

**Fastlane Productions Newsletter**  
**Faces of Fastlane – Chris Rivera, Audio Engineer**



Chris Rivera knows what it's like to be in the right place at the right time. After studying audio recording arts in college, he knew he wanted to go into the business, but he needed his big break. That moment came when he was talking with a customer one day at Office Max, where he worked after college. Chris discovered the customer he was helping had a son who worked for Walt Disney World, and he began asking him questions about breaking into the business. One thing led to another, Chris sent his resume to the customer's son, and the next thing he knew, he was working as an audio technician for one of the most notable companies on earth, Walt Disney World.

Chris didn't start out dreaming of Disney, or even living in Florida for that matter. He was born in Wichita, Kansas, where his dad was stationed in the Air Force. Chris's family lived in Kansas for a few years, then moved to Azores, Portugal, and finally settled down in South Dakota. Chris lived with his mom and older sister in South Dakota, where he attended middle school and high school. His passion for engineering led him to the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, where he attended his freshman year. However, he soon realized that he wanted to be closer to his dad, so he decided to move to Florida, where he finished his education and earned a degree in Audio Recording Arts.

It was after earning his degree that he took a job at Office Max to pay the bills, and had his chance encounter with a Disney connection. He started his career at Disney as an Audio Technician/ Pyrotechnician in 2004. Chris learned the ropes while setting up and striking impressive Disney shows and working on their famous Fireworks shows. After 2 years, he transferred to MGM Studios where he worked on more pyrotechnics with a large-scale production called Fantasmic! which featured amazing pyrotechnics and a crew of around 20 technicians and 20 performers.

In 2007, Chris decided to move back to South Dakota to be closer to family, and to experience the changing of the seasons again! While in South Dakota, he sent out resumes, and landed a job with Fastlane Productions. He moved to Denver, and his first job at Fastlane was as an Audio Assistant for Janet's Camp. Chris says his first six months were spent learning the company inside and out, from all of the employees, but especially his mentor, Micah Ortega. Chris learned a lot from Micah, including how to drive a Hino truck, the theories of audio, and even how to become a better person.

Chris has been at Fastlane for three years, and loves that every day is different. One day he might be loading a show for the weekend, the next, he might be setting up audio for the Bolder Boulder, and the next, he might be doing a cooking show or even a wedding! Not only does he love that each day is something new, he loves that the company lets their employees express themselves. It's not only permitted to share new ideas and give honest feedback, but it is actually encouraged, creating a positive work environment for everyone. While he may be on the opposite side of the country from where his career started, it seems that for Chris Rivera, his career is just taking off!