

July 21, 2011

An Open Letter to TechMaine Members and Friends:

It's about a month, now, since I assumed the role of Executive Director of TechMaine. During that time, I've met with a number of current (and past) TechMaine members, Board members, and partners. The conversations have been frank and – I hope – fruitful. Clearly, there is a great deal of support for the organization and its role.

But I am also hearing uncertainty about how (and why) individuals and companies relate to TechMaine. What is our mission? What services and value do we deliver? How do we fit in with the array of other associations and industry groups? I'd like to respond with a few candid thoughts.

- 1) I believe implicitly in the value of TechMaine. Our world – our jobs, our homes, our schools – is increasingly interwoven with technological advances. A strong technology association keeps Maine at the forefront of innovation and growth. And there's no doubt that the future good jobs in Maine will involve technology.
- 2) Our mission, as stated at the top of this letter, is to connect and support technology companies and technology users throughout Maine. We can be the common platform where people and companies come together to ask technology questions, learn about new ideas and trends, look for skilled staff, and celebrate our mutual accomplishments.
- 3) TechMaine needs to broaden the diversity of programs we offer, and the variety of ways in which you can engage us. We're already looking closely at the user groups and other offerings, to make sure they deliver value. And we're developing new programs, including the plan to put on a cybersecurity event in the fall.
- 4) We're talking to a number of partner groups, examining ways to collaborate on programs that will be meaningful to TechMaine members and to the state of Maine. (You may have heard that this fall we'll be joining other tech companies in the new Casco Bay Tech Hub in downtown Portland.)

I look down the road and I see a TechMaine we're all excited about. A vital part of Maine's economic development fabric. An information resource for small companies and large firms, "pure" technology developers and organizations who use – but are heavily dependent on – technology. A shared space for understanding and growing new technologies and opportunities.

A membership organization such as TechMaine derives its strength from its members' involvement. We're working hard at our end – here's what I ask of you:

- If you're currently a member, *thank you!* If your membership has lapsed, please visit <http://www.techmaine.com/join> and be part of us once more. We need your participation and good ideas.
- If you have thoughts or opinions about how to make TechMaine better, or if you know of a company you think should be involved, please contact me. Some of the best ideas and programs we are working on have come from concerned and engaged people like you.

Thank you,



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