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PORTFOLIO

2026202620262026202620

ARANA

★ DESIGNED FOR TEXAS ★

Location

Austin, Texas

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HOWDY

HOWDY

ABOUT ME.

I make the boring stuff worth reading and the serious stuff easy to understand.

By day I'm a designer at the Texas Division of Emergency Management, where that's pretty much the whole job. When a hurricane's coming or a wildfire's spreading, people don't have time to decode a cluttered graphic, so I make sure they don't have to. I work across branding, photography, and digital design, and I'm usually the guy who notices the logo is two pixels off.

Off the clock, you'll find me hunting down vintage cowboy boots, geeking out over old Western signage, or building data visualizations for fun (yes, for fun). I live in Austin with my wife and our three cats, Kimchi, Bevo, and Bordeaux, who all have strong opinions about my work hours.



JASON E. ARANA

CREATIVE DIRECTOR CANDIDATE

WHY ME?

I've spent my career in places where design isn't decoration, it's a tool. At the Texas Division of Emergency Management I'm the primary graphic designer on our Media and Communications team. When the state needs to say something urgent, I'm part of making sure it lands, and lands fast.

No two days look the same. One day it's executive briefings for agency leadership. The next it's game day graphics for One Pill Kills, a brand guide for the new Texas Statewide Peer Support Network, or around-the-clock graphics during active disaster response, when the deadline is now. I also lead creative for the Texas Emergency Management Conference, which has posted three record years in a row.

What I care about most is building things that work beyond me: scalable templates, clear guidelines, and brand systems the whole team can use and trust. I helped bring TDEM and its family of programs under one look, and I lead a small team of designers, student workers, and contractors who keep that work moving.

Beyond design, I work across the full production stack: photography, video, motion graphics, and social. Before TDEM, I spent six years helping Texas A&M University-Central Texas modernize its brand standards and launch its first bilingual ad campaign. That job taught me how to build consensus and make creative decisions that outlast any single project.



I know how to lead visually, work collaboratively, and deliver under pressure. The work day ~~ends~~ might end at 5; but the mission never stops.

GRAPHIC DESIGN

The following are a series of graphic projects that showcasing my artwork's and design's created for the Texas Division of Emergency Management

GOD BLESS THE GREAT STATE OF TEXAS

THE TEXAS DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



Reimagine. Update. Implement.

I helped modernize TDEM's brand from the standards up, updating the agency's guidelines, establishing a unified look for social media, and defining how tone, layout, and typography show up in everything we put out. That work extended to the sub-brands: refining ISTF and developing IMT so each could stand on its own while still feeling like TDEM.

None of it happened solo. I worked closely with videographers, public information officers, social media managers, and outreach coordinators so everyone was working from the same playbook, and partnered with internal and external stakeholders on everything from event materials and campaigns to executive presentations.

Different teams, one standard:
Consistent, scalable work that serves the people of Texas

All work, marks, and assets shown are property of their respective organizations and clients. Included here solely to demonstrate creative direction, design execution, and professional application.

THE PROBLEM

When I joined TDEM, there was no shared visual system. Teams were producing materials independently, and much of the work still carried the agency's legacy branding. The result was a fragmented look across social media, presentations, and campaign assets. Nobody was doing anything wrong; there just wasn't a common foundation to work from.

MY APPROACH

That gap was the opportunity. Rather than locking everything down, I focused on guidelines flexible enough to bend for different needs: shared templates, clear rules for type and color, and a system any team could pick up without needing a designer in the room. The goal wasn't control. It was a foundation people would actually use, and a standard the agency could keep building on.

FRAGMENTED SYSTEM

INCONSISTENT OUTPUTS

LEGACY INFLUENCE

NO SHARED STRUCTURE

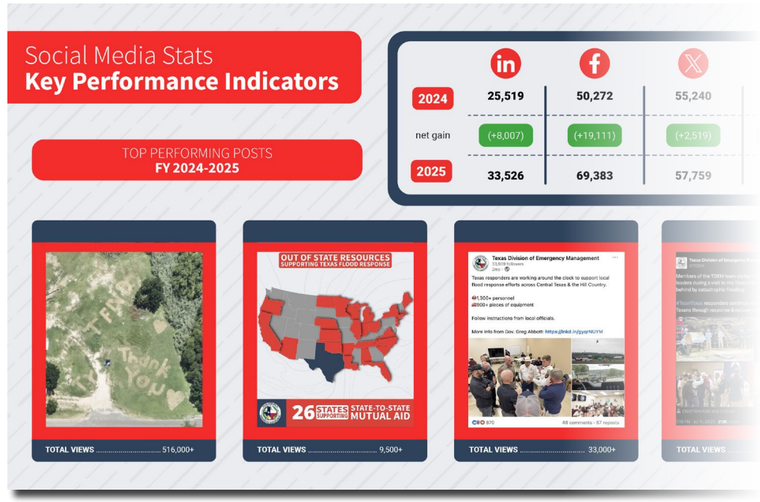
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VISUAL COMMUNICATION

