

## Adobe: Adobe Creative Suite 5 Launch Campaign

Source: Jay Chiat Awards, Gold, 2011



Downloaded from WARC

This campaign for Adobe's Creative Suite 5 (CS5) software aimed to raise awareness for the product and encourage trial downloads (a key gateway to purchase for products of this kind). Among the campaign's aims was to show "real-world work" rather than "polished advertising", and to get influential creative professionals to become brand ambassadors. The campaign strategy involved leading websites such as TechCrunch and Digital Photo Pro redesigning their homepages by using CS5. The 14 redesigns were launched on the same day, inspiring widespread buzz among the target audience. Some 65,000 trials were directly attributed to the campaign in less than two months.

**Goodby Silverstein and Partners**

### SUMMARY

Today, being creative means you have to be good at manipulating software as well as generating ideas. Light pens, mice and keyboards have replaced pencils, paper and draft boards. For Web designers, photographers, architects and digital artists, software programs now provide the virtual canvas for their ideas.

Adobe's Creative Suite sits at the heart of this new way to work – a collection of specialist programs that have become the de facto backbone of the Creative Pro industry. Each step-up in processing power has enabled Adobe to pack richer, better features into its software – which means that Adobe is able to sell newer versions, each one incrementally better than the last.

However, from the perspective of the design professional, newer versions of Creative Suite have led to "release fatigue" and resentment at having to spend more money to keep up with the steadily increasing pace of change.

So how would we overcome the natural inertia among Creative Pros and persuade them that a new version – version 5 – was worth investing in?

### BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Much of Adobe's business has been built on the Creative Suite, a collection of almost 50 software tools enabling design creativity. For 20 years these tools have served as a resource and a means for Creative Pros to create in a digital world.

While there are a small handful of competitors, Adobe is effectively competing with its own legacy products rather than alternatives to its software. So our challenge as marketers was not so much to raise awareness and ward off competitive pressures as to address consumer resistance to another version of a tool kit that Creative Pros already owned.

Historical performance had shown us that the key to success was trial downloads. In spite of the emotional or rational inertia that discouraged upgrading, once users properly played around with the latest version, they were significantly more likely to upgrade. Usage was nearly always a catalyst for conversion.

**Our communication goal** was to get busy Creative Professionals to download trial versions of Creative Suite 5 (CS5).

**The specific business objective** was to beat the performance of the launch of CS4 across its first quarter of release. No small feat, as 18 months prior, CS4 had been the biggest launch of Creative Suite ever. More specifically, revenue from Creative Solutions increased by \$354.4 million during fiscal 2010 as compared to fiscal 2009, primarily due to strong licensing of CS4 during fiscal 2010 until the release of CS5.

## THREE KEY INSIGHTS

### #1 Creatives fear change

It is a paradox that while Creative Pros deal in innovation and originality, they are often highly conservative in how they work. They have set rhythms, routines and comfort zones. The software programs they use are complex, so upgrading carries real risk. Will they lose speed and skill relearning how to do stuff? Why take that risk (and spend the money) unless they absolutely have to?

#### *Calm their fears*

We needed to showcase how easy, fast and fluid the new CS5 was – and assuage their concerns about upgrading.

### #2 Creatives work visually

Creative Professionals tend to be visually literate. Much of what they do, much of how they work and much of how they are judged and judge others is based on the look of the content they produce.

#### *Inspire the upgrade*

Show off CS5 live, with real-world work (vs. polished advertising that merely claims or asserts improvements).

### #3 Creatives only trust each other

Creation is scary. Creatives put their souls into their work and are judged by everyone. As a consequence, Creatives are a close-knit group who really only trust the judgment and guidance of those who also know what it's like to be on the creative front line.

## ***Influence the influencers***

Get credible Creatives to be our ambassadors. Find the spaces where Creatives gather and facilitate a peer-to-peer conversation vs. Adobe-to-customer selling.

# **SOLUTION**

## **The Great Home-page Redesign Project**

*Use CS5 itself to create the communication, not ads. Focus not only on what's been created, but also on the process of creation, through a live demo of what CS5 can do, amplified by powerful voices from the creative community.*

We seeded advance copies of CS5 and persuaded influential websites directed at the creative community to redesign their home pages. Critical leadership websites took on the risk of altering their most important, high-value piece of real estate – their front door to their users – via CS5.

Redesigning a home page is a huge challenge, usually requiring considerable investment in time. With CS5, what could have taken months now took weeks, and our target saw firsthand the ease of use of the new suite, and that CS5 was not a risky proposition but a powerful, practical upgrade. If a trusted website could use CS5 so easily, so could they.

