



Xiaomi launches new smart TVs in the Philippines

TECHNOLOGY brand Xiaomi has launched its Xiaomi Smart TV 2025 models in the Philippines, it said on Wednesday.

The company's new smart television models are available as a Shopee exclusive from Aug. 25 to Sept. 5 at promo prices, it said in a statement. Meanwhile, regular prices start at P7,695 for Xiaomi TV A 2025 series models, while the Xiaomi TV A Pro 2025 TVs are priced at P16,195 and up, depending on screen size.

The new smart TV models have a built-in Google TV operating system with Google Assistant. Chromecast and Miracast are also supported, and Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and YouTube are preinstalled.

The entry-level Xiaomi TV A 2025 models come in 32-inch and 55-inch variants with a 4K HDR display and motion smoothing technology, as well as Dolby Audio, DTS:X, and DTS Virtual:X for surround sound.

Both feature a metal finish with an ultra-slim bezel design and a 60Hz refresh rate. The 32-inch model has a quad-core A55 CPU with 1.5GB RAM and 8GB ROM, while the 55-inch variant has a quad-core A55 CPU and Mali-G52 GPU with 2GB RAM and 8GB ROM.

Meanwhile, the Xiaomi TV A Pro 2025 series is available in bigger 43-inch, 55-inch, 65-inch, and 75-inch variants.

"The Xiaomi TV A Pro 2025 Series leads the way in home entertainment innovation. It's got the biggest screen in the line with a 75" model, fully equipped with a bright and stunning 4K QLED display with a 60Hz refresh rate that shows dazzling visuals in smooth and seamless 4K HDR," the brand said.

"Enjoy total immersion in anything you're watching — stream all your favorites on the internet without interruptions through its 5GHz-capable built-in Wi-Fi adapter, all presented in top-notch visuals and vibrant sound from Dolby Audio, DTS:X, and DTS Virtual:X. It sits beautifully in the center of your home entertainment setup with a premium metal finish and an ultra-slim bezel design," it added.

The new Xiaomi TV A Pro models come in a premium bezel-less design, with a unibody metal frame. All variants come with a quad-core A55 CPU and Mali-G52 GPU with 2GB RAM and 8GB ROM. — **BVR**

PHL AI guardrails must be in line with regional standards, focused on data

By **Aubrey Rose A. Inosante**
Reporter

SINGAPORE — The Philippines should draw up governance and ethics guidelines or guardrails for the use of artificial intelligence (AI) that are aligned with those in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and prioritize data privacy amid a booming digital economy, industry experts said.

"There is no point drafting your own [AI] guardrails or guidelines when not in concert with the ASEAN guidelines," Raju Chellem, editor-in-chief of the AI Ethics and Governance Body of Knowledge, told *BusinessWorld* at the sidelines of the annual IBM Think Singapore 2024 conference held on Aug. 14-15.

"It's better to work together so that we are all together to work for the common good because many countries are looking at AI in isolation and not in-

cluding data as part of it," Mr. Chellem added.

The ASEAN Guide on AI Governance and Ethics was released during the 4th ASEAN Digital Ministers' Meeting chaired by Singapore in February. This is meant to serve as a guide for organizations in the region that wish to design, develop, and deploy traditional AI technologies.

In the Philippines, the Department of Trade and Industry this year released its National AI Strategy Roadmap 2.0, which consists of seven strategic imperatives: building a robust connected and networked environment; improving data access and data value extraction; transforming education and nurturing future AI talents; upskilling and reskilling the workforce; building an AI ecosystem "conscience"; mastering and pushing the boundaries of AI; and accelerating innovation with AI.

According to an IBM Institute for Business Value study, 60% of executives surveyed said they believe the adoption

of generative AI (GenAI) comes with major ethical risks that would be difficult to manage without new or at least more mature governance structures.

Mr. Chellem said without AI guardrails, the finance and healthcare sectors, which are considered "supercritical industries," will be at high risk as both need "high regulation for data privacy, data security, and the use of personally identifiable information."

"Hackers can do phishing, probably destabilize governments, or ransomware as a service," he said.

The digital sector has a "massive" contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) of ASEAN countries, and "a huge chunk of that is because of the power of AI or the power of companies using GenAI," Mr. Chellem said.

"The current GDP of the Philippines is about \$472 billion, and the ICT (information and communications technology) sector contributed roughly about 9.4% to the GDP in 2022," he said.

To educate people on AI, the Philippines needs to apply the same model it

used to boost the nursing sector, which is integrating it in schools, Mr. Chellem added.

"The number one lesson is that the Singapore government does not work in isolation. It always includes the community, industry, and academia. All three work together to form policy and set guidelines, set governance frameworks [in AI]," he said.

Catherine Lian, general manager and technology leader for IBM ASEAN, told *BusinessWorld* that governance is key in the adoption of GenAI.

"The GenAI adoption that we talk about is all about governance. We have a Watsonx governance model that enables appropriate design principles across governance and building up the enterprise-wide application of multiple AI models," she said at the sidelines of the same event.

