

6 PITFALLS EVERY BANGLADESHI E-COMMERCE COMPANY SHOULD AVOID



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Led by an entrepreneurial young generation, the e-commerce industry is expanding fast in Bangladesh. The fact that an e-commerce company can be set up without investing in a traditional a brick and mortar storefront, makes matters all the more exciting! While rushing headfirst into this lucrative business green field might appear enticing, a good idea would be knowing which easy pitfalls to avoid.

1 Leaving All Buzz-creating Activities Till Launch Time

You need to create a buzz around your brand from early on, give or take 3-6 months prior to launching. At least start with a facebook page. Post regular, relevant and meaningful contents to entice viewers. When viewers see your products eventually, they will have a high probability of taking action (i.e. purchasing) if they are familiar with your brand.

2 Losing Hope Too Early On

if you really expected your business's bank account to swell within the first week of operation, you were too optimistic. Business builds up slowly. Buyers need to know you first, before they part with cash to obtain your goods. So don't lose hope and stay put!

3 Not Re-confirming Delivery Request with Buyer

Make sure you call your client and re-re-confirm on the day of delivery as well. Otherwise you run the risk of having to resend your courier guys to the same address with the same package on a different day. It's an additional hassle especially in a cash-on-delivery market like Bangladesh, no matter who foots the bill.

4 Underestimating the Power of Offline

Never miss an opportunity to meet your customers in person! Whether you are selling clothing or book or even food, meeting customers is a must. Newcomers in the e-commerce industry struggle to establish their names. A sure way to establish direct contact with the target market is through participation in fairs or other networking events. Bangladeshi customers are still a long way off from blindly trusting an e-commerce company to deliver as promised (and quite rightly so!). Once they see, touch and feel your product physically, they would be more willing to make a virtual purchase from you afterwards.

5 Ignoring Your Own FnF Circle

If you are planning to take your selling-from-living-room business to the next level, against your traditional-minded family's wish, you might be under a lot of pressure to prove yourself. And fast! At a time like this you might be tempted to step out and seek a greater pool of customers outside the existing circle consisting of your aunts, cousins and mom's friends. A good idea is *not* to alienate these people who have patronised you even if that was out of sheer camaraderie. Rather encourage *them* to spread the word for you.

6 Waiting for Perfection

Just go ahead and launch! Even if it's a test launch, just do it. Waiting till you have pressed out all the wrinkles and perfected your service/product is likely to take away your conviction. Kick start early on. Ask your own network to pose as customers and test your prototype. Take their feedback. You'll be amazed at the level of improvements you can bring about.



Mural (above) inside Cosmic Turtle Visiting Green Earth (below).



Chomsky are attached to the chairs. The vegetables indicate the plantation for a new planet. There are shoes with a big walking ball. This work was shown in 2013 with Shehzad Chowdhury as the curator. The place was Dhaka Art Centre.

There is a painting which makes a joke of death. A tree is chased by a ghost. This was in the Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts in 2006. There was the Epic River in 2002 at Alliance Francaise. The vision was that of a fusion of a man and a fish and a mechanical projection. The entire thing was on a boat. The boat was driven by an ambulance. It has multi-layered meanings and appeals to fantasy.

An enormous painting, 9 ft. by 7 ft. displayed at the Tafe Gallery Museum in Perth, Australia, showed metamorphic life forces. The frog like creatures were neither human nor animal with their blue bulging eyes and long tentacles. The creatures had evolved in protest of Capitalism, and criticised the Futuristic Society. This was called Capitalist Invasion of, Extraterritorial Khalipha in a Microscopic Egg land in the Future.

There was the collage of myths and stories and the world contained by the Ark of Noah, a print displayed at the Cosmos Gallery. The collage of myths contained fairy tales and stories from religion and symbol and iconic, intellectual properties. Post-modern in its theme, it had comic strips of Spiderman and Batman. There was Apollo 11, 'Gazir Pot', rickshaw painting, Aesop's fables etc. The 'Cosmic Arc', one of Ronni's much talked about works, was launched at the Venice Biennale and was published by Mermaid Art Foundation and curated by Ebadur Rahman.

Turtle Myth is an 18 ft. High, 65 ft long sculpture 'Inside the Turtle Dome' at Cox's Bazaar. As a sculpture it has been placed as an emblem at the Mermaid Resort centre in Cox's Bazaar. Ronni has dedicated this sculpture to protest against the depletion of turtle eggs all over the world. It has eight windows and two doors through which visitors can enter and examine the mural inside.

For Ronni art is not a vision. It is a rediscovering of the relationship between the universe and man.



Detail from Archaeology of Noah's Ark.