



REAL ESTATE RUNS IN THE FAMILY

Founded by a mother and son, Joyce Realty is a force to be reckoned with in the New York metro area — covering all five boroughs of NYC, northern New Jersey, and the New York Hudson Valley.

By Blair Krassen, Editor



When Kevin Joyce was growing up, he never imagined following in his mother Mary Ellen's footsteps and entering the world of real estate. He had a passion for the arts and wanted to be an entertainment lawyer.



"During elementary school, middle school, high school, and college, my mother was always engaged in real estate, working as an agent/broker for Patriot Realty, which eventually became Century 21," Kevin continues, "At the time, I had absolutely no aspirations to actually go into real estate."

That all changed when Kevin took a real estate course as an elective in college.

"Running out of electives in college but needing extra credits to graduate, I took a real estate course, and to my surprise, I realized I had a passion for it," says Kevin. "Needing a sponsoring broker to take the class, I turned to my mother's broker, Patrick Nealon, and started doing real estate. When I approached my mother and told her I was going to work real estate for the summer, her advice was, 'don't do it.' However, right out of the gate that summer, I made \$58,000, and I thought to myself, 'ok, I have the gene.'"

From this experience, Kevin ultimately realized that even though she warned him not to pursue it, his passion for the industry was passed down to him from his mother. Continuing on this path with Century 21, out of 8,000 agents in the Northeast, Mary Ellen was ranked #3, and Kevin was ranked #5.

After having such immense success during his first few years in the business, Kevin proposed the idea to his mother of the two of them starting their own company. And together, they decided to go all-in, and that was the birth of Joyce Realty, joining together as equal partners in 1994.

Sadly in 2013, Mary Ellen passed away after a long and courageous battle with ovarian cancer. Her 15-year odyssey through this disease considered a miracle in itself at the time, was a testament to her faith, strength, and unwillingness to ever

give up. Since then, Kevin has served as the company's president and principal broker.

Setting up for Success

The first step in starting Joyce Realty was opening the first office in Pearl River, NY. This 5,000-square-foot location is currently the brokerage's main office. Kevin laments, "If we were a Macy's, that location would be considered Herald Square for our company."

After setting roots in Pearl River, Joyce Realty branched out to northern New Jersey, setting up shop in Mahwah in Bergen County. They recently opened a beautiful new office in Throggs Neck, on East Tremont Avenue, a prime location in the Bronx, even offering a water taxi service bringing you to midtown Manhattan in 20 minutes. Joyce Realty not only sells properties in the Bronx but in the other four boroughs and Westchester County as well.

Although there is a great deal of competition in New York City, Joyce Realty recognizes the benefits and opportunities that come with being in that market, such

as the high price points.

"The New York Metro market is a prime marketplace to be in," Kevin continues, "And I feel very fortunate sometimes because I've been going to places where, for instance, in the Midwest, a broker that did 2000 transaction sides, but their average sale price is \$170K. My market is \$680k right now."

Kevin has always known exactly what he wanted Joyce Realty to be. He never needed to be the biggest brokerage in the city, but rather one with a good reputation that speaks to the hard work of its team members.

"I like to think of myself as maybe not the biggest company, but I like to say that we're like a battleship boutique brokerage in the hottest markets in this country," says Kevin.

Cultivating a Brand

In the company's early days, Joyce Realty had its own magazine to advertise their listings, which were sent to over 30,000 people. It was sent out 10 times a year over 10 months. Unfortunately, this

venture ended when the publisher closed its doors and print started transitioning to digital.

"We had our own magazine," Kevin continues, "It was a private cover for what's now The Real Estate Book, which is Network Communications. We jumped on their distribution, and I had 72 advertisers in my magazine."

To market current listings in the digital age, Joyce Realty joined REBNY (Real Estate Board of New York) and is part of four other multiple listing services, including one in New York and three in New Jersey. They are also the exclusive affiliate for Leverage Global Partners.

Considering he's an artist and his father owned a paper company, design comes naturally to Kevin. Therefore, he worked side-by-side with a designer to create the brand's original graphics and other marketing materials. He still assists with many of the company's creative projects today.

"A lot of the stuff that was built, ad-wise, I did with the graphic artist hands-on," says Kevin. "I'm used to that type of diet, and I like it because it's creative."







Trying Times

In the first 10 years of Joyce Realty, the company grew considerably, to the point where by 2007, they had seven different offices. However, the early 2000s was a trying time for brokers. Kevin vividly recalls the 2008 market crash and how it affected the company and the real estate industry as a whole. But instead of giving up, he saw it as a chance to restructure and make necessary changes.

