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The development of the convenience store and how the store optimizes its supply chain cost

Case study Winmart+

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Abstract

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The purpose of this study was to give the reader a better idea of the development of convenience stores globally. Throughout the study, the challenges of supply chain management were discussed and how this type of store has been managing to develop and compete in the market where there are existences of dozens of different types of retail stores, such as supermarkets, grocery stores, discount stores, and off-price retailers, were analyzed. The study also concentrated on how importance of cost optimization in the development of the convenience store and provided readers a better idea of strategies that can be applied to master these struggles.

A specific case study of a domestic convenience store chain in Vietnam was introduced to provide readers a closer view of Vietnamese consumers' perspectives of the convenience store chain Winmart+. Regardless of some connection and language barrier limitations, the survey managed to demonstrate some of the most important factors affecting the development of convenience store Winmart+ in Vietnam, and emphasized what the store should do to attract more consumers and gain competitive advantages.

The author recommends further research on convenience stores, and some aspects of the correlation between sustainability and the development of convenience stores can be investigated deeper. The development of business should always go hand in hand with environmental protection.

Keywords: convenience store, urban area, cost optimization, inventory control management, advanced technology

The author has employed artificial intelligence as an aid in the thesis. The author has reviewed and edited the text generated by artificial intelligence and takes full responsibility for the content of the thesis.

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Glossary

| | |
|---------|---|
| AI | Artificial Intelligence |
| ATMs | Automated Teller Machines |
| CAGR | Compound Annual Growth Rate |
| CSR | Corporate social responsibility |
| C-store | Convenience store |
| DC | Distribution Center |
| GPS | Global Positioning System |
| NACS | National Association of Convenience Stores |
| QR Code | Quick Response Code |
| TOPSIS | Technique for Order of Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution |

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1 Introduction

1.1 Definition of a convenience store

Retail is one of the most popular industries that directly affects people's daily lives. "Retailing includes all the activities involved in selling goods or services directly to final customers for their personal, non-business use" (Kotler, 2016). Assosia (2025) mentioned several types of stores in this industry, including department stores, supermarkets, grocery stores, convenience stores, superstores, discount stores, off-price retailers, and non-store retailers. The retail industry has shown steady growth, accompanied by increasing global popularity. Among all the different types of stores in this industry, convenience stores have been standing out with significant growth in various regions globally and making a highly significant contribution to the development of the economy, both nationally and internationally. Despite its significant impact on the macroeconomy worldwide, this type of store has still not received much attention from university students to conduct further research. Therefore, in this thesis, the topic of convenience stores will be examined in detail, providing readers with a clearer understanding of the store and its significance to the economy and consumers' daily lives.

NACS (2025) defines a C-store as a type of retail store that sells essential items with a limited selection, such as snacks, beverages, packaged food, and other essentials, quick and accessible. Store convenience refers to a store that possesses all the attributes that minimize the time and effort required to patronize it (Reimers, 2014). C-stores exhibit three main characteristics that distinguish them from traditional stores (NACS, 2025). Firstly, the store is usually located near a residential area. Secondly, it is a small outlet opening for long hours with a limited product selection, and lastly, a C-store frequently imposes higher prices than traditional grocery stores or supermarkets. Generally, speedy service and convenience are two key factors that distinguish C-store chains from other retailers.

There are several ways to divide the convenience store types. Abdullah (2012) stated that a C-store can be divided into two types: a gasoline station combined with a convenience store or a broad merchandise mix, along with extended operating hours. On the other hand, NACS (2025) categorizes C-store types by size. A kiosk is a store with a size less than 800 square feet, a mini C-store is usually with a size 800 – 1200 square feet, a limited selection convenience store is 1500 – 2200 square feet in area, a traditional C-store is about 2500 square feet, an expanded C-store is about 2800 – 3600 square feet, and a hyper C-store is a large store with the area from 4000 to 5000 square feet.

1.2 Problem statements

One of the most significant challenges that C-stores encounter is cost optimization. In the era of urbanization and digitalization, with high expectations from consumers, these stores must develop a clear plan to optimize their supply chain, minimizing costs while ensuring product availability and efficiency. Additionally, due to demand fluctuations and space constraints, a traditional supply chain model, typically applied to large stores such as supermarkets, is not well suited to the format of C-stores. This can lead to inefficiencies, including overstocking, stockouts, high logistics costs, and waste. Hence, cost optimization and supply chain optimization are among the most complex problems that must be addressed.

Due to space restrictions, the store cannot stock a wide variety of items in large quantities simultaneously. This might cause the problem of goods scarcity when the demand increases. Therefore, the better the store manages inventory control, the better the result the store achieves.

Nowadays, as environmental issues receive increasing attention, businesses that understand how to balance profit and ecological factors will gain significant advantages in terms of trust and loyalty from consumers.

1.3 Objectives of the study

This study aims to analyze the evolution of the C-store and determine the importance of the supply chain in the development of the C-store industry. Simultaneously, the study also assesses the key challenges for supply chain management, evaluates marketing strategies used to attract consumers, and outlines various payment methods used in daily transactions today.

The second objective of the thesis is to investigate the key factors driving the growth of convenience stores (C-stores) both globally and regionally, with a particular emphasis on location and infrastructure, cultural differences, competitors, sustainability, and technology.

Lastly, the most crucial objective of this thesis is to evaluate cost optimization strategies within the C-store supply chain, emphasizing inventory management, procurement practices, technological adoption, and logistics.

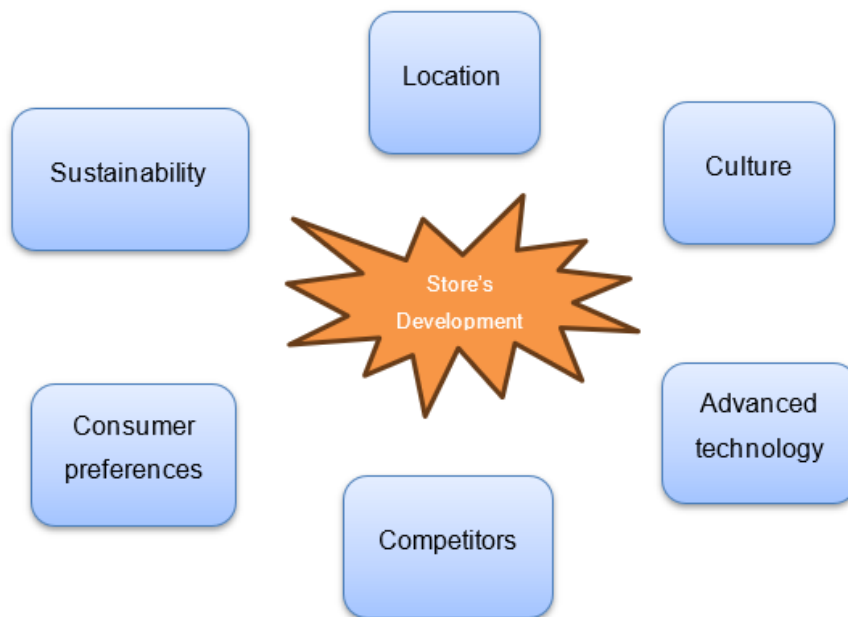


Figure 1. The main factors affecting C-stores' development

2 Literature review

2.1 The evolution of C-stores

The history of C-stores started in the late 1920s in Dallas, Texas, United States (Qmartstore, 2025). The term "convenience store" was not used when the concept was introduced in 1927. At that time, after Southland Ice Company foresaw the huge demand for more accessible shopping options, along with the popularity of automobiles, they decided to open the first store ever with the concept of convenience in retail, marking the birth of the C-store industry (Qmartstore, 2025).

The period after World War II marked a significant shift in the concept of C-stores, as they adapted to the development of suburban communities by expanding their product lines to cater to the needs of suburban families. Furthermore, during this period, 7-Eleven - one of the most prominent players in the convenience store (C-store) industry - emerged, marking a significant development in modern C-stores (Qmartstore, 2025).

According to Qmartstore (2025), the invention of self-service gasoline pumps after 1960 led to the development of a combination of gasoline and convenience stores. The period from 1960 to 1990 was also the era of technical advancement. Consumers who go to stores can easily shop and pay for their purchases without wasting extra time. This is one of the most important criteria that distinguishes C-stores from other retail stores.

The late 20th century marked a period of significant transformation for the C-stores. During this period, convenience stores expanded their range to include a broader range of services and products, such as automated teller machines (ATMs), lottery tickets, and freshly made food. The 1990s marked a notable transition toward healthier and more gourmet food selections. Additionally, stores placed greater emphasis on enhancing the shopping experience by upgrading store layouts and improving customer service (QMartstore, 2025).

The dawn of the digital age at the turn of the 21st century introduced both challenges and opportunities for the growth of convenience stores (Qmartstore, 2025). Embracing online shopping, mobile payment systems, and digital marketing has become crucial for remaining competitive. Currently, there is an increasing focus on personalized shopping experiences, sustainability, and the use of advanced technologies, such as AI, to manage inventory and enhance customer service. Forbes provides an in-depth analysis of these advancements and emerging trends in their article on the future of convenience stores.

The convenience store (C-store) industry is expected to grow from \$1,140.11 billion in 2024 to \$1,268.27 billion in 2025, at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.2% (The Business Research Company, 2025).

