CHRONICLE OF A FORUM

# PenExchange

*Meeting place for friends of writing · 1998–2026*

I TIMELINE II PHASES III PEOPLE IV TOPICS V GENERATIONS VI BRANDS VII PELIKAN VIII TEAM

For almost three decades, PenExchange was the meeting place for fountain pens, ink and paper on the German-speaking web: launched by Pelikan in 1998 as the “Plenum”, a forum of its own from 2003, it grew into a large, helpful community – until it was switched off on 2 November 2026. Drawing on the saved archive, this chronicle tells how the forum grew, what people wrote about, which brands moved them and who shaped PenExchange.

**381,540**
posts in the archive

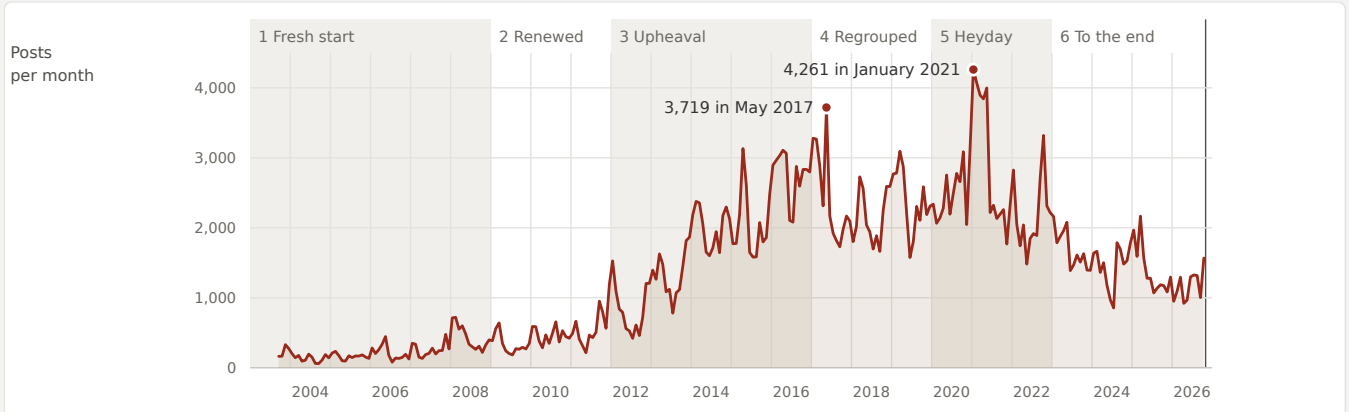
**22,847**
topics

**5,147**
members who posted, out of 8,571 registered

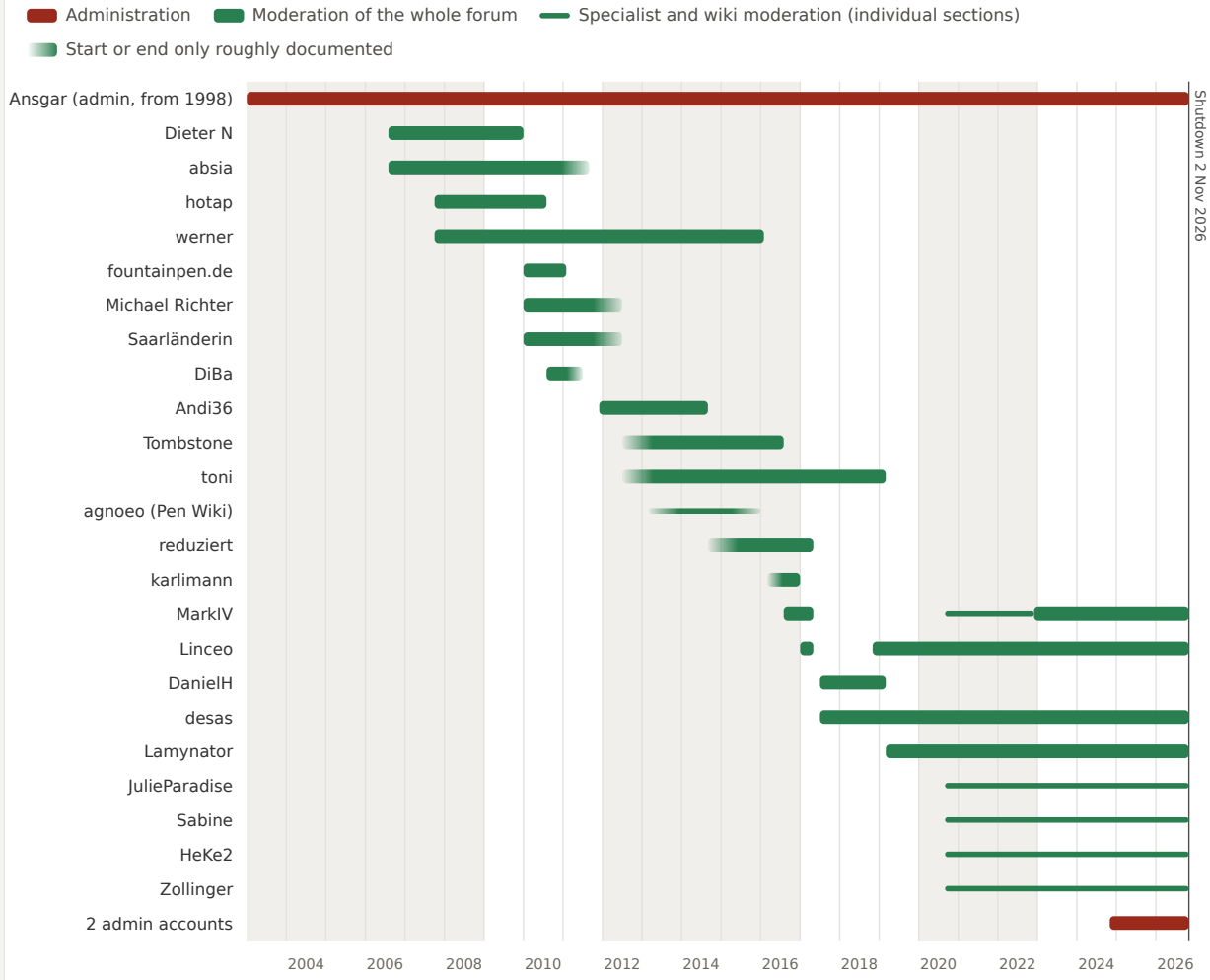
**23**
moderators

## Activity and team over time

At the top, how much was written; below, who moderated when – both on the same time axis. The light bands mark the phases, the vertical line the shutdown.



## Who moderated when




Counted are all posts that were still readable at the time of the backup, by date; 2003 begins on 16 September, 2026 ends with the shutdown on 2 November (pale columns). Terms of office are based on introductions and farewells in the forum, Werner's chronicle and the forum overview at the shutdown; sources in the list further down.

▼ Figures per year as a table

| Year | Posts | New topics | Active posters | New posters |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2003 (from 16 Sep) | 932 | 205 | 67 | 67 |
| 2004 | 1,635 | 322 | 195 | 159 |
| 2005 | 1,941 | 331 | 198 | 132 |
| 2006 | 2,525 | 322 | 199 | 123 |
| 2007 | 3,084 | 346 | 232 | 132 |
| 2008 | 5,217 | 594 | 239 | 136 |
| 2009 | 4,014 | 497 | 232 | 112 |
| 2010 | 5,577 | 510 | 242 | 93 |
| 2011 | 7,002 | 631 | 236 | 85 |
| 2012 | 9,968 | 861 | 447 | 275 |
| 2013 | 16,077 | 1,104 | 534 | 307 |
| 2014 | 24,134 | 1,378 | 549 | 287 |
| 2015 | 24,523 | 1,354 | 616 | 299 |
| 2016 | 33,189 | 1,408 | 723 | 345 |
| 2017 | 29,343 | 1,338 | 744 | 326 |
| 2018 | 25,770 | 1,225 | 692 | 286 |
| 2019 | 28,609 | 1,344 | 740 | 288 |
| 2020 | 29,962 | 1,381 | 811 | 353 |
| 2021 | 35,295 | 1,467 | 846 | 336 |
| 2022 | 26,355 | 1,405 | 754 | 255 |
| 2023 | 20,259 | 1,161 | 719 | 232 |
| 2024 | 17,449 | 1,106 | 681 | 209 |
| 2025 | 16,795 | 1,481 | 664 | 159 |
| 2026 (until 1 Nov) | 11,885 | 1,076 | 601 | 151 |

Active posters: members with at least one post in the year. New posters: year of the first surviving post.

# The phases

Seven periods, each with the key figures, the changes, the most-read topics and the team at the end of the phase. “Most read” means: the topics from this period with the most views as of the cut-off date of 1 November 2026 – the data do not show when they were read. The entries can be filtered by type.

PHASE 0 · 1998 to 2003

## The Plenum at Pelikan

On 31 January 1998, pelikan.de went online, and on its home page, next to “Souverän” and “Level”, there was a third button: “Penexchange”. Behind it lay the “Plenum”, a kind of noticeboard on which you could pin up questions – used by the international collectors’ scene as well. Its initiator and first caretaker was Ansgar from Pelikan.

31 Jan 1998 · OPERATOR · pelikan.de goes online, with the “Penexchange” section on its home page. Documented by a screenshot from the Pelikan archive that Werner showed in his chronicle in 2015.

1998–2003 · COMMUNITY · In the Plenum, pen lovers pin up questions and hope for answers. There are no moderators yet.

16–18 Sep 2003 · TECH · During the move, the admin account carries 45 Plenum topics from the summer of 2003 over into the new forum, including one garbled year (“17 June 2010303”). Nothing more from the Plenum era survives in the archive.

*No entries of this type in this phase.*

**LOOKED AFTER BY:** Ansgar (Pelikan)

PHASE 1 · 2003 to 2008

## A fresh start as a forum of its own

In September 2003 the forum got entirely new software, and everyone had to register again. Many of those who shaped PenExchange for years joined in these months. The focus was on expert questions, above all about old and historic fountain pens; at first, around 200 people a year were actively posting. In 2006 the forum needed moderators for the first time.

| posts | per day on average | active per year | new posters |
|---|---|---|---|
| 15,334 | 8 | 67–239 | 749 |

16 Sep 2003 · TECH · Launch on entirely new software. All members register again; the forum is now found by many German writing-instrument enthusiasts.

21 Sep 2003 · COMMUNITY · Michael Richter offers his ink sample booklets. By 2007, five volumes appear, each with around 80 to 90 inks – for many, the first chance to compare colours before buying. More under People.

28 Nov 2004 · COMMUNITY · The first Stammtisch – a regular local meet-up – of writing-instrument collectors in North Rhine-Westphalia: hotap invites people to Dortmund, and eight collectors come. It is the earliest Stammtisch in the archive – years before such meet-ups spread to many cities.

Aug 2006 · TEAM · In mid-August the first moderators appear, Dieter N and absia. On 23 August the admin explains the step with increasing spam: the moderators are to keep watch “together with Pelikan”. Werner’s chronicle also names a troublemaker as the trigger.

17 Aug 2006 · RULES · A member suggests a section in which forum rules could be posted. Written rules are still a long way off, though; people rely on courtesy and the moderators.

11 Oct 2007 · TEAM · In the thread “Moderator activities”, absia introduces hotap and werner; the “cloverleaf” is complete. Until 2011, every change is announced there.

2008 STRUCTURE “Writing instruments in general” gets new sub-forums, including one for pupils and students. It stays almost empty; the few posts later end up in “School pens and beginner pens”.

2008 COMMUNITY The number of posts rises by almost 70 per cent to 5,217. In January and February 2008 there are more than 700 a month for the first time.

2008 TEAM Working meeting of the admin and moderators in Hanover, with a factory tour at Pelikan in Peine.

*No entries of this type in this phase.*

**MOST READ FROM THIS PERIOD:** “What are you writing with at the moment?” (2004, 365,521 views) · “Which notebooks are fountain-pen friendly” (2008, 307,461) · “A cultivated hand?!” (2004, 271,391)

**MOST THANKS AND PRAISE:** hotap (5.4%) · Thomas Baier (5.0%) · absia (5.0%)

**TEAM AT THE END OF 2008:** Admin Ansgar · Moderation: Dieter N, absia, hotap, werner

PHASE 2
2009 to 2011

## The renewed forum

In May 2009, PenExchange moved to new software with a new design – this time without re-registration, at the address /forum_neu/, which remained until the end. A marketplace and an English offshoot were added, and in 2010 new moderators were brought in specially for the latter; the team was “constantly in flux”. At first, new posters became rarer, but at the end of 2011 activity picked up strongly.

| posts | per day on average | active per year | new posters |
|---|---|---|---|
| 16,593 | 15 | 232–242 | 290 |

1 May 2009 TECH “The renewed forum”: new software, a new look, new sub-forums. Accounts are kept.

4 May 2009 TRADE Rules for the marketplace: members may swap and sell writing instruments, but may not point to their own eBay listings, and every offer needs a price. The moderators explicitly do not want to be an “offer police”.

13 Jan 2010 TEAM absia introduces Saarländerin, the first woman on the moderation team.

18 Jan 2010 TEAM Dieter N, who had already withdrawn some time before, is released at his own request. New are fountainpen.de and Michael Richter, mainly for the newly founded English PenExchange.

29 Mar 2010 STRUCTURE PenExchange now officially exists in English as well. The offshoot remains small; the international competition is strong.

8 May 2010 COMMUNITY “A different kind of marketplace – the travelling parcel!”: a parcel travels from member to member (626 posts). In 2011 a travelling-parcel auction for a good cause follows.

9 Aug 2010 TEAM “No more moderator hotap”: hotap steps down with immediate effect, in the English forum as well.

16 Aug 2010 TEAM “A new moderator”: DiBa, won over at the collectors’ meeting in Augsburg, introduces himself.

17 Aug 2010 OPERATOR “Pelikan brings colourful gemstones to paper”: werner presents the new Edelstein inks (204 posts, over 100,000 views). The range becomes a perennial topic; over 4,000 posts mention it by 2026.

4 Nov 2010 TRADE The admin makes it clear: the forum is to remain free of advertising, and announcements with a commercial background will be deleted.

20 Nov 2010 COMMUNITY werner starts the “Family photo”: inspired by a children’s song, he shows his green Pelikans in a row, and many join in. With 2,275 posts and over a million views by the cut-off date, it is the most-read thread of all brand forums.

11 Feb 2011 TEAM fountainpen.de gives up moderating because his job no longer leaves him the time, but continues to work in the team. In the course of the year, absia (after a break) and DiBa leave as well.

13 Dec 2011 TEAM werner introduces Andi36 as a new moderator.

1 Dec 2011 COMMUNITY The first Advent calendar: a member opens the doors, and hotap accompanies it with the “Notes” (154 posts). It becomes a tradition with 15 calendars up to 2025, organised by changing members and moderators. In the same month, more than 1,000 posts are written for the first time (1,196).

*No entries of this type in this phase.*

**MOST READ FROM THIS PERIOD:** “Family photo” – Pelikan pens in a group picture (2010, 1,042,645 views) · “Pelikan service – still good?” (2009, 395,482) · “Kaufhof – Pelikan 605” (2011, 271,460)

**MOST THANKS AND PRAISE:** Thomas Baier (7.6%) · werner (7.2%) · Andi36 (6.9%)

**TEAM AT THE END OF 2011:** Admin Ansgar · Moderation: werner, Saarländerin, Michael Richter, Andi36

PHASE 3
2012 to 2016

## Upheaval: from collectors’ forum to meeting place

From 2012, PenExchange changed fundamentally. Around 300 new posters joined every year, and posts rose from just under 10,000 to over 33,000 a year. The new generation brought new formats: collective show-and-tell threads, a Pen Wiki, meet-ups in many cities and, in 2015, the Sofa Corner; the forum gave itself its first rules. At the same time, more regulars said goodbye than before. It was less mere growth than a repositioning – more on this under Generations.

| posts | per day on average | active per year | new posters |
|---|---|---|---|
| 107,891 | 59 | 447–723 | 1,513 |

30 Jan 2012 TRADE fountainpen.de suggests giving traders a section of their own in which they can present new products and special prices.

