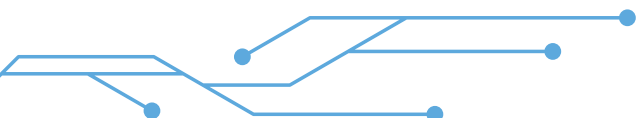


Game On: A Survey on the Rise of Paid Online Gaming in Southeast Asia

Centre for Sustainable
Finance Innovation (CSFI)



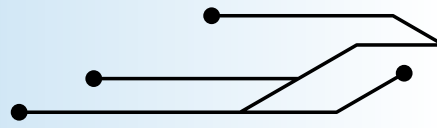


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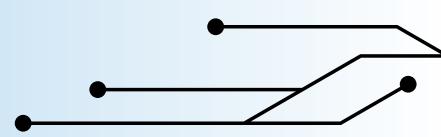
Centre for Sustainable Finance Innovation



The Centre for Sustainable Finance Innovation (CSFI) was established in 2022 to spearhead top-notch research and practical education on two main themes: sustainable finance and financial innovations. Its vision is to forge a solid strategic alliance among academia, policymakers, and finance practitioners. The foundations of CSFI are built upon three pillars of Research, Practice and Education.

CSFI aims to create and promote knowledge of financial innovation and sustainable finance and the connection between the two. Taking an evidence-based and interdisciplinary approach, we harness cutting-edge financial technologies to tackle world-scale challenges and revolutionize local and global finance.

Research Team



Simba, Xin Chang

Director, CSFI

Xin (Simba) Chang is a Professor of Finance at Nanyang Business School and Associate Dean (Research) overseeing PhD programs and research activities at Nanyang Business School. He specializes in corporate finance, especially sustainable finance, capital structure, mergers and acquisitions, and stock valuation.



Cindy, Xin Deng

Co-Director, CSFI

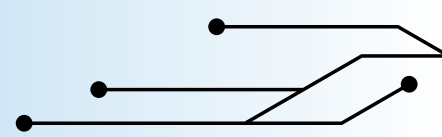
Cindy, Xin Deng is an Associate Professor (Practice) in Banking and Finance department at Nanyang Business School, Nanyang Technological University. She mainly works on empirical corporate finance and Fintech. She has taught undergraduate, MBA and doctoral courses including corporate finance, international financial management, theory of corporate finance, corporate finance empirical studies and blockchains and finance.



Dianna Chang

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Dianna Chang is a Senior Lecturer in Marketing at the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS). Her research interests are consumer behaviour, well-being studies, and sustainability.



Introduction

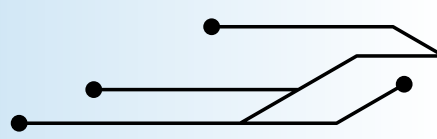
Video games have captivated audiences since the 1970s, evolving significantly with technological advancements. Innovations in digital hardware and game content have continually transformed the industry, with the latest development being the surge in online gaming. This trend is evident in Southeast Asia, where both casual and dedicated gamers have seamlessly woven online gaming into their entertainment choices and daily lives.

To better understand gamers' attitudes and trends, we surveyed 1,500 individuals across five Southeast Asian countries—Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand—who have paid for online gaming services in the past year. Our study aimed to explore usage patterns, preferences, and the role of digital wallets in managing gaming subscriptions.

The findings underscore online gaming's integral role in the lives of Southeast Asian gamers and highlight country-specific differences. Key insights include:

1. Gamers predominantly play alone at home, often using their mobile phones.
2. The online gaming community is diverse, encompassing both female and older players.
3. While gamers remain loyal to their favorite titles, they are also receptive to new games, making the variety of available games and the quality of platform recommendations crucial in consumers' decisions about service providers.
4. Gamers play to relax and have fun.
5. Digital wallets are valued for their convenience across all surveyed countries.

These insights reveal the growing significance of digital entertainment in ASEAN consumers' lives, the increasing reliance on mobile devices, and the popularity of digital wallets for managing online subscriptions and payments.

