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The **THESOURCE**
SEVEN
MOST IMPORTANT
PRODUCT
TRENDS
of 2011

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Cory Lake

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Photo by Travis Anderson

THE SOURCE 2011

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PERSPECTIVE

PERSPECTIVE | BY ZACH PHILLIPS

NO FEAR & LOATHING IN LOUISVILLE, KY.

Guitar Center's officially out of hibernation. Its latest coup? A new location in Sarasota, Fla., with a full-fledged music lessons program. (See page 18.) It's the mega retailer's second store to feature an education department, and it won't be the last. Independent retailers steeped in music lessons are under siege. Right? Not in Louisville, Ky.

You'll remember that's where GC rolled out its first retail-based lessons program in late January. The move drew a collective gasp from independent retailers across the industry. And yet, nearly three months in, it looks as if indies still have the upper hand.

Mom's Music is one of these Louisville indies. A full-line dealership with 500 students weekly, Mom's actually saw a rise in lesson enrollment since GC came to town, according to owner Max Maxwell. He added that GC's local advertising yielded a surge of new customers at his store. And that's not changing.

"We seem to be busier since they've moved in," Maxwell said. "From the first weekend until now, we've been busier."

Mind you, Mom's is working to drive that business. It launched a new website in March that features

links to YouTube teacher videos. The site came at a considerable cost, and guess where Maxwell turned for funds?

"We ask the teachers to give back a few dollars of what they make per student for a month to help with that," he said. "And they've been amazing about it.

"Folks have been e-mailing us, saying, 'What's the availability of this guy? I really want to take from this person.' That's been a huge, huge push for us."

Maxwell said involving teachers in promoting lessons, even when it means charging them, has kept morale high. "They always feel like they're part of what we're doing here and they're not just the hired teacher."

Mom's isn't an isolated example. Willis Music, an independent MI retail chain, has two stores in Louisville, both of which offer lessons. Like Mom's, both are flourishing in the face of more aggressive chain competition, according to Kevin Cranley, president of the Florence, Ky.-based dealership.

"Both [of our Louisville stores] have grown since GC opened on the lessons side," he said. "It's about having the right teachers. We spend a lot of time getting really good, solid teachers."

This isn't to say that GC's model has nothing to teach the music retail industry. In his column, "Welcome to the Jungle," Pete Gamber looks at ways dealers can adapt some of GC's smart practices, such as boosting print music sales by creating lessons binders. (See page 38.)

Ultimately, Gamber and Maxwell both agree GC's biggest impact will be on indies with their heads in the sand. If you're a small operation, start preparing now. As Maxwell explained, "If GC moves into a place that doesn't have strong education programs, then I think they could take over." **MI**



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THE CURE FOR THE PEDAL BORED



Bass Boost Chorus

The Bass Boost Chorus gives bass players something they have long deserved: a chorus that actually works. On bass, this pedal has been optimized to avoid the 'motion sickness' side-effects of traditional chorus effects. A key aspect of this design is the Detune control, which adjusts the pitch of the choral voices to create deep and lush chorus before you dial in any modulation. Put some sweet on your low with the Bass Boost Chorus.



Roto Choir

The Roto Choir provides players with a hyper-realistic emulation of a rotating speaker cabinet in a compact pedal. Specially developed SansAmp technology recreates the complex interactions of both the rotating lower speaker and the treble horn. Even the tonality of the original tube power amp and mic are included. A powerful control section allows you to adjust all of these elements to create endlessly rich, multi-dimensional modulations. Whatever instrument you play, the Roto Choir will make it sing.



Boost Chorus

Based on the lush analog chorus effects of the '70s, this design incorporates cutting-edge performance and unique effect combinations to create a thoroughly modern pedal. The comprehensive control array allows adjustment of every aspect of the effect, including depth, speed, mix and tone. A Pre-Delay control adds delay to the chorus to produce a huge range of tones, including flanging and doubler combination effects. When it's time to bliss out, hit the Multi Voice switch for a celestial ensemble-style effect.

There's no shortage of effects pedals that can color your sound but, when it comes to building a tone that inspires you, it's all in the ingredients. Every Tech 21 pedal has incredibly detailed, organic tones and a powerful control set to explore tons of great-sounding possibilities. These pedals are tour-ready devices with rock solid construction and military-spec components that deliver world-class, studio-grade sound quality.

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Boost D.L.A.

Create everything from clean digital-style delays, to warm analog 'bucket brigade' repeats, to grungy tape echo. Tweak your heart out with the feature-packed controls, including Tap Tempo, Triplets and Trails functions, and a boost of up to 9dB. If your tone sounds D.O.A. bring it back to life with the D.L.A.



Boost R.V.B.

From light shimmers to deep, swampy atmospheres, the R.V.B. emulates natural room ambiances, spring reverbs and vintage plate units. Add some retro audio-gunk with the Rumble control, engage the Trails function or add up to 9dB of clean boost for solos that pop.



Red Ripper

Want something new in a bass fuzzbox? This wickedly dynamic pedal gets meaner the harder you play, shifting from enhanced lower harmonics to buzz-saw, higher harmonic distortions. The sinister R.L.P. control drives your tone from vintage fuzz to monolithic distortion, into Brassmaster-style octaver fuzz and Moogie-style synth tones. Bloody amazing.



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LETTERS

Online Retail Cohesion

I received the March/April 2011 issue of *Music Inc.* and thoroughly enjoyed the feature article, “The New E-tail,” on Nathan Nguyen’s online business, Instrumental Savings.

It is interesting to read about other entrepreneurs who also believe that brick-and-mortar and online stores can work cohesively together.

Micaela Hichborn
Market Research Coordinator
Shopatron

‘Music Education is in Serious Trouble’

I am horrified after reading the March/April 2011 cover story, “The New E-tail,” about Instrumental Savings’ owner Nathan Nguyen.

How can you hold him up to your readers as the future of school music retail? If he is the future, music education is in serious trouble.

There were so many untruths in the article and so much misinformation that I don’t know where to begin. Did you visit his website and see all the cheap Chinese-made violins? Most of his instruments are unplayable and need several hundreds of dollars in repairs before a student can play one.

Nguyen wants unsuspecting parents to buy these instruments instead of renting. Has he ever heard of rent-to-purchase programs? Does he know that a student can go through several sizes of violins? Oh wait, he wants those unsuspecting parents to keep buying those cheap violins, which they will never be able to sell when they need to move up.

Nguyen is undercutting other



‘How can you hold him up as the future of school music retail? If he is the future, music education is in serious trouble.’
— Dixie Huthmaker

music store websites and brick-and-mortar stores. What he is advocating is hurting all of us. And he doesn’t seem to believe that online sites are huge competition to brick-and-mortar

stores. Really?

I don’t think this young man has a clue what a real music store is about. To Mr. Nguyen, it’s not about serving the customer. It’s about taking their money — lots of their money.

P.S. I have always loved *Music Inc.* I learn so much from each issue, but not this one. It’s going in the garbage can.

Dixie Huthmaker
Huthmaker Violins
Duluth, Ga.

GAMA President Says Farewell

Having just completed my three-year term as president of Guitar and Accessories Marketing Association (GAMA), I would like to take this opportunity to thank *Music Inc.* for

the support and exposure you have given to GAMA and our Teaching Guitar Workshops over that period, especially my interview with *Music Inc.*’s editor, Zach Phillips.

I am just one of many presidents since 1995 who supported then-president Bill Schultz’s vision of bringing guitars into the classroom and exposing hundreds of thousands of students to the guitar.

Our program worked then and continues to work now. GAMA remains the only industry-sponsored organization that is dedicated to teaching accredited music teachers how to teach guitar in the classroom.

Harvey Levy
Past GAMA President
President of Levy’s Leathers

Grateful for the Inclusion

I was just browsing through the January issue of *Music Inc.* — excellent, as always — and I noticed the mention of our Brooks, Ga.-based print dealer Prima Music under the listing of select Black Friday campaigns on page 16.

It is very exciting to see our company mentioned, and I wanted to thank you for including us.

We had a great year in 2010, and we are off to a fast start this year. I hope 2011 is a very prosperous one for *Music Inc.*

Thanks for all you do for our industry.

Bobby Mitchell
Prima Music
Brooks, Ga.

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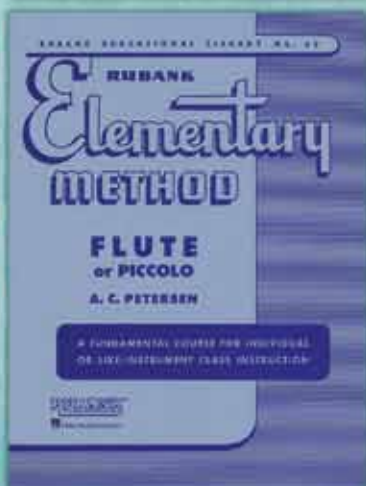
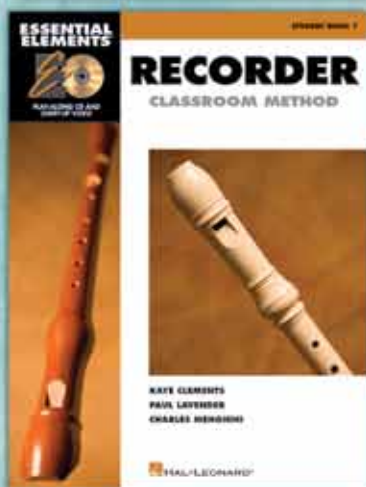
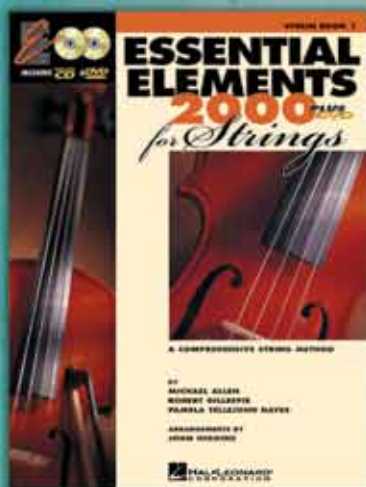
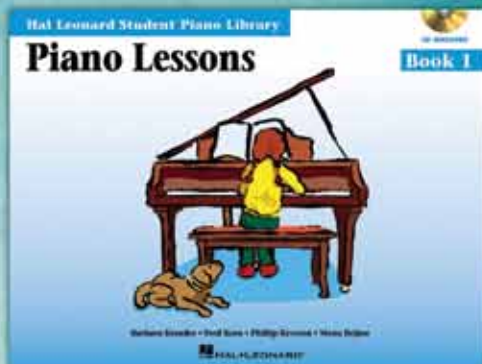
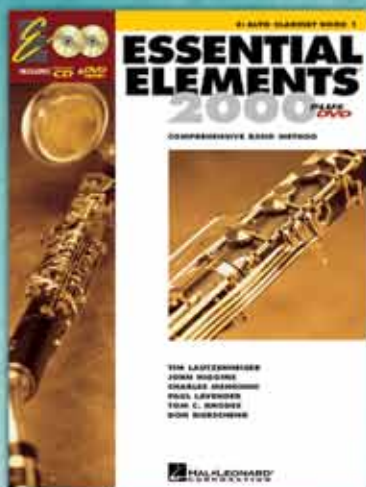
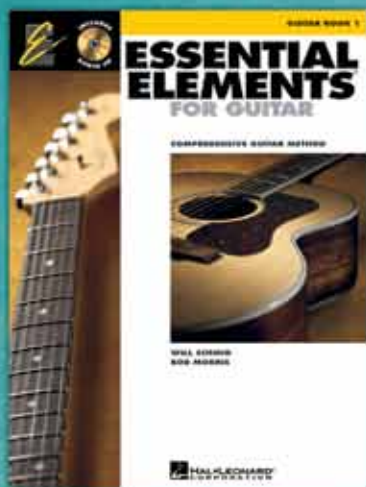
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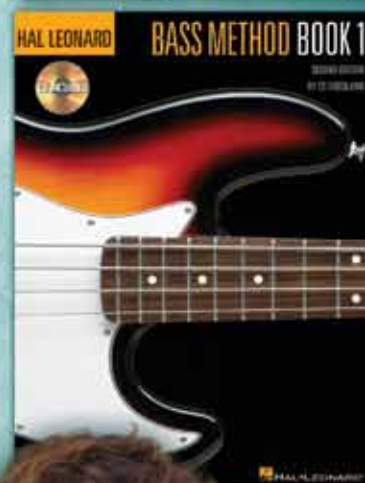
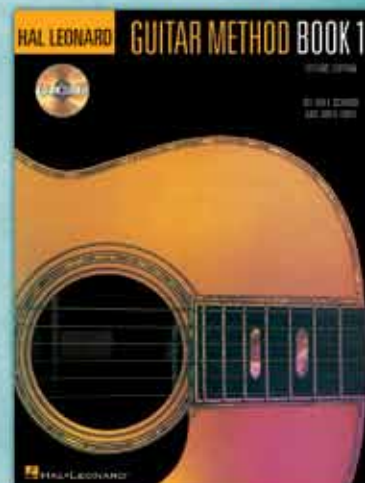
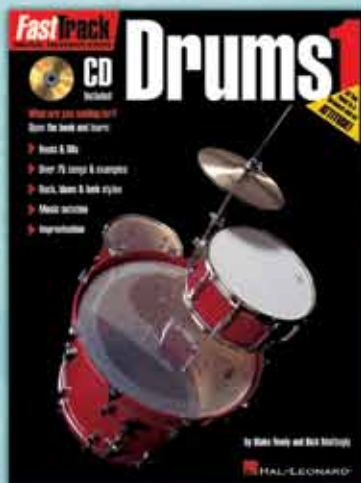
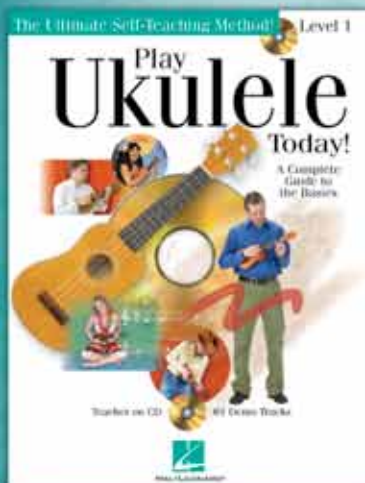


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- > **Tribute**
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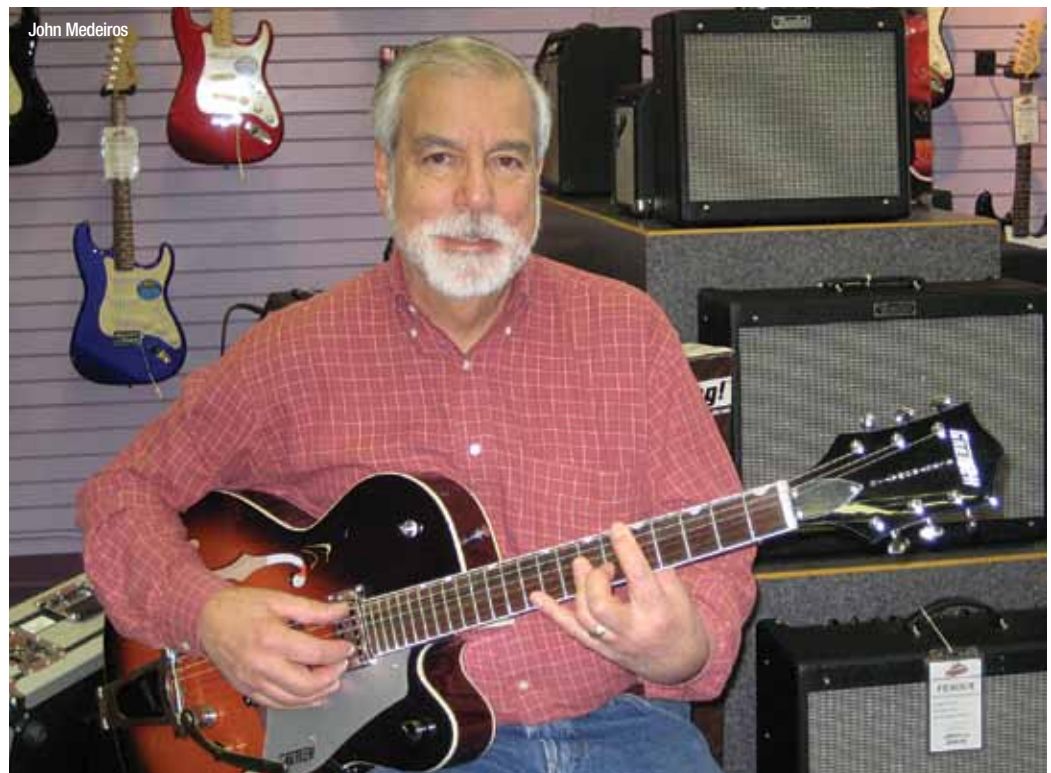
JOHN MICHAEL'S MUSIC AND SOUND | BY JEFF CAGLE

COMMUNITY PARTNER

During a recent two-week span, John Michael's Music and Sound signed up 20 new students — four of them in a single day.

According to Raegan Medeiros, director of the Muskogee, Okla., store's music academy and events and promotions, parents found out about the dealership through the local newspaper and radio station. Only they weren't referring to advertisements for the company's 30th anniversary celebration. They'd read articles and heard interviews about the store's partnership with the Muskogee Teen Center to offer free guitar lessons.

"[That partnership] has been great for the store," Medeiros said. "For one thing, we got to sell the teen center all of the guitars, stands, music books and everything that went along with it. On top of that, we got three articles in the paper and a radio interview where [the teen center director] talked about the store. Although it's great for me to go on and talk about the store, it's better if someone else in the community can say, 'John Michael's Music did the greatest thing by partnering with us.' It's been a way for us to become known in the community as the place to go for music lessons."



John Michael's Music and Sound nabs headlines by forging local partnerships

ROCK STAR TREATMENT

John Michael's Music and Sound, which specializes in the combo business, has been a

part of the Muskogee community since 1981. The store began in what owner and founder John Medeiros called "a closet" before moving to a slightly larger location. A storm tore the roof off of that facility, closing the business for eight months before reopening in 2002 at its current location. The store now boasts 8,500 square feet, a guitar repair area, six teaching studios and a stage featuring professional lighting and a full sound system.

John Medeiros said the stage has been a big asset to the company, which hosts recitals twice a year for the nearly 160 students who take music lessons in-store each week. The company also puts on a rock camp in the summer, and bands perform onstage at the end of the session.

"They learn a song, name their band — everything like that," John said. "We record them and have a concert on Friday night. They have a merchandise table

and do everything a real band would — and they do it all in five days. We pack the place with that concert.”

CLEAR MESSAGING

Word-of-mouth has helped publicize the company’s lessons program, but its biggest promotional push has been Raegan Medeiros’ concerted marketing efforts.

She discussed her advertising-on-a-dime strategy at January’s NAMM convention, during a NAMM University session in the Guerrilla Tactics series. The seminar touched on writing an effective press release, getting acquainted with local media and partnering with organizations to host events. But she stressed that the most important thing dealers can do is find a focus.

“We do everything, but you can’t go out and advertise everything,” Raegan said. “We used to change our ad every month. One month it would be drums, the next would be keyboards, then it’s this then that. It was never a clear message that conveyed what we do really well.

“But we have one of the best music academies around and offer more lessons in one space than anybody else in a 30-mile radius. That’s what we focus on. It’s something that’s unique to us. It’s not something you can get across town or in a nearby town. Once we changed and focused on one thing, then everything else started to grow with it.”

STUDENTS PITCH IN

Focusing on lessons didn’t necessarily mean sinking a bunch of money into ads. Instead, Raegan Medeiros got involved with the Oklahoma Music Hall of Fame and the Muskogee Chamber of Commerce and offered to provide entertainment at events. She enlisted five students from the store’s summer rock camp and formed a band, Signs of Warning. A performance was recently auctioned off at a chamber of commerce event as part of an “ultimate birthday party” package.

“It’s 250 of the most influential people in town who go to that auction, and it didn’t cost us anything to do it,” Raegan said. “They sent out invites to all of the chamber members. They sent out promotional e-mails for us, and everything in there had our name in it.”



GENERATING IMPRESSIONS

Signs of Warning also played at events for the Oklahoma Music Hall of Fame and a festival last summer that drew as many as 1,500 people. Raegan said these events have much more impact than a newspaper ad and stay planted firmly in people’s minds.

“You have to have multiple impressions to have impact with a newspaper ad,” she said. “But you could probably tell me every concert you’ve seen in the past five years, even if you just went out to see some band at a bar on a Friday night. Something like that has a lot of impact. If parents see 11-

12- and 13-year-olds playing up on stage they think, ‘Why can’t my 11-, 12- or 13-year-old do this?’”

She suggested fellow music retailers get involved with local chambers of commerce and non-profits that host events appealing to key demographics, particularly families. It’s a way to connect directly with potential customers, and the events that serve a greater good for the community have a better chance of getting press coverage than a sale or anniversary celebration. It’s a process that usually doesn’t cost anything but time, and the rewards can be plentiful.

“People come and say they read about us in the newspaper or heard about us on the radio, and they’re excited about it,” Raegan said. “It’s not only from the single promotion, but stuff like that builds. Somebody hears about a free music lesson or hears about what’s going on in the community and that you are the place to get this or that product, and it snowballs. It just keeps building and building and building.” **MI**

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AURORA, ILL. By Zach Phillips

PM MUSIC CENTER

PM Music Center struck real estate gold with its new Aurora, Ill., location. The freestanding building, formerly home to a Tweeter store, sits across from Fox Valley Mall — a mile north of PM's previous facility. The location not only drives generous traffic to the school music dealer's retail and music lessons business but also upgrades PM's square footage from 4,200 to 8,500 square feet.

Company co-owner Frank Pampenella said he'd been looking for a new store for a year and a half, but this location was well beyond his price

range. The Great Recession changed that.

"I told the realtor, 'I'm going to insult you with what I'm going to offer, but this is all I can afford,'" Pampenella said. "I went ahead and took pictures of all the vacant buildings around here because there were a ton. I sent that, along with my proposal, showing them that the building could sit here for another two, three years vacant."

He began rebuilding the store in August 2009 and moved in Nov. 2, a half-hour after getting a final permit. "We did it on budget and on time," he said. "It was a challenge."



PM Music Center's management, from left: Michael Schaner, Julie and Frank Pampenella, and Jason Pachona

The former Tweeter building makes its MI retail presence loud and clear with exterior lifestyle photos of people playing music. Being near a mall also has its perks.

"We are seeing a new customer — a slightly different customer," said Michael Schaner, PM's general manager. "We're seeing guys ages 18–35. We never saw that at the other location."

The new store has also helped bring in more of PM's core customers, as well. "We had a very good rental season, and a lot of it was just walk-in people that we didn't even work with at schools," Pampenella said. "Every year, [school rentals] have been going up for us."



*PROMOTING LIFESTYLE



*OUTSIDE HELP

PM's new store tripled its showroom space, effectively expanding the company's retail business and combo presence. "And we may have only added 10–15 percent more product, max," Schaner said.

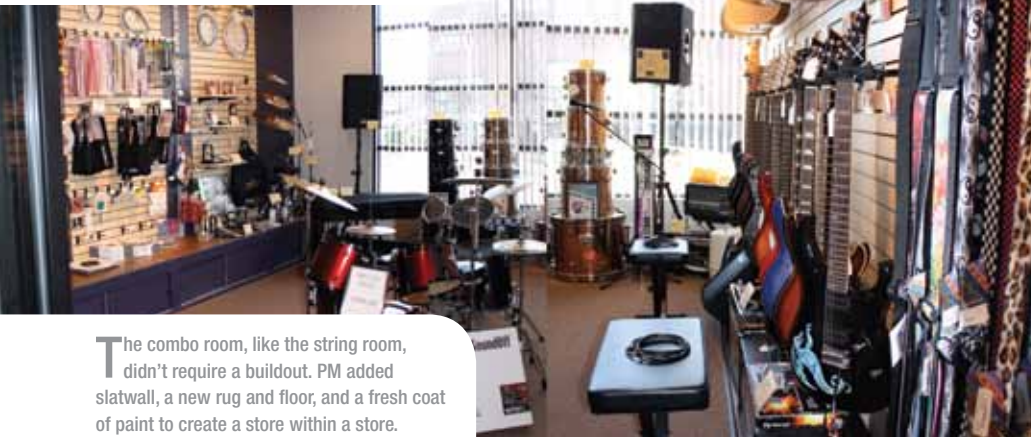
Pampenella purposefully hired an outside-the-industry retail store designer to get a fresh merchandising approach.