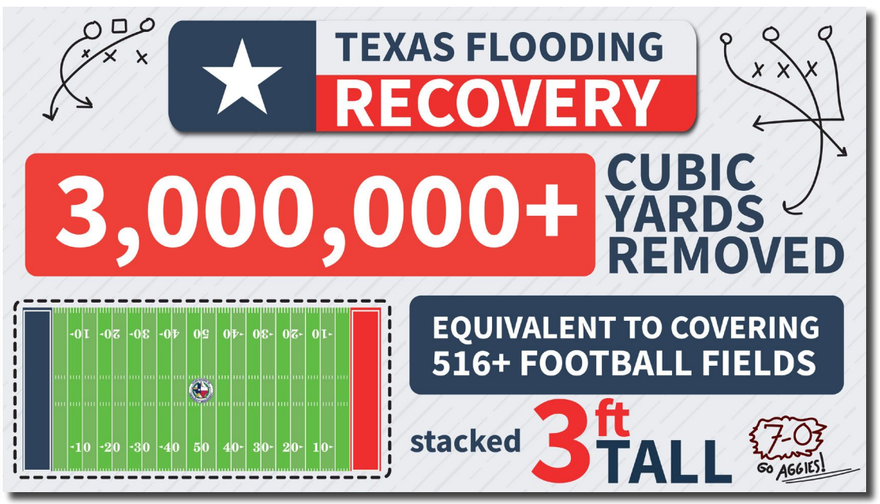
TDEM's PowerPoint presentations were stuck in the past, still reflecting legacy branding from the agency's time under the Department of Public Safety (no offense to those before me, but it felt very governmental). As part of the broader brand overhaul, I redesigned the presentation templates from the ground up to match the updated visual standards. They now serve as the agency-wide default for everything from internal team updates to executive briefings and external-facing communications.