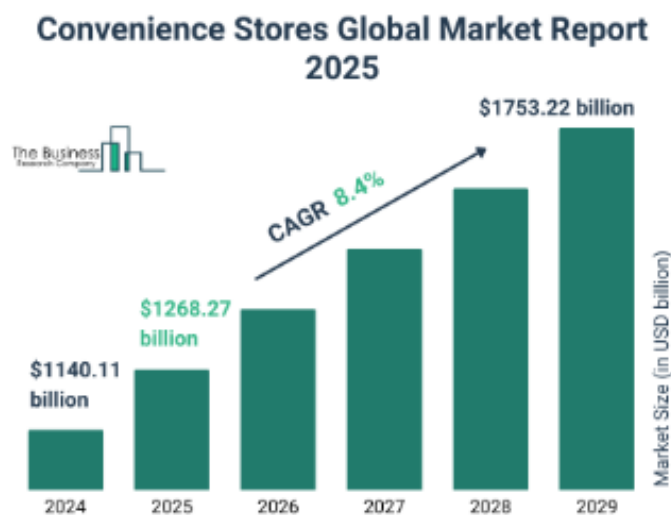


Figure 2. Convenience Stores Global Market Report 2025 (The Business Research Company, 2025)

2.2 Supply chain in retail

Lopienski (2024) explained that the retail supply chain is a comprehensive process consisting of inbound and outbound logistics activities to ensure the entire process, from manufacturing raw materials to the distribution of finished goods to stores, sorting and warehousing, and delivering products to

consumers. Every step in the retail supply chain plays a critical role in contributing to the existence and growth of retail stores. In retail supply chain management, vendor management, demand forecasting, inventory management, and order fulfilment are among the core components that enable the business to survive and compete with other competitors (Ge et al., 2019).

With the development of society, people have come to realize that modern business competition is not only a matter of individual companies competing with one another but also competition among the entire supply chain. Due to its special attention to turnover and inventory control, the C-store must invest more in its supply chain management (Zhou et al., 2021). Understanding the importance of supply chain management in the development of retail stores, in general, and the C-store industry specifically, stores must seek solutions to optimize supply chain costs and enhance the competitiveness of C-stores compared to other retail stores.

2.3 Challenges for the C-store supply chain

Inventory control is the first and most vital issue for any retail store, not just a convenience store. Inventory management takes one-fifth of the total logistics cost (Haapasalo, 2021). Therefore, the better a store controls its inventory, the more successful it will be. A C-store is primarily known for operating in a small space, which also limits storage space (Thinksys, 2024). Due to space restrictions, it's a challenge to stockpile a large quantity of products in the store. Therefore, the store needs to determine a precise demand forecast for the products that are in the highest demand and the quantity that is sufficient at any given time to avoid overstocking or stocking out. This is why the store needs to order products from suppliers more frequently, but in smaller quantities at a time, leading to higher logistics costs. Moreover, with a small order, it is more difficult for the store to negotiate and receive the same bulk discounts from suppliers that larger supermarkets can. This means the store must pay a higher price per unit and incur additional costs for delivery. This is one reason make

the price per unit of products at a C-store is usually higher than at a supermarket (Fernie and Sparks, 2019).

In retail stores, where consumers expect the store to provide fresh products with short shelf lives, the stores need to invest in maintaining products in good condition to provide to consumers. This requires special conditions when transporting from suppliers to the store. Therefore, these products also require a designated area in the store to maintain their quality. In a large store, such as a supermarket or hypermarket, there is a designated area in the warehouse to store perishable products, as they often have a high volume of products at any given time. With a small grocery store like a C-store, it costs more for the store to preserve this type of product.

Secondly, demand volatility is also a significant issue for C-stores. Consumer preferences are constantly shifting, influenced by various external factors, including dietary trends, seasonal changes, local events, and shifts in customer segments within the area. This makes accurate forecasts more difficult (Chopra and Meindl, 2021).

Thirdly, there is a lack of online presence. In the modern world, with Gen-Z shoppers on the rise, consumers are increasingly looking for and ordering a wide range of items online, from furniture and toiletries to food and fresh goods. It indeed saves a lot of time when shopping. Most convenience stores lack visibility in their potential customer base through online systems. This has led to the store unintentionally leaving out a large potential consumer segment (McKinsey & Company, 2022).

Fourthly, the challenge of last-mile delivery is also significant. Due to its location characteristics, the C-store is typically situated in the urban area, which creates transportation difficulties at the final stage before the products reach the store. The more difficult it is, the higher the cost the store has to spend on this stage of transportation.

2.4 Attracting consumers from a marketing perspective

O'Shaughnessy (1994) explained marketing psychology, with three major questions that any business needs to understand to attract and retain customers. The business needs to understand the reasons “why people want a product, how they go about choosing, and what induces them to buy or not to buy” (Simcoe, 2021). By studying and understanding these questions, the business will be able to make a clear business plan, not only to develop the store but also to gain a competitive advantage.



Figure 3. Marketing Psychology (O'Shaughnessy, 1994)

In order to identify consumers' needs, consumers' motivations and experiences of going shopping, being able to control controllable elements in the marketing system – the marketing mix – is a huge competitive advantage (O'Shaughnessy, 1994). Four elements of the marketing mix include product, price, promotion and placement. Among those four elements, product and placement will be mentioned frequently in this study to demonstrate the importance of these two elements in the development of C-stores. A product differentiation strategy is important when the store enters a new market. It is important to understand consumers' needs in the new market and adjust the product options to suit consumers. Choosing the right placement will not only

help attract consumers but also contribute to the cost optimization of the business.

2.5 Impact of payment method on shopping behaviour

Kenton (2024) mentioned in one of his analyses:

Payment is the transfer of money, goods, or services in exchange for goods and services in acceptable proportions that have been previously agreed upon by all parties involved.

According to Kenton (2024), payment can be made in the form of cash, check, wire transfer, credit card, or debit card. Although cash remains one of the most popular methods, the trend has shifted toward cashless methods, which are faster and easier but also carry several hidden risks.

Hafalir & Loewenstein (2009) demonstrated that the majority of consumers increase their overall shopping expenditures when the payment is transmitted from cash to cashless payments. Cashless payments, such as debit or credit cards or mobile payments, certainly lessen consumers' pain when shopping. Nowadays, debit or credit cards are the favourite payment methods worldwide. While the debit card deducts money directly from the consumer's account, the credit card allows cardholders to borrow funds to pay for their expenses and repay them within a specified time frame (Gibson, 2025; Bloomenthal, 2024).

Besides contactless payments, such as debit and credit cards, mobile payments are also one of the most popular methods for completing transactions nowadays. Dahlberg et al. (2008:165) defined mobile payment as "payments for goods, services, and bills made with a mobile device by leveraging wireless and other communication technologies". In many developing countries, an increasing number of people use smartphones daily, enabling easier and faster payment transactions through modern technologies like mobile payments. Quick Response (QR) codes are among the most widely used mobile payment methods. "A QR code payment is a mobile payment method where payment is performed by scanning a QR code from a mobile app" (Dignited, 2018).

Nowadays, due to companies and consumers have become accustomed to using QR code payments, an increasing number of companies are adopting them for their payment solutions. Especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, people have increasingly adopted contactless payment methods, and QR codes have become more popular. It is much faster and more accessible for both businesses and consumers if they adopt this payment method in their daily lives. Deloitte (2023) reported that 4% of consumer transactions globally utilize QR codes, and this number is expected to increase at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 16.1% by 2030.

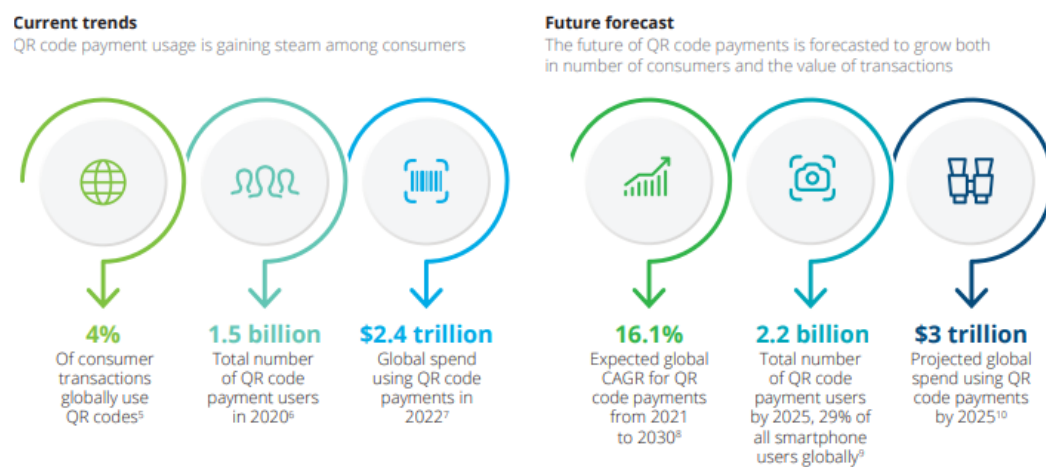


Figure 4. Current and future trends of QR code use in payments (Deloitte, 2018)

According to Deloitte's report (2018), three key features of QR code payments that benefit both customers and merchants are: contactless payment experience, faster payment, service, and settlements, as well as affordable and accessible functionality. Although QR code payments bring significant advantages, they also pose security threats, which require precautions from payers.

3 Factors driving the growth of C-stores globally and regionally

The development of the convenience store (C-store) market varies across different regions worldwide. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the main factors

contributing to the growth of C-stores include location, economic behaviour, population, consumer preferences, culture, regulation, technology adoption, competitors, and sustainability factors.



Figure 5. The growth rate of the C-store industry in different regions globally (Mordor Intelligence, 2025)

In 2023, the Asia-Pacific region was reported to be the largest market in the global C-store market, accounting for 59.39% or \$598.69 billion of the total market value (Research & Markets, 2025). The following is an overview of the exciting growth of other regions, such as Africa and South America, as well as other regions where the market is expected to grow at CAGRs of 23.08% and 17.19%, respectively.

Table 1. Factors contributing to the different growth rates in different regions globally

| | | |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Factors | Fast-growing regions Asia, USA, Middle East (United Arab Emirates) | Slow-growing regions Part of Latin America, Africa, and Europe |
| Economic conditions | High and developing | Low – in Latin America, Africa High, stable - Europe |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Culture & Consumer Behaviour | Tend to use more services from C-stores | Prefer the traditional market EU- prefer large stores such as supermarkets |
| Regulation & business environment | Business-friendly policies | Strict labour laws, sales restrictions |
| Technology adoption | Stronger digital integration (cashless, AI) | Weaker digital integration (cashless, AI) |

The following sub-categories will clarify some of the reasons behind this differing development.

