

**Report on**

**Impact of Digital B2B Marketing Strategies on Client Acquisition: A**

**Study of E-Zone HRM Limited**

**By**

**Ishmama Farhana**

**23304211**

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

BRAC Business School  
BRAC University  
May, 2026

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## **Declaration**

It is hereby declared that

1. The internship report submitted is my/our own original work while completing degree at BRAC University.
2. The report does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The report does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

### **Student's Full Name & Signature:**

**Ishmama Farhana**  
**23304211**

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**Student Full Name**  
Student ID

### **Supervisor's Full Name & Signature:**

**Md Tanvir Hasan**

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**Supervisor Full Name**  
Designation, Department  
Institution

## **Letter of Transmittal**

**Md Tanvir Hasan**

Lecturer

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

66 Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212

Subject: Submission of internship report on E-Zone HRM Limited

Dear Sir,

This is my pleasure to display my entry level position provide details regarding' Recruitment and Selection Procedure E-Zone HRM Limited, which I was appointed by your direction.

I have attempted my best to finish the report with the essential data and recommended proposition in a significant compact and comprehensive manner as possible.

I trust that the report will meet the desires.

Sincerely yours,

---

Ishmama Frahna

23304211

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2026

# Non-Disclosure Agreement



January 18, 2026

Ishmama Farhana  
G.P.Ga-186, Mohakhali School Road,  
Dhaka 1212, Dhaka.

## INTERNSHIP OFFER LETTER

Dear Ms. Ishmama Farhana,

This is in reference to your interview with us.

**Congratulations!** We are pleased to inform you that we have decided to offer you an internship opportunity with us. You will be paid a consolidated salary of **BDT 10,000/-** per month for this position. According to this position you will report directly to **Arafat Hossain, Executive, HR Operations**. Your job location is in **Planners Tower (8th floor), 13/A, Sonargaon Road, Dhaka-1000**.

Find the following confirmation of the specifics of your internship:

Start Date : January 18, 2026  
End Date : April 16, 2026

Your office hours will be in accordance with similar practices of **E-Zone HRM Limited**. However, depending on the exigencies of work, this does not absolve you from working more hours or on holidays.

During your internship, you may have access to trade secrets and confidential business information belonging to the Company. By accepting this offer of internship, you shall devote your entire working ability to E-Zone HRM Limited and exercise full discretion, including maintaining full confidentiality and fidelity towards the Company and/or its Clients, as relevant to you, towards any third party in all matters concerning the Company, its business and policies, its Management and employees.

You shall not, during the course of your internship with E-Zone HRM Limited or any time thereafter, use or disclose to any other company, firm or person, any of the business or affairs of the company, nor shall you without the consent of the competent authority of E-Zone HRM Limited, publish any book, booklet, brochure or any other publication, whether for remuneration or otherwise, relating to the business or affairs of the company or any of its affiliated companies, or relating to your work in the company. You shall also not disclose to any public papers, journals, pamphlets or leaflets, or cause to be disclosed at any time, information or documents, official or otherwise relating to the Company, or any of its affiliated companies except with prior approval.

By accepting this offer, you agree that throughout your internship period, you will observe all policies and practices governing the conduct of our business and employees, including our policies prohibiting discrimination and harassment.

I hope that your association with the Company will be successful and rewarding. Please indicate your acceptance of this offer by signing below and returning it to us. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours Truly,

  
AKM Nurul Huda Pintoo  
Director & CSO

I accept internship with E-Zone HRM Limited on the terms and conditions set out in this letter.

Name : Ishmama Farhana  
Signature :  
Date :

**E-Zone HRM Limited**, Planners Tower (8th Floor), 13/A Bir Uttam C.R. Dutta Road (Sonargaon Road), Dhaka – 1000, Bangladesh  
Phones: (+8802)-223367679, (+880-2)-223363798, Cell: 01714013100, e-mail: [contact@e-zonebd.com](mailto:contact@e-zonebd.com), web: [www.e-zonebd.com](http://www.e-zonebd.com)



## **Executive Summary**

This report presents an overview of the internship at E-Zone HRM Limited, along with an evaluation of the firm and a research-based project on digital B2B marketing strategies' impact on client acquisition.

The three-month internship at E-Zone was conducted from January to April. A hands-on experience was gained across departments. The internship role was required working with the Business Development, talent acquisition also with HR operations departments. The main responsibilities includes assisting in client acquisition activities and recruitment, HR documentation and checking payroll accuracy. The experience of working across departments offered an overall view of the firm and helped me to understand how an HR consultancy firm works in a B2B sector. Besides, the experience allowed developing a practical skill set in communication, data management, and professional work practices.

The overview of the firm shows E-Zone HRM Limited as an established HR consultancy firm in Bangladesh. The firm has a strong corporate reputation within this industry. It has six departments for different functional areas, like Finance , Accounts & Audit, Information Technology, Administration, Talent Acquisition, Business Development and HR Operations. The firm engages in relationship-orientated B2B marketing strategies. However, the firm uses traditional manual-based processes focused on Excel-based programmes and shows limited digital integration in organisational activities. Although E-Zone has a good client relationship and stability in its operations, there is also a gap in its strategic practices. This may impact the firm's competitiveness in the long run in a digitalising industry.

The research study focuses on the digital B2B marketing strategies of the firm, specifically in the client acquisition process. The findings show that there is a high reliance on conventional approaches in client acquisition like phone calls, referrals, and personal networking. Besides, the use of digital tools and platforms is also limited and unstructured. Manual data handling, unstructured digital marketing strategy, and the lack of resources and capabilities are the most significant challenges that are creating barriers. These restrict the adoption of digital practices in client acquisition and affect the efficiency of lead tracking and consistent client interaction.

The study also shows areas to improve the firm's client acquisition process despite the challenges. Integrating a CRM system, maintaining strategic use of digital platforms and enhancing the digital capabilities of employees can improve efficiency in client acquisition.

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# Chapter 1: Overview of Internship

## 1.1 Student Information

Name: Ishmama Farhana

ID: 23304211

Program: Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)

Major/Specialization: Marketing

## 1.2 Internship information

**Internship Period:** 18 January – 16 April

**Company Name:** E-Zone HRM Limited

**Department/Division:** Worked across multiple departments

**Company Address:** Planners Tower (8th floor), 13/A, Sonargaon Road, Dhaka-1000.

### 1.2.1 Supervisor:

Arafat Hossain, Executive, HR Operations.

### 1.2.2 Job Duties and Responsibilities:

I got the opportunity to work across multiple departments throughout my internship. My responsibilities expanded with time as I became more familiar with the departments. The major four departments that I worked with are Business Development, Talent Acquisition, Payroll Process and HR Operations. Describing my core responsibilities below:

**Assistance in Business development:** Initially I started my internship duties with the business development department. As E-Zone is a B2B service provider organization, I was provided with a list of companies. I had to source necessary information for client acquisition, send proposals via mail.

communicate with them and forward them to my supervisor if they show interest. I was also responsible for modifying the company profile to meet specific client needs.

**Supporting Talent Acquisition:** I also worked closely with the Talent Acquisition team throughout my internship. I contributed to sourcing candidates from different platforms, including [Ez jobs](#) and sending the CVs of candidates to the client companies. After receiving the shortlist from them, I used to call the final candidates for interviews. It allowed me to observe how professional communication works in a business environment.

**Organizing HR-related documentation:** I also assisted in documentation management for outsourced employees. After finishing the recruitment process, I was responsible for verifying employee documents, sending out the PID (Personal Information Documentation) form to the employees, reviewing the forms, scanning those & input in excel to provide our clients.

**Assisting in Payroll Management:** One of my critical duties was to assist the Payroll team. Where I used to carefully review the salary sheets and cross-check the attendance and leave records. I also often needed to communicate with the local admins of the companies to collect information needed for payroll processing. I was instructed to be extremely careful doing these payroll-related tasks, as even a small mistake can cost the organisation's reputation.

## 1.3 Internship Outcomes:

### 1.3.1 Student's contribution to the company

Throughout my internship journey, I was associated with almost all the core departments of E-Zone HRM Limited. I tried my best to contribute meaningfully in all functional areas as I worked with Talent Acquisition, Business Development and HR Operations.

In the Business Development department, I contributed to the client acquisition process. I helped source the necessary information of the target companies and approached proposals to the potential clients. My contribution helped the team to deliver proposals on time and reduced the workload of senior executives to focus more on the strategic discussions.

In the Talent Acquisition department, I contributed to the recruitment process. I assisted in employee sourcing, sorting and coordinating for the client companies. My contribution helped speed up the recruitment cycle.

I also contributed to the HR Operations through managing the documentation of the newly outsourced employees. My contribution ensured proper documentation and reduced the workload of the team.

Moreover, I played a significant role in improving the accuracy of the payroll-related data. I carefully contributed in reviewing records, identifying errors and ensuring data accuracy to maintain client satisfaction.

Overall, my contribution was not limited to a single department but rather revolved around all core departments of the firm.

### **1.3.2 Benefits to the student**

The internship gave me a practical insight into the B2B market, which operates quite differently from the B2C market. Working with different departments allowed me to learn more about how the firm operates overall and how the service provider industry might work in general. I closely observed B2B service delivery and understood the process of corporate client acquisition and client management. Learned about how to communicate with clients professionally. Working with different teams and departments also improved my communication skills and analytical skills. I also developed proficiency in MS Excel with my daily use of organising and managing data. I learned about corporate etiquette, met new people and made contacts in the corporate world. Not being limited to only one functional area was one of the most valuable aspects I would say. Working in different departments helped me understand how the departments interconnect while delivering the services. Academic concepts and theories of business and marketing came to life with practical experience of this internship. I realised how client satisfaction is the core for a business and how important it is to maintain long-term relationships with clients. Overall, the internship benefitted me with developing technical, analytical, and communicational skills as well as professional confidence.

### **1.3.3 Problems/Difficulties**

My internship experience came along with several challenges as well. One of my major challenges was heavy Excel-based manual work and limited use of automated systems. Most of my work was done using Excel, especially payroll and documentation. Therefore, the tasks used take a longer time and require strict rechecking for accuracy.

As E-Zone HRM Limited deals with different clients and has to handle large volumes of data, managing those was another major challenge. I had to work with a lot of employee data, and keep everything manually organised and accurate was a tough job for me. As even a small mistake could affect the company's overall reputation in the market.

Working in different departments as well as doing new tasks was exciting for me and also challenging at the same time. Different departments run differently, and as an intern, it was a bit challenging for me to fully understand different needs and follow them correctly.

However, these challenges improved my learning. It helped me become more adaptable and efficient and also helped me learn how to handle pressure in a work environment.

