

# THE WEB ISSUE

FOR PROGRESSIVE MUSIC RETAILERS

JANUARY 2015  
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# music



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SHOW PLANNER**

EVERYTHING YOU  
NEED TO KNOW  
BEFORE HEADING  
TO THIS YEAR'S SHOW  
PAGE 49

# Embracing CHANGE

*How Kraft Music went from brick-and-mortar retailer  
to e-commerce giant*  
Page 38



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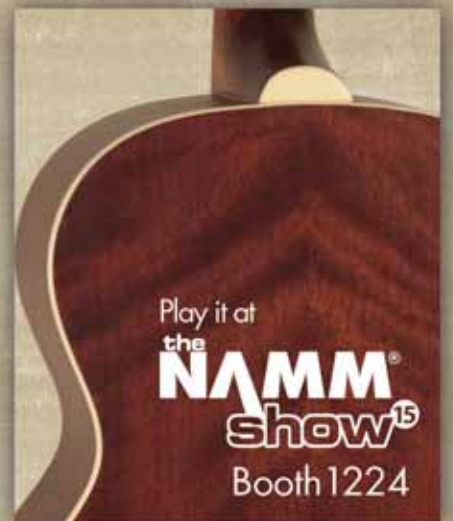




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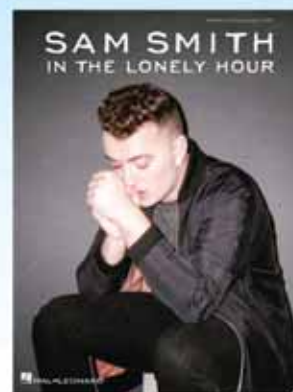
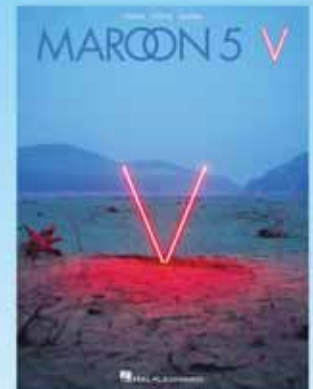
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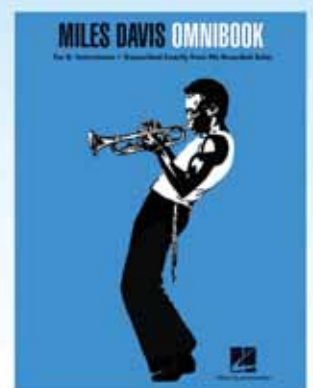
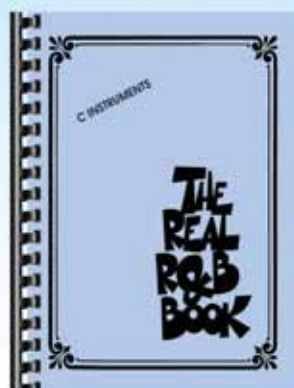
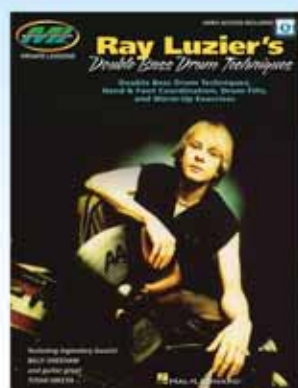
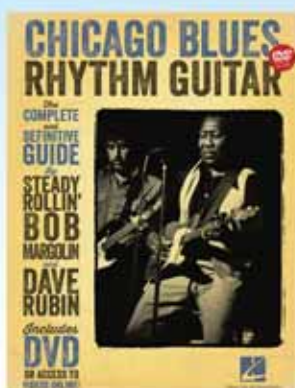
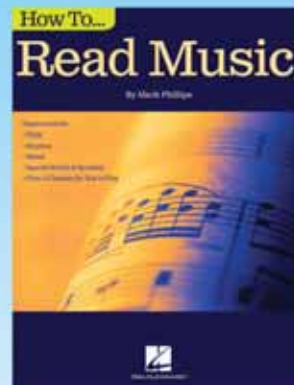
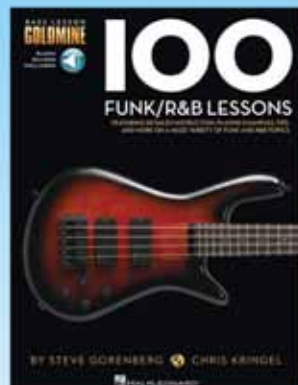
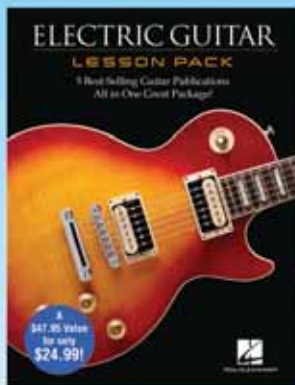
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Ben Kraft



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Ravi



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# PERSPECTIVE

PERSPECTIVE | BY KATIE KAILUS

## MAKE A WEB RESOLUTION

The magazine in your hands is *Music Inc.*'s first-ever Web-dedicated issue. It's something we've wanted to put together for a while now, for, as they say, the future is the Internet. Truth is, the future is now. If you haven't gotten your store's Web presence up to speed yet, don't waste anymore time. Make it your New Year's resolution to bring your business into the 21st century.

This month's cover story, "Embracing Change," which starts on page 38, breaks down how Kraft Music went from being a 100-percent brick-and-mortar retailer to a nearly 100-percent e-tailer. Owner and president, Ben Kraft, attributes most of his company's Web growth to "not being afraid."

"E-commerce in general has always been a changing process," Kraft added. "Consumers are dictating the majority of it, so we have to stay with it and listen to what the consumer is saying and not be afraid to make changes."

This month's "Supply Profile" features website service company Retail Up!, and managing partner Gordon O'Hara explains that if a retailer runs a smoother operation using technology, they will increase their profits and customer base.

"It's about connecting and delighting with the customers," O'Hara said. "That's really what the Web is all about."

The NAMM Show is right around the corner (held Jan. 22-25 in Anaheim, California), and there are plenty of Web-focused NAMM U sessions. O'Hara will

discuss quick ways to optimize a website during his Thursday Ideas Center session entitled "OK, I Have a Website. Now How Do I Get It to Work for Me?" On the social media side, Easy Music Center President and *Music Inc.* columnist Peter Dods will cover everything from the newest social media niche outlets to creating effective Facebook ads during his Saturday session "New Ways to Market Your Store Online." Steinway Piano Gallery's Grant Billings will moderate a panel that will discuss signs that your website needs an overhaul or an update during Saturday's "Now What Do I Do About My Website?" double session.

Read Kraft Music's story, turn to page 14 to check out what Musicstore-live.com is doing to reach over 4 million YouTube views and attend a few of the many Web-based NAMM U sessions. Now is the time to improve your online presence. The majority of the U.S. population has a mini computer in their pocket 24/7. Make sure you are putting your best foot forward not only in your store, but online as well. This is one resolution you don't want to go back on. **MI**



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ELEVEN WORDS THAT SPARKED A REVOLUTION

“Wait a minute, wait a minute,  
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Al Jolson’s first spoken words in *The Jazz Singer* mark the first appearance of synchronized dialogue in a feature-length motion picture. Art mirrored life. Moviegoers truly hadn’t heard anything like this before. And when they did, they wanted to hear more. *The Jazz Singer* had less than two minutes of spoken dialogue. But it sparked a revolution, nonetheless.



*The Jazz Singer, 1927*

#### SOUND CHANGES EVERYTHING

Pictures are pictures. Pictures with sound are transformational. That’s why *The Jazz Singer* hit Hollywood like a seismic wave. Its conversion to “talkies” was quick, complete, and total. Silent films are now history.

{ REST OF THE STORY COMING SOON }  
ZOOM.

# LETTERS

## Strong Relationships

Never in my wildest dreams would I have thought our company would be selected as Retailer of the Year!

We thank you for this recognition knowing that our “retail” model relies more on building strong relationships by visiting band and orchestra directors than relying on retail store traffic. Like many of our colleagues at NASMD, our team (educational reps, repair techs, customer service, etc.) provides “service at the school,” making a trip to the music store an experience more than a necessity. This “road-operation” model was developed during the middle part of the 20th Century by the “Greatest Generation” of school music dealers like my dad, Ziggy Coyle, Lowell Samuel, Jimmy Johnson, Dean Sayre, Pearl West, Ken Stanton, Jimmy Saied, Harold Winkler and many more in their respective regions of the country. Who would have guessed that, despite all the modern conveniences that technology provides, a model developed more than 60 years ago would still be the most efficient way for kids in school to share in the benefits of having music in their lives?

I was fortunate to meet many of these “pioneers” early in my career working with Brian Haut at The Selmer Company (my first job) and then for Vito Pascucci at Leblanc prior to joining our family business. As the years passed, I have been fortunate to have many mentors, notably Bob Scheiwiller, Glenn Holtz, Denny Senseney, Joe Guth, Mark Ragin, Rick Young and so many more the list would be endless.

We realize that the school



music sector is not very “glamorous.” It has, however, certainly proven to be resilient. We thank *Music Inc.* for shining your spotlight on the niche portion of the music industry so many of us call ... home.

George Quinlan, Jr.  
Owner  
Quinlan & Fabish Music Co.  
Burr Ridge, Illinois

## Many Thanks

It was an honor for The Music Shoppe to be selected as one of *Music Inc.*'s Retail Excellence winners. It has been a pleasure to work with Dean Samuel in facilitating our expansion into southern Illinois, and listening closely, there has been much knowledge and experience from which to learn. Seeing George Quinlan on the cover of *Music*

*Inc.* also reminds us that we are in good company with the many other great stores doing this same work. It is a joy to be part of the thriving music business, and we thank you for counting us among those who excel at the job they love.

Christopher Moors  
Manager  
The Music Shoppe  
Champaign, Illinois

## Going, Going, Gone

Once again, *Music Inc.* magazine has hit the ball way out of the park with the December 2014 issue. Who better than [George Quinlan Jr.] on the cover to set the tone for an award-winning offering for the music business? The 2014 Excellence Awards gave me priceless information from

many of the current icons in our industry; both dealers and vendors. Those involved in the selection did an incredible job, and the mix of expertise in both retail and wholesale was right on the money.

The “gear” section is always an asset to me as a buyer, and once again the selection and organization of those items was most appreciated in this critical period of 2014 sales and purchases.

Looking forward to visiting with you all at Winter NAMM 2015, and thanks again for all that you do for the music industry all year long. The *UpBeat Daily* magazines have been the saving grace at NAMM shows for many years, and I can't thank you enough for these each summer and winter.

Mike Guillot  
Purchasing Director  
Mississippi Music Inc.  
Flowood, Mississippi

## Correction:

In the December 2014 Retail Excellence Awards piece on Guitar Center, Mike Pratt's “Vision 2020” was described as “a goal of becoming a \$300 billion dollar company with \$300 million in EBITDA by the year 2020.” This description should have read “a goal of becoming a \$3 billion dollar company with \$300 million in EBITDA by the year 2020.” *Music Inc.* regrets the error.

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# RETAIL

MUSICSTORELIVE.COM | BY DAVID BALL

## THE YOUTUBE FACTOR

Take one look at Music Store Live's homepage and you'll notice something unique about the online retailer. Sure, there's your usual assortment of guitars, amps, picks and pedals. But in the upper left hand corner of the page there's also a YouTube video. Click on it, and you'll catch a glimpse of what sets musicstorelive.com apart from its online competitors.

In this introductory video you'll meet Ben Werlin, co-owner and managing partner of Music Store Live, who explains what the company is all about. "We started out small, but with a big dream: to revolutionize the way musicians buy their gear online, by bringing the guitar shop into your living room," Werlin says in the video.

But Music Store Live actually does more than that. The staff goes in-depth teaching viewers about each piece of equipment and providing knowledgeable insight. In the video, Werlin said his company's goal is not only to provide every detail about the guitar, but to offer a telling player's perspective of exactly how the instrument plays, and what it feels like in the player's hands. Often these product descriptions are accompanied by a video demo in which pro players on staff explain an instrument's



Ben Werlin (center) with Music Store Live's crew

tonal capabilities and demonstrate possible sounds with a variety of different playing styles and techniques.

And if one of MSL's product descriptions convinces a customer to go ahead and buy that new guitar, the company offers free return shipping if the gear doesn't meet expectations.

"This way, it's totally risk free," Werlin said. "It's not going to cost you anything if you don't like the shape of the neck, or the way it feels, or the way it looks. People can return the guitar for whatever reason."

### PRODUCTS & PERSONALITIES

Founded in an apartment in Winooski, Vermont, in 2010, Werlin and his brother began Music Store Live by buying and selling gear in the used

and vintage market.

"My living room was nothing but guitars," Werlin said. "We moved [to an 8,000-square-foot space in South Burlington] in April 2011. And then we started to transition [out of the vintage market] and started to get brands to come on board."

Since then, Werlin and co-owner Jeff Santoro were named Vermont's Young Entrepreneurs of the year in 2013 by the Vermont office of the U.S. Small Business Association. Then, at Summer NAMM 2014, MSL won awards for "Best Emerging Dealer/Rookie of the Year" and "Best Marketing and Sales Promotion" at the Top 100 Dealer Awards. The winning promotion was the site's annual "Gold Rush," a 10-day event that includes gear giveaways, artist interviews and product videos.

Even after a customer has made a purchase, the staff at MSL stays dedicated to keeping a customer tuned in, well-informed, and coming back from more.

"Once somebody's bought from us, they will receive emails that typically have links to some of our creative videos that introduce them more to the store — who we are, what we do, and our personality," Werlin said. "So there's a whole slew of videos they'll see over time, usually one a week, or so."

Now with over 350 videos, 10,000 YouTube subscribers, and nearly 4 million views, the numbers show that the MSL staff's quirky, offbeat sense of humor — whether in product demos, promotional videos or even in the occasional gag reel — is enough to make musicians and gear-heads come visit the site, even if it's just to hang out for awhile.

Werlin said that, when generating viewers, it all comes down to picking the right products to demo.

"Videos that show up in the top YouTube search results for a popular product tend to organically collect a lot of views," Werlin added. "I think good quality content and gear demos related to items that people are searching on — combined with time — results in all of those views." **MI**

# Best enjoyed chilled

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**CELESTION**

GUITAR CENTER | BY FRANK ALKYER

# GUITAR CENTER NAMES DARRELL WEBB ITS NEW PRESIDENT, CEO

Guitar Center announced on Nov. 17 that its Board of Directors appointed Darrell Webb to be the company's new President and Chief Executive Officer. Webb replaced former CEO Mike Pratt.

Pratt's hasty departure from Guitar Center begged the question, "What happened?"

During his 19 months as CEO he set forth an aggressive plan for growth as well as change in the company's corporate culture. The fact that he resigned on Friday, Nov. 14, and GC's board had his replacement announced by 8:30 a.m. the following Monday suggests that not everyone was onboard with his vision.

And that often happens when new ownership comes in.

Ares Capital, a private-equity firm, exchanged \$500 million in debt for a 60-percent equity stake in the company back in April. At the time, Pratt said it put Guitar Center in a position to "invest more back into the business, and back into our people." The real key was that it eliminated \$70 million a year in interest payments.

