

Location, Location, Location meets Expansion, Expansion, Expansion in Rural Kansas

6th Street Fashions & Footwear

Shari Haug started with what she knew she wanted to do. She loved retail, and she wanted to find an opportunity to own her own business while living in a small community.

6th Street started as many small retail

Haug lived in Concordia, Kansas, 53 miles north of Salina and 30 miles south of the Kansas/Nebraska state line. She grew up in Concordia learning about business from her family's grocery store. She had lived in the larger cities and worked for larger corporations in her adult life, but really wanted to find an opportunity to return to her entrepreneurial roots in her home town.

In the early 2000s, residents living in Concordia had to drive an hour or more to shop for fashion and footwear. While she could see that there was a potential need, could Haug find the right inventory mix and the best quality goods to offer at the right price for the area? Her challenge was a common one that many retailers still face. Some of the most intense competition for small business in rural communities is not against the store down the street, it's against large retailers in large metro areas that have the advantage of size when negotiating with vendors and suppliers.

In 2004 she had her answer and with it 6th Street Fashion & Footwear was open for business.

recommending that she work with another small business to develop the 6th Street brand which has paid o tremendously.

When Haug recently was presented with an opportunity to buy a shoe store in a neighboring town, Sutton helped her with the process. Together they worked on nancial projections, inventory mix, and how to capitalize on larger quantity buys from Haug's vendors.

Haug highly recommends working with the KSBDC for anyone currently in business. When we asked what she believes is the secret to her small business success, she was happy to share. "Customer service, for sure! I love hearing my customers say, I would have never tried that on, I love it!" And what advice would you give to someone currently in business today? "Your customers should always come rst!"

Following the good practice of excellent customer service as well as using sound principles to make good business decisions has kept this winner growing and going in North Central Kansas.

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