

Change is Coming Again: Trendspotting Study On The 2022 Philippine National Elections

May the Best Politician Win: Scope and Objectives

This report aims to provide readers information regarding the upcoming 2022 elections as to who and how Filipinos are talking about potential election candidates as well as other election-related conversations.

In terms of media type, this report includes materials from:

Social

- Twitter
- Facebook
- Blogs
- Forums

The date range for this study is the month of April 2021.



2022 Philippine National Elections: Fever, Fiesta, or Fiasco?

Using the keyword “Eleksyon”, we can see the most used and trending phrases related to the upcoming 2022 elections.

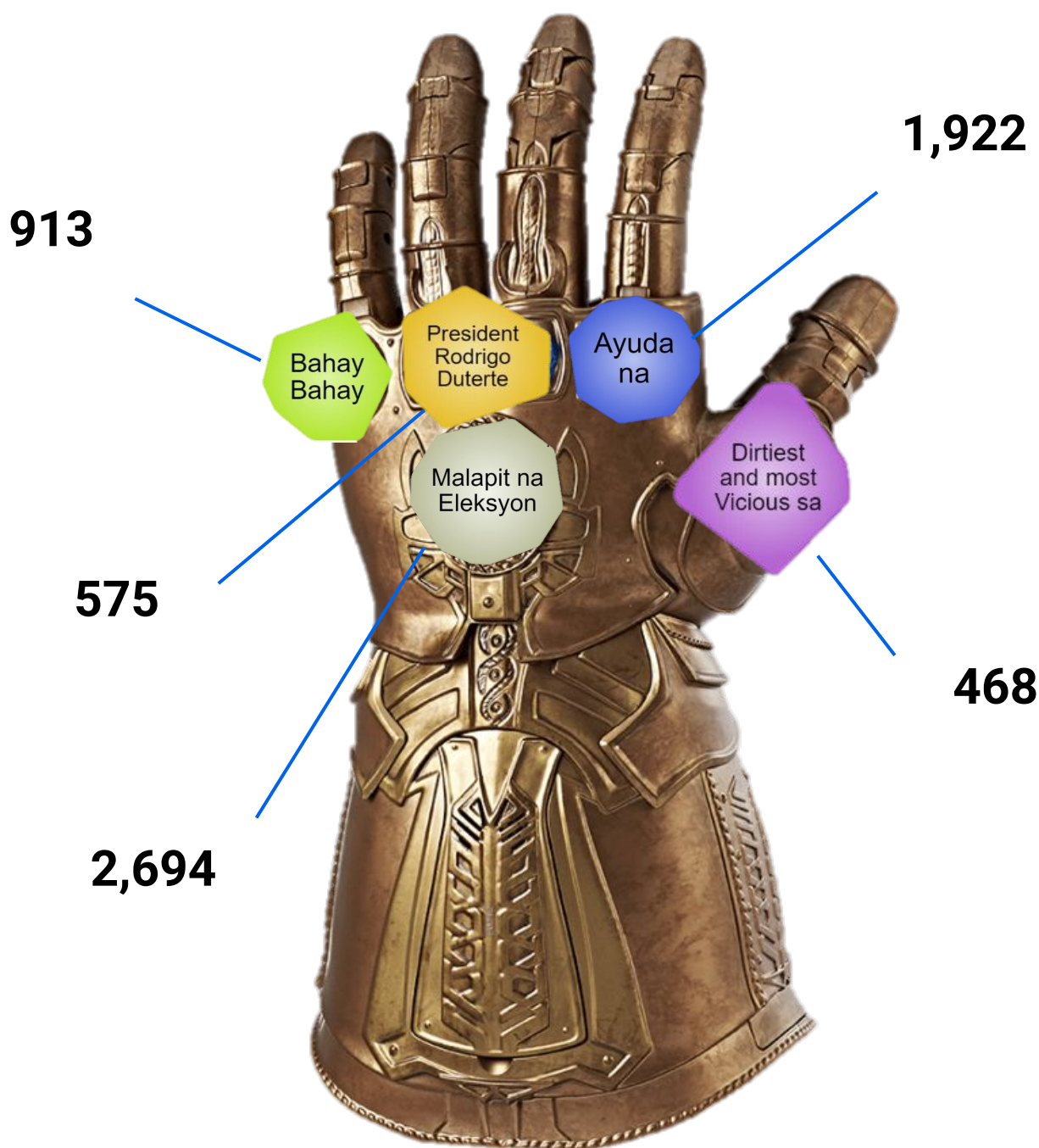
Garnering 16,857 buzzes, we can pick out the more memorable phrases using the Buzz Cluster below from Isentia's Workbench and see people's conversations surrounding them.



