

## With no big customers named, AMD's AI chip challenge to Nvidia remains an uphill fight

ADVANCED Micro Devices Inc. (AMD) Tuesday gave new details about an artificial intelligence (AI) chip that will challenge market leader Nvidia Corp., but the company left out what Wall Street wanted to know — who plans to buy it.

Santa Clara, California-based AMD said the forthcoming chip, which will start trickling out in the third quarter followed by mass production beginning in the fourth quarter, will have 192 gigabytes of memory.

That could help tech companies get a handle on the spiraling cost of delivering services similar to ChatGPT, AMD Chief Executive Lisa Su told Reuters in an interview. She spoke following a keynote presentation in San Francisco during which Ms. Su showed an AI system on the MI300X chip writing a poem about the city.

"The more memory that you have, the larger the set of models" the chip can handle, Ms. Su said. "We've seen in customer workloads that it runs much faster. We really do think it's differentiating."

But unlike past presentations where AMD has talked up a major customer for a new chip, AMD did not say who will adopt the MI300X or a smaller version called the MI300A. The company gave no details on how much the chip will cost or how it will bolster its sales.

AMD's shares have doubled in price since the start of the year and touched a 16-month high earlier on Tuesday, but closed down 3.6% after the presentation on the AI strategy. Nvidia shares finished 3.9% higher at \$410.22, making it the first chipmaker to close with a market capitalization above \$1 trillion.

"I think the lack of a (large customer) saying they will use the MI300 A or X may have disappointed the Street. They want AMD to say they have replaced Nvidia in some design," said Kevin Krewell, principal analyst at TIRIAS Research.

Nvidia, whose shares have surged 170% so far this year, dominates the AI computing market with a market share of 80% to 95%, according to analysts.

Nvidia has few competitors working at a large scale. While Intel Corp. and several startups such as Cerebras Systems and SambaNova Systems have competing products, Nvidia's biggest sales threat so far is the internal chip efforts at Alphabet Inc.'s Google and Amazon.com's cloud unit, both of which rent their custom chips to outside developers.

Aside from the AI market, AMD said it has started shipping high volumes of a general purpose central processor chip called "Bergamo" to companies such as Meta Platforms.

Alexis Black Bjorlin, who oversees computing infrastructure at Facebook parent Meta, said the firm has adopted the Bergamo chip, which targets a different part of AMD's data center business that caters to cloud computing providers and other large chip buyers.

But investors were searching for news on AI. Nvidia's lead there has come not only from its chips, but also from more than a decade of providing software tools to AI researchers and learning to anticipate what they will need in chips that take years to design.

AMD on Tuesday provided updates to its Rocrm software, which competes against Nvidia's Cuda software platform.

Soumith Chintala, a Meta vice-president who helped create open-source software for artificial intelligence, during the presentation said he has worked closely with AMD to make it easier for AI developers to use free tools to switch from the "single dominating vendor" of AI chips to other offerings like those from AMD.

"You don't actually have to do that much work — or almost no work in a lot of cases — to go from one platform to the other," Mr. Chintala said. — **Reuters**

# Nokia sees interconnect solutions boosting PHL data center industry

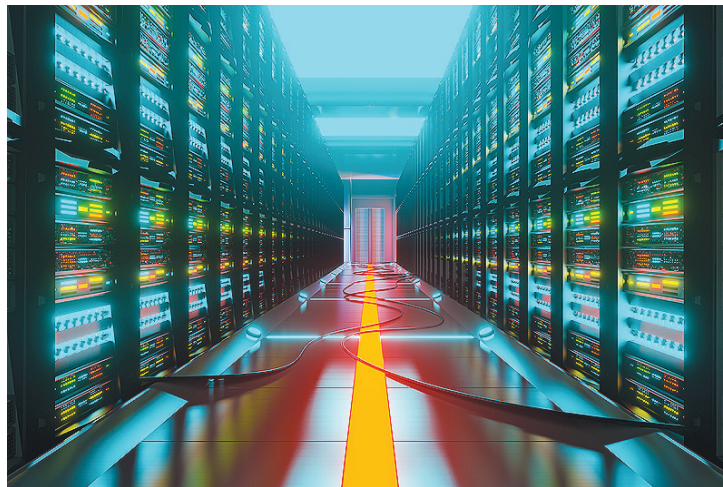
By Justine Irish D. Tabile  
Reporter

BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS solutions provider Nokia expects the development of data center interconnect solutions in the Philippines to support the industry's growth.

"Nokia is a leader in terms of data center interconnect solutions. Data center interconnect solutions are, as we know, networking infrastructure that help connect multiple data centers," Nokia Philippines Head Carlos Alberto Reyes said in an interview.

