



Farmers find their voices on Krishibazaar

NAHID AKHTER

Bangladesh is a rich country. Even if not monetarily, the nation is rich in its soil. We as a nation are fortunate to have soil that facilitates the production of such a wide variety of agricultural products. With agriculture being the most promising asset of Bangladesh as well as considering the ever-increasing price of food, one would expect the farmers of Bangladesh to be anything but poor.

However, that is rarely the case. The farmers are producing good yields and we consumers are paying a good price for it. Then why don't the farmers prosper? The problem lies in unscrupulous practices of the middlemen. Due to lack of proper education and means to get the right information, these farmers fall prey to them and end up not getting their due pay. Keeping this in mind, banglalink, country's second largest operator, has launched a new service called "Banglalink Krishibazaar (Banglalink Agro Bazaar)". By this service, any banglalink customer can dial "2474" to get registered in Krishibazaar, record his/her own desired agro product information



for trading or browse through by listening to other's uploaded information and call up that trader instantly using the service to finalize the coveted deal. The information of the products is available by categories, prices, locations etc to make the process easier for the targets. The program uses voice prompts to guide both buyers and sellers step by step through the whole procedure. Keeping in mind the education issue of most farmers, the whole program uses the medium of voice recording to gather details of the user's needs. The distinctiveness of recording one's own advertisement of their agro-product is what makes it stand out. "Banglalink is seriously keen towards making a difference in the field of agriculture by initiating and bringing the latest services for the masses of the country," said Iftekhar Azam, assistant manager of PR and communications, banglalink. "We have been trying to bring services that can really change people's lives. We were the first

ones to bring services like Krishi Jiggasha, Agri info services with AIS and the latest in that list is Krishi Bazar, a service which has broken the wall between an original producer of farming goods / fisheries and a seller."

Farmers don't need to be dictated by the middlemen anymore and can sell their items directly to retailers or consumers. This has already been appraised worldwide, and recently it has been nominated for a billionth award in the category of new initiative. "We are very much focused on working in a direction that can improve the life of the people of Bangladesh with our innovative products and services to support Government's vision towards making Digital Bangladesh," he added. The charge of the service was kept low to benefit poor farmers. The number of unique subscribers call to the service is 180k within first 3 months of the launch. Average number of subscription calls in the service is 1953 per day. All in all, the service ensures a fair price and convenience for the hardworking root level farmers who are the actual food makers of the nation.

Rapture wins Microsoft's People's Choice Award

IT.TELECOM DESK

Rapture, a 3-member team from Bangladesh's American International University of Bangladesh, won the Microsoft Imagine Cup People's Choice Award in New York on July 13.

This is the only Imagine Cup award that is determined by the public, and it includes a US \$10,000 prize. Eva Longoria, American actress and CEO of the Startup America Partnership Scott Case presented the award to the team.

Team Rapture created Third Eye, a Windows Phone 7 device for the visually impaired that provides an assistive camera and a special user interface with vibration, speech feedback and voice command.

Earlier, the team also won Imagine Cup organised by Microsoft Bangladesh to qualify for the final Imagine Cup 2011 contest in New York.

The Imagine Cup 2011 competition winners were



announced on July 13 at the Imagine Cup World Festival and Awards Ceremony at the David H Koch Theater at Lincoln Center in New York. The event was the culmination of a six-day celebration of technology, hard work and ingenuity. Narrowed from more than 350,000 global registrants, more than 400 students from 70 countries traveled to New York to compete at the Worldwide Finals. The festivities included remarks from philanthropist, activist and actor Eva Longoria and New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Team Hermes from Ireland, Team NTHUCS

from Taiwan, Geekologic from France, team Cellardoor from Poland, Signum Games from Brazil, M.N.A. from Romania, HOMERUN from Korea, Alaniarides from Greece, Jean-Sébastien Duchene from France, Denmark's MP Brun, India Rose from France won the top positions in various categories of the contest. Microsoft Imagine Cup is the world's premier student technology competition, honoring student innovations that address global problems such as improving road and fire safety, eradicating poverty and creating a more sustainable environment.

Acer rolls out Iconia Series

IT.TELECOM REPORT

Acer, one of the largest technology companies in the world, at a hotel in the capital officially launched its Iconia Series in the Bangladeshi market.

With an innovative approach to personal computing the Iconia series offers a range of easy to use devices that include tablets, touchbook and smartphone. Tablets were launched with a new concept device set to add a brand new tablet experience for highly intuitive all-point multi-touch functionality, which means users can navigate seamlessly using all their fingers. The new range of tablets will be made available across Bangladesh through its authorised distributor, Executive Technologies Limited.

Acer introduced the full capacitive Acer Iconia Tab A500 and W500 on Android Honeycomb 3.0 and Windows 7 platform.

