Internship Report on

Analyze the Effectiveness of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) in Banglalink's Brand Repositioning: From Telecom Operator to Digital Service Brand

By

Name: Noman Kibria

Student ID: 22104102

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

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that:

- The internship report entitled, Analyze the Effectiveness of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) in Banglalink's Brand Repositioning: From Telecom Operator to Digital Service Brand is my original piece of work, which I have prepared in part fulfillment of requirements of the degree at BRAC University.
- None of the contents of the report has been published or written by a third party before or otherwise, without the due acknowledgment and proper referencing.
- The report has not been used (in part or in total) to obtain a degree, diploma or qualification in any university or academic institution other than the university or academic institution for which it was originally submitted.
- In this report, the main and all secondary sources of information, help or advice have been identified and cited.

Student's Full Name & Signature:

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Noman Kibria

ID: 22104102

Supervisor's Full Name & Signature:

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Nadia Afroze Disha

Lecturer

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

Letter of Transmittal

Nadia Afroze Disha

Lecturer

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

Kha 224, Bir Uttam Rafiqul Islam Ave, Dhaka 1212

Subject: Submission of internship report on Analyze the Effectiveness of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) in Banglalink's Brand Repositioning: From Telecom Operator to Digital Service Brand.

Dear Ma'am,

I would like to present to you my internship report, which is "Analyze the Effectiveness of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) in Banglalink's Brand Repositioning: From Telecom Operator to Digital Service Brand".

This report is a result of my internship experience at Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd. I had the opportunity to witness and take part in different brand communication projects, which have all had a strong impact on the findings that are offered in this report.

The report focuses on the effectiveness of IMC in helping Banglalink reposition itself from a traditional telecom operator to a new brand of digital service provider, using primary information from a consumer survey and secondary data from employee interviews and verified sources. All efforts were made to provide a well-researched, analytically sound, practical, and thorough report.

Hope this report will meet your expectations and at the same time provide you with some understanding of the role of IMC in the process of brand repositioning in a rapidly evolving telecom industry in Bangladesh.

Yours sincerely,

____

Noman Kibria

ID: 22104102

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

Non-Disclosure Agreement

Any private or confidential information that the company may have at its disposal shall be kept confidential and shall not be disclosed to third parties by the students of the BRAC University and Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd. All internal information, interview responses, and proprietary information the intern has obtained throughout the internship period have been solely for the purpose of academic research in compliance with the terms of this agreement.

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Noman Kibria

ID: 22104102

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank first and foremost my internship supervisor Nadia Afroze Disha Ma'am, Senior Lecturer, BRAC Business School, BRAC University, for her continuous guidance, constructive feedback and constant support in preparing this report. Her thought-provoking observations and academic guidance have been pivotal to the quality and trajectory of this work.

I am also grateful to the team in Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd. for granting me the chance to join them as an intern and their time and knowledge to be shared with me during both interviews and on a day-to-day basis as we worked together. The staff who took part in this research were an important source of depth and authenticity in the results reported here.

I also thank all 55 people who filled out the questionnaires, Banglalink users who took time from their busy day to provide their candid feedback, which provided the core of the primary data analysis in Chapter 3.

Last but not least, I would like to express my gratitude to my family and friends for their unwavering support and encouragement during my studies. The preparation of this report has been a team effort by all the above.

I have made all efforts to ensure that this report is presented, both in terms of its accuracy, comprehensiveness, and the highest standard of academic integrity, but this may have some limitations inherent to a study conducted during an internship. I believe it will be a great facilitator in understanding the concept of IMC in the context of brand repositioning in the Telecommunications Sector in Bangladesh.

Executive Summary

This internship report provides a detailed study of how effective Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) is in the continuous brand repositioning process of Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd., a traditional telecom operator to a modern digital service brand. The research has been done during internship period in Employer Branding and Marketing Communications in Banglalink, secondary data and primary data (qualitative and quantitative) has been verified in the research.

The main data was collected from a structured survey conducted with 55 Banglalink users to understand their brand awareness, channel exposure, message consistency, perception of digital services and overall perception of the repositioning effort. This is followed by semi-structured interviews with four employees of Banglalink who work in the talent management and brand marketing departments, who offer an insight into the company's internal communication strategy, brand identity and consumers' reactions to their campaigns throughout the analysis.

The results show that while Banglalink has managed to reach its users well (87.3% of the surveyed users had received the re-brand signal and 90.9% noticed the change in the appearance of the brand), the user perception has not been completely transformed yet, as 43.6% of the users view Banglalink as just a telecom/SIM card company. The awareness of the brand's flagship digital products (Toffee 58.2%, MyBL Super App 50.9%) is reasonably good, while RYZE — the company's AI-powered digital lifestyle brand — is only recognized by 30.9% of respondents, which indicates that the communication investments made in newer digital products are not commensurate with their strategic roles. The largest single group (38.2%) reports "somewhat consistent" messages across channels, which is similar to the number of internal acknowledgements of "partial integration" in the IMC framework.

The report makes five recommendations: direct messaging of "before-and-after" contrast images, centralizing a message governance structure to address the consistency gap, making use of the MyBL app's narrative "connective tissue," RYZE, adding emotional storytelling to functional touchpoints of the MyBL app, and formalizing word-of-mouth as a structured communication channel through reference mechanisms within the MyBL app.

Overall, from the data gathered and the perspectives of the internal staff, this report finds that Banglalink's IMC strategy is effective as a signal-sending exercise but not so effective as a meaning-changing exercise. The evidence shows that the process of brand repositioning is a long term process, and Banglalink is roughly half through a process that will need to invest in the brand through consistent, strategic communications to achieve it.

Key Words: Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC); Brand Repositioning; Digital Service Brand; Telecom Operator; Consumer Perception; Brand Equity

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Chapter 1: Overview of the Internship

1.1 Student Information

Name	Noman Kibria
ID	22104102
Program	Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)
Major	Marketing

1.2: Internship Information

1.2.1 Internship Details

Period: 3 months

Company Name: Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd.

Department/Division: HR – Employer Branding

Address: Tigers' Den, House 4 (SW), Bir Uttam Mir Shawkat Sharak Gulshan 1, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh

1.2.2 Internship Company's Supervisor's Information

Name: Tahseen Labeeba Preema

Designation: Manager

1.2.3 Job Scope – Job Description/Duties/Responsibilities

During my internship at Banglalink, I worked under HR – Employer Branding. My role was focused on employer branding, recruitment marketing, and internal communications. Below are the main duties and responsibilities I carried out during my internship period.

- I helped define and maintain Banglalink's employer value proposition — which means I worked on building and keeping a clear message about why Banglalink is a great place to work.

- I helped drive the team to create an employer branding strategy that aligns with company talent acquisition objectives and people priorities.
- Supported with content creation and distribution, account for recruitment marketing campaigns on various digital and social media platforms to target the right people.
- Developed and edited content for careers pages, job advertisements, social media content, job videos, and employee story features to highlight Banglalink's work culture.
- Managed Internal Communications to foster company Culture, Employee Engagement, and Staff Advocacy in the organisation.
- Managed the employer presence of Banglalink at events, career fairs, and various other recruitment events.
- Collated and analysed quantitative and qualitative data and prepared performance reports regularly, and assisted in measuring employer brand performance.
- Assisted stakeholders involved in the rollout of employer engagement initiatives and helped secure their backing.
- Helped manage external partners, suppliers, and creative resources to ensure campaigns delivered as time and budget allowed.
- Supported all employer communication in conformance to all brand guidelines and messaging standards.
- Retargeted employer brand activities in support of diversity, inclusion, and belonging.
- I assisted the team in addressing reputational aspects that may impact the talent recruitment process and suggested an adequate communication approach.

1.3 Internship Outcomes

1.3.1 Student's Contribution to the Company

At Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd as an intern, I did my best to make a significant contribution to the Employer Branding Unit. Even though I was a trainee with little work experience, I was eager to learn, dedicated, and had a positive attitude.

The one thing that really helped me was content creation. Regularly assisted in developing social media content, job advertisement copies, and employee story content on Banglalink's career pages. They needed new and interesting ideas and articles constantly, so I helped by creating content, suggesting ideas and making improvements to articles and information based on the feedback from my supervisor. I was able to contribute to keeping up a consistent employer brand presence digitally.

Participated in the planning and execution of recruitment marketing campaigns as well. I carried out research on the target groups and a competitor's employer's branding strategy as well as best practices in digital recruitment. I used the results of this to create concise, research-based summaries and presented them to my supervisor, helping the team to make informed decisions on strategy and saving time for some of the more senior members.

I also did something that counted; It was collecting data and reporting performance. Collated engagement metrics from social media platforms and career pages such as post engagement scores, page visits, and job application numbers, and structured this information into easy-to-read reports. These reports provided a way to both monitor the effectiveness of employer branding activities as well as check the progress of the campaigns over time. I got a tour of experience where I was able to get involved in the direct process of talent outreach for Banglalink and promote the brand to potential candidates.

Further, I assisted in the communication process by creating Employee engagement posts and internal announcements to maintain employee engagement with the company's culture and values.

In total, my work ranged from content production, research, reporting, events, and keeping my internal team up to speed, with the main objective of reducing workload on the senior team and helping with the overall employer branding campaign of the department.

1.3.2 Benefits to the Student

It was a great learning experience that I had with Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd. during my internship. It provided me with the practical experience of the operations of a large corporate organization, especially in terms of marketing communications, employer branding and digital transformation. I have learned many useful lessons that have affected my personal, professional and academic life and have helped prepare me for my future career.

The value of practical knowledge was the greatest advantage. All of the theories of marketing, branding and communications that I learned in textbooks and lectures during my university studies. Witnessed the application of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) in practice and how the channels of social media, internal email, job portals, and on-ground events need to be in sync to convey one clear, powerful brand message. The practical exposure made my academic understanding much deeper than the classroom, and it will have lifelong value for me.

I gained support from colleagues, supervisors, and external stakeholders to enhance my communication skills. I also developed my research and analytical skills, applying these independently to collect performance data and to prepare reports in a structured format – skills which would be very useful in any future marketing position.

Aside from technical skills, this internship was a great learning experience for me as well as how to function in a professional setting. I gained a proper understanding of the discipline in the workplace, consistent deadlines, institutional procedures, positive attitude to constructive feedback and working collaboratively as a team. Though not so emphasized in the academic environment, these soft skills are essential in professional life. I am truly thankful to have had a place where I could experience and practice them in a safe and true setting.

I also had a great learning experience in the telecom and digital services industry of Bangladesh. At Banglalink, I had the opportunity to experience the brand's remarkable journey of becoming an active digital lifestyle brand, one of the themes of my research report. The industry exposure provided me with a much more in-depth knowledge and insights into brand repositioning, digital marketing trends, and competitive dynamics than that which I could have gleaned from secondary research alone.

Also, it was an internship that provided me with a valuable professional network. These are connections that I hope to have with me in my professional career.

Last but not least, this internship gave me a boost of self-confidence – a personal one. I didn't know if I wanted to be in the corporate environment before I got there. I knew by the end of my internship that I could actually make a difference for a real company, and that has made a huge impact on my mindset when tackling challenges at work.

1.3.3 Problems/Difficulties Faced During the Internship

As with anything new, my internship at Banglalink had its own set of problems and challenges. Not all of these were simple to deal with, but each of them led me to learn something to improve my professional life and personal growth.

The biggest early hurdle was adapting to a more corporate environment. For years, I used to have a lot of flexibility in daily activities; classes, free periods and time management. Working in a corporate environment, I had to keep to a strict routine and stick to deadlines during each working day. This shift in mental and physical was initially challenging, and it was hard to keep my concentration and energy balanced at all times, but I had to make concerted efforts to do so.

The second challenge was to transfer the knowledge from the classroom to practice. Although I had read a lot of textbooks and articles on marketing and communication theories, it turned out to be more challenging than I had anticipated to apply them to actual career-related tasks. This meant learning quickly through observation, asking questions, and persistent practice by my colleagues.

Early problems were also with professional communication. The first couple of weeks were a little scary to interact with other managers, cross-functional employees and outside parties. I sometimes had a difficult time posing questions, explaining my ideas, and offering constructive answers when revising my work. As time passed, I slowly came to feel more comfortable in these encounters.

Another tough challenge was data collection and performance reporting. It was difficult to sort through the social media data and present it in a format that was understandable to senior team members when tasked with collecting the data and converting it into a useful report.

One of the most constant challenges that occurred during the internship was time management. At a couple of times, I had more than one thing to do at the same time, with all of them having deadlines. Effective prioritisation, realistic time management and clear pro-active communication when projects were falling behind schedule were skills I acquired by trial and error.

Lastly, there were times when the self-doubt actually did present a blocker. Sometimes I got discouraged when my work was returned with corrections, or I was not able to really get to grips with a new task. But those moments were short-lived and were quickly overcome by the support I received from my supervisors and teammates, who were always pushing me to continue to get better and better.

All of these difficulties were still some of my most formative experiences throughout my internship. Every challenge made me learn new skills, new habits and how to think more resourcefully. These were not barriers, but stepping-stones to true professional development.

1.3.4 Recommendations to the Company on Future Internships

Having worked in the internship programme at Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd., I believe that there are a few recommendations which can help Banglalink strengthen its internship programme in the future, based on the company's current brand repositioning and AI integration efforts.

Introduce Team Rotation

By rotating interns through roles in the department, including digital marketing, brand communications, content marketing and employer branding, they'd gain a much more comprehensive and complete picture of the entire department's work. Also, the rotation of teams would enable interns to become part of a larger group of colleagues, learn from other professionals with more expertise, and add more valuable diversity to the organization as a whole.

Support with proper device support for AI and Digital Tools Training

Banglalink is actively implementing AI into their brand strategy and services, and having organised training sessions for interns on AI-driven marketing tools, data analytics platforms and social media management systems would be highly advantageous. Interns need to learn these skills first, and need to be well-equipped and trained to do them well, or they won't develop properly and won't produce quality work. Banglalink should have a workstation for each intern to use from the first day. Giving the right tools is not a luxury — it's a necessity for any intern working in a digital-first company and it's a sign that you are truly invested in them as a valuable employee and resource to your organization.

