Women in Technology & Data Awards 2020

Reference data professional of the year

Louise Green, Bureau van Dijk, a Moody's Analytics Company

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When you've spent 30 years at the same company, you must be doing something right. That's how long Louise Green has spent at company information provider Bureau van Dijk, steering its marketing activities, first for the UK market, and now as managing director, with a global remit for its products.

Green joined the vendor as one of its first UK employees. Then, BvD was selling data on CD-ROMs, which she says was "revolutionary" at the time. Now, as part of Moody's Analytics, the vendor's products cover more than 366 million companies (up from 60 million 10 years ago) and 325 million company executives.

Over that 30 year period, Green points to two trends that have contributed to the company's growth: first, technical advances that allow for far greater export and integration of data, and the creation of identifiers that allow users to create company-level views; and second, the globalization of data. Whereas company data used to be domestic by market, the vendor created regional and global datasets to reflect a company's global presence via its supply chain, partners, and customers.

Before BvD, Green worked for a financial analyst, gathering data from official sources on construction companies. "So when I interviewed at BvD, I understood the product because it was what I would have wanted," she says. Her first three years at the vendor were in sales, where she came to understand the importance of working closely with clients—something she says its salespeople still excel at, actively providing feedback to drive product development. "The culture here is that we get excited about the things clients can do with our data," she adds.

During the 2017 purchase of BvD by Moody's Analytics, Green was "privileged" to be part of the team charged with representing BvD in the acquisition and integration and understanding what Moody's brought to the table. For Green personally, this translated to a bigger role, and leading last year's launch of its Compliance Catalyst 2 product, which helps firms strengthen their third-party due diligence and risk assessments, reflecting the evolving market's need for a more scalable compliance platform.

Now, Green is excited about the potential for artificial intelligence (AI) to help evolve BvD's platforms further. "There is always appetite for more data, and higher-quality data. We're constantly striving to reduce false positive results, and AI is going to make a big difference around speeding up the interpretation of data. We're about helping people make better decisions and work more efficiently."

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Winners' Circle: Louise Green, Bureau van Dijk

Searching for the Right Answers

Louise Green, managing director for marketing and communications at Bureau van Dijk*, won the reference data professional category for the second successive year at this year's Women in Technology and Data Awards. She speaks to Victor Anderson about her clients' need for the "right" answers, her achievements during her 30-year career at the firm, and the positive changes she has seen towards women and minority groups during her time in the industry.

Q What does your day-to-day role at Bureau van Dijk entail?

Louise Green, managing director, marketing and communications, Bureau van Dijk: I lead the marketing and communications at the firm, and part of that includes knowledge management and e-learning.

Q You must have seen some changes across the industry during your three decades at the company?

Green: Yes, the entire industry has changed—it was in fledgling form when I joined. We were selling data on CD-ROMs. Some people didn't even have CD-ROM drives at the time!

Q What are you most proud of that you brought to Bureau van Dijk during your time at the company?

Green: I'm proud that I was part of the team involved in the sale/acquisition of Bureau van Dijk to Moody's and the subsequent integration into the Moody's Analytics business. Having joined Bureau van Dijk as a startup, and then seeing it being such a significant acquisition and contribution to Moody's, has been immensely rewarding. There's still so much to learn and achieve and it's a great privilege to have been part of such a successful journey.

Q What are the most acute challenges facing your customers right now with respect to your remit? What are you hearing from them?

Green: Our Orbis entity database is used for lots of different business challenges, so customers' needs vary. I think a big challenge for our clients is how they can make better decisions, which we support by giving them high-quality data. They are also interested in getting a single-entity view—they want scale of data and unique identifiers. And when they are doing things like onboarding know-your-customer (KYC) and anti-money laundering (AML), they want to reduce the number of false positive results from their screening as much as possible.

Q How does Orbis help in that regard?

Green: It's a balance: Our customers want to look at the detail and be rigorous in their screening, but the more detail you look for, the more results you get. The reality is that you only want the "right" answers. We plug Orbis into solutions we've created that we call catalysts. We have one called Compliance Catalyst, which we reworked last year, and we've done a lot of work around trying to reduce false positives. Part of that is improving the accuracy of the algorithms and models [in Compliance Catalyst]. We also employ artificial intelligence and machine learning in those models so they can learn from when false positives crop up, particularly around adverse news associated with companies and people.

Louise Green

Q Did you benefit from a mentor or sponsor who helped you with your career development in what is still a male-dominated industry?

Green: I've been very fortunate that since becoming part of Moody's—we were acquired in August 2017—I've been involved with the Moody's Senior Women's Leadership Forum. Within that there are lots of mentoring and opportunities to meet senior people in the organization. The forum also offers coaching and face-to-face teaching. Last year, I attended the Women's Leadership Forum, which is part of Harvard Business School's Executive Education Program, which was also inspirational. I'm also involved with a program where senior woman help develop high-potential women in the organization, which is an opportunity to keep learning too.

Q Have you noticed much of a change across the industry in terms of gender equality and equal opportunities for minority groups?

Green: Well, it's great having things like these awards that recognize women in the industry. In the marketing industry, as in the information industry, there are more women [than other parts of the capital markets], although I would still like to see more women in senior roles. But I do think there is increased awareness that women are here, we're at the table, and we want to be part of the senior leadership. I'm pleased to see that there is increased awareness that it's not for women to change to become part of that conversation, but for workplaces to adapt. I'm a big fan of Michelle King's research, which shows that women don't need to be fixed or do things differently—it's the environments that need to change, and both men and women will benefit from these changes. **wt**

* Bureau van Dijk is a subsidiary of Moody's Analytics.

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