



The Culture Code

A GUIDE TO HOW WE WORK



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In an industry people love to hate, we decided to be different.

Since the beginning, the foundation of our company has been the same: build something genuinely good for the people who work here and the customers who depend on us.

As a purpose-driven company, we prioritize greatness over growth and put people above profit, and it's worked out pretty well for us. Happy employees lead to satisfied customers, which lead to a healthy business.

We've spent 20+ years figuring out how to build a company worth working for. This is what we've learned so far.

Enjoy!



At Text-Em-All, where we came from shapes how we operate today. Our history is something we carry with us, revisit often, and pass on to everyone who joins us.

OUR STORY

Our beginnings

It all started at a kitchen table.

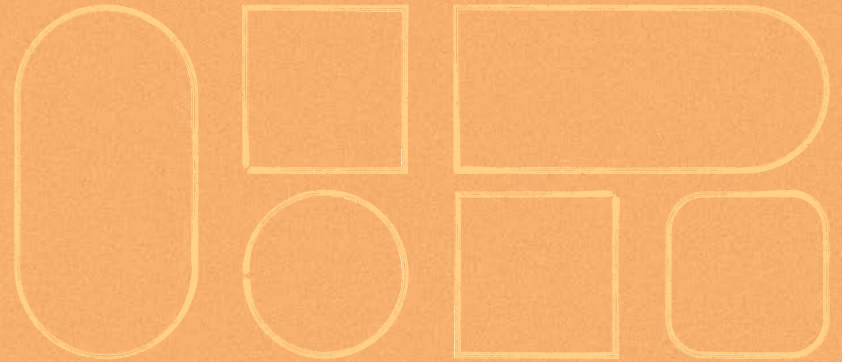
In 2005, Brad Herrmann, Hai Nguyen, Dick Herrmann, and Stephen Barclay set out to build a different kind of company — one that provided an important service to the community and actually cared about the people doing the work. (Spoiler alert: it worked.)

At the time, most tech companies were chasing quick and easy growth, optimizing for the bottom line, and treating people like resources. The founders wanted to prove there was another way. That success could be measured by more than profit, and that you could build something great without making people miserable in the process.

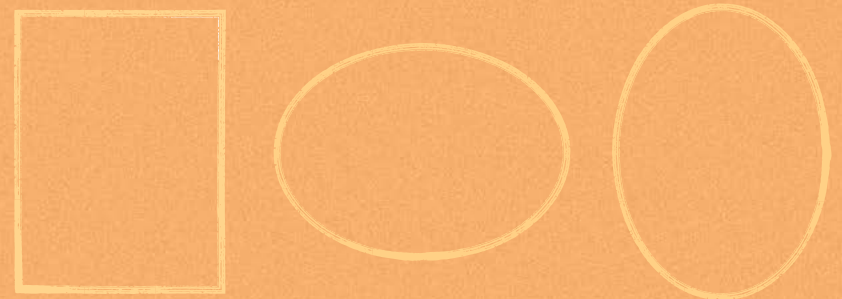
And that kitchen table where they signed the papers? It's still in our office today. It sits in the Founders meeting room as a reminder of where we started and how we still operate — warm, inviting, and built for the kind of conversations that actually matter. The only thing left was to make sure the people building it would always have a stake in what it became.

“The company isn’t just about messaging; it’s about the people that work here. We want it to be a place that people are excited to come to, and we want it to be the best place that our employees have ever worked.”

BRAD HERRMANN, CO-FOUNDER



The very first company meeting, 2005



OUR STORY

100% Employee-owned

From the beginning, Text-Em-All was never intended to be sold.

Brad and Hai wanted to build something worth keeping, and from early on, that meant sharing the results with the people building it. Profit sharing (which we used to call “icing on the cake”) has been part of the deal for as long as most people here can remember.

For years, that conviction lived in the culture. In how decisions were made, how people were treated, and how the company grew. In 2023, after years of searching, they found a legal structure that matched it. We implemented an Employee Ownership Trust and became 100% employee-owned, formalizing what had always been true in practice.

