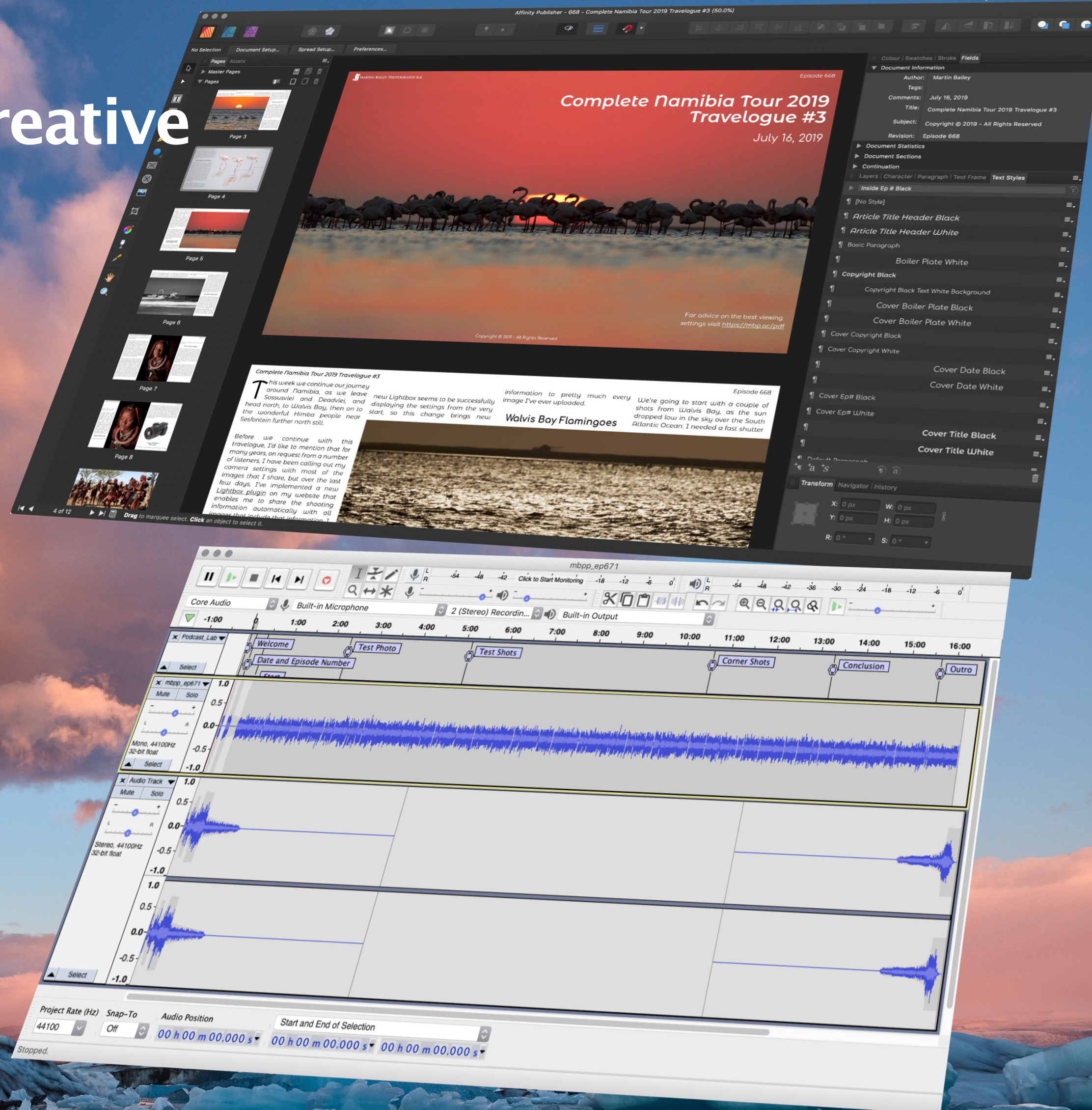


Alternatives to Adobe Creative Cloud Applications

Aug 14, 2019



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For many years, I've used Adobe's Master Suite, and when the Creative Cloud was introduced, I gladly started a subscription. Due to my style of travel, sometimes not having access to the Internet for up to 7 weeks, I also helped Adobe to shape their license checking and grace period lengths, so as not to leave photographers in the field high and dry.

