



Internship Report

Sales Force Automation Implementation



Submitted to

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Subject: Submission of internship report on Robi Axiata Limited

Dear Madam,

This is to inform you that I, Naushad Qader, a student of the BRAC Business School of BRAC University, have, under your supervision, completed my three months Internship Program at Robi Axiata Limited. Hence, I am submitting my internship report on Sales Force Automation Implementation. It was very interesting for me to be given such an interesting topic to work on, as this is an up and coming innovation in Bangladesh. Thank you for guidance and patience.

Yours' sincerely,



Naushad Qader

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As part of my internship for BUS400 from BRAC University I have been assigned this report to reflect my learning and it is with great pleasure that I express my gratitude to following institutions and individuals.

Firstly I would thank BRAC University and the BRAC Business School for enlightening me over the period of my Bachelors in Business Administration. Every faculty of the BRAC Business School receives my greatest honor because of all their teachings.

I would thank Ms. Afsana Akhtar, Associate Professor, BRAC Business School, BRAC University, for providing me the proper guidance to complete the whole internship report. Even during times when my work seemed difficult to me, I always received proper direction. My gratitude goes to Robi Axiata Limited for selecting me as an intern into their organization, which helped me a lot to learn about corporate culture in a highly competitive environment. I would like to thank Mr. Salahduddin Mohammed Yusuf, Manager as well as Mr. Shiblee Noman, Managers at Channel and Sales Operation at Robi Axiata, both of whom were my line managers. I must set aside a vast amount of reverence for my other line manager, Mr. Enamul Hassan, Specialist, Channel Operations. All my line managers had been extremely cordial, supportive and optimistic with my efforts and me since the day I joined. Along with that I would also like to show my heartfelt gratitude to all the members of the Channel Operations, Market Operations department who have always been very supportive towards me and encouraged me to work creatively.

Lastly, I would like to thank Mr. Mohammad Shawkat Kader Chowdhury, Vice President, Sales Operations and Mr. Syed Ashraf Uddin Ahmed, General Manager, Channel Operations for being role models for their constant motivation and support. They have become roles models for me.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to assess whether the implementation of Sales Force Automation for Robi Axiata Limited is an effective step. Robi Axiata Limited, a leading telecommunications service provider in Bangladesh has always been in the forefront of when it came to innovation. In order to stay competitive in a challenging environment, Robi Axiata has decided to take advantage of an automation tool that is limited in use in the country. This tool, known as Sales Force Automation allows the sales process to be almost completely automated with the help of an Android based application. The main purpose behind moving forward with such a tool is to track performance to Robi's sales teams and products and services. This tool also allows employees to become more productive, whether it is in the field, making sales calls, or in the office, generating reports and making critical decisions. The Sales Force Automation (SFA) tool is divided into three tiers – the application, the database, and the server. All these three tiers combined help Robi's employees to automate the sales, reporting, and evaluation aspect of the business. The success of SFA for Robi ultimately depends on the acceptance and adoption of this technology by the employees of the company. This is why it is imperative that the different teams be trained thoroughly regarding the usage of the platform, as well as the benefits they, and the organization as a whole, can gain from the proper utilization of such an innovative tool.



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1. Introduction

This internship is a part of the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) program that provides an on-the-job experience to students. The theoretical knowledge and practical training is not the same theme. The theoretical knowledge is fulfilled when it can be used in the practical field. The goal of this internship is to apply one's theoretical knowledge in practical fields. Thus the internship is a pragmatic application of knowledge and achieving practical experience by engaging oneself in different and distinct sectors of work. That is why the internship program is also included in the curriculum of BBA at BRAC Business School, BRAC University. I carried out my three-month internship program at Robi Axiata Limited. The telecommunications industry in Bangladesh is one of the dominant industries in the country and Robi Axiata helped me understand many of the underlying criteria's required to be successful in this industry.

1.1 Origin of the Report

The BBA curriculum composes of 130 credits. At the end of all theoretical courses, the BBA student has to join a formal workplace to complete the final four credits. For three months, the student is employed in a workplace and imparts his/her theoretical knowledge of business in his tasks and collects information and practical experience from professionals. At the end of the internship period, the student writes a report based on a previously decided topic with his academic advisor and submits it to the advisor.

For this report, the topic selected is Sales Force Automation Implementation at Robi Axiata Limited, which was the project initially given to me at the start of my internship period. The report is submitted to both, the supervisor at Robi Axiata as well as the faculty member at BRAC University, overlooking the internship advisory.

1.2 Objective

Sales Force Automation is a fairly new technology being implemented in Bangladesh. The objective of this report is to look at the different aspects of Sales Force

Automation (SFA) and how Robi is implementing such a technology into its already developed system of sales. The report outlines factors such as

- Operational infrastructure of SFA
- Technology used to implement the new tool
- Training of sales staff to fully utilize SFA
- Internal strengths and weaknesses of Robi when implementing SFA
- External opportunities and threats when dealing with such a new technology

1.3 Methodology

The data collected to compile this report came from a combination of primary and secondary resources.

