

Honestly, what a surprise.

I did not expect to get nominated by all means. Essentially, I'm just a young salesperson trying to make it in this everchanging world. What an achievement to get here and thank you to the person / people that put my name forward, I truly appreciate it. I'm only 25, and this Rising Star award is for people aged under 40, talk about a generational difference in the same category...

#### **Quick brief about me:**

I was born in 1998, I don't stop smiling, I like all things sport, I have a massive ego (but don't tell anyone) & I was born and raised on the Gold Coast, Australia. I went to boarding school in which I was disciplined in playing all kinds of sport which has engaged my love of health & fitness. I then furthered my study at Bond University, achieving a Bachelor of Business and majoring in Asian Business Studies. My highest achievement was completing Chinese Language Levels 1-4, which is the highest level you can achieve in Australia and gaining the 'first in class' award for Chinese Language 1 & Chinese Language 3 (don't speak to me in Chinese, I have forgotten it all).

#### **My introduction into the casino & gaming market:**

I have grown up immersed in the world of casinos & gaming since before I was even of legal age to enter a property. My father, John Curtis, established Simtech in the early 2000's and experienced significant growth from 2014 since bringing its LED product to the casino and gaming market. He would plan his trips throughout Asia to align with my school & university holidays from when I was 15 years old so I could join his travels and simultaneously learn about the gaming market, Simtech's product & his sales tactics (& boy, is it paying off for him 8 years later). I travelled around Australia, New Zealand, to Manila, Singapore and of course, Macau. Dad would kindly ask to have the meeting off the main casino floor so I could join, and I would put my suit on and (not so) patiently sit and listen while Dad and his client would talk all things business. I went to G2E Asia and would obviously be the youngest in crowd, I learned the differences between selling our products to casino properties and gaming manufacturers and selling within international markets. But most importantly, I would network (& get drunk) with some of the hardest working and most influential names in the casino industry, including high level management staff such as Andrew McDonald, Ken Jolly and Mike Palmeri to respected casino technicians who would ultimately be the ones installing and servicing our products. At the time, I did not realise how valuable these trips were to my career.

#### **My Experience:**

Entering my full-time role at Simtech at the age of 20 (Dad gave me a job for my 20<sup>th</sup> birthday...), I worked as an assembler and installer. This was amazing experience for me to get my hands on the product and work through all the difficult situations that my team experience within the factory and out in the field. This has been invaluable knowledge since moving into my sales role. Further to this, I forced myself to work in HR, production management and project management roles to gain further understanding within all aspects of the business. I was then tasked to be the leading hand for a major project known as the 'Players Stadium' that was to be installed at Solaire Resort in Manila. For those who don't know, this is largest gaming display in the world. I was able to stamp my name to this project by running the entire assembly workshop and completing the project on time & under budget (I didn't receive a budget, but it would have been under). But annoyingly, I was not able to travel to assist with the install as I was still underage.

The 2018 Australian Gaming Expo (AGE) was my first taste as a Sales Executive for Simtech. I was let loose, chatting away to possible clients, and 'selling' all items Simtech. Oh, I was so naïve. However, I proved myself and was trusted by my father and the other sales team members to take on some of the larger accounts that Simtech had established, such as The Star Entertainment Group, Crown Resorts & Skycity Auckland. I made probably every mistake I could, learned to overcome difficult conversations with clients and Simtech's production team, but I made sure to keep a smile on my face and make sure everyone left the table with an optimistic attitude.

Fast forward to 2022, I had travelled and worked at almost every expo globally including AGE, AHG, G2E Asia, G2E Vegas, IGA & ICE (London). Through this, I built my network with high profile individuals, potential prospects and established a personal reputation within the gaming industry, sharing my love of Simtech's visual technology. I worked on everything from small sports screens at my local pub to multi-million-dollar contracts with Aristocrat and Konami in the US, and then some of the largest LED projects in the world at The Venetian, Galaxy, The Star and more casino groups around Australia & Asia. Further, I lead Simtech's diversification of product into a commercial market, working with global architectural brands, sporting leagues, government entities, outdoor advertising companies and commercial properties such airports & shopping malls (however, nothing will ever beat my love of the gaming industry). I lead the charge for Simtech to win multiple awards including Gold Coast Manufacturing Award, Gold Coast Innovation Award, Gold Coast Family Business Award and being nominated for multiple state-wide exporter of the year awards. Due to my role quickly growing into an international sales role and diversifying Simtech's product into new markets, I was promoted to VP Sales & Strategy.

### **My Role:**

My new role allowed me to hire (& fire) sales team members, create a marketing team to grow Simtech's brand, and establish an exciting culture where, one at a time, clients *want* to buy from Simtech anywhere in the world. Recently (& due to COVID) I have spent a lot of time building relationships and understanding the US market, travelling there for weeks on end multiple times within a year and improving Simtech's manufacturing facility and reputation in that market (I brag about having a social security number). Since the 're-opening' of Asia, Brandon Lee (Simtech Asia Sales Executive) and I have already made multiple trips and are working on some very exciting (very secret) large projects. This surge in sales globally has forced me to discuss high level business decisions about the restructure of Simtech and hiring of major personnel in specific jurisdictions with Simtech's executive team.

I must personally give thanks to the whole team at Simtech, this includes our ops manager, general manager, projects manager, design team and the whole factory staff. Specifically, my father, he has trained me from Day 1, and I will take his guidance when I am stuck with what move to make next. Without realising it, I am living my dream role.

### **The Future:**

I will continue pursuing my strategic direction within the global gaming industry and making a name for both myself & Simtech. I simply get too excited about the products and innovation available to this company and with the ever-changing scope and fast paced industry, it aligns perfectly for an exciting career that I want to be a part of.