

**THE TEXAS TRIBUNE**

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**5 YEARS**






"In a word, it's all about..."

# IMPACT.

For five years we've delivered on our promise to cover public policy and politics with ambition and moxie — giving average citizens more reliable access to nonpartisan information, holding elected and appointed officials accountable and providing the greatest possible transparency into the inner workings of government. We really do believe that educating our friends and neighbors about the issues that affect every one of us will make them more thoughtful and productive in their daily lives. We all have a stake in a better Texas, and we believe The Texas Tribune is one way to get there."

— EVAN SMITH, CEO & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF





“We believe that civic discourse is in danger of becoming less informed and more reflexively partisan. We believe that’s bad for democracy and bad for Texas. That’s why we started The Texas Tribune.”

— JOHN THORNTON, TEXAS TRIBUNE FOUNDER

**NONPROFIT.  
NONPARTISAN.  
STATEWIDE.**

Back in 2009, the number of full-time, professional journalists covering Texas politics, government and public affairs from the Capitol was in steady decline, shrinking the amount of information available to Texans about their elected representatives, their tax dollars, their government and the civic projects going on in their own hometowns. As a response to this and the technological changes transforming the news media, John Thornton, a longtime venture capitalist in Austin and a passionate believer in public media, joined forces with Evan Smith, veteran editor-in-chief of *Texas Monthly* and television host, and Ross Ramsey, longtime owner and editor of *Texas Weekly*, the state’s premier newsletter on politics and government. Together, they set out to reinvent the business model for providing statewide news for a mass audience.

On Nov. 3, 2009, The Texas Tribune and its destination website were launched, thanks to \$4 million in private contributions as seed funding, a small band of talented computer programmers and some of the most accomplished journalists in the state. Since launch, The Texas Tribune has produced robust nonpartisan journalism, interactive tools to access public data and public events around the state, bringing greater transparency and accountability to public policy, politics and government. We are working to raise the level of civic engagement in communities far and wide and to return civility to our discourse on the issues that matter.

The Texas Tribune is the only member-supported, digital-first, nonpartisan news organization that informs Texans — and engages with them — about public policy, politics, government and statewide issues.

“You can’t solve big policy and political problems if you don’t know about them, and you can’t know about them unless someone tees them up. We’re here to tee them up.”

— ROSS RAMSEY, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

“I saw the opportunity to be part of the solution — to throw my experience and reputation behind an energetic start-up with the potential to change the face of politics and policy reporting in Texas.”

— EMILY RAMSHAW, EDITOR

“We believed that public service journalism is a public good, that there was not nearly enough of it in Texas, and that we could help solve that problem if we put the right people in the right jobs with the right tightly focused mission and enough money in the bank.”

— EVAN SMITH, CEO & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

# WHAT WE DO

All of us at The Texas Tribune are working hard to inform millions of Texans about the challenges we face in **public education, higher education, health care, immigration, criminal justice, energy, water and transportation.**

## NEWS

As a nonpartisan digital news organization, the Tribune publishes enterprise journalism, aggregated news from other sources, polling, blogging, columns, commentary, multimedia and data visualizations on our destination website. We provide our content to dozens of Texas news organizations that distribute it widely through their print, online and broadcast channels as well as to national news organizations such as *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*.

## TRIBinvestigates

The Tribune's investigative projects provide Texans with new levels of accountability. A recent series, the four-part "**Hurting for Work**" investigation, exposed gaping holes in the state's workers' compensation system, resulting in immediate changes to Texas' worker safety hotline and to the life of a young mother whose husband was killed in a workplace accident.

## TribTalk

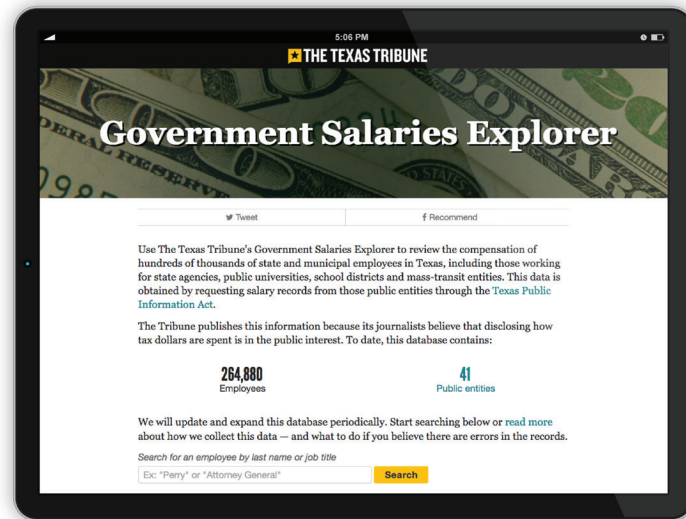
We take seriously the need to facilitate a statewide conversation about our priorities, and we understand that few things stimulate discussion more than opinion and commentary. TribTalk is a digital forum for dialogue and debate about the day's news; it's an op-ed page for the 21st century.

