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“*Know* what you *own*, and *know* why you own it.”
— PETER LYNCH

“To be an *investor* you must *believe* a believer in a better *tomorrow*.”
— BENJAMIN GRAHAM

“The *biggest* risk is not taking any risk ... in a world that's *constantly changing* really quickly, the only strategy that is *guaranteed* to fail is not taking risks.”
— MARK ZUCKERBERG

“If I had *asked* people what they *wanted*, they would have said *faster* horses.”
— HENRY FORD

“Do not *save* what is left after *spending*, but *spend* what is left after saving.”
— WARREN BUFFETT



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DR. ROBERTO DE OCAMPO, OBE

Publisher
ALEX TORRIJOS

Editor-in-Chief
HEINZ BULOS

Creative Director
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Contributing Writers
EXCEL V. DYQUIANGCO
JESI BONDOC, RFP®
MARION EVANGELISTA, RFP®
EDMUND LAO, RFP®
JEREMY JESSLEY TAN, RFP®
FITZ GERARD VILLAFUERTE, RFP®

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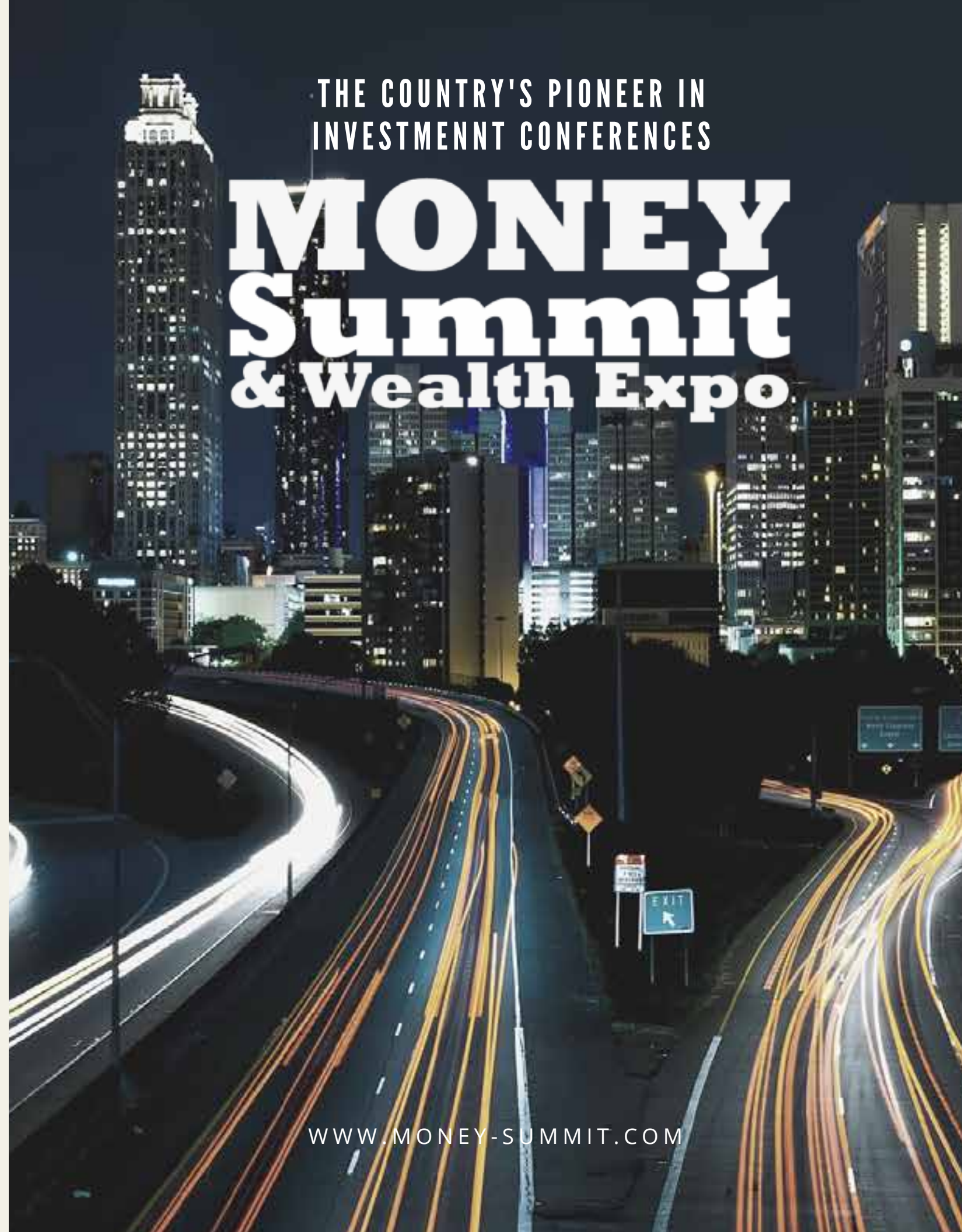
Production Supervisor
ALEX AUSTRIA

Executive Assistant
EDLEN VANEZZA BAYATON-OBISPO

Legal Advisor
ROBERT A. ABADILLA

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HOW TO REACH US
MONEYTREE PUBLISHING CORP.
Unit 206 Great Wall Bldg. 136
Yakal Street, San Antonio, 1203 Makati City
Telephone : (02) 8844-2868
E-mail : info@moneysense.com.ph
Web : https://www.moneysense.com.ph
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7 Money Lessons for Your Kids

I have two daughters—a teen and a tween—who belong to Gen Z and Gen Alpha, respectively. They are at an age where money is no longer a vague concept or hard, shiny coins to play with. Money has become a more regular topic of conversation at the dinner table.

They badger me with how much money we have, force me to make a pact that they get to inherit the house, beg me for money to go out with friends or buy Robux (if you don't know what that is, you are too old). They have even started worrying about what career to pursue (something I only took seriously during my mid-20s crisis).

Years ago, when we were still homeschooling our eldest, I told myself I would teach her everything about money—how interest rates work, what compounding is, how to invest in the stock market, and how to save on insurance premiums. I gave that up.

Knowing better, I have realized there are more foundational principles they need to learn first. Personal finance is not just numbers. Personal finance is about beliefs and behavior. The ratios, percentages, and charts can follow later when they're older.

So, here are the seven money lessons I teach my kids and what you should consider teaching to yours:

The value of hard work. Our children know we work hard. And they understand that the food they eat, the trips we've taken, and the comforts they enjoy are the fruits of hard work. We teach them six things about the relationship between work and money.

First, they need to choose a career they are good at, enjoy, and pay well (find their ikigai). Second, they should work hard if they want to enjoy the lifestyle they want. The Bible says if you don't want to work, you should not eat (2 Thessalonians 3:10). Third, there are no dole-outs. Fourth, their work right now is their schoolwork, so they should take it seriously. Fifth, chores are part of their work to contribute to our household. And lastly, if they want to buy something a bit expensive, they have to work for it.

The importance of stewardship. We teach our kids that everything belongs to God (Psalm 89:11), and we are just stewards. Even our ability to earn money comes from Him (Deuteronomy 8:18). As such, we are responsible for how we use the money and talents entrusted to us. Admittedly, this is easier said than done, especially as they see a steady stream of Lazada, Landers, and Shopee deliveries to the house. But we constantly credit and thank God for all our blessings.

The impact of delayed gratification. Don't easily give in. Our kids know how to wait. Even when we can afford something they want, we tell them to wait at a more opportune time. They would wait until their birthday or Christmas, months or even years. And we would explain why delayed gratification builds character (and make them watch the marshmallow experiment repeatedly). Plus, this prevents a sense of entitlement.

The motivation of rewards. We don't pay for chores or for doing what they should do, like working hard in school. However, we know that incentives can work when done right. We focus on intrinsic rewards—motivation from within—like a sense of accomplishment, pride in doing excellent work, and a duty to do what is right. We talk about how they can honor us as parents (Ephesians 6:1-3) and please God (Colossians 3:23) by studying hard and doing chores.

Of course, we also give extrinsic rewards, not as an incentive to work (before the fact) but as a show of appreciation (after the fact). For example, if they performed exceptionally well during the school year or trimester, we treat them out at their favorite restaurant. We also pay them a "salary" for non-chores work like helping in our business (our teenager edits videos and articles).

The freedom of limits. Limits are a reality, so they should learn to deal with limitations. They don't live in a world of unlimited supply and unlimited wealth. We work with a budget, and just because we can afford something does it mean we should spend it. Setting limits not only teaches them to wait, but they also learn to be content and grateful for what they already have. Not having limits encourages entitlement.

The power of choice. Another benefit of limits is it forces them to choose. When our teen goes out with friends, we give her just enough and no more. She knows she has to be smart about how she spends her allowance. She can't just buy or order anything she wants. And this makes her wiser and more responsible. Another bonus: making calculations in her head is mental math that makes schoolwork real and practical.

The gift of giving. We teach them why giving is one essential purpose of money. While it's okay to enjoy financial blessings, we should also be a blessing to others by giving to people we know who are in need. We tell them how giving, tithing, and generosity are recurring themes in the Bible regarding money. We talk to them about giving contributes to happiness. And we give them gifts to celebrate milestones and holidays.

So, before you talk to your children about insurance, credit cards, mortgages, and investments, give them a solid foundation to carry them through life.^{MS}

Heinz Bulos
Editor-in-Chief
hbulos@moneysense.com.ph

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How to Avoid Online Scams

By EDMUND LAO, RFP®

Scammers are becoming increasingly creative and advanced in getting your hard-earned money or personal information. It pays to protect yourself from being scammed. Note that scammers target everyone and prey on unsuspecting people. The best antidote is always to be suspicious of any offer (personal or social media). Remember that if an offer is too good to be true, it probably is.

Here are some tips to help you avoid falling into the trap of being scammed:

1. Know who you are dealing with. You fill up a KYC (know your client) form when you open an account with a financial institution or service provider. If the institution does not have your personal data, you are not allowed to transact with them. The opposite is the same. Before giving your information and money to the company or person soliciting the investment, you should research their reputation and track record. The promised rate of return is not the only criterion. Sadly, many succumb to the greed of making more money without first researching the company and the people behind the offer. It is also good to seek wise counsel from reliable people before arriving at a decision.

“Always use a strong *password* and avoid using public WiFi when you do *online* banking.”

