

A Glimpse at Bangladeshi Fashion and Lifestyle Industry
Through *ICE Today* Magazine



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Abstract

This report is an account of my internship taken at the magazine *ICE Today* where I worked for sixteen weeks as a student of media and cultural studies of BRAC University. During this period I learned various things about magazines and writing articles. Furthermore, I learned about branding a product and a lot about supply chain management. Basically, this paper will talk about what I have learned in my journey.

This paper is divided into four chapters. The Introductory chapter talks about magazines and the various roles they play in our cultural lives. In the second chapter I have looked into how magazines emerged as a part of mass media with a brief survey of Bangladeshi magazines. This also includes a discussion on *ICE Today*, its history, methodologies and reception. The third chapter contains the main portion of the internship report. In this chapter I have written about my various assignments and tasks at *ICE Today*. Finally, the fourth chapter which is also the conclusion briefly summarizes my overall experience in *ICE Today*.

In short, this paper reflects the best four months of my life so far and how I have grown as both a person and someone who is looking to succeed in the corporate world.

Chapter One: Introduction

The world is like a kaleidoscope. Blink and one misses whatever was happening the second before. It moves at such a speed that it can be somewhat impossible to keep track of everything. Lucky for us, we have been blessed with the media. Whether it is online or in paper, the media helps us keep up to date with whatever is going on in the world starting from politics to what the latest trend is. It enables us to keep up with the world. It's coverage of topics can be diverse. Starting from serious issues such as the politics, financial analysis, and factual report of events, to covering the advancement of style and fashion, magazines cover it all. "It broadens our horizon and ensures that we do not blink and miss the next big thing" said Emily Lorraine de Montluzin¹

As a student of the Department of English and Humanities, BRAC University, majoring in Media and Cultural Studies, I took a number of courses which are related to different aspects of media and cultural analysis. Courses such as ENG331 Cultural Studies, ENG333 Globalization and Media, ENG401 Editing, ENG404 Copywriting, ENG440 English for the Print Media, ENG465 Translation Studies, have provided me with valuable insights about the mass media, print media such as magazines and the interplay between media and society and culture. As a part of the undergraduate program, media students in ENH undertake internships in various organizations. I always thought this a great opportunity for media students to actually work in a media organization and looked forward to it. So, I chose *ICE Today* magazine for my internship and went through an interview for selection.

As a child reading and writing always fascinated me. I initially started by reading comic books and writing essays but soon my fascination deviated towards magazine. I remember collecting magazines as a child. My passion for reading and writing is what lead

¹ Emily Lorraine de Montluzin: Professor of History, emeritus. Trustees Research Scholar, Francis Marion

me to choose Media and Cultural Studies as a major. I stumbled upon *ICE Today* one day in a coffee shop and the way they presented information really fascinated me. The visual was very colorful and vivid and the presentation was very attractive and neat. After that I did a bit of research and found out about this magazine as much as possible. I thought they were doing a great job. So, while choosing and applying for internship, *ICE Today* was my first choice and I was really thrilled when I was selected.

Chapter Two: A glimpse at Fashion and Lifestyle Magazines in Light of *ICE Today*

Ours is a time which is heavily reliant on the media. It is not wrong to say that the modern day society and media grew hand in hand. Magazines are a major component of media which is deeply integrated with our daily and social life. Magazines not only create awareness among people about what is going on in the world but it also acts as a medium of leisure and self-development. Not only does one know what situation current world affairs are inclined towards, but one is also up to date with one's favorite celebrity is up to. One learns about important do's and don'ts that help one become a better person. Be it, how to invest better, how to dress better or how to live a healthier life. Magazines play a big role in the society. Although slightly more niche than newspaper, magazines too promote business and commerce, keep us up to date about sports and entertainment and also broaden the horizon of our knowledge. It is a one stop place to obtain a bundle of knowledge.

