

# LESSONS: ACE THE 1<sup>ST</sup> DAY

P.32

FOR PROGRESSIVE MUSIC RETAILERS

SEPTEMBER 2013  
MUSICINCMAG.COM

# music inc.

## NORTHERN

P.36

# STAR

MARK  
HEBERT

**COSMO MUSIC'S STUNNING  
SHOWROOM SHINES A LIGHT  
ON THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**

**FROM THE TOP**  
Vic Firth Lathes **P.48**  
Down the Law

**SUMMER NAMM**  
A New Venue Sparks **P.50**  
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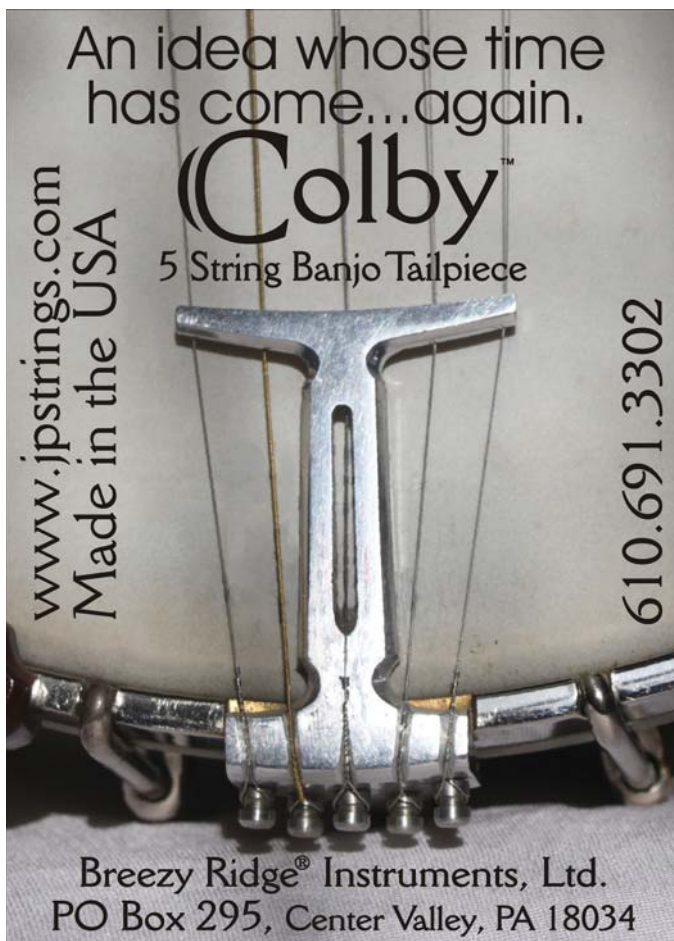
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SEPTEMBER 2013 | VOL. 24, NO. 8

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

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

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OTHER MAHER PUBLICATIONS:  
DownBeat, UpBeat Daily

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

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

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



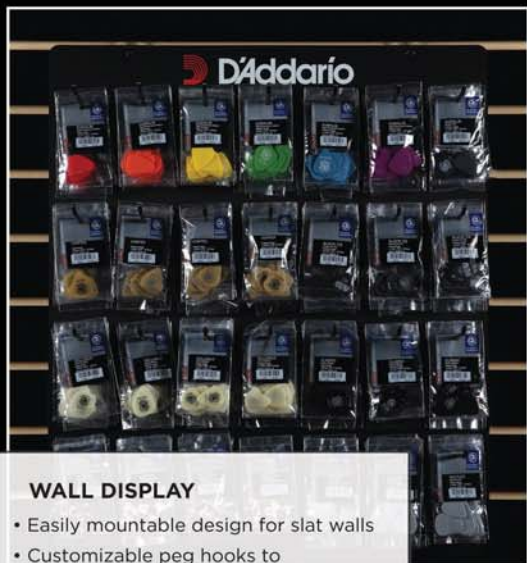




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# INSIDE *FEATURES*

## COVER STORY

### **36** **NORTHERN STAR**

Cosmo Music's stunning showroom lights up the customer experience.

BY DAVID ZIVAN

## FEATURES

### **48** **FROM THE TOP**

Vic Firth reflects on 50 years of sticks, mallets, rolling pins and performing with some of the world's finest conductors.

BY STEVE HARVEY

### **50** **SUMMER SHOWDOWN**

A complete wrap-up of Summer NAMM, including trends, events and all the products that made "Best in Show."

BY KATIE KAILUS





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# INSIDE *DEPARTMENTS*



16



## IDEAS

### 31 INDEPENDENT RETAIL

Make sure you are aware of hidden costs.  
*By Ted Eschliman*

### 32 THE LESSON ROOM

Learn how to eliminate your students' and families' "first-lesson jitters."  
*By Pete Gamber*

### 34 THE RETAIL DOCOTOR

Ensure your store is a go-to when it comes to the latest technologies.  
*By Billy Cuthrell*

## GEAR

### 62 DRUMS & PERCUSSION

Gretsch releases a Foo Fighters signature snare; LP's Americana cajons find their groove; Mapex builds a beginner set



### 68 GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES

Ibanez gets jazzy with a George Benson model; Levy's supports classical

### 72 AUDIO & RECORDING

MXL's new Solo cardioid mic is a Revelation

### 74 PIANOS & KEYBOARDS

Kawai grows a hybrid

### 76 PRINT & MULTIMEDIA

Hal Leonard's *Wicked* is very good — and Alfred plays some praise songs

### 78 DJ & LIGHTING

It's futile to resist Chauvet's new Obey controller

## ASK THE RETAILER



### 82 HOW DO YOU SELL BOUTIQUE CYMBALS?

Displaying the cymbals on kits that attract attention helps move this growing category.

Cover photo by Matthew Plexman

## RETAIL

### PROFILE

14 Hartland Music manages a renovation while staying open for business.

### NEWS

- 16 Sam Ash opens its second location in Texas
- 17 GC reaches the 250-store mark
- 20 Sherman Clay closes in Seattle — ending its retail operations

## SUPPLY

### PROFILE

24 Crush Drums uses its connections to gather steam in the industry.

### NEWS

- 26 Fender Museum to close; Hohner gives guitars to GAMA.
- 27 Cordoba launches new website
- 28 Hal Leonard corporate team runs for a cause



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# PERSPECTIVE

PERSPECTIVE | BY DAVID ZIVAN

## COUNTERING TROUBLE

*You may be right. I may be crazy.*

— B. JOEL

All the retailers I have ever met, no matter the industry, notice customer service everywhere they go. And why not? You might steal a great idea from an unlikely place — or be reminded of just how damaging bad service can be. It's a multifaceted topic — and sometimes the lessons are not crystal clear.

My father and I recently made a pilgrimage to a great deli in the Chicago suburbs. We were in search of a superlative sandwich, as we often are. Upon entering, I happened to hold the door for an older woman. She thanked me politely, but I also noticed she was clutching her purse a little too tightly, and had a grim expression on her face.



Not my problem, of course. I took a number. The place — essentially a large open room, with service counters on three sides — was busy.

"My bagels!" she cried, waving a finger in the air. Heads turned. "I didn't get my bagels!" she said, louder this time. The harried owner asked politely how he could help her. "I got home, and my bagels weren't in the bag! Where are they?"

The place was short-staffed (a topic of its own — don't get me started) but the man said he would find them, and stepped closer to hear her story. She ordered her bagels and her fixings, she said, and that young man over there helped her, and she paid for everything, and drove all the way home, and when she got there, no bagels. The man assured

her that he would get them right away — and could he please see her receipt?

The bagels were not on the receipt; it seemed clear she had not paid for them. Never mind that, though. "I'm hungry!" she said, raising her voice now. "Give me my bagels!" It got more unpleasant, and at one point the owner calmly asked her not to use some of the choice words she was uttering. The owner was unwilling to simply give away the bagels, and eventually the unhappy customer stormed out, promising never to return.

I've been telling this story lately, asking businesspeople how they would have handled things. There are unknown variables, to be sure. The poor woman may have been unbalanced in some way. And as my father pointed out later, by the time she got back to the store, the facts didn't matter anymore.

Most people think the owner handled it well — several bystanders complimented him on keeping a cool head. One veteran of our industry said that they should have simply given her a bag of bagels — that, he said, would have been the best customer service, under the very visible circumstances.

I don't know if there's a "correct" answer here. But I do know that, in retail, crazy stuff can happen, and we'd best be prepared for it. Your policy may be that the customer is always right, however unreasonable, and that's fine; what's important is that your staff knows the steps to take to follow that policy. Every employee needs to be trained on what they are and are not empowered to do, no matter how hungry the customer. **MI**



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# LETTERS

## Cuthrell For the Win

I loved Billy Cuthrell's July cover story, "A New Way to Win." We have been toying with a similar concept of bundling the cost of an instrument into signing up for lessons for a long time, but have had difficulty pulling the logistics together. I think referring to it regarding the cell phone industry makes perfect sense.

We are a perfect fit for this concept as we run a full lesson studio of 500 students per week along with a full retail facility in Washington state. We are Mapex dealers as well as PDP, Tama, Taylor Guitars, Fender and many others. I think this would be a great way to turn higher-priced instruments and to build an even stronger student base.

Again, great job with the article. It's exactly what we've been looking at with a few minor tweaks — very good with an innovative look.

**Troy Moore**  
Moore Brothers Music  
Sammamish, Wash.

## A Radical Response

Billy Cuthrell is always one of the highlights each time I read *Music Inc.* Besides hunting for client coverage, I'm always looking for what he has to say. Congratulations go out to him on his July cover story, "A New Way to Win." I love seeing someone taking the bull by the horns.

I first met Cuthrell in 2008. We were both part of the NAMM Presidential Advisory board. I immediately took a liking to him. His passion for our industry was evident. But even more importantly, I saw someone else who felt that there needed to be change. Big change. I knew right away that he was going to do something big for this industry.



I know he has influenced other retailers. I hope that his ideas can reach the manufacturers. But I bet that his greatest influence has been in his customers and students. Those customers and students are the ones who have benefited most, and at the end of the day, that is what it's really all about.

**Josh Vittek**  
Vittek PR  
Carlsbad, Calif.

## An Innovative & Informative Plan

I visit many of our dealers three to four times a year. I try to keep up on the latest innovations and possible [business] solutions, so that I may share them with dealers that are open to new ideas. In those discussions, they will sometimes express their concerns or challenges. During my last

trip, two of our dealers shared with me some concerns that were addressed in the July cover story featuring Billy Cuthrell's radical plan.

While I am certain this approach will not be accepted by all, I think those who give it a chance and think it through will benefit greatly by taking it.

I thought the article was clear, concise, focused, innovative and very informative — an all-around excellent interview that should be widely shared. It's great that people in this business would share ideas like this.

**Steve Crisafulli**  
Gatchell Violins Company  
West Melbourne, Fla.

## Many Thanks

I would like to thank *Music Inc.* for the coverage of Muncie Music Center in the August

cover story. I am humbled and honored to have had our store featured.

Several individuals in the industry reached out to me after reading the article to mention how proud they are to have a relationship with a single, smaller store that is remaining resilient through a tough economy. And that's all I want, as well. For my family, my employees and their families, and, of course, for our customers, I simply want to serve folks as best I can.

We are fortunate at Muncie Music Center to be able to make a living serving our community doing what we all love. Whether it's helping kids get started, teaching adults, assisting at Music For All (a national music education association), or helping out at concerts and schools, we do our best not to lose sight of our role to serve.

Here's to a successful and prosperous fall/recruiting season.

**Dave Helms**  
Owner  
Muncie Music Center  
Muncie, Ind.

## Corrections:

On the August 2013 cover, *Music Inc.* incorrectly stated Keyboard Concepts' anniversary. They are currently celebrating their 30th anniversary. Also in the August issue, Korg's King Korg analog modeling synth was mislabeled. *Music Inc.* regrets the errors.

EDITOR'S NOTE: MUSIC INC. ENCOURAGES LETTERS AND RESPONSES TO ITS STORIES. E-MAIL LETTERS TO EDITOR@MUSICINCMAG.COM; OR WRITE TO 102 N. HAVEN RD. ELMHURST, IL 60126; 630-941-2030; FAX: 630-941-3210.



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> **Deep in the Heart of Texas**

Sam Ash arrives in Dallas

PAGE 16

> **Still Growing**

GC opens 250th store

PAGE 17

> **Making a Move**

Mainline Music opens new shop in historic building

PAGE 19

> **End of an Era**

Sherman Clay closes the lid

PAGE 20



# RETAIL

HARTLAND MUSIC | BY DAVID ZIVAN

## CLEANING UP THEIR ACT

**C**an renovations actually be fun?

No. The answer is no. But Larry and Ellen McDonald, the husband-and-wife team who head up Hartland Music and its lessons division, the Waukesha County Conservatory, in Waukesha, Wis., probably came as close as anyone could.

At the beginning of 2013, utilizing a Small Business Administration loan of around \$80,000, the NAMM Top 100 retailer polished up its entire operation, putting in new carpeting and paint, tidying the outside of the facility, and even increasing their band rental stock. The craziness of the project took place in the weeks just before the Winter NAMM show — and during the period when the business was acquiring the Kawai line. Sounds like a blast, right?

"It gave us a new store again," McDonald said.

Which is its own kind of fun.

### TIME FOR A CHANGE

Hartland Music began in 1981, when the couple bought an existing business where Larry was teaching guitar. They grew the operation and in 1986 moved from the 900-square-foot shop into a larger facility with 20 studios. In 2000, they built a



15,000-square-foot building on a major thoroughfare.

