



 text-em-all

# The Culture Code

a guide to how we work

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At Text-Em-All, we want to do more than deliver messages — we want to make a positive impact.



In an industry people love to hate, we decided to be different. Making customers and employees happy has been our strategic plan since 2005. Culture is our competitive advantage.



As a purpose-driven organization, you'll discover that we strive to be a joy to do business with, prioritize greatness over growth, and put people above profit. Not only do we think this is the right thing to do, we believe it's a better way to do business — happy employees lead to satisfied clients, which lead to healthy profits.



Now, we want to share what we've learned with you. Maybe you'll find something in here that inspires you, or perhaps you'll find something that completely changes your views on business and capitalism.

So get ready because you're about to dive into our world — our history, culture, vision, and values.

Enjoy!

# Our history

In 2005, Brad Herrmann, Hai Nguyen, Dick Herrmann, and Stephen Barclay set out to build a different kind of company — one that not only provided an important service to the community but was about the people who worked there. (Spoiler alert: **it worked.**)

Brad, Hai, and Stephen quickly realized that there was a space in the tech industry to build a company that was culturally different from the rest, and they jumped at the opportunity. They became an example to the greater business community that there is another way to work. Success doesn't have to be measured by just the bottom line, and you and your employees don't have to hate coming to work. You can enjoy what you're doing, find reward in your work, and enjoy the challenges that come with it.

“We start with people that care about their coworkers, their customers, and building a great product,” Brad said. “If you have all that, you'll find win-win relationships across the board.”

## TEXT-EM-ALL TIDBIT

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.” Well, that leaf steadily grew, giving us an idea — everyone should get a piece of the plant to grow on their own! Now we have dozens of jade plants around the office.



THE VERY FIRST COMPANY MEETING, 2005

“ 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

# Our purpose

In 2017, we decided that as a company with lofty goals, we needed to create a purpose statement to communicate to our community what type of business we wanted to be. It may sound dramatically existential, but we were really asking ourselves the question: Why do we exist? After multiple brainstorming sessions, we agreed that our purpose is to positively impact those around us.

As a company whose goal is to still be here in 100+ years, we recognize that our purpose will need to evolve and adapt throughout the years, and we plan to revisit our purpose every few years. Until then, our focus will be on using our guiding tools to pursue opportunities that allow us to have a positive impact on our employees, our community, and beyond.



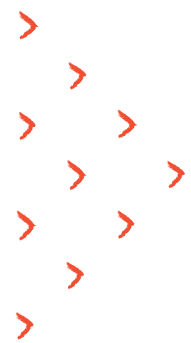
# We exist to make a positive impact





## Our guiding tools

At Text-Em-All, we're led by our three guiding tools: our manifesto, values, and formula. We've added these guiding tools as we've grown throughout the years, and these tools help us to consistently make a positive impact. We believe that if we make decisions that reflect our manifesto, align with our values, and adhere to our formula, we'll continue to thrive as a team, a company, and a force for good in our community.



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 & laughing till it hurts are equally important.

We do the right thing, even when no one's looking.

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

We measure success by more than just profit.

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

You should fire us if we suck.

We are crazy about keeping it simple.

We feed off creativity & dreams, passion & good cheer.

We try to make the stumble part of the dance.

## 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 — to put into words what made us different.

Our Manifesto phrases aren't just words to us; every employee looks for ways to live out our Manifesto 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.

### TEXT-EM-ALL TIDBIT

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.



OUR GUIDING TOOLS

# Our values

In October 2017, the entire company headed down to Austin, Texas for a facilitated retreat in search of Text-Em-All's core values.

We had a set of values, but they weren't created with input from the full team, which didn't feel right. In Austin, we came up with a group of finalists that we deemed important and then wrote stories and examples of times when the trait was lived out.

Amazingly, we saw the overwhelming presence of three values: **Authenticity, Compassion, and Shared Excellence.** These became our core values.



## 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.



**1** trust  
each  
other

**4** hold  
each other  
accountable

**2** embrace  
healthy  
conflict

**5** focus  
on results

**3** commit  
to the plan



#### OUR GUIDING TOOLS

## Our formula

If our Manifesto is who we are and our Values are what we stand for, the Formula is most definitely how we work.

