

Asia (ex-China) Retail & E-commerce

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Teresa Lam

Vice President

E: teresalam@fung1937.com

T: (852)2300 2466

Fung Business Intelligence

10/F LiFung Tower

888 Cheung Sha Wan Road

Kowloon, Hong Kong

T: (852) 2300 2470

F: (852) 2635 1598

E: fbigroup@fung1937.com



Asia at a Glance



E-commerce: Lazada's 11.11 Online Revolution mega sales to offer 210 million products this year

Lazada, Southeast Asian largest e-tailer in which Alibaba holds a majority stake, will launch its annual online sales event – Lazada Online Revolution mega sales on 11 November across six countries - Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. This is the sixth year Lazada running the month-long online shopping festival, which starts from 11 November and ends on 12 December each year. Themed “Shop the Universe”, the mega sale of this year will offer 210 million products, up sevenfold from 2016, and will have expanded product categories to cover fashion, luxury cosmetics, groceries, pet supplies and digital goods such as e-vouchers and prepaid mobile-phone top-ups. International brands include Huawei, Laneige, Levi's, Mac, Ray-Ban, Shiseido and Triumph. Lazada will also work with over 80 delivery companies to handle orders during the sale. In 2016, shoppers in Southeast Asia ordered about two million items within the first 24 hours of Online Revolution 2016, with VR glasses, smartphones, shower gels and mascaras among the top selling products¹.

E-commerce: Zalora joins media companies Diva and The Take to launch shoppable video

Southeast Asia's major fashion e-tailer Zalora has partnered with Diva, an Asian women's entertainment television channel under U.S media company NBCUniversal International

Networks (NBCUIN), and shoppable clip maker The Take to launch an innovative shoppable videos on its online platforms. The new initiative allows consumers of Zalora online platforms in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Hong Kong and Taiwan to shop for Zalora fashions directly from specially created NBCUIN videos with Zalora's product catalogue. By mousing over a “shoppable” bar shown on the video, shoppers can browse the content, select items of preferred size and colour and instantly purchase their items².

Retail logistics: Singapore's online delivery service provider Honestbee allies with Thai supermarket chain Villa Market

Honestbee, a Singapore-based online on-demand grocery delivery service provider, has paired up with Thai supermarket chain Villa Market to provide home delivery services in Bangkok. Following its debut in Thailand in March 2017, Honestbee has achieved great success and continued to expand in Bangkok. In addition to Villa Market, Honestbee also tied up with local grocer CP Fresh Mart to offer a delivery service with products at cheaper prices than retail in September 2017. Meanwhile, Honestbee has also partnered with Thai restaurant and bakery chain S&P to offer restaurant food-delivery service in Bangkok³.

Shopping malls: Japanese fashion mall Lumine to open first overseas store in Singapore in Nov 2017

Japan's fashion mall Lumine will open its first international store in Singapore's Clarke Quay Central on 25 November, 2017. The retailer believes the new launch in Singapore will

provide an important gateway to the Asian market and crucial in positioning the brand on the world map. Covering some 10,000 sqft, the new complex houses an in-house café as well as more than 20 Japanese brands, including Tomorrowland, Iena, Fray I.D. and Spick & Span, with items priced between S\$15 and S\$850. The Singapore store will replicate the shopping experience in Lumine's 16 branches in Japan⁴.

Department stores: Seibu to open first Malaysia store in Kuala Lumpur

Seibu, an upmarket department store operator under Japan's retail giant Seven & I Holdings, will make inroads into Malaysia by opening a four-storey department store in Kuala Lumpur in 2019. The move comes after the retailer's new openings in Indonesia and Singapore. Located in the country's financial hub Tun Razak Exchange, the new store will sprawl across 28.3 hectares (283,000 sqm) and be operated by Sogo Malaysia, offering items from food to clothing targeting high-income consumers. Currently, Seibu boasts 16 stores in Japan, with its flagship store in Tokyo's Ikebukuro⁵.

