

COUTURE | BOOK™

Artistic photo book design

Creative entrepreneurs rely on photography and web design solutions from Adobe to create high fashion photo books



Phyllis Lane, a fashion photographer, journalist, and high-end wedding photographer, wanted a new way to showcase her photographs. What she and her partner Rodrigo Coelho got was a whole new business that gives professional photographers stylish, one-of-a-kind photo books that make their images shine.

Coelho and Lane operate COUTURE BOOK, a business which combines the best technology, printing, and binding techniques to create high-end, coffee table style photo books for photographers and designers. Adobe® Photoshop® Lightroom® and Photoshop CS3 Extended software drive the photography workflow used to manage, sort, and enhance images. Customers then upload images or templates to the COUTURE BOOK website, which was created with Adobe Flex™ Flash® CS3 Professional, and InDesign® CS3 software.

COUTURE | BOOK

COUTURE BOOK produces high-end, coffee table style photo books using photography and web design workflows based on Adobe solutions.

COUTURE | BOOK



COUTURE | BOOK



"Using the file export feature in Adobe Photoshop Lightroom and a free plug-in available on the COUTURE BOOK website, users can upload a folder of images or a selected collection directly to COUTURE BOOK without leaving the Lightroom interface."

Rodrigo Coelho,
Owner, COUTURE BOOK

Not your mom's photo album

In 2000, Lane spent eight months creating her first custom photo book using her design vision and an inkjet printer at home. "The response I received proved that other photographers also wanted a high-quality way to showcase their images," says Lane.

Enter Coelho, an entrepreneur with a background in systems and technology. Together, Lane and Coelho systematized the production process for creating high-end coffee table books for professional photographers. The two first went on to produce exclusive book products for high-volume wholesale partners in the professional photography space.

The couple's first venture—called "[together] book"—is a website that offers consumers a patent-pending way of binding 4 x 6 and 5 x 7 photographic prints into photo books that lay open like a book. This product was featured on Oprah's "O List" of her favorite things in 2006.

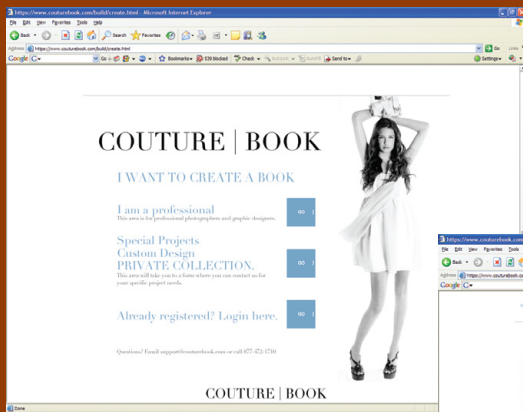
In 2007, Coelho and Lane launched COUTURE BOOK, a website that offers a number of high fashion book collections with specific fabrics and styles. Customers can lay out the pages of their books themselves, or take advantage of the company's full-service concierge option. "COUTURE BOOK combines leading technology, custom printing, and old-world, hand-stitched binding techniques to create beautiful, one-of-a-kind books that will last for generations," says Lane.

Adobe inspired workflow

Lane and Coelho use Adobe solutions for Lane's photography workflow and to create the COUTURE BOOK website and services. A wedding and fashion photographer, Lane shoots both film and digital using Nikon cameras. She uses Adobe Photoshop Lightroom for color corrections, batch adjustments, and organizing images.

Adobe Photoshop CS3 is used for retouching images, in-depth color corrections, and correcting imperfections using the clone stamp and healing brush. "With Adobe Photoshop CS3 I'm fixing color tones, pumping up the contrast or curves, burning in details, and perfecting skin to create the best image possible," says Lane.

For COUTURE BOOK, Coelho and Lane rely on Adobe Flash technology to deliver an intuitive web experience. Templates of page layouts created in Adobe InDesign designate the placement of images and text. Proprietary software extracts the XML data from the



After perfecting images in Adobe Photoshop Lightroom and Photoshop CS3, customers log in to the COUTURE BOOK website and select the style of their custom book. Professional photographers and graphic designers can log in and create their own books, while other customers can take advantage of custom design services.



