

NEWS

Ross Perot Jr.'s secret weapon to lasso businesses: A look inside the Circle T Ranch

Jul 17, 2015, 1:23pm CDT



Candace Carlisle
Staff Writer
Dallas Business Journal

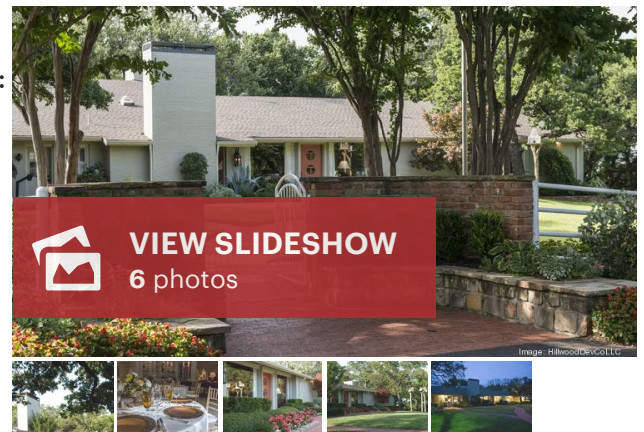
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Ross Perot Jr. and his senior executive team at Hillwood have a secret to win over big businesses such as Facebook: A modest 1950s-era ranch house at Circle T Ranch.

The ranch also holds a decades-old barn that has also helped bring Perot's southern hospitality to the Dallas-Fort Worth business community through corporate meetings, dinners and charity events. It also helps showcase Perot's 18,000-acre master-planned development, AllianceTexas.

Circle T is home to about 2,000 head of cattle in Westlake and is something many folks in the business world can't get elsewhere, Perot, chairman and CEO of Fort Worth-based Hillwood, told the *Dallas Business Journal* in an exclusive interview.

"It's a great showcase for our land and cattle," Perot told me. "Then we decided we wanted it to become our marketing center, so it got a little bit bigger and a little bit grander. That will open in about a year."



The modest 1950s-era ranch house at Circle T Ranch typically hosts about 60 events a year... more

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Hillwood land, which was something he learned from his father, Ross Perot Sr., on the land owned off Legacy Drive in Plano.

"People from all over the world come to this project and we want to show them our hospitality," he added.

Even though Facebook wasn't directly brought into Circle T Ranch, the house was a bit of a retreat for team meetings discussing the project later identified as Facebook.

Perot walked the *Dallas Business Journal* through the details of how Fort Worth and Hillwood landed Facebook in this week's cover story that debuted Friday. He also talked about how he and the Hillwood team win business, and the group's next moves toward landing the next big deal.

Hillwood's President Mike Berry said the company has historically won business based on "good, old-fashioned Texas hospitality," throughout the decades and isn't something that will soon change.

"People – particularly those from out of the country – enjoy the house even though it's not extravagant," Berry said. "It feels comfortable and it has a lot of Texas in it."

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