Report to the Board
Texas Student Media
Frank Serpas for Gerald Johnson, Director

Here are bullets since our last meeting.

Initiatives:

The two-week inauguration of the “Support Student Voices” campaign starts on March 30th. This effort will focus fundraising energy for all TSM media units at the same time, while serving as the vehicle for the annual KVRX Pledge Drive and TSTV 24seven events. Check out supportstudentvoices.org for more info.

On May 22nd, TSM will publish the “Powers Retrospective.” This full-color, special edition (tabloid) will include content from the Texan and Cactus that was published during his nine-year term as president. This will be a feel-good, commemorative edition and will also have over-run distribution at commencement on May 23rd. We have been working with development, the president’s communications team, and various departments on campus. His supportive business leaders, campus, and the community will have the opportunity for ad placement within the publication.

On February 27th we met with representatives of KOOP Radio to get their input regarding our upcoming purchase of a replacement transmitter for 91.7 FM.

People:

The March 9th addition of administrative associate Emily Barrett puts the Business Office at full strength for the first time in a year. She comes to TSM from KUT and has over a decade of UT experience. Over the past few weeks she’s helped with the backlog of accounts-receivables and facilitated student travel.

A vacant account executive position was filled on February 23rd when Allysun Gutierrez joined the professional sales team. She was formerly with the Abilene Reporter News. Conversely, an account executive position became available on March 13th when Robert Meute resigned. The search for a replacement is underway. Also, Cierra Smith joined the student sales team on March 9th.
Advertising / Denise Twellmann

Goals:
Set individual monthly revenue goals for each product (KVRX, TSTV, Digital, Travesty & Print) to remind professional team that sales need to be made into all products. This will also prepare them for possible upcoming changes to commission plans.

Cactus sales:
Sold to date: $23,782 = $11,000 increase over 2014 (and we’ve extended the space deadline to 3/27)

Powers Retrospective:
We’ve launched the sales collateral to celebrate President William Powers, Jr. with great response from the campus accounts we’ve reached out to.

Sales collateral update:
Much of spring break was spent updating sales collateral, including the TSM Media Kit & rate cards, and creating insert rate cards that offer more competitive rates to our advertisers.

Comics Special/Travesty combo buy:
Launched a combo special to reach the very targeted advertisers that want to advertise in these products. Publication dates: 4/17 & 4/21

Training:
While providing training for our new employees, it’s been uncovered that many of the existing student sellers need a “refresher” course as well. Currently working on updating the training manual.

Digital / Curt Yowell

• Secured mobile terminal to allow for Cactus Yearbook purchases during events
• Developed and launched http://www.supportstudentvoices.org in support of TSM pledge drive (site has responsive design)
• Developing online competition among TSM for pledge drive
• Developed and launched http://www.farewellpowers.com in support of Powers Retrospective publication (site has responsive design)
• Hired student team to lead new online project, aka “The River” project
• The Daily Texan microfilm digitization project RFP draft submitted to UT Purchasing Office
Marketing, Creative Services and Production / Daniel Hublein

Projects since last meeting include:

- Powers Retrospective (edition template, cover, copy, marketing materials)
- Farewell, Powers website (slideshow, web graphics, copy, marketing materials, online ads)
- Farewell, Powers doubletruck template
- SSV (concept, print ads, online ads, website, marketing materials, business cards)
- SSV Press Release
- Burnt X Logo design
- Richard Finnell Memoriam
- Campus TV ads for all entities
- Cactus Marketing materials
- Cactus/Travesty marketing material
- Update of all TSM rate cards (with new direction from Denise)
- “Student Seller” print ads and posters around campus

Print Media Adviser / Peter Chen

Staff development:

- Prof. Gina Chen on managing reporters to department heads.
- Profs. Ed Timms and Bill Minutaglio on basic news writing, open to entire staff.
- Hoping to have Prof. Maggie Rivas-Rodriguez on beat coverage.
- Informal talks on fairness in coverage, crime reporting, photography skills, to various departments.
- Working on a more comprehensive libel primer for the Texan orientation handbook, and a better libel quiz for student managers.

Increase visibility:

- Publicized TSM entities on in-house TV screens in CMA and Belo.
To: The Texas Student Media Board of Trustees  
From: Jordan Rudner, Managing Editor, The Daily Texan  
Date: March 23, 2015

Hello all,

Halfway through the semester, I am pleased and proud of where The Texan stands. Across all departments of the paper, staffers have been ambitious in their goals for themselves and for each other. They’ve then matched that ambition with a significant outpouring of effort and both physical and mental energy. Though there are still many goals yet to accomplish, we’re making significant gains on the goals we set out at the beginning of the semester.

