Happy New Year to all of you! Because this video will go live at 6AM middle European time, for some of you it might still be before midnight. If so, just close the screen open it tomorrow again. For the rest, I prepared a short video with the usual three topics: Look back, look at where we are, and forecast into the next year. Some of you might miss the goals for next year. Because I am a hobby YouTuber, I go with Confucius who said: “The way is the goal”. And frequent viewers know, that I enjoy this way a lot. Maybe I am able to share or transfer this enthusiasm to one or the other, especially to young people. Electronics, and especially short wave radio, was my hobby, when I was young. And this hobby later on made it possible for me to have a family and raise my kids. And it makes it possible to enjoy live even if I turn to 60 this year!

Enough about past times. What happened last year? Thanks to YouTube I have quite a good overview about that. Let’s first concentrate on the channel itself: First, on the “currency” of YouTube, the subscribers. The channel hit the 1000 subscribers on February 5th, nearly a birthday gift. At this time, about 20 people subscribed per day. This number went up quite fast, also because I was once featured by hackaday.io. In May-June I was abroad on a big project for many weeks. This can be seen also on the number of subscribers gained during this time. After that, the growth of subscribers was quite steady and reaches now about 60 per day. And yesterday, the channel crossed the 14’000 subscribers mark, with viewers from 144 countries. This is the power of the internet! Here are the top countries, and here the ones with the leas views.

Let’ focus for a moment on the top 10 videos of last year. One focused on batteries, another one on GPS modules, A third one on the new A6 GSM Module. Then I had two Nextion display tutorials in the top ten. The MKR1000 video was not a nice one, but because of its honesty, it is placed as #3. The rest of the videos are ESP8266 videos.

Now to the undiscovered gems: The videos with the least views. This is the video about my Swiss Army Knife. It has now its regular appearance in the mailbags. The videos about 3D printing were not important to you, even if I thought, I could share some knowledge there. One small remark: The concept of the Automatic Switch off made its revival in one of my more successful videos: The Amazon dash. If you do not believe it, check it.

My first 4 videos all made it on this looser list. This is particularly sad, because the Morse trainer presented there was an innovation which was even purchased by the Swiss military. But I have to admit, this was in the 80s. I still like it, because it helped me to pay for my studies then. This is, why I ported it to Arduino

As said, subscribers are the currency of YouTube. More important for me, however, is the time you spend with my videos. This number also increased quite constantly and reached 27’000 minutes per day. This means, that every day, you guys watch my videos for 19 days. This is quite impressive for me, because I well know, that you could do many other things with your valuable time. Thank you very much for this time!

Another important report is the report about traffic sources. It shows, how videos and channels are detected. And here, I have to say thank you again. Because a big junk of the videos, this red one, comes from “channel browse”, where you basically browse through the videos of the channel and discover some new stuff. The suggested videos here in blue are particularly important for all channels, because Google presents new videos also to people which do not know the channel. And this number depends heavily on the famous “likes” and “comments”. This is the reason, why I ask you for that favor. Here you see, hat about every 10th viewer also presses the “like button. And you see also, that I always get some thumbs down. I would really be glad to know in the comments, what the reason for this thumbs down was…

And here you see the most liked and the most hated videos. The most liked one is obvious: In this video I asked directly for your support with likes and comments. And you responded. Thank you again.

And the most hated one was the rant about the at this time unfinished MKR1000. Some viewers thought, that this was unfair to Arduino.

Where do we stand today? The channel is now visible on a global basis. But more important for me are the comments. We have a regular exchange and I get a lot of very nice ones. You can believe it: This matters to me. And recently, I discovered another fact which I enjoy very much: Viewers start to help each other with problems. So, sometimes it is even not necessary for me to answer, because a viewer shared directly its experience. Great! We become a community!

Just a remark to the comments: As you know, I try to answer every comment, with one exception: If it has absolutely nothing to do with the video. But it might be that I oversee one or the other comment. YouTube is not very good in presenting these comments. Sorry for that. In the meanwhile, it takes me about an hour or more per video to answer all of them. But I like it and I apologize for the forgotten answers.

I added also Facebook and Twitter. There, I try to share a little more and a little earlier.

Where are we heading? Usually, mailbags are a glimpse into the future, because, sometimes, I have an idea or I see some interesting stuff. Or a viewer has a good idea about a new topic. Then, I have to get the parts. You might laugh now, but even if I have already a lot of parts, for most of the new projects I need some more…

And when the products arrive, they usually end-up in a mailbag and you know what will follow. In addition, I open now my secret project stack. It has the form of folders on my computer. And to make sure that they are not forgotten, they get an exclamation mark in front of them. If I sort the folder now, they appear all before the other files. After the project is finished, it gets the number of the YouTube video.

Inside these folders, I start to collect information. If I find e.g. link, I create a word document in the respective folder, and put this link in. This is my way to organize myself. Simple, but ok for my purpose.

So, which projects are now in this folder?

To make it clear: This is an alphabetical order, not an order in time. And it is well possible, that many other projects can appear in-between, and sometimes, a project idea will also be deleted…

So, if we start with the smallest device: I like the ATTinys and I would like to do a project with them in the next time. Maybe it could be in conjunction with another interesting device, the VL53L0X. This would give a new radar for my self-balancing robot.

On the next level, we find things like Solar power for small devices, a mobile power supply to be used in hotel rooms and other locations outside the lab. The comparison of LDO chips fits neatly into this category. If we go to Communication, you see LoRa as an important topic. But also a new Range test with the ESP8266. Maybe I even can include an ESP32 into this test. And I would like to concentrate also on other devices in the Sub GHz area, which is mainly 433 and 868MHz in Europe. Whisper nodes fit neatly into this topic.

Then, of course, you find some ESP8266 topics, and I hope, more and more ESP32 topics.

On the next level, I would love to start to work a little more with the Raspberry Pi, always in conjunction with the small devices. Topics like Node Red, Johnny Five and Firebase fit in this area.

So, you see, I have stuff for a few months to come. In-between you will see some mailbags, Labreps, and product reviews if interesting new stuff appears. And I am in preparation to organize a raffle where you can win some stuff. Maybe I succeed in making this also a recurring topic in the new year. Maybe, it would increase the suspense a little…

Most probably, two things will not change in the near future: The intro and:

I hope, this episode was useful or at least interesting for you. Maybe I will extend it. If (true), please like. Bye