2. Avoid online pressure sellers. Scammers often use online pressure selling to lure people into deciding immediately. Usually, they use the FOMO (fear of missing out) technique. They will not give you enough time to think or seek advice from knowledgeable people. When you are being pressured, the best is to ignore and decline the offer.

3. Know the payment system. If someone asks you to send money online, that is a red flag. You can make legitimate transactions via over-the-counter direct bank deposit to the institution's account (assuming you have verified its legality). The teller will confirm the recipient's name, so you know where to send your money. There are many stories where money was deposited online to the account of the scammer agent, who disappeared from social media afterward. If you are advised to deposit to an agent, you can call the company's customer hotline and ask for verification.

4. Don't respond to suspicious phone calls. The Data Privacy Act of 2012 protects all our banking information, so it is very unusual for you to be getting fake calls from supposed bank representatives who claim you need to update your bank details. The caller (scammer) will call you from a cell phone number, not a landline phone number. He may seem legitimate as he knows your full name, birthday, and address. He will then tell you different reasons why you need an update. Once he asks for your 16-digit debit card or credit number (for verification purposes) and asks for the CVV number for OTP generation, that is already a signal that it is a scam. Immediately end the conversation and report the cell phone number to the service provider. Remember never to share the CVV number of your card. Never share the OTP sent to your cell phone as well. It is like giving away your money to scammers.

5. Don't open suspicious emails. If in doubt, try to verify the identity of the contact. Do not rely on the contact information provided by the sender. Check the contact number on the Internet, and delete the message if your suspicion is confirmed.

6. Keep your gadget secure. Always use a strong password and avoid using public WiFi when you do online banking. Never save your password on your computer or cell phone. It is best to write it in a notebook and keep it in a secure place. Never key in your password within view of another person. When browsing, ensure the URL displayed

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“When *shopping* online, always go for an online shopping *platform* trusted by many people.”



has “https” and not just “http.” Most importantly, remember to change your password from time to time. If you suspect there is unauthorized access, change your password immediately.

7. Keep an eye on fake online payment proof. Scam artists have used this trick to fool sellers. For the first few transactions, they will send actual proof of online payment. When they get your trust already, and you become complacent, they will buy more but send fake evidence. Always make it a point to verify the payment before completing deliveries. An example is my son’s small shoe business. Even if we trust his regular buyers, we still make it a habit to verify the online payment before sending the item for delivery.

8. Beware of phishing. Online scams became common, especially during the lockdown, because most people were confined at home. The scammers devised their tricks in the comfort of their homes. This time it is harder to track them down. They use phishing to lure you into clicking a seemingly legitimate email message from a company, like a bank. Once you click it, it leads to another website, and if you enter your vital information, the scam artist gets to have access to your bank account.

A few months ago, two banks were involved when a group of scammers used phishing and siphoned off the unsuspecting clients’ monies to the other bank where they have an account. From that bank account, they converted it into a cryptocurrency. Therefore, it is wise to check the website after clicking the link. There should also be an icon of a closed padlock beside the URL. Lastly, here is where your English subject comes into play. Phishing has a weakness. It has a generic greeting, wrong spelling, and poor grammar. Anybody good at English will surely notice it.

9. Be careful with online shopping. When shopping online, always go for an online shopping platform trusted by many people. It is good to have someone you know vouch for that seller. Never buy unless that seller has a good track record with his buyers. Remember, once you send money to a seller (who is a scammer), there will be no refund for the non-delivery of the item.

When you feel you are uncomfortable with the offer, walk away. Remember the saying, “prevention is better than cure.” The same goes for scams. It is better to be mindful and always be on the lookout so as not to fall for these tricks. Just don’t be gullible; scammers will become extinct if all of us are wiser than they are.^{MS}



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Best Deposit Products with the Highest Interest

By EXCEL V. DYQUIANGCO

Most central bank savings accounts in the Philippines grow funds at a meager 0.10% to 0.25% per year. This is sufficient to keep your money for everyday costs but not for other financial goals that require faster growth.

Fortunately, both traditional and digital banks offer a variety of high-interest savings accounts that deliver speedier returns on deposits. The interest rates on these accounts are seven to 10 times higher than on conventional bank accounts. In the Philippines, you can even open a high-interest saving account from the comfort of your own home.

Here is a list of the best deposit products with the highest interest rates, aside from stashing your money in the bank.

DiskarTech

- Interest rate: **Up to 3.25%**
- Initial deposit: **Not required**
- Maintaining balance: **None**
- Interest-earning balance: **None**

DiskarTech, which RCBC backs, is the bank's attempt to get into the mass market. Users can deposit, withdraw, and transfer money using this virtual banking platform. It also has strong relationships with payment platforms like 7-Eleven and Bayad Center.

This software allows users to open a savings account. There is no requirement for an initial deposit. Furthermore, it is not required to preserve balance. However, the maximum deposit is ₱48,000. An annual interest of 3.25% is available to account holders.

If you're curious about where your money will be held, it will be placed at RCBC because DiskarTech accounts are effectively basic deposit accounts (BDA) of RCBC.

Tonik Bank Stash

- Interest rate: **4% (Solo Stash) / 4.50% (Group Stash)**
- Initial deposit: **Not required**
- Maintaining balance: **None**
- Interest-earning balance: **None**

Tonik, Southeast Asia's first digital-only bank, debuted in the Philippines earlier this year. Apart from convenience, Tonik offers the Philippines' highest interest savings account, particularly its "Stashes," which the bank characterizes as independent savings pockets for different aims and purchases.

Annual interest on Solo Stashes might be as high as 4%. When you join a Group Stash, which allows you to save money with at least two family members or friends, you can earn up to 4.50% interest.

Tonik will give you five Stashes when you sign up for an account, which implies you can save for many objectives at once. This should be an excellent option.

CIMB Bank UpSave

- Interest rate: **Up to 2.5%**
- Initial deposit: **Not required**
- Maintaining balance: **None**
- Interest-earning balance: **None**

The UpSave account from CIMB Bank is a high-interest savings account that you can conveniently open through the bank's mobile app. The UpSave account does not require an initial deposit, and you are not required to have a balance to keep it operational.

UpSave account holders will receive a 2.5% annual interest rate on their deposited balances. There is no minimum balance requirement to earn interest.

Another appealing aspect of this savings account is its free life insurance, up to ₱250,000 in coverage—if you keep a ₱5,000 average daily balance for a month, that is. Please keep in mind that this benefit is subject to certain restrictions.

CIMB GSave

- Interest rate: **Up to 2.6%**
- Initial deposit: **Not required**
- Maintaining balance: **None**
- Interest-earning balance: **None**

Do you have GCash on your phone? If so, you can save money with it. Simply search for GSave in your app and register.

CIMB and GCash collaborated to create GSave. GSave allows you to earn 2.6% annual interest, paid out monthly. You can earn interest without making an initial deposit or maintaining a minimum amount. CIMB Bank will give you free life insurance with coverage of up to ₱250,000 if you can maintain a minimum average daily balance of ₱5,000 for one month.

Using your GCash account, you may easily fund your GSave savings account. Transfers between your GSave account and your GCash wallet are also free!

Komo

- Interest rate: **Up to 2.5%**
- Initial deposit: **Not required**
- Maintaining balance: **None**
- Interest-earning balance: **None**

EastWest Bank created Komo, a fully digital banking solution. Like the other digital banks on this list, Komo does not demand an initial deposit or a minimum amount to maintain an account. Similarly, no minimum balance is required to earn interest.

This high-interest savings account in the Philippines will earn you up to 2.5% interest per year. It is ten times greater, according to Komo, than those of other banks. Depending on your balance, Komo applies three different interest rates. You can get 2.5% interest on your first ₱500,000. The next ₱1.5 million is eligible for a 1.5% interest rate. Additionally, any balance over ₱2 million can earn 1% interest.

ING Save

- Interest rate: **Up to 2.5%**
- Initial deposit: **Not required**
- Maintaining balance: **None**
- Interest-earning balance: **None**

Another digital bank on this list, ING Bank, offers a high-yield savings account called the ING Save Account in the Philippines. The bank does not require a minimum available daily amount to earn interest. However, if you have a savings account with a daily value of more than ₱20 million, you can receive 1% gross each year.

The introductory interest rate promo of 4% per year is also available to new account holders. If you qualify, you can take advantage of the promotional rate for the first four months after opening your account.

Keep in mind that a high-yield savings account is perfect for building an emergency fund and saving for short-term goals such as international travel, purchasing new technology or appliance, or planning a wedding. Whatever your financial objective, select the most satisfactory option with features and perks that meet your needs and requirements.^{MS}



Student Loan vs. Educational Plans

By EXCEL V. DYQUIANGCO

Filipinos prioritize their children's education even over other financial goals like retirement. There are two ways to fund the cost of a college education: getting a student loan or an educational plan.

The Difference

To help you decide which option to choose, here are some short descriptions of what a student loan and an educational plan offer.

Purpose

You can only use the money from student loans to pay for your child's education. However, if you want something more flexible, an educational plan can cover your child's education and other unrelated expenses.

Payments

You get the proceeds from a student loan to pay for tuition, and you can pay it in manageable installments. You pay premiums years ahead for an educational plan. When the plan matures, you get the proceeds to pay for tuition. Ask yourself: Do you want to pay now or in the future?

Coverage

A student loan is just a loan. An educational plan usually includes riders, such as insurance coverage, for an additional cost. So, it plays a dual role of investment to pay off tuition and as insurance to support your dependents in case of your untimely death or disability. Unlike a student loan, where only the student gets to use this money for their education, an educational plan adds protection for your entire family.

Options to invest

Think of an educational plan as forced savings or investment plan. You can invest in corporate bonds, government securities, equities, and other assets. If you plan to invest for a more extended period, you can shift the premium from equities to fixed income after 15 years to avoid market swings.

Withdrawals

In an educational plan, you can withdraw a portion of your money in case of an emergency and leave the rest invested. It allows you to cover immediate expenses without sacrificing your savings.

The downside of an educational plan is that the premiums can be expensive. You need to set aside money for premium payments now when you may be at the stage when money is still tight. The alternative is you can wait until your children are ready for college. You probably will be earning more and could afford to take out a loan by then.

Still, an educational plan is an excellent option to consider. You get to save for your children's education without worrying about the future. And you get some insurance protection for your family.^{MS}



Primer: Online Insurance

BY JEREMY JESSLEY TAN, RFP®

The COVID-19 pandemic has made businesses evolve in how they do things. Spending behaviors have also changed with consumers being able to easily purchase pretty much anything with one click or, should I say, a tap of a finger. In the past two years, buying insurance in the Philippines has also gone through a significant change.