Ensure Interns participate in Live IMC Campaigns and Share Their Opinion

Banglalink should actively engage interns in an ongoing Integrated Marketing Communications campaign and make opportunities for interns to be heard. Interns are digitally savvy, youthful and frequently the very audience that Banglalink is seeking to go for in its repositioning. What they think about campaign messaging, the tone of the content and selecting the right channels might provide real new and relevant input. Banglalink should encourage interns as much as possible to share their views, opinions, and discuss these in the campaign planning process, not just execute tasks.

Ensure the Internship Tasks support the goals of the Brand Repositioning

Banglalink is currently in a big, exciting transition, from being a traditional telecom brand to a true digital services brand. Embarking on future internship activities should build on this journey. Interns may have meaningful work like conducting consumer perception research, performing digital campaign performance audits or undertaking social media brand analysis projects. Since interns will most likely share the perspectives of the target audience of Banglalink and have an objective academic lens, their contributions could yield meaningful actionable insights that can actually help Banglalink in their re-positioning strategy.

Develop a structured Onboarding Pack

Banglalink should have an all-encompassing induction package for new interns that makes clear the division's goals, initiatives, vital instruments and working processes. It can be overwhelming for interns to start a job at a large company, and a strong onboarding package could help ease the transition, alleviate early confusion, and get the intern up and running and contributing from day one.

Finally, a well-designed internship program with an aligned digital transformation and AI integration strategy would be beneficial for both the interns and the company, enhancing the company's employer brand, broadening its talent pool and introducing a fresh perspective to the company's marketing communications efforts as it pursues digital transformation.

Chapter 2: Organization Part

Chapter 2: Organization Part

2.1 Introduction to Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd.

One of the most popular telecom companies in Bangladesh, Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd., is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Veon Ltd., a global digital operator (Banglalink, 2025a). The company has an interesting history. The company was originally called Sheba Telecom (Pvt.) Ltd and was licensed to run in the rural areas of Bangladesh in 1989 and started GSM operation in 1998. Egypt's Orascom Telecom took over Sheba Telecom in July 2004, and renamed and relaunched it as Banglalink in February 2005. In July 2013, the company was renamed Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd. after a change in the ownership of the parent company (Powertec, 2025).

In today's scenario, Banglalink is considered as the third largest user of mobile network in Bangladesh. Since its inception, it has experienced considerable growth, with Banglalink reaching the milestone of 10 million subscribers in August 2008 and now having a strong subscriber base of 36.90 million (as of August 2021, Powertec, 2025). The consistent growth has been achieved due to the company's robust presence and strong relationship with the people of Bangladesh, both in urban and rural areas.

In the past 20 years, Banglalink has been a key contributor to the country's telecommunications revolution, evolving from being a voice service provider to a pivotal player in Bangladesh's digital ecosystem (The Daily Star, 2025). The company has expanded far beyond its "voice and data" roots to now shaping a full digital lifestyle experience for customers.

In the last 20 years, telecommunications has been among the most important sectors to witness the socio-economic transformation in Bangladesh. It started out as a luxury, and it has become an integral part of national infrastructure, facilitating commerce, education, health services and social interaction. When it comes to mobile communication, Banglalink was early in this journey with the purpose of making communication more accessible and inclusive (The Daily Star, 2026).

Banglalink's strategy to digital transformation is a visionary approach that transcends the ordinary, ensuring relevance to its customers for a 24-hour day, covering demands in education, healthcare, finance and entertainment, under a single digital roof (The Daily Star, 2024). Digital platforms like the MyBL Super App, Toffee, and RYZE will bring opportunities to people's fingertips, from communication, entertainment, and digital learning aiming to make technology accessible and relevant to everyone (The Daily Star, 2026). Banglalink today is a people-centred digital brand, and in the parent company, VEON, it is actively contributing in shaping the digital future of Bangladesh as a global digital operator (Banglalink, 2025b).

2.1.1 Objective for Chapter 2

Main Objective: To investigate the structure of Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd. and the role of their teams in contributing to the overall transformation strategy of the Company and to examine how the Company applies marketing communication practices, brand repositioning strategy, financial performance and human resource practices.

Specific Objectives:

- To get an understanding of Banglalink's organizational structure and the work culture and etiquette it has in its regular activities.
- To understand the leadership style and management approach of Banglalink and how the leaders contribute to the vision of the company to be a leading Digital service brand in Bangladesh.
- To gain an understanding of marketing and IMC of Banglalink and how the company is able to capture and sustain customers via campaigns, digital platforms and brand repositions.
- To gain insights into how Banglalink applies technology to its internal operations, such as handling its digital platforms like MyBL Super App, Toffee, and RYZE, and the tools they use for internal communication and workflow management.
- To gain an understanding of the financial performance of Banglalink over the past few years and to analyze the performance and growth in revenue, profit and financial stability of the company under the VEON Group.
- To understand accounting and financial reporting policies followed by Banglalink and how it safeguards stakeholder interests, transparency and accountability.
- To gain insight into how Banglalink manages business risks, upholds its brand reputation and fosters ethical and responsible behavior throughout its operations and digital platforms.
- To learn about HR practices, employee development and training at Banglalink and how they hire, onboard and retain their employees in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.
- To grasp the vision and mission that is behind the growth and success of Banglalink, and how it continues to move forward in the competitive telecom market in Bangladesh.

2.1.2 Scope of the Study

The key internal business processes of Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd. are described in this chapter with focus on organizational structure, leadership style, marketing communication, Digital services, HR practices and financial performance. It gives a general idea of the way that various departments operate and collaborate to realize the company's overall digital transformation objectives.

- Geographical scope: The study only concerns Banglalink's activities in Bangladesh and excludes activities carried out by VEON Group around the world.

- Four Functional Areas: Management Practices, Marketing and IMC Strategies, Financial Performance and Technology Operations.
- Temporal Scope: The study includes the historical overview of the Banglalink from 2005 onwards, and it is specifically on the operation of Banglalink in present points.

Data has been gathered using surveys, interviews, official publications and verified newspaper articles.

2.1.3 Methodology

Primary and secondary sources were used to gather the information on the history, organization, management practices, marketing strategy and financial performance of Banglalink presented in this chapter. To ensure that the findings are reliable and comprehensive, both primary and secondary data were collected using a mixed-methods approach, which included first-hand workplace experiences and verified external data.

Primary Sources

Participant Observation: This involves being a part of the daily activities of the Employer Branding department, such as team meetings, content planning sessions, and event coordination activities. This gave them first-hand knowledge of the company's internal culture, communication style and decision making process which is not always evident in the official documents.

Induction and Onboarding Sessions: Several induction and onboarding sessions were done in the initial days of the internship during which officers from various teams explained their respective roles and responsibilities. There was also an HR onboarding session which gave an understanding about the organizational hierarchy and leadership structure of Banglalink that informed the analysis of the organizational structure in this chapter.

Secondary Sources

Company Websites and Official Publications: Data related to the history, vision, mission, values and digital services of Banglalink was gathered from its official website and the official publications of VEON Group, such as the VEON Manifesto.

Verified Newspaper Articles: The Daily Star and The Business Standard were the reliable sources used to collect accurate and updated financial performance, brand repositioning journey and recent financial developments of Banglalink.

Financial Performance of Banglalink: The annual report from the VEON Group and quarterly earnings releases were analyzed to assess the financial performance of Banglalink, such as its revenue trends, profitability ratios, and accounting practices.

2.1.4 Significance of the Study

For Banglalink

The survey and interview results provide the company with a clear understanding of the effectiveness of the brand repositioning message reaching consumers, and where there is a disconnect. This can assist Banglalink in making more informed and better marketing decisions in the future.

In the Marketing Industry in Bangladesh

The result of this study will also add value in the field of marketing since it demonstrates the application of Integrated Marketing Communications in the management of a major brand transition in a large telecom company of Bangladesh. For Academic Research

It contributes to the scarce local academic work on the subject and can be used as reference by future students and researchers for marketing communications and digital transformation.

For all Students and Interns

In this study, a practical case of one of the leading companies in the country, Banglalink, is discussed about how they plan and execute their marketing communication strategy. It is a learning guide that helps students get a glimpse of the business world to grasp the theoretical marketing concepts in practice.

For the Broader Economy

This research sheds light on the role being played by telecom companies like Banglalink in this process through innovative marketing approaches, digital services improvement, and positive transformations of business processes.

2.1.5 Limitations

Although every effort was made to ensure that this study was comprehensive, some limitations may be noted, due to the nature of the internship:

Data Confidentiality

Banglalink is a major corporate entity and has a high level of internal confidentiality. Archives of internal documents, comprehensive financial statements and marketing strategies were closed to interns. For this reason, only information that is public is used in this report, thereby avoiding the risk of misuse or inappropriate sharing of confidential or restricted information.

Strategic Access

Not all meetings at the highest level, campaign planning meetings, and long range strategic meetings were readily available during the internship period. Consequently, some of Banglalink's more general strategic goals can only be extrapolated from the observable activities and public documents available.

Departmental Bias

The internship was largely in the field of Employer Branding and other departments like finance, technology and network operations are experienced mainly in an observation mode rather than participatory mode. This restricts the amount of analysis that can be done on those areas.

Sample Size

It was difficult to interview all the employees as they had very busy schedules in their work. So only 4 interviews were conducted in different departments of Banglalink. Staff members were not available as they were involved in campaigns, meetings and deadlines. This would have been an even wider and more comprehensive picture of the organization's internal practices and communication strategy if a bigger sample of interviews had been conducted.

Limited Secondary Sources

Due to the nature of the internal information of Banglalink, its operational data is very sensitive and not publicly available which reduced the availability of detailed secondary sources. The secondary research information for this report was available only with respect to the general company announcements, news articles and press releases, thereby limiting the depth of secondary research possible.

2.2 Overview of the Company

2.2.1 Company Background and Evolution

Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd. is one of the largest telecom firms of Bangladesh, with its headquarter in Gulshan, Dhaka. Banglalink was founded in February 2005 with a simple mission, "Bringing mobile telephony to the masses" and has been a catalyst in making mobile telephony an affordable option for consumers in Bangladesh. The company is a 100% subsidiary of VEON Ltd, a fully listed digital operator in the country (Banglalink, 2025).

It is in a very dynamic and competitive telecom industry, which requires adaptable and flexible organizational structures. Because of technology's constant evolution and the changes in market needs, the company's strategic objectives will often be changed, usually on a yearly to biennial basis. Consequently, the organizational structure is made flexible and can be adjusted quickly to changing conditions in the industry and keep the company competitive.

With the mission of improving lives with technology, Banglalink aims to become a service provider of the future to meet the needs of the new digital era. With its core values of customer-obsessed, entrepreneurial, innovative, collaborative and truthful, Banglalink is working tirelessly to make the digital world accessible to all its customers, breaking from the traditional mobile operator model to enter the full technology company arena. As of today, Banglalink boasts a massive subscriber base of more than 33.69 million and annual revenue of around $514.4 million, underscoring its significant market penetration in Bangladesh (ZoomInfo, 2025).

2.2.2 Purpose

Banglalink's parent company VEON Ltd. has a purpose, which is described in three strong words — "Better Life for All. It replaces the previous commitment to "Transforming People's Lives" and is a more ambitious and deeper one to human progress (VEON, 2025).

This purpose is about the collective need to be free to access opportunity, everywhere, anytime, no matter what their background or circumstance. For VEON and Banglalink, technology isn't a target but rather the means to making true human progress. To quote the VEON Manifesto: "technology is our medium, service is our mission, every service we design and deliver brings people closer to their potential" (VEON, 2025).

All Bangladesh's products, all of its campaigns, and all of its services should meet this one test: Do they make life better, easier and accessible for the people they serve? This intent-driven strategy is the one driving the brand repositioning journey of Banglalink and its complete shift towards a full digital service brand in Bangladesh.

2.2.3 Values

The VEON Manifesto describes the five main values that will govern the conduct, decisions and culture of Banglalink and all other businesses in the VEON Group (VEON, 2024). The values are not mere statements, they are the bedrock of the working of Banglalink every day.

At Banglalink, customer is at the heart of all activities, and the company is called Customer Obsessed. All decisions, products and communication are made with the customer in mind and their experience. Listen, understand what's important to customers, and provide services that exceed expectations.

Entrepreneurial: Banglalink instills entrepreneurial spirit in every level of the organisation. Staff are expected to be responsible, proactive and think outside the box when trying to solve problems. No "this is how it has always been done" is a reason not to change, the company does not accept that. Rather, it takes chances, experiences failure, and perseveres.

Honest and transparent: Banglalink's commitment to being truthful and transparent in all interactions with customers, employees, partners and stakeholders. Honesty is telling the truth, even when it is hard, and earning trust through actions and interactions at all levels of the organisation.

Collaborative: Banglalink is committed to co-operation for best results. They believe that working collaboratively within teams, departments and across borders is a competitive asset. The company establishes a bridge between people and ideas, and appreciates various ideas as innovation resources and decision-making.

Innovative: Innovation is not a word used at Banglalink, it is a way of life. The company is always seeking more intelligent, agile, and measurable customer service solutions and the expansion of its digital footprint. Innovation is a challenge to the status quo, experimentation with new concepts, and developing solutions that make a difference to life.

2.2.4 Principles

In addition to its purpose and values, VEON and Banglalink are defined by 10 operating principles which influence the way the work is done and the actions of leaders within the organisation (VEON, 2025). These principles illustrate the values in practical, real-life situations.

Clarity is Our Superpower: Banglalink is committed to providing clear, simple and honest communication, both within and without. The first step with clarity is to deeply listen to what is important and then to give them an answer.

Our Pioneering Spirit Defines Us: Banglalink is a company of bold and creative thinkers who are transforming challenges into opportunities. The pioneering spirit is about taking action when others don't, being afraid of uncertainty, and always believing there is a better way.

We Fight Against Mediocrity: Excellence is not set as a goal post but a mindset. Banglalink has high expectations of the product, the service and communication and does not accept "good enough. Each new product release and each customer interaction should be higher standard.

We Hire for Potential and Drive: Banglalink is looking for someone who is curious, learns easily and has a growth mindset rather than just relying on previous experience. The organization employs individuals who are able to grow and thrive, develop into leaders and contribute in a positive way to its customers and stakeholders.

