qualitalk

Information from Technology and Society

UNESCO first proclaimed 23 April as World Book and Copyright Day, often abbreviated World Book Day, in 1995. This year, against presenting a coupon, students in Germany of fourth and fifth grade will receive free of charge Germany's current year's book of World Book Day: „I give you a story as a present", at any bookstore in the country – if their teachers reminded them about it in time. E-books were not mentioned in World Book Day advertising campaigns.

Much success wishes

Chris Schlüter

»Boundless creativity with complete solutions for Cross-Media-Design« we are promised by Adobe® which will make available to professional teams its Software Creative Suite, with many extras, via Creative Cloud on a monthly subscription basis.The manager of the store Competence GmbH in Wiesbaden, Ms Christine Scheerer, answers attendees' questions after the presentation Adobe Creative City Cloud Tour, on 18 April 2013.

There Comes The Cloud …

Adobe's Subscription Modell

Networks, servers and memories are already continually in use, as a matter of fact: one uses the internet to check suburban train schedules, availability of doctors' appointments as well as to store the most trivial e-mails on the provider's server and that already for the last couple of decades. Now we have to add Cloud to it.

Cloud computing is being translated into German as *Rechnen in der Wolke*

Thomas Großmann:
bei der Adobe Creative City Cloud Tour. Als IT-Experte von Competence ist er ein gefragter Ansprechpartner.

(= Figuring, calculating in the cloud) which may not be adequate. Somehow, one can't help but being reminded of the Berliner's presumptious saying: *»Janz Berlin war eene Wolke, nur icke war zu sehn«* (= All of Berlin was in a cloud, only I could be seen). And somehow not completely a surprise that in the IT world calculations and putting data into memory are not done in a cloud; data and applications are stored outside of one's own hardware which then is called: to cloud it (pun intended) – »Cloud Computing«.

Curious to find out what's behind all this, I gladly accepted an invitation from Competence GmbH for an introduction to Adobe®'s Creative City Cloud Tour. Adobe's doesn't need an introduction: it's a premier creator and marketer of applications for text, picture and movie presentations. Up to now, applications tended to be sold stored on media such as CDs, packaged in small boxes imprinted with colorful picures. But last year, Adobe launched a new distribution model. The venue of the presentation was at the premises of Competence GmbH in Wiesbaden-Erbenheim. A small, independent operation founded in 1994, it has a goodly number of patrons who appreciate, among other things, the continual efforts of the company to introduce and explain new hard- and software to them, keeping them abreast of the changes in the IT world, removing doubts they may have about such changes.

20 Years of Competent Expertise

Together with her team, Ms Christine Scheerer, the Manager, individually welcomed all attendees and had during the break catered in a nice assortment of tidbits. It speaks for her company when it can maintain itself and provide such outstanding service such as this seminar among the cutthroat competition from the area's media markets, electronic stores, and the recently opened Apple Store in Frankfurt. Indeed, Ms Scheerer mentioned that after the opening of the Apple Store in Frankfurt, her business initially showed a decrease but rebounded shortly thereafter – a sign that good, competent and professional service is all important to today's customer.

One can appreciate that when reading customers' evaluations of the newly opened Apple Store at Bockenheimerstraße in Frankfurt. The majority expressed dissatisfaction. For example, Richard Beer wrote: *»Went to the store twice. If one thinks of nothing more than buying a device, forget it! One first has to line up to go through the rigmarole of the bill… Just going straight to the cashier? Wrong!«* Another customer: *»That's the last time I visited that store: I had an appointment at 12 P.M., on a weekday, but nevertheless had to wait quite some time […]. The people behind the Genius Bar try hard but it was obvious that they only have a rudimentary knowledge of the subject; they are not trained technicians nor are they IT specialists.«*

Information by the bucket

It was now up to Markus Bledowski and his Adobe Creative City Cloud presentation to show the advantages of this new software which spans the whole gamut, from licenses for single programs of Adobe's Photoshop, InDesign, or Illustrator to the complete Adobe Creative Suite Master Collection for teams engaged in complex tasks of print, web publication, video creation (see table). The tool box is so well filled that it should be a pleasure to transform one's results into all types of different formats (»liquid layout«). After all, a web page should be optimally presented whether on a large-format monitor, a tablet or a smartphone.

Spontaneous questions during the presentation from the listeners showed that even already knowledgeable users of the new software were not yet aware of all the possibilities of the new programs. The drive of the presentation, however, wasn't an indepth explanation of such possibilities but rather of the methods of acquisition of the programs: on one

Markus Bledowski,
Referent der Adobe Creative City Cloud Tour, startet die Präsentation bei der Firma Competence.

hand, subscription (at present, 60 Euro [including VAT], per user per month), on the other hand outright purchase (at present 3,500 Euro [including VAT], per user). Ms Scheerer demonstrated how much more advantageous it would be to subscribe: depreciating cost over a period of three years, accounting liquidity during the first year would be improved by 76 percent. Also, with a subscription on a monthly basis, costs can be more easily allocated to the respective teams, projects, etc. And if more licenses are needed, they can be entered simply in the books.

The biggest advantage of Creative Cloud is the immediate access to updates, which are at the user's discretion. One has to keep in mind, though, that updates can be imple-

mented only from the immediately previous version. If the user does not update but later decides to acquire one of the following updates, he will be out of luck: it cannot be done, and the software has to be purchased anew. It is not unusual that users do not, at one time or another, update because features of the update are not needed, or the user thinks he will have difficulties in using the updated version. It is interesting to learn that according to a safety report, the Secunia Sicherheitsreport, the average number of updates during the first quarter of 2013 for a (Windows) computer user amounted to twenty-five.