From Isentia's Workbench



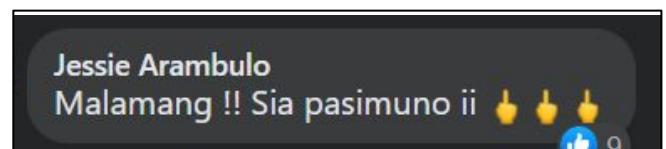
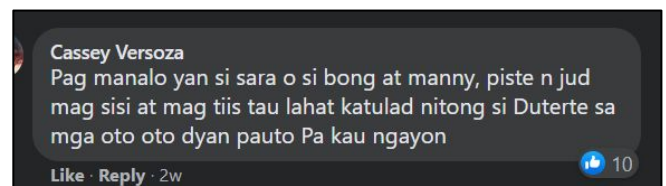
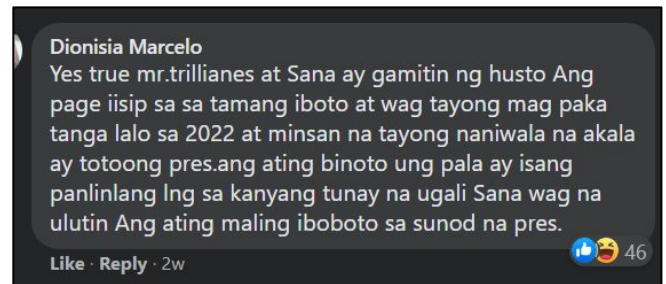
Holding the Gauntlet: Where “Eleksyon” Is Coming From



The figures above show the buzz volumes of the most prominent words and phrases used with the 'eleksyon' keyword.

Brewing Buzz: The Dirtiest and Most Vicious Elections?

On April 30, former senator Antonio Trillanes IV said that the 2022 elections could be the **dirtiest and most vicious elections** in the history of this country. Trillanes further explained that the next presidential election would be a battle between those aligned with the current president and those who are not.



Sentiments towards his statements were perceived as divisive, as supporters and critics of the current administration stormed the comment section of ABS-CBN News' post regarding the matter. There was also a notable backlash against Trillanes in the comments regarding his statement.



The Plethora of Issues Plaguing The President

There were many election-related conversations around President Rodrigo Duterte, as his role in the upcoming elections is seen as pivotal in terms of support. He argues against community pantry organizers to blame other government figures regarding the West Philippine Sea issue, and the said issues will likewise haunt his endorsed candidates in the upcoming elections.



Save the Nation! Duterte Resign!

69,115 have signed. Let's get to 75,000!

Agel John Dayot signed this petition
Dennis Y. Ilajay signed 2 hours ago
Rhys Edgar J. Plopinio signed 3 hours ago

First name
Last name
Email
Pasig City, 1602

Fillipinos for Duterte's Resignation started this petition to President Rodrigo R. Duterte

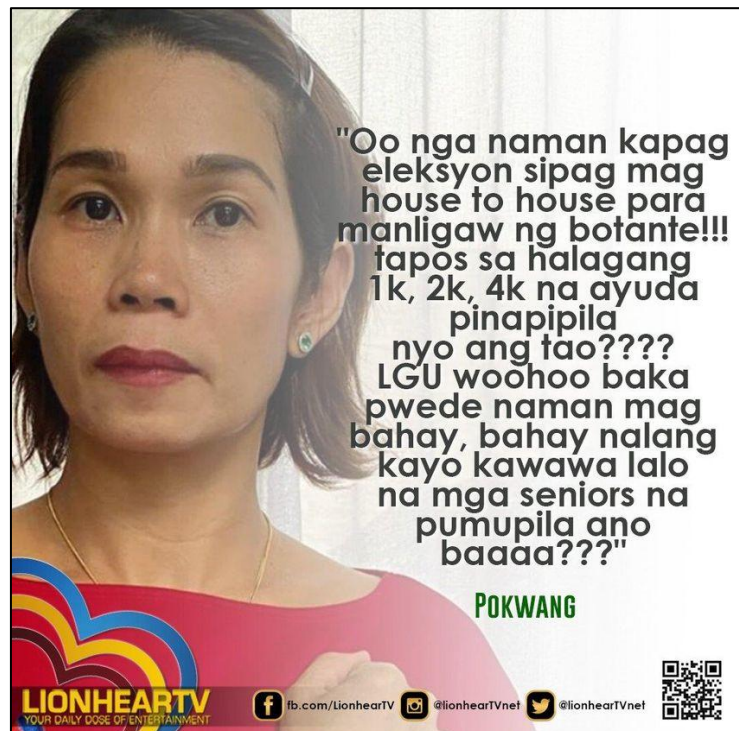
But the one that stood out the most was the online petition made on April 16 for President Rodrigo Duterte to resign. With now over 69,000 signees, this petition was scattered all over social media and is now close to reaching its goal of 75,000 signatures.