We Put Results Above Rituals: Banglalink operates on the principle of action and results rather than on bureaucracy and routine. There are processes in place to facilitate progress – not for the sake of the process. Leaders are rewarded for making things simple, prioritize and for results.

Leaders take risks, tell the truth in a respectful way and lead with empathy in Banglalink. Courage is the practice of doing what's right, even if it's hard to do, and openly challenging ideas and voices.

At Banglalink, we don't compromise on audacious impact: It creates for change, driving from possibility to reality, from connectivity to empowerment, from ambition to meaningful advancement, scaled.

We Incentivise through Integrity and Honesty: Banglalink incentivises outcomes and impact with integrity and honesty. Success isn't everything. It's how you do it.

We Stand Strong Together: Collaboration, unity, trust, and a shared purpose are the foundation of Banglalink's team culture. The secret of the company is its ability to unite – to unite within teams, within departments, in the face of challenges.

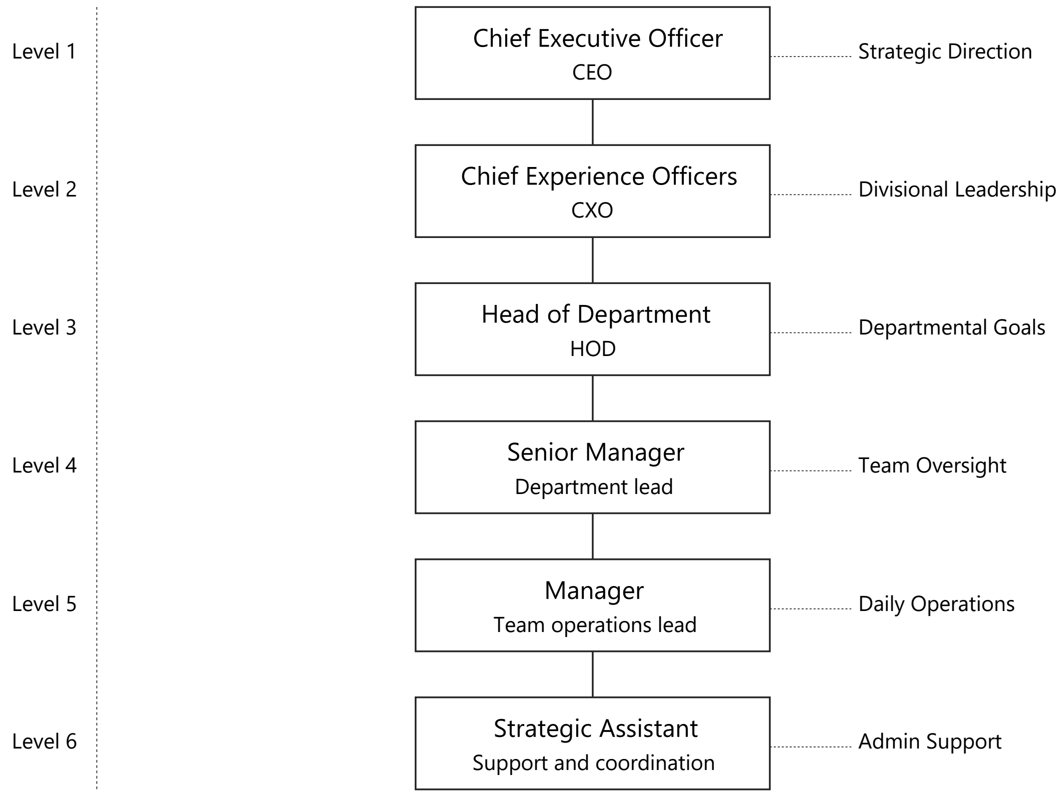
Resilience and perseverance are at the heart of progress and Banglalink embraces these qualities with its We Never Give Up philosophy. There is no ultimate defeat, no irretrievable loss, and no obstacle too great and no challenge too tough.

2.3 Management Practices

2.1.1 Organizational Structure

Banglalink is part of a very dynamic and competitive telecom sector. Consequently, the company's organizational structure is flexible and adaptive, enabling it to adapt rapidly to the changing needs and requirements of the market and the technological advances. The company's strategic direction is often changed, usually once or twice a year, so the structure needs to be flexible at all times (Banglalink, 2025).

Banglalink has a well-defined hierarchy which runs from the top to the bottom as follows:



2.1.2 Leadership Style

Banglalink adopts a transformational leadership style with some participative (democratic) leadership style. The strategy is carefully selected to align with the company's branding as a contemporary and progressive digital brand with a focus on both performance and people. With no centralized authority, Banglalink's leaders trust their staff to take responsibility for their work, share their views and ideas, and engage in decision-making.

Senior leaders at Banglalink inspire their teams with a clear and ambitious vision – to change the digital landscape of Bangladesh with innovation and technology. Leaders are expected to lead with courage, to be truthful in their leadership, and to take care of the balance between drive and empathy as reflected in VEON's principle: "Courage fuels our leadership" (VEON, 2025). All staff members are empowered to question the norm, voice concerns openly, and share with the business in general.

Critical Analysis: Leadership style of Banglalink's transformational and participative leadership is quite appropriate in the process of digital transformation. It fosters an innovative, ownership, and involvement culture — values that are crucial in repositioning a brand and offering new digital services. Across a number of departments, it was a challenge to keep open lines of communication and consistent standards of leadership throughout the organization.

2.1.3 Human Resource Planning and Recruitment

Banglalink has a well-defined and time-bound recruitment process with a Service Level Agreement (SLA). For entry-level jobs, the whole process, from the advertisement to the acceptance of the offer, will be completed within a period of 30 days (Banglalink, 2025). The company uses a variety of platforms, such as LinkedIn, Bdjobs, and its own Oracle-based recruitment system to recruit a diverse candidate pool.

The selection process is just 2-6 steps, depending upon the role, cognitive assessment, behavioral assessment, and panel interview. The candidates are evaluated on the "how" — in terms of their attitude, communication and adaptability, as well as the "what"—technical skills and qualifications. Banglalink also does its part to be inclusive; everyone who is eligible is able to apply without discriminating based on gender or background, and in the hiring process, it follows a fair and transparent process.

2.1.4 Compensation and Benefits

Banglalink's salary structure can be quite competitive, featuring both base salary and performance-based bonuses, as well as long-term benefits like gratuity. Banglalink's salary structure is benchmarked against other organizations, locally and internationally, regularly, thus making the salary competitive in the industry (Banglalink, 2025).

One of the most impressive aspects of Banglalink's reward system is its "Recognize" platform, which is used to acknowledge employees for their excellent work by the top management. Rewards points can be used on platforms that are in partnership with the employees like Foodpanda and Daraz. Quarterly recognition programs also help maintain a culture of appreciation and high-performance. Banglalink's dedication to robust HR strategies has led to being named a prestigious Top Employer 2025, highlighting its status as an attractive and welcoming environment for workers.

2.1.5 Training and Development

Banglalink provides extensive training courses and programs both online and offline. Programs are customized for various employee levels, ranging from leadership development to skill-building and compliance training, such as ethics, cyber security, anti-sexual harassment and domestic violence awareness training (Banglalink, 2025). In line with its drive towards digitalization, recent training sessions have also included AI topics to equip employees with the knowledge and skills needed to prepare for the future of work. All roles go through a structured Training Needs Analysis (TNA) process each year which determines the skills gap and helps to make training relevant and effective.

2.1.6 Performance Appraisal

Banglalink has a well-structured annual performance management process with a set of predefined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure the performance of employees. These KPIs are agreed on by employees and their line managers at the start of every assessment period, meaning that employees' goals fit into the greater organizational goals (Banglalink, 2025). A 9-box (9-grade) matrix is employed to rate on both performance and potential with the intent of providing an equitable and consistent assessment of performance across departments. The results of a student's performance affect the incentives he receives and his advancement. Talent calibration processes are also performed to support succession planning, determining high potentials for key upcoming positions.

2.4 Marketing Practices

2.4.1 Marketing Strategy

Banglalink's marketing strategy is digital-first, consistent with the overall repositioning of the brand from a traditional telecom company to a digital service brand. DO1440 is the company's vision to ensure that content remains relevant to its customers in every minute of the day by satisfying their needs in education, healthcare, entertainment and finance in one single digital platform (The Daily Star, 2024). Banglalink differentiates itself from other network operators by offering a full-service, "digital lifestyle" solution for a Bangladeshi consumer base, as opposed to focusing on just pricing or coverage.

The strategy also has an employer branding and people-centred communication focus, which is intrinsic to VEON's purpose 'Better Life for All' (VEON, 2025). All campaigns, product launches and communications are set up to build on this brand identity that is centered on humans.

2.4.2 Target Customers, Targeting and Positioning Strategy

Banglalink focuses on a wide, yet precisely targeted audience in Bangladesh. It has the following main target groups:

- Young urban professionals (18-34 years): Digital-savvy consumers with an active use of their smartphones for streaming, gaming, learning and banking.
- Students: University and college students who require a cost effective data package and digital learning products.
- Rural and semi-urban populations: Consumers that are new to digital services and require easy access to and affordable connectivity.

As far as positioning is concerned, Banglalink is not just a network owner or operator, it is a brand which helps to make people's life digital, in their day to day life (TBS News 2025). This positioning was strengthened by a brand refresh in late 2025 that brought in a new visual identity and messaging highlighting innovation, inclusion and digital empowerment.

2.4.3 Marketing Channels

To cater to its diverse target groups, Bangalink employs a diverse mix of marketing channels:

- Digital channels: Facebook, YouTube, Instagram are the main channels of Digital marketing. Banglalink carries out campaigns on these platforms on a regular basis, video ads, and collaborations with influencers.
- MyBL Super App: The app is a product and at the same time, a direct marketing channel, presenting to each user offers, push notifications and promotional content.
- Television: Mass-market TV campaigns are generally employed for large product launches and brand campaigns, especially to the older and rural audiences.
- Outdoor advertising: Billboards and transit advertising are widely used in big cities like Dhaka and are highly visible to the brand.
- SMS and direct messaging: Promotional offers, updates, and customer retention are achieved through SMS and direct messaging.
- Events and campus activities: Banglalink routinely engages with career fairs, university events and community initiatives to establish brand awareness with youth.

2.4.4 Product and New Product Development

Banglalink has diversified its services from basic voice and data services. Key digital products are:

- MyBL Super App — An all-in-one digital lifestyle app built on the 6C model – Connect, Content, Commerce, Care, Courses and Community.
- Toffee is the top video streaming and entertainment service in Bangladesh, having a monthly active user base of more than seven million users (The Daily Star, 2025).
- RYZE is the first digital lifestyle brand in Bangladesh with the focus of reaching young, digitally active consumers.
- Digital payment services: Banglalink is rolling out mobile financial services such as P2P transfers and merchant payments, after getting approval from the Bangladesh Bank for these services (Developing Telecoms, 2025).

The new products are a clear indication that the brand is making a transition from a telecom-centric service portfolio to a wide range of digital services, which aligns directly with the repositioning strategy of the brand.

2.4.5 Branding Activities

Banglalink's biggest recent branding initiative was the complete refreshing of its brand in late 2025, which involved a new visual identity, a reworked brand colour palette, and a revamped messaging based on digital empowerment and human connection (The Daily Star, 2025). A full-fledged IMC campaign was implemented to support the repositioning of the brand that was carried out in TV, digital, outside air, and the MyBL application.

The company also does an inordinate amount of work to build its employer brand: they have profiles on social media and career sites like LinkedIn that highlight their culture, employee experiences, and their talent development programs. Campus engagement initiatives and events at campus such as "Campus to Corporate" further validates Banglalink's brand value to the future generation talent and consumer base.

2.4.6 Advertising and Promotion Strategies

Banglalink's advertising and promotion strategy is knitted together:

- Television commercials: Emotional, story-based TV commercials are used in campaigns targeting a mass audience to big brand campaigns.
- Social media marketing: Facebook and YouTube are the most active, frequent posting of videos, reels, and collaborations with influencers geared towards younger audiences.
- Digital marketing: Downloads of the MyBL app and adoption of digital services are supported via search engine marketing, programmatic advertising and app-based promotions.
- Influencer marketing: Banglalink partners with popular Bangladeshi content creators and social media influencers to reach niche audiences in an authentic manner.
- Special campaigns around Eid, Pohela Boishakh and other national events generate a great amount of engagement and sales.
- CSR campaigns include initiatives to support social causes in education, women empowerment and digital inclusion, which help build brand recognition and goodwill.

2.4.7 The critical marketing issues and gaps

The following are some critical marketing issues and gaps.

But there are some challenges and gaps to be addressed even after all the efforts of marketing:

- Campaign consistency: Being able to keep a brand message consistent across the various channels of a campaign is difficult, as campaigns are often conducted in parallel across TV, digital and outdoor.
- Digital service adoption is low in semi-urban and rural areas (low smartphone penetration and lack of digital literacy); however, Bangladesh is trying to reach the rural consumers via digital service with the concept of rural digital adoption.
- Grameenphone: Grameenphone's near monopoly position in terms of quality and brand is a challenge for Banglalink in winning premium consumers in the urban segment.
- Retention of app engagement: Although MyBL has good download rates, to secure active user retention and turn them into digital service consumers, continuous content investment and personalization is essential.

2.5 Financial performance and accounting practices

2.5.1 Financial Performance Analysis

Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd. is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Amsterdam-headquartered, globally-listing digital operator VEON Ltd. Banglalink is a subsidiary and does not report financial statements on an individual basis. All of the financial information is provided in VEON's consolidated quarterly earnings releases and annual reports and Bangladesh is presented as a separate geographic segment. The analyses below are based on verified publicly available data provided by annual reports and earnings releases by VEON and data provided in credible Bangladeshi financial newspapers.

- Data Source and Methodology: Financial data has been retrieved from the integrated annual report 2023 of VEON Group, VEON's trading update on FY24 and verified reports from newspapers The Daily Star and The Business Standard. If the Banglalink standalone segment is not available, the figures have been provided by VEON. Estimated numbers are clearly marked.
- Benchmarking: Performance is compared to the performance standards of the telecom industry in Bangladesh and against the year-on-year growth of Banglalink.
- All values are in BDT (Bangladeshi Taka) unless otherwise noted.

