IT POTENTIAL

Leap ahead or catch up

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Recently I attended a CIO Conference in Indian Wells, California, where the key topic was how to take advantage of Cloud Computing in this economic condition, globally. The FOBANA is a convention for Bangladeshi expatriates in the US, and in July 2009, a common theme resonated that we have significant potential in this perfect storm, to leap ahead in the global market of information technology.

We have a significant amount of talent, especially with or without formal post high-school degrees. Culturally we are creative and emotional, which provides a platform for an explosive new world of information technology. An infrastructural framework is needed to capture this market at this moment. The window is pretty short, but components are within reachable distance.

I met a few young and exciting Bangladeshi developer-entrepreneurs in Outsource World at Javits Centre, New York. The group I met was definitely brilliant. Support is needed to provide flexible infrastructure with incentives, marketable concepts, delivery readiness and expeditious execution.

For example, speaking to one individual related to iphone app developer, current development is related to games, as independent item. It is obvious that this market has potential, with the same skill set, there are enterprise applications that can be developed and sold to the small and medium enterprises market. This is the cloud opportunity, where the commitment for infrastructure is none

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

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but creativity and innovation and it will create the difference in the global market.

Considering two countries -- Israel, the dominant provider of all information system security products today, had focused on it and delivered. Any major security product would require components from Israel. The second country is India. India has versatile developer contribution, analysis groups, and remote infrastructure management (RIM) leadership.

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resource pool at hand.

With the cloud infrastructure with multi layer expertise and specialisation, we can dominate in one or more layers with great focus.

The developers are available in Bangladesh. Maintenance is where we can improve. The package application for tasks is available. We need the customisable options by the end users. At the same time, too much custom application needs to be reduced in production, as knowledge workers are moving more often from organisation to organisation. We can introduce the concept of ownership, accountability and maintainability to our development platform, and we should be there. These are achievable cultural qualities.

The readily available components we have now include a vast number of IT graduates, access to the internet via satellite and fibre optic, government focus on a digital revolution, expatriate contribution at conceptual level, developers at all the levels, along with regulations for intellectual property related laws with execution.

A critical component for success is the information related to expressed and un-expressed demand from the market. At this moment, the global market is looking for cost savings, consolidation, rapid marketisation of new products or features, and innovation with execution. Expatriates are a great resource for these ideas.

In addition, while the country itself is moving towards a digital evolution, opportunities are also piling up. We should not elasticise the time line, which would make us a follower, rather than a leader.

Earlier, I mentioned the perfect storm. It is the time. The global economic meltdown, government cash infusion for bailout, burst of the cloud and software as a service market, job loss of the outdated legacy talents, and expected return on any investment less than six months is creating the sense of urgency on action.

On top of that, reduced market penetration activities, loss of tribal knowledge, increased work load of average workers, and distribution of specialised knowledge is the best environment for pro-acting initiatives. Could you imagine any situation better than this in creating a new leader for a new market? We need to capture this, and we should capture this, and capture this now.

The author is the managing director at Logicworks.

Rush for netbooks, notebooks @ Laptop Expo 2010

IT.TELECOM REPORT

Masud Hossain, an executive of a renowned trans-national organisation, was planning to buy a notebook computer for work purpose since the beginning of the year. A friend suggested him to wait till this year's annual laptop fair as different retailers offer good deals-discounts and price cut during the event.

Therefore, when the three-day Dhaka Laptop Fair, 2010 kicked off at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre on Wednesday, Masud rushed to the venue as soon as possible to buy a laptop.

"What's the use of the latest games if those can't be played during the leisure hours of the day?" said Ayman, who along with his friends came to visit the fair on the opening day. Ayman later explained that he is a freshman at a university and doesn't have classes all day long. He loves to play games in his computer and wants to buy a highly-configured notebook in order to spend the breaks between classes.

Every year since the commencement of the fair in 2008, enthusiasts and probable buyers throng different stalls at the expo in order to find their most suitable portable device. The event is being hosted for the fourth time in the capital.