"My husband does a lot of the building management and the financial management," McDonald said. "I'm the people person, and HR. I do purchasing. I clean toilets. And I sell grand pianos."

Along with a 3,000-square-foot music therapy clinic and 2,000 square feet for showcasing pianos, the current space includes a 5,000-square-foot showroom, a coffee bar, a stage, and 38 private studios. The company leases the studios to 55 instructors, who serve close to 2,000

students each week.

And that is a lot of foot traffic.

"We've been doing OK, even after 2008," McDonald said. "But we realized after 13 years in the building that things were not as new looking. And we know you have to make changes in retail."

### PIECE BY PIECE

Most businesses can't simply shut down while new carpet gets installed. So McDonald devised a schedule that sounds something like a military operation.

"We emptied out entire areas

Carpet and paint throughout the store (left) and studios got a facelift.



by 8 p.m.," she said. "A crew would come in overnight, move stuff out, the painters came in, then the carpet guys came in. They would lay carpet at about 4 a.m."

At one point when the carpet was pulled up, they invited students in with their parents to sign the floor. They held a carpet moving sale, to clear some inventory out — and in several cases, simply got rid of pianos that weren't going to get sold. "It was sort of 'Somebody is taking this home tonight. It's free,'" McDonald said. They organized





a testing session, where they poured coffee on the carpet to assess its stain resistance.

Helping to smooth over any disruption was regular communication with the entire staff.

"I sent an email to everyone, called the Carpet Update," McDonald said. "Every morning and every night. A lot of emails. Sometimes there was one in between. We laid out whose rooms needed to be emptied. There was food getting served at various times. It was a total mess going on. A total mess — first the studios, and then the showroom, and then the back room repair area where everything had landed when there was no place else to go."


That last piece was the biggest mess, and it coincided with Ellen's departure for The NAMM Show — a coincidence she still

claims was unintentional. Regardless, when the entire project was finished, "the head carpet layer brought me a bouquet," McDonald said. "We had worked that well together."

#### BOTTOM LINE


In the end, the redo has been a real success, though at press time Hartland and the Waukesha County Conservatory had not yet found time for a celebration or grand re-opening. And McDonald said that, for now, it would be hard to measure the business impact of the project — though at the end of July, merchandise sales were up 12 percent over 2012, year-to-date. "Can I say it has tangibly increased sales? Not sure," she noted. "But I can definitely say we're really quite busy right now."

And that's fun, too. **MI**



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## SAM ASH OPENS NEW TEXAS SHOP

Industry stalwart Sam Ash recently opened a location in Dallas, its second in Texas and its 48th storefront. Based in New York, the company currently operates in 16 states. Its other Texas shop is in San Antonio.

"We've been looking in Houston, Dallas and Austin for quite a while," said COO Sammy Ash. "We've wanted to go there for a long time, and this time everything fell together. It's an old building, but its placement on the highway is great." Ash said the 21,500-square-foot store was the first in the company to open with a music school in place.

"Considering everything, this is probably the nicest store we've got," Ash said. "Not the biggest, by a longshot. But beautiful. And probably not our last one in Texas. Fantastic economy and a fantastic state."







Bennett

## GC Hires New PR VP, Opens 250th Store

Guitar Center recently named Christopher Ian Bennett to the newly created position of vice president, communications and corporate affairs. The company said the announcement comes as part of a new set of initiatives at GC, which includes a formalized communications/corporate affairs department. Previously, Bennett led Best Buy Canada's corporate communications department under Mike Pratt, now Guitar Center's new CEO. A graduate of a Performing Arts School in Canada, Bennett's passion for music and new media will help him lead the new communications strategy for Guitar Center.

Bennett will be responsible for the communications strategy of the entire GC organization and affiliated brands. Working closely with GC's current PR agency partners, Clyne Media and Filter Creative, Bennett will be the new spokesperson for the organization and will play a more active role in communicating directly with the media than ever before.

"The Guitar Center story fuses an iconic history in retail with an exciting vision for its future leading the MI industry," Bennett said. "We have a great opportunity in front of us to work more closely with the press through a more transparent and open level of communication with them."

In other company news, GC recently announced it had opened its 249th and 250th locations. The 249th is located in Port St. Lucie, Fla. The 250th, in Waco, Texas, features GC Garage, a repair department, as well as GC Studios, an initiative allowing the company to provide in-house lessons.

## IN MEMORIAM

### Jim Hoover

Jim Hoover, a former president of Springfield, Mo.'s Hoover Music Company, died in July at 73 after a battle with cancer. Jim's grandfather Herbert Lee Hoover founded the company in 1912. Jim and his brother Kenny took over in 1978. Jim's son, Brian, became president in 2000, but Jim continued to come into the store and handle the repairs of stringed instruments.



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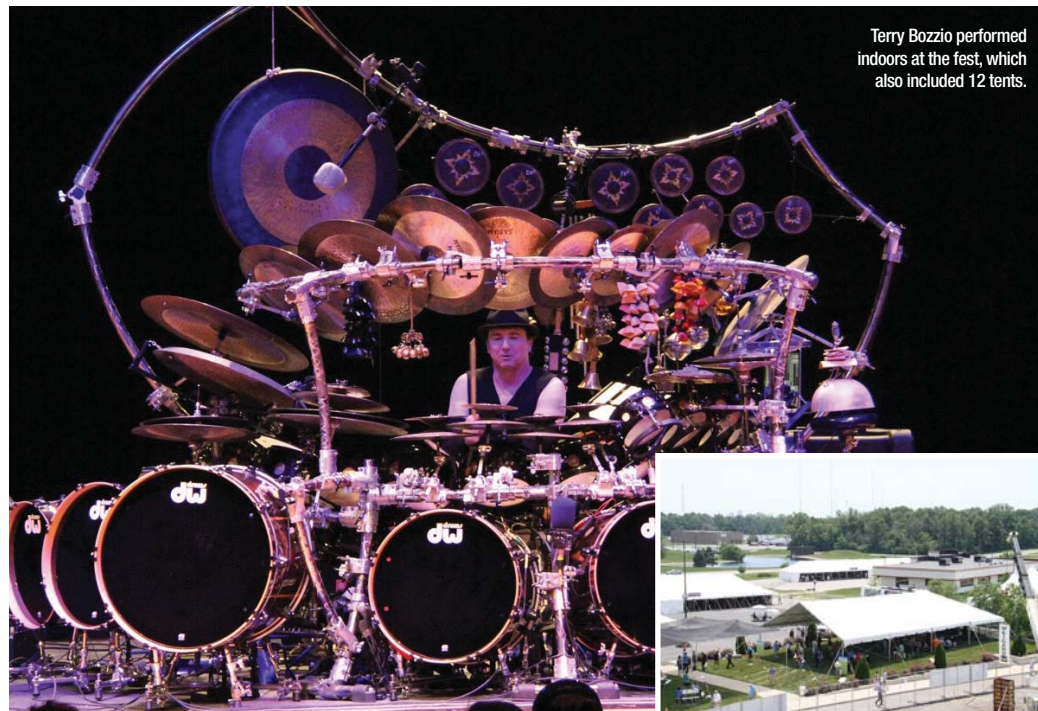
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# SWEETWATER GETS FESTIVE

This summer, Ft. Wayne, Ind.-based Sweetwater Music held its annual GearFest. The event, which debuted in 2002, featured exhibits from more than 200 manufacturers; workshops, clinics and seminars; live demos; special performances; and a musician's flea market. With more than 7,000 in attendance, and sales up by more than 36 percent over 2012, this year's edition broke all previous records.

This year's featured speakers included Mastodon guitarist Bill Kelliher, guitarist Gary Hoey, bass player Billy Sheehan, drummer Terry Bozzio, record producer Jack Douglas, producer/engineer Frank Filipetti, producer/engineer Fab Dupont, mixer Chris Lord-Alge, live sound engineer Rick Camp, and many others. To celebrate its 130th anniversary, Gretsch provided the festival's closing event, featuring Australian singer/songwriter and guitarist Joe



Terry Bozzio performed indoors at the fest, which also included 12 tents.

Robinson, and power pop band Fountains of Wayne.

Sweetwater editorial director and guitarist Mitch Gallagher demonstrated the "Tones of the

Pros," from his recent book *Guitar Tone: Pursuing the Ultimate Guitar Sound*.

In total, GearFest included more than 140 workshops and

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## OPENING

# BACH TO ROCK NOW IN WAYNE, PA

Music school Bach to Rock celebrated the opening of its newest location, in Wayne, Pa., in July. This location is the first in Pennsylvania, the company's 8th outlet and its second franchisee.

"After months of preparation and training, we are so excited to officially open our doors to the public," said Dave Leonard, who owns the school with his wife, Ellen Good. "We offer a variety of music programs for students of all ages, from early childhood to adults, and can't wait to be a part of the local arts community."

"We are thrilled to expand Bach to Rock's presence with the opening in Pennsylvania," said Brian Gross, president of Bach to Rock. "We know that with Dave and Ellen's leadership, their team of handpicked, quality, professional instructors will make Bach to Rock a hub of the Wayne music community."







## MAINLINE MUSIC MAKES A MOVE

Mainline Music, a full-line retailer in Port Orchard, Wash., recently moved to a new location. Partners Darren Erickson and Pamela Bilodeau (at left) first opened the business in the fall of 2010, when their area's only music store closed. The building, originally constructed in 1894, was converted to a Model-T factory in the 1920s, and now serves as a hub for all things artistic, including a music and dance school.

"We're getting great response from the community," Erickson said. "The community is excited we're here. This town deserves a good music store."



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## SHERMAN CLAY TO CLOSE LAST LOCATION

Longtime piano dealer Sherman Clay has closed the last of its retail outlets. The downtown Seattle location of the chain, once 60 strong, was slated to shutter in September.

"There's a tendency to lean toward viewing this as a collapse, as a sign of economic troubles, and actually Sherman Clay was very profitable," said Tom Austin, president of the company's retail division, who started with Sherman Clay 40 years ago as a sales trainee. "This was really a generational evolution. When the sons of Herman Schwartz got to

the point where they saw their retirement within sight they decided to close down the retail."

Founded in San Francisco by Alexander Sherman in 1870 and owned by the Schwartz family since 1960, Sherman Clay & Co. has long been recognized as one of America's leading piano retailers. Earlier this year, the company's Bay Area locations were acquired by Steinway & Sons. The Portland area stores closed last winter. Austin said that the company had owned the Seattle location's building since 1926, but sold it about a year-and-a-half ago. At press time, there was no word on Steinway's plans in the Seattle market.

"We've been through world wars. Earthquakes. The Depression," Austin said. "We were authorized to sell Steinway in 1892. It's a sad day. But you put your arms around it and move on."

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## NAMM Foundation Gives Gard Scholarships

The NAMM Foundation announced the recipients of the William R. Gard Memorial Scholarship for the 2013-14 academic year. Named for a former NAMM Executive Vice President, the Gard Scholarship is designed to invest in the education of promising students who are contributing their talents to the music products industry. The annual award supports a portion of academic expenses for selected NAMM member-company employees studying full time at accredited four-year universities.

The 2013-14 recipients are: Nicolas Falcetti, University of Massachusetts Lowell, Falcetti Music; John "Jack" Finnegan, University of Iowa, Quinlan & Fabish Music Company; Kelly Riordan, University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, Hartland Music; Jason Terry, University of South Carolina, Rice Music House; Brady Vilhauer, Chandler-Gilbert Community College, Broadway Music; James Warren, Adrian College, Music and More.

"While these students never had the chance to meet Bill Gard, I believe they would have been inspired by his dedication and love of the industry," said NAMM President and CEO Joe Lamond. "It is in Bill's spirit that we look to the future and to these students who will help lead us there."

Scholarships are awarded in the amount of \$2,000 per academic year. They may be renewed for up to three additional years, provided the applicant continues his or her employment with a NAMM member firm and maintains satisfactory academic standing.

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## Note From Our Members

### NAMM Members on the Benefits of Belonging

As your industry association, NAMM continually works to offer events, training, programs and services designed to help its Members grow and prosper, but there is also a more personal connection to the work we do each and every day. Best told by them, here are two perspectives on the benefits of joining this close-knit international community and staying current by renewing your NAMM Membership along with thousands of other companies in September and October.



**Doug John and Francie Denis** are new to the business, starting from scratch to build Legend Music in Manteca, Calif., in March of 2011, and adding their Fresno location about one year later. As Doug explains, being part of a

larger network of music product professionals has been invaluable as they work to grow their retail business, lesson programs and community connections.

"I find that NAMM has a great network for meeting people, talking to manufacturers and distributors, and other dealers especially. It helps to find out their tricks of the trade, how

they do things, how they promote things. Those connections have been the biggest thing we've taken advantage of so far, being so new. This last Nashville show, we made some very good contacts and met some really nice people.

"After winning the Top 100 Dealer Award for Rookie of the Year, we got a copy of the press release before we even returned home. We plan to send it to the local press and share it with our customers. I think it will be a real asset to our business. Like I said when we won our award, this is a unique industry. I was in the industrial sector for 47 years, and in the not-quite three years of doing this we've had more fun, met more nice people and made more friends than during those 47 years. The kids in our lesson program are a major part of that—it makes you walk three feet off the ground when you see somebody click with music."



**Dale and Phyllis Webb**, owners of The Magic Fluke Company, in Sheffield, Mass., manufacture ukuleles in the United States and are focused on creating music-making opportunities within their community. A Member

for 10 years, Phyllis reflects on how the industry comes together through NAMM.

