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The Fall Product Preview

All the latest products sure to boost your bottom line this fall

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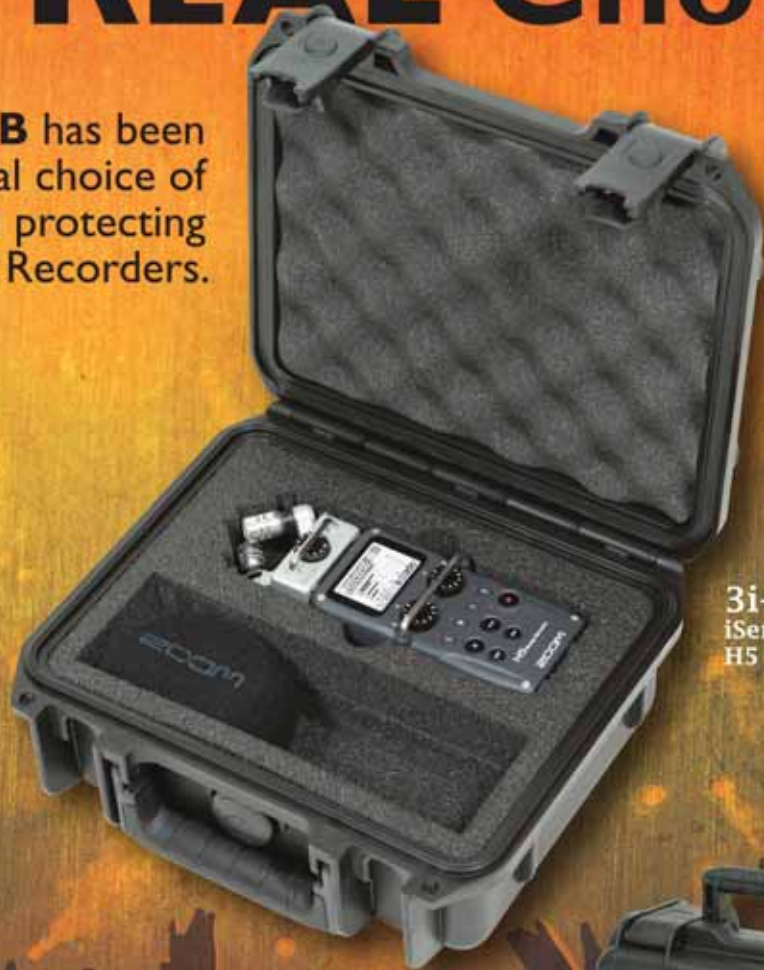
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Jack Maher, President 1970–2003

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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 UNIVERSAL AUDIO

PERSPECTIVE

PERSPECTIVE | BY KATIE KAILUS

GET INVOLVED

Remember back in high school when you joined all those crazy organizations like color guard, chess club and intramural basketball? Chances are you're not playing professional basketball today, but you probably made some new friends as a result of joining these organizations, and they maybe even helped you grow as a person — opening up your mind to new ideas you weren't aware of before.

Think of the MI industry as high school. There are all kinds of organizations to join and become active in: NASMD, RPMDA, Percussion Marketing Council (PMC) and Independent Music Store Owners (iMSO) to name a few. Not to mention NAMM — which is much more than just a membership association. It's an opportunity to meet, network and grow — not only your business, but yourself.

In his column this month (see page 31), Gerson Rosenbloom discusses what he gained from looking beyond the four walls of his store when he joined NAMM's board of directors.

"Whatever I contributed to NAMM, I was rewarded a hundredfold with the personal knowledge gained by listening to other smart people and learning from their experiences," Rosenbloom writes.

Rosenbloom went on to become a NAMM chairman — not bad for just getting involved

on the board.

Also offered by NAMM is the annual Washington, D.C., Fly-In to advocate for music education in schools. (Check out our full coverage of the event starting on page 42). This year's trip which was held May 19–21 and featured many meetings with members of Congress and a day of service at D.C.'s Savoy Elementary teaching kids to play music.

"I was told by several prior attendees that it would be a life-changing experience, and I can attest that it definitely was," said Chris Syllaba, president and CEO of Jordan Kitt's Music in Rockville, Maryland and 2014 Fly-In attendee. "I encourage others to consider donating their time and effort to this important advocacy."

Business too busy for you to fly all the way to D.C.? Join the Percussion Marketing Council and receive drumming event ideas for the annual International Drum Month held every May or iMSO for a retailer-to-retailer discussion forum.

Your bottom line improves when you branch outside of your store's walls, meet fellow MI retailers and get involved in all the opportunities and organizations this industry has to offer.

And that's the bottom line. **MI**



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LETTERS

Partisan Politics

While reading Alan Friedman's Obamacare article in the May 2014 issue of *Music Inc.*, I thought I was reading a magazine such as *Time* or *Newsweek*, not a professional industry magazine. *Music Inc.* has reached a new low and has lost much credibility after publishing this political article. I expect to read information about the music industry and not about someone's love affair with Obama and a very polarizing healthcare policy. Oh yes, the latest polls show the majority of Americans do not support Obamacare. In addition to that, the federal government can not even take care of our veterans through the VA Hospital System. How can they even attempt to take on a healthcare system for the entire population?

I guess I should not be surprised by the partisan article because tax accounts thrive and live off of small businesses as the tax codes, laws, and regulation become more complicated.

I believe it is time that *Music Inc.* bring in fresh faces with new ideas and thoughts about our industry. I will not be interested in reading any future articles by Friedman.

As my father taught me, you never mix politics with business.

Justin Walters
President
JW Music, Inc.
Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Report from the Hill

If you have never gone to Washington, D.C. as a part of NAMM's Music Advocacy Fly-In you need to strongly consider doing so next year. Some of the most important and rewarding work in our industry happens in the few days of the Fly-In. This year, there was an optional "Day of Service" where NAMM



members were shuttled to Savoy elementary school to volunteer with the children, helping them play the guitar, ukulele and the drums. Chad Smith, drummer for the Red Hot Chili Peppers, was there helping the kids with us!

Probably the coolest thing I got to experience in D.C. was the celebratory dinner in the Library of Congress honoring the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH) Turnaround Arts Initiative, and also honoring the first Grammy Foundation Music educator Award Recipient, Kent Knappenberger. The children at Savoy Elementary School where NAMM members volunteered performed for us at the dinner. Savoy elementary is part of the PCAH Turnaround Arts Initiative program. It was hard

to believe that two years ago the children there had no music or arts programs and that the school was one of the poorest and least funded schools in DC. Seeing the difference that music was making in two short years for these children was nothing short of miraculous. The confidence, the musicality and the joy on each and every one of their faces really made me think of why I was there and almost brought me to tears.

In our advocacy training, I learned that 1.3 million students in the United States have no instruction in music. That is a huge number and I was shocked and saddened for the kids — our kids. During our meetings with all of our members of Congress, this number kept coming to my mind. The faces of the kids at

Savoy Elementary were there also, cheering me on and helping me know what I was in DC fighting for.

Thanks NAMM for doing this! I am a better person for it!

Liane Rockley
Rockley Music Center
Lakewood, Colorado

Kidder's 40th

Big thanks to the editors of *Music Inc.* for including our 40th anniversary celebration in the July issue! We have hosted several clinics, reading sessions, and events already this year with the help of our supplier and publisher partners. In July we had our "Instrument Anniversary Sale" for those instruments that had been used as demos, scratch 'n' dents, or just had one too many anniversaries as part of our inventory. We also hosted "Tryout Tuesdays" giving kids a chance to tryout band and orchestra instruments, two piano clinics with Phillip Keveren, and a week-long "Bound for Broadway" camp. Our 25th Annual Sacred Choral Reading Session kicks off in August as well as a little friendly drum line warm up competition "Drumming in the Parking Lot."

I must credit my parents, Jim and Ede, our fantastic staff members past and present, and our wonderful customers for 40 years of spreading the joys of making music. Looking forward to the next 40!

Beth Houlihan
President
Kidder Music Service
Peoria, Illinois

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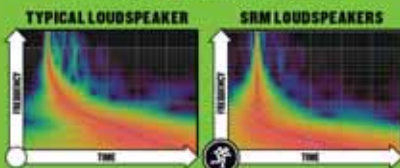
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Holds record-breaking GearFest
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Hosts grand opening extravaganza
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> **Epic Music**

Rocks out on one year anniversary
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RETAIL

SIMPLE SOUNDS | BY KATHLEEN COSTANZA

YOUR TRUSTY, LOCAL DULCIMER SHOP

Outside Simple Sounds in Shipshewana, Indiana, a sign reads, “Learn to play the dulcimer in three minutes.”

“In less than three minutes, I can have you playing a song. You might not be playing it very well, but you’re going to play one,” said owner Gary Zher. Sure enough, customers wander in, pick up a mountain dulcimer, and start to think, “I can do this.” About 80 percent of Simple Sounds’ customers who walk out with a mountain dulcimer have never even played music.

As any MI retailer knows, creating new music makers is no easy feat. But getting people started with folk music is Simple Sounds’ forte, whether it be on the dulcimer, mandolin, banjo, ukelele or an entry-level guitar. Since purchasing the store in 2001, Gary and Linda Zher have transformed what was once a dulcimer-only store into a full folk music shop and repair operation with a strong footing in the local folk and bluegrass scene.

“We have wonderful stories of people getting their start here and now they lead classes and write music,” he said. “The dulcimer is an instrument that, if you want to put the time into it, you can really have fun with it.”

Along with traditional folk instruments, Simple Sounds car-



At left: Gary and Linda Zher; Inset: Dulcimers behind the counter.

‘You’re not going to walk into a big box store and find a bowed psaltry.’

ries instruments like ocarinas, auto harps, tuned chimes and a wide variety of dulcimers that veer into high-end. The unique inventory gives the store a niche, distancing them from big box competition. Or, as Zher puts it, “You’re not going to walk into a big box store and find a bowed

psaltry.”

The resurgence of folk into the mainstream, and occasionally even Top 40 music, hasn’t hurt the business’ growth either. (Zher says it’s worked out “perfectly.”) In the last few years they’ve seen mandolin and banjo sales pick up and currently stock 15 to 20 different ukuleles.

SIMPLE BEGINNINGS

Visitors might guess the Zhers were folk instrument aficionados since day one. But before Simple Sounds, Gary Zher owned a company that built deluxe sleepers for big rig trucks.

After selling the trucking company, Linda, a pianist, was looking into buying a retail shop in the downtown area when they discovered the previous owner was willing to sell Simple Sounds.

“I never gave music a second thought,” Gary said. “But the principals of running a business are not that much different. There are nuances, but you have to price right, have good margins, great customer service and know your product. That’s something we had to learn very quickly.”

Gary picked up the dulcimer and eventually learned other instruments, examining their construction to help “sell the differences” between them. Then, in 2004, a fire burned the building to the ground.

With insurance and enough entrepreneurial experience, they were able to rebuild. But not wanting to use all their cash at once, the Zhers started asking customers, “What would you like us to buy? What do you want to see?” Listening closely, they started stocking more chimes, gift items, CDs and carefully filled the three-times-as-big space with inventory that set their shop apart.

“We weren’t smart enough to plan it that way,” Gary said. “But that’s how our customers led us into this really niche market.” **MI**

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GUITARS & MORE | MOVE

Guitars & More Goes 400 Percent Bigger

Dustin Honeycutt opened Guitars & More in Gardendale, Alabama, last August thinking it would stay a small, one-man operation. Things didn't work out quite the way he planned.

By June the store grew so busy that Honeycutt and Eric Gibson, COO, had to switch to a location 400 percent bigger in order to stay full-line, totaling about 5,000 square feet.



Dustin Honeycutt and Eric Gibson

"I knew we had a dead market so I thought I'd be at least able to sustain myself," Honeycutt said. Guitars & More is smack dab in the middle of a dry market with the nearest music store over 20 miles away and the closest GC 40 miles south. "But then we started picking up business from outside of our market — that's when it kind of got overwhelming."

Beyond the fast pickup in sales, a few other things have come as a surprise to Honeycutt in his first year. For one thing, the uke craze and demand for other folk instruments like mandolins and banjos came as a shock. He and Gibson have kept those instruments in stock and also carry PRS, G&L, Washburn, Dean, Kentucky and Luna. But Honeycutt has mostly been taken aback at how far customer service has grown the store's reputation organically.

"It's actually much easier than I thought it would be," he said. "It's surprising how people react to kindness and a straight answer."

SWEETWATER | EVENT

Sweetwater's GearFest Busts Records

Sweetwater Sound's annual GearFest saw its biggest crowd ever, with more than 8,000 visitors contributing a 25-percent increase in sales over of last year's event. The two-day fest held June 6 and 7 included exhibits from 200 manufacturers along with workshops, live demos and a musician's flea market.

The marquee event was the Producer's Panel which featured a panel of producers and engineers including Bruce Swedien, Bob Clearmountain, Ed Cherney, Ross Hogarth, Richard Chycki, Bil Vorndick, Fab Dupont and Mick Guzauski. In total, GearFest included 185 workshops and seminars, in nine different venues and hourly prizes totaled \$72,000 worth of instruments and equipment.

"I personally greeted thousands of our customers at the front door as they arrived and was astounded by the enthusiasm everyone seemed to have for Sweetwater and GearFest," said President Chuck Surack. "That, along with its continued growth in overall attendance and sales, has made GearFest a truly unique event in the music retail business."



The EMP tent featured gear demos and performances for DJs, remixers and producers throughout GearFest.

