

Made In America Sam Walton

Made in America: Sam Walton and the Evolution of Retail *Abstract:* This analyzes Sam Walton's entrepreneurial journey and its impact on the American retail landscape, focusing on the "Made in America" ethos. Using historical data and academic frameworks, we explore Walton's strategies, the creation of Walmart, and the broader implications for American manufacturing, employment, and consumerism. **** Sam Walton, the founder of Walmart, revolutionized retail in the 20th century, dramatically altering the way Americans shopped and impacting the entire global economy. While often criticized for its impact on small businesses and labor practices, Walton's legacy is complex and deserves a nuanced examination, especially in the context of "Made in America." This will explore this legacy, highlighting both the successes and the challenges.**

Walton's "Made in America" Vision (or Lack Thereof): Walton's strategy wasn't explicitly focused on "Made in America" products. His core principle was low prices, achieved through economies of scale and efficient supply chain management. This often meant sourcing from the lowest-cost providers globally, potentially hindering domestic manufacturing.

Figure 1: Walmart Supplier Diversity (Simplified): **Global Suppliers | | (Asia, Latin America, etc) V Walmart <-- Large Volume Purchases | | (Lower Prices for Consumers) V American Consumers** ***Note: This visualization is a simplified representation and does not fully reflect the complexity of Walmart's global supply chain.***

The Impact on American Manufacturing: The shift toward global sourcing significantly impacted American manufacturing. While Walmart's low prices benefited consumers, it contributed to the decline of many domestic manufacturing jobs. Research suggests a correlation between Walmart's growth and the decrease in manufacturing employment during the 1990s and 2000s (Source: BLS data).

Figure 2: US Manufacturing Employment (1990-2020): ***(Insert a line chart showing US manufacturing employment trends, potentially overlaying Walmart's growth curve for comparison.)***

The Role of Efficiency and Technology: Walton's emphasis on efficiency and technological advancements (like barcode scanning) played a crucial role in his success. This approach allowed for better inventory management and ultimately lower prices, but it also changed the relationship between businesses and consumers.

Table 1: Key Technological Innovations at Walmart: | Year | Innovation | Impact | ||| | 1970s | Barcodes | Enhanced inventory management, reduced labor costs | | 1980s | Computerized systems | Streamlined supply chain, improved logistics | | 2000s | E-commerce | Expanded market reach, new customer engagement opportunities |

Beyond the "Made in America" Label: The debate surrounding "Made in America" is complex. While Walton's model prioritized low prices, the trend towards global sourcing wasn't solely his fault. The increasing globalization of markets and the pursuit of cost-efficiency were broader economic forces. Practical Applications and Ethical Considerations: Walton's success challenges us to consider the ethical implications of globalization. Sustainable and ethical sourcing practices are becoming increasingly important. Companies now face pressure to balance cost-efficiency with social and environmental responsibility. This is directly related to the evolving definition of "Made in America". Conclusion: Sam Walton's legacy is a complex tapestry of innovation, economic disruption, and ethical considerations. While his model benefited consumers with lower prices and convenience, it also contributed to the decline of some domestic manufacturing sectors. A deeper understanding of his model, its impact, and the evolving concept of "Made in America" is critical to navigating the future of retail and global economics.

Advanced FAQs: **1.** How did Walmart impact small businesses in local communities? This requires a nuanced analysis of both the positive and negative effects on the local economic ecosystem. (Data on local market saturation and job displacement would be important here). **2.** What are the modern strategies of Walmart to improve its ethical sourcing practices? This needs to explore Walmart's current initiatives for supply chain transparency and ethical labor standards. **3.** How does the rise of e-commerce, with its global reach, redefine the "Made in America" concept? This addresses the challenges posed to traditional manufacturing and sourcing models. **4.** Can a balance between cost-efficiency and ethical sourcing practices be achieved in modern retail? **This calls for analyzing existing models and exploring emerging technologies supporting ethical sourcing.** **5.** What role does government regulation play in guiding a more "Made in America" approach to retail and industry in general? This probes the effectiveness of policies designed to support domestic manufacturing and fair trade practices. **Disclaimer:**** This provides a general analysis. Further research and data are essential for a more comprehensive understanding. ***(Remember to include the promised data visualizations and tables to support the analysis.)***

Made in America: The Sam Walton Story and the Power of American Manufacturing

When you think of American retail giants, one name consistently rises to the top: Walmart. And at the heart of Walmart's incredible success story is its founder, Sam Walton. More than just a shrewd businessman, Sam Walton embodied a deep-seated belief in American ingenuity and the power of domestic production. His legacy is intrinsically linked to the concept of "Made in America," a philosophy that helped build not only a retail empire but also significantly impacted the American manufacturing landscape.

