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THE 2010 FALL PRODUCT PREVIEW

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AUGUST 2010 | VOL. 21, NO. 7

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(877) 904-7949

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES: \$50 one year (11 issues), \$90 two years (22 issues) to U.S.A. addresses. \$75 one year (11 issues), \$140 two years (22 issues) to Canada and other foreign countries. Air mail delivery at cost.

SINGLE COPY (and back issues, limited supply): \$9.95 to any address, surface mail. Air mail delivery at cost.

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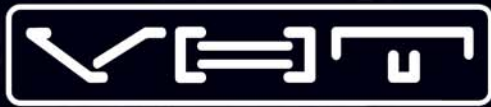
DownBeat, UpBeat Daily

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Please allow six weeks for your change to become effective. When notifying us of your new address, include your current MUSIC INC. label showing your old address. MUSIC INC. (ISSN 1050-1681)

Published monthly, except April. Printed in U.S.A. by Maher Publications Inc. 102 N. Haven, Elmhurst, IL 60126-2932. Periodical Postage Paid at Elmhurst, IL and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to MUSIC INC., P.O. Box 11688, St. Paul, MN 55111-0688





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PERSPECTIVE

PERSPECTIVE | BY ZACH PHILLIPS

PROFIT FROM YOUR PAIN

If you failed to shatter any sales records this spring, you're not alone. Throngs of music retailers at the recent Summer NAMM convention bemoaned dreadful business in April and May. (NAMM coverage begins on page 32.)

Many have coped by finding ways to make the economic malaise work in their favor. Reese Marin, president of Bellevue American Music in Bellevue, Wash., shopped all his major service providers for lower rates. He



said he was able to negotiate a 25-percent decrease in his company's telephone bill and get insurance premiums "way down" since many providers were desperate for his business. Most significantly, Marin negotiated a 25-percent reduction in his building's rent — savings that went straight to the bottom line.

"I went to my landlord and said, 'You need to suffer with me. I want an immediate reduction,'" Marin explained.

He rejected his landlord's first offer, and faced with the prospect of an empty building, the landlord eventually acquiesced.

"If you don't ask, you don't get," Marin said. "So I asked, and I got."

Leslie Faltin, co-owner of Instrumental Music Center in Tucson, Ariz., convinced her landlord to delay a routine rent increase another six months. "As our rent goes up in May, it gave us a nice break over the summer," she said.

The recession has also given Faltin an unexpected boon: cash-strapped consumers selling their used instruments at dirt-cheap prices.

"I have purchased decent silver-plated flutes for \$100, a cornet for \$30 and a silver trombone for \$40," she said. "I tell people they would get more from Craigslist or eBay but that I could offer them cash. If the customer has tried to sell the instrument without any luck, they may see my offer as better than nothing, and I end up with a used instrument that I can make good margins on when I'm able to sell it."

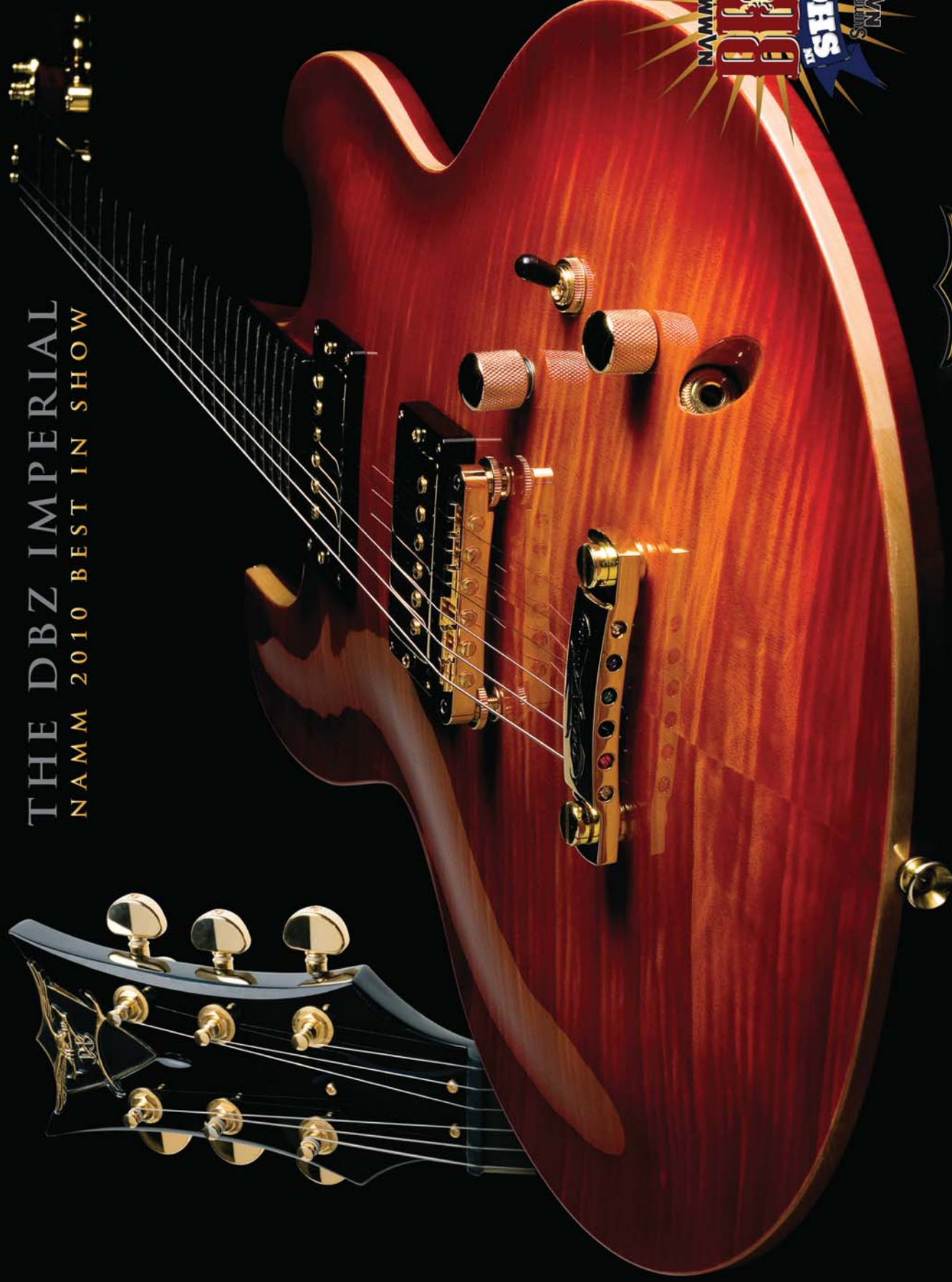
John Pedersen, owner of Pedersen's Band & Orchestra in Burbank, Calif., has partly offset economic woes by raising repair rates. His company increased its rates on major overhauls by 20 percent and as much as 40 percent on minor work. For large school accounts, however, Pedersen has increased rates by just 10 percent.

"If your store has a good service department, you can justify raising your repair prices," he said. "You can't buy local repair services on the Internet. Repair services, in general, are underpriced."

"No one seems to complain. I probably should have done it sooner."

Maybe your customers will resist a 40-percent price bump. That still leaves your service providers. If you haven't already, call them and start haggling. As Marin said, you don't get if you don't ask. **MI**

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While the minimum advertised price (MAP) policy debate published in the June issue of *Music Inc.* may interest some readers, in my opinion, neither side wins the argument because both are out of touch with reality.

It is quite true that MAP is now regarded by the public as the new list price, and they expect to be able to shop for a better price. A total free-for-all where dealers could price new instruments at whatever amount they wish would result in price wars and such low profit margins that mass-produced instruments would be unprofitable to handle.

To demand that dealers adhere to strict MAP policies to protect profit margins is an exercise in frustration and futility since it's very clear that major manufacturers in our industry are unwilling to enforce strict adherence to MAP. While price wars, which result in low profit margins for dealers, are deeply troubling for retail merchants, manufacturers have little incentive to cut off dealers who are buying large quantities. The manufacturers' profit margin per unit has not been cut, so they benefit from volume sales.

chaser, the market is currently flooded with guitars. The greatest competitors to high-end American guitars are not necessarily instruments made by competitors in the United States or Chinese imports (which are also being produced today in far greater quantities than ever before) but used instruments by these same makers. Selling prices are closely linked to supply and demand. Dealer profit margins in selling new, high-end American-made guitars have severely eroded as a result.

Virtually all major American guitar makers have vastly expanded their production capacity since the mid-1980s and now have an overhead structure that will not let them go back to the good old days.



POINT

JAMES BEETHAM



COUNTERPOINT

SCOTT LEWIS

MAP KEEPS PRICES ARTIFICIALLY HIGH.

MAP IS ANTI-CAPITALIST BY DICTATING MORE ACTIONS.

MAP KEEPS PRICES FROM GETTING TOO LOW.

MAP PROMOTES U.S. MANUFACTURING, PUTS MONEY BACK INTO COMMUNITIES.

DOING AWAY WITH MAP WILL MAKE US MORE CREATIVE AND PROMOTE GREATER PRICE TRANSPARENCY.

MAP ONLY SERVES TO PROTECT LARGER RETAILERS AND SUPPRESSED POTENTIAL, INDIE COMPETITION.

DOING AWAY WITH MAP WILL HURT THE QUALITY OF OUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES.

MAP FOCUSES RETAILERS ON SERVICE, NOT PRICE NEGOTIATIONS.

MAP LEVELS THE PLAYING FIELD

SCOTT LEWIS, AMERICAN OUTLINE & BAND HAVES STORE, WYOMING

I am opposed to the rise to the bottom for my company, my industry and my community. The given to our current economy is low prices are good for the consumer, so we should seek to drive to the lowest we can. There are economic and human costs in doing so, and we should consider the consequences for retailers, manufacturers, wholesalers, music allocation systems, the economy and civic resources.

I built my business with the goal of creating a dream place once staffed by industry experts who could make a great living respected professionals. Ten years later, my brick-and-mortar music-and-pop shop is a valued part of the local music community, providing music education through lessons and in-store clinics, a welcoming atmosphere to engage different kinds of expert advice, treatment repair services, and a trade-in and consignment business. Most of this can't be done online, but I consider the Internet to be vital to my business, letting me reach clients across the world, around the clock. I want to survive and feel that MAP guidelines offer the best hope of keeping Main Street as relevant as the World Wide Web.

MAP PROMOTES QUALITY SERVICE.

MAP guidelines give consumers an incentive to purchase products based upon either experience and expertise, not just the lowest prices. When used properly, they ensure that quality product retailing in production and knowledgeable retailers — both online and brick and mortar — stay in business.

As one of my competitors put it, "Without MAP, I've never for the independent retailer." For a small-business retailer. The effects of removing MAP include origin loss, further job cuts and poorer service. Brick-and-mortar stores won't be able to afford to sell products that are offered online for significantly less money and eventually, even the remaining online retailers will increase pressure on manufacturers to lower their wholesale prices.

MAP helps halt a future of cost-cutting and outsourcing, of reducing quality and draining our economy. As buyers, people, owner of boutique gold company Bayley Electronics argued, MAP is vital to keeping high-quality jobs and money in the community manufactured in America.

"If MAP is repealed, the number of jobs will decline because of price wars, leaving fewer customers to experience with new and innovative products," Payne said. "Shoppers will be reluctant to experiment with products that are expensive when they know they must buy massive quantities in order to compete on price. Most alarming for the manufacturers, if MAP is dismantled, there will be immense pressure to lower production costs, inevitably, to achieve lower worldwide prices, manufacturers will move overseas to compete. This race to the bottom could perpetuate massive deflationary trends when we need to be encouraging minimal deflation to stimulate national growth."

"MAP focuses smaller efforts toward negotiating customers with service performance rather than making constant aggregating of wholesale costs their primary activity. In short, MAP may be the last thread for privately owned, community-based retailers and independently owned manufacturers."

MAP PROMOTES QUALITY OF LIFE.

Keeping our small mom-and-pop shops and Manufacturers in business is an investment in everyone's quality of life. As the 3-50 Fund — a non-partisan organization devoted to saving brick and mortar — outlines, for every \$100 spent by locally owned independent stores, \$48 returns to the community through taxes, payroll, and other expenses. Spread that as a national chain, and only \$43 stays in the community. Spend that online and working in the community, schools, parks, and public

Op-Ed, continued on page 61

IDEAS

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In response to the MAP policy discussion in your June issue, one key factor seems to be overlooked repeatedly when weighing in on abandoning MAP. The physical location of your business can be the wild card when it comes to MAP and its effectiveness for independent dealers.

In many smaller towns where there isn't a nationwide chain as a competitor, the independents almost always flourish as a result of MAP policies. With the only competition being the Internet in situations like this, MAP allows our customers to see one price online and then come into our store and get a lower, much more reasonable price every single time.

'The physical location of your business can be the wild card when it comes to MAP and its effectiveness for independent dealers.'

— **Jeremy Carney**

margins for these products are high. It is highly unlikely that major makers of guitars in the United States or abroad have either the desire or the ability to put the genie back in the bottle.

George Gruhn
Gruhn Guitars
Nashville, Tenn.

LETTERS

to repeat sales and additional new customers frequenting your business because of word-of-mouth that your prices are so much lower than online. They didn't know that was possible.

This in itself makes MAP effective and essential for smaller independent dealers.

Finally, yes, the online stores can offer a lower price, as well, but this requires the customer to call the store to get that price. In reality, that rarely happens with online shoppers in our point-and-click age.

There is still a strong number of small independents in small towns. MAP has helped protect us since its inception and, in turn, has allowed us to compete with the large chains and actually thrive.

Jeremy Carney
Northern Music & Video
Potsdam, N.Y.

An Online Must

I have to respond to James Bethea's comments about MAP in "We Need to Abandon MAP" (June 2010). I'm sorry, but I feel that he has not fully experienced trying to sell quality products without MAP in such marketplaces as eBay or Amazon. If he had, he would have not made the comments he did. I'm sorry if this is a bit long-winded, but I feel very passionately about MAP.

My business, Andreas Inc., is a 100-percent drop shipper online with no brick-and-mortar store. I used to sell Mid-East products prior to MAP online, and let me tell you: It was a challenge. I don't think that James realizes just how many sellers are out there who are willing to discount a product to the point that they are only making a few bucks on a product that costs \$50, \$100 or even more.

I experienced that firsthand from a seller on eBay. The seller did not care about customer service, getting the products to the customer or anything else. How do I know this? His eBay feedback reflected it. His feedback was horrible, but still, many people were tempted to purchase from him because his prices were so low. How much volume would you have to do to make a 2- to 5-percent markup worthwhile?

I would like to address each of James' points and advocate for MAP:

1. *By design or by chance, we have ended up with a system that protects larger players and suppresses potential retail competitors.*

On the contrary, MAP allows the cream of the crop to rise to the top. Businesses small or large can succeed based on factors other than price. Case in point: As soon as Mid-East initiated MAP policies, that fella on eBay went out of business, and buyers on eBay were better off for it. Trust me.

2. *At its best, MAP is ineffective. There are always retailers willing to forgo their*

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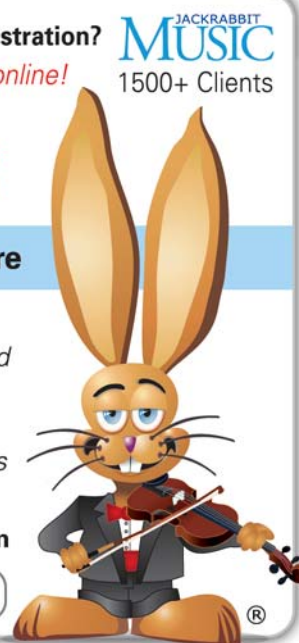
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contractual obligations to secure a sale.

MAP is very effective. I have seen my business increase year after year, and I owe a good portion of its success to MAP. I don't understand the mindset of doing anything to make a sale. Sellers should always be focused on supplying what customers need and customer service — not the sale.

3. Freedom equals opportunity. MAP policies are inherently anti-capitalistic. Doing away with MAP policies will unshackle our creativity and let us compete with the best of the best on every level.

Anti-capitalistic? MAP is capitalism at its best. There is nothing stopping you from charging more than MAP, and I do just that on many Mid-East items I sell. Now that's capitalism. Do I still sell those items? Yes, because price isn't the only factor in whether you sell an item or not. Capitalism is when you can increase your profit margin. MAP helps me do that.

MAP helps not only us sellers but the manufacturer, as well. It also helps the customer. If the prices are all the same, the customer will either go with the business that has good feedback on eBay or, in the case of Web sites, go with a site that shows a Better Business Bureau (BBB) symbol. How can that be bad for the customer?

There's one more thing I have to add. For those who want to abolish MAP because they feel they could then lower their prices and increase their sales and profit, think about it logically for a moment. If you lower your prices with the belief that you will sell more, don't you think your competitors will do the same? Of course they will. I

would if I wanted to survive — I'd have to. Given that, you would end up back where you were in terms of sales numbers, only you would be making a lot less profit.

I do not understand the argument for getting rid of MAP. Lowering MAP will not increase your sales. Price tags don't sell products. Salesmanship does.

Andreas Georgiou
Andreas Inc.
Palm Harbor, Fla.

MAP Curbs Free Riders

I work for a manufacturer of MI products. Before coming to this industry, I worked for other manufacturers in other industries, including consumer electronics. My point of view on MAP and other MAP-like policies is simple. The Internet made MAP necessary to ensure that free riders don't interfere with legitimate dealers. (A free rider is someone who simply sits in a garage, buys a small quantity of an item and sells it on eBay or another official-looking site in order to make a few bucks, then turns around and buys a new iPad or Weber grill or maybe even a guitar.)

MAP SUPPORTS R&D

Manufacturers that have a deep interest in doing R&D — research and development — need MAP-like policies to ensure that dealers take the time to train their staffs, explain the differences between products, describe the innovations that each product possesses and educate consumers on how they work. Innovative companies need to ensure that these legitimate resellers have the margins they need to train their staffs on new products' capabilities, merchandise these innovative products and promote them to customers. A new idea requires that kind of

'A MAP-like policy created by a manufacturer means it wants its resellers to succeed and to have margin, so they can train their staffs.'
— Steve Skillings

work, and that takes margin.

Now, companies that have a deep interest in doing D&R — disassemble and rip-off — don't care about MAP-like policies and don't care if resellers want to drive prices to the bottom and kill off any dollars for training. From that point of view, the reseller doesn't need to do anything other than take the money and order more stock. While this attitude seems shortsighted to some, it is a business model, and it serves a real market need. Some people just want a cheap product and are willing to wait for it and pay for it — and pay for it and pay for it.

I worked at one of the most innovative product companies on the planet, and it legally holds the line on reseller prices. As it was explained to me, resellers can sell at any price they want, and manufacturers can work with any reseller they want. This company did not want to work with resellers who cut prices on their products because their products required explanation, training and marketing. Resellers fill that need beyond what the Internet can do.

A MAP-like policy created

by a manufacturer means it wants its resellers to succeed and to have margin, so they can train their staffs, hold inventory and promote products. If I were a reseller, I wouldn't want to work with non-MAP manufacturers.

CONSUMERS BENEFIT

Price wars hurt everyone, even the consumer who is driving his local reseller out of business by working the price down to the bottom of the reseller's margin. Resellers need to be strong for innovation to continue. Manufacturers can't do it alone. My old company sold direct to consumers and through resellers, and the larger business was through resellers. I can assure you that consumers still want to learn about products through their local resellers, and free riders are making that harder and harder.