Fashion magazines happens to be one of the most popular categories of magazine and *ICE Today* being one of the premier lifestyle and fashion magazines in Dhaka, it is important that we know a little about the origin of fashion magazine. The inception of fashion magazines dates back to almost 150 years. It has been identified that *Godey's Lady Book* was the first women's magazine. Following the footstep of *Godey's Lady Book*, a plethora of fashion magazines tried their luck in the publishing business with the purpose of attracting consumer groups who stay loyal to them said Elaine Stones². Since 1860, the year when the very first issue of *Godey's Lady Book* was published, fashion magazines have come a long way and play a very integral role in influencing people. Among the most popular fashion magazines are *GQ*, *Vogue*, *InStyle*, *Lucky*, *Elle*, *Vanity Fair* etc. While their common trait is to keep their readers up to date with the latest trends, each magazine is differentiated through a specific characteristic. Stones stated that, each magazine apart from the usual features also

² Elaine Stone is a professor emerita at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) a business training resource for fashion industry professionals, designers, and artists.

focus on certain aspects that give them a competitive edge. For instance, *InStyle* magazine focuses on celebrity lifestyles whereas *GQ* focuses on men's fashion. Magazines such as *Essence* and *Ebony* focus on the African-American population hence have a more niche client base. Much like the aforementioned magazine, *ICE Today* too has a somewhat niche target group which primarily focuses on consumers with acquired taste in modern fashion and a contemporary lifestyle. Stone further argued that reporting and interpreting the new fashion is the central characteristic of any fashion magazine. While this is Stone's conclusion of fashion magazines, Brian Moeran³ states that magazines play an instrumental role in establishing what the latest trends are by portraying supermodels and celebrities wearing whatever is in. Seeing their favourite celebrities wearing the product of a certain brand immediately triggers a consumer into wanting to own something similar because their role models own them. Hence Moeran added a different dimension to fashion magazine by describing it as a bridge that connects fashion designers to consumers (p 39-41). So, what most literature suggests is that a fashion magazine not only keeps reader updated about whatever is going on in the world, they also act as a platform where fashion designers, both renowned and upcoming can showcase their products. Apart from that, they help readers to move up in the social ladder by letting them know about the latest clothing, restaurants, movies, gadgets etc.

Magazines have been there in our country since 1947. "Begum" the first Bengal weekly magazine was published in Kolkata on July 20, 1947⁴. It focused on empowering women who were forced to stay behind closed doors. The first issues sold 500 copies, the chief editor being none other than Bengali poet and activist, Sufia Kamal.

³ Brian Moeran is Professor of Business Anthropology at the Copenhagen Business School and founding Editor of the Open Access Journal of Business Anthropology.

⁴ Basher, N. "Begum: How One Magazine Began a Revolution". Daily Star. 20 May. 2016.

2.1. A brief history of *ICE Today*

ICE TODAY

Logo of *ICE Today*

ICE Today was started in 2005. Published on a monthly basis, the magazine is under the ICE Media Ltd publishing umbrella which also produces *ICE Business Times*, *Jamini*, *Charbela*, *Chardik*, and *Bengal Barota*. The magazine's publisher is entrepreneur Abul Khair Litu, who has also published *Shilpa O Shilpi* about Bangladeshi art. Litu is an art enthusiast and active in the Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts. *ICE Today* is a lifestyle magazine that primarily focuses on bringing Information, Communication and Entertainment (ICE) to its readers. Published every month, this versatile magazine keeps its readers updated on various aspects of the world starting from fashion to travelling to food to aspects of turning oneself into a better person to various events around Dhaka City. Apart from these, the magazine also focuses on a Cover Story every month which revolves around a broad horizon of topics starting from current issues Dhaka City is facing to inspirational stories ordinary people achieving extraordinary feats. Moreover, *ICE Today* has special issues like the Women's issue, Men's issue, EID issue, Wedding issue, Travel issue etc. In short, *ICE Today* has something in store for anyone and everyone. Whether one is a fashionista, tech-savvy person, food enthusiast, aspiring entrepreneur or just someone who is looking for a good read, *ICE Today* is one's place to be.⁵

