

Making a Difference in People's Lives

An Interview with John R. Dye, Executive Vice President, General Counsel, and Secretary,
and Luella Chavez D'Angelo, Chief Communications Officer, Western Union

EDITORS' NOTE In addition to his corporate role of Executive Vice President, General Counsel, and Secretary, John Dye is also Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Western Union Foundation. Prior to joining Western Union, Dye was Senior Vice President, Interim General Counsel, and Corporate Secretary of the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (FHLMC). Previously, Dye served as Senior Vice President, Principal Deputy General Counsel Corporate Affairs of FHLMC and held senior leadership positions at Citigroup, Inc. and Salomon Smith Barney. He began his legal career at the New York-based law firm Brown & Wood. Dye earned a Bachelor of Arts degree, magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, from Middlebury College and a juris doctor degree from the University of Virginia School of Law.

As Chief Communications Officer, Luella Chavez D'Angelo is responsible for developing and implementing global communications and corporate social responsibility strategy for the company's growing array of products and delivery channels. In addition, she oversees Western Union's Social Ventures department, and the Western Union Foundation, for which she also serves on the Board of Directors. She has been with Western Union since 2000, when she was appointed the inaugural Director of the First Data Western Union Foundation. Prior to joining Western Union, Chavez D'Angelo served as Chief Marketing Officer for the Denver Museum of Nature and Science and as Director of Marketing for the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science. She also served as Vice President of Institutional Development for the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center. Chavez D'Angelo holds a bachelor's degree in Marketing Management and a master's in Business Administration, with an emphasis on Finance, from the University of New Mexico.

COMPANY BRIEF Western Union (westernunion.com) is a leader in global payment services. Together with its Vigo, Orlandi Valuta, Pago Facil, and Western Union Business Solutions branded payment services, Western Union provides consumers and businesses with fast, reliable, and convenient ways to send and receive money around the world, to send payments, and to purchase money orders. Western Union, Vigo, and Orlandi Valuta branded services are offered through a combined network of over 500,000 agent locations in 200 countries and territories, and over 100,000 ATMs and kiosks. In 2014, Western Union completed 255 million consumer-to-consumer transactions worldwide, moving \$85 billion of principal between consumers, and 484 million business payments.



John R. Dye



Luella Chavez D'Angelo

How deep is the heritage of corporate responsibility at Western Union and how does it align with the business?

Chavez D'Angelo: We see this as a three-legged stool with each leg as important as the others. We need to have a strategic corporate philanthropy plan. We also have to look at corporate responsibility in terms of how responsible the company is in its actions and business model, as well as in elements like the traditional ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) component.

The third focus we added over the past five years is the shared-value component. We started thinking about our unique products and services at Western Union, and we knew we needed to determine how we could increase value to the shareholder while also increasing social impact. It was about putting a plan in place to find new customers, or verticals, which would bring in new revenue but that would also make a positive social impact on the world.

Our greatest example of this is our NGO Global Pay product, which we launched about five years ago. We have helped keep foreign exchange costs down for our NGO clients. However, we weren't helping them move money across the broad spectrum of their money transfer needs.

We decided it would be great to look at the NGO vertical as a new customer segment for our company but in a way that would keep prices reasonable and give them one-stop shopping to move their money cross-border. This would help them maintain their focus on their mission rather than on how to move money.

Today, we have more than 700 NGO clients that are using this product. This is one example of the shared-value leg of the stool.

Another is corporate responsibility, which involves looking at all of our business operations. John is my partner on this. With our governance component, we make sure we have the right checks and balances in place to ensure that we are responsible with all of our business operations.

At the heart of our entire CSR focus is the Western Union Foundation and our corporate philanthropy initiative.

Dye: One of the things that is wonderful about Western Union as a company is that its fundamental business is mission-driven. I travel all over the world talking to regulators, legislators, and policymakers, educating them about our fundamental business. It's very gratifying because 20 to 30 percent of our remittances are being moved by clients to pay educational expenses and taking care of very basic needs of individuals around the world.

We also serve as the on-ramp to financial inclusion for many of our clients and customers. There are a lot of un-banked and under-banked people, and we provide them access to financial services. It's this element of our business that dovetails so nicely with the work the foundation does.

In our basic daily existence, we are helping people through our services, especially with the foundation. We can focus those needs more precisely. The foundation was established around 10 years ago with a pretty ambitious agenda, and we have typically focused on specific targeted areas. In the first few years of the foundation, the initiative that was spearheaded was Our World, Our Family program to which we made a \$50-million commitment. Since I've been here, we have made a commitment to Education for Better, which focuses on secondary education and vocational training. We committed \$10 million over three years, but surpassed that benchmark within two years. It's been an incredibly satisfying experience for us to see the fruits of this labor make a difference for both children and adults.

