



Greeting Card Association

## FACT SHEET

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### THE FACTS ABOUT GREETING CARDS

After a long day at work, you arrive at home and grab the mail. You flip through the pile of bills until that one piece of mail captures your attention – you stop flipping. Unlike the rest, this envelope is not legal-sized with your name and address typed neatly behind a clear window. It is handwritten and says that someone took the time to let you know that they were thinking about you. It feels good.

It seems simple, but yes, a greeting card makes you feel loved or appreciated – we have all experienced it. The majority of Americans agree traditional methods of personal communication, such as greeting cards, beat out their point-and-click counterparts, such as text messaging and e-mail, by making people feel more special, according to a recent study\* on behalf of the Greeting Card Association (GCA).

#### The Power of the Card

- A single greeting card has the power to touch people in a special way. For years, the practice of sending and receiving cards has been integral in **keeping family and friends connected**.
- While traditionally cards have been sent to connect on seasonal occasions, such as Christmas, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day and Easter, today **there are cards for every relationship, every occasion, every ethnicity, every age group, every gender and every special interest group**.

#### The Average Mailbox

- **90 percent of all U.S. households participate in the greeting card category**, purchasing at least one greeting card per year. Those households on average purchase 30 individual cards per year.
- **The average person receives more than 20 cards per year**, about one-third of which are birthday cards.

#### Deliver the Letter ... the Sooner the Better

- **Nine out of 10 Americans look forward to receiving personal letters and greeting cards** because cards allow them to keep in touch with friends and family and make them feel that they are important to someone else.
- Personal greeting cards and letters are the primary types of mail **people most look forward to receiving, opening first and reading thoroughly**.

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### **Popularity Contest**

- The **most popular card-sending holiday is Christmas**, which accounts for more than 60 percent of all individual seasonal cards sold. The next most popular holidays in order are Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Easter and Father's Day. The **most popular recipients of seasonal cards are parents**, who receive about one out of every five seasonal cards.
- The **most popular everyday card is the birthday card**, which accounts for 60 percent of all individual everyday cards sold. The next most popular everyday cards in order are anniversary, get well, friendship and sympathy. The **most popular recipients of everyday cards are friends**, who receive about one out of every three everyday cards.

### **The Business of Greeting Cards**

- **Americans purchase nearly 7 billion greeting cards every year**, generating nearly \$7.5 billion in retail sales. Cards range in price from 38 cents to \$10, with **the average card retailing for \$2 - \$4**. Cards featuring special techniques and intricate designs are at the top of this price scale.
- There are **an estimated 3,000 greeting card publishers in America**, ranging from major corporations to small businesses. GCA members together account for approximately 95 percent of the industry market share.

\*The Emotional State of the Union survey was conducted on behalf of the GCA by Penn, Schoen & Berland Associates, Inc., a national research firm, to determine Americans' emotional connections and plans for communication. The survey of 911 adults, 18 years of age or older, was conducted in January 2004. The overall margin of error is +/- 3.3 at the 95% confidence level.

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