Subject: Enlightening article on Wal Mart
Posted by colinhester on Tue, 30 Nov 2004 19:57:34 GMT
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http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-11/29/content_395728.htm

Subject: Re: Enlightening article on Wal Mart
Posted by Manualblock on Tue, 30 Nov 2004 22:29:03 GMT
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The Chinese government has demanded and recieved from Wal-Mart the right for their workers to unionize. Granted the union in China equals the government but it still has the negotiating power of traditional unions. So; how fair is that? Since they are prevented from participating in unions here. Therefor since many have no health care benefits and a good percentage recieve state aid in the form of food stamps etc. It's nice to know that we as taxpayers subsidize Wal-Marts workforce. Think about it the next time you buy their cheap crappy stuff and think you are saving money. Especially after you need to replace what you bought 6 months later.(I don't mean you Colin; just generalising)

Subject: Re: Enlightening article on Wal Mart
Posted by colinhester on Wed, 01 Dec 2004 03:31:22 GMT
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To be honest, I do not know what to think of Wal Mart. I'm happy that a once-small Arkansas store made it (I'm orginally from the northeast part,) but they are no longer a small Arkansas store. They played the game better than anyone, not only going from a large store with strong buying power, but now they are a mega empire that influences foreign trade policies. Yeah, their quality is suspect, but what store's isn't?They are playing the game to the ultimate extreme. Reminds me of the cartoon "Pinky and the Brain," where at the end of the show Pinky asks the Brain, "Hey Brain, what are we goin' do tonight?" The Brain replies, "Same thing we do every night; try and take over the world."".....Colin

Subject: Re: Enlightening article on Wal Mart
Posted by Manualblock on Wed, 01 Dec 2004 13:00:58 GMT
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Pinky and The Brain; now you are talkin'! Great cartoon.

Subject: Re: Enlightening article on Wal Mart
Posted by colinhester on Wed, 01 Dec 2004 16:54:22 GMT
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Sadly, I foresee China's history reading more like the Lorax.....Colin

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Subject: Re: Enlightening article on Wal Mart
Posted by Thermionic on Thu, 02 Dec 2004 16:01:53 GMT
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When Sam Walton was alive, Wal Mart had much less foreign made garbage. AAMOF, everything about them was different (and IMO better!) Wal Mart has helped to create this current situation with Chinese made goods. One of my closest friends knows some people who have been involved with Wal Mart at rather high levels (we live in western Arkansas). They claim that as the company got bigger and more powerful, they began to screw a lot of U.S. companies out of business, or else force them to move their plants to foreign soild. Wal Mart would approach a domestic company and strike a deal with them for a million widgets a year at $10 each. Not being stupid, Company X didn't look a gift horse in the mouth and would always jump at the opportunity of a free meal ticket. But since Company X didn't have the capability to produce a million widgets a year, they knew they'd have to expand.After a few years in their huge new facility, Wal Mart would approach them at yearly contract time and say, "Ya know, we're just paying too much for these widgets. We're going to give you $6 each, take it or leave it." Well, now they have Company X bent over a barrel. They have a huge plant with enormous overhead, and Wal Mart is 70% of their business. At this point, if they lose them, they've lost the whole shootin' match. It's O-V-E-R.The numbers on paper say they can't sell their widgets for $6, so what to do? Their choices are to either lose their bread and butter customer and go back to the small time; not really an option. OR..... shut down that facility and move all their equipment to Mexico or China, and all those American jobs with it. Not only are American jobs lost, but U.S. government revenue from income tax, those workers' insurance and investment plans, and their hopes and dreams. Plus, all that dough is now going into the Chinese economy, not ours. Guess what the commie government is spending it on? Why, building the largest military force in the history of the world, with a few thousand nukes pointed at every free capitalist nation on Earth! Courtesy of your friendly neighborhood Wal Mart..... Of course, the other side of that story is that we cheapskate Americans have also had our hand in creating the situation, too. People are no longer interested in quality, just as long as it's cheap.Thermionic

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Subject: Re: Enlightening article on Wal Mart
Posted by Manualblock on Thu, 02 Dec 2004 21:46:49 GMT
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Hear;hear;hear!!! You have struck the nail full force on the head. But first lets remmember those that shop at these glorified flea markets are not saving money. They are subsidizing health care and many other tax issues for Wal-Mart to steal labor from people who have no other options; through increased tax requirements to fund the shortfall created by the pathetic salaries and the pirated tax incentives offered these creepy Wal-marts and I am sorry but my dad always said you don't save by bying cheap goods. Let the shoppers refrain from needing all these gimcracks and tchochkies like little kids and frequent some American made quality stuff for a change. If you can't afford quality wait and save. Grow up. I love it whenever one of these sweatshops is prevented from building somewhere.

