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Alibaba to buy remaining shares in food delivery app Ele.me

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Ele.me, which roughly translates as "Hungry?", is part of a fast-growing and competitive e-commerce market in China driven by consumers eager to use smartphones to make purchases from groceries to cinema tickets.

In August Ele.me bought major rival Baidu deliveries from Baidu Inc. For Alibaba, the latest acquisition enlarges the e-commerce firmâ??s food delivery empire, which also includes delivery platform Koubei, as it competes with Meituan Dianping, backed by Tencent Holdings Ltd.

Alibaba and Meituan are both investing heavily in offline services, including deliveries, mobile payments and unstaffed stores, to tap a wider demographic as Chinaâ??s online commerce market shows signs of slowing.

Ele.me will continue to operate under its own brand following the acquisition, said Alibaba, but will combine some functionalities with Koubei.