

Category Creation to Branding

POWERFUL BRANDS DON'T JUST
SELL PRODUCTS,
THEY CREATE NEW BEHAVIORS.

The STORY of “Invisible Brand”

bKash, Pathao, Chaldal, Shohoj

What was life like before these products/services existed?

WHAT IS A
CATEGORY?

A **category** is a specific **market segment or industry classification** that groups a set of products or services together based on **shared characteristics, functions, or consumer needs**.

In business and branding terms, a category defines **where a product or service competes** and **what consumers compare it against** when making decisions.

Category	Examples
Search Engines	Google, Bing, DuckDuckGo, Yahoo
Social Media	Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (X), LinkedIn
E-Commerce	Amazon, eBay, Alibaba, Daraz, Pickaboo
Ride-Sharing & Delivery	Uber, Pathao, Shohoz, Obhai
Mobile Banking & Fintech	PayPal, bKash, Nagad, Upay, Rocket
Online Grocery & Retail	Chaldal, Shwapno Online,
Telecom & Connectivity	Grameenphone, Robi, Banglalink, Teletalk
Workplace Communication	Slack, Microsoft Teams, Zoom
EdTech (Online Learning Platforms)	Coursera, Udemy, 10 Minute School, Shikho,
AI & Automation	ChatGPT, OpenAI, Midjourney, Jasper, Deepseek

Understanding Category Creation

- Category Creation is when a company introduces a product that doesn't fit into existing markets but solves a new or evolving problem.
- It happens when a product **defines a new problem or reframes an old one.**

"If you don't create a category, you compete on price.

If you do, you own the market."

Category Creators Don't Compete; They Define the Game!

Brands that create a new category don't have to fight for market share against existing competitors—they set their own rules and become the leader in their space. Instead of struggling to differentiate within a crowded market, they define a new problem and position themselves as the **only solution**.

Why Category Creation is Powerful

- **No direct competitors initially** → You become the *default* choice.
- **You shape customer expectations** → You define how the industry should operate.
- **Competitors have to follow your lead** → Instead of competing, they copy you.

How does it happen? (The 4 Approaches)

1

Reinvent an old category

- *Example: Tesla redefined electric vehicles.*

2

Create something entirely new

- *Example: iPhone (Smartphones weren't a category before).*

3

Combine existing categories

- *Example: Apple Watch (Merging Fitness & Smart Gadgets).*

4

Serve an underserved niche

- *Example: Shopify (E-commerce for Small Businesses).*

The Difference Between a Category Creator & a Competitor

Feature	Category Creator	Competitor
Market Approach	Defines the market	Enters an existing market
Growth Strategy	Educates consumers, creates demand	Competes on price, features, or marketing
Competitive Position	The first mover, brand leader	Struggles for differentiation
Long-term Impact	Becomes the benchmark	Has to catch up

- ✅ **Category Creators Lead** → Competitors **Follow**
- ✅ **Category Creators Shape Markets** → Competitors **Fight for Market Share**

How to Become a Category Creator



Find an underserved need

What problem exists that no brand is solving properly?

(Example: Before bKash, people needed secure and fast money transfers.)



Reframe the problem

Can you make people see the need in a new way?

(Example: Pathao convinced people that bikes were faster and more affordable than cars.)



Introduce an entirely new solution

How is your product/service different from everything before it?

(Example: Chaldal's logistics model was different from regular e-commerce.)



Brand the category, not just the product

Can your brand name become synonymous with the solution?

(Example: People say "bKash me" instead of "send money via mobile.")

How a Category Becomes a Brand

The Shift from Product to Brand


Creating a new category is great, but **what makes it a brand?**

WHAT IS A

Brand

A **brand** is the **identity and perception** of a product, service, or company in the minds of consumers. It includes the **name, logo, messaging, values, and customer experience** that differentiate it from competitors.

More than just a product, a brand represents **trust, emotion, and connection** with its audience.



