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Walmart Supply Chain Modernization using AI

Anupriya Sharma, Walmart Group Director Strategy

Digital Media Center 1030
October 16, 2024 - 02:00 pm

Abstract:

Innovation has long been a core part of Walmart's company culture. One of Sam Walton's, "10 Rules for Business" was to swim upstream and ignore conventional wisdom. From inventing the Supercenter to recent experimentation in GenAI, Walmart has a history of trying new things and scaling what works. Walmart's business was founded on pairing customer service and convenience with offering low prices on a wide array of items (referred to by Walmart as "Every Day Low Price" or EDLP, for short). We have come a long way, and Technology has come center stage right next to Walmart's focus on People (including the customers, employees and partners). To facilitate rapid innovation and support the digital transformation of the business, it was necessary to modernize the technology stack.

Understanding physical assets as nodes in a broader inventory system, and leveraging automation and intelligence, presented several foundational shifts in the scale of the technical infrastructure that Walmart needed to build for Supply Chain and beyond.

The enterprise continues to place significant emphasis on utilizing ML/AI and optimization techniques to automate and enhance decision-making processes, with the aim of improving both customer experience and associate efficiency and experience along with business outcomes. The new architecture for the next generation promotes modularity, enabling quick experimentation and agile change management, unlike the old-fashioned approach of lengthy waterfall-style rip and replace. Our network and compute strategy ensures we always maintain access to a reliable and scalable infrastructure ensuring reliability across the supply chain. As the field of Gen AI matures so does our understanding of it's application across our supply chain and item journey. The use cases across Supply Chain range from demand forecasting, optimizing inventory levels, to routing orders. We are on a journey and just getting started in many ways.

Speaker's Bio:

Anupriya Sharma is Walmart Group Director Strategy since 2015. In this capacity, she is leading Technology Strategy for the Walmart US business, covering eCommerce, Supply Chain, Store Operations and Merchandizing. Prior to Walmart, she led global transformations with a focus on Human Capital and data analytics.