3.1 Location and infrastructure

"The choice of retail location areas is an important decision for retailing decision-makers, as it is a long-term decision, and higher costs are involved in it" (Singh et al., 2020). The right location can determine whether a retail store thrives or fails. Five key criteria were identified based on the Technique for Order of Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution (TOPSIS) model to determine the optimal chain store location: population, store cluster, site features, store site acreage, and the proportion of rent expenses to annual sales (Singh et al., cited in Chang and Hsieh, 2014).

Population is indeed the utmost factor affecting the development of a C-store. One of C-store's main characteristics is its location near residential areas, mostly in urban areas, where there is a high population density. The World Bank Group (2023) reported that currently, more than half of the global population resides in urban regions. Adults living in urban areas tend to have longer working hours and less free time for shopping. Additionally, in urban

areas, families often have dual-income households, which means they have more possibilities to spend more disposable income on shopping activities (Reimers, 2013). This benefits the C-store's business to a greater or lesser extent, as products sold in C-stores usually have a higher price than those in traditional stores, which makes the store a less favourable choice for consumers with lower incomes.

Population density has a significant impact on the development of C-stores, as evidenced by the notable differences in development rates across various regions worldwide. The Asia Pacific is the fastest-growing market in the C-store industry, driven by several key factors. Firstly, the population density of countries such as Vietnam and Thailand is high, accompanied by a rapid growth in urban lifestyles, which drives more individuals to live in cities, where C-stores are easily accessible and tailored to meet urban needs (Mordor Intelligence, 2025). Additionally, the small size of a C-store also helps the store easily approach consumers in busy areas, where the infrastructure is dense and complex.

3.2 Culture and regulations

Culture plays a crucial role in shaping consumer behaviour, shopping preferences, and the overall success of convenience stores across various regions.

3.2.1 Differences in culture in different countries

Compared to consumers in European countries, consumers in the Asia Pacific region tend to favour the existence of C-stores better. Japan, South Korea, and Thailand are among the countries experiencing rapid growth in the C-store industry. With more than one million stores worldwide, Japan and South Korea already had over 55,000 stores in each country in 2024 (Young, 2024). In Thailand and Taiwan, the development of the C-store industry has also grown significantly. Besides the reason that the population density in these countries is considerably high, national culture and consumer buying habits also contribute

to this trend. "People from one culture possess a common yet unique set of behaviours, beliefs, norms or values that differentiate them from people in another country" (Triandis, 1994). For instance, consumers in Asian countries typically prefer to shop for fresh food daily, making the convenience store an essential part of their daily lives. In contrast, consumers in European countries, the United States or Canada tend to shop weekly at large stores, in supermarkets, which limits consumers' reliance on C-stores. One of the reasons for this contrast is that until now, many Asian families still have several generations living under one roof, which requires a significant amount of groceries and fresh food every day to feed many people, while in Western countries, a household tends to have only a few people living together, children do not prefer to stay with their parents when they turn over 18 years old. Additionally, consumers in Western countries also have a culture of dining out, which is more prevalent than in Asia.

One of the best countries that can demonstrate a good example for the development of the C-store industry, based on its national culture and consumer behaviours, is Japan. Japan's konbini – the specific name of a C-store in Japan - stands out globally and is more successful compared to C-stores in other countries. This is due to the store's carefully curated offerings, innovative product rotation, and high consumer loyalty (Sipper, 2024). Unlike traditional C-stores, which typically offer a limited selection of ready-to-eat food to clients, the C-stores in Japan have successfully provided a diverse range of ready-to-eat food options that cater to local culinary tastes and maintain high standards of freshness. Sipper (2024) mentioned some of the best-selling items in Japan's C-stores, such as onigiri, bento boxes, instant noodles, matcha and green tea beverages, desserts and sweets, and fruit sandwiches (also known as "fruit sando"). Given that Japanese consumers value convenience stores as a reliable source for satisfying meals at any time of day, these stores continually monitor trends, seasons, and consumer preferences to adjust their products accordingly. In addition, the C-store's customer service in Japan is considered the best. Most C-stores are open 24/7 to serve consumers' needs at any time, and staff members are well-trained to always welcome customers with a warm

and polite manner. With Japanese consumers, the attitudes of staff members are considered as important as the quality of the store's products. 7-Eleven – a global convenience store chain – is also extremely popular in Japan. However, the concept of 7-Eleven stores in Japan differs significantly. They have thoroughly researched the Japanese market before deciding to enter it.



Figure 6. A corner from a typical C-store in Japan (Internet, 2025)

3.2.2 Differences in culture in different areas of a country

As mentioned, the C-stores are typically located in urban areas with high population density, where people also work longer hours and have less time for shopping, making the existence of convenience stores more essential (Reimers, 2013). In addition, in rural and suburban areas, the presence of traditional supermarkets remains quite significant; people still prefer to consume products from where they are accustomed to buying at lower prices.



Figure 7. Traditional market (Internet, 2025)

3.3 Competitors

In the retail industry, the competition between different types of stores is intense. As is evident, larger stores, such as supermarkets or hypermarkets, are among the major competitors of C-stores. Nowadays, giant stores not only want to operate in large areas with a wide variety of products, but they also want to open smaller-format stores, such as convenience stores, to capture the customer segment typically served by convenience stores. For instance, in the United Kingdom, some major grocers such as Asda and Morrisons are aggressively expanding their network of smaller-format stores (Jenkin, 2025). Due to its compact design, the store can fit into a crowded urban area, where there is a high concentration of diverse customer segments. This creates a high risk for C-stores to compete with.

Lin et al. (cited in Hsu, 2023) stated: "The greatest competitor of convenience stores is not industry peers, but the changing needs of consumers. It is essential to always think one step ahead, further and faster than consumers".

O'Shaughnessy (1994) stated that a business that can provide a differentiated offering and maintain cost leadership will gain a competitive advantage. However, in the era of constant innovation, it is still essential but not enough for companies to rely solely on product differentiation to achieve competitive advantages. In addition to offering a wide range of goods, including high-quality products to attract consumers, the C-stores also need to invest more in innovation and customer service to retain loyal customers.

3.4 Advanced technology

Advanced technology has significantly transformed the convenience store industry, improving efficiency, customer experience, and profitability. In today's digital age, anyone who knows how to harness and utilize the power of technology will gain numerous advantages to some extent.

The innovation of payment methods has significantly changed purchasing behaviour. Cashless payments are becoming increasingly popular globally. Contactless payments, utilizing digital wallets like Apple Pay or QR codes, benefit both businesses and consumers by saving a significant amount of time and enabling companies to manage their cash flow more efficiently.

Additionally, applying advanced technology in operational activities will drastically improve cost optimization. McKinsey & Company (2022) shows that implementing proper self-checkout at the store can improve productivity by six to twelve percent, with labour costs reduced by up to thirty percent. One of the most famous convenience store chains to introduce self-checkout kiosks in its business is 7-Eleven, operating in Japan and the United States. The German C-store chain REWE has launched its new concept, REWE Pick&Go, in several of its stores across Germany (REWE, 2022). This concept is considered the next level of the self-checkout system. With REWE Pick&Go, customers simply sign in, shop, and then leave, without waiting in line to check out. The bill will be automatically sent to the customer's account after they leave the store. This

concept is captured securely using state-of-the-art camera and sensor technology.

3.5 Sustainability

Sustainability has become an indispensable factor in the development and evolution of the retail industry, in general, and the convenience store industry, specifically. As consumers' perceptions about environmental protection and concerns about global warming increase, C-stores also need to update and adapt to reduce waste, lower their carbon footprints, and adopt eco-friendly business models to gain customers' trust and loyalty. NACS (2025) reported that in 2020, 50% of consumers in the United States stated they were seeking greener products.

One of C-store's first actions in demonstrating its concern for sustainability is offering organic and plant-based products, purchasing local goods to reduce its carbon footprint, and supporting local farmers. Japan is one of the leading countries that emphasizes the importance of sustainable business, as the Japanese people consistently highly value sustainability. For instance, Lawson – Japan's second-largest C-store chain - has announced an increased focus on sustainability and environmental protection efforts since 2012, as well as a new initiative since 2019 called “Blue Challenge 2050” with the goal of reducing the company's energy use and harmful emissions (Benton, 2022).

4 The importance of cost optimization in the C-store supply chain

4.1 Cost optimization in the C-store supply chain

Gartner (2024) defines cost optimization as "a business-focused, continuous discipline that drives spending and cost reduction while maximizing business value". In other words, cost optimization in business is the process by which leaders find ways to reduce costs while maintaining the quality of their products.

The better a company optimizes its costs, the higher the chance of achieving higher profitability. Cost optimization has become a crucial component of long-term success in today's competitive business environment. Applying this in the C-store business is considered one of the most critical elements that have led to the long existence of the store. In terms of the supply chain, cost optimization has played a crucial role, as it is key to lowering operational costs, reducing inventory waste and shrinkage, optimizing supplier and logistics costs, and gaining competitive advantages (OpenAI, 2025).

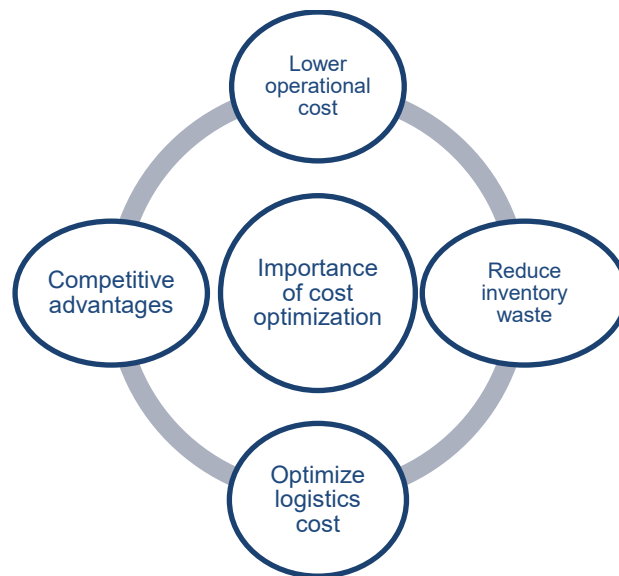


Figure 8. The importance of cost optimization (OpenAI, 2025)

4.2 Cost optimization strategies in the supply chain

Supply chain cost optimization aims to control supply chain expenses while improving the return on investment, thereby maintaining a reliable supply (Bhojwani, 2023). For the C-store industry in particular, implementing cost optimization in supply chain management is even more crucial than in many other industries. The following analytics will provide some potential strategies for convenience stores' supply chains.