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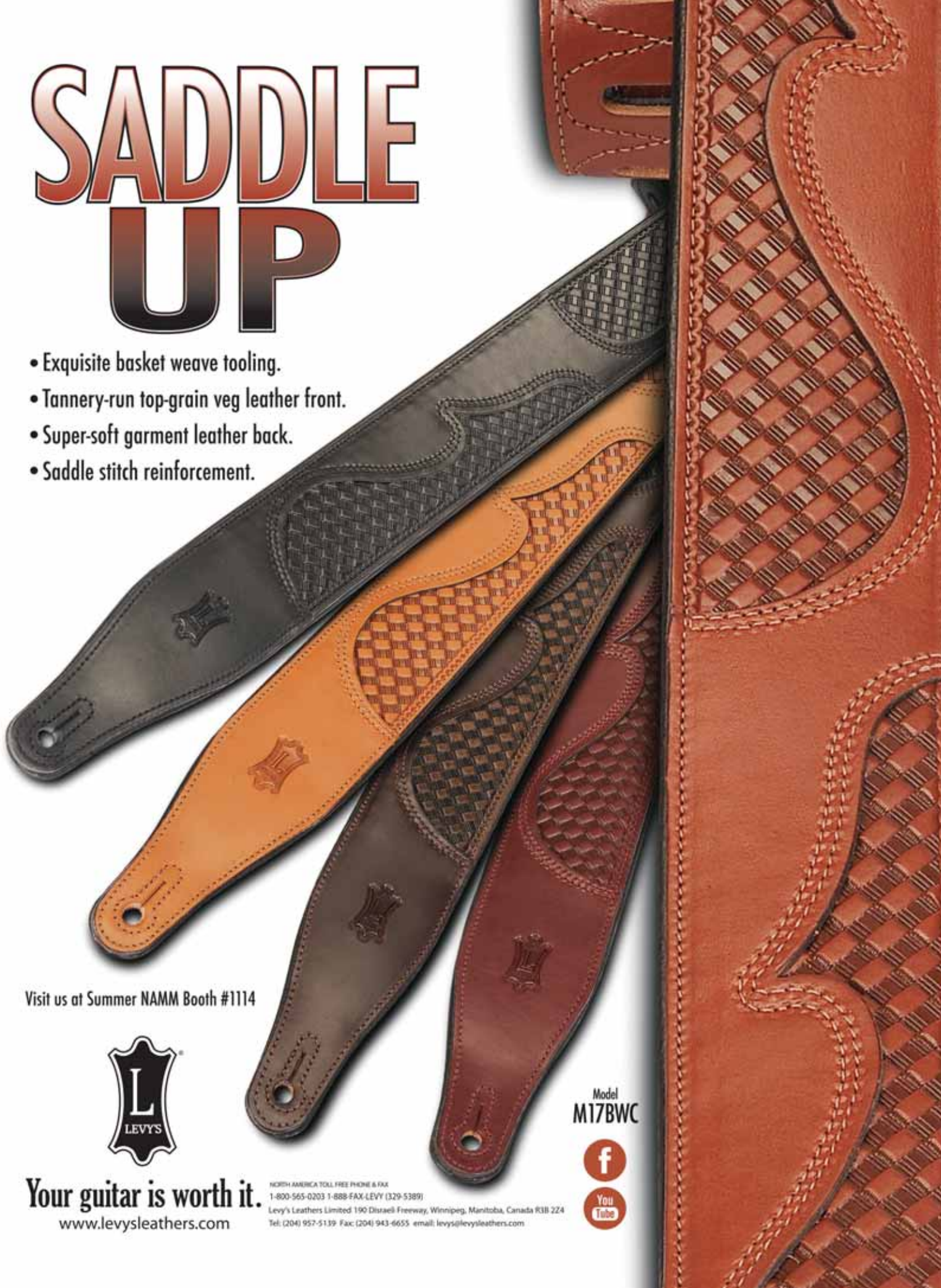
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HEID MUSIC | EVENT

HEID MUSIC REBRANDS WITH GRAND OPENING



A ukulele performance at the Green Bay grand opening.

Heid Music's Green Bay store, one of five locations, had been running since 1979 and needed what Dede Heid, executive vice president, called a "facelift." But after the company considered renovation costs, it

decided to move into a new location all together that opened last November.

Not wanting to cannibalize the holiday selling season, they held off on the all-out, four-day Grand Opening Extravaganza until June 4-7. Heid said the aim of the event, complete with clinics, giveaways, performances and demos, was to "rebrand" themselves in the Green Bay marketplace.

"We did hit our overall sales target. We had everyone from loyal customers to new faces coming in," Heid said. "And that was the goal, that we would have people we haven't seen in a while come give us another shot, if you will."

To get the word out, Heid used its social media channels, targeted e-blasts and saw a number of customers coming in from Craigslist posts for items on sale — a tool Heid is encouraging her team to use even more.

The new Green Bay location is in a more retail-centric area with higher foot traffic and is closer to highways. An added bonus: the new layout requires lesson students to come in through the store, not separate entrances.

"Now the lessons are very much a part of the store experience," Heid said.

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EPIC MUSIC | EVENT

Epic Music Rocks Out With Anniversary Concert

Last year, Epic Music owners George Contreras and Lorraine Guier hosted a grand opening show in their Phoenix store. One year later, they upgraded to an anniversary rock concert in the Tempe Center for the Arts with four local bands and a Dean guitar giveaway.

“We had a really good response,” Contreras said. “The highlight of the show was putting our 12-year-old student on stage where she rocked a song with the band Tricus, which is my band. So she got to experience what it’s like to play with a band onstage in a venue like that in front

of an audience.”

A year into business, Contreras said “the recession is still here” and they face competition from a nearby GC. But he and Guier have aimed to set their store apart with customer service and by stocking products big boxes are less likely to have, like Revolution amps. They also connect with the Phoenix music scene in a variety of ways and let local bands sell their merchandise there.

As Contreras explained, “We’re always thinking, what we can do to give a lasting memory when people walk in here?”



Lorraine Guier and George Contreras at their grand opening in 2013.

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Twelve year old Epic Music student Lizette Blancas performs with the band Tricus

PORTMAN'S MUSIC | MOVE

Ed Jordan's Closes, Portman's Expands

Portman's Music Superstore in Albany, Georgia, is moving into the former Ed Jordan Music's location, which closed last June after 32 years. Portman's Music has four locations but store manager Mike Boone said the Albany store is grown tight on space for inventory.

“We were looking to expand,” Boone said. “We are busting at the seams. We just need more room.”

The new location has about three times as much square footage and most of it will be devoted to a larger showroom. But the new location is also being renovated to include lesson studios and a repair shop, neither of which the old Albany location offered.

“We’re really looking forward to having the lessons center,” Boone said. “I think that’s going to be a real boost to our business to have customers coming in every week.”

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Photo: Michael Corral

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Distributes Sabian's band and orchestra instruments
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Executive receives lifetime achievement award
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Donates to Haiti
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SUPPLY

BACKUN | BY KATIE KAILUS

CONTINUED GROWTH

Backun Musical Services knows what its audience wants. In fact, the clarinet manufacturer's whole business model has been built off the principle of giving its players exactly what they want.

Founded as a woodwind repair shop in 2000, Backun began building clarinet parts after one of the shop's clients had an antique clarinet in need of a barrel. Not only did founder Morrie Backun create a new custom barrel for the player, he also designed it to improve the tone and response of the clarinet. Today, Backun's products are sold around the world and played by many respected artists, such as Corrado Giuffredi.

"Backun caught on like wildfire," said Joel Jaffe, director of sales and marketing for the company. "We kind of stumbled into it as a repair shop and now here we are making our own instruments."

Fourteen years later, Backun is making its clarinets and clarinet parts using Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machines at its headquarters just outside of Vancouver. Jaffe said the consistency that comes with using the machines is unparalleled, giving the instruments an exactness high-end players are looking for.

"We are quite happy being at



At right: Morrie Backun; inset: Joel Jaffe.

Backun uses its artists, social media and accessories to drive growth

the top," Jaffe said. "We truly are the Bugati of clarinets. These days people want to race to the bottom with the lowest price, and that's just not what we do."

SOCIAL TIME

Recently, Backun expanded its worldwide presence by inking a deal with Japanese distributor Dolce Musical Instruments which also has three retail stores in Japan. Backun now has distribution in nearly 30 countries and

is known worldwide — partly thanks to its strong social media presence.

Jaffe said the company has worked hard to build its social media into what it is today. Backun launched its YouTube page in 2010 to accompany its Facebook and Twitter pages, and now the company's videos have more than 1 million YouTube views.

"We ask our artists to record educational videos on clarinet technique issues like how to play in the altissimo register or what to look for when buying a clarinet," Jaffe said. "We don't pay our artists to do them. They do the videos because they see the benefit in helping players improve."

Jaffe said the key to growing consumer engagement is creat-

ing unique content and not using the page as a direct advertising medium.

"Our YouTube page is not about selling our products," he said. "It's educational based. There are over 150 videos from a variety of Backun's global artists, and a lot of our videos are focused on helping young players. We crowdsource the questions via email and social media, and answer them through a video."

GROWTH IN ALL DIRECTIONS

When Jaffe and the Backun team look ahead, they see continued growth in all sectors of their business.

"Year after year we have achieved growth in both volume and brand recognition," he said. "We hope that continues in the future."

One way Backun has grown is through its accessories.

"The barrels and the bells help us build our brand, [so] even if a consumer can't afford a clarinet, there's a barrel or bell that might be right for their stage of development," Jaffe said. "Just a change of the barrel helps players improve their playing and their resonance. And when they are ready for a clarinet, the natural step is for them to think of Backun. The goal is not just selling a clarinet, it's helping players improve and enjoy music making more." **MI**

Put some bark in your Casio



The Casio CTK-2400 Sound EFX Sampler

The new Sound EFX Samplers expand on Casio's history of sampling keyboards and will unlock creativity for a new generation. Featuring a built-in microphone, it is easy to capture sounds from anywhere. In addition, sampled sounds remain stored in the keyboard after you turn it off, allowing you to repeat your performance without having to entice Rufus to bark again. All of this plus all of the lesson features, tones, rhythms and USB connectivity of a full sized Casio 61-key keyboard.

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DISTRIBUTION

Sabian Picks Pearl

Sabian has appointed Pearl its exclusive distributor of Sabian band and orchestral instruments in the United States. However, KMC will continue to be the exclusive U.S. distributor of Sabian drum set cymbals.



“Having worked successfully with Pearl in other markets around the world, we are confident the synergy between our two brands will lead to significant growth for both companies,” said Andy Zildjian, Sabian’s CEO. sabian.com; pearldrums.com

DISTRIBUTION

Sabian Picks Pearl

Eastman Music Company recently acquired brass instrument manufacturer S.E. Shires Co., which will continue to maintain and operate its corporate headquarters and production facility in Hopedale, Massachusetts. *The Wall Street Journal* reported the company was purchased out of bankruptcy in a deal valued at about \$1.8 million.

Founder of S.E. Shires Stephen Shires told *The Wall Street Journal* that sales were growing but labor and material costs made profiting difficult. It filed for bankruptcy in mid-April.

“We are honored and excited to be able to give the support needed to Shires’ talented team of craftspeople so they can continue their tradition of building some of the finest horns in the world,” said Qian Ni, Eastman’s owner. eastmanmusiccompany.com

DISTRIBUTION

Mighty Bright Idea

Hal Leonard has agreed to distribute Mighty Bright lights to the MI trade worldwide.

“Cooperating with Hal Leonard means that more people will discover the joy that Mighty Bright products bring to the stage, studio and classroom,” said Dustin Cheatham, a manufacturer’s rep for Mighty Bright. halleonard.com



FENDER | COMPANY

Beautiful Day for Fender

Fender Musical Instruments Corporation’s board of directors has added U2 band members The Edge and Bono.

The duo brings a blend of experience in music, entertainment, business and advocacy to the 68-year-old music company. As members of the board, they will carry on the Fender tradition and will guide the company as it pursues new strategies to grow through increased engagement with fans.

“By adding The Edge and Bono to the board of Fender, we are taking an important step toward building a com-

pany that is able to meet its potential as a business and a brand,” said Bill McGlashan, Fender co-chairman. “The music world is changing and Fender is undergoing a transformation into a better music company.”

“Wherever you go in the world Fender is a standard bearer, not just for excellence in technology and craft, but for the influence of American culture,” Bono said. “I’m excited to be part of developing newer technologies with Fender, as well as helping protect the jobs and commitment to excellence of their age-old craft.” fender.com

BARTOLINI | DISTRIBUTION

Bartolini Teams With Dana B. Goods

Bartolini Pickups and Electronics has named Dana B. Goods as its new exclusive U.S. distributor.

According to Bartolini, over the last year, the company has doubled production capacity, and increased its on-time delivery schedule to 99 percent.

“Bartolini is well known for the excellent tone and quality of its pickup and electronics design,” said Dana Teague, president of Dana B. Goods. “We are very excited to be named the exclusive U.S. distributor and look forward to a great marriage.” bartolini.net



Photo credit: Carsten Heineck

D'ADDARIO | AWARD

JOHN D'ADDARIO RECEIVES LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

John D'Addario Jr., vice chairman of D'Addario & Co., accepted the Koblenz Lifetime Achievement Award on behalf of himself, The D'Addario Foundation, and D'Addario & Co., for their dedication to promoting classical guitar. The ceremony took place during the 22nd Koblenz International Guitar Festival on June 9 at the Electoral Castle of Koblenz, Imperial Hall in Koblenz, Germany.

“It is an honor to accept this recognition on behalf of myself, the entire D'Addario family and The D'Addario Foundation,” said John D'Addario Jr. “The art of the classical guitar has long been recognized as fundamentally the heart and soul of this versatile instrument. To play a small part in its history over several generations has been an honor and privilege we take seriously and intend to continue for many generations to come.”

The Koblenz International Guitar Festival and Academy's mission is to encourage artistic excellence, scholarship and philanthropy by organizing events that promote the concert guitar on a worldwide basis. The organization provides leadership for benefit of international concert artists, students, organizations and supporters alike. daddario.com

RADIAL | WEB NEWS

Radial Launches Minisite

Radial Engineering recently launched a StageBug SB-15 Tailbone high performance signal buffer minisite on radialeng.com.

“Once again we offer the full story on one of our products from development to market,” said Peter Janis, Radial president. “The SB-15 Tailbone is designed to sit at the beginning of the signal chain and drive multiple pedals without adding any noise. That’s often an issue with high impedance circuits. It has the same award-winning class-A buffer that is in the Radial JD7 which is used by guitarists, including Steve Vai, John Petrucci and Steve Lukather.”

On the product pages visitors will find information on product features, development, user tips

and frequently asked questions.

Each Radial minisite also offers a downloadable user guide and a link for visitors to send in a question about the product if they have a situation-specific inquiry. tonebone.com/stagebugsb15.php; radialeng.com



Composite Acoustics Brings Music to Haiti

Composite Acoustics, Peavey's line of carbon fiber acoustic guitars, recently partnered with members of the clean water organization Raincatchers to bring guitar instruction and enjoyment to the people of Haiti.

While on a Raincatchers trip to Haiti to teach members of local communities how to collect rainwater and provide clean water on a daily basis, team member Chad Dohring learned just how much experiencing guitar meant to the towns-

people when he brought out his acoustic guitar. But playing guitar in Haiti's humid climate can prove to be difficult.

"I started searching for a solution and I came across Composite Acoustics," Dohring said. "I wrote to the company and they said, 'Yes, we have the guitar for you.'"

Dohring received a Composite Acoustics Cargo guitar and started teaching music at the new school in Haiti.

"The hope that is filled on their faces when they play and sing and make music is amazing," Dohring said. "Music brings hope. It really does."

In addition to the lessons that Dohring oversees, the Composite Acoustics Cargo guitar is left there for students to use on a regular basis. compositeacoustics.com



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APPOINTMENTS

ROLAND SUPPORTS DJ GROWTH WITH NEW APPOINTMENTS



Brandon Ryan

Roland U.S. has appointed Brandon Ryan as product and artist relations manager — dance, DJ and media production. Ryan joined Roland in 2012 and has 20 years of MI experience, including extensive knowledge of sales, marketing and artist relations.