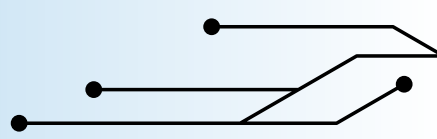


Introduction



We present key findings in this summary report. A full report can be downloaded from our website. This report is part of a series in which we study how digital payment revolutionizes the payment system in Southeast Asia and China. You may also be interested in the following two reports:

- [A Survey on Trends and Digital Adoption in China's Outbound Tourism 2023](#)
- [Relaxation Through Streaming: A Survey on Paid Video-On-Demand \(VOD\) in Southeast Asia](#)



Highlights



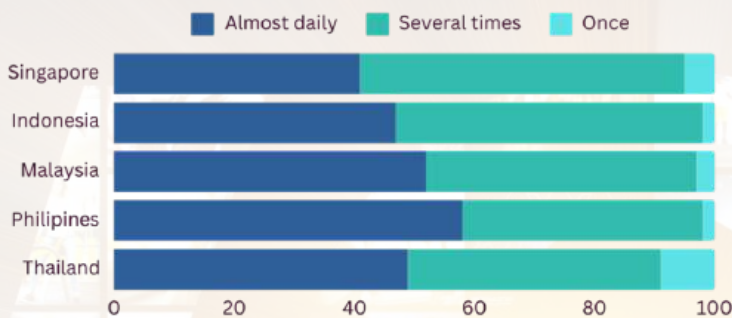
- 90% of regular fee-paying gaming subscribers play multiple times each week, with nearly half (49%) playing daily. Women play almost as frequently and as much as men.
- Gamers play to have fun and relax.
- 90%+ of regular gamers play at home, with even more female gamers playing at home.
- Smartphones are the most popular device, followed by computers.
- Players tend to stick with their favorite games, with about one-third playing the same titles regularly. However, most are open to exploring new games and value recommendations from friends or platforms. Indonesian players, in particular, are keen on reading reviews.
- The top three factors in choosing a gaming service provider are access to exclusive games, game variety, and cost.

Key Findings

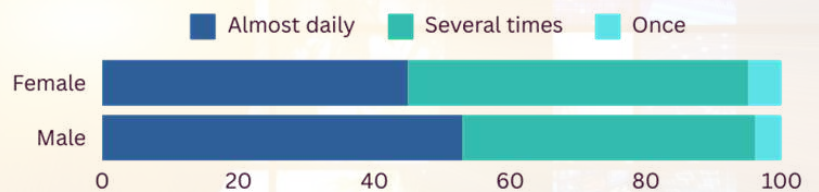
1. For dedicated gamers, gaming is a significant part of life.

Most fee-paying gamers play regularly, with nearly half playing daily and most playing for at least two hours each session. Frequency and playtime generally decrease with age. Notably, women play almost as frequently as men among the surveyed gamers.