"We had been a much larger company managing seven offices at one time, but then 2007-2008 hit us, and I knew I had to swallow any type of pride that may be inhibiting us from moving forward," says Kevin. "So, you have to renegotiate with your landlord to get out of leases as well as contracts with multiple vendors."

Despite these challenges, Joyce Realty survived the recession and came back better than ever. Plus, going through that made them better prepared for the current

market and the obstacles that came with COVID-19. Kevin also recognizes that the city and suburban markets are vastly different, which has become even more apparent over the past few years.

"The concentration and the population in the city are a different animal than, say, dealing with suburbia," says Kevin. "We are seeing our unit values, the transaction sides, go up exponentially. We are experiencing where the lack of inventory and the rate-raising environment has created



a vacuum where I'm seeing bids go over \$100,000, waving inspections. The fed is raising the interest rates because they're trying to tame down inflation."

Joining Joyce

Recruiting new agents is an important part of Kevin's role as president of Joyce Realty. That's why one thing that initially appealed to him about Delta Media Group® was the ability to custom-make his own recruiting website. With the help of Delta's design team, Kevin created JoinJoyce.com, an innovative recruiting website to attract new agents.

"I did some digging within Delta, and I saw some other companies that had recruitment websites," Kevin continues. "And that's a big part of my business."

Although Joyce Realty is often looking for new recruits, when it comes to hiring talent, they certainly value quality over quantity and thus only want to work with those that are a match with the company.

"Recruitment is important to me, but it has to be a fit," says Kevin. "I usually sit with somebody, and we chat, and then I see what their motivation is. We have amazing systems in our company with onboarding people into our group. But I would rather have 50 really well-fed agents than 200 agents doing two transactions."

Having Their Backs

Kevin feels that in order to run a successful business, a leader should be someone who is always there to run ideas by and lend a helping hand.

"I love succeeding; I love getting people what they want and doing a good job," says Kevin. "And I love seeing my agents succeed, and I'm always their wingman. They know they can pick up the phone, and if they need to talk to me about something, or brainstorm about something to get something done, I'm always there for them."

He also understands the importance of giving the team the proper resources and a clear set of guidelines. So, aside from providing them with top-tier technology to make things simpler for agents, Joyce Realty has a handbook that is updated every year as the industry changes. Company processes and expectations change along with it.

"We have a policy and procedure handbook that everyone can get every year,"



says Kevin. "Anything and everything that could come up is inside that book."

Kevin believes that agents should feel like their broker is working for them, not the other way around. For agents to feel supported, they need to know that you have their backs, no matter what.

A True Partner

Kevin first came across Delta Media Group after noticing that other well-known brokerages in the area had been working with the company. He saw the benefits the partnership could have and how it was run and decided it was the perfect opportunity to take Joyce Realty to the next level.

"I've been a huge proponent of building infrastructure and having processes that will bring value and bring in business," says Kevin. "And that's what attracted me about Delta."

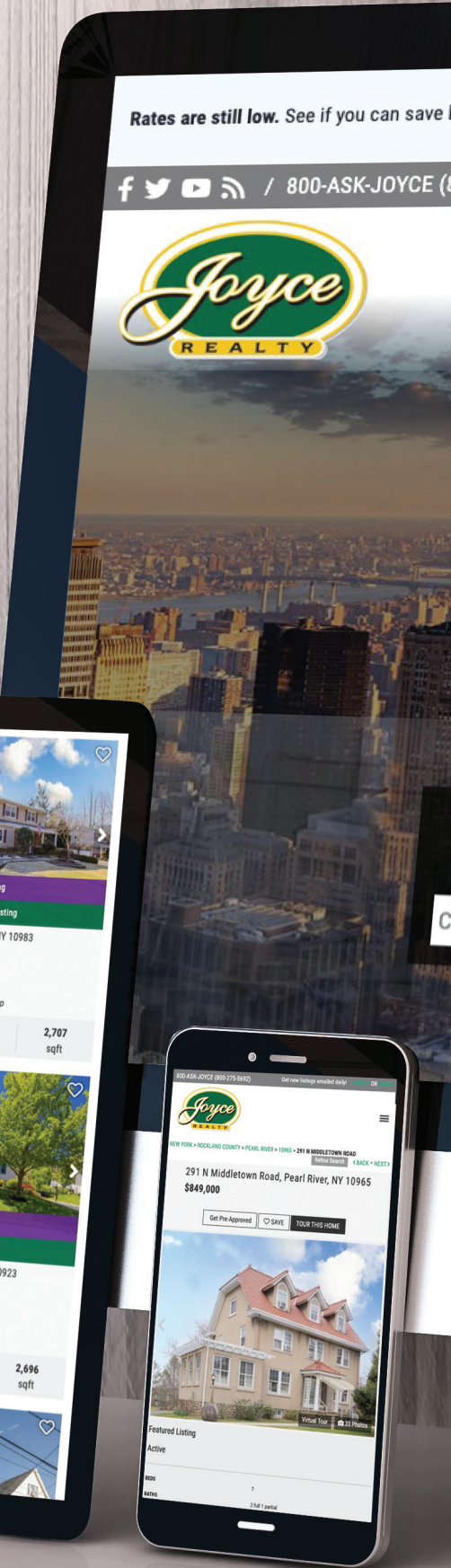
He has found that the products Delta offers are worth the investment, saying, "I'm investing more with Delta because it's smart."