### **1.3.4 Recommendations**

I would also like to make a few suggestions in a respectful manner, relying on my experience overall at E-Zone HRM Limited.

To begin with, a role definition of interns would be beneficial. The effective performance and efficiency can be enhanced by having clear understanding of the responsibilities. In addition, training sessions that are department-wise may also enhance the learning process. It can be relevant to assign the tasks connected with the academic background of the interns so that they could learn what concerns them. Give them an opportunity to put theory into practice.

Secondly, E-Zone will be able to pay more attention to the automation of the manual operations and to invest in digital technology, like CRM systems. It will not just benefit the interns but will also enhance the



general client management and minimize the possibility of mistakes made manually. Finally, it may be worthwhile to implement a performance review system among interns as part of the programme.

All these additions can ensure that the internship programme is more useful both to the organisation and to the future interns.

## **Chapter 2: Organization Part**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides an overview of E-Zone HRM Limited, based on the experience of the internship and the collected data from the company portfolio and documents. It shows the company structure, systems, practices and overall internal and external environment.

E-Zone HRM Limited helps organisations by outsourcing employees and manage their workforce. Firms like E-Zone manage recruitment, payroll, training, and other human resource-related needs. My internship at E-Zone allow me to closely observe the different departments of an HR firm and helped me understand how these functions work together to deliver services to its clients.

This chapter will critically evaluate the firm's management practices, marketing practices, financial performance, operations management and information systems. As well as an industrial overview and competitive analysis.

#### **2.1.1 Objectives of Chapter 2**

1. Critically analysing the organisational structure and practices of E-Zone HRM Limited. (Company's management practices, financial performance, operational systems, and marketing strategies)
2. Examining the industry in evaluation with the internal environment of E-Zone.

### **2.1.2 Scope of the Study**

The study focuses on the key functional areas of E-Zone HRM Limited as well as provides an insight of the industry. The scope of this study is mostly firm-specific. The analysis begins with the internal aspects of the firm and then moves towards the external aspects. However, most financial and strategic data could not be accessed due to restrictions. The study shows how a HR outsourcing firm operates in Bangladesh.

### **2.1.3 Methodology**

A qualitative approach is mainly used for this chapter as the data is driven directly from experience, observation and interpretation. To ensure a complete understanding of the organization, primary and secondary both data sources have been used.

Primary data was gathered through direct involvement in different functional areas of the firm. This allowed me to acquire valuable insights from different departments and help me understand how they function.

Secondary data was collected from the company website, raw portfolio documents and online articles. These helped me to understand more about the overall firm's structure & services in industry context. Combining both of the primary and secondary sources to ensure the practicality of the chapter.

### **2.1.4 Significance of the Study**

This study provides in-depth information on an HR firm and how it operates in Bangladesh. The demand for HR services is constantly growing, and firms like E-Zone play a valuable role in supporting human resource-related problems.

The study shows an analysis of the firm and suggests areas of improvement, such as the adoption of integrated HRIS. The study not only provides valuable insights for the organization but also for other firms in the industry.

### **2.1.5 Limitations of the Study**

One of the major limitations of the study is that the observation has been done for a short duration of the internship. Therefore, it could not capture the long-term performance, strategic decisions and practices of the firm. Besides, as an intern there were limitations in higher level management insights and confidentiality in financial performance. However, the study covers other major aspects and provides a realistic understanding of how the firm operates.

## **2.2 Overview of the Company**



E-Zone HRM Limited is a well reputed human resource management and consultancy firm in Bangladesh. It offers a wide range of Human resource related services to both local and international clients. The firm was established in 2004. Ever since the establishment, the firm has grown steadily and has built a strong reputation in the industry. It serves across different industries such as telecommunications, multinational corporations, national and international NGOs, financial institutions, government organizations etc.



**Picture 1: Solutions Provided by E-Zone**

The firm's core objective is to provide professional HR solutions to its clients to help them manage their human resources efficiently. These services include business consulting solutions, recruitment solutions, learning solutions, payroll management, staff outsourcing and training solutions, research solutions, and other HR-related business solutions.



**Picture 2: Mission of E-Zone**

E-Zone's core mission focuses on being dedicated in all aspects of HR management, providing prompt and efficient services to its clients and creating long-term relationships.

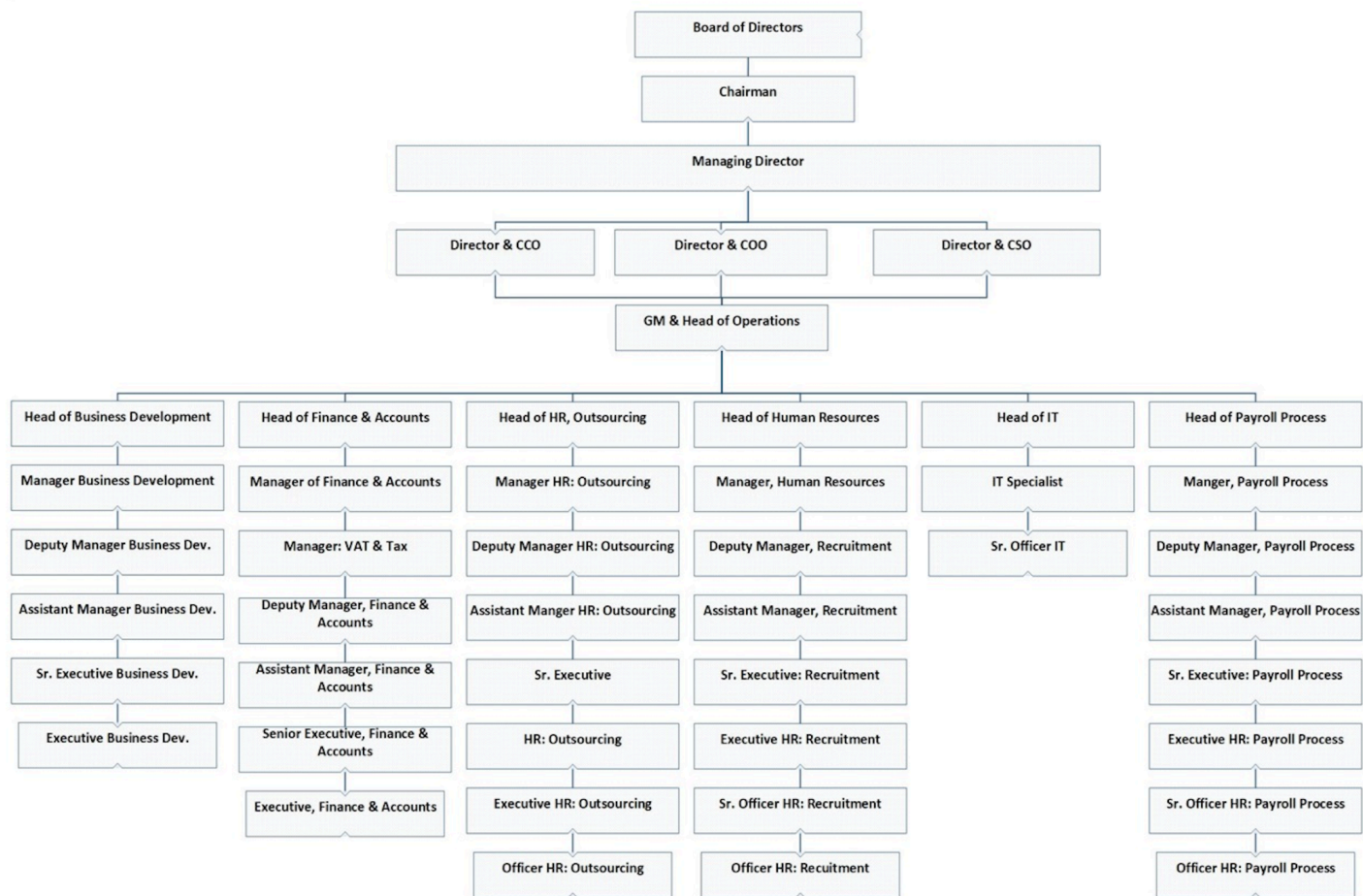


**Picture 3: Vision of E-Zone**

E-Zone's vision focuses on achieving clients' goals and objectives and maintaining an advanced level of competencies and ethical standards. These shape the overall strategy and operational activities of the firm.

The firm has six distinct departments constantly working towards its goal. Each of the departments are responsible for their specialised functions. The departments are Talent Acquisition, HR Operations, Payroll Process, Business Development, IT & Administration and Finance & Accounts.

## 2.3 Management Practices



**Picture 4: Organogram of E-Zone**

### 2.3.1 Leadership Style

E-Zone HRM Limited shows a hybrid leadership style. It reflects a combination of participative and autocratic leadership. Looking at Picture:4 the organogram of the firm, it shows the decision-making authority flows from the board of directors to the head of each department.

The managers and executives from each department are encouraged to come up with new ideas and provide feedback. These inclusive leadership practices make the work environment more collaborative.

However, the large-scale projects, its meetings and its decision-making are centralised to the heads. The managing director and senior managers can take quick decisions without anyone's inputs. This again reflects to an autocratic leadership approach.

Both of the leadership styles together contribute in achieving the firms goals and objectives. Participative leadership style contributes in improving employee collaboration and motivation. Where, on the other hand, the autocratic leadership style ensures prompt decision-making.

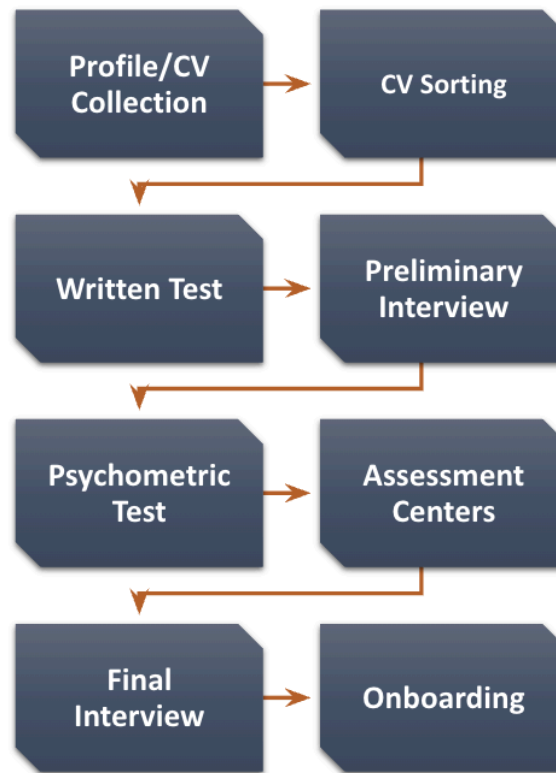
### 2.3.2 Human Resource Planning

E-Zone HRM Limited has a fixed number of permanent employees for each department. The firm plans its fixed human resources in a strategic manner.

| Department                          | Number of staffs |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Senior Management Team              | 5 staff          |
| HR Outsourcing & Payroll Department | 18 staff         |
| Recruitment                         | 8 staff          |
| Business Development                | 5 staff          |
| Accounts & Finance                  | 6 staff          |
| MIS (IT & Administration)           | 10 staff         |

E-Zone follows a strategic approach for its workforce replenishment. The firm frequently recruits interns, trains them with practical work and recruits the best performers for their entry-level roles. Which eventually helps the firm to recruit skilled employees internally with reduced recruitment costs. However, the rigid structure may work against it in times of increased workload.