**“Your brand is what other
people say about you when
you’re not in the room.”**

Jeff Bezos,
CEO of Amazon

To make a Brand Noticed We Create Stories...



**STORIES THAT
CONNECTS THE
AUDIENCE/TG
EMOTIONALLY TO
THE BRAND**



**STORIES THAT
CREATES A
POSITIVE IMPACT**



**STORIES THAT
STARTS
CONVERSATION**



**STORIES THAT
BECOMES PART OF
A
MEMORY/MOME
NT**



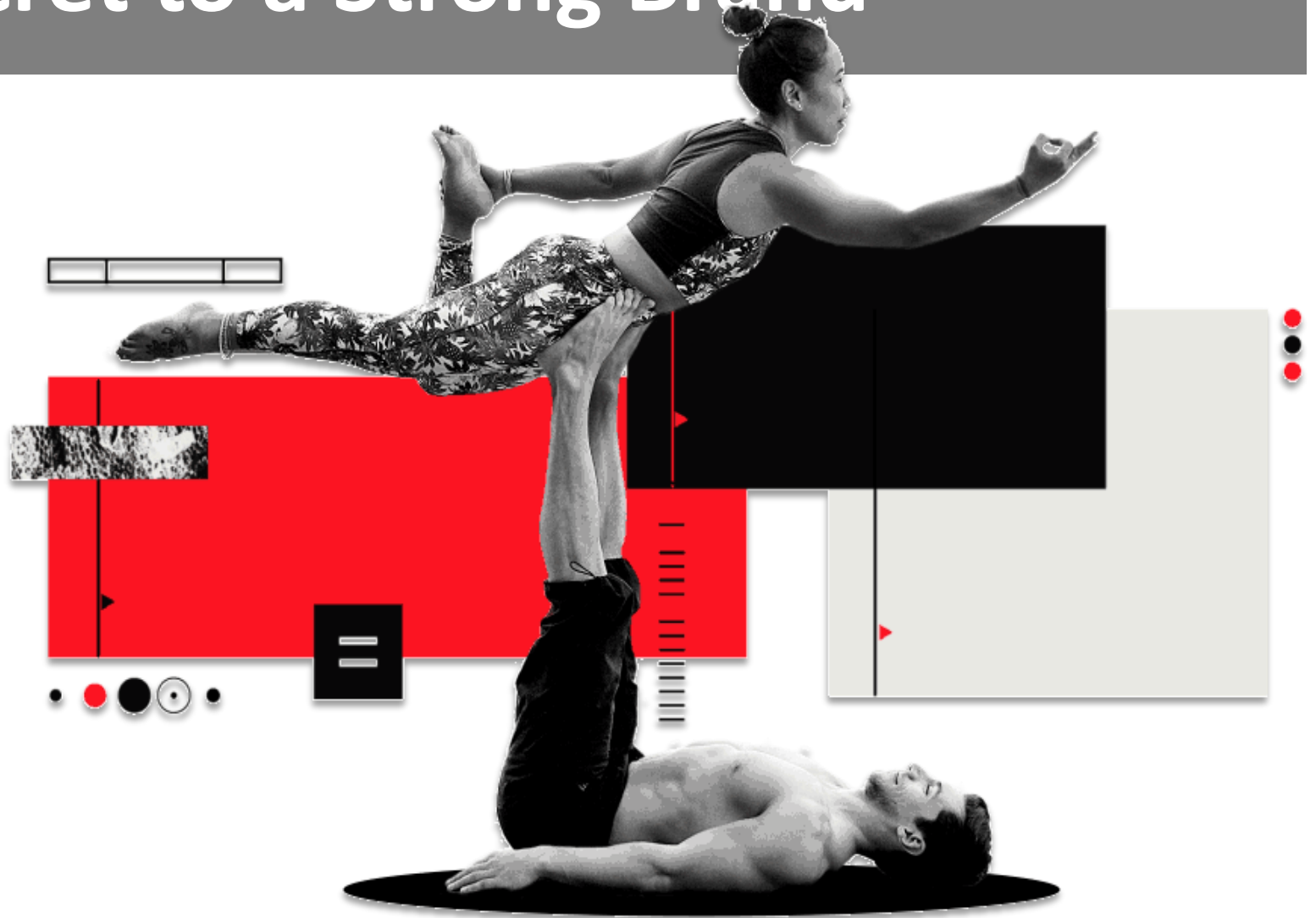
**STORIES THAT
MAKES THE BRAND
STAND OUT IN
CROWD**

