

Gatik's self-driving vans have started shuttling groceries for Walmart

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What is significant about the involvement of Gatik at Walmart?

Gatik AI, the autonomous vehicle startup that's aiming for the sweet middle spot in the world of logistics, is officially on the road through a partnership with **Walmart** .

The company received approval from the Arkansas Highway Commissioner's office to launch a commercial service with Walmart . Gatik's autonomous vehicles (with a human safety driver behind the wheel) is **now delivering customer online grocery orders from Walmart's main warehouse to its neighborhood stores in Bentonville, Arkansas.**

The AVs will aim to travel seven days a week on a two-mile route — the tiniest of slivers of Walmart’s overall business. But the goal here isn’t ubiquity just yet. Instead, Walmart is using this project to capture the kind of data that will help it learn how best to integrate autonomous vehicles into their stores and services.

Gatik uses Ford transit vehicles outfitted with a self-driving system. Co-founder and CEO Gautam Narang has previously told TechCrunch that the company can fulfill a need in the market through a variety of use cases, including partnering with third-party logistics giants like Amazon, FedEx or even the U.S. Postal Service, auto part distributors, consumer goods, food and beverage distributors as well as medical and pharmaceutical companies.

What is Gatik’s Funding Situation?

The company, which emerged from stealth in June, has raised \$4.5 million in a seed round led by former CEO and executive chairman of Google Eric Schmidt’s **Innovation Endeavors**. Other investors include AngelPad, Dynamo Fund, Fontinalis Partners, Trucks Venture Capital and angel investor Lior Ron, who heads Uber Freight.

Gatik isn’t the only AV company working with Walmart. Walmart has partnerships with Waymo and Udelv. Both of these partnerships involve pilot programs in Arizona.

Others in the Self Delivery of Goods

Udelv is testing the use of autonomous vans to **deliver online grocery orders** to customers. Last year, members of Waymo’s **early rider program** received grocery savings when they shopped from Walmart.com. The riders would then take a Waymo car to their nearby Walmart store for grocery pickup.

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