

TOGGLE

WEEKEND LIVING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

A publication of *The Daily Star*



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CREATIVITY IS THE KEY



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ASUS clinches multiple Best Choice Awards at Computex 2023

Global technology brand ASUS recently achieved significant recognition at the Computex 2023 Best Choice Awards for its product performance spanning multiple categories including laptops, healthcare, components, and motherboards.

ASUS received the esteemed

Computex 2023 Best Choice Golden Award for the Zenbook Pro 14 Duo OLED (UX8402) laptop. The ExpertBook B9 OLED business laptop also received the Sustainable Tech Special Award.

ASUS also received multiple Category Awards for products including the ProArt Studiobook 16

OLED (H7604), Studiobook 16 3D OLED (H7604JI) and Studiobook Pro 16 OLED (W7604) laptops; the ROG Rapture GT-BE98 router; the ROG Swift OLED PG49WCD monitor; the ROG Maximus Z790 Extreme motherboard; the ASUS HealthHub remote-care solution; and the ASUS PINBO robot.

Google to introduce Tensor G3 chip in Pixel 8

Google is planning to introduce the latest version of their Tensor chip with significant upgrades in the upcoming Pixel 8 lineup, as per sources such as 9to5 Google and Android Authority.

In phones, an SoC (system-on-a-chip) is a single chip that combines the CPU, GPU, AI cores and other key functions - making it an essential part of making a phone unique in terms of functionality and specs. Google introduced their first smartphone SoC, Tensor, in 2021 with the Pixel 6 lineup, and then Tensor G2 with the Pixel 7

smartphones.

A report by Android Authority states that Tensor G3 will feature nine CPU cores, with four Cortex-A510s, four Cortex-A715s and one Cortex-X3, which all combine to provide a noticeable upgrade from the existing Tensor G2 in the current Pixel 7 lineup. As per 9to5 Google, this chip upgrade will come with added security and boosted storage options, which will allow the Pixel 8 to support faster and more efficient UFS 4.0 storage - reportedly better than the likes of OnePlus 11 and Galaxy S23 Ultra.



Apple to drop 'Hey' from 'Hey Siri': reports



Apple is reportedly working on simplifying the 'Hey Siri' command to simply 'Siri', dropping the mandatory 'Hey' in upcoming updates, as per a report by Apple analyst Mark Gruman.

According to Gruman, Apple has been working on this change for several months, with plans to release the feature as early as next year. His report on Bloomberg states that while this change might seem small, the switch from 'Hey Siri' to 'Siri' requires a lot of AI training to pull off, in addition to internal testing to make sure the command works properly.

Apple products are already able to understand the word 'Siri' in many different accents and dialects, but adding the 'Hey' at the beginning makes the AI more likely to pick up the command and respond accordingly. Gruman says that this new change will also make voice assistance a more integral part of third-party apps and services.



Meta unveils new VR headset Quest 3

Meta has recently announced their latest virtual and mixed reality headset, Meta Quest 3, which the company said will start shipping this fall. According to an official statement, Meta Quest 3 will feature higher resolution, stronger performance and a slimmer design than the previous iteration, Quest 2.

As per Meta, the Quest 3 will be the first headset to feature a next-generation Snapdragon chipset, which has been developed in collaboration with Qualcomm Technologies. According to the company, this new chipset will deliver twice the graphics

performance as Quest 2, offering smoother graphics for VR games.

Quest 3 will also come with updated Meta Reality technology, which will help users immerse in mixed reality settings even more. The tech will also allow new intuitive ways to interact with physical objects in a virtual setting. Additionally, the headset has a 40% slimmer optical profile than Quest 2, making it more comfortable to wear.

Meta Quest 3's price will start at US\$499.99 for the 128GB version. The tech giant is also lowering the price of Quest 2 to US\$299.99 for the 128GB version.

Uber working to resume card payment services in Bangladesh

Ride-sharing platform Uber is working on resuming its card payment services for their customers in Bangladesh, after a suspension of almost 3 and a half years.

Card payments for Uber's ride-sharing services were suspended back in early 2020 when the Bangladesh Bank instructed all local banks to suspend foreign currency payment options for

Uber services in Bangladesh. However, Uber representatives recently held a meeting with the Bangladesh Bank and reportedly agreed on a preliminary decision to reintroduce card payment services for its users under certain conditions.

"Uber is actively working to integrate a local payment gateway for all its

services in Bangladesh. We continue to work closely with the authorities and the banks in order to follow all applicable government guidelines," said an Uber spokesperson.

Last year, Uber's services spanned across 20 cities in Bangladesh and spread across all 8 divisions of the country.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Creative and competitive

In today's dynamic economy, creativity empowers people to navigate the difficult business landscapes effectively while gaining a competitive edge in the fast-paced work environment. Find out how you can use creativity to your advantage and thrive in the competitive job market in today's Cover Story.

The current job market is incredibly competitive, ask anyone who has recently been looking for a job. However, building a personal brand can help you stand out from the crowd and secure your dream job. Check today's Next Step to know more on how you can build your own personal brand in the workplace.

As for the rest, flip through the pages to find out more in today's edition of Toggle.

Happy weekend!