The Secret to a Strong Brand

You need to provide a Positive and Consistent **Emotional Experience** if you want to develop a great brand.

People will start to depend on you and, more importantly, trust you as you continue to do this. We all frequently buy from our favorite brands because of that **Trust & Bond.**

How many of can You hear the sound of Opening of a Coke bottle?



Google: The Search Engine That Became the Internet

Category Created: *Organized, Accessible Web Search*

Before Google, web search was cluttered, inefficient, and unreliable. There were other search engines (Yahoo, AltaVista, Ask Jeeves), but **none were as fast or accurate.**

Google introduced:

- ✅ **PageRank Algorithm** – Prioritized search results based on relevance.
- ✅ **Minimalistic Interface** – Unlike Yahoo, Google focused just on search.
- ✅ **Speed & Accuracy** – Became the default way people access information.

Branding Shift:

Google didn't just remain a search engine—it evolved into a **global ecosystem** (Gmail, YouTube, Google Maps, Android, etc.).

Now, "**Google it**" is synonymous with searching the web—proving that category creators don't compete; they define the game.

3 Key Steps:



Define the Problem Clearly

"What problem are we solving?"

Example: bKash positioned itself as *"Bringing banking to the unbanked."*



Create a Strong Brand Narrative

Example: bKash established it as the Brand that defines your Freedom *"Amar bkash Thekay ke?"*



Build an Ecosystem, Not Just a Product

Example: bKash integrated with banks, e-commerce, remittance services, Donation, Bill Payment, DPS

Group Activity

Let's take 4 Bangladeshi brands:
**bKash, Pathao, Chaldal,
10 Minute School**

Task:


*"What was their initial category?
How did they evolve into a
brand?"*



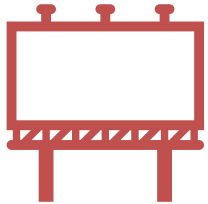


WHAT MAKES A BRAND STAND OUT?

Through the power of
POSITIONING

- **Brand positioning** is the **unique space** a brand occupies in the **customer's mind** compared to competitors. It defines **how** people perceive your brand and **why they choose you over others**.
-  **In simple terms:** *It's what makes your brand stand out and why customers remember you.*

Steps to Create Brand Positioning



Understand the Market

Conduct research on customer preferences, industry trends, and competitor positioning.



Define Your Brand Essence

What does your brand stand for? What are its core values and mission?



Identify Differentiators

Focus on what makes your brand unique (e.g., quality, price, innovation, sustainability).

Steps to Create Brand Positioning

Formula to Craft a Positioning Statement:

- *"For [target audience], [brand] is the [category] that [key benefit], because [proof/reason]."*
- **Example:**
For travelers and commuters in Bangladesh, Shohoz is the all-in-one digital platform that offers seamless ticket booking, ride-sharing, and logistics services because it integrates multiple transport options, provides a user-friendly app, and ensures a reliable, hassle-free experience."