This article will delve into the fascinating "Made in America" philosophy of Sam Walton, exploring how it shaped Walmart's early days, its impact on American jobs, and the enduring relevance of his approach in today's globalized economy. We'll uncover the strategies he employed, the challenges he faced, and the lasting imprint he left on the notion of supporting American-made products.

Sam Walton: A Vision Rooted in Patriotism and Pragmatism

Sam Walton wasn't born into wealth. He was a Depression-era kid from Oklahoma who understood the value of hard work and resourcefulness. His entrepreneurial spirit kicked off with a small five-and-dime store in Newport, Arkansas, in 1950. From these humble beginnings, the seeds of Walmart were sown, and with them, a commitment to offering value to customers while fostering a sense of national pride.

Walton's "Made in America" stance wasn't purely ideological; it was also deeply practical. In the early days, sourcing domestically often meant better quality control, more reliable delivery times, and a stronger connection to the communities he served. He believed that by supporting American manufacturers, he was investing in the very fabric of the nation, creating jobs, and contributing to economic growth from the ground up. This wasn't just about selling products; it was about building a better America.

Early Strategies: Championing Local and Domestic Suppliers

From the outset, Sam Walton actively sought out American-made goods. He understood that offering quality products at low prices was the key to customer loyalty. His early sourcing strategies were characterized by a keen eye for opportunity and a willingness to work directly with smaller, often local, American manufacturers. He wasn't afraid to negotiate, but he also valued strong, collaborative relationships.

One of his core tenets was to find suppliers who could deliver consistent quality and reliable production. This meant understanding the manufacturing processes, visiting factories, and building trust. This hands-on approach allowed him to bypass middlemen, negotiate better deals, and ensure that the products on his shelves met his high standards – and the expectations of his customers. The ripple effect of this was undeniable: by choosing American, he was empowering American workers and businesses.

The "Value" Proposition: Made in America as a Competitive Edge

Walmart's iconic "Everyday Low Prices" (EDLP) strategy was built on a foundation of efficiency and smart sourcing. While some might assume this automatically led to offshore manufacturing, Walton's initial approach often leveraged American manufacturing to achieve his pricing goals. By working closely with domestic suppliers, he could often negotiate favorable terms due to volume and his commitment to consistent orders.

Furthermore, the "Made in America" label itself became a selling point. In an era where national pride was a significant cultural force, customers appreciated knowing that their purchases were supporting their fellow Americans. This resonated with a broad demographic, contributing to Walmart's rapid expansion. The ability to offer affordable, good-quality, American-made goods was a powerful competitive advantage that set Walmart apart from its rivals.

The Evolving Landscape: Challenges and Adaptations

As Walmart grew into a global retail behemoth, the dynamics of global sourcing and manufacturing began to shift. The lure of lower production costs overseas became increasingly tempting, and Walmart, like many other large corporations, began to diversify its supply chain to remain competitive in a rapidly changing global marketplace.

The Rise of Globalization and Offshore Manufacturing

The late 20th and early 21st centuries saw an explosion in global trade. Manufacturing costs in countries like China and other parts of Asia dropped significantly, offering substantial savings on production. For a company as large as Walmart, driven by its EDLP model, these cost efficiencies were hard to ignore. This led to a gradual shift away from a purely "Made in America" focus for many product categories.

This transition wasn't without controversy. Critics argued that Walmart's reliance on offshore manufacturing contributed to job losses in the United States and weakened the domestic industrial base. While the economic pressures were undeniable, the "Made in America" ethos that Sam Walton had championed seemed to be taking a backseat.

Walmart's "Made in USA" Initiatives: A Renewed Commitment

However, the story doesn't end there. In recent years, Walmart has made a conscious effort to re-emphasize its commitment to American manufacturing. Recognizing the growing consumer demand for domestically produced goods and the potential economic benefits of reshoring, the company has launched several initiatives aimed at increasing its purchase of U.S.-made products.

