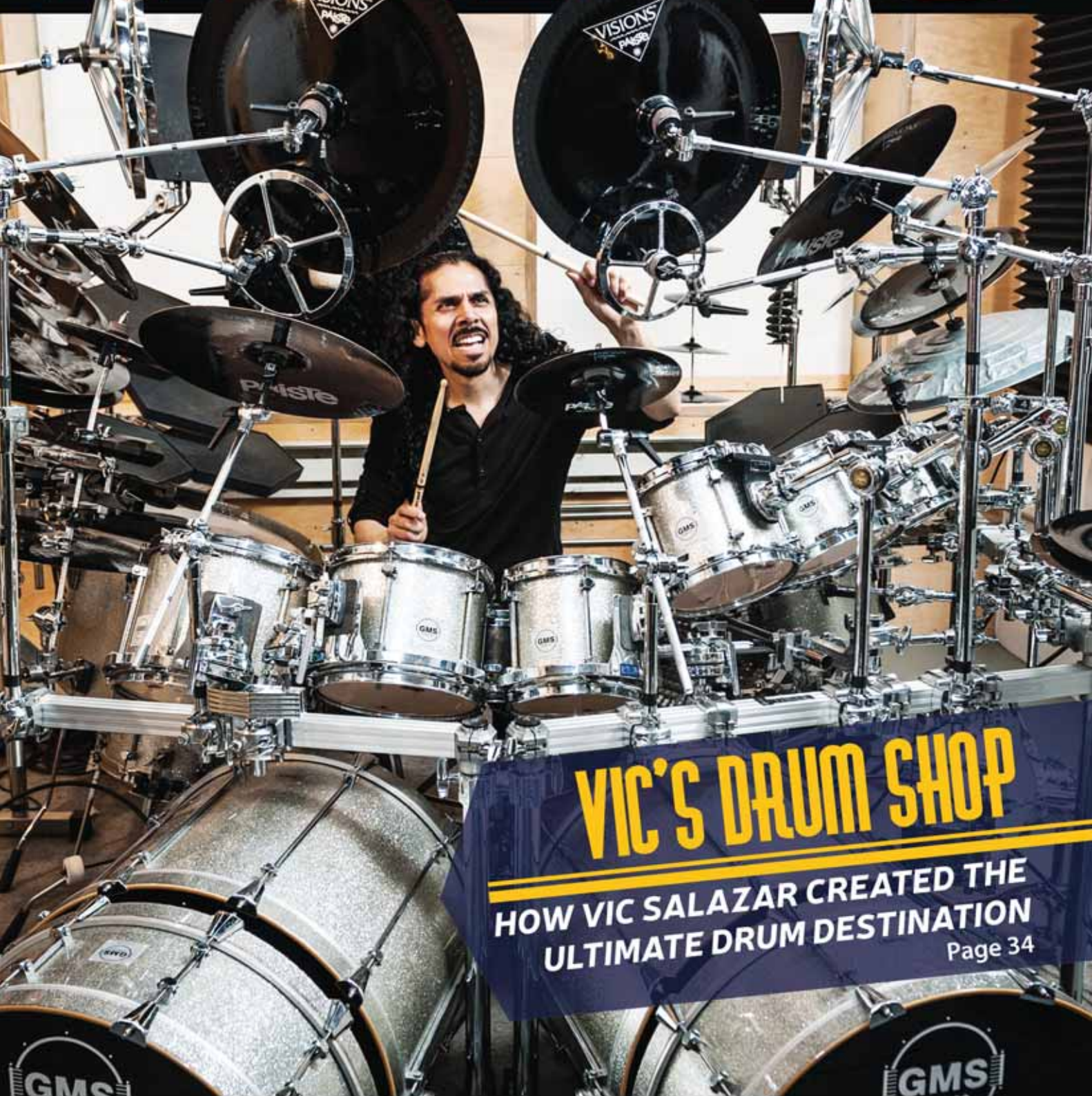


FOR PROGRESSIVE MUSIC RETAILERS

OCTOBER 2014
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VIC'S DRUM SHOP

HOW VIC SALAZAR CREATED THE
ULTIMATE DRUM DESTINATION

Page 34

OLD SCHOOL VIBES

THE VINTAGE-SOUNDING CRAZE HITS
CYMBALS Page 52

FROM THE TOP

REMO BELLI ON THE FUTURE OF THE
DRUM INDUSTRY Page 46

FOLK TREND UPDATE

WHERE THE TREND IS TODAY &
WHERE IT'S HEADED Page 42

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INSIDE

42 | FOLK MUSIC EXPLOSION

An update on folk music's influence on MI.



Michael Kelly F-Style Mandolin

46 | FROM THE TOP

Remo Belli on how his management has evolved over 60 years.

51 | FOCUS: DRUMS & PERCUSSION

52 | OLD SCHOOL VIBES
Cymbals that meet the throwback sound.

54 | DECONSTRUCTING THE DRUM DISPLAY
Retailers share their best kit displays.

Vic Salazar



»»» 34

34 | THE DRUM DESTINATION

Vic Salazar has transformed a raw space into Vic's Drum Shop, Chicago's drum hub that attracts players from around the globe.

GEAR >

58 | DRUMS & PERCUSSION

60 | GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES

64 | AUDIO & RECORDING

66 | BAND & ORCHESTRA

68 | PRINT & MULTIMEDIA

70 | DJ & LIGHTING



74 | ASK THE RETAILER

× How do you drive your sound installation business?

»»» RETAIL

PROFILE

12 | How Carter Vintage Guitars went from zero to 60 in just one year

14 | NEWS

- × Walkthrough of Guitar Center's new Times Square store
- × Robert Lowrey Piano Experts sends big donation overseas
- × Music & Arts adds two near Houston

SUPPLY <<<

PROFILE

22 | Looking back at Dans's first decade

24 | NEWS

- × FMIC builds capabilities to begin selling direct
- × Sabian partners with Crescent

IDEAS >>>

29 | INDEPENDENT RETAIL

× Eschliman on balancing aesthetics and practicality

30 | LESSONS LEARNED

× Rosenbloom examines matching tech with customer connections

32 | THE CUSTOMER WHISPERER

× Billings looks back on 50 years in the business

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PERSPECTIVE | BY KATIE KAILUS

OWNERS, TAKE HEED

If there is one takeaway from this month's cover story on Vic's Drum Shop (starting on page 34), it's owner Vic Salazar's enthusiasm for his business. Even after opening his store nearly three years ago, his energy and passion haven't worn off. He openly admits that he hasn't taken a day off in the 33 months since opening his store — let alone a vacation.

Even when he's not physically at the store, Salazar is on his phone talking with customers, going to shows and posting on his store's social media. He is an extremely intertwined part of his business. He's not just sitting in an office doling out orders to his sales crew. He's out and about meeting those that are helping grow his business. And as a result, he's seeing his store thrive.

When a customer comes in the shop looking for him, Salazar personally takes them on a store tour. That's right. He does it. He takes time out of his busy day to grab the reins — and the customer's attention — and walk them around his shop. As a result, he has a cult following which even includes Italian tourists — as I witnessed firsthand during our visit to his store.

It's no secret everyone likes feeling special and receiving the "VIP treatment." When an owner of a store personally takes time out of his or her busy day to walk a customer around their store, it makes an impact — something the customer will remember for weeks or even months later. It's something they might even share with

their friends.

This kind of treatment from a store owner is impressive to a customer at any store, but especially those (like Vic's) which feature the owner's name in the title. Can you imagine if Ben or Jerry walked you around your local ice cream shop? Or if Eddie Bauer helped you pick out a coat? If customers are shopping at Jim Smith's Music, getting a tour from Jim himself is going to leave an impact.

I am fully aware that being a store owner is a relentlessly busy job. And I'm not saying that you should go three years without taking vacation. Cabo calls all of us once in a while. But, at the very least, evaluate your involvement in your business. Have you let responsibilities fall into the hands of your staffers that shouldn't? Are you making time to interact with your customers? When was the last time you took on the role of store greeter?

Set aside an hour or two each day to get out of your office and make an appearance on the sales floor. Introduce yourself. Shake some hands. Make some impressions. You'll be thankful when those customers return a few weeks or months later. **MI**



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LETTERS

Advocacy Hits Home

Congratulations on the outstanding, seven-page close-up report on the 10th NAMM Washington D.C. Fly-In.

After reading your report, how could anyone in our industry *not* want to support and be involved in this annual activity? It directly connects to music education and the future viability of the entire music products industry.

This year's event was my second Fly-In experience and I come away from each of these in amazement of how great this NAMM initiative is for arts education and the industry. If we do not support NAMM's efforts and investment, and this crucial work in Washington D.C. on our behalf, it will *not* get done by anyone else.

Thanks for your reporting of this wonderful event. After reading your editorial and reviewing the wonderful photos you included, I'm ready to go back even before next May.

*Karl Dustman
Dustman & Associates,
Marketing Communications
Professional Percussion Products*

Hard Work Pays Off

A big thank you to Editor Katie Kalius and the entire staff at *Music Inc.* for the privilege and honor of choosing Nick Rail Music for September's cover story. Recognition by one's peers is humbling, and as I've told our employees, it has everything to do with their hard work, dedication, passion, and willingness to serve.

This is their victory and their day in the sun; thank you for such a well-written, wonderful article.

*Nick Rail
President
Nick Rail Music*



A Look Into T-Rex

Many thanks to *Music Inc.* and writer John Janowiak for the profile of T-Rex Effects in the September issue.

We were thrilled to be able to share the T-Rex story with *Music Inc.* readers, from its humble beginnings in the founders' garage in their Danish hometown to being one of the most coveted brands worldwide in today's crowded pedal market.

It happens to be one of the most exciting times in recent memory for T-Rex, with an unprecedented number of new products being released this year that take T-Rex in some new directions, and even more in the pipeline for 2015.

We hope the story offered some valuable additional context for readers already acquainted

with T-Rex, and served as an introduction to anyone unfamiliar with the company. And kudos to *Music Inc.* for giving its readers insight into smaller companies like T-Rex that together make up an integral part of our MI industry fabric.

*Erik Lind
Product Manager
Musiquip
U.S. distributor of T-Rex Effects*

Sound of Success

The following is an edited excerpt of a column that originally appeared in the Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette.

My friend Jim Anderson, director of the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo, recently reminded me of something I did when we were both in middle school band years ago. He said that one day I came into basketball band

practice with the various instrumental parts all written out for a song very popular at the time. The whole band was astounded by my taking the initiative, when I just I took it for granted.

The point of the story is that it reminded me, once again, of how crucial music was to my overall education and how it continues to be central to my personal life and to my success as an entrepreneur and businessman.

Today, quality music instruction is no longer the educational priority it once was, particularly when budget constraints force tough decisions. I fully understand the importance of spending within your means, but the practice of disproportionately cutting arts programs in order to maintain academic programs is misguided, shortsighted and counterproductive.

I hope that all of Indiana's leaders, educational and political, will broaden their definition of what is truly effective education, by always including the arts in their planning, advocacy, policy-making and budgeting.

Finally, I'd like to encourage my peers in the music industry to speak out on this issue in your hometowns, to share your own music education stories, and to support NAMM in its advocacy efforts in Washington D.C. and through its Support Music Coalition.

*Chuck Surak
Founder & President
Sweetwater Sound*

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PAGE 19

»» ■■■■ RETAIL

CARTER VINTAGE GUITARS | BY KATHLEEN COSTANZA

BUILDING A LANDMARK

There's no real telling what a day at Carter Vintage Guitars in Nashville might hold. Zac Brown might stop in, American Idol might swing by to shoot some b-roll or Macy's could be shooting an ad with some up-and-coming country stars.

It's an unpredictability that a few other storied, long-standing music retailers around the country share. Only difference is Walter and Christie Carter opened their doors 15 months ago.

"We started out with under 100 guitars and we had them spaced out pretty far to make it not look so empty," Christie laughed. "Now we're up at about 700 guitars and we're moving a fair number out every month. We really just exploded. We're looking for more places to put slat wall."

The explosion is a result of a perfect storm of a revitalized 8th Avenue in Nashville, the new convention center and some mastermind marketing from Walter and Christie Carter, which together have turned Carter Vintage Guitars into a new landmark in the guitar-shop-saturated Music City.

EYE-CATCHER

Christie said before she and Walter opened their doors in



Christie and Walter Carter



Guthrie Trapp and Steve Wariner, two of Nashville's hottest guitar pickers, have an impromptu jam in the high-end room.

'Instead of having our business in our living room, we'd have our living room in our business.'

June 2013 they weren't afraid of competition because they knew they could set themselves apart. Perhaps most visibly by the two 150-foot vivid murals on the two sides of their building. One is of a sprawling Les Paul and the other a classic image of Maybelle Carter. Just about everyday, people post photos of it on social media. Walter and Christie even nabbed a Top 100 Dealer Award for it at Summer NAMM.

"When people are driving, you have a few seconds to catch their attention," Christie said. "That 150-foot Les Paul tells people, 'That's a guitar store.'" That's exactly what happened when Carlos Santana drove by last April and stopped in.

