

# EuroPH CONNECT

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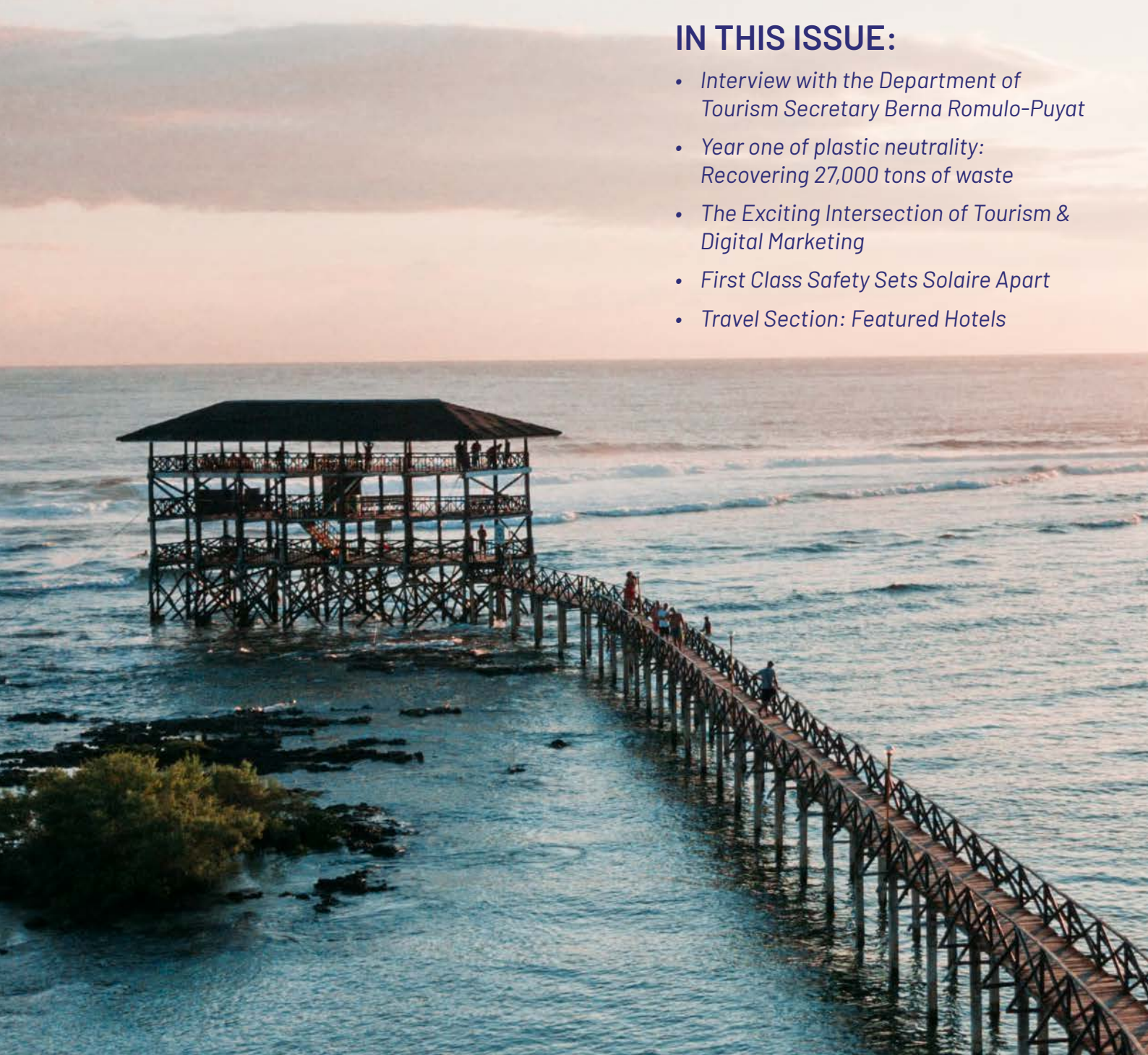
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THE BUSINESS DIGEST  
OF THE EUROPEAN CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE OF THE PHILIPPINES

Issue on Tourism

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- *Interview with the Department of Tourism Secretary Berna Romulo-Puyat*
- *Year one of plastic neutrality: Recovering 27,000 tons of waste*
- *The Exciting Intersection of Tourism & Digital Marketing*
- *First Class Safety Sets Solaire Apart*
- *Travel Section: Featured Hotels*





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European Chamber of Commerce  
of the Philippines (ECCP)

**Head Office**  
19/F Philippine AXA Life Centre Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor.  
Tindalo St., Makati City, Philippines  
Tel: (02) 8845 1326; 8759 6680 | Fax: (02) 8845 1395; 8759 6690  
E-mail: [info@eccp.com](mailto:info@eccp.com)

**Visayas Office**  
DOST 7 Banilad S&T Complex, Gov. M. Cuenco Ave., Banilad,  
6000 Cebu City, Philippines  
Tel: (032) 253 3389; 254 3765; 254 3767 Fax: (032) 253 3389  
E-mail: [visayas@eccp.com](mailto:visayas@eccp.com)

**Mindanao Office**  
Regus Davao Centre, 4F Topaz Tower, Damosa IT Park,  
JP Laurel Ave, Lanang, Davao City, Philippines  
Tel: (6382) 271 0635 | Fax: (6382) 226 4433; 221 4148  
E-mail: [mindanao@eccp.com](mailto:mindanao@eccp.com)

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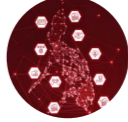

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## Editorial

The world has experienced enormous transformations over the past eighteen months due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The widespread of the virus profoundly affected economic activities and disrupted the supply chain. One of the sectors most affected by the pandemic undoubtedly is Tourism, one of the world's major economic sectors and third-largest export category.

The Philippine Tourism Industry, a prosperous and fast-growing pillar of the Philippine economy has, over the past year, suffered dramatically due to travel restrictions, government-imposed quarantine, and social distancing protocols. As a response, the ECCP has launched initiatives towards the recovery of the tourism industry by creating a venue for stakeholders to discuss the re-introduction of the tourism sector amidst the new normal, provide insights on the current initiatives from the government and private sector, and possible recommendations and solutions for policymakers on how to help the sector get back on its feet.

Since the onslaught of the pandemic, the Chamber has successfully organized a number of webinars on the Philippine Tourism Recovery together with key representatives from the Department of Tourism, and tourism commissioners from different regions and provinces. We also conducted a study on Post Covid-19 Tourism Strategies specifically on Central Visayas, which is one of the top tourist destinations in the country in partnership with the University of Innsbruck. These initiatives are all directed towards creating a solid basis for the decision-making of tourism stakeholders and provide valuable information to our partners in the government.