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How to build a personal brand to compete in the job market

Anyone currently looking for jobs or has been on the job hunt recently is familiar with the harsh reality: the modern job market is extremely competitive. Whether you are applying for a brand new position or trying to get that promotion you had always wanted, chances are, employers have their eyes set on someone they like or value more. A smart way of making yourself stand out among the crowd is to build a noticeable personal brand that will set you apart from other candidates. Here are some essential pieces of information you should know about personal branding, and how you can use it to compete in the job market.

What is personal branding?

A personal brand entails many things, but in essence, it is a form of identity that differentiates you and showcases your unique value proposition to employers. By defining your potential worth, you are not only showing employers how valuable you will be, but you're also making yourself open to better job opportunities and even pay raises in your existing job.

However, building a personal brand is easier said than done, and there is no simple way of doing so. A compelling personal brand entails strong academic background, strategic networking, experience in professional skill development, and oftentimes, a curated online presence. Above all, a strong personal brand remains authentic and consistent at all times and will help the person resonate with employers while assisting with their career goals.

If you want to build a compelling personal brand that will help you attract lucrative job opportunities, keep the following tips in mind.

Define your unique value proposition
Before anything else, make a list of your key strengths, skills, and experiences that

make you unique. These can include your academic degrees, but make sure they are at least somewhat related to the job you're hoping to land. You can also list any professional skill development training or programs you have completed - which again, should be relevant to the field you're applying to. Your value proposition can also include your achievements and passion for the job - two things employers are always eager to learn when scouting for potential employees.

Build a personal brand statement

After you have identified every aspect of your unique value proposition, start writing a clear and concise personal brand statement. This should be a brief summary that captures what you are, what you do, and of course, the value you will bring to your future workplace. A lot of modern candidates mention their personal brand statement in their resume, which is an easy way of introducing yourself to the employer. You can also use this personal brand statement during interviews - though make sure not to sound too artificial - and in your online profiles and portfolios. Keep in mind that a good personal brand statement creates a strong first impression, which

immediately makes you more memorable than the hundred other candidates applying for the same job.

Curate your online presence

Nowadays, a lot of jobs, both at home and abroad, require a range of experience in modern technology and/or social media. As such, a notable online presence goes a long way in shaping a personal brand that employers will notice. Make sure your social media profiles, especially LinkedIn, reflect a professional image and align with your brand statement. Remember to regularly update your Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn profiles with relevant professional information, and whenever you can, share relevant industry highlights to engage with fellow professionals. This will eventually build your image as an industry expert, further adding value to your personal brand.

Strategic networking

Who you keep connections with is often the deciding factor for landing lucrative jobs. Building a strong professional network at the early stages of your career is an important step in building a personal brand that will stand out to employers. A good way of doing this is by attending professional seminars, visiting industry events, and joining relevant associations, which will help you meet with other professionals interested in the same topics as you. Don't be afraid to seek out more experienced professionals for their insights, and whenever possible, collaborate with them so your personal brand reaches out to more people. A good network also adds credibility to your own name - expanding your career opportunities down the line.

Seek testimonials

A good personal brand is backed by other people. As such, you should reach out to previous colleagues, clients, supervisors, and employers for testimonials, which should highlight your skills, qualities, and dedication. Positive testimonials are a great boost to your personal brand and are reliable proof of what you are capable of. You can also use these testimonials in your personal brand statement, or put them in your LinkedIn profile to add more visibility to your name. Not only will this enhance your professional reputation, but also expand your scope of job opportunities.





Turbocharged cars and the ever-lasting bad fuel problem

MATLUB UL ALAM

Turbocharged cars - known for running devices called 'turbochargers' to boost engine performance - have seen a surge in popularity in the past few years. Veteran and new car owners alike are steadily shifting to turbo models over non-turbo ones, but with the shift in popularity comes a glaring issue: fuel quality.

While fuel quality is an important part of running any automobile, it is especially important for a turbocharged car due to the specific requirements and demands put on the engine. Let us take a closer look at how popular turbocharged cars are in Bangladesh and how bad fuel is affecting turbocharged car owners.

How popular are turbocharged cars? A turbocharger is a device installed as a part of an engine that is powered by the force of exhaust gas. The job of a turbocharger is to compress more air into the engine's cylinders. As a result, an increased amount of air allows more fuel to be added to the engine. Thus, the engine can produce more power by consuming less fuel. Since turbocharged engines are dependent on a precise balance of fuel and air for optimum combustion, fuel quality often becomes the most important factor behind properly running a turbocharged car.

According to the market research organisation Mordor Intelligence, 50% of the gasoline-powered cars sold all over the world in the forecast period of 2023-2028 may have turbochargers, and similar growth is expected to continue. Because of changes in legislation all around the world, car manufacturers are motivated to produce more turbocharged cars. These cars can produce more power while consuming less fuel and emitting fewer pollutants - making them an easy choice to consider for potential new car buyers.

Momin Uzzaman, Manager of Sales at DHS Motors, shared his opinion on why car manufacturers are focusing on producing more turbocharged cars. "The main reason is to downsize engines. For example, previously, the Honda CR-V had a 2.4-litre engine. It produced 136 horsepower. By improving technology, the engine size was decreased to 2.0 litres. It

then produced 152 horsepower. Now, by adding a turbocharger, the Honda CR-V can produce 192 horsepower from its 1.5-litre engine," he shares

So, what are the benefits of having a turbocharged car? According to Momin, a turbocharged car has two main benefits. Firstly, the car is more fuel-efficient.

