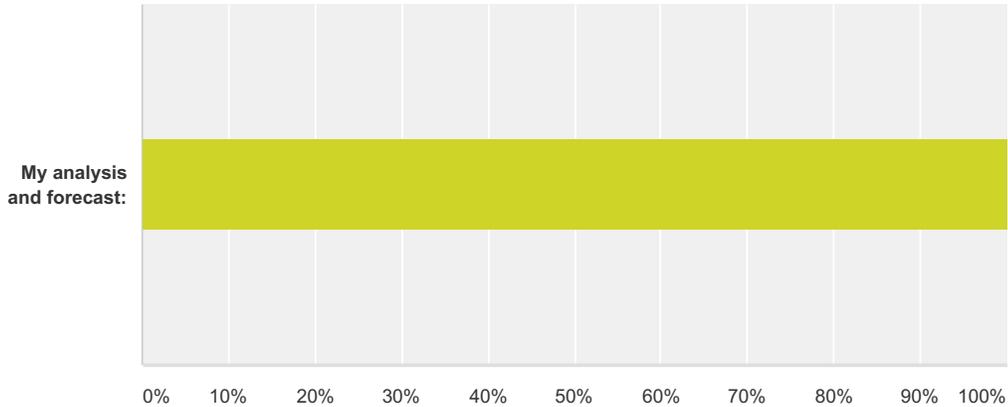


Q1 What is your analysis of the current state of the toy train / model railroading hobby, and what do you see in its future?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 4



Answer Choices	Responses
My analysis and forecast:	100.00% 13
Total	13

#	My thoughts:	Date
1	I think it's a mature market. The exciting growth of the past is over, but the hobby is by no means going away	7/6/2016 5:25 PM
2	My honest opinion is that the model railroad industry & I'm talking about all the different sizes of trains They Only Care About One Thing: How Much Money Can We Squeeze Out Of The Consumer? Example : In the 30's to the 60's Companies like Marx, American Flyer, & of course the King of them all Lionel. These Companies cared about one thing : How To Put A Smile On A Boy & His Father Faces? The answer is to make it more affordable & more fun for the Families. Since Lionel was sold to MPC (I could be wrong about the selling of Lionel) Even though the basic train sets were being sold inexpensively, their quality wasn't as good as there updated sets or as the New Company Would Call It THE SIGNATURE SERIES. Lastly with the model railroad industry growing their new demographic target is now THE FILTHY RICH. The different companies figure if we concentrate on mainly High End Rolling Stock, Passenger Cars, Accessories (Like Wireless & Remote controls) Then There Is The Steam & Diesel Engines. My Prediction Is In The Next 15yrs. The Collectors Will Be The Only Ones Buying The Model Trains.	6/21/2016 7:55 PM
3	Declining toward extinction, although there will always be a few people interested in it.	6/21/2016 1:03 PM
4	I told a train-friend of mine about this poll and asked his opinion. He is not a member of our club and only does HO. He said from what he's seeing lately, the hobby is dying, and I agree with him. Locally, between the two of us, neither of us knows anyone else personally within the hobby. We have both been doing trains for over 50 years. We attended a local train show this month and other than a few kids with no interest in trains that were tagging along with Grandpa, we didn't see anyone there that was younger than about 50. There were a few vendors close to that age, but they were only trying to make a killing and hit a home run selling some trains at prices that were at least 15 years old, not what trains are selling for today. They just put them out on display and pack them up at the end of the day and take them back home. It's sad for our hobby, but the vast majority of people have no interest in trains anymore. Train shows still draw decent crowds, but it's all older folks our age, with no light at the end of the tunnel. It's good to see Menard's having a line of O-gauge available, but they're only in stores at Christmas time, being packed away the rest of the year. Lucky is the hobbyist that still has a local train store in their town, as most have dried up and closed up due to lack of business and activity within the hobby. At least we still have the Internet train stores to meet our needs.	4/30/2016 2:51 PM
5	Toy trains of any gauge will not over take electronic instant gratification. Online gaming and i-playthings are overwhelming kids today. My opinion, kids are born with a predisposition to love trains.	4/11/2016 8:19 PM

LCCA TRAIN TALK #29 "The Best Toy Train Club on the Planet"