In this issue, we put a focus on Tourism as we put the spotlight on the Department of Tourism as Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat shares with us the work they are doing as the country moves closer towards its re-opening for tourists, and programs that are being implemented and in the pipeline for the year to help catalyze the recovery of the local tourism industry.

In this issue, we also have the chance to know more about the exciting intersection of tourism and digital marketing. On page 16, Kapwa Marketing shares that while the tourism industry is unable to operate fully tourism entities can use the extended downtime to optimize their websites and adapt their tourism operations to digital technology. Solaire will also share how they abide by new and developing global standards on hygiene and sanitation, in preparation to welcoming back its guests. Head over to page 18 to discover how Solaire's first-class safety sets them apart. Gearing up towards the re-opening of the tourism industry, on page 20, we also share with you some of the best hotels and resorts that could be one of your next destinations.

We also feature stories on sustainability on pages 12 and 15, an updated events calendar for the rest of Q3, and join me as we give a warm welcome to our new Annual Partners and members on page 26.

On a final note, as the COVID-19 continues, we would like to express that we consider the physical and mental well-being of everyone we work with as our utmost priority. Although we have been in series of lockdowns for nearly eighteen months now, we remain very open and even more committed to being of service to the European-Philippine business community. The road ahead is not without challenges, but we remain watchful of both the adversities and opportunities as your Chamber of Choice.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the EuroPH Connect, and as always, thank you for your continuing support. Stay safe and sane!



**Florian Gottein**  
ECCP Executive Director



Interview with the Department of Tourism Secretary

# Sec. Berna Romulo-Puyat



**As we move closer towards the re-opening of the country, how does the DOT plan to promote the Philippines as a tourist destination and compete with other countries considering that the primary concerns of tourists revolve around the level of vaccination and quarantine protocols in the destination country?**

We have always been proud of the Filipino Brand of Service, and this is the value that would position the Philippines as a tourist destination that prioritizes the health, safety, and comfort of its visitors. We are a nation that is committed to welcoming our guests with a smile, offering our best products and services, and making them feel like the Philippines is their second home.

We have exemplified this value during the onset of the pandemic when we set up response teams and organized 1,219 repatriation missions including sweeper flights in coordination with the different government agencies and the various embassies. The DOT was able to assist over 35,000 tourists, either in getting them home or providing them with food and accommodation. We made sure each and every foreign tourist was able to return to their countries during the lockdown.

“

*We have always been proud of the Filipino Brand of Service, and this is the value that would position the Philippines as a tourist destination that prioritizes the health, safety, and comfort of its visitors.*

”

This initiative of the DOT was praised by foreign embassies and consuls, who have noted that “the Philippines stands out for the care and concern and help that they did.” The DOT welcomes these kind words and take it upon ourselves the challenge to continue showing our tourists the unique Filipino hospitality even in these trying times.

This value has also been ingrained in the Philippine tourism industry and has translated into the current setting, as evidenced by the way our stakeholders have put their best efforts in making sure that their destinations are safe and fun for New Normal travelers.

In fact, in recognition of the Philippines’ efforts to align with global standards for health, safety, and hygiene, we are proud to share that we were awarded the Safe Travels Stamp by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) in September 2020.

The Safe Travels Stamp enables tourists to recognize destinations that meet international standards for health and safety, which allows visitors to enjoy safe travels in such destinations. The Department of Tourism has been given the opportunity to assume the role of a Safe Travels

ambassador to the stakeholders, issuing and advocating the implementation of the Safe Travels protocols, the update of Safe Travels Stamp to subsidiary public sector authorities, and ensure their ongoing compliance with the protocols.

To date, we have awarded the Safe Travels Stamp to two local destinations, which are Baguio City and Boracay Island, and to 158 accommodation establishments (as of 12 August 2021) across the country. We hope that more of our stakeholders will apply for and be eligible for the Safe Travels Stamp as we gradually reopen domestic tourism in various destinations.

Until we are ready to meet our foreign friends again, we will remain committed to upholding the Filipino Brand of Service by continuing to meet, if not exceed, the demands and expectations of our New Normal travelers when it comes to safety, comfort, and fun.

**When is the estimated timeline that the DOT sees international travel returning? What factors are being considered to determine this? With the national government’s recent move towards further relaxation of travel restrictions, what measures are the DOT implementing to help LGUs prepare and consider easing of restrictions to further facilitate the entry of vaccinated travelers for leisure purposes?**

The reopening of inbound international travel continues to depend on several factors such as the status of vaccination roll out both here in the Philippines and in our neighboring countries, along with a global coordinated approach regarding travel restrictions and streamlined health and safety protocols.

We closely monitor the status of inbound tourism of various countries, and by far we see that there is an uptick in inbound international travel in some countries such as Thailand and the Maldives. However, with the threat of the more transmissible Delta and Lambda variants of COVID-19, the reopening of international travel, particularly in the Philippines, remains fluid and uncertain.

“

*We believe that these efforts towards the safe resumption of domestic travel will consequently ripple forward to the eventual reopening of inbound tourism in the country.*

”

While majority of international borders are still closed to leisure travel, we have been focusing on domestic tourism as the primary catalyst for tourism revival. We have been conducting site inspections and validation trips with the intent of ensuring that our local destinations are ready to accept local tourists and are equipped with the health and safety measures aligned with the protocols set by



the National Task Force. These are being done in order to address traveler hesitancy and encourage people that travel can be done in a safe manner.

We believe that these efforts towards the safe resumption of domestic travel will consequently ripple forward to the eventual reopening of inbound tourism in the country.

**For the year 2021, how does the DOT see the tourism industry faring? What programs are being implemented and in the pipeline for the year to help catalyze the recovery of the local tourism industry?**

“

*We are also creating new tourism products that would cater to the evolving preferences of our domestic tourists.*

”

Despite the impending threat of the Delta and Lambda variants on the tourism industry, we remain hopeful that the tourism industry may continue a steady trajectory for the remainder of 2021. This is because a majority of the domestic market is looking forward to traveling once again, as evidenced by the travel survey that we conducted along with the Asian Institute of Management – Dr. Andrew L. Tan Center for Tourism, and Guide to the Philippines.

The survey showed that the appetite for travel among Filipinos is still very strong, with majority of the survey respondents saying that they will travel again for their sanity. With the Philippines’ strong domestic tourism base, we remain confident about the prospects of tourism even with the challenges posed by the pandemic.