*ELEGANT STRINGS

The string room is a store within the store, featuring everything from entry-level instruments to \$3,000 violins. The company recently hired string specialists to better serve this customer. Notice the shelf for storing cases (below, right).

*STORE WITHIN A STORE



The combo room, like the string room, didn't require a buildout. PM added slatwall, a new rug and floor, and a fresh coat of paint to create a store within a store.

*ECONOMICAL SOUNDPROOFING

PM now has 13 teaching studios. They're not Wenger rooms, but Pampenella said he worked hard to soundproof them with deadening materials. "They're a lot quieter than they were in the old place."

A group lessons room lets PM host Kindermusik, rock band and ukulele classes, and a music exploration class for new students. Pampenella explained that it also doubles as an effective tryout room for brass and woodwind customers, hence the instrument display on the wall.



*RECITAL HALL



Formerly Tweeter's home theater room, the recital hall required little overhaul. PM added spotlights, signage and drapes. The rest came from Tweeter, down to the sconces and color scheme.

*WAITING AREA



The waiting room gives parents a place to hang out during their kids' music lessons. As Schaner pointed out, it also keeps them in the store.

THE PERFECT PAIR



The new CAD Stage7 Drum Mic Pack and DH100 Drummer Isolation Headphones. Available together for a limited time. Special bundle MAP \$199. Visit cadaudio.com or contact a dealer for



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CADAUDIO.COM

CLOSING

Fred Myers Closes After Six Decades

Fred Myers Pianos Organs Clocks of Fort Wayne, Ind., has closed its doors after 58 years of business. Owner David Myers, 66, retired after selling the building to an upscale bridal boutique. The store advertised a going-out-of-business sale, which ran from March 7 through April. Myers said the closing wasn't due to economic reasons, and he considers it "a success story rather than a distress story."

"Every professional I spoke to in the field said that at my age this was an offer that I should take, so that's what I did," Myers said.

GROWTH

Music Center Expands

The Music Center of St. Louis plans to triple its size by relocating from its Kirkwood, Mo., location to a 15,000-square-foot space. The newly renamed City Music and Education Center is expected to open on June 1. Along with selling, repairing and renting band instruments, owners Terri and Greg Launhardt also invested \$300,000 in a remodeling project that will create lesson rooms, a "jam room" for bands, a recording studio and a café.

AWARDS

Monstrous Prize

Sweetwater Sales Engineer Brian VanDeKeere received his third consecutive Most Monstrous Salesperson of the Year award from



Monster Cable, extending his ongoing reign as the nation's No. 1 seller of the company's products.

COMMUNITY

Atlanta's Best

Cooper Piano has been named Atlanta's best piano store for the third consecutive year by the U.S. Commerce Association. The organization's 2011 Best of Atlanta Award recognizes local companies that have "achieved exceptional marketing success in their community and business category" and "enhance the positive image of small business through service to their customers and community."



Inside GC's new Sarasota, Fla., location

GUITAR CENTER | EXPANSION

GC OPENS IN SARASOTA

Guitar Center opened its newest location in University Park, near Sarasota, Fla., on Feb. 24. It's the dealership's second retail store with a music lessons program and rehearsal facility — dubbed Guitar Center Studios. To celebrate the opening of the 14,200-square-foot space, GC hosted a grand-opening weekend, offering gear giveaways, free events, and guitar and drum essentials up to 89-percent off list price.

Guitar Center Studios features music lessons for all ranges of students, beginner to advanced, as well as Pro Tools, Logic Pro and GarageBand courses. Rehearsal spaces are fully equipped with backline gear, and musicians also have access to digital recordings of their rehearsal sessions. According to a statement from GC, Guitar Center Studios will be the most modern and affordable lessons and rehearsals facility in Sarasota. The location also features GC Garage, which offers on-site guitar repair services. Throughout opening weekend, musicians could use GC Garage's services for free with the purchase of any guitar worth \$500 or more. This included a 22-point personalized setup, strings and parts not included.

"Over the past several years, we have tested a number of new design and merchandising principles and placed greater emphasis on high-technology

products," said Gene Joly, GC's executive vice president of stores. "A new point of emphasis is on interactive software and recording demo stations with over 200 of the hottest software titles fully demoable in every store, something that no other retailer offers. In addition, our new stores feature Guitar Center Studios lessons/rehearsal spaces and open layouts that yield improved traffic flow and more room for customers to test-drive products in a comfortable environment. Our new Louisville and Sarasota stores are the culmination of this hard work, and the additional stores we open this year will incorporate most of these new features."

As part of the grand-opening weekend, GC also produced a series of Guitar Center Sessions in Sarasota. These included an event with Dave Elitch, drummer for The Mars Volta, on Feb. 25; "Music Creation 101 on a Mac," featuring GarageBand and Logic Studio, on Feb. 26; and an event with *Guitar Hero's* Marcus Henderson on Feb. 27.

In related news, GC named Brandon Green as the winner of its Your Next Record With Keith Urban competition. Green was chosen personally by Urban from more than 6,000 submissions and 100 finalists. He will get an opening slot at one of Urban's concerts, the opportunity to record a three-song EP with producer Dann Huff, and \$20,000 in music gear and endorsements.

PROGUITARSHOP.COM | PARTNERSHIP

ProGuitarShop.com's Sonic Collaboration

A recent collaboration between ProGuitarShop.com and TC Electronic resulted in five TonePrints created by ProGuitarShop.com gear reviewer Andy Martin. The new TonePrints — a series of custom settings by renowned guitarists that can be uploaded to TC Electronic effects pedals — give consumers access to Martin's knowledge of tone. He created TonePrints for all five compatible TC pedals: Flashback Delay, Vortex Flanger, Hall of Fame Reverb, Shaker Vibrato and Corona Chorus.

"I totally got the amazing level of customization [TonePrints] brings to our customers and how it truly connects them with the guitarists that inspire them," said Aaron Miller, owner and founder of ProGuitarShop.com.

"Added to that, Andy's immense love for tone and knowledge of great sounds makes for a perfect fit with TonePrint."

"I've always loved TC Electronic gear," Martin said. "So when I first got my hands on the TonePrint pedals, I immediately understood how great the TonePrint concept could be. And after I got to play around with the different artist settings, the feeling of 'this is going to be big' only grew."

TC Electronics Business Manager for Guitar Tore Morgensen said he's excited about the collaboration and can't wait for the release of Martin's products. "The TonePrint program is expanding at a rocking rate, and to be able to add someone like Andy, who is very respected in



From left: TC's Tore Morgensen with ProGuitarShop.com's Andy Martin and Aaron Miller

the guitar community, is huge for us," Morgensen said. "When they contacted us, we jumped at the opportunity."

Martin's TonePrints, as well as all other artists on the TonePrint roster, are available at tcelectronic.com/toneprints.



Attendees at Parrish Music's Hawaiian Festival

PARRISH MUSIC | EVENTS

Island Music

Parrish Music of Viroqua, Wis., hosted its second annual Hawaiian Festival on March 5. The event featured ukulele and hula kahiko (ancient hula) workshops, taught by Kumu Hula Lani-aloa Lee, executive director of Kof Kupa'a-Pacific Island Resources in Chicago. The workshops were followed by a traditional Hawaiian music and dance concert by Lee and her group, Kupono.

"This is our second event with Lani, and it was even better than last year with more people interested and great turnout for the concert," said Parrish Music owner Ted Parrish.

Parrish Music hosts a ukulele class every Saturday morning.

DADDY'S JUNKY MUSIC | VENUES

DADDY'S DEDHAM GROWS

Daddy's Junky Music in Dedham, Mass., recently moved to a 7,500-square-foot location. The former 4,000-square-foot Dedham space had been the store's home for the past 19 years.

The new location, which boasts Daddy's first-ever performance area complete with staging and seating, was the main site of Daddy's grand-opening weekend. Events included meet-and-greets with Godsmack frontman Sully Erna and The Ramones' drummer Marky Ramone. Hundreds turned out to get their photo

taken with Erna and his solo band. He also signed copies of his debut solo release, *Avalon*.

"Sully and I have been friends for over 20 years," said Candi Bramante, Daddy's promotions director. "So, when we decided we wanted to do some meet-and-greets during our grand opening weekend, it was a no-brainer. We were very fortunate that he took the time to celebrate with us."

Ramone also partook in a fundraising dinner in conjunction with Daddy's to benefit Autism Speaks, an organization dedicated to funding research for autism. Attendees were served a dinner that featured Ramone's new pasta sauce, "Brooklyn's Own." Hundreds returned the following night for an in-store "Eat & Greet" with Ramone, who signed jars of sauce.

"As luck would have it, Marky came to us immediately after receiving a Lifetime Achievement Award at this year's Grammys," said Daddy's owner Fred Bramante. "He brought the award with him, which was very special to our customers and his fans, as he very graciously let everyone hold it and get their picture taken with it."



Daddy's grand-reopening celebration in Dedham, Mass.



From left: Taylor's Bob Taylor and JR Robison with Springfield Music's Donovan Bankhead

HONORS

Springfield Awards

Top Taylor Rep

Springfield Music of Springfield, Mo., has honored Taylor Guitars' JR Robison as its 2010 Representative of the Year.

"JR played a huge role in our success with Taylor this year," said Donovan Bankhead, vice president of Springfield Music. "He embodies what a great rep should be — knowledgeable about product, attentive to the store's needs, and creative in working out solutions and suggesting events. And he's a heck of a guy, too."

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AMRO MUSIC | BY HILARY BROWN

EMPLOYEE OF THE CENTURY

He has gone by many titles, but most people just call him Mr. Amro.

Vernon Drane has been with Amro Music of Memphis, Tenn., since 1945. Now 86, he has worked with several generations of owners and has regulars that span four generations, as well.

"People ask me all the time, 'How's Mr. Amro doing?'" said Chip Averwater, CEO of Amro Music. "Sometimes I ask, 'Do you mean my father, my grandfather, or do you mean Vernon?'"

Drane — affectionately known as "Cowboy" for his Western wardrobe — began teaching clarinet for founder Milford Averwater while attending Memphis State College.

"When I first went in, there were three stores in town," Drane said. "And when they went under, we bought out a couple of stores and started moving and getting bigger."

In his 65-year tenure at Amro, Drane saw the company transition from a modest five-employee payroll to a full-line retailer. He would become sales manager until his brief retirement in 1990, when he went to Scotland to explore his genealogy. He has since taken a part-time position in the repair shop fixing saxophones, but Drane's still recognized among



Vernon Drane

his colleagues as a go-to man.

"He really sticks out, and everybody notices him," Averwater said.

At 6 feet 2 inches tall, Drane's hard to not notice. Averwater's father, former Amro CEO Bob Averwater, recalled that Drane once helped him capture a harmonica thief. "I took off after [the thief] and chased him around the block," Bob said. "As I came around the corner, here was Vernon coming back from lunch. Vernon stepped to one side in front of him. He just gobbled him up in his arms and held him until I could get there to him. He was a jack of all trades."

A talented saxophonist, Drane also plays bagpipes with the area's Shriners.

"He can work here as long as he wants to," Chip said.

THE WOODWIND & BRASSWIND | AWARDS

The Pride of South Bend

The Woodwind & Brasswind of South Bend, Ind., has been voted Favorite Place to Buy a Musical Instrument in the *South Bend Tribune* 2011 Reader's Choice Awards.

"We've been working hard to improve our store experience, lessons and events, and we appreciate the recognition from the community," said Kurt Witt, director of marketing for The Woodwind & Brasswind.

The 10,000-square-foot superstore also sponsors many local events, including the Annual Tent Event Sale and a battle of the bands. Plus, the dealer hosted a clinic featuring Leblanc clarinet artist Julian Bliss in January and a drum clinic in March. It has also partnered with local radio station WAOR to support the Logan Center, a local resource center for people with disabilities. Both founded the School of Rock program, which advocates music's therapeutic benefits.

MISSISSIPPI MUSIC AWARDS

JOHNSON GETS BUSINESS AWARD

Mississippi Business Journal has named Rosi Johnson as its Business Woman of the Year for 2011. She's the CEO and president of Hattiesburg, Miss.-based Mississippi Music and Mississippi Music Acceptance.

Johnson currently serves on the board of directors of the National Association of School Music Dealers and is a past NAMM board member.

She's a member of the Alliance of Independent Music Merchants, American Music Conference, Mississippi Music Educators Association, Historic Hattiesburg Downtown Association and Area Development Partnership of Forrest and Lamar Counties.

TRIBUTE

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

Maurice Rhodes

Industry veteran and print music expert Maurice "Maury" Rhodes died on March 19 at the age of 69. Rhodes ran Carl Fischer's Chicago operations for nearly 30 years until taking his most recent position at Quinlan & Fabish in Burr Ridge, Ill.



"In the days before Google searches, there was Maury," said George Quinlan Jr., president of Quinlan & Fabish. "Directors could give him the least little clue about the piece they wanted, and instantly, he knew the arrangement, the publisher and if it was in stock. A true gentleman, his knowledge, his sense of humor and his giving soul will truly be missed."

"The best view was Maury's welcoming smile and his aura — a wonderful mix of calm confidence and humility," said Danny Rocks, a consultant and print industry veteran.

"Maury had a wonderful and developed sense of what his customers wanted and needed. As we presented our new releases, Maury would listen to us with interest. He never tipped his hand, and most important, he never made a disparaging remark about some pieces that were best left aside. Maury was candid and confident in his selections. He knew what his customers would buy — or would not. Because, first and foremost, he knew his customers."

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Note from Joe

Wanna Play? NAMM Programs Promote Your Business and Create More Music Makers

One of the most important roles of any industry trade group is to promote business and grow the market. For NAMM, that means reaching out to all the people who don't play an instrument and convincing them to give it a try. It's also something that I am deeply passionate about and felt was a critical component of our success at Skip's Music.

Is it a tough sell? Not really. We know that the desire to play is out there. The tricky part is to overcome whatever barrier that has kept someone from trying. I ask people all the time if they play a musical instrument—a favorite pastime of mine while waiting in the security line at the airport! Most people reply in a couple of ways: They say, 'I used to play but stopped' or 'No, I don't but I've always wanted to try it.' From a salesman's perspective that means we're more than halfway there.

That's where *Wanna Play?* comes in. It's NAMM's public relations campaign designed to reach millions of these prospective players and get them to go into NAMM Member stores to discover what they've been missing all these years. This program may not get your current customers too excited, but they aren't the intended target. *Wanna Play?* is for the folks who are NOT coming into your store now.

There are many ways to get involved. National Wanna Play Music Week is May 2 – 8, and our team has created a campaign that will be featured in major media markets, reaching tens of millions of people. We've also designed activities for dealers to get involved, including naming May 6 – 8 "National Music Store Weekend." Go to www.namm.org to get your store involved.

Wanna Play? is just one program in our lineup aimed at getting people of all ages into your store and playing music. From preschoolers to seniors, NAMM has a turnkey program to help you get more customers. Is it easy? Not really. Are some of these programs time intensive and hard to pull off? Maybe! I'd be lying if I told you differently. But running a successful music store is already a difficult job, and you've crossed that bridge. So take the next step and quit settling for the regulars who come through your door. Take great care of them, of course, but as the economy recovers, take the bold step and say 'I want MORE good customers.'

Wanna Play?

Joe Lamond • NAMM President/CEO

New Customers Wanna Play This May!

Mark your calendars—NAMM's 5th annual
National Wanna Play Music Week is May 2 – 8, 2011.

We've scheduled activities designed to put the media spotlight on the many proven benefits of playing music and give people new reasons to start or re-start this life-changing activity. Plus, we're promoting National Music Store Weekend, Friday-Sunday, May 6 – 8, to honor the hub of all things musical—the local community music store. When people discover their passion for playing music, the whole industry benefits!

Get information and materials to help bring customers
into your store at www.namm.org.

wanna
play?
music week
May 2-8, 2011
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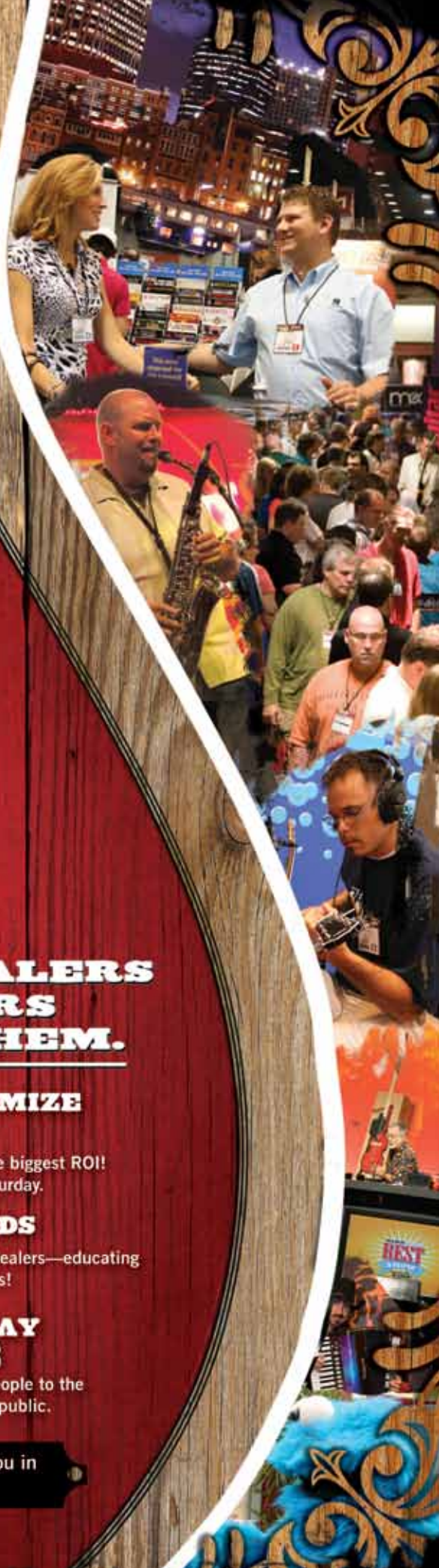
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- > **Japan Manufacturers**
Report minimal quake damage
PAGE 26
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Defends trademark in China
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Creates Karl Bruhn memorial fund
PAGE 31

SUPPLY

MANUFACTURING | BY KATIE KAILUS

MI BRANCHES OUT

The hottest emerging markets for MI manufacturers may just be outside of MI.

Daisy Rock and Alfred Music Publishing, for instance, recently launched record labels, while Fender dove into commercial audio systems. It begs the question: Is this the future for MI suppliers?

DAS AUDIO

Fender has partnered with Volkswagen to equip select 2012 models with the Fender Premium Audio System (FPA).

The new Jetta GLI will be the first Volkswagen model to feature the FPA system this spring. Developed exclusively for Volkswagen, it will eventually be available in all other Jettas, and in the new 2012 midsize sedan and 2012 Beetle this fall.

“By partnering with Volkswagen on the Fender Premium Audio System, we are creating a unique partnership with a truly innovative company, allowing us to deliver a product that is as unique, expressive and dynamic as the customers who use it,” said Mark Van Vleet, Fender’s senior vice president of business affairs.

The new audio system is the result of a three-year collaboration between Fender and Panasonic



Automotive. It features a 400-watt, nine-subwoofer speaker system. The Fender brand has been successful outside of the MI industry before with such endeavors as the *Rock Band* video game.

“The Fender brand has long been regarded as an iconic music brand,” said Brian Tedeschi, business affairs manager for Fender. “As a result, we look to create innovative and compelling products outside of the MI industry where we believe the Fender brand will be successful with music enthusiasts, in addition to musicians.”

STUDIO TIME

Both Daisy Rock and its parent company, Alfred, have rolled out record companies this year in collaboration with TuneCore, a service designed to provide an easy way for songwriters to upload and distribute their record-

ings through online stores.

Daisy Rock Records (DRR) continues with Daisy Rock’s female branding as a way for women to get their music heard.

“For the last 11 years, we’ve been putting guitars into females’ hands so they can make music they love,” said Tish Ciravolo, Daisy Rock’s founder and president. “The one comment that we heard constantly was, ‘How can I get my music heard?’ [This] ultimately means distributed and marketed. So, Daisy Rock Records is our answer to this problem for the girls out there rocking out. We will help you get your music heard through DRR, and hopefully, every girl will achieve all of their musical dreams.”

Daisy Rock Records artists keep all the rights to their music and 100 percent of the royalties generated from online sales

through TuneCore.

Alfred Records is designed to be a way for schools to raise money and increase awareness for their school music programs. The label lets the programs record and sell their music at iTunes and other digital music stores.

TuneCore provides a 20-percent discount to schools and has worked with Alfred to create instructions on how to upload music, handle royalty registration and payment, and receive earnings from fundraisers.

“I love the fundraising aspect of this program, and I think all the digital stores are great vehicles for sharing our music with the parents and community,” said Carmen Gassi, band director at White Oaks Secondary School in Oakville, Ontario. “My students can’t wait to begin.”

MUSICAL MULTITASKING

So is this the future of the MI industry? It may be for Fender. According to Tedeschi, the company’s team is considering branching out into different segments outside of MI.

“As a company focused on innovation, we are always looking for new and compelling music-related products inside and outside the MI industry,” Tedeschi said. **MI**

CHARITY

Pick by Pick

U.K. mosaic artist Ed Chapman created a Jimi Hendrix mosaic out of 5,000 multi-colored Fender guitar picks.

The mosaic was auctioned off at Cancer Research UK's Sound & Vision event, held at Abbey Road Studios on Feb. 24. fender.com



AWARDS

Korg's Key Retailers

Korg recently announced the winners of its 2010 Korg USA Key Note Awards. Presented at winter NAMM, the annual distinction recognizes retailers who have demonstrated their commitment to Korg brands.

"These awards are not only significant for the recipients but also important to Korg USA, as our company continually strives to return the same support and commitment that our dealers demonstrate," said Douglas Nestler, vice president of sales for Korg USA.

Winners included: ProAudioStar of Brooklyn, N.Y.; Recording Services & Supply of Salina, Kan.; Easy Music of Honolulu; Sweetwater Sound of Fort Wayne, Ind.; and Bellevue American Music of Bellevue, Wash. korg.com

SUPPLY | DISASTER

MINIMAL QUAKE DAMAGE FOR MI SUPPLIERS

Major Japanese MI suppliers suffered minimal damage from the March 11 earthquake that ravaged Northern Japan.

Roland, Yamaha and Kawai, all headquartered in Hamamatsu, are located roughly 300 miles from Sendai, the city worst hit. None reported any significant damage to their facilities, and at press time, none had employees injured in the quake.

Hoshino Gakki, located roughly 55 miles northwest of Hamamatsu in Nagoya, also suffered no damage or injured employees.

"Upon review of our supply chain for [Yamaha's] musical instrument, pro audio and audio/video divisions, we do not foresee any significant impact in our ability to supply product to our customers," said Tom Sumner, senior vice president of Yamaha Corp. of America. "However, we are still assessing the full impact on and the stability of our supply chain and are taking the precaution of looking at alternative sources for components

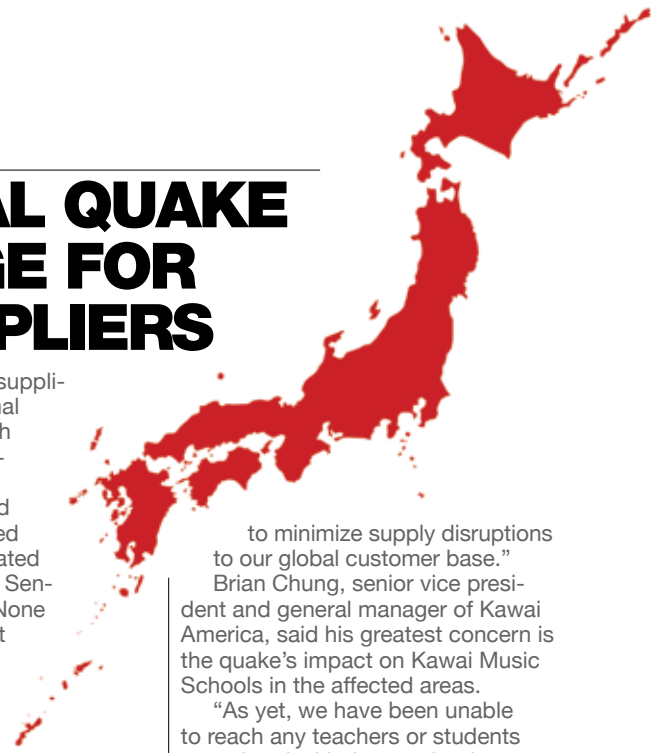
to minimize supply disruptions to our global customer base."

