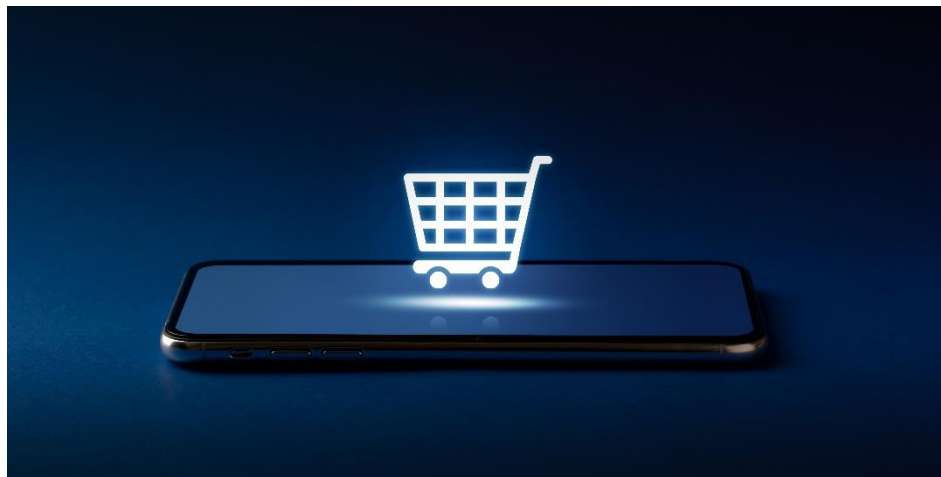


China Retail & E-commerce Weekly Update



I. Sector Review	2
Internet & E-commerce	2
Douyin Pay expands beyond ByteDance ecosystem and now supports external platforms	2
Meituan Instashopping launches free return shipping service	2
Pinduoduo launches 'Duoduo Harvest Pavilion' to support agricultural industry	2
Pinduoduo's community group-buying app Kuaituantuan launches gift-giving feature	3
Meituan Dianping relaunches premium food delivery service	3
Tmall launches 'Taobao Flash Sale' service with over 260 brands joining in initial phase	3
Retail Logistics	4
Cainiao launches cloud warehouse product for small and micro merchants	4
ALDI opens new large-scale distribution centre	4
JD Logistics adds 30 overseas warehouses in 1H25	4
Supermarkets & Hypermarkets	5
JD Supermarket's orders grow by 20% yoy in 1H25 with plans to reach 500 million users in next three years	5
Walmart China expands business presence of community stores with new Bao'an Wanda Plaza store	5
Food & Beverage	5
Luckin Coffee exceeds 4,000 stores in Guangdong, launches 3-day celebration with rewards	5
Starbucks China partners with Xiaohongshu	6
References (in Chinese)	7

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I. Sector Review

Internet & E-commerce

Douyin Pay expands beyond ByteDance ecosystem and now supports external platforms

It was reported that Douyin Pay (抖音支付) is expanding beyond the ByteDance (字节跳动) ecosystem, exploring possibilities for external scenarios. Douyin is investing heavily in its payment business, with Douyin Pay no longer limited to use within the Douyin app – it is now connected to external platforms such as Pupu Supermarket (朴朴超市). When consumers shop on the Pupu Supermarket app and proceed to check-out, they can see Douyin Pay listed alongside other payment methods including Alipay, WeChat Pay, Huabei, UnionPay QuickPass, and digital RMB. Currently, Douyin Pay also offers 'rewards on every transaction' for Pupu Supermarket users, with additional instant discounts available for enabling password-less payments.¹

Meituan Instashopping launches free return shipping service

On 5 September, Meituan Instashopping (美团闪购) partnered with multiple retail brands across various categories including apparel, cosmetics, consumer electronics, home appliances, and general merchandise to launch a free return shipping service, the first of its kind in the instant retail industry. The service initially covers Meituan Black Gold and Black Diamond members, with all costs borne by Meituan. When users purchase products that come with a seven-day unconditional return service, they no longer need to pay for return shipping. They simply need to submit an application to the platform and select 'Meituan Pickup & Return.' After approval, a delivery rider will come to pick up the return items, allowing a free pickup and return service in as fast as 30 minutes.²

