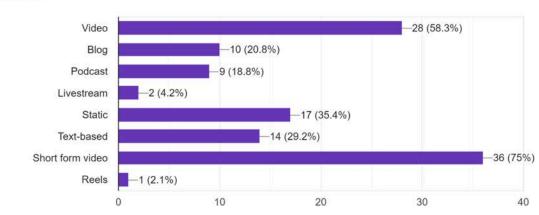
positive or at least neutral responses to bKash's marketing initiatives, indicating successful involvement and connection with the target demographic.

iv) Preferred Platforms



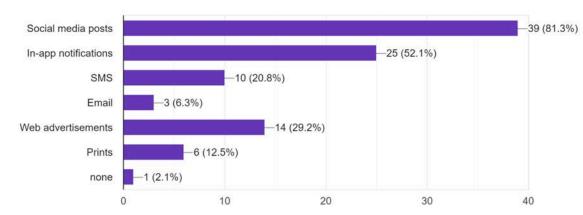
Which social media platforms do you use most frequently to consume marketing content? 48 responses

According to the poll results, Facebook is the predominant social media network among Gen Z, with Instagram and YouTube being the next most popular choices. This discovery showcases the ongoing significance and attractiveness of Facebook to younger demographics, despite the emergence of newer platforms. Instagram's enduring popularity is a testament to its visually captivating content and its ability to connect with Gen Z through personal expression.



What types of content formats do you engage with most? 48 responses

The study results indicate that the majority of respondents (75%) clearly favoured short-form video content. This trend exemplifies the growing influence of websites that focus on concise and captivating videos, such as TikTok and Instagram Reels. Extended videos are increasingly gaining popularity following the trend of shorter videos, and they continue to hold significant appeal.



How do you prefer to receive promotional information from brands like bKash? 48 responses The survey indicates that respondents prefer to get bKash promotional updates mostly through social media posts and in-app alerts. This indicates that these mediums are highly effective in maintaining client engagement. bKash utilises social media channels to actively engage with users in the online locations they frequently visit. Conversely, in-app notifications enable bKash to send personalised messages and promotions directly to users' devices, serving as a direct and intimate communication tool.

3.4 Recommendations

It is wonderful to see that the suggestions I initially had in mind for bKash were already being implemented to different extents during my time here. It is commendable that these programmes have launched, as they show exactly how bKash is ahead of the curve in terms of attracting and retaining its younger segment. However, to ensure that the measures they are taking have real and long-lasting effects, they need to be constantly improved alongside the period of their execution.

As younger viewers now consume short-form video more than any other form, bKash should pay more focus to this format. Videos can include behind-the-scenes bKash service tours, customer testimonials, or tutorial content. This audience will appreciate the fun and attention catching short length videos created for social media platforms such as Instagram Reels, Snapchat, and TikTok. Engaging youth and imparting financial literacy knowledge can be accomplished through the incorporation of gamified elements into bKash applications or social media platforms. Enhancing the learning experience by incorporating games or challenges that offer incentives for achieving specific financial objectives or learning unfamiliar financial concepts can make the process more interesting and gratifying.

bKash can work through their ability to communicate with Generation Z and Millennial demographics through collaborations with prominent influencers who uphold similar values in the public eye. Content creators and influencers can utilize their audiences' trust and sense of connection by posting real content that highlights the benefits and takes away the intimidation that comes with using bKash. Positive responses to the content developed with the likes of Rafsan The ChotoBhai and Amin Hannan speak of such facts. By actively seeking important partnerships like this, bKash can establish itself as the preferred option among younger groups.

Potential ways to better the user experience of the bKash application include improving its speed, interface appearance, and usability. By introducing interactive tutorials, visually appealing themes, and customized dashboards, usability can be increased and the presence of youth would likely expand as well.

Leveraging social media live streaming sessions to respond to user inquiries concerning bKash services, gathering feedbacks, and unveiling new features will certainly promote bKash as a reliable service. By connecting users to the business in real time, this interaction can build community and passion. Of course, this sense of bonding can be further tailored by arranging

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small-scale workshops and classes or retreats for content creators. Throughout these events, attendees would participate in specific activities and challenges to gamify their process of learning about bKash while also forming a social circle amongst themselves.

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Appendix:

Questionnaire:

How familiar are you with services in Bangladesh?	h bKash's r	narketing	campaigns	s compared	d to other d	ligital wallet *
	1	2	3	4	5	
Not familiar at all	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	Extremely familiar
In what ways do you find providers? More engaging More informative	bKash's m	narketing c	content diff	erent from	other finar	ncial service *
More visually appealing	g					
More frequent updates	3					
Not different						

Can you identify and do not commonly			ages that bk	ash uses in t	neir marketing	g that you *
O Yes						
O No						
O Not sure						
If you answered ye	es to the prev	vious question	n, briefly spec	cify your obse	rvation	
Long answer text						
Do you feel bKash immediate action? Lasting brand in Immediate action	mpression	efforts aim m	nore at buildir	ng a lasting bi	and image or	driving *
How often do bKa community involve		ng campaigns	s include mes	sages about	the brand's vi	sion or *
	1	2	3	4	5	
Never	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	Always
Does bKash's mar	keting conte	nt encourage	you to develo	on long-term l	ovaltv2 *	
Yes		in encourage			oyany:	
Maybe						

How relevant do you 1 individual?	înd bKash's	marketing	content to y	our interest	s and lifesty	/le as a Gen Z *
	1	2	3	4	5	
Very relevant	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	0	Very irrelevant
What type of content	would make	e bKash's m	essages mo	ore appealin	g to you and	d your peers? *
Humorous						
Educational						
Interactive						
Visual (Inforgraphic	c/Video)					
Other						
What emotions or rea	ictions does	bKash's cu	rrent marke	ting invoke	in you? *	
O Positive				3		
Negative						
 Neutral 						

No reaction

Facebook
Instagram
TikTok
Twitter
Youtube
Other

What types of content formats do you engage with most? *

Video
Blog
Podcast
Livestream
Static
Text-based
Short form video
Other

How do you prefer to receive promotional information from brands like bKash? *
Social media posts
In-app notifications
SMS
Email
Web advertisements
Prints
Other