"One line I say regularly is that 'we cannot afford to *not* be at the NAMM Show.' That, traditionally, has been where we

make connections with new dealers and come face-to-face with retailers we may have gotten over the phone but are now meeting in person for the first time. Technology can't erase what it is to talk business, network and solidify our relationship face-to-face. We're creating new relationships with other manufacturers too. In this changing world, we really need one another—and we need to market our community together.

"I'm also really proud of the work the association is doing for music advocacy. Districts are losing music and arts because there's no time or budget. NAMM's work to keep music in the schools is so important and something I think the association does well."



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> **Dean Markley**  
Teams with Korg UK  
PAGE 26

> **Community Professional**  
CEO passes away  
PAGE 27

> **Hal Leonard**  
Runs for charity  
PAGE 28

> **D'Addario**  
Expands leadership  
PAGE 28

# SUPPLY

CRUSH DRUMS | BY KATIE KAILUS

## THE CRUSH CONNECTION

They say in business it's all about who you know. No one knows that better than Terry Platt, CEO of Crush Drums. He and his partners, all former employees at drum companies across the industry, started Crush Drums in 2010. And they had no idea the impact their connections would have on their new business venture.

"We had a lot of great relationships with people from our former jobs," Platt said, adding that their artist roster grew to 25 or 30 before the company even began producing instruments. "When our current artist relations partner and I left our former company, we let the artists we worked with know. They said, 'We are going with you.' And we let them know that we didn't have any sets for them to play yet. They said, 'If you guys are doing it we want to be a part of it.'"

As a result, Platt and his partners took the artists' input when developing Crush Drums, which Platt describes as a company that makes "custom-type drums that drummers want to play."

The team also used their connections to seek out dealers.

"We knew the drum buyer at Musician's Friend, and I laid out Crush's company profile to him



Chad Huang, Ricky Hughes,  
Terry Platt and Michael Swenson

and he understood it," Platt said. "So he was on board from the start. That allowed us to focus on the premier drum shops."

And all that focus has paid off. Since launching at the 2011 NAMM Show, the Tampa, Fla.-based company has placed its products in at least 110 dealers across the country. A distribution agreement with Musiquip signed in July could give them access to another 500 retailers.

### HANDS-ON APPROACH

Platt attributes most of his company's fast growth to his team's hands-on approach.

"I feel like that along with great artist relations, we keep a great drum community with our players," he said. "We are very hands-on with the guys that play the drums, and we listen to their comments on how we could do things a little differently."

Crush Drum's social media presence has also impacted its relationship with its customers.

"On our Facebook page, we've had [instances] where a kid will post how he's thinking about playing an ash kit or a brush kit and you'll see guys like George Johnson from Seal's band comment on his post and

say, 'Hey, that's the kit I play out on tour, and this is what I love about it,'" Platt relayed. "It's that kind of experience that impacts customers."

Starting out with humble intentions, Crush Drum's quick growth has left Platt and his team a bit surprised.

"We honestly started the company thinking we would do well enough to keep it going," Platt said. "We didn't expect it to explode and see the growth that we have so quickly. Everyday we pinch ourselves and think, 'Wow, this is really happening.'" **MI**



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## AWARD

**JJ Babbitt President Receives Award**

Rocco Giglio, president and COO for JJ Babbitt, was recently awarded the Van and Jean Young Lifetime Achievement Award at the annual Elkhart Jazz Festival in Elkhart, Ind. Giglio was recognized for his many years of contributions to the city's Jazz Festival, as well as for more than a half-century of contributions to the band instrument industry. [jjbabbitt.com](http://jjbabbitt.com)

## DISTRIBUTION

**Dean Markley Adds Korg UK as Distributor**

Dean Markley has named Korg UK its exclusive distributor throughout the United Kingdom and Ireland.

"The addition of Korg UK as a partner is yet another example of our strategy to enhance our worldwide distribution network to better support the demands and needs of our customers," said Lori McCallian, CEO of Dean Markley International.



"We look forward to a strong relationship with the Korg UK organization and driving growth opportunities for both companies while expanding our global customer footprint."

[deanmarkley.com](http://deanmarkley.com); [korguk.com](http://korguk.com)

## CLOSING

**Fender Museum to Close**

The Fender Museum of Music and the Arts in Corona, Calif., is set to close. The city of Corona has bought the building and plans to build a community center on the lot.

"Fender is extremely proud of what the Fender Museum has provided our local community over the past two decades, and will continue to support its successful 'Kids Rock Free' music education program," said a Fender spokesperson.

While Fender has had a relationship with the Fender Museum since its inception in 2002, it is not a subsidiary of Fender Musical Instruments Corporation. FMIC, whose main manufacturing facility is also located in Corona, granted a limited license to the facility to use its name, as well as business-related materials and articles, such as its website and business cards. [fender.com](http://fender.com)



The Music Link's Ashley Atz (far right) describes the U.S. workshop to Congresswoman Jackie Speier (second from right) and House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (center).

## THE MUSIC LINK | EVENT

# TML TAKES PART IN 'MAKE IT IN AMERICA'

The Music Link was recently recognized as part of California Congresswoman Jackie Speier's "Make It In America" event in San Mateo, Calif.

The event was comprised exclusively of U.S.-based companies that manufacture products domestically or are increasing stateside production. The Music Link's display was highlighted for an outstanding contribution to domestic instrument production in California.

In 2009, The Music Link opened its Hayward, Calif., workshop, and today exports domestically-produced products to more than 12 other coun-

tries worldwide, while devoting an entire division of the company to U.S. production.

"U.S.-made instruments still set the standard the world over, and we're proud to be a part of that historic tradition and what it means to our local and national economy and culture," said Steve Patrino, company president.

In other news, The Music Link has put the ordering power in the hands of its dealers with its new Online Dealer Portal. Dealers can now access the company's full catalog online as well as current stock levels, recent orders and tracking numbers. [themusiclink.net](http://themusiclink.net)

## HOHNER | CHARITY

## Hohner Helps Out GAMA

Hohner has signed on to contribute Hohner guitars in support of the Guitar and Accessories Marketing Association's (GAMA) Teaching Guitar Workshops program.

The workshops help start classroom guitar programs in schools across the United States and Canada.

"Traditionally Hohner has enthusiastically supported GAMA's efforts to support classroom music education with its Teaching Guitar Workshops," said Rock Clouser, Hohner product manager for fretted instruments. "Keeping youth inspired to create music is very important to Hohner." [hohnerusa.com](http://hohnerusa.com)

ALFRED MUSIC | EVENT

## ALFRED JOINS IN NATIONAL MUSIC DAY CELEBRATION

Alfred Music joined the National Music Day and Make Music L.A. celebration with public performances in Palisades Park in Santa Monica, Calif., during National Music Day on June 21. The day kicked off with “The 100 Hohner Harmonica Project,” where attendees could participate in a community lesson and performance led by Tom Nolan. Following the event, Alfred Music gave away copies of Alfred’s *Teach Yourself to Play Harmonica*. In addition to contributing free products to “The 100 Hohner Harmonica Project,” Alfred Music donated over \$1,000 worth of free music products throughout day. National Music Day is a one-day event where free, live musical performances and opportunities to make music take place across the United States.

“This type of community event aligns perfectly with Alfred Music’s core mission to encourage people to learn, teach, and play music of all genres and ability,” said Alfred Music CEO Ron Manus. {alfred.com}



CORDOBA | WEB

## Cordoba Debuts New Site

Cordoba Guitars has revamped its website to feature an improved, user-friendly layout, high-resolution product photography and video, and an upgraded dealer search. A brand new support section called “Live. Play. Learn.” contains articles, diagrams and video tutorials in an effort to educate customers on the behavior and maintenance of nylon string guitars and ukuleles.

Also, the new dealer search auto-detects the country of residence based on the user’s IP address, and also provides users with the option to search by country. {cordobaguitars.com}



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Hal Leonard's triathlon team

HAL LEONARD | CHARITY

## HAL RUNS FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Fourteen members of Hal Leonard's corporate team recently participated in the Tri-ing for Children's Triathlon, a benefit for Children's Hospital of Wisconsin in Milwaukee and UW Health American Family Children's Hospital in Madison, Wis.

"Training and participating with co-workers was motivating," said David Jahnke, vice president of national sales. "We were happy to raise money for such a worthy cause." [halleonard.com](http://halleonard.com)

## IN MEMORIAM

### Community CEO Passes Away

Timothy Dorwart, CEO of Community Professional Loudspeakers, passed away on July 15 due to illness. Dorwart became Community's CEO in March 2013 and led the company through its introduction of several important new products at InfoComm. He came to Community from Gibson where he held the position of general manager of pro audio.

"We are deeply saddened by Tim's death," said Bruce Howze, Community's president. "We mourn the loss of our chief executive and a good friend, and we extend our most sincere condolences to his wife and family."



## APPOINTMENTS

### FMIC Names New VP of Sales

Enders Musical Instruments (FMIC) recently named Tony Price vice president of North American sales.

In this role, Price will have sales responsibility for FMIC and specialty brands across all channels, and KMC fretted brands for national accounts through inside sales. He will also be in charge of FMIC's regional and district sales manager structure.

"This is an exciting evolution for the sales management team," said Andy Rossi, senior vice president of global sales for FMIC. "We are glad to have Tony with us, and expect great things for our company and our customers."

Alan Waite, who previously held this position, transitioned into a new role supporting emerging strategic sales initiatives. Waite has led the FMIC sales force in North America for more than 20 years.

"We are thrilled to have Alan's talents focused entirely on our strategic growth plans," Rossi said. "His passion for motivating our teams and creating plans for growth is unmatched in our industry."



Tony Price

**Solid State Logic** has named Jay Easley vice president of live consoles in the Americas.

Ron Kronewitter has been appointed to the position of key accounts

manager for **Fishman**.

**Anthem Musical Instruments** has hired Frank Sarcia as director of sales.

**Universal Audio** has added David Lenat as its director of U.S. sales.

D'ADDARIO | PERSONNEL

### D'ADDARIO EXPANDS EXECUTIVE ROLES

D'Addario has debuted a new organizational structure designed to reinforce the leadership of the company.

The new corporate structure consists of two divisions that will be led by new co-presidents, Rick Drumm and John D'Addario III. This strategy will make it possible for both individuals to leverage their experience and strengths.

Drumm will now be re-

sponsible for all of D'Addario's percussion brands as well as its woodwind accessories line under the Rico brand name, and manage all of D'Addario's international affiliates. Formerly the company's executive vice president, D'Addario III is now responsible for the global supply chain of the string manufacturing business, as well as all U.S.-based distribution. [daddario.com](http://daddario.com)

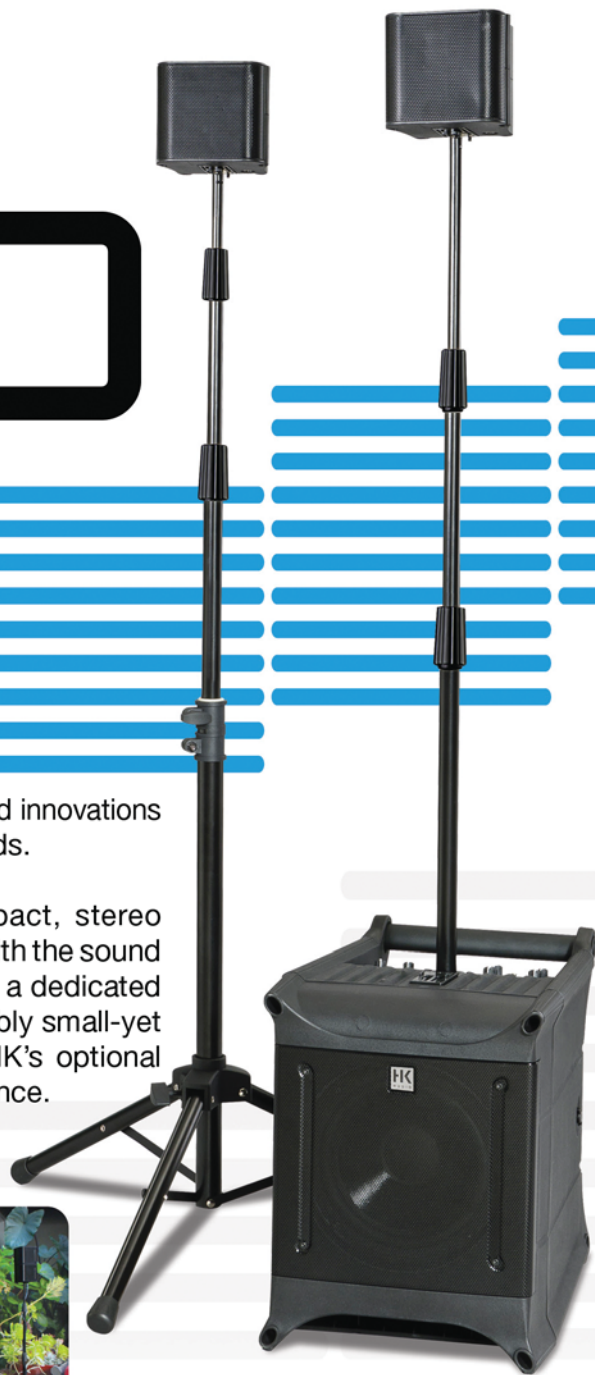
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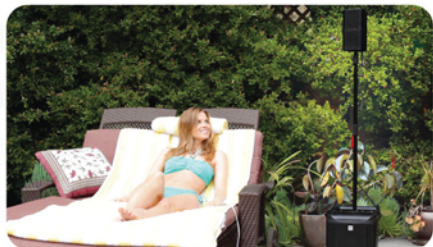
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# IDEAS

Inside **IDEAS** > The Lesson Room Page 32 > The Retail Doctor Page 34

INDEPENDENT RETAIL | BY TED ESCHLIMAN

## HIDDEN COSTS

Most of us are savvy to the concept of “delivered” cost. When we calculate true profit, we account for shipping, as well as labor to unpack, prep, hang, heat and cool — all the steps to transition a product from the manufacturer’s warehouse and into the customer’s hands. A tenor sax case doesn’t net for \$75 if it costs \$35 to get it to your door. The \$110 true net (\$35 freight PLUS the \$75) reveals your selling price of \$135 is NOT a profit margin of 44 percent. It’s actually 19 percent. We understand shipping costs, because they’re printed clearly on our invoices, but there are other subtle industry expenses. You need to understand the nature of the time value of money. The cost of inventory that sits for too long is easily underestimated.