Beauty and personal care: Japanese drug store chain Matsumoto Kiyoshi to tap Taiwan market

Japan's major drug store chain Matsumoto Kiyoshi will soon open its first store for Taiwan through forming a joint venture company with a local manufacturing and logistics company. Matsumoto Kiyoshi will sell beauty and health food products under its brand in Taiwan, with a hope to attract more Taiwanese customers to its domestic locations when they travel to Japan. Currently, Matsumoto Kiyoshi also operates 12 stores in Thailand via a joint

venture with a local firm⁶.

Personal electronics: China's smartphone maker Vivo eyes overseas markets including Singapore and Taiwan

Vivo, China's major smartphone maker, will soon bring its products to Singapore, Taiwan and Russia, followed by a foray into Africa in early 2017. The company has recently expanded into the Hong Kong market with the launch of its latest model X20. Its V7+ model is already posting strong sales in India, Thailand, the Philippines, Myanmar, Malaysia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Cambodia and Bangladesh. Established in 2009, Vivo is noted for its innovative phone cameras feature and was the first brand to roll out a smartphone with a dedicated Hi-Fi chip. According to U.S. research agency Gartner, Vivo ranked fifth in global smartphone sales for 2Q17 in terms of volume, taking up 6.6% market share⁷.



Statistics: Retail sales up 2.2% yoy in September 2017

Japan's retail sales increased by 2.2% yoy in September 2017, due chiefly to a growth in sales of most of the major product categories, including motor vehicles (up 5.9% yoy), medicine & toiletry stores (up 5.8% yoy), fabric apparel & accessories (up 5% yoy), fuel (up 4.6% yoy), general merchandise (up 1.2% yoy), food & beverages (up 0.5% yoy) and machinery & equipment (up 0.4%). By contrast, retail sales of non-store retailing fell 0.9% yoy in September 2017⁸.

Statistics: CPI up 0.7% yoy in September 2017

Japan's consumer price index moved up by 0.7% yoy in September 2017. By category, prices of fuel, light & water charges, medical care and food rose 6% yoy, 1.8% yoy and 1% yoy respectively in September 2017, followed by education (up 0.4% yoy), culture & recreation (up 0.2% yoy) and miscellaneous (up 0.1% yoy). Prices of clothes & footwear, furniture & household utensils and housing decreased by 0.3% yoy, 0.2% yoy and 0.2% yoy respectively in September 2017, while prices of transportation & communication remained unchanged from the same time last year⁹.

Retail technology: Sony develops AI remote-driven vehicle to display ads

Japan's electronic giant Sony has developed a vehicle named SC-1 that can be driven remotely through advanced sensor technology and artificial intelligence (AI) to capture a 360-degree image of its surroundings. The use of AI technology allows the vehicle to distinguish the age and gender of people walking nearby and to show demographic-specific advertisements on its 55-inch ultra-high definition 4K displays on each of the four sides of the vehicle. In addition to the marketing use, the three-meter long vehicle can also transport people at leisure facilities such as golf courses and shopping malls, while passenger can drive the vehicles themselves via the onboard controller and augmented reality-enabled interior display, which can superimpose computer generated image such as dinosaurs onto the fairway when golfers travelling to the next hole¹⁰.

E-commerce: Rakuten partners with third-party retailers for its loyalty reward program in the U.K.

Japan's e-commerce giant Rakuten has added third-party retailers to its loyalty rewards programme in its U.K. website, marking the first time that Rakuten Super Points loyalty scheme features third-party retailers in Europe since its launch in the region one year ago. The collaboration enables Rakuten's shoppers in the U.K. to collect and use Rakuten Super Points at over 200 popular British retailers including Marks & Spencer, Asos, TK Maxx and Tesco. The points, earned via shopping at Rakuten.co.uk, can be redeemed for shop credit which can be used online and in-store at a number of retail partners¹¹.

Apparel and footwear: Forever 21 closes debut flagship store in Tokyo

American fast fashion chain Forever 21 shut down its first flagship store in Japan in Tokyo on 15 October, 2017. Industry analysts attribute the closure to the lofty rental rate and constantly declining foot traffic. Latecomers including international rivals Zara and H&M as well as domestic homegrown labels Spinns and WEGO, coupled with the fast-growing e-commerce have also further diluted the core consumers of Forever 21. Founded in 1984, Forever 21 currently owns 700-plus stores worldwide, with most of them located in the U.S.¹².

