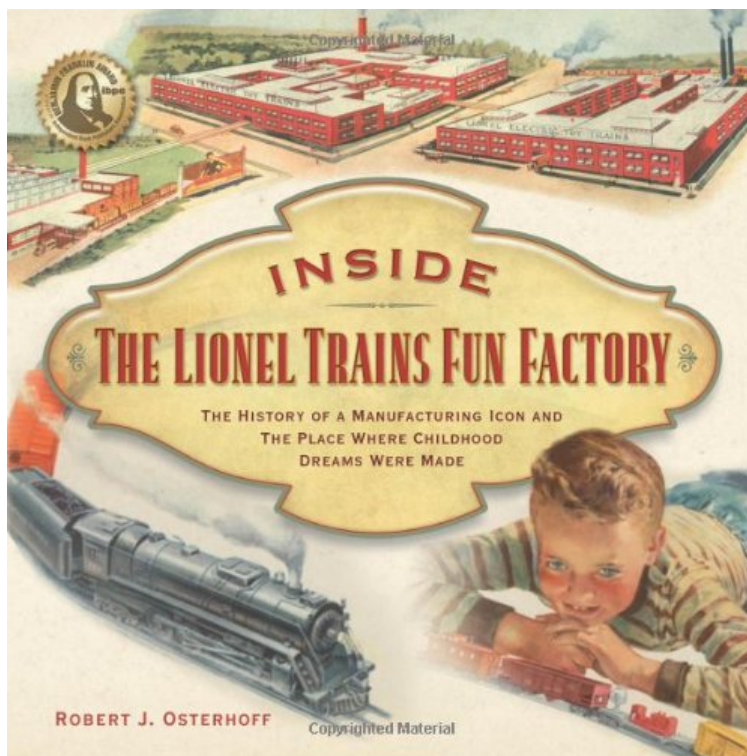




*Robert J. Osterhoff*

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(Pdf free) Inside The Lionel Trains Fun Factory: The History of a Manufacturing Icon and The Place Where Childhood Dreams Were Made

## **Inside The Lionel Trains Fun Factory: The History of a Manufacturing Icon and The Place Where Childhood Dreams Were Made**

**Robert J. Osterhoff : Inside The Lionel Trains Fun Factory: The History of a Manufacturing Icon and The Place Where Childhood Dreams Were Made** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Inside The Lionel Trains Fun Factory: The History of a Manufacturing Icon and The Place Where Childhood Dreams Were Made:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful narative style of presenting the facts about LionelBy JoeI've been a toy train buff for many a year and have done my share of reading about toy train manufacturers, primarily Lionel. Most of the historical type books (regarding the history of Lionel) are hero worshipping tripe about the founder of the company, Joshua Lionel Cowen(JLC). This scholarly and painstakingly researched book is in a class by itself. Lest you think this is a bashing of Mr. Cowen, not so. The man is a toy train founding father icon. He founded a company that for almost sixty years led the way (in sales, marketing, innovation, and manufacturing) for the toy train industry. I cant pay him a higher compliment. ButK Along the way he proved that if a big enough lie(s) is told repeatedly and no one dares question it (the present book being a refreshing exception) the lie lives on for perpetuity. Chapter 1 devotes a section to The Cowen Invention Myths. The author is kind by using the word fabricate

rather than lie. But fabricate is a euphemism for lie. Cowan did not (as he proclaimed) invent the flashlight, or electric motor, or other assorted electrical devices. What Cowen will ever be remembered for is a fact and not a fabrication/lie. I quote the author from chapter 1 of the book: What is fact is that Cowen took his miniature battery-powered electric motor, attach it to a crude flatcar and introduced the Lionel electric train. For this incredible accomplishment he deserves due credit. Amen to that by my memories of a young boy who knew there was a heaven when receiving his first Lionel train set in 1948. The demise of the original Lionel (circa 1970) may be attributed to various economics and social changes occurring during the 20th century. The author does a scholarly (and a cant put down the book interesting!) accounting of these changes that buffeted Lionel, especially from the late 50s and on. But there is another reason for the demise, not mentioned directly by the author but implied. Before proceeding with the reason I make the following statements. My main interests as a young boy/man were physics, boxing, and art. There are two physicists who had a huge impact on physics in the 20th century. They were Albert Einstein and Richard Feynman. I admired them then and still do. In the arts my admiration knows no bounds for Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo. And Rocky Marciano was my boxing hero. This leads up to my next commentary. The sales and manufacturing sides of the house were almost exclusively Jewish and Italian respectively. And very simply when you get too many of the same kind in an organization its called inbreeding. If you want to see what inbreeding can do, e.g., physical inbreeding, take a look at the English royalty. The inbreeding at Lionel was of a less obvious nature but it was there in spades. Its not just that Jews and Italians dominated. Reading Mr. Osterhoffs book makes you aware that each was one big family in the true sense of the word, i.e., blood relatives. Some were closely related, some more distantly, but relatives they were. The result is the two big happy families (!), guilty to an extreme of the think alike syndrome. The world was a changing (in spades after WW II) but they did not adjust to the changing world. And they paid the price. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in historical documentation written in a narrative style that keeps ones eyes from becoming glazed over. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great purchase!By lrpThis book is well put together and also very informative. Gives a wonderful background history that any train collector would enjoy. I purchased this for my grandson, who has always been interested in trains, for his birthday. He loves it.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good price.By TrainmanQuick delivery. Good price.

