OPTIMIZING MARKETING STRATEGIES IN THE NEW RETAIL ERA: A CASE STUDY OF W COMPREHENSIVE SUPERMARKET*

Wei Liu[1] and Junshan Ma[2]

[1-2]International College, Panyapiwat Institute of Management, Thailand

Corresponding Author's Email: liuweithaioutlook.com

Received 22 April 2026; Revised 5 May 2026; Accepted 7 May 2026

Abstract

This research article aims to: This paper aims to: 1) study the current marketing problems faced by W Supermarket in Changsha County, China; 2) analyze the current marketing situation of W Supermarket based on the 4V marketing mix theory (differentiation, multi-functionality, value, and resonance); 3) propose marketing optimization strategies suitable for W Supermarket in the new retail era. This study employs a mixed research method, collecting quantitative data from 273 consumers and qualitative data from 16 managers and frontline employees. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, reliability and validity testing, correlation analysis, and regression analysis, while qualitative data, based on operational information, were analyzed using thematic analysis and triangulation.

The results show that:W Supermarket performs well in terms of product quality, price competitiveness, and basic customer resonance, indicating that it has established a certain market foundation and customer recognition in Changsha County.W Supermarket still has some weaknesses in marketing, especially in online platform utilization, functional flexibility, value added

Citation:

* Wei Liu and Junshan Ma. (2026). Optimizing Marketing Strategies In The New Retail Era: A Case Study Of W Comprehensive Supermarket. Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Development, 4(4), 839-853.;

DOI: https://doi.org/10.

Website: https://so12.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/JISDIADP/

services, and brand value creation, which limits its competitiveness under the new retail transformation trend.

The 4V marketing mix theory can effectively identify the key marketing problems of W Supermarket and provide a practical framework for its optimization. Therefore, W Supermarket should transform from a traditional transactionoriented model to a consumer centric new retail model by strengthening differentiation, enhancing online-offline integration, improving value added services, and deepening emotional resonance with consumers.

Keywords: New retail, Comprehensive supermarket, Marketing strategy, 4V marketing mix theory

Introduction

The rapid development of digital technology has accelerated the transformation of the retail industry from traditional store operation models to a more integrated, consumer-centric new retail model. Against this backdrop, supermarket competition is no longer limited to product variety and price advantages, but focuses more on online-offline integration, service innovation, customer experience, and brand interaction. The rise of e-commerce platforms, smart retail systems, and digital marketing tools has significantly changed consumer expectations, making convenience, responsiveness, and personalized service increasingly important in retail competition. Therefore, traditional supermarkets face immense pressure to upgrade their marketing strategies and improve their ability to adapt to the new retail environment.

W Supermarket, located in Changsha County, Hunan Province, China, is a typical community retailer that initially grew by offering fresh food, affordable prices, and close ties with surrounding residents. Over time, it has continuously expanded its business scope to cover a variety of daily consumer goods while maintaining a relatively stable customer base. However, under the influence of

the new retail trend, the supermarket faces many structural problems, including weak digital channel development, insufficient online marketing effectiveness, limited service differentiation, and a lack of value-added services. These challenges indicate that traditional supermarket marketing models are no longer sufficient to support long-term competitiveness in an increasingly digital and customer-centric market. To better understand these issues, this study uses the 4V marketing mix theory, which emphasizes differentiation, versatility, value, and resonance, as its primary analytical framework. Compared to traditional marketing methods, the 4V framework is better suited for examining how retailers create unique value, expand consumer functionality, enhance added benefits, and strengthen emotional connections with customers. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the current marketing challenges faced by W Supermarket and propose practical optimization strategies to support its transformation in the new retail era. Furthermore, the findings can provide valuable insights for other local supermarkets seeking sustainable development in a highly competitive market environment.

Objectives

1. To diagnose the current marketing status and key marketing problems of W Supermarket by applying the 4V marketing mix theory.

2. To propose practical marketing optimization strategies that enhance W Supermarket’s market competitiveness, customer loyalty, and brand value, while offering insights for similar enterprises.