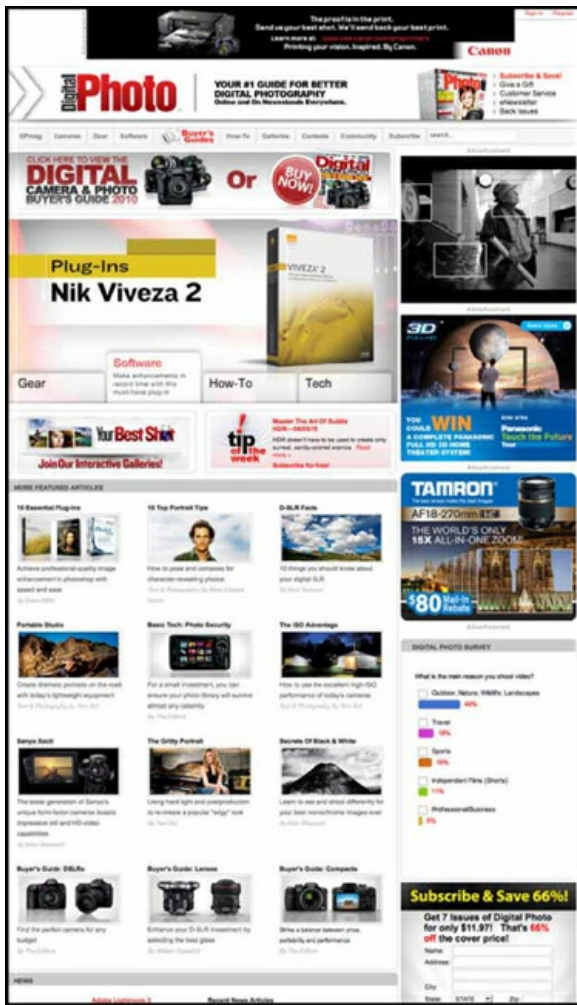
Fourteen different sites accepted the challenge – from TechCrunch to Smashing Magazine to Digital Photo Pro.

Each site's own creative team was brought into our agency for briefing, along with an overview of Creative Suite 5 in its beta stage.

The home-page redesigns, clearly labeled as being built with CS5 tools, would become the debut for the most-advanced design software in the world.

All 14 redesigns were switched over on the same day.

# **BEFORE**



AFTER



## EXECUTION: PEER CONVERSATION AND TRIALS

To stimulate peer-to-peer discussion among the Creative Pro group, we cataloged the redesign process for each site and embedded social tools and discussion forums within our design contest. The extra content lived on the sites within their editorial spaces, and *not* within ad banners.

Each site sported a badge on its home page that highlighted the changes in addition to driving traffic to a CS5 design competition and CS5 trial opportunity. We offered Creatives a free trial of CS5, and via the competition, encouraged them to create something amazing and to post it on Behance. The winners would take home free CS5 software, with a different product available as a prize each week of the competition. Prizes varied from the Adobe Photoshop CS5 Extended, valued at \$999, to the Adobe Creative Suite 5 Master Collection, valued at \$2,499.

We dubbed the contest **Five Weeks of 5**.

## FIVE WEEKS OF 5

## 5 WEEKS OF 5 COMPETITION BRIEF: DESIGN PREMIUM

### THE BACKGROUND

We've just released Adobe® Creative Suite® 5. It's filled with new features that are designed to make the creative process faster, more efficient and more rewarding. It's also loaded with new technology that helps you work across different media. Combined, these breakthroughs help you create engaging work that reaches the biggest audience possible. And to that end, we want to give you an even bigger platform with this contest. Show us — and everyone else — what you can create with Adobe® Creative Suite® 5.

### THE ASSIGNMENT

Pick one or more new features in CSS Design Premium. Then create an original piece of art that incorporates your selected feature(s).

### SHOW US WHAT CSS CAN DO!

#### THE DETAILS

1. Download the trial version of CSS Design Premium at [adobe.com/downloads](http://adobe.com/downloads)
2. Try out the new features outlined in the section to the right.
3. Create something amazing that showcases one or more of the new features, whether it's the process or the final product. It could be an illustration, a photo, an animation, a short film, a digital project or even a hybrid of these things.
4. Upload your entry to Behance. Be sure to tell us how you used your selected feature(s) to make it. You can even include screen grabs of the process.

#### THE JUDGES

A panel of judges, made up of designers and developers from top creative sites, will pick winners each week for 5 weeks. They will rate your entry, first and foremost, on your ability to show the new features of CSS in an interesting way.

#### THE FINE PRINT

Winners will only be selected from the U.S. Your entry must incorporate at least one new CSS feature. You can submit one entry per week, for the five weeks of the contest. Once you have submitted a particular entry, you may no longer submit that entry in subsequent weeks.

Good luck, and have fun.

## THE RESULTS #1: *SITE REDESIGNS*

If we had tried to buy the home-page ad units alone on our targeted websites, our media budget would have been exhausted in a week.

Instead, for far less capital outlay and an extended period of communication, we got 14 key influential sites to redesign their real home pages for five weeks in a live demo of CS5.

For a number of the sites, the redesigns proved so popular that they were retained after the promotional period had ended. TechCrunch's editorial carousel, SitePoint's entire site overhaul and DV Info's new logo all continue to evangelize our product.

## THE RESULTS #2: *TRIAL UPGRADES AND REVENUE*

The **28 million people** reached via the redesigned sites were impacted far more powerfully than any amount of paid banner media could have done.

We turned websites into the message itself — a surprising, interesting execution that engaged our highly critical audience.

Some **65,000 trials** were directly attributed to the campaign in less than two months. That is 65,000 risk-averse Creatives who tried something they once had little intent to try.

The value of those trials represents over **\$162 million** in revenue to Adobe's bottom line, while the investment in the program was under \$400,000.

## **Beating CS4**

Despite not having the technological jump of CS4, the launch of CS5 broke all records. Adobe set a new record high for quarterly revenue, thanks largely to the successful launch of Creative Suite 5. In Adobe's Creative Solutions segment, broad adoption of CS5 continued to drive the overall performance of their creative business and contributed to strong revenue growth in fiscal 2010 as compared to fiscal 2009. Since its release, CS5 revenue has grown by approximately 21% when compared to a comparable period of time for CS4 products.

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# **WARC**

