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## SURVIVING HURRICANES

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Johnson of  
Mississippi Music

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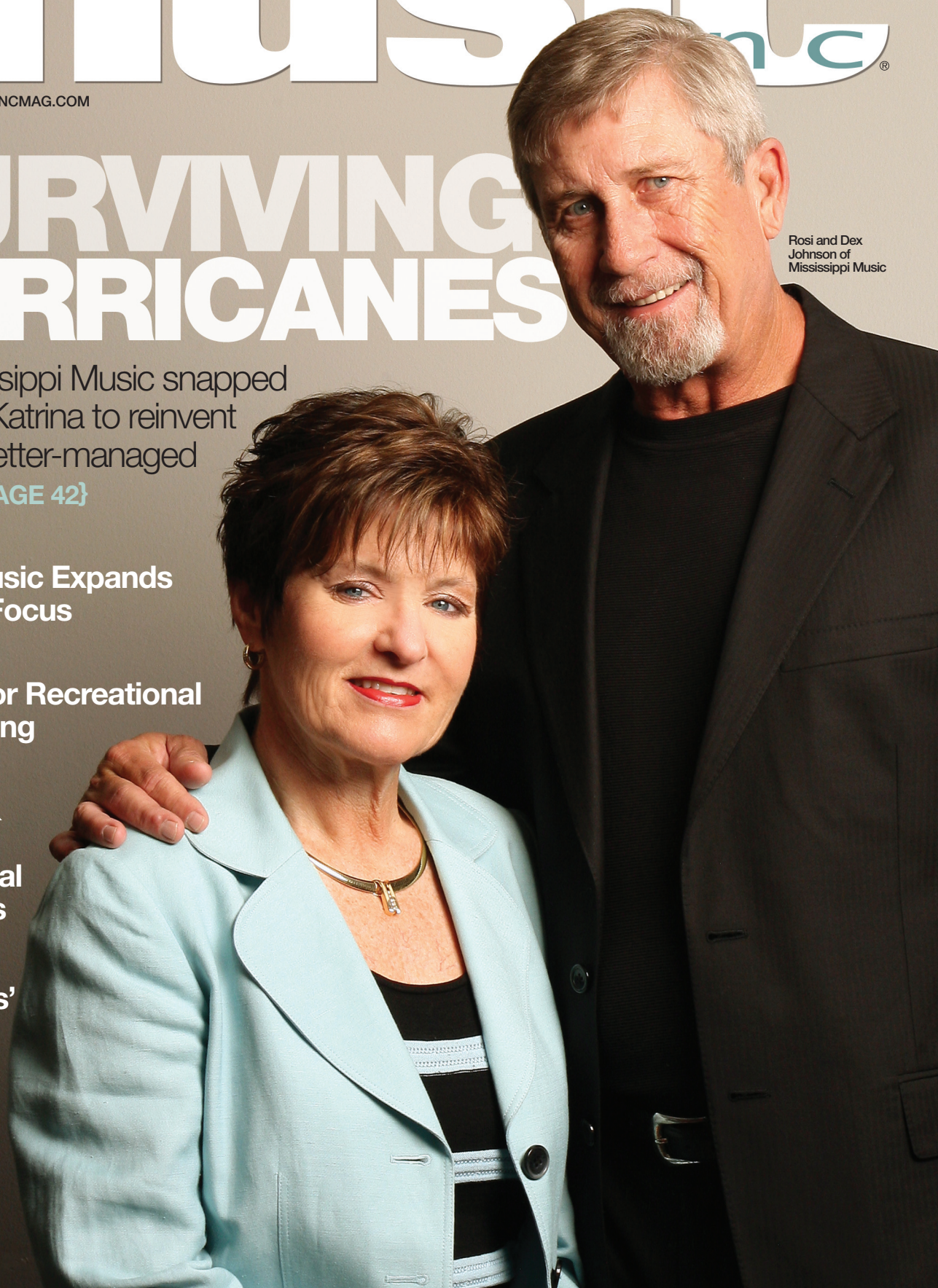
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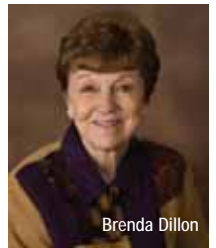
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Cover photo by Theresa Cassagne



Alan Friedman





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PERSPECTIVE | BY ZACH PHILLIPS

## READERS SPEAK UP

The day *Music Inc.*'s June 2009 issue hit the streets, our e-mail boxes began filling up. Music retailers and suppliers were writing in with raves and rants about the cover story, "What Went Wrong With the Piano Industry ... And How to Fix It" by Greg Billings. The article had clearly struck a nerve.

Some of these responses have been published in this month's *Letters* section. (See page 10.) Certain groups, namely the recreational music making community and Piano Manufacturers Association International, were so vocal that we even created a special section for their feedback, beginning on page 12.

These are the first responses to the June cover story, but they won't be the last. In next month's edition, piano industry veteran Terry Lewis will present an alternate view on the piano industry's decline. I wouldn't be surprised if others follow him up, as well.

I said it then, and I'll say it now: Billings' article was one of the most important stories ever published in this magazine. It served as a bitter pill in some corners of the industry, but it also put the debate in the spotlight. And any debate about how to succeed in this economic climate will help revive the piano industry. If you haven't read "What Went Wrong With the Piano Industry" yet, pull out the June issue, or download the article from the *Resources* section of our Web site, [musicincmag.com](http://musicincmag.com). While you're at it, let us know what you think. E-mail [editor@musicincmag.com](mailto:editor@musicincmag.com).

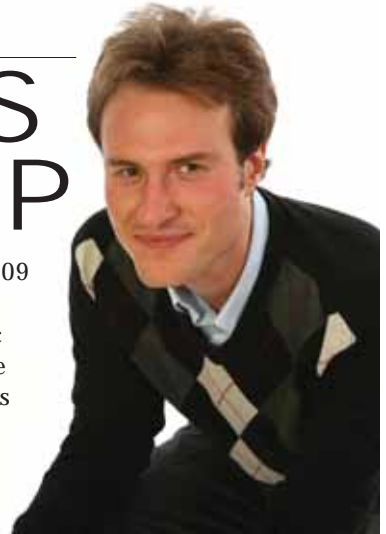
### BENEFITTING FROM A BAD ECONOMY

Despite pain in all industry segments, especially pianos, some positive signs have recently crept up in small town retail. This month's *Retail News* section (beginning on page 22) reveals music retailers expanding their operations or going into business for the first time. Avalon Music is one of them.

This Wenatchee, Wash., full-line dealership is making the recession work in its favor — at a time when even strong dealers are taking a wait-and-see approach to any growth opportunities. Avalon is moving into a new, \$500,000 building in mid-August. Company co-founder Steve Clem explained that the weak economy resulted in an enviable, 6.5-percent fixed interest rate and great deals on construction.

"I think this is a great time to take an opportunity and strengthen our market position," Clem said. "The cost of building is between 25- and 30-percent lower than it was 18 months ago. When you start looking at the financing on that, which typically for commercial is 15 years, and you start looking at interest rates, that 30 percent adds a lot of money to your monthly net. That's a lot of guitars, strings and band instruments that go into making up that difference."

Here's hoping Avalon's growth is the start of a larger trend. **MI**





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# LETTERS

## COURAGE OF CONVICTION

I don't know if it's my flawed perception or indeed a disconcerting trend I've taken notice of in recent times, but it seems like many people have a hard time taking responsibility for their own actions and/or look to blame others for their problems. I also can't help but have contempt for people who love to point out what's wrong but never offer a solution (thereby making themselves part of the problem instead of the solution). That's why I found Greg Billings' commentary on the woes of the piano industry

("What Went Wrong With the Piano Industry ... And How to Fix It," June 2009) a blunt, to-the-point, introspective and honest assessment of what's going wrong, followed with meaningful and abundant solutions to the problem at hand.

Those who may feel attacked by some of Greg's comments should put down their pens, rip up their defensive letters to the editor, and instead, merely consider the merits and intentions of Greg's remarks.

Greg is not attacking anyone. He is merely pointing out the obvious and challenging us all, as a collective industry of smart and innovative people, to rethink strategies and their cost-benefit relationships. He's recommending we change our business practices and models to match current times, step up to leadership roles, overcome unfounded fears by using the wonderful technologies available to us all, and grow the piano marketplace in more innovative and productive ways for the long haul.

It's rarely popular to speak the truth and do the right thing ... just ask any U.S. president. But Greg has my vote for taking the first step to lead piano retailers, manufacturers and support organizations out of the land of old habits that no longer work into the land of emerging opportunities, even in the midst of a bad economy. And kudos to *Music Inc.* for having the courage of conviction to run a somewhat controversial but, ultimately, valuable article for all of its readers. Congrats to you both.

**Alan Friedman**  
Friedman, Kannenberg & Co.  
Farmington, Conn.

### Cheap Shot

Blaming the digital piano for the demise of acoustic piano sales is a cheap shot ("What Went Wrong With the Piano Industry ... And How to Fix It," June 2009). I am a professional pianist who learned on a pathetic spinet piano, which is all my parents could afford in 1960s dollars.

I have been an electronic keyboard and organ tech for more than 20 years and have

witnessed remarkable improvements in action design on all of the digital pianos and keyboards. Most of these digitals have a dynamic, responsive and even touch that the majority of acoustic pianos I have played lack.

To buy an acoustic piano that has decent, stable action these days; stays in usable tune for more than a few weeks; and has a decent tone would start at \$10,000. Beginning students

have no concept of touch or sympathetic resonance. The affordable acoustic pianos made in Korea and China are what local nightclubs and restaurants purchase. They are only good for firewood after a year or so of use.

If I had a modern digital or a nice Steinway D with fast, regulated action back when I was learning to play, my progress would have been much accelerated, but I persevered because I

loved improvising and creating music. The average person today will quit piano lessons if they are not fun, no matter how fine an instrument he or she has.

I would guess that most of the superior grand pianos sold today end up as furniture with the sole purpose of impressing the owner's social connections.

**Christopher Domres**  
Music Tech Services  
Raleigh, N.C.

### Shake It Up

Just a quick note to express my support and praise for Greg Billings' article, "What Went Wrong With the Piano Industry ... And How to Fix It."

He absolutely nailed it! His plan is bold and may not sit well with some people, but piano education and retailing need a shake up! They have been floundering for years and need new direction and support.

Greg's assessment of the PMAI and its lack of true leadership is pointed and accurate. Hopefully, they will view these thoughts and suggestions in a positive manner and get back on course to reposition the association as a viable and worthwhile influence on the industry.

**David Hall**  
Pro-Active Web Sites  
Arlington Heights, Ill.

### Commended

I read the article ("What Went Wrong With the Piano Industry ... And How to Fix It") in *Music Inc.* with great interest. It is obvious that [Greg Billings] put a great deal of time and effort into this project, covering the subject on many different fronts.

Although I do not agree with all of his points or many of the comments made by those who contributed to the article, I commend you for tak-



ing on such a controversial topic. I've never known Greg to be shy or withdrawn, so I shouldn't be surprised that he wrote this article.

*Fred Forshey*  
Forshey Piano  
Houston

**Couldn't Sleep**

I wanted to thank *Music Inc.* magazine for the outstanding piano issue (June 2009).

I woke up at 2 a.m., started reading and couldn't put your magazine down until I finished the whole thing at about 5 a.m. (I read parts more than once.) You guys get it! Thank you.

*Alice Alviani*  
Family Piano  
Waukegan, Ill.

**Size Doesn't Matter**

Your June 2009 issue of *Music Inc.* puts Y to rest, once and for all, the age-old question: Size does *not* matter. Even if [the magazine] was, in your words, "on the slim side," I've never seen an issue more chock full of insightful and valuable info. I enjoyed, in particular, Greg Billings' unabashed remarks on the piano market ("What Went Wrong With the Piano Industry ... And How to Fix It") and Kenny Smith's in-the-trenches advice to salespeople ("Knucklehead Mistakes").

*Gerson Rosenbloom*  
Spectrum Strategies  
Medford, N.J.

**Common Problems**

I appreciated your article in the latest issue of *Music Inc.* ("Knucklehead Mistakes," June 2009). It was a really good summary of very common problems out there in MI land. Thanks for writing it.

*Matt Frazier*  
M-Audio  
Irwindale, Calif.

**No More Knuckleheads**

I really liked [Kenny Smith's] "Knucklehead Mistakes" article (June 2009). Every one of them is a tenet we coach thoroughly (particularly when we have newbies around), but it is nice to see it laid out in an article. Now, I can show any would-be knuckleheads that article and say, "Dude, it is right there. Don't be a knucklehead." I love that lateness is No. 1. It's my biggest pet peeve. Very nice. Keep up the good work.

*Peter Dods*  
Easy Music Center  
Honolulu

**Lost Print Music Sales**

A number of "teacher favorite" A piano teaching books from FJH Music have not been available for several months because of ongoing litigation with Alfred. One teacher has started a lending library of these books with her students. Very creative, however, we are losing sales while the publishing companies litigate. Not a

good situation for the music industry.  
*Lee Moyer*  
Marty's Music Store  
Annville, Pa.

EDITOR'S NOTE: MUSIC INC. ENCOURAGES LETTERS AND RESPONSES TO ITS STORIES.  
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# What went Wrong with the Piano Industry: The Response

**M**usic Inc.'s June 2009 cover story, "What Went Wrong With the Piano Industry ... And How to Fix It" by Greg Billings, attracted a flurry of responses. Opinions were across the map, and none were neutral.

In particular, members of both the recreational music making (RMM) movement and Piano Manufacturers Association International (PMAI) took issue with some of the story's claims. The following is their counterargument.



## Dispelling RMM Myths

**B**illings' story maintained that the recreational music making (RMM) movement is unlikely to have a dramatic impact on new piano sales. Among his reasons, he wrote that RMM is backward looking and skews older adults; that it mainly generates digital piano sales, not acoustic piano sales; and that the name itself has negative connotations. Several music retailers, suppliers and teachers disagreed.

### NOT JUST OLDER ADULTS

The RMM community emphasized, first and foremost, that the movement attracts people from all demographics, not just older adults.

Dan Rodowicz, Yamaha Corp. of America's market development manager, keyboard division, wrote, "RMM is neither 'backward looking' nor [does it] 'skew the old.' In fact, our experience has been that the average age of students is around 50. We have even had members as young as 18 in our classes."

Debra Perez, co-owner of Valley Keyboards and The Piano Gallery in Texas, mentioned a proprietary RMM piano program, Musical Moments, that she offers at her stores. The initiative is aimed specifically at adults.

"Because the adult piano student has been neglected through the years, there are more adults desiring to play the piano than we can imagine," Perez said. "As a piano company focusing on the adult piano student, we experience many benefits. Our stores have a positive energy that continu-

ally attracts new students and new customers. We very seldom have a quiet store. We benefit from the consistent lesson revenue from our classes, and we benefit from the instrument sales."

### RMM FOR KIDS

John Fitzgerald, manager of recreational music activities for Remo, said that Health Rhythms, Remo's research-based RMM program, aims to reach every demographic.

"Who participates and to whom does Remo seek to expose to recreational music activities? Literally everyone," he said. "I know of a drum circle facilitator in Japan, Tomoko Yokota, who facilitates pre-natal drum circles, and I know of a number of [drum circle facilitators] who work specifically in hospice care helping families celebrate a life, process grief."

Fitzgerald also cited a survey conducted by Village Music Circles, a company that hosts drum circles. Out of 125,000 drum circle participants in a one-year period, 50 percent were school-aged children.

## + THE TEEN RMM DEMOGRAPHIC

Music is good for people of all ages, even teenagers — especially teenagers.

The beginning RMM teen is the student who missed the traditional classical training in childhood, probably won't play the piano much between classes, loves rock 'n' roll, pop, contemporary Christian music and other non-piano-teacher-type music. They watch and learn from YouTube tutorials and have already decided to make music a part of their lives, on their terms, their way, playing music they love.

The teen RMM demographic is often overlooked because of teens' inability to purchase \$30,000 grand pianos today. Never underestimate this group. They love music! They may actually be a bigger contributor to the arts and the music industry than students who are practicing two hours a day, getting ready to study in a music school or conservatory. In a few years, teen RMM students will be lawyers, doctors, teachers and businesspeople, and they will have a large amount of disposable income to invest in their real love: music.

**Will Bailey**  
RMM Facilitator, Writer  
The Piano Gallery; Corpus Christi, Texas

## + RECREATIONAL MUSIC MAKING (RMM) DEFINED

"Recreational music making encompasses enjoyable, accessible and fulfilling group music-based activities that unite people of all ages, regardless of their challenges, backgrounds, ethnicities, abilities or prior experience. RMM ultimately affords unparalleled creative expression that unites our bodies, minds and spirits."

— Karl Bruhn, Father of the RMM Movement

### QUALITY OF LIFE

Other music industry professionals stressed the health and wellness benefits of RMM. Alyssa Janney, Health Rhythms division manager of Remo, mentioned HealthRhythms' success in improving people's quality of life.

"I have been a witness to RMM, not as a cheesy, cleverly contrived sales promotion but as a gift that the music products industry can offer society, which genuinely improves their quality of life," she said.

Janney cited the HealthRhythms Web site, [remo.com/health](http://remo.com/health).

