

Germany: Rewe and Aral slow down the roll out their c-store concept

After opening 465 Rewe To Go supermarkets at Aral petrol stations, both companies have agreed to focus on the quality of the service before opening more sites.

Despite the initial success of Rewe To Go stores at Aral petrol stations – a concept piloted in 2014 – some operators are complaining of higher costs. Both companies have decided to slow down the mass roll out of the concept to focus on improving the current 465 sites during the first half of 2019.

An incredibly successful pilot program in 2014 with 10 Rewe To Go stores at Aral stations convinced the German companies two years later to set the ambitious goal of 1,000 combined sites by 2021.

"So far, the focus has been on expanding the network. We now want to use the first half of 2019 to bring new insights and new knowledge to the shops and to optimize them accordingly," said a Rewe spokesman in a statement to German publication [NZR](#).

Aral and Rewe, however, have confirmed that the target of 1,000 combined sites for 2021 remains. The expansion will continue after June 2019.

Germany is a challenging market for convenience retailers due to the presence of large, discount supermarkets. In the last years, various players have started to improve the convenience side of Europe's largest petrol station market. Rewe and Aral are already immersed in the biggest project of the kind. Leading German wholesaler Lekkerland introduced its convenience store concept 'Frischwerk' at end of 2016, implemented in various sites across the country.