

Sleep Country and Walmart's Innovative Bloom Pop-Up Shops Featured in Strategy Highly successful Bloom mattress-in-a-box collection displayed at two Toronto Walmart locations

TORONTO, Aug. 29, 2019 /CNW/ - Sleep Country Canada Holdings Inc. ("Sleep Country" or the "Company" (TSX:ZZZ)), is proud to announce that its recent Bloom Pop-Up Shops, in collaboration with Walmart, were featured in the influential marketing outlet Strategy. The first-ever pop-up events were designed to highlight the successful partnership between the two retail powerhouses, who came together in March 2019 to offer Sleep Country's Bloom collection online at [Walmart.ca](https://www.walmart.ca).

Just in time for back to school, shoppers were given the opportunity to touch and feel Sleep Country's Bloom collection – including mattresses, pillows, toppers and platforms – at Walmart locations in Thornhill and Toronto Stockyards. These Pop-Up Shops gave customers a first-hand glimpse into the collection that Canadians have been raving about since Bloom's launch in 2017.

"We're thrilled by the reception we received from shoppers at our Bloom Pop-Up Shops, and the coverage in Strategy underscores the success of our growth-focused, omnichannel investments," said Stewart Schaefer, Chief Business Development Officer of Sleep Country Canada. "These pop-ups are an example of our commitment to next-generation retailing and serving our customers any way they want to shop. Our long-term strategy is paying off through our expanding market share and growing customer base."

The following article first appeared on [strategyonline.ca](https://www.strategyonline.ca).

Bloom mattresses pop up at Walmart

The Sleep Country mattress-in-a-box brand made appearances inside two of the retailer's stores in the lead-up to back-to-school.

Sleep Country Canada's iconic jingle asks: "Why buy a mattress anywhere else?"

Well, in an ever-changing and ultra-competitive retail landscape, the Vancouver-born retailer has been selling one of its brands elsewhere. The 25-year-old company is aiming to keep up with the times via its first-ever pop-up shops for one of its mattress-in-a-box brands, Bloom.

This month, Sleep Country placed Bloom mattresses inside two Toronto-area Walmart stores, inviting people to sample any of the four Bloom beds, pillows, toppers and platforms. There were also "Sleep Country's Sleep Experts" in stores to answer queries from potential customers.

Even in today's click-and-buy world, customers still often want to "touch-and-feel" items, particularly mattresses which tend to cost a fair amount and will be in someone's bedroom for years to come, notes Stewart Schaefer, Sleep Country's chief development business officer.

The two pop-ups were strategically timed for back-to-school, specifically targeting those going off to college and university this August and September. And since prices for the Bloom mattresses sit on the lower-end (for example, a Twin bed starts at \$295), Schaefer says Walmart was a natural fit for the brand, allowing it to reach "value-conscious" customers.

While there was an iPad located in the pop-up shops so that people could order on the spot, Schaefer says the two activations within Walmart stores were more about raising brand awareness than sealing the deal on the spot. Today, most people will test the Bloom mattress, and then go home to research online, before finally making a purchase decision, he says. In acknowledgement of that, an offer to get up to \$200 off certain Bloom mattresses kicked-off the same day as the in-store pop-ups, but runs until Sept. 10.

Sleep Country launched Bloom online-only back in 2017 and since then, the mattress-in-a-box concept has become the retailer's fastest-growing brand, says Schaefer.

Of course, Bloom is far from the only game in town these days. American co. Casper started in 2014 and pioneered the idea of selling mattresses online, which just a few years ago seemed unthinkable. Since then, the direct-to-consumer brand has opened a Canadian office. The other main player in Canada, Endy, was purchased by Sleep Country last year. There's been a slew of other homegrown brands popping up in recent years, from Serta teaming up with Canadian Tire to the launch of Peterborough, Ont.'s Hamuq.

While many of those brands were born online, most (including Bloom) have taken an omnichannel approach to cater to those who want to try before they buy, says Schaefer. And Sleep Country intends to continue investing in a mix of digital and traditional marketing to promote both Bloom and Endy, which has a higher price point

(starting at \$675 for a Twin, the same price as the cheapest mattress from Casper), explains Schaefer.

So far, this modernization strategy has paid off for the legacy retailer. Revenue increased 15.9% to \$166.6 million in the second quarter of 2019, up from \$143.7 million in Q2 2018, according to a company press release. It attributed the strong results to the company's "omnichannel strategy and growth-focused investments in partnerships and product development," in particular "exposure to an expanding customer base resulting from new partnerships, such as Walmart and Urban Barn."

"It is clear that our omnichannel strategy is working, and we look forward to expanding our reach and forming new partnerships that resonate with Canadians," said Dave Friesema, CEO of Sleep Country Canada, in the press release. Schaefer notes that, while nothing is set in stone, he anticipates more pop-up shops to come based on results from the pilot activations.

The Bloom shops were handled internally, while North Strategic led PR.

About Sleep Country Canada

Sleep Country is Canada's leading sleep retailer. Sleep Country is the only specialty mattress retailer with a national footprint in Canada. Sleep Country operates under three retail banners: Dormez-vous, the largest retailer of mattresses in Quebec; Sleep Country Canada, the largest mattress retailer in the rest of Canada; and Endy, Canada's leading online mattress brand with the most Canadian 5-star reviews. As of August 29th, 2019, Sleep Country has 275 stores and 16 distribution centres across Canada. All of the Company's stores are corporate-owned, enabling it to develop and maintain a strong culture of customer service, resulting in a consistent and superior in-store and home delivery experience. Sleep Country also works closely with Canadian charities to donate new and gently used mattresses to families and children in need.

For more information about the company visit sleepcountry.ca and on Facebook at facebook.com/SleepCountryCan.

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