



BALLOTPEDIA

The Encyclopedia of American Politics

Celebrating Ten Years

A LETTER FROM OUR EDITOR IN CHIEF



GEOFF PALLAY

Prior to joining Ballotpedia, Pallay was a policy analyst for the South Carolina Policy Council, where he covered Jersey. Pallay spent eight years in the south, studying Journalism and History at Emory University before earning

I've had the honor and pleasure of working at Ballotpedia since June 2010. Back then, we talked about ourselves being one of the little guys—the political website that focused on the “down-ballot coverage” while everyone else obsessed and wrote about the top of the ticket. We humbly thought our domain rested in the areas of politics with little coverage and little competition. If only my 2010-self could see us now; I would've never believed it.

When I joined the staff in 2010, we had just embarked on an exciting new project to write articles about the 7,383 incumbent state legislators. Every year since then has topped the previous one in sense of satisfaction and in growth. Like any other growing company, we've experienced a combination of highs and lows. I suppose we have learned first-hand why they call it “growing pains.” With a large vision and grand ambitions, we set the bar high for ourselves. We have exceedingly high expectations for the quality of our work. But seven years, about 600 million page views, and 188,000 new articles later, I'm proud to say that we've had an amazing ride to date.

Each year brings new challenges and new opportunities to provide a richer, fuller encyclopedia for our customers. If the next seven years are as exciting as the last seven, then we've got an incredibly bright future ahead of us—one that

“Each year brings new challenges and new opportunities to provide a richer, fuller encyclopedia for our customers.”

will be filled with continued highs and lows, but predominantly, the incredible honor of helping create a more informed and level-headed climate around politics. Here are some of my favorite highlights from the past seven years.

2010: We launched the state legislative project and pioneered our very own competitiveness study, now in its seventh year.

2011: It was a year of R&R. No, not rest and relaxation. Redistricting and Recalls. We had a wonderful year writing all about the redistricting maps and Wisconsin recall events.

2012: This was our first step into the big leagues, with our expansion into congressional coverage.

2013: In 2012, we expanded up with Congress; in 2013, we went deeper into local government with two major projects. We acquired the Sunshine Review and more than 30,000 articles along with it. We also launched our school boards coverage area into the 1,000 largest school districts.



STORIES FROM BALLOTPEDIA READERS

Until I discovered Ballotpedia, I had no unbiased source for information about judgeship elections, and often was at a loss on ballot measures as well. I now go to the polls feeling confident in my decisions. This doesn't just affect me - I have an email list of about 1000 voters in my immediate area who depend on me for thorough research and recommendations on these small local elections. Many of them tell me they just print out my emails - complete with extensive Ballotpedia citations - and bring them into the booth with them. Most of those folks wouldn't otherwise vote in those very local elections, so this information has a real impact.

- Jen A. from Brooklyn



Ballotpedia's organization makes sense and the site is easy to use, uncluttered by superfluous graphics, animations and so forth. Unlike some once-useful sites that have become top-heavy with bandwidth-hogging features, Ballotpedia seems to rely on supplying the "meat" – which, to this civil servant at least, seems a good choice. Navigating Ballotpedia is intuitive, at least for someone with a nodding acquaintance with government organization.

The site deserves a big thumbs-up for the attention it pays to ballot measures, including initiatives, referenda and recall elections. I have used this information, spot-checking it with other sources, and have found it to be clear and accurate. My spot-checking has given me confidence in the overall general reliability of Ballotpedia, at least in this regard and, by extension, for the site as a whole.

- David W.

a number of issues including the state budget. Originally from New a Masters in Public Administration at the College of Charleston.

2014: We were all about elections, all the time, in the early years of Ballotpedia. In 2014, we moved beyond just what appears on the ballot and began focusing on the policy conversations behind the scenes of each election, with the launch of our Public Policy Desk (at the time, called Policypedia).

2015: In continuing with the trend to go beyond what appears on the ballot, we launched our Influencers project. Influencers help elect candidates, achieve policy change, create ideological change, and affect popular perception. Put simply, American politics is incomplete if solely focused on elected officials.

2016: First, you build articles on what appears on the ballot, in front of voters (2007-2013). Then, you write about the various policy areas that are influenced and shaped by elections (2014). Once that's done, you must write about the movers and shakers behind the scenes (2015). Next comes helping readers understand the facts being spun and interwoven around the political landscape. Hence, 2016 brought us Verbatim: Ballotpedia's fact-checking project.

