

## Tech Spotlight

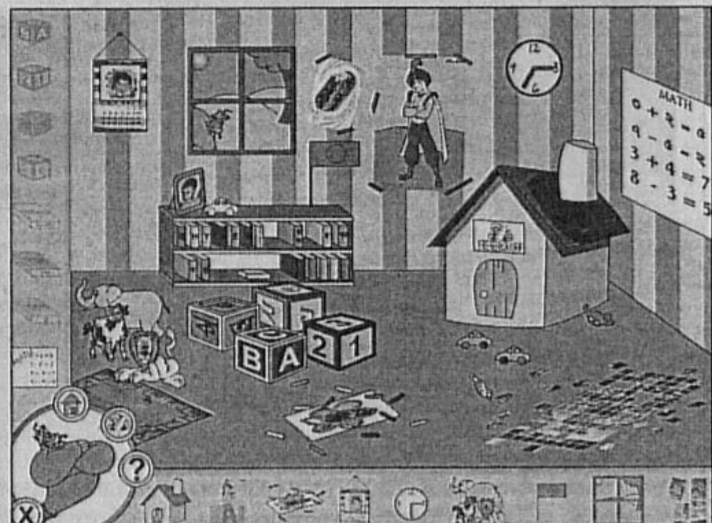
# Making them learn the 'genius' way

## Interactive tutorials for kids by '4-In-Genius'

RIDWAN A KABIR

ALONG with many other things, the ever-growing tech-craze has inspired many students to test the boundaries of their tech capabilities. These small time efforts are growing at an amazing pace, and the country has witnessed such phenomenon before. Recent endeavors of making Flash based educational and other interactive software, taken up by four students from leading universities, under the name '4-In-Genius' (4IG), is definitely appreciable.

Initiated in March 2004, the 4IG team, which includes Mominul Hoque, Asfaque Ahmed and Mohammed Salehin from International University of Bangladesh (IUB) and Chowdhury Iftekhar Hossain from North South University, made their debut in the tech community through their participation at the recently held Bangladesh Computer Samity (BCS) Computer Fair. At the BCS showcase, the 4IG team displayed their Flash-base products like, 'Arshan-Amar Pora', 'Bigyaner Khela', 'Fanius', 'Shadhin Bangla Mail', and 'Mobile Mela'. Each of these products



cts has been created by the 4IG from the scratch and put under marketing distribution for the first time.

4IG's website www.4ingenius.com also has a flashy outlook, literally reflecting a fine work of Flash, like their products, which are all visually enthralling. The website is another way of getting information on their products.

Apart from software production, the team is also involved in producing corporate solutions to other local companies, including web page solutions, server implementation, customised softwa



views about 'Arshan-Amar Pora', 'Funius', and 'Bigyaner Khela'. The reason behind making flash-based products is that it would easily click on any youngster's mind with its colourful and flamboyant outlook, which 4IG has tried to make consistent in their products.

Arshan-Amar Pora, a tutorial for 37 year old children has Aladin's Genie accompanying them throughout the programme. "This will not only draw the kid's attention for a longer period, but will also allow us to use some pre-established colour and figures which are already widely accepted in their world," says Hossain, marketing manager and one of the technical hands of 4IG. And this is exactly how Arshan is different from any of the educational software available in the local market. The software has 'interactive ways' to learn numbers, to understand the hand-clock, Bengali and English rhymes and stories, introduction to animal world, knowing the human body, learning the calendar and colours.

'Bigyaner Khela' has a collection of games using the basics of physics in most cases. Nothing more than household essentials such as cups, books and paper are required to perform these games in practice. The instructions are in Bengali and thus would be best suited for kids who know how to read the language. Knowledge on gravity, suction, wire-tensile, air, magnetisms, and many more are prospected through the software. "This is almost like buying a

book on scientific games from the book fair," says Hoque, "the only difference is that children of this generation are getting more and more accustomed with their household computers as soon as the term 'games' is mentioned. Of course, this is what has driven us all the way long and have the children as only focused users," Hoque adds. Seventeen biographies of different pioneer scientists from around the world in different times and major scientific discoveries are also included.

'Funius' is an amazing collection of what is more appropriately stated as 'things to do', including wallpapers, games, trailers, screen-savers and animal videos. The software part includes sections such as ABC-Colour, Anim-Colour, Global pets, and Melody Assistant, which focus on stirring the youngsters' knowledge-base and proclaiming them to learn faster with developing an eager interest on software solutions that comprise most of the today's world. "High-quality 3D games, and not just one but more than ten different ones, are a major attraction. Funius will be in good demand among the children once they know how to claim it," hopes Hoque.

