



Power Mac Center opens first Apple Premium Partner store in PHL

POWER Mac Center (PMC) last week opened the country's first Apple Premium Partner store in Makati City.

The store located in Power Plant Mall has a one-stop concept and offers retail, service, and training to customers in its selling area.

"The brand-new PMC Apple Premium Partner store offers 275 square meters of shopping space that carries a comprehensive lineup of Apple products on offer, including iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch, Mac, and accessories including AirPods and AirTag," PMC said in a statement.

"It also offers a Mobile Care Service Center helmed by expert technicians that can provide repair services and offer product knowledge, as well as dedicated space for product and feature demos conducted by Apple Certified Trainers," it added.

The PMC Apple Premium Partner store also offers exclusive deals to corporate and education clients.

"The opening of our first Apple Premium Partner store is undoubtedly the culminating high-

light of all of the store openings we've celebrated this 2022. As we expand our footprint in the different regions, we also always aim to elevate the overall customer experience with our brand. Power Mac Center is truly honored to be one of the first in Southeast Asia to offer this ultra-premium experience," PMC Director of Product Management and Marketing Joey Alvarez was quoted as saying.

PMC is offering deals on Apple devices, accessories and services to those who will visit the concept store from Dec. 16 onwards. Details on the promos are available on PMC's official social media pages.

The PMC Apple Premium Partner store will also host free workshops open to the public until Dec. 30.

"Topics include getting personal with iPhone 14 and iPhone 14 Pro, productivity with iPad, switching to Mac, project management with Mac, and portrait photography with iPhone. Conducted by Apple-certified PMC trainers, similar special sessions will be scheduled occasionally at the new store for anyone to join," PMC added.

HONOR set to launch foldable flagship phone in the country

SMART devices brand HONOR this week launched its foldable flagship phone, which it said will be available in the Philippines soon.

The HONOR Magic Vs is the brand's latest foldable phone that "pushes industry benchmarks in design, display, performance and user experience, making it the perfect companion for business and entertainment."

"We are thrilled to introduce our next-generation foldable flagship, the HONOR Magic Vs, which packs groundbreaking innovations and exceptional user experience into an elegant and stylish design," Stephen Cheng, HONOR vice-president for marketing, was quoted as saying in a statement.

"The HONOR Magic Vs will be our very first foldable flagship to debut in overseas markets and we



are confident that it will deliver huge advancements, transforming how people all around the world use their smartphones," Mr. Cheng added.

The HONOR Magic Vs is 12.9-millimeter thin when folded and weighs 261 grams, which the brand said makes it one of the

lightest foldable phones in the market.

The phone also has a gearless hinge made through single-piece casting processing technology.

"The HONOR Magic Vs is able to withstand over 400,000 folds, equivalent to more than 10 years of use with 100 folds per day, cre-

ating a new first in foldable smartphone design," the brand said.

The foldable phone has a 6.45-inch external display with a 21:9 aspect ratio and a 90% screen-to-body ratio.

Meanwhile, its main screen is an extra-wide 7.9-inch display for ease of multitasking and better viewing.

The HONOR Magic Vs has an AI-enabled HONOR Image Engine and triple-camera system made up of a 54-megapixel (MP) IMX800 main camera, a 50MP ultra-wide and macro main lens, and an 8MP 3X optical zoom camera.

It is powered by a Qualcomm Snapdragon 8+ Gen 1 Mobile Platform with enhanced GPU and CPU performance. It also supports the 66-watt wired HONOR SuperCharge fast charging.

The phone comes in three colors: orange, cyan and black.

Musk says to step down as Twitter CEO once he finds successor

BILLIONAIRE Elon Musk said on Tuesday he will step down as chief executive officer (CEO) of Twitter, Inc. once he finds a replacement, but will still run some key divisions of the social media platform.

"I will resign as CEO as soon as I find someone foolish enough to take the job! After that, I will just run the software & servers teams," Mr. Musk wrote on Twitter.