Brian Chung, senior vice president and general manager of Kawai America, said his greatest concern is the quake's impact on Kawai Music Schools in the affected areas.

"As yet, we have been unable to reach any teachers or students associated with those schools — but we continue to hope for good news regarding their well-being once communication to the area is restored," Chung said.

"The big concern [of Roland staff] is for the safety and condition of Roland Japan's dealers and their families in northern Japan in the Sendai area," said Dennis Houlihan, chairman of Roland U.S.

"Naturally, there is great concern on [employees'] part for the well-being of their fellow citizens, and we'll do whatever is asked of them to help," said Hoshino USA President Bill Reim.



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NAMM's Joe Lamond (middle, right) accepts an award from Yamaha's Rick Young (middle, left)



YAMAHA, NAMM | HONORS

YAMAHA AWARDS LAMOND

Yamaha Corp. of America Senior Vice President Rick Young awarded a 50th year commemorative "greatest hits" gold record to NAMM President and CEO Joe Lamond and staff during a recent visit to NAMM's Carlsbad, Calif., headquarters.

"For half a century, Yamaha has been a great friend and partner to NAMM," Lamond said. "We've worked together to develop new markets, fund music research, fight for music education in our schools and create some truly memorable NAMM show concerts. We appreciate this recognition." yamaha.com

LEVY'S LEATHERS | TRADEMARK

Levy's Battles Alleged Chinese Trademark Violators

Harvey Levy, vice president of Levy's Leathers, recently got an upsetting phone call from his company's Chinese distributor, Ivan Music. The distributor informed him that Chinese retailers were complaining that they could purchase Levy's Leathers product for significantly

less than Ivan Music's price. The product, it turned out, was counterfeit, but it had the same look, logo and packaging — down to the hangtag with Levy's nephew's photo.

Levy added that his company's trademark has been registered in China, Hong Kong and Japan, among other countries

outside of Levy's home base in Canada.

On March 22, Levy announced that his company hired law firm Baker & McKenzie to curb the alleged counterfeiters. According to a statement from Levy, the firm will begin by reviewing China-based online auction websites that serve as platforms

for intellectual property infringements.

"I've also heard that other North American manufacturers are seeing their counterfeits in Europe and the U.K.," Levy said. "I can only imagine it won't be too long until that's true for Levy's, as well, so I'm trying to nip it in the bud." levysleathers.com

MARTIN | LEGAL

Martin, Sen. Casey Fight Unfair Trade Practices

Sen. Bob Casey has joined forces with C.F. Martin to urge China to end trade practices that allegedly harm workers and businesses in the Lehigh Valley of Pennsylvania, as well as across the country.



Martin's Chris Martin (left) and Sen. Bob Casey

"Pennsylvania businesses are telling me that unfair trade practices by the Chinese have harmed their ability to compete, and job losses substantiate those claims," Casey said. "The lack of protection on the part of the Chinese hurts C.F. Martin & Co. and countless other businesses and workers."

In January, *Music Inc.* reported that a Chinese-based company had acquired the Martin trademark in China and began making and marketing its own Martin guitars.

Martin executives said they have fought to register the Martin trademark with the Chinese government since 2005 to protect the brand and prevent China from selling counterfeit guitars.

"We are greatly honored to have an ongoing relationship with Sen. Casey, and we can't express in words how much we appreciate his openness and willingness to assist us in rectifying our dilemma with respect to protecting our valued trademark in China," said Chris Martin, chairman and CEO of Martin.

In January, Casey sent a letter to President Barack Obama detailing the hardships imposed on Martin by China's trade practices and urging him to press the issue with Chinese President Hu Jintao during his visit to Washington, D.C. Casey asked Obama to focus his discussions around intellectual property rights protections and currency valuation. martinguitar.com

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TONIC | SHOWS

TONIC Presents at Summer NAMM

The Tonal Innovation Center (TONIC) will be hosting a discussion on the use of sustainable materials for musical instruments at 2011 Summer NAMM in Nashville, Tenn. The two-hour seminar will take place from 8–10 a.m. on July 22 on the second floor of the Nashville Convention Center. TONIC advocates the use of environmentally friendly, recyclable tone material for use in musical instrument manufacturing. **{tonal.fi}**



GIBSON | ONLINE

GIBSON EN ESPAÑOL

Gibson Guitar has launched its official Spanish-language website.

Gibsonguitar.es provides a fully integrated experience for Spanish-speaking fans and musicians that support the Gibson brand. The site offers daily music news and features, music videos, contests, guitar lessons, and other related information. It also includes Spanish-language product pages describing the features and specs for Gibson, Epiphone and Kramer guitars, as well as other gear and accessories.

Fans can participate in the site's exclusive interviews by submitting questions to their favorite Latin and international artists via Facebook and Twitter. **{gibsonguitar.es}**

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TRIBUTE

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

Tsutomu Katoh

Korg Chairman Tsutomu Katoh passed away on March 15 after a long battle with cancer.

"Since he founded Korg Inc. in 1963, Katoh has led our company with great talent, vision and leadership," said Seiki Kato, Korg's president. "He was loved and respected by all the employees and Korg family members, and he made a huge contribution to the lives of countless musicians around the world."

Richard Ash, CEO of Sam Ash Music, remembered Katoh as "one of this industry's true visionaries."

"Mr. Katoh's Korg products have inspired hundreds of thousands of musicians over the years," he said. "His legacy will live on for many years to come." **{korg.com}**

FISHMAN | LEGAL

Fishman v. Esteban Trial Begins

The trial resulting from the lawsuit filed by Andover, Mass.-based Fishman Transducers on Jan. 17, 2007, against Stephen Paul (doing business as “Esteban”), Daystar Productions and HSN Interactive began March 14 in the United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts. The suit is for unfair competition, trademark infringement and false advertising in violation of the Federal Lanham Act.

Fishman alleged that Esteban, Daystar and HSN advertised, promoted and sold Esteban guitars while falsely misrepresenting to the public that the Esteban guitars were equipped with Fishman electronic components. According to the lawsuit, these statements have been made in television infomercials and on numerous websites. However, Fishman claimed it hasn’t sold electronic components to Esteban or any other party for use in Esteban guitars, and it has not authorized either Esteban or Daystar to use the name and trademark Fishman in promoting or selling Esteban guitars.

“We are obviously very concerned by the blatant misconduct of the defendants identified in our complaint, and we intend to protect our good name and trademarks vigorously,” said Larry Fishman, president of Fishman Transducers. fishman.com

QSC | AWARD

QSC's Star Rises

QSC Chief Financial Officer Jatan Shah recently received the Orange County Business Journal 2010 CFO of the Year Award in the Rising Star category.



QSC's Jatan Shah (left) with QSC CEO Joe Pham

Held Jan. 18 at the Hyatt Regency Irvine hotel in Irvine, Calif., the fourth annual award ceremony included panelists from Orange County Business Journal and California Society of CPAs.

Shah was selected out of 40 nominees for his integral role in QSC's achievements since joining the company in the spring of last year. qscaudio.com

AMERICAN DJ | TRADEMARK

ADJ, WAL-MART REACH SETTLEMENT



American DJ has reached a settlement with Wal-Mart and DBL Distributing in a trademark infringement lawsuit regarding the American Audio brand. The suit originally alleged that the two companies and three other firms — V2Go Technology, American Audio Laboratory and Laser Karaoke — used the American Audio trademark in advertising, distributing and promoting unaffiliated audio products. The terms of the settlement were undisclosed.

According to American DJ attorney Kenneth Sherman, Wal-Mart and DBL were included because, by distributing and selling products bearing the American Audio trademark, they were trading on the brand's goodwill.

“The American DJ Group maintains a strict policy to pursue all infringers of its intellectual property rights, including any and all distributors who traffic in illegal products bearing any ADJ mark or brand,” Sherman said.

V2Go Technology, one of the five defendants named in the original lawsuit, has also filed for bankruptcy. “American DJ feels vindicated that both Wal-Mart and DBL have recognized ADJ's rights with respect to its trademarks in this regrettable incident,” Sherman said. “It is unfortunate that the manufacturer of this product has been forced into bankruptcy and that the distributors have been left fully liable for the resolution.” americandj.com



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CONTEST

Vandoren's Magic Reeds

Vandoren has named the first two winners of the company's Magic Reed contest.

Clarinetist Kaya Jordan and alto saxophonist Chase Haynes, both of Greensboro, N.C., won a year's supply of Vandoren reeds, along with a 50 pack of reeds for each of their schools.

The winners selected a reed at random from a flow pack of 50 reeds that was on sale at Greensboro's Moore Music. The store also won a Vandoren prize package. vandoren.com

ARTIST APPROVED

Yamaha Gets Igoe

Yamaha recently signed drummer and educator Tommy Igoe to endorse its drums.

"We look forward to working with Tommy to help raise the level of innovation within drum set education around the world," said John Witmann, manager of artist relations for Yamaha. yamahadrums.com



Fender L.A. Artist Relations Showroom

PRIMACOUSTIC | PARTNERSHIP

FENDER CHOOSES PRIMACOUSTIC

Primacoustic has been selected to assist with the acoustical treatment of Fender's new Fender L.A. Artist Relations Showroom. Located in Los Angeles, the large open space consists of separate areas for electric and acoustic instruments.

"For many of us, Fender has been a guiding light in the music, sound and recording business," said Peter Janis, president of Primacoustic. "The simple fact that Fender understands the importance of acoustical treatment and invested in this technology to treat their new facility is a testament to their commitment to continuing the tradition that has made Fender what it is today." primacoustic.com; fender.com

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YAMAHA | MEMORIAL

MEMORIAL FUND CELEBRATES BRUHN

The Yamaha Music and Wellness Institute (YMWI) recently created a memorial fund honoring the work of late founder Karl Bruhn. Widely acknowledged as the “father of music making and wellness,” Bruhn, along with YMWI President and CEO Dr. Barry Bittman, championed the initial research that established recreational music making as an effective wellness strategy. All contributions to the Karl T. Bruhn Memorial Research Fund will be used exclusively for research.

“During Karl’s tenure at YMWI, he and Barry produced convincing and persuasive research to prove the strong connection between wellness and music making,” said Terry Lewis, former executive vice president of Yamaha Corp. of America and the recently

The Yamaha Music and Wellness Institute launches a fund honoring the late Karl Bruhn

appointed chairman of YMWI. “The Karl T. Bruhn Memorial Research Fund will ensure that this vital research continues and that Karl’s vision will be fulfilled.”

Bruhn, a longtime senior executive at Yamaha, first director of market development for NAMM and chairman of YMWI, passed away on Oct. 5, 2010, following a brief illness. yamahainstitute.org

APPOINTMENTS

GCI Names Wilder VP of Marketing

GCI Technologies has appointed Mark Wilder as vice president of marketing.

The former director of marketing for Samson, Wilder will report to GCI CEO Artie Cabasso. He will also redevelop the company’s creative marketing strategies and expand artist relations efforts.

“GCI’s brands are poised for growth, and I look forward to helping realize their potential,” Wilder said.



Mark Wilder

KHS America has appointed Michael Robinson as director of marketing.

Alfred Music Publishing recently signed record producer Ken Scott to its lineup of music publication authors.

APB-Dynasonics has hired Eric Oppenheimer as U.S. sales manager for the company’s professional audio mixing consoles.

Sean Weijand has been chosen to oversee Canadian business development for **Primacoustic**.

Yorkville Sound has promoted Laurence Bell to the position of brand manager for the Hughes & Kettner sector.

The Harman Mixer Group has appointed Katy Templeman-Holmes as product manager for Soundcraft Studer, which also welcomed Keith Prestidge as

sales director for Asia and the Pacific.

The Stanton Group has tapped Andrew Duafala as director of key accounts for the U.S. sales team and Jean van Doorslaer as regional sales manager.

Hal Leonard has appointed Joe Burzinski to the newly created position of vice president of digital enterprise solutions.

Innovative Percussion has added industry veteran Rich Mangicaro as manager of artist relations, combo products.

Eminence Speaker recently promoted Josh Martin to the new role of technology sales manager.

The Music Group has named Gregg Stein vice president of mass marketing.

Tim Lautzenheiser has joined **Music For All** as a senior educational advisor.

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IDEAS

Inside **IDEAS** > The Customer Whisperer Page 34 > The Retail Doctor Page 36 > The Lesson Room Page 38 > Lessons Learned Page 40

INDEPENDENT RETAIL | BY TED ESCHLIMAN

SELLING SOLUTIONS

It's easy to get bogged down in the "business" of business. Stocking shelves, straightening displays, monitoring gross margin levels — we ponder buying decisions and selling strategies based on the mundane stuff: what we hope our customers will be doing with our products.

If your business is wired simply to acquire and move "stuff," let me suggest an additional dynamic that could energize all levels of operation, purchasing, merchandising and sales training — the notion of solutions. At the recent NAMM show, Bob Phibbs, a.k.a. The Retail Doctor, introduced his modification of classic FAB (feature-advantage-benefit) selling: "It has ... so you ..." In a nutshell, this puts the focus on application and context *before* the goods themselves.

YOU'RE THE THERAPIST

With old-school retail, we filled our stores with goods we thought we could sell, and we waited for customers to come in and buy them. If all worked out, we talked customers into needing the goods. Now, with turbo-charged competitive new-school retail — and proper attention to turns and gross margin return on



'The best mindset is to think of our goods as prescriptions to problems.'

investment — we can ill afford to warehouse deeply anything that won't meet customer needs and yield near-immediate profits. Stale inventory stunts cash flow and kills retailers. It's more important than ever to track customer needs and stock inventory around those wants and desires. To do so, the best mindset is to think of our goods as prescriptions to problems. We become shelves and

hooks filled with solutions. Just as important, our staff becomes the face, counselor and therapist equipped to help the consumer enjoy and grow in the craft.

At NAMM, Roland founder Ikutaro Kakehashi mentioned this notion, likening the music store to a family doctor. We may not always have the remedies for the entire music community packed within our store walls, but we can frame our businesses as the go-to place. It starts when a musician needs a resource or tool to advance his or her art. When we go to trade shows looking for solutions, we equip ourselves for greater relevance in our markets.

For example, consider the Apple iPad's growing popularity. At NAMM, we looked at a lot of new implements that would bridge iPad use with the musician. It's not just a gadget, and seeking out iPad clips, mounts, pouches and devices became a show priority. The ravenous market hunger for ukuleles also had us on the hunt for method books, class materials, and an array of new body styles and designs to bring this activity home. And an increasing interest in niche folk instruments had us checking out new guitar, mandolin and banjo lines that

local competition wasn't stocking.

IN-STORE CONSIDERATIONS

Our stores should be clean and logically arranged. Essential accessories and instruments can't be displayed on opposite sides of the showroom. Again, associate activity (playing guitar) with need (instrument maintenance, chord book, strap), and display with minimal physical barriers.

We also need staff trained and tuned to these evolving requirements. Our employees need to be able to speak intelligently about the goods or at least know how to access outside resources for more information.

Plus, solution selling is about "delivery." A storefront's not enough. Today's retail is about having displays marked effectively for a consumer who would rather read signage than be sold by a salesperson. Outside the store, we need a cyber presence that, at minimum, advertises how we can get goods to consumers in-store with sensitivity to a busy culture.

A good store is a prescription — medicine for the soul. **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

Vendor Relations Test

Years ago, when I had my store in Milwaukee, there was real competition for brands. We chased a particular major line for years. We knew we could do a better job than its current dealer, but we couldn't convince the brand's leadership. As we gained more and more market share with our lesser lines, the other dealer was deconstructing — and for reasons that had nothing to do with its brands. Eventually, we scored “the big meeting” with the supplier at the last Chicago NAMM show.



Six questions to ask yourself next time you're considering a new brand

The rep, who was kind of shady himself, ushered us into a little cubical with the VP, who was a notorious self-important big shot. He peppered his pitch with vulgar four-letter words and made outrageous claims about current dealers' sales levels. He also made ridiculous demands, which we rejected, but offered us the line anyway.

After my business partner and I left, I stopped in the aisle and asked, “Do you really want to do business with these people?”

“No, I really don't,” he said.

That line never recovered in Milwaukee, and we built the lesser line into a strong local brand.

When you take on a line, you take on more than just the products. You take on the rep, and you take on the rep the supplier's going to hire after him. You take on the company's customer service staff, its corporate culture and its reputation. The more important the brand, the more important these relationships are.

So, when we add a line, big or small, we need to look at the big picture before we take the leap. Here are a few important questions to ask yourself.

1. Is this line going to bring new customers into my store? There are only a few lines that have enough brand equity to draw customers, and we know what they are. Unfortunately, brand equity is usually paid for from the dealer's profit margin. This is a big decision, and many dealers have let the ego boost of landing a big line devastate their profitability. A few of these situations are playing out this very moment. Usually, the grass on the other side of the fence isn't greener — it just has different weeds.

2. If a new line isn't going to bring in new customers, is it something we'll sell instead of something we currently sell or something we'll sell in addition to something we currently sell? If it's a replacement line, margin, turn or customer value must be significantly better to justify the move. If it will represent additional revenue, the choice is easy. Great add-on products pop up all the time, and usually, the buy-in and commitment are minimal.

3. What is the turn/margin ratio? My colleague Alan Friedman has a great rule of thumb: If you can't sell them all in 144 days at 40 percent or in six months at 50 percent, don't buy them. If you have some lame excuse why you should violate this rule, expense the cost of the items to marketing or fixtures rather than inventory.

4. How exclusive is the product? If it's sold online, will your customers find it at a lower price, and when they do, will you price match? Will they think you're a bandit? And does it matter? Sometimes it doesn't. More than once, I've gone to Radio Shack to buy some small part — which was more expensive and of lower quality than what I could get at mycablemart.com — because I needed it now. There are items that customers aren't price-sensitive about, and there are things you shouldn't be too

'When you take on a line, you take on more than just the products.'

margin-sensitive about if they serve your larger purpose.

As a "Best in Show" panelist at January's NAMM convention, I picked IK Multimedia's iKlip, which is distributed by Hal Leonard. I don't know the product's margin, but I don't think it matters because the price is so low and the cool factor is so high. I want customers telling their friends about the cool, new item they found at my store. Also, everybody already does business with Hal Leonard, so the other issues are moot.

5. What happens when something goes wrong? Does this supplier have the capability and the intention to take care of the product and your customers? This is a real concern for small and emerging companies, as well as those without a domestic distribution company. (Just ask anyone who has ever bought containers of product direct from overseas manufacturers.)

6. Do you want to do business with these guys? Relationships matter. Sometimes, suppliers are ruthless bastards, sometimes they're like droids in suits. Some companies are in various stages of transition, and it's hard to tell who's in charge. But a few have well-established, well-earned reputations for genuine partnership, great customer service and loyalty to dealers. If you're considering an accessory you'll buy from a website or pleasant voice who happens to answer an 800 number, it probably doesn't matter much. But when we make a major commitment to represent a major line, the quality and character of the people we will be dealing with is very important.

There was a time when there were more dealers than suppliers. Things have changed. Today, if suppliers want their products seen, heard, touched and smelled in a real music store, they're going to have to earn their place in yours. Hold them to a high standard. **MI**

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

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THE RETAIL DOCTOR | BY BILLY CUTHRELL

Curbing Entitlement

A year ago, I needed a part-time staffer to work evenings at the counter. I thought it would be perfect for a college student — the job wasn't that difficult and allowed time for classes. I wrote an ad for Craigslist and college job boards outlining the position. I explained that we'd provide training and offer a flexible schedule if the candidate happened to be in a band or needed time off for school or the holidays.

Since guitar is the No. 1 instrument we teach and sell, we wanted someone who could at least play a little, tune and change strings. Other stuff — changing drumheads or helping customers pick out drumsticks — could be taught to the right candidate. I placed the ad and waited for the calls to come flooding in.

And I waited, and waited.

THE RESPONSE

After two weeks, we had zero responses, except for a guy who e-mailed saying he sent his son to America and wanted us to give him music lessons. All we had to do was send the guy our checking account number, and he would “put the cash right in our account.” Other than that, nothing. Nada. Zilch. It wasn't the highest-paying job in the world at \$10–\$12 per hour, but it's not as if we were looking for Steve Jobs' right-hand man.

After four weeks, I reposted the ad on Craigslist for the fifth time and made a new flier for college job boards. This time, I mentioned it would be OK if the candidate didn't have much music experience, but we wanted friendly people who liked to work in a fun environment. I figured unemployment was still high, and a paying job was still a paying job. The scam e-mails from Craigslist kept flooding in.

THE CANDIDATES

At week six, we finally got a few calls. It turned out these people needed to call to continue receiving their unemployment checks and weren't interested in an actual job. I told one guy that the job started at \$10–\$12 an hour and would at least get him working again. He said he could make more collecting unemployment.

Finally, I received calls from two promising candidates. The

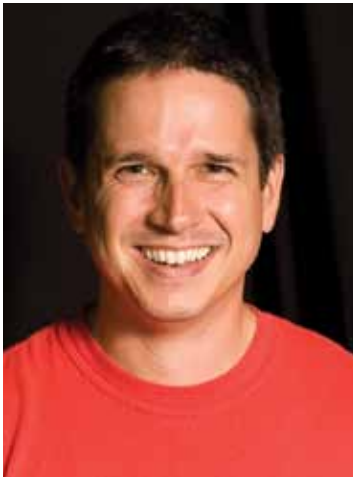
first was a gigging guitar player who had two years left in school. The second worked in a music store as a freshman in college, and now, he was a senior looking at sticking around for grad school. That was promising — we wouldn't have to train him, only to watch him leave.

THE INTERVIEWS

When interviews rolled around, the grad school candidate got to the shop 20 minutes late. He never apologized for being late — he even told me he was a little put out that traffic “made” him late.

That said, he was well-spoken and had an air of confidence, even though he wasn't familiar with some of our common name brands and didn't understand our point-of-sale system. (Hadn't he worked in a music store?) About midway through our chat, he cut me off mid-sentence and said, “I know what I'm worth, and 10 bucks is way too low. How about \$20?” I shot back, “How about \$8?” He laughed, but I didn't. He countered with, “I'll settle for \$18,” as he stood to shake my hand. I showed him the door.

An hour later, the second candidate showed up early, and we got off to a good start. He knew our brands and our shop since he'd bought strings and other accessories from us. But before I could ask my first question, he said, “I'm going to save us



Today's hires often have unrealistic expectations. Here's how to set them straight

both time. What are you paying for this job again?" I said, "It starts at \$10, but we can discuss it." He cut me off and told me he wouldn't take less than \$14 — and wanted a raise in a few months. He reasoned that he'd bring lots of people and potential students to our shop from his local gigs. I showed him the door.

THE HIRE

A few weeks later, we got a call from a kid who said he'd seen our ads on Craigslist. By this time, I'd devised a prescreening strategy, so I wouldn't waste anyone's time. I was polite and made a joke or two but then gave him my "directive mandate," laying out the job duties as follows:

"We are looking for someone who doesn't mind paying dues and earning his paychecks. You'll

be the new guy here, and we don't care that you play in bars around town or worked in another music store for a year. Every store is different, and every customer is different. I expect you to show up on time for the actual interview, and if hired, I expect you to show up on time, all the time, and be here 10 minutes before the shift starts. The job pays \$10, but if you have some experience, are a fast learner and can read, write and do basic math, you may start at more, but don't count on it.