An Employee Ownership Trust is governed by a set of purpose statements, which are commitments that define what the company exists to do and who it exists to serve. At Text-Em-All, employee owners are responsible for upholding them along with our Trust Stewardship Committee (employees) and Advisory Board (employees, founders, and external members).

Now and forever, we’re a private and independent business. We control our product, who we are, and our future decisions. It’s good for our people, and it’s good for our customers too. The same values and culture that got us here are the ones running the company today, and our customers can expect the same exceptional service they’ve always had.

OUR PURPOSE TRUST STATEMENTS

- 1 Keep the company financially strong
- 2 Put people and impact ahead of profit
- 3 Stay independent
- 4 Engage employees in shaping our future
- 5 Build a transparent, authentic, and fun workplace
- 6 Treat customers with integrity and compassion
- 7 Balance the needs of employees and the business
- 8 Be a joy to work with
- 9 Share profits with employees

What it looks like

After so many years, the wall tells a story. Faces change, families grow, and you can watch people evolve from one photo to the next. It started with a handful of people at a kitchen table. Now it's hundreds of moments, all in one place, and it's still growing.



Opposite page: A close up of a portion of the anniversary wall

OUR STORY

It all goes back to our roots...

Back in 2005, Brad and Hai bought a jade plant for the office. Brad took a leaf from that plant and set it aside, declaring, “Let’s grow this leaf into a new plant, just like our new company.”

Over time, that leaf grew. And as the company grew alongside it, we decided that every employee should have a piece to take care of themselves.

Now, when someone joins Text-Em-All, we have them cut a piece from a coworker’s jade plant as part of their onboarding and nurture it throughout their time at the company. And if you’re out of town or on leave, others will take care of it for you because it’s a small tradition that means a lot to us.

Every plant in our office traces back to that original leaf Brad set aside twenty years ago. If you come visit us, you’ll see dozens of them spread across desks and windowsills throughout the building!



The Original: Where it all began!



Our purpose

We've always known why we exist. But after 20 years and a company retreat in Chattanooga, TN, we landed on six words that capture everything we do and why we do it.

"To deliver the messages that matter" means something different depending on where you sit. To our customers, it's a reliability promise. To our team, it's a daily commitment to each other. To the industry, it's proof that a better way of doing business is possible. And to the people who will work here in 20 to 70 years, it's a standard we're setting right now.

It's a high bar, but we're always up for a challenge.

“ My hope is that this purpose inspires the people who read it. I hope it shows that a company can operate with intention and still grow. I hope it encourages other leaders to question the assumptions they hold about workplaces. ”

RON KINKADE, HEAD OF MARKETING

To deliver the messages that matter.

how

what

why



Our Guiding Tools

While our purpose tells us why we exist, our Manifesto, Values, and Formula show us how to live it out.

We've developed them over the years, but together they form a complete picture of who we are, what we stand for, and how we work together.

OUR GUIDING TOOLS

Our manifesto

Our Manifesto is a collaborative declaration of who we are. The entire company (well, everyone who was here at the time) participated in creating it. The goal was to identify the “why” behind what we do as a company and put into words what makes us different.

Our Manifesto phrases aren’t just words to us; every employee looks for ways to live them out daily. From eagerly embracing our differences to refusing to let our customers send spam from our platform, we strive to stay true to the goal we’ve set for ourselves.



TRUE STORY

If you ever visit our office, you might hear us calling each other by some pretty clever nicknames! These were created during the Manifesto-writing process, and we’ve kept the tradition alive ever since.

We believe *everyone has something important to say.*

We use our powers for *good, not evil.*

We think the world would be better if *nice people finished first.*

We think working hard and laughing ‘til it hurts are *equally important.*

We do the right thing, *even when no one is looking.*

We *embrace our differences* because they make us who we are.