One significant program is the "American Jobs" initiative, which aims to support the creation or retention of American manufacturing jobs. Walmart has pledged billions of dollars to purchase products made in the USA, working with U.S. manufacturers to develop and source a wider range of goods. This includes everything from apparel and home goods to toys and electronics. This renewed focus on "Made in America" signals a recognition of the long-term value of domestic production.

The Impact on American Workers and Communities

When Walmart prioritizes American-made goods, the impact on American workers and communities can be substantial. Supporting domestic manufacturing translates directly into job creation in factories, warehouses, and related industries. These jobs provide livelihoods, stimulate local economies, and contribute to the overall health of the nation's industrial sector. Sam Walton understood this fundamental connection, and in its current "Made in USA" efforts, Walmart is attempting to recapture that spirit.

The benefits extend beyond direct employment. Investing in domestic supply chains can foster innovation, encourage the development of new technologies, and strengthen the country's manufacturing capabilities. It also reduces reliance on foreign supply chains, which can be vulnerable to geopolitical events or trade disputes. The emphasis on "Made in America" can, therefore, be seen as a strategic move for economic resilience.

Lessons from Sam Walton's "Made in America" Philosophy

Sam Walton's approach to sourcing and manufacturing offers timeless lessons for businesses and consumers alike. His belief in the power of American production, coupled with his relentless pursuit of value, provides a blueprint for how to build a successful enterprise while contributing to national prosperity.

The Importance of Supporting Domestic Industries

Walton's legacy underscores the crucial role that businesses play in supporting domestic industries. By actively seeking out and prioritizing American-made products, companies can contribute to job creation, economic growth, and the preservation of manufacturing expertise within the country. This isn't just altruism; it's often a smart business strategy that can lead to greater supply chain stability and a stronger brand reputation.

Consumer Power and the "Buy American" Movement

Consumers hold significant power in shaping manufacturing trends. The growing "Buy American" movement, fueled by a desire for quality, transparency, and economic patriotism, is a direct reflection of the values that Sam Walton championed. When consumers choose to purchase products that are made in America, they send a clear signal to manufacturers and retailers, influencing sourcing decisions and driving demand for domestic production. The choices we make at the checkout counter have a tangible impact on the factories and jobs in our own country.

The Enduring Relevance of American Ingenuity

Sam Walton's story is a testament to the enduring power of American ingenuity and entrepreneurship. His ability to build a global empire from scratch, while holding firm to principles of value and domestic support, is an inspiration. The "Made in America" concept, in its truest sense, is about more than just a label; it's about believing in the capacity of American workers, American innovation, and the potential for American businesses to thrive while contributing to the nation's well-being. As we navigate the complexities of the modern economy, the lessons learned from Sam Walton and his commitment to "Made in America" remain remarkably relevant, reminding us of the profound connection between commerce, community, and national pride.

Made in America: Sam Walton and the Paradox of Global Sourcing

Sam Walton, the visionary behind Walmart, built an empire on the bedrock of affordability and accessibility. His relentless pursuit of lower prices, however, has led to complex questions about the "Made in America" ethos. This delves into the intricate relationship between Walton's business model and American manufacturing, examining both the potential benefits and the substantial challenges presented by a global supply chain. The Walton Legacy and the American Dream Sam Walton's story is inextricably linked to the American Dream. He rose from humble beginnings to create a retail juggernaut that profoundly reshaped the consumer landscape. His emphasis on low prices, aggressive expansion, and a relentless focus on efficiency became the hallmark of Walmart. But this success story, while undeniably powerful, also triggered a national conversation about the impact of global sourcing on American jobs and manufacturing. Was Sam Walton truly "Made in America," or did his business model ultimately rely on a globalized approach? **The Drive for Low Prices: The Engine of Globalization** Walton's business model revolved around the concept of offering lower prices to consumers than competitors. To achieve this, he strategically sourced goods from various global suppliers. This approach benefited consumers directly, providing access to a wider range of products at competitive costs. Walmart's aggressive buying power allowed them to leverage economies of scale and secure lower prices from manufacturers worldwide, ultimately translating to savings for the customer. **(Data Visual):** A bar graph comparing the average price of a basket of consumer goods in 1970 versus 2023, highlighting the dramatic price reductions during the period of Walmart's rise, would be relevant here. Sources like the Bureau of Labor Statistics or academic studies on consumer price indices could be referenced. **Potential Advantages of "Made in America" for Walmart (If applicable):** • **Enhanced Brand Perception:** A "Made in America" focus could improve public perception and foster consumer trust in Walmart. • **Job Creation and Economic Growth:** Local manufacturing would stimulate employment opportunities within the United States. • **Stronger National Supply Chains:** A focus on domestic sourcing would create more robust and resilient supply chains, reducing reliance on overseas partners. • **Reduced Environmental Impact:** Depending on the manufacturing processes, supporting domestic production could lead to fewer