We shall continue to carefully implement the plans, activities, and programs outlined in the Tourism Response and Recovery Plan (TRRP) while observing the prevailing pronouncements of the national government on the minimum health and safety protocols.

Among these programs is the provision of soft loans especially for MSMEs. To help mitigate their financial concerns, the CARES for TRAVELS program with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) was launched last year, providing zero collateral loans to the country’s MSMEs.

We are also creating new tourism products that would cater to the evolving preferences of our domestic tourists.

In the survey that I have previously mentioned, one of the key implications is that traveler preference has significantly evolved due to the pandemic.

Based on the survey, travelers prefer outdoor activities like going to the beach, hiking, and biking, with “staycation” coming in next. There is an emerging preference for the outdoors and well-ventilated areas over confined spaces or facilities.

We are thus aligning the development of new tourism products along with the preferences of our New Normal market. Our stakeholders and industry partners can look forward to these developments as we gradually launch them throughout the remaining months of 2021.

The DOT successfully reopened several Inter-Regional and Intra- Regional Tourism Circuits in support of the pivot towards domestic tourism amidst the pandemic. Our primary focus is for tourism products within these circuits to be inclusive, innovative, sustainable, and engaging, and that health and safety protocols are in place to avert the risk of community transmission.

The vaccination of tourism front liners classified under the A1 group, and the rest of the tourism workforce under A4, is also well underway. Vaccination for tourism workers in the NCR is expected to be completed before the end of August, at the same time, those in key destinations such as Boracay, Bohol, Palawan, and Siargao have also started with the help of the National Task Force against COVID-19 and the private sector.

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#### PROFILE OF SECRETARY BERNADETTE ROMULO-PUYAT

Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat is a product of the University of the Philippines where she graduated cum laude for her bachelor’s degree in Economics. She also pursued her master’s degree in Economics at the same institution.

From 1994 to 2006, she was a lecturer at her alma mater. She served as an Economic Consultant to the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council from 2001 to 2002, and to the Presidential Management Staff from 2005 to 2006. Furthermore, she served as Deputy Cabinet Secretary at the Office of the President in 2006.

In 2007, she was appointed Undersecretary at the Department of Agriculture where she handled special concerns, administration and finance, and agribusiness and marketing. Additionally, she headed various teams and committees on rural credit, trade and investment promotion, development assistance, international cooperation, organic agriculture, and gender and development.

In May 2018, she was appointed Secretary of the Department of Tourism. Her focus is on sustainable tourism, increasing investments in the sector, enhancing programs for tourism infrastructure, as well as product and market development.





# Year one of plastic neutrality: Recovering 27,000 tons of waste

Nestlé Philippines



Nestlé Philippines has achieved a fresh milestone in tackling plastic waste as it completes its first year of plastic neutrality, the first multinational fast-moving consumer goods company in the country to do so.

Since August 2020, the company has collected, co-processed, and diverted from the environment over 27,000 metric tons of plastic waste, slightly above the volume of used plastic in the packaging that it has put out in the market over the past year.

“

*As a food and beverage manufacturer with a major presence in the country, we are called upon to be at the forefront in confronting urgent issues that our planet faces. Our vision, which we are working hard to realize, is that none of our packaging, including plastics, ends up in landfills, in oceans, seas, and rivers.*

”

The Philippines is the third largest source of ocean plastic worldwide. Nestlé continues to accelerate its initiatives to address plastic waste holistically in the country across three focus areas:

1. Developing the packaging for the future, through packaging and delivery innovation and plastic reduction;
2. Helping to shape a waste-free future through increased collection and recycling; and
3. Driving new behaviors and understanding through solid waste management education.

“As a food and beverage manufacturer with a major presence in the country, we are called upon to be at the forefront in confronting urgent issues that our planet faces. Our vision, which we are working hard to realize, is that none of our packaging, including plastics, ends up in landfills, in oceans, seas, and rivers. A few years ago, we identified plastic neutrality as a major step forward for us as a company and it is our most important environmental milestone to date. The way has been full of challenges, requiring significant investments and a learning curve as we acquired experience. But we have demonstrated that it can be done, and it is viable. We are grateful to our partners including Republic Cement, CEMEX Holdings Philippines, and Plastic Credit Exchange for enabling us to become plastic neutral,” said Nestlé Philippines Chairman and CEO Kais Marzouki.

With its partners, Nestlé Philippines is collecting plastic waste from local government units and communities in different parts of the country. The waste is co-processed in cement kilns, a waste management method by which waste materials are processed at a very high temperature. This breaks down complex materials into simpler compounds and the energy or mineral content of wastes are completely recovered and utilized in the process of producing cement. Emissions from the process are filtered and monitored in compliance with standards of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Looking to the future, Mr. Marzouki said the company is advocating

the passage of legislation that will put in place an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme for plastic waste. EPR is a comprehensive policy approach in which a manufacturer's or importer's responsibility for a product is extended to the post-consumption stage of its life cycle.



Nestlé also co-developed solid waste management modules for schools and also created condensed materials for teens and parents which have been endorsed by the National Solid Waste Management Commission

To do more together, Nestlé Philippines is encouraging consumers to become a Kasambuhay for the Environment. They can start by visiting [Nes.tl/KasambuhayForTheEnvironment](https://Nes.tl/KasambuhayForTheEnvironment) where they can access solid waste management modules developed for parents and teens, and learn about the waste cycle, proper segregation, recycling, and more. The website also lists locations where they can drop off their plastic waste for recycling, including Nestlé-sponsored collection points at SM Mall of Asia, SM North Edsa, and SM Fairview, among other sites.



To further its commitment to the planet, Nestlé launched the Isabuhay sa Bahay challenge which aims to spark a movement among its 5,000 strong employees how to live a more sustainable lifestyle for the good of the planet

“At Nestlé Philippines, we are deeply committed to attaining our environmental goals, consistent with our vision of a waste-free future. As we have been in the Philippines for 110 years, we want to leave a legacy, anchored on our respect for the future and coming generations, that includes effectively caring for the planet. Mr. Marzouki said.





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Powering Infinite Possibilities

# Why Clean Energy is the Only Way Forward

Energy Development Corporation

Despite the effects of the pandemic on the energy sector, [it is expected that the demand for energy in our country will increase](#) in the next several years due to economic and demographic growth. With high demand, the price of electricity in our country can break the bank of the average Filipino family. We rely heavily on importing fossil fuels that are not only expensive but also harmful to the environment. More and more countries are starting to invest in renewable energy, as it is more practical and environmentally friendly, and it produces more jobs nowadays compared to the fossil fuel industry. It's time we follow suit—it's time we recognize that RE is the future of our country's development.

