

# Gen Z goes retro: Why the generation is ditching smartphones for 'dumb phones'

THERE is a growing movement among Gen Z to do away with smartphones and revert back to "less smart" phones like old-school flip and slide phones. Flip phones were popular in the mid-1990s and 2000s, but now seem to be making a comeback among younger people.

While this may seem like a counter-intuitive trend in our technology-reliant society, a Reddit forum dedicated to "dumb phones" is steadily gaining in popularity. According to a CNBC new report, flip phones sales are on the rise in the US.

Gen Z's interest in flip phones is the latest in a series of obsessions young people are having with the aesthetic of the 1990s and 2000s. Y2K fashion has been steadily making a comeback over the past few years and the use of vintage technology, like disposable cameras, is on the rise.

There are a few reasons why, including nostalgia and yearning for an idealized version of the past, doing a "digital detox" and increasing privacy concerns.

Nostalgia is a complex emotion that involves reconnecting with the happy emotions of an idealized past by recalling positive memories.

Over the years, marketers have realized that nostalgia is a powerful way to evoke positive emotions — so much so



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**A WEALTH of research shows that nostalgia can result in consumers being willing to pay more, enhanced brand ties, increase purchase intention, and increased digital brand engagement.**

that nostalgia marketing has become a recognized marketing strategy. It leverages positive memories and feelings associated with the past to create an emotional connection with consumers.

A wealth of research shows that nostalgia can result in consumers being willing to pay more, enhanced brand ties, increased purchase intention, and increase digital brand engagement.

Nostalgia may be a driving factor behind people purchasing flip phones because they evoke memories of a previous era in mobile communication.

But nostalgia marketing doesn't just target the younger generation — it's also a powerful tool for advertising to those who grew up using older mobile devices. Nokia is an example of a company that understands this well.

A YouTube advertisement for Nokia's 2720 V Flip shows how brands can use nostalgia marketing to appeal to customers and drive product sales.

When older generations speak about objects from the past, they usually hearken back to "the golden era" or "golden time." The comment

section of the Nokia video showcases this kind of thinking.

One comment reads: "My first phone was a Nokia 2760! It was also a flip phone. This brings back good memories." Another says: "I am definitely getting this just for good old memories. When life was easy."

Another reason why people might be purchasing flip phones is to do a digital detox and cut down on screen time. A digital detox refers to a period of time when a person refrains from using their electronic devices, like smartphones, to focus on social connections in the physical world and reduce stress.

In 2022, people in the US spent more than 4.5 hours daily on their mobile devices. In Canada, adults self-reported spending about 3.2 hours per day in front of screens in 2022. Children and youth had about three hours of screen time per day in 2016 and 2017.

Excessive smartphone usage can result in a number of harmful side effects, such as sleep disruption. Just over 50% of Canadians check their smartphones before they go to sleep.

The blue light emitted from smartphones may suppress melatonin production, making it harder to sleep and causing physiological issues including reduced glucose tolerance, increased blood pressure, and increased inflammatory markers.

The increased level of digital connectivity and the pressure to respond instantly, especially in a post-pandemic world where many people work remotely, can lead to increased levels of anxiety and stress. Being constantly online can also lead to reduced social connectivity and can negatively impact personal relationships and social skills.

The constant digital noise and multitasking nature of smartphones and apps like TikTok can lead to decreased attention spans. From my personal observations in the classroom, I've noticed students find it difficult to concentrate for prolonged periods of time.

A condition known as text neck can also occur when a person spends extended periods of time looking down at an electronic device. The repetitive strain of holding the head forward and down can cause discomfort and pain in the neck.

As people become more aware of the potential side effects of excessive screen time and constant digital connectivity, some are choosing to digitally detox. Flip phones are a way people can limit their exposure to digital noise and build a healthier relationship with technology.

Smartphones have a long list of advanced features such as cameras, GPS,

and tons of mobile applications — all of which can store and access a significant list of personal data.

In some cases, personal data can be used for targeted advertisements, but in worst cases that information can be leaked as part of a data breach. More and more people are growing concerned with how their data is being collected, shared and used by companies and online platforms.

It's natural to feel worried about the potential misuse of our personal information. That's why some people are taking matters into their own hands and seeking out creative ways to limit the amount of data being collected about them.

