

FIELD AGENT<sup>®</sup> PRESENTS

# WALMART X



INSIDE THE CUSTOMER  
EXPERIENCE AT WALMART

# X Marks the Spot

“X marks the spot” is never more true than in retail. For retailers, especially in the competitive grocery sector, the customer experience (CX) is paramount. Naturally, retail managers and operational staff devote much time and energy to questions like:

- Can shoppers quickly and easily navigate stores?
- Are guests treated kindly and professionally by store employees?
- What are shoppers’ attitudes toward prices, private labels, produce freshness, and other make-or-break factors?
- And, especially today, are shoppers satisfied with their digital experiences—from mobile apps to grocery pickup?

All critical questions about CX.

**Based on mystery shops and retail audits at 61 different Walmart stores across the country, this report offers a one-of-a-kind look inside the CX at Walmart.** The pages to come provide a ground-level, data-based, shopper-driven look at how the chain is serving shoppers across several key CX dimensions.

So turn the page, and let’s see if X marks the spot at Walmart.

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## ENDCAPS AND INSIGHTS

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# What Field Agent Did

To understand the customer experience at Walmart, and how it compares to other retailers, Field Agent conducted three mobile studies—two in-store, one online/pickup—across 61 Walmart stores (see map). Stores were predominantly supercenter formats.

Studies were conducted through the Field Agent mobile app, **January 16-18, 2020**. All participants were U.S. adults at least 18 years of age.

For comparison, Field Agent also conducted in-store, online, and pickup studies across 62 Super Target stores and 61 Kroger stores. Altogether, this report encompasses studies at 184 stores.

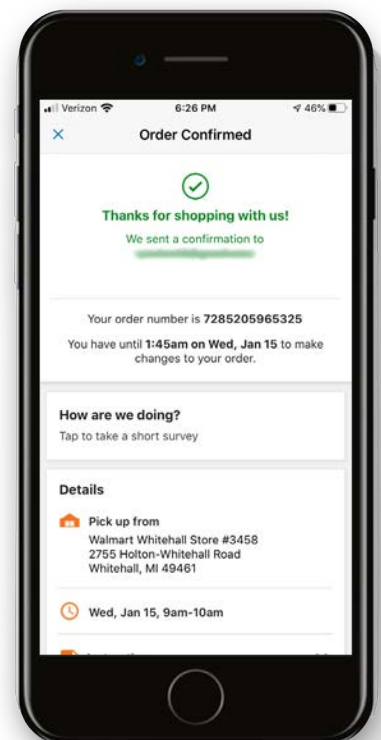
## Study Locations



📍 Target    📍 Kroger    📍 Walmart



Agent Photo



Agent Screenshot

# Store Navigation

Field Agent enlisted shoppers to gauge the navigability of 17 different Walmart stores (primarily or exclusively supercenter formats). Using the Field Agent app, our agents timed how long it took to locate Uncle Ben's Long Grain & Wild Rice, from the store's front entrance. Field Agent also asked these shoppers to locate Philadelphia cream cheese and Dawn Ultra detergent, to help us understand the ease of navigating the store and locating individual products.



Agent Photo



## 97.2 seconds

Average time it took Walmart shoppers to locate Uncle Ben's Long Grain & Wild Rice

## 60.8 seconds

At Kroger (n = 20)

## 66.2 seconds

At Super Target (n = 20)

*"I found the rice aisle right away, but not all of the Uncle Ben's products were grouped together."*

- Walmart shopper, Mechanicsburg, PA





## Ease of Navigation



**75%**

Of Walmart shoppers (n = 20) found it **easier than expected** to locate Philadelphia cream cheese

**10%**

Found it harder than expected

Of Walmart shoppers (n = 20) found it **easier than expected** to locate Dawn Ultra dishwashing detergent

**70%**

**20%**

Found it harder than expected



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# Prices & Perceptions: Name Brands

All the bells and whistles in the world won't matter to shoppers if the price isn't right. To understand pricing conditions at Walmart and its competitors, Field Agent price-checked several name brands and store brands across three retailers.