transportation-related emissions. **Challenges in Maintaining a "Made in America" Model** *Production Costs and Competitiveness:* A key challenge is the often higher production costs associated with American manufacturing. Finding ways to maintain pricing competitiveness while ensuring higher wages and fair labor practices is crucial for a "Made in America" strategy, which Walmart has not fully addressed. *Challenges in Sourcing:* Scaling manufacturing in the US while meeting Walmart's massive demand for a diverse range of products presents substantial logistical hurdles. *(Case Study):* Examples of US companies facing issues in maintaining competitiveness with global producers. **Ethical Considerations in Global Sourcing** *Labor Practices:* Walmart's extensive global supply chain has raised ethical concerns regarding worker treatment and working conditions in overseas factories. Maintaining ethical standards across the supply chain, including wages, working hours, and safety, is a significant challenge. *Environmental Impact:* Transportation costs, emissions, and the environmental footprint of manufacturing processes contribute to the broader environmental challenges of globalization.

The Case Study of American Made Components While Walmart hasn't fully embraced widespread "Made in America" production, some segments of their offerings **do** feature American-made parts or components. Analyzing these cases allows an understanding of which specific products, or supply chain tiers, would benefit from a "Made in America" approach. *(Case Study):* Focus on specific examples where Walmart features American-made components within certain product lines, such as electronics or clothing. This demonstrates a nuanced understanding of the issue.

Actionable Insights for Walmart (and other retailers):

- **Strategic Partnerships:** Develop strategic partnerships with American manufacturers to understand their needs, challenges, and sourcing strategies.
- **Investing in American Production Facilities:** Explore opportunities to invest in and support US manufacturing facilities that have the capacity to meet increasing demands.
- **Transparency and Traceability:** Implement thorough transparency across the supply chain to ensure ethical labor practices and environmental sustainability.
- **Worker Training & Development:** Work with American manufacturers to enhance their workforce skills and create opportunities for career advancement.

5 Advanced FAQs:

1. Can Walmart transition to a predominantly "Made in America" model while maintaining its low-price strategy?
2. How can Walmart prioritize sustainability concerns and ethical labor practices within its global supply chain?
3. What government policies could incentivize or support a shift towards more domestic manufacturing?
4. How can innovative technologies, like automation and 3D printing, assist in revitalizing US manufacturing?
5. What is the long-term impact of global sourcing and "Made in America" on the American economy and worker livelihoods?

Conclusion: The legacy of Sam Walton is complex and multifaceted. While his focus on affordability benefited consumers, it also presented challenges to American manufacturing. A complete shift to a "Made in America" model may not be feasible for a retailer of Walmart's scale, but the company, and other retailers, can strategically integrate American manufacturing components in a way that benefits both consumers and American workers. The key lies in a delicate balance between global competitiveness and ethical labor practices, environmental sustainability, and supporting the American manufacturing sector where appropriate.

The Enduring Legacy of "Made in America": Sam Walton's Vision and Its Impact

In the annals of American retail, few figures loom as large as Sam Walton. The founder of Walmart, a titan of commerce that reshaped how millions shop, harbored a deep-seated belief in the power and potential of American manufacturing. The phrase "Made in America" was more than just a slogan for Walton; it was a guiding principle that fueled his business philosophy and contributed significantly to his empire's success. This article delves into Sam Walton's unwavering commitment to American-made products, exploring the genesis of this conviction, its practical implementation within Walmart, and the enduring legacy and complexities of his "Made in America" ethos.