4.2.1 Inventory management optimization

Inventory control is one of the primary challenges for developing a C-store. Due to space restrictions and the limited number of goods items, the store needs to implement an efficient demand forecasting system. It is not simple to forecast something that has not happened yet. Today, thanks to the development of advanced technology, making a demand forecast is simpler than ever. By utilizing AI and machine learning, sales trends can be predicted more accurately, and inventory levels can be adjusted accordingly. McKinsey & Company (2023) reported that AI-driven inventory control can reduce stock waste by 30%. Figure 9 illustrates the process of making demand forecasts straightforwardly using high technology.

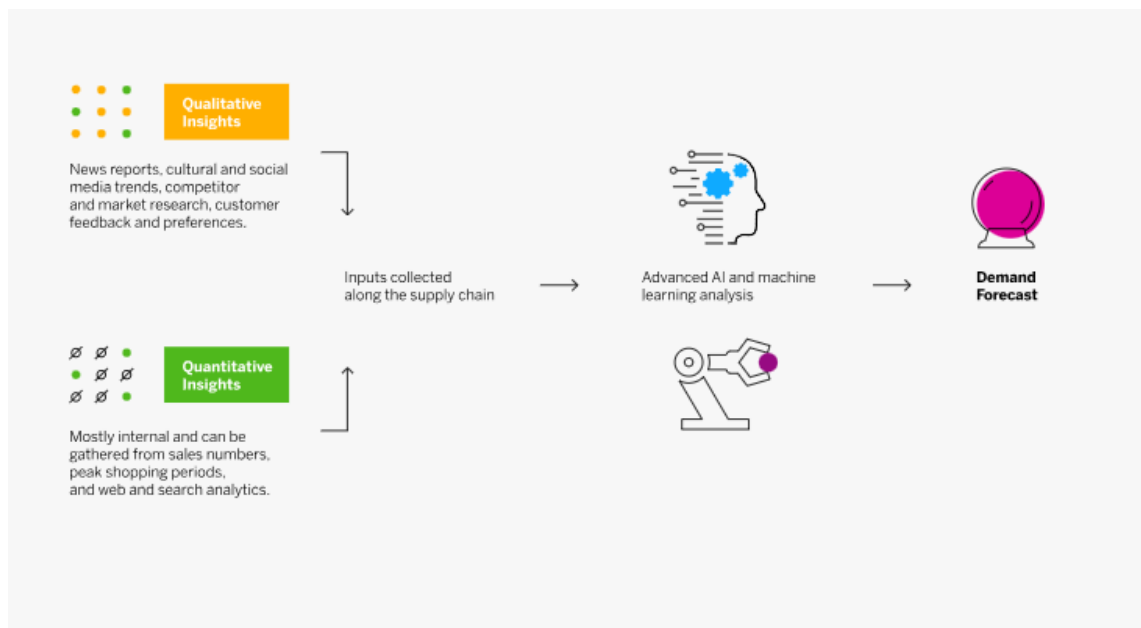


Figure 9. Demand forecasts are achieved through advanced analysis of qualitative and quantitative supply chain insights (SAP, 2025)

In Japan, the concept of Kanban, also known as the lean management process, has been widely utilised as a model of minimizing inventory.

Marutschke (2012: 4) stated:

The concept of Kanban is the integration of just-in-time (JIT) deliveries and inventory control, in fact originated from retailing, in which mass merchandizing stores used product-related information such as item name, code and storage location in order to minimize inventory.

One of the primary objectives of Kanban is to prevent the accumulation of excess inventory. By implementing JIT inventory in C-store supply chain management, the store can avoid the issue of overstocking in a small space. Companies that are successful at JIT inventory management can maximize profits by keeping stock investment as low as possible. Despite some existing drawbacks, the benefit of applying JIT inventory is remarkable. 7-Eleven Japan is a good example for employing JIT inventory in their operations. By employing JIT system, the chain is finely tuned to minimize stockouts and reduce excess inventory (Jenkins, 2024).

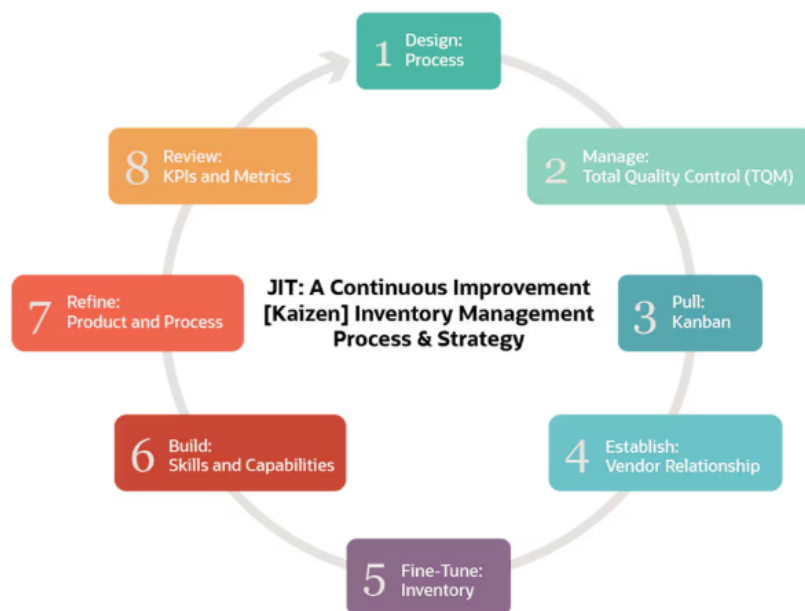


Figure 10. Just-in-time (JIT) inventory cycle (Jenkins, 2024)

4.2.2 Vendor relations and procurement strategies

A store that has established bonding relationships with its vendors has already gained a significant advantage over its competitors. By selecting reliable vendors and negotiating favourable terms, the store can ensure it receives high-quality products at competitive prices. Paytronix (2025) identified three key areas that C-stores should focus on when establishing relationships with vendors. Firstly, when selecting suppliers, always prioritize vendors' ability to provide high-quality products, timely delivery, and cost-effectiveness. Additionally, the store should always prioritize cooperating with local vendors to reduce transportation costs, support the community, and contribute to sustainability by minimizing its carbon footprint. Secondly, the store needs to secure effective negotiation tactics to receive better pricing and payment terms. Moreover, as the quote in the novel *Don Quixote*: "It is the part of a wise man to keep himself today for tomorrow and not venture all his eggs in one basket", this is a wise tactic for C-store to not rely on only one supplier, the stores should diversify suppliers to mitigate risks.

4.2.3 Technology and digitalization

By integrating AI-driven pricing into its operations, the store can expect a significant profit increase of 10–15% (McKinsey & Company, 2025). Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) is one of the advanced technologies that has become increasingly accessible in recent years, thanks to its widespread use in global supply chain management and pet microchipping. In a nutshell, RFID is "an automatic identification technology that uses wireless sensors to identify items and gather data without human intervention" (Hong et al., 2011). By adopting RFID in supply chain management, businesses have the opportunity to reduce management costs and increase the efficiency of product flows (Hong et al., cited in Tajima 2017). Hong et al. (2011) stated that "using RFID in a retail industry can improve shipping, receiving and put-away processes corresponding to suppliers, distribution centers (DCs) and retailers". Several researchers have demonstrated the importance of RFID technology. Using

RFID in a retail store can help track inventory in real-time, allowing for the avoidance of overstocking, which is not permitted in convenience stores (C-stores). Additionally, using RFID can also help track products from the warehouse to the store and prevent theft. For instance, in Finland, many supermarkets, such as the Lidl and Kespro chains, have been attaching RFID codes to some high-value products to prevent theft.

To run a successful business, a store must effectively manage several key aspects. Thousands of payment activities need to be controlled carefully, from the front-end, including all customer transactions and revenue management, to back-end activities such as purchasing products from suppliers and paying for other essential business expenses. It would be a waste of time if all these payment activities were conducted on paper. Instead, nowadays, thanks to technological advancements, most payments can be made digitally. This method helps the supply chain process more efficiently, faster and reliably than doing it manually. McKinsey & Company (2024) reported that “roughly nine in ten consumers in both the United States and Europe have made some form of digital payment over the past year.”

4.2.4 Logistics and distribution

Mutlu (2006, cited in Ballou 1992: 15) reported that the average proportion of transportation costs to total costs is approximately 38.26%. Therefore, it is crucial to plan the shortest and most efficient routes to deliver products from suppliers to the stores. However, due to the characteristics of locating in urban areas, where population density is high and the infrastructure is constrained, planning optimized routes is more complicated. Using global positioning system (GPS) tracking, adjusting the delivery time not in peak hours during the day in order to reduce the extra long routes in urban areas.

When C-store expands the business by offering home delivery to consumers, the importance of last-mile delivery is significant. Last-mile delivery refers to the final phase of the delivery process, and it can comprise up to 53% of the total

cost to move goods (Dolan, 2022). It is considered the most expensive and time-consuming part of the shipping process. Therefore, the better the C-store manage its last-mile delivery, the less cost the C-store has to spend. One of the solutions to optimize last-mile delivery is to apply micro-fulfillment in the supply chain process. Micro-fulfillment is a model that places small-scale warehouse facilities in densely populated areas closer to the consumer to improve delivery times.

