



## MegaLink welcomes three new members

**M**egaLink, the country's pioneering ATM consortium, has accepted three new members namely, Philippine Business Bank, Metro South Cooperative Bank and Equicom Savings Bank. This increases MegaLink's current roster of members to twenty-five institutions.

The Philippine Business Bank (PBB) led by Alfredo M. Yao currently has 27 branches in Metro Manila and Luzon. PBB's prime clients as its name suggests are business establishments both small and medium enterprises, and large companies. Mr. Yao, also the chairman of Zest O - one of the largest fruit juice makers in the country, also recently completed the purchase of Astan Spirit Inc.

Metro South Cooperative Bank (MSCB) is the first cooperative bank member of MegaLink. As an entity, it is under the supervision of both the Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Cooperative Development Authority. To date, Metro South has 960 member-cooperatives with a combined membership of 2 million individuals nationwide.

The membership of Equicom Savings Bank into MegaLink marks the return

of Antonio L. Go, former Equitable PCI Chairman, to the banking industry. Equicom Savings Bank currently has three branches and will open 15 new offices soon, most of which will be located in areas with numerous Filipino-Chinese business establishments, their intended clientele.

"We look forward to more touchpoints nationwide with these new members as well as the increase of cardholder base utilizing and benefiting from our members' ATM network and interconnections," said MegaLink President Benjamin P. Castillo.



## Consumers reap benefits of ATMs everywhere

**E**NCASH Network Services, the country's first Independent ATM Deployer (IAD), and MASS-SPECC Cooperative Development Center, a Mindanao-wide federation of cooperatives, hold the distinction of being the first MegaLink non-bank members. As a affiliate network members, they are rapidly extending MegaLink ATM convenience to previously unreachable markets.

Both institutions help MegaLink fulfill its aim of bringing banking to where people need it most. Whether its distance, lack of infrastructure or costs that hinder the deployment of ATMs, MegaLink is rising to the challenge.

Initial services available are standards such as balance inquiries, withdrawals, cash advance and fast cash. Bills payment and the standard MegaLink POS service, which will allow an ATM cardholder to pay through MegaLink POS terminals in certain establishments, will soon be made available to those new members.

Among rural banks, ENCASH's connection with MegaLink meant more than just distinction. Their local banking publics embraced the services, and partner rural bank operations have significantly improved. With an initial network of

6 ATMs, ENCASH started operations on the 16th of December 2007. Reflecting its wide acceptance in the market, the fast-growing network ended April 2008 with an installed base of 61 ATMs, all using the PLDT Shops Work Unplugged (SWUP) wireless data communication service. Within the next quarter, ENCASH expect to receive the balance of their first 100 ATM order from suppliers.

Bank of Florida, a charter member of the Pampanga Federation of Rural Banks, and listed as one of the top rural banks in the country, has felt the warm acceptance of clients of their first ATM. In terms of resources among rural banks, the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation has listed Bank of Florida second in Pampanga, fourth in the region and 20th in the country.

Bank of Florida client Robin A. De Leon of San Jose, Floridablanca, endured the hassles of commuting just to gain access to his bank account. "Now it's more accessible and comfortable. I can instantly withdraw cash from the ATM," De Leon said.

Leny C. Beltran of Paguiruan, Floridablanca complained of the same traffic and sometimes, lack of transportation just to get to an ATM. "But now I save time, and I know the ATM location is safe," she said.

GM Bank in Nueva Ecija, on the other hand, is a consolidation of Community Rural Bank Inc. (CRBI) and the Muñoz Rural Bank Inc. (MRBI). GM Bank has gained the largest share in Nueva Ecija covering 80% of the market, and is poised to become one of the largest rural banks of Central Luzon.

"It has increased our market share, attracting more clients with the additional global service we provide through the ATM. Our clients have increased in number. Having an ATM has proven our capability to provide banking needs and financial services to our clients in the rural and remote areas. It also provided us with the technological advantage and some prestige," said Ramon D. De Ocampo, Senior Vice-President of GM Bank, Inc.

Their first ATM in Rizal, Nueva Ecija was placed in the public market. In March this year, GM Bank was awarded a plaque of appreciation from the Rizal LGU for their initiative. The plaque carried the appreciation of its townspeople, and local government officers and employees for contributing to improving their lives. The mayor, vice-mayor and all councilors also issued a memorandum expressing gratitude for GM Bank's initiative of installing the town's first ATM.

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### MegaLink expands... continued from SS-1

transactions will be made available at POS terminals and these will not necessarily be located at merchants' sites but even at bank branches as well."

Mr. Castillo revealed that MegaLink's strategic partnership with telecoms giant SMART Communications was moving in new directions as well. Aside from its current mobile banking partnership, the companies are expected to announce new services soon.

