

# GADGETS MAGAZINE



# Home + TECH

Work. Study. Play. Live.



**Mobility**

**THE ISUZU D-MAX TECH LEXICON**

**Cybersecurity**

**TOP 5 MOBILE MALWARE TARGETING YOUR DIGITAL MONEY**

**Feature**

**TURNING YOUR HOME INTO A SMART HOME**





Oh my Genio



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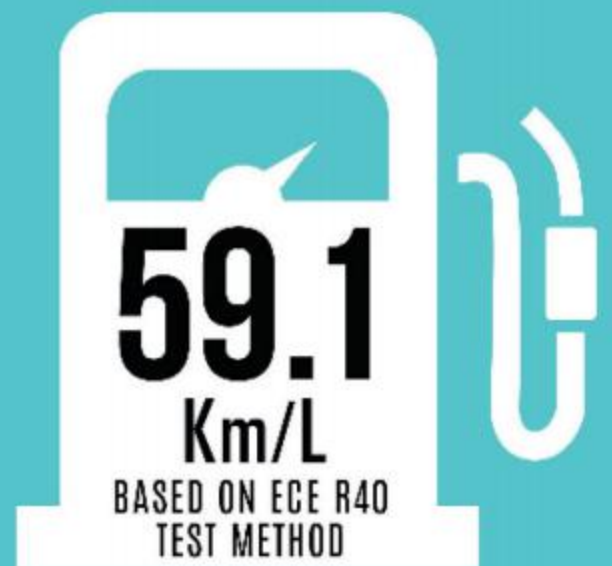
Honda Philippines, Inc.



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# Genio

*Fabulous New Colors!*



# ONE DREAM

# Contents

## 08 PARADE



- 08 Lego Star Wars
- 10 HP ProBook 445 G7
- 11 LG DUALCOOL APX | LG DUALCOOL IPX
- 12 XTREME COOL Side-By-Side Inverter Refrigerator
- 14 vivo Y20 [G]
- 15 vivo Y12s
- 16 Oppo A74 5G
- 17 Oppo Enco X | Oppo Band
- 18 Xiaomi Mi 11 Lite
- 20 Redmi Note 10 Pro
- 21 Synology RS2821RP+
- 22 Fitbit Luxe
- 24 Samsung Window-Type Inverter Airconditioner

## 38 COVERSTORY

- 38 Work It (From Home)
- 42 A Classroom At Home
- 46 Keep Moving Forward
- 50 Levelling Up At Home



## 54 FEATURE

- 54 Turning Your Home into a Smart Home
- 120 Buy Real, Buy Smart



## 26 GADGETS LAB

- 26 TECNO Camon 16
- 30 Razer Tartarus Pro
- 34 Logitech C922 Pro HD Stream Webcam
- 36 Realme Buds Air 2

## 80 GAMING

- 80 The Legends of Heroes
- 82 Acer Predator League 2021

## 58 MOBILITY

- 58 The Isuzu D-Max Tech Lexicon
- 66 Hyundai Staria MPV
- 72 The All-New Honda City Hatchback
- 78 Honda Launches New Off-Road Motorcycles

# 84 INNOVATION

- 84 UV Light Disinfection, Mobile Robot, Automated Monitoring
- 88 PH Startup Incubator Awards
- 90 PASIMANO: A Solar-Thermal Window



# 100 CYBER SECURITY

Top 5 Mobile Malware Targeting Your Digital Money

# 94 FINTECH

- 94 XM Online Trading
- 98 Digital Finance for Global Filipinos



# 110 EMPLOYMENT

- 110 The Top Companies for Career Growth
- 114 Workplace Inclusivity Becomes a Reality for Persons With Disabilities

# 104 ENTERPRISE

- 104 Seamless Customer Experience: 3 Insights
- 106 The National Arts and Crafts Fair Goes Online
- 108 Design-Driven Businesses

# 116 EDUCATION

- 116 Liwanag ng Tagumpay
- 118 Teaching Certificate Program for Online/Flexible Education



# Contents

## 122 GREEN

- 122 EPSON Environmental Vision 2050
- 124 Certified Plastic Neutral
- 125 'Aling Tindera' Waste-to-Cash Program

## 128 WELLNESS

- Smile Train:  
The First Filipino  
Speech Therapy App

## 126 APPS

- UMA:  
An Agri-Trading Platform for  
Farmers and Entrepreneurs

## 134 ENTERTAINMENT

- 134 Mabuhay Ang Lokal
- 136 Which Type of NBA  
Fan Are You?

## 138 PROPERTY

- 138 Call for Entries:  
PropertyGuru PH Awards
- 142 Smart Building Technology  
in the New Normal

## 144 GOVERNMENT

ExpresSS e-Learning Portal

## 146 NEWSBYTES

The Latest in the World  
of Tech



## 150 RELIC

Surgical Mask



*150*

# NEOFOX

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# LEGO Star Wars

Construction Sets

THE NEW LEGO Star Wars construction sets were made for adult builders to recreate some of the most iconic designs from the Star Wars galaxy.

The new sets feature two iconic additions to the LEGO Star Wars helmet collection first revealed last year — a bust inspired by Darth Vader and one in the likeness of a loyal Scout Trooper. A stunning new model honoring the imposing Imperial Probe Droid completes the trio. Designed for adults and experienced LEGO builders with a passion for the Star Wars galaxy, fans can now build, display and pay homage to the Dark Lord of the Sith by taking on these new building challenges.

Passionate builders can enjoy some time to relax as they take on these complex creative challenges, recreating every authentic detail in true LEGO style. When done with the build, the models can be displayed with a bespoke plaque to put the final touch that will make the perfect desk ornament or centerpiece in the home for Star Wars fans.

All three items are available in all LEGO Certified Stores and on [bankeebriks.ph](http://bankeebriks.ph) as well as Lazada, Shopee, Dotcom, and Zalora.

## LEGO Star Wars Darth Vader Helmet (75304)

Capture the sinister look of the Star Wars icon and ultimate villain, with the 834-piece displayable model. Offering an immersive building experience, the finished helmet makes an impressive display piece.

**Darth Vader Helmet - PHP 4,999.75**







### LEGO Star Wars Scout Trooper Helmet (75305)

The stunning 471-piece helmet has been created as an homage to the Scout Troopers' ultimate reconnaissance and infiltration abilities. Dust off your speeder bike and enjoy recreating every contour and detail with LEGO bricks.

Scout Trooper Helmet - PHP 3,499.75

### LEGO Star Wars Imperial Probe Droid (75306)

Adult builders can recreate scenes from Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back on the ice planet Hoth when constructing this distinctive droid. The 683-piece model features a transparent pole to 'suspend' the droid over the buildable snowy scene.

Imperial Probe Droid - PHP 4,999.75



# HP ProBook 445 G7

ONE OF THE NEWEST MEMBERS of the HP notebook family, the ProBook 445 G7 comes with a durable aluminum case with an attractive metal finish. Thin and light and starting at 3.53lbs, it projects a stylish yet professional look and feel of higher-end notebooks.

Powering the ProBook 445 G7 is an AMD Ryzen 4000 Series processor with up to 8 cores for notable efficiency and long battery life. This allows users to multitask throughout the day — using office applications, internet surfing, as well as basic image and video editing — without any considerable effect on speed and performance.

HP also spotlights the multi-layered security protection of the ProBook 445 G7. With commercial-grade security features offering enhanced security and privacy features from the BIOS up, this notebook PC offers the same level of protection that can be found in desktop PCs, addressing the needs of growing businesses. Among the available security features is HP Sure Sense, which uses deep learning AI to provide exceptional protection against advanced malware, and HP Sure Click that helps protect from malware, ransomware, and viruses.

HP notebooks have come to be known for their reliability. The ProBook 445 G7 lives up to this reputation, having passed stringent 19 MIL-STD 810H tests. It also comes with class-leading features as the HP Sure Start for AMD; the self-healing BIOS that automatically recovers from attacks or corruptions without IT and user intervention; HP Extended Range Wireless LAN that allows for greater distance from transmission point and fast data at shorter ranges; the built-in HP Privacy Camera that blocks the lens of your camera; and the HP Fast Charge where you get up to 50% battery life in just 30 minutes of charging.





Dual Inverter Air Conditioner

# LG DUALCOOL APX | LG DUALCOOL IPX

THE NEW LG DUALCOOL air-conditioners with Dual Inverter Compressor boast 70% lower energy consumption and 40% faster cooling performance. LG's groundbreaking UVnano technology in both the APX and IPX models also removes 99.99% of germs from humidity, bacteria, and viruses within the unit. Its high removal efficiency was tested and certified by TUV Rheinland in South Korea in March 2021, together with the certified capability to prevent the growth of fungi and microbes that can cause allergies, colds, and lung infections. The IPX model comes with the Ionizer+ feature, also tested by TUV Rheinland, which sterilized 99.9% of all traces of SARS-CoV2 in controlled test conditions.

Moreover, the 5-step Total Air Care System in the APX and IPX series also provides a complete air-purification

system starting from the Pre-Filter, which detects dust particles in the first step; to Auto-Cleaning, which automatically cleans inside the airway to prevent bacteria and mold. With the new LG DUALCOOL, every member of the family can experience a cool, clean, and fresh environment for better health at home. The integrated air-purifier in the LG DUALCOOL APX series can also detect and filter out PM1.0 dust particles, which are 2.5 times smaller than PM2.5.

LG's new air-conditioner lineup is driven by its Dual Inverter Compressor, which offers up to 70% less energy consumption and 40% faster cooling performance. These innovative air-conditioner lines also come equipped with a range of features to provide heightened convenience — from Active Energy Control for energy saving during long

sessions to extensive 20-meter coverage via the Windblast feature. Along with the new lineup, LG also presents a new remote control with an LED backlight for night use, allowing customers to select Sleep Mode without turning on the lights. For enhanced durability and customers' peace of mind, the new series comes with Gold Fin condensers with patented anticorrosion coating plus a 10-year warranty on compressors, and a 1-year warranty on condensers, evaporators, and PCB mainboards.

The air-conditioners support connectivity with the LG ThinQ app through WiFi, so users can control the air-conditioner from anywhere, anytime. In case a problem occurs, customers can also save repair time through the Smart Diagnosis program which can diagnose common problems that might happen with air-conditioners.

# XTREME COOL Side-By-Side Inverter Refrigerator

Refrigerator

PHP 47,995

**THE 19.8 CUBIC FEET** XTREME COOL Side-by-Side Inverter Refrigerator (XCOOL-SIDEBYSIDE20IG) is the ultimate choice for a spacious, convenient, and efficient way of preserving the freshness of our food. It boasts a combination of elegant and novel

appearance and innovatively powerful technology for the modern Filipino lifestyle.

This two-door refrigerator delivers tons of storage spaces, adjustable shelves and compartments, capacious fruits and vegetable

crisper drawers, as well as bright LED lights to let you see items tucked away. It has a no-frost feature that does not require defrosting and is able to limit the formation of mildew or odors inside the refrigerator. This new refrigerator comes with a digital touch panel on the door that allows you to easily adjust temperatures and settings with a simple touch, without having to open the refrigerator door.

Compared to a refrigerator unit with a regular compressor, the XTREME COOL Side-by-Side Refrigerator powered by an inverter compressor saves about 25% in electricity consumption. This enables the unit to operate according to the temperature in the refrigerator — running at full speed when it needs cooling down and stopping completely when the temperature is low enough.

It is also an environmentally friendly product as the freon-free refrigerant and foaming insulation materials used for the fridge freezer cause no damage to the ozone layer and have a minimal impact on global warming.





# vivo Y20 [G]

Smartphone

PHP 9,999



**WITH A PERFORMANCE PROCESSOR** that's boosted by the MediaTek HyperEngine and a long-lasting battery, gamers get a thrilling and satisfying gaming experience on the vivo Y20s [G]. Its Helio G80 octa-core processor records speeds of up to 2.0GHz, offering 98% more power than its predecessors.

Raising the mobile gaming experience, its MediaTek HyperEngine processor makes load times faster by increasing the phone's response to the touchscreen, making it extra sensitive to touch input, and giving its users a split-second advantage against the competition.

In boosting connectivity performance, MediaTek optimizes latency by carefully managing different connections like game controllers and headsets that are often connected via Bluetooth and the smartphone's

connection to Wi-Fi. Its multi-peripheral coexistence mechanism maintains a smooth and seamless flow of these many connections.

On visual quality, MediaTek mirrors its expertise in premium TVs to smartphone displays as MediaTek MiraVision enhances in-game image quality real-time which makes for a lower action-to-display latency. Sealing the richness of the visuals are better contrast, texture sharpness, and fine details, further enhanced with the vivo Y20s [G] Halo FullView Display.

Punctuating its incredible gaming specs with a little bit of style and more ease of use is its side-mounted fingerprint scanner that makes unlocking super convenient. It comes with a 5000mAh battery and an 18W fast charge for ultra-fast charging.

# vivo Y12s

Smartphone

PHP 6,499

**THE NEW VIVO Y12S** a value-for-money device with a comprehensive user experience.

Two features make the vivo Y12s ideal for both gamers and non-gamers. For gamers, the Multi-Turbo 3.0 optimizes core scenes to reduce stuttering and lag in games. It shifts automatically to prioritizing internal storage resources to avoid delays when multiple apps are running simultaneously in the background.

Non-gamers, meanwhile, can benefit from the FunTouch OS 11 which runs on Android 10. It has a long list of extra features that make app management seamless like the iManager that

automatically junks unused files to clean up space, the AI editor that makes it easy to edit and organize photos and videos, and the Gallery app that optimizes the performance of downloaded programs.

The vivo Y12s makes unlocking easier with its side-mounted fingerprint scanner capable of allowing access to the phone in 0.23-seconds. There's also no need to hang around power outlets with its 5000mAh battery.

Making the phone more stylish are its two trendy colors: glacier blue and phantom black. A 6.51-inch Halo FullView Display completes the vivo Y12s' sophisticated design.





Smartphone

# Oppo A74 5G

A VIDEOGRAPHY AND ENTERTAINMENT smartphone powerhouse that comes at an affordable price, the Oppo A74 5G runs on Qualcomm Snapdragon 480 5G with a hefty 6GB of RAM and 128GB of storage capacity that guarantees a faster, smoother user experience both on productivity and entertainment.

The Oppo A74 5G also gives you the chance to amp up your social media content with its camera features that you can do with its 48MP AI rear quad camera. Other features social media savvy users can enjoy are AI Scene Enhancement 2.0, AI Beautification, Ultra Clear 108MP Images.

Additionally, get the smartphone that supports your daily grind like the 5,000mAh mega battery that comes with an 18W fast charger and programmed with an all-around Smart Power Saving system that could keep up with your jam-packed day.



Wireless Earphones

# Oppo Enco X

**MADE IN PARTNERSHIP** with renowned Danish loudspeaker brand Dynaudio, the OPPO Enco X are wireless earphones powered by a one-of-a-kind acoustic system and acoustic structural design. The unique design around the OPPO Enco X allows it to reproduce the rich texture of music, while its noise-canceling function works in almost any scenario to give users the peace and quiet they might need.

The Oppo Enco X is built with binaural low-latency Bluetooth transmission that is designed with strong interference scenarios in mind, delivering greater stability, system-level ultra-low latency optimization, and even stronger latency reduction. The Enco X is equipped with Bluetooth 5.2 for a more advanced transmission protocol, making it more compatible with both Android and iOS operating systems.



# Oppo Band

Health Tracker

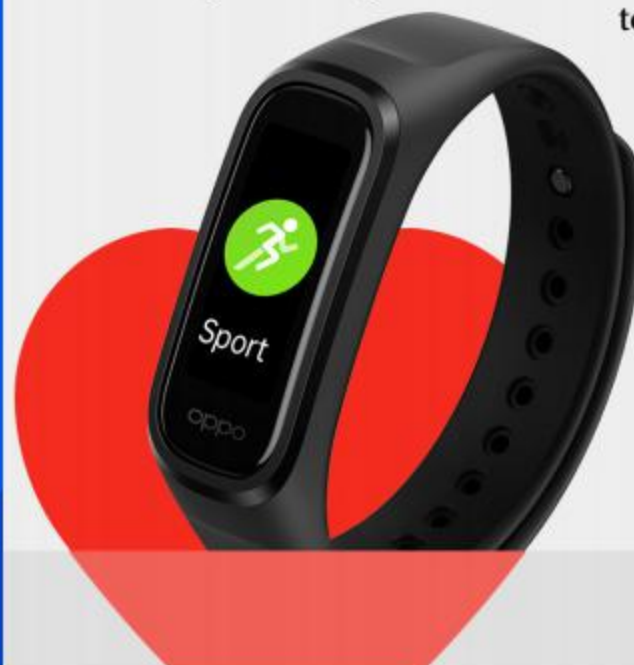


**THE OPPO BAND** is the latest addition to the brand's wearable device line. Meant for fitness and health, it features a continuous blood oxygen monitoring function that works even when the user is asleep.

The OPPO Band has 12 workout models, ready to receive data on a user's heart rate while performing

a variety of exercises such as walking, cycling, swimming, running, yoga, and so much more. The data is analyzed through the HeyTap Health app, which sends users notifications on their health and motivates them to continue staying fit.

It comes in a basic sports version and a style version, each making adjustments to allow for maximum comfort. It works with a user's smartphone, allowing for messaging and call notifications, music playback, plus a feature that helps you find your phone.





Smartphone

8GB+128GB - PHP 14,990

# Xiaomi Mi 11 Lite

**THE XIAOMI MI 11 LITE** packs all the perks of a flagship-level smartphone into an ultra-lightweight and stylish design, perfect for users seeking a high-end smartphone without the high price.

The Xiaomi Mi 11 Lite features a 6.55-inch AMOLED DotDisplay with 10-bit TrueColor support, producing a dazzling 1.07-billion colors. This allows for smoother color gradation and a more natural transition between hues, minimizing banding and reducing noise and blemishes on the image, whatever angle the display is viewed from.

Featuring DCI-P3 color gamut, color performance is further optimized by providing high color accuracy and retention, ultimately creating a stunningly vivid, true-to-life image. Additionally, its support for HDR10

creates a more dynamic image with sharper contrast for a more lifelike viewing experience.

The Mi 11 Lite's stunning picture quality is paired with equally vivid sound. Equipped with certified hi-res audio dual speakers, it offers an exceptional listening experience with truly immersive sound. In addition, with its 90Hz refresh and 240Hz touch sampling rate, the phone is as impressive to use as it is to look at.

Debuting with the Qualcomm Snapdragon 732G, Mi 11 Lite offers more power, more speed, and higher reliability. Equipped with LiquidCool technology, the Mi 11 Lite is built to stay at peak performance even during periods of heavy usage, such as when streaming or gaming. With a 4,250mAh





battery and 33W fast-charging, it offers long-lasting power for full-day and even multi-day use.

It confidently carries on Xiaomi's legacy of innovation and best-in-class smartphone camera technology. Touting a triple rear camera array with a 64MP main shooter and 1/1.97-inch sensor, the Mi 11 Lite offers a nimble and user-friendly experience that enables anyone to take professional grade pictures and videos with minimal effort. An 8MP ultra-wide-angle and 5MP telemacro camera round out the triple camera setup, allowing users to capture wide scenery shots or close up macro shots with stunning detail.

Both the wide-angle camera and the 16MP front camera have been optimized for low-light conditions with Night

Mode, enabling users to take stunning images of sunset landscapes, nighttime cityscapes, or night-out selfies with higher brightness, sharper contrast, and enhanced detail. The cameras are further boosted by a selection of new video modes and filters that allow anyone to easily capture pro-level, cinematic footage that would otherwise require a high level of expertise and expensive equipment to create.

Measuring just 6.81mm in thickness and weighing in at a mere 157g, the Mi 11 Lite offers a more comfortable and lightweight in-hand feel. Protected by Corning Gorilla Glass 5, this device is built to withstand damage from everyday drops and scratches. Designed for the fashionable young generation, it comes in boba black, bubblegum blue, and peach pink.





# Redmi Note 10 Pro

Smartphone

6GB+128GB - PHP 12,590

8GB+128GB - PHP 13,590

**THE REDMI NOTE 10 PRO** ups the ante, having one of the highest resolution cameras for smartphones. The phone's massive 108MP sensor with 9-in-1 binning technology and dual native ISO combine to capture the finest details, provide a higher dynamic range, and offer an array of photo editing possibilities. Thanks to Night mode 2.0 powered by a RAW multi-frame algorithm, users can capture stunning visuals even in low-light settings.

The Redmi Note 10 Pro offers both pro and telemacro time-lapse video shooting. Other new additions include photo clones, video clones, dual video, and long exposure modes for extra fun photo or video sharing on your favorite social media apps.

Following a seamless redesign, including an Arc side fingerprint sensor and a 6.67-inch 120Hz AMOLED DotDisplay, the device grants an all-around smooth user experience. Available in three head-turning colors — onyx gray, glacier blue, and gradient bronze — the Redmi Note 10 Pro is as elegant as it is durable, with Corning Gorilla Glass 5 on the front protecting it from unsightly scuffs and scratches.

The Redmi Note 10 Pro truly packs a punch with one of the most powerful 4G processors in the market, Qualcomm Snapdragon 732G. Ideal for gamers and streamers alike, the device's high performance and low power consumption model, paired with an immersive sound system featuring dual speakers, provides an optimal on-the-go viewing experience. Thanks to the 5,020mAh battery and advanced 33W fast charging, time spent powering up will be kept to a minimum.



# Synology RS2821RP+

Rackstation

SYNOLOGY'S new 3U 16-bay RackStation RS2821RP+ is built to excel in large-scale infrastructure backup, business-level file serving, and private cloud services.

The new RackStation unit boasts a significant leap in performance over its predecessor, delivering 115% higher random write IOPS, 162% higher read IOPS. It also offers 26% higher sequential read performance at 2200MB/s and 65% higher sequential write throughput at 1164MB/s.

The RS2821RP+ can be upgraded to meet specific business requirements. The

PCIe port can be used to install a dual-port Synology 10GbE or 25GbE NIC3 to improve network throughput or a Synology M.2 adapter card with SNV3000 Series NVMe SSDs to create an SSD cache, a cost-effective method to boost random read/write IOPS of hard drive arrays without occupying standard drive bays.

Memory can be expanded to 32GB of DDR4 ECC memory, and 12 extra drive bays can be added with the RX1217(RP) expansion unit bringing the total to 28. The RS2821RP+ is covered by Synology's 3-year limited warranty, extendable to 5 years in select regions.



**THE FITBIT LUXE** is a new fashion-forward fitness and wellness tracker designed to help you take a more holistic approach to your health and wellness. Luxe offers the motivation and support you need to stay healthy in today's world with everything from stress management tools to automatic activity and sleep tracking – all in an effortlessly chic bracelet design.

Wellness Tracker

PHP 8,490

# Fitbit Luxe



The Luxe gives you access to Fitbit's wide range of health and wellness features to support a holistic approach to healthy living. Get insights into your wellbeing in the Fitbit app with the Health Metrics dashboard, which tracks your breathing rate, heart rate variability (HRV), resting heart rate (RHR), skin temperature variation, and coming soon, oxygen saturation (SpO2) — all these help you identify changes that may be caused by increased stress or fatigue.

With a light, slim form factor, the Luxe is designed for maximum comfort, making it easy to wear nightly to manage your sleep. Sleep Score helps you better understand your sleep quality, and bedtime reminders can help you establish a more consistent sleep routine. With Luxe, you'll get six months of Fitbit Premium for added support and deeper analysis of your data.

Premium members can view deeper sleep analytics. Some will see feature tests as Fitbit works to expand its future offerings to give even more personalized guidance based on your sleep patterns.

Additional health tools include food, hydration and weight logging, and menstrual health tracking. Premium

members have access to more than 60 new pieces of nutrition content, including curated healthy recipes from Fitbit and Eating Well magazine. The new blood glucose logging feature in the Fitbit app allows you to track your blood glucose levels to see how they change throughout the day.

The Fitbit Luxe has the 24/7 heart rate tracking that powers many of Fitbit's health, wellness, and fitness tools. You can track your daily heart rate in real-time to better measure your calorie burn. You can also choose from 20 different on-wrist exercise modes, including golf, pilates, spinning, or tennis, and for those who prefer running, biking, or hiking outside, you can use connected GPS from your phone to see real-time pace and distance.

In addition to all the health and fitness features, the Luxe has key convenience and smart features like alarms, a stopwatch, and timers to help you manage your day, all with up to five days of battery life. Stay connected and up-to-date with customizable call, text, and smartphone notifications, and set bedtime reminders or use do not disturb when it's time to focus. Its broad compatibility with Android and iOS



phones, plus Google Fast Pair, makes it easy to get moving while staying connected.

With a sleek buttonless design, the Luxe is Fitbit's thinnest and first color touchscreen tracker to date, with a variety of vibrant new clock faces. Its intuitive swipe and tap functionality give you easy access to your daily stats, notifications, and core health and fitness features.

A beautiful, sleek tracker with a color touchscreen and up to five days of battery life, the Fitbit Luxe can be matched with a wide range of stylish accessories, including a modern luxury bracelet from California jewelry brand gorjana.



Air Conditioner

# Samsung Window-Type Inverter

**SAMSUNG IS OFFERING** a new way to cool down without adding a dent to bills with its first window-type air conditioner with a digital inverter for optimized cooling and a filter to keep homes clean.

The Samsung Window-Type Inverter saves up to 61% more energy than non-inverter units, so everyone can relax with the air conditioner on for the whole day. Unlike fixed-speed compressors, this digital inverter

technology regulates the speed of the compressor based on the level of room temperature. It keeps the room cool without sudden spikes in energy usage.

Additionally, the air conditioner can make rooms cold 15% faster than non-inverter units. Through Fast Cooling, the unit operates with the fastest fan speed to reach the desired temperature in the shortest period of time. Once it is reached, the fan slows down to maintain the coolness.

Another exciting feature is the air conditioner's anti-bacterial filter. Everyone can breathe clean air thanks to its silver ion, Vitamin C, and anti-mite technology. These are proven effective in destroying bacteria, allergens, and other airborne contaminants. With an air conditioner that brings clean and cool air without consuming much energy, families can keep comfortable without worrying about electricity bills.



# GADGETS MAGAZINE

REACHES

# 1.6 MILLION STUDENTS

ALL OVER THE PHILIPPINES

## METRO MANILA

Abe International Business College • Adamson University • Angelicum College • Arellano University • Asia Pacific College • Ateneo de Manila University • Central Colleges of the Phils. • Centro Escolar University • Dela Salle University • Don Bosco Technical College • Emilio Aguinaldo College • Eulogio Amang Rodriguez Institute of Science & Technology • Far Eastern University • FEU Institute of Technology • Jesus Reign Christian College • Lyceum of the Phils. • Manila Central University • Manuel L. Quezon University • MAPUA Institute of Technology • Marikina Polytechnic College • Merriam College • National Defense College of the Phils. • National Teachers College • National University (Phils.) • Navotas Polytechnic College • New Era University • Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Pasay • Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Marikina • Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila • Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Muntinlupa • Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Valenzuela • Perpetual Help College of Manila • Phil. School of Business Administration • Philippine Christian University • Philippine Normal University • Philippine Womens University • Polytechnic University of the Phils. • Rizal Technological University • San Beda College • San Juan De Letran • San Sebastian College • Technological Institute of the Phils. • Technological University of the Phils. • Trinity University of Asia • University of Caloocan - Main Campus • University of Makati • University of Manila • University of Perpetual Help System DALTA • University of Rizal System (Main campus) • University of Sto. Tomas • University of the East • University of the East Ramon Magsaysay • University of the Phils. (Diliman) • University of the Phils. - Manila

## LUZON | NORTHERN

Angeles University Foundation • Aurora State College of Technology • Baliwag University • Bataan Peninsula State University (Main Campus) • Benguet State University • Bulacan State University (Main Campus) • Cagayan State University • Central Luzon State University • Don Honorio Ventura State University • Dr. Yangas College • Holy Angel University • Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State University (Main Campus) • La Consolacion University Philippines • Mariano Marcos State University (Main Campus) • Nueva Ecija University of Science & Tech. • Nueva Viscaya State University • Pampanga State Agricultural University • Pangasinan State University (Main Campus) • Ramon Magsaysay Technological University • Saint Louis University • Tarlac Agricultural University • Tarlac State University • University of Assumption • University of Cordilleras • University of Luzon • University of Pangasinan • University of the Northern Phils. • University of the Phils. - Baguio

## LUZON | SOUTHERN

Aquinas University of Legaspi • Ateneo de Naga University • Batangas State University • Bicol University (4 campuses) • Cavite State University - Dela Salle Lipa • FEU Cavite • Laguna State Polytechnic University • Lyceum of the Phils. University Batangas • Manuel S. Enverga University • Marinduque State College • Mindoro State College of Agriculture & Tech. • Palawan State University • Romblon State University (Main Campus) • San Pablo Colleges • Southern Luzon State University • University of Batangas • University of the Phils. - Los Banos

## VISAYAS

Aklan State University • Bohol Island State University • Bukidnon State College • Capiz State University • Carlos Hilado Memorial State College • Cebu Doctors University • Cebu Normal University • Central Philippine University • Eastern Visayas State University • Guimaras State College • John B. Laason Foundation Maritime University • Misamis University • Naval State University • Negros Oriental State University • North West Samar State University • Samar State University • San Carlos University • Siliman University • Siquijor State University • Southern Leyte State University • University of Cebu • University of Negros Occidental Recoletos • University of San Agustin • University of San Jose Recoletos • University of St. La Salle • University of the Phils. - Visayas • Visayas State University (Main Campus) • West Visayas State University • Xavier University

## MINDANAO

Ateneo de Davao University • Capitol University • Caraga State University • Central Mindanao University • Davao Del Norte State College • Jose Rizal Memorial State University • Mindanao State University Iligan • Mindanao University of Science & Technology • St. Michaels College - Iligan • Surigao Del Sur State University • Surigao State College of Technology • Unibersidad de Zamboanga (Main Campus) • University of Mindanao • University of Southeastern Philippines • University of the Phils. - Mindanao • Western Mindanao State University • Zamboanga State College of Marine Science & Tech.

