



SMPTE Spotlight:

# Philip Courtney

BY RUSSELL POOLE

**CURRENT POSITION:**

- Director of Solutions at Electrosonic

**PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:**

- SMPTE, Audio Engineering Society (AES), Themed Entertainment Association (TEA), Audiovisual and Integrated Experience Association (AVIXA)

**DEGREE:**

- Bachelors of Science in Show Production and Touring, Full Sail University

Many people see engineering and tech as fields devoted to innovation and problem-solving. Media technology and engineering shatter this idea by viewing innovation as a means of telling or enhancing stories. No one encapsulates this more than Philip Courtney, the Director of Solutions Design at Electrosonic. He has spent his career in the worlds of AV, broadcast, and immersive experience design.

“I started on the hands-on side of live events and systems integration, eventually moving into design leadership and large-scale experiential work,” said Courtney. “Over time, I learned to balance creative intent with engineering discipline, which led me to my current role guiding teams that design complex, emo-



tionally resonant environments. At every stage, I’ve been drawn to projects that blend imagination with technical mastery.”

Courtney has been recognized by Commercial Integrators’ 40 Under 40 and Elite’s 20 Under 40, both in 2024. These honors were for a multitude of accomplishments, including starting a successful business early in his career and leading major projects such as COSM in Los Angeles and Meow Wolf in Houston, Texas. He’s also found significant meaning in developing future talent.

“I’ve been shaped by mentors who encouraged curiosity and pushed me to think beyond the obvious—people who believed that the best technology should feel almost invisible,” said Courtney when discussing his own influences. “Some were engineers who taught me rigor and precision,

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while others were creative technologists who showed me the power of emotional impact. What influenced me most was their shared belief that storytelling and engineering are partners, not opposites, and that great work lives at that intersection.”

Courtney became involved with SMPTE in 2025. Being part of the community connected him with people who care as deeply about the craft as he does, influencing how he approaches his own work. His passion for his work extends far beyond SMPTE. He describes his favorite career moments as the ones where he serves as a bridge between the creative and technical teams. However,

the roles he finds challenging, those involving new technologies and large-scale solutions, push him to grow and adapt. Those experiences are just as thrilling to him.

“Working in immersive environments taught me how powerful it is when art and technology truly collaborate,” said Courtney. “I want to leave a legacy of mentorship—helping the next generation find confidence at the intersection of creativity and engineering. More than anything, I hope the environments I’ve helped design, and the people I’ve supported along the way, continue to inspire long after I’m no longer in the room.”

Philip Courtney sees engineering as a creative act, which allows him to be passionate about both the art and science involved in his work. His goal is to design systems that function well while elevating the story being told and amplifying the human experience at the center. He finds inspiration for his curiosity and creativity from his family, his home, and his artistic passions like music and sound/light design. This inspiration is reflected in his work, ensuring an authentic, immersive experience that every audience can enjoy.

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