Consistently Deliver on Your Promise:

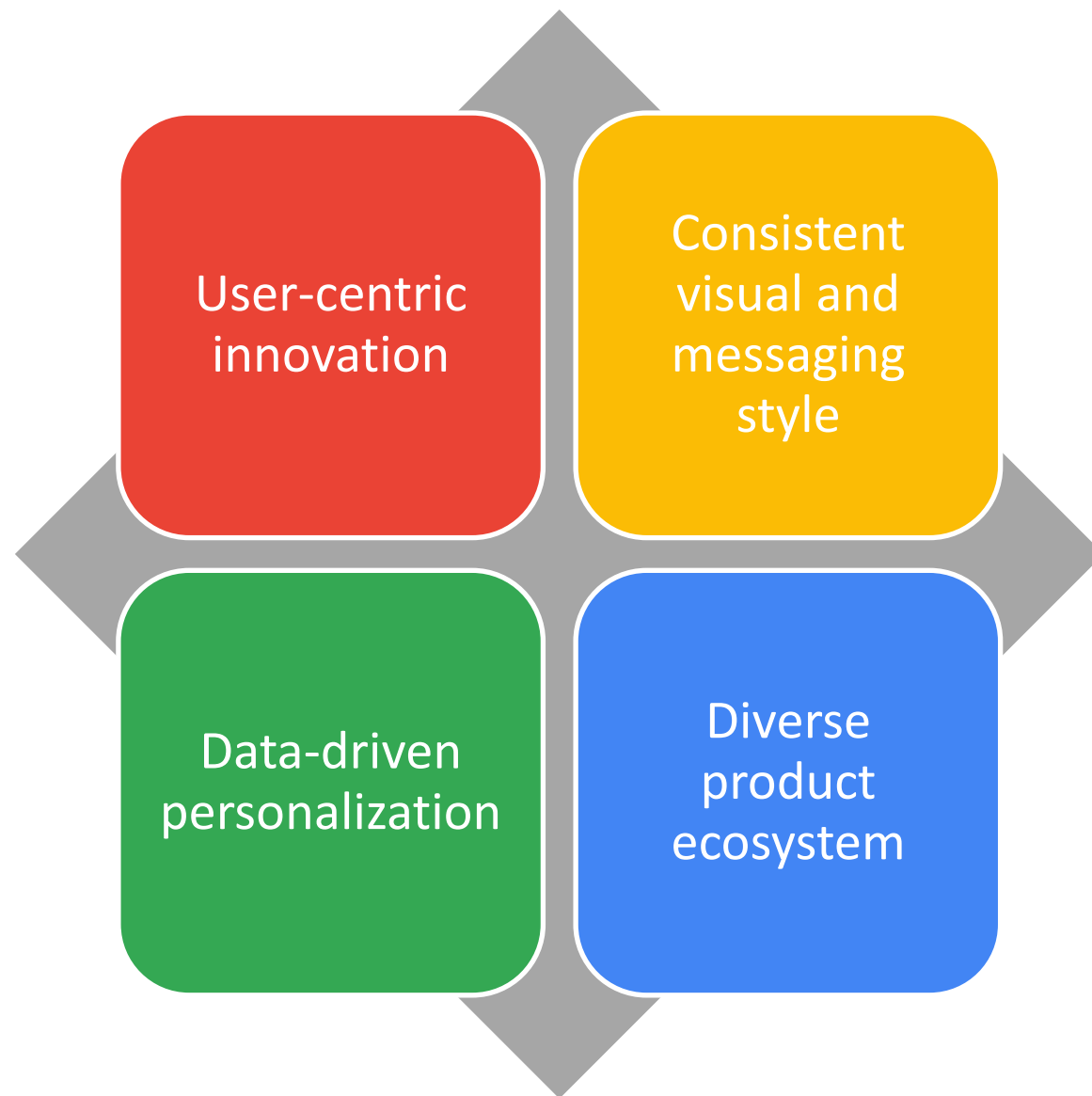
- Ensure all brand communications and experiences align with the positioning.

