

Impact Report

2024

The
Minnesota
 Star
Tribune



Journalism is a crucial community asset - now more than ever.

Here at the Minnesota Star Tribune, we believe that local journalism is the lifeblood of an informed and engaged community. And we're fortunate to call Minnesota home – with all of the great people that lead our nation in civic engagement, philanthropic giving and community connection.

We're blessed to operate in our exceptional state, and we've undergone significant changes to ensure you have access to the high-quality reporting, information and facts that you need to make your own informed decisions amidst tumultuous times.

At a time when the economic model for quality journalism is deeply under threat, the Minnesota Star Tribune is creating new ways for people and organizations to support this critical resource for the state.

In this report, we're proud to recap some of our most impactful work over the past year, while never losing sight of the fact that our most important asset is you, our readers. All of this work has been done with you at the center of our efforts, so we can help build a better Minnesota by connecting you with the ideas and stories that strengthen our community.

From completely rebuilding our digital backend, to expanding across the state to serve all of Minnesota, to restructuring our newsroom to better serve your needs, to launching a reimagined opinion platform in Strib Voices, to rebranding to the Minnesota Star Tribune, to providing free election coverage, to launching our organization's first ever philanthropy effort in the Local News Fund, to securing innovative tech partnerships with the likes of Google and OpenAI, we've made significant strides in establishing a new business model for local news organizations.

And we're just getting started.

Thank you for your interest in learning about our progress and for your generous support in preserving local news.

With deepest gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Grove". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Steve Grove
CEO and Publisher
The Minnesota Star Tribune



New horizons for a new Minnesota.

2024 was a pivotal year for the Minnesota Star Tribune. Facing change head on, we embraced a new way of doing things around here. From the ground up, we reimagined what was important to our readers. What they wanted from the stories we covered. And how they were able to access those stories throughout their day.

To do that effectively, we explored company-wide initiatives to better deliver meaningful content that resonated and aligned with the values and interests of all Minnesotans.

Using well-defined goals in 2024, we set out on a number of important objectives, including dramatically growing our digital subscribers, diversifying and building new revenue models through amped-up events throughout the year, leaning deep into innovation knowing that our talent is what drives our success, and strengthening our culture of belonging in every corner of the company.

In the pages that follow, you'll see some of that work in the stories we covered, in the programs we started, and in the dedication we have to building a better Minnesota by building a better us.



Harris/Walz 2024

Nobody was better positioned than the Minnesota Star Tribune to tell the world about Tim Walz after Kamala Harris selected him to be her running mate. Our politics team dove deeply into his record as Minnesota's Governor and as a member of Congress. We followed him on the campaign trail, and were with the campaign in Philadelphia on election night. We took down our paywall in the weeks leading up to election day, making all of our coverage — including our Voter's Guide and results table — free.



Charter Schools

The charter school movement started in Minnesota and is often hailed as one of the most significant public education revolutions in the last half-century. But reporting by the Minnesota Star Tribune revealed that the state's pioneering charter school system, which receives about \$1 billion in taxpayer funding, is failing thousands of children. The state's hands-off approach to regulation has created a sink-or-swim culture in which dozens of charter schools shut down because of bad planning, financial chicanery and mismanagement. Even worse: many charter school students in Minnesota are failing to deliver on the promise of improved academic achievement.



The Minnesota Star Tribune Rebrand

The Minnesota Star Tribune relaunched under a new brand platform for its audience as 'The Heart and Voice of the North.' Following a reimagination of its technology products, reporting focus, and growth strategy, the company has positioned itself for a new chapter in a dynamic and challenging time for journalism. Adding Minnesota to its nameplate to signal an expanded, state-wide focus going forward, the company's mission is to connect the people, ideas, and stories that strengthen Minnesota's communities.

"We're thrilled to relaunch as the Minnesota Star Tribune at such an important time for our state," said Steve Grove, CEO and Publisher. "It's not every day you get to reimagine a 157-year-old publication for a new era — so we don't take this moment lightly. We've spent the last year investing in more journalism in more locations on top of a stronger platform. We're relaunching ourselves under a new name because we want Minnesotans to know what we believe: that this state deserves the strongest local news organization in America at a time of so much change."



PARTNERSHIPS



Connecting with our community.

At the Minnesota Star Tribune, our goal is to build a better Minnesota by connecting with the people, ideas and stories that strengthen our communities.

There isn't any better way to do this than being out in the communities we serve. Listening and learning from people in all corners of our state while having some fun along the way.

Below are examples of how we embrace that philosophy and celebrate with Minnesotans.

The Wrap

The Wrap's inaugural event welcomed over 800 guests into our historic printing facility to experience the news, events, and people that shaped Minnesota in 2024. The immersive event experience was a reflection of the biggest stories from 2024 and a celebration of Minnesotans who are making a lasting impact on the state. The evening showcased live music from LAAMAR, Charlie Parr, and a dance performance from Taja Will. Guests enjoyed curated food from the chefs of Minnesota Star Tribune Restaurants of the Year, including Yia Vang, Diane Moua, and more, while sipping on specialty cocktails crafted by Meteor bar owner Robb Jones. Attendees left making a lasting impact by raising over \$20,000 for our Local News Fund.

Minnesota Matters

Minnesota Matters is our ongoing interactive discussion series that brings Minnesota Star Tribune journalists on tour to engage with communities across the state. Now in its second year, the 2024 series continued our commitment to convening Minnesotans for conversations on the future of media and the issues most relevant to their regions. In 2024, we visited Mankato, Moorhead, Rochester, Brainerd, St. Cloud, Duluth, and Grand Marais — and the series continues in 2025 with new cities and conversations happening across Minnesota.

*The
Wrap* ✨

Engage
Mankato

MINNESOTA MATTERS
Alexandria

A free press comes at a real cost.