⁵ For further information please see <http://icetoday.net/about-us/>

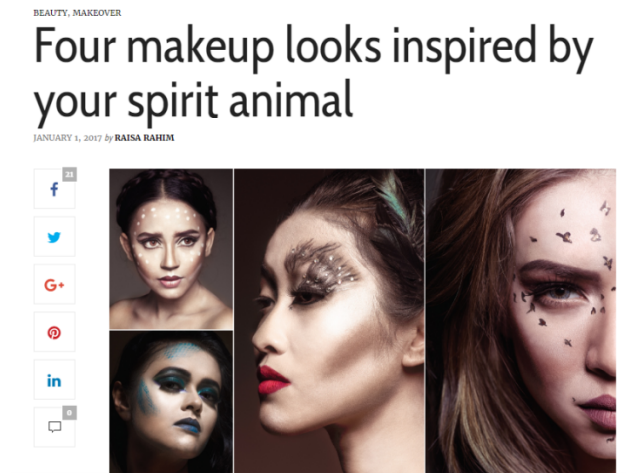
2.2 Different Segments of *ICE Today*



Cover Page of *Ice Today*

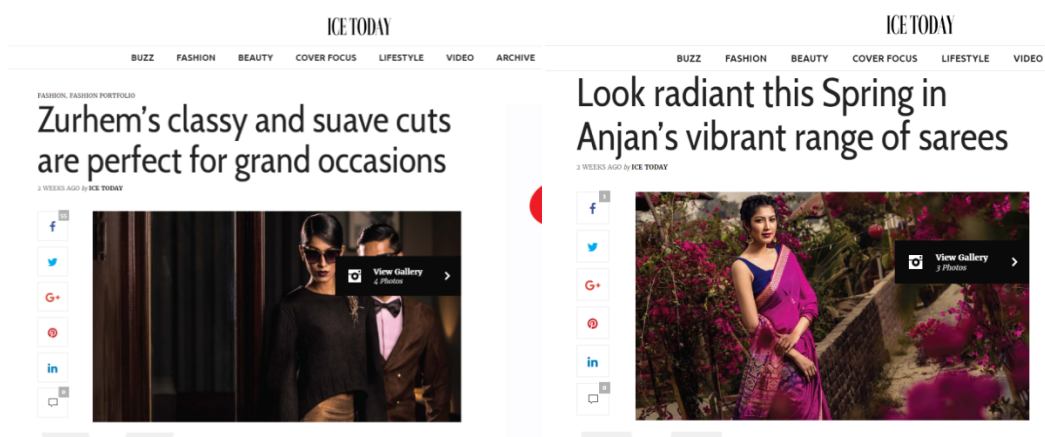
In keeping with the need of time, *ICE Today* has added many supplementary sections to boost its readership. The supplements are given below.

- **In The Buzz:** This is usually the first section of the magazine. It is composed of ten to eleven articles about what's in right now. This section gives its readers an update of the latest trends, events and restaurants etc. Articles range from beauty tips, to health tips to clothing tips to the hottest new restaurants in town and what to eat when one visits them. For example this month's issue featured articles about what makeup to own, exciting new perfumes that has been recently launched as well as a segment on the international chain Johnny Rockets and what to order there.



Visual Illustration of Better You

- Better You:** In this section, the articles focus on factors like health, wellness, social awareness, leisure, career advice etc. Basically it helps the readers be a better version of them. For example, this month's issue featured places where book readers can get the best books, diet routines that will help one maintain a healthier lifestyle and also how to earn extra money if one is a student. The articles are usually backed by factual evidences as well as statements and opinions of people who specialize in these fields. Basically if want an expert's opinion without having to pay the consultancy fee, this section is one's place to be!



Visual Illustration of Fashion Portfolio

- **Fashion Portfolios:** This section feature the latest outfits and designs of some of the most trending and popular brands in the city. It caters for both men and women. For instance, the most recent issue featured products of the brand Anjan's and Zurhem.



