



# The Western Union Company (WU)

Updated November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 by Prakash Kolli

## Key Metrics

<b>Current Price:</b>	\$17	<b>5 Year CAGR Estimate:</b>	12.4%	<b>Market Cap:</b>	\$7.34B
<b>Fair Value Price:</b>	\$23	<b>5 Year Growth Estimate:</b>	2.0%	<b>Ex-Dividend Date:</b>	12/18/21 <sup>1</sup>
<b>% Fair Value:</b>	74%	<b>5 Year Valuation Multiple Estimate:</b>	6.1%	<b>Dividend Payment Date:</b>	12/31/21
<b>Dividend Yield:</b>	5.5%	<b>5 Year Price Target</b>	\$25	<b>Years Of Dividend Growth:</b>	7
<b>Dividend Risk Score:</b>	B	<b>Retirement Suitability Score:</b>	A	<b>Last Dividend Increase:</b>	4.4%

## Overview & Current Events

The Western Union Company is the world leader in the business of domestic and international money transfers. The company has a network of approximately 550,000 agents globally and operates in more than 200 countries. About 90% of agents are outside of the U.S. Western Union operates three business segments, Consumer-to-Consumer (C2C), Business Solutions, and Other (bill payments in the U.S. and Argentina). Approximately 86% of revenue is now from C2C, 9% from Business Solutions and 5% from Other. Western Union divested the Speedpay (U.S. bill payments) and Paymap (mortgage payments) businesses in 2019. The company had ~\$4.8B in revenue in fiscal 2020.

Western Union reported decent Q3 2021 results on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021. Companywide revenue grew 2% to \$1,286.3M from \$1,258.5M and diluted GAAP earnings per share increased 4% to \$0.57 in the quarter compared to \$0.55 in the prior year. The growth in revenue was driven by double-digit growth in digital money transfer revenue and Business Solutions offset by weakness in retail money transfer. The increase in earnings was driven by share repurchases, higher revenue, margins, and lower marketing costs offset by a higher tax rate, and technology investments. C2C revenue was flat at \$1,104.5M from \$1,106.5M on a year-over-year basis resulting from flat transaction growth. Cross border transfer revenue grew 1%. Digital Money Transfer C2C revenues increased 15% and digital money transfer volume increased 19%. Business Solutions revenue rose 31% to \$116.8M from \$89.1M due to weak comparisons in the prior year caused by COVID-19. Other revenue increased 3% to \$65.0M from \$62.9M.

Western Union is divesting the Business Solutions unit for \$910M in cash. Closing is expected in 2022 after approvals.

Western Union updated earnings per share guidance in 2021 to \$2.05 - \$2.10.

## Growth on a Per-Share Basis

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2026
<b>EPS</b>	\$1.57	\$1.74	\$1.43	\$1.59	\$1.62	\$1.66	\$1.60	\$1.87	\$2.46	\$1.87	<b>\$2.07</b>	<b>\$2.29</b>
<b>DPS</b>	\$0.31	\$0.43	\$0.50	\$0.50	\$0.62	\$0.64	\$0.70	\$0.76	\$0.80	\$0.90	<b>\$0.94</b>	<b>\$1.14</b>
<b>Shares<sup>2</sup></b>	619	572	552	522	502	482	459	441	418	418	<b>401</b>	<b>327</b>

Western Union's traditional C2C business is highly profitable but it is a mature business. The top line has exhibited some volatility in the past 10-years leading to volatility in the bottom line due to acquisitions and divestures. Earnings per share growth has benefited from significant share buybacks. We expect share repurchases to resume after 2020 and continue out to 2026. We are estimating a 4% annual reduction in share count each year. Revenue and earnings were negatively impacted by COVID-19 in 2020 offset by strong growth in digital money transfer. After 2020, we are now expecting 2% earnings per share growth due to strength in digital, the Walmart partnership, cost savings, and share reduction offset by long-term declines in retail transactions. Digital Money Transfer is growing at a double-digit rate and revenue is now 24% of total C2C revenue. We expect this to increase over the next several years, especially as more consumers use digital payments. The company is also making additional strategic moves mostly through partnerships that could bear fruit. We are now expecting a 4% growth rate in the dividend per share to 2026 on average.

