

THE DELIVERY WARS

超級外送員：使命必達的省時戰

The pandemic led to the rise of food delivery services, which have changed people's lives but also subjected delivery workers to increasingly harsh schedules and high-risk work environments. The personal experiences and in-depth interviews in this book peel back the industry's façade to reveal the cruel reality behind the convenience.

“Free time, monthly income of NT\$100,000” – Are delivery jobs really what they seem to offer?

Consumers place orders with the leisurely click of a button, but for delivery workers, every order is a race against time. Adapted from the author's master's thesis, which won the Taiwan Sociological Association's Fieldwork Award, this book uses field research and numerous interviews with delivery workers to show the hard realities of delivery work from behind the scenes. The author also draws on personal experience in noting the job's ups and downs and the impact of platform restructuring on working conditions.

The book is divided into four chapters. Chapter one introduces how Taiwan's food delivery platforms have developed and provides context for the job, explaining how the “low threshold” for hiring and “flexible schedule” attracted large numbers of workers. Chapter two describes the ground rules and challenges of the work, highlighting the difficulties and mishaps workers encounter between store and customer. For example, drivers often speed to make up for lost time, which might be caused by a “slow cooker” order (an order with a long prep time) or stores that make on-site customers the priority and ignore delivery orders, among other things. Chapter three explores the constant changes to delivery platforms in recent years, which have left delivery drivers subject to more rules related to scheduling, equipment, and complicated pay rates, and have required longer shifts to make up for lower wages. Chapter four discusses the high-



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risk working environment, including a high rate of traffic accidents and long hours, and calls for improved job conditions.

This book's clear structure and easy-to-read text present a three-dimensional picture of a delivery worker's job and its many challenges, emphasizing the importance of dignified work while making clear to readers the cost of the labor behind the convenience.

Tsai Wan-Yun 蔡宛芸

Tsai Wan-Yun, born in 1993, earned a Master of Architecture and Urban Planning from National Taiwan University. Her master's thesis, *A Time-Saving War for Freedom? The Labor Regime of Digital-mediated Foods Delivery*, looks at the contemporary phenomenon of food delivery. It won the Taiwan Sociological Association's Outstanding Master's Thesis Fieldwork Award.

