

## Rising Star: Covington's David Lefebvre

By Sue Reisinger

*Law360 (August 13, 2025, 4:04 PM EDT)* -- Covington & Burling LLP's David Lefebvre's practice sits at the center of the changing landscape of media and entertainment programming and includes participating in forming the recent multibillion-dollar Disney joint venture with Reliance Industries in India, earning him a spot among the practitioners under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

### The biggest case of his career:

Lefebvre said last year's creation of an \$8.5 billion joint venture between The Walt Disney Co.'s Star India business and Reliance Industries' Viacom18 to manage the operation of Disney's entertainment properties in India was probably the most significant case of his career. He co-led the Covington legal team representing Disney in the media licensing aspects of the agreement reached last November.

The deal involved "a broad range of content and multiple time zones," Lefebvre told Law360 Pulse. "There really are no convenient times for conference calls between Los Angeles and Mumbai."

Robyn Polashuk, partner and co-chair of Covington's entertainment & media industry group, said Lefebvre's team leadership and legal skills on the Reliance transaction "stood out and were instrumental in our work on the matter. He is taking a broader role in our entertainment and media practice, and serving as a key mentor to junior attorneys."

### His proudest moment as an attorney:

Lefebvre said his promotion to counsel was both a personal and professional turning point in his career.

"It felt like affirmation that I had chosen the right career for my interests and talents," he explained.

"The moment was also emotional for me because I thought of my dad, who had passed away suddenly a

2025



**David Lefebvre**  
Covington & Burling LLP

**Age:** 37

**Home base:** Los Angeles

**Position:** Special Counsel

**Law school:** Columbia Law School

**First job after law school:** Associate at Proskauer Rose

couple of years earlier," Lefebvre added. "He had always been there to share in the joy of my achievements, and I know how proud he would have been."

#### **What motivates him:**

Lefebvre said he feels lucky to work in an industry that genuinely interests him, and that he has always had a built-in competitiveness and strong drive to do things well.

"Now, as a father, I'm motivated by my kids," he added. "I want to provide for them, of course, and I also want to show them what it means to live with integrity."

#### **Why he's a media and entertainment attorney:**

Lefebvre said he finds it rewarding to work behind the scenes with companies whose products and services he already uses as a consumer.

Also, "I enjoy drafting — translating concepts into language — anticipating issues, and coming up with elegant solutions," he said.

#### **Other notable cases:**

Lefebvre co-led a team of Covington lawyers who represented Paramount Global last year in network distribution matters in support of its pending transaction with Skydance Media LLC.

He also advised Disney in 2023 on a landmark carriage deal with Charter Spectrum that included ESPN, Disney Channel and other television networks; ABC owned-and-operated broadcast stations; and Disney+ and ESPN+. Covington said the deal is anticipated to be "transformative" for the television industry.

"And I was privileged to be a part of the team that advised the National Football League on its 'Thursday Night Football' deal with Amazon [in 2021]," Lefebvre said. The estimated \$1 billion deal marked the first time the NFL awarded exclusive game rights to a digital streaming outlet, Covington said.

#### **How his practice will change in the next 10 years:**

Lefebvre, who works with various emerging technology companies in the field, said he "feels like we're at the start of a new era that will be defined by AI."

He said he believes AI is going to "transform the entertainment industry, the legal profession, and pretty much every other sector of the economy — we just don't yet know exactly how."

But he added that he hopes "we can harness AI to do amazing new things while also protecting the human elements that make the entertainment industry so special."

*--As told to Sue Reisinger. Editing by Kristen Becker.*

*Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2025 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,100 submissions. Attorneys had to be under 40 as of April 30, 2025, to be eligible for this year's award.*

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