Christie also said the location of their building on 8th Avenue, about six blocks from the new convention center, has seen an uptick of foot traffic and a cluster of new stores, attracting "guitar tourists" from all over the world.

"I think of this as guitar tourism," Christie said. "We sold to a Japanese customer yesterday who came to Nashville just to go guitar shopping. "They come to Nashville to look for vintage instruments and it's really good to have all the stores close each other because it makes it easy for the customer. They can shop them all."



Walter and Christie Carter in front of the 150-foot mural of a Les Paul.



From left: Justin Nash, Taylor Jones, Suzy Newton, Christie Carter, Natalie Thompson, Carson Royster, Aaron Pearson and Walter Carter.



The exterior of Carter Vintage Guitars on 8th Avenue.

BEYOND MUSIC CITY

Outside Nashville, customers have found Carter Vintage in a wide mix of ways. About 40 percent of their sales are over the phone and Internet, and their biggest driver is their YouTube channel.

The channel is filled with hundreds of clips of musicians testing out the instruments for sale. In total, the channel just topped over half-a-million views in about 10 months.

“You could be sitting in Kalamazoo, Michigan and you can hear the D-28 you’re interested in buying and you can hear an A-level musician playing it,” Christie explained. “It’s a great marketing strategy, and it’s worked really well for us.”

THE CARTER FAMILY LIVING ROOM

The Carters have had a number of snowballing factors helping them grow. But most of their growth has come from the inside. When customers walk in, they and their team of 12 offer customers a soda or beer and encourage people to hang out and handle the instruments. And while the instruments draw vintage enthusiasts, the Carters say it’s the atmosphere that makes them stay and spread the word.

“Before we had the store open, we had started the business out of our living room which grew to be difficult and awkward in some cases,” Walter said. “So we decided instead of having our business in our living room, we’d have our living room in our business.” **MI**

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GC TAKES ON TIMES SQUARE

By Frank Alkyer

In a move that places it alongside the largest brand names in America, Guitar Center opened a 28,000-square-foot showroom in Times Square on Aug. 7.

While bloggers had a field day calling the opening week's sound levels "an ear-splitting hell hole" due to the high volume of musicians trying out instruments, GC executives smiled, noting that that's exactly what they want customers to do.

"One of the things that's really important to us as a company is that everything is accessible for every single customer," said Kevin Kazubowski, senior vice president of stores, while giving the media a tour of the new showroom.

In short, if customers are trying out new gear, they'll be buying it, too. The new location becomes GC's 262nd store and the flagship for the entire chain featuring a variety of new concepts and techniques.

Here's a walkthrough and insights into GC's latest thoughts on store design.



< ROLLING OUT A NEW GUITAR WALL

The new guitar wall display features hot, rolled steel with LED lighting to give the wall and instruments a stage-worthy glow.

"Every single guitar is accessible and everybody can play anything they want," Kazubowski said. "They went through five or six iterations in our merchandising lab back at the home office and this is the one we landed on. You'll probably start seeing some of this in our other stores. What we're doing in our other stores is redoing the guitar wall, bringing everything lower so that people can get to it really easily."



^ RETHINKING THE ACOUSTIC ROOM

"The flooring you'll see here and next door in the Platinum Club is made from reclaimed barn floor," Kazubowski said. "We went out and got something special that we won't have in any of our other stores for this particular location. Anything is playable. We have everything from an \$11,000 Taylor

hanging on the wall right there all the way down to a \$99 guitar right here. We really encourage people to pick up and play anything here. That's why they're all unlocked and within arm's reach."

The room features a full humidification system and displays about 200 acoustic guitars.

THE PLATINUM CLUB >

"In a lot of our stores, we have something we call the Platinum Room where we have our high-end guitars," Kazubowski said. "Those rooms have between 10-15 guitars. Here we have the Platinum Club. The idea was to mimic a speakeasy or jazz club."

The club features a stage where live performances can happen for an audience up to 75. With a control room set up next door, GC plans to tape a variety of events from the club, including its award-winning "Guitar Center Sessions" television show that airs on DirectTV.

In building the club, GC Pro and its partners actually built it as a room within a room to ensure that there would be no sound leakage issues when taping or hosting an event.

"In a real recording studio, you have isolation where you have walls and floors that are actually separated from the outer walls," said Rick Plushner, vice president of Guitar Center Professional.

GC has invested more than \$180,000 in recording equipment for the room, including an Avid S3L system at the front of house.



EXPANSIVE DJ ROOM

The store features 15 DJ stations, each fitted with an Apple MacBook Pro, a controller and headphones. "Every station is set up with its own computer so you can go and audition each system individually," Plushner said. "I expect that on opening night, it will be packed." The room also features the chain's third Serato in-store digital space for DJs.

LARGE LESSONS FACILITY

Lessons are a new focus for GC, and the Times Square location features nine lesson rooms.

"Each of our rooms is set up with two instruments, so the instructor and the student will be playing the same thing," Kazubowski said. "We name all of our rooms after local acts. Wherever we have a lessons facility, we try to get local, like The Sondheim Room or Mary J. Blige. They're all sound proof. They all have Auralex on the walls. The drum room actually seals at the bottom so you don't hear anything. We have this in about 80 stores. That's one of our big initiatives to get this into all of our stores by 2017."

THE FIRST FENDER CUSTOM SHOP ROOM

"We have a Fender Custom Shop Room co-branded with Fender, and it will be manned by someone from Fender," Kazubowski said. "The nicest Fender Guitars that I have ever seen are in this room." This concept of a co-branded room staffed by Fender employees is a first for GC.

NEW HOME FOR BLACKIE

And if the sheer expanse of gear isn't enough for customers, the Times Square location is also a bit of a museum, becoming the permanent home for Eric Clapton's famous "Blackie" 1956/57 Fender Stratocaster and his 1964 Gibson ES335. Guitar Center purchased both guitars at auction in 2004 for \$959,500 and \$847,500, respectively.

REVVED UP RENTALS

"This is rentals location No. 32 for us," Kazubowski said. "Rent now, play now; that's our slogan. We're renting back lines or if somebody comes into town and needs a guitar for a weekend, they can get that here. They have access to a loading dock in back [a rarity in New York City], so when folks want to rent a bunch of speakers or something like that, we have an easy way to get them loaded into their cars."



REMIX IN THE DRUM DEPARTMENT

Kazubowski noted that there aren't a lot of acoustic kits on the drum floor, with GC displaying many more electronic and hybrid kits. The department also features an electronic Drum Tutor display where drummers

can test their skills and get electronic feedback.

"We have it in five stores right now," he said. "You play, and it tells you if you're doing it right. It's like Rock Band for adults." **MI**

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ROBERT LOWREY PIANOS | PHILANTHROPY

Robert Lowrey Piano Experts Donates Pianos to Jamaica

Robert Lowrey Piano Experts in Toronto recently packed up 21 pianos and shipped them off to churches, schools and community centers in Jamaica.

“Older pianos have become a problem,” said owner Robert Lowrey. “People are downsizing, people don’t want them. There’s a glut of pianos that are 60 to 100 years old on the market. Sadly, they often end up in landfills.”

So instead of sending the used trade-in pianos that weren’t quite sellable to a piano graveyard, the company partnered with Bonnie Hoy who finds new homes for the instruments. It also partnered with

Monarch Moving Systems which helped with the moving arrangements. The crew loaded all 21 pianos into a large shipping container and filled the gaps between the instruments with cardboard from old piano boxes.

“They’ve been extraordinarily well-received and in fact they’re desperate for more,” Lowrey said of the 14 pianos they shipped last year. They plan to collect trade-ins and continue the donation next year as well. “Having something in the absence of nothing has started many a talented musician or athlete who otherwise hasn’t had the means.”

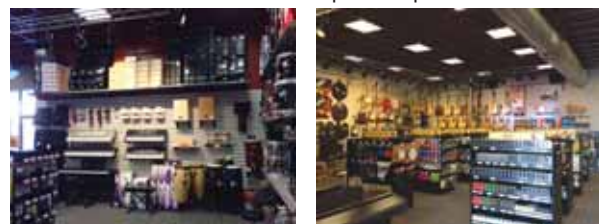


MUSIC & ARTS | OPENING

Music & Arts Adds Two Stores Near Houston

Music & Arts recently added two new locations in Humble and Tomball, Texas, in the Houston area. The roughly 3,000-square-foot stores also include six music lesson studios, which will have the capacity to serve about 250 students. The locations will service nearly every school district in Northwest Houston and surrounding areas.

“We are excited to expand our presence in the North Houston market especially during this time of year,” said Vince Chiappone, regional sales director for Music & Arts. “We work with numerous school music programs in the area so having these two additional locations will help us help them.”





Store owner Larry Miller with Terrell Diehl.

METRONOME MUSIC | CONTEST

METRONOME MUSIC AWARDS MANSFIELD TEEN NEW SET

Metronome Music in Mansfield, Ohio, has awarded over \$20,000 in musical instruments over the last 24 years in their 17 and under youth music contests. But last August, 16-year-old Terrell Diehl made an especially big impression. After performing in the last four contests, Diehl took home first place and a new DDrum Starter Kit.

While his drumming would be impressive for any kid his age, Diehl has the extra challenge of living with arthrogryposis, a condition that causes joint contracture. It requires him to need a wheelchair and limits the mobility of his joints. But his condition hasn't stopped him from continuing to practice

drumming, which he's been doing since he could first bang on pots and pans.

"When he was being lifted from the wheelchair to the drum set on stage, he apologized to the audience for delaying the contest," said Sales Manager Chris Stecker. "The audience responded with applause."

"Why do we do it? Because younger kids need goals, and a contest like this helps them to achieve them," Stecker said.

"We're a small city that has seen Westinghouse, Tappan, General Motors leave, but our citizens have passed a pot-hole tax for many years, which shows that we all care about the success of our community and our kids."

 An advertisement for DrumClip, featuring a close-up of the product on a drum rim. The text is set against a red background.

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 An advertisement for CymPad, featuring several cymbal pads of different colors and sizes. The text is set against an orange background.

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CYMPAD[®]
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www.cympad.com



Note From Joe
The NAMM Foundation, Supporting Music Education for All Children

With relentless lobbying and promotion about the importance of music education, 94 percent of America's children return to school this fall with the opportunity to learn music.*

While every child should have the opportunity to make music, all too often music is among the first classes cut from public school budgets. The government statistic above is encouraging, but we know it will not be a reality for far too many kids. Here's where all NAMM Members can use the tools found on the NAMM Foundation's website to play a vital role in creating more supply (number of quality music programs) and demand (kids who want to play music).

The NAMM Foundation is dedicated to advocating for music education at the local, state and national levels. And now, with the debut of a new, user-friendly website packed with great tools and information, the Foundation arms you with everything you need to strengthen music education in your community.

Advocacy

Music and the arts are essential to every child's education and SupportMusic, a NAMM Foundation initiative, provides teachers, parents and community leaders with the tools and resources they need to advance community support for music education

Research

The NAMM Foundation supports groundbreaking research projects that explore the benefits of music making for people of all ages and levels of experience. This research helps to validate a complete education that includes music and proves to be an important tool when advocating for the arts at budget time

Promotion

From promoting the results of our research studies to finding the Best Communities for Music Education in America, NAMM helps keep music making top of mind with the public by getting the word out through the media. The NAMM Foundation also airs its "Just Play" PSAs on TV stations throughout the U.S. and Latin America.



Check out nammfoundation.org for yourself and learn more about how you can change the lives of students in your area by becoming a music education advocate. *Our vision is a world in which every child has a deep desire to learn music and a recognized right to be taught; and in which every adult is a passionate champion and defender of that right.* The NAMM Foundation is our industry's path towards achieving that vision.

Joe Lamond
Joe Lamond

NAMM PRESIDENT AND CEO

* Research citation: See <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011078.pdf>



NAME **NAMM News** October 2014

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- > **FMIC**
Builds capabilities to sell direct
PAGE 24
- > **Sabian, Crescent**
Join forces
PAGE 25
- > **Remo**
Appoints new CFO
PAGE 26

SUPPLY

DANSR | BY FRANK ALKYER

A DECADE OF DANSR

Walking through the Champaign, Illinois-based warehouse for Dansr, the small goods distributor best known for its work with Vandoren reeds and mouthpieces and Denis Wick mutes and brass mouthpieces, one thing is very apparent — it’s comfortable, flat-out comfortable.

“The first thing we have to do with any warehouse is to air condition it and manage the humidity because it’s a big deal with reeds,” said Mike Skinner, Dansr’s president. “Now, with Flow Packs, it’s less of an issue, but the warehouse is still treated.”

Dansr has made a point of maintaining comfort levels for retailers and manufacturers alike. As the company celebrates its 10th anniversary, Dansr continues its mission of being a leading provider of high-quality, high-volume legacy brands.

GETTING VANDOREN

A little over 10 years ago, Skinner was just the opposite of comfortable. He faced a major career decision. He was working for D’Addario, which distributed Vandoren, but not for long. D’Addario purchased Rico reeds, which meant the Vandoren distribution deal was about to end.