A few weeks later, Pratt's management team gathered some 1,000 GC executives and top vendors to outline a new, long-term strategy for the company called Vision

2020. The plan targeted the year 2020 as a deadline for reaching \$3 billion in annual sales with \$300 million in EBITDA as well as attempting to position Guitar Center as one of the top places to work in North America.

Guitar Center needs growth to help retire a still-lofty debt of nearly \$1.1 billion.

Sources close to the company suggested that after a decent-but-not-stellar third quarter, Ares wants to change course seeking a faster return on its investment, and Pratt balked.

"In April of 2014, Ares Management took control of the company," said one source. "While highly supportive of management's initiatives, they felt it was time to select a new CEO whose experience and outlook were more in-line with their plans to accelerate growth at Guitar Center. Mike Pratt offered his complete support of this leadership transition timeline."

With that, Darrell Webb took the reins of the industry's largest retailer. Prior to GC, Webb had retired in 2013 after a two-year stint as the chairman and CEO of Sports Authority and a five-year leadership tenure at Jo-Ann Fabrics that included stints as chairman, CEO and president.



Darrell Webb



Mike Pratt

"We would like to thank Mike Pratt for his service and welcome Darrell to the company," said David Kaplan, a member of Guitar Center's board of directors and co-founder and senior partner of Ares Management. "Given Darrell's extraordinary track record of success in growing and leading large, specialty retail companies, we are confident in his abilities to enhance Guitar Center's customer experience and further bolster the company's position as a world-class, omni-channel retailer in one of the most passion-driven retail categories."

SWEETWATER | CLINIC

# Eagles Guitarist Hosts Clinic at Sweetwater



Mitch Gallagher (left) and Don Felder (right)

legendary Eagles guitarist Don Felder recently visited Sweetwater's facility in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

A long-time Sweetwater customer, Felder presented a full-day workshop for 15 aspiring songwriters.

"It was a very free-flowing conversation," said Christopher Guerin, VP of corporate communications. "We had [the participants] sitting in a circle. [Felder] came in and said, 'What can I tell you about songwriting?' And he was

just peppered with questions for eight hours."

"It was a full-day session, and they had a little party at the end of the day," Guerin continued. "We wanted it to be an intimate experience."

Felder also recorded the 100th episode of Sweetwater's Guitars and Gear video program with Sweetwater Editorial Director Mitch Gallagher. That evening, Felder performed with Mitch's Eagle's Tribute Band to a packed house.



JIMI'S MUSIC STORE | BURGLARY

# Guitars Stolen in Shop's Second Burglary in Two Years

A Dublin, Ireland, guitar shop has been burgled for the second time since 2012, after raiders smashed through the door and took a handful of unique, high-end instruments.

The break-in occurred at Jimi's Music Store, after midnight on Oct. 30. Seven guitars, valued at around \$37,000, were either stolen or damaged. The shop was also ransacked, and guitars were smashed during the raid.

"It's very disheartening," owner Jimmy Scanlon told the *Herald* (Dublin). "I've been here since 2009 and this has happened to me twice now. You start to wonder if you should just close up, or keep going."

replacement Seymour Duncan pickups) and a 1995 Fender Custom Shop Telecaster.

Photographs and serial numbers are available on Jimi's Music Store's Facebook page.

Scanlon is asking for anyone who knows where the guitars are — or anyone who is offered them for sale under unusual circumstances — to come forward.



Door smashed by burglars (left); Owner Jimmy Scanlon (top right)

When the shop was robbed in 2012, 50 guitars worth a total of \$125,000 were taken.

"My insurance premium has gone way up since the last raid, but what I can't understand is why anyone would steal these instruments," Scanlon explained. The guitars taken in the most recent robbery are very recognizable, without guitar cases, and "virtually impossible to sell."

The guitars stolen in the October robbery include a 2012 Gibson 335 Sunburst, a 2006 Gibson Les Paul Standard (with

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WEST MUSIC | CLOSING

# West Music Closes Ottumwa Location

West Music closed its Ottumwa, Iowa, location, on Dec. 31, citing a shrinking economy in southern Iowa.

Founded in 1941, West Music is based in Coralville, Iowa. The Ottumwa location was in business for 20 years and is one of seven locations owned by West Music in Iowa and Western Illinois.

The company will continue to provide

products and services to the Ottumwa community through weekly visits by West Music's educational sales representatives.

"West Music's commitment to the area school music programs and local musicians remains extremely important to all parties," said Robin Walenta, president and CEO of West Music in a statement released to the press. "As an

additional convenience for musicians in the community, West Music is in the process of searching for local partners to establish satellite locations that will stock every day musical accessories, such as reeds, lubricants and popular method books."

The company liquidated all inventory at the store at 404 West Main Street in Ottumwa through Dec. 31.

## APPOINTMENTS

### GUITAR CENTER NAMES NEW EXECUTIVE VP, MARKETING MANAGER

Guitar Center has announced the appointment of Michael Amkreutz to the position of executive vice president, marketing, merchandising and e-commerce, for the Guitar Center brand.

The former chief marketing officer at Systemax North American Technologies, Amkreutz will be responsible for all aspects of GC's marketing campaigns, product assortment, in-store merchandising and e-commerce strategy.

His expertise in marketing, merchandising and technology — developed over the years at companies, such as Sears, Newegg, Hannspeer North America and Sharp Electronics — made him the ideal choice for this critical role in the organization.

Guitar Center Professional (GC Pro), the outside sales division of Guitar Center that focuses on the needs of professional users, appointed Adam Riley to the newly created position of marketing manager.

The announcement reflects the division's ongoing growth and expansion within the professional audio, live sound, house-of-worship, education and installed sound market sectors.

Riley will be responsible for developing and implementing a comprehensive marketing plan to increase overall brand visibility by utilizing new, progressive marketing tools with a special focus on Web, print, social media and event-based initiatives.



Michael Amkreutz



Adam Riley

## IN MEMORIAM

### LARRY MOODY (1940-2014)



Larry Moody passed away on October 18. He was 74.

His career in the music industry was centered around two companies, a retailer and a supplier. He began his career in the music industry as a retailer working for Ziggy Coyle in Ohio. The store was owned by Ziggy, a past president of the NAMM Board of Directors, and Russell Hill. The retail experience was helpful to Larry, who was hired by Yamaha and later by the Gemeinhart Flute Company in Elkhart, Indiana.

### DAVID WAYLETT (1953-2014)



David Wayne Waylett, a long-time employee of McFayden Music in Fayetteville, North Carolina, as the band instrument repair specialist, has died. He was 61.

The McFayden co-workers loved Waylett like a family member. He most recently was a partner in Cape Fear Music Center in downtown Fayetteville, where he continued to pursue the business of band instrument repair.

Waylett is survived by his mother, Betty; his brother, Donald; his longtime love, Yvonne Drew; and his trusted friend Ann Matthews.

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## Note From Joe Getting Out of Your Office

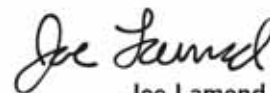
Like many of you, I love reading our industry trade magazines. Each has a unique voice, and there is no better way to keep up with the news of our little world. I've just finished the December books and, in many of the articles, this theme was repeated: Successful NAMM members spend a lot of time out of their offices meeting with their customers. I think Tom Sumner from Yamaha put it best when he said, "We have a saying that 'One day in a dealer's store is worth 100 days in the office.'" There were countless examples of our members doing exactly this—from George Quinlan calling on Chicago-area schools to Paul Reed Smith bringing his band to play a benefit for the sick child of an employee at Bill's Music, one of his dealers. These folks all have something in common: They know that the answers to how they can best serve their customers and grow their businesses won't be found at a desk but rather out in the field.

I write this from somewhere over the Pacific on my way to Tokyo. We've planned a week of member visits with manufacturers, distributors and retailers, as well as a full schedule of Oral History interviews to further capture the industry's story for future generations. Over the past 60 days, representatives from our Board of Directors and Executive Committee and several NAMM staffers have traveled to dozens of states, as well as Washington, D.C., and literally circled the globe attending other trade fairs, promoting the benefits of

NAMM membership and its trade shows, and meeting with our members to learn how we can better serve their needs. The knowledge these folks bring back helps us shape our strategy and direct resources so they can have the most impact on members and the industry.

There's a good chance you're reading this either on your way to—or possibly even at—The NAMM Show. Good for you! I believe there's no better place to maximize this concept. In Anaheim, you can literally accomplish what would take months of travel and countless plane rides to do. By meeting with your customers, suppliers and peers face-to-face, you're soaking up the wisdom of the industry. What's that saying, "No *one* of us is as smart as *all* of us"?

In the year ahead, I challenge you to commit to doing what these successful NAMM members do: get out of your office as often as possible. There are many opportunities to do things with your association as well, like promoting music education in your community, in your state and in Washington. Yes, it makes for some long days and a lot to catch up on when you get back, and time away from family is tough, but the experiences, the learning and the friendships you'll develop will be well worth it.



Joe Lamond  
NAMM PRESIDENT AND CEO



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- > **Martin**  
Receives FSC Leadership Award  
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- > **Gibson**  
To open store on Sunset Blvd.  
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- > **Vic Firth**  
Names new VP, GM  
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# SUPPLY

RETAIL UP! | BY DAVID BALL

## BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

**R**etail Up! was founded on one fundamental philosophy: to give independent retailers ways to increase profitability. Using the latest technology and outside-the-box marketing strategies, Retail Up! helps dealers reduce operational costs and maximize point-of-sale opportunities both online and in-store.

Managing partners Gordon O'Hara and Bee Bantug gained their expertise in the natural foods industry, developing the "first-ever consolidated database of natural foods products for independently owned food stores," O'Hara said. "So we took that experience and we came to the music industry."

O'Hara and Bantug started Retail Up! in 2002, working with manufacturers and distributors to develop a turnkey system for retailers, which has its own proprietary e-commerce platform, which now includes a centralized database of about 300,000 music products and 800,000 sheet music titles.

"That turnkey system [also] includes about 20 other marketing tools that dealers use to market their stores," O'Hara said. "For example: e-newsletters, the ability to have lead-developing online questionnaires, online rentals



Gordon O'Hara

### Retail Up! gives indie dealers an online platform to convey the in-store experience

of both band instruments and sound equipment, the ability to post coupons in-store and online, and a number of other tools that the retailers use to market their stores."

On top of that, Retail Up! offers what it calls "The Best of Both Worlds" approach, in which retailers can add on a

customized look and integrate that with the underlying turnkey system in their own look and feel, in order to promote their brand.

#### BEYOND E-COMMERCE

Even before the advent of social media, Retail Up! has understood that the customer's online experience should be an accurate reflection of the atmosphere in the store.

"We always said that the best thing that a retailer can do online is always remember that online is just another gateway for the customer to [get acquainted with] the specific shopping brand experience they offer," Bantug said.

"Products are part of the sto-

ry," O'Hara continued. "But the more important part of the story is you consider that, say, only 10-15 percent of the people [on your site] are going to buy at any given time. What are you going to do with the other 90 percent that's not ready to buy? Well, you talk about services."

Outside of basic product sales, other services that Retail Up! helps dealers provide on the Web include: online rentals, online questionnaires which can supply product advice or steer a customer interested in lessons toward the right teacher, and e-newsletters that update customers about upcoming events and promotions.

"We try to integrate ways to make the Web consultative, as well as selling," O'Hara said. "Because that way you reach out to the other 90 percent — that's confused, or not ready to buy — and you provide them with pathways.

"If a retailer can make it smoother to run their operations using technology, then they will increase their profits, and the customers will come.

"It's about connecting and delighting with the customers. That's really what the Web is all about, and all of these applications we try to design around that goal." **MI**

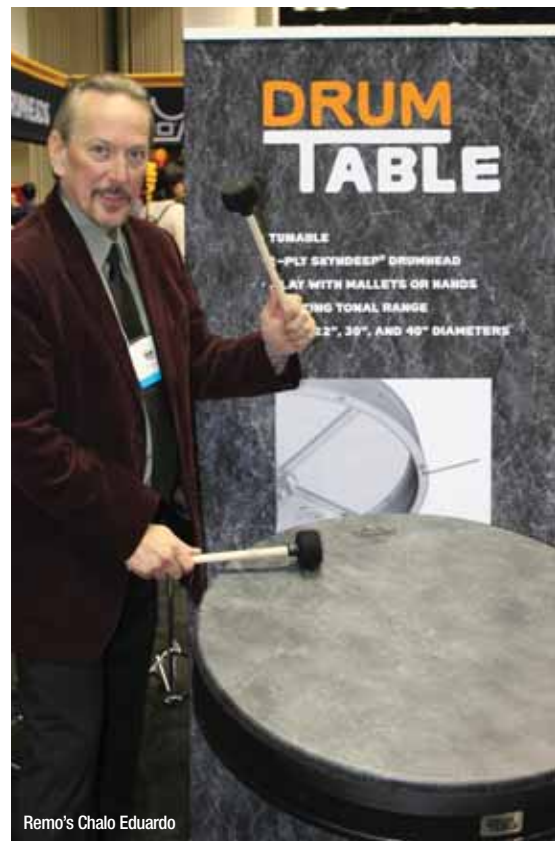
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PASIC 2014 | BY KATIE KAILUS

# THE DRUM BEAT

Drummers from all over the world flocked to the Indianapolis Convention Center in Indianapolis from Nov. 19–22 for the annual Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC). More than 4,500 attendees listened to performers and walked the

expo hall floor which showcased more than 100 exhibitors.

“We had a lot of people walk through the booth and play and interact with the kits,” said Todd Trent, Taye Drums’ sales and marketing manager.

“For us, PASIC is all about the consumer. It’s about giving them the opportunity to

touch the drums, see the drums, play the drums and get an impression of the kits.”

## HOT FROM THE SHOW FLOOR

Smaller, portable kits continued to trend at PASIC, with many manufacturers reporting continued strong sales in the segment. Tama showcased its Cocktail kit while Ludwig highlighted its Breakbeats kit, which artist relations rep Uli Salazar described as “ideal for city players.”

“It’s great for musicians that live in small apartments or those who want to jam out down in the subway. And the sound is phenomenal.”

Taye Drums showed off its updated, travel-sized GoKit, which now features a new, flashier finish.

“The GoKit’s popularity increased to the point where people were asking for a more flashy look, so we came out with a silver





sparkle kit,” Trent said. “And it has turned out to be a huge hit for us this year.”

Dixon set up a cajon with its multi-functional cajon pedal — which can attach to a cymbal stand and strike any type of percussion — along with a snare drum and cymbal to create a more innovative traveler’s kit.

“It’s really becoming the casual drum kit of the future,” said Jim Uding, Dixon Drums product manager.

Drum kits aside, ProMark highlighted its “Play. Plant. Persevere.” initiative which plants five trees for every one that is used to manufacture sticks in Tennessee.