"There, you can learn how, through this research-based RMM program, a grandmother

with advanced Alzheimer's disease was able to speak her 8-year-old granddaughter's name for the first time ever in her life," Janney said. "You can hear how an adolescent from a juvenile detention facility transformed from an angry, defiant teen to calling for a group hug in just a few short weeks. These life-transforming experiences represent genuine value to the participant and instill affection for music making that a lifetime of piano or drum lessons would be hard-pressed to match."

### THE TEACHER ISSUE

Rodowicz disagreed with Billings' claim that RMM's primary thrust has been retraining existing teachers to teach adults to play.

"While RMM does provide a great opportunity for piano teachers to expand their student base and income, many of our teachers have come from all walks of life — and, yes, to include enterprising music teachers, as well."

"Teachers of all ages and backgrounds are embracing the RMM philosophy," Perez added.

"The bottom line is this industry needs more music makers — of all ages and of all types of instruments," Rodowicz said. "We fully support and even appreciate the efforts of NAMM and the other manufacturers in promoting RMM — even if the name doesn't exactly roll off the tongue."



# **+** MISGUIDED ARGUMENTS

**Karl Bruhn, Former Yamaha and NAMM Executive  
Recreational Music Making Pioneer**

**M**usic Inc.'s recent article, "What Went Wrong With the Piano Industry," focusing on the multifaceted challenges of selling acoustic pianos in our society, demonstrates the vacillating ramblings — digital pianos are good, digital pianos are bad; we need to sell quality pianos at affordable prices; recreational music making (RMM) is good for business, RMM is bad for business — of an individual who is convinced that getting young children playing the piano and playing it well is going to save the industry.

Greg Billings' misguided, circular arguments suggest that the hope for the future is the development of virtuoso children whose families understand and appreciate the inherent value of an acoustic instrument over a digital one.

His contention that "formal piano instruction in elementary school is essential" is beyond short-sighted. Perhaps Billings should consider that if piano instruction were readily available in schools, the overwhelming likelihood is that the instruments would most likely be digital.

Billings' suggestions, "Teach the Fun" and "More Group Learning," seem to contradict his negative analysis of RMM. His comment, "amateur musicians take their music seriously," suggests that the term RMM is an insult, reducing their music to "a shuffleboard game or a trip to the carnival."

He goes on to say "RMM for seniors is not the magic solution for declining acoustic piano sales." Unfortunately, he follows that line with, "We need to reach baby boomers and kids if we're going to grow." Having been a part of this movement since its inception, I do not recall it being limited to individuals exclusively above a certain age.

The author also says "RMM for seniors is not the magic solution for declining acoustic piano sales." I would like to point out that there are no simple solutions to complex problems and that RMM, properly understood and taught, might just be one of the things that can help make a difference.

To discuss RMM without commenting on peer-reviewed, published, scientific research documenting the biological and psycho-social health benefits of playing a musical instrument is to drive a coffin nail into an industry facing powerful societal trends and challenges that extend far beyond the confines of music.

His comment that "RMM is backward looking and skews the old" appears in sharp contrast to his new idea to "Get Community Centered." He suggests relationships with "teachers, preschools, churches, interior designers and charitable organizations." Perhaps I missed a few decades, but isn't this the "same old ... same old?" Did he just happen to forget community organizations, such as senior centers, retirement communities, after-school programs, intergenerational programs, rehab centers, hospitals, clinics, etc.?

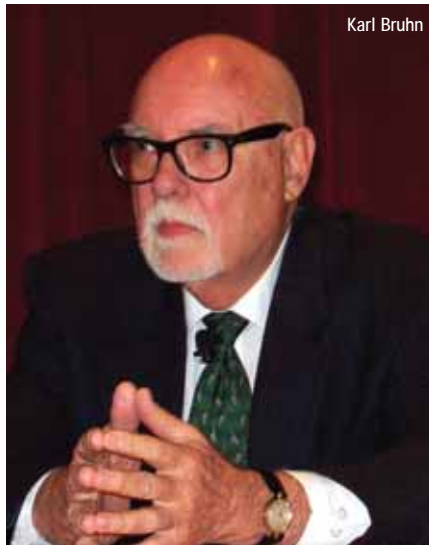
Contrary to the author's vehement arguments, the digital piano is not the culprit for the industry's misfortune. If that were the case, exercising on a treadmill would be an unacceptable compromise compared to running on the street. This author would likely argue that those in health clubs were not exercising properly.

The author absolutely misses the most important point for the music products industry. Perhaps the key to reviving the industry is not promoting sales but rather serving a societal need — developing modern strategies that enable creativity, boost self-confidence and improve quality of life regardless of age.

Mr. Billings says, "The piano industry is in tough shape. It took us a long time to get into this mess, and there is no easy way out." Few could argue with that.

Ultimately, the author reiterates that if we do not get "6 and 7 year olds playing the piano and playing it well, we might as well take a ride down to the mall and plant ourselves on a bench in front of the organ store and watch our future."

Perhaps it's time, Mr. Billings, for you to re-evaluate at least some of your motives and rationale for building a better yesterday, and get off that bench.



Karl Bruhn

## **PMAI Speaks Out**



Brian Chung

### **Get the Facts Straight**

**G**reg Billings needs to do his homework. For the past four years, the member companies of PMAI have been working diligently — with the valuable support and partnership of NAMM, Music Teachers National Association (MTNA), Piano Technicians Guild and others — to promote a piano learning experience that is fun, taught in groups and focused primarily on baby boomers. In his "Piano Industry Recovery Plan," Billings identifies these elements as essential for the piano industry.

Had he conducted a more careful investigation, Billings would have discovered that PMAI's efforts have produced significant results. Hundreds of existing and emerging teachers are now equipped to teach recreational music making (RMM) to baby boomers and other age groups. Dozens of valuable RMM group teaching sessions have been taught to large audiences at multiple MTNA national conferences. A five-hour *RMM Training Seminar* is now available on



DVD and is assisting hundreds more teachers across the country. And many piano dealers are being introduced to and trained in the RMM concept. PMAI is proud of its work in advancing the RMM cause. In the old days, this was called leadership.

Mr. Billings implies that these RMM efforts should be scrapped in favor of programs to reach children. But while there is already a plethora of teaching mechanisms available to attract and engage children, there are comparatively few designed specifically for baby boomers (and other age segments besides young children). PMAI members believe that reaching the boomer generation is essential to the future of the piano industry. Wisdom (and limited resources) dictated that we pursue this goal

with undivided focus. For exercising such wisdom, PMAI is criticized by Billings as “ineffectual.” PMAI will not attempt to be a jack of all trades and, subsequently, become a master of none. We have chosen a prudent path and, despite criticism, will strive to travel it well on behalf of our industry.

Finally, in his “How to Fix PMAI” sidebar, Billings blithely advises PMAI to embrace the Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) proposal submitted by Tom Dolan. One wonders if Billings ever read the proposal. As someone who has studied RFID carefully, I believe Dolan’s proposal has great merit over the long-term. But, as with most things, the devil is in the details.

For instance, did Billings realize that RFID will require dealers to pay higher prices for

‘PMAI will not attempt to be a jack of all trades and, subsequently, become a master of none.’

every piano sold by a PMAI member company? Did Billings know that RFID will give manufacturers and flooring companies unhindered, real-time access to the status of inventory on a dealer’s floor — whether or not the dealer wants the manufacturer to know? Did Billings consider

the significant cost of developing and maintaining a sizable third-party inventory database? RFID could be an important tool for PMAI and our industry one day, but not yet. If Mr. Billings can so easily buy into such a complex proposition without reading the fine print, perhaps someone has some proverbial “ocean-front property in Kansas” to offer him.

I mean no disrespect to Greg Billings, although he showed no such deference in his disparagement of PMAI leadership. But credible journalism requires a full and balanced understanding of the facts — something his article clearly lacked.

*Music Inc.* readers should note that it is much easier to throw a rock than to push one uphill.

**Brian Chung**  
PMAI President  
Senior Vice President of Kawai America

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**Lack of Knowledge**

As we have been privileged to work with PMAI and NPF for 25 years and will conclude our tenure on June 30, we would have appreciated an opportunity to be interviewed for Greg Billings' article about the piano industry in the June issue.

We did poll the majority of piano manufacturers who were quoted in the article and learned that they did not know PMAI and NPF would be attacked — and would not have supported Billings' opinions had they known about them in advance.

Billings' lack of accurate knowledge was especially apparent in the bullet points under "How to Fix PMAI." Regarding his suggestion that PMAI recruit non-member manufacturers and distributors

indicates he is unaware that the PMAI board has worked diligently through the years to recruit both groups. Countless invitations and personal contacts have been made to every manufacturer and distributor who attends NAMM trade shows, as well as those who don't. PMAI has always encouraged every company that participates in the piano industry to join PMAI in order to unify and strengthen the industry and grow the market.

Numerous efforts have been made to recruit digital piano manufacturers as PMAI members in addition to Roland. In the past, the digital piano companies had declined PMAI's invitations, saying they had their own organization, the International Association of Electronic Keyboard



Brenda Dillon

Manufacturers (IAEKM). With the recent changes in that organization, perhaps more companies will be inclined to become PMAI members. While it is true that Roland is not a voting member, the majority of decisions made at PMAI board meetings are by consensus, and Roland fully participates in that process.

Contrary to Billings' assertion that PMAI meeting attendees are not the decision makers, the majority of the PMAI board members are the leading American executives of their companies and do have the authority to make decisions on behalf of their companies. Every effort is made to include off-shore CEOs at PMAI's annual meeting at NAMM's winter trade show, but they have chosen not to attend the interim board meetings.

The National Piano Foundation was formed in 1962 as the educational arm of PMAI. It does not have a separate revenue stream of any significance. Because of its non-profit status, it has been awarded grants that serve the piano industry as a whole. NPF membership includes piano teachers, piano retailers, piano technicians, print music retailers and piano enthusiasts. To describe the relationship between PMAI and NPF as "incestuous" is ludicrous.

As far as NAMM awarding

grants to NPF, Billings obviously isn't aware that most NAMM grants are matching. To propose that NAMM shouldn't give "another dime until PMAI demonstrates that it's willing to put its own money on the line" indicates a lack of knowledge about the NAMM funding process for grants. In fact, PMAI and NPF have consistently over-matched every grant received from NAMM.

Billings' attack on RMM again reflects his lack of knowledge. As far as RMM's name (recreational music making) goes, an NPF survey of RMM students found that 75 percent of them wouldn't have taken piano lessons if this kind of class had not been available. They clearly aren't concerned with what it's called, but they do care that they are having fun while learning to play the piano. As far as Billings' recommendation of having "more group learning" goes, RMM programs have dramatically increased group teaching throughout the United States. Teachers initially began using this approach with adult students and are now considering the same approach with their younger students, with a special focus on RMM classes for teenagers.

Although a new management company will be working with PMAI and NPF as of July 1, we will continue to be supportive of PMAI and its future goals. We began this response by saying it has been a privilege to work on behalf of this organization, and we hope those who genuinely care about its future will choose to work constructively on its behalf. Attacking from the outside will never be as powerful as working from the inside.

*Don and Brenda Dillon  
PMAI and National Piano Foundation  
Executive Directors*

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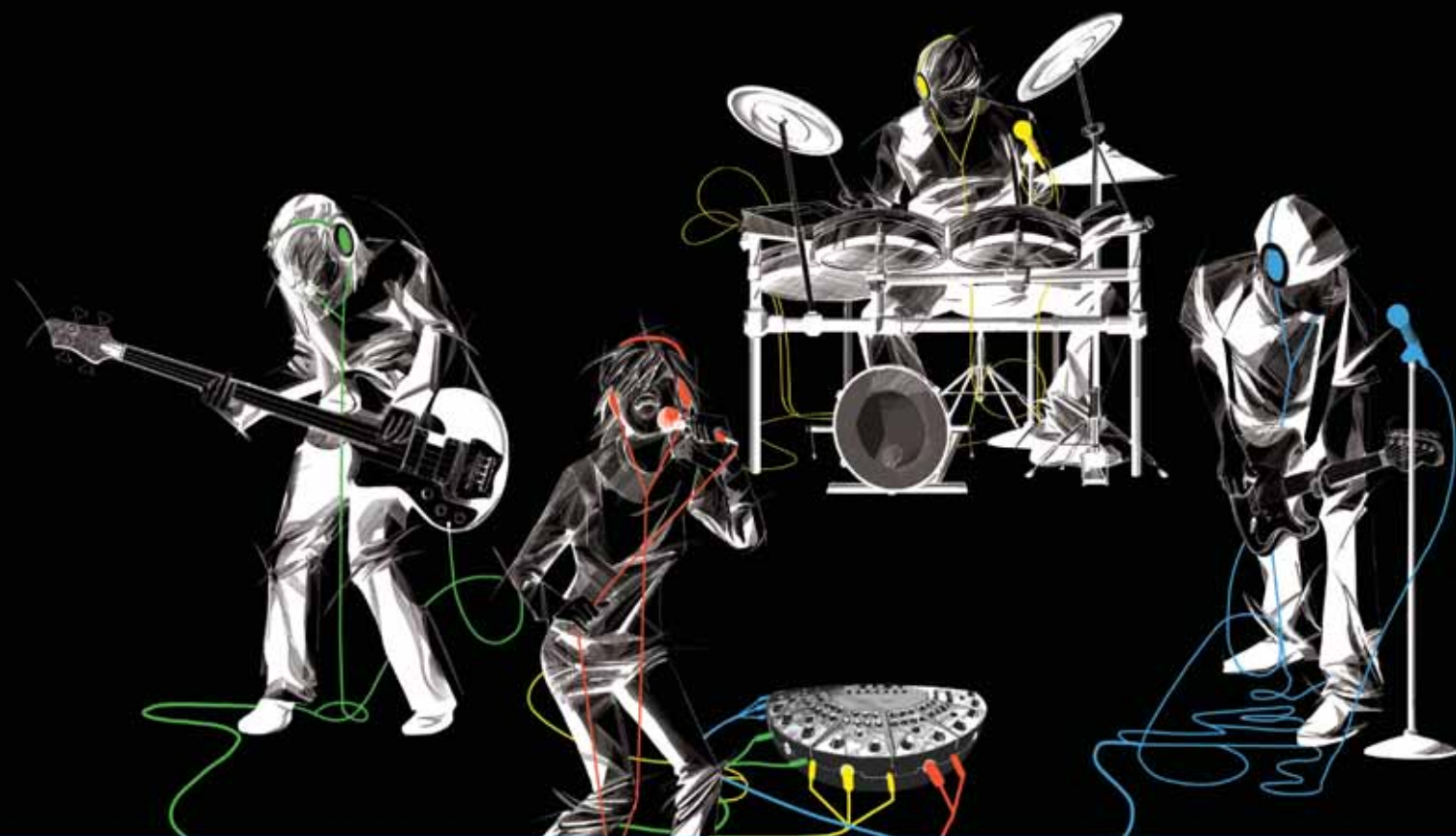
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# NAMM<sup>®</sup> News

AUGUST 2009

*"We're Going After the Freeway..."*

## Back to School, Back to Music Advocacy!

It's that magical time of year that parents across the country celebrate and children dread—back to school. But with current economic challenges and recent cuts in education budgets, there seems to be less to cheer about.

### Note from ~~Joe~~ Mary

Music education is the seed that, once planted, helps children to grow, learn and discover their innate musical potential. When kids learn music in school, it not only helps foster their self-discipline and self-expression, but may also improve their academic performance.



Music education enables our own industry to thrive as well. And, when budget cuts threaten school music programs, they also threaten our collective future. That's why NAMM is devoted to ensuring that every child receives a complete education that includes music and the arts. As the association for the international music products industry, NAMM remains active at the forefront of music education advocacy, policy and promotion. Our efforts include facilitating the Support Music Coalition, which provides tools and information to keep music programs in public schools; fighting for music education on Capitol Hill; highlighting school districts around the United States that excel in music education for the association's Best Communities for Music Education list; and sponsoring Music Education Days at each of the NAMM shows, where regional music teachers can attend education-focused NAMM U sessions and network with Member companies. The NAMM Foundation also works to validate the social and academic benefits of music making through the funding of groundbreaking scientific research.

Today's music education students are tomorrow's music makers. As our nation's children head back to school, we encourage you to join in your community's efforts to support music education. Visit [www.namm.org/publicaffairs](http://www.namm.org/publicaffairs) and [www.supportmusic.com](http://www.supportmusic.com) to learn more about how you can get involved, as well as how to contact your elected officials so you can let your voice be heard.

By supporting a complete education that includes music and the arts, we can help enrich the world and promote a brighter future for us all.

**Mary Luehrsen**  
**NAMM Director of Public Affairs**  
**and Government Relations**

NAMM relentlessly represents the importance of access to music education in public schools, and champions the need for every child in America to receive a complete, well-rounded education that includes music and arts education. We do this work in communities, with our state legislatures, and on Capitol Hill. We will continue the crusade this year by making sure this important message is heard.

wanna  
**Play?**  
 Brought to you by NAMM

### Keeping the Message in the Media

NAMM public relations efforts focus on placing stories in hundreds of local community newspapers timed to appear in the fall, back-to-school time frame. These stories concentrate on why it's important for kids to study music in school, leading parents, educators and press to [www.wannaplaymusic.com](http://www.wannaplaymusic.com) for the latest research, articles and information to support the proven benefits of playing music.

