



Since Ryman was established in 1893 it has become a household name; recognised for its quality stationery products, value, reliability and famous for customer service. With a multi-channel and nationwide chain of 240 stores, Ryman is the high street's market-leading specialist stationery retailer. Turnover for the group is more than £140 million.

**Market**

Building on its longstanding history of stationery product innovation and customer service, Ryman combines high street accessibility with a much extended range of products available online and through in-store ordering for next day delivery. Targeting business, home office and consumer stationery markets, Ryman's range extends to more than 20,000 items, supported with newly introduced business services including DHL Servicepoints. In addition, Ryman offers a dedicated business account with optional credit facilities and bulk discounting.



Despite recent difficult trading conditions, the UK market for personal and office stationery remains relatively constant. According to Key Note research, it is valued at just over £3 billion, made up primarily of core products such as

paper, writing instruments, filing and storage solutions. Digital storage, home printing and social categories are experiencing growth, as are security products such as shredders, tamper proof ink and forged note identification equipment, fuelled by rising consumer concern of identity theft. In 2008 the banking crisis generated marked growth in home safes and cashboxes.

Due to the wide appeal of stationery, Ryman has a broad spectrum of competitors ranging from electrical retailers to supermarkets as well as more traditional stationery retailers such as WHSmith, Viking and Staples.

**Product**

Ryman sells a wide range of stationery and office supplies, from writing equipment, paper and filing solutions to office furniture and technology, including large capacity external hard drives, A3 colour printers and a wide range of own-brand remanufactured, compatible and high capacity ink cartridges.

As a specialist stationer, Ryman is able to offer products not normally found in general stationery stockists, such as grades, colours and sizes of products to suit many specific needs. Ryman continually strives to be first to market with innovative new stationery products. A full business service is provided in a number of stores, including DHL Servicepoints, photocopying, binding, laminating, bulk printing and business and personalised stationery. Self-service photocopying is also available in most stores. In addition, business account holders are offered a credit facility which combines the benefits of bulk pricing and convenience of



Theo Paphitis, Chairman, Ryman Limited

delivery for large orders with the flexibility of visiting any of its stores for smaller top-up purchases.

**Achievements**

Ryman continues to show strong performance in the stationery sector; since 1995 the business has increased fourfold and today, Ryman has a turnover in excess of £140 million. Not only diversifying into new product areas as the market changes, Ryman's success can also be attributed to consistent investment in its people, its store estate, information technology, warehousing and distribution.

In the last year, Ryman continued to follow a robust store opening programme with the most recent launch on Cheapside in the City of London in November 2009. Ryman has also maintained its refurbishment programme with over half the chain receiving significant shop floor improvements during 2009.

The Ryman website and online business has recently undergone a major transformation in preparation for the next generation of multichannel retailing. Furthermore, Ryman has continued to build on the benefits of the integration of three separate stationery businesses – Partners, Stationery Box and Ryman – into one national chain, implementing state-of-the-art store planning software to improve stock control and optimise on shelf presentation.

**Recent Developments**

It's not only the Ryman product offering that is driven by innovation and improvement but the business itself is in the midst of an initiative to lessen its impact on the environment by working closely with the Carbon Trust. Theo Paphitis, chairman of Ryman, has fronted a major campaign for the Trust, publicising its loan scheme to businesses.



In product development, Ryman is committed to growing its range of products using new technology, recycled paper and materials from sustainable forests. On the shop floor, meanwhile, biodegradable carrier bags have been introduced which, due to their light weight, have a smaller carbon footprint than the equivalent sized paper bag. A reusable carrier bag made from non-woven polypropylene is also available.

The company's warehouse, packaging and logistics operations compress and recycle cardboard and plastic waste, while the Ryman delivery fleet uses Euro 4 vehicles to reduce carbon emissions and developments in eco-friendly fuels are monitored. In addition, all Ryman suppliers must comply with guidelines from the Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code.



**Promotion**

Ryman's promotional strategy rests on its consistent 'value for money' offering across its ranges. Multi-purchase discounts are made available on key lines and special items, while price-led promotional activity features heavily during seasonal consumer peaks such as 'Back to School' and Christmas.

Charity work is a central part of the Ryman culture and includes Ryman's support of Comic Relief in 2009 which is being repeated in 2010 through an official partnership with Sport Relief, an initiative of Comic Relief.

For the Academic Year 2009/10 Ryman is sponsoring the Young Enterprise Company Scheme Marketing Award for the first time,

providing inspiration and encouraging the development of entrepreneurial skills in 3,000 schools across the UK. Ryman continues to sponsor the Ryman Football League, maintaining visibility for the brand in the south of England.

**Brand Values**

Acknowledged as a specialist in its field, Ryman has developed and nurtured its standards of quality, value, reliability and service over 115 years, building and retaining a loyal customer base. Ryman is proud of its record of investing in its people, training them to be able to deliver a high standard of service, backed by expert knowledge of Ryman's range of products and their applications.

[ryman.co.uk](http://ryman.co.uk)

1893	1970s	1995	2001	2007	2009
Henry J Ryman opens his first store on Great Portland Street, London.	The family business is sold. Over the next 20 years its owners include Burton Group, Terence Conran, Jennifer d'Abo and Pentos.	Ryman is acquired by Chancerealm Limited (later known as Ryman Group Limited), in which Theo Paphitis is the controlling shareholder.	Ryman acquires Partners the Stationers, comprising 86 stores.	Ryman acquires 61 Stationery Box stores, which are rebranded to Ryman by October 2008.	Ryman partners with Red Nose Day 2009 raising more than £500,000 for Comic Relief through staff fundraising and the sale of exclusive product.



**Things you didn't know about Ryman**

- Ryman recycles more than 150,000 cartridges every year on behalf of its customers. Many of its own-brand cartridges also use remanufactured materials.
- Ryman opened its first stationery shop in 1893; sales were £50 in the first week.
- Ryman sells two million pens every year; enough ink to draw along the length of the Great Wall of China almost 300 times.
- At present there are 27 members of staff who have been with Ryman for more than 25 years, 49 members of staff who have celebrated at least 20 years' service and 118 members of staff who have been with the company for more than 15 years. Ryman's longest serving member of staff retired in 2009 following an impressive 53 years of service.