Inspired by a leadership conference in 2014, Brad asked everyone in the company to read “The Five Dysfunctions of a Team” by Patrick Lencioni. We loved it! We decided to incorporate it into our everyday work. However, to make it work for us, we took the business-school-sounding principles and set out to put them into our own words. A large committee of folks from various teams came up with the phrases you see today. More importantly, you hear them every day.

These phrases are regularly incorporated into conversation, thus making it easier to hold people accountable and embrace healthy conflict.

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

#### TEXT-EM-ALL TIDBIT

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

Leave your ego at the door.

Thou shalt not judge.

Put yourself out there.

Our purpose unites us.

Assume positive intent.

## embrace healthy conflict

Be genuine, authentic, and transparent.

It's not you, it's your idea.

Great teams don't hold back.

We celebrate passionate, unfiltered debate.

Conflict strengthens relationships.

## commit to the plan

Without clarity, there can be no commitment.

Understand your role.

Lingering bitterness is not tolerated.

Stack hands and break.

## hold each other accountable

Push because you care.

If it was easy, everyone would do it.

Likability doesn't replace accountability.

Defensiveness loses championships.

Your teammates are counting on you.

## focus on results

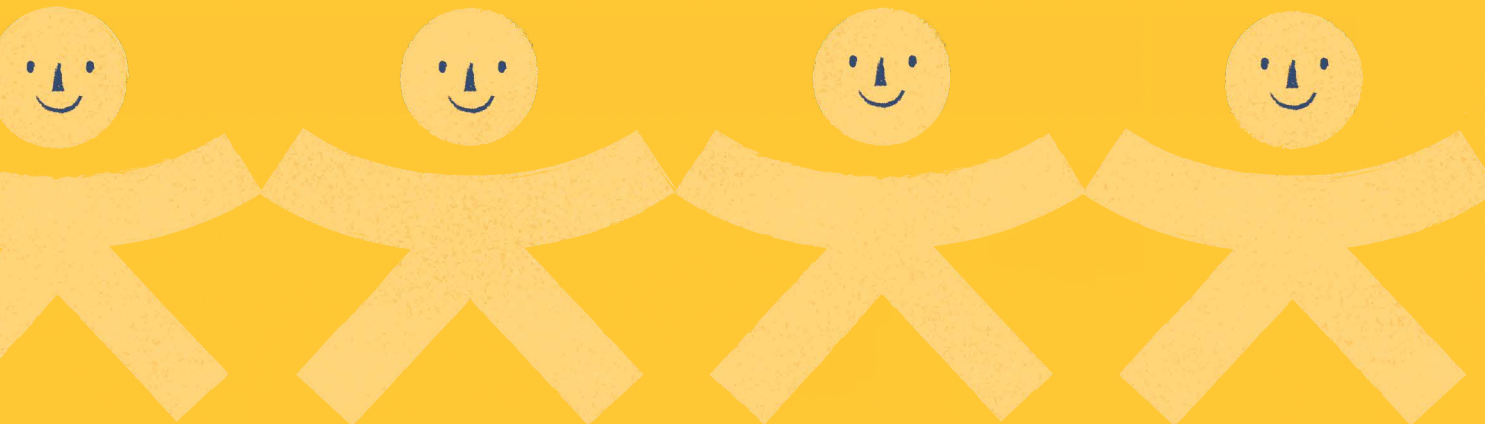
Prove it.

Acknowledge, learn, adapt.

I am not successful until WE are.

Success leads to better problems.

Care.





# How we work with our employees

Text-Em-All's approach to compensation and personal development is unique. One of our goals as a company is to have happy and fulfilled employees who find joy in their work. To accomplish this, we regularly review compensation, chat with employees about their career paths often, and offer continuing education opportunities to encourage growth.

# Compensation

Brad has said on more than one occasion that he wants us all to be millionaires and retire early. As such, Text-Em-All offers financial education, transparency, amazing benefits, and generous compensation.

We want Text-Em-All team members to be paid well. We look at a person's skills and experience in the overall job market and evaluate the value a person brings to the Text-Em-All team. By combining a healthy salary with generous benefits, we expect to pay significantly better than average.

