

# The Brick

Annual Magazine 2010

[www.LEGO.com](http://www.LEGO.com)



**THEME:  
THE DIGITAL  
LEGO® BRICK**

FIGHTING CORRUPTION ...

VISITING LEGO EMPLOYEES  
IN FIVE COUNTRIES

LEGO STAR WARS  
– THE SUCCESS CONTINUES

BUILD YOURSELF  
A BETTER WORKPLACE

## 10-ton fire engine reappears as 183 bricks

Read more about the [Annual Report](#) and the [Progress Report](#) on the back cover



# Dear Reader

In the mid 1930s, when we were still a very small company, LEGO Founder Ole Kirk Kristiansen formulated our motto: "Only the best is good enough."

Over the years, the LEGO Group has become a much larger company – but "Only the best is good enough" remains the spirit behind all our efforts. Often we add the words "for children" to our motto because children are at the heart of all our activities – they are our most vital concern.

In saying that only the best is good enough for children, we are stating our determination to give them the best and most fun experience in their play. An experience which at the same time develops such skills as creative problem-solving, teamwork, motor skills and creativity. That is precisely the kind of thing the LEGO® brick can deliver, and it remains the keystone of our entire approach to business.

But our focus is not confined to children. We also want to be the best business partner, the best employer, the best supplier. And with this in mind, the LEGO Group constantly strives for continued improvement. That doesn't mean we never make mistakes. But it means that we try to learn from any mistakes we do make.

Through the pages of The Brick we would like to tell you about all the exciting activities going on within the LEGO Group. How we're working to give children the best play experience, how we're improving our workplace, and how we're co-operating with our partners. You will find lots of examples of this in these pages.

If you would like to go into more detail, you can browse through the figures behind our results by reading our Annual Report 09 on the financial data and our Progress Report 09 on the non-financial data.

Together, the Annual Report, the Progress Report and The Brick provide a composite picture of how – in our everyday operations – we are trying to live up to Ole Kirk Kristiansen's old – yet highly relevant and timely – motto.

I hope you'll be inspired by this glimpse into our world – and that you'll enjoy reading about us!



Jørgen Vig Knudstorp  
LEGO Group President and CEO



# The Brick

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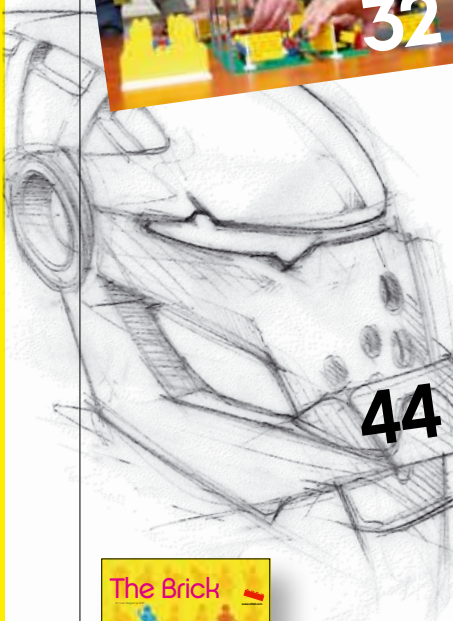
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**Cover photo:**  
LEGO designers visit a fire station to fetch inspiration for the new LEGO fire engine. Page 20.  
Photo: Thomas Yde

## CONTENTS

- 4 In deep water with LEGO® Atlantis
- 6 Exporting 50 years' experience to new factories
- 8-17 **THEME: THE DIGITAL LEGO BRICK**  
LEGO bricks and minifigures have long had online presence. You can design your own LEGO model and box, and from 2010 online play will extend to the LEGO Universe game.
- Home visit to LEGO employees**  
The LEGO Group has about 8,000 employees – living and working in more than 30 countries. Join us on a visit to LEGO employees in Japan (page 18), the Czech Republic (28), USA (36), Denmark (48) and Hungary (56).
- 24 Innovation saves energy, protects environment
- 32 **They're building themselves a better workplace**  
A lion roars – so a LEGO DUPLO lion can symbolise factory noise. Employees in Hungary are playing with LEGO bricks to design a safer factory environment.
- 38 Fighting corruption ...
- 42 LEGO employees give a helping hand in toy-shops
- 44 **Bye Bye BIONICLE – hello HERO FACTORY**  
Six heroes fight arch villain Von Nebula and his five henchmen. Together they make up LEGO HERO FACTORY, the successor to BIONICLE.
- 50 New hope for South African youngsters
- 54 LEGO Star Wars – success for more than a decade
- 58 For children

The LEGO Group is a privately held company based in Billund, Denmark. The company is still owned by the Kirk Kristiansen family who founded it in 1932.

The LEGO group is engaged in the development of children's creativity through playing and learning. Based on the world-famous LEGO® brick, the company today provides toys, experiences and teaching materials for children in more than 130 countries.

The LEGO Group has approximately 8,000 employees and it is the world's fifth largest manufacturer of play materials.



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Printed matter

# In deep WATER with LEGO® Atlantis

Deep under the sea, where LEGO bricks normally are out of their depth, a group of intrepid minifigures have set themselves a task – to uncover the secret of LEGO Atlantis.



BY RENÉ MADSEN

**A** team of six heroic minifigures, led by Prof. Sam Rhodes and Capt. Ace Speedman, move into deep water in their search for the legendary, lost city of LEGO Atlantis.

*Their adventure takes them deeper than any minifig has ever ventured before. Each step of the way, every splash they take is more dangerous than what has gone before – but it brings them closer to Atlantis.*

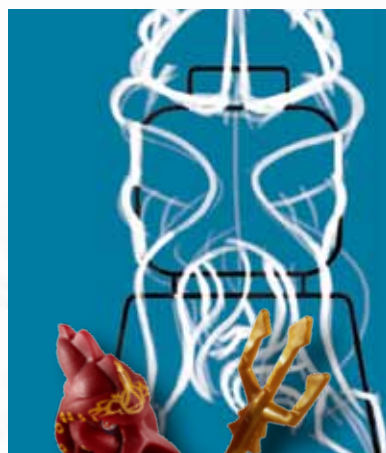
The story of the new LEGO Atlantis begins with Prof. Sam Rhodes, who has inherited an old map from her grandparents. A map she is convinced will lead to the legendary, sunken city of Atlantis. She tricks a team of salvage experts, led by Capt. Ace Speedman, into salvaging an abandoned, underwater research station. It is not until later that the team discover the reason no one before them has salvaged the research station – and suddenly the hunt to find Atlantis is on.

#### **Minifigures and octopuses**

*The research station lies on the edge of an extinct, submerged volcano – waiting for our heroes. The team approach in their red submarines – but when a giant crab attacks their craft, they realise that everything's not what it seems. By encircling the crab at speed in their submarines, they raise an underwater sandstorm – and capture the surprised crab.*

When the LEGO Group produces a new range of minifigures, their distinguishing features are normally their new "clothing" or new facial expression. But the monsters of LEGO Atlantis are different in quite another way. The three monsters are a mix of normal minifigures and creatures from the deep: The grey shark warrior has the body of a minifigure – but the head of a shark. The stingray warrior is dark blue – with the head of a stingray. The octopus warrior is dark red and has no legs – instead he has the lower body and face of an octopus.

The heroes in LEGO Atlantis are ordinary minifigs – with new facial expressions and new diving gear. They also have different personalities and are good at doing different things.



LEGO Atlantis stretches over a period of two years with new models and further development of the story during each year.

3-D glasses will be included with 1.2 million LEGO Atlantis sets to enhance the visual experience of the website. 3-D glasses will also be distributed via the LEGO Club and various campaigns.

### Creative freedom

*Behind the crab the team find the first of five treasures – a special key which, in addition to being a collectible, turns out to have a very special function. But the crab has the last word – when it pushes our heroes' submarines over the edge into the volcano.*

You will see a lot in LEGO Atlantis that you don't find in the real world. For example, the submarines are not the classic type of sub. But Will Thorogood, lead designer in charge of the development, says it gave the design team more freedom to be creative:

*"We had the opportunity to play around with the design a little ... to give our submarines a bit of flourish. For example, we thought originally that submarines had to be yellow. But it turned out that children didn't think the colour was important – so we made them red instead because it's a colour better suited*

*to the background. Personally, I think they're pretty cool,"* says the designer – who also helped create LEGO Power Miners and LEGO Space Police.

The treasures that the monsters are guarding are not just a series of collectibles – as the LEGO Atlantis universe unfolds, it becomes clear that the treasures are keys, playing a role in the developing story.

*The watery depths are dark, and the depth gauge has given up. Our team of divers have arrived before the closed portal – the only thing between them and Atlantis. Each of the five treasures acts as a key, and when the last one is in place, the heroes can activate the portal and enter LEGO Atlantis.*

Although the story of the first year ends at the entrance to Atlantis, it does not finish there. The next phase of the LEGO Atlantis story will be launched in early 2011 with a new story and new sets – but that's a whole new chapter.

# EXPORTING 50 YEARS of experience

When the LEGO Group opens a new factory abroad, it sends its most experienced Danish employees to the new facility to pass on years of experience to new colleagues.

BY RENÉ MADSEN AND PERNILLE STANBURY PHOTO NIELS ÅGE SKOVBO

**N**o fewer than 15 times in the past four years Else Sundahl Pedersen has packed her suitcase and flown off to LEGO factories in the Czech Republic, Mexico and Hungary. Normally, she is a machine operator on a packing machine at the factory in Billund, Denmark. But when the LEGO Group sets up a new factory outside Denmark, it's not enough just to hire personnel and buy machinery – the new workforce has to be aided and trained to use the machines efficiently. This is where on-the-job trainers like Else Sundahl Pedersen come in.

"We're quite proud of the job we do – and our foreign colleagues have to have the chance to learn as much as they can. Of course, passing on experience is not an easy process but we do our best to give the new employees all the basic know-how we can – plus all the tips and tricks we've picked up after years of working on our own machines."

Altogether, she and her workmate Ulla Skovbjerg Johansen have 50 years' LEGO experience to draw

upon when they're abroad helping new colleagues.

"The most difficult part of our job is to teach our new colleagues to listen ... they have to learn to hear when machines are running smoothly," says Else Sundahl Pedersen.

#### First, train the interpreter ...

When the LEGO Group dispatches employees as job trainers, it always means a certain length of time away from home. For example, trainers alternated 14 days away and 14 days home in Billund for six months while the factory in the Czech Republic was in its start-up period.

Else Sundahl Pedersen: "You need the co-operation of your family – otherwise it won't work. But it's interesting being part of something new. If it wasn't, we wouldn't do it. We always learn something new to take home with us, too. You get to know yourself better – and to find out how patient and tolerant a person you are. It's demanding work. You're exhausted at the end of the day. You work through an interpreter – and you have

*Between them, Ulla Skovbjerg Johansen (right) and Else Sundahl Pedersen have a total of 50 years' LEGO experience – and they need it when they are off training colleagues at the new plants in Mexico, Hungary and the Czech Republic. Training others and passing on skills is a point of honour with them. "When we leave that new factory, we want everything to be perfect! We're not there for a holiday. But it would be nice if the LEGO Group got the idea of opening a factory in Australia or maybe Thailand next time," says Else Sundahl Pedersen – with a bit of a twinkle in her eye.*





The LEGO Group has factories in four countries: Mexico, Hungary, Czech Republic and Denmark. The latest factory was inaugurated in Mexico in 2009. It produces LEGO® bricks for the US market.

The flying job trainers are experienced LEGO employees whose normal day job is operating a moulding machine or working on the LEGO packing lines.

to be sure the interpreter understands what you're telling them about the machinery."

But the work offers a great bonus: you learn a lot about a foreign country and its people.

Else Sundahl Pedersen: "The best thing is getting out and discovering new cultures. Our new colleagues in the countries we visit have shown us great hospitality, and we've been invited home to see how they live. You don't get that kind of experience as an ordinary tourist."

#### Point of honour

Ulla Skovbjerg Johansen has been abroad on 12 training trips.

"It's exciting helping to set up a new factory like this – seeing things get off the ground. We make it a point of honour to teach our new colleagues everything we ourselves know – and what we've

spent 25 years learning. It's a tremendous challenge teaching them everything about the job in a year – not to mention all the travel backwards and forwards to Mexico. On the other hand, we've no chores and duties after hours – and we don't have to rush home and cook a meal in the evening!" says Ulla Skovbjerg Johansen.

"When we first came to Mexico a few years ago, there were two production lines looking a bit lost in the middle of a gigantic hall. After a year's work and a constant flow of job trainers to and from the new site, production had become one of the biggest in the entire LEGO Group," says Else Sundahl Pedersen – with more than just a hint of pride in her voice.

#### Factory-floor training

When the Danish job trainers travel abroad to teach

their colleagues in foreign countries, they're not headed for classrooms with dusty training manuals. Teaching takes place among the machines – and the trainers are not afraid to get their hands dirty.

Else Sundahl Pedersen: "We often take our place in the packing line, helping local colleagues with their work. It's in the LEGO spirit that colleagues help each other – and hopefully it rubs off on our new colleagues, and they do the same thing." Mexican colleagues certainly haven't forgotten their Danish job trainers.

"Last Christmas, our interpreter came to visit us – and had brought us all little gifts from one of the operators in Mexico. It was a warm, friendly gesture from a foreign colleague," says Ulla Skovbjerg Johansen.

# Youngsters jump From games to bricks – AND BACK

LEGO® bricks and minifigures have long been part of the digital, online world. When youngsters play LEGO video games or visit the LEGO world online, they must be guaranteed the same good, safe fun as when they open a real-life box of LEGO bricks.

BY PERNILLE STANBURY PHOTO NIELS ÅGE SKOVBO

**T**he days when children were content to sit on the floor or at the dining table, playing with their toys, are long gone. Youngsters these days are completely at ease moving around the digital world – where they are also likely to come across LEGO bricks. Perhaps on the LEGO.com website, maybe playing a LEGO Indiana Jones game – and very soon the new LEGO Universe.

“Children spend quite a lot of time online and playing computer games, and it’s important that we have LEGO play translated credibly to computer games and the online environment. Playing in virtual, digital surroundings must offer the same qualities as playing with physical bricks – it has to be fun, creative and developing,” says Henrik Taudorf Lorensen. He heads the department responsible for digital LEGO play.

#### Home visits

To see how children play when they’re at the computer or game console, the LEGO Group has visited the families of girls and boys in Europe, USA and Asia.

“One of the things we observed was that children were happy to pick up a story line and develop the story when they played on the computer. In several families we saw, for example, children playing a computerised Star Wars game – and putting the game aside for a while because they’d been inspired to build a couple of Star Wars models. That’s why it’s important that there’s a natural link between our digital world and our physical products – and, for example, that you can play LEGO Rock Band on a pirate ship with Power Miners figures,” says Henrik Taudorf Lorensen.