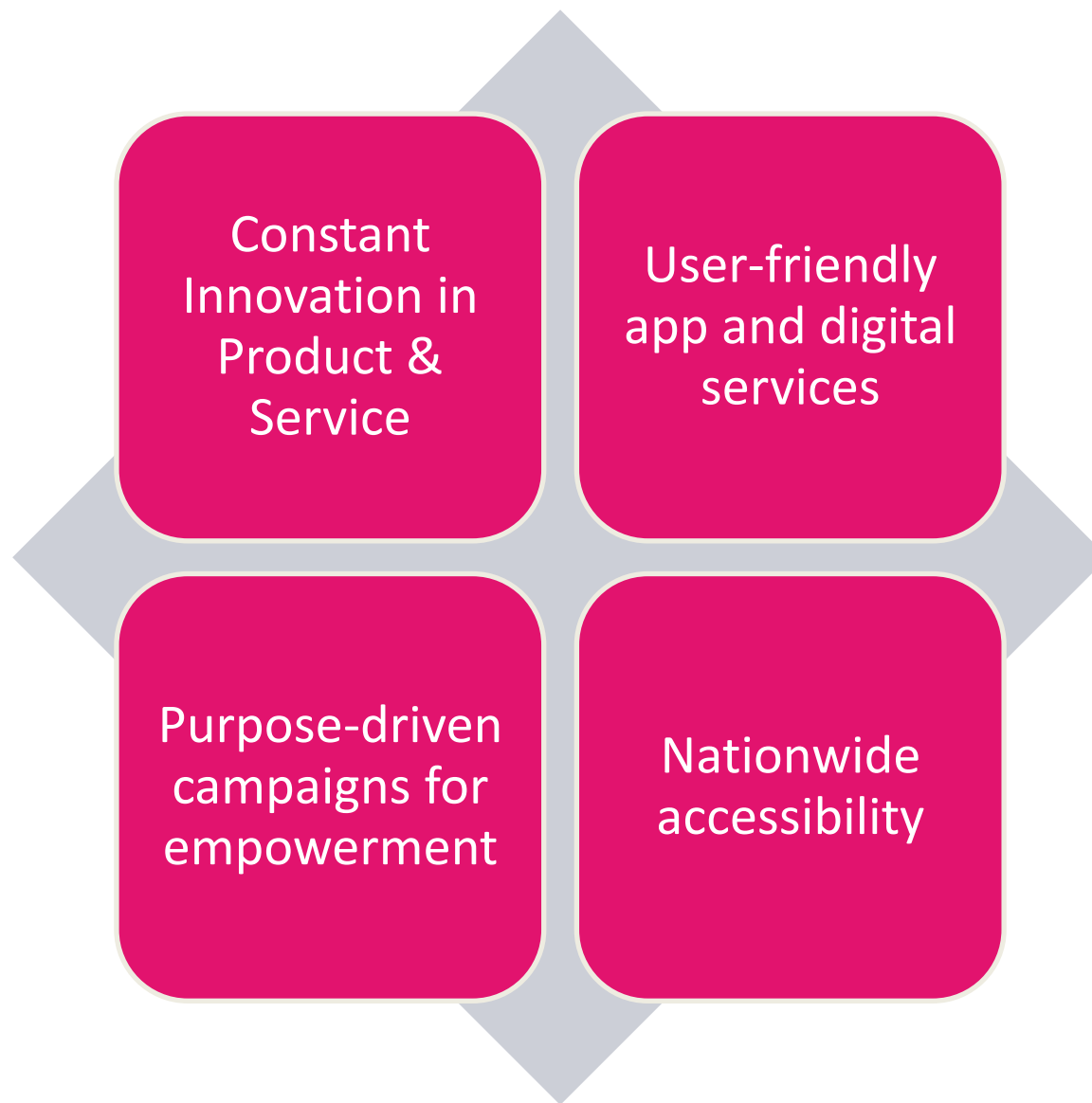
Scaling a Category into a Dominant Brand