Secondly, the cc (cubic centimetre) of the engine is decreased, which necessitates paying less tax and duty. When it comes to popularity, Momin adds that because of lower prices, turbocharged cars have gained a lot of popularity in Bangladesh. "By adding turbochargers, the engine size is decreased to 1500 cc, compared to 2000 cc and 2400 cc engines previously. Therefore, less duty and tax need to be paid to the government. As a result, these cars are getting wide acceptance."



While less duty charge is among the top reasons, some other factors behind the recently widened acceptance of turbocharged cars are their fun-to-drive features, efficiency, lower price, the need of paying less AIT and of course, attractive looks. For the past couple of years, the road structures in Bangladesh have improved, which has made driving for both new drivers and veterans a more pleasing experience, with turbocharged cars enhancing the experience even more.

Fuel quality in Bangladesh and the consequences

While it's true that turbocharged cars are being bought more locally, the undeniable fact remains that turbocharged cars require good-quality fuel to operate. For example, a 10th-generation Honda Civic requires a minimum of RON 91-rated fuel. This

is because a turbocharger raises high pressure inside its engine cylinders. Therefore, the fuel should have less tendency to prematurely detonate before reaching the optimal ignition point. As only good fuel has this desired feature, it's natural for turbo owners to want high-quality fuel. Sadly, many turbocharged car users are unsatisfied with the fuel quality available in Bangladesh.

When asked about the local availability of good fuel, Saiful Osman, the executive director of Sadi Filling Station Ltd, said that it is difficult to tell if filling stations receive a supply of good fuel or not. "But it is possible to get good fuel if no mixing, tempering, or adulteration is made," he adds. Both turbocharged and non-turbocharged cars regularly refuel at Sadi Filling Station Ltd.



PHOTOS: ABRAR SHAREQUE KHAN

In social media platforms, especially local Facebook groups about cars and car owners, issues related to bad fuel quality are discussed almost every day. What is the main cause behind this bad fuel? According to Saiful, because of adulteration and the mixing of low-grade gasoline and condensate, fuel quality is ultimately reduced. Many filling stations do not clean their fuel reservoir tanks regularly, which also reduces the quality of fuel supplied to car users.

"Approximately 10-15 cars have issues related to bad fuel, out of the 40-45 cars that come to our service centre every week," adds Saiful, who is also the CEO of a car service centre named iWorksBD. Quick maths will show that nearly 30% of the problematic cars that come to his service centre face fuel-related problems. While this figure will vary across different

service centres, it still gives a bad impression about the quality of fuel that we normally get.

We also asked Momin about how they are handling fuel-related issues since they mainly sell turbocharged cars to their customers. According to his response, they take samples of fuel from different fuel stations every 3-4 months, after which they test the samples. After getting results, they suggest their customers take fuel from filling stations that ensure quality.

Any solution?

Despite getting bad fuel, people are not stopping buying turbocharged cars. But at the end of the day, turbocharged cars cannot run efficiently if good fuel is not provided. For example, a turbocharged car's engine may make knocking sounds and jerk if it gets bad fuel.

So, is there a solution? Can ECU (Electric Control Unit) reprogramming be conducted on turbocharged cars so that they do not require a higher RON-rated fuel? Saiful answered, "I am not sure if it will work or not. But I know of an authorised car dealer who reprogrammed some of their cars' ECUs - which still did not provide any benefit. Their cars still have many troubles and low fuel efficiency."

Saiful shares some tricks and tips for turbocharged car users: "Try to be careful so that you do not fill up your car with bad fuel. Use good-quality air filters and engine oil. Engine oil must be authentic, and it should have the specification 'API SP' or 'API SN PLUS'. Change the oil within the interval of 3,000 kilometres."

Sadly, there is no permanent solution if your car regularly suffers because of bad fuel. Many use octane boosters and other additives, but these do not solve the problems long-term. The only solution is to use high-quality fuel, which we do not get on a regular basis. All we can do is take feedback from fellow turbocharged car users about where they refuel regularly. Fuel system service can also be conducted more frequently. Additionally, carbon cleaning can help reduce carbon deposits created from unburned fuel during the combustion procedure.

CREATIVITY

Why does it matter and is it fostered in our workplace?

MORIUM KULSUM

Whenever we talk about organisational success, we always shine a spotlight on the concept of 'productivity' while completely overlooking the significance of 'creativity'. The reason is rather obvious: it is easy to quantify how productivity contributes to success. The more efficient the employees, the more impressive the bottom line. Productivity plays a pivotal role in achieving business goals; however, relying solely on productivity will not guarantee lasting success.

In today's innovation-driven economy, creativity not only enables companies to navigate crises effectively but also empowers them to gain a competitive edge in the cutthroat business landscape. This is a key reason why multimillion-dollar companies are embracing creativity in offices and cultivating it from within. Let's take a closer look at how creativity is viewed in our workplaces and how leaders can nurture this invaluable trait among their employees.

Do our leaders encourage creativity?

Leaders recognise that a business emerges from the crucible of innovative ideation. However, as operations commence, they often get caught up in the fray of routine tasks and lose sight of the importance of out-of-the-box thinking.