The argument that MAP-like policies will drive up prices doesn't hold water in my experience. If you manufacture a product, you want to sell it at the lowest price you can afford because more people will buy it, and that brings up your efficiency. Manufacturers determine product prices based more on the components and assembly methods than street prices.

MAP-like policies don't tell you how to sell, how to build value or how to run your business. They just tell your customers that you've got a product they might want, and you've got it at a fair price. It seems to me we should be focusing all this energy on getting rid of something whose time has come and gone: MSRP — not MAP. With the Internet in place, does anyone even look at MSRP anymore?

I hope this helps the reseller world understand why MAP-like policies are

important to manufacturers that are innovating, creating new categories and helping resellers to keep the MI business moving forward.

Steve Skillings
President and CEO
BreezSong

A Matter of Trust

The MAP debate in the June issue caused me to think about why our company, Powell Flutes, continues to have MAP policies. As Americans operating under a mostly capitalist system, the argument to let the market set prices is compelling. So why don't we?

In our case, we have a fair and simple pricing plan. Every dealer, regardless of size, is charged the same price. This assures a level playing field for all dealers. So why

bother with MAP at all?

I think I understand the real issue. For years, large dealers have bullied suppliers for favorable pricing terms, putting smaller dealers at a competitive disadvantage. While MAP does not assure that every dealer pays the same price, it at least assures that any cost advantage a large dealer has will not be apparent to the consumer in advertising.

Unfortunately, our dealers have been conditioned to distrust claims of a level-price playing field. So, despite our fair and simple pricing plan, they simply don't believe that Powell isn't cutting the same special deals with big retailers that everyone else seems to be doing. And since dealers cannot verify that we are charging

a small dealer the same price as a large dealer, they feel more comfortable about their competitive position when they see a MAP structure.

Steven Wasser
President
Verne Q. Powell Flutes
and E.K. Blessing

Thanks From Allegro Piano

Many thanks for the terrific article by Katie Kailus on the Allegro Piano showroom ("Piano Retail as Art," June 2010). The story reads beautifully, the photos look great, and we deeply appreciate the opportunity to help you put this together and to bring the Allegro story to your readers' attention.

Howard Sherman
President
Howard Sherman Public Relations

Corrections

We received word from Fields Pianos in Santa Ana, Calif., a dealership named as defunct in "How Much is Too Much?" (June 2010), that it's alive and well. Fields is the Steinway retailer in Orange County.

Also, in the June *Gear* section, the Young Chang vertical piano was mislabeled Y 122. It should read Y 112. *Music Inc.* regrets the errors.

EDITOR'S NOTE: MUSIC INC.

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RETAIL

MUSICAL INNOVATIONS | BY JEFF CAGLE

SEIZING THE DOWNTURN

Tracy Leenman was looking forward to being a stay-at-home mom after a long career in music education and the MI industry. She'd enjoyed stints with several music retailers and even served on the National Association of School Music Dealers board. But in February 2009, a group of local string teachers asked if she'd visit their schools. They were tired of retail reps passing by their classrooms to visit only with band directors.

"This was a school district with pretty good funding for education, so visiting only the band directors means potentially missing out on some very good business," she said.

LOW RENT, HIGH GROWTH

Leenman spent much of the following spring teaching private lessons, visiting schools and renting instruments out of her house. During that time, she needed to move her makeshift showroom twice to accommodate her son's return from college and grandchildren wanting their playroom back. (Her husband even lost his parking spot in the garage.)

Reluctant to open a storefront during a recession, she finally took her husband's advice. He'd urged her to check



in with a landlord in Mauldin, S.C., about rent. When the landlord came back with his first figure, Leenman said she was almost relieved because it was too high. He followed that up with a reduced offer, though, since the strip center was only 30-percent full. Between the bargain rent and 11 schools within five miles of the location, Leenman said couldn't *not* take the plunge, and she opened Musical Innovations.

"On this side of town, there weren't any music stores, and this is where the growth is

happening," Leenman said. "They're still building houses. They're still building schools. Since we got here, three more storefronts [in the strip center] have been rented."

Her whole family pitched in to ease startup pains, from her architect husband, who designed the store, to her youngest son, who offered IT support.

A TAILORED EXPERIENCE

More recently, Leenman said she has noticed a trend: Fewer customers are being enticed by dirt-cheap

prices online. Instead, they're seeking an educational experience and personalized service, which is exactly what Musical Innovations strives to deliver. Leenman mentioned that, despite her store's set hours, she'll open early or stay late by appointment — anything to fit a customer's schedule.

Recently, a man called to see if he would make it before close so his daughter could look at flutes. Leenman told him she'd stay open, even though he'd be arriving at closing time.

"We had a table all set up

with about 15 different flutes in his price range and her playing range, and we spent about two hours going over them," she said. "That's the kind of thing you won't ever get online. If you tried that many flutes [from an online seller], you'd be paying crazy freight getting them back and forth."

"We gave her a mini lesson, and she ended up going with a very high-price flute. I saw her father later, and he said they both were happy with it. Just the fact that we sell by appointments when needed gave them private time here to sit with us and say, 'I like this,' or 'I don't like this.' We don't want to be this big company that has hours from this to this and turns off the lights while you're still shopping."

SPENDING WISELY

Lean budgets have forced Leenman to get creative with marketing. She captured one customer with the Musical Innovations Facebook page, even though there were 45 miles and a number of school music dealers between them. When advertising in more traditional mediums, she said tracking the return on investment is key. She mentioned a friend and fellow business owner who recently spent \$3,500 on holiday advertising.

"They had 1,500 new customers at Christmas. I asked how many of the 1,500 came in because of the flier as opposed to word-of-mouth, newspaper, or driving by and seeing the sign. The owner said she didn't know. I asked how many of the

1,500 bought something and what was the average sale. She didn't know. My thinking is this: She spent \$3,500 and has no clue on the return. She had a good Christmas season, but there is no provable connection between the two events."

Leenman recently sent out a mailer to everyone who rents or gets maintenance coverage from her store. "For everyone who rents, there was a \$50 coupon to pay off your instrument early. Less than a week after the coupon hit homes, we'd already had two customers come in and pay off their contracts. The mailer cost less than \$150 for time and everything we copied and mailed out, and within a week, we'd already had two people come in and pay more than \$300 each to pay

off their instruments.

"And the best part about paying off their instruments is we don't have to worry about them paying anymore. We will never have to chase them down anymore — they can't default."

Leenman credited her company's early successes in part to the recession, which has forced her to be lean. "We started on an austerity budget," she said. "It's much easier than having to cut back to an austerity budget. We're watching every penny. That's been the key to surviving. I hope that some of these companies that are having to make these changes stay tight. I hope they stay on austerity because if they start letting loose again we're going to end up right in the same boat." **MI**



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BECAUSE SOUND MATTERS

CLOSING

Caldwell Calls It Quits

Caldwell Studio of Music in Caldwell, N.J., closed on June 30 after 58 years in business.

"Even if we're sold out, I'll be here," said owner Beverly Sannito to *The Star-Ledger* about the closing date. "I want to say goodbye to everyone."

Sannito's husband, Dick Sannito, played alto sax and clarinet with Louis Prima, Tommy Tucker and others before opening Caldwell Studio of Music in 1952. Dick Sannito passed away in 2002 at the age of 77, but his wife continued to operate the store. According to *The Star-Ledger*, the store had 300 students at its peak. Dick Sannito and more than 12 other teachers held lessons four nights a week, plus Saturdays. The store had fewer than 50 students at the time it closed.

APPOINTMENT

Licensed to Appraise

In May, Joyce Miller, co-proprietor of Bernhardt House of Violins in Greenville, S.C., became a member of the Appraisers Association of America. The international organization, based in New York, recognizes its members as experts in the appraising and authenticating of items within their respective fields. Miller specializes in buying, selling and appraising fine orchestral stringed instruments and bows. To be received into the association, applicants must pass two written exams and submit at least three sample appraisals.



CONTEST

GC Lets Bands Rock 'n' Roll All Night

Guitar Center has teamed up with Kiss to give 22 unsigned bands the chance to open for the group during its U.S. tour. Through the contest, Guitar Center On-Stage, one band from each of the 22 markets across the United States will play at a Kiss show. At the end of the tour, members of Kiss will choose the best of the bands to receive a grand prize that includes a \$10,000 Guitar Center shopping spree. Bands are encouraged to register through Sept. 1 at gconstage.com.

PIANO EXPERTS | LEGAL

Biasco Fiasco

Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan recently recovered nearly \$40,000 from Paul and Peter Biasco, owners of the former Naperville, Ill., store Piano Experts.

The Naperville Sun reported in February 2008 that the Piano Experts closing left expectant piano owners without instruments after they had already paid. An investigation by Madigan's office and a lawsuit found approximately 174 piano orders totaling more than \$975,000 were outstanding when the piano dealership shut its doors.

Madigan's office also secured a permanent injunction in DuPage

County Circuit Court to ensure that the Biascos "can never sell pianos again in the state of Illinois," said Robyn Ziegler, Madigan's press secretary. The injunction "stops them from participation in this kind of venture again."

No criminal charges were filed in the case, but Ziegler said Paul Biasco recently agreed to make \$22,500 in restitution to 39 customers who lost cash deposits or full or partial payments made toward pianos. Peter Biasco agreed to pay \$15,000, for a total of \$37,500, earlier this year.

According to Ziegler, more money could be recovered from the Biascos.



SOUTHPAW | ANNIVERSARY

Thirty Years of Serving Lefties

Southpaw Guitars, a family-run shop that has sold more than 100,000 guitars to left-handed players around the world, celebrated its 30th anniversary in July.

Southpaw Guitars stocks nearly 1,000 acoustic, electric and bass guitars from such brands as Gibson, Fender, Heritage, Jackson, Jerry Jones, Martin, Schecter, Taylor, Takamine, Hofner, Alvarez and EVH.

"We are celebrating 30 years sell-

ing lefty guitars, and we are doing great," said Jim Duncan, store owner and a left-handed player who founded the shop with Bill Townsend in 1980. "Thanks to thousands of loyal customers, we have grown to become one of the top niche marketers in the industry, for which we are sincerely grateful and proud."

The store featured several special deals and promotions in celebration of its anniversary.

SWEETWATER | EVENT

GEARFEST BREAKS RECORDS

Sweetwater's recent GearFest 2010 broke every record. The two-day event took place on June 25 and 26 at Sweetwater's campus in Fort Wayne, Ind. Overall attendance increased by more than 50 percent, and onsite sales also exceeded the previous record by more than 50 percent.

The annual end-user-oriented music and pro audio festival featured manufacturer exhibits; workshops, clinics, and seminars; live demos; special performances; and a musician's flea market. Key events included a Producer Forum, an all-star producer panel led by Sweetwater Editorial Director Mitch Gallagher; the story behind Gretsch Guitars with



Fred Gretsch, company president; and a presentation on home studio acoustics by acoustics expert Russ Berger.

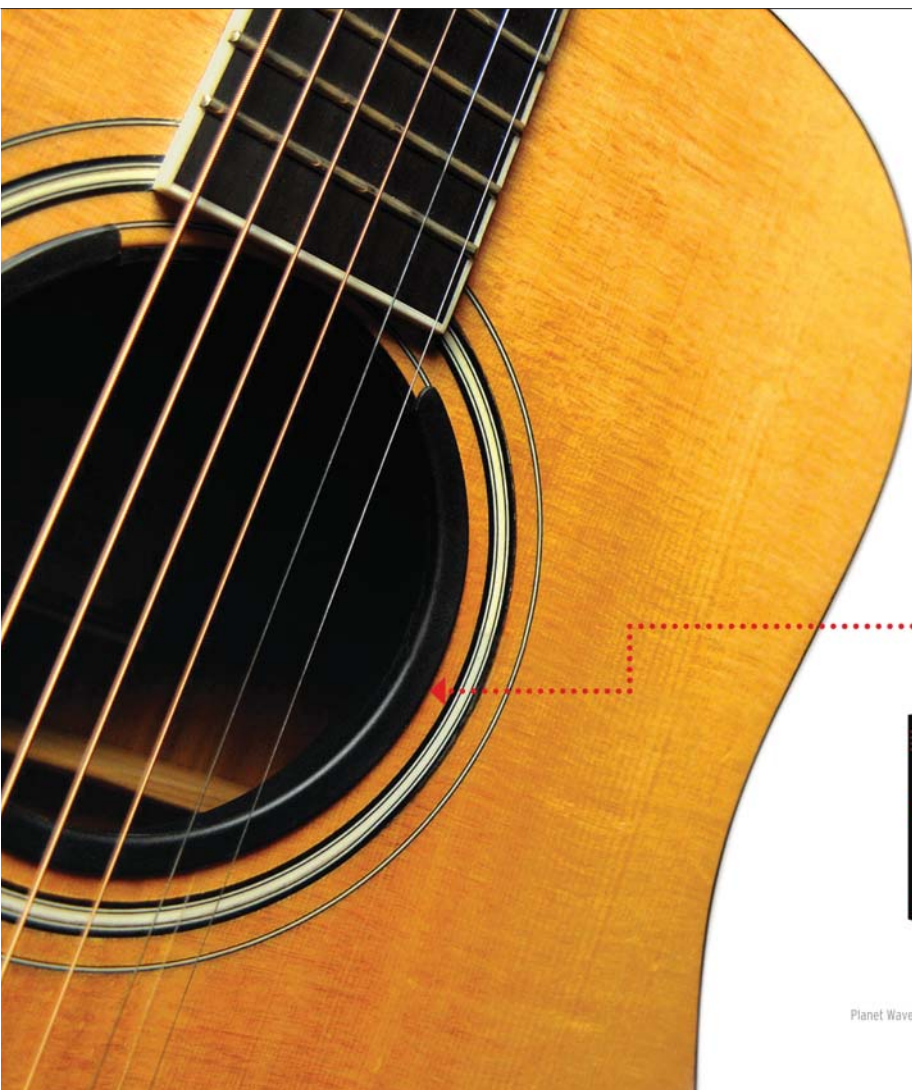
In total, GearFest included more than 40 workshops and

seminars on the guitar, recording, live sound, computer music creation, acoustics, songwriting and electronic instruments. David Grissom and Greg Koch, along with dozens of other

nationally known artists, performed on the latest gear.

More than 170 musical instrument, music technology and audio equipment manufacturers were on hand to give attendees a look at the latest gear. Prizes were given away hourly, along with three grand prize packages worth more than \$75,000.

"There's literally nothing like GearFest in the entire country that is free and open to the public," said Chuck Surack, Sweetwater founder and president. "We're thrilled that hundreds of manufacturers and thousands of customers came out to enjoy this amazing event with us."



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ONLINE

Gist Web-Ready

Gist Piano Center of Louisville, Ky., has launched a new Web site at gistpianocenter.com. It lets visitors view the online event calendar, watch videos, listen to piano music and schedule tunings. The site also lets customers calculate monthly payments, reserve recital space, learn about pianos and interview piano teachers in their areas.

TRIBUTE

Remembering Breese

Terrance John Breese, owner of Huber-Breese Music in Fraser, Mich., died on May 8 at the age of 61. Breese opened Huber-Breese Music with lifelong friend Paul Huber in 1972, and in 1982, Breese founded Southern Thumb Music in Richmond, Mich. He was a member of Percussive Arts Society, Michigan Guild of Music, National Association of Music, Cross Cut Band and Golden Rain Percussion Ensemble, as well as a music instructor. Breese is survived by his wife, Carmen; daughter and son-in-law, Patricia and David Christensen; sisters, Norene and Joyce; and granddaughters, Ashlee, Julie and Tia.

VENUES

Grand New Storefront

Grand River Music recently transitioned from a Web-only warehouse-based business to a brick-and-mortar dealership. Owner Terry Poe opened a storefront in Eastown, Mich., where he will also continue to operate the online business, grandrivermusic.com, out of the 1,200-square-foot basement. The store sells new and used guitars, basses, mandolins, amplifiers, and accessories. It also offers lessons, repairs and jam sessions.

"A light bulb went off, and I thought, 'Why isn't there a guitar store in Eastown?'" Poe said to *Michigan Live*.



From left: Battle For Berklee runners up Myles Jasnowski and Max Sink with winner PJ Brutzman

DADDY'S JUNKY MUSIC | EVENT

Battle for Berklee

Daddy's Junky Music joined forces with Berklee College of Music, Music Drives Us, Ibanez, Godin, Fender, Dunlop and D'Addario to host the third annual Battle For Berklee national guitar competition.

High school guitarists entered the contest by e-mailing a three-minute MP3 of them playing through the daddys.com Web site, and the entries were evaluated at Berklee College of Music in Boston. The top 10 finalists recently battled it out live at Daddy's Boston location for more than \$15,000 in scholarships and prizes.

"The judges agreed that the gen-

eral level of guitar players performing at the finals was pretty advanced," said Dana Acker of Berklee's special programs department. "The choices were difficult, but the top three really blew the roof off."

The winner, New Jersey's PJ Brutzman, walked away with a full scholarship, including housing to the Berklee College of Music Five Week Summer Performance Program, an autographed Ibanez Pat Metheny PM35NT guitar, a Godin 5th Avenue Kingpin guitar, a Fender G-Dec 30 amplifier, Dunlop pedals and a one-year endorsement deal with D'Addario.

MUSICIAN'S FRIEND | AWARDS

MF Takes Top Web Honors

Musician's Friend received the Web site of the Year honor during the 25th Annual Multichannel Merchant Awards, held in Orlando, Fla., on May 25. Additionally, the musiciansfriend.com site won a gold award in the Computer and High-Tech Equipment and Software category. This marks the fourth year in a row that Musician's Friend has been a finalist. It also won gold awards in the Computer and High Tech Equipment category in 2007 and 2009 and a silver award in 2008.

Plus, the company took the No. 1 position, based on sales, in *Internet*

Retailer magazine's annual Top 100 Web Retailers List in the Specialty/Non-Apparel category for 2010. Among all domestic Web retailers, Musician's Friend ranks No. 38 in annual sales.

"I'm delighted to report our most recent set of accolades from the Multichannel Merchant Awards and *Internet Retailer* magazine," said Craig Johnson, Musician's Friend CEO. "These outstanding honors from our industry peers are the collective effort of every member of the Musician's Friend team, and I personally thank and congratulate them."

CLINICS & APPEARANCES



Tommy Emmanuel

+ COSMIC CLINIC

Cosmo Music of Richmond Hill, Ontario, held a guitar workshop featuring two-time Grammy nominee Tommy Emmanuel on May 14. AER, SF Marketing and fingerstyleguitar.ca teamed up to co-host the event, which brought in more than 60 attendees. During the two-and-half-hour interactive workshop, Emmanuel shared stories, tips and tricks while performing.



The Bacon Brothers

+ STAR SPOTTED

Tobias Music in Downers Grove, Ill., donated a new Taylor SolidBody electric guitar as a giveaway and fundraiser for the Education Foundation for Grade School District 58's concert night on May 14. The concert featured The Bacon Brothers, a band that includes actor Kevin Bacon and his brother Michael.

"We decided to get involved with the event because we knew that the Bacons are big fans of Taylor Guitars and use them in their concerts," said Paul Tobias, owner of Tobias Music. "We sold tickets here at the shop and also had a table set up in the lobby at the show to get some last-minute sales."