## TRIB+

Our Trib+ newsletters give our audience the opportunity to become experts on issues including water, public education and Texas politics. These specialized newsletters, many of which are free, feature interactive maps, data tools, research and articles from the Tribune and other trusted sources.

## DATA

Using the latest technology to support our mission of educating and engaging with our audience, the Tribune has become an authoritative source for providing user-friendly data interactives of public information in Texas. Our reporters and software engineers collaborate to present a full picture for readers, giving them the tools to be more thoughtful, productive and engaged citizens.



### Government Salaries Explorer

The Tribune publishes the compensation of more than 260,000 state and municipal employees of 41 public entities because we believe disclosing how tax dollars are spent is in the public interest.

### Election Scoreboard

We bring statewide coverage home every election night with our Election Scoreboard, which can be customized to feature hometown candidates and races.

### Ethics Explorer

To help educate citizens on the degree to which elected officials' personal interests conflict with the public interest when passing bills and setting policy, we created this groundbreaking interactive tool with generous support from the Fund for Investigative Journalism.

## EVENTS

We're spreading a passion for big public policy debates across the state through events — on college campuses, in community centers and everywhere in between — at which public officials, policy wonks and newsmakers answer for the work they're doing and how they're spending tax dollars. In doing so, we're convening an important public conversation about our values, as Texans and Americans.

## 

Our signature annual event, The Texas Tribune Festival, attracts thousands of attendees to learn about Texas' biggest challenges and engage in thoughtful discussion about solutions. Decision-makers, industry leaders and community activists come to take part in shaping the public conversation.





## 

Free, town hall-style conversations are an essential part of the Tribune's DNA. Our 60-plus events a year provide Texans with the opportunity to see, hear and question their elected officials, community leaders and policymakers directly.

## LIVESTREAMING

With our livestream of the 2013 legislative session, we leveraged cutting-edge technology to connect millions of Texans with their state government. Texans could watch and listen to their elected officials in real time from anywhere and on any device. The legislative livestream played such a large role in promoting transparency and accountability that we now livestream breaking news, big political announcements, election night coverage, protest rallies and our own live events.

### 2013 Legislative Session Livestream Stats

YouTube Viewers	Minutes Watched
 <b>473,103</b>	 <b>29,439,958</b>
Countries Watching	Livestream Comments
 <b>183</b>	 <b>132,012</b>

"The Tribune serves as proof that a local site can combine news, data and events into a three-legged stool that stands on its own."

— DAVID CARR, *THE NEW YORK TIMES*

"We want to leverage the journalistic excellence of The Texas Tribune and find ways to collaborate for the betterment of our readership and audience on the border."

— CHRIS LOPEZ, *EL PASO TIMES*

"On some wide-ranging stories, two news organizations are certainly better than one in pursuing the truth. We each bring passionate, enterprising reporters to a subject, and the beneficiaries are the voiceless of Texas."

— JEFF COHEN, *HOUSTON CHRONICLE*



# 21<sup>ST</sup>-CENTURY STORYTELLERS

## INNOVATIVE. ENTERPRISING. ENGAGING.

Every day, all day, a conversation is going on in Texas, and it impacts all of us. Whether you hail from a big city or a small town, whether that town has a newspaper or not, whether that newspaper has Capitol coverage or not, this stuff matters. Roads matter. Public education matters. Higher ed matters. Energy matters. Demographic change matters. These and other big issues are being talked about, chewed over, inspected and dissected by the opinion leaders and shapers, and The Texas Tribune is watching. Through the journalism we produce each day, the data sets we acquire, visualize and disseminate, and the in-person events we convene in big cities and small towns, we mean to educate as many Texans as we can about the work of elected officials, of state government and the impact it has on them, and about the intricacies of the issues in play.



“As a newspaper reporter until very recently, I have seen the drain of resources from newsrooms firsthand. The Tribune’s content has become an invaluable tool for newspaper editors committed to educating their readers on issues facing the state.”