1 WEEK AGO

Khushi Kabir, Sara Hossain and Sultana Kamal discuss their perspective of freedom

Most of us are familiar with terms like 'born free', 'birth right', and 'freedom of speech'; but how many of us are actually entitled to it?...

Visual Illustration of Les Hommes

- **Les Hommes:** This is the main section of the magazine and this section focuses on the cover story mainly. Other than that there are various articles that feature whatever that is happening around the globe, exciting travel destinations and success stories. For example, the most recent issue of *ICE Today* featured interviews of female lawyers and activists since the month of March symbolizes the International Women's Day and also our Independence Day. Personalities like Sultana Kamal, Sara Hossain and Khushi Kabir spoke about their idea of freedom and what needs to be done for women's freedom.

Chapter Three: My Internship in *ICE Today*

As a part of my curriculum, I had to do an internship in the printed media sector and as a student of the ENH department (media and cultural studies major), it was an honour for me to get an opportunity to work for *ICE Today*. On my two weeks, I prepared 2 online newsletters, during which I got to use techniques learned and knowledge gathered from Print Media, Copy Writing, Editing and Translation Studies courses. My supervisor and the Managing Editor of *ICE Today* and *ICE Business Times*, Tawhidur Rashid helped me create a newsletter for the very first time. A newsletter is a frequently distributed publication that is usually about the topic of interest to its subscribers. *ICE Today* is a monthly premier English lifestyle magazine from Bangladesh. The trouble with monthly magazine is public lose trail of what is happening around, what is going to come in the upcoming issue and what they missed in the earlier issues of the magazine. *ICE Today* sends online newsletter to their subscribers every week to keep them updated. In a way it also helps them advertise their website www.icetoday.net.

ICE Today editorial panel didn't give me any particular way of writing online newsletter. They wanted the newsletter to be sensational. My administrator provided me some samples so that I get more familiarized with newsletter and how they are done. He also showed me how to re-edit them with new contents and link the online article with the following newsletter. The articles that I used in the newsletter were preselected by the editorial team. I organized them, wrote the titles, selected the pictures and edited the color combination. My supervisor gave me a list of just about seven hundred and fifty email addresses of the subscribers. I updated the subscription list of their official mailchimp account.⁶ www.mailchimp.com is a website to create and distribute online newsletter for me. I reorganized the content in the subsequent manner: *ICE Today* logo, the focal picture and a

⁶ MailChimp provides email marketing for more than 15 million people globally.

title along with it, quote from conversation with celebrity and role models, what is trending, what to eat and the recipes, which songs to listen, which movie worth one's money and which series to watch etc. The best thing about *ICE Today* newsletter is it's online. So, there was no crisis of distributing them in a manual way. I wrote the newsletter and after getting approval from the editorial board I emailed it to the subscribers. The main difficulty I faced writing the newsletter was resizing the picture. Most of the pictures were really large to fit in the newsletter. So, I had to recheck the whole newsletter twice to make sure that the newsletter is flawless. Being part of the process of creating online newsletter was quite interesting and fun.

The third week came with a new challenge. This time the magazine wanted me to work with the marketing department. The task was collecting data about the clients and updating them in our new website. The magazine was interested to try out their luck on a virtual platform but was not sure about digital space selling to different vendors. I was given the responsibility to dig up more about the whole market trend. I started working on this issue by first making a list of all the publications that have successfully used up the digital space for generating revenues. Of course, the first name that came up was *Prothom Alo*, the largest selling Bengali newspaper in Bangladesh. With printed and digital presence, they boast to have a reader base of 505 million people worldwide, which is a staggering figure. As I was checking for more information, I took help from a friend who is already working for an agency that provides digital marketing solution. According to him, *Prothom Alo* has invested heavily on their online platform and ensuring the best use of Ad-sales platform of Google and regular update with news and features, they have ensured a huge fan following on their social media and eventually clicks increased to hundreds fold which helped them gain more and more advertisers chasing them. Following the footsteps *Prothom Alo*, there was another news agency that struck gold. That was NTV. With their online news portal, ntvbd.com, they have