**Slow-selling Trades.** Suppose a salesman gives a \$500 trade credit for a guitar. The new instrument sold will need to be replaced (and paid for), but the cash from the trade is temporarily parked on the sales floor. If the trade is sold for \$750



the very next day, the salesman could brag about the \$500 plus \$250 profit ready to invest into replacement — 33 points.

But consider this: If the vendor charged an industry-average 18 percent interest on the new guitar, a three-month delay selling the trade accrues \$22.50 (on \$500) and should be subtracted from our trade-in sale. Now we’re down to 30 points. If selling took six months, interest on the static trade would be \$45, and an identical sale would drop to 27 points. If it took a year to sell, that interest becomes \$90, and our \$750 sale would drop to 21 points. The

point here: Trade-ins should always anticipate length of time on the floor. Inventory that hangs around kills cash flow.

**Exponential Obsolescence Cost.** The death spiral of obsolete inventory — last year’s cool stuff — is just as devastating. Once the market is gone for that hot item, it needs to be culled, sometimes at cost or less. You can’t continue to buy fresh inventory and capitalize on new profit potential if cash is tied up in the old and obsolete. “Clear-ancing” must be a recurrent cycle in your marketing schedule.

**“Committed” Cost.** We all have a “hold box” or some kind of layaway area. It’s not a pleasant chore reminding customers they need to complete the sale, but inventory not on the floor impacts cash flow negatively.

**RTV (Return to Vendor) Cost.** Part of retailing is items returned as defective. Be diligent keeping this static inventory to a minimum. Vendors are anxious to send a replacement (not credit), and their finance clock starts ticking when the replacement ships and only ends when they receive the defective mer-

chandise back. Plan on pestering and follow-up.

**Open Box Cost.** Big box stores sell opened packaging at a discount. Today our customers expect us to do the same, so we need to avoid having too many unnecessary duplicates out of the box. Today’s consumers want purchases untouched by human hands whenever possible, or they expect to pay less. Open an item and open your obligation to sell for less.

**“Un-aerated” Cost.** A healthy lawn requires seasonal aerating to return oxygen to its roots. Similarly, you should be culling dead inventory and periodically shuffling it around (especially accessories). This brings eyeballs a new perspective of your product mix.

Good businesses are wired to match up purchasing with sales productivity. It’s important to establish protocols to ensure that the expenses of what comes in stay under the sales of what’s going out. **MI**

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



THE LESSON ROOM | BY PETE GAMBER

# First-Lesson Chops

It's Monday at 4 p.m. and standing in your store is the new trumpet lesson student with her mom, waiting to start her first music lesson. You've gotten them into your store and they have committed to your lesson program, so what happens next? Sounds like a silly question, but is it? What happens when a new student shows up at your store for their first music lesson?

At many stores that trumpet student and parent would stand there waiting for somebody that looks like a trumpet teacher to approach them and say, "Hi." More than likely the sales staff is ignoring them thinking, "They're just here for lessons." After a while, the parent goes to the sales counter and says, "We're waiting for our trumpet lesson, is the teacher here?" The staffer says, "I don't know," goes to check and comes back texting the teacher. "Apparently he's out of town this week."

After an experience like this, you've probably lost a student, a customer and — if they tweet, Facebook or yelp their experience — possibly a few more.

## THE DAY BEFORE A FIRST LESSON

There are ways to avoid what has happened here. Make sure someone on staff calls the teacher and lets them know that they have a new student coming in tomorrow at 4. If the teacher has an issue with that time, it can be resolved before the student comes in. Not to mention you can ask the teacher what books and materials to pull for the lesson. You should also make a list of the new lesson starts for the next day in order of times they come in.

After calling the teacher, you should call the student to remind them when their lesson is starting. Ask them to come in 10 minutes early and go directly to the main sales counter to check in and purchase the books and

materials they will need for the lessons.

## THE LESSON DAY

The day of the first lesson you should post a list of new students that are starting that day. Double check that the teacher and the new student have both been called. Next, pull the books for

the student's lesson. Include a "Welcome to Music Lessons at Your Music Store" letter. Explain what student events, discounts, and such are available to them. Tell your staff to welcome the new student by having them check the new student list so they can address them by name.

Give them the welcome letter, and sell them the books. This gives the student a prompt start on the lessons instead of a teacher taking 5-10 minutes finding books, or, worse yet, scribbling out something for the first lesson.

Hang out with them until you've introduced them to the teacher. Also, make sure to tell the student and parent, "Find me after your lesson — I want to find out how it went."

## END OF LESSON FOLLOW-UP

After the lesson, ask how it went and what the teacher worked on. It's difficult if a store is really busy, but make sure that at least one staffer has the time to interact with your students. Get teachers and staff on the same page. Train your staff and explain to teachers the new approach. This new vibe will make everyone have an awesome first lesson — students, teachers and your store. Win-win-win. **MI**

Pete Gamber is a 35-year veteran of music retailing and music lessons. He specializes in music lesson programs and music retail consulting. He can be reached at [petegambermusic@gmail.com](mailto:petegambermusic@gmail.com).



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THE RETAIL DOCTOR | BY BILLY CUTHRELL

# People Get Ready

At this past January's NAMM show I was talking with a small group of retailers from around the country about the use of technology in our day-to-day operations. I was actually using the time to conduct my own "technology in the workplace" poll. The results? I found that while they all had standard point-of-sale systems and Internet connectivity, that was basically the extent of the technology in their stores. Sure, they had personal iPhones and Android devices. A few had iPads (received a month earlier for Christmas, and not really in use yet). But when I asked if they had thought of using technology to bring customers in their doors, I got blank stares. When I asked if they were using any technologies such as Wi-Fi cameras in their teaching rooms, or simple things like QR codes in store or advertisements, my questions were met with answers like, "I'm not sure I know what that is," and "How would I use that in my shop?"

I believe with a little imagination you can find lots of great ways to incorporate all sorts of "tech toys" into your business. You should not be waiting for your customers to show you the latest technologies; you should be showing them. If you turn them on to something new then you are the go-to, ahead-of-the-curve place to be.

I recommended that the folks I was speaking with visit two booths at the show that were using technologies they probably had not seen before. I encouraged them to then think about how they could take what they saw home and use it in their own shops. Here's what they saw:

## BRING PAPER TO LIFE

A major drum manufacturer celebrating the 20th anniversary of its popular bass drum pedals had these great looking stickers in their booth — a snake head sticking out of a circle. On the bottom of the sticker was a message asking you to download the free mue Alive! app. Once you did, you would point your phone's camera at the sticker. Once the app recognized the image, the snake started to move, climbing out of the circle, then wrapping itself around the screen of your

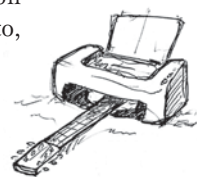
phone and disappearing. Then, in the center of the sticker where the snake had been, came videos of the company's endorsers talking about the pedal. Sounds crazy, right? It is crazy — and every single customer in my shop that I have shown it to loves it! There are multiple apps out there that bring paper to life and add interactivity (augmented reality apps) to just about any product. Check out TouchCode ([touch-code.de](http://touch-code.de)) for just one example.

## NEW DIMENSIONS

A few years ago I read an article outlining how 3D printers were not only going to change manufacturing but also soon reach everyday users. Large 3D printers at the time

were being used to "print" one-off, specialized medical implants, jewelry, racecar parts and custom

mobile phone cases. Instantly intrigued, I started thinking of all the ways this technology could be used in my shops. I soon discovered that a decent 3D printer was still out of my price range. But today, prices are starting to come down, making the printers more attainable for the average home or business user. They work essentially like the printer attached to your computer; you hit a print button and they go to work.



**Incorporate emerging trends and technologies in your business before your customers and competitors do**

A 3D printer uses materials such as production grade plastics to build successive layers until the object being printed appears. The possibilities for this type of printing are nearly endless. If you have a repair shop you can make one-off parts for instruments, or better yet, customized parts that can't be obtained on the market. How about custom tone or volume knobs

an online store to purchase — unless you are a go-to resource for customers seeking to understand the technologies and how they are used. Be that, and you raise your chances for a sale twofold. Your utilization of emerging trends, and demonstrations of how to effectively manipulate them to enhance your customer's lives, create a

unique environment and experience. You should endeavor to offer that one-of-a-kind customer experience that no one else can duplicate. Well, at least until they buy their own 3D printer. **MI**

Billy Cuthrell owns and operates Progressive Music Center. Contact him at [billy@raleighmusiclessons.com](mailto:billy@raleighmusiclessons.com).

*In today's retail marketplace you need to embrace new technologies and be ahead of the curve to set yourself apart.*

with your shop's logo on them, or one-off promotional giveaways (Small guitar replicas? Employee name tags?). Search Google and YouTube for 3D printers and you will discover weeks worth of reading and watching material.

#### ONE-OF-A-KIND EXPERIENCES

In today's competitive retail marketplace you need to embrace new technologies and be ahead of the curve to set yourself apart. You can no longer rely solely on the latest guitar colors, drum configurations and crafty displays at your entrance to woo customers. If you understand and incorporate emerging trends and technologies in your business before your customers and competitors do, then you are that much farther ahead as these things advance. At the very least it's important to understand that your customers (and competitors) are spending more and more time doing their homework and seeing the latest gadgets, developments and technologies on YouTube and around the Internet. Once there, they will click over to



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**NORTH**





**BY DAVID ZIVAN**  
**PHOTO BY MATTHEW PLEXMAN**

# PRV STAR



# THE STORY IS FAMILIAR:

Young man returns from military service and starts a small music business. Weathers storms. Grows. Son takes over business. Weathers storms. Grows.

But while that may sound like the path of hundreds of music retailers across North America, the end result for Cosmo Music looks a lot different. From its commonplace beginnings, the single-store business has radically evolved, operating now out of a stunning 56,000-square-foot facility located in Richmond Hill, Ontario, about an hour north of Toronto. It is, simply put, one of the best-looking showrooms in the world. Its lesson studio facility is near its 3,500-student capacity, and at the end of this past school year it had nearly 12,000 instruments out on rental. The guitar and bass portion of the showroom, about 8,000 soaring square feet, includes separate sections for high-end acoustics and electrics, and a dedicated bass room. And on and on.

At present, the company is generating more than \$16 million (Canadian) annually, and is poised for more growth as it begins a significant expansion into the online space (still vastly underutilized in Canada). The driving force for the company, said CEO Mark Hebert, is a focus on consumer interaction, a kind of shopping adventure reinforced by the sheer scale of the building itself.

“When a customer comes in, it’s not just about buying something or renting something,” he said. “It’s about the experience they have in the store, and the desire created for them to want to come back and show their friends and family. All the staff in the different departments know that that’s the goal. It’s what we all strive toward.”

## THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

“You may have gathered that I am kind of hard to please,” said Hartley Peavey, the founder and CEO of Peavey Electronics. “And I have seen more music stores than I want to even think about. But if you said, ‘Send me to the best music store in North America,’ I would say go visit Cosmo.”

About a year ago, Peavey got convinced by his rep for the area to pay a call on Cosmo and, despite his strongly stated lack of interest in seeing yet another shop, he made the trip. Peavey acknowledges that he hasn’t stopped talking about it since. What he saw was a building designed from the ground up to be one of the finest music stores anywhere.

“My father [Tom] always had a vision — a superstore setup — that we’ve had conversations about for decades now,” Hebert said. “It was something like a mall, with a hallway down the center, and stores going off to the side. Which is kind of what we have going on.”

As customers enter through the front door, they step into a cavernous atrium, 32 feet high, sometimes referred to as







## A LOOK AT COSMO MUSIC

THE 54,000-SQUARE-FOOT SPACE FEATURES DEPARTMENTS DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR THEIR INVENTORY — AS WELL AS A LARGE WAREHOUSE AND PERFORMANCE HALL.







the main hall. Directly ahead are kiosks of clothing, gifts and various accessories. To the left are registers and, farther along that enormous glass wall, a café that looks like a Starbucks. To the right, enormous doorways, individually decorated and designed, serve as storefronts for the different departments. The far end of the room is open to the guitar department, above which a long stairway leads up to the piano department, lessons facility and administrative offices.

"When you first come in, it's like, 'Now I'm in Music City,'" Hebert said. "And then, whether it's a beginner musician or a pro, they enter one of those sub-departments, and they have now entered their own little world of drumming bliss or guitar heaven. It's like a series

**"WHEN YOU FIRST COME IN, IT'S LIKE, 'NOW I'M IN MUSIC CITY,'" HEBERT SAID.**

of boutique shops."

