

Premium grade office space on the rise

Environmentally sensitive, personalized office buildings are the way forward in Manila's CBD

As the dominant office developer of the Bonifacio Global City (BGC) in the Philippines, The Net Group (TNG) pushes its expansion with The Net Metropolis, 5th Ave. development, conceived as a striking landmark to represent the developers' next generation of iconic and ecologically responsive buildings.

Leading international "green" architect, Chad Oppenheim, was selected to master plan and design the project — one of the nation's first under the Philippines' own green building rating system, Building for Ecologically Responsive Design Excellence (BERDE), which was conceived by the Philippine Green Building Council and supported by the World Green Building Council.

Oppenheim's designs for the The Net Metropolis, 5th Ave. master-planned development and its first tower, Net Lima, lead the way for the future of the country and answer the specific needs of its local environment. Because it is a pilot project, Net Lima was integral in the actual creation of the BERDE system.

"Net Lima is driven by our core social responsibility toward sustainable building practices," the president of TNG Carlos Rufino said. "We have combined Chad Oppenheim's visionary design with key learning on sustainability from the roll-out of our portfolio's first tranche of building developments."

The premium office tower, for example, features a dramatic high performance facade and sun shading system that reduces solar heat gain while providing maximum views and natural light to its occupants.

Careful attention is paid to the provision of vibrant public spaces, green amenity areas and sheltered arcades for circulation. Situated within the only central business district (CBD)

of the Philippines with a dedicated economic zone, the 1.2-hectare mixed-use The Net Metropolis, 5th Ave. project in BGC covers an entire city block and features three towers.

Two office towers, Net Lima and Net Park, will offer premium office space for corporate headquarters and worldwide support services. The third tower, the Ascott Bonifacio Global City (developed by The Ascott Limited), will feature 220 units of luxury services residences. Together, the towers will add another 1.5 million square feet of prime office, hospitality and retail space to the Bonifacio Global City.

Cutting edge design

The cutting edge design has brought another standing ovation for TNG, which boasts a 100 percent-leased portfolio in the BGC area with their NetOne Center, Net Square, Net Cube, Net Quad and Net Plaza developments — a total of 1.6 million square feet of leasable space that will accommodate up to 20,000 people by the end of 2011. Jacques Dupasquier, TNG's chairman, came up with the visionary boutique office concept in 1999 and seized on the potential of the BGC to make the vision a reality.

"Our idea was to offer a unique concept, a boutique office building where you can go every day, you are cared for, people know you by name and the service is ultra-personalized," said Dupasquier, a French Filipino who, with his family, also owns a string of boutique hotels in Europe.

All TNG buildings carry trademark details that make it easy for tenants to conduct their business. "For one thing, they have the freedom to make their own decisions on communications providers, which is not how other office developers work," Rufino said.

"Then we provide on-demand air conditioning 24/7 with units that are customized and controllable in each area so that you only pay for what you use" adds Dupasquier.

Other customized touches include polite, efficient and professionally trained service desk staff wearing the latest designer fashions, individually styled lobbies and décor in each building, art exhibitions and commissioned elevator music. On the business side, tenants benefit from excellent tax incentives as the portfolio is within the Information Technology Economic Zone of the BGC under the jurisdiction of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority.

Small wonder that TNG's portfolio is filled with Fortune 500 companies and large multinationals, such as JPMorgan Chase, Deutsche Bank, GE, Intel, Oracle, Ericsson and Quisumbing Torres (Baker and McKenzie.)

Dupasquier and Rufino both agree that TNG continues to redefine the workplace by making it more productive. They find that productivity fosters loyalty, and people tend to stay longer when they are satisfied. And keeping their clients satisfied in a boutique setting has brought about a fresh market brand that is in demand.

No doubt that when the project is finally completed, it will be a central landmark in one of Manila's most exciting central business districts, supplying premium-grade office space that will help fuel growth in the city and the country for years to come.

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Fueling growth with a social conscience

Powering a majority of industries, homes, schools and hospitals in Cebu Province, Vivant Corporation is a publicly traded company listed under the Philippines Stock Exchange, with its holdings focused on energy generation and distribution services.

Its flag-bearer, the Visayan Electric Company, Inc. (VECO) operates the country's second-largest electric utility, servicing the greater part of Metro Cebu and five other municipalities within Cebu Province.

Through its subsidiaries and affiliates, that include CPPC, which owns one of the largest diesel power plants in the country, CEDC, which owns a 246 MW coal-fired power plant, AHPI, an independent power provider that runs the 70 MW Luzon hydropower plant, and DPI, a leading independent power producer in Plawan, Vivant's energy portfolio has grown exponentially in recent years.