— AMAN BATHEJA, REPORTER

“The most rewarding part is knowing that our work makes a difference. We know that we have the attention of state legislators and our representatives in Washington. Our content regularly shows up in news outlets across the state. For many Texans, we are the go-to source for breaking news and in-depth reports. It’s an honor to know that so many people have that kind of trust in us.”

— AYAN MITTRA, MANAGING EDITOR

“At legacy news organizations, the default answer to just about every new idea is ‘no.’ Followed by the reasons why you cannot do something. At the Tribune, the default is ‘yes’ or ‘Why don’t we try X?’ For a veteran like myself, it’s a huge breath of fresh air. Also, how incredibly nimble the organization is. The lack of news bureaucracy here means more time spent on creating great journalism.”

— TERRI LANGFORD, REPORTER

“Coverage of the Texas-Mexico border can get lost in the shuffle because some of the regions are so far away from Austin. But the Tribune offers a chance to report on policy issues at play in Austin, specifically on border security and immigration, that affect areas hundreds of miles away from the capital city.”

— JULIÁN AGUILAR, REPORTER



# BUILDING AN ENGAGED & INFORMED COMMUNITY

Community buy-in was always an essential element of the plan we hatched for a citizen-supported digital media organization, and it remains crucial to our success today. We've used technology to deliver a new kind of journalism: nonpartisan news that can reach more people and make it easier for them to participate. If folks all over the state are engaged by and with our news reporting, data journalism and suite of editorial events, then we're living up to our mission. And the theory of the case has been proven: People really do care about this stuff.

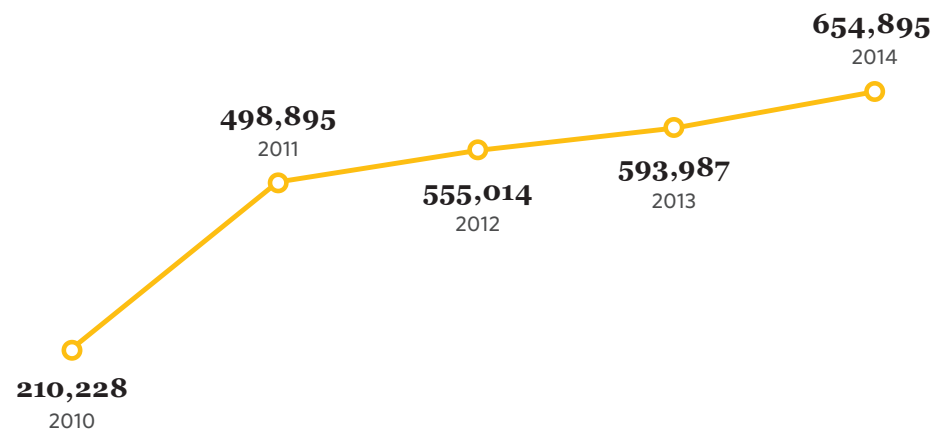
## Since Launch



## Global Readership



## Average Monthly Unique Visitors to Date



# READER COMMENTS

"I feel well **informed** each morning from reading The Texas Tribune and am ready for the day's unfolding events."

"The Tribune covers the forgotten and wonky stories others won't touch. This is a **huge contribution.**"

"While most papers are paring back their Capitol reporting and others rely on 140-character news stories, the Tribune consistently analyzes and reports on all the stories with **timeliness** and **depth.**"

"I think the Tribune reports in a manner that holds elected officials **accountable** for their positions. There is nowhere to hide with the Tribune analyzing the system."

"If I want to know anything about **Texas news** I always check the Tribune."

"Tribune events really set the publication apart. It's not enough to just talk about being politically engaged, and the Tribune provides regular, wonderful opportunities for **active engagement.**"

"**Unbiased**, no-shouting coverage."

"The Tribune has done more than any other publication to engage the public in Texas politics and news by making it very **accessible.**"

"I like the databases and interactive material best. It gives a **deeper level of analysis** than you get on other news media and allows you to really become informed without feeling overwhelmed."