achieved a huge amount of online readers and viewers of news. One added advantage they have is the news/program videos which is not available in *Prothom Alo*. They too invested heavily and ensured a much timelier and beefed up interactions on social media. Both the media houses shared news/views on contemporary issues that have caught public attentions to much extent. Since a lot of people spent a huge amount of their daily time on facebook, they keep on seeing hourly updates/shares of these media houses and interacted via comment or likes. However, such interaction will not be possible for business magazine as it only caters to contents from its monthly magazine. This is why I suggested generating more daily and time appropriate contents/news and sharing it on their websites and social media pages. I have also suggested coming up with a social media strategy with help of a digital agency. My suggestions were discussed elaborately in the weekly team meeting and the authority promised that they would take these seriously for future references.

The exploration to venture into digital ad space for the magazine kept continuing to the fifth week. This week, as I have suggested earlier in a team meeting, the management asked me to get in touch with a digital agency to check possibilities of collaboration with a digital agency for a social media strategy. At first, I had to make a list of a few renowned social media agencies which are working with big brands to manage their product/service portfolio. To my utter surprise, I found out that only a handful of them are handling most of the top notch brands though there was a surge of digital media agencies, which is nothing new for Bangladesh. The reason behind which, as my research found out that was most of the social media managers don't know what actually works on social media. It's just that they claim so to get some accounts to work on and earn some easy and quick cash. For the magazine I am working with, I assumed we would need an agency which is experienced and understands the market dynamics better than most of their competitors.

As I set up meetings with various media managers to discuss about the portfolio of the magazine. To be brutally honest, the lack of having a proper distribution channel was hampering our magazine quite a lot and although that was not the case, it made *ICE Today* look like an unfruitful prospect. I faced a fair bit of difficulty in convincing one of the three media managers I had set up meetings with about the direction our magazine was headed. To begin with, our magazine has a circulation of 15000 copies, which he refused to believe as he has never seen the magazine before in any newspaper stand. I tried my best to keep my composure and did not argue with him because I had also noticed this problem. Instead of getting presenting counter arguments. Instead I remained calm and tried to make the positive features of the magazine stand out in order to present a brighter picture to him. Some of our standout features of our magazines are its high profile interviews, which show it has the reach to all those top level CEOs and MDs; its good graphics design and advertisements of some of the reputed companies. Eventually we came to an agreement because our standout features were unique and not seen in any other magazine in the market. He asked for time to read through the magazine for better understanding of contents. On the other hand, the two other media managers were already sold on the possibilities of the magazine because they are well-aware about the publishing house and its various publications. One of the managers gave us a brilliant idea about going in to video marketing as Facebook videos are very popular and was getting huge attention from the audience. He suggested if the magazine could come up with some videos involving CEOs and MDs, then that would add a new chapter in its history because no one has tried it before. I made a list of suggestions from all the media managers and represented it to the team meeting. The management was pleased. The Managing Editor decided to convey the matter to the higher authority to make some real moves with videos and social media strategy as that would involve cost. I feel as if this was a very significant contribution.