Bayezid Hasan, who recently joined Coca-Cola Bangladesh as the Head of Supply Chain Finance and Financial Planning and Analytics (with prior experience as the Senior Finance Manager at Unilever), says that there exists a mixed landscape when it comes to the encouragement of creativity in our workplace. According to him, leaders prioritise the achievement of company goals but do not hold their employees back from embracing their creative instincts. "Employees must decide how to attain those goals: either stick to the tried-and-true old-school methods or go all out with novel approaches," he adds.

Sazid Al Kabir, a Territory Officer at Banglalink, acknowledges that in some instances, particularly within companies that reached a 'top-of-mind' status, leaders prioritise maintaining the status quo and playing it safe. "These leaders can be hesitant in embracing

change because they worry it may alienate loyal customers," Sazid says. Although our leaders may not directly impede creativity, many of them have not yet fully embraced the role of actively encouraging it within their organisations

Is creativity equally relevant to all roles?

Creativity can take on various meanings depending on the specific job and role within an organisation. Bayezid, drawing from his experience in financial planning and analytics, remarks, "For a finance person, creative thinking could mean developing innovative financial products, conducting thorough scenario analyses before making investment choices, and so much more - even though finance and creativity may seem like an unlikely pair."

Reflecting on his role as a Territory Officer, Sazid shared that the key responsibility in his position involves managing sales operations. He is aware that many sales professionals may think that their work lacks creative opportunities, feeling like they are just executing a top-down strategy. He adds, "A sales professional can hit major milestones only if he can understand the psyche of his customers and launch unique campaigns that resonate with them."

By and large, creativity is treated differently depending on the sector that an employee works in. It is highly relevant to departments like sales and marketing, whereas other domains, such as accounting, may inherently offer limited opportunities for creative exploration.

How to promote creativity in the workplace?

In Bangladesh, a growing number of leaders have come to acknowledge the value of new ideas. But they often struggle with how to actually bring out the creativity in their employees. Thus, here are six strategies you can employ to create a culture where creativity thrives.

Make creativity a priority

It cannot be denied that the responsibility for cultivating a creative culture lies squarely with the leaders. As such, top-level management should strongly and vocally champion this idea of fostering a creativity-influenced workplace. Bayezid adds, "Leaders should embody the principle of creativity through their communications and actions so that employees are inspired to emulate creative endeavours."

Give employees autonomy

To unlock a company's most important asset—its creative capital—managers need to grasp the importance of setting targets while avoiding micromanagement. Sazid had previously worked at a place where rigid guidelines dictated every course of action, which, according to him, "only stifled the creative flow and resulted in a diminished individual contribution". He adds that he has a level of autonomy in his current role, where he has the authority to design his work independently, free from constant supervision.

Facilitate cross-functional brainstorming

It should be management's mission to encourage collaboration among teams with diverse skills and strengths. Because innovation is more likely to happen when people of different disciplines, backgrounds, and areas of expertise share their thinking. "When I worked for a marketing agency," Sazid reminisced, "We would gather a cross-functional team of 10 to 12 people, including marketers, interns, and designers, to devise blended strategies for boosting sales at client restaurants."

Encourage upward communication

Hierarchical structures with multiple layers often hinder idea exchange, thereby impeding

creativity within organisations. To foster an environment conducive to creative thinking, managers must encourage open communication and active participation from employees at

all levels. Bayezid shares that his previous employer demonstrated a commitment to this principle by arranging a monthly event where any employee could directly ask questions to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Arrange idea competitions

Another way to provide intellectual challenge and inspire creative output is by arranging various idea competitions. By creating a platform where employees can submit their ideas and compete for recognition and rewards, organisations foster a culture of innovation and engagement. Both Bayezid and Sazid noted that many companies now host multiple intra-organisational idea competitions for their employees from time to time, which are great for bringing in new ideas while also being good team-building exercises.

