

The Disarmingly Honest Pen Salesman

BY BARRY GABAY

Chatterley Luxuries is a trusted web store due to Bryant Greer's sterling reputation.



Left—Chatterley Luxuries owner Bryant Chatterley Greer holding Aurora 100 Anniversario, Conte, and DUCA limited edition fountain pens.

Above—at 13, Bryant produced this “memoir,” including a page dedicated to his love of pens and pencils.

On a typical day at Chatterley Luxuries online web store, owner Bryant Chatterley Greer is up early. Arizona time means the business is two to three hours behind the East Coast. Overnight emails come first. Then there is a progress review for ongoing projects with overseas partners. He also works on short videos—usually a new pen he’s especially interested in sharing. Midday is quality control, handwritten thank-you notes, packing, and shipping. Later in the day come website updates, inventory updates, and consignment piece pricing.

Each day is different, but because Bryant has a rhythm, it’s generally smooth. Additionally, he talks with customers throughout the day. He answers questions, clarifies specific points, and researches extensively if a customer asks a question he can’t answer immediately.

Since boyhood, Bryant has loved pens. He recalls, “At age 13, I wrote a ‘memoir’ and dedicated a page to pens and pencils. I even went so far as to ‘create’ my own pens.”

As a young adult, he began collecting vintage fountain pens and later expanded his interest to modern pens. Presently, his personal collection includes stellar examples of vintage and modern, limited and standard editions, from both large and small manufacturers. Each day, he strives to share his passion with customers through Chatterley Luxuries.

In his own words: “I loved vintage, but once I encountered modern pens, it was all over. Modern is my true love, but vintage was my first.”

Approximately 25 years ago, he began buying and selling vintage fountain pens on eBay. He became adept at cleaning, tuning, and understanding exactly what he had. He worked hard at taking good photos before listing and reselling. Those early skills have sharpened, as Bryant now presents primarily modern pens to the writing instruments community. He remembers that “those early years taught me how pens age in the real world and how to honestly judge a pen’s condition.” Discovering Fountain Pen Network and developing a circle of pen friends led Bryant from hobbyist to professional.

In 2008, he began selling pens full time, building on sales techniques he developed while working for LVMH/Diageo brands. He describes his approach to business as “pure hospitality.” Many of his customers would describe Chatterley Luxuries as exactly that.

His is a business where customers feel comfortable under the guidance of Bryant and his crew, Tiffany and Evan. The team all share similar views despite varied responsibilities. Bryant leads client and collector care; Evan holds down website management; Tiffany oversees logistics and inventory. Everyone does a little of everything, but all three are primary customer contacts.



Above—a prior Chat Drop featuring collectible fountain pens.
 Above right—the Chatterley Luxuries team at the Washington D.C. Fountain Pen SuperShow.
 Right—various examples of Chatterley-exclusive pens collaboratively designed by Greer and the respective company.

Bryant explains, “We meet people where they prefer—phone, text, WhatsApp, Instagram, or in person, of course—then we educate and guide them. The challenge is that they can’t hold the pen, so service and honest recommendations matter. Sometimes the right answer doesn’t equal a sale, and that’s okay. Our standard is loyalty: we measure success in clients kept.”