Veteran staff contributed to the concepting of the building, Hebert said, but the lead designer for the project was a local guy,

Peter Tillmann, whose resume includes design work for the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto.

"The atrium is pretty much his first sketch from when we sat down at the table," said Peter Fudge, sales manager for the education division, who has been with the company since 1985. "He said, 'Just start talking. Tell me what kind of music store you want.' And he started to draw."

The building is entirely humidity controlled ("Some spaces more than others," Fudge noted), and all departments open onto the main hall. Among the more unusual custom elements is what Fudge calls the "Disney hallway" — a wide corridor, concealed from customer view, that runs the length of the store, connecting each department to the shipping and warehouse area, as well

as the repair shop. There are no boxes laying around in the retail space. No clutter anywhere.

"You could eat off the floor in that store," Peavey said. "You walk in and the atmosphere is electric. Their displays are clean, the guitars are set up, there's no rust on the strings, there's no dust."

Each department handles its own staffing and tracks its own numbers, like a little business unit. As the photos on these pages demonstrate, each has a feel and layout that the management deemed most conducive to its products. The print and books room is full of earth tones and elegant lighting. Drums and percussion has an industrial feel, with exposed girders providing what Fudge called "a 'big wow' wall of drums." The guitar area is designed around



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an enormous painted guitar image: “The mezzanine is shaped like a telecaster body, the steps are frets, the headstock is in the ground,” Fudge said.

And where did all this inspired design come from?

“For about a ten-year period prior to our first store, we asked that whenever any of our upper managers, or any of our other employees for that matter, were in a different country or different province that they visit a local music store and jot down ideas,” Hebert said.

Insert your own cliché here: *Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. Mediocre artists borrow; great artists steal.* Regardless, there can be no doubt that Cosmo Music contains elements of some of the best retail design from around the globe.

### THE MODEST START

Tom Hebert served in the Canadian Air Force, working primarily as a mechanic, and was stationed all over the world, including a long stint in Germany. He played in the Variatones, a popular rock band with country influences, and when he left the service in 1966 he knew that his passion was music. His first business was importing guitars from Italy and Japan. In 1968, he opened a retail location, changing the name of his company from Cosmo Guitars to Cosmo Music, and in 1971 moved to Richmond Hill, the town where the superstore sits today.

The company soon added brass and woodwind, and by the mid-’80s moved to another larger location. Another store, dedicated to that market segment, as well as

the growing repair operations, opened in 1990.

The split operation continued to grow — at 8,800 square feet, the second location was touted at the time as one of the boldest showrooms anywhere — but the arrangement had downsides. “Far too many inefficiencies,” Fudge said. “We knew we needed to bring everything together.”

Soon after the turn of the century, Mark began taking over more and more of the day-to-day operations of the business. He’d been trained for it — and not just because of his business degree from the University of Western Ontario.

“I’ve always worked in the store,” he said. “My mother was doing payroll when she was in the hospital, two hours after she gave birth to me. So I was

involved even then.”

Coming up, Mark got a taste of virtually every part of the business, “from being back in the warehouse to cleaning the instruments to going out on the road as a sales rep to visiting with schools and teachers to fielding phone calls for orders to working all of the positions in the office like accounts receivable, data entry, and accounts payable. It was kind of lucky for me, because the company was small enough that there were always people off for maternity leave or other comings and goings.”

Despite eight years of piano, alto sax from grade 5 through grade 11, a bit of rock drumming and a little guitar tinkering, Hebert claims “limited musical abilities.” More important, he said, were larger scale projects

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COSMO MUSIC

that came to him, even early on, like changing over the entire company's computer system, and researching and implementing a new accounting package.

Hebert stresses the fact that despite the company's growth (they employ about 200, about 90 of whom are teachers), the staff still feels close. Brenda Hebert, Mark's mother, started in the business in 1972 and still serves as CFO. Repair department manager Kevin Rohm started in 1976, and Jerry Hunt, purchasing department manager, signed on in 1985. "Growing up in that — when I eventually got to work here, they were all my family," Mark said. "No one really wants to let each other down."

"In some big retailers," Peavey said, "you walk in and they have one of everything, but nobody knows anything. At Cosmo, the people have a smile on their face — and they know what they are talking about."

Hebert is quick to praise his entire staff, noting especially his "right-hand man" Rudi Brouwers, vice president and COO, who according to the company's internal bio "as a teenage bass player ... walked into the store and just never left." Brouwers, Hebert said, "is involved in every decision."

## WIDE OPEN TERRITORY

Toronto is the capitol of Ontario and the nation's largest city, with 2.6 million residents — bigger than Houston, smaller than Chicago. Cosmo is actually located in the York Region, north of Toronto, and Hebert says eventually the area will be the population center of the wider metropolitan area.

"In Canada, because of population density, you never see towns or cities where you have a dozens of music stores, or a giant Guitar Center across the street from Sam Ash. You just don't get that up here," Hebert said. "Toronto is the most highly dense city in Canada, but compared to New York it's just a completely different scale. And that actually makes for quite a large barrier to entry."

Cosmo sits essentially at the crossroads of the main north-south thoroughfare out of Toronto and one of the region's largest east-west highways. As a result, Cosmo enjoys the benefits of being both an extremely local store for many customers, and a destination store for many others.

"We have to be," Hebert said. "We have

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to have people driving two hours to get to the store. Or even flying. We have people from all over the world come to the store.”

Soon, theoretically, the store will be selling all over the world. Though the Cosmo website is just over a year old, and the company has done hardly any advertising, sales

on the site have already exceeded 10 percent of total revenue. Nearly 13,000 square feet of the building is warehouse space, allowing for same-day shipping on most orders. Recently, the company reorganized the space for even greater capacity and efficiency.

Smart move: forecasters say that growth

of e-commerce in Canada in the near term will outpace the rate in the United States. From 2007 to 2012, according to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, online sales in Canada doubled, but still represented only about 4 percent of total sales of goods and services in the country. (Estimates vary, but in the U.S. that figure is thought to be closer to 10 percent). Without question, despite having one of the highest rates of Internet penetration in the world, Canadians have been slow to embrace e-commerce.

#### ON THE HORIZON

Along with a constant effort to enhance the customer experience, the leadership of Cosmo Music is focused on where the market is going. The education program at the store is a model for such endeavors, beginning with the Apple Seeds (6 weeks to 12 months) and moving through Bean Sprouts, Sweet Potatoes and Honey Bees before finishing with Puddle Jumpers — four-year-olds who will soon be entering school music programs.

The store itself is a resource and a driver. On the second floor, along with the administrative offices, group lesson rooms look out onto the atrium (“When you walk in, you see students making music,” Fudge said. “The idea is that it’s all of a piece.”). The acoustic piano showroom feels elegant, separate from the combo and band action downstairs. And finally, there is the Cosmopolitan Concert Hall, a performance space with a stage and seating for 250. It hosts jazz bands, choirs, and larger clinics — and, outfitted as it is with full smoke and lights, it can tilt in the nightclub direction quite easily.

This year, Cosmo hosted all of the concerts and competitions for Music Alive, the largest public school music festival in the region. “We host thousands of children each year this way, and let them experience the store and music in a whole different way,” Hebert said. “A lot of them may not have seen the store before but we know all of them are enthralled with music. They are in a band that’s competing, and so they’re a potential client of ours. We’ll see a ripple effect: later that evening, or on the weekends, or a couple weeks later, those kids are back in with their parents. They’re doing the tour: ‘Look at this! Look at that!’” **MI**



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Firth at rehearsal with the Boston  
Symphony Orchestra, circa 1985

# VIC FIRTH OF VIC FIRTH COMPANY

*A musician and teacher from a very early age, percussionist Vic Firth founded the New England-based Vic Firth Company, a global leader in the manufacture of drumsticks and mallets, in 1963.*

INTERVIEWED BY STEVE HARVEY

## HOW DO YOU START YOUR DAY?

I exercise for half an hour then I come into the office. My crew is so good that I have very little to do. They manage to find me things to do to keep me busy.

## DO YOU STILL PLAY?

I retired in 2002 after a 50-year stint as timpanist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. I also belonged to a Japanese orchestra out of Matsumoto, with conductor Seiji Ozawa. I used to do four trips to Japan and a European tour every year with him. That finished about four years ago. I figured I'd quit while I was ahead. We have a set of tympani in our artist room, and I went in there last week and played a few things. If that were a student of mine I'd kick him in the butt! I'd say, get your hands back in shape.

## YOU PLAYED WITH A NUMBER OF THE WORLD'S GREAT CONDUCTORS. DID YOU HAVE A FAVORITE?

The period when I did play I now refer to as the Golden Age. You name a conductor: Ormandy, Koussevitsky, Bernstein, Ozawa, Haitink, Stokowski. It was a great privilege and pleasure to play with some of them. Some of them were broombeaters. But I do miss the sounds that I used to hear around me, and contributing to that sound. I now only hear it when I'm driving the car from the plant back to Boston.

## HOW DID YOU FIRST START MAKING DRUMSTICKS?

I whittled some drumsticks down into a shape and a size and a taper that felt very responsive. Then I found a wood turner in Montreal who made sticks for me on a hand lathe, one at a time — so ten pairs was a big order. Little by little it increased and he couldn't handle it. I had a colleague in Maine that found me a place in Kingfield. That ran out of space so we moved over to Newport, Maine, where we are now. From those original ten pairs we now turn 85,000 sticks per day.

## BUT THIS WASN'T YOUR FIRST BUSINESS VENTURE.

I ran an art gallery for seven or eight years. I worked as a partner in a closed investment trust. I taught full-time at the New England Conservatory. I did a lot of stupid things!

## I USE ONE OF YOUR ROLLING PINS SEVERAL TIMES A MONTH.

The plant in Newport, Maine that I bought back in 1996 had

other businesses. I bought it in bankruptcy court; they had been making a few drumsticks for me. We made everything: miniature baseball bats, caps for English Leather cologne, beater bars for vacuum cleaners. All of them failed, one by one, except the Vic Firth Gourmet line. We built it up and kept it going for years. It was a novel reflection of what we were capable of doing, and we had fun doing it. I've made a lot of friends because I gave them a peppermill.

## WHY DID YOU MERGE WITH AVEDIS ZILDJIAN CO. IN 2010?

I had nobody in my family that was interested in taking the business over. I have two daughters; up until recently they were involved. They were both great, but as they left I missed having them here. I thought, rather than leave the company without

a leader from the Firth family, we should try to find someone else who would make a great partner and work well with my people. I had several proposals, and I selected Zildjian to merge with. We both work on the same philosophy; it's been a great relationship.

## HOW IMPORTANT IS EDUCATION?

I had a terrific first drum teacher in Maine. It wasn't until I started to look back in my 30s that I began to realize — it wasn't me, it was the basic training that I'd had. It only emphasized in my own mind how important my first teacher was. I thought, one way for me to pay back to music was to start a program for

educators. We have roundtable discussions and we teach how to make teaching a successful profession. We've done them all over the world, and they're always welcomed and very successful.

## WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM VIC FIRTH CO. IN THE FUTURE?

We're constantly coming up with new and innovative products, and manufacturing leaner and leaner and taking the competition on head-on as we move into today's business climate. I'm a horse with blinders on; I never look to either side or the rear. I just go forward with what I think is right and best for the company, and for drummers. It's been fun, a great trip, and I've enjoyed every minute of it.

## IF NOT THE MUSIC INDUSTRY, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING?

I would have remained involved in collecting art and would have spent more time on my boat, fishing.

*"I'm a horse with blinders on; I never look to either side or the rear. I just go forward with what I think is right and best for the company, and for drummers."*

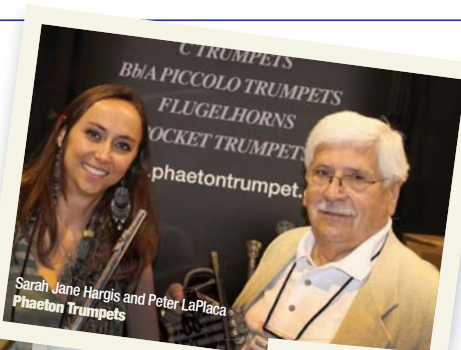




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# Summer Showdown

SUMMER NAMM | BY KATIE KAILUS WITH REPORTING BY DAVID ZIVAN

An increase in attendance and the new Music City Center gives the summer show a boost

Hohner's Will Straughn and Leon Lewis

Summer NAMM showed off its new digs, The Music City Center, to more than 11,498 attendees — a 12 percent increase in attendance over last year's show. Held July 11–13 in Nashville, Tenn., the summer show saw 422 companies exhibit representing more than 1,150 brands. Part of the growth was also attributed to the 157 first-time exhibiting companies.







Mike Mulqueen  
Moku Ukuleles

St. Louis Music's Chris Makle, Art's Music  
Shop's Jessica Freehling-Kazzie and Zander  
Kazzie, and St. Louis Music's Mark Ragin



NAMM YP  
Attendees



Randy Chaisson  
and Greg Zeller  
Sabian



Marc Reiser and Ben Fargen  
Fargen Amplification



Ron Manus  
Alfred



Guitarist Mark Kroops  
plays at the Kyser booth



Andrew  
Biddle  
Griffith  
Technologies



Mike Martin  
Casio

"This year's Summer NAMM reminded me of some of the past Nashville shows a decade ago when companies were really excited about growth and opportunity," said Joe Lamond, NAMM's president and CEO. "We're grateful to our members who made the trip to Nashville this summer. Retailers were focused on stocking up for the fall and holiday selling season and exhibiting brands were able to capitalize on that by opening new doors and writing orders at the show."