Apparel and footwear: Japanese magazine Clutch to open first retail store in London

Clutch, a Tokyo-based men's fashion magazine, will open its first retail store in London in 1Q18, marking the company first's foray into the U.K. market. Located at Great Portland Street in Fitzrovia, the 2,000-new store will house a Clutch café and a fashion boutique, showcasing a selection of Japanese fashion brands, including Eternal, First Arrow's, Fullcount, Glad Hand, Japan Blue Jeans, Jelado, Kato and Momotaro Jeans¹³.

Apparel and footwear: Italian womenswear brand Anonyme Designers teams up with Japanese department stores

Italian womenswear brand Anonyme Designers has sealed a pact with three major Japanese department stores – Sogo and Takashimaya in Yokohama, and Hankyu in Osaka for distribution of its products in the country. The brand has been selling its products in Japan for three years upon setting up its Asia base in Hong Kong. In addition to its self-managed online store, Anonyme Designers has also offered its products on Italian luxury online fashion website Yoox. Anonyme Designers currently sells in 25 countries via wholesale distribution with over 1,000 outlets and numerous department stores on three continents¹⁴.

Apparel and footwear: Asics develops microwave technology for custom-made soles

Japan's sneaker maker Asics has teamed up with Taiwan-based Tayin Research & Development Co., Ltd., to co-develop a

microwave technique to speed up the time it takes to make a pair of athletic soles. By utilizing heat generated by microwaves to fuse different materials together to create shoe soles, the innovative method enables customers to build their shoe soles with self-selected colors in as little as 15 seconds. Asics believes the new technology will also optimize in-store experience for the sneaker shoppers, allowing them to take part in custom design their shoes in the store on the spot¹⁵.

Beauty and personal care: Beauty brand Shiro opens first overseas stores in London

Japan's beauty brand Shiro has recently opened two new stores in London, marking it foray into the U.K. market and first store openings outside of Japan. Featuring natural beauty using simple natural methods, the brand offers skincare, haircare, fabric care and fragrance products made with high-quality natural ingredients. In addition to the new openings in London, the brand has also launched a dedicated UK web store to serve customers nationwide¹⁶.

Beauty and personal care: Kosé launches premium skincare brand Decorté in the U.K.

Japan's cosmetics giant Kosé has launched its high-end skincare brand Decorté in the U.K. in partnership with local upscale department store operator Selfridges. Selfridges is the first and the only official distributor in the U.K. to offer Decorté. Currently, Decorté is also available in Asia, North America and Italy¹⁷.

South Korea

Statistics: CPI up 2.1% yoy in September 2017

South Korea's consumer price index increased by 2.1% yoy in September 2017. By category, prices of housing, water, electricity, gas & other fuels and food & non-alcoholic beverages rose 3.9% yoy and 3.3% yoy respectively in September 2017, followed by transport (up 2.7% yoy), miscellaneous goods & services (up 2.7% yoy), restaurant & hotels (up 2.4% yoy), alcoholic beverages & tobacco (up 1.8% yoy), clothing & footwear (up 1.2% yoy), education (up 1% yoy), health (up 0.8% yoy), furnishings, household equipment & routine maintenance (up 0.8% yoy) and communication (up 0.3% yoy). By contrast, prices of recreation & culture fell 1.4% yoy in September 2017¹⁸.

Statistics: Consumer sentiment index up 1.5 points mom in October 2017

South Korea's consumer sentiment index moved up by 1.5 points mom in October 2017. The growth was mainly driven by an increase in consumer sentiment regarding current domestic economic conditions (up 4 points mom), prospective domestic economic conditions (up 3 points mom), prospective household spending (up 1 point mom) and prospective household income (up 1 point mom). Consumer sentiment related to current living standards and prospective living standards stayed unchanged from the previous month in October 2017¹⁹.