Mr. Reyes said the Philippines is a strategic location for data centers, making it a viable prospect for data center interconnect solutions.

"The Philippines, at this moment, has a very interesting development of the business in the data center because of the geographical location and because of the different multiple subsea cables that connect the Philippines to the world," he said.



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"At this moment, we consider that the data center interconnect solutions of Nokia can strongly support the development of the data center industry that is developing in the Philippines," he added.

He added that data center interconnect solutions will help in storing large amounts of data from Philippine firms.

"Many of the sectors that are in the Philippines require a high amount of data to be managed at storage like the banking and business process outsourcing indus-

tries, and all of these are reliant on the data center ecosystem that is currently growing in the Philippines. Our solution in Nokia can strongly help the development of these solutions and the performance of the data centers in the Philippines," Mr. Reyes said.

He said Nokia's data center interconnect solutions, which have the highest speed optical links, offer secure protocols and high performance, can contribute to the growing data center industry in the country.

He added that many industries in the Philippines are interested in tapping the services of data centers.

"The Philippines is preparing very well in the direction to have the capacity of data centers and become a very important data center player in the world," Mr. Reyes said.

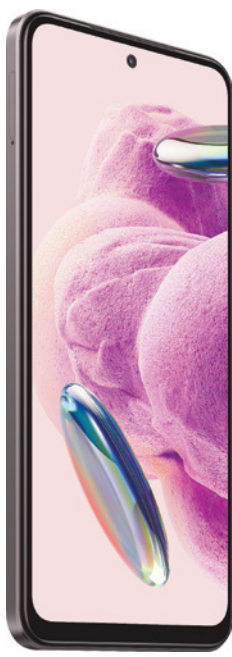
For the industry to grow further, large enterprises, public organizations, and the government should collaborate, he said.

"Large enterprises, government and public organizations are working in the direction that they need to automate and digitalize the way they are working. This definitely requires a data center capacity to handle it," Mr. Reyes said.

One of the challenges that organizations face is how to shift from their old systems to an automated one, he said.

"I think the concept of the data centers and the cloud are fundamental because they can facilitate the process of moving all this data in the proper way and in a cost-effective way," Mr. Reyes added.

## Xiaomi launches new Redmi Note 12 series phones



REDMI NOTE 12S

SMARTPHONE brand Xiaomi last week launched in the Philippines the newest phones in its Redmi Note 12 series, the Note 12 Pro and Note 12S.

Tomi Adrias, Xiaomi Philippines marketing head, said at the launch event last week that the additions to the Redmi Note 12 series aim to enhance smartphone features that matter to the lifestyles of today's youth.

"The new models expand their smartphone options, so they could find the right device that matches their personality and everyday needs," Mr. Adrias said.

"We promise to commit to providing accessible technology at an affordable price," he added.

The Redmi Note 12 Pro has a 108-megapixel (MP) main camera and an 8-MP ultrawide angle camera, supporting 4K video resolution.

It has a 6.67-inch FHD+ AMOLED Dot-Display with a 120Hz refresh rate and support from Dolby Vision and Dolby Atmos.

The phone is also powered by a Snapdragon 732G processor and a 5,000mAh battery with 67W turbocharging.

The Redmi Note 12 Pro is available in the colors Star Blue, Glacier Blue, Polar White, and Graphite Gray.

Meanwhile, the Redmi Note 12S has a 6.43" FHD + AMOLED DotDisplay with a 90Hz refresh rate and 180Hz maximum sampling rate.

It is powered by a MediaTek Helio G96 processor and 5,000mAh battery with 33W fast charging.

Available colors include Ice Blue, Pearl Green, and Onyx Black.

The recommended retail price for the Redmi Note 12 Pro is P14,999, while the Redmi Note 12S is priced at P12,999.

Both products have 8GB of RAM and 256GB of internal storage.

The new smartphones are now available for purchase online and in authorized Xiaomi stores. — **Miguel Hanz L. Antivola**



REDMI NOTE 12 PRO

## Bo's Coffee, Pure Nectar tie up for expansion

By Justine Irish D. Tabile  
Reporter

PURE Nectar Co., Inc. is partnering with Bo's Coffee to roll out juice bars in the latter's stores in a move that is expected to help the cold-press juice brand reach its 30% growth target for 2023.

"We're looking at a 20%-30% increase in sales, easily. Easily, because like Steve was mentioning, we will be partners and they have 130 stores," Pure Nectar President and Chief Executive Officer Alan L. Escalona, referring to Bo's Coffee Founder, Chairman, and Chief Executive Officer Steve D. Benitez. "So, if we will be able to sell our products to 30% or 40% of their stores, that's immediately 50 stores rather than putting up one franchise after the other, which takes time," Mr. Escalona told *BusinessWorld* in a recent interview.