Peter Brown has also joined the team as product specialist — dance and DJ. Brown holds a bachelor of arts in music in electronic production and design from Berklee College

of Music and recently served as a sound designer for the film *Fast and Furious 6*.

Finally, Casey Bishop has been named AIRA artist and customer relations. Prior to being recruited by the dance and DJ team at Roland, Bishop served as a sales engineer for production, rental and live performance venues at the pro-audio and video division of Roland, Roland Systems Group. rolandus.com

inMusic has added Costa Lakoumentas, who will oversee the newly acquired D&M Professional brands, and John Terry, who will become the U.S. national

sales manager for Denon DJ. **Brent Barnett** has been named the new artist relations manager for Gretsch Drums. Barnett has worked in the percussion division of KMC Mu-

sic, Gretsch's U.S. distributor, for the past seven years, and will be based out of KMC's Ontario, California location.

SKB's Music Pro AV Division has named Eric Sands

national sales manager.

Michael Doucot has been named product marketing manager for Electro-Voice Portable Sound North America.



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Note From Causby

NAMM Membership: Customized to Your Success

During the last NAMM Show, the Member Center hosted a ukulele circle where people of all skill levels could play and learn together. I was fascinated by how this little instrument brought together so many different people from all over the world and I instantly wanted to join in the fun. I wondered whether I could really do it and, to my surprise, I actually learned something! I even played a song.

I was immediately hooked and began visiting a variety of Member stores and websites in search of ukuleles. As a consumer, I was overwhelmed by my own lack of knowledge and the multitude of sales experiences I encountered. Some offered too many choices, others not enough. Some had the time to speak with me, while others didn't. This got me thinking about how I could use my experience to help people get more from their Membership, knowing there are many untapped resources our Members aren't currently using or may not even know exist. Finding that right mix of sales training, inventory knowledge and customer service is crucial to retaining customers, and showing Members how to dial in that mix is even more important.

Members tell us that our trade shows are the number one benefit of belonging. Yet NAMM doesn't just work for its Members seven days a year—we're here to serve you year round. Are you taking advantage of your Membership the other 358 days?

If you're a retailer, have you ordered the new bilingual *Sesame Street* brochures to display in your store or lesson room?

They're an excellent way to drive young music makers and their parents into your store. NAMM has this and more brochures to help you grow your customer base and expand the market of potential music makers. Have you read NAMM U's monthly newsletter? It features a variety of articles and videos on sales, social media, customer service, inventory management and more as your industry peers share what works in their businesses. NAMM U Online is also a great way to provide your employees with quick, convenient industry training anytime.

If you're a manufacturer, are you participating in NAMM's Intellectual Property forums, reviewing the latest industry statistics in the *Global Report* or making your business more technology-efficient through NAMM Standards? These valuable benefits are included in your Membership. The association also pushes out industry news and content each day through its Facebook and Twitter pages—a great opportunity for suppliers and retailers alike to repurpose this content on their own social media accounts.

Ukuleles are not one-size-fits-all and, ultimately, I had to find the one that worked for me. NAMM Membership is also unique and can be customized to fit your company's individual needs and challenges. Whether you're a Member, a former Member or have never joined NAMM, we want to hear from you so we can set your business up with the tools and resources that will give you the best chance for continued success and sustainability.

Sincerely,

Causby Challacombe
DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP, NAMM



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IDEAS

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LESSONS LEARNED | BY GERSON ROSENBLUM

HOBNOBBING 101

My history with NAMM started back in 1989. Despite what turned into a pretty good run, I nearly missed the opportunity of a professional lifetime. Fortunately, everything worked out for me, but I came awfully close to missing an extraordinary experience. Here's the story:

In April of 1989, I was approached about joining the NAMM board of directors by then Chairman of the Nominating Committee, Jack Coffey. As I came to learn, the senior class of NAMM board members and executive committee had met, as they do once a year, to choose a slate of individuals to stand for election to the board. They actively seek input from NAMM membership to identify candidates who will make up a board that fairly represents all factions of the music industry.

When the call came in from Jack, I was somewhat dumbfounded. Actually, in hindsight ... I was just dumb! I just didn't see myself as that kind of person. I was a young businessman who was forging new ground in the red-hot combo sector, predicting



'Some of your greatest benefits will come from looking beyond your own four walls.'

the next hot trend, and focused entirely on growing my business. What did I know about board governance? What did I care? More than anything, I had a set of preconceived notions about NAMM and its board — and they weren't pretty. I believed that the board was a bunch of cantankerous guys who gathered

in smoky boardrooms and took a break from their drunken carousing only long enough to get in 18 holes.

Where did such crazy beliefs come from? Perhaps it was a less friendly press back in those days. Or maybe it was a NAMM that didn't do as good a job as they do today in educating their constituents, in self-promotion, and in image building.

THE LESSON LEARNED

Regardless of the reasons for my misguided disrespect, I decided that I'd use this opportunity to go shake up the organization. The lesson learned: NAMM needed little fixing. Rather it was me who would have his arrogance and narrow-mindedness knocked down. What I discovered was a trade association that was incredibly well-run, with a capable and devoted staff, and industry volunteers who, like myself, became obsessed with doing their very best for the music products industry. The NAMM boardroom was a place where talented people worked together for the greater good of the MI industry. Serving on the NAMM board offered me the opportunity to work side by

side with true icons of our industry. And in doing so, every moment spent there was a huge learning experience.

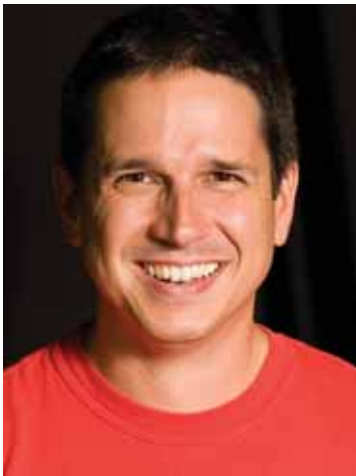
Whatever I contributed to NAMM, I was rewarded a hundredfold with the personal knowledge gained by listening to other smart people and learning from their experiences. Through my time at NAMM (and my on-going association with the organization), I met and became friends with hundreds of gifted leaders from every corner of the globe and every segment of our diverse industry. I also learned the astoundingly important role of networking and moving beyond my own narrowly focused business. The universal knowledge and industry contacts gained through my work at NAMM has made me a better-rounded, more competent businessman. The temptation is always to exclusively work hard on your own business. But ironically, some of your greatest benefits will come from looking beyond your own four walls. **MI**

Gerson Rosenbloom is the Vice President of Strategic Management at Sweetwater Sound, the former president of Medley Music, and a past NAMM chairman. Email him at: gersonmusicinc@gmail.com

THE RETAIL DOCTOR | BY BILLY CUTHRELL

More Tech, More Revenue

A few articles back, I discussed some of the technology tools that I employ in my shops to assist with daily tasks and making our general operations run smoothly while keeping it at the forefront of a tech-savvy consumer base. I received reader emails asking how to stay abreast of new products coming on the market, and there was some general concern over not being tech-savvy enough to figure out how to set some of the products up and use them effectively.



First, I find many new and existing products via crowdsourcing sites like Kickstarter where I've discovered both hardware and software products. I also receive notifications from various Web-based resources, such as Gear Patrol and tech blogs. It seems that every day my inbox is filled with alerts of new widgets coming on the market. In some cases I invest in products through Kickstarter, and in other cases, I wait and purchase once the products are released on the public market. I use and test these for ease of use, reliability and effectiveness before I write about them.

Secondly, I want to put the disclaimer out there that I'm not a "tech guy." I still have a, gasp, iPhone 4 and iPad 2. They still work well for me and I have not seen the need to upgrade yet. The nice thing about most of the products I outline is that technology has become very user friendly, well-made and continues to evolve into intuitive products. Companies know that if their product is going to succeed and be useful to the end user it better be super easy to set up and start using right out of the box. Most of these technological marvels I investigate are really useful when it comes

to boosting my bottom line, so I brainstorm on how to best use them in my shops and try to find new ways of incorporating products if I feel the initial investment will pay for itself and then help in providing further revenue. These hardware or software products are looked at as business expenses and that's it.

Of late, I've been using and testing a new batch of products that I have found a lot of uses for in my shops. Below are two of the most recent products that I have found to be easy to use, offer good options for the end user and are easy to set up and use right away (i.e. realize ROI in the short term). Outside of the ways I describe below, I encourage you to look at how these products can fit into your shops.

SWIVL (SWIVL.COM)

Touted as a "robotic platform for learning" I consider this more of a table top video tool than a "robot," but it does have some very cool features that can be employed for music lessons and retailers with multiple locations. Swivl is a table top unit that combines the Swivl app with cloud hosting and wireless audio that enables video from any location. Available for iOS and Android, Swivl lets you record your video and then upload them to the company's cloud-based storage for sharing with others.

The cool thing here is that the Swivl base unit has a built in motion sensor that follows the speaker/presenter. You simply place your phone or tablet in the base and it follows your every

These three tech tools will increase your bottom line – and you don't have to be a 'tech genius' to use them

move by tilting and rotating, plus records your audio via a remote. If you have more than one location and would like to offer training videos, this might be a great tool to incorporate. I can also see using this for music lessons that have groups of students in multiple locations, or even for getting into online lessons. Swivl starts at \$299 and goes to \$799, but the \$499 middle, or basic tier, is probably the best bet to start with since that offers the cloud storage as well.

LIFX (LIFX.CO)

LIFX is a Wi-Fi-enabled energy efficient LED light bulb that is completely controlled from your smartphone. At \$99 per unit, the LIFX is more expensive than your average LED bulb, but it is equipped with Wi-Fi and it's rated to last up to 40,000 hours (a life expectancy of 27 years if used about four hours a day) and with an amazing choice of colors at your fingertips, the cost can be justified. This is actually an item I found on Kickstarter and thought it would be very cool in my home, and it was, but I found it worked amazingly well in our shops on our in-house performance stages.

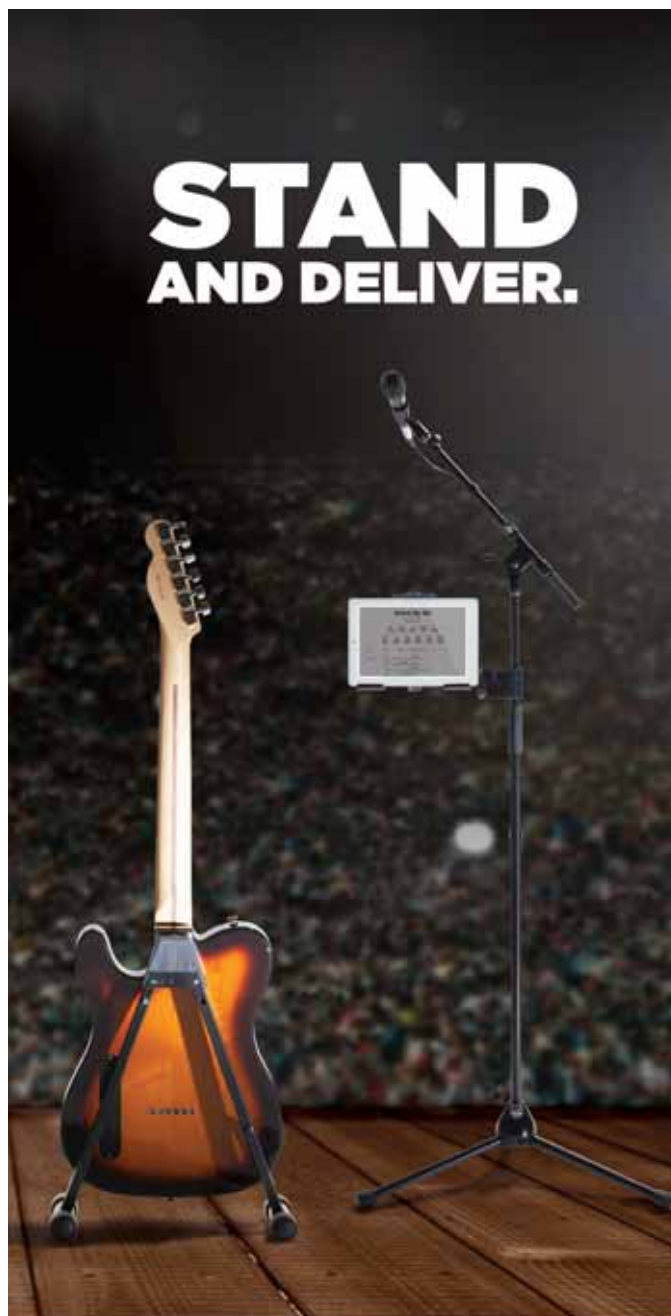
We all know how important lighting can be in the retail environment, but I found LIFX was great when used during student recitals and performances. At a recent recital, I pulled out my iPhone and changed the color on the stage between students' sets. As it's a gradual lighting change, unlike many stage lights, it set a nice mood for each piece of music being presented by our students and we got more questions about the cool lighting effects.

GEN 16 CYMBALS (ZILDJIAN.COM/HOMEPAGEGEN16)

When I first saw the debut of the Gen 16 line a few years ago at NAMM I was intrigued, but not enough to pull the trigger and jump into the cymbal line right then. I thought of it like a total redesign or introduction of a new car model — there were probably some initial bugs that needed to be worked out, but with some tweaks it would be a great product. Still, I immediately loved the thought process behind the cymbals. The overall design and sound was very fresh, and I could immediately envision so many applications in our teaching studios. Fast forward three years and I jumped on the new version of these.

We recently put four sets of Gen 16 cymbal packs to work in our teaching rooms and opened an eDrums Lesson Lab area complete with electric drum sets all running through a Jam Hub unit. It's been great for noise reduction from acoustic drum lessons, but overall our students have been amazed at how cool the Gen 16's sound and it has them excited to be at their weekly lessons, and if the students are excited that means retention. This is truly a well thought out reinvention of an instrument for a new generation that likes their technology. **MI**

Billy Cuthrell owns and operates Progressive Music Center in Raleigh, N.C. Contact him at billy@raleighmusiclessons.com.



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INDEPENDENT RETAIL | BY TED ESCHLIMAN

Got Milk?

There are just some things a local grocery store should never run out of. What would you think if you heard, “Sorry, we are out of milk?” If you’re like me and there are competitive stores nearby, you may never be back. It’s an obtrusive waste of my time making extra trips, and convenience often trumps price. Duh, I haven’t saved any money if the item I want to buy is out of stock.



The dilemma is, when our business gets into slower times, there are tough purchasing decisions we need to make to keep the cash flow smooth, including King Solomon cut-the-baby-in-half sacrifices. We get seasonal “holes.” But just like you never want your grocery store to run out of basics like milk, we need to watch for empty store hooks for inventory breaches that taint our shelves and tarnish our reputation.

