

## LinkedIn's verification feature now available in the Philippines

SOCIAL MEDIA platform LinkedIn Corp. has made its verification badge feature available to Filipino users to help in the identification of genuine accounts.

"We've brought our new identity verification feature to the Philippines to help our members make more informed decisions about whether the people and businesses they interact with are real," LinkedIn Country Lead for the Philippines and Head of Growth Markets Atul Harkisanka said in a statement.

This free feature requires users to submit a government-issued ID that will be vetted by one of LinkedIn's verification partners. In the Philippines, members can verify their identity through the Persona platform.

"Our aim is for every member of the global workforce to

verify at least one attribute of their professional identity, with an aspirational goal of 100 million verified members by 2025," Mr. Harkisanka said.

There are more than 30 million LinkedIn members worldwide who have a verification badge on their profiles.

LinkedIn currently has 13 million users in the Philippines, including those seeking to connect with fellow professionals and those seeking employment.

The verification feature is integrated into some job postings, Mr. Harkisanka said. About 20% of all job postings on the platform have a verification badge.

Verified profiles can get 60% more views, 30% more messages, and 50% more comments and interactions for their posts, he added. — **Aubrey Rose A. Inosante**

# PHL saw most financial-related phishing attempts in the region

THE PHILIPPINES ranked first in the Southeast Asian region in terms of the number of financial-related phishing attempts on businesses' devices in 2023, according to global cybersecurity firm Kaspersky.

In a report released on Monday, Kaspersky reported that the Philippines recorded 163,279 detected and blocked financial phishing attempts last year, three times higher than 52,914 cases recorded in 2022.

This was followed by Indonesia with 97,465 attempts and Vietnam with 36,130 incidents. Thailand and Singapore saw the least number of financial phishing attacks at 25,227 and 9,502, respectively.

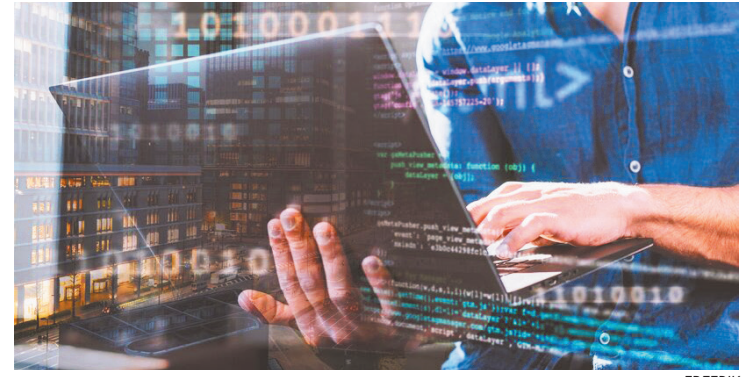
"Phishing is a trusted technique for cybercriminals when it comes to infiltrating business networks because they usually work. The rise of generative AI (artificial intelligence) helps cybercriminals to make phishing messages or scam resources more convincing. As a result, it becomes challenging for people to distinguish between a

scam and a legitimate communication. That's why the role of robust security solutions increases," Kaspersky General Manager for Southeast Asia Yeo Siang Tiong said in a statement.

Kaspersky defined financial phishing as fraudulent resources related to banking, payment systems, and digital shops. Payment system phishing includes platforms or pages impersonating known brands, it said.

"Phishing persuades users to take action which gives a scammer access to your device, accounts, or personal information. By pretending to be a person or organization the users trust, they can more easily infect the victim with malware or steal their information," Kaspersky said.

"These social engineering schemes 'bait' with trust to get valuable information. This could be anything from a social media login, to your entire identity via your social security number. These schemes may urge the user



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to open an attachment, follow a link, fill out a form, or reply with personal information," it said.

The cybersecurity firm blocked a total of 455,708 financial phishing attempts targeting companies of various sizes in Southeast Asia last year, it said. This was 44.6% lower than the 822,536 recorded in the previous year.

"Cybercriminals employ various tactics, including financial-related phishing, to deceive employees and trick them into falling

victim to an attack... Tools to help safeguard against human error are a vital step forward, but they can't exclude employee education, skills development, and overall strengthening of the company's ability to detect and respond to cyberattacks," Mr. Yeo said.

