

The Western Union Company is an American financial services and communications [company](#)

Western Union, as an industrialized [monopoly](#), dominated the [telegraph](#) industry in the late 19th century. It was the first communications empire and set a pattern for American-style communications businesses as they are known today.

Up until it discontinued the service in 2006, Western Union was the best-known U.S. company in the business of exchanging [telegrams](#).^{[5][6]}

Western Union has several divisions, with products such as person-to-person money transfer, [money orders](#), business payments and commercial services. They offered standard "Cablegrams", as well as more cheerful products such as Candygrams, Dollygrams, and Melodygrams.

Notable History:

- In 1861 it opened the [first transcontinental telegraph](#). In 1865 it formed the [Russian–American Telegraph](#) in an attempt to link America to Europe, [via Alaska](#), into [Siberia](#), to [Moscow](#)
- It introduced the first [stock ticker](#) in 1866, and a standardized time service in 1870. The next year, 1871, the company introduced its [money transfer](#) service, based on its extensive telegraph network
- By 1900, Western Union operated a million miles of telegraph lines and two international [undersea cables](#).
- In 1914, Western Union offered the first [charge card](#) for consumers; in 1923 it introduced [teletypewriters](#) to join its branches. [Singing telegrams](#) followed in 1933, intercity [fax](#) in 1935, and commercial intercity [microwave](#) communications in 1943. In 1958, it began offering [Telex](#) service to customers in New York City.
- During World War II, families with sons in military service dreaded the Western Union "boy on his bicycle" to arrive at their home with a telegram from the [War Department](#) or the [Navy Department](#). The message began: The Secretary of War (for soldiers and airmen) or Secretary of Navy (for sailors and marines), regrets to inform you that [name, rank and serial number of the man in the military service] was killed in action (or missing in action).
- Western Union became the first American [telecommunications corporation](#) to maintain its own fleet of [geosynchronouscommunications satellites](#), starting in 1974. The fleet of satellites, called [Westar](#), carried communications within the Western Union company for telegram and [mailgram](#) message data to Western Union bureaus nationwide.
- After the [2004 Indian Ocean tsunami](#), the Foundation donated US\$1,000,000 to the relief effort.
- [Liverpool FC](#) announced on August, 9, 2017 that Western Union would become their first ever sleeve sponsors, from the start of the 2017-18 Season. They signed a £25m deal for 5 years as [Liverpool's](#) sleeve sponsor.

Sending and receiving funds[\[edit\]](#)

In order to send funds, a sender goes to a Western Union office and presents funds (plus fees) for "Next Day" or "Money in Minutes" service. The sender provides his or her name and address, the recipient's name, and a designated payment destination. Western Union then provides the sender a 10-digit Money Transfer Control Number (MTCN) that the sender must provide to the recipient. The recipient then proceeds to a Western Union agent office in the designated payment location, presents the 10-digit MTCN, and a photo ID. Money is then paid out to the recipient. In some locations, if a recipient lacks identification documents, the sender and receiver can set up a pre-arranged password. Funds are paid out in cash, although if payment exceeds a

local maximum or cash on hand, a check is issued. Alternatively, a sender may forward funds to a recipient by using Western Union's website or by phone. In some countries, the recipient doesn't need the MTCN number if one has sufficient identification.

Western Union Mobile[\[edit\]](#)

In October 2007, Western Union announced plans to introduce a mobile money-transfer service with the [GSM Association](#), a global trade association representing more than 700 mobile operators in 218 countries and covering 2.5 billion mobile subscribers.

The proliferation of mobile phones in developed and developing economies provides a widely accessible consumer device capable of delivering mobile financial services ranging from text notifications associated with Western Union cash delivery services to phone-based remittance options. Western Union's mobile money transfer service offering will connect its core money-transfer platform to m-bank or m-wallet platforms provided by mobile operators and/or locally regulated financial institutions.

Western Union Connect[\[edit\]](#)

The company launched the Western Union Connect service in October 2015, following partnership agreements with major instant messaging apps [WeChat](#) and [Viber](#).^{[28][29]} The partnership allows users of WeChat to send up to \$100 to [China](#), the [US](#) and 200 other countries,^[29] while Viber users can send up to \$100 for \$3.99 plus [exchange rate fees](#), with that fixed fee increasing the more money is sent up a limit of \$499.^[28]

Western Union's vision is to be a global leader in cross-currency, cross-border money movement & payment services, continuing to meet consumer and business needs as they develop.

We're realizing this vision through our global cross-border platform supported by an multi-channel network that spans over 200 countries and territories, built on ever-evolving technology, trusted relationships with Agents and partners, and global compliance capabilities.

Money movement

We look to increase the number of ways consumers and businesses can move funds around the world, enabling money transfer and payment services.

Global network

We continue to build a robust digital and physical network to enable the movement of funds across borders quickly and reliably.

Ever-evolving technology

We invest in technology to provide more accessible, trusted ways to move money whether it's online, via mobile or at retail.

Partner relationships

We build relationships with digital and social media organizations to become one of the leaders in cross-border digital money transfer.

Key numbers and facts

Over 550,000 Agent locations, 100,000 ATMs and kiosks globally

Reaching billions of accounts worldwide

International payment solutions to serve businesses and NGOs

WU.com websites in 41 countries , with capability to send to more than 200 countries and territories

WU Mobile apps in **18 markets and relationships with mobile network operators in several other markets**

Ground-breaking relationships with social media and messaging platforms like Viber and WeChat



1851

Western Union is founded in 1851



1865

First stock traded on NYSE in 1865



1871

Money transfer introduced 1871



1933

First singing telegram 1933



1974

Introduced the Westar satellite in 1974



1993

The Western Union phone card is released in 1993



2000

Focus on digital money transfer with WU.com launch 2000



2007

The Mobile Money Transfer Service is announced in 2007



2010

Created Western Union Business Solutions 2010



2015

WU® Connect Platform introduced; allowing social media users to send money 2015



2016

Western Union Cross-Border Platform Connects Consumers to over One Billion Bank Accounts 2016



Hikmet Ersek

President, CEO, Director



Raj Agrawal

Executive Vice President,
Chief Financial Officer



Caroline Tsai

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