



## The Ford Century: Ford Motor Company and the Innovations that Shaped the World

By Russ Banham

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### **The Ford Century: Ford Motor Company and the Innovations that Shaped the World** By Russ Banham

No technological achievement has altered our world more than the introduction of the automobile into every element of our society, and no single company has been more influential in that achievement than Ford Motor Company. For the past one hundred years, we have used automobiles for our livelihood, for travel and recreation, for delivery and transport—thanks, in large part, to the vision of Henry Ford and the three successive generations of Ford leaders that have furthered his legacy.

This hundredth anniversary book is a fascinating, highly visual look into the history of an American icon—a company with a household name that has been a part of the fabric of our nation's history. Ford's story is one of inventions, personalities, legendary vehicles, setbacks, and successes, all intertwined with the most challenging and innovative century in American history.

*The Ford Century* represents the visual history of the man, the machine, and the company that changed the world. From the automotive assembly line to the V-8 engine; from the affordable everyman's car to the creation of a network of national highways, from the Arsenal of Democracy in World War II to today's global economy—it's all here in the most compelling and comprehensive book on Henry Ford and the Ford legacy.

With more than five hundred full-color and archival images, an unflinching, thoroughly researched text, and many special features, this book spans a complete century of goings-on at this archetypal corporation. *The Ford Century* covers all of the well-known subjects—the Model T, Edsel Ford, the famed Rouge Complex—plus exciting unreleased vehicles, compelling interviews, and surprising insights that are possible only with the unparalleled access granted to the producers of this book.

Featuring a lively, personality-centered text and stunning images *The Ford Century* is a compelling read for car buffs, industry watchers, and connoisseurs of illustrated history alike.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This is corporate history with the top down-a breezy, upbeat, illustrated cruise through the 100 years since the first Ford Motor Company's incorporation and its release of the Model A in 1903. Banham, who has produced similar corporate histories (Coors: A Rocky Mountain Legend, etc.), skims past the historical context of the Ford Century, but the author skips none of the debit entries on Ford the man, not even his anti-Semitism and bouts of flinty noblesse oblige during the Depression, although he does avoid most of the company's labor-management potholes. After devoting much space to Henry Ford, Banham describes his successors, including Henry II, McNamara, Iacocca, Nasser. Most of these CEOs take a bow for globalizing Ford through acquisitions (Lincoln, Mazda, Volvo, Jaguar, Land Rover) and for benchmarks in marketing and engineering, including the Edsel. Banham wisely pauses in the middle of this management hagiography and gives over the story to the cars themselves in an illustrated centerpiece of 25 "Heart and Soul" Fords (along with models from Volvo et al.)-most with marketing case summaries and social history. Studded with more than 500 images, including early photos of production lines, advertisements and the automobiles themselves, this volume is a nice road trip for Ford marque buffs, but on the whole it comes off as a glossy, self-congratulating corporate history.

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From [Booklist](#)

The Ford Model T changed the way America lived--almost everyone could now own a car. And when Henry Ford devised the assembly line method of car building so that more Fords could be produced, American industry was also changed. Next year marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of Ford Motor Company, and this large-format visual history of the company is tied to the planned worldwide celebration. Banham, a business journalist and book author, writes engaging text that is certainly not overshadowed--but, instead, supported--by the vast illustrations. More than 500 photos have been culled from private collections and the Ford archives, and they are used to great effect as Banham charts the growth of one of the most significant companies in the world. Of particular delight is the "Special Collectors Section," which profiles 25 "vehicles that have generated excitement and inspired passion," from the 1914 Model T to the 1991 Explorer. (For a dark chapter in Ford history, see Thomas E. Bonsall's *Disaster in Dearborn: The Story of the Edsel*, reviewed in this issue on p.554). *Brad Hooper*

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Review

"This effective, visually attractive, well-timed tribute is appropriate for public libraries." -- *Library Journal*

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