

Stand out from the CROWD

Behance provides platform for artists to show their stuff

Adobe long has been the industry leader in providing software for creative professionals, such as graphic designers, illustrators, photographers, web designers, videographers and more. Its Creative Cloud software, formerly known as Creative Suite, has become the must-have digital tool set for anyone generating professional content for print, web or multimedia.

It seems only fitting that the company selling the programs used to create so much imagery would also provide a platform to display the fruits of its users' labor. **Behance.net**, part of the Adobe family, is an online portfolio site for anyone who wants to share their work with the world.

Behance's stated mission is "to empower the creative world to make ideas happen." While that's kind of wishy-washy, meaningless marketing speak, the site does serve a good purpose. It is intended to provide a one-stop gallery for people looking to hire, or just admire, creatives in the visual arts. There are other similar sites, such as Flickr, which focuses



KEVIN O'NEILL
InSites

on photography, or Deviant Art, which is mainly illustration, but Behance is probably the most well-known and comprehensive.

It's popular categories are graphic design, photography, interactive design, art direction and illustration, but it also features work from architecture, fashion, industrial design, motion graphics and more.

The design of the site is pretty straightforward. The homepage features a gallery of images, each labeled with its creator's identity. You can scroll down through the gallery endlessly, as more rows are continually added every time you reach the bottom of your screen.

Clicking on an image brings you to a portfolio, which is called a project. At the top of the project is a title; the creator's name and location; stats on how many views, likes and comments the work has; links to follow, or contact, the artist; and an optional description about the work.

The work is posted in a vertical stack that you can scroll down through. The number of images posted is usually just a few, but there doesn't appear to be a limit. One artist I looked at created a separate image

for every day of the year and posted them all. When you get to the bottom there's a "like" button. There may also be links to other projects the artist has posted and viewer comments.

Too much of a good thing?

For an artist looking to get noticed, it's a double-edged sword. On the one hand it's a popular site with potential clients, so they may discover your work. On the other, there are so many talented users on the site that it's hard to stand out from the crowd.

There are several other ways to view images besides clicking on random artwork that catches your eye. If you know an artist's name, you can type it in the search field. There are also various filters you can apply to reorganize the gallery, such as the creative field (photography, design, etc.), color palette, location, tools used, galleries and more.

The site has other features in addition to the galleries. People looking to hire an artist can post jobs on the site. There's a link to a site with career tips for creatives. Another section features success stories from Behance users. There's also a blog and an app. Some companies, like Pixar and Pantone, and schools, like Rhode Island School of Design and Pratt Institute, post galleries that are essentially advertisements for the organizations.

Free and easy

You need to create an Adobe ID online in order to post your work, but that's a free and fairly painless process. Once you sign up, the process is similar to other online portfolio sites. A template is provided with some customization options you can choose, such as background colors or personal images, a profile picture and logo.

The only minor annoyance I encountered was uploading my logo and profile images only to be told — after the fact — that they were the wrong size. I had to resize them several times before they met the site's specs, which should be provided before you upload your images.

For professional and aspiring artists, Behance is another tool they can add to their marketing kit to help them promote their work online. It doesn't cost anything and requires little effort to post your work for the world to see. Even if you're not a visual artist, but like looking at art, the site is worth visiting.

KEVIN O'NEILL is a staff artist for The Times-Tribune. Send your favorite websites and apps to him at koneill@timeshamrock.com.