"We are also continuing to market and refine our outsourcing service which will provide both cost and operational efficiencies for current and prospective members. These will include expanding the scope for MegaLink to become the end-to-end solution provider for ATM services," he said.

The evolution beyond mere ATM transactions was anticipated by MegaLink long before the industry knew what hit them. ATM

operations have become integral to any bank's services. Joining an ATM network was the most cost-effective and convenient option to bring banking to where people were, and it still is.

"There are still a vast number of unconnected banks serving niche markets such as the thrift and rural banks which may not necessarily have the same resources as our current members, thus creating the opportunity for new players such as Independent ATM deployers and other outsourcing providers to come in," said Mr. Castillo.

"At the same time, there are also other non-banks with their own set of end users, usually the un-banked, who wish to participate in the business of transferring value in various areas such as remittances, payment solutions. We look at these players and we recognize that they complement as well as contribute to the existing network infrastructure of our member banks."

"This ongoing evolution has been seen in more advanced markets. ATMs deployed by Independent ATM deployers outnumber and outperform bank deployed ATMs in countries such as the US, Canada, UK and Australia," Mr. Castillo added. "With regard to other ATM network operators in the region, however, we have seen that only the Philippines has accepted non-banks as members."

MegaLink has recognized these trends by keeping a close watch on the industry. It is currently the only Philippine member of the ATM Industry Association (ATMIA), as well as the Asian Payment Network.

ATMIA owns and operates the Global ATM Security Alliance, which provides members with the latest information, trends and assistance in network security. It is a global organization of 812 institutional members in over 60 countries.

APN is a network of switch operators from different ASEAN countries, enabling cardholders visiting member countries to withdraw from a member ATM network in the country's currency.

These International Interconnections are all part of MegaLink's expanding range of services and reach. From serving the banking public to reaching the un-banked, the network is moving in time to the needs of new consumers.

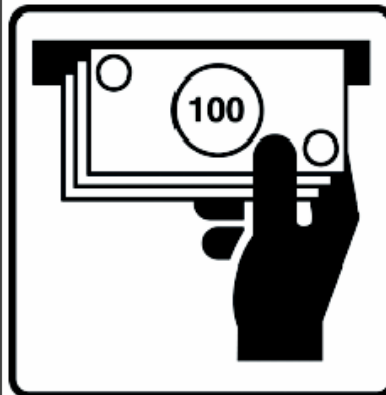
"We are seeing greater demands from consumers. Technology has enabled them to access a greater amount of information so it is easier to compare prices, service levels and product offerings across competitors and across industries. Consumers are now more demanding in terms of the speed and quality of service, the level of differentiation required per individual and the level of transparency needed from financial institutions," he noted.

Mr. Castillo added that globalization and the influx of OFW remittances have led MegaLink to increase touchpoints to more areas. "While looking to increase MegaLink's presence locally, we also aim to having more touchpoints abroad to serve our OPWs there," he said.

He added that new players were also entering the business, such as telecoms companies and non-traditional service providers offering alternative and competitive services. "We prefer to work with these new players so that we can complement each others' markets and competencies," he said.

"There will be more alliances and strategic partnerships - both with local and international partners to further bring MegaLink to world-class standards. These alliances will result to new businesses and services which will ultimately expand the benefits and convenience to the cardholders and end users," Mr. Castillo said.

## Global sign for ATMs unveiled



Above symbol is the new global ATM sign

**T**he ATM Industry Association (ATMIA), the only International trade association for the ATM industry.

ATMIA has announced the world's first global sign for the ATM.

This International ATM graphical symbol or pictogram has now been published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) as the global public information sign for the ATM or cash dispenser.

Its ISO registration number is PI CF 005 where PI stands for Public Information and CF stands for Commercial Facilities.

This public sign was published in the ISO 7001 Third Edition on 2007-11-01.

Continued growth in international trade, travel and tourism requires a common method of communication and standardization of public information symbols can help both providers and users.

The sign or symbol is used where text messages might be a barrier to understanding.

"The ATM is a universal technology which people of all

ages and races are comfortable using. It is therefore appropriate that we have a public sign which everyone around the world can easily understand," said Mike Lee, ATMIA's chief executive.

"The sign should increase foot traffic to ATMs and improve transaction volumes."

MegaLink, the only Philippine member of ATMIA, supports the efforts in promoting this ATM symbol.

MegaLink hopes that sustained education and consistent use of the ATM global sign will lead to a wide reach degree of comprehension at the national and international level.

The ATMIA is an international non-profit trade association founded in 1997 for the ATM industry, with over 1,000 members in 49 countries.

ATMIA's mission is to promote ATM convenience, growth and usage worldwide; to protect the ATM industry's assets, interests, good name and public trust; and to provide education, best practices, political voice and networking opportunities for member organizations.

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b/w  
gis bank  
direct

5x12  
f/c  
chanel  
solution  
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