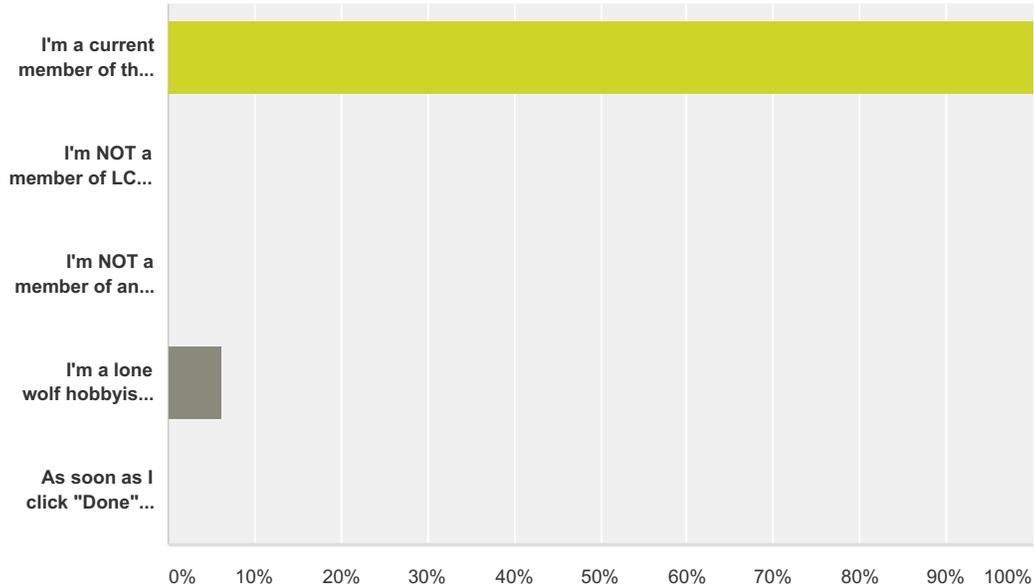
6	<p>My grandchildren had interest when they were in 3-6 year range, but as they got older I-pads, xbox, computers etc seemed to redirect their interests elsewhere. Hopefully enough youngsters will maintain interest, but from what I see at train shows, it doesn't look real good for the hobby.</p>	3/29/2016 8:51 AM
7	<p>From what I'm seeing here lately, I think our hobby is on the downward spiral, but it will still remain mine for life, regardless. Back in the 50's and earlier, trains were the average person's long distance transportation, hence toy train's were a very popular toy for families to have. In the heyday of the 50's, the toy train was a real family project, with everyone getting involved. Dads and Grandpas would spend time with the kids, and even encourage it. Almost everyone had a train set up around the Christmas tree. Once the 60's arrived and plane transportation took over as the more popular means, trains took a back seat, and consequentially toy trains did too. Other types of toys came along during that period and the kid's train layout seemed to go by the wayside. Other than us within the hobby, on average, today's Dad knows nothing about trains or toy trains. The most involvement they have is getting stopped when they're in a hurry and having to wait for a train to pass. Heck, for some of us, we drive out of our way to get stopped so we can sit and watch the train go by. I see you smiling! Another factor that I'm sure is having a negative affect on the hobby is the cost of equipment. Back in the day, comparing N, HO, S, or Lionel, toy trains were a rather inexpensive hobby and you didn't have to spend a lot of money on your set. With the addition of electronics lately (and they are nice), it's getting to be quite an expensive hobby. There's always been a faithful following of us "train nuts", and I think there always will be within our age group, but as time marches on without us, I don't think the younger generation will embrace the hobby as we did. Take a look at the age groups at your next local train show. It's good to see the LCCA actively recruiting younger members into the club, but as a whole, I just don't see that age group being interested in the hobby. Let's hear your opinion.</p>	3/27/2016 8:41 PM
8	<p>Model railroading is great hobby - you can learn many skills. However, it does compete with other forms of "entertainment" of our youth - iPads, video games, sports, etc. Model railroading is an expensive hobby and this might be a deterrent for young people in young families with limited incomes to buy model trains. Is there a way we can make the hobby easier on parent's pocketbooks?</p>	3/18/2016 10:41 PM
9	<p>I read the WSJ article and it does have valid points. We are a senior group and we need to reach out to the younger generations. The LCCA's Junior membership is a step in the right direction. I also believe Lionel, MTH and the others need to reach out to the younger generation by providing items at affordable prices and entry level items.</p>	3/10/2016 9:07 PM