"I'm looking for someone who takes responsibility, knows a guitar from a harpsichord, even if you can't spell harpsichord, has a pleasant appearance that won't scare away potential customers and will get along with staff and pass a background check. I know this seems blunt, but that's what

we want, and if you think you can fill it and then some, let's meet."

YOUR DEFENSE

Blunt, yes, but I have found that it's required when dealing with Generation Whatever. Some so-called experts say you need to be their friends and give them freedom to express themselves while letting them make mistakes. These are probably the same experts who tell you to be your child's best friend instead of saying "no" when necessary.

It's your business and your rules. Granted, you want to create a relaxed place to work, but today's young worker needs to understand that basic job duties and responsibilities are the groundwork for successful businesses and employees. Policies are in place for a reason.

I suggest writing an employee manual and keeping it updated to include job expectations, but most of all, be forward and up front the moment you encounter a potential hire. Create your own "directive mandate," and tell the potential hire up front. Letting employees find themselves while making mistakes can cost you time, resources, customers and, sometimes, your business. Finally, don't be afraid to not hire, no matter how badly you want a position filled. I worked extra hours with my staff until we found the right person.

Oh yeah, that kid I tried my "directive mandate" on? He turned out to be one of the best employees we've ever had. **MI**

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

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THE LESSON ROOM | BY PETE GAMBER

Welcome to the Jungle

Guitar Center and Sam Ash are entering the music lessons business. GC's setting up its lessons program, GC Studios, in every new location. Sam Ash plans to incorporate music lessons into its corporate remodeling vision.

Once a holy grail for independent music stores, lessons are now under siege. Welcome to the jungle — are you really surprised?

GC and Sam Ash aren't doing this to put indies out of business. They want to grab more market share and get new bodies into their stores every week. But like non-gang members getting shot in gang crossfire, some independents will get killed.

Many independents have survived because a local GC or Sam Ash sent them lesson referrals. That will change.

Many independent retailers also think, "It's OK if we don't sell as much gear because we teach music lessons and GC and Sam Ash don't." Reality check: They do.

You need to remember what GC and Sam Ash did to your sales when they opened in your area. Could the same happen to your lessons program, and if you lose your music lesson foot traffic, can you survive? Guitar Center and Sam Ash programs will have all the typical hype and glitter, so your music lessons program needs heart and soul to thrive.

WHAT'S YOUR MARKETING MANTRA?

The GC Studios website claims that the lessons operation offers "a proven world-class curriculum," which it created alongside print music publisher Hal Leonard. The curriculum is based on a progressive advancement model that can be taught through one-on-one lessons, workshops and clinics.

Finally, music education done right.

It's a pretty egotistical claim for a company that has never offered music lessons. You can bet GC's thinking behind this is we're bigger, we're better. It makes for great marketing, but it also raises the question: What's your music lessons marketing mantra? Selling your program on its longevity is important — for example,

"30 years of making musicians." Also, be sure to include photos of students that have gone on to music careers. Rock stars, junior high band directors — include them all.

WHAT'S YOUR CURRICULUM?

GC vows to offer a world-class curriculum. You're not going to find downloaded Internet tab or a "what do you wanna learn this week, dude" approach at GC Studios. Instead, it has a beginning material packet in a binder for students. GC will boost its print music sales with this format.

You should be doing the same at your store. Survey students at all levels to learn what's going on in your private lessons and music classes. Ask teachers questions to find out what method books they use and what songs they teach.

Get on-board with a digital print music service. Put together a binder that includes songs that students are learning in their lessons, and sell it to them. This way, you can also make money on print music.

Make sure teachers sign a no-copyright-abuse-policy agreement. Get rid of photocopies. Make your lesson program legit and professional. **MI**



With large chain stores getting into the music lessons business, your lessons program needs to have heart and soul to thrive

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

STROBOTUNER: The Sequel



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LESSONS LEARNED | BY GERSON ROSENBLOOM

The Next Big Thing

Depending on how long you've been in the music industry, you'll probably remember times when influences outside our direct control drove business. Whether you were around to enjoy the moment, you've undoubtedly heard about The Beatles' first appearance on "The Ed Sullivan Show." I remember my dad and I arriving at the store the next day to see people lined up outside. We suddenly had more business than we knew how to handle. The public had an insatiable thirst for guitars — and manufacturers couldn't crank them out fast enough.

Some years later, the movie "Deliverance" started a feeding frenzy for banjos. "Dueling Banjos" created unexpected business for unsuspecting retailers, who were largely unprepared for the onslaught.

During guitar and banjo madness, Dr. John Chowning was doing academic research at Stanford University, creating a patent that would, in the 1980s, become a commercial bonanza for Yamaha and music retailers all over the world. To this day, retailers, manufacturers and reps view the DX7 as the holy grail of music products, the gold standard by which all others aspire. I wish I had a dollar for every time a rep came to my store with a new product and said, "This is going to be the next DX7."

But few products ever measured up. I can't help but remember those times when I had literally hundreds of people with deposits on DX7s at extraordinary profit margins. And once you've experienced something like the DX7 or The Beatles or the ADAT — or any of the other music industry revolutions — it's hard to not get caught in the trap of waiting for the next great wave. But here's the problem with waves. On rare occasion, they come in a steady flow. (Think DX7, M1, Mirage.) But more often, there are enormous gaps between

the big ones, during which time you can find yourself adrift at sea.

CREATING YOUR NEXT CASH COW

You can't wait for the next big thing to come along. When it happens, it's a fabulous bonus, but depending on someone or something else to drive business is a formula for failure. I hear

the laments all the time: "There are no gotta-have products," or "There are no new guitar heroes." Get over it, and do something to control your own destiny. There are plenty of opportunities to create growth without the chance outside influence.

Here's an example. My company makes a purpose-built Nashville-tuned guitar, which uses the high strings of a 12-string set. In essence, every guitarist is a potential customer for the instrument, and yet only a small portion of guitarists even know such a thing exists. I have dealers who say, "No one asks for these guitars," while others make an effort to put them in the hands of each and every customer. The latter group sells a *lot* of Nashville-tuned guitars. The former group only sells to the occasional customer who responds to our advertising.

We are living in a time with no shortage of great products. Pick one you and your associates believe in, and become its champion. Learn everything there is to learn about it, and show it to anyone with a pulse. You may be surprised how many sales you can make through the passion that comes from truly understanding and evangelizing a product. It's not quite The Beatles, but it's completely within your control. **MI**

Gerson Rosenbloom is managing director of Wechter Guitars. He's former president of Medley Music and a past NAMM chairman. E-mail him at gersonmusicinc@gmail.com.



You don't need another Beatle mania or DX7 to energize a product category

NOT WHAT YOU THINK IT IS

Just a grand piano? Think again. PNOmation II is the next generation in player systems.

In this case, what you don't see is what you get. The PNOmation II system is out of sight, tucked discreetly inside your piano where it can't be seen. And now, along with improved sound performance, it can be controlled via any web-enabled device; an iPad, a laptop, even your smart phone. The music library? Completely self-contained. No CDs to hassle with and now customers can sample music before they buy, purchase songs individually or as albums, create their own playlists and more.

Thanks to PNOmation II, buying a piano without a player system makes about as much sense as a car without a stereo.



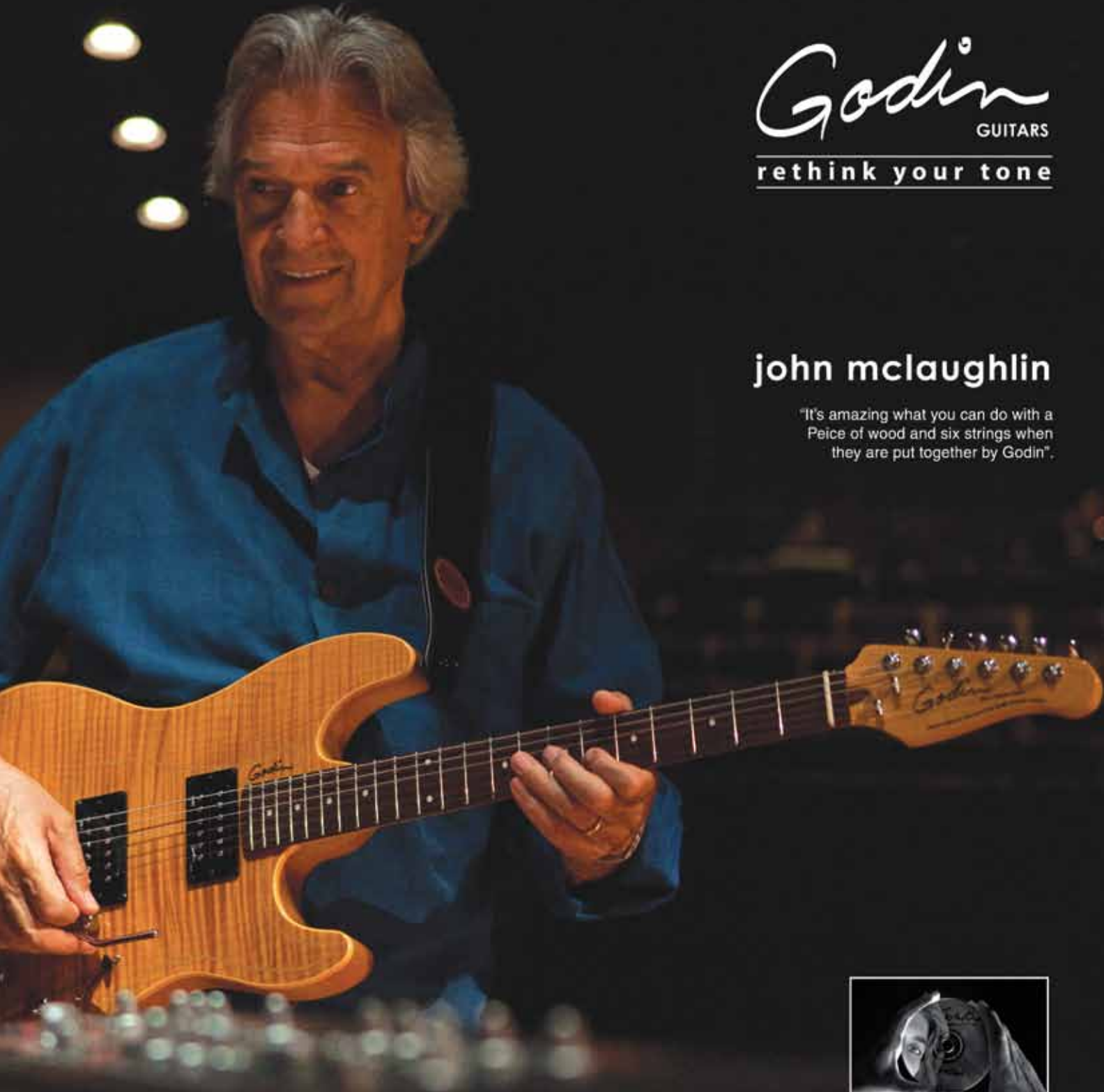
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THE SOURCE

Seven
**PRODUCT
TRENDS
EVERY
MI Retailer
Needs to
CHECK
OUT**

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PAGE 48 THE RETRO RESURGENCE

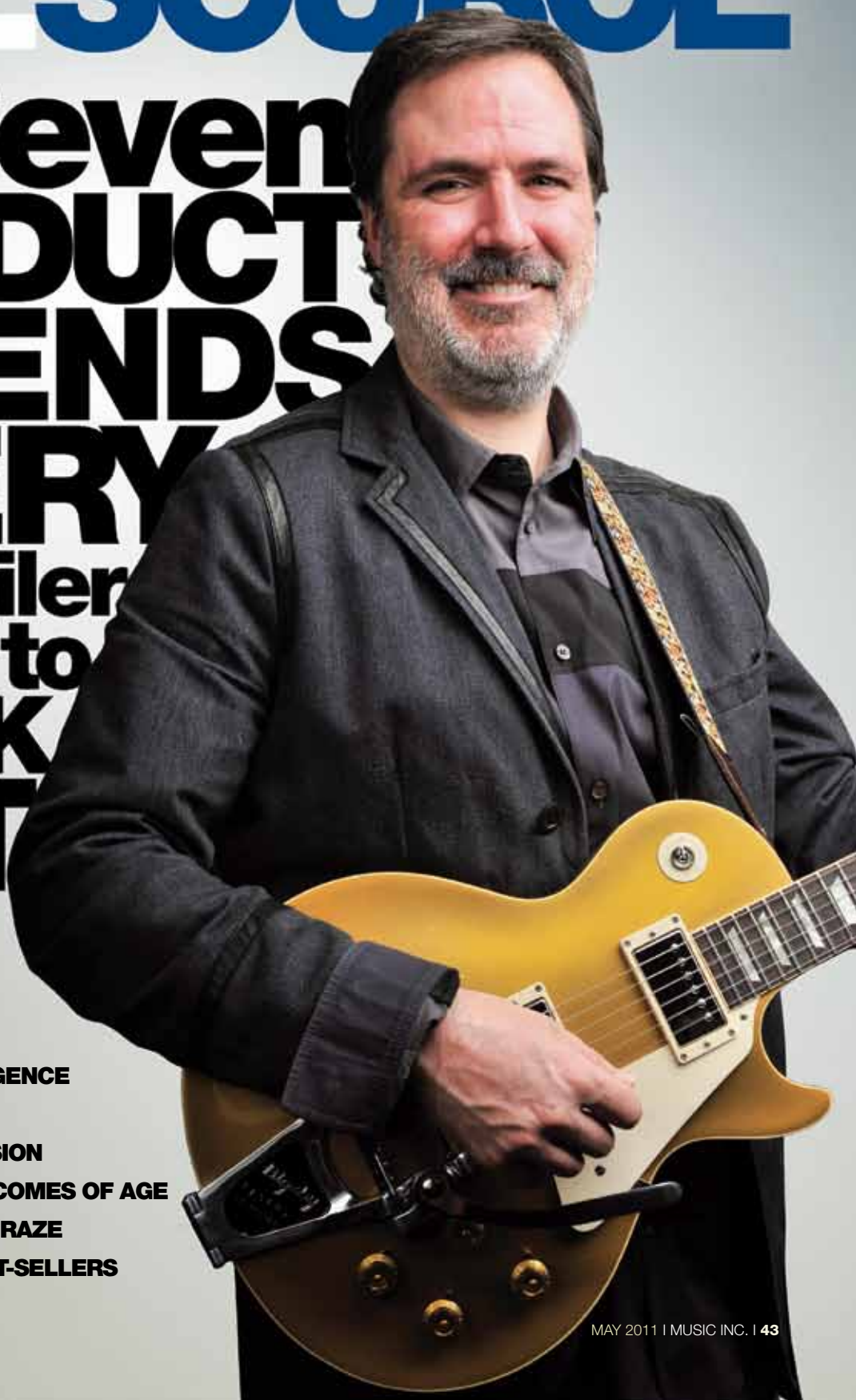
PAGE 52 ALL-IN-ONE AMPS

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PAGE 68 PRINT MUSIC'S BEST-SELLERS



THE iREVOLUTION...



John Grabowski

iDevices and their accessories are still a young category, but they're gaining fast. What will it mean at retail?

Three bucks can now buy you a fiddle.

Mind you, it doesn't have actual strings. You can't play it with a bow, and it's only two-dimensional. But Magic Fiddle, an iPad app from Smule, offers a violin-playing experience that Mashable called "pure, unadulterated musical awesome." And it's one of many virtual instruments working its way onto iPads and iPhones.

"Not content to merely recreate the wheel, software and hardware creators are rushing to invent whole new kinds of musical apps and accessories," said Marc Block, director of U.S. marketing communications at Line 6. "As a result, a mobile device can take on the character of a new style of instrument just by launching the right app."

Not that the trend's putting fiddle retailers out of business. Magic Fiddle, like many apps, is little more than a musical game. Still, not all apps are created equal. As Darius Seabaugh, vice president of marketing at RapcoHorizon, noted, "The boundaries of what can be accomplished [with iDevices] have been pushed to levels where quality audio processing can be easily achieved."

What this means at music retail is the continued rise of a lucrative

but highly competitive accessory market for those iDevices. It's growing so quickly, in fact, that George Hines recently created a new department, multimedia accessories, at his dealership to account for the deluge of iDevice peripherals flooding the market.

"We believe [iDevice accessories] have an income stream that will experience growth for many years," said Hines, owner of Berwyn, Pa.-based combo chain George's Music.

He added that he's planning for "exponential growth" from the department. "We believe 2011 will see hundreds of new items for musicians to use with their iDevices for home recording."

CAPITALIZING ON APPLE

Hines isn't exaggerating. Last January's NAMM show alone saw the release of such standouts as the Akai SynthStation49, IK Multimedia iRig Mic and Alesis iO Dock, to name a few. That's not including the countless recording, pro audio, guitar processing and music education apps touted by exhibitors. In no uncertain terms, we're moving into a brave new world, one where music making will be as much at home on keyboards as on smartphones and computer tablets. (In the case of the SynthStation49, even that line can blur.) And it's all happening on the back of consumer electronics' biggest rock star.

"Not since the Walkman has a product category reached such a broad user base," said Scott Mire, marketing director of Peavey Electronics. "iPhones, iPads and smartphones in general are everywhere, with a customer base that crosses every possible demographic. A byproduct of this customer base is a booming iDevice accessory business."

"The platform's numbers

are just great, making for a sizable market to reach," said Kurt Heiden, marketing manager of Numark, Alesis and Akai. "For example, Apple's iPad is a relatively new computing device, and they've already sold 15 million of them. By MI standards, those kinds of numbers are quite large. Looking at a larger picture that includes iPods, you have hundreds of millions of these devices in place and a market that's as large as the entire personal computer market was around 1998."

But at music retail, Apple's influence runs much deeper than a few iRig Mic sales. The iRevolution's also making waves in music lesson programs and the live sound business. And, as Magic Fiddle hints at, it may just be changing the very nature of musical instruments.

"It's like electronic drums, which now account for half of my drum business," Hines said. "It's not a two- or three-year thing. This is here to stay. And [multimedia accessories], as a department, are here to stay. Mobile devices are going to dominate a lot of the really cool, new creative things that are being generated for musicians who enjoy playing their instruments."

That's not to say these accessories are shattering sales records for Hines — yet. While he's excited about the category, he acknowledged that it's too soon to determine how his new department's actually performing. He's not alone. Alan Moon, sales manager at Front End Audio in Columbia, S.C., mentioned Primacoustic and IK Multimedia iPhone and iPad stand holders generating a lot of interest from his customers. But ask him which one's a best-seller at his dealership, and the picture changes.

"They're brand-new, so we really haven't had a chance to

see a lot of traction in the market yet," Moon said.

"We're stocking some of the Peavey, Line 6 and [IK Multimedia] amp hardware, but these are still very, very new," said *Music Inc.* columnist and Dietze Music co-owner Ted Eschliman. "It's all pretty early."

PREQUALIFIED CUSTOMERS

It raises the question: Why are savvy, bottom-line-focused dealers interested in such a virginal market? For starters, early entries in the iDevice peripheral category have performed well. Myrna Sislen, owner of Washington, D.C.'s Middle C Music, a full-line dealership that specializes in music lessons, singled out IK Multimedia's AmpliTube iRig as a rising star in her accessories department.

"This week alone, I've sold three," she said. "Someone bought

one today, and it was a middle-aged man from Spain. The other day, it was a younger person."

iDevice accessories also represent what Radial and Primacoustic President Peter Janis called the "profitable side of the iPhone business." "Music dealers are in a particularly good position because iPhones and iPads are very convenient interfaces for studio and live use," he said. "And because many of the accessories are priced below \$99, they are impulse buys."

Oh yeah, and customers are prequalified the moment they walk in the store. "Normally, a customer doesn't walk through the door carrying a sign or shirt that says, 'I want to buy a guitar,'" Mire said. "An iDevice user, on the other hand, walks through the door with the device in their hands."

Line 6's Block added that the



The App as a Marketing Tool

In late 2009, harmonica maker Hohner jumped into the app game with *How To Blow The Blues*, a short tutorial on playing licks in a 12-bar blues progression. According to Scott Emmerman, the company's director of marketing and sales, Hohner developed the app to grow the public's awareness of the harmonica.

"We launched the app for iPhone in November 2009, and to date, we've sold over 4,000 downloads on Apple's App Store at \$1.99 each," Emmerman said.

Maybe not coincidentally, Hohner's harmonica sales also rose double digits between 2009 and 2010. Emmerman acknowledged that he can't be sure whether the app was responsible for the spike. Still, he said the "app created a lot of buzz, got Hohner a lot of press and is the only marketing project that I've ever worked on that actually creates revenue. It has more than paid for itself and continues to be an annuity for us."

In March, the company released another app for iPad, iPhone and iPod touch: the Hohner Squeezebox. Mimicking the layout of Hohner's Corona II Classic diatonic accordion, the virtual accordion features a responsive three-row fingerboard that plays and sounds like the traditional instrument, according to a statement from the manufacturer. It's available in several different keys at the Apple App Store for \$1.99, and a Hohner-Mini version is available in GCF for 99 cents. — Z.P.

products usually have a small footprint, allowing for merchandising flexibility. Hines cross-merchandises iDevice accessories at all relevant touch points. The IK Multimedia iKlip, an iPad mic stand adapter, might be displayed alongside orchestra stands and mic stands. Likewise, the iRig got face time at his store counters when it came out.

"It's a discussion piece," Hines said. "Have you seen this? What do you think about this?"

THE CATEGORY KILLER?

But the rise of iDevice accessories has also gone hand in hand with the rise of apps — many of them free or dirt-cheap, a few of them potentially threatening to hardware and software sales. Lately, Steve Hobeck, owner of Heinz Musitronics in Charlottesville, Va., has seen customers come in his store with Real Time Analyzer (RTA) apps on their iPhones. He said the app has the potential to cut into lower-priced RTA sales, but he's not fazed.

"Without question, it's not a threat to us," Hobeck said, speaking to the popularity of apps in general. "If anything, it could be a benefit."

John Grabowski, director of purchasing for Fort Wayne, Ind.-based Sweetwater Sound, added that apps have yet to replace any product sold by his company. In fact, he said he believes low-cost apps expose more people to music making and give music making mainstream exposure.

"The rise of the handheld recorder, which has taken place at almost the same time as the rise of iDevices, is an excellent example of how a dedicated device remains relevant, even in light of something as capable and multipurpose as an iDevice," Grabowski said. "Think about it this way: iDevices are really just portable



Alan Moon

Yamaha and PreSonus iPad apps give added value to mixing consoles

computers, and the introduction of the computer didn't render music gear obsolete either." (Not to mention most of these devices still lack the processing power of your average laptop.)

Gary Gand, owner of Gand Music & Sound in Northfield, Ill., agreed that apps haven't stolen sales from his dealership yet. That said, he pointed out that low-priced RTAs aren't the only hardware piece with the potential to go app and never go back. He sees a day when small tabletop mixers and personal headphone controllers will be mainly the domain of iDevices.

"You'll need some kind of interface to go with it, but they'll sell the interface at computer stores," Gand said.

"If I've got an amp and I want to do all my processing through some sort of iDevice, then I can see pedals going away," Hobeck said. "I can see [the trend] impacting companies like Line 6, which makes the Pod and has all that built into it. I don't see it really competing so much with

the recording devices because the recording devices here have a higher-quality microphone."

Maybe that's why MI suppliers are diving head first into the market, and with a medley of products. The aforementioned Line 6 made its first entry during the summer of 2009 with the MIDI Mobilizer, a MIDI interface for all iPhone, iPad and iPod touch models. Apogee recently introduced Mike, a USB microphone designed specifically for iDevices and Macs. And those are just the obvious suspects in a sea of gear. Other entries are more eccentric. At the last NAMM convention, Musiquip showed primeVibe. This device is designed to season a new stringed instrument by hooking it up to an iPod, which plays music into the instrument to loosen its wood.

Side note: Marc Gallo, founder and CEO of Studio Devil, views apps as one of hardware's best advertising tools. As he put it, "The app serves as a constant reminder to the consumer to make the traditional hardware purchase when they're able to."

PRO APP-LICATIONS

The exception to Gallo's point is when the app's an actual instrument (i.e. Magic Fiddle). And not all instrument apps are settling for gaming-device status.

