

WALMART SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH LIGHTBULBS: FLICKERING OUT?

Sales of compact fluorescent light bulbs have declined 25% from their peak in 2007. Sales in some regions such as Vermont and parts of Massachusetts have declined 35% to 50% from their peak...Only one in four bulbs purchased is a CFL...These numbers paint a troubling picture. In these tough economic times, CFL programs are especially important in getting consumers past the first cost barrier that often prevents adoption of energy efficient products.

—Richard H. Karney

Matt Kistler stared at the letter dated September 2009 from Richard Karney, products manager in the department of energy at ENERGY STAR, and wondered how to react (**Exhibit 1**). Karney's role was to support the adoption of energy-efficient devices across the country to decrease America's dependence on foreign energy supplies. As such, Karney served as a key stakeholder in eco-efficiency and had a broad view on the state of the nation's energy efficiency efforts. Karney's matter-of-fact assessment—"It's apparent the market is headed in the wrong direction"—caught Kistler's attention, especially given all Walmart Stores, Inc., (Walmart) had done to advance compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs).

CFLs were a signature piece in Walmart's sustainability effort and one which Kistler had publicly championed for the past few years. As senior vice president for sustainability at Walmart, Kistler had given frequent talks and media interviews about minimizing the company's environmental footprint. He still was personally invested in the CFL effort even though his day-to-day activities increasingly pulled him away from that program.

When Kistler helped launch the CFL initiative in 2005, consumers perceived CFLs as a poor replacement for conventional incandescent light bulbs because of their up-front cost and questionable light quality. In fact, persuading consumers to adopt this strange-looking bulb proved to be a challenge, even though CFLs were more energy-efficient and lasted much longer than incandescent light bulbs. "At face value, it seems a little counterintuitive because it costs more; it's a dollar or two more than a conventional light bulb," said Walmart's CMO John

This case was prepared by Tucker Norton (MBAE '10) under the supervision of Professor Marian Moore with contributions from the MBA for Executives class of 2010. It was written as a basis for class discussion rather than to illustrate effective or ineffective handling of an administrative situation. Copyright © 2012 by the University of Virginia Darden School Foundation, Charlottesville, VA. All rights reserved. To order copies, send an e-mail to sales@ardenbusinesspublishing.com. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, used in a spreadsheet, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise—without the permission of the Darden School Foundation.

Fleming. “But when you really drill into it, it saves over a ton of greenhouse gas in the life of the bulb. So that’s one bulb making a difference and adding value for our customers.” To help drive sales of these new bulbs, Kistler and others in Walmart worked with suppliers to improve the quality and reduce the retail price, devoting additional advertising and shelf space to CFLs. In one ad, a middle-aged woman stood in a forest while she highlighted the benefits of GE’s CFLs:

This is a GE compact fluorescent light bulb. Didn’t cost a lot because I got it at Walmart. It can save me \$47 in electricity costs—\$47 just by changing a light bulb. But here’s the really neat thing: If every Walmart shopper, all 200 million of us, used just one bulb, it’d be like taking over 11 million cars off the road. That’s a pretty big deal for a little light bulb.¹

The ad may be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4XGshOMljFs>.

Referencing the improvements that were made in CFLs, Michael Petras, GE’s vice president of lighting, said, “The cost is good, it comes on quicker, the colors are better.” Due to product improvements and prominent positioning at an attractive price point, GE sold \$75 million of CFLs that year, much of them to Walmart. CFL sales across the industry were up 20%, and sales of traditional incandescent light bulbs had fallen by 7%.

By October 2007, Walmart’s goal of selling 100 million CFLs was achieved. Widely trumpeted in the press, this historic milestone meant that energy savings were roughly equivalent to taking one million cars off the road.² At the same time, however, the achievement highlighted how little CFLs had penetrated: With over 100 million households in the United States, this impressive-sounding result actually meant less than one CFL per residence on average.³ Kistler knew that he had much more work ahead in positioning and pricing if CFLs were going to become a viable presence in the lighting category.

