TECHFOCUS

Call centres booming with promises

RIDWAN A KABIR

THE year 2006 laid the foundation for firm prospect in growth and development in the field of information and communication technology (ICT) in India. The nation had got itself connected to the outside world via the submarine cable, enabling the countrymen to attend their fair share on seeing and utilizing a dependable platform on ICT infrastructure. ICT may possibly become the nation's largest sector of investment, both from local market holders, and from the international investors, while now we are in good pursuance of exporting our ICT products to the outer world.

Looking out through the window, we see how ICT industry has had grown into 'small and medium enterprise' (SME) connector throughout China, and that is just an example to say. Business Processing Outsourcing (BPO) includes to those call-centres, that work with human resource investments, accounting, and payroll outsourcing, to mention a few. Such jobs will be outsourced from their countries of origin, where human resource is dearer, making an in-sourcing into other countries. These "in-sourced" countries will hence make an outsourcing of their human resource, for a lot less than the country of origin, where the payroll for their local call agents would have been a lot higher.

The Institute for Call Centre and Technologies (ICCT), Bangladesh, made its debut on October 2006 with a motive on making BPO a benchmark in the field of ICT. This institute focuses on building and developing a human resource specialized and well equipped to be expert call agents. Amazing prospect await this arena of BPO in which the locally established multinational companies, along with banks, software companies, apparel industry, have already started to step in through such BPO initiatives. The customer relationship management (CRM) of these companies are entirely dependant on these call centres which provide service for the entire consumer spectrum scattered all over the world.

With Bangladesh's convenient geographical position and a growing juvenile population, we can also attract these foreign tele-service options

"Very recently, international research organization 'GARTNAR' has released a report on the world-wide established BPO related approaches, in which it has been mentioned that India's BPO market share is going to drop at a 55 percentile from its last year's 80 percentile participation in its internal national economy," stated Tapash Pal, director, ICCT. Such statements promises a future of this market throughout the east of the globe including countries such as Bangladesh, Ghana, South Africa, Fiji, Mauritius, Malaysia, Phillipines, Australia, New Zealand, China and more. "Due to its global positioning, Bangladesh stands as one of the best possible competitor to catch this passed-on strand of BPO market share," cited Pal, continuing on how the GARTNAR report suggestion also assumed that a total of USD 27 billion would circulate the world economy, "thus it may not be a good idea to let this opportunity to haul in such a chance-worth immense amount foreign currency inside the country, if all it may take is to build a good pool of human resource who would be comfortably communicative and trained."

To attain our particular share of this huge growing market, which is assumed to be rolling round the globe this current year, we must produce a versatile group of youngsters who are fluent and confident in their grasp of English language, and professionally trained. .

According to Ghosh, the owner of an institute that trains call agents," a competent pursuit on English, its pronunciation, good communication skills, confidence and positive attitude, stress management ability, and on top of all, the ability to pertain an internationally considerable English accent" are the key aspects to consider in the successful operation of foreign-run local call centres.

Ghosh also mentioned how they aim to gain orders from any local or multinational companies for helping them establish their individual call-centres towards meeting their CRM requirements and client satisfaction. The institute is also working on assembling their own call-centre by the middle of this year, which would require at least a count of nine hundred call-agents working days and nights to meet local and overseas calls and hence the apprentices who are taking admission in these courses are being assured of cent per cent recruitment in this field. "While one graduates from the course, and on recruitment, the base salary is guaranteed to start from a USD 150 a month, and individual-base worthy performance is assured to take the salary to a hike," mentioned the director.

The de-centralisation of call management aims to improve a company's operations and reduce costs, while providing a standardized, streamlined, uniform service for consumers, making this approach ideal for large companies with extensive customer support needs. To accommodate for such a large customer base, large warehouses are often converted to office space to host all call centre operations under one roof.

Call Centres use a wide variety of different technologies to allow them to manage the large volumes of work that need to be managed. These technologies ensure that agents are kept as productive as possible, and that calls are queued and processed as quickly as possible, resulting in good levels of service. Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) an integral part of establishing a call-centre, and this in turn is entirely dependant on a dedicated and reliable internet connection.

Ghosh claims that the government should take steps towards supporting such call-centres inestablishing a reliabel internet interface and also to gain their license on VoIP which is quite a hike for the larger majority of the local population. "VoIP will become a good monopoly if only the high business-establishments grab advantage of finance to grab a license," Ghosh said, referring to how the license fee of a proposed amount of BDT 10 crore is quite an amount for any local small-time ISP to gather, and hence, maybe the government should still think their options over reducing the fee.

"Let's just not think that the nation and its authorities will let this chance just pass by, a chance to grab a major share of the USD 27 billion that is assumed to make an entrance into the world's open amrket," Ghosh referred, citing further how India's initial investments back in the early 90's were mostly on call-centres, where they made their connections with the USA industries and made a major haul-in of USD into India, "and now see where they are, and where we stand."

Now it stands as only a matter of time to find out what this government exhibit from their policy-making point-of-view and how they assist the upcoming forge of a 'service industry', an industry still in its infancy. With the right help from the government will not only claim a boost on the incoming foreign currecies into the home economy, will also help the private sectors such as ICCT to be a pioneer towards building a well-stable ICT infrastructure for the present and the future.