Mr. Musk's \$44-billion takeover of Twitter in October has been marked by chaos and controversy,

with some investors questioning if he is too distracted to also properly run his electric vehicle automaker Tesla, Inc., in which he is personally involved in production and engineering.

This is the first time Mr. Musk has mentioned stepping down as chief of the social media platform, after Twitter users voted for him to resign in a poll, which the billionaire launched on Sunday evening.

In the poll, 57.5% of around 17.5 million people voted "yes." Mr.

Musk had said on Sunday he would abide by the results. He has not provided a time frame for when he will step down and no successor has been named.

The poll results capped a whirlwind week that included changes to Twitter's privacy policy and the suspension — and reinstatement — of journalists' accounts that drew condemnation from news organizations, advocacy groups and officials across Europe.

Wall Street calls for Mr. Musk to step down had been growing for weeks and recently even Tesla bulls have questioned his focus on the social media platform and how it might distract him from running the electric vehicle maker.

Mr. Musk has himself said he had too much on his plate, and that he would look for a Twitter CEO. He said on Sunday, though, that there was no successor and that "no one wants the job who can actually keep Twitter alive." — Reuters



TikTok ban for US government phones advances, threatening its ad revenue, experts say

WASHINGTON — A proposal to bar federal employees from using Chinese app TikTok on government devices appeared set to become law, threatening to deal a blow to the company's reputation and scare off advertisers even if it will not affect many users, experts said.

US lawmakers early on Tuesday included the proposal in a key spending bill, as first reported by Reuters, virtually ensuring its passage later this week following a Senate vote to green-light a similar measure.

The move is the latest US effort to crack down on the popular social media platform, which has been the subject of a slew of recent state bans and a long-running US national security probe over fears the app could be used by the Chinese government to censor content or spy on Americans.

While the new federal ban is not expected to put a significant dent in TikTok's estimated 130 million US users, experts consulted by Reuters said the measure could damage the company's reputation, which could in turn scare away valuable advertisers.

"That is what TikTok is at massive risk for: of having that brand reputational (blow) impact the overall revenue monetization that they can make," said Eunice Shin, a partner at brand strategist Prophet.

TikTok said in a statement it was "disappointed that Congress has moved to ban TikTok on government devices — a political gesture that will do nothing to advance national security interests — rather than encouraging the administration to conclude its national security review."

The ban was tucked into a massive omnibus measure to fund US government operations that is expected to be voted on this week and then sent to President Joseph R. Biden for his signature. The bill gives the White House Office of Management and Budget 60 days "to develop standards and guidelines for executive agencies requiring the removal" of TikTok from federal devices.

Many federal agencies, including the White House and the Defense, Homeland Security

and State departments, already banned TikTok from government-owned devices.

White House National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said late Tuesday the Biden administration welcomes "Congress codifying this restriction across the federal government" and noted the Biden administration "has never allowed TikTok on White House devices."

"The ban is minimal, extraordinarily minimal on the overall TikTok user base," said Matthew Quint, a brand expert at Columbia Business School. "The question is more, 'will this action get the ball rolling to create a bipartisan movement to fully ban the service because of a potential threat to national security?'"

The proposal last week won the backing of Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy.

But prior bids to ban the app have run up against free speech concerns. In 2020, Republican then-President Donald Trump attempted to block new users from downloading TikTok and to ban other transactions that would have effectively barred the app's use in the United States but lost a series of court battles in part on free-speech grounds.

Efforts to ban the app have gained steam in recent weeks after US FBI Director Christopher Wray said last month it poses national security risks, flagging the threat that the Chinese government could harness the app to influence users or control their devices.

On Monday, state agencies in Louisiana and West Virginia became the latest to ban the use of TikTok on government devices over concern that China could use it to track Americans and censor content.

Some 19 of the 50 US states have now at least partially blocked access on government computers to TikTok. Most of the restrictions came within the past two weeks.

The US government Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, a national security body, has for months sought to reach a national security agreement to protect the data of US TikTok users, but it appears no deal will be reached before year's end. — Reuters

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