



I am in your pocket, in your daughter's pencil case, on your father's desk, and in front of the cash register of your local bakery.

I am idolized by designers and artistic directors the world over, and major museums put me on display.

You've seen me in Paris, Sao Paulo, New York, Dakar, ... the list goes on and on.

You can find me in 160 countries. I am so much a part of life that every country believes I was born there.

I am the most sold ballpoint pen in the world.

I am incredibly modern.



I'm **60** years old





# The birth of a cult product.

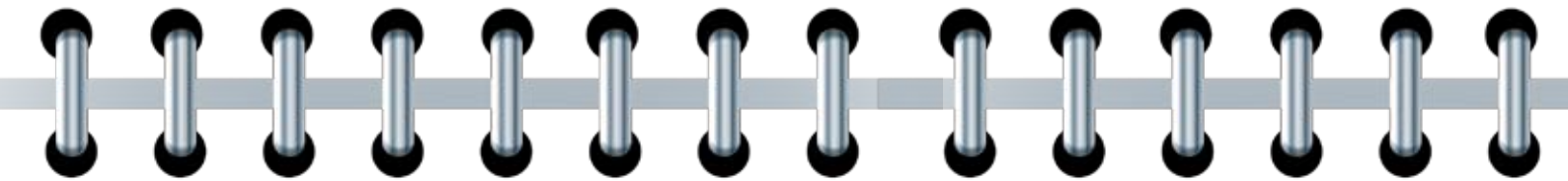


Marcel Bich in front of the factory in Clichy (France) - 1953

BIC® Cristal® is turning 60, but is as fresh as the day it arrived on the market. How can we explain the incredible longevity that has made it THE intergenerational pen, loved on every continent?

Perhaps we should look to its origins and get to know a man with an unlikely passion.

BIC® Cristal® is the fruit of the intuition and tenacity of the Baron Marcel Bich. Born in Turin in 1914, he was thirty years old when he joined forces with Edouard Buffard in 1945 to create a company that manufactured writing instrument parts in Clichy, France. When several ballpoint pens began appearing on the market, the Baron Bich noticed how much faster these instruments made writing and realized they could revolutionize the field. However, to do so, their quality had to be improved and they had to be made affordable for all budgets. Marcel Bich therefore bought the patent for the pen developed by the Hungarian Laszlo Biro and set out to find the ideal ink formula as well as the perfect fit between the ball and the ink tube, for which he used Swiss watch-makers' skills. He designed the future ballpoint pen to be at once attractive and functional. After several years of working relentlessly and putting all of the company's capital on the line, the miracle product was ready to leave the factory in Clichy in December 1950. Behold BIC® Cristal®! It cost only 0.50 French Francs and was...refillable!



The launch of BIC® Cristal® came at a unique time in history. France was in the midst of full-fledged reconstruction. The country craved innovation, speed... and above all useful products.

BIC® Cristal® was a hit from the very beginning. It was the right product at the right time; it made quality writing quick, portable, and very affordable.

Marcel Bich's high quality mass production model appears to have worked: 10,000 BIC® Cristal® pens were sold everyday during the first year, and several million are sold daily today.

The pen quickly became an important export. In 1951, BIC® Cristal® made its way to Belgium, in 1954 to Italy, in 1956 to Brazil, and in 1957 to the United Kingdom, South Africa, and the South Pacific. In 1958, it set out to conquer the vast North American market.

But why would it be otherwise? The BIC® Cristal® adapts to every type of writing, every alphabet, every budget...



# BIC® Cristal® on show!

The BIC® Cristal® ballpoint pen quickly found a loyal following, which was in large part thanks to the courage and incredible modernity of a man who didn't think twice about giving his own name, minus the "h", to the brand. From the very beginning, the Baron Bich concentrated on advertizing and surrounded himself with renowned designers and poster artists such as Raymond Savignac, who created the popular "The BIC point turns and turns" ("Elle court elle court la pointe BIC") campaign in 1952 and the schoolboy character in 1960. The little boy with a ballpoint head has become the brand's emblem for its many different products.