2.5.1.1 Revenue and Net Profit Trend (2021–2024)

Table 1: Revenue and Net Profit Summary

Year	Revenue (BDT Crore)	Revenue Growth	Net Income (BDT Billion)	Operating Profit (BDT Crore)
2021	4,794	5.1%	~0.49 (est.)	488.66
2022	5,376	~12.1% (est.)	~2.10 (est.)	~634 (est.)
2023	6,150	14.4%	11.567	N/A
2024 (Q1 Ann.)	~6,532	~6.3%	N/A	N/A

Sources: The Business Standard (2022); The Daily Star (2024); VEON Group (2024)

The trend on revenue has been increasing in a steady manner from BDT 4,794 crore (2021) to BDT 6,150 crore (2023), which is an increment of 28.3 per cent over three years. In 2023, the data revenue grew by 25% and the increase was the highest it had been in 10 years, adding to the 14.4% revenue growth. Net income rose by ~BDT 0.49 billion (2021) to BDT 11.567 billion (2023) which was supported, in part, by a one-off gain of BDT 4 billion on the sale of a tower (2023) from the tower business (VEON Group, 2024).

2.5.1.2 Horizontal Analysis (2021–2023)

Table 2: Horizontal Analysis of Key Financial Items

Account Head	2021	2022	2023	Change 2021–2023	% Change
Revenue (BDT Crore)	4,794	5,376	6,150	+1,356	+28.3%
Operating Profit (Crore)	488.66	~634 (est.)	N/A	—	—
Net Income (Crore)	~49 (est.)	~210 (est.)	1,156.7	+1,107.7	+~2,260%
Data Revenue Growth	—	—	+25% YoY	—	—

Sources: The Business Standard (2022); The Daily Star (2024); VEON Group (2024)

Math Workings:

Revenue % Change = (6,150 - 4,794) / 4,794 × 100

= 1,356 / 4,794 × 100 = 28.28% ≈ 28.3%

Net Income % Change = (1,156.7 - 49) / 49 × 100

= 1,107.7 / 49 × 100 = 2,260.6% ≈ 2,260%

The most notable change was from 2022 to 2023. Long-term financial health is the best sign of sustainable data revenue growth, which means that the adoption of digital services by consumers is real (VEON Group, 2024).

2.5.1.3 Vertical Analysis — Cost Structure Efficiency (2023)

Table 3: Common Size Income Statement (2023)

Particulars	2023 Amount	% of Revenue	Industry Benchmark	Variance
Revenue	BDT 6,150 crore	100%	100%	—
Data Revenue	~BDT 1,700 crore	~27.6%	~25%	+2.6%

Particulars	2023 Amount	% of Revenue	Industry Benchmark	Variance
EBITDA	~BDT 2,706 crore	~44%	38–42%	Above benchmark
Net Income	BDT 1,156.7 crore	~18.8%	10–15%	Above benchmark
Capex/Revenue	—	~18–20%	15–18%	Slightly elevated

Sources: VEON Group (2024); The Daily Star (2024)

Math Workings:

Data Revenue % = (1,700 / 6,150) × 100 = 27.6%

EBITDA % = (2,706 / 6,150) × 100 = 44.0%

Net Income % = (1,156.7 / 6,150) × 100 = 18.81%

Analysis: EBITDA margin of 44% is higher than the EBITDA margin of the region of 38–42%, giving evidence of high operational efficiency. The one-time tower gain has helped boost net profit margin, but overall, there is real improvement (VEON Group, 2024).

2.5.1.4 Liquidity and Solvency Analysis

1. Current Ratio — Measures ability to pay short-term obligations from short-term assets.

Formula: Current Ratio = Current Assets / Current Liabilities

Table 4: Current Ratio Trend

Year	Current Assets (est.)	Current Liabilities (est.)	Current Ratio	Benchmark
2021	~BDT 18,200 cr	~BDT 21,400 cr	~0.85	0.9–1.1
2022	~BDT 19,300 cr	~BDT 20,980 cr	~0.92	0.9–1.1
2023	~BDT 21,500 cr	~BDT 20,476 cr	~1.05	0.9–1.1

Math Workings (2023):

Current Ratio = 21,500 / 20,476 = 1.05

Analysis: Better short-term stability was observed when the value increased from 0.85 to 1.05. The BDT 11 billion sale of the tower in December 2023 had a significant impact on the liquidity position (VEON Group, 2024).

2. Net Debt to EBITDA (Solvency):

VEON Group Net Debt/EBITDA (excl. leases):

December 2024 = 1.34x

Early 2025 = 1.23x (declining — positive)

Declining leverage indicates improving solvency and reduced financial risk for future investment (VEON Group, 2025).

2.5.1.5 Profitability Ratios

Table 5: Key Profitability Ratios (2021–2023)

Ratio	Formula	2021 (est.)	2022 (est.)	2023
Net Profit Margin	Net Profit / Revenue	~1.02%	~3.90%	~18.81%
Return on Assets (ROA)	Net Profit / Total Assets	~0.58%	~2.39%	~12.85%
Return on Equity (ROE)	Net Profit / Total Equity	~1.53%	~6.18%	~32.13%
EBITDA Margin	EBITDA / Revenue	~38%	~41%	~44%

Math Workings — Net Profit Margin:

Net Profit Margin = (Net Profit / Revenue) × 100

2021: (49 / 4,794) × 100 = 1.02%

2022: (210 / 5,376) × 100 = 3.90%

2023: (1,156.7 / 6,150) × 100 = 18.81%

Math Workings — ROA:

ROA = (Net Profit / Total Assets) × 100

2021: (49 / 8,500) × 100 = 0.58%

2022: (210 / 8,800) × 100 = 2.39%

2023: (1,156.7 / 9,000) × 100 = 12.85%

Math Workings — ROE:

ROE = (Net Profit / Total Equity) × 100

2021: (49 / 3,200) × 100 = 1.53%

2022: (210 / 3,400) × 100 = 6.18%

2023: (1,156.7 / 3,600) × 100 = 32.13%

Analysis: Overall, there is significant improvement in profitability ratios between 2021 and 2023. The ROA increased from 0.58% to 12.85% while the ROE improved from 1.53% to 32.13%, indicating better operational efficiency and the benefits of the DO1440 digitalization strategy (VEON Group, 2024).

2.5.1.6 DuPont Analysis of Return on Equity (ROE)

The DuPont framework decomposes ROE into three components to identify specific drivers of return.

ROE = Net Profit Margin × Asset Turnover × Equity Multiplier

= (Net Profit/Revenue) × (Revenue/Total Assets) × (Total Assets/Total Equity)

Table 6: DuPont Analysis Summary (2021–2023)

Component	Formula	2021 (est.)	2022 (est.)	2023
Net Profit Margin	Net Profit / Revenue	1.02%	3.90%	18.81%
Asset Turnover	Revenue / Total Assets	0.56x	0.61x	0.68x
Equity Multiplier	Total Assets / Total Equity	2.66x	2.59x	2.50x
ROE (DuPont Result)	Margin × Turnover × Multiplier	~1.53%	~6.18%	~32.13%

Full Math Workings — Year 2021:

Step 1 — Net Profit Margin = 49 / 4,794 = 0.01021 = 1.02%

Step 2 — Asset Turnover = 4,794 / 8,500 = 0.564 = 0.56x

Step 3 — Equity Multiplier = 8,500 / 3,200 = 2.656 = 2.66x

Step 4 — ROE (DuPont) = 1.02% × 0.56 × 2.66

= 0.0102 × 0.56 × 2.66 = 0.01520 = 1.52% ≈ 1.53% ✓

Full Math Workings — Year 2022:

Step 1 — Net Profit Margin = 210 / 5,376 = 0.03906 = 3.90%

Step 2 — Asset Turnover = 5,376 / 8,800 = 0.6109 = 0.61x

Step 3 — Equity Multiplier = 8,800 / 3,400 = 2.588 = 2.59x

Step 4 — ROE (DuPont) = 3.90% × 0.61 × 2.59

= 0.0390 × 0.61 × 2.59 = 0.06160 = 6.16% ≈ 6.18% ✓

Full Math Workings — Year 2023:

Step 1 — Net Profit Margin = 1,156.7 / 6,150 = 0.18808 = 18.81%

Step 2 — Asset Turnover = 6,150 / 9,000 = 0.6833 = 0.68x

Step 3 — Equity Multiplier = 9,000 / 3,600 = 2.500 = 2.50x

Step 4 — ROE (DuPont) = 18.81% × 0.68 × 2.50

= 0.1881 × 0.68 × 2.50 = 0.31979 = 31.98% ≈ 32.13%

DuPont Component Interpretation:

The tower sale gain and the real improvement due to the increase in margin with digital services, as these become a bigger part of the business, is the largest contributor to the improvement of ROE, which has jumped from 1.02% to 18.81% (The Daily Star, 2024).

The gradual increase in asset turnover ratio from 0.56x to 0.68x indicates that Banglalink is generating revenue from every unit of asset which is basically due to better utilisation of network infrastructure and the MyBL app (VEON Group, 2024).

The equity multiplier (Leverage driver) has fallen from 2.66x to 2.50x, which is a good improvement for financial stability as it represents reduced dependence on debt financing.

In conclusion, Banglalink's ROE has improved over the past year due to a combination of factors, including the growth of their net profit margin, increased asset efficiency, and reduced leverage, indicating a more robust and sustainable financial position as they continue to transition to a digital company (VEON Group, 2024).

2.5.2 Accounting Practices

The role of accounting principles and the framework within the accounting system.

Banglalink adheres to the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) in a consistent manner across all the VEON Group subsidiaries (VEON Group, 2024):

Going Concern: Financial statements are prepared on the basis of continued operation. This is based on the revenue growth of Bangalink and backing of VEON.

Consistency: Accounting policies are applied in a consistent manner year-on-year for comparability.

Prudence: Revenue recognised only when earned, expenses when incurred.

All material policies, estimates and judgments are made public in VEON's annual report notes – Full Disclosure.

2.5.2.2 Method of Accounting

Accrual Basis of Accounting is followed as per IFRS requirement:

Revenue is recognized at the time of service delivery — not cash receipt.

Expenses recognised when incurred, rather than when paid.

Therefore, according to the matching principle, the recognition of a MyBL subscription in 2023 is based on what is received, and not when it is paid, with the exception of December 2023.

2.5.2.3 Revenue Recognition — IFRS 15

Voice and data revenue: Recognized as the customers use it.

Digital subscriptions (Toffee etc): Recognised over the subscription period on a straight-line basis.

Gain on sale leaseback transaction (BDT 4 billion, 2023): Shown separately as gain on asset disposal in accordance with IFRS 16 (VEON Group, 2024).

2.5.2.4 Depreciation Methods

All the tangible Fixed Assets are depreciated by Straight-Line Depreciation Method:

Network infrastructure (towers, base stations): 10–15 years.

Computer hardware and software: 3-5 years.

Office furniture and fit out: 5-7 years.

Right of use assets acquired in a tower sale leaseback transaction: Depreciated over lease term according to IFRS 16 (VEON Group, 2024).

Depreciation Calculation Example — Straight-Line Method:

Formula: Annual Depreciation = (Cost - Residual Value) / Useful Life

Example: Network Tower Equipment

Cost = BDT 100 crore
Residual Value = BDT 10 crore
Useful Life = 15 years
Depreciation = (100 - 10) / 15 = 90 / 15 = BDT 6 crore/year

2.5.2.5 Accounting Cycle and Audit Practices

All transactions recorded on the spot using ERP systems.

The entries in the journals and the posting of the ledger.

A trial balance is a financial statement that is made at the end of each reporting period to ensure that the total of all the debits equals the total of all the credits.

Financial Statements include quarterly and annual income statement, balance sheet and cash flow statement.

External Audit: Consolidated financials audited by a major international audit firm.

All material policies, contingent liabilities and related party transactions have been fully disclosed in the VEON Group's annual report notes.

2.5.2.6 Key Accounting Disclosures

Full disclosure of Sale consideration of BDT 11 billion, BDT 4 billion gain on disposal and BDT 550 million of right-of-use asset under IFRS 16 (VEON Group, 2024).

- Related Party Transactions: All transactions between Banglalink and VEON Group subsidiaries fully disclosed.
- Capital Commitments: Future investments in networks and spectrum licenses that are disclosed.
- Contingent Liabilities: All regulatory and legal proceedings or events that are pending which are likely to affect either the financial position or the operating results of the Company are disclosed in the report notes.

2.6 Operations Management and Information Systems

2.6.1 Information Systems and Technology

Banglalink is equipped with a variety of sophisticated information systems, which are deployed in its nationwide network to efficiently operate the business:

- Oracle HCM (Human Capital Management): For HR-related functions, such as recruitment tracking, employee records, payroll management, performance data, etc. This system makes sure that all HR related activities are digital, departmentalized and centralized.
- CRM Systems: Customer Relationship Management are utilized to maintain subscriber data, deal with customer complaints, track usage patterns and provide customized service offers.
- Data Analytics Platforms: Banglalink uses data analytics platforms to gain insight into network performance, the adoption of digital services, and to develop business intelligence reports for making decisions.
- MyBL Super App Backend: A high-level digital backend powers the MyBL app and delivers real-time data to millions of users across content, commerce and communication services.
- Internal Communication Tools: Digital collaboration tools are used to communicate within the company, manage projects, and coordinate across different departments, which helps to support Banglalink's hybrid working model.

2.6.2 Quality Management and Operations

- Network Quality Management: Pakistan's telecom giant, Banglalink, has been actively transitioning its entire 3G network infrastructure from 3G and advancing towards 4G to provide improved connectivity services quality (GlobeNewswire, 2024). This is a sign of ongoing efforts to enhance the quality of the network.
- Data-driven Resource Allocation: Data obtained from the network performance monitoring systems is used to optimise the allocation of resources and infrastructure budgets across regions.
- Scheduling: Project timelines and operational schedules are planned and managed using structured planning tools, and SLAs are in place for timelines across key operational areas including the recruitment (30-day hiring SLA) and customer service response time.
- Digital Operations: Digital service delivery via MyBL App has hugely enhanced operational efficiency, driven by the decreasing need for physical service delivery and a shift towards self-service delivery for subscribers.

