



# Walmart encouraging entrepreneurs to take part in Open Call event

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ST. LOUIS, MO - Entrepreneurs from across the Metro East and the state of Illinois are invited to take advantage of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to pitch their "made in the USA" product ideas to Walmart buyers as part of the retailer's annual Open Call event.

Registration for the event is now underway at [walmart-jump.com](http://walmart-jump.com), and will continue through May 18. Those that are selected to participate in Open Call will have the potential get their products on the shelves of the World's Largest Retailer and/or online at [www.Walmart.com](http://www.Walmart.com) or [www.Samsclub.com](http://www.Samsclub.com).

"We are excited to once again invite businesses from all 50 states to meet with Walmart buyers who have one goal in mind: to buy more American products for our stores, clubs and Walmart.com," said Cindi Marsiglio, Walmart's vice president of U.S. Manufacturing. "By investing in products that support American jobs, we are able to

bring new products to our shelves that our customers want and new jobs to our communities. Increasing domestic manufacturing will help create additional jobs in the U.S., and that's good for American businesses."

Walmart buyers will be looking to make deals of varying sizes. In some cases, Walmart will select businesses to supply product to a handful of stores in a local market, while other businesses will be chosen to supply hundreds or thousands of stores, in addition to selling their products at Sam's Club locations and at Walmart.com.

Kansas City-based Mighty Good Solutions is among the many Midwestern companies who have signed successful deals as part of previous Open Call events. In 2014, the company landed a deal to place its product, the Mighty Handle, which allows users to carry multiple plastic shopping bags at one time, on the shelves of 4,500 Walmart stores nationwide.

"For small manufacturing companies like mine, Open Call is really like playing in the Super Bowl," said Ben Rondo, co-founder of Mighty Good Solutions. "Our Open Call deal truly put us on the map. Prior to our deal, our product was only available in regional grocery store chains. Now, the Mighty Handle can be found in every city in the country."

In January 2013, Walmart committed to American renewal by announcing it intends to help boost job creation and U.S. manufacturing through buying an additional \$250 billion in products that support American jobs over 10 years. Based on data from Boston Consulting Group, it's estimated that 1 million new U.S. jobs will be created through the Open Call initiative.

## **About Walmart**

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (NYSE: WMT) helps people around the world save money and live better - anytime and anywhere - in retail stores, online, and through their mobile devices. Each week, over 260 million customers and members visit our 11,695 stores under 59 banners in 28 countries and e-commerce websites in 11 countries. With fiscal year 2017 revenue of \$485.9 billion, Walmart employs approximately 2.3 million associates worldwide. Walmart continues to be a leader in sustainability, corporate philanthropy and employment opportunity. Additional information about Walmart can be found by visiting <http://corporate.walmart.com> on Facebook at <http://facebook.com/walmart> and on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/walmart>.

## **About Walmart in Illinois**

In Illinois, we serve customers at 196 retail units and online through Walmart Grocery Pickup, Walmart.com and Jet.com. We are proud to employ 54,698 associates in Illinois. Walmart supports local businesses, spending \$54.1 billion with Illinois suppliers in FYE16, which supported 261,439 supplier jobs. Walmart and the Walmart Foundation are active in Illinois communities where we live and work and invest in communities through local grants, customer engagement and associate volunteer efforts. In FYE16, we contributed more than \$44.1 million in cash and in-kind donations to local nonprofits in Illinois and our Illinois associates volunteered more than 39,381 hours with local causes. Learn more at the Walmart Today blog, and our Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram channels.