



China: Smart gas stations land in Shanghai

The Shanghai branch of the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) is introducing new technologies at a number of stations to offer a seamless, convenient service.

By the end of July, some 100 CNPC petrol stations will include 'smart filling' – a new process that uses the Internet of Things, cloud technology and intelligent sensors to make sites smarter, reducing fuelling time from six to two minutes.

The program by China's leading fuel retailer, CNPC, started back in April with a pilot program of 15 sites under the moto 'Gas Station + Internet + Non-fuels.'

At present, CNPC Shanghai has an oil storage capacity of 430,000 cubic meters, 164 gas stations, 142 convenience stores, more than 1,800 employees, and over 100,000 daily service customers.

Changing with the times

As the Shanghainese society becomes more modern and demands new services, CNPC has made an effort to continue to evolve along with it. In recent years it has changed its business model from a traditional fuels provider to following the formula *gas station + Internet + non-fuels* – a complete service station with a wide range of services and goods.

By investing in new technologies, the company has built various systems for retail management, fuel cards, and ERP as well as a secondary logistics distribution system to improve the efficiency of fuels distribution, storage, sales and allocation.

CNPC in Shanghai became a pioneer in the cooperation with third-party mobile payment platforms such as WeChat, Alipay, and UnionPay. It was also the first mobile payment service for oil and non-oil products in Shanghai. The number of WeChat active customers for "China Oil Hospitality E Station" has exceeded 2.6 million.

"In the future, we will promote the use of the gas station as a platform by utilizing Internet, big data and cloud technology, and through integration, sharing and cross-border to achieve 'gas station + Internet + N' – the full construction of the 'person, car, life' ecosystem," said the company according to Finance Eastday.

On April 8, PetroChina partnered with Zebra to develop the 'Smart Fuelling' project – a system that

interconnects fuel dispensers to create a more efficient fuelling experience and reduce times by more than 50%. By the end of July, the service will expand from the initial 15 sites to almost 100.

As the Chinese forecourt market begins to open up to foreign players – BP and Shell have already announces ambitious expansion programs for the country – state supported players such as CNPC are investing in technology to safeguard their dominance of the market.