I have huge respect for what Adobe has done for photography and indeed many creative areas, but for a number of reasons I've decided to reduce my Creative Cloud subscription to the Photographer's Plan, and today I'd like to walk you through my reasoning and decision process.

Before I go on, I'd like to mention that I am one of the relatively few people that really used many of the Creative Cloud applications. I used Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Premiere Pro, Audition, occasionally After Effects, and until 2016, Lightroom was my goto photo editing and asset management tool. I was getting value from the Creative Cloud, and when I was paying ¥5,378 which is about \$51 per month, I felt as though it was a relatively good deal.

So what happened?

Well, it was really a collection of things that started me thinking that I wanted to move away from the Creative Cloud. The first thing was a price increase that happened without me noticing, until after I got back from this year's Namibia

Tour. I might have received a notification email, but I didn't recall seeing one, but then I noticed as I did my accounts that the price had been hiked to ¥6,134 which is about \$58.30 at the current exchange rate.

Alternatives?

The price increase started me wondering if I had any alternatives, but before I thought much more about that, I noticed a new product from a company that I've been watching closely, and that was Affinity Publisher, a direct competitor for Adobe's InDesign, which is the product that I have been using for many years to create ebooks and my tour guidebooks etc.

I have taken Linda.com courses on InDesign, as it's a pretty complicated program to use, but even so, every other week or so, as I was creating my weekly eBook for the MBP Pro members, I found myself stuck on something, and what I could do in an hour when things go well, would all of a sudden take me three hours, and I have frankly counted on being able to make these ebooks in around an hour, not three, so from a

business perspective, this hits me pretty hard.

So I decided to pick up a copy of Affinity Publisher and see how it fared against the industry-standard eBook designing software package, InDesign. I opened Affinity Publisher and very quickly got



A Revelation!

Most of what I looked for was exactly where I would have expected it to be. It felt so natural to use, that I felt myself chuckling to myself a number of times as things just came together so easily. At least 10 times I mentioned to my wife that this is how InDesign should have been designed, or why didn't Adobe do it like this. Affinity Publisher is worlds more intuitive, and I believe my weekly eBooks look better for it as well.

This revelation got me thinking. I started to wonder how many other Creative Cloud applications I could realistically replace, and pretty much straight away bought Affinity's other two products, Affinity Photo, which is a Photoshop replacement, and Affinity Designer, which replaces Illustrator. Not a bad start!

I Have Audacity!

The other Adobe application that I relied heavily on was Audition, as I've been using that to record the Podcast audio each week for the last few years. I had a really good look around for some alternatives, and even tried to record into some of the music production or DAW software that I already own, but none of it really suited my needs. Then I decided to check out Audacity, which is a free, open-source application for recording audio. I've been aware of [Audacity](#) for many years, but never thought to really give it a try.

Having taken it for a spin, I found myself once again wondering why Audition didn't work like that. There are things that Audition does better, and it's probably now taking me a little longer to produce my podcast because of that, but as a means to an end, I don't mind, and I am gradually improving my workflow again, so all is good on the audio front.

Switched from Lightroom Three Years Ago

As I mentioned, I jumped ship from Lightroom to Capture One Pro three years ago anyway, so that was now out of the equation, and the reason for switching was pure and simply better image quality, but if I was still with Lightroom, I'd have probably been

looking for an alternative anyway as Adobe move Lightroom to the cloud and make the regular Lightroom "Classic". I understand that they are saying that Lightroom is not being end-of-lifed, but I simply do not like anything that gets termed classic when it really isn't. Although this may be just my impression, I'd have moved away from Lightroom before now anyway.