So, what comes next? As the Encyclopedia of American Politics, the sky's the limit. There are many different exciting directions we could go in, but I'll close with just one - comprehensive sample ballot coverage for 100 million Americans. Wouldn't that be something?



**LUCY BURNS
INSTITUTE**
connecting people to politics

JUDGEPEDIA

2006

DECEMBER 18
LUCY BURNS
INSTITUTE
GOES ONLINE

2007

WIKIFOIA
GOES ONLINE
MAY 30
BALLOTPEDIA
AND JUDGEPEDIA
GO ONLINE

2009

BALLOTPEDIA
EXPANDS
TO COVER STATE
LEGISLATURES

**2016
2006
YEARS**



2011

BALLOTPEDIA EXPANDS
TO COVER US CONGRESS
FIRST 100 MILLION PAGEVIEWS
100,000 ARTICLES WRITTEN

2012
250 MILLION
PAGEVIEWS
REACHED

2015

BALLOTPEDIA EXPANDS INTO
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION COVERAGE

BALLOTPEDIA, JUDGEPEDIA AND
POLICYPEDIA ARE CONSOLIDATED

OCTOBER 2

VERBATIM PUBLISHES FIRST ARTICLE

NOVEMBER 13

INFLUENCERS DESK IS CREATED

HIT 500 MILLION PAGEVIEWS

BALLOTPEDIA

2013
OCTOBER 1
FIRST MEDIA MENTION TRACKED

2016

FEBRUARY 1
FIRST EDITION OF
THE TAP GOES OUT

2014
JUNE 30
POLICYPEDIA GOES ONLINE
AUGUST 4
SAMPLE BALLOT GOES ONLINE

BALLOTPEDIA
The Encyclopedia of American Politics



TWEETS 20.2K FOLLOWING 32.5K FOLLOWERS 48.2K LIKES 7,881 LISTS 9 MOMENTS 1

Following

Ballotpedia

@ballotpedia

The Encyclopedia of American Politics

📍 United States

🔗 ballotpedia.org

📅 Joined June 2009

📍 Born on December 18

[Tweet to Ballotpedia](#)

753 Photos and videos

TEN YEAR TOTALS

9,504

UNIQUE MEDIA OUTLETS

18,991

MEDIA MENTIONS -
ALL TIME TRACKED

92,726

SOCIAL MEDIA
FOLLOWERS

108,253

SUBSCRIBERS

251,020

WEBSITE ARTICLES



(the equivalent
of 304 Bibles)

750,000,000+

LIFETIME PAGEVIEWS

Tweets Tweets & replies Media



J. as in Jazz
@Mme_Falcon



Winning Mark
@winning_mark



We ❤️ @ballotpedia too! #secretsauce

allisterbyrd @allisterbyrd

I'm using @ballotpedia for some post election research for my job and I love it. Such a great resource



Camryn Grimes
@camryngrimes



Chance Berndt
@Chance_Berndt



DON'T JUST VOTE; BE INFORMED.



Ballotpedia is a neutral, third-party site that has
information on all elections!



@ballotpedia, you're the real MVP this
#Election2016



Kern County Library
@KernCntryLibrary



What's on your ballot? Find out on Ballotpedia
ballotpedia.org/Main_Page



Laura Royden
@lauraroyden



Yes! @ballotpedia is usually my first suggestion
when people ask where to find any sort of
election-related info.

Christopher Ingraham @_cingraham

Deeply-felt FFF to @ballotpedia today -- an impartial, invaluable source of up-to-date
information that I turn to constantly in my reporting

2016 IMPACT

125

BALLOTPEDIA'S HIGHEST
ALEXA RANKING IN 2016

11,303

MEDIA MENTIONS

12,500

ELECTIONS COVERED

43,725

PAGES ADDED

176,168,157

PAGEVIEWS

1,621,633

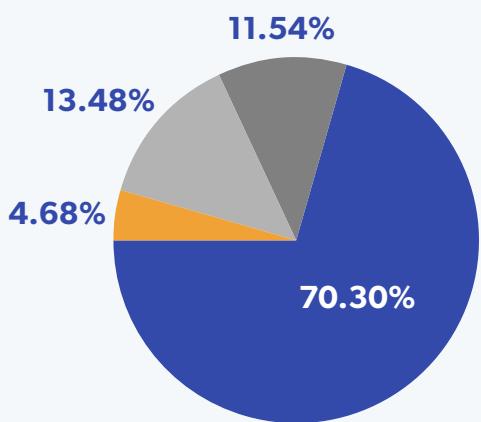
VOTERS WHO USED
OUR SAMPLE BALLOT
LOOKUP TOOL