Retail technology: Bookseller Yes24 trials autonomous robot and electronic trolley in store

South Korea's bookseller Yes24 is testing an autonomous robot named Around and an electronic trolley called air cart at its secondhand bookstore in Busan. The major duty of Around is to collect books that have been read by customers, while air cart is to help staff members to move books around more safely and easily, with both them equipped with anti-collision features. In collaboration with local tech firm Naver Labs, Yes24 has spent a year on development the automatic robot and carts. More Arouns and air carts will be launched before the end of 2017 after the trial and follow-up software and hardware updates²⁰.

Convenience stores: South Korean CVS chain GS25 to open first Vietnam store in November 2017

GS25, a South Korean convenience store chain under local conglomerate GS Group's retail unit GS Retail, will open its first store for Vietnam in Ho Chi Minh City in November 2017 in collaboration with Vietnam's conglomerate Son Kim Group. The new opening will mark the first overseas foray for GS25. The debut store will be operated by GS25 Vietnam, a joint venture between GS Retail and Son Kim Group. GS Retail reportedly has signed a master franchise agreement with the joint venture company, in which it holds a 30% stake²¹.

Apparel and footwear: Zara's sister brand Oysho launches on South Korean e-tailer SSG

Oysho, a lingerie, sportswear and homeware brand under Zara's parent company Inditex Group, have opened an online storefront on South Korea's largest online platform SSG. The new opening follows Oysho's launch of its own website Oysho.com in South Korea on 7 September, 2017. Oysho will showcase its sleepwear, lingerie, gym wear, beachwear, footwear and accessories items on SSG. The brand believes the launch on SSG will enable customers to reach the brand more easily and expand its customer base. Prior to the online expansion, Oysho has already established three brick-and-mortar stores in South Korea²².



Statistics: Retail sales up 3.2% yoy in September 2017

Taiwan's retail sales grew 3.2% yoy in September 2017. The rise was chiefly attributable to an increase in retail sales of fuel products (up 11.4% yoy), information, communication, equipment & electrical household appliance (up 6.9% yoy) and food, beverage & tobacco products (up 4.4% yoy), followed by non-store retailing (up 3.4% yoy), general merchandise (up 3.3% yoy), medical goods & cosmetics (up 2.8% yoy), motor vehicles (up 2.2% yoy) and household supplies (up 0.6% yoy). By contrast, retail sales of fabrics & apparel items and building materials fell 2.8% yoy and 0.4% yoy respectively in September 2017²³.

Convenience stores: FamilyMart Taiwan launches e-wallet app My FamiPay

Convenience store chain FamilyMart Taiwan has rolled out an e-wallet app called "My FamiPay" with local Cathay United Bank and Kuala-Lumpur-based payment platform Soft Space. Aimed to make in-store purchases and utility bill payments easier for customers, My FamiPay integrates debit/prepaid/credit cards and other various stored value cards, allowing users to seamlessly collect and redeem loyalty points and make payments at the store counter. The app accepts transactions from over 21 non-cash payment providers via barcode scanning. It will also support pre-order purchases offered exclusively to FamilyMart shoppers. FamilyMart Taiwan plans to make the app available to a third-party payment processor to enable business owners to accept online payment seamlessly²⁴.



Shopping malls: Thai Shopping Centres Association invests 57 billion baht for mall space expansion

Thai Shopping Centres Association (TSCA) is allocating 57 billion baht (US\$1.7 billion) for raising their combined mall space to over 9.1 million sqm by 2019. The expansion aims at serving the lifestyles of consumers in the digital era and cement Thailand as one of the top destinations in ASEAN. Currently, members of the TSCA include the top 13 shopping mall operators nationwide, namely Boonthavorn Ceramics, Central Pattana, Index Living Mall, KE Land, LH Mall & Hotel,

MBK, Pacific Park Sriracha, Rangsit Plaza, Seacon Development, Siam Future Development, Siam Piwat Group, The Mall Group and The Platinum Group. These companies operate 97 malls covering 8 million sqm in combined space²⁵.