With the support of a team and a manager, we expect that our employees' skills will grow and their roles will evolve over time. So at least once a year, each employee sits down with their direct manager to review their compensation. This annual review is tied directly to their career development and should be accompanied by feedback and a clear development plan for the year to come.

**“ Our intent is to make the choice to work at Text-Em-All about more than just compensation, and instead, focus on the work we do, how we do it, and who we do it with. ”**

— BRAD HERRMANN, CO-FOUNDER

# Benefits & Perks

As a company that sees our employees as our biggest asset, we strive to treat them as such. To put it plainly, we make sure our employees are taken care of because we care about them! Each employee at Text-Em-All gets generous benefits including 100% premiums-paid for their family's health/dental/vision insurance, unlimited PTO that's actually unlimited, 100% 401K matching on up to 6% of their salary, and more.



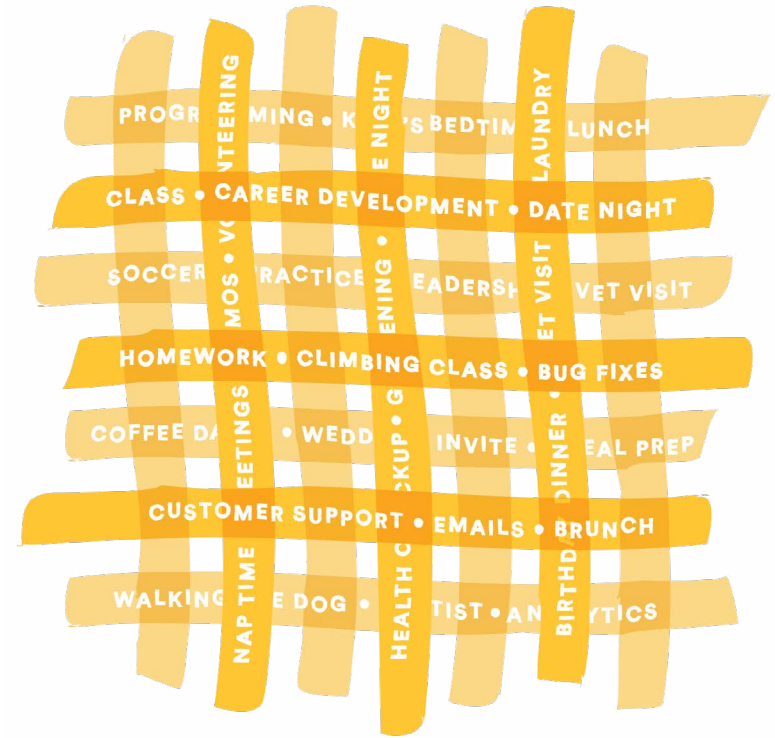
# Work/Life Integration

We've been practicing work/life integration at Text-Em-All since the day we were founded. We strongly believe that it's mutually beneficial for both our employees and the company as a whole to practice work/life integration because it creates harmony throughout all areas of our employees' lives. Our approach to work/life integration offers flexibility to employees by letting them (to an extent) structure their work days the way they see fit. This allows employees to coach soccer teams, pick up their kids from school, and easily work from home when any situation arises. In response, our team members are committed to great work, which sometimes means we jump in after hours to make sure an important project is completed.

At Text-Em-All, effective work/life integration is a product of our team's commitment to each other and to the company. Since trust is at the core of everything we do as a team, we don't have to worry about our co-workers abusing their flexibility because honestly, no one wants to! We know that as part of a team, "I am not successful until WE are."

**“ 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



In addition to trust, we all commit to getting our part done. Clarity and honesty throughout teams allows our purpose to unite us and lets us feel confident that we can commit to providing flexibility for all team members by working together. Our teammates are counting on us, and we hold each other accountable, meaning if a teammate is unavailable when you need them to be, we go straight to the source and talk to them about it.

With trust at the base, commitment in the heart, and accountability weaved throughout our teams, it's easy to have a work/life integration structure that benefits everyone.