We measure success by *more than just profit.*

We are crazy about *keeping it simple.*

You should fire us *if we suck.*

We try to make the *stumble part of the dance.*

We loathe unwanted and annoying interrupt-dinner-with-the-family *spam calls.*

We feed off *creativity and dreams, passion and good cheer.*

OUR GUIDING TOOLS

Our values

In 2017, the entire company headed down to Austin, Texas, for a company trip with one goal: to find our core values.

We had values before that trip, but they weren't created with input from the full team, which didn't feel right. In Austin, we wrote stories and examples of times each value showed up in our work, then looked for patterns.

We immediately saw the overwhelming presence of three themes: Compassion, Authenticity, and Shared Excellence. These became our core values.

Every big decision at Text-Em-All gets filtered through our values, and so do most interactions. Employees are constantly on the lookout for moments when a coworker brings them to life, and when they do, we make a point of calling it out.



Compassion

Our shared humanity connects us. We feel for each other and help in ways big and small.



Authenticity

The courage to be imperfect, to show up and be real, to be honest, to be our true selves.



Shared Excellence

We know our best can always be better, and great things are never done alone.

OUR GUIDING TOOLS

Our Formula

In 2014, Brad asked everyone to read “The Five Dysfunctions of a Team” by Patrick Lencioni. The principles resonated, but the language felt like a business school textbook. So we did what we do: got the whole team in a room and put it in our own words. What came out are the phrases you’ll see on the next page, and more importantly, the ones we hear every day.

We’ve listed the five overarching themes of our Formula on the right, and on the next page, we’ve shared the full version. We hope you enjoy reading through the principles that make our employee relationships so unique.



TRUE STORY

We close out all of our meetings with one big, simultaneous clap. This clap represents a phrase taken directly from our Formula: “Stack Hands and Break”!

Trust each other

Embrace healthy conflict

Commit to the plan

Hold each other accountable

Focus on results

Trust each other

Leave your ego at the door.	Our purpose unites us.
Thou shalt not judge.	Assume positive intent.
Put yourself out there.	

Embrace healthy conflict

Be genuine, authentic, and transparent.	We celebrate passionate, unfiltered debate.
It's not you, it's your idea.	Conflict strengthens relationships.
Great teams don't hold back.	

Commit to the plan

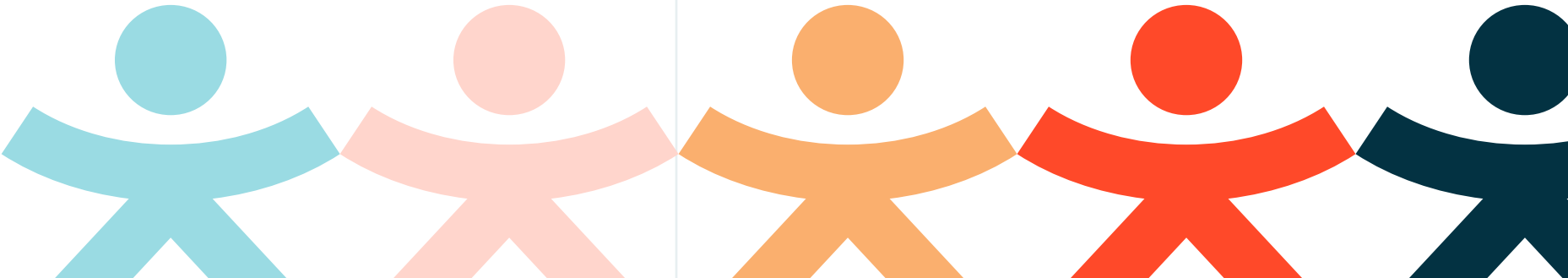
Without clarity, there can be no commitment.	Lingering bitterness is not tolerated.
Understand your role.	Stack hands and break.

Hold each other accountable

Push because you care.	Defensiveness loses championships.
If it was easy, everyone would do it.	Your teammates are counting on you.
Likability doesn't replace accountability.	

Focus on results

Prove it.	Success leads to better problems.
Acknowledge, learn, adapt.	Care.
I am not successful until WE are.	