Pinduoduo launches 'Duoduo Harvest Pavilion' to support agricultural industry

The '2025 China Farmers' Harvest Festival Golden Autumn Consumption Season', jointly launched by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Ministry of Commerce and other departments, officially kicked off in Hangzhou on 5 September. Pinduoduo (拼多多) participated in this event as an e-commerce platform representative, collaborating with China Agricultural Film and Television Centre to launch a 'Branded Agricultural Product Tasting', inviting multiple cultural bloggers and Internet celebrities to livestream on-site, innovating consumption scenarios and stimulating agricultural product consumption vitality. That evening, Pinduoduo partnered with 300,000 agricultural product merchants on the platform to jointly launch the 'Duoduo Harvest Pavilion', covering multiple categories of agricultural products including vegetables and fruits, aquatic products and seafood, meat, poultry, eggs and dairy, and grains, oils, rice and flour. Consumers can simply search for 'Duoduo

Harvest Pavilion' within Pinduoduo to instantly group-buy quality agricultural products from various regions across over 1,000 agricultural hubs nationwide.³

Pinduoduo's community group-buying app Kuaituantuan launches gift-giving feature

Kuaituantuan (快团团), the WeChat community group-buying mini program under Pinduoduo (拼多多), recently launched a gift-giving feature. However, unlike the gift-giving functions on other e-commerce platforms, Kuaituantuan users cannot send gifts directly. Instead, they must first purchase one or more items for themselves, then purchase an additional item to send to someone else. On the payment page, users can see an option called 'Buy one more for someone you love'. By filling in the recipient's address in this section, users can purchase an additional item for the other person, with the total price including the cost of the gift.⁴

Meituan Dianping relaunches premium food delivery service

On 10 September, Meituan (美团) announced that Dianping (大众点评) will officially relaunch its premium food delivery service. The platform will utilize its proprietary large language model, combined with data analysis of massive real reviews to understand user needs, further filtering out non-authentic review data to provide users with reliable decision-making through 'AI + genuine high ratings'. Currently, the platform has already assembled over one million highly-rated dine-in restaurants. In the future, Dianping will invite more new restaurants to join based on ratings and operational performance. In addition, Meituan's consumer-side AI intelligent agent service is currently in the 'closed testing' phase and will also be launched shortly.⁵

Tmall launches 'Taobao Flash Sale' service with over 260 brands joining in initial phase

On 11 September, Tmall (天猫) launched its 'Taobao Flash Sale' (淘宝闪购) service, supporting one-hour delivery service for products from brands' official flagship stores. Currently, Tmall has extended flash sale partnership invitations to brand merchants, encouraging Tmall and Taobao (淘宝) merchants to become instant retail suppliers. Furthermore, Tmall has launched the Super 88 event – during 8-14 September, the first batch of over 260 brands has connected to Taobao Flash Sale through their Tmall flagship stores or authorized specialty stores. After joining, merchants' products will not only be displayed on Taobao, Ele.me, and payment platforms, but will also show a 'Flash Sale' label and receive platform traffic support. Merchants can ship from nearby stores based on the user's location in order to achieve one-hour delivery.⁶

Retail Logistics

Cainiao launches cloud warehouse product for small and micro merchants

At the recent 2025 Global Smart Logistics Summit, Cainiao (菜鸟) officially launched its cloud warehouse and logistics product and related support measures for small and micro merchants. This product leverages Cainiao's nationwide warehousing, distribution and supply chain ecosystem to provide small and micro merchants with stable and efficient one-stop warehousing and distribution services. It supports seamless integration with omnichannel e-commerce platforms and will gradually roll out digital tools such as intelligent replenishment and intelligent customer service, enabling small and micro merchants to enjoy the technological benefits of a 'major supply chain', as well as cost-effective warehousing and distribution supply chain services.⁷

