

Community-based e-hardware platform targets small businesses, homeowners

By Patricia B. Mirasol *Reporter*

KONSTRUK, a community-based e-hardware store, is looking to make it easier for small businesses and homeowners to get their construction and home improvement needs directly from manufacturers and suppliers.

"I have seen the pain points of the trade and how it suffered during the pandemic," said Rommel T. Bulalacao, CEO of Konstruk Tech Corp., and also a construc-

tion industry practitioner for over three decades.

"Konstruk was a dream conceptualized during the first lockdown," he said at the company's launch. "There is no similar concept yet in this industry that uses e-commerce."

The Konstruk platform includes construction material manufacturers, community hardware stores, home furniture distributors, local artists and tradesmen. Its advantage over the bigger hardware players is that their consumers have the freedom to canvass

different products, Mr. Bulalacao told *BusinessWorld* in a Zoom call.

"We're a community-based marketplace," he said. "You can canvass 5-10 similar products within a city, select a price range or a particular material [you need], and then add to cart."

As of March 14, it has already onboarded Republic Cement, Smart Options, BMG Enterprises, Arnie Furniture, and RN Wholesaler Hardware, among others. Mr. Bulalacao said merchant registration and verification in their platform takes 4 hours.

The platform can also be used by overseas Filipino workers, who can order construction materials and have them delivered to where they are building a home in the Philippines.

Local artists, on the other hand, can use Konstruk as an alternative platform to sell their artwork.

"I've been into the art trade for 12 years, and have good friends in the art scene," Mr. Bulalacao said. "Before, *sa gallery ka* [artists sold in galleries], and the gallery prices are too high. Unlike *kung sila mismo*. Direct *na sila sa con-*

sumer [Unlike if the artists sold their artworks directly]."

The e-hardware platform's business model is closer to the online food delivery service Foodpanda, added Nicolas R. Yuseco, Konstruk's business development manager.

"We are point-to-point (P2P)," he told *BusinessWorld* in the same Zoom call. "From the merchant, the products will be delivered straight to the client. Our [on-demand and scheduled] delivery ranges from motorcycles to 16-wheeler trucks."

Toki-Toki, Transportify, and Lalamove are the platform's logistics partners. Konstruk uses Metrobank for the payment gateway system.

In the post-pandemic e-commerce space, Konstruk targets to corner 5% of the home improvement and construction industry.

"We also want to help the small businesses that suffered from the lockdowns," Mr. Bulalacao added. "We are humbled to aid them, especially the MSMEs [micro, small, and medium enterprises]."

BRIEFS

Federal Land unit tops off new Manila Bay condo

A SUBSIDIARY of real estate developer Federal Land, Inc. recently topped off a new tower at its development in the Manila Bay Area.

Horizon Land completed the structure of the Palm Beach West Coron Tower, the third of the four-tower residential condominium.

"Palm Beach West is a mid-rise development designed to provide its residents a space to unwind and resort-inspired amenities for a relaxing lifestyle," the company said.

The residential condominium is part of Metro Park, Federal Land's master-planned community.



DMCI Homes to develop project in Tandang Sora

DMCI Project Developers, Inc. (DMCI Homes) is developing a new condominium project in Quezon City.

The Erin Heights is located along Commonwealth Avenue corner Tandang Sora Avenue in Quezon City. It will have 54 residential floors and offer studio, two-bedroom, and three-bedroom unit configurations ranging from 28.5 square meters (sq.m.) to 87 sq.m.

"Beyond the advantageous location, what makes The Erin Heights even more a profitable property investment is its promise of a plush and modern lifestyle that promotes a healthy work-life balance in the new normal," the company said in a statement.

The Erin Heights will feature a modern tropical design concept. It targets young professionals, families and investors.

Amenities include the Sky Deck, co-working space, fitness gym, game area, a roof deck lap pool, a leisure pool, a pool deck, a shooting court, kiddie pool and playground.

"The Erin Heights is set to open its doors to residents in October 2027. Units are now pre-selling at a starting price of P5,062,000," the company said.

IFC says ready to assist local governments in 'building green'

By Marifi S. Jara

Mindanao Bureau Chief

GOING GREEN for housing projects, whether high-end or socialized, does not have to be costly and complicated, according to an International Finance Corp. (IFC) executive involved in the institution's certification system that aims to promote more climate-friendly and disaster resilient buildings.

"People think that when you say 'green' buildings, they are expensive and they are technically complex," Angelo Tan, Philippine country lead of IFC's Climate Business Department, said at last week's Livable Cities webinar series.

Mr. Tan said IFC's certification system called EDGE, or Excellence in Design for Greater Efficiencies, offers a free online tool that provides simple and measurable standards on "building green" based on materials, and systems for energy and water.

IFC, the World Bank's private sector arm, certified 50 projects including 6,400 homes in 2021, covering a total of 420,000 square



MEMBERS of the Philippine Army assist in immediate repair works for homes affected by last year's Typhoon Odette, internationally known as Rai, in Eastern Visayas, one of the Philippine's most typhoon-prone regions.

meters (sq.m.). Mr. Tan said another 3.77 million sq.m. have registered and are up for certification.

Complementary to the EDGE index, IFC is also ready to assist local governments units (LGUs) in setting up policies that will encourage more green ventures.

"Under IFC's green and resilient programs, we want to collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders," Mr. Tan said. "We can work closely with you (LGUs)

to enable you to make that enabling environment for greener and more resilient buildings.

INCENTIVES

The IFC executive said incentives for developers do not have to be limited to waived or reduced property tax, which cuts the local government's potential revenue.

LGUs, he said, can introduce such measures as cutting the processing time for permits and

requirements for green-certified projects, providing grants or loans, offering technical assistance, and updating local legislation to improve the regulatory framework.

Mr. Tan cited the IFC's work with the Mandaluyong government for the city's green building code, one of the pioneering local ordinances on environment-friendly property projects.

IFC is also piloting its Building Resilience Index (BRI) in the Philippines, an online tool that includes hazard mapping and resilience assessment for building projects.

With the help of EDGE and BRI, Mr. Tan said, green buildings could be made "more accessible, inclusive, and affordable."

The IFC executive stressed that applying "quantitative" resilience and sustainability standards are especially important for socialized housing projects as the underprivileged population are under greatest threat from climate change.

"Risks are increasing with global warming... Climate impacts are felt disproportionately in urban areas with the most economically and socially marginalized," he said.



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