

As created on 11/1/04, author: R.v.Densen

Introduction

Probeersel.com is a non-profit community for beginning as well as established comic artists who want to share their art with the world for free.

Probeersel.com has been activated on May 16, 2002 by René van Densen, hosted by Protagonist.nl. The free comics site, until then only featuring the comics by Van Densen himself, had been on the internet for a while before then. This is disclosed in the section 'History'. This document shows some of the statistics and interesting events of the past half year, and is intended only for the Probeersel.com audience to read. No rights can be derived off the publication of this document; it is merely for general information to those who are interested.

History

Probeersel.com started out as a 'comics' section on R.v.Densen's personal homepage in 1999, then hosted on Xoom.com, which later became NBCI.com after a merger with NBC. Xoom hosted a wide range of personal homepages and offered 500MB of storage space, which even, say, a 5-part philosophical graphic novel won't exceed. To improve the odds of the site, or more specifically the then still under development graphic novel quintology 'Probeersel', being found and read, the comics section got a second URL which was provided by V3.com, better known as 'the go.to people'. From that moment on, the comics could be read from <http://welcome.to/probeersel> and they are still accessible from there, today.

Welcome.to/probeersel evolved into a separate site rather than a sub-section of Van Densen's personal page, when NBCI decided to stop hosting personal homepages and all of the site became homeless in August 2001. Van Densen decided to try his luck with www.topcities.com and created a webpage for the comics alone.

In February 2002, the site got a large design and content structure make-over. Since the Probeersel graphic novel quintology, still considered the center of the site, had by then been finished and published online, the time was ripe to structure the site better. The goal was to make sure the Probeersel books would be read, and also to try and found a (small) community of new and struggling comic artists with promising material to publish their material for free. To further aid the promotion and accessibility of the site, the URL www.probeersel.com was activated with Protagonist on April 24, originally only as a 'virtual' URL until Topcities objected to the amount of data traffic it generated and tossed it offline for a day. Van Densen decided to start paying for the hosting of the site, thereby ensuring that the content would remain available as long as he would be able to pay the bill. Probeersel.com was born.

In 2002, artists Joep van Abeelen ('Retirement') and Gregory Cathalina ('God.inc') joined the site. This was also the year the first edition of the Probeersel.com t-shirts could be won for free. In 2003, Satan ('Macademia') and Sionnain Comeaux ('The Whole Truth') joined as well. In 2004, Béné van Gansbeke, Troy Titane, Patrick G. Smith, Bandirah and Jon Hancock joined the site, bringing the current total number of artists to 10. In August 2003 a staff was formed, one member of which wasn't mentioned in this list: Tom Geelen, technical staff. 2004 meant more changes, in fact, as the second T-shirt competition started off, and in October 2004, the dynamic site's content was migrated to MySQL instead of the text-based database setup Van Densen had initially invented, thus making the site more stable, faster, and ensuring the hosting server won't buckle under pressure of large amounts of visitors. The site has been slowly but surely gaining a fanbase and increasing visitor traffic, and is here to stay.

Traffic Report

The fifth half year of 'existence' shows interesting fluctuations but, in the end, an overall growth in terms of total traffic:

May:	daily average of visits: 205	total: 6372
June:	daily average of visits: 174	total: 5232
July:	daily average of visits: 168	total: 5210
August:	daily average of visits: 204	total: 6351
September:	daily average of visits: 239	total: 7186
October:	daily average of visits: 254	total: 7899

The bandwidth allowance at Protagonist is a good 3 Gb - Probeersel.com doesn't use that yet (although we're getting close!), but still the traffic went rather well in that department too:

May:	daily average of pages: 667	total Kbytes that month: 1298472
June:	daily average of pages: 670	total Kbytes that month: 1225069
July:	daily average of pages: 580	total Kbytes that month: 1244318
August:	daily average of pages: 793	total Kbytes that month: 1711278
September:	daily average of pages: 962	total Kbytes that month: 2552066
October:	daily average of pages: 864	total Kbytes that month: 2232568