“Bernard Van Doren [the owner



From left: Dansr’s Bill Gray, Gary Winder and Mike Skinner

of Vandoren Paris] looked around and asked me what I thought could be the next step,” Skinner said. “And I said, ‘The next step is that you need somebody to distribute your product.’ He was very clear that he wanted to be unique. He has a high-value legacy product and didn’t want to be four pages in somebody’s catalog.

“And I said, ‘Well, the only way you’re going to get that is if I do it. Because I know who you are. I know your product. I understand who you want to be. I understand your direction.’”

Van Doren gave Skinner 10 days to show him how. The first call he made was to Bill Gray, the CEO of BGE Financial, because Skinner needed financing — fast.

“So, basically, we talked about the opportunity,” Gray said. “I said I’d need some numbers

to look at. I worked in retail. I knew the quality of the brand. But from a national level, I had no idea of volume. When I got the numbers, my eyes got a little bigger. So, I emailed the numbers to Greg [Grieme, BGE president and CFO] and said, ‘We’ve got an opportunity here. Take a look at this.’ He was pretty excited.

“But I think my biggest concern was that if the larger distributors in the United States really understood that this opportunity was out there — if Michael didn’t move quickly enough — he might miss this great opportunity.”

So, Gray suggested they become partners in the deal.

“The most important part of this is that it took us just 90 days from the day we said, ‘Yes, we’re going to do this’ until the day we went to the first convention and

shipped product,” Skinner said.

Today, Dansr stocks everything Vandoren and Denis Wick produces. The company boasts a 98-percent, same-day fulfillment rate. And the management team continues to look for other high-quality, high-volume legacy brands to distribute, or even purchase.

Three years ago, the group purchased Jones Musical Instruments and brought on a new partner in industry veteran Gary Winder to serve as vice president of sales and marketing. When Vandoren Paris developed the new Juno line of student reeds, Jones became the ideal U.S. distribution partner for that product.

Winder has been impressed with the innovation he sees from the companies they work with, like the Denis Wick Travel Mute.

“It actually fits inside the bell so it doesn’t stick out,” he said. “So far we have the trombone and the euphonium, and they’re working on the trumpet — put it in the bell, close it up in the case. And the tuning is perfect.”

As for Van Doren, Dansr’s management team said he’s not just a business partner, he’s a role model. “This guy is larger than life,” Winder said. “You talk about a company having a vision. This company has a vision, but the vision changes every day. And that’s the exciting part of being part of this.” **MI**

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FENDER | CORPORATE

FMIC BUILDING CAPABILITIES TO BEGIN SELLING DIRECT

Fender Musical Instruments Corporation (FMIC) held a two-day business meeting the week of Aug. 4 with key North American dealers at the Fender Visitor Center in Corona, California.

FMIC interim CEO Scott Gilbertson and other members of the executive management team discussed the company's strategic initiatives to elevate the Fender brand among consumers.

"We are committed to grow our business in partnership with our dealers," Gilbertson said. "As an industry leader, we view it as our obligation to significantly invest in the consumer experience."

During the meeting, the company announced it is building capabilities to offer the full Fender product catalog through its website, "in an effort to meet the demands, needs and desires of the modern consumer." Fender also announced a series of digital initiatives focused on enhancing the dealer's customer relationship management capabilities and sales effectiveness tools.

"By investing in digital capabilities and elevating our consumer experience around our brand, products and services, we expect to drive increased engagement, emotional affiliation and consumer demand," Gilbertson said. "We believe our strategy will

accrue significant benefits across all aspects of our dealer base."

The discussion included short and long term opportunities for the dealer network to benefit from Fender's shared technology, content capabilities and consumer insights.

The two-day interactive meeting focused on outlining Fender's underlying strategy for growing the brand in partnership with the dealers along with in-depth discussions on the state of the marketplace, product assortment planning, opportunities around consumer activations, visual merchandising and new product campaigns.

{fender.com}



STEINBERG | ANNIVERSARY

Steinberg Turns 30

Steinberg is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. The German audio and music software and hardware company, founded by Manfred Ruerup and Karl Steinberg, now has more than 1.5 million users worldwide.

"Steinberg has a tradition of pioneering in new technologies that we can be proud of, and our wide network of accomplished engineers, musicians, producers and composers allows us to keep our fingers at the pulse of the industry," said Frank Simmerlein, marketing director at Steinberg.

"I've been a part of this company for a long time and it's wonderful to sense that the spirit of the early days, the constant desire to find new ideas and solutions, lives on."

Steinberg have released many products and technologies throughout the years. The advanced music production system, Cubase, arrived in 1989, while WaveLab audio editing and mastering suite was introduced in 1995. Virtual Studio Technology (VST) and the Audio Stream Input/Output (ASIO) protocol are two open standards first released in 1997. Designed to meet the requirements of pro audio customers comes Nuendo, a digital audio workstation that hit the market in 2000, followed by the first integrated virtual sampler, HALion in 2001.

Since 2005, the company is a wholly owned subsidiary of Yamaha Corporation. {steinberg.net}

CÓRDOBA, GUILD | DISTRIBUTION

Córdoba, Guild Guitars Find UK Distributor

Córdoba and Guild Guitars have partnered with Selectron (UK) Ltd. to distribute them in the United Kingdom.

"With Selectron's long history of distributing MI brands to some of the UK's top retailers, along with their dedication to providing top notch customer service to both dealers and consumers, we couldn't have found a better fit in the UK for the Córdoba brand," said Tim Miklaucic, Córdoba Music Group's CEO.

Selectron plans to distribute all Córdoba guitar and ukulele lines. Guild distribution in the UK has been on hold since July 2014. Selectron's Guild distribution and product support will resume immediately with Guild's Traditional series, GAD series and the Newark St. collection, offering a diverse selection of acoustic and electric styles. {cordobaguitars.com; guildguitars.com}

SABIAN, CRESCENT | PARTNERSHIP

Sabian, Crescent Partner

Crescent Cymbals has transferred all production of its handmade cymbals to Sabian. The two companies first collaborated producing the Elements series.

Sabian CEO Andy Zildjian and Crescent Cymbal CEO Michael Vosbein realized they shared a common vision for the art of cymbal making, the two companies said in a statement.

“Eventually when an opportunity comes to partner with a substantial manufacturer with a great legacy who has been making hand-hammered cymbals for decades and have it all happen right here in North America, I am down and I am in,” Vosbein said in a video on his company’s YouTube channel. “I am thrilled to have the opportunity to partner with [Sabian].”

“The opportunity to be able to work with [Crescent] which has an audience for [hand-hammered cymbals] and do that with no volatility is fantastic,” Zildjian said. sabian.com; crescentcymbals.com

KORG | PHILANTHROPY

KORG GIVES UKULELES

Korg USA recently partnered with Guitars in the Classroom, a non-profit that provides schools with guitars and ukuleles to incorporate music into the education curriculum. The goal of the organization is to enhance the student’s academic experience by introducing music throughout various subjects stimulating their ability to learn.

Korg USA donated ukuleles to be distributed to various classrooms across the country, supporting the non-profit’s stance on the importance of music in schools.

korg.com



Sabian's Andy Zildjian and Crescents' Michael Vosbein

A large advertisement for Kahuna Ukuleles. At the top, the word "KAHUNA" is written in large, stylized, orange and white letters with a sunburst effect behind the 'A'. Below it, the word "UKULELES" is written in a smaller, white, outlined font. The main part of the ad is a grid of 24 ukuleles, each with a different color and design, arranged in four rows of six. The background is a blue sky with white clouds and a blue ocean with white waves. At the bottom, the text "Ride The Wave" is written in a large, cursive font. Below that, the website "www.apintl.com" is listed. At the very bottom, there is a logo for AP International and the text: "Kahuna Ukuleles is a division of AP International. For more info, visit apintl.com or call 732.919.6200".

APPOINTMENTS



Darlene Krupa

REMO NAMES NEW CFO

Remo has appointed Darlene Krupa as its new CFO.

In 2010, Krupa joined Remo as the accounting manager under longtime CFO Doug Sink. After 28 years with Remo, Sink has retired.

“With her thorough knowledge of our finance and accounting needs, I am confident in Darlene’s promotion and am looking forward to working with her in this new position,” said Brock Kaericher, president of Remo. remo.com



Yamaha promoted Armando Vega to marketing manager for the company’s guitar department. He began his career at Yamaha Guitars in 2005 as product manager and since has helped

develop the award-winning A series guitars and THR desktop amplifier lineup.

“Armando has been integral to helping Yamaha guitars grow its market share in the United States over the last few years by facilitating artist relations and providing solid marketing and sales support,” Webster said. “This promotion will build upon his mastery of the entire product lineup and bring his marketing skills to the next level as we align for success with our dealers and customers.”



Jessica Bartoshesky has joined **KHS America** to fill the newly created role of educator relations coordinator. She will be working with the marketing department to help guide and spearhead

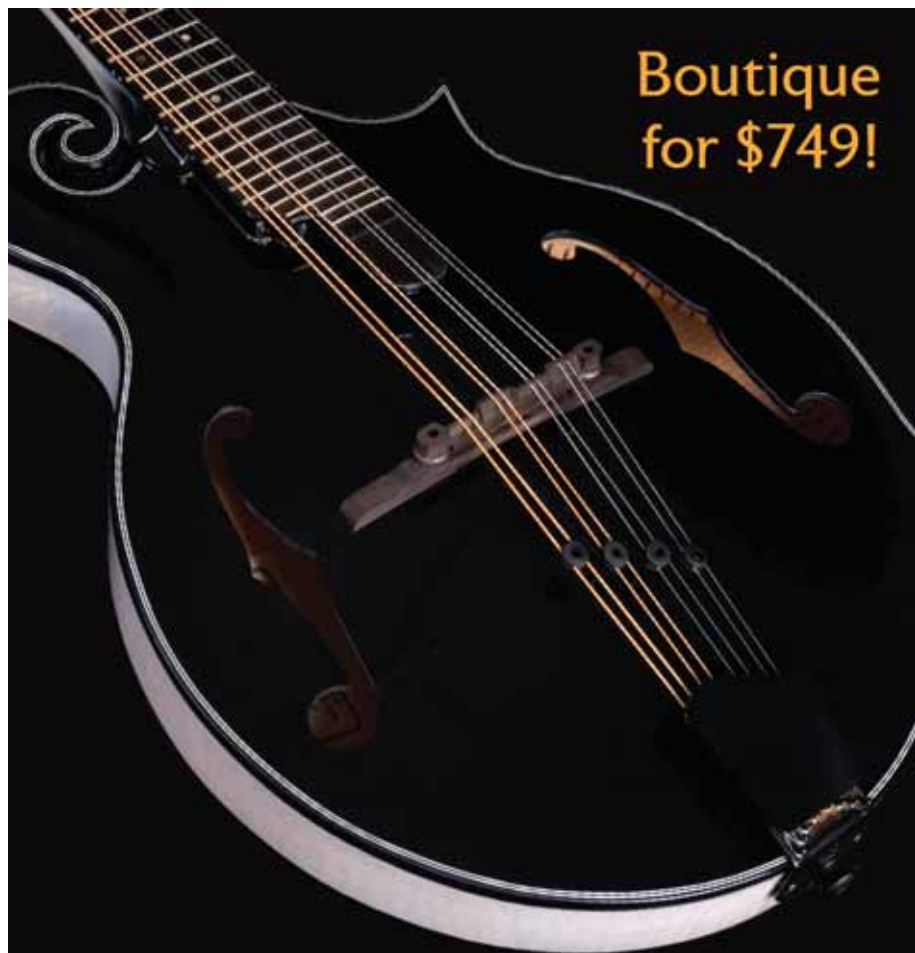
marketing initiatives for music educators.



Amati USA has named Jay Wanamaker president & COO. Wanamaker will oversee all Amati U.S. operations, including Amati Woodwind & Brass Instruments and V.F. Cerveny Brass Instruments, as well as the Strunal String Instrument brand.



KMC Music has appointed Heather Smith marketing manager. Smith will oversee media relations amongst other responsibilities.



Boutique
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Michael Kelly Guitars puts Boutique Within Reach with instruments that deliver on the quality and aesthetic sensibilities of a small boutique builder, but for amazing prices. Take this new Legacy Black collection of mandolins. Fully carved solid wood top and back, radiused fingerboard and a totally boutique color combination for \$749 (MAP). This is just the beginning, isn't it time for you to put boutique within your customers' reach?

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IDEAS

Inside **IDEAS** > Lessons Learned Page 30 > The Customer Whisperer Page 32

INDEPENDENT RETAIL | BY TED ESCHLIMAN

SECRETS IN DISPLAY

In stocking, displaying and selling our wares we harbor an often imperceptible conflict in priority —customer draw versus staff efficiency. Your sales team wants orders. They want similar items together, SKU position permanence and possibly a disdain for inventory holes. Customers want and need many of these elements, including a searchable “logic” and of course, full shelves.

