

Deloitte's Scope

An Interview with Joe Echevarria, Chief Executive Officer, Deloitte LLP

EDITORS' NOTE Joe Echevarria joined the Deloitte U.S. Firms in 1978 and became an audit partner in 1988. Since that time, he has held a wide range of leadership positions, most recently as U.S. Managing Partner-Operations. As part of his current role, Echevarria chairs the U.S. Executive, is a member of the U.S. Board, the Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited (DTTL) Executive and DTTL Executive. Echevarria frequently speaks to influential media such as CNBC, Fox Business, The Wall Street Journal, and Reuters about the U.S. Economy and business trends, professional services, and the audit profession. He was a panelist for the 2012 White House Forum on Women and the Economy and a keynote speaker at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Annual Capital Market Summit. He earned his bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Miami, where he serves on the Board of Trustees and chairs the Business School's Board of Overseers.



Joe Echevarria

COMPANY BRIEF Deloitte is the brand under which 180,000 dedicated professionals through a global network, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited (DTTL), collaborate to provide audit, consulting, financial advisory, risk management, and tax services to select clients. Deloitte LLP is the member firm of DTTL in the United States. Deloitte LLP (www.deloitte.com) does not itself provide services to clients but coordinates the activities of its following subsidiaries: Deloitte & Touche LLP; Deloitte Consulting LLP; Deloitte Financial Advisory Services LLP; and Deloitte Tax LLP.

What is the state of the global economy today and how has Deloitte prepared for the near future?

The global economy is making progress despite lingering problems and ongoing policy debates. Growth is not yet what we would wish, but there are reasons to be optimistic about next year.

At Deloitte, we continually refine our strategies to ensure that we are well-positioned to grow even in the face of global economic challenges. Technology advances are increasing the options for innovative business solutions and we work at staying ahead of new developments that change what clients need, what we do for them, and how we interact with them.

How have professional services firms evolved in the global marketplace?

Many companies are adopting a globally integrated business approach while placing greater emphasis on responding to local needs and cultures. This pattern of thinking globally while acting locally has created a huge opportunity for professional services organizations that can combine global reach with local expertise. A global perspective coupled with an in-depth understanding of markets around the world is valuable to companies confronting change and competition on many fronts.

Globalization requires professional services organizations to make strategic investments in cross-border delivery capabilities. Operating effectively in a connected yet diverse international environment is critical for sustained long-term growth. At Deloitte, we strive to serve our global clients with distinction and help them solve their toughest problems with seamless cross-border service. We focus on building global teams, developing our talent by providing cross-border experiences, creating global solutions for our clients, and positioning Deloitte as the trusted advisor among the most successful global companies.

How does Deloitte differentiate itself among the Big Four?

One of our primary differentiators is our scope. We offer two distinct sets of services: audit and advisory. The purpose of our audit services is to protect investors and the public interest; our key contribution is promoting trust in capital markets. With our advisory services, our purpose is to unlock growth with bold ideas and innovation, which we achieve by providing insight and analysis that build the confidence executives need to achieve strong growth. This and the fact that we serve 70 percent of the Fortune 500, as well as many units of government, gives us a holistic view of the economy and business environment, which helps us to better serve clients.

Another differentiator is our commitment to our people. As a services organization, we are only as good as our talent. An important part of our people-focused culture is professional development and training. Two years ago, we invested in Deloitte University, a leadership center near Dallas. Over 50,000 of our professionals have attended programs and classes there to date. This concentration on cultivating tomorrow's leaders is a central component of Deloitte's culture and why we are different.

How important is innovation to Deloitte's success?

At Deloitte, innovation creates value for our clients and stakeholders in ways that break existing trade-offs, allowing them to do something that previously was difficult or impossible. These breakthroughs are sometimes achieved one step at a time and sometimes in great leaps; and I believe big ideas can come from anywhere, so we are deliberately open to all types and sources of innovation. We have dedicated innovation groups in each of our major lines of business, as well as a technology-intensive infrastructure, which includes an internal microblogging platform that facilitates the kinds of informal interactions that can't be designed, only encouraged. This allows innovation at Deloitte to spring from anywhere and take root everywhere.

Does your corporate responsibility need to align with your business and how do you engage your employees in these efforts?

Our collective societal impact is not only aligned with our business – it's embedded in who we are as an organization. Corporate citizenship is among our core beliefs. Our mantra is, "making a difference by doing what we do best" to make America stronger and the world a better place.

We deliver this through multiple means, from skills-based volunteerism to cash philanthropy to our work via the Deloitte Foundation to helping our clients craft sustainable value chain strategies. Our commitment is demonstrated by being a leading voice for "A Billion+Change" to promote support of nonprofits by corporate America.

Applying our skills and resources in the areas in which we excel enables us to drive social innovation, deliver meaningful and measurable outcomes, and instill great pride in our people.

What are your key priorities for Deloitte as you look to the future?

First, we are committed to consistently building upon the quality and integrity of our work. Innovation is essential. At Deloitte, we continually update our thinking and service delivery methods to ensure that we have a significant positive impact on capital markets and business performance, and thereby make America stronger.

Second, collaboration is increasingly important to ensuring business success. At Deloitte, we are focused on our work with not just clients in the business community, but government, nonprofits, and communities.

Lastly, we are dedicated to recruiting talented people because we depend on skilled talent for our future competitiveness. Part of this strategy is investing in our current talent as well. ●