Nowadays, when the online shopping trend has become more popular, employing the omnichannel concept in all daily trading activities will not only help the C-store business increase customer base, customer satisfaction, and maintain loyal customers, but also help the store optimize its supply chain cost. Omnichannel was defined as “the conceptualization of the complete integration of all channels, with no distinction between the online and the physical channel, is the new retailing paradigm of today” (Simone and Sabbadin, 2017). Some of the benefits of omnichannel are helping the store boost customer loyalty, expand sales channels, increase brand recognition, improve operational efficiency and especially, inventory management can be optimized better (Terry, 2022). Nevertheless, integrating the omnichannel concept into business is not a simple process. It requires a lot of capital and effort to execute and make it work. Therefore, if small C-stores also want to implement omnichannel to their businesses, they need to consider costs, scalability, and operational efficiency beforehand.

5 Empirical study

This chapter outlines how research was conducted. It started with the analysis of the C-store market in Finland. This section aims to support the analysis of the development of the C-store market in Vietnam, a market in a developing country, compared to the Finnish market, a market in a developed country.

The C-store market in Vietnam and an overview of a domestic C-store chain, Winmart+, are discussed using secondary data. Following up, the analysis about Winmart+ case via using collected data will be carried out.

5.1 Development of Finland's convenience store industry

Before 2017, Siwa and R-kioski were the two primary C-store chains operating simultaneously across Finland. However, since 2017, Siwa, originally part of Suomen Lähikauppa Oy, which was acquired by the Kesko Group in 2015 (Helsinki Times, 2015), had to terminate its operations after 36 years. Since then, the R-kiosk chain has been recognised as the only convenience store chain operating nationwide in Finland. The chain is a part of the Reitan Convenience division of the Reitan Group. There were approximately 560 stores in 2017, decreasing to 350 stores across Finland by 2025 (R-kioski, 2025).

Besides selling essential products and serving ready-to-eat meals throughout the day, such as hot dogs and sandwiches, R-kioski stores also offer additional services to respond to consumers' demands. One of the significant additional services of R-kioski stores is that they have replaced many Posti - Finnish postal offices; customers can easily send or pick up their packages from the closest R-kioski without going far away to the main office of Posti (R-kioski, 2025). In addition, most of the R-kioski stores in the Uusimaa area even cooperate with HSL, which helps public transport users purchase public transportation tickets more easily and more conveniently. Furthermore, to attract more loyal customers for the store, the R-kioski stores in several big cities such as Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa, Vaasa, Tampere and Turku have provided a gambling service – Veikkaus – catering to consumers' enjoyment in their leisure time. However, all the additional services mentioned can also be easily found in other grocery stores and supermarkets. In many small cities, R-kioski stores are also a place for elderly people to gather around and have a sip of coffee together. This is actually a special point that has helped R-kioski stores survive and compete with other strong competitors in the modern era.

In Finland, in the grocery store market, there are two major players, which are S-Group and K-Group, accounting for more than 80% of the total market value (Clausnitzer, 2024). Followed by Lidl – the overseas chain originated from Germany, which takes 10%, and the other small and independent stores take less than 8% of the total market value. Theoretically, R-kioski is not classified in the grocery store sector, but in the convenience store sector. However, given its business model and store count, R-kioski's market share can be counted as the "Other" category in the grocery store sector. Based on the given date, C-stores are not favoured by Finnish consumers. Several factors contribute to this fact, such as the opening hours and the competitive landscape have evolved, gaming legislation and attitudes towards games have shifted, and there have been changes in online shopping and where people reside. Consumers in Finland still prefer to shop at supermarkets, such as K-Supermarket or Prisma, where product categories are more extensive and diverse. Consumers would be able to purchase all the products they need for the whole family in one-stop shopping, with the pre-list they have in hand, once or twice a week (Jarvinen, 2009). Besides, in Finland, the high density of other grocery stores, such as Lidl stores, with preferential prices has made the existence of C-stores more difficult. Lidl – a German grocery brand has applied a strategy of supplying Finnish consumers with its product brands. They declared that 80% of their products are private labels (Lidl, 2025). Using private labels means the expense of producing goods is cheaper due to manufacturing and distribution being handled directly by the store and doesn't need a third party to do so. No middlemen in the supply chain process means lower costs and higher margins.

Competing with several big players in the grocery market in Finland, R-kiosk has always struggled. Koistinen and Järvinen (2009) stated that the biggest strengths of C-store are their business hours on Sundays and late nights on weekdays. For the business to be successful, the owner has to work long hours, saving as much cost as possible, but still not enough.

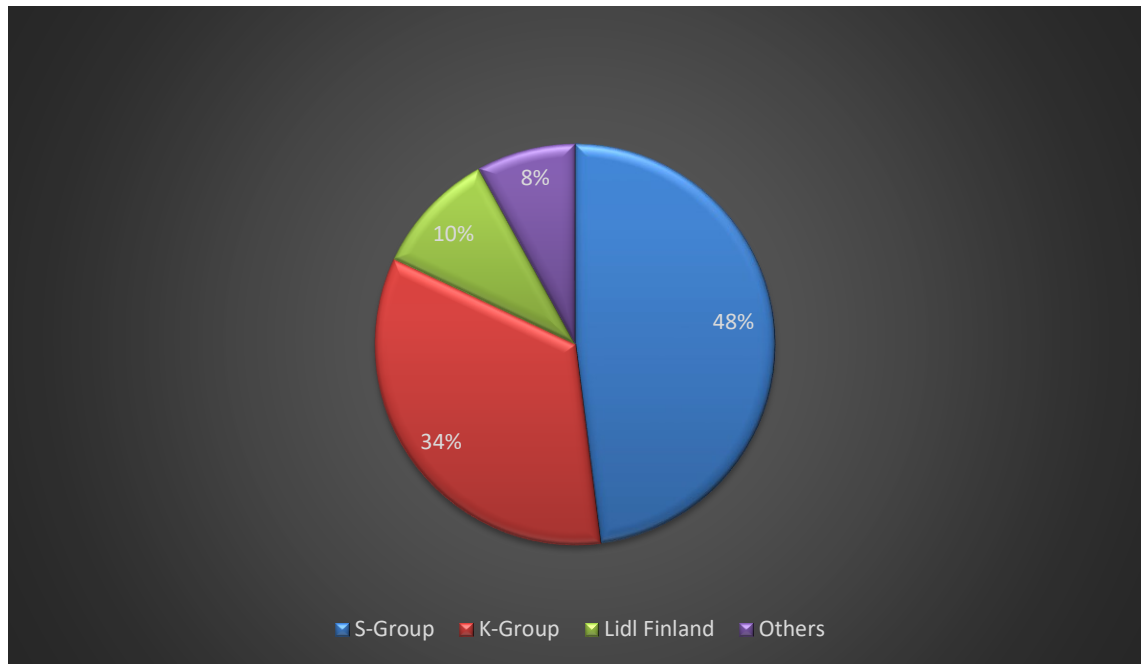


Figure 11. Market share of grocery stores in Finland in 2023 (Clausnitzer, 2024)

5.2 Development of Vietnam's convenience store industry

In contrast to the slow growth of the C-store market in Finland, the C-store market in Vietnam has seen robust growth. The reasons behind the spectacular growth are the support of urbanization, changing consumer lifestyles, and increased demand for convenience products (B&Company, 2024). According to B&Company's report (2024), the urbanization rate in Vietnam is 30%, with the young population accounting for 57% of the total population of Vietnam (Vietnam's population surpassed 100 million people). Moreover, it is also expected that the middle class in Vietnam will increase by triple in size by 2030. The increase in the middle class and young generations – the generations who highly appreciate the time-saving factors and are willing to spend more disposable income on shopping activities - creates a high potential for the development of the C-store industry.

In Vietnam, the C-store market is dominated by both foreign brands and domestic chains. Vietdata (2023) reported that there were approximately 6,740 convenience stores by 2022 across Vietnam, with the highest density in Ho Chi

Minh City – Vietnam's leading economic centre, followed by Ha Noi - the capital of Vietnam. Among foreign brands of C-stores operating in Vietnam, the existence of some famous names such as 7-Eleven, Circle K (USA), Ministop (Japan), GS25 (South Korea), etc, is also significant. Even though these chains are some of the most popular C-store chains worldwide, some of them have not seen great growth since they started penetrating the Vietnamese market. For instance, 7-Eleven, which has been present in Vietnam since 2017, has promised to expand the business with 1000 stores across the country in 10 years. However, by 2022, there were only 66 franchising stores had been opened (Vietdata, 2023). According to Vietnambiz (2023), the challenges of searching for a good location and the mismatch with local shopping habits are some biggest challenges that lead to the growth regression of the 7-Eleven chain in Vietnam. In Vietnam, to rent a store in a crowded area, near a residential, school, office or hospital area, investors have to spend quite a lot of money, and most of the good locations have been occupied already. This causes a vast challenge for 7-Eleven investors. In addition, even though when penetrating the Vietnamese market, the chain already tried to adjust its menus to suit Vietnamese consumers, it still cannot adapt to consumers' demands with fresh food selection. Vietnamese consumers would like to see more variety of fresh products, rather than coffee, instant noodles or soft drinks, which consumers can easily find anywhere in small stores. This demonstrated the importance of culture and consumer habits in the development of the C-store chain.

5.3 Winmart+ - A case study of the domestic convenience stores in Vietnam

5.3.1 Research Methodology

A research methodology describes the techniques and procedures used to identify and analyze information regarding a specific research topic.

(Sreekumar, 2023). In this study, in order to understand clearly why the C-store market develops at different speeds in different areas, case studies will be applied to explain in detail to readers. In addition, a survey was designed to

collect opinions from a limited consumers in Vietnam about the existence of Winmart+ stores. The study plans to concentrate on a case of a Vietnamese C-store chain in order to provide readers with a broader view of the C-store industry in Vietnam, and how domestic companies in Vietnam compete and don't let lucrative pieces of cake only fall into the hands of foreign giants.