10	<p>The economy is in tough straights in America. There are high end and very wealthy collectors which do not seem to mind paying the cost of large layouts and best of the best 0-scale and tinplate sets. Young people living on a small weekly allowance from home don't seem as interested. Younger hobbyists loose interest quickly and love fast electronics and play what seems popular. The train catalogs are full of product and it would appear that there are few customers seeking too much product. Smaller hobby shops in my locale have gone out of business. The only way for me to see the latest product is to attend the bigger train events. The WSJ story is mostly true. I have worked all of my life to save a few extra dollars so that I can (only) now afford the train set I did not have as a boy growing up in middle America. I love the LCCA since I am able to keep current with many friends who enjoy the hobby like I do. I can only imagine at some point there will not be so many friends of the hobby like us. I don't know any younger collectors who speak the nuances of the good of days of Made in America toy trains.</p>	3/10/2016 6:26 AM
11	<p>When K-Line ceased operation, we could certainly interpret that as being indicative of further retrenchment in the hobby. It was, after all, the demise of one of the major brands of O gauge toy trains. Now, however, we see advertisements from Trainworld/Trainland touting "O-Line Trains, The New Manufacturer on the Block." The rolling stock on-line photos suggest that these are the former K-Line products, and even the boxes are reminiscent of those of late-production K-Line. If "O-Line Trains" persists and expands, then perhaps we have not witnessed a retrenchment after all. Perhaps the K-Line product is still alive and well, just under new ownership and a new brand name. A true newcomer to the market seems to be Menard's line of O gauge rolling stock and O scale structures. This may be a truly new entry into the O gauge market, which suggests a new expansion of that market. The appearance of both O-Line Trains and of Menard's O gauge items seems to indicate that the hobby remains healthy and economically attractive to new marketers.</p>	3/7/2016 1:22 PM
12	<p>Young people aren't interested in "things." They want "experiences". Many, for example, love to travel. Interacting with a wide variety of friends often is very important as well. Also, more and more of them will rent instead of purchasing a home, living in high density urban areas with very little space to "collect." They will have fewer children on average, decreasing the "handing down of traditions" that most of us find important. None of this bodes very well for the future of acquiring or collecting ANYTHING.</p>	3/6/2016 6:55 PM