Literature Review

The transformation from traditional retail to new retail is closely related to the rise of omnichannel operations, the application of digital technologies, and customer-centric value creation. Recent research indicates that retail

digitalization is no longer limited to establishing online sales channels, but involves the integration of offline stores, online platforms, data systems, and customer interaction processes, aiming to improve operational efficiency and customer loyalty. Omnichannel development is particularly important in the supermarket and grocery sectors, as consumers increasingly expect seamless integration of online and offline channels in areas such as information search, ordering, payment, delivery, and after-sales service. Research shows that effective channel integration can enhance customer engagement and loyalty, while insufficient coordination between channels reduces customer satisfaction and limits a company's long-term competitiveness (Gao & Su, 2021; Cuesta-Valiño et al., 2023; Vhatkar et al., 2024). Retail competitiveness increasingly depends on customer experience and perceived value, not just price and product availability. In omnichannel retail, customer loyalty is enhanced when consumers perceive consistency, convenience, and positive experiences across channels. Previous research has shown that customer experience is a major driver of repeat purchase intention, engagement, and relationship maintenance, while perceived value influences consumers' willingness to adopt and continue using omnichannel services (Zhang et al., 2024; Sharma et al., 2024; Rahman et al., 2025). Furthermore, recent research on grocery retail indicates that store value, service design, and retail brand performance remain crucial factors in shaping customer loyalty, especially as consumers evaluate not only product quality but also relationship and experiential benefits (Duh et al., 2023; Nusrat et al., 2024). Against this backdrop, the 4V marketing mix theory offers a useful perspective on retail transformation, as it transcends the traditional product-centric competitive model, emphasizing differentiation, versatility, value, and resonance. In the new retail era, supermarkets not only need to offer a wide variety of goods and reasonable prices but also need to create unique service features, flexible shopping functions, enhance customer value, and build closer emotional connections with consumers. This theoretical orientation aligns with recent

research in omnichannel retail, which indicates that sustainable competitiveness depends on value innovation, channel coordination, and relationship development, rather than solely on isolated transactional advantages (Cai & Lo, 2020; Eriksson et al., 2022; Cuesta-Valiño et al., 2023). Therefore, applying the 4V framework to W Supermarket is appropriate, as it allows for the simultaneous diagnosis of functional weaknesses (e.g., low online channel utilization) and relational weaknesses (e.g., insufficient brand resonance) from an integrated marketing perspective. In the new retail environment, local supermarkets must shift from a traditional transaction-oriented model to an integrated value-creating model. However, while numerous recent studies have explored omnichannel retail, digitalization, and customer loyalty, few have specifically focused on how community-based supermarkets can optimize their marketing strategies using structured frameworks such as 4V. This research gap underscores the necessity of this study, which uses the 4V marketing mix theory to analyze the current problems of W Supermarket and proposes practical transformation strategies.

Methodology

Population and Sample:This study employed a mixed-methods approach to examine the marketing strategies of W Supermarket in Changsha County, China, under the new retail environment. The study participants included consumers with prior shopping experience at W Supermarket and internal staff familiar with its daily operations and marketing practices. A mixed-methods approach was chosen because it integrates quantitative and qualitative evidence within the same research framework, leading to a more comprehensive understanding of the research question (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

The quantitative component involved collecting data from W Supermarket consumers through a questionnaire survey. A total of 273 valid questionnaires were obtained for data analysis. The qualitative component

included in-depth interviews with 16 respondents, including 5 managers and 11 frontline employees. These respondents were selected because they were directly involved in W Supermarket's marketing operations, customer service, product display, and daily management.

Research Instruments:The main research tools included structured questionnaires and semi-structured interview outlines. The questionnaire was designed based on the 4V marketing mix theory, which includes four dimensions: differentiation, functional flexibility, added value, and resonance. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure respondents' perceptions, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) (Likert, 1932). The questionnaire primarily covered consumers' evaluations of W Supermarket's product differentiation, service functions, perceived price and value, shopping convenience, online-offline integration, and brand emotional resonance. A semi-structured interview outline aimed to gather more in-depth information from management and frontline employees regarding W Supermarket's current marketing issues, operational challenges, customer needs, and possible optimization strategies.