Knock-Knock, Who's There?



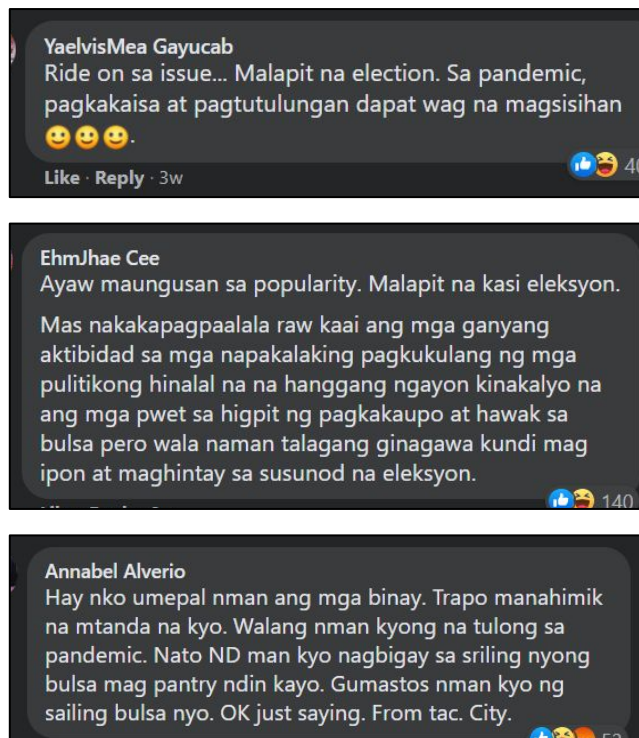
Conversations surrounding **“Bahay Bahay”** or **“House-to-House”** was about Filipino comedian and actress Pokwang, who made a statement regarding the process of getting financial support from the government. She asked why is it that when it is election season, politicians are actively going house-to-house to court voters, but when getting financial aid from local government units, people have to fall in line?



Several netizens supported her statement, some even mentioning specific political figures like mayors of their respective cities to praise or defame them depending on how they acted regarding this issue.

When To Be Visible and Vocal: Timing Is Everything

On April 20, former Vice President Jejomar Binay questioned the government on why they harass and **red-tag community pantries** for giving to the poor and hungry.



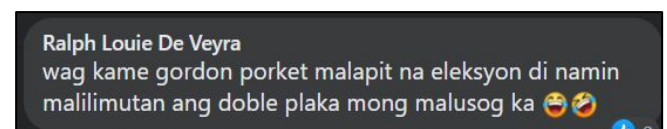
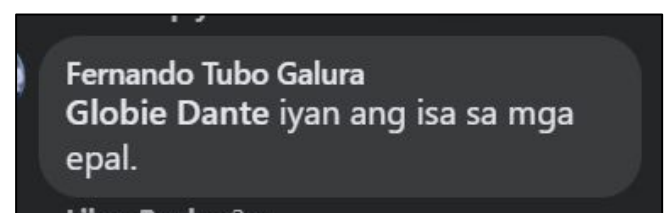
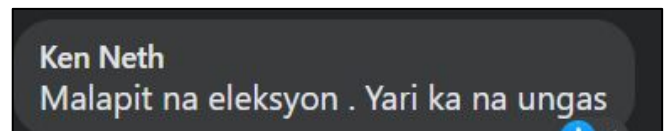
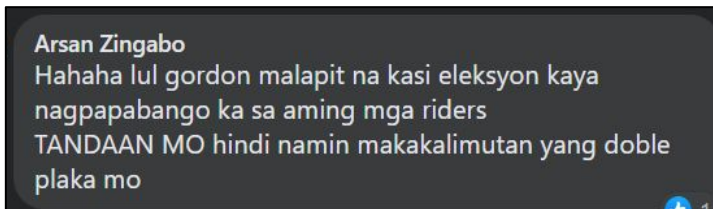
Some netizens were quick to point out that political figures such as him are only voicing out their opinions now because elections are near. Some were also in support for Binay, agreeing on what he said regarding the state of community pantries. While other comments were derogatory in nature, insulting the former Vice President saying that he is a “trapo”, old, and did nothing to contribute during the pandemic.



