



Mekong Capital - Newsletter 1Q24

For the quarter ended 31 March 2024

What's Inside:

SPOTLIGHTS ON INVESTEE COMPANIES

MEKONG
CAPITAL

MAROU
FAISEURS DE CHOCOLAT

LiveSpo[®]
A Future Without Antibiotics

 **GENE
SOLUTIONS**

vuanem[®]

 **HSV**

MUTOSI

F88

In March 2024, Marou unveiled its first international pop-up store at Takashimaya Orchard shopping mall in Singapore, marking the first steppingstone to open *Maison Marou* concept overseas.

The company also recorded an 82% year-on-year growth in net revenue in the first quarter of 2024 with its retail network of 15 shops in big cities and popular tourist hotspots in Vietnam.

82% year-on-year
increase in net
revenue

Marou, founded by 2 French entrepreneurs, is a chocolate company dedicated to making premium quality single-origin chocolate bars from cacao beans sourced from Vietnam. Marou currently has 15 shops, which offer a wide selection of chocolate drinks, pastry, and chocolate bars, in big cities in Vietnam, and 9 kiosks in Tan Son Nhat International Airport.

Sector: Confectionery and F&B - marouchocolate.com





In the first quarter of 2024, LiveSpo recorded a 36% year-on-year growth in net revenue. This was mainly attributed to the company's expanding network of modern trade stores that carry its products and increasing the number of LiveSpo's product types available at each store.

During the quarter, research by the National Children's Hospital and LiveSpo's Spore Probiotics Research Center has validated the effectiveness of *LiveSpo CLAUSY* in supporting the treatment of prolonged diarrhea in children, cutting down 2-3 days of treatment time and increasing effectiveness of up to 50-60%, depending on the symptoms.

36% year-on-year increase in net revenue



LiveSpo, founded by three founders with combined experience in biotechnology, sales, and marketing, is a consumer health company manufacturing and selling liquid spore-based probiotics supplements, focusing on improving digestive health and enhancing respiratory function. Its nasal-spray spore probiotics, LiveSpo NAVAX, is one of LiveSpo's most popular and highly efficacious products, offering a safe respiratory treatment option to patients, particularly children, instead of using antibiotics.

Sector: Consumer Health - livespo.com

Launched 2

New Reproductive health genetic testing products



In January 2024, Gene Solutions launched 2 new products, *triSure thalass* and *Carrier thalass*, bringing its Reproductive health genetic testing portfolio to 10 products, making it the most comprehensive reproductive testing offering in Vietnam.

With these 2 new products, Gene Solutions can now screen for Thalassemia, which is a genetic blood disorder that affects the production of the protein in red blood cells that carry oxygen. It is the most common genetic disorder found in pregnancies in Vietnam with 8,000 cases per year, compared to 1,800 cases of babies born with Down syndrome.

Adding this feature allows Gene Solutions' reproductive health genetic testing products to be added to the Ministry of Health's guidelines for all pregnancies in Vietnam.

Gene Solutions, founded by three Vietnamese scientists and doctors with solid experience in genetics, cancer biology, and biotechnology, is a leading genetic testing company that specializes in Non-Invasive Prenatal Testing ("NIPT") for pregnant women and a pioneer in Oncology with its early cancer detection technology, SPOT-MAS™. Gene Solutions currently has a presence in Vietnam, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines.

Sector: Biotechnology - genesolutions.vn

Opened 2 New stores

Vua Nem opened 2 new stores in April 2024, bringing the total number of stores nationwide to 131. The store-level EBITDA in the first three months of 2024 achieved 115% YoY growth as a result of Vua Nem proactively introducing more quality products at affordable price ranges to cater the needs of mass Vietnamese consumers.



Vua Nem is the leading mattress retail company in Vietnam in terms of number of stores, founded by two Vietnamese entrepreneurs. While most mattress retailers in Vietnam are showrooms for a single mattress brand, Vua Nem targets to differentiate by offering an omnichannel shopping experience with a wide range of mattresses, bedding accessories, and sleep solutions such as multi-brand mattresses, bedding accessories, adjustable beds, etc. Vua Nem positions itself as a friendly brand targeting the mass market.

Sector: Mattress Retail - vuanem.com



In the first quarter of 2024, two new *Beauty Box* stores were opened, bringing the total number of stores to 19 in-mall locations nationwide. During the quarter, HSV also signed partnership agreements for 3 new Korean brands - *VDL*, *Freshian*, and *Isa Knox* - to be exclusively available in *Beauty Box* stores

Beauty Box, a multi-brand skincare and cosmetics retail chain, offers a diverse range of exclusive, authentic, and high-quality beauty products from overseas brands. In addition, *Beauty Box* has a team of dedicated beauty consultants in store to provide personalized advice to customers targeting their specific needs.

Sector: Beauty & Cosmetic Retail Chain - beautybox.com.vn

Opened 2 new *Beauty Box* stores



Launched 2 new products



In 1Q24, Mutosi launched two new products of *iOn Alkaline Hydrogen* water purifiers, which can produce water with pH level from 8.5 to 9.5 to support body pH balance, lessening symptoms of acid reflux and selective digestive problems.

Mutosi Group is a manufacturer and distributor, specializing in producing water purifiers and electrical appliances following Japanese standards. Mutosi Group was established in 2018 by 4 co-founders, who have extensive operating experience in the water purifier industry.

Sector: Household Appliances - mutosi.com

Founded in 2013 by three entrepreneurs, F88 is one of Vietnam's largest financial service chains providing vehicle title lending and insurance to mass underbanked people through its 813 branches nationwide as of 31 March 2024.

*Sector: Personal Finance
- f88.vn*

Launched new loan product designed for women

With the technical assistance program from the Australian Development Investments, since March 2024, F88 has introduced a new secured-lending package featuring exclusive deals designed specifically for women-led micro and small-sized enterprises in Vietnam to expand their businesses. This initiative is a part of F88's commitment to enhance gender equity and financial inclusion for Vietnamese women.