Old-fashioned flip phones generally have fewer features that collect and store personal data compared to smartphones. That can make them a more attractive option for people concerned with privacy, data breaches, or surveillance.

But this trend doesn't mean smartphones are going out of style. There are still millions of smartphones being shipped worldwide every year. The trend may result in users opting to own both a smartphone and a flip phone, allowing users to digitally detox and reduce screen time without sacrificing the benefits of social media. — **The Conversation via Reuters**

# OFW remittances drive adoption of digital payments in PHL — Visa

REMITTANCES from overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) are driving the use of app-based digital payments, according to a report by Visa.

The report showed there was a high frequency of sending and receiving remittances among Filipinos, as 48% of Filipino respondents said they send money internationally at least once per month, while 77% said they receive money a few times a year.

More than half or 57% of Filipino respondents also said they intend to use digital platforms for remittances more often in the future.

"Remittance habits are also changing with ease of use and better technology — we are seeing remittances being sent and received in less than a day in Asia Pacific, spurring increased frequencies," Visa Asia-Pacific Head of New Payment Flows T.R. Ramachandran said in a statement.

"Beyond livelihoods, we are also seeing more remittances made in support of key

life milestones, such as funding college education, making investments for the long term, or saving for an overseas property purchase," Mr. Ramachandran said.

While a number of remittance users are using digital platforms, Filipino respondents said they were generally open to it, as they see these as a secure way to send and receive money.

The report showed that majority or 71% of Filipino respondents said they adopted app-based solutions to receive funds from OFWs.

Filipinos surveyed also said they primarily receive remittances (70%) rather than sending (17%), Visa said.

It also showed that female OFWs send money earned from their jobs in domestic work or healthcare industries, remitting just as much as their male counterparts.

"Fast, easy and secure payments can make a profound difference to families, communities, and economies around the world," Mr. Ramachandran said.



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**THE central bank wants 50% of total retail transactions done digitally.**

"This new research shows incredible acceleration of digital payments and how consumer expectations of speed

and ease of use is underpinned by the demand for better security," he added.

However, Visa said in the report that high fees and issues with calculating the exchange rate remain pain points in the adoption of app-based digital remittance for the broader Asia-Pacific.

"Almost all physical surveyed remittance users report at least one issue, such as speed, convenience, and a confusing/difficult process," Visa said.

It said that remittances are not just a lifeline for everyday needs, but also a key economic driver in the Philippines, with remittances contributing an estimated 9.3% in gross domestic product in 2021, according to data from the Philippine Statistics Authority.

The central bank wants 50% of total retail transactions done digitally and to bring at least 70% of Filipino adults into the financial system by this year under its Digital Payments Transformation Roadmap. — **A.M.C. Sy**

## PAL to buy nine A350-1000s for long-haul fleet, future demand

FLAG carrier Philippine Airlines (PAL) is set to welcome nine A350-1000s to add to its fleet which it said will help with its expansion plans.

Under PAL's "Ultra Long Haul Fleet" project, the nine Airbus aircraft will be operated on nonstop services from Manila to North America.

"The A350-1000 combines greater range capability with the higher capacity we need to serve future demand. It's the perfect aircraft to enable PAL to meet its expansion plans in a sustainable way, while offering passengers the highest levels of onboard comfort," PAL Chief Operating Officer Captain Stanley K. Ng said in a statement.

The new aircraft will join PAL's two A350-900s that are currently flying to destinations in North America, Asia, and Australia.

"Flying passengers farther and in greater comfort, the A350 brings a step-change in fuel efficiency and an immediate significant contribution to reduced emissions. We look forward to working closely with our long-standing customer

Philippine Airlines as it moves forward with its long-haul fleet modernization program," Airbus SE Chief Commercial Officer Christian Scherer said.

Mr. Ng said that the additional aircraft will allow the company to fly nonstop transpacific and transpolar routes all year and provide it the ability to directly link the Philippines to Europe.

A350s offer the longest-range capability of any commercial airliner in production today as it is capable of flying 8,700 nautical miles or 16,100 kilometers non-stop.

As of April 31, Airbus' wide-bodied A550 family had won 928 firm orders from 54 customers, 530 of which currently fly in 40 airlines for long-haul routes.

Aside from A350-1000s and A350-900s, PAL also operates A330-300s to serve the Middle East, Australia, and various points in Asia.