However, for a sale to occur, the customer must already know they need an item *or* it has to be proactively displayed to entice discovery. When an employee is stocking our shelves, their priority is for rationality and ease of restocking. Their goal is to “store” our items on the walls, not always to move them out the door.

DISCOVERY

Thinking back on my own house lamp purchases, they’ve rarely been out of the lamp section of a store, but instead from the sofa, end table or bedroom furniture display. The wife and I would see something displayed next to the units we are about to buy, and — both figuratively and literally — a light would go on. What could have been an



Products must be proactively displayed to entice customer discovery

untapped afterthought became a profitable “add-on” sale for the furniture store.

We were victims/beneficiaries of customer “discovery.” I don’t think the salesperson ever asked us if we wanted lamps, they were just displayed so compellingly. Context!

We as music retailers can employ the no-brainer ideas like putting straps near the guitars and maintenance kits near the horns.

But what about similar activity “centers” in the store? We can’t depend on the suggestive sales skills of our staff to be the sole source of these transactions, and admittedly, today’s sales culture does not want to be sold. They want to discover.

CONTINUITY

The other secret to retail display success is something that goes beyond just classifying like products. It exploits the visuals of line, color and a fourth dimensional spatial flow. Most of these are so cerebral they escape all but the best of merchandisers. Things like the geometry of hook placement — are the lines even, are they continuous from product to product? Flow from front to back? As well as simple strategies like color and shape of packaging, all placed in the same area give a subliminal sense of order and, ultimately, comfort to a customer. If they draw, they move! When packages look like each other on a wall, the eye and brain only have to differentiate individual product specs. They aren’t viscerally bumped by the interruptions of corners and brand identity. Consider having as many

of your manufacturer’s product in one area instead of differentiating by instrument all the time. Side note: This also means committing deeper to fewer vendors to give this kind of packaging uniformity.

CREATING CULTURE

Imagine a customer wants to demo a new guitar. After plugging him in, a salesman was heard saying, “Stupid customer. Didn’t even know we have an amp room.”

Stupid customer? No, stupid salesman. There’s no way a person new to the store is going to immediately know our store’s breadth of resources. Stupid manager for not nurturing a welcoming environment and store culture for new customers. Stupid store owner for not signing the amp room well enough for the newbie to see it was there.

Attention to broad but fundamental elements like line of sight, signage, order and product drama can open a whole new sales floor dynamic. There’s never a single right answer and the best thing you can do is experiment. **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*.

LESSONS LEARNED | BY GERSON ROSENBLOOM

People Who Need People

The Internet is ubiquitous. Recently I found myself thinking about this when I used my iPhone to deposit a check into my bank account with no teller intervention. We all think about the prevalence of online retail and its impact on traditional brick and mortar. But now we're banking, investing and checking our health records on our computers and phones, without ever dealing with another human being. So what does this mean for music retailers?



It's natural enough to assume that all of this technology undermines the need for traditional methods of doing business. And it's true enough that all businesses need to be sharpening their Internet awareness and expanding their online capabilities.

But there's a secondary outcome of all of this that plays right into the hand of traditional dealers. All of the impersonal transactions leave a void for human contact. For too many dealers, the approach to this is an "either/or" scenario. Some dealers have not yet upgraded their online presence. They're stuck in times-gone-by, and they're just not offering customers the chance to buy the way they want to buy. But they provide them a terrific warm and welcoming place to do business. They do relationships well, but tend to have a very limited number of customers to relate to — due to their lack of online presence.

At the other end of the spectrum are a group of dealers who have tapped into the latest technology, polished their SEO, and are enjoying the business that results from their online presence, but are missing the relationship piece of the puzzle.

CREATING A BALANCE

The answer lies within dealers' ability to balance their technological abilities with their interpersonal prowess. I discovered this many years ago, in the early days of mail order. Partially based on my expertise in synthesizers back in their infancy, partly due to my likeable nature on the phone, and also due to New York City's onerous tax burden, I had huge success selling keyboards to a huge customer

base in the Big Apple. It's not like there were no dealers there ... that was the heyday of 48th Street. I assumed that the tax advantage was the primary reason for my success. But when New York dealers realized how much success I was having shipping into New York, they simply cut prices to, in essence, absorb the sales tax. The lesson learned for me was that I kept selling to an expanding group of satisfied customers. Why? Because even though I thought that I won them initially with the tax advantage, I kept them by providing service over the phone that apparently they considered better than what they were getting face-to-face with their local dealers.

When you win a customer's business by virtue of your online presence, what do you do to differentiate yourself from other online sellers? Or their local dealer? The same question applies for brick and mortar stores.

As I discovered many years ago, matching or beating a price is not the primary motivator for many customers. Create a true relationship or even a friendship, and you'll likely win a customer for life. **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.

Matching or beating a price is not the primary motivator for many customers

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THE CUSTOMER WHISPERER | BY GREG BILLINGS

What I Learned in 50 Years

After working more than 50 years in a music store, I am retiring this month. It all started in August 1964. Riding the wave of Beatle-mania, my dad opened a guitar department in what was to me, a very boring piano and organ studio. As the carpenters finished remodeling, there were 30 Fender, Gibson and Gretsch guitars and about 20 Vox amps to be uncrated and set up. I guess Dad figured a 14 year old on summer vacation was just the man for the job. To this day, the smell of fresh lacquer instantly transports me back to that moment when the first guitar case was opened.



To be completely honest, it's not 50 straight years. There were few diversions; short stints as a musician, at a record distributor, a music publisher and as a road rep. But, all of the last 38 years have been on the front lines. There have been 15 stores — malls, warehouses, strips and free standing. In the '70s I nearly went broke in the organ business, being rescued by a kindly competitor, Verne Netzow, who treated me like a son and taught me how to run a profitable business.

Along the way I've learned a few things and made a few observations, which I humbly offer:

1.) Our willingness to teach each other, even among competitors, is astounding. In addition to Mr. Netzow and my dad, a short list of my mentors includes my first boss, Bob Zenoni (the original Uncle Bob of Uncle Bob's Music), Keith Mardak, Bob Jones, Larry Linkin, Nick Orlando, Dick Hanold, Tad Wegman, Henry Steinway, John Majeski, Lane Zastrow, Chuck Faas and Dennis Houlihan. There are two kinds of mentoring. One in which the mentor imparts advice and wisdom. The other is a more significant form and just requires proximity to a remarkable

person who is transparent. I have been blessed with more of the later than the former.

We really don't consider our peers to be mentors. But counsel and advice from Ron Carlson, Dave Slan, Mike Greene, Fred Forshey, Steve Datz, Ellen McDonald, Steve and Sherry Bird, Kathi Kretzer, Steve Thomas, Tom Schmitt, Bill McCormick and many others has

been invaluable. The generosity we show toward each other in the musical instrument industry is effervescent.

2.) The amount of talent and creativity among our retail sector is staggering. Of course, there are and have been geniuses on the supply side. Men like Ikutaro Kakehashi, Bob Taylor, Hartley Peavey, Keith Mardak, Leo Fender, Henry Steinway amongst others, are widely recognized. But in sheer numbers, most of the heavy lifting is done by ten thousand indie dealers striving everyday to succeed in a business where most who try, fail. My dad was one of them. I am one of them. My son is one of them.

3.) We think way too much about product. Every brand has dealers who succeed and dealers who fail. It is emerging products that present the greatest marketing challenge and the greatest profit potential. We need to think more about guiding customers through the decision making process and less about moving product.

4.) Even though our customers tell us that price is the most important thing, it usually isn't. Being satisfied with their purchase is what matters most. For a customer to feel satisfied, they are going to have to be able to use what they purchased to achieve what they

'My career has been a joy and a burden — like going to the best party in the world, only to have to stay to clean up the mess.'

intended, and know they were treated fairly in the process. That means every contact, from our first encounter to the last bit of support, is vitally important. Those among us who cut corners, perish.

5.) Most music stores have too much inventory. Customers usually become confused considering more than three choices.

Though I am leaving the daily regime of running the business, I shall continue to write about being a Customer Whisperer. I promise to write only as long as I serve that purpose.

My career has been a joy and a burden — like going to the best party in the world, only having to stay to clean up the mess. Still, I wouldn't trade my experience. We have crossed the precipice to a new era of retailing. It is time for me to get out of the way. The new path will be blazed by a new generation with the same enthusiasm and energy that I felt when I opened that guitar case and smelled fresh lacquer for the first time back in '64. **MI**

Greg Billings is the former owner of the Steinway Piano Gallery in Naples, Florida. He welcomes questions and comments at gregpianos@gmail.com.

LESSONS I LEARNED THE HARD WAY

- It doesn't matter what your competitors do. We all have the same set of challenges. It only matters what you do.
- Don't depend on offering the lowest price. There's always someone willing to sell cheaper. There's no such thing as enough volume to make up for low margin.
- There is nothing wrong with being the highest price store as long as you add value. Customers will respect you.
- The balance sheet is more important than the income statement.
- Inventory turn is as important as gross margin.
- Customers are important and employees are more important. Treat them fair, pay them well and they will crawl over crushed glass for you.
- The dynamic tension we endure with our suppliers is the fuel that sustains our industry. We are adversaries and must not be lulled into thinking we are partners.
- The energy and optimism of youth triumph over the experience and wisdom of the aged. Thus it has always been.



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The Drum Destination

OPENING ON A DEAD END STREET IN CHICAGO

JUST THREE YEARS AGO, VICTOR SALAZAR HAS

TRANSFORMED VIC'S DRUM SHOP INTO A

GEAR-PACKED DESTINATION.

By Kathleen Costanza

Two bewildered Italian tourists, a father and his teenage son, are meandering the halls of Vic's Drum Shop.

It's early Tuesday morning, and Vic's is still closed. But somehow they've made it through the front doors of the Music Garage, an enormous rehearsal space in Chicago where the shop is housed.

"Ah, are you here to see Vic's Drum Shop?" Vic Salazar asks. They nod. "Hi, I'm Vic."

The shop doesn't open until noon. But, alas, they're only in town for another hour.

And so he steps aside, and begins to take them on a tour of the 10,000-square-foot labyrinth that, in only three short years, has gone from a raw space to an international temple of all things drum.





Vic Salazar



Salazar tests a cymbal with Anthrax drummer Charlie Benante.

"We're doing half a dozen to a dozen tours a day," Salazar said. "Which makes me feel good, because it means we haven't tapped into the whole market. If we weren't giving tours anymore it would mean everyone who is going to come has been here."

When asked what prompted him to open a retail space on such a large scale in 2011, Salazar responds that Chicago hadn't had a dedicated drum shop since 1993. Now it does. One that, through a constant stream of clinics, promotions and networking with both day-to-day customers and international drumming superstars, has become a mecca for drummers around the globe. And it's only getting busier.

Welcome To Vic's

If Vic's Drum Shop has become a landmark, it's an awfully hard one to find. Pulling into an old paper mill on a dead end street in Chicago's West Loop, it's easy to wonder if your GPS has steered you to the wrong place.

"We're at a dead end street. We have no storefront window. You'd never walk or drive past us by mistake — never," Salazar said.

He'd been familiar with the Music Garage from renting a rehearsal room for several years prior. But when he was looking for the right space to open his own operation in early 2011, after 18 years managing The Drum Pad in Palatine, Illinois, he realized the customer base already embedded in

the building — about 120 bands and 130 drummers — made it the perfect spot. Of course, to attract the rest of the customers, he would just need to make his shop a destination. Easier said than done.

"When you walk in it's an all-out assault," said operations manager Kevin Jensen of the opening hallway stocked with hardware, videos and accessories. "You can't even handle how much variety there is and how well the inventory is laid out."

Beyond the opening hallway, the shop is divided into seven rooms packed to the brim with products from just about every major drum manufacturer as well as a wide variety of boutique brands.

Salazar has been drumming since he was eight and would obsess over drum catalogs and pour over specs as a kid. But inspiration for the store's design stemmed from much more than drums — the News Stand app on his iPhone, Chicago's Contemporary Museum of Art and the Apple Store. The idea for the wall of tubes that holds 800 models of drumsticks came to him from an Italian restaurant's wall of wine.

A key to how they've been able to make about 34,000 SKUs fit in 10,000

square feet is by keeping only one of everything out for customers to audition, while brand new gear for purchase is kept in stock rooms.

But the biggest benefit to the separate rooms is that they're sonically treated — drummers can actually hear what they're testing out.

"Most music stores are one big room," Salazar said. "I've been in some stores where sales people are telling customers to keep it down because they're on the phone or trying to do business with another customer. So having all these rooms enhances the shopping experience."

Connecting Drummers

Not even a store filled with as much gear as Vic's could attract customers by just unlocking its doors, and Vic's success so far has stemmed from connecting with customers in a wide mix of ways.