Subject: Re: Enlightening article on Wal Mart
Posted by colinhester on Mon, 06 Dec 2004 02:51:00 GMT
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I agree WalMart was a much friendlier place years ago. I used to be fun to go there. I'm not sure if it was just because I was a kid, different times or what. I know two owners of companies that have had dealings with WalMart, and they both turned out for the best. The first case is RusCo, based out of Jonesboro, AR. I went to ASU with the two founding brothers. While in high school, they started to make windchimes for the neighbors. Long story short, the business grew and they are now the supplier of windchimes to WalMart and still based out of J'boro. The second instance happened while I was in grad school working for a furnite store making and setting up waterbeds (oh, the stories I could tell ;)) Anyway, the guy I worked for was approached by WalMart to sell speciality waterbeds, kids waterbeds that look like old cars. Even though the volume was going to be huge, WalMart would only buy on consignment; so, if the bed did not seel, the owner was out the cost. He did not do business and is still around. Again, I really don't know what to think. WalMart has played the game well, but at what cost? Good for WalMart and its share holders. A kid I grew up with in the early '80s did all sorts of odd jobs around the neighborhood and for his father. The only thing he ever bought were WalMart stocks. Mind you this kid was 10-11 at the time. Well, by the time he got to college he was able to pay for it and law school without taking out a loan. Nice to see a fellow Arkansan around here. I grew up in the NE corner - Paragould to be exact. I attended UofA for a couple of years - that time of my life is real fuzzy due to mass alcohol intoxication.....Colin

Subject: Re: Enlightening article on Wal Mart
Posted by Wayne Parham on Mon, 06 Dec 2004 03:49:00 GMT
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I did a lot of business with Wal-Mart in the 80s too. Parham Data did several prototypes for them, most did not sell. But several did, and we put thousands of our products in their stores. I designed communications devices and specialty products for them. Data communications, telephony and even NiCad battery chargers that combat memory effect. Everything I designed for them was to be used in the stores, not to be sold on the shelves.What I found was that there were several competing groups within the company that did projects. Winning projects would get placed in the stores, and other projects would die. That was not really any different than other corporate enterprises. I cultivated a relationship with some of the people in various groups, and I think they considered me to be a reliable vendor.Parham Data was only asked to warranty maybe 10 devices out of tens of thousands that were put into the stores, and I built prototypes quickly for them. I would usually make the design and first proof-of-concept prototype at cost and if the project was successful, then I would have a few thousand built for use in the stores. All production was done in Tulsa, Oklahoma, so our products were 100% American made. I don't think that matters anymore but back then it was a badge of honor for Wal-Mart. That relationship was a pretty good deal but I really worked hard and, in the end, other things became more lucrative for me.I never had a problem with Wal-Mart invoices getting paid, but I heard a lot of horror stories. I always sent in the paperwork just as they asked, and would be paid in 45-60 days. Several people told me that was quicker than normal and that 90 and 120 days was not unusual from Wal-Mart. I was pretty dilligent at making sure the paperwork had dotted I's and crossed T's because I didn't want problems, so all my large orders went pretty smoothly. It's always a hassle to orchestrate a few thousand products with hundreds of parts inside, so dealing with a few extra forms to expedite receivables wasn't a big deal.Back in the 80s, there was one day a week called "vendor day" that all Wal-Mart's buyers would greet new vendors. That was really something, because there were thousands of people from all over the world in Bentonville on that day. After you got "connected," you really didn't want to be there on vendor day because the place was a zoo. But it was interesting to see. I don't know if they still do it that way or not.