### 2.3.3 Recruitment and Selection Process



**Picture 5: Recruitment Process of E-Zone**

E-Zone follows a structured process for their recruitments. The recruitment process starts with collection of the CVs, screening and sorting the CVs, doing a written test, interviewing the potential candidates in stages and finally selecting the best candidates. Following the structured process makes the recruitment more effective and efficient.



### **2.3.4 Compensation System**

E-Zone has a systematic compensation plan for their employees. The Payroll Process Department manages the compensation system. The employee salary calculation is done based on attendance, leaves, and overtime. Only the executives and their assistants from the Payroll team are responsible for disbursing the monthly payrolls.

### **2.3.5 Training and Development**

E-Zone HRM Limited acknowledges the necessity of employee training and development programmes. They frequently conduct training programmes throughout the year. The HR & Outsourcing Department organises and manages the training sessions. The training programmes contribute to improving technical skills and enhance their overall productivity and efficiency.

### **2.3.6 Performance Appraisal System**

The performance appraisal of E-Zone mainly depends on the evaluation of the supervisors. They evaluate the employee performance based on task efficiency and completion. There is no fixed framework for performance appraisal. Therefore, the performance appraisal assessments have a higher probability of being inconsistent across departments.

## 2.4 Marketing Practices

### 2.4.1 Marketing Strategy

E-Zone HRM Limited only deals with corporate clients, providing HR solutions on a business-to-business level. The firm therefore follows a B2B marketing strategy. They mainly focus on client satisfaction, building long-term relationships with the clients and emphasising their improved service quality. In service industries like this, good networking and being a credible and reliable service provider can be the key success factors.



**Picture 6: Marketing activities of the firm**

### 2.4.2 Target Customers, Targeting and Positioning Strategy

E-Zone HRM Limited targets companies from different industries that are in need of HR-related services. They maintain a customer segmentation list of different companies from different industries. The customer acquisition process is targeted and executed from that. Their target customer segments include financial institutions, national & international NGOs, the telecommunication industry, the pharmaceutical industry, engineering institutions, shipping & logistics, the garment & textile industry, FMCG, the Bangladesh government and other entities.

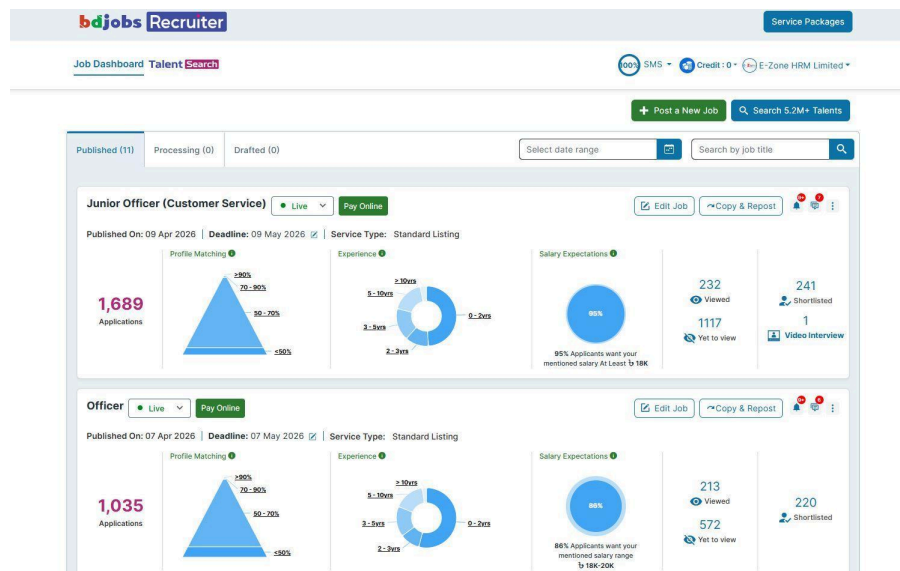
| Name of the company                                                                                    | Work Area                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Banks</b>                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| AB Bank PLC                                                                                            | Recruitment Process of MTO & Probationary JCO, Recruitment, Develop HR Policy and Procedures Manual, Employee Handbook based on HR Policies, Employee Code of Conduct, Contractual Staff Management, Salary Survey |
| Bankers Selection Committee-Bangladesh Bank                                                            | Exam Conduction for various positions                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Dutch Bangla Bank PLC                                                                                  | Recruitment, Contractual Staff Management                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Bank Asia PLC                                                                                          | Recruitment, Total Recruitment Process for Management Trainee positions                                                                                                                                            |
| BRAC Bank PLC                                                                                          | Total Recruitment Process for MTO, Contractual Staff Management, Recruitment                                                                                                                                       |
| National Credit and Commerce Bank Ltd.                                                                 | Total Recruitment Process for Three Positions: Junior Officer (General), Assistant Officer (General), Assistant Officer (Cash), Outsourced Staff Management                                                        |
| Habib Bank PLC                                                                                         | Recruitment                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Bank Al -Falah                                                                                         | Recruitment                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Commercial Bank of Ceylon                                                                              | Recruitment                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Dhaka Bank PLC                                                                                         | Compensation and Benefits Survey, Review of HR Policy Manual & Employee Handbook, Recruitment                                                                                                                      |
| ICB Islamic Bank                                                                                       | Training, Recruitment                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Jamuna Bank PLC                                                                                        | Recruitment, Promotion Test-2016, 2017                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Meghna Bank PLC                                                                                        | Compensation and Benefits Benchmarking, Business Policy                                                                                                                                                            |
| National Bank                                                                                          | Recruitment                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| One Bank                                                                                               | Recruitment                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Premier Bank                                                                                           | Recruitment- TJO for Cash & General officers (Written Exam) (for 3 consecutive years) & Various Positions, Training                                                                                                |
| Standard Chartered Bank                                                                                | Recruitment                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Prime Bank PLC                                                                                         | Recruitment                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Trust Bank PLC                                                                                         | Total Recruitment Process of Trainee Assistant Cash Officer positions                                                                                                                                              |
| MasterCard                                                                                             | Recruitment                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Standard Bank PLC                                                                                      | Recruitment, Review of HR Policy Manual & Employee Handbook                                                                                                                                                        |
| United Commercial Bank PLC                                                                             | Recruitment, Contractual Staff Management, Exam Conduction, Mystery Shopping                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Bangladesh Government</b>                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Bangladesh Election Commission – Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) Project | Recruitment, deployment & payroll/benefits, field expense claim management                                                                                                                                         |
| Export Competitiveness for Jobs (EC4J) by Ministry of Commerce                                         | Feasibility Survey, Training Facilitation, Training Module Development, Cooperation and Coordination with different Industry Associations                                                                          |
| Aspire to Innovate (a2i)                                                                               | Recruitment, Deployment & Payroll Management, Leave, Expenses and Benefits Administration                                                                                                                          |
| Digital Interactive Knack for Knowledgeable Human Assets (DIKKHA), ICT Division                        | Outsourced Staff Management Services                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>UN, National &amp; International NGOs</b>                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| PLAN International Bangladesh                                                                          | Mentoring and Coaching, Gap Analysis, Outplacement Support                                                                                                                                                         |
| Max Foundation                                                                                         | Compensation & Benefits Survey                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| IPAS BD                                                                                                | Recruit Process Management, Verification                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Surjer Hashi Network (SHN)                                                                             | Recruitment, Payroll & Benefit Administration                                                                                                                                                                      |
| UNICEF                                                                                                 | Recruitment, Payroll & Benefit Administration, Outsourcing Solutions                                                                                                                                               |
| Practical Action, Bangladesh                                                                           | Job Profiling/ Analysis, Organization Restructuring, Conducting performance Appraisal of Driver & Support Staff                                                                                                    |
| UNDP                                                                                                   | Recruitment, long- listing, Survey for Service Contract Salary Scale 2011 & 2012, Human Resources Management Services for Activating Village Courts Projects.                                                      |
| UNFPA                                                                                                  | Recruitment, long- listing, Assessment Center                                                                                                                                                                      |
| UNOPS                                                                                                  | Outsourcing Staff Management                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| WHO                                                                                                    | Outsourcing Staff Management                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| WFP                                                                                                    | Outsourcing Staff Management                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| suPPPort Limited                                                                                       | Recruitment Deployment & Payroll Management, Leave, Expenses, and Benefits Administration.                                                                                                                         |
| GIZ                                                                                                    | Recruitment, long- listing                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| World Vision                                                                                           | Recruitment (Head Hunting)                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| CBM International                                                                                      | Recruitment                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| British Council                                                                                        | Recruitment and Conduction of various Examination such as O and A levels, ACCA, NCC, IELTS, ESOL etc. Temporary staff management services, Police Verification                                                     |

**Picture 7: Target customer segments of E-Zone**

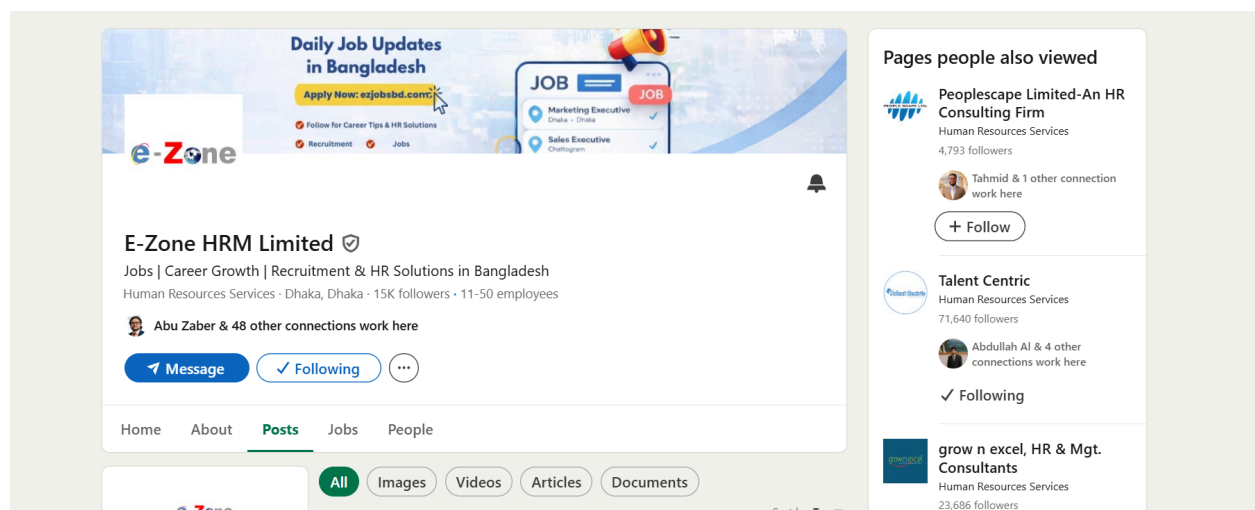
The firm offers customized solutions for each of the target segments, based on customer needs. E-Zone positions itself as a one-stop solution for HR-related services. They mean to differentiate by offering customised HR solutions for specific client needs. As well as maintaining a strong relationship with the clients for the long term.