Luxury: Italian sportswear brand Paul & Shark launches in King Power's Downtown Duty Free Mall in Bangkok

Italian luxury sportswear brand Paul & Shark has opened a new store at King Power's Downtown Duty Free Mall in Rongnam Road, Bangkok. Under one roof with other international and local brands, the new store showcases Paul & Shark's autumn/ winter collection. It is one of the several stores Paul & Shark opened in Thailand in 2017²⁶.

Malaysia

Statistics: CPI up 4.3% yoy in September 2017

Malaysia's consumer price index rose 4.3% yoy to 120.3 in September 2017. The growth was mainly driven by an increase in prices of major expenditure categories, including transport (up 15.8% yoy), food & non-alcoholic beverages (up 4.6% yoy), furnishings, household equipment & routine household maintenance (up 2.8% yoy), restaurants and hotels (up 2.6% yoy), health (up 2.5% yoy) and housing, water, electricity, gas & other fuels (up 2.4% yoy). By contrast, prices of both clothing & footwear and communication slid 0.3% yoy respectively²⁷.

Singapore

E-commerce: Singapore's m-commerce forecast to grow 33% over next the five years

Singapore's m-commerce market is estimated to expand by 33% over the next five years, according to Worldpay's Global Payments Report. The report also stated that Singapore leads Southeast Asia in smartphone and mobile broadband use and is the third largest e-commerce market in region with 73% of its Internet users already shopping online. For payment preference, 66% of the surveyed shoppers in Singapore said they still prefer to pay with credit cards. Meanwhile, alternative payment methods are gaining a foothold in the city, with bank transfers and e-wallets both expected to nearly double in share by 2021, rising from 11% to 21% and 13% to 21% respectively²⁸.

E-commerce: Online restaurant booking service provider Chope raises US\$13 million

Chope, a Singapore-based online restaurant booking service provider, has secured US\$13 million in a new round of funding led by Asia-Pacific venture capital Square Peg Capital and joined by new investors C31 Ventures and Moelis Australia as well as existing investors NSI Ventures, Susquehanna International Group, DSG Consumer Partners and Singapore Press Holdings. Chope will use the proceeds to strengthen its offerings, develop a larger sales force, enhance customer experience and invest in further

innovations. Established in 2011, Chope is one of the most widely-used restaurant booking systems in Asia, with over 3,000 F&B clients and 20 million dinners using its service. Currently, Chope provides reservations services of almost 2,000 hotels in Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Beijing, Bangkok, Phuket, Jakarta and Bali²⁹.

Apparel and footwear: FJ Benjamin plans to raise US\$28.6 million

Singapore-listed fashion retailer FJ Benjamin plans to raise up to S\$39 million (US\$28.6 million) through issuing rights cum warrants, aiming to raise about S\$12 million via issuing 341.2 million new shares plus issuing warrants that could raise another S\$27 million. In 1Q17, the retailer revealed that its losses significantly narrowed to S\$942,000, a substantial improvement from S\$3.6 million from a year earlier. Currently, FJ Benjamin distributes a number of international fashion and accessories brands in Singapore, including Banana Republic, Celine, Gap, Givenchy, Guess, La Senza, Loewe, Marc Jacobs, Rebecca Minkoff and Tom Ford in fashion, plus lifestyle brands Babyzen and Sheridan, and watch brands Frederique Constant, Nautica, Swarovski and Victorinox Swiss Army³⁰.

Luxury: Hermès opens world-first home product exhibition in Singapore

French luxury fashion house Hermès opened its first-ever home exhibition “Through The Wall” in Singapore on 7 October, 2017, showcasing the brand’s new collections for home. Running until 29 October 2017, the exhibition is held at Hermès’ Liat Towers flagship store on Orchard Road. Hermès hopes its extension to home product collection

can resonate with Asian customers³¹.

Beauty and personal care: Spanish makeup brand 3ina taps Singapore market

Spanish makeup brand 3ina has made foray into Singapore by opening debut stores in Ion Orchard and Tampines Mall. With all of its products made in Europe, the brand carries products in trending colours well-liked by younger women, with coloured mascara, liquid liners in iridescent finishes and nail polishes as its signature products. Its other products include three-in-one foundation to brow pencils, matte lipsticks, chubby lip pencils, brushes and other makeup tools³².

Endnotes

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