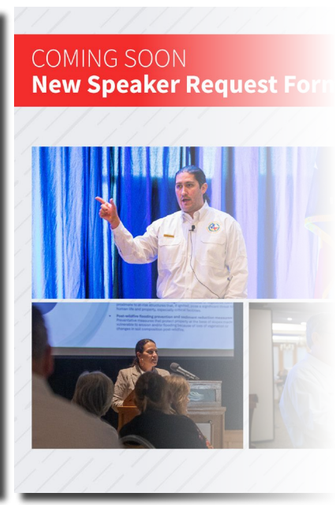






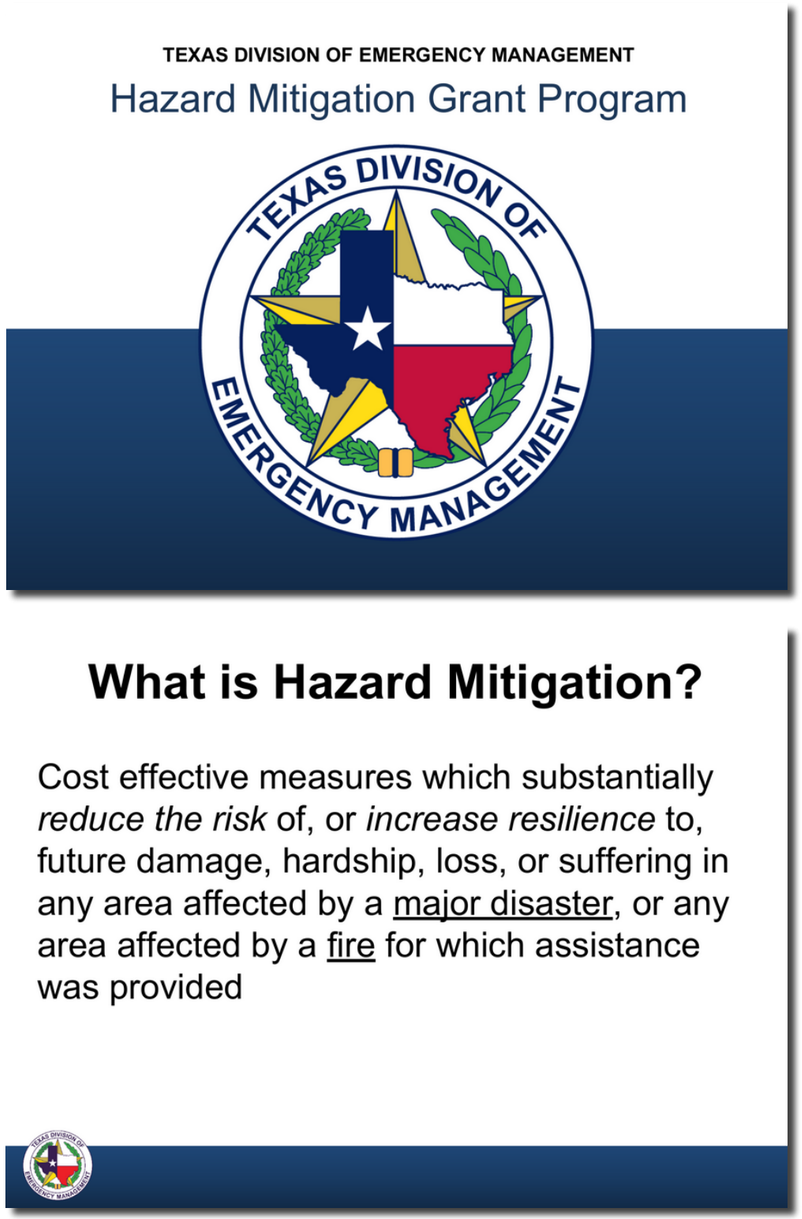






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BEFORE



AFTER



FROM LEGACY TO SYSTEM

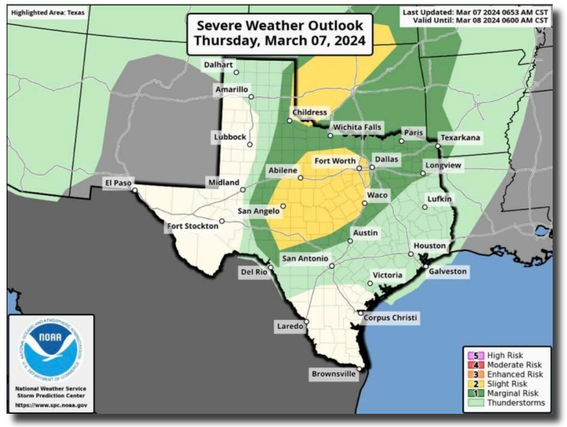
TDEM is only five years old as an independent agency, and the presentations didn't reflect that. The old templates were consistent but flat, safe but forgettable. For an agency building its identity from the ground up, that felt like a missed opportunity. The new system brought in bold typography, clear hierarchy, and a visual identity with some personality. Something that felt as sharp and capable as the people behind it. .

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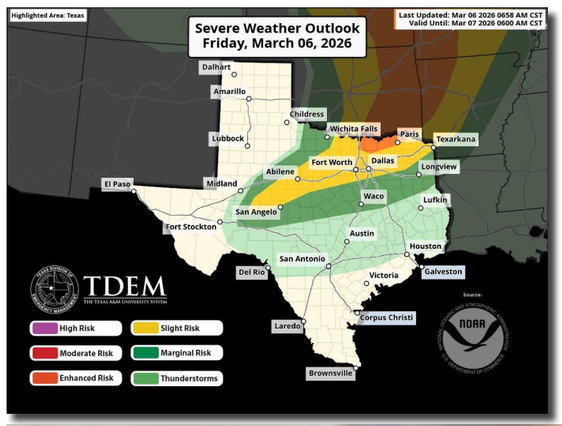
SOCIAL MEDIA

TDEM's social media presence needed a defined visual language, something consistent enough to be recognizable but flexible enough to work across every type of content we put out. Working alongside the team, we built that system from the ground up.

The bigger shift was moving toward original content. Instead of leaning on outside partners for assets, we started creating our own, which meant we could move faster, stay on brand, and respond in real time when it mattered most. Every post now has a clear look and a clear purpose.