1–2 Mar 2012 RULES The first general forum rules appear, a good 14 years after the start: rules for how members treat one another, separately for private and commercial members. Traders identify themselves in their signature. The question of advertising is hotly debated. After a meeting of the admin and moderators in Nuremberg, the “NEW new rules” follow in June.

Jun 2012 TRADE The “Commercial marketplace” opens: traders now show their offers in an area of their own, and private offers and wanted ads are reorganised.

2012 STRUCTURE Kaweco gets a sub-forum of its own in the brand forum.

2012 TEAM Michael Richter and Saarländerin step down, Tombstone and toni join; their first moderation notes appear from autumn 2012 at the latest.

2 Sep 2012 COMMUNITY A member proposes a wiki so that the knowledge in the many topics can be found more quickly (146 posts).

2013 STRUCTURE The Pen Wiki launches, sponsored by Pelikan like the forum. agnoeo takes care of it.

2013–2016 COMMUNITY A wave of meet-ups: 75 new Stammtisch topics in four years, for example in Berlin (1,191 posts), Hanover and Würzburg.

4 Apr 2014 OPERATOR In the forum, Pelikan invites members to the first “Pelikan Hubs”, meetings of Pelikan fans in many cities on the same day. They become a fixture.

Sep 2014 TEAM Andi36 announces a break from moderating; members thank him in “Thanks to Andi36”. reduziert joins.

13 Nov 2014 OPERATOR In a survey, Pelikan asks members how PenExchange could be improved – with a prize draw.

2015 TECH Major software update, mainly for security, plus a new design. It meets with objections at first and then wins acceptance.

5 Aug 2015 STRUCTURE The “Sofaecke” (Sofa Corner) opens, “as many had wished”: for the first time, a section for everything that has nothing to do with writing instruments. Politics and religion stay out.

25 Oct 2015 COMMUNITY werner begins the chronicle “Penexchange – History” and continues it until 2022.

16 Feb 2016 TEAM “End of moderating – my thanks to Werner”: werner steps down after a good eight years, and karlimann succeeds him.

8 Aug 2016 TEAM “Change in moderation”: Tombstone steps down for private reasons, MarkIV takes over.

16 Aug 2016 TRADE “Bargains, offers, discount codes”: members collect special offers – 1,560 posts and over 800,000 views.

2016 COMMUNITY With 33,189 posts, the strongest year until 2021.

*No entries of this type in this phase.*

**MOST READ FROM THIS PERIOD:** “Latest pen arrivals”, started by toni in 2012 (4,672,795 views, 11,364 posts) · “Enlightenment requested: iron gall ink” (2013, 1,381,886) · “Latest accessories arrivals…” (2015, 1,010,080)

**MOST THANKS AND PRAISE:** Killerturnschuh (2.7%) · glucydur (2.4%) · stefan-w- (2.3%)

**TEAM AT THE END OF 2016:** Admin Ansgar · Moderation: toni, reduziert, karlimann, MarkIV · Pen Wiki: agnoeo (last mentioned in 2015)

PHASE 4
2017 to 2019

## Eventful years, regrouped

After the record year of 2016, the forum had to find its feet again. An open letter asked for clear channels for complaints, and in May 2017, after a “troll affair”, three moderators stepped down at once. toni held the fort, two new moderators joined in July, and at the members’ request the Sofa Corner was no longer public. In 2018 the forum and the wiki got new software; at the end of 2018 admin Ansgar retired from Pelikan and yet stayed with the forum. With around 700 active posters a year, PenExchange remained as lively as before.

| posts | per day on average | active per year | new posters |
|---|---|---|---|
| 83,722 | 76 | 692–744 | 900 |

Jan 2017 TEAM karlimann leaves the team, Linceo joins.

17 Feb 2017 RULES An “Open letter to the forum management” asks about complaint handling and mediation.

25 Apr 2017 RULES The terms of use receive their final version, valid until the shutdown. Traders must be identifiable “much like a legal notice”, and advertising belongs exclusively in the commercial section.

2 May 2017 · TEAM — After a “troll affair”, reduziert, MarkIV and Linceo step down as moderators; toni holds the forum alone for a while and, in “Living together in the forum from now on”, argues for a stricter course until calm returns. With 3,719 posts, May becomes the most active month before 2021.

10 May 2017 · STRUCTURE — Following a suggestion from the members, the Sofa Corner is from now on visible only to logged-in members and no longer appears among the active posts. The chatting thus stays among members (t=18634).

5 Jul 2017 · TEAM — DanielH and desas join the team. Members welcome them as relief for the “only remaining moderator”.

Oct 2017 · STRUCTURE — The brand forum is reorganised: Asian brands get a sub-forum of their own, Italian and American brands are grouped together.

Mar–Apr 2018 · TECH — Software update for the forum and the Pen Wiki with a refreshed design (103 posts of discussion). A bug when uploading pictures is fixed with a further update.

25 Jun 2018 · TRADE — “New at pen-paradise”: in the commercial section, a dealer reports continuously on new products in the range (494 posts, 329,000 views).

Nov 2018 · TEAM — Linceo returns to the team.

End of 2018 · OPERATOR — Admin Ansgar, a Pelikan employee and the initiator of the forum, retires. He stays with the forum as admin: in 2023 and 2026 the team still calls him “our admin”.

Feb 2019 · RULES — Debate about deleted posts: “What gets deleted, when and why”.

13 Mar 2019 · TEAM — toni announces his departure and wants to concentrate on content again; according to the chronicle, personal attacks on the team also played a part. As early as 14 March, Linceo welcomes Lamynator as a new moderator. DanielH had withdrawn without saying goodbye and gets in touch in July with “Reporting back”.

18 Mar 2019 · COMMUNITY — A member notes: the forum will soon have 250,000 posts.

*No entries of this type in this phase.*

**MOST READ FROM THIS PERIOD:** “Drawing with fountain pen and ink” (2017, 724,390 views) · “New at Kaweco” (2018, 361,541) · “New at pen-paradise” (2018, 328,973)

**MOST THANKS AND PRAISE:** Thom (3.3%) · JulieParadise (2.6%) · NicolausPiscator (2.4%)

**TEAM AT THE END OF 2019:** Admin Ansgar · Moderation: desas, Linceo, Lamynator

PHASE 5
2020 to 2022

## Heyday: challenges and specialist moderation

In the Covid years, PenExchange was livelier than ever: in 2021, 846 members wrote 35,295 posts, and in January 2021 alone there were 4,261 – both records. Ink challenges filled the ink reviews, joint writing projects in Sütterlin and Kurrent script emerged, and the team brought in specialist moderators for support. In 2022 the momentum eased somewhat; in the autumn the moderators put the shared hobby back at the centre.

| posts | per day on average | active per year | new posters |
|---|---|---|---|
| 91,612 | 84 | 754–846 | 944 |

13 Jan 2020 · TRADE — To save storage space, topics in the marketplace archive are deleted after three months.

from Mar 2020 · COMMUNITY — Covid shapes everyday life: in 2020 and 2021, over 1,200 posts mention Corona (as Covid is called in German), lockdown or the pandemic. There are hardly any new meet-ups in 2020 (two topics).

May–Oct 2020 COMMUNITY Ink challenges: “30 Inks in 30 Days” (May), “50 Shades of Blue” (July), “31 Colours of Season: Autumn” (October), plus challenges for left-handers.

8 Sep 2020 TEAM After consulting Pelikan, the team introduces specialist moderation: JulieParadise, Sabine, HeKe2, Zollinger and MarkIV look after individual sections, above all ink and the marketplace.

Jan 2021 COMMUNITY Record month with 4,261 posts. With 35,295 posts, 2021 becomes the strongest year.

2021–2022 COMMUNITY Joint writing projects in Sütterlin and Kurrent script.

16 Sep 2021 STRUCTURE Introductions of new members move from the Sofa Corner to a section of their own.

Oct 2022 RULES On 17 October, the time limit for editing one’s own posts is cut from 60 to two minutes so that replies do not lose their context afterwards. On 28 October follows “On the mood and focus in the forum”: the thread “What didn’t make me happy at all today” is closed and removed because of data-protection violations; the Sofa Corner itself remains – as a cosy café, “not a protest pub”. Plus notes on copyright and data protection.

End of 2022 TEAM After a break and two years of specialist moderation, MarkIV takes on a full moderation role again.

*No entries of this type in this phase.*

**MOST READ FROM THIS PERIOD:** “Advertising” – historic fountain-pen ads (2021, 1,234,370 views) · “Ink chromatograms” (2021, 480,487) · “31 Colours of Season: Autumn” (2020, 250,512)

**MOST THANKS AND PRAISE:** vanni52 (4.7%) · JulieParadise (3.4%) · Zollinger (3.2%)

**TEAM AT THE END OF 2022:** Admin Ansgar · Moderation: desas, Linceo, Lamynator, MarkIV · Specialist moderation: JulieParadise, Sabine, HeKe2, Zollinger

PHASE 6

## 2023 to 2026 Lively to the end

Even in the final years, 600 to 700 members posted every year, almost 17,000 posts were written in 2025, and the meet-ups came back to life. Pelikan remained the big topic: 2026 began with the question of what members could look forward to that year. In the background the owner changed – in 2023 the French Groupe Hamelin bought the Pelikan group. The server aged, and efforts to put the operation into the hands of the community fell on deaf ears. On 30 October 2026 came the announcement: shutdown on 2 November. The last days were all about sticking together.

| posts | per day on average | active per year | new posters |
|---|---|---|---|
| 66,388 | 47 | 601–719 | 751 |

30 Jun 2023 OPERATOR The news makes the rounds in the forum: Hamelin is taking over the Pelikan group. Completion drags on until the turn of the year 2023/24.

Dec 2023 TECH The forum is slow, pages break off. Lamynator explains that with the takeover and changing agencies there is no technical progress; admin Ansgar is trying to find a remedy.

Jun 2024 OPERATOR Pelikan closes its Hanover and Falkensee sites, and distribution passes to Hamelin. In the forum, concern grows about what will become of PenExchange.

10 Nov 2024 RULES Note from the moderators: there is no rule on gender-inclusive language. Every member writes as they wish, and this is not commented on.

17 Nov 2024 COMMUNITY Debate about “Texts from language models here in the forum” (80 posts).

28 Nov 2024 OPERATOR Two more administrator accounts are added. They do not appear in the forum itself.

2025 COMMUNITY The meet-ups come back to life: 16 new Stammtisch topics, more than in any year since 2017.

2025 TRADE Almost a fifth of all posts (18 per cent) are in the marketplace. This cannot be compared with earlier years because posts were deleted there.

Nov 2025 TECH Repeated outages. MarkIV explains: the forum software runs on an old server that belongs to Pelikan “and therefore now to Hamelin”, and it has no high priority there.

16 Aug 2026 OPERATOR In its newsletter, Pelikan asks for opinions on the future of “Pelikan Fine Writing”. Members share the questionnaire in the forum so that as many as possible respond – and name the forum as their source.

30 Oct 2026 OPERATOR The admin announces that the operator, Groupe Hamelin, will close the forum on 2 November. A security vulnerability in PHP is given as the reason; long efforts to take over the operation themselves went unanswered.

30 Oct – 2 Nov 2026 COMMUNITY “Where shall we meet when the forum is switched off?” – 222 posts by the last backup on the morning of 2 November. Ideas range from a Discord server to a postcard to the group’s top management; members save content, and Ansgar tries to secure the data. October 2026 brings 1,568 posts, more than any month since March 2025, and another 145 follow in the last two days.

*No entries of this type in this phase.*

**MOST READ FROM THIS PERIOD:** “Pelikan 2026 // what can we look forward to?” (2026, 222,923 views) · “Old 4001 Pelikan inks” (2023, 197,373) · “Ink flow – wet or dry?” (2023, 175,899)

**MOST THANKS AND PRAISE:** Zollinger (3.7%) · TomSch (3.2%) · vanni52 (3.0%)

**TEAM AT THE SHUTDOWN:** Admin Ansgar, plus two admin accounts without posts · Moderation: desas, Lamynator (also administrator), Linceo, MarkIV, Zollinger · Specialist moderation: JulieParadise and HeKe2 (ink, ink reviews, miscellaneous), Sabine (marketplace, miscellaneous)

# People who carried the forum

PenExchange lived on members who shared their knowledge, helped newcomers, organised meetings and set the tone. Three of them stand here for many. Below, an analysis of thanks and praise shows who made a particular difference in which years – including those whose great time came at the beginning, when the forum was still small.

## werner

MODERATOR 2007–2016 · PELIKAN EXPERT · CHRONICLER

**2,243** posts **145** topics **3.7m** views of his topics




For over eight years werner moderated the forum, calmly and mostly in the background; at PenExchange, moderator notes were written in green. Hardly anyone organised so much knowledge and attracted so many readers.

## hotap

MODERATOR 2007–2010 · COLLECTOR · NETWORKER

**1,336** posts **183** topics **1.2m** views of his topics




In the early years, hotap was one of the forum’s leading voices. In 2007 he received more thanks and praise than anyone else, and of the topics started in 2007, his have the most views as of the cut-off date.

- In 2004 he founded the writing-instrument collectors’ Stammtisch in NRW: on 28 November 2004 the first eight collectors met in Dortmund. It is the earliest Stammtisch in the archive.

## Michael Richter

INK EXPERT · MODERATOR 2010–2012

**359** posts **54** topics **5** ink booklets




Long before ink swatches and colour charts were taken for granted, Michael Richter (in the forum “M. Richter”) wrote out hundreds of inks with the same nib and turned them into booklets for comparison. From 2003 to 2005 he was among the members thanked most often.

- Started the “Family photo” (2010) and “My companion for the coming week” (2012): together over 4,100 posts and 1.8 million views, two of the ten most-read topics of all.
- 632 posts in the Pelikan forum. He presented new products and special editions, the Edelstein inks (2010), Pelikan on television (2008) and the visit of CAS collectors to Pelikan (2009).
- In 2007, together with hotap, he set up directories of the best descriptions and tests in many sub-forums, and in 2020 a table of contents for the ink reviews.
- From 2012 to 2015 he opened the notes on the Advent calendar every year.
- From 2015 he wrote the chronicle “Penexchange – History”; without it, this chronicle would lack many dates.

> *“calm, steady and friendly moderation”*
>
> mirosc in the farewell thread for werner, 2016

- Brought the world into the forum: press and TV reports, pen fairs and exhibitions, such as the fountain-pen exhibition at the Dortmund museum (2005), plus a report on a visit to Aurora (2006). Most of his posts are in “Literature and info”.
- Helped in very practical ways, for instance with “Filling a cartridge with ink using a syringe” (2007, over 33,000 views).
- Accompanied the first Advent calendar in 2011 with the “Notes” (154 posts).
- In 2012 he opened the discussion of the “NEW new rules” – with thanks to the moderators who had settled the dispute in person in Nuremberg.