#### Children happy to make movies

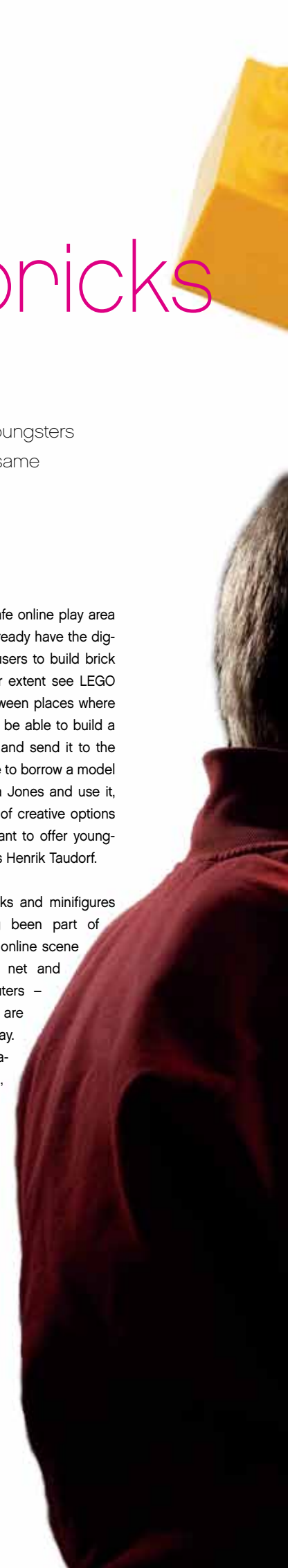
During family visits it was also found that children enjoy making up stories by sharing their LEGO models with others or by making short movies.

“And that’s where we come in – delivering a safe online play area for children, where they can be creative. We already have the digital bricks in LEGO Digital Designer, allowing users to build brick models on screen. In future, we’ll to a greater extent see LEGO models being sent backward and forward between places where children are playing. For example, children will be able to build a cool model in the new LEGO Universe game and send it to the picture gallery on our website. Or they’ll be able to borrow a model or an exciting background from LEGO Indiana Jones and use it, say, in their own online movie. That’s the kind of creative options accessing different parts of the system we want to offer youngsters,” says Henrik Taudorf.

**“Playing in virtual, digital surroundings must offer the same qualities as playing with physical bricks – it has to be fun, creative and developing”**

LEGO bricks and minifigures have long been part of the digital online scene – on the net and on computers – and they are here to stay. But the traditional, physical bricks children

can play and build with on the floor or at the dining table – they will never go out of fashion. There will always be LEGO bricks, as there have been for the past 50 years – but now they are also available in the digital world.







### **LEGO bricks in the digital world:**

Parents must have complete confidence that LEGO websites are a safe environment in which their children can move around.

LEGO play on a computer will always be related to the physical products.

Just as they build simple models with bricks, gradually progressing to larger and more complex building projects, children must always be able to move up the digital ladder. From quick clicks on the LEGO.com website to the new LEGO Universe online game or LEGO Digital Designer – a programme which allows the user to build virtual LEGO constructions on the computer screen.

# UNIVERSE UNDER THREAT

# MINI FIGURES

## TO THE RESCUE

An online version of the LEGO® Universe game will be launched in 2010. Players can explore the Universe, battle against dark, evil forces, build their way out of problems – and at the same time develop their social relations with other players.

BY PERNILLE STANBURY PHOTO PATRICK SCOTT LEWIS

**C**hristmas garland lighting with scores of tiny light bulbs suspended from the ceiling near the entrance even though it is summer. Apart from that, the visitor's first impression is of an enormous, red LEGO brick. A logo hangs alongside the brick, a strange fish built of LEGO bricks.

An old warehouse near Denver, Colorado, is home to the games developer company, NetDevil. Computer games and LEGO bricks have almost become one

here, close to the snow-clad Rocky Mountains. In 2010 LEGO Universe, a game developed by NetDevil for the LEGO Group, will hit the market.

NetDevil specialises in developing computer games – so-called MMOG, Massively Multiplayer Online Games, which allow thousands of players to meet and play together on the Internet, in the same universe and at the same time.

### The Universe must be saved

The story is about the Universe being in danger and having to be saved by heroic minifigures.

"The codewords for LEGO Universe are players meeting, building and playing. You can customise your ability and identity, and you can recreate yourself to be whatever you can imagine. You can be friends with other LEGO fans, and you can actually 'create' your own bits of the LEGO Universe, making them be whatever you want," says Ryan Seabury, one of the three founders of NetDevil and the company's creative director.

He still remembers the buzz of excitement when the LEGO Group suggested doing business together. "We all agreed this could be the coolest thing ever. We'd all grown up with LEGO bricks but hadn't built anything with them for a long time. We immediately



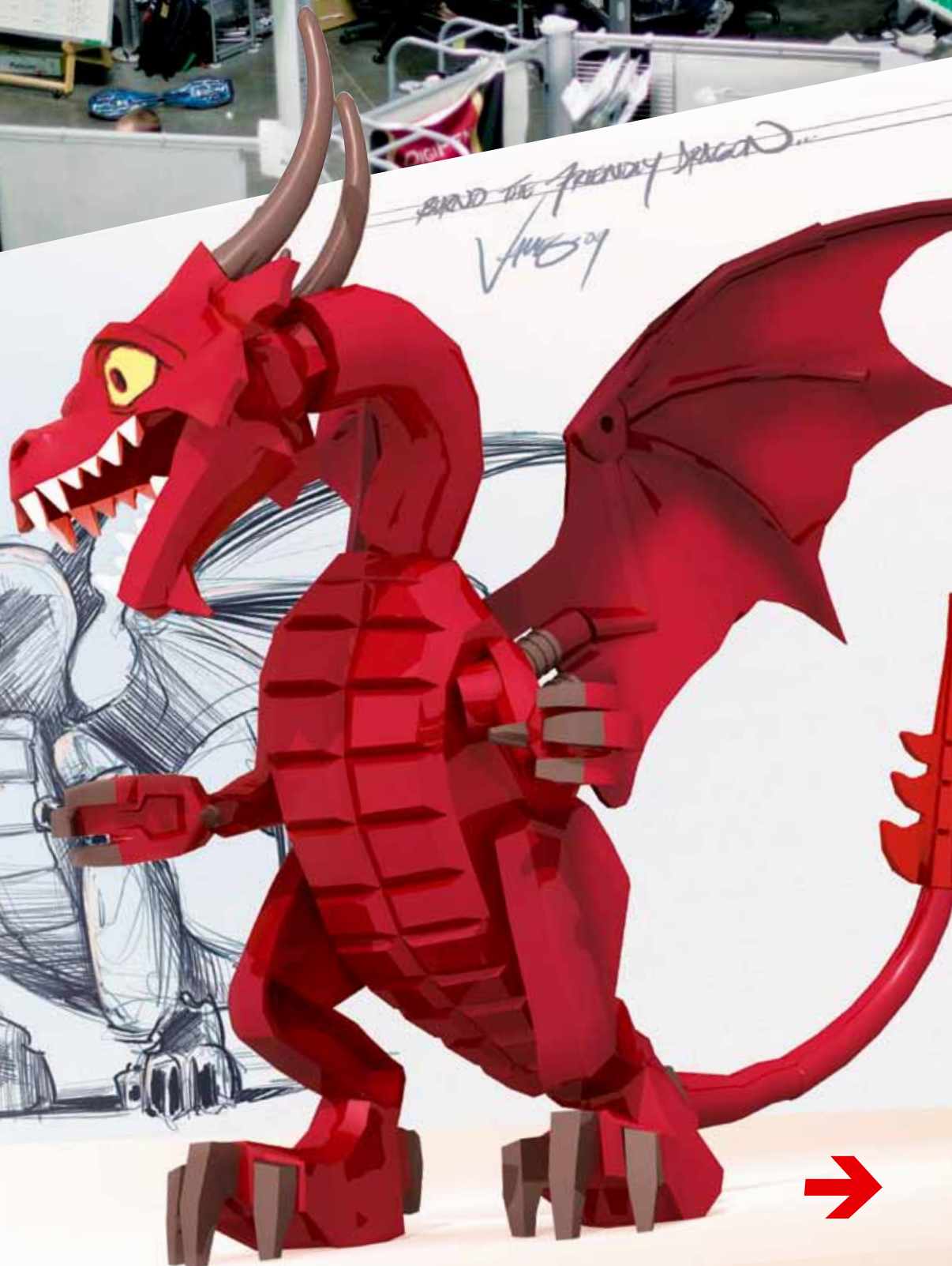
[www.LEGOuniverse.com](http://www.LEGOuniverse.com)

LEGO Universe appeals to LEGO fans from eight years old and upwards. The LEGO Universe storyline is that the Universe is under threat and must be saved by intrepid minifigures. As the game proceeds, players meet familiar LEGO figures from various product lines – for example, Knights or Pirates – although LEGO Universe is by no means simply LEGO sets converted for the Net. There are good and evil figures, and players find themselves exploring the Universe, with many different worlds from the past, present and future. They have to do battle with sinister, evil powers, and at the same time they can develop social relationships with other players. In many situations they can build their way out of a problem – for example, by constructing a space vehicle, a bridge or a racing car. Child safety is given high priority in LEGO Universe. Moderators monitor the game continuously, and parents are able to decide how long and where their child may play.



BRAND THE FRIENDLY DRAGON...

V. JAMES 09





*Modelbuilders at NetDevil believe they may have the largest collection of LEGO bricks outside a LEGO factory. Duane Hess is one of the modelbuilders who's been assisting the games developers by building lots of the things needed in the game. One important reason for this activity is to make sure that everything built of bricks in the game can also be built in reality.*

bought some LEGO bricks and began building – some of the models were of the netdevil fish, which is our logo,” says Ryan Seabury.

### **Bricks from mom's garage**

NetDevil could see both creative and business potential in collaborating with the LEGO Group. The fact that the bricks can be combined in unlimited fashion and still remain the same – that's unique.

“At the same time we'd reached an age when we ourselves were beginning to have children – so it appealed to us that it was something to do with kids. The LEGO language is a common language, and the system hadn't changed over the years. In my own case, I found myself digging out all my old bricks from





Ryan Seabury (at the right) is Art Director of the games developer company NetDevil. He still remembers the enthusiasm when the LEGO Group suggested a collaboration: "We agreed that it could be the coolest thing ever."

my mom's garage – and I see the game as something to be played across the generations. It's even a way for my mom to become involved because she knows the bricks," says Ryan Seabury.

#### Mind games

Having young families of their own, the NetDevil team prefers creating games that stretch the imagination and get the user thinking. Humour is also an important ingredient: "We usually ask ourselves – could this happen in the real world? Perhaps not – but who cares as long as it's fun!"

Ryan Seabury is sure LEGO Universe will be big and exceptional:

"We're combining parts of existing online games with the LEGO system – and nobody can copy the LEGO idea."

Jason Chen, editor of the reputed gadgets website, Gizmodo, wrote: "Basically, this is the natural evolution of the LEGO brand.

You know how you fondly remember playing with LEGO sets when you were a kid? Your kids are going to remember this. (...)

And adults, like us, who are LEGO Fans, will get in on this game hardcore, making it an easy contender to top World of Warcraft in the MMO space."





# VIDEO GAMES

FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY

In 1997 the LEGO Group released its first video game. LEGO® Island won “Family Game of the Year” for PC in 1998 and sold more than one million copies. From 2005 the LEGO games development has taken place in partnership with TT Games.

BY MARTIN SANDGAARD

**A**lthough the primary target group of the LEGO Group’s video games is boys aged 6 to 12, it is a key feature that they are designed to appeal to several generations, says Jai Mukherjee from LEGO Digital:

“Some commentators are pointing to the fact that, together with Nintendo, we are spearheading the development towards getting the entire family to play together. Our own studies tell us that up to half of the LEGO video game players fall outside the primary target group,” he explains.

### Makes the family play together

When father and son or older and younger brother play together, it needs to take place on equal terms. One example of this is the “drop-in/drop-out” feature in the LEGO games, which encourages a second player to join the fun.

“Although we were the first to successfully introduce this concept, several publishers now make use of it. We frequently discuss with our partner, TT Games, how we keep making each new game fresh and exciting for kids,” says Jai Mukherjee, who points to humour as the most distinctive feature of a LEGO video game.

“A LEGO game is filled with humour and parody. There is lots of action but it is non-violent. Although kids get to compete and fight, the humour makes it more cartoon-like. And no one dies. At most, they break into pieces or fly off the screen. When you ask parents and kids what they remember and like about the games, it is all about this sense of humour.”

Tom Stone, MD TT Games Publishing adds: “Working with the LEGO Group has enabled us to make games that

are creative, engaging, immersive and fun. The LEGO brand provides the creative freedom to take a new and distinctive angle on gaming, which our young gamers love”.

### More LEGO experiences on the way

The game releases of recent years have been action/adventure games based on the LEGO Group’s collaborations with several films. This is true of, for example, the very popular LEGO Star Wars and LEGO Indiana Jones games:

“We have found a good recipe for a successful video game. In future we will continue to focus on the action/adventure genre, but we will also work on incorporating even more of the LEGO play experience in the games.”

“We will also incorporate more elements from the physical building experience where relevant. As an example you can build new levels and challenge family and friends in the new LEGO Indiana Jones 2, and in the upcoming Harry Potter game there is less combat and more focus on using magic to build with bricks,” explains Jai Mukherjee.

### New game types

There are also new game types on the way. 2009 saw the release of LEGO Rock Band which builds on the popular Rock Band releases. In 2011 comes the LEGO City game based on the LEGO Group’s own popular CITY product line. In contrast to, for example, Star Wars, Indiana Jones and Harry Potter, LEGO City Stories will have a more loose central story that will encourage the player to explore a wider variety of side stories and challenges.



### LEGO video games since 2005

- BIONICLE: Maze of Shadows, 2005
- LEGO Star Wars: The Video Game, 2005
- BIONICLE Heroes, 2006
- LEGO Star Wars II: The Original Trilogy, 2006
- LEGO Star Wars: The Complete Saga, 2007 (PC version i 2009)
- LEGO Batman: The Video Game, 2008
- LEGO Indiana Jones: The Original Adventures, 2008
- LEGO Battles, 2009
- LEGO Indiana Jones 2: The Adventure Continues, 2009
- LEGO Rock Band, 2009
- LEGO Harry Potter: Years 1–4, 2010
- LEGO Universe, 2010

# MANY VISITS TO THE DIGITAL PLAY ROOM



## In 2010, LEGO.com is released in:

French, Polish, Russian, Czech, Hungarian, Italian, Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish, Danish and Spanish (separate sites for Mexico, Spain and Latin America).

With more than 16 million visits a month, LEGO.com is one of the world's largest websites for toys. The "digital play room" is filled with experiences which add to and underpin the well-known LEGO® bricks.

BY MARTIN SANDGAARD

**B**attle the giant crab in LEGO Atlantis, enter the "holo-brick" archive and watch all the LEGO Star Wars products through time or design your own LEGO box with LEGO Design byME. There are many good reasons why the typical visits to LEGO.com last more than 15 minutes.

The many loyal visitors can rejoice in a large update of LEGO.com in 2010. Visitors from, for example, France, Russia, Spain and a number of other countries can look forward to getting the website in their own languages when it is expanded with 13 new national versions. In addition, LEGO.com will get a general boost and a new design, and in the future, it will provide new opportunities for the user to personalise his or her content.

### Play with others online

And finally, in 2010, LEGO Universe will be introduced (see page 10). LEGO Universe is the great investment of the LEGO Group within multiplayer games played online by several persons at the same time. The most well-known examples are World of Warcraft and Second Life.