The concert, held at Tivoli Theatre in Downers Grove, was attended by almost 700 people and raised roughly \$3,000 for the school district. The Bacon Brothers visited Tobias' shop before the show.

"You should have seen the look on one of our customer's faces when she walked in and found Michael and Kevin playing guitars in here," Tobias said. "It was priceless."

HENNESSY AND SONS | CLOSING

HENNESSY AND SONS SHUTTERS DOORS

Business had been brisker than usual this past June for Hennessy and Sons, a Columbia, Mo.-based music store, due to its going-out-of-business sale. Store owner Frank Hennessy made the decision in March to close his 35-year-old business, which primarily sold and restored pianos. The shop also sold musical gear, songbooks and a few guitars. Its last business day was June 30.

According to a *Columbia Business Times* article, Hennessy cited a reduction in his revolving credit lines and "doom-and-gloom" predictions for small businesses in the media since the beginning of the recession as his reasons for closing the store. Hennessy's career started in 1967 as a salesman at Hauer Music in Dayton, Ohio. After several years of combining his technical expertise with salesmanship for other retailers, Hennessy opened his own piano shop in 1975.

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Note from Joe

Government Regulations and Their Impact on Your Business

For many NAMM Members, the term “government regulations” is shorthand for government-imposed requirements that place undue burdens on business. For others, it represents necessary restrictions on behavior or process to assure quality of life, a sustainable environment and access to opportunity for all.

While government’s influence in business is not new, it’s amazing how the landscape has changed in just 10 years. More issues than ever impact NAMM Members and knowledge about regulatory requirements is necessary for business success. The Federal Register, which is the government’s principal tool for announcing regulations, grew nearly 20 percent from 2001 to 2008. Whether it’s regulation that directly impacts NAMM member companies —such as Internet sales tax, credit card privacy issues, environmental issues, tariffs or consumer

finance—or more generalized regulation like health care, there’s likely to be even more regulation in the coming years. The time for not paying attention is over—forever.

In addition to our primary lobbying effort in support of music and art education for all children, your association is active year-round advocating for legislative or regulatory reform with the goal of providing support and assistance to all NAMM Members. We work with a great team in Washington, other associations like the National Retail Federation and NAMM Members to make sure our voice is heard when these laws are being debated. We strive to educate and inform you about compliance with pertinent regulations, and we fight to achieve reasonable gains and outcomes for the entire industry. Like democracy, government regulations are grounded in discussion and compromises. On a daily basis, your \$195 annual dues help NAMM stay actively involved in representing your views and looking out for the best interests of our Members with your elected officials—and we encourage and welcome your continued input.

To stay up-to-date on current issues and NAMM’s efforts to support the needs of small business, visit www.namm.org/publicaffairs and follow NAMM’s Public Affairs blog updated regularly by Mary Luehrsen, Director of Public Affairs & Government Relations.

Joe Lamond • NAMM President/CEO

NAMM is working on and educating Members about the following issues:

International Trade and Regulation Issues

- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES); required documentation for use of wood and wildlife on restricted use lists
- Lacey Act implementation; new regulations on importation of illegally harvested wood and/or wood products
- White Spaces and broadband licensing and regulation
- Intellectual property and copyright protections

Environmental Issues

- California Air Resources Board (CARB) standards; amendment of deadlines for sale of non-complying products
- Potential Federal legislation to expand California requirements nationwide
- Consumer Product Safety Commission; rules on lead and other content in musical instruments and other products
- Hazardous waste disposal for electronic and other products with metals deemed hazardous

Financial Regulation

- Swipe fee amendment in financial regulatory reform legislation giving retailers more flexibility to accept debit cards
- Implementation of federal gift card legislation
- Payment card industry (PCI) compliance standards
- Federal and state rental-purchase legislation

Tax Issues

- Restrictions on use of last-in, first out (LIFO) inventory accounting
- Estate tax reform
- Internet sales tax and sales tax fairness; advocating for tax parity between storefront and online retail
- General small business tax issues

Healthcare Reform

- Healthcare reform regulation development and implementation; advocating for concerns and needs of small businesses





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of Schoenberg Guitars says, **"The ToneRite[®] has made a dramatic difference in the tone of new instruments and has helped to 'wake up' vintage instruments that haven't been played in years."** Alan Bibey, member of Grass-towne and two-time SPBGMA Mandolin Player of the Year had similar compliments: **"The ToneRite[®] supercharged my instruments to their max in volume and tone! One of the most useful new products I've seen in a really long time!"** Grammy Award winner John Sherba of the Kronos Quartet said, **"The more I used the ToneRite[®] the better my instruments got, not just a little bit, but creates a definite, noticeable, positive audible difference."** The third generation ToneRite[®] is now available for resale to select stores.

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Appoints Larry Thomas CEO
PAGE 28
- > **Musiquip**
Picks up Hiscox Cases
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- > **Yamaha**
Aids underfunded schools
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- > **Conn-Selmer**
Gets winds Web ready
PAGE 31

SUPPLY

CLOUD MICROPHONES | BY JENNY DOMINE

CLOUD MICS ALOFT

RJ Cloud compares the first time he heard a ribbon microphone to a religious experience.

"I couldn't believe my ears," he said of the mic, a vintage RCA on loan from local audio engineer Stephen Sank. "It reminded me of vintage analog recordings, full of richness and depth, but with the clarity of digital."

He and Sank decided to collaborate on a new ribbon mic design and applied for a series of patents in 2007. Since then, there's been a new sound echoing off the red rock formations of the Tucson, Ariz., landscape. The two audiophiles formed Cloud Microphones in June last year with Cloud as CEO and Sank working as an independent contractor for the company.

Cloud Microphones made its debut at the Audio Engineering Society 2009 convention in New York with three models, the JRS-34, the passive JRS-34-P and the limited-run special-edition chrome JRS-34-SPE.

The JRS series is named for Sank's father, Jon R. Sank, the RCA engineer who developed the BK-11 microphone. Trained by his father from a young age, Sank continues to build upon



RJ Cloud (left) Stephen Sank

the lessons he learned at the original RCA Laboratories. Today, he and his wife, Cynthia, service and restore vintage ribbon mics with a passionate view of mic engineering as an art form.

"I've always had a deep appreciation for engineering that is so good, it's at a level of

being art," Sank said. "If you look inside the original [RCA] 44-A, it's absolutely, spectacularly engineered to the point of being very, very beautiful."

More recently, at The NAMM Show 2010, Cloud launched the two-channel Cloudlifter. It's designed to interface passive, low-output

ribbon mics with any phantom-powered input device.

LOCAL ADVANTAGES

When Cloud started looking for ways to build cost-effective microphones, his colleagues said it would be impossible without overseas production. But he and Sank insisted that a local approach could be affordable and produce a higher-quality product.

"I am serious about quality control," Cloud said. "When we got our second order of Cloudlifters, about half of them had minor issues with the paint and finish. I sent all of them back."

Cloud connected with a local fabrication firm, Aerofab, to build the microphone parts. Aerofab has a commitment to eco-friendly business practices, including the use of solar energy. Any parts not made locally are contracted from other U.S. companies.

"In the case of Aerofab, I can literally stroll over any day of the week and say, 'Hey, let's try this,' or 'This isn't quite right. Can we change this?'" Sank said.

"As a result, we have been able to make improvements upon improvements on the microphone in a very timely manner," Cloud added. **MI**



Ron Manus

ALFRED MUSIC PUBLISHING | BY ZACH PHILLIPS

ALFRED SAVES THE EARTH

Ron Manus is trying to reduce the music industry's carbon footprint one piece of recycled sheet music at a time.

"As book publishers and print music people, we have a big impact on the environment," said Manus, CEO of Alfred Music Publishing in Van Nuys, Calif. "We want to make sure we minimize that impact."

He knows cynics will peg

The print music publisher leads the industry's eco-friendly charge

him as another Prius-driving Californian jumping on the eco bandwagon. He even

chuckled when discussing his first order of business after taking the reins at Alfred last December: upgrading to water-free urinals. "Everything we do trickles down," Manus said with a laugh.

But the urinals are part of a much larger, formal corporate initiative Manus spearheaded to make the print publisher more environmentally friendly. Dubbed Alfred Cares, the new program includes drastic

changes to the company's infrastructure and product that add up to an investment of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Cynics everywhere, take note: Alfred Cares will also reduce the company's cost of doing business — starting with its water bill.

"All of these investments pay for themselves," said Bryan Bradley, COO of Alfred.

"And after that, it's *saving* us money," Manus added.

GOING PAPERLESS

Alfred's green crusade actually dates back to last year when it began printing on recycled paper. But Manus said he was reluctant to promote the changeover at first.

"The intention behind it wasn't, 'Hey, look at us,'" he said. "That's not the reason we're doing this. We're doing it because it's the right thing to do."

To his credit, much of Alfred Cares goes on behind the scenes, particularly when it comes to infrastructure changes. The water-free urinals alone save roughly 40,000 gallons a year per unit. Alfred's also in the process of transitioning to a paperless warehouse office by investing in a voice-picking system. The move, which comes with a significant upfront cost, will save approximately 170,000 pages annually.

"Right now, the order is generated, and someone in the warehouse gets the order on paper, picks it and scans it," Bradley said. "It produces a lot of waste. Now, they will be wearing headsets and speaking into a computer. We'll save all that paper."

Incandescent lights in the warehouse are also being swapped out for energy-efficient fluorescent models. These last longer and use roughly 50-percent less power. Annually, this saves 140,000 kilowatts.

But according to Manus and Bradley, the most drastic internal change has been cultural. "We knew that we couldn't make this successful if it wasn't part of the culture and a formalized program," Bradley said. "[Caring for the environment] is part of Alfred's core beliefs, and people work here because they believe in it.

Everybody believes in it."

This means certain decisions are made based on their environmental impact, not the bottom line. Alfred's production department, for instance, is encouraged to spend more on product development if it will reduce the company's carbon footprint.

"We'd never want cost to be a reason not to do something," Bradley said. "We have a mechanism through this formalized program where we can absorb those costs.

"These aren't things the customer necessarily gets, except for the benefit of knowing they're supporting a company that focuses on this."

100-PERCENT RECYCLED

Other Alfred Cares initiatives are more visible. Manus estimated that 95 percent of the company's books are now printed on 100-percent recycled paper — the rest on partially recycled paper. And every Alfred book now lists its ingredients. For example, customers can see that page one of a particular book was printed on 60-percent recycled paper, the rest on 100-percent recycled paper.

"It's like food," Bradley said. "You may want to know what's in the product you're purchasing."

The publisher is also cutting down on its plastics consumption. Standard DVD cases have been replaced with models that feature large holes and, consequently, much less plastic.

"Plastics are terrible for the environment," Manus said. "They take a while to break down, and parts of them don't

ever break down."

He smiled, then added, "Don't get me started."

SHARING RESOURCES

Alfred's not the only print music publisher that has gone green, although its efforts may be the most ambitious. Manus, in fact, credited fellow publisher Mayfair Music for helping inspire Alfred Cares. Last year, Mayfair began printing nearly all of its catalog on paper made from 30-percent post-consumer waste and 70-percent sustainable North American forest pulp. According to Steve Loweth, president and general manager of the Markham, Ontario-based company, Mayfair Music has also stopped UV-coating its covers.

And in the same way Mayfair Music left an impression on Manus, he said he hopes the rest of the music industry will follow Alfred

Cares' lead.

"We'll share the information," Bradley said. "We can't force our distributed partners to switch their production, but we can say, 'Here's how we do it. Here's who we use. Here's how it all comes together, and here's the cost.' We are an open book with all of our sources."

Manus added that baby steps are key to launching any corporate green initiative. "With every decision you make, you can make a better decision just by taking a moment and thinking about it," he said. "You're buying new toilets? Think about it. You're buying new lighting? Check your options. You can't always do it, so you make a choice somewhere else where you can do it.

"And usually, it's not that hard. It's like Al Gore said. It's only an inconvenient truth. It's not painful." **MI**

Source: Alfred Music Publishing's marketing department

Alfred Cares Stats

As of July 1, seven months into the initiative:

> 443,750
units printed on recycled paper

> 54,826,955
pages printed on recycled paper

> 122,861
DVDs produced with 100-percent recycled packaging

TECHNOLOGY

Peavey's Hero Maker

Peavey has partnered with Zivix to introduce the Peavey HeroMaker guitar controller, a full-sized six-string electric guitar and software controller, and the new *Jam Party: Be The Music* software.



"I believe these innovative new products will also motivate many gamers to go beyond a gaming experience and move towards music creation and expression," said Hartley Peavey, founder and CEO of Peavey. {peavey.com; zivix.net}

TRENDS

AmpliVox Greens Up

AmpliVox Sound Systems has announced it's manufacturing and selling P.A. systems and podiums that are RoHS (Restriction of Hazardous Substance) and WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) compliant. Green Cross has certified that AmpliVox's raw particle board panels are made of 100-percent recycled and recovered wood fibers. {ampli.com}

CONTESTS

Rival Rewards

The Korg, Marshall, Lâg and Vox brands have launched an online contest, Reprise Rivalry. It gives eight U.S. bands and artists the chance to win a gear package worth more than \$5,000, plus promotion from all four brands and one year of artist endorsements.

Bands can submit songs for free and will be featured on the Reprise Rivalry contest Web site. {korg.com}



PARTNERSHIP

Mixware Gets Ultimate

Mixware will be the U.S. distributor for Ultimate DJ Gear (UDG). UDG has developed a range of bags, trolleys and CD wallets for DJs.

"[Mixware's] Laurent Cohen and his team have the right expertise in the MI and pro audio market," said Michael Schmeitz, founder and CEO of UDG. "They have the tools to bring our innovative and unique products to new and expanding markets."

{mixware.net}

FENDER | PERSONNEL

FORMER GUITAR CENTER CEO TO LEAD FENDER

Fender Musical Instruments Corp. (FMIC) has appointed Larry Thomas as CEO, following the

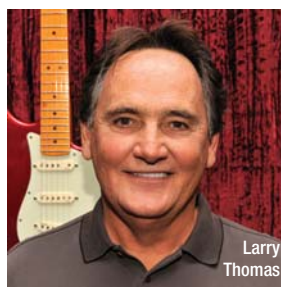
retirement of the company's chairman and current CEO, Bill Mendello. According to a statement from Fender, the appointment is part of a succession plan that has been in place for nearly a year, and

Thomas will officially begin his new role on Aug. 1. He led Guitar Center from 1996–2004 as chairman and CEO and served on Fender's board of directors since last year.

"I am delighted to be able to pass the leadership of FMIC into the very capable hands of Larry Thomas," said Mendello, who will remain on Fender's board of directors. "Larry is a widely-respected person with an incredible amount of experience and valuable insight about music companies and music retailers, large and small. He is one of the true legends in the industry and brings the cre-

dentials that will help lead FMIC to even greater future success."

"It is an incredible honor and responsibility to be chosen to lead



Fender Musical Instruments Corp.," Thomas said. "As one of the world's best-known and most respected companies, there continues to be great potential in the FMIC brands, and I look forward to con-

tributing to future success while growing the company's powerful musical legacy."

Fender has also named current board members Mark Fukunaga and Michael Lazarus as co-chairmen, effective Aug. 1. Fukunaga has served as a member of the company's board since 1993 and is currently the chairman and CEO of Servco Pacific. Lazarus has served as a board member since late 2001. In 1991, he co-founded Weston Presidio, a private equity firm and Fender's largest shareholder, where he currently serves as managing partner. {fender.com}

HAL LEONARD | DISTRIBUTION

HAL LEONARD GETS AUTO-TUNED

On June 1, Hal Leonard added pitch-correction software to its list of audio tools through a distribution deal with Antares. Antares, a Scotts Valley, Calif.-based company, was founded in 1990 as Jupiter Systems by geophysicist and inventor Dr. Harold Hildebrand. The company develops digital signal processing-based audio hardware and software products, such as Auto-Tune.

"Auto-Tune is a truly iconic product that has reshaped the sound of contemporary music," said David Jahnke, Hal Leonard's vice president of national sales. "We're excited to provide music retailers easy access to this great-selling software." {haleonard.com}





From left: Hiscox Cases' Bryan Ball, Rob Peach, Peter Goalby, Dave Arkenstall, Wally Bayliss and George (front)

MUSIQUIP | AGREEMENT

A Case for Musiquip

Musiquip has been appointed the U.S. distributor for Hiscox Cases in Staffordshire, England. The brand offers cases for a variety of instruments, including acoustic and electric guitar, as well as alto and tenor saxophone, alto horn, baritone, euphonium, violin, viola, cello and mandolin.

Hiscox cases are constructed of a leather-textured, high-impact Acrylonitrile Butadiene Styrene hard plastic outer shell, bonded directly to an inner molding made from a cellular foam.

"Durable, lightweight, dependable protection for your instrument is essential," said John Kelley, Musiquip's general manager. hiscoxcases.com

SHURE | OUTREACH

Shure Helps Grand Ole Opry Recover

Among the locations damaged by the May flooding in Nashville, Tenn., were the Grand Ole Opry House and Soundcheck, a large rehearsal facility and Shure's Nashville office.

Though the Opry was temporarily displaced from its permanent home, Shure provided it with wireless microphones and ear monitor systems, so it didn't miss a broadcast due to the flood.

In addition to supplying gear to the Opry, Shure has also been providing assistance to artists, such as Brad Paisley, Toby Keith, Hank Williams Jr. and Little Big Town, among others.

shure.com

SUPPLY  

KALA | PROMOTION

KALA GOES TO THE MOVIES

Kala Ukulele has become a major sponsor of the Mighty Uke Roadshow, a tour of the award-winning documentary "Mighty Uke," produced by Tiny Goat Films. To get ukes in the hands of players, Kala will provide Tiny Goat Films with instruments and encourage its global network of ukulele distributors and customers to become part of the "Mighty Uke" experience. The uke maker will also produce a limited-edition Mighty Uke model to help promote the roadshow. kalaukulele.com

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EVENT

Zildjian's Boston Pride

Zildjian recently hosted representatives from its German and Austrian dealers at the Zildjian factory and headquarters in Norwell, Mass. Accompanying the dealers was staff from Zildjian's German and Austrian distributor, Pearl Europe. The visit included a factory tour and a dinner cruise on Boston Harbor.

"It is very rewarding to be able to show our business partners the entire essence of Zildjian," said Craigie Zildjian, CEO of Zildjian.

{zildjian.com}

AWARDS

Songwriters Honor**Mardak**

Keith Mardak (pictured), chairman and CEO of Hal Leonard, was honored with the Abe Olman Publishers Award at the 41st annual Songwriters Hall of Fame gala in New York on June 17. The award is given to publishers who have helped to further the careers and success of songwriters.



"Keith has been a driving force in the music publishing industry, and we are looking forward to applauding his accomplishments," said Hal David, chairman and CEO of the Songwriters Hall of Fame. {halleonard.com}

CHARITY

Yamaha Guitars Travel to Schools in Need

Yamaha has announced a working relationship with the Traveling Guitar Foundation. The N.J.-based



charity co-founded by guitarist and songwriter Damon Marks (pictured) provides instruments for schools that lack well-developed music programs. Yamaha will provide Gigmaker electric guitar kits and digi-

tal keyboards, which the foundation will donate to worthy schools.

