

## CYCLING THROUGH THE STORY OF HUFFMAN'S

Helpful

Hurtful

The Huffy bicycle story began with George Huffman. He was an American businessman from Ohio. In 1887, Huffman bought the Davis Sewing Machine Company out of New York. He moved the business closer to his hometown of Dayton, Ohio.

The company's new location was near steel mills and rubber factories. Now that he had easy access to the raw materials to make bikes quickly and cheaply, George noticed a market for bicycles. His company made its first bike in 1892.

Then in 1924, George's son, Horace Huffman, changed the business name. It became the Huffman Manufacturing Company. Since bicycles sold well, the business kept making them. The company also made new products like smaller bikes for children, which was very popular. It had rear training wheels and footsteps. This model changed the way kids' bikes were manufactured. Huffman's bikes became very popular. People nicknamed them "Huffy bikes." The company liked the name and trademarked it.

Over the next thirty years, Huffy made more bike models. One popular model was the "banana" bike or "banana seat" bike. The bike was a hit with teens in the 1970s. At the height of its popularity, Huffy sold two million bikes each year, shipping bikes to stores by truck and train.

By 1990, the company faced financial trouble. Chinese companies started making bikes cheaply. Big store chains bought cheap bikes from Chinese companies. These stores sold them for low prices so Huffy had to cut costs to compete.

Huffy continued to cut costs. The company closed its Ohio plant in 1998. Workers there earned \$10.50 per hour. Huffy moved the production plant to Mexico. Workers at the Mexico plant made \$5 per hour.

Huffy later moved the company plant to China. Workers there only earned 25 cents per hour. Despite these changes, Huffy still struggled in the market.

In 2004, Huffy filed for bankruptcy. In 2006, Huffy celebrated the sale of its 100 millionth bicycle. United Wheels, a larger company, bought Huffy in 2018. Today, you can buy Huffy bikes in stores and online. The company also sells scooters, electric kids' cars, and electric bikes.

### Sources:

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