> *“Tough but fair”*
>
> fountainpen.de on hotap stepping down as moderator, 2010 – hardly any collector had done so much for the others

- The ink sample booklets: parts I and II already existed when the new forum started in 2003; he reissued part I in September 2003 in 20 copies. Part III (June 2004) showed over 90 inks, including Galerie Jansen, Herbin, Diamine, Private Reserve and old Pelikan colours; part IV (October 2005) 81 writing samples on 14 A5 cards, part V (May 2007) over 80 inks.
- He wrote all the samples with the same nib so that the colours could really be compared.
- The booklets became an institution: members and dealers referred to them, and in 2008 a member compared them with Greg Clark’s book “Ink Sampler”.
- Plus test reports and scans of Galerie Jansen (2004), Rohrer & Klingner (2005), Diamine (2006), Pilot Iroshizuku and Noodler’s (2008) – 132 of his posts are in the ink forum – and reports from pen fairs and meetings such as the 1st Nuremberg collectors’ meeting in 2008.
- Moderator from 2010 to 2012, mainly for the English PenExchange. As late as 2024, a member searching for a “lost green” came across a post he had written there in 2010.

> *“our ink expert”*
>
> hotap in 2007, recommending the booklets to a newcomer

## The most-praised members of each phase

For each phase, the members with the largest share of thanks and praise, plus all 15 who were thanked by the largest number of different members – each person in the phase in which their share was largest. Within each phase, sorted by the number of replies with thanks or praise. The figures: posts, all replies with thanks or praise addressed to them, and their share of these in that phase.

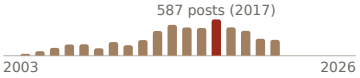
PHASE 1 **Fresh start · 2003–2008**

Also in this phase, profiled in detail above: hotap and Michael Richter.

### Tenryu

STEADY PROLIFIC POSTER

**5,131** posts, 2004–2021 · **964** replies with thanks or praise · **3.8%** share in phase 1




17 years in the forum, over 5,000 posts, and 328 different members said thank you at least once: Tenryu was among the most-thanked in 2005 and 2007 and remained a reliable voice until 2021.

- Threads such as “Japanese fountain pens.” (2013), “1000 things the writing-instrument collector does (not) need.” (2016, 156 posts) and “Good cases – bad cases” (2019).
- Most often in the Pelikan forum, in Miscellaneous and in Ink; plus presentations such as of the Pelikan PURA (2006) and of pencil sharpeners (2011).

### absia

MODERATOR 2006–2011

**805** posts, 2003–2014 · **199** replies with thanks or praise · **5.0%** share in phase 1




One of the first two moderators. Until 2010, absia introduced every new colleague in the team and held the forum together in its first big years.

- Collected press and TV reports about fountain pens (“Collection of links to fountain-pen articles …”, 2010, around 85,000 views).
- In a 2008 poll, asked whether members would like stub nibs for Pelikan Souveräns; lively threads such as “State pen?” (2006).
- Most often in Miscellaneous, in the Pelikan forum and in Ink.

### Dirk Barmeyer

EXPERT ON ITALIAN PENS

**833** posts, 2003–2024 · **181** replies with thanks or praise · **4.5%** share in phase 1




Dirk Barmeyer brought Aurora and the Italian brands into the forum; in 2007 he received as much thanks and praise as only two others.

- In 2008 invited members to the Aurora collectors’ club and its magazine; many posts in the forum for Italian brands.
- His thread “Calligraphy fountain pens” (2005) was read almost 50,000 times.

> *“Very nicely done and informative.”*
>
> a member in 2010 about a booklet he had sent out

PHASE 2 **Renewed · 2009–2011**

Also in this phase, profiled in detail above: werner.

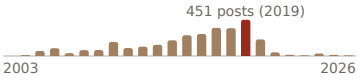
## stift

EXPERT ON OLD FOUNTAIN PENS

**3,084** posts, 2004–2026

**962** replies with thanks or praise

**2.4%** share in phase 2




From 2004 until the shutdown: stift knew all about old fountain pens, Montblanc and identifying writing instruments; 326 different members thanked stift at least once.

- A fifth of the posts each in old writing instruments and in Montblanc, plus many answers in the forum “Identifying writing instruments”.
- Threads such as “Old fountain pens... what are you writing with” (2008) and “Pelikan ink tablets c. WWII” (2019).

## Andi36

MODERATOR 2011–2014 · STAMMTISCH

**2,854** posts, 2010–2026

**939** replies with thanks or praise

**6.9%** share in phase 2




In 2011, 13.8 per cent of all replies with thanks or praise went to Andi36 – the highest annual share any member ever reached. In December he became a moderator.

- Organised the Stammtisch Niederbayern/Oberpfalz (Lower Bavaria/Upper Palatinate), whose meetings each gathered over 100 posts in the forum.
- Wrote a lot about ink, for instance “How do you fill fountain pens when the level in the ink bottle is falling” (2012), and about Pelikan’s Edelstein inks.

## fountainpen.de

MODERATOR 2010–2011, THEN IN THE TEAM

**2,194** posts, 2004–2026

**642** replies with thanks or praise

**2.1%** share in phase 2




As early as 2004, fountainpen.de received the largest share of thanks and praise of the year after Thomas Baier. Later he moderated mainly the English PenExchange. Even after he stopped being a moderator in 2011, he continued to work in the team – for example when the first forum rules came in 2012.

- In 2012 suggested a section of its own for dealers and asked, regarding the new rules, whether questions about experiences with products would remain allowed – they explicitly did.
- Started “TWSBI ... broken again ...” (2015, 198 posts, over 100,000 views), a poll on fountain pens (2014) and, in 2024, the discussion about texts from language models in the forum.
- A good third of his posts are in the Montblanc forum.

## Thomas Baier

INKS AND PELIKAN

**1,936** posts, 2003–2018

**597** replies with thanks or praise

**7.6%** share in phase 2




In four years – 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2009 – Thomas Baier received the largest share of thanks and praise. Hardly anyone shaped the early years for so long.

- Started “What are you writing with at the moment?” (2004, 670 posts) and “Pelikan service – still good?” (2009, 639 posts): together over 760,000 views.
- Many ink reviews and posts on Pelikan and nibs, plus early user reports such as on the Lamy 2000 (2003).

PHASE 3 **Upheaval · 2012–2016**

## Killerturnschuh

MONTBLANC AND INK

**5,470** posts, 2013–2026

**1,306** replies with thanks or praise

**2.7%** share in phase 3




In 2016, the forum's strongest year, nobody received more thanks and praise. Killerturnschuh wrote with passion about Montblanc, inks and everything in between.

- "What I would wish for from Pelikan for 2017" (2016) became, with 222 posts, a big wish list for the hosts.
- Almost three in ten posts in the Montblanc forum, plus ink presentations and buying questions.

> *"your presentation of it is fun to read"*
> a member in 2018 about an ink presentation

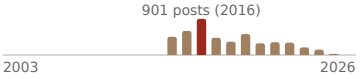
## bella

MONTBLANC, PAPER AND COLLECTIVE THREADS

**4,517** posts, 2014–2025

**1,227** replies with thanks or praise

**2.1%** share in phase 3




341 different members thanked bella at least once – as many as for hardly anyone else. From 2014 to 2025 bella was at home in the collective threads, in Montblanc and in the Sofa Corner.

- "Montblanc Heritage 1912 – Review" (2015, 147 posts, almost 70,000 views), "Weariness and oversaturation" (2014) and "OMAS is back" (2023).
- The advice "Hands off stone paper" (2015) was read over 30,000 times.

## meinauda

HANDWRITING, INK AND MEET-UPS

**4,679** posts, 2011–2026

**1,083** replies with thanks or praise

**2.0%** share in phase 3




meinauda wrote about ink, handwriting and calligraphy from 2011 onwards and was among the most-thanked in 2013; 312 different members said thank you at least once.

- Opened the thread on the "PenPort in Hamburg on 3 Oct 2017" (64 posts) and presented Montblanc editions such as "Mahatma Gandhi" (2011).
- Finds and questions such as "Pelikan 4001 royal blue without the blue" (2020) and "kakimori – the all-rounder from Japan" (2022).

## stefan-w-

INVENTOR OF THE ARRIVALS THREADS

**2,856** posts, 2012–2026

**633** replies with thanks or praise

**2.3%** share in phase 3




stefan-w- started "New ink arrivals" in 2014 and "Latest accessories arrivals" in 2015 – together over 4,300 posts and 1.9 million views. Of the topics started in 2014 and 2015, his have the most views as of the cut-off date.

- Plus wish lists for Pelikan (2015) and tips on good deals.
- Most often in Miscellaneous, in the Pelikan forum and in Ink.

## glucydur

PHOTOGRAPHY AND STYLE

**2,972** posts, 2013–2018

**623** replies with thanks or praise

**2.4%** share in phase 3




glucydur combined fountain pens with photography and good taste and was among the most-thanked in 2015 and 2016.

- In 2016 opened the companion thread to "Fine Fountain Pen Art" (793 posts) and in 2015 the "Watch thread – brand-free" in the Sofa Corner (1,011 posts).
- Wrote mainly in Miscellaneous, in the Sofa Corner and about Montblanc and Pelikan.

PHASE 4

## Regrouped · 2017–2019

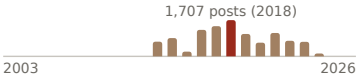
### Thom

INK AND FLEX NIBS

**10,509** posts, 2013–2024

**1,530** replies with thanks or praise

**3.3%** share in phase 4




With 10,509 posts, Thom wrote more than any other member, mostly about ink. In 2017 and 2018 nobody received more thanks and praise.

- “Noodler’s Creaper Flex Pen” (2013, 1,119 posts, over 400,000 views) and its offshoot on dip and flex nibs became works of reference.
- A third of his posts are in the ink forum, a quarter in the Sofa Corner.

> *“What a brilliant thread!!”*
> vanni52 in 2021 about a thread Thom had pointed to

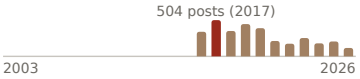
### Pelle13

COLLECTIVE THREADS AND KAWECO

**3,190** posts, 2016–2026

**987** replies with thanks or praise

**2.1%** share in phase 4




Pelle13 was at home above all in the big collective threads and presented Kaweco special editions; 287 different members said thank you at least once.

- Presentations, for example of the Kaweco AL Sport Rosé Gold (2018) and Paradise Blue (2016).
- Almost three in ten posts in Miscellaneous, plus the Sofa Corner, Pelikan and Ink.

### NicolausPiscator

INK AND MEET-UPS

**2,937** posts, 2017–2025

**481** replies with thanks or praise

**2.4%** share in phase 4




In 2018 NicolausPiscator presented an ink every week, collected beautiful colour combinations and brought members together.

- “Ink of the week (2018)”: 399 posts, over 150,000 views.
- Founded the Stammtisch Mittelrhein (Middle Rhine) in 2017 and invited members to the factory tour at Pelikan in March 2018 (213 posts).

PHASE 5

## Heyday · 2020–2022

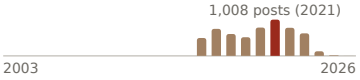
### JulieParadise

SPECIALIST MODERATOR FROM 2020

**5,719** posts, 2016–2026

**1,468** replies with thanks or praise

**3.4%** share in phase 5




377 different members thanked JulieParadise at least once – only TomSch had more. From 2020, as a specialist moderator, she looked after Ink and the ink reviews.

- Launched the autumn challenge “31 Colours of Season: Autumn” (2020, 435 posts, 250,000 views).
- Opened the thread on the Pelikan Hubs 2019 and projects such as “Faust in handwriting” (2016).

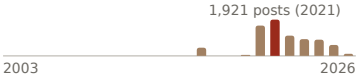
### vanni52

INK EXPERT OF THE LATER YEARS

**7,513** posts, 2016–2026

**1,459** replies with thanks or praise

**4.7%** share in phase 5




In 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2024, vanni52 received the largest share of thanks and praise. Half of his 7,513 posts are in Ink and the ink reviews.

- Started “Your most beautiful Italian fountain pens” (2020, 520 posts), “Old 4001 Pelikan inks” (2023, almost 200,000 views) and “Stationery shops – now more than ever” (2020).
- Of the topics started from 2023 to 2025, his have the most views as of the cut-off date.

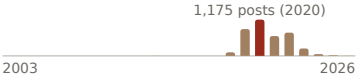
### hoppenstedt

COLLECTOR WITH A FEEL FOR METAL

**3,871** posts, 2013–2026

**774** replies with thanks or praise

**2.5%** share in phase 5




hoppenstedt showed all-metal fountain pens, Montblanc and Pelikan special editions and was among the most-thanked in 2019 and 2020.

- “Full Metal ‘Not-Only-Jacket’” (2021, 199 posts, 90,000 views) and questions such as on the M805 Stresemann (2020).
- Almost a fifth of the posts each in the Montblanc forum and in the Sofa Corner.

PHASE 6

## To the end · 2023–2026

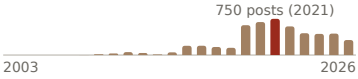
### Zollinger

SPECIALIST MODERATOR FROM 2020, LATER MODERATOR

**5,215** posts, 2008–2026

**1,684** replies with thanks or praise

**3.7%** share in phase 6




From 2019 to 2026, Zollinger was among the five most-thanked every year. Specialist moderator from 2020, moderator at the shutdown.

- “The pairs thread” (2017, 531 posts), “LAMY Safari – all colours” (2020, 179,000 views) and Inktober 2021 with its companion thread.
- As early as 2008 he took apart the Pelikan Level L5 – read over 100,000 times.

> *“many thanks for all your posts here”*
> Strombomboli, 2021

### TomSch

HELPER WITH TRICKY QUESTIONS

**4,727** posts, 2008–2026

**1,493** replies with thanks or praise

**3.2%** share in phase 6




607 different members thanked TomSch at least once – more than anyone else, almost twice as many as JulieParadise in second place (377). Many said thank you more than once. TomSch helped with identifying pens, with refills and with spare parts.

- Solutions such as for the Pelikan refill “Perfect 237” (2015) and many answers in the forum “Identifying writing instruments”.
- From 2024 to 2026, among the three most-thanked every year.

> *“a competent answer as always”*
> a member, 2018

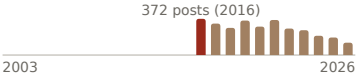
### Edelweissine

ADVENT CALENDARS AND COLLECTIVE THREADS

**3,012** posts, 2016–2026

**822** replies with thanks or praise

**1.9%** share in phase 6




Edelweissine opened the notes on the Advent calendar in 2023 and 2024 and was among the most-thanked in recent years; 315 different members said thank you at least once.

- “Advent calendar 2024 – notes and comments” (171 posts) and the previous year’s thread (100 posts).
- Questions and tips, such as on an unknown Sheaffer (2019) and “Faber-Castell Basic is now called Essentio” (2018).