Take MorphWiz. Available for \$10, this grid-based instrument for the iPad has garnered media praise for its uniqueness and subtlety. A video on the MorphWiz website shows Jordan Rudess, Dream Theater keyboardist and co-creator of the app, playing a surprisingly moving version of "Somewhere Over The Rainbow" using a sound resembling a Moog keyboard in outer space.

"Mobile music making products may not have all the features of computer-based tools, but they

really do allow you to go anywhere to write, record or perform music," said Line 6's Block.

Within the pro audio industry, a few apps have already gained pro status. Gand praised the StageMix iPad app accompanying Yamaha's M7CL digital mixing console. The app gives users remote control of M7CL functions, specifically the monitor mixes from the performers' positions on stage. And Gand said it's a powerful enticement.

"The M7CL console is a \$20,000-\$26,000 product," Gand said. "And [the app] allows us, as dealers, to promote a major sale to a church or theater or even a traveling professional group, as opposed to selling them a mic stand mount or a cute little briefcase that they can put their iPad into that we can only make \$12 on. It's actually worth going out and turning customers onto the iPad to make a sale like this."

Similarly, Front End Audio's Moon praised the new iPad app for PreSonus' StudioLive series digital mixers, which, like the Yamaha app, offers remote control over the console.

"That's *really* strong," he said. "I think we'll see some products that actually don't have much of a control surface any longer."

THE TEACHING MIRACLE

Middle C Music's Sislen, who runs a lessons program with approximately 400 students, isn't concerned about the plethora of free music learning apps on the market. She even called iDevices "a miracle" as a teaching tool.

"[Teachers] can instantly pull up seven versions of a song to find out exactly what that kid wants to play and then help them to play that tune," Sislen said. "It's an incredible, incredible teaching tool and resource. And they *all* use it."

Here, IK Multimedia CEO Enrico Iori made a convincing pitch for his own company's iDevice accessories, stressing their low cost to students and families on a budget. "How do you get a 12-year-old to invest in an amp and pedals to encourage his learning and his love of playing the guitar when cash is tight?" Iori asked rhetorically. "Offering low-cost products like iRig and AmpliTube for iPhone, iPod touch or iPad is a great way to get him understanding the concepts of tone and building his first guitar rig without breaking the bank."

Sislen added that iDevices don't conflict with any services or products at her store, including her sizeable print music department — which accounts for roughly 25 percent of her business. And if iDevices do conflict with print music one day, publishers may have a solution to get retailers in on the action. Mel Bay, for one, is currently working on a partnership for dealers to offer its e-books through an affiliate relationship. Company President Bryndon Bay said the service may be available as early as this summer.

And while a 9 1/2-inch iPad screen may be a little small for reading piano music, chances are consumers will start demanding more virtual sheet music as the format evolves — and that day will likely come sooner rather than later. People like their iDevices, and their attention spans aren't getting any longer. As Musiquip Product Manager Erik Lind said, "With these iDevices being one-stop shops for so many functions, so much information, I think we're seeing to some extent a reduction in attention span, patience, etc. towards anything that *doesn't* fit into the iDevice realm." **MI**

— Zach Phillips

★ IDEVICE ADD-ONS & APPS



RapcoHorizon iBLOX This instrument interface lets users connect a guitar, bass or keyboard to an iDevice. It has a headphone jack and clip for attaching to a belt or strap. MSRP: \$49.99. rapcohorizon.com



Alesis iO Dock In essence, the iO Dock turns an iPad into a recording system. It offers two XLR/TRS inputs with phantom power. MSRP: \$399. alesis.com

Apogee Mike Standing roughly as tall as an iPhone, this compact studio-quality USB mic was designed specifically for iDevices and Macs. It's made to record everything from vocals to percussion. apogeedigital.com



IK Multimedia iRig Mic A handheld condenser microphone for iPhone, iPod touch and iPad for quality audio and vocal recordings on the go. MSRP: \$59.99. ikmultimedia.com



Line 6 MIDI Mobilizer "With lots of great apps already available and more being released all the time, MIDI Mobilizer is the most affordable way to turn your Apple mobile device into a complete studio," said Line 6's Marc Block. MSRP: \$99.99. line6.com

Primacoustic Telepad "These allow the devices to be mounted on a mic stand for easy viewing," said Primacoustic's Peter Janis. "Because they employ a ball joint and adjustable tube clamp, you can adjust the viewing angle to suit." MSRP: \$35. primacoustic.com



PreSonus StudioLive Remote This free iPad app offers wireless control of any PreSonus StudioLive mixer's channels, auxes, effects, subs and Fat Channel processors. presonus.com



iConnectivity iConnectMIDI iConnectMIDI offers plug-and-play capability between any MIDI controller device and iDevice. The unit also takes advantage of multiple new CoreMIDI music apps that let users play, record and jam. MSRP: \$199.99. iconnectivity.com



Akai SynthStation49 This full-featured keyboard is a control for iPad and an iPad performance tool. It works with Akai's SynthStation software and offers direct MIDI recording. MSRP: \$299. akaipro.com

Studio Devil Guitar Amp App A guitar amp simulator that features Studio Devil's popular amp modeling algorithms for the ultimate in guitar tone. It's available at the iTunes store. studiodevil.com



Musiquip prime-Vibe "[It] connects to an iPod and breaks in a guitar, violin or other wood-based instrument by vibrating user-selected music into the soundboard," said Musiquip's Erik Lind. musiquip.com

IK Multimedia AmpliTube iRig A best-selling guitar and bass input device for iPhone, iPod touch or iPad that lets users jam anywhere. The unit comes with AmpliTube Free software. MSRP: \$39.99. ikmultimedia.com



Peavey AmpKit LiNK This box interfaces a guitar with an iDevice, so users can take advantage of the AmpKit app. The app features quality tones and the CrossTalk Eliminator to eliminate feedback. MSRP: \$39.99. peavey.com

K&M iPad Holder This unit can clamp onto most any stand, and the Prismatic Clamp offers a wide swing range, making it possible for every user to get his or her desired position. The swing movement can be adjusted to swing easily or be held firmly in place. k-m.de



...THE RETRO RESURGENCE



Cory Lake

The retro-inspired gear craze has left MI customers rockin' like it's 1950

They just don't make them like they used to.

This goes for guitars, drums and band instruments. In no uncertain terms, retro-inspired gear has caught the eye of MI consumers. Evidence of this was rampant at the recent NAMM show, where vintage-inspired everything held its own against cutting-edge technology.

"I think the MI trend toward vintage-inspired gear is a reflection of a greater, more general retro-inspired pop culture movement," said Erik Lind, product manager for Musiquip. "Elements of vintage have found their way into music, design, television and film.

"What's interesting, though, is that it's cross-generational. For older consumers, it is largely born out of nostalgia. For younger generations, I think the vintage-is-cool vibe is, at least to some extent, a counterattack on the superficial, fast-paced, disposable mass-marketing aspects of much of today's consumer culture."

An aging baby boomer population has also had a major pull

on the trend. Boomers are looking for something to take them back to the glory days. Vintage-inspired gear and reissues are music retailers' ticket to tap into that nostalgia.

"Every dealer should be addressing this marketing," said John Kelley, general manager of Musiquip. "The trend is undeniable, and to ignore it is self-defeating. Every manufacturer has part of their line dedicated to vintage-esque design. Though I hate to, I quote Nickelback often. In 'Rockstar' they sing, 'I want a new tour bus full of old guitars.' That's what every guitar player wants but can't afford. These new instruments make the dream somewhat accessible."

Now better equipped to afford the gear they couldn't 20 or 30 years ago, boomers are looking for that guitar they ogled over when they were younger.

"[A guitar] with the look and feel of a particular era or icon holds great appeal because it lets players have fun with creating a sense of identity to align themselves with the music and musicians that they admire," said Cory Lake, whose store, American Guitar & Band in Maple Grove, Minn., has had strong success with Fender Relics because they represent iconic rock guitars.

TIMELESS AXES

Dick Boak, artist and public relations director for C.F. Martin, believes musicians gravitate toward vintage guitars partly because of the way the instruments change with age.

"A lot of people think that older guitars are somehow better than newer guitars," Boak said. "Certainly, as guitars get older, they lose some of their moisture, the lacquer cures and they open up. The wood shrinks, and they become lighter and more bal-

RETRO REVIVAL

Budda V-20 The latest amplifiers from Budda, including the V-20, are outfitted with 6V6 power tubes and a special thick alternative voicing for mid-tone control that boosts the mid frequencies, giving the tone added cut and presence in the mix. budda.com



Seymour Duncan 35th Anniversary Commemorative JB Model, Jazz Model Pickups "The 35th anniversary commemorative JB model and Jazz models are wound the same as when we first introduced them as production models in late 1970s," said Seymour Duncan's Bill Leigh. seymourduncan.com



Ludwig Legacy Kits Ludwig's Legacy kits take players back in time with not only their sound but also their look. These custom-built American-made drums feature hand-selected North American hardwoods and a core ply of premium poplar, which yields warmth and resonance. ludwig-drums.com



Paiste Formula 602 The reintroduced Paiste Formula 602 series includes the same sound and looks as the original. The cymbals are made by hand from the original Swiss CuSn20 bronze using traditional methods that have remained unchanged over the past half century. paiste.com



Cannonball Vintage Reborn Series "Cannonball has taken the sound and feel of vintage horns and included modern keyword, such as the capability to play the front high F key by tilting the index finger rather than having to lift it," said Cannonball's Sheryl Laukat. cannonballmusic.com



P. Mauriat PMXA-67RCL, PMXT66-RCL P. Mauriat's latest vintage line includes both an alto, PMXA-67RCL, and a tenor, PMXT66-RCL (pictured). The saxophones blend both a vintage look and sound with modern mechanics and feature rolled tones holes. pmauriatmusic.com

Reverend Pete Anderson Model Reverend Guitars partnered with Grammy winner Pete Anderson for its first hollow body. The guitar features a retro look, satin finish and vintage appointments. reverendguitars.com



Gretsch Renown57 "Gretsch's new imported Renown57 kit is not based on a vintage set or piece of gear but on vintage auto," said Dale's Drum Shop's Rej Troup. "It's generating a lot of interest and definitely has a 'wow' factor." MSRP: \$3,010. gretschdrums.com



Fender Road Worn Series This line includes the Road Worn Player series Stratocaster, Road Worn Player series Stratocaster HSS and Road Worn Player series Telecaster. All three models feature an alder body with a lightly worn lacquer finish, a three-ply pickguard and aged knobs. MSRP: \$1,199.99. fender.com

Tanglewood Sundance Historic Series "A collection of solid-top acoustics designed in a traditional, understated 1940s style, the guitars feature an antique amber finish and vintage-style chrome tuners," said Musiquip's Erik Lind. tanglewoodguitars.co.uk



The Music Link The Loar LO-16 The LO-16 combines a solid top and small body style with a vintage vibe. The guitar is available in both a natural and classic black finish with ivory-colored body binding and a vintage-style white pickguard. theloar.com



Martin D-18GE Golden Era The Golden Era D-18 recreation instrument is modeled after the D-18 models made circa 1934. The soundboard and interior bracing features Adirondack red spruce. martinguitar.com



anced, adding to their appeal.”

For Martin, Boak said the plethora of vintage-inspired instruments was spurred on by its custom shop in the early 1980s.

“We began to see custom orders coming through for the same types of models over and over again,” Boak said. “They were basically recreations of our own guitars from the pre-war era, or the Golden Era, as [Martin] trademarked it.”

In addition to its custom shop, Martin offers many vintage models, including the D18 Golden Era, which includes an Adirondack spruce soundboard like those used on pre-war Martins.

Affordability gives consumers another reason to turn to retro-inspired gear and reissues when looking for a vintage fix.

“People are more interested

in the vintage market now more than ever,” said Ashley Atz, PR manager for The Music Link, which offers vintage models in its Recording King and The Loar guitar lines.

“However, not everyone can afford to buy a guitar from the 1950s, but many still recognize that vintage instruments are prized for their sound and build quality. The modern manufacturer’s response has been to build instruments that are true-to-spec reproductions of those classic instruments.”

Bobby Boyles, owner of Oklahoma Vintage Guitar in El Reno, Okla., agreed that affordability is a major selling point for inspired gear.

“For us, promoting the vintage-based new products is easy because we are Okla-

homa Vintage Guitar,” Boyles said. “People come to us from around the world to see vintage, and we show them both. Lots of times, they buy the vintage-inspired items because they have the look they like and the sound they like but also the price they like.”

Cost aside, getting customers to play the guitars and honing in on their vintage qualities and components are ways American Guitar & Band’s Lake approaches selling vintage-inspired pieces.

“We insist on getting guitars into people’s hands,” he said. “If someone wants to buy a guitar that looks identical to a vintage instrument, we focus on the design details and explain exactly what features are the same as the original and which elements are updates.”

ICONIC SKINS

The drum industry has been ahead of the curve in the vintage market. Most manufacturers have always offered a vintage set or vintage finish in their lines.

“Ludwig, for example, has never gone away,” said Rej Troup of Dale’s Drum Shop in Harrisburg, Pa. “It’s hard to get a more vintage-inspired drum set than its Classic Maple or Legacy kit in a vintage wrap.”

Gretsch Drums also continues to turn out vintage shells every year. “Having something classic and vintage is different,” said John Palmer, product manager for Gretsch Drums. “It’s been so far removed in many cases that it looks like it is a fresh perspective.”

Gretsch recently released its Renown57 kit, which incorpo-

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rates such iconic car design elements as a Motor City blue finish, an aluminum triangular teardrop painted white with raised beveled chrome edges and an embossed chrome Gretsch logo, resembling the “hood ornament.”

“Gretsch drums are so based in history and are so respectful of history,” Palmer said. “Our drums are revered from the 1950s and before. So, we really keep our recipe for vintage drums the same.”

Paiste Cymbals has a similar recipe. In 1996, it introduced the Traditionals line, which included cymbals that recreated historic sounds. In 2005, it reintroduced its Giant Beat and, in 2011, its Formula 602. Ed Clift, vintage product manager for Paiste America, said he believes keeping adequate stock

levels is important for selling these products.

“Keep stock levels at one to show, one to go,” he said.

RETRO HORNS

The retro-inspired trend has stretched to band instruments, as well. Saxophones that feature retro lacquer finishes and vintage sounds have always had a strong following, but lately, suppliers have seen a rise in interest.

“Perhaps it is that we want something unique and different than the modern and trendy,” said Sheryl Laukat, CEO of Cannonball, manufacturer of the Vintage Reborn series, which improves on the intonation of its original vintage horns.

Kerry Klingborg, general manager for Antigua Winds,

which recently released the Antigua Pro Saxophone 4240 with antique finishes, stressed that display is critical to selling vintage horns, for example, at the front of the store or mixed in with the biggest sellers.

“Have it in stock,” Klingborg said. “It’s been a trend to clear the shelves in past years. I think as the economy recovers, the built-up demand is important because if people don’t find it in your store they’ll find it elsewhere.”

NOSTALGIA’S A FUNNY THING

Creating a display that takes customers back in time can be a powerful merchandising technique. “Use the power of context and nostalgia,” said Justin Norvell, product director for Fender. “Placing a ’52 Tele on the wall by itself is one thing.

“Dress the display up with iconic photos of key artists playing similar-looking models and you create context where you are tapping into a more emotional and aspiration place with the consumer.”

American Guitar & Band’s Lake mentioned that nostalgia connects musicians to history.

“There are two major types that come in [looking for vintage gear],” he said. “There are those that want a vintage instrument but may not have the money and those that like the look and enjoy being connected to something nostalgic.

“Whether a guitar is replicated with great attention to detail or dreamt up through an idealized sense of the past, it is a way to access musical history.” **MI**

—Katie Kailus

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Scott Maxwell

EVERYTHING AMPS

At the risk of sounding like his father, Jerry Perron said kids these days have it easy.

The owner of The Music Center in Brunswick, Maine, recalled his middle school years and the discovery of the Boss DS-1 distortion pedal. At the time, it was a techno marvel and let him sound like Ace Frehley. But nowadays, new guitarists have a plethora of sounds and effects at their fingertips to help them explore

Guitar amps have evolved into all-in-one tone machines, recording studios and learning tools

tone and learn music — all of which Perron believes speeds up the learning process.

“If you wanted to get an echo, you had to get a separate pedal,” Perron said. “It’s pretty amazing [with current amps] to go from a Fender Twin sound and switch the button and it sounds like a [Marshall] JCM800. The emulations have gotten so close.”

And tone modeling of vintage tube amps is just one of many features found on today’s amps. Such units as the Fender G-Dec and Line 6 Spider Jam offer robust built-in added value, including on-board CD-quality

recording capabilities, USB connectivity to access bundled recording and educational software, sharing abilities, and hundreds of effects and artist presets.

“People wanting electronic products that have a tremendous amount of functionality is a big deal in our lives today,” said Shane Nicholas, senior product manager for Fender’s amp division. “A large section of our consumer base that wants to buy a guitar amplifier is not satisfied anymore with an amp

with three knobs on it and a fuzz box. But given our history, we still have a large segment that wants to buy tweed and Black-face tube amps from us because of the great music that has been made with them. The trick is to keep that historic flame alive but also realize that everyone has a cell phone in his or her pocket that takes photos and holds music and show that we're not afraid of technology."

ROBUST TEACHING TOOL

Scott Maxwell, store manager of Reno's Music in Fishers, Ind., said this new generation of amps offers great teaching tools that let fledgling musicians explore sounds without having to spend a fortune on pedals.

"A lot of beginners might not know what a lot of the effects are," he said. "They now have them at their disposal with these new amps, so they get to learn how a tremolo differentiates from a flanger. They're learning about all of the effects, and that goes toward building trust with the customer. After a couple of years when someone is in his first band and wants a stage amp, he knows what specific pedals he's going to want at that point."

Maxwell added that his company's big in performance-based education and has advocated Hal Leonard's Play-Along series. When the publisher teamed up with manufacturers, such as Fender and Roland, to make the Play-Along books compatible with their amps, Reno's outfitted its seven guitar rooms and larger classroom with Fender G-Decs.

"The two of them joining forces was a perfect match for us," Maxwell said. "The Play-Along books come with SD cards loaded with songs and the appropriate tone. It changes the student's whole experience of

'The G-Dec has been a big help in launching some of our classes and group lessons.'

— **Scott Maxwell**

learning to play. No matter what the student might be playing, you can adjust the tempo. It makes the learning process more efficient, so they progress faster and it's more fun.

"The G-Dec has been a big help in launching some of our classes and group lessons. They're essentially little rock bands, and the G-Dec is a big part of their personal practice and getting the material together. It brings in more teaching revenue, which is more and more important for everyone."

NOT JUST FOR STUDENTS

John Rosborough, owner of U Sound of Music in Kokomo, Ind., said students aren't the only demographic benefiting from the G-Decs and Spider Jams of the world. These amps also open up new opportunities for amateur recordists and guitarists in bands.

"It gives the enthusiast the opportunity of going to a computer and layering and putting down tracks, so they can make their own CDs," Rosborough said. "It's very helpful to have bandmates who are learning a new song to be able to hear a product that they can put together and rehearse off of."

Pinkston Music in Gulfport, Miss., caters to the \$795-and-under market and sells 30-40 Line 6 Spider IV 15s per month to entry-level players. But ac-

*** ALL-IN-ONE AMPS**

Fender G-Dec This amp includes USB connectivity for high-quality, low-latency audio output and for engaging the Fender Fuse software application. This allows for on-screen parameter control, deep editing, unlimited preset storage, online preset swapping with the Fender Fuse community and free Fender artist presets. fender.com



Line 6 Spider Jam The Spider Jam offers more than 350 artist-created and song-based presets, 12 original amp models, seven Smart Control FX, and more than 100 endless jam tracks by session musicians. The looper features up to 24 minutes of CD-quality recording time, and the Spider Jam offers a mini stereo MP3/CD input. line6.com

Vox JamVox This package lets users import their MP3/iTunes libraries or favorite CD tracks. Using proprietary technology by Korg, guitarists can extract solo guitar parts or reduce and essentially mute guitar parts from any prerecorded track. Plus, guitarists can then record their own guitar performances. voxamps.com



Roland AC-33 The amp's on-board phrase looper lets users record and loop up to 40 seconds at a time. Users can jam over guitar riffs or incoming audio from the aux input. The AC-33 also offers battery-power capability, running on AC power or eight AA batteries. rolandus.com

Orange OPC This unit is a PC housed in an Orange cabinet. It boasts stereo twin JBL 6 1/2-inch speakers, an Intel i3-540 3.06 GHz Dual Core processor with 4 GB of RAM, a 500-GB hard drive and a slot-loading DVR drive. The OPC comes preloaded with software, including the Orange Edition of PreSonus Studio One. orangeopc.com





Jerry Perron

According to owner Jim Pinkston, seasoned players 30 and over usually go for the Spider Jam.

“They’re married, they’ve got two kids, they’re not 23 anymore with a bunch of guys coming over to drink beers and jam, but they still want to play guitar,” he said. “It’s \$400. It has a recording studio where you can plug a microphone into it, a keyboard, a bass — anything you want to with an endless loop station.”

Reno’s Music’s Maxwell also said he often sees tone connoisseurs choose G-Decs and Spider Jams. “A seasoned player who knows stage volume knows why they want a ’65 Deluxe Reverb instead of a modeled version,” he said. “But even a seasoned player like that could be swayed when they say, ‘Well, this is

just for rehearsal, practicing or composing.’ Then they look at all the other sounds, software and everything that you can do with it. There are many reasons why they might prefer it. Plus, it’s less expensive.”

At The Music Center, Perron said working musicians regularly come in who play in cover bands. Over the course of a gig, they can cover ground from Skid Row to The Beatles to Alanis Morissette.

“Nothing beats having the real thing, and it would be great to own 30 amps from the vintage market,” Perron said. “But it’s not like it used to be where you had a rack full of different processors. Everything is all in one unit.”

And for a robust recording experience, musicians will soon have to look no further than Or-

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ange's OPC, which is essentially a PC built into an amplifier cabinet. The OPC features a 500-GB hard drive, Intel 3.06 GHz Dual Core processor, 4 GB of RAM, wired ethernet and Wi-Fi, and twin JBL 6 1/2-inch speakers housed in an Orange cabinet. It also comes preloaded with more than \$1,000 of software, including the Orange Edition of PreSonus Studio One.

The OPC has generated interest outside the MI industry — guitarist Tiago Della Vega demonstrated the OPC's power and broke his own world record for fastest guitar playing at January's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas — but Orange has dubbed the amp the "musician's personal computer."

"More people are getting on-

line, and in the digital age, music is way more accessible with the launches of sites like MySpace and YouTube, along with MP3 sharing," said Charlie Cooper, Orange OPC project leader. "Sharing music is much easier to do. It's much more important now that everything you create is available digitally. With studio rates getting more and more expensive, more people are turning to home recording. It makes sense to have an all-in-one unit that simplifies the entire process."

DON'T OVERWHELM

With so many features, these amps can easily overwhelm customers. Perron recently visited a chain store and said he saw a salesman bombarding a customer with information unrelated to

a question about how George Harrison got his tone.

"Learn the product, but be able to read the customer," Perron said. "When the customer comes in and asks, 'Why do I want this amp?,' show them it's because it can give them the sound they want. Dial it in right away or get close. After they goof off for 5 or 10 minutes, that's when you can jump in and say they haven't even opened up the hood of the car yet.

"When you take that route, by the time you're done talking, the customer isn't overwhelmed. If you overwhelm someone, they shut down and get the deer-in-the-headlights look. But if you get them interested, the amp is going to sell itself in a few minutes."

Rosborough stressed that dealers need to be polished when

demonstrating these amplifiers, but they also allow him to take off his salesman's hat.

"Put about eight bars of some well-known songs together really quickly, and then put the guitar in their hands and say, 'Take off,'" he explained. "When you hit a button and it sounds like one of your favorite artists, you're instantly gravitated to practice more and learn more songs. Once you get someone passionate and excited about sharing music they have made themselves, they are going to grow as a musician.