Do you like Lionel toy trains? Enjoy corporate history? Or just want to take a nostalgic journey back to your childhood?Then Inside The Lionel Trains Fun Factory: The History of a Manufacturing Icon and The Place Where Childhood Dreams Were Made is for you delivering a fascinating trip through the rise, fall and rise again of Lionel, one of the manufacturing and pop icons in modern American life. The impeccable research by Lionel historian Robert J. Osterhoff, along with hundreds of unpublished photos and images, tells the history of Lionel's trains, factories, employees and business practices from the late 19th century until today.

The experts agree, Inside The Lionel Trains Fun Factory is a must read for every toy train and manufacturing enthusiast "The toy train hobby will long be in debt to Bob Osterhoff for the outstanding research he has conducted and the many insights he has shared about Lionel, its development as a business and its growth as a manufacturer. Everyone who loves electric trains will gain immensely from reading this superb study." Roger Carp, Senior Editor Classic Toy Trains magazine and author of The World's Greatest Toy Train Maker: Insiders Remember Lionel"Phenomenal! This never-before-seen research makes vivid how a brash Joshua Lionel Cowen created the Fun Factory of the world. Consider this Volume 2 of All Aboard! that every collector needs as much as a 700E." Ron Hollander, author of All Aboard! The Story of Joshua Lionel Cowen His Lionel Train Company"Marvelous historical insight in what it takes to run a toy manufacturing company given all the challenges of wars, strikes, and corporate intrigue that Lionel's fun factories encountered over the years. Truly a masterful story of an American icon and a must read for history buffs." George J. Schmid, CEO Kiehl Engineering Co. (1972-2000)"Bob Osterhoff, a meticulous and devoted researcher, has written the definitive book on Lionel factories. I strongly recommend the book for all students of Lionel history." Bruce C. Greenberg Ph.D., President Greenberg Publishing Company (1975-1991)Lionel employees and executives from every era say Inside The Lionel Trains Fun Factory is the most accurate and enjoyable story of Lionel's many fun factories"Bob Osterhoff has written an interesting and accurate history of the Lionel factories. I know, because I was there! Starting in 1917, as a young boy I spent many Sundays at Lionel's Newark shop with my father. During my Lionel career, I played a major role in planning and construction of the plant and in the installation of new processes and equipment to meet the growth in business. Bob has captured the excitement of that period." Tom Pagano, Assistant Superintendent Parts Production and Infrastructure Maintenance The Lionel Corporation (1935-1959)"Growing up with a love for Lionel trains, it was my childhood dream come true to join The Lionel Corporation. This book recreates that dream with the most accurate and enjoyable portrayal of Lionel during my tenure at the company. Come see where childhood dreams were made." Bruce Parmett, Sales Manger The Lionel Corporation (1964-1966)"This book finally tells the Lionel story the way it actually happened: the good, the bad and the ugly. I know because I was there for many years as an officer of the company." Robert Stein, Vice President The Lionel Corporation (1965-1982)"Inside The Lionel Trains Fun Factory provides a wonderful journey into the history

of a cherished brand accurately portrayed right up to present day." Michael Braga, Regional Sales Manager Lionel L.L.C. (1972-present) -- sAbout the AuthorRobert Osterhoff, a retired executive of the Xerox Corporation, has conducted extensive international management consulting, specializing in the practices of business effectiveness, benchmarking and knowledge management. He served on the Board of Examiners of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and as Treasurer and Director of the Baldrige Foundation. A graduate of Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa, Bob received a master's degree in business administration from Rochester Institute of Technology. This is Bob's third book, having previously authored Greenberg's Guide to Lionel Paper and Collectibles and Greenberg's Guide to Lionel Prewar Parts Instruction Sheets. Bob and his wife, Laura, have three married children and six grandchildren, and they live in the St. Louis area.