



LAUREATE PROFILE

Pay-Less Markets, Inc. (Est. 1950)

Founded in 1950 as J&G Thrift Market, Pay-Less Markets, Inc. has been Guam's trusted supermarket, providing top-quality products and services for island residents. Laureate began its *kânera* (journey) with a vision to provide the best customer value every day. Since its inception, Pay-Less has provided a broad range of products across departments such as Produce, Meat, Seafood, General Grocery, Frozen & Chilled, Health & Beauty, General Merchandise, and Liquor. In 1955, Laureate was rebranded as Pay-Less Supermarkets. In 1985, Calvo Enterprises acquired the business from Jones & Guerrero Company, Inc., and expanded under the current name, Pay-Less Markets, Inc. (PMI).

Through the years, Laureate has consistently demonstrated a forward-thinking approach to retail. In addition to acquiring Safeway in the Micronesia Mall and Ada Seiyu Mart's stores in Dededo and Sinajana, Laureate has led multiple major renovations to enhance customer experience. The company continued to grow and evolve through retail expansions, renovations, innovative business ventures, and strengthening partnerships and tenant agreements with local businesses while staying true to the company's vision and maintaining the warmth and hospitality of Guam's *Hâfa Adai* spirit.

Laureate has embraced technological advancements to enhance customer experiences and streamline business operations. In 1997, Laureate established its first loyalty program, the Star Card, which provided enrolled members with discounts on their purchases and the opportunity to accumulate points that could be redeemed for rewards. Although innovative, it was not without its challenges, and the program concluded in the early 2000s. In 2021, *Måolek Rewards* was launched. A digital loyalty program designed to provide greater value and a seamless shopping experience, the program offers points & rewards, digital coupons, promotions & sweepstakes, exclusive savings, digital receipts, and analytics, which allows Pay-Less to personalize promotions and enhance the overall shopping experience. Laureate integrates technology and innovation into both online and in-store marketing initiatives that include its website, social media pages, and the popular *Chagi* YouTube videos, in-store screens and kiosks, which not only redefine the grocery shopping experience but make it more engaging, efficient, and savings-driven for its customers.

Internally, Laureate places strong emphasis on employee development and satisfaction. With a team of over 800 employees, the company fosters a positive and engaged workplace culture through leadership training, health and wellness programs, and recognition initiatives like the *Inafa'maolek* Employee Recognition Program. Employees are equipped with CPR training, safety education, compliance training, customer service workshops, and more - all aimed at fostering excellence and ensuring safety.

Beyond traditional retail, Laureate has launched several trailblazing services. Its SuperDrug pharmacies provide essential healthcare products and medications across the island, while the Pay-Less O.N.E. and Health Smart programs offer customers natural, organic, and dietitian-approved foods. Pay-Less Floral Shoppe offers a wide variety of floral arrangements and specialty items. PDC Wholesale (Pay-Less Distribution Center) began as a central distribution hub for its supermarkets and expanded not only its facility storage space but its operations into one of Guam's largest importers of commodities and leading importer of refrigerated food goods, sourcing products not just from the U.S. but from international suppliers in the Philippines, Japan, Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland and beyond. PMI Security Solutions was established in 2017 as Pay-Less Markets' loss-prevention division. The entity has now expanded to extend comprehensive security services to over fifteen businesses islandwide.

Laureate further modernized its operations by launching online shopping with curbside pickup in 2020 and, later, delivery services in 2024 through Uno-Go. Sustainability efforts such as the Go Green campaign, the Mission Zero Bags initiative, and solar panel installations at multiple store locations reflect the company's environmental consciousness. These initiatives have contributed to significant energy savings and helped lead the island-wide movement to ban single-use plastic bags.

Laureate has demonstrated resiliency by navigating a variety of challenges to include typhoons, natural disasters, supply chain disruptions, and the COVID-19 Pandemic. Adjusting hours to provide customers access to essential supplies, organizing food drives, providing a dedicated shopping period for senior citizens, and supporting the community and region with charitable contributions, Laureate continues to demonstrate its deep-rooted commitment to the community. Since launching the Pay-Less Community Foundation (PMCF) in 2006, Laureate has channeled its success into charitable giving and service. Programs like Small Change, Big Difference, eduKitchen, and the Kick the Fat 5K/10K have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars and supported dozens of nonprofits across the island. Laureate spearheads health and nutrition education, youth wellness initiatives, and environmental beautification projects. Notably, the PMCF's Circle of Care cancer support programs provide a comprehensive program of psycho-oncology support services for the island community, which underscores the organization's profound social impact.

For 75 years, Laureate has remained committed to its mission of delivering fresh, high-quality products while caring for its employees and the broader island community. Through every expansion, innovation, and community outreach, Laureate has proven that business success and social responsibility can go hand in hand. With its roots firmly planted in Guam and its eyes on the future, Laureate's *kårera* continues as a shining example of what it means to forge a lasting legacy for generations to come.