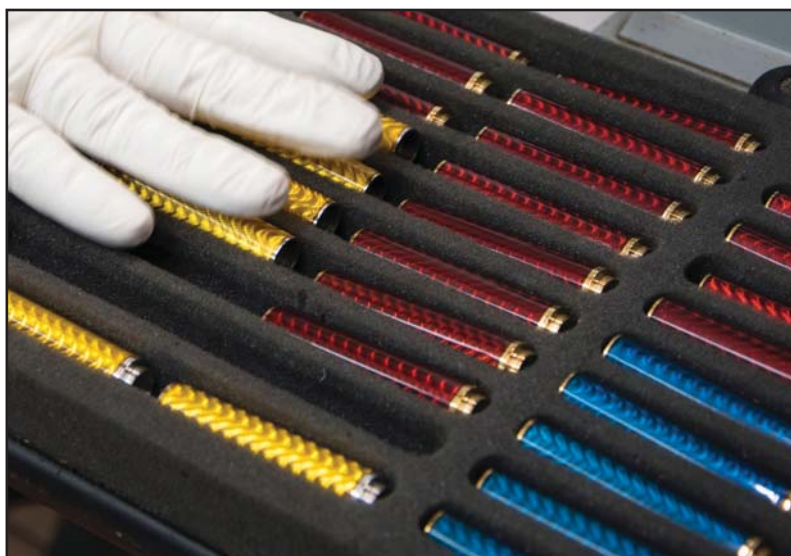
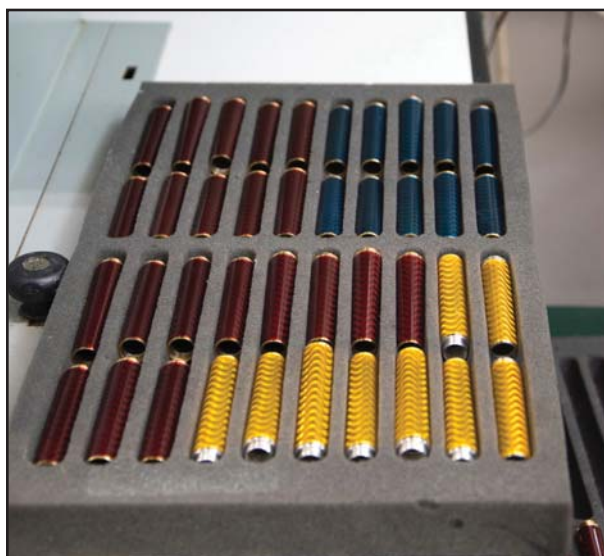
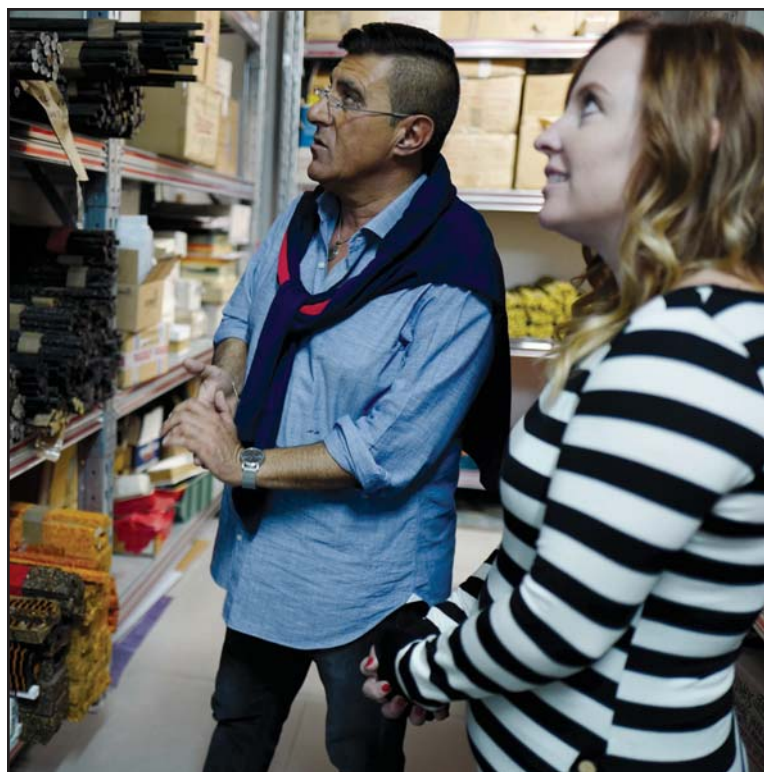
Chatterley Luxuries understands the dynamics between customer taste and sales. Bryant treats each brand, each model individually. For new inventory, Bryant remembers that he too is a collector. He prioritizes pieces that he would personally carry and stand behind. He looks for honest design, high-quality materials, long-term serviceability, and manufacturers who will fully support the pen. This is a team effort involving Chatterley, the customer, and the manufacturer.

Chatterley represents more than 30 brands from the United States, Europe, and Japan. There are also pre-owned pens from many manufacturers. Additionally, there are beautiful Chatterley Exclusives, models from major manufacturers who have produced stunning pieces in small numbers to be sold only by Chatterley. Presently, there are a number of exclusive projects underway with European makers.