# Theo Wanne

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## THE SUMMER SHOW REPORT

Antonio Ferranti, vice president of sales for Alfred Music, was one of the exhibitors doing brisk business. "We really had an awesome show," Ferranti said. "We opened probably a dozen new accounts and took in a great volume of orders."

Chris Larpenteur, product specialist for Yamaha guitars, said he believes the new convention center might have added to the increase in attendance.

"There was a lot more traffic for us this year, which might have to do with the new building," he said. "We saw a steady amount of people at our booth."

Fargen Amplification, which showcased its new Townhouse amplifier at the show, returned to Summer NAMM after taking three years off.

"We decided to return this year because, being a boutique company, Summer NAMM lets us reach a lot more people and meet a lot more dealers that we wouldn't normally get to meet," said Marc Reiser of Fargen. "We had dealers at the booth that we would normally get 5 or ten minutes with at Winter NAMM, and here they were at our booth for half an hour. We also use Summer NAMM as one of our key events during the year for our marketing campaign. We think manufacturers can leverage it."

### THE PORTABLE SHOW

And Fargen wasn't alone. Many companies debuted their new wares at the show, such as Martin Guitars, which highlighted its LX1E Ed Sheeran guitar model. The guitar even earned a nod at "Best in Show." (For a full Best in Show roundup, see page 56.) Moku Ukuleles debuted its custom models that let customers decide



which tonewoods they want to use when creating their own uke.

But, most noticeable was the release of a slew of ultra-portable instruments.

Kala unveiled its travel-size Rumbler UBASS, that measures in at 21 inches, and is ideal for commuters or airline travelers.

"It meets most airline carry-on requirements," said Rick Carlson, marketing manager for Kala. "The Rumbler is the ultimate portable bass for live performance and in the studio. It's strung with Kala's proprietary Silver Rumbler Strings, and each model is equipped with a Kala piezo pickup and EQ with built-in tuner."

Also debuted at show was Roland's Cube GX series. Named the "Best in Show" product, the Cube GX series offers users three different models as well as the updated MicroCube GX, which runs on eight AA batteries and weighs in at only about 6 lbs. **MI**

Riversong  
Guitars' Margo  
Bobrowich and  
Mike Millmore



# DIRECT SOURCE PICKUP

- Acoustic/Electric
- Home Studio
- Teaching Room
- Live Sound
- Worship Music

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Introducing the new Direct Source Pickup from Zildjian. A one-of-a-kind pickup design for use with Gen16 acoustic-electric cymbals as well as Zildjian acoustic cymbals. Eliminates feedback, phasing, and cross-talk. Reproduce a natural acoustic tone. Enhance with reverb. Or use the Gen16 Digital Cymbal Processor (DCP) to tone shape any cymbal in your setup. Seamlessly integrates with both edrum and acoustic drum sets. Perfect for live performance applications.

Visit [gen-16.com](http://gen-16.com) for more information.

**gen**<sup>16</sup>  
Zildjian

**SOUND LEGACY**





### BEACOCK MUSIC NAMED 'DEALER OF THE YEAR'

During the Top 100 Dealer Awards ceremony, held July 13 at the Music City Center, NAMM named Vancouver, Wash.-based Beacock Music its Dealer of the Year. Owner Gayle Beacock was on hand to accept the award. The other winners were named in the following categories: Best Marketing & Sales Promotion, Schmitt Music; Best Exterior Presentation and/or Merchandising and Display, Beacock Music and Matt's Music Center; SupportMusic Advocacy Award, Schmitt Music; Best Special Event, George's Music Stores; Best Online Presentation, Vintage King Audio; Music Makes a Difference Award, Avalon School; Best Emerging Dealer, Legend Music.



### NAMM's Networking Opps

NAMM offered several evening events at this year's Summer NAMM.

The Grand Opening Party on July 10 featured a tribute to Jimi Hendrix and his Nashville connection. The Billy Cox Band of Gypsies performed and Jimi's sister Janie Hendrix made an appearance.

On July 11, NAMM hosted "Insight," a panel discussion which included such industry icons as Andy Zildjian, Fred Gretsch, Chris Martin and Hartley Peavey, among others, along with moderators country singer Vince Gill and Bedell Guitar's Tom Bedell. Topics covered included leading through change and brand building.

"NAMM members tell us that networking at our events is very important to them," said Joe Lamond, NAMM's president and CEO. "So we produced new evening events such as Insight and boosted the quality of others."



## NAMM NAMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS

NAMM held its annual summer board meeting on July 13. The executive committee announced new appointments and bid farewell to its outgoing chairman.

Larry Morton, previously NAMM's vice chairman, will move into a new role as chairman of NAMM's board of directors. Morton, president of Hal Leonard, served on NAMM's board from 1999–2002.

"I am honored and humbled to be elected chairman of the NAMM board and feel a special responsibility in doing all that I can to support NAMM's mission of creating music makers," Morton said.

Chris Martin, CEO of Martin Guitars, was named to the position of secretary. Martin previously served on the NAMM board of directors from 2000–2003.

"I am proud and honored to be selected to join the NAMM executive committee," Martin said. "As the sixth-generation owner-operator of my family business, I look forward to helping our industry grow and prosper."

Also stepping into new positions within the executive committee are Mark Goff of WH Paige & Company, who was named vice chairman and Robin Walenta of West Music who was named treasurer.

The tenure of Kevin Cranley, who served as chairman since 2011, was distinguished by the revision and consolidation of NAMM's long-standing vision, mission and objectives. During his two-year term, Cranley presided over the adoption of five strategic objectives. He took particular pride in the committee's ability to put aside individual agendas to focus constructively on the overall welfare of NAMM's 9,000 members in carrying out the association's strategic vision.

"All of us at NAMM are immensely grateful for the superb leadership Kevin has brought to the NAMM Board and the organization itself," Morton said. "With his expansive knowledge of our industry, his passionate belief in the power of music to better the world and his strong personal integrity, Kevin has raised the standard for all who serve the industry."

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AMPS



TABLETS



## THE NAMM SHOW REPORT

# NAMM<sup>®</sup> University

# BEST

# IN SHOW

## 2013 SUMMER NAMM AWARDS

### BEST IN SHOW, THE GEAR-CENTRIC PANEL

discussion at Summer NAMM, delivered 24 new products and services that an expert panel of six music product retailers deemed to be the best they saw during NAMM's annual summer convention. Moderated by *Music Inc.* Publisher Frank Alkyer, the session took place in the Music City Center.

### LET'S BEGIN:

#### THE CATEGORIES

##### BEST IN SHOW **P.57**

The best product or service that panelists saw at NAMM.

##### GOTTA STOCK IT **P.58**

A product that retailers should stock right now, if they haven't already.

##### BEST ADD-ON OR ACCESSORY **P.60**

A great product from the small-goods arena.

##### COMPANY TO WATCH **P.61**

An exhibitor with trendsetting products or services.

#### THE PANELISTS

##### Mike Guillot

Mississippi Music, Hattiesburg, Miss.

##### Donovan Bankhead

Springfield Music, Springfield, Mo.

##### Brad Boyton

Rhythm Traders, Portland, Ore.

##### Paul Decker

Music Villa, Bozeman, Mont.

##### Tim Pratt

Dietze Music, Omaha, Neb.

##### Myrna Sisen

Middle C Music, Washington, D.C.



Frank Alkyer

# BEST IN SHOW

CATEGORY

MIKE GUILLOT

## C.F. Martin Ed Sheeran Acoustic Guitar

"All you have to do is touch this guitar and you can feel the quality. It's a travel guitar that you can also use on stage."

DONOVAN BANKHEAD

## NAMM Retail Boot Camp/NAMM U.

"I brought my entire management team and definitely got my money's worth. Even if this was all we came for, it was worth it."



BRAD BOYNTON

## Tattletale Remote Alarm System

"Little sensors go on a music stand or guitar, and, when the sensor is triggered, it will notify you on your cell phone."

MYRNA SISLEN

## Cube GX Series

"They sell like crazy and have a reasonable MSRP."



TIM PRATT

## Pedaltrain Volto

"You can travel all over the world with these. They have plugs for many foreign countries."



PAUL DECKER

## Zoom H6

"It sells to anybody, from TV guys to musicians to parents who want to record their kids."



Paul Decker

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- Durable rubber ends feature built-in straplock
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## Why Dream?



"Innovative ideas... like the **Recycle Program** & **Sound Pricing** are major reasons why Dream Cymbals has been, and will continue to be successful in my store"

*Brandt Bourque*  
- Music Inc.



**dream**  
Cymbals and Gongs

[www.dreamcymbals.com](http://www.dreamcymbals.com)

## THE SUMMER SHOW REPORT

NAMM University  
**BEST**  
SHOW

CATEGORY

# GOTTA STUCK

**DONOVAN BANKHEAD**  
**Nashville Music Stands**

"They catch your attention the second you see them. They have all kinds of fun designs and even some for kids, and they come in all different colors."

**PAUL DECKER**  
**Gator Frameworks**  
**GFW-ID-SPKR**  
**Speaker Stands**

"The third leg of the speaker stand is adjustable, so if you are on uneven ground you can adjust it."

**BRAD BOYNTON**  
**Remo Silent Stroke**  
**Drumheads**

"They open up a whole new world of possibilities in terms of different sounds."

**MYRNA SISLEN**  
**Ukulele packs and books by both Alfred and Hal Leonard**

"These packs are huge money-makers. Don't underestimate the power of print music to making dollars."

**TIM PRATT**  
**Fishman Triple Play**

"This is a great piece. It's easy to install, and features a non-intrusive installation with no cables."

**MIKE GUILLOT**  
**Yamaha APXT2 Guitar**

"Small body guitars are what's hot right now. It has a great look and has the antiqued-looking tuners on the back."







Roland® wishes to thank Music Inc. magazine for awarding the new CUBE GX series amps **Best In Show** at Summer NAMM 2013.

**Roland®**  
MICRO CUBE GX  
CUBE-20GX / 40GX / 80GX







## CATEGORY BEST ADD-ON OR ACCESSORY

TIM PRATT  
**BoloPick**

"Hang these up at the counter and away they go. They make a great gift and a great add-on."



PAUL DECKER  
**Option Knob**

"Now you can change your volumes and adjust everything [using your feet] with just this one little tool."



DONOVAN BANKHEAD  
**Souldier Straps**

"All of their stuff is U.S.-made, and comes in a ton of colors."



BRAD BOYNTON  
**CruzTOOLS**

"As drummers, we've been a bit envious of guitarists and their tool kits. Finally there's one for us."



MYRNA SISLEN  
**First Chair Accessories, VT-1 Tuner**

"This tuner fits right on the scroll of the violin and has all the features that other tuners have."



MIKE GUILLOT  
**Planet Waves NS Micro Tuner**

"Super micro and comes with a visual metro-nome, so it doesn't make a sound."



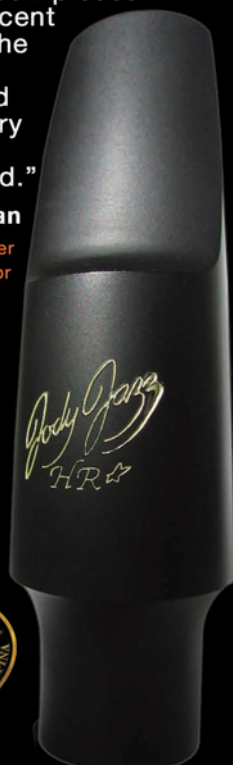
## JODYJAZZ HR\* OUR #1 SELLER

MSRP \$159 - \$169

"JodyJazz mouthpieces give the Crescent Super Band the consistency, precision, and tone necessary for a world-class big band."

Caleb Chapman

Crescent Super  
Band Director



JodyJazz.com

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Half the weight  
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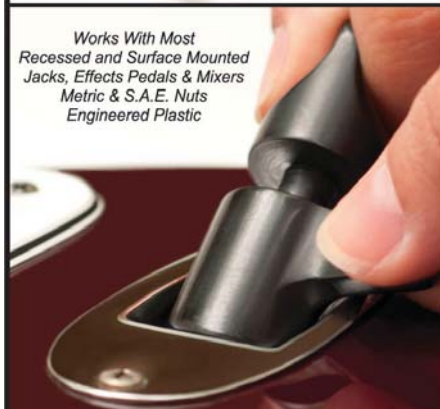
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Metric & S.A.E. Nuts  
Engineered Plastic



"We can tighten loose nuts,  
but we can't do anything about your drummer"

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MFG. USA  
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www.allparts.com/bullet

# COMPANIES TO WATCH

CATEGORY

## ZOOM

TIM PRATT  
Zoom

"They have created such a niche market. And you know it's an innovative company when they can show up to a trade show with one product."



DONOVAN BANKHEAD  
Breedlove/Bedell Guitars

"Owner Tom Bedell wants to build another great American guitar company. He treats his dealers with respect like they are friends and partners. I think he is a great example of how vendors should treat their dealers."

## Blackstar

PAUL DECKER  
Blackstar Amplifiers

"The great thing about them is that they are all about amps, and they are all guitar players. They are making amps for the working musician."



HAL LEONARD  
CORPORATION

MIKE GUILLOT  
Hal Leonard

"They are now starting to distribute products from companies such as Line 6, Alto, Avid and Tycoon Percussion. And I think we are going to see this continue to grow."