TECHNEWS

Acer to enhance your desktop experience

EDWARD APURBA SINGHA

ANY technological breakthrough can bring drastic changes in our lifestyle and at the same time create opportunity for successful endeavours. Computer, the central component of this hi-tech age has gone through several revolutionary changes since its inception to reach its present condition.

Traditional desktop PCs are bulky and for this reason they experience some technological setbacks. As a result, PC manufacturers are constantly working to come up with second best alternatives for their customers.

In the process, they discovered that reduction in size compel them to sacrifice capacity and performance. For such reasons it was difficult to survive the mission from technical standpoint.

Recently Acer a computer hardware manufacturer has successfully overcome this paradoxical situation and

unveiled its new cutting edge technology to substitute traditional desktop CPUs.

This new gadget retains all traditional desktop facilities and at the same time incorporates some advance features.

The Acer Aspire L310 is equipped with the Intel Core 2 Duo E6300 processor (2.0 GHz,

1 MB L2 cache / 1.86 GHz, 1066 MHz FSB, 2 MB L2 cache) that has increased performance and reduced power consumption. It has a system memory of 512 MB DDR RAM, upgradeable to 2 GB, a storage capacity of 160 GB SATA, an integrated optical DVD-Writer, Wireless LAN/USB multimedia keyboard with a USB optical mouse, 10/100/1000 Network Integrated Card (NIC), IEEE 1394 port and onboard sound and graphics.

Acer Aspire L310 is running on Windows Media Center Edition and equipped with one button recovery feature and the anti-theft Kensington lock slot. The Acer Aspire L310 is available in Bangladesh starting from Taka 55,000/- (excluding taxes and the display) with a one-year warranty and lifetime updateable anti-virus from E Trust.

Acer, a Taiwan based fast progressing computer hardware manufacturer has tied up with a local hardware vendor Executive Technologies Limited (ETL) to expand its business in Bangladesh.

Acer ranks as the world's No. 4 branded PC vendor, designing easy, dependable IT solutions that empower people to reach their goals and enhance their lives.

Since spinning-off its manufacturing operation, Acer has focused on globally marketing its brand-name products: mobile and desktop PCs, servers and storage, LCD monitors and high-definition TVs, and handheld/navigational devices. Acer Inc. employs 5,300 people supporting dealers and distributors in more than 100 countries.

TECHNEWS

ASUS introduces R2H Ultra-Mobile PC

STARTECH DESK

GLOBAL Brand Pvt. Ltd. (GBPL), recently unveiled the latest R2H Ultra-Mobile PC in the local market, says a press release.

With built-in high-resolution webcam, incorporated global positioning system (GPS) and biometric fingerprint authentication, the 7-inch ultra compact R2H is designed to fulfill the increasing need for an all-in-one mobile device that enables professionals to stay connected, productive and secured on the go.

The feature-rich R2H is packed with computing, multimedia and connectivity functions. Built-in Bluetooth 2.0 EDR (Enhanced Data Rate), WLAN 802.11 a/b/g and high-resolution webcam offer extensive high-speed connection and wire-free video communication.

In addition, satellite GPS provides a comprehensive travel guide that the users no longer need to deal with paper maps or ask for directions! The incorporated GPS antenna with a foldable mechanism allows convenient storage when not in use. Ultimately, the R2H empowers users to go anywhere, do anything!

To encourage the consumers the product has an installment facility associated with 'Brac Bank' loan scheme. The Notebook has a price-tag of Taka 1,00,000/-.

TECHNEWS

New portable entertainment machine unveiled

STARTECH DESK

COMPUTER Source Ltd. (CSL), premium partner of Hewlett Packard (HP), has introduced portable entertainment pavilion HP dv2000 Notebook in the local market, says a press release.

The company refers to it as a versatile notebook that has it all - brains, brawn and beauty - plus the latest mobile technology. Stored movies, music, videos and photos jump to life at your command - without having to boot the entire operating system.

Students who want to work wirelessly around campus, share media or store lots of music and digital media files, the HP dv2000 has all the good features.

In fact, anyone looking for a

dynamic entertainment experience with flexibility to connect to the net wherever they go will find the HP Pavilion dv2000 a perfect fit.

Some of the features to it as a smooth, high-gloss coating with a unique in-laid design, widescreen display featuring HP BrightView Technology and the built-in Altec Lansing speakers that provides a sound-immersing theatre experience, more wireless freedom and multi-task with the latest breakthrough mobile technology, integrated 1.3-megapixel webcam for live video conversations, Bluetooth, 5-in-1 digital media reader, QuickPlay with remote control and DVD±RW.

The HP Pavilion dv2000 is Windows Vista capable and this stylish, sleek notebook has a pricetag of Taka 1,10,000 and in addition you will get a lucrative Lexmark printer with each HP dv2000 Notebook.

PHOTOTECH

FUSION MAN

This handout picture supplied by Babylon-freefly.com and taken on March 12 shows Swiss professional pilot and inventor Yves Rossy above the Spanish resort of Empuriabrava during a test flight with jet-fuel powered wings strapped to his back. Rossy and his "Fusion Man" project is due to take part in the upcoming Geneva's International Exhibition of Inventions in April.

PHOTO: AFP