## ADDITIONAL

Abra State Institute of Sciences and Technology • Agusan Del Sur State College of Agriculture & Tech. • Apayao State College • Bataan State College • Camarines Norte State College • Camarines Sur Polytechnic College • Catanduanes State University • Cebu Technological University • Cotabato City State Polytechnic College • Isabela State University • Kalinga State University • La Concordia College • Leyte Normal University • National College of Business Art • North Luzon Phils. State College • Northern Iloilo Polytechnic State College • Occidental Mindoro State College • Palompon Institute of Technology • Pamantasan ng Pasig • Partido State College • Quirino State University • Sorsogon State College • Sultan Kudarat State University • Sulu State College • University of Antique

REVIEWED BY GABRIEL PE

# TECNO CAMON 16

SMARTPHONE



TECNO Mobile recently found success with their Spark-series smartphone. Now with a new line—the Camon 16—the brand looks to shake up the market once again, this time by offering a camera-centric phone for the masses.

## DESIGN



The TECNO Camon 16 is a looker. Our review unit was in the misty grey color, and it was a looker even with a jelly case on. Speaking of the jelly case, the glossy back was a fingerprint magnet, but the included jelly case saved me from fingerprint apocalypse, plus it was fairly thick and gave me reassurance in case I dropped it.

On the front of the phone is the 6.8-inch HD+ screen along with the 16-megapixel selfie camera. At the back is the quad-camera setup and below that is the fingerprint reader. On the left side is the sim card tray and microSD slot, on the right is the volume and power buttons. Lastly, below is the downward-facing speaker, micro-USB charging port, and headphone jack.



## HARDWARE



The Camon 16 is powered by a MediaTek Helios G70 octa-core processor with 6GB of RAM and 128 GB of internal storage.

The phone's camera is its main feature, sporting a quad-camera setup at the back. It has a 48-megapixel main shooter, a 2-megapixel Bokeh lens, another 2-megapixel Macro lens, and the brand's AI lens. The camera has 10x digital zoom, can record videos at 2K, and Ultra Night Lens.

You also won't run out of juice with the massive 5000mAh battery which supports 18W fast charging. The phone lasted me a whole day of heavy gaming and needed just 2 hours to go back to 100%.



## USER EXPERIENCE



It was only last year when I first heard about Tecno Mobile. Since it was a newcomer, I set my expectations low since I didn't know what I would be getting, rather experiencing. Boy was I surprised!

There are two features that surprised me the most: the cameras and its gaming capability.

The Camon 16's cameras produced great and sharp images, especially outdoors. The 48-megapixel main shooter was able to retain most of the details of the shots. Sure it's not flagship quality, but definitely way above its price range.

The camera was also able to shoot 2K videos, which I appreciate. It's not 4K, but for the price, it was great to see something

more than FHD. The camera also has 10x digital zoom, but in all honesty, it's not great, especially if you have shaky hands such as me.

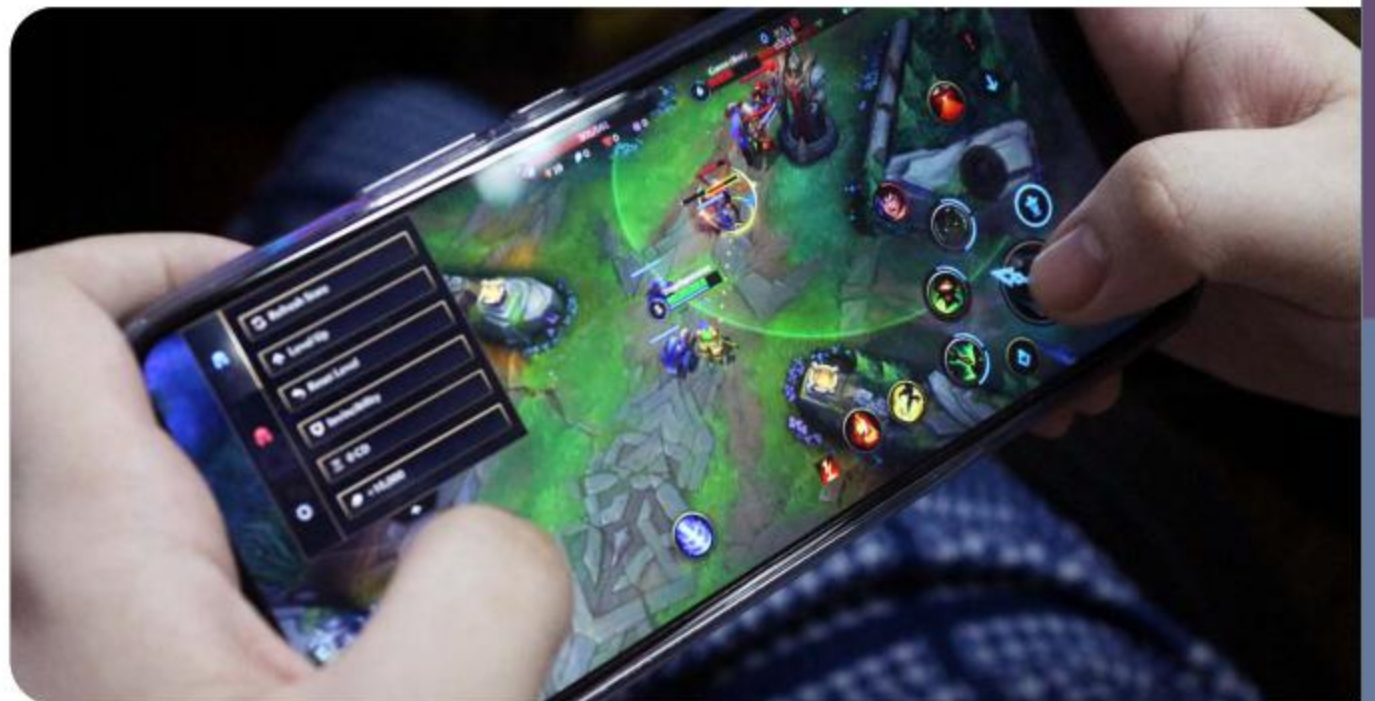
Moving on to the gaming aspect. The Camon 16 became my go-to gaming device in the two weeks I had it. The phone was able to run *Call of Duty: Mobile* at medium settings with high frame rates — not the best settings but more than enough to help me win some dubs. For MOBA games such as *League of Legends: Wild Rift* and *Mobile Legends: Bang Bang*, it was running on High setting with 60fps, good enough to play on the main stage of most gaming leagues. With dual-band, Wi-Fi was also great if you have routers with 5.0Ghz bandwidth for more stable gaming.

Additionally, and thankfully, the front camera placement was great for gaming. Most phones place the camera in the

center nowadays, so having it placed back on the top left was refreshing to see. It was less distracting when I was engrossed in ranked games.

If there's one thing that bugged me about the phone, it was the massive bloatware and ads that came out of the box. Most phones do show ads, but somehow I noticed it more on the Camon 16. Bloatware is also common; heck most brands have them, but yet again I feel that they are more noticeable on the Camon 16 than most. It's not really dragging down the phone in terms of performance, but still, I was sort of annoyed from time to time.

Another thing to note was the size of the phone. I needed some time to get used to the bulk of the phone, especially when gaming. It is not the biggest out there, but the bulk and heft needed some time to get used to.



## VALUE



Coming in at PHP 7,990. The TECNO Camon 16 does something few brands do: it offers great performance for value. I am looking forward to more value for money phones from the brand now that I have experienced a TECNO for myself.



## SPECIFICATIONS

**Display:** 6.8-inch HD+ Display  
**Processor:** MediaTek Helios G70  
**OS:** HiOS based on Android 10  
**RAM:** 6GB  
**Storage:** 128GB (expandable)  
**Camera:** 16-megapixel (Front); 48-megapixel, 2-megapixel Bokeh, 2-megapixel Macro, AI Lens  
**Connectivity:** Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, GPS, Micro-USB  
**Features:** Ultra Night Lens, Fingerprint sensor  
**Battery:** 5000mAh with support to 18W Fast Charging  
**Dimension:** 170.9 x 77.2 x 9.2mm

## WHAT'S HOT

- ▶ Surprisingly great camera
- ▶ The G70 processor is a beast for esports titles

## WHAT'S NOT

- ▶ Bloatware and ads
- ▶ A bit bulky

## BOTTOMLINE

**The TECNO Camon 16 is beast made for gamers**

GADGETS  
MAGAZINE  
EDITOR'S PICK

REVIEWED BY REN ALCANTARA

# RAZER TARTARUS PRO

PC CONTROLLER

gadgets magazine.com.ph

I have been happily playing games on the PC since I started with my first 3D shooters in the mid-90s. This constitutes the majority of my life, and I don't think that's going to change. As such, I have accumulated a fair amount of experience, and along with that experience, a fair amount of peripherals. One of the ones that I have grown to love very much is the keyboard controller. I have gone through the core Razer gaming claw lineup, from the first Tartarus, the Orbweaver, and now, the subject of today's review, the Razer Tartarus Pro.





## DESIGN



The Tartarus Pro carries the same core design as the Orbweaver and the first generation Tartarus, in that it's a small keyboard that's meant to be used with your left hand. There's a wrist rest, a palm rest, and the same keys that your left hand would normally reach on a standard keyboard. There are 19 keys on the main face, a scroll wheel, and on the side, where your thumb can reach, there's a single key, an eight-way D-pad, and a single clocky button. It's done in a matte, not quite rubberized finish on the palm and wrist rest, and a matte hard plastic for the frame. There's also a long USB cable so you can plug it into your computer without any difficulty.

## HARDWARE



The device has per-key chroma control, so you can set any combination of colors you want, and with the included software,

you can even set it to change depending on the game you're playing, what the audio is doing, your keystrokes, or a number of other variables.

The keys themselves have analog-optical, so if you're looking for the usual clicky mechanical switches, you're out of luck. It is, however, these keys that make the claw controller special. Each of the main keys on the face of the device and the single thumb key on the side can have two actuation points, which lets you bind a function for a shallow press, and a deeper press, which sounds great, at least on paper.

## USER EXPERIENCE



First things first: no, it doesn't have mechanical keys. I know; it's a bit of a bummer, particularly if you like tactile switches. If, however, you're like me and prefer linear mechanical switches, you're in luck, as these analog-optical switches feel basically like deep-actuating

Cherry Black switches, complete with a satisfying tap at the end of travel. I rather like the feel of the switches on the keys, though as Cherry Silvers are my keys of choice, I'd have liked a bit less force necessary, though I do get you need some resistance to get the dual actuation thing to work.

Hand position is reasonably comfortable. I wear a size M for gloves, and while the top row can be a bit of a reach without repositioning, tapping on any of the keys in the middle row poses no problem.

Unlike the Orbweaver, there's no adjustability to the ergonomics of the Tartarus Pro. The wrist rest, thumb controls, and palm rest are all in fixed places, so if it doesn't fit your hand, there's the breaks.

The keys, at least, are very responsive, and if you have any experience with any of Razer's other claw controllers, you can get right on to it with no problem. This is made better with the exceptionally useful



software that allows you to realize the claw's maximum potential, including recording macros, changing the lighting (or letting the lighting change on its own, for example, depending on your Overwatch character), and set pre-configured profiles.

It's not all great, though. The main feature of this over the previous generation of claws, as well as the non-Pro version, is the inclusion of





## SPECIFICATIONS

**Switches:** Razer Analog Optical  
**Keys:** 32 + Mouse wheel  
Unlimited macro length  
Selectable profiles  
RGB lighting

## WHAT'S HOT

- ▶ Interesting switches
- ▶ Nice switch feel
- ▶ Great software
- ▶ Best option in a niche market

## WHAT'S NOT

- ▶ Not useful for everyone
- ▶ Expensive

the aforementioned analog-optical switches. On paper, the concept is great. A partial press triggers a keystroke or function, and a deeper press triggers another function. In practice, it falls quite flat, as the deeper press can't really be triggered without first triggering the function bound to the shallow press. Yes, it will work sometimes, but the majority of things I wanted to do in shooters are hindered by this oversight.

For example, I bound the spacebar and ctrl to the thumb key, but whenever I want to scramble over cover in *The Division 2*, the game would first register the Spacebar press and snap to cover before scrambling over. It might be more useful in MOBA titles, with macros, but it'll all depend on the bindings.

Where I did find more use for the two functions is editing. I edit a podcast, and having twice the controls within easy reach of the fingers of one hand made the whole editing process that much more convenient. You can also set the threshold for when each press triggers so you can customize the response to your liking.

The ergonomic hand position also does a fair share to reduce fatigue and is part of the reason I can't live without a claw controller — it lets me play or work for hours without the hand strain.

### VALUE



This is honestly a mixed bag. For between PHP 6,000 to PHP 7,000, one would

have to have a compelling reason to use it, such as hand strain, the need or macros, or possibly competitive gaming, so it's clearly not for everyone. For those that do need it, though, there's really no other alternative except the older Razer claw controllers. The non-adjustability drops value even lower, but again, not having any real competition out there is a compelling reason in itself.

## BOTTOMLINE

**Works great as a controller claw, but the opto-mechanical gimmick falls flat.**



REVIEWED BY MARIBELLE ALBA



# LOGITECH C922 PRO HD STREAM WEBCAM

WEBCAM

Video is now where all the action is, and after over a year spent in front of my PC camera, I thought it would be a good idea to upgrade to something that would make me look better due to a higher resolution — much like having a virtual makeover. Let's see if Logitech's C922 Pro HD Stream Webcam would grant me my wish.

## DESIGN



The C922 Pro HD Stream Webcam is not the latest Logitech webcam model, so it looks a bit dated for the 2020s. It is basically a plastic rectangle with the camera lens in the middle. On either side are LED activity lights and stereo microphones. Markings consist of the words "HD 1080p" to the left of the lens and "logi" to the right. This main body sits atop a hinged integrated stand that can be easily and securely attached to a laptop screen or desktop monitor. There's also tripod thread at the base which, with the included mini tripod, lets you position the C922 at different angles.



## HARDWARE



The C922 Pro HD Stream Webcam has an autofocus HD camera lens that lets you record Full HD video (1080p) at 60fps or HD video (720p) at 30fps. It has two microphones for capturing sound from different directions. When the webcam is in use, the LED activity lights turn on. It comes with a 1.5m cable terminating in a USB-A connector.

## WHAT'S HOT

- ▶ Full HD video quality
- ▶ Auto-adjusts in low light setting

## USER EXPERIENCE



Out of the box, the C922 Pro HD stream Webcam is a plug-and-play affair and is good to go once connected to your laptop or PC. Those who intend to use it for recording or livestreaming videos can download the accompanying Logitech Capture app, which gives you additional video content creation options like recording from 2 cameras, recording in 9:16 format (perfect for Instagram), studio controls, text overlays, etc.

One of the best features of the C922 is its automatic low-light adjustment, so you don't need ring lights and such for good video quality. In fact, I was able to do a zoom video chat in a totally dark room with just the monitor screen as the light source and my video still came across clear and well-lit.

## WHAT'S NOT

- ▶ Not the latest model
- ▶ Not cheap

The stereo microphones also do a good job capturing realistic, natural-sounding audio. However, if you're recording narration or voice-over, a separate condenser mic would still be the better option.

## VALUE



On the Logitech official store in Lazada, the C922 is listed at PHP 5,827, reflecting a 10% discount off the PHP 6,490 SRP. I've seen it offered at below PHP 4,000 by some online sellers. For me, though, the value of Logitech products is not just about price. It's about the entire ecosystem that the brand has created, with its Logitech G Hub where you can optimize and configure your Logitech G devices. Targeted mainly for gamers who want to stream the action, the C922 is an affordable, good-quality webcam.

## SPECIFICATIONS

**Max Resolution:** 1080p @ 30fps, 720p @ 60fps  
**Focus type:** Autofocus  
**Lens type:** Glass  
**Built-in mic:** Stereo  
**Diagonal field of view:** 78°  
**Dimensions (HxWxD):** 44x95x71mm  
**Cable length:** 1.5m  
**Weight:** 162g  
**Mounting:** Tripod ready universal mounting clip  
**Compatibility:** Windows 7 or later, macOS 10.10 or later, Chrome OS, USB-A port  
**Others:** Comes with mini tripod, 3-month premium xsplit license

## BOTTOMLINE

**Video chats and livestreams come alive with its Full-HD capability.**



REVIEWED BY **MARIBELLE ALBA**

# REALME BUDS AIR 2

WIRELESS EARBUDS



Moving beyond just smartphones, realme is expanding its product range to wearables and other AIOT devices that all offer a smarter, more enjoyable lifestyle. Among the latest devices they've introduced into the market is the Buds Air 2, true wireless earbuds with active noise cancellation. Let's check out how it performs.

## DESIGN



The test unit that I received comes in black, although a white color option is available. As with other similar products, the earbuds are housed in a glossy oval plastic charging case that has a USB-C port at the bottom, a discreet button on the right, and a hinged cover on top. Each earpiece consists of an earbud attached to a thin round stalk. Each earbud weighs only 4.1g, so they're easy to wear the whole day.

## HARDWARE



The core of the Buds Air 2 is a 10mm hi-fi bass boost sound driver made with a diamond-like carbon coating. It is equipped with the latest Bluetooth 5.2 version for a more stable signal, a stronger connection, and lower power consumption. Active noise cancellation is achieved with the new realme R2 chip, while dual microphones come with an environmental noise reduction algorithm. The high-capacity battery can be fast-charged in 10min for 2hrs of playback. The earbuds



can be used continuously for 5hrs, while the charging case adds an extra 20hrs for a total of 25hrs playback or over 1 whole day of non-stop use.



## SPECIFICATIONS

**Sound driver:** 10mm diamond-like carbon driver  
**Audio codec:** AAC, SBC  
**Bluetooth:** 5.2  
**Noise cancellation:** Active noise cancellation up to 25dB, dual-mic ENC for calling  
**Charge time:** 1hr to fully charge earbuds only, 2hrs to fully charge case & earbuds  
**Battery life:** Earbuds - 4hrs with ANC, 5hrs without ANC; earbuds + charging case - 22.5hrs with ANC, 25hrs without ANC  
**Weight:** 4.1g for each earbud  
**Water resistance:** earbuds - IPX5  
**Others:** Type C charging cable; earbuds - S, M, L

## USER EXPERIENCE



There are several features that I truly appreciated with the Buds Air 2. First is Fast Pair — from the first moment I opened the case, it automatically found and paired with my phone with no other action needed on my part. Amazing!



Second is its Active Noise Cancellation. I normally don't like activating ANC because I want to stay aware of my surroundings in case there's a delivery guy at the door, etc. And in some earbuds, ANC creates an echo chamber in my ear which I find uncomfortable. In the Buds Air 2, ANC reduces but does not totally muffle outside noise — some people would consider this a weakness, but I actually prefer it this way.

Third, I like its Smart Wear detection that automatically turns off/pauses the

earbuds when you take them out of your ear and resumes playing when you put them back in.

With Bluetooth 5.2, connections stayed strong and stable even some distance from my phone, and with dual microphones, call quality remained clear throughout.

realme invited popular duo The Chainsmokers to help tune the bass boost driver of the Buds Air 2. You do get a rather strong bass — a bit too much for my taste. And while overall music listening is all right for its price point, separation on the mids and highs could be improved.

Apparently, you could tweak equalizer settings on the realme Link app, but the device is not yet supported on the iOS app. Also, while it can be paired with several devices, it's a hassle switching to another device, so I'm resigned to just being able to use it with my phone and not my tablet.

## VALUE



With an SRP of PHP 3,990 on the realme PH website, the Buds Air 2 cannot be considered an entry-level device as it is actually one of the higher-priced audio products of the brand. You can get it for much lower, though, at around PHP 2,000 from other online sellers — not a bad bargain for what you're getting.

## WHAT'S HOT

- ▶ Automatic pairing!
- ▶ Smart detection
- ▶ Active noise cancellation

## WHAT'S NOT

- ▶ Device not supported on the realme Link app for iOS
- ▶ Not multi-point

## BOTTOMLINE

**With the Buds Air 2, realme has given us a pair of good-quality, affordable active noise-canceling earbuds.**

Words by Ren Alcantara

# WORK IT (FROM HOME)

Technology continues to enrich our lives in all its facets, but perhaps the most visible space in which it has made an impact is how we work.





First, and both the bane and boon of our work existence, is video conferencing. I feel like there's not a lot to say

about this since we've all been doing it for a good long while now, but the strides we've made in the video conferencing space have been amazing. From the early days of just audio to today's multi-user video conferencing with passwords, backgrounds, screen-sharing, and all the bells and whistles, we've come a long way, and that's thanks to a few things.

First, the connectivity. The amount of data needed to do a Zoom call rests at about 2.4GB per hour, which increases tremendously as more people join the call. This isn't something that we would have been able to do consistently (at least in the Philippines) some years ago. Current LTE and 5G connectivity, as well as terrestrial fiber connections, give us the pipes we need to get the kind of speed and latency we need to make current video conferencing possible.

The second is the software. While there have been conferencing applications in the past, the current options are worlds apart from what we had before. Software and bandwidth optimization, better interfaces, controls, and

availability, and most importantly, cross-platform compatibility, make anyone—from someone on a cellphone in a bus to the CEO at his desk—be able to join meetings.

Working from home also brings other technical issues, not the least of which is not having all office hardware at your disposal. Fortunately, the cloud has done a lot to bridge that technological gap in more ways than one.

Firstly, there's storage. Google, Dropbox, Windows, Apple, and many others offer cloud storage that lets you access important resources online, as long as you have access to the Internet. These days, it's often much smarter to upload

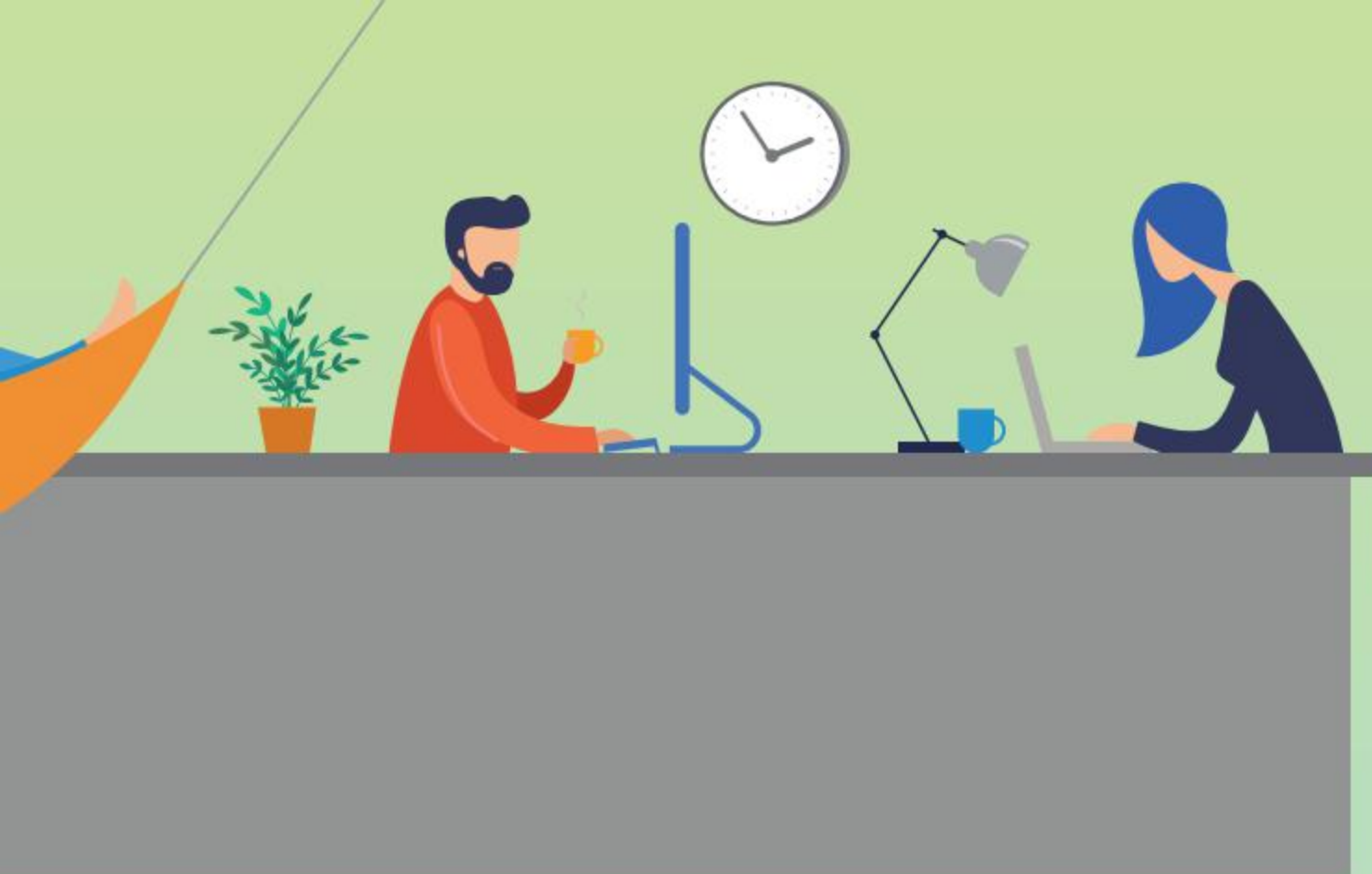
key files to the cloud, rather than having to worry about misplacing an external hard drive or leaving it at the office where it's going to be out of reach.

Cloud software also allows for some great work use cases. When done properly, online collaborative platforms such as Google's office suite can cut down the effort in moving a project forward and, in tandem with video conferencing and screen sharing, can be almost as convenient as working in the same room.

Possibly one of the biggest challenges faced by those working from home is getting the fruits of your labor. Everyone, from freelancers to regular







employees, needs to get paid, and with access to banks being a little more difficult depending on the situation on the ground, many financial institutions have sprouted to take care of our banking needs.

Banks have never offered such robust online banking options as they have now. Some can go as far as being able to deposit cheques through their apps, while most allow surcharge-free, instant fund transfers to other banks, through a web browser or a smartphone application.

They can even utilize QR codes to send account information for a truly hassle-free experience. Online-only financial

institutions have also come up, with great options coming from companies like Tonik and CIMB, catering to today's hyper-connected, remotely located workforce.

Joining the fray are other non-bank initiatives, such as Globe's GCash and Smart's PayMaya, which allow people to send and receive money, as well as make purchases through their respective apps. Like bank accounts, you can also send QR codes to others so they can send you cash without having to worry about getting the account number wrong—a persistent fear of mine, to this day.

There's also the matter of hardware. While in the past, having a laptop to use

at home was a luxury few could really afford, dropping costs have reduced the cost of entry for the laptop space. If even that is an issue, the market has been flooded with highly capable tablets that can do all the basics of word processing, spreadsheets, web browsing, and video conferencing with no problem. And if the situation calls for it, you can even use your phone.

Not many people are aware of this, but many phones from the bigger manufacturers offer a desktop mode that gives users a desktop-like experience when the phone is connected to an external display. Combo that with a keyboard and mouse (or use the phone as a touchpad) and you pretty much have a functioning desktop! If you have an older device that supports this feature and a screen to use, you essentially have a desktop (though a little nerfed) you can use for that purpose. We have an old Samsung Galaxy S8 at home that I use exactly in that manner.

Because of the challenges we've been facing, we've been brought into a new phase of work, and one that is both safer, and more convenient for those who can do it and, thanks to technology, things are possible in that space that just couldn't happen a few short years ago.



Words by Gabriel Pe

# A CLASSROOM AT HOME

A year into the COVID-19 pandemic, most of us, perforce, have adapted to working from home, playing and relaxing at home 24/7, and, of course, learning from home.



**A**s schools are still closed, students continue to study and learn from home, and, considering the poor state of internet connection in most Filipino households, this presents a constant challenge.

But moving beyond connection issues, families have also found that they need to allot a place dedicated to learning to reduce distractions while studying, where students can fully absorb their lessons and feel at ease and productive.

As a new law student, here are some of my insights after a year of distance learning myself.

### Find a niche

One of the first things I needed was a dedicated learning space where no one could disturb me. For studying, whether it is Law, a bachelor's, or any other lessons, a student needs the space to think and absorb his lessons fully. Unlike the traditional classroom setting, distance learning is somehow more challenging, and the added distractions at home don't really help.

So to help your child, or student, at home, providing a quiet corner is important. The location must have a decent internet connection and a relatively strong mobile signal because you never know when a power outage might strike, and mobile data is your only answer.

The room also needs to have adequate lighting, preferably with a lot of natural light. If natural light is not available, choose lighting close to natural light (slightly cool light temperature), which research has shown to help students take in lessons more effectively.



### Technology is here to guide us

The major driving force behind distance learning is technology. Apps to provide an online classroom experience are utilized by universities worldwide. Video conferencing programs have replaced lecture rooms, and libraries offer remote access to their online journals to facilitate student research.

