

The Kodak Camera

Introduction:

Through this weeks assignment I've learned a lot of new information about the history of photography. There has been endless progress and evolution through the years, people testing out different processes to create even better images and changing the photography history. It was a complicated time to capture images and the processes were even more complicated. This made it a little hard to digest all the information and understand the lengths people went through to create images.

Even so, all these techniques were necessary to be able to further develop better and easier ways to document memories. The particular technique I've chosen to research more is a newer invention, but had a big impact on photography and society as well. Here's my research report about the Kodak camera.

Today pretty much everyone owns a camera, at least one integrated in their phones. Billions of people have the opportunity to capture moments and document their lives every day. Photography has become such an easy thing to access for people now that it's hard to imagine a time where it wasn't like that. In 1888 George Eastman shared an invention to the public that is a huge part of the easy access people have to photography today. Let's go back to the date that changed the history of photography.

Inventor:

George Eastman was born in New York in 1854 and was an American dry-plate manufacturer. In 1880 he opened the Eastman dry plates and Film company. He had a passion for photography, but wanted to make the process of taking images easier for everyone. His first camera, the Kodak, was released and sold to the public in 1888 and consisted of a box camera with 100 exposures. By 1927, Eastman Kodak was the largest U.S company in the industry.



The Kodak Camera:

1888 was the year George Eastman constructed a new small and simple camera that was meant for the average person who didn't want to bother with chemicals and difficult technical processes. The camera was a huge success for many people, among them also a lot of women started using it to capture images. The Kodak camera came with the slogan «You click the button, we do the rest» to illustrate how easy the process was for each individual using it.

The camera came with 100 exposures and when the 100 pictures of film were shot, the photographer could mail the camera to Eastman Kodak, where all the technical and complicated work would be done by skilled people. Before the camera got sent back to the owner, the camera would get filled with new exposures ready for usage. It wasn't the cheapest, but the easy to use camera and the service for developing and printing made it photography really attractive for the public.



The original Kodak of 1888 was modified in 1889 when the barrel shutter was replaced by a sector shutter. Later a bigger version of the camera was also introduced to the public. The original Kodak camera is really rare to come across today and is considered a priced collectors item.

Company results:

Kodak's role throughout the history of photography was one of the most influential. They gave the ability for the public to capture images and document their lives exactly how they wanted. The development and printing service made the camera especially attractive for people because it made the photography process so much easier for the consumer.

At the same time, it was a roller coaster for the company because they made both financial and technological mistakes through the years. They had struggles with the printing of the images, when suddenly the images came back blotchy and unclear. This made the market drop and the company had to find the problem and make some adjustments. Since then the company has had its ups and downs but can proudly say they represent a part of history that changed photography to what it is today.



Influence:

Kodak is still a functional company today and even though they are mostly known for their historic role in photography, the company has continued to create and meet needs for industries making images since the early 1900s. Kodak's current portfolio is based on deep technological expertise developed over the years working with material science, deposition and digital imaging science.

I can definitely see how the Kodak camera has influenced the history to the path we are on today when it comes to photography. I think this product created a new era that opened up to the endless photography possibilities we may take for granted today. Today we pretty much always have our

phones with us wherever we go, so the possibility to snap a quick photo of pretty scenery and things we like is at the tip of our fingers.

Sources:

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