### BC666

STAMMTISCH HAMBURG-SÜD

**1,289** posts, 2022–2026

**319** replies with thanks or praise

**2.3%** share in phase 6

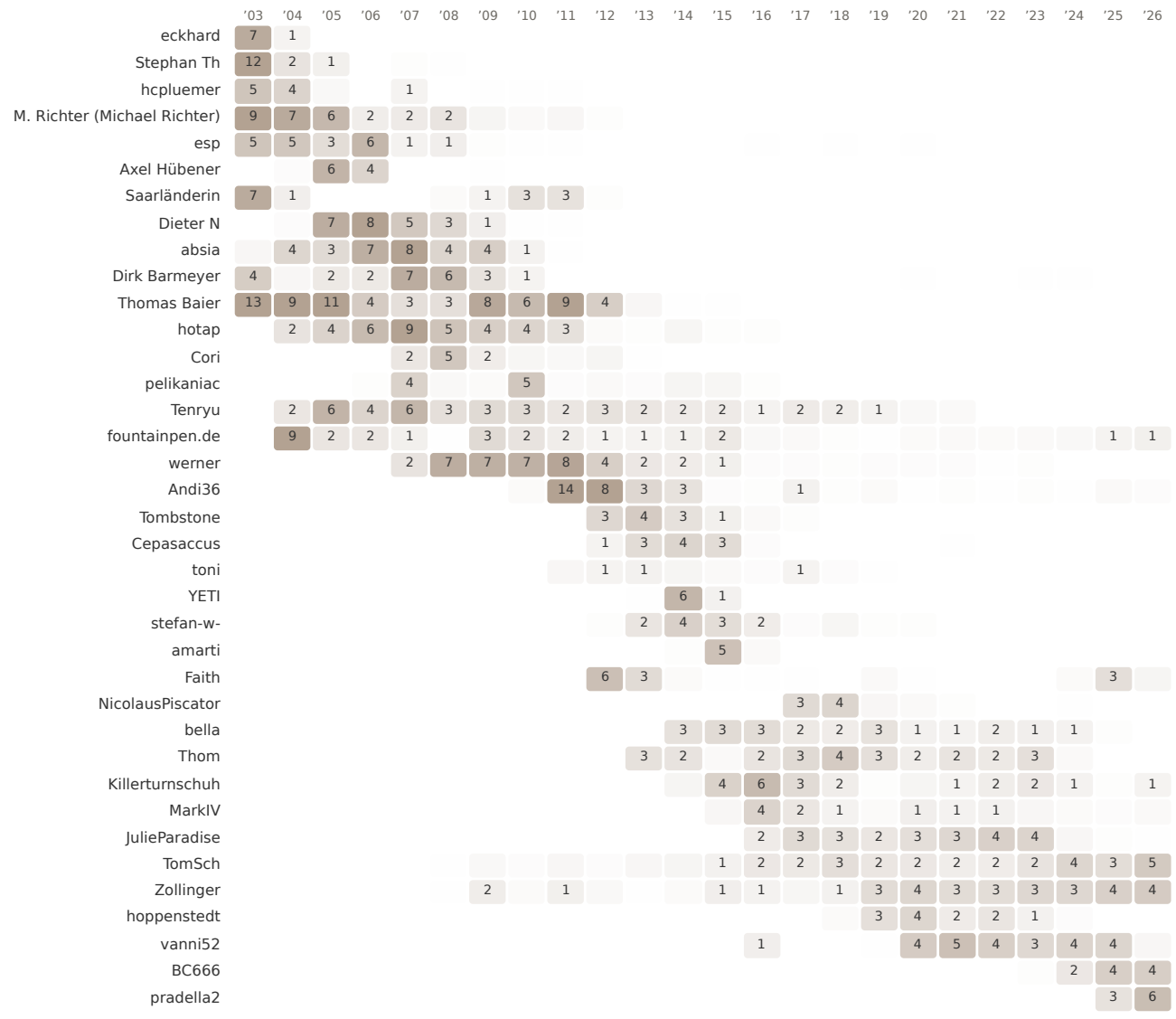



BC666 kept the Stammtisch culture alive to the end and received the largest share of thanks and praise in 2025.

- Organised the Stammtisch Hamburg-Süd – with dates up to 24 October 2026.
- A quarter of the posts are in “Literature and info”, where meet-ups were announced.

## Who made the biggest difference, and when

Share of all replies with thanks or praise in a year. This way, a thank-you from the small forum of 2004 counts as much as one from the large forum of 2016 – and those who gave a great deal early on become visible, even if they wrote less later. The second view shows the share of views of the topics started in each year – counted up to the cut-off date of 1 November 2026, not within that year.




Selected are all who reached 5 per cent (rounded) in at least one year, the four with the highest share in each phase, and a few who had many readers or a particularly large number of different people thanking them. Counted are replies with “thanks” and similar words or with praise (“great”, “excellent”, “helpful” …); they count for the person quoted or, without a quote, for the author of the preceding post. “Thanks in advance” does not count.

## Year by year: who carried the forum

For each year, the five members with the largest share of all replies with thanks or praise, plus the three whose new topics from that year had been read most by the cut-off date. This keeps visible who gave a great deal in their time – even if they wrote less later on.

| Year | Thanks and praise | Most thanked and praised | Most-read new topics by |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2003 | 139 | **Thomas Baier** 12.9% Stephan Th 12.2% M. Richter 8.6% eckhard 7.2% Saarländerin 7.2% | **admin (Ansgar)** 21.3% bjoernkraus 8.4% Saarländerin 8.2% |
| 2004 | 289 | **Thomas Baier** 9.3% fountainpen.de 8.7% M. Richter 7.3% esp 4.8% Michael Weise 4.2% | **Thomas Baier** 13.9% phouk 9.7% esp 5.9% |
| 2005 | 314 | **Thomas Baier** 11.1% Dieter N 7.0% Tenryu 6.4% Axel Hübener 6.4% M. Richter 6.1% | **Schuttwegraeumer** 4.9% M. Richter 4.2% hotap 3.1% |
| 2006 | 518 | **Dieter N** 8.1% absia 6.9% esp 6.2% hotap 5.8% stift 4.4% | **Katharsis** 6.0% hotap 3.8% saintsimon 3.5% |
| 2007 | 621 | **hotap** 8.9% absia 8.4% Dirk Barmeyer 7.1% Tenryu 6.3% Dieter N 4.7% | **hotap** 12.6% Cori 6.4% absia 5.4% |
| 2008 | 1,107 | **werner** 7.0% Dirk Barmeyer 5.9% hotap 5.2% Cori 4.8% Christian Mücke 4.2% | **Cori** 9.1% S.Gawlick 6.8% Geschichtenschreiber 5.8% |
| 2009 | 813 | **Thomas Baier** 7.5% werner 6.8% hotap 4.2% absia 4.2% isegrimmgo 3.2% | **Thomas Baier** 12.5% ralph 6.9% Saarländerin 5.6% |
| 2010 | 1,177 | **werner** 6.7% Thomas Baier 5.9% pelikaniac 4.8% G-H-L 3.8% hotap 3.7% | **werner** 27.4% federmann 5.1% isegrimmgo 5.0% |
| 2011 | 1,932 | **Andi36** 13.8% Thomas Baier 8.7% werner 7.7% Ex Libris 4.5% mariannchen 4.2% | **Ex Libris** 9.5% Andi36 9.0% Thomas Baier 9.0% |
| 2012 | 2,611 | **Andi36** 8.1% Faith 5.5% Thomas Baier 4.2% werner 4.1% audace 3.4% | **toni** 36.7% werner 7.4% Faith 3.6% |
| 2013 | 3,596 | **Tombstone** 4.4% meinauda 4.3% Andi36 3.4% Faith 3.1% Cepasaccus 3.0% | **Holunderbeere** 13.9% Thom 5.4% toni 4.6% |
| 2014 | 5,252 | **YETI** 6.3% stefan-w- 4.0% wilfhh 4.0% Cepasaccus 3.6% Tombstone 2.6% | **stefan-w-** 9.6% Cepasaccus 3.5% werner 3.0% |
| 2015 | 4,677 | **amarti** 5.3% Killerturnschuh 3.9% glucydur 3.8% bella 3.1% wilfhh 3.1% | **stefan-w-** 8.1% DanielH 7.8% amarti 4.5% |
| 2016 | 7,008 | **Killerturnschuh** 5.8% MarkIV 3.8% glucydur 3.3% bella 3.0% Thom 2.3% | **MarkIV** 6.3% Quest 6.1% stingray 5.3% |
| 2017 | 6,117 | **Thom** 3.2% NicolausPiscator 3.2% JulieParadise 3.2% Killerturnschuh 3.1% Pelle13 2.4% | **Linceo** 6.5% Artus 5.9% NicolausPiscator 3.5% |
| 2018 | 5,243 | **Thom** 4.4% NicolausPiscator 3.6% TomSch 2.8% JulieParadise 2.6% stift 2.2% | **Füchschen** 4.6% ichmeisterdustift 3.0% pelikanjog 2.7% |
| 2019 | 6,774 | **Zollinger** 3.0% hoppenstedt 2.7% Thom 2.7% bella 2.5% Will 2.4% | **SpurAufPapier** 3.0% Zollinger 2.8% Horsa 2.4% |
| 2020 | 7,159 | **vanni52** 4.4% hoppenstedt 3.5% Zollinger 3.5% SpurAufPapier 2.8% JulieParadise 2.8% | **MarkIV** 5.7% vanni52 4.3% Zollinger 3.0% |
| 2021 | 7,045 | **vanni52** 5.4% JulieParadise 3.4% SpurAufPapier 3.3% Zollinger 3.0% Thom 2.3% | **Knorzenbach** 10.7% MarkIV 6.6% vanni52 3.4% |
| 2022 | 5,734 | **vanni52** 4.1% JulieParadise 4.0% rubicon 3.7% Zollinger 2.9% Chia 2.7% | **tanja13** 4.1% ichmeisterdustift 3.7% vanni52 3.1% |
| 2023 | 4,591 | **JulieParadise** 3.7% Zollinger 3.4% vanni52 3.3% rubicon 2.7% Thom 2.7% | **vanni52** 6.5% SteamDevil 4.6% imperius 2.8% |
| 2024 | 3,794 | **vanni52** 3.7% TomSch 3.5% Zollinger 3.4% Edelweissine 2.3% rubicon 2.3% | **vanni52** 5.9% SteamDevil 3.0% ichmeisterdustift 2.6% |
| 2025 | 3,258 | **BC666** 4.1% Zollinger 4.0% vanni52 3.6% TomSch 2.9% Faith 2.8% | **vanni52** 3.5% imperius 2.3% Erfeus 2.3% |
| 2026 | 2,329 | **pradella2** 5.6% TomSch 4.6% Zollinger 4.4% BC666 4.2% mondindianer 2.1% | **Portaner** 8.7% pradella2 4.4% mke 4.0% |

“Thanks and praise”: all replies with thanks or praise in the year; the percentages are shares of these. For topics: share of all views of the topics started in that year, excluding five conspicuous topics; counted up to the cut-off date of 1 November 2026, not within that year. 2003 from 16 September, 2026 until 2 November. “admin” is the account of Ansgar, who transferred the old Plenum topics in 2003.

## Short briefings: everyone with at least 5 per cent in one year

25 members received 5 per cent (rounded) or more of all replies with thanks or praise in at least one year; Zollinger is included as an exception because he received the most overall. Sorted by first peak year. Caution with 2003: the year covers only three and a half months and 139 replies, so even a few thank-yous produce high shares.

### Thomas Baier

2003: 12.9% · 2004: 9.3% · 2005: 11.1% · 2009: 7.5% · 2010: 5.9% · 2011: 8.7%

Four times the largest share of a year (2003, 2004, 2005, 2009) – hardly anyone shaped the early years for so long.

1,936 posts, 2003–2018 · 597 replies with thanks or praise · to the profile

### M. Richter (Michael Richter)

2003: 8.6% · 2004: 7.3% · 2005: 6.1%

Michael Richter, the man behind the ink sample booklets; among the most-thanked from 2003 to 2005.

359 posts, 2003–2025 · 132 replies with thanks or praise · to the profile

### eckhard 2003: 7.2%

A Pelikan fan of the first months: almost two thirds of his posts in the Pelikan forum, plus questions about storing and dismantling fountain pens that prompted many replies.

76 posts, 2003–2004 · 13 replies with thanks or praise

### hcpluemer 2003: 5.0%

In 2003 wrote the fundamental threads “Cleaning and chemistry” and “Learning to repair and restore”, followed in 2004 by “It’s so quiet around Cross”.

159 posts, 2003–2015 · 30 replies with thanks or praise

### Dieter N 2005: 7.0% · 2006: 8.1% · 2007: 4.7%

One of the first two moderators (2006–2010). Wrote mainly about ink and Pelikan; “Cool MB fakes” (2006) was read almost 37,000 times.

581 posts, 2004–2012 · 143 replies with thanks or praise

### Tenryu 2005: 6.4% · 2007: 6.3%

One of the most constant posters: 17 years in the forum, over 5,000 posts, 328 different members said thank you at least once. Known, for example, for “Japanese fountain pens.” (2013) and “1000 things the writing-instrument collector does (not) need.” (2016).

5,131 posts, 2004–2021 · 964 replies with thanks or praise · to the profile

### hotap 2006: 5.8% · 2007: 8.9% · 2008: 5.2%

In 2007 the largest share of thanks and praise; of the topics started in 2007, his have the most views as of the cut-off date.

1,336 posts, 2004–2016 · 375 replies with thanks or praise · to the profile

### werner 2008: 7.0% · 2009: 6.8% · 2010: 6.7% · 2011: 7.7%

From 2008 to 2011, around 7 per cent of all replies with thanks or praise every year – right at the top for four years.

2,243 posts, 2007–2026 · 820 replies with thanks or praise · to the profile

### pelikaniac 2010: 4.8%

A Pelikan and Kaweco fan; in 2010 presented Kaweco classics such as the Liliput and the calligraphy set in detail.

991 posts, 2006–2016 · 219 replies with thanks or praise

### Stephan Th 2003: 12.2%

One of the first test-report writers of the new forum: his reports on the Pelikan M800 (2003) and the Waterman Man 100 (2004) were each read over 30,000 times. Active mainly in the Pelikan forum.

136 posts, 2003–2005 · 30 replies with thanks or praise

### Saarländerin 2003: 7.2%

One of the oldest members and, in 2010, the first woman on the moderation team (until 2012). “Fascination Montblanc?” (2009) gathered 358 posts and almost 170,000 views.

483 posts, 2003–2012 · 109 replies with thanks or praise

### esp 2003: 5.0% · 2004: 4.8% · 2006: 6.2%

A collector from the very beginning, in the forum for more than 20 years, mainly in Pelikan, Ink and Montblanc. Questions such as about cases for larger collections or about an unknown Meisterstück had collected many views by the cut-off date.

693 posts, 2003–2025 · 107 replies with thanks or praise

### fountainpen.de 2004: 8.7%

In 2004 the second-largest share of thanks and praise after Thomas Baier; later a moderator, and after that still in the team.

2,194 posts, 2004–2026 · 642 replies with thanks or praise · to the profile

### Axel Hübener 2005: 6.4%

An expert on fakes: “Montblanc: original and fake” (2004) was read almost 57,000 times; in 2006 he asked what fake S.T. Dupont fountain pens would mean for collectors.

134 posts, 2004–2008 · 41 replies with thanks or praise

### absia 2006: 6.9% · 2007: 8.4%

Moderator from the very beginning; among the three most-thanked in 2006 and 2007.

805 posts, 2003–2014 · 199 replies with thanks or praise · to the profile

### Dirk Barmeyer 2007: 7.1% · 2008: 5.9%

The expert on Italian fountain pens; among the most-thanked in 2007 and 2008.

833 posts, 2003–2024 · 181 replies with thanks or praise · to the profile

### Cori 2008: 4.8%

A regular voice from 2007 to 2012, with threads such as “Buying a Toledo?” (2007, 112 posts) and “Priceless – we’re talking about treasures”. Of the topics started in 2008, Cori’s have the most views as of the cut-off date.

936 posts, 2007–2026 · 127 replies with thanks or praise

### Andi36 2011: 13.8% · 2012: 8.1%

In 2011, with 13.8 per cent, the highest annual share any member ever reached.

2,854 posts, 2010–2026 · 939 replies with thanks or praise · to the profile

### Faith 2012: 5.5%

Brought pen pals into the forum in 2012: “The thing about pen pals” (176 posts) and the “Pen pals – overview” (almost 200,000 views), plus a much-read “Short cleaning guide”. Very active again in 2025.