You had to meet face-to-face with a trusted financial advisor and sign paper documents to purchase insurance pre-pandemic. Now, many insurance companies, with the help of the Insurance Commission, have shifted to allow purchasing of insurance by meeting financial advisors through video conference and then signing through customers' phones or tablets.

While relatively new, certain insurance products allow customers to skip the human interaction with agents as they can be purchased entirely online.

Advantages of Buying Insurance Online

1 Convenience. Buying insurance becomes more convenient as you can do this without finding a trusted financial advisor. You can simply find a reputable insurance company and get your insurance plan whenever and wherever you are.

2 Buy at your own pace. Some people tend to avoid buying their insurance plan because they're not comfortable with the financial advisors who will pressure them to make the purchase right away. Online insurance allows you to compare different plans and compare them to your needs. The downside of self-paced buying is that you might not purchase or delay for too long that it becomes too late.

3 Lesser charges. Online insurance could entail lesser charges to the customers since there will be no insurance agent to give commissions to. Lesser charges could also mean lower premiums.

Disadvantages

1 Questions will not be addressed immediately. Often, when purchasing insurance products, there will be a lot of clarifications and questions needing answers. Having no human interaction within the process of online

insurance could mean these questions will not be answered immediately. There could be an FAQ section, but you can put only so much in an FAQ.

2 here's no middleman (financial advisor). Customer service will never be perfect in every customer's eyes. When it comes to insurance, that financial advisor can be the middleman that deals with frustrating customer service and the annoyed client. That middleman can be a customer's assurance that something is being done about their inquiry.

Factors to Consider in Choosing Insurance Online

1 Type of insurance. As you select your insurance coverage, be aware that there are different types to choose from—term insurance, traditional insurance, and insurance with investment or the Variable Unit Linked (VUL). Each type has various benefits depending on your preferences.

2 Coverage and riders. On top of having death benefits for the beneficiaries, you can also add riders to boost your coverage. Not all products, though, would have similar riders, which sometimes make it harder for us to choose which is best, because a lot of times, all these riders are good.

3 Paying period. Filipinos do not like the idea of paying for an extended period of time. This is why a "long-term" plan for most Filipinos is 5-10 years. For insurance products, the longer the pay period, the cheaper it is in terms of yearly premiums. So those who are tight on a budget would prefer a more extended payment period.

4 Premiums. Of course, just like in buying any product, the price matters, and most often, it matters the most. Term insurance plans are the cheapest, while the VUL tends to have the highest premiums mainly because it has an investment component.

Factors that Affect Insurance Premiums. Whether purchasing online or through face-to-face/video calls, the factors that affect premiums are pretty much the same.

1 Age. The most known factor that affects insurance premiums is the applicant's age. The younger you are, the lower the premium, mainly because the risk of getting critically ill or dying at a young age is also lower. It is also worth noting that insurance companies have different policies regarding an applicant's insurance age. Some companies will consider an applicant's current age as their insurance age as late as two weeks before their next birthday, while others will consider a new insurance age six months before their next birthday.

2 Health. Another major factor in determining insurance premiums is the state of your health. This is crucial in determining whether you are insurable or not for the chosen plan. Thus, you should consider getting insurance at the earliest possible opportunity.

3 Occupation. What you do plays a role, especially when you want insurance covering you for accidents. Someone whose work entails being outside, being prone to accidents, or being at sea, among others, are seen as higher-risk occupations that could result in higher premiums.

4 Riders. Riders give additional coverage that can boost your financial protection beyond just death. The more coverage you want, the more you pay—it's as simple as that.

Reminders When Applying for Insurance Online

1 Answer questions truthfully. During an insurance application process, there will be many questions that need to be answered. Make sure to read each question carefully and answer honestly. Any misrepresentation could cause some problems during a claim, or worst, you might not be allowed to claim at all.

2 Compare plans to suit your needs. Buying online allows you easily compare plans. Be ready to determine which benefits or coverage are most important to you to make comparing easier. If possible, have a spreadsheet ready, so you can summarize the benefits of the plans you are considering.

3 Read the fine print. The fine print is often overlooked because it's usually written in small fonts. That is not an excuse because the fine print is where the details are. Buying online gives you time to read the proposal thoroughly before making the purchase. ^{MS}



A Brand Ambassador for Diversity

By SKYE ZHIA as told to EXCEL V. DYQUIANGCO

Before I started with TikTok, I already had a YouTube channel. It was where I usually create content on lifestyle, DIY tutorials, traveling, food trips, and more. It was not my intention to monetize my channel at first, but eventually, I learned that I could do this as a living. TikTok, as we know it today, is a source that is easily accessible to the general public, and I decided to follow the trend and use the ease of accessibility to its full potential with my content creation.

When I started on TikTok, I didn't care if my videos weren't trending. I was just creating videos out of passion since I am fond of documenting my life. As time passed, I realized that there was an image of myself that I had built up and should be maintained. Being an influencer takes determination, confidence, and passion.

At times, I feel a sense of doubt about whether it is okay to continue going down this path. But then I remind myself why I started in the first place, which fueled my desire to continue doing what I love. As the old saying goes, do what you love to do, and everything else will follow.

Consistent Uploading in TikTok. During my first few months, I was added to this group chat on Facebook, where you can find many TikTok celebrities or influencers. I felt like I was the only person there who had a small following compared to those who had already cemented their image. I felt insecure at first, but I picked myself up and just continued creating content over time.

I can recall the most memorable experience of receiving gifts in large quantities from multiple establishments. The most notable incident was when I was shipped an iPhone 12 Pro Max from Shopee as a gift for my collaboration with the company. This experience is memorable because I have never expected how rewarding it feels to do what I love while reaping its benefits.

I currently have 355 thousand followers on TikTok. I grew my number of followers during the pandemic, as most stayed at home, and I had to find coping mechanisms to keep myself sane. I usually upload content around three to five times a day, and as expected, not all of my videos received a large number of views.

Exploring the World. As of now, I am a freelancer and accept brand collaborations through email. My niche is more on lifestyle and travel vlogs. I love my work as an influencer because I can be flexible anytime and anywhere. Wherever I go, I can bring my work with me. It also serves as an opportunity to develop creative ideas for creating new content.

What makes me different from other influencers is that I want to go out and explore the world rather than just focusing on just a single category. I believe that life has too many things for us to try. I want to show the world my perspective of how we should live life by embracing diversity.

While some people would often take ideas from others—and I find nothing wrong with that—originality beats copies of tested concepts. I take ideas from other people with my content creation but then twist them to make them my own too. This is how I do things my way, and they are all bound to change from time to time.

We all need to have a light of inspiration, especially at our low points. As an influencer, I feel a sense of fulfillment when people get entertained and learn something from the content I create. It makes me feel happy knowing that I have served my purpose in this community while putting a smile on people's faces. Being the source of inspiration for many people has also encouraged me to go further with my content creation. Just like communication, sending a message and receiving feedback go both ways, and I believe it is fulfilling to establish a connection with my followers to be better.

As for my future plans, I want to continue what I'm doing and improve my content even more. I have the desire to project myself even further, as improvements require consistency. Personally, I want to travel around the world and all of its corners as I am a wanderlust. I have always been curious about the cultures of other countries, religions, tribes, and more, as I want to show my perspective on global diversity. Professionally, I still aim to grow my following and establish myself as not just a traveler but an entrepreneur who can do many great things. I always had the urge to be the best version of myself while serving as a source of inspiration for those aspiring to do the same.^{MS}



MY MONEY LESSONS

Starting as an Influencer

For those who want to become influencers, **Skye Zhia** has some advice:

Be authentic. Show the real you. Don't be afraid to get judged.

Be consistent. People love it when they see updates or content from you at least every week or every other day.

Do what you love. Everything else will follow.

Achieving Great Dreams

By JOAQUIN BAES as told to EXCEL V. DYQUIANGCO

It started at the height of the pandemic. I started uploading videos on Instagram and TikTok and told my friends to watch them for a good laugh. My TikTok account was private, but my close friends told me to make my account public so that more people could watch my videos.

The first few months were crazy. I started by doing skits and POVs. “How do I keep growing?” was the question that often invaded my head. It evolved over time because I wanted people to get to know me more. So now, I make vlogs, my *puyat* with wacky series, my random thoughts, my day-to-day struggles, and anything else I can think of. I was constantly thinking of new content and how fast I get it uploaded. Not to mention balancing my school life and personal life. It felt like my world changed overnight, and I wasn’t prepared for it.



I didn’t expect hundreds of thousands of people to watch my videos. I didn’t expect such positive feedback, and it made me giddy. My friends and family were so supportive, and I was genuinely glad, so I kept uploading as many videos as I could at the time. I didn’t even think about monetization until recently. I was surprised that people find happiness in something I do for fun. Knowing I can try and make someone’s day better—even for just a minute—puts a smile on my face.

Currently, I have 334 thousand people following me. I still can’t comprehend how that happened, but I think it was because I was very consistent in uploading content every day. However, I recently stopped uploading content every day because of schoolwork and mental health.

Never in a Box. One of my most memorable experiences as a content creator is meeting other content creators in real life. Due to the pandemic, it’s been quite hard to meet up with friends. But still, last February, I went to my TikTok friend Jill’s (raineioop on TikTok) birthday at her house. That wouldn’t have happened if it wasn’t for TikTok. Also, I met up with my other TikTok friends, Spencer Serafica and Juan Pacheco. We went to the mall, played bowling, got some coffee, ate good food, and had fun overall.



I think what makes me different is the type of content I create. I want to cater to as many people as possible without losing myself. I do all kinds of content, and I think that makes me stand out—I don’t confine myself in a box. I also go live a lot on TikTok and try to interact with my viewers as much as I can. I do enjoy talking with them. Plus, I also think people like the type of content I do. I like to be as natural and personal as possible to my viewers. I want them to like me and not just my content.

Meanwhile, receiving messages from the viewers fulfills me. Sure, not all of them will be positive and uplifting, but for the most part, when I read comments saying how happy I made them with my content, I also feel joyous and content.

