

Presenting corporate trailblazers of tomorrow

Team Why Not from IBA, DU wins Unilever BizMaestros 2017



The jury



Team Why Not



Team Watchmen



Team Second String



PHOTOS: ORCHID CHAKMA

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Business competitions are of monumental significance for all students standing on the edge of the corporate domain. Amongst all these ambitious prizefights, Unilever BizMaestros stands out for good reason.

BizMaestros is the flagship business competition of Unilever Bangladesh Limited, a frontrunner among fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) organisations in the world. On the night of October 25, 2017, the finale of the competition was held at the Grand Ball Room, Radisson Blu Dhaka Water Garden, after a month-long rigorous and demanding journey.

The finale of the eighth instalment of this competition took place amidst much anticipation and ceremonial grandeur, where the five finalist teams engaged in the ultimate challenge for a taste of triumph. The champions of BizMaestros would, like every year, represent Bangladesh at the global platform of Unilever Future Leaders' League (FLL) 2018 in London, and for the first time will be fast tracked to the Unilever Management Trainee Programme (Unilever Future Leaders Programme).

At the end of the night, Team Why Not from Institute of Business Administration of Dhaka University (IBA, DU) bagged the champions' trophy with Team Watchmen, also from IBA, DU, obtaining the first runner-up position and Team Second String from Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP) as the second runner-up.

The event was officially inaugurated by the welcoming speech of Kedar Lele, Chief Operating Officer of Unilever Bangladesh Limited, who was also an integral part of the judging panel. He pointed out how BizMaestros has the kick of the real corporate world which is conveyed in its motto – "Experience the Thrill of Real Business".

He also talked about the objectives of this market dominating FMCG, saying, "Firstly, I believe it helps us identify the best business students that the top schools have to offer. These brilliant youngsters, while solving real-life cases, provide a fresh take on things. Secondly, there is no better way to learn than the simulation of real business, and finally, it is also a matter of national pride as the best talents from Bangladesh will later proceed to the FLL..."

It is worth mentioning that Team Bangladesh had won FLL back in 2016. The COO concluded his speech on the note that Unilever thrives from the energy and exuberance of the youth and that's the key to flourish in this industry.

After battling it out with hundreds of dexterous teams from different universities in three rounds of cut-throat competition, five teams emerged as the finalists: Watchmen from IBA, DU; Second String from BUP; Uncertainty Principle from IBA, DU; A Few Good Men from BUP; and eventual champions, Why Not from IBA, DU.



The first round involved the shampoo brand TRESEMME, where teams were asked to make a three-minute video presentation suggesting ways in which the brand managers of the product could increase its recognition. This had to be done within a budget and three action plans were to be included.

Knorr was the product of concern in the second round and this revolved around project planning where the teams had to strategise formula to make Knorr the most loved noodles brand of the country amidst an already saturated market. Here, the stakes were high as the plan was to be made for an extensive period of five years.

For the third round, the participants had to deal with Pureit, the water purifier, and this round was all about activation. It was the most challenging task as it included the concept of actual sales pitch in order to attract non-users. They had to design marketing campaigns based on their on-ground research findings that would focus on interaction, engagement and retaining customers.

The final round was where it all came together and the five teams were each given 15 minutes to present their marketing campaigns along with a TV commercial and a one minute sales pitch. The presentations were under the scrutiny of corporate maestros of Unilever Bangladesh who

formed the judging panel: KSM Minhaj, Customer Development Director; Zahidul Islam Malita, Finance Director; Kedar Lele, COO; Kunal Sharma, Human Resources Director; and Aminur Rahman, Supply Chain Director. The judges, after each round of presentation, bombarded the participants with demanding questions and applauded them simultaneously as they tackled the questions professionally and exhibited campaigns brimming with passion and excellence.

The first team to present their ideas on market penetration of Pureit was Team Watchmen from IBA, DU – consisting of AKM Faruq Reza Mitul, Wasie Farhan Khan and

Murtaza Arshad Jilani. They focused mainly on raising awareness, emphasising on the difference in quality between Pureit and other purifiers in the market and challenging the misconception that boiled water is safe to drink. They would do so via various marketing campaigns like launching a web series on YouTube and through sales personnel demonstrating the benefits of Pureit at the point of purchase.

The next team was Second Strings of BUP whose members were Auntica Deb Nath, Sehtaz Rashid Chowdhury and Amin Ul Bashir Alvi. The campaign they put up revolved around mothers, the main decision makers of households. They would plan strategies keeping mothers as the main

target audience and influence their decisions through Above the Line (ATL) tools, collaborating with NGOs and other guerrilla marketing campaigns that include interactive games for mothers and children.

A Few Good Men of BUP, with M. Ashfaq Ali, Arif Al Mannan and Md. Akib Arefin as members, talked about challenging the delusion of drinking boiled water and pointed out that the main competition of Pureit was not other purifiers but the age old deep-rooted belief itself. Their campaign focused on enhancing the image of Pureit like that of a family member who protects the family.

A similar approach was taken by Uncertainty Principle from IBA, DU, consisting of Mithi Chowdhury, Rawnak Zaheen Wasi and Tushar Ahmed Nishu, who talked about how parents have this unyielding trust in boiled water endorsed by all agents of the society. Their activation campaigns included partnership with paediatricians, aggressive informative advertisements and the inclusion of "Water Police" who would go from door to door to check water composition among other strategies.

Finally, Afnan Bin Ashraf, Mahbub Rahman Nafee and Md. Rafid-ur Rob of Why Not from IBA, DU, presented a 360 degree marketing campaign that covered all the major and minor contributing factors in increasing market penetration. They addressed the retailer's end, the minute details of packaging and taglines, psychological aspects of customers along with after-sales services. They presented their strategies from the point of view of a sceptical customer who finally decides to buy Pureit after being triggered by social media messages, TVCs, convinced by water purifying challenges and a trial period. The judges were impressed by their bold and ambitious strategies which were inspired by the tactics of Unilever itself, as suggested by the team in a room full of cheers and applause.

Kunal Sharma, Human Resources Director, addressed the crowd after the end of the presentation round and showed his gratitude towards the parents and teachers present. Kedar Lele, impressed by the teams, penned down an impromptu poem that carried the names of all the teams and a clue to the name of the winners. The results were declared after a short pause during which musician Xefer performed for the audience. Model and actress Azra Mahmood was the master of ceremonies.

Dr. AKM Saiful Majid, Professor and Director of IBA, DU, who was present throughout the finale went on to say, "These platforms where business students get to apply all the theories they learn in classrooms in real life contexts is praiseworthy and it is impressive to see all the competitive tactics they come up with to expand market shares."

The night ended on a celebratory note with a clear indication that Bangladesh will be in the hands of promising business leaders in the years to come.