ALDI opens new large-scale distribution centre

On 10 September, ALDI announced that its East China regional distribution centre is now fully operational. This marks an important step forward for the supermarket chain in upgrading its supply chain and expanding its market presence in China. ALDI stated that it completed a seamless transition of its distribution centre from Huaqiao, Kunshan to Taopu, Shanghai in a short period of time. In addition to being closer to Shanghai stores, the facility also features a two-level double-sided warehouse design that supports more efficient inventory turnover and distribution, along with precise multi-temperature control which offers safe, high-quality end-to-end cold chain services. This new distribution centre will support product distribution to all ALDI stores in Shanghai and Jiangsu, and its strategic location effectively shortens the travel time between the distribution centre and stores.⁸

JD Logistics adds 30 overseas warehouses in 1H25

The 2025 China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) was recently held in Beijing. JD.com (京东集团) set up an exhibition booth themed around 'Digital-Physical Integration, Smart Sharing Globally', showcasing its innovative products and solutions across multiple business sectors including retail, logistics, technology, industry, and health. JD Logistics (京东物流) is rapidly building an integrated supply chain and logistics system centred on overseas warehouses. In the first half of this year, JD Logistics has added over 30 new overseas warehouses and currently operates more than 130 overseas warehouses globally, ranking among the industry leaders in quantity and covering 23 countries and regions worldwide.⁹

Supermarkets & Hypermarkets

JD Supermarket's orders grow by 20% yoy in 1H25 with plans to reach 500 million users in next three years

JD Supermarket's (京东超市) 11th anniversary conference was held in Beijing on 8 September. At the conference, JD Supermarket reviewed its performance results for the first half of 2025. During this period, JD Supermarket's shopping user base increased by 18% yoy, order volume increased by 20% yoy, and transaction volume rose 15% yoy. It also plans to expand the user scale from 300 million to 500 million over the next 3 years. Industry insiders believe that the retail industry is currently undergoing profound adjustments. The market faces serious product homogenization and intensifying price wars. Meanwhile, as consumers become increasingly rational and their demands more diverse, it has become difficult to attract users in the long-term just by relying on low prices.¹⁰

Walmart China expands business presence of community stores with new Bao'an Wanda Plaza store

Walmart China opened a new community store in Bao'an Wanda Plaza in Shenzhen on 13 September, marking its fourth community store in Shenzhen. The store covers approximately 500 sqm and features a curated selection of over 1,000 products, covering categories such as fresh produce, prepared foods, and bakery items. It continues the 'everyday low prices' strategy with identical online and offline pricing, and operates until 22:30. Walmart China first began exploring the community store format in 2018 with 'Huixuan Supermarket', which ultimately closed all locations by 2021 as it failed to match community needs. Walmart China restarted its community store exploration earlier this year with locations already established in Longhua, Nanshan and other areas, adopting a 'low-key trial and error, steady expansion' strategy.¹¹

Food & Beverage

Luckin Coffee exceeds 4,000 stores in Guangdong, launches 3-day celebration with rewards

On 5 September, Luckin Coffee (瑞幸咖啡) announced that it has surpassed 4,000 directly-operated and franchised stores in Guangdong – a nationwide milestone. To celebrate, Luckin Coffee launched a themed event in both Guangzhou and Shenzhen during 5-7 September, which established 100 flagship image stores and introduced customized merchandise, creating a province-wide celebration. During the event, Luckin Coffee offered Guangdong consumers various benefits.¹²

Starbucks China partners with Xiaohongshu

Starbucks China recently announced a partnership with lifestyle-sharing app Xiaohongshu (小红书) to launch the exclusive 'interest-community space' programme, aiming to better engage with interest-based communities. The coffee chain has selected more than 1,800 stores across China to create several community spaces centred around four main interests: pets, handicrafts, cycling, and running. These store operations will also be managed by like-minded Starbucks employees. Xiaohongshu will provide more traffic and exposure for related offline activities and interest content. Through the app's map function, users can also find nearby Starbucks locations that function as 'interest-community spaces'.¹³

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