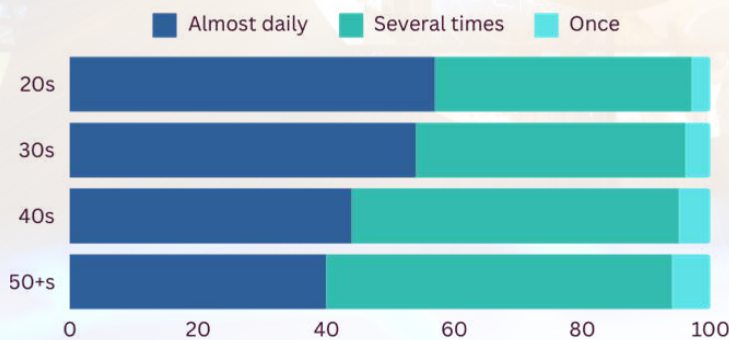
Online gaming frequency by country



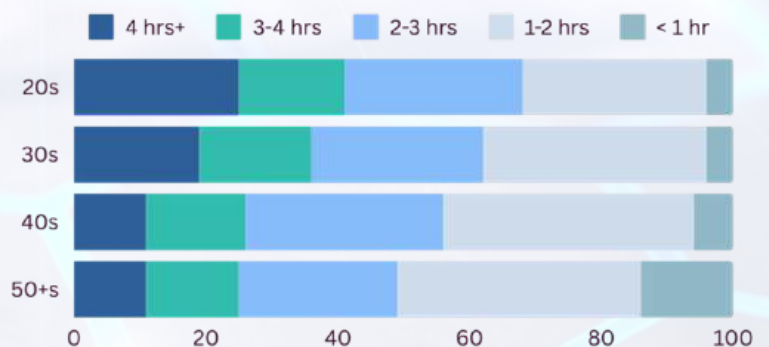
Online gaming frequency by gender



Online gaming frequency by age



Gaming time by age

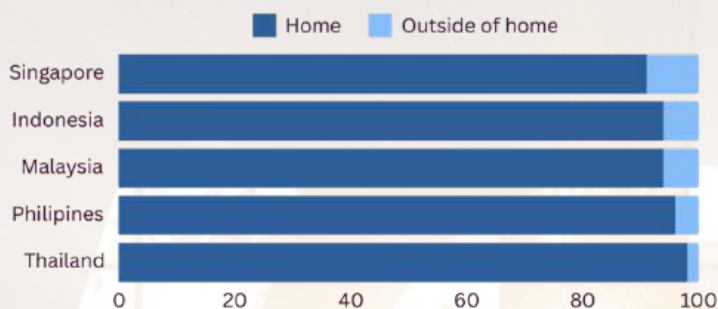


Key Findings

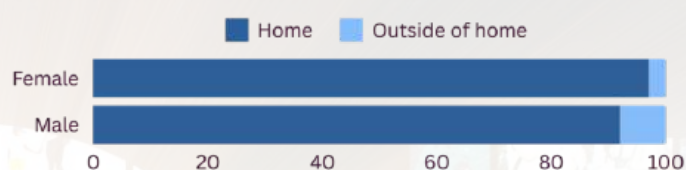
2. Fun and Comfort at Home

Over ninety percent of surveyed gamers play at home, with the figure rising to 97% for women.

Gaming location by country



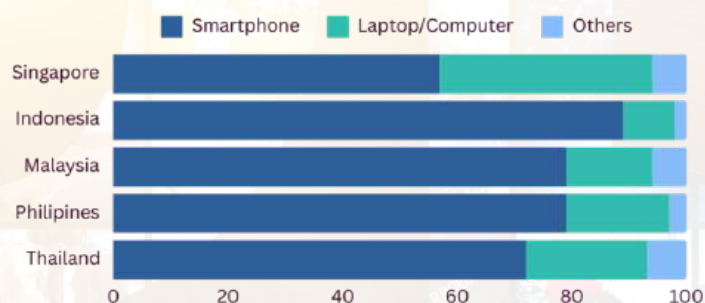
Gaming location by gender



3. Smartphone Dominance

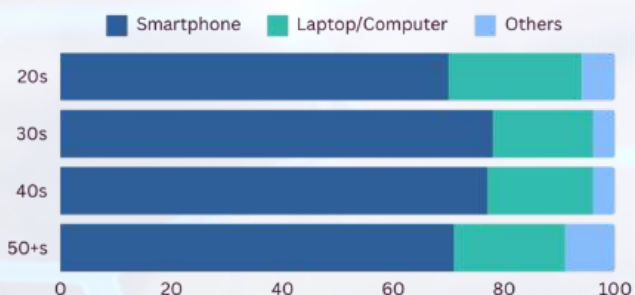
While gamers predominantly play at home, most use smartphones for their gaming. In Singapore, gamers are more likely to use laptops or computers than in other countries, likely due to higher computer ownership and better network stability.

Favourite devices by country



Younger gamers (in their 20s) and older gamers (50s and above) use smartphones less frequently, with younger gamers preferring computers and older gamers favoring other devices, such as TVs, for their larger screens. Men are more inclined to use computers than women.