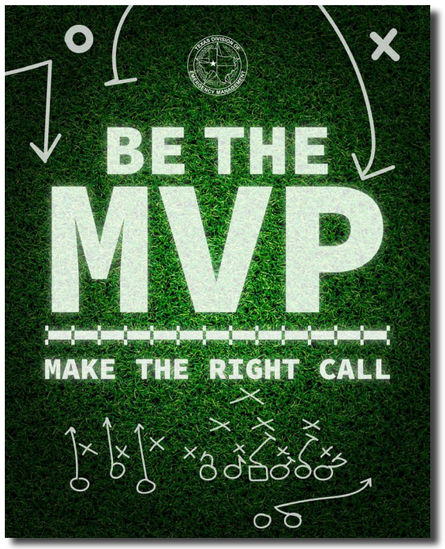






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CREATING ART

Emergency management content is serious by nature, which is exactly why illustration works so well. A well-crafted piece can make critical information feel approachable without making it feel less important.

I leaned into illustrated campaign artwork to give TDEM's messaging more range. Not every post needs to feel like an alert. Some need to meet people where they are, whether that's a holiday, a cultural moment, or just a message that connects better with warmth than urgency. The goal was always the same: get the information to land with as many people as possible.

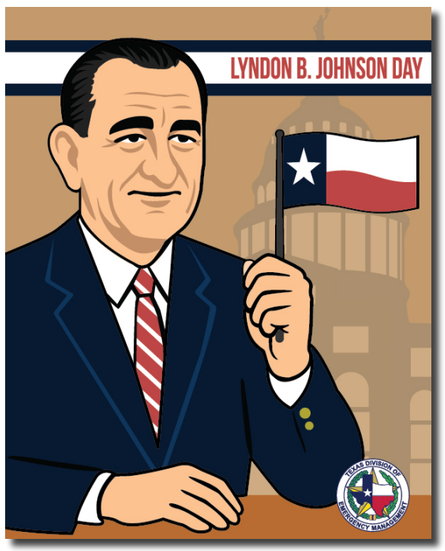












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TDEM
SUB-BRANDS

TEAM TEXAS
Emergency Management

A unifying brand for the emergency management community across Texas Designed as a kind of "bar wear" for the field, Team Texas gives personnel something to wear with pride regardless of their agency or jurisdiction. The identity is built around inclusivity and statewide cohesion, a brand that travels as well as the people who wear it.