1,917 posts, 2012–2026 · 455 replies with thanks or praise

### YETI 2014: 6.3%

A short, bright star: 1,530 posts between the end of 2013 and mid-2015, 1,320 of them in 2014 alone – and that year the largest share of thanks and praise. Topics such as “Super 5” and “Pelikan 4001 Turquoise”.

1,530 posts, 2013–2015 · 391 replies with thanks or praise

### amarti 2015: 5.3%

In 2015 the member with the largest share of thanks and praise: almost 1,400 posts in one year, detailed presentations such as of the titanium Namisu Nova and the TWSBI Eco, plus the 2015 Advent calendar and an open Pelikan Hub in Düsseldorf.

1,623 posts, 2014–2020 · 292 replies with thanks or praise

### Killerturnschuh 2016: 5.8%

In 2016, the forum’s strongest year, the largest share of thanks and praise.

5,470 posts, 2013–2026 · 1,306 replies with thanks or praise · to the profile

### Zollinger Exception: 5% in no year

The exception: never above 5 per cent in any year, but among the five most-thanked every year from 2019 to 2026 – and, with 1,684 replies with thanks or praise, the most of all overall.

5,215 posts, 2008–2026 · 1,684 replies with thanks or praise · to the profile

### vanni52 2021: 5.4%

Ahead in 2021 with 5.4 per cent – and also the most-thanked member in 2020, 2022 and 2024.

7,513 posts, 2016–2026 · 1,459 replies with thanks or praise · to the profile

### pradella2 2026: 5.6%

The newcomer of the last months: in the forum only since March 2025, and in 2026 nobody received more thanks and praise. Likes to write about old pens such as the Geha 410 and Pix Meisterstücke.

766 posts, 2025–2026 · 214 replies with thanks or praise

### TomSch 2026: 4.6%

In 2026, with 4.6 per cent, just below the threshold – 5 per cent when rounded. 607 different members thanked TomSch, more than anyone else.

4,727 posts, 2008–2026 · 1,493 replies with thanks or praise · to the profile

## Who was thanked most often

The number on the right: how many different members thanked them at least once, 2003–2026. Below the name: how many thank-you replies there were in total – many people said thank you several times.

| | |
|---|---|
| TomSch<br>1,180 thank-you replies | 607 |
| JulieParadise<br>952 thank-you replies | 377 |
| Killerturnschuh<br>863 thank-you replies | 343 |
| bella<br>737 thank-you replies | 341 |
| Thom<br>940 thank-you replies | 331 |
| Tenryu<br>578 thank-you replies | 328 |
| stift<br>711 thank-you replies | 326 |
| Zollinger<br>1,087 thank-you replies | 324 |
| Edelweissine<br>581 thank-you replies | 315 |
| meinauda<br>697 thank-you replies | 312 |
| vanni52<br>1,049 thank-you replies | 303 |
| werner<br>691 thank-you replies | 301 |
| Pelle13<br>686 thank-you replies | 287 |
| fountainpen.de<br>479 thank-you replies | 279 |
| Andi36<br>712 thank-you replies | 269 |

## Whose topics were read most

Views of all topics a member started, up to the cut-off date of 1 November 2026; excluding five conspicuous topics.

| | |
|---|---|
| toni<br>46 topics started | 5.6m |
| werner<br>145 topics started | 3.7m |
| MarkIV<br>243 topics started | 3.2m |
| Linceo<br>166 topics started | 2.8m |
| stefan-w-<br>81 topics started | 2.7m |
| DanielH<br>173 topics started | 2.5m |
| vanni52<br>189 topics started | 2.2m |
| Zollinger<br>92 topics started | 2.1m |
| ralph<br>268 topics started | 2.1m |
| Holunderbeere<br>41 topics started | 1.9m |
| Thomas Baier<br>77 topics started | 1.9m |
| ichmeisterdustift<br>191 topics started | 1.7m |
| Killerturnschuh<br>142 topics started | 1.5m |
| Knorzenbach<br>28 topics started | 1.4m |
| hotap<br>183 topics started | 1.2m |

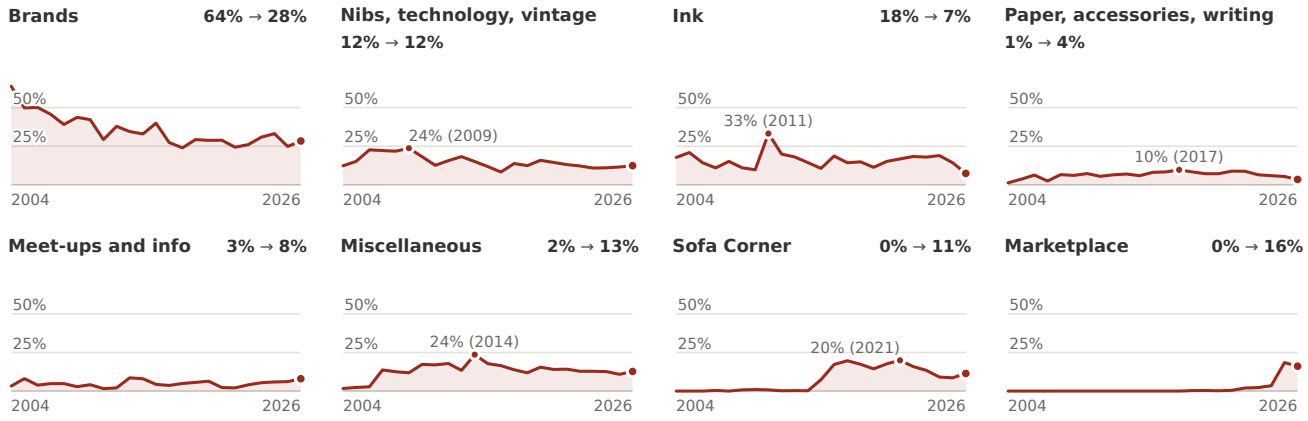
Such figures are an approximation. They only capture thanks that were visible in the forum – not help given by private message, on the phone or at a meet-up, and not the work behind the scenes. That the most-thanked members include moderators, collectors, ink experts and even a dealer shows how broadly the forum was supported.

# What people wrote about

A brand forum turned into a meeting place for everything to do with writing. In 2004 almost two thirds of all posts were in the brand forums, just under half of them about Pelikan. With the new generation from 2012 the conversation spread out: to the large collective threads in “Miscellaneous” such as “Latest pen arrivals”, to ink, paper and handwriting and, from 2015, to the Sofa Corner. The brands remained the largest area – they simply shared the stage with more topics.

## Share of all posts in a year, 2004–2026

Each panel is one area, all on the same scale. Hover or tap to see the values of all areas for a year.




Topics count in the area where they last stood. The Sofa Corner includes the introductions of new members; the marketplace only appears from 2022 because older offers were deleted. 2026 up to 2 November.

▼ All shares as a table, also by brand forum

## Where people wrote

Share of a year’s posts by area, in per cent

| | ’04 | ’05 | ’06 | ’07 | ’08 | ’09 | ’10 | ’11 | ’12 | ’13 | ’14 | ’15 | ’16 | ’17 | ’18 | ’19 | ’20 | ’21 | ’22 | ’23 | ’24 | ’25 | ’26 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Brands | 64 | 50 | 50 | 46 | 39 | 44 | 42 | 29 | 38 | 34 | 33 | 40 | 27 | 24 | 29 | 29 | 29 | 24 | 26 | 31 | 33 | 25 | 29 |
| Nibs, technology, vintage | 12 | 15 | 23 | 22 | 22 | 24 | 18 | 13 | 16 | 18 | 15 | 12 | 8 | 14 | 12 | 16 | 15 | 13 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 12 | 12 |
| Ink | 18 | 21 | 14 | 11 | 15 | 11 | 10 | 33 | 20 | 18 | 14 | 11 | 19 | 14 | 15 | 11 | 15 | 17 | 18 | 18 | 19 | 14 | 7 |
| Paper, accessories, writing | 1 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 10 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 9 | 9 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 |
| Meet-ups and info | 3 | 8 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 8 |
| Miscellaneous | 2 | 2 | 3 | 14 | 13 | 12 | 17 | 17 | 18 | 13 | 24 | 18 | 16 | 14 | 12 | 16 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 13 | 11 | 12 |
| Sofa Corner | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 17 | 20 | 17 | 14 | 18 | 20 | 16 | 13 | 9 | 9 | 11 |
| Marketplace | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 18 | 16 |

## Which brand forums

Share of all posts in the brand forums, in per cent (rounded)

| | ’04 | ’05 | ’06 | ’07 | ’08 | ’09 | ’10 | ’11 | ’12 | ’13 | ’14 | ’15 | ’16 | ’17 | ’18 | ’19 | ’20 | ’21 | ’22 | ’23 | ’24 | ’25 | ’26 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pelikan | 45 | 48 | 44 | 48 | 35 | 35 | 34 | 36 | 36 | 25 | 30 | 34 | 31 | 24 | 32 | 24 | 28 | 25 | 22 | 22 | 21 | 30 | 33 |
| Montblanc | 32 | 22 | 19 | 10 | 12 | 15 | 17 | 10 | 14 | 12 | 16 | 22 | 20 | 21 | 18 | 21 | 24 | 23 | 22 | 22 | 18 | 12 | 17 |
| Lamy | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 8 | 13 | 12 | 6 | 9 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 11 | 17 | 13 | 11 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 11 | 18 | 10 | 11 |
| Asian brands | 0 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 11 | 9 | 6 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 8 | 9 | 13 | 16 | 11 | 16 | 6 |
| Kaweco | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 9 | 10 |
| Italian brands | 6 | 7 | 11 | 8 | 13 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| Parker, Waterman, US | 11 | 9 | 12 | 14 | 14 | 10 | 11 | 15 | 12 | 18 | 13 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 9 |
| Graf von Faber-Castell | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| other brands | 4 | 7 | 4 | 9 | 11 | 11 | 9 | 15 | 14 | 12 | 10 | 8 | 12 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 9 | 12 | 9 | 11 | 13 | 11 | 11 |

0% 60% and more

## The big long-running threads

From 2012, collective threads emerged in which members showed for years what they had newly acquired, what they were writing with or what made them happy. In 2016, more than one post in five ran in one of the 20 threads with over 900 posts; up to 2011 it was two per cent at most. “New ink arrivals”, for example, began in February 2014 and had its strongest year in 2016.

| Thread | Posts | Posts per year, 2003–2026 | Posters | Share of generation 2012–16 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| “Latest pen arrivals”<br>2012 · Miscellaneous · started by toni | 11,364 | | 635 | 59% |
| “What made you happy today”<br>2015 · Sofa Corner · started by DanielH | 8,957 | | 445 | 51% |
| “What music are you listening to right now”<br>2015 · Sofa Corner · started by f.larsen | 4,520 | | 284 | 60% |
| “Enlightenment requested: iron gall ink”<br>2013 · Ink and ink flow · started by Holunderbeere | 4,296 | | 125 | 50% |
| “Small questions, quick answers”<br>2016 · Miscellaneous · started by Quest | 2,462 | | 278 | 38% |
| “Family photo”<br>2010 · Pelikan · started by werner | 2,275 | | 290 | 46% |
| “Latest accessories arrivals…”<br>2015 · Accessories · started by stefan-w- | 2,248 | | 309 | 58% |
| “Coronavirus times – the good, the bad, what is different from usual”<br>2020 · Sofa Corner · started by Strombomboli | 2,246 | | 141 | 51% |
| “New ink arrivals”<br>2014 · Ink and ink flow · started by stefan-w- | 2,083 | | 248 | 62% |
| “Drawing with fountain pen and ink”<br>2017 · Miscellaneous · started by Artus | 1,976 | | 147 | 20% |
| “My companion for the coming week”<br>2012 · Miscellaneous · started by werner | 1,919 | | 264 | 61% |
| “What are you reading at the moment?”<br>2016 · Sofa Corner · started by reduziert | 1,751 | | 249 | 49% |
| “Bargains, offers, discount codes”<br>2016 · Pen trade/service/repairs · started by stingray | 1,560 | | 311 | 38% |
| ““Fine Fountain Pen Art" – fountain pens & photography”<br>2016 · Miscellaneous · started by AndreasD | 1,288 | | 122 | 33% |
| “Meet-up / Stammtisch in Berlin”<br>2013 · Literature and info (books, press articles, collectors’ meetings, pen fairs) · started by toni | 1,191 | | 83 | 65% |
| “Noodler's Creaper Flex Pen”<br>2013 · Sheaffer, Cross and other American brands · started by Thom | 1,119 | | 38 | 66% |
| “More of that eBay stuff”<br>2014 · Sofa Corner · started by Cepasaccus | 1,060 | | 195 | 46% |
| “Ink chromatograms”<br>2021 · Ink and ink flow · started by MarkIV | 1,049 | | 45 | 65% |
| “The dithering and deliberating thread”<br>2015 · Miscellaneous · started by DanielH | 1,018 | | 146 | 74% |
| “Watch thread – brand-free”<br>2015 · Sofa Corner · started by glucydur | 1,011 | | 146 | 69% |

Columns in each row on their own scale; the red column marks the strongest year. “Generation 2012–16”: share of posts by members who first posted between 2012 and 2016 – they carried almost all the big threads.

### The most-read topics

Views up to the cut-off date of 1 November 2026, just under 187 million across all topics together. The data show how often a topic was viewed in total, not when. Older topics had more time to collect readers; it is therefore normal that younger ones have fewer views. At the top are threads that grew over years: collective show-and-tell threads, ink and quick expert questions.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | “Latest pen arrivals”<br>2012 · Miscellaneous · 11,364 posts | 4,672,795 |
| 2 | “Enlightenment requested: iron gall ink”<br>2013 · Ink · 4,296 posts | 1,381,886 |
| 3 | “Advertising” – historic fountain-pen ads<br>2021 · Old writing instruments · 435 posts | 1,234,370 |
| 4 | “Family photo”<br>2010 · Pelikan · 2,275 posts | 1,042,645 |
| 5 | “Latest accessories arrivals…”<br>2015 · Accessories · 2,248 posts | 1,010,080 |
| 6 | “Small questions, quick answers”<br>2016 · Miscellaneous · 2,462 posts | 946,988 |
| 7 | “New ink arrivals”<br>2014 · Ink · 2,083 posts | 899,277 |
| 8 | “Bargains, offers, discount codes”<br>2016 · Pen trade and service · 1,560 posts | 806,363 |
| 9 | “My companion for the coming week”<br>2012 · Miscellaneous · 1,919 posts | 787,676 |
| 10 | “Drawing with fountain pen and ink”<br>2017 · Miscellaneous · 1,976 posts | 724,390 |
| 11 | “Fine Fountain Pen Art – fountain pens & photography”<br>2016 · Miscellaneous · 1,288 posts | 691,100 |
| 12 | “Meet-up / Stammtisch in Berlin”<br>2013 · Literature and info · 1,191 posts | 482,261 |

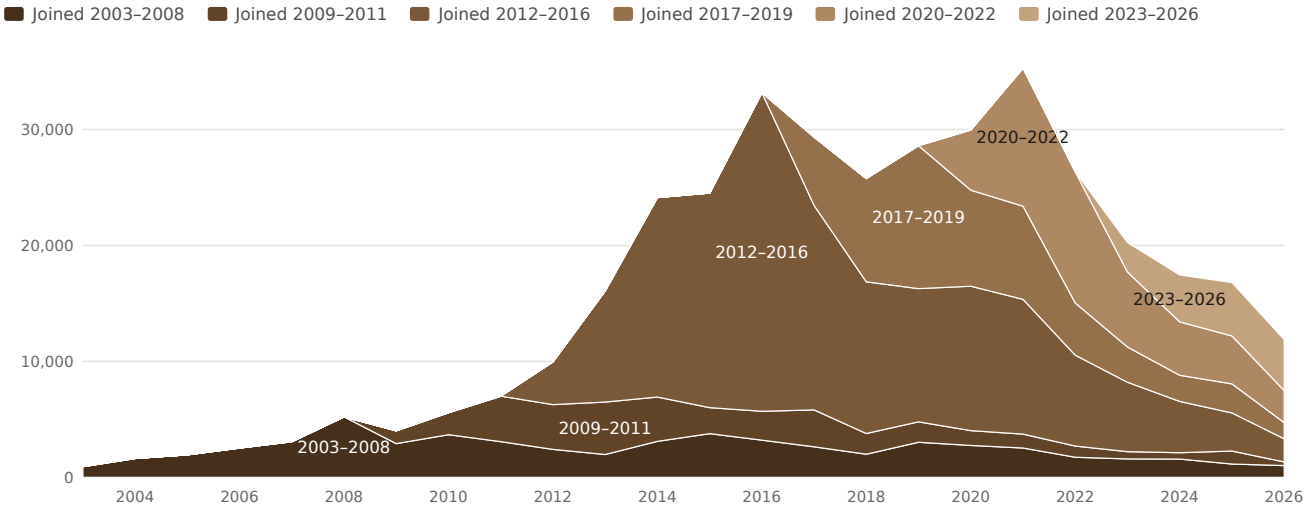
Not in the list: five topics with few posts but 13.3 million views between them, such as “Warning about regularly listed eBay offers” (50 posts, 4.7 million) or “Writing sets for every occasion” (17 posts, 3.7 million). Figures like these are more likely to come from search engines and automated requests than from readers in the forum. The most-read topics of each phase are shown in the timeline above.