From Humble Beginnings to Retail Giant: The Genesis of a Vision

Born in Oklahoma during the Great Depression, Sam Walton's early life was marked by a profound understanding of the value of hard work and thrift. His family's itinerant lifestyle, driven by his father's search for better opportunities, exposed him to the struggles of ordinary Americans. This formative experience instilled in him a keen awareness of the economic realities faced by his potential customer base. He understood that for many, affordability was paramount, and supporting local economies was not just a feel-good notion but a necessity for survival and prosperity.

Walton's first foray into retail began with a Ben Franklin five-and-dime store in Newport, Arkansas. It was here, in this small-town setting, that he began to hone his retail acumen. He observed what sold, what customers wanted, and crucially, where those products came from. Even in these early days, Walton was known for his sharp eye for sourcing quality goods at competitive prices. This early success laid the groundwork for the immense retail powerhouse he would later build.

The "Made in America" Imperative: A Cornerstone of Walmart's Strategy

As Walmart expanded, Walton's commitment to sourcing domestically became a defining characteristic. Unlike many retailers who were increasingly looking to overseas markets for cheaper labor and production, Walton actively sought out American manufacturers. This wasn't simply altruism; it was a shrewd business decision rooted in several key factors:

Quality Assurance and Control

Walton believed that American-made goods generally offered superior quality. He understood that consistent product quality was essential for building customer trust and loyalty. By working with domestic suppliers, he could more easily monitor production processes, ensuring that the products on Walmart's shelves met his exacting standards. This reduced the risk of defective merchandise and customer complaints, which in turn minimized returns and bolstered the store's reputation. The reliability of **American-made goods** was a significant differentiator.

Shorter Supply Chains and Faster Inventory Turnover

One of the most significant advantages of sourcing domestically was the reduction in lead times. Shorter supply chains meant that Walmart could replenish inventory more quickly, allowing for greater responsiveness to changing consumer demand. This agility was crucial in the fast-paced retail environment. It also meant less capital tied up in transit, improving inventory turnover rates and enhancing cash flow. The efficiency of **domestic sourcing** was a key operational advantage.

Supporting Local Economies and Communities

Sam Walton was a staunch believer in the economic well-being of the communities where Walmart operated. By prioritizing American manufacturers, he was indirectly supporting American jobs and businesses. This created a virtuous cycle: Walmart's success helped American factories thrive, which in turn provided employment for American workers, who then became Walmart's customers. This symbiotic relationship was central to Walton's vision and a powerful marketing narrative. The concept of **buying American** resonated deeply.

Brand Identity and Consumer Appeal

In the era of globalization, the "Made in America" label held a certain cachet. Consumers often associated it with quality, patriotism, and fair labor practices. Walton understood this intrinsic appeal and leveraged it to his advantage. Promoting American-made products allowed Walmart to cultivate a brand image that was not only about low prices but also about supporting the nation's economy. This emotional connection with customers proved to be a powerful driver of sales. The narrative of **supporting American jobs** was compelling.

Implementation: How "Made in America" Was Woven into Walmart's Fabric

Walton didn't just espouse the "Made in America" ideal; he actively implemented it throughout Walmart's operations:

Building Relationships with Domestic Suppliers

Instead of simply demanding lower prices, Walton focused on building long-term partnerships with American manufacturers. He visited factories, understood their challenges, and worked collaboratively to find mutually beneficial solutions. He was known for his direct approach, often negotiating deals on the spot, fostering a sense of trust and commitment. This hands-on

approach to **supplier relationships** was instrumental.

The "Buy American" Campaign

Walmart launched explicit "Buy American" campaigns, highlighting products made in the United States. These initiatives often included in-store signage, advertising, and special promotions, educating consumers about the availability and benefits of purchasing American-made goods. This proactive marketing effort made the "Made in America" message a central part of the Walmart shopping experience. The impact of **Walmart's American-made initiatives** was significant.

Product Mix and Merchandising

Walton made a conscious effort to ensure that a significant portion of Walmart's product mix consisted of American-made items. Buyers were encouraged to seek out domestic sources, and merchandise was often displayed to emphasize its American origin. This ensured that the "Made in America" promise was visible and accessible to shoppers at every turn. The careful selection of **American-made products** was a strategic advantage.

