



THE SUGGESTED MARKETING PLAN FOR NEW STUDENT ICON PACKAGE IN THE ICON DEPARTMENT OF BANGLALINK COMPANY

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Bachelor's Thesis

12. 02. 2015

Bachelor's degree (UAS)

Field of Study Social Sciences, Business and Administration			
Degree Programme Degree Programme in International Business			
Author(s) Md. Rashel			
Title of Thesis The suggested Marketing plan for new student ICON package in the ICON department of Banglalink company			
Date	12.2.2015	Pages/Appendice	64/2
Supervisor Tuula Linnas			
Client Organisation/Partners ICON department of Banglalink company			
<p>Abstract</p> <p>Banglalink Ltd. is the second largest telecommunication company in Bangladesh after Grameen phone. The ICON department is a telecommunication service department under Banglalink Company. ICON is a successful department which is bringing one fourth of the company profit. Their service is targeted to a very small target group. Therefore, it is high time for them to grab a big target group to gain more profit.</p> <p>Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were jointly used in this thesis process, which contributes to understand the current market situation and the need of the specific target group. Based on the research results, a suggestion for establishing a new package was given to the ICON department through a marketing plan.</p> <p>A SWOT analysis as a starting point is introduced for the company to establish the new package. The marketing plan suggestion as the result of the thesis includes market segmentation and targeting, market strategy, marketing communication, pricing strategy, distributing strategy, financial projection and implementation plan. The assessment of the thesis topic and research was done in the end.</p>			
Keywords Banglalink, ICON, Marketing strategy, Marketing communication, Financial capability,			
Telecommunication service, Market segmentation, Competitor analysis, Implementation plan.			

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	6
2	PRESENTATION OF BANGLALINK LTD.	8
	2.1 Market situation of Bangalink	10
	2.2 Available product packages of Banglalink and their marketing.....	11
	2.3 ICON department of Banglalink.....	12
	2.3.1 Benefits of ICON users	12
	2.3.2 Unbounded communication	13
	2.3.3 Value added services.....	14
3	NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT	15
	3.1 Product development process	15
	3.2 Service innovation process	17
4	IMPLEMENTATION OF RESEARCH.....	19
	4.1 Survey results analysis.....	19
	4.2 ICON managers interview results analysis	32
5	SUGGESTIONS FOR NEW ICON STUDENT PACKAGE.....	36
	5.1 SWOT analysis as starting point.....	36
	5.2 Marketing strategy for ICON-S package.....	40
	5.2.1 Market segmentation and market targeting for ICON-S package	41
	5.2.2 Product positioning and differentiation for ICON-S package	44
	5.3 Pricing of ICON-S	45
	5.4 Distributing of ICON-S	45
	5.5 Marketing communication for ICON-S	46
6	FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR ICON-S.....	50
7	CONCLUSIONS.....	55
	REFERENCES.....	57
	APPENDICE	61
	Appendix 1: Survey questionnaire for students.....	61
	Appendix 2: Interview questions for ICON managers.....	64

List of FIGURES

FIGURE 1. Subscribers in different telecommunication companies in Bangladesh. (btrc 2014)	10
FIGURE 2. Steps in new product development process (Kotler 2008, 551-555).....	16
FIGURE 3. The planning cycle of success for new service system (sidlaurea 2014)	17
FIGURE 4. Age group of the respondents (n=100).....	20
FIGURE 5. Monthly expense spend on mobile services (n=100).....	21
FIGURE 6. Monthly expense in mobile services according to the gender of respondents' (n=100).....	21
FIGURE 7. Information source for Banglalink ICON department knowledge (n=100)	22
FIGURE 8. Knowledge about different services of ICON packages (n=100)	24
FIGURE 9. Respondents using Banglalink services (n=100).....	24
FIGURE 10. Various operators and Banglalink Services (n=100).....	25
FIGURE 11. Decision way on choosing mobile services (n=100)	26
FIGURE 12. Factors influencing on choosing mobile services (n=100)	30
FIGURE 13. The buyer decision process for new product (Kotler 2008, 272).....	47

List of TABLES

TABLE 1. Average of factors influencing on choosing mobile services (n=100).....	31
TABLE 2. SWOT analysis of ICON-S.....	40
TABLE 3. Market segmentation criteria for ICON-S	43
TABLE 4. Monthly expenditure calculation of ICON-S.....	51
TABLE 5. Monthly revenue calculation of ICON-S	52
TABLE 6. Launching action and time for ICON-S.....	53

1 INTRODUCTION

The name of the research problem is suggested marketing plan on creating new student icon package in ICON department of Banglalink Company.

Banglalink Ltd. is a growing telecommunication company in Bangladesh. Now-a-days they are always trying to improve their services according to the need of their customers and to compete with the competitors. They have lots of services which are provided by different departments. One of the departments is called ICON department. This is a special department of Banglalink which is providing services to some specific group of people. (banglalink 2014)

Definition of research problem

Based on my working experience in Bangladesh in ICON department, I think they can attract more customers if they target students of Bangladesh as one of target group. The main aim of this thesis is to suggest a good marketing plan to Banglalink Company, for introducing new ICON student package. In this thesis broad introduction of Banglalink and ICON department will be mentioned, and present situation of telecommunication business will also be presented as background information. In the theoretical part various marketing theories will be mentioned because, these theories are the core foundation of this thesis. In addition to that market research for the suggested marketing plan will be done mostly through quantitative research and with the help of minor qualitative research. Based on relevant resources and with the help of theoretical guidance the process of creating new services and the implementation of that service will be presented through the thesis. (icongsm 2014)

Structure of the thesis report

This thesis includes five chapters, excluding introduction and conclusion chapter. Introduction chapter describes clear definition of the thesis research problem, and an outline of the whole thesis structure. The second chapter describes background information about the case company and their current condition is also described briefly. Theoretical part plays a vital role in this thesis so third and fourth chapter are combined information of theoretical knowledge and real life survey and interviews. Fifth chapter describe the suggestion based on survey and interview results. Sixth chapter describes the financial projection of the research on the basis of previous annual report. Sixth chapter also portray the recommended implementation process of the research. In this chapter research objective is also interpreted, as well as the methods used for data collection and analyses of data are described.

Quantitative and qualitative research methods are jointly used, which contributes to the diversity of the research outcome. Based on the chapters research result, summary of the whole thesis is expressed in conclusion chapter.

2 PRESENTATION OF BANGLALINK LTD.

Banglalink is one of the famous telecommunication companies in Bangladesh. Their main aim is to continuously improve their services by developing their consumer based strategies. They have started their journey in February, 2005 with a simple mission “bringing mobile telephony to the masses”. They have changed the phone status from luxury to the necessity for general people. Banglalink got 1 million subscribers within December 2005 and 3 million subscribers by October 2006. Within two years it becomes the second largest telecommunication company in Bangladesh with 7.1 million subscribers. It currently has 29.45 million subscribers as of April 2014. (banglalink 2014)

Banglalink has grown in past years because of their innovative products and services, immense improvement of network quality, reliable customer care and creating distributed network system all over the country. Banglalink has also established a strong emotional connection with their customers. The mission statement of Banglalink is ‘Making difference’. Here the statement means making difference in the society. They are always working for the betterment of the society. Their mission statement always can be seen in their advertisement as well as their promotional activities. Whatever they do for marketing their product they use the statement because it has an emotional impact on the people of Bangladesh. (banglalink 2014)

Banglalink remained committed to the citizen of Bangladesh in making difference in the socio-economic development of Bangladesh. The company introduces several projects every year for the welfare of the community. At the same time the company is also taking care about the environment. Since 2005, Banglalink has been cleaning the world’s longest sea beach, Cox’s bazaar. Under this project many people are working in various groups in different shifts. This project is still going on and it has a compact impact on customers mind. Cox’ bazaar sea beach is another emotional influence for the people of Bangladesh and Banglalink is using the beach for the betterment of the society as well as attracting the customers. Since 2009, Banglalink is arranging concert for collecting blanket or winter clothes for the underprivileged rural people inside Bangladesh. People who are able to donate winter clothes or blanket they can go to the concert and enjoy the concert for free. These kinds of events are free of cost for the people and at the same time Banglalink are attracting more customers by their social activities. (banglalink 2014)

Banglalink Ltd has customers all over Bangladesh. It has covered all 64 districts of Bangladesh. Banglalink has approximately 3990 customer service point all over the country. Only in Dhaka city they have around 1500 customer service point. The company also has 2600 call center for online customer service, which are available 24/7. Banglalink Company has spread all over the country very rapidly and their next plan is to go to every union of the country as they have already reached all the districts. Banglalink is one of the best telecommunication company as well as the biggest inside the company. Their market shares are growing day by day and they are the first Telecommunication Company who gets profit in their early stage of business. Banglalink has their production factory situated in Chittagong. All the necessary products for the company are produced there. (banglalink 2014)

In present market situation, with so many packages and special offers from the telecommunication companies, most people are frustrated and confused, especially with the billing system. People are calculating their billings in terms of BDT per minute. With so many options, people are spending more than half the time in calculating which package, on what day, and at which time would give them the maximum benefit. Banglalink has launched per second charged service by keeping this on mind. While other operators are charging per minute. Which creates an immense buzz in the telecommunication business. (banglalink 2014)

2.1 Market situation of Bangalink

Telecommunication industry in Bangladesh is growing very rapidly. Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) at the end of 2013 declared that, the total number of cell phone subscribers is 114.808 million as on January 2014. It was 72.963 million at the end of March 2011. These numbers prove that telecommunication industry is in its growth stage. (btrc2014)

Banglalink is one of the fastest growing mobile operators from Bangladesh. It holds the second position in this market after Grameenphone. Around 28.932 million people are now using Banglalink's services. It's a huge success for this company because Banglalink is not a pioneer company of this market. At present, Grameenphone, Robi, Teletalk, Airtel, Citycell and Banglalink are running telecommunication business. In Figure 1 is given their market share through a chart:

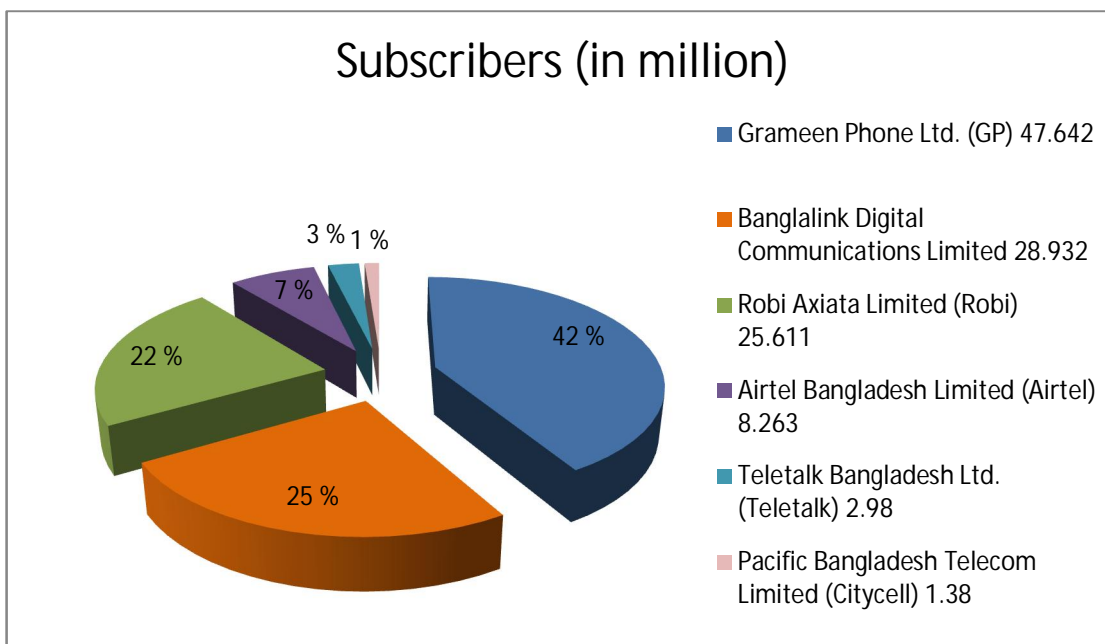


FIGURE 1. Subscribers in different telecommunication companies in Bangladesh. (btrc 2014)

2.2 Available product packages of Banglalink and their marketing

Banglalink has different types of product packages targeting different groups of people. Banglalink has all kinds of target groups regarding their packages. In one sentence their target groups are those people who are using mobile phones. In current situation Banglalink has three types of packages which are pre-paid, post-paid and priyjon. In pre-paid packages they are offering:

1. Banglalinkdesh
2. Banglalink play
3. Banglalinkdesh hello package
4. Banglalinkdeshek rate
5. Banglalinkdeshek rate darun
6. Banglalinkdesh 7 fnf, Banglalinkdesh 10 fnf
7. 1 second pulse.

