

WHAT DO ALL MODEL TRAIN ENTHUSIASTS HAVE IN COMMON?

- They think N Scale is the BEST scale ever!?!?!
- They think Santa Fe is the best railroad to have ever existed!?!?!
- They think Ready-To-Run is evil!?!?!
- Actually.....
 - The only thing we have in common is we are all getting older.....

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR MODEL TRAINS & LAYOUT WHEN YOU ARE GONE?

Presented by
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WHO IS THIS GUY?

- Former VP of Marketing & Customer Service – InterMountain Railway Co.
- Volunteer – Colorado Model Railroad Museum (Special Projects)
- Estate & Donation Coordinator – Northern Colorado Model Railroad Club
- Owner / Operator – YardSaleTrains www.yardsaletrains.com
- N Scale guy & Regular Presenter
 - Future of Model Railroading
 - Getting Kids (and others) into the Hobby
 - How the Industry Works



THINGS TO COVER

- Harsh realities....
- What is the impact of not planning?
- What is the impact of planning?
- What is going to happen is not what you think – get over it.
- What should be the desired outcome?

MODEL TRAIN LAYOUTS

MODEL TRAIN LAYOUTS

- Selling a Model Train Layout.....
 - Why is it so hard?
 - First you have to ask the question – What is a Model Train Layout?



A Model Train Layout Is Somebodies Dream!

But it's not 'your' dream.....

(it's not your space, your scale, your railroad, your location.....)

MODEL TRAIN LAYOUTS

- Selling a Model Train Layout.....
 - Things that come into play.
 - Space – few folks have instant space to take a full-size layout.
 - Era/Railroad – can it match my desires.
 - Logistics – can it even be moved without intensity?
 - Costs – Is it worth that to me?
 - Harsh Reality – there is a high high probability that the layout will be disassembled and trashed.....



MODEL TRAIN LAYOUTS

- Disassembling a Model Train Layout.....
 - How is done?
 - Did you plan for this?
 - Can you plan for this? **YES!!**

- Start Now!! How does your layout come apart?
 - Do you have a layout that could be disassembled? Does anyone but you know the process?
 - Do you know it will have to be ‘sliced & diced’? Where is the best places to cut? What tools are needed?



MODEL TRAIN LAYOUTS

- Build a Plan / Create a Notebook / Leave it where it can be found (i.e. Put it on the wall next to the layout!)
- Who gets what? Are there friends, modelers, family that want parts of your layout? If so, put that in the book (presuming you like them enough...).
- How do you remove all the electronics? Where are they? What are they?
- Stripping the layout... buildings, scenery (especially trees), track (sometimes)

MODEL TRAIN LAYOUTS



- Disassembling the layout.
 - If not prepared for this, it can be overly traumatic for those left behind!
 - If not prepared for this, it can be overly traumatic for those left behind!
 - Know how this should be done for your layout – and no, we are NOT going to unscrew the 1100 screws holding it together.
 - It will be FAST, it will be LOUD, and it will be DRAMATIC.
 - No room looks sadder, more barren, more empty, and more abandoned than a room that was filled with a model train layout the day before.....
- Let those that are going to deal with this know what is going to happen!!!

MODEL TRAIN STUFF..... THE THINGS YOU HAVE

- Dealing with all the pieces.....
- What do you have?
 - Do you have an inventory? (Don't worry, no one does....)
- Break it down into Categories –
 - Engines
 - Rolling Stock
 - Structures & Scenery
 - Electronics
 - Books & Memorabilia
 - Photographs & Videos



MODEL TRAIN STUFF CATEGORIES -

- Engines
 - Probably most valuable items you have.
 - Consider (Brass, Sound, DCC, Custom, Unique, Age, Emotional).
 - Where are the boxes? Put all the boxes in a labeled box. (For extra credit throw a slip of paper in each box that tells brand of decoder, is it DCC, sound, etc.)
 - Do you want some of these to go to specific people and/or organizations? (Put that in the notebook!)

