The History Of General Motors Essay, Research Paper

I believe that General Motors Has one of the best technical development facilities.

When an ambitious young inventor named Charles E Kettering set up a small laboratory in a Dayton, Ohio, barn in 1909, he laid the foundation for what was to become the automotive industry’s first research laboratory. Today that organization survives–and thrives–as the General Motors Research and Development Center. Charles F. Kettering’s first laboratory, 1909-1911, was in E.A. Deeds’ barn in Dayton, Ohio. This was the birthplace of an improved automotive battery ignition system and the electric self-starter. Kettering and associate E.A. Deeds called their new business the Dayton Engineering Laboratories Company. The name Delco, formed by using the initials, has had a long history as a GM trademark.

Working at night, Kettering and a few assistants developed a high-output battery ignition system for cars. Soon after, he and his small team developed and demonstrated the first practical electric self-starter, which was introduced on the 1912 Cadillac. Within five years, all new vehicles were equipped with it, and the handcrank became obsolete.

In 1916, Kettering and his associates sold their firm to United Motors Service Company–which would soon be acquired by General Motors–and formed a new organization called the Dayton Research Laboratories Company. Kettering hired his former college chemistry teacher, F.O. Clements, to organize the laboratory for him.

By 1917, before Dayton Research Laboratories got well under way, the United States entered World War I. Unable to obtain the materials needed to conduct research, Kettering and Deeds merged the organization with the Dayton Metal Products Company and devoted their efforts to manufacturing war materiel.

Charles F. Kettering, shown here circa 1920, founded what was to become the automotive industry’s first research laboratory–General Motors Research and Development Center. At the end World War I, the company once again turned its attention to automotive research. At the same time, in the summer of 1919, the management of General Motors Corporation decided to establish a central research laboratory–a facility where new products and improvements to existing products could be developed. Kettering initially turned down the job of running the laboratory, busy as he was with his own business and research activities. General Motors solved this problem by buying his company.

The new organization was named the General Motors Research Corporation, incorporated on June 12, 1920. The laboratory was initially set up in a large building in Moraine City, six miles south of Dayton, but moved to Detroit by 1925.

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The Technical Center, designed by internationally acclaimed architect Eero Saarinen, remains one of the premier examples of the International style of architecture. It was constructed at a cost of approximately $100 million–equivalent to about a half-billion of today’s dollars. In 1986, the American Institute of Architects honored the GM Technical Center as the most outstanding architectural project of its era. Designed by Eero Saarinen, the General Motors Technical Center netted the American Institute of Architects’ award for the most outstanding architectural project of its era.The laboratory moved again, but by the end of World War II, it became evident that more space was still needed. General Motors purchased a site outside Detroit’s city limits in Warren to build a new Technical Center, designed to house Research, Engineering Staff, Styling, and Process Development activities. Between 1952 and 1955, the Research Laboratories moved into eight new buildings at the site. Since then, three additional buildings have been constructed immediately north of the original buildings.

With all that was said, General Motors Corporation has shot to first in the race of automotive technology from the Cadillac Northstar Engine, to the heated seat, even to the first electric car – the EV1.

General Motors Corporation has one of the most distinctive Development buildings in its class with state of the art technology and an outstanding development staff. Sales for the General Motors corporation have soared following the distinctive design of the all new late 90’s Cadillac. Willam Durrant, the founder of the General Motors Corporation, has changed the way a lot of us look at today’s luxury vehicles. Back in the early 1900’s we all had to start our cars by turning a crank and now it is with the simple urn of an ignition switch. I might ad that General Motors was the first to develop the very first 100 mph car.

The new General Motors Technical Center was dedicated May 16, 1956.The laboratory moved again, but by the end of World War II, it became evident that more space was still needed. General Motors purchased a site outside Detroit’s city limits in Warren to build a new Technical Center, designed to house Research, Engineering Staff, Styling, and Process Development activities. Between 1952 and 1955, the Research Laboratories moved into eight new buildings at the site. Since then, three additional buildings have been constructed immediately north of the original buildings.