

# Pockyland

By HispaBrick Magazine®

Pictures by Pockyland

Since we started on this adventure of publishing a magazine about LEGO®, we have always kept an expectant eye on the download statistics of each issue and, mainly, the geographical distribution of our readers. From the very beginning our attention was drawn to the downloads from Taiwan, from a website we could make heads nor tails of even with the help of Google translate: Pockyland. Years later, by chance, I contacted Rack, one of the administrators of Pockyland and LEGO ambassador... and we got talking.

**HBM:** How did Pockyland get started?

**Pockyland:** Long long ago, there was a boy who lived in Taiwan. His name was Pocky. Pocky liked LEGO brick toys very much. When he grew up, he still liked LEGO toys very much. But he found there was little few information about LEGO available in Taiwan. So, he decided to make a LEGO brick forum in 2007. It would provide a lot of information about LEGO bricks, including LEGO products and activities. Fans would be able to share their collections or evaluations there. So, Pocky and his friends worked together to set up the forum. Its name was "Pockyland".



In 2008, Pocky met Rack. It changed their fate. Rack is a Doctor. He had no chance to play LEGO brick when he was a child, because it was too expensive for his parents. When Rack was to be a father, he decided to buy a lot of LEGO bricks to play with his children.

Rack likes building his own creations rather than collecting LEGO sets. So, he posted a lot of his creations on Pockyland and it drew Pocky's attention. Pocky invited him to administer the forum. They became best friends and managed the forum together. Rack had a lot good idea for the forum, such as new forum software, a plan to have more activities for member, and he designed a calendar for our forum. Pockyland was updated in 2009 and did a lot of public displays. It attracted a lot of fans to join Pockyland and so it became a biggest BRICK forum in Taiwan.







In 2010, Rack became LEGO® ambassador for Taiwan. LEGO Co. invited him to cooperate with official LEGO activities several times. They wish to work with AFOLs to make the activities better.

Pockyland is like a big family. Anyone can be our admin if you have passion and are responsible. Of course, some active member can be close to us without to being an admin. We share our life with each other, not only about LEGO brick. Especially when we see something new or interesting such as a funny video, new toys, new TV/PC games, or feel depression or lovesick, we will share on our forum. I have participated in a lot of forums, such as aquarium, 3C, movie or music, but I feel Pockyland is different from other forums. A lot of members are friends on our forum. A couple married due to our forum and we participated in their wedding. Our children play with bricks together. We even go on family trips together.

We often talk to our webmasters via online communication every week. We talk when something happens on our forum or if there are plans for the forum and find a way to fix it. I had remembered we had a financial problem regarding our server and rent of the forum in 2010. We placed a call for help in our forum and got much help from our members so that Pockyland can keep running.

So Pocky and me both feel Pockyland is a very good space for our life and we want to keep it for our members. We spend a lot of time to manage and look for some members to be our webmaster.

**HBM:** How many members do you have? How many events do you do each year?

**Pockyland:** According to the statistics in forum, we have 85479 members.

The age of our member is between 10 – 55 years old. About 60% of the children are boys but over 90% of the adults are men. Most women don't have a hobby in Taiwan. They like go to buy something new more than creating something new.

Most fans like the LEGO castle series and like to create castle MOCs. Star Wars™ series is always top 1 for Taiwan AFOLs but children like Iron-man more. I think this is because they never see the cartoon and movie of Star Wars.

We have 2 online brick creation games every year, there are 2 groups (adults and children) in every contest, I wish more children could join and win a prize.







We have 4 public exhibitions in Taiwan every year. We can see a lot fans take their family to join and share their creations and collections

Besides, there are some organizations (government, school, museum, department store) who invite us to do some brick shows.

We have many exhibitions, Taiwan fans are very good in city and castle creations. We build huge city scenes and streets. We have a plan. This is a fantasy story, just like LOTR. The name of this phantasy land is POCKYLAND. Several races live there, including humans, dwarfs, orcs, elves, etc.. The story is about them. War and peace is between them. We ask several builders to cooperate to make it. You can see several countries that were finish on our book. We plan put them all together in a large display. Then we will publish another book about the story. The creation will be 10M x 10M.



We collect wonderful pictures of creations to publish a calendar every year. Members can buy it as a souvenir.

**HBM:** How popular is LEGO® as a toy among children in Taiwan?

**Pockyland:** I believe there is no one who doesn't know LEGO in Taiwan. LEGO is equal to Brick. LEGO is best quality in Taiwan but it's the most expensive toys. So, a lot of parents can't buy the LEGO sets due to their price.

**HBM:** Now that LEGO has marked countries with emerging economies like China, Russia, etc. as market objectives, have you noticed a change in attitude from LEGO towards the fans in your country? Has there been a change in the availability and price of the sets?



**Pockyland:** After publishing the minifigure series, a lot of fans complained about their poor quality and irritable smell. We also found they were marked "made in China".

If "made in China" makes the retail price go down, most fans think it's all right. But we didn't find any decrease in price in recent sets.

Many fans complain the price is up and quality is down. Even some fans refuse to continue buying new sets.

I found only a few themes were made in China. Not all themes. But to be honest, I found the new themes are designed very well. Good themes, like LOTR, module building, etc.

So, if someday all themes are made in China I think it will be a hard decision.

Because there are good themes and good designs, but poor quality and poor prices. It makes us hesitate to buy.

**HBM:** How did the idea for the book come about?

**Pockyland:** I build a lot of MOCs. Many people ask me to how to start building. To be honest, the question is hard to answer. There are some brick idea books in online bookstores, but they are all in English. There are no books in Chinese. So we decided to make a tool book for the beginner.

Besides, our builders think if our creations could be in books, it's very cool for us and it's a memory of our BRICK time.

Book publishing will make some money, the money is all for the forum foundation. You know, it costs a lot of money to keep a forum working.

## About the book

It is always difficult to express your opinion about a book, especially because you have to maintain a balance between your personal opinion and what the book offers objectively. Well, all of this is even more complicated when the book is written in Chinese and you don't speak the language. So my opinion in this case must be based only on the images in the book and the feeling these transmit.

The book is a 190 page paperback in full colour. It is divided into three parts and in the first of these there is a series of photographs showing the main types of LEGO® pieces and some different construction techniques, including SNOT. This is the shortest part of the book.

In the second part you can find a collection of magnificent MOCs, made by the collaborators of the book. As a note of interest, some of the models come with building instructions. There are MOCs of many different themes and instructions for models of different levels of difficulty.

The last part is dedicated to the different dioramas that make up the collaborative project of Pockyland. A fantasy world you can read about in the preceding interview. Some of the dioramas are really spectacular.

The book is interesting, its contents varied and it includes good quality building instructions. Unfortunately I cannot evaluate the text that accompanies the images.

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