"That's what these amplifiers bring. It's not only a polished sound, but it's a learning tool. And that's why we're in this business — to help these players get to the next level." **MI**

— Jeff Cagle

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THE ULTIMATE ADD-ON

A consistently strong accessory, tuners are gaining more traction than ever with new brands, models and features

It's something every musician needs and something every music retailer can sell: the almighty tuner.

It has add-on power that makes it a sure-fire sale. And the recent surge in new brands, models and features has grown the market, which features tuners in every price range for every player.

"Nearly every dealer has a customer for tuners," said Joe Gilmartin, tuner product manager for Korg USA. "Tuners are an excellent high-margin attachment sale for a very broad customer base. Plus, as players gain experience, we find they graduate to more advanced tuner products. Our most successful dealers stock a variety of tuner formats and price points."

"Regardless of the type of instrument, players today use tuners," said Brian Vance, D'Addario's manager of product management. "Combo stores, band and orchestra dealers, even drum shops all should stock tuners, especially if you have lessons. Based on the types of customers or musicians a store attracts, there should be a mix of stand-alone, clip-ons, metronome tuners and pedal tuners to meet the various needs of your customers."

CLIP-ON CRAZE

Gone are the days of balancing bulky tuners on your knee. In the past year, the market for clip-on tuners has doubled, according to Vance. The simplicity and compactibility of these models have made them hot sellers and ideal for musicians on the go.

"[Clip-ons] are huge items," said Myrna Sislen, owner of Middle C Music in Washington, D.C. "I sell boxes of them every week, close to about 30 or 40. They are a really,



really easy and important way for people to enjoy their instruments."

Sislen said the Crafter TG-200H, which retails for \$24.95, is a strong seller. The tuner offers a microphone and bright screen that features an orange-green color scheme when going from out of tune to in tune.

For a music lessons-based operation like Sislen's, tuners can also help strengthen relationships with teachers.

"Retailers have quickly gained the support of teachers through tuners," said Joe

Arias, vice president and general manager of Crafter. "Giving a student, or any beginner, the ability to tune quickly and accurately focuses more lesson time on making music."

Neil Lilien of Meisel Accessories, maker of the MCT-8L clip-on, said the small, portable size of such tuners adds to their appeal, especially for traveling and gigging musicians.

"Clip-on tuners are hot because of their easy-to-store size, speed, accuracy and reasonable price," Lilien said. "Many are equipped

with a built-in microphone in addition to the vibration sensor.”

CLIP-ON, CLIP-OFF

Pitching a tuner doesn't require special tricks or selling tactics. Ray Aleshire, purchasing department manager for Lansing, Mich.-based Elderly Instruments, uses his store's website and customer e-mail lists to promote the category.

“We include tuners in our usual e-mails to our customers whenever [tuners] are on sale, which is fairly often,” Aleshire said. “Also, we list them as featured items and as suggested add-ons for most instruments on our website.”

Aleshire also makes sure to cross-promote tuners alongside instruments on the show floor.

“The tuners we actually use to tune our instruments are in our showroom,” he said.

Keeping instruments on the floor in tune is essential to value-added retail, and keeping tuners near those instruments lets customers see firsthand how the tuners function.

“Having well-tuned instruments hanging from the walls sells more instruments,” said Chris Labriola, designer for Peterson Electro-Musical Products. “When a customer tries an instrument, the first strum can determine whether they keep playing it or if it goes back on the wall.

“When a salesperson tunes a new instrument before casing it up for a customer, it reinforces the important role of a tuner in

‘Clip-on tuners are hot because of their easy-to-store size, speed and accuracy.’

— Neil Lilien

assuring that the instrument always plays and sounds at its full potential. At that moment, a tuner is as easy of an add-on as is the case.”

Bobby Boyles, owner of Oklahoma Vintage Guitar in El Reno, Okla., carries a tuner around in his pocket.

“It's just so easy to keep in my pocket now, and anytime someone wants to try a guitar, banjo or mandolin, I clip the tuner on the instrument and tune it for the customer,” he said. “This becomes a subtle sales demonstration of the tuner, and I just close with, ‘By the way, this tuner model is only \$19.99 this month.’ This gives me a tuner sale a high percentage of the time, even if we don't sell the guitar.”

Snark Tuners' Steve Ridinger suggested using sales staff as clip-on models.

“Store employees can attach one to a name badge or clothing, and when a customer asks to try an instrument, such as a guitar, the employee can hand them the tuner and suggest they tune it before playing it,” Ridinger said.

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SIX STRINGS, ONE STONE

For the musician who wants a faster tuning system, polyphonic tuning now lets players tune all strings at once.

TC Electronic's Polytune burst onto the scene last year, giving musicians the opportunity to tweak their tunings easily by strumming all six strings at once. DigiTech's answer to polyphonic tuning, the HardWire HT-6, was introduced at this past NAMM convention. It includes a player-intuitive display that features 90 LEDs, 15 per string, so users can quickly see which strings need to be tuned.

"With the introduction of a new type of tuning technology and products that let players tune all six strings at once, the market is beginning to change,"

'When polyphonic tuners were introduced, tuner sales began to shift away from big brands.'

— Scott Klimt

said Scott Klimt, marketing manager for DigiTech. "For years, the tuner pedal market had been dominated by two or three different brands. When polyphonic tuners were introduced in 2010, tuner sales began to shift away

from those big brands."

Klimt stressed that these polyphonic tuner pedals are ideal for gigging musicians.

"Once customers realized for the same price they could get more features in a product that is easier to use without sacrificing quality, polyphonic tuners began to take market share away from the biggest established brands," Klimt said.

IREVOLUTION-PROOF

With the iRevolution in full swing, free iPhone, iPod and iPad tuner apps have flooded the market. Nevertheless, many manufacturers and retailers don't view them as a threat.

"The fallout I've seen from tuner apps is people coming in and saying, 'I tried that tuner app,

and it sucks,'" Middle C Music's Sisen said. "So I have not had people saying they don't need a tuner because they can do it on their phone. They may try it on their phone for a little bit, but they come in and buy a tuner after that. [Physical] tuners are much, much easier to use and much better."

With technology continuously advancing the way business is done, tuners are a staple that continue to sell.

"The first millionaire in California during the gold rush wasn't a prospector," DigiTech's Klimt said. "It was the guy selling shovels."

"Every miner has to have a shovel, and every guitar player has to have a tuner." **MI**

— Katie Kailus

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* TUNER TIME



Barcus-Berry Sync Clip-On This unit features an illuminated LCD display and two tuning modes. It boasts fully adjustable clip-on mounting with silica gel clip pads to protect the instrument. The unit also includes five tuning selections, including chromatic, guitar, bass, violin and ukulele. MSRP: \$39.95. [\[barcusberry.com\]](http://barcusberry.com)



Crafter TG-200H "This is a great product at a great price," said Middle C Music's Myrna Sisen. "You can't say 'no' to it. A pitch pipe costs almost as much as this tuner does. It's small, inexpensive and, most of all, it works. I've sold boxes of these." MSRP: \$24.95. [\[crafterusa.com\]](http://crafterusa.com)



SHS Tune Tech Orb The company's new Orb tuner was named for its simple ergonomic shape. Features include in-tune color changing, one-button configuration, 360-degree viewing and a scratch-resistant rubberized finish. MSRP: \$14.99. [\[shsint.net\]](http://shsint.net)



John Hornby Skewes SpongeBob SquarePants Clip-On Tuner SpongeBob SquarePants even has his own tuner: the SBT01. This clip-on is fully chromatic and clips easily to any instrument. With a full 12-note range, the SBT01 lets users tune any instrument and features a blue backlit LCD display for any angle. [\[jhs.co.uk\]](http://jhs.co.uk)



Peterson Tuners "The StrobStomp Classic is the newest pedal tuner in the Peterson line," said Peterson's Chris Labriola. "Offering 1/10th-cent accuracy, an extremely rugged build and a built-in active D1 XLR output, this pedal tuner is perfect for the regularly gigging guitarist or bassist." MSRP: \$69. [\[petersontuners.com\]](http://petersontuners.com)

TC Electronic Polytune

Polytune provides a quick overview of the pitch of all strings — ideal for live settings and gigs, where it's essential to tune quickly. It features 17 LEDs, which offer super-bright, focused color to ensure optimal visibility. [\[tcelectronic.com\]](http://tcelectronic.com)



Korg AW-2 The universal clip-on chromatic tuner attaches directly to any wind, brass or string instrument. A double ball joint allows for multiangle positioning with greater mobility for the display. An energy-saving auto mode automatically switches to the low-power soft mode when no sound is present. [\[korg.com\]](http://korg.com)



DigiTech HardWire HT-6 Polyphonic

This polyphonic tuner features a large LED display that uses 90 LEDs to show the tuning status of each string. It boasts five different tuning modes and true hardwire bypass that guarantees the pedal won't affect the tone when off. [\[digitech.com\]](http://digitech.com)



Planet Waves Tru-Strobe

Daddy's Junky Music's Lew Ditommaso praised this pedal tuner's heavy-duty construction, adding that it has "a huge display that is extremely stable and easy to read in both darkened and lit rooms." [\[planetwaves.com\]](http://planetwaves.com)



Snark SN-1 "They work great, the tracking is fast and accurate, and they are easy to use with a variety of useful features," said Elderly Instruments' Ray Aleshire. "They are very affordable. Plus, they look cool and have a very catchy name." [\[snarktuners.com\]](http://snarktuners.com)



Cherub Technology Metro-Tuners

Cherub's entry-level tuner and metronome line now includes three clip-ons and two Metro-Tuners. They use proprietary software to make tuning quick and accurate. [\[cherubtechnology.com\]](http://cherubtechnology.com)



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DIGITAL REACTION

New FCC regulations and enhanced feature sets spell increased demand for digital wireless systems

Kevin Peckham



News flash, analog wireless system manufacturers: Guitar players don't want to break up. They just need some space.

"Analog wireless microphones are still using 75-year-old FM radio technology," said Don Boomer, wireless sales engineer for Line 6. "The same system that's in your car is what's being used for analog wireless mics."

That said, digital wireless isn't exactly a newcomer to the wireless category either. Many of the systems exhibited at The NAMM Show 2011 were actually second- and third-generation models of decade-old products. But times and technologies are changing, and recent actions by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) have convinced music retailers to revisit the market. And it's a broad market, with a wide spectrum of users.

"Usage is no longer a casual one-size-fits-all decision," said Kevin Peckham, product manager for Full Compass of Madison, Wis. "Factors of application, locality, confidentiality of program material, duration of use and sonic performance must all be carefully weighed to make an optimum choice of product."

SPACE INVADERS

Super Wi-Fi, broadband, smartphones — these aren't just 21st century buzzwords. According to Boomer, these dominant consumer technology forces will be responsible for the death of analog wireless altogether. And this isn't the only area where the wireless industry's seeing changes.

"The spectrum is getting

crowded with digital television stations because the stations that were in the 700 MHz band moved down to the remaining TV band,” said Chris Lyons, manager of technical and educational communications at Shure. “The bus is getting a little bit more crowded, and there are more people who want to get on the bus.”

In turn, manufacturers have taken a second look at other parts of the spectrum.

“Digital is a good alternative to UHF,” said Ryan Clement, general manager and vice president of Grandma’s Music & Sound in Albuquerque, N.M. “Just looking ahead, digital seems to offer better sound quality and less chance of FCC-related issues.”

He added that informing consumers of recent changes is the most effective way to promote and sell the category.

Digital wireless also eliminates region-to-region interference inconveniences. Peckham said Full Compass markets to “those who must operate with extremely high reliability in different locations,” such as touring bands. Here, digital is a godsend for music retailers looking to limit the number of SKUs in their wireless sector. This goes for online dealers with national customer bases, too.

“One thing that’s nice about [digital wireless] is that there are fewer SKUs to stock,” Lyons said. “The same SKU, the same unit, is sellable to customers throughout North and South America. With the analog system, when somebody calls, you have to say, ‘OK, where are you? You’re in Denver? You need this particular SKU? And let’s hope that dealer has one in stock.’”

TONE GENERATORS

With the digital wireless market coming of age,

several retailers are targeting the most unexpected users of all: instrumentalists. This group often finds the category particularly attractive due to digital wireless’ lack of companding technology.

“We’re focusing on customers who have a need for improved wireless sound quality — guitar players, vocalists, presenters have been the most receptive,” said GC Pro Senior Account Manager Dan Scalpone, who discussed the Shure PGXD as a popular, versatile piece. “For an additional \$50 cost from the analog version, you receive an easy-to-use, clear-sounding unit.”

Josh Snyder, pro audio department manager at Drome Sound in Schenectady, N.Y., explained that instruments are characterized by a larger range of high and low frequencies than vocals. He said he believes digital wireless better emphasizes these differences. And he, like many retailers, abides by a what-you-play-is-what-you-get mantra when selling the category. This grabs the interest of guitar and bass players coveting the uncompromised tone of their axes, as opposed to a more processed sound.

“Guitar players are usually very particular about their tone,” Snyder said.

“With guitar, you get a better transparency, you get more clarity,” Lyons said, adding that he emphasizes the improved dynamic range and lower noise floor when selling digital wireless

systems. “It results in a more realistic, lifelike rendition of the sound.”

According to Snyder, the digital component isn’t even the biggest selling point. When qualifying a guitarist, for instance, he mentions the cable modeling feature of the Line 6 Relay G30, which lets users dial in preferred cable length.

Lectrosonics Director of Business Development Karl Winkler said his company has had tremendous success with “general purpose” systems. Still, he mentioned that the Quadra digital in-ear monitoring feature gives the system unique selling power.

Boomer added that foolproof sync-and-scan functions make digital wireless extremely profitable for MI rental outfits.

“You send these things out to schoolteachers, and you don’t



John Nady

‘Looking ahead, digital seems to offer better sound quality and less chance of FCC-related issues.’

— Ryan Clement

have to have any more ability than to turn it on,” Boomer said.

PICK YOUR BATTLES

Digital wireless isn’t for everyone, though. According to Lectrosonics’ Winkler, music retailers must evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each

*** DIGITAL WIRELESS**

Brace Audio DWG-1000 Brace is a relative up-and-comer, but its DWG-1000 guitar system has been revered by music retailers and audio aficionados alike. It has 2.4-GHz frequency operation, and the system can accompany up to 12 systems at once. The unit features 10–15 kHz frequency response and an all auto channel lock system for minimal dropouts. braceaudio.com



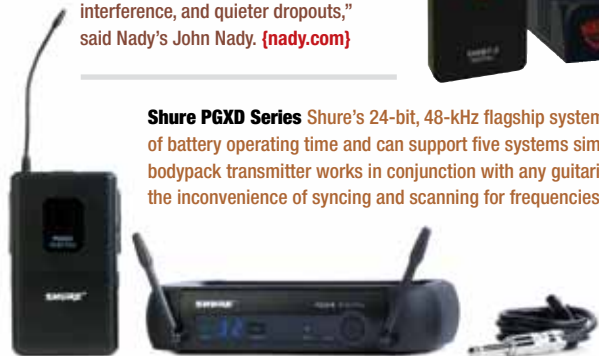
Line 6 XD-V70 Wireless Microphone Essential for cable-free flexibility, Line 6's anti-jamming technology prevents dropout and interference. Operating in the 2.4 GHz range, the XD-V70 features six microphone models, letting vocalists channel the tones of their favorite mics. "With its tone modeling and engineering capabilities, it really gives you a lot in its price range," said Drome Sound's Josh Snyder. line6.com



Nady DW-2 Set to ship this spring, Nady's DW-2 brings the digital wireless phenomenon to consumers at an affordable price point. "[The DW-2] offers the key advantages of digital wireless: ease of setup and operation, less potential interference, and quieter dropouts," said Nady's John Nady. nady.com



Shure PGXD Series Shure's 24-bit, 48-kHz flagship system offers 10 hours of battery operating time and can support five systems simultaneously. The bodypack transmitter works in conjunction with any guitarist's rig and forgoes the inconvenience of syncing and scanning for frequencies. shure.com



Line 6 Relay G50 Inspired by the uncompromising tone of a high-quality cable, the Line 6 Relay G50 system offers digital channel lock for interference-free performance. Along with its license-free 2.4-GHz broadcast range and 12-channel selection, the system's Cable Tone Simulator lets users dial in cable length and not have to mess with amplifier tone settings. The pedalboard receiver lets players activate the system straight from their setup. line6.com



Lectrosonics Quadra Lectrosonics stretches the boundaries of in-ear monitoring technology with the versatile Quadra system, which operates in the 902–928 MHz band with 1-millisecond latency. With multiple knob and channel configurations, users can tailor the system settings to their own liking. The M4R belt pack diversity receiver and M4T half-rack transmitter also combine four channels for intuitive, real-time operation. lectrosonics.com



system for effective sell-through.

"Considering any wireless mic, whether it be analog or digital, as a perfect product for everyone will backfire," Winkler said.

For example, digital wireless is ill-suited to large groups because only a limited number of systems can run simultaneously. Wireless' significant church and theater group consumer base might leave retailers feeling conflicted.

"If you're a theater group and you need 15 or 20 systems onstage, then obviously [five channels] are not enough," Lyons said. "So for some people, it's an absolute blessing, and for others, it might not be suitable."

'The emerging new digital wireless category creates a buzz, which can spur sales.'

— John Nady

Still, retailers can effectively promote the digital wireless category without fear of returns. As Peckham explained, just ask questions.

"Are you operating in crowded RF environments?" he said. "Are you plagued with performance issues? How many channels of wireless do you need? What is the minimum battery life you can tolerate?"

"The answers will either point toward or away from digital solutions."

According to Nady Systems CEO John Nady, point-of-purchase materials and "proactive salesmanship" are tried-and-true marketing methods. He also suggested that retailers stock their stores based on price point and offer value systems along with high-end performers.

"New technology is always attractive to customers, as it implies progress and better performance," Nady said. "As with the introduction of UHF 20 years ago, the emerging new digital wireless category creates a buzz, which spurs sales and can entice consumers to upgrade their equipment."

"With increased sales will come technical improvements and better pricing, hence better value, and digital wireless will become a more significant part of the wireless mic market." **MI**

— Hilary Brown



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Craig Merrick

THE HOBBYIST DJ

DJs are the new rock stars. Everybody wants to be one.

Look no further than the popularity of electronic music. Rock bands are recruiting onstage scratchers. *DJ Hero* has become a household name. It's a driving force in today's mass media, and music enthusiasts are forgoing the ax in favor of the turntable. Vestax Associate Product Manager Joe Jack Giocopelli even called the DJ sector "the fastest growing segment in the music industry," and he's not alone.

"The digital DJ market is exploding right now," said Michael Parker, segment and

The entry-level DJ market has exploded, and suppliers are meeting demand with inexpensive, all-inclusive products

planning manager for retail at Avid. "We're seeing compounded annual growth rates of over 40 percent."

However, DJ manufacturers have fallen victim to another sign of the times: the faltering economy. Entry-level hobbyists are seeking to get their feet wet in the burgeoning DJ mainstream without substantial investment. They're looking to cut costs without cutting corners.

"Nobody has any money right now," said Bernie Fryman, owner of Audiolines in Chicago. "You can get everything for free. People that want to be DJs aren't DJing with CDs anymore."

It's actually a blessing in disguise for MI dealers. The upsurge in the all-inclusive DJ unit — a hybrid mixer/controller that typically retails for less than \$1,000

— is a welcome addition for retailers and especially for frugal novice scratchers. Neophytes now realize that entry into the world of DJing requires little capital and few repercussions, save for their own computer.

"Having a low cost of entry eliminates one of the barriers for people who are considering being a DJ," said Adam Cohen, director of marketing and business development for Numark. "When people find out that they can actually perform a gig with just a laptop, their digital music library and a controller like the Mixtrack that costs them less than \$150, it can be an eye-opening experience."

SELLING TO THE NON-DJ

For Aaron Rathbone, vice president and general manager of Dirt Cheep Music in Smyrna, Ga., selling all-in-one units means forgoing the word “economical” altogether.

“We present the idea that value is more important than pure economy for the discerning purchaser and then demonstrate the value can exceed the price in our product selection,” he said.

Rathbone said he had tremendous success with the Numark product family in 2010. He attributed the popularity of the company’s Mixtrack controller to its contradictory construction: a compact chassis with a pro-quality feature set.

“DJ customers of all kinds want smaller, lighter, easier and more powerful products,” Rathbone said. “They’re willing to replace the idea of economy if the idea is presented well.”

So what does it mean to sell to a start-up DJ? It means over-emphasizing effortless assembly, particularly when the new DJ is a seasoned instrumentalist looking to integrate the piece into a pre-existing rig. And according to Sweetwater Director of Purchasing John Grabowski, it means giving customers out-of-the-box convenience without sacrificing quality.

“These customers prefer a single integrated DJ system rather than separate components, but they still want well-designed features with solid construction,” Grabowski said.

For Fryman, it also means a lot of hand-holding and troubleshooting. His best-selling product in this range, the Denon DN-MC6000, comes with the Virtual DJ lite software bundle. By installing the latest version of drivers and software free of charge with purchases, Fryman

saves the customer — and himself — an unnecessary stomachache.

“For years, we would charge an upcharge if a guy wanted to install it on a computer,” said Fryman, who now advertises the free service on his website. “Everyone that took it home would



Bernie Fryman



Aaron Rathbone

bring us their laptops in three days and say, ‘I want a refund.’ We wound up having to save the sale and do it anyway. It’s a lot easier to be the hero in the first place. The other thing is if retailers are installing the stuff there’s some value added.”

Fryman advised retailers to discuss controller/mixers with quality sound cards. Though the 96-bit, USB-compatible devices drive much of his business, he said many amateur setups usually aren’t equipped with DJ-appropriate sound cards.

HEAD TO THE PROS

Stanton Group CEO Tim Dowart said having seasoned DJs on staff can better qualify customers — even if they’re non-DJs. Such pros can also keep retailers savvy on the ever-changing advances in the DJ community.

his DJ merchandise to entry-level DJs. At his Glendale, Calif., dealership, newbie misconceptions about gear aren’t uncommon.

“When guys are neophytes or totally unfamiliar with the product, all they have to go by is some friend,” Merrick said. “One guy’s a sculptor and the other guy’s a painter and another guy’s a performance artist. It’s not the same thing. Somebody can be steered onto a product brand or model that’s really good quality but not necessarily for what they want to do. You gotta get the right thing for the right job. A qualified salesperson can separate the hype from what your real needs are.”

Hype isn’t always negative, though. Brian Dillon, marketing director at Pro Audio Star in Brooklyn, N.Y., attributed the success of one of the store’s best-sellers, the Vestax Typhoon, to its reputation among DJs. Employees have ably related the hype to DJ newcomers who were looking for a reputable yet functional unit.

“The Vestax Typhoon was really the trailblazer in this new controller market,” Dillon said. “There was an appeal because the brand has a great boutique following, and Vestax also really represents DJ culture well. People who use Vestax tend to be more creative and into the technology aspect of the product.”

But the advent of digital DJ technology has led to accelerated market changes. Hearsay in the DJ community now travels and dies more quickly.

“What might have previously taken the market three to five years to evolve now happens in one to two,” Dowart said. “It’s critical for retailers to partner with innovative DJ companies like Stanton to sustain category relevance and increase customer accessibility to new technologies.”

Sustaining category relevance

“It is crucial to leverage active and connected DJs that understand the needs of your customers and can offer you valid buying advice,” Dowart said. “Remember that quite a lot of DJ products have crossover relevance to non-DJ shoppers.”

