

China and India surge forward in Asia-Pacific Retail industry

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Chinese and Indian retailers are forcing their way into the Top 500 list of retailers in Asia Pacific, according to a new survey produced by Euromonitor International for RETAIL ASIA magazine. The Retail Asia Top 500 list, now in its fourth edition, shows that while retailers from the developed, high-value markets of Japan, Australia, South Korea and Taiwan still dominate the Asia Pacific retailing industry, Chinese and Indian retailers are making headway fast. In 2006, 81 retail companies from China and 17 from India made it into the Retail Asia Top 500 list.

“This is a significant development”, comments Euromonitor International's Research Director, Andy Carter. “China and India have some of the world's fastest growth rates in urbanisation and in numbers of households and these demographic and social factors are boosting the rapid development of their retailing markets. The easing of the retail FDI regulatory environment in India is also making it an increasingly attractive target for international players”, he added.

While national retailers in China and India surged forward in the Retail Asia Top 500 list, 2006 also saw major foreign retailers bowing out of some challenging Asian markets. Tesco and Casino pulled out of Taiwan, while in South Korea, Carrefour sold its outlets to home-grown retailer E Land Corp and Wal-Mart sold its operations to Shinsegae Department Store.

Euromonitor's Andy Carter explains, “2006 was a year of strategic re-think for many international retailers, with several major players withdrawing from key Asian markets where their chance of becoming market leader was limited - in order to focus their operations on markets providing better opportunities for growth.”

Steven Goh, executive chairman of Retail Asia said, “We are seeing considerable changes in this year's Retail Asia Top 500 listing compared to the first edition in 2004 – changes in names of retail companies, sales volumes, ranking positions – with all of these changes reflecting the very robust economies in the region in these past few years,” he added.

Â Breakdown of Top 500 Retailers by CountryNumber of retail companiesJapanÂ 116ChinaÂ 81AustraliaÂ 70South KoreaÂ 38TaiwanÂ 32New ZealandÂ 30Hong KongÂ 25ThailandÂ 24SingaporeÂ 20IndiaÂ 17IndonesiaÂ 16MalaysiaÂ 15PhilippinesÂ 12VietnamÂ 4Retail Asia-Pacific Top 500 by Euromonitor International

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