The seventh week was remarkable due to my involvement in the event that the media house was planning to do for several days. For the lifestyle magazine I was asked to help the marketing team to sell set up a booth for an upcoming bridal festival that the magazine was really elated with. Usually November and December fall under the wedding season and for me the wedding season has always been about attending weddings of friends and family. But there is a whole other side to the wedding season. For the first time in my life, I came to realize how big the total wedding industry is. Weddings these days qualify as an industry not only because it's an exciting prospect because there are many tycoons running the show, many exciting products and the budget is bigger than ever. There is a plethora of transaction starting from shopping to wedding planning to photography. Festivity at its very best and the lifestyle magazine at *ICE Today* decided to be the title sponsor of Bridal Festival comprised of a big photography session. The specialty of this association was that it was the first of its kind gathering the top 30 wedding and portrait photographers of Bangladesh. Without a doubt, wedding photography has become a huge phenomenon in Bangladesh in last couple of years. This is why such an association came into being to promote their voices being under one umbrella. My responsibility was to prepare all sorts of sponsorship and partner collaboration document preparation for the event. The magazine was the title sponsor but we were also in need for a co-sponsor. We had several prospects in mind starting from banks, beauty lounges to jewelry shops, all of the aforementioned institution more than capable of being a co-sponsor. After speaking to a number of potential sponsors, a beauty lounge which was looking to get into the map by doing massive promotion for itself came forward to partner with us. The lifestyle magazine had just published about a special beauty supplement which was made by them and hence the relationship and understanding of the two parties were very warm and fresh. This helped to cut the deal easily. While preparing the paper work for the deal, I first saw the actual usage of barter and sponsorship negotiation. The event was

supposed to take place by the end of the current month, so time was running out. I started working with the marketing head of the lifestyle magazine as soon as the sponsorship deal was done. This time the task was to come up with strategies for selling two booths that the magazine received as a title sponsor. The magazine also planned to sell slots/cues of the fashion show that it was going to take place every day for three days of the show. What I got to learn was how to sell small parts of an event to particular brands and convince them about their brand visibility and mileage by taking part in the event.

On the eighth week of my internship, I got to take part in the Leather tech, an exposition for the leather and leather goods. The exposition was a great opportunity for the businesses engaged in the sector because leather is said to be the future of the RMG (readymade garment) sector of Bangladesh. It is supposed to earn 5 billion dollar worth export earnings by 2021. I also got to know that last year leather sector crossed 1 billion dollar worth export earnings for the first time. As a result, I was deeply interested to know more about the scenario and its hiccups. Previously, I got to read about the peril of tanneries in the localities, especially in Hazaribagh where the factories are causing pollution and are responsible for health hazards of the workers. The Human Rights Watch report tagged Bangladesh as one of the worst polluters of environment when it comes to having tanneries. However, this fair opened my eyes and created a sort of positive impression in my mind about the sector. I got to hear the speeches of the high-end businessmen and professionals of the leather sector. Just like RMG, this sector too can earn billions of dollar worth of business and create employment of a huge pool of people. Additionally, I understood that the sector is already has lessons to learn from the RMG sector and henceforth can work hard to ensure compliance in the factories. As I spoke to some of the factory owners and asked them about the bottlenecks they have, they mentioned about the constant pressure from the government's side to relocate their tanneries, which would require financing. The amount of financing that

is offered by the government, is “inadequate” according to them. This seemed to be a grave condition. On the other hand, some of the factory owners mentioned about the scarcity of the raw leathers due to some local conspiracies. All these helped me understand better about the dynamics of the whole sector. I was asked to prepare a summary note identifying the problems and solution. Also, I was asked to make a database of the leather and leather goods factories who could be potential clients of the business and lifestyle magazine. For part of the list, I had to explore the social media to see which local leather brands were spending much for the visibility of their brand. It was none other than Apex, a local brand that has wonderful social media presence through well-strategized campaigns which had a huge fan-following. My recommendations were to get engaged with both Apex and Bata for regular advertisements. Also, I suggested brands like Crescent and Orion, who were new in the field but have much visibility due to their expansion.