Lighting Basics: Incandescent versus CFLs

The incandescent light bulb had remained substantially unchanged since its invention by Thomas Edison. The average 100-watt light bulb used only 10% of its energy for light. The rest was given off as heat. Although modest improvements were made in extending the lifetime of the bulb, there was little progress in any meaningful change in product performance. Pricing of such bulbs could be as low as 25 cents each, making them an inexpensive purchase for average U.S. households.

CFLs had gas-filled tubes that replaced the tungsten filament, and the resulting light was due to excitation of small amounts of mercury in the gas. As a result, energy requirements

¹ YouTube.com, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4XGshOMljFs> (accessed April 6, 2011).

² Charles Fishman, “How Many Light Bulbs Does It Take to Change the World? One. And You’re Looking at It,” *Fast Company*, December 19, 2007.

³ U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 data.

dropped by approximately a factor of four: A 23-watt fluorescent bulb provided the same light output as a 100-watt incandescent with much less heat generated. Without the fragile tungsten filament, a CFL had a much longer life, almost 10 times that of a normal bulb. But the manufacturing process was more complicated for a CFL, and the resulting purchase price could be 3 to 10 times more per bulb versus the price of an incandescent light bulb. Additionally, because of the several milligrams of mercury content, these bulbs could not be thrown away; they had to be recycled. Occasionally, concern about the mercury content surfaced in the media—one panicked consumer called her local hazmat team to clean up a broken CFL, paying a \$2,000 cleanup bill in the process. Such negative publicity, though infrequent, muddled the generally good sustainability story for CFLs.

Role of the Walmart Sustainability Officer

Kistler's main responsibility was integrating sustainability into Walmart's culture and brand. Connecting sustainability to the company's growth strategy was key, and getting the whole company engaged had tested Kistler's influence and networking skills. Kistler had an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management and management experience with several companies (**Exhibit 2**), but in his Walmart role, he had fewer than 10 people reporting to him, an incredibly small number compared with Walmart's 100,000-plus suppliers and more than two million employees. At Walmart, Kistler saw his role as an evangelist, encouraging company stakeholders to innovate, collaborate, and support its sustainability goals.

Although Kistler had been with Walmart only six years, he also understood that his mandate was to fit sustainability within the Walmart culture. But Walmart's margins were razor-thin, with earnings of just 2%, and this parsimonious attitude pervaded the company in many ways. Used furniture was commonplace in conference rooms and offices. Even the shelving and desks were Formica. This mindset combined with operational excellence allowed Walmart to pass on its savings to consumers while reinforcing its ubiquitous value proposition of low prices. After all, Kistler wondered if customers would be willing to pay more for greener products such as CFLs, even though recent Walmart commercials underscored the savings benefits that consumers gained from shopping there.

The commercials may be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ap6zzn1eLYc> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMugsudRVi8>.

Kistler also wrestled with other challenges in developing better, greener products, including the unintended consequences that resulted. He already had one example for the CFL initiative. Since CFLs lasted much longer, the lighting industry would have to adjust to selling substantially fewer, higher-cost light bulbs, which certainly meant a difficult economic change for those companies. As Michael Petras said, "The economics are better with incandescent

bulbs.” Additionally, because CFLs were disproportionately made in Asia, unlike incandescent light bulbs, manufacturing shifted overseas, and many traditional light bulb plants closed.⁴

Birth and Growth of Walmart

Samuel Moore Walton was born on an Oklahoma farm on March 29, 1918. After serving in World War II, Walton returned home and paid \$25,000 for a retail store in Newport, Arkansas. Ultimately, Walton was forced to give up the store when he could not afford to renew the lease. In 1951, he bought another store, this time in Bentonville, Arkansas, and called it Walton’s Five and Dime, a venture that proved more successful. By the end of that decade, Walton had spread his retail ownership to more than a dozen stores across Arkansas, Kansas, and Missouri.