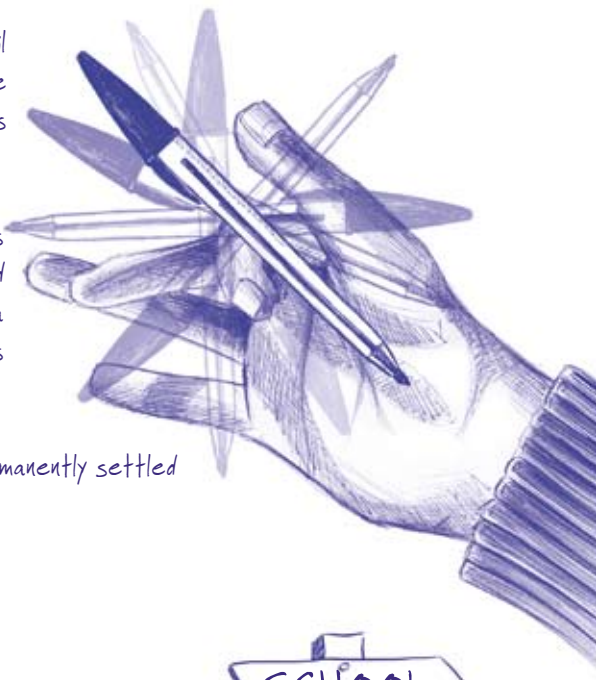
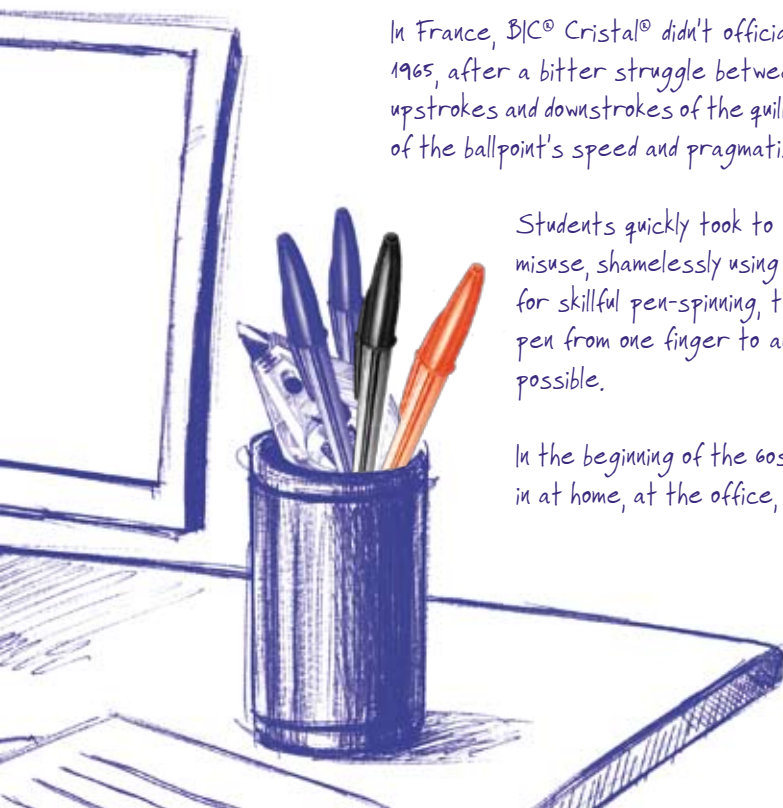


## Back to school for BIC...

In France, BIC® Cristal® didn't officially go to school until 1965, after a bitter struggle between advocates of the upstrokes and downstrokes of the quill and the supporters of the ballpoint's speed and pragmatism.

Students quickly took to this pen through its misuse, shamelessly using it as a "blow gun" and for skillful pen-spinning, the art of passing a pen from one finger to another as quickly as possible.

In the beginning of the 60s, BIC® Cristal® permanently settled in at home, at the office, in stores...





# Simple? Appearances can be deceiving

At first glance, BIC® Cristal® has an extremely simple design, yet it is in fact quite technically complex. Since 1950, BIC has made no compromises and left nothing to chance in order to continually improve the performance of BIC® Cristal® and offer the consumer the same quality of writing throughout the life of the pen.

Tungsten carbide ball  
1 mm in diameter, 100% of the balls are checked for roundness and resistance

Brass tip  
Ball inserted to the nearest micron

Hexagonal barrel  
Comfortable grip,  
doesn't roll on the desk,  
8.3 mm in diameter,  
14.7 cm long

Hole in the barrel  
Balances the pressure inside and outside the pen, pushes the ink towards the tip, prevents leakage

Cap in the color of the ink  
With a hole so as to conform to the BS 7292-1 norm

Cartridge  
Polypropylene tube with  
0.4 grams of ink

Ink  
Water resistant,  
dries in less than 2 seconds,  
smooth writing

Transparent, polystyrene body  
Sturdy, visible ink level

Plug  
In the color of the ink

## A focus on technology...

Could you have imagined that so much technology goes in to the pen that you've carried with you since childhood?

