

Consumer Attitudes
Toward Fraud and
Opportunities for
Mobile Network Operators
in Vietnam

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This report provides a short analysis of Vietnam. It is part of a larger piece of work covering six countries across South East Asia. The full report is available for download on the GSMA website.

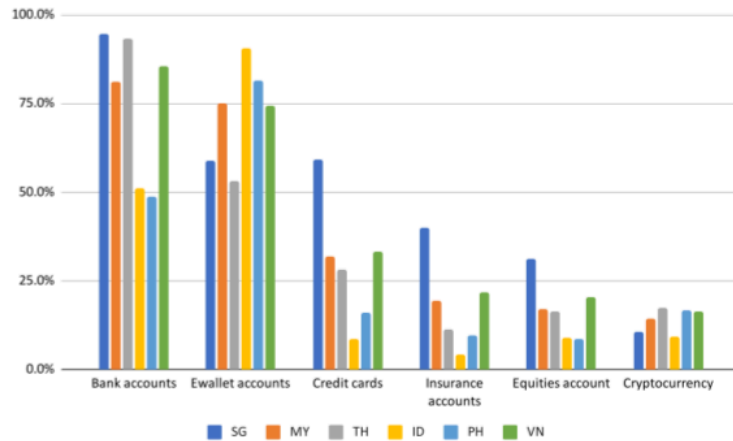
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Executive Summary

Vietnam's booming digital economy faces a rising tide of financial fraud. This report examines Vietnamese consumer attitudes towards fraud, revealing significant concerns about account hacking, data breaches, SIM-swap attacks, and mobile payment vulnerabilities, particularly within the widespread adoption of e-wallets (**74%**). The study highlights opportunities for Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) to leverage APIs for enhanced security measures, including real-time fraud detection and improved e-wallet integration. Addressing consumer privacy concerns and regulatory compliance are crucial for fostering trust and enabling the continued growth of Vietnam's digital economy.

Adoption of eWallets has reached 91% in Indonesia and 80% in the Philippines

Penetration of Financial Accounts by Country (% Popn)



Consumer Attitudes Toward Fraud in Vietnam

Vietnamese consumers are increasingly wary of financial fraud, with over **89%** expressing concerns about account hacking and data breaches. This is in-line with other SEA developing economies (e.g. Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines) where in general anxiety of fraud is higher than in developed nations (e.g. Singapore and Thailand)..

SIM-swap attacks, mobile payment vulnerabilities, and personal data theft are the key areas of concern.

As digital payments gain traction, **63%** of Vietnamese respondents report believing that account security risks are rising. This aligns with other SEA countries, however, it is worth noting that Singapore stands out with higher expectations for the growth of fraud at **79%** of respondents.

Vietnam mirrors other SEA markets in facing three major fraud threats:

1. SIM-Swap Attacks

48% of Vietnamese respondents are aware of SIM-swap fraud and identify it as a critical concern.

Along with the Philippines (**49%**) this is the highest across SEA countries, indicating that MNOs in Vietnam should prioritise and communicate actions focused on proactive SIM fraud prevention.

2. Mobile Payments and E-Wallet Security Issues

With **74%** e-wallet adoption, Vietnam is in-line with Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand with higher bank account ownership than e-wallet. It is worth noting however, that across all countries in SEA e-wallet usage is very high.

Vietnamese consumers are increasingly cautious about security, with **90%** stating they worry about fraudulent transactions.

3. Personal Data Security & Concerns

Concerns about personal data privacy affect **95%** of Vietnamese respondents, which is very similar to the SEA average of **96%**.

When asked about accountability for fraud prevention, **51%** of Vietnamese respondents assign primary responsibility to service providers such as banks and fintechs. Overall this is aligned to the SEA average of 50%, however, it is interesting to note that Vietnamese assign higher responsibility to internet providers and MNOs with **21%** versus the SEA average of **13%**.

Opportunities for Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) in Vietnam

Vietnam's mobile-first economy presents MNOs with a unique opportunity to address fraud through API-driven solutions. The following sections outline how MNOs can leverage their infrastructure and reach to enhance security in Vietnam.

Enhanced Account Security APIs

Overall Vietnamese are more aware and have higher adoption rates of security tools than the SEA average and on the same level as advanced countries such as Singapore. This is particularly true in the use of biometric security (**77%**) and password managers (**63%**).

Seamless Number Verification / Silent OTP

There is an opportunity for MNOs to integrate Silent OTP APIs into banking and e-commerce, further strengthening security and offering seamless authentication experiences.