“Research methods are the strategies, processes or techniques utilized in the collection of data or evidence for analysis to uncover new information or create a better understanding of a topic” (University of Newcastle, 2024). There are 2 main methods to collect data: qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative research assists researchers in gaining a better understanding of complex concepts, social interactions or cultural phenomena, while quantitative research assists with uncovering patterns or relationships and making generalisations (University of Newcastle, 2024).

5.3.2 The development of a Vietnamese domestic C-store chain – Winmart+

Winmart+ - part of Masan Group Vietnam, one of the biggest domestic chains in Vietnam – was renamed from Vinmart+ in 2022 (Masan Group, 2022). Vinmart+ was a retail store chain belonging to Vingroup and was first introduced in 2014 (Vy, 2016). However, after an unsuccessful operation, the store chain was acquired by Masan Group in 2019 and has experienced massive innovation since then. By restructuring the operation, the company has successfully improved the operational efficiency of the C-store chain. (Masan Group, 2022) stated: “Consumers will be winners when they enjoy superior shopping experiences at a reasonable price. Vietnamese producers and farmers will win with the win-win cooperation model with WinCommerce”. The company not only concentrates on attracting consumers but is also concerned about domestic and local farmers and suppliers. This is one of the most important strategies that Wincommerce has done it right, and that is the reason making the Winamrt+ chain revive and develop more than ever.

Vietdata (2023) reported the number of stores from some of the prominent C-store brands operating in Vietnam.

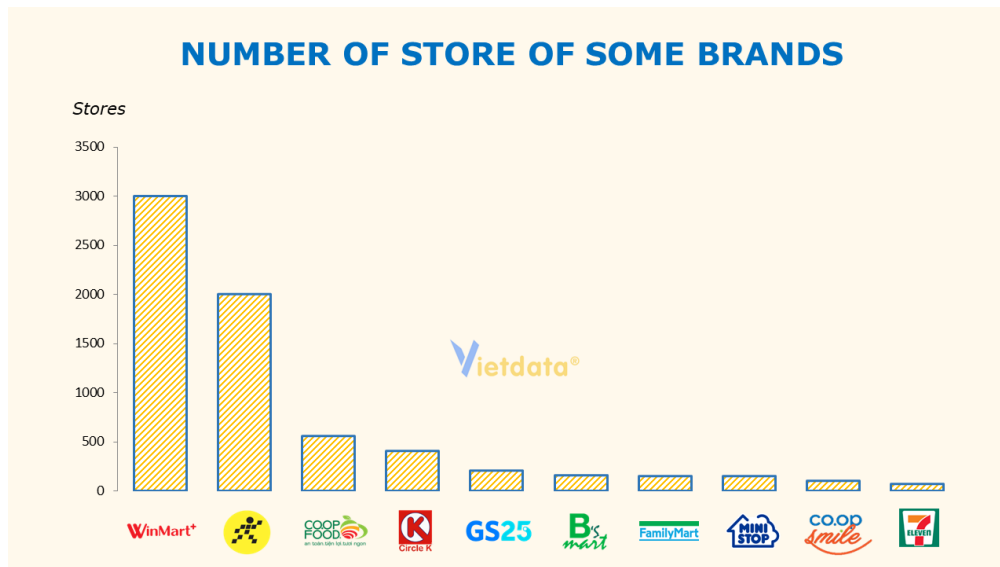


Figure 12. Number of C-stores from some brands in Vietnam in 2023 (Vietdata, 2025)

As shown in Figure 12, even though the existence of some big players from overseas brands in the Vietnamese C-store industry is significant, Winmart+ has managed to become dominant in the C-store market. Despite its short history of establishment, since 2014, its growth rate has already been significant and has surpassed many other brands, such as Circle K, which has been operating in Vietnam since 2008. In 2023, Winmart+ opened more than 3000 stores across the country, with revenue that took the lead in the C-store market, around VND 31,000 billion (~USD 1.2 billion) (Vietdata, 2023). Despite the revenue having been sliding slightly since then, this chain has still overcome the revenues of other overseas brands.

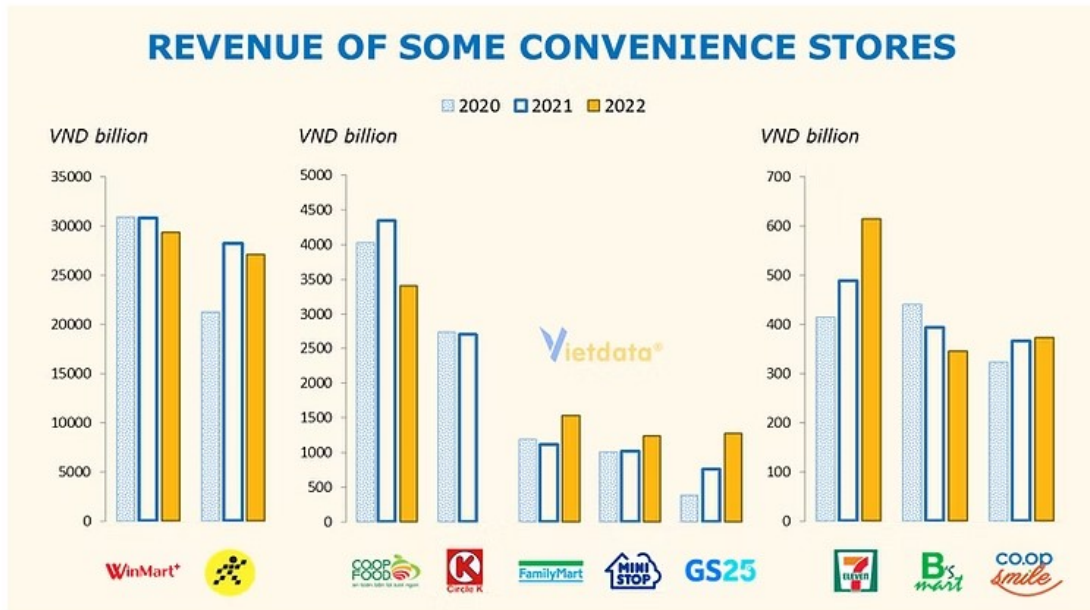


Figure 13. Revenue of some C-store brands in Vietnam

5.3.3 Conducting the research

A survey was designed and distributed to a selected number of consumers in Vietnam to gain specific insights into the development of Winmart+ and to understand consumers' perspectives on the existence of C-stores in a developing country like Vietnam. Most respondents are acquaintances of the author's friends living in major cities such as Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City. The survey was sent out in October 2024 and received responses from forty-four participants. Due to distance and connectivity challenges, only forty-four respondents shared their opinions about the store chain. Given the limited number of respondents, the accuracy of the survey results may be affected. Nonetheless, it still effectively reflects Vietnamese consumers' perceptions regarding the development and necessity of Winmart+ C-stores in their daily lives. The language barrier is also one of the biggest obstacles when collecting data from consumers in Vietnam. Therefore, some of the aspects of the survey were not conducted with precise information as expected. The questions in the survey were chosen depending on the characteristics of the respondents, with simple questions to easily approach respondents.

Fifteen basic questions were designed on the E-lomake website to be as concise as possible to maintain respondents' interest and ensure reliable answers. The questionnaire was divided into three main sections: general information, store service, and store improvement.

The first five questions aim to collect basic information about respondents' age and observe the connection between age range and the Winmart+ stores' recognition. The questions were also aimed at familiarizing respondents with the topic. Among the forty-four respondents, most of them are at a young age, the generation that tends to access more advanced technology and new trends more easily. 39% of respondents are under the age of 20; the difference is not significant between the ages of 20-30 and 31-50, but the rate of people with the age more than 50 is frankly low. This demonstrates the impact of population rate and age on the development of the C-stores. Young adults tend to use convenience services more often due to busy daily lives and habits of enjoying and discovering new services. Older people still tend to use the traditional markets that they have been familiar with for decades.

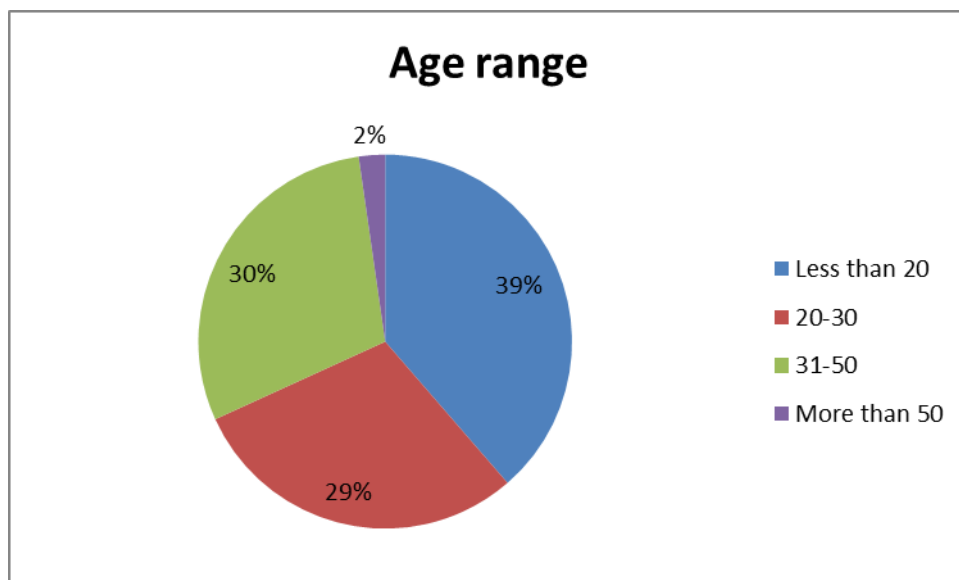


Figure 14. Age group using the Winmart+ service

Due to the high density of Winmart+ stores in the cities, consumers can easily notice the store by passing by. This demonstrates that the rate of respondents

noticing the existence of Winmart+ stores via passing by is significantly high, 31 out of 44 respondents.