## LEGO.com in 2009:

- On average, LEGO.com had 16.5 million visits a month.
- The average visit to LEGO.com lasted more than 15 minutes.
- Games were the most popular type of content on LEGO.com.
- LEGO Star Wars was the most popular franchise site with more than 3.3 million visits a month during the last half of 2009. In second and third place came LEGO City and BIONICLE with 2.5 and 2.2 million visits, respectively.
- Most visits to LEGO.com were from the USA, England, Germany and Canada.
- The site elaborating on the new online multiplayer game, LEGO Universe, had over one million visits in December of 2009.

# LEGO® DESIGN BYME UNIQUE LEGO MODEL OF YOUR VERY OWN – IN ITS OWN SPECIAL BOX

You, too, can be a designer – with LEGO Design byME. You can build your own unique LEGO model on your computer and have it delivered with its own building instructions. You can even design the box it comes in!

BY PERNILLE STANBURY

**W**hy is it that only designers employed by the LEGO Group can decide what a finished LEGO model should look like? Well actually – they don't necessarily. Thanks to some clever software on a LEGO website, you can sit in the comfort of your home, at your own computer, and design your very own, 3-dimensional model in virtual, digital bricks. You can post a picture of your model in a picture gallery on the LEGO website, and – if you wish – you can buy a box containing all the pieces for the model, complete with printed building instructions.

### New box – ready to hang on the wall

Naturally, a particularly fine LEGO model has to have its own particularly fine box. So when you've finished building your digital model, you can design a sleeve for your own box. You can give your model a descriptive name and choose from among several different backgrounds – for example, town, action or fantasy. And the final stroke of genius – you can inscribe the box with the magical words: Designed by ... and add your own name.

The LEGO Group asked a group of boys in New York for their thoughts on the box. They were so enthusiastic about it that they said they might well flatten out the sleeve and use it as a unique poster on the wall of their room.

"Design byME has been really well received by the market. Surveys among parents show that they think it's one of the best online offers for children because youngsters have to apply their creativity. Children think Design byME is cool to use, and they like the idea of being able to decide everything – from the model to the finished set. Many also plan to give their specially designed box sets away as personal gifts," says Gitte Hedegaard Nipper, Marketing Manager for LEGO Design byME.

The only thing children would like to change about the product is actually its price. A Design byME model set can cost up to 50% more than an ordinary box of LEGO bricks with the same number of bricks in it.

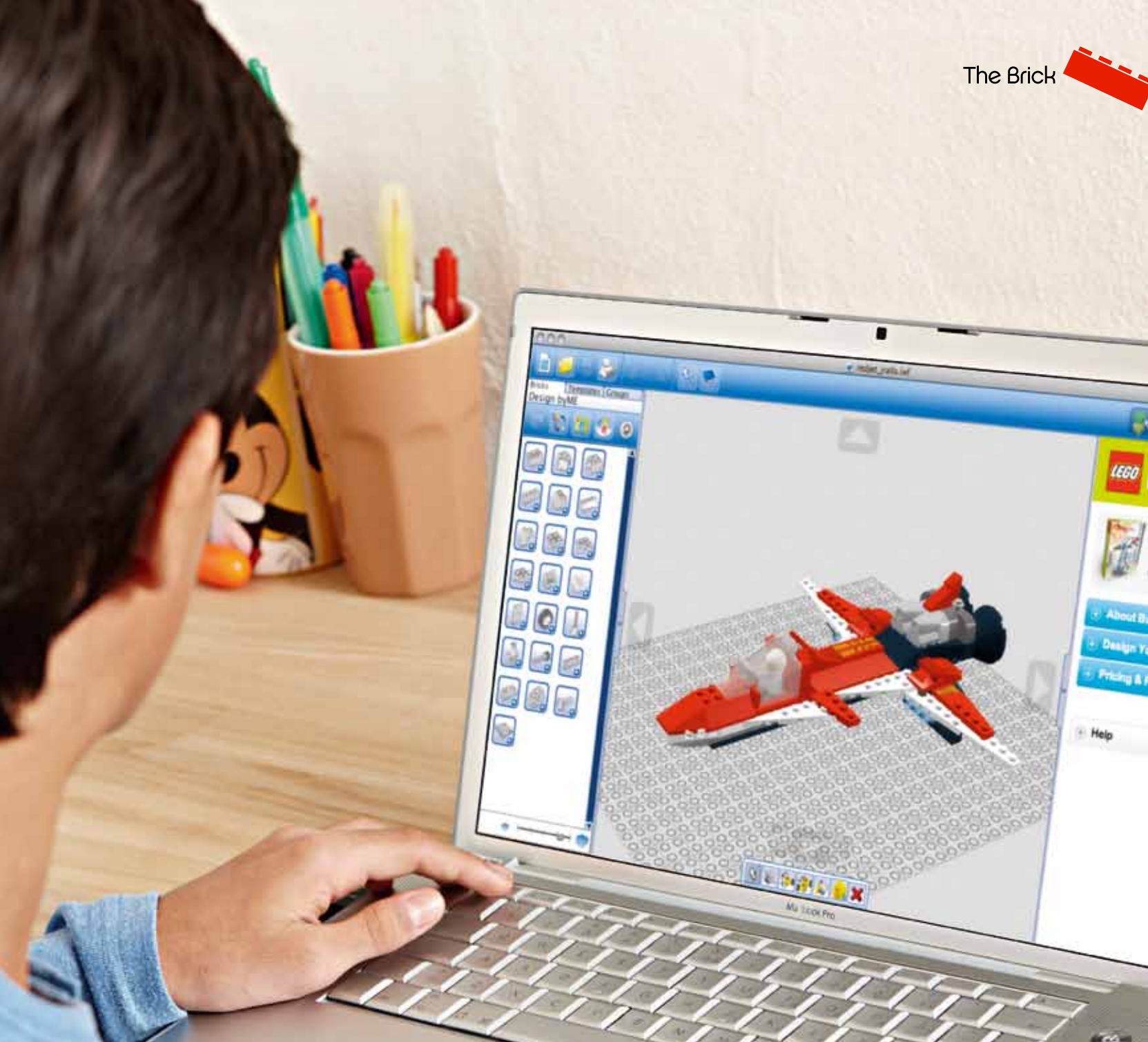
Gitte Hedegaard Nipper: "All the bricks are picked out of the storage system and packed by hand in a factory in Europe, and a unique box has to be made for the product – plus a one-off set of building instructions. That's why the personal set costs more – but don't forget you're the only person in the world to own precisely a set like that."

LEGO Design byME has its own website [www.LEGODesignbyME.com](http://www.LEGODesignbyME.com) and appeals especially to children in the 10-14 age group. Many adults also take the opportunity to design their own LEGO set – for instance, as a special gift. Before starting to build, you have to download the LEGO Digital Designer software from the website. It is free, and the programme offers the user a choice of nearly 1,500 bricks and other pieces. The largest model so far built and bought through LEGO Design byME is a medieval castle – consisting of 4,351 LEGO bricks.

[www.LEGODesignbyME.com](http://www.LEGODesignbyME.com)







*Dreamt byME, Built byME –  
Designed byME. With LEGO  
Design byME, children – and  
adults – can build their own  
LEGO model online, design their  
own box sleeve and receive the  
product through the post.*





# VISITING EIJI MIZUTANI JAPAN

BY KENT DAHL PHOTO KENT DAHL

**A**pproaching Eiji Mizutani's home in the out skirts of Tokyo you are greeted by an enticing aroma. Right in front of his modern apartment building an old man is roasting sweet potatoes over firewood in an open shack. Today it is a rare sight in Tokyo's modern metropolis.

"There were a lot of sweet potato sellers roaming the street, when I was a child," says 59-year-old Mizutani who was born near Osaka five years after the second World War ended.

On the contrary there were not many toys. Spinning tops, glass balls and card games were the most common toys.

"The scarcity is probably the reason why I developed a fascination with toys," reminisces Mizutani while his wife, Kumiko, offers green tea and Japanese rice sweets. While the food is Japanese, their interior is modern with a leather sofa and a wooden dining table with Danish chairs. Being an amateur painter the walls are partly decorated with Kumiko's paintings.

"From a young age I had a dream to run a toyshop," says Mizutani. "When in my 20's I took a job with a toy wholesaler in Osaka. After five years I knew the in and out of the toy business, and I started a toyshop with my wife."

"It was a very happy time communicating with children," says the couple that has no children.

Competition from new big discount stores drove them out of business some years later, and Mizutani joined a big toy manufacturer, which downsized five years ago. Being part of management Mizutani decided to resign and was soon contacted by LEGO Japan, which asked him to become head of sales.

"I expected an American style company with top-

down sales targets," reveals Mizutani and continues: "But in the LEGO Group the production side asks the sales department for advice. We make the sales targets together and it is great."

He also confides that he does not speak English. However, his colleagues promised to help him out - and they do.

Normal retirement age in LEGO Japan is 60 with a possibility to extend for some years. Nothing is decided and Mizutani is contemplating his future. It could be some kind of volunteer work involving toys and children.

"For my generation work is hobby," he confesses. "I like to make people happy, which is the result of a good salesman," he states.

However, when young he developed another passion besides toys. He visited a nearby racecourse and fell in love with horses.

"I am not a gambler. It is studying the horses and figuring out their good points, which is interesting," he explains.

He has since covered all the Japanese racecourses with his wife who shares his interest. Kumiko was, however, surprised to spend their honeymoon on a horse-breeding ranch.

"Ninety countries have horse races. I would like to visit some of them in the future," says Mizutani.

*The food is Japanese but the couple has furnished their home with a leather couch, a Danish dining table and chairs made of light wood.*







# FIRE-FIGHTER FOR A DAY

You can't sit behind a desk and design a fire station – so LEGO employees go out fighting fires during working hours.

BY ROAR RUDE TRANGBÆK PHOTO THOMAS YDE AND THE LEGO GROUP

**H**enrik Andersen is a designer with the LEGO Group – but on a cold autumn day in 2008 you might have spotted him dangling 10 metres above the ground at a fire station. He and his colleagues had swapped pen and computer for fire engines, fire and rescue work. They were doing field research, hunting for good ideas for how to design the new LEGO® fire station, which was why they had become firemen for a day. And why Henrik Andersen was hanging precariously above the ground.

“We have to find out how firefighters in real life rescue people from multi-storey buildings. It's highly inspirational being strapped into a safety harness and lowered to the ground, experiencing for yourself what it's like – instead of sitting at a desk trying to guess,” he says.

#### Roll-up door is a must

Every year, LEGO City designers leave their desks to gather inspiration from the real world for their next LEGO models. But children expect certain things when, for example, they buy a fire station – regardless how “real life” may look.

Henrik Andersen: “There are many classic elements that a fire station must have. Obviously there has to be a fire engine – and the roll-up garage door is something every child recognises from cartoons. It's iconic, it just has to be there.”





*A day at a real fire station provides important inspiration for designers – as firemen for one day, they are allowed to put out fires and try the different equipment.*

But a day spent at a real fire station can give the designer important new inspiration.

“When we’re allowed to put out a fire and try different tools, it gives us a better basis for including more details and atmosphere in the finished models. There’s no substitute for being there and trying it for yourself – much better than seeing the situation on the Internet or TV.”

**Balance of real life and fun**

Henrik Andersen stresses the importance of reflecting the details of a real-life fire station in a LEGO model.

“We visited a fire station at an airport. The fire station has a firefighter’s pole, just like the LEGO model – so it is something that’s used in real life. And the LEGO fire engine now has new bricks – they look like hydraulic pistons – which raise the ladder. The pistons look like the ones on a real fire engine,” says Henrik Andersen.

But details shouldn’t be included at all cost, he says: “A fire station is actually a fairly boring place sometimes – it’s just like a big garage. A LEGO fire station has to be an exciting thing to play with. It should be realistic – but should always be fun to play with.”

**Rescuing the cat**

One of the details that help make the fire engine fun for children is a little cat and a tree, which are included in the fire station set. Children can play at rescuing the cat out of the tree.

“It was an idea that came to us late in the design process. The box was to contain four firefighters and one safety net. But it takes four people to hold the net. The question was: who should they be rescuing? Now they can rescue the cat!” says Henrik Andersen.



✘

**A look behind the new fire station**

The new LEGO fire station includes 662 bricks.

The safety net is a new feature in the LEGO fire station – but did you know that it was originally a net hung between a set of football goalposts? Only at that time the net was white.

Fire extinguishers, safety net and firemen's pole are yellow in the LEGO fire station. That's in order that children will notice them but also because the fire station will be sold throughout the world – and fire extinguishers differ from country to country.

The new fire engine is sturdier than earlier ones. There's a risk the ladder on the vehicle will break if children play roughly with it – and children will be children! A specially designed brick has been provided to keep it in place. Often, the front of the fire engine is also broken when children drive it into things. To take care of this problem, designers have created another new brick which strengthens the front.

**“We visited a Fire station at an airport. The Fire station has a Firefighter’s pole, just like the LEGO model – so it is something that’s used in real life”.**

# INNOVATION



## VARIOUS WAYS IN WHICH THE LEGO GROUP IS SAVING ENERGY:

**Lighting:** In collaboration with a lamp manufacturer, LEGO employees have developed a lamp which reacts to movement and at the same time lowers the light intensity when natural daylight flows in through the window. The lamp cuts energy consumption by 80-85% and is flexible – for example, you can increase lighting intensity in graphic departments where there is a need for lots of light or lower it in general office surroundings where the need for lighting is less.



When you pump water to the top of a pipe and spray it in the form of tiny droplets, then blow cold air over it, evaporation lowers the temperature far below what is achieved by traditional cooling technology. The principle is the same as when you wrap a damp cloth around a bottle of soft drink in the summer heat – evaporation cools the bottle. Only here, the principle is applied to cooling LEGO Group moulding machines. LEGO Technician Egon Christensen shows the system on the roof of the Billund Moulding Shop.

## NEEDED TO SAVE ENERGY AND PROTECT THE PLANET



LEGO employees thinking “outside the box” in efforts to save energy. New economy measures support investigation into how the company can switch to renewable, sustainable energy.

BY MARTIN SANDGAARD PHOTO NIELS ÅGE SKOVBO

**T**hey said we were crazy – and that it had never been done before,” says Utilities Manager Mikkel Ørum, recalling his meeting with the ventilation people invited to put one of his many energy-saving ideas into practice. Instead of using energy to heat and then cool the air used in the ventilation system in the company’s Danish factories, his suggestion was simply to cool with outdoor air – which is already cold.

### Seeing the wood, not the trees

“Normally, doing that kind of thing would create draught in a room. And that wouldn’t be a very good idea in an area occupied by lots of people day and night. But we solved the problem by slowing down the air coming into the building by means of a so-called frequency converter. It gave us the positive extra benefit that we were able to save power on fans in the system,” says Mikkel Ørum.

“We’ve broken all the rules on how people normally think of ventilation, and as far as we know we’re the first to have experimented along these lines. But sometimes you arrive at the best result when you have the courage ‘to see the wood, not the trees’, and believe in your ideas.” Mikkel’s idea saved the LEGO Group and the environment 4.6m kilowatt hours – or the equivalent of the annual power consumption of more than 800 Danish homes.

### Every little helps

The philosophy of ‘every little helps’ reduced the LEGO Group’s energy consumption in Denmark by more than 10% from 2007 to 2009. Ventilation, cooling, compressed air and lighting are some of the areas in which the company’s building employees are constantly on the look-out for savings. Since 2007, the saving has been more than 10 million kilowatt hours. At present, intense efforts are going on to examine the company’s Danish energy consumption – and generate inspiration for further economies.