In post-paid packages they have Banglalink inspire and Banglalinksmc. Pre-paid packages are targeting young generation of the country and Banglalink has been quite successful with these packages. Post-paid packages are for adult people and business people inside the country. Their post-paid packages are not as successful as pre-paid packages. (banglalinkpacakges 2014)

Banglalink is using different communication channels for different target groups. Young people watch television a lot in Bangladesh, that's why Banglalink always advertises in television those packages targeted to young people. Another advertising strategy is that, they advertise in newspapers those packages which are targeted to aged people (40+). Some special packages information is provided directly to the targeted personnel. Priyjon package is one of them. In priyjon package Banglalink has made partnership with most regular user organizations all over the country and they are using these organizations in their promotion. People who are using priyjon are getting certain amount of discount in buying things from the partner organizations of priyjon. Priyjon department of Banglalink made partnership with different types of organizations such as food and beverage companies, entertainment companies, fashion companies, daily shopping centres, electronic companies, and tourism places. They have also introduced an insurance policy named priyjon insurance. As Banglalink is a known company all over the country, people can have faith on their services. Another remarkable promotional action they are using is the face of Shakib al Hasan. He is the number one all-rounder cricketer in the world and people of Bang-

ladesh follow him blindly. As role model he is the perfect person for promotion. The strategy Banglalink generally use is remarkable. (banglalinkpriyojon 2014)

2.3 ICON department of Banglalink

ICON is a premium telecom brand of the country under Banglalink Company. ICON means many things additional rather than only a mobile connection. ICON provides all kinds of solution what a mobile user needs with some extra added value with the service. ICON users are part of selected group of people, who are highly valued and well taken care clients. ICONS also provide a variety of exclusive lifestyle facilities and events for their users. (icongsm 2014)

2.3.1 Benefits of ICON users

Most common benefit ICON users are getting, there is a dedicated ICON manager who is giving nonstop service. Every ICON client has an individual ICON manager, who is responsible for fulfilling the needs of an ICON client. ICON users are first priority to get known about all new different kinds of offers and facilities through partner outlet. There are sometimes special occasion arranged inside the Banglalink Company and ICON subscribers are always invited to those events. ICON users get the company services with minimum time period, if they are facing any problem regarding ICON services. ICON users are CIP (chief important people) people in the country, so they count as a VVIP (very very important person) customer for the ICON department. (peperonity 2014)

ICON customer care

ICON department provides the best customer care service in the country. There are team of customer care representatives, who are dedicated especially only for ICON subscribers. They always ensure that ICON users get the best service and they get the service with high priority. A dedicated ICON manager will always answer to any of the service required by ICON user. ICON managers are responsible to provide these services 24 hours in any day of the week. ICON users do not need to bother about customer care; they always get the special treatment directly from care centre managers. (iconcustomer care 2014)

2.3.2 Unbounded communication

ICON users always get the most beneficial deal available in the country. It doesn't matter what package an ICON user is using, he/she can make calls as much as he/she want. There is no call limit for them and the connection never gets disconnected for over calling. This facility also goes same for the sms service and internet service. ICON users who are using over calling, over sms and internet facilities, they can also earn some loyalty point, if they pay the dues in the right times. After achieving a certain amount of loyalty point, ICON user can win exclusive prizes. ICON users can have handset equipped with the latest feature at competitive price provided by their handset partners. (iconunbounded 2014)

Convenient accessibility

ICON managers are responsible for giving all kind of services to ICON users. ICON managers will help the ICON users with all customized digital information and using of internet facilities. Usually ICON users use email to be connected with different people. If any user faces any problem regarding email issue, then ICON manager will help to recover the problem. Internet is a necessity for daily life now-a-days. ICON manager is responsible to setup the internet through a modem or by using handset of ICON users. It depends on the wish of the users but ICON managers can give suggestion to the users according to the needs of the user. (iconaccessibility 2014)

International roaming

It doesn't matter which part of the globe the ICON users visit, they will always be connected with people with an ICON's attractive offers on international roaming. ICON manager will assist the user how to activate roaming and even assist further if they require while activating this service. (iconinternational 2014)

2.3.3 Value added services

The main facility ICON users are getting is some value added services what makes them feel special. They can use call blocking option very easily and without any bother. ICON users are usually business people inside the country so, they always want to be updated with stock exchange information. There is an application by default for ICON users that is called stock info, which gives 24 hours live news feeds of Dhaka and Chittagong stock exchange. In Bangladesh there are two Stock Exchange Companies and ICON is getting news from both of them. ICON users can use internet everywhere even if they are not using internet package. He just needs to send a message to ICON manager and ICON manager will activate the internet service to be used within one minute. There is always possibility to lose handset and with the people who usually lose everything they had in their handset. ICON users don't face these kinds of problems as their mobile phone data including contacts, calendar, sms, photos, videos, audios etc. are backed up by ICON backup service. (icongsm 2014)

ICON users get another value added service which is called vehicle tracking. This service observes fuel cost, mileage, arrival, departure, speed report from a remote location. When ICON user is busy or out of network or maybe he/she switched off the mobile phone, then the service call alert inform the user about the calls when the user open the mobile phone or come to the network again. Paying electricity bills or water bill in Bangladesh is difficult process. The person might need to wait in the long queue for whole day. ICON users are busy people of the country and they want to be out of this stress. ICON also provides bill pay services for their users. ICON representative is responsible to pay all the bills on behalf of the ICON user. Mobile remittance is another service for ICON users, who are using foreign currency for their business or personal purpose. This is a high secure, reliable, fast and cost effective system provided by ICON department. ICON users also get international sms service, conference call service, and visit yellow pages of Bangladesh for navigation service. These are value added services which are making ICON users feel special and different from other operator service users. (icongsnavs 2014)

3 NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

The world is changing very rapidly in consumer tastes, technologies and competition. That's why a company needs to consider many streaming information before launching new product or service. A company can introduce new product or service in two ways. One of the ways is buying the whole company, a patent or a licence to make someone else's product. Another way is to introduce new product or service through market research. Introducing new product or service through a market research means product improvement, product notification and new brand that the firm develops through their research and development efforts. (Kotler 2008, 551-555)

3.1 Product development process

Creating a new product idea can be done by using internal sources and external sources such as customers, competitors, distributors, suppliers etc. Sometimes very good innovative idea comes from observing and listening to customers. The company can analyse customer queries and survey to find out new product ideas which can full fill their needs. (Kotler 2008, 551-555)

Effective product innovation is driven by a well-defined new product strategy, which gives direction for new product innovation. Second step for new product development is to generate ideas. Idea generation can be done from internal sources for example: idea from people, who are working in the company or company personnel. Another idea generator source is external source, who are customers. Once some ideas are generated then the best idea need to be chosen through idea screening process. After idea screening one ides needs to be selected, this is called concept development and testing process. Product concept is a detailed version of the idea stated in meaningful consumer term. Once the idea is developed, then the marketing strategy and the analysis of business need to be done carefully. These are very important issues for launching new product in the market. After that the product should be developed and some product sample can be used for test the market. Next step is to commercialization of the product. Commercials help the customer to know about the product and it also helps to increase the number of potential customers. (Kotler 2008, 551-557)

According to Kotler the new product development process for finding and growing new products consists of nine main steps:

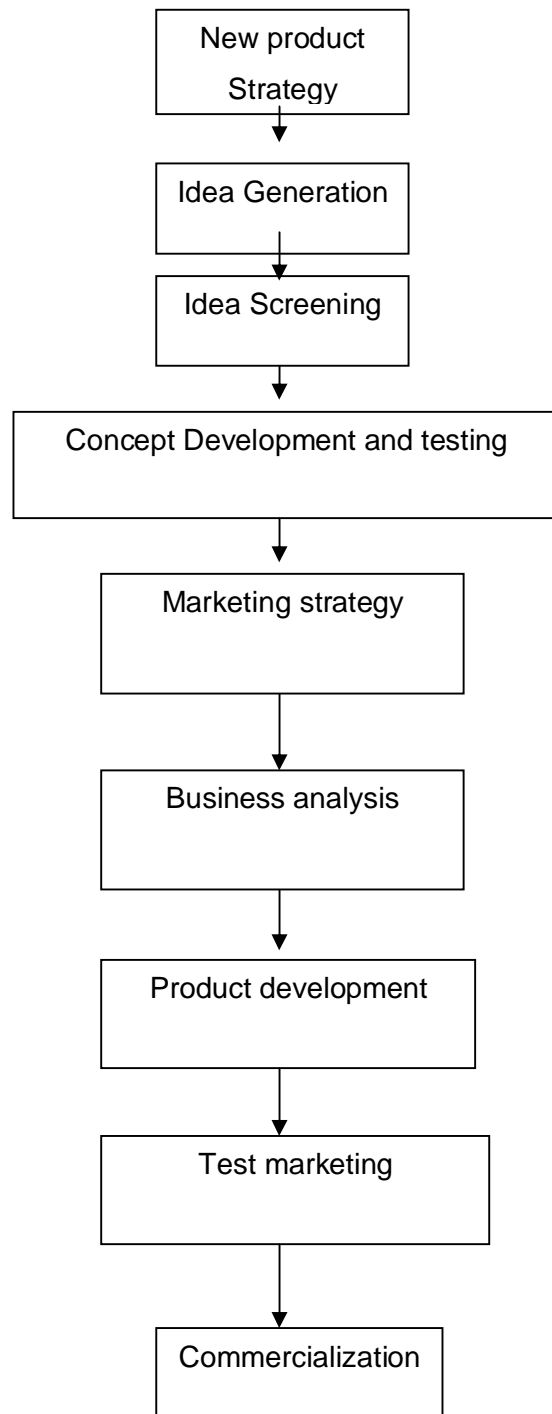


FIGURE 2. Steps in new product development process (Kotler 2008, 551-555)

In this research a new service for ICON department in Banglalink Company will be suggested through research and development process. In this case it will be relied mostly on external resource such as students as they are the main target customers for the new innovative service. Also internal resources such as company managers will be interviewed to generate new ideas for the new service innovation.

