

NEWS

GRACE PACKAGING BUSINESS WRAPS UP SEALED AIR DEAL

SADDLE BROOK, N.J. -- W.R. Grace & Co., Boca Raton, Fla., has merged its packaging business with Sealed Air Corp. here to create a new specialty and protective packaging company with combined annual sales greater than \$2.5 billion.business, best known for its Cryovac brand of vacuum packaging, specializes in materials and systems to preserve perishable foods. In addition to Cryovac products, the division

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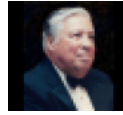
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business, best known for its Cryovac brand of vacuum packaging, specializes in materials and systems to preserve perishable foods. In addition to Cryovac products, the division also manufactures Formpac foam trays for supermarket and institutional food service.

Sealed Air specializes in protective and specialty packaging materials and systems,

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Joe V's by Texas grocer H-E-B set to open in Dallas
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Union workers rally against Smart & Final warehouse closures
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5 THINGS



ISSUES & TRENDS

5 things: Should Walmart be worried?

Here's 5 things you may have missed in grocery

[Supermarket News Staff](#) | May 17, 2024

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expansion. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, due to its size, Walmart must find ways to bring in an additional \$26 billion this year to reach its target of 4% year-over-year growth. In an effort to meet these goals, the company has recently announced [cuts to hundreds of jobs](#) and the [closure of all 51 Walmart health centers](#). Walmart has always been good at leveraging data analytics to better understand consumer behavior and preferences, and now they're ramping up those efforts even further. Plans include diversifying revenue streams, catering to different customer groups, and enhancing customer experience in-store and online. Walmart plans to address one of the biggest customer complaints — checkout convenience — expand digital offerings, and optimize store operations, all without raising costs. In Amazon's world of Prime delivery, Walmart has to be crafty with agility, data-driven decision-making, and customer-centric innovation to stay competitive in an ever-evolving retail landscape. —Ally MacConchie

Happy birthday, scanner! It's been almost 50 years since the checkout technology of the future made its debut in grocery stores, and things haven't been the same since. The Spectra-Physics Model A, the first barcode scanner, first appeared at a Marsh Supermarket on June 26, 1974, and the first item scanned was a pack of Wrigley's Juicy Fruit chewing gum. That's [according to Smithsonian Magazine](#), which highlighted the upcoming 50 year anniversary in a recent article. The scanners didn't come cheap either, running \$4,000 (roughly \$25,000 today) according to the article. The scanner technology had such a big impact on retail that it now finds a place of prominence in the National Museum of American History's electronic collection. —Tim Inklebarger

Bringing back the value: Even McDonald's feels the pain of inflation. The fast food giant announced recently that it plans to [sell a \\$5 meal bundle](#) this summer as the company aims to retain cost-conscious consumers, and rivals increase promotions. "Our sales and guest-count momentum has slowed considerably," a McDonald's owner said in an email sent to fellow operators last week prior to

home prices (5.2% vs 1.3%). Consumers are weary of the high cost of eating out — an opportunity now more than ever for grocers to tout their prepared foods and meal planning recipes. —Chloe Riley

You broke the internet: Could the internet be nearing a breaking point? That's the question posed by *New York Times* technology reporter Kevin Roose, whose [recent article](#) asks the question: "What if Google decides to overhaul its core search engine to feature generative artificial intelligence more prominently — and breaks our business in the process?" It's a big question that could have ramifications for businesses across the globe. Tech gurus have given a lot of thought lately to what happens if AI-powered chatbots replace Google's search function. The search engine giant recently announced it will feature search results with responses from its Gemini A.I. technology. The traditional hyperlinks will appear lower down on the page, which has many worried. The article focuses primarily on the impact the tech will have on news publications (it's not all about you, *New York Times*), but the change is likely to have unintended consequences across the internet. The *Times* article notes that Gartner, an analyst firm, predicts traffic from search engines could drop by 25% by 2026. —TI

All cooped up: What came first, the chicken or the egg? Well, it's pretty obvious... the chicken. They don't call it a chicken coop for nothing, and Costco has [quite the deal going on right now](#). Yes, now anyone can join the chicken pet movement (well, with a Costco membership anyway) and purchase their own house for feathered friends. For just \$440 you can raise your chicken empire...or get yourself a brood of hens and have fresh eggs for whenever the mood strikes. Of course, there is assembly required, and hopefully your experience does not end up like mine involving a child's swing set years ago when the directions called for "M" this and "K" that and all the labels fell off the pieces of wood. No, we've come a long way since then, so I'm certain the process is seamless. The coop holds eight smaller hens or a few chickens. Or, you know, one misbehaving husband...who says you need a dog house? —Bill Wilson

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