Interviewing members of the Channel Operations team, who were involved with the Sales Force Automation program, was the main source of primary data. The bulk of information came from Mr. Salahuddin Yusuf, Manager of Channel Operations. He provided an extensive supply of information regarding the technology being implemented and the entire distribution system of Robi Axiata. He also explained the importance for such a technology at the given time.

Other members of the team, such as Enamul Hossain, Specialist, and Shiblee Noman, Manager, gave me important information regarding the application. Interviewing them gave me a holistic view of the SFA project.

The secondary data regarding the industry and market structure of the telecommunications industry of Bangladesh, the overall economic pattern of Bangladesh were collected from the BTRC website and the history, products and the achievements of Robi Axiata were collected from the official Robi Axiata website.

1.4 Scope

The market operations division at Robi Axiata is a large and multi-functional wing of the company that deals with distribution, retailer management, sales and many other operations. However, for this report, the scope was limited to the channel operations department within the market operations division. This is where the topic at hand was

monitored closely and implemented. The team members at this department had the best knowledge about the subject and were able to provide adequate information.

1.5 Limitations

Though the intention was to provide a flawless report, there were certain limitations that caused lapses in the report. Due to these limitations, the information provided in this report and the analysis carried out are incomplete. The limitations of this report include the following:

- The project is mainly being carried out by third-party vendors so there is information gap
- Sensitive information regarding the technology was not provided as Robi operates in a highly competitive industry
- The technology is still in its pilot testing phase and the employees, themselves, are not fully aware of the different aspects of it
- Employees at Robi Axiata work under immense pressure and are not always able to provide sufficient time for interns.

2. Overview of Bangladesh telecommunications industry

Bangladesh is a rapidly developing market-based economy and, despite all the political and economic hurdles, this country still attracts a large pool of potential investors. Over the years, Bangladesh has undergone rapid structural changes and improved its infrastructural development immensely. The low tariff rates and the reduced barriers to entry and exit in this country has led to many globally established investors being attracted to this small but rapidly developing country. In 2010, Bangladesh's per capita income was established as US\$1700 (adjusted as purchasing power parity) and its GDP growth rate was settled at 6.3% (Before the political conflicts of early 2013). Goldman Sachs and a member of the D-8 countries list Bangladesh in the Next-Eleven countries. These factors have contributed to the fact that many foreign investors aim to invest in the RMG sector, the Infrastructure sector and the Telecommunications sector of Bangladesh.

The Telecommunications sector of Bangladesh is rapidly developing into a market hub full of potential for local and foreign investors. Unlike most other countries, this sector is still new and rapidly growing and thus has not reached maturity level yet. The telecommunications sector has seen growth in mobile penetration that has exceeded all expectations by having over 65.1 million subscribers in September 2010 compared to only 4 million in 2004. While initially most network operators focused on the economically bustling cities like Dhaka and Chittagong, as the market in these countries expanded and matured, many network operators are focusing on other districts, tapping new territories, far-flung villages and remote areas for mobile subscribers.

This rapid growth in mobile telephony has had a colossal effect on the economy in terms of aggregate investment, FDI and productivity levels, not to mention improvements in communication, networking and social cohesion. Foreign investor confidence has further increased due to the introduction of IPO by Grameenphone, the largest market shareholder in the telecom industry and the industry has taken on much greater significance in Bangladesh's capital markets development as a result. The recent addition of increase potential for Value Added Services (VAS) and 3G offerings has created a further scramble to enter the telecom hub of Bangladesh. The growth in the telecommunications industry can mainly be attributed to factors such as the deregulation of the telecom industry, lack of a fixed legal infrastructure in the industry and extremely high competition between the major market leaders of this industry. Reduced barriers to entry due to collaboration with local and foreign investors have also led to global companies entering the market and creating huge levels of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) by telecom giants like Telenor, Axiata-Berhard, Orascom, Singtel and, most recently, the entrance of Bharti telecommunications in the form of Airtel. Bangladesh's huge potential in WiMAX and submarine cable, although relatively developed and maturing in most countries, is still new and emerging in Bangladesh and many foreign investors are entering this market to take full advantage of this resource.

Currently, there are six telecommunication companies in Bangladesh. These are:

- 1) Airtel Bangladesh Ltd. Branded as Airtel, formerly known as Warid Telecom.
- 2) Grameenphone/Telenor Bangladesh Ltd. Branded as Grameenphone.