The Evolution and Challenges of "Made in America" at Walmart

While Sam Walton's commitment to "Made in America" was strong and impactful, the reality of globalized commerce presented ongoing challenges. As Walmart grew into a global behemoth, the pressure to source products from lower-cost countries intensified. Globalization offered unparalleled opportunities for cost reduction, which was a cornerstone of Walmart's low-price strategy. This led to a gradual shift in sourcing for many product categories, even as the company continued to champion American manufacturing in specific areas.

In recent years, the retail landscape has continued to evolve. Consumer attitudes towards globalization and the origins of products have become more nuanced. While many still value "Made in America," the economic realities of global supply chains and the competitive pricing pressures mean that achieving a purely "Made in America" product mix for a retailer of Walmart's scale is incredibly complex. Furthermore, defining what constitutes "Made in America" can itself be a challenge, with varying definitions and regulations surrounding country-of-origin labeling.

Despite these complexities, Walmart has continued to make efforts to increase its sourcing of American-made goods. The company has invested in domestic manufacturing and has highlighted its commitment to supporting American jobs and communities. However, the scale and scope of these efforts are often debated, and the company faces ongoing scrutiny regarding its global sourcing practices. The ongoing discussion around **global sourcing vs. domestic production** is central to this.

The Enduring Legacy of Sam Walton's Vision

Sam Walton's "Made in America" philosophy left an indelible mark on Walmart and the broader retail industry. His conviction that supporting American manufacturers could be a successful business strategy challenged conventional wisdom and demonstrated the power of aligning business goals with national economic interests. His legacy serves as a reminder that the choices retailers make about sourcing have profound implications for jobs, communities, and the national economy.

While the retail environment has changed dramatically since Walton's time, his core belief in the value of American craftsmanship and the importance of supporting domestic industries continues to resonate. The phrase "Made in America," though sometimes complex to implement in its purest form, remains a powerful symbol of quality, ingenuity, and national pride. Sam Walton's dedication to this principle, even in the face of evolving global economic forces, solidifies his place as a visionary who understood the interconnectedness of business and country. His impact on the **American retail landscape** and his influence on the **Made in USA movement** remain significant.

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In conclusion, digital access to Made In America Sam Walton demonstrates the powerful fusion of technology and learning. Through responsible use of legal platforms, users can maximize knowledge acquisition while supporting ethical practices and cybersecurity. Digital downloads enable continuous intellectual growth, making education more accessible, flexible, and relevant in the digital age.

Questions & Answers About made in america sam walton

No	Question	Answer
1	What does 'Made in America' mean in the context of Sam Walton's Walmart?	For Sam Walton, 'Made in America' meant prioritizing sourcing products from American manufacturers and suppliers. He believed this supported the U.S. economy, created jobs, and offered customers good value.
2	Was Sam Walton's commitment to 'Made in America' always easy to maintain?	No, it wasn't always easy. As Walmart grew, sourcing exclusively American-made goods became challenging due to cost, availability, and global supply chains. The company has faced evolving strategies over time.
3	How did Sam Walton's 'Made in America' philosophy influence Walmart's early success?	It was a significant differentiator. By championing American products, Walton appealed to patriotic sentiment and offered competitive pricing, which resonated strongly with his target customer base and contributed to Walmart's rapid expansion.
4	Did Sam Walton actively seek out American suppliers for Walmart?	Yes, absolutely. Sam Walton made it a point to visit factories, meet with manufacturers, and build relationships with American suppliers. He was known for his hands-on approach to sourcing.

5	What are some common criticisms or debates surrounding Walmart's 'Made in America' initiatives, both during Sam Walton's time and since?	Criticisms often revolve around the actual percentage of American-made goods, the impact of global sourcing on U.S. jobs, and whether 'Made in America' claims are truly robust or more of a marketing tool. Debates continue on the definition and feasibility of such initiatives.
6	How did Sam Walton's focus on 'Made in America' align with his overall business strategy?	It aligned perfectly with his strategy of offering 'everyday low prices.' By cutting out middlemen and working directly with U.S. manufacturers, he aimed to reduce costs and pass those savings onto consumers, a core tenet of Walmart's success.
7	Are there any modern initiatives or continuations of Sam Walton's 'Made in America' ethos at Walmart today?	While the landscape has changed, Walmart has had various 'Made in America' programs and commitments over the years, sometimes focusing on specific product categories or pledging to increase domestic sourcing. However, the scale and focus have evolved since Sam Walton's era.

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