

## Then and Now

**B**y the time *STORES Magazine* debuted in 1918, the retail industry was entrenched and some of today's most recognizable retailers had logged decades in business by then. Brooks Brothers, the oldest clothier in the U.S., was already 100 years old in 1918!

Take a look at 10 retailers who were in business in 1918, what was going on in their businesses around that time — and then fast forward to what they're up to now.

### Macy's

**Then** — By 1918, R.H. Macy & Co. had already logged 60 years in business and was generating \$36 million in annual sales. Situated on Broadway and 34th Street, the New York City flagship store was poised to become the "World's Largest Store" just six years later, spanning more than 1 million square feet of retail space.

**Now** — Macy's Inc. is one of the nation's premier retailers. With fiscal 2016 sales of nearly \$26 billion and approximately 140,000 employees, the company operates more than 700 department stores under the Macy's and Bloomingdale's nameplates, along with some 160 specialty stores including Bluemercury and Macy's Backstage.

### Brooks Brothers

**Then** — The country's oldest clothing retailer, Brooks Brothers celebrated its first 100 years in business in 1918. The first Brooks Brothers store opened April 7, 1818, on Cherry Street in New York City and was known as H. & D.H. Brooks & Co. Following the completion of Grand Central Terminal, Brooks Brothers relocated to its present flagship location at 346 Madison Avenue in 1915.

**Now** — Brooks Brothers shows no signs of aging. The specialty apparel retailer is a leader in personalization with its Made-to-Measure program. Its women's

merchandise has been reaching new heights since Zac Posen was named creative director in 2014; Brooks Brothers was also an early adopter of Alexa for Business, a new service from Amazon Web Services.

### JCPenney

**Then** — JCPenney was founded in Kemmerer, Wyo., in 1902 by James Cash Penney. Originally called the Golden Rule — the standard by which the company has operated for over a century, to treat others as they would like to be treated — the chain's name was changed in 1913 to the J.C. Penney Company, and by 1914 Penney relocated headquarters to New York City to be closer to the major sources of merchandise.

**Now** — J.C. Penney Company Inc., one of the nation's largest apparel and home furnishings retailers, combines an expansive footprint of approximately 875 stores across the United States and Puerto Rico with a powerful ecommerce site to connect with shoppers how, when and where they prefer to shop. JCPenney held fast to its heritage this past holiday season, inviting shoppers to take "The JCPenney Holiday Challenge" and get everything on their lists for less than they thought.

### Neiman Marcus

**Then** — The first Neiman Marcus store opened in 1907 in Dallas. The company was founded by Herbert Marcus, his sister Carrie Marcus Neiman and his brother-in-law A.L. Neiman for an initial investment of \$25,000. The retailer's world-famous "Christmas Book" first appeared as a 16-page catalog in 1926.

**Now** — For over a century, The Neiman Marcus Group has stayed focused on serving the unique needs of the luxury market. Today, that commitment is stronger than ever; the company offers upscale assortments of apparel, accessories, jewelry,



The Saks Fifth Avenue flagship store is located on Fifth Avenue, between 49th and 50th Streets in midtown Manhattan.



From its humble beginnings as the Golden Rule store in Wyoming, JCPenney is now one of the nation's largest apparel and home furnishings retailers.

beauty and decorative home products to the affluent consumer. There are 42 Neiman Marcus stores across the U.S. and two Bergdorf Goodman stores in Manhattan; the luxury retailer plans to open a flagship store in New York City this year.

### Saks Fifth Avenue

**Then** — Saks Fifth Avenue is the successor of a business founded by Andrew Saks in 1867 and incorporated in New York in 1902 as Saks & Company. In 1923, Saks & Co. merged with another familiar name in the annals of retail, Gimbel Brothers Inc. On September 15, 1924, Saks Fifth Avenue opened in New York with a full block avenue frontage south of St. Patrick's Cathedral facing what would become Rockefeller Center.

**Now** — Saks Fifth Avenue is renowned for its superlative selling services and luxury merchandise offerings consisting of the best of European and American designers. Always innovating, Saks recently debuted a new selling approach in Greenwich, Conn., creating separate specialty stores for merchandise segments — shoes, jewelry and contemporary fashion.

