



KEEP SUPPLY: A PEOPLE-FIRST COMPANY, BUILT TO SCALE

From the outside, KEEP Supply might appear to be a rapidly growing distributor of industrial refrigeration parts based in the Midwest. But spend some time inside the company, and a more unexpected story unfolds—one about trust, ownership, and a belief that every employee should understand how the business operates and its future direction.

Founded in 2017 in Springfield, Missouri, KEEP Supply has grown rapidly, thanks in part to its innovative e-commerce approach and strong company culture. But its biggest asset isn't its inventory or online presence—it's its people. And that's by design.

A CULTURE THAT ATTRACTS TALENT—AND KEEPS IT

In an industry not known for flashy perks, KEEP Supply stands out. Every employee receives unlimited paid time off, and health, dental, and vision insurance are fully covered for both individuals and their families. New hires don't just join a team—they join a company that invites them to help shape it.

There's an employee-led culture committee. A recognition program for anniversaries called "Workies." An internal currency—KEEP Cash—redeemable for gear or donations. And perhaps most importantly, the decision to build a new warehouse—crucial to the company's future growth—wasn't dictated from the top. It was developed with input from the broader team.

"Our people aren't just executing a plan," says Director of People and Culture Lindsay Bauer. "They're helping to create it." That mindset has paid off. In just one recent year, KEEP added 34 employees and continues to plan for further hiring. In an industry where recruiting is notoriously difficult, they've built a workplace people want to join.

As the company expanded, the challenge was maintaining that culture. The solution? Invest in people first. When the employee headcount approached 100, the leadership team realized that their directors could no longer handle all the forecasting and operational planning alone. So they established a new level of leadership—empowered managers who were trained not just to lead, but also to forecast, plan, and help shape strategy.

But they didn't stop there. They implemented delegation training to shift perspectives from "my output defines my value" to "my success is helping others succeed." Directors became coaches. Communication norms were formalized. New expectations were introduced in all-hands meetings to ensure everyone was aligned as the team expanded. And all of it was rooted in the same question: How do we grow without losing who we are?

ACHIEVING CLARITY AND CONFIDENCE IN A COMPLEX BUSINESS

KEEP Supply's growth has been both cultural and operational. From a small regional player, they've become a national distributor, shipping over 10,000 SKUs nationwide, often faster than competitors, thanks to their online-first approach.

They shifted strategically from drop-shipping to holding more inventory, requiring significant investments in warehousing and fulfillment, but giving them a competitive edge in customer service. It's a complex business with thin margins, fragile supply chains, and many moving parts. And yet, employees across the company—warehouse workers, marketers, managers—can speak fluently about the numbers. That isn't a coincidence.

THE OPERATING SYSTEM BEHIND IT ALL

Behind the scenes, KEEP Supply has been driven by The Great Game of Business (GGOB) since day one. Unlike companies that adopt GGOB years into their journey, KEEP was built with it from the start. Two of the partners had used GGOB at a previous company and couldn't imagine doing business any other way.

"We were born this way," says Bauer. "We never had to unlearn bad habits or recover from a lack of trust. Our culture grew up healthy." At KEEP, GGOB isn't just a program; it's the operating system. Every Tuesday morning, the entire company comes together for a Huddle to review the financials and update scoreboards. Teams forecast their figures, and managers explain any changes. The numbers are transparent—and so is the discussion.

A MiniGame—a themed, short-term initiative to solve a specific business challenge—might focus on improving inventory accuracy, customer onboarding, or LinkedIn engagement. Everyone participates. Everyone learns. Everyone plays.

And that shared understanding has made them quicker, smarter, and more resilient. "We're not just playing the Game," says Josh Burch, CEO. "We're scaling it."

WHY IT WORKS

What makes GGOB successful at KEEP isn't just the Huddles or scoreboards—it's the core philosophy: trust, humility, and the belief that good ideas and clear thinking can come from anywhere. "GGOB provided us with a framework," says Bauer, "but what really matters is our belief in shared ownership—of results, culture, and decisions."

It's a mindset that encourages honest conversations about what's working, what's not, and how to improve. It helps people feel recognized and gives them a sense of control. In a world where many businesses struggle to engage employees at all, KEEP's team members are actively helping run the business. "We wouldn't know how to separate KEEP and The Great Game," says Burch. "They're intertwined."

PLAYING THE LONG GAME

As KEEP Supply plans for the next five years, its leadership will continue to focus on clarity, communication, and maintaining the culture that has brought them this far, rather than on external pressures. That's why they're investing in leadership development, building a scalable communication model, reinforcing training, and creating intentional space for strategic planning.

They're not chasing growth at any cost. They're designing growth that reflects who they are. And that, perhaps, is the real secret to KEEP Supply's success: they've built a company where doing things the right way isn't just the plan. It's the habit.

“ I CAN'T SAY ENOUGH HOW INCREDIBLY GRATEFUL WE ARE TO OUR ENTIRE TEAM AND HOW THEY SHOW UP AND SHOW OUT EVERY SINGLE DAY. ”

— JOSH BURCH,
CEO

BY THE NUMBERS: KEEP SUPPLY'S GROWTH SINCE 2017

- **10x revenue growth** since inception, with annual revenues now in the tens of millions
- **Over 10,000 SKUs shipped nationwide** across a complex cold chain ecosystem
- **100+ employees**, up from a handful just a few years ago, with 34 hires in one year alone
- **Zero layoffs**, even during the COVID-19 pandemic
- **One new warehouse**, built with input from team members and designed for future growth
- **100% employer-paid healthcare** for individuals and families
- **Dozens of MiniGames** played to tackle real business problems and grow team capabilities
- **100% of employees invited to see the numbers, shape the future, and play the Game.**