“It is something that is engrained in the company culture at D’Addario, and especially ProMark, because we feel that it is our responsibility to give back,” said Elijah Navarro, percussion junior product specialist at D’Addario, ProMark’s parent company. “If you sign up for our ProMark newsletter, we will plant a tree in your honor in Tennessee. It’s a green movement, and it’s great to give back to the environment what we take on a daily.” **MI**



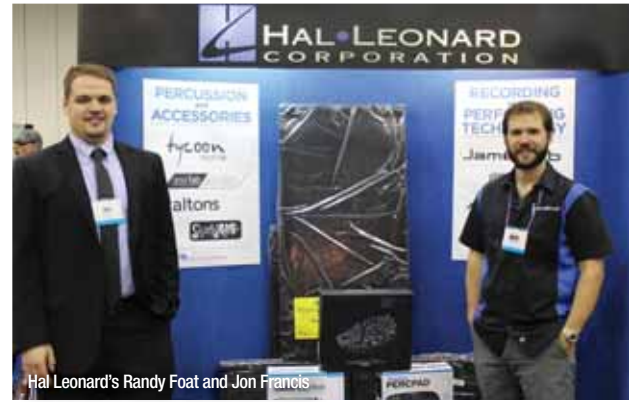
Tama's Roger Carter



Alfred's Michael Finkelstein, Dave Black and Jennifer Paisley-Schuch



Mapex's Bob Berheide



Hal Leonard's Randy Foat and Jon Francis



Ludwig's Uli Salazar



Taye's Todd Trent



Pearl's Kevin Geis



Yamaha's Troy Wollwage



Explorers Percussion's Wes and Lorene Faulconer



Dream Cymbal's Craig Snowden

MARTIN | AWARD

# MARTIN GUITAR RECEIVES FSC LEADERSHIP AWARD

C. F. Martin Guitar received a FSC Leadership Award from the Forest Stewardship Council at an awards ceremony at Greenbuild 2014.

Co-hosted with the World Wildlife Fund and Green Sports Alliance, the first FSC Leadership Awards were given to organizations and people who have long championed forest conservation and leveraging markets

to promote stewardship.

“Like salmon swimming upstream, the award winners have worked tirelessly to protect forests and create change in the marketplace,” said Corey Brinkema, president of the Forest Stewardship Council US.

“They are used to being told ‘it can’t be done’ so they know that true leadership requires resolve and determination, usually

in the face of strong currents protecting the status quo.”

Martin received the award for leadership in the music industry. Other winners included Kimberly-Clark, Domtar and Scholastic.

“These award winners show that we can protect forests and still have plenty of wood and fiber to meet demand,” Brinkema said. [martinguitar.com](http://martinguitar.com)



PORTER & DAVIES | ARTIST APPROVED

## Porter & Davies Names New Endorsees to Artist Roster

Porter & Davies has announced Arctic Monkeys drummer Matt Helders and Kasabian drummer Ian Matthews as its latest endorsees, among others.

The BC2 and BC Gigster are ideal for all types of musical genres, and new endorsees span a wide range of styles, including metal, dance and country.

According to Porter & Davies, some endorsees

have been so impressed with BC2 and BC Gigster that they have invested their own money and bought their systems. This has helped the company to continue investing in product research and development.

The new artists join a roster of notable drummers, including Kenny Aronoff, Clem Burke, Billy Cobham, Gerald Heyward, Tommy Lee and Jojo Mayer. [porteranddavies.co.uk](http://porteranddavies.co.uk)

MANHASSET | AWARD

# MANHASSET RECEIVES WASHINGTON STATE GREEN MANUFACTURING AWARD

The Association of Washington Business (AWB) — which serves as the state’s Chamber of Commerce — and the Manufacturing and Technology Association honored the Manhasset Specialty Company with the Green Manufacturing Award. Judges evaluated companies maximizing energy efficiency levels, going above and beyond regulatory requirements, minimizing waste from the production process and reducing their carbon footprints.

AWB said in a release: “In 2002, Manhasset replaced its painting process with environmentally friendly powder coating. The process of cleaning and preparing metal music stands for powder coating did, however, create materials that needed to be disposed

of. So, Manhasset didn’t stop working. This year, Manhasset became the first company in the Northwest, and one of only 30 so far in the nation, to adopt a new surface treatment process which is completely waste-free. To prepare for installation of the PlafORIZATION system, Manhasset shut down production for more than a month. They began preparing last fall, building up an inventory of their high-end music stands to meet customer demand. In February and March, they removed old equipment and set up the PlafORIZATION line. It was the biggest upgrade of their manufacturing line in decades. The new process generates zero waste and is more efficient.”

“All of the employee-owners at Manhasset

have worked very hard to make the company’s manufacturing processes better for the environment,” said Barry Heid, general manager of Manhasset Specialty Company. “Being 100-percent green is important to all of us.” [manhasset-specialty.com](http://manhasset-specialty.com)



# GIBSON TO OPEN STORE AT FORMER TOWER RECORDS SITE

On Nov. 10, Gibson announced plans to renovate and reopen the former site of Tower Records in West Hollywood, California, as a special outpost for Gibson Brands.

Company CEO Henry Juskiewicz said Gibson would spend at least \$1 million to renovate the building for a reopening by the end of the year.

The company has signed a 15-year lease, with plans to showcase all of its musical instruments and consumer electronic lines in a venue that will also feature live performances.

“We want to reinvent this site to be the international phenomenon that its legacy deserves,” Juskiewicz told the *LA Times*.

Constructed in 1971, the one-story, 8,700-square-foot building at 8801 Sunset Blvd. became a center of activity for the Sunset

Strip’s vibrant music scene.

“We are going to honor history and take it to a whole new level,” Juskiewicz said. “We want to retain that crazy vibe of Tower Records.”

Since Tower Records filed for bankruptcy in 2006, the site was under threat of demolition by developers proposing a new, three-story building that would house an upscale gym and offices for rent. Preservationists protested the plan, however, and the city withheld approval of the project.

Jay Luchs, a real estate broker with Newmark Grubb Knight Frank, who represents the landlords, told the *LA Times* there was a lot of interest in the site from potential renters.

“At the end of the day, Gibson was the right fit,” Luchs said. [gibson.com](http://gibson.com)



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# Orange Sponsors Classic Rock Roll of Honour Awards

The 2014 Classic Rock Roll of Honour awards were held on Nov. 4 at the Avalon in Hollywood, California. For the fifth consecutive year Orange Amplification was the presenting sponsor of the awards, which was hosted by Grammy Award winner Sammy Hagar.

The event was attended by rock royalty, and it culminated with ZZ Top’s Billy Gibbons presenting the Orange Amplification sponsored Living Legend award to Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee and icon Gregg Allman.

Orange Amplification had a Crush Pro 120 Combo at the awards, which was signed by many famous attending artists and will be auctioned off to raise funds for Little Kids Rock. [orangeamps.com](http://orangeamps.com)



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## APPOINTMENTS

### DOYLE ASSUMES DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS OF VIC FIRTH AS VP, GM

Vic Firth Company has appointed James Doyle vice president and general manager, assuming all day-to-day operations for the company.

Doyle has been with Vic Firth since 2000, serving in various roles. This new arrangement will enable company founder Vic Firth to focus his time on two key areas: artist relations and product development.

“I started my company more than 50 years ago and couldn’t be more excited about our future,” Firth said. “We will continue to provide the same level of excellence our customers have come to expect, managed by Jim and an experienced team. I’m thrilled to continue doing what I love most — interacting with all of my friends in the industry and creating new products.”

[vicfirth.com](http://vicfirth.com)

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**INTERNATIONAL DISTRIBUTOR WANTED**

**Craig Denny** has been promoted within St. Louis Music to vice president of band and orchestra.

**Martin Guitar** has promoted two: Carmen Cortez now holds the position of director of international sales and Chris Thomas is the new director of artist relations.

## IN MEMORIAM

### JERRY FREED



Jerry Freed, founder of Gator Cases, passed away on Nov. 13 after a bout with cancer. He was 74.

Freed was an entrepreneur and innovator in the audio and

MI industries, bringing energy and insight to numerous roles during his 50-plus-year career in the industry as a sales rep, product strategist, importer and manufacturer.

After attending Drake University in 1962, Freed began his career as a salesman for the Roberts Tape Recorder Company, representing a line of reel-to-reel recorders manufactured in Japan by Akai Electronics. Freed then went on to launch Califone amplifiers, a division of Roberts, and left after Califone was purchased by Rheem in 1967.

Eventually Freed co-founded International Music Corporation (IMC), which went on to partner with Samick, Akai and Charvel/Jackson.

In 1989, Freed left IMC to form Freed International, marketing and representing various MI brands, before founding Gator Cases with his daughter, Crystal Morris, in 2000.

He is survived by his wife of 45 years, Gail, daughter and son-in-law, Crystal and Bob Morris, and two grandsons, Trey and Ryan.

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# IDEAS

Inside **IDEAS** > The Customer Whisperer Page 32 > The Retail Doctor Page 34 > My Turn Page 36

THE TECH BEAT | BY JAMES HARDING

## THE FACEBOOK AD ADVANTAGE

How much time do you spend a day on Facebook? According to data Facebook has collected on its more than one billion users, the average person spends over six hours a month on Facebook. More than 60 percent of those users are viewing Facebook on a mobile device. That means that over 600 million people interact with Facebook on a device they carry with them at all times. To put that into perspective, these are more than double the engagement numbers for Google. In short, if you're not spending at least a little of your advertising budget on Facebook, you are missing a huge opportunity.

My company, Gist Piano Center, recently opened a new store, and we needed an inexpensive way to bring prospects through our doors. We didn't have time to wait for the new website to start performing, and we didn't have a lot of money to bring people in. Thus, we chose to focus our marketing dollars on Google AdWords and Facebook. Facebook let us create ads, gauge their impact and tweak our campaigns with nearly immediate feedback. After a couple of weeks, our Facebook ads were



**'Facebook helped us find where our loyal customers came from.'**

driving more prospects into our new store than we were seeing in the rest of our stores combined.

### TARGET YOUR AUDIENCE

The key to our success with Facebook was focusing in on the people who were most likely to be interested in our products. First, we created a website landing page for our new Facebook campaign to promote. That way we could track how many people came to our site from our campaign. Next, we selected a

number of targeted zip codes, languages and financial demographics that would help us identify the people who could afford our products and lived near enough to purchase from us. Finally, we added a number of "interests" that would help us find people who had posted something about music on their pages.

The next step was to define a daily budget. Though we could start for as little as \$5 per day, we chose to set our budget at \$10 per day and then make adjustments from there. We were also able to define a "pay per click" bid limit, but we decided to let Facebook do it automatically.

### CREATE COMPELLING CONTENT

Of course, no ad campaign would be successful without a compelling image (something bright and alluring) and interesting, relevant copy to accompany it. Nowhere is this truer than Facebook. We knew our content was going to appear in the same news feed as baby pictures and pet videos, so we knew we had to offer something equally exciting. We were able to create six images that excited us, format them for the mobile and main news feeds (right column ads do not perform well) and post

our campaign.

### TWEAK YOUR CAMPAIGN

We checked our Facebook insights page daily to see how customers were interacting with our campaign. After two weeks, it was obvious that some of the photos we were most excited about didn't excite our customers. We "turned off" the photos that weren't performing well and focused our budget on the successful images.

Before long, we were running multiple campaigns with different images and different copy, and, over time, Facebook helped us find images that made our campaigns pop and helped us find where our loyal customers came from.

Why not adopt a "let's try it" attitude when it comes to Facebook advertising? For about the price of a single newspaper ad, you can spend an entire month tweaking your social media message. Facebook advertising will help you bring in new customers, build your social media networks and increase your bottom line. **MI**

James Harding is the president of Gist Piano Center, a freelance Web designer, pianist and avid blogger. Email him at [jharding@gistpianocenter.com](mailto:jharding@gistpianocenter.com). He will speak about music lesson programs at NAMM U on Jan. 24.

THE CUSTOMER WHISPERER | BY GREG BILLINGS

# If I Knew What I Know Now

**D**uring the 2012 NAMM Washington D.C. Fly-In we had the privilege of being briefed by Steve Schmidt, a Republican political operative who had been both John McCain and George W. Bush's campaign manager. It was a thrill for us to get the inside scoop, and he said two things that are still with me almost three years later.

"I've run a winning campaign and a losing campaign — I like winning better," was how he opened. At the time, he was in the process of consulting on the film "Game Change," which is based on the events of the 2008 presidential election. When asked about Sara Palin he said, "Well, if we had known then what we know now ..."



## Six business lessons to heed now

There is wisdom for music dealers in both comments. Running a music store is not for the faint of heart, and no one is going to hit the mark every time. Most of the people we hire don't work out. But, a few are spectacular. Most of the new products we introduce are duds. Occasionally there is a big hit. Like Steve, I like winning better. Unfortunately, winning isn't a learning experience. But, losing certainly can be, if we let it.

We have choices when we look at our failures. We can make excuses and place blame. Or, the more useful approach is radical pragmatism. What can we learn, and how can we do it better? Which brings us to Steve's next lesson: If we had known then what we know now ...

Looking back on 50 years in a music store, if I had known then what I know now, I would have embraced my early failures rather than trying to excuse them. Here are a few other things I would have done differently — if I had known then:

- Avoid partnerships with friends. Partnerships are successful when each member brings a skill set necessary to the endeavor, but lacking in the other. First-time entrepreneurs often enter into partnerships with friends because they are afraid to go it alone.
  - Don't try to advertise your way to profitability. Small businesses do not have enough money to make a significant advertising impact. We often have just enough money to go broke trying.
  - Understand the importance of location in retailing. The physical presence of your store is still more important than your best ad. As a foot note, I wouldn't have waited 30 years to build my own building. I would have done it at the first opportunity.
  - Engage in relationship building. Community events, organi-

zations and philanthropy offer better return on investment and more free PR opportunities for small businesses than paid advertising. This requires fancy footwork, lots of saying "yes," constant smiles and thousands of handshakes.

- Be your own best salesman. Being dependent on a sales staff to sustain your business is risky. If you don't love talking to customers and don't get a thrill from making a sale, you probably shouldn't be in the music business. Let your staff see how it's done so they can follow your lead.

- Don't fall in love with products or suppliers. What gizmo you like best is irrelevant. We have to find the best possible product, that we can profitably sell, to suit our customers needs.

In the 1960s, there were accordion dealers who didn't like guitars and didn't want to change their business model. They perished. Then there were others, like the tiny Frank Cascio Music Shop, where I took my first music lesson almost 60 years ago, that evolved and eventually became Cascio Interstate Music, one of the nation's leading dealers. There are thousands of other examples of businesses that survived, and even thrived, simply by adapting to reality. **MI**

Greg Billings is the former owner of the Steinway Piano Gallery in Naples, Florida. He welcomes questions and comments at [greg-pianos@gmail.com](mailto:greg-pianos@gmail.com). He will be speaking on improvements he could have made during his retailing years at NAMM U on Jan. 23.



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THE RETAIL DOCTOR | BY BILLY CUTHRELL

# Revamped Store Technology

I'm a bit old school. I still use my iPhone 4, original iPad (it makes a great recipe finder in my kitchen) and iPad 2. My Mac desktop that I'm writing this column on is getting ancient by today's standards at a mere four years old. But all of these devices still work for me, so I've seen no need to upgrade.

While I'm not personally a "tech junkie" at home, I do love to investigate how new gadgets will work in my stores and, as the pace of innovation increases every year, I'm always on alert for the better mouse trap. It seems when one company jumps into a segment, I can find three or four others that are releasing something to compete. For example, a few issues back I wrote about the Wi-Fi cameras I deployed in our teaching rooms. They were great, until a year later when I found another camera that is lightyears better — and \$20 less. I wanted to revisit two product categories and introduce you to a third that I think is so important I'm making it central to my upcoming NAMM Idea Center session in January.