Another way technology is helping us is with studying apps. In previous issues, we've featured a number of productivity apps to help you improve your work focus. These apps use different focusing techniques, such as the Pomodoro technique. Other apps such as Discord, Google Meet and Zoom, has changed the way students are able to collaborate on projects and group discussions.

Gadgets such as tablets and laptops also allow students to continue their studies despite being away from school. Tablets have changed the way we find and use

reading materials. Laptops offer greater mobility to students, now that they are not restricted to attending classes at a specific place.

### Learn to rest

The one thing that has given me the greatest difficulty about distance learning is that you don't get enough rest. It isn't just because I work and study at the same time, but rather the difficulty in setting boundaries about when to stop and when to start anew. The blurred line of when to study and when to relax is surely a burden for both students and teachers alike.



**When you find yourself or someone you know burdened by a heavy workload, you can remind them to take a step back and take a breather.**

Asynchronous class projects have given professors and teachers more workload just to check whether students are learning. Meanwhile, students are struggling to keep up with the deadline and demands. The vicious cycle takes a toll on both as they struggle to adapt to the new normal.

When you find yourself or someone you know burdened by a heavy workload, you can remind them to take a step back and take a breather. Taking a break is just as important as acing your exams as, after all, health is wealth during this difficult time.







# KEEP MOVING FORWARD

Words by Alyssa Joji Silva

**F**or us students, distance learning has limited us from what we used to do face-to-face. School gates are closed, and various sports complexes are unavailable, which leaves student-athletes no choice but to study and train at home. But how do student-athletes get by in fulfilling both their academic and athletic responsibilities? Let's take a closer look at the testimonial of Alexis Samala, a 20-year-old volleyball player studying at a local college.



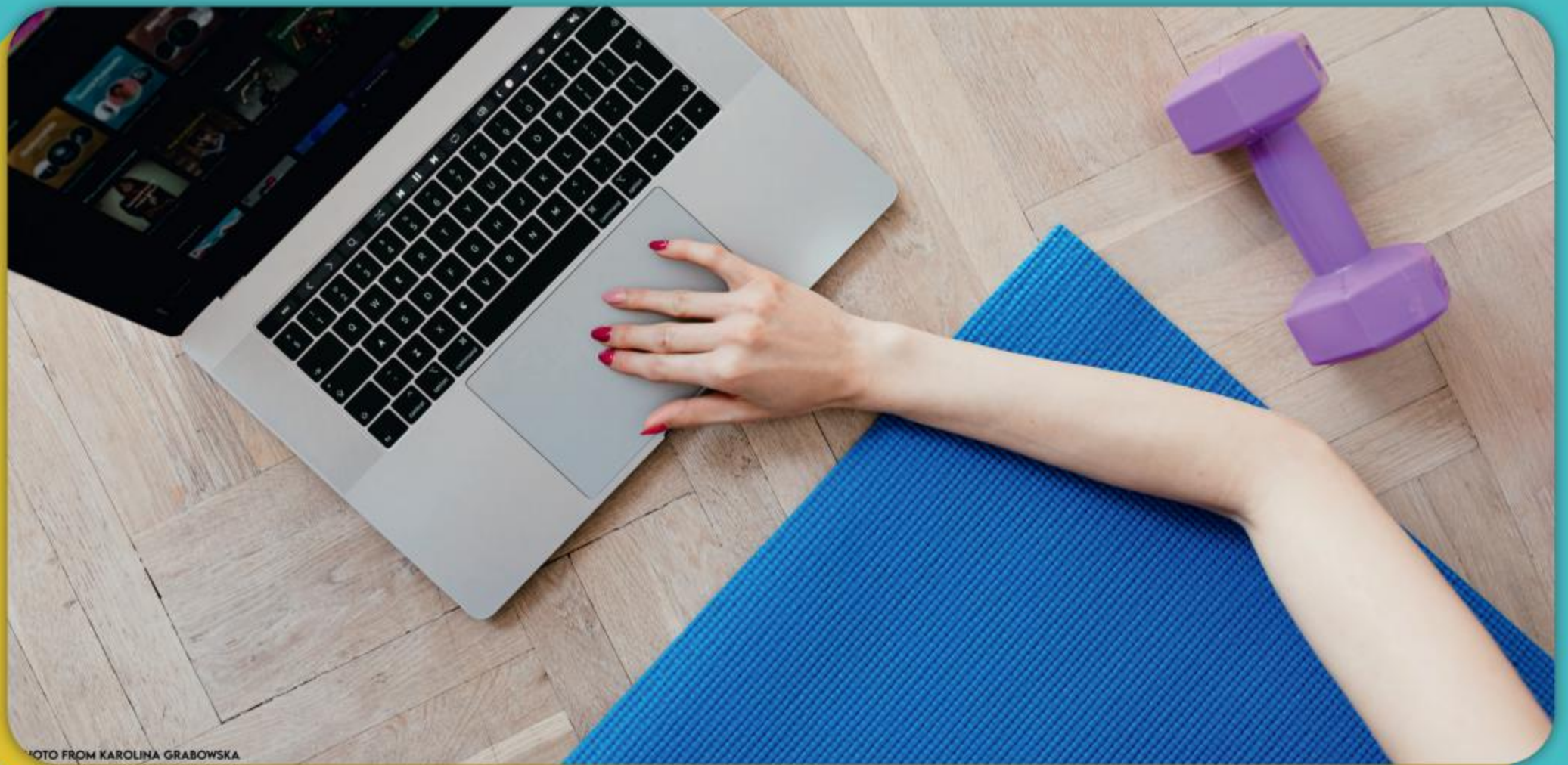


PHOTO FROM KAROLINA GRABOWSKA

## ADAPTING TO CHANGE

At the beginning of lockdown, Alexis was getting by with an online set-up for both classes and training. Her bedroom instantly became her new classroom and training space. This was extra challenging because there were times that her ball would go “flying everywhere” and “possibly go to a neighbors house or out the street” and so she “couldn’t train with a ball”.

On some days she would reminisce about the past where she got to play with her teammates at the sports complex, and they would separate into pairs, triads, or groups and do sequences assigned by their coach. There were also times that they would move away after their sequence to “whisper and talk.” Remembering those moments makes her smile while feeling sad that things are completely different now.

For her, it’s just “silence, since I can’t necessarily talk with my teammates through Zoom or Google Meet without everyone knowing what we’re talking about. Sure, we can message through Messenger or Telegram but it’s just not the same as being physically around with my closest friends and teammates and talking with each other as volleyballs fly past.”

As the weeks and months passed, she slowly adjusted to the new normal. Even if the training experience is different from before, she realized that her being an athlete in the new normal is no different from non-athletes. Since “training has been moved to once a week instead of 3 times a week, things haven’t been as difficult in terms of physicality. Like my week feels the same as non-athletes but just add a 2-hour workout. If in a day, let’s say the day that I have training, I would really push myself to get the work that has the deadliest deadline completed just so that the next day, since my body is in pain, I don’t really have to work too hard.”



# TIPS FOR STABILITY

So how does a student-athlete like her manage her academics and sports training at home? Here are some valuable tips for everyone:

## Prioritize

Keep track of your work and training requirements. If you have training Tuesday night and you have this 2-page paper due on Wednesday morning, then make sure that you get that paper done by Tuesday BEFORE training. This is just so that you aren't forcing your brain to work when your body is just done for the day.

## The alarm clock is your best friend

If you are the type who loses track of time especially during a busy day and you're flooded with work, set up an alarm clock. Test out different alarm settings before training or work to see what works best for you. You might find it ideal to set the first alarm at 30 minutes and a second reminder alarm at 15-minutes prior to the scheduled activity. The first alarm could be your signal to start dressing up and preparing for physically and mentally for the task ahead.

## Physical and emotional well-being

Being physically fit in the new normal is not enough. You should also stay emotionally and mentally fit to keep moving forward.



# SMOOTH-SAILING

Adjusting to the new normal has been quite challenging for everyone, but once you get the hang of it, you should be able to sail smoothly through life. It all depends on how we handle our situation. If we want to keep moving forward, we must create an easy path that steers us through the physical and emotional issues.

Much in the same way that Alexis' insight about not being different from other students despite being a student-athlete, we all need to find that spark so we can look forward and take control of our wheel.

That spark, whether it be a small realization or a major eureka moment, will guide our path so we can take hold of our lives and make the best of living in this new normal.

# LEVELLING UP AT HOME

Words by Trinity Salvio

**I**n the safety of our homes, we try to find leisure within the familiar walls to pass the time.

Recreational activities change according to how we cope with the new normal. Technology helps. With so many devices and equipment at our disposal, we're able to spend most of our time online and make the most out of what the Internet and other social media applications have to offer right now.

Online games are by far the most popular and sought-out modes of leisure for most Filipinos, especially for those who'd rather play with friends and family to keep their thumbs occupied with activities that don't involve writing or working.

Sure, we don't get to see all of our friends and families but there's a reason why online video calls were invented.

It all boils down to how we use our gadgets to maintain connections with our loved ones.

There's more to life than just slaving away at assignments and professional projects, right? Somewhere in the vast digital world, games are waiting for us to play at home during the new normal. Here are a few online games that will surely bring you to the edge of your seat as you can enjoy playing with a lot of people.

## In and Out of Bounds

Open-game exploration is probably the most enticing thing any action-adventure game could ever offer for players who plan on escaping the mundanity of the real world and fend off magical monsters and fight glorious battles with diverse

characters. *Genshin Impact*, developed by miHoYo for mobile, console, and PC platforms, is an epic action role-playing game that takes place in a fantastical world of Teyvat where elemental magic thrives and all sorts of creatures are encountered by the players.

The game corporates an action-based battle system wherein they can participate in a single-player campaign or multiplayer mode and that up to 4 players can join several domains and match up with various people online.

Players will experience the endless thrill of upgrading their character's levels and skills while exploring the various nations of Teyvat to complete a larger-than-life storyline.





## Getting Good by Doing Good

We all live as social beings ever since we were born, relying on one another for friendship above all else.

We see each other as competition and rivals too but we all consider ourselves as strangers soon to be friends, in most cases.

In the world of *Sky*, an online mobile game by Thatgamecompany, players can embark on a social adventure with their friends and loved ones to explore seven realms in a beautiful yet mysterious kingdom.

Here, the players also known as 'the children of the Light' and get to solve puzzles and learn the epic lore behind the inhabitants and spirits of the great kingdom.

Unlike most competitive games, *Sky* incorporates altruism so that players can succeed to the next level.

All in all, the game celebrates teamwork and friendship like no other as gamers of all ages learn to fly together and bring back light to this wonderful world filled with intrigue.



## Teamwork Makes the Dream Work

International competitions. Winning endless battles. Achieving glory for leading your team to victory. Players become heroes almost every day when they enter the world of *Mobile Legends*, an online multiplayer mobile game that utilizes a battle arena for gamers to navigate and defend from the enemy team.

Developed by Moonton, this MOBA game requires players to defend or infiltrate the enemy base with their teams comprised of 6 roles. There are more than a hundred characters with different powers and abilities tailored for offensive and defensive maneuvers.

Most of their backgrounds and character designs are inspired by Southeast Asian themes and motifs. *Mobile Legends* continues to be one of the most downloaded mobile games ever since 2017, making it a top game in Southeast Asia.

Players come together to join and battle in tournaments and campaigns to spread its influence in the online gaming community. We're all down to making a name for ourselves in the big gaming leagues.



## What Matters Most

Online games are an all-time favorite activity for many Filipinos not just because they're available online but because these were most likely recommended by our close circle to play with.

There are endless choices for something to do that doesn't involve going outside and facing the real dangers of the pandemic. At home, we're free to do anything. In games, we do the same thing in a wilder and freer digital landscape. We've got our wild imaginations to immerse us into new worlds without ever having to step foot outside.

The latest technology has already granted us tons of opportunities to make the

most out of our free time thanks to app developers improving the overall quality of their products and services.

We may not be able to spend much time outside right now but at least we get to enjoy the pleasures that the Internet and a variety of gadgets have already provided for us.

We're all familiar with the work and play ethic when it comes to handling the many duties and responsibilities we have as students and working adults.

It's important to balance the two aspects in our day-to-day activities for our different lifestyles.





# TURNING YOUR HOME INTO A SMART HOME

Words by Gabriel Pe

Over the past year, more and more smart products have appeared in the market. The influx of new products has made it easier and cheaper to turn your home into a smart home. Here are some of the items you might want to start converting your house into the house of tomorrow, today!



## Smart lights

One of the easiest smart home devices you can get a hold of and install are smart lights. Depending on the model, they can feature RGB lighting, color temperature adjustments, and of course, wireless power control.

Smart lighting has several benefits. One is the convenience of control and versatility. A single light can be used for different scenarios since they are dimmable and have a changeable color temperature.

Another benefit, some may argue, is energy efficiency. Smart lights are usually LED lights that are more efficient than regular fluorescent and incandescent light fixtures. They also last longer, even with constant use.

Currently, the most common smart lighting are bulbs and LED strips. Smart LED tubes are already available abroad, but I have yet to find one locally available. However, if your house uses a lot of tube lights, well, there is another solution.





## Smart light switches

If you live in a house populated by tube lights or an old apartment that you can't remodel, a smart light switch may be the way to go. Smart switches convert your traditional light switches to be controllable through your smartphones or smart hub.



There are different types of Smart Light Switches. One is a mere module you connect to your existing switch. There is also a switch that functions as a remote, and that you can actually remove from the base.

Smart switches, like smart lights, have their own benefits. When paired with a smart light, they are energy efficient. By themselves, smart switches provide users added convenience, giving them control via smartphone apps or even voice control through smart hubs.

## Smart appliances

Aside from smart light fixtures and switches, smart appliances are something you have to consider getting once you start converting your home. From smart robot vacuums to smart TVs and even smart air conditioners, there are many smart appliances now available in the market.

Many smart home products have their own integrated app that enables a certain degree of control through the users' phones. Smart air conditioners and smart fans enable users to remotely control their home temperature whether they're already in it or still a block away.

Smart robot vacuums can help you clean your house even when you're out and about. Meanwhile, smart kitchen appliances such as ovens and microwaves notify users when their dishes are ready to eat. Some appliances can actually set the timer themselves with users just inputting the type of dish they placed inside.

What makes a smart appliance a must-have? Convenience and complete integration to the smart home. Smart home users can control almost all their needs right at their fingertips, thanks to AI and the Internet of Things (AIoT) built into most of these smart products.







## Smart cameras and sensors

Other smart products which you can consider are smart cameras and sensors. Smart cameras, especially those built-in to smart doorbells, give homeowners an added sense of security. Most of these smart cameras already have IR Cameras that allow for night/dark video capture and can even notify users when they hear or detect movement.

Smart sensors don't give such protection; instead, these are built for the most convenience. Setting up smart sensors around the home allows the light to instantly turn on or off and even interact with other smart products such as TVs and speakers to instantly set the mood.



## Smart hubs

Tying your smart home together will be your smart hub. These come in the form of a smart speaker, a tablet hub, and a programmable hub, depending on what type of smart home you're doing.

The cheapest and undoubtedly the easiest to set up are the smart speakers and tablet hubs since these are based on Google/ Amazon home apps. Other programmable hubs can utilize different protocols, such as Zigbee and IFTTT, to create more complex scenarios for your smart home.

Smart hubs will be your best friend for hands-free smart home controls. At the same time, they ensure that your smart devices can communicate with each other, acting as the brains of the whole home. While these are essential in making a smart home easier, you really don't have to get one at the start, especially the speakers, since they truly shine only when you have completed your smart home set-up.

With these basic devices, you are well on your way to starting your smart home journey.





# THE ISUZU D-MAX TECH LEXICON



ince it was first introduced in the Philippines close to two decades ago, the Isuzu D-MAX has earned a well-deserved reputation as an iconic pickup truck due to its outstanding durability and quality.

In developing the third generation D-MAX, Isuzu engineers devoted 6 years of research and 4-million kilometers of testing to build a vehicle that would not only live up to, but transcend, its respected lineage. The result is an All-New D-MAX that adds smart innovations and intelligent features to its rugged toughness and exceptional performance, making it truly worthy of its tag line “Into New Heights.”

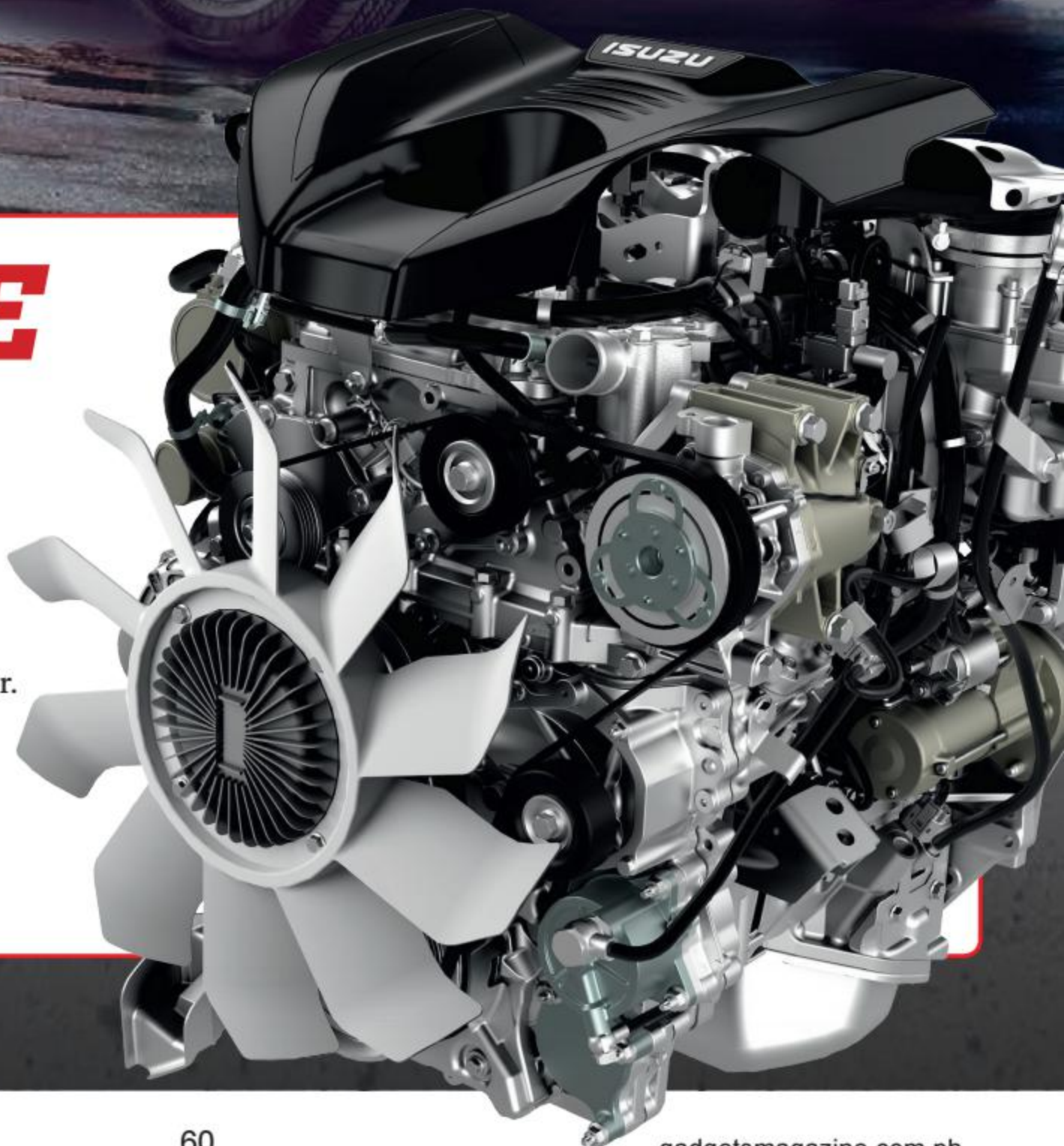
The flagship D-MAX LS-E 4x4 AT variant, in particular, is packed with automotive technology that ensures a more enjoyable, more comfortable, and safer ride. And, since like us, many motorists may not be familiar with the terminologies and concepts behind these new features, we’ve compiled the D-MAX Tech Lexicon as a quick reference.



# ENGINE

## 4JJ3-TCX

The newest Isuzu 3.0L common rail direct injection 4-cylinder in-line Blue Power diesel engine with an electronically-controlled variable geometry turbocharger and intercooler. Mated to a 6-speed automatic transmission with sequential shift, it delivers a maximum output of 190PS @ 3,600rpm and 450Nm @ 1,600-2,600rpm.



# ACTIVE SAFETY FEATURES

In the automotive industry, active safety or primary safety systems are those features that help avoid accidents. Developments in electronic systems have resulted in advanced, sophisticated technologies preventing collisions or minimizing the effects of a crash.

## Brake Override System

An active safety feature, the brake override system is a failsafe measure in case the vehicle receives mixed signals or during malfunctions. Some examples would be if the driver accidentally steps on the accelerator while braking, or in cases of unintended acceleration, the system will override the accelerate command to safely stop the D-MAX.

## Anti-Lock Brake System (ABS)

ABS prevents the wheels from locking or slipping when braking on a slippery surface so the driver can maintain control over the vehicle.



## Brake Assist (BA)

When the driver steps on the brake pedal suddenly, such as for emergency stops, Brake Assist will increase the braking force. It is also activated when braking during a Forward Collision Warning (FCW) or together with the Autonomous Emergency Brake (AEB).

## Electronic Stability Control (ESC)

ESC improves vehicle stability by controlling engine power and applying the brakes to the wheels as needed on slippery road surfaces to prevent skidding. It uses sensors that detect rapid changes in vehicle conditions while driving.

## Hill Descent Control (HDC)

HDC automates the speed of the D-MAX when driving down a steep incline, and works by pulsing the brakes and controlling each wheel independently to maintain traction.

## Electronic Brake Force Distribution (EBD)

EBD complements ABS by distributing the braking force between the front and rear wheels to compensate for any shift or changes in load conditions and prevents premature locking of the rear wheels.

## Traction Control System (TCS)

Similar to, and complementing ESC, TCS also controls engine power and stops the wheels from spinning by automatically applying the brakes to individual wheels. It is most effective when trying to regain traction on surfaces like sand, rocks, mud, and other slippery surfaces.

## Hill Start Assist (HSA)

HSA prevents the D-MAX from rolling backward when driving up an incline from a stopped position. The system holds the brake as the driver transitions between the brake pedal and the gas pedal.

# ***ADVANCED DRIVER ASSIST SYSTEM (ADAS)***

**ADAS**   
ADVANCED DRIVER ASSIST SYSTEM

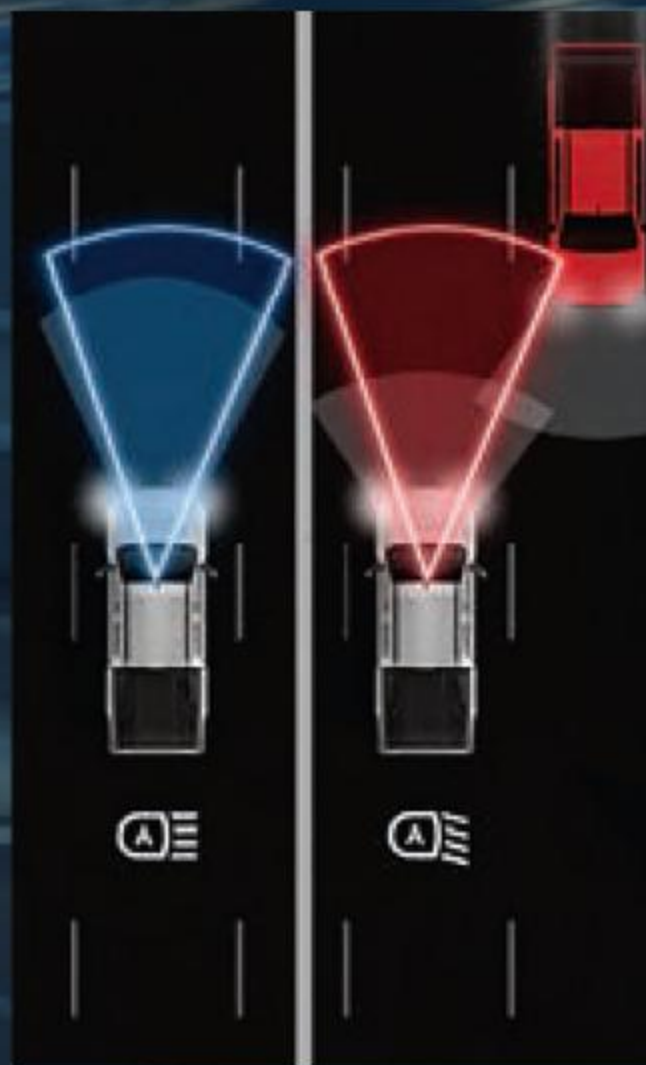


The D-MAX LS-E 4x4 AT is equipped with ADAS, an electronic system that uses automated technology including sensors and a first-in-class Smart Duo Cam to constantly monitor the surrounding environment as well as driver and vehicle behavior, and respond accordingly. ADAS creates a human-machine interface that increases car and road safety by minimizing human error. ADAS is real-time technology using multiple inputs to alert the driver to problems, implement safeguards, and take over vehicle control when needed. ADAS greatly improves active and passive safety.



### **Adaptive Cruise Control (ACC)**

With ACC, the D-MAX can run at a preset speed range while maintaining a proper distance from the vehicle ahead. It slows down when the front vehicle slows down and speeds up when it senses the distance to the other vehicle opening up.



### **Automatic High Beam (AHB)**

When driving at night, the Smart Duo Camera checks the brightness of the headlights of oncoming vehicles, the taillights of the preceding vehicle, and even the street lights, and automatically switches the D-MAX's headlights between high beam and low beam, as needed.

### **Autonomous Emergency Brake (AEB)**

With AEB, the D-MAX has an extra pair of eyes on the road and an extra foot over the brake pedal. With ADAS constantly monitoring the vehicles in front, the AEB is activated when the distance suddenly gets smaller and the system determines that a collision is unavoidable — for example, when the driver is too slow to react even after being alerted by a Forward Collision Warning (FCW).





## Blind Spot Monitoring (BSM)

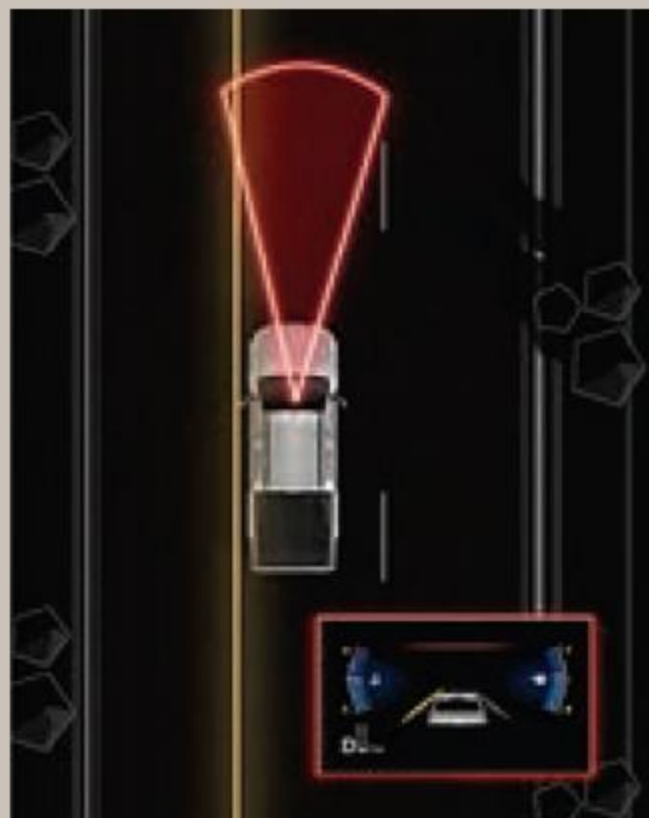
The D-MAX is a massive vehicle and, from the driver's position, there are many areas behind or at the sides that may not be immediately visible. Blind Spot Monitors are like having eyes at the back of your head. Radar sensors detect following vehicles in the adjacent lanes and notifies the driver with the blind spot indicator on the side mirrors.

## Forward Collision Warning (FCW)

When the D-MAX senses that it is getting too close to the vehicle in front, it will issue an FCW to alert the driver of a possible collision. It is simply a notification, and relies on the driver to take action. In case the driver does not react, then the AEB takes over to prevent or mitigate a collision.

## Lane Departure Warning (LDW)

The D-MAX cameras also monitor the lane markings on the road. When it senses the vehicle drifting or deviating from the lane, it alerts the driver so he can drive safely in the proper lane.



## Manual Speed Limiter (MSL)

The MSL is a function that limits the vehicle speed to a certain speed limit. Once it is set, the D-MAX will not accelerate beyond the specified speed. It can be temporarily overridden when the driver steps strongly on the accelerator, such as when overtaking, and the D-MAX speeds up. When the vehicle speed falls to the set speed or lower, it will then reactivate.





## Multi-Collision Brake (MCB)

The multi-collision brake automatically applies the brakes at the same time that the airbags are activated in a collision. This helps reduce secondary collision damage and prevents the D-MAX from going off the road or going into the opposite lane.



## Rear Cross-Traffic Alert (RCTA)

When reversing out of a parking space or driveway, radar sensors monitor if there are vehicles approaching from the right or left of the D-MAX. The system sounds a buzzer and also alerts the driver through the blind spot indicators on the side mirrors.

