

realme to launch entry-level C53 smartphone in PHL

REALME PHILIPPINES (realme) is set to launch on June 22 its new budget smartphone in the country, the realme C53.

“The realme C53 brings together yet again the Champion-level aesthetics and features for a bang-for-your-buck smartphone,” realme Philippines said in a statement last week.

The realme C53 will be launched via livestream on realme’s Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube pages on June 22 at 6pm. Pricing details will also be released that day.

The brand said the realme C53 is a stylish, segment-leading device for the youth. It is the thinnest phone of realme to date at just 7.49 millimeters for improved comfort while holding.

It is manufactured via a gold filament gradient coating process, where the exterior of the C53 features different raster textures under certain angles and lighting conditions. The brand likened the phone’s finish to optical 3D illusions called cross-view stereograms.

The realme C53 comes in two colors, namely Champion Gold and Mighty Black.

“Gold, traditionally associated with a podium finish, gets reimagined to be the color of everyday Champions: promising a daily tech companion that wins in both looks and features,” realme Philippines said.

Based on realme’s global website, the C53 features a 6.74-inch display, which is slightly larger than the C55, with a 90Hz refresh rate.

It is powered by a 5000mAh battery and supports 33W SUPERVOOC charging.

The phone also has an octa-core chipset, 12 gigabytes (GB) of Dynamic RAM, and 128GB of storage.

It sports a 50-megapixel camera with artificial intelligence capabilities.

A detailed review of the realme C53 will come out in *BusinessWorld* next week. — **Miguel Hanz L. Antivola**

Spotify plans new premium tier, expected to include HiFi audio

SPOTIFY Technology SA is planning a more expensive subscription option that’s expected to include high-fidelity (HiFi) audio in an effort to drive more revenue and placate investors who’ve been saying the company should raise its prices.

To augment its current “Premium” tier, Spotify will give subscribers expanded access to audiobooks, either through a specific number of hours free per month or a specific number of titles. There will be an option to purchase more. Currently, the company only sells audiobooks à la carte through its app. Spotify plans to introduce that feature in the US in October, after first launching in markets abroad.

“At Spotify, we are constantly iterating and ideating to improve our product offering and offer value to users,” a company spokesperson wrote in an e-mailed statement. “But we don’t comment on speculation around possible new features and do not have anything new to share at this time.”

Shares fell 2.7% to \$155.73 at 10:44 a.m. in New York.

These changes might be enough to drive new revenue and maintain interest in a stock that has doubled so far this year to \$159.99 per share. Spotify has been competing fiercely with

the rival services from Apple Inc. and Amazon.com, Inc., both of which hiked their standard plans’ prices by a dollar in the US to \$10.99 per month in the past year. Spotify’s \$9.99 Premium plan, which includes access to podcasts and ad-free music listening, has remained the same in the US since the service launched stateside. The company also offers a free version with commercials.

Chief Executive Officer Daniel Ek said on an earnings call earlier this year that the company balances pricing changes with the desire to grow subscribers. In 2022, the company increased prices in more than 40 markets.

“It’s definitely something that we’re doing, and we’re looking at it as a balanced portfolio approach, where in some markets we’re selectively increasing prices, because we’re in a more mature place,” he said. “In some markets, we’re mostly focused on growth.”

The company has been reining in costs this year in an effort to achieve profitability. It reduced staff by 6% in January and then cut an additional 2% of employees earlier this month. It also let high-profile podcast deals lapse and is looking to sublease floors in its New York City office. — **Bloomberg**

Acumen with real-time insights: The power of data visualization and analytics

By Stuart Fisher

WITH business environments today characterized by highly saturated and distributed markets, enhanced customer experiences is key to differentiation and competitive advantage. While digitization inevitably is the path to success, this must be done carefully and with the intention of steering the business to marry smart investments that directly benefit the experience their customers have with the brand.

