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Not Your Typical "9-to-5"

by **Lisa Dawson** in [Sports](#)[Bookmark](#)

Just when you think Frisco has it all, employment opportunities, beautiful housing divisions to accommodate a growing population, award-winning schools, newly-developed retail centers, tasty restaurants, an abundance of professional sports teams and top-notch hospital systems, there is now even more to appreciate about our 62 square miles. A new kind of artform and sport is making its mark on Frisco! If you think our city cannot get any better, it just did. Particularly, if you are a professional esports gamer or the parent of a kid who is passionate about video games. And, these days, who does not love or play video games?

Complexity Gaming, one of North America's most elite and longest-standing esports organizations, has opened its new corporate headquarters at The Star. Called the GameStop Performance Center, the headquarters is a sleek, modern, 11,000-square-foot facility dedicated to all things gaming and video game related. Complexity Gaming team members compete in international tournaments to win prize pools worth millions of dollars playing games such as Dota 2, Counter Strike and Fortnite. In 2018, the team that won The International (a tournament for Dota 2) won \$25.5 million.

Just steps from the Dallas Cowboys World Headquarters, Cowboys Fit and Baylor Scott & White Sports Surgery Center at The Star, Complexity Gaming is aiming to establish their team headquarters as a fully-integrated facility by connecting with a traditional sports franchise and a medical center. Here, esports athletes are treated like professional sports athletes in every aspect of their profession.



With this new facility, gone are the pre-conceived notions of teenagers shutting themselves into dark rooms, playing endless hours of video games and snacking on junk food. “We believe gamers should have balanced lives,” says Cam Kelly, the chief marketing officer for Complexity Gaming. “We treat our players as whole individuals. From exercise to nutrition and medicine, we want to optimize this space for health and well-being.”

The facility is unprecedented, just like the prominence and popularity of the esports industry. Esports has come a long way since its humble beginnings. For those unfamiliar with esports, it is an estimated \$1 billion industry globally.

By all accounts, the first-ever gaming tournament took place in 1972 at Stanford University in Palo Alto, Calif. Players were invited to compete in a game called Spacewar!, developed in 1962. Many experts agree Spacewar! was one of the most influential games in the early history of video games. Fast forward nearly 50 years – there are more than 1.2 billion people playing video games worldwide, about 700 million play online games and the highest paid esports players are making close to \$3 million a year. Not your typical nine-to-five kind of career! Mr. Kelly says Complexity Gaming players even live in luxury apartments only about five minutes from their headquarters.

In keeping with the industry’s penchant for growth, Complexity Gaming promotes accessibility. “Many esports teams and organizations build their headquarters behind chain-link fences, which makes it difficult for the community or fans to feel welcome,” says Mr. Kelly. “We see The Star as the cornerstone for the local community here in Frisco, so when designing our new headquarters, we wanted to ensure it was accessible to the public and provided opportunities for the next generation of esports players and fans, both locally and globally. For example, our public area is open to anyone during business hours to socialize, shop, play games, enjoy esports entertainment and to ultimately feel like part of our Complexity family.”

The space features an 18-foot video wall, which will stream a variety of content, including live esports tournaments. There are also tablets available for casual gamers to play popular mobile games and high-powered gaming stations for aspiring esports professionals to go head-to-head in the latest PC games. “As we evolve and obtain feedback, we hope to host more events for high school students, as well as families that view gaming as a way to connect with each other. For example, we will be working with our partners at GameStop to host summer camps for local teens to play with our athletes and to learn more about building healthy habits around gaming to ensure they are considering their well-being outside of the game.”

The headquarters hosts The Innovation Lab for research and development, a collaborative space singularly focused on helping advance the industry as a whole. “The Innovation Lab is a dedicated space for us to work with our partners to research, develop and test new products that will enhance health and wellness in esports, as well as boost longevity for professional esports athletes,” Mr. Kelly shares. “For example, many gaming chairs are designed for race car drivers and not for sustained hours of gameplay. Jerseys are often produced via aluminum dye sublimation, which can cause discomfort. Supplements and performance beverages on the market are limited for short-term stints at the gym as opposed to pushing cognitive functions to the limit for hours on end. There are a wide variety of player-related and industry-wide issues that need to be solved, and we hope to work with various partners to identify players’ needs and address these in real-time to develop innovations we can share with other esports organizations.”



day. Helping players wind down and feel less stressed is a main concern for the team's management. There is a decompression porch where players can recover from high-intensity training with recovery equipment. There are also cryotherapy chambers and nap pods, all surrounded by an abundance of natural light and calming music designed for mental relaxation. In between games, players have access to these areas for some down time. There is also ample space for players to perfect their skills in the Mind Gym. The area was developed in partnership with Mamba Sports Academy and HyperX and features proprietary training software and high-end equipment for performance training. There is rubber flooring for low-impact activities, such as yoga, to promote player cognitive preparation and mental wellness. In the Advanced Training Rooms, another area for players to hone their online skills, they have the opportunity to mimic main stage competition settings, such as custom LED lighting, advanced sound engineering and precision climate control. Finally, for players 21 and older, there is the Miller Lite Player Lounge, a dedicated space for players to relax with one another, coaches and the management team. According to Mr. Kelly, the area is a place for the team to celebrate their accomplishments. After a recent tournament win, the space erupted with some post-win merriment.

Complexity Gaming completes its holistic approach to the industry and players by giving back to the community. They are committed to contributing to meaningful and relevant causes around Frisco. "Cause is one of the five pillars of Complexity Gaming. Most recently, our Madden player, Drini, participated in the Play It Forward Esports Tournament, benefiting the Children's Medical Center in Dallas. We are already working toward more initiatives with our partners, such as the Dallas Cowboys and the local Parks Recreation Department, that will give back to our community," says Mr. Kelly.

As Frisco continues to grow and mature, Complexity Gaming and esports will now be part of that ever-evolving, innovative journey. Kids and parents can take full advantage of the new headquarters and what it has to offer. "We view gaming and esports, at its heart, as a form of entertainment that has the potential to connect people and deepen relationships. And our public space is a reflection of that belief."

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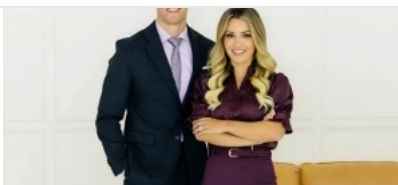
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Choosing only one photo for the cover of the August issue of *Frisco STYLE Magazine* is an annual challenge for our staff! We love looking through all of the inspiring and unique images photographers and readers submit in hopes of having their work featured on our cover. From photos of traveling and outdoor adventures to local landmarks and pets, it is so fun to get an idea of what our readers love and value visually.

We would like to say a special thank you to the local leaders who selected their favorite images to share with our readers, as well. Be sure you keep your eyes peeled throughout the feature for their selections!

Stop by the lobby of 3001 Dallas Parkway, in HALL Park, throughout August to see a presentation of the following images that achieved Honorable Mention status.

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