Salazar keeps his office in his back pocket, and creates a steady stream of Facebook posts on the go, "with no real plan." They're not your typical posts, though. Instead of stagnant gear sitting on the sales floor with a price tag, the posts give birthday wishes to internationally acclaimed drummers Salazar knows personally, or tell regular "Vic's to the Rescue" stories of Vic delivering new gear just in time for a Los Lonely Boys concert or for Peter Erskine. The page is quickly growing past 15,000 likes and he has yet to pay to "boost" a single post.

There's a lot of Salazar's face on the page, along with everywhere else in the store. His image is on tote bags, T-shirts, shakers. But Salazar said using his image as a logo isn't coming from a place of ego — it's about branding and showing customers there's a real person operating the store rather than a vague, corporate entity.

"You feel like there's somebody behind the busi-

"YOU FEEL LIKE THERE'S SOMEBODY BEHIND THE BUSINESS," SALAZAR SAID. "IT'S NOT JUST ME. IT'S MY STAFF. IT'S PEOPLE WHO DRIVE THE BUSINESS AND PEOPLE WHO SUPPORT THE BUSINESS."

ness," he said. "And it's not just me. It's my staff. It's people who drive the business and people who support the business."

Talking about Facebook, he explained, reminded him that later that day he needed to post a series of photos of all the customers he ran into at Lollapalooza over the weekend.

People are also attracted to the store by the constant clinics Vic's hosts. The previous weekend with drummer Derek Roddy made for the 33rd clinic in 33 months. That doesn't count the monthly Vic's Happy Hour at nearby Cobra Lounge, where Vic's hosts a customer's band and gives them 100 percent of the door collections.

Looking Beyond the Music Garage

For the last three years, Vic's business has been driven by foot traffic. But they recently launched the online store, making the day-to-day even busier and adding a new responsibility to his streamlined crew of eight.

"There's a horrible imbalance in my life," Salazar laughs, adding it's been about 33 months since he's had a day off. "But who's counting? Well, I guess I am. I haven't taken a vacation in three years."

The long term goal, though, doesn't look a lot calmer.

"Ultimately, what would be wonderful is if I could expand and open up other locations wherever we need a Vic's Drum Shop," he said. "I wouldn't go where there's a drum shop already established. But I know there are a lot of stores that have closed — the independent drum shop is a dying breed. And it's a shame. We need more of them." He said once his model is fine tuned,

he can't duplicate himself but by hiring the right people he could see duplicating the model to open more locations that mimic the experience he had as a kid of auditioning gear in an all-drum haven.

For the Italian tourists, Salazar ends the tour not in the shop itself but in his own rehearsal room on the third floor of the Music Garage.

There, he shows them his personal set comprised of 16 drums, 50 cymbals, eight



Salazar and drummer Tomas Haake check out cowbells in the percussion room.



Salazar and drummer Gavin Harrison in the main drumstick room.

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pedals and five cowbells. Oh, and a gong. It's a jaw-dropping contraption, one that illustrates his passion at the intersection of drumming and drums.

"Vic's eye for detail and his sense of vision is unparalleled based on anything I've ever seen," Jensen said.

"There really is nobody who could pull off a shop like this but him. It's his sense of vision — the way that he looks at the drumming community as such a vital and important piece of the music industry that is currently undeserved. Drummers deserve this store." **MI**

Grassroots Social Media

People across the globe find Vic's Drum Shop through its creative social media. Here are a smattering of the content-driven posts Salazar writes daily.

VIC'S TO THE RESCUE
 On August 8th, when Trevor Holder drummer from the touring musical "Motown" needed some gear before packing up and leaving town the next day, he knew there was only one place to call - Vic's!
 Once Vic rescued the call... See More

Like Comment Share

Barclay Jahn, Maggie Bury, Conny here and 28 others like this.

Conny here here and Vic.
 August 24 at 8:27am · 47%

Vic's to the Rescue

When international drummers find themselves needing some gear ASAP, they know who to call. Salazar often documents the trip with photos and facts about the musician.

VIC'S T-SHIRT SIGHTING
 The Alice Cooper Band ALS Ice Bucket Challenge featuring Drummer Glen Sobel... See More

Alice Cooper Band accepts ALS Challenge!
 Today, on their day off outside of Washington, DC, the Alice Cooper Band accepted the water salute for ALS... See the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge to date...

Like Comment Share

Rock Kapke, Brent Jahn, Alice Cooper Media Relations, LLC and 11 others like this.

Leslie Emergentwishes I like with the Vic's shirt. See fourth.
 13 hours ago

Vic's T-shirt Sighting

Vic's T-shirts pop up all over the place, like on a band member of Alice Cooper's band when the band took the ALS Ice Bucket challenge.

BIRTHDAY WISHES
 Steve Smith was born today in 1954 in Whitman, Massachusetts.
 Steve Smith is a remarkably versatile drummer best known for his work with the iconic rock band Journey (1978-1985, 1995-1998), and the fusion band which he L... See More (10 photos)

Like Comment Share

Birthday Wishes

Salazar often features a bio, video clip, photos and birthday wishes to drummers across all genres.

PHOTO OF THE DAY
 Not one but TWO custom 72" Remo Suede Ambassador bass drum heads arrived for Seventh Day Adventist Church in Chicago!
 We can't wait to hear what they sound like once they're installed. We'll keep you posted!

Like Comment Share

Photo of the Day

Daily photos capture day-to-day life at the shop, like the arrival of 72-inch Remo bass drumheads.

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WALK THROUGH

Vic Salazar has turned what was once the raw, open space of the Music Garage into a store spanning 10,000 square feet and holding just about just every drum brand you can think of — large and small. Here's a look into Vic's world:



▲ SNARE ROOM

The sound-proof snare room holds 225 snares by 28 manufacturers arranged alphabetically and by size.

◀ MAIN ROOM

The main stick room holds 800 models of drumsticks that drummers can test out on the giant practice pad in the center. "I didn't want the sticks behind the counter," Salazar said. "It just doesn't make it conducive to shopping. A drumstick for a drummer is the most important tool, it's our connection to the instrument."



▲ PERCUSSION ROOM

The percussion room includes djembes, cajons, congas, darbukas, shakers and much more. "It's a very important market," Salazar said of hand and world percussion.

▶ ACOUSTIC ROOM >

The L-shaped acoustic room is kept meticulously neat and uncluttered despite the volume of kits. "All the badges line up on the drums," Salazar said. "They have to. It looks neater, even if you can't put your finger on why."



CYMBAL ROOM

The museum-inspired cymbal room holds hundreds of cymbals for customers to test. "Installing clutches on all of the high-hat pairs makes it simple to swap out the hi-hats and try them out," Salazar said.

V



< PEDAL & DRUMHEAD ROOM

"We have 3,500 drumheads in stock and seven brands of heads," Salazar said. "Even those upper cabinets were designed with heads in mind." All the bass pedals are out and arranged alphabetically for customers to audition as well.

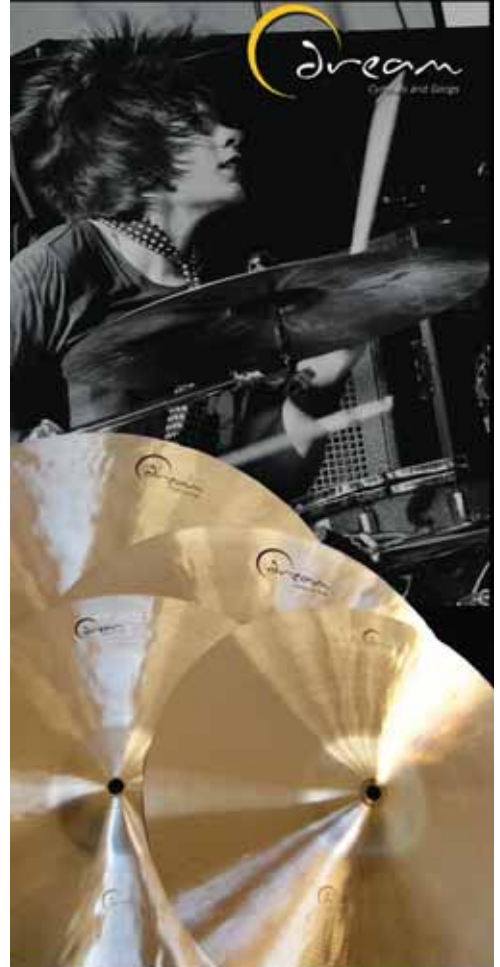


< ELECTRIC ROOM

"We have a variety of different kits here —no duplicates," Salazar said. "You can audition any of these drum kits via headphones or through amps. Everything is connected."

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THE FOLK EXPLOSION

By John Janowiak



MI retailers continue to feel the effects of mainstream folk music



Folk instruments are in consumers' ears and eyes more than any other time in recent history. It's hard to turn on the radio without hearing the pluck of a banjo or the high-pitched sustain of a mandolin. And it's a given that this fuels instrument sales. Er ... isn't it?

It's been a few years now since everyone in the industry started talking about this big folk explosion, so we thought it was time to check in with suppliers and retailers and see if the phenomenon is still going strong. And it seems that it is — as long as you cast a pretty wide net to define folk music.

"The lines are blurred — folk and Americana, roots music, it depends on what you're calling folk," said Steve McCreary, general manager of Collings Guitars. "But that whole acoustic thing, the singer/songwriter stuff and Americana, are still very much a big deal."

The folk music out there today may bear little in common with, say, the iconic style of Pete Seeger. But folk's newer, more all-encompassing cousin — Americana — has gone mainstream.

"Americana seems to be much more popular as an identified genre than it was even a couple of years ago," said Amy Ball Braswell, co-owner of Capo's Music Store in Abingdon, Virginia. "People like the Wood Brothers and Darryl Scott, who fall into multiple categories and are out there touring, are getting more attention in our region. They seem to be fueling lots of younger bands that are starting to play. They're identifying themselves as Americana, not bluegrass, country or rock. They're mixing a little bit



Gold Tone GM-6 mandolin



Michael Kelly Legacy Elite mandolin



of everything in there.”

As the music gets mainstream exposure, so do the instruments.

“Folk instruments have really enjoyed crossover exposure over the last year,” said Tracy Hoeft, founder of Michael Kelly Guitars. “You are hearing mandolins in country music, Americana, singer/songwriter, indie rock, and even some pop and EDM. This has been great for these instruments and the players who play them.”

Without a doubt, folky bands like the Lumineers, The Avett Brothers and Swampcandy have contributed to this exposure.

“But we also benefit from bands like Lady Antebellum, Imagine Dragons and others that have added to the complexity of their music with these instruments,” Hoeft said.

WHAT'S HOT

By all accounts, banjos continue to be big sellers. For Deering, all banjo models have benefitted from the boom, but especially the Goodtime banjos, Boston 6-String and Eagle II banjos, according to David Bandrowski, director of marketing for the Deering Banjo Co.

At Capo's Music, Braswell said she's selling more open-back banjos, and banjos in general, to a younger generation of players.

“The 6-string banjo has become much more popular than it was for us even five years ago,” she said. “Real banjo players won't play a 6-string banjo! But for those who want that banjo sound, like in a country band or even rock band, they're going to like a 6-string because of the accessibility, the transferability.”

That seems to be key to reaching today's folk musicians: give them ways to play old instruments

in new ways.

Gold Tone Banjos started out 20 years ago solely as a banjo company, but now banjos comprise only about a fifth of the company's business. They've shifted more toward alternative and instruments, giving artists something new and special to incorporate in their acts. “We make banjo guitars that a guitar player would play just like a guitar, but the tone comes out as a banjo,” said Wayne Rogers, president of Gold Tone. “We make a mandolin that a guitar player plays — it has six strings on it rather than eight strings.”

Such instruments allow a guitar player to get an entirely different sound without undergoing years of lessons on a new instrument.

“For the dealers who realize this potential, they can get new dollars from old customers,” Rogers said. “Our sales for 6-string mandolins and 6-string banjos is steady and rising.”

For Michael Kelly Guitars, mandolins have been a recent focus in this market and strong sellers, too. “The consumers that we are hearing from are more varied than ever before in our 15-year history,”



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Hoeft said. “We are seeing more young players seeking out a quality f-style mandolin because they know the sound that they want. We are also seeing more guitar players adding mandolin to their arsenal as they desire to expand their sonic range.”

McCreary of Collings Guitars is seeing a trend toward smaller-bodied guitars. “Over the last 10 years, they’re tending to want the smaller-bodied guitars, and I think part of that is this trend toward more vintage, folksy music,” he said. “The body style and the volume and tone lend themselves more to an accompanying instrument, more-so than a larger bodied guitar.”

WHAT'S NEW

Suppliers continue to serve up new products to address the folk explosion. Collings Guitars is introducing a company called Waterloo Guitars that will specialize in simple, Depression-era-style guitars.

“It’s harking back to a time when there were simpler instruments,” McCreary said. “We also introduced a tenor guitar recently, which was historically a folk music instrument but has also crossed over into more mainstream music. Artists



Capo's Music Store's Gill and Amy Braswell



such as Carrie Rodriguez and The Mastersons are putting them to good use.”