## Who came, who stayed

The change in topics went hand in hand with a change of generations. The pioneers of 2003 to 2008 wrote mainly about brands, nibs and old fountain pens. From 2012 a large new generation joined – 1,513 new posters in five years – who showed, collected and chatted more and carried the big long-running threads; in 2016 they wrote four out of five posts. Many pioneers stayed nonetheless: in 2016, 54 of them were still active, and in 2026 still 27.

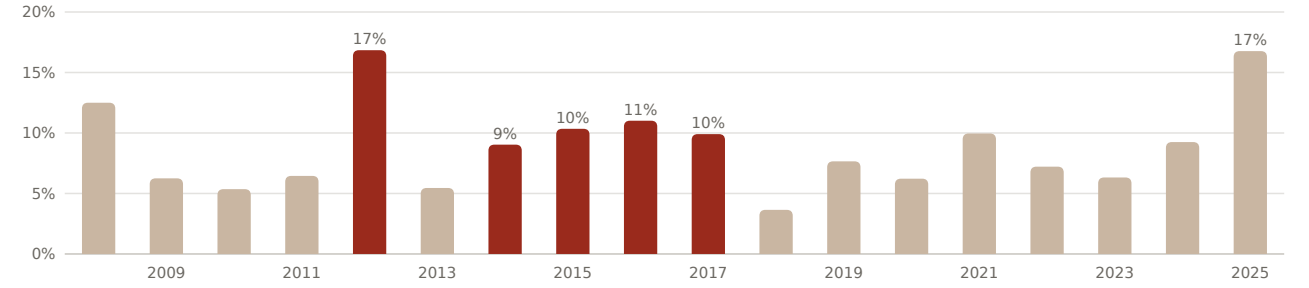
## Who wrote a year's posts – by joining phase

Members by the year of their first post, grouped like the phases of the chronicle; the oldest at the bottom. Hover or tap to see the values for a year.




## Growth or repositioning?

Share of regular posters (at least 20 posts in the year) who never wrote anything again afterwards. In the years of the big influx, more regulars said goodbye than before – the growth was also an exchange.




2012 was the year of the dispute over the first rules. 2026 is missing because nobody could post after the shutdown.

So was the influx from 2012 an illusory success? No, but it was more than growth. Members from the time before 2012 went on writing around 6,000 posts a year until 2017, almost as many as in 2011 – the newcomers came on top. But the old base became narrower: in 2011, 236 old-timers posted, in 2016 only 108, and those who remained wrote more instead. From 2014 to 2017, 9 to 11 per cent of regulars left for good each year, almost twice as many as in 2009 to 2011. A more accurate word than "growth" is therefore: a repositioning with growth – from a specialist collectors' forum to a large meeting place where expert talk, showing and chatting stood side by side. From 2018, the old-timers also wrote considerably less.

## What the generations wrote about

Share of each joining phase's posts by area, across all years. The pioneers stayed more with brands and technology, the later ones wrote more about ink and in the Sofa Corner.

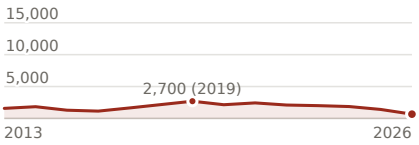
| | Brands | Nibs, tech | Ink | Paper, writing | Meet-ups | Miscellaneous | Sofa Corner | Market |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2003–2008 | 40 | 20 | 12 | 5 | 4 | 14 | 5 | 0 |
| 2009–2011 | 28 | 14 | 20 | 10 | 7 | 14 | 6 | 0 |
| 2012–2016 | 29 | 11 | 17 | 8 | 5 | 16 | 14 | 1 |
| 2017–2019 | 29 | 14 | 14 | 7 | 4 | 14 | 16 | 3 |
| 2020–2022 | 28 | 12 | 14 | 9 | 4 | 14 | 15 | 4 |
| 2023–2026 | 31 | 14 | 16 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 12 | 8 |

## Chatting or talking shop?

The 231 prolific posters who still wrote at least 50 posts after the Sofa Corner opened in August 2015, by their share in the Sofa Corner: posts per year and how many stayed until 2025/26.

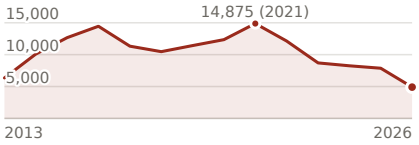
**Hardly in the Sofa Corner** **1,572 → 667**

under 5 per cent · 34 prolific posters, 79% stayed to the end



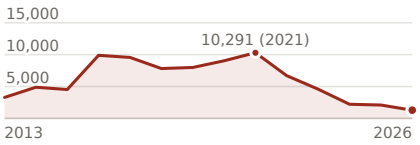

**Mixed** **6,352 → 4,906**

5 to 20 per cent · 126 prolific posters, 74% stayed to the end




**Sociable** **3,289 → 1,291**

20 per cent and more · 71 prolific posters, 62% stayed to the end




Complaints about too much chatter came up again and again. That is why, in 2015, at the request of many, the Sofa Corner was created for everything that would otherwise be “off topic”; in 2017 it stopped being public, and in 2022 the moderators put the hobby back at the centre. Some experienced members wished the forum were more factual; hotap, for example, complained in 2015 that informative posts were being talked to death, and posted for the last time in 2016. Others came precisely because of the sociability. On balance, the forum kept its experts: of the prolific posters who hardly wrote in the Sofa Corner, 79 per cent stayed until the end, of the sociable ones 62 per cent – their posts fell most sharply after the Covid peak of 2021.

## The prolific posters and their topics

The 20 members with the most posts, their course over the years and where they wrote most. 13 of them joined from 2012 onwards; from the pioneer era up to 2008 come Tenryu, stift, TomSch and Zollinger.

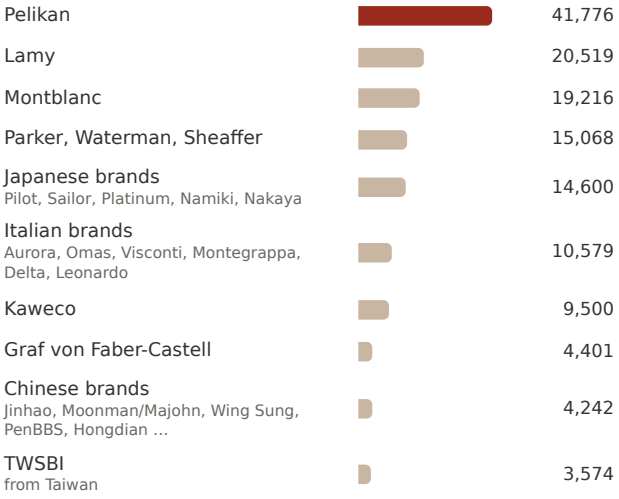
| Member | Posts | Active | Posts per year, 2003–2026 | Main areas |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thom | 10,509 | 2013–2024 | | Ink 40% · Sofa Corner 24% · Nibs/tech 12% |
| vanni52 | 7,513 | 2016–2026 | | Ink 51% · Brands 14% · Sofa Corner 14% |
| JulieParadise | 5,719 | 2016–2026 | | Sofa Corner 23% · Ink 22% · Brands 16% |
| Killerturnschuh | 5,470 | 2013–2026 | | Brands 38% · Ink 22% · Miscellaneous 18% |
| Zollinger | 5,215 | 2008–2026 | | Brands 34% · Miscellaneous 32% · Nibs/tech 22% |
| Tenryu | 5,131 | 2004–2021 | | Brands 32% · Ink 17% · Miscellaneous 16% |
| TomSch | 4,727 | 2008–2026 | | Brands 39% · Nibs/tech 29% |
| meinauda | 4,679 | 2011–2026 | | Ink 22% · Paper/writing 19% · Miscellaneous 16% |
| bella | 4,517 | 2014–2025 | | Brands 27% · Miscellaneous 21% · Sofa Corner 15% |
| SpurAufPapier | 4,428 | 2018–2026 | | Sofa Corner 24% · Miscellaneous 20% · Brands 17% |
| hoppenstedt | 3,871 | 2013–2026 | | Brands 44% · Sofa Corner 23% |
| agathon | 3,381 | 2009–2025 | | Brands 30% · Ink 29% · Nibs/tech 16% |
| Pelle13 | 3,190 | 2016–2026 | | Miscellaneous 29% · Brands 20% · Sofa Corner 18% |
| stift | 3,084 | 2004–2026 | | Nibs/tech 50% · Brands 36% |
| Edelweissine | 3,012 | 2016–2026 | | Brands 25% · Miscellaneous 20% · Sofa Corner 19% |
| Strombomboli | 2,986 | 2012–2026 | | Brands 22% · Sofa Corner 19% · Miscellaneous 17% |
| Linceo | 2,984 | 2009–2026 | | Brands 35% · Miscellaneous 16% · Sofa Corner 15% |
| patta | 2,973 | 2012–2026 | | Brands 31% · Sofa Corner 17% · Miscellaneous 17% |
| glucydur | 2,972 | 2013–2018 | | Brands 38% · Miscellaneous 28% · Sofa Corner 17% |
| MarkIV | 2,941 | 2015–2026 | | Ink 47% · Sofa Corner 14% · Brands 12% |

# Brands: who was talked about

Pelikan was the most-mentioned brand in every single year: in 2004 more than one post in four mentioned the name, and at the end still about one in ten. Behind it, the field changed. At first Montblanc and the American classics Parker, Waterman and Sheaffer followed, and from 2013 mostly Lamy. Japanese brands such as Pilot, Sailor and Platinum rose from eighth to third place, Italian makers lost weight, and from 2012 Chinese brands were added – from zero to several hundred posts a year.

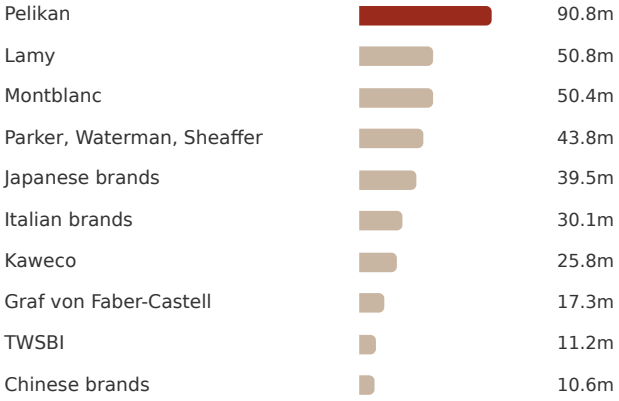
## How often the brands were mentioned

Posts that mention the brand at least once, 2003–2026.



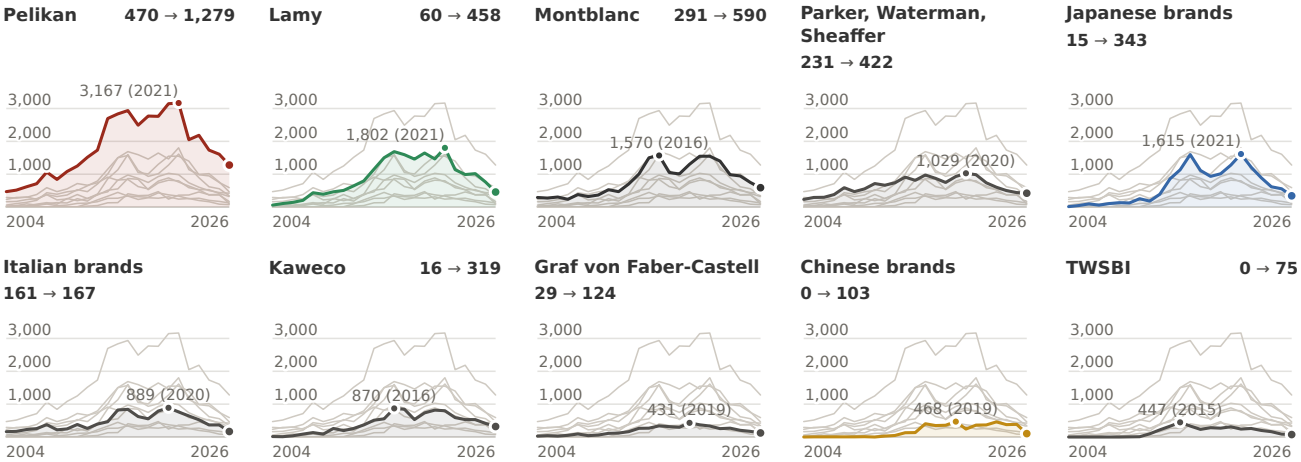

## How often readers got to see them

Estimated impressions: views of forum pages on which the brand appears, up to the cut-off date of 1 November 2026 – the counterpart of “ad impressions”.



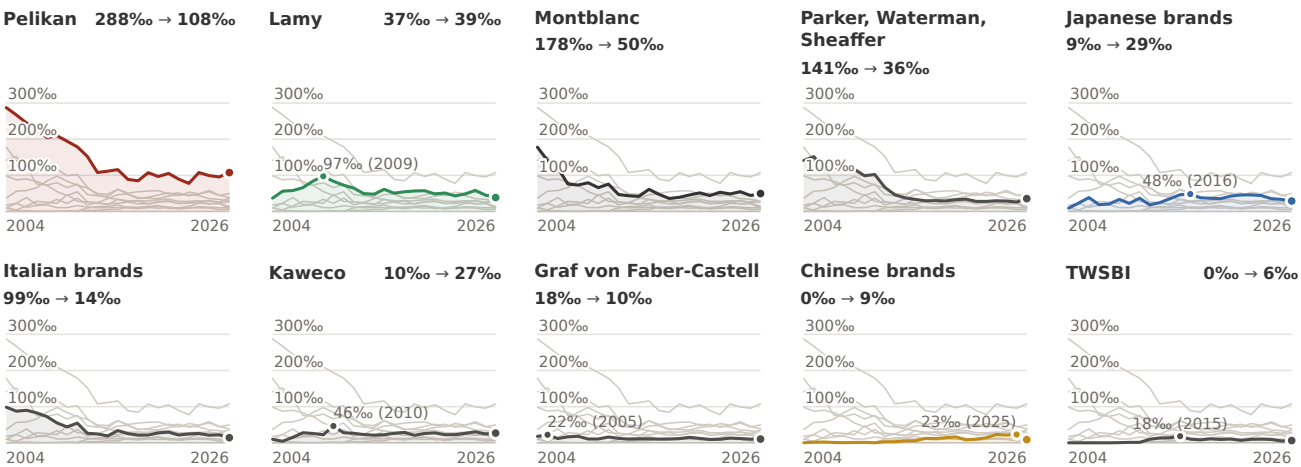

## How many posts mentioned the brands – per year

Absolute numbers, all panels on the same scale; in grey in the background, the other brands. This shows how interest grew with the forum – for Pelikan from 470 posts in 2004 to over 3,100 in each of 2020 and 2021.