#### Facts like:

- Playing music positively affects the development of children's (and teen's) cognitive skills.
- It builds confidence, self-discipline and inspires creativity.
- Playing music can also increase productivity and help kids and teens connect socially with their peers.



## NAMM in the Schools

In 2009, NAMM will launch SchoolJam USA! This program provides hundreds of music-loving young adults the opportunity to perform, increasing their love for playing music and promoting the benefits of music for teens, as well as, school music programs, nationally. Best of all, it's a win-win for schools, bands and music retailers alike, as bands vie to win gear for them—and their school music programs—from NAMM Member music stores. NAMM will promote SchoolJam USA in schools across the country and launch the program with a national media campaign, reaching out to the public through TV, radio, online and print coverage.



## Grow Your Lesson Program

While some schools are cutting their music programs, you have the opportunity to grow yours! Many kids—as well as their parents—are looking for a place to learn to play a musical instrument. Now is the time to advertise your programs—by running ads in your regional paper, distributing fliers at area schools, posting ads on community boards, tweeting your message on Twitter or posting a message on your FaceBook page.

And be sure your lesson program is included in NAMM's new *Wanna Play?* Lesson Locator. Simply send your store's information to us at [info@namm.org](mailto:info@namm.org). Don't have a music lesson program? Sit in on the NAMM U sessions during Summer NAMM to get tips and ideas on how to start one.



## Be an Active Voice in Your Community

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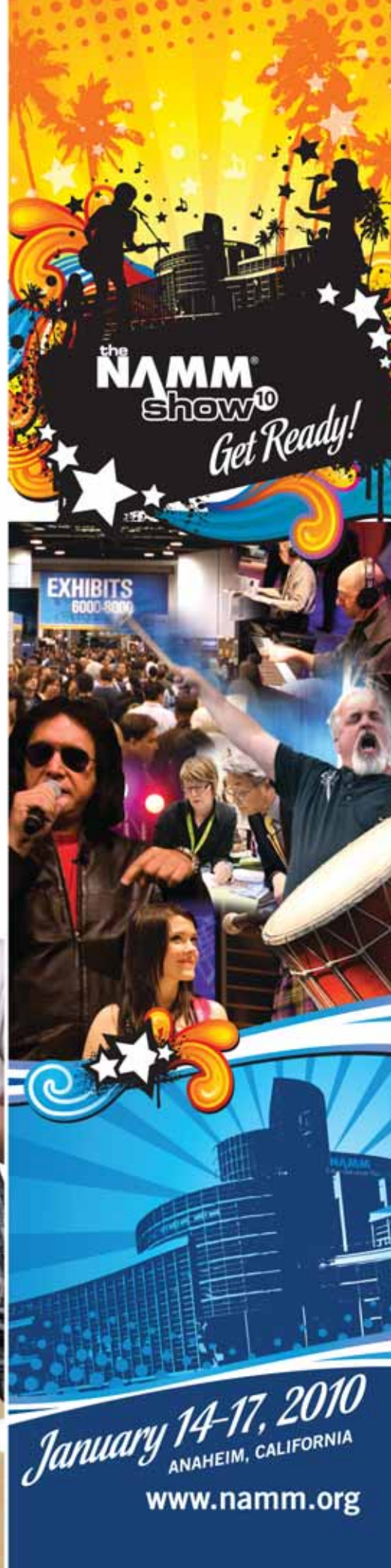
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# RETAIL

ELEFANTE MUSIC | BY JENNY DOMINE

## THE FAMILY ACT

When Al Elefante opened Elefante Music in 1996, he never predicted his passion for music education would evolve into a 500-student lesson program and school music dealership, let alone inspire his family and community. Today, many of Elefante's first students have grown up to become music directors in the schools around the New Providence, N.J., area, where the store is located. These directors rent his instruments and recommend his staff for private instruction.

"Quite a few of his students have made their career in music, specifically music education," said Stefani Healey, Elefante's daughter and company co-owner.

### FAMILY FOUNDATION

Elefante Music opened as three rented lesson rooms on the top floor of a two-story building. Within two years, the studio took over the entire second floor. In 2003, Al Elefante bought the building, renovated it, and added accessories and instrument rentals. His daughters, Healey and Michele Stivalo, joined the business after finishing college. His wife,



Elefante's next generation, from left: Michele Stivalo, Joe Elefante and Stefani Healey

### Elefante Music's lessons studio evolves into a conservatory for the arts

Betty Ann, handles school accounting and billing.

One corner of the building houses Zita's Homemade Ice Cream, which is run by Elefante's nephew, Peter Elefante. The shop is named after Al's mother.

In September, Elefante Music will transform again when the building reopens as The

Performing Arts Conservatory at Elefante Music.

### GROWING COMMUNITY

According to Healey, they considered expanding the retail side of the business but believed a performing arts center would better serve the community. The decision also made financial sense.

"In the back of our heads, with budget cuts, we felt more people would be willing to spend money on the education rather than retail," Healey said.

Despite this shift, Elefante Music's biggest source of income is its instrument rental service, which rents more than 4,000 instruments in New Jersey. And because Elefante

has put a greater focus on education, it stays front of mind among parents when it's time to go from renter to buyer.

"The retail has really grown in terms of step-up instruments," Healey said. "They trust the teachers and want to buy from that trusted source."

Healey said the store plans to further its position as an arts community-builder online with a new Web site that launched in June.

"We really want to get the kids involved with videos, blogs and forums to use as a resource."

### OFF BROADWAY

Because of its location near New York City, many of Elefante Music's teachers are former Broadway professionals.

"We're really lucky to have a lot of Broadway people move out of the city and start their families here," Healey said.

The newest Broadway instructor to start teaching in the store is Elefante's son, Joe, who most recently worked on *Jersey Boys*.

"We are trying to get into the schools with jazz workshops with Joe to get kids interested in music," Healey said. "It's really given a legitimacy to our business." **MI**

ONLINE

**GC Pro Revamps Site**

Guitar Center Professional has launched a new Web site, gcpro.com. It's designed to make a professional user's buying experience easier via straightforward navigation, a streamlined interface and new market-derived content. Users are also able to connect with GC Pro's account managers and other sales staff to keep them up-to-date on new products, upgrades and compatibility issues.

PROMOTION

**Guitar Karaoke**

During April and May, a dozen Korg USA dealers took part in Vox's JamVox Nights promotion by hosting evenings of "guitar

karaoke" in their stores. This initiative combined product demonstrations and Q&A sessions with a party-like atmosphere that included prize giveaways and karaoke. A Vox rep

was present at each event for a product demonstration. Quality Guitars in Spring Hill, Fla., brought in 60 event attendees while Cascio Interstate Music in New Berlin, Wis., closed a JamVox sale to every guest.

EVENT

**Stone Cold Promo**

On May 29, Musicorp supplied Stageline guitar stands and Elixir guitar strings to the musicians of the *Stone Cold Reality* television show at Seminole Music in Seminole, Fla. The musicians' visit was taped for the show, and some of them played during an in-store performance. *Stone Cold Reality* follows real musicians gigging without a record label's assistance.

APPOINTMENT

**Rhapsody Board Add**

Grant Billings, owner of Steinway Piano Gallery in Madison, Wis., was recently elected to the board of directors of Rhapsody Arts Center. Billings also serves as the director of the Steinway Piano Society of Madison and the founder of the annual Southwest Florida Young Artist Piano Competition.

MUSIC & ARTS | BY KATIE KAILUS

PEAK PERFORMERS

They say money's the great motivator, but a little recognition can go a long way, too. Music & Arts' Peak Performers program rewards top employees by giving them a little bit of both.

The program aims to encourage staff at both the corporate and store levels to think of new strategies to improve productivity and sales. And for Music & Arts, recognizing achievement has been good for the bottom line. Ron Beaudoin, senior vice president of sales and marketing for the Frederick, Md.-based school music retail chain, even credited Peak Performers for Music & Arts' rising earnings in 2008.

"We have returned to the level of profitability that we had enjoyed before our acquisition by Guitar Center," he said. "We exceeded the company forecast by single digits."

PEER-TO-PEER RECOGNITION

Each quarter, employees can nominate fellow co-workers who they believe have enhanced the company. Winners' names are then published in Music & Arts' quarterly newsletter, *Quarter Notes*, putting them in the running to win the Peak Performer award for the year.

Come December, senior management selects finalists from the pool of recipients. Winners receive a \$1,000 cash prize, a plaque and an all-expenses-paid trip to the winter NAMM show, with a three-day extended visit to Disneyland.

WINNING IDEAS

Last year, there were 44 total Peak Performers and two winners, one from the store level and one from the corporate level.

Kelly Capobianco, the customer service and general manager of the company's Horsham, Pa., branch, was one of the two finalists. She redesigned the system that lets educa-



Amanda Schoemer (left) and Kelly Capobianco

tion reps accept rental instrument orders from across the country before the start of the fall rental season. The idea saved money, as it only required data entry to be processed in one location instead of all locations.

The second finalist, Associate Marketing Manager Amanda Schoemer, helped implement the most aggressive holiday promotional program in Music & Arts' history. During the fourth quarter of 2008, Music & Arts used several different tools to reach customers, including circulars and direct mailings. A special Black Friday event resulted in Best Buy-like lines in front of the stores at 7:30 in the morning for a 9 a.m. open. All of these methods resulted in Music & Arts doubling its sales from the previous year.


FINDING PEAK TALENT

According to Beaudoin, finding such devoted employees starts with a tight interview process. "We focus on people who are energetic, outgoing and friendly," he said. "We also look for employees who are loyal and honest, which is why many of our employees are customers."

Along with customers, Music & Arts calls on high school music departments, asking for the best and brightest. Corporate sales managers also seek employees from other music dealerships that go out of business or get acquired by Music & Arts. For example, Pete Riccardo, who sold his business, Riccardo's Music, to Music & Arts, now handles all of the company's repairs in the Northeast. MI



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CLOSING

**Paramus Closing**

Frank & Camille's Paramus, N.J., store filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy on March 23. At press time, the store was hosting a going-out-of-business sale and could not be reached for comment.

VENTURES

**J&R Adds MI**

J&R Music & Computer World, an independent consumer electronics store, has added a musical instrument shop to its block-long dealership in lower Manhattan. The new shop will feature three levels with each floor devoted to a different area of musical products and services. The store celebrated its grand opening from June 18–21, with promotions, giveaways and performances. According to a June 17 article in *Twice*, a consumer electronics magazine, featured brands at J&R include Fender, Yamaha, Roland, Samson, Pearl, Vox, Serato, Washburn, Seagull, M-Audio, Tascam and Marshall.



OPENING

**Drums in Portsmouth**

The Drum Center of Portsmouth, N.H., opened its doors in June. The new store is the brainchild of owner Shane Kinney, formerly of The Drum Shop of Portland, Maine. He cited a void in the New Hampshire market, the seaside location and New Hampshire's lack of sales tax as reasons for choosing the location.

"After spending 10 amazing years in Portland, being awarded a top salesman by many key suppliers, I really felt the need to branch out and do my own thing," he said.

VENUES

**The New Avalon**

Avalon Music of Wenatchee, Wash., is planning to move into a new retail space in August. According to *The Wenatchee World*, the \$500,000 building will double Avalon Music's space. The full-line dealership is currently housed in a temporary space behind Hart's Fish & Chips.



As part of its summer music schedule, Music Authority of Cumming, Ga., held an annual year-end showcase at the Cumming Playhouse from May 14–17. Students, instructors and staff took part in this 1980s-themed concert, "Big Hair and Broadway."

Performers showcased music ranging from Journey to *The Phantom of the Opera*. Sixth-year Music Authority student Matt Royer was honored on the last day of the showcase, as he will go to college this fall.

ROCK 'N' ROLL SUMMER SCHOOL

This summer, Music Authority is also helping students connect

with their inner headbanger.

The company's Rock Camp teaches participants the essentials of live performance, then features a concert for parents at the end of the camp. Students are encouraged to try new instruments, and guitar players and drummers are brought on stage to sing. For this year's session, recording artist, instructor and performer Steve Cunningham joined the students for an educational clinic, where he taught different playing styles, introduced them to a lap steel guitar and invited them to play onstage with him.

Music Authority is also hosting a Girls Rock Camp and a Theater Camp.

FORBES PIANO | CLOSING

**FORBES TO SHUT DOORS**

Forbes Piano in Birmingham, Ala., will be going out of business at the conclusion of its liquidation sale, which went into effect in early June.

"From Forbes family members who have been involved in providing pianos for more than a century, to our dedicated, professional staff, to the family of customers we have been proud to serve, Forbes Piano has been all about family," said French Forbes III, the company's vice president and general manager. "We have been honored to serve people in the Birmingham area and will find it very difficult not to serve them on a daily basis going forward."

Founded in 1889 by E.E. Forbes, the company has been Birmingham's exclusive Steinway piano dealer for nearly a half century. It has also been the area's exclusive Yamaha piano and keyboard dealer. Forbes will continue to operate Allen Organs, a side business that sells and services organs to churches and other institutional customers.

According to an article in *The Birmingham News*, staff writer Michael Tomberlin indicated that the economic decline was not a factor in Forbes' decision. French Forbes said it had more to do with cultural changes and less music education for young people.

"If you went back to shipments in 2001 in the piano industry, in general, compared to what it is now, it's been a downsizing industry," Forbes said in the article.





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- Eric Kirkland  
Guitar World Magazine  
February 2009 Issue

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FULL COMPASS | EXPANSION

## FC MOVES TO NEW DIGS

Full Compass has started moving into its new, 140,000-square-foot facility in the Silicon Prairie Business Park in Madison, Wis. It will host an open house from Oct. 22–24 with live music. According to a company statement, Full Compass has experienced rapid growth during the past 31 years, outgrowing its three previous locations. The new warehouse will span 80,000 square feet, twice its current size, and will allow the company to stock more than 100,000 products. The building also features a sound equipment museum, two fully equipped production studios and a restaurant with a full-time chef.



Bizarre Silence rocks Music & Arts' Marlton, N.J., reopening

MUSIC & ARTS | OPENING

## M&A Celebrates Marlton Reopening

Music & Arts reopened its Marlton, N.J., store on May 9 with a celebration featuring contests and live music. The new location gives the company 3,275 square feet of space — an expansion from its previous Marlton store — with new design elements and colors, as well as better visibility from the road.

More than 400 people visited the store for the event. Among the contests held that day, a Garage Band competition was open to local bands with members 20 years old or younger. Local band Bizarre Silence won, taking home a B.C. Rich electric guitar and bass, two Raven amps, a bass amp, and a Tama drum set. Second- and third-place winners Shadow Play and Giraffe Policy won \$100 and \$50 Music & Arts gift cards, respectively.

Instruments, home theater systems and locally donated prizes were raffled off. Customers could also play *Guitar Hero* in-store. The video game was provided by Game Stop.

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# SUPPLY

JJ BABBITT | BY FRANK ALKYER

## BABBITT CELEBRATES AT 90

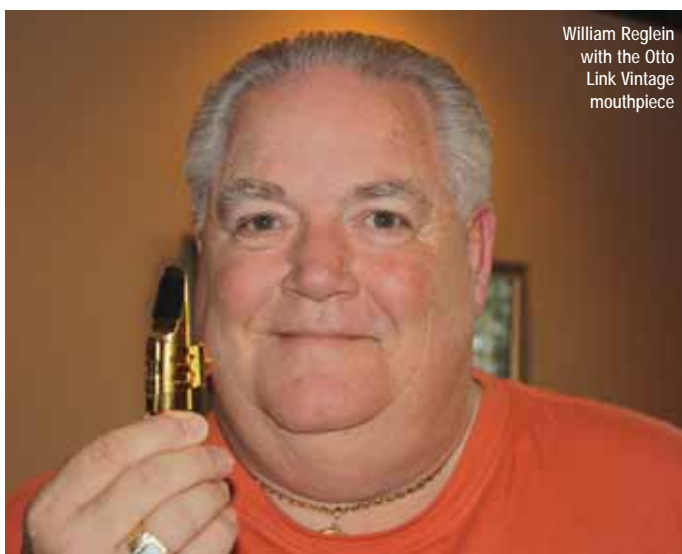
JJ Babbitt is celebrating its 90th anniversary by having one of the best years in company history — not bad for a nonagenarian.

Babbitt, a legendary maker of saxophone mouthpieces, didn't find success through grand planning, aggressive expansion or magic elixirs. Company management sees success as a byproduct of solid, family business practices and an economy that favors accessory makers.

"2008 was the best year in the history of the company, and this year is looking better already," said Rocco Giglio, company president and chief operating officer. "I think, with the economy the way it is, people don't buy high-priced stuff. So instead of buying a new musical instrument, they're buying a new mouthpiece."

