



## Adrian Cătu

### PROFILE

An incurably curious, carefully creative mind driven by the pleasure to learn, communicate and build. After 18 years of awarded product management, switched to a career of visual anthropology and photography awarded with “Picture of the Year” 2020.

### EXPERIENCE

#### VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGIST & PHOTOGRAPHER, OWN COMPANY 2014-PRESENT

After 18 years in the IT industry, I took a sabbatical year to focus on my all time favorite hobby - photography. But the sabbatical turned into a long, personal journey which allowed me to grow through close contact and fieldwork in many social environments I could not previously know, in Romania and Africa. During this unexpected journey I ended up publishing featured articles and covers for [National Geographic](#), [New York Times](#), [The Guardian](#), [Politico](#), [Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung](#), [Agence France Presse](#), [Decât o Revistă](#). In 2015 I cofounded [Documentaria](#), a collective of documentary photographers which has meanwhile become widely known in Romania and abroad. In 2020 I became the third Romanian photographer ever [awarded](#) at [Picture of the Year International](#), winning also the “[Superscrieri #9](#)” national award. In 2021 my first documentary - [My Socialist Home](#) - was premiered in London.

#### PHD STUDENT, ANTHROPOLOGY, SNSPA 2016-PRESENT

A 2011 visit to Burkina Faso eventually turned into a PhD about the origins and underpinnings of a strange human-crocodile relationship. Under the supervision of prof. Vintilă Mihăilescu and prof. Vladimir Pasti, the thesis converged into a methodology of researching trans-material objects, with further research expected to expand the findings towards our relationship with technology, algorithms, VR objects or AI.

#### SENIOR PRODUCT MANAGER & UX SPECIALIST, VENDIO SYSTEMS 2008-2014

Working for this multi-channel e-commerce platform based in San Mateo, CA, I was responsible with specifying and supervising the development and maintenance of various B2B and B2C SAAS. Working under SCRUM or other agile methodologies, my main focus was on achieving a great UX through clear and clever UIs, tailored user flows and optimising recurrent operations while finding the sweet spot between an ideal UX and development/operational costs. I was also involved in merging the PM practices and B2B products after acquiring a competitor company. I worked with international teams located in Romania, US and India, mostly bridging between remote business executives and local development managers.

#### PRODUCT MANAGER, AUCTIONWATCH/VENDIO 2004-2008

After 8 years in development and code writing, I shifted to product management because it better suited my creative personality. I was quickly assigned to work as a technical PM for the most challenging B2B projects of the company at that time, responsible to turn the business requirements into product requirements, supervising UX and bridging between marketing and development. Two of the projects I developed have been awarded an eBay Star Award (in 2005 and 2010).

#### SENIOR DEVELOPER & TEAM LEAD, AUCTIONWATCH 2000-2004

I was among the first hires of Auctionwatch.com, which was - to my knowledge - the first US based startup to employ a development team in Romania. Working on a LAMP stack (C/C++/Perl OOP/PHP/MySQL/LiteSQL), I both coded and managed a team of coders, building demanding and scalable B2B and B2C e-commerce SAAS for US market.

#### DEVELOPER & TEAM LEAD, ASSISTENT RESEARCHER, FREELANCE 1996-2000

At the beginnings of my career I subsequently worked as assistant researcher in AI at Microtechnology Institute Bucharest, as a freelance developer for a contractor in Canada, as a senior software developer & team lead for a French company specialised in Braille equipment and as senior developer for CCS Systems, a German company specialised in archiving and computer vision.

#### **EDUCATION**

**SNSPA, DEPT. OF ANTHROPOLOGY** – PHD STUDENT, 2016-PRESENT

**SNSPA, DEPT. OF ANTHROPOLOGY** – MASTERS DEGREE, 2012-2014

**UPB, FAC. ELECTRONICS, T-COM. & IT** – BS IN MICROELECTRONICS, 1990-1995

#### **SKILLS**

Emotional intelligence, storytelling proficiency, good communication, imagination, lateral thinking, abstractizing abilities, thorough understanding of human cultures, fieldwork experience in vastly different cultural environments, open minded, curious, honest to myself and to others, valuing collaboration rather than competition, experienced in working with multinational environments and multicultural teams, bridging a strong technical background with a humanistic/anthropological training and a visual/creative approach.

#### **FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

English, French, Italian.

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