The company website is extensive. Unlike many retail pen sites, which simply catalog pens in stock, chatterleyluxuries.com has a comprehensive Question–Answer section for most brands. It is not only a commercial website; it is an educational one. There is serious research present in each entry: analyses and explanations of specific features for each brand and many individual models. It really is a remarkable effort.

Vintage and consignment pens are an important part of Chatterley. The consignment business grew naturally out of trade-ins and helping customers sell. It snowballed into a trusted channel, and now complete collections arrive weekly. “Chat Drops” is a feature which many customers await each week. Varied pens in limited numbers are offered. Every Tuesday morning, there is a Chat Drop of pens which disappear quickly. What a treasure trove.





Top row—Tiffany and Bryant on a tour of Italy, including Positano; Tiffany with Delta/Maiora CEO Nino Marino at the Delta factory in Napoli, Italy. Above—bodies of the Chatterley-exclusive Montegrappa MG5 Vetrare Enamel limited edition fountain pens.

Consignment pricing is based on the current market realities, demand, and actual condition—not wishful thinking. This is a popular feature among customers because most do better on consignment than through a straight trade-in. Chatterley maintains transparency throughout. These are someone else’s pens they are selling. Bryant and his team demonstrate great respect for the owners and for the pens entrusted to them.

Bryant understands that a fountain pen is not a necessity. Buying one is a choice to satisfy a personal desire.

“We sell fountain pens. It should be enjoyable—no one needs these—so the goal is to make sure customers enjoy the experience. We focus on the customer, from their first message until long after the ink is dry,” Bryant says with disarming honesty.

The emotional attachment of customers to their pens is something Bryant anticipates because he sees it in himself. He understands the feelings of customers when using a pen that is not only functional but that elicits feelings and memories. When hearing customers gush over a pen, he is not surprised “because I know how emotionally attached I am to my pens. A number of pens I purchased for Chatterley inventory have landed in my personal pen case.”



Left—Bryant holding a Montegrappa Anytime Supremo Limited Edition fountain pen, by industrial designer Paolo Favaretto.
Above—Chatterley is known for its excellent website photography, as shown in these detail shots of a Chatterley Exclusive Maiora Everest Peak Limited Edition.

Tiffany and Bryant send hand-written thank you notes to customers and people in the industry. That's all part of good business practice, not to mention good manners, but Bryant also regards writing those notes and letters as play: like all collectors, Bryant genuinely enjoys using his favorite pens.

Bryant offers the following advice to both newbies and experienced pen people: "Buy what you love. Don't get caught up in hype. Do your research. Introduce yourself to people—this community is welcoming and happy to talk pens."

Bryant understands what society now favors and what people buy. The digital world has had an enormous impact on hand-writing and pen use over the past few decades. Bryant sees one of his roles as connecting with people through the physical act of uncapping a pen, filling it with a favorite ink, and writing with it. This tactile aspect is important. People tell Bryant how rewarding it is to carry, fill, and use a fountain pen.

Bryant says, "It's amazing how many new fountain pen customers I meet—people buying their first fountain pen from Chatterley or buying their first fountain pen ever."

This self-actualized gentleman sees his place in the world. Most pen industry people I meet envision growing, growing, growing. Expansion possibilities even crowd their dreams. That's not Bryant.

"I'm not chasing size for its own sake," he explains. "In five years, I hope to be doing what I love most: creating and curating amazing pens with amazing people, and connecting them with collectors who share the same passion. Growth is natural, but my goal isn't just to get bigger, it's to keep it personal, honest, and inspiring."

For Bryant, chatterleyluxuries.com keeps evolving. It is constantly being revised and improved. It's a website representing all of the projects that Bryant and his team have done in the past with their manufacturers. It is more than a retail site, it is a curated record of Chatterley's pens, projects, and events, including a catalog of thousands of sold-out pens that gives collectors a lasting reference. Visit the Chatterley website; see for yourself. It's an education in the hand-held writing instruments culture.

Visit chatterleyluxuries.com or scan the QR code at right.

Barry Gabay is a PW contributing editor.