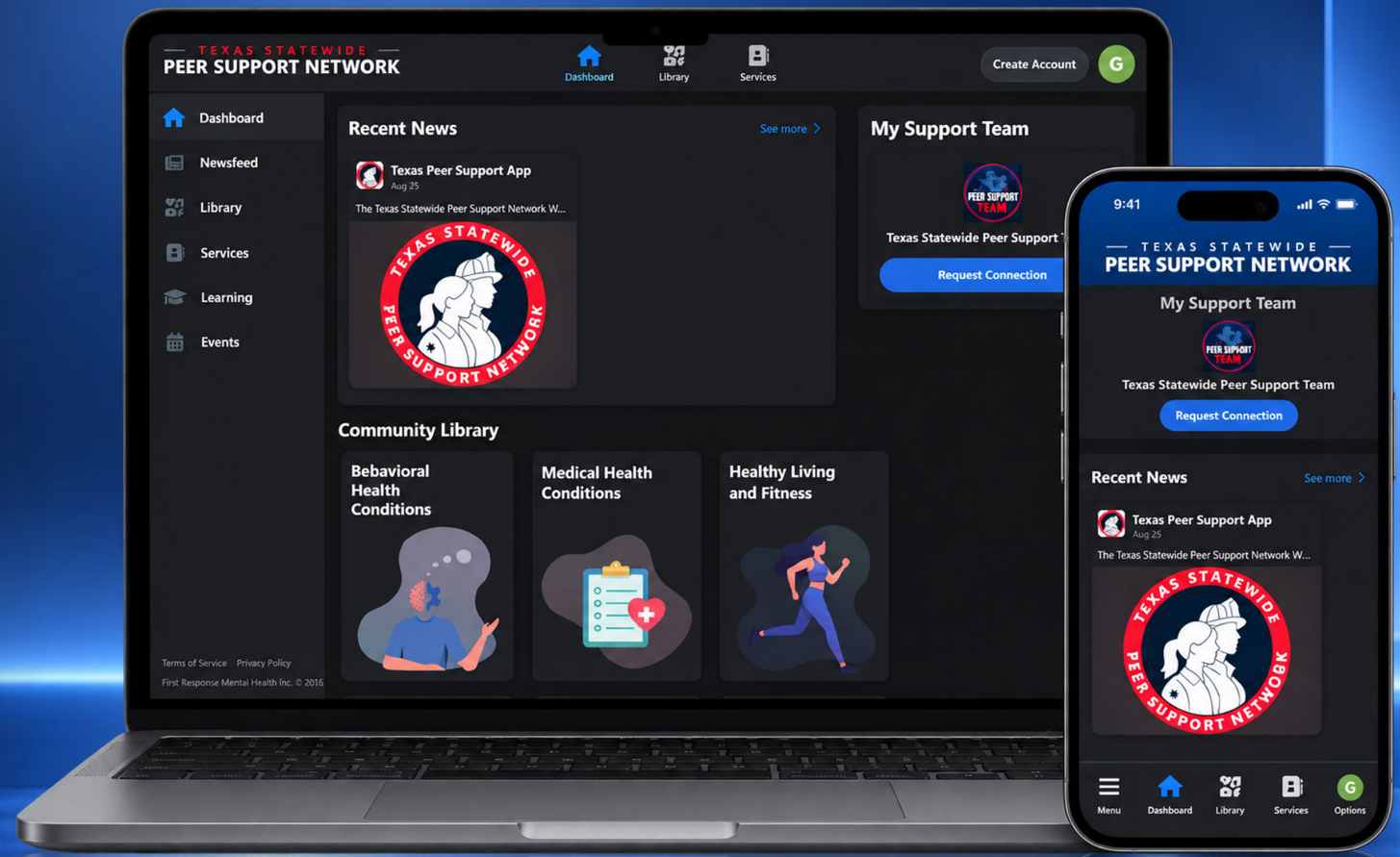


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PSN

Created under House Bill 35 and launched October 1, 2026, the Texas Statewide Peer Support Network gives every Texas first responder, volunteer or paid, active or retired, confidential access to trained peer supporters who've worked the same job. The program offers one-on-one support, help after critical incidents, and connections to professional care, all through a call/text line and the Texas Peer Support app.

I developed the brand identity and brand guide, partnered with the program team on the app's design, and worked with vendors and external partners to produce banners, swag, and trade show materials to get the word out statewide.



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FIVE YEAR

Getting to design the mark for TDEM's first five years was a real honor, and I wanted it to carry the weight of the moment. Every element in this design was placed with intention. Some details are front and center, and others are tucked in quietly as a nod to the agency, its history, and the people who helped build it.

Beyond the commemorative challenge coin, the mark became the identity for the entire anniversary year. We carried it through special edition events like our All-Hands Call, environmental signage across the agency, and even the cake we all shared to celebrate. Seeing it show up everywhere that year made it one of the most rewarding projects I've been part of.



Eight stars for TDEM's eight regions

Twenty three rays for the agency's twenty three Disaster Districts

The tip of the star lands on Placedo, Texas, hometown of John Sharp former Chancellor of Texas A&M University System









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ISTF

The ISTF brand already had good bones. The work here wasn't about starting over, it was about building on what was already working. That meant developing a full brand guide, tightening visual consistency, and establishing clear standards so the identity could hold up across every material and deployment. The result is a cohesive, scalable system that supports ISTF's presence statewide.









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one pill kills

don’t make a deadly decision

One Pill Kills is a statewide anti-fentanyl awareness campaign with real stakes. The visual identity was already in place, so my focus was on standardizing how the brand showed up across every outreach piece and making sure each one was consistent, clear, and accessible. When the message is this important, how it looks matters just as much as what it says.

Through TDEM, our team partnered with university athletic departments across Texas, including Rice University, the University of Houston, Texas A&M, UT Austin, UNT, and TCU. Together we brought the campaign to game day with web ads, merchandise, in-venue screen graphics, motion graphics, digital signage, and giveaways that put the message in front of fans where they already were.

























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TEXAS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

THE ACADEMY

The Academy is the first program of its kind in the nation, and the brand needed to reflect that. Built to feel connected to TDEM while standing on its own, the identity was designed to grow with the program as it expands to new locations and classes.

The logo represents the bell tower located at Texas A&M Unviersity-San Antonio, the site where the first Academy class was held.

