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THIS IS RETAIL

• INNOVATION •

#thisisretail

Rick Hustead, Chairman, Wall Drug Store, Wall, SD

Describe your business.

Wall Drug Store, the #1 Roadside Attraction in America, has been entertaining and educating the traveling public since 1931. This 76,000 square foot wonderland of free attractions includes a restaurant that seats 520. We also have 26 different and unique retail shops. Our staff of over 200 employees is there to assist and serve you. There's something for everyone at Wall Drug!

How did you get your start in the business?

I grew up in the family business and was actually "working" when I was 8 years old and worked through grade school, high school, and college in the summers. I came back in 1981 as a manager and presently I am chairman of our corporation.

Why retail for you?

I grew up in this business and I love being part of it. As an adult, I was thrilled to have the opportunity to come back into the family business when I was 30 years old as a manager.

What are you most proud of in your career?

I was very thankful to have the opportunity to work with my dad Bill for 18 years. He was a great American business man. I am most proud of the fact that we were able to bring our daughter Sarah Hustead back into the family business. I enjoy working with her and believe she has the talent, ability and tenacity to take this family business into the fourth generation.

What is the most innovative thing your family did to make your business a success?

My grandparents, Ted and Dorothy Hustead, bought a drug store in Wall, SD in 1931, right in the middle of the Depression. The original store was 24'x60' and they were living in the back 20 feet of the store, behind a curtain, with their 4-year old son, Billy. They were going broke, and they were desperate. On a hot summer afternoon, Dorothy had the idea to let people know we are here by advertising "Free Ice Water at Wall Drug Store" with highway signs. This brought in many customers and turned the business around. Eighty-three years later, Wall Drug Store is still advertising Free Water and is the largest roadside attraction in America.



"I want to strive to run this business in an excellent fashion. I also want to provide outstanding customer service. When those two things happen together, I'm having a great day!"
Rick Hustead

The 4th Generation: Sarah Hustead Manager, Wall Drug Store

How did you get your start in the business?

I started out bussing tables in the cafe in 2002 and worked every summer at the store growing up. Three years ago my family gave me the opportunity to come back into the business full time as a manager.

Why retail for you?

To me, retail is about continuing what my great grandfather, grandfather, and father have built. Retail is preserving the past while innovating for the future.

For more information about This is Retail - South Dakota:
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