Favourite devices by age

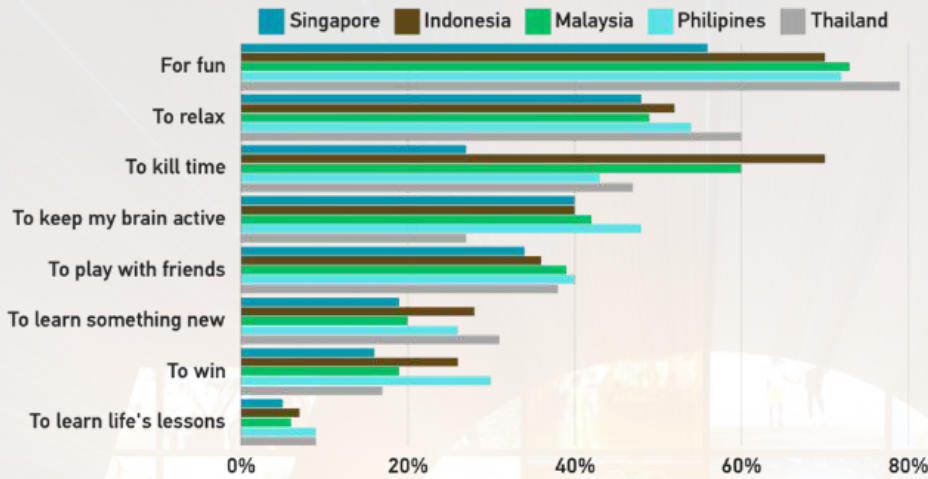


Favourite devices by gender

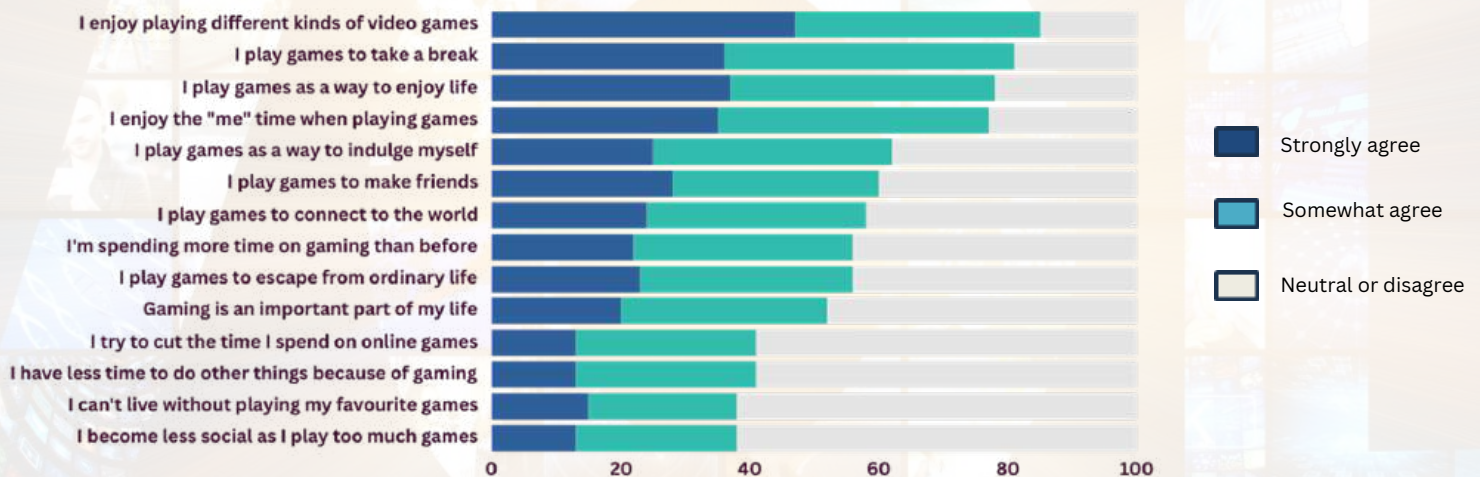


Key Findings

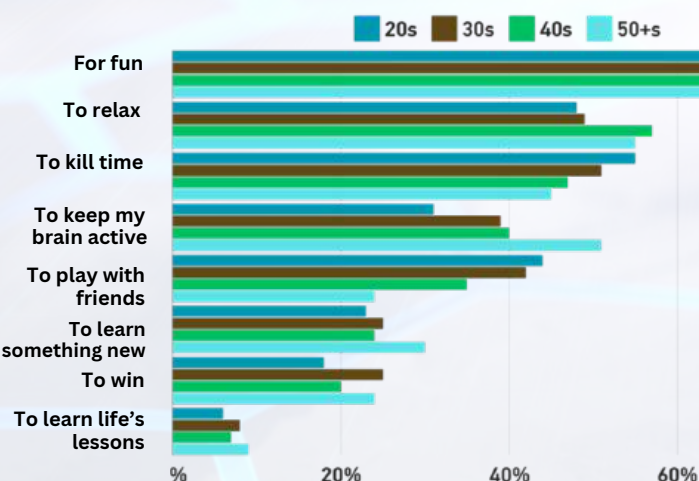
4. Enjoyment and Relaxation



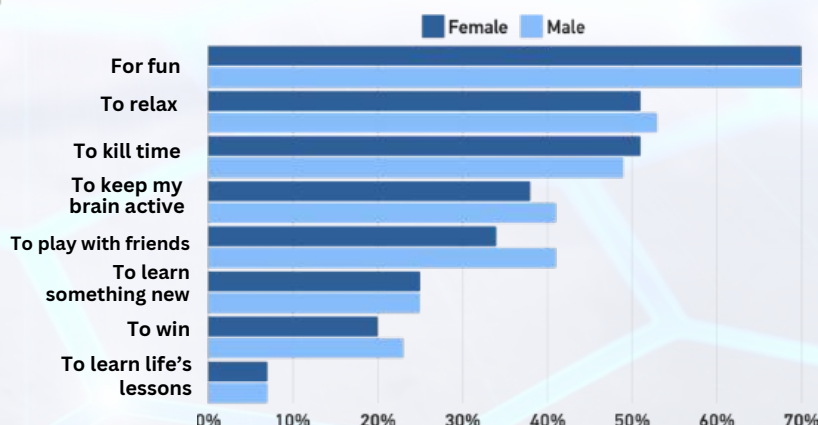
The primary motivations for gamers are to have fun, relax, and unwind. While some play games to pass the time, many, particularly in Singapore, find limited time for leisure yet still prioritise