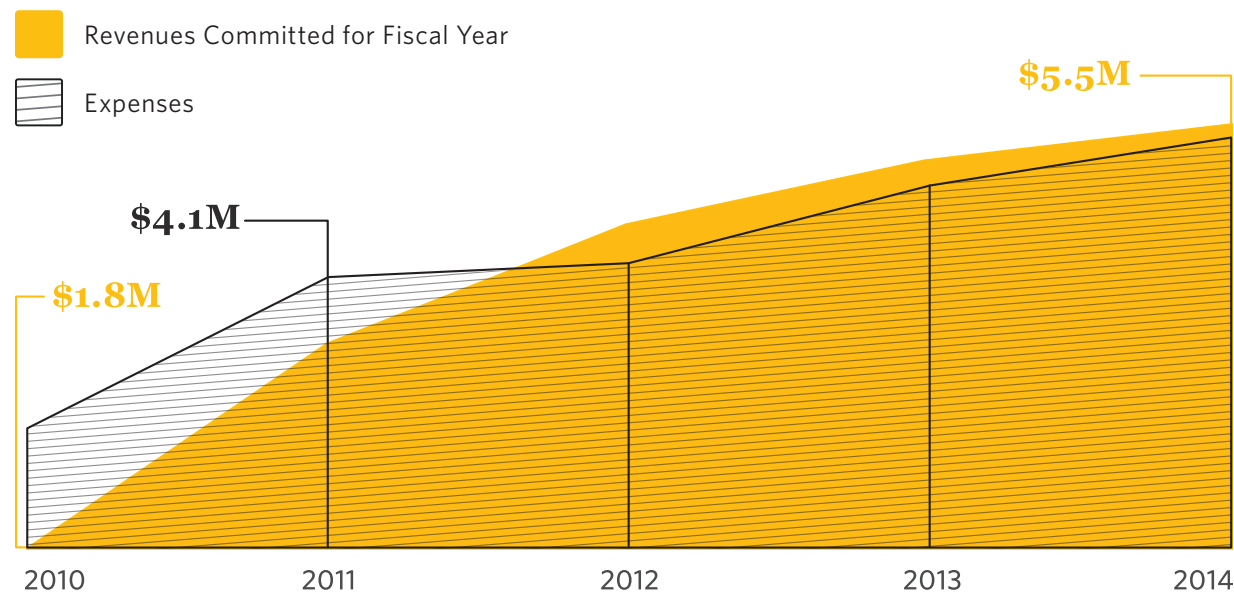
"I appreciate the splendid coverage of state events and the prompt and accurate publishing of news via email. You are my **best source** of Texas news."

"Because of you, I have contacted the Texas legislative branches to participate in homeowners association laws. You have enabled me to find out facts **BEFORE** the laws are argued and/or passed. **I now vote on every matter in every election.**"

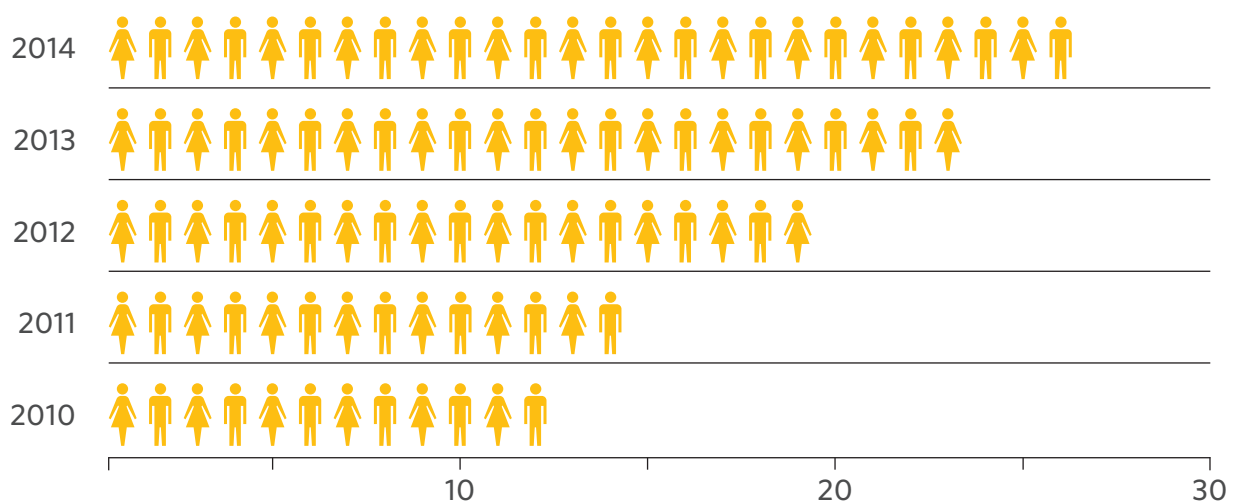
We are, as we've noted many times, a nonprofit news organization, meaning we rely on the generosity of individuals, foundations and corporations to fund our great reporting and our innovative use of technology, with the ultimate goal of putting public service journalism in front of as many people as possible. Our model of sustainability replaces the advertising-driven business model through a mix of individual giving, corporate sponsorship and earned revenue.