Company

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templates and imports it into a database. When customers access a template on the website, the Flash interface displays the reinterpreted template as a designed page that they can drop their images into with just a few clicks.

The COUTURE BOOK interface features an enhanced upload and design tool built with Adobe Flex 2 and Flash CS3 Professional software and delivered using the Adobe Flash Player. “Adobe offers us proven, advanced technology that we can trust,” says Coelho. “Working with Adobe Flex 2 and Flash CS3 Professional enabled us to create a website that is browser-independent and accessible through the ubiquitous Adobe Flash Player.” Developing in Flex 2 and Flash CS3 Professional also supports Coelho’s vision to create an Adobe AIR™ application that will enable customers to work both online and on their desktop to lay out their books.

The technology of customization

COUTURE BOOK offers custom book design services for customers that do not want to do their own layout. Using themes set up as templates in Photoshop CS3, designers simply insert the images and save the templates as JPEG files. “By recording a series of steps as Adobe Photoshop CS3 Actions, designers speed the layout of pages,” says Coelho. COUTURE BOOK will also soon support uploads of Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) files for customers who lay their books out in Adobe InDesign and output to Adobe PDF.

After the customer or COUTURE BOOK designer completes the layout, they upload the full-bleed JPEG files to the COUTURE BOOK website. A flip-book preview, delivered using the Flash Player, shows customers what their books will look like when they are printed. Photographers can share this preview with their clients for approval.

Behind the scenes, the proprietary system takes the JPEG images and XML data—which notes the sequence of images, position, border options, and other specifications—and compiles it into an Adobe PDF file that includes crop marks, order data, printing and binding instructions, a cover, and the designed pages. COUTURE BOOK then electronically transmits the Adobe PDF file and order information via XML to the printer.

COUTURE BOOK has applied for a patent to cover this proprietary method of paginating books for printing, which involves a complex imposition process. Regardless of the book size or page count the system creates a layout of the book that optimizes the use of each press sheet and ensures the pages will be assembled in the correct order.

Books are printed each morning using a full Adobe PDF workflow and HP printers. Some books are bound at the printer, while the archival, hand-sewn binding for the couture and high-end books is done at the COUTURE BOOK facility.

Challenge

- Create the most beautiful photo books in the world
- Leverage photographers’ knowledge of Adobe Photoshop software
- Make the book ordering website easy to use

Solution

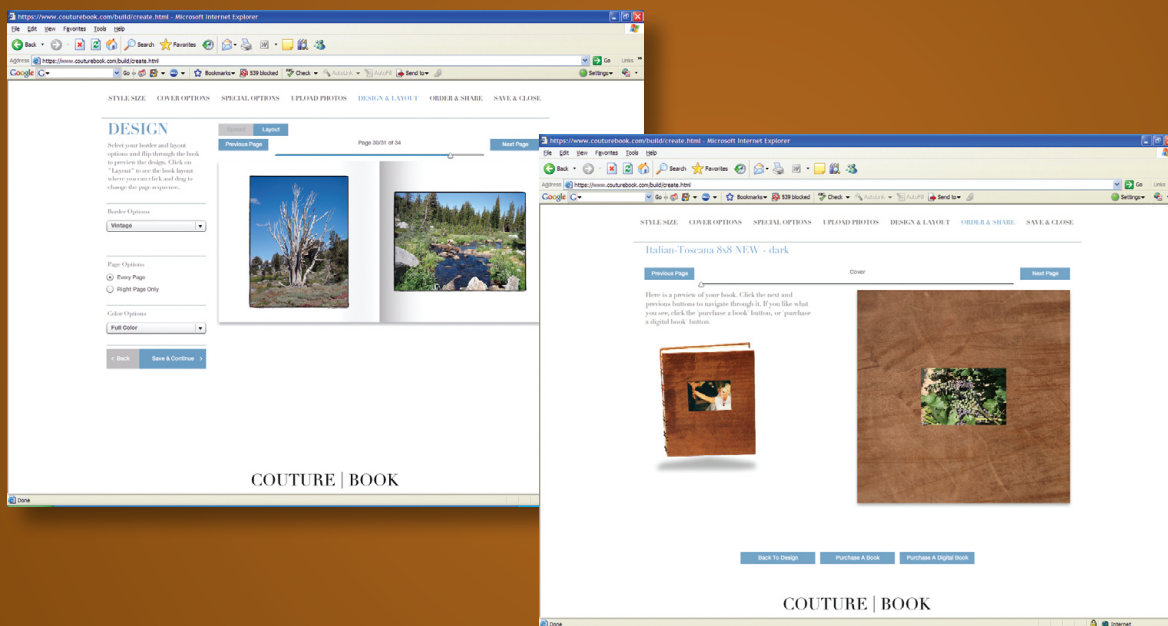
- Use Adobe Photoshop Lightroom and Photoshop CS3 Extended software to drive the photography workflow
- Design page layouts templates using Adobe InDesign CS3 software
- Build interactive website with Adobe Flex 2 and Flash CS3 Professional software
- Enable photo book ordering from within Adobe Photoshop Lightroom