**STAY LOCAL**

Beyond seeing a down economy as an opportunity, Babbitt's management team also takes an old-school but effective approach toward business. First, the company makes all of its products under one roof, giving it control over the quality and consistency of everything from OEM mouthpieces made for large horn manufacturers to its proprietary brands, including JJ Babbitt, Otto Link, Meyer, Guy



### JJ Babbitt launches Otto Link Vintage mouthpieces to commemorate 90 years

Hawkins, Wolfe Tayne and Hite. "We get comments online that say, 'Babbitt is making things in China,'" said William Reglein, owner and company chairman, with a laugh. "Everything is made right here in Elkhart, Ind. Some of those machines are from the 1920s. The one facing machine back there my dad built in 1939 when he first started here."

**MADE TO ORDER**

Babbitt executives also refuse to forecast sales in running the business. Instead, they choose to fill orders as they come in.

"We get people who place an order, and we tell them, 'It's going to be 90 or 120 days before we can get them to you,'" Giglio said. "I remember before I came here, people would say, 'Boy, if they would just add on or put more people on, they could deliver faster.' We just don't have the same philosophy as those people. We believe the pie is just so big, and it's not really going to get any bigger."

"What we have done over the years has proven to the manufacturers and distributors that if you give us your orders,

tell us what you want by a certain time, you're going to get the product, on time, if not a week early," Reglein said.

He added that the key to getting a customer's trust is completing each order based on when it was placed, not based on the customer's size. "You might be a \$50,000-a-year distributor, and he might be a \$100,000-a-year distributor," he said. "But *your* order was placed first. That's fair in our philosophy."

**THAT VINTAGE SOUND**

JJ Babbitt was founded in 1919 by Jesse James Babbitt. His nephew, Eugene "Bud" Reglein, joined the company in 1939 and served there for 65 years, working up to become its owner and president. Bill Reglein, Bud's son, joined the company 42 years ago as the third generation to guide the family business.

In honor of its 90th anniversary, Babbitt has launched the Otto Link Vintage model, which is now available. "We've been working on this new vintage mouthpiece for four or five years," Giglio said. "We tested it with players from California, Chicago and New York. And we tested it with local guys to come up with the sound that they're looking for, a vintage sound." **MI**

TECHNOLOGY

**Instrument Tracker**

The Colorado Institute of Musical Instrument Technology (CIOMIT) has developed new radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology for musical instruments. RFID chips can be inserted into instruments without interfering with their functionality. Dealers will be able to scan an instrument to see if it's in the CIOMIT database and retrieve customer information.



CIOMIT is currently working with manufacturers to equip instruments with RFID chips directly in the factories. [ciomit.com](http://ciomit.com)

DISTRIBUTION

**Sonaré Cancels Keilwerth**

The Sonaré Winds division of Verne Q. Powell Flutes will terminate its agreement with Schreiber & Keilwerth to distribute Keilwerth saxophones and York brass band instruments in North America on Sept. 30. [sonarewinds.com](http://sonarewinds.com)

ENDORSEMENT

**Mason & Hamlin Adds Sung**

The newest member of Mason & Hamlin's artist roster is pianist Hugh Sung. He has been an active soloist and chamber musician ever since his debut with The Philadelphia Orchestra at the age of 11. Sung graduated from The Curtis Institute of Music. In 1993, he joined the faculty of The Curtis Institute of Music and currently serves as its director of instrumental accompaniment. [masonhamlin.com](http://masonhamlin.com)



DISTRIBUTION

**Gemstone Takes on Paesold**

Gemstone Musical Instruments will distribute Roderich Paesold stringed instruments and bows in North America. The Germany-based Paesold, established in 1848, produces handmade stringed instruments and bows. [gemstonemusical.com](http://gemstonemusical.com)



HAL LEONARD, MUSIC SALES | DISTRIBUTION

# MUSIC SALES JOINS HAL

Hal Leonard Chairman and CEO Keith Mardak and The Music Sales Group Chairman and Managing Director Robert Wise have formed Music Sales America (MSA). The new joint venture between the companies aims to expand the availability of Music Sales publications in North America. Hal Leonard will serve as MSA's exclusive distributor.



Keith Mardak

Music, Novello & Co., J. Curwen & Sons, Edition Wilhelm Hansen and Unión Musical Ediciones.

"We are thrilled with this new deal, which will help two thriving and distinctive publishers create new products and make the most efficient, cost-effective use of their respective resources," Mardak said.

SHAWNEE PRESS PURCHASED

On June 18, Hal Leonard also acquired Shawnee Press, a Nashville, Tenn.-based publisher of choral and instrumental music. Since 1989, Shawnee had been operating as an independent subsidiary of Music Sales. Its divisions include Concert Works Unlimited, GlorySound, Harold Flammer Music, Margun Music, Mark Foster Music and Wide World Music. [halleonard.com](http://halleonard.com); [musicsales.com](http://musicsales.com)

LOUD TECHNOLOGIES | MANAGEMENT

## Loud Creates New Teams

Loud Technologies recently unified its engineering, brand management and product management functions and made two market-focused teams: the Pro Audio Group and the Music Gear Group. Jeffrey Cox, vice president of the Pro Audio Group, will manage EAW and Martin Audio. Cox's group will include the EAW Engineering team headed by Jeff Rocha; the U.K.-based Martin Audio Engineering team headed by Jason Baird; and the Canada-based Pro Audio group headed by

Chris Jubien.

John Boudreau, vice president of the Music Gear Group, and his team will develop the next wave of Mackie, Ampeg, Blackheart, Alvarez and Crate products. Boudreau's group will include Nathan O'Neill; the industrial design team headed by Kimberly Van Horn; Greg Young, Mackie brand director; and Pyotr Belov, director of instrument amps.

The two groups will share core technology where it makes sense. [loudtechinc.com](http://loudtechinc.com)



EGACC | LEGAL

# Counterfeiters Sentenced

After more than a year of coordination and investigation by Chinese legal authorities, the efforts of the Electric Guitar Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition (EGACC) have resulted in a criminal sentence for a major counterfeit guitar distributor.

Fender, Gretsch, Ibanez and Paul Reed Smith originally joined forces in March 2008 to form the EGACC. Simultaneous raids were launched on Nov. 26, 2008, against the warehouse and retail operations of Musoland and Paylessguitar in Beijing. The Xuanwu District Public Security Bureau seized more than 1,200 counterfeit guitars and other musical instruments.

On May 6, Li Dan, the individual responsible for the counterfeit distribution ring, was sentenced to three years in prison by the Xuanwu District Court in Beijing.

## TRIBUTE

Thank you for your contributions to the music industry. You will be missed.

### George Lewis

The founder of George L's Cables — a driving force behind Sho-Bud and the pedal steel guitar — George Lewis passed away on May 22. He had a passion for the guitar that led to his pedal steel designs and the creation of pickups and bodies for a host of musicians in Nashville, Tenn., and around the world.

### Bob Speiden

Bob Speiden passed away on May 15. He was 87 years old. Speiden developed the original SF-12 stereo ribbon microphone. In 1998, he licensed the design to Royer Labs.

"Bob was a brilliant audio engineer whose design of the SF-12 was highly acclaimed throughout the professional audio community," said Rick Perrotta, president of Royer Labs. "Not only did we consider him a guiding influence, he was also a dear friend."

### Heribert Glassl

Heribert Glassl, the founder of the Musik Glassl, passed away on May 10 in Germany. Glassl had been a regular fixture in the music products industry for more than 50 years. He had two musical loves, the tuba and the cello. After a long career in musical instrument making, the tuba and cello were the only products he produced in his small German factory.



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HONORS

**Boomers Best in Show**

GHS David Gilmour Signature Boomers took home a M.I.P.A. International Press Award for best electric guitar strings. More than 100 magazines from around the world got together to vote on the stand-out products of 2008 and 2009. The award was presented at a ceremony at the recent Frankfurt Musikmesse in Germany. [ghsstrings.com](http://ghsstrings.com)

PRICING

**Boston Raises Prices**

Boston Pianos has increased its prices, effective July 1. Current prices will be in effect on all shipments ordered and shipped prior to July 1, as long as inventory is available. Any projected inventory needs currently on order were reconfirmed on June 1 and received priority shipment in July. Dealers are encouraged to communicate with their current Boston prospects, including schools and universities, and advise them of this pending increase. [steinway.com](http://steinway.com)

DISTRIBUTION

**Hosa Goes Global**

Hosa Technology recently granted distribution rights for its product line to Sun Pro-Audio of Cape Town, South Africa, and Hyperactive Audiotechnik of Hünstetten, Germany. The agreements provide for Sun Pro-Audio to distribute throughout South Africa, while Audiotechnik will cover both Germany and Austria. [hosatech.com](http://hosatech.com)

GEAR

**Peterson 2.0**

Peterson Tuners has updated its software tuner program, StrobeSoft. The 2.0 version of StrobeSoft adds VST/AU support and a tap tune feature, which can be used while tap tuning woods for instrument construction. A pitch graph is also included that visually displays the duration of the played note in real time with its note/octave location. The graph is designed for students aiming to improve their vocal intonation or embouchure. An upgrade path is available for users to download at a minimal fee. [petersontuners.com](http://petersontuners.com)



VANDOREN | LEGAL

**Vandoren Exposes Fakes**

For the second time in the last two years, raids at several retailers and wholesale companies by the Korean Custom authorities in Seoul, Korea, turned up counterfeit Vandoren reeds.

Initiated by the French company, the raids uncovered several counterfeit boxes of reeds bearing the Vandoren name and image. Penalties for the counterfeiters will be determined by a judge in the coming weeks.

"It is essential that dealers go to legitimate sources to purchase

Raids in South Korea uncover counterfeit Vandoren reeds

Vandoren products," said Vandoren CEO Bernard Van Doren. "Anyone buying Vandoren products from non-official sources could be buying and reselling fake products without realizing it." [vandoren.com](http://vandoren.com)

APPOINTMENTS

**TC Names New CEO**

Marc Bertrand will succeed John Maier as CEO of TC Group Americas, effective July 31. Bertrand most recently acted as vice president of sales for the commercial installation division of TC Group Americas, while overseeing operations of the Canadian-based headquarters and sitting on the TC Group Americas' board of directors. [tcgroup-americas.com](http://tcgroup-americas.com)



Marc Bertrand



>>> Chris Hollebhone

Euphonix has appointed Chris Hollebhone as operations director.

Heil Sound has named Greg

McVeigh as sales manager for its pro audio division.



>>> Rick Carlson

Kala Brand Music has appointed Rick Carlson to the director of sales and marketing position for U.S. and international

markets. Neutrik has appointed Thomas Chudyk as its distribution manager.

Gary Green, formerly of Steinway & Sons, has joined Pearl River. Green

will serve as Pearl River's national sales director and district sales manager for the company's North/East division.

Markus Sailer has been named the sales and marketing director at Schreiber & Keilwerth.

Shure has combined the sales, marketing and support staff of its International Americas and U.S. business units to

form the new Americas business unit. In this new unit, Mark Humrichouser has been appointed as general manager, José Rivas as director of sales,

Terri Hartman as director of marketing, Althea Ricketts as director of support services and Chris Salay as director of financial analysis.



>>> Terri Hartman





From left: Yamaha's Walt Straiton, High School of the Arts President and Executive Director Ralph Opacic, and Yamaha's Carol Baker and Tom Sumner

YAMAHA | CHARITY

## YAMAHA DONATES KEYBOARDS

Songwriting students at the Orange County High School of the Arts recently received 20 new keyboards from Yamaha Cares. Yamaha Cares is active in fundraising efforts for many Southern California programs, including the Children's

Hospital of Orange County, the Special Olympics, college music scholarships, Boys & Girls Club, The Susan G. Komen Foundation, Make-A-Wish Foundation and Toys For Tots, among others.

[yamaha.com/yamahacares](http://yamaha.com/yamahacares)

## WEBNEWS

# Jupiter Redesigns



**{jupiterxo.com}**

Jupiter has launched a redesigned XO series Web site. It features zoom-in product photography, instrument spec charts and special promotional information. Along with links to social networking pages, visitors can join the XO mailing list to receive product updates and locate their nearest XO series retailer.

**{thelessonroom.com}**

D'Addario's new education-based Web site for teachers and students includes more than 1,500 educational resources. Users can find articles about gear and technology, business and careers, and technique and rehearsal tips. It also has interactive music games and instrument care guides.

**{barcusberry.com}**

Barcus-Berry's free e-newsletters are now available to the public. Those who sign up for the e-newsletters will receive monthly exclusive interviews with Barcus-Berry artists along with the newest product information. Links to Barcus-Berry social networks and other affiliates are included in each e-mail.

**{musser-mallets.com}**

Conn-Selmer's new Musser Web site went live on the Internet in May. The site is an information clearing house for Musser instruments, including marimbas, xylophones, vibes, bells and chimes. It offers clear photos, copy and specifications; an owner's manual for each mallet instrument; the AV8084 Musser catalog; and Musser TV, which features videos from Musser artists and events.



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DONATION

**Lowrey Raises \$25K**

The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation and Lowrey surprised students at the Farnsley Middle School in Louisville, Ky., with \$25,000 worth of instruments for the school's music program. Lowrey's L.I.F.E. (Lowrey Is Fun and Easy) members nationwide, mostly retirees, held dozens of auctions and bake sales and sold orange wristbands to help raise funds for Lowrey's Kids Need Music program. L.I.F.E. chose The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation as the recipient of its fundraising efforts. {[lowrey.com](http://lowrey.com)}

TECHNOLOGY

**Steinberg Touch**

Steinberg's new Cubase iC remote controller application runs on Apple iPhone and iPod touch products. Cubase iC provides comprehensive control for Steinberg's Cubase and Cubase Studio 5.0.1 music production systems and is now available free of charge exclusively through the Apple iTunes Store. {[steinberg.net](http://steinberg.net)}



MARKETING

**MBT's New Branding**

MBT Lighting has designed a new logo to reflect advancements in technology and its growing product line. {[mbtlighting.com](http://mbtlighting.com)}



New York  
Voices

Photo by Chris Carroll

SENNHEISER | EDUCATION

**SENNHEISER GIVES JAZZ CAMP VOICE**

The 2009 Bowling Green State University's Vocal Jazz Camp will run from Aug. 4-9.

The event will feature instruction from members of the vocal jazz quartet, New York Voices. Sennheiser and Neumann will provide a scholarship and live microphones both for use during the camp and for prizes. {[sennheiserusa.com](http://sennheiserusa.com)}

MUSICORP | DISTRIBUTION

**Musicorp Straps In**

Musicorp has added Levy's straps to its distribution line.

Musicorp will initially offer a selection of 19 different Levy's strap designs immediately to be stocked in its Louisville, Ky., central shipping facility. The available models include suede leather straps, polypropylene straps, children's guitar straps, banjo and mandolin straps. {[musicorp.com](http://musicorp.com)}



HALO GUITARS | VENTURES

**NEW GUITAR VENTURE**

Luther Waylon Ford is leaving Halo Guitars, a company he co-founded in 2000. For more than nine years, Ford wrangled a unique approach to promoting musical instruments. His efforts led to coverage in media outlets, such as ABC, CNN, MSNBC and Fox. Ford will unveil his new business venture at the upcoming Summer NAMM show. {[fordguitarcompany.com](http://fordguitarcompany.com)}



Waylon Ford



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# IDEAS

>>> **Inside IDEAS**

> Streetwise Selling Page 38

> The Customer Connection Page 40

ASK ALAN | BY ALAN FRIEDMAN

## SELLING RENTALS

Alan,

*How should a customer's rental equity (or rental credits) be accounted for when put toward the purchase of a new instrument? My accounting software currently removes prior rental payments from rental income and reassigns it to sales income when the rental instrument is sold. But I believe you've said it should be left alone and any credit for rental payments should be merely deducted from the instrument's sale price.*

*Michael Schaner  
PM Music Center  
Aurora, Ill.*

Thanks for asking about this great and often misunderstood issue. You are correct in your recollection of my opinion — that all instrument rental payments should be recorded as rental payments and left alone, no matter what ultimately happens to the instrument.

I maintain that when built-up rental credits get applied toward an instrument purchase, those credits should be merely reflected in the instrument's sale price, effectively as a sales discount. The rental credits should *not* be recorded as an ever-increasing liability — they are being built up because we



Accounting for rental equity when put toward an instrument purchase

don't know if the credits will be used by the customer. Nor should they be recorded as a reduction in rental income if and when they are "cashed in."

As I stated, each instrument rented for a period of time is generating income that should be recorded as rental income. To later reduce the amount of recorded rental income by the

amount of these built-up credits (especially after the accounting year has ended and financial statements and tax returns have been filed) is, in my opinion, erroneous.

It's tantamount to saying that the instrument was rented for less than what the store actually collected and reported, and that it's now effectively an ongoing series of prior-period adjustments (an accounting mistake made in a prior year that has been corrected in a future year — not good). It also erroneously distorts (by reducing) rental income and erroneously inflates (by increasing) sales income, gross profit and gross profit percent of the rented instrument now being sold. This makes all sales and rental activity analysis wrong and/or misleading.

### IMPROPER SOFTWARE USAGE

One last point, based on my 20 or so years of experience using Tri-Tech AIMsi and other music retail accounting software solutions. Just because software lets a rental transaction be recorded a certain way doesn't necessarily make that way correct. I truly love AIMsi and the other popular music retail software solutions because, when properly

installed and set up, they produce the accurate, meaningful financial data music store owners need to run a business.