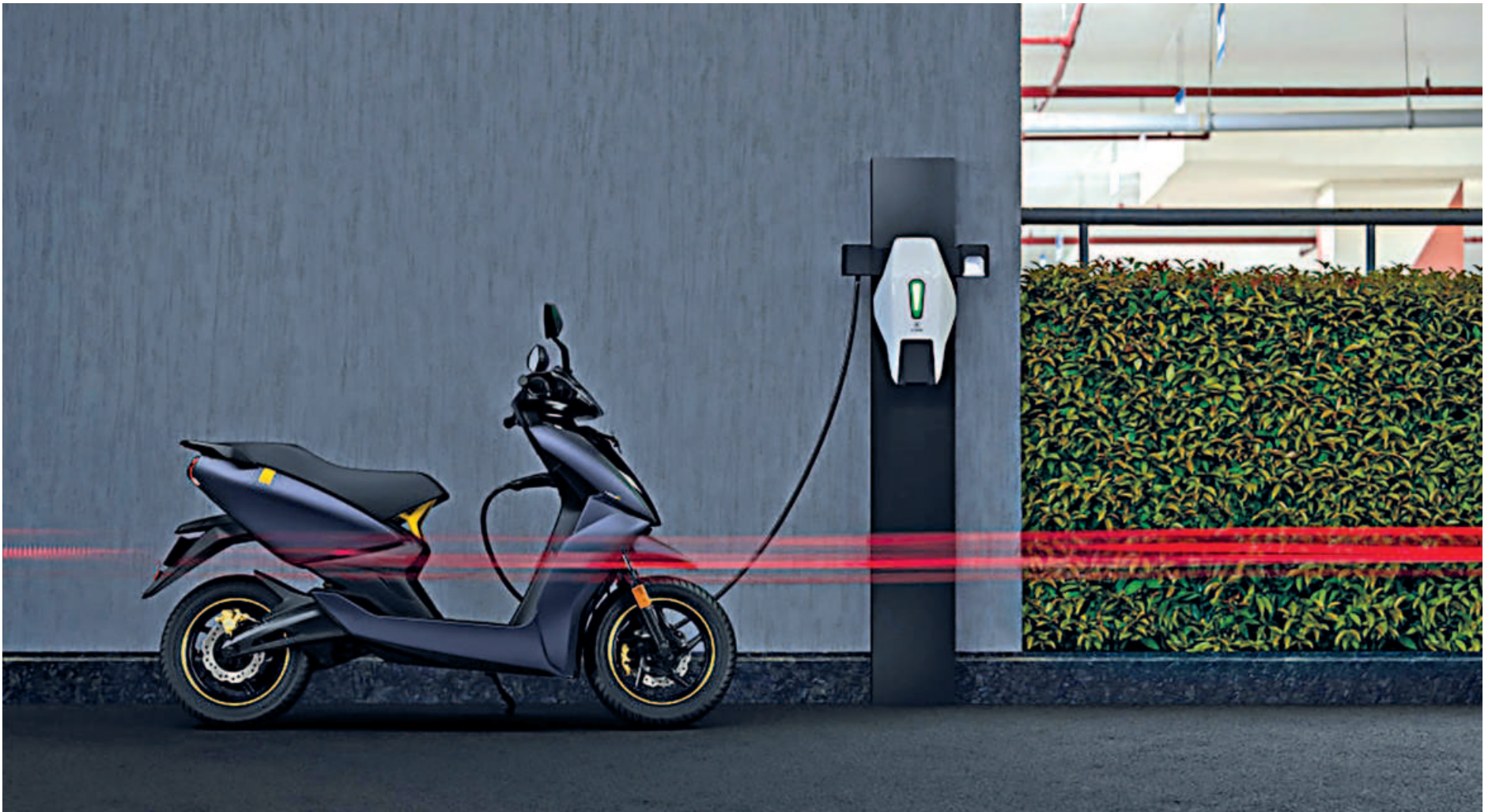
Be appreciative

While creativity requires a hands-off approach, it does not mean management's behaviour makes no difference. As Sazid points out, appreciation shown by supervisors for employees' creative endeavours can serve as a great motivator. Leaders must also take note that when employees try out new things—with their company's best interests in mind—they should not face harsh penalties if they make a mistake the first time around, as such negative reactions will discourage others.

In the event of unsuccessful attempts, Bayezid suggests that employees prepare a knowledge repository so that others can avoid making the same mistake in the future. "Also, before going all-in on an idea, employees must check in with their line manager to ensure that the same idea has not been attempted previously," he suggests.

All in all, our leaders must go beyond simply pulling the stops from creative thinking and instead take proactive steps to actively promote it among their teams. Even though creativity may be hard to demystify, it has a direct impact on business performance. Business success may not be guaranteed but what is guaranteed is that a business will face problems sooner or later, and when that happens, leaders will need creativity more than just getting things done efficiently.





Here's why Electric Vehicles are better for the environment

In recent years, the rise of electric vehicles (EVs) has revolutionised the automotive industry, offering a sustainable and environmentally friendly alternative to traditional fossil fuel-powered cars. With compelling evidence pointing to the detrimental effects of fossil fuel consumption on our planet, it is imperative that we embrace electric mobility as a key solution to combat climate change and improve air quality.

One of the most compelling reasons why electric vehicles are better for the environment is their significantly reduced greenhouse gas emissions compared to internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), transport is responsible for nearly a quarter of global carbon dioxide emissions, with the majority coming from road vehicles. EVs produce zero tailpipe emissions, meaning they do not release any carbon dioxide or other harmful pollutants directly into the atmosphere. This has a profound impact on mitigating climate change by reducing our carbon footprint.

Furthermore, transitioning to electric vehicles also helps to improve air quality, particularly in urban areas where air pollution is a persistent problem. The Union of Concerned Scientists reports that exhaust emissions from ICE vehicles contribute to smog formation and

harmful particulate matter, which have severe health implications, including respiratory illnesses and cardiovascular diseases. By embracing electric mobility, we can significantly reduce these harmful emissions, creating cleaner and healthier environments for all.

The technological advancements in battery technology and the rapid expansion of charging infrastructure have made EVs more practical and convenient than ever before. Today's electric vehicles offer impressive driving ranges, often exceeding 200 miles on a single charge. Moreover, with the development of fast-charging stations, the time required to recharge an electric vehicle has dramatically reduced, making long-distance travel a feasible option. Additionally, the overall maintenance costs of EVs are lower compared to conventional vehicles, as they have fewer moving parts and do not require regular oil changes or engine tune-ups.

Critics of electric vehicles often raise concerns about the environmental impact of battery production and the electricity sources used for charging. While it is true that manufacturing batteries involves the extraction and processing of minerals, including lithium, cobalt, and nickel, it is essential to recognise that advancements in technology are driving improvements in battery production, making it more efficient and sustainable. Moreover,

the growing renewable energy sector ensures that EVs can be powered by cleaner sources, further reducing their environmental impact.