## Córdoba

MYRNA SISLEN  
Córdoba

"The problem I have always had is that of the fractional guitar, and how to get an instrument in the hands of little kids that is good quality. Córdoba did some research and found the same quality in a guitar that is a quarter-size that is now in the \$200 range."



BRAD BOYNTON  
Mapex

"In an era of overproduction and overabundance, especially where prices keep on coming down, we as dealers are always looking for something unique that may not be available nationally, and Mapex does that."



Commercial Sound



Professional Sound



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Pro AV



Microphones



Projectors



Speakers



Accessories

## Your one-stop distribution partner

FDW Corp is a national leader in professional audio, video, lighting and AV product distribution.

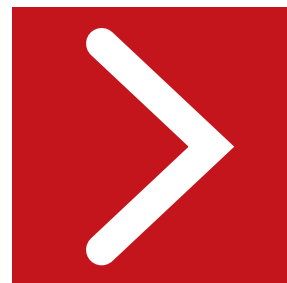
Same-Day Shipping • \$13 Million of Inventory • Over 500 Brands

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# GEAR



GROVER | GWC-MF

## Freeze Frame

Grover Pro Percussion recently released the GWC-MF Professional Castanet Mounting Frame. The frame quickly and securely transforms any handle castanets into a versatile castanet machine. The GWC-MF frame can be placed on a table top or mounted onto any standard cymbal stand for greater flexibility in positioning. MSRP: \$105. [groverpro.com](http://groverpro.com)



### > InsideGEAR

> **Drums & Percussion**

LP goes patriotic with new cajons  
[PAGE 63](#)

> **Guitars, Amps & Accessories**

Martin debuts grand model  
[PAGE 68](#)

> **Audio & Recording**

Ion gets the party started  
[PAGE 73](#)

> **Piano & Keyboards**

Kawai's CS10 blurs lines  
[PAGE 74](#)

> **Print & Multimedia**

Hal Leonard unveils 'Wicked' new release  
[PAGE 76](#)

> **DJ & Lighting**

ADJ holds Freq show  
[PAGE 79](#)

LATIN PERCUSSION | AMERICANA GROOVE CAJON

## True Americana

Latin Percussion's new LP Americana Series Groove Cajons are made in the United States from hand-selected, 9-ply, plantation-grown Baltic birch. Featuring an adjustable front plate and fixed snare wires in a slim design, the LP Groove Cajon offers rich, deep bass tones. MSRP: \$299. [lpmusic.com](http://lpmusic.com)



GRETSCH | TAYLOR HAWKINS

## Pity the Foo

Gretsch Drums recently released its signature snare drum with Foo Fighters drummer Taylor Hawkins. With a 6.5- by 14-inch black nickel-plated steel shell, the Taylor Hawkins snare drum features 10 lugs, an adjustable chrome-plated throw-off, 2.3 mm triple-flanged hoops and Remo Coated Emperor X batter head. [gretschdrums.com](http://gretschdrums.com)



CAPPELLO DRUM | DIXSON BASS DRUM LIFT

## The Dixon Bass Drum Lift

The Bass Drum Lift benefits 16-, 18-, 20-, 22- and 24-inch bass drums. The Lift lets the beater strike the drum head at a more desirable position, and raises the bass drum to offer more room to resonate. The Lift affords positioning of beaters to strike on both sides of center and prevents wear to hoops. [bassdrumlift.com](http://bassdrumlift.com)





# GEAR GUIDE

## DRUMS & PERCUSSION



### CYMPAD | MODERATORS

## Cymbal Sound Off

Cympad's new Moderators are available in 50, 60, 70, 80, 90 and 100x15 millimeter sizes to allow incremental modification of virtually any cymbal's sound. The Moderators are made from the same foam material as Cympad Optimizers. [cympad.com](http://cympad.com)

### SCYMTEK | VINTAGE SERIES

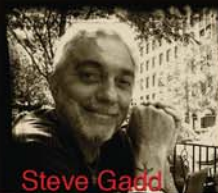
## Vintage Vibes

The latest offering from Scymtek Cymbals is the Vintage series. The cymbals are unlathed, with aggressive hammering and a raw finish, which all work together to create the dark, dry, articulate voice of the Vintage series. [scymtek.com](http://scymtek.com)



## VIC FIRTH SIGNATURE SERIES

Conceived through decades of game-changing collaborations with the world's top players, Vic's Signature Series puts the artist's personal touch into your hands.

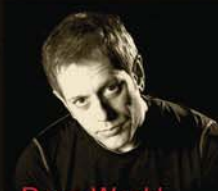


Steve Gadd

**1983** *Steve Gadd*

Designed with a long taper to create maximum rebound. Barrel tip for a great recording sound.

SSG



Dave Weckl

**1989** *Dave Weckl*

Medium taper for the perfect balance between speed and leverage. Tip creates a broad cymbal sound.

SDW



Steve Jordan

**2006** *Steve Jordan*

Light and long for great touch and sound around the drums and cymbals.

SJOR



Pete Lockett

**2013** *Pete Lockett* **DrumJammer**

Small round tip for defined sound. For drum set, electronics, timbales, metallic percussion & more!

SLOC

Check out Vic's entire line of Signature Series sticks at [VICFIRTH.COM](http://VICFIRTH.COM)





**VIC FIRTH**  
LEADING THE WORLD, ONE PAIR AT A TIME

HERE'S TO ALL THE  
**GAME-CHANGING  
MOMENTS.**

**STEVE GADD  
1966**

**"UNLIKELY INSPIRATION"**

Legendary pianist Chick Corea sits down at Steve Gadd's drums, just hours before a gig. Chick's "un-drum-like" and free approach to the drums "shined a light on what I had been trying to figure out for a while." Steve's playing is forever changed.

*Check out [VICFIRTH50.com](http://VICFIRTH50.com) to see Steve tell the whole story.*



# GEAR GUIDE

## DRUMS & PERCUSSION

TAMA | SILVERSTAR LIMITED  
EDITION HYPER-DRIVE KITS

### Super Star

Tama has released its Silverstar Limited Edition Hyper-Drive kits. The kits offer tight, focused attack, and feature the S.L.P. G-Maple Snare. [tama.com](http://tama.com)



# SILENTSTROKE

IDEAL FOR LOW VOLUME  
PRACTICE APPLICATIONS

DURABLE SINGLE PLY  
MESH DRUMHEAD

GREAT FEEL AND  
RESPONSE.



SNARE/TOM DRUMHEADS: 8"-18"  
BASS DRUMHEADS: 18"-24"



MAPEX | REBEL

### Rebel Yell

Mapex has designed its Rebel line specifically for beginning drummers. These drum sets are outfitted with double braced hardware, a set of cymbals including a ride and a pair of hi-hats, a throne, and a pair of sticks. [mapexdrums.com](http://mapexdrums.com)



# TOUR APPROVED. GIG READY.



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Rectangular Case  
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Bass Case  
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24 Channel Mixer Case. Fits Presonus  
StudioLive 24 or Allen & Heath ZED-24  
1R2723-8BW



KORG MS-20 Mini  
Analog Keyboard  
Case w/Pull Handle  
and wheels  
3i221710MS20

*i series*

ORANGE, CA



# GEAR GUIDE >

GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES

MARTIN | GRAND J12-16GTE

## True Grandeur

Martin has released its Grand J12-16GTE model, which features classic styling. The model boasts a 17-inch grand jumbo body along with D-TAR Wave-Length Multi-Source electronics. MSRP: \$1,999. [martinguitar.com](http://martinguitar.com)





FENDER | WILKO JOHNSON  
TELECASTER GUITAR

## Wilko's Choice

Fender's Wilco Johnson Telecaster guitar features a black finish and single-ply red pickguard, maple neck with comfortable "C"-shaped profile, and dual vintage-style single-coil pickups. The guitar also features a 7.25-inch-radius rosewood fingerboard with 21 vintage-style frets. [fender.com](http://fender.com)

THE LOAR | LM-590

## Smooth Satin

The Loar has introduced the LM-590, a solid hand-carved instrument with a resonant thin satin finish. The LM-590's top is hand-carved from solid spruce, and the back and sides are hand-carved from solid maple. It also includes Grover reverse-gear tuning machines and a satin tobacco sunburst finish. [theloar.com](http://theloar.com)

IBANEZ | GEORGE BENSON LGB30VYS

## George's Jazzy Axe

The new Ibanez George Benson LGB30VYS model is being deemed one of the first signature "jazzboxes" of the Ibanez Artstar series. The LGB30VYS model features a 3-piece maple set-in neck with a spruce top and maple back and sides. The guitar also includes an Ebony bridge and Super 58 pickups. [ibanez.com](http://ibanez.com)

ENCORE | E89

## Encore, Encore

Encore's E89 is the latest addition to the Trev Wilkinson-designed Encore range. Available in Gloss Black and Thru Red finishes, the E89 features a streamlined double cutaway basswood body, which gives great access to all 24 frets. The maple neck with rosewood fingerboard is slim and fast-playing, and the guitar is strung through the body. [jhs.co.uk](http://jhs.co.uk)





TC ELECTRONIC | SPARK MINI BOOSTER

## Sparks Fly

TC Electronic's Spark Mini Booster is the first pedal to feature Prime-Time, a feature that detects whether you want the pedal to be permanently on when you hit the footswitch, or just for as long as you hold the footswitch down. The pedal features 20 dB of boost. [tcelectronic.com](http://tcelectronic.com)

STRING SWING | CC37

## Smooth Transporter

String Swing's CC37 is a flat-folding guitar stand. It was developed on String Swing's precision CNC automated bender, and allows for quick and easy transport between venues. [string-swing.com](http://string-swing.com)



FARGEN | TOWNHOUSE

## Hand-Wired Hit

Fargen Amplification recently debuted its Townhouse, a 5-Watt Class A design, hand-wired amp made in the United States. Its two-way Decade Switch covers the 1950s and '60s, with vintage tweed- and brownface-inspired tones. The Townhouse also incorporates a U.S.-built transformer, vintage '60s-style caps and carbon comp resistors, and DC filaments for ultra quiet operation. [fargenamps.com](http://fargenamps.com)





LEVY'S LEATHERS | CLASSICAL  
GUITAR STRAPS

## Classic Look

Levy's Leathers' new printed classical guitar straps are designed exclusively for guitars and ukuleles without strap pins. Each 1-inch wide sublimation-printed polyester strap features a plastic sound-hole hook and tri-glide adjustments. The straps are available in ten original designs. ([levysleathers.com](http://levysleathers.com))



KORG | PITCHHAWK

## Pitch Like a Hawk

Korg has added the PitchHawk, which features a newly-designed clip and a newly-developed, high contrast display. Additional features include an alert for over-winding the E string, an auto power off function and a memory back-up function to remember settings. The clip is compact and features an ultra-tight grip. MAP: \$29.99. ([korg.com](http://korg.com))

HANDWOUND IN VERMONT, USA

What is *your* dream tone?

Kent Armstrong®

Rory Gallagher  
SIGNATURE PICKUPS

KENT ARMSTRONG'S RORY GALLAGHER SERIES WAS CREATED DIRECTLY FROM THE PICKUPS CURRENTLY RESIDING IN 7 OF RORY'S MOST LOVED STAGE INSTRUMENTS INCLUDING HIS WORLD-RENOWNED 1961 FENDER STRATOCASTER.

WDBIZ.COM/MUSICING



MXL | REVELATION  
SOLO

## Riding Solo

MXL recently debuted its Revelation Solo fixed cardioid pattern tube microphone. The Revelation Solo has a vintage tube sound with the convenience of a cardioid-only pattern. It features a 32mm Gold sputtered capsule, hand-selected EF86 tube and a dark violet and chrome finish. The microphone comes complete with an aluminum flight case, shock mount, Mogami cables and custom power supply. [mxlmics.com](http://mxlmics.com)



HARRISON CONSOLES | MIXBUS

## Mixbus Overhaul

Harrison Consoles has released version 2.3 of its Mixbus Digital Audio Workstation. Enhancements include several new shortcuts for faster bus assignments and a complete user-driven editing and keypad overhaul that makes Mixbus more intuitive to users of other widely used DAWs. [harrisonconsoles.com](http://harrisonconsoles.com)



EMINENCE | PSD:3014

## Continual Power

Eminence has added the PSD:3014, a 1.4-inch exit compression driver to its line of HF products. With a 100 watt continuous AES power rating, the PSD:3014 features a 3-inch voice coil and a recommended minimum crossover frequency of 800 Hz. [eminence.com](http://eminence.com)



AKAI | MPX8

## Sweet Samples

Akai Professional's MPX8 is a standalone SD sample launcher with MPC pads and an USB/MIDI/CV keyboard controller. Using a standard SD card, users can load virtually any sample onto MPX8 and then assign it to any of the unit's eight backlit velocity- and pressure-sensitive pads. MPX8 also comes with a library of standard samples built-in, which can be used for live performance in front of a crowd, on a radio show, or for in-studio production. [akaipro.com](http://akaipro.com)

ION | HOUSE PARTY

## Party Rock

Ion has unveiled its House Party, a smaller version of Party Rocker. Both sound systems' built-in party lighting goes into action when the music starts. Both feature Beat Mode and Party Mode for their lighting, and can stream music from any Bluetooth device, including iPad, iPhone, iPod and Android devices. [inmusic-brands.com](http://inmusic-brands.com)



NADY | WLPA-35

## Portable Noise

Nady has added the handheld WLPA-35 to its line of portable P.A. systems. This loudspeaker/microphone unit is lightweight and easily portable. The WLPA-35 includes a high-performance VHF wireless microphone, 35-watt amplifier and 5-inch speaker and features bass/treble tone control and rechargeable Lithium ion battery. [nady.com](http://nady.com)





# GEAR GUIDE >

## PIANOS & KEYBOARDS



CASIO | XW-G1

### Dynamic Duo

Casio recently unveiled its limited edition XW-G1 synthesizer created by design duo, Dee and Ricky Jackson. Only two units of the Limited Edition XW-G1 synthesizer were created, which feature the designer duo's Lego block design and neon leopard print patterns. [casiousa.com](http://casiousa.com)

HAMMOND ORGAN | PORTABLE ORGAN

### Can Take it With You

The new Hammond Xk-1c provides the full versatility of Hammond's B-3 in a compact package weighing just 16 pounds. Following the lead of the SK series of ultralight keyboards, the Xk-1c uses the same Virtual Tonewheel "engine" as Hammond's flagship B3-mkII Console Organ, with all the traditional elements. MAP: \$1,495. [hammondorganco.com](http://hammondorganco.com)



KAWAI | CS10

### Blurs Lines

Kawai latest hybrid piano, the CS10, blurs the line between acoustic and digital pianos. The new model's cabinet is the same as the Kawai K2 Professional Upright Piano. Classic lines, traditional leg and toe block design plus an authentic fallboard create a traditional appearance. The CS10 features Grand Feel action, which features extra-long wooden keys. [kawaius.com](http://kawaius.com)

# Great Digital Pianos Begin Here.

Since 1927, Kawai has crafted fine pianos with the utmost care and skill. Kawai's exceptional collection of professional products is the result of a decades-long quest to create electronic instruments with tone and touch that parallel their acoustic counterparts. Discover the difference these award-winning instruments will make in your business.