Although Delta Media Group is Joyce Realty's tech vendor, Kevin sees it as so much more than that.

"I don't think of you guys ever as my vendor; you're a partner to me," says Kevin. "You're my online window to the world. That's where people look."

What Kevin values most is the team at Delta. He appreciates being able to meet with the staff regularly and is always aware of what's happening and what's new with the technology.

"Just keeping the pulse where no one feels that they don't know what's going on. That was an important thing for me," says Kevin.



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Targeting the Younger Generations

Being in a metropolitan area packed with young people, the majority of Joyce's prospective clients fall into the Gen Z and Millennial categories. Because of this, using generational marketing to directly target their customer base is an essential part of Joyce's marketing strategy.

Joyce Realty targets these younger groups by showing them the data and giving them the information they need to start the home-buying process. On their website, they have a *First Time Home Buying Guide* as well as a *Millennial Homeownership Guide*. These guides are complete with everything young buyers need to know — from reasons to own your house to understanding down payments, mortgages, and the loan approval process.

"I think Gen Z appreciates the value prop-

osition of giving them really strong data and a one-stop package type of situation and streamlining everything," says Kevin.

Another way they market to younger buyers is through their blog on their DeltaNET® website. While their blog appeals to every demographic, posts about saving for your first home, local restaurants and bars, dog parks, and Instagram-worthy spots are reeling in those Gen Z and Millennial buyers by telling them the information they want to know.

Joyce Realty also caters to first-time home buyers because they have their own mortgage company, QuestStar Mortgage, that Kevin created himself. QuestStar Mortgage is a full-service mortgage company specializing in conventional, FHA, VA, jumbo, and refinance loans. Through the Joyce Realty website and the Loanzify app, the home loan approval and mortgage calculation processes are made easy and can be done from anywhere.

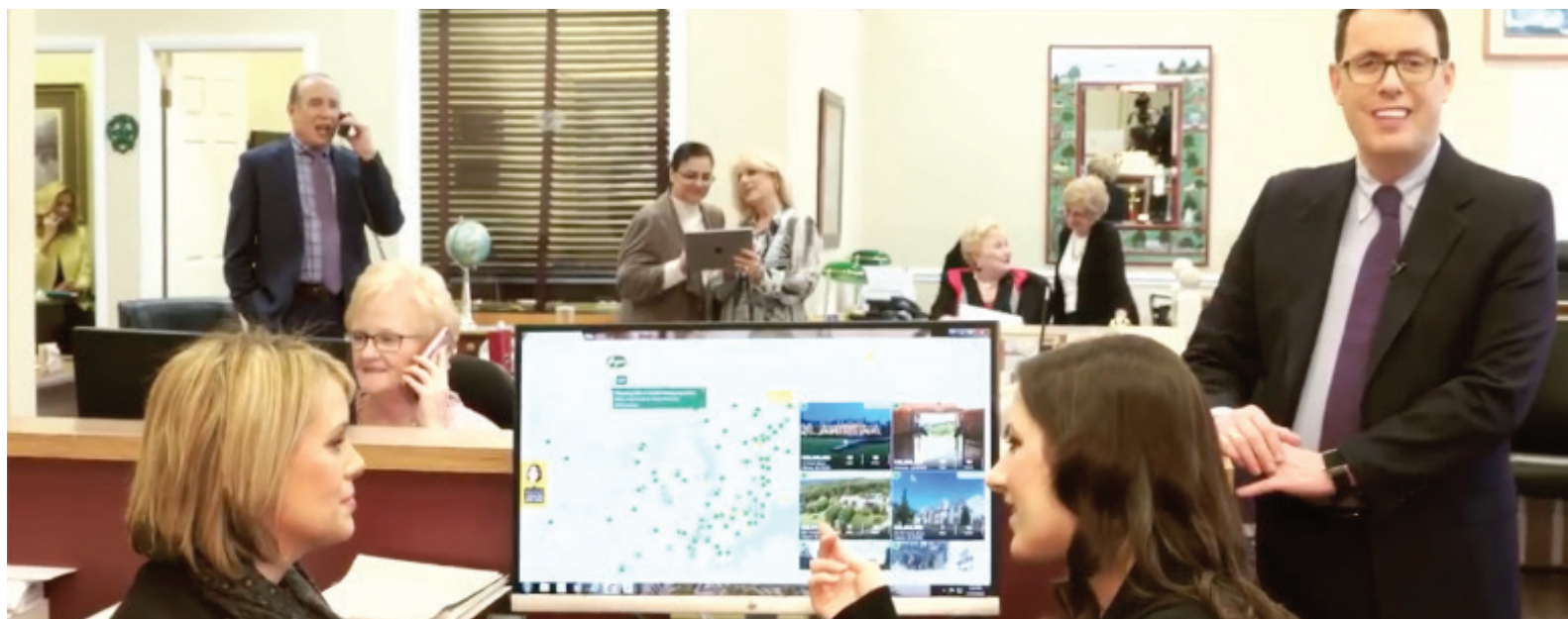
"I recruited from one of my competitors, a loan processor, and we're online now with seven of the largest banks, and we can cater to every need that people have," Kevin says. "It's a one-stop-shop solution that we offer."