Change Is Coming (Yet Again)

Conversations surrounding the phrase “**Malapit na eleksyon**” or “**Election is near**” scattered throughout social media. However, all seemed to point to one narrative - **political figures and potential candidates trying to get in the social media spotlight because of the upcoming elections**. Majority of posts that featured statements or acts of any politician with nearing the elections had negative sentiments saying that they are only trying to improve the public’s perception of them.

Now that the elections are near, what are the other notable conversations?

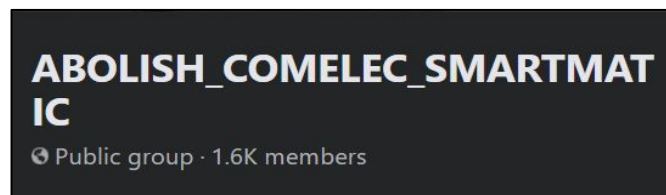
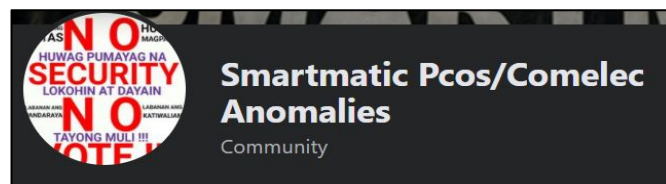


Of Questions and Quandary

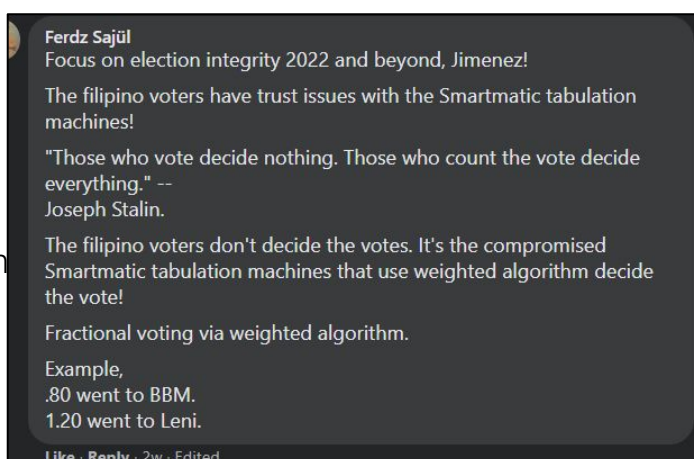
With the elections just around the corner, people in the comments section of any election-related social media post looked back to what happened during the 2016's automated polls, **where the Precinct Count Optical Scanner (PCOS) had some issues regarding the count in votes.**



There are even dedicated communities in Facebook like **"Smartmatic Pcos/Comelec Anomalies"** as well as **"ABOLISH_COMELEC_SMARTMATIC"** that push for electoral reforms to create a new electoral body system, therefore, calling to abolish the COMELEC and their automated election system.