In 1962, Walton opened the first Walmart store in Rogers, Arkansas. Walmart’s beginnings were humble enough: a large, cluttered store with low-priced products. Back then, Kmart and Sears were the fearsome goliaths of the retail industry, and Walmart’s success was by no means assured. Walton instilled the values of hard work into his company. CEO David Glass said that Walton looked “to improve something every day” in its merchandising and operations, changes often inspired by visiting competitors’ stores to observe best practices.⁵ By 1969, the company was incorporated and went public on the New York Stock Exchange shortly thereafter.

As Walmart grew, its reliance on technology and supply chain excellence proved to be a major advantage in the marketplace. Long before competitors even had the capability, Walmart was data-harvesting store sales trends to allocate its inventories more efficiently and keep labor costs down, which were critical cost factors for a retail business. Walton’s philosophy on low-cost operations meant that these cost savings were passed on to customers rather than retained as profit. The lower prices helped to drive Walmart’s increased volumes more quickly than its competitors’ and allowed it to build scale and fine-tune its operational strategies in its battle with Kmart and Sears. In 1987 Walton opened his thousandth store; just four years later Walmart passed Sears as the largest retailer nationwide. When Walton died in 1992, he was the richest man in America. Walmart was growing stronger, becoming the largest U.S. private employer in 1997.

Despite all this success, soon after the year 2000, under the leadership of CEO Lee Scott, Walmart’s image got mired in controversies about fair wages, environmental impacts, and pricing mom-and-pop stores out of business:

⁴ Charles Fishman, “Walmart Puts Some Muscle behind Power-Sipping Bulbs,” *New York Times*, January 2, 2007.

⁵ Jeffrey A. Krames, *What the Best CEOs Know: 7 Exceptional Leaders and Their Lessons for Transforming Any Business* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005).

- Walmart was sued more than 6,000 times in 2002.⁶
- Walmart lost a 2002 Arkansas Supreme Court ruling over preventing its workers from organizing a union.
- Walmart was hit with a class-action lawsuit in 2003 for not paying its workers for overtime.
- Walmart was criticized in a 2004 PBS *Frontline* documentary “Is Walmart Good for America?”⁷
- Walmart was denounced for its practice of locking employees in overnight to prevent “shrinkage.”⁸

This fusillade of bad news was unprecedented for a company accustomed to earning respect under its universally loved founder. Much of the criticism caught Walmart leadership by surprise and made its executives appear out of touch. “We always believed that if we sat here in Bentonville and took care of our customers and took care of associates, the world itself would leave us alone,” said Scott.⁹ Ironically, Walmart won *Fortune*’s Most Admired Company award for 2003 and 2004.

In June 2005, Walmart’s annual gathering of shareholders marked a turning point for Walmart. To thunderous applause, Walmart leadership admitted the mistakes that led to its stock price drop of 20%. Then-executive David Glass explained to the crowd of 20,000:

While we’re trying to do the right thing by our customers and shareholders, we did nothing about our image. Therefore, we’ve been vulnerable to attacks. I thought all we had to do was run our business, and it would go away. But we already know the result of that...What we need to do much better is to get our story out about how we feel and how we really run our business.¹⁰

From that point forward, under Scott’s leadership, Walmart began implementing major initiatives to reach the high ground. Programs such as the \$4 prescription drug plan—revolutionary pricing for 30-day supplies of hundreds of pharmaceuticals—set off waves in the stagnant pharmacy sector. Walmart’s new offerings were quickly adopted by such competitors as Target.

⁶ Jerry Useem, “Should We Admire Walmart?” *Fortune*, March 8, 2004.

⁷ “Is Walmart Good for America?” *Frontline*, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/walmart/view/> (accessed December 2011).

⁸ Steven Greenhouse, “Workers Assail Night Lock-Ins by Walmart,” *New York Times*, January 18, 2004.