## Why do we have to shift?

We just have to look at the map to know why we need to make the switch—the Philippines is located where there are no significant fossil fuel deposits. This makes us reliant on other countries for our oil supply. Because of this, we are vulnerable to oil price fluctuations and energy insecurities, making electricity a lot expensive while also being inefficient for certain places in our country.

We are one of the [most vulnerable countries to the adverse effects of climate change](#). Just last November, we were decimated by the strongest typhoon of the year—super-typhoon Rolly, which claimed lives, livestock, and livelihood. If climate change-related catastrophes like this continue to pummel our country, it is projected that it will reduce our country's long-term economic growth by 0.02% annually, which equates to a [3.8% GDP reduction in the year 2050](#). If we want to mitigate the effects of climate change, we need to look at other sources of energy apart from fossil fuels, which contribute greatly to global warming.

There are already several countries thriving on the use of renewable energy. Take [Iceland for example, a country previously reliant on coal and oil](#). With the collaboration of local entrepreneurs and the government, Iceland was able to develop a framework that incentivizes and supports geothermal energy projects. Nowadays, Iceland powers its heavy industries and homes through hydro and geothermal energy.

## Renewable energy in the Philippines

Like Iceland, [we are also a country rich in geothermal energy sources](#) since the Philippines is located in the Pacific Ring of Fire. EDC has geothermal energy facilities in Leyte, North Cotabato, and Negros, with the facility in Leyte having the largest installed capacity among all geothermal plants in the country and the world's biggest wet steamfield. Geothermal energy is the Holy Grail among RE technologies with its inherent ability to provide a stable and reliable source of baseload or 24/7 power, or what EDC refers to as Geo 24/7.

These renewable energy facilities are becoming cheaper and cheaper to develop compared to the operation of traditional fossil fuel power plants. It is reported that [42% of global coal power plants are not profitable anymore](#) and are expected to have another downturn soon. Because of this, more and more renewable energy plants are being built around the world, which means more job opportunities for the Filipino people if we make the shift to RE. In 2018, in the US, [the fastest-growing jobs were in the renewable energy industry](#), with approximately 3.3 million Americans working in the clean energy industry.

If we take a step back and start to look at the bigger picture, shifting to RE has far greater merits than sticking to fossil fuel. In some cases in our country, [RE even helps save biodiversity](#). EDC's BINHI program is successful in conducting forest restorations in geothermal energy production sites in Leyte, Bicol, Negros, and Mount Apo. The shift to RE does not only help us economically, but down the road, it will be our foundation for building a regenerative world for the generations to come.

To learn more about shifting to renewable energy to power your business better and lower your carbon footprint, visit: <https://www.energy.com.ph/shift-to-renewable-energy/>





Photo by: Sittiphong | Shutterstock photo ID: 1621394309

# The Exciting Intersection of Tourism & Digital Marketing

## Kapwa Marketing

Even when tourism is hibernating, tourism businesses can still do so much to stay on top of clients' minds.

While the tourism industry is unable to operate as usual, tourism entities can use the extended downtime to fully optimize their websites and adapt their tourism operations to digital technology.

### Repurposing the Downtime

Although travelers are making travel plans sporadically, they are out there finding the next perfect getaway. Hence, it is crucial to be present online and consistently deliver the message that we are still around, have re-opened and are working hard to be COVID-resilient.

### We Are Going Digital

The whole world is going online. It is apparent that the same marketing strategy that has been very effective in the past may no longer be as effective as today. The industry has to unlearn many things about how consumers make a buying decision, how they travel and how they consume travel services.

It challenges businesses to be proactive in exploring digital strategies to re-engage, re-connect and regain customers' trust. One way to do this is by going digital. So, whether you are a tour operator, a travel agency, a hotel, restaurant, attraction or any tourism-related entity, digital marketing could work for you.

The intersection of tourism and digital marketing is truly exciting! At the height of a global pandemic and eased human interaction, amplifying your online presence is a strategic move.

### Kapwa Travel vis-à-vis Kapwa Marketing

The last few months have been the ideal time and opportunity for [Kapwa Travel](#) to refocus on tweaking and improving our online presence with the help of our sister company [Kapwa Marketing](#). Since all of our published [tours](#) are currently dormant, it also allowed us the opportunity to recalibrate and redesign them to create better experiences.

Armed with decisive digital marketing tactics, we are driven to move to the next chapter with high hopes for Philippine tourism.

### Digital Marketing in Tourism

Pivoting your digital marketing tactics today can certainly get you in a better position now and in the years to come. To do this, businesses can employ a strategic mix of digital marketing tactics to stay as visible as possible on the internet. Some of the digital marketing tactics include:

- Search engine optimization (SEO)
- Search engine advertising (SEA)
- Social media marketing
- Email marketing
- Video marketing
- Content marketing
- Direct online bookings

Depending on which market you're targeting, businesses can adjust their digital marketing efforts to effectively use the right approach, choose the right channel and create the right content for the right audience.



Photo by Mikael Blomkvist from Pexels



# First Class Safety Sets Solaire Apart



*Solaire's elevated sanitation procedures also employ the use of luminometers to test the cleanliness of every space.*

Solaire is synonymous to excellence and innovation, and its ever-growing list of milestones attest to the heights that the luxury property has achieved. The Filipino integrated resort has been making waves in strides, from being a consistent name on the coveted Forbes Travel Guide 5-Star Awards list for 5 consecutive years, to receiving the distinction of being the Best Regional Asian Integrated Resort in the 2019 G2E Asia Awards – a remarkable feat having been in the game for less than a decade and besting the bigwigs of the industry.

Like many businesses, Solaire found itself amid its most extraordinary challenge to date which required the brand to temporarily close its doors to ensure public safety in the early months of the previous year. For the remainder of 2020, Solaire crafted its safety campaign down to the tee which entailed meticulous planning, sourcing, and testing to make sure every step to be implemented in its staff-only locations, on all gaming floors, in every room and suite, restaurants, and public spaces – all abide to new and developing global standards on hygiene and sanitation, in preparation to welcoming back its guests. The result is a sweeping overhaul of processes in both front and back of houses, as well as facility upgrades which ultimately led to Solaire being the brand to emulate.