Data Collection: Data collection was conducted through a combination of questionnaires and in-depth interviews. First, consumer questionnaires were distributed to customers who had shopped at W Supermarket. After screening and verification, 273 valid questionnaires were retained for quantitative analysis. Second, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 16 internal participants, including 5 managers and 11 frontline employees. The interviews focused on W Supermarket's marketing practices, changes in customer behavior, online platform usage, value-added services, and brand building challenges. In addition, operational information related to W Supermarket's marketing activities, service processes, and customer management was collected as supplementary evidence. Combining questionnaires, interviews, and operational information helps improve the completeness and credibility of research findings.

Data Analysis: Quantitative data analysis employed descriptive statistics, reliability and validity tests, correlation analysis, and regression analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize basic information about respondents and their evaluations of the 4V marketing dimensions. Reliability and validity tests were used to examine the consistency and applicability of questionnaire items. This study used correlation analysis to explore the relationships between key variables and regression analysis to examine the impact of the 4V marketing dimensions on W Supermarket's marketing performance and customer-related outcomes (Field, 2013).

Qualitative data from interviews were analyzed using topic analysis. This method was used to identify recurring patterns, key themes, and explanatory evidence related to W Supermarket's marketing issues and optimization directions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Finally, triangulation was used to integrate evidence from questionnaires, interviews, and operational information to improve the credibility and validity of the research findings.

Results

A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed, and 273 valid questionnaires were returned, resulting in a valid response rate of 91.0%. The sample generally reflects the characteristics of W Supermarket's core consumers. The proportion of female respondents was slightly higher than that of male respondents. Most respondents were concentrated in the middle-aged group, especially those aged 36-55. In terms of income, most respondents had a monthly income between 2,000 and 6,000 RMB. Furthermore, most respondents lived within one kilometer of the supermarket, indicating that W Supermarket primarily serves residents of the nearby community. These results are consistent with the supermarket's localized and community-oriented market positioning.The measurement instrument also demonstrated acceptable quality. The reliability

results showed that the Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the four dimensions ranged from 0.786 to 0.892, while the overall scale reached 0.879, indicating acceptable to excellent internal consistency. The validity results further showed that the KMO values of all main dimensions were above 0.70, and Bartlett's tests were statistically significant. These findings suggest that the scale had satisfactory construct validity and was suitable for further statistical analysis.With regard to the 4V marketing mix dimensions, the findings reveal that W Supermarket still performs relatively well in some traditional retail aspects. Consumers gave higher evaluations to price differentiation (M = 3.83), product quality differentiation (M = 3.71), and image differentiation (M = 3.67). These results suggest that the supermarket retains certain strengths in affordability, product reliability, and basic market image. However, weaker performance was found in service differentiation (M = 2.87), channel differentiation represented by online platform usage (M = 1.26), and extended supplementary functions (M = 1.14). These low scores indicate that W Supermarket remains weak in online retail capability, functional expansion, and service innovation under the new retail environment.

In terms of added value, technological enhancement scored 3.09, which was slightly above the neutral level, while service enhancement (M = 2.82) and corporate culture and brand-related value (M = 2.79) both remained below the midpoint. This suggests that although the supermarket has adopted some technological elements, these have not yet been translated into a strong consumer-perceived value advantage. By contrast, the resonance dimension performed relatively better, with value resonance scoring 3.60 and emotional resonance scoring 3.59. This indicates that W Supermarket has already established a moderate level of trust and emotional connection with its customers, which may provide an important foundation for future strategic improvement.

Table 1 Consumers' evaluation of W Supermarket under the 4V framework (N = 273)

Dimension	Item / Indicator	Mean score
Differentiation	Product assortment differentiation	3.14
	Product quality differentiation	3.71
	Price differentiation	3.83
	Service differentiation	2.87
	Promotion differentiation	3.04
	Channel differentiation (online platform use)	1.26
	Image differentiation	3.67
Functional flexibility	Core function	3.05
	Extended supplementary function	1.14
Added value	Technological enhancement	3.09
	Service enhancement	2.82
	Corporate culture and brand-related value	2.79
Resonance	Value resonance	3.6
	Emotional resonance	3.59

The study found a significant positive correlation between each dimension of the 4Vs and customer loyalty, with correlation coefficients ranging from 0.387 to 0.534 ($p < .01$). Furthermore, regression analysis showed that each dimension of the 4Vs had significant explanatory power for customer loyalty, with an adjusted R^2 of 0.463. Overall, these findings suggest that supermarkets' main weaknesses lie in online channel development, ancillary functions, and value-added marketing, while their main strengths lie in product quality, price competitiveness, and increasing customer resonance.

