

Gareth Edwards

Master storyteller

Using Adobe® Creative Suite® 4 Production Premium software, Gareth Edwards brings stories to life with technology that maximizes his efficiency and creative potential



How Gareth Edwards' Workflow has Improved using Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium

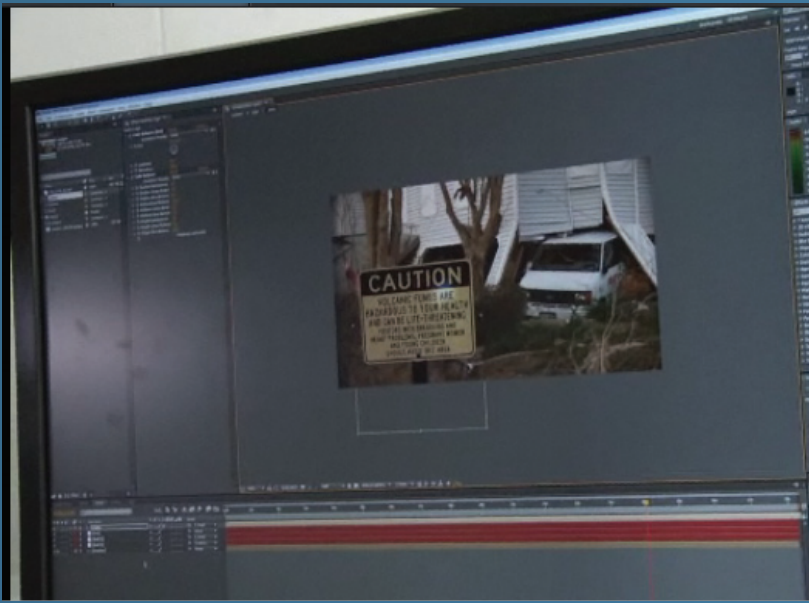
Pain points

"I often work with low-budget, guerilla shots captured with 35mm lenses and a narrow depth of field. As a result, the backgrounds are entirely out of focus, so I don't have defined points we can use to track the shots. I also need to rapidly work among applications, without having to worry about manual updates and time-consuming rendering."

Solution: Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium

- Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium offers Mocha for After Effects built in. Based on Imagineer's 2.5 D tracking system, Mocha for After Effects is a cost-effective, standalone tracking tool that generates solid 2D tracks, even on the most difficult shots. With Mocha, Edwards can stabilize even the most jittery handheld footage and blurry backgrounds.
- Adobe Dynamic Link has been expanded in Adobe Creative Suite 4, allowing Edwards to edit content in one software application and immediately see it update in another without rendering.

Filmmaker Gareth Edwards is a self-proclaimed "Jack of all Trades." He's a successful director, video editor, and visual effects artist. Often working with grueling post-production schedules and cranking out hundreds of shots in a few short months, Edwards needs the right tools to help him bring everything together. The common thread running through all of his award-winning work is masterful storytelling, told with imagination and Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium software.



Edwards' science fiction feature film, *Monsters*, is slated for cinema release in 2010. For this project, the production team will edit everything using only components of Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium, including using Adobe Premiere Pro CS4 to edit the production.

"I knew that Adobe Creative Suite Production Premium was the only way I could finish the project within budget and with the extreme levels of quality required. I needed to have complete creative control and a virtually seamless workflow—which is precisely what Adobe's video toolset provides."

Gareth Edwards, filmmaker

"Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium software is so freeing from a creative standpoint," says Edwards. "It offers a rich, well-integrated feature set that gives me a variety of options to accomplish whatever I have in mind. With Adobe software, the tools blend into the background."

Award-winning work, off-the-shelf tools

During his career, Edwards has used expensive proprietary tools and tried workflows built using software from a variety of vendors. He found that neither can surpass the streamlined, integrated workflow Adobe Creative Suite Production Premium provides.

Edwards started filmmaking at age 12 using his father's video camera. He subsequently attended art and film school, and launched a successful career. Since he began working professionally, Edwards has won numerous awards including a

British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) award for his visual effects work on the BBC program *Hiroshima*. His work also includes directing the BBC documentary *End Day*, and producing the visual effects for the BBC series *Seven Wonders of the Industrial World* and the Discovery Channel mini-series *Perfect Disaster*, for which he was nominated for an Emmy Award. All of this was accomplished with off-the-shelf hardware and the components of Adobe Creative Suite Production Premium.

One of Edwards' crowning accomplishments is his stunning visual effects work for the BBC's *Attila the Hun*. Edwards had to digitally create a vast army and sweeping historical vistas. All together, the show required 250 visual effects shots, various foreign locations, and five months of post-production work.

"I knew that Adobe Creative Suite Production Premium was the only way I could finish the project within budget and with the extreme levels of quality required," says Edwards. "I needed to have complete creative control and a virtually seamless workflow—which is precisely what Adobe's video toolset provides."

250 shots, five months

To create 250 shots in five months, Edwards set up a timeline in Adobe Premiere® Pro software, where he created a rough version of each shot for previsualization. He then exported each clip into Adobe After Effects® software, tracked it, and re-imported it into Adobe Premiere Pro.

“Working on a 64-bit operating system is a core component of the HD editing workflow. Adobe Premiere Pro CS4, Adobe After Effects CS4, and Adobe Photoshop CS4 Extended are all architected for 64-bit systems, resulting in a dramatic performance payoff for anyone using a 64-bit system.”