The company also flies single-aisle A320s and A321 on its domestic and regional network out of hubs in Manila and Cebu. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

## Megaworld net income rises 33% on sustained business recovery

MEGAWORLD Corp. on Wednesday reported an attributable net income of P4.1 billion in the first quarter, up 33% from last year, driven by improvements in all its core businesses.

In a stock market disclosure, the listed township developer saw a 24% jump in consolidated revenues to P16.2 billion in the three-month period.

"We start the year strong as we continue sustaining the recovery momentum of our businesses and finally grow past our pandemic performance for the first time since the pandemic began in 2020. This affirms our position in the industry and ability to quickly adapt in this new environment and capture opportunities," Kevin Andrew L. Tan, Megaworld chief strategy officer said in a statement.

"As we move forward, we are now focused on sustaining our strong growth and look to close the year with a record performance for Megaworld," Mr. Tan added.

Real estate sales went up by 17% for the quarter to P9.4 billion on the back of higher project completion rates, while residential pre-sales rose 71% to P39.6 billion. The increase was driven by the renewed demand

for projects in McKinley West and Uptown Bonifacio in Taguig City.

Leasing revenues saw an 18% growth during the three-month period to P4.4 billion due to the better performance of the mall segment.

Megaworld Premier Offices booked a 5% increase in rental income to P3.1 billion in the first quarter from the P3 billion recorded the previous year on the back of growing tenants from traditional, business process outsourcing, and emerging businesses.

Megaworld Lifestyle Malls, its mall segment, reported 73% higher revenue for the quarter at P1.2 billion due to full rent collection and higher spending.

Meanwhile, Megaworld Hotels & Resorts reached a top line of P813 million as of March, up 62% from last year, driven by the growth of its in-city hotels, meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions or MICE operations, and strong revenues from food and beverage.

Megaworld has 30 master-planned integrated urban townships, integrated lifestyle communities, and lifestyle estates across the country.

At the stock exchanges, its shares rose by 1.01% to P2 apiece. — **Adrian H. Halili**

## ACEN joint venture plans energy storage system in Vietnam

AMI AC Renewables, through its subsidiary AMI Khanh Hoa, has signed a memorandum of understanding with Honeywell International, Inc. to collaborate on a 7.5-megawatt-hours battery energy storage system (BESS) project in Khanh Hoa, Vietnam.

AMI AC Renewables is a joint venture between ACEN Corp. and AMI Renewables.

In a statement on Wednesday, ACEN said the pilot proj-

ect, which was co-funded by a grant from US Mission Vietnam, will demonstrate how energy storage can help Vietnam integrate more renewables into its power system.

The project plans to use an energy storage system of Honeywell and integrate it into a 50-megawatt-peak solar farm, which is operated by AMI Khanh Hoa.

"The success of the BESS project at AMI Khanh Hoa will

be among the achievements for the bilateral cooperation relationship in technological, technical, and economic development between the US and Vietnam, and help contribute to Vietnam's target of Net Zero emissions by 2050," Nguyen Nam Thang, AMI AC Renewables chief executive officer, said in a media release.

AMI AC Renewables has been developing and operating renewable energy proj-

ects in Vietnam, including the 252-megawatt (MW) wind project in Quang Binh and the 80-MW solar plants in Khanh Hoa and Dak Lak.

In 2021, AMI AC Renewables received a grant of \$2.9 million from the US Mission Vietnam to develop the project.

"Battery energy storage solutions are vital to advancing sustainability efforts. We look forward to collaborating with AMI AC Renewables to extend

renewable energy availability from the Khanh Hoa solar farm beyond hours when there is no sunlight," said Ramanathan Valliyappan, general manager of Honeywell Process Solutions Asia Pacific.

Energy storage is being put forward as a key element of the energy transition partnership between Vietnam and its international partners to support Vietnam's net zero ambition by 2050. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

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All applicants must have 1-5 years' experience in respective field not more than 50 years old and proficient in both Mandarin Chinese and English. Chinese nationality is encouraged to apply. You may contact us through phone +83 977 8237 447 / +83 (46) 4129576 or through email hr.recruitment@kwc.com.ph for further inquiries.

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- Conduct intensive collection activities and follow-up of overdue accounts and escalates problematic accounts to the market
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- Participates in various Order to Cash Continuous Improvement initiatives

Qualification:

- Bachelor's degree graduate preferably with a degree in Finance Accounting
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