**Dropcam (dropcam.com):** A few years ago, I wrote about Belkin's \$99 Wi-Fi Netcam after I placed several of them in our teaching rooms and around my shops. These are really great cameras and we still use them, but I've been playing around lately with the Dropcam. Both the Belkin and Dropcam are super easy to set up, but what I really like about Dropcam is the 720p video capability and the night vision. I set up a Dropcam to broadcast a piano teacher's recital, and the image was great, even with the minimal stage lighting and darker room. Plus, the Dropcam seems to have a better connection and load speed over our Wi-Fi.

**Point of Sale Systems:** The "Accept Payment Anywhere" movement was just emerging a few years ago when I wrote about the Square (squareup.com) system, which I had tried in my store. Since then the market category has exploded, and there's lots of companies jumping in. I've now experimented with not only Square, but **PayPal (paypal.com/webapps/mpp/credit-cardreader)**, and **Intuit's Service (gopayment.com)**, as well. We moved back to PayPal over Square and Intuit as my staff seemed to prefer the PayPal system. Other services include PayAnywhere (payanywhere.com), ROAMPay (roamdata.com) and Amazon's Local Register (localregister.amazon.com).

All of these payment services offer easy set up, free card readers and rates that hover anywhere between 2.5–2.9-percent per transaction. Like I said a few years ago in my original article, it's awesome to be able to accept payments anywhere in the store and not be tied to a desk.

**Beacons (estimote.com):** Apple may have quietly rolled out its iBeacon technology, but it's quickly gaining popularity. This piece of hardware broadcasts a low-energy Bluetooth signal that identifies the beacon by your mobile device. The beacon sends out its signal, letting apps on the device pick up notifications whether the app is running or not, when the user gets within range of the beacon. You may set beacons to offer promotions through your store's own app and through other apps — much like social networking. For example, you can set up a beacon in your guitar department that sends a message that all strings are half price. You can also track how customers move around your store. If the customer picks up a demo guitar, the beacon then knows it's been moved and sends the notification to that person to visit a webpage for further information. This emerging technology shows potential for retailers and will be interesting to watch grow. **MI**



**Revisiting past technologies that have gotten a reboot**

Billy Cuthrell owns and operates Progressive Music Center in Raleigh, North Carolina. He will be speaking about technology at NAMM U on Jan. 24.

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MY TURN | BY RAVI

# Mobile Strategy 101

**M**obile marketing is not just the future — it is now. China and India boast the largest mobile markets due to population, but the United States is a compelling third thanks to mobile market penetration — there are more mobile accounts in America than people.

According to ComScore, Americans access the Internet more frequently with mobile devices than computers, and Pew Research has shown that four out of five mobile consumers shop on smartphones. About half of all retailers meet this market with a mobile platform, and those who do not will soon be left in the dust.

Point of sale is no longer solely in stores or on computers. It is anywhere, anytime. Three of four people use phones in the bathroom, and 20 percent have made a purchase while on the john, according to 11mark! Furthermore, Frost and Sullivan have reported that 90 percent of texts are read within seconds, while emails have dropped to only 22 percent.



**‘Closing sales on mobile devices reduces steps between promotions and sales.’**

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A cloud app is similar except that the software is stored on

an external server and therefore does not require a smartphone or available memory. Essentially a hybrid between a mobile website and a native app, it stores a temporary version on the device enabling offline browsing. However, Internet is required for interactive functions. These can be more expensive to create and maintain, but are always up-to-date and never deleted from a customer’s phone due to lack of memory. Moreover, they can also be accessed by feature phones (non-smartphones) that have Web access.

Regardless of platform, employing e-commerce such as PayPal is smart business. Closing sales on mobile devices reduces steps between promotions and sales, and one can easily entice consumers to “act now.” Time sensitive or “limited availability” promotions increase conversion of consumers to customers.

## THE ART OF GEOFENCING

For consumers to engage with websites or apps, retailers must generally rely on them to take the initiative and “pull” information from the source. However, sophisticated smartphones down to the cheapest feature phones empower retailers to proactively reach customers by “pushing” promotions via text. While recipients must opt-in by texting a short code, according to Cisco, 80 percent of consumers

## DEVELOPING AN APP

How does one engage today’s consumers? For starters, have a mobile website. Create a modified version of an existing site specifically for a small touchscreen. Mobile devices can be automatically redirected.

Developing an app increases mobile opportunities since users interact with apps six times as often as mobile Internet, according to Nielsen. A native app is custom software that is downloaded, stored on a mobile device and able to use the device’s built-in functions such as the camera — much like installing and using a computer program.

Customers need not always be online, however, they must have smartphones with

want locally relevant promotions.

Imagine receiving a text saying, "Save 20 percent on a box of strings — today only. Click 'Buy Now' and pick up at your convenience." Interested consumers instantly engage with the ad, purchase regardless of location and fetch the strings at the next lesson.

Geofencing services harness the power of customers' location to engage them when best positioned to buy. According to GeoPerks, location-based promotions yield greater than 30 percent conversion, and, according to Cisco, 47 percent of mobile consumers prefer to receive deals only when physically close to a store.

By establishing a geofence — a perimeter using cellphone triangulation (three cell towers) or GPS with a predetermined radius of a few miles — retailers can automatically send texts when opt-in customers cross the fence. Consumers are more likely to capitalize on offers while driving by or perhaps dining at the restaurant next door — 62 percent prefer to save time while just 29 percent prioritize money, according to Pew Research.

Non-competing neighboring retailers can establish a geofence together to cross-promote their products and services. For example, an auto mechanic can send messages to customers: "Waiting for your car? Save 10 percent on an introductory music lesson next door. Inquire now, schedule at your convenience. Offer expires today." The mechanic earns referral fees, the music store acquires new customers and consumers' time is used wisely. It is entirely automated and everyone wins.

Employees and teachers who perform live can also generate new customers. The performer can promote the app and an incentive to the audience. Inspired fans opt-in and instantly receive an offer for a discount intro music lesson at the store — perhaps with that musician on stage.

Today's retailers cannot afford to overlook a mobile strategy. The simplest point of entry is to create a basic app from social media using a free service, but adding e-commerce and text promotions puts a retailer on the mobile map. **MI**

Ravi is the former guitarist of three-time Grammy nominee Hanson and a touring singer/songwriter. He will speak on mobile marketing at NAMM U on Jan. 24.

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# Embracing CHANGE

*OVER THE LAST 30 YEARS, KRAFT MUSIC HAS EVOLVED FROM 100-PERCENT IN-STORE SALES TO NEARLY 100-PERCENT E-COMMERCE SALES BY FOLLOWING ONE SIMPLE PRINCIPLE: ADAPTING TO CHANGE*

***DRIVE BY KRAFT MUSIC*** and you'd think you're passing by a typical local brick-and-mortar MI retailer. The seemingly traditional 16,500-square-foot building located in Franklin, Wisconsin, houses the company's offices, showroom and call center and looks like any modern, well-kept MI dealer.

However, Kraft Music is far from traditional.

While it does have a 2,000-square-foot showroom packed with acoustic guitars, digital drum sets and a slew of keyboards, across the street sits a 42,000-square-foot warehouse and distribution center that handles anywhere from 100-150 orders a day — all coming through the company's



# GE

By Katie Kailus



e-commerce website.

“The amount of orders [per day] varies,” said Ben Kraft, president and executive chairman. “That quickly turns into 4,500-5,000 boxes a month, and beginning Black Friday and into Cyber Week, we gear up to ship 15,000 or more boxes through the end of the year.”

But, Kraft Music wasn’t always a strong e-tailer. The company got its start in 1984 by Ben’s father Roger and focused on keyboards, recording gear and the then newly created computer-music category of products. Throughout the next 30 years, the company would move locations another five times — all within southern Wisconsin — until reaching its current space in Franklin in 2012.

It’s hard to conceive a niche e-tailer putting out so many orders, especially with stiff competition from sites like Amazon and eBay, but Kraft said it was getting an early jump on the Internet (the store’s first website launched in 1995) that really gave the company an edge in the online space. Today, Kraft Music has eight employees dedicated to updating its site alone and another seven sales advisors helping customers navigate through their purchases. Nearly 100 percent of the company’s sales are made online.

In addition to getting an early jump on the Internet, Kraft attributes his company’s success to adapting to change.

“Going from mostly in-store sales to mostly online sales has definitely been a change for the business, but it was the change the customers voted for,” Kraft said. “I think about all the changes that we’ve gone through throughout the years, and, to be honest, change is one way in which the company got started. MIDI was invented the year my dad incorporated. So, already he was on the forefront of the change in technology.”

Kraft also isn’t afraid to make big moves for his company — literally.

“When we run out of space, instead of capping it off, we go and find more space — no matter how scary it might be to take on a second building or another lease,” Kraft said.

## **MAKING THE TRANSITION**

When asked how Kraft Music transi-



tioned from completely brick-and-mortar to nearly online-only, Kraft said it was almost out of necessity.

“Our staff back then was small and as we began growing as a company, the e-commerce side began propelling, which meant we needed more stock,” Kraft said.

The store didn’t have space for all the extra products, and boxes began spilling out into the showroom.

“You would open up the door and there was just a wall of product,” he added. “We put it wherever we could. Fewer and fewer products were on display because we just didn’t have the space.

“When we moved to this location [in Franklin] we knew we wanted to dedicate a couple thousand square feet to a showroom, which still remains today, but, in that time, almost all of our focus was on building our website.”

Kraft said his No. 1 tip for retailers looking to excel in e-commerce is to “not be afraid.”

“E-commerce in general has always been a changing process,” he said. “Consumers are dictating the majority of it, so we have to stay with it and listen to what the consumer is saying and not be afraid to make changes.”

## THE KRAFT WAY

Smart hiring decisions have also assured Kraft Music’s success. Jamie Medina, Kraft’s top executive, joined the company in 2008, and was immediately tasked with super-charging the sales and marketing model.

“He absolutely succeeded,” Kraft said. “We really see today’s retail world the same way, and Jamie’s understanding of the complexity of the ever-changing online ad space has driven the company. Generally, Jamie and I have had a ‘divide and conquer’ sort of MO. Trusting him to drive the sales and marketing side of the business has given me the ability to focus on what the business needs to be successful now and in the future.”

To help Kraft stand out among the Amazons and the eBays, Kraft and Medina hired a knowledgeable team of sales advisors to guide customers through every step of their online purchases. Often, customers from across the country will drive to Kraft Music’s showroom to try out a few different models before making their purchase.

“We have people call from as far away

as Ohio, St. Louis and Minneapolis asking if they could try out a certain couple of products because they can’t find a place in their local market where they can play all three, four or even five products in one place to make a final decision,” Medina said. “So, they see our site and see that we have all of them in stock and make the trip here.”

If a product the customer is looking

for isn’t currently on display in the showroom, sales advisors will bring it in from the warehouse.

“We’ll get them a cup of coffee, a set of headphones and some monitors and let them be,” Medina said. “We want to let them put the time into the instrument that they want to make this decision and not be in this loud, crazy, high-pressure environment.”

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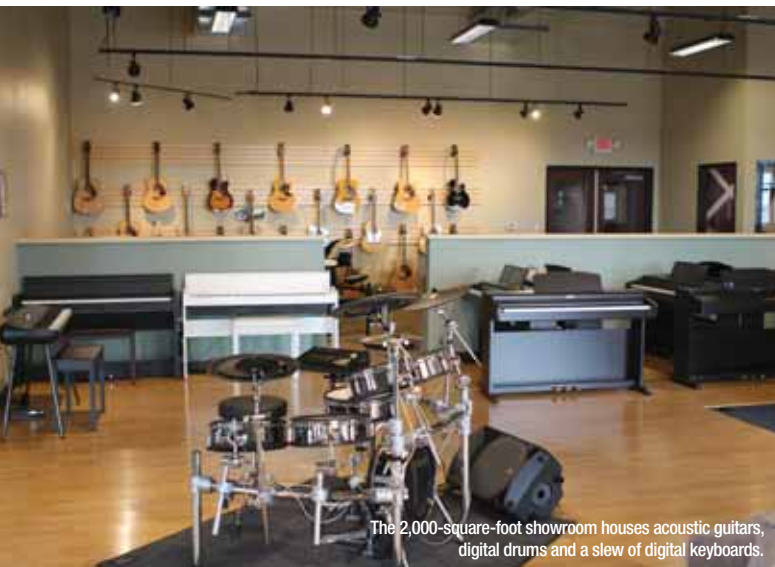
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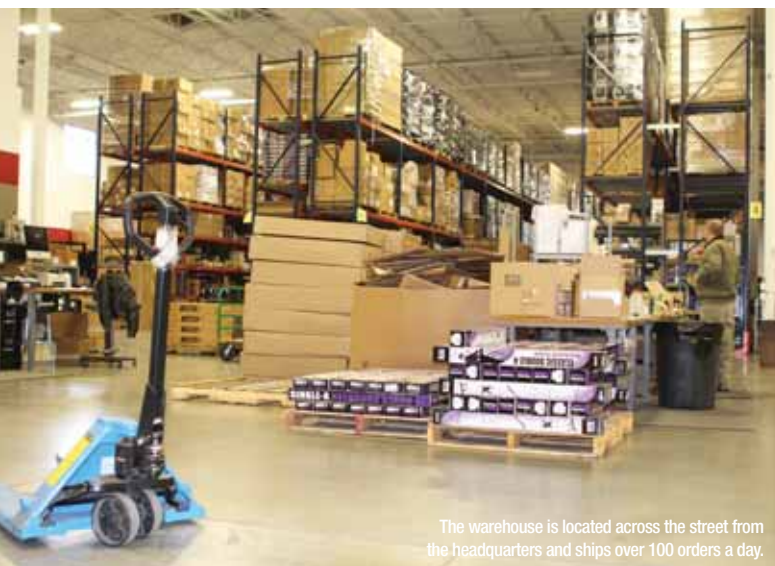
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Kraft Music expanded and remodeled its headquarters in 2013 to include the company's offices and showroom.



The 2,000-square-foot showroom houses acoustic guitars, digital drums and a slew of digital keyboards.



The warehouse is located across the street from the headquarters and ships over 100 orders a day.

This mindset is all part of the “Kraft Way,” which Kraft himself said comes down to doing the right thing for the customer.

“I hate to use that cliché ‘do the right thing,’ but that’s what it boils down to,” he said. “Our customers can be our family, our friends, our neighbors. I might see them at the grocery store at the end of the day. They are buying from Kraft Music and my last name is Kraft.”

Kraft and Medina said they both base a lot of the company’s policies on experiences they have had as customers.

“We have evolved simply by doing what we would expect,” Kraft said. “We know when we’ve been treated lousy and when someone just hit it out of the park. Keeping that in mind is key.”

Constantly maintaining good customer service is something that Kraft and Medina instill in their staff.

“Ben and I are always talking to the sales advisors about expecting 100-percent,” Medina said. “It’s not just coming from direct management. It comes from Ben Kraft. It comes from the CEO. We talk about it in our meetings. They know that we expect that.”

“Just yesterday we had a company-wide meeting and something that was highlighted by our director of sales was all the positive feedback he was hearing from customers. He explained that all of us are involved in the customer experience from the warehouse staff handling the guitars with gloves and putting the right ones in the right cases to the marketing team coming up with their content. It is all part of the customer experience.”

