

As created on 11/1/05, 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 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 ('Macadamia') 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 total number of artists at that point to 10. In August 2003 a staff was formed, one member of which wasn't mentioned in this list: Tom Geelen, technical staff. By the end of 2004, Béné van Gansbeke decided to go solo, thus becoming, to date, the first and only artist to leave our non-conformist community. Just before his departure, Argibald joined the site. In 2005, Benjamin Kikkert, Marz, Elizabeth Neerenberg, Matt Baay, Secher Nbiw and Wouter Goudswaard joined the site as well, bringing the total number of artists currently publishing on Probeersel.com to 16.

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.

2005 brought a lot of publications, on- and offline, for several of the Probeersel.com artists, as well as collaborations between them and between other artists.

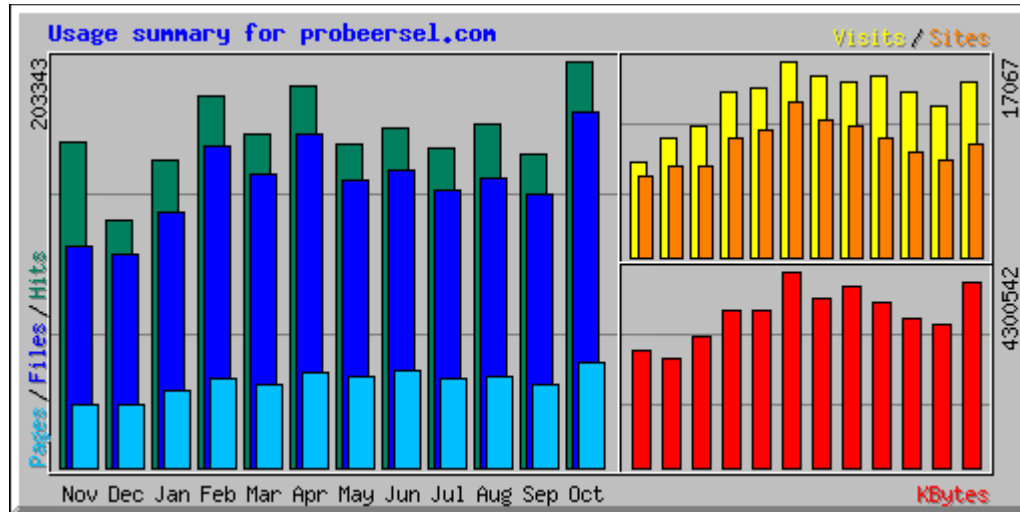
On May 1st 2005 Probeersel.com had its first comics convention debut on the ClickBurg convention in Tilburg, the Netherlands.

The site has been slowly but surely gaining a fanbase and increasing visitor traffic, and is here to stay.



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Graphical Chart Traffic



Traffic Report

The sixth and seventh half year of 'existence' show interesting fluctuations but, in the end, an explosive growth in terms of total traffic:

November 2004: daily average of visits: 276 total: 14197

December 2004: daily average of visits: 333 total: 13156

January 2005: daily average of visits: 365 total: 14396

February 2005: daily average of visits: 510 total: 15733

March 2005: daily average of visits: 475 total: 15256

April 2005: daily average of visits: 568 total: 15688

May 2005: daily average of visits: 506 total: 17067

June 2005: daily average of visits: 508 total: 14725

July 2005: daily average of visits: 507 total: 14282

August 2005: daily average of visits: 464 total: 11341

September 2005: daily average of visits: 438 total: 13156

October 2005: daily average of visits: 489 total: 15171

The bandwidth allowance at Protagonist was a good 3 Gb, but was upped to 8 Gb at the start of this period, just in time because Probeersel.com was about to exceed that - the traffic went rather well in that department too:

November 2004: daily average of pages: 989 total Kbytes that month: 2572221

December 2004: daily average of pages: 1029 total Kbytes that month: 2382166

January 2005: daily average of pages: 1238 total Kbytes that month: 2888386

February 2005: daily average of pages: 1593 total Kbytes that month: 3439415

March 2005: daily average of pages: 1339 total Kbytes that month: 3433179

April 2005: daily average of pages: 1602 total Kbytes that month: 4300542

May 2005: daily average of pages: 1480 total Kbytes that month: 3717338

June 2005: daily average of pages: 1626 total Kbytes that month: 3991286

July 2005: daily average of pages: 1429 total Kbytes that month: 3603419

August 2005: daily average of pages: 1468 total Kbytes that month: 3259145

September 2005: daily average of pages: 1389 total Kbytes that month: 3121938

October 2005: daily average of pages: 1703 total Kbytes that month: 4068560



WWW.PROBEERSEL.COM
 FREE ONLINE GRAPHIC NOVELS, COMICS AND ARTWORK
Half-year status report,
November 2004 - October 2005

