

MDEC, Unionbank and Launchgarage host EXPAND Philippines for Malaysian Startups.



Malaysian startups gather in Manila for EXPAND Philippines

Manila, Philippines - For the second year in a row, Launchgarage, the Philippines' premiere tech accelerator, partnered with the Malaysian Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) to host its second cohort for EXPAND Philippines, a structured 3-week market access program for Malaysian startups seeking to test and validate their products and services in the Philippines.

“The cross border collaboration between Launchgarage Philippines and Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) has created market access opportunities for Malaysian startups to expand their network and services to the Philippines. This program would not have been possible without our partner, Launchgarage. MDEC is extremely honoured to have been part of these startups expansion into the Philippines” said Keasavan Hari Krishnan, MDEC Market Engagement Lead for Growth Ecosystem Development.

In collaboration with UnionBank, the consortium hosted their second Demo Day which featured six Malaysian companies and their products and services last August 31 at Unionbank Plaza in Pasig City.

“We want to identify startups that we can help be successful not just here in the Philippines, but globally,” said Jojo Flores, COO of Launchgarage.



The event was graced by the presence Alaminos City (Pangasinan) Mayor Arth Bryan Celeste, who at 22 years is the Philippines youngest mayor. During his speech Celeste talked about the significance of startups and the importance of partnerships. The Mayor of the northern Philippine city also cited his eagerness to integrate various projects from the crop of companies into their ecosystem and avail of services that would benefit his constituents.

“Startups have the power to change the world. The people behind these startups have that power but I believe that not one man can change the world, we need partners” said Celeste.

The 2019 cohort features a diverse set of elite-tier companies which include: **CK Group**, an Integrated Property Marketing Agency specializing in digital design solutions using the latest media and visualization technology, **Sometime by Asian Designers**, an e-commerce bag and accessories specialist company that co-designs with very select established Asian designers and icons to conceptualize and produce exclusive and iconic designer bags, **NEXPlatform**, a data-driven Proptech company that provides smart marketing solutions to help property developers digitalise their processes and improve customer experience, **Accendo**, a Talent Experience platform designed to help with deep people analytics and career pathing and **SonicBoom**, an all-in-one open payment terminal for parking, vending machines, and retail stores.

The official media partner for the event was [Ambidextr](#), [a content marketing and events management company](#) focused on telling the stories of tech companies in Asia Pacific.

“We’re excited that more startups are looking to expand to the Philippines as a major part of their growth plans. With a large, young and digital savvy population, the country is the second fastest growing economy in ASEAN. Startups have a very unique opportunity to play a part in the country’s leap towards industrialization, thanks to initiatives such as EXPAND Philippines, said [Ambidextr](#) Managing Partner Junie Agcaoili.

ABOUT MALAYSIA DIGITAL ECONOMY CORPORATION (MDEC)

Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation or MDEC is the lead agency in driving the digital economy in Malaysia under the Ministry of Communications and Multimedia Malaysia. Since its inception 23 years ago, MDEC’s mission is to develop the nation’s digital economy. MDEC’s implementation efforts are centred on driving investments, building local tech champions, catalysing digital innovation ecosystems and propagating digital inclusivity.



ABOUT LAUNCHGARAGE INNOVATION HUB

Launchgarage is the premiere technology accelerator for traction stage startups in the Philippines comprised of a large and diverse global network of industry experts, stakeholders, investors, and collaborators that aims to bring local companies to the global market through deal-flow facilitation, advisory and various programs. It was founded in 2016 by Jay Fajardo and Jojo Flores, two of the country's most revered and well-known icons in the tech industry.

ABOUT UNIONBANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

Union Bank of the Philippines (UnionBank) is a publicly listed universal bank. They distinguish themselves through superior technology, unique branch sales & service culture, and centralized backroom operations. Their superior technology allows the delivery of online, real time business solutions to meet their customers' changing and diverse needs through innovative and customized cash management products and service offerings. Their unique branch culture ensures efficient and quality service as well as mitigating operational risk. Their centralized operations enables them to provide responsive, scalable, and secure transaction processing.