

The year of 1971, painted the future of this nation through unparalleled courage and sacrifice of millions. A call for freedom was answered not just by individuals or by crowds alone but by the entire nation. This year long struggle lead to our Independence on December 16th, making it the most significant event that was, is and will be remembered and revered by every Bangladeshi. The event is celebrated through different form of expression not just by individuals but by organization alike. In fact, consumer's expectations of social responsibility from major brands have made commemoration of special days an obligation and '71 is no exception.

Grammenphone as one of the leading brands of the nation also complied with its duty by showing respect and gratitude towards the freedom fighters. On the year 2008 as the day approached it was time once again to get back to the meeting rooms and prepare a plan to commemorate the day. Gray Advertising Ltd, as the agency working for GP however had different plans for this year. This was more than a celebration; it was an opportunity to do something for the nation to rekindle a dying inspiration amongst the youth of the nation.

An inspiring brand representing advancement should not just memorialize the past. As a leading brand, revitalizing the inspiration of such an honorable event amongst the ignorant youth of today was not only its responsibility but also an opportunity to create further relevance of the brand essence "Magic of Closeness". To undertake this Grameenphone and Prothom Alo would come together to make it happen.

The Strategy

The first task was to find relevance of 'Magic of closeness' with the victory won on 16 December 1971. Once the connection was established it would just not be a tribute to Independent but would also be an equity raiser for the brands related to the campaign. A plan was proposed which would not only fulfill these objectives but also create a new icon for this memorable occasion. A task that would be achieved through a well planned effective and creative campaigns ever executed in regard to this day.

The core idea was to publish a book that would contain very personal letter written by freedom fighter from all over the country during the fight for Independence. This would bring out the very essence of '71 and present it to the people of this country. As GP

believed that it brought victory everyday with the power of closeness it should preserve this powerful symbol of closeness to inspire the next generation.

The principle focus of the campaign was the book that would contain a collection of 80 letters. The collection of the letters started from the 1st of December and continued till the end February. This allowed the campaign to incorporate not only 16th December but also 26th March. The collected letters was showcased on 26th March through a book, special supplementary with a national daily, TV show, exhibition and reading sessions with children around the country.

The campaign was implemented in 5 phases which would ensure the effectively of the campaign. The phases were as follows:

Phase 1: Announcement & Awareness

The initial grand announcement was done through a press conference on 16th December held at Muktijuddho Jadhughar. This added to the credibility of the program and also generated support from the people who had the greatest resource. The event was attended by all the partners undertaking the campaign. The CEO and PR Head of GP, the Editor and Sub Editor of Prothom Alo along with a freedom fighter were present at the occasion. The program was executed at the presence of all media; press and TV. Following the conference, awareness amongst masses was done through advertisement in mass media (TVC, Press AD, RDC), News and PR (Box ad, article, updates, stories, letters to the editors, editorials) and POS materials at GP and Prothom Alo offices.

Phase 2: Collection, verification, Authorization

To make the process fast and effective Prothom Alo regional reporters were called in to start regional movements while voluntary submitted letter were collected at the main offices. Collection from door to door was needed hence the country was divided into seven zones namely Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi1, Rajshahi2, Barishal, Sylhet and Khulna. Three districts comprised one zone and twenty one districts in all were covered. There was one coordinator for a zonal headquarter and one supervisor per district. The main collection was done by Prothom Alo reporters and Bondhushobha working under the supervisors. A reporter was responsible for his/her respective districts and four

Bondhushobha was assigned per district. The zonal coordinators and supervisors ensured effectiveness of the collection process alongside verification and authorization.

Phase 3: Selection & Research

A committee was formed that comprised of one famous historian and scholar, editor from Prothom Alo, two famous writers Zafar Iqbal and Anisul Huq and one representative of Muktijudho Jadhugar. This committee was assigned with the job to select 80 letters out of the collected lot. To add further credibility and spice to the book additional background research was done. Mechanism for the background research was as follows:

- 1 researcher and a reporter visited the family
- A field worker and a photographer covered the areas mentioned in the story
- The coordinator ensured outside support – from other zones

Phase 4: Writing, Editing and Publishing

Once collected, the researchers submitted all their documents to Prothom Alo. The papers then went through checking and rechecking by Junior and Senior writers of Prothom Alo. Once this stage was complete the stories were submitted to the editorial panel, which was the selection committee formed in phase 3. Once the editorial approved the materials they were handed over to the Chief Editor of Prothom Alo who did a final check and passed it onto the publishing house. The publishing house designed the cover, proof read and formatted the stories. After this was complete it was again shown to the Chief Editor to get approval from him and GP. After final approval it was sent back to the publishing house for final printing.

Phase 5: Publicizing the Book

The publishing of the book was announced through press advertisement which conveyed the primary message “Bijoyer Shokti” now published with the letters of 1971”, and a secondary message “We hope the future generations will achieve new victories everyday with the inspiration preserved within the pages of the book”. Other material included PR in Prothom Alo as special supplement showcasing some of the letters, front page write up and coverage of the Inauguration Event of the book. The Inauguration Event for the book consisted of a keynote speech, reading session and other activities and was attended by

personnel from Prothom Alo, Grameenphone, Selection Committee, freedom fighters, Muktiyuddho Jadughar.

A TVC was aired to further strengthen the awareness of the book with the primary message “We believe that, in this way, the inspiration of 1971 can still inspire future generations” and a secondary message stating “That is why Bijoyer Shokti will be published on 26 March with the inspiring letters of 1971”. Extensive PR activities in Prothom Alo in the form of Article (to commend the action and hope for success), stories (letters and excerpts from the book to create hype), letters (expressing how the letters inspire), book reviews (to keep the news of the book) was done to generate interest. Reading session at selected school was done in the presence of the media.

The book became the highest selling book ever to be sold in Bangladesh and it successfully created a new icon that reawakened the spirit of '71 among the youth of today. As a result of this communication the associated brands automatically created its own presence and sense of responsibility towards the society with the mass resulting in equity for the brand.