**FIVE-YEAR HIGHLIGHTS**

**Net Income to Date**



**Number of Reporters by Year**



As a citizen-supported media organization, we're proud that we've been able to do exactly what we set out to do in our first five years. We've used technology to deliver a new kind of journalism: nonpartisan news that can reach more people and make it easy for them to turn knowledge into action. Citizen involvement in Texas is on the rise. And we're changing the way business gets done in our state government.

What's next?

**MORE!**

More readers, more places, more impact. Our goal is to reach even more Texans — in all corners of the state — allowing them to be informed and engaged in the same way our followers have for the first five years. We plan to access more people, providing relevant coverage and live events throughout Texas. Fueled by technology, we will continue to innovate in news and its delivery.



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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OneSpot

**Evan Smith, Board President**  
Chief Executive Officer & Editor-in-Chief  
The Texas Tribune

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**LEADERSHIP**

**Evan Smith**  
Chief Executive Officer & Editor-in-Chief

**Emily Ramshaw**  
Editor

**Tim Griggs**  
Chief Operating Officer & Publisher

**“This is an example of truly innovative thinking by a small team that allows a broad, national audience to have meaningful access to important state-level stories.”**

**— 2014 GANNETT JUDGES ON THE TEXAS TRIBUNE’S “SPOTLIGHT ON THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE” LIVESTREAM**

For a complete list of donors to The Texas Tribune, please visit [texastribune.org/support-us/donors-and-members/](http://texastribune.org/support-us/donors-and-members/).

**2014**

**Online Journalism Awards**  
Planned News Event: “31 Days, 31 Ways”  
Topical Reporting: “Texas Abortion Filibuster”

**Sidney Hillman Award**  
August 2014 Award: Jay Root’s “Hurting for Work”

**National Edward R. Murrow Awards**  
Overall Excellence  
Best Website (Video)

**Investigative Reporters & Editors**  
Gannett Award for Innovation in Watchdog Journalism

**Society of Professional Journalists**  
Best Deadline Reporting: “Abortion Filibuster”

**Education Writers Association**  
2nd Place, Investigative Reporting: “Faking the Grade”

**Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards**  
Best Continuing Coverage Video: “Abortion Filibuster”  
Best Video News Series: “State of Mind”  
Best Video Feature Reporting: “Prostitution Rehab”  
Best Small Online News Website  
Overall Excellence

**Texas Medical Association Anson Jones Award**  
1st Place, “Shortage of Doctors Tough to Fix”

**Fort Worth SPJ**  
Reporting on Open Government: “Bidness as Usual”  
Opening the Books: “Faking the Grade”

**Headliners Association of Texas Showcase Award**  
Silver Award: “Bidness as Usual”

**Texas Classroom Teachers Association**  
Silver Bell Award: “Faking the Grade”

**2013**

**Online Journalism Awards**  
General Excellence Award

**The National Academy Of Television Arts & Sciences Lone Star Chapter**  
Politics/Government News Series Nominee: “State of Mind”

**Austin Chronicle Readers’ Choice**  
Best News Website  
Best Non-Chronicle Publication

**State Bar of Texas**  
Gavel Award: “Errors in Judgment”

**Regional Edward R. Murrow Award**  
Best Investigative Reporting: “Dog Scent Evidence”

**Education Writers Association**  
2nd Place Enterprise Story: “Death of a District”

**2012**

**National Edward R. Murrow Awards**  
Excellence in Journalism: “An Interactive Approach to Civic Engagement”

**Global Data Journalism Awards**  
3rd Place: “Rise & Fall of Rick Perry’s Presidential Bid”

**Society Of Professional Journalists**  
Digital Video Series: “Fertile Ground”

**Webby Awards**  
Official Politics Nominee

**2011**

**National Edward R. Murrow Awards**  
Best Non-Broadcast Website  
Best Use of Video: “Stump Interrupted”

**Fort Worth SPJ First Amendment Awards**  
Best Online Project: “Detaining Care”

**Texas Medical Association Anson Jones Awards**  
1st Place: “No Country for Health Care”

**Society of Professional Journalists**  
Open Doors Award

**Houston Press Club Lone Star Award**  
Best Internet-Based Feature: “Instapundit”

**Knight-Batten Awards for Innovations in Journalism**  
Honored With Special Distinction

**2010**

**Online Journalism Awards**  
General Excellence Award

**Gannett Foundation Awards**  
Innovation in Watchdog Journalism: “Stump Interrupted”





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