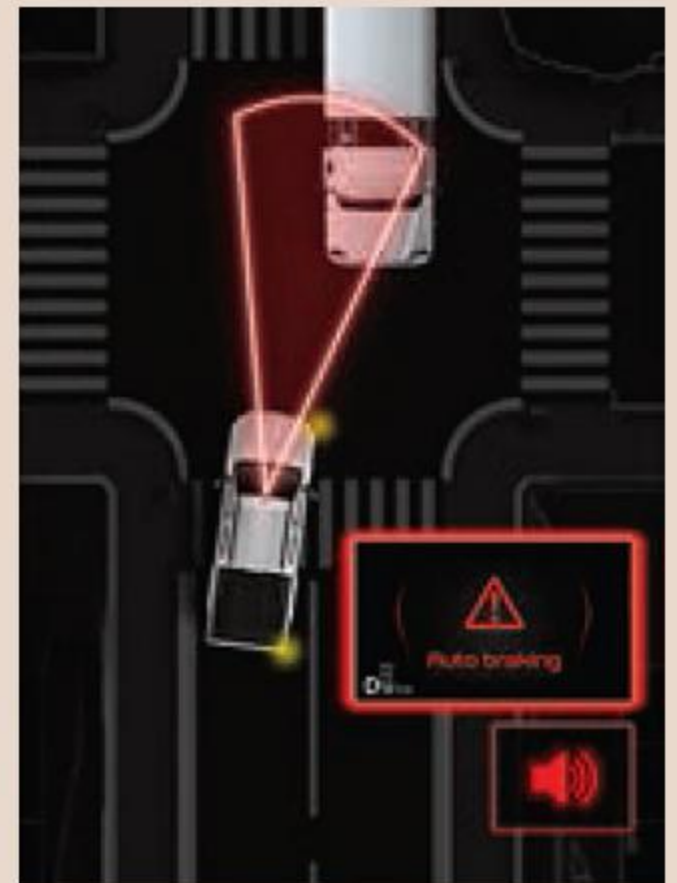


## Parking Aids

Using ultrasonic sensors, the parking aid system on the D-MAX detects objects around it and lets inform the driver through buzzer sounds and alerts on the multi-information display.

## Pedal Misapplication Mitigation

When the driver accidentally presses down on the accelerator pedal with more force than needed while the D-MAX is stopped or moving slowly and the camera detects an obstacle in front, the system will restrict the engine output so the vehicle starts moving slowly, thus mitigating any possible collision damage.



## Turn Assist

Another sophisticated feature, Turn Assist monitors oncoming traffic while turning at an intersection. It will activate AEB and bring the vehicle to a complete stop if it detects a vehicle coming towards you, thus preventing an accident.

# HYUNDAI STARIA MPV

**THE FUTURE OF MOBILITY WITH  
SAFETY AND VERSATILITY**





Hyundai Motor Company recently launched its new STARIA multi-purpose vehicle (MPV) lineup via a digital world premiere, establishing a model for its future Purpose Built Vehicles (PBVs). It is available in 2- to 11-seat configurations and in two variants, STARIA and STARIA Premium. The latter elevates mobility to the next level with upgraded features and variant-exclusive finishes for a more luxurious look and feel.

“We are thrilled to introduce STARIA, which represents our latest effort to

spearhead the evolution of mobility, and to address emerging lifestyle needs as we adapt to new ways of living,” said Thomas Schemera, executive vice president and global chief marketing officer. “STARIA is a step forward in connecting us more closely with our environments so that we can get more out of our everyday lives and do more for ourselves in transit.”

STARIA will go on sale in select markets starting from the second half of 2021.

### **Premium and futuristic exterior styling**

Evoking the streamlined form of a spaceship, STARIA’s sleek exterior is

defined by a single stroke running from front to rear — inspired by the curve of light that illuminates the Earth’s horizon at sunrise when viewed from space.

The front is embellished with horizontal daytime running lights (DRLs) and a positioning lamp, together running across the width of the vehicle. This is complemented by a bold, wide radiator grille with a unique pattern. Its clean silhouette is further accented by a pair of low-set headlamps. Hyundai uses the same body color for all frontal parts to maximize the vehicle’s modern and pure style.





The STARIA Premium features a variant-exclusive tinted brass chrome treatment, applied to the Hyundai emblem, grille, headlamp bezels, front and rear bumpers, wheels, side mirrors, and door handles to emphasize the vehicle's premium and modern look.

Lowered beltlines and panoramic side windows improve overall visibility and create a feeling of openness. This sense of spaciousness — inspired by traditional Korean 'hanok' architecture — allows passengers to feel as if the outside scenes are an extension of the vehicle interior.

The design theme carries over to the rear, featuring a wide window framed by elongated vertical tail lamps, with STARIA Premium models receiving Hyundai's unique Parametric Pixel lamp design and garnish on top. The rear bumper is lowered so passengers can easily load and unload cargo.

STARIA models are available in eight exterior colors: abyss black pearl, creamy white, graphite gray metallic, moonlight blue pearl, shimmering silver metallic, dynamic yellow, olivine gray metallic, and gaia brown pearl.

### **Transforming mobility by providing more quality time in transit**

The STARIA interior applies a simple and modest layout to highlight driver convenience and passenger comfort while staying faithful to its original value as an MPV. The cruise ship-inspired interior delivers an open and unique atmosphere through its innovative design architecture. The vehicle's lower beltlines and panoramic windows create a spacious, stimulating environment for all passengers.

The driver and passenger seats in the first row are designed to offer a feeling of space and comfort. STARIA's

simple interior layout focuses only on the essentials to provide more room and flexibility to passengers. A glove compartment in the first-row passenger's seat is moved forward to provide extra legroom space.

The driver's seat has a futuristic high-tech look with an advanced 10.25-inch front display screen, touch-based center fascia, and a button-type electronic shift lever. The digital cluster is located on top of the dashboard, providing an unobstructed view for the driver.

Storage space is available on top of the overhead console, bottom of the cluster, and top and bottom of the center fascia. Both driver and passengers also have access to a center console equipped with cup holders, USB ports, and additional storage space.

The STARIA Premium offers a variety of additional interior features that will



transform the passenger's mobility experience. The 7-seat Premium model is equipped with Premium Relaxation Seats in the second row that recline electronically and also have sliding capabilities for easy reach or to maximize cargo space. The one-touch relaxation mode makes the seats recline automatically to a posture that comfortably disperses the passenger's weight and improves overall body balance. Even when the seats are reclined by this mode, there is enough room for an adult passenger to sit comfortably in the third row, thanks to its spacious interior layout.

The 9-seat Premium model's individual seats in the second row can swivel 180 degrees to face passengers in the third row. This makes STARIA Premium ideal for corporate vehicles or mobile offices as passengers can turn their seats around and conduct meetings face to face. Families will also find these

swiveling seats convenient as rear-facing passengers will have easy access to those seated in the third row.

A 64-color ambient mood lamp, available in all STARIA Premium variants, provides a lush interior atmosphere. The harmonious direct and indirect lighting can selectively illuminate the cockpit, console, doors, and cargo areas. The premium feeling is further enhanced by the Bose sound system.

Additionally, STARIA's generous legroom is among the best in its segment and can be converted into expansive additional cargo space when all seats are pushed together — made possible by the versatile long sliding seat function. Moreover, the full-flat mode applied to rear passenger seats of the STARIA standard model makes this vehicle the perfect choice for activities that require a lot of room and

interior flexibility, such as camping and equipment-intensive sports.

Interior color options are: black, black and beige two-tone, and black and blue two-tone. The Premium variant offers additional options of gray and brown two-tone as well as gray and light gray two-tone.

### **Maximizing platform and performance**

The STARIA's innovative interior space utilization is made possible by the MPV's 3,273mm wheelbase with an overall length of 5,253mm and width of 1,997mm. Its overall height of 1,990mm is optimized for passengers to conveniently enter and exit the vehicle and is high enough for an average school-aged child to stand upright and move with ease.

Cargo space availability varies depending on how the seating configurations are



arranged. The 2- and 3-seater, optimized for business use, offers maximum cargo space of almost 5,000-liters. The cargo space dimensions have also been increased to carry three Euro pallets at once.

Powertrain options offer a diesel-powered 2.2-liter VGT engine and a gasoline-powered Smartstream G6DIII 3.5-liter MPI engine.

The diesel engine is newly improved and mated with either a six-speed manual or eight-speed automatic transmission, delivering an estimated power output of 177PS and 44kgf-m of torque. Its high-efficiency, air-cooled turbocharger has an improved compressor and turbine wheel performance for better low-speed torque performance.

The gasoline-powered G6DIII 3.5-L MPI is mated to an eight-speed automatic transmission, delivering an estimated power output of 272PS and 33.8kgf-m of torque. Its integrated thermal management system provides fuel efficiency improvement by optimizing control of coolant temperature according to vehicle operating conditions. An integrated roller swing arm helps to further improve fuel efficiency by reducing friction. New stainless-steel castings help improve exhaust interference for more power.

Hyundai Motor optimized each powertrain option for low noise, vibration, and harshness (NVH), better shift sensation for high torque performance, and improved acceleration. It also optimized the direct valve control body for increased hydraulic efficiency, the oil pump for fuel efficiency, and the multi-plate torque converter for control and fuel efficiency.

Mechanical upgrades also resulted in improved ride comfort thanks to the application of a multi-link suspension at the rear axle. STARIA's upright inclination angle and lever ratio of shock absorbers also contribute to improved ride comfort. Likewise, upgrades in brake calipers and discs provide stable stopping power even with the model's large size.

On top of mechanical upgrades, aerodynamic upper body design and under-body improvements result in improved drag coefficient for better fuel economy.

**Smart features for safety and convenience**

The STARIA has secured the highest level of vehicle safety. It offers an option to add as many as six airbags, and all seats come with three-point seat belts and headrests. Safety is further bolstered by smart features such as forward collision-avoidance

assist (FCA) and blind-spot collision-avoidance assist (BCA).

The wireless module seat belt reminder (WM-SBR), the world's first seat belt reminder system using wireless communications technology, enables passengers to enjoy the benefits of seat belt reminder and long sliding capabilities at the same time. In a situation where a passenger attempts to open the power sliding



door while a rear-side vehicle is passing by, the safe exit assist (SEA) prevents the door from opening. Rear occupant alert (ROA), available in select markets, uses a radar sensor to detect and alert the driver if a rear passenger is left in the car after exiting the vehicle.

The STARIA also comes with Hyundai's smart infotainment system and is equipped with a wide-angle camera

that enables the driver and front passenger to view rear passengers in the back seat on the display screen. Families can use this feature to conveniently monitor children and pets, while business users such as ride-hailing services also will benefit from this feature.

The infotainment system also enables the driver and front passenger to communicate with rear passengers

using a unique speaker function that allows all occupants to clearly hear one another.

### **What's Next**

Moving forward, Hyundai plans to launch Special Vehicle lineups of the STARIA, such as limousines, ambulances, and camping cars. In addition, eco-friendly variants of STARIA are scheduled to be added in the future.



# THE ALL-NEW HONDA CITY HATCHBACK





**H**onda Cars Philippines, Inc. (HCPI), Honda's automobile business unit in the Philippines, officially launched the All-New Honda City Hatchback through a virtual event streamed on Facebook. The All-New Honda City Hatchback introduction expands the renowned City model line-up and serves as the brand's newest offering in the B-segment hatchback category.

### GRAND CONCEPT

Compared to the City sedan's grand concept of *Ambitious Sedan*, the All-New City Hatchback was derived from the grand concept of *Energetic Hatchback* which aims to exude a more active and energetic character. While sharing values in terms of comfort, premium, and high quality with the sedan, the hatchback variant offers a sporty yet versatile and cool vehicle that would complement the diverse needs of customers based on their active lifestyle.

### EXTERIOR

The City Hatchback's exterior design was developed with a concept of *Energetic* resulting in a cutting edge and sporty combination, further emphasized by a combination of low height and widened width for an energetic feel with solid power.

The All-New City Hatchback retains the same 2600mm wheelbase similar to that

of the City sedan but is 21mm taller and 204mm shorter due to the removal of its rear overhang, giving it a sporty exterior look while maintaining the capability of diverse cargo capacity.

Available only with a lone RS variant, the All-New City Hatchback shares some RS design elements with the sedan, giving a stronger impression of its sporty characteristics. Upfront, it comes with an RS design front bumper and RS design high gloss black front grille with RS emblem, complemented by full LED headlights and LED daytime running lights that expresses an integrated solid wing face similar to the RS sedan. At the side, the high gloss black power-folding mirrors and 16-inch two-tone Berlina black aluminum-alloy wheels further contribute to its strong side profile character design. At the rear, sporty styling cues such as the RS design rear bumper with a sophisticated diffuser, high gloss black





tailgate spoiler, and full LED taillights give an impression of being more active and young, completing its distinct sporty hatchback look.

**INTERIOR**

The All-New City Hatchback continues its *Energetic* concept in the vehicle interior. It features a spacious cabin complemented by high-quality materials noticeably in its suede and leather seats, black interior trims with red stitching and accents, leather-wrapped shift knob and steering wheel with audio controls, front and rear center armrests, sports pedals, and multi-information display with red illumination.

Given its hatchback styling and configuration, it comes equipped with Honda's signature Ultra Seats (ULTR), so the rear seats can be folded flat or flipped up, giving it the versatility to quickly adapt to a wide variety of passenger lifestyle and cargo hauling needs.

The four ULTR adjustable modes include:

**Utility Mode:** with the two rear seats folded flat, the vehicle can carry two passengers and accommodate large cargo items in the rear storage area.

**Long Mode:** with the front passenger seat fully reclined and the rear passenger seat folded flat, the vehicle can carry two passengers and accommodate long cargo items such as surfboards.

**Tall Mode:** with the rear seats folded upward, the vehicle can accommodate tall items that need to remain upright, such as a large plant or tall luggage.

**Refresh Mode:** When removing the front-seat head restraints, moving the seats all the way forward, and tilting the seatbacks all the way back, the Refresh Mode allows the front and rear seats to be connected, providing a comfortable place for two people to relax.





**UTILITY MODE**

Lower the rear seats to slide in bulky objects with ease.



**LONG MODE**

Lower one side of the cabin to make room for boards or long objects



**TALL MODE**

Tilt up the seats to allow for larger, taller objects such as luggage



**REFRESH MODE**

Remove the headrest, lean back, and relax for a quick break on a long drive



On top of its premium yet sporty and versatile interior, the All-New City Hatchback also boasts an array of various technology features such as an 8-inch advanced touchscreen display audio with Apple CarPlay, Android Auto, and WebLink connectivity; an 8-speaker system (4 + 4 tweeters); and a new air conditioning system with rotary knobs, digital display, and illumination.

It also features a one-push start system with smart keyless entry and remote engine start for added convenience and ease of access.

**ENGINE AND TRANSMISSION**

Powering the All-New City Hatchback is a 1.5-liter 4-cylinder DOHC i-VTEC engine that produces a maximum power output of 121ps at 6,600 rpm and 145Nm of torque at 4,300rpm. The engine is mated to a continuously variable transmission (CVT) that delivers a smooth, refined, powerful yet fuel-efficient driving performance while allowing for an engaging driving experience through the use of paddle shifters. Honda's eco-assist system, which consists of the ECON mode and eco-coaching ambient light, helps promote fuel-efficient driving.

**SAFETY**

As standard, the All-New City Hatchback is equipped with a G-force Control (G-CON) body structure that helps to protect the cabin during collisions from any direction, vehicle stability assist (VSA) with agile handling assist (AHA), emergency stop signal (ESS), anti-lock braking system (ABS), electronic brake-force distribution (EBD), hill start assist (HSA), and multi-view rear camera with dynamic guidelines. Also standard are six airbags consisting of dual front airbags, front driver and passenger-side airbags, and side curtain airbags. It was awarded a 5-star ASEAN NCAP safety rating.



**AVAILABILITY AND COLORS**

The All-New City Hatchback is available at all 38 Honda dealerships nationwide with a suggested retail price of PHP 1,115,000, exclusive of the PHP 13,000 Safeguard Duty cash deposit. It is offered in ignite red metallic, meteoroid gray metallic, and platinum white pearl (+PHP 20,000). The brilliant sporty blue metallic color is available starting June 2021.

To know more about the All-New City Hatchback, visit the nearest Honda Cars dealership, or access Honda Cars Philippines, Inc.'s VIRTUAL SHOWROOM through HCPI's official website at [www.hondaphil.com](http://www.hondaphil.com).

**While sharing values in terms of comfort, premium, and high quality with the sedan, the hatchback variant offers a sporty yet versatile and cool vehicle that would complement the diverse needs of customers based on their active lifestyle.**



HCPI president  
Masahiko Nakamura  
with the All-New Honda  
City Hatchback



# HONDA LAUNCHES NEW OFF-ROAD MOTORCYCLES



onda Philippines, Inc. (HPI), the No.1 motorcycle manufacturer in the country, officially launched the All-New CRF300L and The All-New CRF300 Rally, bringing in the new generation of design and performance for off-road riding.



Serving as the enhanced version of its predecessors (CRF250L and CRF250 Rally), the All-New CRF300L and the All-New CRF300 Rally will stand as the aspirational models for other on and off-road motorcycles. These are the perfect bike for riders looking for a powerful yet comfortable and maneuverable ride.

The All-New CRF300L and The All-New CRF300 Rally come equipped with a new 286cc, 4-stroke, liquid-cooled DOHC Euro-5 compliant engine for improved power and performance. It delivers 19.6kW @ 8,250rpm of engine power and 26.1Nm @ 6,500rpm of torque while improving fuel

consumption at 29.5km/L for a longer and more efficient ride. The engine also has an assist/slipper clutch for smooth gear switching operation and to prevent wheels from locking while changing gears.

Like its predecessor, this motorcycle comes in two variants: the All-New CRF300L and the All-New CRF300 Rally. Both variants have a digital meter with a gear position indicator to help riders have precise gear information and controlled riding. Both are designed with a stronger, lighter, and sharper image, appealing to daring riders who see endless motorcycle riding possibilities.

The All-New CRF300L design has been upgraded to resemble the CRF450L. It features a new light-designed thin headlight for improved vision on the road, an upside-down gold shock absorber for safer and better riding, and a pro-link rear suspension for excellent balance when maneuvering. Riders can experience more comfortability, and better maneuverability since the All-New CRF300L's weight was reduced by 6kg. It is offered in extreme red, at a suggested retail price of PHP 259,900.

Meanwhile, the All-New CRF300 Rally's new headlight design and wipers also come with a large Rally bike-style windshield for safety from small projectiles while off-road. This variant also has a new 12.8-liter fuel tank capacity, giving riders less worry about fuel when riding off-road. With its weight reduced by 5kg, riders can experience a more relaxed and worry-free ride. It also comes in the extreme red premium color and is priced at PHP 300,000.

"The year 2020 clearly showed us what motorcycles can do for us in our lives other than daily commuting, paving the way to endless possibilities for motorcycle innovations. For Honda, there is no end of the road to creating a better normal for Filipinos," HPI president Susumu Mitsuishi said.



Words by Jose Alvarez



THE LEGEND OF HEROES

# TRAILS OF COLD STEEL IV



**DEVELOPER**

Nihon Falcom

**PUBLISHER**

NIS America, Nihon Falcom

**PLATFORM**

PlayStation 4, Nintendo Switch, PC, Stadia

**A**

s the saying goes, all good things must come to an end. The Trails franchise has gained a small yet loyal following since its debut in the United States, gaining rave reviews along the way. In *Trails of Cold Steel IV*, protagonist Rean Schwarzer seeks to bring an end to a curse that has gripped Erebonia into starting a war that might affect not only Erebonia itself but the entire world—the Great Twilight.

Numerous characters return from previous Trails games, including the cast of the *Trails in the Sky* series and the cast from the *Trails from Zero* series, or the Crossbell arc. The *Trails From Zero* series was only released in Japan, but as of this writing, fans have translated the games to English. However, an official English translation is still unknown. The events of the game pick up from *Trails of Cold Steel III*, scattering Class VII all across Erebonia as they work to contain the Great Twilight and its effects on Erebonia, with the help of faces familiar to those who have played previous Trails games.

The gameplay is no different from a traditional turn-based JRPG or previous Trails games. You can activate Brave Orders to boost your characters in battle such as dealing additional damage, guard breaking opponents, delaying opponents' turns, casting arts, and reducing incoming damage. These Orders can be upgraded by defeating Trial Chests with certain combinations of characters. The Trial Chests also serve as waypoints that one can teleport to for backtracking purposes.

The orbment system makes a return as well. However, one of my favorite returning features is Lost Arts, which are gained by defeating powerful optional bosses throughout the game. Lost Arts are extremely powerful but can only be used once per battle, draining the character's EP bar completely. Enemies also require far more damage before they can have their guard broken, which adds a degree of difficulty to the game, and makes it extremely difficult if you're playing on Nightmare, the highest difficulty level.

Mini-games such as Vantage Masters also return. I spent more time playing this mini-game than I did playing the main game itself, which shows how addictive mini-games can be in JRPGs. You can play against people in the world for additional cards to build your deck. This edition of Vantage Masters is also far more difficult than in *Trails of Cold Steel III*, requiring you to develop a strategy based on who you are playing. A new mini-game called Pom! Pom! Party is also introduced, allowing you to play a game akin to the mobile game *Candy*

*Crush* for additional rewards. You can even play blackjack or poker in-game as well.

Like in *Trails of Cold Steel II*, the game also ventures into exploring romantic relationships throughout the game. It is up to you who you want to end up with, but you have to use Bonding Points and give them certain gifts to raise their bonding level with you. Those you can romantically pursue also have hearts next to their name when you view your bond with them.

*Trails of Cold Steel IV* is a great game, but one you can only truly enjoy when you have played the previous games. You might want to pick up *Trails of Cold Steel* and go from there for storyline purposes. This is also another game that requires one playthrough before you can earn the true ending, boosting its replay value even more. While a fun game overall, those new to the series should pick up *Trails of Cold Steel* and play their way through to the finish.

Words by Gabriel Pe



**A**

fter more than a year of waiting, the Acer Predator League 2020/ 2021 finally took off last April 6 to 11 featuring some of the biggest teams from Asia battling it out for a piece of the USD 400,000 prize pool.

Predator League 2020 was supposed to be a grand offline event set at the Mall of Asia Arena last year, but the pandemic suspended sporting events, including offline esports events. Nonetheless, Predator League 2020/2021 pushed through in 2021 albeit moving online instead of LAN.

“Even though we couldn’t do it offline, a lot of fans kept talking about why we shouldn’t cancel (the event), we should still host the event,” said Andrew Hou, Pan Asia-Pacific president, Predator, prior to the competition.

“So we decided to host the event online. Hopefully, this will be a good learning point for Acer, for us to do more and more online events because I think even after this pandemic a lot of events will be virtually done online.”

The online tournament featured two of the biggest esports title in Asia: *Dota 2* and *Players Unknown Battleground (PUBG)*. Teams were further assigned into two groups for each title, Asia and APAC.

Words by Gabriel Pe



Acer Pan Asia Pacific president Andrew Hou



Andrew Hou with host Eri Neeman.

After a week of battling, it was Team Veteran from Myanmar who came out on top against team IMG from Mongolia, 2-1, for the Dota 2 Asia title. Meanwhile, Damwon Kia would be the top Asia team for PUBG, garnering 142 points in 12 rounds of action.

On the APAC side, it was team Eagle 365 from Indonesia who netted themselves 125 points to win the PUBG APAC tournament. Filipino teams ArkAngel Predator ended at 6th place with 91 points, followed by TroubleMaku at 9th with 61 points. Rounding out the Filipino contingent was Gamers Lounge who finished 14th with 32 points.

In Dota 2 APAC division, it was an all-Filipino grand final, as OB x Neon Esports went head to head with defending Predator League champions TNC Predator. In the end, it would be the defending champions, TNC Predator, who would lift the Predator Shield for the second time in a row, sweeping OB.Neon at the finals.

Meanwhile, Reckoning Esports, the third Pinoy team, ended the tourney at fourth after an impressive lower bracket run.

The end of the event also meant the passing of the torch for a new host country, and it was revealed that Predator League would be heading to Japan in 2022.



# UV LIGHT DISINFECTION, MOBILE ROBOT, AUTOMATED MONITORING

Student projects under the Smart Prepaid  
Innovation Generation Program



Young innovators from the Philippines' top colleges and universities offering solutions to help safeguard public health amid the COVID-19 pandemic have received support from Smart, the wireless unit of PLDT.

During the Demo Day of the Smart Prepaid Innovation Generation program, teams from Mariano Marcos State University (MMSU), Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP), University of Baguio (UB), and the University of Negros Occidental–Recoletos (UNO-R) showcased tools that communities can adopt to prevent the spread of the coronavirus infection.

## UV Light Disinfection Through Remote Automation (ULTRA)

Mariano Marcos State University

MMSU's Project ULTRA promises a cost-effective disinfection tool that's simple to operate. The remote switch system makes use of a mobile app that automatically turns on UV lights to sanitize a room, then switches them off once disinfection has been completed.

"We were thinking of our frontliners when we came up with the project," said Fraezzel Juness Albayalde. "We wanted to develop a solution that will lessen their workload and will protect those who protect us."

The team said they almost quit when they faced coding challenges for their entry. But

buoyed by their school's support, they pushed on and were able to submit their requirements on time. They were also able to present a prototype on Demo Day.



## Sanitizing Mobile Robot (MOBOT)

University of Baguio

Meanwhile, the innovators from the University of Baguio assembled a low-cost sanitizing mobile robot (MOBOT) that uses UV light to disinfect an area. This mobot can move autonomously around hallways and corridors or it can also be manually steered using a remote control.



"UV lamps are often called germicidal lamps because they use radiation to disinfect the air, water, and nonporous surfaces," said Frenzel Castro. "When UV light hits the surface, it kills pathogens on surfaces that are often touched by persons."

The group originally intended to market their device to hospitals to help staff sanitize areas while minimizing their exposure to harmful organisms such as the SARS-CoV-2. But throughout their consultations with their mentors, they realized that their mobile robot can also be used in gyms, restaurants, public transport vehicles, and other commercial establishments.

## Contactless Automated Monitoring for Persons Under Monitoring (C.A.M.P.)

University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos



Inspired by medical frontliners, the team from UNO-R came up with C.A.M.P., a device automatically sends temperature readings of Persons Under Monitoring (PUMs) directly to assigned health workers without the need for physical interaction.

Team UNO-R says sourcing the required components for the device proved to be a challenge. “We had to order online and most of the shops are located in Manila. It takes a week before the items are delivered to us,” explained Lex de la Torre. “But thanks to the guidance of our faculty advisor, we were able to adapt to the situation and found alternatives to make our machine work.”

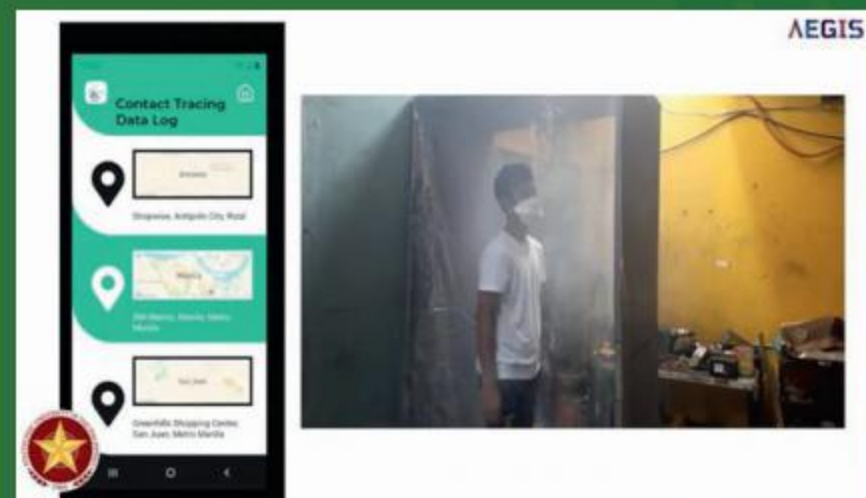
## Allied Equipment for Guaranteed Increased Security (AEGIS)

Polytechnic University of the Philippines

PUP’s Project AEGIS aims to make contact tracing more efficient. Speaking from individual experiences, they say that the current methods employed by most businesses in their community are cumbersome and are often disregarded by the public.

“We thought of an automated system where a customer simply walks into a booth and his vital signs and important details are automatically taken and stored,” said Francis Simeon. “We believe that getting the right information can be a powerful tool in helping curb the rising cases of COVID-19 in our communities.”

As a solution, the team crafted an all-in-one terminal that houses an infrared thermometer and automated disinfection machine that can be placed at entry points. The machine also records customers’ details through a QR code.



# Smart Prepaid Innovation Generation Program

**U**nder the program, the teams underwent five months of lectures and intense one-on-one mentorships with mavericks from the technology space and startup ecosystem.

The teams agree that the series of lectures strengthened their projects by rationalizing their efforts and focusing their attention on more viable options. The talks also opened their eyes to generating feedback from their target users so they can improve their tools further.

Participants from UB are grateful for learning sessions that helped them fill in their own lean canvas and craft their value proposition. They said these lectures helped them understand their customers better and isolate issues or problems their proposed solution will address. Their mentorships also improved their prototype by testing features and applications to make their device more useful in the real world.