The 10.1-inch fully capacitive touchscreen ensures an optimal on-screen experience.

During the launch S Rajendran, chief marketing officer Acer India said "Acer offers an impressive range of high quality personal computing devices to its consumers. With a first mover advantage on our Android 3.0 Operating System, we are confident to address the rapidly growing consumer IT segment in Bangladesh."

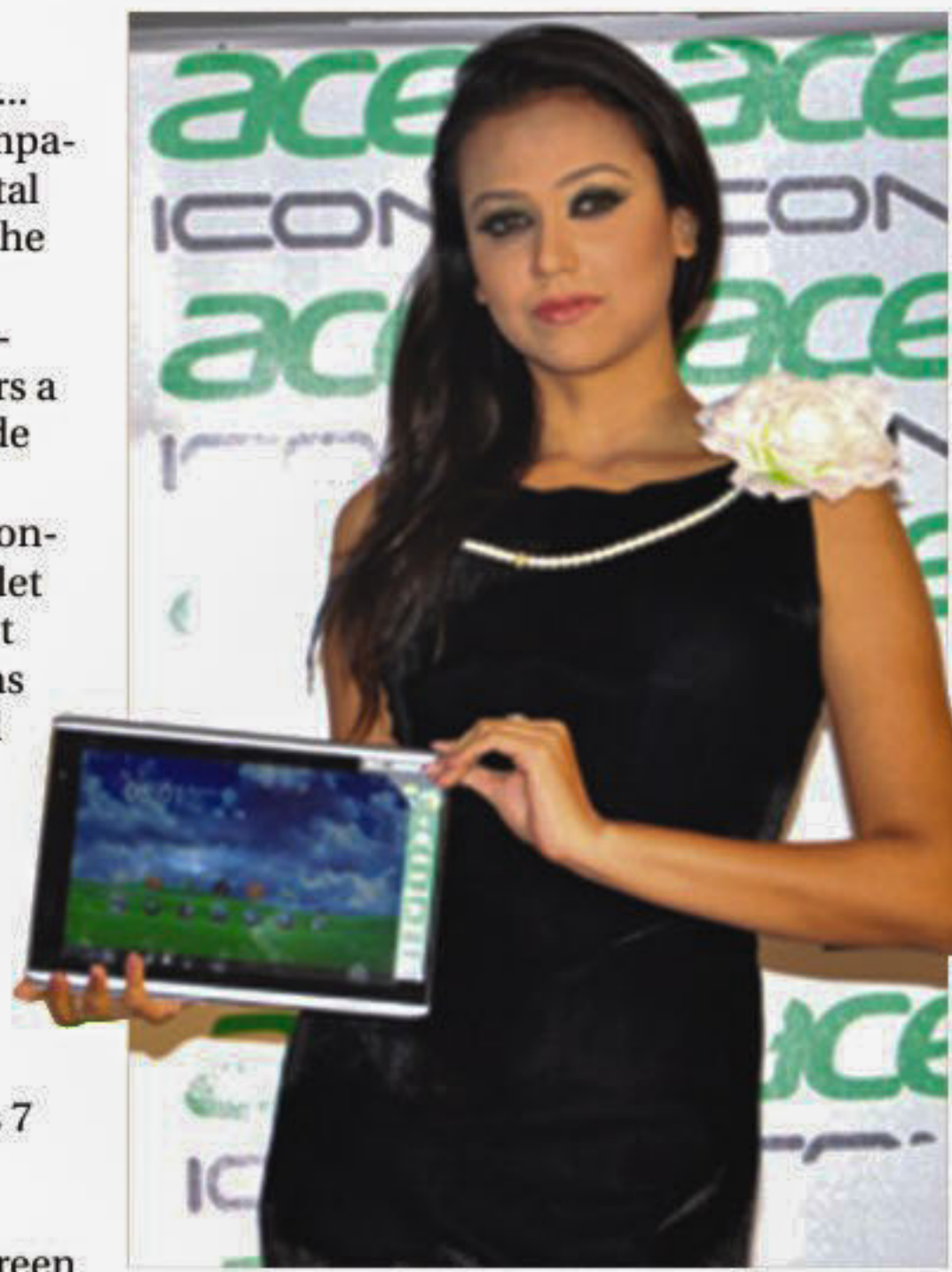
Although the Iconia dual-screen notebook was available in the market, it was also part of Iconia Series launch.

The 14-inch notebook is powered by Intel Core i5 processor with Windows 7 OS and features high-definition widescreen LED backlit LCD screen.

It features a unique Acer Ring Control Interface. The Acer Ring appears simply by placing five fingers on the screen. The Ring also provides fast access to favourite applications and features. The dual-screen touchbook won this year's prestigious "Last Gadget Standing" award at International Consumer Electronics Show CES.