Basic math tells us if we’re going to run a tight ship in slow times, we must prioritize and make some at least temporary reductions in the gaps between selling cycles. These spells aren’t horribly unpredictable and with a few philosophical guidelines you can keep your store minimally stocked.

STAPLES & SENSATION

They won’t always be transparent, but you supply items that define you as a music store. These are the staple items, such as #2 clarinet reeds and valve oil, your best selling brand guitar strings, 14-inch batter heads and marching lyres — when in season. Not always intuitive, you should generate inventory sales reports to come up with your list. Remember, this is not just about having them to sell; it’s about stocking to meet merciless customer expectation.

On the other end of this are items you’d categorize as “sensation.” They are the new, hip and trendy items that maybe don’t have a track record yet, but lend a visceral customer reaction when he/she sees them in the store. These can be a new amp you’ve not stocked before, new issue print music, even an entirely new instrument category you’re testing out. Done effectively, they create store traffic.

The problem? You really need both staples and sensation. You can’t only sell the stagnant same ol’ same ol’ all the time, but if you’re perceptive of the predictable intricacies of seasonal cash flow, you can change your mix, and it’s numbingly simple. Slow times mean don’t sacrifice the staples, killing store credibility.

LEAVE ROOM WITH 75

We run our purchasing off an analysis of the previous year’s cost of goods sold by product types and brands. We calculate the year’s budget, any stock ordering is matched carefully to history of not what we bought from our vendors, but what we sold. Your reps will pummel you with their own reports of what you bought at re-auth times, but they rarely factor what is stuck hanging on your wall. My best tip, commit to 75 percent of that figure.

Some product categories of our industry are indeed fickle. You still need some leeway on brand preference, accessory obsolescence, and, of course, the larger influence of economy and consumer confidence — a.k.a. the slow times. When you limit to committing to an arbitrary 75 percent, you have the bulk of your staples on hand, but all things being equal, still have that

Finding the right balance of both staple and sensation gear is key to a successful operation

25 percent remaining to play with later. You can adjust purchasing for shifting brand loyalties more effectively. If you enjoy a healthy special order business, you also need to subtract that out of the 25 percent you haven't committed.

Keep on top of all this by running weekly replenish reports and respond quickly. Make sure you complete physical empty hook

inspections to allow for computer error. The more frequently you run this, the lower you can maintain stock levels. Just don't run out of milk. **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*.

PRIORITIZE PURCHASING BY STAPLE/SENSATION

STAPLES

- Dealer exclusive minimum stock requirements
- Best seller accessories — strings, drumheads, stands, etc.
- Instrument care products, cases/gig bags
- Standard method books local teachers expect
- Core strap, capo, tuner selection
- Entry level guitars, school instruments

SENSATION

- Brand new accessory items, tuners, strings, etc.
- New amp and guitar lines
- Custom or boutique instruments
- Experimental niche category items, such as lighting
- New pedals/guitar effects
- New drum hardware

COMMIT TO NO MORE THAN 75% OF THE PREVIOUS YEAR'S COST OF GOODS SOLD. FILL IN THE REST AS CASH FLOW ALLOWS. BUY MORE ONLY IF YOU SELL MORE. ADAPT AND NUANCE WITH 25% BALANCE OF THE ABOVE.

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THE CUSTOMER WHISPERER | BY GREG BILLINGS

Art of Story-selling

Last month's column, "The 17 Minute Rule," addressed the importance of keeping presentations short and using personal stories to frame your important points. This month, we are going to consider how to construct compelling, engaging stories.

At least once a week, a parent tells us some version of, "We want to start our kid on a cheap instrument because we really don't believe they will stick with it. If they get good, then we will buy something better."



A good story can be more persuasive than a list of product specs

It's frustrating because the parents really haven't thought this idea through. They are just following the path of least resistance. We want to help, but we don't want to get into an argument. In the piano segment, it is particularly problematic because parents mistakenly believe that a keyboard will be adequate for their kids starting piano. Rather than bombard them with credible statistics, we use this short story to turn them around:

"When I was a freshman in college, I took Psychology 101. I didn't learn much about psychology, but I learned quite a bit about rats. It seems that if you want the rats to run from one end of a maze to the other, you have to use some cheese. Without cheese, the rats just mill around aimlessly. If we want our kids to succeed we have to provide a proper reward for their effort. The teacher is going to teach, the kids are going to practice, and you are going to drive them to lessons and recitals and pay for everything. But, the reward comes when they kids touch the keys. If they get the beautiful sound of a string vibrating over a piece of spruce [at this moment I play a C chord on the piano] they are going to be a lot more motivated than if they hear a squeaky sound coming

out of a little speaker. Most experts agree that kids need a good instrument right from the start and you can rent a good piano for less than the cost of a buying bad piano. There is a reason the drop out rate is so high for kids who don't have real pianos."

This story works because it follows a prescribed formula.

First, it is personal — our listener can identify with being a college freshman. Second, it is engaging — they can visualize the rats milling around. Next, it is aspirational — it is about giving their kids the best opportunity to succeed. It's dramatic because the difference in sound between a piano and a keyboard. It is persuasive because it is so logical and offers a solution. Additionally, it uses just enough fear to be taken seriously. And, it all takes less than a minute to tell.

BECOME A STORY TELLER

Fortunately, many of our brands have wonderful histories. After World War II, Ikutaro Kakehashi opened a radio repair shop in a storefront smaller than a Manhattan studio apartment. From that humble beginning he built Roland, the largest electronic musical instrument company in the world. Along the way he invented the first practical drum machine — the organ that became the Hammond Pieper which was the forerunner of today's electronic keyboards all while leading the team of manufacturers that made MIDI a industry standard and also pioneering all those little stomp boxes to which guitar players are hopelessly addicted.

Dick Dolan transformed QRS from a player piano roll cutter into a high-tech engineering firm making state-of-the-art digital player piano systems. Leo Fender may not have invented the first electric guitar, but he definitely invented the electric bass guitar. In 1909, William F. Ludwig and his brother Theobald invented the modern bass drum pedal in the old Omaha Building in Chicago and went on to build the company that made the drum set Ringo Starr played on *The Ed Sullivan Show* 55 years later. Every company has a tale to tell and your customers will probably respond better to these real people and their real stories than they will to features or specifications.

Today's clients are used to being spoon fed and entertained. They have very short attention spans. That's why they are not impressed with facts, especially technical facts and especially presented orally. But, they will respond to a story.

As early as 522 B.C., Darius the Great was carving stories into stone walls to justify his kingship of Persia. Jesus used parables to help his disciples understand theological concepts. Government propaganda, from the French Revolution to the current troubles in Ukraine, has used clever tales of harm and threat to create fear, hide their cunning and rally citizen support.

ENGAGE YOUR CUSTOMERS

The best stories clarify features and concepts, or deal with objections, in a way that will hold our customers attention and help them better understand. Knowing this, construct just a few stories to address your most common challenges. They should be personal, engaging, dramatic and aspirational to be persuasive. They should conclude with a solution dependent on your product. Feel free to use props and don't hesitate to imply just a little fear.

Let's not forget that people love pictures. In my office I have adjacent pictures of my grandfather's band from the '30s, my dad's band from the '50s and my band from the late '60s. None of those pictures have much to do with pianos, but customers really like hearing about my family and it seems to change the entire dynamic of my time with them.

It is a simple fact of human nature that we are hardwired to respond to stories. You

have a story to tell. But maybe you're not telling it. Or not telling it often enough, or to the right people. Think about how you came to be in a music store, what you have learned along the way and the interesting people you have met. You will find your stories.

Make sure to tell your stories over and

over again and refine them until they are perfectly natural. Your customers will respond and you will have more fun doing your job of gently guiding clients through the decision making process. **MI**

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

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FROM THE TOP

INTERVIEWED BY KATIE KAILUS

BILL PUTNAM JR. | UNIVERSAL AUDIO

HOW DO YOU START YOUR DAY?

I have breakfast with my family, drop my son off at school and then go work out. Once I get to the office, I catch up with emails or jump into a meeting.

YOUR FATHER STARTED UNIVERSAL AUDIO BACK IN THE 1950s. HOW DID THE COMPANY GET ITS START?

Universal Audio's story is kind of unique. My dad was in the recording business, and he actually started doing audio during World War II. He was in the army signal corp and they were involved in armed forces radio, but he had been in radio before the war. After the war, he started a recording studio in Chicago. He was kind of in the right place at the right time — the blues were going on in Chicago and a lot of the early rock 'n' roll and big bands came through there. So, he was recording everyone from Muddy Waters to Chuck Berry to Duke Ellington and Count Basie. He started some successful studios in the late 1940s and realized there wasn't specific equipment for the recording studios at that time. There was broadcast and telephone equipment that had been adapted for the studio. So, he began designing his own gear and became famous for that. And eventually started Universal Audio in the 1950s.

THE COMPANY WAS EVENTUALLY SOLD, CORRECT? SO, HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED IN UA?

Yes, well, my dad sold Universal Audio and it kind of went away as a living brand, but was always remembered as having some well-respected products. My background is in engineering, and I always knew I wanted to get into music. So, when I was finishing my PhD program, I decided to restart Universal Audio with an eye towards re-manufacturing some of the early analog equipment. But really the goal was to get to really fine digital emulation of the analog equipment.

Back then, my brother, who is a musician, was very much an "analog purist." He was using all classic analog equipment, big analog consoles, tape machines. And I was more interested in the future of digital audio. And so we would have these endless arguments. And one night, after sitting around drinking, we were like, 'Hey, how about we do both?' He was there as the inspiration and also he very much

championed the philosophy of doing the analog equipment completely faithful to the way it was done back in the early days. That was in 1998 and we've been doing it ever since.

HOW HANDS-ON ARE YOU WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRODUCTS?

My background is electrical engineering. I started the company because I wanted to make products myself. I was involved in the first few directly and then got wrapped up in the business side, and ended up enjoying it way more than I thought I would. I found business to be a very creative and rewarding pursuit in and of itself. And it's even better when it's related to music, which is my passion. So I would say there was a large chunk of time where I was doing more spreadsheets than programming or signal processing. But since then, I've been involved in several of our most recent products like the Ocean Way Studios product, where we simulate the acoustics of a couple classic recording studios — some that my dad designed in Hollywood in the '60s that are still in pristine condition.

ARE YOU A MUSICIAN YOURSELF?

I play guitar, but my brother plays everything. When we were younger, I was struggling to learn guitar — I think I had been playing for a few years. He borrowed my guitar for a weekend and came out playing better than me in two days. He's really talented. He borrowed my dad's reel-to-reel tape machine and my guitar and closed his bedroom door for a few days and came out with an album. He's prolific — he can play just about anything.

SOUNDS LIKE IT. DOES HE TEST OUT UA'S PRODUCTS?

Yes, he tests out all our products. He isn't directly involved with the company. One of our more successful products was our emulation of a pseudo-tape machine. When we were doing that product, we needed someone who had good ears. He took all the measurements and did all the biasing and alignments of the machine — many, many hours of work.

IS BEING A MUSICIAN A PRE-REQUISITE FOR WORKING AT UNIVERSAL AUDIO?

Not officially, but if you end up in this industry, it's because you love music. It really helps if you have first-hand



Metronome (1964)

Tube Recording Channel

Driving Amplifier (1967, 1978)

Low Pass Filters (1962)

Super Time Cube (1973)

Leveling Amplifier (1969, 1975)

er Set (1971)

etric Equalizer (1974)

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4-7100 Four-Channel Mic Preamp & DI with Dynamics
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3-MNH Classic Tube Recording Channel
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1000 Hz Low Pass Filter

1000 Hz Low Pass Filter
• 100% Tube to 100% Solid State
• 100% Tube to 100% Solid State
• 100% Tube to 100% Solid State

THE DETAILS

BILL PUTNAM JR., CEO

HQ: Scotts Valley, California

Founded: First founded in the 1950s, re-started in 1998.

Employees: 100

Best selling product: The Apollo family of products

Fun Fact: "My dad started the company under the name Universal Audio, but then changed the name to UREI, which became a famous brand in and of itself. He sold UREI to JBL Harman back in the early '80s. So, the Universal Audio name hadn't been used since the '60s."

knowledge of the gear and music and it gives you that little extra passion that I think is really key. So, the majority of the folks at UA are either musicians or record. If you walk around the office, you'll see keyboards, guitars or basses in almost every cube.

THERE'S BEEN A LARGE SURGE IN THE POPULARITY OF SYNTHESIZERS AND VINTAGE GEAR ACROSS THE MI INDUSTRY. HAVE YOU GUYS NOTICED THIS WITH YOUR PRODUCTS DESPITE THE 'DIGITAL AGE' WE ARE IN?

Definitely. The types of products that people are buying that are analog are different.

When I first started, we were selling more line-in/line-out products like compressors. And now, really, to be something that's going to sell it needs a microphone input or an instrument input.

But I have noticed the resurgence in the synthesizer world and the vintage analog has carried over to our market as well. I think there's a reason for it. We kind of like to have our cake and eat it too in the sense that I believe there is a place for analog. If you come by our office we have some classic analog synths — we even have a Moog Modular. So we really appreciate that vintage stuff. There's a deep appreciation for it. But, on the other hand, we work really hard to do digital emulations that sound as good as we can and we never hold back. I think there's a place for both.

WHAT IS YOUR HOTTEST PRODUCT RIGHT NOW?

I would say our Apollo product line, which is our line of recording interfaces. We have a product with four mic inputs that sells for around \$2,500, and a \$2,000 version of that with different amounts of processing power, which is the differentiation between the two. Then we have the new lower-end Apollo Twin — which we announced this past Winter NAMM and it is doing quite well. It's a two-channel recording interface that brings high-quality audio down to the desktop. Since we came out with it, that is the product that I use for all my recording. It sounds fantastic and it's in the \$699 or \$899 price range. It's the Universal Audio quality at a much more affordable price.

YOU RECORD AS WELL?

Yeah, right now I am trying to learn more and more about electronic music, and picking up my guitar a little less.

WHO IS THE UNIVERSAL AUDIO CUSTOMER?

The first thing that comes to mind is someone who cares about audio quality. We are not a company that differentiates itself by creating a product that is lower cost than everyone else. And we are not going to differentiate ourselves by creating a product that has more whiz-bang features. The thing that always differentiates Universal Audio is the audio quality — whether it be the actual quality of our converters or our recording interface, or the plug-ins that we do. That said, I think it appears there are a lot of different places in the industry where people care about quality, and certainly high-end studios across the board do, so you'll find Universal Audio in major recording studios.

But, there are a lot of folks that make a portion of their living mixing or mastering or doing products for other people, and they are our customer as well as the high-end amateur. UA is for people that are willing to spend a little bit more to get higher quality — someone kind of like myself. No one is going to pay me to be a musician, but I care about it enough that I get pleasure out of having really nice high-quality equipment.