<sup>1</sup> Western Union has not yet declared the next dividend. The date are estimates based on prior years.

<sup>2</sup> Share count in millions.

*Disclosure: This analyst has no position in the security discussed in this research report, and no plans to initiate one in the next 72 hours.*



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## Valuation Analysis

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Now	2026
Avg. P/E	12.1	9.7	11.5	10.5	12.0	11.8	12.3	10.4	12.2	12.9	8.2	11.0
Avg. Yld.	1.6%	2.5%	3.0%	3.0%	3.2%	3.3%	3.6%	3.9%	3.6%	4.0%	5.5%	4.5%

Western Union's stock price is down significantly since our last report due to the resurgence of COVID-19 in overseas markets. We have pegged our 2021 earnings estimate at the mid-point of updated guidance. Our fair value multiple for the long haul is 11X, slightly lower than the trailing 10-year average and accounting for more competition. Our fair value estimate is now \$23. Our 5-year price target is now \$25.

## Safety, Quality, Competitive Advantage, & Recession Resiliency

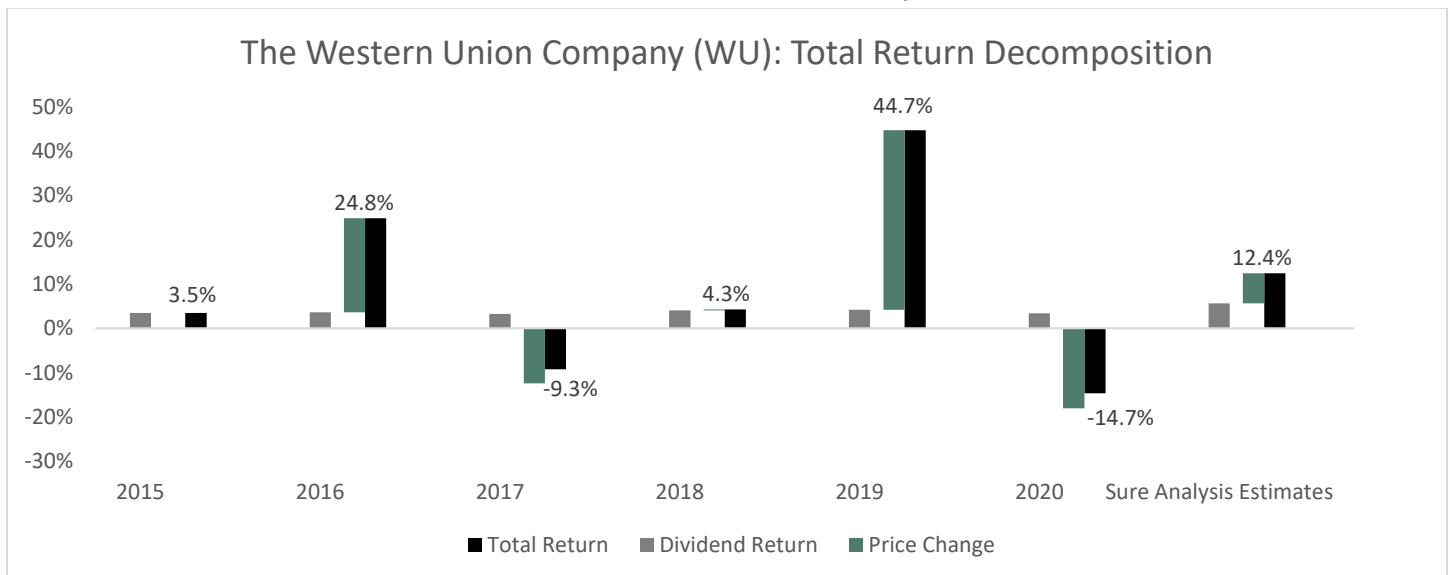
Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2026
Payout	25%	35%	31%	38%	39%	44%	41%	33%	48%	46%	45%	50%

Western Union's competitive advantage stems from its C2C business and unrivaled network of agents that process transactions. The company strengthens its network effect with partnerships and now with its digital money transfer effort, app, and westernunion.com. Importantly, Western Union is now partnered with Walmart. New online competitors are entering the market including Xoom owned by PayPal, Square, Stripe, Zelle, Libra Association, etc. As these platforms gain transaction, Western Union's C2C business will likely be negatively affected through lower pricing. The company makes conservative use of debt with only \$2,852.6M of long-term debt that is offset with \$1,003.4M of cash and equivalents. Interest coverage is about 9.6X and the leverage ratio is about 1.5X.