## Name Brand: Uncle Ben's Long Grain & Wild Rice



**Walmart prices** (n = 13 stores): **\$2.14 (mean)**;  
\$1.74 (low); \$2.24 (high); 0% on sale

**Target prices** (n = 20 stores): **\$2.34 (mean)**;  
\$2.00 (low, with card); \$2.39 (high); 5% on sale

**Kroger prices** (n = 19 stores): **\$2.42 (mean)**;  
\$2.19 (low); \$2.69 (high); 0% on sale

**36%** of Walmart shoppers felt the price was **higher than expected**; 14% said it was lower

## Name Brand: Philadelphia Cream Cheese



**Walmart prices** (n = 18 stores): **\$1.96 (mean)**;  
\$1.96 (low); \$1.96 (high); 0% on sale

**Target prices** (n = 20 stores): **\$1.99 (mean)**;  
\$1.99 (low); \$1.99 (high); 0% on sale

**Kroger prices** (n = 20 stores): **\$2.54 (mean)**;  
\$2.29 (low); \$2.69 (high); 100% on sale (with card)

**17%** of Walmart shoppers felt the price was **higher than expected**; 0% said it was lower

# Prices & Perceptions: Store Brands

And then there are the store brands. As with name brands, we price-checked a few different private-label products at Walmart. Then, at Super Target and Kroger, we price-checked equivalent store brands—equivalent in both product characteristics and size.