HOW WE WORK WITH OUR EMPLOYEES

# Career Paths, One-on-Ones, & Personal Development

Our intention at Text-Em-All is to provide engaging work in a supportive environment so individuals can be their best. Key factors in creating this fulfilling work experience are personal growth and mastery. Our Career Progression Process intends to support this goal by:



**Increasing transparency for the promotion and compensation process**



**Providing a development path to help you grow and progress in your career**



**Outlining the requirements and expectations for each level of your career**

We hope this process will help guide our employees' careers, facilitate one-on-ones, and provide a path for a fulfilling career at Text-Em-All.



## **TEXT-EM-ALL TIDBIT**

Each year around their anniversary date, we invite our employees to have an Anniversary Chat with Brad or Hai and their manager. This conversation is not about compensation or performance but is purely a check-in on the employee as an individual.



## How we work with each other

At Text-Em-All, our culture is our competitive advantage, and it really comes to light in how we work with each other. We want our employees to trust each other, and we believe that three key components to establishing that trust are transparency, connection, and recognition.

HOW WE WORK WITH EACH OTHER

# Transparency

Every Wednesday at 11:30am, we gather the company together for a group lunch over our Scoreboard meeting, where we practice open-book management.

The purpose of the Scoreboard meeting is threefold:

To get to know team members that you don't work with every day.

To create transparency across the company and allow everyone to see what's happening. The metrics help us better understand what teams are doing and why they're doing it, and allow others to give input.

To provide a dedicated space for us to discuss important topics or issues. As metrics are presented, everyone is encouraged to ask questions and challenge one another. We welcome ways to problem solve or improve numbers as a company.



BRAD MAKING US LAUGH DURING SCOREBOARD, 2022

Metrics allow us to be aware of trends and changes in real-time so that we can adjust or correct before it's too late. They provide perspective, both of future and historical purposes, to show us where we've been and where we are.

They also give us an opportunity to live out our formula:

- Trust each other**
- Embrace healthy conflict**
- Commit to the plan**
- Hold each other accountable**
- Focus on results**



# Connection

## TEA Talks

TEA talks are bi-monthly discussions with randomly selected team members and enable us to facilitate conversations that may not happen naturally so that team members who don't work together can build trust. Every other month, the TEA Talk groups are led by a different full-time person, and we encourage all members to be vulnerable and authentic.

We're hopeful that TEA Talks are just the beginning and that people continue their conversations outside of these bi-monthly chats!



## Get-to-Know-You Lunches

In 2020, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we instated “Get to Know You” lunches. These lunches aim to get to know either one or two of your co-workers on a deeper, personal level. The best part? Since our co-workers are bonding, we pay for the meal.

## Inclusion & Diversity

We built Text-Em-All with the understanding that it's our differences that make us stronger. Since day one, diversity and inclusion have been a functional part of our culture, policies, and guiding voice.

We believe that fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace ensures that each person feels empowered to bring their authentic self to work. We are committed to embracing diversity and being the change in the world. It's simple for us—people come before profit.

Here are some of the ongoing goals that our company works toward:



Auditing our recruiting processes to make sure we're reaching diverse candidates



Implementing a formal donation plan to donate quarterly to organizations that fight for racial equality and social justice



Identifying how and when we can support minority-owned businesses when we make purchases



Providing training and resources around social justice topics (ie. racial injustice, unconscious bias)

## HOW WE WORK WITH EACH OTHER | CONNECTION

### Company Trips

Between scoreboard lunches, TEA talks, get-to-know-you lunches, and more, we work hard to cultivate an environment of trust in our little corner of Texas. We take that a step further by taking a vacation together every few years. (Yep — you read that right!)

Throughout the years, we've prioritized team relationship-building by taking all-company trips. They've taken several forms over the years, but each trip has a focus and a purpose. Some trips are focused on celebrating a milestone, others are focused on defining or refining our culture, and others are concentrated on learning and growing together.

Something magical happens when you take aligned people and remove them from their responsibilities and day-to-day work. The ability to talk and bond cross-functionally with different people and teams grows our company in ways we never could in Frisco.

It's a huge investment of time, money, and effort, and as we grow, it becomes more complicated, but we'll continue to do them because they're vital to our company's core.