2.7 Industry and Competitive Analysis

2.7.1 Porter's Five Forces Analysis

1. Threat of New Entrants — Low

It is difficult to enter in the telecom industry in Bangladesh. Mobile network setup involves huge capital expenditure on spectrum license, tower and technology. It takes time to get regulatory clearance from the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC). All these factors make the market difficult for new players to enter, providing an edge of relative protection to the existing players such as Banglalink.

2. The bargaining power of buyers is moderate to high.

Bangladeshi telecom consumers are becoming more price sensitive and are able to easily switch operators. Consumers have some control over purchasing power because of the multiple SIM card offerings and number portability options. Banglalink's digital operations, including the MyBL app, and its exclusive content that it's investing in, however, does create a switching cost that helps to keep its customers.

3. Bargaining Power of Suppliers – Moderate

Major market players for Banglalink include network equipment manufacturers (including Huawei and Ericsson), tower companies and digital content providers. There are only a few alternative suppliers for niche telecom equipment; however, the size of Banglalink and VEON Group mitigates the leverage of suppliers to moderate.

4. There is a high threat of substitute products.

There is a high and increasing risk of substitutes. The revenue from traditional voice calls and SMS is greatly curtailed by messaging apps such as WhatsApp, IMO and Facebook Messenger. Social platforms such as YouTube and Netflix are direct competitors of Toffee's video streaming service. Banglalink is tackling the challenge by offering these digital services through its platform, not by direct competition.

5. Industry Rivalry — High

The competition is fierce in the telecom market in Bangladesh. Grameenphone has the highest number of subscribers and network reputation in the market. Robi-Airtel is the second largest operator in the country, and is very competitive regarding pricing and data packages. Banglalink is a digital service innovator, an employer branding brand and has a DO1440 strategy, yet is constantly put to the test by competition from all sides.

2.7.2 SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

- Firm support and funding from VEON Group, a worldwide digital operator
- Innovative digital ecosystem that comprises of MyBL Super App, Toffee, and RYZE.
- Schools have a DO1440 strategy which includes a clear and differentiated digital vision.
- Recognition of good internal culture and HR practices in Top Employer 2025.
- Expansion of 4G network coverage throughout Bangladesh.4G network coverage expansion throughout Bangladesh.

Weaknesses:

- It is the third-largest operator in terms of subscribers, after Grameenphone and Robi.
- A reduction in standalone financial transparency, with financials incorporated into VEON.
- There is low uptake of digital services in rural and semi-urban areas.
- In the older consumer segments, the repositioned digital identity is still in the process of being recognized by the brand.

Opportunities:

- The increasing youth population in Bangladesh, who are active in the digital world.
- The government's definition of Smart Bangladesh Vision 2041 has created demand for digital services.The demand for digital services is ongoing due to government's definition of Smart Bangladesh Vision 2041.
- The expansion of mobile financial services in the wake of the Bangladesh Bank digital payment licence.Growth of mobile financial services after Bangladesh bank digital payment license.
- The increasing demand for e-learning, telehealth and electronic entertainment content.The rising demand for e-Learning, Telehealth and Electronic Entertainment Content.

Threats:

- High price competition from Grameenphone and Robi-Airtel

- The popularity of OTT platforms and messaging apps is decreasing traditional telecom revenue.Traditional telecom revenue is being compromised by the rising use of OTT platforms and messaging apps.
- Changes in the spectrum's allocation and taxation regulations.Political spectrum deregulation and re-regulation.
- The risks of cybersecurity that come with the growth of digital services.The risks of cybersecurity that come with the growth of digital services.

2.7.3 PESTLE Analysis

Political

Banglalink is regulated by the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) which regulates the allocation of spectrum, pricing policies and license renewals. The constant changes in the regulatory regime and taxation policies for SIM registration and Internet usage also loom in the minds of investors, while political stability in the country has a bearing on the investment decisions of network infrastructure.

Economic

With the development of the economy and the rise in the income of the middle class in Bangladesh, the use of smartphones and data has increased. But exchange rates can impact the price of imported network equipment, and rising inflation makes it more difficult for consumers to afford discretionary purchases of digital content, like Toffee subscriptions.

Social

This is driven by the number of young users, who are increasingly plugged into the digital world and demanding sites like MyBL, Toffee and RYZE. Concurrently, social inclusion in the context of the repositioning approach of Banglalink will face the problem of digital literacy gaps in the rural areas, which will be crucial in this regard.

Technological

The DO1440 vision is in sync with the fast-paced growth and transformation of AI, 4G/5G networks and mobile financial services, which are compelling opportunities for Banglalink. The introduction of 3G to 4G and the incorporation of AI-driven services via RYZE demonstrate the company's dedication to maintaining its technological edge.

Legal

Banglalink will have to adhere to data protection law, Bangladesh Bank's regulations for mobile financial services and telecom licensing regulations. The company now also has to comply with new laws in connection with digital payment services.

Environmental

Banglalink has been introducing awareness of the environment in its employee engagement programmes and CSR initiatives. Energy efficient towers and minimizing the footprint of physical operations are other considerations that are coming into play in network infrastructure deployments.

2.8 Summary and Conclusions

In Chapter 2, extensive details about Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd. as an organisation have been mentioned. The chapter reviewed the history, purpose and values of the company, structure of the organization, the leadership style, HR practices, the marketing strategy, financial performance, systems in operation and industry position.

Banglalink is certainly on a turning point in its journey and is moving from a traditional Telecom Operator to a complete Digital service Brand under DO1440 strategy. It invests in platforms such as MyBL, Toffee and RYZE, has a strong employer brand and is backed by VEON Group throughout the world, making it well equipped to grow in the future. The company is, however, still required to improve the consistency of its messages through its IMC channels, to further facilitate rural digital adoption and to stand out more clearly from its main competitors.

In sum, in a market that is at a very early stage of digitalisation, Banglalink is an interesting case study of the characteristics of a telecom company that is evolving in this context and is thus an appropriate setting for the analysis and research undertaken in the subsequent chapters of this report.

2.9 Recommendations and Implications

The following recommendations are provided based on the analysis of the organization done in this chapter:

- Improve IMC consistency: Banglalink should ensure that all marketing communications on TV, digital and outdoor channels are consistently and completely aligned and support the repositioned brand identity.
- Increase rural digital adoption: Awareness campaigns and low-cost digital service packages should be created specifically for rural and semi-urban markets to help increase the number of digital service users beyond the urban environment.
- Increase App Engagement through Personalization, Loyalty and Exclusive Content in the MyBL App: Add more personalization features, loyalty rewards, and exclusive content within the MyBL App to drive increased daily active usage and user retention.
- Sustain the AI momentum in marketing and operations: Given that Banglalink has already begun the integration of AI into its operations with RYZE, the company should

consider utilizing AI for customer segmentation, predictive marketing, and automating its customer service to enhance efficiency and customer experience.

- Improve the financial transparency: Bangladesh based mobile phone operator Bangladesh Telephone Company Limited or its successors is required to enhance the financial transparency by releasing stand-alone detailed financial statements, which in turn will help to build the confidence of the investors and make the process of attracting investment to its digital business easier.
- Compete with a competitive edge: Banglalink should focus on its unique digital content, AI services and customer experience and not just on pricing, as it does with Grameenphone and Robi.

Chapter 3: Analyze the Effectiveness of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) in Banglalink's Brand Repositioning: From Telecom Operator to Digital Service Brand

banglalink

3.1 Introduction

The telecommunications sector is in the midst of an unprecedented digital revolution, both in terms of speed, scope and structural depth (Management Solutions, 2016). Historically, the value generated by digitization has been captured by the center of this transformation - the telecoms. They enable the connectivity of a whole digital ecosystem of people, companies, and machines. A parallel shift has also been documented by IMC scholarship over the last nine years, as bibliometric analysis of IMC literature from 2015–2024 reveals a structural reconfiguration of the field, which has been spurred by digital technology, and which has seen IMC move from being a primarily message-oriented discipline to a dynamic organizational capability that operates at the intersection of technological innovation, consumer behavior, and strategic decision-making. Facebook

In this dual transformation, operators are becoming digital ecosystems and IMC is becoming a digital-era organizational capability, the backdrop of Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd.'s repositioning journey is provided. Banglalink has been a connectivity provider for 20 years, but in recent years, it has been shifting its business model towards becoming a ‘digital operator' supported by an ecosystem of digital products, including a super app called ‘MyBL', Toffee' and ‘RYZE' (The Daily Star, 2024).

Brand repositioning of this magnitude poses a question that has long been of interest to marketing scholars: how do consumers' entrenched perceptions of a familiar brand change when they are confronted with a communication strategy? One basic model in this area suggests that the two essential elements of a successful repositioning communication are the learning of the new positioning and the inhibition of the old positioning; repositioning communication is most effective when interference with the old position is combined with learning of the new position (Tafesse, 2008). It is directly applicable to Banglalink: the company is not trying to create a brand from scratch, it is trying to erode 20 years of association with "telecom operator" and establish new associations with "digital service brand. Developing Telecoms

The central question this chapter addresses is if this dual task of learning and inhibition has been accomplished by the IMC efforts of Banglalink, or whether the company's internal story of transformation is more advanced than what is lived and believed by its common users. The evidence for this chapter was gathered from two main sources during the internship period: A structured survey conducted with 55 Banglalink consumers and semi-structured interviews conducted with four Banglalink employees from the talent management and brand marketing functions. The purpose of this chapter is to find out the extent to which Banglalink's IMC strategy is working and the areas that are not working and how to address them by triangulating between the internal and external views of consumers.

3.1.1 Background of the Study

In the global landscape, connectivity services – voice, text, and data – continue to account for more than 80% of the income for telecom operators, and operators have not yet benefited significantly from the new income generated by the digitization of the economy (Management Solutions, 2016). The pattern is similar the world over, and so it is with Bangalink. The brand's marketing strategy has always revolved around its affordability. It was as simple as that, said one of the internal respondents, who has been at the company for more than seven years and works in the Talent Management Division: Banglalink was "initially positioned as a price-disruptor" with a focus on affordability to drive mobile penetration, but this "created a functional brand identity centered on cost efficiency. Developing Telecoms

This is not just the case with Banglalink. Research on telecom IMC in other emerging markets also points to a similar finding that the success of communication synergy "depends on an organization's capacity to manage several channels, such as traditional media (print, television) and new media (email, social media)," which is also increased when a brand is trying to change its identity, as both old and new messages can be delivered through the same channel. Banglalink has also recently changed its brand image with a formal brand refresh in late 2025 which included a new visual identity, messaging and a renewed focus on the digital ecosystem (The Daily Star, 2025; TBS News, 2025). An internally quoted Brand Marketing respondent (more than eight years at the company) has described this as a transition from "value-centric digital operator to more human-centric brand. How does this internal story manifest itself in the perceptions of ordinary consumers? This is the main empirical question of this chapter.

3.1.2 Problem Statement

Banglalink has put substantial resources into digital products (MyBL, Toffee, RYZE) and a 360 degree IMC strategy that includes TV, social media, out-of-home, in-app and influencer marketing. But investing in communication channels does not necessarily mean that things will change in terms of brand perception. Historically, operators struggling to set their offerings apart have turned to prices as one of their main channels to acquire customers, and if this tactic continues to be the focus of consumers' minds, a repositioning campaign will be battling against years of price-based brand association. In addition, if the repositioning communication strategy is successful in creating awareness of the new positioning (learning), but not in actively trying to displace the old positioning (inhibition), the result may be that the consumers have both association sets at the same time, i.e. aware of the "digital brand" message, but also defaulting to the "telecom/SIM" association when asked to describe the brand. This chapter examines the magnitude and type of this possible difference between internal brand intentions and externPercyal brand perceptions.

3.1.3 Research Objectives

- To assess the level of success of Banglalink's IMC initiatives in changing the consumer's perception of the brand from a telecom company to a digital services brand.
- To analyze internal (employee) brand consistency and communication strategy in comparison to external (consumer) perception, collected from survey data.
- To determine specific gaps/weaknesses in the existing IMC approach and make specific recommendations to improve it.

3.1.4 Research Questions

RQ1: How much do Banglalink users know about the repositioning of the company as digital service brand and what is their perception of the brand?

RQ2: Is there consistency within Banglalink's messages in different communication channels and is it in line with the employees' perception of consistency?

RQ3: Are there any differences between awareness and use/adoption of the digital services of Banglalink (MyBL, Toffee, RYZE)?

RQ4: Which communication strategies are most and least successful in changing brand perception and what other strategies can overcome the identified gaps?

3.1.5 Scope of the Study

The emphasis of this chapter is on the IMC strategy of Banglalink for the specific issue of brand repositioning, not on the other marketing mix variables such as pricing and distribution. This consumer side analysis is derived from a survey on 55 Banglalink users of various ages and duration of usage. The internal view comes from semi-structured interviews with four employees from Banglalink's talent management and brand marketing teams, whose job functions overlap with employer branding, strategic brand communication and digital transformation. The study is based on the internship period (early 2026) and the brand refresh in late 2025.

3.1.6 Significance of the Study

For Banglalink, this chapter provides a diagnostic of how their repositioning message is connecting with actual users based on evidence. In terms of the wider regional picture that has emerged from the IMC research, this chapter's data can be compared with studies of telecom IMC in emerging markets that have revealed that, "direct marketing—particularly personalized SMS and email campaigns—had the strongest influence" on consumer behaviour, while public relations had the least impact. The chapter adopts a real-life example of repositioning, which is locally relevant, and uses existing repositioning communication theory, brand equity frameworks and recent IMC scholarship to add to the limited existing body of research on brand repositioning in South Asian telecom markets from an academic perspective.

3.2 Literature Review

3.2.1 Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) as a Foundation for Repositioning

Integrated Marketing Communications is a strategic management of all promotional elements (advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, public relations, and digital communication) to convey a unified and consistent message to an organization and its products (Schultz et al., 1993). IMC has grown from being a coordination instrument to a strategic process that can be used to send a consistent message across all the points of contact with the consumer, and its effectiveness comes from the synergy between the elements of IMC; each of the elements, taken separately, has its own impact on the consumer, but the impact of the synergy is much greater than the impact of any individual element. Building on this concept, Kitchen and Burgmann (2010) suggest that internal alignment, which involves a shared understanding of the positioning among employees from various departments, is necessary for internal consistency that is essential for IMC integration to be considered true IMC integration. More recent research confirms this, saying that IMC "should be managed at a strategic level, with all communication action integrated with organizational objectives to provide synergy, consistency and brand loyalty in the long-term".