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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:

Hits	Files	KBytes	Country
296	289	6369	Andorra
1796	1739	20747	Argentina
20494	20784	685500	Australia
9134	8843	188858	Austria
56986	51832	848362	Belgium
4297	4107	64006	Brazil
29617	27786	716792	Canada
670	670	22367	Croatia (Hrvatska)
990	975	31359	Czech Republic
16927	16562	330798	Denmark
25049	22685	544917	Finland
25695	24143	437396	France
27806	25926	526742	Germany
709	708	15477	Greece
5390	5110	72736	Hungary
842	840	42460	Iceland
451	385	4165	Indonesia
1289	1106	15882	Israel
5722	5463	92231	Italy
1429	1410	37015	Japan
469	468	4058	Lithuania
4949	4452	124691	Malaysia
8362	7882	113738	Mexico
1168	1128	15173	Morocco
526678	409136	8424105	Netherlands
450925	375343	10382243	Network
1814	1725	61288	New Zealand (Aotearoa)
4964	5520	161818	Non-Profit Organization
6433	6395	120595	Norway
1036	993	14563	Peru
8254	8039	107941	Poland
4301	4021	61214	Portugal
765	661	14607	Romania
2750	2605	96403	Singapore
16473	13266	362846	Sweden
7911	7641	141581	Switzerland
561	500	6680	Taiwan
1563	1329	21202	Thailand
3665	3449	58900	Turkey
53695	49227	923986	United Kingdom
6820	6473	191180	United States
241934	216961	5438006	Unresolved/Unknown
459	459	21106	Uruguay
332978	299606	7519658	US Commercial
24712	22878	765861	US Educational
1668	1529	55439	US Military
2901	647	30335	Virgin Islands (U.S.)



Current content

- Ambience

Sci-fi story, by Satan.

- Argibald (Dutch)

Irregularly appearing absurdist cartoons, by Arbibald.

- Autobiopsy

A 24-Hour Comic, by René van Densen.

- BunBuns

Wordless comics about creepy bunnies, by Matt Baay.

- De Kreup Vallende Histie (Dutch)

A bidaily Dutch dose of absurdism, by Bandirah. (ended late 2004)

- Earth Harvest

A comic involving aliens and fast food, by Jon Hancock.

- 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).

- In Het Geheel Doorsnijden (Dutch)

More random absurdist cartoons by Troy Titane.

- Jeffrey (Dutch)

If the bee and the flower could talk, what would they say ? By Troy Titane.

- Kalkedodder (Dutch)

A daily Dutch dose of absurdism, by Bandirah. (will end late 2005)

- Luchtgitarist

Irregularly appearing comics about an air guitarist, by Wouter Goudswaard.

- Lucky Shot

Short sci-fi story, by Patrick G. Smith.

- 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.

- Milk, Sex & Cookies

Film Noir on the farmgrounds, by Elizabeth Neerenberg.

- One Year In Satan's Purrgatory

A weekly comic strip (52 episodes total) about two guys and their psychotic cat, by René van Densen.

- Opgedragen Aan Een Zieke Maatschappij / Dedicated To A Sick Society

Full-page comics with a gritty but idealistic approach, by René van Densen.

- Paco & Manolo

Two creepy men on a bench harassing one another, by Marz.

- 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).

- Prejudges

A 12-Hour Comic, by Gregory Cathalina.

- Probeersel Graphic Novel Quintology

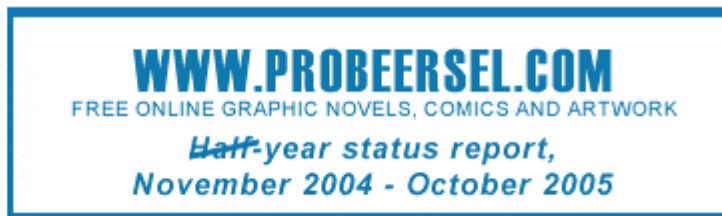
Graphic novel in five parts about a young man who tries to get his memory back and the symbolic adventures he has along the way, by René van Densen.

- RCH

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

- Real Life (English / Dutch)

An irregularly published collection of cartoons by Benjamin Kikkert.