Kevin believes that Gen Z is the industry's future and feels that the younger generations are starting to see the value in homeownership and having a place to call home.

"I think no matter what generation, even though it's Gen Z and they say that Gen Z is not going to stay at the same employer for a long time, they're going to jump around," Kevin continues, "I think what's happened to everybody with us dealing with this COVID plague is we recognized that home is where the heart is."

Moving Forward

Aside from revamping their technology



with Delta and introducing new generational marketing strategies, Joyce Realty has recently made several other updates. They renovated their corporate office and did the build-out of their mortgage suite.

“We got all licensed,” says Kevin. “I got personally licensed as a mortgage loan originator, which was a new thing. We grew that side of our business. We want to have the experience for our clients to have a one-stop real value where you can say, well, I’m going to check this out. I can beat any retail bank anytime because I deal with the largest wholesale banks in the nation.”

During the pandemic, Kevin took the time to build a new structure for the company. He declared it his responsibility to lead his team through such a difficult time.

“It was a lot during this COVID period; we were moving forward and building the business up and infrastructure up to be ready,” says Kevin, “That’s really what my job has been: to lead. I was hands-on with the whole build-out of our sites from square one.”

Kevin feels that consistency is the key to continued growth and success; nothing lasts if you aren’t always striving for better.

“The biggest thing I think to have longevity is consistency,” he says. “I’m never completely 100% satisfied because I want to do better.”

Kevin also believes that having the right tools and support in your corner is essential to keeping momentum, which is something every business needs to move forward.

“It’s called momentum,” he explains. “You can’t let the grass grow under your feet. You have to keep on moving with everything. And that translates into not just work, but personal life, fitness, just being a good person and growing. You have to keep the wheels turning, get things locked down, and get your position in place for where you want to be and where you’re going to grow.”

Leaving a Legacy

Although Kevin’s mother isn’t around to run the business with him anymore, the lessons and values she instilled in him



during his childhood and early career remain present.

Kevin’s mother always told him, “Always be ethical. Keep your sense of humor. Try your best and be consistent, and you’ll be above the pack.” Kevin takes this advice with him everywhere he goes. It represents the company and the values that every staff member and agent at Joyce Realty follows each and every day.

Another lesson Kevin learned from his mother is that people don’t become successful by others getting things done for them, but rather by watching the examples others have set for them while making something their own.

“My mom never gave me any leads, but I did watch her,” says Kevin. “And I don’t think anyone that’s truly successful in real estate emulates exactly; you make it your own, and you internalize it.”

Finally, Kevin puts people first and cares about his clients, just as his mother always did. His primary goal is to help his

agents and clients succeed, and he loves doing it.

“I really care about the people first before my transactions,” says Kevin. “And I think that’s where my strength has always been, with my agents and my clients and everything that I deal with and growing the company because I believe in it, I’m passionate about it, and I really I love what I do, and I don’t think many people can say that.”

As Kevin continues to follow his mother’s advice, the example she set for him, and always puts his customers and agents before himself, Joyce Realty will continue to leave a legacy — just as Mary Ellen did. Real estate runs deep in the Joyce family, and the leadership qualities, talent, and passion Kevin inherited are truly what sets Joyce Realty apart from the pack.

To learn more about Joyce Realty, visit joycerealty.com and joinjoyce.com.