MODEL TRAIN STUFF CATEGORIES -

- Rolling Stock
 - Probably largest and least valuable items you have.
 - Consider (Brass, Sound, Custom, Unique, Age, Emotional).
 - Where are the boxes? Put all the boxes in a labeled box(s). (For extra credit throw a slip of paper in each box that tells if there is something unique – like sound cattle car, etc.)
 - Do you want some of these to go to specific people and/or organizations? (Put that in the notebook!)

MODEL TRAIN STUFF CATEGORIES -

- Structures & Scenery
 - Probably the most awkward items to deal with.....
 - Their fragile, their light, and non-train folks don't know how to deal with them well.
 - If you have a fully developed layout, many of your operators would love to have an item or two from your layout to add to their own.
 - Removing items from a layout can be tedious – put in your notebook how things are attached, it helps!
 - Used scenery elements (ground cover, flock, glue, ballast, etc.) needs to be donated – pick who you like!

MODEL TRAIN STUFF CATEGORIES -

- Electronics
 - Can be large money real fast!
 - DCC systems are not cheap. Half price for complete systems can still be \$100's of dollars.
 - Electronic add-ons also carry value-
 - Track detection, working animation from signals, scenery, tortoise switches, Arduino, Raspberry Pi, short circuit protection.
 - Do your best to list this all in the notebook! (Oh, and mention where they are located; a Sawzall will slice a booster in half with little effort!)

MODEL TRAIN STUFF CATEGORIES -

- Books & Memorabilia
 - Magazines are hard hard sale. Few people want/need them anymore.
 - Books can be a hard sale. Except in rare cases, what you paid for it will not be what you get for it – not even close.
 - Create a list, note those that are signed, special, etc.
 - If you have an extensive collection, consider specialized software – www.librarything.com
 - It's free – web-based.
 - It has an app for Smartphone.
 - You can create categories/collections. (It helps me not to buy the same book twice...)



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MODEL TRAIN STUFF CATEGORIES -

- Books & Memorabilia (continued...)
 - Railroad stuff (lanterns, plaques, builder plates, signs, artwork, paperwork, china, promotional materials, nails, switch stands, spikes, rail, timetables....)
 - This stuff is brutal to establish a value! Some of it may be one of a kind!
 - One of a kind = “you were the one that wanted it...”
 - One of a kind = “so many other people want it it would sell for stupid amounts...”
 - But if you’re looking for books & prices – a fun website that connects hundreds of independent booksellers → <https://www.alibris.com/>

MODEL TRAIN STUFF CATEGORIES -

- Photographs & Videos



<https://www.railpictures.net/photo/696317/>

Ryan Slaton - Photographer

MODEL TRAIN STUFF CATEGORIES -

- Photographs & Videos
 - Curse of the digital world.....?
 - What Do You Have?
 - Is it yours? Others? Both?
 - How Do You Have It?
 - Slides, Negatives, Digital, CDs, VHS, Other.....
 - Where Is It?
 - Who Can Get To It? How Can They Get To It?
 - Does It Have Value.....
 - Short Answer – Yes!!

MODEL TRAIN STUFF CATEGORIES -

- Photographs & Videos

BNSF 489367

GN Heritage Car



MODEL TRAIN STUFF CATEGORIES -

- Photographs & Videos (cont)
 - Document it some how!
 - Make Sure Others Know!
 - Do you have any 'last days' photographs / videos?
 - Start now documenting – at some level...
 - Where
 - When
 - Details

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO HAPPEN?

- If you don't plan on it, then I can assure you it will be everything you didn't expect.
 - The kids may rent a dumpster.....
- Those having to deal with it are going to have a large emotional toll trying to 'guess' what you would have wanted.
- Without guidance they will make mistakes.
- Be realistic
 - Don't tell them "I have over \$10,000 invested in the layout!" and leave them with the impression they must get that out of it!

I STRONGLY ENCOURAGE YOU TO PLAN

- Create a notebook that folks can find.
- Structure of your notebook does not matter (English is generally preferred).
- Document about the layout (disassemble, who gets what, locations of items)
- Document about the items (boxes, who gets what, special notes)
- Decide on a person, or persons, that can take on the effort.
- Do NOT be nebulous! “Let the kids have what they want and after that I don’t care....”
- This notebook will make it so much easier for those having to deal with it all!

