

Delivering Value

An Interview with Brian L. Duffy,
Co-President, Greenberg Traurig, LLP



Brian L. Duffy

EDITORS' NOTE Brian Duffy previously served as Chair of the firm's 600-member Global Litigation Department from 2009 to 2013. He focuses his practice on trial and appellate work in the class action, employment, energy, commercial contract, and product liability areas, serving as national, regional, and local counsel in high-profile cases. He represents public and privately held entities and their principals in complex business-related disputes arising from both internal and external sources. Duffy focuses on a broad array of industries including consumer goods and retail, food processing and restaurants, and energy and natural resources.

What has made Greenberg Traurig such a success?

It is the culture and the way we interact with each other. We are all focused on delivering great value and service to our clients, and we like each other and recognize that it is a privilege to be of service to our clients, as well as to one another.

How do you define what value means? Can you show that it is not just about price but things like client service?

Price is one part of it but it is also about service. This includes a commitment to meeting the needs of the client from a responsiveness standpoint, and having the kind of business judgment that allows us to figure out how to help clients achieve their goals – this is the sole reason we exist.

It is also about acknowledging economic realities. In some cases, the value equation is more heavily weighted towards price and in other cases, the value equation is more heavily weighted towards service and expertise.

Do you classify the firm as mid-size and are you competing at all levels with boutique firms?

Size is largely immaterial to clients, so it is not a way we define ourselves, nor would we say that size has a value in and of itself.

We need to have sufficient strength, expertise, and geographic reach to meet client needs. It is the only reason to have an organization of this size.

We compete with the other global firms because our core clientele need the abilities and skills that our lawyers have.

How do you balance your managerial duties with the day-to-day client interaction?

When one is in the arena, he knows how tough it is to get hired, to meet the expectations of the client, and to figure out the economics that work for the client, so it makes him a better leader.

If all I did was law firm management, the risk would be losing that connection to both clients and lawyers, and there is nothing more important for a law firm than talent. When I'm out there representing clients, I don't lose track of that.

I work for my partners and our job is to work for our shareholders and help them be successful in representing great clients.

Has the complexity of this work dramatically changed?

In litigation, clients are saying they want a high level of expertise in a particular subject matter or area. To meet that expectation as a law firm, we need to have the next hot area covered with people who have that level of expertise. Over the past 15 years, we have been seeing more specialized representation.

In addition, the profession has been dramatically changed by technology and that is accelerating which, at day's end, is a great thing. Anything that allows us to deliver better service and a better price is something we should embrace. ●

A Global Practice

An Interview with Patricia Menéndez-Cambó,
Vice President, Chair, Global Practice and Global Corporate & Securities Practice, Greenberg Traurig, LLP



Patricia Menéndez-Cambó

EDITORS' NOTE Patricia Menéndez-Cambó is also Co-Chair of the Global Energy & Infrastructure Practice, and a member of the firm's Executive Committee. Prior to assuming the leadership of the firm's Global Practice Group, she headed the firm's Latin American Practice.

In leading within so many parts of the firm, how do you balance your time?

Although I represent clients from around the world, my primary focus is on European transactions with an emphasis on deals involving companies from Spain and the Americas. I assist clients primarily with mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, and corporate transactions, as well as cross-border financings and capital markets matters, serving as lead counsel on numerous first-time cross-border transactions.

Would you provide a description of Greenberg Traurig's Global Practice?

Our multidisciplinary team has wide-ranging experience representing U.S. and international clients who do business in Latin America, the Iberian Peninsula, Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Europe, etc., as well as advising global clients on business ventures in the United States. Our experience throughout the regions enables us to offer clients market-specific local knowledge and resources. Our team includes lawyers who have been chief legal officers at major multinational companies and who have spent years solving real-world problems worldwide.

What are the strengths of Greenberg Traurig's Global Energy & Infrastructure Practice?

We have the capability to bring together a multidisciplinary team of professionals from across the firm to assist clients with a broad range of project finance and infrastructure development opportunities, whether those exist in the U.S. or around the world. The Global Energy & Infrastructure team advises energy companies, utilities, project developers, investors, regulators, government entities, and other industry participants on key issues and challenges affecting their businesses.

How important is it to maintain that client interaction even with all of your management responsibilities?

I remain actively involved in the strategy and operations of my clients' business, providing practical solutions to their business problems and serving as a catalyst for launching, growing, and maintaining successful businesses. This is a role I have played throughout my career in different settings. I previously served as Subdirectora General for Telefónica S.A. and General Counsel to a number of their subsidiaries and affiliates, assisting them with global expansion. During my tenure as in-house counsel, I was also a Director for a number of entities within the Telefónica Group throughout Latin America, Europe, and Asia.

I have managed to combine my professional success with my personal passion for supporting the growth and advancement of Hispanic women lawyers. At the firm, I led the development of a "role model" program throughout the Americas aimed at partnering today's women leaders with members of the next generation. The program focuses on closing the economic gender gap and improving social norms by establishing a network of role models for women in the Americas.

Additionally, I have been an active member of the World Economic Forum's Gender Parity group, which is committed to promoting women's leadership and gender parity worldwide. Recently, I was recognized with the "Outstanding Contribution to Gender Diversity" award as part of the 2014 Chambers USA Women in Law Awards. I truly enjoy working in the U.S. and internationally to raise awareness of the issues affecting women lawyers. It is critical that the next generation of young women receive the mentoring and educational opportunities they need in the workplace to maximize their future leadership potential. ●