Deering just released the Goodtime Solana 6, a 6-string banjo with nylon strings and a pickup built in, and the new Goodtime Americana banjo, which features a wider Grand 12-inch rim. Meanwhile, Gold Tone introduced a Bela Fleck Gold Tone banjo, an alternative banjo that is tuned four steps low, to a C tuning.

Although no one can be sure, some think the so-called folk explosion — or at least the renewed interest in acoustic instruments — will last a long while to come. “With new acoustic instrument amplification technology, artists don’t have to give up their folk/acoustic instrument for an electric guitar in order to be heard,” Deering’s Bandrowski said.

“The opportunity for increased exposure for the growing number of new young artists due to social media, and an increasing number of tavern-style local venues and festivals, means an outlet for this new acoustic interest is flourishing.” **MI**



Capo Music Store's folk instruments on display.

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FROM THE TOP

INTERVIEWED BY KATIE KAILUS

REMO BELLI | REMO

HOW DO YOU START YOUR DAY?

I'm a person that more than 50 years ago got involved in nutrition. I'm married to a physician and my son's a physician, so I look at life in a very healthy way. I start my day by preparing myself and focusing on my nutrition and my exercises. I'm 87 years old, and I still have the gig!

YOU STARTED THE COMPANY NEARLY 60 YEARS AGO. HOW HAS YOUR ROLE AT REMO CHANGED OVER THE YEARS?

It has changed dramatically because of the complexity of the company. I spend the majority of my time on research and product development, as well as trying to figure out where the company will be going over the next five or 10 years. I have a very capable group of people that I work with, and I'm very pleased with the work they do. I am still very involved with the company. I spend the majority of my time in the factory, research and development. But, day-by-day management is in the very capable hands of Brock Kaericher, our president, and Bob Yerby, our vice president of sales and marketing.

WHAT IS YOUR MANAGEMENT STYLE?

I do not micromanage. I look at what we need to do, what innovative steps we need to take and what the people we service need. I'm not a very good bean counter, I have other people that are better at that. I try to stay as loose and relaxed as possible.

REMO IS ALWAYS AT THE CUTTING-EDGE WHEN IT COMES TO DRUMHEAD MATERIALS, FOR EXAMPLE NUSKYN AND NOW SKYNDEEP. HOW DO YOU COME UP WITH THESE MATERIALS? WHAT GOES INTO THE PROCESS?

I'm fortunate to have a very capable staff made up of ex-professional drummers, such as myself, and others that have always had a deep interest in drums. We are constantly examining the market. We are fortunate that we are located in the deep professional market of Hollywood, and we get to talk directly to the people who make the music on a regular basis. So most of it comes from the relationship we have with the professionals and the sounds they felt they needed to have in order to advance in their careers.

We are constantly listening to the people who play our products.

BEING SO CLOSE TO HOLLYWOOD, ARE YOU AND THE STAFF AT REMO REGULARLY ATTENDING THE CONCERTS OF YOUR ARTISTS?

Absolutely. Our schedules are full up! It's always interesting. Just the other day when Paul McCartney was playing at Dodgers Stadium with 62,000 people, Brock, our president was there. That's one big point we make is to connect with artists. We are [located] in the hub of popular music, so to speak. That has a big impact on us. If we were in a small town we couldn't connect with artists as much as we do.

YOU MENTIONED THAT YOU WERE AN EX-PROFESSIONAL DRUMMER. CAN YOU TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR PLAYING CAREER?

I'm from South Bend, Indiana. [Before moving to California], I used to play in Chicago clubs in the late 1940s early '50s. I've played the Shubert Theater [now Bank of America Theater], and played in some small jazz groups on Chicago's Clark street. I was very much a part of the Chicago scene. Eventually I made my way to California.

HOW HAS HAVING A PROFESSIONAL CAREER IN DRUMMING HELPED YOU SHAPE THE COMPANY OVER THE YEARS?

Had I not been a professional located in Los Angeles I would not have been able to develop the understanding of the nuances of all the different instruments that we make. And if I had been living in the middle of Texas somewhere I wouldn't have had the contacts.

WERE YOU STILL PLAYING PROFESSIONALLY WHEN YOU STARTED REMO?

I was a professional drummer for 18 years. However, I was slowly weaning myself from drumming professionally when I started the company because I was already in the retail business. Roy Harte and myself had established a very successful drum outlet called Drum City in Hollywood. And so I made the transition from actively playing to retail and actively playing until the Mylar drumhead concept came along. Then I knew I no longer had the

REMO USA



THE DETAILS

REMO BELLI, FOUNDER & CEO

HQ: Valencia, California

Founded: 1957

Employees: 277

Best selling product: Drumhead seller, Coated Ambassador; percussion seller, Mondo Djembe

Fun Fact: Remo became a professional drummer at the age of 16 when professional drummers began being drafted by World War II. He served in the Navy, and then went on to play with jazz and swing groups.

time to do both.

WHERE DO YOU SEE THE COMPANY HEADING IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS?

We see ourselves with substantial growth over the next five years. We've put a large amount of time, energy and money over the last 20 years into these questions: "Where are we?" "Where is the drum industry?" "What are we going to do, and how are we going to do it?" We have supported a lot of research in the use of music in other forms of entertainment. What we have been developing is the connection between music and the life-enhancement business.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY LIFE ENHANCEMENT?

Using musical instruments in ways other than learning how to play — like the entire field of caregiving, for example, whether you are a doctor or an educator, or whatever the case might be. This is the area that we have worked into. We believe the use of music in these areas is going to grow substantially.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO PREPARE FOR THAT SORT OF GROWTH?

We have a number of instruments that we have been introducing and are going to continue to introduce that allow for this sort of expansion. Similar to the complexities of practicing in relation to noise — drummers have practice pads or electronic kits and trumpets have mutes — hand percussion didn't have that. We have developed new instruments with new frequencies that have never been developed before. We are giving people in the caregiving business a chance to use an instrument such as a drum and go into areas that they couldn't go into before [due to sound].

WHICH PRODUCTS IN THE REMO CATALOG PERTAIN TO THE LIFE-ENHANCEMENT BUSINESS?

Most of the products suitable for that purpose are the hand-played drums. However, we have now introduced a line of products that feature Comfort Sound Technology — which has a big vibration with a controlled sound —

like the NSL Drum Table that can be taken literally to all environments including the caregiving business. This new business that is developing needed tools that could be taken into different environments where there is sound and noise sensitivity. So, we have developed these frequencies that are very comfortable for those with disabilities as well as those without.

SOME OF THESE INSTRUMENTS YOU SPEAK OF FALL INTO THE WORLD PERCUSSION CATEGORY, WHICH HAS BEEN VERY HOT AS OF LATE. WHERE DO YOU SEE THIS TREND HEADING?

World percussion is what I call the "more personal drum." Everyone that gets involved in this segment doesn't just buy one drum like you might buy one trumpet or one saxophone. Everybody that gets involved owns ultimately five or six instruments along with the accoutrements like noise makers. The drum customer is the kind of customer you see often if you set up your environment to welcome them. So, I see nothing but substantial growth for this industry.

'THE [WORLD PERCUSSION] CUSTOMER IS THE KIND YOU SEE OFTEN IF YOU SET UP YOUR [STORE'S] ENVIRONMENT TO WELCOME THEM. I SEE NOTHING BUT SUBSTANTIAL GROWTH FOR THIS INDUSTRY.'

YOU RECENTLY DEBUTED THE NEW VERSA SERIES OF PERCUSSION. IS THIS ALSO AN EXAMPLE OF A PRODUCT THAT MIGHT FIT WELL WITH CAREGIVERS?

Yes, Versa drums accommodate themselves. You can fit 39 Versa drums into an average sedan. If you are in the school system and are short on room and storage and maintenance instruments, Versa solves all these problems.

And it includes anything and everything that a person that is interested in world percussion would need, and you don't need to know how to play to use it. It took 20 years of learning what was needed and where it was needed. And I'm happy to share that we have now obtained a patent on the system.

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

I might be in the caregiving business of some sort. Because of my wife's activities, it is something I've been very involved in, and I enjoy it very much. I find it to be very rewarding.



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The Vintage Vibe

Vintage-sounding cymbals are the latest category to go old school

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Deconstructing the Drum Display

Retailers show off their effective kit displays

Page 54

Old School Vibes By Katie Kailus

Cymbals are the latest product category to increase their 'new vintage' options. As players continue to crave this throwback sound, how can retailers bank in?

for some musicians there's nothing like quite like achieving that vintage sound. New guitars with vintage sounds are hot sellers as are vintage sounding pedals. Now, drummers looking for that old school, hand-hammered dark tone don't have to look too far. Cymbal manufacturers recently released a slew of new, vintage-sounding cymbals including Meinl's Byzance Vintage Pure Ride and Zildjian's Kerope line.

"There's a strong resurgence for listening to music dating back from the 1960s, '70s and '80s and this, in turn, influences many drummers to recapture authentic sounds from these classic tunes," said Andrew Shreve, marketing and artist relations manager at Paiste, which has seen great success with its Giant Beat line. "From classic rock to early '80s pop, drummers want to mimic these sounds on their kits."

Shreve said the price and rarity of actual vintage cymbals has driven players to turn to vintage recreations.

"It can be less time consuming and cheaper to purchase new cymbals with an authentic vintage look and sound," Shreve continued. "The added benefit of investing in new, vintage-sounding cymbals is they carry a warranty whereas older

used cymbals don't."

Banking in on Vintage

So, how do dealers bank in on this trend? Meinl's Adam Anderson suggests stocking many different products and stocking deep.

"This [type of] cymbal is extremely unique," Anderson said. "You can have 10 of the same cymbal, and they will all sound different, which is the beauty of cymbals — they are all truly one of a kind. With the continuing growth of online retailers and sales, a store front has to do whatever they can to get customers to come in the store, and buy in the store. By having a wide selection of cymbal choices, and a few choices within each model, you will overload the customer with options, so when they find 'the one' they will have to buy it."

Zildjian Product Manager Tony Lapsansky said online retailers should display their stock thoroughly on their websites.

"The better these products are presented online [including plenty of quality pictures and descriptions] the better the impact if you're looking to draw customers in from all over the globe," Lapsansky said.

For brick-and-mortar retailers, Dream Cymbal's President Andy Morris advocates getting the cymbals into the hands of your customer.

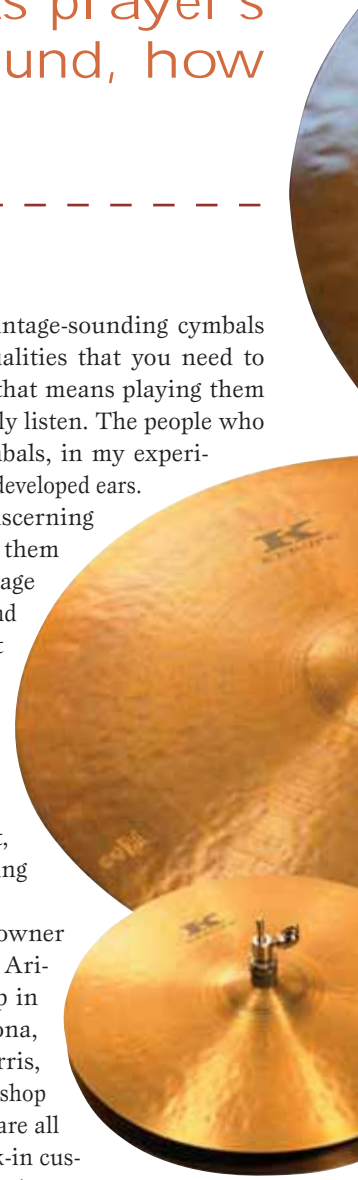
"Get your customers playing them,"

Morris said. "Vintage-sounding cymbals have musical qualities that you need to experience and that means playing them in the shop. Really listen. The people who buy vintage cymbals, in my experience, have pretty developed ears.

If you have a discerning customer, allow them to discover vintage cymbals. They tend to be confident musicians, even if they don't know what they are looking for, they will know it when they hear it, so get them playing the cymbals."

Ron Fraser, owner and operator of Arizona Drum Shop in Scottsdale, Arizona, agrees with Morris, adding that in his shop different models are all available for walk-in customers to demo and compare in a relaxed environment where they are encouraged to try the cymbals out on a drum set.

"If the customer isn't comfortable playing in the store or wants to hear the cymbal





Dream Vintage bliss

Meinl Byzance Vintage Pure Ride

Zildjian Kerope

Paiste Giant Beat

from in front of the kit, I'll play them at any dynamic level or music style of their interest," Fraser said. "We take whatever time is needed to educate our customers on how cymbal manufacturing varies and has evolved, [including] the different metals

used and what physically influences the sound a cymbal creates. Our goal always is to learn what the customer is going for, then guide them and experiment with any options that may be a fit."

The Future of the Old School

So what does the future hold for the vintage vibes? According to Meinl's Anderson, growth.

"The market is heading in a great direction," he said. "Modern music with a

vintage sound is an amazing challenge to try and achieve. The direct influence of older music is getting stronger and stronger these days. The vintage sound will continue to become more popular. Maybe even older sounds will get into the mix."