Shadhin Bangla Mail is an effort, which is inspired by Linux systems, and the way they would use open source codes in all their products. "We have done the same with Shadhin Bangla Mail," states Hoque, while mentioning how keeping the source code open allows it to remain customisable by the user at his or her require-



re development, 3D animations, graphics and printing solution, and they also have their own printing press.

"We have tried to create some interactive software products for children," said Hoque, a third-year BBA student at IUB, the young managing director of 4IG, while reflecting his

## Tech Focus

# Business solutions from Navana

SYED TASHFEEH CHOWDHURY

NAVANASOFT, one of the many concerns of Navana Group is a unique business solution provider that has developed and adopted an impressive line of software over the last seven years.

The firm is currently popular for their product 'Ezyweb', a content management system, useful in web designing and web updating.

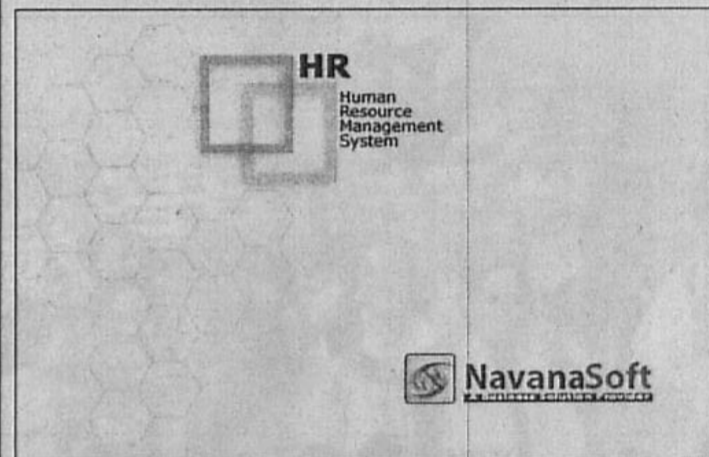
"Usually sites contain either static or dynamic data, but through Ezyweb, one can very easily and directly update a site without going through the tedious process of creating a folder and uploading the information from there," said Shamim Ahsan, Assistant Manager of Sales and Business Development at NavanaSoft.

The product has an easy to

overtime period, payroll processing, generate pay slips, and compose HR related letters.

Other unique products by NavanaSoft are Pharmaceuticals Sales Management System

System(PMS), Expense Management System(EMS), Fixed Asset Management System(FAMS), Automobile Sales Management System(ASMS), Production Management System(PrMS),



learn templating system, WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) content editor, easy Menu/Page creation, ordering menu and contents, image uploading, unlimited page and contents features. It is also easily expandable and no client software is necessary.

The next product in line by the firm is HRMS (Human Resource Management System), which facilitates various aspects and resolves problems faced by Human Resources (HR) managers and Executives of any business organisation.

The system can manage employee recruitment and selection, store employees' relevant information, keep a manual attendance log, execute Loan/advance management of individual employee, calculate

(PSMS), the Roster Management System (RMS) and the Service Center Automation System (SCAS).

PSMS is capable of estimating incentive-figures and managing information of different supplier and customer groups.

RMS is a scheduler that is logical and easy to learn. Current engagements and vacant engagements can be easily viewed, along with the generation of bills to concerned parties.

SCAS is an integrated system that aids the vital management of concerned and necessary functions of any office. The system can track the history of all events beginning from the generation of job cards to gate passes.

The company offers many financial products include Procurement Management

Customer Relationship Management System(CRMS), Accounting Management System(AMS), Real Estate Sales Management System(REMS), Point of Sales (PoS), Inventory Management System(IMS), Digital Brochure and Digital Presentation.

"Most of our products were done in SQL server, except for AMS, HRMS," said Ahsan.

Oracle was used to develop the last two products.

"We were always lucky to easily implement any product after its development at any of the various Navana Group concerns and to test its effectiveness in real-life situations," said Ahsan.

They were assisted by professionals from every field they worked, getting professional advice on features are necessary in developing their products. For example the firm hired Chartered Accountants when they developed their Accounting Management System.

The firm has collaborations with Crimson Logic from Singapore and euroinfo System of India and their products are sold in packages or as modules depending on the requirements of the customer.