gaming for enjoyment and relaxation. Players also value the personal time that gaming provides.



Gaming by age and gender



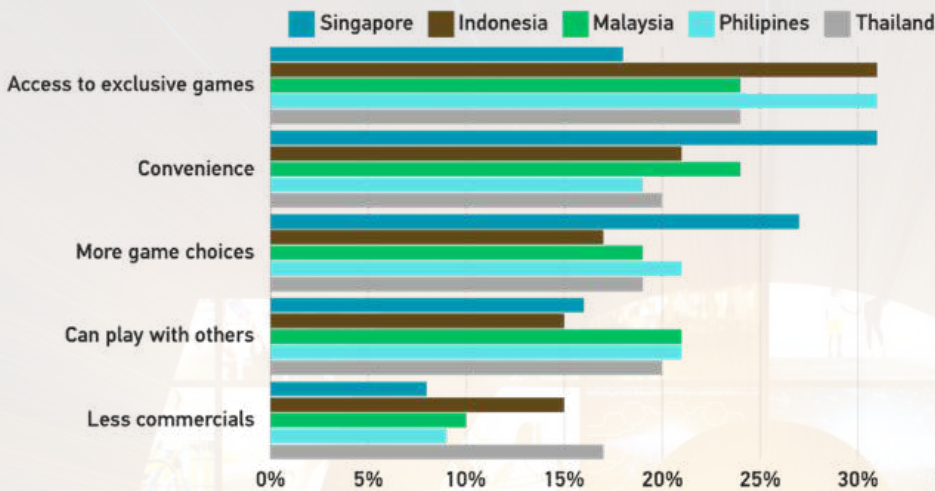
For older gamers, staying mentally active and learning new things are key motivators, with less emphasis on the social aspects of gaming. Both women and men generally play for similar reasons, though men tend to place more importance on the social interaction of playing games with friends.