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- 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.

- To Every End

A short story with a very personal storyline, by Sionnain Comeaux.

- The Artificial Real

A series of several other short stories, currently containing 'Chalk', 'Reaper, Baby' and 'Rock', 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 Illogical Box

Irregularly updating comic, by Secher Nbiw.

- The S(w)ingin' Titties

A pair of endlessly optimistic breasts sings the night away while cancer strikes, by Troy Titane.

- 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.

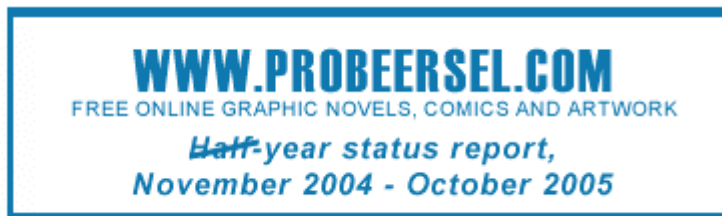
- Worst Case Scenario (Dutch)

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

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

- Troy Titane held a spectacular book launch of 'Doodspraak', his interviews with famous Dutch and Flemish people about death;
- Argibald joined Probeersel.com;
- Gregory Cathalina' s*God.inc* returned briefly;
- Béné van Gansbeke went solo - for his comics, you can now go to <http://www.bene-strips.be>;
- There was a little cross-over guest episode between René van Densen' s*The Grim DotCom* and Reinder Dijkhuis' *Rogues of Clwyd-Rhan* (<http://www.rocr.net>);
- Bandirah' s*De Kreup Vallende Histie* was stripped down to 30 ' essential' episodes that were hand-picked by a group of colleagues. All other episodes have vanished offline;
- Sionnain Comeaux' 24 Hour Comic was removed on her request;
- Argibald' s cartoons were part of an exhibition / entertainment show in Breda called ' Hitting Humor' ;
- Benjamin Kikkert joined Probeersel.com;
- Marz joined Probeersel.com;
- Troy Titane and Bandirah began a collaboration project: a weekly column, written by Troy and illustrated by Bandirah, about movies/TV/DVD on the site Tilburgz.nl;
- Elizabeth Neerenberg joined Probeersel.com;
- René van Densen visited the UK Web & Mini Comix Thing in London and posted a big report;
- Troy Titane' s and Bandirah' s column featured a discussion between Troy and Dutch writer Arnon Grunberg;
- Gregory Cathalina designed an all-new logo for Probeersel.com, which he also produced on big wooden panels so it can be used for convention booths where Probeersel.com will appear;
- René van Densen' s involvement with the ClickBurg convention caused a bit of a delay in the appearance of this half year report, wich was actually due May 1st and now appears.. well, half a year later;
- At the ClickBurg convention, Probeersel.com was represented by Argibald, Bandirah, René van Densen and Troy Titane - this was also ' our' first comics convention debut;