As early as July 2020, Solaire began its internal simulations to polish its revamped measures and make the necessary adjustments prior rolling out a more sophisticated and detailed business operation that responds to the challenges of the time. The luxury resort's enhanced protocols are indeed laudable – from modifying its cleaning procedures, employing the use of high-grade disinfection and sanitizing agents and apparatuses, to its most impressive undertaking which sits behind large steel doors to keep the ventilation top-notch. Solaire maintained it is many steps ahead of its peers by being the first integrated resort to install high-performance UVC light technology to its central air-conditioning system. The task of ensuring the outstanding quality of air in 100% of the property – from the team member offices, every hallway, both hotel towers, as well as the entirety of the casino, boutiques, restaurants, bars, and guest areas – is all thanks to this colossal mechanism. Already fully operating since October 2020, this step assures guests that Solaire has the highest quality of air circulating across the entire property by filtering and eliminating bacteria and viruses, and halting air-borne diseases from spreading.

Its safety campaign, "Solaire Is Safe For You", has also been an effective supporting tool to inform and entice many of its

patrons. Solaire utilized its social media pages and shared with its audience various content that presented the resort's incredible transformation to create a safer environment in a time of unprecedented concerns.

With such an extensive and well-executed safety plan in place, Solaire continues to garner international acclamations including the Sharecare Health Security VERIFIED with Forbes Travel Guide and is recognized as one of 40 holders of the Safe Travels Stamp by the World Travel & Tourism Council. Locally, Solaire's efforts on public health and safety received commendation both from the public and private sectors. The property was awarded the Philippines' Department of Tourism Safety Seal Certification and is the 1st recipient of the Thomas Edison Recognition Award from Intertek Philippines.



For more information, visit <https://www.solaireresort.com/article/solaire-safe-you>.

For reference and inquiries, please contact:  
Krizia Cortez  
Public Relations and Communications Manager  
Solaire Resort & Casino  
Telephone Number: + 63 2 8883 8784  
Mobile Number: +63 998 586 1327  
E-mail: [krziacortez@solaireresort.com](mailto:krziacortez@solaireresort.com)



# Travel Section: Featured Hotels

## The Farm at San Benito

The Farm at San Benito, which is a proud member of CG Hospitality, is an eco-luxury, holistic, medical wellness resort located in Lipa City, Batangas, which is a 90-minute drive south of Manila. It rests on 48 hectares of lush green jungle and has a stunning view of the majestic mountains and pure and fresh air with clear and positive life-giving energy radiating around the property. Its world-class facilities and services have made it a recipient of over 60 prestigious international accolades, including "The Best Medical Wellness Resort in the World." With only 40 exclusive suites and villas, a well-maintained property, world-class service, and the Filipinos' nurturing touch, The Farm offers guests an unparalleled life-changing holiday experience.

The Farm at San Benito  
For inquiries: [www.thefarmatsanbenito.com](http://www.thefarmatsanbenito.com)  
Instagram: @thefarmatsanbenito  
Facebook: The Farm at San Benito



## One-Of-Collection (Amorita Resort)

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One-Of-Collection (Amorita Resort)  
Cellphone: +63 917 861 9441  
Email: [inquiries@one-ofcollection.com](mailto:inquiries@one-ofcollection.com)  
Website: [www.amoritaresort.com](http://www.amoritaresort.com)

## Crimson Resort and Spa Mactan

Crimson Resort and Spa, Mactan is a 6-hectare sprawling Balinese-inspired resort with 40 private villas and 250 guestrooms that combine both comfort and style with its contemporary Asian elements. Designed for romantic getaways, family holidays, and guests looking for laidback tropical elegance, Crimson offers a private beach and an iconic infinity pool. Completing its facilities are its signature restaurants Azure Beach Club with Rock Bar and Enye by Chele Gonzalez. It also hosts a full-service spa, a 3,700sqm kid's club, and offers the Filipino's warm service and charm.

Crimson Resort and Spa Mactan  
Seascapes Resort Town, Mactan, Lapu-Lapu City  
Tel: +63 32 401 9999  
+63 32 239 3900  
Email: [info.mactan@crimsonhotel.com](mailto:info.mactan@crimsonhotel.com)  
Website: [www.crimsonhotel.com/mactan](http://www.crimsonhotel.com/mactan)



## Club Paradise Palawan

Club Paradise Palawan is an exclusive, 19-hectare island resort within the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in the naturally flourishing archipelago of Palawan. This tropical paradise offers unmatched seascapes, natural attractions, magnificent diving spots, and a myriad of discoveries just waiting to be found along the 700-meter stretch of white sand beach that hugs the resort.

Its beachfront villas with private balconies and well-appointed suites offer the best coastal views of Coron. Travel to this beautiful island with peace of mind on a private seaplane with the resort's Private Journey room offer and indulge in a truly island escape.

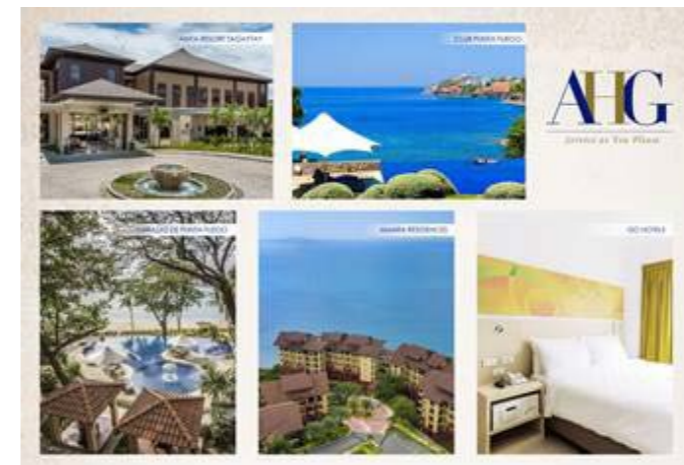
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Website: [www.clubparadisepalawan.com](http://www.clubparadisepalawan.com)  
Call Reservation: +63 917 568 4862 | +63 917 827 9852 | +63 917 840 1674  
Contact Email: [sales@cp.discovery.com.ph](mailto:sales@cp.discovery.com.ph) or  
[reservations@cp.discovery.com.ph](mailto:reservations@cp.discovery.com.ph)

## Badian Island Wellness Resort

Tropical Wellness on an Island in Southwestern Cebu

Wellness meets luxurious living in Badian Island Wellness Resort. With 42 Suites which is tucked away in an 8.5-hectare lush tropical garden. Indulge and experience truly relaxing days mostly spent in hammocks fixed to the palm trees, lounge chairs on the beach, and the picturesque and calming view of the mountains and the sea. Uniquely offers Thalasso or ionized seawater outdoor pools that can ultimately heal and revitalize the body.

