

NEUWARK COMMUNICATIONS · READINESS RESOURCE

Philippines Reachability Readiness Check

A 20-minute self-assessment for foreign companies serving Philippine users: can regulators reach you, and are your tax, e-commerce, privacy and licensing positions ready if they do?

Six areas · 22 checks · a simple red / amber / green score · sources for every regulatory statement

neuarkcommunications.com · hello@neuarkcommunications.com · +63 927 873 9995

Manila HQ: Level 8, Ayala Triangle Gardens Tower 2, Paseo de Roxas cor. Makati Avenue, Makati City, Metro Manila 1209, Philippines

Singapore account office: Level 39, Marina Bay Financial Centre Tower 2, 10 Marina Boulevard, Singapore 018983

Why reachability, and why now

Philippine regulators are increasingly asking one practical question of foreign digital businesses: *when something goes wrong here, who do we call?* In September 2026 the CICC wrote to two foreign online platforms asking them to name a local representative, and the NPC was reported to have issued show-cause orders to several platforms over registration requirements. Alongside these moves sit laws that already reach foreign providers: VAT on digital services, the Internet Transactions Act, and the Data Privacy Act.

This check helps your communications, legal, policy and product leads see where you stand in about 20 minutes. It doesn't replace legal advice.

How to score

Tick Yes / Partly / No for each check that applies. Skip a whole area if it clearly doesn't apply (e.g., Area 5 for non-regulated sectors).
Green: no "No" answers in Areas 1–4. **Amber:** 1–3 "No" answers. **Red:** 4+ "No" answers, or any "No" in Area 1 combined with active Philippine users.

1 • Reachability & local presence

Can Philippine authorities reach a named, empowered person at your company quickly?

Check	Yes	Partly	No
A named Philippine point of contact (resident agent, local representative or local office) is documented and known internally	☐	☐	☐
That contact can escalate to decision-makers the same day	☐	☐	☐
A rapid-response protocol exists for urgent requests from Philippine authorities (owner, hours, escalation, language)	☐	☐	☐
If you operate a platform used by minors: current safety and age-assurance measures are documented and can be shared	☐	☐	☐

Why it matters: In letters dated 21 September 2026, the Cybercrime Investigation and Coordinating Center (CICC) asked two foreign online platforms to designate a resident agent or local representative “who can facilitate Philippine jurisdiction”, and to share safety, rapid-response and age-assurance plans. The CICC said platforms should be “reachable, accountable, and responsive”. [S1]

2 · Tax: VAT on digital services

If you sell digital services consumed in the Philippines, is your VAT position settled?

Check	Yes	Partly	No
You have confirmed whether your services are “digital services” consumed in the Philippines under RA 12023	☐	☐	☐
If you are a nonresident digital service provider: VAT registration status and remittance process are confirmed with advisers	☐	☐	☐
Someone owns BIR correspondence and deadlines	☐	☐	☐
Leadership knows that non-compliance can lead to suspension of the business, including blocking of the digital service	☐	☐	☐

Why it matters: RA 12023 (approved 2 October 2024) makes digital service providers, resident or nonresident, liable for VAT on digital services consumed in the Philippines, requires nonresident providers to register for VAT, and allows the BIR Commissioner to suspend a provider’s business, including by blocking its digital services through DICT and the NTC. [S2]

3 · E-commerce: Internet Transactions Act

If you sell to Philippine buyers online, do you know whether RA 11967 applies to you?

Check	Yes	Partly	No
You have assessed whether your platform or storefront “avails of the Philippine market” under RA 11967	☐	☐	☐
Consumer-facing terms, seller information and complaint handling have been reviewed against the Act and its implementing rules	☐	☐	☐
Someone owns DTI correspondence	☐	☐	☐

Why it matters: RA 11967 (approved 5 December 2023) covers business-to-business and business-to-consumer internet transactions within DTI’s mandate where a party is in the Philippines, or where a platform or merchant avails of the Philippine market and has minimum contacts. The DTI Secretary can issue compliance orders. [S3]

4 · Data privacy & NPC registration

Are your Philippine data-privacy duties (including registration) mapped?

Check	Yes	Partly	No
You have assessed whether the Data Privacy Act applies to your processing of personal data about people in the Philippines	☐	☐	☐
You have checked NPC Circular 2022-04 registration criteria (250+ employees; sensitive personal information of 1,000+ individuals; processing likely to pose a risk to data subjects' rights; not occasional)	☐	☐	☐
If required: data processing systems and a Data Protection Officer are registered via NPCRS	☐	☐	☐
A breach-notification owner and process are in place	☐	☐	☐

Why it matters: The Data Privacy Act (RA 10173) has extraterritorial application in defined cases (Sec. 6). NPC Circular 2022-04 sets out when registration of data processing systems and the DPO is required. In September 2026 the NPC was reported to have issued show-cause orders to several online platforms over registration requirements. [S4–S6]

5 · Sector licensing (if relevant)

If you are in a regulated sector (e.g., digital assets), is your licensing path clear?