And did you know that today, BIC® Cristal® is still produced by BIC in its own factories in France, Brazil, Mexico, and South Africa... and on machines that are also designed by BIC? The company also manufactures its own inks to guarantee a smooth and high quality writing experience.

# BIC® Cristal® : the pen that lasts

Nothing is superfluous with the BIC® Cristal® that weighs only 5.8 grams! Every detail is dedicated to one sole purpose: writing. And writing for as long as possible at least 2 km (1.25 miles)

2km



With a single BIC®  
Cristal® you can:

Do 986 Sudokus



Write 506 postcards



Create a 37 x 42cm  
reproduction of the  
famous Johannes  
Vermeer painting, "Girl  
With a Pearl Earring"  
By James Mylne - 2010



## Essential and generous

BIC® Cristal® pens are universal and indispensable. We often misplace them; we trade them without thinking about it. The sociologist Umberto Eco said of the pen,

"The BIC® Cristal® is the sole example of socialism in practice... it cancels out all the rules of ownership and social distinction...".





# BIC® Cristal® on display

Although BIC® Cristal® is a familiar everyday product around the world, it has still managed to be elevated to the status of a work of art. Today, major museums across the globe, like the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMA) and the National Modern Art Museum, Centre Georges Pompidou, in Paris, include BIC® Cristal® as part of their permanent collections.

Never limited to writing, artists rely on the pen for all kinds of drawing.

As for designers, the BIC® Cristal® has inspired totally original and extraordinary creations: chairs, lamps, curtains, vases...



Birthday Bouquet, 250 models commissioned  
© Spices Communication



• Herbert Hinteregger  
• "All over"  
• Georg Kargl Fine Arts, Vienna



• Paolo Ulian  
• "Anemone"



• Maison Martin Margiela  
• "stylo plume"



• EnPieza! estudio  
• "Volvik 50"



• Giffin'termeer  
• "the Daisy Vase"



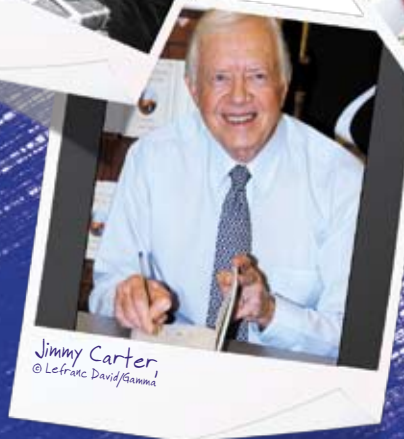
• EnPieza! estudio  
• "Volvik 349"



• Herbert Hinteregger  
• "Object (all around)"  
• Georg Kargl Fine Arts, Vienna



60 years old,  
and still  
on the ball!



Simple and rare

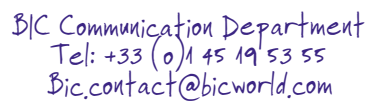
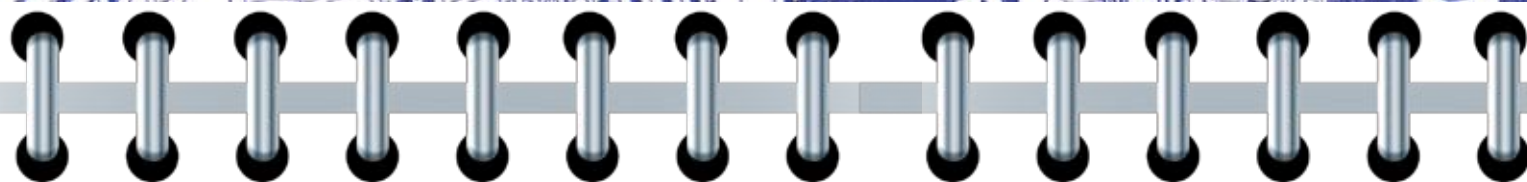
## Limited Edition Gold and Silver BIC® Cristal®

To celebrate its 60th birthday, BIC® Cristal® is dressing up in gold and silver. This limited series will be available in stationery stores and supermarkets starting at the end of 2010 and while supplies last. Take advantage of the opportunity to own a unique collector's item ...

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