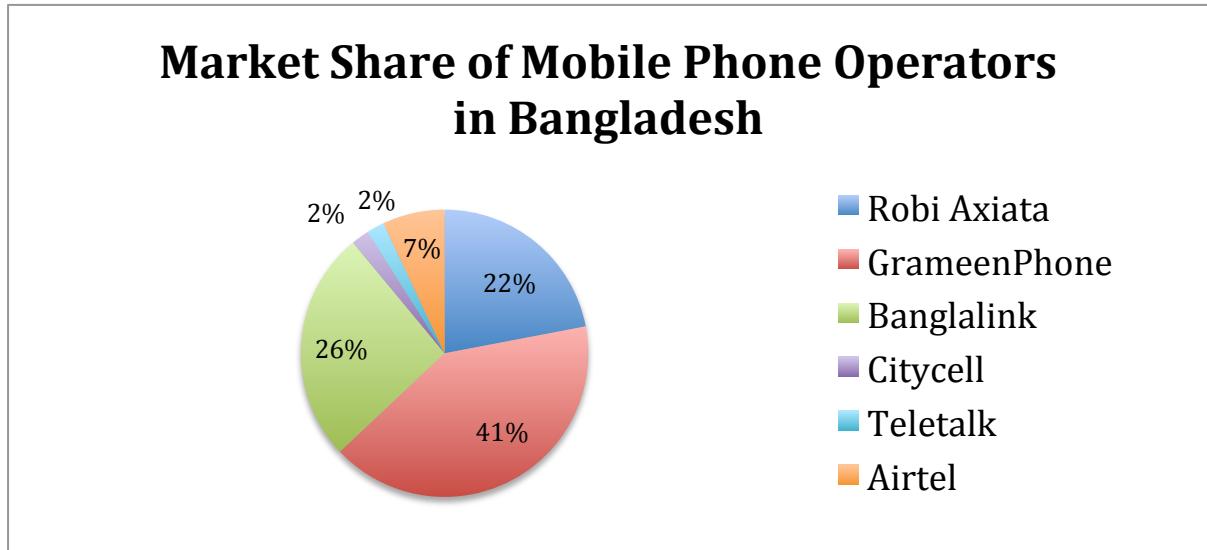
- 3) Orascom Telecom Ltd. Branded as Banglalink.
- 4) Pacific Bangladesh Telephone Ltd. Branded as Citycell.
- 5) Axiata Bangladesh Ltd. Branded as Robi
- 6) Teletalk Bangladesh Ltd. Branded as Teletalk.

Three mobile network providers, GrameenPhone, Banglalink and Robi Axiata, dominate the Telecommunications market. GrameenPhone is the current market leader amongst the three, with more than 40% of market share. GP has a strong position in the mass market, youth segment and enterprise segment. With the power gained from being the first telecommunications company to set up in Bangladesh, they have slowly gained a strong popularity amongst all the demographic sectors of Bangladesh. They have also advanced towards 3mn EDGE subscribers and are currently in the process of providing 3G services. GP has the most significant strength in terms of network coverage as it has the largest number of base stations. GP also has the best distribution network, the highest Average Revenue Per Unit (ARPU) . GP is also in a strong position to penetrate the market to mobile internet by using its EDGE service.

Banglalink comes second, with 27% of Market share. Amongst the three, Banglalink achieved 27% of the market share on account of aggressive price wars, substantial marketing investment through advertising, extensive focus on public relations and communications. It too has a large presence in the mass market and the SME market. Banglalink is also perceived to have invested heavily and added staff substantially to focus on its marketing campaigns. Amongst the three, Banglalink has focused the most intensely on its marketing and promotional features, such as the ‘Banglalink Desh’ slogan and focused on an aggressive growth campaign.

Robi Axiata is the third largest mobile phone operator in the telecommunications industry and holds 21% market share. Robi Axiata has focused more on improving their network connections and outreach, building marginal subscriber additions through aggressive marketing campaigns. Robi is also perceived to be the most strongly placed to develop more sophisticated value added services (VAS) products as well as for 3G installation. This is due to the fact that NTT DOCOMO owns 8.41% of the shares of Robi Axiata and DOCOMO are a leading telecomm company in

Japan and also the global pioneer in 3G data and VAS services. Recently, they aim to focus on the untapped, rural areas of Bangladesh, where network connectivity and mobile phone operations is less, and shift away from the saturated markets of Dhaka and Chittagong.



3. Robi Axiata Limited – The Organization

3.1 Introduction

Robi Axiata Limited is the third largest telecommunications company in Bangladesh, which has seen rapid growth in the past five year after it was rebranded from ‘Aktel’ to ‘Robi’. The company has vastly developed its services to meet the growing needs of customers, ranging from voice and high speed Internet services to customized telecommunications services. Robi is a joint venture between the Axiata Group Berhad of Malaysia, one of the leading telecommunications company in Asia, and NTT DoCoMo Inc., a predominant mobile phone operator in Japan and a world leader in mobile communications network worldwide.

Robi gains from the knowledge of Axiata and NTT DoCoMo in the fields of network architecture. Their services include 2G and 3G voice calls, 3.5G Data/GPRS/EDGE high-speed Internet connectivity and GSM services, based on the vigorous network infrastructure and the latest in mobile technology. The company has the widest International Roaming coverage in Bangladesh connecting 600 operators across more

than 190 countries. Robi's customer centric solution includes value added services (VAS), quality customer care, digital network security and flexible tariffs, with an addition of mobile apps to make customer experience even better.

3.2 History

Since its inception in 1996, Axiata Group and its predecessor Telekom Malaysia has invested around BDT 11,000 crore in the form of equity till 2012. Moreover the company has contributed almost BDT 10,000 crore to the Bangladesh Exchequer in the same period.