Check	Yes	Partly	No
You know which regulator(s) license your activity in the Philippines	☐	☐	☐
Digital-asset businesses: you have reviewed the SEC CASP Rules and Guidelines (SEC MC Nos. 4 and 5, s. 2025) with licensed Philippine counsel	☐	☐	☐
Entity, capital and office requirements have been costed and scheduled	☐	☐	☐

Why it matters: Under SEC Memorandum Circular Nos. 4 and 5, s. 2025, crypto-asset service providers must be SEC-registered corporations with a physical office in the Philippines that is appropriately staffed during business hours, and at least PHP 100 million paid-up capital. [S7]

6 · Government relations & communications

If a Philippine regulator called tomorrow, would your response be calm and consistent?

Check	Yes	Partly	No
A stakeholder map covers the agencies relevant to you (e.g., BIR, DTI, NPC, SEC, CICC, DICT/NTC) with owners	☐	☐	☐
Approved holding statements exist for regulator enquiries and media, in English and Filipino	☐	☐	☐
A role matrix defines who drafts, approves and speaks (comms, legal, policy, product)	☐	☐	☐
Employees and local partners have an FAQ on what to say and whom to route enquiries to	☐	☐	☐

Why it matters: These are good-practice operating controls, not legal requirements. They decide whether a regulatory question becomes a routine exchange or a headline.

What to do with your score

- **Green:** keep a named owner for each area and review quarterly, or whenever a new Philippine rule or consultation lands.
- **Amber:** close the gaps in Area 1 first (a reachable contact and a response protocol), then work through tax and privacy with your advisers.
- **Red:** treat it as a leadership agenda item. Map stakeholders, confirm your legal position with licensed Philippine counsel, and prepare holding statements before you need them.

How Newark helps. Newark Communications is a public affairs, PR and government-relations firm in Singapore and the Philippines. We build stakeholder maps, regulator-engagement plans, crisis and holding statements, and local-presence programmes. Entity set-up, licensing and legal opinions are handled **with licensed Philippine counsel**. Newark is not a law firm.

Start with a 20-minute conversation: hello@newarkcommunications.com · +63 927 873 9995

Sources

All accessed 25 September 2026. Summaries are simplified. Read the primary text and confirm with counsel.

Ref	Source	URL
S1	SunStar, “CICC, NPC crack down on social media platforms” (CICC letters dated 21 Sep 2026; CICC statement)	https://www.sunstar.com.ph/manila/cicc-npc-crack-down-on-social-media-platforms-over-child-safety
S2	Republic Act No. 12023 (VAT on digital services), Secs. 108-A, 108-B, 236(F) and suspension provisions	https://www.lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2024/ra_12023_2024.html
S3	Republic Act No. 11967 (Internet Transactions Act of 2023), scope and Sec. 14	https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2023/ra_11967_2023.html
S4	Republic Act No. 10173 (Data Privacy Act of 2012), Sec. 6	https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2012/ra_10173_2012.html
S5	NPC Circular No. 2022-04 (registration of DPS and DPO); NPC Registration System	https://privacy.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Circular-2022-04.pdf · https://npcregistration.privacy.gov.ph/
S6	The Manila Times, 24 Sep 2026, NPC statement on digital platforms and child users; SunStar (S1)	https://www.manilatimes.net/2026/09/24/business/sunday-business-it/npc-calls-on-digital-platforms-to-protect-child-users/2431808
S7	SEC MC Nos. 4 & 5, s. 2025 (CASP Rules and Guidelines), as reported	https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/06/12/business/top-business/sec-issues-rules-on-crypto-asset-service-providers/2131711 · https://newsbytes.ph/2025/06/12/sec-issues-circulars-regulating-crypto-trading-platforms-in-ph/

Important notice

This checklist is general information for discussion purposes only. It is not legal, tax or regulatory advice and does not create an adviser relationship. Laws, implementing rules and agency positions change. Whether a requirement applies to your organisation depends on your specific facts. Obtain advice from licensed Philippine counsel and qualified tax advisers before acting. References to agency actions describe publicly reported events and do not suggest that any particular company is non-compliant. © 2026 Newark Communications.