Conclusion

The research results indicate that W Supermarket remains competitive in traditional retail, particularly in terms of price, product quality, and basic store

image. However, it lags behind competitors in the strategic capabilities required for the new retail era. Specifically, the extremely low ratings for online platform usage and extended auxiliary functions suggest that the supermarket has not yet completed its transition from a transaction-oriented store model to an integrated omnichannel retail model. This explanation aligns with previous retail research findings, highlighting the critical importance of channel integration quality and digital strategy for customer engagement and loyalty in supermarkets and omnichannel environments.

Another important finding is that W Supermarket's weaknesses are not isolated but interconnected. Its service differentiation capabilities remain weak, its online channel development is insufficient, and the added value related to technology, service, and brand needs further improvement. Limited resource investment, insufficient innovation drive, and inadequate integration between its operating system and customer-centric services contribute to the problem. This helps explain why, despite the presence of certain technological applications, they have failed to generate strong perceived consumer value. The issue lies not only in the adoption of technology but also in its transformation into a consistent retail experience. Digital tools alone cannot build loyalty unless they are embedded within a robust value creation system.

Another significant finding of this study is the substantial role resonance plays in explaining customer loyalty. Among the 4V dimensions, resonance has the strongest explanatory power, suggesting that emotional connection and brand identification may be particularly important in high-frequency consumption environments such as neighborhood supermarkets. This finding is significant because it indicates that supermarket competition is not solely determined by functional efficiency or low prices. For local retailers, long-term competitiveness may increasingly depend on consumers' trust, familiarity, and emotional attachment to the brand. Therefore, the findings support the view that W Supermarket's future marketing strategy should not only focus on addressing

operational deficiencies but also strengthen service meaning, community engagement, and brand resonance.

Recommendation

This study uses the 4V marketing mix theory as its main analytical framework to examine the marketing strategies of W Supermarket in the context of the new retail era. The results show that W Supermarket still possesses several traditional retail advantages, particularly in price competitiveness, product quality, and basic brand image. These advantages explain why the supermarket has been able to maintain a relatively stable customer base in its local community market. However, the study also reveals that in an increasingly digital, integrated, and customer-centric retail environment, these traditional advantages are no longer sufficient to support its long-term competitiveness. W Supermarket still has significant shortcomings in online channel development, functional expansion, service value-added, and brand value creation. Particularly noteworthy is the very low consumer engagement with the supermarket's online platform and low awareness of its expanded service functions, indicating that W Supermarket has not yet fully completed its transformation from a traditional supermarket model to a new retail model. Another important conclusion is that the four dimensions of the 4V marketing mix theory provide an effective framework for identifying and explaining the marketing problems currently facing the supermarket. Differentiation helps explain why W Supermarket performs relatively well in product quality and pricing, but is somewhat lacking in service and channel innovation. Functional flexibility indicates that the supermarket primarily meets basic shopping needs but has not yet developed broader supplementary functions that can enhance consumer dependence and convenience. The value dimension reveals that technological application alone cannot automatically create perceived customer value unless service quality is

simultaneously improved and brand connotation enhanced. The resonance dimension is particularly important because it reflects the supermarket's potential to build trust, emotional attachment, and repeat business among community consumers. In this sense, resonance is not only a result of good marketing performance but also a strategic resource for sustainable development. W Supermarket should move beyond a transaction-oriented strategy and gradually establish a more integrated value creation model. The supermarket should not rely solely on low prices and basic product supply but should strengthen differentiated products and services, improve online-offline integration, expand value-added services, and build stronger emotional connections with customers. This transformation is crucial not only for enhancing market competitiveness and customer loyalty but also for long-term brand value enhancement. More broadly, this study demonstrates that the 4V marketing mix theory can be effectively applied to the analysis of local supermarkets in the new retail environment. Therefore, this study provides practical insights for W Supermarket and valuable reference for other similar community retail enterprises seeking transformation and sustainable development.