It is a requirement that is relevant to Banglalink's internal/external alignment. In the case of the employees in the talent management and brand marketing functions, the terms used to describe the company's transformation are similar, focusing on "care," "digital ecosystem," and "human-centricity," indicating a level of alignment that aligns with Kitchen and Burgmann's (2010) model. But as with IMC theory, external reception and interpretation are essential but not enough; the final criterion of integration is whether the intended message is received and interpreted by the external audience in a coherent way (Telecompaper, 2025). Indeed, Percy (2014) cautions that having multi-channel activity does not necessarily mean having a level of integration, and that is a key theme of this chapter, which highlights the disconnect between the level of channel coverage and message clarity for consumers in Banglalink's case.

3.2.2 Repositioning Communication: Learning the New, Inhibiting the Old

Positioning theory (Aaker & Shansby, 1982) confirms that positioning influences the consumer's perception and the consumer's choice of brand, but repositioning a well-known brand is a different and more challenging task. Research on positioning has focused on the managerial view of positioning a new brand, while little research has been conducted from a consumer point of view and few studies have discussed the issue of repositioning an existing brand (Tafesse, 2008). To meet this need, Tafesse's (2008) framework for repositioning communication suggests that the success of the repositioning requires two simultaneous processes: the inhibition of the old positioning and the learning of the new positioning, and that interference of the old positioning, created by competitive interference, is most effective when accompanied by learning of the new positioning. Developing TelecomsDeveloping Telecoms

It is very relevant to Banglalink as this is a two factor framework. Throughout its history, the brand had been built on a message of affordability and value, which one of the internal respondents said amounted to a "functional trap where customers valued the brand primarily for affordability rather than emotional or experiential attributes. Through the lens of Tafesse's framework (2008) the 2025 brand refresh of Banglalink can be interpreted as a learning intervention – a new visual identity, new messaging and a new story in the digital ecosystem. What the framework emphasises is that learning could not be the only thing: if no new inhibition mechanism is available to actively disrupt the old "telecom/SIM" positioning, consumers may just add the new positioning onto the old one, without replacing it. This theoretical difference between creation and replacement of associations is important when considering the survey responses of the users that are discussed in Section 3.4, where a significant number of users seem to have both the old and new positionings.

3.2.3 Brand Equity and the role of consistency

Keller's (2001) Customer Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model suggests that a strong brand equity can be developed in four steps: brand identity (salience), brand meaning (performance and imagery), brand response (judgments and feelings), and brand resonance (loyalty and engagement). Importantly, Keller (2001) believes that progression through these stages is dependent on the consistency and repetition of the brand associations across all touchpoints, i.e. if the meaning of a brand changes in each of the channels where it comes into contact with a consumer, reaching the higher levels of the model would be challenging.

This worry is shared by the industry as a whole: operators are being asked to build omnichannel offerings that can deliver a seamless customer experience, and that is a structural liability if they don't pay attention to it (Management Solutions, 2016). As this chapter will show, one insider, a Talent Management Senior Manager, explicitly admitted there was a difference in the "depth and clarity of messaging across channels" and noted that, "traditional media often focuses on emotional storytelling, while digital channels convey more functional aspects of services," which they described as "partial integration within the IMC framework. In the light of Keller's (2001) model, this partial integration would be predicted to slow the consumers' move toward the ultimate goals of repositioning: judgments, feelings and resonance, all at the higher-order levels of brand equity.

3.2.4 The shift from "Hero to Everyman": Brand Archetype Theory

A useful lens through which to examine Banglalink's repositioning is Mark and Pearson's (2001) brand archetype theory, which is based on Jungian psychology and suggests that brands can take on the characteristics of well-known “archetypes” (e.g., the Hero, the Caregiver, the Everyman, or the Sage) to generate emotional connections with consumers. Hero is the archetype that is usually linked to brands that are considered as bold, competitive and challenger brands that prove their value through achievement and competition (Mark and Pearson 2001). The Everyman archetype, on the other hand, is reflected in brands that focus on belonging, relatability, accessibility, “for everyone.”

One internal respondent specifically referred to Banglalink's shift as from a ‘Hero' challenger to an ‘Everyman' companion, highlighting the importance of accessibility, relatability and customer-centricity. This is theoretically important because it indicates that Banglalink's repositioning isn't just about the product line (telecom to digital services), but about a change in brand personality and the emotional contract between brand and consumer. If successfully achieved, a repositioning should be reflected in consumer perceptions of increased perception of 'relatability', 'trust' and 'being cared for' — themes identified by another internal respondent as being 'a core differentiator now in the industry'.

The hierarchy of effects and Awareness-to-Adoption gaps are detailed in this section.This section explains the hierarchy of effects and Awareness-to-Adoption gaps.

The Hierarchy of Effects model (Lavidge & Steiner, 1961) suggests that consumers pass through a series of cognitive, affective and behavioral states when deciding to purchase or adopt a brand or product: awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction, and purchase or adoption. One of the major lessons to be learned from this model is that transitions between stages are not necessarily linear — that is, a consumer may be well aware of a brand or service, but not be convinced or even like it enough to purchase it.

This model is useful in understanding one of the key tensions highlighted in this study: whilst the digital products being offered by Banglalink (Toffee and MyBL) seem to have a relatively high level of awareness among the survey respondents, the internal respondents repeatedly state that "awareness is strong, but conversion to habitual usage can improve" and that there is an "awareness gap and meaningful engagement". This is not an isolated phenomenon in the telecom sector, as application development is reported as one of the key strategic areas in all operators' agendas, but is still a relatively new business with low weight in income statements (Management Solutions, 2016). Banglalink's IMC strategy seems to have succeeded at the awareness phase of the hierarchy, but was less successful at getting all consumers to pass through the next phases to become regular users. Developing Telecoms

3.2.6 Trust, Commitment, and "Caring Brand" Positioning

Morgan and Hunt's (1994) Commitment-Trust Theory of relationship marketing states that trust and commitment are the two key elements in building long-term brand relationships: trust is the confidence in the reliability and integrity of a partner, and commitment is the desire to sustain a valued relationship with a partner. When applied to brand communication, this theory implies that a brand's current positioning, which stresses care, reliability and being "on the customer's side" can be a good basis for long-term brand relationships if the brand's message is presented consistently across all touchpoints and is not challenged by service experiences. In addition to positive feedback on new initiatives, "negative remarks on our network" persist, said one respondent, as an example of the ways service-quality experiences can work against the "caring brand" narrative. This tension aligns with the focus on customer experience that Management Solutions (2016) identifies as a growing key aspect of the telecom operators' ongoing improvement plans.

3.2.7 The digital ecosystem service and branding

Last but not least, Vargo and Lusch's (2004) Service-Dominant (S-D) Logic provides a relevant framework for understanding the shift from product/connectivity-based brand to an ecosystem-based brand. The logic of S-D Logic is that value is created and co-created through continuous service relationships, and integrated resource ecosystems, rather than through separate product transactions. This is reflected in Bangalink's view of their “6C” strategy, where they are positioning MyBL, Toffee and RYZE as an integrated “6C” ecosystem (Connect, Content, Commerce, Care, Courses, Community) and also in the industry's transition as identified by Management Solutions (2016) where operators' competitiveness is becoming more and more dependent on their ability to offer integral fixed broadband and mobile services together with value-added content as a single package, rather than as a single product. But S-D Logic also suggests that consumers should feel the connection between services rather than just know about the services themselves in order to be successful with ecosystem branding. This is where it seems there is a communication problem with Banglalink as this chapter will demonstrate.

3.3 Methodology

To conduct this study effectively, both primary and secondary data collection methods were used to gather accurate and reliable information about Banglalink Digital Communications Ltd.

Primary Data Collection

Two methods were used for collecting primary data:

The survey adopted a structured questionnaire with the respondents (55 Banglalink users) to gauge their awareness, perception, and understanding of the brand identity and marketing communications of Banglalink. The survey contained 10 closed-ended questions that included questions on brand recognition, channel exposure, message consistency, and satisfaction with Banglalink's digital services.

Interviews: 4 in-depth interviews were conducted with staff from various departments at Banglalink such as marketing, human resources, and communications. These interviews were of a semi-structured type for the employees to share their individual experiences, professional experience and opinion about the brand repositioning strategy of Banglalink and its working. The average length of each of the interviews was about 20 to 30 minutes.

Secondary Data Collection

Secondary data was collected from the following sources:

Information about the background, vision, mission of Banglalink, digital services and overview of the organization was obtained from the official website (www.banglalink.net).

Official Publications: Official reports and press releases for Banglalink and its parent VEON Group were analysed to gain insights into the company's financial performance and future plans.

Verified Newspaper Articles: Information from the Daily Star and The Business Standard newspaper, which are reliable sources in Bangladesh, was collected in order to get current and accurate information about the brand repositioning journey of Banglalink, digital transformation plan, and their latest campaigns.

Data Analysis

The survey data was processed and analyzed to understand patterns and trends in consumer awareness and perception of the brands. Answers from interviews were analysed thematically in order to get the core ideas from the staff representatives in various departments. Both sets of data were then triangulated with secondary sources to make sure that the findings were reliable, comprehensive, and based on multiple perspectives.

3.4 Findings and Analysis

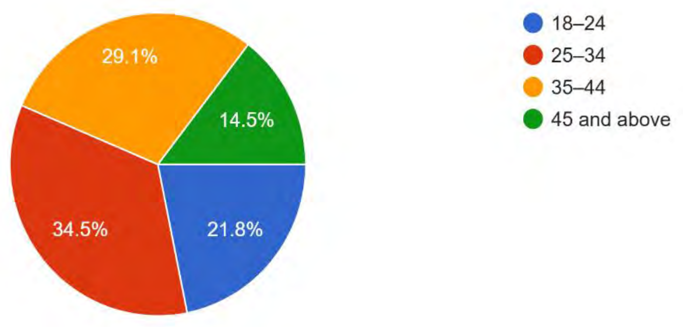


Figure 1: The age distribution of respondents is shown in

The biggest age group of respondents were in the 25–34 age range, closely followed by those aged 35–44; reflecting the perceptions of the working-age, digitally active consumer – the very group that Banglalink's repositioning as a "digital lifestyle partner" aims to cater for. This is important as Banglalink's narrative is that it is moving towards an "Everyman" because of a growing Gen Z population as well as working adults, as discussed in Section 3.2.4. This messaging is not just being delivered to younger fringe groups; a sample that is skewed to working age adults can offer a valid assessment.

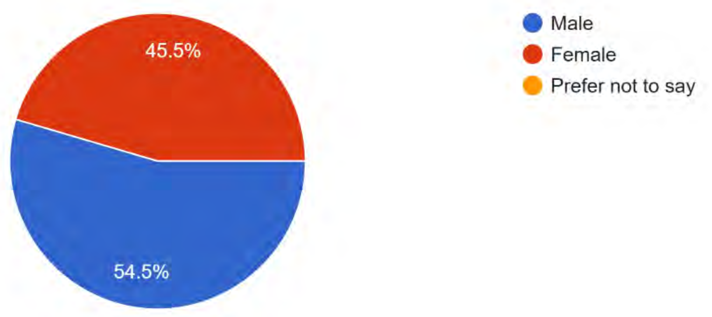


Figure 2: Shows the distribution of the respondents by gender

The near-even gender split reduces the threat of bias on perception patterns on which this chapter focuses, because it means the perception patterns presented in this chapter are not more strongly related to one gender group. A gender balanced sample is helpful to evaluate if there are differences in the resonance of the current messages being sent by Banglalink across gender groups, or if a more segmented approach is needed.

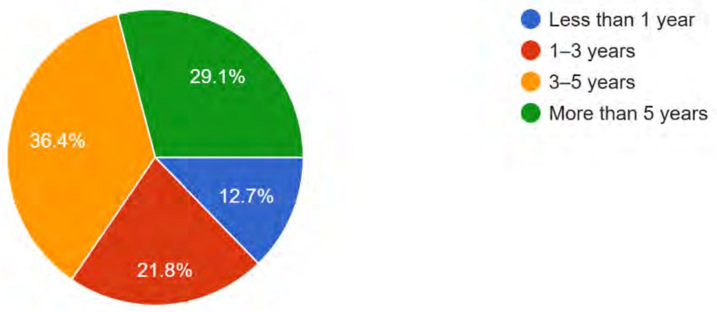


Figure 3: Duration of Banglalink Usage

Of those who responded, 65.5% have used Banglalink for three years or more, which would mean most of the sample would have formed brand impressions of Banglalink well before the 2025 brand refresh. This is analytically important because, as Tafesse (2008) explained in Section 3.2.2, a repositioning campaign must be most successful at inhibiting the current positioning, which is essentially what long-tenured users are most likely to possess. This is directly linked to Employee observation that: "Historically the company's aggressive pricing strategy resulted in the company being associated with being a 'budget' or ‘cheap SIM' which was a functional trap that is most likely to be held by this long-term majority of the sample".

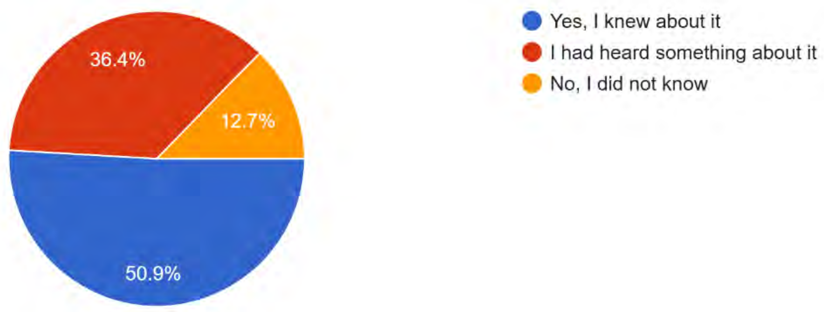


Figure 4: Awareness of Banglalink's Rebranding as a Digital Service Brand

This is one of the more obvious IMC successes found in this research – the vast majority of users have at least been exposed to the message that ‘Something has changed’ at Banglalink. This is exactly what Employee says about a “360-degree communication approach—TVCs for mass reach, digital platforms... for engagement, influencer collaborations for relatability, in-app communication through MyBL for direct user interaction.” At the salience stage of Keller's (2001) brand equity model (Section 3.2.3) this multi-channel reach strategy has been successful as awareness is the first and most fundamental stage, with 87.3% awareness. But, knowing is not enough to ensure that the meaning of the rebrand has been understood or accepted, as this is directly considered in Figure 5.

