



Hallmark: Cards for All Occasions

Listening Questions 1:

1. How much revenue did Hallmark Cards earn in 2014?
2. Why did the Hall brothers start selling cards with envelopes?
3. What did the Hall brothers decide to do in 1915?
4. What was the innovative way they displayed their greeting cards?

Listening Questions 2:

1. How many new or redesigned greeting cards does Hallmark produce each year?
2. What is a "Hallmark Holiday"?
3. How many full-time employees does Hallmark have?
4. Who is Donald J. Hall Jr.?

Transcript 1:

Hallmark Cards is well-known for being the largest greeting card manufacturer in the US. It had \$3.8 billion of revenue in 2014.

The company's history dates back to 1910, when Joyce Hall moved to Kansas City with 2 boxes full of picture postcards. He was only 18 years old at the time and he made money by selling the postcards. His brother Rollie joined him in his business, but within 5 years, they noticed that postcard sales were declining. In response, they started selling valentines and Christmas cards with envelopes, which were more private than postcards.

After a fire destroyed their office and inventory in 1915, they decided to buy a printing press so they could manufacture their own products. The Hall brothers innovated the way greeting cards are displayed by displaying them on tiered racks instead of in drawers. One year, after they had sold out their solid-colored wrapping paper, they started selling fancy French envelope lining as wrapping paper. The linings quickly sold out and the Hall brothers started printing their own decorated wrapping paper.

The greeting cards with envelopes, the card displays, and wrapping paper are all still part of the modern Hallmark business.



Transcript 2:

Now, in the US, Hallmark products are sold through more than 30,000 retail outlets. The company produces about 10,000 new or redesigned greeting cards each year and its products are distributed in 100 countries and 30 languages around the world.

Beyond greeting cards and wrapping paper, Hallmark also sells books, decorations, toys, Christmas tree ornaments, and more. It sells greeting cards for so many occasions that the term "Hallmark Holiday" was created. Hallmark Holidays are holidays that are considered to exist primarily for commercial purposes, like selling greeting cards, instead of a traditional or historical event.

As of 2015, the company had 10,500 full-time employees and nearly 20,000 part-time employees worldwide. Donald J. Hall Jr., the grandson of founder Joyce Hall, is the President and CEO of Hallmark. His father Donald J. Hall is the Chairman of the Board for Hallmark.