USA Trains began producing Large Scale model trains 22 years ago with the introduction of one Santa decal in six different railroad paint schemes. You may ask yourself, how did Charles Ro take a small family-run business from one home and make it one of the world’s largest manufacturers of American prototype Large Scale Trains?

**Everett - where it all began.**

The story begins in 1972 with Charles Ro, Sr. redirecting Lionel Trains as a hobby. He saw it as a diversion from his heavy shop business which consisted of four salons and sixty hairdressers. One showcase of trains in the hairstylist store and a single phone on the wall, Lionel Trains were sold both locally and through mail-order. Mail-orders were handwritten, packed, weighed on a bathroom scale, and shipped all over the world.

The sales of Lionel Trains expanded until the mid-80’s when Lionel decided to move its production from Michigan to Mexico and did not produce any model trains for nine months. As the current stock of Lionel Trains began to dwindle, Charles Ro Supply Company, the retail operation which sold the Lionel Trains, was expanding as Lionel was back into production with its product line. In order to manage both operations, Charles and his son decided to consolidate operations “under one roof.” Both companies moved into a newly built facility at 662 Cross Street in Malden. The new, one block long building had three floors and over 30,000 square feet of space providing USA Trains with more space to produce its new products which consisted of a noisy snowplow, two-axle automobile carrier, concrete truck, and piggyback boxcar. Production was now in full gear with over ten different styles of rolling stock being produced in many different paint schemes. USA Trains began to emerge as one of the premier manufacturers of Large Scale trains.

In 1995, Charles made the decision that if USA Trains was to continue to grow, it needed the EM&G GP9 and GP9 were produced and they won the Model Railroader’s Readers’ Choice award for that year. The world had now recognized USA Trains as a leader in the manufacture of Large Scale trains. The production of additional diesel locomotive styles increased over the next few years with the introduction of the 44 Tonner, FBA and B, GP30-2, SD40-2, GP35, PA-1 and PB-1 and more recently the 36 and SD70M Mac Diesel Locomotives as well as the dcr metal Deco 1-6-0-T Steam Locomotive just being released this past year. Again, USA Trains received awards for it’s locomotives with the GP30 claiming the Readers’ Choice Award for 2002. The garden model railroader now had a variety of American prototype locomotives and road names to choose from...there was something for everyone. Oh yes, don’t forget the USA Trains slogan, “The Quality of Brass at a Plastic Price.” This says it all because all of the USA Trains locomotives are loaded with detail both for appearance and locomotive characteristics of brass models costing thousands of dollars, yet USA Trains locomotives are priced at under $200.00. No wonder they have produced so many different styles and road names – the market demands it.

As the Large Scale modeler began to run his high-detailed locomotives, there became an increased demand for locomotives designed specifically for the model railroad industry. In 1999, USA Trains was formed to produce the first line of locomotives designed specifically for the model railroad industry. USA Trains products are very detailed and include many small parts which have to be hand assembled.

4 Bay Covered Hopper. Also during this period of time, a complete trackside was being offered. At this point, the product line was quite extensive with not only a number of different styles of rolling stock but also all the paint schemes available within each style of car. The model railroader consumer now has hundreds of choices and they all are American prototypes.

In 2001, USA Trains began to produce highly detailed die-cast steam locomotives with the introduction of the World’s largest die-cast metal -- the Big Boy. This new series of locomotives was labeled the “Premier Series” and represented the most detailed, largest die-cast locomotives ever produced. The Hudson was well received in the marketplace as it was highly-detailed, durable and a smooth runner. Over the next 5 years, USA Trains added the GE Electric and the US Big Boy Steam Locomotive to the Premier Line. The GG1 can be coupled with our Streamlined Alumimum Passenger Cars to make the famous “Congressional train.” Integrate a die-cast GGG and two three foot long aluminum cars each illuminated running on your layout...that’s a 40 foot long train. The Big Boy is almost five feet long by itself and weighs about 45 lbs. It is the largest die-cast locomotive ever produced.