- Our web traffic in March was the highest it’s been so far this semester, and our numbers are some of the highest I have seen in my time at the Texan. What is especially exciting about this is that our numbers are not the result of any single article going viral, because though we appreciate the traffic viral stories attract, they often have little to do with the quality of the reporting itself. Instead, our March numbers came as the result of readers engaging with a wide number of stories across multiple departments — well-written and strongly argued album reviews, quickly-produced sports coverage of close games and generally outstanding coverage by the news department. The numbers we’re seeing are hard-earned — and, possibly because they are spread out across many stories, they haven’t crashed our website (which is always excellent).

- Just before spring break, we produced a 28-page South By Southwest insert, on top of our normal daily coverage. This insert was the product of collaboration across almost every department at the Texan, and especially involved Photo, Comics, Design, Copy, Social Media and, of course, Life & Arts. Editors Kat Sampson and Danielle Lopez tirelessly worked to produce the best possible insert, then spent their entire spring break producing non-stop coverage alongside the photo team, led by Lauren Ussery and Amy Zhang. They also passed out nearly 2,000 copies of the insert to SXSW-goers, which we hope spread the brand and spread the word about the fundraising drive. We also produced a phenomenally thorough and expertly produced video, which I encourage anyone reading this to check out.

- Even as staffers put together the SXSW insert, they were also throwing significant energy and attention at the recent Student Government elections. I would be remiss if I did not individually mention Samantha Ketterer, who led the charge on our thorough and relentless coverage of an unusually long campaign season. The Texan’s coverage rightly attracted widespread attention, and between Samantha’s work and news editor Julia
Brouillette’s commitment and energy, we served our audience — the UT students — well. Students who likely never thought about the Texan prior to this election cycle were turning to us daily for the latest updates on the Jones/Dargahi and Rotnofsky/Mandalapu campaigns, and I believe Samantha and Julia did more to promote the Texan among the student body that week than I’d seen in a long, long time.

- If SXSW and SG elections weren’t enough, we’ve also been covering the Big 12 and NCAA basketball tournaments (in fact, the women’s NCAA run is still going strong). Sports reporters Courtney Norris and Jeremy Thomas covered the women’s games diligently, while photographer Marshall Tidrick spent several days in Dallas to make sure we had the best multimedia coverage possible. Evan Berkowitz left family vacation early to head to Pittsburgh with photographer Daulton Venglar, the second such trip the duo made in two weeks, to cover the men’s team. Again, the collaboration we’ve seen has been wonderful.

- We’ve also made significant progress on one of our original goals for the semester — the elusive “24-hour website.” Although we are still in the trial-and-error phase, as of today, our website is being updated every one to two hours with brand new content. We are well on our way to our ultimate goal of a website that constantly presents fresh, relevant stories, a departure from the “upload everything at 2 a.m.” pattern from which even major newspapers have struggled to depart. The transition hasn’t been easy, but with the efforts and flexibility of every single department — and exhaustive coordination and time commitment from associate managing editors Brett Donohoe and Jack Mitts — we’re making serious, visible progress.

I could go on for a long time about the Texan’s many goals, and the setbacks and successes we have experienced. There is still much work to be done. But on the whole, the state of the Texan is strong — entirely because of the hard work of nearly 230 dedicated and tireless students, and the leadership of our department heads.

All the best,

[Signature]

Jordan Rudner
Daily Texan Managing Editor
March 23, 2015

To the Members of the Board:

I don’t have much time left in office, but here is what I’ve been up to since the last meeting:

• I’ve met with several directors of communications and public affairs representatives to determine better ways to share content and already begun implementing these.
• We’ve continued our series of Q-and-A’s with the University’s deans.
• I’ve begun training my successor.
• I’ve increased outreach efforts by visiting with more student organization leaders and even attending more events off campus to represent the Texan.
• I’ve gathered together the student managers to discuss our time in office and how we think the organization could function better.
• We’ve covered a number of controversial but thought-provoking issues on the editorial page!

Sincerely,

Riley Brands
To the board:

This has been an exciting and fast-paced semester for Cactus! We’re extremely excited to announce that we submit the final 27 pages of the book on April 3 and wrap up book production.

Here are some of the highlights from this past month:

• On Feb. 27 we met a 44-page deadline.
• In early March, we finalized the cover and endsheets.
• On March 19, we did the impossible, and met a 25-page deadline in the middle of spring break.
• We hired an editor who focuses solely on sales, and she is currently working with organizations on campus on sales partnerships.