3.2 Service innovation process

Service explains the customer's perception and the perception varies as customer needs are different. The overall quality of the service relies on the quality of the resources and it can satisfy customers if it hits customer needs. There are different views of different persons about introducing new service. The most recommended is research and development. It means doing the proper research is the key of success for new service innovation. The research should be done properly and with proper and reliable sources, then the percentage of success is very high. Before doing research proper planning of research is also a vital part in case of service innovation. In this research the author surveys the targeted customers for getting genuine and reliable information, and will decide what types of needs the customers have. Figure 3 given below, shows the steps of the planning cycle of success for new service system. (Edvardsson 2000, 29)

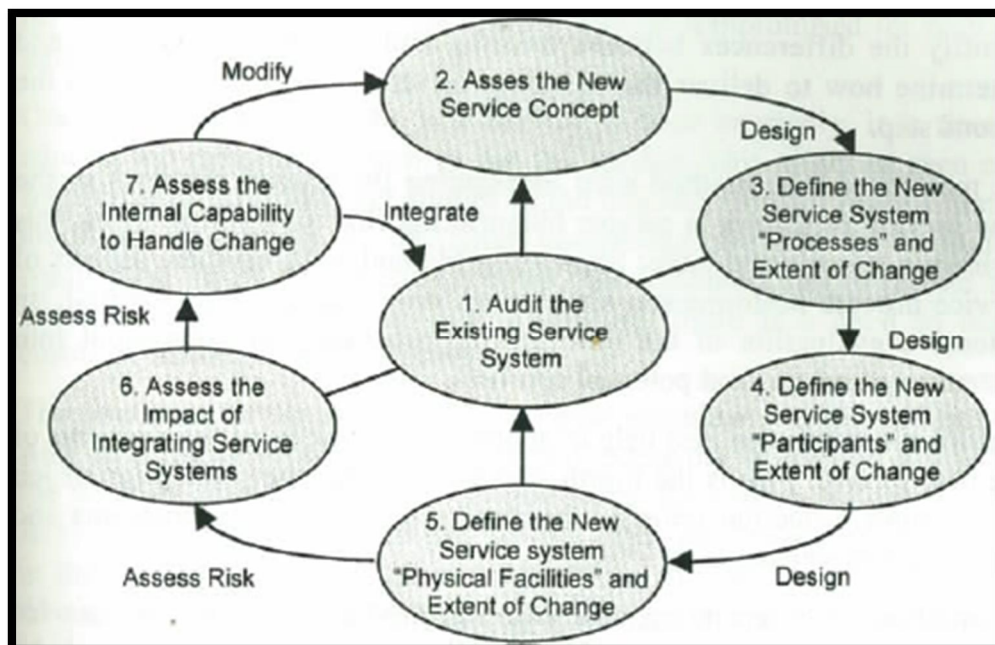


FIGURE 3. The planning cycle of success for new service system (sidlaurea 2014)

Service innovation process includes some steps also. First step is to audit the existing services. First a company must find out the competitor available in the market for same kinds of service. After that assessment needs to be done as compared to existing competitors. It also means assess the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities for new service. Then it is time to define the new service appropriately, which means what will be the features for new service. After that the potential customer groups needs to be set as target group. Which group of people have possibility to use the new service, it needs to be defined. After that physical facilities also need to be defined to potential customers. Once everything is done then the company will analyse the risks related with new service. The company needs to find out what kinds of risks available in the market and inside the company. Then the company will also analyse what kinds of risk handling capability they have to launch new service. (sidlaurea 2014)

4 IMPLEMENTATION OF RESEARCH

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods have been used in this thesis. With the help of Zubair Ahmed (Student in United International University, Dhaka), there were 100 questionnaires as final research sample for the thesis. The questionnaires were distributed in five universities situated in the capital city Dhaka, in Bangladesh, in December, 2014. In each university 20 questionnaires were provided. Zubair visited every university personally for distributing questionnaires. These universities were North south university, Brac university, American international university, Ahsanullah university of science and technology and United international university. All the universities are situated in Dhaka city of Bangladesh.

With the support of an ICON Manager two other ICON Managers Mustafizur Rahman and AnisulHaque have been interviewed as qualitative research purpose. The interview was done through skype on 26th of December 2014. ICON managers were in the main branch of ICON department in Mohakhali, Dhaka.

4.1 Survey results analysis

Author divides the chapter into two parts to present the questionnaire research results; First part describes background information of respondents, and second part describes respondents' impression on telecommunication companies of Bangladesh, Banglalink Company, ICON department and further information about their needs, and factors influencing them to consume telecommunication services. All respondents fulfilled first nine questions, however, there were only a few answers from the last open question; the limited time is the main reason for that.

Background information of Respondents

Among 100 respondents of the questionnaire research, there were 50 females and 50 males' respondents. Questionnaires were distributed equally according to gender to get proper idea about their thinking differences. These respondents were belonging to 5 different universities. These universities were United International University, American International University-Bangladesh, North-South University, BRAC Uni-

versity and Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology. About the age groups of the respondents, considering about people who are students and use telecommunication services in their daily life, so the starting age was 15, every 5 years was a group, and totally there were 4 age groups. Figure 4 presents respondents division in different age group.

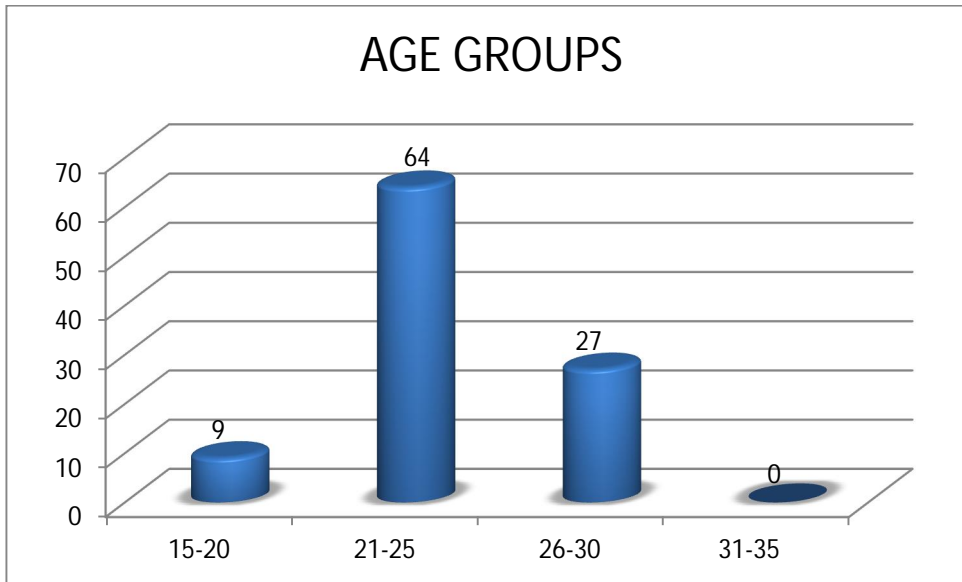


FIGURE 4. Age group of the respondents (n=100)

In Figure 4 it can be seen that, in the age group from 21 to 25 years the number of respondents was the biggest 64 person which is the same as 64 % because the total number of respondents was 100. After that, in the age group from 26 to 30 years occupied 27 % and from 15 to 20 years age group took 9 %. There were no respondent belonging from 31 to 35 years age group.

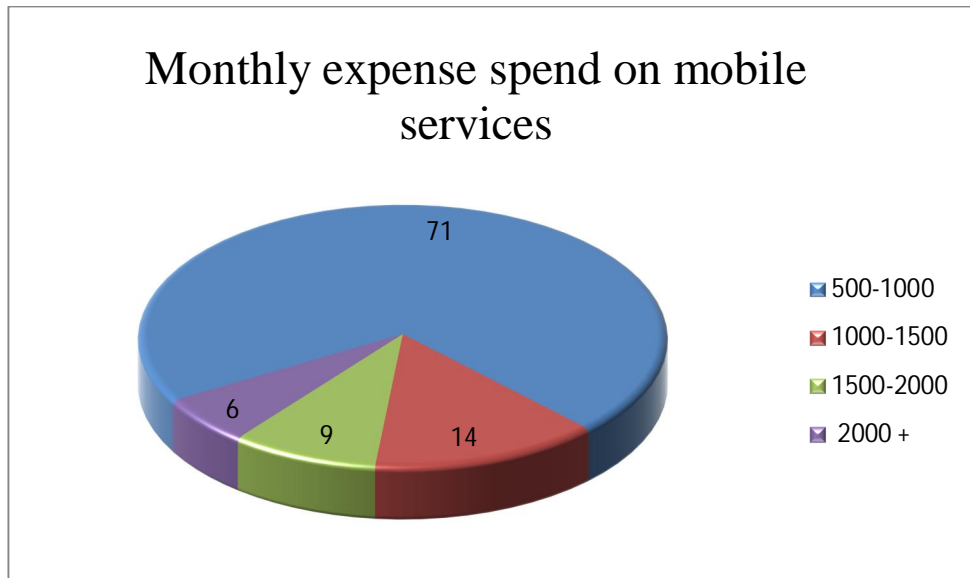


FIGURE 5. Monthly expense spend on mobile services (n=100)

The intention of third question was to get the idea of the monthly expenses on telecommunication services by students. Figure 5 shows, 71 % of them are spending BDT 500- 1000. 14 % are spending BDT 1000-1500, 9 % are spending BDT 1500-2000 and only 6 % are spending more than BDT 2000 per month. BDT stands for Bangladesh Taka where 100 BDT= 1 Euro.

The author tried to analyse data on monthly expenses according to respondents' gender. As the survey was done on 50 male and 50 female students, it is clearly showing in Figure 6, that monthly phone expense doesn't vary so much due to gender.

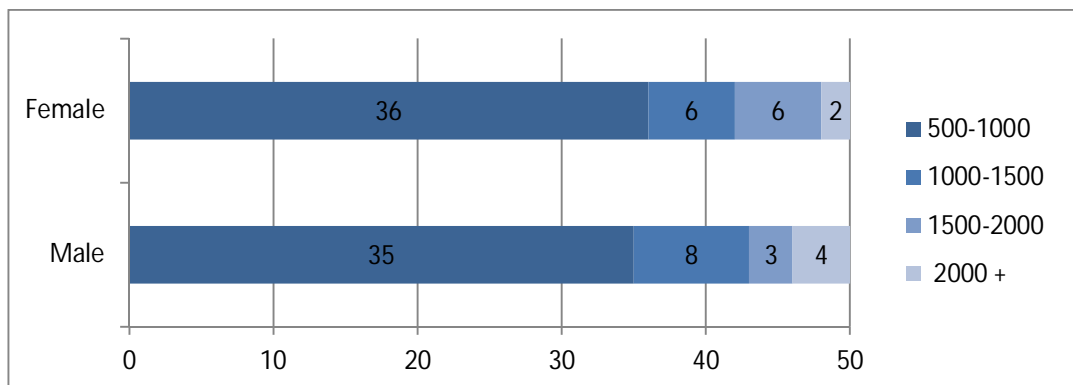


FIGURE 6. Monthly expense in mobile services according to the gender of respondents' (n=100)

In question no. 4, the author asked the target students, do they know about Bangla-linkl CON department and if they know about ICON department then how? Figure 7 shows that, 98 % of them answered they know about this package and 2 of them didn't know about it. Among 98 students, 10 of them know about it through friends and family, 26 of them know about it from newspaper/ article, 29 of them know about it from Internet sources and 33 students know about it through TV.

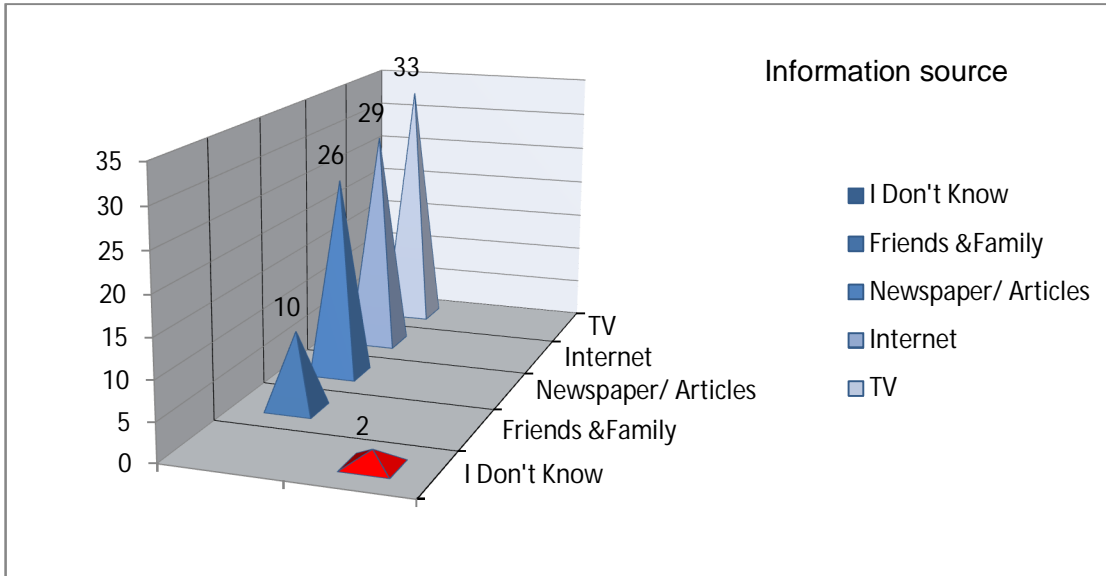


FIGURE 7. Information source for Banglalink ICON department knowledge (n=100)

Question no. 5 was asked to know how well the respondents know about ICON packages. The author asked them to rate nine different options of Banglalink ICON packages. Rating scale was: 4 for very well known, 3 for known, 2 for partly know and 1 for unknown. As is presented in Figure 8, 98 students answered those questions which were:

1. Bundles of ICON: 12 respondents marked very well-known which is 4 in the rating scale. 68 students marked 3 (Known). 18 respondents rate it 2 (partly known).
2. Prices of ICON bundles: The price is known to 51 respondents which is rated 3 in our scale, but no one rated it 4 (very well known). 37 respondents rated it with 2 (partly known). Rest 10 respondents gave it 1 which is unknown.
3. Call limit of bundles: No respondents rated it with 4 (very well known). 24 respondents rated it as 3 (known), 54 respondents said 2 (partly known) and 20 rated 1(unknown).

