Adobe Customer Story

Dado Valentic blurs the lines between still and motion imagery.
Master colorist and artist bring magic to cinema and fashion with Adobe Creative Cloud.

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Dado Valentic, Master Colorist, Mytherapy

SOLUTION
Adobe Creative Cloud

RESULTS
PROJECT VARIETY
Work on feature films, commercials, and fashion industry projects

MEDIA EXPANSION
Serve clients at the crossroads of multiple media types

COLORFUL STORYTELLING
Help people connect emotionally with video imagery using color

ATTENTION GRABBING
Create innovative cinemagraphs to captures people’s attention
The melding of color and technology

Dado Valentic worked as a producer and DJ before discovering the world of color grading 10 years ago. The industry looked very different at that time, with only four color grading studios in London, so getting started was challenging. He learned his craft in Los Angeles before moving back to London and opening his own company called Mytherapy.

Today, he holds the status of master colorist and teaches other colorists specific methods for working with color and color science. Valentic has worked on 60 feature films, hundreds of commercials, and actively engages with fashion industry clients to develop everything from online brand videos to billboards. In addition to his London facility, he recently opened a small studio in New York City, both of which employ a full Adobe Creative Cloud workflow.

Adobe: What is your ultimate goal when you are commissioned to work on a film or commercial?

Valentic: I strive to understand the story the cinematographer is trying to tell and what mood needs to be created, and then develop color recipes that convey the story’s essence. This often means adopting a more analog way of rendering and displaying digital imagery so that it looks like film.

Adobe: You have a unique color aesthetic. Can you tell us more about it?

Valentic: I see my job as bringing the soul back to digital imagery. Digital images are crisp, detailed, and clean, but there is often an issue because viewers do not feel an emotional connection to the still or video images. There’s a whole group of people who prefer to listen to music on vinyl records or tapes or play music through old amplifiers because the music sounds richer. The need to experience more richness and depth is true of imagery, too.

Adobe: How are you using Adobe SpeedGrade CC in your work?

Valentic: SpeedGrade, over the years, has been our secret weapon and inspiration. We love the ability to create stylized color looks in Adobe SpeedGrade or Photoshop and bring them directly into the Adobe Premiere Pro timeline.

Adobe: You are known mostly for color correction in cinematography, but have branched out into other areas that span both still and motion imagery. Can you tell us more?

Valentic: Everyone here at Mytherapy loves to explore the gray area between still imagery and cinematography. We have created many innovative cinemagraphs, or still photographs with subtle animated movement. Cinemagraphs are an emerging art form that really captures people’s attention. Imagine receiving an email from a brand that includes high-end still imagery with motion. It’s something unexpected that delights consumers. The disciplines of still and motion imagery are converging, and this trend really inspires us.
Adobe: What do you see happening as your clients expand into a variety of new digital media?

Valentic: Take a brand such as Vogue or GQ. They are now hosting videos online and attracting huge and exponentially growing numbers of viewers. Video content is expected today; it really isn’t optional. Brands also are repurposing assets into everything from cinemagraphs to 15-second Instagram videos, blogs, and billboards. Every visual or video has to have the same quality, look, and feel. That is where we come in. We serve clients at the crossroads of multiple media types, and it is a very exciting place to be.

Adobe: Tell us more about your workflow.

Valentic: We used to take images after a shoot and start working on them, but now our work starts on set. We start creating assets on the set, manage the look and color and feel on the spot, and match video to still imagery coloring and styles provided by photographers. We can typically provide a great-looking proof showing the look we’re striving for and obtain sign-off on the direction before we leave the shoot.

Adobe: How does Creative Cloud help with your ability to serve clients faster and more effectively?

Valentic: Creative Cloud helps us collaborate much better as a team. We do a job on set and upload it to Creative Cloud and the team in the studio can open it straightaway and start working. Especially in the fashion industry, we can work with clients who may be in New York, Paris, or London—they are typically not located in the same place. We can log in no matter where we are and get access to all of the settings and profiles of our color science, which is amazing.

Adobe: What are your mainstays in Creative Cloud?

Valentic: We use Photoshop, Premiere Pro, and SpeedGrade day in and day out. After Effects and Photoshop are our main tools for creating cinemagraphs and we also use Adobe Prelude for data wrangling. The unsung hero for us is Adobe Media Encoder. The importance of compression for delivery of images and footage to the right devices cannot be overstated. We have to resize media files and make sure the color is perfect for viewing across a wide variety of outlets—all while maintaining metadata. Without Media Encoder, we literally would not be able to complete most of our work.

Adobe: Can you tell us more about your use of Premiere Pro?

Valentic: One of the main advantages for us is its integration with RED, our primary digital camera. It’s amazing that we can throw 6K RED files right onto the timeline without transcoding. After a client shoots a scene, we can play it and start working with it in real time on a laptop without stutters or delays. That capability was science fiction just a few years ago.
SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

- Adobe Creative Cloud. Apps used include:
  - Adobe Premiere Pro CC
  - Adobe After Effects CC
  - Adobe Photoshop CC
  - Adobe SpeedGrade CC
  - Adobe Prelude CC
  - Adobe Media Encoder CC

Adobe: How are you using Photoshop in your video workflow?

Valentic: We rely heavily on Photoshop to apply curves and select colors, then export files and load them onto the Premiere Pro timeline. I can apply the same transformations and color looks created in Photoshop to the world of motion imagery. The stills and motion files match exactly.

Adobe: Photoshop celebrated its 25th anniversary. How has the software affected your work as a creative professional?

Valentic: Adobe has grown very large and could have easily fallen into the trap of being a company that does not need or want to innovate. But Adobe continues to deliver so many great breakthroughs that I typically take days off work to play with and learn new features that inspire and empower me. Adobe gives us mind-blowing features, especially in the case of Photoshop. New features in Photoshop make us want to explore. In fact, I don't think the whole idea of the cinemagraph would have been realized without support for video in Photoshop.

Adobe: What cool projects have you worked on recently?

Valentic: We launched a new TV screen for Panasonic in a campaign involving still and motion images. We created several motion loops for outdoor advertising, including content for a 30-meter-wide screen in a train station and large screens in airports. The challenge was interesting, because we had to create an immersive experience worthy of the screen we were promoting.

Additionally, our New York office is working on a new series of brand videos for Ralph Lauren that we're enthusiastic about. We're also working on an amazing feature film, Absolutely Anything, a British comedy/sci-fi that's due out in May 2015. It is Robin Williams' last performance, and the Monty Python team is behind it. This is a monumental film project for us, and we couldn't be more excited.