



L-R: Sally-Ann D'Amato, Rich Welsh, and Dan Huerta.

# SMPTE at the NAB Show 2025: Innovation and Action

BY RUSSELL POOLE

The 2025 NAB Show has ended, and SMPTE made waves with special sessions, Standards updates, and educational opportunities. These sessions not only showcased everything SMPTE was working on but also how new technology could be implemented into workflows and how SMPTE is training the next generation to create the innovative technologies that will drive the future of media.

## Future of Cinema

SMPTE's 2025 NAB Show journey began on Saturday, 5 April, with an all-day Future of Cinema Conference (FOCC). Beginning with a welcome session from SMPTE President Rich Welsh, SMPTE Executive Director Sally-Ann D'Amato, and Vice President of Studio Relations and Technology Insights at Barco Dan Huerta, the Future of Cinema was a popular event that showcased the best of SMPTE and the media tech industry.

The opening session, "AI from the Trenches: Real-World Insights and Innovations Driving the Future of Cinema," featured a panel of experts in the field of AI, specifically regarding media tech. Entertainment Technology Center's Yves Bergquist, Storybook Studios' Albert Bozesan, and CEO of Secret Level, Eric Shamlin, took to the stage to discuss their highs and lows when it comes to AI and machine learning across cinematic production, animation, and trend forecasting.

"Reimagining Filmmaking Through AI: Empowerment, Collaboration, and Education" was next on the docket and was hosted by Chaitanya Chinchlikar, the Vice President, Business Head, and CTO of Whistling Woods International.

"Artificial intelligence is now an inalienable part of Filmed



Chaitanya Chinchlikar

Entertainment," said Chinchlikar. "In the session, I presented how Whistling Woods International—India's premier Film & Creative Arts Institute, is exploring AI's impact on specific job roles and the ensuing need to update our curriculum & teaching methodology to ensure that we equip students to be the next generation of filmmakers. Over the past many months, we have been evaluating dozens of currently existing AI-enabled platforms, and several in development, to understand which job roles they are likely to enable, enhance & disrupt, and to include the teaching of those in our curriculum."

Taking a break from AI, the following session was all about HDR. "Next-Generation Projection" featured a panel of Barco leadership, including Dan Huerta, Iris Wu, Joachim Zell, and Anders Ballestad. This expert panel shared the latest breakthroughs in HDR cinema projection with Lightsteering technology, featuring real-world content, conversion workflows, and leading industry tools like ACES, Resolve, Baselight, and Colorfront.

The next session featured Marvel Studios' Marc Zorn discussing secure content delivery. "Safe Collaboration in New Media Space—Adapting to Constant Change" was a presentation about media creation and delivery using cloud technology, and how said technology can incorporate other technologies for safer productions.

Perhaps one of the most unique sessions in all of NAB was



Marc Zorn



“Movie AI for Real—Live Demos of the Latest Gen AI and ML Tools,” session panelists. (L-R): Alan Pao, Callum Rex Reid, Peter Busch, Soyoung Lee, and Rich Welsh (moderator).

the Future of Cinema session, “How Sphere Studios Creates and Delivers Evolving Content for a Dynamic Screen.” This session featured Variety’s Carolyn Giardina and SMPTE President Rich Welsh speaking with Toby Gallo, Katie Hinsin, and Andrew Shulkind from Sphere Studios. The panel detailed the workflows that keep the Sphere running and producing innovative content.

The following session, “Movie AI for Real—Live Demos of the Latest Gen AI and ML Tools,” was another panel led by SMPTE President Rich Welsh. The panel included Peter Busch from Flawless, Soyoung Lee from Twelve Labs, Alan Pao from Scriptini, and Callum Rex Reid from Volustor. The session in-



The FOCC sessions were well-attended.

cluded demos of various AI tools used in film, while the panel explained their benefits.

The final session of the Future of Cinema Conference was “HDR in Cinema: Addressing Versioning with a Practical Workflow.” Featuring the crew from Barco and Bill Feightner from Colorfront, this session featured a technical collaboration between Colorfront and Barco focused on managing this versioning challenge efficiently.

### Sunday April 6

SMPTE special sessions have always been part of the NAB experience, and the Society started strong with “AI-Driven Live



Panelists for the opening session, “AI Driven Live Broadcasting Through the SMPTE Lens.”

Broadcasting Through the SMPTE Lens”—Opportunities, Challenges, and the Future of Media.” The session featured a panel of AI experts, including Andre Roelofs from Eurora Labs, Jan Weigner and Tab Butler from Cinegy, Lewis Kirkaldie from Tyrantite, and Anoop Thomas from EMAM Inc.

The following session was a SMPTE staple at NAB. “SMPTE Presents: Demystifying Standards, Specifications and Open-Source Efforts” featured SMPTE Standards Director, Thomas Bause Mason, and SMPTE Standards VP, Raymond Yeung, discussing the importance of SMPTE Standards.

The final Sunday SMPTE session was “Making Media Services and Devices Just Work—A Panel Discussion.” Said panel led by Ross Video’s Chris Lennon, and featured Thomas Edwards from AWS, Antonia Kerle from the BBC, Darren Long from ITV, and Stan Moote from IABM. The panel discussed interoperability amongst devices and finding simple solutions to technical issues that are unnecessarily complex.

### Monday April 7

Carolyn Giardina led a panel of experts in the SMPTE session “SMPTE Presents: Filmmakers Talk About the Importance of Color Management and ACES.” Industry experts Alastor Pan



“SMPTE Presents: Filmmakers Talk About the Importance of Color Management and ACES.” session panelists. (L-R): Carolyn Giardina (moderator), Francesco D’Ascenzo, Alastor Arnold, and Jeff Budsberg.

Arnold from FotoKem, Jeff Budsberg from Dreamworks, and Francesco D’Ascenzo from BULL discussed the importance of color science in film production and the latest workflows and techniques used in color management.

The final SMPTE session of the 2025 NAB Show was “AI as Ally: Enhancing Human Creativity in Media Production” with Flikforge’s Andy Beach and Evergreen Media’s Doug Daulton. This session was about how AI can enhance the creative process without removing the human elements of such films. Topics included AI integration strategies, ethical considerations, and the evolving partnership between human ingenuity and computational assistance.

### SMPTE Education and Representation

On Monday and Tuesday morning, SMPTE Education held a virtual tour of its virtual classrooms at the SMPTE Booth. The tours showed attendees how to register for classes, what classes were available, different certifications, and many other aspects of SMPTE education.



Michele Wright (right) speaks at the #GALSNGEAR Connect Women’s Leadership Conference.

SMPTE Director of Business Development and Outreach Michele Wright spoke at the #GALSNGEAR Connect Women’s Leadership Conference. The conference, which took place Tuesday morning at NAB, featured a panel of STEM leaders who spoke about being a woman in the workforce.

“It was a thrilling experience,” said Wright. “Any opportunity I am afforded to inspire today’s generation, including women in tech and trailblazers from across our media and entertainment industry, aspires me all the more to ensure that tomorrow’s generation in M&E, STEM, and beyond are equipped to be all the more inspired and motivated to stand on my shoulders.”

### Conclusion

The 2025 NAB Show was a stellar event for everyone in the media tech industry. SMPTE’s presence at the event is always a big one, and the sessions produced by the Society always make waves amongst the NAB attendees. The Future of Cinema, SMPTE sessions, and Education programming showcased the best of what SMPTE has to offer, and we thank everyone who attended our sessions.

We look forward to being back next year.

DOI: 10.5594/JMI.2025/KZH01021  
Date of publication: 15 May 2025