In the context of Bangladesh, while electric vehicles hold great promise for a cleaner and sustainable future, it is important to acknowledge the current limitations, particularly the lack of EV infrastructure. Bangladesh, like many developing countries, faces challenges in terms of establishing a robust charging network and addressing range of anxiety concerns.

One of the main hurdles is the scarcity of charging stations across the country. The limited availability of charging infrastructure makes it difficult for EV owners to conveniently recharge their vehicles, especially during long journeys. The development of a widespread charging network is crucial to encourage the adoption of EVs and alleviate concerns regarding range limitations. Collaborative efforts involving the government, private sector, and international organizations can help accelerate the deployment of charging stations, both in urban areas and along major highways, enabling EV users to travel with confidence.

Moreover, the affordability and accessibility of electric vehicles pose challenges in Bangladesh. While EV technology is becoming more cost-

competitive globally, the upfront price of electric vehicles, including import duties and taxes, may still be a barrier for many potential buyers in the country. Initiatives such as tax incentives and subsidies can play a significant role in making EVs more affordable and encouraging their adoption among the general population.

Despite these challenges, the Bangladesh government has shown its commitment to promoting electric mobility. Among other initiatives, the government announced a policy that aims to have at least 15% of all vehicles on the road running on electricity by 2030 and recently the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority finalised a guideline for proper operation and registration for EVs in the country. These initiatives demonstrate a strong vision for a sustainable transport sector. To achieve this goal, it is essential to address the infrastructure gaps and collaborate with international partners to share best practices and knowledge.

While electric vehicles offer significant environmental benefits, including reduced emissions and improved air quality, their widespread adoption in Bangladesh faces challenges related to EV infrastructure and affordability. Addressing these limitations will require a collaborative approach involving government initiatives, private sector investments, and public awareness campaigns.

Air coolers vs air conditioners: Which one should you get?

As the scorching summer heat wave sweeps across Bangladesh, citizens are seeking refuge from the sweltering temperatures within the confines of their homes and offices. In this battle against the relentless heat, the choice between air coolers and air conditioners has become a pressing question for many. To make an informed decision, it is essential to weigh the factors of cost, effectiveness, size, and electricity consumption associated with these cooling solutions.

Air coolers, also known as evaporative coolers, rely on the principle of evaporation to lower the temperature in a room. These devices draw in hot air from the surroundings and pass it through water-soaked pads or filters. As the air passes through the wet pads, the water evaporates, causing the air to cool down. The cooled air is then blown back into the room, creating a refreshing breeze. This process effectively adds moisture to the air, which can be beneficial in arid climates but may lead to increased humidity in already humid regions like Bangladesh.

In contrast, air conditioners employ a refrigeration cycle to cool the air. They use a compressor, condenser, expansion valve, and evaporator to circulate a refrigerant that absorbs heat from the indoor air and releases it outside. Air conditioners are known for their ability

wider range of households in Bangladesh. On the other hand, air conditioners require a larger financial investment upfront, including installation charges and higher maintenance costs. However, it is important to consider the long-term cost implications, as air coolers tend to consume more electricity than air conditioners, leading to potentially higher energy bills over time.

Effectiveness is a crucial aspect to evaluate when determining the best cooling solution for tackling intense heat waves. Air conditioners excel in this regard, providing rapid and efficient cooling throughout the room. By extracting warm air and circulating cooled air, air conditioners can lower the temperature significantly, creating a comfortable environment even on the hottest days. In contrast, air coolers rely on the evaporation of water to cool

