

Executive of the Month

A FORMER REAL ESTATE REPORTER, EDITOR, MUSICIAN, AND FOOD WRITER

For Linda Alexander, great storytelling has been a hallmark of Alexander Marketing for two decades



Linda Alexander

NEW YORK, NY The *New York Real Estate Journal* (NYREJ) sat down for a question and answer session with Linda Alexander, this month's Executive-of-the-Month.

Alexander is the founder and president of the eponymous firm she launched in 2000. A former real estate reporter, editor, musician, and food writer, when starting her PR firm, she decided to focus on one of her favorite industries, i.e., real estate!

NYREJ: What made you shift from journalism to PR and why do you represent the real estate sector, exclusively?

Alexander: Real estate is a global, never-ending story and, more often than not, a fascinating one. It's a great, beautiful umbrella encompassing a massive range of participants, from commercial and residential property owners, to developers, property managers, asset managers, brokers, bankers, investors, architects, designers, builders, engineers, and so much more! Walk down a street and every building has a history, a back-story. I love traveling to cities around the world. As a writer whose career has primarily focused on music, real estate, and recipes, I always say if you want to know about any culture, listen to the music, look at the architecture, and eat the food!

NYREJ: You have an unusually eclectic professional background, care to share some of it?

Alexander: If you live long enough, there will be opportunities to do a lot of different things. I would say 70% of the reporters I have worked with have covered different beats and many of my clients started out in different fields. My focus has always been on writing, though initially it was music. As a kid, I studied voice at the Chicago Conservatory of Music and took piano lessons. I grew up in Chicago in a large family rooted to that city from the early 19th century. But I always loved New York and dreamed of becoming a famous songwriter

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here. Just before my junior year in college – I was at the University of Florida – I visited a classmate in New York, auditioned for some bands as a fluke, and got hired by one! After making a deal with my parents, who agreed to subsidize my dream for six months with the understanding I would stay at an uncle's apartment at the Delmonico, I knew I was on my way! The band did gigs at the Bitter End and the Village Gate, as well as a bunch of joints and dives. It was a magical time. By the time the six months were up, I had moved in with the lead guitarist, who later became my first husband. Two years later, I returned to school and finished my degree in clinical psychology with a music minor. Having previously interned at Manhattan State Psychiatric Center's Kirby Hospital as part of a work-study program, I was hired after graduation as the assistant music therapist. At 25, I was going to write hit songs and heal the mentally ill through music!

Looking back, it gave me a strong background for the crazy stuff I've seen in this business!

NYREJ: How did you find your way into real estate?

Alexander: I left the job at Manhattan State after five years to restart my music career. Needless to say, I waited on a lot of tables but finally landed a copywriting job in the direct marketing division of a national advertising agency. During this time, I started working on a Thai cookbook with one of my former waitstaff colleagues. "Pojanee Vatanapan's Thai Cookbook with Linda Alexander" was published by Crown in spring 1986, eventually selling 30,000 copies. In the interim, I



Shown (from left) are: Peter Sabesan, Cresa; Brian Earley, The Metropolis Group; Linda Alexander, Alexander Marketing; Peter Morandi, Eastman Cooke; April Intrabartola, Eastman Cooke; Andrew Solano, Emtec Engineering; and Don Gelestino, Champion Elevator.

got laid off when the ad agency moved the DM division to L.A. But a miracle occurred, my dear friend Marina Higgins of Argo Real Estate was starting the third-party management division and asked if I could help her out until she found a new secretary. She knew I could type. I spent five fabulous years learning about this wonderful industry at Argo. We started an in-house ad agency and I got to work on a wide variety of projects in real estate and hospitality with the visionary who is now the firm's president and CEO.

Over the next decade, I worked as a marketing director at Greenthal, returned to the agency side at Stanton & Hawthorne, and began taking on freelance assignments writing brochures for major players in commercial real estate. Concurrently, I was working on more cookbooks and writing jingles with an outstanding group of musicians, which whom I co-wrote the music for the "Pop Singer," a play that lived and ingloriously died in Baltimore during tryouts.

During this period, I got an offer from the then publisher of "West Side Spirit" and "Our Town" to write a weekly real estate column. "The Cooperator" started giving me freelance work, too. Next, Jerry Schein of Schein Publications hired me to edit a monthly start-up, "Residential Business NY," and my journalism career took off. At some point, the publisher of "The Cooperator" was about to launch The Cooperator



Alexander's husband, Tar Beaty and their Jack Russell/Beagle rescue, Nosey Rosie.

Expo and asked if I knew anyone at "The New York Times" who might announce it. I did and the story ran. The PR work increased exponentially and I had to commit – journalism or the proverbial Darkside. Alexander Marketing Corp. was incorporated in November 2000.

Today, I am a proud Upper Westsider, who co-chairs a committee on Community Board 7 that works with small businesses, restaurants, and

the community. I'm married to Tar Beaty, the brilliant artist, entrepreneur, and graphic designer who created the AMC website, among dozens of others, and our 11-year-old Jack Russell/Beagle rescue, Nosey Rosie Beaty. Every day, I feast my eyes on Central Park from my living room, the Hudson River from my office, and sing the praises of some of the world's most interesting people in print, digital, and social media!