## Store Brand: Creamy Ranch Salad Dressing



**Walmart prices** (n = 10 stores): **\$1.17 (mean)**;  
\$0.92 (low); \$1.72 (high); 0% on sale

**Target prices** (n = 6 stores): **\$1.19 (mean)**;  
\$1.19 (low); \$1.19 (high); 0% on sale

**Kroger prices** (n = 11 stores): **\$1.50 (mean)**;  
\$1.50 (low); \$1.50 (high); 0% on sale

**70%** felt the price of the Walmart brand was **much better** or **better** than the name brand equivalent

## Store Brand: Traditional Pasta Sauce



**Walmart prices** (n = 12 stores): **\$1.09 (mean)**;  
\$0.88 (low); \$1.38 (high); 0% on sale

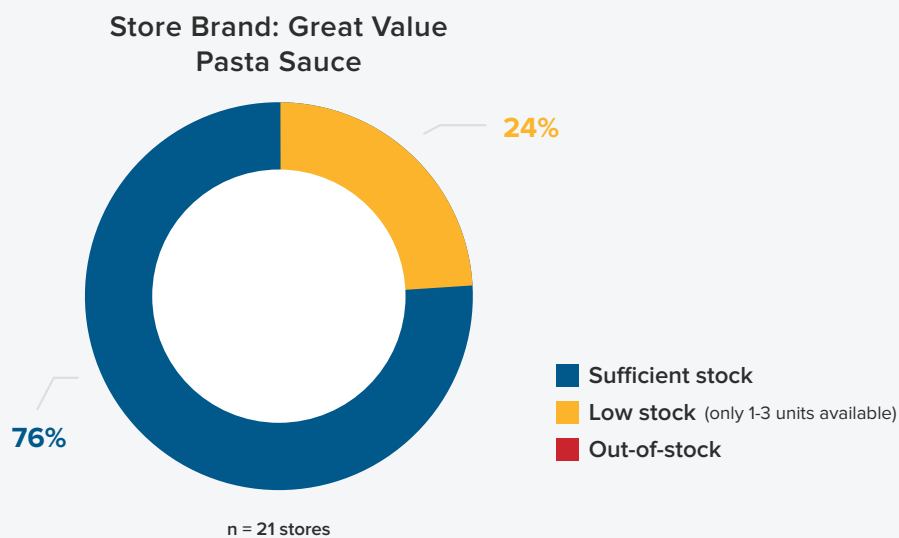
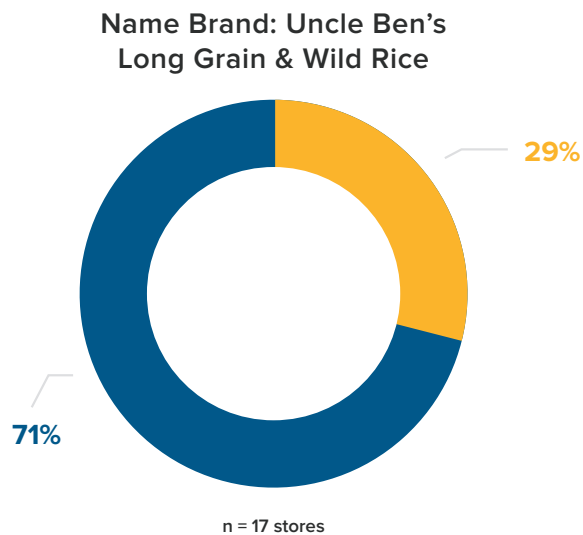
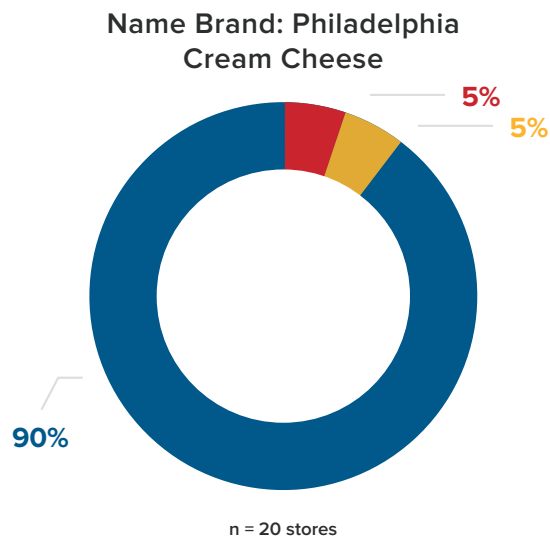
**Target prices** (n = 19 stores): **\$1.34 (mean)**;  
\$0.95 (low); \$1.59 (high); 0% on sale

**Kroger prices** (n = 20 stores): **\$1.49 (mean)**;  
\$1.49 (low); \$1.49 (high); 0% on sale

**58%** felt the price of the Walmart brand was **much better** or **better** than the name brand equivalent

# On-Shelf Availability

A common frustration among shoppers: out-of-stocks. Field Agent asked shoppers to gauge stock-levels for a few different Walmart products.



Agent Photo

# Store Brands

Store brands are part of the overall CX offered by retailers. So how do perceptions of store brands stack up at Walmart? Field Agent asked shoppers to compare and contrast Walmart store brands against name brand equivalents.

## Great Value Pasta Sauce (n = 20 stores)

**50%** Said they'd purchase the **Walmart brand** over the closest name brand alternative

**15%** Said the Walmart brand had a **better** quality perception  
*20% worse, 5% neutral*



Agent Photo

## Great Value Ranch Dressing (n = 20 stores)

**55%** Said they'd purchase the **Walmart brand** over the closest name brand alternative

**5%** Said the Walmart brand had a **better** quality perception  
*45% worse, 50% neutral*

## Great Value Laundry Detergent (n = 14 stores)

**50%** Said they'd purchase the **Walmart brand** over the closest name brand alternative

**7%** Said the Walmart brand had a **better** quality perception  
*50% worse, 43% neutral*



Agent Photo

*"Great Value [detergent] seems like it would do a good job with my clothes. I like the scent options."*

- Walmart shopper, Murfreesboro, TN

# Customer Service

Here's a question: Just how responsive and friendly are Walmart associates? We ultimately asked 40 Walmart shoppers to tell us whether employees said hello and/or goodbye, and whether they offered to help. We asked similar questions at other retailers.



