

Dance Studio Ownership 101:

Facts, Myths, and Secrets to a Successful Studio

a guide by




Whether you are only now poised to open your own dance studio or have been in the business for years, the success of your location depends on a wide variety of factors. As the owner, it rests on you to soak up as much information on the industry as possible, as this will undoubtedly allow you to better determine what your customers want and the best ways for your studio to fulfill their needs. However, like any sector, studio ownership is fraught with its own set of misconceptions.



It's imperative for you to be able to separate fact from fiction to achieve studio success.

Widely **recognized as an invaluable tool** for dance studios and beyond, The Studio Director has certainly weathered the storm of the industry and, as such, has compiled its own set of dance studio ownership facts, myths and secrets.



Though by no means all-inclusive, our list of must-know details will provide you with a firm foundation to take your studio into a brighter future and a more profitable tomorrow.

These tips and tricks can help guide you down a wiser path and hopefully prevent you from making egregious errors along the way. Without further delay, let's take a look at how you can take your dance studio to new heights of success.

The Myths



We're not exactly sure how some of the biggest industry myths came to be, but before we move into what you need to be doing to enhance your studio's success, it's essential that we take a few moments to debunk a few of the most glaring misconceptions that have long plagued the dance studio industry. Even if you have fallen prey to one or multiple of these myths, it's never too late to course-correct your studio's direction.

I. Your Passion is Enough

We hate to be the ones to break this to you, but your passion for dance isn't the end-all, be-all of your business. Granted, your deep, abiding love for the art will help fuel you to stick with it during hard times.

Yet, your appreciation of dance or even existing teaching experience **won't afford you the business acumen** you'll need to keep your studio afloat in a fiercely competitive world. If necessary, consider sharpening your business skill set, and don't be afraid to reach out for help to do so.

II. You'll be able to Maintain a Singular Focus

To that same end, running any kind of business is likely much more complicated than you might realize. If you're picturing a simple existence wherein you focus on the numbers while your employees handle the rest, think again.

At some point, you might be able to turn your attention to the big picture, but first you'll have to be a **master multi-tasker**. Independent business owners often find themselves having to learn every aspect of their business as they establish themselves. You'll have to do the same.



III. You Need to Diversify your Offerings

In order to capture as much of the market share as possible, you might be tempted to offer as many different types of classes as possible. However, in many cases, this is a big mistake.

Deciding to **offer personal training**, for instance, is a question that will complicate your studio's needs and often increase your expenses, sometimes without the anticipated profit boost. Especially if your studio is on the young side, you might opt to focus on doing one service really well before you begin diversifying just for the sake of it.

IV. Stick with what Works

Just as we wouldn't recommend introducing too many different kinds of services right out the gate, you also shouldn't cling so tightly to what you've established. The only way your studio can ever truly grow is to keep pushing it forward, and refusing to innovate either in your services or with **your price point** can lead to stagnation.

Staleness can eat away at your customer base and ultimately your profits, as your competitors will begin easily eclipsing your own studio. Don't let that happen and be ready to make changes as needed.

V. Customer Loyalty Happens Organically

“If you build it, they will come,” right? Contrary to what you may believe, running your own business doesn’t work like that. It takes focus, hard work and a kickass marketing plan to **build a loyal community** of customers just as passionate about your studio as you are.

Ultimately, your students will be your most valuable asset, helping to spread the word about your studio on their own. But don’t expect to achieve this without employing some key strategies to make it happen. In today’s day and age, you need to make a concerted effort to gain any real attention.

VI. You Should Stay up on the Latest Trends

Don’t misunderstand us. Staying knowledgeable and updated on the most recent developments in your industry is a wise move for any business owner. However, that doesn’t mean your studio should **hop aboard every trend** that comes your way.

Given the specifics of your students and your surrounding area, it might not make sense for you to go all-in on whatever new type of class is sweeping the nation. Gauge interest and do ample research before you blindly gamble your resources on the latest fad.

VII. Scale Up as Soon as Possible

Bigger isn't necessarily always better. Your studio's success is not measured simply by the amount of space you have at your disposal or **how many staff members** you employ. In fact, often it's quite the opposite.

Studios with the tightest amount of resources can maintain the highest profit margins, and though you might feel like you need to expand as quickly as you can, we caution you to only do so once every other option has been exhausted. The larger your studio is, the more likely it is to collapse under operation expenses, after all.