A hand-drawn illustration of a hand holding a banner. The hand is simple, with a thumb and index finger visible, holding the banner from the right side.

How We

A hand-drawn illustration of a hand holding a banner. The hand is simple, with a thumb and index finger visible, holding the banner from the left side.

Show Up

Our guiding tools aren't things we read once and file away. They show up in how we run meetings, how we celebrate each other, and how we make space for real conversations.

This is what that looks like in practice.

HOW WE SHOW UP

Transparency

Open-book management is the practice of sharing the real numbers with everyone, not just leadership. Every Wednesday, that's exactly what we do. The whole company sits down for lunch and our Scoreboard meeting, where revenue, customer feedback, sales updates, and product progress are shared openly with everyone in the room.

When you own a piece of the company, understanding how it's actually doing matters. The Scoreboard is where that happens. It's also where we ask hard questions, challenge each other's thinking, and catch problems before they compound. Some of the best decisions we've made started as a hand raised during that weekly lunch.



Connection

Onboarding

During your first week, you're given two assignments. The first: Find someone with a company credit card to take you to lunch. The second: Find people who can tell you about moments that shaped this company — both the good and the dark days.

For our new recruits, it's a good way to get to know the people they'll be working with every day, and for the people sharing the stories, it's a great reminder of how far we've come.

Get-to-know-you lunches

One of our goals is that you can walk into a room, sit next to any co-worker, and start a conversation — regardless of what team they're on. Not everyone crosses paths organically, so we made it easier. Grab lunch with a co-worker you don't talk to regularly, and we'll pick up the tab!

Above and opposite page: Our scoreboard lunches in action

Company Trips

We work hard to cultivate trust in our little corner of Texas, but we take it a step further by taking a vacation together every few years. (Yep, you read that right!)

Each trip has a purpose — some celebrate a milestone, others focus on defining our culture. On some trips, we've even visited companies we admire to see what building with intention looks like somewhere else. But the real value of these trips lies in what happens outside our planned activities. Conversations happen that wouldn't happen in a meeting. Relationships deepen across teams that rarely interact, and we come back stronger every time.

Celebrations

It's important to us to mark the moments that matter, both in and outside of work. Baby showers for growing families, proper send-offs for retirements, and every work anniversary celebrated with a prize wheel spin. And sometimes, we celebrate just because we can. Ask us about our “Take This Job and Shove It” party sometime!

The connection doesn't stop at company-sponsored events either. Over the years, our employees have found their way to happy hours, 5Ks, karaoke, and more together.

Opposite page: Photos from company trips over the years



HOW WE SHOW UP

Recognition

We have a simple belief: people should hear when they’ve done something that matters.

Recognition cards are our most everyday version of that. When you see a coworker living out our values or formula, you call it out by sharing a card in our designated Slack channel. The opposite page features actual recognition card quotes.

At the end of each year, we give two awards that carry a little more weight. The Positive Impact Award goes to someone whose presence makes everything around them better — the results, the people, and the culture. The Frontline Leader Award goes to someone who leads from exactly where they are, makes their team better without being asked, and acts like a true employee-owner in every sense.

And then there’s the Moose. It’s the highest honor at Text-Em-All, and whoever received it last is the one who passes it on. When the time feels right, they give a speech about the next recipient at Scoreboard and present the award in front of the entire company. And once you’re awarded the Moose, you even get to sign it as a permanent reminder of the good work you’ve done.

