

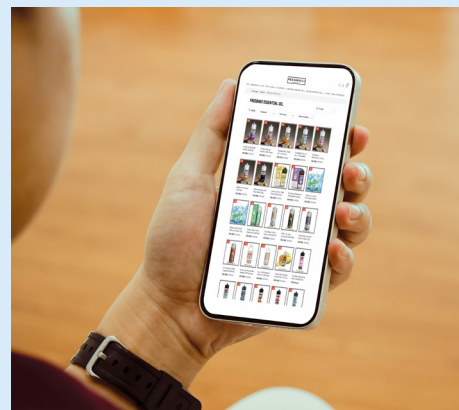
E-Cigarette and Heated Tobacco Product Marketing and Appeals on Retailer Websites in Vietnam

Background

This study examined e-cigarette and heated tobacco product (HTP) retailer websites in Vietnam and identified common marketing strategies and appeals used. At the time of data collection, e-cigarettes and HTPs were not legally imported and sold in Vietnam. As of January 2025, the production, sale, import, storage, transportation, and use of e-cigarettes and HTPs are banned in Vietnam.

Methods

In April 2023, e-cigarette and HTP retailer websites targeting Vietnamese consumers, determined by web domain and content, were identified through Google searches. The 30 most popular sites based on website traffic according to Similarweb were included in the sample. 497 webpages within one click of the homepage were captured, coded, and analyzed. All webpages were captured between May 14–June 17, 2023.



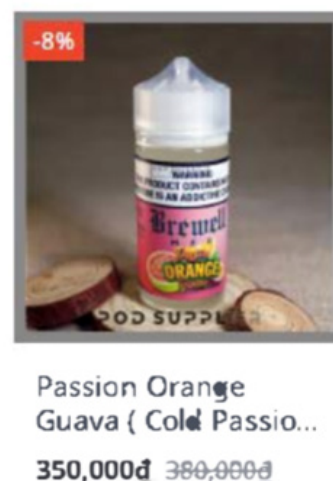
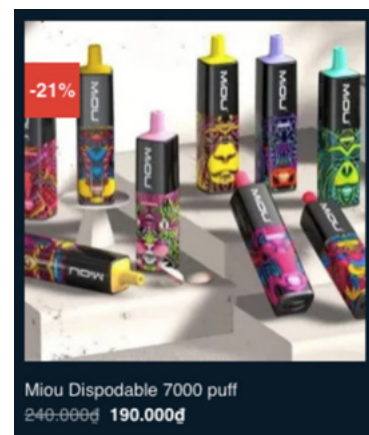
Findings

Minimum age requirement and age-restriction statements or mechanisms:

- ➔ 17 retailer sites (57%) displayed no age restrictions
- ➔ Of the remaining 13 websites:
 - ➔ 12 retailer sites (92%) displayed age restriction statements regarding purchase and use
 - ➔ 3 retailer sites (23%) restricted site access via pop-up or other mechanisms to those 18+ years
 - ➔ 1 retailer site (8%) required age verification via documentation (ID card, driver's license, or student ID) before purchase

Promotion and engagement strategies were observed on 29 (97%) retailer sites.

- ➔ The most common promotion strategies were product discounts (n=27, 90%) and general incentives that applied to all sales (e.g., free shipping, total site discount) (n=16, 53%)
- ➔ The most common engagement strategies were links to social media sites (n=26, 87%), account log-in or membership (n=22, 73%), and information on physical store location (n=22, 73%)
- ➔ Across the 22 sites that provided information on physical store location, 48 store locations were listed: 29 in Ho Chi Minh, 10 in Hanoi, 3 in Da Nang, 2 in Bien Hoa, and one of each in Phan Thiet, Hoi An, Da Lat, or Hai Pong



Product Specific Information

Presence of Concept & Characterizing Flavor Descriptors in Product Names

9,019 products were found, and 8,987 were coded for flavor (e-cigarette liquids, disposable e-cigarette devices, pre-filled cartridges/pods, HTP inserts, starter kits, and combos). Among these:

- ➔ 5,370 (60%) featured a characterizing flavor descriptor. Of these:
 - ➔ 3,960 (74%) were fruit-flavored
 - ➔ 670 (12%) featured sweets (such as candy, gum, sugar, chocolate, and cookie)
 - ➔ 523 (10%) featured beverages other than coffee, tea, or alcohol (such as milk, energy drink, and cola)
- ➔ 3,341 (37%) featured a concept descriptor*. Of these:
 - ➔ 2,453 (73%) included descriptors related to a cold sensation (such as “cold,” “ice,” “freeze,” and “arctic”)

*Terms that imply some type of flavor/sensation/taste/aroma that awaits the consumer, such as “Lush Ice.”