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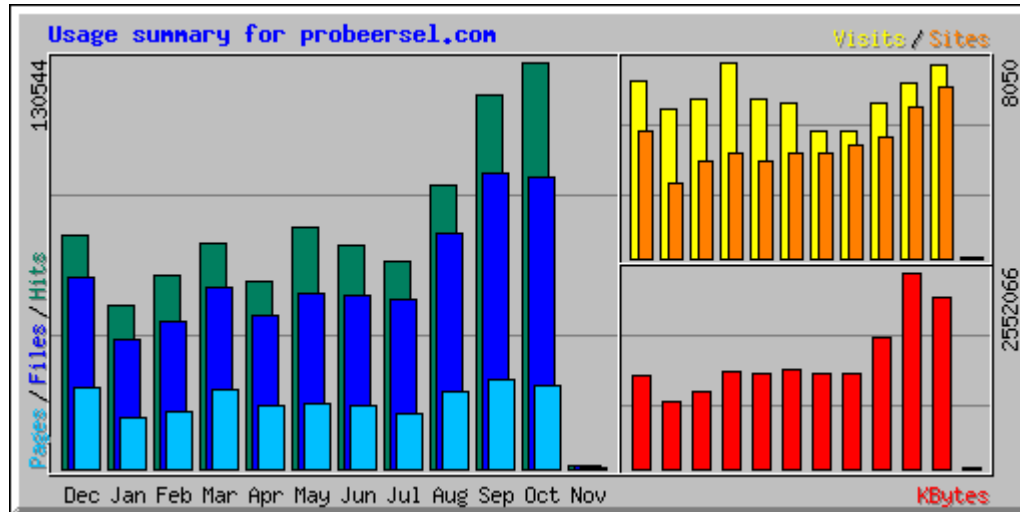
Countries

As in previous years, there was a lot of variety in the countries of this site's audience. An overview:

# Months	Hits	Files	KBytes	Country
2	205	205	2016	Argentina
6	2772	2288	47698	Australia
6	2264	2213	433903	Austria
6	16796	14559	229952	Belgium
5	1059	1005	16074	Brazil
1	43	43	301	Bulgaria
6	6822	5289	118264	Canada
1	40	40	314	Croatia (Hrvatska)
1	397	368	14696	Czech Republic
6	2317	2168	61153	Denmark
1	155	149	2386	Estonia
6	5030	4847	143497	Finland
6	4322	3579	54732	France
6	2440	2384	54487	Germany
2	205	137	2988	Greece
4	332	328	5081	Hungary
1	126	126	2720	Indonesia
3	311	257	5190	Israel
6	1831	1419	30158	Italy
4	713	707	17087	Japan
6	2543	2368	26144	Mexico
1	193	193	8705	Morocco
6	187203	128135	2336961	Netherlands
6	111598	74244	2122582	Network
6	1092	1039	24847	Non-Profit Organization
4	2224	2210	38858	Norway
1	349	275	3544	Peru
2	261	261	5668	Philippines
6	1680	1497	22967	Poland
3	580	457	6517	Portugal
5	1125	1040	24988	Singapore
1	106	104	1398	Slovak Republic
1	60	60	475	Slovenia
1	45	45	378	South Africa
6	3248	3183	67831	Sweden
5	1028	1020	17681	Switzerland
1	213	210	2894	Taiwan
1	189	182	6200	Turkey
6	3951	3065	69243	United Kingdom
5	4503	3331	72940	United States
6	68650	55468	1344004	Unresolved/Unknown
6	102973	96429	2804213	US Commercial
6	6934	6438	215467	US Educational
5	619	588	34622	US Government
5	765	700	18973	US Military



Graphical Chart Traffic



Current content

Currently Probeersel.com hosts the following comics (In alphabetical order):

- **Autobiopsy**
A 24-Hour Comic, by René van Densen.
- **De Kreup Vallende Histie (Dutch)**
A bidaily Dutch dose of absurdism, by Bandirah.
- **Earth Harvest**
A comic involving aliens and fast food, by Jon Hancock.
- **Even A Red-Haired Dude Could Be Lucky...**
A four page short story (with some nudity), by Bené van Gansbeke.
- **Experiment**
A one-page drawing style experiment, by Bené van Gansbeke.
- **Fatal Saga**
Online graphic novel, tells the tale the quest of the immortal Blaze, by Patrick G. Smith
- **God .inc**
A daily comic strip starring the Lord himself, by Gregory Cathalina (ended March 3, 2004).
- **Hermetic Reflections**
A philosophical two-page thought, by Bené van Gansbeke.
- **Hymen For Sale**
Original version of the short story by Béné van Gansbeke, which was also published on Stripster.nl, was one of 15 winners in the Mekanik Strip Wedstrijd "What' s Your Excuse?" and it will consequently appear in print, alongside the other 14 winning stories, in the upcoming year, and a revised version has been published on Pulpdeluxe.be.
- **Jeffrey (Dutch)**
If the bee and the flower could talk, what would they say ? By Troy Titane.
- **Maak Het Verhaal Af En Kleur De Plaatjes / Finish The Story And Colour The Pictures**
A comic strip with a new look at how abstract a comic could be, by René van Densen.
- **Macadamia**
A weekly trip to academic insanity, by Satan.
- **One Year In Satan's Purrgratory**
A weekly comic strip (52 episodes total) about two guys and their psychotic cat, by René van Densen.
- **Opedragen Aan Een Zieke Maatschappij / Dedicated To A Sick Society**
Full-page comics with a gritty but idealistic approach, by René van Densen.
- **Penguism**
A weekly comic featuring a penguin in a pink tutu who used to be a human policeman and now goes to train the penguins to conquer the world, by Sionnain Comeaux & René van Densen (on temporary hiatus).