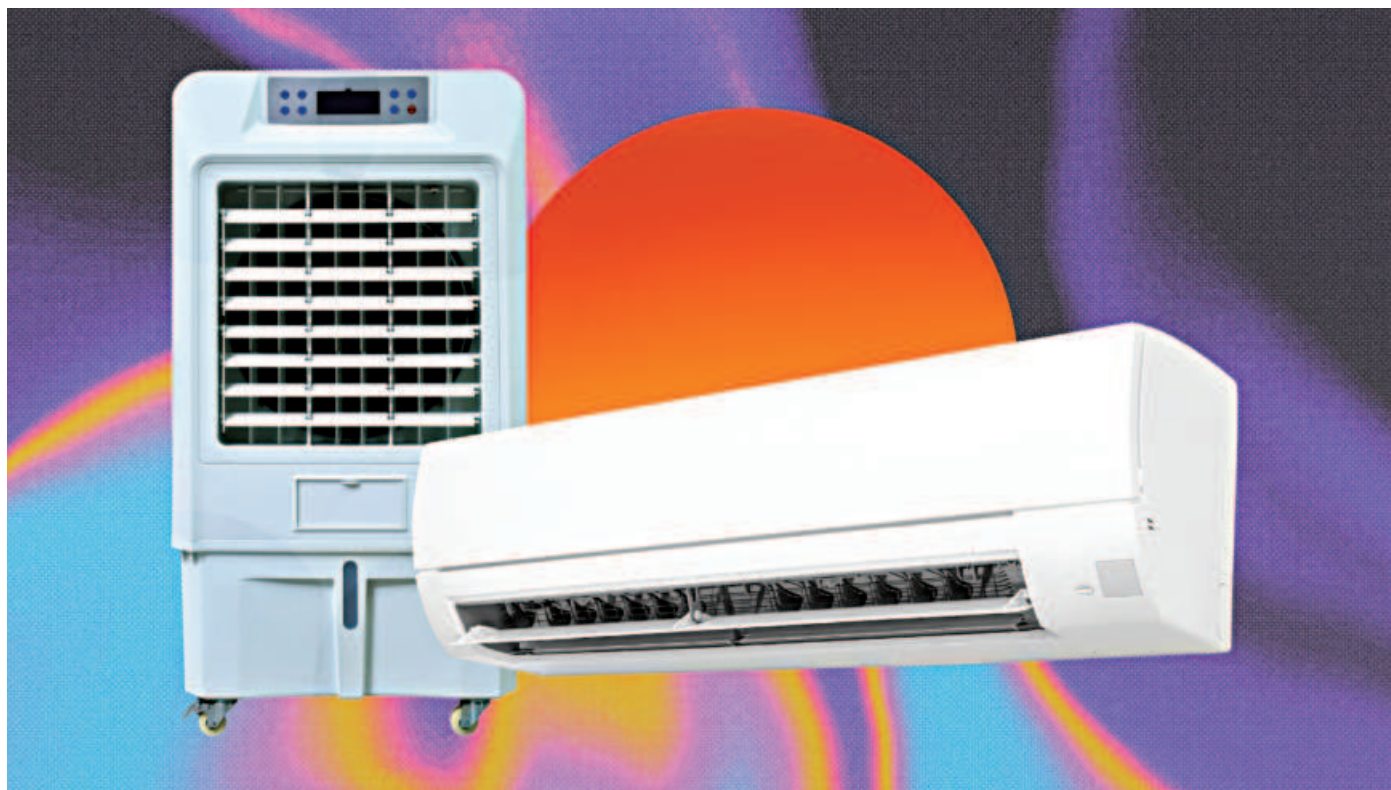
the indoor air. Furthermore, modern air conditioners come with advanced features such as programmable timers, adjustable fan speeds, and remote control options, enhancing user convenience.

Size considerations can play a significant role, particularly for those living in small apartments or houses with limited space. Air coolers are typically more compact and portable, making them easier to move around and suitable for smaller rooms. This flexibility allows users to target specific areas, ensuring a localized cool environment. Conversely, air conditioners require a fixed installation, usually mounted on walls or windows, which may pose challenges for those with limited space or renting accommodations.

In a country like Bangladesh, where energy efficiency is a crucial concern, the impact on electricity bills cannot be ignored. Air coolers consume significantly less electricity compared to air conditioners, making them a more sustainable choice in terms of energy consumption. This can be particularly appealing in areas where power supply is scarce or unreliable. However, it is important to note that air conditioners have seen improvements in energy efficiency in recent years, and newer models with energy-saving features are available in the market. When considering the long-term impact on the environment and energy costs, investing in an energy-efficient air conditioner may prove to be a more responsible choice.

Ultimately, the choice between air coolers and air conditioners boils down to individual needs, preferences, and budgets. Air coolers offer affordability, portability, and lower initial costs, making them an attractive option for smaller spaces or those on a tight budget. On the other hand, air conditioners provide superior cooling capabilities, offering rapid relief from the oppressive heat and maintaining a consistently comfortable environment. While air conditioners come with higher upfront costs and energy consumption, the investment in a more efficient model can mitigate these concerns over time.

As the heatwave continues to test the limits of endurance, the decision between air coolers and air conditioners remains a personal one. Whether it's embracing the economical cooling prowess of an air cooler or indulging in the refreshing coolness of an air conditioner, the ultimate goal is to find solace from the relentless summer heat and ensure a comfortable haven within the confines of our homes.



to rapidly cool large spaces and maintain a desired temperature consistently. They can effectively remove excess humidity from the air, making them suitable for humid regions.

When it comes to cost, air coolers undoubtedly have the upper hand. These portable devices are generally more affordable than their air-conditioning counterparts. With a relatively low purchase price and no installation costs, air coolers offer a budget-friendly cooling solution, making them accessible to a

the air, which is a less effective method in regions with high humidity, such as Bangladesh. While air coolers do provide some relief, they struggle to match the cooling power of air conditioners.

The main advantage of air conditioners lies in their powerful and precise cooling capabilities. They can quickly bring down the temperature in a room to a comfortable level, even during extreme heat waves. Air conditioners also provide better air filtration, removing dust particles, allergens, and pollutants from