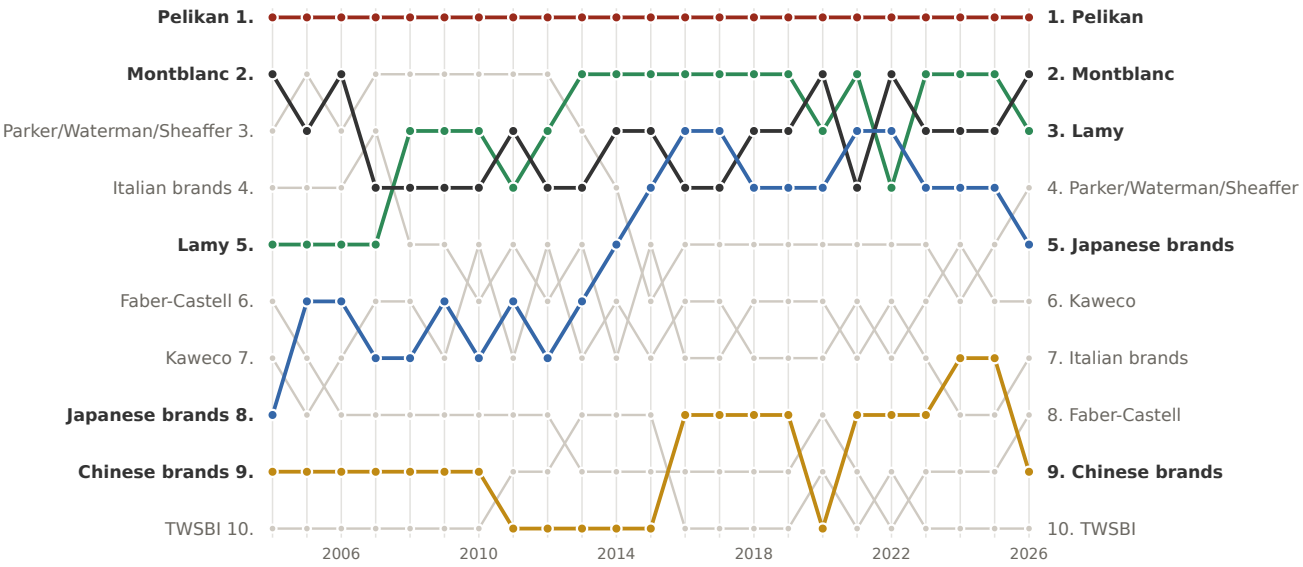

## What share of the conversation they had – per 1,000 posts

The same mentions relative to all posts of the year. A falling share does not mean less interest here: the forum grew, and more and more other topics were added. Only both views together show the full picture.



## The ranking, year by year

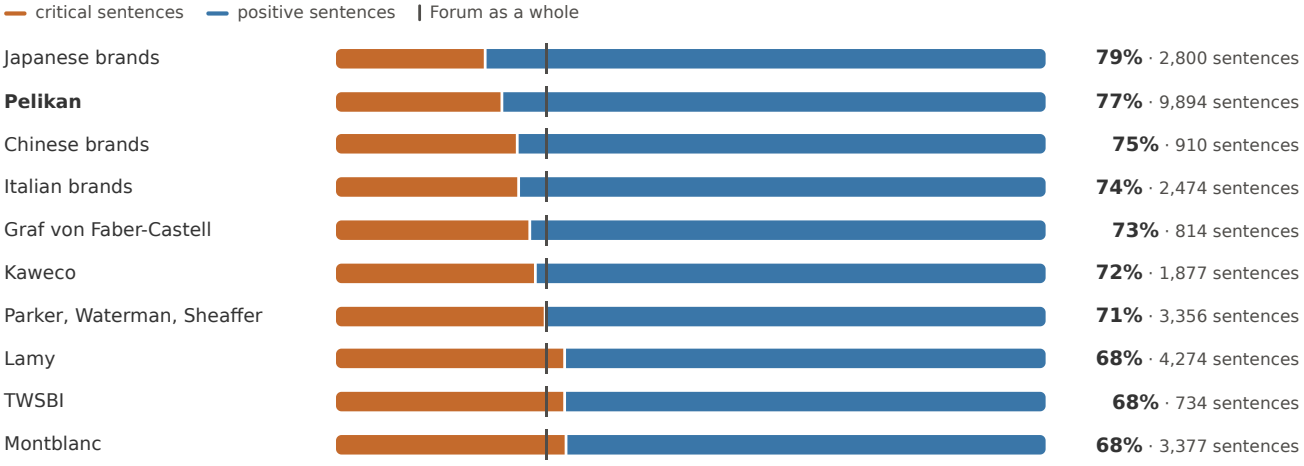
Rank by the number of posts mentioning a brand. Hover or tap to see a year's ranking; a name highlights its line.




Japanese brands: Pilot, Sailor, Platinum, Namiki, Nakaya. Italian: Aurora, Omas, Visconti, Montegrappa, Delta, Stipula, Leonardo and others. Chinese: Jinhao, Moonman/Majohn, Wing Sung, PenBBS, Hongdian, Asvine, Hero and others. TWSBI comes from Taiwan. In the event of a tie, the overall total decides.

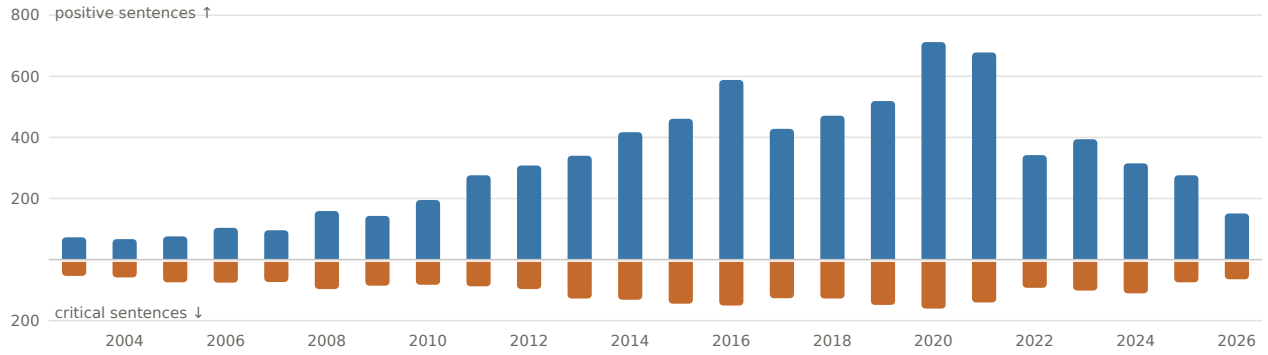
## How people wrote about the brands

Mentioned often does not mean praised often. That is why every sentence mentioning a brand was checked for words of praise and criticism. Of the evaluative sentences about Pelikan, 77 per cent were positive – more than in the forum as a whole (70 per cent) and more than for Montblanc and Lamy (68 per cent each). Only Japanese brands were narrowly ahead at 79 per cent, with far fewer sentences.



### The tone about Pelikan, year by year

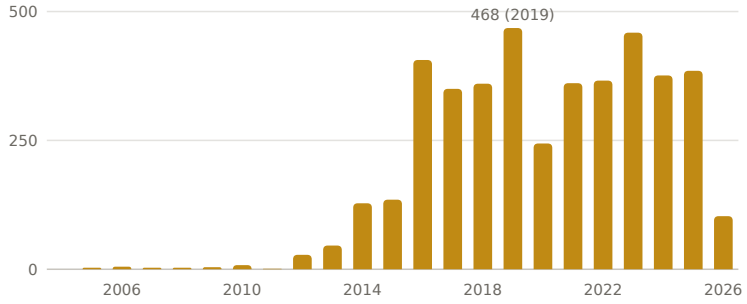
Positive sentences upwards, critical ones downwards. Over the years the tone became ever friendlier: at first, just over half of the evaluative sentences were positive; from 2016 to 2023 it was around four in five.




Simple word lists, sentence by sentence: words of praise such as “schön” (beautiful), “zufrieden” (satisfied), “empfehlenswert” (recommended), “schreibt weich” (writes smoothly), critical ones such as “leider” (unfortunately), “kratzig” (scratchy), “Problem”, “enttäuscht” (disappointed); a “nicht” (not) or “kein” (no) in front reverses the meaning. Greetings and quotations do not count. The method does not recognise irony or technical jargon; the values show tendencies. 84 per cent of the sentences with brand names remained neutral: they describe, ask or compare.

## Chinese brands

Posts mentioning a Chinese brand, per year. Until 2011 they hardly appeared; from 2014, inexpensive fountain pens from China became a regular topic – first Jinhao, then Wing Sung, PenBBS, Moonman/Majohn and Hongdian. The tone was friendly: 75 per cent of the evaluative sentences were positive.




| | |
|---|---|
| Jinhao<br>first in 2012 | 2,057 |
| Moonman / Majohn<br>first in 2018 | 646 |
| Wing Sung<br>first in 2009 | 522 |
| PenBBS<br>first in 2017 | 317 |
| Hongdian<br>first in 2019 | 285 |
| Asvine<br>first in 2022 | 154 |
| Hero<br>first in 2005 | 154 |
| Delike<br>first in 2017 | 87 |
| Kaco<br>first in 2018 | 78 |

### How much was written in the brand forums

Posts in the brands' sub-forums, 2003–2026, with trend and views (as of 1 November 2026). The Pelikan forum was by far the largest and the most read.

| Brand forum | Posts | Trend 2003–2026 | Views | Topics |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pelikan | 33,709 | | 18.2m | 2,151 |
| Montblanc | 22,140 | | 11.4m | 1,640 |
| Lamy | 12,943 | | 7.7m | 837 |
| Other brands | 11,708 | | 6.6m | 1,173 |
| Asian brands | 10,546 | | 5.6m | 729 |
| Parker, Waterman, US brands | 9,589 | | 7.7m | 930 |
| Italian brands | 6,290 | | 4.2m | 545 |
| Kaweco | 6,010 | | 3.6m | 378 |
| Graf von Faber-Castell | 3,089 | | 2.6m | 298 |

Trend for each forum on its own scale; the red column marks the strongest year. Views exclude one conspicuous topic each in the Montblanc, Asian and Pelikan forums. "Other brands" collects all makers without a sub-forum of their own.

# A gain for Pelikan

Pelikan founded PenExchange in 1998 and supported it for almost three decades. What the forum did for the brand cannot be put into exact figures, but the numbers are clear: no brand was mentioned as often, none seen as often, no brand forum read as much – and hardly any was written about so warmly. Many who wrote here about their Pelikans also met in person at the Pelikan Hubs.

**41,776**
posts mention Pelikan – more than Montblanc and Lamy combined

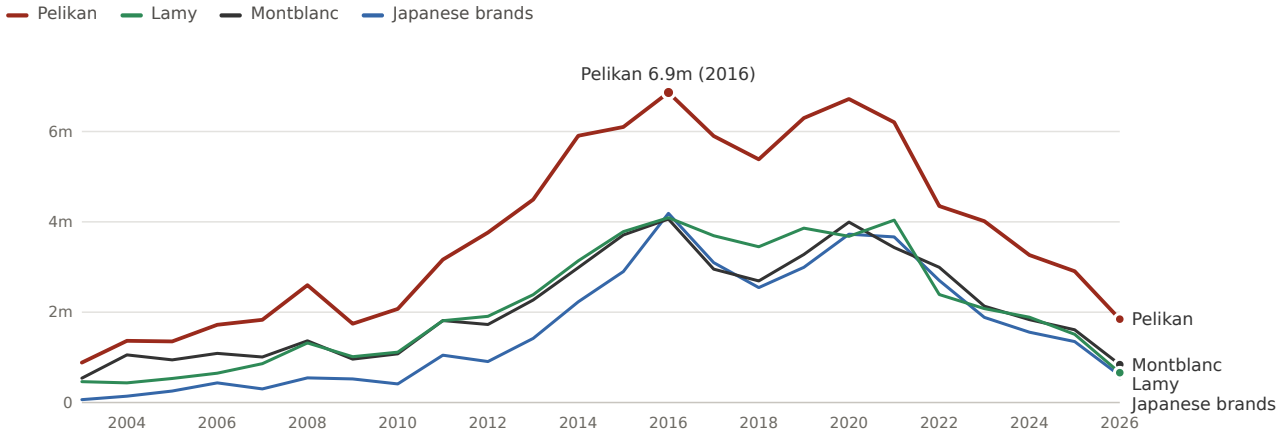
**No. 1**
among all brands, in every year from 2004 to 2026

**≈ 91m**
views of pages on which Pelikan appears – almost every second page viewed

**18.2m**
views in the Pelikan forum, the largest brand forum with 33,709 posts

### Impressions by the year the pages were written

Estimated views of forum pages on which the brand appears, by the year in which the page was written, as of 1 November 2026. The chart does not show when the views occurred, but how many views the pages from each year had collected by this cut-off date. That younger pages have fewer views is normal: they have not been online as long. There are fewer pages from the early years, and very old posts are easily lost in the sheer volume – if they were relevant to many people, search engines would still surface them; little-read old pages are therefore probably niche topics.




Estimate: a topic's views are spread evenly across its pages of 15 posts each; a page counts for every brand that appears on it. Counted are all page views up to the cut-off date of 1 November 2026, including those by guests and search engines; five conspicuous topics are excluded.

For comparison: bought as banner advertising, around 91 million impressions at the usual €2 to €5 per 1,000 impressions would have cost roughly €180,000 to €450,000. On top of that comes what no banner can do: recommendations from connoisseurs, honest feedback and a community that felt connected to the brand.

## Why visibility matters

The view figures matter for two reasons: they show how large the community really was, and they turn genuine customer voices into a lever for AI Visibility.

### There are more of us than it seems

In every brand community, a few people write and most only read along. This is normal and known as the 90-9-1 rule: around 90 per cent only read, 9 per cent contribute occasionally and 1 per cent write most of the content (Jakob Nielsen).

PenExchange follows exactly this pattern: the most active one per cent of posters – 51 members – wrote 41 per cent of all posts, the most active 10 per cent together 86 per cent. Half of all posters wrote four posts or fewer, 3,424 of the 8,571 registered members never posted, and guests could read without registering.

The 381,540 posts stand against 186.7 million page views (as of 1 November 2026). Even if part of these come from search engines and programs, the community was many times larger than the circle of those who posted.

### AI Visibility: Earned Media is the biggest lever

Building AI Visibility – appearing in the answers of AI assistants – is a real challenge for many companies. Three types of media play a particular role:

- **Owned Media**, such as the company's own website: it can be optimised for AI Visibility, but the effect is limited; its influence is often estimated at around 20 per cent.
- **Paid Media**, i.e. advertising: it has hardly any influence on most AI models, because they simply do not see advertising. There are exceptions, such as Meta Muse Spark, which draws on content from Instagram, Facebook and Threads for its recommendations.
- **Earned Media**, i.e. customer opinions and real feedback from people: by far the biggest lever for AI Visibility.

