



Mechanical Engineering
Academy of Distinguished Alumni

Royce J. Holland, Jr.
Distinguished Mechanical Engineer, 2006

BSME, The University of Texas at Austin, 1971
MSME, University of Pennsylvania, 1975

Chief Executive Office (Retired)
Masergy Communications

Royce Joseph Holland was born December 29, 1948 in Fort Worth, Texas. He graduated from Grandview High School in 1967 as class valedictorian. His passion for understanding “how things work” led him to Austin and The University of Texas. He was a member of Tau Beta Pi and received his BS degree in mechanical engineering in 1971.

Royce accepted his first engineering job with Westinghouse’s energy division. Realizing his potential, the company paid for his advanced degree. Balancing work and school, he earned his Master’s in mechanical engineering from the University of Pennsylvania in 1975.

Royce left Westinghouse in 1974 to broaden his engineering experience with positions at Morrison-Knudsen, Energy Factors, and Kiewit. After 15 years engineering, developing and financing power generating facilities, Royce and a Kiewit colleague convinced Kiewit to invest in the fledgling competitive telecommunications created by the 1984 divestiture of AT&T.

MFS Communications, Inc. was among the first competitive local telecommunication providers in the U.S. As co-founder, president and chief operating officer, Royce grew the business to serve 52 metropolitan areas in North America, Europe and Asia. In 1993, he was appointed by President George H.W. Bush to the National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee. In 1996, with the Internet still in its infancy, MFS was acquired by WorldCom for \$14.3B.

Royce is widely regarded as a telecom pioneer. During his tenure at MFS Communications, he advocated for sweeping telecommunications regulatory reforms to foster broader competition. His vision and tireless

efforts were ultimately realized when President Bill Clinton signed the Telecommunications Act of 1996 into law. Royce helped secure provisions in the Act, which threw open local phone markets for competition.

In 1997, he co-founded competitive local exchange carrier Allegiance Telecom Inc., where he went on to serve as chairman and CEO until its sale to XO Communications in 2004. From 1998 to 2000, he served as chairman of the Association for Local Telecommunications Services. In 1999, he was appointed by Governor George W. Bush to the E-Government Task Force and subsequently served as a member of the Bush/Cheney presidential transition team from 2000 to 2001.

In 2006, he was hired to turn around competitive local exchange carrier McLeod USA, making the company vibrant and successfully selling the company to PAETEC in January 2008. After the sale of McLeod USA, Royce accepted the chief executive officer position at Masergy Communications, an innovative, next-generation service provider where he had been a board member since 2005.

Royce was named Distinguished Mechanical Engineer in the Academy of Distinguished Alumni in 2006. The university provided him the foundation for his over 40 years of experience in the telecommunications, energy, and construction industries. Royce has mentored countless colleagues and provided guidance as a board member to a variety of global technology companies.

Royce retired in 2014 and now lives in Dallas with his wife, Sue. He has two grown children and one grandchild. His daughter, Andrea, and her husband, James, as well as son, David, and his wife, Nicole, are all engineers.