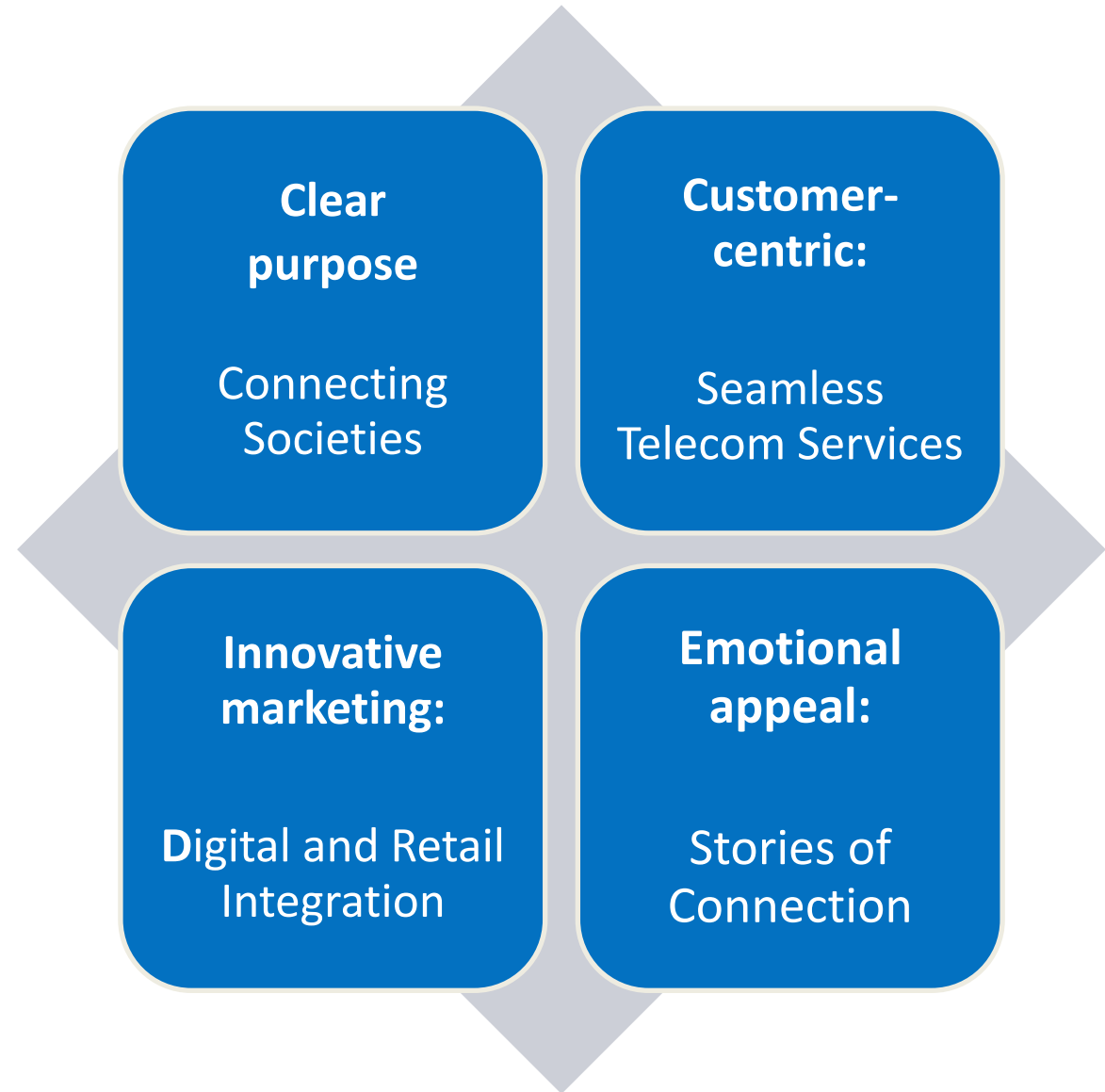
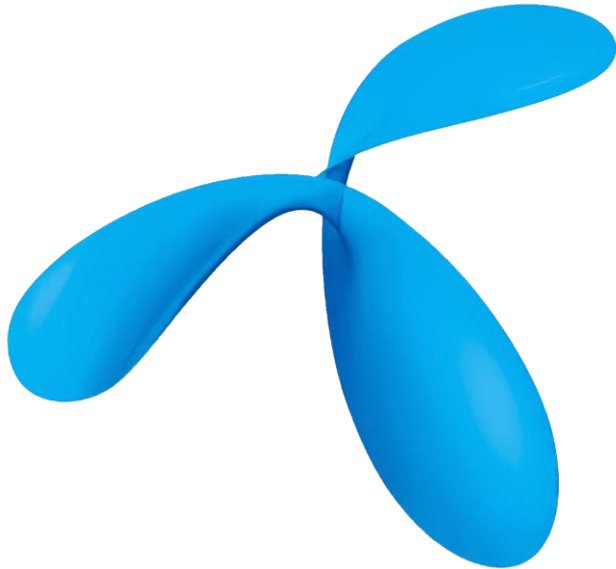
- **First-mover advantage isn't enough** → *Innovation must continue!*
 - Example: bKash didn't stop at mobile banking—it expanded to merchant payments, remittances.
- **Marketing is about emotional connection, not features**
 - Example: Why do people **trust bKash more than Nagad**, even if Nagad offers lower fees?
 - *Brand trust, consistency, and reliability!*
- **The power of customer advocacy & network effects**
 - Example: *Pathao grew because more drivers = faster rides = better experience.*
 - More **users = better service = stronger brand presence.**