20,300,000

UNIQUE VISITORS
IN THE SIX WEEKS
LEADING UP TO
ELECTION DAY

FINANCIALS

EXPENSES



- Administration: \$230,110.65

- Communications*: \$662,031.77

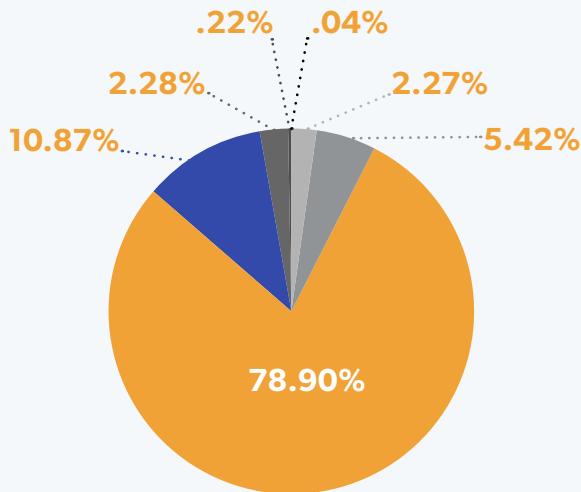
- Fundraising: \$566,620

- Editorial: \$3,453,403.95

Total 2016 Expenses: \$4,912,165.77

*Includes a \$480,000 in-kind Google AdWords grant

REVENUE



- Corporate Donations: \$100,054.58

- Foundation Grants: \$239,100.00

INDIVIDUAL DONORS: \$3,480,329.47

- In-kind Donations: \$479,627.52

- Advertising Revenue: \$100,658.41

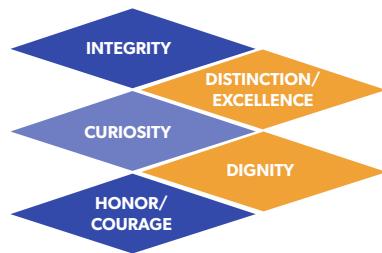
- Data Sales: \$9,700.00

- Investment Interest: \$1,713.08

Total 2016 Revenue: \$4,411,183.06

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES OF BALLOT PEDIA

When BP staff personify and exhibit these values, we are a high performance/high enjoyment team that gets our very important job done.



What do these values mean? What does it look like to have integrity? What kind of behaviors embody honor/courage? Behaviors that exemplify or embody each value are listed below.

INTEGRITY

- ⇒ You communicate directly with people and never say something about a team member that you have not said directly to him or her.
- ⇒ You say what you think and are known for candor.
- ⇒ You are non-political when you disagree.
- ⇒ You make and fulfill promises carefully.
- ⇒ You are quick to admit mistakes and take action to resolve them.
- ⇒ You ask for specific feedback.
- ⇒ Your actions always align with Ballotpedia's best interest.

DISTINCTION/EXCELLENCE

- ⇒ You are an Artisan.
- ⇒ You are passionate about improvement.
- ⇒ You readily recognize excellence in others and talk to them directly about how they achieved it.
- ⇒ You pause and celebrate in the presence of excellence.
- ⇒ You evaluate your own work and improve it so that you can be proud of it.
- ⇒ You reward innovation and ideas, and share your innovative ideas with peers.

CURIOSITY

- ⇒ You ask questions in search of understanding rather than in search of argument.
- ⇒ You listen for and question assumptions until you understand them.
- ⇒ You are a genuinely open minded, receptive person.
- ⇒ You are non-judgmental when addressing problems and assume good faith on the part of your co-workers.

DIGNITY

- ⇒ You think about the experience of the underdog when doing your work.
- ⇒ You disagree with people openly and in such a way that your respect for him or her grows.
- ⇒ You are compassionate.
- ⇒ You are a responsive person.

HONOR/COURAGE

- ⇒ You put your tasks in the context of the impact of the mission.
- ⇒ You put your reputation behind your work and the work of your team.



If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact: info@ballotpedia.org