VIII. Your Price Point is your Top Priority

Sure, your price point is a major contributing factor in how well your studio performs, but it certainly isn't the only one. More than maintaining the lowest prices, you need to calculate the rates that are affordable for you and strategically use your price point to **establish the perceived value** of your services.

How much your classes cost will play into how customers see your business and what place they consider it fulfilling within the larger industry around it. Be careful not to fall into the price trap and keep your eye on the big picture you're trying to build toward.

The Facts

Now that we've dismissed some of the dance studio ownership myths, let's discuss some of the undisputed facts that you definitely need to take into consideration as you establish your brand and build a community of students who believe in your studio.

Bear in mind that the below only mark a starting point, and you'll need to continually expand your knowledge base to reach new horizons going forward.

I. Organization is Key

It shouldn't be much of a surprise that the best studios are often the **most organized ones**.

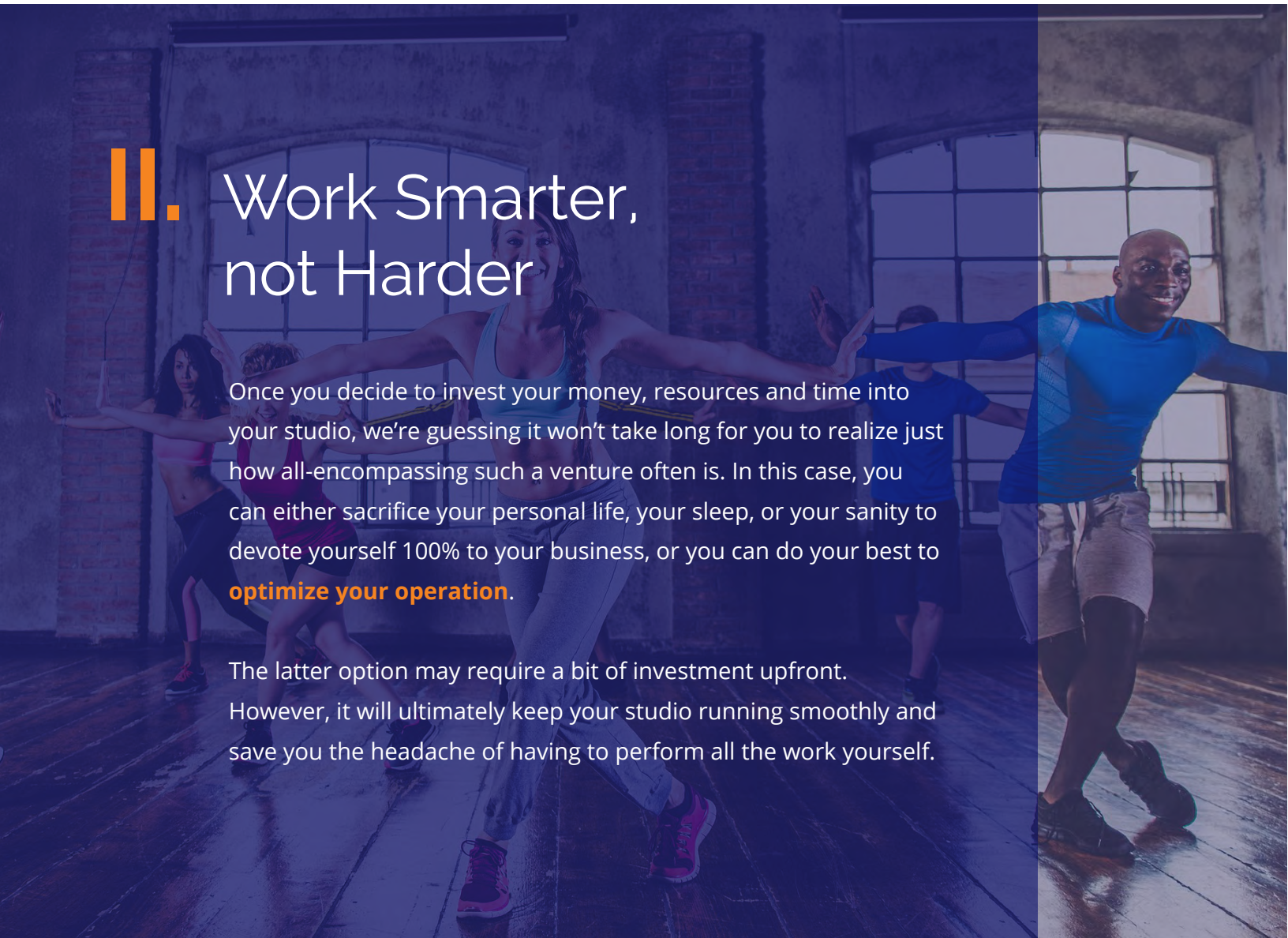
Effectiveness begins with efficiency, and investing in some useful tools -- like studio management software -- will make it much easier to keep all your studio's data intact.