The tightly knit DJ community is fueled by hearsay and brand identity. Newcomers often request a specific piece of gear at the recommendation of someone else. Craig Merrick, owner of Astro Audio Visual Lighting, said he sells nearly 50 percent of

*** DJ STANDOUTS**



Denon DJ DN-MC6000 Denon's four-channel, eight-source contribution to the all-in-one category offers real-time matrix operation for up-to-the-minute response, along with an abundance of MIDI effect controls. It also boasts the company's signature pitch bend keys and large buttons. denondj.com

Native Instruments Traktor Kontrol S4 The company's ergonomic four-channel mixers offer a portable DJing solution for amateur and mobile DJs alike. Compatible with Traktor Pro 2 software, it packs a three-band EQ and a Traktor-to-Xone-style switcher. native-instruments.com



Gemini FirstMix Audiolines' Bernie Fryman qualifies this all-inclusive piece as "inexpensive, but [it] works well enough to launch an entry-level DJ on his career." Newbies can enter into the art of DJing with this two-deck-plus-mixer setup. FirstMix offers two-band EQ, effects control and touch sensitive jog wheels for natural response. geminidj.com

Vestax Typhoon Pro Audio Star's Brian Dillon described the Typhoon as not only a "great value" but one that's representative of DJ culture. "People who use Vestax tend to be more creative and into the technology aspect of that product," Dillon said of the USB-compatible, effects-driven unit. The Typhoon also features monitoring, filtering and songlist control. vestax.com



Numark NS6 "The NS6 should be a killer when it ships," said Dirt Cheap Music's Aaron Rathbone of the anticipated follow-up to Numark's popular NS7. The four-channel, dual-platter unit ups NS7 technology by adding high-definition, 3,600-click-per-rotation jog wheels; zero-latency control; direct access to beat skip; and Strip Search needle position indicators. numark.com

Numark Mixtrack The compact chassis, popular Virtual DJ LE software and mid-section mixer — honing cross and line faders and advanced looping and effects controls — pack big punch into a small package. numark.com



Stanton SCS.3d "With the multitouch sensitive surface and USB connectivity, it affords DJs unlimited mapping options to control their favorite DJ software without the traditional restrictions of assigned knobs and faders," said Stanton's Tim Dowart of the unit. stantondj.com



Pioneer DDJ-S1, DDJ-T1 Unlike its contemporaries, the USB-powered Pioneer DDJ series is compatible with Serato Itch or Traktor Live. Along with tactile two-channel deck control, the system features alphabetic song and search functions, slip mode for tempo-sustaining effects control, and intuitive layout reminiscent of Pioneer's pro DJ rigs. pioneerelectronics.com



also means careful purchasing. Hillary Hirche, owner of The Midi Store in Sedona, Ariz., doesn't take chances when it comes to buying hotly anticipated products.

"The best thing I can offer is buy early," Hirche said. "When a new item comes out and if it has some groundbreaking or very cool new features, it will sell out, and you won't be able to get it if you wait to order. Invariably, if a product is a hit, you can get an initial batch and then go through a long dry spell when there are none around."

GETTING IN TOUCH

DJing's a tactile art, and packaged product won't impress customers seeking realistic turntable response. With all-inclusive units, retailers unanimously agree that thinking "outside the box" is the best approach. They use hands-on displays and customer-accessible merchandising, sometimes even bringing in guest DJs to demo the equipment.

Hirche regularly follows up with customers and conducts surveys to determine in-demand features, be it functionality, warranty or price. At Astro's MixLab, an audio learning center, Merrick offers beginner-level instruction on popular units, such as the Numark NS7. The dealership also hosts in-store DJ competitions, clinics and manufacturer-sponsored networking events.

"Get them something even very basic that they can put their hands on, that they can get creative with, that they can get excited about," Merrick said.

By investing in experienced salespeople and quality merchandise, a retailer's DJ department can flourish. Grabowski cited "sound reinforcement, computer music production, recording and even other musical instruments" as potential add-ons.

Dillon also added that enthusiasm for the entry-level category often catalyzes a first-timer's "love affair with music production."

"A 16-year-old buying his first DJ controller is often embarking on a lifelong career in the music industry," Dillon said. "If we can satisfy him on that purchase, he will likely come back in a few months when he decides he wants some studio monitors or in a year when he needs an interface or keyboard."

Soon enough, Dillon added, "he is outfitting new studio or starting his own venue." **MI**

— Hilary Brown



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PRINT'S BEST-SELLERS

Print's not dead. Far from it.

You wouldn't think so judging from hard-luck headlines about paper and ink — the most public being Borders' bankruptcy announcement last February. But within the music products industry, a subset of retailers keep profiting from carefully pruned print music selections. This includes specialty shops but also full-line brick-and-mortar dealerships that look to print as a cash cow. And the onslaught of e-readers, iDevices and piracy websites doesn't seem to be changing that.

"If print's dying, I'm not seeing it," said Myrna Sislen, who runs Middle C Music, a Washington, D.C., full-line retailer with an emphasis on music lessons. "For us, it's growing. And I am not doing *anything* print-specific to advertise the fact that it's here."

That's not to say certain categories aren't down, or disappearing. DVD sales, for one, have taken a hit due to free online content, as has guitar music. And more than ever before, individual market factors (i.e. school budget cuts) can render one dealer's best-seller another's blow-out stock, even among similar operations with similar customer bases.

So what exactly's selling?

In short, educational product. Lots of it.

PIANO PROFIT CENTER

Educational product, in fact, is the closest thing print has to a recession-proof category. Antonio Ferranti, Alfred Music Publishing's director of sales, said case studies point to this industry backbone actually increasing in sales and volume during tough



Carol Wasson

Surprise! Print music's still alive and well. Here's what's strong and what's trending

times. "Additionally, these are often the categories that have the highest profit margins for the print music retailer."

"In my dealings with music retailers, it's unanimous that educational product is the strongest category," said Kevin Hackinson, vice president of FJH Music. "The reason is because of the longevity of the product."

"Dealers are still commenting that their lesson programs remain strong despite the sluggish economy," said David Jahnke, Hal

Leonard's vice president of sales.

Method books, particularly those with a play-along component, are a perennial best-seller among these dealers, and piano music remains the paragon of the category. Dowling Music's adult piano method sales have quadrupled over the past year, according to Rick Valentine, general manager of the Houston-based print specialty business. He added that Alfred's Adult All-In-One Course is his company's top seller, followed by Faber's Adult Piano Adventures series.

"I think the baby boomers are starting to retire, and many of them are filling their days with a new hobby: music," he said.

Piano methods have been a strong performer for Marcia Stearns, owner of Bookmark Music, a print specialty shop based in Pacific Grove, Calif. She said piano methods make her store attractive to out-of-town

piano teachers who don't live near a brick-and-mortar print seller. Carol Wasson, owner of Wasson Music, a Centerville, Ohio, print and music lessons operation, cited piano method and technique books as her top sellers. And Jason Pachona, manager of Aurora, Ill.-based school music dealer PM Music Center, has observed a rise in his piano method sales, especially the Alfred and Faber titles.

"Now that Hal Leonard is distributing and reissuing the supplemental Faber books, we anticipate stronger sales there due to demand," Pachona said.

Sacred piano music, in particular, is growing. Robin Walenta, president of Coralville, Iowa-based full-line chain West Music, has driven sales in this category via expanded selection and workshop support. Additionally, Wasson reported growth in sacred piano music over the past



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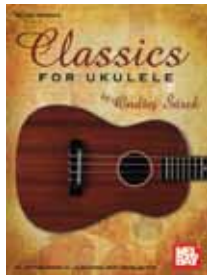
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Carl Fischer I Used To Play Series “We’re seeing a demand for music geared towards someone who hasn’t played their instrument in a long time and they’re deciding to pick it up again,” said Carl Fischer’s Chris Scialfa. “[I Used To Play] includes books for flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, violin and cello geared towards the adult player who wants to pick up their instrument again.” carlfischer.com



Mel Bay Classics For Ukulele Mel Bay compiles 20 famous classical pieces and arranges them for ukulele. Highlights include “Moonlight Sonata,” “Ave Maria,” “Ride Of The Valkyries” and “Hungarian Dance No. 4.” melbay.com

Hal Leonard 100 Greatest Songs Of Rock & Roll “I cannot keep that book in the store,” said Middle C Music’s Myrna Sislen. “The teachers love them. It’s got great songs. It’s well-printed. The setup is good. And if you don’t play very well, it has the chord symbols above it, and it’s got the tab. You can almost use it as a method book.” halleonard.com



FJH Music Succeeding At The Piano — A Method For Everyone Penned by Dr. Helen Marlais, this method features what FJH dubbed a “joy-filled and pedagogically sound approach” to learning piano, along with time-tested classics. “It is becoming a best-seller,” said FJH’s Kevin Hackinson. fjhmusic.com

nine years.

“I now have a huge selection of [sacred piano] books — literally 10 times what I stocked 10 years ago — and am constantly restocking items,” she said.

BAND BOOSTER

Drew Parker, co-owner of Separk Music, a full-line dealership in Winston-Salem, N.C., continues to move deeper into the school music rental busi-

ness. In tandem, he’s watched his band print music business grow.

Parker’s not an anomaly. Several dealers reported strong band music sales, despite the budget crisis and school band program cuts. Speaking to the trend, on-line piano music retailer Bobby Mitchell, owner of Atlanta-based Prima Music, even singled out band as a growing alternative market for his company.

“Despite challenges in school music programs and economic effects on private lessons, these sales have been steady, and we are optimistic that they will continue to improve,” said Phil Smith, vice president of print distributor Worldwide Music Services.

Chris Scialfa, senior vice president of sales at Carl Fischer, mentioned that music for flexible instrumentation has also been growing at retail. “As more and more schools have to deal with budget cuts, they’re potentially dealing with combining string and band programs,” he said. “This creates a need for music geared towards mixed ensembles.”

This isn’t to say band music sales haven’t been affected by macro factors. Sislen said her band rentals have been “way up,” but her band music sales are nearly nonexistent. She suspected that the state has been supplying music to students.

THE POP CONUNDRUM

To quote Chris Rock, pop music’s a tough industry: here today, gone today. And in print, retailers’ success with the category couldn’t be more mixed.

Denton, Texas-headquartered print retail giant Pender’s Music has experienced a major decline in pop folios and individual sheet music, according to its president, Richard Gore. On the other hand, full-line retailers steeped in music lessons tend to report the oppo-

site. At West Music, pop piano/vocal/guitar (PVG) folios rank among the company’s highest performers.

“PVG, in particular, is strong due to our large selection and because they are impulse items for those individuals and students looking for gifts,” West Music’s Walenta said.

While several retailers acknowledge they don’t turn at their stores, songbooks remain a shining star in the pop segment. Anthony Mantova, owner of Mantova’s Two Street Music, a full-line retailer based in Eureka, Calif., singled out compilation songbooks as a best-seller.

“Everything from Johnny Cash to *Celtic Favorites* is flying off the shelves,” he said. “As a result, our radio ad campaign is now all about our book selection. We use the book section as a forum for displaying accessories that help people learn instruments.”

Sislen praised beginner guitar songbooks, noting that she can’t keep Hal Leonard’s *100 Greatest Songs Of Rock & Roll* in-store. “I can’t seem to order enough of them,” she said. “The teachers love them.” (Sislen, and many others, also reported anything featuring Taylor Swift flying off the shelves.)

“Over the past several years, multimedia play-along songbooks have been gaining remarkable momentum at retail,” Alfred’s Ferranti said.

He added that Alfred offers solutions to mitigate retailers’ risk with pop, including automated racking programs and vendor-managed solutions that provide fresh product without a large time or financial commitment.

Likewise, Hal Leonard’s Jahnke said his company’s Broadway music sales continue to “beat expectations.” Retailers steeped in the category agree. Wasson, for

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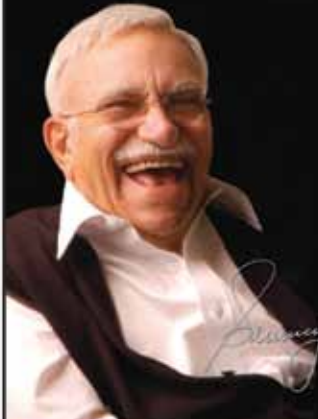
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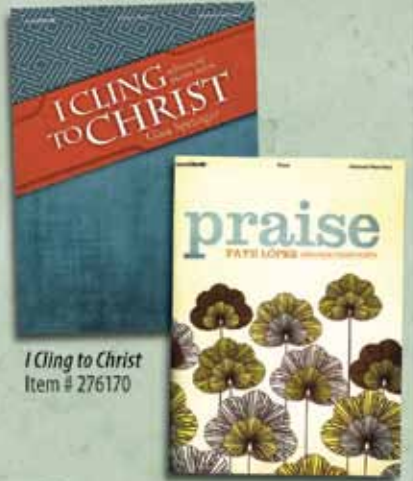
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- Ukulele Music
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↓ DOWN

- DVDs
- Karaoke

one, cited musical theatre as one of her strongest categories. She's had robust sales with Alfred's *Singer's Library Of Musical Theatre* and Hal Leonard's *The Singer's Musical Theatre Anthology* series.

THE GLEEK EFFECT

While not necessarily pop, choral music has benefitted from a pop phenomenon: "Glee." The TV comedy-drama, which is centered around a high school glee club, has brought the sexy back to choir. Gore noted that choral music recently experienced a sales spike at Pender's Music.

"I attribute this to the popularity of singing shows on TV — 'Glee,' 'American Idol,' etc."

He added that a capella ensemble music for choir is trending up. "Again, 'Glee' is a

runaway success and shows no sign of slowing down."

That said, the choral market is highly competitive and often requires a deeper commitment than other print genres.

"I don't do choral anymore because somebody else in town does it better," Sislen said. "It's such a specialized market."

DIGITAL SURGE

On-demand digital print music accounts for 3–5 percent of Wasson Music's monthly sales. Wasson said she anticipates that number to reach 10 percent within the next five years, and Sislen estimated that digital downloads are her No. 1 seller.

Digital print stands as one of publishers' more ingenious innovations. It requires zero inventory for dealers, helping



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protect them from pop's capricious nature, and usually boasts robust margins.

"With some, like FreeHand [SheetMusic-Now], you can tell them what you want to charge," Sislen said, adding that she'll often charge a premium for customers wanting sheet music instantly.

Hal Leonard's Jahnke called his company's Digital Retailer program "the ultimate customer service tool." "Digital Retailer gives music stores access to our continually growing archive of digital content, which gives them the ability to take care of their customers' requests on the spot," he said.

Alfred also offers a similar service, Total-SheetMusic, and has partnered with Leaping Brain, a video-on-demand company, to offer retailers video-on-demand products for their websites.

"Digital downloading on our website has steadily increased for us since the launch of our digital delivery [service] in August 2009," said Eric Strouse, president of Stanton's Sheet Music, a print specialty dealer in Columbus, Ohio. "We've let that business come to us versus actively pursuing new growth."

THE UBIQUITOUS UKE

After 16 years in business, Bookmark's Stearns recently took on her first non-print product: ukuleles. She said they'll sell "fun" at her store, but the move also speaks to the enormity of the uke trend. And — no surprises here — book sales in this category have taken off.

"We watched our sales of ukulele books increase two years ago, so we invested gradually to build that inventory selection," Stearns said. "It has kept growing and is staying pretty strong." Alfred's *Teach Yourself To Play Ukulele* is her top-selling uke title.

Ruby Beeston, president of Salt Lake City-based full-line dealer Best in Music, mentioned uke books are increasingly popular at her stores, citing the uke's low price point and simplicity as reasons.

"Who would have ever thought that a small four-string instrument with an average entry price around \$25 would capture the heart of the nation?" Jahnke said.

On a related note, drum and percussion music is finding a larger niche audience. West Music's Walenta singled it out as an emerging category. "That has been a grow-

ing niche both online and in our regional stores," she said.

Worldwide Music's Smith commented that he's constantly surprised by the variety of titles that sell in this category, which is strong at his company. "Unlike piano methods, where the top five share a large part of

the market, drum methods are less homogenous and often come from smaller specialty percussion publishers, which presents more of a challenge for us [as a distributor] in terms of stocking products, but we think it's better for the industry as a whole." **MI**

— Zach Phillips

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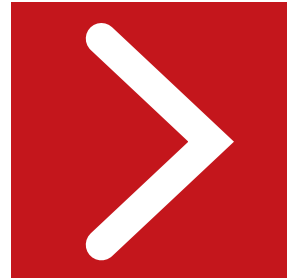


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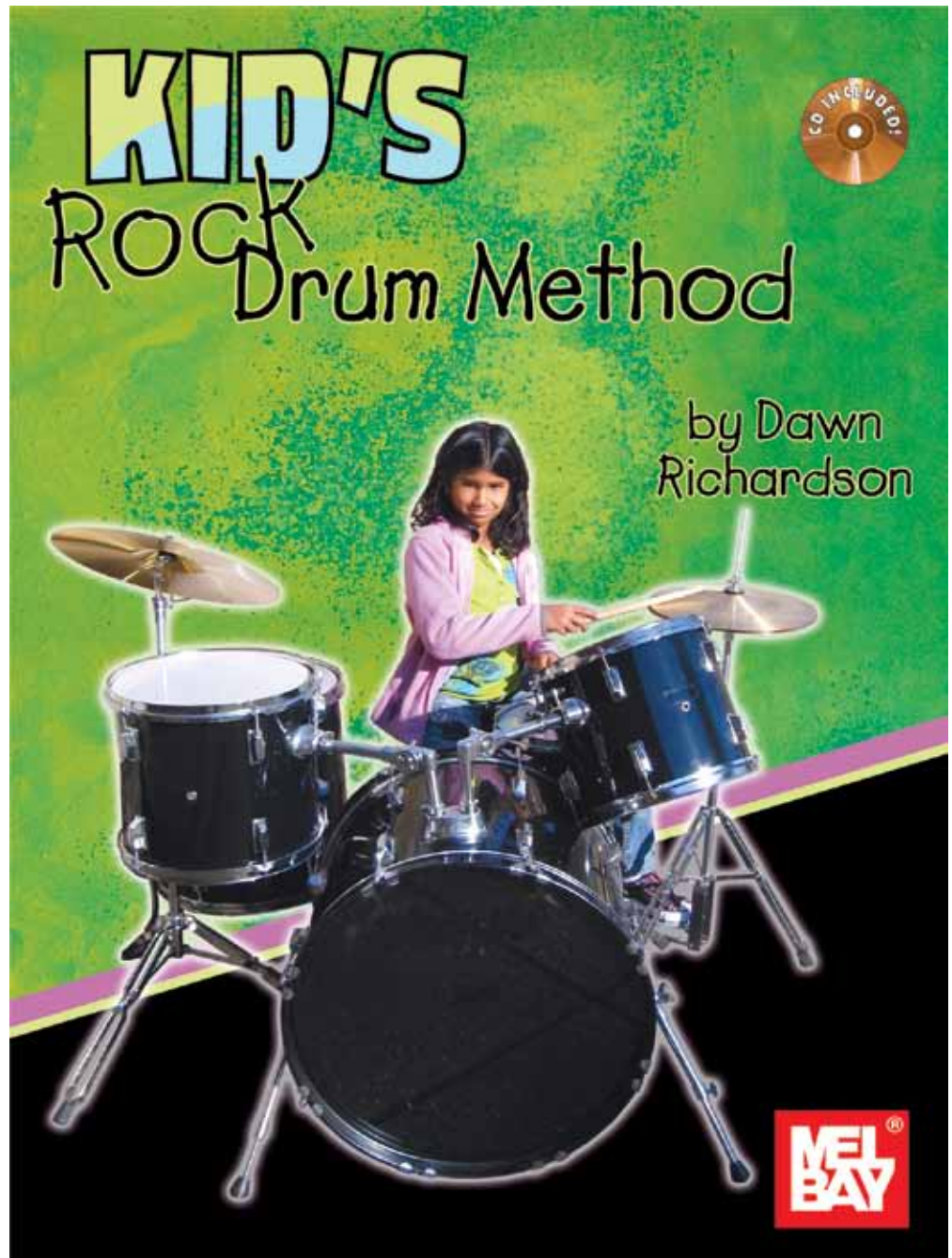
GEAR



MEL BAY | 'KID'S ROCK DRUM METHOD'

Kid Rock

Mel Bay recently released *Kid's Rock Drum Method*. Written by Dawn Richardson, the book is full of exercises and beats for the next rock star drummer. It's geared toward younger players but is appropriate for older first-time students, as well. The book features moderate pacing and introduces concepts one at a time for an easy learning process. It comes with an audio CD. MSRP: \$14.99. melbay.com



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Hudson evolves jazz drumming
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Korg crafts portable piano
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American DJ goes retro
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THEODORE PRESSER | 'AMAZING GRACE: EIGHT SONGS OF THE SPIRIT'

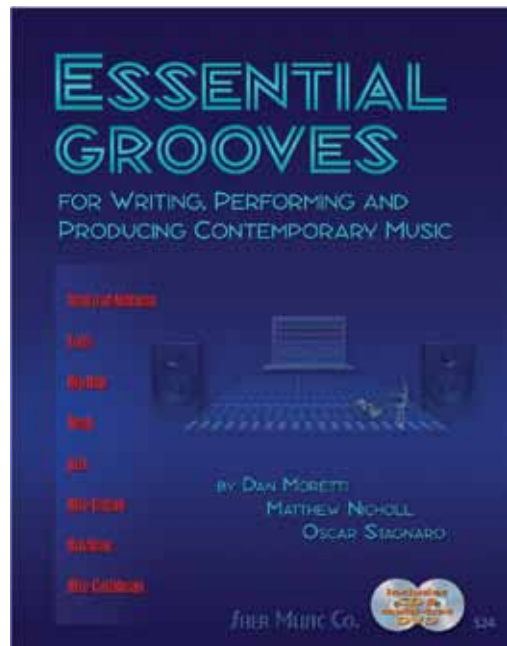
Spirit Songs

Theodore Presser's recent release, *Amazing Grace: Eight Songs Of The Spirit*, is a collection of eight spirit songs for flute and guitar. The works can be performed as a suite in recital or used as individual hymns in worship services. MSRP: \$15.95. presser.com

SHER MUSIC | 'ESSENTIAL GROOVES'

Essentially Groovy

Sher Music's new *Essential Grooves* packs everything musicians need to know about contemporary styles into a reference of audio, scores and text. The book presents 41 different grooves covering all the important styles that have influenced contemporary music, each performed by live players in soul, Motown, funk, rock and Afro-Cuban styles. The book contains scores, text, stereo mixes of the musical examples and multitrack audio files of each example. MSRP: \$24. shermusic.com



HAL LEONARD | 'WHAT MUSIC MEANS TO ME'

Music & Art

Hal Leonard has published Richard Rejino's book, *What Music Means To Me*, a collection of personal stories that relate back to the difference music makes in people's lives. The book also features exquisite photographs that illustrate its message.

whatmusicmeanstome.org

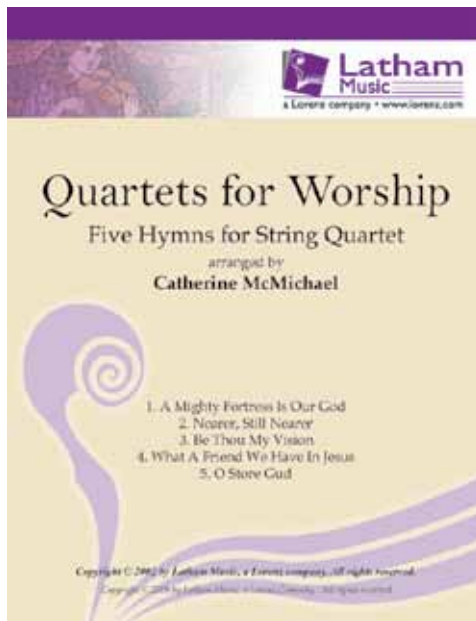
GEAR

PRINT, MULTIMEDIA & GIFTS

LATHAM MUSIC | 'QUARTETS FOR WORSHIP'

Four Score

Latham Music has introduced *Quartets For Worship* by Catherine McMichael. The quartets are scored at a moderately difficult level with playable settings for experienced musicians. All five selections are ideal for any church service setting. MSRP: \$19.95. lorenz.com



HUDSON MUSIC | 'THE EVOLUTION OF JAZZ DRUMMING'

Darwin's Drums

Hudson Music's new *The Evolution Of Jazz Drumming* by Danny Gottlieb is a book and DVD package designed as a guide and workbook for the high school, college-level or professional drummer. It can be studied based on a typical 16-week college semester. MSRP: \$29.99. hudsonmusic.com

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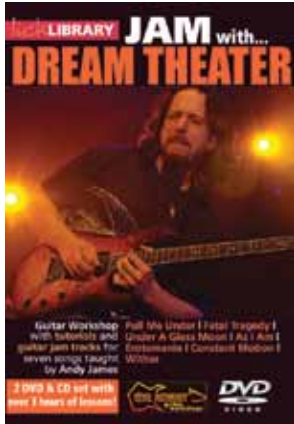