Opposite page: Real life recognition quotes from our team

Thanks Humberto, for having the trust to speak up yesterday in our all-hands. Because you had that trust to share what was on your mind, we were able to engage in healthy conflict and arrive at a common understanding.	Josh just worked late to finish a help-em-all tool that should greatly simplify engineering support for registration platform alarms. He and Jassin showed great initiative in coming up with the idea. Great work guys.	I was on support and got a report in our emergency inbox. I put out the call for help, and Tera didn't hesitate. Together we made sure every affected customer heard back quickly. I love having you as a teammate!
This is for Angela. After some back and forth she was off to the races building what the CX needed to help these customers. Thank you Angela for the Shared Excellence!!!	I wanted to give a quick shout out to Erika. We've been working through a challenging issue, and our discussions have always remained positive and constructive. Thank you for doing a great job at your job!	I wanted to shout out Ron for his great question during the scoreboard today. It reminded me how important these kinds of difficult clarifications are for the rest of the team.
This goes out to Chris and his dog! They had to cut their walk short so he could run home and help me get logged into my computer yesterday. Thank you for saving me, per usual! I'm forever grateful for your expertise!	Thanks to Attila for being ready and willing to jump on a support issue while I was 15 minutes away from home. Between the two of us we were able to quickly diagnose the issue and resolve it.	Major shout-out to Chris and Derek for responding, identifying, managing and fixing this morning's down time. Thank you for being alert, acting instantly and minimizing the fallout from the failure. You guys are solid!
This one is for Jay, Coco & Manny – I got to join an important call today. It takes a lot of work, preparation, courage, and thick skin to handle these types of calls and I know we're in good hands!	I'm very grateful that I'm on the same team as you, Sam. I learn something new, or a new way of thinking, almost every day from working with you.	I wanted to give a HUGE thank you to everyone who helped pack customer engagement boxes yesterday! The grand total was 126 boxes ready-to-go in about an hour and a half (with a pizza break!!)



Caring for

You

and

Future You

We want the people here to be taken care of —
today, and twenty years from now.

That shapes everything from how we structure
compensation and specific benefits to how we
design our in-office schedule.

CARING FOR YOU AND FUTURE YOU

Benefits

We cover 100% of health/dental/vision insurance premiums for every employee and their entire family. On top of that, each employee gets a \$1,000 annual mind, body, and wellness allowance, a \$750 technology allowance every two years, and a phone plan they can join at no cost. The goal is simple: nobody should have to think twice about taking care of themselves or their family.

Future you

Brad has said more than once that he wants everyone here to become millionaires one day. That's not a throwaway line. We match 401 (k) contributions up to 6% of each employee's salary, make a discretionary year-end contribution based on company profits, and distribute quarterly profit-sharing directly to employees.

As employee owners, the company's success is everyone's success, and the finances are structured to make sure that's felt.



Clockwise from top:

Our 'Take This Job and Shove It' party, a sweet group sk, and our employee ownership celebration

Flexibility

We work a hybrid schedule — three days in the office, two remote — but the real flexibility is in the smaller moments. Need to leave for a doctor’s appointment or make it to Donuts with Dads at your kid’s school? Employees have the flexibility to manage their own work/life balance. The expectation is that everyone will get their work done because we have a foundation built on trust.

Every June and July, the entire company goes remote, allowing employees the flexibility to work from anywhere. The one ask is that anyone in Dallas spend Wednesdays in the office to touch base in person and have Scoreboard lunch. That one’s worth showing up for. Additionally, we take a winter break from December 24th to January 1st each year to allow employees to reset and spend time with their loved ones.

