



SMPTE at the 2025 Saudi Media Forum

BY RUSSELL POOLE



L-R: Pierre Routhier, Maja Davidovic, Paul Whybrow, Jesse Janosky, and David Long.

The Saudi Media Forum (FOMEX) was held 19-21 February in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. SMPTE had the privilege of presenting several sessions at the event with the intent of boosting the nation's media technology infrastructure and training the next generation of Saudi engineers and technologists. Over 60% of Saudi Arabia's population is under the age of 30, and the government is planning the construction of 300 radio stations, multiple television studios, and technology centers. SMPTE's presence at FOMEX helped set a foundation for educational opportunities in the region as well as a chance to collaborate with new partners.

SMPTE Session 1: Empowering the Next Wave— A Broadcast Engineer's Journey to Mentorship and Inspiring Innovation

This session explored the media infrastructure required for sports broadcasts. Led by the founder and principal of JPM Technology Consulting, Jesse Janosky, the session highlighted an in-depth look at the phases of broadcast design and production as well as the essential educational pathways, technical skills, and adaptability required to excel in this rapidly evolving field. Janosky outlined his career working as a broadcast engineer. He focused on the transformation from student to mentor, all while detailing the challenges and requirements for sports broadcasting. This session was the perfect combination of mentorship advice and technical lecture, the first of many at FOMEX.



SMPTÉ Session 2: Next Generation TV: UHD/HDR Key Principles

This session was a deep dive into the world of Ultra High Definition (UHD) and High Dynamic Range (HDR) television. Presented by Pierre Routhier, a specialist in advanced imaging technologies, the lecture detailed why UHD and HDR are superior to traditional HD formats and how these cutting-edge technologies redefine the viewing experience. It also taught attendees how to implement these technologies as well as their future.



SMPTÉ Session 4: Mastering Color—The Science and Standards Behind Visual Storytelling

The final SMPTÉ session at FOMEX dealt with color science, the Standards that dictate best practices, and the technology that makes color an endlessly interesting topic. The presentation was given by David Long, the Director of the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) Center for Media, Arts, Games, Interaction & Creativity (MAGIC) and MAGIC Spell Studios. He introduced participants to the principles of color science and its practical applications in media production, digital imaging, and computer graphics. Attendees also learned the development and implementation of color standards such as sRGB, ITU Rec. 709, International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Rec. 2020, and the Academy Color Encoding System (ACES). This session was designed for students, researchers, and industry professionals. Everyone in attendance left with a keen understanding of color science both in theory and in practice.



SMPTÉ Session 3: Unlock Your Future—How SMPTÉ Drives Careers and Powers the Entertainment Revolution

In this session, Paul Whybrow, Chair of SMPTÉ Oceania, discussed all things SMPTÉ. From the Standards community to our educational opportunities, Whybrow covered how SMPTÉ can stimulate career growth, and offer students exclusive networking opportunities. Whybrow also talked about SMPTÉ's technology efforts in AI, virtual production, and on-set virtual production. This session showcased everything SMPTÉ has to offer.

Conclusion

FOMEX was a stellar event, with countries and companies from all over the world in attendance, and SMPTÉ's presence was particularly impactful. Through this new partnership, SMPTÉ aims to expand its presence in the Middle East while fostering a spirit of education, growth, and advancement for all who seek to master media technology.

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