4. Text message limit of bundles: It seems that text message limit of Icon package is not very well known. Only one respondents rate it with 4 (very well known). On the other hand, 15 of them rate it with 1 which means it's unknown to them. Most of them marked it with 2 (partly known) which are 45 respondents, and rest of 36 respondents rated it 3 (known).
5. Internet usage limit: Internet is now playing a significant role for choosing any phone packages in Bangladesh. Here we see that ICON's Internet usage limit are very well known to 7 respondents. It's rated by 3 (known) by 46 respondents. 33 respondents rated it with 2 (partly known) and 13 respondents rated 1 (unknown).
6. Contact recovered service: This service seems most likely unknown to most of them. 39 respondents rated it with 1 (unknown). 35 respondents rated it with 2 (partly known), 23 respondents rated as 3 (known), but no one rated 4 (very well known).
7. Shopping partners: Shopping partners of Icon package is also rated by 1 (unknown) by 43 respondents which is the highest. 36 respondents rated it with 2 (partly known), 18 says 3 (known) and it's very well known by only 1 respondent.
8. Restaurant partners: No respondents rated 4 (very well known) to this section. Moreover the biggest group which is 77 respondents rated it 1, which means it is unknown to them. Then 18 respondents rated it with 2 (partly known), and 4 respondents rated it with 3 (known).
9. Event partners: Like restaurant partners, event partners are also unknown to most of them. 51 respondents rated it 1 (unknown). 35 respondents gave it 2 (partly known), 12 of them rated it with 3 (known). No respondent gave 4 (very well known).

Even though 98 respondents said that they know about ICON packages but it seems that they are not very aware about the facilities of ICON packages and their services.

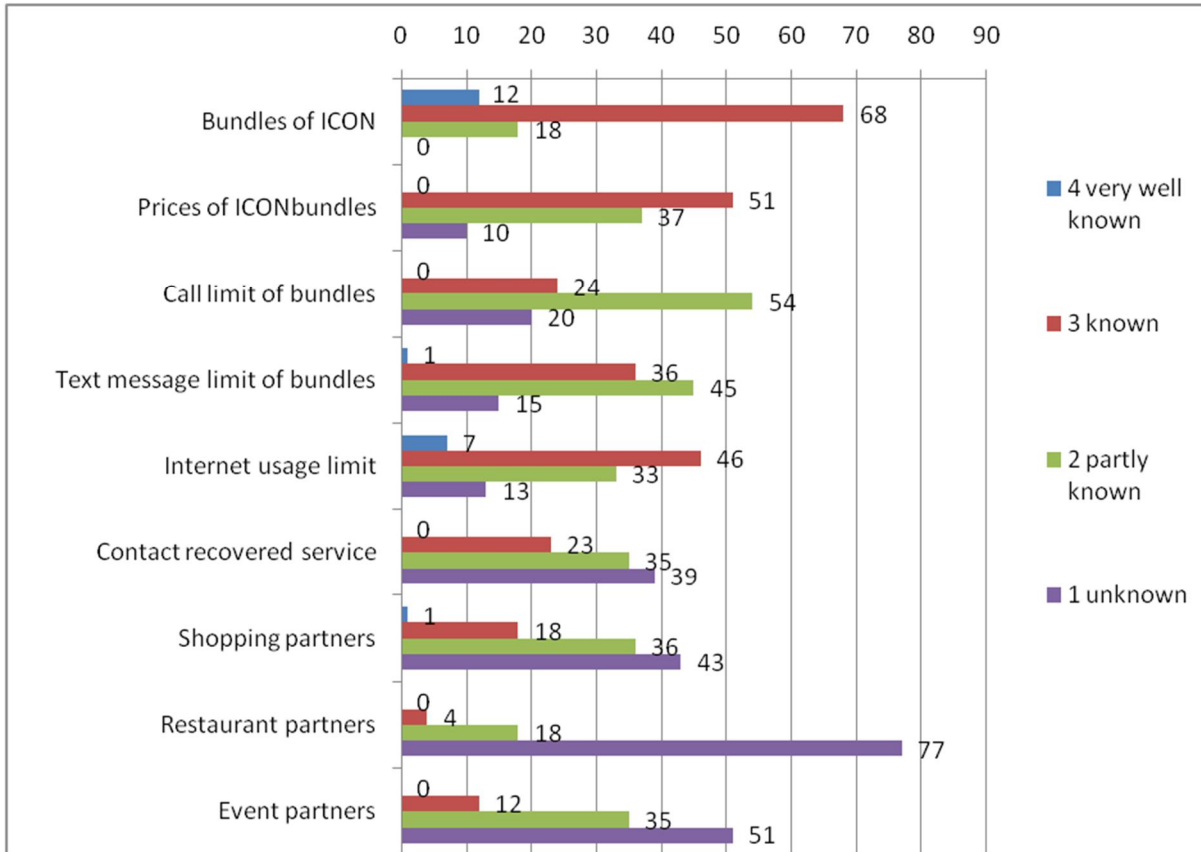


FIGURE 8. Knowledge about different services of ICON packages (n=100)

The intention of the next question was to know how many of the respondents are using any Banglalink service and in next it was asked which services they are using, if they are not using Banglalink services. As is shown in Figure 9, 45 % of targeted respondents were using Banglalink service. Other 55 % respondents are using other services.

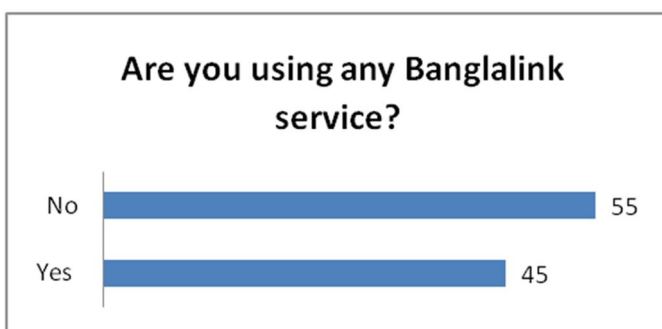


FIGURE 9. Respondents using Banglalink services (n=100)

In figure 10, it can be seen that, a big portion of respondents are using Grameen Phone services. Grameen Phone has the largest market share in Bangladesh and it is also reflected in the survey results. 42 out of 55 respondents are using Grameen Phone. 7 respondents are using Robi. 6 of them are using Teletalk. There were not any Citycell or Airtel users. According to the survey results, it can be said that, Grameen Phone Company is the biggest competitor for ICON packages.

Among 45 respondents who are using Banglalink service, 27 indicate that they are using Banglalink Prepaid service. Other 18 respondents are using Banglalink Priyojon service. It is certain that respondents are not using post-paid or any other services of Banglalink.

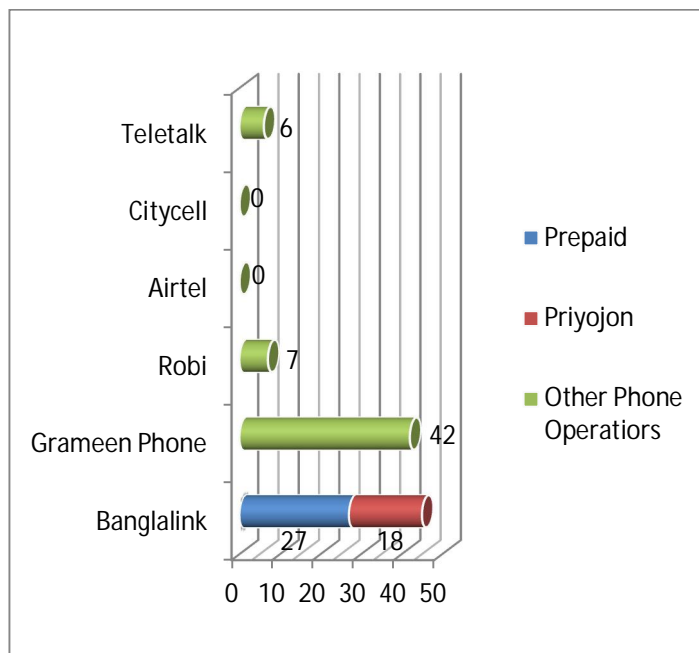


FIGURE 10. Various operators and Banglalink Services (n=100)

Next question in the survey questionnaire was “How do you make decision on buying mobile services?” Most of the respondents answered it with the ‘I decide’ option. As is presented in Figure 11, 64 % respondents are taking decision by themselves. 7 % of them said they are taking decision by them and with their family. It means family suggestion is also an important factor that they care about. Only 2 % respondents answered with the option “My family decides.” The second largest group implies that the decision directly influenced by their friends. 27 % of respondents are influenced by their friends.

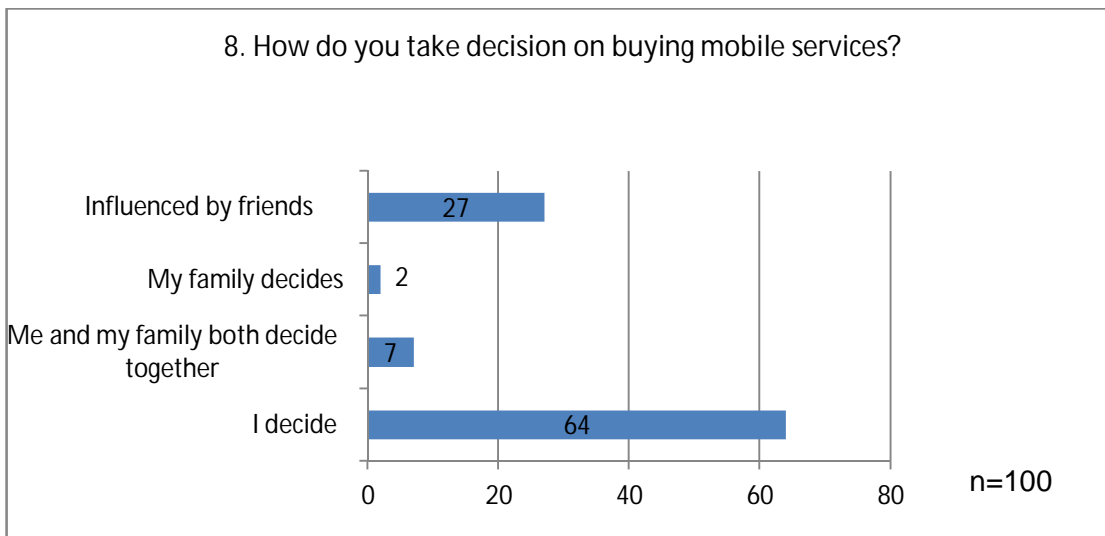


FIGURE 11. Decision way on choosing mobile services (n=100)

In survey questionnaire, where 15 factors were given and asked how much respondents are influenced by these factors, when buying mobile services. Questions were rated by scale of 1 to 4, where 1 is not important at all, 2 is not very important, 3 is quite important and 4 is very important. Our target respondents answered these questions from their perspectives which can be seen in Figure 12. These 15 factors are described below according to the results of survey.

1. Brand Awareness: The survey results show that most of the student found it quite important, which was 3 in scoring scale. 15 respondents rated it with 4 (very important), 56 respondents rated it with 3 (quite important), 24 respondents rated it with 2 (not very important) and 5 respondents rated it with 1 (not important at all).