But these same fabulous software packages can also be used in a flawed way by an uninformed user. Let me be clear: I am not saying the software *itself* is flawed. I am saying some users have set up their software in a flawed way, such as letting rental credits reduce rental income or recording the sale of a rented instrument as rental income instead of as sales income.

Mike, your question is excellent because this issue is often misunderstood by music store owners and their accountants, as they try to record and report these transactions in conformity with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), other accounting pronouncements (FASB #13), our tax code and just plain-old good management reporting. If you're having trouble falling asleep or get frequently constipated, I can send you a copy of the Internal Revenue Code, which makes for excellent toilet reading. **MI**

Alan Friedman, CPA, provides accounting and financial services to music industry clients. He is a frequent speaker at NAMM U. seminars and can be reached at 860-677-9191 or [alan@fkco.com](mailto:alan@fkco.com). Visit his Web site at [fkco.com](http://fkco.com).

STREETWISE SELLING | BY KENNY SMITH

# Quoting Prices Kills Profit

The easiest way to increase profits in music retail is to stop quoting prices. The buck stops at your mouth. The moment we quote a price, whether in-store or on the phone, we give up control, and the value of the product begins to drop. We're then at risk of being eliminated. I'll admit I'm guilty of quoting prices. In fact, it took me years of getting my butt kicked to learn that graciously handing out prices wasn't the answer to making profitable sales in music retail.



## WHY CUSTOMERS ASK FOR PRICES

It may be unintentional, but most customers want to skip the sales pitch and fast-forward to the price. Have you ever asked yourself why? The reasons vary, but the three most common are as follows.

First, people are preprogrammed from birth to ask the price of everything, whether they're interested in owning it or not. Many times, this is nothing more than a knee-jerk reaction. Second, customers may not have anything else more intelligent to ask. Too often we forget that customers don't want to appear stupid — this is the one question they can ask without accidentally getting embarrassed. And the last reason people ask for price is they are seriously shopping you, but you don't know it.

No matter what the case, when you prematurely quote prices, you lose. Even if you get the deal, when it's all said and done, ask yourself if you could have made more profit. Your

ability to affect a customer's perceived value of a product becomes much more difficult as soon as you give a number. The customer's brain goes into calculator mode. Instead of thinking with his emotions, his brain starts flashing "Danger, Will Robinson" signals.

## HOW TO AVOID PRICE QUOTING

If you've worked one day on a music store's sales floor, "How much?" is a common question, so don't act surprised when you hear it.

Try to avoid quoting the price the first time you're asked. To make this work, you've got to be ready and quick. Even a slight pause ruins it. Point out a feature — something compelling about the product that the customer can appreciate. This is where knowing your stuff becomes important.

One of my mentors, Hartley Peavey, always said, "If you can't explain your products, then all you've got to talk about is the price." And he's right!

Another way to avoid just handing over the price is to turn a cus-

tomers' "How much?" question into a qualifying move. Herein lies an opportunity to find out key details, such as "How soon do you need it?" or "If you bought it today, how would you pay for it?" This is profitable information to know before you go spitting out a number. Someone financing may not be nearly as concerned with the selling price as someone paying in gold bullion.

Find out if the customer has already priced the product elsewhere and how much he thinks it costs. It's very possible to get these answers without telling customers your price or upsetting them. You just need practice. Try it first with a stunt customer — every store has at least a couple of these.

What if everything in the store has a price on it? It doesn't matter. Most customers don't believe it and still want to know, "What's my price?" You can use these same techniques when this situation arises, and they'll work just as well.

At first you may feel a little shaky dodging the price question. After a few tries, it will become second nature, and you'll be able to deflect it a few times in the same deal. Every time you do, you add value to the sale and stand to make a higher margin in the end. **MI**

Kenny Smith is an industry veteran and consults for both retailers and suppliers. He can be reached at kennysmith8888@gmail.com.

Techniques to avoid quoting prices and to draw attention back to value



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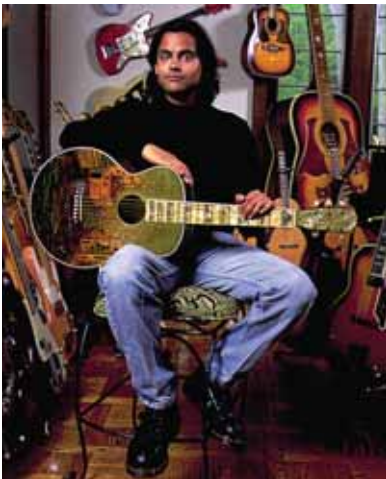
[getolympus.com/audio](http://getolympus.com/audio)

THE CUSTOMER CONNECTION | BY RAVI

# Nurturing Newcomers

Art programs disappearing from public schools has become part of American life. Creating well-rounded Americans, intellectually speaking (we have plenty of *physically* well-rounded Americans, despite thriving sports programs), stands in the shadows of achieving high scores on standardized tests, which hardly prepares one for real life.

Surely one cannot place the burden of filling this void on local music stores. However, “mom and pop” do directly impact the future of school music programs. For remaining programs to survive and inspire the resurrection of others, participating students have to excel.



Music retailers can impact the future of school music programs simply by how they serve first-time instrument renters

Students, parents and retailers should consider any rental as a rent-to-own opportunity, so the quality of rentals should be that of a purchasable instrument. After all, we’re trying to engage open minds for a lifetime.

## MAKE IT SIMPLE TO SWITCH

Along with quality instruments, flexible rental agreements are vital to a child’s artistic development. Kids should be able to upgrade or switch instruments mid-semester easily in order to find their musical voices. For

most beginners, a horn is a horn and a violin is full, three-quarter or half-size. While this may be the only criteria concerning first-timers, their needs will quickly mature as their talents develop. No restrictive contract should stunt their growth.

## INTRODUCE TEACHERS

Good band or orchestra experiences often lead to further private study. Creating incentives for parents to augment school music programs, such as discounted rental rates for those who also enroll in private lessons, is a win-win situation. When junior and his parent come in to rent an instrument, why not briefly introduce him to an available, personable teacher who might inspire him to further his studies? Nothing will endear a potential student to a store like a personal introduction to a professional musician who could possibly be his guiding light.

It is our responsibility as citizens to work conscientiously today to create the best tomorrow. Our children’s intellect is a critical component. We can preach all we want, but at the end of the day, simply not getting in our own way will create a natural interest in and demand for the arts. **MI**

Ravi is a musician, clinician and music industry lecturer. Visit him at [heyravi.com](http://heyravi.com).

## STREAMLINE RENTALS

Retailers must not create obstacles in the instrument-rental process, as flustered parents may throw in the towel before junior even enters the ring. Facilitating the entire experience will make long-term customers out of newly inducted school music families.

Why not provide educators with preprinted questionnaires for each student, regarding required instruments, accessories, books, etc.? Make them multiple-choice to ensure that they comply with product availability. Perhaps create a form on your store’s Web site or social network. Either one would streamline the process. Excited students would arrive at your store with information in hand or ready to collect merchandise they’ve ordered electronically.

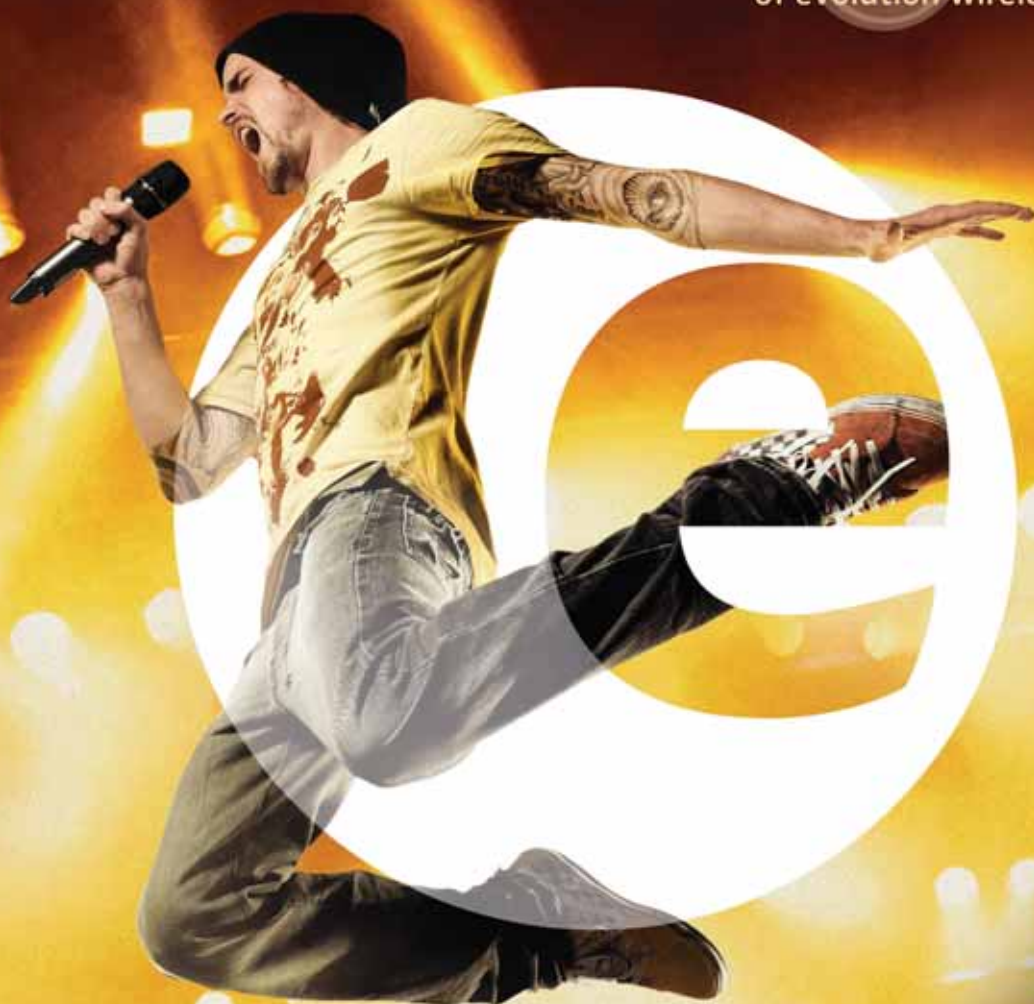
## NO POOR-QUALITY INSTRUMENTS

Only well-maintained instruments should be rented along with the appropriate accouterments — no trumpets going out with extra reeds! Otherwise, we’re cutting off junior at the knees, along with chipping away at the future of school music programs and your future customer base.




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Dex and Rosi  
Johnson





# THE SURVIVORS

BY ZACH PHILLIPS  
PHOTO BY THERESA CASSAGNE

Rosi and Dex Johnson of Mississippi Music fought Hurricane Katrina, the recession, inventory nightmares and the ailing piano market — and lived to tell about it

On Aug. 28, 2005, Rosi and Dex Johnson touched down in Guangzhou, China, for a Pearl River Piano factory tour. Not a full day into the trip, they got news that a developing storm, Hurricane Katrina, was picking up momentum back home.

“I told Dex, ‘I have a bad feeling about this one,’” said Rosi, president of Hattiesburg, Miss.-based Mississippi Music.

The husband-and-wife team scrambled for the next 24 hours trying to get a family member or store manager on the phone. When they finally got through, they were told to stay put — everyone was either evacuating or hiding out. They made the tough decision to finish the trip, helpless to do anything from 8,500 miles away.

When they returned to Mississippi seven days later, much of the landscape was unrecognizable. "It was complete devastation," Rosi said. She recalled how their daughter had to stay home the week they were gone so she could conserve enough gas to pick them up from the airport. (Gas station pumps were tapped out.) Days later, the Johnsons drove a four-wheeler three miles past a police line to rescue a friend who'd lost his home along the Gulf Coast.

"There was so much debris I had to wear goggles," Rosi

said. "There was nothing left around his home. *Nothing*."

Luckily, physical damage at Mississippi Music's four stores was limited to a leaky roof and shattered windows at the Biloxi, Miss., location. But physical damage was only one bullet the company dodged. All stores lost power for at least a week. (The Hattiesburg location was without power for 13 days.) All stores went nearly a month without any computer systems. There was also a slew of homeless employees and, all the while, zero business coming in.

"And it was hot, hot, hot," Dex said.

"The whole area was closed, even the banks," Rosi said. "There was no electricity. Nobody had any money."

Nowadays, you wouldn't think Mississippi Music was a Katrina survivor. 2007 turned out to be a banner year for the 63-year-old, full-line dealership, which was founded by Dex's parents, Jim and Mac Johnson. The company's sales have taken a hit due to the current recession, but gross margins have barely dipped. Rosi now likens Katrina to "a nightmare with a silver lining." It was a nightmare, in fact, that helped shape the company into a more efficient, more resilient operation.

#### THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH

That isn't to say the recovery wasn't a lifetime worth of headaches.

The week following the hurricane, company communications were handled via cell phones (when they worked). Vendors were contacted, and most gave Mississippi Music various payment extensions. In turn, the company passed on the same courtesy to its customers. Insurance only covered one week of lost business, but staff continued getting paid. And employees with damaged homes were given free reign to camp out in the company's recital halls.

"I let them move in with mattresses upstairs, and they had a bathroom and air conditioning," Rosi said.

Mississippi Music reopened for business 10 days after Katrina passed, and people wanted to come back to work immediately. What few sales the company made in-store were written up by hand.

"We have a system in place from when we used to do it

manually, but we'd never updated it," Rosi said. "Never thought of it."

Reps in the company's Audio Services division stayed on call with cell phones to do damage assessments at churches. "They bought water and supplies with their own money, which I didn't even know about," Rosi said. "When they'd go to assess damage for these churches, they'd give them supplies."

Mississippi Music also became a hub for used instrument donations from big-hearted Americans hoping to put music back into damaged schools. The gesture turned out to be a little too much of a good thing.

"We said, 'Please stop,'" explained Dex, who serves as Mississippi Music's executive vice president and public relations guru. "Our repairmen were devastated, but people wanted us to fix these horns for free. And we did fix a certain amount, but then we had to stop.

"We started telling people, 'If you want to repair [the instruments] and then send them, we'd love it.'"

#### THE BANNER YEAR

As 2005 rolled into 2006, people in Mississippi and Louisiana began collecting insurance settlements and rebuilding their homes. They also began buying instruments again. Lots of instruments. And they shopped at Mississippi Music to repay the company for its kindness, resulting in a sales windfall the likes of which Rosi and Dex had never seen.

"The March 2007 [fiscal year] was banner," Rosi said. "We couldn't keep up with it. It was totally bizarre."

Rosi and Dex estimated sales in their piano and combo

## AVOIDING DISASTERS

Since Hurricane Katrina, Mississippi Music has been careful to update its hurricane disaster plan regularly. Company President Rosi Johnson offered the following advice to fellow music retailers who need a disaster plan.

- + Create an up-to-date, extensive employee call list — now. It should include (at the employee's discretion) personal cell and home phone numbers, as well as numbers of a spouse or friend living with the employee. Remind all staff to notify you if numbers change. Update it annually.
- + Have a store meeting the moment a hurricane poses a threat to go over everyone's plans. Make note of employees who are leaving town and where they are going, and get new contact numbers, if needed. Communications are extremely important during the recovery process.
- + Have everyone back up their computer data regularly.
- + Close out POS register and credit card machines. Make a report, and do a deposit. Be sure to keep a copy of the deposit slip.
- + Fill all company vehicles with gas as far in advance as possible since lines will form early at gas stations. Park behind the store close to the building.
- + Unplug all electronic devices in-store, and place them at least a foot off the floor if possible. Use cinder blocks, if necessary. Move expensive or large seasonal sellers away from windows.
- + Turn off all battery backup/power supplies, and lift them at least 1 foot off the floor. Place a garbage bag over each computer box and monitor.
- + Before leaving, make sure all computers are shut down and unplugged. Carry them upstairs if there is a second floor in your building. Turn air conditioning and heater units to the "off" position.



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*Paul Reed Smith*  
[www.prsguitars.com/amps](http://www.prsguitars.com/amps)





departments were up 50 percent from the previous year, as people began purchasing replacement instruments.

"Musicians wanted something to calm them, something soothing," Rosi said, noting that band and orchestra instruments didn't experience as drastic an uptick as other categories. "Ironically, so many of these people called and said their child took the horn with them [when they evacuated]."

#### INVENTORY GLUT

It seemed like the storybook ending to a dark period. Only it wasn't over.

"When sales spike, what do you do?" Rosi asked rhetorically.

"Buy inventory," Dex said.

And following the surge in business, the company was left with too much stock. The glut, in fact, turned out to be a symptom of a deeper problem, one that

had been going unnoticed for years: a tendency for individual stores to overbuy.

Rosi and Dex became aware of the issue in January 2007. They'd begun running reports on aging inventory using Tri-Tech's AIMsi software and didn't like what they saw. A lot of product was celebrating its second birthday.

Rosi called the four store managers together for some aggressive goal-setting. "I threw out GMROI [gross margin return on investment] reports," she said. "We actually reviewed every vendor, every item line by line. I gave every store a flat-out goal: 'Your inventory has to come down \$150,000 by so and so time.' I didn't say which department. I didn't even go there. I said, 'You've got to get rid of the old stuff first. You won't be able to order anything. And I'm sorry to say that.'"