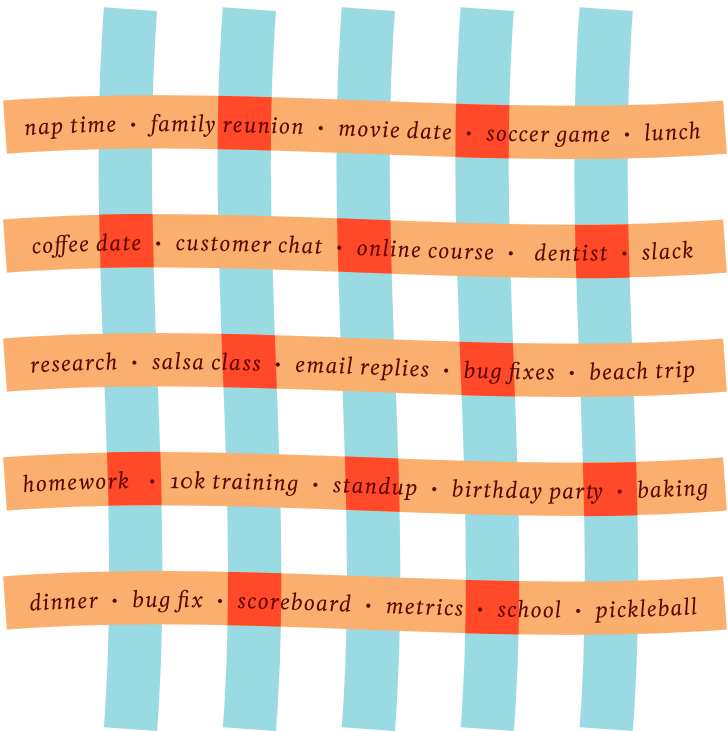
As for vacation, employees get 25 days of PTO each year, plus 5 additional volunteer days to use however they choose.

“ We don’t look at vacation as a luxury, reward, or perk. It’s an essential part of work and life that will make you healthier, more productive, and boost your creativity. ”

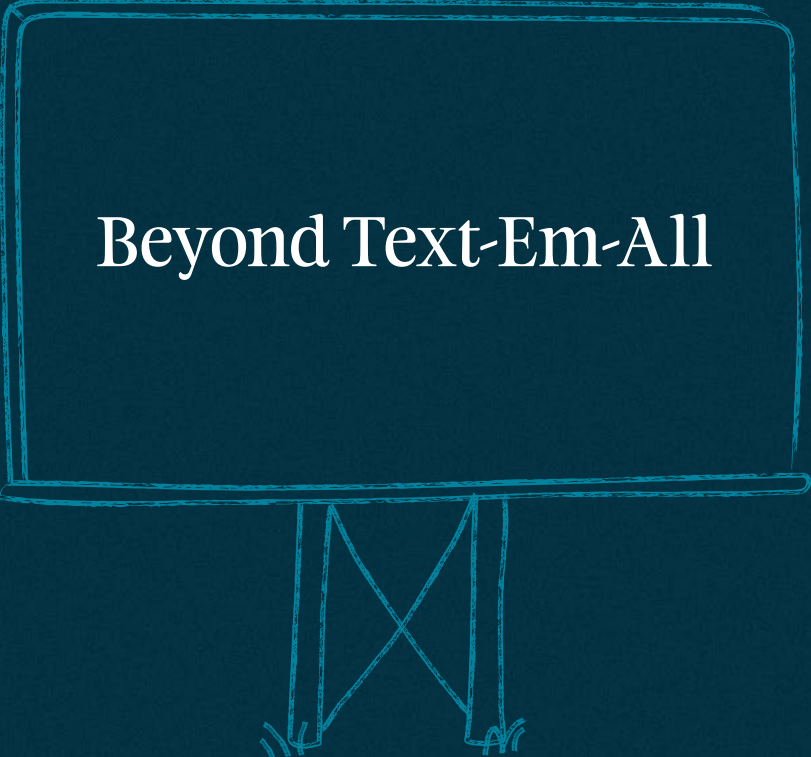
SABRINA WHITE, HEAD OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCE

The anniversary chat

Once a year, each employee sits down with Brad or Hai and their manager for an honest conversation about how they’re actually doing. Some people bring family photos or talk about work they’re proud of. Others just talk. Either way, the point is the same — Brad and Hai just want to know the people here as people, not just as employees.



With trust at the base, commitment in the heart, and accountability woven throughout our teams, we strive for a work/life integration structure that benefits everyone.



Beyond Text-Em-All

The same philosophy that shapes how we treat our employees also shapes how we engage with the community and industry. For us, taking care of people doesn't stop at the office door.

BEYOND TEXT-EM-ALL

In the community

The Founders Scholarship

In 2024, we announced the first annual Text-Em-All Founders Scholarship, a \$10,000 award given each year to a Texas high school or undergraduate student who exemplifies our values in their life and studies. It started as a vision item on a whiteboard in Nashville in 2020 and became something real four years later.