Benefits

- Simplify book creation and production process with integrated Adobe workflow
- Provide photographers and designers with a high-quality way to showcase their work
- Offer eco-friendly photo book option exclusively through Adobe Photoshop Lightroom

Toolkit

- Adobe Creative Suite 3 Design Premium. Components used include:
 - Adobe InDesign CS3
 - Adobe Photoshop CS3 Extended
 - Adobe Flash CS3 Professional
 - Adobe Acrobat® 8 Professional
 - Adobe Photoshop Lightroom
 - Adobe Flex 2



The COUTURE BOOK interface features an enhanced upload and design tool built with Adobe Flex 2 and Flash CS3 Professional. A “flip book” preview, delivered using the Flash Player, shows customers what their books will look like when they are printed.

“Adobe solutions not only help us create the most beautiful books in the world using the latest printing workflow, industry leading software, and old-world binding techniques, they also make it easy for our customers to upload, preview, and order their one-of-a-kind books.”

Phyllis Lane, owner, COUTURE BOOK

A green solution

Recognizing that many photographers manage their images in Photoshop Lightroom, COUTURE BOOK has also developed a plug-in that exports images from Photoshop Lightroom directly to COUTURE BOOK. “Using the file export feature in Adobe Photoshop Lightroom and a free plug-in available on the COUTURE BOOK website, users can upload a folder of images or a selected collection directly to COUTURE BOOK without leaving the Lightroom interface,” explains Coelho.

COUTURE BOOK’s new Earth Collection, which uses 100% post-consumer recycled, carbon-neutral sheets from Mohawk Fine Papers,

is available exclusively through Photoshop Lightroom. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of each eco-book is donated to nonprofit organizations that plant trees and also used for purchasing offsetting carbon credits.

“Photographers using Adobe Photoshop Lightroom to import, batch process, and edit hundreds or thousands of images can upload using our plug-in, use an auto-layout function on the COUTURE BOOK website featuring a simple design to lay out their eco-books, and be done with their book quickly so they can spend more time shooting—all the while doing something positive for the environment,” says Lane.

Overall, Coelho and Lane look forward to a long and rewarding relationship with Adobe. “We chose to standardize on Adobe products for many reasons, including the familiarity of the tools, the ability to use an Adobe PDF workflow for printing, integration among programs, the ubiquity of the Adobe Flash Player, and the Adobe AIR technology roadmap,” says Coelho.

“Adobe solutions not only help us create the most beautiful books in the world using the latest printing workflow, industry leading software, and old-world binding techniques, they also make it easy for our customers to upload, preview, and order their one-of-a-kind books,” adds Lane.



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