

The 2008 PASIC featured the third highest attendance on record for a PASIC convention in Austin, Texas.

- More than 6,500 drummers and percussionists from around the world came to the show.
- It attracted 1,400 more drummers than last year's convention in Columbus, Ohio.
- Attendees enjoyed more than 130 clinics, concerts and master classes. The events covered everything from drum set to marching.

# SHOWS



PASIC | BY JENNY DOMINE

## CHANGING TECHNIQUE

Jim Catalano noted that only two things have changed at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC) since he started coming in 1978: cell phones and better technical chops among young drummers.

“The techniques that I would have played in a piece for my masters recital in marimba are now played as an audition piece for an upcoming freshmen into college,” said Catalano, Ludwig’s director of sales and marketing for schools and concert percussion.

### TEENS, TECHNOLOGY, TECHNIQUE

Catalano attributed the higher skill level in this next wave of musicians to their access to technology, the Internet and a willingness among drummers to share technique.

“When I was growing up, if you wanted to see a great percussionist, you had to stay up and watch ‘The Ed Sullivan Show,’” Catalano said. “Now the kids of the last 20 years have videos, DVDs. They can study drummers.”

This year’s PASIC, held Nov. 5–8 at the Austin Convention

## PASIC 2008 revealed how technology has helped create younger drummers with top chops

Center in Austin, Texas, featured clinics and contests that perpetuated this trend toward sharing technical know-how. Technology also played a greater role on the show floor. For instance, Roland and Alesis showed the V-Drum and Ion Drum Rocker, respectively, as featured wares at their booths.

Other technological tools geared toward young drummers included Toca’s relaunched Web site, which provides instruc-

1. Mike Balter’s Jeffrey Meegan; 2. Evans’ Kurt Wilbur; 3. Beatnik’s Rusty Membreno; 4. Alfred’s Dave Black (left) and Rich Lackowski; 5. Bosphorous’ Dave Brown; 6. Grover Percussion’s Neil Grover; 7. From left: Zildjian’s John Sorenson, Craigie Zildjian, Keith Aleo and Allen Kaylor; 8. Sabian’s Robert Zildjian (left) and Robert Mason; 9. Pro-Mark’s Pat Brown (left) and Bruce Salyers; 10. Hal Leonard’s Luke Edstrom (left) and Marilyn Fleenor; 11. From left: EMD’s Andrew Swift, Bert Wall and Garrett Barker





tional video clips; Hal Leonard's *Rock Band – Modern Rock Edition – Drum Play-Along Volume 19*, the companion to the popular music video game; and Alfred's *The Commandments Of Early Rhythm & Blues Drumming* book and CD pack.

**ACCESSORY ADVANTAGE**

Accessory exhibitors at this year's PASIC had a stand-out showing. As consumers tighten their budgets, these companies have stressed their essential role in retail.

Chuck Moulton, Vic Firth's in-store marketing and direct retailer accounts manager, said accessories are a retailer's life blood. "It's not an easy time to be selling drum kits, but guys still need sticks, they still need heads," Moulton said.

Tommy Robertson, owner of Tommy's Drum Shop in Austin, noted the critical role accessories play at his shop. "Sticks and drumheads always do well," he said. "The hardware and cymbals do excellent."

Jim Rockwell, director of marketing for Latin Percussion, has also noticed this trend. "We've seen a shift to our accessory items — our bells and blocks," he said.

"I don't sense any real concern about demand," said Brock Kaericher, president of

Remo, about accessory sales. "This year, with all the work we've done with world percussion in the general population and through medical use, we are not seeing a slowdown in that area."

New accessories highlighted at PASIC included: Vater's Mike Wengren 5B and 2B sticks finished in a black stain and with album artwork; Sabian's Vault Artisan Traditional Symphonic 17–20-inch hand cymbals; Gibraltar's lightweight shelf rack; and Regal Tip's Keith Carlock signature model sticks.

"This has been a record year," said Jerry Andreas, senior vice president of the music division for SKB. "We're expanding our factories right now. I think it's going to be tighter in the next few months, but the accessory business is not as susceptible to fluctuations."

