

INTERNET

## Hermès pens digital notes to introduce first writing instrument

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*Hermès' Nautilus pen and goatskin envelope*

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By JEN KING

France's Hermès is pushing the value of handwritten correspondence through a digital campaign featuring its Nautilus writing instruments.

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**Luxury Daily**

Introduced through an email blast, the subject line only reads "Nautilus," a type of marine life, which may not be compelling enough for opens due to the disconnect between product and definition. Nonetheless, Hermès' timing for the product push is on point as consumers begin writing holiday greeting cards and looking for small tokens for loved ones or colleagues.

"In the digital age, everyone texts, tweets and emails, making handwritten notes a very special and rare form of correspondence," said [Brian Honigman](#), New York-based content marketing consultant and social media marketer.

"Hermès is likely trying to engage customers to write handwritten notes during the holidays to help make the form of communication even more special, bringing the brand in as part of the experience," he said.

Mr. Honigman is not affiliated with Hermès, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Hermès did not respond by press deadline.

## Write gifts

Within the body of Hermès' email, a cartoon of a man in tails and a topcoat, with orange wings, stands next to copy reading, "Go on, write!" An image below shows the details of three Hermès Nautilus pens at different angles, while text underneath reads, "Rediscover the art of correspondence. Choose your Nautilus, and write to a friend at Hermes.com."

A click-through lands on the Nautilus product page where a video clip automatically begins. The clip shows the pen's three color options, ebony, H red and carbon blue, as they move across the screen to highlight its features, as well as how the writing instrument opens to conceal the nib.

When the clip ends a new screen loads with copy reading "It is time to write once more! Choose a Nautilus and..." To the right, the consumer can select the color of the pen's body, a fountain nib in black, blue, ebony, blood orange and H red ink or a ballpoint in black or blue ink.

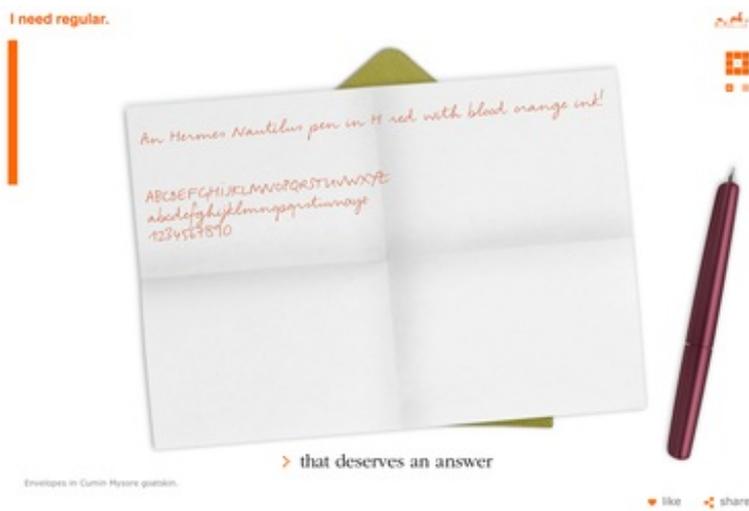


## *Fountain pen options*

After a selection is made the consumer can click "write to a friend" to begin a digital writing trial. The next screen allows the consumer to choose from a range of colored Mysore goatskin leather envelopes.

The selected envelope then opens and a piece of paper unfolds and reads "Write here!" To see how the pen writes, the consumer can type and watch the Nautilus respond.

Once a sample is written the consumer can send the message to a friend or loved one via email or share the note on Facebook, Twitter or Google +. When finished the paper refolds and is inserted into the envelope and closed while text overhead explains that the letter has "flown" off to its recipient.



### *Nautilus writing sample*

On the recipient side, an email will arrive with the subject line “You have mail” and its body will be addressed to the individual and tell who sent the note. A goatskin envelope and an Hermès Nautilus are seen in the body along with a prompt to “Read it and answer at Hermes.com.” The landing page from the click-through directs to the letter written to the recipient and gives the opportunity to write back by saying, “That deserves an answer.”

When the prompt is selected the Nautilus video clip begins thus creating a chain of interaction.



### *Received letter email*

The Hermès Nautilus is the first pen created by the leather goods maker and was designed by Australian industrial designer Marc Newson and Japanese writing instrument brand Pilot. Although the name Nautilus may seem disconnected at first glance, Hermès’ artistic director Pierre-Alexis Dumas and Mr. Newson share a love for the work of science-fiction author Jules Verne, and named the pen after Captain Nemo’s submarine in “Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea.”

Made of aluminum and stainless steel, the pen’s barrel is shaped like a horseshoe, a nod to Hermès’ equestrian ties. The fountain pen version is \$1,650 while the ballpoint is \$1,350, and for an additional \$500 a calfskin-leather case can be purchased to store the Nautilus and a reserve of ink.

## Future and past

With the introduction of mobile technology the role of a traditional writing instrument has been altered.

For example, Germany's Montblanc extended its writing instrument offerings with the introduction of the new mobile-ready stylus, the e-StarWalker.

Montblanc partnered with consumer electronics brand Samsung to create the technology needed to create a digital writing instrument specifically for the Galaxy Note 4 smartphone. By widening the scope of its offerings into the digital realm, Montblanc will likely see an increased interest among mobile-savvy consumers ([see story](#)).

Taking the effort a step further, Montblanc allows enthusiasts to handwrite on their tablet and send the note to a friend or family member through an iPad application.

The app allows users to try out different Montblanc pens and ink colors, as well as learn about the products that the brand offers. Highlighted writing instruments such as the Montblanc Screenwriter will bring the brand into the digital world and will likely reach younger generations who may not be familiar with Montblanc's offerings ([see story](#)).

Hermès' playful take on a tutorial works to show the value of the product and its quality.

"Illustrating the value of a product and how it's used can always help customers better understand if they'd like to purchase a product," Mr. Honigman said. "A video of a bad product won't trick people into buying it, but a valuable product accompanied by a video can help increase the likelihood of sales."

## Final Take

*Jen King, lead reporter on Luxury Daily, New York*

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/fI4vtEfRSw4](https://www.youtube.com/embed/fI4vtEfRSw4)

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