

Big Beat Music Studio: 'Keep on jammin'!

This week, we feature Joseph Nevolo of Big Beat Music Studio, Neptune City.

Why did you start the business? In the early 1980s, when I was gigging six to seven nights a week with Phantoms Opera (former BonJovi members), The Good Rats (Warner Brothers), and Mahogany Rush (CBS), and teaching at Drummers Collective (NYC), aspiring drum students from all over the tri-state area would travel quite a distance to study with me. I had a pretty good reputation having studied with such giants as Carmine Appice (Jeff Beck, Rod Stewart), Joe Morello (Dave Brubeck), Lenny White (Return to Forever), and Louie Bellson, coupled with practicing as much as eight hours a day for several years of my life. I thought it would be a good time to start my own business.

If you could do it again, what would you do differently? I try not to second guess myself any more. Many years ago, I was a top contender for Kiss and BonJovi, and auditioned for Bruce Springsteen. I used to beat myself up for not getting the gigs, thinking, I should have played simpler, shouldn't have done a drum solo, and should have had more vocal lessons/singing practice for Kiss.

However, my mother always told me that everything in life happens for a reason. I went on to tour the USA, Canada and Europe with several bands, was on MTV several times, played on several world-acclaimed CDs, was a semi-fi-



Big Beat Music Studio, established by musician Joseph Nevolo, is in Neptune City. Students, above, are shown during an eight- to 10-week band ensemble. The school offers lessons in a variety of instruments, as well as vocal instruction. BIG BEAT MUSIC STUDIO

nalist in a world drum solo contest judged by Neal Peart (Rush), and have positively impacted the lives of thousands of students I have taught over the years. I consistently receive thanks from former students who are performing in club bands, national touring acts, and one who went on to win the "World's Fastest Drumming Competition." I feel honored to have had the opportunity to make such an impression on my students. So, all in all, I would not have done anything differently.

What's the best business advice you have ever received? The best advice I ever received was from a business motivational tape by Brian Tracy that stated: "Your success in life will be in direct proportion to what you do after you do what

you are expected to do." This has been my guiding principle and philosophy ever since I opened my business.

What personality trait helps you the most? I believe it's my youthful spirit and creativity. I keep adding to the "toys" and technology in my drum studio, which is like the "Disneyland of Drums." It now consists of two acoustic drum sets, one Roland electric set, sound activated lights, sound system, three projection screens, 3D 55" TV with Mac computer, hand and foot counter, a new, revolutionary, cutting-edge teaching system, bubble machines, and more. I feel like a kid in a candy store every time I enter my studio, and evoke this enthusiasm into my teaching and onto my students.

What's the hardest part of the job? The hardest part for me is the business end. However, I am very thankful to have a great office staff and great teachers, which helps tremendously.

What's the easiest part of the job? The easiest part of the job is the actual teaching. When a new student comes to me, whether they are a brand new beginner, have had prior lessons at another facility, or are a gigging musician, I have the uncanny ability to instinctively know what's needed to be developed. It's almost as if I have this matrix in my head that can instantaneously dissect what's needed and formulate a plan of study.

What's your least expensive product or service? We offer semi-private/small group lessons if pri-

BIG BEAT MUSIC STUDIO

TYPE OF BUSINESS: Music school with instrument sales and accessories

OWNER: Joseph Nevolo

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PHONE: 732-774-8861

WEBSITE: bigbeatstudio.com

FOLLOW US ON: Facebook: Big Beat Studio School of Music

HOURS OF OPERATION: 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., Mondays to Fridays (11 am to 2 p.m. by appointment); 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays

FOUNDED: 1982

vate lessons do not fit into a family's budget, and also offer periodic jam sessions for a small fee.

What's your most expensive product or service? Depending upon how you look at it, the most expensive is actually the least expensive! We are running a special promotion for new students whereby pre-payment of six months to one year of lessons upon enrollment will entitle you to a free instrument (either a Fender guitar, drum set, or a Shure microphone and stand).

Describe your most unusual customer, job or work experience. I wouldn't want to call it unusual, but a unique student came to me over 20 years ago and is still a student today. His name is JC and he has Down syndrome. His mom informed me that several teaching facilities had refused to take on JC as a student. I was determined to do whatever it took to help JC learn to play. I formulated a method of instruction with the use of neon sticks, laser pointers, and fluorescent geometric symbols which successfully enabled JC to accomplish his dream of learning

to play the drums. I am proud and honored to have been written up in local and international publications on this method. I have also taught dozens of students with ADD and autism, and am currently teaching a student who is blind.

When you leave the business what will you do? I plan to rock until I drop! I have too much fun at this business to plan to stop or retire, and will continue as long as I am physically able.

In one sentence, tell us why customers should shop here. You are going to have a musical adventure you will never forget. Strolling up our piano key walkway, greeted by our Elvis Presley statue, amidst our avant-garde décor with top notch instructors and fun-filled studios, you will "KEEP ON JAMMIN'!" and as Elvis would say, "Thank you very much."

Have a business you would like us to feature? Tell us about it at community@njpressmedia.com. Put "my business" in the subject line, with your location.