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Sam's Club plans 30-store expansion

Sam's Club, a division of Walmart Inc., plans to open more than 30 new clubs across the U.S. over the next several years. The first location, which is planned in Florida, is slated to open in 2024. In addition to new clubs, the company has a multiple-year plan to invest in and modernize its supply chain through new distribution and fulfillment center locations across the country, including cutting-edge automation. Sam's Club will launch five new supply chain fulfillment and distribution centers in 2023, with the first location planned in Georgia in Q3.

The decision to invest in expanding its physical footprint was motivated by historic comparable sales growth, and a record rise in membership over the last two years. Sam's Club has continued to prioritize products and services that drive shopping trips and demonstrate the value of membership.

"We've seen remarkable growth over the past few years with a record number of members, and we're excited to bring the experience of Sam's Club to even more markets as we expand our footprint," said Kathryn McLay, CEO at Sam's Club. "And as we open new clubs in new locations, we'll continue to innovate so that our members shop and save whether in person or online."

Club Features

Over the past several years, Sam's Club has invested significantly in its physical footprint, enhancing member experiences with improved member service desks, and redesigning the majority of its 600 clubs, making them brighter, easier to navigate, and more functional. The brand has also invested significantly in its in-club technology to improve the shopping experience with Scan & Go Checkout, Scan & Go Fuel, Scan & Ship, Curbside Pickup, and other omnichannel offerings.

The new clubs will be approximately 160,000 square feet, larger than most current locations. Most new clubs will feature a seafood / sushi island, full-service floral, and walk-in dairy and fresh coolers. Additionally, members will benefit from a larger healthcare space inclusive of a patient waiting area, health services suites, private consultation rooms, and dedicated hearing and optical centers. Many of the new locations will also include fuel stations and liquor offerings.

Notably, there will be a significant expansion in the omni-fulfillment footprint allowing for a dedicated space for curbside pickup, delivery to home and ship from club orders. This area will include walk-in coolers and expanded doors for outgoing delivery truck efficiency.

Supply Chain Enhancement

To support Sam's Club's significant growth over the past few years, coupled with expanded omnichannel options for their members, the company has undertaken a significant transformation of its supply chain, evolving network and end-to-end capabilities. This will enable noticeable increases in member experience and service times along with supporting the core club growth. Over the next several years, Sam's Club will add numerous new facilities to its supply chain network as well as retrofitting a number of existing facilities for more enhanced physical and digital capabilities.

"We have an opportunity to place ourselves on the cutting edge of efficiency and automation, unique to our business model," said Joseph Godsey, senior vice president of supply chain at Sam's Club. "The most exciting thing, though, will be when the member sees and feels the enhancements — and loves us even more."

With this investment, clubs and members will become significantly closer on average to a supply chain facility. As part of these new footprints, Sam's Club is launching highly automated facilities with state-of-the-art automation and robotics. By combining the shorter distances and the efficiencies added via process, automation and digitization, replenishment of clubs and item fulfillment for members will be best in class.

Focus on Sustainability

Sam's Club is committed to constructing and designing its future facilities sustainably. The company's focus on becoming more regenerative is embedded across its operations. It is designing future clubs with zero emission strategies built in through electrification of equipment, including electric ovens, HVAC equipment, water heating systems, and low emissions refrigeration systems. In addition, the company is committed to installing energy efficient LED lighting, electric vehicle charging stations for delivery vehicles and new "green" refrigerant in its new locations.

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