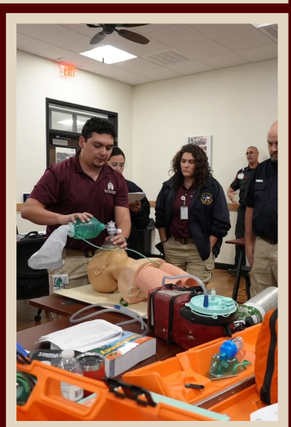












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THE CONFERENCE

THE TEXAS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE



The largest of its kind.

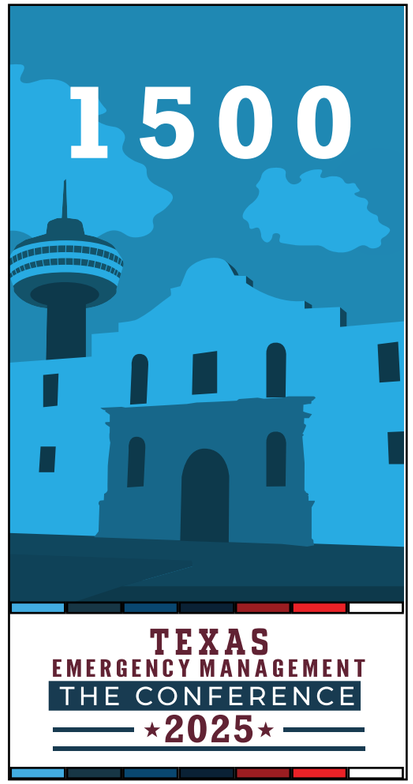
Over 4,200 attendees from 45 states and 6 countries. More than 200 workshops. The Texas Emergency Management Conference is the largest emergency management conference in the nation, and it needed a visual identity that could hold its own at that scale.

I redesigned the entire look and feel from the ground up. New color direction, new graphic language, a fully realized brand system built to work across every surface and format. On-stage visuals, digital signage, sponsorship assets, badges, environmental graphics, motion work. Everything connected by a single creative vision.

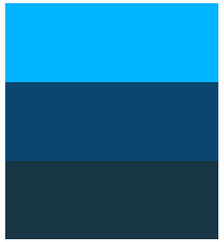
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THE VISUALS

The theme of this year is "Around Texas" featuring eight unique regions in the beautiful State of Texas

This theme is focused mainly on visuals however for the signage I'd like to take a more simple approach with bright colors and contrasting text that is loud, in your face, but is still legible.