LICK LIBRARY | 'JAM WITH DREAM THEATER'

Dream On

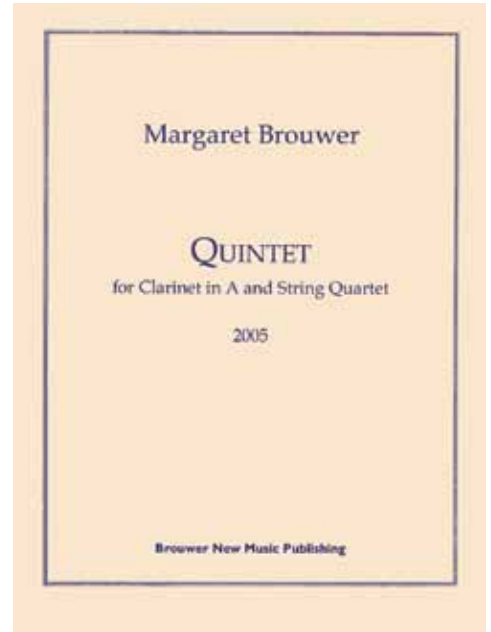
Lick Library has launched *Jam With Dream Theater*. This double DVD guitar tuition set features Andy James taking players through the intricacies of some of the world's most skilled guitar playing, all in the style of John Petrucci and Dream Theater. The DVD shows how to play seven tracks that span more than a decade of Dream Theater's music. licklibrary.com



CARL FISCHER | BROUWER QUINTET

Quintet Classics

Carl Fischer Music recently announced the distribution of Brouwer New Music Publishing's *Quintet* for clarinet in A, two violins, viola and cello by Margaret Brouwer. A work in four movements, *Quintet* was commissioned by Daniel Silver and the University of Colorado. MSRP: \$42.50. carlfischer.com



Eric Schoenberg

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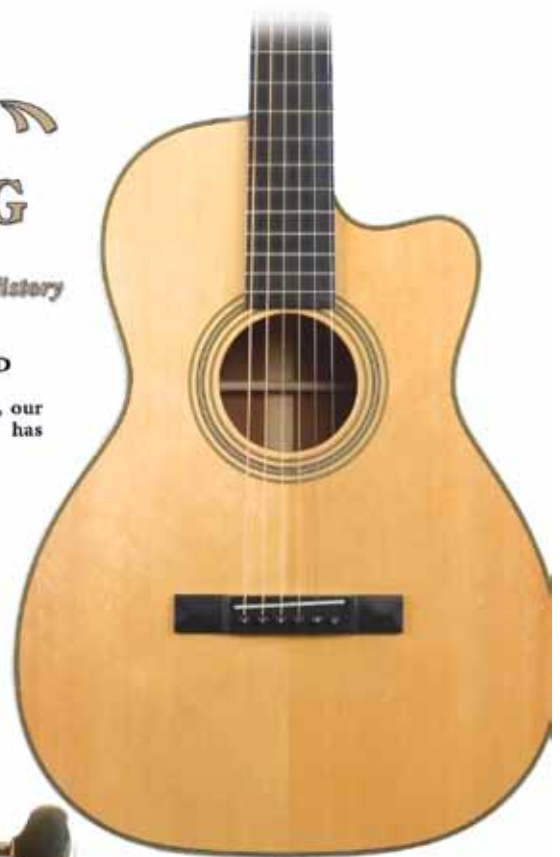
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SAMICK | TORINO USA TR

Grand Torino

Samick has added the Torino USA TR to the Greg Bennett guitar series. The Torino USA TR features a double cutaway sculpted body, flame maple top, mahogany set neck and ebony fingerboard. The instrument also includes Seymour Duncan pickups and a Grover tailpiece with an adjustable bridge. gregbennettguitars.com

WASHBURN | PARLOR GUITARS

Timeless Charm

Washburn recently debuted two new parlor acoustic models. The R315KK features a spruce top, while the R321SWRK (pictured) boasts a solid spruce top and a tree of life inlay offset by a solid rosewood back and sides. The compact bodies are ideal for travel. MSRP: R315KK, \$712.90; R321SWRK, \$1,069.90. washburn.com

MORGAN MONROE | MDM-2

Distressed Beauty

Morgan Monroe has introduced the MDM-2 distressed mandolin. The MDM-2 features all-solid, hand-carved woods; a radiused fingerboard; an ebony fretboard and bridge; a cast antique brass tailpiece; antique brass Grover tuning keys; and a 31-mm nut width. It also has a custom tone bar. MSRP: \$839. morganmonroe.com

YAMAHA | A-SERIES

Handcrafted Masterpiece

Yamaha Guitars' lineup of acoustic-electrics has been expanded with the A-Series. Offered in a dreadnought cutaway and a concert-size cutaway, A-Series instruments feature a slim neck profile and a rounded fretboard edge. The semi-open pore finish on the neck maintains the wood's feel and enhances playability. yamaha.com



VOX I NIGHT TRAIN 50

Midnight Train


Vox recently rolled out the Night Train 50 tube amplifier and V212NT speaker cabinet. The all-tube Night Train 50 offers two channels for a diverse range of sounds. The V212NT extension cabinet is an ideal sonic complement to the Night Train 50, which includes EL34 tubes in the power stage, to produce a tight sound. MSRP: Night Train 50, \$1,000; V212NT speaker cabinet, \$700. voxamps.com

ELECTRO-HARMONIX I
DELUXE MEMORY MAN


Memory Man

Electro-Harmonix has introduced the most powerful version of the Deluxe Memory Man analog delay. The pedal provides sweet organic delay and modulation. The DMM's tap tempo feature enables players to set a delay time that's in sync with a song quickly by pressing the tap button in time to the music. This new delay takes that a step further by providing five tap divide subdivisions. MSRP: \$504. ehx.com







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VHT | EL84

VHT Adds Adapter

VHT has released the Special 6 EL84 adapter, which reconfigures the Special 6's 6V6 output tube socket to accept an EL84 output tube. With the adapter, players can enjoy earlier breakup, distinctive midrange complexity and top-end chime. The Special 6 EL84 also works in other 6V6 amps. MAP: \$19.49. vhtamp.com



FRET-KING | SUPER-MATIC

Super Guitar

Fret-King's new Super-Matic is a self-tuning guitar that features a Wilkinson ATD HT440 self-tuning hardtail bridge. The Super-Matic can be put in standard tuning with the touch of a button. The guitar has a 25 1/5-inch scale length, close-grain Indian rosewood fingerboard with a 10-inch radius and hand-crowned medium-jumbo nickel silver frets. jhs.co.uk

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HOTTIE | HOTTIE 429

Hard Rock Hottie

Hottie has introduced the Hottie 429. The guitar boasts master-grade tonewoods, a carved eastern hard rock maple top and a one-piece Honduran mahogany body. The Hottie 429 also features Hottie pickups and a TonePros wraparound bridge. MSRP: \$2,499. hottieguitars.com



LEVY'S LEATHERS | CHRISTIAN GUITAR STRAPS

Line Expansion

Levy's Leathers recently expanded its Christian design guitar strap line. The 2-inch heavy cotton webbing straps are covered with a gold-colored foil and feature a cross or fish design. They're finished with leather ends and are available in six different design variations. levysleathers.com



HARRIS MUSICAL PRODUCTS | TIMBER TONES

Exotic Picks

Harris Musical Products is now distributing Timber Tones, hand-finished guitar picks that have been crafted from 18 different exotic woods using end cuts from guitar manufacturers. Each pick is the same size and thickness, although each different wood has its own sonic characteristics and variations in tone. timber-tones.com



LÂG GUITARS | CASES

Lâg Bags

Lâg Guitars has released a line of soft padded gig bags, semi-rigid gig bags and hardshell Crococases, offering custom-fit protection for all body styles in the Tramontane acoustic guitar line. The hardshell Crococases feature a dark-brown mock-crocodile finish with gold accent closures and a plush interior. MSRP: \$49-\$149. lagguitars.com

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GATOR CASES | G-TOUR

Tour Tough

Gator Cases recently added 12- and 15-inch dual loudspeaker cases to its G-Tour line. The cases feature thick plywood construction and a tough PVC exterior. A specialized EVA foam-padded interior and thick foam divider keep loudspeakers safe and secure during transport. The interior divider also features an internal storage compartment for accessories and cables. gatorcases.com

KK AUDIO LABS | DS-6

Hi-res Monitor

KK Audio Labs has introduced the DS-6 6-inch, two-way powered studio reference monitor. The high-resolution DS-6 features a 6-inch low-frequency driver that uses proprietary composite cone material with a 1-inch custom-designed titanium composite high-frequency tweeter. kkaudiolabs.com



AURALEX | SONOLITE

Soundproof

Auralex's new SonoLite fabric-wrapped Studiofoam Pro panels are ideal for the home-based recordingist. The panels are available in black or beige and feature squared edges that provide an overall noise coefficient rating of 0.75. MSRP: \$24.99 per panel. auralex.com

CERWIN VEGA | CVI

Passive Portability

Cerwin Vega has unveiled the CVI passive portable P.A. speaker series. Housed in a double-braced wood cabinet with an 18-gauge steel grill, the line is designed for mobility. The speakers boast high-performance 34-mm Mylar compression drivers. cerwinvega.com





ZOOM | R8

Versatile Perks

Zoom has unveiled the R8, which combines four production tools in a small, versatile device. In addition to eight-track playback and two-track simultaneous recording using SD memory cards, the R8 is a digital multitrack recorder, an audio interface, a control surface and a pad sampler. zoom.co.jp

SENNHEISER | MK 4

Pro Sounds

Sennheiser's new MK 4 is a large-diaphragm true condenser microphone that's ideal for professional users in project studios but also suited for other recording environments and stage use. The mic has a large 1-inch diaphragm spattered with 24-karat gold and features a sturdy metal housing and an elastically mounted capsule.

sennheiser.usa.com



TASCAM | DR-05

Hi-res Hero

Tascam recently launched the DR-05, a high-resolution stereo recorder. It boasts a pair of condenser microphones with sensitivity up to 125 dB SPL and low noise, designed to capture the detail and dynamic of a performance. The portable recorder features a peak-reduction function to set the optimum recording level automatically, a limiter and low-cut filter to help prevent distortion, a self timer recording button, and variable speed playback. MAP: \$99. tascam.com



FOCUSRITE | VRM BOX

Quick Monitoring

Focusrite recently launched the VRM Box, a headphone monitoring system featuring virtual reference monitoring (VRM) technology. The VRM Box functions as a high-quality 24-bit, 48-kHz USB audio playback interface. Featuring a 108 dB dynamic range, its headphone amp boasts a precise, low-distortion sound. MSRP: \$124.99. focusrite.com



SIGNEO | SOUL

Soul Food

Signeo USA has launched Soul by Ludacris, a line of high-definition headphones. The lineup includes five models designed in collaboration with rapper Chris "Ludacris" Bridges. The entire line contains professionally voiced sound technology with advanced circuitry and drivers. Such features as world-class noise-cancellation technology and ultra-precise audio mix balancing deliver deep bass without sacrificing clarity of mids and highs. soulbyludacris.com



AKG | CS 5

Conference Center

AKG has released its new CS 5 conferencing system. The interactive system is ethernet technology-centric with 64 audio channels, ideal for small or large discussions. The mic station acts as a delegate or a president station, enabling the main speaker to control the discussion. harman.com



AUDIO-TECHNICA | AT2022

Stereo Master

Audio-Technica's new AT2022 X/Y is a dual-element condenser microphone designed for stereo recording. It features two unidirectional condenser capsules in an X/Y configuration pivot, creating 90-degree narrow or 120-degree wide stereo operation for versatile pickup. The capsules also fold flat for storage and transportation. A switch allows for a choice of flat response or low-frequency roll-off to control undesired ambient noise. MSRP: \$439. audio-technica.com





UNIVERSAL AUDIO | UAD-2 SATELLITE

Universal's Satellite

Universal Audio has unveiled the UAD-2 Satellite Duo and Quad FireWire DSP Accelerator Packages. The UAD-2 Satellite family combines DSP acceleration with the plug-and-play simplicity of FireWire 800/400, ideal for Intel-based iMacs, MacBook Pros and Mac minis. The UAD-2 Satellites feature the entire UAD Powered Plug-Ins library. uaudio.com

PROPELLERHEAD | REASON RECORD EDUCATION

Combo Pack

Propellerhead recently released Reason Record Education, new packages that consolidate the Reason Record application suite at a special price for schools. Available in license packs of one, five and 10, Reason Record Education pairs the music production environment Reason with Record recording software for musicians. propellerheads.se



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LOS CABOS | 7A HICKORY NYLON TIP DRUMSTICKS

Lucky No. Seven

Los Cabos Drumsticks has added 7A hickory nylon tip drumsticks to its catalog. The sticks are 15.5 inches long and feature a 0.543-inch diameter. They boast long-lasting durability. MSRP: \$14. loscabosdrumsticks.com



MAPEX | BLASTER KIT

Dynamite Drums

Mapex's new drum set class is based off its Black Panther snare drum series. The first of the series, the Blaster kit, features thin maple shells with walnut sound-shaping rings, providing a full-bodied sound. Each drum is accented with brushed black chrome hardware. mapexdrums.com

REMO | KATSUGI OKEDAICO

Japanese Fusion

Remo's new Katsugi Okedaiko was inspired by Japanese percussionist Hiroyuki Hayashida, along with recent developments in taiko drum playing styles. The Katsugi Okedaiko is manufactured with Remo's lightweight Acousticon drum shells and Skyn-deep Natural drumheads with a calfskin graphic. The lightweight instrument is easily slung over the shoulder and comes with two bachi sticks. remo.com





BIG BANG DISTRIBUTION |
AHEAD METRONOME PRACTICE PAD

Keepin' the Beat

Big Bang Distribution recently rolled out the Ahead Metronome Practice Pad (AMP), a practice tool for drummers. The interactive AMP helps drummers improve their control, speed, endurance, flexibility and timing in a variety of standard and odd meters. Highlights include an easy-to-read LCD readout, gum rubber pad for comfort and the AMP Control Center, which allows for easy adjustment of tempo, mode, counter and timer. **{bigbangdist.com}**

PRO-MARK I BACKPACK

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Pro-Mark's new backpack features an attached stick bag that's easily removable. The large inner compartment holds notebooks, music, a practice pad, a computer and more. The backpack has multiple zippered pockets for smaller items, such as keys or iPods. It also features a molded head-phone port and side mesh water bottle pockets. MSRP: \$92.95. **{promark.com}**



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KORG | MICROPIANO

Fun-sized Piano

Korg recently launched the microPIANO, a compact, convenient and portable piano for players of all levels. Featuring 61 keys, the microPIANO borrows many design elements from a grand piano, including an adjustable lid.

The instrument gets its sound from Korg's flagship digital pianos and offers 61 vibrant, authentic sounds, 25 of which are short-phrase sounds that can automatically generate phrases simply by holding down a key. The microPIANO is available in black, white and red. MSRP: \$500. korg.com



AVID | M-AUDIO VENOM

Venomous Versatility

The new M-Audio Venom synthesizer combines Avid's expertise in virtual instrument development and keyboard design. The instrument combines the warm sound and character of vintage keyboards with the intuitive control and workflow advantages of modern digital processing. It features extensive sound design capabilities, ergonomic design, the Vyzex Venom software editor, a built-in USB audio/MIDI interface and Pro Tools compatibility. avid.com



CASIO | CTK-7000

Keys to Success

Casio has released the CTK-7000 keyboard. It features 61 piano-style touch-response keys, 800 built-in tones and 250 rhythms in a variety of musical styles. The keyboard also includes nine physical sliders for organ drawbar mode or mixer operation, as well as a 32-channel mixer for adjustment of volume, pan, reverb and chorus. MSRP: \$449.99. casio.com



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P. MAURIAT | COGNAC LACQUER

Luxury Lacquer

St. Louis Music has released the Cognac Lacquer alto and tenor saxophones from P. Mauriat. Each body tube is hand-hammered out of French brass, and each tone hole is drawn and rolled one at a time to ensure consistency. The keywork responds quickly and accurately due to its blue-steel springs. The PMXA-67RCL and PMXT-66RCL are available in honey gold, vintage dark and unlacquered, as well as silver- and gold-plated. pmauriatmusic.com

RICO | RESERVE CLASSIC

Classically Trained

Reserve Classic alto saxophone reeds are the latest addition to Rico's Reserve Classic reed line. The alto sax reeds are made from lower-internode cane, which produces a consistent tone. They feature a thicker blank that creates more resonance, along with a profile that provides more flexibility than standard alto saxophone reeds. The reeds are available in strengths of 2.0 to 4.5. MSRP: \$52. ricoreeds.com



REUNION BLUES | VIOLIN CASE

Heavyweight Champ

Reunion Blues recently unveiled its first-class heavyweight violin case. The case is built on a heavyweight foundation of shock-absorbing Flexoskeleton walls lined with reinforced impact panels. The inside of the case features a multilayer foam suspension system that gently but firmly cradles the violin. An adjustable locking strap helps prevent movement when the case is bumped or dropped. reunionblues.com

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ON-STAGE GEAR | FLIGHT-READY CASES

Flight Time

On-Stage Gear has launched new ATA-style flight-ready cases, including the FC5000CDJ CDJ player case and FC7000 series rack cases. They're constructed of 3/8-inch plywood shells with PVC exteriors, aluminum skeletal structures and stackable impact-resistant ball corners. The FC5000CDJ CDJ player case is designed to allow complete functionality from the case itself. The FC7000 series can house amplifiers and wireless systems. onstagestands.com



ODYSSEY | REDLINE SERIES

Seeing Red

Odyssey recently introduced the Redline series of DJ/producer bags. Each bag is padded for extra protection and features an adjustable compartment for laptops, heavy-duty zippers and pulls, as well as easy-access front, back or side pockets. MSRP: \$119.99–\$359.99. odysseycases.com



AMERICAN DJ | SPHERION

Retro Disco

American DJ's new Spherion ATRI LED features a globe-like shape, spinning motion and more than 100 sharp beams of light, emulating a 1970s disco effect. Powered by five high-output 3-watt TRI LED sources, the Spherion projects through 116 small lenses, while rotating 360 degrees to fill a room completely with razor-sharp beams of multicolored light. MSRP: \$419.95. americandj.com



STANTON | SCS.1

Improved Mix

Stanton has made several updates to its premier mixer control surface, the Stanton Control System1. The SCS.1 offers a built-in FireWire audio interface, assignable encoders and tight two-way software control. Updates to the mixer include expanded presets, new ASIO drivers, updated firmware and DaRouter software. stantondj.com

MARKETPLACE

- ◆ Rates: Classified display: \$25 per column inch. Reading notices: \$1.00 per word; \$15 minimum charge. All ads are prepaid.
- ◆ Payments: Send check or charge it on MasterCard, Visa or discover.
- ◆ Deadlines: Advertising closes the 15th of the month, six weeks prior to issue date—i.e. the May issue would close March 15.
- ◆ Send your advertisement to: Music Inc., 102 N. Haven Road, Elmhurst, Illinois, 60126: or FAX your ad to: (630) 941-3210.
- ◆ Questions? Call Sue Mahal at (630) 941-2030, Ext. 121.



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JOB OPENING
ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE – LATIN AMERICA

The International Division of KMC Music, Inc. is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Account Executive – Latin America.

The Account Executive will be responsible for the development of distributor relationships for all KMC proprietary product lines (Takamine Guitars, Ovation Guitars, Hamer Guitars, Latin Percussion, Toca Percussion, Gretsch Drums, Gibraltar Hardware, Genz Benz Amplifiers, etc.) in Latin America. This position is directly involved with all aspects of the distributor sales process including achieving sales targets, distributor training, implementation of sales and marketing programs, market research, and customer service.

We are seeking a highly motivated sales professional with excellent product knowledge of musical instruments and demonstrated success working with a close team in a dynamic, challenging environment. Ideal candidates will have had at least 3 years experience in a distribution account executive position, preferably in Latin America.

Qualified candidates will be fully bilingual (English/Spanish), have excellent verbal and written communication skills, be highly proficient using basic Office software (email, spreadsheet, word processing, etc.), and be willing to undertake extensive international travel. The position will be based in Bloomfield, CT.

Interested applicants should send a resume and letter of application to the attention of John Shand at the above address, or by email to john.shand@kmcmusic.com. While all applications will be reviewed and kept on file, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.



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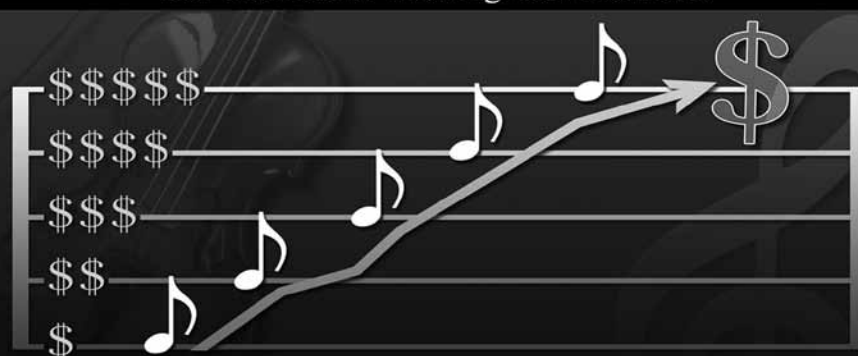
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Kenny O'Brien
President, Music & Arts

MUSIC & ARTS

Kenny O'Brien
President

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Robin Walenta

West Music
Coralville, Iowa

We recognize that customers have many options in which to purchase their music needs. West Music's focus is on differentiating the customer's experience through outstanding customer service, cross-departmental merchandising and partnering with educators to assure a supported selection. We also realize that the Web is a valuable tool for customers' print music needs, and we will expand our selection and integrate downloads in the near future to support that demand.



>>>

Carol Wasson

Wasson Music
Centerville, Ohio

By having FreeHand, a terrific in-store download site that we use daily, I have been able to provide my customers with on-the-spot service. Many people do not want to provide their credit card information online, so our in-store print-on-demand is one of my fastest-growing areas.

As a result of the changing advances in technology, the print-on-demand business will only increase. I have a print-on-demand online site; however, very few customers use it because they prefer to come into my store. I am also known to look at different versions of the same song and let the customer know which one I think will best fit their needs. This is the type of service they cannot get online.

>>>

Jason Pachona

PM Music Center
Aurora, Ill.

One of the biggest changes over the last several years was the transition to digital sheet music. We no longer stock any popular individual sheet music. When customers ask, we direct them to compilations or try to locate the piece they're looking for from Sheet Music Direct or FreeHand. Of course, we frequently special order titles, as well.



>>>

Richard Gore
Pender's Music
Denton, Texas

How are you adapting to macro changes in the print music market?

We buy less on semi-annual stock orders and reorder more frequently. Previously, we placed two stock orders a year per publisher: one in the summer and one in the winter.

Now, every category is assigned to a specific buyer in our company and tends to be seasonal to some degree. We plan our ordering in four-month increments using a rotation of category groups, including keyboard and gifts, vocal/pop, choral, band, and jazz/instrumental.

Each buyer places three stock orders during a calendar year and also orders music to back up our promotional mailings, conventions or workshops as

separate orders.

By spreading our stock orders into four-month increments, our inventory turns have increased to two and a half a year. This helps in planning our cash flow and keeping buyers from overbuying on stock orders.

Our company's website continues to improve functionality provided to educators. One feature that has improved functionality is our Piano Quick List. This feature is located on the left-side panel and lets piano teachers order method books based on the criteria they use while shopping in our stores. It helps teachers purchase the students' books with ease.

Additionally, all current

promotions are on our home page with an interface to sound files and scores in most cases. The customer can add any item to their shopping cart or wish list with one click.

We reduced our advertising costs by sending a postcard using the cover graphics of the promotion and encouraging customers to shop online. Customers may also opt to go totally green and receive their card via e-mail. We have eliminated thousands of pounds of wasted paper catalogs by using our website to deliver promotional materials.

Finally, we continue to reach out via social media in harmony with our existing marketing channels.



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