Dream's Morris believes as long as the vintage sounds are quality, they will continue to be popular.

"Any trend that looks back to time honored sounds or craftsmanship never goes out of style — the product has to have that substance, though," Morris said. **MI**



D

econstructing

By Katie Kailus

the **Drum Display**

Merchandising bulky drum kits isn't always easy. These retailers have taken their displays to a new level while effectively grabbing their customers' attention.

Cosmo Music Richmond Hill, Ontario

Even Cosmo Music's 56,000-square-foot facility wasn't enough space to showcase the store's wide selection of drum kits. So President and CEO Mark Herbert decided to lift the kits off the floor and showcase them along the walls of the store's drum room.

"We decided to display the kits this way because there was simply no other way to fit all of our unique selection into the department — as large as it was — for everyone to see," Herbert said. "We also prefer to not stack kits, as it doesn't give the customer the full experience of what the kit will look like."

Herbert explained that with this setup, customers are able to see the amount of kits the store has in stock, as well as the range of color options in certain cases.

"Brands can also be merchandised 'section wise' and in other unique ways, adding additional excitement to the brand," Herbert said.





Dale's Drum Shop

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

According to Dale's Sales Manager Dan Grabski, the drum kit display room features 25-foot ceilings for multiple reasons. "It's really impressive walking into a room with high-end drum sets stacked from floor to ceiling," Grabski said. "We wanted to have as many kits as possible in stock at any given time, while keeping the shop clean and open with space to walk and try gear. The only way to accomplish that was to use the vertical space." Grabski said it increases customer interest because they have the ability to look around the shop and not worry about bumping into gear on an overly crowded floor. "It really gives us the opportunity to engage a customer and pull down a kit for them to try," he said. "Having the kits high up with proper lighting showcases the drums with clear separation from one another."



Revival Drum Shop

Portland, Oregon

Revival Drum Shop highlights its kit selection in a cozy floor display by placing them on oriental rugs. The display fits in with the store's rustic vibe.

"Displaying the kits in a curated setting showcases the kits and minimizes the feeling of a retail environment," said owner Jose Medeles, adding that this setup also connects the customer with the kits.

"It's not only pleasing on the eye, but makes the buying experience more personal," he said.



**South Shore
Music/DiCenso's
Drum Shop**
Weymouth, Massachusetts

South Shore stacked its kits on top of its cymbal wall for easy access, eliminating a cluttered salesfloor.

"We sell many more cymbals than we do drum kits, so we wanted to give the customers easy access to cymbals while still displaying the kits," said owner Peter Volpe.



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SIMMONS | STRYKE6

Portable Kit

Simmons' new Stryke6 drum controller is the first iPad controller that delivers a full drum kit playing experience. Equipped with six velocity-sensitive pads plus two foot pedals for kick and hi-hat control, the laptop-sized Stryke6 is perfect for on-the-go playing, portable practice and other times when a full kit is not a viable option. Using the free Simmons Stryke Drums app, the Stryke6 easily connects to an iPad for an immediate, out of the box playing experience, including a wide range of sounds. Or connect via USB to any computer to trigger a variety of DAW applications and sample programs, including Garage Band, EZ Drummer, Logic or Ableton Live. simmonsdrums.com



GROVER PRO | SUPER STOCK SD1 FR SPECIAL EDITION

Aluminum Mallets

Grover Pro's Aluminum Handle Bass Drum Mallets feature a comfortable 5/8 inch diameter aluminum shaft with a finish that is easy to grip. The weight of the aluminum handle will add more "punch" to a stroke, while bringing out more bottom end from any size drum. Solid maple cores are covered with the finest German felt, which is hand-sewn over the core. The oblong heads produce a dense and rich sonority, yet provide focus when needed. Color labeling allows for quick model identification. The Aluminum series features four models: Legato (yellow), General (green), Staccato (blue) and Ultra Staccato (red). groverpro.com

ALESIS | PRO X HI-HAT

Hi-Hat Mimic

Alesis' new Pro X Hi-Hat is a patented dual cymbal hi-hat controller with true open, halfopen, closed, "chick" and splash triggering capability. Designed to offer authentic hi-hat playability and unprecedented trigger response with Alesis' DM10, DM8, and DM Dock, Pro X Hi-Hat mimics the movement, placement and feel

of an acoustic hi-hat with the flexibility of an electronic drum pad. Based on the type of contact made with Pro X Hi-Hat, the drummer will experience the same level of controlled variation an acoustic hi-hat offers. alesis.com





BOSO | FIXED HANDLE WIRE BRUSHES

Bamboo Sound

Boso Drumsticks has rolled out their new Boso Natural 5A and Strata 5A fixed handle wire brushes. Boso designed their new brushes as a complimentary size to their popular 5A model bamboo drumstick. The expansive brush features a medium gauge wire with a uniform sound and feel at every tempo and dynamic level. The rubber is re-

cycled material, the ink is soy-based, and the sticks are finished with a natural beeswax coating. By layering natural and compressed bamboo using a method Boso calls “strata technology,” Boso Strata is able to mimic the density of hickory and produce bamboo sticks that match the weight drummers are accustomed to. bosodrumsticks.com



PROTECTION RACKET | DELUXE UTILITY CASE

Travel Buddy

Protection Racket’s Deluxe Utility Case is the ideal travel companion for musicians looking for a bag to carry their Roland SPD-S drum pad. The double compartment case comes fully padded with two front, two side and one back zipper pockets. There’s an easy access compartment, which is the perfect fit for the SPS-S. It also features a hideaway ergonomic rubber carry handle. protectionracket.com

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CHARVEL | SUPER STOCK SD1 FR SPECIAL EDITION

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Charvel's new Pro Mod Series Super Stock SD1 FR Special Edition wraps a radiant Sunset Orange Flake gloss finish around a classic San Dimas body. Other features include a quartersawn maple neck with an oil finish and comfortable Pro Mod profile, fast and smooth compound-radius maple fingerboard with 22 jumbo frets, Seymour Duncan '59 and JB humbucking pickups with cream bezels, three position chrome-tip toggle pickup switch and single knurled control knob. The instrument also includes a top-mount Floyd Rose FRTO1000 double-locking tremolo bridge and locking nut, and non-locking Charvel tuners.

{charvelguitars.com}

BOSS | WAZA CRAFT

Artful Sounds

BOSS has debuted the Waza Craft series, a new line of special edition compact pedals that offer players the ultimate BOSS tone experience. "Waza" is the Japanese term for art and technique, and each pedal carries the Waza symbol to represent the artful wisdom and tech-savvy spirit flowing within BOSS design and craftsmanship. The debut of the Waza Craft series includes the SD-1W Super Overdrive, BD-2W Blues Driver and DM-2W Delay. All three pedals provide the classic sound signatures of the past and present BOSS pedals they're based on, plus switchable modes for customized tones. {bossus.com}



HOGJIM | PIK TIK

Pik it Up

Hogjim's Pik Tik is a patented pick holder that lets guitarists transition from strumming to pickless play. The Pik Tik adheres to the guitar pick guard by suction, letting a pick be held perpendicular to the guitar's surface.

Whether you insert the pick one millimeter or the full five millimeters, it will remain secure. The Pik Tik can be removed after playing or remain on the guitar as a pick holder. Either way, it will not damage the surface. {hogjim.com}



ALVAREZ | MDA70

New & Improved

Alvarez has made further improvements to its all-solid wood Masterworks line. The new MDA70 features a solid "AA" grade Sitka spruce top, solid rosewood back and sides, 1.5 mm abalone purfling, flame maple binding, a bi-level polished rosewood bridge, and premium tuners and ebony bridge pins. alvarezguitars.com



VHT | ECHO-VERB

Double Trouble

VHT's easy-to-use Echo-Verb is a delay and reverb pedal with two completely independent sections. The delay section is completely analog and features a decay control that simulates a vintage tape echo machine's

high-frequency roll-off. The decay control can adjust the repeats from crystal-clear to dark and mellow. The reverb section is also completely independent, with dwell, tone and mix controls. MAP: \$129.99. vhtamp.com



KACES | HARDSHELL SERIES

Strum Safely

Kaces music accessories has added a hardshell banjo case. The hardshell series delivers the tough construction and classic appearance. With a rugged 5-ply wood exterior, a PVC outer covering, and reinforced outer valences stitched through the wood for maximum durability, the case is built to last. The interior features soft padding and a convenient storage compartment for accessories.

kaces.com



GOLD TONE | AC-6+

Get the Blues

Gold Tone has released the stage-ready AC-6+ six-string banjo. The instrument features a composite body, great acoustic projection and a SMP humbucking pickup. It also features a Terminator Tailpiece, maple slim neck and sealed tuners. goldtone.com

GEAR >

GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES

QICKPICK | PICK CAPS

Qick & Easy

QickPick has introduced a headwear line featuring a patent-pending pick pocket built into the visor of the cap. The location of the pocket allows for easy access and prominent display of a guitar pick. Qick-Pick caps are customized with a company logo through their stock or custom headwear programs. The stock cap program has four styles available in a variety of colors and can be ready to ship with your embroidered logo. The custom cap program lets customers design a cap with every feature selected to fit a brand's unique story. qickpick.com



HENRY HELLER | MATADOR SERIES

New Additions

Henry Heller has debuted its Matador series. A 2.5-inch wide guitar strap tapers to a 2-inch strap with metal tri-glide adjustability. The straps are available in many South American Inca designs as well as black and blue denim. omgmusic.com

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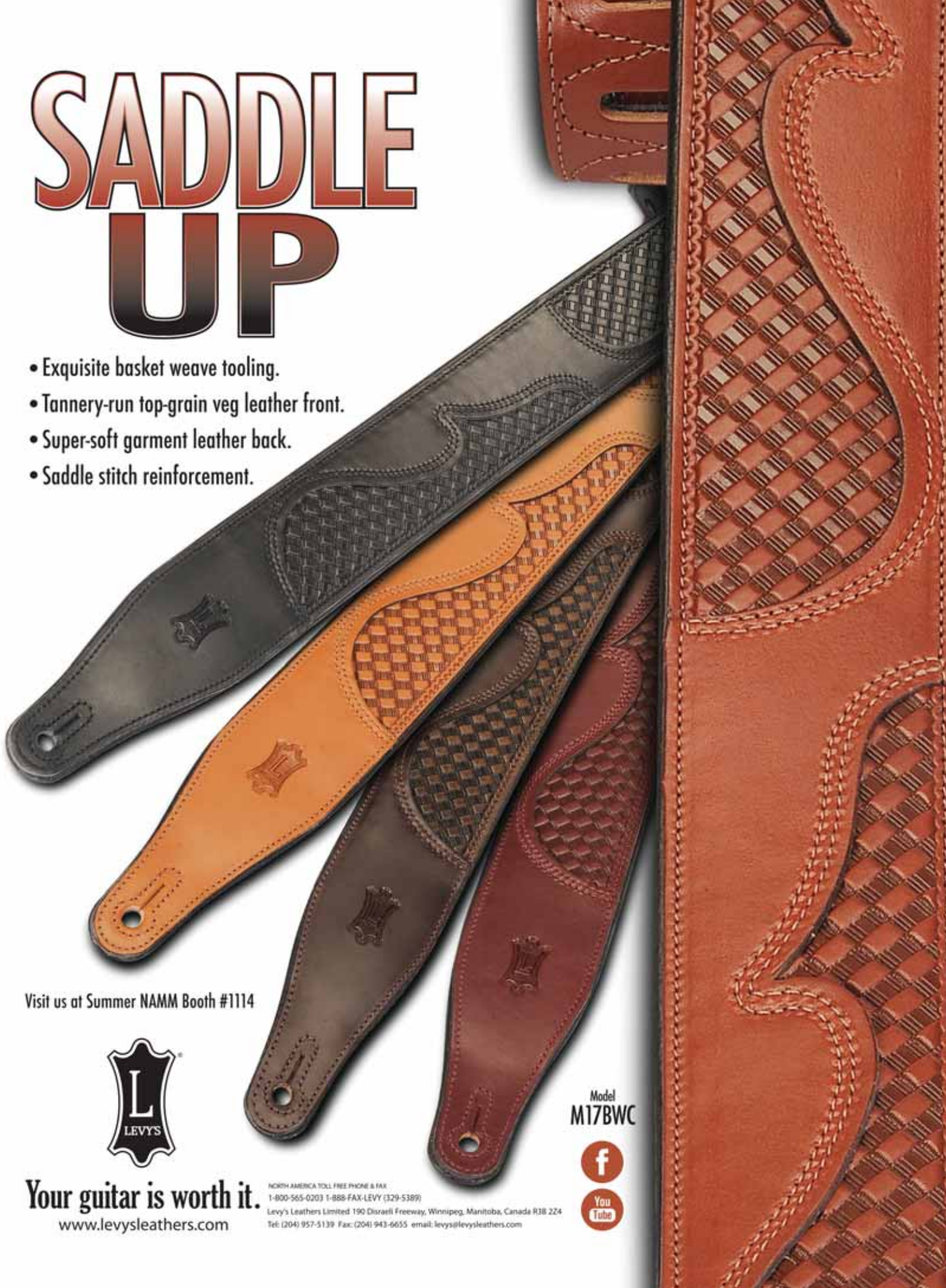
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MACKIE | SRM750 1600W, SRM2850 1600W