"We started with combo, but it was amazing how many old pianos you might have sitting there. You forget about them."

Managers began remerchandising their showrooms to get old product front-and-center. "Say, with guitars that were older, we made a display in the middle of the floor," Rosi said. Prices were slashed, and the company took a hit, so it could get the inventory out the door and get cash flowing again.

Blemished, older pianos were moved to Mississippi Music's Jackson, Miss., and Biloxi stores, which then hosted scratch-and-dent sales.

"We did very well with that," Rosi said. "We used to do that every year, and we'd gotten away from it. That brought in some income."

Managers were also encouraged to take advantage of eBay to blow out blemished, used and discontinued merchandise. "eBay helped, and we hadn't been actively doing eBay like some other companies," Rosi said.

A student employee originally handled the transactions, but all stores have since designated an employee to run their eBay businesses.

#### CHANGING PURCHASING CULTURE

Most of these measures were quick fixes, though. For the long-term, Mississippi Music needed shrewder purchasing etiquette, and the onus fell on

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store managers.

“Having different stores is very challenging because you have to carry the right [product] mix, the right quantities and convince everyone that we are one company,” Rosi said. “That means we have *one* inventory. And that’s the hardest thing to get across.”

Managers were given a directive to check in with other stores when preparing to order an item to make sure it wasn’t in-stock elsewhere. When buying quantities larger than three or four of a single item, managers also had to check in with other stores to see if they needed the inventory.

Rosi Johnson  
on inventory:  
‘This mentality of,  
“If we don’t have a  
lot of stuff, people  
don’t like it, they  
don’t think we’re in  
business” — that’s  
just bull. It’s just a  
mindset.’

“Say you have to buy six of something to get the deal from the supplier,” Rosi said. “Well, that store doesn’t have to buy six. Call the other stores. ‘I want two of these. Do you want two?’”

Mike Guillot, Mississippi Music’s purchasing manager, also checks every manager’s order.

“I told Mike, ‘I want you to look at these POs, and when you see six, 12, 18, 24 [quantities of an item], I want to know,’” Rosi said, adding that she’ll often double-check purchase orders herself, as well.

The new practice meant some painful micromanaging at first but has since resulted in a slimmer, faster-turning, better-managed inventory.

“And they’ve gotten *a lot* better at it,” Rosi said of the individual store managers.

As far as not being perceived as a gear heaven among customers?

“This mentality of, ‘If we don’t have a lot of stuff, people don’t like it, they don’t think we’re in business’ — that’s just bull,” Rosi said. “It’s just a mindset.”

#### THE SALE IS NOT DEAD

This isn’t to say Mississippi Music didn’t have some creative inventory management systems already in place. For years, the company has hosted a closed-door, invitation-only sale at each

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## {THE SURVIVORS}

of its stores on a Thursday in February. The annual event generates cash and moves stock before Mississippi Music's fiscal year-end in March. And the 2009 sale was a doozy.

A line of 130 people stretched a full block down the street outside of the company's Hattiesburg store, waiting for the doors to open at 2 p.m. By the end of the day, 400 people had passed through. The event was promoted via direct mail and e-mail blasts.

"In light of the economic downturn, company-wide it brought in the company's second highest sales ever in a single day," Rosi said.

"We reduce [the price of] everything, but it might only be 5 percent for something new."

In Biloxi, an area hit badly by Katrina, Mississippi Music opted to add a cash-back element to the closed-door sale this year. Along with mail and e-mail promotions, radio spots were also aired, and company reps dropped off fliers at local schools.

"People need money this year with the economic downturn," Rosi said. "We did cash back of 5 percent on top of the sale price."

All sales were final, and in the end, the Biloxi location doubled its business from the previous year's sale.

### RELATIONSHIPS STILL MATTER

Despite steadfast instrument rentals and decent combo sales, Mississippi Music's piano division has been hurt by the recession, with sales down roughly 30 percent for the 2009 fiscal year. Still, Rosi said the company's overall gross margins are "just slightly down" from last year. She credited her employees.

"The major factor that carried Mississippi Music through Katrina, helped it capitalize on the banner years after Katrina and now pulls [it] through this economic recession is our amazing management team and employees who work hard to give our customers the best service to keep them coming back to shop with us," Rosi said.

Steady sales in the house of worship market have helped, too. Mississippi Music's stores are located deep in the Bible Belt, and when churches began buy-

ing again, they remembered the goodwill of the Audio Services division in the weeks following Katrina.

"Two years after Katrina, that division boomed," Rosi said.

'Every time we're  
in that band hall,  
we have to, in a  
nice way, tell that  
band director what  
we're doing for  
them. We have  
to sell ourselves  
each week.'

— Dex Johnson

Allen Riley, Mississippi Music's top keyboard salesperson, recommended that fellow dealers interested in getting deeper into the house of worship market "befriend the guy on the keyboard [at a church] every Sunday morning. He is eventually going to bring in a treasurer, deacon, worship leader, music minister or even pastor. That is the key to not only having a one-time successful large sale to a church but a lifetime of dedicated business."

Snagging that lifetime of dedicated business is so important to Mississippi Music that Dex spends most of his time on the road, citing his father's example. Dex visits with school band and orchestra directors and takes them to lunch, even if one of Mississippi Music's road reps has already called on the director that week.

"I know every band director in the state except for a few new ones," he said.

"Every time we're in that band hall, we have to, in a nice way, tell that band director what we're doing for them. We have to sell ourselves each week."

Acknowledging the high cost of such efforts, Dex smiled and said, "It's very expensive. But we're going to make sure they love us." MI



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# FALL PRODUCT PREVIEW

## 2009



SAMSON | ZOOM R16

## Portable Studio

Zoom's new R16 digital recorder boasts 16-track playback, eight-track simultaneous recording and secure digital (SD) memory. The R16 is three production tools in one device: a multi-track recorder, an audio interface and a control surface, providing the necessary tools for creating studio-quality recordings. Users can record up to 32 GB on an SD card. The SD recording is convenient for file transferring and avoids crashing the hard drive. MAP: \$399.

[samsontech.com](http://samsontech.com)

# GEAR >

GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES



**1** AMERICAN MUSIC & SOUND CONCORDA LINE WALDEN is now shipping the full Concorda line of acoustic guitars, including the all-solid, high-gloss CG2010 grand auditorium model (pictured). The 2000 series combines Walden's SupraNatura line's designs — a graphite-reinforced, thin-profile neck; bone nut and saddle; and maple binding — with a maple-mahogany rosette. {[americanmusicandsound.com](http://americanmusicandsound.com)}

**2** C.F. MARTIN D-12 DAVID CROSBY SPECIAL EDITION The new D-12 David Crosby Special Edition guitar has been designed to resemble the D-18DC Signature edition and built to be tuned a whole step below standard pitch. Crosby requested that the African black ebony fingerboard have jumbo frets and that the fingerboard terminates in a radius that follows the sound-hole arc, resulting in a partial 18th fret. {[martinguitar.com](http://martinguitar.com)}

**3** MAJOR MUSIC SUPPLY RG-10 Major Music Supply debuted the new Revival RG-10 in response to requests from dealers around the country. An affordable, full-size dreadnought, the RG-10 is an ideal match for aspiring guitarists seeking an affordable instrument. It features a spruce top and mahogany back and sides. The RG-10 also includes a gig bag. MSRP: \$219.99. {[majormusicsupply.com](http://majormusicsupply.com)}

**5** YAMAHA FJX730SC, FJX720SC The FG acoustic guitar, introduced in the 1960s with the Red Label, is now complemented by the FJX730SC and FJX720SC acoustic-electric, medium jumbo body models. The FJX730SC comes with Yamaha's A.R.T. (Acoustic Resonance Transducer) acoustic-electric pickup system. MSRP: FJX730SC with A.R.T. system, \$899.99; FJX720SC, \$789.99. {[yamaha.com](http://yamaha.com)}





DAISY ROCK | EMERALD VELVET FINISH

## Emerald City

Daisy Rock Guitars is now offering its Rock Candy Special guitar in an Emerald Velvet finish. The Rock Candy Special is designed with Daisy Rock's signature girl-guitar features: lightweight construction, a slim and narrow neck design, and visual appeal. It also comes with black binding, star fret-board inlays, a sycamore body with quilted maple contour top, mahogany neck and rosewood fingerboard. The Rock Candy Special is also available in Honey Velvet and Purple Velvet. MSRP: \$709. {[daisyrock.com](http://daisyrock.com)}



EKO GUITARS | RANGER, ROKES VI

## Eko Relaunches

Players can once again pick up an Eko Ranger or Eko Rokes VI, as the Eko guitar brand recently relaunched in the United States. A select team of luthiers have developed the new instruments to reflect many of the characteristics, features and designs of the Eko models made in Italy between 1960 and the late '80s. Eko is distributed by IBC Trading. {[ekoguitarsusa.com](http://ekoguitarsusa.com)}



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[BOSS | FRV-1 FENDER REVERB PEDAL](#)

### Classic Reverb Staple

BOSS and Fender have collaborated to develop the FRV-1, a recreation of the 1963 Fender Reverb. A staple sound of rockabilly, country, blues, surf rock and even grunge rock, this tube-driven reverb sound is now available in a rugged, compact pedal.

The FRV-1 recreates the classic spring-reverb sound via patented COSM technology. Three classic controls for Dwell, Tone and Mix let players refine their tone, adding warmth or twang.

{[bossus.com](#)}



[LEVY'S LEATHERS | CHRISTIAN GUITAR STRAPS](#)

### Praiseworthy Guitar Straps

Levy's Leathers has expanded its Christian-themed guitar straps with soft garment leather designs, embossed with Christian symbols and complemented with embroidery. Pictured is model MG26EECC with the cross symbol, available in brown, black and tan. The other models feature religious symbols, such as the fish, dove, trinity and Bible images. {[levysleathers.com](#)}

[WEASELTRAP RECORDS | HARMONIC CAPO](#)

### Possible Progressions

Weaseltrap Records and guitarist Bob Kilgore now offer a capo that plays harmonics. This gadget looks like a conventional capo, but it works differently. Instead of pressing strings down firmly to the fretboard, it has six individually adjustable, soft rubber pads that lightly touch the strings to produce harmonic tones when the open strings are played. And unlike other capos, guitarists can play below it. Pull off notes with the left hand, and the open strings are converted to harmonics. The Harmonic Capo makes seemingly impossible chords and note progressions possible.

{[weaseltrap.com](#)}





ACE PRODUCTS | RB CONTINENTAL BAG

## Drop-Tested

Reunion Blues has expanded its leather line with a new, rugged RB Continental guitar case. It's made with a water-resistant ballistic exterior that surrounds a new, lightweight Flexoskeleton protection system of high-density foam and EVA impact panels. This offers enough protection to survive a 40-foot drop. Inside, it has a velvet tuck interior lining; solid-cell neck brace suspension system; and thick, soft mesh-lined side panels that cradle the instrument.

{[aceproducts.com](http://aceproducts.com)}



WARWICK | T.M. STEVENS SIGNATURE BASS

## Warrior Roar

The Warwick Custom Shop's new, colorful, African-themed T.M. Stevens Signature Bass Streamer Stage I honors the inventor of heavy metal funk. The neck is made of maple with Ekanga strips. Africa and name-plate inlays with LEDs also adorn the 24-fret Wenge fingerboard and headstock. Its funky tone is provided by active MEC P/J-pickups and active MEC three-band electronics. {[warwick.de](http://warwick.de)}

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## GEAR

### S & ACCESSORIES

ORANGE AMPS | OBC810  
BASS SPEAKER CABINET

## Tiny Terror Returns

In keeping with the Tiny Terror concept, Orange has launched a new OBC810 bass speaker cabinet using 8-by 10-inch speakers with solid construction, rear casters and grip handles. For professional sound quality and road-ready dependability, this new speaker uses high-quality materials to deliver its sound. [omec.com](http://omec.com)



ROLAND | CUBE-80X

## Roland's New Cube Tunes Up

The new Cube-80X guitar amplifier from Roland delivers 80 watts of power through a 12-inch speaker. It features a switchable clean and lead channel design derived from its predecessor. The Cube-80X includes a new looper function and solo function with memory ability. It also has a new tuner function and an auxiliary input for play-along with external MP3 or CD players. MSRP: \$529. [rolandus.com](http://rolandus.com)



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An advertisement for Curt Mangan guitar strings. The background is a collage of various string packages. In the center is a large white star with a black outline, containing the text "MADE IN USA". Above the star is the "curtmangan" logo. Below the star is the "FUSIONMATCHED" logo and the tagline "REAL STRINGS REAL TONE™". At the bottom, the slogan "IT'S NOT WHAT WE DO... IT'S WHAT WE DON'T DO!" is written in a stylized font.





IBANEZ | PROMETHEAN PRO BASS AMP

## Hot Red Amp

Ibanez has expanded its amplification offerings with the Promethean Class D P500H 250-watt head and the P5110 10-inch speaker combo. The vibe control knob offers large and small tonal changes from vintage to modern bass tones. MSRP: P5110 combo, \$933.32; P500H 250-watt head, \$699.99. {[ibanez.com](http://ibanez.com)}



MARSHALL | HAZE LINE

## In a Haze

Marshall's new 40-watt Haze combo and 15-watt Haze head are designed for clean sound, blues tones and rock. The Haze 40 combo is equipped with a single Celestion G12-66 Marquee 12-inch speaker. It features a closed-back cabinet with four circular holes to preserve both an open-back and a closed-back design. The Haze 15 head is powered by a pair of 6V6 valves. Two 8-ohm jacks and one 16-ohm jack are provided. MSRP: Haze 40-watt combo, \$1,000; Haze 15-watt head, \$840. {[marshallamps.com](http://marshallamps.com)}



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GIBSON | 1962 EPIPHONE WILSHIRE REISSUE

## Wilshire in White

In cooperation with the Gibson Custom Shop, Epiphone has released the second guitar in the Epiphone Custom Historic USA series, the 1962 Wilshire Reissue, in white. Made in Nashville, Tenn., and limited to only 100 instruments worldwide, it combines attention to detail and historic accuracy. The guitar comes in an original-style hard case with a numbered certificate of authenticity in a leatherette binder. It also includes a vintage coiled guitar cord; commemorative picks and T-shirt; and a 1962-style, thin leather strap. MSRP: \$4,832. ([epiphone.com](http://epiphone.com))



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PRS | HOT HUES FINISHES

## Retro Dream

Paul Reed Smith Guitars has teamed up again with DuPont and its Hot Hues color palette to offer new metallic guitar finishes, such as Twilight, Catalina Dream and Sinful Cinnamon. The most recent application of the Hot Hues line will be featured on the Mira and the Starla models.

"[The colors] are brand-new for us, and we think they will give these already retro-inspired guitars a customized, Hot Rod vibe," said Rick Hodgson, a member of the PRS sales team. Pictured is the Catalina Dream Starla. ([prsguitars.com](http://prsguitars.com))





HANSON | CIGNO

## Italy Rocks

Hanson Musical Instruments, a guitar and bass pickups manufacturer, has launched a full line of electric guitars, which will be available in August. The initial offering includes the Cigno, based on a set-neck, triple-P90 design. The Cigno's look recalls the Italian side of the electric guitar explosion in the late 1950s and early '60s. However, the guitar's appointed with professional-grade hardware and modern components. Hanson's specialty in pickup design also means the Cigno can produce sonically competitive tones. MSRP: \$899. {[hansonguitars.com](http://hansonguitars.com)}

FENDER | SIGNATURE  
JAZZMASTER GUITARS

## Sonic Masters

Sonic Youth has teamed up with Fender to create the Thurston Moore and Lee Ranaldo signature Jazzmaster guitars. Moore and Ranaldo modified their Jazzmasters by simplifying them, leaving just a three-way switch and volume knob. Both guitars have alder bodies and C-shape maple necks with rosewood fingerboards, American Vintage Jazzmaster tremolos and black anodized aluminum pickguards. Ranaldo's guitar (pictured) features revoiced, wide-range humbucking pickups; a Mustang-style bridge; and 21 vintage frets. It comes in a Sapphire Blue Transparent satin nitrocellulose lacquer finish with a satin black painted headstock. {[fender.com](http://fender.com)}



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**1 HEIL SOUND PR 20 UT** As a low-cost version of Heil's PR 20, the new PR 20 UT has specifications and performance characteristics that are identical to its sibling, such as a wide frequency range, the ability to handle +140 dB SPL, -35 dB of rear rejection and natural articulation. The difference is a stripped-down packaging scheme, putting the UT in nearly any musician's price range. MSRP: \$115. [heilsound.com](http://heilsound.com)



**2 SHURE SUPER 55 DELUXE** Shure has taken the iconic 55SH body, dropped in a new supercardioid motor and added some blue highlights. The resulting Super 55 Deluxe vocal microphone has the same retro look but with a contemporary performance upgrade. The Super 55 includes modern sound, high output, a supercardioid polar pattern, an internal shock mount and rugged die-cast steel casing. MSRP: \$300. [shure.com](http://shure.com)