## 85%

Of Walmart shoppers reported NO employee (excluding cashiers/greeters) attempted to greet or help them

85% at Kroger (n = 40)

80% at Target (n = 41)

## 73%

Said their Walmart cashier initiated a greeting

93% at Target (n = 41)

73% at Kroger (n = 40)

## 8%

Said they were greeted by a non-cashier, non-greeter Walmart employee

15% at Target (n = 41)

10% at Kroger (n = 40)

## 83%

Said their Walmart cashier initiated a "thank you"

93% at Target (n = 41)

85% at Kroger (n = 40)

## 8%

Said a non-cashier, non-greeter Walmart employee asked if they could help

12% at Target (n = 41)

8% at Kroger (n = 40)

*"She had a nice smile and gave me a friendly hello."*

- Walmart shopper, Philadelphia, PA



## Checkout

Few things can irritate a shopper more than long waits in the checkout lane. We asked 40 Walmart shoppers to make a purchase and time how long it took to make it through a **cashier-operated** checkout lane at Walmart. Shoppers were instructed to locate the lane with seemingly the shortest wait, to start the timer (inside the Field Agent app) the moment they arrived at the lane, and to stop the timer the moment they were free to leave. **For all retailers below, the vast majority of checkouts transpired on a Saturday.**

**4.1**  
minutes

Average checkout time at Walmart  
on median purchase of \$4.05

**21.3**  
minutes

Longest checkout time  
reported at Walmart

**37**  
seconds

Shortest checkout time  
reported at Walmart

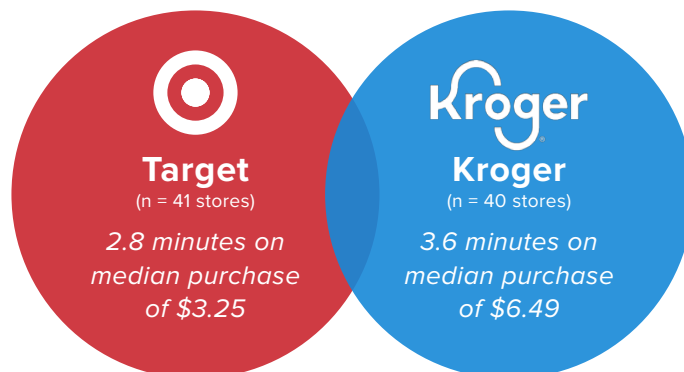


**41%**

Of Walmart shoppers felt their  
wait was **shorter than expected**

*34% longer than expected*

### Average Checkout Time



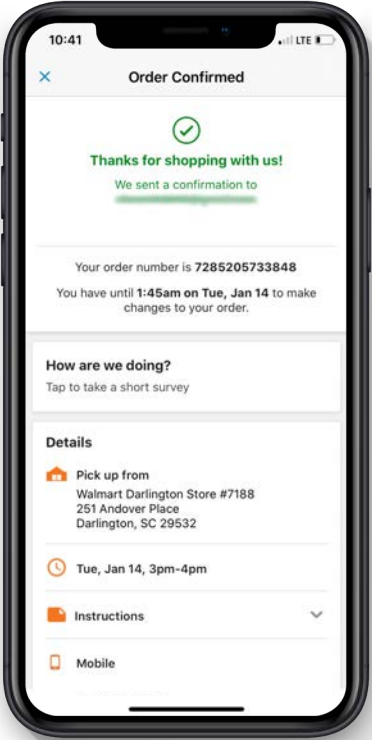
# Online Experience

Slowly but surely, grocery shopping becomes a more digital affair every day, with more shoppers than ever buying groceries online for pickup or delivery. Field Agent asked 21 shoppers to purchase at least \$30 worth of groceries/household consumables online through either the Walmart website or app. We required these agents to use Walmart’s curbside pickup service. But before talking pickup, **what did shoppers think about the web/app experience through Walmart?**

