

INTERNET: City people make most of technology

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CARA SPILSBURY/Staff photo

Sergio Bellotti, owner of 24/7 Drums in Haverhill and a drum teacher at Berklee College of Music, has started using Skype to teach drum lessons to students all over the world. Skype uses a microphone and webcam to connect people over the Internet.

locally and his store is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday or by appointment at later times. He brought his store to Haverhill in 2006 and also uses eBay and 247drums.com to sell his wares.

The Italian-born musician began using Skype for personal reasons, but soon realized the technology could help grow his business. Bellotti travels the world for music, so he meets a lot of young musicians on his travels. Many of the people he meets have already seen him perform on YouTube.

Through the Internet, he could not only spread his music and stay in touch, but he realized he could tutor students as well. Six months ago, he added Skype lessons to his repertoire.

Although the online distance learning increases the number of students he can reach, nothing beats a one-on-one, in-person session for Bellotti.

Still, he sees the Internet's role in music as a positive one. Growing up, Bellotti had access

to only one bookstore and its limited music books to study from. Today, the world of music is a click away.

"There is so much culture sharing. With the Internet, everyone can be seen and heard."

For more on Bellotti's business, visit www.247drums.com.

Kyle Sawyer of Plaistow, a member of Haverhill Alliance Church on Kenoza Avenue, spends much of his time outside of church coordinating Web seminars for the American Chemical Society, so he knows the power of the Web's wide reach.

The 31-year-old Sawyer has combined his two passions, helping to connect church members via the Internet.

He introduced church members to MyChurch.org, an online community for churches that works a lot like Facebook, the wildly popular Web networking site. To date, MyChurch.org serves 31,750 churches and 234,838 members around the world. Haverhill Alliance Church

boasts 15 members.

Through the site, members can connect outside church walls. The church can publicize its service times and Web site, where its monthly newsletter is available.

Sawyer dreams of having online theology discussions in forums online.

"That's the direction we want to go someday," he said.

Sawyer also realized the power of Facebook when he helped coordinate the youth ministry at the church.

The youth group at Haverhill Alliance Church has teenagers from six different schools, teenagers who were already utilizing Facebook. It made perfect sense to bring the youth group to Facebook as well, Sawyer reasoned.

"It helps them connect better," he said. "Their lives are hectic, and this allows them to all meet in one place."

Visit Haverhill Alliance Church at www.haverhillalliancechurch.org.

Sergio Bellotti is a world-renowned drummer. He teaches at Berklee College of Music in Boston and owns 24/7 Drums, a music shop on River Street in Haverhill.

Because of the Internet, Bellotti's musical talents have spread around the world. And thanks to a technology called Skype, he can teach around the world as well, from the comfort of his local music studio.

Skype uses webcams and microphones to allow phone calls free of charge over the Internet with anyone in the world, granted they have the same technology on the other end.

Bellotti teaches private lessons