Creative Cloud has integrated additional tools for creation and administration: each user in the team will have a storage capability of 100 GB in Cloud, plus two technical-support inquiries per year free of charge. One can work locally on the computer; a continuous connection to the internet is not required. However, one has to allow a license verification on-line every thirty days.

With that new subscription model, work should have become easier. One participant, though, reported difficulties she had when between Christmas and New Year, nothing with her programs seemed to work and customer support was not available; she needed new different type of credit card to go on (Note: credit card purchases are still not very common in Germany). Ms Scheerer in her reply assured everyone that if Cloud for Teams are acquired at Competence GmbH, clients will be billed; a credit card will not be necessary. ❑

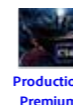### Buying Guide: Product Comparison Creative Cloud

See what's inside
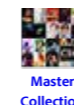View pricing and components of each Creative Suite 6 edition and Creative Cloud membership.
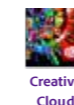
	Design Standard	Design & Web Premium	Production Premium	Master Collection	Creative Cloud
Products					
Photoshop	•				
Photoshop Extended		•	•	•	•
Photoshop Lightroom					•
Illustrator	•	•	•	•	•
InDesign	•	•		•	•
Adobe Muse					•
Acrobat XI Pro					•
Acrobat X Pro for Creative Suite	•	•		•	
Flash Professional		•	•	•	•
Flash Builder				•	•
Dreamweaver		•		•	•
Edge Tools & Services †					•
Fireworks		•		•	•
Adobe Premiere Pro			•	•	•
After Effects			•	•	•
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SpeedGrade			•	•	•
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Bridge ‡	•	•	•	•	•
Media Encoder ‡	•	•	•	•	•
Services					
Device and PC sync					•
Cloud storage					•
Business Catalyst					•
PhoneGap Build §					•
Typekit					•
Story Plus					•
Digital Publishing Suite, Single Edition					•

The thing with the Click

Orders On-line and its Consequences

The delivery situation for the roughly 22,600 inhabitants of our neighborhood of Gonsenheim functions quite well and also provides a lively picture of the health of the local economy. Small stores, physicians' clinics, bank branches line Gonsenheim's main thoroughfare, the former Kaiserstraße (»Emperor Street«) which after a visit from the »Gröfaz«*) had to endure a short-lived renaming into Adolf-Hitler-Straße. Now being called *Breite Straß*e (= Wide Street), such establishments stretch on both sides of it for well over one kilometer, with its hustle and bustle. The tram between downtown Mainz and the next town of Finthen to the west runs on it; it has three stops on Breite Straße, which is very convenient for shoppers. Drivers also, with
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*) **Gr**ößter **F**eldherr **a**ller **Z**eiten (= greatest generalissimo of all times)

some luck, can find a parking spot on Breite Straße and avoid having to lug purchases over a longer distance.

Close to a school off Breite Straße, a small market opens every Wednesday and Saturday where they sell fruits, vegetables, fish, meat, as well as bread, other baked goods and delicatessen. A flower shop features also, a huntsman who sells what he hunted, deer, rabbit, pheasant, has his stand, and one can find even a crêperie.

Traffic Disturbances of the Special Kind

With its stores, and east-west traffic passing through it, there may be an occasional traffic jam: delivery trucks might block Breite Straße when carrying goods to the stores on the street. But it's not only the wholesaler's trucks delivering to the retailers, or the rush deliveries to pharmacies or the heavily armoured cars to the banks which can create problems: more and more, trucks delivering orders from mail order are noticeable, and further contributing to traffic jams.

An other aspect is that the mail order deliveries can be particularly annoying: for example, for two bookstores on Breite Straße when book deliveries for their neighbors not at home from on-line stores are drop-

ped off at one of them. Come to think of it, the bookstores could get a book within a day – that's being assured through the streamlined delivery service of the German Publishers' and Book Wholesalers' Organization, probably faster than delivery from the on-line store. But people don't appear to think that far.

Libri, the most prominent book wholesaler in Germany, has a large logistics center in the town of Bad Hersfeld, some 170 km north-east of Mainz, precisely the place where also the on-line organization of Amazon has one of their distribution centers. By the way, that is the center which gained notoriety because of its appalling working conditions for part-time workers during the time running up to

Christmas 2012, after an investigative report by Radio Hessen was broadcast nationwide by the major TV network of ARD in February 2013.

The temptation for customers to do more and more with just a click contributed to an increase in Amazon's trade volume in books by over 60 percent during the last two years. Many small, operator-owned bookstores in Germany had to fold because of this change in customer behavior; even large bookstore chains were affected and had to drastically reduce their presence in the market.

That change is leading to more jobs in low-qualification, low-paying jobs, no direct customer service on a one-to-one basis, no places where to leisurely browse books anymore. Will the current advance of e-books mean the demise of all bookstores in our neighborhoods?

Other vendors in specialty stores report that customers come in, ask for advice and explanations, in apparel

stores try on clothing. But then just take notes or in the case of clothing, tear off tags with size anddetails and leave the store without even a »Good Bye« and without a purchase. Some mumble they »*will think it over*« but never return. What then actually happens is that once at home, they hunker down at their computer and place an order to an on-line store, with the information they had gathered at the bricks-and-mortar store. Does it seem far-fetched to suggest to stores to start charging a fee for advice, to discourage such despicable behavior?

The writing seems to be on the wall: more and more small stores will close because this **thing with the click** – and we will see more and more streets with more and more rows of empty showcases. We then will have gambled away the life quality of our neighborhoods with our on-line habits. ❐