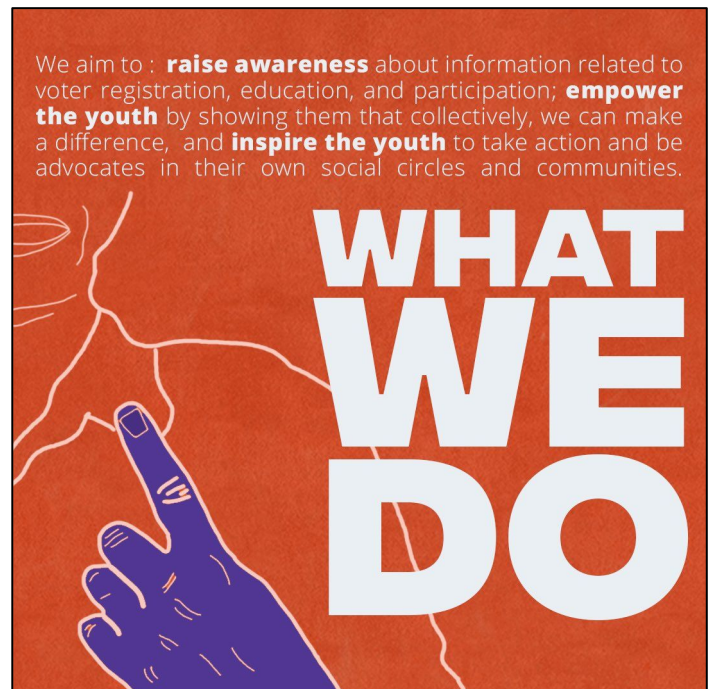


The sentiments in these comments were mainly in favor of **abolishing the PCOS machine**, further expressing their **frustrations and distrust towards the COMELEC** and the **7-hour glitch** that happened during the 2016 elections.



Reigniting The Fire In The Young

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, **Gen Z'ers and Millennials are set to make up the most significant voting population in terms of age in the next election season.** A non-partisan group introduced two new hashtags that will help raise awareness in using the youth's voter population to make an impact in the upcoming 2022 elections.



The group We The Youth Vote, regularly puts out content that relates to youth voter registration. They use hashtags and employ strategies that are more appealing to the youth, such as spreading their advocacies on multiple platforms like **Instagram and Tiktok, with influencers that are very popular to the youth** these days to join their cause and spread awareness. Also, with the pandemic still lingering, the group organizes **online seminars or webinars** that teach **voter's education** and other related topics on **youth voter registration**.

A Familiar 2016 Narrative

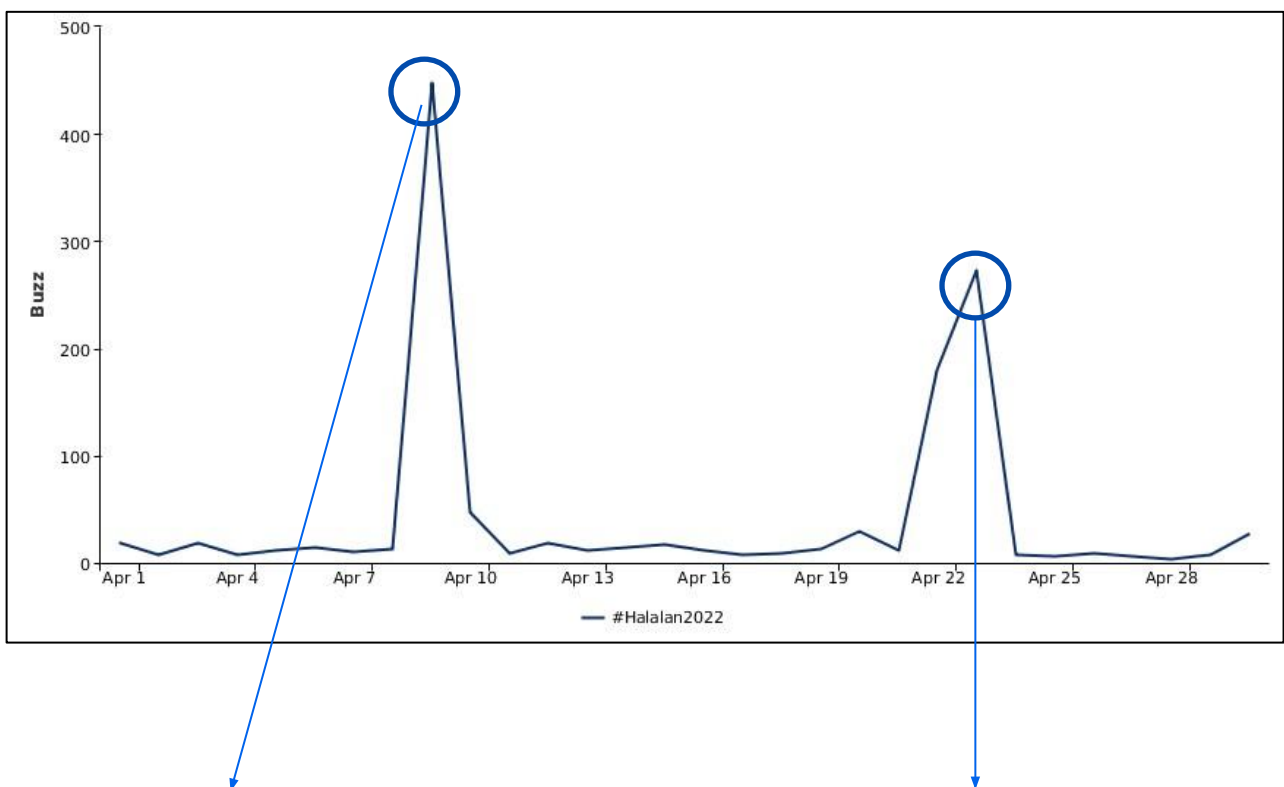
Isentia's data shows that the keyword **"Run Sara Run"** garnered over **6,000 buzzes**. The majority of it came from INQUIRER.net's Facebook post regarding Sara Duterte's campaign posters that were spotted on the Kalayaan Island Group in the West Philippine Sea.