*Electrician Bjarne Hedegaard Sørensen programmes one of the LEGO Group's new intelligent lamps. It has a motion sensor, can compensate for changing levels of daylight, and can be adjusted to suit local conditions to provide the best lighting and maximum saving.*

### **New moulding method good for environment**

Encouraged by favourable results so far, there's an ambition to do even more to reduce the climate and energy impact. Approx. 60% of the company's energy consumption is swallowed up by the machines that – in 2010 – will mould about 26 billion LEGO® bricks. So employees have been keeping their eyes open for new, alternative solutions in the hunt for improvements.

Anders Christiansen is one of the project leaders: "Being able to save energy is a key consideration when you're introducing a new moulding concept for LEGO bricks. By adopting new mould and machine technology, we'll achieve both greater efficiency and huge energy savings."

"For many years, we've used hydraulic pressure to mould LEGO bricks. It's a reliable technology – but not very energy-efficient. So in 2009 we tested some new, electric moulding machines, which are admittedly more expensive – but on the other hand they use as much as 40% less energy," Anders Christiansen says.

### **Local tests, global consequences**

In 2010, last year's tests will be extended to cover both electric moulding machines and so-called hybrid machines, which combine hydraulic and electrical pressure.

Says Anders Christiansen: "Hybrid machines are a bit cheaper to buy but still use up to 30% less energy than traditional moulding machines."

Electrical moulding will be introduced in the Mexico plant in 2010 for further testing and concept proving. Further expansion of this concept will be considered once the concept has been fully evaluated.

### **Switching to renewable energy**

Energy targets are a global matter, extending beyond mere savings, says Helle Sofie Kaspersen, head of the LEGO Group's strategic efforts on the energy front:

"Of course, we have to continue harnessing every good idea our bright employees come up with. And we have to become even better at applying new technology to save energy. But we also have to think along new lines about the kind of energy we use."

"In 2010 we shall be looking at various forms of alternative energy with a view to switching gradually to renewable, sustainable forms. Whether we decide to install wind turbines, solar cells or something else altogether will depend on local conditions at our factory sites: weather conditions, local subsidy schemes, etc. The important thing for us is to make a contribution towards a genuine global change," she says.



#### **VARIOUS WAYS IN WHICH THE LEGO GROUP IS SAVING ENERGY:**

**Cooling:** Cooling takes energy – that includes the cooling of moulding machines. But if the cooling pipeline runs alongside the hot hydraulics pipeline, cooling requires unnecessary extra energy. So experiments are going on to run the cooling and hydraulic pipelines along separate routes.

In some production areas the LEGO Group has introduced "groundwater cooling", cooling water with the help of naturally cold water pumped up from underground. This arrangement provides much more efficient cooling per consumed energy unit than doing the job by conventional means.

**Compressed air:** In one of the production areas in Denmark, there are several compressor units, each as big as a normal office! They supply compressed air to moulding machines and other users. By continuously adjusting and tightening the system instead of doing it, for example, just once a month, it has been possible to reduce pressure loss by the equivalent of 930,000 kilowatt hours a year.



# CHILDREN FIGHT FOREST FIRE

The people of northern California have learned to live with the threat of raging forest fires which devastate the region every year. But six children from the Lake Tahoe district decided there must be a solution – and today they are developing their idea along with some of the world's corporate and educational giants.

BY JAN CHRISTENSEN

It's no fun having to spend a large chunk of your summer vacation indoors. But that's exactly what schoolchildren in the Lake Tahoe district of California, close to the Nevada state border, had to do when four major forest fires swept across their local area in 2008. Six children aged 11-13 years decided to find a solution to the problem of the massive forest fires that are both a threat to life and an enormous drain on resources.

The children entered the FIRST LEGO® League, which with its 140,000 participants is the world's biggest scientific tournament for children and young people.

## PC users raise the alarm

The team of Californian children – calling themselves LEGO Guards – hit upon the idea of having a network of web cameras monitoring large areas of forest. They called their idea "Forest Guard". The cameras transmit images across the Internet to thousands of PC users – who have installed the camera images as a screensaver on their computer screens. And by pressing a single keyboard button, users can notify the fire authorities if they spot smoke or fire. It is not the world's first system for raising the alarm to control forest fires – but the unique aspect is the children's solution of linking cam-

eras to a network of private PC users. It means fires can be traced quickly and cheaply.

The judges examining FIRST LEGO League competition entries thought the idea was good – so good in fact that they gave it first place in the global final. The children also impressed the electronics company SONY, which has joined in the further development of the project, with the support of consulting engineers NIRAS and the University of Nevada.

In December 2009 "Forest Guard" was given its initial tests in one of the forested areas that the system is designed to save from destruction. At the same time, two of the team members had the opportunity to present their idea in connection with the December UN climate summit in Copenhagen, where they impressed the founders of FIRST LEGO League, Inventor Dean Kamen and LEGO Group Owner Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen.

The University of Nevada will take up the further development of "Forest Guard". Meanwhile, the six young entrepreneurs are back in FIRST LEGO League 2010 with a new idea. This time they have their sights on preventing a collapse of information systems in connection with the inevitable annual forest fires.



FIRST LEGO League, which is organised as a joint venture by the LEGO Group and the organisation FIRST, sets children and young people the challenge of solving problems through science and sheer creativity. FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) is a non-profit organisation whose purpose is to encourage children and young people to take an interest in science and technology.



## IVANA ZOBINOVÁ

CZECH  
REPUBLIC

VISITING

BY PERNILLE STANBURY PHOTO PERNILLE STANBURY

**T**ake a look!" says Ivana Zobinová pointing out of her living-room window.

"I can see the LEGO factory from my flat – so I can always check to see whether it's still there!" she says ... and chuckles.

Ivana Zobinová is a happy woman with a ready smile. She has worked for the LEGO Group in the Czech Republic for the past eight years, and about a year ago when she went looking for a new flat for herself and her 17-year-old son, Mark, she was sure of one thing: it had to be near her work.

The little town of Kladno near Prague has both a factory which packs LEGO® sets and a factory which builds large-scale LEGO models. Ivana works in the model factory. She began there as a model builder, mostly because her mother, who worked there, recommended the LEGO plant as a good employer. Now Ivana is a team leader – although now and then she reverts to her old role as a model builder when there's a sudden, acute need for an extra pair of hands. The large models are destined primarily for use in LEGOLAND® Parks and retail displays (toysshops).

"I enjoy my work – which I suppose is obvious from the fact that I've been doing it for eight years! I learn something new every day – for example, at the moment I'm also learning English. I like working with people and solving problems, and I like the people I'm working with," says Ivana.

Now aged 36, she spent four years at home looking after her son – and has worked for only one other company, apart from the LEGO Group.

"The big difference is that the LEGO Group focuses on people, and it's OK to state your honest opinion to

your manager. That wasn't the case where I used to work, I can tell you!" says Ivana.

She is divorced and lives with her son in a three-room flat, which she is buying with the aid of a 30-year mortgage loan. The fifth-floor flat has a fine view across Kladno from the living room, which incorporates an open-plan kitchen with dining area. Ivana and Mark each have their own room, and there is a bathroom complete with a washing machine. The family includes a third important member: Monty the Dog, a Cavalier (although he's still just a pup and is looked after by Ivana's grandmother when she's at work).

"Monty's my second child," says Ivana with a smile, relating how she devotes a lot of her recreational time to the dog. She enjoys reading – Harry Potter books are evidence of that on the shelf – and also music and dancing ... as well as spending time with her friends.

**What's your idea of a good life?**

"Wow, that's quite a question! But I suppose it's having a child who's healthy and happy, and having a good job you enjoy doing. And friends you can discuss your problems with – and have a good time with."

Mark's still at school and dreams about becoming a fireman.

**What are your dreams for your son?**

"He has his own ideas about what he would like to do. But I really would like him to get some experience outside our own country. To take the opportunity to travel – for example, to Britain. We weren't able to do that before 1989," says Ivana Zobinová.

*Ivana and her son Mark are comfortable in their three-room owner flat on the fifth floor. There is a view of the LEGO factory so Ivana can always check to see whether it's still there.*



# DESIGNERS LEAVE fingerprint

If you have a LEGO® set, check it out. You are almost certain to find – somewhere – that the designer has left an identifying fingerprint on the model. For example, the registration plates on vehicles in the LEGO fire station say HA 7208. HA are the initials of Designer Henrik Andersen, and 7208 is the product number of this particular LEGO set. Henrik Andersen has left similar “hidden messages” on 10-15 LEGO models.

“Apart from registration plates, we can sometimes hide letters on computer screens – and one designer features, for example, on a ‘Wanted’ poster for the criminal ‘Flatfoot Thomsen’. Thomsen is the designer’s own surname,” reveals Henrik Andersen.



915,000,000.

## Did you know ... ?

With two 2x4 LEGO bricks of the same colour you can build 24 different figures.

With three 2x4 LEGO bricks of the same colour you can build 1060 different figures.

With six 2x4 LEGO bricks of the same colour you can build more than 915 million different figures.

With eight bricks the number of combinations is virtually unlimited ...



## Did you know ... ?

The LEGO Group expects to sell more than 160 million LEGO sets in 2010.

That's about five sets every second ...

If you packed all the sets into lorries, you would need a fleet of more than 12,000.

If you stacked all the sets on a football field, the pile would be 145 metres high – or the height of a 43-storey building.



# ARCHITECTURE IN MINIATURE

BY ROAR RUDE TRANGBÆK

After 10 years as an architect, American Adam Reed Tucker was getting bored. He drew up a list of what he thought was missing from his life. One of the items was: building models of buildings. So off he went to the nearest toy shop, filled 17 shopping carts with LEGO® bricks – and began building.

In the process Adam Reed discovered that LEGO bricks are perfect for building models of life's real buildings. He created a series of models of well-known skyscrapers – some of them requiring more than 500,000 LEGO bricks.

Later, he experimented with building more compact but still highly recognisable models – and in collaboration with a development department at the LEGO Group whose task it is to identify new ways of doing business, LEGO Architecture came to life: a series of miniature models of renowned American buildings.

LEGO Architecture sets contain far fewer parts than the large models Adam Reed had previously built – but that doesn't mean a great deal, he says:

"My aim is to show that you don't need LEGO bricks worth a fortune to be able to build a model. You can do it in miniature. As an architect, I'm not so interested in the degree of detail – it's more a question of capturing the essence of a building."

***The very shape of LEGO bricks sets a limit on creating detail – is that not a bit of a challenge?***

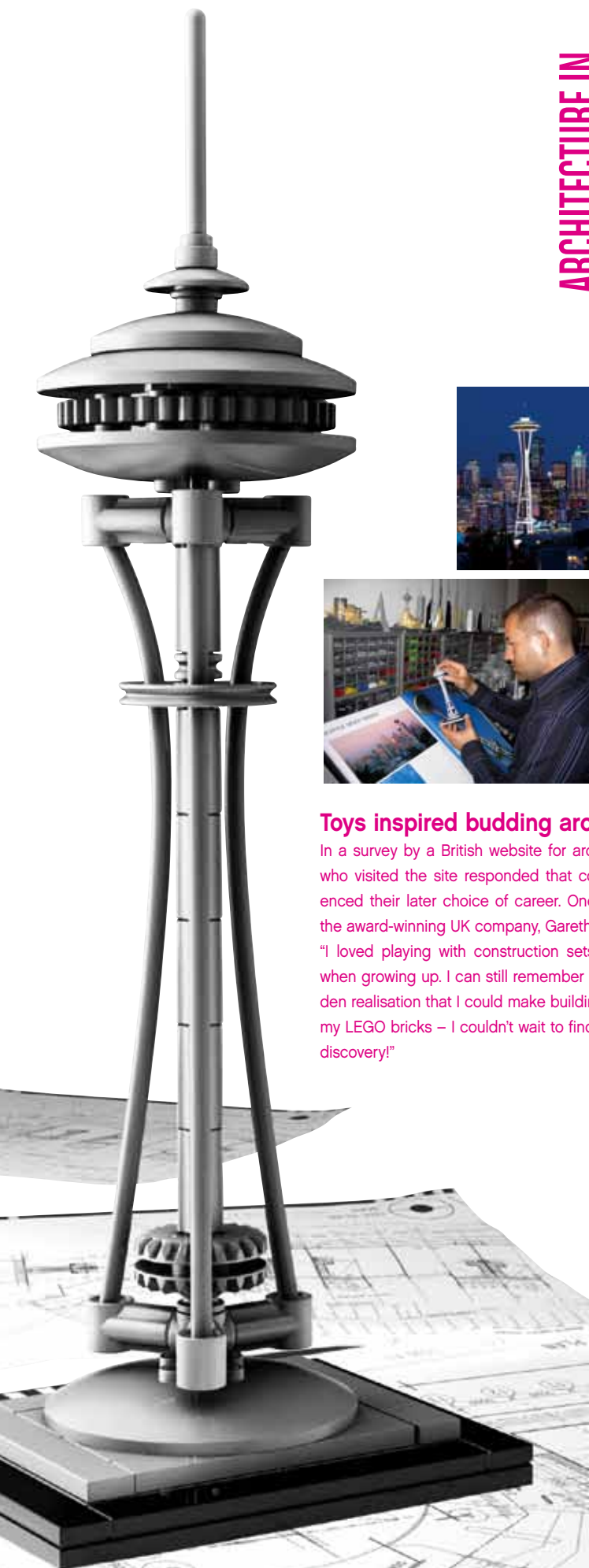
"Actually the limitations help to drive the creative process, and creativity explodes when you use the bricks in new, untried ways. I've often built something I thought was impossible – simply by thinking differently."

***How do you create the LEGO Architecture models?***

"About 75% of my time is spent defining the concept and capturing the essence of the building. I study colour, form, proportions, rhythm, balance, aesthetics, design characteristics and the visual energy. Then I spend 15% of my time on test models, trying various techniques and methods in order to arrive at a good design. The last 10% is spent making final adjustments to the finished model."

## Toys inspired budding architects

In a survey by a British website for architects, 99% of architects who visited the site responded that construction toys had influenced their later choice of career. One of them, Rory McCoy of the award-winning UK company, Gareth Hoskins Architects, said: "I loved playing with construction sets and other building toys when growing up. I can still remember my excitement at the sudden realisation that I could make buildings structurally sound with my LEGO bricks – I couldn't wait to find my next big architectural discovery!"



## LEGO Architecture was launched in the US in 2008.

In 2010 the products will also be available in limited numbers via the LEGO Group's own stores and Shop at Home Internet stores in the UK and Germany.

The series comprises six models:

- Empire State Building, New York
- John Hancock Center, Chicago
- Space Needle, Seattle
- Sears Tower, Chicago
- Guggenheim Museum, New York
- Fallingwater, Pennsylvania

For more information visit: [www.architecture.LEGO.com](http://www.architecture.LEGO.com)







# EMPLOYEES BUILD THEMSELVES a better workplace

Playing with LEGO® bricks helps employees to create a safer workplace environment at the LEGO plant in Hungary.

BY ROAR RUDE TRANGBÆK PHOTO KATONA LÁSZLÓ

**F**erenc Osvári does a lot of shouting. If he didn't, his workmates wouldn't be able to hear what he says above the noise in the moulding hall at the LEGO Group factory in Hungary. The hall has a high ceiling and is packed with machines – all producing LEGO bricks. Sound waves from the machinery bounce off the hard concrete walls and wash backwards and forwards across the hall. The result is a throbbing, metallic racket. The sound level is so overpowering in parts of the moulding shop that the law requires employees to wear hearing protectors.