Teaching employees the “Kraft Way” starts during their first days on the job.

“We changed our new-hire experience, which now includes a half day with me where the new hire goes over photos and the 30 years of the company’s history, so they know exactly who they are working for,” Kraft said.

Department heads give presentations on their roles in the business and then comes a focus on product demos.

“Vendor reps have been fantastic about making time and there are a lot of online resources as well,” Kraft said. “And then we teach them the ‘Kraft Way.’ So, they go three or four weeks before handling their first customer. The feedback from [the new hires] has been fantastic. They all have said they felt ready to give the customer what they expect.”

## THE NEXT 30 YEARS

When it comes to looking down the road to the next five years, Kraft said it is easy since they have about 10 years worth of ideas percolating.

“We have to somehow provide the platform for those ideas now, whether it is physical space or additional people or resources,” Kraft said, adding that the possibility of moving to another location in the near future that would house the offices, showroom and distribution center all under one roof is a on the table.

When it comes to the next 30 years, Kraft said he hopes his business has embraced change the whole way through, serving customers in ways that can’t even be imagined now.

“Hopefully there will be Kraft Music drones or Kraft Music robots delivering products to customers’ doors,” he said. “Stay tuned.” **MI**

# WALK THROUGH

Kraft Music has a team of eight responsible for creating and updating the content on the MI dealer's website, maintaining its fresh, modern feel. Here is a quick glance at the site:



## HOMEPAGE BUNDLES/GIFT IDEAS

"Vendors provide many bundles, and we're not afraid to build bundles on our own," Kraft said. "We've got 10-plus years of bundle building under our belt, so the selection of products, the process in how it happens, the buying, the maintenance, the shipping, the pricing — by now, we've tried most things, made plenty of mistakes and it's all bottled up in a recipe that we guard as if it were [our] grandpa's."



## GOOGLE TRUSTED SITE

"We talk a lot about building confidence for the customer," Medina said. "One of our biggest goals is to create that brand image that you should be confident in buying from us. So Google came out with this product that said all that for us, and it gives the consumer more confidence because they may be a first-time user to Kraft Music, but they know who Google is. By Google saying, 'Hey you can trust me. We trust them.' It just adds to that confidence builder to us."



## HOME ELECTRONICS

"It's very complimentary feature to our business," Medina said. "We have a strong relationship with Yamaha so they are the main vendor that we have. We thought it would be a good complimentary segment to have for our MI customers. We gave it a whirl and it worked. We almost look at it as a service to our customers. But beware, the home electronic industry moves at a much quicker speed that the MI industry is not used to whatsoever."

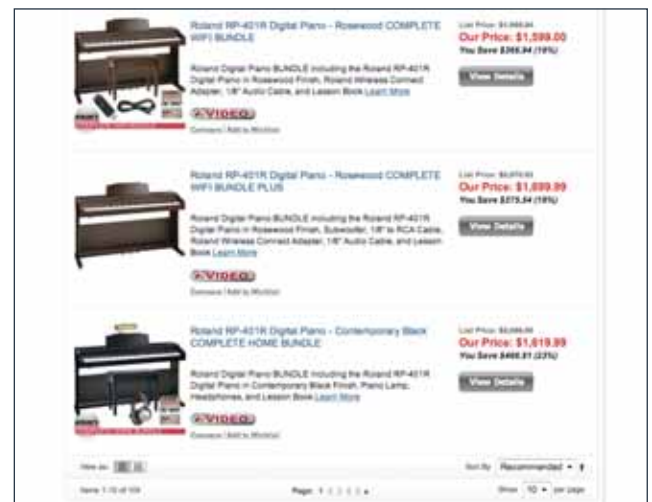
## COMPANY HISTORY

"We have an interesting story to tell, and we feel that it's important that our customers know that's who we are," Kraft said. "Narrating our 30-year history hopefully illustrates our dedication to customer service, our desire to be here longer than a single holiday season, and it also shows that there is a lot of brick and mortar and human beings that make up this e-commerce business."



## PRODUCT PAGES

"Updating our product pages is our biggest challenge," Kraft said. "We've got a lot of home-grown systems in place, and maintenance is our top concern. We keep looking and shopping for the 'easy button,' but we have yet to find it. So, instead we're running report after report, hour after hour, and a lot of people are involved in that process. It keeps getting harder and harder as we grow, and so our main objective moving forward will be to shore up our back-end operations, while still allowing us to stay as nimble as we have been in the past."



# FROM THE TOP

INTERVIEWED BY MICHAEL GALLANT

## JACK O'DONNELL | inMUSIC

### HOW DO YOU START YOUR DAY?

I start my day by going to the gym. I like starting the day with exercise; it allows me to concentrate on the day ahead of me.

### WHAT'S YOUR SINGLE FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR GIG?

I'm very engaged as an executive and enjoy being actively involved in the product development process. I like trading ideas and throwing concepts back and forth with people. We have a lot of very creative and dedicated people here — they live and breathe this every day. I love engaging their passion — a lot of great ideas come from that process.

Our goal is to always deliver what the artist wants or needs, and I am actively involved with the team on the product development strategy. It's great to see our strategy translate into new standards within our industry, and I enjoy watching those products enter into the market and be used by musicians.

### WHAT'S YOUR BACKGROUND IN THE INDUSTRY?

I worked at Stanton Magnetics and Pickering and Company. Those were two of the leading stereo cartridge companies in the industry in the 1960s through the '80s. Being heavily involved in the product development and marketing of those companies put me right into the thick of the recorded music business. I learned how people use the products we make. I got a first-hand education about how important music is to people — both from a professional and producer standpoint and from the vantage point of the music "consumer." This ultimately guided me to where I am today, and the insight and the experience that I gained from my time there, 12 years, has translated into the business I built today. While I was leading a team at Stanton and pushing to establish the company in the professional market, my personal interest in this area evolved, which led me to purchase Numark in 1991. And the company portfolio has certainly expanded since then.

### WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO BUY THE BRANDS THAT INMUSIC OVERSEES? IT'S AN INTERESTING, VARIED GROUP OF COMPANIES.

Thank you — we're very proud of our portfolio. Each brand has a unique story and different elements. Each brand appeals to a unique market, has a unique following,

and has a specific set of strengths and individual characteristics. I suppose you might draw a parallel between owning several different-style restaurants — a steakhouse, a Chinese restaurant, a fusion restaurant, a classic Italian, and so on. While in the broadest sense, yes, it's all food, but in reality, they each address very different markets.

But what should tie them all together is the quality of their offerings and the skill and dedication of their people. Same with us — all our companies wowed us with their technology, product portfolio and talented people. That's the primary reason behind our decisions.

### HOW IS WORKING IN THE DJ MARKET UNIQUE, AS OPPOSED TO YOUR OTHER PRO-AUDIO AREAS?

The DJ market has a customer who uses creativity to define him or herself. It's a market completely unlike any other, because it's partly performer and partly consumer. Our customers improvise and perform, like the most intense musical or vocal recording and performing artists, but they also represent a consumer market for program material, new musical trends and directions, and, of course, equipment.

All of that said, Denon DJ and Numark are two totally separate brands with different staffs and different customers. They are distinct, just like there are very different genres of musical artists, and performers from those genres each have their own particular followings.

### IS IT DIFFICULT TO MANAGE A CONSUMER OPERATION LIKE ION UNDER THE SAME ROOF AS PRO-AUDIO BRANDS?

While it requires a different mindset, we have incredibly talented people with a wealth of expertise in that channel. Music is the common language between our brands in all categories, so relating one to the other is something we do on a daily basis. Additionally, ION maintains its own professional staff and business, so no, not really — it's a totally separate company.

### WHAT WENT INTO THE RELEASE AND SUCCESS OF THE USB TURNTABLE?

At the time, in the early 2000s, vinyl was making a great comeback, which was also around the time that iPods were introduced to the market. Great music always endures the shifts in playback formats — people will want to keep their favorites with them no matter the application, and we saw the potential in converting vinyl to a modern format.



## THE DETAILS

JACK O'DONNELL, CEO

**HQ:** Fort Lauderdale, Florida

**Founded:** 1991 — after more companies were acquired, the inMusic name was established in 2012.

**Employees:** 650

**Best selling product:** Numark DJ controllers, Alesis electronic drum kits and keyboard controllers, and Akai Professional MPC series.

**Fun Fact:** O'Donnell got his start working for record player cartridge manufacturers — an auspicious beginning for the future CEO of multiple major DJ equipment brands.

## AND YOU JUMPED ON IT.

We took advantage of this opportunity, and our talented team was spot on with their instincts that there was something special about the marriage of a classic analog technology and a modernized digital one. Today, the USB turntable continues to be a successful product.

## SINCE ACQUIRING AKAI PROFESSIONAL, HOW HAVE YOU APPROACHED CONTINUING THE LEGACY OF THE LEGENDARY MPC SERIES?

Akai Professional began manufacturing electronic instruments in 1984 and had a strong influence on the electronic music scene the moment it entered. Today, we continue to pace the industry with cutting-edge music production tools and an extremely loyal customer base. With each new MPC, we maintain the iconic MPC workflow that artists have come to love. Great hardware controls still provide the best user experience, and they are better than ever.

## YOU'VE INTRODUCED A SOFTWARE COMPONENT AS WELL.

MPC Software, the software platform for the MPC Renaissance and MPC Studio, lets you open any MPC program file, providing continuity between the classic and the new. With MPC Renaissance, we've included all of the sounds featured in classic MPCs including the sonic DNA of both the MPC60 and MPC3000 via Vintage Mode. In fact, the software lets you use the coveted filters of time-honored machines to help you get that unmistakable MPC vibe.

## SO THAT CONTINUITY BETWEEN CLASSIC AND CUTTING-EDGE IS KEY.

We recognize that each new MPC should be able to introduce new advances in technology. We take the opportunity to hear what artists think and feel about music production. What do they like? What don't they like? Then, we adjust and improve upon those features.

Today, our flagship device — the MPC Renaissance — is a modernized version of past workstations, incorporating the best features from the past with modernized enhancements. On screen, everything is familiar, only now, you can dive much deeper via the tight integration with music production software.

## IS IT EVER CHALLENGING TO KEEP THE INDIVIDUAL BRANDS IN THE INMUSIC FAMILY STRAIGHT AND UNIQUE?

Artists have an affinity towards our brands that allows us to continue to make great products that provide creative solutions to help them excel in their careers. We listen to the

artists as to what their different creative needs are. Naturally, there can be an overlap in their needs, but that said, each brand has a high-level of authenticity towards the market it serves. So no, it's not challenging — things fall naturally into place. The product lines of each company remain unique and separate from the others. It will always be about the brands and the artists they serve.

## HOW DO YOU ENSURE QUALITY OVER SUCH A WIDE SWATH OF PRODUCTS AND BRANDS?

First and foremost, we have a highly unique team of developers who create products that we know will provide the best experience to our customers. These individuals are creative and talented, but, above all, they're passionate about their work. We also have a team of quality assurance testers that work in conjunction with engineering.

## IS inMUSIC MADE UP OF MUSICIANS?

Most of our employees here are musicians — they're DJ's, recordists, keyboard players, beatmakers — and they have firsthand experience in developing and designing our products. They create products by day and use them at night, which allows them to evaluate the products in a working environment. They can ask themselves questions like, "What's missing?" or, "Does the placement [of a certain component] work?" We're

very responsive to market feedback.

## HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN A PRODUCT IS "DONE" — A.K.A. READY FOR THE MARKET?

We have critical stages of approval that must be met in order to reach the next step in market availability. From product managers to engineers to marketing and sales people, all teams are involved. We take great pride in creating a product that we would be proud to use. That's the definitive stamp of approval.

## AS FAR AS ACQUIRING NEW COMPANIES, IS THERE ANYTHING ON YOUR WISH LIST?

I am always keeping my eye on positive growth and expansion. The mission of the company is to create new products and innovations that best serve customers needs — and we're always looking for opportunities to grow and push technology forward.

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

I like creating new products, so if it wasn't in the music industry, I would imagine I would be creating new homes or buildings.

'THE MISSION OF THE COMPANY IS TO CREATE NEW PRODUCTS AND INNOVATIONS THAT BEST SERVE CUSTOMERS NEEDS.'

# EON 600 SERIES

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## THE GUIDE

THE NAMM SHOW 2015

THE NAMM SHOW 2015 | BY KATIE KAILUS

## STRIKE A CHORD

In need of some business inspiration, innovative selling strategies and proven ideas? Look no further than this year's NAMM Show, held January 22–25 in Anaheim, California. The show promises to be chock-full of better business ideas, so many, in fact, NAMM President and CEO Joe Lamond said attending the show is the “single most important thing you could do to achieve your goals for 2015.”

“In this competitive marketplace only the best and brightest survive, and you will find those folks in Anaheim this January,” he added.

## BIG-NAME ACTS

NAMM has added some big names to this year's bill, including Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak and author Richard Gerver.

Wozniak will discuss the hard-hitting lessons he learned during the founding of Apple as well as innovations in business and entrepreneurship at Saturday's Breakfast Session. Gerver, author of *Creating Tomorrow's Schools Today*, will share his insights on change, leadership and education during Sunday's Music Education Days — an event that



## This year's NAMM Show promises to 'resonate' for everyone in the MI industry

gives music education professionals exposure to the latest in music product innovation.

“Since the days of Thomas Edison, The NAMM Show has been the place where great thinkers have come together to create the future,” Lamond said. “Wozniak and Gerver are some of the iconic thought-leaders out there, inspiring entrepreneurs to think outside of the box and

thrive in these turbulent times. NAMM members will leave energized on their return to make their businesses better and with a clearer sense of what's next.”

On the concert side, Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue will headline the NAMM GoPro Grand Plaza Stage on Thursday night, while the Imagine Party will take place Friday night at the John Lennon bus.

## SLIGHT ADJUSTMENTS

Smoother registration and badge pickup are just two of the refinements that NAMM has made. Additionally, NAMM has listened to member feedback and will be more aggressive regarding enforcement of the show's sound regulations, creating a more business friendly show floor.

“The big additions to the show come from what our 1,500 exhibitors and more than 5,000 brands bring to the table,” Lamond said. “The creative exhibits, concerts, parties and innovative, creative new products are the stars of The NAMM Show.” **MI**

# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS



Unless otherwise noted, the following events will be held in NAMM's Idea Center (booth 5501 in Hall B).

## WEDNESDAY, JAN. 21

8:30 A.M.–5 P.M.

### 2015 Retail Boot Camp

*Brian Parsley, Ben Blakesley, Alan Friedman and Daniel Jobe*  
**Hilton Anaheim Hotel, California Ballrooms**

This year's boot camp will help you increase sales, grab repeat customers, take your profits to the next level and grow your business in 2015. Bring your whole team to this intensive one-day training session, as this year's event features new educational content. The boot camp is free to all NAMM members, but you must sign up at [namm.org](http://namm.org). (Lunch will be served at noon.)

## THURSDAY, JAN. 22

### BREAKFAST SESSION

8:30 A.M.–9:30 A.M.

