



WEIDENHAMMER HELPS VILLA LIVE LARGE

Weidenhammer has often tried to position itself as a strategic partner who is able to equip business with the technological tools to make it thrive. Whether an established organization that has already reached its peak and is merely looking to sustain position at the top of the industry, or a smaller business looking to take the next step, Weidenhammer and our skilled personnel can help businesses make the leap.

This may be best exemplified by Weidenhammer's long-standing client, VILLA. VILLA's first store opened in 1989 under the name of Sneaker Villa. Located in Exeter Township, Pennsylvania, the store initially focused primarily on sneakers, with a small athletic clothing line. Weidenhammer was asked to join Villa during their early years to become a strategic IT partner.

Today VILLA is growing and they have a plan in place to continue expanding. Backed by a solid growth plan, aggressive management and strong investments in a trusted IT partner, their long-term plan has worked. VILLA has grown from a single store in a small Pennsylvania town to a major retailer in larger cities throughout Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

VILLA, now headquartered in Philadelphia, is a specialty retailer of urban-inspired apparel and footwear products. They now have locations throughout Pennsylvania in the cities of Harrisburg, Lancaster, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Bethlehem, York, and Allentown. In addition, they also have a store in Camden, New Jersey.

VILLA's selection of merchandise includes products from Nike, Jordan, Timberland, Adidas, Puma, Rocawear, LRG, Blac Label, New Era and more.

Weidenhammer provides a variety of IT services for Villa that have aided them in their expansion. Initially, Weidenhammer took in and hosted VILLA's business applications in the Weidenhammer data center. Villa needed experience with IT management and support, especially in the areas of Wide Area Network (WAN) management, security, and data center facility management capabilities for improved uptime. Weidenhammer also assisted in reconfiguring the WAN for VILLA including directing their now 24 store locations, warehouse, and corporate office to the Weidenhammer Data Center location, with new stores being added regularly. In addition, Weidenhammer also manages, monitors, and administers end-to-end technology resources of the Villa environment, as well as engineering and project management resources to assist with special projects or requests as they arise.

Weidenhammer data centers operate a load balanced terminal server environment for users which encompasses active directory management, exchange management, a proprietary financial and retail application, and Microsoft Office™ Suite applications. Weidenhammer has worked with VILLA's IT management to build procedural and process flow disciplines within the corporate environment - all geared to best practice behavior in technology administration and control.

How can the VILLA / Weidenhammer relationship best be described? "I routinely deal with a large amount of vendors," states John Goy, VILLA's Information Technology Manager. "And while I'm not overjoyed with all of them, I can honestly say that Weidenhammer has been an absolute pleasure to deal with since I began working here three years ago. One of the best things about them is they don't nickel and dime you. You know what you're going to get and what it's going to cost. In addition, since the atmosphere at VILLA can sometimes be described as rather chaotic, Weidenhammer brings a steady, reliable hand to the process."

The VILLA Experience

VILLA's vision is to change and enhance the way business is done in the inner-cities. They put a significant investment in their sales experts and its store environment delivers an extremely high energy environment for shoppers. VILLA sales experts are both current and aspiring community leaders, as the company hires from within the community. Their stores are designed to be neighborhood hubs where customers can sit down and watch the many flat screen televisions, find out about upcoming parties, purchase tickets to key concerts, and listen to the live DJs every Friday and Saturday night.

VILLA also partners with schools, local governments and community groups to improve the community through service, education initiatives, anti-violence programs and economic investment. Stores are equipped with a community board for communicating community initiatives driven by the patrons and/or Sneaker Villa.

Looking Into the Future

As VILLA peers into the future, their plans for growth look even stronger. VILLA recently ventured into the Pittsburgh market and they have plans in place to expand to Cleveland. VILLA's long-term plans are to continue expansion to the western and southern portion of the United States, and also to become a publicly traded company. Working with Weidenhammer assistance, this expansion can happen.