



# DRESSED FOR SUCCESS

## How Cedar Hill became the perfect fit for apparel company PepWear

PepWear was a business busting at its seams. The custom apparel maker was housed in a deteriorating building, and not only needed a new facility, but also space to grow in order to meet the vision it had for the future.



“We have four screen printing stations and they’re huge, massive machines. And we need space to store all the apparel. We have to keep a large backstock of apparel on hand.”

### The PepWear Story

Like many apparel brands, PepWear comes from humble beginnings. The business started in 1987 as Music T’s. It was, quite literally, one man selling shirts out of his car to students and parents of high school band members around Dallas.

In 2006, Music T’s was acquired by Craig Johnson, who was looking for a business with upside. Envisioning what the company could become under his direction, Johnson took over with the intention of expansion. But in order to do so, the business needed a new home.

Its building was falling into disrepair and even updates would be limited by space constraints and a lack of flexibility.

The following year, Johnson updated the company name and moved PepWear to Cedar Hill, Texas – a move that proved instrumental in its success.

### Solving the Space Crunch

The business cliché is that it’s all about location, location, location. For PepWear, location didn’t necessarily mean high traffic. The business does all of its sales online or in person. There’s no storefront.



**“That’s just not who we are. What we really needed was space.”**



“It’s not necessary to be on a main road where people can see us,” PepWear Marketing Manager Sydney Myers said. “That’s just not who we are. What we really needed was space.”

With a staff of about 60, PepWear needed a facility that could house its administrative offices, sizable printing press machines and a warehouse to store both incoming and outgoing apparel.

“We do need a lot of space for the printing,” Myers expanded. “We have four screen printing stations and they’re huge, massive machines. And we need space to store all the apparel. We have to keep a large backstock of apparel on hand.”

Cedar Hill Business Park offered PepWear all the land they needed to build the perfect facility. In fact, after PepWear grew substantially in the first several years it was in Cedar Hill, it found itself in need of even more warehouse space, which it satisfied through a 20,000-square-foot expansion.

“Having the space for a giant warehouse is important,” Myers said. “Obviously, the land we

have has allowed us to expand. Having all this land gave us the ability to do that. That was important because a couple of years ago we launched our own private label. PepWear now actually has a brand of clothing that we use for our custom apparel.



“Having the extra land allowed us to expand by launching our private label.”

While space was the primary need for PepWear, Johnson had other concerns as well. A lot of places offer space, but Cedar Hill offered more that made this particular space enticing. He noted its access to major highways, an abundance of restaurant and shopping options for employees and clean neighborhoods.

Apparel sales is a very visual transaction, and those clean neighborhoods – including nearby parks and outdoor spaces – have also provided PepWear with locations for photo shoots to enrich their marketing and advertising.

The choice was about more than just business, though. It was about the company and its people.



"The move to me represented a new mindset," Myers explained. "We wanted a better location; we wanted a better building. We wanted it to be new and a place that fit our needs. All of that was because of a mindset we wanted to grow. The company was doing well, but obviously you want to keep growing. We've done that, and moving to a new location was a part of that. There were things that just needed to get better. Since then, we've grown so much because of having that growth mindset."

Any business operates best when its employees are happy and invested. Many of PepWear's staff don't live in Cedar Hill, but don't mind driving there from wherever across the Metroplex they might call home.

"I don't live in the area, so for me it's a 45-minute drive to here from where I live, but I really don't mind because, for one, it's a great company. But also because the area is nice," Myers said. "There are good places to eat for lunch, it's a nice city. I don't mind driving here. There are several people who drive pretty far, but we do it because it's a great company and a great city to work in."

## Still Growing

From its one-off T-shirts out of a car trunk to its one-millionth screen print (which was accomplished in 2015), PepWear has been able to extend its service offerings beyond custom and event apparel. It now also does custom embroidery, custom patches and handcrafted metal and wooden commemoration plaques.

With a decade in Cedar Hill under its belt, PepWear is firmly entrenched in the local business community. The company is a member of the Chamber of Commerce and supports both the football and band programs in Cedar Hill Independent School District. In fact, a staff member is also on the board of the Cedar Hill Education



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- PepWear  
Marketing  
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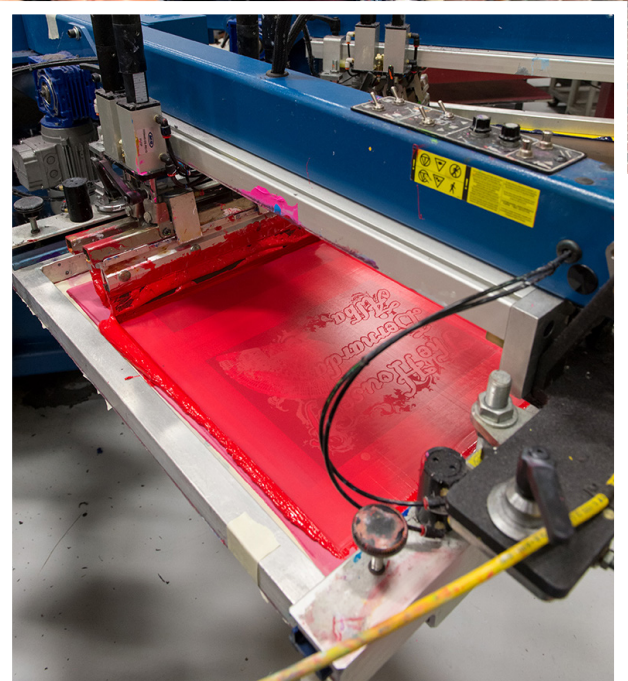






Foundation, and the company donates shirts each year to every employee at the CHISD convocation. PepWear also hosts the monthly Cedar Hill Business Park monthly meeting at its headquarters.

“We were welcomed with open arms and have dug our heels into the community,” PepWear Vice President of Sales Becky Seeton said.



## The Right Fit

PepWear was a growing business that needed the right space and environment to accomplish its goals of expansion. It found that space in Cedar Hill. Since anchoring in Cedar Hill Business Park, the company has more than doubled in size, and if it needs to grow even more, the custom apparel maker knows it's in the right place.

“We’ve grown a lot since we moved here, so it looks like we made the right choice,” Myers said.



**CEDAR HILL, TX**  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
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