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BUS 545 – Social Media Marketing

Week 8 Assignment – M8A1 “Final Paper Milestone: Social Media Marketing Campaign Plan”

BUS 545 – Summer Term 1

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## **M8A1 Final Paper Milestone: Social Media Marketing Campaign Plan**

### **Selected Topic: Utilizing Social Media to Promote TT Scale**

#### **Abstract**

The submitted submission for the final paper for the BUS 545 course deals with social media and how it can be utilized to promote the model railroading scale known as “TT Scale”. TT Scale, also known by the nominal scale ratio used in most applications of 1:120, is a comparatively rare scale in North America, having been eclipsed in production scale small size metrics in the 1960s by the introduction of N scale, which has a scale ratio of 1:160. With the advent of small-scale production techniques such as 3D printing and laser etch printing, the ability to bring new followers of TT scale into the fold has improved over the last decade or so. The question remains on how to best use social media to bring TT Scale to the model railroader’s attention as well as to increase the number of active TT Scale model railroaders in North America.

#### **Introduction to TT Scale**

TT scale is a comparatively rare model railroading scale in the United States and in Canada as well but has a fairly robust following in Europe and the former Soviet Union, most notably Russia itself. At a scale ratio of 1:120, one inch on the scale model is equivalent to 120 inches on the prototype item, or simply put, 10 feet on the real prototype item. This places TT scale roughly halfway between the two most widespread model railroading scales in North America of HO Scale (1:87.1) and N Scale (1:160), making for an perfect compromise amongst the space requirements of HO Scale and the smaller size of N Scale, allowing for easier handling

and building or equipment than N Scale whilst allowing for more detail in less space compared to HO scale.

### **Discussion of Topic – A Brief History of TT Scale**

TT Scale can trace its roots back to the WWII era, when Hal Joyce, founder of the HP Products manufacturing company, an automotive engineer developed TT Scale as an alternative to the larger and more space intensive HO and OO Scales (GreenHobbyModel.com, n.d.), as well as larger scales such as S, O, and G. Compared to the models of the era in other scales, the stamped metal and printed cardstock TT Scale parts and car sides were relatively crude, but they had two advantages: they were more economical than the competition in some limited aspects to produce, as well as the space requirements for an operational model train layout were (and are) much less (Roberts, 2019), especially when contrasted to HO Scale. The introduction of smaller scales in the mid-1960s, such as N Scale by and largely annulled the size advantage that TT Scale held over larger scales such as OO Scale, S Scale, and HO Scale. This, coupled with the onset of the Vietnam War, meant that HP Products, Hal Joyce's manufacturing company, was producing war-related items rather than model trains. This was the so-called "death knell" for commercial TT Scale in the United States and Canada. The desertion of HP Products from the model railroading scene was not the end of TT Scale world-wide, though. TT Scale had by that point in time, found itself a home in Europe, particularly in East Germany and in England as well (Tri-angTT.org, n.d.). This would prove beneficial to the fans of TT Scale in North America in the future.

The accessibility of European TT Scale equipment meant that much was still available for the model railroading public at large and provided numerous modelers with track and components that could be used to scratch-build and/or kit-bash their own models in TT Scale.

With the development of home 3-D printers and improvements in home resin casting, it has become much easier for the small hobbyist to produce items in TT Scale than ever before and to sell them to the consumer as well. Coupled this with the manufacture of North American prototype TT scale locomotives and equipment by companies such as MTB, the future of TT Scale has never looked brighter, comparatively speaking.

The single biggest obstruction to the existence and growth of TT Scale as a viable model railroading scale is the overall deficiency of awareness of the scale. That is the point of this social media campaign: to spread awareness of TT Scale, and to promote TT Scale as a viable model railroading scale. The target audience of the social media campaign are of any person that has an active interest in scale model railroading, especially in scratch-building and custom work. The chief method of reaching the goal audience is to make use of social media websites, such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Secondary means of reaching the target audience would be via print media, such as model railroad related magazines and websites. Regarding the segmentation of the target consumer, the focus will be on younger model railroaders, out of the fact that there are fewer of them and their age allows for better interaction via social media in many aspects, not to mention that the younger generation of scale model railroaders are in general, the future of the hobby. There is also the fact that the younger generation of model railroaders are far more active, in general, on social media as compared to older generations of model railroaders (Lighthouse.com, n.d.).

### **Discussion of Topic – Measuring Campaign Effectiveness**

The chief metric to be used is to see how many more active TT Scale Model Railroaders join the rolls of active modelers on [www.TTnut.com](http://www.TTnut.com), the single largest TT Scale Model Railroading forum in English (TTnut.com, n.d.). Secondary metrics would include the counting of active TT

Scale Model Railroaders at model train conventions such as the National Model Railroad Association's (NMRA) National Train Show (NTS), which is held in a different location, once a year. The National Train Show is a literal showcase of model railroading from around the world. The privacy concerns of such a social media campaign of a given and small-scale scope are limited, as there will be limited data collected, primarily the name, age range, and general location of the newcomers to the TT Scale model railroading community.

Contingencies for the plan of action for the social media campaign are limited due to the small size of the TT Scale community online and consists primarily of halting the campaign and assessing what is possibly going wrong, and making corrections as needed. The campaign will likely be a recurring one, based on the success of the prior ones, the campaign will be modified to improve and augment what works best and to minimalize what does not work so well.

### **Summary**

While the model railroading community on the internet is relatively limited overall, and the online TT Scale model railroading community is even more so, there is much that can be done to help bring newcomers to the hobby and to the scale as well. Making choices based on key metrics and data points is vital, and the result is by and large going to be determined by the amount and quality of the effort going into it, as well as the accessibility of supplies as well. The plan is to advance and improve, incrementally, over time, which is a practicable goal.

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