#### Breakfast of Champions

*Joe Lamond, President and CEO of NAMM, and Guests*  
**Hilton Anaheim Hotel, Pacific Ballrooms**

Kick off your show with an insider's look at trends and products certain to shape your business and drive the industry in the new year. Join Lamond as he introduces the leaders behind developments that will help you grow your business and stay relevant in 2015. (Free breakfast served from 8-8:30 a.m.)

10:30 A.M.

#### The Hitchhiker's Guide

#### to the Facebook Galaxy

After his standing-room-only session last year, Cris Behrens, store manager at Summerhays Music Center, returns for an encore presentation, and he's armed with new ideas. Behrens will pass along tips that don't require lots of time or money. Discover how to create an effective Facebook ad, partner with local radio stations to get new "Likes," make sense of the boosted posts feature and much more.

11:00 A.M.

#### 10 Ways to Increase Your Sales With eBay

If you are selling or thinking

about selling on eBay you cannot miss this session with Blues Angel Music co-owner Jim DeStafney and eBay facilitator Sierra Williams. Walk away with proven ideas for getting more out of the online auction site.

11:30 A.M.

#### Love the Mess — Grow Your Business by Embracing Your Challenges

Join business trainer Brian Parsley for this dynamic session, and walk away with a new perspective on your store — and your life. He'll show you how to create more engaged and willing employ-

ees, three simple steps to boost sales and customer loyalty, and also how to find deeper meaning in your work.

**12:00 A.M.**  
**How to Turn Your Aging Inventory Into Cash**

Join sales expert Bob Popyk and Alan Friedman, music retail financial guru and partner at Friedman, Kannenberg & Co., for this fast-paced session. Walk away with practical ideas to move obsolete and dated merchandise out the door—with money in your cash register!

**12:30 P.M.**  
**5 Things You Must Know About Instagram**

Ben Blakesley, social media expert and author, explains how to use Instagram to connect with your audience and grow your retail business.

**1:00 P.M.**  
**Take Your Lesson Program From Break-Even to Breakthrough**

Donovan Bankhead of Springfield Music will walk listeners through proven strategies and tactics for creating a lesson program with sustainable profits. Find out how to build a program that customers will pay real money for — and make real money for your business.

**1:30 P.M.**  
**New Ways to Market Your Store Online**

Peter Dods, president of Easy Music Center and *Music Inc.* columnist, reveals his most successful Internet marketing tactics. From advice on Facebook ads to niche social media outlets, Dods shares his best practices for

using the Internet to rapidly grow your business.

**2:00 P.M.**  
**How to Relate to and Motivate the Next Generation of Employees**

Join CJ Averwater of Amro Music, as he shows you how to interact with, attract and motivate misunderstood Millennials — the generation holding the keys to the successful future of your retail business.

**2:30 P.M.**  
**Boost Your Lesson Sign-ups — and Keep the Students You Have**

Learn how to increase your lesson program sign-ups while keeping the students you already have with this practical session led by Liane Rockley, owner of Rockley Music.

**3:00 P.M.**  
**5 Ways to Turn Your Repair Department Into a Profit Center**

Listen in as Robert Christie, owner of A & G Central Music, explains how to take your repair department from a profit drain to a profit center. Christie will share five simple steps he's taken to change the way his store handles repairs that have made a difference to his business. Get ideas you can apply in your shop, and don't miss this opportunity to boost your bottom line.

**3:30 P.M.**  
**Make More Money With Your iPad**

Joe Dorsey of Hoggstowne Music shows you the hardware, apps and steps needed to turn your iPad into a money-

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**4:00 P.M.**

**Music Lessons: How to Compete Against Your New Competitors**

Join Menzie Pittman of Contemporary Music Center as he reveals proven ideas that have helped his lesson program flourish in this new normal.

**4:30 P.M.**

**Take the Stress Out of Your Financial Operations**

Take financial control of your music retail business as Lori Supinie of Senseney Music offers simple tips to help you make better decisions, give you peace of mind, keep your store in the black and even prevent employee theft.

**5:00 P.M.**

**OK, I Have a Website. Now How Do I Get It to Work for Me?**

Gordon O'Hara and Bee Bantug of Retail Up! explain how to get the most out of your current website and social media presence. Learn to create a plan to promote and manage your site while increasing efficiency, productivity and profitability.

**6:00 P.M.**

**Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue in Concert**  
**NAMM GoPro Stage, Grand Plaza**

The world famous trombone and trumpet player from New Orleans will headline the stage during NAMM's opening night.

**FRIDAY, JAN. 23**

**BREAKFAST SESSION**

**8:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m.**

**Epic Marketing: Win More Customers by Marketing Less**

*Joe Pulizzi, Marketing Guru, Author and Founder of Content Marketing Institute*

**Hilton Anaheim Hotel, Pacific Ballrooms**

Pulizzi will show you how to be an "epic" marketer and use your unique story and expertise to engage your customers like never before. (Free breakfast served from 8-8:30 a.m.)

**10:30 A.M.**

**How to Get Started With YouTube and Video Marketing**

If you are ready to get started using video in your music retail marketing strategy, Ben Werling of MusicStoreLive, Kurt Witt of Woodwind & Brasswind, and moderator John Mlynczak of PreSonus will help you get noticed in the cluttered world of YouTube and Facebook.

**11:00 A.M.**

**The Keys to a Powerful Website (Double Session)**

Mike Ross of Sweetwater Sound reveals the company's best online practices and tips for getting the most out of your company's Internet presence. He'll dig into everything from powerful home page tactics to enhanced product presentations to copyright no-no's.

**12:00 P.M.**

**Epic Marketing: Get Started**

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### With Content Marketing

Joe Pulizzi, founder of Content Marketing Institute, is back and this time is showing listeners how to use content marketing to develop an engaged and loyal following from scratch.

**12:30 P.M.**

### Simple Ways to Improve Your Google Search Ranking

Gabriel O'Brien of Larry's Music Center discusses easy ways to boost your Google ranking for better search results, with a few basic tools anyone can implement.

**1:00 P.M.**

### Innovative Store Design Examples That You Can Use

For stores in need of a makeover, Jen Lowe of Boom Boom Percussion and a panel of progressive music retailers, including David Kalt of Chicago Music Exchange, Mike and Ray Guntren of Ray's Midbell Music, and John Van Ness of Spindrifft Guitars, discuss refreshing DIY merchandising and design techniques to inject excitement into your brick-and-mortar.

**1:30 P.M.**

### How I Built a Lesson Program With 2,000 Students

Pete Gamber, music lesson

guru and *Music Inc.* magazine columnist, distills the wisdom gained from his 35-year career building a 2,000 student music lesson program into one exciting session. Learn a common sense growth system you can apply right away to your lesson program.

**2:00 P.M.**

### How to Take Advantage of Reverb.com

Keith Grasso, a preferred seller on Reverb.com, shows you the ins and outs of selling new, used and vintage gear on the site. Learn how to boost the value of your local brick-and-mortar store by increasing your online presence and clearing out aging inventory.

**2:30 P.M.**

### Proven Money-Makers for 2015

If you are looking for a new and proven revenue stream in 2015, join moderator Alan Friedman of Friedman, Kannenberg and Co. and a panel of progressive retail leaders, including Bob Kohl of Long & McQuade, Gayle Beacock of Beacock Music, and Frank Pampanella of PM Music Center, as they discuss three activities to bolster your bottom line.

**3:00 P.M.**

### How to Host a Rock Camp From Start to

# Win

# Win

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### Finish (and Beyond)

Rand and Cindy Cook of The Candyman Strings & Things reveal their best practices for producing a rock camp. Whether you are starting from scratch or looking to improve an existing camp, this is where you need to be.

**3:30 P.M.**

### What I Wish I Knew When I Opened My Store

Greg Billings, *Music Inc.* columnist and former retailer, looks back on his 50 years in music retailing and shares the top 10 lessons he learned. Walk away with practical, real-world solutions to common pitfalls. Let Billings' gift of hindsight save you time, trouble and money. A cannot miss for new and veteran retailers alike.

**4:00 P.M.**

### 5 Promotions That Will Make You the Go-to Store

Want to be most happening place in the community? Tracy Leenman of Musical Innovations will show you how. She will share five low-cost,

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- Andrew Scheps  
(Red Hot Chili Peppers, Adele, U2, Metallica)

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high-impact promotions and events that helped turn her start up into a major force in her market.

**4:30 P.M.**

**How I Built a Profitable, Award-Winning Lesson Program (Double Session)**

Susan Pascale, owner of Pascale Music Institute, is back by popular demand to show you how she has built an award-winning lesson program. Learn how to improve your program by boosting enrollment while increasing quality.

**6:00 P.M.**

**She Rocks Awards Hilton Anaheim Hotel, Pacific Ballroom**

Guitarist Orianthi co-hosts the third consecutive year of this award show paying tribute to women who portray leadership and stand out in the music industry. Award recipients include Colbie Caillat and The Bangles.

**SATURDAY, JAN. 24**

**BREAKFAST SESSION**

**8:30 A.M.–9:30 A.M.**

**Steve Wozniak, Apple Co-Founder Hilton Anaheim Hotel, Pacific Ballrooms**

Wozniak co-founded Apple in 1976 and is the mind behind the US Festival and countless technological innovations, including the Apple I and II and the universal remote control. He'll share insights on innovation, the creative process and entrepreneurship. Limited seating. Get there early! (Free breakfast served from 8-8:30 a.m.)

**10:30 A.M.**

**The 10 Commandments of Selling on Amazon and eBay**

Listen in as Leslie Faltin of Instrumental Music Center explains how to grow your retail business, increase sales and expand your customer base by creating a secondary income stream through selling on Amazon.com and eBay.

**11:00 A.M.**

**How I Got 7 Million Views on YouTube**

Drum Center of Portsmouth owner Shane Kinney will show you how he did it and why video marketing has been essential to his company's success. He'll cover guidelines

for filming and setup, how to choose the right software and hardware, ideal video length, creating a video brand for your business, measuring success, and common misconceptions about YouTube and video marketing. Learn from his best practices.

**11:30 A.M.**

**Merchandise Your Store for a Bigger "Wow" Factor — and Bigger Profits**

Join Gayle Beacock of Beacock Mu-

sic, NAMM's 2014 Top Merchandising Display winner, for this high-energy session. Beacock will break down effective store design to a science. She'll share her secrets for creating a showroom that stands out from the rest. Find out how to take your retail environment to the next level for a bigger "wow" factor — and bigger profits.

**12:00 P.M.**

**Now What Do I Do About My Website? (Double Session)**

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**IP**

Moderated by Grant Billings of Steinway Piano Gallery, a panel of expert retailers will discuss signs that your website needs an overhaul or update, if you should do it yourself or hire a pro and the financial costs of a good website.

**1:00 P.M.**

**Modernize Your Lesson Program Today**

James Harding, president of Gist Piano Center and *Music Inc.* magazine columnist, explains how modernizing your lesson program can reduce overhead, stabilize income and build critical word-of-mouth advertising for your teachers and store.

**1:30 P.M.**

**Drive Sales With Mobile Marketing**

Ravi, mobile marketing expert, discusses how mobile marketing with location technology helps a music retailer reach potential customers the moment they are most interested.

**2:00 P.M.**

**Simple Tech Tools to Boost Your Profits**

Billy Cuthrell, owner of Progressive Music Center and *Music Inc.* magazine columnist, explores the latest tech tools and how they can help solve common issues. Learn to improve productivity and put money back into your bottom line.

**2:30 P.M.**

**5 Proven Tactics for Indie Retail Growth**

Amy Ball Braswell of Capo's Music Store offers her five best ideas for maintaining retail growth that turned her fledgling store into a NAMM Top 100 dealer in just five years.

**3:00 P.M.**

**5 Simple Tactics for Finding and Hiring Retail Superstars**

Robin Sassi and Kimberly Deverell of San Diego Music Studio show you how to never make a bad hire again with quick and easy hiring and interviewing strategies.

**3:30 P.M.**

**Make Your Marketing Relevant for 2015**

Cream City Music has created a powerful, consistent customer experience in-

store, online and on social media. Listen in as Brian Douglas, company president and CEO, shows you how to create the best customer experience using proven examples from his company's own promotions, merchandising and branding. Rethink the way you're presenting your retail business in the new year.

**4:00 P.M.**

**Good Debt is a Good Thing**

You might think by borrowing money to stock inventory, you're bound to get yourself in trouble with high interest rates and debt service payments. However, music retail financial gurus Alan Friedman and Daniel Jobe reveal how debt can be used strategically to boost sales, increase cash flow, minimize interest charges and avoid costs from aging inventory.

**4:30 P.M.**

**Keep Your Rock Camps Rolling All Year Long**

Menzie Pittman of Contemporary Music Center and Billy Cuthrell of Progressive Music Center have realized the many benefits of running rock camps long after the summer camp season ends. They

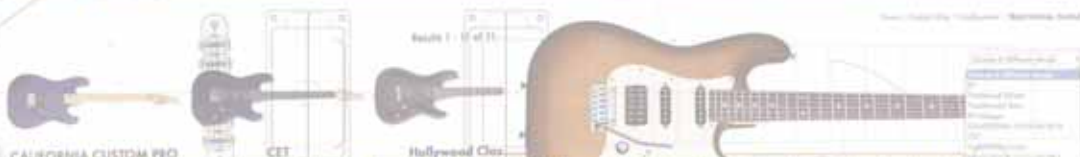


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**Tech Products**

This session, hosted by Jeff Mozingo of Mozingo Music and John Mlynczak of PreSonus, will highlight successful ideas for customizing music technology solutions for local schools. It will also explore strategies to increase technology sales in the short- and long-term.

**7:00 P.M.**  
**30th Annual TEC Awards**  
**Hilton Anaheim Hotel,**  
**Pacific Ballrooms**

Nominees across 30 categories will be honored for creative and technical excellence. Hall of fame inductees include bassist Nathan East and engineer-mixologist Ed Cherney. Attendees must have a ticket to enter.

**7:00 P.M.**  
**Muriel Anderson's**

**All-Star Guitar Night**  
**Marriott Anaheim,**  
**Grand Ballroom**

Now in its 20th year, this guitar-centric event brings together a myriad of talented artists to raise money so disadvantaged youth can have access to musical instruments and education.

**SUNDAY, JAN. 25**  
**BREAKFAST SESSION**  
**8:30 A.M.–9:30 A.M.**

**Best in Show**  
*Frank Alkyer, Music Inc.*  
*and UpBeat Daily*  
*Magazines, and Panel*  
**Hilton Anaheim Hotel,**  
**Pacific Ballrooms**

Best in Show is celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2015. Host Frank Alkyer, publisher of *Music Inc.* and *UpBeat Daily* magazines, has put together an all-star panel of retail buyers who

will teach listeners the key differences between summer and winter camps, how to promote them effectively, how to structure your business to host camps year-

round, and what tools you'll need to make it happen.

**5:00 P.M.**  
**Ideas to Boost Your**  
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**10:30 A.M.**  
**Secrets of Social Media Success (Double Session)**

Laura Whitmore of Mad Sun Marketing leads this high-powered panel of social media pros from the media, music retail, manufacturing and entertainment. They will discuss tips and methods for achieving social media domination. If you want high engagement and tangible results from your social media efforts, check out this session.

**11:30 A.M.**  
**How to Get a Grammy Nod as an Indie**

Linda Chorney made history in 2012 as the first independent artist without a publicist, manager or label to be nominated for a Grammy for "Best Americana Album." Find out how she did it. Chorney will share her wildly entertaining ride and a few adventures from her book, while focusing on where a musician's hard-earned money should and should not be spent to reach for the brass ring.