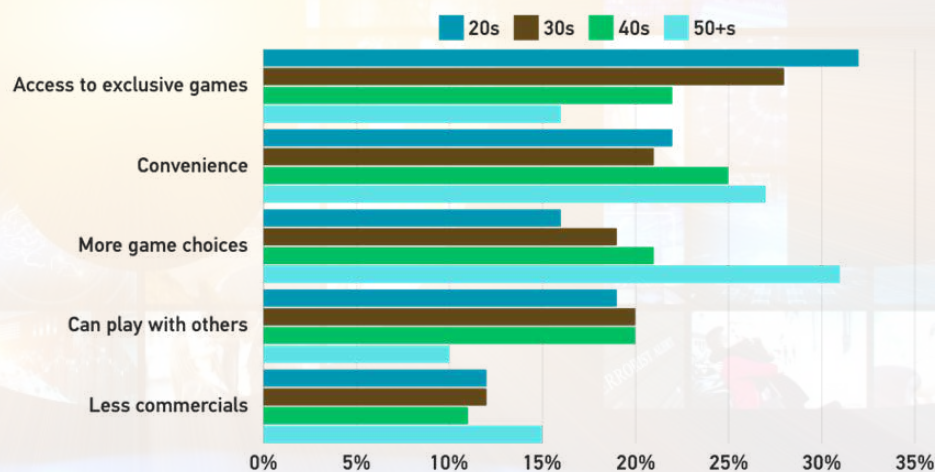
Key Findings

5. Why Pay to Play Games?

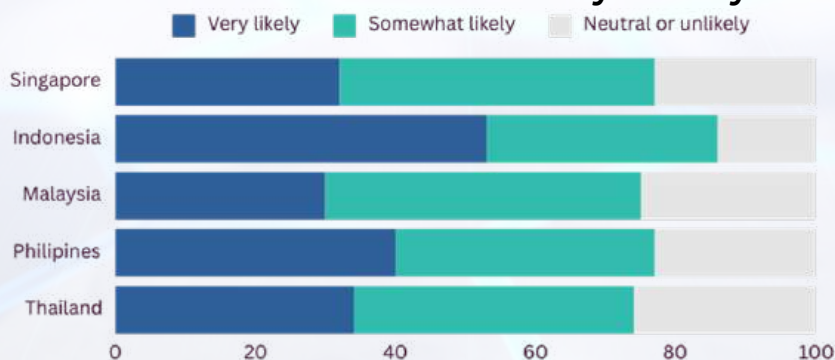
The motivations for paying to play games vary by country. In Singapore, players emphasize convenience and having a broad selection of games. Gamers in Indonesia and the Philippines, however, place a higher value on exclusive content. Indonesian and Thai players are particularly concerned about advertisements.



Among players aged 50 and above, the decision to pay is driven by the desire for more game options, aligning with their goal of staying mentally active. Notably, Indonesian gamers show a higher tendency to continue with paid subscriptions.