In the near future, I want to move to Canada and be with my mom since she works there. I would like to pursue law there as well. I get asked a lot about what I want to be when I grow up, and honestly, I want to try it all before making a decision. I want to try hosting, acting, modeling, becoming a spokesperson, and more. People shouldn’t let others dictate what they can and cannot be. After all, if you’re going to dream, you might as well dream big.

Achieving Dreams. Even before TikTok, I’ve always been cautious with my money. I usually only spend my money on essential things like food, but sometimes I reward myself with shoes or clothes. I do save the majority of my money. I keep it in the bank for safekeeping and tell my mom of my spending so that she can monitor it. I also ask her for advice whenever I would buy something.

The moment I became a content creator was when I knew that anyone could achieve his dreams if he tried hard enough. TikTok opened a lot of doors for me. I am very grateful for the people who have helped and supported me to get to where I am now.^{MS}



MY MONEY
LESSONS

Fun on TikTok

Joaquin Baes just wanted to have fun. But with more than 300,000 followers on TikTok, he shared his secrets to success.

Know who you are. Always know who you are and what you stand for. Make content that you like doing. This also includes standing your ground on specific topics and issues. A time will come when a brand whose values don’t align with yours will contact you. If that’s the case, maintain your integrity rather than choosing the money. The easiest way isn’t always the right way.

Always be grounded. Always be grounded and humble. Don’t let the views or likes determine your life. Surround yourself with people who remind you of who you are. Sometimes everything gets a bit overwhelming, and it’s nice to have people around you to keep you sane.

Be a trendsetter. Don’t be a trend follower but a trendsetter. Think of new things that haven’t been done before, then if people like them, stick with them. People often copy other people’s content because other content gets more engagement than their own. This is a quick solution, but you won’t be happy in the long run because, deep inside, this isn’t the type of content you like doing.

Promoting the Beauty of Cebu

By MARK MONTA as told to EXCEL V. DYQUIANGCO

I started blogging in 2007 to 2008 when I was a DOST scholar. All of my scholar friends had blog sites, and I wondered how nice it would be to have one. In my first few months, I was overwhelmed because there were so many things I needed to learn. But despite the challenges, my blog led me to form new relationships online, where I learned the ropes of blogging.

My heart has always been for my hometown in Cebu City, and because of this, I decided to focus my blog on what my province has to offer. With this, I soon founded the Cebu Bloggers Society (CBS) in 2008, intending to promote Cebu through blogs. At first, monetization was not the priority. My goal was to hone my passion for writing, meet fellow Cebu bloggers, and unite together for the betterment of Cebu, especially in terms of the tourism industry. But later on, I just discovered that I could earn money through Google AdSense.

The Cebu Bloggers Society. CBS has grown stronger over the years. Touted to be the premier blogging organization in Cebu and the Central Visayas, we ventured into opening our doors to social media influencers, or as we call it, internally “social media movers.” They are movers because we believe using our social media platforms will help move people, industries, or even campaigns for their growth and development. So today, we are a family of bloggers composed of bloggers and social media influencers or movers.

We have several collaborations for our projects and a plan for Bloggers Social Responsibility (BSR), the term I coined during my first year of CBS. It is a counterpart to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). BSR is a section of CBS merely for charity and giving back to the communities by using our resources as bloggers.



Our family is unique because, unlike any other organization, we have officers who will ensure that members get good benefits and advantages, especially on their blogging journeys. Plus, we also get to travel regionally. I still remember doing the yearly familiarization tour in the SOCCSKARGEN region, which we called the SEX Tour (SOCCSKARGEN Experience Tour). We visited many tourist destinations in the SOCCSKARGEN region, including the famous pineapple plantation in Polomolok South Cotabato, Lake Sebu, and others. Another memorable travel was during the FamTour in Baguio with our friends from Baguio Bloggers Org.

Before the pandemic, I attended a series of events hosted by Saucony Philippines for their Fitness Tour and Hiking activity at the famous Osmena Peak. Also, one of my memorable experiences was when brands started checking me out. I then became associated with Skechers Philippines for their running campaign.

Of course, running a group has not always been easy. One of the challenging parts of being the CBS founder is that I get to deal with different attitudes and personalities. Everyone is unique, so as much as we want to push our group’s intents or ideas, we always consider those who constantly oppose us for their personal reasons. It’s hard—very hard, but with the help of our officers, we overcome this through meetings, discussion, a series of talks, and meeting halfway.

On Saving and Spending. Presently my official Facebook page (@TheMarkMonta) has 10,631 followers, while for my official Facebook blog pages, I have 8,622. On my Instagram, I have a good number of 20.6K followers and counting.

At first, I did not expect that my numbers would grow. But when I kept posting relevant content on my pages, I slowly gained momentum, especially when I wrote about travel, food, and fitness.

I don’t usually spend a lot in terms of saving and spending, but I do save monthly on different banks. I do monthly savings on BPI, ING International, and sometimes on digital wallets such as PayMaya and ShopeePay. I also have savings accounts in different cooperatives because they give great savings interest, such as TMX Employees Consolidated Multi-purpose Cooperative (TECMPC) and AIM Coop. In addition, I put my money into MP2 savings in Pag-IBIG too! And for spending, I think I put a lot of money into my own house. It’s supposedly a two-story house that I planned, but I was able to build a perfect one-story home for my family due to budget issues.

As for my future plans, I personally want to travel more! I want to visit European countries. I’ve been to the U.S, and other Asian countries, but I wish to also travel to European places.

Professionally, I just hopped to a new position in TMX Philippines (TIMEX). I’ve been employed by Timex for 15 years now, but I’ve been here for four years in my new position and am still exploring more in my job as a Web Content Specialist.^{MS}

MY MONEY LESSONS

Getting into Blogging

For those who want to start a blog and monetize from it, **Mark Monta** shares three pieces of advice:

Start a blog out of passion. When you want to start a blog just because of money, you better stop right there. Cash and other benefits come second. Think first of the passion and drive on why you want to start a blog.

Content is king. When you already have a platform or blog, always remember that content is king. Continually update your blogs with relevant articles that are based on your niche. If your blog category is food, update your followers or co-foodies with new and exciting places to experience some delicious grubs.

Keep the fire burning. Make sure to adapt to changes. Technology is not static—it changes, which is what you need to do. Embrace changes that will make you a better blogger.



SUN LIFE PHILIPPINES: A LIFELONG PARTNER IN HEALTH AND WEALTH MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

By ROSSANA UNSON

If there's anything that the past three years have taught Filipinos, it's that health concerns are totally unpredictable. While the COVID-19 pandemic took the entire population by surprise, it was those who were well-prepared and had stable and reliable health insurance plans that had less to concern themselves with. They had more time to focus on immediate needs like keeping their loved ones safe and cared for. These were the fortunate people who were ready for any eventuality and now more than ever, being ready seems to have become more important to Filipinos post-pandemic.





Sun Life Philippines Chief Client Experience & Marketing Officer Carla Gonzalez-Chong shares precisely how the pandemic—and a renewed focus on health and wellness due to this—has caused Filipinos to make a conscious effort to be more vigilant when it comes to their health.

“Before the pandemic, health has always been a top priority for the majority of Filipinos, but only 10% are financially prepared in case of health emergencies. With the rising incidence of lifestyle-related diseases and concerns about contracting the COVID-19 virus, there has been an increased interest in Sun Life health protection products that provide cash benefits for covered critical illnesses and hospitalization,” she shares.

The Sun Life advisors, she says, have been active in reviewing the financial portfolios of their clients to address any health protection gaps they may discover. She discusses one such product that can easily address such a gap: “To provide Filipinos with more health protection options, Sun Life launched Sun ICU Protect last year, a severity-based health insurance plan that provides life insurance protection and a financial safety net to insured clients should they be affected by a life-threatening condition.”

She also recounts that further to the new product offering, Sun Life held its annual charity

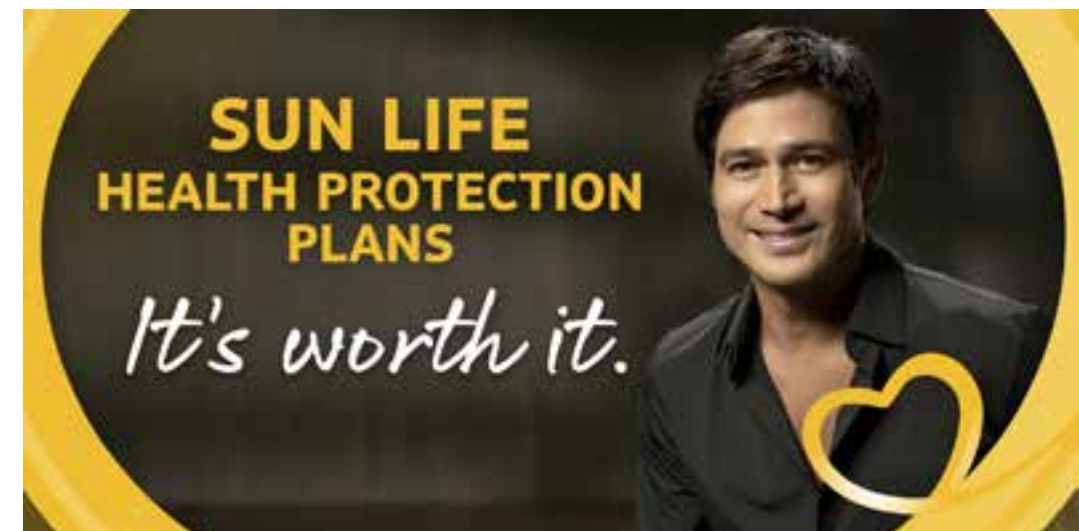
sporting event, SunPiology: Family Challenge, to engage entire families in a fun physical activity to encourage movement.

Sun Life has also made it a priority to help the community through its philanthropic arm, the Sun Life Foundation.

“The Sun Life Foundation has collaborated with several organizations such as the Health Futures Foundation, Inc. and Institute for Studies on Diabetes Foundation, Inc. to bring health education programs and Diabetes care closer to Filipinos living in remote areas of the country,” she proudly states.

Moreover, with their Partner in Health campaign, Sun Life has without a doubt exhibited how they’ve leveled up their efforts in providing Filipinos with truly worthwhile programs so they’ll be absolutely ready for whatever challenges in health may arise.