Driving the Filipino economy

Owned by the Garcia-Escaño family of Cebu, Vivant Corporation is committed to driving the Filipino economy and fuelling growth within the communities it serves. As such, it prides itself on being a good corporate citizen, and an innovator in sustainable energy sources, by adopting modern and clean technologies and sound business practices.

Despite being just under a decade old, the seeds that came to be Vivant Corporation were first sown in 1870, when Don Fernando Escaño set out to make his fortune in the abaca trade. Abaca, a species of banana native to the Philippines, was, at the time, used to make rope and cord and an important inter-land product, along with other agricultural crops, livestock, consumer products and other general merchandise.

The trading element of these important cargo items led the pioneering entrepreneur to branch out into shipping. A few years later, Escaño was running one of the biggest shipping companies in the Philippines. At the turn of the 20th century, as demand for abaca declined, Hijos de Escaño, as the company was now known, replaced the cash crop with copra (dried coconut kernel), sugar and other products, and maintained a strong shipping reputation, with stations in Bombay (Mumbai), Ormoc and Maasin. It was at that point the company relocated from the Sogod Bay area to Cebu, now the hub of shipping and commerce in central and southern Philippines.

Contact Vivant or any of its subsidiaries at:

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A long history, a powerful future

In 1918, the Escaño and Garcia families took over the Visayan Electric Company Inc. (VECO) and were soon diversifying into other business areas. Under the new management, VECO's generating capacity rose significantly and services expanded throughout Cebu.

VECO also moved beyond its transmission coverage and held franchises and branches in Negros and Zamboanga del Norte. Both shipping lines and electricity continued to flourish until the second world war, picking up directly after. VECO resumed operations and financed an expansion that allowed it to increase staffing and machinery equipment requirements back to pre-war levels.

By 1968, Escaño Lines had nine ships, one of which, Escaño II, was one of the first inter-island vessels to introduce modern navigational devices and equipment as well as lifestyle facilities and comfortable accommodations for passengers. The firm also chartered out boats for various Philippine ports.

Today, Escaño Lines continues to operate in the Southern Philippines, although the family divested its interest in the business in 1989. As for VECO, it continues to lead the electric distribution industry. In 2004, amid pioneering regulation through the EPIRA Law, the Garcia-Escaño family forged a shareholders' agreement with the Aboitiz family to pave the way for the future.

In 2003, it acquired 99% of Philstar.com and infused its holdings in Hijos De F. Escaño Inc. (HDFE) and Visayan Electric Company Inc. (VECO) to this company, thus creating Vivant Corporation.

THE
NET
GROUP



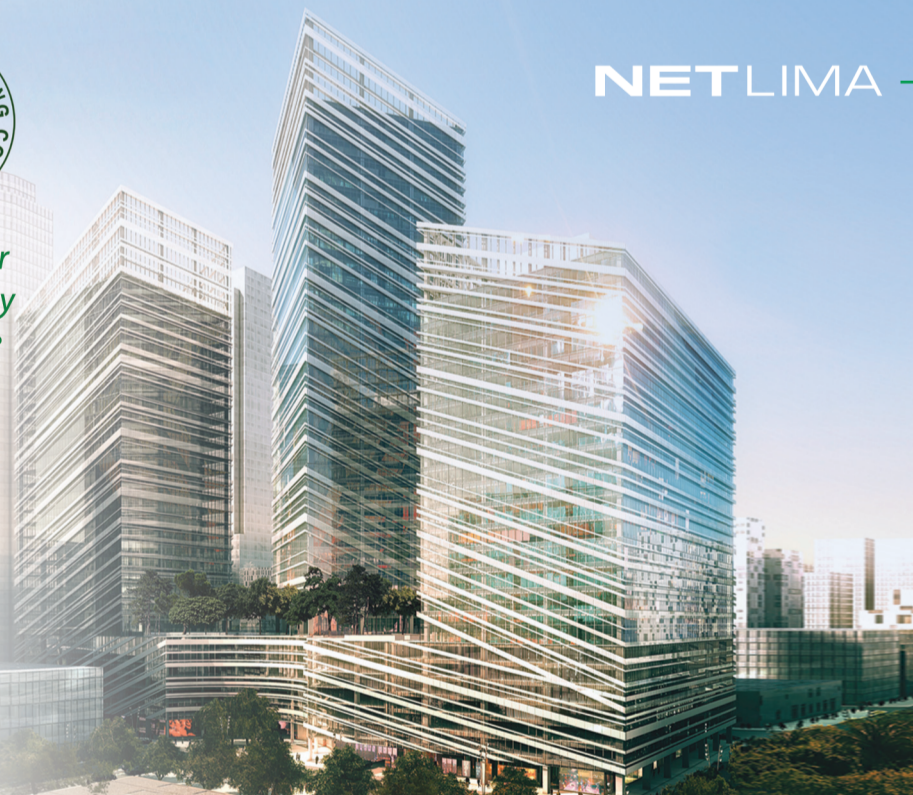
THE PHILIPPINES' LEADING DEVELOPER OF BOUTIQUE IT OFFICE BUILDINGS

Nestled in the prime center of the country's main central business district is the new development masterplanned and designed by Chad Oppenheim, world renowned, Miami-based green architect. This unique and iconic landmark represents both Taguig City's forward vision and The Net Group's newest generation of green and efficient buildings.