According to a CX Network report, metrics used to measure customer experience investment challenges across the Asia Pacific prove that clarity around digital strategy is critical to tapping into the opportunities that digitization brings. However, for organizations to be confident of building customer loyalty and retention, efforts must be focused on deriving meaningful business insights from real-time operational data, a combination of analytics and data visualization.

ANALYTICS AND DATA VISUALIZATION: LINCHPINS OF THE MODERN ENTERPRISE

For the modern enterprise that wants to keep pace with evolving demands, operational processing of transactions, interactions and analytics is the cornerstone

of delighting customers. Through insightful analytics and impactful data visualization, organizations can identify correlations across variables, allowing for more strategic decision-making that, ultimately, improves the customer experience.

Analytics and data visualization can also be applied to decipher historical data which shine a light on recurring trends and uncover future opportunities. Think about how the frequency of variables can elucidate the minutiae of consumer behavior, such as how and when purchases are made to other supplementary goods that are browsed by customers. This not only facilitates upselling but also discovering new potential markets, as well as opportunities to innovate and improve existing processes and workflows.

THE CASE FOR MODERN DATA VISUALIZATION

Recognizing patterns more efficiently empowers users to comprehend large amounts of data at a glance. With users more sophisticated and expecting more from their digital experiences, businesses need to be able to count on their ability to understand the effectiveness of existing strategies and internal processes. Doubly so, now that the marked uptick in digital-driven

trends from the pandemic are likely to remain permanent, according to McKinsey’s Consumer Pulse Survey.

When done right, data visualization boosts sales with existing customers while opening a whole new range of markets and demographics for potential new business. For instance, take the following use cases as proof of how data visualization is driving businesses to be nimble and stay lean:

- **Energy:** Offshore oil rigs generate a great deal of data that needs to be collected and consolidated. At first glance, it’s filled with difficult-to-decipher decimals and data points, but when it’s converted into a visual graph, it becomes easier to interpret. The data is then segmented based on various attributes including environmental factors, temperature, pressure, flow rate and more. By visualizing the data in a digestible manner using Tableau, for example, users can derive insights that help manage and forecast production and demand for oil. This is particularly important during times with rising gas prices. With the right database and data visualization tool, processing facilities can handle more data, driving real-time analysis that helps oil and gas operations run more

efficiently, which is crucial for healthy production rates.

- **Healthcare:** Hospitals and clinics rely on data visualization to help optimize their revenue. From a data perspective, they are interested in understanding what procedures were being performed, why and when patients are making appointments, how often doctors are seeing patients, etc. Throughout the pandemic, hospitals were fully-booked with COVID patients, but concurrently experienced a decline in scheduled appointments and procedures for visits including nonurgent surgeries and annual check-ups. This has a direct impact on revenue, and with all the new data coming in, simply looking at data tables is not sufficient in drawing meaningful conclusions. Hence, data visualization plays a big role when extracting outliers and insights, especially since healthcare data comes in from various sources including that of service providers, customers and insurance agencies.

Stuart Fisher is regional vice-president of Couchbase in Asia Pacific and Japan.

FULL STORY

Read the full story by scanning the QR code or by typing the link <<https://rb.gy/fug9y>>

BCI: \$16.5-B worth of projects to be built in PHL this year

BCI Asia Philippines, Inc. said the top developers and architecture firms it named are expected to construct properties worth \$16.5 billion in the country, starting this year.

Last week, BCI Asia held its 18th BCI Asia Awards, which recognized developers and architecture firms that have constructed and designed the greatest volume of buildings in seven Asian markets: Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

For this year, the most active architecture firms in the Philippines are Aidea, Inc., Arch. Jonathan O. Gan & Associates, ArchiGlobal, Inc., ASYA Design, Cañizares Architects Design Company, Casas+Architects, JSLA Architects, LPPA Design Group, and Visionary Architecture, Inc.

“The portfolios of these elite architecture firms comprise \$16.5-billion worth of properties scheduled to start construction in the Philippines this year,” said BCI Asia.