**3 BLUE MICROPHONE WOODPECKER** The new Woodpecker combines the low noise and detail of Blue's class-A discrete, handmade electronics with the sound of a handmade, aluminum ribbon, pressure-gradient transducer. Woodpecker's active ribbon provides the warmth of a traditional ribbon microphone, while retaining the high-end shine of a condenser microphone. It's designed to be durable and to deliver the wide frequency response needed for modern digital recording. The Woodpecker's exotic wood finish, gold trim, custom shock-mount and cherry wood storage box make it the ideal centerpiece of any recording studio. [bluemic.com](http://bluemic.com)



**4 AKG LIMITED EDITION D 7 LTD** The redesigned, limited-edition D 7 LTD vocal microphone from AKG is a reference dynamic mic that delivers high-end performance and sound. The new Laminated Varimotion diaphragm lets the microphone be fine-tuned without any extra tuning resonators. The mic's integrated high-pass filter completely eliminates handling noises, and the new acoustical-designed inner windscreen provides additional protection from interruptions in live applications. The inner windscreen of the D 7 LTD can also be replaced with an extra windscreen, which comes supplied with the vocal mic. This further extends its lifespan and durability. [akg.com](http://akg.com)



**5 SENNHEISER 2000 SERIES** Sennheiser's new 2000 series is a professional, entry-level wireless microphone system. It includes rugged products for a wide range of wireless applications. For the SKM 2000 handheld transmitter (pictured), all capsules from the evolution series can be used. From July onward, the microphone head of the e 965 true condenser microphone will also be available for the handheld transmitter. The body-pack transmitter is equipped with a three-pole plug and can be used with all of Sennheiser's professional clip-on microphones. [sennheiserusa.com](http://sennheiserusa.com)







OLYMPUS | LS-10

## Recording to Go

The new Olympus LS-10 Linear PCM audio recording device delivers the high fidelity of a portable, professional recording studio in a light, go-anywhere body. No extra gear is required to record audio in uncompressed 24-bit, 96-kHz linear PCM format for digital stereo recordings true to the original performance. It offers multiple recording formats: WAV, MP3 and WMA. Built-in high-sensitivity and low-noise stereo microphones capture important details and nuances. The microphone amplifier circuitry is carefully designed to reduce interference for greater sound clarity. [olympusamerica.com](http://olympusamerica.com)



SONY | PCM-M10

## Growing Family

The PCM-M10 joins Sony's PCM-D1 and PCM-D50, forming a comprehensive family of portable field recorders. The new M10 recorder is 24-bit, 96-kHz capable with electret stereo condenser microphones, 4 GB of internal flash memory and a micro SD/memory stick slot. It offers a built-in speaker, cross-memory recording, digital pitch control, digital limiter, low-cut filter, track mark functions, 5-second pre-recording buffer and A-B repeat capability. Sony's PCM-M10 features durable metal construction and long battery life using conventional AA alkaline batteries. It will be available in October. MSRP: \$399. [sony.com](http://sony.com)



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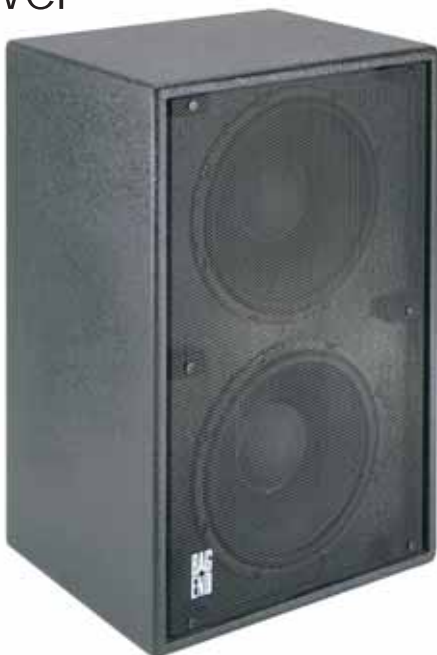


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BAG END | DOUBLE 12 SUBWOOFERS

### Feel the Power

Bag End's double 12-inch subwoofer is now available in both a passive installation version (model D12-E-I) and a powered version (model PD12-E-I, pictured) featuring the company's built-in, high-efficiency, modular Minima One amplifier. These 12-inch subwoofers can be installed, taking advantage of their low profile and compact size, or used as portable units. They deliver a flat frequency response and reliable high-fidelity performance. The dual 12-inch cones deliver frequency response down to 8 Hz when used with the 8 Hz integrator and blend well with most upper-range systems, giving the sound at both low and high listening levels a feeling of power. ([bagend.com](http://bagend.com))



WAVEANGLE | RADIAN GOLD SERIES

### Small Miracle

WaveAngle is now shipping the Radian Gold series wireless guitar system. The Radian system is a compact, wireless unit designed for use with electric guitars and basses. It uses wireless technology designed to run in the 2.4 GHz worldwide license free ISM radio band. The transmitter and receiver fit easily into an accessory pocket, require no wall wart for power, operate on a single AAA battery for a life of up to 20 hours, and do not need any additional cables or rack mounting gear. MSRP: \$299. ([waveangle.com](http://waveangle.com))

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INTERFACE

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**ENT-15P**

**ENT-8P**

**ENT-12P**

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AMERICAN AUDIO | XSP SERIES

## Concert Sound

American Audio's new XSP series of high-power speakers are versatile and affordable. Models include the XSP-8A (8-inch), XSP-10A (10-inch), XSP-12A (12-inch) and XSP-15A (15-inch). The built-in amplifiers can be connected to a mixing console or sound source directly without the need for a typical amp. With an "invisible" full grill design and flyable and floor-mount options, the XSP speakers are ideal for installs. MSRP: \$239.95-\$559.95. {[americanaudio.us](http://americanaudio.us)}



MOTTAUDIO | B8MP3

## True Mix

The Guardian Audio B8MP3 eight-channel TCC (True Channel Count) mixer from MottAudio has a built-in USB MP3 player. By plugging in a flash drive with MP3 or WMA songs, the player controls on the B8MP3 can play, pause, repeat, and skip forward and backward. The backlit display gives real-time information about the songs. There are eight mic/line channels, two bands of channel EQ, effects bus, RCA in and out, five-band graphic EQ with lighted sliders, reverb with delay controls, effects loop, and phantom power. MottAudio uses True Channel Count on all Guardian Audio mixers. A mic channel consists of a minimum of an XLR input, EQ, aux and level controls. {[mottaudio.com](http://mottaudio.com)}

MOOG | MF-106TC ANALOG TIME COMPRESSOR

## The Time Machine

According to Amos Gaynes, Moog's applications and "temporal" engineer, the Analog Time Compressor circuit on the new MF-106TC can eliminate digital latency in real time — or sound like someone's playing faster than he really is.



"The MF-106TC has hundreds of unique applications," said Moog Marketing Manager Chris Stack. "Used on the Pitch Preview output of our new Etherwave Plus Theremin, you not only hear your note before the audience does, you actually hear it before you play it." {[moogmusic.com](http://moogmusic.com)}

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# SINGULAR SNARES

Attract aficionados or just put a little extra shine on display with one these eye-catching snare drums. They celebrate either a signature artist or company birthday.



1



2



3



4

**1 SPAUN DRUM TREY GRAY SIGNATURE SNARE** Trey Gray of Brooks and Dunn has a new Spaun signature snare with a hybrid 7- by 14-inch, 13-ply shell. Its double 45-degree edge on the batter side accentuates the crack while a rounded bearing edge with 42-strand wires on the snare side promotes articulation. Ten percent of all proceeds from the drum's sale will go to the Huntington's Disease Society of America. MSRP: \$950. {spaundrums.com}

**2 LUDWIG CENTURY COLLECTION** During its 100th anniversary this year, Ludwig is offering the Ludwig Century Collection. Available at select Ludwig Platinum dealers nationwide, the collection includes the 1928 Gold Triumphal reissue (pictured), the hand-engraved Black Beauty, a laser-engraved Black Magic model and two titanium Supraphonic models known as "The Chief" snares. {ludwig-drums.com}

**3 SONOR DANNY CAREY SIGNATURE SNARE** Constructed of a 1-mm bronze shell, The Danny Carey Signature snare drum comes with artist series snare-style lugs. All of the hardware comes in a chrome finish. With a 14-inch diameter and 8-inch depth, the shell is covered with talisman symbols. Carey's signature is engraved around the air hole, giving the snare his personal touch. MSRP: \$1,079.99. {hohnerusa.com}

**4 GRETSCH STEPHEN FERRONE SIGNATURE** Stephen Ferrone requested that Gretsch make a drum with classic tones, flexibility and elegant looks. The resulting snare features a 6.5- by 14-inch brass shell. It includes 2.3-mm triple flanged hoops that can be tuned to deliver a wide range of tones. An adjustable side-pull throw off and low-profile butt plate with drum key screws provide convenient snare wire access. MSRP: \$920. {gretschdrums.com}





DRUMFIRE | DHB6500  
DRUM HARDWARE BAG

## Wandering Drums

The new DHB6500 drum hardware bag from Drumfire is designed to make the transportation and storage of heavy drum accessories easier. Constructed of a durable, water-resistant nylon exterior, the DHB6500 features a foam-lined interior that protects the contents while preventing stands from piercing its sidewalls. Measuring 40-inches long by 30-inches wide by 12.5-inches deep, the bag can hold up to eight pieces of hardware, plus accessories and a drum throne seat. MSRP: \$297.99. {musicpeopleinc.com}



PLAYERS MUSIC | BOB CONTI SIGNATURE STICKS

## Conti's New Hits

Duratech, a division of Players Music Accessories, is now offering its first signature series drumstick line. The signature sticks are available in black with blue pinstripes on the 5A model and solid black on the F14 model. Each stick bears new endorsee Bob Conti's signature. Conti currently plays percussion for Jose Feliciano and can be heard on more than 180 albums. MSRP: 5A, \$16.75; F14, \$15.70. {playersmusic.com}



ON-STAGE STICKS | DA-100 DRUM STICK HOLDER

## Quick Draw

On-Stage Sticks, part of the On-Stage Stands brand, now offers the DA-100 drum stick holder. This stick holder features a soft neoprene pocket allowing for silent access to sticks or mallets. Designed to clamp onto any drum hardware stand, the DA-100 incorporates a 45-degree angle for fast, mid-beat stick removal. The clamp itself features a rubber tip for a secure grip and scratch prevention. The DA-100 has room for up to eight pairs of 5A or 5B sticks. MSRP: \$29.99. {onstagestands.com}



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{[tocapercussion.com](http://tocapercussion.com)}

DRUMSKULL DRUMS | CUSTOM METAL WORK

### Extra Adornment

Djembe builder Drumskull Drums has partnered with Grant Gordon, founder of Djembekan Jewelry, to offer elaborate djembe decorations to the public. Gordon's custom metal work is now available on specially selected lines of DrumSkull djembes. This service is available to current customers on any pre-owned drum. MSRP: \$1,095. {[drumskulldrums.com](http://drumskulldrums.com)}



MEINL | ZEBRA DRUM RUG

### Drummin' on the Wild Side

The new Meinl drum rug in zebra finish offers up a hard rockin' look. The entire bottom side is covered with rubber to avoid sliding, and it comes with a bag for comfortable transportation. The zebra drum rug measures 5.25 by 6.5 feet. MSRP: \$130.

{[meinlcymbals.com](http://meinlcymbals.com)}







SABIAN | AAX RAW BELL DRY RIDE

## Raw Power

The newest addition to Sabian's AAX series is the AAX Raw Bell dry ride cymbal. It includes the company's AAX Dynamic Focus design, which ensures optimum response and a consistently pure sound. Fully hammered from the edge to center, the 21-inch AAX Raw Bell dry ride is crafted from pure Sabian B20 bronze and is available in natural finish or glossy brilliant finish. [sabian.com](http://sabian.com)

ZILDJIAN | Z3 CYMBALS

## Rock Louder

Zildjian is offering a new generation of its Z series rock cymbals. After more than two years in development, the Z3 cymbal series features a unique lathing process that creates a more pronounced tonal groove design for greater projection and power potential. Zildjian's finish and computer hammering process completes the look with a symmetrical hammering design, which enhances playability. MSRP: \$221-\$541. [zildjian.com](http://zildjian.com)



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# GEAR >

## BAND & ORCHESTRA

SANDNER | 300 MODEL

### Budget-Minded

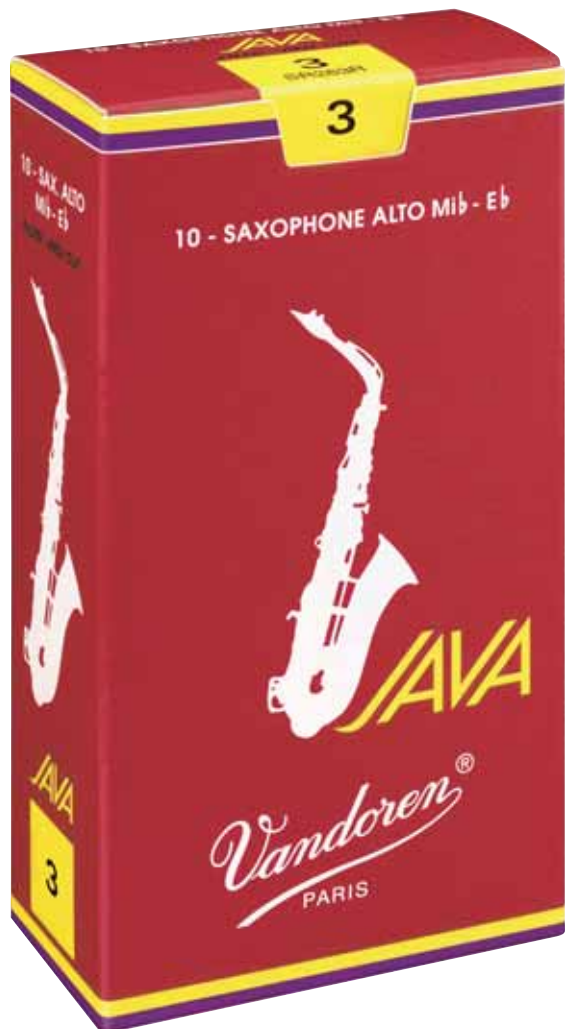
The Sandner 300 model is a violin outfit for budget-minded rentals or entry-level sales. This new violin features an ebony fingerboard and tailpiece with four fine tuners. It also features a German Aubert bridge, steel strings, and octagonal Brazilwood bow with ebony frog and genuine horsehair. A lightweight case is included. MSRP: \$99. {[amatis.us](http://amatis.us)}



VANDOREN | JAVA  
RED JAZZ REEDS

### Java Jive

Vandoren is offering a new file-cut jazz reed called the Java Red. This cut is more flexible and has a more tonal body, while still offering a rich and centered sound that provides projection and precise attacks. These reeds are available for soprano, alto and tenor saxophones. {[vandoren.com](http://vandoren.com)}



CONN-SELMER | VINCENT BACH  
NEW YORK MODEL NO. 7

### Lucky No. 7

Conn-Selmer has introduced its latest addition to the Bach Stradivarius Bb trumpet line. The New York Model No. 7 combines the qualities of the original trumpet with modern performance features. The Model No. 7 has a narrower, classic tuning slide with a single brace; lightweight slides; bead rings on all tuning slides; first and third slide finger rings; and a 1930s-style mouthpiece receiver. {[conn-selmer.com](http://conn-selmer.com)}



YAMAHA | BLACK PHOENIX

### Golden Saxophone

In celebration of Yamaha's 50th anniversary of manufacturing instruments in the United States, it's introducing the Black Phoenix line. This includes the YAS-82ZBP saxophone, which has a two-piece, hydro-formed bell and lightweight brass alloy body. It also includes custom engraving and black lacquering. MSRP: \$5,099.

{[yamaha.com/band](http://yamaha.com/band)}



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# GEAR >

BAND & ORCHESTRA

MAJOR MUSIC SUPPLY | ADAGIO EM-150

## Summer Outfit

Major Music Supply's new Adagio EM-150 violin has a solid spruce top with a flamed back and sides, along with an ebony fingerboard and appointments. An octagonal Brazilwood bow and an oblong-shaped violin case are included with the outfit.

{majormusic.com  
supply.com}

JJ BABBITT | OTTO LINK VINTAGE MOUTHPIECE

## Vintage Jazz

In commemoration of its 90th anniversary, JJ Babbitt has launched Otto Link Vintage mouthpieces for tenor saxophone. The new models emulate the retro sound of the company's classic Otto Link mouthpieces. They come in a choice of metal with 24-karat gold plating or hard rubber, and they're individually serial numbered. The Otto Link Vintage comes with a ligature and cap. MSRP: gold plated, \$389; hard rubber, \$209. {jjbabbitt.com}



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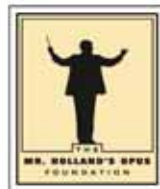
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[www.mhopus.org](http://www.mhopus.org)



KORG | PA500 ORT

## Between the Notes

Korg's new Pa500 Oriental (Pa500 ORT) interactive workstation touts additional sounds, new styles and enhanced features to facilitate Middle Eastern music. Because Middle Eastern music requires quarter tone/Arabic scales, the Pa500 ORT includes a miniature, one-octave keyboard on its front panel, where each key has been equipped with an LED indicator. This lets users quickly select the notes that will be flatted to the nearest quarter tone. More than 100 new sounds have been added to enhance the music's realism. Also featured are 128 Oriental PAD sequences that are compatible with the Arabic scales. MSRP: \$2,229. {[korg.com](http://korg.com)}

ROLAND | DP-990R

## Stylish Feel

Roland has debuted the DP-990R piano, which features the company's PHA II ivory feel keys. They're made of a moisture-absorbent material that has the natural look and feel of real ivory and ebony. It features an 88-key concert grand sound with individual multi-samples for every key. The piano's customization options enable users to design their own unique piano sounds by adjusting damper, strings and key-off resonance.