WWW.PROBEERSEL.COM
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*Half-year status report,
May - October 2004*

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- Prejudges

A 12-Hour Comic, by Gregory Cathalina.

- Probeersel Graphic Novel Quintology

Graphic novel in five parts about a young man who tries to get his memory back and the symbolic adventures he has along the way, by René van Densen.

- RCH

Short stories that symbolise themes in society, by Gregory Cathalina.

- Retirement

A graphic novel about an addict and a god, by Joep S. van Abeelen (on temporary hiatus).

- RexRex (Dutch)

A daily Dutch literary oneliner or dialogue, by Troy Titane.

- Right In Front Of Me

A valliant but failed 24 Hour Comic attempt which will be turned into a full story but is currently on temporary hiatus, by Sionnain Comeaux.

- The Artificial Real

A series of several other short stories, currently containing 'Chalk' and 'Rock', both by René van Densen.

- The Grim DotCom

A weekly comic starring the adventures of the Grim Reaper who finds that what he loves doing most needs an update, by René van Densen.

- The Whole Truth

A weekly comic featuring Koyasu and Isis, freakish creatures from some dimension not our own, in which everything said is spoken in a semi-confusing and paradoxical way, by Sionnain Comeaux (on temporary hiatus).

- Vice Versa

A short story, by Sionnain Comeaux.

- Worst Case Scenario (Dutch)

A daily Dutch thought on the most bizarre situations for promotional sausage, by Joep van Abeelen & René van Densen (ended October 12, 2004).

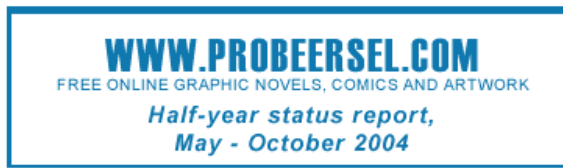
- Zwaardvis (Dutch)

Short comic page about eating swordfish, by Béné van Gansbeke.

The site also contains above mentioned artists' biographical information and some loose comics, artwork, cartoons, t-shirt designs, wallpapers and other downloads.

Special Events of the past half year

- Artist Bandirah joined Probeersel.com
- Patrick G. Smith' s graphic novel ' Fatal Saga' started appearing online
- Bandirah' s comic ' De Kreup Vallende Histie' started appearing online
- Gregory Cathalina returned with a brand new comic: RCH. This will be a collection of short stories, premiering with the first stories "Ball", "Door" and "Spear"
- Worst Case Scenario featured guest episodes by René Janssen, Cecile Saiso, Jonaschk, Matthijs de Boer, Rutger Ockhorst and also featured a Farscape-themed week
- René van Densen made a guest cover for Stripster.nl for the Stripdagen comics convention in Haarlem in June, and he, Bandirah, Gregory Cathalina and Agazyr (co-star in ' One Year In Satan' s Purrrgatory') visited the convention
- Remembering Marlon Brando who died earlier this year, an episode of Worst Case Scenario and The Grim DotCom were specially dedicated to him
- The Probeersel blog featured a special ' thank you' post to several well-appreciated initiatives giving us attention, love, or a ' mere' link
- René van Densen had a friendly online public chat with Reinder Dijkhuis from Rocr.net
- Jean-Paul Arends spammed the StripSter.nl forum with the ' Worst Case Scenario' -punchline "Wil je daar ook worstjes bij?" which resulted in a funny episode about that, as well as the slogan appearing elsewhere online, and for a moment seeming to become the new "All your base are belong to us"
- Comments were switched on on the Probeersel blog (thanks to Sionnain Comeaux for that)
- Saiso.nl, Plintkaboutier.nl and Wulffmorgenthaler.nl all quoted Probeersel.com' s link reviews of their sites
- Béné van Gansbeke' s comic ' Zwaardvis' appeared online, and on Stripster.nl as well
- Troy Titane' s returned with his comic ' RexRex'