Gareth Edwards, filmmaker

He managed all of the assets using Adobe Bridge software. He then loaded video of each shot into Adobe Premiere Pro and reviewed it in HD. With the advent of Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium, Edwards plans to take advantage of the advanced capabilities of Dynamic Link to edit content in After Effects and immediately see it update in Adobe Premiere Pro without rendering—further streamlining his workflow.

“You simply must see how each shot looks as part of the scene,” says Edwards. “By bringing everything quickly together in Adobe Premiere Pro, I can make broad, objective decisions. The rendering time in Adobe Premiere Pro is so fast that I can go make a cup of tea, come back, immediately see how my shot looks within the scene, and make adjustments. It’s a very efficient way to work.”

When he could see how each shot flowed into the next, Edwards began creating the effects, working back and forth between Adobe Photoshop® Extended and Adobe After Effects software. He sketched matte paintings and other scene elements in Adobe Photoshop Extended and imported them directly into Adobe After Effects with layers intact. Moving and editing assets among software applications, a major challenge in some workflows, is easy with Adobe Creative Suite Production Premium, according to Edwards.

“I can play with the layers in Adobe Photoshop and import them directly into Adobe After Effects where they are automatically updated,” says Edwards. “This level of integration has really helped my post-production workflow. It feels like I’m using one piece of software.”

Last-minute change, no problem

Adobe Creative Suite Production Premium makes it easy for Edwards to make last-minute changes, even when a film is almost completely finished. For *Attila the Hun*, attention to historical accuracy was vital. During a test screening, the production designer noticed an incorrect detail on a city wall. According to Edwards, changing an element at that late stage would be a big job using other tools, but it was a minor matter with Adobe Creative Suite Production Premium.

To fix the detail, Edwards simply pressed Ctrl-E in Adobe Premiere Pro to open his After Effects project, found the layer with the erroneous detail, pressed Ctrl-E again to open that layer in Photoshop Extended, and changed the layer. He then saved and closed his files. All of the changes automatically filtered back to the Adobe Premiere Pro timeline and were re-rendered. “Making late-breaking changes is a really simple, fast process with Adobe Creative Suite Production Premium,” says Edwards.

Gareth Edwards

London, England

Challenge

- Create high-end post-production results on minimal budgets
- Find a superior solution to proprietary post-production equipment or multi-vendor solutions
- Work seamlessly and natively with tapeless camera formats
- Save time when moving among software applications
- Streamline asset management
- Devise a previsualization workflow for effects that enables hundreds of shots to be created in months
- Place creative control in the hands of video editors and VFX artists

Solution

- Previsualize shots using Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium
- Work seamlessly between After Effects and Photoshop to create visual effects
- Use Adobe Premiere Pro CS4 to edit film for cinematic release
- Leverage integration among components of Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium to gain dramatic workflow efficiencies

Benefits

- Avoided complex post-production workflows and asset management
- Cut costs and enabled rapid post-production
- Surpassed high-end post-production equipment or workflows involving multiple vendors
- Seamlessly managed assets
- Independently created 250 shots in five months
- Maintained creative control

Toolkit

- Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium. Components used include:
 - Adobe After Effects CS4
 - Adobe Photoshop CS4 Extended
 - Adobe Premiere Pro CS4
 - Adobe Bridge
 - Dynamic Link
- Platform: Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional running on 64-bit and 32-bit PC desktop and notebook computers



"Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium has liberated me. With Adobe software, it has become less about who has the monopoly on expensive gear and more about who's got the best ideas."

Gareth Edwards, filmmaker

Less housekeeping, more creativity

For Edwards, another major benefit of Adobe Creative Suite Production Premium is its ability to automatically track assets. Using other tools, Edwards always had to remember details such as the origin of a file, its location, and whether or not it was the latest version.

"If you are moving between applications from a variety of vendors, then asset management quickly becomes very confusing. You have to be very clever, organized, and careful," says Edwards. "Adobe Creative Suite Production Premium automatically keeps a tight rein on assets, freeing me to keep creating."

Asset management is just one of the ways Adobe Creative Suite Production Premium speeds up Edwards' workflow. He notes that he can work faster using integrated software from Adobe than if he was given more expensive software. "Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium has liberated me," says Edwards. "With Adobe software, it has become less about who has the monopoly on expensive gear and more about who's got the best ideas."

Edwards often works with high-quality compressed high definition (HD) files, captured

by cameras such as the Sony HDCAM EX. Says Edwards, "With native support for the Sony XDCAM EX format in Adobe Premiere Pro, I can take advantage of the efficiencies of a true file-based workflow, without transcoding or rewrapping, providing a software-only tapeless HD workflow—from capture to output."

Edwards has also accelerated his workflow by running Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium on 64-bit computers and operating systems. "Working on a 64-bit operating system is a core component of the HD editing workflow," he says. "Adobe Premiere Pro CS4, Adobe After Effects CS4, and Adobe Photoshop CS4 Extended are all architected for 64-bit systems, resulting in a dramatic performance payoff for anyone using a 64-bit system."

Adobe tools from start to finish

Edwards is now working on a science fiction feature film, *Monsters*, slated for cinema release in 2010. For this project, the production team plans to edit everything using Adobe Premiere Pro CS4 software, which means they will be using Adobe software from start to finish. Says Edwards, "Adobe software gives me complete creative control and a fluid workflow that, at this point, I simply couldn't live without."



Adobe

Adobe Systems Incorporated
345 Park Avenue
San Jose, CA 95110-2704
USA
www.adobe.com

Adobe, the Adobe logo, Adobe Premiere, After Effects, Creative Suite, and Photoshop are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Adobe Systems Incorporated in the United States and/or other countries. Microsoft and Windows are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

© 2009 Adobe Systems Incorporated. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA.
95012200 04/09 R