High-Powered Additions

Mackie has launched two new high-power, high-output additions to the SRM family of powered loudspeakers — the SRM750 1600W dual 15-inch high-definition powered loudspeaker and the SRM2850 1600W dual 18-inch powered subwoofer. Both new models benefit from the features and technology of the SRM Professional series, which includes the SRM550, SRM650 and SRM1850. This offers a 1600-watt amp platform paired with custom transducers housed within professional-grade, internally-braced all-wood cabinets. srm.mackie.com



FENDER AUDIO | PS-512

Full Bodied

Fender Audio's new PS-512 is a full-bodied Class A/B powered subwoofer that pairs with all Fender Passport (or other) P.A. systems that include the "sub out" feature. Boasting one 12-inch Fender Special Design Ferrite Magnet (3-inch Voice Coil), the PS-512 will increase a system's bass frequency output and maximize the power sent to the mid- and high-frequency drivers. fender.com



IK MULTIMEDIA | IKLIP XPAND MINI

Klip it On

IK Multimedia has released the iKlip Xpand and iKlip Xpand Mini, the next generation of microphone stand mounts for tablets and smartphones. Both the iKlip Xpand and iKlip Xpand Mini feature an expandable spring-loaded bracket design with rubberized gripping points that can be extended to safely and securely hold a wide range of smartphones and tablets to a standard microphone stand pole or horizontal boom. ikmultimedia.com



JENSEN | P10R-F

Broken-in Sound

Jensen Musical Instrument Speakers has added the P10R-F for those who desire the tone of a classic broken-in 10-inch Alnico speaker. The P10R-F was designed by the Jensen factory in cooperation

with Fender for the reissue of the Fender '57 Bandmaster and the 20th Anniversary Vibro-King. The goal was to design a P10R speaker with a more broken-in, worn sound straight out of the box. jensentone.com



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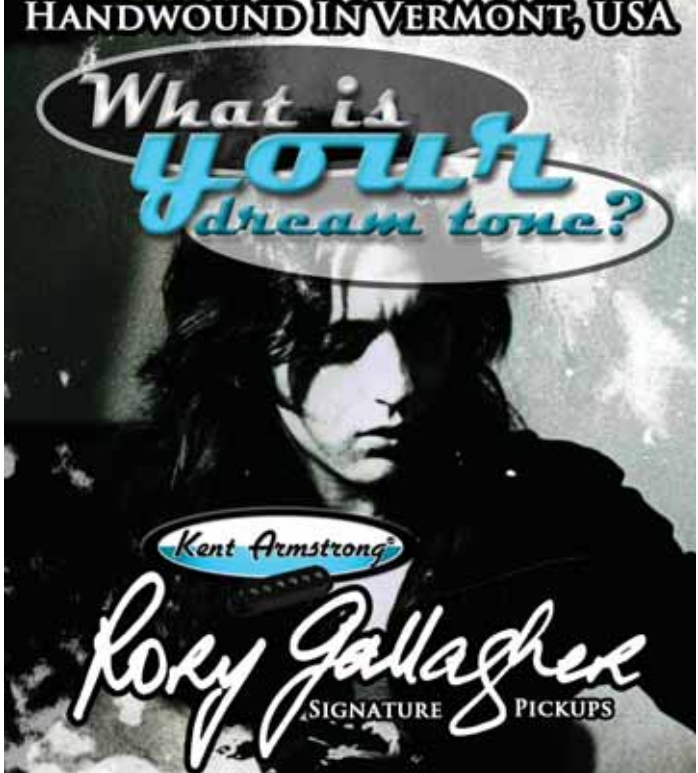
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ZONDA | DOUBLE HORNS

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Zonda has packed as much value into its Single and Double Horns as possible. Each model comes standard in yellow brass with mechanical linkage. The Single has a medium bell throat and a rose brass lead pipe, while the Double has a large bell throat, yellow brass lead pipe and features a Kruspe wrap. Both Zonda horns ship complete with an ABS hardshell case, premium oils and Zonda cleaning cloths. stlouismusic.com



JUPITER | 1100 SERIES

Tonal Colors

Jupiter's 1100 series trumpets produce a wide range of tonal colors that meet any musical demand. Three distinct models give players the freedom to choose from a variety of leadpipes and bell materials. Whether players are looking for a dynamic, classic or majestic sound, the 1100 series trumpets have the power and versatility to provide a limitless range of musical expression. jupitermusic.com



ALTUS FLUTES | L907 ARTIST SERIES

Limited Flute

Altus Flutes recently unveiled its Limited Edition L907 Artist series flute. The limited edition is based on the popular 907 model flute and will feature an engraved lip plate, crown and keys and features a .958 Britannia Silver headjoint, silver-plated body and mechanism, drawn tone holes, and stainless steel springs. Only 50 of the engraved flutes will be available in the U.S. market. altusflutes.com

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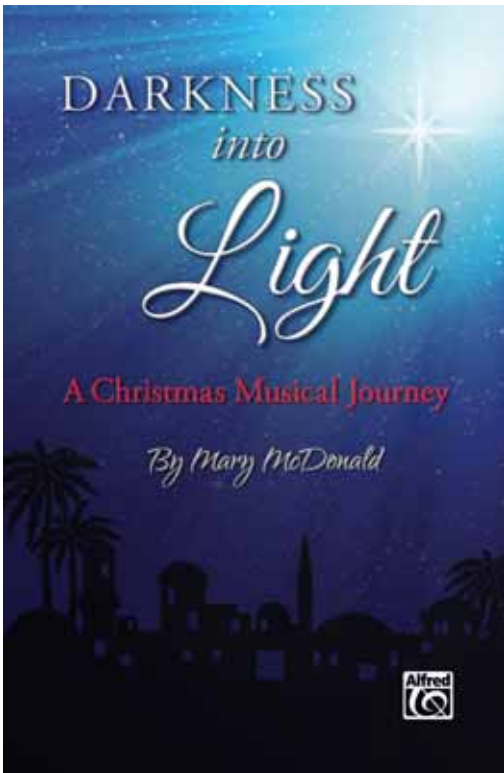
Hal Leonard's new book, *Five Finger Death Punch – The Wrong Side of Heaven and the Righteous Side of Hell* features 12 tunes from the two 2013 albums released by the highly acclaimed California rock/metal quintet, Five Finger Death Punch. Note-for-note guitar transcriptions with tablature are included for the hit singles “Battle Born” and “Lift Me Up.” halleonard.com



RUNNING PRESS | 'THE MUSICIAN'S NOTEBOOK'

Songwriter's Toolbox

The new reissue of *The Musician's Notebook* brings the classic journal up to date with a brand new cover and revised set of inspirational quotes from the best contemporary musicians like Beck, Justin Timberlake and Adele. The notebook contains every type of ruling a musician needs, including tablature, guitar chord boxes, staves and notepaper for lyrics. runningpress.com



ALFRED | 'DARKNESS INTO LIGHT'

Holiday Musical

Alfred's *Darkness into Light* is the new 40-minute adult Christmas musical from Mary McDonald, which features fresh settings of carols and new songs. An optional candle-light moment is included along with inspired narration and lighting suggestions to heighten the darkness into light theme. For efficient rehearsals, listening CDs and part-dominant reproducible CDs are available for purchase. An accompaniment track CD and chamber orchestration parts are also available, giving choirs a variety of performance options. alfred.com

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CAMEO LIGHT | CLPFLAT1RGB10IR

Stealthy Light

Cameo Light's new Flat PAR projector, CLP-FLAT1RGB10IR, are ideal for tight spaces as well as locations requiring elegant and unobtrusive lighting. The CLPFLAT1RGB10IR can be wirelessly operated via an infrared remote control, offered as an accessory, and operates with total silence thanks to convection cooling. Four DMX control modes, numerous programs and integrated music control provide a range of functionalities and lighting effects. The CLP-FLAT1RGB10IR can be used as master, slave and standalone, and manually controlled by a bright display with four buttons. cameolight.com



optional IR-remote
CLPFLAT1REMOTE



AKAI | AFX, AMX

Double Control

Akai Professional has added the AFX and AMX controllers for Serato DJ. Over a USB connection, AFX and AMX each add extensive hands-on controls to a variety of DJ setups ranging from Serato Noise-Map Control Vinyl (DVS), minimalist controllers, HID-capable CD transports, and more. AFX, a controller for both modern electronic dance music artists and turntablists, features an intuitive array of knobs, pads and buttons for advanced track manipulation. Meanwhile, AMX is a plug and play mixing control surface with inputs for Serato NoiseMap control signals. akaipro.com



PIONEER | DDJ-SX2

Flipping Out

Pioneer has introduced its latest DDJ-SX2 controller for Serato DJ with Serato Flip functionality. The new DDJ-SX2 is the first controller to use Serato Flip, which can record and playback a user's hot cue operations. In addition, the model features operation buttons, multi-colored Performance Pads, and improved JOG wheel reaction time. It features an independent 4-channel mixer that can be used with other external sources such as turntables. pioneerdj.com



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Boso	38
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Cavanaugh Red Label	75
Classifieds Ads	72-73
Cympad	19
D'Addario	5
Dansr	67
Deering Banjo	56
Dream Cymbals	41
Drum Clip	19
Evets	3
FDW Corp.	33
Gold Tone	31
Hal Leonard	7
Hunter Musical Products	65
Innovative Percussion	37
JEN Education	69
JJ Babbitt	13
Jody Jazz	16
Kala Brand Music	44
Kickport	56
KMC Music	23
Korg USA	39
Kyser	45
Levy's Leathers	63
Loud Technology	28
Michael Kelly	26
Music Inc. Magazine	71
NAMM	20-21
Remo	59
Roland	2
Samson	76
SHS	62
Shubb Capos	44
SKB Cases	17
The Music Link	49
Theo Wanne	8
Veritas	4
Vic Firth	50
WD Music Products	65
Zoom North America	9

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Max Maxwell

SystemMax A/VL
Jeffersonville, Indiana

About 70 to 85 percent of our business is houses of worship. So much of what we do is networking and a lot of it is word of mouth. It's a relationship business. We refer business to Mom's Music in Louisville, Kentucky, and they refer business to us. It's been really helpful.

We realized there are a ton of small music stores that have no way of installing a sound system in a church or school yet they're the connection the school makes first.

A retailer friend and I were talking and I said, "Do you do any sound installation?" He didn't. He gives me leads. I'm a recommended vendor for him and I've picked up funeral homes, churches and restaurants. I recommend his business as well.

We're really good trainers. No matter what, you very rarely get somebody who is hired on the job and all they do is run sound, lights or video. Even at a school, people might touch a sound system once a month. Being able to train them how to use it in the simplest manner is key to us growing.

>>>

Mic Cox

CA House Music
Parkersburg, West Virginia

Since I've been here, what I've been doing is really pushing our Facebook presence. We've seen a lot of business come out of that.

I've also gone through past churches we've worked with and put together their email addresses and sent email blasts that explain our specials.

We'll also show up to a church or school and look at what they have and give them some ideas of what they'd would need to improve it. If it's a quick fix we'll fix it — if not we'll suggest what they'll need. I do a lot of that.

I just went to a high school the other week and fixed a problem — which was just a volume knob turned up way too high that was affecting everything else. Two other high schools called me because the principals all talk to each other. We got a lot of business from that.



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John Rosborough

Sound of Music
Kokomo, Indiana

How do you drive your sound installation business?

We've been doing sound installations for over 30 years but we also do retail and rentals. The sound installation portion keeps growing every year, and it's probably about 25 percent of our business. We do a lot of work with churches but we also do government and schools. A lot of our business is driven by churches because of lifetime friendships. One church tells another church, and you really rely on a solid reputation and being willing to go the extra mile and be on call, 24/7.

A lot of people don't call anymore; they prefer to text and email. But I think a valuable tool is to pick up the phone and converse.

That helps drive our business. If we haven't talked to a client in a while we will call them up and say, "What's going on?" We will tell them about a program or product we have available.

A lot of times we will be in a church that's over 100 years old with no blueprints. So you have to be able to walk the whole facility and plan a strategy with the help of software and the expertise of the engineer on staff that's really geared towards that church's needs. You've got to listen because everybody worships differently — you have to customize each installation for their needs. More and more, churches are doing a blended worship. Some are

contemporary and some are traditional.

The other thing that's crucial in churches is it has to look aesthetically pleasing.

It's keeping in communication with that client, and that's what I think equals success, going over each feature of the installation step by step to make sure they're happy. And as you know, a happy client tells everybody.

One of the best avenues to new business is being civic minded and getting out in the community. Don't be afraid to be on a board whether it be United Way or a local symphony. You can't be stuck in your cave. Get out and meet and greet. **MI**

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