

Daraz launches D-Force

Digital freelance employment for the youth of Bangladesh

MITHI CHOWDHURY

Daraz Bangladesh has recently launched an ambitious sales programme called "D-Force" – a digital freelance employment platform for students and part-time workers. In their efforts to pioneer freelance employment in Bangladesh, Daraz representatives have conducted interactive sessions at multiple universities, including IUB, ULAB, BRAC University and University of Asia Pacific. The D-Force project is a pioneer in merging online platforms with reform work, particularly employment. During an interview with Antonio Fantappiè, Business Development Manager and Head of Sales Force at Daraz, SHOUT learned about D-Force and the philosophy behind this innovative concept.

When asked what motives led to this venture, Antonio said, "The exciting element of this project is that it has an untapped potential for growth. The large population of Bangladesh will allow D-Force to grow dramatically, especially in the rural areas."

D-Force, short for Daraz Force, provides selected students with a special log-in ID with which they are able to place orders and work for Daraz as sales consultants. This allows an unlimited number of freelancers to sell through any mobile device, thereby, making the entire process much more efficient. Free sales training is provided to the best performing agents who also receive certification from Rocket



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHE

Antonio Fantappiè, Business Development Manager and Head of Sales Force at Daraz.

Internet and Daraz Bangladesh. D-Force offers salaries based on commission which increases with performance.

In today's globally competitive labour market, such specialised training is indeed crucial in order to start a promising career. Through this opportunity, students will not only learn valuable skills but also receive certification from a renowned multinational company. Needless to say, this is a unique chance to boost their CV and get some real hands-on experience.

So far, the response has been tremendous – not only for the training programme but also for subsequent intern-

ship opportunities. "One of our core team members was a sales consultant until a few weeks ago. Through his outstanding performance and dedication, he's earned a permanent spot in the D-Force team. At this rate, I won't be surprised to see many of our agents working as interns or even full-timers," added Antonio.

Eventually, D-Force plans to expand to rural areas in order to train the youth in basic computer, sales and communication skills. The D-Force team plans to partner with local NGOs and expand their training programmes to underdeveloped localities. Although Bangladesh has seen a growth in

such innovations starting off with a dramatic flair, the progress tends to wane eventually.

"Every innovation has to overcome its own set of obstacles. If we're able to maintain an organised framework and provide effective training to our agents, then I see no reason why e-commerce and D-Force will not grow," said Antonio.

Antonio and his team have built the entire project from scratch. From marketing and expansion strategies to setting training schedules and materials, the D-Force team has been working around the clock to set up this platform for Bangladesh. So far, D-Force has been tremendously successful in Nigeria, providing employment to roughly 30,000 people within a year. The team is confident that they'll be able to achieve similar numbers in Bangladesh as well.

Antonio had a few parting words regarding entrepreneurial innovation to maximise social benefits: "There are endless ways to unleash your creativity and become an entrepreneur. D-Force provides all the tools necessary to unleash such creativity. I'm proud of the work we've done so far. Most importantly, I'm glad to have provided the youth of this country with the instruments to develop and hone their personal skills."

Mithi Chowdhury is a dog-loving-movie-watching-mediocrity-fearing normal person. Either that or a penguin. Find out at mithichy612@gmail.com



**TRASH TO TREASURE
BY LABIBA MUSTABINA**

It's safe to say that most of you would back me up when I say majority of the budget phones or the not-so-sophisticated gadgets we own come with very distasteful and less than minimum options for flip/back covers. If you too are bored with the way your phone looks too generic, here is how you could up your phone game:

PRESSED FLOWERS

If you were always fond of floral prints, here's your chance to take your love for it to the ultimate level by adorning your phone case with real, pressed flowers. If you haven't made pressed flowers before, you should know they look absolutely gorgeous and are extremely easy to make. You could go the conventional way of pressing flowers by placing flowers of your choice (preferably small in size) or single petals within paper napkins, further enclosed on both sides by two pieces of papers. After you've set the arrangement, make a final check to ensure all the flowers are facing up, petals spread out. Then, put the good old dictionary or a similarly heavy book to good use by placing the ensemble inside for 7 days. Or, you could opt

Pretty phone covers

for the method of the restless: use a microwave oven. Place the paper-tissue-flower ensemble under a heavy glass dish and heat in high power for a minute.

Now that you're done pressing the flowers, bring out your bland old phone cover and start delicately arranging the flowers on the cover, gluing mildly in position as you go. It's preferred that you put brighter colours in the background and darker colours at the top. Now, for the top coat use adhesive mixed with a bit of water and use 3 coats, ensuring overnight drying between coats, to attain a clear gloss finish.

STAR STUDDED GALAXIES

Who doesn't love a starry night? If you



want to capture the enigmatic play of colours of a galaxy, simply bring out your old nail polishes and paint yourself one on the cover of your phone. For this, at first you need to paint a uniform coat of black colour on the phone cover that will serve as a background for your galaxy. Next, bring out the blues and purple and the greens from your nail polish stash. Use an old plate as a palette and a small piece of your sponge and get working on the masterpiece. Dab the sponge on the colours and unleash your inner Van Gogh by dabbing the colours on your canvas. There are no rules but one: use the darker colours first and then dab on lighter colour on top of them

for creating the aurora effect. If you do not have lighter shades of the colours, mix some white nail polish with the darker ones and you're good to go. Finally, it's time to paint the stars. For this, dip an old toothbrush in some white acrylic paint mixed with a few drops of water and run your thumb through the bristles which creates a fine splatter pattern that resembles the star studded galaxy that you'll be able to hold in your hands.

SPRAY PAINT LACE CASE

For the cheat method to a super elegant look for your phone, grab some leftover lace and secure it tightly with some tape over your phone cover. Depending on the colour of the cover, pick a contrasting colour of spray paint and spray paint all over the phone case. Wait a few hours till the paint has dried and then simply peel off the lace, revealing your classy vintage phone cover.

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