Video Production Alternative

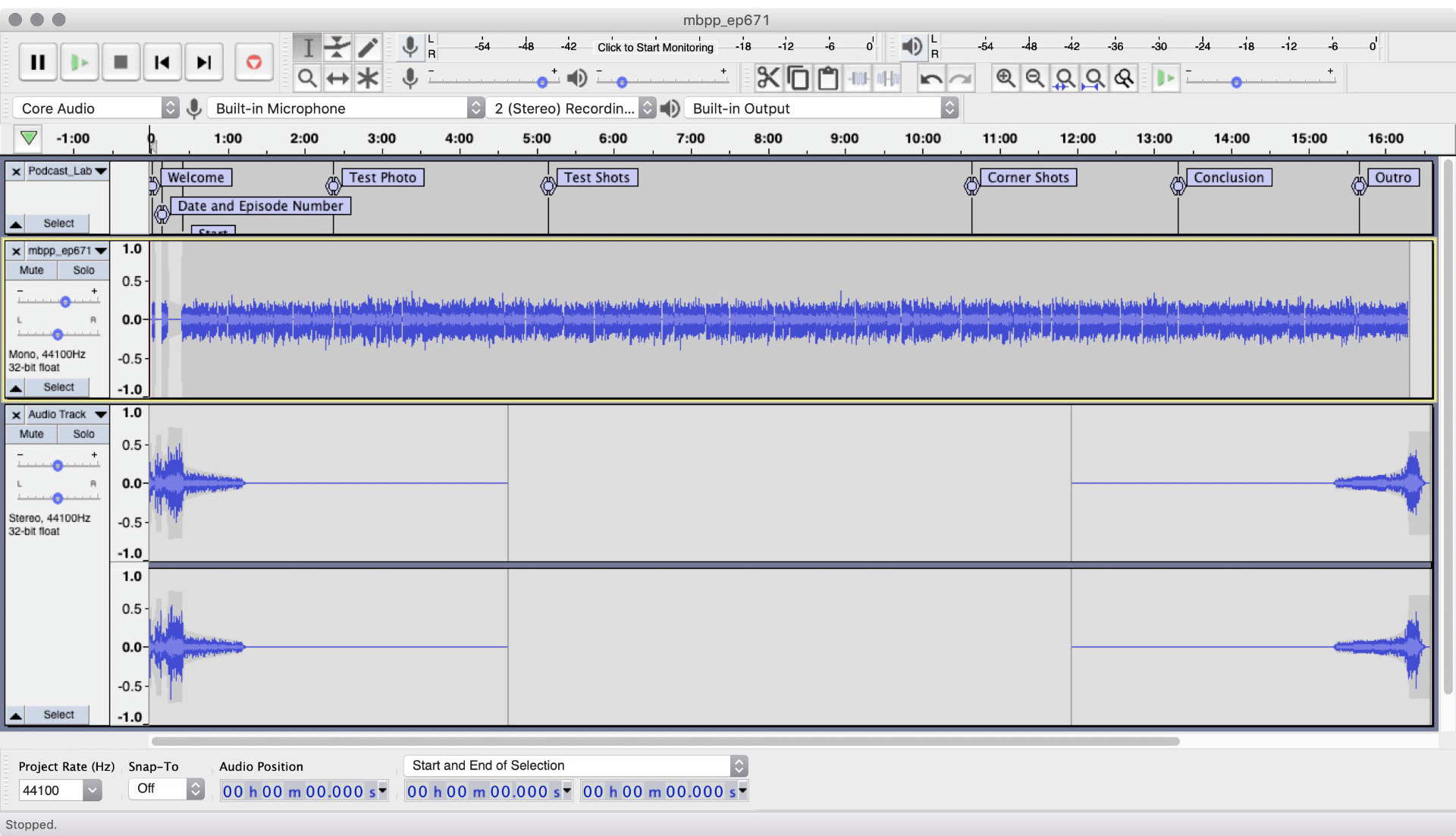
The final thing that I needed to replace was Premiere Pro and After Effects for video production, and for the record, I have at this point not actually replaced them, but because I haven't had a project that requires me to invest in another package yet, my current plan is

to buy Final Cut Pro if I need something in the near future. Final Cut Pro is a very expensive package though. At this point, I have been able to replace the first four products for less than the cost of one month of the Creative Cloud for each product. Although Audacity is free, I actually donated \$50 to the team to help with future development, so that's again about how much I was paying for the Creative Cloud for one month.

I actually have a feeling that the Affinity team is probably working really hard on their next Creative Cloud killer, which will probably be a Premiere Pro alternative, so I'm hoping that they release that before I have to pay for Final Cut Pro, or any other package that I might decide on later.