As a subsidiary of Axiata Berhad Malaysia, Robi draws on leading edge technology to provide its service in Bangladesh, covering almost 100% of the population, Robi is committed to provide best data and voice quality and will continue to ensure that its customers are able to enjoy the best experience through leading edge technology and innovative products and services.

3.3 Product and Service offerings

Robi offers a wide range of products that include prepaid and postpaid packages that give customers the flexibility to choose one that suites their preferences.

Robi has recently simplified its prepaid offering to make it more convenient for its customers to choose a package that suites their needs best. The prepaid packages that Robi offer are listed below.

Name of the Prepaid Package	Characteristic of the Prepaid Package
Shorol 39	For those who talk the most in one single number: The "Priyo" Number
Unlimited FnF	For those who have loads of friends: Unlimited Friends
Goti 36	For those who prefer simplicity: Flat Rate
Robi Club 34	For those who have many Robi numbers in their phonebooks: The Robi Circles
Nobanno 37	For those who talk more at nights: The Night-Talkers

For its post-paid package, Robi offers two universal packages, which simplify things, even more for its customers. Along with individual sim-card offerings, Robi is able to customize their post-paid packages for corporate contracts to better suite company specific needs.

Along with these mobile packages, Robi also offers high speed Internet through their robust 3.5G network infrastructure that has a wide coverage map. Robi 3.5G is the third generation of mobile communication technology that will allow customers to surf the Internet with speeds of more than three times faster than 2G technologies. Robi 3.5G is the enhanced version of 3G that offers higher mobile Internet speed of up to 21Mbps, while 3G offers mobile Internet speed of up to only 384Kbps. Nevertheless, the average download data speed available is usually in the region of 1-3 Mbps.

In addition, Robi offers many value added services (VAS) for its customers such as

- SMS and Messaging
- Goon Goon (caller ring back tone)
- Circle - a unique, mobile-centric, SMS-based social network
- Balance Transfer – Both, prepaid and postpaid customers can transfer balance from their Robi account to any Robi number
- BIMA Life Insurance – Robi prepaid subscribers can register for BIMA Islamic Life Insurance and can earn insurance coverage depending on their airtime usage.

3.4 Operational Network Organogram

Robi Axiata Ltd. has a meticulously structured tall organogram, which allows each division to work independently within the guidelines set by the top management.

The organogram hierarchy is as follows:



3.5 Principles & Purpose

Robi Axiata Ltd. is guided by three guiding principles. These principles define the company's purpose and direct its employees in the right direction. The three principles are as follows:

Uncompromising Integrity

- We will be legally, ethically, and morally correct.
- Our conduct will be fair and honest.
- We will listen, seek understanding and encourage open dialogue.
- We will be passionate in pursuing our beliefs
- We will treat others with dignity, valuing and benefiting from diversity
- We will be accountable for our actions and behaviors on fellow employees, customers, shareholders, and the communities in which we operate.
- We will be courageous in sharing our work and bold to learn and improve from our

mistakes

- We will adhere to our Code of Conduct, protect and uphold it.

Customer at the Centre

- We will be customer centric delivering their needs in terms of value, quality and satisfaction.
- Our customer focus will be unrelenting in creating positive experience, at every point of interface, sale and post-sale.
- Simplicity will be the key for the customer to learn about us, buy from us, and get support from us whenever, wherever.
- We will strive for continuous innovative solutions in every sphere of our work.
- We will engagement with the customers to know their demands and design our actions to care for them better than our competitors can.
- We will not be distracted from creating and providing value for our customers.

I Can, I Will

- Ensure our efforts produce desired results.
- Seize opportunities at the right time and execute them on time.
- Go beyond our scope, strive for and achieve excellence.
- Do what it takes to ensure delivery of results not waiting for delegation.
- Go that extra mile, setting ambitious goals to ensure our efforts bring success.
- Have the courage to say and do what it takes in order to ensure success

4.0 Job Overview

4.1 Designation - Intern at Channel Operations (Market Operations)

I was assigned as an intern in the Channel Operations department, which is a part of the market operations division. This department is in charge of managing the distribution and retail distribution of all of Robi Axiata's products, both tangible and intangible. This department deals with the distribution HUBs and retailers all over Bangladesh, ensuring that customers have access to all of Robi Axiata's products. In essence the Channel Operations department is the backbone of the entire organization.

This is because if this operation is not carried out smoothly, customers would not be able to receive the company's products, and in turn the company would not earn any revenue.

4.2 Specific Responsibilities

The department I was assigned to had many functions, which kept everyone on their toes at all times. By the end of my internship period, I was able to cover many of the smaller tasks that took up a lot of time of the specialists in the Channel Operations department. The responsibilities that were handed to me were as follows:

- Administer retailer registration in all regions – Every day there would be requests from new shops that wanted to become retailers selling Robi's products such as scratch cards, easy load recharge, data cards and sim cards. The retailers' information was updated in an online sales tracking software known as the STS Online. I was consigned to check every retailer's information provided, such as National ID information and trade license to verify the validity of the request. It was my responsibility to approve of all the requests in order for them to start their operations.
- Retagging of 7,000+ retailers into new distribution HUB – As Robi is a fast growing company, the need to break down existing distribution HUBs into smaller HUBs was needed. For this reason, all of its retailers had to be retagged with the new distribution routes. I, along with 3 other specialists of my department, retagged over 7,000 retailers into these new HUB's using the STS Online server. The entire process took over a month to complete.
- Conduct surveys for various reasons – I was ascribed with conducting, both telephonic and field surveys in order to retrieve assorted information. Some of these survey's were for the following reasons:
 - Find out the reason for some areas performing poorly, when compared to month wise comparison – I was in charge of calling 120 area managers to analyze why particular thana's in their region was performing poorly.
 - Assess how well the retailers were coordinating with the DSR (Distribution Sales Representative) for achieving targets for certain

campaigns, such as the Uthsob+ campaign – I had to call 300 retailers and ask them whether they knew about the campaign, and whether they were trying hard enough to achieve their targets.

- Evaluate how Robi's products were doing in the market – Carried out field research, asking retailers about the demand of different telecom service providers.
- Remove Easy Load options from certain numbers – Area managers from different regions would send lists of numbers to have the option of Easy Load credit transfer removed. On an average the amount would be 500. The list would be forwarded to me and I would use the Robi Easy Load server to delete them. To delete a hundred numbers options, it would take about an hour. By the end of my internship period I brought down the time to 25 minutes.

4.3 Different Aspects Of Job Performance

Since Robi's retailers are constantly working during office hours, it was important to complete each task assigned to me as quickly as possible. For this reason, there was always a time restraint for every task. For instance, when deleting the Easy Load option, I had to first suspend a phone number in order to convert the number to a regular sim without the Easy Load option. I had to calculate the amount of time it would take to suspend and transfer the numbers to the Easy Load dump server. If I suspended too many numbers at once, it would take many of those numbers a lot of time to get reactivated without the Easy Load option. To keep operations smooth, I had to work in a timely manner, which meant not only acting quickly, but also calculating the exact amount of work that had to be done.

During my time at Robi Axiata, my managers stressed the importance of time. This is because of the nature of work in this department. For this reason, it was important for me to always enter the office before 9:00 am and leave well after 5:30 pm, which were the regular working hours at Robi.

4.4 Critical observations and recommendation

As an intern at Robi, I had the chance to look deep inside the company's operations from an outsider's perspective. What I have noticed during the 3 months I was there, was that, though the human resources are hard at work to achieve the company's objectives, technology does not allow them to work at a steady pace. Many a times I have observed that tasks cannot be completed because the server is under maintenance.

It would be helpful for its employees if Robi redesigned its software to allow tasks to be performed in batches rather than individually. This would save a lot of time and would allow team members to speed up the entire work process.

Another aspect of the work that was noticed in Robi was that the electronic gadgets that were being used were outdated. For instance, most of the laptops were still running Windows 7 and Internet Explorer as their default browser. Robi is trying hard to push new technologies to its distributors but is not providing the latest in technology to its own employees. It would be better if Robi could provide the latest technology for their employees.

The software used for internal communications is currently Lync by Microsoft, which is based off an outdated Instant Messaging Platform. Instead, Robi could start using BaseCamp, which is a leading, open-source project management and collaboration tool that allows faster communications.

It would be wise for Robi to update their mobile app R-Hive, the app recently developed to track employee performance, to allow its employees to not always depend on a laptop computer to run tasks such as e-mail correspondence, file transfer, downloading reports, etc.

5.0 Project – Sales Force Automation

5.1 Overview

Sales force automation (SFA) software is a type of program that automates business tasks such as inventory control, sales processing, and tracking of customer interactions, as well as analyzing sales forecasts and performance. Businesses may have a custom version developed specifically for their needs, or choose from among the increasing number of sales automation software products, such as Interact Commerce's ACT and GoldMine Software's GoldMine. Sales automation software is sometimes called sales automation software, and sometimes called customer relations management (CRM) software.

SFA packages typically include a Web-ready database, an e-mail package, and customizable templates. A three-tiered architecture is typically used to separate the database, server, and application to reduce programming demands on clients. A module-based design is generally used, to allow users to customize the package to suit their needs.

In August 2000, Oracle released a free CRM software package, OracleSalesOnline.com which makes information - such as contacts, schedules, and performance tracking - available online through the included database program. The package is designed for medium-to-large enterprises with mobile work forces. All data and storage are based at an Oracle facility, similar to the application service provider (ASP) model, which means that data can be accessed from any Internet connection and that the client doesn't need special hardware or software. The Oracle package also includes online staff training.