Badian Island Wellness Resort  
Telephone: +63 32 354 1555 - 2555  
Cellphone: +63 920 952 6293 | +63 917 191 5888  
Email: [salesreservations@badianwellness.com](mailto:salesreservations@badianwellness.com)



## Anya Hospitality Group

AHG (Anya Hospitality Group) is the most trusted hospitality management group for property owners who demand expertise, bespoke services, and world-class experiences. With over 20 years of experience, AHG has set a name for itself in the industry. Its Four Pillars of Services include branding, management services, consultancy, and revenue management and distribution. Their portfolio comprises some of the most distinguished brands including Anya Resort Tagaytay, Club Punta Fuego, Amara Residences, Terrazas de Punta Fuego, and Go Hotels (Airport Road, Timog, Ermita, and North Edsa).

Anya Hospitality Group  
Landline: (8) 553 8888 Mobile: 0917 823 4669  
Email address: [info@ahg.com.ph](mailto:info@ahg.com.ph)  
Website: [www.ahg.com.ph](http://www.ahg.com.ph)  
Facebook and Instagram: AHGPhils





**JEFF MENDOZA**  
Asia Pacific Regional Head  
PLDT Enterprise



# PLDT Primes PH as Newest Data Center Hub in Asia

*Emerging data center market poses potential to be next big economic driver*

(Manila, Philippines – June 1, 2021) The global pandemic has been a catalyst for digital transformation as there was a steep rise in the usage of consumer applications from social media to video streaming, gaming, e-commerce, online learning, and telehealth, among others. The pandemic has also pushed the enterprise and public sector over the technology tipping point by accelerating their cloud adoption by increasingly migrating workloads to the cloud and massively using collaboration platforms supporting work from home arrangements.

Speaking earlier this year at Asia Pacific Regional Internet Conference on Operational Technologies (APRICOT) 2021, Jeff Mendoza, Asia Pacific Regional Head of PLDT Enterprise said, “The digital transformation dictated by the pandemic among the enterprise and consumer sectors have pushed the hyperscalers in the cloud and content provider space to step on the gas with their data center deployment plans across relevant countries. The goal is to optimize subscriber experience through data sever localization while enhancing network resilience in growth markets, including the Philippines.”

## Digital Philippines at a Glance

The digital profile of the Philippines has motivated these hyperscalers to build their digital infrastructure within the archipelago. As these big techs strive to reign in the intensified battle of eyeballs or subscribers, the population and the digital economy of a country are critical considerations in crafting their data center expansion road map.

According to We Are Social's Digital 2020, the Philippines is home to the second-largest eyeballs within the Southeast Asia with a population of 109M. It has one of the youngest median age of 25.8 years old versus the average age within the region of 31.8, pointing to a sizable tech-savvy population which has stronger digital appetite and adoption to technology.

The nation also takes pride in having one of the highest mobile penetration rates in the region at 138%. The Philippines has 74M internet users with netizens spending 10.5 hours online which is the longest across the globe.

The Philippines has been dubbed as the social media capital of the world when it comes to hours spent in social media while it ranks as 6th in the list of countries with the most Facebook users. E-commerce sales grew by USD3.6B in 2020 at a phenomenal growth rate of 43%, with projections spiraling to USD12B in 2025.

From a Cloud Service Revenue perspective, Global Data has reported that the Philippines is anticipating a steep rise in cloud service revenues up to USD2.4B by 2024. This is due to the increase in cloud spending in the Enterprise segment and the government's Cloud First Policy which encourages and pushes the agencies to hasten their cloud adoption strategies.

## The 5G Curve Fueling Data Center Demand

The country has also been cited by the GSMA, a global mobile industry organization for mobile network operators worldwide, as an early adopter of 5G, alongside China,

Singapore, and Hongkong.

Smart, the wireless subsidiary of PLDT, has launched its 5G services in key locations in the Philippines. 5G brings about denser and faster streams of data as it is driving the need to bring more efficient compute and storage power closer to the point of connectivity and the end-user. Hence, fueling a stronger demand for edge data centers.

## The Philippines as an Emerging Data Center Market

The challenges confronted by major data center hubs serving Southeast Asia, like Singapore and Hong Kong, come at a time when the demand for such facilities in the region is growing. In Hong Kong, geopolitical risks out of the imposition of China's National Security Law has caused hyperscalers in the West to rethink their strategy of building or expanding their server farms in the country. In Singapore, the government has issued a moratorium to freeze data center construction amid high demand in response to sustainability concerns. Landmass shortage was also cited as another point of consideration.

“Hyperscalers are in need of options to serve the fast growing demand within region. This is the time when the emerging data center markets such as the Philippines, is anticipated to take advantage of this window of opportunity,” Mendoza added.

According to Structure Research, a research firm niched in the data center internet and cloud space, the Philippines is one of the emerging DC markets, having a high growth rate alongside Malaysia and Thailand.

Cushman & Wakefield, a reputed global commercial real estate services firm whose technology advisory group is also deeply connected into the data center ecosystem, has cited the Philippines' DC Market CAGR of 14.2 % versus the Southeast Asia's growth average of 12.9% until 2024. It has been noted that SEA is the fastest growing region for co-location data centres in a span of 5 years, underpinned by the rapid pace of digitalization and surge in demand for cloud based services.

UBS sees the Philippines as an underserved market with tremendous opportunity, with strong demand from domestic and international operators. This is attributed to data localization and the demand for lower latency by the consumer and enterprise sectors.

## Robust Submarine Cable Infrastructure

At present, there are nine (9) existing submarine cables landing in the Philippines, with seven (7) more international cable systems upcoming. These resilient subsea cables are complemented by six (6) diverse Cable Landing Stations strategically located within the archipelago while more stations are already anticipated to be built in the next three years.

Moreover, the Philippines has over 600,000 kilometers of fiber optic cables spread across the islands to date with PLDT owning 478,000 kilometers of the said fiber network. PLDT also has the lion's share of submarine cable capacities terminating in the Philippines.

Hyperscalers are building new subsea cable systems landing in the Philippines, which highlights the importance of the country in the digital infrastructure roadmap of these tech giants.

## Greening the Power Grid

Touted as one of the early renewables leaders in the region, with a sustainable energy mix of 24%, the Philippines strives to push for more green sources of power thru the Department of Energy's Renewable Power Standards circular.

The government's sustainability campaign anticipates renewable power to generate 35% of the country's electricity by 2030.

This national program is aligned with the sustainability initiatives of the hyperscalers via their respective commitments to renewable energy utilization across their operations.

