

What's the beauty of writing articles by hand?

In short: it changes writing from speed first to "it's okay to take your time" and it pushes you to sketch more. Plus, it just looks satisfying.

Context

I'm someone who has written for years books, courses, articles, blog posts, newsletters in many different ways. On a computer. On an iPad in a train, on a phone while walking from point A to point B, with audio notes transcribed with AI while walking. Each of these writing methods fits a different season of my life: agency days, independence without a kid, the arrival of a kid, high-stress, etc.

Plan

- ⊗ context
- ⊗ slow writing
- ⊗ sketching
- ⊗ satisfying
- ⊗ yet still digital

Now I'm in a phase where I want to drastically change my behavior with technology. I want to be a better example for my son where the tools I use are totally at my service and I'm not at theirs. So I bought for writing, planning, and a lot of my work a remarkable tablet. A tool that doesn't have any possibility to suck my brain. It's a tool for writing and drawing. And the only "crazy" feature it has is that it can transform my handwriting in typed text that I can then publish from my macbook.

Slow writing

It's kind of strange to write a blogpost like this by hand. In fact it's maybe since college that I haven't written by hand as much text. And now I'm here writing "long blog posts" all by hand. One of the beauty of it is that it's slow writing.

It takes patience. It builds again the muscle of being able to maintain a thought in your head while it slowly translates in written words.

Strangely enough I'm writing longer pieces when I'm writing by hand.

For now what I really appreciate is that writing by hand changes writing from a "getting shit done fast" activity to a "take your time" and "relaxing activity".

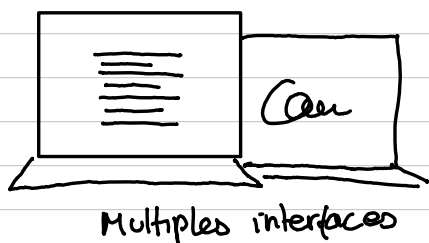
In a way it tells my brain: "things take time and that's okay". Which is already an interesting change for someone like me who is used to be extremely efficient.

This slow writing therefore leaves me at the end of the writing not with a feeling of let's "get more shit done" and a sense of urge. Instead there is a weird calm that stays with me at the end.

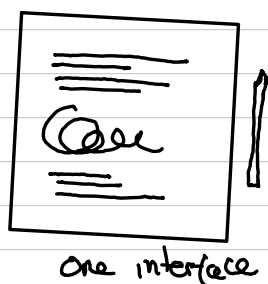
We'll see in a few days, weeks and months if this feeling stays when writing by hand.

Sketching

As I was writing my first Q&A by hand I naturally started adding sketches in my writing. Writing by hand is in geek terms a bit of an all-in-one method. When I write on a computer I have to switch programs and interfaces between writing and illustration. When writing by hand I just stay in the same mode and interface when writing or sketching.



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Satisfying

Another quality of writing by hand is that the draft (before I transform it in typed text) just looks lovely. In fact that's why I'm wondering if I'm not gonna attach each time a PDF of the hand written version to the articles I write. For sure the typed version allows a responsive interface that works also on small screens and makes the text searchable. But at the same time it's weirdly refreshing to see the human hand behind a text.