"Obviously life would be easier if we could cut some of the noise out!" shouts Ferenc Osvári, manager of the moulding shop, as he shows factory visitors around the machinery.

## Inspiring the employees

The noise level at the plant is already a subject of focus – but much more needs to be done, emphasises the factory manager, Jens Peter Clausen.

"We took over the factory in December 2008, and we spent a lot of time in 2009 improving both safety and the working environment. But I'm still not entirely satisfied. What we haven't managed to do yet is change our mentality and culture," says Jens Peter Clausen.

## All ideas welcome

So Ferenc Osvári and 20 of his colleagues are looking for ways to make the LEGO factory a better workplace. Help comes in the shape of a few big boxes piled high with LEGO bricks. Over the next couple of days they will build themselves a better workplace – with bricks.

### Model of the problem

*Ferenc Osvári, manager of the LEGO System moulding shop at the plant, has built a model showing an employee in the process of repairing a moulding machine – without telling anyone that he's doing the repair. This is against the safety regulations – and can be dangerous if an unsuspecting colleague switches the machine on ...*



# ...a better workplace



"While you're building a model of your problem in LEGO bricks, you have to tell the others what you're doing – and that makes the problem visible to everyone. A DUPLO lion can symbolise noise because it roars, and a fence can represent various kinds of barriers, not just physical ones. You work in metaphors when you build like this," says Robert Rasmussen, who is running the event.

Ferenc Osvári picks up two bricks, face deep in concentration, adds them to a LEGO model – and breaks into a huge, satisfied smile. Before him he has a potential problem at the factory, now captured in model form. A minifigure, symbolising an employee, its hands deep inside a switched-off moulding machine, is repairing a machine fault.

"Maybe a colleague starts the machine because no one knows someone is busy repairing it – and he has an accident. Simply because no one's been told – although it's laid down in the rules," says Ferenc Osvári, showing the model to the others around the table.

## Making progress

Later, in a newer moulding hall, he shows some of the progress made in creating a better working environment. The ceiling has been lowered, sound-absorbing materials hang on the walls – and there are fewer moulding machines in the room, which is located next to the larger, older moulding hall, where the noise is so loud that everyone has to wear hearing protectors. The noise level in the new hall is much lower.

"It's a great improvement, and I hope we can do something similar to reduce the noise in the rest of the moulding shop," says Ferenc Osvári.

Jens Peter Clausen stresses that the LEGO Group has both the desire and the determination to invest in improving the workplace envi-

ronment. In 2010 alone it has earmarked several million kroner aimed at further reducing the noise level at the Hungarian factory.

Jens Peter Clausen: "But a lot of the thinking is up to the employees who face the problem day in, day out. We encourage all our employees to get involved in identifying improvements to help facilitate their daily work. Every employee has to feel that he or she can put forward suggestions for improving the workplace environment. And that they will be listened to."

## 21 ideas for improving the workplace

Two days' "play" with LEGO bricks – producing 21 specific proposals for improving the working environment. Roaring lions behind fences symbolise noisy, but enclosed, moulding machines – and models of decorating machines and assembly lines illustrate repetitive work. Nine of the ideas have been selected by employees and given top priority.

"It's important that you yourselves are responsible for the changes. If you have the impression that it's a problem finding time or resources to implement the changes, my door is always open – come and speak to me," Jens Peter Clausen urges his employees.

One of the suggestions is that employees who stand for long periods at the same machine should take a short walk through the premises every hour or so – to introduce a bit of variety to their work.

"It's a really good idea – and, in principle, it can be adopted immediately. But I think we in management should take the lead, show a good example, and take part in the exercises during one of our tours of the plant – to show that we really do believe it's important," says Jens Peter Clausen.



## Three focus areas at the LEGO factory

Armed with LEGO bricks and creativity, employees at the LEGO factory in Hungary came up with solutions to three challenges: Noise, hand injuries and RSI – repetitive strain injury.

Noise from machinery and assembly lines is a problem familiar to hundreds of employees in LEGO factories all over the world.

RSI also affects many employees on assembly lines and decorating machines – often repeating the same movements over a long period.

In 2009 there were 56 workplace accidents at the Hungarian plant – 23 of them involving hand or finger injuries. Only seven of the 56, however, resulted in more than one day's absence from work.

## Focus on general and workplace environment

The LEGO Group focuses on having a good workplace environment. All LEGO factories today have earned environmental certification in accordance with ISO 14001, and all workplaces with more than 100 employees are certified according to OHSAS 18001.

These technical labels show that factories and workplaces satisfy stringent environment and safety requirements – and that the LEGO Group constantly focuses on improving conditions for its employees. Every year, external auditors monitor that the LEGO Group continues to live up to the stipulated standard.

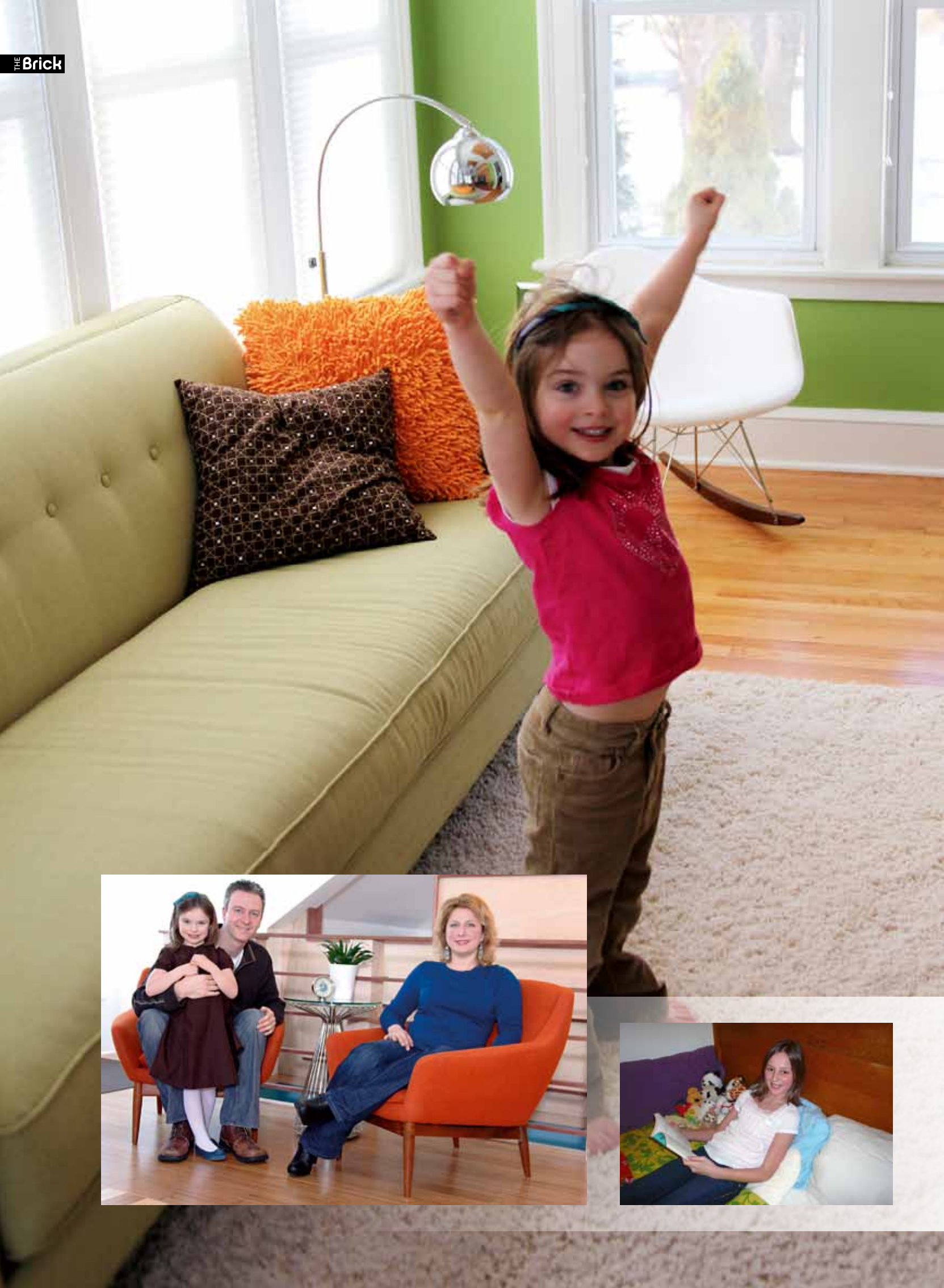
The LEGO Group also observes global standards for how heavy objects should be lifted and how repetitive movements, chemicals, waste, noise levels and warehouse facilities should be handled in order to ensure a healthy environment.

The aim is for the LEGO Group to be among the 10 safest employers in the world by 2015.

“

In one area of the factory the noise level has already been cut dramatically by fairly simple measures, says Judit Nagyné Dr. Dömötör, who's responsible for health, safety and environmental matters: "We've moved the assembly machine away from the moulding machines, applied sound-absorbing sheeting to the walls up to a height of 4 metres and placed foam material inside some of the machines to reduce the noise."





## JOHN MCCORMACK

VISITING  
USA

BY DANIEL LIPKOWITZ PHOTO JOHN MCCORMACK

**J**ohn McCormack works as an Art Director at the U.S.A. LEGO office in Enfield, Connecticut. His responsibilities include the creative development of the global communication concept, including packaging, television spots and other marketing materials for the hugely successful LEGO® *Star Wars* theme.

Asked about his spare-time activities, he says that he spends most of it raising his two daughters, Grace and Sophia, with his wife Karra. He also paints, studies art and architecture and admits to being obsessed with (American) football and basketball.

"I consider my role at LEGO to be a dream job," John says. "I am involved in the day-to-day upkeep of the LEGO *Star Wars* IP, which presents many opportunities to be creative and is loads of fun."

John never minds coming in to work. "Each day is unique and inspiring," he says. "Monday mornings are not a problem for me. There is nothing tedious about working here... well, maybe except for those long plane rides to the Danish headquarters in Billund, Denmark."

Plane rides or no, John would be hard-pressed to find other employment where he enjoyed his work as much. "This is the first company I have worked for where I can imagine always being here, and not wondering about what I will do next for a job."

**What makes a good workplace?**

John: "A place where I work toward a goal, feel like my role has an impact and can somehow make a difference in what I am doing."

**How has your job changed over your time at the company?**

John: "I started as a designer who handled many

different jobs for the North American market. I used to be known as the 'Co-Pack King.' My job is now more specific in that I only deal with novelty development for LEGO *Star Wars*, and I now team up with colleagues throughout the world to deliver the best product possible.

**What's the most rewarding part of your job?**

John: "It is especially pleasing to be a part of an organization that inspires kids so much, and I relish my role in helping to do that."

John's personal goals are very much in synch with the company's own: "To nurture and help my children grow into good people, to remain eternally optimistic and positive no matter what we are faced with over-coming, and to preserve what is good and pass it on to the next generation."

In talking to John about his work at the LEGO Group, it becomes clear how much he really loves what he does:

"When I was a kid, my dream job was working for George Lucas at Industrial Light & Magic as a special effects artist. I studied the movies and bought books on how ILM created the *Star Wars* universe. I was also a huge fan of LEGO products, and I specifically remember doing extra chores so I could get enough cash to buy the brand-new LEGO Space and Castle sets. I would make my own Hoth movie sets, painting backgrounds and building snowspeeders out of LEGO bricks. I feel like I am living out my childhood dream with my job here at LEGO, working on *Star Wars*. What could be better than that?"

*John McCormack spends most of his time off with his wife Karra and his daughters Grace and Sophia.*



# FIGHTING CORRUPTION

Is it OK to accept two expensive games consoles as a gift from a supplier? Is it OK to pay 20 dollars to pass more quickly through passport control? The LEGO Group trains its employees to behave decently.

BY PERNILLE STANBURY

**S**ituation: The LEGO Group is looking for a new supplier, and the choice is between two candidate companies. A LEGO employee visits one of the suppliers in Taiwan and is invited out to dinner in the evening. Over dinner the LEGO employee chats a little about his family in Denmark and mentions that he has two children. They are 10 and 12 – and are crazy about computer games.

The next day the supplier arrives with a gift: Two of the latest Nintendo DS games consoles. What should the LEGO employee do? Say thank-you and take the gifts back home to the children? Say “thank you – but I’m not allowed to accept gifts”? Or say thank-you, take the gifts home – and inform the boss? More in a moment about the Nintendo dilemma.

It’s a constructed example – but realistic, nevertheless, when you work for an international company.

## **Bribe – no, never**

Throughout its more than 75 years of existence, the LEGO Group has built up a good reputation. Just how company employees can preserve that reputation is something you can read in a manual, laying down rules for good business ethics – viewed from a LEGO perspective. The manual says, for example, that LEGO employees must never offer or accept a bribe or put themselves in a situation where a conflict arises between their personal interests and the interests of the company.

“We set high standards and emphasise the importance of doing things the right way. With that in mind, we’ve set up a training course in which we put employees in various dilemma situations taken from real life. Many of our senior managers and employees who are involved in sales or procurement have taken the course,” says Lars Vinther Øhlenschläger from the LEGO Group’s department for Corporate Governance.

## **LEGO® bricks for the authorities – no way!**

Fine principles and rules written in a manual are one thing. But things can be







different when you're faced with the problem "in the field". When you're standing there with goods you can't get into a country because an insistent person in authority demands a cash backhander.

Lars Vinther Øhlenschläger: "Obviously we know this kind of situation occurs, and we've spoken to colleagues in some of the countries where it is most likely to happen. We heard from one country manager that we have had a truckload of goods standing at the border for several days because our colleagues in the given country refused to pay a facility payment. Finally, the authorities had to give up and let the truck through."

A facility payment can, for example, be when a person in authority demands, say, 20 dollars to speed up an administrative process.

Lars Vinther Øhlenschläger: "We don't – and we won't – play that game. It's a form of bribery, even though it may well be at a low level – we're not going to allow our employees to commit a criminal act on behalf of the company. It's not within our norms and values. The only time it can be excused is when an employee's health or life is in danger."

Speaking to colleagues from other countries has revealed, however, that another practice has been seen in some cases:

"They told us that they had an internal rule that it was OK to give a person in authority a few LEGO boxes, if it could help to get things through. They didn't think it was the same as giving someone cash. So giving someone a facility

payment has in fact happened in our company – but we're working to do away with the practice entirely, partly through a dialogue based on our manual and the follow-up courses," says Helle Sofie Kaspersen, head of the LEGO Group department for Corporate Governance and Sustainability.

**Talk things over**

The hope is that the training courses will inspire employees in the various departments to talk about how to behave in specific situations – also because there can be differences from country to country.

Helle Sofie Kaspersen: "There are so many borderline cases. Every single department or national office which could face the problem should get a discussion going and set a limit for what's acceptable – and what's not. For example, in a procurement department there must be clear-cut limits for how large a gift it is permitted to accept from a supplier."

**Nintendo no-thanks**

So what about the Nintendo dilemma? Can the LEGO employee's children look forward to a couple of new games consoles? No. In some countries it is normal practice in the business world to receive modest gifts or be invited out for a meal. But two Nintendo DS games consoles – that's something the employee would have to refuse. But nicely. Such gifts are too generous. They could be looked upon as a bribe – or could influence the employee to make the wrong decision.