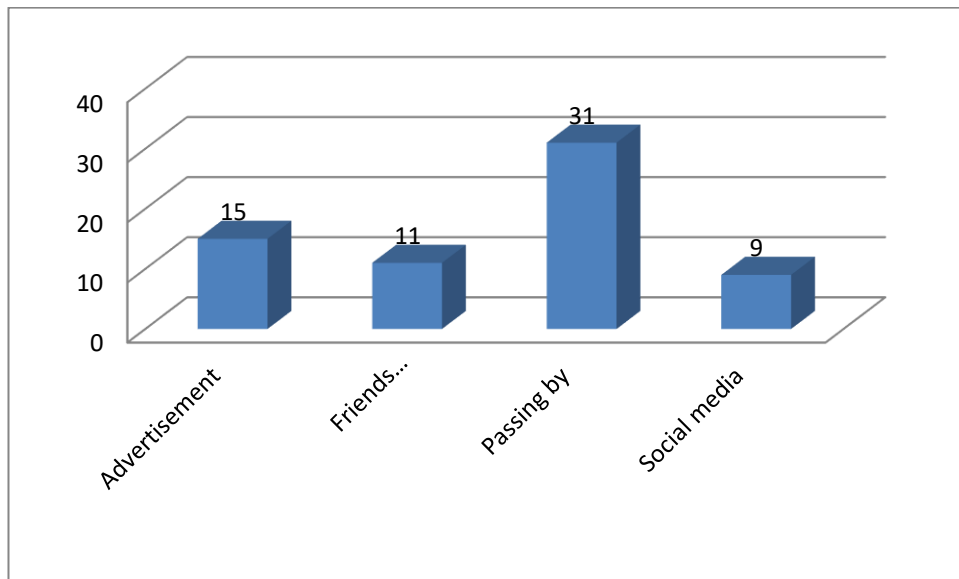


Figure 15. Channels help to connect consumers with Winmart+ stores

Among forty-four respondents, even though the rate of consumers visiting Winmart+ weekly and a few times a week is noticeable, the rate of consumers who barely go shopping in the Winmart+ stores is also high. The number of respondents who answered never go shopping in Winmart+ is 11 out of 44, the highest number among all options.

While analyzing the development of the C-stores, one of the factors that the stores need to focus on is determining consumers' needs. Knowing the reasons why customers go shopping, the C-store will be able to adjust its business strategy and plan an effective way to remain competitive. The survey has managed to find the three most common reasons that consumers choose Winmart+ over the other grocery stores or traditional stores. The location, product selection and convenience (easier and quicker). Among forty-four respondents, 38 out of 44 respondents agreed that a good location can help increase the store's recognition and attract more clients. 20 out of 44 respondents focus on product selection when shopping in Winmart+. This is also one of the reasons that has led to the dramatic growth of Winmart+ in just

ten years. The domestic store chain knows what its consumers need, understands consumers' habits, and offers a reasonable price with high quality to consumers.

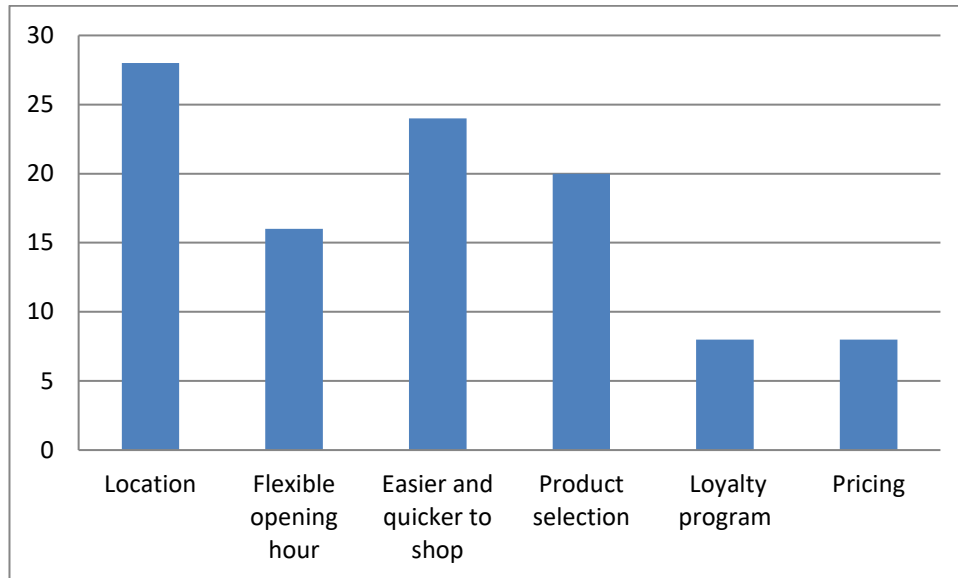


Figure 16. The reasons consumers choose to shop at Winmart+ over other C-store chains

The second section of the survey concentrates on the store format and how store service affects the purchasing behaviours of consumers. Due to the limitation of space, the selection of products is also limited. Most of the respondents answered that they only go to Winmart+ to purchase snacks and beverages - 31 out of 44 respondents, while ready-to-eat meals, one of the emphasized products of C-stores, weren't noticed much.

The survey also focuses on identifying which payment methods are most favourable to Vietnamese consumers. As expected, cashless payment methods, which include debit/credit cards and mobile payments, have also been used the most among the forty-four respondents. The mobile payment method that Vietnamese consumers commonly use is QR codes. According to Agribank (2024), over 87% of Vietnamese adults own a bank account. In 2023, more than 11 million transactions were made using cashless payment, which increased 50% compared to 2022 (Agribank, 2024). Hafalir & Loewenstein (2009) stated

that the number of transactions increased when the payment method was transferred from cash to cashless. This theory is also applied to Vietnamese consumers. Nowadays, not only consumers from urban areas, but also consumers in rural areas can own their bank account, which makes daily activities easier, faster and more effective. Figure 17 shows a clearer idea of which method has been used most among the respondents.

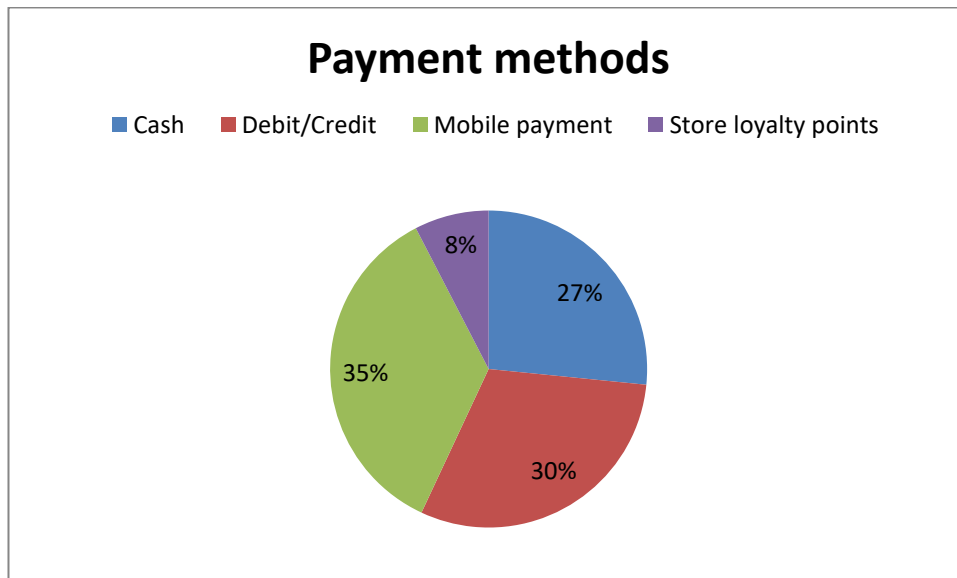


Figure 17. Payment methods are used in Winmart+

Among forty-four respondents, twenty-six people responded with the satisfaction of Winmart+ service, accounting for 59,1%, and 59,1% of total respondents were also satisfied with the variety of products offered at Winmart+. As expected, the ratio of respondents who think the price in this store is more expensive than other stores is 63.6%, which means Winmart+ stores are still not preferred among the majority of Vietnamese consumers.

The last section of the survey aims to collect respondents' opinions on what they would like to see more of the Winmart+ store. With 23 out of 44 selecting the former, and 26 out of 44 selecting the latter, product variety and reasonable price are two priorities that most of the respondents would like to receive more from Winmart+. This demonstrates the importance of cost optimization to the growth of the store. Once the stores manage to control inventory, ensure to

provide various selections of products to clients, but still manage to optimize the cost, the products' prices can be adjusted and be equivalent to the income of Vietnamese consumers. This will create a different perspective of the consumer about C-stores and will help bring C-stores closer to consumers' daily lives.