**12:00 P.M.**  
**Rules of the Jungle: Survival Skills for the Music Business (Double Session)**

Get an edge in the merciless music industry with Jeff Weber, producer, record executive and author, as he reveals the secrets to success he has learned over a 30-year career.

**1:00 P.M.**  
**2015 Best Tools for Schools Awards**

Eliahu Sussman, editor of *School Band & Orchestra Magazine* moderates a panel of editors and guests of Timeless Communications as they announce the winning products in the annual Best Tools for Schools Awards.

**1:30 P.M.**  
**What You Need to Know to Get an Endorsement Deal (Double Session)**

Jen Lowe of Boom Boom Percussion and a panel of experts take the intimidation out of scoring the endorsement deal you want.

**2:30 P.M.**  
**Hit Songwriting: Secrets of the Pros**

Join Thornton Cline and a panel of fellow hit songwriters — including Allan Rich, Michael Jay and Michele Vice — for an up-close look at the craft, art and business of songwriting. This session will explore actual methods of writing a hit, demoing a song, promoting your work and earning royalties, and the secrets of their songwriting success.

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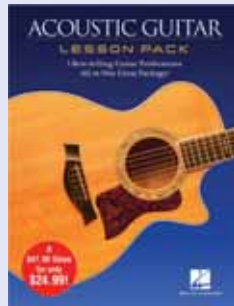
TOMBSTONE



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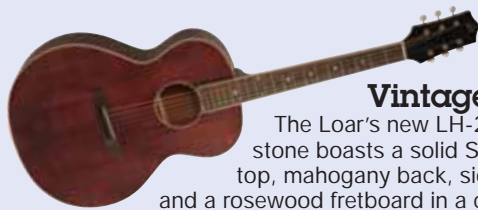
**Sound Value**

Hal Leonard will showcase its Lesson Packs for both acoustic guitar and electric guitar. These new releases each contain five publications in one handy boxed set: four books and one DVD for half of what these components would cost separately. *The Acoustic Guitar Lesson Pack* and *The Electric Guitar Lesson Pack* let students get started with solid lessons using hit songs. The methods' well-paced and logical teaching sequence will get beginning guitarists playing and the music examples from The Beatles, Jimi Hendrix and Green Day, among others, will keep them motivated and having fun. **{halleonard.com}**



**A Big(sby) Partner**

Knaggs Guitars are methodically produced instruments that offer a modern sound, with a classic look and feel. To distinguish themselves even more from the competition, Knaggs is now offering Bigsby Tremolos on all three tiers of its popular Influence Chena and Kenai series instruments. **{knagsguitars.com}**



**Vintage Blues**

The Loar's new LH-204 Brownstone boasts a solid Sitka spruce top, mahogany back, sides and neck, and a rosewood fretboard in a classic pre-war body style. The body features a brown satin finish and a vintage-style bound soundhole. The low-key headstock design is a simple gold logo decal that gives a nod to the guitar's rootsy heritage. **{theloar.com}**



**Stylish Straps**

OMG Music will highlight its new set of Henry Heller 2-inch Vintage Heavy Cotton Straps. The straps contain riveted classic-style leather ends and metal tri-glide hardware. They are available in five unique designs. **{omgmusic.com}**

'Vo, LLC .....	5410	Altamira Musical Instrument .....	1117
108 Rock Star Guitars.....	4386	Altus Flutes.....	3220
1964 Ears.....	3549	Alvarez Guitars.....	4000
3RD Power Amplification .....	1684	Amahi Ukuleles.....	1704
4ms Company.....	6990	Amedia Cymbals USA.....	2865
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Alpine.....	6464	Art Vista Productions .....	6427



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**Silent Spider**

SpiderCapo will highlight its Harmonik Mutes II, which creates natural harmonics with any open string. They are light-weight and even mute string-ring build up and feedback. Use as many or as few as needed.

{[spidercapo.com](http://spidercapo.com)}

**Everything You Need**

The McDSP Everything Pack includes all McDSP's equalizers, compressors, virtual tape machines, multi-band dynamic processors, reverbs, de-essers, noise filters and 'futz' tools. The Everything Pack features all the plug-ins from Emerald Pack, Retro Pack and the new 6020 Ultimate EQ, AE400 Active EQ, and SPC2000 Serial/Parallel compressor. {[mcdsp.com](http://mcdsp.com)}



**Quiet Light**

The new PAR Projectors from Cameo's Flat Pro Series use high performance LEDs and convection cooling to produce amazing picture quality with minimal noise and heat. Impressive color and high refresh rates make them ideal for video production.

{[cameolight.com](http://cameolight.com)}



**Warm Attack**

Five years of research and development has produced Riversong Guitars' Hi-Tech Wooden Guitar Picks that provide the tonal and "wear in" benefits of wood. Wooden picks have many different tones depending on the orientation of the edge and the wood grain itself. The fibertone between the wood layers provides a warm attack and excellent flexibility. {[riversongguitars.com](http://riversongguitars.com)}



ArtecSound Co., LTD .....	2995	Beijing Deyong Musical Instr .....	2800
Arturia .....	6314	Beijing Eastman Musical Inst. ....	4900
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**Machine Revolution**

Kluson's new Revolution Series tuning machines provide the ultimate in performance, stability and reliability with smooth action and no backlash. Three designs are available, all with one-piece die-cast housing and a 19:1 gear ratio. **{kluson.com}**



**Chromatic Characters**

IMS will showcase its Chromatic Character Tuners and its Giving Shelter Charity CD, which benefits cancer patients and their families. The Chromatic Character Tuner was a winner at "Best in Show" in the "Accessories and Add-ons" category during its debut at the 2014 Summer NAMM Show. **{imstechnologies.net}**

**Need a Hand?**

Gig Gear will showcase its Gig Gloves, which let musicians protect their hands with as much care as their instruments. These gloves provide comfortable but tough hand protection and include removable fingertips for added control. **{gig-gear.com}**



**Speak Up**

Moses will display its Sonosphere speaker systems. These uniquely designed speakers improve the amplified sound quality of both acoustic and electric instruments. The round Sonospheres are optionally powered speakers that provide remarkably high-quality flat response and wide dispersion sound. **{mosesgraphite.com}**



Bourgeois Guitars.....	1301	CEntrance Inc.....	7305
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**Compact Kit**

Roland's TD-1K V-Drums are the newest compact kit added to the V-Drums family. The TD-1K features 15 ready-to-go drum kits for playing nearly any style of music. Every drum sound offers a wide dynamic range and natural tone, and the pads provide an organic response that fully supports authentic acoustic playing techniques. **{rolandus.com}**



**Theo's Latest**

SHIVA The Destroyer is the latest mouthpiece from Theo Wanne and comes from years of R&D between Theo Wanne and some of the world's foremost saxophonists. It includes next-generation features, such as Theo Wanne's proprietary 'Shark Gill' chamber (to optimize boundary layer effect), Liberty Ligature and legendary quality. **{thewanne.com}**

**Universally Useful**

The ReedGeek "Universal" Tool is designed to help all woodwind players, both students and professionals, achieve better reed performance more simply and accurately than any other reed tool on the market today. With its compact, portable design and proprietary true-edge retention technology, the ReedGeek rivals even the most expensive reed knives, with no sharpening required. **{reedgeek.com}**



**Colorful Cases**

Crossrock's CRA400 line of uke cases is functional and fashionable. A stylish zipper and password lock reduce weight while maintaining excellent protection. They are available in nine different colors. **{kinstarintl.com}**

Dunnett Classic Drums .....	3064	Epilog Corporation.....	1240
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**Max Power**

Los Cabos Drumsticks will display its Power Maple stick, a new addition to its line of maple drumsticks. Featuring an elongated oval tip, this is the stick for drummers that need a little more reach. **{loscabosdrumsticks.com}**



**Island Customs**

Built at the Kala custom shop in California, Kala's Elite U.S.A. ukuleles contain the finest Hawaiian woods, hand-tuned tops and bracing for optimal tone and a wider fingerboard for increased maneuverability. **{kalabrand.com}**



**Innovative Breakouts**

The new Hosa Pro Breakouts cables make the process of interfacing consumer audio products with professional equipment easier than ever. With Hosa Pro Breakouts, any consumer audio product equipped with a stereo minijack output can seamlessly be interfaced with professional units sporting quarter-inch Tip/Sleeve, XLR or even RCA connectors. **{hosatech.com}**



**Handy H5**

Zoom's H5 Handy Recorder offers four tracks of simultaneous recording, a shockmounted X/Y stereo microphone, and dual mic/line combo inputs — all in the palm of your hand. Like the H6, it can use all Zoom interchangeable input capsules letting you choose the best microphone for every recording situation. **{zoom-na.com}**

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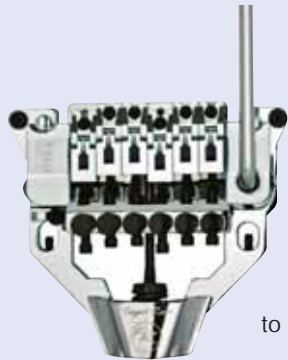


**Ground-shaking Tone**

Schecter will showcase its new Hellraiser Passive Series. The models feature a Mahogany body and three-piece Mahogany neck with Schecter's Brimstone pickups for ground-shaking tone with refined clarity. **{schecterguitars.com}**

**Levy's Latest**

Levy's Leathers will highlight its MV17HD01 straps which are available in Burnt Olive, Tan and Burgundy. These hand-dyed veg-tan leather guitar straps with suede backing represent a 21st century style reminiscent of the 1960s. **{levysleathers.com}**



**Retrofit Rose**

Floyd Rose will showcase its FRX Surface-Mounting Tremolo System. This system will retrofit all tune-o-matic and stopbar tailpiece systems with a locking nut/truss rod cover hybrid that will mount behind your guitar's existing nut, only requiring two small wood screws to be installed. **{floydrose.com}**

**Right on Time**

OnBoard Research will display its PT10C Tuner with precision digital clock. This feature lets musicians discreetly check the time during a gig without having to look down at their watch or mobile phone. The clock will help a music instructor be aware of their class time with just a subtle glance at their headstock. In addition, enhanced mechanical properties offer a truly rugged instrument tuner suitable for all occasions. **{onboardresearch.com}**



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**Natural Care**

Zymöl Music is dedicated to producing high quality, all-natural products that protect your instruments while being environmentally friendly. Visit booth 1161 to find out how you can become an authorized representative or dealer. **{nymolmusic.com}**



**Portable & Affordable**

Dusty Strings will roll out The Boulevard, a new 34-string lever harp with concert tension gut strings, designed specifically for classical players and students. Portable and affordable, with a warm, full sound, this harp is an ideal choice for budget-minded schools and students. The Boulevard is made in the United States. **{dustystings.com}**

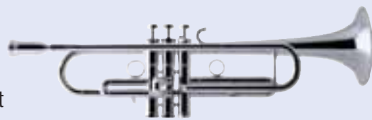
**Shed Some Light**

Mighty Bright will showcase its Crescendo LED Music Light, a brand new rechargeable music light constructed of durable Silicone and bright white, unbreakable LEDs. You'll never need to replace another battery or bulb again. **{mightybright.com}**



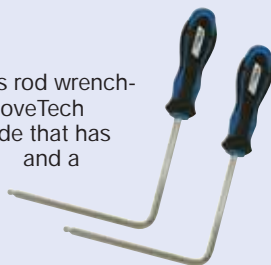
**Schilke Smooth**

Rounding out its HD Series, Schilke will highlight a new Bb trumpet model designed for the notable trumpeter Jon Faddis. This tuning bell model is built on Schilke's HD valve cluster and is available in silver or gold plate. **{schilkemusic.com}**



**Two New Additions**

CruzTOOLS will debut two new truss rod wrenches for acoustic guitars. The new GrooveTech Soundhole Drivers include a hex blade that has been extended for improved access and a ball-end tip that easily fits into the truss rod nut. **{cruztools.com}**



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String #	Electric Guitar	Acoustic Guitar	Standard Tuning
1	12:1	12:1	E
2	20:1	20:1	B
3	35:1	14:1	G
4	20:1	20:1	D
5	24:1	24:1	A
6	39:1	39:1	E



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**Change is Good**

Fostex will showcase the first model change in the 30 years of its industry standard, model 6301 series active monitor speakers. The new 6301N series inherits the robust die-cast construction of the current 6301 series, but now offers such features as 20W D-class amplifier, multi-voltage power handling, detachable power cable as well as energy saving stand-by mode. **{fostexinternational.com}**



**Contoured Capos**

Shubb Capos will showcase its updated renowned Standard Series of capos with contoured edges and a reshaped backing pad made of specialized silicone rubber. They are available in polished or brushed nickel finishes. **{shubb.com}**

**Pro Control**

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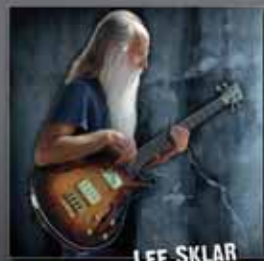


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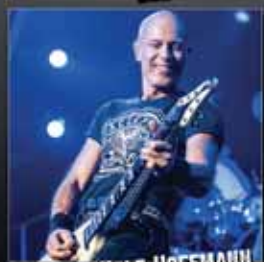
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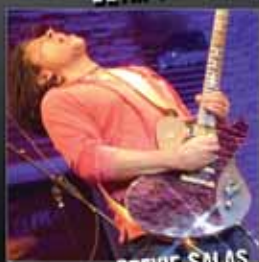
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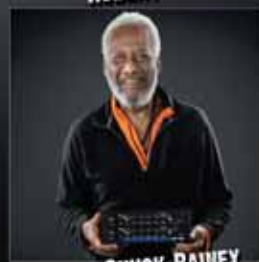
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In 2013-2014, thanks to the NAMM Foundation, GAMA, the D'Addario Music Foundation, the Fender Music Foundation, Guitar Center Charitable Giving, and the Martin Guitar Foundation, GUITARS IN THE CLASSROOM is continuing to bring musical learning to K-12 classrooms around the country. We wish to express our gratitude to these foundations and the following forward thinking guitar related companies for empowering and equipping us to spread the love of making music with guitars to young people every day.

<b>Alfred Music Publishing</b>	<b>Kala Brand Music Co.</b>	<b>Levy's Leathers</b>
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<b>Daisy Rock Girl Guitars</b>	<b>Intellitouch Tuners</b>	<b>Martin Guitars</b>
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**FOCUS:**

# AUDIO &

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## **WIRELESS WONDERS**

Manufacturers put a focus on digital when it comes to wireless systems

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Retailers discuss how they grow and operate their sound installation business

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# WIRELESS WONDERS

MANUFACTURERS CONTINUE TO DEVELOP A SLEW OF NEW WIRELESS SYSTEMS WITH A FOCUS ON DIGITAL

By Katie Kailus

**F**irst came the wireless microphone, then the cordless telephone and, today, Wi-Fi Internet is norm in almost every cafe, restaurant and airport across the country. We as consumers are less “tied down” than ever. And with that freedom to roam has come an increase in wireless systems.

“We live in a wireless world and customers demand the same from their equipment,” said Gary Boss, Audio-Technica’s marketing director for professional products. “Who would have thought five years ago that

people would be walking around clubs mixing from an iPad?”

