

BELL NUNNALLY MANAGING PARTNER CHRIS TROWBRIDGE IN TEXAS LAWYER FIRM LEADER Q+A TALKS 2020'S PERSEVERANCE AND 2021'S PROMISE

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Managing Partner Christopher B. Trowbridge is featured in the *Texas Lawyer* firm leaders Q+A “'Anytime, Anywhere’: A Q&A With Christopher Trowbridge, Managing Partner of Bell Nunnally.” The piece explores the challenges of 2020 and then looks at positive indicators shaping 2021.

Here are several exchanges from the full interview:

How is 2021 going for you so far?

We're feeling very optimistic as we move into Q2. Here in Texas, the reopen is in full swing, and this is both an incredible lifeline and a genuine challenge for many of our clients. We're helping businesses navigate their own reopenings (as well as our own) and continuing to provide consultative guidance on how best to utilize federal and state relief efforts. We anticipate robust growth in virus-depressed areas, such as commercial real estate and retail and hospitality, and we are well-positioned to provide the resources these clients need to excel. We also think ever-increasing employment numbers combined with rising consumer confidence may usher in a nationwide “boom time”—potentially lifting all practices.

In terms of ongoing bright spots, business formation and transactions remain strong, along with health care. And, we anticipate continued growth in IP, tax, labor and employment and litigation across industries.

We'll continue to be who we are: a level-headed resource for clients, focused on direct answers and with a steady, long-term business outlook. Since 1980, through many booms and busts, this philosophy has worked for us and for our clients.

What did you do right?

Given the challenges of 2020, many of which have continued into this year, our biggest accomplishments are twofold: 1) we took care of each other and our clients; and 2) we kept calm. The former is about more than just moving matters forward, maintaining the payroll and putting successive health and safety guidelines and tools in place. It is really about reaching out and checking in on each other and on our clients in the community—without any subtext. The question, “How are you doing?” suddenly became vital and incisive. We often gathered as a firm community on Zoom and leadership organized surprise deliveries to show appreciation to our professional staff and employees. Operationally, our technological pivot to the remote environment had early growing pains, but they were quickly ironed out. We also, collectively, focused on moving the business forward—including writing more than 50 COVID-related alerts direct addressing client questions. This clarity and shared mission proved helpful and, at times, a welcome distraction from a very unsettling backdrop. Tech companies monitor services for downtime. We're proud of our people and our processes: we reported zero downtime for clients in 2020.

What obstacles are in the way this year?

Until broad vaccination occurs, every business is susceptible to serious disruption. We also recognize, as a firm and with our clients, two key aspects of the pandemic: 1) many parents are still homeschooling and working from home, two things that rarely are easy to do at the same time; and 2) collectively we are all working through some mental health issues stemming from a year of tragedy and restrictions. Both in terms of continued spread and in terms of human resources, our nationwide reopen needs to be thoughtful. However, as “normal” returns, we are hopeful that our economic growth continues apace, along with greater mobility and joy in our communities. We recognize the need to temper our expectations and stay focused on how we can help each other and our clients to succeed.

In addition, The Mid-Market Report excerpted Trowbridge's commentary from the *Texas Lawyer* piece on the increased role of technology for its article “How Litigation-Based Firms Have Survived (and Sometimes Thrived) in a Pandemic” (later syndicated by *Litigation Daily*):

Anytime, anywhere. That's Bell Nunnally's litigation philosophy. Prior to the pandemic, we routinely trekked across the wide expanse of Texas, to the Fifth Circuit in New Orleans, the Federal Circuit in D.C., and to Philadelphia on the East Coast and San Francisco on the West Coast. The shift to a virtual environment overall, and especially in terms of litigation, was certainly unexpected. However, our culture, which stresses flexibility and has invested heavily in technology, allowed our attorneys to quickly pivot and master new platforms, such as Zoom where we prevailed in one of the first-ever virtual temporary injunction hearings. (And, thankfully, none of our litigators came before the court looking like a cat!) We see these technologies continuing to play a significant role, especially as the nation's reopening varies greatly by state.

To read the full *Texas Lawyer* interview, please click [here](#).

Related Media Coverage:

- [“Premium Subscriber Spotlight: Bell Nunnally,”](#) *Lawbook*
- [“How One Texas Firm Found Success ‘Amid the Deluge,’”](#) *Texas Lawyer*
- [“How Litigation-Based Firms Have Survived \(and Sometimes Thrived\) in a Pandemic,”](#) *The Mid-Market Report*

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