HOW WE WORK WITH EACH OTHER

# Recognition

It feels good to be recognized, and here at Text-Em-All, we prioritize recognition as a valuable part of our company culture. We've instituted multiple recognition programs throughout our office, including our Moose Award, Prize Wheel, Recognition Cards, and even our Foam Finger — which might mean you're getting the wrong type of recognition. ;)

**"Thomas works really hard to ensure his clients are happy and taken care of. Thank you for caring for our customers!"**

**"I would like to recognize Lauren, Sarah, Coco, Britt, and guests for helping put together over 400 snack/food bags at Frisco Fastpacs!"**

**"Shout out to Cassandra for her hard work. She's tenacious when faced with any task and so easy to work with."**

**"A huge high-five to our fantastic Manny! I just had the absolute delight of tuning into one of his calls, and his blend of professionalism and compassion is like a masterclass in awesome!"**

**"I have to give a huge shoutout to Derek for all of his help getting Jassin and myself up to speed on Firebird development. You are seriously a great teacher!"**

**"I want to send a shoutout to Darsh for being so helpful! He helped me with some reports recently and he was super kind and patient."**

**"I want to take a moment and give a huge shout out to Chanelle. She is always quick to help me (or anyone else) out. She keeps our office functioning well and does an amazing job."**

**"I just want to give a shoutout to Angela. She's been absolutely awesome on this latest project."**

\*ACTUAL RECOGNITION CARD QUOTES

HOW WE WORK WITH EACH OTHER

# 100% Employee-Owned

When Brad and Hai created Text-Em-All, they simply wanted to create a company that cared about people and was small and nimble. A company that made pragmatic decisions without the overhead of “corporate” oversight.

Once they realized that they really had a culture and company that was worth preserving, they started searching for a solution that protects what makes Text-Em-All special, considers future governance of the company, and allows the entire team to benefit financially from the company’s success. Employee ownership and the employee ownership trust model, in particular, met all these needs.

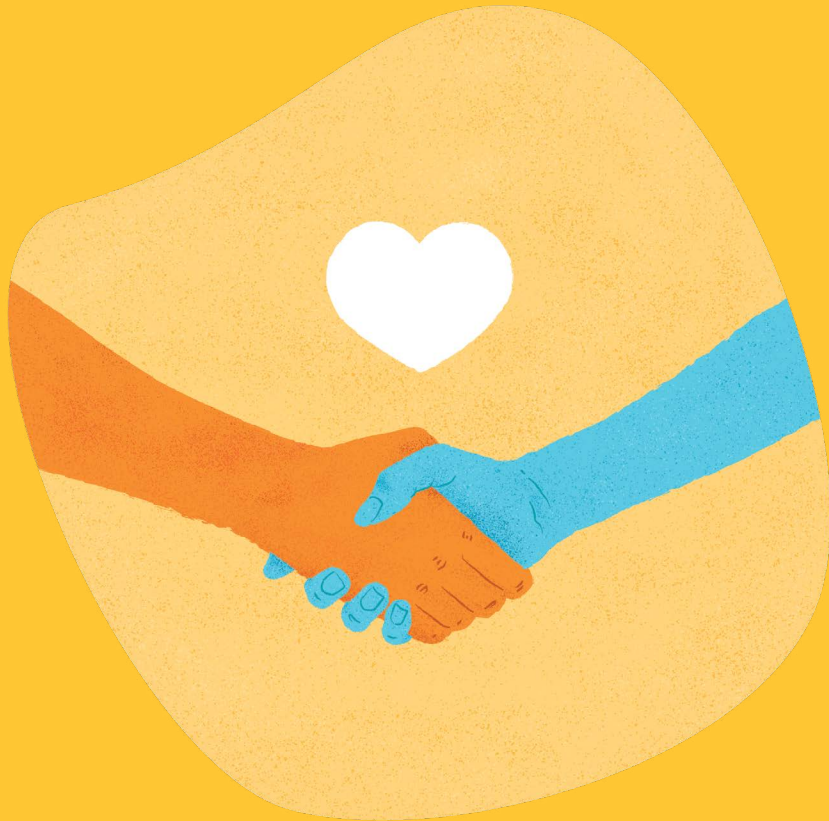
In 2023, Text-Em-All implemented an Employee Ownership Trust and became 100% employee-owned. While this change was one of the most important days in our business’s history, how we work together will stay the same. Our employees have always been involved in the company’s decision-making, but now they will also be able to benefit from its growth.

