

Green technology for a cleaner future

SHAMS RASHID TONMOY

Over the years, several organisations have adopted green initiatives to tackle the grave global concern of climate change.

To mark Grameenphone's journey of 25 years, telecom expert Abu Saeed Khan has conducted a research survey called 'Partner in Digitalization 1997 - 2022', discussing various aspects of the telco's impact.

In the first part of this five-article series, we will take a look at how Grameenphone is making environmental contributions to Bangladesh, including introducing renewable power generation and solar-powered electricity systems.

Renewable power sources

Grameenphone's dedication toward a greener environment is most apparent in their environmental-friendly headquarters, GPHouse. Inaugurated in November 2010, GPHouse is a self-sustaining office space that produces its own electricity, recycles its water supply and utilises intelligent lighting to conserve power.

Grameenphone also enforces an effective use of non-renewable resources by converting their older solar generators to hybrid grid-solar network systems, thus making power generation more efficient. The report by Abu Saeed Khan states that last year, the company converted 36 solar generator plants to modernised hybrid sites, which will reportedly save 197,100 litres of

fuel and reduce 263 tons of annual carbon dioxide emission.

The company has also opted to use lithium-ion batteries over lead-acid batteries, reducing carbon emissions by 600 tons - converting 2,500 sites this way in 2021. During load shedding, these sites run on backup electricity provided by powerful batteries instead of relying on fuel-run electricity generators. The switch to a lithium-ion-based battery solution will reportedly cut down carbon emissions by 291 tons. Grameenphone plans to reduce carbon emissions as a whole by 50% by 2030, as per the report.

Utilisation of solar energy

Due to the shortage of reliable electricity access in remote rural areas, charging mobile phones can be a daunting task with a regular USB/cable charger setup. To combat this issue, Grameenphone introduced solar-powered charging kits that

utilise renewable solar energy to conduct menial daily tasks such as charging a phone - especially useful in locations where electricity is in sparse availability.

Because of this application of solar energy, it became easier for rural communities to come together and share their access to these solar-powered charging kits - thus bridging a telecommunication gap that had previously existed in rural areas.

Sustainability and conservation

Since last year, Grameenphone has increased collaboration with stakeholders in addressing nationwide environmental issues such as waste management, water conservation and natural disasters.

Observing Green Week 2022 from May 16 to 19, Grameenphone launched a 'Green Pledge' campaign in which the company addressed the consequences of climate change and how recycling and reducing

waste can lead to an eco-friendly lifestyle.

Grameenphone also plans to retain 100% wastewater recycling every year - reducing water footprint and increasing access to clean and safe water in remote communities. The company's signature environmental regulation - the Reduce, Reuses and Recycle policy - addresses concerns regarding both general waste and e-waste.

The company has helped recycle over 91 tons of electronic waste, including discarded gadgets, electronic devices and antennas, by the end of last year. Their recycling campaigns are conducted both home and abroad, following the ISO 14000, OSHAS 18000 and R2 accordance standards. Last year, the company recycled over 80,000 lead-acid batteries, further adding to their overall green cause.

Grameenphone's contribution towards building a greener future makes them stand out as an exemplarily eco-friendly company. By shifting to renewable power generation and recycling waste materials, Grameenphone is paving the path for better utilisation of green technology in the tech and telecommunication sector of Bangladesh.

[The viewpoints and findings in this article are based on Abu Saeed Khan's compiled report 'Partner in Digitalization 1997 - 2022'.]



Building a career as a social media influencer: Niche and audience

MORIUM KULSUM

It is almost impossible to scroll through our newsfeed without seeing influencers promoting viral content or advertising their favourite brands. Influencers, in simple terms, are trusted figures within a niche community who retain a loyal following. By virtue of their popularity, expertise and credibility, influencers can often affect their followers' purchasing decisions. Becoming an influencer can be a dream come true for many. This two-article series will outline the steps one might need to turn social media enthusiasm into a long-term career. Stay tuned next week for the next installment of this career guide.

Select your niche

Fashion, food, travel, tech, entertainment, business, lifestyle — are some options to consider when choosing your niche as an influencer. Research extensively and share content on your chosen domain as a

content creator striving to build influence. Rasheduzzaman Rakib, creator of the popular entertainment YouTube channel RnaR, believes that selecting an appropriate niche depends on personal preference. He recommends, "Aspiring influencers must identify their field of expertise and interest — what they can do better than everyone else and what they are genuinely interested in doing."

Understand your audience

Once you have selected your niche, you need to figure out who your target audience is and what kind of content they may want. Most social media platforms have built-in analytics sections that can give you helpful insights into your current audience's gender, geographic location, occupation, online behaviour, etc. You can also learn about their demands and preferences by running polls and analysing the comments

section. Habiba Akter Shurovy, a prominent fashion influencer and entrepreneur, states, "If content creators are looking to build long-term careers as influencers, they must understand their audience, foster meaningful relationships with them, tap into their needs and deliver content based on that."

Choose your social media platforms

As an influencer, you need to have a dominant online presence. But that does not mean that you have to stay active on all social media platforms. You should consider the platforms that are best suited for your content and where your target audience is concentrated. Pick two or three platforms to start building your audience. However, keep in mind that you need different strategies for different channels. Renowned entertainer Nusrat Upoma, also known as Bengali Boin, advises new content

creators to focus on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok - arguably the most popular social media platforms in the country right now. "Aspiring influencers should leverage video content, both live streaming and short-form, in order to grab the attention of viewers and reach a larger audience within a short period of time," she shares.

Share content on a consistent basis

Emphasis on putting out useful, relevant, and unique content that resonates with your viewers. You also need to create a schedule for yourself that allows you to regularly share content in order to retain your current audience base. Regarding this, Rakib adds, "Influencers have to stay aware of whatever is happening in their surroundings and create relatable content revolving around trending news." He thinks that such a content strategy can help the content reach people who do not currently follow you.