Acer also launched its Iconia A100, a 7-inch Android tablet and Iconia Smart A300, a 4.8-inch smartphone on Android Gingerbread 2.3 OS with 8 megapixel camera.

The Iconia tablets are preloaded with a wealth of touch applications designed specifically for easy navigation and seamless experience. The series includes three



new features: SocialJogger, MyJournal and Scrapbook.

"As authorised distributors for the Iconia series in Bangladesh, we will represent and work together with Acer to expand our retail foot prints across the nation. We believe our association with Acer will bring a new dimension to our current portfolio and help us deliver through our extensive distribution network," said Salman Ali Khan, deputy general manager, Executive Technologies Limited.

Prior to the launching event S Rajendran said the company was growing in Bangladesh steadily and in a measured manner.

In order to serve its consumers best, Acer already has 12 (9 in Dhaka, 2 in Chittagong and 1 in Sylhet) retail outlets since its inception and by the end of the year there will be four more.

But Acer believes in larger geographical coverage, Rajendran said. And the company has plans to set up channel based retail outlets in other parts of the country.

The company also wants to have support centres with the outlets.

Without giving much detail Rajendran said Acer is going to make stronger participation in few government projects as Acer is committed to Digital Bangladesh initiatives.

Qubee's Pre-pay personalised package

IT.TELECOM DESK

Qubee, a leading WiMax internet service provider in the country has launched a new internet data and speed package for its pre-pay users, says a press release.

With the new package, pre-pay users can now choose their desired volume and speed up to 256 Kbps, 512 Kbps and 1 Mbps. Qubee says users now have the choice between speed and usage volume at no extra cost.

For instance, the company says, a user who wants a higher speed but requires less volume per month can now choose from the three different cards and get different bandwidth allocations, similarly a user who requires higher volume and not top speed has the flexibility to choose a package according to his/her particular needs.

HP's TouchPad tablet: the reviews

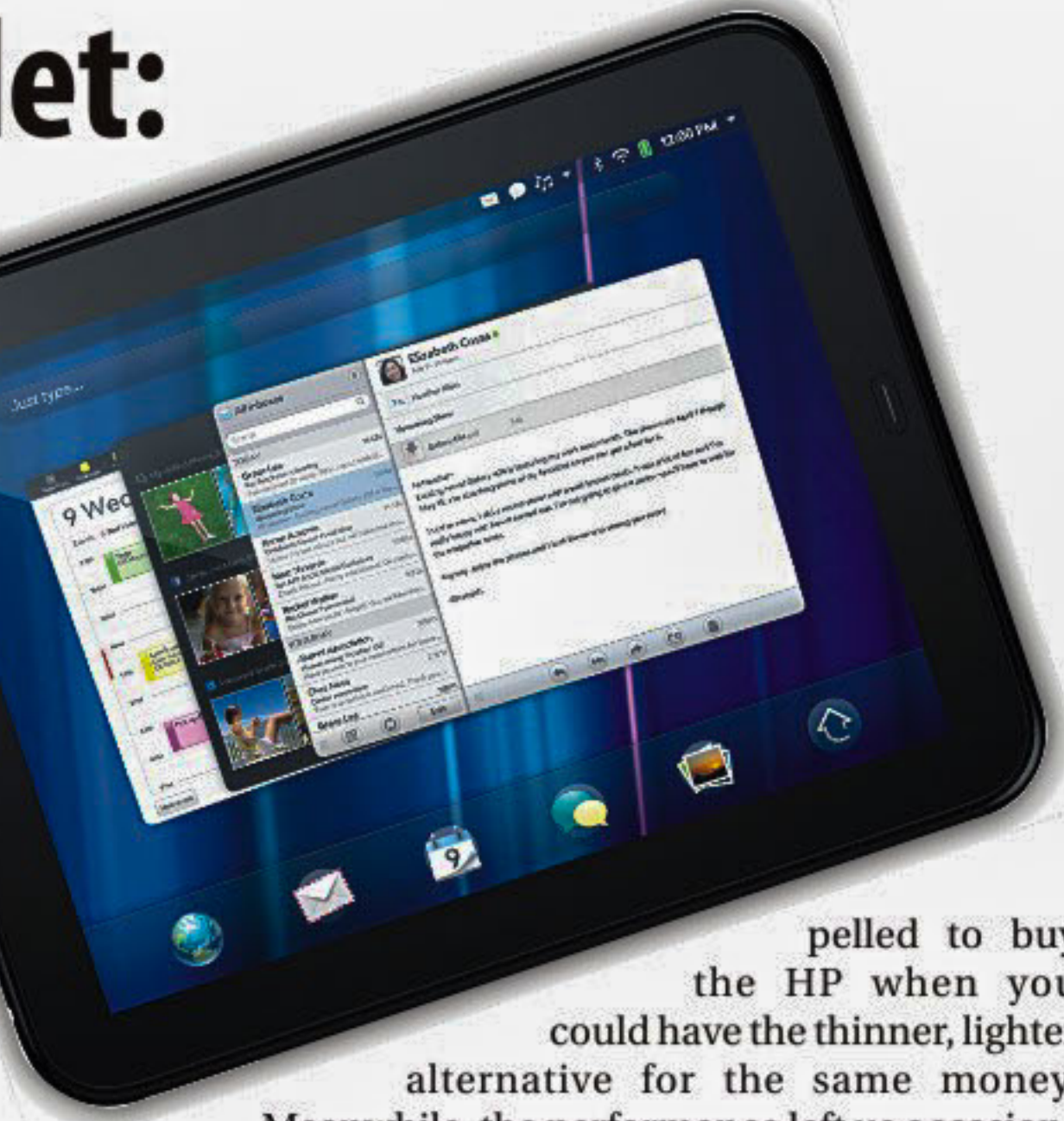
Hewlett-Packard's decision to enlist funnyman Russell Brand to promote its new TouchPad tablet in a series of online videos seems to have been the right one. People love the ads. Whether consumers will warm to the device itself remains to be seen, though.

