



NOTABLES & NEAR MISSES

It would be easy to dedicate every page of this magazine to the host of deserving music product retailers nominated for *Music Inc.* Retail Excellence Awards, and nominating suppliers had plenty of high praise to go around.

On that note, *Music Inc.* tips its hat to the following honorable entrepreneurs.

Photo by Marianne Williams



MARKETING & PROMOTIONS

SKIP'S
MUSIC

Sacramento, Calif.

LONGSTANDING RELATIONSHIP
IN THE COMMUNITY.

**EXCELLENT
MARKETING
PROGRAMS**

THAT ATTRACT FRINGE
MUSIC MAKERS.

CUSTOMER SERVICE



J.W. Pepper Paoli, Pa.

"Outstanding retailer devoted to customer satisfaction. They help their customers make informed buying decisions by reviewing, cataloging and promoting what they feel are the highest quality of music and resources."



Long & McQuade Pickering, Ontario

"While most big-box stores tend to rotate their staff, L&M has managed to hold on to them. A friendly face is really important to the consumer."



Ken Stanton Music Marietta, Ga.

"Understand relationships with the musicians they service."



Meyer Music Kansas City, Mo.

"Tremendous service and even higher business ethics."



The Twelfth Fret Toronto

"They give you the complete experience that every musician looks for when shopping for a new guitar. And every single guitar, whether it's \$300 or \$5,000, is spotless, adjusted perfectly and treated with the same care. The store itself looks great, and the guys are incredibly knowledgeable."



Brass Bell Milwaukee

"Their staff has regular meetings to review store policies and [to discuss] how to manage difficult situations. Managers are loyal, long-term employees who run their departments with much autonomy.

"[Brass Bell] has intense customer service focus and has a suggestion box for customers to recognize excellent employees, located near the lesson waiting area."



Steinway Piano Gallery

Bonita Springs, Fla.

"[Owner] Greg Billings gets it, from promotions to merchandising to long-term thinking in regards to marketing and music education for children and adults. Community involvement with all musical groups, and if he finds a need for a new group, he creates it. From consumers, colleges, PR, music education, professional merchandising, strategic thinking, [he] has his act together."



My Music Store Golden Valley, Minn.

"[The] store owner has been 43 years in the business, treats customers with a smile, listens first, then makes qualified, no-pressure recommendations. They have a clean store, great lesson program and loyal customers. They don't have many problems because it is such a pleasant environment to shop in."



Hickey's Music Center

Ithaca, N.Y.

"Wide variety of print music; attends local and national music conventions; user-friendly online ordering; friendly and knowledgeable staff."

MARKETING &
PROMOTIONS



Middle C Music Washington, D.C.

"[Owner] Myrna Sislen is always on top of industry trends. She looks for innovative products and ways to bring in business to her store."



Bellevue American Music

Bellevue, Wash.

"E-mail blasts regularly concerning store events and a busy schedule of in-store clinics."



Evola Music Bloomfield, Mich.

"This dealer has been very cre-



ative in its advertising efforts, which other dealers have copied. The 'Piano Spa' and 'Extreme Makeover' for pianos installed with PianoDisc are just a couple of creative ideas. They were able to generate sales through these programs during the traditionally slow summers."

DESIGN & DISPLAY

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Cosmo Music

Richmond Hill, Ontario

"This dealer has consolidated its operations under one megastore, which is laid out like a city street with individual shops representing the various lines. You just have to see it to believe it ... spectacular."

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Robert M Sides Family Music Center

Williamsport, Pa.

"The recital hall is a killer feature for a retailer their size."

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Schmitt Music

Edina, Minn.

"Nestled in a very upscale Galleria Mall, they have worked with the neighboring high-end furniture store, Gabberts, to display items making the store very attractive. They also have a nice layout to their store separating the various product lines."

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Henri's Music

Green Bay, Wis.

"Pianos have their own section, amps have a loud room, all departments have their own identity, but traffic in the store still flows naturally. Clean, accurate pricing, signage and displays that are visually pleasing."

EDUCATION EXCELLENCE

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Sensenev Music

Wichita, Kan.

"This retailer focuses on all types of music makers from the hobbyist to the school music educator. Their staff has extensive knowledge and experience in their fields, and they strongly value the dealer/customer relationship."

"Sensenev is always looking for ways to serve their community and increase the number and quality of music makers in their area. They are very active in school programs throughout the state. They are the go-to dealer for music educators throughout the area."

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Groth Music

Bloomington, Minn.

"Has the best road reps in the state. The director of school services is a tireless advocate for school music programs, attending many school board meetings, and works with teaching districts [to show] how to battle pressure to shrink arts pro-

grams. Great selection of band and orchestra instruments and accessories, and best sheet music selection in the state."

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Tarpley Music

Lubbock, Texas

"Well run, organized and effective. A huge advocate for school music programs."

Hofner
- since 1887 -

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Hagenau, Germany

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