

PLENUM: smart seat numbering – no batteries required

Thonet will be presenting its new smart seat numbering system PLENUM at ORGATEC 2026. With an e-paper display module that requires neither maintenance nor batteries, the seat numbers can be mounted on or recessed into the backs of various Thonet chair models. An intuitive, dedicated app allows a single person to number each seat individually with just a few taps on their smartphone. This means that event organisers can quickly number, personalise and reorganise seating arrangements directly from their mobile phones.



Each PLENUM module can display seat and row numbers, logos, icons, QR codes or custom texts. The captions are prepared for each display in an easy-to-use app that has been designed specifically to work with the PLENUM system. The displays are updated simply by holding the phone up to the PLENUM module. Using the same technology as e-readers and supermarket shelf labels, the slimline e-paper display works without needing any batteries. The power required to update the display is transmitted to the module along with the data for each individual seat using the phone's NFC function. When a smartphone running the app is held up against the display, an induced current provides sufficient power to update the seat numbers on the e-paper modules to the format that has been selected in the app. The whole update process can be carried out in a matter of seconds. Just like traditional e-reader devices, the PLENUM module displays text and graphics in black and white. This means that users can also switch easily between daylight and dark modes.

The seat number modules are compatible with a large portion of Thonet's event and conference seating portfolio, including models S 43, S 53–56, S 160, S 220, S 243, S 260, S 360 and the latest S 760. With its slim profile, the seat number display can be recessed into the upholstery or discreetly attached to chairs with a wooden seat shell. The PLENUM kit also includes a phone case specially designed to help position the user's device correctly against the display when updating seat number data.

As well as being user-friendly, PLENUM provides event organisers with a wide range of useful technical features. The battery-free induction power means that the seat number module does not require servicing. This is particularly advantageous when responding to tenders for projects that

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prohibit the use of batteries. Furthermore, the module features a fast display update process and low-error data transfer. The sleek app allows the user to choose between various layout templates or even create their own. This means that the display can show just a seat number or row label, a combination of both or a custom text. Seat modules can be programmed in ascending or descending order or in a snaking (meandering) sequence, depending on the app user's route through the room.

It is also possible to transfer QR codes, event logos or symbols such as a wheelchair icon to the display. The app automatically converts graphics files into black and white icons, so that images can be used without needing to be converted. QR codes can be generated directly within the app. These features ensure a high degree of customisability for the seating plan and bundle design and delivery into an intuitive app that requires no additional software. This allows event organisers to effortlessly create and display seat reservations for media representatives, VIPs or other specific areas. They can also easily make changes within the app themselves without having to call in an IT specialist.

PLENUM is a flexible, easy-to-use seat numbering system for halls, auditoriums, conference rooms and all event spaces with a large amount of seating. It can be used by anyone, and no additional handsets or devices are required in order to manage the numbering. From content generation to display updates, absolutely everything can be done right in the phone app.

About Thonet

Thonet has been making furniture for the residential and contract sectors since 1819. With a passion for bentwood and tubular steel, the German company produces iconic designs – from its famous coffee house chair and Bauhaus classics by Mart Stam, Marcel Breuer and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, to contemporary pieces by leading modern designers. Combining the latest production technology with traditional craftsmanship has made Thonet one of the world's favourite furniture makers. At the Frankenberg factory, innovative products are still being manufactured today, just as they have always been; they are designed for long-term use and are synonymous with the highest level of quality, functionality and a timeless design. The development of durable furniture has always been a defining feature of Thonet's corporate history. From the earliest days, Michael Thonet's first bentwood designs were not just aesthetically remarkable but also bore witness to a particularly thoughtful approach to the use of materials. Moreover, many Thonet furniture pieces last for generations: they are used for decade after decade and can be repaired in Frankenberg if required. Thonet's commitment to sustainable design, which is firmly anchored in its DNA, was recognised in 2024 with the German Ecodesign Award: the iconic 214 coffee house chair picked up the special Timeless Design award in the Product category.

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