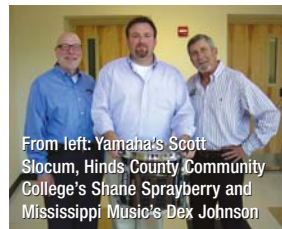
"We are always seeking ways to put instruments into the hands of students because the value of active music making in a child's life is incalculable," said Rick Young, senior vice president of Yamaha Corp. of America. {yamaha.com}

YAMAHA | ANNIVERSARY

25 Sounds of Summer

This year, Yamaha's national summer percussion camp series, Sounds of Summer, is celebrating its 25th anniversary. The program will run through July 28. Each camp is hosted by a retailer and an educational institution in tandem. The program has taught an estimated 45,000 students in the last 25 years.

"It has grown to become one of the nation's leading instructional opportunities for young percussionists," said Troy Wollwage, percussion marketing manager for the Yamaha Band and Orchestral Division. {yamaha.com}



From left: Yamaha's Scott Slocum, Hinds County Community College's Shane Sprayberry and Mississippi Music's Dex Johnson

APPOINTMENTS**AKG Taps Trott**

Andy Trott, president of Harman's mixer business, Soundcraft Studer, has been named president of AKG, which is headquartered in Vienna.

Stefan Gubi, who headed AKG for the past five years, departed at the end of June, returning to a senior post in the telecom industry, where he worked prior to joining AKG.

"Having a background as a digital engineer and a recording musician, I am absolutely thrilled at the prospect of leading another legendary name in the audio industry," Trott said. {harman.com}



Andy Trott

D'Addario has hired Tom Spaulding as a full-time member of the guitar.com team, where he will help develop, publish and manage the site. The company has also named Thomas Offermann as international classical guitar artist representative. Both Marco Soccoli and Frank Aresti

have been named senior artist relations managers.

Chauvet and **Illuminarc**



>>> Ford Sellers

senior product development manager.

Focusrite Novation has named Ralph Goldheim the director of U.S. sales.

Keith McMillen Instruments has appointed Andrew Calvo as vice president of sales and marketing.

Korg has promoted Douglas Nestler to vice president of sales. A.J.

Reitz has been hired as national sales manager. Michael McAndrew has been named Korg's manager of customer service and inside sales. Jason Gano has been appointed Korg's Southern Mid-Atlantic district sales manager, and Eric Senderoff has been named the Northern Mid-Atlantic district sales manager.

Pearl River Piano Group America has appointed Bob Saari as district sales manager for the Midwestern region. He will represent both Pearl River and Ritmüller pianos.

Shure has promoted Ron Thompson to senior vice president of operations and COO. Avi Vaidya has

also been promoted to senior vice president of product development and chief technology officer.



>>> Ron Thompson

MUSICORP | OUTREACH

MUSICORP JUDGES BANDS

Musicorp sponsored a Battle of the Bands contest presented by Dave Janssen School of Music in Simi Valley, Calif., as part of the local Cajon Creole Music Festival over Memorial Day weekend.

Musicorp Region Manager Dan Murdy represented the company as one of the judges for the final competition and presented Fender strings to

the winning band. The 12 bands that competed consisted of Dave Janssen School of Music student musicians ranging from 9–18 years old, who performed on one of three stages at the festival.

“It is very rewarding to see the excitement on the faces of these kids as they experience live performance for the first time,” Murdy said. {musicorp.com}



PROTECTION RACKET | ARTIST APPROVED

Speciality Protection

Pink Floyd drummer Nick Mason (pictured) was reorganizing his warehouse and drum collection when he contacted Protection Racket to order 70 cases for the project. Mason wanted the cases to have a clear window pocket on them, so he could use photographs of the drums for easy identification. He also requested special cases be made for his Ferrari and *The Dark Side Of The Moon* kits.

Mason got permission from Ferrari to use its logo on the cases in a matching Ferrari red color. Two sets of the cases were made, one for Mason and the other for the sister kit housed at the Ferrari Museum in Maranello, Italy. Mason's final set of cases featured *The Dark Side Of The Moon* album artwork. {protectionracket.co.uk}

WEBNEWS

WEB SITE FOR WINDS

Japanese wind instrument maker Yanagisawa Wind Instruments, which is distributed by Conn-Selmer, has launched a new Web site. The site, yanagisawasaxophones.com, provides information about the different saxophones, necks and mouthpieces. Yanagisawa also launched a Facebook fan page and Twitter account.

“I am so pleased to give Yanagisawa the exposure they deserve on the World Wide Web, and it is my hope that this Web site will help saxophonists become better acquainted with the Yanagisawa instruments,” said Michael Holmes, director of marketing for saxophones at Conn-Selmer.



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+ 4% The decrease in attendance from Summer NAMM 2009, which attracted 12,967 registrants as compared to this year's 12,463.

+ 70 The number of first-time exhibitors that took out booths at the convention.

+ Flat This year's Summer NAMM brought in 383 exhibitors, the same as last year's convention.

SHOWS



SUMMER NAMM 2010 | BY ZACH PHILLIPS & FRANK ALKYER

FOURTH-QUARTER RAMP-UP

Summer NAMM 2010 was an uphill battle from the get-go.

In April, news leaked that two retailers on the NAMM board saved the show from cancellation, urging NAMM to push forward despite waning interest. Then came the flooding in Nashville, Tenn., and reports of dreadful April and May sales at many MI dealerships. Add to that a host of major suppliers opting out of the show, not to mention a date that coincided

Despite waning attendance, Summer NAMM still serves as the ultimate pre-holiday season pick-me-up

with Father's Day.

In this light, Summer NAMM 2010 turned out to be

stronger than expected when it descended on the Nashville Convention Center from June 18–20. A devoted who's who of independent music retail walked the show floor, including most dealers in the Alliance of Independent Music Merchants (AIMM).

"When we were at the AIMM meeting, they had over a 90-percent turnout of their

members," said Harvey Levy, vice president of Levy's Leathers. "That's significant. Supposing you use the old 80/20 rule, you have the most significant and influential independents here at the show."

The convention attracted 4-percent fewer registrants (12,463 total) than last year's event — and this included 250 members of the public who

1. NAMM's Joe Lamond (left) and Sabian's Andy Zildjian; 2. Hunter's Steve Smith (left) and Paul Chu; 3. Peterson's Marshall Johns (left) and Chris Labriola; 4. Dansr's Richard Galime (left) and Hamilton Stands' Bill Carpenter; 5. DBZ Guitars' Dean Zelinsky; 6. From left: Ernie Ball's Brian, Sterling and Scott Ball; 7. Casio's Richard Leiter (left) and Mike Martin

1. From left: Alden's Gordon Close, Bob Wiley and David Nebreski; 2. Rowdy Pickers' Lawson Peets; 3. From left: EMD's Tony Graham, Dan Barker, Anthony Armendariz, Ennis Markus, Buz King and Andrew Swift; 4. TC-Helicon's Laura Clapp Davidson and Andrew Tysinger; 5. Souldier Straps' Jen Tabor; 6. From left: American Music & Sound's Tom Menrath, Mike Papa and Gabe Whyel with Young Chang's Y T Kwon; 7. Miller Guitar Straps' John Dewart; 8. Laney's Roger Williams (left) and Music Distributors Group's Jack Thompson; 9. Madarozzo's Martin Ritter (left) and Scott Tilley; 10. Kyser's Randall Williams; 11. From left: The Music Link's Misha Guiffre, Chris Lekas, Scott Thompson, Terry Buddingh, and Ashley and Travis Atz; 12. Line 6's Don Boomer; 13. Telefunken's Jason Scheuner (left) and Tom Hickey; 14. Tobias Music's Paul and Pat Tobias; 15. U.S. Music's Gil Soucy (left) Barry Ryan; 16. From left: St. Louis Music's Jay Seiler, Rich Dumstorff and Matt Picker

bought tickets for Wanna Play Music Sunday. Still, overall exhibit square footage got a slight bump, according to the NAMM staff.

"In addition to some of our industry's largest manufacturers and distributors, Summer NAMM appeals to the new and emerging companies, and there were 70 brand-new NAMM exhibitors this year," said Joe Lamond, president and CEO of the trade association.

MIXED TRAFFIC

Most exhibitors reported brisk, quality traffic on Friday, the show's opening day, and mentioned it tapering off afterwards. Mike Martin, Casio's director of marketing for electronic musical instruments, called Summer NAMM "an absolute success" for his company but added that he treated it as a regional show, not a national expo. Ben Parker, MI product manager for Chesbro Music, also appreciated the convention's location.

"Our dealer base is strongest on the West Coast," Parker said. "So coming out here, we've met a lot of people who we wouldn't usually have the opportunity to meet, especially at a larger NAMM show, like the Anaheim show, where there are





a million things coming at you.”

Beyerdynamic had a front-and-center booth with American Music & Sound. “It’s been a long time since beyerdynamic has been on the exhibit floor for a Summer NAMM — close to 15 years — so we were pleasantly surprised by the activity level here,” said Paul Froula, beyerdynamic’s national sales and brand manager.

Marc Ingber of Score Marketing doesn’t exhibit at winter NAMM but takes out a booth at the summer show. “For new people, this [show] is fantastic,” he said. “It really helps them get off the ground. But you’ve got to have enough dealers come out. Even though the economy was worse last year, there was more traffic and more dealer buyers at that show.”

One exhibitor, who asked to stay anonymous, said he’s not coming back next year. “We would not do it unless there was something that assured us that there were going to be a lot more dealers here.”

And yet Summer NAMM has its die-hard supporters. The week after the show, Lamond mentioned that his e-mail in-box filled up with notes from retailers begging him to keep the convention alive. Scott Davies, American DJ’s general manager, said the

1. Bedell Guitars’ Jeff Moore (left) and Tom Bedell; 2. D’Addario’s Brian Vance; 3. From left: Alfred’s Daniel Frohnen, Holly Anzalone-McGinnis and Antonio Ferranti; 4. From left: Yamaha’s Rick Young, John Schauer and Tom Sumner; 5. beyerdynamic’s Paul Froula; 6. American Way Marketing’s Jim Klingler (left) and John Musselman; 7. Wristies’ KK Gregory; 8. Rock On Audio’s Peter Lewis; 9. From left: Oriolo Guitars’ Tony DiDomenico, Don Oriolo, Warren Hibbert, Felix The Cat, Don Oriolo, Mike Oriolo, Jurgen Thomas, Richard Cimarik and Lori Abshire; 10. Remo’s Brian LeVan (left) and Bob Yerby; 11. From left: Chesbro’s Pedro da Silva, Ben Parker and Corey Kerr; 12. Tornavoz’s Dave Hager; 13. American DJ’s Alfred Gonzales (left) and Scott Davies; 14. JamHub’s Veronica Pierni; 15. Score Marketing’s Marc Ingber; 16. Wechter Guitars’ Gerson Rosenbloom (left) and Abraham Wechter

show has always been good for his company. When asked how he felt about being one of the only lighting exhibitors this year, he added, "We love it."

SMALL GOODS GLORY

In terms of new gear, Summer NAMM has become more and more about small goods, as dealers seek out that new gadget to bring excitement to their fourth quarters.

Ernie Ball's Gigbag Amp couples — you guessed it — a gig bag and a mini Marshall amplifier, all for a \$119 street price. An MP3 player can be plugged into the amp for play-along.

Samson's new Zoom H1 Handy Recorder was promoted at NAMM as the smallest recorder ever. With a \$99 street price, the simple, lightweight unit has X/Y stereo mics; up to 24-bit, 96-kHz WAV audio; and one-button recording (i.e. no menus required). "Everything's a switch or a button," said Mark Wilder, Samson's director of marketing. "It's ultra-simple."

ToneRite released the third generation of its ToneRite automatic play-in device. This model fits nylon- and steel-string acoustics, hollowbody archtops, thinlines, and acoustic basses. Once installed, it's designed to improve an instrument's tone, clarity, resonance and volume.

Among tuner suppliers, D'Addario's Planet Waves brand debuted the NS Capo Tuner, which combines the NS Dual Action Capo with a chromatic tuner. It lists for \$65. SHS Audio showed Tune Tech TT-10 chromatic clip-on tuners in five different colors, each listing for \$20. And Peterson's booth featured a range of models, including the Stomp Classic — a pedal tuner and DI.

ACCESSIBLE TECHNOLOGY

Several exhibitors focused on marketing their technology-based products to a deeper customer base. Hal Leonard hosted an invite-only retailer meeting at its booth Friday morning for this purpose. The company's distribution deal with Avid resulted in the new Pro Tools Vocal Studio, a \$99 package that includes an M-Audio Producer USB mic and Pro Tools M-Powered Essential software.

"Educators and students are ideal purchasers, but the MI combo stores see these turnkey bundles at \$99 as fourth-

quarter stack-'em-high-and-watch-'em-fly products," said Brad Smith, Hal Leonard's marketing and sales manager.

He picked up the new IK Multimedia AmpliTube iRig, a tiny interface that Hal Leonard distributes. "This turns any Apple mobile device into a little amplifier. And that's where it's going. It's the democratization of recording."

JamHub, maker of silent rehearsal

devices for bands, has also diversified into the education market. "The education market is huge for us," said Veronica Pierni, vice president of operations and finance for JamHub. "We're finding [our product] is great for people giving music lessons in their stores because they don't have to compete with the overall sound of students playing in their stores." She added that high schools and houses of



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Nicole Fox
Miss Hawaii 2008

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+ SKIPPING SUMMER NAMM IS UNHEALTHY

BY BRIAN REARDON, MONSTER MUSIC; LEVITTOWN, N.Y.

I had my doubts about attending Summer NAMM this year. I thought mid-June was too early. Late July is a different story — get me within one billing cycle of late August, and I can see the finish line. I am always cranky in June, though. And with no end in sight to the general economic malaise, I really questioned my need to attend the show. But I bit the bullet and booked a room.

You can never measure the true success of a NAMM show simply in terms of business written at the actual convention. What might have seemed to be a lousy show at first blush usually looks altogether different the further one is removed from it. When I was a rep, so many of my best accounts often began with a casual NAMM show introduction. As a dealer, so many of my best ideas and most enduring trade relationships have begun in a similar fashion. Ideas need time to germinate, however. The value of these ideas is almost always enhanced by the passage of time.

Maybe it sounds trite, but so much in life is just showing up. When I discuss the possibility of stocking a given manufacturer's line in my store, I always mention the 600-plus students that make their way through the front door each week as they participate in our lesson program. I mention this not to display delusions of grandeur. The simple fact is that the guitars and musical products my students ogle each week are the instruments that they initially fall in love with and inevitably purchase. The brands at my store — that are seen, handled and played — become the brands my customers come to request. So I must confess a combination of disappointment and confusion by the decision of many established brands to skip this year's Summer NAMM. They chose to not be seen by the members of the trade that attended.

Gordy Wilcher, a fellow music store owner, sat with me on the "Best in Show" panel. He chose the NAMM Idea Center itself as his "Best in Show." At first, this might appear to be a peculiar pick. "Best in Show" winners are always products, right? Guess not. The attendees obviously agreed. There was rousing applause, the only such reaction to accompany any of the picks.

Reluctance to attend is healthy. The decision to not attend isn't. I don't believe that it benefits individual companies, and I certainly don't believe it benefits NAMM as a whole. As for me, I'm glad I decided to go, even if — for the sake of my psyche — I would rather see the show moved later in the summer. I remain confident that in a couple of years — with the benefit of time's passage and, ideally, a rebounding economy — were I to look back and calculate the cost of attending Summer NAMM 2010 versus the amalgamated benefits that it would prove to be a substantial bargain.

So much in life is just showing up.

'I must confess a combination of disappointment and confusion by the decision of many established brands to skip this year's Summer NAMM.'

worship have taken to JamHub, as well.

Beamz used NAMM to pitch its interactive light-based music system's educational benefits. The Beamz device offers an instant music making experience to anyone, according to Al Ingallinera, the company's vice president of product management.

TRAVEL GUITAR SHOWDOWN

Portability proved to be the watchword among exhibiting guitar makers. Taylor unveiled the GS Mini, a scaled-down version of its Grand Symphony body shape. The guitar, which lists for \$678, has a proprietary magnetic sound-hole pickup, ES-Go, so it can be amplified. Taylor also showed the V-Cable, a 1/4-inch cable with a built-in volume control.

Ministar Guitars showed the Acoustar travel guitar. "The strings are pulling the neck inside the guitar, and when you put the neck back on, it comes right back to pitch," said Bob Wiley, chief designer for Ministar, as he wound the strings and locked the neck into the guitar body. "Suggested retail price is \$295 and includes the bag. You would never know it's a travel guitar unless I told you."

Voyage-Air launched its first electric travel guitar model, the limited-edition Belair. It features a solid alder body and semi-transparent, high-gloss TV Yellow finish and lists for \$799.

In related six-string news, guitar designer Trev Wilkinson mentioned he thinks the cheap guitar era is over. "Guitars are going to start going up in price," said the designer of Fret-King Guitars, as well as Wilkinson hardware, tuners and pickups. "China's wages are going up now. Everybody's wages are going up."

With that in mind, Wilkinson launched the ATD HD440 self-tuning bridge. It's available on Fret-King Super-Matic guitars, and Wilkinson also offers it to guitar makers. With the bridge, guitarists can have up to six different tunings onstage at the press of a button.

THE BEDELL BOON

Bedell Guitars promoted an initiative that's designed to energize the holidays at retail. Any customer who purchases the company's Great Divide Songsmith guitar from Oct. 1–Dec. 31

will get a free Fishman amp, valued at \$230. The program was developed in partnership with Fishman Transducers.

"[The guitar] retails for under \$400," said Bedell Guitars President Tom Bedell. "It's got Fishman Isys electronics in it with a tuner. It sounds great as an acoustic guitar, and it sounds great plugged in."

He added that the deal will be supported with advertising in consumer and trade publications.

FALL AUDIO ROLLOUT

In audio, Line 6 showed the new XD-V digital wireless systems. They feature easy setup and operate in the 2.4 GHz band to avoid interference from high-

flattest frequency response with the flattest phase response across the bandwidth," said John Schauer, a Yamaha product manager. "They'll play very loud, generally 3-6 dB louder than any competitive product — which is big-time."

PLAY DAY

Summer NAMM ended with Wanna Play Music Sunday, where 1,000 members of the public came out to cruise the show. Reunion Blues hosted a Reunion Blues Vintage Guitars Roadshow to offer free instrument appraisals to the public.

"The traffic started off gangbusters in the morning, slowed to a crawl around

1:00 and then ended with a flurry," said John Maher, advertising and marketing director of Reunion Blues. "We came away with 15 video segments of the best appraisals and are working now on the next series of Roadshow videos, so we are happy with the results."

In a statement from NAMM, Bob Taylor, president of Taylor Guitars, said he wants even more of the public to attend Summer NAMM.

"Where I'd like to see us go is having so much public in here that we don't know what to do with them," he said. "But I'm excited about the first step in the direction of creating a public day." **MI**



1. From left: Saga's David Gartland, Rich Ferris, Mike Willemin, Billy McCaleb and Don Moser; 2. From left: Musiquip's Erik Lind, John Kelley and Jeff Sazant

powered sources and for license-free use worldwide. The handheld mic systems have interchangeable capsules and also model several different microphones.