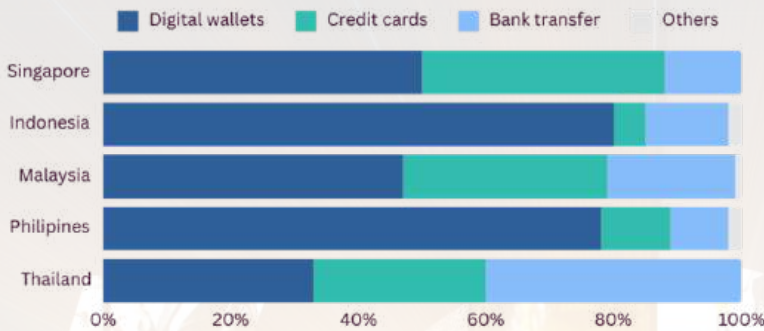
Service continuation intention by country



Key Findings

6. Digital Payment on the Rise

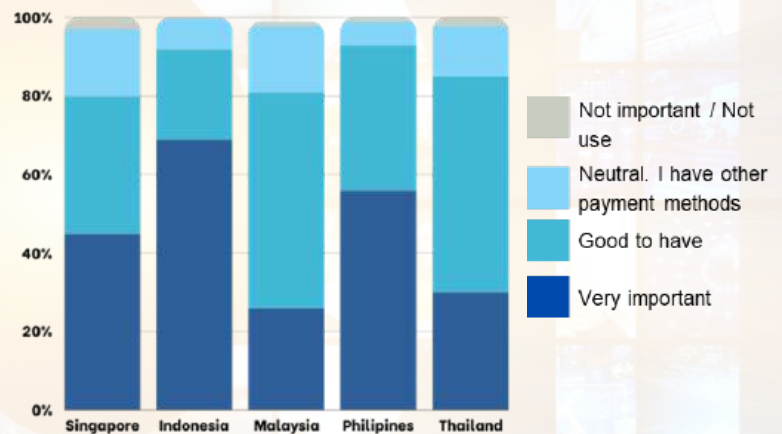
Payment methods by country



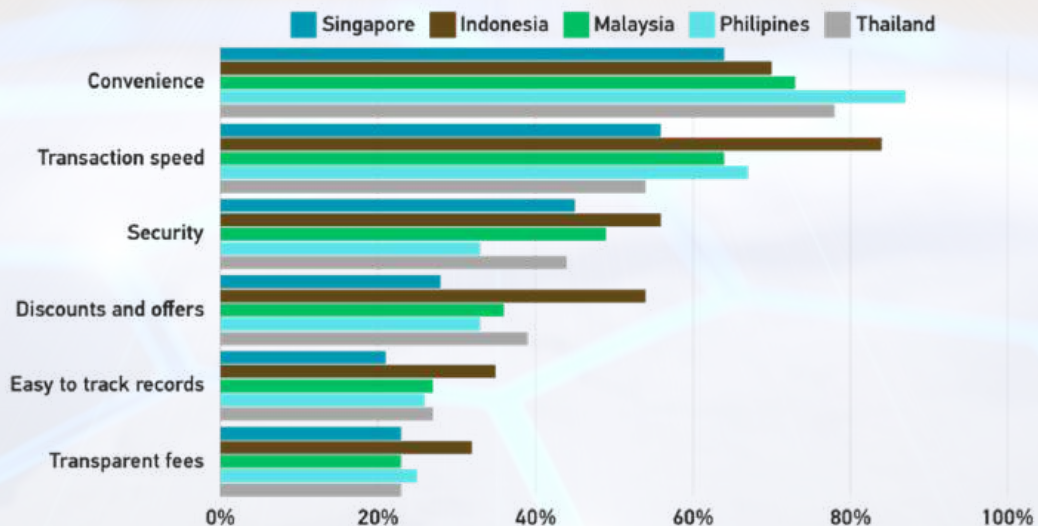
Digital wallets have surpassed credit cards as the primary payment method in all countries, especially in Indonesia and the Philippines, where bank account and credit card ownership remain low.

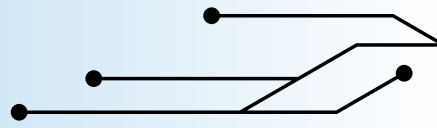
Consumers value digital wallet payments for their convenience, speed, security, and marketing offers. They expect digital wallets to offer lower fees, pricing options, discounts, and improved security measures.

Digital wallets attitude by country



Digital wallet usage motivation by country





Contact Us

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The full report is available for download from our centre's website at <https://www.ntu.edu.sg/csfi>.