The model ensures that the adoption of an AI-first approach does not compromise the data provided and follows the code of ethics of an organization, Ms. Lian said.

Shifting towards smarter search technology on websites

By **Genie Yuan**

VECTOR search understands the context and meaning behind queries, allowing it to retrieve more relevant results for users' vague searches.

This growth reflects the growing reliance on the internet for various activities and information-seeking purposes. The increasing number of internet users in the Philippines underscores the importance of adapting to the digital age and addressing potential challenges that come when searching for things.

Nearly 90% of users will not return to a site if they have a bad experience. Take a moment to appreciate that staggering statistic. Site reliability engineers are

OPINION

traditionally focused on the "five 9s," ensuring a website remains up and accessible 99.999% of the time. Yet, that is only a part of the picture guaranteeing a positive user experience. What else can cause a user to click away from a site and never return?

Not being able to discover what they were looking for.

The frustration of trying to search for something and being unable to find it quickly and efficiently may be one of a user's most disappointing experiences. You want to build a site where that rarely happens. However, users make it very hard. Oftentimes, they do not know exactly what they are looking for. They have a picture in their mind of what they want but lack the precise terms, and their search ends up being submitted with keywords such as: "the

thing that tightens screws." A human respondent to that search will return an index of screwdrivers. What will your keyword-based search return? Articles about tightening techniques, blog posts on different types of screws and tools that have nothing to do with screwdrivers.

This example happens all the time, every single day, countless times a day.

Facing this dilemma requires a new resource to improve the user experience and bring clarity even when users lack it. Vector search offers possibilities that are not feasible with traditional keyword search alone.

HOW VECTOR SEARCH WORKS

Vector search is a machine learning method that trans-

forms textual data into high-dimensional vectors, capturing semantic relationships between words and phrases. It differs from traditional keyword-based search, which relies on exact matches, by understanding the context and meaning behind queries. This approach enhances the accuracy and relevance of search results, making it a powerful tool for modern information retrieval systems. Vector search interprets the meaning behind queries, identifying relevant documents with related terms. This makes it an invaluable tool for improving user experience by providing precise and accurate search results in response to imprecise or descriptive queries.

FULL STORY



Read the full story by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or by typing the link tinyurl.com/2akeltgm

Genie Yuan is the regional vice-president for APAC Japan, Couchbase.

Dollar bonds,
from SI/1

Chief Economist Ruben Carlo O. Asuncion said in a Viber message.

The BSP cut benchmark interest rates for the first time in almost four years to mark the start of a "calibrated" easing cycle amid an improving inflation and economic outlook. The Monetary Board slashed the target reverse repurchase rate by 25 bps to 6.25% from an over-17-year high of 6.5%.

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. Chief Economist Michael L. Ricafort said the timing of the offering is favorable.

"Relatively lower long-term interest rates that reduce the borrowing/financing costs of the NG amid appreciating peso exchange rate recently, thereby could reduce debt servicing of the NG," he said in a Viber message.

The local unit closed at P56.281 per dollar on Tuesday, strengthening by 5.2 centavos from its P56.333 finish last Thursday, Bankers Association of the Philippines data showed. This was the

Borrowings,
from SI/1

"We have a fiscal plan to follow. There are no plans to increase our borrowings," he added.

The National Government's (NG) borrowing program is set at P2.57 trillion this year, of which 75% will come from domestic sources. It borrows from external and local sources to fund a budget deficit capped at 5.6% of the gross domestic product.

The latest data from the Treasury showed that debt payments jumped by 41.29% to P1.28 trillion in the first half. The government has allocated P2.03 trillion in debt servicing for this year.

National Treasurer Sharon P. Almanza likewise said that the current borrowing plan has "taken into account" the central bank's easing cycle.

The Monetary Board earlier this month delivered a 25-basis-point (bp) rate cut, bringing the benchmark rate to 6.25% from the over-17-year high of 6.5%.

The central bank could cut rates by another 25 bps in the fourth quarter, BSP Governor Eli M. Remolona, Jr. earlier said.

"Upcoming monetary policy easing will bode well for NG's borrowing plan because it will now be cheaper," Ruben Carlo O. Asuncion, chief economist at Union Bank of the Philippines, Inc., said.

Apart from monetary easing, the country's investment grade ratings will help support cheaper borrowings.

peso's strongest finish in almost five months or since its P56.255-per-dollar close on April 1.

Year to date, the peso has declined by 91.1 centavos from its P56.281 finish on Dec. 23, 2023.

"Some investors are also locking in interest rates before the Fed and other central bank rates go down further in the coming months," Mr. Ricafort said.

The US Federal Reserve is widely expected to begin cutting interest rates in September following Chairman Jerome H. Powell's dovish stance last week.

Analysts also expect the BSP's easing cycle to continue until next year, with at least 100 bps in rate cuts seen in 2025.

The government's borrowing program is set at P2.57 trillion this year, 20% of which will come from foreign sources.

The government borrows from external and local sources to fund a budget deficit capped at 5.6% of the gross domestic product.