Team UNO-R appreciated the lecture on pitching the most. As engineering students, they said their degree focuses on the technical aspect of projects, and pitching is not commonly taught in their course. But thanks to the lecture, they became more confident in talking about their proposed solution in front of people.

The developers from MMSU said that through the lectures, they were able to consider the business side, the legal aspect, and improving the customer experience for their innovation. Talking about their

Innovation Generation journey, they say the activities made them realize the importance of passion, inspiration, and teamwork in overcoming challenges en route to reaching the team's goal.

Through the program, the innovators from PUP realized that the greatest gift of innovation is the endless possibility of growing and transforming ideas to make them more relevant to different situations. The group is excited that their prototype has been gaining support from their professors who have been pushing for its implementation at the campus.

The first Smart Prepaid Innovation Generation was launched in August 2020, coinciding with the celebration of International Youth Day. Sixteen teams from the country's leading colleges and universities qualified for the program and participated in seven lectures and more than 70 one-on-one mentorship sessions.

The initiative aims to harness the creativity and passion of the youth so they can live smarter for a better world. The small grants program challenges the current generation to develop technology-enabled, simple solutions to enable their communities to adapt to the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic.

Smart Prepaid Innovation Generation is part of Smart's initiatives that support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (UNSDG) #4 on Quality Education. Digital literacy and education continue to be a flagship CSR program of Smart and its parent firm, PLDT, Inc.





## Strengthening the future of the Philippine startup ecosystem with the TBI 4.0 program

**A**s the country's startup ecosystem continues to thrive, the Department of Science and Technology - Philippine Council for Industry, Energy and Emerging Technology Research and Development (DOST-PCIEERD) and QBO Innovation Hub hosted the PH Startup Incubator Awards to recognize and reward top-performing Technology Business Incubators (TBIs) that have demonstrated outstanding capabilities and produced impactful programs and startups during the TBI 4.0 Program. The awarding ceremony was held via Zoom and Facebook Live on April 23, 2021.

The TBI 4.0 program, funded by the DOST-PCIEERD and led by QBO Innovation Hub, aims to

develop world-class TBIs and incubator managers and increase the number of quality tech startups in the Philippines. The program, which was initiated in 2019, also

elevated the capacity and services of the 12 DOST-supported TBIs from all over the country, many of which were affiliated with local universities.

- |   |   |    |  |
|---|---|----|--|
| 1 | <b>Asian Institute of Management</b><br>AIM-Dado Banatao Incubator            | 7  | <b>QBO Innovation Hub</b>  |
| 2 | <b>Batangas State University</b><br>Center for Technopreneurship & Innovation | 8  | <b>University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines</b> CDO B.I.T.E.S. |
| 3 | <b>Caraga State University</b><br>Navigatu                                    | 9  | <b>University of the Philippines Cebu</b> Cebu inIT                                |
| 4 | <b>De La Salle University</b><br>Animo Labs                                   | 10 | <b>University of the Philippines Diliman</b> UPSCALE Innovation Hub                |
| 5 | <b>Mindanao State University Iligan Institute of Technology</b> iDEYA         | 11 | <b>University of the Philippines Los Baños</b> Sibol Labs                          |
| 6 | <b>Palawan State University</b><br>Palawan International TBI                  | 12 | <b>Western Visayas State University</b> Green TBI                                  |



The TBI 4.0 program encompassed four main strategies, namely: (1) Co-incubation, (2) Internationalization, (3) Co-development of Programs, and (4) Leveling Up. All these strategies are meant to further equip incubators with capabilities to develop Filipino tech startups.

DOST and QBO Innovation Hub

introduced the PH Startup Incubator Awards to recognize and showcase the country's TBIs and their accomplishments throughout the TBI 4.0 program, as they continue to support startup businesses through their high-quality innovative training and service offerings. The event also marks the two-year celebration and culmination of the TBI 4.0 Program

and the journey of the 12 Technology Business Incubators (TBIs) who have participated.

The winners of the awards were announced on the Zoom and Facebook live platform on the 23rd of April 2021. Each TBI was measured by its impact on each of the respective categories.

*Grand Champion*  
**UPSCALE Innovation Hub**  
University of the Philippines-Diliman

*Extra Mile Incubator*  
**Animo Labs**  
De La Salle University

*Rising Star Incubator*  
**iDEYA**  
MSU Iligan Institute of Technology

*Best Incubator Governance & Operations*  
**UPSCALE Innovation Hub**  
University of the Philippines-Diliman

*Best Incubator Infrastructure*  
**Center for Technopreneurship and Innovation (CTI)**  
Batangas State University

*Best Incubator Community Program*  
**SIBOL Labs**  
University of the Philippines-Los Baños

*People's Choice Incubator*  
**iDEYA**  
MSU Iligan Institute of Technology

*Best Incubator Startup Program*  
**AIM-Dado Banatao Incubator**  
Asian Institute of Management

*Best Incubator Growth & Sustainability*  
**Animo Labs**  
De La Salle University

The grand champion received a cash prize of PHP 100,000, while the awardees for Extra Mile Incubator, Rising Star Incubator, and People's Choice Incubator each received PHP 80,000. The winners of the Operational Excellence category awards received PHP 50,000 each.

"When our TBI was established, the goal was to support spinoff companies resulting from innovations generated by the Engineering R&D for Technology consortium, which was composed of eight Philippine universities with graduate programs in engineering," shared the grand champion winners, UPSCALE Innovation Hub. "This continues to be part of our core mission and to date, we have helped launch 9 spinoff companies with an additional 6 spinoff companies in the pipeline, on top of the other ventures that we have helped launch."

"During a time when it can sometimes be hard to find hope and inspiration, the first-ever Philippine Startup

Incubator Awards gives us that and more," said QBO Innovation Hub and IdeaSpace president Rene 'Butch' Meily. "The TBI 4.0 program has upgraded the entire Philippine startup ecosystem through your incubators. Our hope is that the program will help spread entrepreneurship all over the country."

QBO Innovation Hub executive director Katrina Rausa Chan also expressed her gratitude to the 12 participating TBIs who have continued to empower startups amid such unprecedented times. "This past year was very challenging, it threw a curveball in this project just as we were getting started. I would like to congratulate all of you. In some ways, we've made it but in another sense, we're just getting started. The work will keep going, and the work that we do is important."

"As the local business landscape continues to become more digital, startups along with micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs)

must prioritize digitization to make processes easier for their own operations and their customers," shared Russel M. Pili, DOST Chief of Research Information and Technology Transfer Division. "With the PH Startup Incubator Awards, we hope to inspire more businesses to make that shift as we recognize and honor the TBIs that are at the forefront of innovation."

With the TBI 4.0 Program and the PH Startup Incubator Awards recognizing the importance of startups in the Philippines, the country is on the right path towards innovation aimed at uplifting the lives of millions of Filipinos. Moreover, the TBI 4.0 Program will continue to provide a deeper engagement with the TBIs and further increase the impact of the program through collaboration and enriching experiences.

"Community is our advantage as an ecosystem and we intend on working with the TBIs to leverage that and build a globally competitive startup ecosystem," Chan further added.

# PASIMANO: A Solar-Thermal Window

**UP Visayas students named Philippine champions of the 2021 Go Green student competition**

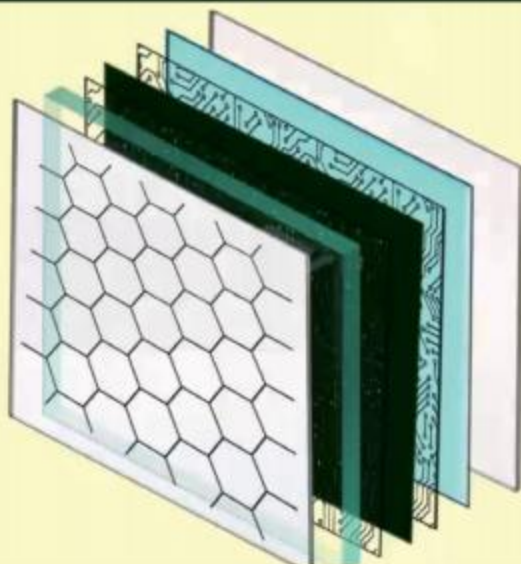
**B**S Biology students from the University of the Philippines–Visayas were crowned as the champions of the 2021 Go Green Country Finals. Running on its 11th year, Go Green is a global student competition searching for innovators and game-changers who dare to disrupt, put their skills to the test, and push the boundaries of sustainable and digital transformation in energy management.

Team Pasimano, composed of Jade Karrie Palma and Pauline Anna Lamela, emerged victorious among the Top 3 finalists from over 100 entries nationwide. Their winning project, Pasimano, is a solar-thermal window that collects and converts light and heat energy into power and electricity.

It allows consumers to use natural sources of energy while using products derived from materials often neglected in the environment: agricultural waste. The window, made from nano-silica and lignocellulose extracted from rice husk and biomass, is able to provide energy that is efficient and long-lasting.

**“Agriculture is perhaps one of mankind’s most pivotal pursuits, but just as it secures the economy and ensures food security, it also takes its toll on the environment. Electricity accounts for 30% of the global carbon dioxide emissions and agriculture is responsible for 24% of greenhouse gas emissions,” Lamela shared at the beginning of their pitch to the panel. “The inefficiency and unsustainability of sources of energy, as well as the improper handling of agricultural waste is a pertinent problem that we aim to provide a solution for.”**

## PASIMANO: Window Layers



| *Anti-reflective Coating*

| *Transparent Substrate*

| *Transparent Electrode*

| *UV/IR Active Layer*

| *Transparent Electrode*

| *UV/IR Reflective Layer*

| *Backsheet*

Pauline Lamela



**Jade Palma**

In addition to their promise of creating sustainable energy, utilizing green technology, offering a more affordable option to commercial windows and commercial solar panels, and promoting agricultural waste management, Pasimano pledges to provide clean and sustainable energy to underprivileged communities.

**“We are committed to reaching our goal of providing a more efficient and sustainable source of energy. We aim to launch Project Bintana Para sa Tanan or Windows for All, wherein for every 10 Pasimano window panels purchased, one window panel will be donated to a chosen household from an underprivileged community,”** said Palma. Through this cause, clients will be able to contribute to environmental change, as well as help those in need. With Pasimano, nobody will be left in the dark.



**“We strongly believe in the prudence and creativity of the Filipino youth, as well as their potential to rise as global leaders in innovation and sustainability,”** said Homer Ilagan, director for power products, home and distribution, and digital energy of Schneider Electric Philippines, and one of the panelists for the event.

**“Schneider Electric Philippines always believed that the Filipino youth are more than capable of coming up with the next big innovation for our future,”** he added

Lamela and Palma will be representing the Philippines in the 2021 Regional Finals to be held on June 15-17, 2021. They will be competing against delegates across Asia-Pacific.





## Registration now open

Interested participants can now register their groups at The 3M Inspire Challenge website (<http://go.3m.com/3minspirechallenge>). Groups should consist of two to four students, and at least one male and one female member.

Participants are invited to submit ideas for the three challenge themes: Technology, Sustainability, and Innovation. Full details of the case themes will be unveiled when submissions open from May 22 to June 21, 2021.



## Championing the next generation of talent

The 3M Inspire Challenge is the latest addition to 3M's diverse ecosystem of community engagements to make a positive impact in the fields of science and education, and champion a diverse talent pipeline. It is 3M's first standalone challenge targeting undergraduates in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam.



3M also partners with various organizations such as the Department of Science and Technology and Mano Amiga Academy to provide high-quality STEM educational opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds.

# The 3M Inspire Challenge 2021



# ONLINE TRADING

## 8 Reasons Why It Is The Ideal Platform

**XM has built a solid online trading reputation over 11 years by following three guiding principles: Big. Fair. Human.**

XM is widely recognized as one of the world's largest and most reliable financial services providers who focus exclusively on the client. This reputation is built on 11 years of fair, transparent, and successful operations. XM follows a human approach to doing business which has attracted more than 3,500,000 clients in 196 countries, including the Philippines.

### 1 XM offers fair and reliable trading for all clients

XM is now well established as a leading global, fully licensed (IFSC, ASIC, DFSA, and CySEC) and regulated brokerage company. It was founded in 2009 by market experts with extensive knowledge of the global forex and capital markets. The company's primary aim from the outset has been to ensure fair and reliable trading conditions for every client. This has been achieved by following these three principles: be big, be fair and be human. The success of their approach is reflected in the 30 prestigious awards, which acknowledge their adherence to these corporate brand values.

### 2 Trade over 1000 financial instruments with XM

XM has regularly been recognized for its best execution of orders with no re-quotes and no rejections. They offer personalized customer engagement that enables clients' success. XM's Philippines clients can trade a wide range of over 1000 financial instruments and assets. In addition to forex trading clients can trade CFDs (Contracts for Difference) on stock indices, stocks, energy, precious metals and spot. Their clients are also eligible to trade with leverage up to 888: 1 and spreads starting from just 0.6 pips.



### 3 XM offers excellence for all traders

There are four account types available. They are designed to accommodate the financial goals, situation, and risk that each individual client wishes to assume. Micro, Standard, XM Ultra Low and Shares account ensures every trader's needs are covered. XM also offers 15 MT4 or MT5 trading platforms, giving clients an exceptional choice. All systems have been developed with convenience and simplicity in mind. They are available for Windows and Mac operating systems, and they also meet the needs of traders who prefer mobile trading on smartphones and tablets.

Flexibility and being able to offer a service for every trader have been other key factors in XM's continued success. If you are a beginner, you can test your trading knowledge on free demo accounts. Then when you are ready, you can easily switch to real trading accounts. XM also offers a wide choice of base currencies with fast execution of orders and no re-quotes.

### 4 Trade standard and micro-lots with XM

Clients have the option to trade different sizes of trading lots and the possibility of trading with standard or micro-lots. Additionally, XM offers different levels of leverage, protection against negative balance, and hedging permission (except in a "shares account"). There are also many other characteristics that protect the client and meet their specific trading needs. This is one aspect where XM stands out in comparison to other brokers. There are no hidden terms to what they offer to clients – whether in pricing, trade execution, or promotions. Their services speak for themselves and what they promise is exactly what they deliver, without compromise.

# TRADE IN



## FX



## GOLD

CFDs ON STOCKS WITH 

Trade within the **GLOBAL MARKETS**

### 5

**Easy to open and manage an account with XM**

In addition to a perfectly optimized trading environment, XM clients benefit from simple and hassle-free procedures. This applies in equal measure to opening and managing accounts or making deposits and withdrawals. Should you need any assistance, a dedicated support team is ready to offer expert help 24/5 in more than 30 languages.

### 6

**Knowledge is power at XM**

All XM clients have access to a multitude of professional webinars and educational seminars. They are manned by a powerful team of professionals with long expertise in the financial markets. And together with certified forex instructors, the XM Research and Education Center provides a full range of up-to-date trading tools essential for profitable trading. Everything is covered from basic, intermediate, and advanced trading concepts. These resources are available free of charge.

In addition to the wealth of top-notch educational resources, XM also provides exclusive live webinars from highly qualified expert instructors. These are fully interactive and offer valuable question and answer sessions that help traders address their specific needs.



# 7

## XM provides the market analysis that matters

Since 2012, XM has hosted well over 600 seminars in more than 120 cities worldwide to educate traders and provide them with the necessary trading tools. XM's market experts offer daily updates on all major trading sessions in several languages, along with multiple daily briefings on the major events that shape the global markets.

### Market Analysis

- Daily coverage of the European and Asian sessions
- Real-time analysis of the major financial markets
- First-hand information on market research

### Forex News

- News on the latest market developments
- Real-time news streaming
- Regular updates on all major currency pairs

### Economic Calendar

- Updates on the latest economic releases
- Real-time forecasts, historical graphs, event descriptions
- Access to over 100 economic indicators from the world's economies

### Free Trading Signals

- Coverage of 10 financial instruments
- Delivered twice a day
- Multilingual signals with entry, take profit and stop-loss levels

As Chris Zacharia, marketing director at XM, said: "Our team put all their talent, knowledge, and energy into developing video tutorials that can serve their true purpose and provide users with exactly what they require: answers. We have gone the extra mile to create an outstanding result: the XM learning tool for traders."



## 8 XM gives clients the tools to achieve their financial goals

XM is dedicated to providing all its clients with the tools to achieve their financial goals. Training and educational resources on all aspects of online trading enable clients to access and operate in international markets. Traders can always keep abreast of the latest financial technologies and make the most of any competitive advantage.

Join to find out first-hand why millions of people choose XM for their trading and financial services needs. And hurry if you want to take advantage of the excellent promotions currently on offer.

## FinTech

- ✓ Bayad ng government bills
- ✓ Bayad ng utility bills
- ✓ Load ni bunso

# DIGITAL FINANCE FOR GLOBAL FILIPINOS



igital financial services leader PayMaya is making it even easier for overseas Filipinos to pay for government fees and their family's utility bills through the PayMaya e-wallet app.

In time for Labor Day on May 1, PayMaya opened this service for Filipinos overseas so they can now use their Philippine mobile SIM on roaming to register for a PayMaya account, allowing them to perform transactions such as paying government dues or utility bills, as well as sending money to other PayMaya users, even while abroad.

“Our vision of Digital Finance for All Filipinos includes our hardworking countrymen abroad, our modern-day heroes,” said Orlando Vea, founder and CEO of PayMaya. “Having a PayMaya account wherever you are in the world can empower Filipinos overseas and help them stay connected with their loved ones in the Philippines.”

According to 2020 data released by the Philippine Statistics Authority, there are an estimated 2.2 million Filipinos currently working abroad, with millions more who have already migrated and can still benefit from a strong fintech platform that can help them and their families who are still in the Philippines.



## Expanding financial inclusion for Filipinos worldwide

Paying for government fees such as taxes and social insurance contributions while abroad is among the top concerns of Filipinos overseas. For example, those who are currently abroad can easily use their PayMaya accounts to conveniently pay their individual Social Security System (SSS) contributions using the SSS mobile app, as well as nominate their PayMaya accounts to receive loan proceeds and other disbursements from the agency.

“Since 2019, this partnership between the Social Security System (SSS) and PayMaya has opened doors for many overseas-based Filipinos to easily and speedily remit contributions and receive disbursements to the pension fund--made all the more crucial during these trying times when mobility is limited to help curb the spread of COVID-19. This new offering from PayMaya will allow even more Filipinos to derive benefits and take advantage of the services offered by SSS from practically anywhere in the world,” said Aurora C. Ignacio, SSS president and CEO.

Aside from the SSS, PayMaya users abroad can also transact with other government agencies such as the PAG-IBIG Fund, Bureau of Internal Revenue, the Department of Foreign Affairs, and over 60 other agencies and local government units that accept PayMaya as a payment option.

PayMaya recently piloted the service in Singapore with positive feedback from Filipinos in the city-state, especially since many lack credit cards and other financial instruments that allow them to easily conduct financial transactions back home.

On top of government payments, overseas Filipinos can also pay bills through the more than 500 active billers available in the PayMaya app. On top of this, they can also send money to other PayMaya users in the Philippines or to any of the more than 37,000 Smart Padala centers nationwide once they have added money to their accounts.

To start using PayMaya abroad, all they have to do is download the PayMaya app on their phones (<https://official.paymaya.com/CAK1/425eb133>), and register using their Philippine mobile SIM with international roaming activated, their address in the Philippines, as

well as a valid Philippine ID such as passport, driver's license, UMID, SSS ID with digitized photo, PRC license, and postal ID.

Once done, they can Add Money to their account through VISA, Mastercard, or JCB debit or credit cards, or through PayMaya's international remittance partners such as Western Union and Moneygram.

PayMaya is the only end-to-end digital payments ecosystem enabler in the Philippines, with platforms and services that cut across consumers, merchants, communities, and government. Through its enterprise business, it is the largest digital payments processor for key industries in the country, including “everyday” merchants such as the largest retail, food, gas, and eCommerce merchants as well as government agencies and units.

Through its app and wallet, PayMaya provides over 28 million Filipinos with access to financial services. Customers can conveniently pay, add money, cash out or remit through its over 200,000 digital touchpoints nationwide.

The Smart Padala by PayMaya network of over 37,000 partner agent touchpoints nationwide serves as last-mile digital financial hubs in communities, providing the unbanked and underserved with access to digital services. To know more about PayMaya's products and services, visit [www.PayMaya.com](http://www.PayMaya.com) or follow @PayMayaOfficial on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.





# TOP 5 MOBILE MALWARE TARGETING YOUR DIGITAL MONEY



With the steady increase of internet users in the Philippines

now standing at 73.91 million or 67% of its total population, global cybersecurity firm Kaspersky urged Filipinos to lookout against the top five most prevalent malware targeting their smartphones and their data and money online.

Identified as the most common malicious software (malware) detected in mobile devices of Filipinos are Trojans.

Trojans are malware disguised as legitimate software that hackers and cyber thieves use to get into a user's system to spy on them or steal from them. An internet user is usually tricked by some form of social engineering to install Trojans into their system. Once activated, attackers can easily delete, block, modify, and copy the user's sensitive data. Trojans can even disrupt the performance of computers or computer networks or, in the case of Filipino users, their mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets.

These Trojans are classified based on the type of actions they can perform on a computer.

According to Kaspersky, the top five types of malware that they blocked

from being installed on the devices of Filipino Internet users are:

### 1. Generic Trojan

**2. Trojan-Dropper** - sneaks into devices without being detected by antivirus programs. It also masks any installation of viruses by hackers.

**3. Trojan-Downloader** - similar to platforms that require software and system updates, Trojans are updated by hackers to be one step ahead of antivirus programs. With Trojan-Downloader, cybercriminals are able to install newer versions of existing malware in their target's device.

**4. Trojan-SMS** - programs that command a victim's phone to send text messages to premium rate phone numbers, costing money in the process.

**5. Trojan-Proxy** - this virus creates proxy servers out of infected devices to enable an attacker to stage anonymous attacks by hiding their true location.

The pandemic forced everyone around the world, including Filipinos, to jump into the online world, whether for personal or business reasons, to go on with their lives. This behavior has since translated to the surge of social media marketing campaigns, e-commerce platforms,

and increased activity around e-payments with a total value of PHP 53 billion so far.

And while digital payments are becoming the more preferred method in the "new normal," based on the 2020 PayPal Consumer Insights Survey conducted in the Philippines, security remains the top consideration when consumers pick a digital platform, especially as 99% of the Filipino respondents confirmed their plans to use digital payments even post-COVID-19.

The risk comes in the form of ensuring user security when using platforms that have access to financial assets. Android users are at the highest risk of becoming targeted by malware, especially Trojans that specifically target mobile banking.

By disguising as legitimate applications, Trojans can steal money from mobile bank accounts or e-wallets. In fact, 98% of these malicious programs are designed for the Android OS.

"Based on our data, the Philippines may have had only 55,622 mobile malware detections in 2020, which is almost half of the monitored 110,130 attempts back in 2019. But there should be no room for complacency for Filipinos," says Chris Connell, managing director for Asia Pacific at Kaspersky.

“As of January this year, 96.5% or over 71 million Filipino internet users access the internet via their mobile phones. The majority of them (85.7%) have their shopping apps installed on their devices, and almost half (42.1%) got their bank’s official apps, too. Now imagine the amount of confidential and financial data stored on our hand-held devices. This is why our smartphones now are lucrative targets for cyber-thieves, and we all need to start protecting them,” adds Connell.

Although Trojans are unable to self-replicate, these programs will not only disrupt the performance of devices but actually cost real money to the victims.

Taking advantage of anti-malware software can help users detect these malicious programs and prevent Trojan attacks. Filipino Internet users can benefit from best use practices for prevention, and Kaspersky experts suggest the following:




**Avoid clicking on links from emails sent through social network sites and chat rooms, placed on banner ads from suspicious websites, and sent by unfamiliar people.**



**Be wary of emails asking for sensitive information, redirecting victims to websites, and pop-up windows.**



**Check if the URL looks suspicious and make sure to input data only when connection is secure.**



**“By disguising as legitimate applications, Trojans can steal money from mobile bank accounts or e-wallets. In fact, 98% of these malicious programs are designed for the Android OS.”**



Avoid accessing the Internet through public Wi-Fi networks since cybercriminals can intercept these networks and steal passwords and other sensitive information.



Read customer reviews of a specific online retailer before accessing it and restrict the credit limit of the used ‘online credit card.



Run the latest version of programs and software, and use anti-malware services for an additional level of protection.

# Seamless Customer Experience: 3 Insights

**W**ith the shift towards the digital marketplace last year, both businesses and their respective customers will continue working and interacting remotely in 2021. With that comes a vital aspect — ventures should definitely emphasize a seamless customer experience.

Customer experience is a silent game-changer set to regain customer inflow, especially for businesses or companies who had to move away from physical, on-ground setups. While this experience was initially designed to just provide support or troubleshoot problems for customers, it has now evolved into a deeper and dynamic understanding of what customers go through.

Additionally, customer feedback has provided crucial insights and points of action for businesses to integrate as they build experiences that can adapt to each customer's needs.

“Designing experiences for customers now requires a more deliberate and ever-evolving approach, entailing precision, customization, and thoughtful details,” said regional vice president Rajiv M.Dhand from TELUS International, a leading digital solutions and customer experience (CX) provider.

“At a time like this, when companies like ours have access to insights from customer feedback, we treat them as a valuable stimulant to adapt to as we create a more personalized and unique experience for each customer, which is our goal for each interaction,” Dhand explained.

Undeniably, digital platforms have given the much-needed flexibility for customers. As these platforms are here to stay, TELUS International Philippines shares these three important learnings that can help businesses improve how customers experience their brands now and in the coming years.





**1****Being digital-first should put a premium on data privacy and security**

The swift migration of businesses to digital solutions heightened the focus on immediate accessibility and user experience. However, it can also leave loopholes in data security if done in haste. This movement paved the way for leaders in tech and CX to stress the need for firms to ensure that they have the proper IT and data security systems and tools to always secure data and transactions.

With adaptation now more settled for companies, setting standards and stricter systems on oversight for remote work should be the next priority to ensure longevity when investing in these tech solutions.

**2****Remote or hybrid set-ups demonstrate the power of cloud**

Applying remote work set-ups happened faster than expected, even with the limitation of stable internet infrastructure in the Philippines. Businesses were able to continue and adjust to the enforcement of skeletal capacity in workplaces with the aid of cloud-enabled platforms.

Cloud solutions paved the way for smoother transitions and collaborations among users in different locations. This has become instrumental for companies who are designing their way forward. Even traditional businesses who are new to this kind of work are now improving process flows with the real-time updates they get from operations managed by cloud technology. These significant improvements have ushered in more efficient ways of working, which will be here to stay.

**3****Conveying empathy and transparency through digital channels is an edge**

Minimizing face-to-face interaction and boosting virtual ones does not mean losing empathetic forms of communication. In times of crisis, silence or canned responses may seem impersonal or out of touch, leading to customers' disinterest or mistrust.

Companies need to bring the same personal experience and empathetic messaging to all channels available to their customers. This comes with being more transparent about what companies can offer and what their limitations are at this time. It helps manage customers' expectations and lead them to proper channels where they can be serviced better.



**“Through these learnings, we are able to go beyond simply delivering easy, real-time support to our customers. There is another layer of care and thoughtfulness that we add to the overall experience. While that might seem intangible, it makes a great difference,” said Dhand.**

Technologies will become more advanced as tech and CX experts in companies like TELUS International Philippines relentlessly find ways to bridge needs through digital solutions.

For TELUS International Philippines, its commitment to providing world-class customer experiences will create a sustained evolution as more people rely on digital solutions as the world continues to transition and

learn from the wave of experiences that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about.

Dhand added, “In the years to come, the surge of innovations and omnichannel solutions will continue to define how customers experience different brands, but one thing that will remain constant is how, as a company, we can show our care and dedication as we design human-centric customer experiences.”

# The National Arts and Crafts Fair goes online

**T**he National Arts and Crafts Fair (NACF) Artisanal Shop was recently launched by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to help micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and Indigenous Peoples (IPs) market their artisanal products online amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The NACF Artisanal Shop features the finest collection of authentic and intricately designed heritage crafts by IPs, local weavers, and artisans

from 17 community-partners from all over the Philippines. The initiative is spearheaded by the DTI's Bureau of Domestic Trade Promotion (DTI-BDTP) with support from the DTI Regional and Provincial Offices and in partnership with CustomMade Crafts Center, Inc. (CMCC) and powered by UnionBank GlobalLinker.

DTI Secretary Ramon Lopez said, "With our 2025 vision of a more inclusive and prosperous Philippines, the online NACF Artisanal Shop will



give broader market access both locally and globally to the products of our artisanal communities. This, in turn, will create employment opportunities that will provide a decent income for our people and support our poverty alleviation efforts.”

“With the accelerated adoption of e-commerce during the pandemic, DTI is also increasing its efforts to promote the digitalization of our MSMEs. This will serve as a means to secure sustainable practices and livelihood that will also ensure inclusivity in our communities, especially those in far-flung areas,” the trade chief said.

Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda, who has been supportive of the National Arts and Crafts Fair (NACF), particularly during her stint as Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Finance, noted that the “online fair is timely and may be a venue that can be used to empower our micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) amid this pandemic, where they can continue to showcase their local products.”

The NACF Artisanal Shop is a one-stop online hub for products selected with the consumer in mind. The online platform features wardrobe staples such as neckties, scarves, earrings, and woven fabric face masks; home accessories such as baskets, planters, and pillowcases; trinkets and gifts for any occasion; snacks and wine; and an array of teas best-paired with honey from the Philippine Forest Honey Network.

