

W. L. Gore & Associates

BACKGROUNDER



PROFILE

As an advanced materials company committed to sound science, Gore has changed lives and industries since 1958. We are passionate about addressing the toughest technical challenges in the most demanding environments. Whether it's protecting explorers atop the world's highest peaks, traveling deep into space to enable new discoveries or working inside the human body to save lives—our products solve complex problems and perform as promised, time and time again.

A privately held company with approximately \$3 billion in annual sales, we pursue opportunities where our core technologies and deep technical expertise make a meaningful impact. Our fabrics provide protection and comfort across a broad range of activities and conditions—from hiking in downpours to fighting fires. Our specialized medical devices treat aortic aneurysms, heart defects and other serious health problems. And we deliver breakthrough solutions to product and process challenges in a variety of markets and industries—from aerospace to pharmaceutical to mobile electronics, and more.

Gore has 10,000-plus associates, with manufacturing facilities in the United States, Germany, United Kingdom, Japan and China, and sales offices around the world.

CULTURE

Our continued innovation is a direct result of our strong, team-oriented culture. United by common values, our global teams bring together extensive knowledge and collaborate closely across an enterprise free from traditional hierarchy. We are a company of innately creative thinkers focused on providing exceptional value to our customers. We look for opportunities where others may see none, and our reliable solutions underscore our shared commitment to integrity.

At Gore, every individual matters, and we achieve greater success when we harness associates' diverse talents and perspectives. We encourage all associates to play an active role in charting their career path and helping their fellow associates grow. Sponsors and leaders—not bosses—guide associates in maximizing their talents and interests to meet business needs.

This work environment fosters personal initiative, creativity and hands-on innovation. And it drives our continued recognition from the Great Place to Work[®] Institute as a top workplace around the globe, with inclusion on every list of the "100 Best Companies to Work for in America" published annually in *Fortune* magazine. We consistently appear on similar lists in Asia Pacific and Europe and rank among the world's top multinational workplaces.

HISTORY

On January 1, 1958, Bill and Vieve Gore marked their 23rd wedding anniversary with the start of a new business venture in the basement of their Delaware home. A former DuPont research chemist, Bill set out to pursue new market opportunities for fluorocarbon polymers, especially polytetrafluoroethylene or PTFE. He also introduced novel ideas about how to organize a company and unleash creative potential.

In 1969, the couple's son, Bob Gore, discovered how to modify PTFE to form a strong, porous material. This discovery—expanded PTFE or ePTFE—changed the future of the enterprise and paved the way for waterproof, breathable GORE-TEX[®] fabric and thousands of diverse innovations.

As the company that invented ePTFE and introduced it in the marketplace, we remain a fluoropolymer leader, committed to engineering excellence and building on our founders' tradition of using advanced materials to improve lives and change outcomes for customers and end users around the world.

Gore Innovation Milestones

A SNAPSHOT



- 1950s** Bill and Vieve Gore launch W. L. Gore & Associates in the basement of their Delaware home to explore the untapped potential of the polymer polytetrafluoroethylene, or PTFE. The company's first product is MULTI-TET™ Insulated Wire and Cable. It will be used most heavily in defense applications and the burgeoning computer industry.
- 1960s** The company's first patent is issued. Gore's technology lands on the moon as part of NASA's historic Apollo 11 mission. Bob Gore, son of Bill and Vieve, discovers expanded PTFE (ePTFE), a versatile fluoropolymer that dramatically broadens Gore's product offerings.
- 1970s** Gore announces the formation of an industrial products group to sell a number of products for the industrial maintenance, plumbing, heating and air conditioning markets. The GORE-TEX® Vascular Graft launches, beginning Gore's Medical Products Division. Gore makes its first sale of windproof, waterproof and breathable GORE-TEX® fabric.
- 1980s** GORE-TEX® footwear laminate and GORE-TEX® glove inserts are developed. Gore's fiber is used in space suits designed for astronauts on the Columbia, NASA's inaugural space shuttle mission. Gore launches its first medical ePTFE patch product, a cardiovascular patch. Others follow, including patches for hernia reconstruction. Gore receives the Prince Philip Award for Polymers in the Service of Mankind for the development of its medical products.
- 1990s** Gore introduces its first product featuring electromagnetic interference (EMI) shielding technology. GLIDE® Floss, one of the company's most significant non-fabric consumer products, debuts. Gore introduces a membrane electrode assembly used in fuel cell technology. ELIXIR® Strings—a coated guitar string that dramatically improves tone life—enters the market. The company introduces the first toxin-destroying filter system.
- 2000s** Gore launches minimally-invasive products to treat congenital heart defects, peripheral artery disease and aortic aneurysms. Architectural fabric woven from GORE® Fiber is used in the new retractable roof over Centre Court at London's Wimbledon tennis tournament. Gore was recognized for its development of functional fabrics that provide full service protection against weather and electrostatic discharges. A *Fast Company* magazine article refers to Gore as "the most innovative company in America." The company celebrates 50 years of innovation.
- 2010s** GORE-TEX® Active Shell garments launch, geared toward high speed, highly aerobic activities that require enhanced breathability. Gore earns its 10th DuPont Plunkett Award for fluoropolymer innovation, this time for turbine filters that capture particles in the submicron range. Gore continues making a splash in the portable electronics market with a vent that provides new levels of protection against water immersion. GORE® High Flex Planar Cables help enable the landmark discovery of gravitational waves. Gore surpasses 40 million medical devices implanted worldwide.

LEARN MORE

View the interactive timeline at gore.com to see more of Gore's innovation milestones and other key moments from the company's history.