'WE ARE NOT A COMPANY THAT DIFFERENTIATES ITSELF BY CREATING A PRODUCT THAT IS LOWER COST THAN EVERYONE ELSE.'

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR UNIVERSAL AUDIO?

We would like to continue making high-quality plug-ins. I think we challenge ourselves with every plug-in we come out with because we attempt to learn something new or invent something new. I hope we continue to push the quality level on digital emulation even farther. The difference between the digital versions and analog is less and less. We are doing some interesting things to expand the universe where digital emulations matter.

With Apollo Twin, we announced something called Unison which is a hybrid digital and analog technology which is core to what Universal Audio is about — we really care about both digital and analog. So, Unison is the technology where we are emulating through a combination of analog and digital mic pre-amplifiers. There are more and more areas where high-quality emulation can bring benefits to the customer. So, I hope to do more and more of that.

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

It's hard because music is like the first 10 on my list. I would probably have an organic farm or be a chef. Or both. Why not reach for them all?

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The Arts of Advocacy

BY FRANK ALKYER

10 takeaways from this year's annual NAMM Advocacy Fly-In

IN MID-MAY, 65 NAMM MEMBERS GATHERED IN Washington, D.C., to take part in what has become an annual industry ritual — The NAMM Advocacy Fly-In in Washington, D.C.

The 10th, and largest, NAMM Fly-In featured a bit of star power including Red Hot Chili Peppers' drummer Chad Smith, guitarist (and former New York Yankee) Bernie Williams and actor Doc Shaw joining NAMM members in conducting more than 100 face-to-face meetings with Congressional leaders and their staff members.

What began as a group of industry leaders meeting legislators has grown into three-and-a-half days of community service, intensive training and events, all geared to drive home a point — music and arts education is essential to a complete and competitive education.

“We envision a world in which every child has a deep desire to make music and a right to be taught,” NAMM President and CEO Joe Lamond told attendees. “And a world where every adult is a passionate champion and defender of that right. That’s our end zone. That’s what we’re here for.”

NAMM members who have attended Fly-Ins have called it “life-changing” and “eye-opening.”

“It gave me a whole new appreciation for what’s happening out here in D.C. — that you can build personal relationships,” said Mike Kamphuis from Conn-Selmer. “To know you can have a face-to-face conversation with a representative and a senator, and have them regurgitate the aspect that music education is important just leaves me pumped up.”

“This year with Ron [Manus] from Alfred and Barbara [Wight] from Taylor and myself from Yamaha, three completely different companies, pulled it together in a day and after the first meeting, we had it down,” said Dave Jewell from Yamaha. “It was there. The ‘wow’ moment is just the fact that we get together in such a quick time, from competing companies sometimes, and we put it together for one message to make it work.”

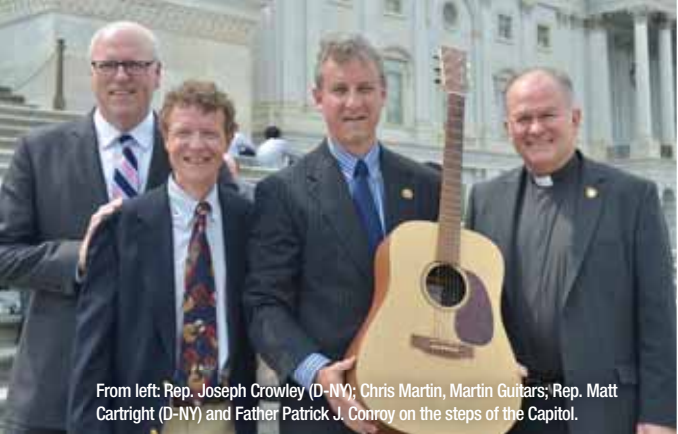
In honor of the 10th annual NAMM Fly-In, the following pages offer 10 takeaways from this year’s events.



Liz Reisman, owner of Creative Music Center helps a student at Savoy Elementary School during an “in-service” day for Fly-In delegates.



From left: Robin Walenta of West Music, Myrna Sislen of Middle C Music, Gayle Beacock of Beacock's Music, Liz Reisman of Creative Music Center, Tracy Stuhr of West Music, Sandy Goff of Paige's Music and Tracy Leenman of Progressive Music.



From left: Rep. Joseph Crowley (D-NY); Chris Martin, Martin Guitars; Rep. Matt Cartright (D-NY) and Father Patrick J. Conroy on the steps of the Capitol.



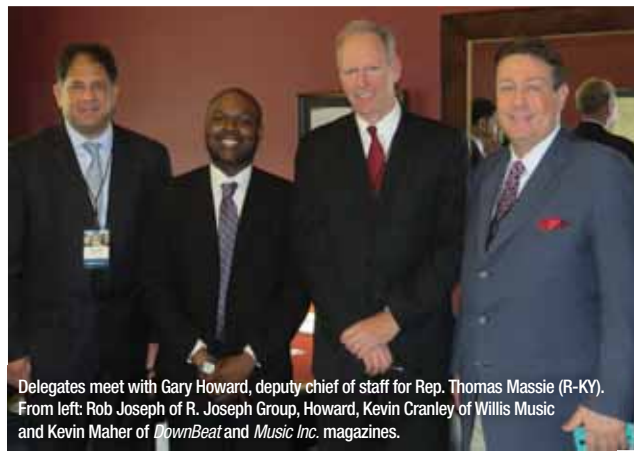
Retailers and *Music Inc.* columnists Greg Billings of Piano Gallery and Billy Cuthrell of Progressive Music Center.



Leann and Tobin Rockley of Rockley Music.



From left: J.P. Parekh of Rice Music House with NAMM's Mary Luehrsen and Joe Lamond.



Delegates meet with Gary Howard, deputy chief of staff for Rep. Thomas Massie (R-KY). From left: Rob Joseph of R. Joseph Group, Howard, Kevin Cranley of Willis Music and Kevin Maher of *DownBeat* and *Music Inc.* magazines.



From left: Joe and Becky Pritchard of Pritchard Music Academy with Mark Despotakis of Progressive Music.



Rep. Scott Peters (D-CA), right, meets with Red Hot Chili Peppers' drummer Chad Smith and Taylor Guitars' Barbara Wight.



Fly-In delegates get briefed on the latest policy trends and news surrounding music education before heading to Capitol Hill.



The Wisconsin delegation with Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI). From left: Ben Kraft of Kraft Music, Larry Morton of Hal Leonard, Jonathan Lipp of Full Compass, Baldwin, Susan Lipp of Full Compass, Tristann Rieck of Brass Bell Music and Leo Cocco of Nelson, Mullins, Riley and Scarborough.



Delegates meet with a staff member from the office of Rep. Adam B. Schiff (D-NY). From left: David Jewell of Yamaha Corp. of America, Ron Manus of Alfred Publishing, Barbara Wight of Taylor Guitars and Lora Bodmer of NAMM.



The New York Fly-In contingent meet with Morgan Broman, chief of staff for Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY), third from right.



Menzie Pittman of Contemporary Music Center, left, with Brian Reardon of Monster Music.



Speaker of the House John Boehner (R-Ohio) speaks with Fly-In delegates. From left: Hal Leonard's Larry Morton, drummer Chad Smith, guitarist Bernie Williams, a member of Boehner's staff, music-brain researcher Nina Kraus, music educator Kent Knappenberger and Boehner.

1 Change = *Patience and persistence*

• THE PRIMARY MISSION FOR DELEGATES DURING this year's Fly-In was to encourage legislators to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), legislation that has languished in Congress for six years now.

Also known as No Child Left Behind, ESEA legislation includes provisions to fund education, emphasize equity, high academic standards and accountability, and narrow the achievement gap by creating fair access to quality education.

Why is this legislation so important to music and arts education? Because the arts are already designated as a core academic subject in the federal law, thus better ensuring

arts programs remain strong in the schools.

Once on the Hill and in meetings with members of Congress and their staffs, it became clear that there will be no movement on the reauthorization before the November mid-term elections.

Then, why ask? To ensure that when the vote comes or new education legislation is introduced, legislators will remember the arts are a core subject.

"There's a saying in Washington that you don't measure change in years or decades, you measure it in generations," said Joe Lamond, NAMM president and CEO, in discussing why lobbying has to have such a long-term vision.

2 Turnaround Success

• IN THE EAST ROOM OF THE WHITE HOUSE, ON A warm May afternoon, young artists joined with stars, the first lady and even the president to celebrate how arts can positively impact education.

They gathered to celebrate the success of the Turnaround Arts, a pilot program created three years ago by the President's Committee for Arts and the Humanities to see if infusing the arts into eight of the nation's poorest performing schools could make a difference. It did.

During the inaugural Turnaround Arts Talent Show at the White House, students from these schools sang, danced, acted and performed with the help of all-star mentors to demonstrate the skills they learned from the program. They were good, but the effect the arts had on their schools was even better.

"Three years ago the members of PCAH came up with this audacious idea," said First Lady Michelle Obama, the honorary chair of PCAH. "They decided they wanted to use arts education to turnaround struggling schools. They wanted to bring in art supplies and instruments and training. And they wanted to convince famous artists to adopt these schools and help them transform over a two-year period of time.

"And we all know the statistics when it comes to the power of the arts in education. We know that kids who get involved in the arts have higher grades, higher graduation rates, higher college enrollment rates. I could go on and on and on. I am very proud to say that today, three years later,

the Turnaround Arts program has exceeded not just our expectations, but our wildest hopes and dreams."

Obama said including strong arts instruction, combined with some school improvement grants, helped increase math and reading scores, attendance and enrollment rates, parent engagement, and drastically reduce student suspensions.

"Two of the schools in our pilot improved so dramatically that they are no longer in turnaround status," she said. "Today, the students in these schools are engaged in their education like never before and that's really the point. It's about their education."

Then, she told a story about Boston's Orchard Gardens Elementary School.

"This school had six principals in seven years," Obama said. "Their teacher turnover rate was over 50 percent and test scores were among the lowest in the state. But they had a principal who believed in the power of the arts.

"So that individual replaced the school security guards with five full-time arts and music teachers. And today, Orchard Gardens is known as one of the most improved schools in the entire state of Massachusetts."

Obama called the pilot program an "overwhelming success," and announced that 35 more Turnaround Arts schools in 11 states will be added this fall.

"Ten thousand more students will finally have access to arts education," she said. "This is huge. But as we celebrate this expansion today, I'm thinking about the kids who aren't among the lucky few who attend a Turnaround Arts school."

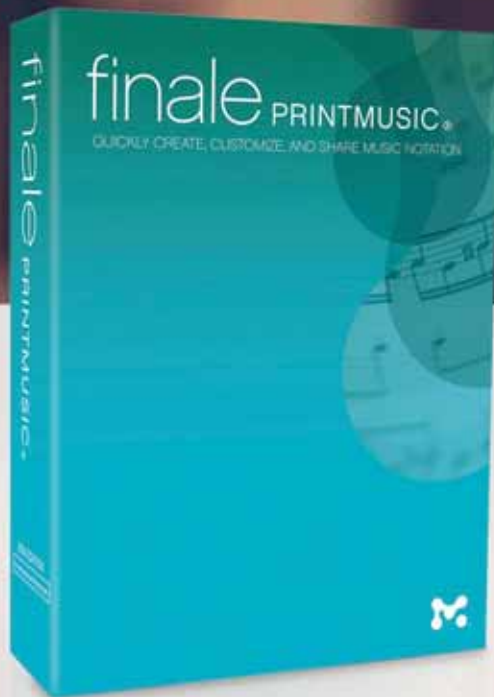
At the end of the show, President Barack Obama made a surprise visit.

"I hope that events like this help send a message to school districts and parents and governors and leaders all across this country that you've got to support the arts," he said. "It's a priority."



Right: Michelle Obama; inset: President Barack Obama

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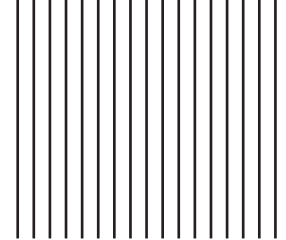
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3. Power to the States

WITH ESEA STALLED IN THE COMMITTEE, THE power of defining education standards has rapidly returned to the states.

Chris Minnich leads the Council of Chief State School Officers, an organization of 57 of the nation's top state education officials. He said that 40 states have waivers from No Child Left Behind and 45 states have adopted their own standards.



Chris Minnich

“Our organization and our members have become much more influential in what’s going on in education because there really is no coherent federal education policy right now,” Minnich told NAMM Fly-In attendees during a briefing.

“Next year, we’re going to be giving new assessments across the country,” he said. “And these new assessments are going to be much more difficult in English language arts and mathematics.

“When we get these results, fewer kids are going to pass

these tests. That’s going to be really hard on communities. We’re already starting to see this. New York and Kentucky were the first two states to deliver the new assessments and they have many fewer kids passing the assessments.”

The net result, in Minnich’s view, will be upset parents and difficult conversations locally and nationally about the new standards.

“So, what does that mean for the arts?” he asked. “We were very careful as we were writing the standards that we talked about how arts can be integrated into the math and language conversation. We thought that was a really important thing for us to do.

“We also think the arts in itself should be part of this conversation. The only reason we started with those two subjects was we felt like we had the most consensus on those two subjects.

“A part of this ongoing conversation is that we really are at a reflection point. And I think it’s really important to note that this is the time. We won’t have another shot at this. I was talking with some of my colleagues in the states and asked, ‘So what happens six years from now when we want to redo these standards? Do we get together again as a group?’ Nobody had the appetite for that because we had such a hard time in the states trying to hold this together.”

4. Education is Shifting

WHILE EDUCATION LEGISLATION MIGHT BE STALLED in Congress, issues surrounding education are changing rapidly, according to Maria Voles Ferguson, executive director of the Center on Education Policy at George Washington University.



Maria Voles Ferguson

Speaking to Fly-In delegates to get them up to speed on the issues, Ferguson noted there are two important shifts happening.

First, a demographic shift, whereby Americans are becoming older and the population is becoming more diverse.

“By the year 2050, one in five Americans will be an immigrant,” Ferguson said. “The Latino population will triple in size.

“The youngest of us are the most diverse — 47 percent of children

under five belong to a racial or ethnic group. When you think about how that plays out in the schools, it’s daunting and wonderful all at the same time.”

Along with these changing demographics, Ferguson said

there are 50 million students in the public school system today, and that is expected to rise 8 percent by 2021. When coupled with the recession’s lasting impact on budgets, Ferguson said there are more students and less resources.

“These are great challenges at a time when some very, very important reform actions are going on in K-12 schools,” she said.

The second shift she sees is the new emphasis by employers being put “soft skills.”

“Specifically, attentiveness, perseverance, creativity, engagement, working memory and recall,” Ferguson said. “All of these skills contribute to student success. You can talk to any researcher. You can certainly talk to institutions of higher-ed. And these skills are an important part of the conversation.