TC-Helicon released VoiceLive Touch at what turned out to be one of the only press conferences at the convention. The unit scales down the company's VoiceLive models into a vocal processor and looper that can be easily mounted on a mic stand. VoiceLive Touch's intuitive user interface also allows for quick and easy vocal harmonies. It lists for \$695.

Yamaha debuted the DSR series, the high end of its active loudspeakers. "Bottom line, it's going to give you the

MIKE GUILLOT

DIRECTOR OF PURCHASING,
MISSISSIPPI MUSIC; HATTIESBURG, MISS.



+ SOMETHING SMALL

Hamilton Stands Uni-Stand

This sturdy metal amplifier stand tilts any size amplifier to virtually any angle, and it works on open- and closed-back amps. It collapses into 2 inches, and the rubber feet and rest plate prevent movement on virtually any surface. Plus, it improves bass response.



+ GOTTA STOCK IT

Zoom H1 from Samson

This is the digital recorder that everyone can afford and is still packed with features. It will sell like popcorn and can be given to everyone on your Christmas list.



+ COMPANIES TO WATCH

Yamaha Corp. of America

It's the company's 50th year in the United States. Yamaha proves that it listens to the dealers, the customers and the music world.

+ BEST IN SHOW

Ibanez Montage

This guitar will stand out on your display wall, and it has "sold" written all over it. It has a spruce top, mahogany back and sides, chrome die-cast tuners, a magnetic and an undersaddle pickup, and a three-band Ibanez EQ with tuner — all for less than \$500. This is definitely the guitar that will get noticed and get *you* noticed.

GEORGE HINES

OWNER AND PRESIDENT, GEORGE'S
MUSIC; BERWYN, PA.



+ SOMETHING SMALL

CooperCopia CooperStand

This guitar stand will sell because it folds up nicely and should fit in most guitar cases and bags. Its unique, upscale look fits a market niche that appeals to people who want portability and high quality.

+ GOTTA STOCK IT

IK Multimedia iRig from Hal Leonard

This real-time multieffects app and interface for iPhone and iTouch is designed for electric guitar, bass and other line-level signals. It's a low-cost accessory that makes playing music more enjoyable, and it's versatile. The packaging also allows for great cross in-store merchandising and should be a strong seller.



+ COMPANIES TO WATCH

Rapco/Horizon

This company's always looking for market niches and opportunities through constant research of industry trends. Look for these folks partnering with other suppliers to produce great new products.

+ BEST IN SHOW

Musical Distributors Group iTab

The iTab is a compact electronic tab and lyric songbook that holds thousands of tabs and hundreds of backing tracks. You can't underestimate cool. It looks like something Apple would think of. The iTab offers relatively low cost and high return on investment, and it gives you a really cool accessory to attach to a guitar headstock.

BRIAN REARDON

OWNER, MONSTER MUSIC;
LEVITTOWN, N.Y.



+ SOMETHING SMALL

StoneWorks Picks

No two picks are the same. The picks last forever, as the stone that they are carved from is much stronger than even the heaviest-gauge string. Suggested list is \$22.95, which, given that they last forever, is a real fair price.

+ GOTTA STOCK IT

Electro-Harmonix V256 Vocoder Voice Pedal and Voice Box Pedal

They have gender-bender features, which let singers bring out either the male or female characteristics of their own voices. Even the most petite female singer can sound like Barry White on a certain setting. Voice Box also creates lush and complex harmonies.



+ COMPANIES TO WATCH

Reverend Guitars

A company and a product line that consistently beats my customers' expectations. It's always giving the customer the feeling that they are getting so much more guitar for the money. Unlike many ubiquitous lines, you don't see them in catalogs and all over the Internet.

+ BEST IN SHOW

DBZ Guitars

Dean Zelinsky seems to have a knack for intuiting what the public will want to buy before they want to buy it. The Imperial, which aesthetically appeals to a weekend-warrior 50-something demographic, is like nothing you have ever seen before.

VICTOR SALAZAR

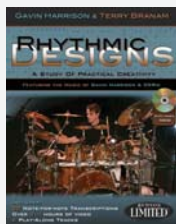
GENERAL MANAGER AND EVENTS COORDINATOR,
THE DRUM PAD; PALATINE, ILL.



+ SOMETHING SMALL

Hal Leonard *Rhythmic Designs* by Gavin Harrison

Despite the advanced nature of this material, drummers of all levels can gain valuable insight and inspiration from this comprehensive package. With great content and Harrison's name attached, you are sure to sell quite a few of these, so stock up now.



+ GOTTA STOCK IT

Puresound Custom Pro Series Snare Wires from D'Addario

The biggest innovation comes in the new Speed Release Straps. These straps let the user quickly disengage the wires from the drum while leaving the straps attached to both the butt plate and strainer, enabling quick head and/or wire changes.

+ COMPANIES TO WATCH

Remo

Remo is setting a new trend in hand drums and drumhead technology. Utilizing its proprietary Skyndeeep imaging and graphic technology, Remo is able to produce heads that look and feel like an animal skin or have unique graphics while retaining superb sound and durability.



+ BEST IN SHOW

Ludwig Keystone Series Drum Set

These drums are made in its Monroe, N.C., facility utilizing the same shell-making technology as its top-of-the-line Legacy Classic and Classic Maple lines but without a hefty price tag.

GORDY WILCHER

OWNER, OWENSBORO MUSIC;
OWENSBORO, KY.



+ SOMETHING SMALL

Willis Music *John Thompson's Modern Course Plus Piano/Popular Piano Solos*

This is useful for church musicians, hobby pianists, pop stars and educators. It's a four-in-one product and a great deal.

+ GOTTA STOCK IT

Austin Guitars from St. Louis Music

The AA20 series from Austin guitars is a great value and our go-to guitar for that first-time buyer or buyer on a budget. The fact that they are doing the setup saves me lots of valuable time away from the repair bench. It's very profitable, and our customers dig them.

+ COMPANIES TO WATCH

Samick Guitars USA

Perhaps the model of an indie-friendly supplier, Samick Guitars offers great margin, huge selection and great service, too. The addition of the Greg Bennett USA series and the TJR line makes this company even more watchable.

+ BEST IN SHOW

NAMM University Idea Center

The NAMM University Idea Center is hands down the best at this show. NAMM's professional development team, led by Ken Wilson, has built a valuable and useful community that gives attendees the best return on their money. The team has also added NAMM U online, so we can learn 24/7.



ZACH PHILLIPS

EDITOR, MUSIC INC. MAGAZINE;
ELMHURST, ILL.



SOMETHING SMALL

Planet Waves NS Capo Tuner from D'Addario

D'Addario has gotten accolades over the years for its small goods, and there's a reason why: It always comes up with clever, helpful, inexpensive tools for musicians. For acoustic guitarists, this is a dream come true, and I think it's worth every penny.

GOTTA STOCK IT

VHT Special 6 Series Amps from The Music Link

I'm most excited about the lunchbox-style amp head in the line, which sells for around \$180. It's a 6-watt all-tube unit, so you can get really cutting tube tone at low volumes.

COMPANIES TO WATCH

Rock On Audio

It offers the Rock Box Limiter and Rockon Cable, a \$200 wired in-ear monitor solution for guitarists, drummers — anyone who doesn't need wireless in-ear monitors. The cable plugs into your guitar but also has a splitter to the side where you plug in your in-ear monitors or headphones.

BEST IN SHOW

TC-Helicon VoiceLive Touch

This is your ultimate vocal toolbox. It's a looper, and it's a vocal effects unit. But what makes it especially cool is the simple, user-friendly interface. Singer-songwriter-guitarists can mount this to their microphone stands, plug in the guitar and microphone, and they're ready to go.



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IDEAS

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INDEPENDENT RETAIL | BY TED ESCHLIMAN

WHEN TO CASH OUT

Last year, my business partner and I returned from Summer NAMM glowing. We had a contagious zeal and were eager to share our new finds with senior staff. Three things, in particular, had us downright giddy: a new bass line, a modular practice/stage monitoring system and an up-and-coming folk instrument line. These would represent our “keynote” fresh products.

Unfortunately, when we reviewed their sales histories seven months later, all three were total duds. Most of them still remained on the floor, despite the enticing “What’s New” signage, the staff lip service and the Facebook updates. It was a real head-scratcher. In July, we were convinced we had Nashville’s greatest hits, but now, they were marked for the cutout bin.

THE COST OF STORE TRAFFIC

On the brighter side, despite our marketing missteps, we were able to recover our net costs on these goods. After years of seeing similar decisions fated to our garage-sale tables, we counted our blessings that we were able to get



How to minimize the risks of taking on new gear

our investments back.

Early in the purchasing process, we promised ourselves, “Six months, cut bait.” In other words, we knew we were taking a chance and wanted to be ready to liquidate long before the inventory could become completely stale and unsellable.

Understand, this is a paradigm shift, even for us retail veterans. It’s hard to let go of the old-school get-your-margin-

at-any-cost mentality. Too often, music retailers hold on to wares too long in a Don Quixote-style quest for “impossible dream” profit. Sometimes, it just isn’t there, and you have the choice of warehousing permanent junk or disposing it at a loss and moving on to the next thing. The former is the worst choice — slow-movers bury the good ones on your sales floor, taking up important retail space and valuable sales staff time.

Still, it’s important to embrace new things. It not only invigorates the salesforce but also gives a fresh perspective on your old inventory, too.

Ironically, our curiosity in the unsuccessful bass line brought customers in that bought old, familiar bass lines. The new, outlandish orange and pink models were attention-getting, yet bassists ultimately took home the conservative vintage sunburst or solid-black models we’d sold for years.

The traffic-inducing practice/stage monitoring systems also tarried, but we sold high-margin cables, stands and mics to many who came in to check out the new product.

And the new folk instrument line we failed with brought

sales-inducing comparisons to proven guitars and mandolins. Plus, we got a clearer picture of what we needed to reload with in time-proven SKUs.

BALANCING THE OLD, NEW

The trick is balance. We didn’t return from Summer NAMM with abundant new lines; we chose a conservative three. Widespread brand desertion causes store-identity crisis with customers. It’s good to morph changes in slowly, and when you pepper your store with new things amid the old, it exudes freshness and stability.

You want new, and you need new. Think of the old gambler proverb: Know when to hold them, when to fold them. That requires being conscious of when your inventory arrived and when it *didn’t* sell. A pre-meditative inventory time limit lets you make mistakes and take a few chances on new gear.

Did we make purchase mistakes last NAMM? Yes. Will we make them again? Of course. But we’ll know when to cash out. **MI**

Ted Eschliman is a 30-year veteran of music retail and co-owner of Dietze Music in Southeast Nebraska. Mel Bay published his book, *Getting Into Jazz Mandolin*.

THE CUSTOMER WHISPERER | BY GREG BILLINGS

CW Goes to Washington

When NAMM asked me to join its annual lobbying trip in Washington, D.C., two years ago, I had some ambivalence. On one hand, it would be foolish to not help my fellow dealers and myself by helping NAMM. I really do believe in the benefits of early music education and think it's one of the best places to spend our tax dollars. But there's something unseemly about lobbying — isn't there? After all, the press has nothing good to say about lobbyists. Then I did a little research.

The term “lobby” may have been coined by Ulysses S. Grant to describe citizens who hung out in the lobby of the Willard Hotel — where he sipped brandy and chomped cigars — waiting for their chance to buttonhole a legislator, cabinet member or even the president himself. (Today, we just send a polite e-mail to our representative or senator and request a meeting.)

We live in a democracy. Citizens have the right, even the obligation, to petition their leaders. Besides, if we don't do it, who will? So off I went, unprepared and not knowing what to expect.

HOW TO LOBBY

Thankfully, NAMM's team is very well-organized and, with its Washington representatives, knows exactly what to do. First, they know that we have many important legislative issues to cover and little time with members of Congress and their

aides. They know that federal funding for elementary and secondary education is likely to be at the top of the agenda in the next session after the fall election. And they know who sits on the important committees that authorize and appropriate funds.

NAMM has a clever strategy for getting meetings with the right people: They use constituents. That's right — the 23

NAMM members who volunteered for this effort live and work in the districts and states of the senators and representatives who will write the legislation that affects us. It turns out that politicians are very interested in talking with people from home, people who can vote for them and employ other potential voters.

NAMM has also retained some very influential, very smart advisors, such as former Secretary of Education Richard Riley and former Rep. Butler Derrick. Though retired, they all have a personal passion for music

education and an intimate knowledge of how Washington works.

Also worth noting: The process for participating in NAMM's fly-in changed this year. Now any member could opt in to the lobbying effort, which was held in mid-May. About half of us had been on one of the three previous trips, but this was the largest lobbying effort by far, comprising nine teams of one to three people each.

There were leaders from big suppliers, such as Hal Leonard; little dealers like me; and everything in between. Our common denominator was a stern conviction that music needs to remain core curriculum in the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) — or whatever they decide to call federal funding for elementary and secondary education next year — and that funding needs to increase, so every kid has a chance to play in band.

TAKING THE HILL

After a full day of training and briefing, we were ready to charge the Hill. We had been warned that we might have just a few moments to capture our legislator's attention and communicate our message.

Meetings often took place in a senator's office, but they also happened in hallways,



The customer whisperer lobbies for music education on Capitol Hill

lobbies and elevators. Sometimes, we had the big cheese, but more often, we spoke with a legislative aide. These aides are very important. They're the people who actually write the legislation. It's better to have an aide alone than a senator without an aide. Also, many of these smart, young people have long government careers, so seeds we planted on the trip may well bloom later.

Each team had its own style, but we decided to capitalize on our strengths. After brief stints in the humble congressional waiting rooms, whichever of us was from the home district said "hello" and introduced the others. Then, it was down to business. We presented the compelling statistics from NAMM-funded research, which proves early music instruction is a better way to get higher math and reading scores than remedial tutoring.

At the right moment, we also asked our host if he or she had ever played a musical instrument. This question had a magical effect. Tense faces smiled. Stiff shoulders loosened, and we heard stories of band trips, piano recitals and beloved music teachers. The meeting's tone turned on a dime. And it happened in most of our meetings. Our hosts internalized our message because they had been the smart kids in school and so were their friends. And they all played music.

I spoke last because I was the "closer." A brief recap and a simple request: When the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is reauthorized, keep music and arts as core curriculum, provide schools more flexibility and increase funding under Title 1, so every



From left: Willis Music's Kevin Cranley, NAMM's Joe Lamond, former MENC Executive Director John Mahlmann, Schmitt Music's Tom Schmitt and Paige's Music's Mark Goff



From left: Sen. Kay Hagan, former Secretary of Education Richard Riley, Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough's Leo Coco and Schmitt Music's Tom Schmitt



From left: Greg and Sara Billings, "Sesame Street" star Bob McGrath, and Steinway Piano Gallery - Madison's Grant Billings

'At the right moment, we asked our host if he or she had ever played a musical instrument. This question had a magical effect.'

child has access to music and the arts as part of a complete, quality education.

LOBBYING IS SELLING

Everyone we spoke with pledged his or her support. Even those who started a meeting with sound-bite references to state's rights and rants about how much they hated NCLB and how it handcuffed principals and worked against local control were willing to get behind music education.

But political support can be ephemeral, and NAMM is going to have to come back to Washington again and again on behalf of music education, access to protected exotic resources and other small business issues. As our Chairman Tom Schmitt of Schmitt Music said, "Think about the groups that aren't

here pressing their cause."

The customer whisperer discovered that lobbying is selling — greeting, creating rapport, establishing expertise, handling objections, presenting an irresistible option and asking for a decision. To NAMM's credit, it relies on what our industry has plenty of: salespeople. Our team had 11 successful meetings in a day and a half. The other eight teams reported almost identical results.

Did we change the world? No. Did we change some minds? Yes. Did we do some good? Definitely. **MI**

Greg Billings whispers to customers at the Steinway Piano Gallery in Bonita Springs, Fla. He welcomes questions and comments at greg@steinwaynaples.com.

CUSTOMER CARE | BY BILLY CUTHRELL

The Executive Parent

The customer landscape seems to change every few years. These days, a customer who feels even slightly wronged can get downright ugly. And with the proliferation of Internet sites that let them vent, you may find yourself defending simple business practices that work great for the other 98 percent of your clients.

This is the first installment in a series of articles where I'll present the symptoms, diagnosis and possible treatments I've used in my shop for the past 10 years to remedy an ailment I call "the customer is always right." Because in some cases, the customer is plain crazy (and needs a real doctor).

I'll begin with customers suffering from executive parent syndrome, or EPS. I realize these symptoms could be mistaken for a variety of other ailments, such as super-self-importance syndrome or just-plain-rude virus, but there are some slight giveaways that indicate EPS. Once recognized, you'll be able to treat this effectively and, hopefully, with compassion.

DIAGNOSING EPS

People suffering from EPS are living to work, not working to live. These parents have a twitch in their thumbs from over-using BlackBerrys. In some cases, you'll notice BlackBerrys to their ears the whole time they're in your store or teaching studio. In extreme cases, they'll pace the sidewalk in front of your business while talking about work, even though they just spent 9–12 hours there. This parent will also wear nice business attire,

although it's often wrinkled from that Herman Miller office chair. They'll rarely approach your sales counter if they enter the store from the confines of their mobile office (car). If they do, it's hard to speak with them because they're still talking on their BlackBerrys about — you guessed it — work.

On the rare occasion that you get a moment to communicate with them, their phones will

undoubtedly ring, and they will undoubtedly pick up. Sometimes, you'll assume they think they're better than you and don't have time for what you need to tell them. In many cases, though, the parent is simply overworked.

THE E-MAIL TREATMENT

This ailment can be tough to treat. Due to the symptoms listed above, direct conversation is almost impossible, so one of the most effective ways to deal with EPS is e-mail treatments. When students register, we collect their

primary and secondary e-mail addresses. We also use Facebook to communicate in some instances. By injecting a healthy dose of e-mails, either through the primary account from your registration records or through Facebook, your communications will make their way onto BlackBerry screens and get read, even if they're not responded to right away. This usually treats 80 percent of parents with EPS.

It's important that you use the correct wording in your e-mail. Be direct, and set up a time to talk with the parent or customer. Example: "Hello Mr. Jones. I need to speak with you for five minutes regarding your tuition payments for Tom's lessons. May I call you this afternoon at 3 p.m.? If I do not hear otherwise, I will contact you then." This may take several e-mail treatments. In rare cases, stronger medicine may be needed, such as a direct confrontation in your shop that interrupts a BlackBerry Internet surfing session. Still, I'm sure you'll see results if you stay the course.

Don't assume your staff is using this treatment effectively. Follow up to ensure they're taking initiative, e-mailing to stay in contact and not simply waiting to catch the parent when he or she comes in. **MI**

Billy Cuthrell operates Progressive Music Center and askourmusicians.com. Contact him at billy@ppdsonline.com.



BlackBerry-toting executive parents are tough customers to pin down. Here's how to reach them



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THE LESSON ROOM | BY PETE GAMBER

In Support of Summer

Every year, I get excited about Summer NAMM, but my excitement usually turns to frustration when I get to the show and realize that everyone's *not* trying to improve the music products industry. Maybe the voices of dissent are correct. They suggest that suppliers don't care about supporting retailers, and this became evident as I walked the show this year and saw absenteeism by many big suppliers. The concept that actions speak louder than words came to mind.

What happened to Summer NAMM? When I attended my first summer show in 1985, NAMM was mainly about acquiring new lines and products. MTV was crankin' (with music), and the terms inventory control and cash flow management weren't discussed much, if at all.

