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Walmart teams up with Zipline to test limited on-demand drone deliveries

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September 14, 2020

“Walmart ([WMT](#)) is teaming up [with] Zipline to test drone delivery early next year, as the world’s largest retailer continues to explore the future of on-demand delivery.

“Starting next year, Zipline will begin making on-demand deliveries for Walmart for “select health and wellness products with the potential to expand to general merchandise,” Tom Ward, senior vice president of customer product at Walmart, wrote in a blog post.

“Zipline, which operates the world’s largest drone delivery network, is best known for delivering critical medical supplies — particularly blood — [in hard-to-reach areas of Rwanda](#), the landlocked African country characterized by hilly and mountainous terrain. The company counts Sequoia, A16Z, GV, Temasek, TPG, Baillie Gifford, and Katalyst Ventures among [its backers](#), and was recently valued at \$1.2 billion, [according to a 2019 report from CNBC](#).

“The on-demand drone delivery trials with Zipline will take place near Walmart’s home in Northwest Arkansas.

“According to Ward, “Zipline will operate from a Walmart store and can service a 50-mile radius, which is about the size of the state of Connecticut.”

“The system will facilitate rapid delivery times of under an hour, Ward wrote, and helps curb carbon emissions.

“The operation will likely begin early next year, and, if successful, we’ll look to expand,” the executive added.

“Ward added that Zipline had delivered more 200,000 medical products

across thousands of medical facilities in multiple countries.

“This uniquely positions them for national-scale operations across the United States,” Ward added.

“Last week, Walmart [began testing drone delivery](#) for select groceries and essential items in Fayetteville, North Carolina, by partnering with Flytrex, an end-to-end drone delivery company.”

Julia La Roche is a Correspondent for Yahoo Finance. Follow her on Twitter.

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Walmart to test drone delivery of grocery, household items

September 9, 2020

“(Reuters) - Walmart Inc <WMT.N> said on Wednesday it would run a pilot project for delivery of grocery and household products through automated drones, along with end-to-end delivery firm Flytrex, as the U.S. retailer looks to beef up its delivery business.

“Bentonville, Arkansas-based Walmart said the test would start on Wednesday in Fayetteville, North Carolina, with cloud-controlled drones picking up and dropping off select items.

“We know that it will be some time before we see millions of packages delivered via drone. That still feels like a bit of science fiction,” Tom Ward, senior vice-president, customer products, said in a statement.

“The company has accelerated the expansion of its pick-up and delivery services in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, as virus-wary consumers increasingly prefer having items delivered at their doorsteps.

“Walmart, whose U.S. online sales doubled in the second quarter, has previously partnered <https://reut.rs/3jYzvII> with Ford Motor Co <F.N> and self-driving vehicle startups Gatik and Nuro to explore delivery through autonomous vehicles.

(Reporting by Praveen Paramasivam in Bengaluru; Editing by Vinay Dwivedi)

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