Brand communities with real people thus become an important strategic lever for staying visible when purchase decisions are supported by AI agents. PenExchange was exactly that: 41,776 posts by members about Pelikan, largely publicly readable and grown over almost three decades.

**Global impact – not just in the DACH region.** PenExchange is in German, but AI models use knowledge across languages: what a model learns from German posts it can also apply when answering in English, French, Japanese or Chinese. Almost three decades of experience with Pelikan pens and inks therefore shape Pelikan's AI Visibility worldwide – far beyond the German-speaking countries (Germany, Austria, Switzerland).

### Which Pelikans were discussed

Posts that mention the model or the ink, 2003–2026.

FOUNTAIN PENS

| | |
|---|---|
| M200 | 4,051 |
| M800 | 3,991 |
| M400 | 3,491 |
| M1000 | 3,477 |
| M600 | 2,403 |
| Souverän (series) | 2,391 |
| Pelikano | 1,835 |
| M605 | 1,444 |
| M805 | 1,373 |
| M205 | 1,368 |
| 400NN | 908 |
| 100N | 811 |
| Toledo | 668 |
| M1005 | 625 |

INKS

| | |
|---|---|
| 4001 inks | 4,282 |
| Edelstein inks | 4,165 |

### Pelikan in the forum

How the brand and its fans came together.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1998 | Pelikan launches the "Plenum" on pelikan.de; Ansgar from Pelikan looks after it until the shutdown. |
| 2008 | The admin and moderators meet in Hanover, with a factory tour in Peine. |
| 2009 | "Pelikan service – still good?": 639 posts and almost 400,000 views, praise and criticism voiced openly. |
| 2010 | The Edelstein inks arrive, and werner starts the "Family photo" – with over a million views by the cut-off date, the most-read thread of all brand forums. |
| 2013 | Pelikan sponsors the Pen Wiki. |
| 2014 | Invitation to the first Pelikan Hubs. By 2026 there are over 40 Hub topics with around 2,200 posts, from Hamburg to Vienna. |
| 2014 | Pelikan asks members how PenExchange could be improved. |
| 2019 | "My wishes for Pelikan for 2020 and beyond": 228 posts with ideas for the "host company". |
| 2020 | After consulting Pelikan, the team introduces specialist moderation. |
| 2026 | "Pelikan 2026 // what can we look forward to?" (226 posts); in August, members share Pelikan's survey on "Fine Writing". |

> Not every mention was praise. Service, quality and prices were discussed openly, sometimes harshly – but around 2,300 critical sentences about Pelikan are outweighed by a good 7,600 positive ones, more than three to one. It was precisely this openness that made the forum valuable for Pelikan: here, loyal customers said what they liked and what they didn't, and many others read along.

# All moderators

23 people moderated PenExchange, plus admin Ansgar and two admin accounts from the last two years. New moderators were usually introduced in the forum and signed off when they stopped; these posts are the sources (t = topic number in the archive). Where only a year is given, no announcement survives and the duration is an approximation.

| Name | Role and period | Duration | Introduction, farewell, sources |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Ansgar** | ● 02/1998–11/2026 Administration | 28 yr 9 mo | Pelikan employee, initiator and caretaker since 1998. Retired from Pelikan at the end of 2018, admin of the forum until the shutdown (t=44036). |
| **Dieter N** | ● 08/2006–01/2010 Moderation | 3 yr 5 mo | Listed as the first moderator from mid-August 2006 (t=1249). Released at his own request on 18 Jan 2010 (t=1254). |
| **absia** | ● 08/2006–2011 Moderation | ≈ 5 years | In the team from August 2006; introduced the new colleagues until 2010 (t=1254). A break in 2011, then farewell (chronicle). |
| **hotap** | ● 10/2007–08/2010 Moderation | 2 yr 10 mo | Introduced on 11 Oct 2007 (t=1254). Farewell on 9 Aug 2010: "No more moderator hotap" (t=3709). |
| **werner** | ● 10/2007–02/2016 Moderation | 8 yr 4 mo | Introduced on 11 Oct 2007 (t=1254), stepped down in February 2016 (t=14524). Wrote the chronicle "Penexchange – History". |
| **fountainpen.de** | ● 01/2010–02/2011 Moderation | 1 yr 1 mo | Introduced on 18 Jan 2010, focus on the English PenExchange. On 11 Feb 2011 asked to be taken off the moderation team for professional reasons (both t=1254), but continued to work in the team afterwards, including when the first forum rules were drawn up in 2012. |
| **Michael Richter** | ● 01/2010–2012 Moderation | ≈ 3 years | Introduced on 18 Jan 2010, focus on the English PenExchange (t=1254). Left in 2012 (chronicle). |
| **Saarländerin** | ● 01/2010–2012 Moderation | ≈ 3 years | Introduced on 13 Jan 2010 as the first woman in the team (t=1254). Left in 2012 (chronicle). |
| **DiBa** | ● 08/2010–2011 Moderation | ≈ 1 year | Won over at the collectors' meeting in Augsburg, introduced himself on 16 Aug 2010 (t=3778). Left in 2011 (chronicle). |
| **Andi36** | ● 12/2011–09/2014 Moderation | 2 yr 9 mo | Introduced on 13 Dec 2011 (t=4843). Announced a break in September 2014 (t=10374) – according to the chronicle, his farewell. |
| **Tombstone** | ● 2012–08/2016 Moderation | ≈ 4 years | From 2012, own moderation notes from autumn 2012. Opened the Sofa Corner in 2015; handed over to MarkIV on 8 Aug 2016 (t=16033). |
| **toni** | ● 2012–03/2019 Moderation | ≈ 7 years | From 2012 (chronicle). From May 2017 held the forum alone for a time; farewell on 13 Mar 2019 (t=13272). |
| **agnoeo** | ○ 2013–? Pen Wiki | ≈ 3 years | Looked after the Pen Wiki from 2013, extended rights documented from May 2013 (t=6262). Still mentioned in 2015; the end is not documented. |
| **reduziert** | ● 2014–05/2017 Moderation | ≈ 3 years | From 2014 (chronicle). Stepped down on 2 May 2017 (t=18538). |
| **karlimann** | ● 2016–01/2017 Moderation | ≈ 1 year | Succeeded werner in 2016 and left at the beginning of 2017 (chronicle). |
| **MarkIV** | ● 08/2016–05/2017 Moderation<br>○ 09/2020–12/2022 Specialist moderation<br>● 12/2022–11/2026 Moderation | 6 yr 11 mo | Took over from Tombstone on 8 Aug 2016 (t=16033), stepped down on 2 May 2017 (t=18538). Specialist moderator from 8 Sep 2020 (t=28604), fully back in the team at the end of 2022 (chronicle). |
| **Linceo** | ● 01/2017–05/2017 Moderation<br>● 11/2018–11/2026 Moderation | 8 yr 4 mo | From the beginning of 2017, stepped down on 2 May 2017 (t=18538). Returned in November 2018 (chronicle). |
| **DanielH** | ● 07/2017–03/2019 Moderation | 1 yr 8 mo | Welcomed on 5 Jul 2017 (t=13272). Withdrew at the beginning of 2019 without saying goodbye and got in touch in July 2019 with "Reporting back" (t=24986). |
| **desas** | ● 07/2017–11/2026 Moderation | 9 yr 4 mo | Welcomed on 5 Jul 2017 (t=13272). Announced the specialist moderation in 2020 (t=28604). |
| **Lamynator** | ● 03/2019–11/2026 Moderation | 7 yr 8 mo | Welcomed on 14 Mar 2019 (t=13272). Also an administrator at the shutdown. |
| **JulieParadise** | ○ 09/2020–11/2026 Specialist moderation | 6 yr 2 mo | Specialist moderation from 8 Sep 2020 (t=28604), most recently for Ink, ink reviews and Miscellaneous. |
| **Sabine** | ○ 09/2020–11/2026 Specialist moderation | 6 yr 2 mo | Specialist moderation from 8 Sep 2020 (t=28604), most recently for the marketplace and Miscellaneous. |
| **HeKe2** | ○ 09/2020–11/2026 Specialist moderation | 6 yr 2 mo | Specialist moderation from 8 Sep 2020 (t=28604), most recently for Ink, ink reviews and Miscellaneous. |
| **Zollinger** | ○ 09/2020–11/2026 Specialist moderation | 6 yr 2 mo | Specialist moderation from 8 Sep 2020 (t=28604); a global moderator at the shutdown. When he switched is not documented. |
| **Two admin accounts** | ● 11/2024–11/2026 Administration | 2 yr | Created on 28 Nov 2024; no posts in the forum (team page). |

# What remains

381,540 posts by 5,147 members, 23 moderators, 15 Advent calendars, meet-ups and Pelikan Hubs from Hamburg to Vienna – and an archive that has been saved.

But above all, what PenExchange stood for remains: sharing knowledge, helping newcomers, treating one another kindly and passing on the joy of writing by hand. In 2016 a member compared the forum to a living room that only the team made cosy. Many who got to know each other here want to keep meeting – that was the tenor of the last days.

# Sources and method

## How this chronicle was made

- All figures come from the 381,540 posts of the “Website-alles” backup (texte/forum_alle_beitraege.jsonl), last backup on the morning of 2 November 2026. Thread titles and quotations from the forum have been translated from German; the original titles of the key topics are given alongside.
- Brand mentions: posts that mention a brand at least once, found using search patterns for brand and model names; brand groups such as “Japanese brands” count a post only once.
- Impressions: a topic’s views are spread evenly across its pages of 15 posts each; each page counts for all brands that appear on it. Banner prices for comparison: €2 to €5 per 1,000 impressions as a guide value for display advertising (rechner-portal.de, TKP (CPM) calculator, as of September 2026).
- Tone: every sentence with a brand name is checked against word lists for praise and criticism, and negations reverse the meaning; quotations and greetings are left out. For comparison, every fourth post in the whole forum was checked in the same way.
- Thanks and praise: replies with “thanks” and similar words or with praise count for the person quoted, or, without a quote, for the author of the preceding post; short thank-you posts in between are skipped. Shares per year make small and large years comparable.
- Counted is what was still readable at the time of the backup. Deleted material is missing, such as the marketplace archive, which from 2020 was emptied after three months. The forum statistics last showed 408,616 posts and 24,232 topics.
- Terms of office come from introductions and farewells in the forum: until 2011 in the thread “Moderator activities”, after that in separate topics and in “What made you happy today”. Werner’s chronicle fills the gaps; the team page and forum overview of 1 and 2 November 2026 show the situation at the shutdown.
- Announcements in the “Notes / announcements” section from before October 2015 no longer survive (for example about Andi36, 2014). Where an introduction is missing, the first moderation notes of their own (“have moved …”) show from when someone was in office at the latest.
- The phases are cut by calendar year so that the figures per phase remain comparable.
- Views come from the forum’s topic lists as of 1 November 2026. They state how often a topic had been viewed in total by then – not when. They count every page request, including those by guests, search engines and programs; five conspicuous topics have therefore been taken out of the rankings.
- Visibility: posts per member from the backup (381,540 posts by 5,147 posters), registered members according to the forum statistics (8,571). On the 90-9-1 rule: Jakob Nielsen, “Participation Inequality”, Nielsen Norman Group, 2006 (nngroup.com). On Meta Muse Spark: TechWyse, April 2026 (techwyse.com). On the cross-language use of knowledge by AI models: Anthropic, “Tracing the thoughts of a large language model”, March 2025 (anthropic.com). The assessments of Owned, Paid and Earned Media are practitioners’ estimates, not measurements from this chronicle.
- Topic shares: posts per sub-forum and year, combined into areas. Moved topics count where they last stood.

## Key topics in the archive

- “Penexchange – History –” (*Penexchange – Historie –*) by werner, from 25 Oct 2015 t=13550
- “Moderator activities” (*Moderatorentätigkeiten*), introductions and farewells 2006–2011 t=1254
- “No more moderator hotap” (*Kein Moderator hotap mehr*), 9 Aug 2010 t=3709 · “A new moderator” (*ein neuer Moderator*), 16 Aug 2010 t=3778
- “New moderator – Andreas (Andi36)” (*Neuer Moderator – Andreas (Andi36)*), 13 Dec 2011 t=4843 · “Thanks to Andi36” (*Danke an Andi36*), 26 Sep 2014 t=10374
- “End of moderating – my thanks to Werner” (*Ende der Moderatorentätigkeit – Mein Dank an Werner*), 16 Feb 2016 t=14524 · “Change in moderation” (*Wechsel in der Moderation*), 8 Aug 2016 t=16033
- “What made you happy today” (*Was Dich heute gefreut hat*): welcomes in 2017 and 2019, toni’s farewell t=13272
- “Welcome to the Sofa Corner!” (*Herzlich Willkommen in der Sofaecke!*), 5 Aug 2015 t=12968
- “End of the moderating of Thorsten, Mark and Donate” (*Beendigung der Moderatorentätigkeit von Thorsten, Mark und Donate*), 2 May 2017 t=18538
- “Specialist moderators” (*Fachmoderatoren*), 8 Sep 2020 t=28604
- Sofa Corner visible only to logged-in members, 10 May 2017 t=18615 t=18634
- Ink sample booklets by Michael Richter, 2003–2007 t=78 t=464 t=487 t=923 t=1554
- Collectors’ Stammtisch NRW, 2004 t=558 t=579 t=608 · “Family photo” (*Familienfoto*), 2010 t=4009 · “My companion for the coming week” (*Mein Begleiter für die kommende Woche*), 2012 t=6136
- First Advent calendar, 1 Dec 2011 t=4800 t=4806 · “Pelikan Hubs” (*Pelikan-Hubs*), 2014 t=9330
- “New rules” (*Neue Regeln*), 2 Mar 2012 t=5242 · “New rules / advertising” (*Neue Regeln / Werbung*) t=5446 · “Disadvantages of the new rules for all of us” (*Nachteile der neuen Regeln für uns alle*) t=5444
- “My wishes for Pelikan for 2020 and beyond” (*Meine Wünsche an Pelikan für das Jahr 2020 und darüber hinaus*) t=25249 · “Pelikan 2026 // what can we look forward to?” (*Pelikan 2026 // worauf dürfen wir uns freuen?*) t=42816 · “Pelikan Fine Writing survey” (*Pelikan Fine Writing Umfrage*) t=43739
- “Marketplace rules” (*Tauschbörsen Regeln*), 4 May 2009 t=2846 · “NEW new rules” (*NEUE neue Regeln*), June 2012 t=5965
- “Dear admin and moderators …” (*Liebe Admin- und Moderatorenschaft …*) with the proposal for a dealers’ section, January 2012 t=5080
- “Nutzungsbedingungen / Terms of Use”, version of 25 Apr 2017 t=5240
- “On the mood and focus in the forum” (*Zur Stimmungslage und Fokussierung im Forum*), 28 Oct 2022 t=35668
- “Sale of Pelikan’s core business?” (*Verkauf des Pelikan Kerngeschäfts?*), from 2023 t=37283
- “PenExchange will be switched off on 2 Nov 2026” (*PenExchange wird am 02.11.2026 abgeschaltet*), 30 Oct 2026 t=44036
- “Where shall we meet when the forum is switched off?” (*Wo treffen wir uns, wenn das Forum abgeschaltet ist?*) t=44037

Offline, every topic is stored under Website-alles/website-alles/www.penexchange.de/forum_neu/viewtopic.php@t=[number].html