



Change is Inevitable...



When you are traveling someplace, do you focus on the journey or the destination?

It's interesting to ask because there are no wrong answers. The response comes from what each person believes. Conversations can spawn from posing such a question.

So...What's your pleasure?

I understand those wanting to experience the journey. Life is a series of events and milestones. From graduating high school and/or college, securing your first job, getting married and starting a family, these are points people will likely never forget. Anniversaries to commemorate birthdays, weddings, and other accomplishments serve to remind us of these goals.

The same ideas go towards traveling as well. Along the way, we see many tourist attractions, local delicacies, area landmarks and other points to make that trip memorable. Anyone can think back and remember what was remarkable about the experience—whether it was good, bad, or ugly.

These are the memories that make up a life.

On the other side of this equation, there are people who want to reach their destination. While the circumstances may differ in what people see and remember, their priority is getting to where they are going. They become laser-focused on meeting that goal. If that means not making too many stops, seeing local attractions or doing anything else, then more power to them.

Some people like to make "good time" by just driving or flying through. They could bring snacks and sandwiches to save time and money eating out. Their mission is to get to where they are going, regardless of any potential obstacles.

For myself, it's about the destination. Setting a goal and achieving it makes me proud. No matter where I go, my objective is to get there. There are stops along the way as needed. However, I would rather spend more time where I end up over the trip. Once I get to where I am going, there is a sense of relief and accomplishment. The goal was set and reached.



Getting there also means that my journey is over.

As I move on as the post-AMP-RI President, the organization has selected two new people to lead AMP-RI into the new year and beyond. You will get the chance to meet Alec Asten and Michael Merline, who are the new president and vice president, respectively. Their profiles are included in this edition. Please give them your undivided support.

Before I go, there is a Board that needs to be acknowledged for their work and dedication behind the scenes. They devote plenty of time making these events happen.

Without them there is no AMP-RI.

In particular, I want to personally thank a few people who were instrumental in making my job easier. Special thanks to Giovanna Mercurio for her logistics genius, Kristen Regine for being the social media guru and especially “The Guiding Light” Joyce Pucino. She was there to offer guidance, counsel and support during my time as President. There are no words to express my gratitude toward her contributions.

Be sure to reach out and help. There are opportunities to do that, including becoming a Board member. Learn more later in this newsletter.

All the best, and always remember to never forget—me.

Mark Berger

Immediate Past President

AMP-RI



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Meet the President - Alec Asten

The Association of Marketing Professionals of Rhode Island announced their new Board President at their recent annual meeting.

Alec Asten of **Firesite Films**, takes over as the group's President.

Asten, who officially became the new leader on July 1, replaces Immediate Past President Mark Berger.

Berger said the organization has a good core of people who are ready to move forward.

"Alec has been with the organization for some time. He is eager to see how he can raise their level of visibility of the group within Rhode Island and beyond," Berger said. "Working alongside Alec over the past several months gives me every reason to believe he will exceed their goals."

Among the events the group will start planning include the Third Annual Spring Conference, and a winter holiday-themed celebration. More events will be announced soon, so check back with them by visiting their website at www.amp-ri.com.

Asten has been a New England filmmaker for over 30 years. His span of work includes directing and producing feature films, broadcast documentaries, television commercials and award-winning corporate videos.

His production company, Firesite Films, was established in 2007 and now shares offices in Mystic, CT and Providence, RI.



Alec's involvement with AMP-RI started over 10 years ago, when he became a member in 2014.

He is thrilled to become the president and is excited to further build our collaborative endeavor of education and networking. Alec said there are many initiatives he would love to start planning now.

"AMP-RI is a wonderful organization where creative, artistic, and marketing professionals come together to seek advice and learn the latest techniques within the industry," Alec said. "What makes this group so special is the members sincerity, devotion, and eagerness to share information by helping each other grow and strengthen careers."

He plans on meeting with the Board to further educate himself on the group's dynamics and putting them in positions to succeed.

Meet the Vice President - Michael Merline

The Association of Marketing Professionals of Rhode Island announced their new Board Vice President, Michael Merline, at their recent annual meeting.

Michael has enjoyed a career in the training industry for over 20 years. As a Learning Experience Design Consultant at **Citizens Bank** in Johnston for the past 11 years, Michael is responsible for developing compliance courses and implementing new technologies in the training. He has held instructional design positions in several industries including: finance, K-12 education software, data information software, scientific hardware and engineering companies.

His involvement in the business community includes extensive volunteerism in ATD organizations, ongoing support in the RI business community including live music venues, non-profit organizations and cultural events. He can be seen regularly at area networking events throughout Southern New England.

Michael is enthusiastic to be on the AMP-RI Board to lend his knowledge and experience to marketing professionals. He was initially impressed with the group and looks forward to contributing right away.

"I was on the panel for their Spring Conference last April. It was an honor to work with them and see what they were trying to accomplish. When I was asked to join the Board and the group, I eagerly accepted. This is a great opportunity to reach more people about the fun activity and outreach we can offer," Merline said.

Mike has a passion for music. He is a Booking Agent for the band **In Lieu of Flowers**. The Americana-influenced group play gigs around the region. As such, he visits venues like small clubs to establish relationships with owners with the potential to securing dates for the band.



In addition to all of this, Michael lends his voice for public service announcements, podcasts, voice-over work, historical, narrative and biographical projects. He also supports his many local charitable organizations.

This is a Call for ... Board Members

The group is actively searching for AMP-RI members who would like to join the Board of Directors for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Meetings are held monthly in person or virtually for roughly one to two hours. You have the opportunity to create and put together events for members and guests, host networking events and become part of a growing community of communicators.

We currently seek anyone who is interested in the following areas:

Assistant Treasurer	Newsletter Editor/Writer
Secretary	Graphic Designer

Contact AMP-RI Joyce Pucino to learn more about the Board. She may be reached at pucinoprint@verizon.net.

Second Annual Spring Conference Shines

Plant City in Providence provided the backdrop for the organization's Annual Spring Conference held in April.

Attendees were treated to a panel discussion regarding a variety of topics ranging from media relations to effective social media placements. The group also took time to explain their experiences and what worked best for their clients.

The panel, moderated by Beth Carey of **Apply Yourself Today**, consisted of John Houle of **Main Street Media**, Hugh Minor of **Saint Elizabeth**

Community, Michael Merline of **Mike Speaks at the Mic**, and Social Media Influencer Amir Henley. Alicia Alexander of **Make a Difference Consulting** served as the event's motivational speaker.

Breakout presentations were given by Crystal Cordones of **Crystal Clear Marketing** and Author Stan Skrabut, Ed. D. Crystal spoke about social media dos and don'ts. Stan talked about the emergence of artificial intelligence in our lives.

Special thanks to all of the event sponsors and vendors who supported this event!