The Non-Timber Forest Products Exchange Program Philippines (NTFP-EP Philippines) initiated CustomMade Crafts Center, Inc. (CMCC) as a collaborative network of non-government and community-based organizations that empower forest-dependent communities to work towards fair trade and sustainability. This year, CMCC curated artisanal products from its partner communities from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. Anchored on sustainability, CMCC advocates for safe environmental practices, research, and sets top quality standards for the production of products such as honey, textiles, and natural dyes.

Further, with the rise in demand for products that contribute to safer practices for the industry, the Philippine Textile Research Institute has been working with CMCC towards slow fashion, which is quality-based rather than time-based and focuses on slower production, sustainability with ethics, and encourages consumers to invest in well-made and lasting clothes. Every bespoke piña formal attire, everyday wear, or new product using indigenous fabrics not only makes for a statement piece but also carries the stories of hard work and ingenuity of Filipino artisans.

Visit the NACF Artisanal Shop at <https://nacf.linker.store/> to know more about the communities, their stories, and to support the DTI’s Buy Local, Go Lokal advocacy campaign.

For regular updates on the projects of the DTI-Bureau of Domestic Trade Promotion, get in touch with Director Marievic M. Bonoan at [bdtp@dti.gov.ph](mailto:bdtp@dti.gov.ph) or follow the BDTP’s social media accounts: @DTI.BDTP on Facebook and Instagram, and @DTI\_BDTP on Twitter.v



# Design-Driven Businesses



he Design Center of the Philippines spotlighted four design-driven businesses at a recent

ASEAN Design Products Webinar hosted by the ASEAN-Japan Centre (AJC) and Japan Institute of Design Promotion (JDP).

The webinar highlighted the positive social impact of the designs and underlined how the designers applied uniqueness, creativity, and innovation into their products. At the same time,

it introduced the businesses and their products to the Japanese market as well as audiences beyond the local arena.

The featured designers were Dr. Ria Canlas of **Po-Lite Technology**, Kae Batiquin of **HoliCOW PH**, Willie Garcia of **Junk Not!**, and Kay Concenco of Lamana. They shared that their products are readily available, sustainable, have elevated or provided a solution to users' daily lives, and are in line with the UN's sustainable development goals. They also described the process of how these products came to life.

"Compassion is both branding and advocacy. This leads to a new norm of business social enterprise. It is

because of equal dimension and empathy applied to the products, design, construction methodology, and operations. Every time I improve any aspect of my business operations, the more I manifest compassion.", Dr. Ria Canlas of Po Lite Technology on her process as a designer-entrepreneur explains.

For Kae Batiquin of HOLICOW, her process involves acknowledging the importance of the life cycle of materials.

"By acknowledging the new normal and by transforming waste to a resource, and by understanding that design is a tool, we want to show that even waste material can be treated as natural material, and we have closed the loop. This is the responsibility

Fillo Lamp

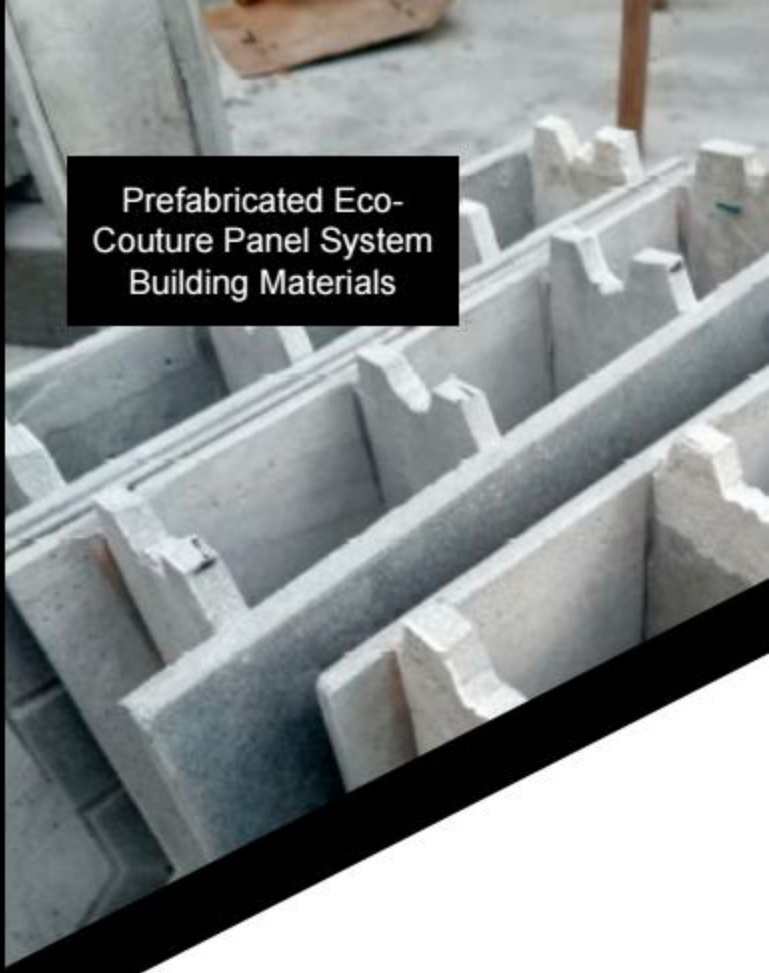


LAB'AS Table Napkin Rings Set





Sea Glass Lamp



Prefabricated Eco-Couture Panel System Building Materials

of design. This what we in HOLICOW feel like when we have partners that come in with us; we tell them that we can do collections one at a time so that we are able to close the loop and do upcycling as the main design point," she says.

In addition to learning about the Japanese consumer preferences and behavior, the webinar was an opportunity for designer-entrepreneurs to

understand how good design can impact the fulfillment of their business goals and objectives and, ultimately, give them new insights and better perspective into the movement of trends and businesses in the global market.

"While the pandemic has disrupted the world order and put our global priorities to task, it has allowed all of us to recalibrate our lives towards life's essentials. The Design Center is a firm believer that Filipino brands and innovators can be the catalyst of change by being pioneers of sustainable businesses that truly speak of compassion not only for their consumers but also for the future that each and every one of us aspires to have," Design Center executive director Rhea Matute shares.

The ASEAN Design Products Webinar is part of the bigger collaboration agenda strengthened through a

Memorandum of Understanding last March 2020 between Design Center, AJC, and JDP. It aligns the Good Design Award Philippines with Japan's prestigious Good Design Award or GMark and their goal of supporting and establishing respective national good design award systems in 6 ASEAN States: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, and the Philippines.

Looking ahead, the webinar series will introduce national design centers from participating ASEAN member states who will be given the same opportunity to showcase and take the lead in establishing their very own design identity and standards based on their national culture, craftsmanship, and innovations.



PO LITE TECHNOLOGY, INC.

# THE TOP COMPANIES FOR CAREER GROWTH

Photo by David Milmont on Unsplash



LinkedIn, the world's largest professional network, recently published its list of the 2021 LinkedIn Top Companies in the Philippines for the first time. This annual guide identifies the best places for professionals to grow their careers. Many of these companies on the list are currently hiring, with more than 70,000 open roles in the Philippines.

Topping the Philippines' list this year are: (1) Philippine National Bank, (2) Smart Communications, (3) Manila Water, (4) Philip Morris International, and (5) EY. The rest of the list is dominated by companies whose products and services helped make people's lives better during the pandemic — from financial services, food and beverage to telecommunications sectors. All companies invest in employee success, career development, and equity and inclusion to ensure they continue to be among the best workplaces for employee growth.

Chris Anderson, senior news editor, APAC, at LinkedIn, said: "The past year has presented extraordinary challenges for so many around the world and our Top Companies methodology reflects these realities. It helped us surface companies investing in employee growth as we navigate a world of work that's forever changed by the global pandemic. We found the best companies that have put their employees first by implementing various policies around well-being and mental health and helped them get back on their feet through training and development programs.

Key trends from the Top Companies list include:

## PRIORITIZING SKILLS

Many of the Top Companies have made commitments and launched programs to develop employees' skills to meet current and future job requirements. Recognizing that continuous learning is crucial in the future economy, Manulife Philippines (#7) provides all employees with opportunities for professional development throughout their journey in the company. These include on-the-job training, mentoring, coaching, in-house instructor-led learning sessions, and programs that support employees' continuing education and development in industry-specific areas.

"We believe in continuous learning because curiosity and the desire to learn are ways by which we bring Think Big—one of our core values—to life. Recently, we launched Pursuit Learning Hub, an internal one-stop-shop for quick and easy access to learning resources, including a range of new content by LinkedIn Learning, to empower our



employees globally to reach new heights, succeed, and embrace an always learning mindset,” Richard Bates, president and CEO of Manulife Philippines, said.

## RESILIENCE IN ESSENTIAL SERVICES

In the Philippines, companies in the financial services, telecommunications, and food and beverage industries dominate the list. The presence of four banks in the Top 10 such as Philippine National Bank (#1), LandBank of the Philippines (#6), Metrobank (#8), and BDO Unibank(#14), as well as telecommunications company Smart Communications (#2), and food and beverage companies such as Nestle (#10) and Coca-Cola Beverages Philippines (CCBP) (#11) reflect the strength and resilience of these sectors in the country during the COVID-19 pandemic. For its part, CCBP shared how the urgency to protect and support its employees, customers, local communities, and businesses at the onset of the pandemic helped them serve their customers.

“Our consistent and daily communications with our teams have helped everyone deal with the crisis and understand more about each other, our business, and our customers. The pandemic has helped us do things we never

thought were possible—transitioning to a virtual workforce, rolling out full-scale remote learning, accelerating our agility and speed in e-commerce, and improving our decision-making. The crisis has brought us closer as a Coke Family—we have become more understanding and caring with one another, so we do not let anyone down,” Gareth McGeown, CEO and president of CCBP, said.

## SUPPORTING THEIR WORKFORCE THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES

Employers in the essentials services sectors continue to be the workplaces of choice for professionals in the country. Overall, these companies are ahead of the game in supporting their talent pool, with programs for flexible work arrangements and employee well-being, among others. Manila Water (#3) rolled out programs to listen, respond, retool and reskill, to help employees deal with the impact of COVID-19.

“We realized that the pandemic is an unprecedented reality that we all need to face over an extended period. Consistent with our corporate value of malasakit (compassion), these programs are the best expressions of our care for our



employees who drive our business forward. Without our people's commitment, we cannot deliver our service to our customers and create value for our stakeholders. In the darkest moment of uncertainty,

we wanted to provide hope for our employees and, in doing so, help the country in our small way," Janine Tan-Carreon, corporate human resources group director of Manila Water, said.

**Here are the companies on LinkedIn's 2021 Philippines Top Companies list:**

**Philippine National Bank**

**Smart Communications**

**Manila Water**

**Philip Morris International**

**EY**

**LandBank of the Philippines**

**Manulife Philippines**

**Metrobank**

**Accenture**

**Nestle**

**Coca-Cola Beverages Philippines**

**Macquarie Group**

**NCR Corporation**

**BDO Unibank**

**IQVIA**

The Top Companies methodology uses LinkedIn data to rank companies based on seven pillars that have been shown to lead to career progression: the ability to advance, skills growth, company stability, external opportunity, company affinity, gender diversity, and educational background.

**“Employers in the essentials services sectors continue to be the workplaces of choice for professionals in the country. Overall, these companies are ahead of the game in supporting their talent pool, with programs for flexible work arrangements and employee well-being, among others.”**

# Workplace Inclusivity Becomes a Reality for Persons with Disabilities

**P**articipants of Microsoft's Enabler Program are proving that with strong support and equal access to employment, persons with disabilities (PWDs) can contribute meaningfully to the economy and society.

The Microsoft Enabler Program was launched in September 2020 to pioneer disability-inclusive workplaces across Asia-Pacific by removing the barriers for a more diverse workforce. A first of its kind globally, the program provides cloud & AI training for PWDs, accessibility education for employer partners, and inclusive hiring from non-profit organizations (NPOs) supporting persons with disabilities.

"There are 650 million persons with disabilities in the Asia-Pacific region alone, making accessibility and providing inclusive opportunities absolutely critical," said Fides Ricasa,

Microsoft Philippines chief partner officer. "This is imperative to us as an organization, especially in the world we live in today. Access to digital skills and employment opportunities must be given to every community and individual as we look to rebuild our economies."

In addition to training and resources, the program provides Tech Consult sessions that persons with disabilities can join to be connected to Microsoft volunteer technical subject matter experts to enhance their knowledge and skills.

Key to the Microsoft Enabler Program's efforts in the Philippines is Microsoft's partnership with local non-profit social enterprise, Virtualahan. They are a for-impact organization that provides training to commercial partners on how to become inclusive employers and pools potential candidates for vacancies within the organization.

"We envision for the Microsoft Enabler Program to change the employment landscape for Persons with Disabilities in the digital economy in the Asia-Pacific by serving as a sandbox for companies that are working hard to embrace disability inclusion in their respective organizations," said Ryan Gersava, founder and president of Virtualahan.

In the Philippines, the Microsoft Enabler Program has successfully provided full-time employment opportunities for three individuals: Ritchell Anne de Loyola, Zeus Exequiel Seth Oliveros, and Jefferson Cortez.

Ten years ago, Ritchell Anne de Loyola was diagnosed with a chronic illness that resulted in a physical disability that forced her to step away from her career. "I could not walk, and I needed to use a wheelchair for several years."





However, she was undeterred and went on to pursue online digital skills training through Virtualahan. This brought new life to her career, first as a bookkeeper then as a finance officer. Today, Ritchell works for Microsoft and is a program manager of the Microsoft Enabler Program, advocating for inclusivity for others like her who have disabilities.

“This program is driven by the same fundamental belief that allowed me to learn new skills and gave me the opportunity to join Microsoft. Through this, we are able to amplify our efforts and open doors for more persons with disabilities,” said de Loyola. “To be empowered, first of all, accept your condition and understand your limitations; then focus on your skills, abilities, and strengths to live up to your potential.”

Another successful placement through the Microsoft Enabler Program is Zeus Exequiel Seth Oliveros, who has an orthopedic condition that causes mobility dysfunctions. Zeus was hired by Cognizant Technology Solutions Philippines, a partner company, last year as a data analyst.

“Being exposed to the many challenges faced by Persons with Disabilities in the corporate world, one thing I applaud is how Cognizant embraced diversity and inclusion completely,” said Oliveros.

According to Gersava, Zeus’s successful completion of his internship with Cognizant was due, in no small part, to how the company worked hard to position him for success, proving how essential it is for PWDs to have a robust support mechanism that enables them to thrive in their respective organizations.

Finally, Jefferson Cortez, who joined HCL Technologies in April 2021 as an accessibility engineer. Jefferson is Hard-of-Hearing (HOH) and has been passionate about helping others with the same condition for over twenty years, as a professional sign language interpreter and by conducting sensitivity training for communities and individuals on how to deal and communicate with the deaf or HOH. With HCL Technologies, he is able to expand his efforts even more, as he is involved in making sure their apps and solutions are accessible and inclusive to persons with disabilities.

“Building a culture of inclusion is when talents with a disability find a safe space in their respective workplaces that lead to the feeling of true belonging. It is being intentional in creating a mechanism that will break down barriers that may hinder their full and effective participation in the company on an equal basis with others,” said Gersava.

Currently, the Microsoft Enabler Program has eight commercial partners in the Philippines: Cognizant Technology Solutions, ePLDT, HCL Technologies, Nexus Tech, NTT Data, Wipro, Crayon, and DDLs Philippines.

Microsoft aims to continuously grow this collection of commercial partners and non-profit organizations, in order to bring inclusive opportunities and digital skills to more Filipino persons with disabilities across the nation.

“Joining the Microsoft Enabler Program means future-proofing your community of persons with disability and your company. It guarantees access to employer-partners that you can positively influence to create a steady pipeline for your talents with a disability to find meaningful employment,” said Gersava.



# LIWANAG NG TAGUMPAY

## Free Bee celebrates graduation season with OFWs

**C**hildren of overseas Filipino workers shared their gratitude to their parents in the latest video campaign launched by Free Bee, the go-to app of OFWs powered by PLDT Global Corporation. The short video entitled *Liwanag ng Tagumpay* features snippets of OFW families celebrating graduation, an important milestone in the lives of Filipino families, and the most tangible proof of the years of migrant families' sacrifices bearing fruit.

One of them is Josephine.

A mother of three, Josephine has been working as a domestic helper in Hong Kong for seven years. Her eldest son will graduate with a degree in BS Marine Technology this

year. "Mixed emotions, excitement, and the feeling that so many years went by, and all the sacrifices I made are really worth it seeing my child wearing a toga, going up on the stage, and [receiving his] diploma," she said, when asked how she felt about it. After all, Josephine's primary motivation to seek work abroad was to ensure that her children could finish school, she added.

Meanwhile, for Qatar-based Evangeline, it is fulfilling for her to see her children finish their studies. "*Bilang magulang na malayo sa mga anak, napakasarap na makita mo nagbunga ng maganda ang sakripisyo niyo ng pamilya, yung mga araw na di kami magkakasama, kapalit ng katuparan ng mga pangarap nila at mga pangarap*

*namin para sa kanila.* (As a parent who is far from my children, it is moving to see that all of your family's sacrifice – the times that you spent apart – are rewarded with the realization of their dreams and our dreams for them)," she said.

The two modern-day heroes, Josephine and Evangeline, have been able to stay in touch with their children in the Philippines via the Free Bee mobile app.

"[It's] beneficial and convenient. It helps keep distant family members together and helps me stay in touch with my family," Josephine said.

Evangeline also said that Free Bee allows them to connect easily with their loved ones. "*Nagiging*



*madali ang mahihirap na mga araw dahil mas madaling makipagusap, makita, o mag-message sa mga mahal sa buhay na malayo sa akin. Napakaimportante ng technology at social media applications sa mga OFW na gaya ko. (The hard days become better because it's easier to talk to or send a message to loved ones who are far from me. Technology and social media applications are very important to OFWs like me.)"*



Their stories are part of why PGC-backed Free Bee continues to find ways to serve the Filipino community worldwide. PGC is the international arm of the country's largest integrated telco, PLDT.

"Free Bee understands the lifestyle, the struggles, and the stories of our *kababayans* abroad, and we want to let them know that we are here to celebrate with them as their children finish school and prepare for the next step in their life," said Albert V. Villa-Real, SVP and chief commercial officer at PGC. "Through this video campaign, we hope that we can inspire OFWs and their families, especially during the graduation season, to continue to reach for their goals, knowing that we will continue to support them

through reliable and affordable ways to stay connected with the people that motivate them the most," Villa-Real added.

Available in 180 countries, Free Bee helps OFWs call their loved ones through its award-winning mobile app, with or without the internet. It also allows them to conveniently top-up or send load to Smart, TNT, and Free Bee customers. The app also allows them to pay Philippine utility bills and access other content, products, services, and offerings by partners. In 2020, Free Bee was recognized as the Most Innovative Customer Facing Solution by the Pacific Telecom Council.

For more information, visit <https://freebeecalls.com>.



# Teaching Certificate Program for online/flexible education



The Technological Institute of the Philippines (T.I.P.) Quezon City College of Education is offering an enhanced 18-unit Teaching Certificate Program (TCP). This pioneering post-baccalaureate program is intended to hone the skills and competencies of basic education and college teachers in online and flexible teaching and learning. It is also open to non-education degree holders who wish to qualify for the Board Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers (BLEPT).

The fully online program will have its first run starting June 25 through September 17, 2021, a total of 12 weeks to complete the required 18 units. It is facilitated by a team of specialists in teacher education and online outcomes-based teaching and learning. Fittingly, the T.I.P. TCP is delivered via the T.I.P. Canvas Learning Management System, the official online learning platform of the institution.

“One of the objectives of the enhanced T.I.P. TCP is to help ensure educational continuity in this new normal. The current and future teachers across the elementary, secondary, and tertiary levels need to be properly trained for remote teaching and learning so that education is optimally supported during and beyond this pandemic,” said T.I.P. president Dr. Elizabeth Quirino-Lahoz.

Specifically, the coursework includes: (1) Philosophical and Historical Foundations of Education Including Online and Flexible Learning; (2) Principles and Strategies of Teaching with Focus on Online and Flexible Learning; (3) Preparation of Instructional Materials for Online and Flexible Learning;



(4) Curriculum Development with Focus on Online and Flexible Learning; (5) Student Learning Assessment Utilizing Online and Flexible Assessment Tools; and (6) Facilitating Learning Using Online and Flexible Learning Tools.

“To make it convenient for our students, who are composed of working professionals, the online classes are set at 3 times a week and scheduled only after office hours. The days of the week shall be calendared based on the convenience of both the students and the teacher,” said T.I.P. Quezon City vice president for academic affairs Dr. Cynthia Llanes.

Enrollment is ongoing and T.I.P. is offering an early bird discount for those enrolling on or before May 31, 2021. Graduates of architecture, arts, business, computing, engineering, law, medical, and allied health science programs, or any baccalaureate program, are welcome to enroll.

To know more about T.I.P. and the Teaching Certificate Program, visit T.I.P.'s official website through [tip.edu.ph](http://tip.edu.ph) or T.I.P.'s social media accounts @TIP1962official for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. For enrollment inquiries, contact [tcp@tip.edu.ph](mailto:tcp@tip.edu.ph) or (+63) 917-859-0279.

# BUY REAL, BUY SMART.

**Protect your warranty and your equipment by using  
Epson Genuine Inks for your Epson Printers**







**A**s printing becomes more accessible, an increasing number of counterfeit inks are entering the market to provide consumers with cheaper options. While it might be tempting to cut costs by purchasing non-genuine inks, doing so entails serious risks and threats.

For Epson printer users at home or in the office, managing printing requirements demands saving money while you can, but what is the true cost of buying into counterfeit inks? Here are some of the dangers of using non-genuine inks for your printer:

### 1 POSSIBLE PRINTER DAMAGE

Non-genuine inks purchased from unauthorized sellers may cause leaks and clogging that may lead to printer damage. Using non-genuine inks may provide savings in the short run, but it can potentially be costly with the additional servicing required when the other components in your printer have been compromised.

### 2 Warranty void

A home or office printer is an asset, and you want to make sure that you have the best protection for your investment. Deciding to go for counterfeit

inks will automatically void your Epson printer warranty, and since counterfeit inks may potentially harm your printer, the money saved on the initial purchase of non-genuine inks simply isn't worth the potential cost of having to replace damaged parts without warranty protection.

### 3 Higher costs

Counterfeit inks are widely available, and consumers often choose to use them believing that they provide the same performance as genuine inks. This could be a costly mistake as non-genuine supplies could pose multiple risks as mentioned above and may affect both print quality and performance.

Maintaining your printer equipment in good working condition is the key to productivity. To get the most out of your Epson printer, we recommend using only Epson

genuine inks to keep your machine at optimal performance.

Epson's genuine inks are produced following stringent quality control standards that guarantee the best performance of your printer, ink, and media. To ensure that you are purchasing an authentic Epson ink bottle, look for the Genuine Epson Color Shifting Label and Hologram Sticker on the packaging. If you suspect that the inks you have purchased are fake, go to this link on the Epson Philippines website to submit a report.

Saving money at home or in the office is important but spending a bit more on genuine supplies is always worth it, rather than taking a chance with counterfeit supplies. To find an Epson Authorized Dealer near you, check the store listing on the website or browse Epson's flagship store in Lazada.



Look for the **Genuine Epson Color Shifting Label** and **Genuine Epson Hologram** sticker to ensure you are using authentic Epson inks.

# EPSON ENVIRONMENTAL VISION 2050



Seiko Epson Corporation has renewed its Environmental Vision 2050, a statement of the company's environmental goals for 2050, to achieve sustainability and enrich communities. Epson will become carbon negative and underground resource free by 2050.

Epson was founded in 1942 in Suwa, a city located in the rich natural

environment of Nagano, Japan. Harmonious co-existence with the communities in which it operates has always been a cornerstone of the company, and even as its operations have expanded globally, its culture of respect for the environment has never wavered, and it has always maintained ambitious environmental goals. Epson established Environmental Vision 2050 in 2008 and revised it in 2018 to realign it with a changed operating environment.

This latest revision was made as part of the Epson 25 Renewed corporate vision, which set "achieving sustainability and enriching communities" as the company's aspirational goal.

Specifically, the company set goals that clearly show its commitment to tackling the major societal issues of decarbonization and resource recycling and how it will proceed with concrete efforts to achieve them.

## Environmental Vision 2050

Epson will become carbon negative and underground resource free by 2050 to achieve sustainability and enrich communities.

### Goals

2030: Reduce total emissions in line with the 1.5°C scenario

2050: Carbon negative and underground resource<sup>1</sup> free

### Actions

- Reduce the environmental impacts of products and services and in supply chains
- Achieve sustainability in a circular economy and advance the frontiers of industry through creative, open innovation
- Contribute to international environmental initiatives

The Epson 25 Renewed corporate vision, which was established

on March 18, 2021, includes Environmental Vision 2050. In line with this vision, Epson will pursue decarbonization and resource recycling programs, provide products and services that reduce environmental impacts, and develop environmental technology.

Epson plans to spend and invest 100 billion yen on decarbonization, resource recycling, and environmental technology development over the next ten years. It expects these efforts to enable the company to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the supply chain by more than two million tonnes. Even apart from this 100-billion-yen investment, Epson will concentrate its management resources on developing products and services that reduce the environmental impacts of its customers.

## WEARING OUR HEALTH

Written by Gabriel Pe



### TECHNOLOGY Gaming

Words by Gabriel Pe

## PHASMOPHOBIA

DEVELOPERS



Phasmophobia may be a ghost and ghost hunt simulator, but it's not dead forever. At least not in Phasmophobia: Kinetic Games.

Phasmophobia was all the rage when it was released on Steam last year. This new take on the horror genre has earned it the best of the Game Awards back in 2020 and a nomination as VR Game of the Year at the 2020 Steam Awards. The game also garnered an overwhelming review on Steam.

### Ghost-busting extraordinaire

You play as paranormal investigator exploring different maps for poltergeists. You use different equipment to help you determine what type of ghost is haunting the location. You can also use the game cash for every evidence objective you finish. The cash can be used to buy new equipment and existing ones.

The main goal is to find out what ghost has three distinct pieces of evidence as the ghosts share two types of

March 2021

TAPE A PLAY  
00:00:00



PARADE



**STUDIES SHOW** that smartphones have 2,700x more bacteria than a kitchen cutting board. It's very hard to clean properly given that it's delicate and has a lot of nooks and crannies. LG TONE Free FN7 wireless earbuds solve this and give you peace of mind thanks to its UVnano charging case. Utilizing built-in ultraviolet light, the ultra-charging case keeps listeners' ears cleaner by eliminating 99.9% of bacteria from the non-toxic, hypoallergenic silicone ear gel and inner mesh. The compact charging case provides up to an hour of listening time after only a five-minute charge.

LG TONE Free FN7 ear buds have a new spiral design that maximizes comfort and delivers active noise cancellation at its best with three microphones on each earbud for monitoring and tuning out sounds. Their vertex ribs provide even distribution of pressure, allowing them to adapt to all ear shapes and reduce any extra noise effectively for a more immersive listening experience.

## LG Tone Free FN7

Wireless Earbuds

March 2021

26

Wearable Air Purifier

## LG Puricare Mask & Charging Case

**THE LG PURICARE MASK**, is a wearable air purifier that uses HEPA filters to filter out 99% of harmful particles so you can breathe only clean, fresh air.

Made with medical-grade silicone, it is made of the same materials applied to oxygen respirators at hospitals. The design also makes it possible to wear the mask comfortably for hours on end. It fits and seals to your face to minimize air leakage around the nose and chin, comfortable for everyday wear while maintaining air leakage. A Respiratory Sensor detects the cycle and volume of

the wearer's breath, whereas dual inverter fans have three speed settings that adjust accordingly. The Puricare mask comes with a washable face pad and disposable filters.

The LG Puricare Mask charging case utilizes UVnano technology. This case is designed to clean and protect the wearable air purifier while charging. It uses UV light to eliminate 99.99% of germs in just 30 minutes and remove bacteria from filters up to 99% using dry mode (1 level). It can fully charge the Puricare Mask in 2 hours for up to 8 hours of use.



27

March 2021

### Pandemics

US digital health and fitness bands used data when they were sick where sick people

an increase the huge improvement

much more accurate, and pandemics

March 2021

# YOUR LIFE, UPGRADED

We are more than just tech



# Birch Tree®

## FORTIFIED

## Certified Plastic Neutral

**D**airy brand Birch Tree, manufactured by Century Pacific Food, Inc. (CNPF), one of the Philippines' leading food and beverage companies, was recently recognized as a 'Plastic Neutral Brand' by the Plastic Credit Exchange (PCX), cementing its commitment to reducing plastic pollution.

As a certified plastic neutral brand, Birch Tree has balanced the plastic it uses in its packaging by recovering an equal amount of plastic waste and stopping it from polluting the environment. This will also reduce plastic waste flow into landfills and oceans.

"Environmental stewardship is a top priority for Birch Tree. We know that change takes time, but we are willing to rise to the challenge of making our packaging and processes as environmentally friendly as possible," said Greg Banzon, chief operating officer, CNPF.



The Plastic Neutral Certification involved third-party auditors that allowed PCX to verify Birch Tree's plastic footprint and offsets. This environmental accountability ensures that Birch Tree makes a sustainable impact.

Accounting firm Isla Lipana & Co. verified that Birch Tree's annualized plastic footprint from July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020, has been recovered and processed on behalf of the company. Birch Tree also received Plastic Credits to offset the equivalent volume of plastic waste from January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2020.