Pod 1 Time Lavie Milk 7000 Steam



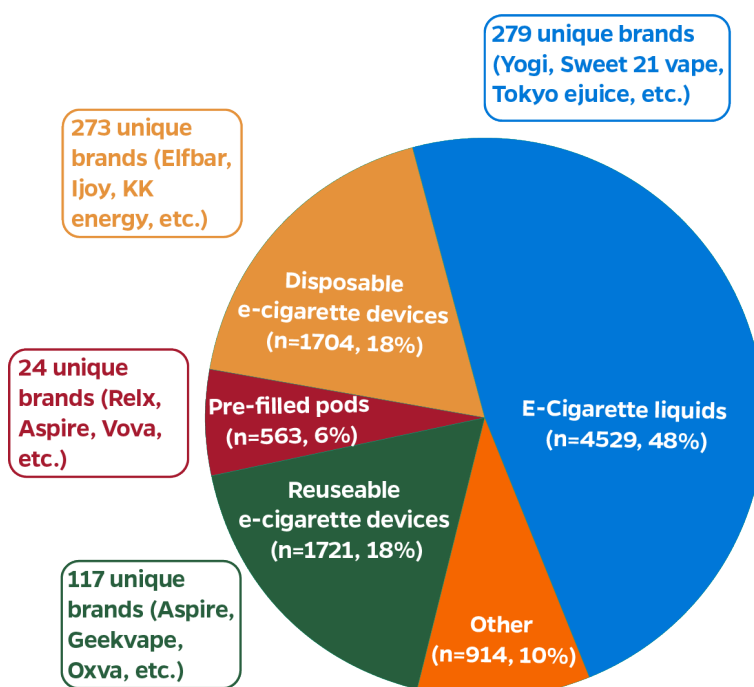
Pod 1 Time Mario 8000 Steam

Products Resembling Other Objects

141 (2%) products resembled another object. Of these, the most popular three were:

- ➔ 49 (35%) resembled cartoon/fictional character figures
- ➔ 29 (21%) resembled electronic gadgets
- ➔ 27 (19%) resembled drinks

Product Types Across Retailer Websites



Conclusions

The broad range of e-cigarette and HTP products and marketing tactics found on retailer websites in Vietnam, including flavors like fruit and products mimicking toys, likely attract youth. In November 2024, Vietnam’s National Assembly approved a ban on the production, sale, import, storage, transportation, and use of e-cigarettes and HTPs, effective January 2025. These findings are in line with the need for such policies and emphasize the importance of implementation, enforcement, and monitoring to prevent youth exposure to product marketing.

Supplementary Material

Price (in Vietnamese dong đ) and brand by product type (n=9,019)

Product Type	Mean Price (SD)	Price Range ^a	Number of Unique Brands ^b	Common Brands ^c
Reusable e-cigarette device ^d (n=1,721, 19%)	801,830 (616,813)	50,000-12,000,000	117	Geekvape (n= 310), Aspire (n= 194), and Oxva (n= 168)
Disposable e-cigarette device (n=1,704, 18%)	210,321 (107,302)	65,000-1,850,000	273	Elfbar (n=78), Ijoy (n=78), KK energy (n=72), and Relx (n=72). There also was a high frequency of products that did not have an obvious brand name (n=76).
Heated tobacco device (n=86, 1%)	1,541,590 (679,831)	270,000-3,600,000	4	Iqos (n=69), Lil (n=13), Hitaste (n=3), and Gcore (n=1)
Heated tobacco inserts (n=178, 2%)	782,989 (411,172)	80,000-1,450,000	7	HEETS (n=75), Iqos (n=37), Terea (n=27), Marlboro (n=20), Sentia (n=9), Fiit (n=6), and Blends (n=4)
E-cigarette liquid (n=4,529, 49%)	312,150 (96,820)	50,000-4,500,000	279	Yogi (n=236), Sweet 21 vape (n=216), and Tokyo ejuice (n=207)
Pre-filled cartridges/pods (n=563, 6%)	194,596 (135,557)	50,000-1,250,000	24	Relx (n=179), Aspire (n=114), and Vova (n=74)
Starter kit ^e (n=37, 0.4%)	984,000 (931,862)	300,000-4,500,000	22	Voopoo (n=5), Dotmod (n=3), Geekvape (n=3), and Smok (n=3)
Branded accessories ^f (n=32, 0.4%)	Not collected	Not collected	19	The Best Vape (n=7), Etoy (n=3), and Oxva (n=3). Note: The Best Vape is a retailer website.
Combo ^g (n=169, 2%)	712,880 (414,804)	90,000-2,550,000	42	Aspire (n=21), Oxva (n=21), and Geekvape (n=16)
Other tobacco and nicotine products ^h (n=243, 3%)	Not collected	Not collected	Not collected	Not collected

^a 200 products did not specify a single price point, with 127 having no price listed, 63 providing a price range, and 10 having the price obscured on the webpage.

^b A total of 614 brands were identified across product types, however, some brands occurred in multiple product categories.

^c All brands are listed for HTP devices and inserts due to low brand count. Combo brands were determined using the brand of the reusable e-cigarette device, regardless of the brand of the accompanying products.

^d Includes reusable with refillable tank, reusable with refillable pod/cartridge, or reusable with disposable pod cartridge.

^e Listing explicitly labeled as “starter kit.”

^f Accessories that are branded for promotional purposes (e.g., vape lanyards and bags).

^g A reusable e-cigarette device and at least one other product type, such as a device and an e-cigarette liquid sold together.

^h Products other than e-cigarette or HTP products, among which, 97% were cigars, 2% were cigarettes, and 1% were cigarillos.