“The conversation about these skills was disregarded 20 years ago. It wasn’t something that was taken seriously. And now there is a real effort to figure out ways to measure them, to really bring them into the conversation. I think one of the best things that have come along in supporting that is when you look at polling data and research on what employers want, this is what they talk about. And they place it above any particular field of study. They want students who have these skills.”

5. New Research: *Music Ed Makes Better Learners*

WHEN IT COMES TO MUSIC-BRAIN RESEARCH, SOME of the most exciting findings in the field are coming from Nina Kraus, a professor at the Auditory Neuroscience Laboratory at Northwestern University.

Kraus has been conducting two studies in conjunction with

the Chicago Public Schools and the Harmony Project in Los Angeles to see if music education can help close the learning gap faced by children living in poverty.

In a briefing at the Capitol, Kraus told Congressional leaders and staffers that she began by looking at facts her lab had already discovered —

children with less educated mothers are less neurologically developed than children with more educated mothers.

“These are kids are at risk for linguistic deprivation,” Kraus said. “Maternal education is an index of socio-economic

status. We know that children who are born to moms who have less education are likely to have heard 30 million fewer words than kids who’s moms have more education.”

Then, she and her team began to study children with less-educated mothers, introducing music education. After two years of this added training Kraus is convinced that music makes a difference.

“I can tell you that we do have iron-clad evidence that this music education is really shaping the brain in fundamental ways to make better learners,” she said. “The kids whose moms had less education, their nervous systems were just generating noise. And because the nervous system, when it’s not stimulated from the outside with structured input, it will make up it’s own stimulation. Noisy brains, like static from your radio.

“On top of it, when we deliver sounds and we play speech sounds, the response to the sound is diminished in the kids whose moms have less education.”

Kraus’ Chicago team found that after two years of study, the students with music education had neurons that were responding faster, especially in noisy listening environments.



Nina Kraus

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6. STEAM is Gaining Steam

DURING A PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE CAPITOL lawn, Rep. Suzanne Bonnamici (D-Oregon) discussed the importance of turning STEM into STEAM.

Serving on the committee on Education and the Work Force and the committee on Science Space and Technology, Bonnamici said science, technology, engineering and math (STEM)



Rep. Suzanne Bonnamici speaks about the STEAM Caucus.

are important to the future of the country, but the arts (STEAM) are also necessary to help unlock the creative power of students.

As one of the founders of the bi-partisan STEAM Caucus in Congress, Bonnamici said, “We know and we’ve learned more over the last year of our caucus, that educating the right brain helps students think outside the box and

take risks. The results? We have more creative and innovative thinkers and a more creative and innovative workforce.”

Former Education Secretary Richard Riley applauded the STEAM movement noting that the arts have long been part of core educational fabric. “When I became Secretary of Education, President Clinton and I were determined to make music and art part of the national goals,” Riley said. “[Current Secretary of Education] Arnie Duncan has stated publicly his conviction that when students are engaged in the arts, graduation rates go up, drop-out rates go down. I’m certainly convinced of that. It’s very rare that you find band members dropping out of school. You simply don’t see that.”

Offering his own personal experience, Red Hot Chili Peppers’ drummer Chad Smith said music in schools changed his life. “I have to be honest with you,” Smith said. “Math, English, science were not my favorite things to go to, but I was so passionate about music that it kept me in school. I would have never graduated.”

7. Partnerships Propel Efforts

MARY LEUHRSEN, NAMM’S DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC affairs, is a partnership machine. She has promoted and forged partnerships with a variety of organizations. Two of those partnerships were evident during the Fly-In.

First, Joe Lamond, NAMM president and CEO, spoke during an awards ceremony for the Afterschool Alliance — one of the nation’s leading voices for access to affordable, quality after-school programs. “We know [music has] to be part of the school day,” Lamond told alliance attendees, who were also lobbying in Washington. “But we are also very aware of how very important it is to have it also after school. Music and arts education and what you’re doing in so many forms

is probably one of the lures that will draw the most number of children into your programs after school.”

Another long-time partnership was present during the Support-Music Coalition. “I cannot think of another realm in the education world where such a relationship exists between educators and industry,” said Chris Woodside, assistant director of the National Association for Music Education in discussing the partnership between NAFME and NAMM.



Joe Lamond speaking to the Afterschool Alliance

8. Teachers Matter

ONE OF THE DELEGATES FOR THIS YEAR’S FLY-IN was Kent Knappenberger, recipient of The Grammy Foundations first-ever Music Educator Award.



Kent Knappenberger

A music teacher at Westfield Academy and Central School in Westfield, New York, Knappenberger was given the award earlier this year for leading an exemplary music program that includes six choirs, four handbell ensembles, four steel pan ensembles and a Celtic-American string band.

He was selected from more than 5,700 applications for having a program with 50 percent of the students at the school involved in music, including a men’s choir. More students

participate in music than the school’s football team.

When asked how that could be, Knappenberger told Kristen Madsen, the foundation’s president and CEO, “There’s no bench in chorus. Everybody gets in the game.”

After receiving a SupportMusic Award from NAMM at the Library of Congress, Knappenberger discussed why music education is essential.

“When we entertain the idea that somehow the arts are not essential to our children, we do so not only in the face of thousands of years of experience, but also in the face of millions of people who brought life to life through the lens of music,” he said. “This is a place where every other subject area meets, and a place where their relationship to each other is made clear and functional.”

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- Julien Bitoun



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- Kim Young

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9. Advocacy Resources

THROUGHOUT THE FLY-IN, A VARIETY OF GREAT online resources were cited. Here are three:

• **SupportMusic.com**

SupportMusic is a public service initiative operated under the NAMM Foundation to support music education in local communities. The organization’s website is packed with resources including downloadable brochures in English and Spanish on keeping education strong and grass roots advocacy.

• **Artsedsearch.org**

A project of Arts Education Partnership this online clearinghouse collects and summarizes research on all arts education, not just music.

• **Aep-arts.org/research-policy/artscan**

Another AEP project, Artscan lets advocates find the latest state policies supporting arts ed and compare your state’s policies to others.

10. Advocate on a Local Level

ADVOCACY AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL IS ESSENTIAL, but one of the next steps for NAMM, according to Joe Lamond, president and CEO, is “working in the states correctly.”

Lamond noted that Iowa is beginning to drill down to the state level with leadership from Robin Walenta and West Music in Coralville. Pennsylvania is another state where local advocacy is taking root with the help of Mark Despotakis and his store Progressive Music Center.

In Illinois, George Quinlan from Quinlan & Fabish in Burr Ridge, joined a coalition of arts organizations and educators for the 2014 Arts Education Advocacy Day in late April,

meeting with legislators at the capitol in Springfield.

With budget cuts looming, legislators told advocates during the drive-in that it was a good time to get the message across that arts education needs to remain a core academic study in the state’s schools.



George Quinlan, second from left, and arts education advocates meet with Illinois Senate Republican Leader Christine Radogno.

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GEAR 
GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES

Strike A

Folk instruments continue to dominate, and banjos are leading the pack

[1]



[2]

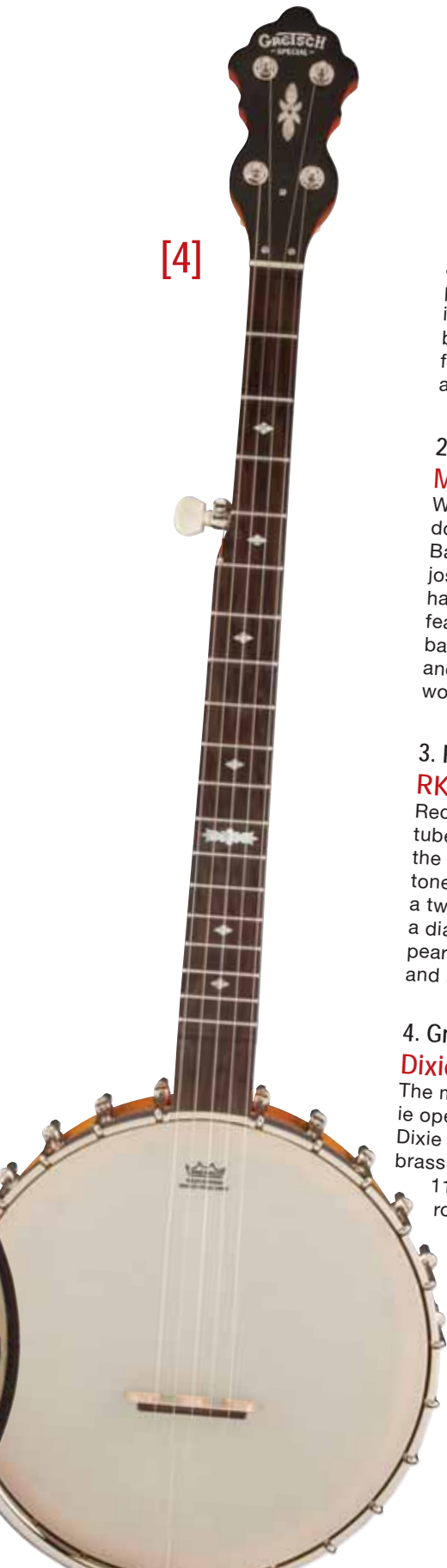


[3]



Chord

[4]



1. Deering **Vega Little Wonder, Vega Old Tyme Wonder**

Deering's new Vega Little Wonder and Vega Old Tyme Wonder five-string open-back banjos are now being offered with a wider, 12-inch banjo rim. Wider rims offer the banjo player a deeper, rounder sound and have been favored by players who play the clawhammer style of banjo playing. These stained maple Vega openback banjos will have a Renaissance head for additional warmth and a historical appearance. deeringbanjos.com

2. Washburn **Mandolin Banjo**

Washburn Guitars has added a Mandolin Banjo to its Bluegrass series. Based on Washburn's Mandolin Banjos of the 1910s and '20s, the BM3 has a four chorus 13.75-inch scale. It features a walnut rim and resonator back plate which maximizes volume, and a mahogany neck with a rosewood fingerboard. washburn.com

3. Recording King **RK-R30-BGM**

Recording King's new RK-R30-BGM tube-and-plate flathead banjo pairs the Recording King 20-hole flathead tone ring with the sound and ease of a two-piece flange. Features include a diamond and square mother-of-pearl inlay pattern, and a maple neck and resonator. recordingking.com

4. Gretsch **Dixie Special**

The middle child in the Gretsch Dixie open-back banjo family is the new Dixie Special. Features include a rolled brass tone ring and 24 tension brackets, 11-inch Remo Renaissance head, rock maple neck, rosewood fingerboard with frailing scoop and vintage-style B&D inlays. MSRP: \$799. gretschguitars.com

HOW WE SELL: Banjos



Paul Blumentritt
The Folk Shop
Tucson, Arizona

"The increased use of banjos in Americana music, by such artists as Steve Martin and Taylor Swift [can] open a door in the back of someone's brain, making them say 'What's that beautiful sound?' We as dealers must be ready with banjos on display, set up and in tune.

"My 'funny line' is when a customer says he wants to buy a guitar, I'll say, 'No you don't, you want an important instrument — a banjo!' That usually gets a laugh, but it also implants an idea in someone who is looking for a different sound. Selling banjos requires that personal touch."

YAMAHA | L SERIES

Acoustic Face Lift

Yamaha has redesigned the L series line of acoustic guitars. All new models now include solid Engelmann spruce tops that are treated with A.R.E. (Acoustic Resonance Enhancement), an original wood reforming technology developed by Yamaha. Instruments made with this technology pro-

duce a tonal richness that can only be found in vintage models that have been played for many years. The redesigned bracing improves the vibration of the top board and tonal transference throughout the guitar, creating balanced low end and crisp top end characteristics. yamaha.com



BREEDLOVE | CROSSOVER OF

Try Something New

Breedlove's Crossover OF mandolin is ideal for guitar players looking to expand their skills by learning the mandolin. The Crossover OF features a carved, solid top with a wider nut width and radiused fretboard. This allows for exceptional comfort and playability. The OF is available in a natural or black finish. MSRP: \$665. breedlovemusic.com

LEVY'S LEATHERS | MC10

Banjo Necessity

The MC10 cotton banjo strap from Levy's Leathers is made from 100-percent slip-resistant cotton with leather ends and clip attachments. The tri-glide adjustment is adjustable to 57 inches. Pictured here are the available colors: black, burgundy, navy, natural and red. levysleathers.com



BABICZ FULL CONTACT HARDWARE | Z SERIES SYSTEM

Zinc Zone

The Babicz Z Series system's bridges are made of zinc instead of aluminum. They are available in several popular styles of guitar bridges, including 2-point Strat tremolo, 6-hole Strat tremolo, hardtail and Tele (both single-coil and humbucker versions). fullcontacthardware.com



VHT | I-16

Smart Amp

The app-friendly VHT i-16 combines real tube tone with 21st century connectivity. It features a tone-enhancing 12AX7 preamp tube running at 300 volts for real-tube amp dynamics and texture, and the i-16's Tone-Link jack provides unlimited access to iPhone, iPad and iPod touch modeling apps, such as Apple's GarageBand, IK MultiMedia's AmpliTube, and Positive Grid's Bias and JamUp. vhtamp.com





ARISTIDES | ARIUM

Shine On

Aristides Instruments has created the first-ever bass guitar made of Arium. The instrument uses an exo-skeleton design made of a semi-monocoque construction for maximum performance. The 050 is a semi-monocoque 34-inch scale electric bass guitar with a 12-inch radius fretboard, C-shaped neck and 1.85-inch GraphTech nut weighing in at a little over 9 lbs. Hardware is available in chrome, black or gold finishes and includes an ABM aluminum bridge, Hipshot Ultra-Light machine heads and Schaller strap locks. **{aristidesinstruments.com}**



CORT | MR600F

New Addition

The MR600F has been added to Cort's MR series. The new model is outfitted with the Fishman Isys Plus preamp and Sonicore pickup. The new model features a dreadnought body with a Venetian cutaway for unhindered playability up and down the fretboard. With a mahogany back and sides, the body boasts a solid spruce top and advanced scalloped X bracing for overall performance. MSRP: Natural satin finish, \$425; natural gloss finish, \$450. **{cortguitars.com}**



HENRY HELLER | MANDOLINO STRAPS

Mandolin Swag

Henry Heller's new Mandolino series straps feature available in black and brown. They boast bolo braided leather with matching ends. The straps are handcrafted in the United States. **{henryhellermusic.com}**



SCHECTER | HELLRAISER STAGE DEPTH CHARGE

Raise Some Hell

Schecter has added the Hellraiser Stage Depth Charge powered 4 x 12 cabinet to its amplification division. The internal 200-watt power module and crossover amplify and focus the low frequency. An on-board volume control lets users blend how much sub-lows they need from the specially designed 12-inch speaker, while the three Celestion speakers add traditional cut and tone. **{schecterguitars.com}**

