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Going Green, Saving the Environment

Despite being one of the fastest-growing countries in Asia, the Philippines is considered the most susceptible to hazards brought by climate change[1]. This alarming reality, which can put the lives of Filipinos at risk, calls timely attention to the pressing environmental issues that need to be acknowledged and addressed before it is too late.

Local organizations, especially the Micro, Small, and Medium-Scale Enterprises (MSMEs), have a role to play in tackling these environmental challenges. With 99.56% of companies in the Philippines registered as MSMEs in 2017[2], these businesses have the potential to take the lead in helping address the collective burden and help mitigate the effects of climate change in the country.

When it comes to running an eco-friendlier business, Epson's printers can help SMEs reduce its energy consumption through its heat-free Micro Piezo and PrecisionCore printing technology and can consider these three steps to go green and save the environment.

Sustainable Operations

The Philippines still uses non-renewable sources to power up cities and businesses every day, and while the government continues to explore alternative energy sources, the best course of action in the immediate future is the adoption of ecological options and an overall reduction in power consumption.

One option for MSMEs is the use of efficient office equipment, such as printers, projectors, and other electronic devices, that can support business processes using less power. For instance, MSMEs can consider switching from laser to inkjet printers, which can save up to 85% energy in normal operations.[3]

Nowadays, MSMEs show readiness to make this switch, as they increasingly consider "eco-friendliness" when buying office equipment. According to an Epson study on the digital transformation of SMEs in ASEAN, 76% of MSMEs

in the Philippines prefer owning inkjet printers due to its ecological advantages[4], and since printers account for about 10% of the energy consumption of a typical office, using inkjet also translates to lower energy costs.[5]

Reduced Office Waste

Waste pollution remains a massive issue in the Philippines. With an average of 40,000 tons of waste produced everyday — enough to fill up to 100 Olympic-sized pools[6] – the country is considered as the third largest ocean polluter.[7] In Metro Manila alone, approximately 9,212 tonnes of waste end up in rivers, creeks, and other bodies of water, including Manila Bay.

To help solve this problem, MSMEs should incorporate the habit of recycling paper, plastic, and e-waste into their regular operations. MSMEs should also consciously seek out alternatives to reduce garbage disposal, such as recycling spent consumables or using office devices like inkjet printers that do not employ non-reusable cartridges, which can significantly lessen the environmental impact of using printers.[8]

Working with the Community

Eco-initiatives play a key role in companies to impact climate change. It may come in simple ways like taking part in annual environmental activities or by conducting social responsibility projects, such as information dissemination campaigns on environmental issues, clean up drives, among others.

For instance, Epson Philippines Corporation has partnered with the Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR-EMB) and its youth-led organization GREENduction Philippines in rolling out eco-initiatives for two years now.[9] This year, Epson Philippines' eco-projects focus on upcycling, a practice that transforms by-products and waste materials into new materials of better quality and environmental value.

These initiatives include a denim upcycling workshop for the youth beneficiaries of Alay Pag-Asa Christian Foundation, Inc. and the EcoVision Short Film Competition, an inter-collegiate competition which taps the artistry of Filipino students in raising public understanding of the environment and its conservation through the power of the visual medium.[10]

MSMEs have a huge role to play in protecting the environment. The smallest effort can go a long way, and local businesses have the power to influence customers and other entrepreneurs to do the same. With greater awareness and consciousness on the smart ways to curb carbon footprint, collective action from local businesses can help mitigate the country's

prevailing waste problem.

[1] Institute for Economics & Peace. Global Peace Index 2019: Measuring Peace in a Complex World, Sydney, June 2019.

[2]https://www.dti.gov.ph/business/msmes/msme-resources/msme-statistics

[3]Keypoint Intelligence Buyers Laboratory Custom Report (May 2017)

[4] The SME Digital Transformation in ASEAN; An Epson Survey 2019

[5] Epson research based on data from a commissioned survey conducted in March 2018 by SOMPO Risk Management & Health care Inc.

[6]https://www.senate.gov.ph/publications/SEPO/AAG_Philippine Solid Wastes_Nov2017.pdf

[7]https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1063093

[8] Inkjet printers have 59% less replacement parts compared to laser printers - Keypoint Intelligence Buyers Laboratory Custom Report (May 2018).

[9]http://news.epson.com.ph/pressreleases/epson-works-with-youth-groups-to-drive-environmental-initiatives-2835792

[10]http://news.epson.com.ph/pressreleases/epson-denr-embs-greenducation-ph-launches-1st-ecovision-short-film-competition-for-students-2824098