"The recent upgrade and affirmation of current credit ratings from the aforementioned ratings agencies gives the NG more borrowing opportunities abroad," Mr. Asuncion said.

Last week, Moody's Ratings affirmed the Philippines' investment grade rating of "Baa2" with a "stable" outlook. The country also holds ratings of "BBB" from Fitch Ratings and "BBB+" from S&P Global Ratings.

"If the NG continues with its consolidation plan and follows through, the A-rating is very possible. Simply put, the coveted A-rating is really doable and reachable," Mr. Asuncion said.

Philippine Institute for Development Studies Senior Research Fellow John Paolo R. Rivera said upgraded credit ratings will help the country attract investments and support overall growth.

"Upgrades in investment grade ratings of the Philippines will allow our government to position the economy as an investment destination, given stabilizing macroeconomic indicators, relaxing of interest rates in the foreseeable future, and ability of the government to support a conducive investment environment," he said.

The government is aiming to achieve an "A" rating status by the end of the administration or by 2028.

"Should the Philippine economy continue to demonstrate stable macroeconomic fundamentals, the economy is on track to achieve successive rating upgrades," Mr. Rivera said.

SM Prime's FourE-Com Center: Innovative form and function in an office complex

SM Prime Holdings, Inc. has been at the forefront of creating innovative and sustainable property developments that enhance the quality of life for Filipinos. As the demand for office spaces continues to evolve and adapt to "new ways of working," SM Prime is ready to meet the needs of the corporate and business processing sectors with FourE-Com Center.

Located in the thriving Mall of Asia Complex, SM Prime's FourE-com Center is an office complex comprised of three 15-storey towers spanning more than 103,000 sq.m. of leasable space. The development is the perfect answer for businesses looking for a premier office base in a prime location.

AN ARCHITECTURAL MARVEL

Awarded Best Office Architectural Design 2023 at the 11th Property Guru Philippines Property Awards, FourE-Com Center is truly an architectural gem. The three-tower Pre-LEED Gold-certified edifice stands out for its sapphire crystal-like structure designed to give FourE-Com Center a strong identity. This majestic design is not arbitrary either. The building's slopes not only allow more sunlight to penetrate the podium where the infrastructure stands, but also create more viewpoints of the sea and surrounding environ.

DESIGNED FOR TODAY'S BUSINESSES

From the outside in, FourE-Com Center's meticulous design shows. The office's strategic location puts it in the heart of a bustling district that makes it a more accessible and convenient workplace for office workers. The center is only 9 kilometers from the South Luzon Expressway's Nichols Toll Plaza and even closer to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. Within the MOA Complex, too, is the National University MOA Campus, giving SM Offices business partners easy access to a rich talent pool.

SM Offices Business Unit Head Alexis Ortiga adds, "We also put a priority on employee conveniences. Through a network of elevated walkways, FourE-com Center is strategically interconnected to the MOA Complex. This means easy access to other amenities and facilities, such as the Mall of Asia, SMX Convention Center, SM MOA Arena, SM by the Bay, and transport terminals among others."

Fusing industrial and modern styles, the FourE-com Center's interior design is crafted to meet current tenant prerequisites and create a cohesive aesthetic. Each tower's entrance lobby is elegantly



The FourE-com Center has slopes that allow more sunlight to penetrate the podium, as well as to create more viewpoints across the building.



SM Prime's FourE-com Center's sapphire crystal-like structure is designed to give the building a strong identity among other buildings in the Mall of Asia Complex.

lined with marble, while the office floors boast of floor-to-ceiling glass windows that provide tenants with an unobstructed view of the picturesque Manila Bay.

Energy-saving systems are implemented in the center by utilizing natural light, energy-efficient LED lighting, water-efficient fixtures and aerators, and motion-activated escalators. Water and waste management systems are also in place to ensure that non-potable water and wastes are recycled. Other low-carbon footprint features in the complex include an electric vehicle charging station, bike racks, and even a Trash-To-Cash Program.

With plans to expand its offerings, the FourE-Com Center's fifth-level open-air sky garden will introduce more amenities by the third quarter of 2024, including outdoor work spaces, free Wi-Fi, and multi-purpose outdoor event spaces for tenant-centric activities, such as exercise classes and holiday parties. These amenities are sure to add to the allure of FourE-Com Center, providing businesses

an inspiring work environment tailored for today's dynamic work culture.

EXPERIENCE GROWTH IN A PREMIER OFFICE SPACE

For businesses looking to occupy one of its spaces, FourE-Com Center has floor plates ranging from 2,500 to 3,000 sq.m., allowing BPOs and corporate markets to choose from a selection of sizes. These office spaces are also offered in bare-shell condition, allowing tenants the liberty to customize their environments according to their specific needs and preferences.

"SM Offices continues to set the standard in office developments. Advancing innovative and sustainable solutions that cater to the evolving needs of the modern workplace, SM Offices facilitates the growth and success of business enterprises in a premier and strategically located office complex," said Ortiga.

For more information on FourE-Com Center and other office developments from SM Prime, visit <https://www.smoffices.com>.