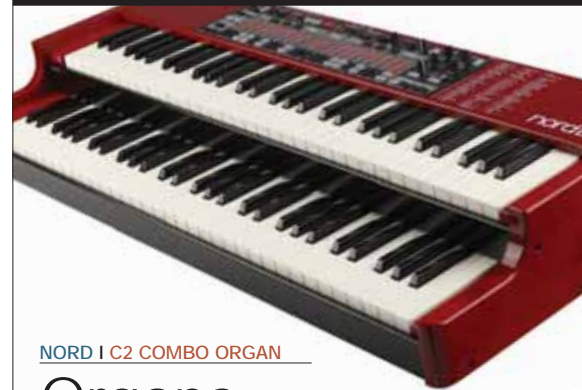
An on-board USB port provides add-on functionality to the DP-990. It also comes with an audio port, which lets users connect any portable music player and play along. {[roland.us.com](http://roland.us.com)}



YAMAHA | AVANTGRAND N2

## New Hybrid

Yamaha has introduced the AvantGrand N2, an upright piano that features the sound, touch and action of a grand. Measuring less than 21-inches wide, the N2 has the sound of a Yamaha CFIIIIS concert grand. The AvantGrand series actualizes the physical connection with the player by transmitting "string" vibrations through the keys to the player's hands, while the four-channel, three-way spatial acoustic speaker system reproduces the original grand piano samples. {[yamaha.com](http://yamaha.com); [avant-grand.com](http://avant-grand.com)}



NORD | C2 COMBO ORGAN

## Organs Anywhere

Nord's newest combo organ, the C2, provides rock organists with new sounds but can also be used in churches, concert halls or anywhere a pipe organ is needed. It features a baroque pipe organ that compliments Nord's tonewheel and transistor organs. The C2 also has a monitor input to plug in an MP3 or CD player and a drawbar preview that lets an organist dial in a new sound while playing. {[americanmusicandsound.com](http://americanmusicandsound.com)}





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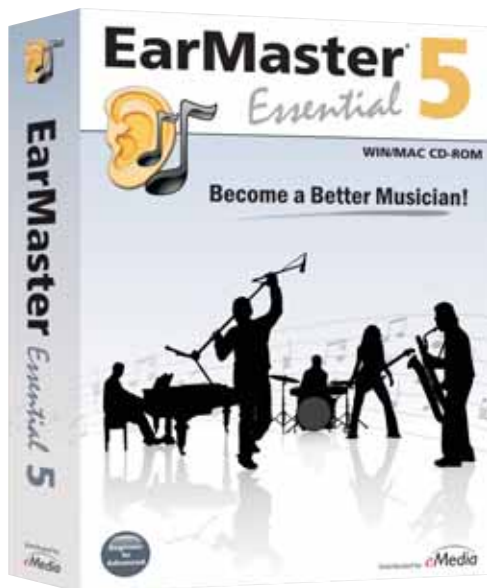
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### EMEDIA | 'EARMASTER ESSENTIAL'

## eMedia is All Ears

eMedia Music has added *EarMaster Essential* to its line of music software. *EarMaster Essential* presents an ear training solution with the core features of *EarMaster Pro 5* at a lower price. It offers 139 lessons from classical music to rock, including jazz chords, swing rhythms and a customized mode to practice according to the user's needs. *EarMaster Essential* will challenge both trained and untrained ears. It's for vocalists and musicians playing guitar, piano, bass, drums, flute or any other instrument. MSRP: \$29.95. {[emediamusic.com](http://emediamusic.com)}



### ALFRED | SINGER'S LIBRARY OF MUSICAL THEATRE

## Broadway Anywhere

Alfred's Singer's Library Of Musical Theatre songbooks are now available, packaged with audio CDs of piano accompaniment tracks that match the dozens of sheet music arrangements within each volume. This new feature lets vocalists practice or perform the songs anywhere, regardless of the availability of a pianist. Each songbook contains roughly 35 songs in their original keys, authentically transcribed from the original vocal scores. MSRP: book and two-CD sets, \$39.95; CDs only, \$22.95; book, \$19.95. {[alfred.com](http://alfred.com)}



### MJS | EASY GUITAR, BASS DVDS

## Easy Learning

MJS Music and Entertainment has created guitar and bass instruction, targeting specific scales, chords or theory. MJS Easy DVDs offer lessons that clearly show the viewer which strings, frets, fingers and picking techniques to use. The MJS DVDs include sheet music in real time and an on-screen instructor. MSRP:

\$12.95. {[mjspublications.com](http://mjspublications.com)}







HAL LEONARD | MOVIE FOLIOS

## Jai Ho!

Hal Leonard is offering new movie music at Summer NAMM with piano/vocal/guitar folios, including the music from

"Slumdog Millionaire." The winner of eight Academy Awards, including Best Picture, Best Original Song and Best Original Score, "Slumdog Millionaire" is the story of a Mumbai teen who wins the

Indian version of "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?." The worldbeat soundtrack features the music and score from A.R. Rahman, and includes "O, Saya," "Paper Planes," "Ringa Ringa," "Latika's Theme" and "Jai Ho."

MSRP: \$16.99. {[halleonard.com](http://halleonard.com)}

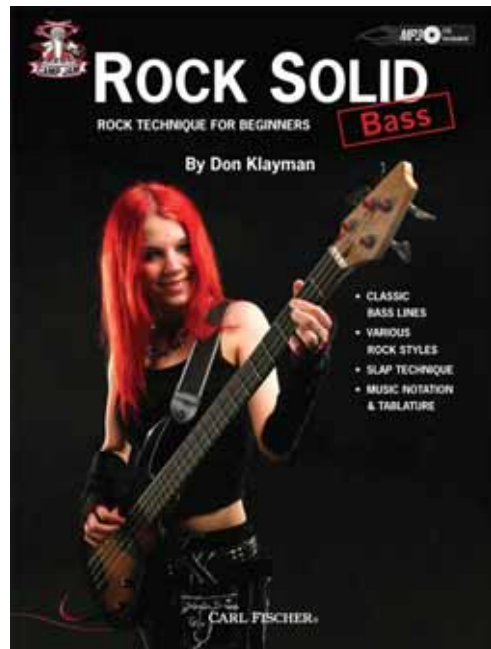


CARL FISCHER | ROCK SOLID SERIES

## Jam Camp Primer

Carl Fischer has joined forces with Camp Jam, a rock summer camp for kids and adults, to create the Camp Jam curriculum. The Rock Solid series is an easy guide for aspiring rock musicians.

The series launches with *Rock Solid: Guitar* by Steve Freeman, *Rock Solid: Bass* by Don Klayman, *Rock Solid: Keyboard* by Pete Orenstein, and *Rock Solid: Drums* by Liberty DeVitto and Sean Kennedy. The lessons have been used at Camp Jams in 16 cities across the United States. MSRP: *Rock Solid: Guitar*, \$24.95; *Rock Solid: Bass*, \$19.95; *Rock Solid: Keyboard*, \$23.95; *Rock Solid: Drums*, \$19.95. {[carlfischer.com](http://carlfischer.com)}



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HERCULES | DEEJAY TRIM 4&6

## DJ Connections

Hercules recently unveiled the DeeJay Trim 4&6, a USB audio interface built for advanced DJs who don't have an audio interface. The unit provides DJs with an extra USB hub, which prevents compatibility issues on some laptops. DeeJay Trim 4&6 also lets its users preview, talk over and export mixes. MSRP: \$249.99. [hercules.com](http://hercules.com)

DENON DJ | DN-S1200

## Media Upgrade

Denon DJ has upgraded its DN-S1200 media player and controller. It features MP3 and WAV file playback from USB mass storage devices and has improved functionality by implementing MP3 disc playback via firmware. The free upgrade can be downloaded on Denon's Web site and is enabled from the system upgrade capability via USB. MSRP: \$599.99.

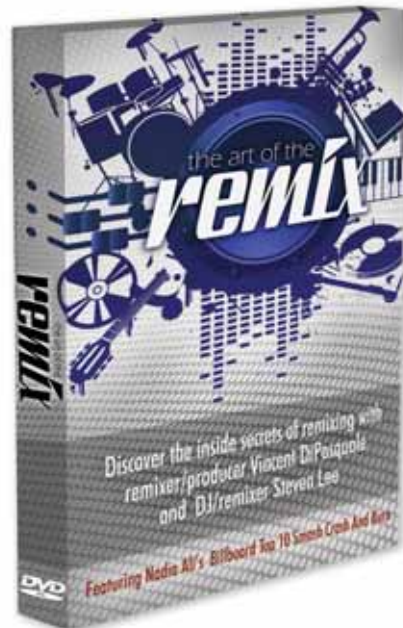
[denon.dj.com](http://denon.dj.com)



ELATION | DESIGN LED 36 PRO

## Custom Pro

Elation Professional's new IP-rated Design LED 36 Pro adapts to indoor or outdoor applications. It produces colors with 108 watts of high output featuring 36- by 3-watt RGB LEDs (12 red, 12 green and 12 blue). The light also features a gel/frame holder, which lets users further customize it to their needs. MSRP: \$1,299.95. [elationlighting.com](http://elationlighting.com)



AURALEO ADVANCED | 'THE ART OF THE REMIX'

## Master of Mix

Auraleo Advanced Learning and FaderPro.com have released *The Art Of The Remix* DVD. Producer Vincent DiPasquale and DJ/remixer Steven Lee teach users how to create grooves, construct vocal edits and develop sonic treatments on the DVD. The course includes more than three hours of video. MSRP: stream over the Web, \$89; DVD, \$99. [faderpro.com](http://faderpro.com); [auraleo.com](http://auraleo.com)



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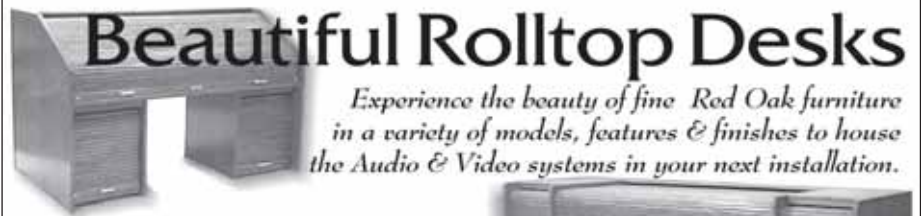
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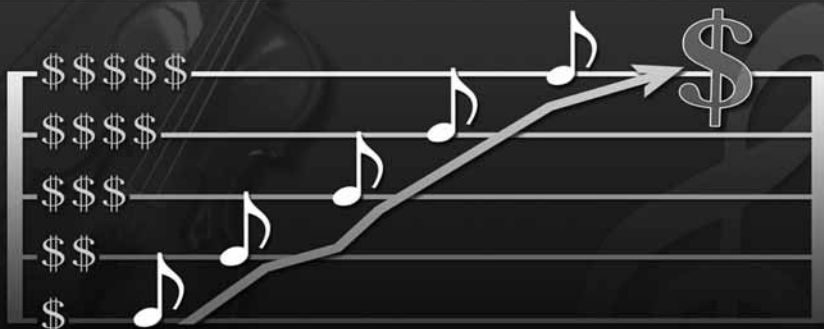
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**Phil Metz**  
Ted Brown Music  
Tacoma, Wash.

Our president, Whitney Grisaffi, has attended some of the local schools' meetings to put her two cents in. We also just had spring rental meetings. We have pretests for the kids in the schools and bring in instruments. The parents are invited, so they can actually prerent the instruments, and they don't have to mess with it in September. We're alleviating that pressure for them at that time and getting [ourselves] ahead of the game.

>>>

**George Quinlan Jr.**  
Quinlan & Fabish  
Burr Ridge, Ill.

Cutbacks, although they are not fun, are not the worst thing. When they eliminate a beginning band program — that's bad. Rather than eliminate the program entirely, [we] run an outsourced, fee-based, after-school program until [the school] can reinstate it. We've been pretty successful with that. We're still teaching one, but two have already been brought back [into the schools]. We call it "life support." We want them to hire us, so they can fire us.

>>>

**Tony Colwell**  
Buddy Roger's Music  
Cincinnati

Around here, we've had concerns about music programs flat stopping or the usual budget cuts. We do our homework and try to prepare for that. We prove that we are the best, so whatever business is there, we will get it. We do that with our service and reputation. We show up at all the marching band competitions, we do the spot repairs — we are there.

>>>

**John Giovannoni**  
The Music Room  
Palatine, Ill.

School budget cuts don't really mean much because we don't have a good relationship with our school district. We've been trying for 15 years. We try to support [school music] as much as we can. We also have a 10,000-square-foot basement that lets us run our own bands.



>>>

**Tony Leonard**  
Playground Music Center  
Fort Walton Beach, Fla.

Photo by Steve Haugh

# How are you preparing for possible school budget cuts?

We are doing all the fundamentals the best we can. We have a minimal road [rep] staff that we value too much to let go, and we are trying to do a better job of recruiting.

We have, on the other end, tightened up our collections, all the things we can do to improve the cash flow, tweaking recruiting and working with band directors to increase involvement.

[We establish relationships with the directors]

the basic way: We call on them five days a week, year round. We are there when we say we are going to be there, at the time we say we are going to be there. We are there to serve their needs.

[We do] school promotions, such as sponsor a jazz festival where middle school and high school students come out and perform. For the beginning-level students, we sponsor concert band festivals and [put] ads in their programs. We sup-

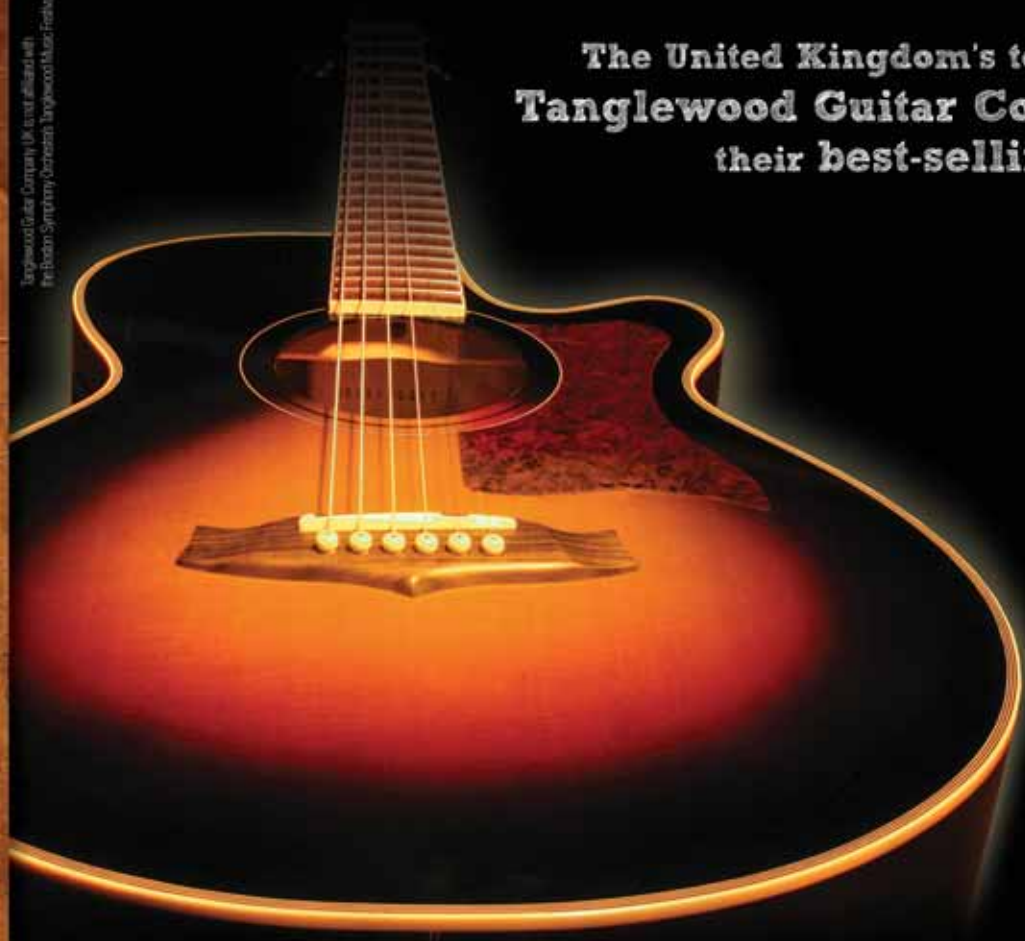
port the bands in any and every way we can.

However, we are not doing anything that is at the beginning of the line other than helping the band directors in the recruiting process, helping out with try-outs and getting our brochure in the band directors' and prospective band students' hands.

We also have established online rentals to make it easier for them [during] the rental process.



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\*Hey, we give you a 1GB SD card, AC adapter, USB cable and Cubase LE... Give us a break on the batteries.

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