



**Hasbro: Toys for Everyone**

**Listening Questions 1:**

1. Where did the name *Hasbro* come from?
2. What did Hasbro sell before it sold toys?
3. Mr. Potato Head was the first toy to do what?
4. Why were G.I. Joe toys called "action figures"?

**Listening Questions 2:**

1. In the 80s, how did Hasbro market the G.I. Joe and Transformers toy lines?
2. Other than G.I. Joe and Transformers, what are 2 brands that Hasbro controls?
3. What was Hasbro's net revenue in 2013?
4. Where is Hasbro's revenue growing faster: developed economies or emerging economies?

## Transcript 1:

It's almost impossible to go to a toy store and not see products from Hasbro. It is one of the biggest toy companies in the world and it started in 1923.

The company started as Hassenfeld Brothers and the name was later shortened to Hasbro. It was founded by brothers Henry and Hillel Hassenfeld in Providence, Rhode Island, USA. Although it is a major toy company now, it originally sold textile remnants and later sold school supplies. Hasbro sold its first toys, doctor and nurse kits, in the 40s.

In 1952, Hasbro launched its first hit toy, Mr. Potato Head. Mr. Potato Head was the first toy to ever be advertised on TV and the toy line has been in production for over 60 years.

Hasbro made another major innovation in 1964 when it launched G.I. Joe, the first toy to be called an "action figure." G.I. Joe toys were 12-inch tall figures that looked like American military men. Hasbro called them "action figures" because they thought boys would not want to play with "dolls."



## Transcript 2:

Over the decades, Hasbro continued to innovate and acquire other companies. In the 80s, the company used animated series to help drive demand for its toy lines, in particular G.I. Joe and Transformers. Hasbro and other companies continue to use this marketing tactic to sell toys to kids.

In 1984, Hasbro acquired the board game company Milton Bradley and in the early 90s, it acquired Tonka, Parker Brothers, Kenner, and Nomura Toys. Hasbro now controls major brands such as Play-Doh, Nerf, My Little Pony, Monopoly, Transformers, and G.I. Joe. It also has major licensing agreements to make toys for Star Wars, Disney, and Marvel.

2013 was the 6<sup>th</sup> straight year that Hasbro had over \$4 billion in net revenue. Just under half of that revenue, 49%, came from the US and Canada. Although the majority of revenue comes from developed economies, Hasbro's revenue growth is stronger in emerging markets than in developed ones, 11% compared to 1% over the last 5 years.