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Cadillac Ranch
Region 1



Stock Yards and Big Tex
Region 2



Caddo Lake
Region 3



Galveston Port
Region 4



South Padre Island
Region 5



Alamo
Region 6



El Paso Star
Region 7



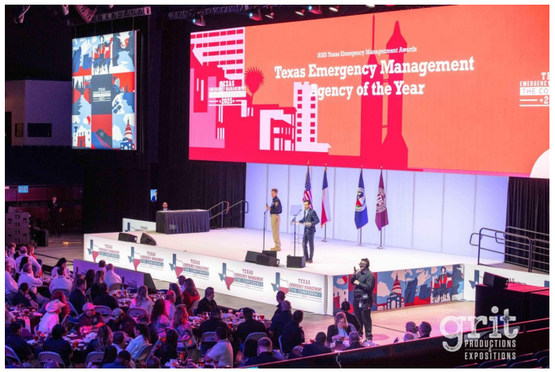
Capital
Region 8

THE CONFERENCE

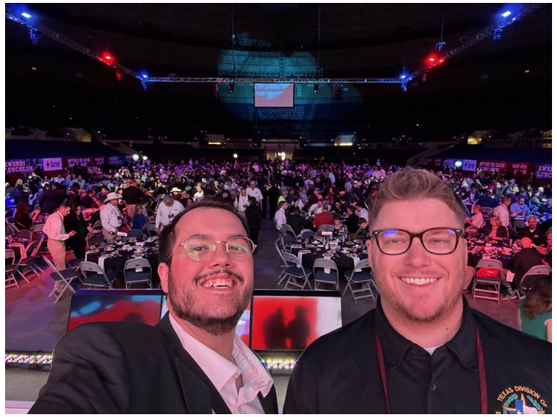




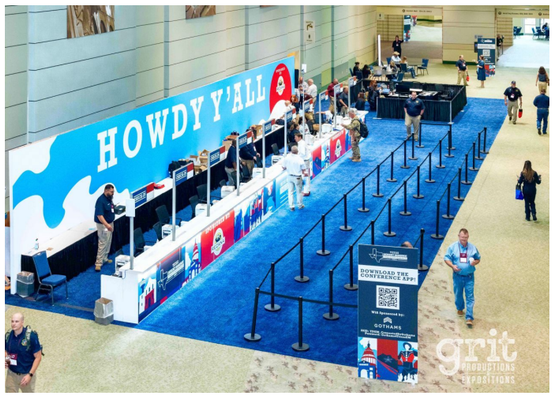
















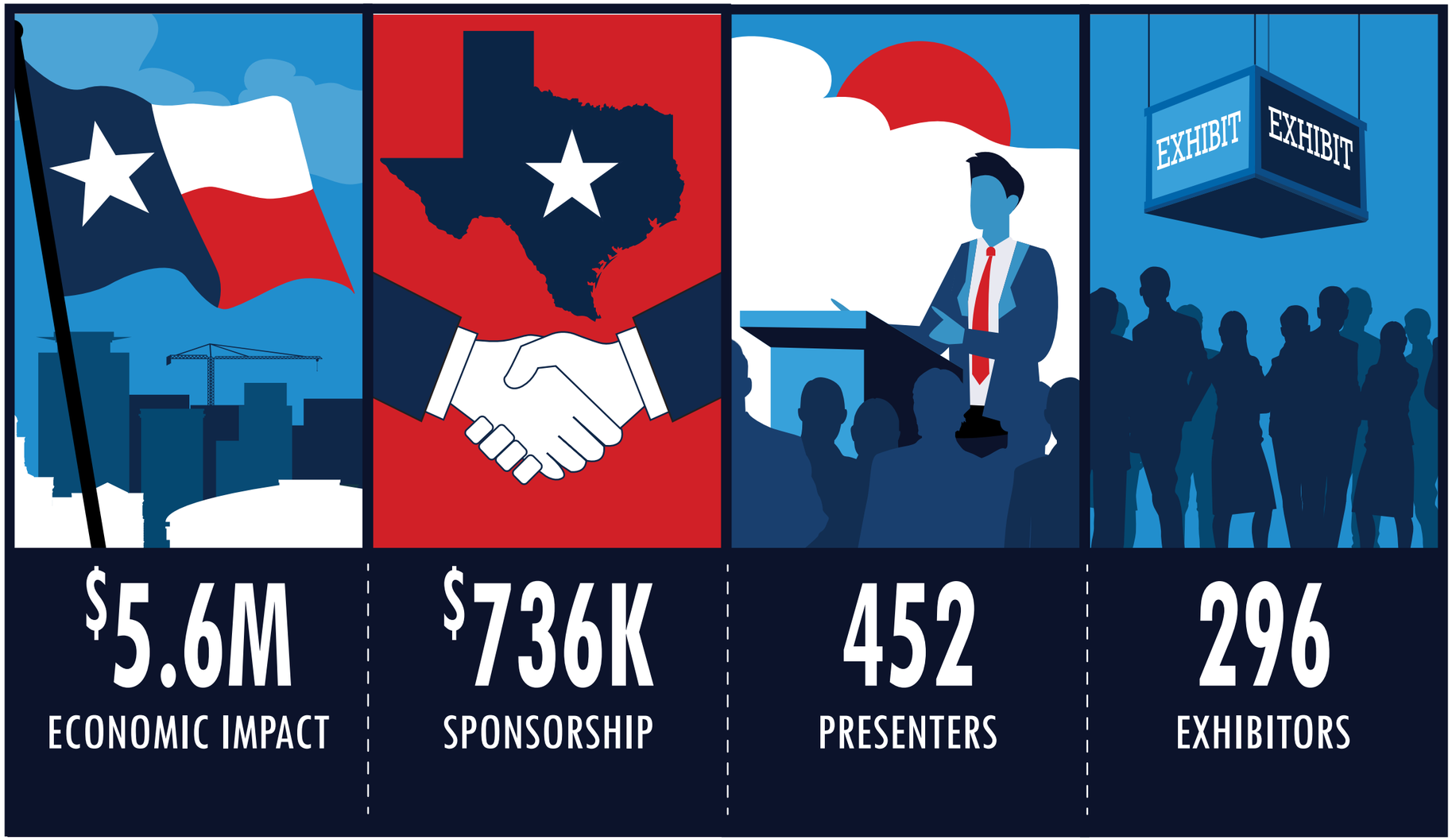




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THE CONFERENCE

TEMC 2026 built on the previous year with continued growth across several key measures, reaching 4,281 registered attendees, up 66 from 2025, and 3,927 onsite attendees, up 36. Exhibitor participation saw the strongest increase, rising from 229 to 296, a 29% jump, while sponsorship participation increased from 75 to 76 sponsors and total sponsorship revenue grew from $735,000 to $736,000. The conference also featured 452 presenters and generated an estimated $5.6 million in economic impact, underscoring both the scale of the event and its growing reach.