The Stinger

So, the stage was set. I had an alternative solution for everything either already purchased or decided but waiting to pull the trigger on. I then went over to Adobe's web site to see how easy it was going to be to cancel my subscription and was horrified to find that not only had I missed the email about the price increase, but I believe I never received notification that June was my yearly renewal month, and Adobe wanted around \$333 before they'd let me cancel my Creative Cloud subscription. I was kicking myself for not looking earlier, but this actually helped me to not rush the decision.



The Solution

After spending another few weeks trying to live without Photoshop, I realized that I rely on it a little too much for certain plugins, like Canon’s Print Studio Pro for some of my printing workflow, and a few other things, so although I can use Affinity Photo for my editing work, I decided that it was probably better to keep Photoshop, so I went back to the Adobe website to check the prices of their subscription with just Photoshop.

I imagine there is some kind of a marketing campaign behind this, but I found that I could get the Photography Plan for just ¥12,700 for the year, which is about \$121, just a hair over the cost of two months for the full Creative Cloud. This also comes with Lightroom which I do not need, but it was half the price of the other plans with just Photoshop in it, so I tried to see if I could switch, and I was able to do so without a penalty. In fact, after paying for a year of the Photography Plan, I received a refund of ¥613 or \$5.83.

I was quite happy to be able to do this and would imagine that this would have been a cheaper option than paying the \$333 to simply cancel my subscription. Conversely, I remained pretty annoyed that Adobe wanted to charge me this penalty after being a Master Suite user for well over ten years. I realize that they are running a business, and appreciate that a customer that is leaving is less important than one that is staying, albeit on a lower plan, but the whole

thing just seemed cheap and completely disregarded the loyalty that I have shown to Adobe up to this point.

I’m also somewhat saddened to see Adobe making what I believe to be some strange marketing decisions. Whether you believe that they are gradually killing off the standalone version of Lightroom or not, their pricing strategies for the Creative Cloud seem to be annoying many more people than just me. Until a few years ago I would have banked on Adobe being around for at least a few more decades, but if they continue with their current strategies while their competitors continue to hit it out of the park, I’m no longer so sure of that.


Anyway, at this point, I’m happy that I do get to continue to use Photoshop as a plugin host, and I now have four of my five necessary programs covered for the price of just four monthly payments for the full Creative Cloud suite. I feel somewhat liberated, and I’m looking forward to not having to pay my monthly subscription to Adobe anymore. Whether I renew my subscription for the Photography Plan next year will depend on how much Adobe want for it, and also if the companies that create the plugins I use will release versions for other software like Affinity Photo. I actually doubt very much that this will happen, and imagine that Affinity will just gradually improve their support for Photoshop plugins instead. Either way, once that happens, I think I’ll stop my current Photography plan as well. I will also be careful to keep in mind that my

subscription renews in June so that I don’t miss that again.

Of course, if you are using the Creative Cloud and still happy with it, I hope you continue to enjoy it. I have nothing against Adobe as such, but for me, I feel that it’s time to move on, and if you are feeling the same way, maybe the programs that I’ve decided on will help with your own search as well. Also, if you aren’t aware of which month your subscription renews in, it might be worth checking and making a note, so that it doesn’t creep up on you like it did me.

Mentorship Program Almost Ready!


Before we finish, I know that some of you are looking forward to the new MBP Mentorship program that I’ve been working on. Although I had to put this on the back-burner as I worked through a few personal issues this year, I’m now working on it again, and hope to start taking people on board over the next few weeks. The system will kick Mentees off with a short Getting Started course that helps to give me an idea of your level of understanding, while working towards you selecting a Primary Mentorship Path, which also includes one-to-one consultation sessions as the Mentee works through the various stages.

 MARTIN BAILEY PHOTOGRAPHY K.K.

33% COMPLETE

1/3 Steps

Hello, Martin!



Getting Started

Getting Started

Take the Exposure Quiz

1 Quiz

Exposure Quiz

Select your Primary Mentorship Path

1 Task

Exposure Quiz

Answer the following questions to test your knowledge of exposure

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Answered

Review

Review question

Which settings will achieve the same exposure as an aperture of f/11 and shutter speed of 1/500? Select two answers.

☐ Aperture f/16 and Shutter Speed of 1/250

☐ Aperture f/16 and Shutter Speed of 1/1000

☐ Aperture f/8 and Shutter Speed of 1/250

☐ Aperture f/8 and Shutter Speed of 1/1000

Skip question

Check

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