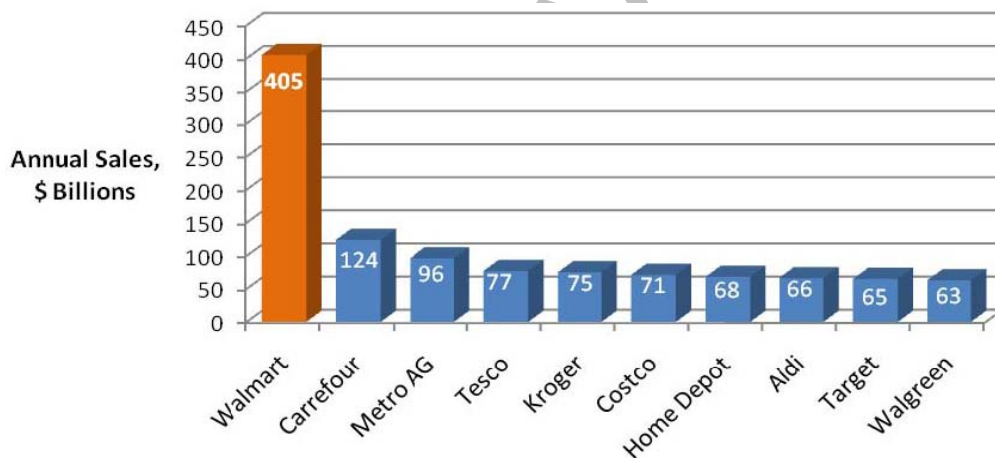
⁹ Robert Berner, “Walmart’s Scott: We Were Getting Nowhere” *BusinessWeek Online*, September 2005 (accessed January 2012).

¹⁰ *CNN/Money*, June 3, 2005, <http://money.cnn.com/2005/06/03/news/fortune500/walmart/index.htm> (accessed January 2012).

In February 2009, Michael Duke was named the fourth CEO in the history of Walmart, after Walton, Glass, and Scott. Duke had graduated from Georgia Tech and spent his first years learning to manage at Rich's Department Stores, later moving to logistics. In all, he worked 23 years at Rich's and its later incarnations—Federated and May Department Stores—before joining Walmart in 1995. For the first time in company history, Walmart had a CEO who had not previously worked with Walton.

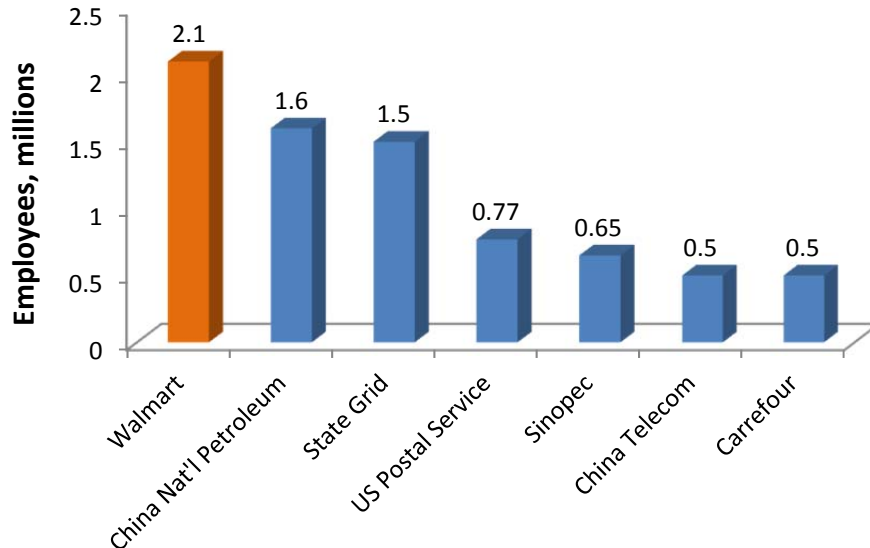
The 2009 figures demonstrated Walmart's hegemony in the retailing business (**Figure 1**). Walmart's annual sales totaled \$405 billion, a number larger than the other four largest retailers combined. If Walmart had been a country at that time, it would have had the 21st-largest GDP, greater than that of Taiwan or Greece. From its position at the top of the *Fortune* 500 list, Walmart employed more people than any other company in the world. Despite the recession, both sales and employee figures were still growing as of the end of 2009 (**Figure 2**).

Figure 1. World's largest retailers by revenue.