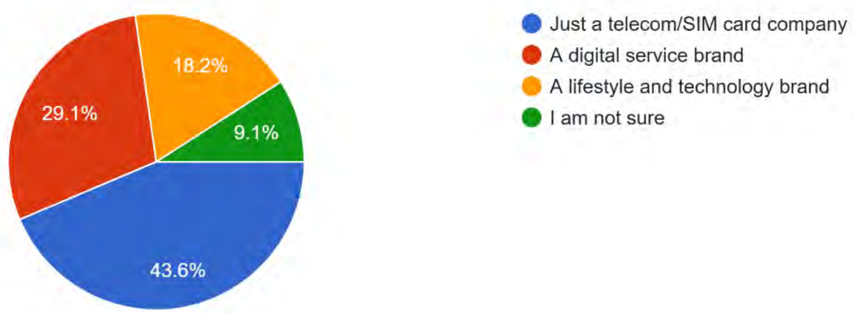


Figure 5: Current Perception of Banglalink

This is the most important finding in this chapter and it shows the enormous difference between awareness (Figure 4) and perception. However, even with 87.3 percent of respondents exposed to the repositioning message, the single largest perception category (43.6 percent) is still the legacy "telecom/SIM" brand, just edge out by a small margin by "digital service brand" (47.3 percent) and "lifestyle and technology brand" (9.1 percent).

This aligns exactly with Employee concern that “Banglalink is seen as just a price driven brand and if we can change the perception then we have to go to 'digital ecosystem enabler' which takes time to change.” and Employee 1's comment that “Many consumers are still thinking about telecom brands as connectivity, so shifting the mindset to 'digital ecosystem enabler' takes time.” This is exactly what you'd expect to see if you learned a new brand association to the service, while the old brand association of "telecom/SIM" remained relatively uninhibited: the new "digital service brand" association is clearly learned by a significant number of users (47.3% combined), but it has not yet supplanted the older "telecom/SIM" association for the largest single group. The employee explicitly stated that "the impact is incremental as deeply ingrained historical perceptions exist" and that "brand transformation is a long-term process, which must be reinforced in communication, service delivery and customer experience.

This has led to the finding that Banglalink's current IMC strategy may be more focused on the addition of new associations (new visual identity, new messaging, new product launches) rather than having a direct contrast communication that explicitly names and reframes the old associations. An additive strategy may lead to the possibility of consumers maintaining all the identities at the same time for an extended period of time. Banglalink could launch a campaign series that explicitly mentions "before and after" - such as content that references the old positioning, followed by "Now we're about your whole day. This would implement the "inhibition" portion of Tafesse (2008)'s framework which seem to be less developed than the "learning" portion.

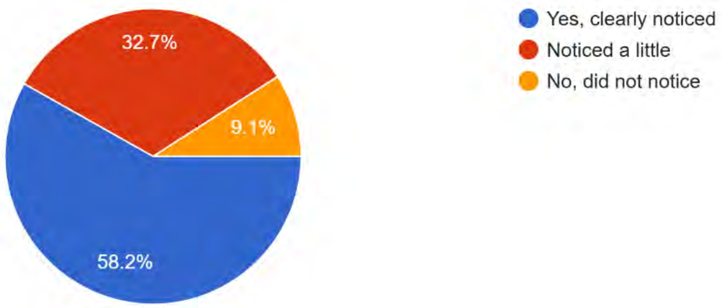


Figure 6: Awareness of the changes in the visual identity of Banglalink

This is the highest agreement score in the survey at 90.9%, which shows the visual rebranding of Banglalink has been very successful at the level of visibility. This is consistent with what Employee said that "Banglalink has a relatively high level of consistency in its brand identity because the visual elements and communication style are standardised. It uses an orange colour palette, modern typography and it communicates simply.

But when seen alongside Figure 5, there's a key difference — one that corresponds exactly to the employee's own description of the new look as "partial integration within the IMC framework": consumers have definitely noticed the new look (90.9%) but for 43.6% of them, they haven't yet been able to link the new look to a new meaning of what Banglalink essentially is. Banglalink's performance on the imagery dimension of brand meaning (visual identity) is good, but not equivalent on the judgments dimension (what the brand essentially stands for) in terms of Keller's (2001) terms (Section 3.2.3).

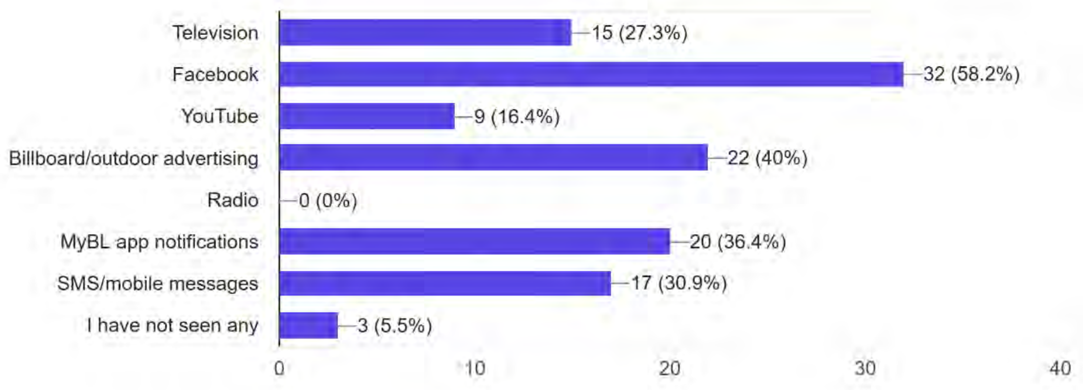


Figure 7: How Consumers are exposed to Banglalink's Communications

The dominance of Facebook (58.2%) is telling of the importance of digital platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram for engagement, as described by Employee 1, and the complete lack of radio (0%) reflects a digital first repositioning strategy. The relatively strong result for MyBL app notifications (36.4%) and SMS (30.9%) shows that Banglalink owned channels (channels the company controls directly, existing customers) are indeed working as effective communication vectors, as described by its employees as using "adtech and martech tools in digital, and innovative alternate media in BTL."

It is also why, even though television historically has been the channel that has the biggest footprint in telecom brand advertising in Bangladesh, and Facebook has a comparatively smaller footprint, older and longer tenured users (Figure 3) may be less active on Facebook than younger users, which could contribute to the disproportionately strong legacy perceptions among some segments (Figure 5). When Employee said that he would recommend "more localized and segmented communication... across different demographics," he was indirectly referring to this.

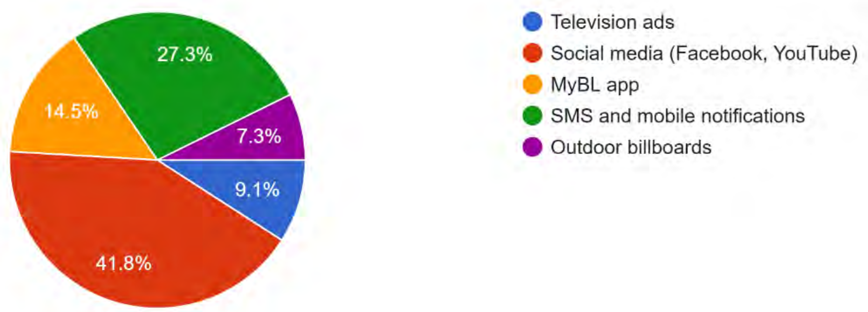


Figure 8: Most Likely Communication Channel

This dominance of perceived channel (41.8%) as the dominant channel, compared to the next in the hierarchy, digital-owned channel (MyBL app at 14.5%) indicates, in practice, that Banglalink's ‘360-degree’ approach is perceived as social-media-led. Not a bad thing in and of itself, but it puts a premium on the consistency of the message on this one major channel. As Employee said, "digital platforms communicate more functional aspects of services" while "traditional media often emphasizes emotional storytelling", the channel that consumers are most familiar with, Banglalink (social media) may communicate more functional aspects of its services than the emotional aspects, which may help explain why the "Everyman/CARE" emotional repositioning (Section 3.2.4) has not yet reached full conviction among consumers, as examined in the next section (Figure 12).consumers, as examined in the next section (Figure 12).

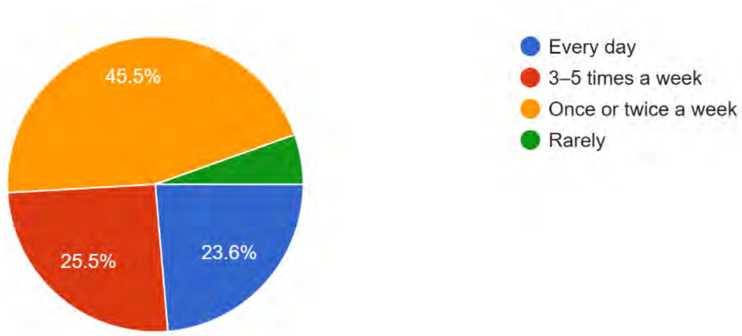


Figure 9: Shows the distribution of exposure to Banglalink ads

As seen in the Employee description of how they measure effectiveness of communication – "reach, engagement rates, app adoption" – and in Employee's reference to “top-of-mind awareness (TOMA)”, Banglalink has a strong presence in the minds of its audience with 94.5% of respondents reporting that they use the platform at least once a week. This high frequency aligns with the high awareness figures in Figure 4, which suggests that reach and frequency, the traditional measures of advertising effectiveness, are not the weaknesses of Banglalink's IMC plan. The vulnerability isn't whether the message is being seen or not, but whether it's being seen and understood clearly and consistently, as the following figures demonstrate.

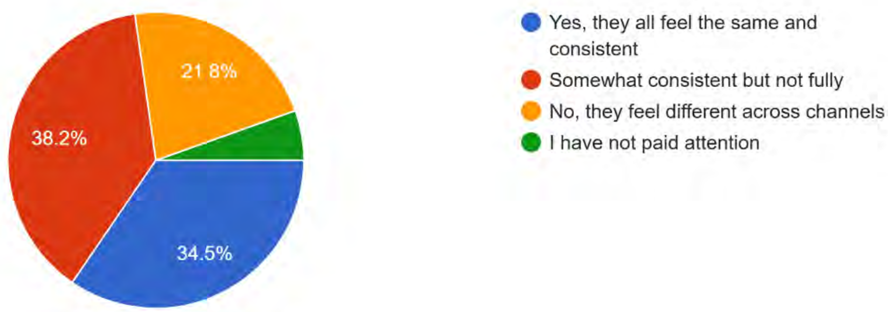


Figure 10: Consistency of Messages Across Communication Channels

The 72.7% consistency is quite a good headline figure, but the majority response (38.2%) is somewhat consistent, but not fully consistent, rather than fully consistent. This result directly correlates with the employee's internal assessment: "The visual and emotional tone is stable... there is variation in the depth and clarity of messages across channels – Employee's own words (quoted): "partial integration within the IMC framework.

It is interesting that an internal brand marketing employee came to a similar conclusion ("partial integration") that 38.2% of the external consumers did ("somewhat consistent but not fully") — indicating that Banglalink's own assessment of the extent of IMC integration is valid in this regard and corresponds with how the brand is experienced by external consumers. It's a pretty rare and valuable alignment because it's a situation where Banglalink don't have to identify the problem; they do have to implement something in which they have already diagnosed.

A remedy that was recommended strongly by the employees of explicitly communicating the interdependencies between various services and how they are part of a single platform, namely "ecosystem storytelling". On this, Banglalink may create a messaging matrix in the middle of all its messages, which means that every campaign will have a key idea, such as "Banglalink cares about your digital day," and this core idea will be mapped to all messaging channels, including the TV, where it will be presented emotionally, or the app, where it will be presented in a functional way, but the core idea will be the same in all cases — directly addressing the "partial integration" both Employee and 38.2% of consumers named.

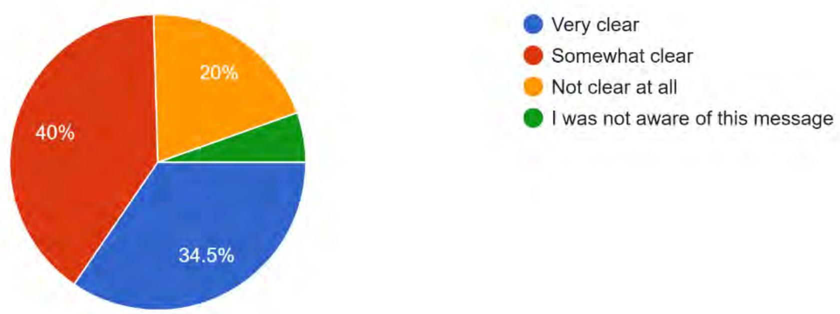


Figure 11: Clarity of Banglalink's Digital Brand Message

The overall majority, which is positive in this figure (74.5%), is similar to that found in Figure 10, but "somewhat clear" (40%) is the largest single group, whereas "very clear" (34.5%) is the largest single group in Figure 10. Again, it shows an understanding by Employee 1 that 'shifting that mindset to 'digital ecosystem enabler' takes time' and 'requires continuous education, simplified messaging'. The 20 percent who said the message was "not clear at all" is a significant minority who are clearly not being reached by the repositioning message and is similar to the percentage of respondents in Figure 13 who indicated that they didn't know about any digital service offered by Banglalink, implying a possible overlapping segment of consumers who are not being reached by the repositioning message at all.