Under this post, most sentiments were highly unfavourable not only to Sara Duterte but also to fellow Filipinos who will support her in the upcoming 2022 elections. Although it is not campaign season yet, there were notable comments from netizens sharing their encounters with Sara Duterte's campaign materials. The materials were said to be sponsored by her supporters, with one person sharing his encounter with a giant poster of "Run Sara Run" in Albay that caught the attention of several netizens.



The “Manny” Endorsements

Isentia has incorporated the buzz trend from Isentia’s Workbench using the keyword “#Halalan2022” to get more insight. The keyword garnered **1,267 buzzes**, and there were notable surges in the conversations during April 2021.



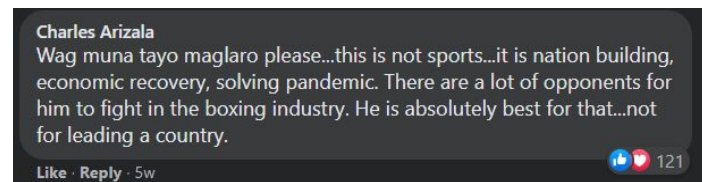
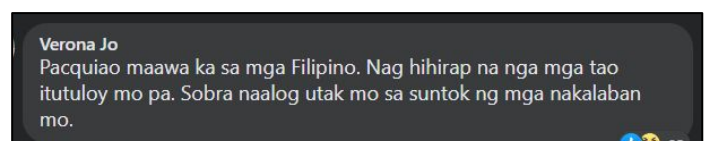
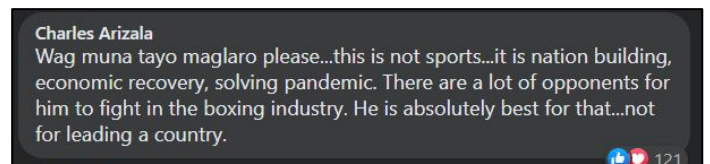
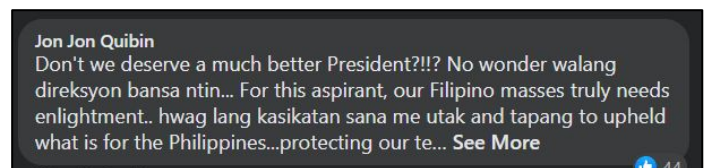
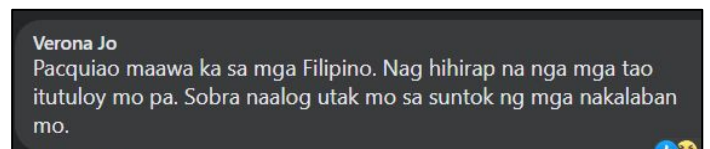
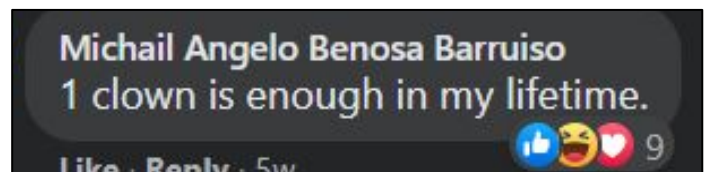
April 9 - ABS-CBN News reported on Sen. Manny Pacquiao’s tweet thanking San Miguel Corporation’s president Ramon Ang for endorsing him as the next president of the Philippines.

April 23 - ABS-CBN News reported on Pulse Asia’s survey regarding Filipino’s most preferred senatorial candidate, with Sen. Manny Pacquiao topping the survey.