Firms should prioritize employee education, skills development, and strengthening their ability to detect and respond to cyberattacks, he added. — **Aubrey Rose A. Inosante**

## Balancing sustainability and productivity in the digitalization of the PHL economy

By Rajesh Ganesan

Since the devastation caused by typhoon Yolanda, there has been a significant increase in Filipino awareness regarding the connection between climate change, carbon emissions, and the growing severity of weather-related disasters. At the same time, the country is undergoing a process of digital transformation as it strives to keep pace with its neighbors.

While the adoption of new technologies has positively impacted the workplace, workforce, and employee workload, it has also had adverse effects on the environment. Both the manufacturing and transportation of IT hardware, as well as software development and usage, contribute greatly to carbon emissions.

To sustain the country's economic growth through digitalization, business leaders must prioritize sustainability alongside their modernization efforts. It is also important for businesses to operate their technology within the framework of compliance, laws, and sustainability.

### LESS COSTS AND CARBON EMISSIONS THROUGH ENERGY CONSERVATION

While some see sustainability as a source of additional expenses, it can contribute positively to the bottom line. For example, energy conservation not only lessens a company's carbon footprint, but it also reduces operational expenses by lowering electricity bills.

This is particularly important given that the Philippines has some of the most expensive electricity rates in all of Asia, along with the anticipated depletion of the Malampaya gas fields next year and the power shortages expected to follow.

### REDUCING POWER DRAIN THROUGH ENDPOINT MANAGEMENT

One way businesses and other organizations can quickly make an impact is by addressing the excessive use of devices such as computers and printers, implementing energy conservation practices in the workplace, and making workplace devices as energy-efficient as possible. This starts with knowing how much energy is being consumed by your digital assets, like servers, kiosks, laptops, mobile devices, and tablets, followed by recommending what

your organization can do to reduce carbon emissions from these devices.

For example, people may make a habit of leaving their computers on while out for lunch or at a meeting. But that unnecessarily consumes energy, especially when done every day and across the whole workplace.

Assuming that well-disseminated policies addressing this problem are already in place in a particular workplace, business leaders can complement these efforts through endpoint management systems. This allows organizations to monitor the energy consumption of individual endpoints and then take action remotely whenever needed.

For example, users can automate the shutting down of specific groups of computers based on their users' working hours and days off. An endpoint management solution can also automate measures to reduce the energy consumption of computers when idle, such as by reducing display brightness or putting the monitor display to sleep.

Aside from the automation of tasks that reduce excessive and unnecessary electricity consumption, an endpoint management tool can also enable deci-

sion-makers to see the bigger picture when it comes to implementing energy conservation. This enables effective decision-making and impactful sustainability measures across the organization.

### ENHANCING DATA CENTERS' ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The technologies deployed in data centers today are not sustainability-friendly. With the amount of hardware, cooling, and processing power that data centers need, organizations need software that can monitor the usage of these energy sources.

Maximizing the operational efficiency of their data centers is another way for businesses and other organizations to conserve energy. While data center management practices and solutions are known primarily for enhancing performance, they can also monitor metrics such as CPU health, CPU temperature, fan speed, and power consumption to guide the operation and maintenance of data centers, and implement energy conservation measures.

For example, while the default climate in the country is hot, requiring more cooling of data centers, there are seasons, or even just days and weeks during the

warm season, when the climate is cooler. Integrating smart temperature control devices in a data center management platform reduces the performance of cooling devices when temperatures are cooler and prevents wasting electricity.

### SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS EVERYTHING, INCLUDING THE BOTTOM LINE

Promoting sustainability is crucial for contemporary businesses, and it should not be overlooked. Organizations should start by changing their mindsets and introduce one sustainability aspect at a time into their business practices. Not only does sustainability contribute to efforts that make our world better, but embracing environmental and social sustainability also lowers costs, makes brands more enticing for consumers and business partners, and enhances regulatory agility. Embracing rather than being indifferent towards this push for sustainability will only be a boon for Philippine organizations, elevating brand reputations through accountability and making digital operations work for the environment.