Carla articulates, “At Sun Life, we believe that investing in our health means we give ourselves more time and the freedom to do more of the things we love with the people that mean the most to us—our families. The Partner in Health Campaign aims to inspire and guide Filipinos to live healthier and brighter lives, providing them with sound advice, offering health protection



solutions, and giving access to tools and resources that will help them appreciate health and wellness from a holistic perspective. The Partner in Health Campaign encourages Filipinos to invest in our health because it's worth it!"

Sun Life regularly conducts research studies to help them determine the needs of their clients and potential clients. Based on their client research studies, 38% are intending to buy a health protection product in the next six to twelve months. The Partner in Health Campaign aims to help them decide to purchase a health protection product for themselves.

"We hope that the stories of our brand ambassadors Charo Santos-Concio, Piolo Pascual, and Matteo Guidicelli, who have placed health and financial preparedness as a top priority in their lives, will inspire viewers to choose Sun Life as their partner in health," Carla enthuses.

She's talking about a series of compelling videos launched for this campaign where their ambassadors expressed messages and tips about life to their younger selves. Guidicelli recounted his carefree, happy younger days and segued to a reminder to secure not just his finances, but his health as well for his future family. Pascual, on the other hand, encourages his younger self

to continue to pursue his dreams but to likewise protect his health and resources, with the assurance that this will certainly be worthwhile. Finally, Santos-Concio reminds herself of the advice that her father, who was a doctor, gave her: good health is priceless and keeping healthy is not just for herself but also for her future family. These videos are truly inspirational as they recount truths many would also tell their younger selves if given the chance.




When asked to discuss Sun Life's health protection plans and how they might differ from competing products from other life insurance companies, health insurance companies, and HMOs, Carla enumerates, "Sun Life's health protection plans such as the SUN Fit and Well, Sun ICU Protect, SUN Cancer Care, and SUN Senior Care offers prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation benefits that can complement any existing HMO plan. For most critical illnesses such as heart attacks, strokes and cancer, a big sum of money is required to fund treatment and rehabilitation, and the benefits provided by an HMO plan may not be enough. With Sun Life's health protection plans, insured clients can receive cash benefits should one be diagnosed with any of the covered critical illnesses. Depending on the plan, even if clients do not contract an illness, they are still covered by life insurance. But some



SUN Senior Care

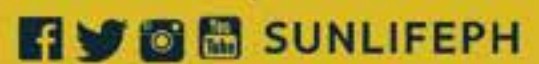


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offer both health protection with the added benefit of life insurance to ensure their family's future is well-protected should anything happen to them. Other cash benefits for hospitalization and rehabilitation are also included depending on the product chosen. Insured clients will also have the opportunity to avail of exclusive benefits from GoWell, Sun Life's health and wellness community, including relevant content, events, and perks and rewards that will help them prevent illnesses and live a healthier lifestyle."

While these are all extremely useful to ensure and protect physical health, it is also undeniable that the pandemic has had a considerable effect on mental wellness. When asked what steps Sun Life has taken to address this situation, Carla reassures, "Mental health awareness has grown over the years and has sparked a heightened interest during the pandemic. To address this, Sun Life has been offering free webinars that can help Filipinos cope with stress and anxiety and improve their overall mental well-being with mental wellness talks, meditation, and sound bath virtual classes. For the Partner in Health Campaign, we collaborated with the Philippine Mental Health Association, Inc. (PMHA) to develop "Mind Your Health" social media content and the "Safe Space Webinars". Follow our Sun Life Philippines social media pages to access this content," she invites.

Speaking of relevant content, Sun Life's online GoWell Community is known to carry a wealth of health and fitness content. When asked to elaborate on this initiative, Gonzalez-Chong pipes up enthusiastically, "Sun Life's GoWell community aims to gather like-minded Filipinos who desire to become fit and well. Apart from the health and fitness content published in gowell.com.ph, we also offer community webinars tackling holistic wellness. GoWell members also get to earn points that they can redeem as rewards for participating in any of our activities. There are two membership tiers – Teal and Gold. The Teal membership is open to everyone and the Gold membership is exclusive to Sun Life insured clients of our SUN Fit and Well, Sun ICU Protect, SUN Cancer Care, and SUN Senior Care plans. Gold members enjoy different perks and rewards and access to GoWell Studio which houses fitness and wellness videos. To become a GoWell member, simply go to gowell.com.ph and register!"

It is quite evident that Sun Life is walking the talk when it comes to offering fantastic opportunities for current and future clients to secure not just their finances but equally important, their health. At a time when this is of utmost importance, it is clear that Sun Life is attuned to the needs of its market. It's not a wonder that Sun Life is an industry leader.^{MS}



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 **Sun Life** | Partner for Life

Your Guide to Digital Banks

By JESI BONDOC, RFP®

The year 2020 was a pivotal year for the fintech industry in the Philippines. As brick-and-mortar banks became less frequented due to restricted mobility during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, digital banking witnessed an accelerated interest and engagement in their services.

What is digital banking? Do you still remember the dragging tick of the clock whenever you're in the bank? Waiting in the queue for minutes, hours even, for a transaction that doesn't need to last more than it should be?

With digital banking, you can now experience smoother and faster transactions within the comforts of your own space without setting foot inside a brick-and-mortar branch. You can easily access your bank accounts and perform cashless transactions either through online banking (accessing banking functions via the bank's website from a laptop) or through mobile banking (using the bank's mobile app to access banking services via a smartphone or tablet).

Online banking and mobile banking form part of digital banking, giving you the option to bank whenever and wherever you want.

However, there are still people who prefer traditional banking. The great thing is you can decide which one you prefer more. Choose the one that suits your lifestyle. If you are the sociable type and like that the branch manager and personnel know you personally,

you probably would prefer traditional banking. But if you are super busy and want to do things conveniently, digital banking is a better option.

Pros and cons of traditional banking.

Traditional banks offer direct services to clients to ensure their access and management of their accounts. These banks have a physical presence—your local brick-and-mortar branches. You, or an authorized representative, need to be there in person to do banking transactions.

Pros:

Physical requirements. If you need to withdraw physical cash, you have no choice but to go to an ATM or branch. In most cases, if you need to open an account, you should visit the bank.

Social aspect. Some people like interacting with real people, not apps. And the local branch manager develops business relationships with their clients.

Cons:

Limited hours. The drawback with traditional banking is the limited time to transact due to fixed banking hours. Most open at 9 am and close at 3 pm or 4 pm. Most branches are closed on weekends.

Long waiting time. And then, there is the seemingly unending waiting time to complete a transaction usually brought by the traditional banks' insufficient workforce.

Pros and cons of digital banking.

Digital banking, on the other hand, takes place entirely online. Anything that needs to be done can be accessed in the comfort of your own home—from online deposits and checking account balances to transferring money and paying bills. There are traditional banks that offer digital banking. And then there are pure digital banks, also called neobanks, which are banks with zero physical branches.

Pros:

Convenient 24/7 access. As long as you have a stable Internet connection, performing bank transactions can be done anytime and anywhere.

More efficient. It's easier to track your transactions with digital banking, preventing fraudulent charges and minimizing human error.

Better rates and lower fees. With online banks saving on operating costs such as rent, salary, and utility expenses, they can afford to drive down fees and offer higher deposit rates, ultimately benefitting consumers.

More features. Beyond regular transactions, digital banking apps are also rich in features like savings and budgeting tools and financial calculators to help customers make money decisions.

More inclusive. Digital banking proved to be a great equalizer, leveling the playing field by reaching unbanked and underbanked communities that rely heavily on mobile phones but may not have access to physical bank branches.

Cons:

Occasional downtime. While we say that one obvious benefit of digital banking is access, downtime and regular app maintenance can be a hassle, especially if you rely solely on a pure digital bank and there's no branch to visit instead.

Security issues. There are always unscrupulous people who use online scams, phishing emails, and other fraudulent means. Digital banks are striving to protect their clients' data with cybersecurity protocols, but sometimes gullibility can get the better of people.

Pure Digital Banks. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas approved only six digital-only banks:

1. Overseas Filipino Bank. www.ofbank.com.ph
The Overseas Filipino Bank (OFBank), a digital-only and first branchless government Bank, is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Land Bank of the Philippines (LANDBANK). OFBank was created to cater to the banking and financial requirements of overseas Filipinos, OFWs, and their beneficiaries.

Following its unique mission, OFBank provides reliable and secure financial products and services to meet these requirements, including delivering quality and efficient foreign remittance services.

OFBank offers the following ATM Savings Accounts for Overseas Filipinos, OFWs, and their beneficiaries:

- OFBank Visa Debit Card for Overseas Filipinos and Overseas Filipino Workers
- OFBank Visa Debit Card for Beneficiaries
- OFBank Regular Debit Card for Beneficiaries (for customers below 18 years old, but at least 7 years old)

To open an OFBank account, simply download the OFBank Mobile Banking App via Google Play or App Store and follow the steps provided for account opening.

2. Tonik Digital Bank. tonikbank.com

Tonik is officially the Philippines' first neobank to secure a digital bank license from the BSP. As a digital-only bank, Tonik operates on a fully digital platform.

Jesi Bondoc is a Registered Financial Planner of RFP Philippines and co-founder of ODONTO PAY. He is also an entrepreneur in the field of F&B, construction, fitness and tech. You can send your money questions at jesi.rfp@gmail.com or jj_bondoc@yahoo.com and they'll be answered on his next article. For more info about Registered Financial Planner program, e-mail to info@rfp.ph or text <name><e-mail><RFP> at 0917-9689774.



Tonik offers the following products:

- **Tonik Account**—your main account
- **Stashes**—this one is unique to Tonik, think of Stashes as separate savings pockets for different things like emergency stash, vacation stash, tuition fee stash, new car stash, etc. You can also customize and open a new stash that suits your saving goal. For Solo, stashing, interest rate per annum is currently set at 4%.
- **Time Deposits**—Tonik’s time deposits offer as much as 6% interest per annum.
- **Debit Cards**—when you create a Tonik account, you instantly receive a free Virtual Debit Card. In-app request for a physical debit card is also available.
- **Loans**—Tonik offers quick loans, shop installment loans, and soon bigger loans.

Tonik app can be downloaded via Google Play or App Store.

3. UNObank. www.unobank.asia

As of writing, UNObank has yet to be officially launched. UNObank is a credit-led digital bank that is pioneering an elevated approach to banking. The UNObank platform is powered by artificial intelligence (AI), allowing smooth yet secured customer onboarding, transaction authorizations, alternate data-based credit scoring, product and interface personalization with advanced security, and risk and privacy management patterns.