**81%** Said grocery-shopping through the Walmart website/app was **easier than expected**  
*5% harder than expected*

**57%** Of Target shoppers (n = 21) said grocery-shopping through the Target website/app was **easier than expected**

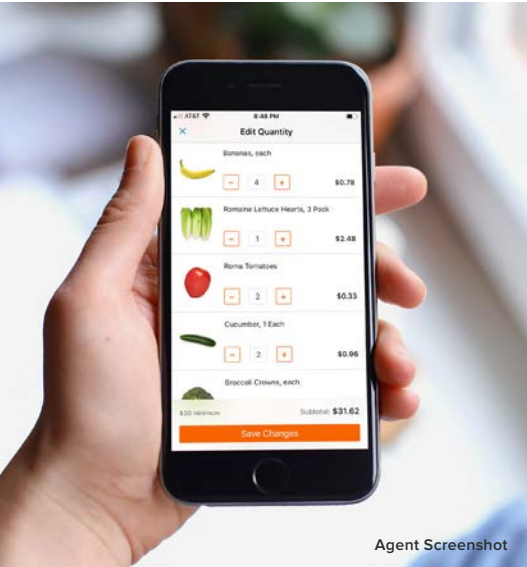
**34%** Of Kroger shoppers (n = 21) said grocery-shopping through the Kroger website/app was **easier than expected**



Agent Screenshot

Where 5 is “excellent” and 1 is “poor,” how would you rate these dimensions of the online grocery-shopping experience?

	Walmart	Target	Kroger
Selection	4.4	4.0	4.3
Navigability	4.2	4.0	3.7
Overall	4.3	3.9	3.7



Agent Screenshot

*“[Walmart’s online experience is] very user-friendly, and I love that it remembers what you have ordered in the past to make reordering easy.”*

- Walmart shopper, Biddeford, ME



Agent Photo

## Pickup Experience: Wait Time

After purchasing at least \$30 worth of groceries online, all 21 shoppers visited their local Walmart to pick up their orders. We asked participants to time how long it took to receive their groceries, from the moment they arrived at the **curbside pickup site** to the moment the order arrived at their vehicle.