## 2.4.3 Marketing Channels

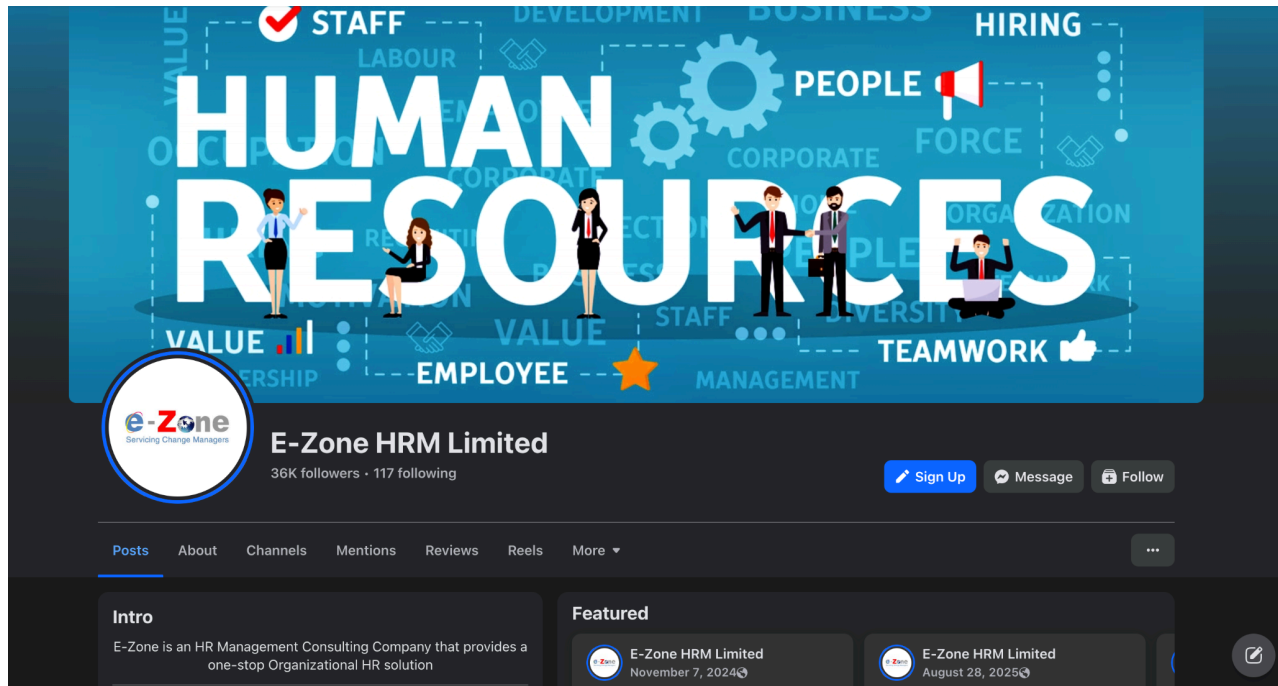
E-Zone HRM Limited uses both direct and digital channels for marketing. The firm directly communicates with their clients through proposals and tenders. Often these communications initiate over formal phone calls or emails. Their professional networking and referrals from other clients also play a vital role. Besides, online presence in job portals like BDJobs, owned media such as website, LinkedIn and Facebook are also crucial mediums to reach clients, as well as to communicate with them and to outsource services.



Picture 8: Presence in BDJobs



Picture 9: Presence in LinkedIn



**Picture 10: Presence in Facebook**

The Business Development Department is responsible for maintaining the marketing related activities. The firm relies more on direct engagement through direct channels and personal selling, which works effectively in business-to-business markets.

#### **2.4.4 Service Development and Competitive Practices**

E-Zone focuses on developing more customised HR solutions to meet their specific client needs. They focus on their existing services like recruitment, payroll processing, etc. rather than introducing new offerings. However, from a critical perspective, the firm can emphasise technology-driven automation to compete even better with its rivals.

### **2.4.5 Branding Activities**

E-Zone HRM Limited has a lower focus on strategic brand building. The firm relies on its good corporate reputation for branding. The firm considers its image to be dependent on client satisfaction and the success rate of projects. The firm is active on digital media platforms, but brand communication efforts are not consistent across platforms.

### **2.4.6 Advertising and Promotion Strategies**

E-Zone HRM Limited does practise traditional advertising activities. It is more reliant on professional networking, client referrals and direct marketing.

E-Zone also has a presence on media platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn but not on a promotional level. The use of digital tools is also limited. The firm's lesser focus on promotional activities may reduce brand visibility in a competitive digital business environment.

### **2.4.7 Critical Marketing Issues and Gaps**

Being a B2B service provider firm, E-Zone HRM Limited is naturally more focused on delivering customer needs. However, modifying the marketing efforts can improve the firm's overall performance and brand image. The firm has a very limited marketing strategy; improving that can increase the brand visibility. Besides, heavy manual processes and lack of an integrated system are keeping the firm from using its full potential. Fixing the issues can help the firm gain long-term competitiveness.

## **2.5 Financial Performance and Accounting Practices**

A comprehensive financial and accounting analysis could not be done due to limited access to financial documents and annual reports. Therefore, a brief analysis has been done based on available information, organisational observation and logical inference.

### **2.5.1 Financial Performance Overview**

The revenue stream of E-Zone HRM Limited flows from supplying manpower and managing HR operations for client organizations. The firm happens to have a stable financial position from having yearly renewed contracts with repeat clients and large-scale projects. These lasting relationships with clients indicate a steady flow of revenue, stable financial performance and reduced financial uncertainties. Besides, the volume of outsourced employees and number of projects can also directly influence the financial performance of the firm.

### **2.5.2 Accounting System and Procedures**

E-Zone HRM Limited appears to follow standard accounting principles and the accrual basis of accounting, where revenues and expenses are recorded at the time when incurred.

Payroll and other financial records are managed systematically with the help of Excel-based systems. This supports the firm's basic need of recordings and reports. However, thus, the risk of manual errors and lack of real-time tracking remain.

## **2.6 Operations Management and Information System Practices**

### **2.6.1 Operational Activities**

E-Zone HRM Limited runs its operations to deliver HR-related services. Each of the operations, including employee recruitment, outsourcing, data management, training, payroll processing, etc., is handled by specialised departments. A structured workflow is maintained to conduct the operations efficiently to satisfy the clients.

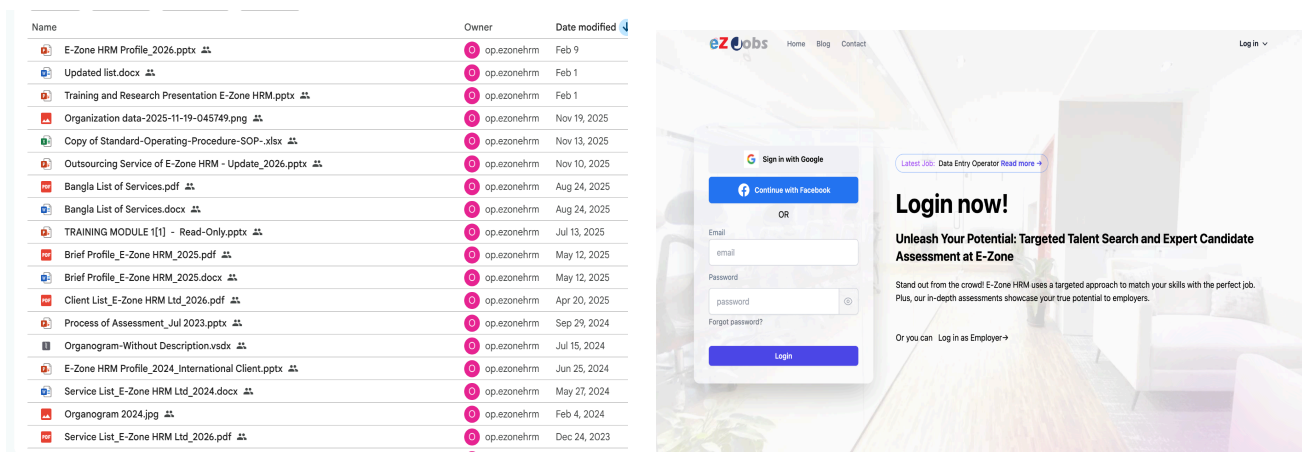
### **2.6.2 Use of Information Systems**

The firm uses manual processes for collecting, processing, storing and sharing data. They mainly use Microsoft Excel-based systems for their operations like payroll processing, employee data management and more. Their information system is functional but lacks integration and efficiency to manage their large volumes of data.

## 2.6.3 Database and Software Usage

E-Zone does not use any integrated HRIS or CRM software system at the present time for their internal management. They rely on Excel-based data management, Google Drive for sharing internal data files and emails for internal communication. Externally they only manage their website and online job portals.

Job-Portal Link: <https://ezjobsbd.com/>



**Picture 11: Internal documents sharing through google drive**

No automated system is used for quality management, scheduling, resource allocation or operations management. Everything is maintained manually through constant supervision and consideration of client feedback and corrective actions.

## 2.7 Industry and Competitive Analysis

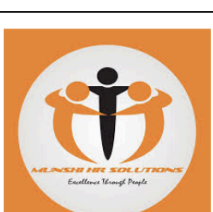
### 2.7.1 Industry Overview

In the past few years, the human resource outsourcing and consultancy industry has significantly grown in Bangladesh. Firms like E-Zone HRM Limited help organisations with their human resource management and allow them to focus more on their core business activities.