You can join UNObank’s mailing list to receive updates on their exclusive features and services by visiting their website.

4. Union Digital Bank.

www.unionbankph.com/unionbankonline
 Union Digital Bank is a wholly owned subsidiary of UnionBank, the listed Aboitiz-led bank. The BSP approved UnionBank’s digital bank license application last year and UnionDigital is the fourth entity to get an online banking license from the BSP.

Union Digital Bank is expected to launch this year 2022. Stay tuned for its official launch to explore their products and services.

5. GOTyme . www.tyme.com/tag/gotyme

GoTyme is the fifth digital bank in the Philippines granted license by the BSP. It is a partnership between the Gokongwei Group and Singapore-based Tyme.

Like UNObank and Union Digital Bank, GOTyme is yet to be operational. It is expected to start operating in the second quarter of 2022. It will allow users to register both through an app and digital kiosks that will be set up throughout the malls and retail footprint of the Gokongwei Group, which also owns local lender Robinsons Bank Corp.

6. Maya Bank. www.mayabank.ph

Maya Bank is the digital banking arm of Voyager Innovations, the Manila-based owner of PayMaya. Maya Bank powers the digital banking experience of its consumers and enterprises across their other products like the Maya all-in-one app, Maya Business, and Maya Center.

Maya offers the following products and services:

- **Savings**—Maya bank offers an introductory interest rate of 6% per annum until August 31, 2022.
- **Business Deposit** - It is a fully digital deposit product available to business clients of Maya Bank. It simplifies the financial management of a business by having a single account, which can accomplish the following: receive sales revenues, transfer funds within Maya Bank and other banks or e-wallets via PESONet, and disburse payroll and benefits payments to employees. It also allows businesses to earn interest on funds kept in the Maya Bank Business Deposit account at 1.5% interest rate.
- **Loans**—Maya Bank offers a minimum credit limit of Php500 and a maximum credit limit of Php15,000.
- **Deals**—exclusive deals such as cashbacks, discounts and raffle promos await Maya Bank’s customers.

The Maya Bank app can be downloaded via Google Play or App Store.

Go Digital Banking! Given the current circumstances brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, digital banking gave us a better and more convenient way to access and manage our finances. You can say goodbye to tedious queues, dismal interest rates, and limited banking hours!^{MS}



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Money and the Filipino Gen Z

By FITZ GERARD VILLAFUERTE, RFP®

Which generation do you belong to? Fortunately, there's no hard line separating the different generations. So, I can claim to be a Millennial (Gen Y) despite most literature saying that I probably belong to Gen X.

I call anyone older than 55 years old a Baby Boomer for convenience. If you're over 40 years old, you belong to Gen X. If you're over 25 years old, you're a Millennial. Otherwise, anyone younger belongs to the Gen Z fam.

I also see some distinctions between the generations when it comes to career building.

Filipino Baby Boomers built their wealth by going up the corporate ladder. Meanwhile, Gen X people are more entrepreneurial because that's how they survived economic recessions, although most still valued building a career through employment.

Filipino Millennials witnessed the growth and mass adoption of the Internet, giving them new career opportunities in the global economy. Today's online freelancing and tech startup industries are teeming with them. But broadly, Gen Xers wear a lot of hats. They could be an employee by day, an entrepreneur at night, and a freelancer during weekends—they invented hustle culture.

But what about Gen Z? How is this generation roaming college hallways and youngbloods of the workforce dealing with career choices and life in general? More importantly, how are they navigating through adulting and solving challenges in their personal finances?

There's limited study in the Philippines

on this area, but according to the 2022 Investopedia Financial Literacy Survey, Gen Z adults are more financially sophisticated than any previous generations globally. Another study by Raddon Research Insights found that Gen Z adults are three times more likely to take a financial education class than Millennials.

Indeed, these are interesting findings for a generation that older ones dismiss as mostly distracted and self-absorbed. It seems that there's more to them than their witty posts on Twitter and dance challenge videos on TikTok. Here are more takeaways from the studies mentioned and my general observation of the Filipino Gen Z.

Personal Finance. Gen Zs are more aware of the importance of saving and can save better than previous generations did during the same age. However, many are anxious that they might still not have enough money to afford their future goals.

In my university talks, students would always ask for ways to earn extra income. When asked why they're interested in knowing, the most common answer is that they want to save money on their own for their wants and not have to ask their parents to buy them.

Moreover, I also observed that most Filipino Gen Zs struggle to understand the benefits of leveraging debt and credit. Like in global studies, Zoomers (Gen Z) tend to avoid debt because previous generations gave them the impression that borrowing money has a more considerable downside. This explains why most Gen Zs I met prefer debit cards to credit cards.

Lastly, Gen Zs rely more on mobile apps and budgeting software when it comes to money management. They don't like using good, old-fashioned spreadsheets, which Millennials and Gen Xers prefer.

Investing and Entrepreneurship. A study claims that 54% of Gen Z has some form of investment. In my opinion, this is because of the proliferation of fintech and the lowering of investing barriers.

When I was in my early 20s, I had to go to the stockbroker's office to open an account, which required a minimum deposit of P25,000. Today, Gen Zs have access to websites, online brokers, and mobile apps where they can buy stocks and invest in funds within minutes while in the comforts of their homes. Moreover, you can now open an account in most local funds and a few stockbrokers for as little as P1,000.

Unfortunately, only 31% of Gen Z investors feel confident that they can explain how the stock market works to a friend. And while 25% of Gen Zs worldwide hold cryptocurrencies and NFTs, only a fraction could actually describe how blockchain technology works. It was primarily because of FOMO (fear of missing out) that they invested in these assets.

Lastly, Zoomers are the most entrepreneurial of all the current generation. A good 35% of Gen Zs have plans or have already started their own business. Scrolling through Facebook and TikTok, I don't find it surprising anymore to see many Filipino Gen Zs selling products online, offering a service, and even marketing a coaching program they developed.

Financial Knowledge. Social media plays a significant factor in how Zoomers learn about personal finance. I observed that Filipino Gen Zs prefer the convenience and fast-paced education that YouTube and TikTok videos provide. They put less priority on reading books and attending finance seminars.

Moreover, they're aware of the past mistakes of previous generations from the stories they read online, and research shows that 64% of them understand the importance of financial planning.

Unfortunately, they also feel overloaded with information and would often default to just following the advice of their Gen X or Millennial parents about money management.

However, among all generations, Zoomers are the most comfortable talking about money to their parents and peers. So, it seems that the Filipino culture of money being a taboo topic at the dinner table will soon come to an end.

In a few years, all Gen Z will enter the workforce, and hopefully, there will be more studies. We'll better understand their career choices, financial views, and money habits, especially in the Philippines. And by then, we'll also see the next generation, the so-called Gen Alpha, start to form their own financial personality.^{MS}



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The Cost of Having a Baby

By MARION EVANGELISTA, RFP®

Having a child is a memorable experience. The arrival of a child thrusts the couple into a new role as parents. As the author Jake Slope says, "Parenting is a lifetime job and does not stop when a child grows up." Like any job, preparation is key. Here is an idea of the costs involved in the early stages of a child's life to help parents like you arrange their financial resources.

Pregnancy and Birth of the Baby. The health of your baby and yours is paramount in this first phase of having a baby. Check-ups with the obstetrician-gynecologist (OB) become a monthly engagement. The consultation fee is around ₱1,000 per visit. Meet at least two OB doctors during the first month of your pregnancy so you may find a doctor you will be at ease with. Aside from the consultation fee, other expenses include the ultrasound test, fuel, parking, and snacks. A pregnant mother such as yourself needs to be well-fed, and, as such, bringing healthy snacks on the way to the OB is wise.

The OB has a list of hospitals to deliver your baby. It's best to inquire about the costs of these hospitals' normal and cesarean (C-section) deliveries. The total charge consists of a) doctor's fees for the OB, anesthesiologist, and pediatrician, and b) hospital fees for you and your baby. Doctor's fees for normal delivery range from ₱60,000 to ₱100,000 and can double for C-sections. The hospital fee in a reputable private hospital for normal delivery is ₱60,000 and can likewise double for C-section. These costs include the personal-protective equipment of the doctors and nurses assigned to you.

A portion of the bill is deducted for PhilHealth members. Some employers may give partial or full benefits for pregnancies. If your baby has no complications and because of the threat of virus infections, expect the doctor to release you and your baby after a day.

Newborn (0-3 months). Your newborn baby will now enter her home. You must prepare your home to give warmth and protection to your newborn. This is where the purchase of numerous items comes in. At the top of the list are blankets, hooded towels, gauze cloth, swaddles, pajamas, diapers, mittens, socks, and muslin cloth. You can get a set for ₱1,500. Infant towels and blankets range from ₱150 to ₱200 per piece. While most newborn babies will stay in a bed beside their mother, purchase a crib so your baby will be

secured when you do other activities. A crib costs ₱1,000 to ₱5,000, depending on its material and features. If your baby's room size is small, it's best to get a foldable crib that is easy to store.

Diapers are a constant in a baby's life. A set of 80-piece diapers can cost around ₱600. Eighty pieces sound like a lot, but newborn babies pee and poo on them. Many times, the usage rate is 10 to 12 diapers a day. When there is a sale, it's best to purchase two boxes always to have extra diapers and save on cost.

Hygiene items are likewise essential. For around ₱5,000, some brands offer a newborn gift set that includes foam shampoo, cleansing gel, cleansing water, body lotion, and diaper rash cream. A daily bath will not be complete without a tub. This costs from ₱300 to ₱700.

Your parents may offer to help you and your spouse with your baby. If not, you could just hire a helper. The salary depends on the roles the helper will play. Ideally, you should set aside around ₱8,000 per month for this. Likewise, expect food and utility expenses to rise when a grandparent or helper stays in the house.

A monthly visit to the pediatrician is a must. The pediatrician will be responsible for your baby's immunization. Hepatitis B immunization starts a month after birth. Set aside ₱1,000 for the doctor's fee. The immunization and/or booster cost range/s from ₱1,000 to ₱5,000. A more affordable option is to have your baby's immunization at your nearest health center. For a complete list of vaccinations, check your child's baby book.