EASTWOOD | WARREN ELLIS SIGNATURE MANDOTENOR

Musical Fusion

Eastwood Guitars has teamed up again with multi-instrumentalist Warren Ellis to create the Warren Ellis Signature MandoTenor. The instrument not only meets Ellis' needs, but also offers a unique twist for any professional studio. This sleek dual cut carved alder body comfortably lets you switch from the 14-inch scale mandolin to the distinctive sound of a 23-inch scale tenor — or both at the same time. **{eastwoodguitars.com}**





Digital

USB mics are one of the hottest iProducts hitting shelves

[1]



[2]



1. Blue Microphones

Spark Digital

Blue Microphones' new Spark Digital mic connects via USB and uses the same technology found in studio microphones for professional recording on an iPad, iPhone or computer. It boasts studio controls directly on the mic including volume and gain control and instant mute. Spark Digital is the only iPad microphone to offer zero-latency headphone monitoring. MSRP: \$199.99. bluemic.com

2. Nady

USB-4B

Nady's USB-4B is a versatile, table-top boundary condenser microphone with unidirectional pickup pattern for full-frequency response and unparalleled audio/feedback rejection at any distance. The USB-4B is ideal for meetings, teleconferencing, dictation and ambience recording. The plug-and-play mic needs no PC drivers and is compatible with Mac and PC computers. nady.com

3. Apogee

ONE

The Apogee ONE is a studio-quality microphone and USB audio interface for iPad and Mac. ONE is designed for easily creating professional sounding recordings on an iPod touch, iPhone, iPad or Mac. Using Apogee's premium AD/DA conversion, ONE produces pristine music, podcast, and voice-over recordings while also delivering audiophile-quality sound to headphones. apogeedigital.com

4. IK Multimedia

iRig Voice Line

IK Multimedia's new iRig Voice microphone line is an easy-to-use vocal microphone for iPhone, iPad, iPod touch and Android devices. iRig Voice comes with the new and free EZ Voice app, which lets users sing along and record with any song on their iOS or Android mobile device's music library. ikmultimedia.com

Download



[3]

[4]

HOW WE SELL: USB Mics



■
Matt Davis

Midwest Pro Sound and Lighting
Chicago

"We have found that the customer USB microphones have generally been entry-level podcasters and vocalists. Generally these clients are attracted to the affordability, simplicity and/or portability of an all-in-one unit. We generally sell these products by asking the client about their immediate needs, other equipment they own, and their overall production goals. If a client does not anticipate the need to record multiple sources in their productions, we like to recommend USB microphone options."





ICON DIGITAL | P3

Like Magic

Icon Digital has teamed up with MAGIX to create a Professional Production Package (P3). The package includes Icon's Pro-Series QCon Pro and MAGIX Samplitude Pro X. The QCon Pro is a USB-MIDI controller station with nine touch-sensitive motorized faders, eight channels plus master, a full transport section and dynamic LCD and LED displays for time, audio levels and parameters. icondigitalusa.com

QTX | QX SERIES

Contemporary Cabinets

QTX has debuted the QX series of P.A. speaker units in a contemporary-styled moulded ABS cabinet, each with an integral carry handle and a constant directivity horn. The built-in mixer amplifier section delivers high output to the driver units to develop high SPLs. The speakers boast a lightweight ported cabinet, titanium compression driver and mic/line inputs with volume controls. qtx.avsl.com



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Andy Tinsley - FOH Engineer, Alkaline Trio

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**Richard 'Dickie' Chappell -
Monitors, Peter Gabriel**

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Simon Fuller - FOH, Dry The River

"The OM7 is REALLY doing it for me - so smooth and hi-fi for a vocal dynamic. The OM7 is a gorgeous sounding vocal mic through a PA. All of the OM Series mics are remarkable and would work for me in a bunch of contexts. They sound balanced in frequency response from top to bottom."

Brent Bodrug - Sly-Fy Chapel Studio



"Ben Kowalewicz had been using the standard vocal mic forever and I always struggled with it. We started trying out all types of mics, and Audix came out on top. Ben's a performer and the Audix OM6 has the feel that he likes - it just feels right to him. The OM6 works great and he loves it!"

**Bob Strakele -FOH,
Billy Talent**

"The noise rejection characteristics of the OM6 and OM5 have been the total selling point for us."

**Ciaran McKenna - FOH
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RADIAL | SB5W

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Radial's SB5W is a wall-mount stereo direct box that fits inside a standard light switch electrical enclosure and employs a Decora wall plate cover for fit and finish. As the design is completely passive, no local powering is needed. Choice of RCA or 3.5 mm mini TRS inputs make it easy to interface to laptops and iPhones. A simple level control sets the output. MSRP: \$130. radialeng.com

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B&C SPEAKERS | DE550, DE554

B&C's Latest Launch

B&C Speakers has launched the DE550 and DE554, 51 mm (2-inch) diaphragm high-frequency drivers. These drivers are also an alternative solution for OEM's aiming for higher driver density in small-format line array design. The 51 mm diaphragm DE554 offers ideal performance in a small format, 1.4-inch exit HF driver, while the DE550 incorporates B&C's largest-ever diaphragm in a 1-inch exit, wide response HF driver. All models feature a CCAW voice coil carefully mounted on a new, high temperature polymer diaphragm, optimized phase plug and a neodymium ring magnet. bcspeakers.com



HARBINGER | V&Ri

Power & Punch

Harbinger's new V&Ri series of portable powered loudspeakers include two distinct models to meet a wide range of users and applications from bands and musical performances to DJs and karaoke. The V2115 is a 15-inch, two-way loudspeaker system that packs 600 watts of clear power and punch, with high-performance Class-D amplification and deep, solid bass response. The V2112 offers the same feature set in a 12-inch configuration for even greater portability. harbingerproaudio.com

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Emerging

The cymbal market introduces new sonic experiences

[1]



1. Meinl

Byzance Vintage Pure Ride

The raw-looking Byzance Vintage Pure Ride cymbals with high-density hand hammering are all about strong sticking responses over deep and dry darkness. There's total control, due to almost no sustain. The cymbals come in 22 and 20 inches in regular and light weight. meinlcymbals.com

2. Scymtek

Jingle Crashes

Scymtek Cymbals has added Jingle Crashes to its Vented series. The jingles can be removed so drummers can customize the cymbal to their individual taste. The drill hole sizes are compatible with standard cymbal rivets. scymtek.com

[2]



3. TRX

TRX Blends

TRX Blends are a combination of two cymbals in one. The first is a mash-up of TRX's MDM and BRT series and features a medium-weight, latched MDM outer section combined with a heavier, polished BRT inner section and bell. This creates a cymbal with a progressive blend of warmth, brightness, sustain and power. trxcymbals.com

Cymbals



[3]



[4]

4. Sabian

Jojo Mayer Hoop Crasher

Designed by Jojo Mayer, Sabian's new versatile, 13-inch Hoop Crasher offers a massive palette of sound. The top flotation ring is punched with 32 holes for lightness and lift, while the heavier bottom ring is designed with an X-Celerator Air-Wave lip to eliminate airlock and minimize contact area with the snare head. Attached by a pair of cotter pins, the two rings can be played free by simply removing the pins, allowing more flotation and lift of the top ring. sabian.com

HOW WE SELL: New Cymbals



Pat Besecker

Dale's Drum Shop
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

"When one of our brands expands its family, we enjoy giving it the red carpet treatment. The first step is to let everyone know about them by placing them on 'main street.' There's a specific section that's in plain view when you enter the shop dedicated to only the new cymbal line, where the cymbals are playable and labeled with signs declaring what this new line offers to the player sonically. We also throw as many of the new cymbals as we can fit on a drum set to allow the customers to experience the new sounds in context."

GROVER PRO | PERCUSSION ROAD CASE

Hit the Road

Grover Pro's Percussion Road Case is constructed for years of trouble-free service in band rooms, concert halls, percussion studios and on the field. Key features include three sliding drawers of varying depths and two oversized vertical slots designed to hold hardware and cymbals up to 22 inches in diameter. A central snare drum cubby securely protects valuable concert snare drums from damage during transport. There's also a dedicated storage compartment for snare stands and log drums. As an added bonus, the case features a removable lid that easily converts into a large padded trap table. MSRP: \$1,795. groverpro.com



PREMIER | MODERN CLASSIC

Retro Rhythm

Premier's Modern Classic drum set is a selection of three-piece kits that are overtly retro with clean tones and a modern build quality. Exclusively hand-crafted at Premier's Custom Works in England, each model shares several key features including birch/mahogany shells; 4.5 mm (8-ply) for the toms and 6 mm (11-ply) for the bass drum, low-mass solid brass tube lugs, single-flange solid steel hoops, 30 degree round-over bearing edges and Remo USA Coated Ambassador heads. premier-percussion.com

DIXON | BRITE KEY

Key to Tuning

Dixon's Brite Key has three functions: a LED flashlight, bottle opener and standard drum key. Perfect for poorly lit stages, practice rooms and teaching studios, the powerful LED light helps players to fix, find or adjust. MSRP: \$17.99. playdixon.com



DW | MDD PEDAL

Pedal to the Metal

The Machined Direct Drive Pedal is packed with drummer-friendly features and is machined from solid aluminum. An Optimized Fulcrum Geometry linkage was developed to offer smooth, effortless action with just the right amount of beater throw. Other features include a solid aluminum, perforated footboard with a contoured heel plate, interlocking Delta hinge, Threaded Bearing Technology in the drive linkage and cam, Tri-Pivot swivel toe clamp and solid aluminum direct drive cam with pivot adjustment. The double pedal offers a lightweight single-post auxiliary pedal and a patented all-bearing zero-backlash universal joint. dwdrums.com



TOCA | SNARE CONGA CAJON

Conga Cajon Hybrid

Toca Percussion's Snare Conga Cajon is constructed with a fiberglass bowl. It's topped with thin, responsive layer of tonewood that's divided into a larger chamber for a deep conga tone and a smaller chamber with an underside snare for the distinct treble sound of a cajon's front plate. MSRP: \$379. [{tocapercussion.com}](http://tocapercussion.com)



KELLEY PERCUSSION | EXTREME ISOLATION HEADPHONES

Two-Way Isolation

Direct Sound Extreme Isolation headphones from Kelley Percussion were developed for drummers and come in three models: the EX-29, EX-25 and HP-25. With an exclusive sound isolating design, the high-fidelity headphones provide isola-

tion in two directions: they not only keep ambient sound out, they also keep their own sound in — never bleeding into microphones or other players' ears. MSRP: EX-29, \$189.95; EX-25, \$139.95; HP-25, \$64.95. [{kelleypercussion.com}](http://kelleypercussion.com)

KICKPORT | FX BASS DRUM SYSTEM

Studio-Quality Bass

KickPort's new FX Bass Drum System lets drummers break the sound barrier for a studio-quality bass drum sound. The sound enhancement pre-pack includes a KickPort for the resonant bass drum head and a 2-inch FX port for the batter head. While the KickPort lowers the drum's pitch and emphasizes its lower frequencies for a deeper, fuller sound, the FX port reduces high frequencies and removes unwanted overtones and over-ring to add clarity and focus. [{kickport.com}](http://kickport.com)



KACES | SNARE DRUM PORTER

Back-to-School Snare

Kaces is now shipping its redesigned line of school percussion bags. Like all the porters in the line, the Snare Drum Porter features durable heavy-duty wheels and telescoping double-handles. It also has a zippered pocket for a stand and two additional zippered pockets for accessories. [{kaces.com}](http://kaces.com)



Band Together

Boost every sale with the newest B&O add-ons



[1]



[2]



[3]

1. Cooperstand Pro-Mini

Cooperstand's Pro-Mini stand is the most compact folding instrument stand of its type. Fabricated from kiln-dried African sapele, the Pro-Mini is now a 1/2-inch longer than the original. In the first position, Pro-Mini will support the smallest instruments, even a violin with shoulder rest. In the full open position, it will support slightly larger instruments with bodies up to 3 3/4-inch thick. Pro-Mini's durable design supports all sizes of ukuleles, u-basses, mandolins, violins, violas, many harpsichords and tablets. cooperstand.com

2. D'Addario NS Micro Violin Tuner

D'Addario's NS Micro Violin Tuner features an easy-to-read, multi-color display and metronome in an attractive compact design. A gentle, lever-lock clamp holds the tuner securely to the violin or viola. The fast pitch response also makes it a practice tool for referencing and improving intonation while playing. MSRP: \$36.95. daddario.com

3. Vandoren Saxophone Reed Sampler

Vandoren has expanded the Jazz Reed Mix sampler packs to include options for soprano and baritone saxophones. The soprano sampler pack includes one reed of each of Vandoren jazz/commercial cuts: Java, Java Red, ZZ and V16. The baritone sampler will include one Traditional, Java, Java Red and ZZ reed. dansr.com

4. Buffet Crampon Icon Bell

Buffet Crampon's Icon bells let players explore different sonorities without changing their instrument. The shape of the Icon bell is narrowed at the midpoint and the base is ringless. It weighs 30 percent less than a traditional bell and the flare has been specifically redesigned to optimize projection of airflow. buffet-group.com



[4]

HOW WE SELL: B&O Add-Ons



Nathan Linn

Strait Music Company
Austin, Texas

"We're very keen to product knowledge and we learn so many things through the experiences of our repair staff. We also try B&O accessories — there's no better way to know how a product performs.

"Our most successful accessory promotions are beginner package deals. We collaborate with school directors to create a hand-selected accessory package specific for their school.

"The last key we've found is research. We read blogs, B&O websites, music magazines and anything else we can find."



