

Expansions seen on hold due to tariff uncertainty

EXPANSION PLANS may have to be put on hold as companies seek more clarity in the direction of global trade, according to the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP).

“I’m sure the companies will tighten their belts if they know their revenue lines are not coming in,” MAP President Alfredo S. Panlilio



said in the sidelines of a Business-World Economic Forum on May 22. He expects an episode of minimal growth as trade stalls in the face of the US tariffs.

Mr. Panlilio noted that Semiconductor and Electronics Industries in the Philippines, Inc. President Danilo C. Lachica expects “modest” growth for the leading Philippine commodity export.

The Philippines exported \$12.14 billion worth of goods to the US in 2024. Of the total, 53% consisted of electronic products.

“We were going to continue with the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises to Maximize Opportunities for Reinvigorating the Economy (CREATE MORE) Act roadshows, but we were kind of distracted by the reciprocal tariffs. But again, we’re employing about 3 million direct and indirect workers. We

expect, trade negotiations and all, to see modest growth for the industry,” Mr. Lachica said.

“How is a Chief Executive Officer to manage business? There are always uncertainties. There are always new things that come onto your plate,” Mr. Panlilio said.

The Philippines posted weaker-than-expected 5.4% growth in

the first quarter, with gross capital formation growth dampened in the face of a lack of clarity in global trade.

US President Donald J. Trump paused his reciprocal tariffs in April for 90-days but continues to apply a 10% “baseline” tariff rate for most trading partners. — **Aubrey Rose A. Inosante**



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Miners upbeat over Lotilla DENR appointment

THE new Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) leadership is expected to continue easing the permit processes for mining contracts, miners said on Sunday.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) said it hopes new Environmental Secretary Raphael Perpetuo M. Lotilla will continue the programs his predecessor initiated at the DENR, “specifically in the establishment of an enabling environment for mining.”

The chamber cited the “reduction of the mining and exploration permitting process as well as other investor-friendly initiatives.”

“We are eager to partner with Secretary Lotilla on programs that will enhance the environmental, social, and governance performance of mining contractors such as what our members are doing through the Chamber of Mines’ Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM) program,” COMP Chairman Michael T. Toledo told *BusinessWorld*.

The DENR under former secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga in February issued an order requiring miners integrate the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) into their Social Development and Management Programs (SDMPs).

An SDMP is a five-year comprehensive plan required of mining companies for the “improvement” of the living standards of host and neighboring communities in their areas of operation.

COMP said it is banking on Mr. Lotilla’s “extensive experience as a professor, lawyer,

chief executive officer, legislative liaison, and Energy secretary.”

It said it hopes Mr. Lotilla will carry out the administration’s “vision of maximizing the full potential of the Philippine minerals development industry in improving the lives of present and future generations without compromising the integrity of the environment.”

Greenpeace has noted that Mr. Lotilla will take the helm of the DENR “at a time of worsening climate, pollution and a biodiversity crisis.”

“We urge him to stay true to the mandate of the DENR to protect and conserve the environment for the welfare of present and future generations,” Greenpeace Southeast Asia Executive Director Jasper Inventor said.

In Mr. Lotilla’s previous post at the Department of Energy, “we’ve seen aggressive moves to enable dangerous nuclear energy, promote fossil gas, and reverse the moratorium on coal-fired power plants,” it noted.

Greenpeace urged Mr. Lotilla to “urgently” endorse to President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. the Climate Accountability Bill, which seeks to create a system of reparations to hold polluters accountable.

Greenpeace also urged the new DENR leadership to push for a national ban on single-use plastics and amend the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Act of 2022 “to mandate reduction,” and reconsider dozens of reclamation projects. — **Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza**

Golden Haven recognizes excellence at the Golden Stars: Annual Awards 2024

Golden Haven Memorial Parks recently held the Golden Stars: Annual Awards 2024, a prestigious event dedicated to celebrating the top-performing Sales Partners who have been instrumental in the company’s remarkable success. The event, which took place in April 2025, honored the Sales Directors, Sales Managers, and Sales Agents whose exceptional dedication, perseverance, and performance continue to drive Golden Haven’s growth and maintain its legacy of excellence in the memorial care industry.

“We are incredibly proud to recognize the achievements of our Sales Partners, who have demonstrated unwavering commitment to delivering the highest standards in memorial care. Their dedication not only fuels Golden Haven’s continued growth but also helps us fulfill our mission to set the Gold Standard in Memorial Care,” said Estrellita Tan, chief operating officer of Golden Haven Memorial Parks.