As a studio owner, you'll have students and staff members alike depending on you to set the tone for your business. In order to keep the many facets of your studio running smoothly, you'll need to put a framework in place to keep your studio as organized as possible.

II. Work Smarter, not Harder

Once you decide to invest your money, resources and time into your studio, we're guessing it won't take long for you to realize just how all-encompassing such a venture often is. In this case, you can either sacrifice your personal life, your sleep, or your sanity to devote yourself 100% to your business, or you can do your best to **optimize your operation**.

The latter option may require a bit of investment upfront. However, it will ultimately keep your studio running smoothly and save you the headache of having to perform all the work yourself.



III. Never Stop Innovating to Stay Competitive

We've mentioned earlier how taking the tried-and-true approach can be the death knell of your studio. To that end, it's vital that you address just how critical it is that you stay actively engaged in pushing the limits of what your studio can do.

This doesn't mean giving in to every whim of the industry itself but simply keeping abreast of **what your competitors** are doing. You need to constantly be on the cutting edge of new ways to attract customers in order to keep your business at the forefront of students' minds.

IV. Burning Out is a Very Real Possibility

As a studio owner, you may regularly find yourself overwhelmed with everything that has to be done just to keep the lights on. Although we're sure that your passion will go a long way, the **stress that can accompany** running your own business is often to come along for the ride.

You need to take necessary steps to prevent yourself from burning out, and practicing self-care -- whether that means investing in new tools for your business or simply creating boundaries between your business and your personal life -- is something you need to consider a priority.

V. Reporting Makes all the Difference

Knowledge is power, especially when it comes to running a successful business. So your studio will need as much data as possible to isolate trends, identify new opportunities for growth and maintain a steady focus of how best to foster customer engagement. No matter what system you have in place, you'll need a **reporting component** to help you organize and compile your staff and student information in actionable ways. The more intuitive and detailed reports you have on hand, the more equipped you'll be to keep your studio moving in the right direction.

VI. Your Success Hinges on your Team

They say that a good business depends on the team you have behind you. Although it is not the sole requirement to make a positive impact on your industry, you certainly will face an uphill battle without the **best possible instructors** and administrative staff working to keep your studio running smooth.

You might have to think outside the box to make the most of your recruitment efforts, but in general, you should consider your team your greatest asset. In the best of circumstances, they should feel just as committed to your studio as you are.

VII. You need to Wow Customers from the Start

First impressions are everything, especially when your competitors are ready to pounce at a moment's notice. In most cases, you'll only have one real chance to transform **one-time customers into regulars**.

You'll need to not only impress them with your studio but also capture the follow-up data you need to concentrate your marketing efforts on prospective customers who are already familiar with your studio. In any case, you need to ensure that their perceived value of your service is impeccable.

VIII. Don't Underestimate the Power of Scheduling

With regard to both managing your staff and setting up classes, scheduling is often the key to making your studio a success. Time is the one resource you can never truly get more of. So streamlining your business and carefully **setting up a schedule** that works for everyone is essential to make the resources you do have at your fingertips.

This might extend to putting a comprehensive software system in place, but even if you decide not to go that route, don't let the importance of scheduling slip past you.

The Secrets



Even if you have all the basics covered, your studio could be missing out on some easy ways to attract customers and cut costs. So, we're making it a point to address some of those hidden tips and tricks that may have thus far escaped your attention.

Running a successful studio is already tricky enough as it is. You'll need all the help you can get to beat out your competitors.

Here are some secrets that could boost your chances of long-term success.