5.2 Objectives

In such a competitive market such as the Telecommunications Industry in Bangladesh, it is always important to stay alongside or ahead of the competition. For this reason, it is also important to track how the company is doing in comparison to others in the market over time. There were three main sectors that needed tracking,

which were the main objectives that Robi had in mind while developing Sales Force Automation (SFA). They are as follows:

1. Sales Transactions – In order to understand how the company is doing over time, it is necessary for Robi's management to monitor sales of all their products. However, it is an impossible task to monitor every retailer's performance on a daily basis. SFA allows Robi's management to quickly get an overview of the sales transactions taking place in every region. SFA not only allows management to observe these transactions, but also makes lives of the distributors and retailers much easier as they can easily order, receive and verify different products through the system. The need for manual records is redundant.
2. Performance – Robi is constantly developing and modifying products and services to cater to customer needs and demands. It is important to know how each product or service is performing in the market and whether there is a need to alter any of them. SFA becomes an important tool to track the performance of these products.
Performance of the distributors and retailers also need to be monitored constantly to see whether they are achieving their daily, weekly and monthly targets. SFA allows assigned personnel's to download reports from the server any time they wish to and review these performances.
Robi Axiata devises many campaigns throughout the year, for retailers and customers alike. It is important to monitor these campaigns progress, to check whether rules are being followed and the rate of success each campaign is having in different parts of the country. SFA allows tracking this progress as well.
3. Market Survey – The SFA software and app developed for Robi allows it's DSR's (Distribution Sales Representative) to record many different information while they are on site visits. These include the overall demand in the market, product availability in particular areas and also any news regarding trends or changes in customer behavior in the market. Through the SFA software, the managing body gets a real time update regarding this information, and quick action can be taken.

5.3 Methodology

In order for Robi to implement its Sales Force Automation, it had to create a platform for the automation to be carried out. For this reason, Robi appointed a third party to develop software that took care of this need. The software has three tiers to it. 1) The Server, 2) the Database, and 3) the Application. The server is a web-based platform that links the app to the database, which is updated in real time.

To better understand the methodology we need to look at Robi's supply chain. The following diagram summarizes the entire process



Robi sends all of its products, tangible and intangible, to different Distribution HUBs all over the country, from where DSR's (Distribution Sales Representatives) collect those products and distribute them among the many retailers through different routes. The DSR is the key element in this entire process that links Robi to its retailers, there for it is this DSR that initiates the Sales Force Automation course.

Robi assigns each DSR a daily, weekly and monthly target based upon market conditions, previous track records and company objectives. It is the responsibility of the DSR to collect products, such as sim cards, scratch cards, data packs and Easy Load balance from the Distribution HUB and disburse them to the different retailers. A particular Distribution HUB may have 5 DSR's, who, in turn, may be responsible for 20 retailers each. These retailers are divided into different Routes, depending on the proximity of the retailers. For instance, the DSR that looks after the Gulshan vicinity may have retailers in Gulshan 1, Gulshan 2, Banani, Mohakhali and Badda. It is difficult for one DSR to visit each of these areas on the same day. For this reason, these areas are set up as different Routes, of which the DSR will visit them on a daily basis, alternate day basis or twice in a week basis. This makes it a more viable scenario for the Sales Representative.

At the start of each period, be it daily, weekly or monthly, the DSR receives their target, which is to sell at least a particular amount of each product. The DSR can then plan out a strategy to achieve that target. Once in the field, the DSR needs to push the products onto the retailers.

Before SFA was implemented, all of this was tracked manually with the help of invoices and notes. However, SFA will change the entire process and makes things much easier to track.

5.4 Limitations

Robi has a working model of its Sales Force Automation system that is in its pilot-testing phase. The model is not perfect yet and Robi is working hard to identify flaws in the design and acting quickly to eliminate them. The major limitation of Robi's Sales Force Automation program include:

- Sales staff reluctant to change – Sales Force Automation is a relatively new technology in Bangladesh and is very different from what the sales staff has been used to for so many years. The adoption of this new technology will be slow, which could limit the program to reach its full potential.
- Network Reliability – SFA solutions are data intense. Queries and reports sometimes join several different tables, which can tax database and application servers. Systems can be slow if not equipped with sufficient Internet bandwidth. Slow response time, especially in the field for a salesperson is intolerable from their perspective and will hinder sales efforts. Robi has strong network coverage. However, there are still spots, where coverage is weak. This means that there may be times when information may not be recorded due to a lack of Internet connectivity.
- Dependence on Android Operating System – The app that has been developed for SFA at Robi only runs on Android OS 4.4 and above, which means that everyone who needs access to this app must be using a fairly new smartphone running the operating system. If this is forced upon sales staff, it could take a toll on their budget.

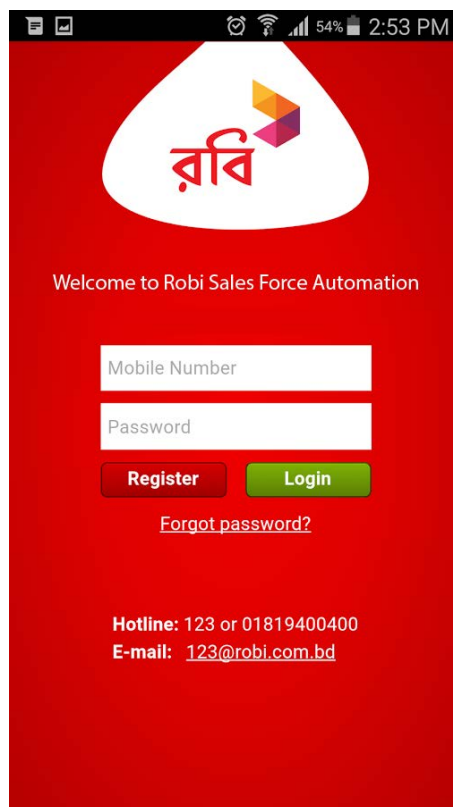
- Lack of training – As this is a completely new method of sales for the staff; they might come up with difficulties while on the field carrying out a sales call. This could hinder sales and demotivate them to achieve their target.