SIM-Swap Fraud Detection

Vietnam exhibits a higher level of awareness of SIM-Swap attacks (**78%**) than the SEA average (**60%**) and prioritisation of this security feature is the highest of all countries surveyed.

Implementation of this security feature and integration into the banking / fintech ecosystem is a large opportunity for MNOs.

Fraud Prevention in Digital Commerce

Vietnam's thriving social commerce ecosystem necessitates robust fraud prevention mechanisms.

With **67%** of Vietnamese consumers regularly making purchases via social platforms it is the highest in SEA with the average at **51%**.

APIs that cross-verify user details at the point of transaction (e.g., mobile number, location) can significantly reduce fraudulent transactions in real-time.

Location data can enhance fraud prevention, and the Vietnamese express more willingness to share data if it will provide a security benefit with **86%** respondents willing versus the SEA average of **79%**.

Mobile-First/Mobile Led Financial Services

With **74%** of Vietnamese consumers using e-wallets and **85%** bank accounts, and having high levels of access on mobile (e.g. **73%** of respondents access banking primarily on mobile). APIs that enable account security and fraud detection can enhance trust.

72% of Vietnamese respondents prefer pre-filled forms when signing up for digital services, the highest in SEA and significantly above the regional average at **59%**.

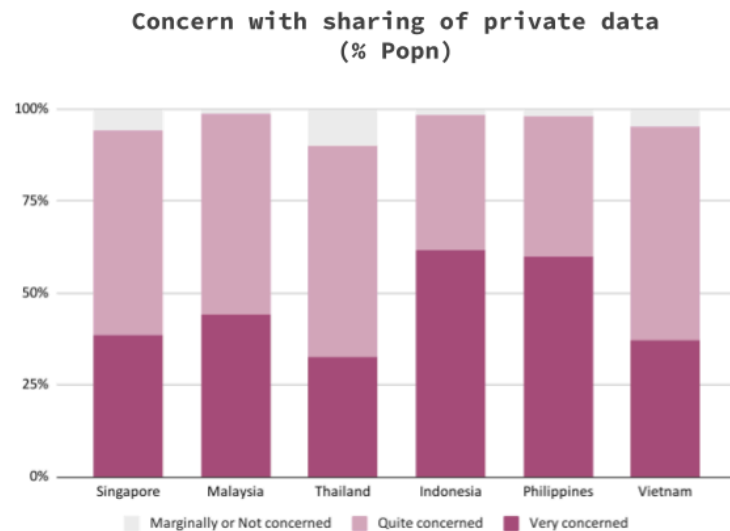
By focusing on the mobile-first approach MNOs can increase security and ease of use across a broad range of applications.

Privacy Concerns and Regulatory Implications

As found across SEA, Vietnamese consumers are increasingly concerned about how their data is used. **95%** express concerns with data sharing, particularly with Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

APIs that prioritise data transparency and granular consent management can address privacy concerns while fostering trust.

Across all countries consumers are concerned about data privacy



Vietnam's evolving regulatory framework on data protection provides a backdrop for MNOs to align API offerings with compliance requirements.

Recommendations for MNOs in Vietnam

1. **E-wallet and banking integration APIs** - support the rapidly growing digital payment ecosystem.
2. **Targeted API Development** - Focus on APIs addressing high-priority concerns, such as SIM-swap fraud detection, Silent OTP, and real-time transaction verification.
3. **Consumer Education** - Collaborate with fintechs and e-commerce platforms to educate consumers on fraud risks and security measures, boosting API adoption.
4. **Regulatory Compliance** - Work closely with Vietnamese authorities to ensure APIs meet current privacy and data protection standards and help to shape future regulations.

5. **Strategic Partnerships** - Partner with local digital commerce platforms and fintech players to enhance fraud prevention mechanisms and identify further opportunities.
6. **Build transparency and trust with consumers** - Build APIs with features like granular consent management to address privacy concerns and empower users to control data sharing.

Conclusion

Vietnam's digital economy is poised for exponential growth, creating both opportunities and challenges in fraud prevention. MNOs are uniquely positioned to lead this transformation by leveraging their infrastructure to deliver innovative API solutions. By addressing fraud concerns, enhancing data transparency, and aligning with regulatory standards,

MNOs in Vietnam can secure their position as enablers of a safe and inclusive digital ecosystem. This comprehensive approach will not only bolster consumer confidence but also drive the adoption of secure digital services, fostering long-term growth in Vietnam's digital economy.

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Think Howe offers strategy consulting and research services to private companies, governments, and public institutions focused on the Australasian region.

Over the past 15 years, we have worked with clients across the region, creating impact through a combination of outcome focused management and on-the-ground experience.

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