2. **Service Quality:** In the survey result it seems that, service quality is most important factor to the respondents. The largest portion which is 69 respondents have rated it 4 (very important). On the other hand no student rated it with 1 (not important at all). That means service quality is one of the main factors that influence them most. Again 18 respondents rated it with 2 (not very important) and 13 respondents said it is quite important to them.
3. **Sales Representative Service:** Survey results show that it's an important factor for choosing a phone service. 54 respondents gave it 4 (very important). 18 respondents marked it with 3 (quite important). 23 respondents rated it with 2 (not very important), and 5 respondents come up with 1 (not important at all).
4. **After Sales Service:** This is another important factor indicated by targeted respondents. 58 respondents rated it as a very important factor. Other 23 respondents rated it 3 (quite important), and 19 respondents rated it as 2 (not very important). No one rated it as 1 (not important at all). This implies that, it's an unavoidable factor to them for buying phone service.
5. **Price:** Price of phone service is very important to 36 respondents, quite important to 44 respondents, not very important to 11 respondents and not important at all to 9 respondents.
6. **Availability in the Market:** This survey result tells that, this factor has different appeal to different respondents. 39 respondents rated it as a very important factor which is 4 to our scoring scale. On the other hand 34 respondents, which are very close to 39, rated it as not very important factor which is 2 in this scale. Other 27 respondents gave it 3 (quite important), but no one rated it as 1 (not important at all).
7. **Network Availability:** This is one of the most important factors influencing respondents on choosing mobile services. 69 respondents see it as 4 (very important) factor, 18 respondents rated it as 3 (quite important), 13 respondents rated it as 2 (not very important). No respondents rated it as 1 (not important at all).

8. Advertisement: Only 6 respondents gave it 4 (very important). 33 of them rated it as 3 (quite important), 52 respondents rated it as 2 (not very important) and 9 of them rated it as 1 (not important at all).
9. Events (concerts, stage drama etc.): Very few respondents are interested to these factors. Only two of them rated it as 3 (quite important), whereas no one see it as 4 (very important). 21 respondents gave it 2 (not very important) and the largest portion which is 77 respondents rated it with as 1 (not important at all).
10. Special Offers: 10 of them rated special offers by 4 (very important). 33 respondents rated it with 3 (quite important), 32 respondents rated it with 2 (not very important) and 9 of them rated it as 1 (not important at all).
11. Internet Sales: This service is still quite new to Bangladeshi respondents. However the largest group of this survey's respondents didn't find it important. 94 of them answered this factor with 1 (not important at all). Only 6 of them gave it 2 (not very important). No respondents rated it either 3 (quite important), or 4 (very important).
12. Telecommunication Sales: Like internet sales, telecommunication sales also seems useless to the respondents. 85 respondents come up with 1 (not important at all) and other 14 rated it with 2 (not very important). Only one student gave it 3 (quite important) and no one marked on 4 (very important).
13. Role Model: We didn't get any student who claims it as 4 (very important factor). Moreover only 5 of them recommend it as 3 (quite important). 21 respondents come up with 2 (not very important) and rest of 74 respondents rated it with 1 (not important at all).

14. Recommendation from Family and Friends: 5 respondents from 100 noted it as very important factor which is 4 to our measuring scale. 21 respondents rated it 3 (quite important). Here the largest group goes with 2 (not very important) which contains 68 respondents. Other 6 respondents rated it with 1 (not important).

15. Other Users Evaluation: Only one student answered it with 4 (very important). 18 respondents rated it 3 (quite important), 61 rated it with 2 (not very important) which is largest and 20 of them rated it by 1 (not important at all).

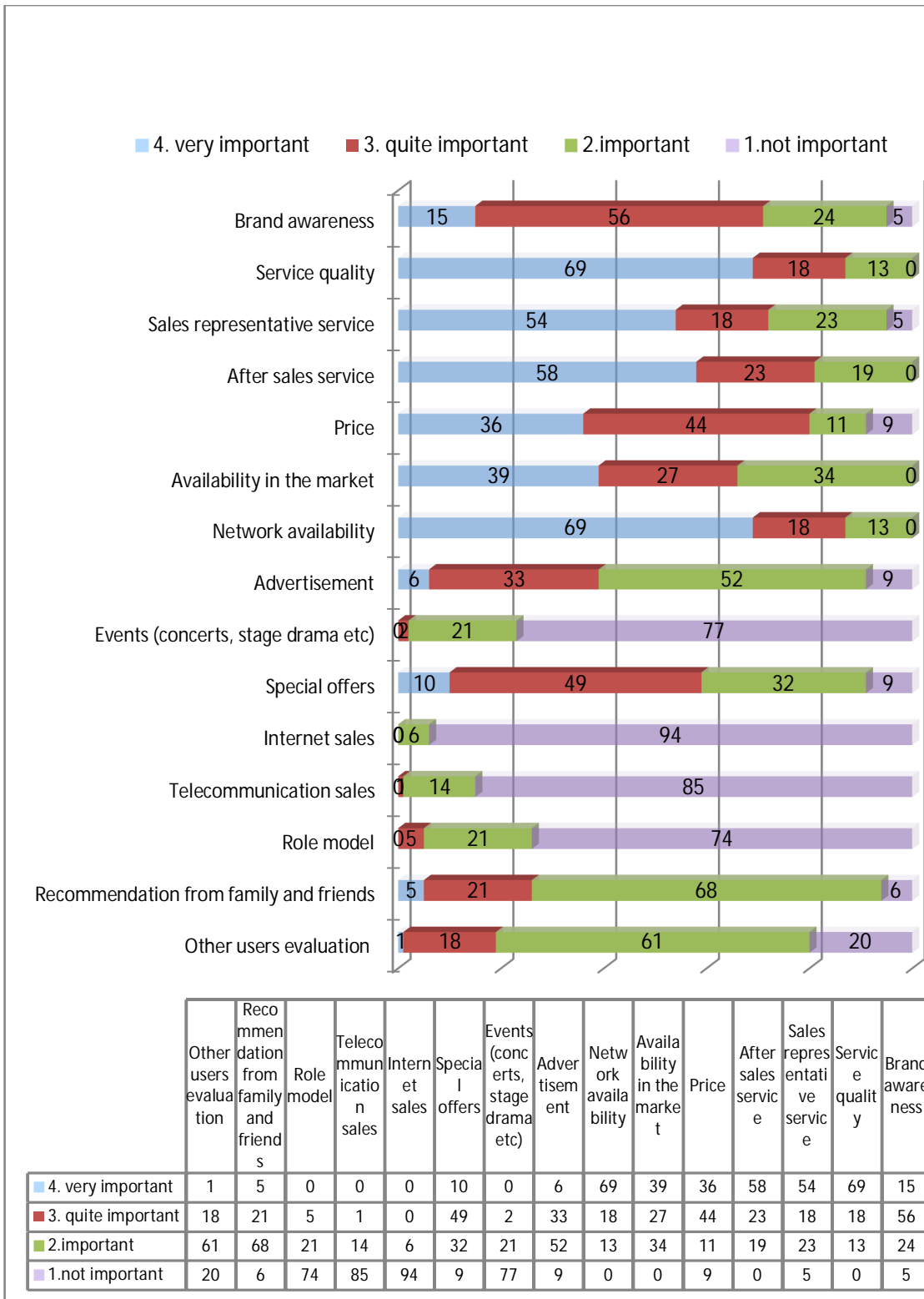


FIGURE 12. Factors influencing on choosing mobile services (n=100)

TABLE 1. Average of factors influencing on choosing mobile services (n=100)

Factors influencing on choosing mobile services	4 very important	3 quite important	2 important	1 not important	Average
Brand awareness	15	56	24	5	2.81
Service quality	69	18	13	0	3.56
Sales representative service	54	18	23	5	3.21
After sales service	58	23	19	0	3.39
Price	36	44	11	9	3.07
Availability in the market	39	27	34	0	3.05
Network availability	69	18	13	0	3.56
Advertisement	6	33	52	9	2.36
Events (concerts, stage drama etc.)	0	2	21	77	1.25
Special offers	10	49	32	9	2.6
Internet sales	0	0	6	94	1.06
Telecommunication sales	0	1	14	85	1.16
Role model	0	5	21	74	1.31
Recommendation from family and friends	5	21	68	6	2.25
Other users evaluation	1	18	61	20	2

Table 1 is showing the average of every influencing factor according to the rating of respondents. In the average it is seen that service quality and network availability are the most important factors as their average is the highest, which is 3.56. The average of after sales service is 3.39 which seem to be the second important influencing factor. Average of sales representative service is 3.21, price is 3.07 and availability in the market is 3.05. It can be seen from the Figure 13, the most important factors are: service quality, network availability, after sales service, sales representative service, price and availability in the market. The average of brand awareness is 2.81, advertisement is 2.36 and recommendation from family and friends is 2.25, which seem also quite important. Average of role model is 1.31, event is 1.25, telecommunication sale is 1.16 and internet sale is 1.06. According to response of the respondents these factors doesn't seem very effective while choosing mobile service.

4.2 ICON managers interview results analysis

The objective of the interview was to understand the company's existing marketing situation, marketing strategies, segmentation style, network capability, and opinion new ICON package. The interview was taken on 14th of December, 2014 through Skype. The author interviewed two interviewees at the same time because ICON managers are most of the time busy with their own work. The interview lasted around one hour. Both ICON managers were sharing their view properly and gave their opinions and suggestions on creating new ICON package.

Current market situation of ICON department

According to the answers of ICON managers, the current market situation of ICON department within Banglalink Company is better. ICON is holding most of the VVIP (very very important people) and CIP (chief important people) consumers. According to ICON managers, one fourth of Banglalink's profits are coming from ICON managers. They said it is not because of the number of the consumers, it is because of the number of loyal consumers and their using capability. ICON users' use ICON's various services as ICON provide those lots of valuable features.

Marketing strategy

ICON departments target customers are CIP (chief important people) people of Bangladesh, that's why they have different marketing strategy. ICON department's personnel know what their customers' needs are and provide them services according to their needs. ICON managers said it is as simple as that. They do not follow any certain marketing strategy. They just fulfil the needs of their customers. They also said that, they have lots of eligible man power which is the main strength of ICON department to satisfy ICON users' needs. Another strategy they had mentioned about maintaining timing. It is quite difficult to maintain right timing in Bangladesh because of the busy traffic. ICON managers are using special vehicle with whistle to maintain time. They are able to reach to the right places on right time to provide services if needed to ICON users.

Market segmentation

Market segmentation is very much clear for ICON department. ICON department has clearly identified their target group. According to the answers of ICON managers, author said it is psychographic segmentation. ICON's target consumers are high profiled people inside the country and they have some certain lifestyle for living. They have different characteristics which means, they have some different needs rather than general people. ICON department understand that and provide them the services they desire.

Network system

ICON managers describe the network facilities for ICON users. They said now-a-days load shedding problem has increased in Bangladesh. Load shedding means the electricity power supply problem. Bangladesh is a country with 170 million people, that's why it is quite difficult for the government to supply electricity in every area. For that reason ICON department has established extra power supply services in ICON network stations. This power supply helps ICON users to be connected smoothly. This is strength of ICON department to retain their customers.

Promotional activities

ICON managers said they do not have any certain kinds of promotional activity. They only go to promote their services by prior appointment, to those people who are targeted customers of ICON.

ICON's competitors and uniqueness

ICON managers said they do not have competitors right now in the market. They said their main competitor is another Banglink's service which is Priyojon department. As both departments are belonging to the same company so they do not consider them as competitor. According to ICON managers there is no telecommunication company whose target customers are CIP (chief important people) people. Most of the telecommunication companies are targeting grounded level people as their target customers. So, ICON is the only department which is providing services for those people and that makes ICON department unique as compared to other mobile operators in Bangladesh.

Idea of including students as ICON user

Both ICON managers were surprised by the proposal to take students as ICON users. According to their opinion they think students will not be able to pay their charges of ICON packages. They said most of the students do not have sufficient financial capability according to their research, at the same time they said it will be difficult for them to control if they get another group of target customers.

Suggestion for new ICON package

They have suggested that, it is possible to create another ICON package for certain group of people but they need extra eligible man power to control those customers. As Banglalink is a very big telecommunication company budget should not be a big problem. The same network can also be used for this purpose so, no extra cost will be needed to set up the network. At the same time they said, it will be better if the target group belongs to the capital city Dhaka only. According to the research most of the educational institutions are situated in Dhaka so, ICON department do not need to open various customer service points in different cities if the target customers are belonging to Dhaka region only. If the new package is established for Dhaka city only then it will reduce immense cost and maybe get profit easily. At the same time they have suggested to keep price relevant for the target group otherwise the plan will not be succeeded. They have also suggested that, to establish this package good promotional activity is needed. Advertising is one of them but it costs money, so the author has to consider the expense very carefully to give proposal of establishing such kind of package.

Name and slogan

The author suggests the name ICON-S and both the managers agreed upon the name. They said it will be very good idea to keep the name short and mention the target group in the name. Students can recognize it quite easily and will try to be connected with the service. About slogan they said it is not possible to use the same slogan which is used for ICON users. It needs to be different. They suggested that the slogan should be short and catchy. ICON manager AnisulHaque suggested a slogan, which is “we are beside you”. He thinks students will feel special if they think their mobile operator company is with them. He said it in native language Bengali and the author also think it will be very catchy slogan for the target group as well as general audience.