The ninth week of the internship brought an exciting opportunity to do something that I have never tried before. It was about assessing the potential of a social media platform for the lifestyle magazine. The social media platform under consideration was none other than instagram. Ever since facebook bought instagram for 1 billion dollar, the site made headlines in the business world as well as tech news media. By functional definition, instagram is an online mobile photo-sharing, video-sharing and social networking service that enables its users to take pictures and videos, and share them on a variety of social networking platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Flickr. The lifestyle magazine intended to explore opportunities of branding via instagram because the former had an amazing archive of fashion and lifestyle photography which would enable to reach out to hundreds of thousands of instagram users. As mentioned earlier, during the eighth week of my internship, I was searching for agencies that offer digital media solutions for leather goods brands. I came across one such agency. While I was gathering information about the aforementioned brands,

I got in touch with them. As per the instructions from the higher authority of the magazine, I once again got in touch with them to check if they would like to provide some help with the instagram project. This project will focus on teaching fashion models who have worked with our magazine, how to upload their trendy photos on a regular basis and how to share them on other social media platforms. The magazine believes this will be a great chance for them to reach out to all those fans of the models out there.

However, this was the ninth week of my internship and I realized that this project will need more time to show results through a broader and a more effective impact. Furthermore, the project was in its state of infancy and was yet to gain full approval from the highest authority. I will need more time to research about this but we have to keep in mind the exciting prospects of this project.

Chapter Four: Conclusion

The internship in *ICE Today* was an amazing experience for me. Not only did I get to implement whatever I learned throughout my undergraduate life but I also found out what life is like in a professional environment. Although my peers were extremely friendly, they were equally professional at the same time. I got to learn a lot and every bit of experience and memory I will be taking from this internship will make me a more wise and enlightened person. I have learned a lot about how an organization operates, more importantly I have learned about newsletter writing, database management and also setting up and attending meetings. Furthermore, I have acquired newfound passion for the printed media sector which I believe will come in handy for my future endeavors in this sector. All of what I have learned would have been impossible if it weren't for my peers who constantly supported me and guided me. Although I was very new to this, they made me feel at home and helped me on each and every step of my journey. I got to learn a lot from them. I have also achieved a fair bit of networking as I have met an array of new people including chair persons, managers of big corporations, business tycoons, celebrities and aspiring entrepreneurs. Apart from developing the skills that I have acquired in classrooms, I also got an opportunity to develop real life skills like communicating within a work environment and promoting unity. I have found out that offices too can have a very informal way of communication which made me feel slightly more comfortable but it is the professional tone my peers taught me that will help me thrive in the corporate world. I hope that the experience and the connections I have established during my time with *ICE Today* will help me in my professional life. I will cherish my time with *ICE Today* forever.

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APPENDIX

The various tasks related to articles and interview writing, and social media management at *ICE Today* are attached in this section for review.

“Our first ever ranking of male and female models of Bangladesh fashion industry”

Starting from billboards, to covers to fashion spreads of magazines and newspapers, their graceful presence enchants us. They are fashion models who have become more than just a face to admire; sensuously walking the runway, becoming the face of brands, and molding into a wide range of roles in the glamorous world of fashion and style.

The world of modelling encompasses more than just standing in front of the camera. Behind the scenes, they have learnt to handle the chaos of the green room, and make the visions of the choreographer a reality while maintaining an elegant demeanor. There lies a common misconception that this profession does not require the same level of dedication and discipline as in other industries. While many of us have the shelter of our office- these individuals always face the world and it's never ending wave of scrutiny.

In order to make your mark amongst designers, photographers, and advertisement agencies, you must be determined to take the shoe by the heel and get to the top. Keeping this in mind, *ICE Today* is here to show you that it takes more than just a pretty face to make it in the competitive world of fashion.

Concept by Tawhidur Rashid

Methodology by GoutomSaha and Natasha Rahman

Tabulations by Khandokar Asif Sulaiman

How the ranking was done

With the emergence of the fashion industry in Bangladesh, the models too have reached great heights outside their comfort zones. However, when it comes to representing the country in the international forefront, we could only select a handful of eligible candidates. In a country that is yet to offer, institutionalized grooming, their success is undeniable.



Illustration of Top model of the Town project

Therefore, to take our modeling industry to the next level, we at *ICE Today*, wanted to identify the areas in which our models are excelling and propose areas which call for development.