The Golden Stars Awards serve as a testament to the hard work and passion of Golden Haven’s sales professionals, who are truly the backbone of the company’s success. The awards ceremony was held in two grand events: one for VisMin at Dusit Thani Lubi Plantation in Davao last April 3, 2025, and another for Luzon at Camp Netanya in Mabini, Batangas last April 8, 2025. These two-day events not only celebrated the winners but also provided an opportunity for networking, knowledge-sharing, and leisure, allowing Sales Partners to connect and collaborate on furthering their professional careers and Golden Haven’s mission.

The awards were presented in several key categories, including Top Sales Director, Top Sales Manager,



and Top Sales Agent, honoring those who demonstrated exceptional sales performance, leadership skills, and a strong alignment with Golden Haven’s core values of service and excellence. These awards recognize the relentless efforts of individuals who go above and beyond to provide families with the best memorial care solutions.

Beyond empowering its sales force, Golden Haven also plays a meaningful role in nation-building — creating flexible income opportunities for Filipinos across all walks of life. From OFWs to part-time and full-time workers, retirees, and young professionals, Golden Haven’s sales network helps uplift families by supporting financial stability and livelihood across various age groups and backgrounds.

With a focus on personal growth and professional achievement, Golden Haven’s commitment to supporting and celebrating its Sales Partners remains unwavering. These individuals play a critical role in driving the company’s vision forward, ensuring that Golden Haven remains a leader in the memorial care industry.

As Golden Haven continues to thrive, the company will remain dedicated to nurturing its Sales Partners, recognizing their contributions, and providing the resources they need to succeed in this vital sector.

OPINION

The CPG, retail, and consumer dynamic

IN BRIEF:

- Retailers and CPG companies are investing in technology and innovation to stay relevant and meet evolving consumer demands.
- The evolving relationship between retailers and CPG companies requires a focus on collaboration to address changing consumer behaviors.
- Companies that prioritize consumer needs and expectations will be best positioned to thrive in the future.

The relationship between consumer packaged goods (CPG) companies, retailers, and consumers has undergone significant changes over the past five years. Disruption and innovation have forced CPG and retail companies to rethink their businesses, while consumers have reevaluated how they shop and what they need. The evolving relationship between CPG companies and retailers presents an opportunity for a more radical rethink of how they both go to market and measure success.

CPG companies, which create merchandise that customers frequently use such as food, beverages, cosmetics, and cleaning products, and retail companies, have both invested in new technologies, channels, and consumer touchpoints to stay relevant.

However, their roles have overlapped, leading to tension and increased competition for attention as the traditional model no longer remains linear. CPG companies make products, but they now also deliver and sell them directly to consumers, while retailers sell and deliver products to consumers while also making them. Consumers buy products, but they often personalize and co-create them with CPG companies. Additionally, with consumers focusing more on value and price, they’re showing less interest in brands (apart from luxury goods) and are instead more interested in what retailers themselves have to offer.

Consumers, who ultimately hold the power in this dynamic, are more informed and demanding than ever. Companies that can deliver on consumer needs and expectations will be in the strongest position to reset the relationship.

This article explores how retailers and CPG companies can strengthen their partnership to overcome disruption, better serve consumers, and thrive in a rapidly evolving market.

RETAILERS GAINING CONFIDENCE AND MORE CONTROL

Retailers, especially in the grocery sector, have become more empowered and confident. The pandemic accelerated their technology adoption, enabling contactless payments, self-service checkouts, and delivery services. These innovations have driven convenience and cost efficiencies, allowing retailers to exert more control over what they sell and focus on delivering value. Additionally, many retailers have taken on broader roles as community hubs and defenders of consumer interests, pushing back against price increases from CPG companies.

EMBRACING DIRECT CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT

As consumer engagement becomes more highly prioritized, CPG companies are using technology to build direct connections with consumers through direct-to-consumer (D2C) business models, subscription services, and social selling. According to the EY Future Consumer Index, influencers are on the rise, with 45% of consumers sharing that they follow social media influencers. As much as 74% say they find influencer product recommendations trustworthy, and 61% share that they purchased a product based solely on an influencer’s recommendation.

CPG companies have also focused on making supply chains more flexible and responsive, reducing costs and being more sustainable. By exploring new physical channels and adapting to the growing power of larger retailers, CPG companies aim to maintain production and execute growth strategies to gain higher sales volumes.