I. Studio Management Software is a Must

We've already alluded to the vital role that studio management software can play in your studio's success. Saving you time and money, this tool can have an across-the-board effect on how you run your studio and prevent you from facing some of the **most common pitfalls** that studio owners face as they attempt to gain traction.

There's no reason you should have to struggle to get everything done each day, and the right system will be able to greatly reduce the blood, sweat and tears you need to accomplish what you need to keep your studio on top.

II. You need to Identify what makes your Studio Distinctive

Every studio owner wants to maximize their student base and earn higher profits, but with so many out there clamoring for the same collective prospects, you really have to set yourself apart.

The best way to start is to simply ask yourself **what your studio excels at** that none of your competitors do. Focusing your energies on spreading awareness of your studio's specialty or specific service feature will help guide your marketing efforts, making it easier for you to focus on the specific audience you need to attract.



Flexibility Creates a Happier, more Productive Business

As a studio owner, it's easy for you to get so caught up in how to maximize the efficiency of your business that you fail to take your own freedom into consideration. As a business owner, you already have a certain level of flexibility that other workers can only dream of.

However, target your decision-making on processes that can keep your schedule as manageable as possible. Once you aren't under as much pressure, you'll find that your **passion will be able to drive** you once again.

IV.

Community Building starts with Customer Complaints

You might assume that building a community of devoted customers who can advocate for your studio starts with marketing, but once you have customers' attention, the real test begins. To inspire a deep love for your brand, you need to demonstrate your top-notch customer service.

There's no better opportunity than when **dealing with customer complaints**. How you handle negative feedback proves your devotion to continually improving your service and maintaining absolute customer satisfaction no matter what.



V.

Cultivate a Creative Atmosphere to Inspire your Team

We've mentioned how integral your team is to your long-term success, but you need to do more than bring top talent into your studio. You need to keep them there. This begins with creating the kind of positive atmosphere and management style that helps your team feel like a family.

By **placing innovation and fun** at the forefront, your instructors and staff alike will bond more thoroughly, and best of all, their enthusiasm will prove to be infectious, passing along to students and boosting the likelihood that they will keep coming back for more.

VI.

Working with Students Helps them to Succeed

To create that kind of personal relationship with students, your team needs to engage with them in more than just a superficial way. Become invested in each student's success, and you'll marvel at how their commitment increases accordingly.

One such way is to give students **regular progress reports**, creating a broader picture of how well they're doing and giving them a goal to strive for. The key is that you communicate with your students and encourage your instructors to go that extra mile to push them forward.