Birch Tree's commitment to achieving plastic neutrality led to a partnership with PCX, the world's first global, non-profit, fully integrated plastic offset platform. PCX offers a seamless, traceable, and effective solution to offsetting post-consumer plastics responsibly to ensure they don't wind up in nature. PCX redirects plastic waste to the safest, most environmentally preferred end destination using only processes that comply with international industry best practices.

# Aling Tindera



## ‘Aling Tindera’ Waste-to-Cash Program

Birch Tree also supports PCX’s Aling Tindera Waste-to-Cash program, allowing sari-sari store owners to earn cash from collected post-consumer plastic waste.

The Aling Tindera Waste-to-Cash program also increases income opportunities for sari-sari store owners, most of whom are women. This aligns with Birch Tree’s goal to enhance the lives of Filipino micro-entrepreneurs.

“We have resolved to consider various options that allow us to have an impact now. Through the Aling Tindera Waste-to-Cash program, we not only provide people an avenue to monetize plastic waste but also educate young generations about the benefits of recycling and co-processing,” Banzon said.

“By building a strong network of women micro-entrepreneurs, who can be catalysts for sustainability in their respective communities, we hope to achieve the ultimate goal of having no plastic waste in nature,” he added.



## Working towards a plastic waste-free future

As humanity launches into a collective effort to reduce the devastating impacts caused by plastic pollution, Birch Tree does its part by doing what it can to achieve a waste-free future.

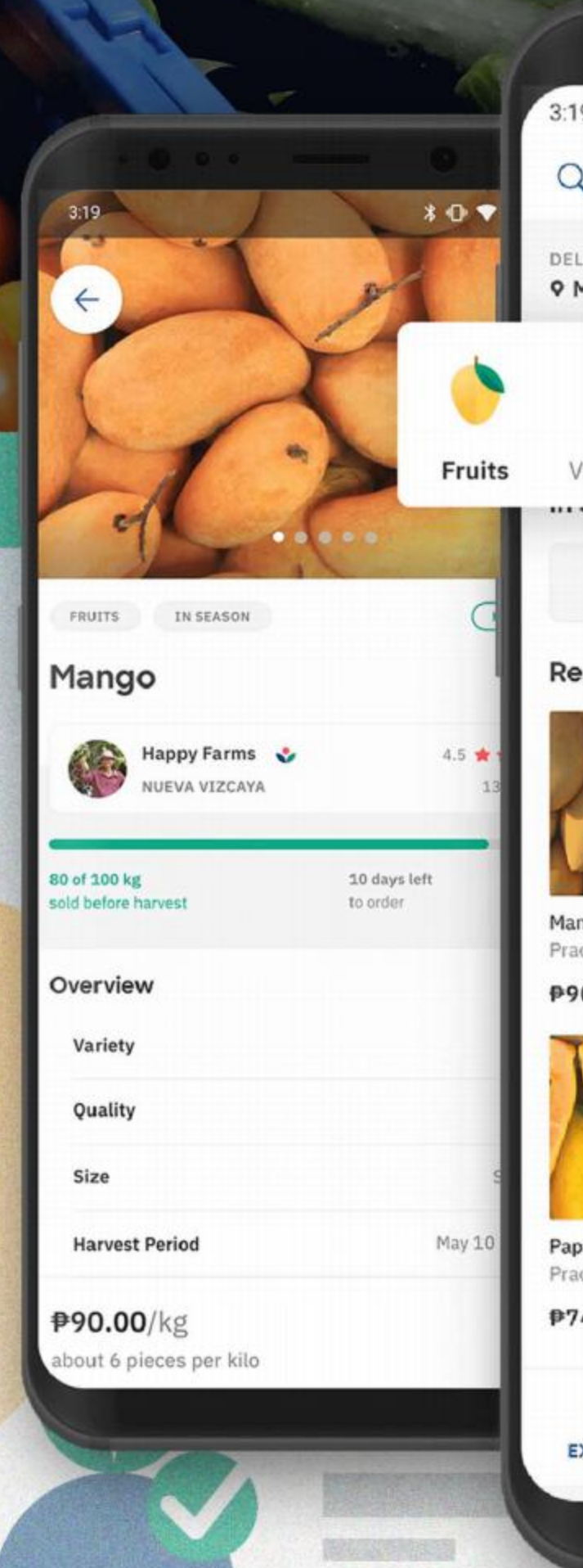
“Globally, 91% of plastic waste goes unrecycled. About 79% of all plastic waste ends up in landfills or nature as litter. Through our partnership with PCX, we are optimistic that we are doing our part to repurpose our plastic wastes while also empowering local communities to help reduce pollution before it can enter the environment,” Banzon said.

# UMÁ

## An agri-trading platform for farmers and entrepreneurs



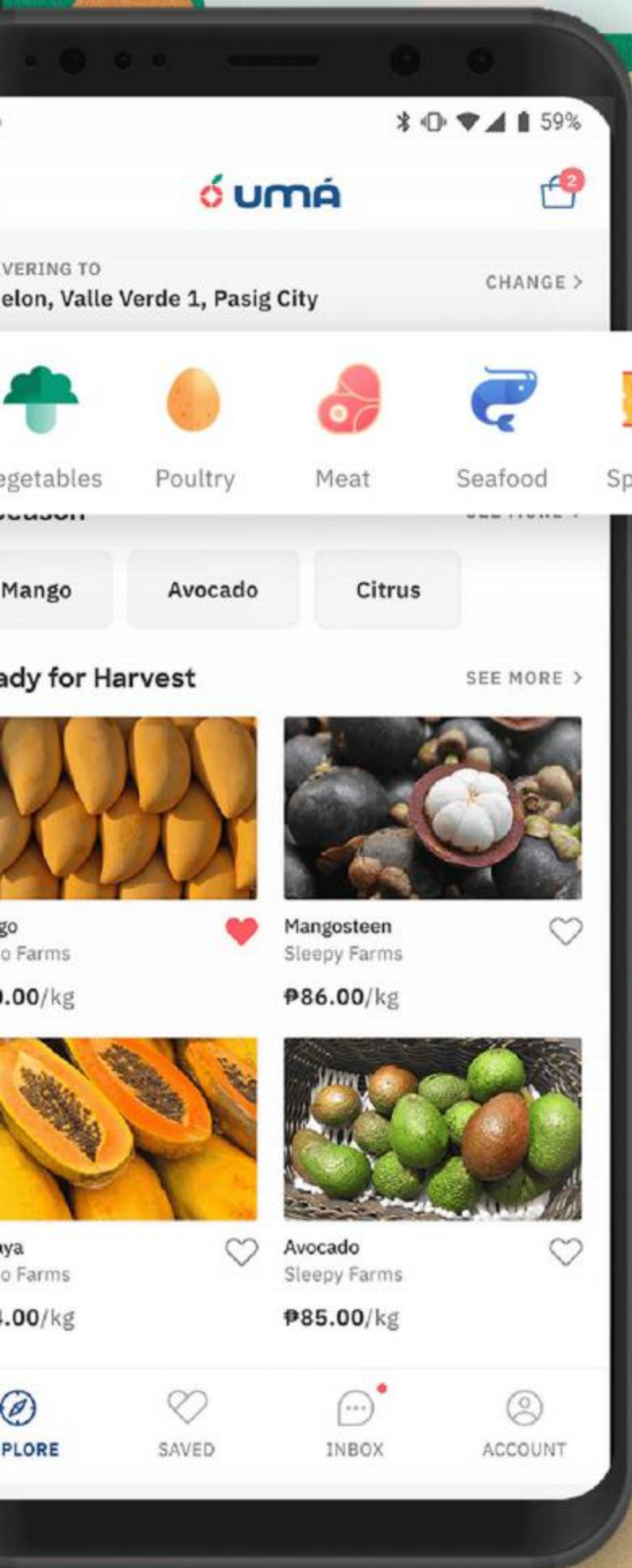
Developed and launched by innovative organization iFarms Inc., the UMÁ app seamlessly bridges the gap between farmers and entrepreneurs. The app is designed to make digital agriculture trading easy, transparent, and more reliable for both farmers and buyers.



# The Story of UMÁ

iFarms Inc. is a homegrown agritech company founded by young professionals who aim to dignify and revolutionize agriculture in the Philippines. In 2020, the organization introduced its flagship service called the UMÁ.

UMÁ, derived from the Bisaya, Hiligaynon, and Bicolano term for farm, is a business-to-business (B2B) data-driven solutions platform that provides buyers with access to a wide range of farm produce, ranging from seasonal fruits and vegetables to seafood and native grains.



## Sold Before Harvest®

UMÁ gives partner-growers the opportunity to market their products, provide all relevant information, input their own competitive prices, and manage delivery schedules. The app also allows businesses to connect directly to the growers to order and arrange deliveries.

“This easy-to-use app is backed with a system that ensures orders are fulfilled from the farm to your doorstep, making the trading experience as seamless as possible,” shares iFarms Inc. founder Jairus Ferrer.

“We’re solving the logistics and accessibility problem that has made moving food from point A to point B incredibly challenging,” he adds. “We want farmers to grow what the market needs at prices they’re willing to buy and for buyers to discover the best quality, reasonably priced goods.”

Sold Before Harvest® is the UMÁ solution to the major agricultural problems of wastage and oversupply. Ordering even before the produce is harvested allows our growers to anticipate logistical and operational activities and ensure the freshness of the produce delivered to businesses.

The UMA app is available for download on the Google Play Store for Android and, soon, on the App Store for iOS.

For more information on the UMÁ, visit the website at <https://uma.ph/>. You may send inquiries to [hello@ifarms.ph](mailto:hello@ifarms.ph) or contact +63 917 187 8862.



# SmileTrain

The first Filipino speech therapy app



For the thousands of babies born with a cleft each year, speech therapy is an essential need. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, has disrupted access to speech therapy services. Smile Train, the world's leading cleft charity, stands by its commitment to continue promoting comprehensive cleft care despite the challenges brought about by the pandemic with the launch of its online speech therapy services.

With telehealth emerging as an important pillar of healthcare delivery in the Philippines, Smile Train Philippines is launching the first Filipino mobile speech application in the country designed for those born with a cleft. The app was developed to help parents, guardians, and children in accessing speech therapy services online. With kid-friendly features and lively graphics, the app leads to a wide array of educational videos and speech therapy sessions, all in Filipino. The app also serves as a platform for more patients and families affected with cleft to connect with healthcare professionals to ensure that they can continue to receive comprehensive cleft care with minimal disruptions.

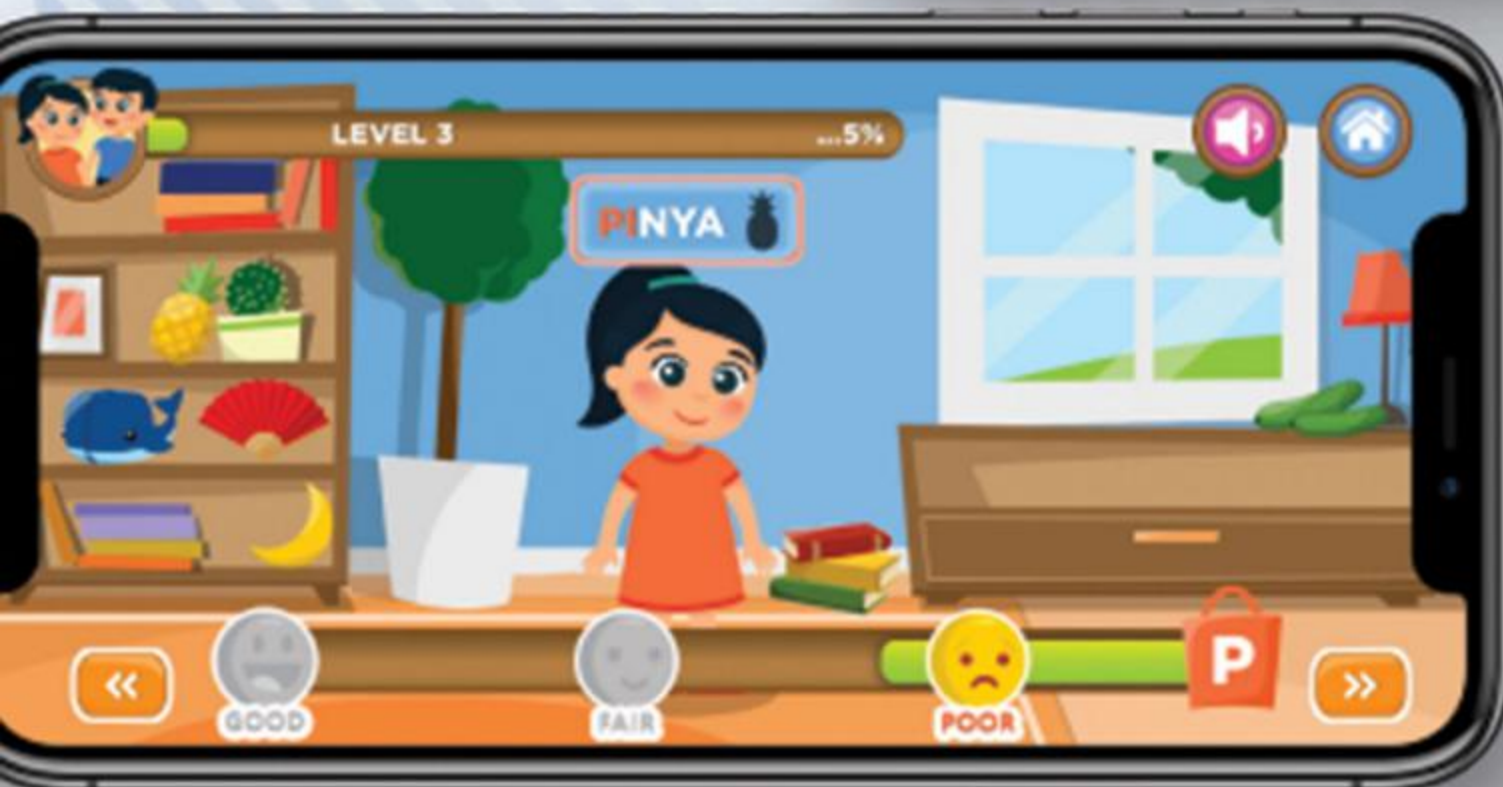
Since the start of the pandemic, Smile Train's speech telehealth program in the Philippines has treated over 200 patients, providing them with more than 1,000 cleft care-related sessions — including speech therapy, nutritional support, breastfeeding guidance for mothers of babies with clefts, pre-surgical consultations, and psychosocial care. Smile Train envisions the app to be more than just a platform for learning, seeing it as a way to bring more smiles to cleft-affected families in the Philippines.

“Technology has allowed us at Smile Train to deliver the speech therapy needs of children with cleft throughout this pandemic. Safety is our foremost priority, and I am glad that this app allows us to safely serve the needs of these kids in the comfort and safety of their own homes,” said Smile Train's South East Asia director Kimmy Flaviano.

The Smile Train app also addresses a glaring gap in reaching kids with a cleft. “With the app, distance is no longer a problem. Kids may start their speech therapy sessions which they otherwise would not have started without the app. Furthermore, the app encourages more Speech Pathologists to partner with Smile Train,” said Veronica Yu, a speech pathologist and the lead content creator of the app. “Partnering with Smile Train is life-changing, and I know that the Smile Train app will give many speech pathologists the fulfillment of knowing that they are making a difference in people's lives,” Yu concluded.

“With or without the pandemic, digitalization of health services is definitely important as it allows patients to access health services in a more cost-effective way,” said Jeo Paz, founder and chief executive officer of Nifty Hero. “This



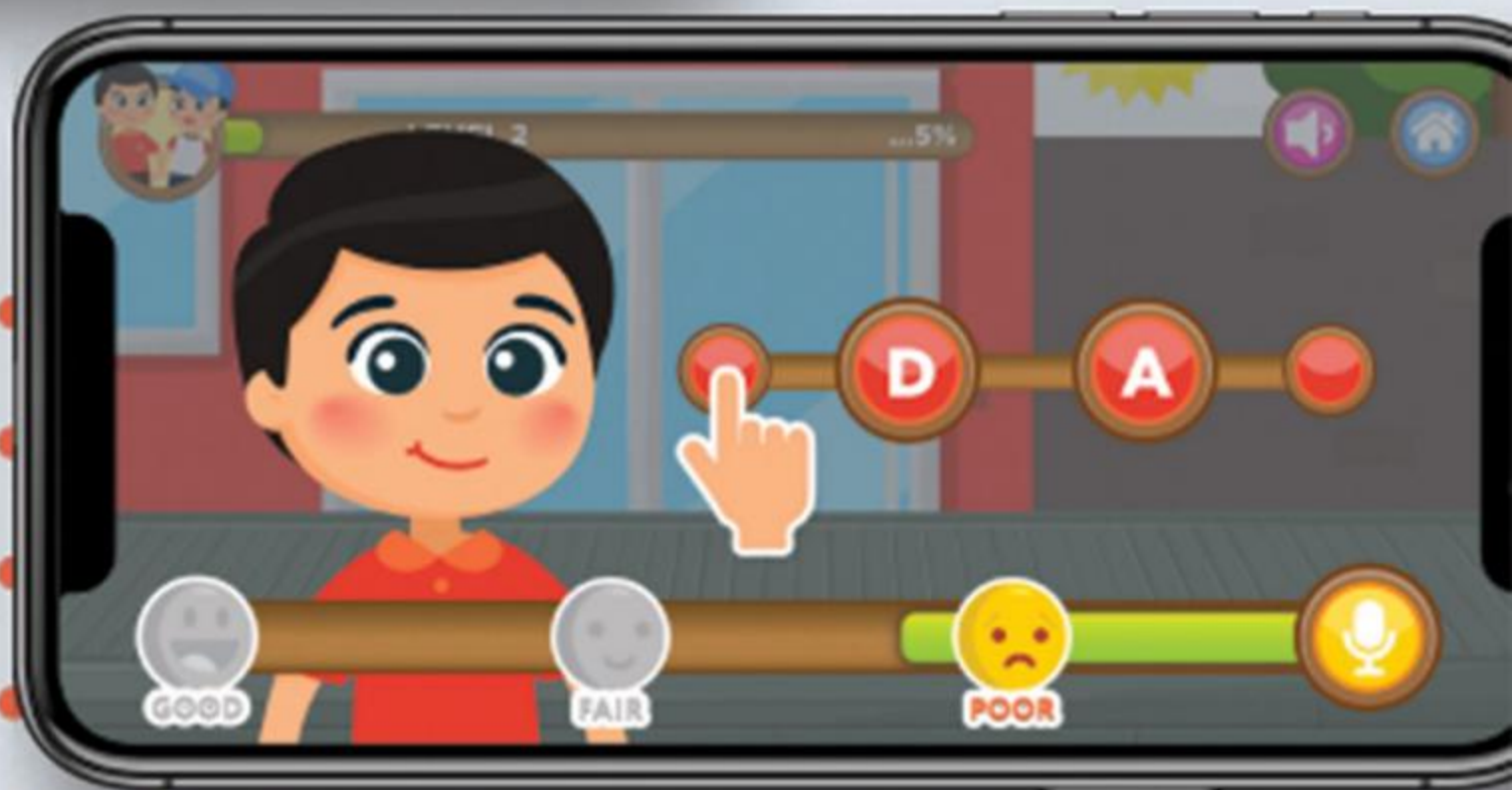


The app is available for download on the App Store and Google Play in April. For more details about the app, visit <http://smiletrainspeechapp.com/>.

For more information about Smile Train Philippines' local efforts and to refer a patient in need, visit [smiletrain.ph/get-help](http://smiletrain.ph/get-help), follow Smile Train Philippines on Twitter and Instagram @SmileTrainPh, and like them on Facebook at @SmileTrainPhilippines.

is precisely what the Smile Train speech app is trying to accomplish, providing hundreds of families with cleft access to speech therapy services at little to no cost at all, wherever they may be.”

Nifty Hero is the developer of the Smile Train app, advocating to help non-profit organizations create sustainable, cost-effective, and value-added health solutions to help organize, automate, and improve services offered.



# ABBOTT COVID-19 FAST, RELIABLE



Efforts to ramp up COVID-19 testing capacity in the Philippines have received fresh impetus, with the Office of the Civil Defense (OCD) procuring and distributing the Abbott Panbio™ COVID-19 Ag Rapid Test Device for the detection of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in people suspected of having COVID-19. The procurement of 500,000 Panbio rapid antigen tests is part of the OCD's COVID-19 response to the pandemic and is in addition to purchases by LGUs (Local Government Units) to meet local testing needs. Forty-five hospitals and LGUs in Metro Manila and nearby provinces recently received these tests procured by the OCD.

Along with the newly introduced lab-based SARS-CoV-2 IgG II (Immunoglobulin G) quantitative antibody test for helping measure and understand an individual's immune response, Abbott's COVID-19 tests offer a range of solutions to serve evolving testing needs in the country.

Abbott's COVID-19 test portfolio helps healthcare professionals detect the virus at all stages of its life cycle, with tests performed in the lab, as well as rapid tests done at the point of care. As the country strengthens testing efforts, the availability of these two testing technologies provides reliable testing for active infections, aids in contact tracing, and provides insights about how people react to COVID-19 infection and vaccination by measuring the body's immune response.

Vince Dizon, Deputy Chief Implementer of the National Action Plan Against COVID-19, said: "The Abbott Panbio antigen test, which has received WHO (World Health Organisation) Emergency Use Listing, will greatly help us quickly detect positive cases within minutes and allow for faster tracing and isolation as we battle this wave of infections."

Over the coming months, Abbott expects to provide millions of COVID-19 tests to the Philippines. In 2020, Abbott shipped 400 million COVID-19 tests worldwide.

# COVID-19 TESTS: EASY, CONVENIENT

## QUICK, RELIABLE COVID-19 TESTS WITH PATIENT-FRIENDLY NASAL SWAB

The Panbio COVID-19 Ag Rapid Test Device is a lateral flow assay for the rapid, qualitative detection of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The test is a reliable, affordable, and scalable option for large-scale testing in various community settings. Panbio COVID-19 Ag is CE-Marked and has received WHO Emergency Use Listing (EUL).

Individuals have the option of a nasal swab for the collection of specimens, making the process less invasive and more convenient. The test — which is authorized for use by healthcare professionals — requires no instrumentation and provides results as early as 15 minutes. Negative results do not preclude COVID-19 infection and cannot be used as the sole basis for treatment or other management decisions.

The ongoing fight against COVID-19 in the country calls for an efficient diagnostic tool that can enable decentralized testing. Abbott's fast, user-friendly Panbio COVID-19 Ag test can significantly improve efforts to control the transmission of COVID-19 in the Philippines.

"Our country needs innovative weapons to control this latest surge in COVID-19 infections — a rapid, reliable, and easy-to-administer COVID-19 test that can be scaled is a key tool for expanding testing," said UP-Philippine General Hospital Medical Research laboratory chief Dr. Januario Veloso. "Given the urgency, the need for short turnaround times and opportunities for expanding decentralized testing, tests such as the Panbio rapid antigen tests can strengthen public health efforts to control the transmission of the coronavirus."

Results from a clinical study by Abbott of 508 samples demonstrated that Panbio COVID-19 Ag with a nasal swab has a 98.1% sensitivity and 99.8% specificity on people who were suspected of exposure to COVID-19 or had symptoms in the last seven days.

"Abbott is committed to bringing a range of reliable and convenient COVID-19 tests to the Philippines, especially the Greater Manila Area, as quickly as possible," said Sanjeev Johar, divisional vice president, Abbott's rapid diagnostics business in Asia Pacific. "Our pioneering technologies provide fast, accurate point-of-care COVID-19 testing and help scale diagnostic capability, bringing it closer to millions of Filipinos."

## EVALUATING IMMUNE RESPONSE WITH ABBOTT'S IGG SEROLOGY TESTING

As the Philippines joins many other countries worldwide in the authorization and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, it is important for healthcare professionals and researchers to assess how individuals and communities are responding to vaccination. This is where Abbott's quantitative SARS-CoV-2 IgG II antibody test may help determine and monitor a person's immune response to vaccines, including research to determine how long a response may last.

Abbott's scientists designed the quantitative IgG II test to detect the spike protein of the SARS-CoV-2, which plays an important part in how the virus enters the cells. As the body develops an immune response, antibodies develop and bind to the spike portion of the virus to block the protein and ultimately prevent infection. Several vaccines are designed with the spike protein to trigger that same immune response. Research has also shown a correlation between rising IgG levels that target the spike protein, such as those in Abbott's quantitative test, and rising levels of neutralizing antibodies, or the specific antibodies that block infections.



A study to determine the clinical performance of Abbott's SARS-CoV-2 IgG II Quant test on its Alinity i instrument found it had 99.60% specificity (ability to exclude false positives) and 99.35% sensitivity (ability to exclude false negatives) in patients tested 15 days or more after symptoms began.

"As COVID-19 vaccination becomes more widespread, Filipinos may need reassurance that the vaccine is generating an immune response, and many would want to understand how

long the immune response lasts. Tests such as the IgG II quantitative assay may help provide more insight to doctors and scientists," said Prof Dr. Januario Veloso.

Delivering reliable results quickly, Abbott's COVID-19 testing options in the Philippines demonstrate high specificity and sensitivity. They can be used by healthcare professionals in various settings, helping curb infection surges, along with providing greater knowledge about the coronavirus as it continues to evolve.

## ABBOTT'S DIAGNOSTICS LEADERSHIP

Abbott has long been a global leader in infectious disease testing, including the development of the first HIV test. The company created a Global Surveillance Program 25 years ago to monitor HIV and hepatitis viruses and identify mutations to ensure the company's tests remain up to date. Abbott also has a long-standing discovery program that identifies new or unknown pathogens and develops tests to address these new threats.

# CALL FOR HELP!

HOPELINE, HEALTHNOW, BANTAY BATA #163

**T**o ensure that Filipinos are able to cope with mental and physical health concerns brought about by the pandemic, Globe encourages the public to access its “lifelines” such as Hopeline to receive FREE 24/7 mental health support, HealthNow to access health services, and Bantay Bata #163 to report domestic and child abuse.

Hopeline is a round-the-clock suicide prevention and crisis support desk of Natasha Goulbourn Foundation (NGF) created in 2012 with Globe providing the necessary technology for its operations. Since then, the hotline has received over 43,000 calls mostly related to depression, suicidal thoughts, and relationship problems in the last 2 years

Those who are in emotional crisis and in need of immediate assistance may contact the hotline through 2919 (toll-free for all Globe and TM subscribers), (02) 804-HOPE (4673), or 0917 558 HOPE (4673).

“The uncertainties that surround us are a cause for anxiety and concern for many which could take its toll on our mental well-being. We intend for Hopeline to serve as a lifeline to those in need of support, and eventually help ease their burden,” said Yoly Crisanto, Globe chief sustainability officer and SVP for corporate communications.

The Department of Health (DOH) reported almost 600 suicide-related calls during the months of January and February 2021 alone. The National Center For Mental Health (NCMH) hotline also receives an average of 1,002

monthly calls, with suicide calls accounting for 289 each month.

These staggering figures have given rise to the importance of mental health support platforms that people can easily access. Thus, NGF also partnered with telehealth service integrator HealthNow to give the public more ways to reach the hotline. With the partnership, Hopeline can now be accessed in the HealthNow app’s Urgent Help button which can be found on the app’s welcome page.

“Hopeline Philippines is here to help those with depression and those going through emotional crises especially now during these trying times. It just takes one call to save a life to suicide. One line, one call, one life. Be one with us,” said Jean Goulbourn, president and founder of Natasha Goulbourn Foundation

HealthNow is a joint undertaking of 917Ventures and AC Health. It is a mobile app that helps patients conveniently consult with a doctor, buy medicine for delivery, and schedule clinic appointments without leaving their homes. The app may be downloaded from Play Store for Android and App Store for iOS.

Globe likewise continues to support the ABS-CBN Foundation, Inc.’s Bantay Bata #163 Helpline, which is free for all Globe and TM mobile phone users. It allows anyone to report child abuse especially during this period when children are at home most of the time. To call, simply dial #163.

Globe strongly supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly UN SDG No. 9 which highlights the roles of infrastructure and



innovation as crucial drivers of economic growth and development. Globe is committed to upholding the 10 United Nations Global Compact principles and 10 UN SDGs.

To know more about Globe’s sustainability efforts, visit <https://www.globe.com.ph/about-us/sustainability.html#gref>

# Mabuhay ang LOKAL



he Philippine Cable and Telecommunications Association, Inc. (PCTA), the umbrella organization of cable television operators in the Philippines, launches *Mabuhay Ang Lokal*, a campaign that aims to celebrate the stories of local individuals, groups, and cultures. The campaign will capture meaningful stories that represent the campaign's major themes, namely: *Lokaltura*, *Lokalert*, and *Kwentong Lokal*.

*Lokaltura* will capture the vibrant culture of local communities, underlining how PCTA member operators take part in keeping local traditions, flavors, and activities alive.

*Lokalert* will highlight programs and initiatives that help communities stay informed with urgent news and announcements to keep people updated and safe when they need it the most.

*Kwentong Lokal* will put the spotlight on different individuals or groups who have special talents and stories to share. Through *Mabuhay Ang Lokal*, cable TV subscribers are given the opportunity to be active members of their communities by showcasing and sharing their own stories.