"Business Conduct with Integrity – the LEGO Way" is available to all LEGO employees – and suppliers and other business partners are welcome to receive a copy. The LEGO Group subscribes to the UN Global Compact, which lays down 10 general principles governing participating companies' work with social responsibility. One of the 10 principles is that the company should fight all forms of corruption, including blackmail and bribery. If an employee is in any doubt, he or she can always contact their superior, the LEGO Group department for Corporate Governance or the Legal Department.





# CRANE TRUCK

IS INSPIRED BY THE REAL THING

BY PERNILLE STANBURY

If LEGO Designer Uwe Wabra sees a tough, cool truck driving down the street, he is quite likely to run after it for a closer look. That's what it's like being a LEGO® Technic designer. Although most of the inspiration for the big models comes from online illustrations or trade fairs, the designer is always on the lookout for new interesting details.

It took Uwe Wabra eight months to design the big motorised Technic Crane Truck. He built at least

50 different versions before arriving at the finished item. The result is a red truck with a four-stage gearbox controlling all its functions. The yellow crane unfolds, rises and lowers, and swivels. The cab can tip open, and four outriggers stabilise the vehicle as it lifts its heavy loads.

While Uwe Wabra is designing a model, he can build it without the building instructions – he could put the crane truck together in 4-5 hours, whereas other people might spend twice that long. But

once the model is finished and he is working on a new design project, within a couple of weeks he's forgotten the old one.

It looks, by the way, as if Uwe likes the number 1877. The Crane Truck consists of 1877 LEGO pieces – the same number as the black Tow Truck (a US vehicle from 2006) that he also designed.



Notice the driver's name sign on the windscreen, the registration plate and the company name on the door UW Lifting Service – the vehicle carries the designer's personal touch.

# LEGO FACTORY GOES RETAIL

BY ROAR RUDE TRANGBÆK PHOTO KATONA LÁSZLÓ

**V**iktória Villás and Alekszandra Karvatszka are wearing their best smiles and red LEGO® sweatshirts, and they've left their day jobs at the Hungarian LEGO factory a few hundred kilometres north of Budapest – for a couple of days. For the next 48 hours they will be facing the public as LEGO “experts” in a large toy retailer’s in the Hungarian capital. The place is packed with toys – and eager children and parents looking for that perfect Christmas gift.

Every year, several hundred LEGO employees volunteer to leave their familiar jobs in factories, offices and development departments, and join the front line – helping retailers during the peak season.

## Getting close to the consumer

For Viktória Villás, Alekszandra Karvatszka and 11 other colleagues in Hungary, it's the first time they've been on such an assignment. But it won't be the last if it's up to them.

“At the LEGO factory I only see boxes of LEGO bricks when they are packed and loaded aboard lorries to be driven off to customers. I'd never really seen what happens to the product when it leaves the factory – and how it's delivered to the shops. Now I know – and it's actually nice meeting consumers in the shops,” says Viktória Villás, whose normal day job is dispatching goods from the LEGO warehouse.

Alekszandra Karvatszka works in Production at the Hungarian factory – so she's familiar with the contents of the LEGO DUPLO sets stacked on the shelves of the Hungarian toyshop.

“Although I maybe won't be able to use my consumer contacts in my daily work, working in the shop has shown very clearly that the products we make at the factory make consumers – the children – happy. And that in itself gives you a good feeling,” she says.

## Unusual – but good

For Mr. Ladányi, owner of the shop Játékbox (in English: Toy Box), it's been a positive experience having two real-life LEGO employees helping to stack shelves and meet customers:

“It's been interesting for the customers to hear about LEGO bricks from people at the factory where they are actually made. I don't think any other toy manufacturer does anything like this in Hungary. It's unusual but I'd definitely like to repeat it – no doubt about that.”

## What's hot – and what's not?

But why does the LEGO Group invest resources in sending its staff away from their desks and machines – into the toyshops? There are several reasons. In the first place, it gives employees a

*Employees at the LEGO factory in Hungary have been helping out at some of the country's toyshops. It gives everyone a better understanding of which LEGO sets customers are buying.*



## It's a global, old and good idea

LEGO Group employees have been swapping their day jobs for toyshop work for more than 10 years – to help form a picture of how consumers respond to LEGO products. It is a voluntary arrangement – run independently by LEGO offices in each country. Employees are usually sent to shops during very busy periods – often in the peak month, December.



greater understanding of what's going on in the market, and how toyshops co-operate with the LEGO Group. But just as important is the contact the employees make with the children, parents and grandparents who buy LEGO bricks. Which products do they think are "hot" – and how do they react if the product they were wanting is sold out?

### **Empty shelves and an unforgettable face**

The LEGO factory in Hungary manufactures LEGO DUPLO sets almost exclusively – so it comes as something of a surprise to the visiting LEGO employees that DUPLO products are not the ones most people are asking for. One surprised man is Tamás Papolczi, who designs moulds – when he's not helping out in a toyshop:

"The two days I've spent in the shop have told me a lot about which sets are most popular with the customers. For example, I now realise that LEGO *Star Wars* sells much more than DUPLO! That was a huge surprise to me!"

In one of the shops the factory employees were sent to, there was such a demand for LEGO *Star Wars* that there were soon no more on the shelves.

"People kept asking for LEGO *Star Wars* – but we had to try and send them to other shops which still had the product. That wasn't very good ..." says Marietta Hegyes. But back at work in the mould workshop at the LEGO factory, it was the memory of a little boy in the toyshop she recalls best:

"It was quite amusing – but not for him! He was a little boy, and he wanted to know the price of all the LEGO sets in the shop – and he wanted to buy them all – but his mum said: No, you can only have one! So he had to be happy with a – small – Power Miners set ... oh, I'll never forget his face!"

The experiences gained from working with retailers will be shared with factory colleagues, and the information will help the LEGO Group to give toyshops and consumers better service in future. The ambition, of course, is to make the LEGO Group the best supplier of toys in the world.



# THE MAKING OF A HERO

Jes Vestergaard makes plasma weapons, supervillains and robot heroes. He's one of the designers behind LEGO® HERO FACTORY.

BY ROAR RUDE TRANGBÆK PHOTO NIELS ÅGE SKOVBO

**J**es Vestergaard creates heroes out of paper, pencil and computer. The heroes are born in the sketches he and a handful of other LEGO designers sit and work on behind closed doors in Billund, Denmark. And from August 2010 the heroes will make their appearance on toyshop shelves all over the world: LEGO HERO FACTORY.

LEGO Designer Jes Vestergaard was a member of the team that created the BIONICLE figures sold globally for a decade. LEGO HERO FACTORY is the successor to BIONICLE, and here Jes Vestergaard has also been involved – right from the earliest sketches two years ago.

## Start with the bad guys

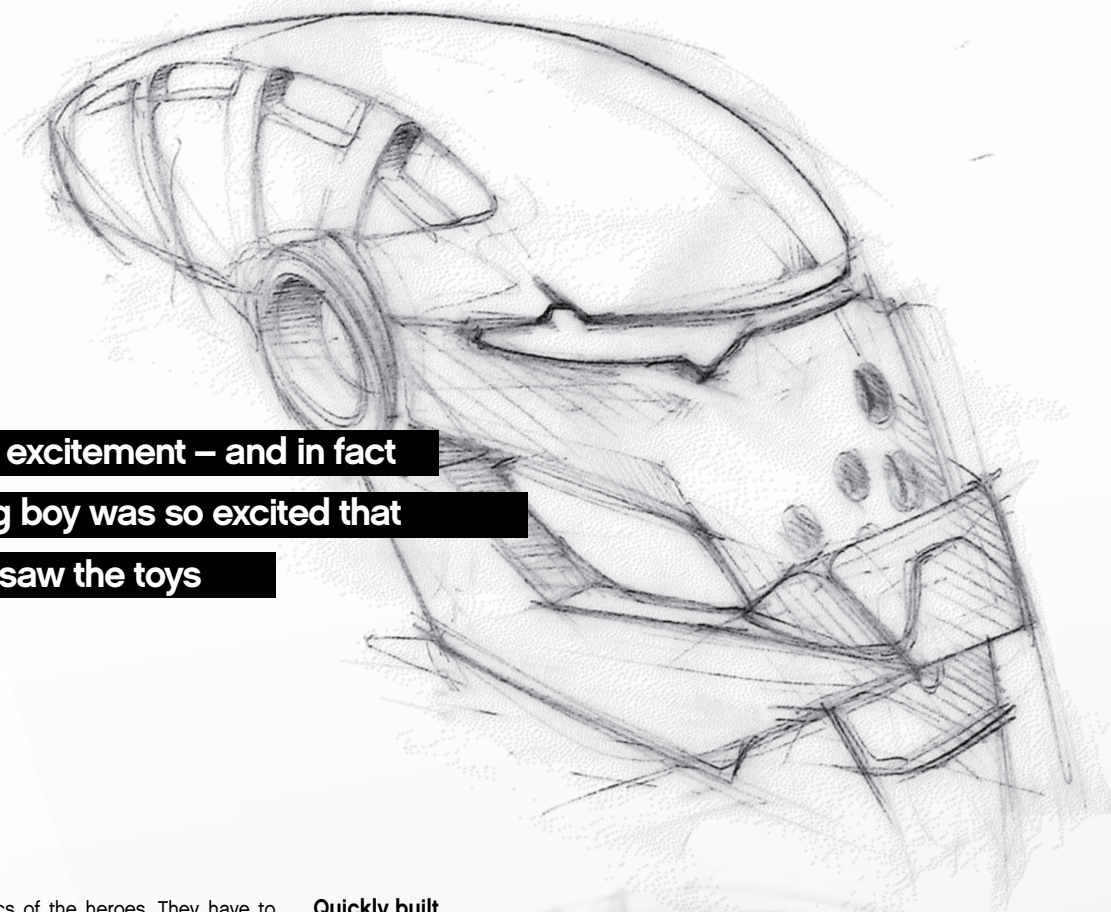
How do you go about inventing a brand-new story about robot heroes? You begin with the supervillain, says Jes Vestergaard:

"Once you've found out what the bad guys will look like, it's actually quite



*The mask worn by Preston Stormer is one of Jes Vestergaard's favourites: "It says: This is a person in control of things – a born leader you don't want to cross or get on the wrong side of."*





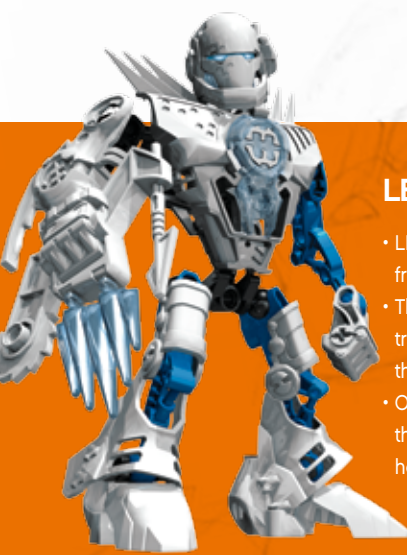
**“They can jump about in excitement – and in fact on one occasion a young boy was so excited that he wet himself when he saw the toys he’d come to test ...”**

easy deciding the features and characteristics of the heroes. They have to be strong enough to fight the evil villains – and win. The main villain in HERO FACTORY is called Von Nebula, and he’s really evil. For example, he can create black holes – and use them to destroy his enemies.”

**Six robots are the heroes**

There are six heroes in LEGO HERO FACTORY. All of them are robots, built in a “Hero Factory”. And together they fight it out with Von Nebula and his henchmen.

“Each of the heroes has his special strengths – a bit like BIONICLE characters. When it came to deciding what weapons the heroes should have, we drew our inspiration from BIONICLE fan pages on the Net, where children discuss which weapons and powers they think are cool. We found that plasma is a big hit, and the leader of the Heroes, Preston Stormer, actually has an ice-plasma weapon,” says Jes Vestergaard.



**LEGO HERO FACTORY**

- LEGO HERO FACTORY will be on sale from August 2010.
- The story is about a factory which builds, trains and equips robot heroes – who are then sent out into the world to fight evil.
- Our story has six heroes, battling against the main villain Von Nebula and his five henchmen.

**Quickly built**

LEGO HERO FACTORY figures are quick to build and the figures are very stable, enabling boys’ action play. Designing the figures was an exciting task for Jes Vestergaard and his fellow designers.

“The challenge is to create six figures, each with its own identity. You have to use colours and include design details that give them a unique expression. And I think we’ve managed to produce a fair result,” he says, introducing us to the six small hero figures.

**Preston Stormer is a leader**

Jes Vestergaard has worked on a number of elements, including the leg protectors for the new heroes and the mask worn by one of the figures. He holds up Preston Stormer’s mask, one of his favourites:

“It’s a simple mask – but radiates strong character. The mask says: This is a person in control of things – a born leader you don’t want to cross or get on the wrong side of.”

While it can be a challenge designing figures, one of the things you enjoy as a designer is when selected children are invited to give their views on the almost finished products.

“Children give you their candid view, and they see things differently. We designers can show them a particular character we think is pretty awesome, even invincible. Their reply: Hey, he’s got no protection on his back – he’s too weak!” says Jes Vestergaard.

**A minor accident ...**

But fortunately, for the most part, children are delighted when they’re asked to test new toys – and that goes for LEGO HERO FACTORY too.

“They can jump about in excitement – and in fact on one occasion a young boy was so excited that he wet himself when he saw the toys he’d come to test ...” says Jes Vestergaard.







GITTE GULDAGER &amp; JOHN NIELSEN

VISITING

## DENMARK

BY PERNILLE STANBURY PHOTO NIELS ÅGE SKOVBO

**T**here are few things more typically Danish than a housing estate like the one in which Gitte Guldager Nielsen and John Nielsen live in Billund. Straight streets, relatively uniform houses, easy access to school and leisure activities, overlooking a beautiful green area. Their house has been the safe, comfortable oasis in their family life for 25 years.

They have been married for 27 years, been together for even longer – and represent the very essence of stability. John has been a LEGO employee for 35 years, Gitte for 32. But as John points out, he has colleagues who have been with the company even longer...

He is a toolmaker and started with the LEGO Group as a mechanic. He progressed to the post of manager of Pre-Production Testing, a department which tests and prepares production equipment for new LEGO® bricks. Currently, he works in the Concept Centre, tasked with finding new ways of making interesting LEGO bricks in future.

#### **What keeps someone with the same employer for so long?**

"They haven't thrown me out yet!" says John, a wry smile crossing his face:

"I've been through many changes, with departments that have moved, been renamed and given new managers – so I've not always had the luxury of job security. Unfortunately, I've had to do my own share of laying off staff. On the positive side, I've always found my work interesting and challenging – involving quite a lot of travel."

Gitte began her LEGO career with LEGOLAND® Billund, and worked in a couple of other departments before – 20 years ago – taking up her present job with LEGO Security. Security personnel and Control Centre look after LEGO buildings in Billund, providing a first response in the event of a fire or intruder situation. Other businesses and private households can buy the same service from LEGO Security, and Gitte and her colleagues process all alarm calls to the Control Centre. One of her tasks is making ID cards for Billund employees.

"No two days are ever the same – you never know what's coming! I'm really pleased to be working here – and I've got great colleagues and two good, understanding bosses."