Author’s suggestion

Author suggests a deal of package for the new ICON service which is as follows:

Name of the package	ICON-S
Call limit	1000 minutes/ month
Text messages	500 SMS/ month
Internet	Charges will apply according to use
Partners Discount	Applicable
Monthly Fees	1000 BDT including VAT
Payment method	at the beginning of the month

Both ICON managers said it is very well organized and can be very effective if it is implemented properly. At the same time they suggest that proper advertising will be the key for this kind of package. Availability is another factor which needs to be considered carefully.

5 SUGGESTIONS FOR NEW ICON STUDENT PACKAGE

In this chapter the suggestion of ICON student package will be described. The suggestion is based on the survey results and answers of the interviews given by ICON managers. According to the discussion with the ICON managers the name of the package was decided. The name of this special package will be ICON-S. Here “S” stands for student. The slogan for this package will be “we are beside you”. As the slogan will be in native language Bengali, ICON manager AnisulHaque suggested that, it will be very appealing slogan for the target group. As ICON’s prime concern is to make the consumers feel special so, some exciting facilities for the target group will be introduced in this package.

ICON is a brand inside Bangladesh and it has a great image to the students. It will be quite easy for Banglalink Company to introduce a new package for students. As ICON managers said they don’t need to set up the whole system for the new package. All they need is more eligible man power and a good implementation plan. Author thinks that ICON student package must include all the facilities what ICON users are getting but it is not possible to provide them for students as they don’t have sufficient financial capability. So, the package must be fulfilling the desired needs of the student within the range of their financial capability.

5.1 SWOT analysis as starting point

SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats for a company. It is a brief list of the critical success factors in the market. In many cases SWOT has been used to find out the possible solution for any new product or services. Based on qualitative, quantitative and desk research, this chapter will present the SWOT analysis for creating new ICON package.

Strengths

Strength is one of the internal elements that an organization has. Strengths come from the organization and help to make better performance. When one organization decides to introduce new product or service then they consider the strengths what they already have for the new product or service. ICON is one of the famous and

well-known brands of Bangladesh. They have a strong image for providing proper services to their users. It is one of their biggest strengths.

ICON has excellent brand awareness and reputation among customers. Based on the interview, it can be known that the company has good income level customers, so those customers support the strong buying power. Customers have very good impression about the services of ICON. From the company's point of view, ICON is one of the strongest departments of Banglalink Company. ICON provides direct services to the customers in right time.

In addition, the company has outstanding sales representatives and management staff, which also can provide the important inside strength. Although ICON managers said that, they don't have any competitor as who are providing the same kind of services in the market right now. If they want to introduce a new package then there are lots of competitors existing in the market. Moreover, ICON is the core department of Banglalink Company, as they are gaining most of the profit share of Banglalink Company.

Weaknesses

Weaknesses are the internal limitations that bind a company's ability. Weaknesses are something an organization tries to reduce when introducing new product or service. Introducing new product is already a difficult process for any company because it needs lots of research work. Even though the research is done properly very often as a matter of fact Company needs to take risk on some certain factors. It cannot be said strongly that this product or service is going to be successful in the market. There are unknown factor (sales forecast) which is the biggest weakness for ICON to introduce new package. Risk is also involved in introducing new package. Most of the students are using prepaid mobile services. As ICON-S is going to be a post-paid service, so students might not feel interested to use post-paid service.

As ICON packages are known as expensive packages and their target group is the higher level people of the country so, young people, students might not be interested to try this new service. Another weakness in this situation is that ICON won't be able to provide all the facilities in the new package as they are providing in their current packages. So, students who are target group for this new package might feel the lacking of expectation. ICON department also don't use lots of advertisement activi-

ties but in this case, if they want to have customers for their new package then it is compulsory to advertise their service. Students are very much affected by advertisements and most of the students choose mobile services if they find attractive advertisement. Advertising (as promotion) is needed in launching new product or service, because potential customers need to know about the new product or service available for them.

One of the biggest weaknesses they are going to have that, they cannot provide one to one services for students. As ICON is known for providing one to one services to their consumers, in this case it can be a lagging point for new package. At the same time it is not possible to provide 24/7 customer service for the new package, but this is available in current packages now. So, this also needs a careful consideration while launching new package.

ICON department doesn't have lots of customer service points. They only have certain amount of service points, which is another weakness for creating new package. Some customer service points need to be established to introduce new ICON package for students.

Opportunities

Opportunities are the external factors that a company uses to get advantages. A company looks carefully and decides what opportunities they have when they are trying to bring something new in the market. According to the survey results it can be seen easily that there is lots of opportunities for launching new package in the market. ICON is a famous brand and students have special attraction to brands. ICON is only used by special people inside Bangladesh and it will be great opportunity for the students inside the country to feel also special with ICON.

In Dhaka region there are thousands of universities available. This is a great opportunity for ICON department to include them as their customers. If ICON can successfully launch a reliable and financially effective service for students then they can gain lots of profit from this sector. ICON's profit does not depend on the number of consumers. It depends on quality services they provide and loyal customers they have. In this case if they can include students as their consumers then there is possibility to make more profit but this time the profit will come from large number of users. At the same time they will have lots of consumers.

Student's number in Dhaka city is only increasing because all the reputed universities are situated in Dhaka. Students belonging to different cities and villages are coming to study in Dhaka. So, this is one target group where the number of customers will never decrease. Students don't bother about having lots of features in their mobile services which means their needs are limited. If a target group has limited needs, then it is quite easy for a company to introduce or launch a new product or service which will fulfil the limited needs. This also means the cost of creating the service or product will be less. So, it is a great opportunity for ICON to introduce a new service and have students as their consumers.

Threats

Threats are those factors which are outside of the company, challenges the company to achieve its goals are called threats. Threats are basically the competitors existing in the market. A company analyses the threats before introducing new product or service in the market. According to Figure 10(page 24), it can be seen that big proportion of present students are using Grameen phone and in second place there is Banglalink prepaid services. So, for sure Grameen phone is the biggest competitor in the market. As Grameen phone is the first mobile operator service of Bangladesh that's why students are also intending to use their services. Grameen phone also has some special packages only targeting students, which is another reason why most students are using Grameen phone services. So, Grameen phone is the biggest threat for ICON in launching new services for students. Some students are also using airtel, robi, citycell, teletalk services but their number is small. It will be foolish to consider them as competitors as the biggest group of students is using another service.

TABLE 2. SWOT analysis of ICON-S

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong image • Well-known brand • Reputation on proper service • Strongest department • ICON manager • Sales representative • No existing competitor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty • Expensive • Post-paid • Financial • Service point • Availability of same facilities • Advertisement
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special attraction • Potential customers • Increasing profit • Budget • Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitors • Grameen phone

There are lots of competitors existing in the market and ICON has some weaknesses as well. Still it is possible for ICON to overcome them easily as they have strong image in the market. Survey results also show that, there is immense possibility for them to introduce new package and have lots of customers. As ICON department has lots of opportunities and strengths for creating new package, so the author suggests that it will be great idea to generate another package under ICON group.

5.2 Marketing strategy for ICON-S package

Marketing strategy is the marketing logic through which the company creates customer value and achieves profitable relationships with customers. In this section is described how the company decides which customers it will serve (segmentation and targeting) and how it will serve (differentiation and positioning). ICON's new package ICON-S's strategy will be attracting as much customer as possible and to do this ICON department needs to choose the best segment and target to achieve the proper

customers. In addition to that ICON also needs to put their services in the right place in right time.

Another important issues ICON department has to deal with is marketing objective. Marketing objectives are goals ICON department will try to attain in the plan period. As ICON-S package's main goal is to attain maximum number of potential customers, so ICON's main objective is to increase the customers by launching new service. Advertisement will be the key for this marketing objective. Another objective author suggests to Banglalink Company is that increasing market share by 10 % within two years. This can be called as sales objective and to attain this some initiative need to be taken in to consideration. Complete launching plan is one of the major issues among them. There must be a target plan that ICON-S will get at least 20,000 customers every month to obtain their goal. Press release, advertisement and campaign in various universities are must to obtain the goals. Every company's prime concern is to make profit by improving their service or product and to attain this; company needs to take the finance into account, which is called profitability objective. ICON-S package's target will be the same. Its main aim is to increase the profit share for ICON department. So, proper financial plan will be the key to attain profitability. According to the survey and interview result ICON's marketing strategy is described below: (Kotler 2008, 153)

5.2.1 Market segmentation and market targeting for ICON-S package

Market segmentation means dividing large market into smaller segment, so that company can reach their target group effectively and efficiently. There are different groups of buyer exist in the market with various needs. They have different characteristics and their behaviours pattern also varies from person to person. Market segmentation decides which part of groups in the market are potential buyers for certain product or service. In the telecommunication market in Bangladesh there are many types of customers who are looking for different types of opportunities and they choose the best option among them by seeing, which part is fulfilling their needs properly. These customers can be grouped and served in various ways based on geographic, demographic, psychographic and behavioural factors. (Kotler 2008, 410)

Geographical

Geographical segmentation is a form of segmentation, by which marketers divide market into different geographical units such as nations, states, regions, counties, cities, neighbourhoods etc. According to the survey and with the suggestion of ICON manager, most of the students are studying in university and these universities are situated in the capital city of Bangladesh. So, the author suggests that the new package target group will be university students and the package will be available only in the Dhaka region. (Kotler 2008, 411)

As it is already decided that ICON-S package will only serve in Dhaka region so the geographical segmentation for this package is done. As ICON managers suggest it will be better if they keep the package available only in Dhaka region. Then they do not need to establish any customer service point in other cities which will cut cost for the company.

Demographical

Demographic segmentation divides the market into various variables such as age, gender, family, religion etc. In the survey analysis, according to Figure 4 (page 20), 64% of the survey students are aged 21 to 25 years, which is the biggest target group for the new package. So, students aged from 21 to 25 years old will be the most eligible target group for ICON-S package. Survey questionnaires were divided to male and female equally and their answers don't vary so much so the author is not considering the gender for demographic segmentation. In this case only age is considered. (Kotler 2008, 413)

Psychological

Psychological segmentation happens when we segment our market by potential customers' lifestyle, social class, or personal characteristics. ICON's present target group lies on psychological segmented area. Students also have different types of life style but students do not have sufficient financial capability. So, psychological segmentation is not good segmentation for the target group, who are students. ICON-S package's main idea is to provide services according to the capability of the students. According to the interview result ICON's present customers are segmented in psy-

chological segmentation. It will not be a good idea to put another group of customers in the same area for the same department. (Kotler 2008, 415)

Behavioural

Behavioural segmentation happens when we differentiate market based on customer's behaviour towards a product or service. Behaviour differs based on people's knowledge, attitudes, uses, or responses to a product. According to Figure 12 (page 30) it is clear that students are not affected by every factors related to telecommunication service. It is also quite clear that respondents' knowledge about services are also quite low as most of them are not affected by brand awareness, special offers, advertisement, events. Moreover most of the students marked network capacity and after sales services as very important factors. It means network and customer service will be the key factors for ICON-S. (Kotler 2008, 415)

TABLE 3. Market segmentation criteria for ICON-S

Type of segmentation criteria	Selected segmentation criteria
Geographic	Dhaka (capital city of Bangladesh)
Psychographic	Middle class, Generous personality
Demographic	Age: 21-25 years, Students
Behavioural	Regular occasion, Service quality, Finance, Heavy user

After segmentation, a company has to decide which set of buyers they will serve. This set of buyers must share common needs or characteristics. By this decision, the company actually targets the market. ICON-S package's target group is very clear and defined as well as their needs are also similar. According to the survey results, most of the students make decisions on their own when they choose mobile services and most important factor for them is the service quality and network capability of that specific service. It is quite clear from managers' interview that, the service ICON-S should be cost effective for the target group along with some features what they desire. According to the survey the service students most desire is the customer care service and availability of the products in nearest place. According to the author, ICON-S package will provide them with sufficient amounts of calling time and messages option which are the basic needs of students. In addition to that association with event partners will also be a strong strength for ICON-S package. Moreover, it is

quite clear and defines idea of creating new ICON-S package in correspondence with the definite target group and their desires.