The Possibility of a Pacman Presidency

In an interview with Manila Standard, **Ramon Ang** boldly claimed that the president of the Philippines would be **Senator Manny Pacquiao**. Following this, Sen. Pacquiao released out a tweet thanking Ang for his support.

The boxer-turned-senator has not yet given details about his alleged presidential bid. Still, his peers in the senate say otherwise – noting that Pacquiao has been vocal about his desire to run for the presidency in 2022.



Survey Sensibilities: Are surveys still reliable?

A survey conducted by **Pulse Asia** from February 22 – March 3 of this year, revealed that **Sen. Manny Pacquiao** was topping the charts when it comes to people's preference on winning the senatorial seat. In the survey, it also revealed that out of the 2,400 respondents, 58.9% or more than 1,400 vouched that they will be voting for Manny Pacquiao.

Table 4			
2022 ELECTIONS: SENATORIAL PREFERENCES			
February 22 - March 3, 2021 / Philippines / PR1&2			
(Multiple Responses, up to 12 names allowed)			
Page 1 of 2			
Base: Total Interviews, 100%			
	Aware	Voting for	Rank
PACQUIAO, EMMANUEL "MANNY"	99	58.9	1
DOMAGOSO, FRANCISCO "ISKO MORENO"	98	53.0	2
TULFO, RAFFY	98	48.1	3-7
DUTERTE, SARA "INDAY"	99	47.5	3-7
ESCUERO, FRANCIS "CHIZ"	99	46.6	3-7
LEGARDA, LOREN	98	46.2	3-7
CAYETANO, ALAN PETER	100	44.4	3-8
MARCOS, FERDINAND "BONGBONG" JR.	99	40.7	7-10
LACSON, PANFILO "PING"	99	38.1	8-11
ZUBIRI, JUAN MIGUEL "MIGZ"	98	38.1	8-11
REVILLAME, WILLIE	99	34.3	9-11
ESTRADA, JINGGOY	99	30.1	12-15
GATCHALIAN, SHERWIN "WIN"	97	28.1	12-16
BINAY, JEJOMAR "JOJO"	99	27.1	12-17
PANGILINAN, FRANCIS "KIKO"	99	26.9	12-17
GORDON, RICHARD "DICK"	97	26.0	13-19
HONTVEROS, RISA	98	23.9	14-20
EJERCITO, JV	98	22.7	16-22
SANTOS-RECTO, VILMA	98	22.6	16-22
ROXAS, MANUEL "MAR"	99	21.6	17-24
ONG, WILLIE "DOC WILLIE"	86	19.6	18-25
AQUINO, BAM	97	19.5	18-25
VILLAR, MARK	97	18.5	20-26
VILLANUEVA, JOEL	96	18.4	20-26
HONASAN, GREGORIO "GRINGO"	98	18.2	21-26
DUTERTE, PAOLO "PULONG"	90	16.2	23-28
DEFENSOR, MICHAEL "MIKE"	84	14.5	26-30
LAPID, MARK	95	13.8	26-30
ROQUE, HARRY	98	12.6	27-30
TRILLANES, ANTONIO "SONNY"	99	12.4	27-30



Although on social media, the sentiments could not be any different. **Numerous netizens were not in favour of the survey results**, with one comment saying that the Filipinos should learn from their mistakes. Another said that the survey results would only lead to another six years of incompetence from our government. Further, a netizen pleaded to Sen. Manny Pacquiao to not seek any re-election or an even higher office position.

Staying Relevant and Starving The Suspicion

CONSISTENCY with the use of social media

The most notable takeaway from the findings is that **people had negative sentiments towards politicians who only act when elections are near**. The consistency of your actions towards the community that you serve will never go unnoticed. **Consistently connecting with the people is not limited to having a house-to-house meet and greets; we also have social media**. This also does not need to be restricted to a particular season and **can be practised all year round**.

With that said, the ease of using social media to woo voters constantly is not new. Although what is different is that this time, more and more millennials who are much more tech-savvy are running for government positions. Some good examples include **San Manuel, Tarlac Mayor Donya Tesoro** and **Alfonso, Cavite Mayor Randy Salamat**. They use Facebook to consistently appeal to their constituents, which largely contributed to their win during the 2019 local elections.