Data sources: CNN, Retail Info Systems.

Figure 2. Largest companies by number of employees.



Data sources: CNN, Retail Info Systems.

The Dawning of a Green Age at Walmart

Some of you are sitting out there wondering if Walmart is really committed to sustainability and if so, why would we be committed to sustainability. I got involved in sustainability from a defensive standpoint. I got to thinking about, if people are going to attack us, what's left?

—Lee Scott

At Walmart's 2006 Supplier Summit, thousands of the company's business partners listened patiently as executive after executive announced what exactly the new sustainability initiative meant. Then Scott and his colleagues announced three goals that would support the corporate sustainability effort:

1. Using only renewable energy
2. Creating no waste
3. Selling products that sustain people and the environment

"We see sustainability quite simply as doing what is necessary to sustain resources today and tomorrow," said Andy Ruben, Walmart's vice president of corporate strategy and sustainability. Yet Walmart produced none of its own products, and what energy it did consume paled in comparison to others. "What surprised us early on was that only 8% of our total [carbon]

footprint was under our direct control—our stores and our fleet. The other 92% was in the supply chain,” Kistler said. Whether or not the audience knew it, this comment would reverberate for each and every supplier in the future.

As Walmart executives declared their support for sustainability, many stakeholders weren’t so sure about what to make of the company’s new strategy to go green. The union-funded group WakeUpWalmart called it a publicity ploy designed to deflect attention from Walmart’s other long-standing issues such as its labor practices and sale of goods imported from China. Chris Kofinis, WakeUpWalmart’s communications director, said, “We don’t know whether Walmart’s environmental changes are real or a Machiavellian attempt to green-wash a declining public image, but its long record of irresponsible behavior forces one to be skeptical.”¹¹

Sustainability in the Midst of CFL Fade?

Kistler introduced a number of new sustainability initiatives that seemed to take hold. Walmart had unveiled an advertising campaign that included 30-second commercials. Whereas most Walmart TV advertising campaigns typically had highlighted a number of products in a given commercial, its newest TV commercial focused only on one product. In one spot, two pre-teen girls were touting the cost and environmental benefits of recycled T-shirts, while in another, a middle-aged woman displayed a company T-shirt made from recycled soda bottles and talked about the remarkably big savings:

Cute shirts, huh? We got them at Walmart, under eight bucks. Seriously. They’re made with cotton and—get this—recycled coke bottles. Like, plastic bottles helped to make these shirts. But here’s the really cool thing: If every Walmart shopper—all 200 million of us—bought one, it’d be like recycling over half a billion plastic bottles. That’s a lot of bottles. And one fabulous fashion statement.¹²

Another commercial took green to a new level with a carpet cleaning appliance.

I’m watching every penny, just like you. But I still want to be good to the planet. Walmart makes it affordable with uneatable prices on things like this new Bissell Little Green carpet cleaner. It’s great with spots and stains. And it’s made with 50% recycled plastics. So check this out: If every Walmart shopper, all 200 million of us, bought one it would be like recycling 2 million bags of trash. And that is some serious cleaning power.¹³

¹¹ Mark Hallburn, “Pond Destroyed for Walmart,” *PutnamLIVE.com*, September 26, 2006 (accessed January 2012).

¹² This commercial appears on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hf65xUKRCuk> (accessed April 6, 2011).

¹³ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hf65xUKRCuk>.

Kistler also was instrumental in supporting a groundbreaking Sustainability Index to provide consumers with an environmental scorecard. To gather background data for the effort, Walmart sent its suppliers brief sustainability questionnaires (**Exhibit 3**). Despite the apparent simplicity of the questions, not all suppliers completed the form; they either lacked the necessary data or were unwilling to respond. The more than 1,000 suppliers that did complete it, however, faced a challenge of a different sort: It created a new level of competition for manufacturers by rewarding some suppliers more than others.