Rajesh Ganesan is the president of ManagementEngine.

## Securities commission embarking on nationwide sustainability roadshow

THE Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) announced on Wednesday a nationwide roadshow that aims to promote sustainability among small, medium, and large enterprises.

In a statement, the commission said the roadshow aims to introduce sustainability reporting, foster awareness, build capacity, develop measuring tools, and establish monitoring schemes to embed sustainability in business practices.

The roadshow was launched in collaboration with Accelerating Green and Climate Finance project funded by the Canadian government and implemented by the United Nations Development Program.

"Our world is facing complex challenges, from climate change to social inequality, and businesses play a crucial role in addressing these issues," SEC Commissioner Javey Paul D. Francisco said.

"Sustainability reporting is not just about compliance; it is about



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creating long-term value for businesses, society, and the environment," he added.

Small, medium, and large enterprises generate more than 5.7 million jobs and account for 105,000 business establishments in the country.

Only publicly listed companies are required to submit sustainability reports to the SEC.

The commission said it is currently updating guidelines to reflect the latest developments in global sustainability frameworks.

"Moving forward, we envision a future where sustainability is not just a matter of awareness but a standard practice for all small, medium, and large enterprises. By embracing sustainability practices and introducing sustainability reporting, businesses can enhance their competitiveness, attract investors, and contribute to sustainable development," Mr. Francisco said.

After Cebu, the SEC will bring the roadshow to Davao in June, and Baguio in September. These will be followed by the annual Corporate Governance Forum in November, which is organized by the SEC and the Philippine Stock Exchange. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**

## SMIC board OK's increase in number of directors

THE Sy family's SM Investments Corp. (SMIC) said its board has approved a move to increase the conglomerate's number of directors to bolster its corporate structure.

SMIC will increase its directors to nine from the previous eight following the board's approval on March 19 to amend the sixth article under its articles of incorporation, the conglomerate said in a regulatory filing on Wednesday.

"The increase in the number of directors of the company from eight

to nine will add to the mix of competence, expertise, and experience of the current board, enabling it to enhance its response to the evolving needs and goals of the company," SMIC said.

"The articles of incorporation of the company is being amended in recognition of the principles of board diversity and independence of business judgment," it added.

SMIC logged a 25% growth in its 2023 net income to P77 billion. Its

consolidated revenues climbed by 11% to P616.3 billion led by stronger consumer spending.

The conglomerate's core businesses are in banking, retail, and real estate. It also has portfolio investments across various sectors such as logistics, gaming and leisure, renewable energy, bakeshop, and mining.

On Wednesday, SMIC shares were unchanged at P980 per share. — **Revin Mikhael D. Ochave**



## Meralco partners with MMDA to promote road safety

As part of its proactive campaign to contribute to ensuring public safety, Manuel V. Pangilinan-led Manila Electric Company (Meralco) has teamed up with the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) to promote road safety among the power distributor's employees through the conduct of Basic Motorcycle Riding courses.

Seen in the photo (from L-R) are MMDA Traffic Education Division Development Management Officer V Antonio B. Pagulayan Jr., Meralco National Government Sector Relationship Manager Gina G. Magno, MMDA Undersecretary Frisco S. San Juan, Meralco Vice President and Head of Facilities and Safety Management Jerry B. Lao, Meralco National Government Sector Head Rene Y. Sua, and Meralco Head of Corporate Occupational Safety and Environment Management Jose Rafael C. Atienza.

The two-day Basic Motorcycle Riding Course by MMDA is offered for free and open to the public. The program availed by Meralco aims to provide the necessary knowledge and skills related to safe motorcycle riding and to reduce the number of employee incidents related to motorcycles.

"Road safety is a shared responsibility. This initiative in partnership with the MMDA will equip our employees with the proper training on motorcycle riding and help us enhance their safety as well as the members of the riding community that we share the roads with," said Lao.

Around 150 Meralco personnel signed up for the program, the first leg of which was conducted last March 12 and 13 at the MMDA Motorcycle Riding Academy in Pasig City. MMDA will facilitate the same training in Meralco's sector offices in Sta. Rosa City, Laguna on March 19 and 20, and in Valenzuela City on March 26 and 27.