Minnesota Star Tribune Local News Fund

Our mission: To build a better Minnesota by connecting people with the ideas and stories that strengthen our communities.

In the past 10 years, Minnesota lost:

34% local newspapers

64% newspaper journalists

This mirrors national trends:

3M Americans live in a county with no local news source

70M Americans have one or fewer local news sources

We launched the Local News Fund in 2024 to respond to this urgent need—and we're just getting started.

What is the Local News Fund?

Subscription and advertising revenue alone can't provide the resources needed for professional local journalism, so many news outlets – including the Minnesota Star Tribune – are turning to community funding, as well, where donations from individuals, institutions and businesses help extend the reach and capabilities of local news organizations.

The Minnesota Star Tribune is building the leading model for local news in America – driving innovation in media to make every Minnesotan's life better.

What are the donations used for?

Primarily, the Local News Fund will support our work by funding reporter salaries and benefits and covering special project costs for these three important impact areas.

Investigative Journalism Hub

We hold power to account. Our work leads to action, reform, and greater transparency across Minnesota.

Environmental Journalism Hub

From climate change to conservation, we're covering the most critical environmental challenges of our time.

Bridging Divides

Minnesota is increasingly divided-geographically, economically, politically. We're creating journalism that listens, connects, and finds solutions.

We are leaning into our quality journalism rather than reducing our footprint."
- Steve Grove, CEO and Publisher

You can help.

2024 Highlights

- 600+ donors gave to support public-interest journalism
- 2 new reporting positions funded
- Strib AI Lab Fellowship launched

Thank you to our supporters. You're helping us build a stronger Minnesota.

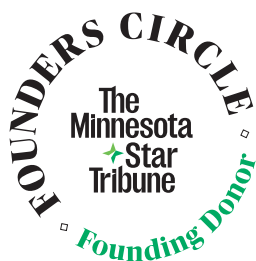
- Google
- Lenfest Institute and Open Ai
- Lee Lynch and Terry Saario
- David and Leni Moore
- George Family Foundation
- Jack and Claire Dempsey
- Mary and Tom Racciatti
- David Kristal and Cristiana Giordano
- Christine and Kermit Freuchte



Your donation is tax-deductible through our fiscal sponsor, the Minneapolis Foundation.

Questions? Contact
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Please visit our website for a full list of our generous partners.



I'm enthusiastic about this undertaking. It seems to hold promise as a way to share important news and opinions with more Minnesotans and (maybe) bring us together even when we have different perspectives on the news. Actually, those different perspectives, when listened to, help us understand one another during this time of societal divides.

-Peggy, Founding Donor



Curious. Dedicated. Professional.

These are the teams at the Minnesota Star Tribune that helps drive our success.



Gaining Momentum: 2024 Minnesota Star Tribune Digital Traffic

DIMENSION	NUMBER
Total Articles Published	17,521
Articles Published Daily Average	48
Podcasts Downloaded	1,219,543
Average Monthly Sessions	13,957,232
Average Monthly Users	5,821,599
Total Sessions	167,486,778
Articles with 100K+ Sessions	13

PODCAST	Publish Frequency	Down-loads	% of Total	CATEGORIES
StribSports Daily Delivery	5x per week	63,459	70%	Sports, Baseball, Football
Access Vikings	2-3x per week during season	19,359	21%	Sports News, Football
Curious Minnesota	1x per 2-3 weeks	7,538	8%	Society & Culture

StribVoices

Strib Voices encompasses all opinion journalism at the Minnesota Star Tribune as well as more commentary from people across Minnesota. Our goal: to make Strib Voices the leading water cooler for local conversation in the country. Below are our contributing voices from across the state.



Andy Brehm



Aaron Brown



Sheletta Brundidge



Clemon Dabney



Angela Denker



Maggie Koerth



Sharon McMahon



Anton Treuer



Ka Vang



Hamse Warfa



Andrew Zimmern

Follow these and all of our journalists by subscribing today.



Building a better Minnesota, starting today!

As we transition from a year of rethinking what we do and how we do it to a year of growth, our efforts are starting to bear fruit. We're entering 2025 with optimism, bolstered by a position of strength — an aberration in local media.

Of course, it's too early to say we're done. In fact, we'll never be done trying to improve how we engage and remain relevant with our communities across the state. We know that's at the heart of what makes it possible for us to build a better Minnesota.

We will continue to “work the plan” delivering the stories and topics that resonate with our readers and what they find of value. Because in the end, we're confident that our goal of strengthening our communities, achieving greater growth and success will follow.



Nicole Norfleet and Aaron Brown curate a weekly guide featuring Minnesota stories and happenings that are worth your time.

NORTH STAR SUMMIT 2025

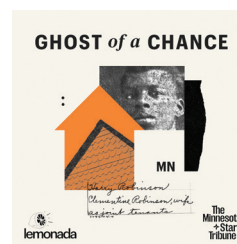
Taking place on Tuesday, Oct. 7, 2025, at the Walker Art Center, this event brings together the Midwest's top minds in politics, business, culture, and innovation to discuss the issues, ideas and solutions that will shape the future of our region and America.

MN RISING

Great stories from great organizations told by the Minnesota Star Tribune. This one-of-a-kind, state of the art new platform at startribune.com and is the largest and most comprehensive Cause Marketing Site in the region.



One of the largest full-service digital media agencies in the Midwest, Foundry North offers extensive experience and a record of success crafting media strategies and creative for our partners that deliver the right message, to the right people, in the right place.



Reporter Eric Roper's riveting podcast chronicling the history of the Robinson's, one of the first black families in south Minneapolis. Find out who they were and what happened to them.

Subscribe today.



 **The Minnesota Star Tribune**
The Heart and Voice of the North