Keep Up With The Chatter: Be All Ears

Practise the art of LISTENING

Following the petition for President Rodrigo Duterte to resign that garnered almost 70,000 signees, **it is imperative that you have an idea of how the public perceives you.** These days, a lot of **community groups on Facebook** are readily available for you to join. For example, there is a Facebook group for people who are residents of Barangay Sta. Lucia, Pasig City. In this group, people share different kinds of information including complaints about their barangay. Consider joining as many local groups as you can.

Listen to what they have to say.

Information is key. Knowing what your constituents' problems are will be helpful not only for them but also for you who will possibly serve them in the future.



The Branding Breakthrough

IMPROVING YOUR IMAGE

With the conversations regarding Sen. Manny Pacquiao's alleged presidential bid, we can say that the public's perception of him being in politics is not that favorable. This negative perception can be attributed to different factors and being a professional athlete turned politician is definitely one of them. However, that is not always the case.

One good example of an athlete turned politician with a very positive public opinion is **Knox County's mayor, Glenn Jacobs or more popularly known as WWE's Kane**. Glenn Jacobs was professional wrestler since 1995 and is now the elected mayor of Knox County since 2018. His good public image is apparent in the comments of his YouTube channel where he regularly uploads content about Knox County. His video varies from **featuring small businesses, reading bedtime stories to children, and providing thanksgiving safety tips**.

With that said, there are many points that can be done to improve public image but **regularly reaching out and connecting to your community will often always be a positive in the public's eyes** – even if you are a 12 major title holder in boxing.



Patronize The Philippines, Not The Personalities

TRADITIONAL VS PROGRESSIVE

Another takeaway from this report is that a number of our current political figures align themselves as committed members of a certain political party, with specific ideologies that are more traditional in nature. With the number of young/millennial voters rising, **the political system is now inclined to be more alternative and progressive.**

With what has been said in this report regarding Antonio Trillanes's statement, the current political climate suggests that it is us **Filipinos vs ourselves**. We are willingly separating ourselves from fellow Filipinos by having political labels.

The question presented among us has always been "Which political alignment is better?" and not **"How can we be of better help to our fellow Filipinos?"**



What Our Insights Leaders in the Philippines Say

Tina Laceda, Insights Analyst, Philippines

"I am concerned with the information gap for the upcoming elections, especially with the shutdown of ABS-CBN. We young voters should be on our toes from misleading information online and pass on facts to elders if needed. It is better to maximize online platforms including Facebook, Twitter, and Tiktok due the continuous grappling of COVID-19. This way, we can tap a broader audience to vote wisely. In next year's polls, I hope there will be great cooperation between the current administration and related agencies as the pandemic muddles the conduct of the elections."



Francis Angelo Calucin, Insights Analyst, Philippines

"With the elections nearing and the faith of our country once again in our hands, having information regarding election-related matters is now more critical than ever. Issues like youth registration, premature campaigning and the glitchy automated voting system in our country, are all election-related topics that could sway your vote and possibly decide the future of our country. In this report, we will tackle the topics mentioned and see what are the conversations around them. Your future. You Decide."

Marianella Pascual, Insights Analyst, Philippines

"In the upcoming elections, we can expect a lot of fake news to circulate online. People have their voices and opinions based on who they want to be in the position. Voters must be well-informed on who they will vote for, so they can make decisions without the influence of misguided information. Fact-checking of politicians, especially on social media, is a must. A data-driven report from a well-known media intelligence company like Isentia can help Filipinos with these important decisions."



What Our Insights Leaders in the Philippines Say



Kate Dudang, Insights Manager, Philippines

"With the Philippine elections just around the corner, politically inclined discussions are ramping up. Through this trendspotting study, key stakeholders will gain access to the significant topics being talked about in the lead up to the votation. Voters will be acquainted with the popular discourse that may help them make an informed vote, while politicians will be aware of what topics they can leverage to resonate with the public they are pursuing."

Victoria Bernadette Lazo, Insights Manager, Philippines


"The national elections is inching closer and closer. Those vying for a position need to stay on top of relevant and related discussions. Isentia's trendspotting studies are a good way for hopeful candidates to get a glimpse of what the digital public want, look forward to, or downright despise in candidates. It would also help them think of ways to tap the groups they want support from. For the general public, this type of study will aid them in their choice. It will shed light on the sentiment of digital conversations towards a possible candidate and their actions."






Please do not hesitate to get in touch with us for more information on this whitepaper.

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