Recommendation

First, supermarkets should strengthen their differentiation strategy by optimizing their product mix and improving service quality. While W Supermarket already performs relatively well in terms of price and product quality, it should further develop specialty products, adjust its product mix according to local consumer preferences, and improve service responsiveness to create a clearer competitive advantage. Simultaneously, promotional activities should be more targeted and attractive, allowing consumers to more clearly perceive the supermarket's uniqueness compared to its competitors. Second, W Supermarket should accelerate the integration of its online and offline channels. Research

indicates that the use of online platforms is one of its weak points, meaning the supermarket has not yet effectively responded to new retail trends. Therefore, it is recommended that W Supermarket improve the usability of its online platform, simplify the ordering process, strengthen digital promotion through social media and local online communities, and more closely integrate online services with offline shopping activities. Through these measures, the supermarket can improve shopping convenience, expand its customer reach, and gradually build a more efficient omnichannel retail model. Third, supermarkets should place greater emphasis on value-added services and brand building. Technology applications should not merely remain at the operational tool level but should be transformed into tangible customer value through better service experiences, membership benefits, after-sales support, and personalized interactions. Furthermore, W Supermarket should strengthen brand recognition and community influence by hosting local promotional events, developing customer care programs, and cultivating a more trustworthy and emotionally resonant brand image. Given that research has found resonance to be a crucial dimension influencing consumer experience, building stronger emotional connections with consumers should be considered a long-term strategic priority. In conclusion, these recommendations will help W Supermarket enhance its competitiveness, customer loyalty, and sustainability in the new retail environment.

References

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(2), 77–101.

Cai, Y.-J., & Lo, C. K. Y. (2020). Omni-channel management in the new retailing era: A systematic review and future research agenda. International Journal of Production Economics, 229, Article 107729. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijpe.2020.107729

Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). Designing and conducting mixed methods research (3rd ed.). SAGE.

Cuesta-Valiño, P., Gutiérrez-Rodríguez, P., Núñez-Barriopedro, E., & García-Henche, B. (2023). Strategic orientation towards digitization to improve supermarket loyalty in an omnichannel context. Journal of Business Research, 156, Article 113475. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.113475

Duh, H. I., & Pwaka, O. (2023). Grocery retailer's brand performances from brand personalities and marketing offerings. International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management, 51(13), 101–122. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJRDM-10-2022-0404

Eriksson, E., Norrman, A., & Kembro, J. (2022). Understanding the transformation toward omnichannel grocery retailing: The role of dynamic capabilities. Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing, 37(12), 2495–2508.

Field, A. (2013). Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics (4th ed.). SAGE.

Gao, M., & Huang, L. (2021). Quality of channel integration and customer loyalty in omnichannel retailing: The mediating role of customer engagement and relationship program receptiveness. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 63, Article 102688. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102688

Likert, R. (1932). A technique for the measurement of attitudes. Archives of Psychology, 140, 1–55.

Nusrat, F., & Huang, Y. (2024). Feeling rewarded and entitled to be served: Understanding the influence of self- versus regular checkout on customer loyalty. Journal of Business Research, 170, Article 114293. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.114293

Rahman, S. M., Carlson, J., Gudergan, S. P., Wetzels, M., & Grewal, D. (2025). How do omnichannel customer experiences affect customer engagement? Theory and empirical validation. Journal of Business Research, 189, Article 115196. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2025.115196

Sharma, N., Foroudi, P., & Gupta, S. (2024). Influence of perceived value on omnichannel usage: Mediating and moderating roles of the omnichannel shopping habit. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 77, Article 103565.

Vhatkar, M. S., Mallipeddi, R. R., & Chai, J. C. Y. (2024). Leveraging digital technology in retailing business: Unboxing synergy between omnichannel retail adoption and sustainable retail performance. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 81, Article 103785.

Zhang, X., Park, Y., Park, J., & Zhang, H. (2024). Demonstrating the influencing factors and outcomes of customer experience in omnichannel retail. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 77, Article 103556.