After we wrap up production, I plan to dive into marketing the book more thoroughly throughout April and May. The books should arrive in early May, just in time for graduation festivities!

This has been an incredibly challenging past three months, but we are excited that the end is in sight! I look forward to sharing our success with you all next month, once the book is officially finished.

Lastly, I’m sorry I’ve been less available and more absent at board meetings. If any of you have any questions regarding the book, please feel free to call (956-369-8377) or shoot me an email (tlcagle@utexas.edu).

Stay prickly,

Tess Cagle
Cactus Editor-in-Chief
Texas Travesty March Board Report

Since our last meeting together….
• Valentine’s Day: We handed out our custom V-Day cards in the mall, and were even allowed to write some of the notes inside them. We also had a great time during our “Win a Date With the Travesty Staff” event. Despite 50 Shades of Grey being a terrible movie, the staff and the winners (Cindy Turner and Natalie Ruiz) all enjoyed the occasion. I’ve included a picture of the date’s conclusion at Chili’s.

• Student Government: We finally won! (links to The Notorious B.I.G.’s “Sky’s the Limit”)

• Distribution: We’ve figured out that we can rent out the West Mall speakers and blast “Mamma Mia” by ABBA on repeat while we distribute, so we did and will continue to do so. It really helped liven the mood and get people interested in our publication. Come and join some Swedish pop with us next time.

• Jermaine Affonso, former Travesty alumni and current Editor of Clickhole (The Onion’s new sister website) stopped by to give an insightful headline workshop. The staff loved it and learned a lot. The Travesty is the first college paper that The Onion’s given this workshop to, so that’s cool.

Current Priorities…
• First Annual Travesty Easter Egg Hunt

• Bill Powers T-shirts: Although the campaign took our attention away from them for a while, they are very close to being completed. We are just figuring out the logistics of taking the orders over the next few weeks.

• Reaching the social media milestones of 5000 Twitter Followers and 3000 Facebook likes. We’re very close.

Coming Soon…
• The Room screening, which we’ll be promoting in the weeks that approach April 14th (the date had been bumped back due to a scheduling issue with the Union).

• The Moontower co-sponsored comedy showcase in the Cactus Café on April 25th, which will coincide nicely with the promotion of our final issue which prints April 21st.

Chris Gilman
Texas Travesty Editor-in-Chief
Texas Student TV
Station Manager Report
March 27th, 2015
Edward Stockwell

Productions:

- ISOJ. Connor and I doing Blanton walkthrough next week. Confident that it will go smoothly.
- Still on board for spring convocations like last semester.
- From what I know right now, Aztex will likely use a larger production company for their games this summer, but they have more cash to burn, so it is to be expected.

General:

- 24Seven officially starting next Thursday night at 10pm (April 2nd) and lasting til April 9th. God help us all. Working on promotions.
- Successfully approved for $2,795 this semester from Comm Council.
- TSTV programs had an excellent SXSW experience! Over an estimated 100 pieces of content were produced.
- Currently working on a TSTV Square space site and ensuring all the necessary pieces fit in it. It looks nice so far!
- Excellent retention rate thus far for new volunteers.
- After the Support Student Voices campaign. We should look into studio upgrades. I spoke with several TSTV alums during SXSW who voiced their support of studio camera upgrades.
- Giving Longhorn Network Operations Directors a tour on Monday.
- Shout out to the advertising department on the increase in commercial sales over the past semester or so.
- Any questions?

It’s budget time, baby!

Edward Stockwell
KVRX Student Radio
Activity Report
March 24, 2015

To the members of the board,

Welcome back! I hope your spring break was relaxing and/or entertaining.

• KVRX Spring 2015 Pledge Drive
  o We have been preparing for KVRX’s portion of TSM’s Support Student Voices event.
  o Premiums have been/are continuing to be gathered.
  o We held a training session at our most recent meeting to introduce DJs to the new means of recording donations.

• SXSW 2015
  o Both of our KVRX sponsored shows went off without a hitch.
  o KVRXPLOSION ended up happening at Holy Mountain on Tuesday, March 17th.
  o The KVRX Local Live Showcase was held at Spiderhouse on Saturday, March 21st.

• Future Live Events
  o We are in the process of planning an end of the year KVRX Presents showcase.

• On the Radar
  o Transitioning to summer schedule / summer staffing.

Thank you,
Rodrigo Leal
KVRX Station Manager