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PERSONAL PROJECTS

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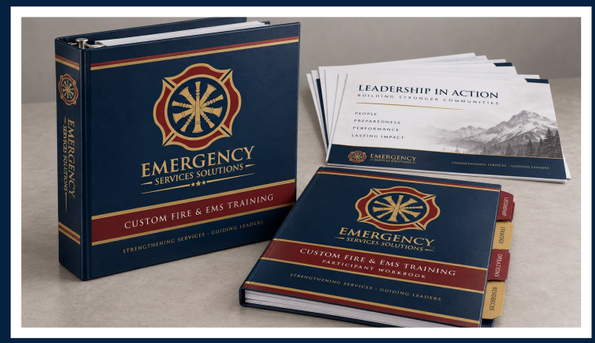
EMERGENCY
SERVICES SOLUTIONS
STRENGTHENING SERVICES
GUIDING LEADERS

The Emergency Services Solutions logo honors the distinguished fire-service career of its founder, a former fire chief with the Manchaca Fire Department in Austin, Texas At its center, five traditional fire-service bugles represent the rank and leadership of a fire chief, while the surrounding Maltese cross reflects protection, courage, sacrifice, and service to others. Together, these elements connect the organization's heritage with its continuing mission to strengthen emergency-service organizations, guide their leaders, and help them prepare for the future.











Virtus.

A concept project for an outdoor outfitter brand built around resilience and survival. The identity draws inspiration from the Roman Colosseum and the grit of gladiatorial combat, where endurance, strength, and discipline determined who made it out. Bold forms, a restrained palette, and a mark that evokes both protection and confrontation.





Virtus.
outfitters



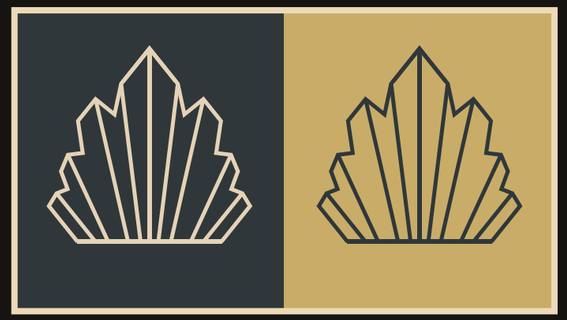




PERSONAL PROJECTS











ZEPHYRUS
NOIR

A conceptual luxury fashion brand built around elegance, movement, and restraint. Zephyrus Noir draws from classical forms and the visual language of modern high-end fashion houses, refined geometry, a minimal palette, and a mark that feels both structured and fluid. The kind of brand that doesn't need to shout to get noticed.

When I designed this, I pictured a fragrance house or a label in the vein of Tom Ford. Funny enough, Zephyrus was the street I lived on when I first moved out of my parents' house, but what really drew me in was the myth: Zephyrus (or Zephyr) is the Greek god of the gentle west wind, known as the messenger of spring. I added black for a dark, mysterious edge and paired it with a 1920s typeface to push it toward an ultra Art Deco, high-society feel.

GUACATÍO JOE



Guacatío Joe is an ongoing personal art project built around the people, moments, and absurdities of everyday life. The characters are exaggerated, expressive, and usually based on someone real. Bold shapes, a loose style, and just enough edge to make you laugh and then feel a little called out.

This project has been a way to poke fun at friends while keeping things lighthearted and exaggerated. I often reimagine people (and pets) as animal characters. Case in point: the chubby cat with the cigar is my boy Kimchi, if he'd walked straight off the set of Scarface.

PERSONAL PROJECTS

GRUGSTAR.COM
CREATIVE & WEB SOLUTIONS

IDENTITY SYSTEM

2026

01. PRIMARY LOGO

GRUGSTAR

F*CK BORING.

02. MONOGRAM



03. SECONDARY LOGO (FLAT)

GRUGSTAR

F*CK BORING.

04. ICONS



05. COLORS

#222122	#DE5116	#417778	#A75879	#E5CFA6

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