



Fact Sheet

Digital Billboards by the Numbers

United States — 1.0% or 5,500 of approximately 550,000 billboards are digital

Source: [Outdoor Advertising Association of America newsletter, Feb. 9, 2015](#). See page 3, *New Digital Billboard Number*.

Texas — 0.88% or 308 of approximately 35,000 billboards are digital

Source: [TxDOT March 2015 Inventory](#)

Note: TxDOT rules require dual permitting for digital billboards, one from the city and one from the State. No digital billboards are permitted to operate outside a city that permits them.

Texas cities— Digital billboards operate in 8.2% or 100 of the 1,215 incorporated Texas cities

Source: [TxDOT March 2015 Inventory](#) and [Scenic Houston 2014 research](#)

At least 386 cities in Texas prohibit new billboards altogether including:

| | | |
|------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Houston | Friendswood | Katy |
| Austin | La Porte | Tomball |
| Fort Worth | Deer Park | Seabrook |
| Galveston | Rosenberg | Galena Park |
| Pearland | South Houston | Jersey Village |
| Sugar Land | Bellaire | |
| Baytown | West University Place | |

Source: [Scenic Houston 2014 research](#)

Digital Signs Raise Controversial Issues and Legal Challenges across the United States

Following are illustrative examples

I. Digital billboard legislation is met with adverse public reaction

Voters in Santa Clarita Reject Digital Billboards

<http://www.signalscv.com/section/36/article/129569/>

Residents Turn Out in Force Against Proposed Digital Billboard in Brunswick, Ohio

<http://www.newsnet5.com/news/local-news/oh-cuyahoga/developer-told-no-to-70-foot-electronic-billboard-in-brunswick>

Bucktown Residents: Electronic Billboard Is Gaudy, Annoying

<http://chicago.cbslocal.com/2014/10/24/bucktown-residents-electronic-billboard-is-gaudy-annoying/>

Neighborhood wins battle, Digital billboard removed

<http://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20140818/rogers-park/neighborhood-wins-battle-digital-billboard-on-western-removed>

Allentown residents decry digital billboard plan

http://www.lehighvalleylive.com/allentown/index.ssf/2014/07/allentown_residents_decry_digi.html

Albany residents seeing red over proposed digital billboards

<http://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2014/06/02/albany-residents-seeing-red-over-proposed-digital-billboard-that-could-block-views/>

Richmond, CA residents overwhelmingly reject digital billboards

<http://www.tombutt.com/forum/2014/14-03-11.htm>

II. In response to adverse public reaction, local governments have restricted or prohibited digital billboards

Alpha Borough Council considers digital billboard restrictions

http://www.lehighvalleylive.com/phillipsburg/index.ssf/2014/11/alpha_borough_council_consider_1.html

Humboldt County Board of Supervisors Votes to Ban Off-Site Digital Billboards

<http://lostcoastoutpost.com/2014/nov/3/supervisors-reverse-prior-vote-agree-outlaw-site-d/>

Buellton, Calif. pulls digital billboard plan

<http://www.keyt.com/news/buellton-chamber-pulls-digital-billboard-plan/27891866>

Des Moines City Council bans new billboards

<http://www.kcci.com/news/des-moines-city-council-bans-new-billboards/25369812>

Hall County, GA looking to ban digital billboards

<http://www.wsbtv.com/videos/news/hall-county-looking-at-banning-digital-signs/vwgMs/>

III. Digital billboards create legal challenges and expense to governmental entities

The Arizona Court of Appeals has ruled that digital billboards along state and federal highways are illegal because they violate the state's ban on intermittent light.

<http://www.scenic.org/blog/133-arizona-court-of-appeals-rules-digital-billboards-illegal>

Scenic America is challenging the FHWA and USDOT for allowing commercial message digital billboards along federal highways. That case is currently pending before the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington D.D.

<http://www.scenic.org/billboards-a-sign-control/digital-billboards/scenic-america-lawsuit-on-fhwa-ruling>

Judge rules against digital billboards in Knoxville

http://www.knoxnews.com/news/local-news/judge-rules-against-digital-billboards-in-knoxville_60592419

After lengthy legal battle, controversial billboard comes down in Peabody

http://www.salemnews.com/news/local_news/article_0bcbcd50-f3b6-5ef6-8fe7-80ab088a0d06.html

Court upholds Nashville ban on conversion to digital billboard

<http://www.scenic.org/storage/PDFs/nashville%20digital%20billboard%20decision.pdf>

NJ towns can ban electronic billboards, court says

http://www.nj.com/somerset/index.ssf/2014/10/court_nj_towns_can_ban_electroinc_billboards.html

Couple settles lawsuit, digital billboard will come down

http://www.pressofatlanticcity.com/communities/eh/margate-causeway-digital-billboard-co-settles-with-couple/article_2d5970b0-74d6-11e3-99a1-0019bb2963f4.html

IV. Digital billboards raise serious highway safety concerns

Safety issues surrounding driver distraction are a growing concern. There is substantial data that directly links cell phone usage and texting to accidents and serious safety threats on our roadways. Similarly, it can be argued that digital billboards, positioned along public roadways, changing messages every 8 seconds, seem by design intended to distract a driver's attention from the roadway.

Due to the small number of digital billboards in the U.S., data on the driver distraction caused by them is limited. The most recent government sponsored digital billboard safety study was issued in 2013 by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/real_estate/oac/possible_effects/cevms00.cfm

The first comprehensive review of the FHWA digital billboard safety study says the study's conclusions are seriously flawed.

<http://www.scenic.org/billboards-a-sign-control/digital-billboards/critique-of-fhwa-digital-billboard-safety-study>

Additional reports also raise serious highway safety concerns.

Insurance industry concerned about digital billboard safety risks

<http://www.scenic.org/blog/206-insurance-industry-concerned-about-digital-billboard-safety-risks>

Digital billboards along Ontario's highways worry paramedics

<https://ca.news.yahoo.com/blogs/canada-politics/digital-billboards-along-ontario-s-highways-worry-paramedics-211116585.html>

Swedish study shows digital billboards distract drivers

<http://www.scenic.org/billboards-a-sign-control/digital-billboards/swedish-digital-billboard-safety-study>

Preliminary results of Michigan digital billboard crash study

<http://www.scenic.org/storage/PDFs/michigan%20study%20on%20digital%20billboard%20crash%20rates.pdf>

V. Digital billboards may adversely affect economic development

Kansas City billboard holds up downtown hotel project

<http://www.kansascity.com/news/government-politics/article3527507.html>

Tacky billboards knocked \$30,000 off home values in Philadelphia

<http://www.businessinsider.com/what-hurts-home-value-2013-5#tacky-billboards-knocked-30000-off-home-values-in-philadelphia-8>

Destination marketer says billboards a drag on business appeal

http://www.bullcitymutterings.com/2014/08/blights-costly-drag-on-business-appeal.html#.U_Xjd_gthto.twitter

VI. Digital billboards increase the cost of highway construction

Minnesota DOT paid Clear Channel \$4.3 million for one digital billboard face, and then allowed the company to relocate it.

http://www.twincities.com/localnews/ci_25321032/minnesotas-4-3m-billboard-settlement-criticized-by-group

State of Texas v Clear Channel Outdoor Inc. is pending at the Texas Supreme Court. If Clear Channel wins, the cost of billboard condemnation will increase, even for non-digital billboards. But it will greatly increase for digital.

<http://www.scenic texas.org/wp-content/themes/uploads/2014-04-21-Brief-of-Amici-Curiae.pdf>