CONSUMERS DRIVING CHANGE WITH NEW BEHAVIORS

Consumers are shopping differently, with increased price sensitivity and a preference for online shopping, home delivery, and buying from thrift stores. Due to being online more often, they are more informed about product ingredients, company practices, and the environmental impact of the companies they shop from.

According to the EY Future Consumer Index, consumers are turning away from once-favored brands as their priorities and options change. As much as 74% have mentioned awareness of shrinkflation in the form of branded products now coming in smaller pack sizes, while 50% would make the switch to a new product if it provided better quality. Consumers are also more willing to try private labels, with 41% having switched already. Brands were not considered an important factor in 48% of purchase decisions, putting CPG companies at a disadvantage.

This shift in consumer behavior is reshaping the relationship between retailers and CPG companies.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION

As the relationships between CPG companies, retailers, and consumers have changed due to ongoing disruption and evolving needs, success now depends on fostering open, collaborative, and agile ways of thinking and working. By leveraging each other’s strengths and innovations, retailers and CPG companies can approach the future from a position of strength.

Creating seamless multi-channel experiences. Retailers and CPG companies must prioritize operating without friction across multiple channels to meet consumer demands. For example, some companies offer a “Buy Online, Pick Up In Store” (BOPIS) model and use mobile apps that allow customers to shop seamlessly across channels. By investing in marketing and innovation, they can create compelling offers for consumers wherever they are. Collaboration between retailers and CPG companies can help address common challenges and leverage each other’s strengths for mutual benefit.

BALANCING VALUE AND VOLUME

As consumers become more price-sensitive, retailers focus on delivering value, while CPG companies aim to drive volume. Both parties have a shared interest in striking the right balance between value and volume. Artificial intelligence or AI-led solutions, such as revenue growth management, can help customize and fine-tune portfolio, pricing, and promotions to achieve this balance. For example, a global food and beverage company uses artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance inventory prediction, utilizing analytics-driven software platforms to minimize inventory levels and costs while improving the accuracy of demand forecasting and streamlining supply chain workflows.

INNOVATING WITH DATA INSIGHTS

Retailers and CPG companies have vast amounts of consumer data but often lack a comprehensive view of future consumer behavior. By sharing insights and working together, they can gain a stronger understanding of consumer purchasing behaviors and create better-targeted campaigns. This collaboration can lead to more effective trade promotions and profitable business strategies. The use of CRM tools in particular can better stratify, assess, and create targeted promotional content for customers.

TURNING FRICTION POINTS INTO VALUE DRIVERS

The shopping experience has many points of friction, such as in apparel — customers expect the option to return unwanted goods at no cost to them and often engage in bracketing, which is defined as buying items in multiple sizes and sending back what doesn’t fit. To address this, retailers and CPG companies can use AI to help consumers make better buying choices and deliver a better shopping experience. The EY Index shows 59% of consumers trust AI-generated imagery to show them what a product would look like on them, 56% positively engage with AI to answer questions about an item, and 50% trust AI to take size measurements via their phone camera, as demonstrated by a Japanese clothing brand. Some companies also accept bracketing within defined limits, and offer faster or free returns to customers who meet a minimum actual spend or who are members of their loyalty programs.

LEVERAGING AI FOR GROWTH AND EFFICIENCY

AI offers endless opportunities to turn friction points into value drivers. Retailers and CPG companies can use AI to anticipate future consumer needs, reassess relationships, and drive growth and margin improvement. For example, a multinational CPG company uses an AI model that integrates forecasts and actual sales data between the company and its customers, linking consumer purchases directly to the source of materials. This approach eliminates traditional supply chain barriers and enhances data visibility, creating a cohesive ecosystem that connects different supply chains and optimizes inventory at distribution centers and stores. As AI becomes an essential part of the CPG and retail relationship, companies must align their strategies to maximize its potential.

FOSTERING A COLLABORATIVE MINDSET

Traditionally, CPG companies, retailers and consumers used to be a simple linear chain: CPG companies manufactured branded products, retailers sold them in their stores, and consumers bought them off shelves.

By focusing on collaboration, consumer-centricity, and innovation, retailers and CPG companies can strengthen their partnership and thrive.

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MARIA KATHRINA S. MACAISA-PENA is a business consulting partner and the consumer products and retail sector leader of SGV & Co.

