**Gautrain History Book: From Dreams to Reality**
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**PROJECT SUMMARY**
Gautrain is a world-class, modern rail network in Gauteng—the first of its kind in Africa. The Gautrain history book provides stakeholders with a creative, easy-to-read overview of Gautrain’s planning, development and start of operations. It is aimed at instilling pride in the successful completion of one of Africa’s biggest infrastructure projects.

**INTENDED AUDIENCE/STAKEHOLDERS**
Due to the general nature of the history book, the intended audiences were broad:
- Political leaders
- Employees
- Project partners
- National and international media partners
- Interested and affected parties
- Institutions of learning
- Government bodies
- Passengers
- Engineers
- Rail enthusiasts
- National libraries
- Bibliophiles

**OBJECTIVES OF THE HISTORY BOOK**
History books are typically perceived as boring. The editorial team of the Gautrain history book tried to avoid this connotation with an exciting project like Gautrain, hence the interactive approach to this publication. The objective of the history book was to overcome the perceived “boringness” of history by making the book interactive.

**KEY MESSAGE STRATEGY**
The key message strategy was the provision of a factually correct, exciting and interactive overview of Gautrain’s history.

**CREATIVE RATIONALE**
Because the Gautrain project was a milestone achievement in South African planning, engineering, construction and design, the project was well documented, with an extensive photographic library that paved the way for a photo journal. The designer was tasked with creating an interactive and lively explorative journey of the Gautrain project from inception to completion. This was to be done while captivating the reader with imagery and creative writing that captured the essence of every key milestone of the project that was, up until recently, not open to the public.
The style of the book was intended to take the reader back to a romantic era in which it seemed that the book was written by an engineer or construction worker. With views unseen by the general public, the worker provided a detailed photographic account of people toiling away in the earthen depths of the tunnels and high up on the viaducts. The engineer was always seemingly at every occasion, giving the reader a bird’s eye view of the events that unfolded during the project, while describing the moments of greatness that came through.

Major milestones were contained in interactive elements. Messages of appreciation and gratitude from project leaders and political leaders were given a human touch through this presentation as letters that the engineer placed into his or her book as a memento (pages vi–vii). Geographer’s notes were placed in a small pocket book that documented the unique geological terrain of Gauteng (page 95). The history book also included a time capsule featuring momentous occasions that marked the project (page 3), a pullout postcard announcing the preferred bidder (page 49), a newspaper clip announcing the finalization of the Gautrain route (page 58), and the South African Post Office post-marked stamp and envelope marking the official commencement of operations (pages 116–117).

When combined with a romantic and nostalgic approach in documenting history, these creative elements compliment what is a momentous achievement in rail history in South Africa, if not all of Africa, continuing the fascination and romanticism humans have for rail.

MEASUREMENT/EVALUATION OF OUTCOMES
Findings from responses to a sample test indicated that most respondents liked most of the elements of the history book.