THE NET
metropolis 5th AVE.



Building for
Ecologically
Responsive
Design
Excellence



NETLIMA is one of the first buildings to be completed at The Net Metropolis, 5th Ave. It is also the flagship pilot project of the Philippine Green Building Council, the country's authority for the World Green Building Council. In contrast to other international "green building" certifications such as the US Green Building Council's LEED certification and the Green Building Council of Australia's Green Star rating, the BERDE rating adapts these and other international green practices into standards appropriate to the local environment. Its exceptional quality coupled with efficient cutting-edge technology makes Net Lima the ideal location for multinational companies, either as their local corporate headquarters or for their worldwide support services. Net Lima "leads" the standard.

NETLIMA has an exceptional floor plate with an average size of above 30,000 square feet totalling a leasable area of approximately 600,000 square feet. For inquiries send an email to marketing@TheNetGroup.ph or call +632 856 9999

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Norkis accelerates growth in the Philippines

A family-managed corporation that focuses on selling the dream of mobility, freedom and comfort to every Filipino through its impressive range of motorcycles and other vehicles, Norkis Group is a hugely successful group with a winning corporate personality.

As well as making a healthy profit by selling quality goods, chairman Norberto Quisumbing Jr. nurtures a meritocratic business environment; one where the staff feel equal to the directors.

"If you treat human resources like family, they have a sense of belonging and a sense of identity," he said. "They need to be recognized and rewarded to make sure there is a level playing field."

Since it sold its first batch of Yamahas from its base in Cebu in the early 1960s, Norkis has grown to boast a branch in almost every province of the Philippines, handling Yamaha, Suzuki, Kawasaki, Hojue and Sunrider two wheel vehicles, as well as compact cars.

Convenience and support in sales, parts, customer service and instalment financing have inspired trust and confidence from both customers and partners, and it now does regular business with more than 6,000 clients. The group has an excellent reputation for delivering expert after-sales and support services through an extensive network of branches and dealers.

"We started as an exclusive distributor of Yamaha, but recently decided to go into dealership with all the Japanese brands," Quisumbing Jr. said. "Also exciting for us, however is that we are handling two brands of motorcycles from China. We are beginning to see a very healthy business partnership with these Chinese suppliers... the Chinese have the quality and they have the price. They know their market, and they have the know-how to market their products."

To illustrate the point, the chairman mentioned the Chinese-Thai brand Dayang has done particularly well in the Philippines, rising, under the Sunrider name to become a premier Chinese brand in the country.

Champions of innovation

The drive to get the Philippines on the move with multi-purpose and affordable vehicles led Norkis to develop its new line, the Legacy First. Combining style with practicality and durability, the hybrid car has emerged as a popular alternative for motorists.

A personal and business vehicle for private and commercial use, Legacy First doubles up as a mini pick-up truck with manual or automatic transmission. It uses a 660 cc 3-cylinder engine and can carry a maximum load of 350 kilograms.

NORKIS Group of Companies

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Norkis Group of Companies



Championing mobility, freedom and comfort for all

Affordable, easy to park, and able to run 15 kilometers on just one liter of fuel, the Legacy First is perfect for driving through the crowded thoroughfares of Cebu, Metro Manila and other key urban centers.

Building on solid foundations

Determined to develop into a global name, the Norkis group has also capitalized on its financial strengths by diversifying into real estate and I.T. projects.

Luis B. Quisumbing, Norkis Group's President, takes up the story.

"In regards to I.T., the Philippines is still underdeveloped compared to other countries in the ASEAN region; we are only breaking through. However, we have invested a lot in I.T. with IBM and SAP and the people dedicated to I.T. activities have matured.

"Filipinos are very, very talented and they are confident they can go into Business Processing Outsourcing. Not only do they speak English, they are also very technically oriented and creative. So we are moving them in that direction as an independent group already.

"As far as property is concerned, we have invested in strategic locations around the country, and over our 48 years in business, have developed many properties. That has been consolidated, and we are moving into tourism and horse racing. Boracay is not the only beauty spot on the island; there are many, many others and we have properties we are going to develop for tourism.

The company chiefs are keen for more joint ventures to bring this vision to fruition. "The Philippines is a good location, but we do not have the expertise nor the market. If there are people that want to join us in developing this, it will make us accelerate even faster," they said.