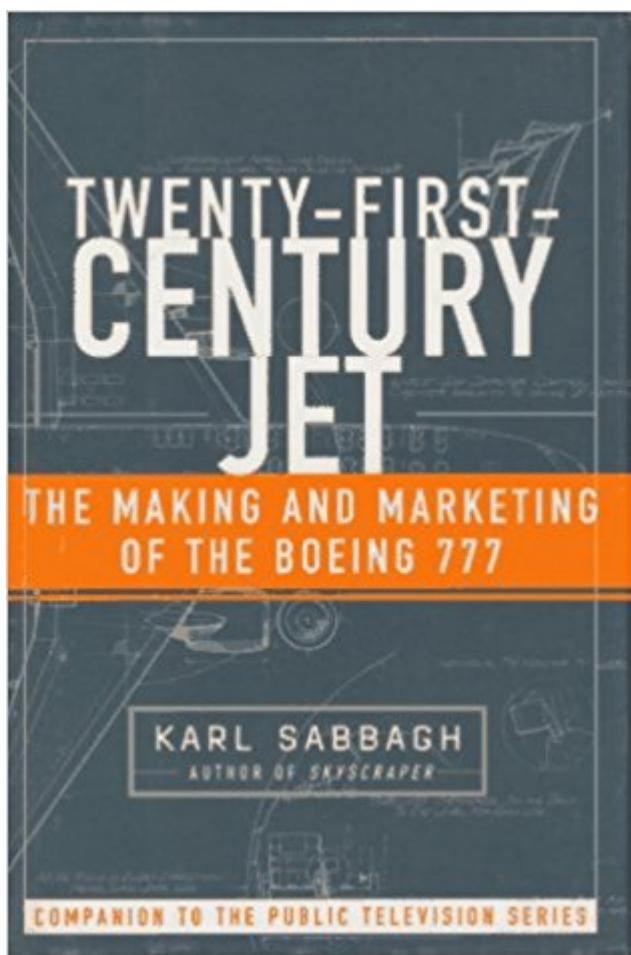


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Twenty-First-Century Jet: The Making And Marketing Of The Boeing 777



Synopsis

Chronicles the steps in the construction of the history-making Boeing 777, outlining the team management techniques, technology and business discussions, and scientific principles that made it possible. TV tie-in. 35,000 first printing. Tour.

Book Information

Hardcover: 368 pages

Publisher: Scribner; First Edition edition (January 3, 1996)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0684807211

ISBN-13: 978-0684807218

Product Dimensions: 6.4 x 1.2 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds

Average Customer Review: 3.1 out of 5 stars 12 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #344,298 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #58 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Aerospace > Aircraft Design & Construction #92 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Transportation > Aviation > Commercial #627 in Books > Science & Math > Technology > History of Technology

Customer Reviews

The design, manufacturing, testing and entry into service of the Boeing 777 was a masterful exercise in modern jet aircraft building. Using the "Working Together" philosophy instigated by the initial hand written commitment letter "...we agree to work together to deliver a service-ready airplane, an airplane that works..." written at 2:15am on an October morning in 1990 signed by United Airlines and Boeing management the almost overwhelming success of this aircraft after more than twenty years in service has justified it's unique development process. This was the first commercial jetliner constructed using the CATIA computer method of design whereby the "interference" of parts during the actual construction was virtually eliminated. As a paperless airplane such "interferences" had been identified before any construction began. Contrast this with the assembly of the first A380 when something as simple as the forward mounted camera high in the vertical fin could not be installed because the connecting wires inside the fin were too short. Contrast further the success of the B777 with the MD11 and A340 which were both in development and construction at almost the same time. The forward thinking decision to use two very large engines rather than three or four smaller ones has also been validated at this time. The

development and design process of the B777 was led by the superlative Boeing engineer Alan Mulally who when later passed over for a promotion to senior Boeing management left Boeing and was then employed as the Senior most executive of Ford Motor Company and who guided Ford through the volatile period in the 2008's to 2010's when every other United States major automobile manufacturer declared bankruptcy and Ford did not. And Ford also declined United States Government financial assistance whereas the others accepted. Except for the B747-8 and the A380, all successful double aisle jetliners today are large twins further validating the Boeing decision from the early 1990's. For this book Karl Sabbagh and video recording personnel were allowed unprecedented access to document this aircraft construction process. The abbreviated story is also available on VHS or DVD, today mostly available though only on the secondary market. Evidently this access was not available at Boeing for the story of the B787, maybe it should have been! An intelligent, insightful observer might opine that the development of the B787 might have been much less flawed had Mulally been in charge.

Sabbagh does a good job of explaining the technicalities behind the design and manufacturing of the Boeing 777. Yet it remains accessible for those who do not have a background in aviation. Throughout the book I was annoyed by the constant physical descriptions of various people and their personalities. I can understand that some readers will like this though. But I found degrading his remarks on the physical stature and cultural traits of the Japanese people in particular. In my opinion this kind of remarks has no place in a book like this. The other thing that bothered me is the naive and pervasive admiration the author displays toward Boeing. It is certainly a great company with an astounding legacy. But little room was made in this book for the other players in the field. And the few times they were mentioned it was mostly on a negative tone. It's almost as if the book had been sponsored by Boeing. That being said, I wanted to learn more about Boeing and the 777 and on that account I was not disappointed. We are given a lot of basic descriptions of the aircraft and the associated manufacturing processes. This book was written for the educated public at large, but the aviation buff will also find it interesting. By his own admission Sabbagh is not himself a specialist, but he gave me the impression that he understood quite well what he was talking about. He is certainly a good writer, if not my kind.

21St-Century Jet : The Making and Marketing of the Boeing 777 is an excellent book. Though it does not go into exquisite detail about the systems of the 777, it provides an entertaining look into not only the design and construction, but the men and women behind the aircraft. There is more to

this plane than just its systems, and that rarely told story is what makes this unique book one that will be enjoyed by engineers, plane enthusiasts, and anyone who has ever flown on an airplane. The story behind the 777 is amazing, the complexity of the plane is daunting, and putting this all into writing, the author makes a story that rivals any novel.

This title is less about aviation and flying than it is about project management and visionary business and management practices. The challenge of designing, building, and marketing a multimillion dollar aircraft is daunting, but the insight into the personalities and practices behind the challenge are insightful, illuminating how a good end-to-end project is run. Those looking for hardcore aviation insights might be disappointed, as another reviewer was. But those who really want to understand the complex realities of running a business and a huge team will find inspiration.

For those familiar with aircraft design (or even just followed The New York Times reporting), this offers a very limited insight into the 777. It won't tell you anything that you don't already know. For the complete neophyte, however, it may be worth a go. Still, Sabbagh could have provided a more animated story with greater details. He should have said lots more in the pages provided. The PBS series based on this book is better. Given the staggering and fine attention that Boeing gave to the 777 (essentially it's gambling the whole company), Sabbagh regrettably, doesn't meet up to the recognition it so rightly deserves

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