The scholarship is an extension of what our founders built this company to be. It comes from the spirit of generosity that shaped employee ownership, and the belief that people are worth investing in.

Quarterly Contributions

Since 2020, a portion of our quarterly profit-sharing cash has gone directly to employees to distribute to local organizations however they choose. Six years in, we're still showing up for many of the same organizations by donating each quarter and volunteering alongside them.

Additionally, whatever employees donate personally, Text-Em-All matches it dollar-for-dollar.



TRUE STORY

We believe in donating our time too. Since 2010, we've worked with local organization Senior Source to wrap and distribute gifts to local senior citizens every holiday season.



Text-Em-All volunteer events throughout the years

BEYOND TEXT-EM-ALL

In the industry



Small Giants

We're a proud member of the Small Giants Community, a group of purpose-driven companies and like-minded leaders that help each other (and budding entrepreneurs) grow and work mindfully. We believe in prioritizing greatness over growth by creating a positive company culture.



Tugboat

As a Certified Evergreen business, we are passionately driven by our purpose to deliver the messages that matter. We believe that putting people over profit, focusing on long-term strategy, and embracing pragmatic innovation are all practices that lead to success.



“It’s neat to see other companies operating under the values-driven leadership movement like us, and to be mentioned alongside them is an honor.”

BRAD HERRMANN, CO-FOUNDER



Counter-clockwise from top:

TEA-members at the Small Giants Summit, Ron presenting at the event, Brad and Hai posing with their Hall of Fame award, Sabrina (left) speaking as a Hall of Fame inductee

Our vision

The plan has always been to still be here in 100 years. And in an industry where companies are bought and sold every day, it's a conscious choice we've had to make.

We make that choice every time we prioritize making the right decision over the quick and dirty one, the right customer over the spammy cash cow, and the people here over the bottom line. Now, that doesn't mean we ignore the bottom line. We know that a healthy business is what makes everything else possible, but it means we never let it be the only thing that matters.

The messages that matter don't change. How we deliver them will keep evolving. But the company behind them — independent, employee-owned, and purpose-driven — is built to last.

The Text-Em-All Culture Code

Third edition, July 2026

Number of employees at time of printing: 44

Brad Herrmann	Jeff Ogata	Daniel Diosdado
Hai Nguyen	Ron Kinkade	Sunil Babu
Stephen Barclay	Lauren Gannon	Kaitlyn Orred
Dick Herrmann	Frank Norton	Dixen Van Pelt
Marsha Jackson	Sam Stokes	Darshan Modha
Attila Vari	Brittney Barnes	Angela Wu
Jay Tollerene	Humberto Lopez	Manuel Perez
Jason Thomas	Alexis Jacob	Breeyae Hogue
Sabrina White	Lea Tellez	Jassin Zaki
Chris Mayer	Derek Schaab	Jonathan Melton
Jeanette Alfaro	Salman Zindani	Cassandra Terry
Cory Shinn	Sarah Noel	Erika Gaffney
Chanelle Miller	Reanna Siegrist	Joshua Wood
Mike Mathew	Lisa Thomas	Brent Orred
Tera Fondren	Taylor Smith	

Company age at time of printing: 21 out of 100+ years

TEXT-EM-ALL | ESTABLISHED 2005

Final Thoughts

We’re so very grateful to the many individuals and organizations that have influenced us on our journey as a company. We’ve learned from some of the very best culture-driven leaders and companies and hope this book carries on the same spirit of sharing and inspiration that has helped us build Text-Em-All into what you see today.

Our goal is to build a 100-year company, so the journey for us is just beginning. We’re still learning, making plenty of mistakes, and sure don’t have all the answers. If this book inspires or resonates with you, we’d love to meet! Perhaps we can learn from each other. Or at the very least, celebrate that business can be a force for good in the world and we just need to have a little courage to do our part.

Brad & Hai





We deliver the messages that matter.