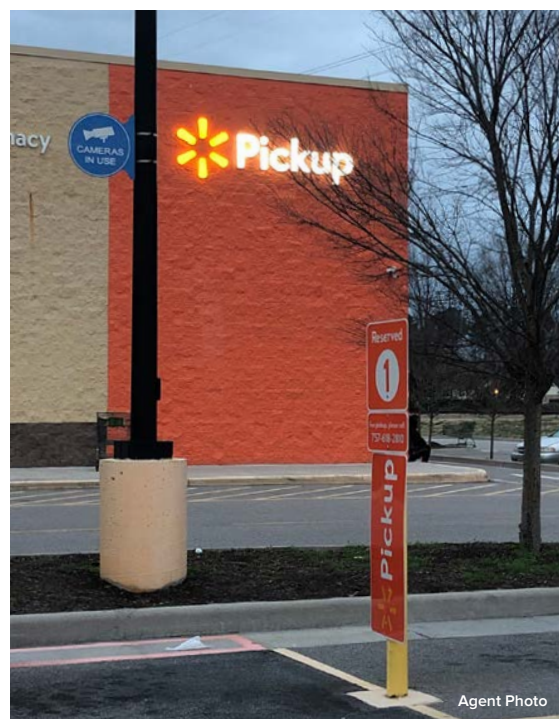
**4.2**  
minutes

Average wait time at the Walmart pickup site

**62%**

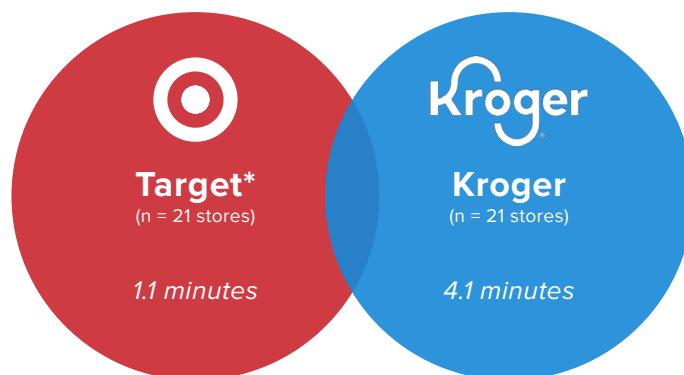
Said the wait time at the Walmart pickup site was **faster than expected**

33% thought it was slower



Agent Photo

## Average Pickup Time



\*Target does not offer fresh, cold, or frozen groceries through pickup

*"It took them a little longer to bring out my order than I thought it should have taken. Someone arrived after I did and they got their order before I did."*

- Walmart shopper, Fort Worth, TX

# Pickup Experience: Site & Personnel

Field Agent asked Walmart pickup users to rate the pickup site and personnel along various dimensions. We also collected ratings on other retailers.



Where 5 is “excellent” and 1 is “poor,” how would you rate these dimensions of the pickup operation?

	Walmart (n = 21 stores)	Target (n = 21 stores)	Kroger (n = 21 stores)
Site navigation/ease of use	4.9	4.4	4.8
Site cleanliness/upkeep	4.7	4.8	4.9
Personnel friendliness	4.8	4.9	4.7
Personnel knowledge/competence	4.9	4.9	4.8
Personnel appearance	4.9	4.9	4.9
The pickup experience overall	4.8	4.6	4.6



## 90%

Said they're at least “a little more likely”  
to use Walmart pickup in the future

10% “neutral” on the question

*“The process was very easy and perfect if you have young kids that you don’t want to drag into the store!”*

- Walmart shopper, Martinsville, VA



## Produce Freshness

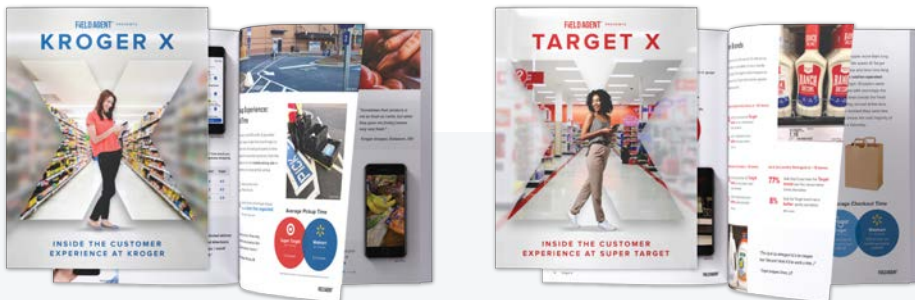
Few parts of the customer experience turn shoppers on—or turn them off—like produce. Is it fresh? Is it crispy, soft, and/or “a little green”? Field Agent required 21 Walmart pickup users to purchase and rate at least three items of fresh produce.

*“Everything was fresh, except the lettuce could have been a little fresher.”*

- Walmart shopper, Summerfield, FL

**4.3** Average **freshness** rating on a 5-point scale  
4.4 average for Kroger pickup

**67%** Said their Walmart produce was **more fresh than expected**  
10% less fresh



Agent Photo

Don't stop now. Go inside the CX at **Kroger** and **Target**

# CX. On-Demand.

In the hyper-competitive grocery industry, a positive, consistent customer experience makes all the difference. From customer service to pickup times, store conditions to web/app navigation, Field Agent has the assortment of digital tools to help you understand and enhance every dimension of your CX.

*We're your on-demand platform for all things customer experience.*

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