

Costco's first bricks-and-mortar store in China opened on Tuesday and was soon overrun with customers, the LA Times reports.

Customers reportedly fought over discounted products and were willing to wait for hours to pay for their purchases

The U.S. retail giant had to suspend operations in its Shanghai store in the afternoon. It cited "heavy traffic and customer flows," according to a text message sent by the company.

Costco is also entering a market where many of its global rivals have struggled and given up. Carrefour SA sold an 80% stake in its China unit at a discount in June while German wholesaler Metro AG is looking to sell its operations.

"There's no other word to describe Shanghai's Costco but crazy," a Weibo user said, who gave up on the shopping plan after seeing two-hour queues at the checkout counters.

Other Weibo users shared that they had to wait three hours to enter the parking lot. Others decided to walk to the store to avoid the traffic jam.

Other pictures showed customers grabbing packets of roast chicken and elbowing out other shoppers at the store.

Local news reports said the retailer offered discounts of 60% on some products and annual membership for just 199 yuan (\$28).