Outsourcing human resource-related services has become a necessity for large corporations for their increasing workforce and the need for efficiency. Nowadays, due to digital transformation, organizations also expect technology-driven HR solutions. Firms that can adopt technological automation and fulfil the needs will gain a competitive advantage in the industry.



### 2.7.2 Key Competitors of E-Zone HRM Limited

|                                  |                                                                                    |                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Enroute International Ltd</b> |   | A leading HR outsourcing firm with strong automation systems and large corporate clients |
| <b>PeopleScape Ltd</b>           |   | Known for structured recruitment and corporate HR consulting                             |
| <b>Talent Centric Ltd</b>        |   | Focuses on executive recruitment and talent analytics                                    |
| <b>Munshi HR Solutions Ltd</b>   |  | Strong in large-scale field workforce deployment                                         |

These are the well established HR service providers of Bangladesh that are directly competing with EZone

### 2.7.3 Porter's Five Forces Analysis

| Force                                | Intensity              | Key Drivers & Implications                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Industry Rivalry</b>              | <b>High</b>            | Intense competition with many firms offering similar services. Differentiation is difficult, forcing companies to compete on price, quality, and technology. |
| <b>Bargaining Power of Buyers</b>    | <b>High</b>            | Major clients (Banks, MNCs) have high leverage. They can switch providers easily and demand competitive pricing alongside high-quality automation.           |
| <b>Bargaining Power of Suppliers</b> | <b>Moderate</b>        | Suppliers are the skilled HR professionals and labor pools. While talent is available, specialized expertise remains a valuable and limited resource.        |
| <b>Threat of New Entrants</b>        | <b>Moderate</b>        | Financial barriers to entry are low, but the need for trust, reputation, and established networks acts as a significant hurdle for new players.              |
| <b>Threat of Substitutes</b>         | <b>Low to Moderate</b> | The primary substitute is "In-house HR." While firms can DIY, the cost-efficiency of outsourcing usually outweighs the benefits of internal management.      |

## 2.7.4 SWOT Analysis

| Category      | Key Factors                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Strengths     | <p><b>Strong Client Base:</b> Established trust with banks, government agencies, and NGOs.</p> <p><b>Operational Expertise:</b> Proven track record in managing large-scale HR operations.</p> <p><b>Service Variety:</b> Offering a comprehensive suite of HR solutions.</p> <p><b>Human Capital:</b> A highly skilled and experienced HR workforce.</p>               |
| Weaknesses    | <p><b>Infrastructure Gaps:</b> Absence of an integrated HRIS (Human Resources Information System).</p> <p><b>Process Bottlenecks:</b> High dependency on manual workflows.</p> <p><b>Visibility:</b> Limited digital marketing and brand presence.</p> <p><b>Data Management:</b> Inefficiencies in how data is stored, retrieved, and analyzed.</p>                    |
| Opportunities | <p><b>Market Growth:</b> Rising demand for HR outsourcing within the Bangladesh market.</p> <p><b>Tech Adoption:</b> Leveraging new digital HR technologies to close internal gaps.</p> <p><b>Global Reach:</b> Potential for expansion into international markets.</p> <p><b>Analytics:</b> Meeting the industry trend for data-driven HR decision-making.</p>         |
| Threats       | <p><b>Competition:</b> Pressure from technologically advanced local and global firms.</p> <p><b>Industry Evolution:</b> Rapid digital transformation making old models obsolete.</p> <p><b>Client Expectations:</b> Increasing demand for high-speed, automated service delivery.</p> <p><b>Market Pricing:</b> Intense price competition affecting profit margins.</p> |

### **2.7.5 Competitive Strategy Analysis**

E-Zone HRM Limited competes in the market by maintaining a cost efficiency and service reliability strategy. The firm offers competitive pricing along with consistent service and strengthening long term client relationships. The strategies contributed to sustaining the firm's position in this competitive industry. However, the industry is shifting towards digitalised differentiation strategies. Automation tools and advanced data management systems are being adopted by the competitors. E-Zone's limited use of these may put the firm in potential disadvantage.

For further assessment, categorising E-Zone's strengths into common, imitable and distinctive strengths. Providing the essential HR services to clients like recruitment, payroll, staff outsourcing are part of their common strength. Their imitable strengths are structured recruitment and training solutions which can be imitated by competitors. Their strong client relationships, reputation, and experience of large-scale projects are part of their distinctive strengths.

The overall competitive advantage of EZone HRM Limited is relationship-based. The integration of digital strategies can convert this advantage into a sustainable competitive advantages.

## **2.8 Summary and Conclusions**

E-Zone HRM Limited is a well established HR consultancy firm in Bangladesh. The firm has a wide range of services to offer to both the local and international companies. The firm has a wide range of clients. The firm has established itself as a trusted service provider to its clients and the industry. E-Zone has a well structured organisational system. The internal departments and their duties are also evenly distributed. The firm however has difficulties incorporating digital technologies in its operation. The intensive manual operations causes operational inefficiency. The HR consultancy industry is becoming technology-driven and competitive day by day. In order to sustain in the long run, the firm has to fulfill the industry requirement and do technological adjustment. This will ensure the long term growth and competitiveness of the firm.

## **2.9 Recommendations**

E-Zone should utilise digital tools and systems for its organisational activities. This will surely contribute in its overall performance efficiency and competitiveness. The use of digital technologies will also reduce the over-reliance on manual processes and will make the data management easier. Besides, gradual digitalisation of its processes, like client communication and reporting systems, is recommended to make the processes more systematised and effective.

Adopting a structured digital marketing strategy is also recommended as it would help the firm to increase its digital visibility and support client acquisition. Moreover, E-Zone can adopt a more value-driven approach and can create service differentiation supported by technology. This will address the threat of increasing competition and industry evolution. E-Zone can overcome its weakness and improve its overall strength by implementing the above measures.

# Chapter 3: Project Part

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the core research project that has been conducted during the internship period. The first two chapters were focusing on the overall experience of the internship and the host organisation. While this chapter studies the specific issue that has been identified during the internship, which is the lack of implementing digital B2B marketing strategies in client acquisition.

During the internship period at E-Zone HRM Limited, the business development department provided direct exposure to the client acquisition process. The firm uses traditional methods and mediums to reach and communicate with potential clients, for instance, telecommunication and personal networking, which are commonly practised in B2B environments. However, in a competitive digitalised business environment, only focusing on traditional practices might not be sufficient.

Digitalisation has significantly transformed the way of client acquisition. The digital platforms in business-to-business markets have enabled firms to identify, engage and convert clients in a more structured manner. The client acquisition process has become more data-driven and relationship-orientated in the B2B environment (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Despite the advancement, many SMEs struggle to adopt the digital marketing practices due to various limitations.

This chapter intends to study the digital B2B marketing strategies in client acquisition processes at E-Zone HRM Limited. The study observes the firm's marketing practices and identifies the gaps and analyses them in light of relevant academic literature.

### 3.1.1 Background and Problem Statement

Digital marketing has transformed the way of client acquisition and customer relationship management over the recent years. Especially in service-orientated B2B markets, the whole process has become more structured and data-driven. Personalised communication, tracking performance, customer interactions, etc. have become more effective and efficient due to digital marketing (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

B2B markets are deeply relationship-orientated. Where buying decisions are influenced by trust, credibility, and long-term relationships (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Digital platforms and CRM tools facilitate the business interactions and evolve the relationship between firms (Holliman & Rowley, 2014).

Despite the digital advancement, adoption of digital marketing practices is still uneven especially across small- to medium-sized enterprises. These SMEs often struggle with limited resources and lack of technological expertise, which hamper their ability to implement digitalised practices (OECD, 2021).

Developing countries like Bangladesh encounter the challenges even more due to infrastructural limitations and a slower digital transformation rate (World Bank, 2020). Therefore, the SMEs and service-orientated firms commonly rely on traditional practices for client acquisition and client management. However, these approaches are not efficient for lead tracking, maintaining consistent communication or monitoring the overall performance.

E-Zone HRM Limited also reflects the reliance on traditional practices. The lead generation process of the firm is fully manual. Additionally, their data management is fully Excel-based, and the client follow-up processes are also quite unstructured. These practices limit the efficiency of the firm's operations and increase data management complexity with increasing clients. Besides, real-time lead monitoring and client follow-up also become inconsistent.

Studies have shown that in B2B environments, the conversion rate and lead management efficiency significantly improve by integrating digital marketing strategies like CRM systems, data analytics and automation tools (Järvinen & Taiminen, 2016). However, in terms of small service oriented firms, particularly in Bangladesh, there is limited existing literature to provide proper insights of implementing digital marketing strategies.

Therefore, this chapter intends to address this literature gap. Combine the practical and theoretical knowledge to evaluate E-Zone HRM Limited's marketing practices and suggest how digital strategies can improve the client acquisition process of the firm.

### **3.1.2 Objectives of the Study**

#### **General Objective**

The main objective of the study is to see how digital B2B marketing strategies impact the client acquisition process of E-Zone HRM Limited. Identifying the gaps and scope for improvement.

#### **Specific Objectives**

1. To examine the firm's current digital marketing tools & practices for client acquisition.
2. To identify key challenges of digital client acquisition practices.
3. To recommend strategies to improve the efficiency of client acquisition processes.

## **Research Questions**

1. What digital B2B marketing channels and tools are currently used by E-Zone HRM Limited for client acquisition?
2. What challenges does E-Zone face in adopting digital client acquisition?
3. What improvements can enhance the efficiency of the client acquisition process?

### **3.1.3 Significance of the Study**

The study provides practical and theoretical insights of the digital B2B marketing context by holding significance from academic, organisational and industry perspectives.

From an academic perspective, the study provides an empirical insight into a small HR firm's digital marketing practices. The existing studies on digital B2B context are focused on developed markets. The study contributes to the existing literature and helps to understand how SMEs adopt digital marketing in developing countries like Bangladesh.

The study is also significant for E-Zone HRM Limited. The study evaluates current organisational practices and provides practical recommendations to improve overall client acquisition and conversion.

From an industry perspective, the study also provides valuable insights for other HR consultancy firms and SMEs facing similar challenges. Contributes to understanding the way of adopting digital marketing strategies to improve client acquisition and overall organisational performance.

### **3.1.4 Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study is limited to the understanding of digital B2B practices used in client acquisition in a Bangladeshi HR firm like E-Zone HRM Limited.

The study begins with evaluating the firm's client acquisition practices. Exploring current client approaching strategies and channels. Then examining the internal challenges and limitations for adopting digital marketing strategies. The analysis of the study is done with the help of collected data from internship experience, observation, interviews and secondary sources. Due to the organisation's confidentiality and inaccessibility of data, financial analysis could not be conducted.



