

▶ 1949

Sam Wurtzel opens Wards Co. on West Broad Street. Sees future in TVs.



DEMENTI STUDIO

▶ 1959

Wurtzel operates four stores in Richmond.



1960

▶ 1961

Wurtzel takes Wards public. Begins East Coast expansion.

▶ 1965

Wards buys out Richmond Carousel Corp. Begins selling auto supplies, clothing, toys, household goods and stereos.



1970

1977

Replaces Dixie Hi-Fi and Custom Hi-Fi stores with a new concept called Circuit City. First six stores open in Washington, D.C.

▶ 1974

Opens Wards Loading Dock, one of the country's first low-cost megastores.



1980

▶ 1982

Company hires Rick Sharp, an engineering whiz, away from Applied Systems Corp. A year later sales eclipse \$240 million.



▶ 1984

With the Loading Dock concept getting tired, the Wurtzels rename the business Circuit City and begin opening larger stores with a broader national network. Listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

▶ 1989

Best Buy launches a new sales format dubbed "grab and go," portending a retail concept that would lead to eliminating commissioned sales people.

1990

▶ 1993

Sharp launches the CarMax used-car superstore. The first opens near Short Pump on West Broad Street.



2000

▶ 2003

Company shifts to an hourly pay structure for sales employees, eliminating 3,900 of its highest paid commissioned workers.



▶ APRIL 2008

Blockbuster announces a \$1 billion-plus public takeover bid to create a massive chain of stores selling electronics and offering movie rentals.

▶ Nov. 10, 2008

Circuit City files for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.