NOW YOUR STUFF NEEDS TO 'DISPOSED' OF....

- Do you not care – can it just be donated? To whom, how, in what manner?
- Do you want others to receive benefit from your 'investment'?
- But if the desire is to start getting rid of items, what are some of the paths?
- Who do you they call?



SELL IT ON EBAY -



- Pros

- Access to the largest audience (global)
- Will most times obtain the highest 'gross price'
- Lots of tools, marketing, promotional items available.
- Auction style or Buy-It-Now available.

- Cons

- It is the highest cost to sell items.
- It takes effort (lots of it) – pictures, packing, shipping.
- You get to deal with a lot of strange people.



SELL IT ON FACEBOOK MARKETPLACE -

- Pros

- Access to a larger audience (if you ship), smaller if you don't.
- Set the price and list the item.
- Can be listed with a Smartphone very quickly.
- Can happen quickly.
- Cheap to do \$0 if sold locally, 5% if shipped.

- Cons

- May not obtain the best price.
- Expect to have folks that want to haggle. (they're not being rude, it's just the platform)
- Are you comfortable have people come to your house? Otherwise should arrange a meeting spot.
- Watch for scammers!



SELL IT ON AUCTIONNINJA-

- Pros
 - Access to a larger audience (if you ship), smaller if you don't - but not as 'niche'.
 - Get a good picture, short description.
 - Runs like an auction but extends with each bid.
 - Do 100-400 lots at once!
 - Can be no shipping and everyone comes to you to pick up!
- Cons
 - May not obtain the best price.
 - Cost is more than Facebook, less than eBay.
 - On 'pick-up day', you'll need help!!

NOTE – This can be done as individuals, or thru an estate sales agent.

MODEL TRAIN GARAGE SALE

- Pros

- It's a one-time event with exposure to the right customer.
- If priced right, a lot will go quickly.
- It gets things to local folks that may have known the modeler.
- Advertise to local clubs and entities.

- Cons

- This is a bit of work!
- You need to inventory it and send that out with the invites / flyers.
- You need to establish pricing.
- Figure out how to take credit cards.

SELL IT AT A TRAIN SHOW

- Pros

- It's a one-time event with exposure to the right customer.
- If priced right, a lot will go quickly.

- Cons

- This is a LOT of work!
- If it doesn't all sell (and it won't) you'll have to haul it home.
- Most shows / municipalities expect you to collect taxes.
- This is a LOT of work!

SELL IT TO A BROKER / DEALER / RESELLER -

- Pros

- One shot and it's done.
- Some will pickup and you don't even have to ship.
- It is the easiest and least traumatic.

- Cons

- May get picky about what they'll accept, so still may have stuff to deal with later.
- Will be the lowest price received.

DONATE IT TOO..... -

- Pros

- Call, pack, deliver/pickup, done.
- Tax benefits (maybe)
- Some organizations will assist.

- Cons

- Don't ask what they will do with it, you may not like the answer.....
- Accept that this is the ultimate "let it all go...." option.

AND WHAT ABOUT.....

- G-Scale –
 - Removing outdoor layouts is a whole different animal, they can be sold, but the house is generally included in the sale..... 😊
 - The other items generally process the same way.
- O-Scale –
 - If it's NOT pre-war, and/or collector items, then it processes pretty much the same way.
 - Pre-war and/or Collector items – prepare for complexities you've never even heard of.....
 - Watch for emotional attachments. (Yours / Theirs / Others / None)
- Tin Plate / Standard Gauge
 - Very very niche interest and audience.

FINALLY, GUIDE THEM TO A CLUB

- Club can provide estate assistance for passed members.
- The Estate Coordinator will work to determine what is needed and best path forward based on desires & guidance.
- Club members will be 'volunteered/voluntold' to assist.

FINALLY, GUIDE THEM TO A CLUB (CONT.)

- Things to provide –
 - Inventory Assistance – Literally the first step in most any of the processes.
 - Guidance to find pricing / valuations.
 - Assistance to with sales approaches (Garage Sales, Estate Sales, Answer Online Selling Questions, Brokers).
- Things we don't provide –
 - We don't, won't, can't sell – short of making them available to the membership for a donation.