THE INDUSTRY'S BIGGEST LESSON ROOM

NAMM is no longer a buy-now show. It has become the ultimate lesson room, and I've learned more there than I could ever teach.

I have learned from industry veterans, such as George Hines, Chip Averwater, Kenny Smith, Kevin Cranley and Danny Rocks — to name a few. I heard about the ukulele craze from Ted Eschliman before it happened, and my fears about *Yellow Pages* advertising were confirmed by Greg Billings. I have also learned from NAMM newbies, such as Aaron Soriero and Myrna Sislen, who've brought new excitement to this industry.

SUPPLIERS, STEP IT UP

As music retail began to change, NAMM and its board members realized that communication and education were the future of a healthy music products industry. Suppliers, you need to support that future, not give lip service.

Real growth isn't going to come from the Internet or Best Buy. It's going to come from local retailers who have educated themselves on finance, marketing, purchasing, and yes, my favorite subject, creating and developing musicians. No new musicians means no new instrument purchases. And a decline in music retail storefronts in communities will lead to a suffering industry.

Suppliers, NAMM has two shows you need participate in until the format changes. Summer NAMM provides sales for your company by maintaining relationships with existing dealers and developing new ones.

Summer NAMM is where and when music retailers look at fourth-quarter purchasing and new products to stock.

Understand that by supporting both NAMM shows you are supporting the education of this industry and will benefit by having a healthy dealer network now and in the future. And to those suppliers who traveled to Summer NAMM and supported it, I want to personally thank you.

RETAILERS, RECOMMIT

Retailers, you need to attend Summer NAMM, too. Otherwise, you're supporting suppliers who want to see this show go away. If you went to Summer NAMM and your vendors didn't, e-mail the national sales manager or president of each non-attending company, and ask, "What's the deal?" I'm going to.

You need to vote with your pocketbooks the same way consumers do. Support the suppliers that were at this year's convention by including them in your fall purchase orders. Cite Summer NAMM in your purchase-order comments, so they know their time and resources were well-spent. Summer NAMM is where it happens. Be part of the solution. **MI**

Pete Gamber is the owner of Alta Loma Music in Rancho Cucamonga, Calif. He welcomes questions and comments at pete@altalomamusic.com.



Absenteeism is not an option when the future of the music retail industry is on the line

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STREETWISE SELLING | BY KENNY SMITH

Are You Crazy Enough?

At Summer NAMM, I embarked on a quest to find dealers who'd done something crazy to stimulate business in this economy. Unfortunately, just about every independent dealer I came in contact with said he or she hadn't done anything lately. Sadly, the small and medium-sized dealers who've been hurt the most have done the least to change their situation.

During the "State of the Industry Address" on the first morning of the show, NAMM President and CEO Joe Lamond asked a ballroom of dealers how many were selling online. About 25 hands went up. I realize only half a crowd usually responds to hand-raising questions, but a lot more should have gone up. On the show floor, I asked dealers if they were using Facebook or had a blog. The most common response was, "No, I don't have the time." Even NAMM University itself got a "Best in Show" pick, but these educational sessions could've drawn a stronger attendance.

It breaks my heart to see dealers suffer when they have so many other options. These days, the world is full of *free* help, and that brings promise to those who'll participate. There are plenty of new online groups you can get involved with now. If you're not in one, find one and join it. The music business has some of the most amazing minds you'll ever find in a single industry. Not taking advantage of this perfect moment is crazy.

THE FLEA MARKET PROMOTION MODEL

Gordy Wilcher, owner of Owensboro Music in Owensboro, Ky., was kind enough to share something crazy he did that turned into a success story. His company hosted a flea market sale — with a twist. One Saturday, Gordy let locals come out and sell their own musical gear in booths he provided in his store's parking lot. It was promoted via Facebook. He wanted a traffic-builder that would attract new, local customers to the store and, at the same time, grow his Facebook following. Still, he knew it was risky.

"I definitely got some push-back from employees about doing this, but it just felt right, and I was determined to do it," he said. "I actually got this idea from attending one of the NAMM U sessions, and I knew we had to try something different. As the possible negatives came up, I told everyone that we were going to follow through with this, hope for the best, and

that's what we did.

"The event drew customers from farther than I expected — areas we don't get much business from. The people just showed up. Some sellers who sold their items came into the store and spent the money they made. We also had flea market shoppers who'd never been to the store come in and buy.

"On our Facebook page, we had many positive comments about what we did, and this has continued to grow our amount of friends and followers significantly. For the first time ever, I was able to get some free press from the local newspaper and radio station all because of this, so it's paying off in a number of ways. The store has seen an increase in traffic and business due to the flea market, and even though it was kind of a crazy thing to do, it's turned out to be one of the best things we've done in years."

If your store is running in business-as-usual mode, it's time to break the mold and do something crazy. There are a multitude of great ideas being shared on a daily basis, and at least one of them is right for you. Get involved, find something that's doable and don't just think about it — do it! **MI**

Kenny Smith is an industry veteran and consults both retailers and suppliers. Find him at kennysmithsalesguru.com.



One retailer boosted his sales, customer base and local visibility by stepping outside the comfort zone

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FALL PRODUCT PREVIEW

2010



PRODUCT OF THE MONTH >

PRS | SWAMP ASH SPECIAL

Blended Pickup Trio

PRS has added its latest Narrowfield pickup technology to the 25th Anniversary Swamp Ash Special guitar. The new pickups focus the string attack like a single-coil but are hum-canceling. The result is a system that blends features of single-coil, soapbar and humbucking pickups.

The guitar has a tremolo bridge, PRS 14:1 Phase II low-mass locking tuners, volume and tone controls with a five-way blade pickup selector, solid swamp ash body, and shadow bird inlays. The pickups include treble 57/08, middle 57/08 and bass 57/08 Narrowfields.

{prsguitars.com}

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Hal Leonard rocks with new Real Book
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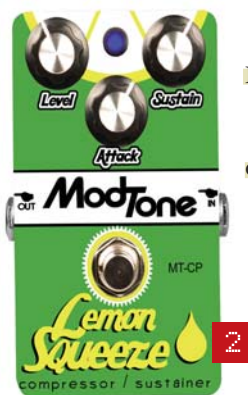
Photo by Karen Solem

GEAR >

GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES

Pedal Power

Pedals that are sure to put sales into overdrive with eye-popping visuals and ear-pleasing tones.



1 ELECTRO-HARMONIX GERMANIUM 4 BIG MUFF PI Electro-Harmonix has resurrected the warm Germanium transistors of the 1960s with the Germanium 4 Big Muff Pi. It features two independent circuits — one overdrive and one distortion — that can be used individually or in a series. MSRP: \$133. ehx.com

2 MODTONE LEMON SQUEEZE The Lemon Squeeze compressor/sustainer features true bypass, signature vintage knobs, quality switches and a rugged all-metal housing with a bright yellow-green color scheme that matches the pedal's name. It also provides clean, transparent functionality. MSRP: \$99.95. modtone-effects.com

3 TECH 21 CHARACTER SERIES The pictured Oxford pedal is one of three new additions to Tech 21's SansAmp Character series. The other new models include Leeds and U.S. Steel. They feature built-in defeatable speaker simulation, three-band active EQ and 100-percent analog circuitry. MSRP: \$225. tech21nyc.com

4 ROCKTRON BLACK ROSE The Black Rose Octaver is a true-bypass pedal. Its controls include thorns, merge and fragrance. Thorns determines the intensity and tracking of the octave-below effect. Merge controls the mix between the original input and the octave effect. Fragrance controls the overall tonal color. rocktron.com

5 AGUILAR AGRO The Agro bass overdrive pedal is based on the saturation channel of Aguilar's AG 500 bass head. The unit produces tube-like overdrive to full-on distortion and provides grind without sucking out the low end. The pedal has a variety of overdriven sounds within a simple four-knob layout. MSRP: \$179. aguilaramp.com



FENDER | SUPER-SONIC COMBO AMPS

Tone Unmasked

Fender has unveiled the Super-Sonic 22 combo, Super-Sonic 60 combo, Super-Sonic 60 head and 212 enclosure. The Super-Sonic 22 (pictured) is a 22-watt tube combo that delivers versatility with the organic feel and moderate output power of a Deluxe Reverb amp. The Vintage channel also delivers pure Fender tone. And while the 1- by 12-inch Super-Sonic 22 is capable of heavily saturated tube distortion and sustain, it doesn't mask the tonal character of a guitar. Offered in classic black and silver or 1961 blond and oxblood cosmetic treatments, both versions include ivory radio knobs and 1960s script logo. fender.com

DIGITECH | BP90

Multi-Talented

DigiTech's new BP90 bass multieffects processor is powered by the AudioDNA 2 and gives players a digital representation of vintage, modern and boutique equipment. It includes stompboxes, amplifiers, cabinets, delays, reverbs and special effects. MSRP: \$139.95. ditech.com



THIRD POWER AMPLIFICATION | DREAM AMPS

Dare to Dream

Third Power Amplification has released two combo amps, the American Dream and British Dream. They are the same size but differ in their tonal palettes. Both have tube combo designs and feature a switchable power tube amp paired with a single 12-inch Celestion driver. The amp section can operate at either 30 or 15 watts of power and offers a two-stage pre-amp using 12AX7 tubes with 6L6 tubes on the output stage. Both combos feature Third Power's switch-back speaker chamber, which is an internal triangular enclosure that eliminates the standing waves inherent in parallel-side designs. MSRP: \$1,999. 3rdpoweramps.com



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KALA | POCKET UKE

Little Ukes Get Smaller

Kala Brand Music has introduced a smaller, more portable model with the Kala Pocket Uke. Measuring 16 inches from top to bottom, it's constructed of solid wood and is available in three models: acacia, mahogany and maple.

The Pocket Ukulele is tuned in the same intervals as a baritone ukulele except in higher octaves. Other features include a mahogany neck, rosewood fingerboard and bridge, 12 silver nickel frets, friction tuners with black buttons, satin finish, and Aquila Nylgut strings. kalaukulele.com



CÓRDOBA | LA PLAYA TRAVEL SS

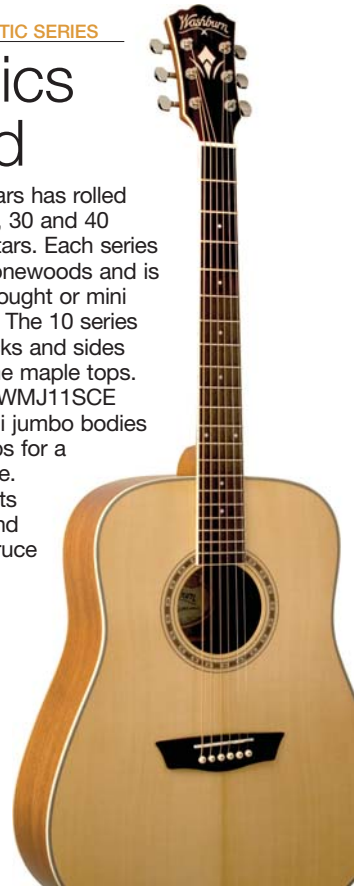
Surf's Up

Córdoba Guitars has partnered with surfer and musician Donavon Frankenreiter to release its first steel-string guitar, La Playa Travel SS. The half-size cutaway travel guitar is designed for adventurous musicians to take on the road and comes equipped with a two-band pickup, battery-powered amp and tarpaulin-insulated gig bag. The La Playa Travel SS features steel strings, a thinner neck and a radiused fretboard. It has a satin finish, solid Canadian cedar top, and mahogany back and sides. MSRP: \$345. cordobaguitars.com

WASHBURN | ACOUSTIC SERIES

Acoustics Abound

Washburn Guitars has rolled out its 10, 20, 30 and 40 acoustic series guitars. Each series features different tonewoods and is available in dreadnought or mini jumbo body styles. The 10 series has mahogany backs and sides with spruce or flame maple tops. The WMJ11S and WMJ11SCE models feature mini jumbo bodies and solid cedar tops for a slightly warmer tone. The 20 series boasts rosewood backs and sides with solid spruce or cedar tops. washburn.com



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DAISY ROCK | EXOTIC WOOD SERIES

Daisy's Exotic Butterfly

The spalted maple Butterfly Jumbo acoustic/electric guitar is the latest addition to Daisy Rock's exotic wood series. It comes with white binding and a butterfly on the 12th fret marker. Featuring a mahogany neck and rosewood fingerboard, the Butterfly guitar offers powerful sound quality whether the player is plugged in or not. It's powered by a Fishman Isys system. MSRP: \$499. **{daisyrock.com}**

TAYLOR GUITARS | GS MINI

Mini & Bold

The GS Mini is the next generation in Taylor's portable guitar line. Featuring a scaled-down version of the company's Grand Symphony body shape, the GS Mini boasts a bold voice and tonal depth that contradicts its compact size. It also features Taylor-designed pickup accessories. The guitar has a scale length of 23.5 inches and a deeper body depth than the Baby Taylor. The GS Mini features a solid sitka top, back and sides of sapele laminate, ebony fretboard and bridge, and tortoise shell pickguard. MSRP: \$678. **{taylorguitars.com}**



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STONEWORKS | GUITAR PICKS

Rock-Solid Picks

StoneWorks has launched natural stone guitar picks fabricated from agate and jasper. Each pick is one-of-a-kind and offers a smooth guitar-playing experience. They also create a glassy, harmonic overtone when hitting the strings.

{stoneworkspicks.com}



ALLPARTS | TREMOL-NO

Take Control

The new Tremol-No from Allparts can be added to any electric guitar equipped with a traditional or locking tremolo. It lets the player set the tremolo in three distinct modes quickly. The modes include divebomb and pull back, divebomb with no pulling back to raise the pitch, and hardtail lockdown. The Tremol-No comes with all the necessary hardware and easy installation instructions. It requires no modification to the guitar. {allparts.com}



LEVY'S LEATHERS | GRRLS ROCK GUITAR STRAPS

Levy's Female Rock Fashions

Levy's Leathers has expanded its Urban Prints guitar strap line for 2010 with five Grrls Who Rock original printing designs. These models use glossy St.-Tropez leather for the canvas. Each narrow, padded strap features an edgy, hard-rocking yet feminine design. Pictured is model PM28STP. {levysleathers.com}

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TC·HELICON

FALL PRODUCT PREVIEW

AUDIO & RECORDING



TC-HELICON | VOICELIVE TOUCH

Vocal Toolbox

TC-Helicon's new VoiceLive Touch is a go-anywhere vocal processor that delivers quality vocal effects and VLoop, a performance vocal looper. The vocal processor features an intuitive interface and includes an integrated mic stand mount to place it where it's needed most for hands-on control.

VoiceLive Touch provides effects from the VoiceLive 2, including HardTune, μ Mod, tap delay, reverb, harmony, doubling and transducer. The instant touch interface features a bright, easy-to-read scrolling display and a 25 favorites option to store and recall customized effects quickly. MSRP: \$695.

tc-helicon.com



Photo by Karen Solem

EQUATION AUDIO | F.20

Classy Looker

The new, retro-looking F.20 from Equation Audio is a large-diaphragm, side-address condenser mic. It features a supercardioid transducer with a nearly 1-inch diameter proprietary electret capsule, switchable 80 Hz roll-off filter and 16 dB pad. The mic's HR-2295 high-resolution head amplifier provides low-noise performance with 20–20 kHz response and 150 dB max SPL handling. It features fourth-generation advanced solid state electronics and head amplifier technology. MSRP: \$699.

{equationaudio.com}



LINE 6 | XD-SERIES

Reliable Wireless

Line 6 has rolled out the XD-series wireless line. It includes two handheld cardioid microphone systems — all featuring exclusive Line 6 digital technologies. New DCL (Digital Channel Lock) and PDP (Proprietary Data Placement) technologies provide encoded digital transmissions, govern against interference and audio artifacts, and ensure reliable operation in hostile RF environments. MSRP: \$349.99–\$499.99. {line6.com}

TELEFUNKEN | AK-47 MKII

Tele Upgrade

Featuring a dual-sided, gold-sputtered capsule and Telefunken EF-732 vacuum tube, the new AK-47 MKII from Telefunken Elektroakustik includes a transformer upgrade to the BV8 found in the classic U-47 and U-48 microphones.

Additional modifications include enhanced low-frequency articulation and a lower inherent noise floor for better overall detail. This new amplifier is combined within an improved circuit board layout, utilizing wide, direct traces and large ground planes for optimal current flow. {t-funk.com}



CAD | EQUITTEK E100S

Smooth CAD

CAD has released the Equitek E100S large-diaphragm supercardioid condenser mic. It has the lowest noise floor in its class at 3.7 dBA, along with a smooth vintage tone and full-bodied low end. The mic features a bootstrapped, full-differential Quadra-FET front end to ensure high sensitivity and low distortion. A nickel-plated, one-inch capsule delivers accurate phasing when miking instruments. MSRP: \$799. {cadmics.com}





RADIAL | CRASHGUARD

Sound Shield

The new CrashGuard from Radial is a sound-shielding device that isolates the drum mic to attenuate the cymbal sounds during the recording process. This reduces interference between the two sources and enables greater control over the sound of the drum. The underbelly is fully coated on the inside with high-density open-cell foam to absorb internal reflections and reduce phase cancellation. On close proximity sources, engineers will also enjoy greater balance over each sound. MSRP: \$40. radialeng.com

AUDIO-TECHNICA | AT4050ST

Recordists' Choice

Audio-Technica's new AT4050ST is a stereo side-address externally polarized condenser microphone. Independent cardioid and figure-of-eight elements are configured in a mid-side arrangement with switch-selectable internal matrixing. This unit offers recordists the choice of selecting a left-right stereo output through the microphone's internal matrixing system or discrete mid-side signals for later manipulation. MSRP: \$1,625. audio-technica.com





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ZOOM | H1 HANDY RECORDER

Zoom Shrinks

Zoom has released its smallest recorder to date, the H1. Weighing about 2 ounces, the H1 features the same studio-quality microphones as Zoom's H2. The H1's two on-board mics are configured in an X/Y pattern for full-stereo imaging depth and clarity. The pocket-sized H1 delivers clear 24-bit, 96-kHz stereo recordings. It can accommodate up to 32 GB microSDHC memory cards, providing more than 50 hours of recording time. MSRP: \$99.

{samson-tech.com}



SANYO | ICR-XPS01M

Slim & Trim

The recently introduced Sanyo Xacti ICR-XPS01M is an ultra-slim audio recorder. A bundled speaker cradle version, the ICR-XPS01MF, is also available. These sound recorders feature Linear PCM recording in addition to various MP3 modes. The Linear PCM provides a high-quality sound recording mode that is equivalent to an audio CD, which can be recorded onto a microSD card and easily transferred and played back on a computer or shared online. MSRP: ICR-XPS01M, \$149; ICR-XPS01MF, \$199. {sanyo.com}



ALLEN & HEATH | ZED-10, ZED-10FX MIXERS

Mighty Mini

Allen & Heath has unveiled its smallest-format mixers to date, the ZED-10 and ZED-10FX. They each feature two high-impedance discrete class A field effect transistor inputs, which let an instrument plug directly into the mixer, emulating valve/tube input circuitry. Each also has a 26 dB gain boost switch, which caters to instruments with low-output pickups. {allen-heath.com}



NADY SYSTEMS | UWS-100

UWS-100 Ships

Nady Systems' UWS-100 is a new 100-channel select UHF wireless system. It offers state-of-the-art PLL UHF performance with 120 dB dynamic range and operation up to 500 feet line-of-sight. Other features include ASC (Auto-Sync Channels) download, which sends selected group and channel information to the transmitter via the IR sender for easy frequency synchronization; tone squelch circuitry; and front-panel touch control buttons for easy channel selection and ASC operation. {nady.com}



MACKIE | SRM1801

Companion Piece

Mackie's new compact SRM1801 subwoofer is designed specifically for use with the SRM450v2. The SRM1801 delivers power, output and low-frequency extension to customers looking to add massive low end to their portable P.A. system. It delivers 1,000 watts of efficient class D power in a lightweight, portable design. The 18-inch woofer features active electronics, a precision crossover and tuning filters.

