

Dhaka Friday May 16, 2008

## TECHFOCUS

## Call Centres

## A sleeping giant

EDWARD APURBA SINGHA

THE country's telecom watchdog, Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC), has formally invited applications from eligible entrepreneurs for licence to establish call centres. According to the BTRC, any eligible person or company can get call centre licence with a nominal payment.

A call centre is a place used for the purpose of receiving and transmitting a large volume of requests by telephone. Nowadays many centres have implemented CTI (Computer Telephone Integration) technology to handle calls.

Large companies generally operate call centres to provide customer service for their clients. For instance, US-based PC manufacturer Dell has housed its call centre in India. If any client of this company calls for customer support, their call will be automatically routed to India for the relevant solution. Besides, some companies also use call centres for their internal purposes such as help desk service and sales support.

Call centre is an emerging revenue opportunity for Bangladesh. The global market of call centre industry was US\$ 382.5 billion in 2004 and is expected to reach US\$ 641.2 billion by 2009. This is an enormous opportunity for Bangladesh: at the moment all ingredients are available in the country to seize a significant chunk of the global market.

The BTRC downsized call centre licence fees from Tk 50,000 to Tk 5,000 in order to help flourish this service across the country. Call centres are being considered as a booming industry. Dhaka- and Chittagong-based call centre operators will enjoy tax holiday up to three years while other operators will enjoy this incentive for five years. Furthermore, the BTRC proposed 0.5 percent revenue sharing when the holiday period is over.

For connectivity, the BTRC recommends call centre operators to use IPLC (International Private Leased Circuit) and in this regard the Bangladesh Telephone and Telegraph Board has already offered 25 percent discount on bandwidth charge for IPLC.

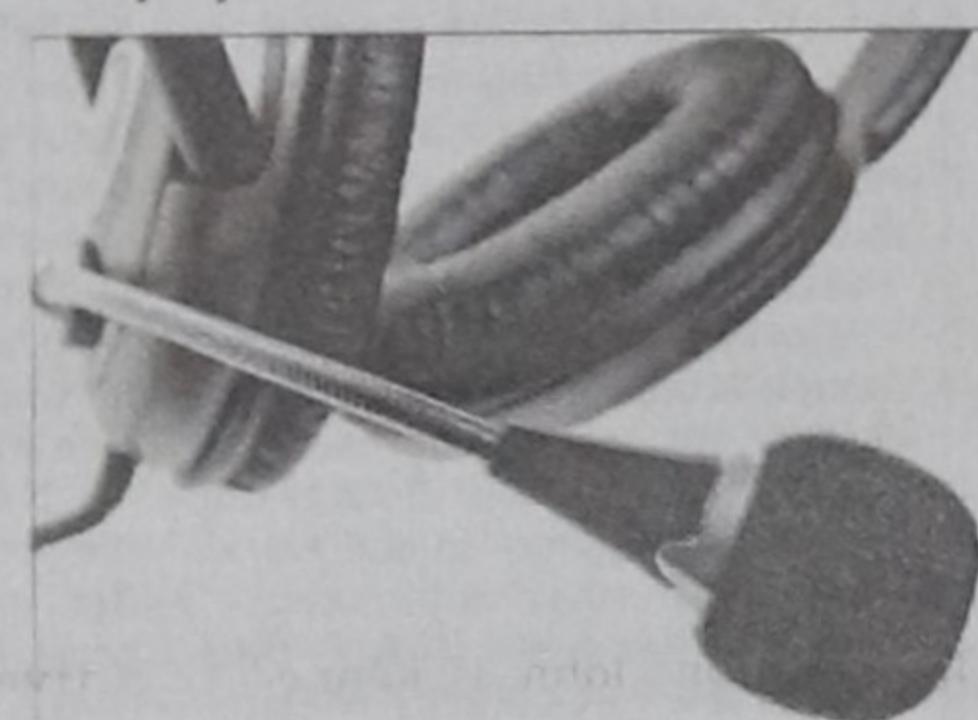
Call centres can be divided into various categories based on their strategy of function and nature of service. But there are mainly two types of call centres such as inbound call centre and outbound call centre.

In an inbound call centre, customers generally place their queries about product information and report any technical glitches. In an



PHOTO STAR

The GP call centre in action. Currently there are around 600 customer managers in call centre and it is currently handling around 2,00,000 calls every day.



outbound call centre, agents initiate a call to a customer mostly to sell a product or a service. Other types of call centre include CRM call centre, interactive call centre, phone call centre, telemarketing call centre, virtual call centre, web-enabled call centre, etc.

Call centres can create huge employment opportunity for students in Bangladesh. Every

year many university graduates in our country remain unemployed. Call centre business can open a new horizon for them.

According to World Call Centre Report 2007, 70 percent call centres in India hired college graduates to conduct their operation. This could be equally true for Bangladesh if we properly use the talents of our youngsters.

Arfinn Groven, customer service director of Grameenphone (GP), told StarTech. "Grameenphone was the first company in Bangladesh to set up a 24-hour call centre in 1999 and today it has the largest call centre in the country."

GP call centre has both automated and human-agent interactions with its customers for 24 hours round the year. Call centre hotline 121 is running through Computer Telephone Integration (CTI) and Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system.

"We have a flexible call centre model doing both inbound and outbound calls serving our different customers according to

their needs," he added.

"Currently there are around 600 customer managers in our call centre and it is currently handling around 2,00,000 calls every day. From the Grameenphone perspective, our call centre is a very effective and customer friendly way to give over 18 million Grameenphone customers a professional after-sales service. In addition, we are informing customers about our products and services in order to enable them to take the right purchase decisions," he added.

India has shown its successes in call centre business. Pragmatic government approach was key to creating a huge outsourcing flow to the neighbouring country. The Indian government gives tax exemption on the export of ITES (Information Technology Enabled Services) and provides other assistances for Indians in building software technology parks. Time factor also drives global companies to choose India as an outsourcing destination.

India's twelve-hour time difference enables global organisations to provide their customers with 24x7x365 days services. By taking advantage of India's time difference, companies in the US have been able to ensure that their customers receive round-the-clock customer support.

Remarkable IT-enabled services in India are helpdesk

destinations.

activities in the society may give wrong signals to new entrepreneurs. It is hard for a newcomer to unilaterally deploy a successful call centre," he added mentioning that they require network to attract global players. Obviously non-resident Bangladeshis can play an important role in investing in this sector and luring foreign investment as well.

"I personally believe if we pave the way for multinational companies to establish their call centres in Bangladesh, it will be more beneficial for the industry," he said.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the operations cost of hiring new workforce.

Customer care: Customer care is one of the common services offered by the call centre. When a customer buys any product or service from a particular company, they are advised to contact the customer care division of the call centre. Many companies in the western world outsource their customer support facility. This in effect reduces the