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PLDT aids Go Negosyo in MSME dev't program

By LOUELLA DESIDERIO

Telecommunications giant PLDT Inc. has partnered with entrepreneurship advocate Go Negosyo to provide technology solutions to small business owners and help them grow in the digital marketplace.

Speaking at the launch of the program held yesterday, Mitch Locsin, PLDT first vice president and head of SME Nation said the program aims to cover 81 provinces and bring more than 100,000 MSMEs online by 2020.

Under the program, PLDT and Go Negosyo would provide the three Ms or mentorship, marketplace through technology and online selling platform, as well as money or access to funding for MSMEs.

Go Negosyo's business training or mentorship, to be provided through the more than 750 Negosyo Centers, would be expanded to include training in setting up and managing online stores through Tackthis!, the online store builder of Voyager.

Apart from helping businesses set up their online presence, Tackthis! also provides logistics capability through its partners so en-

terprises can deliver goods to online buyers.

"Part of the mission of PLDT is to create an environment to go digital. This starts with networks and devices related to that," PLDT chairman and chief executive officer Manuel V. Pangilinan said.

He said PLDT is committed to help enterprises grow and become globally competitive

through the company's digital services and solutions.

"We are confident that this partnership with Go Negosyo will positively contribute to government's programs to improve the lives of our people by promoting digital entrepreneurship," he said.

Once the MSMEs have established their online presence, they can have wider reach through Voyager's virtual marketplace Takatak.

MSMEs can also get access to capital through Voyager's digital lending platform Lendr (www.lendr.com.ph), which can help them apply for various loan offers from participating banks and lending institutions.

MSMEs will likewise be given capability to accept cashless payments through

the quick response (QR) code technology of PLDT's digital payments service PayMaya.

With the technology, customers can pay by simply scanning the merchants' QR code on their smartphones.

Joey Concepcion, presidential adviser for entrepreneurship and Go Negosyo founder, said the program would address what enterprises need to prepare for growth.

"The enablement program covers much of what business owners need to ready themselves in expanding their operations and putting up a presence in the online market space as we've all seen how e-commerce has become the new frontier among Filipino consumers," he said.

* ENTREPRENEURSHIP