Chavez D'Angelo: The Western Union Foundation just hit over \$100-million in grants for the lifetime of the foundation. This represents grants for more than 2,700 NGOs in 135 countries. We have made an impact and we haven't done it alone; we've also involved our business partners. We've had well over 500 of our Western Union agents contribute their own money, which we match, into the Western Union Foundation.

We mutually agree upon the NGO recipient which then gets 100 percent of the amount the agents have put in and our matching funds. The company pays for the administration fees separately. We're very proud of how we're involving our business partners in this as well.

Dye: I'm really proud of our employee participation in the foundation. In 2014, we were at 73 percent participation. It has been a valuable tool for us and really improves engagement. Our 10,000 employees have an active stake in the foundation's activities. As a result of our global footprint, it requires us to be very global in our thinking.

We have a foundation that is short-staffed but there is a great deal of efficiency in giving protocols. I get the privilege of going around the world and presenting grants to deserving charities.

Chavez D'Angelo: Our employees that live and work in the U.S. get a two-for-one match on what they donate. If they live and work outside of the U.S., they get a three-for-one match. This helps us expand our giving to many other NGOs. Because the majority of our employees participate in giving, they feel like they have a stake in the work of the Foundation.

Will you need a public/private partnership model to truly affect change?

Dye: The administrative support of governments combined with thought leadership and processes from the private sector are necessary components for a partnership to be successful.

Chavez D'Angelo: We are the corporation in the mix, but where possible, we try to create a triad effect by having the right NGO, the right government/education organization, and ourselves. We believe that all three have to work together to make a meaningful difference and it's how the most noticeable change is going to happen.

Is it important for the foundation to track impact via metrics?

Chavez D'Angelo: We have established metrics at the foundation to help measure and track overall positive impact on the communities we serve. We believe this is important as we evaluate and work to develop programs.

Dye: We have also reduced the number of organizations we are reaching out to, but we're giving more money. This allows us to better measure success, progress, and achievement. We have joined forces with some of the top-shelf brand names in the charitable world, so I feel comfortable that our dollars are being spent wisely. We also have an ability to measure and monitor this more easily than if we were disbursing through a thousand different charities.

Has a strong CSR component become a prerequisite for attracting top talent to a company?

Dye: Yes. It goes to not what the company is but who the company is. With this type of effort, one can gauge not only the business side of the company but also what the culture is about. This is very important to all generations.

Chavez D'Angelo: Our work around CSR plays a key role in helping attract talent. CSR has become an important determinate for millennials and our workplace culture supports their interest.

Do you ever take time during the process to celebrate its impact?

Chavez D'Angelo: We move fast and furiously. When we hit the \$100-million mark, we knew we had to pause and celebrate it with our employees and business partners, who have been donors. The NGO recipients want to celebrate with us, so we are now planning to celebrate this achievement in May.

Dye: There is a connectedness among the people who are giving money within their countries.

John, has this role been what you expected when you came on?

Dye: I have seen the difference this company makes in people's lives. One of the rewarding elements of this job is that we can make a difference in people's lives in Bangladesh, India, or other places directly through the work we do. There is a strong sense of connectedness between the work people do here and the money that goes to these various countries.

When I interviewed at Western Union, the meeting took place at a company-owned store. I got there early and sat in the lobby, and I watched people come in. It was incredible because I would see a cab driver from Senegal or a cleaning woman from Poland coming into the store to send money to loved ones in distant lands. I felt

there was something about this company that was very interesting to me – it truly serves the basic needs of its customers. I felt that connection and it got me jazzed up about working here.

Seeing the difference we make in day-to-day lives is so moving to me and creates a connection to the company that dollars and cents can't provide.

Part of my job is to get regulators to understand that what we're doing is perhaps not what they think we do but, instead, is about doing good things to serve people's day-to-day needs. When they hear that, I can see their eyes open because they often carry their own notions into the process. Part of my job is to educate these people so they understand the fundamental purpose we serve.

Chavez D'Angelo: Our customers are heroes. They live and work far from their home countries. They adapt quickly to new cultures and languages. They persevere each and every day to support their families back home. In 2014, we moved 255 million consumer-to-consumer transactions worldwide, many of which represent hope, love, and economic prosperity. There is something pretty special in being able to work for a place where we can bring value to society. ●

■

**I have seen the
difference this company makes
in people's lives. One of the rewarding
elements of this job is that we can make a
difference in people's lives in Bangladesh,
India, or other places directly
through the work we do.**

■