"PCTA and our member operators have always believed that no community must be left behind—even the farthest, most remote ones. Equipped with PCTA's core competencies, values, and ideas, we have tirelessly worked to come up and run campaigns and initiatives to ensure that every community is served, heard, and celebrated," Joel Dabao, president of PCTA said.

Together, the PCTA member-cable operators are serving 75% of the total cable TV subscribers in the Philippines. "PCTA works toward serving and enriching the lives of our communities. The first letter in CATV means community. We are strong because of our communities, and we want

to banner their stories for the whole country to watch." Dabao said. "We're firm believers that our kababayans have a story to share, and we want to help showcase local content. This is what will differentiate us as an organization. Through this, we hope to create a ripple effect to encourage and inspire more Filipinos in different parts of our country," he added.

More than just creating and gathering content, *Mabuhay Ang Lokal* sets its sight on strengthening the presence of PCTA member operators in their respective locales and championing the local communities that they serve and keep alive through their operations and initiatives.

“We have and we will continue to play an active, proactive, and productive role in the lives of the communities we serve. Individually, we are local operators whose stories are worth sharing. Collectively, these stories help strengthen our organization’s importance and value to our nation’s narrative and identity most especially in this day and age. Together we will make sure they are known and heard through us,” said Dabao.

Here’s how to participate:

- Simply film a one-minute video as inspired by the *Mabuhay ang Lokal* themes
- You can be creative by editing your videos prior to submitting to PCTA.
- You may send your entries to [secretary@pcta.org.ph](mailto:secretary@pcta.org.ph), [membership@pcta.org.ph](mailto:membership@pcta.org.ph)

[pcta.org.ph](http://pcta.org.ph), or [secretariat@pcta.org.ph](mailto:secretariat@pcta.org.ph).

- PCTA will review your entries and get back to you regarding its airing or distribution

Chosen entries will be highlighted and featured in local community channels and all PCTA digital assets to celebrate local stories. After a year of gathering

content, the program will culminate with *The Best of Mabuhay ang Lokal Stories* to showcase the most inspiring and engaging pieces of content.

Do you have a *Mabuhay ang Lokal* story you want to share? Visit [www.pcta.org.ph](http://www.pcta.org.ph) or follow PCTA on Facebook for more information.



**“We have and we will continue to play an active, proactive, and productive role in the lives of the communities we serve. Individually, we are local operators whose stories are worth sharing.”**

# WHICH TYPE OF **NBA FAN** ARE YOU?



The second half of the NBA season is in full swing, which has teams positioning themselves for the postseason and the Play-In Tournament. With the NBA Playoffs still over a month away, Filipino fans are already gearing up for the stretch run. Whether you consider yourself a hardcore or casual follower, there is a specific NBA fan that reflects your current fandom for the league. Read on to find out what type of Filipino NBA fan you are.



## THE CASUAL FAN

The Casual Fan is the most common fan type known for their general awareness of mainstream teams and players. These individuals watch a few games every now and then on TV and enjoy viewing game highlights. NBA League Pass allows them to catch up on NBA games, among other content on-demand.



The Team Die-hard is loyal to one team and one team alone. They pride themselves on being a team historian, showing a great familiarity with their favorite team's players, coaches, achievements, and traditions.

## THE TEAM DIE-HARD



## THE BANDWAGON FAN

What sets this fan apart from hardcore followers is their association with the current favorites — whichever team or player on any given day. The Bandwagon Fan is never attached and always searching for the latest hot item, and NBA League Pass keeps them in the know 24/7.



## THE NBA GEEK

NBA Geeks are well versed with the league, accumulating a wealth of knowledge from tracking players, from NBA All-Stars to rising prospects, and studying team trends for several years. League Pass subscription is an essential tool for this avid fan as he stays connected to the latest news and highlights across the NBA.



## THE GAMER

Having NBA 2K21 is a must for the Gamer, who constantly updates their team with the latest rosters in the NBA. In addition, this fan boasts an in-depth knowledge of key NBA players, which is critical for their fantasy basketball team to be competitive throughout the season. NBA League Pass offers an advantage to gaming fans alike as they stay updated with the latest news on players, scores, standings, and stats.



Basketball fans are different in their own ways, but one thing in common: having NBA League Pass to watch their favorite teams and players live and on-demand. The great advantage of NBA fans who are also PLDT Home Fibr subscribers is having access to NBA League Pass packages for as low as PHP 85 per month, which can be simply added on top of their monthly internet subscription.

For more information on NBA League Pass offerings, visit [www.pldthome.com/nbaleaguepass](http://www.pldthome.com/nbaleaguepass).

PropertyGuru  
ASIA  
PROPERTY  
AWARDS

# CALL FOR ENTRIES: PROPERTYGURU PH AWARDS



Organizers of the 9th Annual PropertyGuru Philippines Property Awards, presented in 2021 by platinum sponsor Kohler and gold sponsor Boysen, have begun the search for the best developers and projects in the archipelago.

Developers across the islands are now enjoined to showcase their latest developments, achievements, and innovations in the latest Philippine

edition of the PropertyGuru Asia Property Awards series, the widely respected and trusted regional platform celebrated for upholding the real estate industry's "Gold Standard".

Open categories for the 2021 PropertyGuru Philippines Property Awards include accolades for the best Developer, Development, and Design, along with the special recognition for Public Facility. New categories include the titles of Best Developer (Luzon),

Best Developer (Mindanao), and Best Developer (Visayas), recognizing the most exemplary companies in the island groups.

The latest edition of the PropertyGuru Philippines Property Awards will also have new accolades for developers with the finest collection of investment assets. They include the titles of Best Office Portfolio, Best Industrial Portfolio, Best Hospitality Portfolio, and Best Retail Portfolio.



KOHLER presents  
PropertyGuru  
**PHILIPPINES  
PROPERTY  
AWARDS**

**Virtual Media Roundtable**

23 March 2021  
14.00 (GMT+8)

**SPEAKER LINEUP**



**JULES  
KAY**

Managing Director,  
PropertyGuru Asia  
Property Awards &  
Events

Organiser



**CHRISTOPHE  
VICIC**

Country Head,  
Jones Lang LaSalle  
Philippines, Inc.

Chairperson of  
Judges Panel



**CYNDY  
TAN JARABATA**

President, TAJARA  
Leisure & Hospitality  
Group Inc.

Founding Chairperson  
& Longest-running  
Judge, PropertyGuru  
Philippines Property  
Awards



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The country's winning and highly commended developers and projects will be revealed on Thursday, 11 November 2021, in an inclusive virtual gala dinner and awards presentation that will stream live on [AsiaPropertyAwards.com/tv-podcast](https://AsiaPropertyAwards.com/tv-podcast) and the official channels on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube.

**Key dates for the 2021 edition:**  
01 January 2021 – Entries Open  
20 August 2021 – Entries Close  
28 September 2021 – Final Judging

11 November 2021 – Virtual Gala Dinner and Awards Ceremony (Philippines Edition)

9 December 2021 – Regional Grand Final Gala Event in Bangkok, Thailand

Nominations from the public and official entries from eligible companies and projects are currently being accepted on [AsiaPropertyAwards.com/nominations](https://AsiaPropertyAwards.com/nominations).

In 2020, the PropertyGuru Asia Property Awards online gala series, which included the first virtual gala

edition of the PropertyGuru Philippines Property Awards, was viewed more than 516,000 times and reached viewers and property investors in more than 75 countries worldwide. This year, highlights of the Philippines gala event will air on the History Channel, the official cable TV partner of the PropertyGuru Asia Property Awards, reaching even more international audiences.

**BEST IN ASIA**

Winners of the main categories will have a chance to compete at the 16th PropertyGuru Asia Property Awards Grand Final, which will elevate the region's most outstanding developers and projects to the titles of Best in Asia. The 16th PropertyGuru Asia Property Awards Grand Final will be hosted in Bangkok, Thailand, on 9 December and preceded by the 2021 edition





of the PropertyGuru Asia Real Estate Summit, the tech and thought leadership platform of the PropertyGuru Group.

Agriya by Damosa Land, Inc. clinched the top honor of Best Residential Green Development (Asia) last year at the 15th PropertyGuru Asia Property Awards Grand Final.

Joining the virtual media roundtable on 23 March to announce the new edition were Jules Kay, managing director of PropertyGuru Asia Property Awards and Events; Christophe Vicic, PropertyGuru

**Developers across the islands are now enjoined to showcase their latest developments, achievements, and innovations in the latest Philippine edition of the PropertyGuru Asia Property Awards series, the widely respected and trusted regional platform celebrated for upholding the real estate industry's "Gold Standard".**





Philippines Property Awards incumbent chairperson, and country head of Jones Lang LaSalle Philippines, Inc.; and Cyndy Tan Jarabata, president of TAJARA Leisure & Hospitality Group Inc., who is also the founding chairperson of the Philippines Property Awards.

The speakers discussed the Awards program's longevity, technological growth, and regional aspect. Also on the panel were Ofelia Barroga, senior partner of HLB Philippines, the official supervisor of the Awards, who reiterated the credibility, fairness, and transparency of the program. Leo

Leong, general manager of Kohler Kitchen & Bath for South and North-East Asia, also participated in the roundtable to highlight the strong partnership between global brand Kohler and the PropertyGuru Asia Property Awards.

### ECONOMIC HEALTH

The roundtable additionally touched on the program's resilience amid Covid-19 restrictions. Set to be safely conducted as a virtual gala event and ceremony, the PropertyGuru Philippines Property Awards will observe proper protocols in accordance with health and safety standards in the Philippines.

Speakers at the roundtable also touched on the economic health of the Philippines: sharing insights on residential, commercial, and industrial demand throughout the islands; recommendations for the most viable real estate locations and asset segments; and predictions for buyers, renters, and investors in the wake of the pandemic.

For more information, email [awards@propertyguru.com](mailto:awards@propertyguru.com) or visit the official website [AsiaPropertyAwards.com](http://AsiaPropertyAwards.com)





# SMART BUILDING TECHNOLOGY IN THE NEW NORMAL



Managing any property or development is challenging, but the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic made it next to impossible without the help of technology.

According to Joseph Tay, managing director of Proptech company Inventi, virtually every building in the Philippines has incorporated technology in some form as a response to the pandemic, but the most successful in the new normal have been those that have made technology an indispensable part of their property management strategy.

Inventi pioneered smart buildings in the Philippines with Smart Building Solutions (SBS), the company's flagship property management software. Co-Founder & CTO Eds Encarnacion said that properties that have fared well in the pandemic include some of the earliest adopters of SBS,



Stop rummaging through physical files. Store all your important documents & contracts in one place.

inventi

implemented SBS prior to the pandemic so that when lockdown began, facilities staff were able to continue to monitor and maintain the areas across their campuses despite a skeletal workforce.

Another immediate benefit that Inveni's customers have noticed is improved cost management and staff productivity. "What we like about SBS is that we can pull up the maintenance history of any piece of equipment or facility and make informed decisions that can avoid costly repairs or replacements. It has also helped ensure that our staff is accountable for the work that they do because their productivity is logged in the system" says Francis Wee, CEO of W Group, which has implemented Inveni SBS into its six office buildings in Bonifacio Global City.

For building tenants, the highlights have been in enhanced convenience and safety. "With SBS, our tenants

love the ease with which they can file service requests, gate passes, and amenities reservations from their mobile device without having to visit an office or manually fill up a form", said Rolph Mariano, Concierge Department Manager at Arthaland.

Beyond software, one thing that sets Inveni SBS apart is its integration with IoT (Internet of Things) devices for buildings such as occupancy counters, thermal cameras, and indoor air quality monitors. Encarnacion explained that SBS can collect and process that data to notify staff of potentially unsafe events such as crowding or declining air quality so that teams can act quickly to solve a potential problem. This has been particularly useful for Inveni's multi-branch retail & F&B clients, saving them the cost of damage control such as closing down an entire store or outlet.

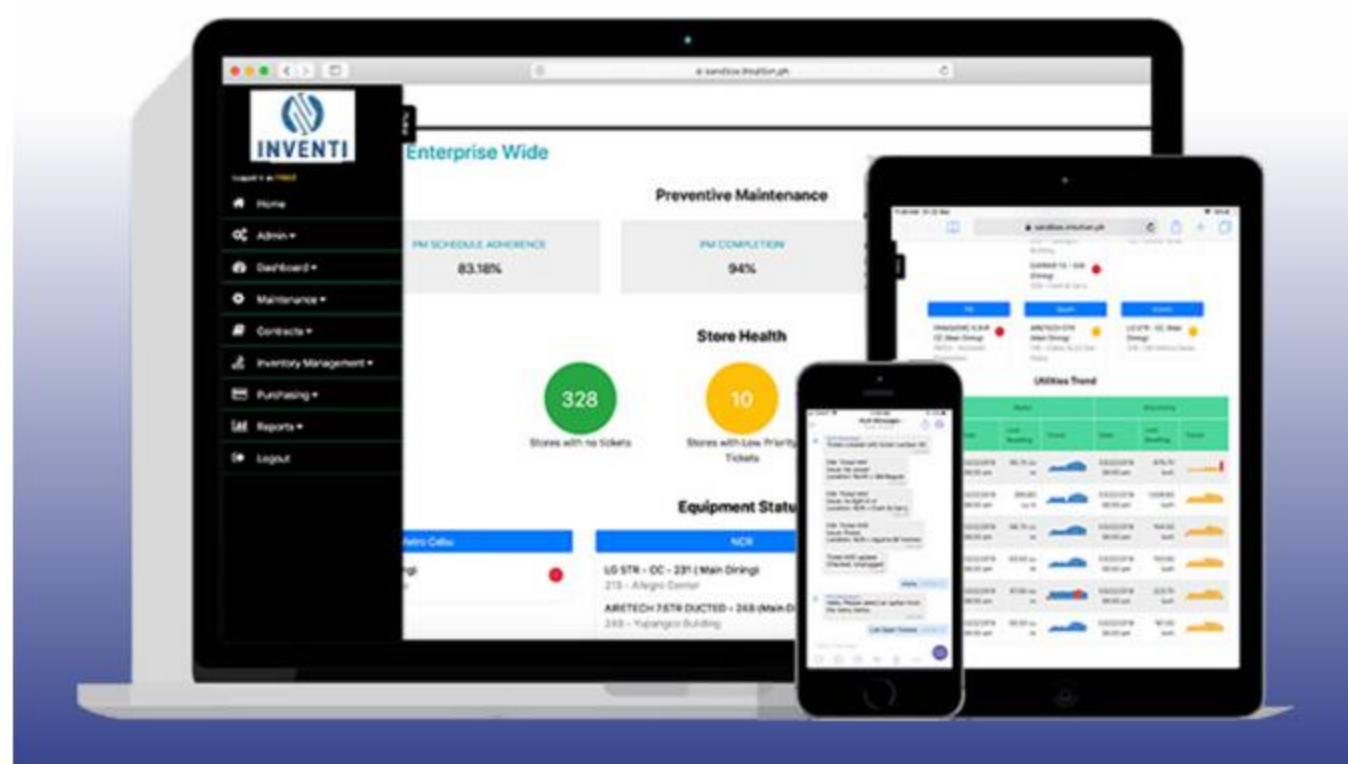
Although still a nascent concept in the Philippines, smart buildings and the software solutions that enable them are catching on. To date, Inveni SBS has been implemented in almost 100 properties nationwide, in large part due to the push to digitize necessitated by the pandemic.

properties that include office buildings, residential condominiums, retail stores, and even school campuses.

Encarnacion mentioned that one of Inveni's first clients was a leading private school that needed a way to easily manage two sprawling campuses. Fortunately, the school

"Whether through a simple temperature scanner or QR code, the Covid-19 pandemic was most properties' first foray into using smart building technology to solve a problem," says Inveni managing director Joseph Tay. "In the years that follow, property managers will be searching for new ways to address their challenges with technology and Inveni will be at the forefront of these innovations."

To find out more about Inveni's property management solutions, visit [www.inveni.ph](http://www.inveni.ph), email [info@inveni.ph](mailto:info@inveni.ph), or call +639952537031.



# ExpreSSS e-Learning Portal



The Social Security System (SSS) now offers an online learning platform to all members, employers, and other stakeholders to learn about the benefits and services of the pension fund. The ExpreSSS e-Learning (ExSSSeL) Portal, which SSS launched in November 2020, represents a milestone in the pension fund's digital transformation efforts.

"The ExSSSeL will allow any participants to learn SSS programs and updates for free at the comfort and safety of their homes," SSS

president and Chief Executive Officer Aurora Ignacio said.

"We realized that online services and transactions are now part of the New Normal as a result of the pandemic. We find ExSSSeL more effective in reaching out to more members across the country and keep them updated on the latest developments in our benefit programs and services since existing community quarantine measures restrict us from conducting face-to-face learning sessions in various offices, companies, and other organizations. As of April 27, 2021,

we have already recorded a total of 71,491 visitors to the said portal," Ignacio explained.

Through the ExSSSeL Portal, SSS members and interested individuals can learn about the different policies, programs, and updates without the need to gather in a single venue for a training session. They can choose among the five training modules available in the learning portal, namely: Module 1 on sickness benefit, Module 2 on maternity benefit, Module 3 on unemployment benefit, Module 4 on disability benefit, and Module 5 on salary loan.





**“We encourage members and interested individuals to use the ExSSSeL Portal as it will help them expand their knowledge about SSS.”**

***Aurora Ignacio***



As part of their learning process, SSS will be issuing e-certificates to participants upon completion of any of the modules, if they obtain a passing rate of at least 80% in the post-examination conducted at the end of each module.

Interested individuals can access the ExSSSeL Portal homepage using this link [https://bit.ly/ExSSSeL\\_Portal](https://bit.ly/ExSSSeL_Portal) and select their preferred topic among the five modules. Once they chose a module, a registration form via Google Form will appear. Participants need to fill up the registration form to start their selected module. The participant's complete name, valid e-mail address, company name, and the nearest SSS branch or their servicing branch should also be provided. Participating employers should indicate the number of employees represented and may also register in multiple modules.

Participants can study the module at their own pace as access to the said portal is available 24/7. Members may also open multiple modules simultaneously.

“At the end of each module, the participant will find a link for post-module examination. It will help them gauge how much they learned. If

they failed the test, we advise them to restudy the module and retake the said exam,” Ignacio said.

For participants who obtained a passing rate, SSS will send an e-certificate to their registered e-mail addresses within seven working days.

From November 28, 2020, to April 15, 2021, a total of 23,738 participants have already viewed the five modules in the ExSSSeL Portal. Nearly 60% or 14,231 of the total participants have completed at least one module and took the post-examination. Ignacio said about 45% or 6,331 of the total participants who took the post-module test received a passing rating and received their e-certificates.

“We encourage members and interested individuals to use the ExSSSeL Portal as it will help them expand their knowledge about SSS,” Ignacio pointed out.

For more information, follow the SSS social media accounts on Facebook and YouTube at Philippine Social Security System, Instagram @mysssph, Twitter @PHLSSS, or join its Viber Community at MYSSSPH Updates.



# CONVERGE ICT DELIVERS MOST CONSISTENT FIXED INTERNET IN 5 REGIONS, ACCORDING TO OOKLA



## The Most Consistent Fixed Internet!

Results are for the following regions:

Metro Manila, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Ilocos and CAR

**MOST CONSISTENT PERFORMANCE**

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CONVERGEICT.COM

Ookla, the worldwide leader in internet testing and analysis, has recently verified that Converge ICT Solutions Inc. offers the most consistent fixed internet performance in the following regions: Metro Manila, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Ilocos, and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) — for the first quarter of 2021.

Converge's outstanding network performance has been attributed mainly to the consistent performance that customers experienced in their standard plans. Ookla Speedtest Intelligence data for Q1 2021 shows the average download speeds of Converge is at 42.93 Mbps, which is representative of actual plans subscribed to by its subscribers.

“Our network performance in the first quarter reflects our focus in providing reliable high-speed internet services to our customers in their standard packages, which subscribers of other providers only enjoy on a promotional basis via their speed boosts. Aside from performance, we work hard to provide a consistent online experience. What good is being the fastest if you only do it in spurts? Service should be at a high level all the time,” Converge CEO Dennis Anthony Uy said.

“We've always had our customers' needs in mind. From our free speed increase to all plans late last year to introducing new products like the Converge FiberX Time of Day, we are all about better experiences for our subscribers,” he added.

Such a commitment to deliver better experiences for its customers underpinned the company's rapid growth in recent years. Converge has been recently named the third fastest-growing Filipino company in the inaugural *Philippines' Growth Champions 2021* reported by global market research firm Statista together with international publications Financial Times and Nikkei Asia, and the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

“We will continue to work hard and ensure that we are able to uplift the Filipino quality of life through our fiber technology. We will continue to serve the connectivity needs of our people, especially during these trying times,” Uy pointed out.

# MICHAEL BREEN APPOINTED AS FORD PH MANAGING DIRECTOR

Ford Motor Company has announced the appointment of Michael 'Mike' Breen as managing director, Ford Philippines, effective June 1, 2021. Breen is currently managing director, Ford Asia Pacific Direct Markets (APDM).

Breen will relocate to Manila and will report directly to Yukontorn 'Vickie' Wisadkosin, president, Ford ASEAN.

In his new role, Breen will be responsible for continuing to drive Ford's momentum in the Philippines, including sustaining the success of its vehicle lineup and further enhancing the ownership and aftersales experience for Ford customers.

"Mike brings with him a wealth of experience gained from close to three decades of working in Ford markets all over the world. As APDM country lead complemented by his extensive expertise in dealer relations, marketing, and sales operations, I am confident that Mike's leadership in the Philippines, together with our dealer partners, will help us improve customer experience to further grow the Ford brand in the market," said Wisadkosin.

In his present role which he assumed in 2019, Breen leads a team that supports distributors across 25 countries working around various product requirements and customer engagement initiatives. Under his leadership as managing director, he supported distributors to grow Ford's presence in selected markets by introducing new products which led to a 15 percent increase in volume and a 5.6 points improvement in market share.

He joined Ford in 1993 as a customer service representative in Ford North America, climbing up the ranks while performing various marketing and sales roles. As Brand Content and Alliance Manager, Breen led the launch and execution of a groundbreaking partnership with Home Shopping Network which helped increase leads and sales as well as improved overall perception of the Ford brand.

In 2016, he was appointed Truck and SUV Launch Manager in Ford Asia

Pacific based in Shanghai, China where he facilitated the integration among teams in Marketing Communications, Media Communications, Truck, and various Asia Pacific markets to support the launch of the Ranger Raptor in 2018. In 2018, he moved to Bangkok, Thailand as Marketing Communications Launch Manager, Ford Asia Pacific Operations.

Breen earned a Bachelor's degree in Business Communications from Oakland University in 1991.



# LG OPENS SMART LAUNDRY LOUNGE



gadgets magazine.com.ph

Get all of your laundry done with just the push of a button. LG Philippines recently inaugurated the first-ever Smart Laundry Lounge outside of Korea. Located in FastWash Bocobo 1000 J. Bocobo St., Ermita, Manila, the Smart Laundry Lounge lets you streamline the laundry process for both business owners and customers.

LG Smart Laundry Lounge makes the whole laundromat experience safer and intuitive thanks to the use of the LG Laundry Lounge App. For business owners, you can monitor revenue, set up new machines, manage error messages, and get alerts when there is a problem in the laundromat. For customers, you can select cycles, manage the laundry, and create payments. You can even be notified when machines are available, so there is no need to wait long in line. Each washing machine also incorporates

hygiene care to ensure safety. The tub of the machine is clean and safe before, during, and after every use.

LG Philippines managing director Sungjae Kim noted during the launch: “We are excited with the opening of the Philippines’ first-ever Smart Laundry Lounge. We envision the concept to be an attractive one for budding businessmen, and for

consumers as well. We want people to be able to experience our smart solutions both in and outside their homes.”

Want to see how the country’s first Smart Laundry Lounge looks like? You can catch a virtual tour of the smart laundry lounge on the official LG Commercial Laundry PH Facebook page.



# SMART PARTNERS WITH MPTC FOR TOLL TOP-UP VIA MOBILE LOAD

Smart, TNT subscribers can now reload their Easytrip RFIP account with a simple text message

As tollways switch to a cashless system for faster, safer, and more convenient transactions on the road, leading mobile services provider Smart Communications, Inc. (Smart) has partnered with Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation (MPTC), the country's largest toll road developer and operator, to introduce a much simpler and easier way of reloading the Easytrip RFID using the country's first toll top-up via mobile load service.

The new service enables Smart and TNT customers to conveniently reload their Easytrip RFID accounts anytime and anywhere just by sending a text message. To reload, subscribers simply have to key in **EASY[DENOM]<SPACE>[12-DIGIT RFID ACCOUNT NUMBER] and send to 3279.**

Customers may load in denominations of PHP 100, PHP 300, PHP 500, or PHP 1000, and the amount will be deducted from their prepaid airtime balance if they are a Smart Prepaid or TNT subscriber, or charged to their monthly bill if they are a Smart Postpaid customer. Subscribers will receive a text message for every successful transaction and will have their Easytrip RFID accounts credited quickly after.

Subscribers may use the Easytrip RFID on the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX), Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX), the Manila-Cavite Expressway (CAVITEX), Cavite-Laguna Expressway (CALAX), and C-5 South Link Expressway.



## Smart and simple way of reloading

“We’re always looking for innovative ways to serve our customers and make their life simpler and easier. Through our partnership with MPTC, we’re glad to offer our subscribers the added convenience and comfort of being able to reload their Easytrip RFID account anytime and anywhere so they have one less concern on the road,” said Jane J. Basas, SVP and head of consumer wireless business at Smart.

“Many of us rely on our mobile phones for crucial information and services, so we are glad to team up with Smart to introduce another hassle-free way for users to top up their Easytrip RFID accounts with their Smart or TNT mobile load through a simple message. This way, they may enjoy a smoother and safer journey on our tollways without worrying about not having enough Easytrip load,” said Rodrigo E. Franco, president and CEO of MPTC.

Aside from reloading via their Smart Prepaid and Smart Postpaid account, Easytrip RFID users may also reload their account via over-the-counter payments at select reloading and installation sites and payment centers.

Easytrip RFID users may also reload their account via the Easytrip website using any Visa, Mastercard, or Bancnet card, as well as via accredited online payment channels.

For updates on Smart’s products and services, follow Smart’s official accounts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.





# SURGICAL MASK

Words by Jose Alvarez

**E**ven before the COVID-19 pandemic, masks have been largely in use in the medical industry for safety reasons. One of those reasons is to catch microorganisms shed in liquid droplets and aerosols from the wearer's mouth and nose. This reduces the infection rate in the hospital during certain surgical procedures. Today, COVID-19 had made mask-wearing very popular (and in some circles, controversial). This is why we should talk about the surgical mask.

Mask use had been documented during the Middle Ages, seen through the now-famous "plague doctor" outfits. The large nose contained aromatic herbs, while the leather kept away fleas. When Louis Pasteur discovered that diseases had a microbial origin, Johann Mikulicz and Carl Flugge created the surgical mask as a piece of gauze tied with two cords to the cap that covered the nose, mouth, and beard. This drastically reduced infections during surgery. However, the improvements to the surgical mask are largely attributed to Chinese-Malaysian doctor Dr. Wu Lien-teh, who improved on this design.

Dr. Wu had observed the face masks that were used in Europe and had adopted them for use during a plague in 1910 that affected Manchuria (modern-day northeastern China) and Mongolia. Dr.

Wu noted that the plague spread by air. He used a face mask of layers of gauze and cotton that protected both the wearer and others a century before the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, he introduced a quarantine, disinfected buildings, and even went as far as to burn down the old plague hospital and replace it. By modern standards, Dr. Wu's methods would be considered drastic, but at the time it was unclear how disease could spread and how quickly it could spread.

A French doctor, Dr. Gerald Mesny, was sent to replace Dr. Wu. The replacement doctor refused to wear a mask and then died of the plague a few days later. Dr. Wu also had to contend with the bodies of the dead which were considered vectors for spreading the plague. They could not be buried because the ground was frozen, so Dr. Wu arranged for them to be soaked in paraffin and burned on pyres. By the time the bodies started being cremated, the plague declined significantly and it was eradicated within a few months. It is said that the modern N95 masks are the descendant of Dr. Wu's initial design. Dr. Wu practiced medicine until his death in 1960 at age 80.

Masks were reportedly used during the height of another pandemic, the 1918-19 influenza pandemic. There were mask-wearing ordinances over a century before

COVID-19, especially in the western United States. Masks had even become a fashion statement—a Seattle newspaper reported women wearing masks to ward off influenza, but the materials used were questionable.

By 1930, medical masks started to be replaced with paper, and in 1960 single-use non-woven synthetic fiber masks became the norm. These disposable masks were cheaper to make and were more consistent with the "single-use" policy that many hospitals have to follow due to the risk of infection. While wealthier countries stopped using masks, developing countries in Asia began to use them because of pollution and the haze season. Areas such as India, Nepal, Thailand, China, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines had all been using surgical masks decades before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now because of the COVID-19 pandemic, masks are being used worldwide. Dr. Wu had even gotten commemorated because of his work in epidemiology and even became the subject of a Google Doodle, showing him assembling surgical masks and distributing them to everyone to prevent the spread of disease. Remember to wear a mask to protect yourself from COVID-19, and that mask-wearing goes back further than you think.

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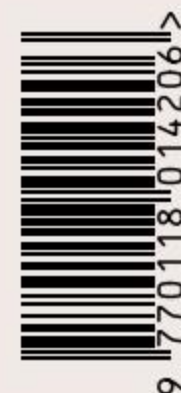
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