This year, 40 companies with 14 pavilions and stalls brought brands like HP, Compaq, Samsung, Dell, Fujitsu, Gateway, Gigabyte, Asus, Lenovo, Toshiba, Acer, and Apple in the fair.

The price range of the laptops starts from Tk 23,000 to Tk 1,75,000. Every company is offering discounts and gifts ranging from Tk 2,000 to Tk 10,000 at the fair.

Today is the last day of the exposition and it will remain open from 10:00am to 8:00pm. The entry fee is Tk 20.
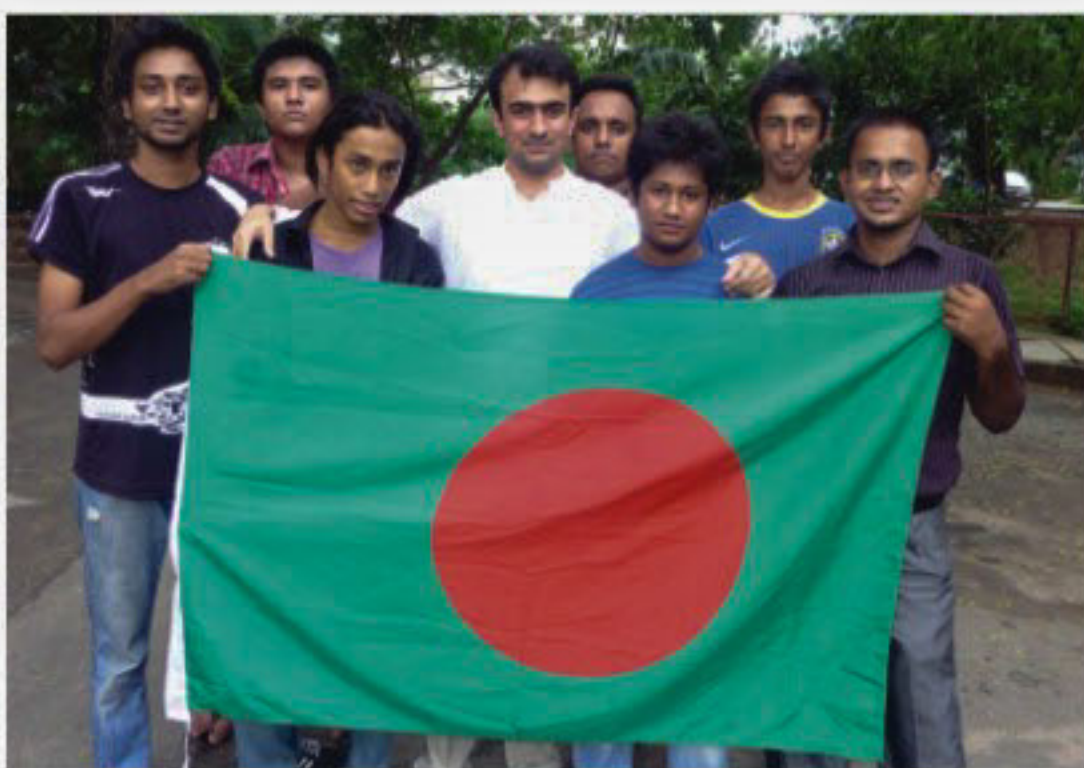

Gamers leave for WCG

IT.TELECOM REPORT

An eight member team with seven participants left Dhaka yesterday to take part in the World Cyber Games (WCG) 2010 Asian Championship in Singapore to be held on July 9-11.

The participants left Dhaka late on Thursday night hoping to put up a good showing at the event which will see top gamers from 14 nations including Singapore, Australia, Hong Kong, South Korea, Malaysia and New Zealand take part.

Gamers will be vying for top spot and a prize money of 4000 Singaporean dollars in three games; FIFA 10, FORZA 3 and DOTA.

Bangladesh have been a consistent performer at the World Cyber Games for a few years now and Md Irfan Hussain, Bangladesh Country Manager of World Cyber Games, who is credited with taking forward this initiative believes that this team is as talented as any that have represented the country so far.

"We are very hopeful to be able to put up a memorable showing at this World Cyber Games. We have some very talented young players who can make a difference," said Irfan.