5.2.2 Product positioning and differentiation for ICON-S package

Products are created in the factory, but brands are created in the mind. Positioning of a product means the place of its appearance in customers' mind. Product positioning depends on many attributes. Consumers may be influenced by many products' attributes, but they choose only one at a time and for choosing that product, they are actually driven by product positioning. The goal of product positioning is to keep the product on top of customers mind against the competitors who are providing same kinds of product or service. (Kotler 2008, 157)

In this case ICON-S package's best strength is that it is post-paid service. Most of the students who are using other mobile services they are prepaid services and the limitation is they cannot continue using their service once their credit is finished. ICON-S gives them opportunity to continue the service and paying for extra use at the end of month. This is one big characteristic of ICON-S package, what makes it unique and different from other competitors. This is one feature of this package which is very new to the target group and in author's opinion it will click customers mind to choose this product.

ICON-S is so different from other available options for the target group. No other telecommunication company allows their event and organization partners discount facilities for students. They keep this special service only for their post-paid and higher paid consumers but ICON-S will make it available for the students, which is another immense feature of this package. Target group can easily differentiate ICON-S as compare to other services. ICON group is a special group under Banglalink Company so; there will not be any problem to make this feature available in the market.

In author's opinion customers will definitely see this package as special package because of its unique characteristics. This product will make the difference in the market if it positioned well, which means if the target group can make the differences and find the rare facilities available in this package. It is very important for the company to provide all the information about this package very clearly while launching it in the market.

5.3 Pricing of ICON-S

Pricing is one of the marketing mix tools that define the amount of money that a company charges for its products or services. In some extent it is one of the best alternatives for forcing consumer to choose a product. It varies from one group to another group of people. Some people spend lots of money on certain products and some look for the cheapest option.

Figure 5 (page 21) describes that 71 % of students in the survey are spending from BDT 500 to BDT 1000 per month as their mobile expense. So, the package cost must not cross the limit of BDT 1000 monthly. At the same time it is possible to add some available value added service in the package. Students who are willing to pay for extra service they can use those services. In the survey the questionnaire were distributed equally between male and female students and it can be seen from figure 6 (page 22) that the monthly expenses don't vary at all according to gender. Male and female students are spending about the same amount of money as their mobile expenses. For ICON-S package the price has been fixed BDT 100 per month by author, which is quite effective selection of price according to the survey result and the suggestion of ICON managers.

In addition to that target group student will get some extra facility depending on their needs of service. Then they will pay extra according to their use and financial capability. Moreover it is a post-paid service that's why students will get extra time to arrange extra money what they will use. So, pricing of ICON-S is clearly defined in this chapter and the author believes that this pricing strategy will be successful in the market.

5.4 Distributing of ICON-S

Invention of new product or services cannot be successful unless it is distributed properly. Distribution doesn't add value by providing the product or service in the right place, until the marketing information is properly distributed. So, it is used to make better marketing for the product or service.

ICON managers suggest that it will be better to keep this package available only in Dhaka region. Banglalink company's main offices and all their departments are also situated in Dhaka. It will be easy for the company to establish customer service point

in the city area and also use the same personnel who are working as whole sellers and retailers. In this case they don't need to establish new distribution channels. Banglalink's service points are already established in the market and it will be better to keep this service available there. It will reduce huge costs for the company if they make ICON-S package available in their service points which are already established. Customers already know about where Banglalink service points are available. All they need is to advertise ICON-S package properly and make it available in every point. Then they have possibility to get many customers.

Another suggestion comes from author that, if Banglalink makes campaigns to raise awareness about ICON-S package in various universities inside Dhaka city then there is immense possibility to attract more customers. It is also possible to establish some small stalls for selling their new service.

In author's opinion ICON-S can be a very successful package for Banglalink Company if they distribute the package properly and make it available to the target customers. In author's opinion this package will create buzz in the market because it has lots of potential customers. Keeping this in mind Banglalink Company should make the product available in the market before launching it. It will be better to launch the product in the market two weeks after the product is available. Otherwise there is immense risk to lose customers. Once the service is advertised and launched in the market then the customers go to nearest possible place to buy that service or product. If they do not find that certain product or service then they lose their faith on that particular company. So, ICON department needs to plan the launching process carefully and implement it.

5.5 Marketing communication for ICON-S

Marketing communication is one of the significant works that a company does to communicate in various ways with its targeted customers. Marketing communication stands for promotional activities. Marketing communication contain four major activities- personal selling, advertising, sales promotion, and public relation. No product or services can be successful without good marketing communication. ICON-S package also needs to create proper marketing communication to reach target customers. Companies always search for the best promotional tools to promote their product or service. For ICON-S the promotional tools needs to choose carefully to reach the

potential customers smoothly. At the same time it is important to analyse the targets group buying behaviour. (Kotler 2008, 272)

According to Kotler there are some general steps which explain buyers' adoption process for new product or service in the market. Figure 14 shows the steps of buyer decision process. In the beginning of the launching of new product or service, most customers ignore the product or service. After some days the product or service raises awareness to their potential customers. Then it creates interest to customers and potential customers' look for more information about the product or service. After knowing about the product or service then customers compare it with other possible product or service which are available in the market. If customers find it more profitable and preferable for them then customers try the product or service. If the trial period goes well and the product or service makes them satisfied then customers take decision to buy the product or use the service. (Kotler 2008, 272)

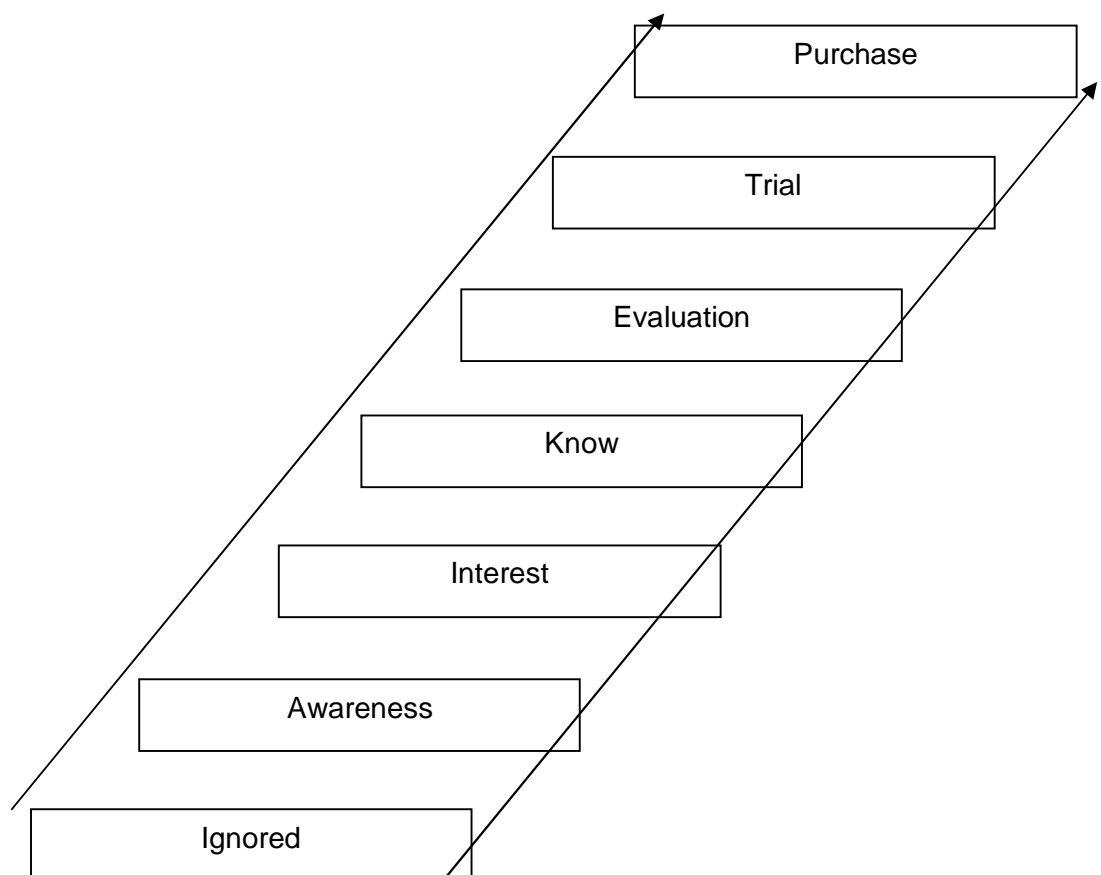


FIGURE 13. The buyer decision process for new product (Kotler 2008, 272)

ICON-S package's target customers will also take buying decision through this process of buying decision. It will be better to create awareness about ICON-S in the market as soon as possible. If the company can do that then they can get away with the ignorant stage very quickly. For creating awareness marketing communication is a must. In today's world marketing communication is a very important factor to be successful in this competitive market. Marketing communication tools are described below.

Personal selling and public relation

In Bangladesh personal selling is a very famous process of selling products or services. This is also considered as the most expensive communication tool. Personal selling is the most effective tool in certain stage of the buying process. Personal selling helps to build up buyers' preference. It has some unique characteristics as compared to advertisement. It involves interaction between two or more people, so each person can observe the other person's need. It also helps to build up relationship with the potential buyers. In personal selling it possible to know about customers' feedback about the product or service immediately and there is possibility to adjust the product or service. This is a communicational method through which sales person uses skills and techniques to influence the customers who are to make purchase decision. ICON department's greatest strength is giving personal service through their managers and sales representative. In the interview ICON managers also said that to develop ICON-S they need extra eligible man power. So, it is a must in this situation to do personal selling for developing ICON-S. As new package's target group is students so, it will be a better idea to visit some universities to raise awareness and at the same time it is an occasion to create relation between the company and consumers. (Kotler 2008, 714)

Advertising and sales promotion

Advertising is a very famous way of communication now-a-days. Though it is found in the research from Figure 12 (page 30) that, students do not consider it as very influencing factor. Still author thinks that it is the best way to communicate with this target group. Students do watch television a lot and they are always following the news

about new features and new products available in the market. So, it will be a better idea to advertise ICON-S in the television, newspapers and in the internet. (Kotler 2008, 713)

Another idea author suggests to company is that to use a role model for the advertisement. Bangladeshi people are very emotionally attached with their role models and very loyal to them at the same time. That's why using role model for ICON-S would be an advantage to attract more customers. Another thought to be considered in this section is that the advertisement should be made based on humour. Students are very much fond of humour and they get attracted by these kinds of advertisements. In addition to that the message in the advertisement should be clear, so that the target customer doesn't feel any kind of confusion while making decision. As our survey Figure 11 (page 26) says most of the students (64 %) make decision by themselves, so it will be a great idea to attract them to the package and make them taking decision to try the service.

Introducing new product or service with a sales promotion is an effective way to get more consumers. For ICON-S package to make some kinds of sales promotion is also possible. Author suggests that ICON-S package sim card can be given free to all their target customers. Then there is more possibility to get more customers for ICON-S package. No other company is giving their mobile sim card free of cost right now in the market. Mobile sim card is an essential part in mobile operators' service. Without sim card no operator can be run. All the telecommunication company available in Bangladesh charges for their sim card. As author has personal experience working in ICON department, that's why he thinks the cost of free cards can be recovered very soon as they doesn't cost very much. (Kotler 2008, 714)

Marketing communication is a very vital part of attracting customers to some specific product or service. In this case it can be seen very easily that all the communicational activities are needed to make ICON-S successful in the market.

6 FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR ICON-S

Financial projection

Financial projection can be described as the projected budget of the whole process of introducing new product or service in the market. It must be done very carefully and ensure that the marketing expenditure is well spent. It is done to avoid the harms a company may face while introducing new product or service. It is wise to invest in some new project by thinking carefully about the financial return on their spending. It is assumed that ICON-S will be launched in the market in June, 2015.

Financial projection for ICON-S based on author's previous work experience on ICON department is given below. These amounts are assumed to create the calculation. In addition to that, author provides calculation in small scale for the first two months. Moreover, he thinks when the business will grow then the profit share will increase for sure. This calculation is done only for the starting and only considering ICON-S package. To make this calculation some factors needs to be assumed. These are: Arrange new customer service point, approximately in 5 new places. Hire new personnel, approximately 20 new people. Sales volume assumed approximately 20,000 at the beginning. For posturing, distributing leaflets and running small stalls ICON department also needs some part time workers at the beginning, who are considered as labour.