6.0 Robi Sales Force Automation

6.1 The Application

To implement SFA, Robi has developed an Android app. With this app installed in a DSR's smart phone, the sales representative can check targets; decide on routes and process transactions.

The interface of the app is straight forward, where the DSR's can log in to their account by typing in their mobile number and assigned password.



Once logged in, the DSR can choose from a multitude of options such as periodic targets, routes, distributor inventory, retailer list, etc. and decide what should the next

course of action be. The app allows DSR's to get real time information about certain things that include:

- Periodic Targets
- Distribution HUB inventory
- Total sales completed at any given period

The app eliminates the need for manual invoicing as the entire process is done through the software. NFC technology is used to record products collected from the Distribution HUBs and sold to retailers.

6.1.1 NFC – Near Field Communication

NFC stands for Near-Field Communication and allows phones, tablets, and laptops to share data with other NFC-equipped devices. The technology evolved from radio-frequency identification (RFID) tech. Unlike Bluetooth, NFC doesn't require any kind of manual pairing or device discovery to transfer data. With NFC, a connection is automatically started when another NFC device enters into that four-inch range. Once in range, the two devices instantaneously communicate and send prompts to the user. There's huge potential with NFC.

6.2 SFA Process

Through the app the DSR can carry out many tasks throughout the day. A typical day of a DSR using Robi Sales Force Automation app will look something like this:

- A notification will arrive on the DSR's mobile phone, giving him a target for the day.
- When he arrives at the Distribution HUB, he will be able to collect the products physically and record all of it into the software using NFC technology. The DSR will need to bring his smartphone in range of the NFC tags attached to the products. This will allow him to record the allotted inventory into his account.
- From the mobile app, the DSR will be able to see which route he must visit that day and the list of retailers in that route.

- Once with a retailer, the DSR will scan the NFC tag on the retailer's ID card to pull up all the information about the retailer, starting from transaction history, previous inventory records, total sales up to point and suggested products to be sold.
- Sales will also be carried out through the app. The DSR will navigate to the sales transaction option after the retailers NFC tag has been recognized. He will then go on to inserting amounts next to each of the products he will be selling to that particular retailer, all of it being recorded in real time to the database.
- As the DSR moves from retailer to retailer, he will be able to see his sales target for the period and also how close is he moving towards it with each sale. This will motivate the DSR to keep pushing forward until the target is achieved.

6.3 Database and Report Generation

The back-end of the SFA software is a database where every piece of information is stored for quick access. Managers and specialists can obtain this data to generate a consortium of reports for better understanding market conditions, product conditions and retailer performance. Out of the three main objectives of SFA for Robi, tracking performance is key, whether it be of products, distribution HUB's, or marketing campaigns.

6.3.1 EBIS – Business IT

The database can be accessed from Robi's servers using a web-interface known as EBIS, which is essentially a report generation tool that allows key personnel to download reports. These reports can be categorized in different manners such as

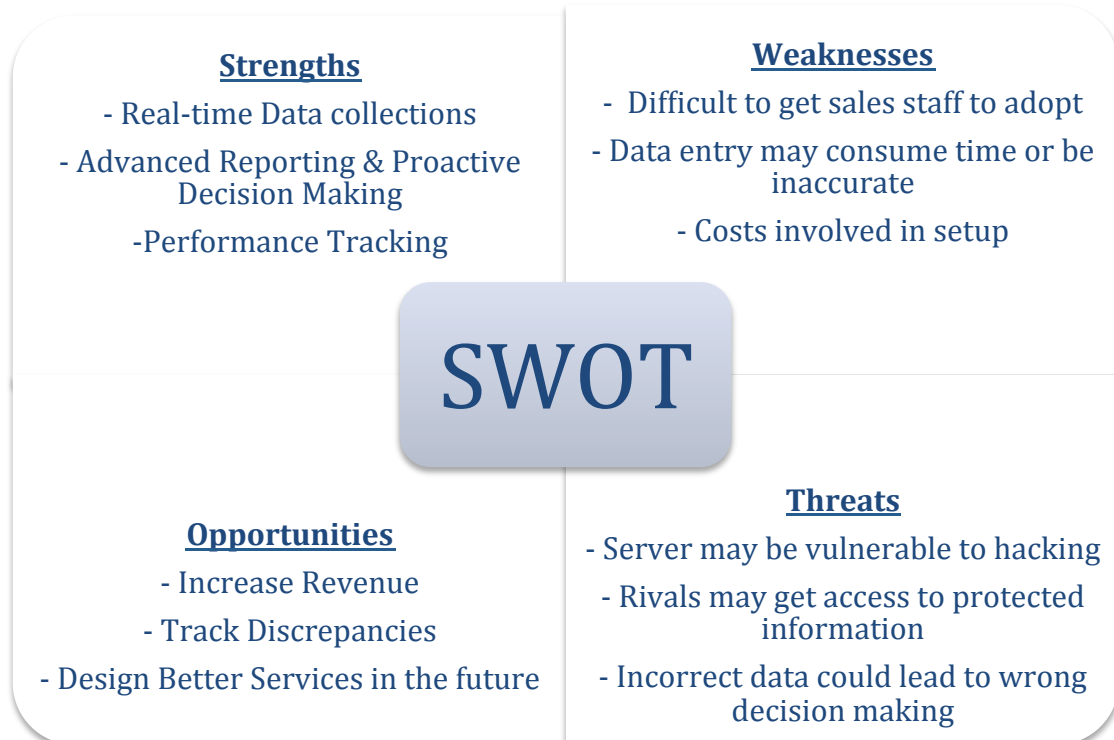
- Region wise
- Area wise
- RSP wise
- DSR wise