How Some of the Category Focused on Creating Powerful Brand

Analyzing A Few POWER BRANDS







What Did these Brands have in Common!

- ✓ Clear brand purpose and values
- ✓ Customer-centric approach
- ✓ Consistency in branding
- ✓ Emotional connection with consumers
- ✓ Innovation and adaptation
- ✓ Purpose-driven marketing
- ✓ Diversification and brand extension
- ✓ Data-driven decision-making

Group Activity

Let's take 4 Bangladeshi brands:

bKash, Pathao, Chaldal,

10 Minute School

and identify their Positioning statement, using this formula

"For [target audience], [brand] is the [category] that [key benefit], because [proof/reason]."



Case Study:

**GRAMEENPHONE: THE BRAND THAT MADE MOBILE A
NECESSITY IN BANGLADESH**

- **Category Created:** *Affordable, Accessible Mobile Communication*

Before Grameenphone (GP), mobile phones in Bangladesh were **expensive, rare, and only for the elite**.

GP **changed the game** by:

- ✓ **Introducing Prepaid SIM Cards** – Made mobile accessible for the mass market.
- ✓ **Expanding Nationwide Coverage** – Connected rural Bangladesh when landlines weren't viable.
- ✓ **Bringing Affordable Internet** – Launched 3G & 4G services ahead of competitors.

Branding Shift

Grameenphone didn't just sell SIM cards—it positioned itself as “**Your Connectivity Partner**” and built trust with **consistent network quality, rural penetration, and brand loyalty**.

Today, **GP = Mobile Network** in Bangladesh, just like **Google = Search** worldwide.

Objectives

- **Brand Positioning:** Reinforce Grameenphone as a partner in progress for rural communities.
- **Increase Awareness:** Highlight Grameenphone's network reliability in connecting even the most remote areas.
- **Drive Emotional Engagement:** Create a strong emotional connection between the brand and its audience.
- **Target Audience**
 - **Primary:** Rural populations across Bangladesh, particularly family members separated due to work or migration.
 - **Secondary:** Urban audiences with rural ties, evoking nostalgia and emotional resonance.

Brand Communication Highlights

Emotional Storytelling:

- Campaign ads featured relatable characters, such as a migrant worker returning home to support his family's dreams.

Local Adaptation:

- Language and visuals were adapted for rural audiences, ensuring cultural relevance and emotional connection.



Time to take a Small Break!