### Lord & Taylor

**Then** — Since 1826, Lord & Taylor has built a reputation for service, quality and style. It was the first retailer to move to Fifth Avenue, install an elevator, open a branch store, offer personal shopping services and create Christmas windows for

pure delight rather than selling merchandise — a tradition that continues today. Perhaps the most significant first: Lord & Taylor was the first store to have a woman as president.

**Now** — Today Lord & Taylor is once again led by a woman, Elizabeth Rodbell, who has focused on engineering the store's omnichannel strategy and delivering unique merchandise and experiences to shoppers. One of the latest moves: For the launch of Project Gravitax, the retailer is merchandising regular and plus-size clothing together. On the partnership front, Lord & Taylor will launch a flagship store on Walmart's website this spring.

### Sherwin-Williams

**Then** — Started just one year after the Civil War ended, Sherwin-Williams is a bonafide artist in the paint realm. In 1918, the company marked 52 years in business and could already lay claim to numerous "firsts," including the 1880 launch of Painter's Prepared/SWP, the first successful ready-mixed paint to be sold with guarantee.

**Now** — With global headquarters in Cleveland, Ohio, Sherwin-Williams-branded products are sold exclusively through a chain of more than 4,200 company-operated stores and facilities. The retailer stays on trend, forecasting yearly popular palettes — Sincerity, Unity and Connectivity for

By 1918, Macy's flagship store on Broadway and 34th Street was poised to become the "World's Largest Store" six years later.





## Then and Now

Continued from page 20

2018. Sherwin-Williams' 2018 Color of the Year is "Oceanside," a deep color that "offers a sense of the familiar with a hint of the unknown," according to the company's description.

### Kroger

**Then** — Barney Kroger opened his first grocery store in Cincinnati in 1883. An innovator in so many ways, he began delivering groceries with Model T trucks instead of horse-drawn wagons in 1913; three years later, Kroger introduced self-service shopping, allowing customers to choose their

**In 1922, Walgreens debuted the malted milkshake ... Kroger had opened 5,575 stores by 1929.**

own merchandise and bring it home themselves — unheard of before then. Even more mind-blowing, Kroger had opened 5,575 stores by 1929.

**Now** — Today Kroger serves nearly 9 million customers every day in 2,793 retail food stores under a variety of local banner names in 35 states and the District of Columbia. The company recently announced its Restock Kroger plan, outlining continued expansion in 2018 as it focuses on redefining



*Holiday window display at Lord & Taylor store in Manhattan on Thanksgiving Day.*

the grocery customer experience; part of the plan calls for growing the footprint of Prep+Pared Meal Kits.

### Barnes & Noble

**Then** — Barnes & Noble originated in 1886 with a New York City bookstore called Arthur Hinds & Company. Store clerk Gilbert Clifford Noble was made a partner in 1894 and the name of the store was changed to Hinds & Noble. In 1917, Noble bought out Hinds, entered into a partnership with William Barnes and changed the store name to Barnes & Noble. Nearly a century later, Leonard Riggio acquired the flagship Barnes & Noble trade name and over the next four decades transformed the company into the bookselling giant that it is today.

**Now** — Between its retail stores and online operations, Barnes & Noble sells approximately 190 million physical books per year and more than 1 million unique physical book titles every year. Barnes & Noble is the second-largest retailer of magazines in America, carrying about 5,500 magazine titles and nearly 1,000 newspaper titles.

### Walgreens

**Then** — Charles R. Walgreen Sr. purchased the Chicago drug store where he had worked as a pharmacist, starting the Walgreen chain. A believer in new ideas and ambitious expansion, Walgreen manufactured his own line of products to ensure high quality and low prices. In 1922, Walgreens debuted the malted milkshake: Customers stood three and four deep around the soda fountain to buy the "old-fashioned chocolate malted milk."

**Now** — Today Walgreens is included in the Retail Pharmacy USA Division of Walgreens Boots Alliance Inc., a global pharmacy-led health and wellbeing enterprise. Approximately 8 million customers interact with Walgreens in some 8,100 stores and online each day. The chain recently announced a rebranding strategy aimed at educating consumers on Walgreens' long-standing history and stepping up efforts to target a younger demographic with more beauty and food options.