



53rd Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta Media Report

Prepared By:



ExxonMobil Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta 2025 Media Overview

Background

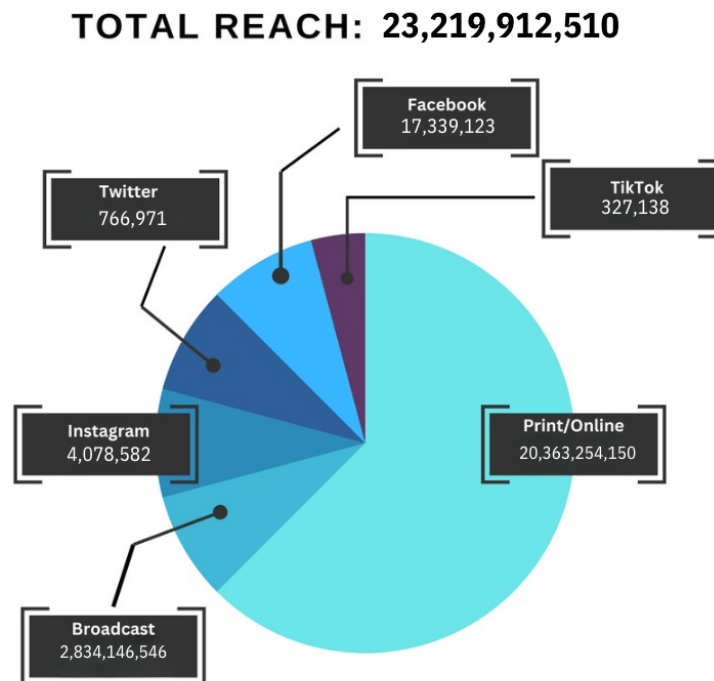
The 53rd ExxonMobil Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta occurred October 4-12, 2025.

In its [2025 final numbers](#) news release, the Balloon Fiesta announced that the 53rd event included 537 hot air balloons and 651 registered pilots flying in this year's event, including 103 special shape balloons and 90 remote control hot air balloons. There were a reported 851,994 estimated guest visits for the 53rd event, with 13 of the 14 sessions taking place. One session (Thursday evening) was canceled. An additional event featuring remote control hot air balloons occurred in Los Ranchos on the Monday evening of the Balloon Fiesta.

The nine-day event concluded a year-long coordinated communications approach on behalf of the event, sponsors and participating pilots/operators. This effort includes traditional/digital planning, messaging, media relations, issue management, social media content, media monitoring, developing/distributing a monthly newsletter (with 106,206 subscribers), as well as coordinating awareness for internal departments and sponsor communication/coordination through traditional, digital and owned media channels.

Total Reach of the 2025 Balloon Fiesta

The year-long proactive media outreach and digital management resulted in a reach of **23,219,912,510**. This includes: **20.4 billion** print and online views ([3,488 articles](#)); **2.8 billion** broadcast views ([3,128 stories](#)), **17.3** million Facebook unique views, **4.1** million Instagram unique views, **767** thousand X/Twitter impressions and **327** thousand TikTok unique views. These results are a result of a year-round outreach tracked using paid/free subscription services (Meltwater, TV Eyes, Cision, PressRelations, Google search, and other industry standards).



Total Reach over the Years

From 2021 through 2025, Balloon Fiesta’s total media reach expanded dramatically. The graphic below highlights the sustained growth, illustrating how consistent, year-round storytelling, national and international coverage, and the addition of new broadcast and digital opportunities have steadily introduced Balloon Fiesta to larger global audiences each year.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total Media Reach Over the Years	8,678,842,782	12,107,076,984	21,146,096,929	19,180,980,567	23,219,912,510

- *2021 – First Event Post COVID-19
- *2022 – 50th Anniversary Event
- *2023 – 51st Event including Gordon Bennett Gas Race & Annular Solar Eclipse
- *2024 – 52nd Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta Event
- *2025 – 53rd ExxonMobil Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta Event

Following the COVID-19 era, tracked media coverage trended up for the 50th Anniversary event and peaked with interest and coverage of the Gordon Bennett Cup gas and annular solar eclipse. Tracked media coverage peaked again in 2025, largely due to increased remote coverage of the event and strategic outreach efforts.