Table 4 shows the assumed expenditure calculation of one month for ICON-S package. All the amounts are provided in Bangladesh currency BDT (Bangladeshi Taka). 100 BDT is equal to 1 Euro. In Table 4 material cost is considered as 2,000,000 which is based on assumption. General income of Bangladeshi people is about 15,000 BDT per month. Here it is considered as 20,000, because working in Telecommunication Company is considered as higher level job in Bangladesh. Electricity and water expenses are calculated based on unit price and by assuming the unit will be used in manufacturing process and will be used in service points.

Unit price for electricity is 50 BDT and water is 30 BDT. It will be better idea to rent some service point at the beginning of launching ICON-S. Banglalink Company has ability to establish the company's own service point but it will better to see the growth of ICON-S first, and then take decision about establishing service point. If the service becomes successful in the market then Banglalink Company can establish service points. As ICON managers suggested that, to run a new service for ICON department

they will be needed some new personnel. Here it is assumed that 20 personnel will be hired for ICON-S and their salary will be 25,000 BDT per month. Total promotional expense is counted as 5,000,000 BDT per month where advertisement expense is assumed approximately 3,000,000 BDT per month and other promotional expense is assumed 2,000,000 BDT per month.

It will be a better idea to make some events every month to promote ICON-S. So, event expense is assumed 1,000,000 BDT monthly. It is assumed that 50,000 sim card needs to be made every month for ICON-S and 50 BDT will be needed to make one sim card. After launching ICON-S in the market network maintenance will be needed to run the service smoothly. So, network maintenance expense is considered as 3,000,000 BDT per month. Depreciation is a common expense which needs to be considered in every business. For ICON-S depreciation expense is assumed 200,000 BDT.

TABLE 4. Monthly expenditure calculation of ICON-S

One month expenses for ICON-S package		
Material cost		2,000,000
Labour expenses	20000*20	400,000
Electricity	10000*50	500,000
Water	20000*30	600,000
Rent of customer service points	100,000*5	500,000
Salary for new personnel	25000*20	500,000
Promotional expenses		
Advertisement	3,000,000	
Others (posturing, leaflet etc.)	2,000,000	
Total promotional expenses		5,000,000
Events expenses		1,000,000
Sim card making expenses	50,000*25	1,250,000
Network maintenance expense		3000,000
Depreciation expense		200,000
Total expenses		14,950,000

Table 5 shows the monthly revenue calculation for ICON-S package. In table 5 the calculation is shown for first two month. Author suggested that ICON-S package will be launched in the market in the beginning of June, 2015. So, the calculation is done for June and July. Here it is assumed that in the month of June the sales volume will be 20,000 and in July it will be 25,000. As it is already decide that the expense for one ICON-S package user will be 1,000 BDT, so total sales in June will be 20,000,000 BDT and in July it will be 25,000,000 BDT. Then the profit is calculated by deducting expenses from sales.

TABLE 5. Monthly revenue calculation of ICON-S

Financial year	2015			
	June		July	
Price per unit	1,000		1,000	
Sales volume	20,000		25,000	
Sales	1,000*20,000	20,000,000	1,000*25,000	25,000,000
Total expenses		14,950,000		14,950,000
Net profit		5,050,000		10,050,000

The calculation is done in a very general way and by considering the general expenses only. When Banglalink Company will take initiative to launch the product then some more calculation may be needed. Overall the financial calculation shown in table 4 and table 5 is quite coherent.

Implementation plan

Planning good strategy is only the start of some new innovative ideas but it fails if the implementation process is not done properly. Marketing implementation is the process of turning the marketing plan into action, in order to achieve the desired goal. Marketing control means evaluating the results of marketing plan and take proper action to ensure that the objective is well attained.

Objective of this research is to suggest Banglalink Company a new service, through which the company can gain more profit and more consumers. Banglalink Company is the second largest telecommunication company in Bangladesh and ICON is one of their main departments. ICON has limited amount of customers because of their high profiled and expensive services. In addition to that ICON is considered as a brand in telecommunication market. So, author's idea is to include a new target group in this department, which will help the department to increase their profit share.

Implementation of this package needs some careful consideration. According to the survey results the need of the target group is clear; in addition to that the company can also measure their financial capability. If the company can satisfy their needs with their capability then it is quite obvious that, the customer will attract to the new service.

Authors' suggestion to the company will be advertising the service properly before launching the product in the market. Promotional activity is very important factor to get more customers. In this case the target group is students so; campaigning in various universities is one good option to promote the service. The company has to give the message to their customers accurately with all the details. At the same time necessary adjustments should be made. Hiring new people, renting new customer service point, making leaflets and posters, make the service available before hands needs to be done even before promotional activities.

TABLE 6. Launching action and time for ICON-S

Financial Year	2015					
	March	April	May	June	July	August
Making sim cards	→					
Distribute sim cards in the market place			→			
Advertisement	→					
Campaign in Universities			→			
Hire new personnel	→					
Renting new service points		→				
Arrange an event				→		
Launch ICON-S				→		

Table 6 shows the action and timing needed for launching ICON-S. According to author, the essential part for ICON-S will be sim cards and it should be ready before May. If Banglalink Company wants to finish making sim cards before May then the sim card making process should be started from 1st of March. After that the sim cards needs to be distributed in different Banglalink selling points within 15 days. The company needs to make sure that the product is available in the market. Advertisement is the key for ICON-S to be successful in the market. So, the advertisement can be

started from 2nd of February and it will continue even after the service is launched. Campaign in different universities can be done from 1st of May to 20th of May. New people will be needed in ICON department for campaign purpose and for new service points. It will be better to hire new personnel before starting the campaign and before renting new service points. So, the new personnel should be hired before April because there is plan to rent new service point from 1st of April. Another plan is to arrange launching event at the day of launching which will be 1st of June.

ICON department have to divide responsibilities to different sectors. Launching new service may effect to their normal routine. Something new in the market always creates buzz in the market. So, the department needs to be prepared to handle the pressure. If they can successfully do that, then there is immense possibility to achieve their goal through the new service package.

7 CONCLUSIONS

The sixth chapter of the thesis aims to conclude and evaluate the whole thesis process; it includes presentation of thesis topic and research and assessment of the thesis process.

Presentation of thesis topic and research

The topic of thesis is Marketing Plan for new student package suggestion for the ICON department of Banglalink Company. The objective of the thesis research was to create new package for ICON department and the thesis aims to give suggestion through marketing plan. The framework of the thesis can be divided into seven chapters; it includes the first introduction chapters, presentation of Banglalink, theoretical chapters, research chapter, marketing plan chapter, financial calculation and implementation and the last conclusion chapter. The introduction chapter firstly defined the thesis research problem, which is to develop better marketing plan for ICON department, then the thesis structure is mentioned to give reader an outline of the whole thesis.

The research chapter contains both the quantitative questionnaire survey with 100 respondents and the qualitative interviews of two ICON managers, which showed the initial understanding about the company's current market statement. According to survey results it can be seen that, there is immense possibility of success for ICON-S package because, most of the respondents already know about ICON and their facilities. The needs for the target group also became quite clear from the survey, for example : what price will be suitable for the students, what are those necessary features which should be included in the package, most influencing factors while students choose mobile services, decision making influence etc. Based on survey results ICON-S package's deal was made by author. The deal may not have real value in practice but it reflects the opinion of students. In the interview both ICON managers said the package deal for ICON-S is well organized. Hence, there is still opportunity to improve the package deal of ICON-S.

In addition the SWOT analysis based on the research results shows the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for ICON-S. ICON-S can be introduced in the market as a brand as it has already a good image in the market, which is the biggest strength for ICON-S. Grameen phone is the biggest competitor for ICON-S as it holds 42 % of total market share and most of the students use Grameen phone services. Suggestions about the market segmentation and targeting, pricing strategy, distributing were also given based on the survey and interview results. Financial projection and implementation plan suggestions were given by author. Marketing plan suggestions are given correspondingly to the theoretical part and research results, which will help the company to understand better about the market situation and will provide market information.

Assessment of the thesis

Author has working experience in ICON department of Banglalink Company, for that reason author knew the ICON's working procedure and have clear information about the department, hence from the author's point of view, the research problem was defined appropriately, and chosen the theoretical basis quite matched as needed for this research.

The author got 100 respondents as research sample, however, compared with the 2.5 million students in Dhaka city, the research sample is negligible and the research results have no significant meaning for practice. Moreover, the number of the last open question answers was very few because of limited time, and concerning the interview research, the interview time was limited and two members from ICON department may not provide information objectively.

The thesis also can be seen as a conclusion of the author's undergraduate studies. The theoretical helped the author to review the marketing theory, and the process of research helped the author to improve many skills on how to define problems, collect information and analyze information. The suggestion part helped the author to combine the theory and practice.

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Interviews

Date: 14th December, 2014

Time: 14:30 Bangladesh time

Place: ICON head office, Mohakhali, Dhaka.

Md. Mustafizur Rahman

ICON manager

ICON department, Banglalink Ltd.

Date: 14th December, 2014

Time: 14:30 Bangladesh time

Place: ICON head office, Mohakhali, Dhaka.

Md. Anisul Haque

ICON manager

ICON department, Banglalink Ltd.

APPENDICE

Appendix 1: Survey questionnaire for students.

SURVEY CONCERNING SELECTION OF MOBILE SERVICE

Dear Respondent,

My name is Md. Rashel. I am currently studying at Savonia University of Applied Sciences (Finland) and doing my thesis on “Marketing plan for new telecommunication service package for ICON department, Banglalink”. The survey is compulsory for my research to get real information as well as real demand. Therefore, I hope you to help me to finish my research by answering the following questions.

I hereby assure that all collected information will be used only in this research and for study purposes.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Please give tick-marks on the following questions:

Name of your Educational Institution.....

1. What is your gender?

Male Female

2. Which age group you are belonging now?

15-20 21-25 26-30 31-35

3. How much do you spend every month as mobile service expense (BDT/month)?

500-1000 1000-1500 1500-2000 More than 2000

4. Do you know about Banglalink ICON department?

Yes No

If yes, how you get the information?

Friend&Family Newspapers/Magazines Internet
 TV Others, what

5. How well do you know about ICON packages? Please use the scoring scale of 1 to 4, where 4 represent very well-known and 1 means unknown.

ICON	4.Very well known	3.Known	2.Partly known	1.Unknown
Bundles of ICON				
Prices of ICON bundles				
Call limit of bundles				
Text message limit of bundles				
Internet usage limit				
Contact recovered service				
Shopping partners				
Restaurant partners				
Event partners				

6. Are you using any Banglalink services now?

Yes No

If yes, then which service?

Prepaid Postpaid Priyojon Other,
what?.....

7. If you are using other mobile operator service then which one?

GrameenPhone Robi Airtel Citycell Teletalk
Other, what?

8. How do you make decision on buying mobile services?

I decide Me and my family both decide together My family decides
Influenced by friends

9. How the following factors influence you, when you are about to buy a mobile service? Please use the scoring level 1 to 4, where 4 stand for very important and 1 stands for not important at all.

Factors of Mobile service	4. Very important	3. Quite important	2. Not very important	1. Not important at all
Brand awareness				
Service quality				
Sales representative service				
After sales service				
Price				
Availability in the market				
Network availability				
Advertisement				
Events (concerts, stage drama etc.)				
Special offers				
Internet sales				
Telecommunication sales				
Role model				
Recommendation from family and friends				
Other users' evaluations				

10. What other factors influence you to choose mobile service?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Appendix 2: Interview questions for ICON managers.

1. What is the current market situation of ICON department?
2. What kind of marketing strategy is ICON department using?
3. What kinds of market segmentation ICON department use?
4. What kind of network system ICON department has?
5. What are promotional activities for ICON department?
6. Who are ICON's competitors?
7. In your opinion, how ICON is different as compare to other telecommunication services?
8. What do you think about the idea of including students as ICON user?
9. Do you have any suggestion or personal view on creating new ICON package?
10. In your opinion, what name and slogan will be appropriate for the new package?
11. What do you think about the package that author suggest?

Name of the package	ICON-S
Call limit	1000 minutes/ month
Text messages	500 SMS/ month
Internet	Charges will apply according to use
Partners Discount	Applicable
Monthly Fees	1000 BDT including VAT
Payment method	at the beginning of the month