PLDT has been implementing sustainability initiatives for its data center facilities that will make the most efficient approach to energy usage. For instance, its data center in Clark, Pampanga built its own solar energy source with an EIFS or Exterior Insulation Finishing System which reduces heat penetration into the building.

## New Destination for Hyperscalers

Possessing a burgeoning digital economy, robust domestic and international infrastructure in place, a progressive renewable power mix, and data centers at par with the technologically developed countries, the Philippines is an ideal destination to support the hyperscale data center requirements of the cloud and content providers.

“The Philippines is indeed a strong player in the emerging market space for globally certified data centers while it thrives on value creation within the digital economy. We expect in-country DC rollouts of global technology players to accelerate,” Mendoza concluded.

The country's major data centers are primarily operated by PLDT through its ICT arm ePLDT Inc. The group currently owns a network of 10 globally certified VITRO data center facilities strategically located across the country, with a total capacity of 72MW and over 9,000 racks, designed to support the transformation and fortify the resiliency of enterprises. Since network is as essential as data center reliability, all VITRO data center facilities are designed to be carrier-neutral, allowing other telcos both foreign and local to provide network connections based on customer preference.

VITRO data center also hosts two of the country's major internet exchanges and serves as the global gateway of the enterprise across different sectors that require colocation, cloud hosting, disaster recovery, managed servers, security and network services—making it the preferred colocation site for hyperscalers.

For more information on PLDT Enterprise and its services, visit [www.pldntenterprise.com](http://www.pldntenterprise.com).





## PLDT Internet exchanges to raise PH standing for hyperscalers expansion in Asia

The Philippines' largest fully integrated telecommunications company PLDT (PSE:TEL ; NYSE:PHI) is set on driving the country's status as the strategic Asian destination for global hyperscalers and content providers. This is on the back of a robust ICT infrastructure in place serving over 74 million local internet users, and extensive peering solutions in the local telco industry through the Philippine Internet Exchange (PHIX) and the VITRO Internet Exchange (VIX).

Through the PHIX and VIX, the PLDT Group provides hyperscalers, Content Delivery Networks (CDN), Over-the-Top providers (OTTs), and content providers access to the second largest "eyeballs" in Southeast Asia with a predominantly tech-savvy population of 109 million having a median age of 25.8 years old, one of the youngest in the region according to We Are Social's Digital 2020 published report.

PLDT Vice President and Head of Fixed Core Business Solutions for Enterprise Gary Ignacio stressed that other than having extensive international cable systems landing in the country and data center space – which are PLDT's core assets – a sizeable internetbase makes for an attractive proposition to those who are considering to expand their market in the Philippines.

"The Philippines presents huge potential as an expansion market for cloud service providers and content providers, with a large digital-savvy consumer base who has the propensity to consume content and digital services. With PLDT, hyperscalers, OTTs, and CPs alike will be able to gain direct access to the eyeballs that are aggregated conveniently through our premier internet exchanges—giving them the largest reach in the PH market and ensuring the best possible service delivery and user experience," Ignacio said.

The nation also has one of the highest mobile penetration rates in the region at 138%. The Philippines has 74M internet users with netizens spending 10.5 hours online marking it as the longest time spent across the world.

The Philippines has also been dubbed as the social media capital of the world when it comes to hours spent in social media, while it ranks 6th in the list of countries with the most

Facebook users. E-commerce sales grew by USD3.6B in 2020 at a phenomenal growth rate of 43%, with projections spiraling to USD12B in 2025.

PHIX is a PLDT-managed, domestic internet exchange point facility that serves as the point of interconnection between internet service providers, content providers, and CDNs, with access to PLDT and Smart subscribers. Through the PLDT and Smart fixed and wireless networks, the PLDT Group already serves an aggregated 78.2 million subscribers as of the first quarter of 2021.

On the other hand, VIX, managed by ePLDT, allows access to local and cached content, and content from other local ISP and CDNs hosted in the leading data center network in the country, with 10 VITRO Data Center facilities strategically built across the country serving colocation, cybersecurity, and other business continuity services of various business sectors.

Both exchanges add value to the seamless internet-user experience of subscribers among its participants and members.

"We at PLDT have consistently been ramping up our investments in expanding our network infrastructure to continue serving the growing digital needs of local and international businesses alike. As we see Philippines as the next ideal destination for cloud and content providers, we see to it that we continuously strengthen our capabilities to ensure that we are ready to support their hyperscale data center and connectivity requirements," said Jovy Hernandez, ePLDT President & CEO and SVP & Head for PLDT and Smart Enterprise Business Groups.

Currently, PLDT has the most extensive fiber footprint among local providers at 511,000 kilometers of fiber coursing through the archipelago boosted by its participation in 15 international cable systems landing in the country. PLDT has been relentlessly expanding its fiber network in and out of the country. In addition to Php 460 billion invested from 2011 to 2020, PLDT is eyeing additional capex spend of Php 88 to 92 billion in 2021, aiding the country's efforts in nation-building through digital services and technology.

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The CMA CGM Group is a world leader in transport and logistics committed to energy transition. We work daily to reduce the environmental impacts of our maritime and land activities. We do this with a pioneering mindset: to act today on the basis of the best solutions available.



The Generali Group is one of the most significant players in the global insurance and financial products market. The Group is a leader in Italy and Assicurazioni Generali, founded in 1831 in Trieste, is the Group's Parent and principal operating Company.

Characterized from the very outset by a strong international outlook and now present in more than 60 countries, Generali has consolidated its position among the world's leading insurance operators, with significant market shares in western Europe - its main area of activity - and particularly in Germany, France, Austria, Spain, Switzerland and Central and Eastern Europe.

The Group has set up offices in the main markets of the Far East, among which India and China; in particular, in China, just after few years of operation, it has become the leader among the insurance companies with foreign equity interests.



A major international group in the construction engineering and mobility services sectors, Egis creates and operates intelligent infrastructure and buildings capable of responding to the climate emergency and addressing the major challenges of our time by helping to achieve more balanced, sustainable and resilient territorial development.

A 75%-owned subsidiary of Caisse des Dépôts, with the remaining 25% held by partner executives and employees, Egis places its multiple fields of expertise at the disposal of the community and makes cutting-edge innovation accessible to all projects throughout their lifecycle: consulting, engineering, operation.

Through its wide-ranging fields of activity, Egis is a central player in the collective organisation of society and the living environment of its inhabitants all over the world.



The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) is a political foundation. In Germany, 16 regional offices offer a wide variety of civic education conferences and events. As a think-tank and consulting agency, our soundly researched scientific fundamental concepts and current analyses are meant to offer a basis for possible political action.



Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software, services, devices and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential. It employs over 200,000 people worldwide, operating in over 120 country subsidiaries.

Microsoft Philippines, the local subsidiary of Microsoft Corporation, has been constantly bringing innovation and making its technology available to Filipino businesses and individuals since 1995. As a committed and trusted partner in nation-building, Microsoft Philippines has made it its mission to fuel growth and healthy communities, as well as transform locally-based businesses and empower them to compete in the global economy. Microsoft Philippines employs over 170 people in the local office with its main operations located in Makati.



Santa Fe Relocation is a global mobility company specialising in managing and delivering high-quality relocation



TÜV SÜD started operations in the Philippines in 1997. Through the years, TÜV SÜD PSB Philippines Inc. has certified more than 600 companies in various industries nationwide for different Management System standards. The company has likewise conducted Third Party Inspections such as tanks/pipelines inspection, lifting equipment inspection, conventional NDT, advanced NDT, ASME inspection or certification, and failure analysis for several power plants, oil and gas companies, and manufacturing facilities in the country.



## Associate Members



Brooky Technologies is a property-tech startup that provides enterprise solutions to real estate companies to help do less and grow more.



Embiggen Consulting Inc. is an international innovation and digital transformation consulting firm committed to building meaningful growth for progressive organizations in emerging markets. The firm builds on four categories of capabilities such as Innovation & Growth, Learning & Development, Digital Transformation Solutions, and Corporate Foresight. We have industry expertise on Banking, Finance, and Insurance; Heavy Industries & Engineering; Public Sector & Development; Education and Retail & Consumer.



The P.J. Lhuillier, Inc. (PJLI) is the proud parent company of the Cebuana Lhuillier Pawnshop, one of the leading and largest non-bank financial services provider in the Philippines with more than 2,500 branches nationwide. PJLI attributes its dominance in the industry to integrity and heartfelt service, robust network of local and international industry partners, and steadfast commitment to nurture market-leading businesses for its growing clientele.



Human Resource Innovations and Solutions, Inc. (HURIS) is a human resource and organization development consultancy and solutions provider, established in 2005.



In1Go Technologies, is an IT Services and BPO company providing a range of value solutions specializing in project management, salesforce management and distribution automation, location based services/marketing, supply chain and marketing enablers. We offer a suite of internet-enabled solutions including applications and systems software. We undertake projects ranging from Re-engineering, Business Operations, Web enablement, Application development, and BPO Operations.



Leaderwise Consulting offer trainings, coaching and assessment (Predictive Index)



In 1980, Mr. Eduardo Ngan Tian then the Vice-President and General Manager of Virra Realty Development Corporation opened R & W Foods at Virra Mall, Greenhills in San Juan, Manila selling snack items like peanuts, ice cream, banana cue, candies, cigarettes and gums. When he resigned in 1986, he saw a beautiful spot in San Beda College in Mendiola where he could expand his food business. Out of; his meager savings he borrowed capital and constructed ten (10) food stalls intending to occupy three (3) stalls for his R & W Foods and lease out the rest. Only 3 were lease out leaving 4 stalls vacant. Needing to fill up the vacant stalls, Mr. Ngan Tian tried serving lunch to students and hit the idea of putting up a pizza parlor and named it LOTS'A PIZZA™. At the same time pizza is outpacing hamburger worldwide. It was to be the first LOTS'A PIZZA™ outlet.



SIDMA COLLEGE is a private higher learning institution offering academic program from Foundation Studies, Diploma Programmes, Bachelor's Degree & Master's Degree in various field ranging from education to business



PVP is an insights, solutions and training company specializing in organizational development, market research and mental health.



We, at Urus Technologies, believe that we are a company of dreams, and we started with one: To Build A Smarter World.



PJS Corporate Support, Inc. (CSI) is a consultancy firm that assists companies in establishing and operating their business by providing incorporation, business permit, resident agent and corporate secretarial services. We are affiliated with PJS Law, a full-service law firm in the Philippines, recognized by various international law publications as one of the country's leading legal advisors.



With our consultants' exquisite credentials and proven experience in accelerating the competency of professionals, Whitehall is one of the forefront training and consulting companies providing best practice solutions and sustained application of learning.



## Regional Members



Cor Jesu College, Inc. is a Catholic educational institution anchored on the Spirituality of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and the charism of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart, and whose main objective is to draw out the best on its students.



S & X Gourmet Inc is a Cebu-based business focusing on Artisan Bakery and Specialized Gourmet

## Individual Member

### Vicky Luis

Vicky is one of the pioneers who brought the Portugal Golden Visa program to the Philippines & has numerous sales with 100% success rate.

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Brooky Technologies

**22**  
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Parkash Mansuhkani

**23,30**  
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**2021 European-Philippine Business Summit**

**24**  
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**Swedish company, specialized in bolting solutions, is looking for potential distributors in the Philippines.**

A Swedish company has been providing customers with high-quality, safe and innovative bolting solutions since 1982. They're offering solutions by brand - original wedge-locking technology, multi-jackbolt tensioning technology, permanent solution to lug wear, and Hydraulic bolting solutions.



**German Cosmetics company is looking for one exclusive distributor in the Philippines.**

A German cosmetics company with over 40 years of experience and a leader in marine cosmetics, is looking for one exclusive distributor in the Philippines. The products included are in the range of Anti-Aging Care, Young Care, Cosmeceuticals, Vegetarian Care, Men Care, and Sun Care.



**Portuguese manufacturer of cork products is looking for prospective buyers.**

A Portuguese company specializing in production and representation of cork related products is looking for a distributor for their fashion products, Moroccan, cork furniture and cladding products, and wall insulation.



**Belgian manufacturer of lubricating oils is looking for financially strong business partners to distribute its products in the Philippines.**

A Belgian Independent lubricants company has over 60 years of experience and expertise in lubricants with a core focus on passenger cars, light duty vehicles, heavy duty vehicles (on- and off road), motorcycles and leisure boats.



**British company is looking for distributors of their light-based beauty devices.**

They are a global expert brand dedicated solely to design, develop, and manufacture light-based beauty devices. They are looking for local distributors of the most advanced IPL technology in the market - IPL (intense pulsed light) hair removal products for use in the home.

If interested in becoming a partner, we would love to talk to you. Please send us an email to [catherine.lee@eccp.com](mailto:catherine.lee@eccp.com) or visit [www.eccp.com](http://www.eccp.com) for more information. We are looking forward to hearing from you.

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