

He made history with a two-liter bottle

In 1970, John Sculley was a newly hired marketing executive at Pepsi. His first assignment: to develop a distinctive glass bottle to compete against Coke's popular 6.5-ounce container.

After extensive consumer research, Sculley realized it made more sense to design a much bigger bottle—to create something entirely new rather than go head-to-head with the smaller Coke product. That way, Pepsi would boost its profits (because the company earned more when families drank more of its soda products) and shoppers could obtain more of what they wanted.

Within a year, Sculley and his team unveiled a two-liter plastic bottle. On a fateful visit to Bentonville, Ark., 30-year-old Sculley met with retail legend Sam Walton to convince him to stock Pepsi's new bottle in his Walmart stores. It was a make-or-break moment in Sculley's young career.

Sculley knew that retailers dreaded carrying soda bottles because the broken glass and spillage were a constant pain. So he put on a little show for Walton.

"Mr. Walton, here is our new unbreakable bottle for Pepsi and we think it's perfect for your superstores," Sculley said. Then he intentionally dropped the bottle.

Walton expected it to create a mess. But when the bottle bounced slightly off the floor and rolled harmlessly a few feet, Walton was stunned.

"What is that bottle made of?" Walton asked in amazement.

"That was the beginning of our most successful marketing campaign," Sculley says. He went on to become CEO of Pepsi and Apple.

— Adapted from *Moonshot!*, John Sculley, Rosetta Books.