VII. Don't Forget to Delegate

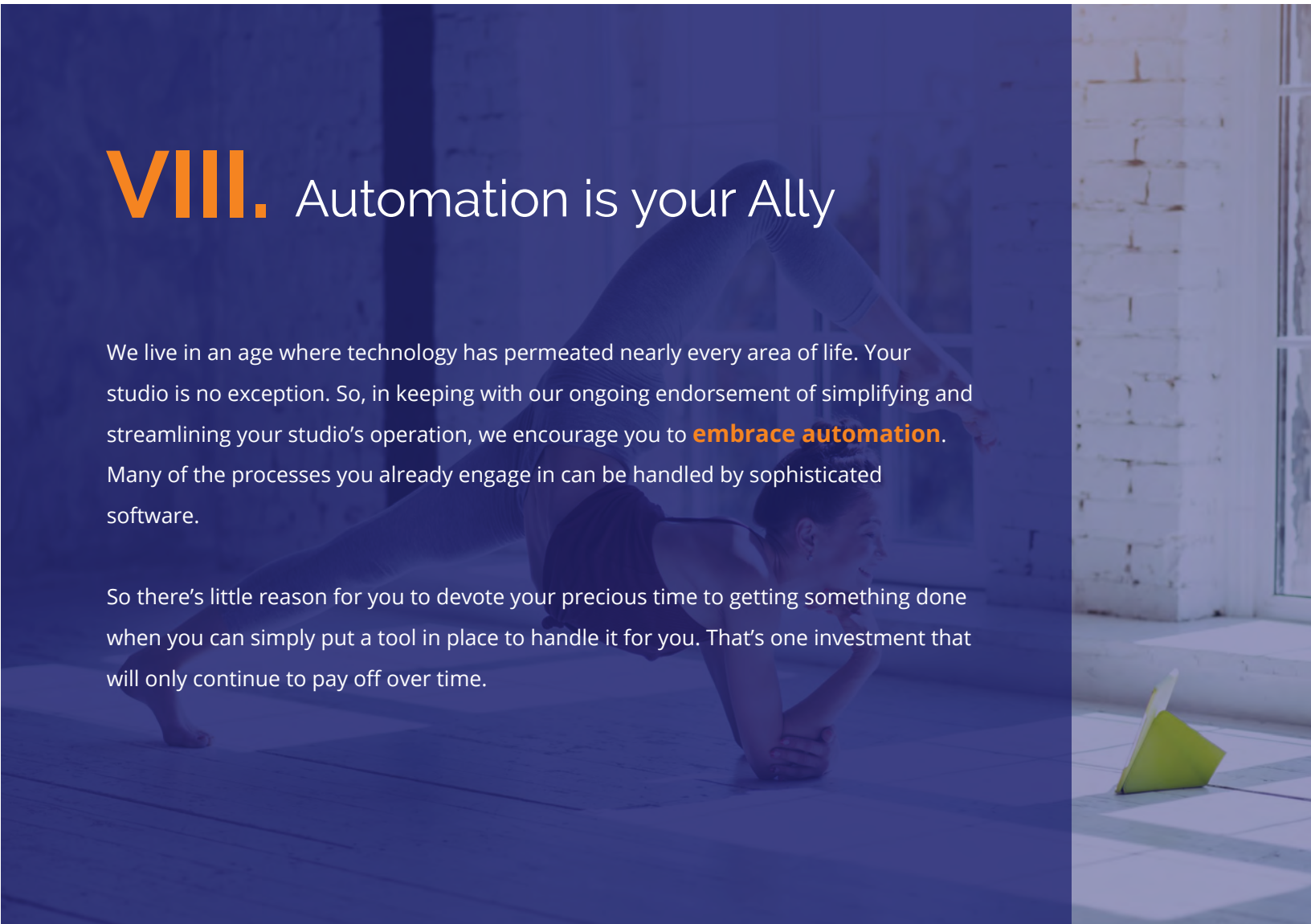
As the studio owner, you set the tone for how your business works. But that doesn't mean you need to do everything yourself. In fact, doing so will lead you to being stressed out and stretched too thin, a negative demeanor that will only adversely affect the tension in your studio.

Instead, learn how to let go of your studio's responsibilities and **delegate to your trusted team members**. We already mentioned the importance of having reliable people working for you, and if this is the case, delegating tasks to them should be a breeze.

VIII. Automation is your Ally

We live in an age where technology has permeated nearly every area of life. Your studio is no exception. So, in keeping with our ongoing endorsement of simplifying and streamlining your studio's operation, we encourage you to **embrace automation**. Many of the processes you already engage in can be handled by sophisticated software.

So there's little reason for you to devote your precious time to getting something done when you can simply put a tool in place to handle it for you. That's one investment that will only continue to pay off over time.



A woman in a dance studio is captured in a dynamic pose, performing a high kick. She is wearing a light-colored, patterned tank top and dark leggings with geometric patterns. Her right leg is extended upwards, reaching towards her left hand which is also raised high. Her left leg is bent and tucked under her body. She has a joyful expression on her face, looking up at her hand. The background is a bright, out-of-focus dance studio with large windows.

Difficult, Not Impossible

While dance studio ownership is by no means easy, we're confident that this eBook will present you with a greater chance at soaring beyond your competitors. Prospective dance students have so many options in most markets that you may find it overwhelming to try and distinguish yourself, but with any luck, we've already established why it's not an insurmountable task to carve out a place for your studio among the herd.

With the right data in your corner, you'll find that your decision-making process as well as the results it yields are far more likely to be attuned to your customers' desires.

The overall goal, of course, is to **boost your efficiency**, finding that ideal balance between resources and profit. For some owners, it eludes them for years, but if you consider each of your studio's steps mindfully, you'll discover that it isn't as impossible as it might have initially seemed.

Like any other business, dance studio success is contingent on that amount of time, love and care you put into it. So channel your passion into your determination to whip your studio -- new and old alike -- into shape and make a difference today.

There's no time like the present to begin making long-term improvements that might even mean the difference between a studio that changes and enhances lives and one that is doomed to get lost in the shuffle.



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