

Walmart

WALMART SUCCESS STORY

Few companies are as successful or iconic as Walmart.

From its headquarters in Bentonville, Arkansas, Walmart is a retail industry leader operating on a global scale. With its mission to help its customers “save money and live better,” Walmart has revolutionized retail, supply chains, e-commerce, and much more.

Sam Walton steadily built his company in Arkansas, first gaining experience in retail in Newport and later moving to Northwest Arkansas. He launched Walton’s 5&10 in Bentonville and later opened the first Walmart store in Rogers in 1962.

THE SITUATION

Sam Walton had achieved success in the retail industry, operating stores in Newport and Bentonville, Arkansas. He wanted to provide his customers with both low costs and excellent customer service.

CHALLENGE

According to Walmart’s official history, Walton’s competitors did not believe that his business model would work. To succeed in his model, Walton would need to adopt new technologies and approaches in order to provide both low costs with top-quality service.

SOLUTION

Walton made his store associates part of the fabric of the company, making them partners in the success of the company. He also introduced new concepts like Sam’s Club and the Walmart Supercenter to help drive low costs for customers.

RESULTS

The first Walmart store launched in 1962 – and by 1967, the company had grown to 24 stores. Walmart went public in 1970 and began a decade of significant growth including opening its first distribution center and its Home Office in Bentonville in 1971.

By 1980, the company reached \$1 billion in annual sales and had grown to 276 stores. During this decade, Walmart opened its first Sam's Club in 1983 and its first Supercenter in 1988.

Walton – known as “Mr. Sam” – died in 1992 but Walmart's mission of providing always low prices continued. The company became the top brick-and-mortar retailer and is now #2 on the Fortune 500 list.

In 2025, Walmart opened its new Home Office in Bentonville, signaling its commitment to doing business in Arkansas.