2025 Media Coverage and Narratives

In 2025, media activations focused on the 53rd event and narratives featuring The Albuquerque Box, Mass Ascensions, Dawn Patrol, drone shows, Special Shapes, Gondola Club, Glamping, Camp 505, Serigraph Poster, Flight of Nations, New Mexico Day and final numbers. It also included new attractions, activities (*Globito Glow in the Village*, New Merchandise, New Special Shapes, New Concessions, Staffing and Board Transitions, ExxonMobil Title Sponsorship Announcement, and Event Safety measures) and issue management.

Working with the Balloon Fiesta staff, sponsors and vendors, The Garrity Group developed narratives to share Balloon Fiesta’s story related to the inaugural *Globito Glow in the Village* event, second annual New Mexico Day, the 2025 Official Serigraph Poster, Official Sponsors, new special shapes, international participation in the 53rd event, Balloon Discovery center enhanced activities, Balloon Fiesta event safety measures, event food and merchandise concessions, Cindy Petrehn Memorial Photo Contest and final event numbers.

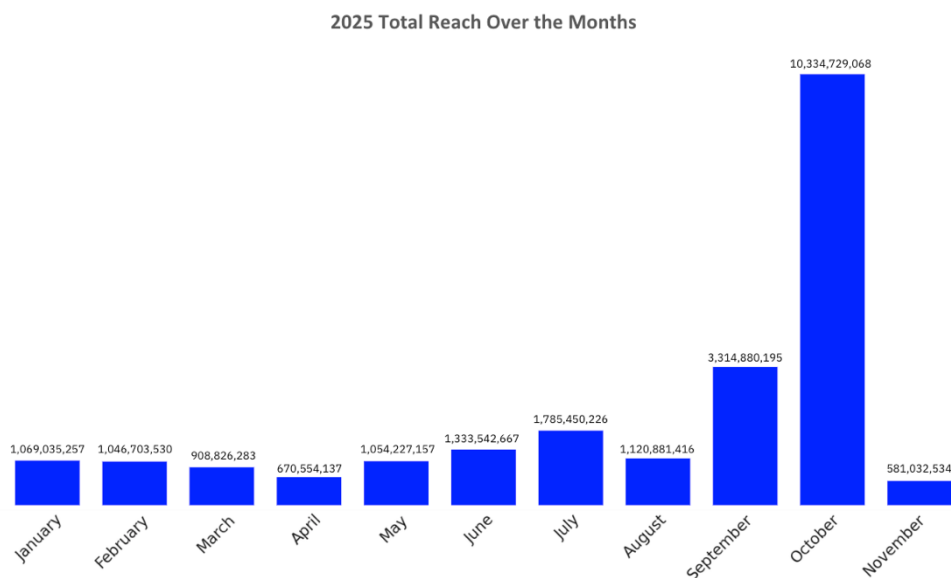
In advance of and during the event, media were invited to cover Balloon Fiesta in person or remotely via a live stream coordinated by the Media Arts Collective in Albuquerque. A curated feed was also provided through Balloon Fiesta Live. For the 2025 event, 811 media credentials were issued to representatives from 130 organizations, including reporters, TV crews, social media influencers and journalists. This included international crews (including France, Germany, Japan, Mexico, the United Kingdom), national crews (Associated Press, CW Network, NBC, People Magazine, Forbes), New Mexico’s major media outlets (Newsradio KKOB, KOB-TV, KRQE-TV, ABQJournal, KOAT-TV, Santa Fe New Mexican) and media/influencers (Theos Trips, ABQ Adventures, average.jo.adventures & Le Wild Explorer).



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The Balloon Fiesta also hosted two unique video feeds. One was a clean livestream feed of the weekend ascensions provided by The Media Arts Collective, generating in excess of 2 million views. The other was a moderated program, Balloon Fiesta Live! reported 1,022,009 views.

Balloon Fiesta's media outreach is year-round. Most of the tracked media coverage occurs in October. Below is a breakdown of measurable coverage throughout 2025.