This allows management to view each DSR's performance and can also get a quick national summary if one wishes to. The reports can be further specified to include particular amount Easy Load sold, to help identify headway of certain on going campaigns. For instance, currently Robi has a campaign titled 'Uthshob+' which promotes an Easy Load recharge of BDT 39 and BDT 79. The Business IT software has a criteria scale to specify particular amounts of recharge made over a period of time. This gives managers a snap shot view of the performance of the campaign.

The web-interface also allows managers to observe the performance of the different products in different regions. One can choose to view the sales figures of, for example, data cards activated over a period of time, giving them an idea about overall demand for internet packs.

6.4 Analysis

To better understand the success rate of the Sales Force Automation tool used by Robi Axiata, a SWOT Analysis was performed to measure the internal and external positives and negatives. The analysis is discussed in greater detail on the next page.



6.5 Discussion

Strengths:

The Sales Force Automation tool allows Robi's Management to receive data in real time, which results in up to date data collection. This allows the management to understand the changes in market behavior in real time and adjust strategies to better reflect these changes.

The reporting end of SFA acts as a strength for Robi as well. The dynamic reports that can be generated through the system saves time and gives the managers the ability to focus on quicker decision making.

The reports not only help with understanding the market, but also the performance of sales representatives and products in the market. This is an important element to increase productivity and revenue.

Weaknesses:

With all its strengths, the success of SFA ultimately depends upon the adoption rate of the sales team and how efficiently they can use the software. If the sales team is not responsive to the tool, it could lead to lower sales, and if adequate training is not provided to these sales representatives, there might be a fall in sales and might lead to misrepresentation of market conditions.

The cost associated with the Sales Force Automation system must also be kept in mind. Initial costs of designing the software and providing the DSR's with compatible smart phones are significant for something that was being done without these before the implementation of the software.

Opportunities:

The SFA software opens up new doors for Robi Axiata that seemed impossible in the past. The generation of real time information gives Robi the opportunity to act according to the market, which keeps evolving all the time. Having this resource in such a highly competitive telecommunications market is a huge prospect for Robi.

This could lead to Robi having higher revenue by taking full opportunity of the market conditions before its competitors can even realize such an opportunity even exists. Products and services could be tailored to better utilize these market conditions.

Threats:

With every piece of new technology comes a certain amount of vulnerability. Hackers are always on the prowl to take advantage of weaknesses in system defenses. Robi Axiata's sensitive information will now be available on the Internet, though behind firewalls. But we all know that firewalls may have holes in them.

This information can also reach the hands of Robi's competitors, which may lead to these competitors taking advantage of it. They could start mirroring Robi's services in areas where Robi is not performing well, and in turn take over that particular market.

The last threat that Robi could face because of Sales Force Automation is the most lethal of them all. If the sales representatives enter incorrect information into the database, which leads to management misinterpreting the data, decisions to go ahead with a particular strategy could result in a loss of revenue. This is the most lethal because it will be very difficult for Robi's management to understand why the particular strategy did not work when the information provided in the reports gives the go ahead.

7.0 Conclusion

Robi Axiata Ltd. is a major player in the telecommunications industry in Bangladesh. A market that is constantly experiencing changes. In order to stay competitive in the market, the company has adhered to the trends and made changes that it felt were important to stay ahead in the market. In the past they have invested large amounts to improve their network infrastructure to make way for wider coverage and faster Internet access. Sales Force Automation is another such innovation that Robi Axiata hopes will keep them ahead of the competition. SFA has been a powerful tool in the global market for many years now, but only has been introduced in Bangladesh. With

hopes of being a key player in the changing economy of Bangladesh, Robi Axiata has ventured into investing in its customized Sales Force Automation platform. This platform will allow Robi to better deliberate its employees' and services' performance in the market. This tool will also help the company evaluate the decisions it takes in real time and stay ahead of the competition with altercations at the right time.

The biggest challenge for Robi for ensuring the success of such an innovative technology is proper training and directives to the teams using this tool. If there is a gap between managements' objectives and the sales teams focus, Robi might miss out on an excellent opportunity to capitalize on. It will all come down to the acceptability and adaptability of this automation tool.

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