RELAXY

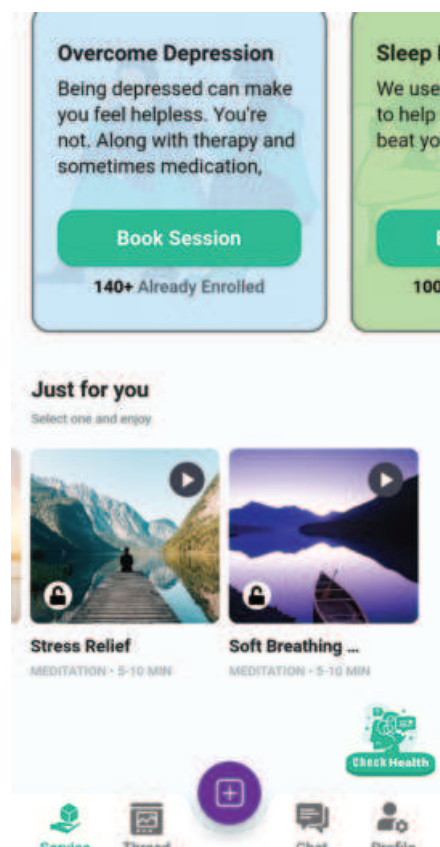
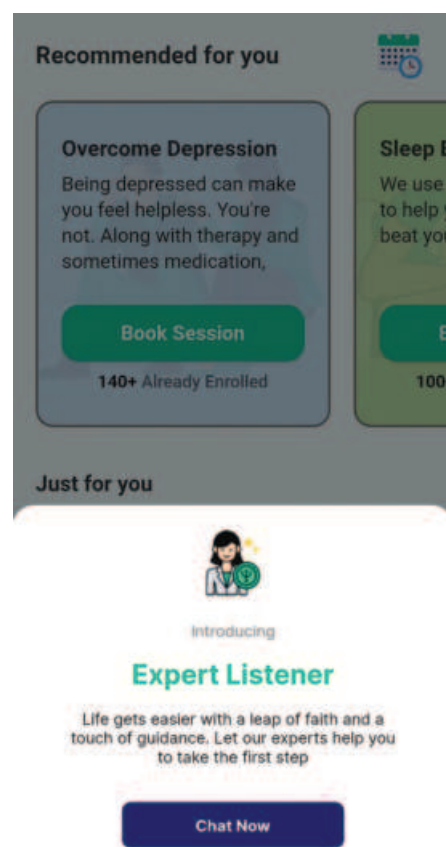
The mental health platform that's here to help

FARHAN MUSHFIQUE

Mental health is an important aspect of everyone's life. While there has been a notable increase in mental health awareness in the last few years in Bangladesh, there is still a significant amount of the population that doesn't address problems related to it. Unfortunately, not everyone has easy access to mental health facilities and therapy, which makes the need for a reliable and alternative mental health platform even more critical.

Relaxy, a locally-based mental health app, aims to provide instant, affordable, and personalised mental health care all over Bangladesh. They officially launched last year in July and since then, the app has been downloaded over 25,000 times. With 11,000 active users and partnerships with Psychological Health and Wellness Clinic (PHWC) and Kaan Pete Roi – a local mental health support helpline, the platform is growing day by day.

The Relaxy app provides users with the option to connect with mental health professionals with more than five years of experience in the field. This feature enables individuals to receive personalised care and guidance from licenced professionals regardless of time and place. Relaxy also emphasises the importance of peer support and has created a supportive community



where users can connect and discuss mental health matters with peers in their network.

Being entirely online and incorporating evidence-based practises means that users can rest assured that the app has their best interests in mind. Additionally, Relaxy values user privacy, and all data including user information is kept confidential. Users also can post and share their problems anonymously which encourages them to seek mental help and guidance.

"More than 90% of people with mental health issues don't seek help because there is a stigma on mental health problems that exist in our country," said Jahnnobi Rahman, CEO and Co-Founder of Relaxy. "It inspired us to come forward with our community platform even though there were many challenges. Surviving in an unknown industry is one of the biggest challenges that we need to overcome to reach our goal."

Jahnnobi was recently named in the Social Impact category of the 'Forbes 30 Under 30 Class of Asia' for her co-founded startup Relaxy. Jahnnobi mentioned that this achievement would not have been possible without the help of her co-founders and colleagues. When asked about aspirations for the startup, she mentioned that Relaxy's plan is quite

simple at this moment. The app is now aiming to achieve 60,000 users by this year and planning to go global, so that it can also serve users from South Asian countries like Indonesia, Nepal, India and Singapore. They are very hopeful that it will not take much time to become one of the biggest mental health platforms in South Asia.

Relaxy is a mental health app that is designed to provide support for individuals suffering from different mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression, stress, insomnia, anger issues and more. It's geared towards helping users create a personalised self-care routine to manage their mental health and allows them to track and monitor their mental wellness. The app is intuitive and simple to navigate, allowing users to quickly access resources and content. It also provides daily reminders for taking medication or engaging in a mental health activity that the user has scheduled.

Relaxy also has a vast range of mental health resources available, including guided meditations, breathing exercises, chatting with experts, self-assessment, and many other self-care activities. The app provides users with the option to connect with mental health professionals via private calls. You can book a session

with a fee starting from BDT 450 per session, with each session lasting 40 minutes. This feature enables individuals to receive personalised care from licenced professionals without being worried about the cost.

Mysha Ahmed, a CSE major from RUET, is an active user of Relaxy. When asked about her experience, she said, "I love the chat feature, where you can talk with people with the same sense of thoughts and feelings". Another university student, Shahriar Mahmud, an IR major from BUP, said, "I was hesitant to try a mental health app but this one exceeded my expectations. It has helped me feel more in control of my mental health and has improved my quality of life". He added that Relaxy has been a lifesaver for him, as he was struggling with anxiety and depression, and this app gave him the tools and resources needed to manage certain symptoms.

Mental health is a sensitive topic, and access to reliable support is essential. If you are struggling with your mental health, there are many resources available to you. You can talk to a trusted friend or family member, seek professional help, or use a platform like Relaxy. It is important to remember that you are not alone, and there is help available - you just have to reach out and look for it.