"We aim to live up to our standards of providing some of the best business solutions that can be available to any organisation," said Ahsan, when asked about future plans.

## Tech News

# TV may soon beam from cell phone screen

AP, Las Vegas

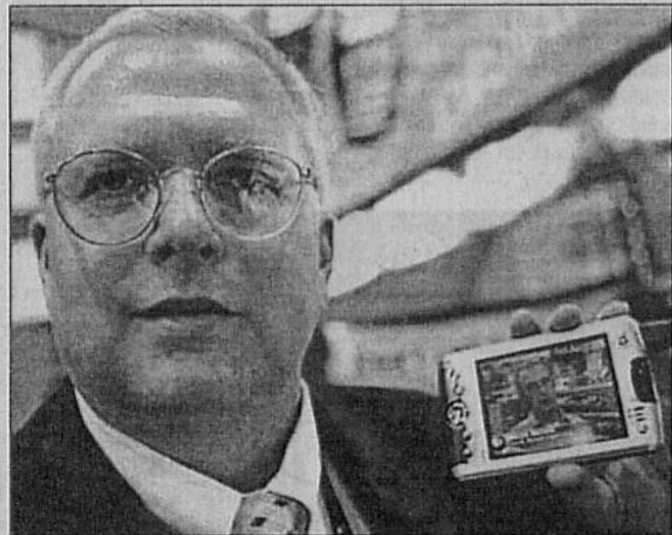
THE screens may be tiny and the batteries over-worked, but the wireless industry is bringing TV to a cell phone near you.

With the mammoth International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas as a backdrop, Verizon Wireless detailed a robust multimedia service for mobile phones, promising video, audio and 3-D games custom-designed for the constraints of a handheld device.

The company also announced that 12 additional markets now have access to the high-speed wireless technology required for the new service, and the 20 markets where the network upgrade was launched last year have coverage over a wider area.

The new Verizon offering, along with other multimedia wireless services unveiled at CES in Las Vegas, marks a big step in the industry's push to generate revenue from more than just phone calls.

On Thursday, SmartVideo Technologies Inc. announced deals to deliver live and prerecorded TV programs from ABC News, CNBC, MSNBC and The Weather Channel to cell phones equipped with Microsoft Corp.'s



Richard Bennett, CEO of SmartVideo Inc., holds a cellphone with live news from ABC at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) on January 6, at the Las Vegas Hilton. The company announced a deal with ABC to provide live news on cellphones.

Windows Mobile operating system. The service, priced from \$13 to \$18 a month, is accessed through a Microsoft Web site featuring other forms of content customized for mobile devices.

Consumers have already shown an appetite for mobile e-mail, Web browsing, music and video games, but many experts view the public fascination with TV and movies as an especially

potent lure for premium wireless services.

"Video is leaps and bounds above anything else" in terms of importance to users, said Roger Entner, an industry analyst for The Yankee Group. "This can certainly bring people in, because it's really eye candy."

But while cellular TV has been available for several years in South Korea, wireless provid-

ers in Europe and North America are only now upgrading their networks with technology powerful enough to transmit video that doesn't look more like a slideshow.

The new Verizon service, named VCAST and scheduled for a Feb. 1 launch, will cost \$15 per month for unlimited access to more than 300 daily video clips, including news and entertainment from the News Corp.'s Twentieth Century Fox studio and Viacom Inc.'s VH1 and Comedy Central cable channels. Customers can also pay extra for 3-D games, music videos and premium channels.

But even with more bandwidth, it's not so easy to replicate the big screen experience on a device with limited screen size, audio quality, processing power, storage capacity, and battery life the last of which tends to suffer with improvements to any of the other factors.

Further, it's not very clear how long users will want to stare at such a small screen, or whether they'll be in a position to watch anything longer than a few minutes while roaming about.

That's why Verizon and others are trying not to inflate expectations for the new

medium, stressing that most users will only want to watch short bursts of video. Wireless providers have been asking media companies to produce specialized video clips: brief news reports and "mobisodes," or episodes of real TV programs that run as little as a minute.

