



TRASH TO TREASURE
 BY LABIBA MUSTABINA

Putting the 'New' back in the Newspaper

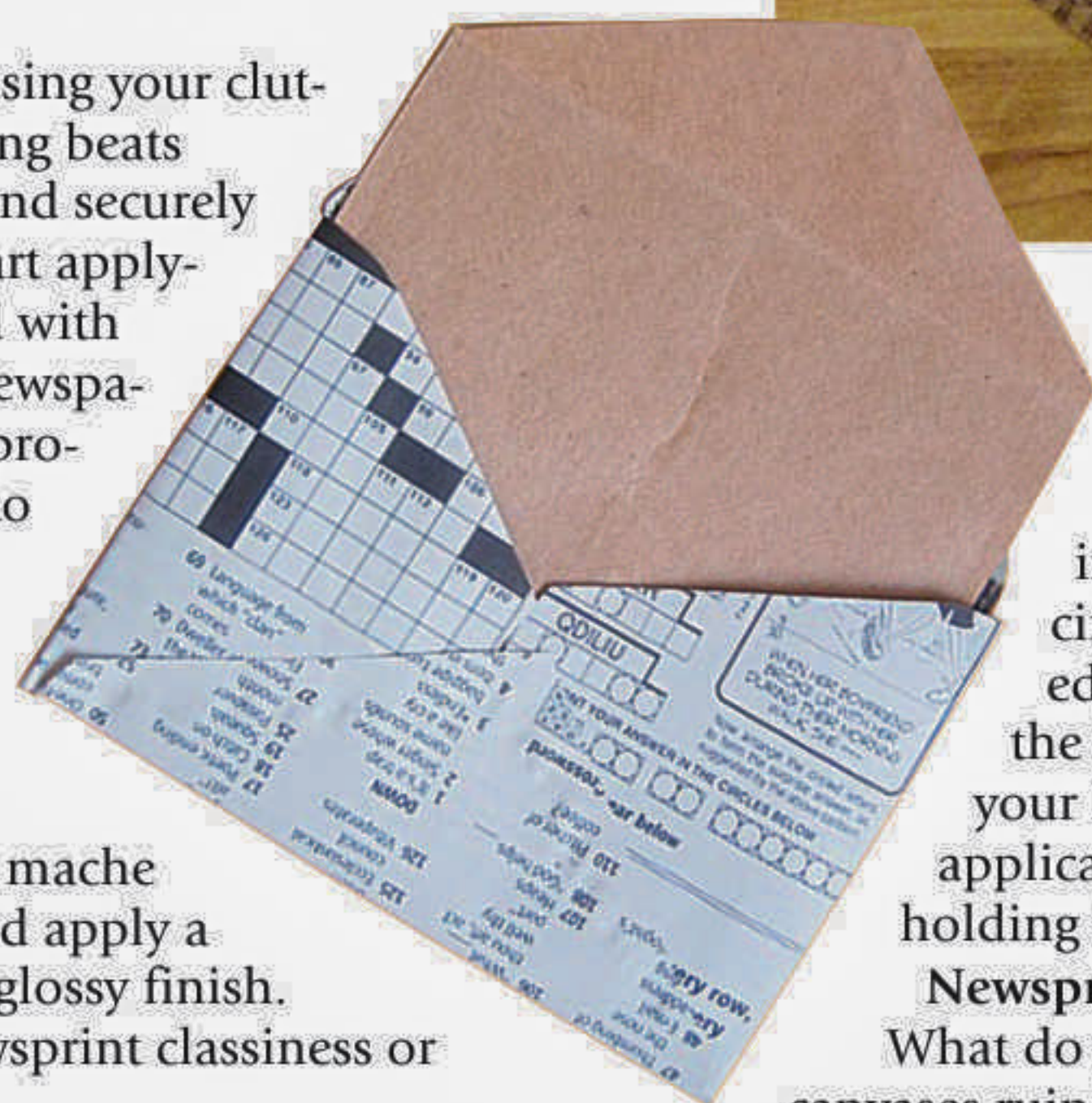
It's Thursday morning. You're sifting through the pages of today's SHOUT. When you're done reading, you may or may not decide to save a few clippings but the rest is indefinitely tossed away, with its destiny unforetold. Allow me to introduce a few ways in which old newspapers can be destined for greater purposes in life.