Now and forever, we’re a private and independent business. We control our product, who we are, and our future decisions. And this doesn’t just benefit us; it also benefits our customers. While our employees continue to grow and maintain our organization’s values and culture, our customers can expect the same exceptional service they’ve always had.



EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP CELEBRATION, 2024

“We’ve built something worth preserving.”



## Our positive impact

At Text-Em-All, we want to do more than deliver messages — we want to make a positive impact. As a purpose-driven organization, you'll discover that we strive to be a joy to do business with, prioritize greatness over growth, and put people above profit. We accomplish these goals mainly through our service in the community and industry.

OUR POSITIVE IMPACT

# In the community

## The Founders Scholarship

In January 2020, the company went to Nashville together to create our vision. One of the items we dreamed up was starting a scholarship. In 2024, we announced the first annual Text-Em-All Founders Scholarship in honor of our founders.

The scholarship is a natural extension of the founder's vision and purpose to positively impact the community. We believe the spirit of generosity and leadership should be cultivated in future generations. We aim to do that by annually awarding \$10,000 to a Texas high school or undergraduate student who exemplifies our values in their life and studies.

## Quarterly Contributions

We believe in sharing our profits to positively impact our community. Each quarter, all full-time employees have the opportunity to allocate \$1,000 across five local organizations however they would like.

### TEXT-EM-ALL TIDBIT

We know that in addition to monetary donations, it's important to give our time to organizations we feel passionate about. Each Text-Em-All employee receives one week of Volunteer Time Off (VTO) a year to serve with an organization(s) of their choice. We also offer 100% donation matching as another way to give back.



# 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.

CERTIFIED



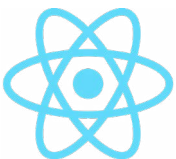
EVERGREEN®

## Tugboat

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

## ReactJS Dallas

We are committed to building a network of innovative thinkers, which is why we host a regular meetup for Dallas-area developers to learn more about the React JavaScript library. Everyone from seasoned veterans to newcomers join us for a great conversation.



# Our vision

We have a bold vision to still be here in 100+ years, positively impacting our customers and community. This vision may seem like a challenge in the competitive space of messaging — companies are bought and sold every day, rolling up into larger and larger corporations that only seem to focus on the bottom line.

As part of the Small Giants community, we firmly believe we're accountable for more than the bottom line. By focusing our energy on our purpose, manifesto, values, and formula, we can make better employees, customers, and vendors. Our community is better off, our industry is better off, and the world is better off.

But don't assume that we don't focus on the bottom line just because our culture is important to us. In fact, a core component of building and growing our culture is a healthy bottom line. We believe in win-win relationships for our employees, customers, and vendors, and without a healthy bottom line — we couldn't have the positive impact we strive for in our purpose.

So while we plan to adapt to changes as they come our way, we'll never lose sight of our mission. No matter how the means may have changed, we'll continue to keep people informed when it matters most and make a positive impact on those around us.



## The Text-Em-All Culture Code

Second edition, Printed June 2024

### Number of employees at time of printing: 45

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

### Company age at time of printing: 18 out of 100+ years

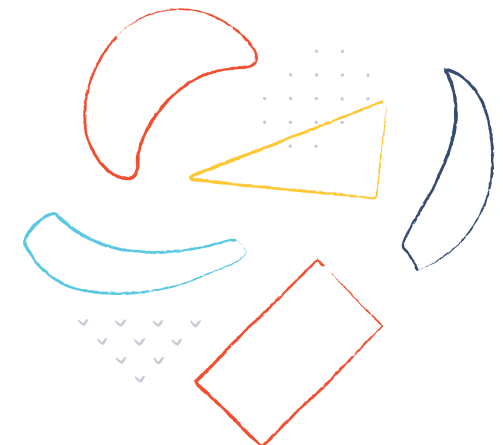
TEXT-EM-ALL | EST. 2005

# 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



 text-em-all