Irfan was particularly hopeful of success in the game DOTA as the same team who recently won the South Asian Championship in Goa, in May would also be participating this time around.

"Shadowplay is a talented team and we can expect them to do good."

But most of Irfan's hopes rest of Arafat Jani, a youngster from Government Lab School who has impressed in FIFA 10 and has stood second twice in the WCG National Championships.

"Arafat is in great touch and playing absolutely superbly. Given his youth, if he can hold is nerves he will almost be unmatched in this game," said Irfan.

Also, Ashiqur Rahman Moin from North South University is a very talented player for FORZA 3 and is ranked 14,000th among 500,000 online gamers.

Dell Studio XPS hits the market

Dell's signature notebook, Dell Studio XPS 1340 is now available in the local market, says a press release from Computer Source.

This notebook is powered by the Intel Core 2 Duo P8700 and provides 1066 MHz Front Side Bus. It is equipped with 4 GB DDR3 RAM and 500 GB SATA 7400rpm internal hard drive. It has 13.3" Wide screen display & NVidia GForce 9400 graphics card to enjoy crystal clear picture.

Dell Studio XPS 1340 has a bold look with Obsidian Black panel cover, with rounded hinges and smooth details. The screen has edge to edge glass.

This notebook has a price tag of Tk.99,000.

Multitasking with Nokia N900

IT.TELECOM REVIEW

One of the most disturbing features of a smartphone is that most of them do not support multitasking, which means, if you need to browse for something while texting, you have to close the SMS option and then open the browser. But Nokia's

N900 allows users not only have multiple programmes running, but have them on multiple windows, just like a computer.

The Nokia N900 is one of the latest mobile computers to come from the Finnish mobile device maker. The N900 comes with a slider with a large WVGA touchscreen and a landscape-oriented keyboard.

The touchscreen is also of the resistive variety, which means it's pressure-sensitive and requires a firm finger press. The screen is fast and responsive with a gentle, reassuring haptic response.

It's also bright, colourful and pin-sharp thanks to its high-resolution of 800x480 pixels way more than the iPhone's same-sized screen.

N900's spec sheet has the same highlights as the N97, including 32GB storage and a 5MP camera, but the N97's Symbian engine has been stripped out in favour of a new Linux-based Maemo 5 operating system.

The device has a three-row keyboard which ingeniously integrates directional keys on the right side. Adapting to the QWERTY will take only a few text messages or an e-mail as the keys are bold and offer easier blind typing, though the keys are closer together.

Like the previous N97's QWERTY, the N900 utilizes the function key to access numbers and additional symbols. Predictive text is enabled system-wide and many applications respect this functionality.

Once getting past the weight, shape, and large touchscreen, one can see the

top of the device has a volume up/down, power on/off/lock, and camera capture buttons.

The 3.5mm headset jack includes a TV-out (PAL/NTSC) which is joined by a dedicated screen-lock toggle button and a well hidden stylus.

The N900 has a 5 megapixel Carl Zeiss camera. The camera is covered by a simple slider and has two LED flash blubs for better low-light pictures and video usability.

The browser is good. Tapping the bottom right corner will display options, while zooming is achieved with a clockwise twirl of the finger laborious but neat or by pressing the volume key.

Strangely, the browser only works in landscape mode but it is capable of displaying Flash animation, unlike most smartphones.

The N900 has multiple home screens, which you change with a swipe of the finger. For example, you can keep The Daily Star's website on one page, and then brush it to one side by moving onto your Facebook page.

Unlike the iPhone, it's easy to multitask with the N900. You can, for example, launch Facebook, then minimise it by tapping the icon showing two folders Facebook will then shrink into a list view, allowing you to swipe over to, say, Ovi Maps.

If you like a smartphone that you can probe and tweak at your whim, the N900 is certainly worth a spot on your shortlist.

TECHPHOTO

Potato Electricity

Bioengineering student Alex Golberg demonstrates a battery powered by a potato in a lab at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem on July 6. The electric battery based on boiled potatoes could provide a cheap source of electricity in the developing world, according to the technology transfer company of the university.

PHOTO: AFP