LCCA TRAIN TALK #29 "The Best Toy Train Club on the Planet"

13	<p>Inexplicably, given the widely-bruited demise of the hobby, a decidedly non-hobby-oriented retailer has recently entered the O gauge scene in a big way. The hardware, home appliance, do-it-yourself chain of Menards began selling a surprisingly wide selection of freight cars last year and has rapidly expanded its offerings, to include not only scale and semi-scale rolling stock but also a variety of well-executed structures. Its fire-damaged engine house (fire-destroyed might be a more descriptive phrase) is quite a novel departure from the repertoire of structures available from other sellers and is a truly imaginative product. I doubt that the Menards chain of brick and mortar stores as well as its website would be investing in this expanding line of cars and structures if its marketing people did not believe that a substantial market exists for it. This, it seems, bodes well for the hobby, especially since it harks back to the days when trains were sold by many hardware and department stores rather than being solely the purview of specialized hobby shops. It will be interesting to see if Menards continues to expand its offerings and keeps O gauge train models as a staple item in its stores. I noticed also that at least some Menards stores offered ready-to-run Lionel sets during the Christmas buying season, another indication that at least one large retailer believes that the market for O gauge trains is alive and well.</p>	3/3/2016 12:19 AM
14	<p>It seems to me that this hobby has been dying for the past fifty years. Slot cars were to be the executioners in the 1960s. Where are they now? IMO Lionel s introduction of the LionChief control system may be the most significant development in three rail trains in many years. it is easy to use and rather self explanatory. No it doesn't have all the goodies of a full command system but it can do most command system functions and even I can make it work without reading instructions of short story length. I do think we will see fewer models of steam locos. Most people today that are not model railroaders never saw a steam loco in everyday use and those younger persons we want to attract to this hobby never will. Diesels with colorful paint schemes and more than the usual roadnames are needed. All opinion of course.</p>	2/29/2016 9:07 PM
15	<p>Do I see the toy train hobby and industry as dying? No! Changing and perhaps retracting? Yes! I'm also witnessing an identical change happening in my other areas of involvement and interest, specifically general aviation and classic automobiles. The naysayers and fear-monger media columnists state that that no new blood is coming in and the old blood is dying off, of which there might be some validity but at an in-depth look, the few quoted metrics and personal observations become narrow and flawed. New people are entering the toy train hobby, not at the unsustainable rate fueled by the nostalgia and collectibles fads of the 1990s and early 2000s, but there are nonetheless new hobbyists. Some model train manufacturers have ceased business but all had flawed business models that again were not sustainable. As long as a market exists for toy trains and their supporting products, even a market of a reduced size, there will be some number of suppliers to that market. That's the beauty of free enterprise! There was a third special interest field that almost died a number of years ago but is now, because of an incredible marketing campaign, a lifestyle for many including highly educated professional people—motorcycling in general and Harley Davidson in particular. Having ridden an unbroken line of them since the late 1950s and to paraphrase the lyrics of a country/western song, I did Harleys long before they were cool. I did toy trains before they were cool too, and am still enjoying them in addition to sharing the joy of them with potential new toy train hobbyists.</p>	2/27/2016 2:08 PM
16	<p>My thoughts on both topics are pretty tentative. Maybe confused would be more accurate. I just browsed a little bit of Stout Auction's latest on-line auction catalog and noted that just about every lot already had bids on it, meaning that on-line bidders are already in the race for the items before the physical auction even begins. First, my impression was that a lot of people are trying to sell a lot of toy train items (so maybe the hobby is in fact dying). But then I realized that, even early in the auction, most lots were garnering respectable bids (so maybe the hobby is alive and well). My third thought was that parents may be missing out on finding some great birthday and Christmas gifts for their kids at reasonable prices by not thinking of the secondary market in toy trains, be it Stout Auctions, eBay, or some other source. Both in Alaska and then in South Dakota, a few friends and I set up temporary public layouts, simple things with very little scenery but a good bit of train action, and kids loved them. I think the kids' interest is potentially there still, but their parents don't think of toy trains as gifts any longer, thanks, perhaps, to the demise of quite a few local hobby shops and a lack of general newspaper advertising by MTH and Lionel. Would fathers still take the time and trouble to help their kid(s) build a train table and help with wiring and so on? Is the apparent decline in kids' toy train interest a result of parents' lack of imagination and/or effort to help those kids get started? I also think that HO may have become too popular a scale and that some parents may have given HO sets to their kids, who became frustrated with trying to keep those tiny wheels on the rails!</p>	2/16/2016 3:37 PM

Q2 Please let us know the nature of your train club affiliation. (This question allows multiple answers so that you can select the last one regardless of your other selections.)

Answered: 16 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses
I'm a current member of the Lionel Collectors Club of America (LCCA).	100.00% 16
I'm NOT a member of LCCA but I AM a member of one or more of the other national train clubs (such as TCA, TTOS, LOTS, etc.)	0.00% 0
I'm NOT a member of any national train club but I AM a member of an organized local club.	0.00% 0
I'm a lone wolf hobbyist and am not a member of any organized train club at all.	6.25% 1
As soon as I click "Done" at the end of this TRAIN TALK session, I'm joining LCCA or renewing my membership today!	0.00% 0
Total Respondents: 16	

#	Do you have some connection to or interest in the toy train hobby that is not included above? Let us know!	Date
1	No	6/21/2016 7:57 PM
2	I see a lot of former full scale railroaders that enjoy the O scale hobby. Ask for that response.	4/11/2016 8:21 PM
3	LCCA in the best of the three clubs I belong to.	3/29/2016 8:52 AM
4	As more observations occurred to me, I've added comments to this discussion group more than once. It's nice to be able to come back to a topic repeatedly. Glad you added that function.	3/7/2016 1:24 PM
5	I also belong to LOTS and TCA.	2/29/2016 9:08 PM
6	I write professionally for a toy train related magazine.	2/27/2016 2:10 PM