

## Company of the Month: HMV

HMV is the UK's premier retailer of music, videos and computer games, with over 75 years of trading history and more than a 100 stores around the country.



The HMV brand, made famous by the instantly recognisable dog and trumpet trademark, has also been successfully exported around the rest of the world, with a further 200 stores in the USA, Canada, Australia, Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Germany and Ireland.

For the whole period of its trading history HMV had been a part of the EMI Group, but in March 1998 it was sold to form a new retail concern, the HMV Media Group – which also comprised of Waterstones and Dillons bookstores.

### In the beginning

The story of HMV as a retail brand began in July 1921, when the renowned British composer, Sir Edward Elgar, officially opened the HMV store at 363 Oxford Street in London. The store was the first to meet the growing demand for recorded music.

### The early years

No other record retailer can claim such a significant role in shaping the way music progressed from concert hall to the home. HMV also played an important part in the new youth culture that grew from the rock 'n' roll explosion. For example, when Beatles manager, Brian Epstein, visited the store to have more demo tapes made in its recording studio, it was Jim Foy, one of the HMV technicians, that alerted EMI's George Martin, the Beatles' legendary producer; the rest is history.

In the early years HMV was THE name in music retailing, and the sixties was a period of growth when fifteen new stores were opened in Greater London and the South East, then again, in the seventies, when a further twenty stores were opened around the rest of the UK.

With the arrival of video and, more recently, computer games, the sizes of new HMV stores have been growing, increasing the demand for trading space. In 1998 HMV opened its flagship store at 150 Oxford Street in London. At 50,000 sq. feet of trading space, the Guinness Book of World Records at the time listed it as the world's largest record store.

HMV continues to expand, not only in the UK, but around the rest of the world.

### **Interesting fact**

HMV stands for His Master's Voice – referring to the Jack Russell dog listening to his master's voice coming out of the gramophone trumpet, the symbol of the company.

For more information on HMV, go to the HMV website at <http://www.hmv.co.uk>