The study is limited to the SME industry of Bangladesh, particularly focusing on HR consultancy firms. Therefore, the findings may not represent large corporations or developed economies. Overall, the study is focused on understanding the adoption of digital B2B marketing in an HR firm's context to identify practical areas for improving client acquisition.

## **3.2 Literature Review**

Due to the rapid technological advancements, the business-to-business environment has gone through remarkable changes. Strategies for client acquisition and relationship management have become more structured, data-driven and scalable. This has changed the way firms engage with clients, redefining the objectives from sales-orientated to value-driven, long-term relationship-orientated (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016).

### **3.2.1 B2B Marketing and Relationship Orientation**

The various stakeholders with longer decision-making cycles and higher levels of risk make the B2B marketing more complex than the B2C marketing. Therefore, building strong relationships becomes a critical marketing component (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

The Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing stresses that to build and maintain long-term relationships in business, trust and commitment are essential (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). In B2B environments, to ensure client retention and long-term contracts, the importance of trust is even more striking. However, in modern business-to-business environments, traditional relationship-building approaches may not be enough.

Digital marketing promotes continuous interaction and transparency among firms and eventually strengthens relationship marketing (Holliman & Rowley, 2014). However, without a structured strategy and consistency, digital tools alone can not guarantee strong business relationships. Therefore, the proper adoption and strategic utilisation of digital tools can secure the effectiveness of digital relationship marketing.

### **3.2.2 Digital Transformation in Marketing**

A firm's integration of digital technologies into creating and delivering value to customers can be referred to as 'digital transformation' (Verhoef et al., 2021). The transformation facilitates firms in tracking and analysing customer data, performance and interactions in a structured manner.

Digital marketing reduces manual reliance and increases organisational efficiency (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). The complex B2B client relationship management requires such digitalised solutions in improving efficiency.

However, digital transformation is consistently adopted across industries. Especially the SMEs, struggle to adopt these advancements due to financial resource limitation, lack of technological expertise, digital strategy and more (OECD, 2021). Therefore, digital transformation requires the alignment of a firm's strategic approach with their resources and capabilities to effectively gain from digital marketing practices.

### **3.2.3 Digital B2B Marketing Channels**

In the B2B marketing context, platforms such as LinkedIn are effective for creating the opportunity for firms to directly connect with industry professionals. Such digital platforms facilitate targeted communication and increase professional visibility (Järvinen & Taiminen, 2016). Besides, email marketing can help with generating leads and potential clients (Ellis-Chadwick & Doherty, 2012).

SEO and strategic content marketing can increase digital visibility and reliability. Firms can build strong positioning through sharing strategic contents on digital platforms (Holliman & Rowley, 2014). Moreover, the consistency of the contents can ensure the true effectiveness.

### **3.2.4 Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Systems**

CRM systems are crucial for strengthening digital marketing strategy. Relationship with clients can be improved by incorporating CRM systems. Digital Customer Relation Management tools help to track and manage client data efficiently by centralizing the data. Research also shows that CRM systems can improve lead management and increase communication efficiency (Buttle & Maklan, 2019). Moreover, it also helps to automate organisational practices. The coordinated overall practices ensures customer satisfaction.

However, the alignment of CRM systems with organisational capabilities is essential. It requires technological investment and the readiness of a firm. Integration in the process without proper processes may cause the systems to fail to deliver expected benefits.

### **3.2.5 Marketing Automation and Lead Management**

The application of digital tools to automate marketing activities is part of marketing automations. This can make the management of large volumes of leads more efficient in a B2B context.

Marketing automation can significantly reduce manual workload, improve communication consistency and lead engagement (Järvinen & Taiminen, 2016). This consistent engagement increases the conversion rates of the leads. However, due to resource constraints SMEs struggle to incorporate marketing automation. Consequently, the reliance on manual processes continues, often leading to errors.

### **3.2.6 Challenges in Digital Marketing Adoption**

The adoption of digital marketing is limited among SMEs due to financial constraints, lack of technological and strategic knowledge and organizational incompetencies (OECD, 2021).

These challenges are even more intensified in developing countries due to infrastructural limitations and a lower rate of technological integration (World Bank, 2020). Therefore, it can be assumed that the adoption of digital marketing is not only dependent on technological access but also requires a firm's strategic planning and capability development.

### **3.2.7 Research Gap**

The existing literature supports the importance of digital B2B marketing strategies for client acquisition. However, there is not much empirical research found concentrating on small consultancy firms, nor is there much focused on developing countries like Bangladesh.

Most of the existing studies are done, concentrating on large corporations or developed markets. There remains a literature gap in understanding the process of digital marketing adoptions in SMEs or developing markets. Therefore, this study bridges the gap by analyzing the digital marketing practices of E-Zone HRM Limited and evaluating the strategies to improve client acquisition efficiency.

### **3.2.8 HR Consultancy Sector in Bangladesh**

The HR consultancy sector in Bangladesh has grown significantly over the past years. The firms support local and international businesses with their human resource management services and improve the overall organisational performance and efficiency (Institute of Personnel Management Bangladesh, 2023)

However, the sector is still not mature in comparison with developed countries. Most of the firms offering these HR solutions are small in size (HR Solutions Bangladesh, n.d.; Henshen Bangladesh Ltd., n.d.; HR Bangladesh Limited, 2024). They mostly rely on traditional methods for client acquisition, such as personal connection or referrals. These methods are great for building trust in B2B context (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). However, only relying on traditional methods can make it hard to scale operations in a competitive B2B world.

The overall SME environment of Bangladesh makes no exception for the HR consultancy sector. The HR firms struggle to adopt digital tools due to lack of resources and technological skills (OECD, 2021). Regardless, the demand for data-driven services is now increasing. The firms are being encouraged to integrate digital marketing strategies to improve their client acquisition and retention.

### **3.3 Methodology**

The study follows a qualitative research approach. It explores the impact of digital marketing strategies in acquiring clients in a B2B context. The qualitative research approach is appropriate here as it allows an in-depth understanding of the digital marketing strategies and practices of E-Zone HRM Limited.

#### **3.3.1 Research Design**

The study follows an exploratory research design. It explores the digital B2B marketing practices of SMEs in a developing economy like Bangladesh.

An exploratory research approach is appropriate for identifying patterns and underlying issues where existing literature is limited. As E-Zone does not follow formal marketing documentation or a structured marketing strategy, exploring the employee responsibilities can help understand the actual marketing practices. The exploratory research will allow a deeper dive into the organisation and thoroughly investigate the research problem.

#### **3.3.2 Data Collection Methods**

##### **3.3.2.1 Primary Data Collection**

The primary data of the research have been collected through semi-structured interviews of the employees involved with marketing activities and client acquisition processes. The interviews were structured with predefined questions and simultaneously had flexibility to explore responses deeper with follow-up questions. Each of the interviews lasted around 20–30 minutes. The interview questions had three sections. Starting the interview with employee responsibilities, then questions related to client acquisition and lastly the related challenges they face. For instance, “What tools do you use for storing client data?” or “What challenges do you face while managing client data?”

A purposive sampling technique was used to select the interview respondents. A total of 3 employees from the business development department were interviewed; two of them were junior executives and 1

was a senior executive. Besides, another senior executive from HR operations was interviewed. All of the respondents were directly related to the firm's marketing activities and client acquisition process.

### **Limitation**

The sample size of the study is only 4 due to the limited time of the internship. However, the sampling technique ensured that participants were directly relevant to the study and provided with meaningful data.

#### **3.3.2.2 Secondary Data Collection**

To support the primary findings, secondary data were collected from E-Zone's company portfolio, internal documents and official website. Additionally, relevant academic journal findings were also integrated to provide a theoretical base for the study and overall improved the quality of the research.

Moreover, the involvement in business development and HR operations also allowed direct observation of the marketing practices. Overall, a data triangulation technique was applied, which improved the quality and reliability of the study.

#### **3.3.3 Data Analysis Technique**

The thematic analysis technique was applied to analyse the collected data. It helped to identify meaningful themes from the qualitative data. The analysis began with reading the data several times, highlighting and coding the important statements to figure out underlying patterns, grouping similar codes to form themes and lastly, interpreting the themes based on research objectives. This analysis approach allowed us to identify major issues and possible areas of improvement.

This section presents the findings from the interviews and the analysis in light of the existing literature. The findings are thematically analysed. The study addresses the core research questions and thematically answers them.



**Picture 12: Word cloud of the research**

'Picture: 12' presents a word cloud of the major keywords that are found throughout the research. The most often mentioned keywords are standing out in the picture. These highlight the firm's current scenario, challenges and opportunities.

The raw data from the interviews are summarized into themes and the themes answers the core research questions of the study.

(RQ1) What digital tools are currently being used,

(RQ2) What challenges are affecting the digital adoption and

(RQ3) What opportunities exist for improvement.

## Mapping Data to Themes

The following table shows how the raw interview data was converted into the research themes :