Infant (3-12 months). This is when your newborn grows physically and mentally. As your baby increases in size, so does the need to adjust her clothes. You buy a set of *sando* and shorts for ₱100. Diapers go a size higher. With easing COVID-19 restrictions, you may want to let your baby see the



outside world. A baby stroller ranges from ₱1,500 to ₱8,000. An advantage of the more expensive strollers is their multi-functionality; they can be a stroller and a child seat at the same time.

If you choose formula milk, the cost is from ₱2,000 to ₱3,000 per 1.8 kg box. A set of three baby bottles range from ₱250 to ₱1,000. Also, buy a sterilizer for ₱1,000 to ₱6,000. A sterilizer is an apparatus that destroys microorganisms by using steam or dry heat. The more expensive sterilizers use UV for sterilizing baby bottles and other baby items.

At six months old, your baby will start to eat solid food. Your family's increase in food purchases may not yet be significant because your baby's intake is still relatively minimal. Your pediatrician may recommend bottled water to ensure your baby drinks clean water. A 1.5L bottle costs around ₱50 per piece.

It is also around this time that your baby learns to walk. It's best to buy more than one pair of shoes for use when she walks inside or outside the house. Its price is ₱100 to ₱300.

Toddler (1-3 years). Because of your baby's more active movements, she needs to replace her lost energy by having food readily available for her. Your child's food intake gradually increases. She can now eat rice, a serving of fruits and vegetables, fish, and meat. You should also have bananas, mangoes, or apples on hand as part of her main meal or snacks.

Train your toddler to sit on a chair and eat at a table. It would be great to introduce this by purchasing a baby highchair. These are easy to assemble and will be of great use as you teach your baby to eat while seated. The cost of a highchair is ₱1,000 to ₱1,500. Eating will not be complete

“Train your toddler to sit on a chair and eat at a table. It would be great to introduce this by purchasing a baby highchair.”

without a set of plates and utensils. The cost of a highchair is ₱1,000 to ₱1,500. A five-piece silicon feeding set costs ₱800.

Toddlers are more observant and playful. Thus, introducing educational toys can help stimulate their mind. A Lego Duplo toy ranges from ₱500 to ₱3,000. Books can also help your child appreciate the alphabet and numbers. It is suggested to buy children's books with a hardcover and thick pages to minimize torn or damaged pages. You can purchase such books from around ₱300 to ₱1,000.

Your child will experience other 'firsts' at this stage. For her first time going to the beach, you will need to buy her swimwear. Your child's first birthday is always special; thus, it is great to have a birthday party with family and friends when conditions allow. Seeing animals in the flesh is also a nice moment. Therefore find time to take your child to a zoo.

Pre-school Age (3-4 years). At this stage, your child will communicate her thoughts in small verbal and non-verbal ways. She is almost ready for school. If a pre-school teacher is available in your neighborhood, have your child meet this teacher at least once a week. Here, your child will learn to socialize and learn from other people. Working in their free time, these teachers will ask for around ₱500 per session.

If you want to expose your child to other children in a classroom environment, have her enroll in a math and reading class. The earliest age some of these classes accept is three years old. A weekly class from a math learning center has a fee of ₱2,000 per month.

As your child continues to grow, expect that clothes, toys, and food preferences may expand. Your child may also develop a liking for certain themed clothes or toys. Thus, she may not accept every item you buy for her.

Preparing for All of These:

Plan and invest. The early stages of life a child goes through come with a price. As parents, giving the best to your child's health and wellness requires money.

Start with preparing for pregnancy. The cost of pregnancy by itself is already a six-digit figure. Allocate a set amount per month from your savings for this goal, and invest it in a fund that matches the timeline for when you want to have a baby. This calls for all couples to monitor their expenses and live a frugal lifestyle to have sufficient savings.

The best time to prepare for having a baby is when there is no baby yet. Individuals who aim to start a family need to include the costs of raising a baby in their life goals. Couples need to develop their support system because raising a baby is no easy feat. This, together with preparing financially, can go a long way to meet the arrival of a bouncing baby boy or a little princess with much joy and security.^{MS}

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Best Stock Trading Apps

By EXCEL V. DYQUIANGCO

Finding the best stock market app can be tricky for a Filipino investor. Getting the ones that accept Philippines-based stock traders to open an account and help you trade stocks on your iOS or Android device is extremely important. Fortunately, we've got you covered, so don't worry!

The top eight best stock trading applications you can use in the Philippines are as follows:

XM. XM is licensed by various authorities worldwide, including the top-tier Australian Securities and Investments Commission, and is recommended for forex and CFD traders who favor MetaTrader platforms and want an excellent account opening experience (ASIC). Three financial regulators regulate XM: the Cyprus Securities and Exchange Commission (CySEC), the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC), and the Financial Services Commission of Belize (FSC).

The account opening procedure is straightforward. There are several high-quality educational resources available. However, XM has some disadvantages. It only offers forex and CFDs as a product. It charges average costs for forex and stock index CFDs, and non-EU users are not covered by investor protection.

HotForex. HotForex is an award-winning forex and commodities broker that offers retail and institutional clients trading services and facilities. HFM positions itself as the forex broker of choice for traders globally by delivering the best possible trading conditions to its clients and enabling both scalpers and traders to utilize expert advisers' unlimited access to its liquidity.

HFM offers an unrivaled range of account choices from which clients may choose to enjoy a custom trading experience. Individuals and institutional users may trade forex and derivatives online with HFM's many account types, trading software, and tools. All retail, affiliate, and white label clients can use state-of-the-art automated trading systems to access varied spreads and liquidity.

eToro. The eToro platform provides traders and investors with access to over 2,000 different financial assets. These include stocks, cryptocurrencies, ETFs, indices, currencies, and commodities, all of which can be invested with or without leverage, giving almost anyone access to short-, mid-, and long-term investment options.

In addition, on eToro, you pay no fee when you initiate a long, non-leveraged position in a stock or ETF. There are no spreads, fees, or hidden costs, and you earn ownership of the underlying asset. Other asset classes at eToro have attractive spreads, including spreads as little as one pip for popular forex pairs. Find out more here.

IQ Option. IQ Option is a reputable binary options broker known for its user-friendly trading interface. The account opening procedure and customer service are excellent, and it is recommended for both novice and experienced traders. Traders seeking a reputable CFD and binary options provider with reasonable fees might choose this platform.

It is ideal for CFD and binary options trading. It has a solid financial product portfolio that meets the demands of the majority of dealers. This platform is an excellent alternative because of its low minimum deposit and demo account. It is simple to use and includes trading tools.

Olymp Trade. Olymp Trade is an excellent example of a trustworthy and safe broker. This top-tier platform has a strong track record and has been on the market since 2014. In terms of qualifications, Olymp Trade is a Financial Commission Category A member who has been certified by Verify My Trade, an independent auditor. It ensures that the platform provides high-quality service at a reasonable price.

The broker establishes trust with its clients by being open and honest about the trading dangers they face. Olymp Trade encourages its clients to continue learning and offers them all the resources and assistance they require to reduce these risks.

IC Markets. IC Markets is a multinational forex broker situated in Australia launched in 2007. The Cyprus Securities and Exchange Commission (CySEC), the Seychelles Financial Supervisory Authority (FSA), and the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) all regulate the corporation. Because the top-tier ASIC controls it, IC Markets is regarded as safe.

IC Markets charges minimal forex commissions. The account opening process is simple and quick, and deposits and withdrawals are free and straightforward.

Octa FX. OctaFX is a brand that two different broker companies share. OctaFX.com has been offering clients a broad choice of trading alternatives with cheap initial deposits since it was founded in 2011. Its exceptional online trading services and platforms have won multiple industry awards.

Octa Markets Cyprus Ltd, which operates under the domain OctaFX.eu, is a Cyprus-based investment business authorized by the Cyprus Securities and Exchange Commission (CySEC). This allows consumers to trade with a broker regulated by the European Union and offers higher levels of protection.

ExpertOption. ExpertOption makes online trading accessible to everyone by providing low deposit and premium accounts. This stock trading app offers exceptional customer service and a comprehensive set of trading tools required for successful trading.

Traders may use complex analytical tools on the platform to make more informed judgments. ExpertOption is a popular choice among traders due to the security of

their cash and the speed with which they may withdraw them. The broker's user-friendly trading program is likewise well-known.

Remember that whatever stock trading platform you choose, you have to study both pros and cons of trading securities.^{MS}

“The broker establishes trust with its clients by being open and honest about the trading dangers they face.”



How to Turn Your Property into an Airbnb Rental

By EXCEL V. DYQUIANGCO

Airbnb home rentals and experiences have grown in popularity in recent years, and working for yourself as an Airbnb host may be a fun and innovative way to make money.

As a host, you may provide a one-of-a-kind event or workshop. You might choose to create an environmentally friendly atmosphere or exhibit a mid-century design. Perhaps you'd like a zen-inspired rental with a butterfly garden and yoga room. Offering distinctive features that set you apart from your local competitors is always a good idea.

Here is how to start.

Think about the amenities your property has to offer.

There are several factors to consider before deciding to become an Airbnb host. Think about what your rental and location provide because the more enticing your home is, the more bookings you'll get. For example, beach cruisers, seaside chairs, umbrellas, and an attractive outside patio with a farm table for wine and cheese parties may draw interest if your house is in a beach neighborhood.

There are Airbnbs to suit every customer's preferences and budget. Because the internet is so user-friendly, potential consumers may sort out not just preferred locations but also desirable features in any house they reserve. You want your Airbnb to create an excellent first impression as a host.

Know the cost of hosting.

There is no charge for listing your space on Airbnb. But you do have to pay a 3% fee on the overall booking amount to Airbnb for each confirmed, checked-in reservation. There is a 20% commission paid to Airbnb for hosting events (also known as an Airbnb Experience). After the commission is computed and taken from the booking amount and any additional fees, the host will typically receive money for the booking from Airbnb 24 hours or so after check-in.

You might be wondering why you'll have to pay Airbnb a fee for each visitor booking. Being a part of the Airbnb family and the website that showcases every home to millions of tourists worldwide is one of the most appealing aspects of being a host. The charge you pay goes toward the costs of running the Airbnb business as a whole. The 24-hour service each host has at their fingertips, and the processing of charge card payments are examples of expenditures.

Start with the website.

Establish an account on Airbnb's website and fill out the required information. You'll be asked for the property's address you wish to advertise. You'll say if you're renting a home, an apartment, a boutique hotel, a villa, or anything else, and what kind of space your visitors will have—a private room or the entire property. There will also be specifications to input, such as the number of people that may be accommodated and the number of beds and bathrooms available. You'll be asked to provide any unique features, such as a patio, hot tub, or fire pit, that potential visitors would be interested in knowing about.