2025 Traditional Media Coverage

The Garrity Group worked with various national and international news media to tell the Balloon Fiesta story. This effort resulted in coverage from leading media sources, including USA Today, Forbes, Associated Press, National Public Radio, Yahoo, AOL, BBC World News, CNN National and International, CBC News Network, CTV News Channel and ARD-Morgenmagazin – German TV. In New Mexico, our team worked to help coordinate live coverage from television network affiliates, including KRQE-TV (CBS), KASA-Fox, KOB-TV (NBC), KOAT-TV (ABC), Telemundo, and KKOZ-AM (Cumulus). Print media coverage included a sponsored insert and an editorial insert provided by the Albuquerque Journal. Other earned print coverage included Albuquerque Magazine, Albuquerque Business First and Santa Fe New Mexican.

The media team also leveraged a clean livestream feed of the weekend ascensions. The Media Arts Collective (<https://themacnm.com>) provided a broadcast quality multi-camera feed which was made available to all media outlets through the Balloon Fiesta's Vimeo channel. The four Media Arts Collective broadcasts, during each of both weekend's mass ascensions, provided a two and a half hour feed of the launches and flying. In addition to being picked up by local media outlets, the international news agency Reuters shared each of the four live feeds with more than 750 broadcasters. Reuters has a daily reach of 1 billion people.



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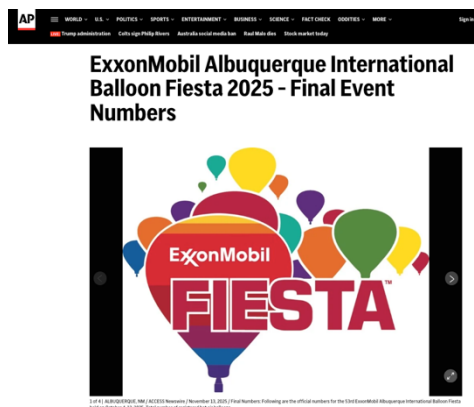
National and International Media Brands covering the 52nd Balloon Fiesta (sample):



Following is a sample of traditional media coverage garnered during this year's event:

Associated Press – [Link to Story](#)

Reach – 35,114,02



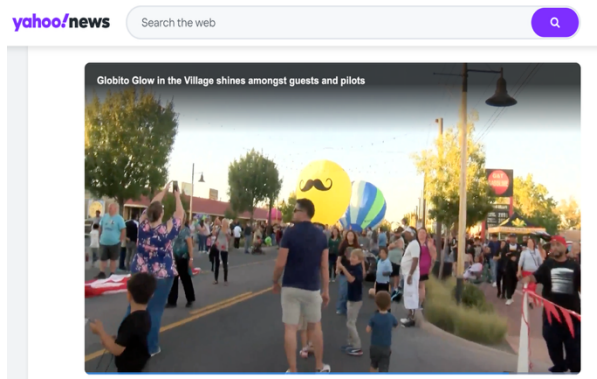
NBC News – [Link to Story](#)

Reach – 34,166,886



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Yahoo! News – [Link to Story](#)
Reach – 55,646,663



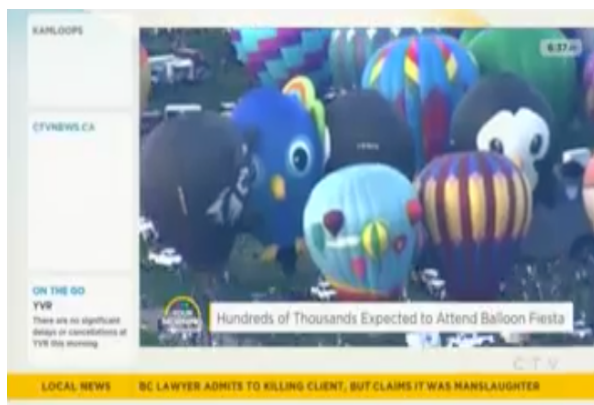
BBC World News– [Link to Story](#)
Reach – 46,000,000



ARD-Morgenmagazin – German TV – [Link to Story](#)
Reach – 7,500,000



CTV Morning Live (Vancouver, Canada) – [Link to Story](#)
Reach – 1,506,000



Forbes – [Link to Story](#)
Reach – 5,000,000



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Social Media Content and Narratives

Complementing the traditional media approach, The Garrity Group developed digital narratives to share the Balloon Fiesta story, highlighting hot air balloon pilots, remote control balloon operators, event updates, guest tips, and Balloon Fiesta sponsors.

The Balloon Fiesta social media approach attracted 40,191 new followers to @BalloonFiesta Facebook, X/Twitter, Instagram and TikTok pages.