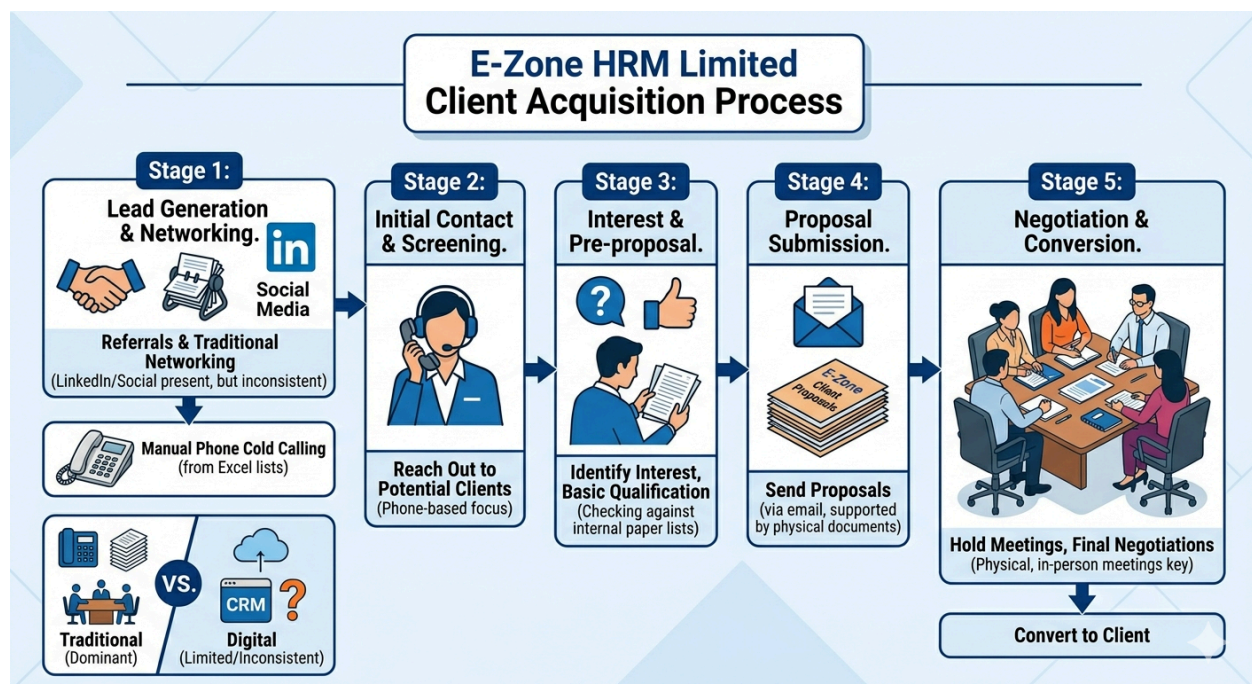
| Summary of findings                                                      | Initial Codes                            | Final Theme                                            | RQ  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Client acquisition done through calls, referrals and personal networking | Calls, Referrals, Personal Selling       | <b>Dominance of Traditional Client Acquisition</b>     | RQ1 |
| Limited and unstructured use of email, LinkedIn and other platform       | Inconsistent Use, Informal Communication | <b>Limited Adoption of Digital Platforms</b>           | RQ1 |
| Client data managed through Excel with missed follow-ups                 | Manual Tracking, No Reminders            | <b>Reliance on Manual Data Management</b>              | RQ2 |
| No formal digital marketing plan; activities are reactive                | Lack of Strategy, Unstructured Approach  | <b>Lack of Structured Digital Marketing Strategy</b>   | RQ2 |
| Limited ability to invest in digital tools                               | Resource Constraints, Capability Gap     | <b>Organisational Capability Constraints</b>           | RQ2 |
| Existing digital platforms not used strategically                        | Untapped Potential, Low Engagement       | <b>Strategic Utilisation of Digital Platforms</b>      | RQ3 |
| Absence of centralized system for managing clients                       | Data Fragmentation, Inefficiency         | <b>Potential for CRM Integration</b>                   | RQ3 |
| Employees lack skills to use digital tools effectively                   | Skill Gap, Low Readiness                 | <b>Strengthening Organisational Digital Capability</b> | RQ3 |



### 3.4.1 Current Digital Marketing Practices in Client Acquisition (RQ1)

#### 3.4.1.1 Theme 1: Dominance of Traditional Client Acquisition Method

The findings suggest that the client acquisition process of E-Zone HRM Limited mainly relies on traditional techniques. As one respondent shared, “*Most of our client communication happens through calls.*” A direct marketing channel is used for reaching the clients. The initial approach of new clients is done over phone calls. Sometimes through personal networking and referrals. A personal selling approach is used by the executives to manage the leads for conversion.

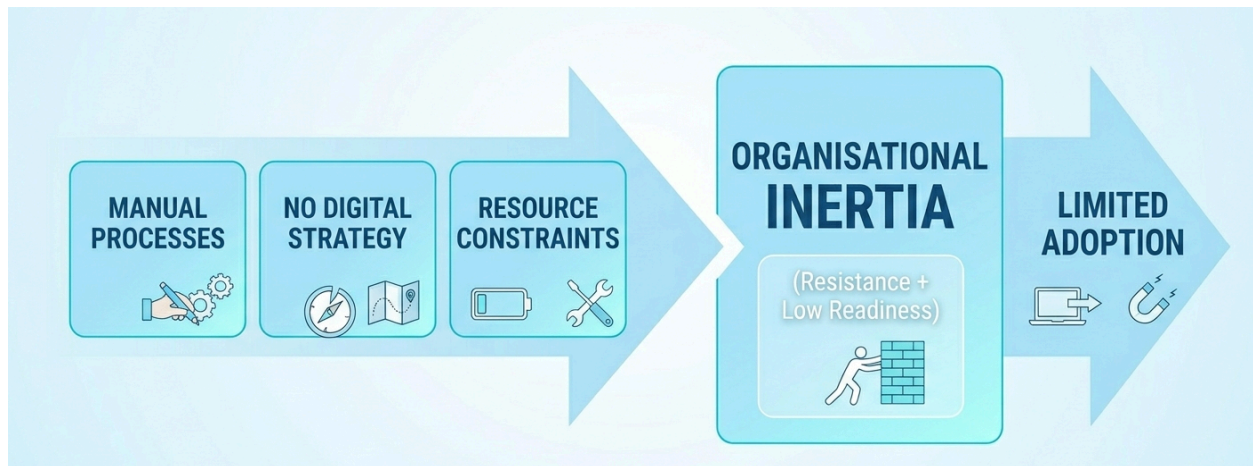


Picture 13: Client Acquisition Process of the firm

#### 3.4.1.2 Theme 2: Limited Adoption of Digital Platforms

The use of digital platforms and tools is very limited at E-Zone. For instance, the presence on LinkedIn and other social platforms is observed to be inconsistent and unstructured. Besides, email communication is also quite informal and lacks consistency. As a respondent shared, “*We frequently use email for communication, but there is no fixed system for it.*” These indicate the presence of digital platforms and tools in the firm but lack strategic integration into client acquisition processes. This lack of strategic integration may result in missing leads and engagements (Järvinen & Taiminen, 2016).

### 3.4.2 Challenges in Adopting Digital Client Acquisition Practices (RQ2)



Picture 14: Challenges in adopting digital client acquisition

#### 3.4.2.1 Theme 3: Resource Constraints

The findings shows that the financial constraints of the firm is one of the major challenges to adopt digital practices. Integrating digital practices requires financial investments in digital tools and technologies. As a senior executive shared, *“Our competitors are investing in digital technologies. We unfortunately have financial constraints.”* This shows that the firm is aware of the industrial changes and digitalisation. However, it is facing difficulties to allocate financial resources for digital transformation and marketing practices. This also aligns with the common challenge among SMEs, where digital adoption is slackened due to resources and capability constraints (OECD, 2021; Verhoef et al., 2021).

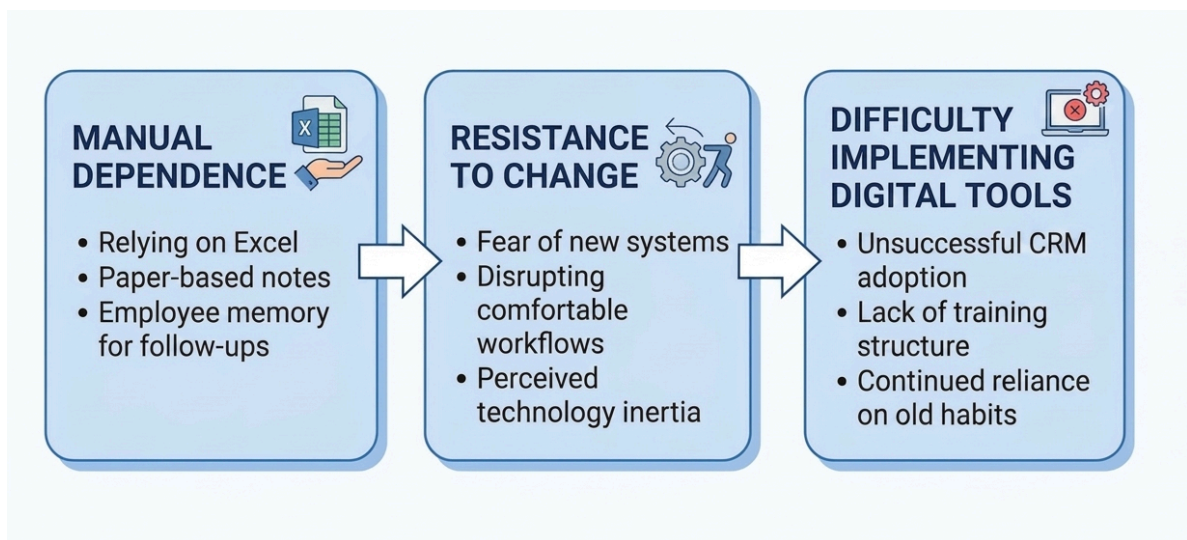
#### 3.4.2.2 Theme 4: Lack of Structured Digital Marketing Strategy

The firm lacks a structured digital marketing strategy according to the findings. As most of the respondents noted, *“We don’t have a specific digital marketing plan.”* Adoption of digital tools becomes disconnected without clear planning (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Unstructured digital marketing strategy drives firms towards reactive client acquisition activities. B2B digital marketing strategies require

structured planning and execution (Järvinen & Taiminen, 2016). Therefore, a structured digital marketing strategy is crucial to overcome the major challenge of adopting digital client acquisition.