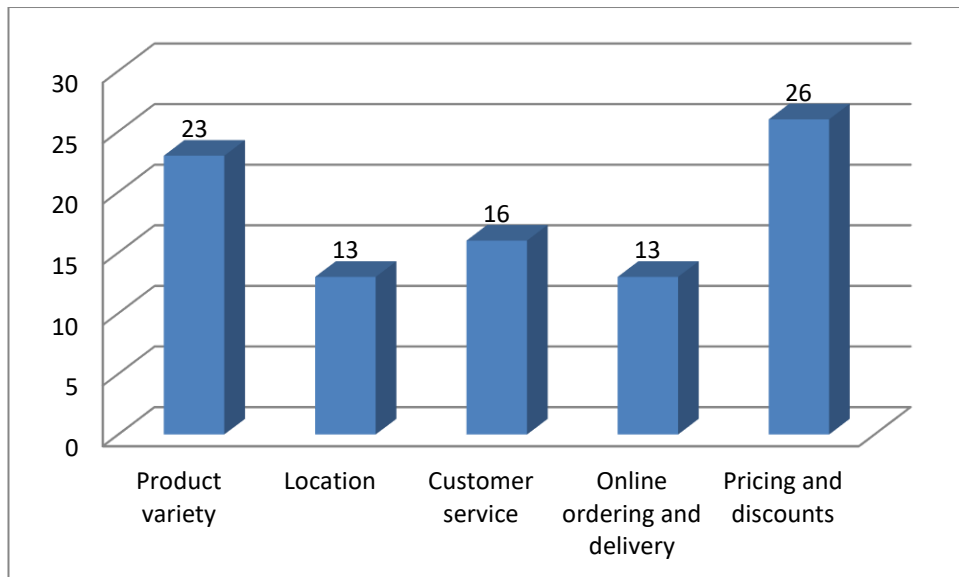


Figure 18. Improvements that consumers would like to see from WinMart+

The conducted survey provided a better view for readers about the development of a domestic C-store chain – Winmart+. After ten years of operating in the domestic market, Winmart+ has successfully created brand recognition among Vietnamese consumers. Despite some limitations in the survey, such as the connection and a language barrier for respondents to answer questions in English, the survey still demonstrated the wide recognition of the Winmart+ store chain among Vietnamese consumers, mostly among the young generation. Even though the store chain has applied new technology, using modern payment methods, due to the limitations of economic and technological development conditions in Vietnam in general, the store chain still has to encounter several challenges to win the loyalty of consumers. To ensure a stable position and become a leader in the long term in the C-store industry in Vietnam, Wincommere – the parent company of Winmart+ needs to invest more in the operation and how to manage to optimize its supply chain cost.

6 Conclusion

6.1 Summary of the study

The purpose of this study was to provide readers with a better idea about the development of the convenience store industry nowadays, and how important it is to the development of society.

A convenience store is a form of store in the retail industry that plays an important role in the development of global economics. Today, due to increased demands from consumers for convenient and faster service, the stores have more opportunities than ever before to develop and expand their business. Due to the research limitation, the study mostly focused on the aspect of supply chain in the development of the C-store industry. The study has successfully assessed some of the most challenging issues in supply chain management. They are the inventory control, the demand volatility, the lack of online presence and the challenge of last-mile delivery (Thinksys, 2024). Besides, the side factors such as the impact and marketing and different types of payment methods were also emphasized during the study in order to provide readers a better view of the broader factors affecting the development of the convenience store industry. Throughout the study, the readers gained a clear understanding of how complex the C-store industry is.

The study was investigated carefully and deeply to identify the factors and reasons for the different growth of the C-store market in different regions globally. Even though the origin of C-store came from a Western country, in the United States, today it is seen to grow at the highest rate in the Pacific Asia region, where there is a high population density and consumers' demands for convenient and speedy service are increasing significantly. To demonstrate how different regions in the world receive different growth of C-stores, and how consumers in different regions have different perspectives about C-stores, a comparison between the development of C-stores in a developed country and a developing country was presented. Throughout the comparison between the C-

store industry in Finland and Vietnam, and the case study about the domestic C-store in Vietnam – Winmart+, readers will have a better idea about how population, consumers' habits, culture and technology impact the development of C-stores.

The aspect of cost optimization in the supply chain was highly mentioned throughout the study to demonstrate its importance in the stable development of the C-store. The better strategies are planned to optimize the cost, the better the store manages to adjust the price and its range of product selection in order to attract and maintain loyal consumers. To optimize the cost, the C-store needs to control its inventory management, adapt to the new technology in order to gain a competitive advantage, create strong relationships with suppliers, and last but not least, the store needs to optimize its logistics and distribution costs. The development of C-store is not only the development of a singular organization, but it also represents the development of the country or the regions. It plays an important role in the economic and social aspects of modern life.

6.2 Suggestions for further research

Due to the limitations of knowledge and resources, there are still several perspectives relating to the development of C-store that haven't been discussed.

The primary study in this thesis has indicated the primary factors that have led to the steady development of the C-store industry in different areas worldwide. For future research, the impact of sustainability on the development of convenience stores couldn't be taken into account more deeply. The environmental issue has been receiving increasing attention. Especially today, the growing rate of the C-store industry in developing countries is higher than in developed countries. With the high speed of growth in developing countries, there are more problems than we ever thought about behind the fast growth. Furthermore, the development of advanced technologies not only creates more

opportunities for economic growth, but also creates some issues relating to human rights, people might lose their jobs because of robotic replacement and so on.

Since this study and the conducted survey have limitations, it could be recommended that this study be conducted more thoroughly in the future. A new survey that would be able to represent the Vietnamese population better, to conduct their opinions on how important C-stores are to their daily lives, could be designed. A better questionnaire could be designed and concentrate better on Vietnamese consumers' perceptions about the C-store service. In addition, a qualitative method can be approached in order to increase the accuracy of the study. A survey using a quantitative method was applied to approach consumers' perspectives. Approaching the owners/ managers of a few C-stores in Vietnam could be a good idea. By approaching both consumers and store owners, the study could achieve a better result on how a domestic store chain as Winmart+, manages to compete with big players from abroad. Furthermore, by interviewing store owners, the different aspects of sustainability and how the stores incorporate environmental issues into business operations could be explored better.

In conclusion, convenience store plays an important role in the development of the retail industry. In the modern world, while everything is related to the development of AI and advanced technology, the economists and owners of the C-store chains need to seize the opportunity, apply advanced and effective technology in the stores' operation. The convenience store industry needs to get more attention and be brought to all the regions around the world. Consumers in developing and poor countries also deserve to receive a modern service from the C-store.

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Appendices

Questionnaire

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AT WINMART+

Part 1. General Information

1. What is your age group?

- Less than 20
- 20-30
- 31-50
- More than 50

2. How do you know about Winmart+

- Advertisement
- Friends recommend
- Social media
- Passing by the store
- Others

3. How long have you been a customer of Winmart+?

- Less than 6 months
- 6 months to 1 year
- 1-2 years
- More than 2 years

4. How often do you visit Winmart+?

- Daily
- Few times a week
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Rarely

5. Why do you choose to shop in Winmart+ over other stores?

- Location
- Flexible opening hour
- Easier and quicker to shop
- Product selection

- Loyalty program
- Pricing
- Others

Part 2: Store service

6. Which products do you buy most frequently from the store? (select more than one)
- Snacks and beverages
 - Personal items
 - Groceries
 - Ready-to-eat meal
 - Household items
 - Others
7. How do you think about the price in Winmart+ compares to other stores?
- Much more expensive
 - A bit more expensive
 - No different
 - Cheaper

8. How satisfied are you with the variety of products offered at Winmart+?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Disappointed
- Very disappointed

9. How would you evaluate the quality of products in Winmart+ compares to other stores?

- Much better
- Same quality
- Not as good as in other stores

10. How would you rate the convenience of the store locations?

- Very convenient
- Somewhat convenient
- Neutral
- Inconvenient
- Very inconvenient

11. How do you think if the store expands opening hours (or even opening 24/7)?

- Excellent idea
- Might be good
- Not necessary
- Don't care

12. How do you prefer to pay for your purchases?

- Cash
- Debit/credit care
- Mobile payment
- Store loyalty points

13. Would you order more often from Winmart+ if the store offer home delivery? Yes/No questions

Part 3. Store Improvement

14. Have you noticed any recent changes or improvements in Winmart+ stores (e.g., new product offerings, store renovations, expanded services)? If yes, what changes did you notice, and how have they impacted your shopping experience?

15. In which areas would you like to see the most improvement in our stores? (Select more than one)

- Product variety
- Store locations
- Customer service
- Online ordering and delivery
- Pricing and discounts
- Others

16. Would you recommend our stores to others? Yes/No questions

17. What suggestions do you have for improving our store chain's services and offerings?



Form is scheduled: publicity starts 2.10.2024 23.31 and ends 2.10.2025 23.59

Customer Satisfaction at Winmart+

General Information

What is your age group?

Select Less than 20
 20-30
 31-50
 More than 50

How do you know about Winmart+?

Advertisement
 Friends recommend
 Social media
 Passing by the store
 Others

Please specify from where you know about Winmart+?

How long have you been a customer of Winmart+?

Less than 6 months 6 months to 1 year 1-2 years More than 2 years

Select

How often do you visit Winmart+?

Daily Few times a week Weekly Monthly Rarely

Select

Why do you choose to shop in Winmart+ over other stores? (select more than one)

Location
 Flexible opening hour
 Easier and quicker to shop
 Product selection
 Loyalty program
 Pricing
 Others

Appendix 1

Store Service

Which products do you buy most frequently from the store? (select more than one)

- Snacks and beverages
- Personal items
- Groceries
- Ready-to-eat meal
- Household items
- Others

Please specify

How do you think about the price in Winmart+ compares to other stores?

- Much more expensive A bit more expensive No different Cheaper
- Select

How satisfied are you with the variety of products offered at Winmart+?

- Very satisfied Satisfied Neutral Disappointed Very disappointed
- Select

How would you evaluate the quality of products in Winmart+ compares to other stores?

- Much better Same quality Not as good as in other stores
- Select

How would you rate the convenience of the store locations?

- Very convenient Somewhat convenient Neutral Inconvenient Very inconvenient
- Select

How do you think if the store expand opening hours (or even opening 24/7)?

- Excellent idea Might be good Not necessary Don't care
- Select

How do you prefer to pay for your purchases?

- Cash
- Debit/Credit
- Mobile payment
- Store loyalty points
- Others

Please specify which method?

Would you order more often from Winmart+ if the store offer home delivery?

 Yes No

Store Improvement

Have you noticed any recent changes or improvements in Winmart+ stores (e.g., new product offerings, store renovations, expanded services)?

- Yes No If yes, what changes did you notice, and how have they impacted your shopping experience?
- Select

In which areas would you like to see the most improvement in our stores? (Select more than one)

- Product variety
- Store locations
- Customer service
- Online ordering and delivery
- Pricing and discounts
- Others

Please specify

Would you recommend our stores to others?

 Yes No

What suggestions do you have for improving our store chain's services and offerings?