#### **What's a good manager?**

"It's someone you're never afraid to approach with a work-related problem. And our managers always support us when we've taken the action we thought best in any given situation. A good manager also has a good understanding of people and treats employees differently – to get to the same result in the end. A really good manager is also close to his or her staff – without being so close that respect between them is lost," says Gitte.

The only thing she thinks her job situation lacks is for all employees now and again to meet outside office hours and take part in some fun activity together – but that's impossible because staff have to be on duty 24 hours a day, 365 days a year at LEGO Security.

John, too, appreciates having a good manager.

"I know I can trust him, and he knows he can trust me. Things are followed up, and that makes for stability. I've also worked under the opposite kind of boss – no clear prioritising or focus on the work at hand," he says.

That word stability again – in John's mind stability means a good life, a secure life. His wife agrees. A good and interesting job brings an element of security to your life.

But work isn't the only thing in this couple's life. They have an adult daughter and son, both now in homes of their own: Daughter Sanne is 25 and training to be a police officer, Son Allan is 22 and a qualified carpenter. The family enjoy travelling – and their second main recreational interest is sport. All family members have played handball, still play tennis, and enjoy watching sport on TV.

#### **What are your dreams for your children?**

"A secure, good family life – and jobs they enjoy working at," says John.

Gitte: "Yes, too many relationships break up these days. We hope they find a good partner and start families. But it would be OK for them to change their employers, if that's what they wanted. We don't think it's been boring working for the same employer for so many years – but they have to respond to the times they're living in."

*It's nice visiting LEGO couple, Gitte Guldager and John Nielsen, in Billund. Cut flowers, cosy candles, and the aroma of fresh coffee. Pictures of their two children on the wall clearly show what's important in their lives.*



# NEW HOPE OF BETTER FUTURE FOR SOUTH AFRICAN YOUNGSTERS

A good education is not something many South African children can take for granted. But in the township of Atteridgeville, LEGO® Care for Education is helping to give children a better education – and boost their belief in their own abilities.

BY JAN CHRISTENSEN

**T**he belief that education will help you towards a better future is not widely held in the poorest sections of the population of South Africa. But for 40,000 children in the township of Atteridgeville, the future may be looking up. The LEGO Care for Education programme “Developing talents through creative play” aims to boost children’s skills and their appetite for education as a means of escaping from poverty.

The goal is to reach out to 25 schools over the next five years. The programme is based on LEGO Education’s learning philosophy and educational materials, which stimulate learning and development through the medium of play. LEGO Education has been selling this philosophy to schools in the western world for more than 25 years but through Care for Education a long-term commitment is being made to areas such as Atteridgeville, where good schooling and well-trained teachers are a rarity.

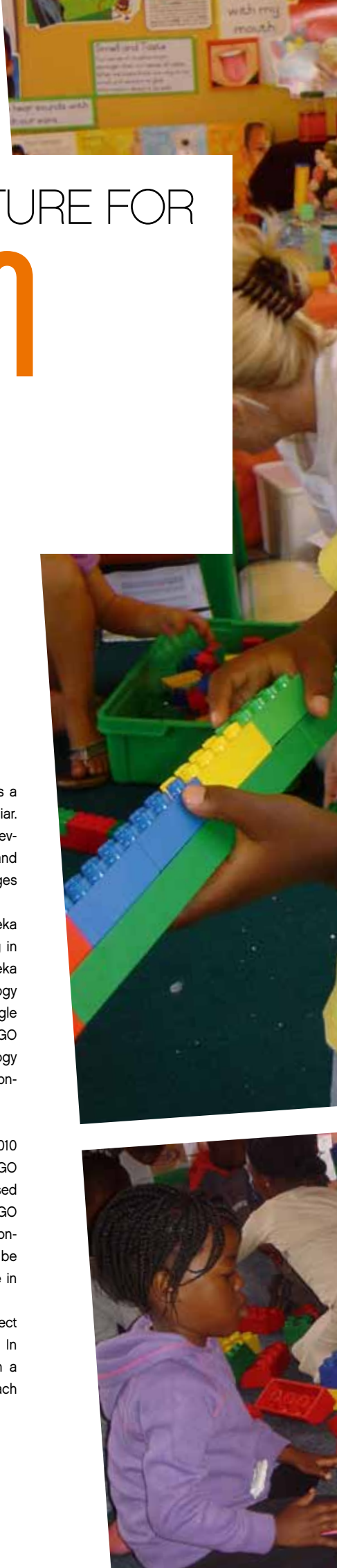
To reach the 40,000 children, more than 1,000 teachers will undergo thorough training in learning philosophy and the use of educational materials. One of the biggest challenges is to arouse the interest of teachers and persuade

them to set aside their scepticism towards a method with which they are not yet familiar. Children quickly grasp the idea – despite never previously having seen a LEGO brick, and their obvious commitment in turn encourages trust and confidence in the teachers.

Freddy Makgato is a teacher at the Vuleka School, one of the institutions participating in the project: “LEGO sets are precious to Vuleka learners – and they can’t wait for technology lessons! Even pupils who sometimes struggle with other learning areas shine when LEGO sets are placed in front of them. Technology without LEGO is like a school without stationery!”

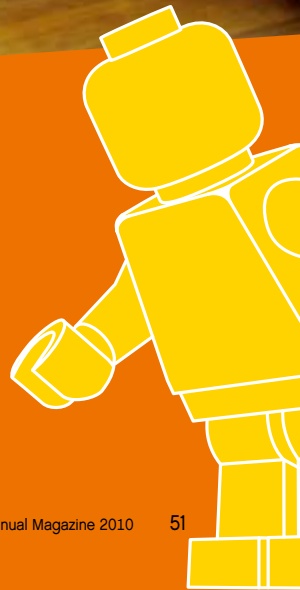
A special feature of the programme in 2010 will see children at 40 schools building LEGO models of the football stadiums to be used in World Cup games in South Africa. LEGO designers will advise the children in the construction of their models, which will later be exhibited at the Sci-bono Discovery Centre in Johannesburg.

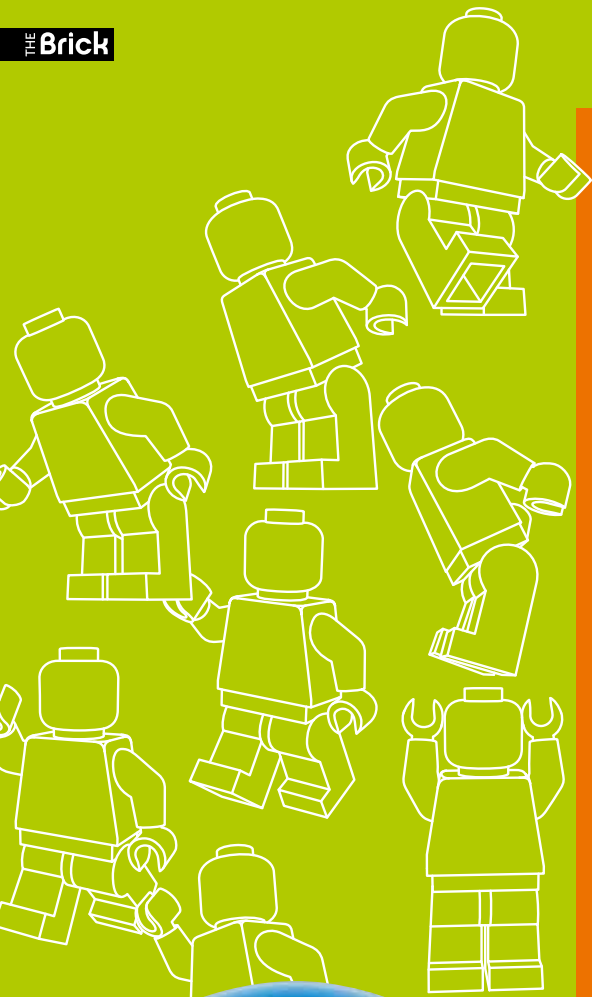
Experience gained in the Atteridgeville project will in future benefit even more children. In 2011 LEGO Care for Education will launch a new programme in China, planning to reach pupils at 200 schools.





The programme "Developing talents through creative play" is supported by the LEGO Foundation and a number of business partners in South Africa. The LEGO Foundation was set up to inspire and develop poor and disadvantaged children through fun, instructive and creative play of high quality. In 2009 the LEGO Foundation distributed LEGO® products and economic assistance to the value of DKK 42.5m (EUR 5.7m). The training of teachers is administered by LEGO Education's partner in South Africa, Hands On Technology. Care for Education also includes LEGO donations for children outside the project schools and a research project which monitors child development to document the effect and gather experience for new Care for Education projects.





## Remote control recalled from market

In summer 2009, the LEGO Group recalled a remote control from the market. There was a risk that consumers might burn themselves on the remote control because the batteries could become overheated.

The remote had exclusively been sold to consumers through the webshop at [www.LEGO.com](http://www.LEGO.com) or the LEGO® Shop at Home catalogue – not through normal retailers. So the LEGO Group contacted all consumers who had purchased one of the remote controls, offering them the opportunity to return the product. A total of approx. 2250 remotes had been sold – either separately or as part of another set. No one came to any harm using the remote control.

It was only the third time in 77 years that the LEGO Group had had to recall a product because of product-safety issues. In 1998, a child's rattle

was withdrawn from the European market – after four cases were reported of children having got the rattle into their mouth, which represented a potential hazard. The product was recalled immediately, even though it conformed to the safety rules. The LEGO Group actually received many inquiries from consumers who wanted to keep the rattle because they were pleased with it.

In 2006, the LEGO Group recalled a large LEGO truck. Several years earlier, the truck had been sold in the USA and had carried a large box of DUPLO bricks. The problem was that children took the truck outside to play with, even though it was not intended for that. The metal in the wheel axles wasn't intended for outdoor use. In some cases the metal had rusted ... the wheels had fallen off ... and it was possible to hurt yourself on the protruding end of the metal axle.

## Did you know ... ?

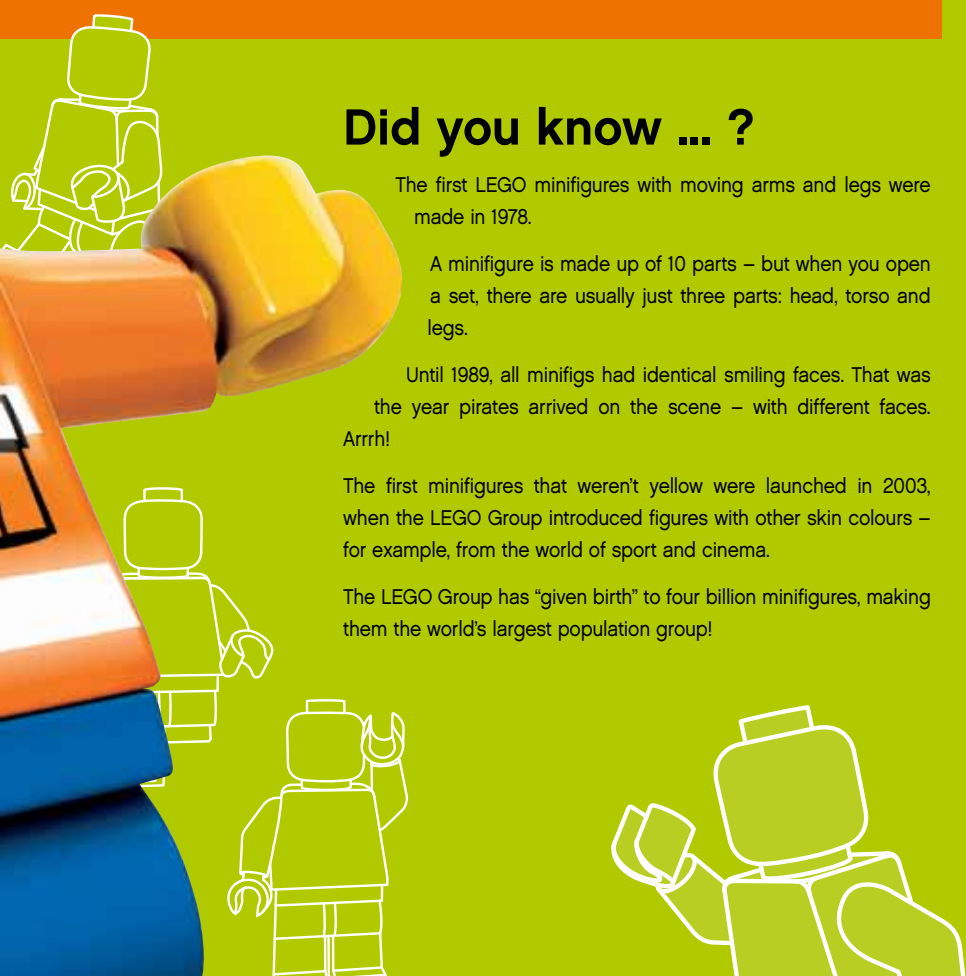
The first LEGO minifigures with moving arms and legs were made in 1978.

A minifigure is made up of 10 parts – but when you open a set, there are usually just three parts: head, torso and legs.

Until 1989, all minifigs had identical smiling faces. That was the year pirates arrived on the scene – with different faces. Arrrh!

The first minifigures that weren't yellow were launched in 2003, when the LEGO Group introduced figures with other skin colours – for example, from the world of sport and cinema.

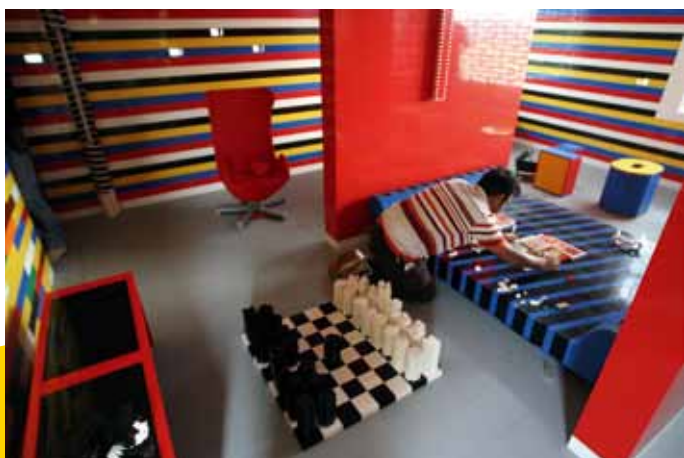
The LEGO Group has "given birth" to four billion minifigures, making them the world's largest population group!





## BOYHOOD DREAM COMES TRUE

Can you build a real house of LEGO® bricks?  
Answer: Yes – if you have **three million bricks**,  
loads of help and tons of imagination.



*James May spent one night in the house which had everything a real LEGO house should have: Colourful walls, a bed, a sofa and a kitchen.*

BY RENÉ MADSEN PHOTO STEVE PARSONS/PRESS ASSOCIATION IMAGES

**W**hen you're a child, you have virtually unlimited imagination – but a limited number of LEGO bricks. And you're never able to build what your imagination dreams up. I thought: I'm grown-up now, I can have as many LEGO bricks as I want – so why don't I make a real house out of them?"

The grown-up boy asking the adult question is British TV Presenter James May, who fulfilled his dream in 2009. Assisted by thousands of volunteers, he built himself a LEGO house big enough for him to live in.