Rolled-up coasters

Since caffeine and morning news are best mates, why not use the newspaper to prevent that hot cuppa leaving a stain on your furniture? To make coasters out of the paper, first you'll need to make around 10 strips of newspaper of roughly half inch, each time folding the sheet of newspaper 5 times on itself. Now, applying adhesive on one side of the first strip, begin to roll it on itself, keeping the centre tight. Continue applying the next strips similarly, one after another on the structure till you've attained the desired size for the coaster.

Paper mache bowls

When it comes to organising your clutter around the room, nothing beats bowls. Blow up a balloon and securely place it on a bowl. Now, start applying coats of adhesive mixed with water and place pieces of newspaper over it, continuing the process for 5-6 layers or more to achieve a solid thickness. The paper mache should be allowed to dry overnight before coating a new layer. Then, pop the balloon to reveal the paper mache bowl. Trim the edges off and apply a final coat of adhesive for a glossy finish. You could leave it at its newsprint classiness or paint it.



Swirled paper roses

Super easy to make, these swirled paper roses will never fail to add elegance to your décor. To make this,



simply cut a circle out of the newspaper depending on the desired size of the rose. Now maintaining a half inch width, starting from the circumference and moving towards the centre, cut a continuous circular strip with wobbly cuts on the outer edge. Now, starting from the outer end, wrap the swirly strip on itself. Adjust the shape to your liking. Finally secure the shape with the application of hot glue or adhesive at the bottom, holding the shape till the glue dries.

Newsprint canvases

What do you do when you have a few old painted canvases ruined beyond repair? You make newsprint canvases with them. This just requires an old, tattered, ruined canvas (a new one works too) and adhesive. Simply layer glue over the canvas and juxtapose newspa-

per strips in various angles over it. You now have a new canvas. You can paint over it or sketch on it but nothing beats silhouette cut-outs in black against the newsprint background.

Instant envelopes

Gone is the era of letter writing but we still haven't managed to say goodbye to envelopes. If you find yourself rummaging around for one, just grab a newspaper. Take a rectangular sheet of newspaper, fold about half inch inwards from both sides. Fold the paper to create three parts: a smaller fold to create the lid and the rest folded in halves for the body. Glue it in place and it's ready for mailing!

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INNOVATION

Going the extra mile for excellence

RUHULLAH RAIHAN ALHUSAIN

This is the second instalment of my series on innovation. Let's discuss the big 3 'A's among global marketers – Amazon, Air Asia and Alibaba – and how they have ensured competitive advantage through innovation.

Do you know that Amazon drones will be able to ship your products 30 minutes after you place the order? Amazon is one of the greatest marketers – creating excellent customer service through innovation. Amazon knows what their customers want even before they ask for it. They know that their customers would love to get the products delivered faster than the express 24-hour delivery. They know that their customers would love to get the recommended products shipped to them. Hence they are planning to launch the future delivery system.

Amazon Prime Air aims to safely get packages into the customers' hands in 30 minutes or less using small unmanned aerial vehicles.

The second example would be Air Asia, the budget airline of this era. Do you know how Air Asia became the largest budget airline? Air Asia did not target the traditional customers of airlines and did



not compete with the strong local player, Malaysian Airlines, but they focused on the multiethnic population of Malaysia that included Chinese, Indian, Indonesian, Thai, etc. who could not afford the airline fare. Traditional airlines never focused on these set of customers, and Air Asia founder Tony Fernandes saw a potentially untapped and uncontested market space in South-east Asia. They

started offering cheaper air tickets and the rest is history. Air Asia knew what their customers needed before they asked for it.

Then comes the example of Alibaba. Alibaba Group was established in 1999 by 18 people led by Jack Ma, a former English teacher from Hangzhou, China. The founder of Alibaba believed that the Internet would level the playing field by enabling small enterprises to leverage

innovation and technology to grow and compete more effectively in the domestic and global economies. Since launching its first website helping small Chinese exporters, manufacturers and entrepreneurs to sell internationally, Alibaba Group has grown into a global leader in online and mobile commerce. Alibaba took Chinese economy from national to international level. Alibaba knew that the world waited for Chinese innovative products and took the initiative to deliver these products to them; the rest is history. Alibaba started trading on the New York Stock Exchange, the biggest IPO offering in US history. That's not all. It is now ahead of Amazon in the drone delivery game as well.

This is the era of customers indeed. Customers are the king in this era. Everyone, every single global marketer, is working towards one goal – ensuring the highest level of customer service through engaging and enabling customers more than ever.

The writer is a professional with over 11 years of experience in mobile banking and digital marketing and is currently the Head of mCommerce Operations at Airtel Bangladesh Ltd.