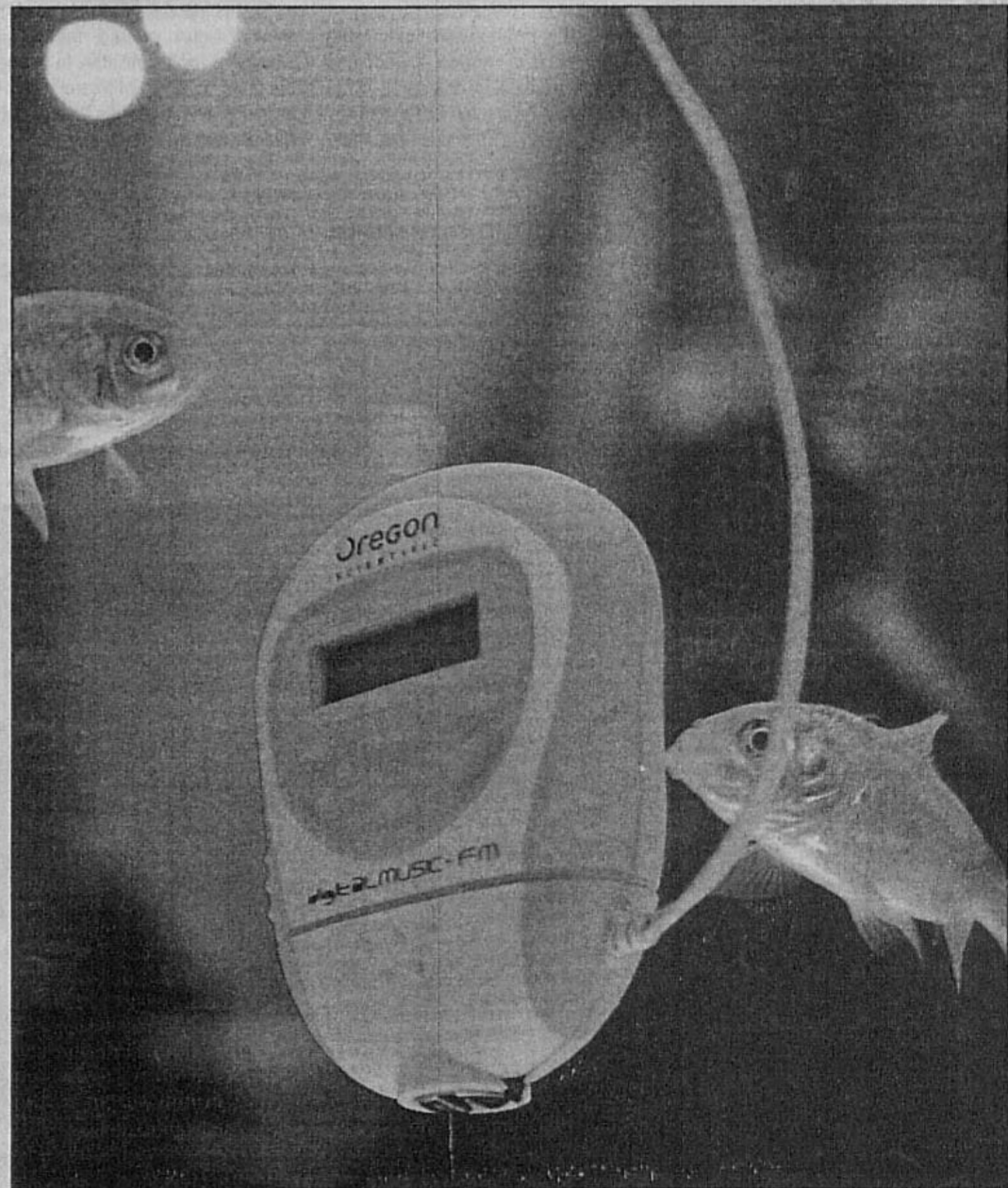
Vodafone Group PLC, part owner of Verizon Wireless with Verizon Communications Inc., forged such a deal in November as it launched its own next-generation wireless service across Europe. The deal with the Fox studio calls for a series of one-minute dramas based on its hit TV show "24."

He said video needs an analogous development with eyeglass screens something that has proven technologically, but not economically feasible for consumers.

Technology companies are so confident about future demand for mobile TV that Qualcomm Inc. and Texas Instruments Inc. are developing competing wireless chips designed specifically to receive and process video signals more efficiently.

Qualcomm also is investing \$800 million to launch a national cellular TV service in 2006 over its own spectrum, broadcasting up to 20 channels for wireless carriers to sell their customers.

## Fish tank music



An underwater MP3 player made by Oregon Scientific is seen on display in a fish tank at the 2005 Consumer Electronics Show on January 7 in Las Vegas, Nevada. The electronic gadget show came to an end on January 9.