There are also several options to consider, such as whether dogs are permitted. Are children permitted? Is it a smoke-free establishment? If you're holding one, what is the event date and period? Will there be materials provided?

Create a fun and exciting listing!

Then comes the exciting part! According to Airbnb's website, you'll need to develop a catchy (and acceptable!) title for your rental, such as "Dreamy English Garden-Style Cottage." The next step is to submit a written description of your home, which should be accurate, inviting, and detailed. The description should be visually appealing, well-written, original, and contain precise facts about your property or experience, as well as correct photographs—you'll have the opportunity to post some very unique photos to showcase your property.

Set a price.

Setting a nightly rate for your listing is the next step. Airbnb will advise you on a reasonable pricing point and suggested information on the cancellation policy,

payment processing, and reservation details. You'll need to figure out how much to charge, which should be comparable to similar homes or experiences in your region. But don't worry, there's no time restriction on generating your listing, and you'll have the chance to review it and make any necessary changes before it goes public.

Set your rules.

Being your own boss is one of the many fantastic benefits of being an Airbnb host. According to the Airbnb website, you may set whatever exact regulations you like for your property—including if you want it to be pet-friendly. When it comes to organizing an event, you and only you have the authority to set the rules. When it comes to hosting your property on Airbnb, you have complete control over everything. This includes pricing, discounts, rental availability dates (including any dates you'd like to block off the calendar as unavailable), any minimum nights you'd like to set for popular seasons, promotions you'd like to run to drum up business during slower seasons, and even how far in advance your guests can book their reservations.

Meet the requirements.

Airbnb has high standards for its hosts to guarantee that each Airbnb stay is a positive experience and that each host succeeds. Four booking-related variables that matter most to visitors are the overall rating of a guest's stay, the response rate from the host, cancellation management, and reservation acceptance. Customer service is crucial, and each host must reply to each visitor promptly. Host response is required within 24 hours, whether it's a question about your ad or information on a reservation.

Clean your property.

The cleanliness of your Airbnb, which encompasses every aspect of the home, is also essential. There should be no dust, hair, garbage, or food in the room, and new linens are required. The check-in procedure should be smooth, and visitors should be able to communicate with the host quickly. This includes instructions to the house, any unique security codes or Wi-Fi details, and complete contact information if they need to reach you during their stay.

Consider being an Airbnb host if you're seeking a new, engaging, and incredibly creative method to start a new job or a side project to supplement your income. It's a task that might satisfy your interests or help you achieve your ambition to own a business, something you may have always wished for. Although hosting is not for everyone, it might be the right match for you. [MS](#)

Best Board Games For Your Family

By EXCEL V. DYQUIANGCO

When it comes to family board games, Monopoly, Snakes and Ladders, or Game of the Generals may be the first things that come to mind. But with board games progressing significantly in recent years, the adventure and the fun that go with it have doubled.

Here are some of the best board games for your family to indulge in during a rainy night or large family gatherings:

Ticket to Ride

Whether you're looking for something to do with the kids on a quiet Sunday that doesn't require much effort, the last thing you want is a challenging game that will stress your brain. This is why Ticket to Ride is such a fantastic game. Although strategies are involved, it is a far more relaxed experience than other family board games.

Players get points by constructing railroad lines. It sounds simple—sort of—because winning isn't always easy. Since specific routes are more valuable than others, it's a race to claim them before anyone else. This gives the proceedings a strategic undertone. Do you want to take the chance of establishing a longer line for maximum profit? Should you make some shorter trips to score quickly? It's a fun puzzle, especially since failing to finish specific paths can deduct points from your total.

Catan

Catan is a unique game in that it is both deep and approachable, strategic yet not convoluted. As a wonderful adult board game, it has considerable staying power. It has a solid track record, having been in stores since 1995.

Resource management is the name of the game. Your objective is to create a civilization bigger and better than anybody else's. To get the upper hand, players must keep their rivals near—you'll never have everything you need immediately, so bartering becomes a lifeline. Prepare to use your silver tongue.

It's also a good idea to brush up on your math abilities. Because board tiles are placed at random and items are based on chance, forethought can be the difference between winning and losing. Similarly, you should consider your chances of hitting it rich when expanding. Do you put everything on the line for something crucial but rare? Is it better to choose a plentiful resource that pays off frequently? It's a fascinating balancing act to see.

Herd Mentality

Herd Mentality is the perfect board game for families that don't even like games. It's simple to learn, there's low pressure, and it requires no specialized expertise. It won't go out of style since it relies on your ability to think rather than retain obscure facts.

Each card asks a simple inquiry with no correct response. For example: what is the best kind of sauce? The players must then put down what they think the majority of the people in the room will say. Those in the majority receive a point, and the first person to reach eight points wins. It's pretty straightforward that you can just finish the board game in less than an hour.

Wingspan

Wingspan is one of the most popular modern board games for families because it is attractive and exciting. After all, you don't win the prestigious Spiel des Jahres award for nothing.

It puts birds in the limelight, as you'd expect because you're attempting to attract as many feathery friends to your reserve as possible. The mechanics for doing so are rather impressive. Players acquire food, which lets them place bird cards on the table, allowing them to collect even more food. After then, they can play more bird cards and so on. It's an oddly captivating cycle.

Photosynthesis

Family board games that allow you to (metaphorically) put your feet up are more than welcome when life gets tough. One of them is Photosynthesis.

Here is how the game works. Rather than pushing you to conquer territory or defeat your opponents, you gain points by planting trees—it's all very healthy. The problem is that nature isn't always fair. Each turn, the sun goes to a new side of the board, and certain soils are richer than others, resulting in a higher score. This may cause your trees to be blocked behind someone else's, preventing them from drawing in light that might be used to grow new trees. With this, you need to have foresight and strategy to win.

Rapidough

If you are looking for an alternative to Pictionary, Rapidough works almost the same way. Instead of sketching items, players create them with dough, as the name indicates. That makes it one of the greatest family board games for kids on this list—they'll enjoy how interactive it is.

Of course, Rapidough isn't just for kids. The ensuing creations and monstrosities are frequently amusing, and it's entertaining to try to figure out what the other players have concocted. To put it simply, creative ability isn't necessary. It's more entertaining if you have no idea what you're doing. All that is required is a willingness to try.

Rapidough still has lots to offer if you enjoy games with a competitive edge. If your opponent wins a round, you lose a certain amount of money. Come in second, and more will be taken away, making it increasingly difficult to create with. This keeps things exciting and leads to memorable showdowns, so give this game a try!

In the meantime, set aside your gadgets so you can find a new adventure in family board games. Not only are these enjoyable, but they bring you and your family closer together. And who knows, you might find out something about yourself and others that may surprise you! **MS**



Veterans Bank Expands ATM Network

Amidst the ongoing pandemic, Philippine Veterans Bank (PVB) expanded its VeteranTeller ATM Network especially in the countryside where convenient and easy access to cash is much needed by the local populace.

PVB has already deployed a total 81 GRG-branded H22V model ATMs as of October as part of its ATM expansion program with 19 more on the way. Out of the total number already operational, 70 of these ATMs have been installed offsite at public facilities such as hospitals, city or municipal halls, provincial capitals, government offices, or public markets while the rest of the newly-installed machines were at the Bank's branches.

Nineteen (19) of the ATMs already deployed were for replacement of older or defective units that regularly break down. These include the City and Municipal Halls of Trece Martirez, Marikina, Angat, Tayabas, Rodriguez, Malvar, Lobo, Tanauan, Banga; at the Provincial Capitol of Batangas; at the Marikina Sports Complex; in hospitals including the De Vera Medical Center in Santiago City, Isabela; the Philippine Port Authority offices in the North and South Harbor; at the PVAO Building in Camp Aguinaldo; and at the National Housing Authority offices in Pasig City.

On the other hand, the remaining 61 ATMs were new installations in PVB branches—Imus, Tacloban, San Pablo, Pagadian, General Santos, Santiago, Taguig, Cagayan de Oro, Laoag and Zamboanga; and in Provincial Capitol Buildings such as Palawan, Zamboanga del Sur, Rizal, and Pampanga, plus an additional ATM for the Provincial Government of Batangas.

Cities and municipalities accounted for the biggest beneficiaries of the PVB ATM roll-out. Cities where VeteranTeller ATMs were deployed include Antipolo, Trece Martirez (Cavite), Legaspi (Albay), Koronadal, and San Pedro (Laguna). In addition, the City of Marikina received an additional ATM on top of its replacement units while one of its barangays, Brgy. Concepcion Uno, also received their



own ATM at their barangay hall. For municipalities, PVB has installed new ATMs at Sto. Domingo (Albay), Angat (Bulacan), Tayabas (Quezon), Surallah (South Cotabato), Anda in Bohol, Carmen (Agusan del Norte), San Pascual (Batangas), Canaman and Milaor which are both in Camariner Sur, Calumpit (Bulacan), Lingayen (Pangasinan), Binangonan (Rizal), Bustos (Bulacan) and Bauang in La Union.

The Bank also deployed new ATMs at the following locations: Caticlan Jetty Port in Malay, Aklan, Nueva Ecija Electric Cooperative 1 Head Office in Nueva Ecija, Bicol Regional Training and Teaching Hospital in Legaspi City, Department of Health Region 9 in Zamboanga City, Department of Education Offices in San Fernando, La Union; General Santos City; and Pagadian City; PhilHealth Cebu Office along Gorordo Avenue, San Pascual Public Market in Batangas, AFP Finance Center—Multi Purpose Coop along Bonny Serrano in Quezon City, Gerona Public Market in Tarlac and the Ospital ng Muntinlupa in Alabang

While the advent of the pandemic has increased the reliance on and the usage of digital and online banking resulting in the adoption of a cash-lite mentality, there is still a considerable demand for cash especially true in the countryside. PVB's ATM expansion is the Bank's way of responding to the needs and requests of their clients.^{MS}

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PVB Main Office and Makati Branch - 101 Rufino corner Dela Rosa Streets, Legazpi Village, Makati City, Philippines 1229

Trunklines: (02) 7902-1600 / 1700 | Customer Care: (02) 8840-3655 • (0917) 822-1953 • (0998) 584-8379 • customercare@veteransbank.com.ph

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