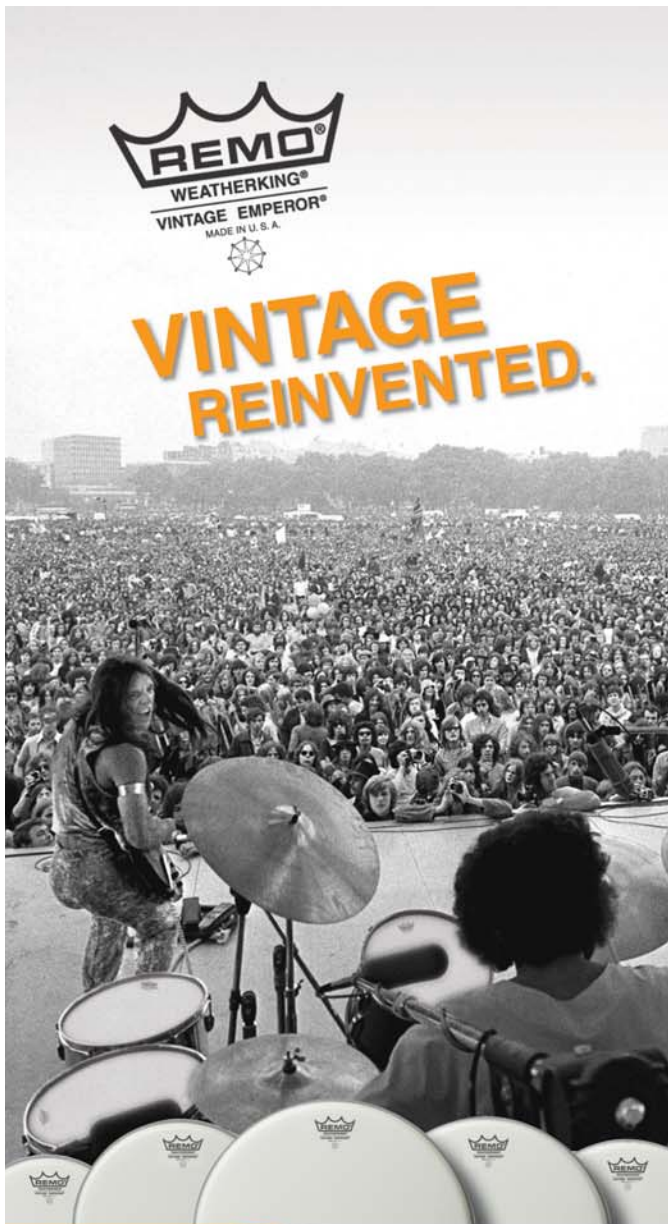
**RETAIL SUPPORT**

That's not to say that drum kits did not have a significant presence at PASIC. Many suppliers have developed new products, promotions and prices to help retailers sell more easily in the current economy.

Sonor Drums plans to create value-added packs that will give end-users extra incentive to purchase kits like its new SSE, which has a street price of \$799.

Mapex will unveil its Meridian series at the upcoming NAMM Show in January. According to Joe Hibbs, Mapex's product development manager, the kits will have improved features with street prices of \$799 for the maple shells and \$999 for birch shells. That's about \$200 less than current Mapex kits of the same quality.

1. From left: Chops Percussion's Derek Felix, Jeff Huffman and Tim Gee; 2. Hamilton Stands' Bill Carpenter; 3. Alesis' Autumn Pittman; 4. Meinl's Adam Anderson; 5. From left: Fork's Drum Closet's Joe Fant, Humes and Berg's Mike and Irwin Berg, and Fork's Gary Forkum, Jonah Hickson and Jamie Forkum; 6. From left: Jeff Ryder's Drum Shop's Monica Sheldon, Michael Hoffer, Kat Ryder and Kirk Scott; 7. Mapex's Joe Hibbs (right) and a PASIC attendee; 8. Vic Firth's Chuck Moulton (left) and Andrew Tamulynas; 9. From left: Steve Weiss Music's Joe Cochran, Steve Weiss, Chuck Nicholson, and Randy Rudolph; 10. From left: Yamaha's John Wittmann, Prudence Elliot, Roger Eaton and Robert Conaway; 11. Ludwig's Jim Catalano; 12. From left: Vater's Chas Cunningham, Dayne Marshall and Alan Vater; 13. From left: LP's Ray Enhoffer, Jim Rockwell and Angelo Arimborgo



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"Everyone is going to be watching their dollars," Hibbs said. "And when they buy something, they're going to make sure they get the best value for the best price."

Ludwig's Centennial series is another economically priced drum set that will feature a price range of \$1,000-\$1,200.

Likewise, Pearl Drums presented the 100-percent birch shell Vision VBX kit between \$1,400-\$1,500. Also, the company recently opened a third distribution warehouse in Pennsylvania that has helped offset shipping costs for its retailers.

"Freight kills everyone in this industry," said Steve Armstrong, senior marketing manager for Pearl Drums. "Now we've got two-day ground distribution to any location in the lower 48 United States."

Pro-Mark and Zildjian each offered unique promotions with practical applications for retailers. Pro-Mark has taken its Anatomy of Feel color-coding system to a new level with eye-catching posters that feature its top endorsers dripping in the colors of their preferred

1. From left: Paiste's Wayne Wilburn, Tim Shahady and Andrew Shreve; 2. Premier's Colin Schofield; 3. Samson's Brian Dougherty; 4. From left: TapSpace's Robert McClure, Bryan Harmsen, Jim Casella and Kirk Gay; 5. Majestic's Chris Hanks; 6. Sibelius' Gabriel Cobas; 7. Tommy's Drum Shop's Tommy Robertson (left) and Leon Prause; 8. Remo Belli; 9. Toca's Victor Flonovich; 10. Pearl's Steve Armstrong

sticks. According to Pat Brown, Pro-Mark's director of sales and marketing, this color system will help retailers better manage their inventory.

"If a green label is with all the yellow labels, it obviously doesn't belong there," Brown said.

Zildjian's John Sorenson explained the company's Displays, New Products and Accessories (DNA) program, which started in 2008 and will continue in 2009. DNA is designed for drum shops to buy smaller, more controlled amounts of inventory.

"It allows the dealer to put together a program that is smart for them," Sorenson said. "As the economy started to get tough, dealers really appreciated that we weren't stuffing them with inventory."

PASIC 2009 will be held Nov. 11-14 in Indianapolis. **MI**