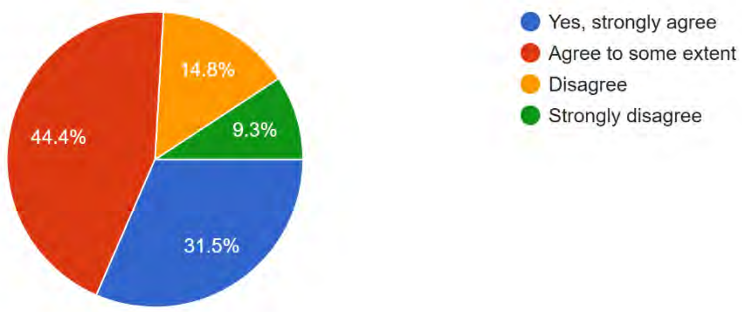


Figure 12: Perceived Success of Banglalink's Transformation into a Digital Brand

This is the most complete indicator of the emotional/conviction aspect of repositioning – moving beyond the awareness level (Figure 4) and visual recognition level (Figure 6) to whether consumers actually believe the repositioning. Overall, with the combined 75.9% agreement, it's an encouraging figure and a reflection of the Employee account that we've seen a shift in levels of engagement and talkability, and that customers are starting to notice and connect with a more human, more empathetic "face" of the brand.

The majority of them, however, agreed "to some extent" (44.4%) but a combined 24.1% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The move towards a 'caring' brand identity has been exactly as Employee 4 said, adding emotional resonance, but not enough to make a significant difference, because of 'historical perceptions'. It also aligns with Employee candid observation that "MyBL lacks an emotional touch at various touch points of various user journeys" as "an app is built more with the functional sense." This functional-over-emotional imbalance in a high frequency touchpoint could be directly driving the 44.4% plurality, as consumers see the evidence of change (new app features, new look), but don't yet feel the emotional repositioning Employeers describe as the key differentiator of the brand (the "CARE").

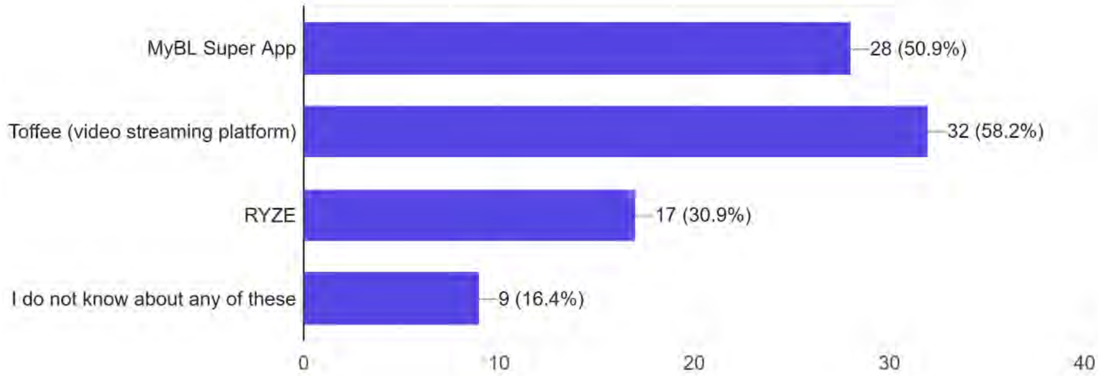


Figure 13: Awareness and Usage of Banglalink Digital Services

The numbers at first glance are promising: A majority of respondents are aware of at least one flagship digital product. Its recognition, however, is relatively low at 30.9% compared to Toffee's 58.2%, is noteworthy when considering how vital RYZE is as an AI-powered digital lifestyle brand. This is closely aligned with Employee's own internal account; "While there is a relatively high awareness of Banglalink's digital services, namely MyBL and Toffee, the level of awareness and uptake of these services among customers is limited, with many customers being aware but not fully understanding the integrated value they provide in terms of a wider digital ecosystem.

It is essentially a lack of communicating the concept of ecosystem integration: consumers can see each of the pieces (Toffee, MyBL, RYZE as named digital services) without necessarily understanding how these pieces fit and align into the unified "6C" digital lifestyle offered by Banglalink; an issue raised also by Employee, who said that "each digital service is focused on their own tonality of messaging, be it functional or emotion based. They have their own distinctive style of language."

The lower awareness rate among consumers (30.9%) indicates that as the first AI-driven digital lifestyle brand in Bangladesh and a key component of Banglalink's AI initiatives, RYZE has not yet been supported with adequate communications budgets. Banglalink can build a dedicated RYZE awareness campaign specifically making RYZE the "connective layer" between MyBL and Toffee; directly implement employee recommendations for "ecosystem storytelling" with the use of RYZE as the "storytelling" tool that connects other stories into a single, understandable, digital lifestyle story.

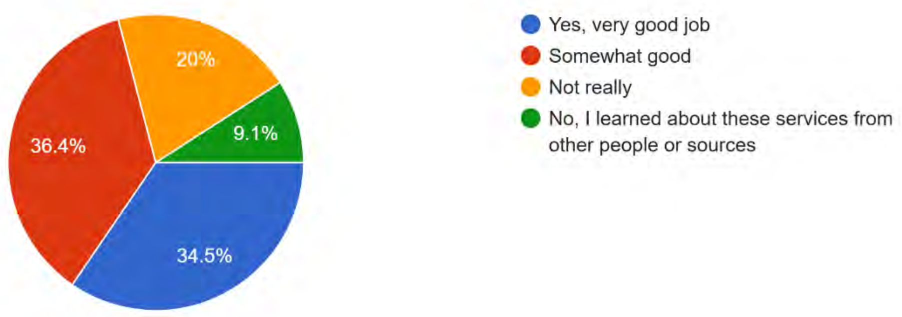


Figure 14: Effectiveness of Marketing Communications in Promoting Digital Services

Figure 13 further confirms the awareness-adoption gap mentioned in this figure. While the combined percentage of those who rated communication effectiveness positively at 70.9%, the reality is that awareness of RYZE remains at 30.9% and 16.4% are still unaware of any digital service, even if the majority gave it a positive rating, this has not been enough to achieve awareness for all. This aligns with Employee assessment: "Digital services are well communicated, but there is still a lot to be done in terms of understanding. Awareness is high, but habit formation is still missing. The next step is to simplify the value proposition further –

make it clear what these services are and how it fits into everyday life. A small but significant glimpse at the fact that word of mouth may be filling the gap where owned-channel communications have not succeeded, as evidenced by the 9.1% who learned about services from "other people or sources" but not from the marketing of Bangladesh's own service, is an opportunity that could be formalized rather than left to chance.

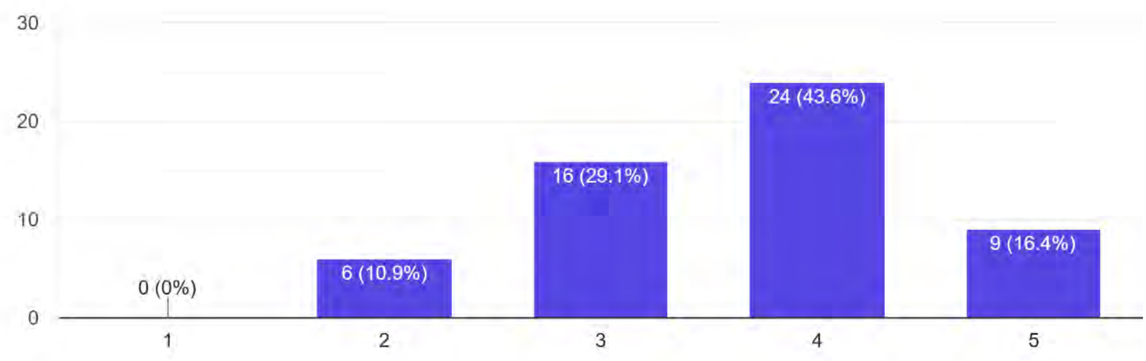


Figure 15: Overall Effectiveness of IMC in Supporting Brand Repositioning

This is a summary measure and the outcome is broadly positive: no one indicated that effectiveness was "very poor" while 60% indicated a rating of 4 or higher. The modal rating (43.6%) is in line with the rest of this chapter, which indicates that overall, Banglalink's IMC strategy is viewed as fairly successful but not completely. Nearly all of the figures are of this type — 87.3% knew about the change but not all of them knew it "clearly" (Figure 4), 90.9% noticed the change was visual, but only 58.2% noticed it clearly (Figure 6), 72.7% agreed the brand had changed, but only 34.5% agreed it was "fully" (Figure 10), and 75.9% agreed the brand had changed, but only 31.5% agreed it was "strongly" (Figure 12).

This trend is exactly what Employee framing forewarns: "brand transformation goes hand in hand with a process of constant reinforcement: in the communication, in the service delivery and in the customer experience. The figures presented in this chapter indicate that Banglalink is not in failure mode when it comes to re-positioning, but rather is about half-way through a process that is described by employees as well as consumers, and both in very similar terms.

3.5 Summary and Conclusion

This chapter aimed to assess the effectiveness of Banglalink in re-branding its image from a telecom operator to a digital service brand by triangulating the responses from the 55 users with the responses from the four Banglalink employees who were interviewed for this study covering two categories: talent management and brand marketing.

The overall theme that is evident is that the repositioning strategy has worked well at the reach and awareness level, but is still going on at the perception, consistency and conviction level. The body has recorded that almost all users surveyed (87.3%) have come across some form of signage that indicates the rebranding of Banglalink, with a huge majority (90.9%) noticing visual changes to the brand, a metric which has confirmed the 360 degree, social media-driven IMC strategy (Employees 1, 2, and 4) is reaching the target audience with high frequency (94.5% at least exposure on a weekly basis). However, the highest percentage of users continue to see Banglalink as "a telecom/SIM card company" (43.6%) and "somewhat" achieved is the highest score for message consistency (38.2%), and only 31.5% strongly agree that the brand has truly transformed.

Interestingly, internal employees, who were not made aware of the survey data, independently described almost the same gaps that the survey data shows: that the impact remains incremental due to deeply ingrained historical perceptions (Employee 4) correlates to the continued existence of 43.6% legacy "telecom/SIM" perception (Figure 4); and that there is a gap between awareness and meaningful engagement (Employees 1 and 4) correlates to the gap between 87.3% rebrand awareness (Figure 4) and 30.9% RYZE recognition (Figure 13). This alignment implies that Bangladesh's internal teams have a true, reflective awareness of where repositioning currently sits – and the challenge isn't to have the internal organisation be blind to the situation, but to have it accurately diagnose what to do about it.

In short, Banglalink's IMC has been a great exercise of sending a message, that "something has changed", which has been received almost universally; but only a little so far at changing meaning. The “telecom/SIM” identity, which has been constructed over 20 years, still exists as the primary mental association for a significant number of users, while the more recent digital ecosystem identity is well understood, but not yet fully internalized as the identity of the brand for most.

3.6 Recommendations and Implications

3.6.1 Managerial Implications

Recommendation 1: Do introduce direct "before and after" contrast messaging to indiscriminately shift the legacy identity. In terms of IMC strategy, Banglalink is doing well on the “learning” dimension of Tafesse's (2008) model since 87.3% of it has been aware of the brand's re-branding, and 43.6% of its users still view it as a telecom/SIM provider, but it seems weak on the “inhibition” dimension (Section 3.2.2) since only 12.7% of the users are satisfied with the service. If Banglalink just announces the new identity, it should also provide campaigns that explicitly mention and redefine the previous identity, such as "You used to know us as minutes and data, now you know us as digital service". This directly implements the inhibition mechanism that current messaging seems to be missing.

Recommendation 2: Create a centralised message governance framework to close the gap of “partial integration”. The same problem was identified by both Employee (Internally) and 38.2% of survey respondents (Externally): Messages are consistent across channels, but on the "somewhat" level (Figure 10). Banglalink need to make a messaging matrix with all the core brand ideas of each campaign and each channel so that there is a traceable meaning to the message, even when it takes different forms in different channels — a call to action from Employee for “ecosystem storytelling”.

Recommendation 3: Use RYZE as the storytelling 'connective tissue' in the narrative of ecosystems. Even as Banglalink's AI flagship, RYZE is lagging far behind Toffee (58.2%) and MyBL (50.9%) when it comes to awareness (Figure 13). As mentioned in Section 3.2.7, there is a gap that needs to be resolved in the development of an ecosystem. Bangladesh Link seems to be a good opportunity to bridge this gap by packaging RYZE as the AI layer that brings MyBL and Toffee into one experience, and in doing so, educate the consumers about the ecosystem as a whole.

Recommendation 4: Add emotion to the functional touchpoints in the MyBL app. MyBL is cited as an owned channel by employees more often than any other, and the fact that it is mentioned as lacking an emotional touch at point of touch (as shown in employee 3's observation, Figure 7) is also significant, since awareness of its functional nature (Figure 13) comes before conviction of its emotional aspects (Figure 12). The emotional repositioning (Section 3.2.4) could be extended to the most frequented app interaction — a personalized message, a milestone acknowledged — by introducing the small “CARE” additions mentioned earlier from the high-frequency app interaction.

Recommendation 5 — Make the word of mouth communication formal. Based on Figure 14, 9.1% of the respondents learned about digital services from "other people or sources" rather than from Banglalink's marketing, and considering that 75.9% of the respondents have generally positive impression of the brand's transformation (Figure 12), Banglalink may put in place structured referral or advocacy actions in MyBL to take the conversion of existing positive impression to an active communication channel.

3.6.2 Academic Implications

This chapter helps broaden the repositioning literature by showing that the empirical reality of developing-market telecoms context is that when the learning mechanism is stronger than the inhibition one, the former can coexist with the latter (when the latter is weak), despite the presence of high awareness of a new positioning (87.3%) and persistence of the old positioning (43.6%). It also extends Keller's brand equity model by showing that the stronger the performance on the imagery dimension (90.9% – visual recognition), the faster it will outperform the performance on the judgments dimension (29.1% – perceiving the brand as fully “digital”). This implies that the two dimensions might not necessarily develop in tandem throughout the repositioning process.

In addition, on a methodological level, this chapter contributes because it shows that the close relationship between the internally articulated diagnoses and the externally measured perceptions of consumers (38.2% "somewhat consistent") is not only about finding the gaps but also about corroborating the accuracy of the existing self-diagnosis by an organization, which is something that could be valuable for future studies of brand repositioning in organizations with a similar level of self-awareness. Lastly, the pattern across almost all of the survey items in this chapter – "majority agreement, but rarely strongest agreement" – indicates that the brand changes that have occurred over the last five years, some of which were clearly and widely communicated internally and externally, could take a longer period of time – perhaps many years – to reach the highest levels of internal brand conviction, as well as external recognition.

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