## Final Thoughts & Recommendation

At present we are forecasting 12.4% annualized total return over the next five years. Western Union was adversely affected by COVID-19, but business is recovering in 2021. The digital business is growing rapidly at a double-digit rate for users and revenue, and the company is expanding into digital banking with WU+ app. Western Union's dividend yield is now very attractive, and the dividend safety is acceptable. Investors seeking income may want to consider this equity. At the current price, we rate this stock a buy.

## Total Return Breakdown by Year



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## Income Statement Metrics

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Revenue</b>	5491	5665	5542	5607	5484	5423	5524	5590	5292	4835
<b>Gross Profit</b>	2389	2471	2307	2310	2284	2156	2171	2289	2206	2009
<b>Gross Margin</b>	43.5%	43.6%	41.6%	41.2%	41.7%	39.8%	39.3%	41.0%	41.7%	41.5%
<b>SG&amp;A Exp.</b>	1004	1141	1200	1169	1175	1669	1232	1167	1272	1041
<b>D&amp;A Exp.</b>	193	246	263	272	270	263	263	265	258	226
<b>Operating Profit</b>	1385	1330	1107	1141	1109	487	940	1122	934	967
<b>Operating Margin</b>	25.2%	23.5%	20.0%	20.3%	20.2%	9.0%	17.0%	20.1%	17.6%	20.0%
<b>Net Profit</b>	1165	1026	798	852	838	253	-557	852	1058	744
<b>Net Margin</b>	21.2%	18.1%	14.4%	15.2%	15.3%	4.7%	-10.1%	15.2%	20.0%	15.4%
<b>Free Cash Flow</b>	1012	917	847	867	805	812	565	482	787	721
<b>Income Tax</b>	109	143	129	116	104	89	905	140	263	111

## Balance Sheet Metrics

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Total Assets</b>	9070	9466	10121	9890	9449	9420	9231	8997	8759	9496
<b>Cash &amp; Equivalents</b>	2083	2351	2612	2618	2392	2068	2103	2221	1819	1428
<b>Accounts Receivable</b>	1062	1041	981	1007	1070	1327	1574	1355	1230	
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	4046	4059	4006	3917	3869	8517	9723	9307	8798	9310
<b>Accounts Payable</b>	8175	8525	9017	8590	8044	1130	719	565	602	501
<b>Long-Term Debt</b>	535	556	639	600	607	2786	3034	3434	3229	3067
<b>Shareholder's Equity</b>	3583	4029	4213	3720	3216	902	-491	-310	-40	187
<b>D/E Ratio</b>	895	941	1105	1300	1405	3.09	-6.17	-11.08	-81.75	16.44

## Profitability & Per Share Metrics

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Return on Assets</b>	13.7%	11.1%	8.2%	8.5%	8.7%	2.7%	-6.0%	9.3%	11.9%	8.2%
<b>Return on Equity</b>	157.8%	111.8%	78.1%	70.9%	61.9%	21.9%	-271.2%			1012.0%
<b>ROIC</b>	27.9%	21.7%	15.5%	16.5%	17.4%	6.1%	-17.9%	30.1%	33.5%	23.1%
<b>Shares Out.</b>	619	572	552	522	502	482	459	441	418	401
<b>Revenue/Share</b>	8.66	9.33	9.90	10.45	10.61	10.99	11.81	12.30	12.28	11.65
<b>FCF/Share</b>	1.60	1.51	1.51			1.65	1.21	1.06	1.83	1.74

Note: All figures in millions of U.S. Dollars unless per share or indicated otherwise.

### Disclaimer

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