The evaluation was conducted via the following method:

1. The criteria of ranking were: Presence in *ICE Today*'s Cover (Score: 10), *ICE Today*'s Fashion Portfolio (Score: 7), Brand Endorsements (Score: 7), Versatility as a Model (Score: 5), Other Accomplishments – walking the ramp (Score: 5), acting in TVCs/dramas (Score: 5), films (Score: 10); participating in beauty pageants (Score: 5); presence in other magazine covers (Scores: 5) as well as Fan Base in Social Media (Score: 5).
- 2) A total of 50 male and female models were ranked and the most sought-after faces were chosen from the highest to the lowest score, in descending order.
- 3) *ICE Today* 2016's fashion portfolios were taken into consideration for the ranking.
- 4) Facebook promotions of brands were noted down and models' presence were identified for their scoring for endorsements.
- 5) Top 20 models were further inquired of via phone interviews to chart down their various

other accomplishments.

6) Facebook fan followers were measured as of December 26, 2016.

7) *ICE Today* editors scored the models in the category of versatility based on their experiences of working with them throughout the years.

8) Five choreographers, namely Azra, Ruma, Mukul, Emu Hashmi and Luna were taken into consideration to measure the ramp presence of top 20 male and female models.

Our Findings

The ranking has enriched us with some interesting observations, which we believe the models, choreographers, fashion and style brands and agencies should take into consideration.

1. There are models that have good scores by being on the cover of *ICE Today* and other renowned magazines but fail to flaunt a good number of followers on social media. We would like to suggest them to take this seriously. Having a good number of followers on social media, be it all by themselves or through an agent or agency, will enable them to connect with more fans and followers which ultimately will increase their face value when it comes to endorsing a brand. In Bangladesh, Facebook and Instagram are the most popular social media, where models can connect with their fans.

2. Versatility was one of the main criteria where *ICE Today* editors gave scores to the models. The fashion department, based on their year-long experiences on working with all these models noticed that only a few handful of models are fit for all sorts of fashion portfolio (be it traditional or western). Since there are no particular grooming facilities for these models, many of them are not even aware of the importance of trying different looks, which enhances their chances to be chosen by brands.

3. We were happy to find out that a good number of leading models have commendable accomplishments other than modelling for brands or walking the ramp. Their

involvement in television commercials or in performing arts enabled them to ensure better fan following. This also testifies that they are multitalented and when provided with the right opportunity, they can become stars.

4. Speaking with different quarters of the fashion and modelling industry, we came to know that models are being chosen by brands based on their presence in magazines and newspapers fashion pages as well as availability for many ramp shows. Besides, affiliation with photographers and choreographers can also land them better opportunities of endorsements. This is why models must follow magazines and newspapers which have been dedicatedly working in fashion and style and maintain good rapport with industry stalwarts, not only to learn from the best but also to attain opportunities that can prove to their ticket to stardom.

5. The ranking of models is not to undermine any model. Rather, we believe this ranking is a beginning to understanding how hard they work throughout the year to materialize their dreams. Bangladesh is a country where we are yet to have professional modelling agencies grooming or endorsing models with particular brands. Many a times models take up offers, because they are considerate enough not to turn them down. This budding industry needs to have a proper structure where models will earn their dues, both financially and socially.

“M360’s ‘Fittest Model Contest’ started with a bang”

A first of its kind fitness competition, *ICE Today* and M360 organized the ‘Fittest Model of the Town’ contest, where leading models of the country participated to put their fitness to test. Their fitness and stamina levels were tested based on the FBI fitness test criteria. They took part in activities like pushups, running and sit ups – each done for one minute each. Furthermore, a part of the tests required them to scan their bodies through the M360 fit 3D test which evaluated their body shape and fat percentage and the other criteria was based on the number of reps per exercise during the contest. The contest took place at Banani Club Field. Receiving 50,000 taka, Indrani and Razz were the lucky winners who surpassed the rest of the participants and came out victorious.



Portfolios I helped to Choreograph for the Boishakh Issue