Much of the heavy lifting, though, would be done by the Sustainability Consortium, a university and industry consortium made up of members from University of Arkansas, Arizona State University, Walmart, Procter & Gamble, Unilever, and many others. The consortium was tasked with developing reliable methods for evaluating the environmental footprint, sharing best practices on collecting the data, and aligning a way of presenting an easily understood score for each product (**Exhibit 4**). Indeed, how to present a score was a central dilemma. Karen Hamilton, a consortium member for Unilever, said, "One fear is figuring out who gets to prioritize the different pieces of sustainability. Who's to decide if greenhouse gas emissions are more pressing than water conservation?" The scale and breadth of the work required meant that the anticipated launch of the Sustainability Index would not happen until 2013, though some of the consortium's members were already beginning to announce progress of their own:

- One-third of Frito-Lay's plants achieved zero landfill status.
- Unilever reduced its water use by 63% and its carbon dioxide emissions by 39% since 1995.
- General Mills saved 1,200 tons of plastic annually for its line of Yoplait yogurt by decreasing the amount of packaging used.

Kistler reread the troubling letter from Richard Karney and wondered what to do about the CFL issue. A public failure here could cause Walmart to lose momentum in the greening of its brand. Was the issue a matter of product, price, promotion, or positioning? As he twirled his pencil, Kistler considered how to reinvigorate the CFL initiative and sustainable lighting in general.

Exhibit 1

WALMART SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH LIGHTBULBS: FLICKERING OUT?

CFL Market Assessment Letter



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

September 18, 2009

Dear ENERGY STAR CFL Stakeholders:

I understand some Energy Efficiency Program Sponsors are facing severe challenges to the continuation of programs for general service CFLs. I am concerned, should these programs experience cuts in funding or outright cancellation, many of the gains we have achieved with this market in the last couple of years could be reversed.

I feel compelled to take this opportunity to share my understanding of where the market for CFLs is at a national level and where it is likely to go in the near future.

- Sales of CFLs have declined 25% from their peak in 2007. Sales in some regions such as Vermont and parts of Massachusetts have declined 35-50% from their peak. Shipments of CFLs are down 49% in 2009 over 2007 levels.
- Only one in four bulbs purchased is a CFL. Seventy five percent of medium screw-based sockets still contain incandescents in regions that historically had invested strongly in CFL promotions. Other regions have even higher saturation levels of incandescents. Two thirds of these sockets require only general service CFLs.
- The great majority of households (60-70%) have fewer than 8 CFLs (20% saturation).
- Median household socket saturations are notably lower than mean saturations. This is because there are many households with few bulbs and a few households with many bulbs which skew the distribution.

	Median	Mean
California	14%	21%
Vermont	13%	21%
Tacoma Power service territory	16%	28%

These numbers paint a troubling picture. In these tough economic times, CFL programs are especially important in getting consumers past the first cost barrier that often prevent adoption of energy efficient products.

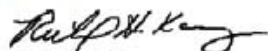
For those who believe the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 will make CFLs the default choice for consumer lighting needs, I again urge caution. The phased standards are implemented progressively between 2012 and 2014, however the timing of the actual impact on the availability and sales of standard incandescents prior to that period is much less certain. To be clear, incandescent lamps will not be banned, rather their efficiency will improve slightly, but will use two to three times the energy of a CFL. Consumers will still have a choice between more efficient incandescents, CFLs, and eventually LED replacement lamps.

Exhibit 1 (continued)

The market for CFLs is far from transformed. DOE has been monitoring and reporting on the CFL market as reflected in the first edition of the ENERGY STAR CFL Market Profile (http://www.energystar.gov/ia/products/downloads/CFL_Market_Profile.pdf). Based on additional data and analysis that DOE has continued to gather, it's apparent that the market is headed in the wrong direction. This will be the subject of a presentation I will be making at the upcoming AESP brown bag webinar on September 24 (<http://aesp.org/cde.cfm?event=269205>). In my opinion, utility programs promoting CFL adoption throughout a residence should grow, not shrink. The market needs these programs to compete with well established technologies that cost a fraction up front, and use much more energy.

I encourage you to let me know how the Department can work with you to not only preserve these programs but to grow them. The consequences of curtailing these programs will jeopardize the great strides we have made since 2005.