CONNOLLY | REVELLE LINE

Total Package

The new Revelle line features five models, the entry level 300 and 500, the antiqued 500QX, the upscale 600 and the ultimate 700QX, a faithful copy of the Guarneri del Gesu "Ysaye." Every violin is made with a Despiau bridge, ebony pegs and fingerboard, and premium synthetic core strings. Revelle also offers complete outfits that come with a high-quality Revelle composite bow, microfiber polishing cloth, rosin and a welcome kit individually signed by a luthier. connollymusic.com



JUPITER | 1150 DOUBLE HORNS

Step-Up to Pro-Level

Jupiter's 1150 Double Horns are part of its 1100 series of step-up instruments. The horns' pro-level features include three stainless steel mechanical-link tapered rotors, a string wrapped fourth rotor, nickel-silver valve casings for smooth action and a comfortable adjustable thumb rest. jupitermusic.com



key Extras

When stocking add-ons, don't forget about the keys segment — a potentially profitable area



[1]

1. Mogami Cable GOLD KEYBOARD CABLE

Mogami Cable has unveiled its Gold Keyboard Cable available in both balanced and unbalanced. Unlike instrument cables originally designed for guitars that can be used with keyboards, the Gold Keyboard Cables are specifically engineered to deliver the clearest possible sound from high-end keyboards. The cables boast an OFC (oxygen-free copper) core for the highest level of transparency, ultra-high density spiral shield for the lowest noise floor and 90 degree connectors save space and extend cable life. mogamicable.com



[2]

2. Yamaha UD-WL01

Yamaha's UD-WL01 USB Wireless LAN Adaptor is a convenient device that creates a wireless connection between select Yamaha keyboards and the player's iOS device for increased versatility and creativity. Compact and portable, the UD-WL01 Wireless Adaptor simply plugs into the USB port of select Yamaha Clavinova, Tyros and Motif XF instruments. Once in place, the UD-WL01 wirelessly connects to a nearby iOS device, enabling the user to access and interact with the growing library of popular Yamaha apps and Web services right from their keyboard. MSRP: \$120. yamaha.com



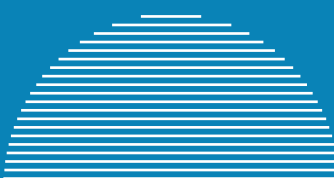
HOW WE SELL: Piano Accessories



Ron Kennebeck
Rieman Music
Des Moines, Iowa

"I will say that it is difficult to add accessories to an acoustic piano sale until the price negotiation is done. You must be careful not to talk accessories until the deal is inked or you will be 'throwing in' the accessories just to close the sale.

"On digital keyboards, 'slabs,' we offer several bundle packages that include a stand and bench for one price, such as \$59 or \$99. Sometimes we match a bundle online that we come across and that includes a stand, bench, headphones and cover."



ROLAND | RP-401R

Twice as Nice

Roland's RP-401R (pictured above) and F-130R are two new compact digital pianos. The RP-401R offers a traditional look ideal for a young family, while the streamlined F-130R is a perfect fit for a single person or couple living in an apartment or condo. The two

digital pianos include Roland's SuperNATURAL Piano technology as well as intelligent rhythm function that lets users enjoy playing and practicing along with a complete backing ensemble that automatically follows chords played on the keyboard. **{rolandus.com}**



CASIO | CTK-2090, LK-175V

À la Modes

Casio has debuted two new digital sampling keyboards, the CTK-2090 and LK-175V. Both keyboards have two sampling modes: short and full. Short Sampling Mode lets users create up to five sounds 0.4 seconds in length, whereas Full Sampling Mode lets users create one two-second sound. With a built-in

sampling microphone, users can also sample their voice and other ambient sounds to create a variety of sampled tones and effects for later use. The new digitals are also outfitted with Casio's Step-up Lesson System, which enables beginners to learn 152 built-in songs, phase-by-phase, at their own pace. **{casioussa.com}**



GEAR

BOOKS, MULTIMEDIA & GIFTS

page turners

[1]



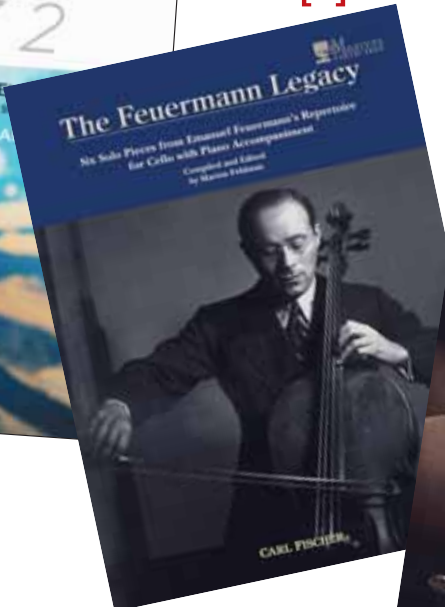
[2]



[3]



[4]



[5]



Keep print inventory current with a wide range of new releases area

1. FJH

The All-in-One Approach to Succeeding at the Piano

Written by Helen Marlais, *The All-in-One Approach to Succeeding at the Piano* teaches the essentials of piano: reading, theory, rhythm, musicianship, technique, composition and composer information — all in one book. The motivational music uses a traditional reading approach that focus on steps, skips and repeated notes in the beginning levels. fjhmusic.com

2. Alfred

Teach Yourself To Play Banjo

Alfred's *Teach Yourself to Play Banjo* walks players through the starting steps of playing the 5-string banjo. It starts with fundamentals like tuning, care and how to read standard musical notation. Next, players learn different chords, strums and songs, plus important techniques such as the hammer-on and pull-off. It's is now available with a DVD and CD. alfred.com

3. Kendor

Effective Etudes For Jazz, Vol. 2

Kendor's *Effective Etudes For Jazz, Vol. 2* is an essential book for jazz ensemble auditions, recitals, festivals, and lessons. It includes 20 etudes based on the changes to jazz standards so players learn to improvise over the chord progressions. kendormusic.com

4. Carl Fischer

The Feuermann Legacy

Carl Fischer has released *The Feuermann Legacy*, a collection dedicated to renowned cellist Emanuel Feuermann. The six pieces include updated fingerings and bowings by cellist pedagogue Marion Feldman. carlfischer.com

5. Hal Leonard

Folk Rock Hits for Banjo, Vol. 3

Hal Leonard's *Folk Rock Hits for Banjo, Vol. 3* is brimming with tunes from the contemporary folk scene. Players follow the banjo tab, listen to the demo tracks on the CD, and then play along with the separate backing tracks. The CD is enhanced so Mac and PC users can adjust the recording to any tempo. Songs include Old Crow Medicine Show's "Ain't It Enough," Mumford & Sons' "The Cave" and The Avett Brothers' "Live And Die." halleonard.com

Dave Smith
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Over the past 40 years, Dave Smith has designed more groundbreaking synthesizers than anyone, ever. Dave Smith Instruments has the largest line of analog and digital/analog hybrid synths in the world. Top to bottom, Dave Smith Instruments' award-winning, American-made product line includes a synthesizer for every need and budget, from the flagship Prophet 12 to the affordable and ultra-portable Mopho product family.



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davesmithinstruments.com

HOW WE SELL: New Print



Lauren Smagacz

Kidder Music
Peoria, Illinois

"When new issues come across our desk, we are often thinking who might benefit from this type of collection, or who is always looking for new supplemental material for their students.

"We also have our 25th annual sacred reading clinic in August which features around 30 new sacred titles from throughout the year. This gives our customers the chance to actually hear the music and see how they might be able to implement it in their classrooms, churches or in their own private studios."



AIM GIFTS | COLOR CHANGING CUPS

Life of the Party

The new 14 oz Color Changing Cups from AIM Gifts shift colors when they're filled with a cold beverage. The cups come in five designs. aimgifts.com



ON-STAGE | GUITAR PICK STYLUS

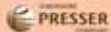
Fingerprint Free

Whether users want to keep their screens fingerprint free, or if they just find using a stylus easier, On-Stage's Guitar Pick Stylus is a musician-themed solution. The attached lanyard has a plastic plug that fits into a standard headphone jack. Dealers can choose from two packaging options: GPS100 ships in lots of 25, each on a 4-color backer card with a shipping envelope for Internet/mail resale while model number GPS200 ships in lots of 25, each on a 4-color backer card. An ideal POP item, the GPS100 makes an excellent add on sale to any tablet-related purchase. MSRP: GPS100, \$6.99; GPS200: \$5.99. onstagestands.com

Robert
MAGGIO

where you end
and i begin

for Soprano Saxophone and Piano



THEODORE PRESER | 'WHERE YOU END AND I BEGIN'

Sicilian Lullaby

Theodore Presser Company has released *Where You End and I Begin*, a new piece from composer Robert Maggio for soprano saxophone and piano. Commissioned by the Pennsylvania Music Teachers Association, Maggio chose a Sicilian lullaby as the founda-

tion for this set of variations. In this exploration of boundaries and connections, the five movements are interconnected, such that later movements contain "familiar" themes, yet new. The piece was written for advanced performers. presser.com

MUSIC GIFTS COMPANY | SAXOPHONE EARRINGS

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Light Show

[1]



DJs have more options than ever with new LED and portable effects lighting

[2]



1. American DJ
Ultra HEX Par 3

American DJ's Ultra HEX Par 3 is an LED Par fixture that produces wide washes in an wide range of rich colors, thanks to a combination of three 10W 6-in-1 HEX LEDs and 63 built-in color macros. The Hex LEDs, which pack red, green, blue, amber, white, and UV into one diode, let users pick from a range of colors and also use ultraviolet light, making the fixture great for those extra glowing effects. americandj.com

2. Chauvet DJ
Scorpion Dual

Chauvet DJ's new Scorpion Dual is a wirelessly controlled aerial green laser that uses a unique dual mirror output to double up lasers. It features 32 built-in patterns including the laser sky effect. DJs can create a customized laser show by using programmable pan, tilt, and zoom with separate X, Y, and Z rolling effects and scan speed adjustment. chauvetdj.com

[3]



3. ElektraLite
eyeBall Outdoor

The new eyeBall Outdoor from ElektraLite puts the same power, control and great color-blending capabilities of the RGBW eyeBall into a new IP65 waterproof form factor. The latest eyeBall preserves the same reliable optics for superior color blending, as well as comes with a wide variety of IP68 power and data cables. myelektralite.com

[4]



4. Blizzard
G70

The G70 is a precise moving head spot fixture that produces bright, even beams of light from its advanced LED optical system which includes 7x high output CREE LEDs. The combination of dual gobo wheels, a richly saturated color wheel, and a three-facet prism enables awesome effects and totally smooth gobo morphing. blizzardlighting.com



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VESTAX | HMX-07

Obsessed With Sound

Vestax's new HMX-07 has improved from HMX-05 with a bibulous material for the ear pads which keep ears dry. A new material for the main unit makes the HMX-07 more durable and scratch-resistant.

The large 40 mm drivers provide crisp high frequency reproduction, while also handling bass and sub-bass

frequencies with ease, making for a serious low-end. In all forms of modern music, the bass is more important than ever before and the HMX-07 doesn't disappoint. Lastly, the folding headband design lets DJs store the lightweight headphones in any DJ bag to protect them while travelling from club to club. vestax.com



ODYSSEY CASES | DDJ-SZ CASE

Case in Point

Odyssey's Flight Zone Pioneer DDJ-SZ case features the patented Glide Style laptop platform design. Specifically made for the long awaited Pioneer DDJ-SZ DJ controller, it also features a patent pending, high-density bevel foam interior that neatly angles upward raising

the controller for an efficient control surface. The stylish V-Cut removable panel gives easy access to the front controls and headphone/mic jacks. A spacious ventilation pit under the controller is ideal for storing cables and compact accessories. odysseygear.com

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Mike Carlson
MC Audio
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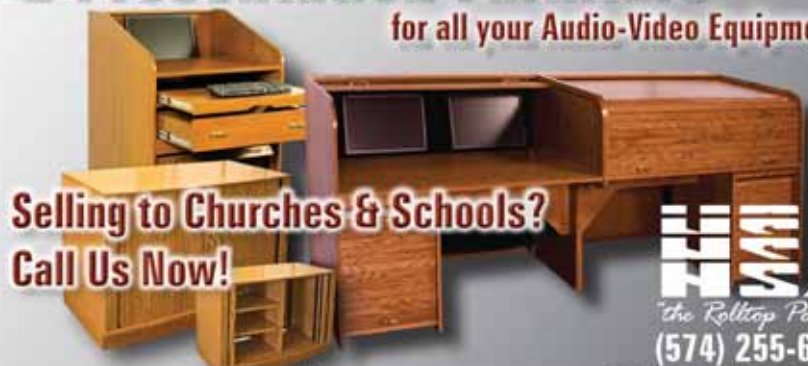
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>>>

John Tarpley

**Tarpley Music
Amarillo, Texas**

It all comes down to preparation. You know, we have historical data, etcetera, from prior years, and we look at what to expect if anything is going to change for the counts. Of course we have ed-reps that are out there calling all the schools every week, so we have a relationship with those schools and understand what their needs are going to be for the year. Our whole summer is preparing for the rental season.

We have a rent-to-own program that features the right to return, early pay discounts and it's very customer friendly and easy for the parent to understand. They can use money that they've built up to move up to a step-up instrument and things like that.

>>>

James Manganaro

**Bridgepoint Music
Menlo Park, California**

Every summer in town here they have a block party. We set up a table and an instrument petting zoo so the kids can see the instruments, touch the instruments, mess with the instruments and try to get sounds out of them. It kind of helps the kids choose the instruments and get familiar with them, but it also helps develop a relationship with the parents that we're the music store in town and hopefully saves time so they choose their instrument at the block party as opposed to when they come in to rent the instrument and take forever trying to look at everything. We try to streamline the process once they're in the doors.

We also usually make sure our repair technicians and the band directors have a really close relationship, which helps with communication for the summer repairs. It's also nice because they know who's doing the work. I use the repair department as a way of dealing with the schools. Some of the bigger retailers have the guy who goes to every school, [collects all the instruments], and then takes them back to the repair guy who works in a cave does nothing but fix instruments. The directors don't know who that is — it's a very impersonal thing and everything they hear is all secondhand. I've never been a big fan of that.



>>>

Tristann Rieck

**Brass Bell Music
Milwaukee**

How do you make the most of **your** band rental season?

We spend a lot of August really training our staff and teaching them how to get through those rentals while making sure they are telling the customers about the value of our rentals.

We started doing a wrap-up folder, which was an idea inspired [by] an oil shop I went to that gave me a little folder with my receipt in it. I realized that something like that would be really great when we were done with a rental so we could put their contract in there. We have some coupons which cross sell our store and tell them about the other services that we offer here at Brass Bell. We also include a place

for the salesperson to put their business card so it can really be personalized.

One of the pages in the folder is kind of a bullet pointed list of the unique benefits of our rental program. So, not only do they see it on the flyer, which is hopefully why they chose to rent with us, but we explain to them during the rental and right before they leave to reinforce why our rental program is the best. We want to make sure that we're gaining this customer for life, and this isn't just going to end at the rental transaction. We want to tell them all about everything else that we offer at Brass.

Finally, we put a little thank you card in the case.

We actually try to do that as a little bit of a surprise to the student so we kind of slip it underneath their instrument or slip it into the little compartment for accessories. It's a little card with a picture of a musical note and then we sign it with our individual name.

We don't just look at it as one rental. We really want to make sure we win that customer for life.

People will come up to me at the grocery store and say, 'I worked with ...' and they'll remember the name of the person they worked with. They'll say how helpful that person was. That tells me people remember us and will come back and shop here. **MI**

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Samson's Expedition Portable PA Systems offer a variety of lightweight, all-in-one units designed for applications where portability is a must and performance cannot be compromised. Whether on stage, in a classroom, at a podium or an outdoor event, there's an Expedition PA that's both perfect for the task and impeccably priced.