The partnership, slated to start this week, will also serve as a new

revenue stream for Bo's Coffee, said Mr. Escalona.

"For them, it's just an additional revenue. It will start maybe next week," he said. "Pure Nectar and Fruit Magic now became a juice bar solution to different brands."

Fruit Magic Co., Inc. is a manufacturing company that specializes in fruit and vegetable preservation.

To date, Pure Nectar has 10 company-owned stores, five franchised stores, and more than 300 brand-to-brand stores.

### FRANCHISING TRENDS

Mr. Escalona said franchisees, coming out of the pandemic, are becoming more cautious about where to put their money.

"Last year, people were just starting to pick up, people were still adamant to get or not to get because [the economy] just opened," Mr. Escalona said. "They were very careful with the little money that they have. They were very careful in getting a franchise and where to locate it."

"They were very aggressive before, and now they are cautiously aggressive. They want to franchise but some particular parameters should be fulfilled, which is better because the market is now getting more educated with franchising," he added.

This cautious behavior, however, is seen to also benefit the franchising industry as it might reduce "fly-by-night" franchises.

"Hopefully, because of that mentality, there will be less fly-by-night franchises. We want the industry to really grow and how does it grow? By more successes. If there would be more stories of success, it would be easier to entice people to invest," he said.

Mr. Escalona also said that more younger people are getting into franchising.

"I think it's because of the thinking that they want to control their time and that they want to be their own boss," he said.

However, not all of them have the capital or the investment capacity to buy a franchise.

"What happens is they work first, save and partly get funds from friends and family to open one," he added.

### INDUSTRY OUTLOOK

"The outlook is very good. It is because franchising has an 80%-90% chance of winning or of success," Mr. Escalona said.

The reason behind this is that the systems and the brand already exist. An investor will just need to duplicate it.

"So the success rate is very high, so [the industry] is just going to thrive," he said.

Mr. Escalona also said many businesses that never used franchises before are now open to it or at least part of its concept.

"The word franchise nowadays is being applied to almost all types of business. It may not be exact, but a portion of the franchising system is being done in different aspects now of businesses. Those businesses that we thought could not be franchised, are now being franchised," he said.

## Dingdong eyes restaurant reservations, retail shops, motorcycle taxis

LAST-MILE delivery solution startup Dingdong plans to explore restaurant reservations, retail shops, and the motorcycle taxi business to diversify its services.

"To further enhance the seamless experience, we will introduce a unique feature that allows customers to reserve tables at our wide selection of partner restaurants," Dingdong Founder and Chairman Dong Dantes said in an e-mail interview.

"Looking ahead, our application aims to expand its services

to include retail shops, incorporating exciting and innovative features that set a new standard in the e-commerce space. We are also exploring the possibility of entering the motorcycle taxi business in the near future," he added.

According to Mr. Dantes, one of the growth areas for delivery businesses in the Philippines is the growing demand and shift in consumer preferences.

"Delivery service providers are expanding beyond their traditional role of goods delivery, ven-

turing into sectors such as food, grocery, and pharmacy delivery," Mr. Dantes said.

"This strategic diversification allows them to access new revenue streams and reach a broader customer base," he added. "This expansion also creates opportunities for partnerships and cross-promotion with local businesses, driving mutual growth."

On May 30, Dingdong and on-demand food and door-to-door delivery mobile application RiderKo signed a memorandum of

agreement to create an all-in-one platform for local delivery service.

Starting June 12, the Dingdong application, powered by RiderKo, will be available for download on App Store for iOS and Play Store for Android.

Aside from diversification, Mr. Dantes also sees technological advancement and customer demand for sustainable options as growth areas for the delivery services industry.

"Advancements in technology have revolutionized the delivery

services industry. From real-time tracking to route optimization and automated systems, technology plays a vital role in improving efficiency, reducing costs, and enhancing the overall customer experience," said Mr. Dantes.

"Another growth factor in the delivery service industry is the sustainability and eco-consciousness of the customers: Customers and businesses are increasingly conscious of reducing their carbon footprint and opting for eco-friendly delivery options, such as

electric vehicles and environmentally friendly packaging," he said.

Mr. Dantes said delivery service providers that will prioritize sustainability are likely to gain a competitive edge.

"This is the reason why in our pipeline, we are looking at providing e-motorcycles in the future," he said.

Dingdong is set to pilot e-motorcycles from Passenger Urban and Rapid Electric Vehicle Solutions, Inc. (PURE-EV) as a delivery option. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**