Sincerely,



Richard H. Kamey, P.E.
ENERGY STAR Products Manager

Source: http://drintl.com/HtmlEmail/CFL/DOE%20CFL%20Letter_SummitFollowUp_Sept09.pdf
(accessed January 2012).

Exhibit 2

WALMART SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH LIGHTBULBS: FLICKERING OUT?

Biography of Matt Kistler

Matt Kistler, Senior Vice President, Sustainability, Walmart Stores, Inc.

As Senior Vice President of Sustainability, Matt leads Walmart's global environmental sustainability strategy. This position serves as the catalyst to integrate sustainability into Walmart's business unit strategy on a global basis, encouraging the company's 100,000 suppliers to innovate, collaborate and support Walmart's key sustainability goals and to integrate sustainability into the brand and culture of Walmart Stores, Inc., engaging the more than 2.2 million Walmart Stores, Inc., associates globally.

Matt joined Walmart Stores, Inc., in November of 2003 as the Director of Private Brands for SAM'S CLUB. In 2004 he became a corporate officer as the Vice President of Product Development, Private Brands, Packaging and Quality Testing. In 2006, Matt was appointed Vice President of Product and Packaging Innovation for SAM'S CLUB. In 2007, he was promoted to Senior Vice President of Marketing, Research and Insights for SAM'S CLUB and in October of 2007 he was named Senior Vice President for Walmart Stores, Inc. Prior to joining Walmart, Matt held management positions with General Foods, Oscar Mayer, and Kraft Foods.

Matt has a BA in Marketing from Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, and an MBA from Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

Source: Walmart Stores, Inc.

Exhibit 3

WALMART SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH LIGHTBULBS: FLICKERING OUT?

Supplier Questionnaire

Supplier Sustainability Assessment: 15 Questions for Suppliers

Energy and Climate: Reducing Energy Costs and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

1. Have you measured your corporate greenhouse gas emissions?
2. Have you opted to report your greenhouse gas emissions to the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP)?
3. What is your total annual greenhouse gas emissions reported in the most recent year measured?
4. Have you set publicly available greenhouse gas reduction targets? If yes, what are those targets?

Material Efficiency: Reducing Waste and Enhancing Quality

1. If measured, please report the total amount of solid waste generated from the facilities that produce your product(s) for Walmart for the most recent year measured.
2. Have you set publicly available solid waste reduction targets? If yes, what are those targets?
3. If measured, please report total water use from facilities that produce your product(s) for Walmart for the most recent year measured.
4. Have you set publicly available water use reduction targets? If yes, what are those targets?

Natural Resources: Producing High Quality, Responsibly Sourced Raw Materials

1. Have you established publicly available sustainability purchasing guidelines for your direct suppliers that address issues such as environmental compliance, employment practices, and product/ingredient safety?
2. Have you obtained 3rd party certifications for any of the products that you sell to Walmart?

People and Community: Ensuring Responsible and Ethical Production

1. Do you know the location of 100% of the facilities that produce your products?
2. Before beginning a business relationship with a manufacturing facility, do you evaluate the quality of, and capacity for, production?
3. Do you have a process for managing social compliance at the manufacturing level?
4. Do you work with your supply base to resolve issues found during social compliance evaluations and also document specific corrections and improvements?
5. Do you invest in community development activities in the markets you source from and/or operate within?

Source: Walmart Stores, Inc.

Exhibit 4

WALMART SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH LIGHTBULBS: FLICKERING OUT?

Walmart: Tier 1 Member of the Sustainability Consortium

What We Do

The Sustainability Consortium develops transparent methodologies, tools, and strategies to drive a new generation of products and supply networks that address environmental, social, and economic imperatives. The Sustainability Consortium advocates for a scientifically grounded process and transparent system, not for individuals or organizations.

Mission Statement

The Sustainability Consortium is an independent organization of diverse global participants who work collectively to build a scientific foundation that drives innovation to improve consumer product sustainability through all stages of a product's life cycle.

Source: <http://www.sustainabilityconsortium.org/> (accessed January 2012).