{mackie.com}

EAW | JF SERIES

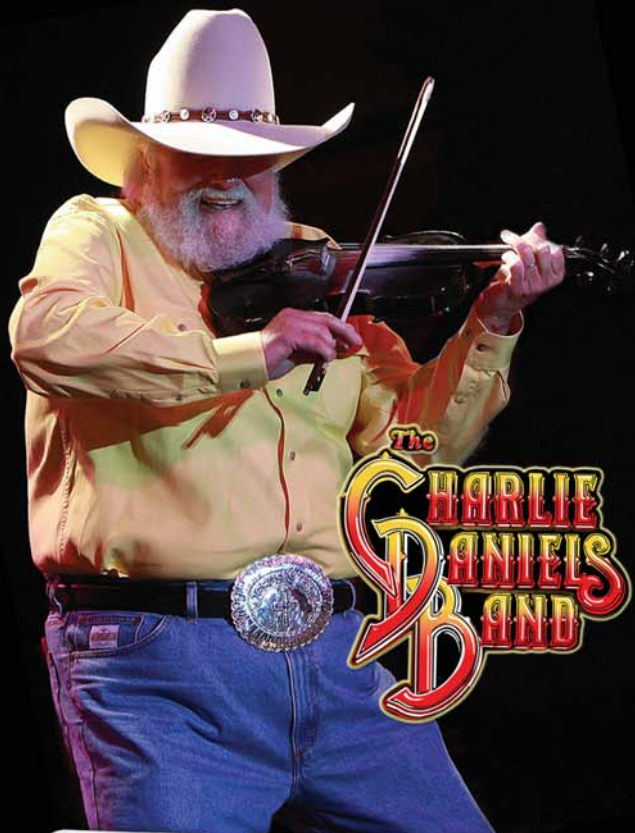
Venue-Ready

The latest additions to the EAW JF series of two-way loudspeakers include the JF8, JF10, JF26, JF29, JF56 and JF59. The JF models include low-directivity 8-inch and 10-inch systems and four 12-inch and 15-inch systems. Integrating lightweight, premium neodymium components and crossover design into an adaptable package offers new levels of utility. When used in conjunction with EAW's UX8800 processor and its EAW Focusing, the JF series provides high performance in a variety of venues. {eaw.com}



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FALL PRODUCT PREVIEW

DJ & LIGHTING



NUMARK | ICD DJ IN A BOX

Hey, Mr. DJ!

Numark's new iCD DJ in a Box is a complete DJ system with iPod docking. It gives DJs at all levels everything they need to perform with their CDs and iPods. The unit contains two Numark NDX200 CD players, an iM1 two-channel DJ mixer with built-in iPod dock, headphones and all the necessary connection cables.

Numark's anti-shock buffered skip-protection technology keeps music playing even when vibrations might cause other players to skip. The included iM1 mixer records mixes straight to the iPod and accommodates all dockable iPod models, providing greater flexibility and convenience.

MSRP: \$399.99. numark.com



RANE | SIXTY-EIGHT

Seamless Switcher



Rane and Serato are now shipping the Rane Sixty-Eight, a Scratch Live-compatible DJ mixer that connects two computers simultaneously. It has four channels, a range of effects and Rane hardware design. Utilizing two USB ports, the Rane Sixty-Eight mixer lets users control up to four decks with one laptop. Two Scratch Live DJs can now play back-to-back, providing seamless handover from one DJ to another, so they'll never miss a beat. rane.com



AMERICAN DJ | FUSION TRI FX BAR

Two-in-One Light

The Fusion Tri FX Bar is a new 21.25-inch-long LED bar from American DJ that combines two different effects in one light. The first effect is four hard-edge LED color pinspots. Each is capable of producing seven colors: red, green, blue, yellow, purple, cyan and white. The second effect is an LED wash/strobe that's created by three banks of LED lights positioned between the four pinspots. The banks are different colors, such as red, green and blue. Each is powered by 45 LEDs for a total of 135 LEDs that are capable of strobing in every color. MSRP: \$399.95. americandj.com

ODYSSEY | FZGSMIXDECKGT

Odyssey Traveler

Odyssey now offers a series of protective cases designed specifically to accommodate the Numark Mixdeck universal DJ system. The Odyssey FZGSMIXDECKGT (pictured) is an ATA flight case that features the company's patented glide-style laptop/gear platform. The glide-style design gives performers seamless access to their laptops or music gear with a sturdy wide-base glide platform at the top and a convenient pull-out keyboard glide tray surface at the bottom. MSRP: \$379.99.

odysseycases.com



DENON DJ | DN-HC1000S

Scratch Control

Denon DJ has begun shipping the DN-HC1000S USB MIDI sub-controller, which is Serato-compatible. The DN-HC1000S is designed to interface directly with turntables and CD players that have Scratch Live. The controller provides plug-and-play operation via self-powered USB connectivity. It replaces the standard PC keyboard for DVS systems with a set of dedicated controls, including track select and fast search, shift/CLR button, five hot-start buttons, three sampler buttons, auto loop, loop in-out with exit/reloop, history, and a tap button. denondj.com



CHAUVET | 4PLAY

Chauvet Gets Around

The new Chauvet 4Play provides a ready-to-go light bar for mobile performers. The bar is fitted with four LED moonflowers, each containing 57 red, green, blue and white diodes to produce sharp, simulated rotating beams. The unit features six DMX control channels that let users control each head individually or as a group. The 4Play also has built-in automated and sound-activated programs. It can be easily truss-mounted by adding clamps or fits on most standard tripods. The 4Play also includes a travel bag for easy transportation.

{chauvetlighting.com}



MBT LIGHTING | LEDJ416

Low Energy, High Impact

MBT Lighting has released the LEDJ416. This low-heat, low-energy light is the latest LED version of MBT Lighting's DJ416 mobile lighting system.

The package includes four LED lamps in red, yellow, blue and green.

The control system consists of a three-pedal footswitch with audio/speed chase selection, along with full-on and black-out modes. MSRP: \$449.

{mbtlighting.com}

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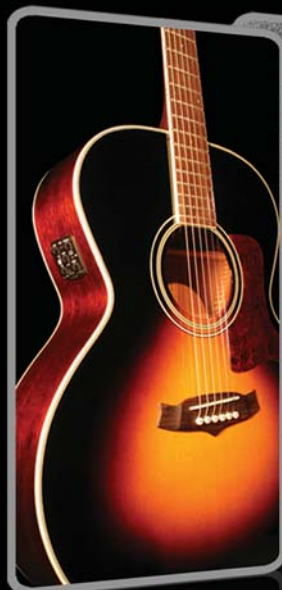
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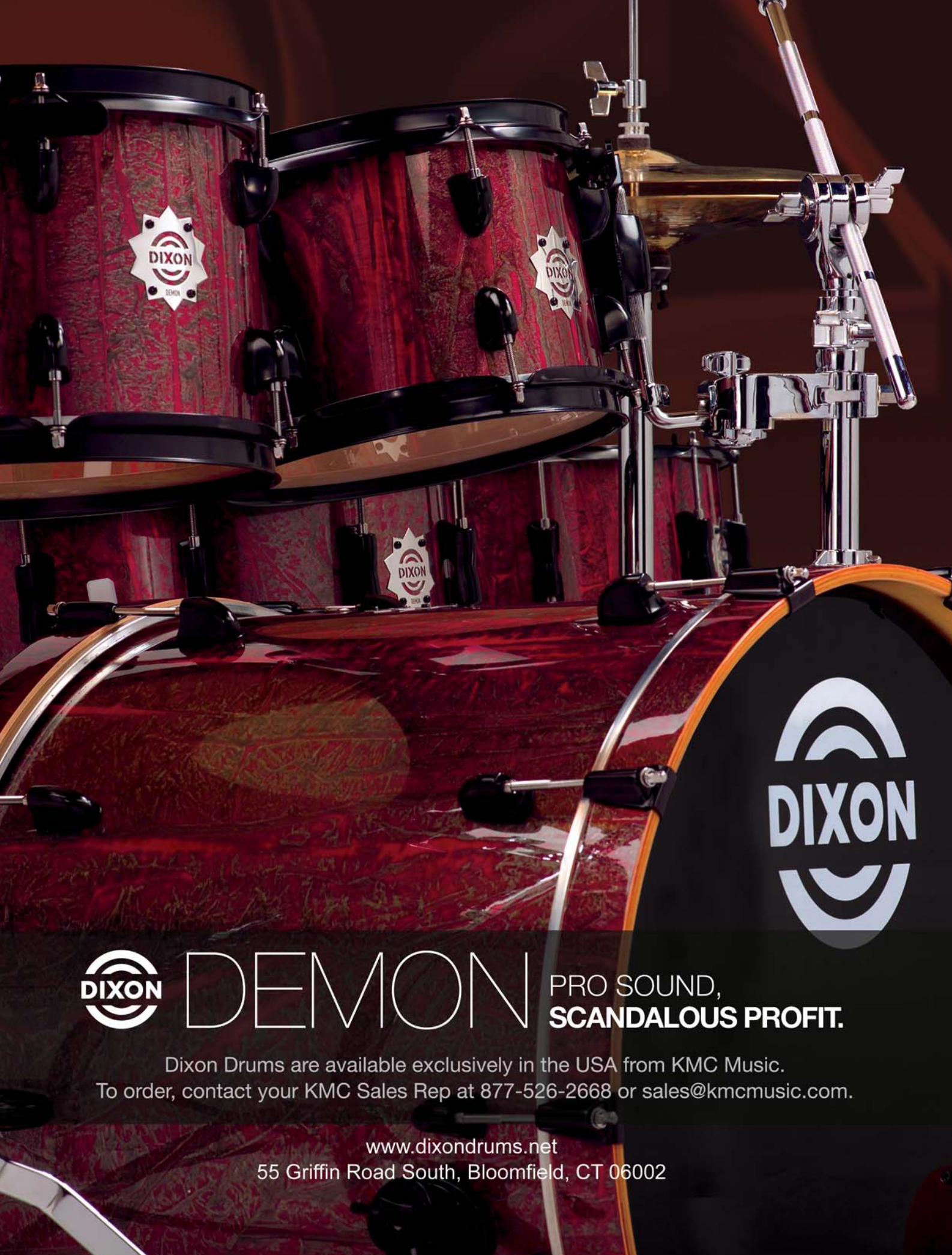
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FALL PRODUCT PREVIEW

DRUMS & PERCUSSION



LUDWIG | LEGACY EXOTIC

Ludwig Adds Rare Veneers

Ludwig's Legacy Exotic flagship drum line adds new, rare hardwood veneers to the three-ply combination of inner and outer North American maple and single poplar core ply with solid maple reinforcement rings. The three exotic veneers include vertical grain African black limba (pictured), Australian lacewood and Amazon sumauma. Each comes in a choice of four different lacquer finishes. MSRP: starts at \$4,999. ludwig-drums.com



GEAR >

DRUMS & PERCUSSION

YAMAHA | DTX550K

Comfort Construction

Yamaha has launched the DTX550K electronic drum kit. It features a built-in suspension dampening system, which absorbs the energy from the hands and wrists for greater comfort. The DTX-Pad snare features a textured cellular silicone head with an air-bubble configuration for more response and subtle stick work. Its two-zone construction features separate pad and edge zones.

The DTX550K boasts 427 internal sounds created by a tone generator that handles both subtle snare work and drum strokes with ease. MSRP: \$2,499.

{yamahadrums.com}



TYCOON | PERCUSSION TABLES

Within Reach

Tycoon Percussion now offers a hardware line to keep drum and percussion instruments within easy reach. The company's percussion tables are available in large and small sizes, designed for all types of drumming situations. The trays are attached to stands that are height-adjustable and double-braced. The trays provide padded surfaces that can accommodate sticks and mallets, as well as electronic multi-pads and laptop computers.

{tycoonpercussion.com}



TOCA | CLAVE BLOCK

3, 2, 1 — Jam!

Toca has released the 3/2 Clave Block. This block can project through high-volume music, withstand the impact of hard playing and transport easily. The instrument is made of a durable composite material that creates clear, warm percussive tones. It's sized and shaped to produce a medium-high pitch that fits melodically between many of the high and medium-high pitched blocks. The 3/2 includes a mount that lets the block swivel from side to side without having to reposition the clamp. MSRP: \$45.

{tocapercussion.com}



LOS CABOS | 8A MODEL

Attack-Ready

Los Cabos Drumsticks' latest addition is the 8A model. It's available in white hickory, red hickory and maple. With a mid-range diameter of 0.580 inches and a round tip, the 8A offers an ideal combination of attack and rebound. It's designed for players looking for enhanced cymbal definition.

"Our product line is based on practicality," said Los Cabos President Larry Guay. loscabosdrumsticks.com

MAPEX | HORIZON FASTPACK

Fast Transit

Mapex's Horizon Fastpack is an easy-to-load drum set. It includes a 20- by 12-inch bass drum, 8- by 6-inch and 10- by 7-inch mounted toms, 12- by 12-inch floor tom, 13- by 5-inch snare drum, and light-weight Mapex 310 series hardware. The bass drum and snare fit into a padded rolling bag with wheels. The toms all fit into a padded bag with a shoulder strap, and an easy-to-carry bag is provided for the hardware. mapexdrums.com



PURESOUND | SNARE WIRES

Quick Change

PureSound Percussion has launched Custom Pro snare wires. The wires are designed with anti-choke end plates that reduce snare buzz and let the player crank up his or her snare tension for a tight response that doesn't choke the drum. MSRP: \$34.99. puresoundpercussion.com



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PEARL | VSX ARTISAN II

New Vision



Pearl debuted its Special Edition Vision VSX shell pack this summer.

This drum set features an Artisan II finish that uses Pearl's digital grain transfer technology. The pictured kit is finished in ebony feathered walnut and features a birch ply shell composition. The six-ply shell thickness of the rack toms and eight-ply shell thickness of the floor toms and bass drums give the kit a balanced sound that fits a variety of music styles.

The matching snare drums are sold separately. MSRP: shell pack, \$1,099; snare drum, \$332.

{pearldrum.com}

REMO | APEX, ADVENT DJEMBES

Make an Impact

Remo's new sleek-looking Apex (pictured left) and Advent (right) djembes are designed with quality and playing comfort in mind.

The Apex features specially engineered tuning brackets, which boast inverted, recessed tuning hooks for easily tuning the drum.

The Advent is portable and weather-resistant with a Remo Suede drumhead that can be easily tuned for the pitch range of a djembe or doumbek sound. Both are molded from ABS durable plastic materials for impact resistance. MSRP: Apex, \$219.50; Advent, \$129. {remo.com}



SABIAN | HHX FUSION HATS

Dark Fusion

Fusion Hats are now available in the Sabian Modern Dark series, HHX. The name Fusion comes from the mix of raw bottom cymbal and lathed top. Featuring a medium top and a heavy, unlathed, hand-hammered bottom, the 13-inch and 14-inch Fusion Hats deliver high-definition sticking, crisp pedal chick and cutting volume in closed and open positions. {sabian.com}





THE MUSIC PEOPLE |
DRUMFIRE PRACTICE PAD

Practice Perfect

The new DrumFire DFP7500 Drum Practice Pad from The Music People features a durable 8-inch pad. It comes with a detachable folding tripod stand that's height-adjustable to accommodate a standing or sitting position. The pad also offers a pivoting head for angle adjustments and a 6-mm mounting bolt. MSRP: \$72.99. musicpeopleinc.com

GROVER | G3 CONCERT SNARE

Well-Articulated

Grover Pro Percussion has released the G3 Concert snare drum line. The G3 features 10-ply maple shells, a choice of six hand-rubbed lacquer finishes, chrome-plated tube lugs, steel or die-cast rims, and a new Grover G3 triple strainer. The line has four types of snares: black coated cable, uncoated steel cable, high-carbon spiral and extra gold coated cables. The G3 is available 5.5- by 14-inch and 6.5- by 14-inch sizes. MSRP: \$850-\$975. groverpro.com



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Photo by Jimmy Ienner, Jr.

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FALL PRODUCT PREVIEW

PIANOS & KEYBOARDS



AMERICAN MUSIC & SOUND | NORD PIANO

Nord Takes the Stage

The Nord Piano, a dedicated stage piano with 88 keys and weighted hammer action, started shipping this summer. It provides plenty of memory locations in a bank/program configuration to give players quick access to their favorite sounds. The Nord Piano comes equipped with several acoustic and electric pianos and harpsichords. More Nord downloadable sounds are available for free at nordkeyboards.com and can be exchanged by using the Nord Sound Manager application. [{nordkeyboards.com}](http://nordkeyboards.com)



Photo by Karen Solem

GEAR >

PIANOS & KEYBOARDS

SCHIMMEL | CASE DESIGNS

Design in Detail

This spring, Schimmel unveiled new variations to the K 125, C 120 Tradition and C 114 Modern Junior piano case designs. The K 125 Tradition and C 120 Tradition models feature new construction on the piano legs, making the

piano foot almost non-existent due to the emphasis on the vertical line. Another improvement to all three pianos is the harmonic transition of the piano leg into the glider. The glider permits height adjustment to compensate for uneven floors and helps keep the instrument in tune longer.

{schimmel-piano.de}



WRISTIES | HAND WARMERS

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Wristies are fingerless gloves for musicians who practice or perform in the cold. They slide over the wrists and hands, letting musicians play with their fingers. Piano, guitar and bass players can use Wristies without having to worry about their fingers getting stiff with cold. Wristies come in short, heated, light and child varieties. {wristies.com}

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YAMAHA | PIAGGERO SERIES

Touch & Tone to Go

Yamaha's new Piaggero series of portable keyboards includes the NP-V60 and NP-V80. These 76-key instruments feature graded softtouch keyboard action. The models weigh less than 16 pounds and maximize small spaces for musicians who require mobility. Both models include 361 XGlite instrument voices and 30 internal songs for use with the Performance Assistant function and lessons. MSRP: NP-V60, \$499; NP-V80, \$599. {yamaha.com}



ROLAND | LUCINA AX-09

Perfect Fit

Roland's new Lucina AX-09 is a shoulder synthesizer that's designed to fit any musician. It has 37 keys and comes with 150 sounds that cover a wide stylistic range. The featured favorites bank lets users select their 12 favorite sounds for instant, one-button recall. Volume, reverb and patch edits can be stored with each favorite. A USB host port lets musicians play WAV and MP3 music files directly from a USB flash drive. MSRP: pearl white, \$699; black sparkle, \$799. rolandus.com

GALILEO | MILANO II, MILANO IIG

Taste of Italy

Galileo Music has released the Milano II and Milano IIG (pictured) ensemble digital pianos. The vertical Milano II and mini-grand Milano IIG feature graded-hammer key actions, stereo sampled sounds with 128 note polyphony and custom digital signal processors.