In a rather typical, wet, British summer the dedicated volunteers sat assembling several thousand LEGO "brick units", each consisting of 272 standard 2x4 LEGO bricks – all of which eventually went into the house that James built. A total of 3.3 million bricks.

The two-storey building had everything a real LEGO house should have: colourful walls, functioning toilet, bed, sofa and kitchen – all built out of LEGO bricks without using as much as a single drop of glue.

James May spent one night in the house, discovering that a LEGO bed lends new meaning to the term "a firm mattress", and that joints between LEGO bricks are not watertight without glue. After a shower upstairs, for example, there was a steady drip-drip-drip through the ceiling downstairs. But even though a real-life LEGO House isn't likely to replace traditional houses of bricks and mortar, children will nevertheless be able to continue having fun with the many bricks used in the building.

Because shortly afterwards, James May's boyhood dream was dismantled and broken down into 3.3 million pieces again. The many LEGO bricks were moved to LEGOLAND Windsor, where in future visitors will be able to build with them. A house, a whole village, another boyhood dream – who knows?

LEGO STAR WARS

# — THE SUCCESS — — THE CONTINUES

The first LEGO® *Star Wars* products were marketed in 1999. And they are still a hit to this day.

BY ROAR RUDE TRANG/ÆK

**L**ight Sabre, Darth Vader, Death Star, Luke Skywalker, TIE Fighter, Princess Leia, Millennium Falcon, Chewbacca, X-Wing. To some people, these are just a string of words with little or no meaning.

But for a whole generation of fans throughout the world the words are more than mere words. They summon up mental images in young and old alike. Two words – one title – bind them all together: *Star Wars*.

George Lucas's adventure movie about a battle between good and evil in a distant galaxy has thrilled millions of people throughout the world. In 1999 the LEGO Group became part of that adventure – with the launch of the first LEGO *Star Wars* sets.

## A great decision

"LEGO *Star Wars* has become something of a classic line of LEGO products today, and our decision to license the story into the LEGO universe may have been one of the best we have ever made as a company," says Søren Torp Laursen, President of LEGO Group sales in the English-speaking countries. But it was a controversial decision, recalls Jill Wilfert, Senior Director of Inbound Licensing at the LEGO Group. She was involved from the outset:

"It was the first time the LEGO Group had made a toy based on an existing brand and story – a so-called licensed product – and there was some reluctance internally because it meant that others would now be able to influence what our products would look and feel like."

But despite the internal Group murmurings, meetings were held with Lucas Film. And Lucas Film was pleased to collaborate with the LEGO Group, says Howard Roffman, President of Lucas Licensing.





"We wanted to bring the unique characteristics of LEGO materials into the Star Wars universe. I think that together we have created a whole new version of Star Wars that is incredibly detailed in its own way – and very entertaining," he says.

**Why do you think LEGO Star Wars has been such a success?**

Howard Roffman: "Fundamentally, it is a good idea that has been executed really well. LEGO is a toy with a proven track record and it appeals to children. Star Wars is a fantasy universe that also has a proven track record, with a profound effect on spectators generation after generation. The combination of the two is magical, and the magic is created because the quality of the products is consistently very high."

In the intervening years, relations between the LEGO Group and Lucas Licensing have gone from strength to strength, says Howard Roffman:

"I feel that what makes the partnership unique is that as companies we have so much in common. Both are privately owned and were created by a single visionary person. We have many of the same core values."

Today, LEGO Star Wars is one of the most popular LEGO products ever, with a huge following of fans – and Jill Wilfert is convinced that its success will continue into the future:

"There's no doubt about it. LEGO Star Wars will last many years to come."

Howard Roffman reveals that employees of Lucas Licensing and Lucas Film are among the product fans:

"And maybe the biggest fan of them all is George Lucas himself. He's been a customer and a fan of LEGO for a long time!"

**BIG SUCCESS, IMPRESSIVE FIGURES**

A total of 314 different minifigures have been produced for the LEGO Star Wars series from 1999 to the present day.

206 different LEGO Star Wars sets have been marketed since the series began in 1999.

The best-selling LEGO Star Wars model is the X-Wing Fighter, launched in 1999.

The largest LEGO Star Wars model ever is the Ultimate Collector's Millennium Falcon, weighing more than 10 kg and comprising 5,197 LEGO pieces.

**More than bricks**

You can see all LEGO Star Wars products, download desktop wallpaper and play the Star Wars game at: [www.starwars.LEGO.com](http://www.starwars.LEGO.com)







TÜNDE MOLNAR &amp; CSABA SZABÓ

VISITING

## HUNGARY

BY ROAR RUDE TRANGBÆK PHOTO KATONA LÁSZLÓ

A few kilometres outside the town of Nyíregyháza in Hungary, 36-year-old Csaba Szabó lives in a small village with his wife Tünde (35) and their three children, Gergó (12), Cyntia (7) and three-year-old Sabina.

"The house was originally built by Tünde's parents but we took it over nine years ago. I like living here. This is the village I grew up in, and I enjoy the freedom of being outside and working in my garden. And the children are safe – even when they're playing in the road outside the house," says Csaba Szabó.

With the children happily at play, Csaba and his in-laws spend a lot of their time in their large garden. In summer it is densely planted with paprika. Sales of the paprika fruit nicely supplement the family's income from the LEGO factory in Nyíregyháza, where Csaba and Tünde both work.

Csaba: "I began as a machine operator, and I've worked my way up – now I'm in charge of the warehouse. I meet lots of people in my job – we work four shifts – and socialising is important when a lot of people work together. I really enjoy my work – I'm responsible for keeping track of goods in the factory."

Csaba's wife, Tünde, began working at the LEGO factory as a quality inspector in April 2009 after spending several years at home looking after the children.

"I'm on the same shift as my husband. It's great! In the morning, the whole family leaves home in the car, we drop the children off at school, and then drive to work together," she says.

The LEGO Group took over the factory in Hungary at the end of 2008, and in Csaba's opinion there have been big changes:

"Well, for one thing, the warehouse isn't such a complicated place as it used to be ... now the plant makes only one product: LEGO® bricks. And the LEGO Group

has brought with it an entirely different mentality: today, management is happy to co-operate with the workforce. For example, we now get lots of new training, and the management team is interested in the welfare of its employees. It's important that we feel the company will also be able to offer us work in the future.

**What could be better at the factory?**

Csaba: "That's a difficult question. Personally, it's just incredible for me that I'm a LEGO employee! Here we are, working for a famous company ... a big brand. I can hardly believe my luck! But, of course, it would always be nice with more money! And the company could be a little better at giving its employees more information about what the future will bring ... about its plans."

**Do you think a lot about the future?**

Csaba: "I have a feeling the LEGO factory will be giving us jobs here in Hungary for a long time to come. We used to be anxious about being able to keep our jobs a year down the line. People were constantly being fired and rehired ... it was a worrying situation, and you never felt sure of your future."

He does today. And while his work does give him financial security, it's neither the work nor the money that's most important to him.

"The most important thing in having a good life is family. It's very important for me as a father to be able to spend time with my children ... quality time. I want to be a good example to my children – when I myself was a youngster I've seen examples of parents who weren't ..."

*Tünde Molnar and Csaba Szabó both work at the LEGO factory in Hungary. They took over the house from her parents. The house is located in a village, where it is safe for the children to play in the road while the parents are working in the garden.*

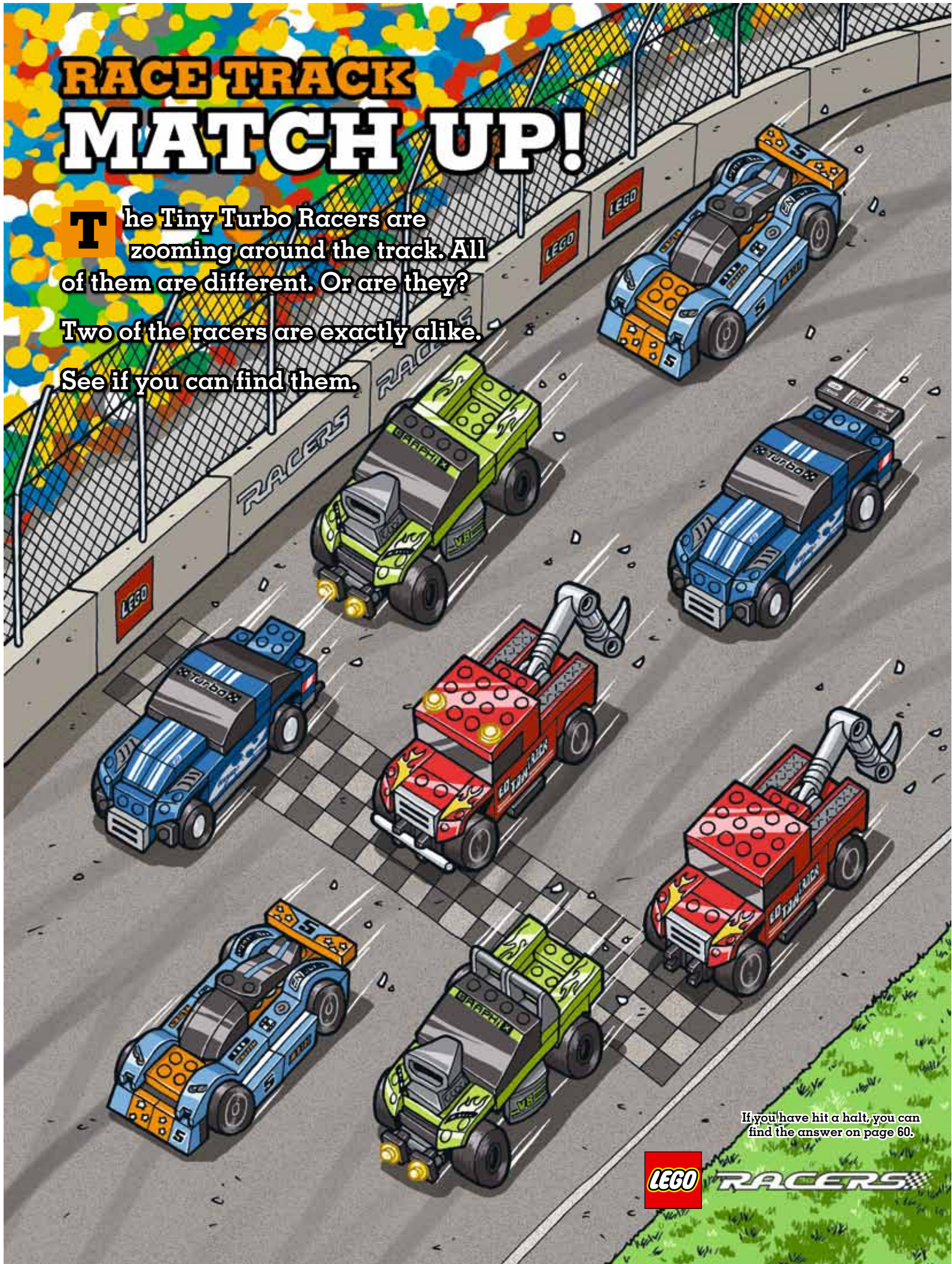


# RACE TRACK MATCH UP!

**T**he Tiny Turbo Racers are zooming around the track. All of them are different. Or are they?

Two of the racers are exactly alike.

See if you can find them.



If you have hit a halt, you can find the answer on page 60.



RACERS

# FIREFIGHTING FUN!



**T**he firefighters are getting ready to fight a fire. But something is wrong! Find the 10 things that are wrong with this picture.



If you are stuck, you can find the answer on page 60.

The solution to the challenges on pages 58-59:



PHOTO: NILS ROSENVOLD

## A true LEGO man

When you have worked for the LEGO Group for more than 30 years, you have so much LEGO DNA in your blood that it has to come out again somehow. At any rate, this is how it is for Egon Østergaard Landbo, who works with product safety, and who has, therefore, chosen to get a tattoo of a minifigure. The drawing of the happy LEGO® minifigure was originally used on a T-shirt, with the minifigure breaking out through the chest and the legs sticking out on the back of the T-shirt. However, Egon Landbo has no plans of getting a tattoo on the other side of his arm...

## Adults also play with LEGO bricks

When adults buy bricks, they are not always a gift for children. According to the international analyst company NPD, a little below 5% of the LEGO sales come from adults who buy bricks for themselves. It is also a well-known fact that the LEGO products have a big and loyal group of adult fans called AFOLs – Adult Fans of LEGO. Many of them have founded and joined clubs arranging large exhibits. The fans meet on the Internet exchanging experiences and showing each other pictures of their impressive LEGO structures.

60,000  
60,000  
60,000

### Did you know ... ?

LEGO bricks made back in 1958 connect perfectly with the bricks that are made today.

The LEGO Group expects to make more than 31 billion LEGO bricks in 2010. That's about 60,000 bricks a minute – or 1,000 bricks every second.

If you placed all those bricks end to end, they would reach 10 times round the world.



## KEY FIGURES 2006-2009

LEGO GROUP

	2009	2008	2007	2006
<b>Income Statement (DKK million):</b>				
Revenue	11,661	9,526	8,027	7,798
Expenses	(8,659)	(7,522)	(6,556)	(6,393)
Profit before special items	3,002	2,004	1,471	1,405
Profit before income tax	2,887	1,852	1,414	1,281
Net profit for the year	2,204	1,352	1,028	1,290
<b>Balance Sheet (DKK million):</b>				
Total assets	7,788	6,496	6,009	6,907
Equity	3,291	2,066	1,679	1,191
<b>Financial ratios (in %):</b>				
Gross margin	70.3	66.8	65.0	64.9
Operating margin (ROS)	24.9	22.0	18.1	17.0
Return on equity (ROE)	82.3	72.2	71.6	147.1
Equity ratio	42.3	31.8	27.9	17.2
<b>Non-financial data</b>				
<b>Consumers</b>				
Number of product recalls	1	0	0	1
Consumer Complaint Call Rate	0.093%	0.123%	0.124%	0.118%
Net Promoter Score Index	126	120	115	111
<b>Employees</b>				
Number of employees (headcount end of year)	8,616	7,337	4,723	4,958
Sick leave	2.9%	3.0%	3.2%	-
Injury rate per million working hours	4.8	4.4	8.0	8.6
<b>Partners</b>				
Number of quality audited suppliers	2	23	8	23
Number of Code of Conduct audited suppliers	48	18	22	23
<b>Environment</b>				
Water consumption (1,000 m <sup>3</sup> )	116	68	92	71
Total energy consumption in production (GWh)	155	108	119	124
Waste (tons)	7,970	3,057	2,422	4,252

Parentheses denote negative figures.

Find more detailed information in Annual Report 09 and Progress Report 09: See back cover.



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## Annual Report

In the Annual Report you will find detailed information on the LEGO Group's financial results in 2009.  
<http://www.LEGO.com/eng/info/>



## Progress Report

In the Progress Report you will find detailed information on the progress of the LEGO Group's work within environmental, social and governance (ESG) areas in 2009. It includes data on for example consumer complaint rates, Code of Conduct audits, employee injury rate and much more.

The Progress Report also serves as the annual communication on progress required by UN Global Compact.

<http://www.LEGO.com/eng/info/>



## The Brick

The Brick is an annual magazine designed to supplement the two reports – Annual Report and Progress Report. It offers a view into the many ways in which the LEGO Group interacts with all its stakeholders, and in an easy-to-read way, it follows up on some of the data in the Progress Report.

<http://www.LEGO.com/eng/info/>