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- Sionnain Comeaux was diagnosed with a brain tumor but pulled through and recovered - once again thank you to all the artists and the audience who sent her warm messages of support!
- Béné van Gansbeke's comic 'Hymen For Sale' appeared online, not just on Probeersel.com, but also at Stripster.nl, Pulpdeluxe.be, and it won the Mekanik Strip Wedstrijd as one of 15 winning stories which means it will appear in print next year
- Our tenth member, Jon Hancock, joined Probeersel.com
- Jon Hancock's comic 'Earth Harvest' started appearing online
- There were plans to appear on the Atlantis Festival in Roosendaal, along with other comic artists, but in the end the plans fell through because the festival didn't receive enough responses to open a room just for the comic artists - maybe next year?
- René van Densen also visited the comics artist festival 'Bal du Rat Mort' in Arnhem and shot a funny photo report of the event
- Probeersel.com celebrated its 3 year existence in Tilburg, with lots of food and alcohol, in the presence of Bandirah, Béné van Gansbeke, Troy Titane, René van Densen, Tom Geelen, and Jeroen Mirck from Comicbase.nl - the blog shows a funny photo report of that event, as well
- Satan's comic, Macadamia, returned to Probeersel.com - in his own words: "I couldn't just let an election year go by unscathed.."
- René van Densen's comic 'The Grim DotCom' is now available at ComicAlert.com, a service that allows you to select comics in an XML file which tells you when they've updated
- Worst Case Scenario ended, after a full year of episodes
- Probeersel.com's site engine was upgraded to a new database, and although the transition wasn't completely flawless, most of the functionality migrated smoothly, and we have our staff member Tom Geelen to thank for that!
- On the Str!pdagen convention, October 2004, Probeersel.com contributed 1500 special 'Artist Showcase' booklets to the special free goodies bag that members of Het StripSchap, as well as the press and special invitees received
- Email accounts service from ZZN.com has once again simply vanished offline, so Probeersel.com no longer endorses this (free) service from them
- The archive for René van Densen's old self-founded school paper, 'BlindSight', is back online, which featured several of his Probeersel.com comics
- Satan's comic 'Macadamia' features President Bush visiting the school
- Gregory Cathalina suffers offline-time thanks to his new cable internet provider, which - in his own words - means he's less behind the computer and lets his creative side come out of its cage again

Trivia

You wouldn't believe what the statistics sometimes tell us... Here's a few search strings that people found the site on, that really cracked us up. There were a lot more, but we thought these were the funniest...

- "trapped art"
- "year 1926 united states fun facts"
- "black wallpaper"
- "kate claxton"
- "facts about the year 1895"
- "mickey donald goofy the three musketeers live on stage"

T-shirt Competition

In August 2002, Probeersel.com had 100 T-shirts printed to be given away through the site. Recently, this competition ended, but we launched a new one already again, so you've got all new chances at winning a limited edition, Probeersel.com T-shirt, and these new shirts are designed by Joep van Abeelen ! The idea is that you send an email to tshirt2003@probeersel.com in which you state your name, email-address and, and this is what can win you such a shirt, your ideas for the story of Joep's graphic novel concept, Retirement, where a God comes to earth and trains a homeless addict to be her replacement so she can retire. The most original and/or best ideas will be rewarded with these awesome T-shirts ! But hurry - there are only 38 T-shirts left anymore !

Check out <http://www.probeersel.com/content.shtml?news24042004> to read more about it.



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Expectations and Plans

- Although we finished the work on our current engine, we' re still planning on setting up the site completely anew in the (hopefully near) future, so it will include loads of extra features (amongst which will be a forum, I promise !) and we' re still unsure wether or not we' ll build an all new code for that ourselves or continue to hold out for the open-sourcing of Joey Manley's new site engine (WebComicsNation) which he is developing.
- Satan is going to continue his current ' President Bush visits Macadamia' this week, and will then resume the comic' s regular publishing schedule again.
- Sionnain Comeaux plans to work on ' If I Fell' and on new episodes of ' Penguism' , as well as a secret new weekly comic.
- René van Densen is currently working on a new chapter of ' The Artificial Real' (which will surprise the loyal readers of the site) and is still considering, at some point in the future, doing a 'The Making Of Probeersel' as a sort of sixth book in the Probeersel Graphic Novel Quintology. He is also hoping to get his hands free to work on the first story in the Non Biblia Sacra project, of which he has the story written already. On top of all that, he' s started initial planning for an all new graphic novel.
- Gregory Cathalnina is still working on two new comics but is keeping all information vague and nobody quite knows what to expect yet.
- Jon Hancock continues work on his story ' Earth Harvest' .
- Bandirah is planning to start an all new comic in January, called ' Kalkedodder' . Around that time, most, if not all, of ' De Kreup Vallende Histie' will be taken offline because he feels ' Kalkedodder' will be much, much better.
- Probeersel.com is currently investigating what would be required to organise a webcomics convention in Tilburg, The Netherlands ! This will be the first webcomics convention in the Netherlands, and unless I' m mistaken, the world ! If you wish to be kept up to date on this, click ' contact us' on the site and let us know !
- On April 23, 2005, a new international 24 Hour Comic Day will be organised by 24hourcomics.com - you never know, perhaps Probeersel artists will join in the worldwide attempt !
- And finally, we expect, as usual, that there will be new comic artists joining, new comics coming up, new interesting things for our visitors and our artists, etc., etc.

Conclusion

Probeersel.com RULES !! Please keep visiting, we promise it'll be worth it.

René van Densen, Tilburg, Holland, 1st of November 2004.