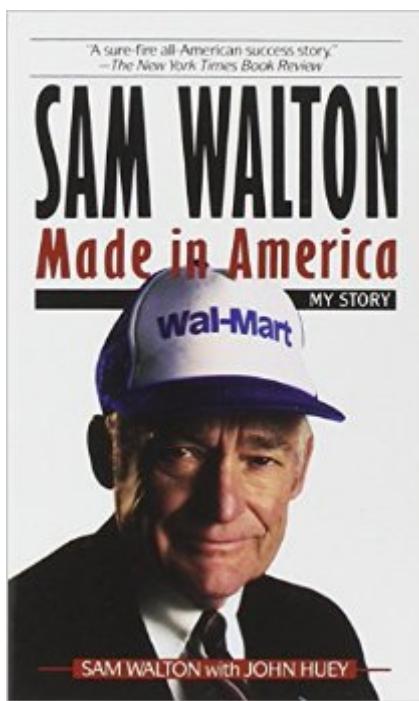


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Sam Walton: Made In America



Synopsis

Meet a genuine American folk hero cut from the homespun cloth of America's heartland: Sam Walton, who parlayed a single dime store in a hardscrabble cotton town into Wal-Mart, the largest retailer in the world.Â Â The undisputed merchant king of the late twentieth century, Sam never lost the common touch.Â Â Here, finally, inimitable words.Â Â Genuinely modest, but always sure of his ambitions and achievements.Â Â Sam shares his thinking in a candid, straight-from-the-shoulder style. In a story rich with anecdotes and the "rules of the road" of both Main Street and Wall Street, Sam Walton chronicles the inspiration, heart, and optimism that propelled him to lasso the American Dream.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (512 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Walton's story is certainly worth reading. He built a business - now the biggest in the world - that can only be described as the work of a genius. The great virtue of this book is the portrait of his mind: he was utterly obsessed with retailing and bent a truly formidable energy to think about it at almost every working hour of the day. It may sound corny, but he reminds me of Miles Davis, who lived, breathed and ate his music. Walton looked at things from every angle, learning as he worked and unafraid to walk into a competitor's office unannounced with a tennis racket to talk. He was a showman and true believer, but also focused maniacally on operations and implementation. (About this, he pontificates about his competitors enjoying the trappings of success to the detriment of their attention to business - surely this is true in some cases, but repeatedly hearing it gets a bit boring.) The business model he created is simple: always offer the lowest price possible, depending

on higher volume to generate higher profit. The second pillar was to relentlessly pursue logistical superiority, in both a distribution system and computer-aided controls, enabling Wal-Mart to continually enhance its efficiency and speed of delivery. As the company grew, it was able to use its power to force suppliers to sell at ever-lower prices. Its stores spread slowly, oozing out like molasses, always supported by the distribution system. The third pillar, which in my opinion is exaggerated to the point of self-delusion, is the "family" aspect of employees (or "associates"), both as members of a store and in relation to customers. Certainly there is something to that, but it is far more limited than he seems to be aware of.

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