These digitals boast 138 preset sounds, plus eight drum kits and sound effects that can be edited, layered and split. The 100 internal rhythm styles can be used in single, fingered or pianist modes. The sounds, effects and styles can all be programmed into the internal panel memories for quick recall. A sliding iPod dock makes it easy to play back audio files and follow iTunes music lessons. galileomusic.com

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FALL PRODUCT PREVIEW



BAND & ORCHESTRA

SAGA MUSIC | CREMONA SV-175 VIOLIN

Elegant Player

Saga Music has released the Cremona SV-175 student violin. The instrument, which is part of the same family as the SV-150 and SV-165 models, has been designed to meet the needs of beginning and advancing students.

The SV-175 features solid carved maple and spruce. Each instrument has been upgraded to include a translucent, warm brown finish, which lets the grain show through. To complete these outfits, each violin, 4/4 through 1/4, has been upgraded to include a Travelite TL-33 oblong violin case with built-in hygrometer and an LB-13 J. La Salle octagonal Brazilwood bow with ebony frog and genuine unbleached horsehair. MSRP: \$249.

{sagamusic.com}





AIM GIFTS | MUSIC SHAPE BANDS

Aim Goes Silly

Aim Gifts has jumped on the latest grade-school craze, Silly Bands. The company has released its own music shape versions of the bands. Pictured are three rock band designs in tie-dye, glitter and original, plus music band instrument designs with glitter. Each package includes 12 pieces of assorted, colored bands. They're collected, traded and worn dozens at a time.

"With over 40 years in the business, I have never seen a product that sells this fast," said Albert Elovitz, president of Aim Gifts. aimgifts.com

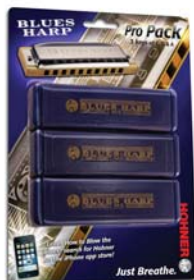
HOHNER | HARMONICA PRO PACKS

Power of Three

Hohner has launched its harmonica Pro Packs in four harmonica models: Marine Band, Blues Harp, Special 20 and Big River. Each contains three harps in the keys of C, G and A. The Pro Packs are priced to save consumers roughly \$4 per harmonica.

They're available in easy-to-display blister card packaging that features pre-purchase selection information; a pocket product catalog; and a booklet of historical facts, notable figures and stories about the harmonica.

hohnerusa.com



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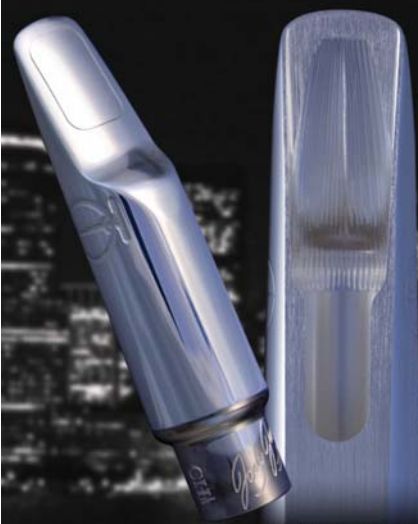
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GEAR >

BAND & ORCHESTRA



1 KACES

POLYFOAM LINE

Kaces has expanded its line of polyfoam band instrument cases with several new color options for flute, clarinet, alto sax and trumpet. Features include heavy-duty bolted handles, ergonomic backpack straps, an MP3 player pocket with headphone port and a six-year limited warranty. The new colors include dark red, purple and dark blue. **{kaces.com}**

2 REUNION BLUES

TRIPLE TRUMPET CASE

The new Reunion Blues triple trumpet case features a 1-inch-thick shock-absorbing Flexoskeleton exterior, which is lined with reinforced impact panels. The ballistic quadraweave exterior features high-strength corded edges and reinforced stress points. The bag also has a zippered pocket and adjustable strap. MSRP: \$199.95. **{reunionblues.com}**

3 STENTOR

STUDENT I & II CASES

The new Student I string instruments from Stentor have blackened rosewood fingerboards and dark rosewood pegs, while the Student II offers full ebony fittings. Both include a light carrying case with integral cover, music pocket and shoulder rest pocket for violin and viola, or a padded rayon backpack bag for the cello. **{stentor music.com}**

4 SLM CELLO,

BASS COVERS

St. Louis Music's Knilling String Instruments has released the SLM Gear cello and bass covers. They boast reinforced padded nylon oxford shells and 20-mm padding. MSRP: cello cover without wheels, \$119-\$129; with wheels, \$139-\$149; bass cover without wheels, \$139-\$159; with wheels, \$179. **{usband supplies.com}**

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JUPITER | 737NTO CLARINET

Ergonomic Wonder

Jupiter has released the 737NTO clarinet. This instrument features an ergonomic C/G key riser, offset trill keys and an adjustable thumb rest. Its body is made from select grenadilla wood and has a 0.577-inch bore. The 737NTO also boasts undercut tone holes, nickel-plated silver keys and metal tenons, as well as a sleek, new ring design. It comes with a wood-frame attaché-style case. jupitermusic.com

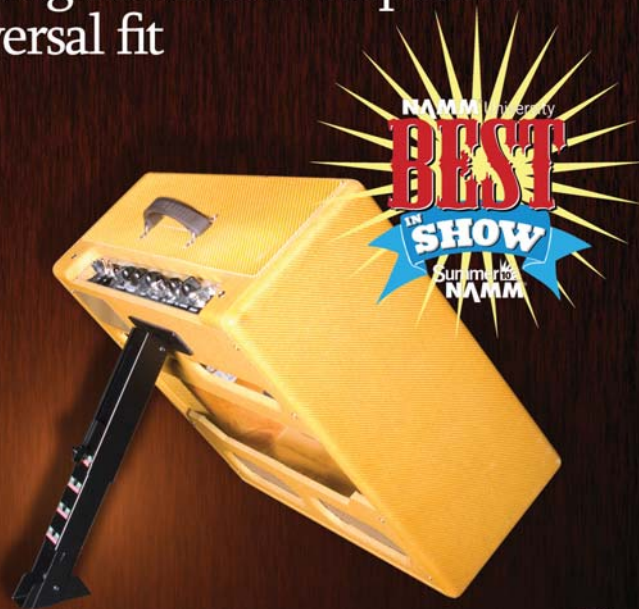


SAINT BLUES GUITAR | WASHBOARD

Boogie Woogie

Saint Blues Guitar Workshop has launched the Woogie Board electric washboard. It features enclosed dual-piezo pickups with a three-way switch for pickup selection, a volume control knob and an output jack housed in a tele control plate built into the leg. saintblues.com

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FALL PRODUCT PREVIEW

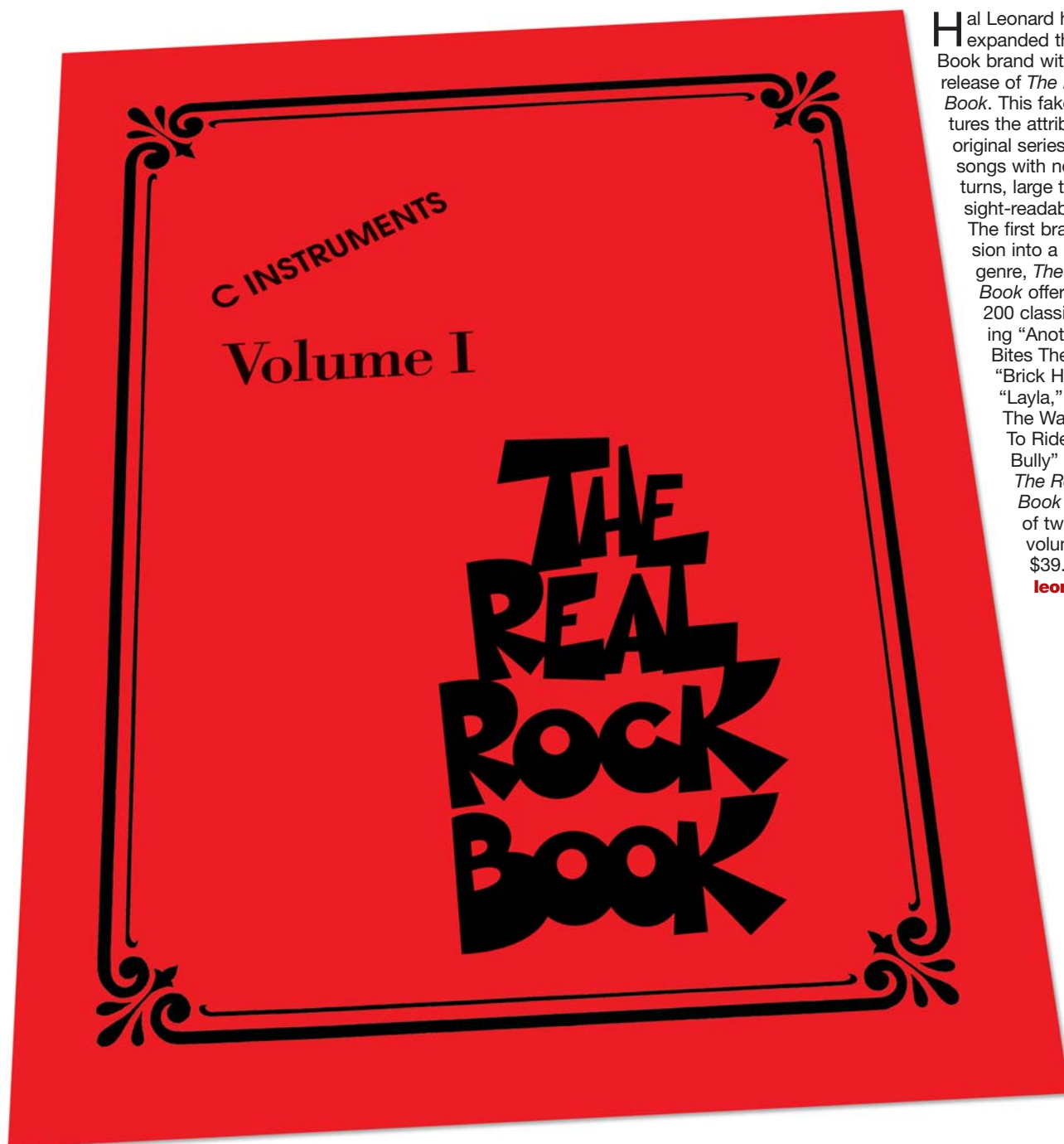
PRINT & MULTIMEDIA



HAL LEONARD | 'THE REAL ROCK BOOK'

Real Rockers

Hal Leonard has expanded the Real Book brand with the release of *The Real Rock Book*. This fake book features the attributes of the original series, such as songs with no page turns, large type and sight-readable notation. The first brand expansion into a non-jazz genre, *The Real Rock Book* offers more than 200 classics, including "Another One Bites The Dust," "Brick House," "Layla," "Smoke On The Water," "Ticket To Ride," "Wooly Bully" and more. *The Real Rock Book* is the first of two planned volumes. MSRP: \$39.99. {[hal leonard.com](http://hal.leonard.com)}



CARL FISCHER | 'LET NATURE SING'

Natural Growth

Carl Fischer Music's latest addition to the BriLee Music vocal solo series for treble voice, *Let Nature Sing: Solo Songs For The Developing Treble Voice*, includes a CD containing both piano accompaniments and vocal demo tracks. The book features 10 songs in a variety of styles, from spirituals to folk songs. The featured songs challenge the voice without taxing it and encourage the development of expressiveness rather than over-extension. MSRP: \$24.95.

{carlfischer.com}



SOUL HOUSE SOUND | 'GUITAR PLAYER WANTED: VOCALS A PLUS'

Vocals for Shredders

Soul House Sound has launched *Guitar Player Wanted: Vocals A Plus*. This DVD aims to get guitar players comfortable with singing while they perform by linking their

musical skills with their undeveloped singing voices. The instruction is straightforward, concrete and step-by-step.

Author Karan Andrea teaches with a no-nonsense focus on what guitarists or any musician needs to learn about singing. The CD includes three sets of vocal exercises that anyone from beginners to experienced musicians can use to develop muscle memory and to improve tone, intonation and range. This package contains a 110-minute instructional DVD, a 79-minute vocal training CD and a booklet summary of the materials.

{soulhousesound.com}



Spotlight Solos

10 Contemporary Arrangements for Solo Voice and Piano

Compiled and Edited by Sally F. Albrecht



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- Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree
- Don't Rain on My Parade
- Forty-Second Street
- Home
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- I'll Stand By You
- It Had Better Be Tonight
- Johnny One Note
- Theme From New York, New York

ALFRED | 'SPOTLIGHT SOLOS'

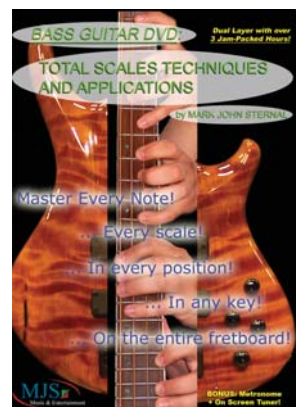
Get Vocal

Compiled and edited by Sally Albrecht, *Spotlight Solos* is Alfred's latest vocal title. It features 10 contemporary settings by Alfred's arrangers, including Jay Althouse, Alan Billingsley, Lisa DeSpain, Mark Hayes, Greg Gilpin and Larry Shackley. Songs include "Ain't Misbehavin'," "Don't Rain On My Parade," "Forty-Second Street," "Home Sweet Home," "I'll Stand By You," "It Had Better Be Tonight," "Johnny One Note" and "Theme From New York, New York." MSRP: book and CD set, \$24.95; book only, \$15.99. {alfred.com}

MJS PUBLICATIONS | BASS TECHNIQUES

Total Bass

MJS Publications has released *Total Scales Techniques And Applications For Bass*. Using easy-to-remember shapes found in every key, bass players can learn to play scales, bass lines and fills on the entire fretboard. The DVD demonstrates tricks and techniques, such as hammer ons, pull offs, picking patterns, vibrato, string bending, slides and two-hand tapping. {mjspublications.com}



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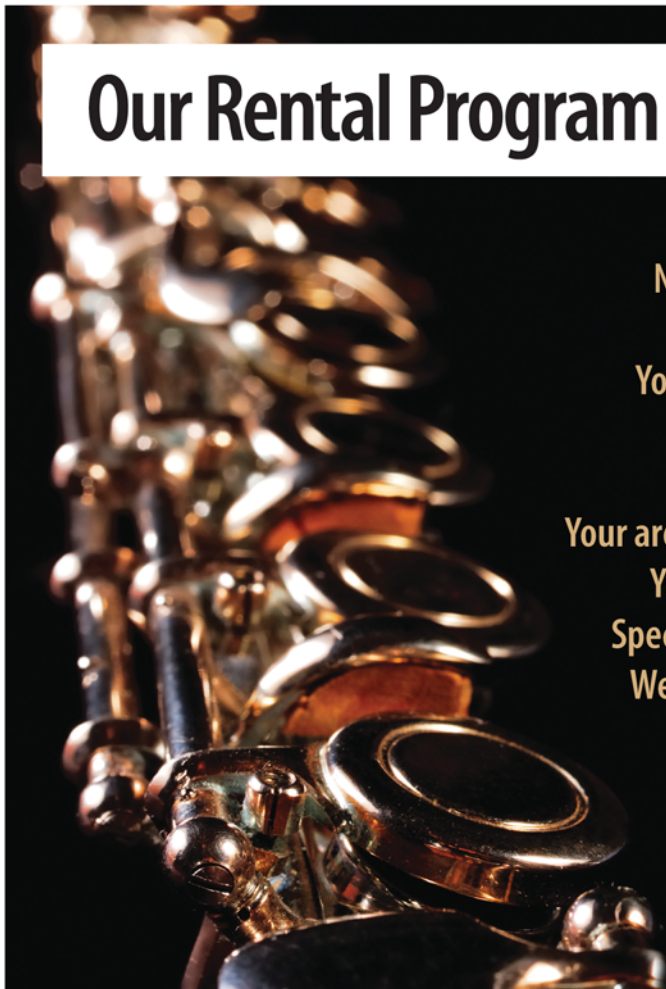


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Mitchel Banks

Don Banks Music
Tampa, Fla.

The new Zoom H1 and the Panyard Jumbie Jams are totally cool. Also, the new Taylor V-Cable with the volume control is a great accessory for those with a pickup without a pre-amp. There is also the new Voyage-Air Belair electric guitar with the folding neck.

I was thrilled to see new entrepreneurs displaying their wares. It's really good to see people still trying to create new ways of doing things. An example of this would be Matthew Miller and his single-button acoustic guitar strap.

>>>

David Hibbs

SoFlo Guitars
Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

The biggest product that jumped out at me were the Taylor acoustics. They are absolutely amaz-

ing instruments. I am not an acoustic guitar player. I like to play electric, but I got a hold of a Taylor six months ago, and it plays like butter. I spent the better part of Saturday going around the Taylor booth

and [checking out] all the higher-end guitars in the place. It was a great opportunity to play hundreds of instruments and get a good feel for what is a good guitar.

DBZ, the Dean Zelinsky company, is something that totally caught me by surprise. When you walked by the DBZ booth, the guitars just popped off the tables. They play and feel very nice.

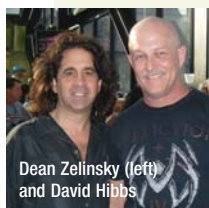
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Lori Supinie

Senseney Music
Wichita, Kan.

We're excited about the Zoom H1 because we know it will be an easy sell to educators and amateur musicians. It's at an attractive price point, easy to use, yet produces good-quality recordings.

The Taylor GS Mini has the sound and voice of a full-size guitar, only in a smaller, more comfy body size. It is a very affordable utility guitar for all kinds of players and comes pre-fitted for Taylor's optional ES-Go soundhole pickup, which can be sold as a great add-on and installed in minutes.



Dean Zelinsky (left)
and David Hibbs

>>>

Connie Smith

Ward-Brod Music
Madison, Wis.



What is the **coolest gear** you saw at Summer NAMM?

The Zoom H1 price point is attractive. We have band directors who are looking for recorders that are very easy and portable, but some of the price points in the past were a little high for them. The H1 also has a nice, slim design, and it's something that anyone can use.

In fact, I was talking to some of our staff members when I got back [from Summer NAMM], and I said, "What about these parents who might not have a musical bone in their bodies but bring their kids in for lessons?" These parents might be great speakers at their businesses, banks, insurance

companies or wherever they might work. They might be able to use something like this, and we will be able to tap into a different market than we are typically looking for.

One of the other products that I really liked was the Yamaha Piaggero keyboard. We have college students who come in once in awhile and want something that is lightweight and portable and will fit in their dorm rooms. Some of the options out there have a bunch of features on them but are really big and heavy. This one seemed to have a lot of everything — portable with a lot of fea-

tures. They are bringing back that arpeggiated sound, where you can play and then push a couple buttons, and it makes you sound like a professional.

Before I go to NAMM, I like to go to the staff and find out what our customers are asking about. When a customer says, "This is a great product, but I wish it could do this," I go to NAMM and try to find out if there is something out there that fits that need.

With so much access to online shopping, we have to have something that will pull customers in to the store to have that face-to-face contact.



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