

# Mike Avitabile Is Changing How We See Video

---

Sunday, July 27, 2014

⋮



Ask Mike Avitabile to what he owes his success in the entertainment industry and he'll tell you it's partly due to being in the right place at the right time.

But you don't become a novelist and director of content operations at Sony Network Entertainment by luck alone. Yes, Avitabile admits, it also had a lot to do with hard work, too.

"Some of it is timing and to some extent good luck, but I always worked hard when I saw an opportunity I wanted," he says. "It's the best thing you can do to put yourself in the position you want to be in."

Working hard has certainly been a focus of Avitabile in the past year. He completed and published his novel, "[A Rum Truck](#)," in October, which is now available as an eBook on Amazon. He's also been pretty busy at Sony, where he manages a team of 45 people working to secure and manage TV shows, movies and other content for a variety of Sony devices, including the newly released PlayStation 4. If you've ever wondered why a movie is available through one service but not another, part of Avitabile's job is negotiating and managing those decisions.

"I really enjoy what I do," says Avitabile. "I know the decisions we make are sometimes small, but it moves the business of overall video consumption forward."

Shaping the way Americans consume media is something Avitabile has been doing for years. Before his job at Sony, Avitabile was at NBC working to set up the video distribution service, Hulu. He also helped to develop video web content in the early days of streaming video, and was filming and editing interviews with directors and actors on NBC's hit shows. For his work, Avitabile won an Emmy.

As people began to consume more web-based content, Avitabile saw an opportunity in operations. Although this shift meant he wasn't doing celebrity interviews anymore, Avitabile credits his decision with leading him to the job he has today.

Avitabile graduated from UNH Manchester in 2004 with a degree in [Communication Arts](#). After struggling to find a job in Boston, he headed to Los Angeles. There he briefly enrolled in a PhD program at the University of California Los Angeles but dropped out to take a job as a production assistant at a TV station in Santa Monica.

"I started working because I wanted to put my skills into practice," says Avitabile. "I applied for the job using the reel I put together when I was in production classes at UNH Manchester. The job was a hands-on practical application of what I had learned in school."

Avitabile also studied creative writing at UNH Manchester, which he says helped shape his writing style. Writing a novel while working a full-time job isn't easy, but Avitabile says he was able to do it by setting goals and a timeline.

"Last fall I rededicated myself to writing. I had the whole thing outlined. I just needed to spend time and do it," says Avitabile.

"I am very happy with it," he says. "I know I already have a career that keeps me busy, but it doesn't let me feel that fulfillment. I wanted to give it my best shot."

Looking back at his time at UNH Manchester, Avitabile realizes it wasn't just the classes that helped his career, but some professors were key players as well, especially

Barbara Jago, associate professor of communication arts. Not only was she an excellent teacher, Avitabile says, but she saw potential and an ability to excel in writing. So much so, Jago mentioned Avitabile in a speech she gave to his graduating class. Avitabile says that moment sticks with him today.

“It makes me want to show her she was right and prove to her she was right for believing in me,” said Avitabile. “She really helped shape my motivation and drive.”

- WRITTEN BY:  
[Beth LaMontagne Hall](#) | Freelancer

UNH MANCHESTER



University of New Hampshire

UNH Today is produced for the UNH community and for friends of UNH. The stories are written by the staff of [UNH Communications and Public Affairs](#). Email us: [unhtoday.editor@unh.edu](mailto:unhtoday.editor@unh.edu).

[MANAGE YOUR SUBSCRIPTION](#)   [CONTACT US](#)

Like us on Facebook

Follow us on Twitter

Follow us on YouTube

Follow us on Instagram

Find us on LinkIn

UNH Today RSS feeds

UNH Today • UNH Main Directory: 603-862-1234  
Copyright © 2021 • TTY Users: 7-1-1 or 800-735-2964 (Relay NH)  
[USNH Privacy Policies](#) • [USNH Terms of Use](#) • [ADA Acknowledgement](#)