Facebook, Instagram, X/Twitter and TikTok are important tools to communicate and engage with guests and to introduce the event to new audiences. Guests and followers used the platforms to access information, ask questions, provide feedback, receive quick and direct customer support and sometimes display grievances, both publicly and through direct messages. Our team used these platforms to communicate important information such as event and weather updates, parking lot status and rain check policies.

As Balloon Fiesta's platform with the largest reach and following, Facebook remains the cornerstone for community building and guest loyalty. Facebook's engagement is high across likes, comments, shares, and direct messages. Instagram continues to be the visual storytelling powerhouse, displaying an active, curated feed. Use of in-app features like interactive stories, along with the introduction of comedic-style Reels (short-form videos), has increased the reach beyond existing followers. X/Twitter remains an effective tool to communicate with reporters/news media. TikTok has been the playground for creativity, where we've tapped into trending sounds to create fun, relatable content that resonates with younger demographics.

A sample of the reach garnered from a general information post can be seen below:



Reach: 50,728 | Views: 264,564 | Interactions: 3,197



Digital Media Overview

Social and digital media play a major role in how Balloon Fiesta engages its audiences. Balloon Fiesta-owned social and digital media channels (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and X/Twitter) provide a way for the event to connect guests at Balloon Fiesta and with fans following from afar.


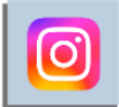


In advance of and during the event, Balloon Fiesta leverages social media to increase awareness of the event, generate excitement for the 53rd Balloon Fiesta and share information that is helpful to guests planning for a Balloon Fiesta visit. Posts included a variety of photos and videos to engage users.

Social Media Results

The total reach of Balloon Fiesta’s social media effort had a total reach of 22,511,814. Balloon Fiesta’s growth was tracked across the organization’s four major social channels (Facebook, X/Twitter, TikTok and Instagram). The growth was achieved using a variety of tactics that leveraged engaging messaging and high-quality images and video.

Following is an overview of each social media outlet’s performance in three key areas: reach, followers, and engagement. The ‘reach’ metric counts reach from the organic or paid distribution of page content, including posts, stories and ads. It also includes reach from other sources, such as tags, check-ins, profile visits, and the number of times the content was played or displayed. This number also provides reach from posts and stories that were boosted. Engagement represents the number of likes or reactions, saves, comments, shares and replies on your content, including ads. Content can include formats such as posts, stories, reels, and videos.

2025 BY THE NUMBERS

	REACH	ENGAGEMENT	FOLLOWERS	INSIDE THE NUMBERS (Compared to 2024)
	17,339,123	1,394,672	261,233	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Facebook’s audience grew by 10,554 new followersFacebook’s engagement increased by 124.3%
	4,078,582	159,087	82,779	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Instagram’s audience grew by 6,560 new followersInstagram’s reach increased by 62.6%
	766,971	50,456	48,942	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Twitter’s engagement rate is 6.6%
	327,138	16,900	5,244	<ul style="list-style-type: none">TikTok’s audience grew by 1,527 new followersTikTok’s engagement increased by 11.1%

Additionally, the 53rd event saw an increase in Balloon Fiesta Live! viewership with a total of 1,022,009 unique views through Facebook and YouTube. Balloon Fiesta Live! is streamed on Facebook and YouTube each session of the event. On average, Facebook viewers watched an average of 1 minute and 52 seconds, and YouTube viewers watched an average of 23 minutes and 3 seconds.

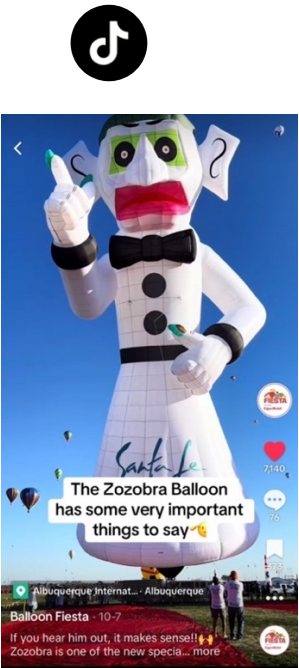


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Following is a sample of social media coverage generated during this year's event:



Views: 453,840 | Reach: 309,632



Views: 13,400



Reach: 14,476