HP pitches the TouchPad as a workhorse that's a boon to productivity and a marvel of multitasking, but which can also hold its own as an entertainment device. The Wi-Fi enabled tablet, which hit U.S. shelves on July 1 (at \$500 for 16 GB model, \$600 for 32 GB), is up against some serious competition from Apple's standard-bearing iPad models and a stable of well-regarded Android alternatives.

HP is smart to trumpet the TouchPad's ability to play Web video and multimedia formats such as Adobe Flash, which Apple has refused to support on its devices despite demands from its own customers. But reviews of the 9.7-inch tablet, which runs on Palm's webOS mobile software, could so far be characterized as tepid at best. Overall, they seem to suggest that while HP should be praised for some of the TouchPad's features, it falls short on too many other crucial elements. Here's a sampling of what's been said so far:

Walt Mossberg, Wall Street Journal: "Despite its attractive and different user interface, this first version is simply no match for the iPad. It suffers from poor battery life, a paucity of apps and other deficits."

Engadget: "The shortage of apps is a problem, no doubt, but that will change with time. What won't change is the hardware, and there we're left a little disappointed. Holding this in one hand and either an iPad 2 or a Galaxy Tab 10.1 in the other leaves you wondering why you'd ever be com-



pelled to buy the HP when you could have the thinner, lighter alternative for the same money. Meanwhile, the performance left us occasionally wanting and, well, what is there to say."

David Pogue, New York Times: "The WebOS is beautiful... It's graphically coherent, elegant, fluid and satisfying. That, apparently, is the payoff when a single company designs both the hardware and the software."

"Much of the TouchPad's promise remains theoretical; all kinds of stuff is 'coming soon,' including music or movie stores and a Mac/Windows utility that will copy your computer's music files to the tablet," Pogue continued.

CNet: "The TouchPad would have made a great competitor for the original iPad, but its design, features, and speed put it behind today's crop of tablet heavyweights... At the end of the day, the TouchPad feels like a well-orchestrated competitor to the original iPad and not the forward-thinking alternative we had hoped for."

Reuters.com



Samsung brings new music phone

IT.TELECOM DESK

Samsung Electronics, a technology giant, is going to launch Samsung Champ Duos (E2652) with a larger display and DUAL SIM support, in the local market, says a press release.

The champ Duos, the new member in the Champ (full-touch music phone) family, will be available in the market from next week.

Champ Duos is designed for trendy and youngsters at an afford-

able price.

The new phone has a stylish and gorgeous look with a metallic appearance.

With 2.6-inch full touchscreen, the Champ allows faster and easier navigation through the menu by swiping fingers or using the stylus pen.

Champ Duos enables an amazing music experience with a built-in radio with recording capability, 3.5 mm earjack and 3D sound effects.

There is a dedicated SIM switch button for swapping between the two SIMs.

The Champ will let you check daily

business schedules, to-do list and E-mail and of course lets you stay connected with friends through social networking sites.

The Samsung Champ Duos also features 1.3MP camera with video recording; MP3/MP4 player; MicroSD up to 16 GB; 3.5mm earjack; SNS links; Multi IM; Stylus pen; Email with Active Sync; FM Radio with recording; Bluetooth; BT 2.0, USB 2.0; 1000 mAh battery

The phone comes in modern black, metallic silver and pure white colours.

Champ Duos has a price tag of Tk 6,790

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