### 3.4.2.3 Theme 5: Reliance on Manual Data Management

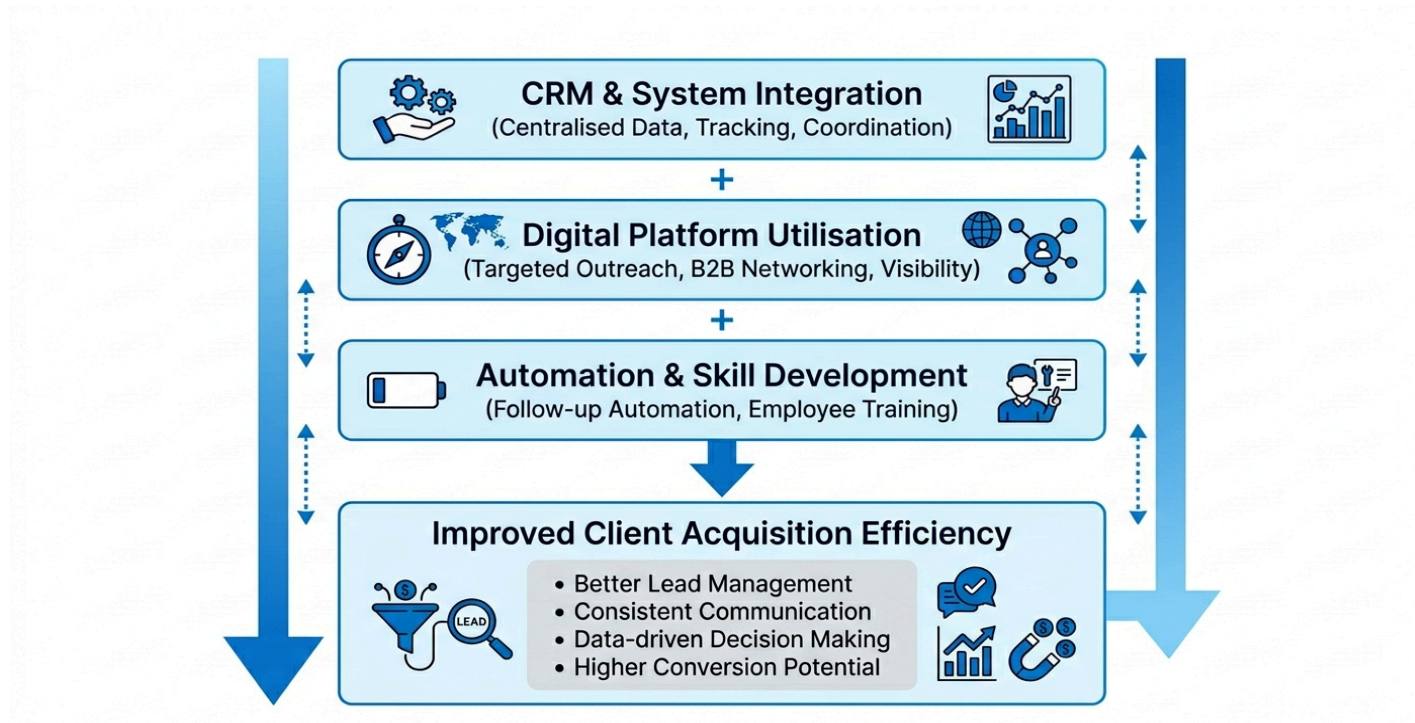
The heavy reliance on manual systems is another significant challenge of adapting digital practices. The firm relies on Excel-based data management for its clients. The client follow-ups are also handled informally. As one respondent stated, *"We use Excel for everything."* Another respondent added that *"We manually note down the client updates, and sometimes we miss follow-ups for not having system reminders."* There is no CRM software or any other automation tool used in the firm's client data management or marketing operations.



**Picture 14: How manual dependency challenges the adoption of digital acquisition**

The continued manual dependency reduces the urgency to adopt digital practices and creates barriers for adoption, leading firms to organisational inertia (Verhoef et al., 2021). Additionally, this manual dependency can also make the employees less inclined to adopt new technologies (Vial, 2019). Eventually restricting the firm's ability to adopt digital data-driven marketing practices for client acquisition.

### 3.4.3 Opportunities to Enhance Client Acquisition Efficiency (RQ3)



Picture 15: Opportunities to improve client efficiency

#### 3.4.3.2 Theme 6: Strategic Utilisation of Digital Platforms

The findings show an opportunity to utilise digital platforms for client acquisition. The firm has a presence on digital platforms, like LinkedIn and Facebook. As a respondent demonstrated, “*We are active on digital platforms, but we do not strategically use them for client acquisition.*” The utilisation of the platforms is quite inconsistent and unstructured. In a digitalising B2B environment, the strategic use of platforms like LinkedIn can improve the professional visibility of a firm. Moreover, LinkedIn is considered an effective channel for lead generation and relationship building (Järvinen & Taiminen, 2016). Such platforms can expand the firm’s reach beyond personal networks and take the lead generation process to the next level.



### 3.4.3.1 Theme 7: CRM Integration

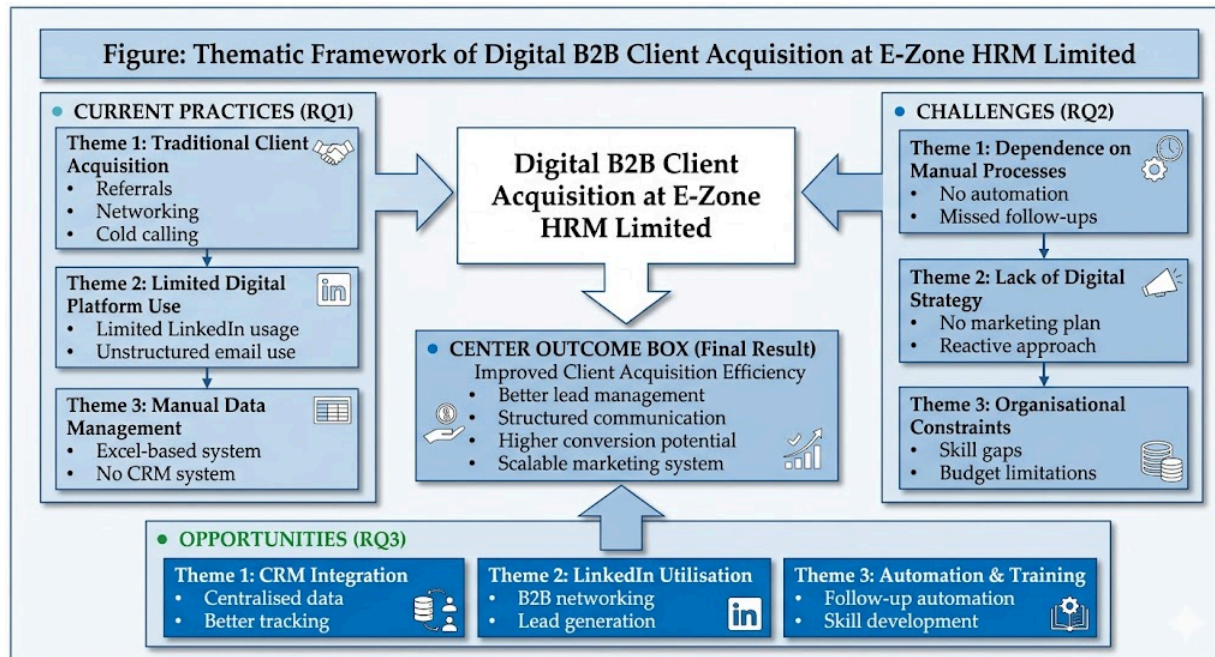
E-Zone currently relies on Excel-based manual tracking of the leads. This limits the efficiency and coordination of the client acquisition process. As a respondent shared, “Client and *lead information is stored individually. In the absence of an employee, it becomes difficult to understand the full history of a client.*” Incorporating a CRM system can address these issues. It can centralise all client data. As a result, the data management, real-time tracking and the follow-up processes will become easier and more structured. Additionally, it can reduce the manual dependency and improve communication consistency with clients. Research suggests that CRM systems enable data-driven decision-making and enhance lead management and conversion rate (Buttle & Maklan, 2019).



Picture 16: CRM integration in the firm

### 3.4.3.3 Theme 8: Strengthening Digital Skills & Capability

The findings also indicate an opportunity to strengthen the digital capability of the firm. The employees currently have limited exposure to digital tools due to the conventional nature of organisational practices. As a respondent shared, “*I believe digital tools can improve our work efficiency, but we require adequate training for it.*” This lack of digital exposure of the employees also restricts the effective adoption of digital client acquisition practices. Targeted training programmes will allow them to gain practical knowledge and enhance the ability to use data-driven approaches. This will enhance the organisational readiness and allow a smoother digital adoption. Research shows that digital transformation depends on not only the technology but also on the employee capability and organisational readiness (Verhoef et al., 2021). Therefore, strengthening the digital skills of the employees is essential for a sustainable improvement in client acquisition.



**Image 16: Synthesis of Findings**

### 3.5 Summary and Conclusion

The report analysed the impact of digital B2B marketing strategies in the client acquisition process at E-Zone HRM Limited. The qualitative research approach enabled the analysis of the existing practices of the firm. Revealed the challenges the firm faces to adopt digital practices in client acquisition and the areas of improvement.

The findings have shown that E-Zone HRM Limited has been largely using the conventional methods of acquiring clients, including telecommunication, personal networking, and referrals. Although these methods are consistent with relationship-orientated B2B markets, these restrict the efficiency and scalability in an ever-digitalised business environment.

The research also shows challenges to adopting digital practices in client acquisition. These challenges include financial constraints, unstructured digital marketing and heavy manual based data management. The tracking and managing leads becomes difficult due to the obstacles. Additionally, the communication also becomes inconsistent. The research also suggests great opportunities to improve marketing areas. The strategic implication of digital tool, platform and systems can improve the client acquisition process.

To conclude, the traditional marketing approaches of the firm are still useful for B2B context but are not enough to sustain a digitally competitive industry. Firms like E-Zone HRM Limited need to embrace digital B2B marketing practices gradually. This strategic adaptation will enhance efficiency of lead management and conversion.

## 3.6 Recommendations

The following strategic recommendations are suggested to improve the digital client acquisition of E-Zone HRM Limited:

**Adopt a Centralised CRM System:** The firm should replace the manual data management to a CRM system. This is help centralize the client data management. The gradual adoption can start from the Business Development department to reduce operational cost and risk. CRM will address the issue of missed follow ups and improve the overall client communication and coordination. The overall client acquisition process will become more efficient and effective.

**Establish a Structured Digital Marketing Strategy:** E-Zone currently do not have any structured digital marketing strategy. A proactive digital marketing strategy is strongly recommended. The strategy must contain proper planning of execution and performance measure matrix . Besides, the strategy should be data driven and well aligned with the firms marketing objectives.

**Maximise Digital Presence:** The firm should be more consistent on their digital platforms. Maximizing digital presence can help creating new B2B networks and increase the professional interactions. Especially platforms like LinkedIn can take the professional presence to next level. Posting regular informative business contents can also enhance the digital visibility and increase potential customer engagement. Strategic and consistent use of digital platform can generate leads beyond its conventional approaches.

**Invest in Digital Skills Development:** The firm is highly recommended to invest in digital training programmes for its employees. It will enhance the readiness of the firm for digital transformation. The client acquisition will be then handled by digitally skilled employees which will make the process more improved and effective.

# **Appendix**

## **Interview Questionnaire**

### **Section 1: Background Information**

1. Please tell me about your role & responsibilities at E-Zone?
2. How long have you been working in the client acquisition process?

### **Section 2: Current Practices and Use of Tools**

3. Can you describe the process of lead generate and management?
4. What channel and medium do you use to reach out to potential clients?
5. How do you store client data?
6. How do you track leads till conversion? Do you follow any structured system?
7. Can you tell me how the firm uses digital platforms and tools for client acquisition?

### **Section 3: Challenges and Improvement Opportunities**

9. What challenges do you usually face in managing client data and tracking leads?
10. Can you share an example where lack of digital tools created difficulties for you?
11. How do you manage follow-ups with potential clients?
12. Have you experienced missed follow-ups?
13. What barriers do you think are preventing E-Zone from adopting digital tools?
14. What changes in the acquisition process do you think can enhance efficiency?



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