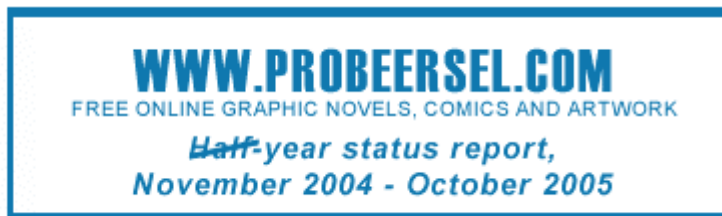
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- Bandirah launched a self-published booklet of cartoons titled ' Poer' and a new alternative comics magazine titled ' De Swasbeer' ;
- Comic journalist Jeroen Mirck reviewed The Grim DotCom and RexRex in his weekly webcomic reviews;
- René van Densen published a short story titled ' Reaper, Baby' (to be found in the The Artificial Real series) in brand new comics periodical "De Lijn";
- Argibald, Bandirah and René van Densen were present at the comics convention in Dordrecht (NL);
- Marz was one of the artists who exhibited sculptures at art gallery Supervile in Leiden in June;
- Troy Titane and Bandirah were interviewed in the Tilburg door-to-door newspaper De Tilburgse Koerier, June 30th;
- A whole bunch of Dutch / Belgian comic artists contributed drawings to the design of the site of the Atlantis festival - amongst them, René van Densen and Benjamin Kikkert;
- The ClickBurg foundation co-organized that webcomic artists could draw ' live' at the Tilburg fair (biggest fair in the BeNeLux) - amongst the artists present were Argibald, Bandirah, René van Densen, Matt Baay and Troy Titane (Matt Baay was, at the time, not a member of this site yet);
- Matt Baay joined Probeersel.com;
- French newspaper Le Figaro wrote a big article about webcomics and interviewed, amongst others, René van Densen (because of his involvements with ClickBurg) - the article featured two episodes from *the Grim DotCom* as illustration;
- Secher Nbiw joined Probeersel.com;
- Troy Titane sent out a press release claiming that one of his columns was removed within an hour of publishing it by request of the AIVD, the Dutch intelligence agency. A hoax, yes, but damn, was it a good one;
- Wouter Goudswaard joined Probeersel.com;
- At the comics, movie and games convention (September 10-11) in Rijswijk, Matt Baay, René van Densen and Wouter Goudswaard were amongst the artists selling and signing their work at the ClickBurg stand - René van Densen launched his first ever Grim DotCom eBook here;
- Troy Titane and Bandirah announced that a book, collecting their columns, titled "Op Verzoek Van Ruud Vreeman", will be published in a limited edition and presented in Paradox, Tilburg, on November 20. The presentation will be presented by Tilburg' s official city poet Nick Swarth, and amongst the speakers at this event will also be René van Densen.
- Comix magazine MYX published a selection of the comics drawn at the Tilburg fair, and amongst their selection were drawings by Argibald, Matt Baay and René van Densen;
- A brand new comics blog was launched: Strips.Blogo.nl, which features seven cartoonists and seven comic artists, one of each for every day of the week. Amongst the selected artists are Matt Baay and René van Densen;
- Bandirah was featured in an article in Playhouse Comix;
- Argibald got to launch his first ever (non-smallpress) book at the Str!pdagen in Houten on 22-23 October, while Wouter Goudswaard also launched his first comic book. Other Probeersel.com artists at this convention were Matt Baay, who also launched some exclusive BunBun booklets, René van Densen was also part of an expert panel in a discussion about webcomics. Bandirah stealthily harassed people within the crowd...;
- Bandirah was featured in an article in the Dutch Hustler;

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...

- "harper' s weekly illustrator january 141870"
- "of satan"
- "titties"
- "horoscope year 2005"
- "red haired"
- "milk sex"
- "imágenes de satan"
- "scheiding"
- "scared cartoons"
- "dr.satan"



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T-shirt Competition

In August 2002, Probeersel.com had 100 T-shirts printed to be given away through the site. After that, we immediately launched a new competition and gave away another 100 shirts with a new design. However, Probeersel.com is currently low on finances and until we find a solution for that, we will not be able to launch a new T-Shirt competition. We apologise, because we enjoyed the designs and the competition just as much as you probably did, but currently we're simply unable to continue this. To stay up to date on when we'll be able to launch a new competition, check back on the site regularly !

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 !) but this will result in a major amount of work that we simply haven't had any time for whatsoever. If you are a coder who'd like to set this up to support Probeersel.com, please, let us know, because currently we can't make any promises on when we'll get round to it.
- November 20, in alternative/jazz bar Paradox in Tilburg, the Netherlands, there will be a major book presentation of "Op Verzoek Van Ruud Vreeman", the bundled columns by Troy Titane with illustrations by Bandiray. René van Densen will be one of the speakers at this event.
- René van Densen is currently working on a new chapter of 'The Artificial Real' 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 has also relaunched the Non Biblia Sacra project, of which he has one story written already and hopes to get round to drawing that. On top of all that, he's started initial planning for an all new graphic novel, and is still also very actively involved with the ClickBurg foundation.
- Sionnain Comeaux is very busy preparing for a new comic project. She has already drawn some material but is still tinkering with the concept, perfectionistic as she is. Expect to see more of that !
- Gregory Cathalina is currently playing in a band and no one knows if he'll ever return. Joep van Abeelen has become a father and seems to have definitely retired his drawing pen.
- Jon Hancock continues work on his story 'Earth Harvest' .
- Bandirah is planning to start an all new comic in January, called 'Astielen Kiekaart' . Around that time, most, if not all, of 'Kalkedodder' will be taken offline because he feels 'Astielen Kiekaart' will be much, much better.
- Probeersel.com will of course be present at the second edition of the ClickBurg webcomics convention in Tilburg, The Netherlands, March 25th, 2006 ! Current plans involve that we'll be there at a big dining table where guests can join us and talk with us about comics while enjoying some wine. We'll see whether or not we can get that to work.
- 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 2005