The portfolios of the top architecture firms in 2022 comprised \$15.57-billion worth of properties.

BCI Asia also named top developers, which it said have a combined portfolio worth \$19.3 billion, almost eight times higher than the combined portfolio of its 2022 Top Developers at \$2.42 billion.

For 2023, the top developers are Anchor Land Holdings, Inc., CDC Holdings, Inc., Cebu Landmasters, Inc., Robinsons Land Corp., DMCI Project Developers, Inc., Megaworld Corp., Nobleland Ventures, Inc., PH1 World Developers, Inc., Primehomes Real Estate Development, Inc., and SM Prime Holdings, Inc.

“These firms were chosen based on the greatest aggregate value of projects under construction during the last full calendar year, weighted by the extent of their sustainability efforts. For architecture firms, pre-tender projects were included to recognize early incorporation of sustainable efforts,” BCI Asia said. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

Maynilad plans to expand new water treatment plant’s output

MAYNILAD Water Services, Inc. announced on Wednesday that it is planning to construct additional treatment facilities to expand the output of its New Water treatment plant.

The west zone water concessionaire has received a permanent operational permit from the Department of Health for its New Water treatment plant, allowing it to convert used water into drinking water, the company said in a statement.

“Our receipt of a permanent operational permit for the New Water facility in Parañaque marks the start of our gradual expansion of direct potable water reuse applications, in line with efforts to develop other sustainable sources of raw water supply,” said Maynilad President and Chief Executive Officer Ramoncito S. Fernandez.

The company also said that its plan to construct similar treatment facilities will allow it to capture treated used water from its other sewage treatment plants for conversion into a drinkable water supply.

Maynilad’s P450-million New Water treatment plant receives treated water from a sewage treatment plant, which it subsequently converts into drinkable water.

According to Maynilad’s website, the plant has a daily output of 10 million liters.

In 2022, Maynilad obtained a conditional operational permit that authorized the facility’s operation for one year.

“The issuance of the permanent operational permit is an affirmation that the facility met all requirements during the monitoring period,” Maynilad said.

Maynilad serves the cities of Manila, except portions of San Andres and Sta. Ana. It also operates in Quezon City, Makati, Calocan, Pasay, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Valenzuela, Navotas, and Malabon. It also supplies the cities of Cavite, Bacoor, and Imus, and the towns of Kawit, Noveleta, and Rosario, all in Cavite province. — **Ashley Erika O. Jose**

TEAM ENERGY
STRENGTH IN SYNERGY

NURTURING THE FUTURE

Maliit man ang butil ng kaalaman, ang dulo nito'y malaking kaginhawaan.

Our country's future is taking shape right now. From classrooms and auditoriums, to laboratories, libraries, and even our homes – these are the places where learning is fostered.

These spaces determine our tomorrow.

We at Team Energy believe in the value of education. We see that the power we generate isn't only for homes and industries, but also for schools. Whether it's for urban universities or classrooms in remote barrios, we've made it our mission to provide adequate and reliable electricity for students and teachers.

Our commitment to education has been evident through the years – in the programs we've implemented, and the partnerships we've forged.

We've constructed and equipped schools, technical training centers and other learning facilities. We've installed solar energy systems in public schools. We've instilled environmental stewardship by enabling elementary schools to become centers for eco-friendly practices. And our employees volunteer annually to repair and maintain public schools in our host communities.

These efforts reflect our confidence that a brighter future is possible. With focus and determination, we are making a dream come true: to be a nation built on education.

Team Energy is one of the largest independent power producers in the country with more than 2,000 megawatts (MW) of installed generating capacity nationwide. It operates two coal-fired facilities: the 1,200 MW Sual Power Station in Pangasinan and the 735 MW Pagbilao Power Station in Quezon province. It also has a 50% stake in the 420 MW Pagbilao Unit 3 Power Project in Quezon.