## VPC1

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### MP Series

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## CE220 Digital Piano

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## MP6



## EP3

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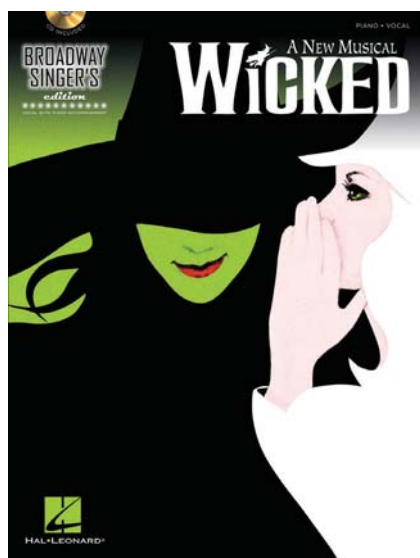
# GEAR GUIDE >

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HAL LEONARD |  
'BROADWAY EDITIONS'

## Wicked Lesson Books

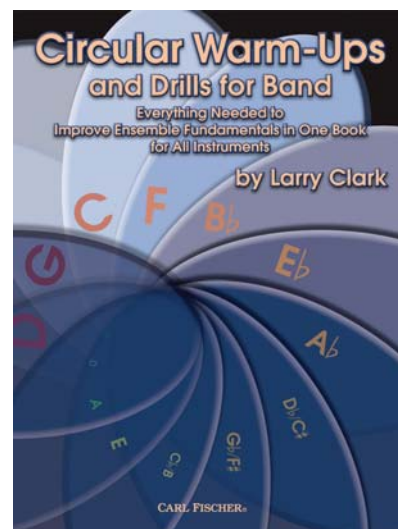
Hal Leonard has rolled out *Broadway Singer's Editions* for *Les Misérables*, *Rent* and *Wicked*. Songs in the series include the vocal line and lyrics paired with reductions of the orchestral accompaniments. The songs are all presented in their original keys, with the piano accompaniments carefully crafted for playability. The CD includes performances of these piano accompaniments, ideal for audition rehearsal or for just singing along. **{halleonard.com}**



CARL FISCHER | 'CIRCULAR WARM-UPS AND DRILLS FOR BAND'

## Carl's Circle

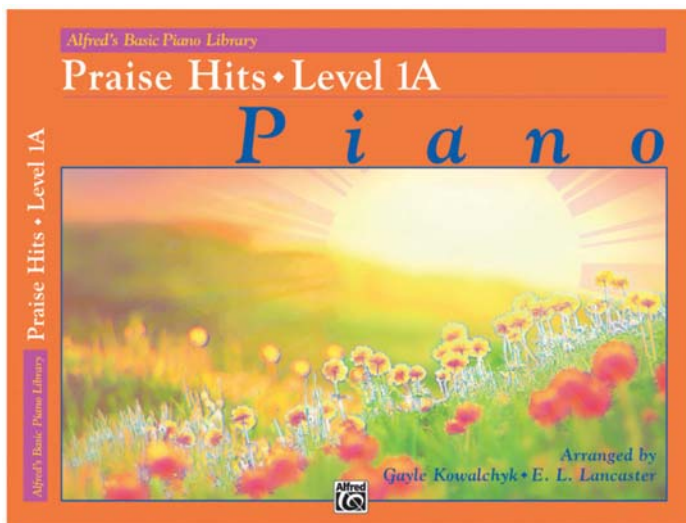
Carl Fischer's *Circular Warm-Ups and Drills for Band* is an exercise book that teaches the basics of ensemble playing, using one tool: the circle of 4ths. The book explains that the circle of 4ths can teach theory, tone, intonation, technique, balance, blend and ensemble awareness. The book teaches students to master all of the exercises it contains in all 12 keys, major and minor. **{carl-fischer.com}**



ALFRED | 'BASIC PIANO COURSE: PRAISE HITS 1A AND 1B'

## Sing Alfred's Praises

Alfred Music has added supplementary titles to its *Basic Piano Course* series. Alfred's *Basic Piano Course: Praise Hits 1A and 1B* fills the need for contemporary Christian music to be used as supplementary pieces for students. With the addition of these titles, students can play versions of well-known contemporary worship music. Each piece correlates page-by-page with concepts presented in Level 1A and 1B of *Alfred's Basic Piano Course: Lesson Book 1A and 1B*. **{alfred.com}**



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# GEAR GUIDE >

DJ & LIGHTING



STANTON | TRACKMASTER V.3 CARTRIDGE

## Stay on Track

**S**tanton has announced that all future production of its ST.150 and STR8.150 turntables will include new cartridges, the TrackMaster V.3 and SM V.3. As part of this new offering, the Stanton ST.150 now includes the TrackMaster V.3 cartridge, which features high-output, low-cue burn and a four-coil pickup. These features make it ideal for any club or scratch performance, while its integrated design doesn't require a headshell. [stantondj.com](http://stantondj.com)



NUMARK | MIXTRACK EDGE

## On the Edge

**N**umark has launched its Mixtrack Edge. The unit features a slim low-profile design and boasts an integrated cover to protect the control surface and a full array of bright backlit controls surrounded by brushed aluminum, including sync, hot cue, loop and two effects controls on each channel. An audio interface is built in for headphone cueing and P.A. system output. [numark.com](http://numark.com)

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CHAUVET | OBEY 4 D-FI 2.4

## Better Obey

**C**hauvet's new Obey 4 D-Fi 2.4 controller is an easy-to-use, wireless DMX controller that is compatible with all Chauvet DJ products operating with D-Fi 2.4GHz. Obey 4 D-Fi 2.4 can control the wireless Freedom series of LED PAR-style uplights and strips. Obey 4 D-Fi 2.4 features 11 operating modes and provides automated, sound activated and manual RGBA/RGBW playback modes. [chauvetdj.com](http://chauvetdj.com)



ADJ | FREQ MATRIX

## Freq Show

American DJ recently launched the FREQ Matrix, which combines a traditional white LED strobe/blinder and a 16-zone matrix chase effect in one fixture. The FREQ Matrix's variable-speed strobe pulsates at speeds of up to 1,200 flashes per minute. Utilizing 16 bright white LEDs arranged in four rows of four, the FREQ Matrix is a cool-running, energy-efficient, low-maintenance fixture that can stay on all night without duty cycles. MSRP: \$559.95. [adj.com](http://adj.com)



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|                              |       |                             |          |
|------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|----------|
| Alfred Publishing.....       | 45    | Kyser.....                  | 35       |
| All Days Music.....          | 15    | Music & Arts.....           | 77       |
| Allparts.....                | 60    | NAMM.....                   | 22-23    |
| AP International.....        | 46    | Nashville Music Stands..... | 4        |
| Audio-Technica.....          | 41    | Peterson Tuners.....        | 30       |
| Big Bang.....                | 27    | Pro Stage Gear.....         | 15       |
| Bolo Picks.....              | 44    | Radial Engineering.....     | 10       |
| Breezy Ridge.....            | 4     | Remo.....                   | 66       |
| Cappello.....                | 18    | Roland.....                 | 2, 59    |
| Cavanaugh Black Diamond..... | 83    | Saga.....                   | 44       |
| Cavanaugh Red Label.....     | 13    | Samson.....                 | 84       |
| Crush Drums.....             | 47    | Shubb Capos.....            | 60       |
| D'Addario.....               | 5, 33 | SKB Cases.....              | 67       |
| D'Angelico Guitars.....      | 3     | Souldier.....               | 57       |
| Dream Cymbals.....           | 58    | St. Louis Music.....        | 79       |
| Entertainment Lighting.....  | 78    | The Music Link.....         | 7, 9, 43 |
| FDW Corp.....                | 61    | Theo Wanne.....             | 52       |
| Fishman Transducers.....     | 42    | Tycoon Percussion.....      | 19       |
| Frameworks.....              | 55    | Veritas.....                | 20       |
| Hal Leonard.....             | 25    | Vic Firth.....              | 64-65    |
| Hunter Musical Products..... | 27    | WD Music Products.....      | 71       |
| Innovative Percussion.....   | 17    | Zildjian.....               | 21       |
| Jody Jazz.....               | 60    | Zildjian Gen 16.....        | 53       |
| Kawai.....                   | 75    | Zoom North America.....     | 11       |
| Korg USA.....                | 29    |                             |          |

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### Pat Besecker

Dale's Drum Shop  
Harrisburg, Penn.

We've seen great success with UFIP cymbals. They respond to every strike the player makes without being followed by a lengthy wash or unwanted overtones. This is very beneficial to the recording process, which makes UFIP a must-have for studio owners and session drummers, so we sell these cymbals mainly to our most experienced customers.

We showcase these boutique cymbals in our main walkway that leads into the drum area. We place them front and center. When we get a customer that is interested in making a cymbal purchase, we ask what they are currently playing and ask them if they've heard of UFIP. We explain the brand's unique attributes and this usually gets the conversation going.

Then we put them on a kit and let the customer try them out. This usually seals the deal.

>>>

### Mat Donaldson

Drum World Tulsa  
Tulsa, Okla.

Boutique cymbals are definitely gaining ground in our store over the last three years. We do very well with Dream Cymbals, but we do not sell them as a cheaper alternative to bigger name brands. Instead, we sell the cymbals on their own merit and the comparable lower price is just the icing on the cake.

Being in Oklahoma, the church, praise and worship community is very large in this area, and bigger, thinner, darker cymbals are currently in vogue in contemporary services right now. That seemed to fit the profile of the Dream line well, so

we let some of the larger churches in the area demo these cymbals and word spreads quickly. Now many of the area churches are not only using these cymbals weekly, but recommending them to other churches.

The customer enjoys a unique connection with the cymbal, saves a little coin, and we maintain a larger profit margin. Win-win-win.



>>>

### Rudy Simone

Donn Bennett Drum Studio  
Bellevue, Wash.

## How do you sell boutique cymbals?

The hottest sellers for us as far as boutique cymbals go are Istanbul Agogh, Meinl and Crescent.

When selling these boutique brands we make sure to focus in on the fact that they have different tonal textures that the larger cymbal makers don't have. When you want a really dry or very arid sounding cymbal or something with a very narrow scope, there are only a few companies that make cymbals like that.

The actual handmade design aspect also helps these cymbals sell, as opposed to the machine-based way of making cymbals.

However, our biggest selling point is telling the customer the story of

the cymbals. We let them know that these cymbals are two pieces of metal spliced together by some guy in Turkey who took a lot of effort to do this, and the end-result is priced under \$1,000. That's rare in the music industry. Usually when you have [an instrument] that is that handmade and takes that much time and has to travel that far to get to your shop, it costs more.

Some people complain about \$500 cymbals, but if you play them for the rest of your life, they only cost you a couple bucks a year.

We sell them to anyone from the young gigging musician who is into the newest gear to the seasoned pros. Actual talented young

drummers will go for the \$500 Istanbul ride that is going to last a while. Professionals who might have a little extra money in their pockets are willing to spend more for the cymbals, as well.

To attract the younger musicians, we will market them by shooting little videos to show how they sound and then post them up on our Facebook page, YouTube channel and website.

We display the boutique cymbals on kits that attract attention. We'll find jazzier boutique kits to display them on to attract attention both ways as a collective whole. When people see those kits they think, "Wow, what's up with these?"



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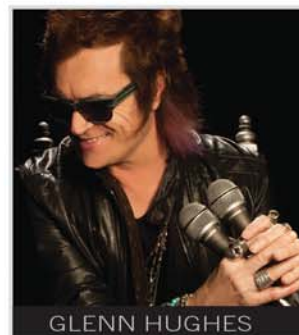
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