But Boss said he believes the spike in wireless sales are twofold.

“The uncertainty surrounding the TV band spectrum has made consumers uneasy, and as it becomes more and more difficult in metro areas to get wireless to work reliably, customers are replacing existing wireless systems with new digital models,” he said. “Secondly, people are searching for products that make their life and job easier. This is the age of magic devices that just work. Would smartphones be anywhere near as popular if you had to do a frequency scan and coordination for



each new location you visited? The new generation of digital wireless products take all the drudgery of setup and frequency selection out of the process but still delivers professional sound quality and performance.”

That new generation of products includes Audio-Technica's System 10, a digital high-fidelity wireless system designed to provide performing musicians with advanced 24-bit operation, easy setup and quality sound.

“What makes this system really sing is the fact that both the transmitter and receiver are actually transceivers,” Boss noted. “That is where the magic happens. Because the system is constantly talking back and forth it is actually able to detect interference and change frequencies on the fly without the user ever being aware it is happening. This is not only beneficial to the stability of the System 10 wireless, but it also allows the system to play nice with other 2.4 GHz devices in the area.”

### DIGITAL FOCUS

In today's digital world, it is no surprise that wireless manufacturers have also been putting a focus on digital.

“We entered the digital wireless space more than seven years ago with the introduction of our Technical Excellence (TEC) award-winning SpectraPulse Digital wireless system, which operates in the 6 GHz range via UWB transmission and created a very unique and secure wireless solution for corporate and boardroom applications,” Boss said.

Line 6, which recently rolled out the XD-V Vocal Wireless system that features up to 10 mic models letting users choose the right sound for their voice, offers only wireless systems that are digital.



“We committed to digital long before it was a trend because it was clearly the future,” said Steve Devino, Line 6 wireless product manager.

A number of Shure's products feature digital RF — meaning the actual transmission of the radio frequencies are done by a digital platform.

“The audio itself that is sent over the airwaves is also, in many cases, digital audio, which can lend to some incredibly pristine sound,” said Stephen Kohler, senior director of marketing at Shure, which has a digital portfolio that includes the GLX-D, QLX-D and ULX-D. “The software that is resident in the transmitters and receivers is obviously digital in nature.





Shure's Stephen Kohler

Much of our wireless portfolio, particularly the higher end systems, involves digital audio networking, which allows users to monitor and control their audio over many channels at once.”

**THE FUTURE OF WIRELESS**

Looking ahead, Kohler said he believes the future of wireless will be more of the same.

“[Shure] will continue to use digital technology to drive ease of use, and better RF quality,” he said. “Specifically as the global wireless spectrum, particularly in the United States, gets more crowded and congested, we’re going to be using digital technologies to create more spectrally efficient wireless. Wireless that will allow for operation of more channels in more crowded environments, and will also perform in what I’ll call a ‘smart’ way — meaning wireless that can easily hop around interference and/or use other technologies to get the best sound possible without dropouts.”

Audio-Technica’s Boss added that manufacturers will be forced to find new wireless solutions due to regulations and a diminishing spectrum, and that digital is the next step.

“We think that digital wireless is one of the very viable paths for the future of wireless, as evidenced by our recent string of digital wireless products,” he said. “And as a slight reveal, you may even see more evidence of this at The 2015 NAMM Show ... stay tuned.” **MI**

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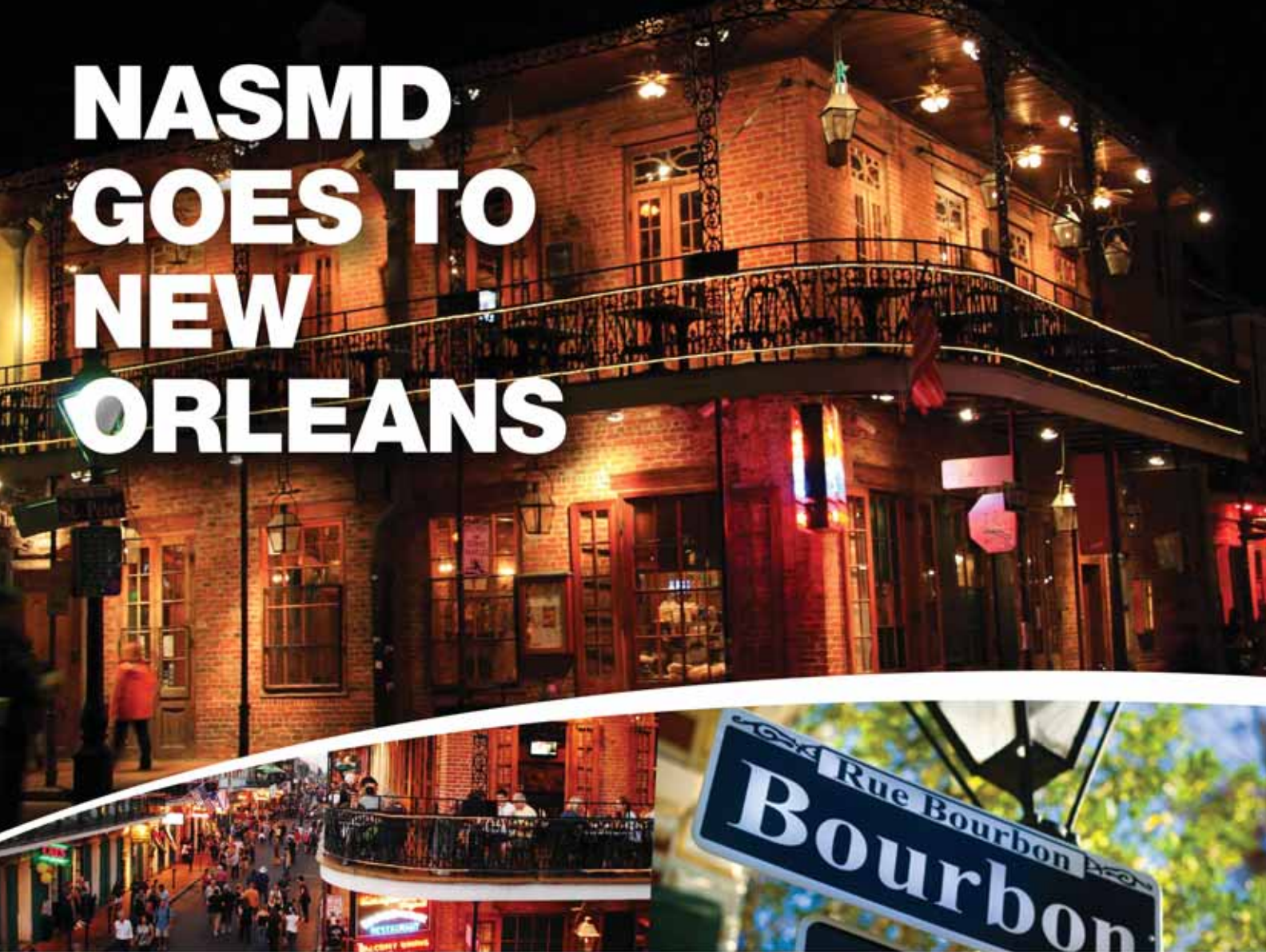
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# THE ART OF THE SOUND INSTALLATION

By David Ball

WE ASKED FOUR RETAILERS TO WEIGH IN ON THEIR STORE'S SOUND INSTALLATION SPECIALTY AND HOW THEY GRAB NEW BUSINESS. HERE'S WHAT THEY SAID:



## SCHOOLS & CORPORATE EVENTS

ANDREW MARRAH

General Manager  
Midwest Pro Sound and Lighting  
Chicago

We get a lot of corporate stuff coming through, including conference rooms. We'll come into [the office] and install conference microphones at a desk and make sure that it's being fed to a laptop. So, we're seeing a different style of sound installation.

We have [also] been seeing a huge increase with schools for sound installation. Typically, they'll need a new public address system installed, or they need something for their gymnasium, or they need something for their theater. A lot of schools are getting ready to revamp, and they've realized how important that kind of stuff is right now.

We advertise to them directly, so that has been helpful. We've been using Google AdWords. We've been really targeting that for the regional portion of installations.

We do mailers to all the schools. We got a list of all the schools, and we're a [Chicago Public Schools] vendor. So, they get the mailer and they see that we do sound installation, and then they'll either just send us a purchase order right away because they can go on our website and [order there]. Or they'll just give us a call and want to set up some sort of conference where we check out the school and they tell us what they want.



## TEMPORARY INSTALLATIONS

### DANNY MILLER

Owner  
Miller Pro AVL  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

We provide for about a 1,700 events a year. These run the full gamut of venues from schools and churches to stadiums and arenas.

We have a full-time installation staff. We have a full drafting department and full-time purchasing agents.

For live production we are typically providing Avid/Yamaha desks, Vertec/NEXO and Omega. [We use] JBL, L-Acoustics, Omega-Corps, Yamaha, Avid, Midas, Soundcraft-Crown, QSC, Shure and Sennheiser.

On the installation side, one thing to note is that the Behringer X32 has become a really valuable tool in both installation, live production and in our video production departments. Not every piece of gear has to be listed on a Rider and cost tens of thousands of dollars to be a valuable tool, and that particular product has done really well.

Most any installation comes with a set amount of training in that installation. We also offer training classes and courses to venues for their existing systems.

We rely on the fact that we have established physical entities in various city locations with fully staffed warehouses to be our marketing front. We try to implement the fortunate ability that — each time we are out in the public — that is our direct marketing opportunity.

Physical advertisement on our buildings, trucks and technicians I think is largely effective [to promote the business] — letting people know you are a force and having them see the name enough times, so that the one time in their life that they need a product, they go, “Oh yeah, what about those guys?”

## CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, RESTAURANTS, & MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

### MAX MAXWELL

Co-Owner  
Mom’s Music  
Louisville, Kentucky



Churches make up 70 percent of our business, with schools, restaurants and municipalities taking up 30 percent. Churches have been the most solid pro-audio client over the last five-to-eight years.

We have an installation crew of anywhere from two-to-four guys that handle the installation of the audio, video and lighting that we sell. So, total we have two designer/sales guys and four installers. There are times when we have two projects going at the same time.

Our main product brands are Electro Voice, Allen & Heath, Sony, Auralex, Sennheiser, Audio Technica, Chauvet and Yamaha, to name a few.

Most clients are trained when the system is installed. Then we are there for their first event, and, depending on the client, [every] few weeks, to sometimes monthly trainings. Most of our clients aren’t professional audio/video/lighting folks, so with turnover comes training for volunteers and new staff.

Most business is word of mouth. Good word on the streets is the best advertising you can buy.



## SMALL-CHURCH INSTALLATIONS

### JOHN ROSBOROUGH

Owner  
Sound of Music  
Kokomo, Indiana

We do one-on-one training because most churches don’t have a professional sound crew. So, you work with them, and you let them grow.

It’s a long journey, but you build your business one customer at a time. You might have a new product, maybe it’s a wireless microphone. It might be a new monitoring system, or a new console board that you want to share. It’s exciting to talk about new technology. They appreciate it, and when you can actually show a need, chances are they’ll find a way of getting it.

A lot of the churches are reinventing themselves in the sense that they try to incorporate not just the traditional worship, but a lot of them are doing contemporary worship. And so you guide them in the direction of equipment that would best suit their needs.

**CAD Audio  
MH210**

CAD Audio expanded its comprehensive studio headphone line with the new precision-built MH210's. Featuring a closed-back, circumaural design, the MH210's are equipped with high output 40mm neodymium drivers for **a powerful sound and an extended frequency response for additional detail, clarity and articulation.** The MH210's are an ideal choice for project and studio recording, DJs and general purpose playback for anyone who appreciates sonic accuracy, musicality and comfort. {[cadaudio.com](http://cadaudio.com)}

**Audio-Technica  
AT5045**

Audio-Technica recently introduced the AT5045 Cardioid Condenser Microphone. The hand-built AT5045 is a "stick-design," large-diaphragm electret side-address condenser instrument microphone with a cardioid polar pattern that **enables the user to capture audio with realism and depth, translating the natural sound of the instrument.** The AT5045 is designed specifically for use on overheads, percussion, acoustic guitar, strings and other acoustic instruments in professional studio applications. {[audio-technica.com](http://audio-technica.com)}







### Shure PSM-300

Shure has introduced the PSM 300 Stereo Personal Monitor Systems. The new in-ear monitoring system has the clarity and precision of wireless stereo with detailed 24-bit digital audio. Patented Audio Reference Comanding ensures **the clearest sound, with ultra-low noise and no artifacts**. PSM 300 systems offer one-touch frequency scan and sync to find and assign a clean wireless channel. [shure.com](http://shure.com)



### Roland SBX-1

Roland's SBX-1 Sync Box is a universal synchronization hub for electronic musical instruments and computers. The compact SBX-1 provides **a convenient way for music creators to use modern production tools and legacy analog devices together at one time**. The SBX-1 also provides hands-on control of timing and groove, and includes CV/Gate outputs for triggering old-school instruments. [rolandus.com](http://rolandus.com)



### Korg MiniKP2S

Korg has debuted the more powerful MiniKP2S, the successor of the classic Kaoss Pad. The MiniKP2S is **packed with effects, controllable via its X/Y touchpad**, as well as an MP3 playback via its MicroSD slot. It comes supplied with onboard sampling, letting the user capture audio from external sources as well via the 1/8-inch stereo input or via the onboard microphone. Samples and audio effects that have been treated with the onboard effects can be instantly exported to Ableton Live for immediate integration into computer-based productions. [korgusa.com](http://korgusa.com)

# GEAR >

GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES

Fender

## Adam Clayton J-Bass

Fender's Adam Clayton Jazz Bass guitar gives players access to the U2 bassist's sound and style. Features include two potent Fender Custom Shop pickups, a Sherwood Green Metallic gloss finish with matching headstock, maple neck with a custom "C"-shaped profile and a vintage-style heel truss-rod adjustment, 9.5-inch-radius rosewood fingerboard with 20 medium jumbo frets and white pearloid block inlays, and a deluxe black hard-shell case with orange interior. [fender.com](http://fender.com)

Bad Cat

## Classic Deluxe

For limited release, Bad Cat has upgraded the Limited Edition Classic Deluxe. The Classic Deluxe was Bad Cat's take on the famous blackface sound that came out of California in the 1960s. This 60s retro upgrade to the Classic Deluxe comes with a lush tube driven reverb and limited edition cosmetics — stone graph grey and steel black vinyl, individually signed and numbered. [badcatamps.com](http://badcatamps.com)



### Levy's MG217

The MG217 is a two-inch garment leather guitar strap with foam padding and black garment leather backing. This strap is a **combination of Levy's 2.5-inch Signature Series MSS2 and their Super Soft M17SS**. The slim contemporary design gives its guitarists maximum comfort in a sleek 2-inch format. {levyleathers.com}



### EVH 5150III Combo

EVH has launched the 5150III 1x12 50-watt combo amplifier. Fitted with a single 12-inch Celestion 16-ohm speaker and **powered by seven JJ ECC83 (12AX7) preamp tubes and two JJ 6L6 power tubes**, it also features front-panel adjustable power output from 50 watts down to one watt. {evhgear.com}



### Aguilar Amplification Chorusaurus

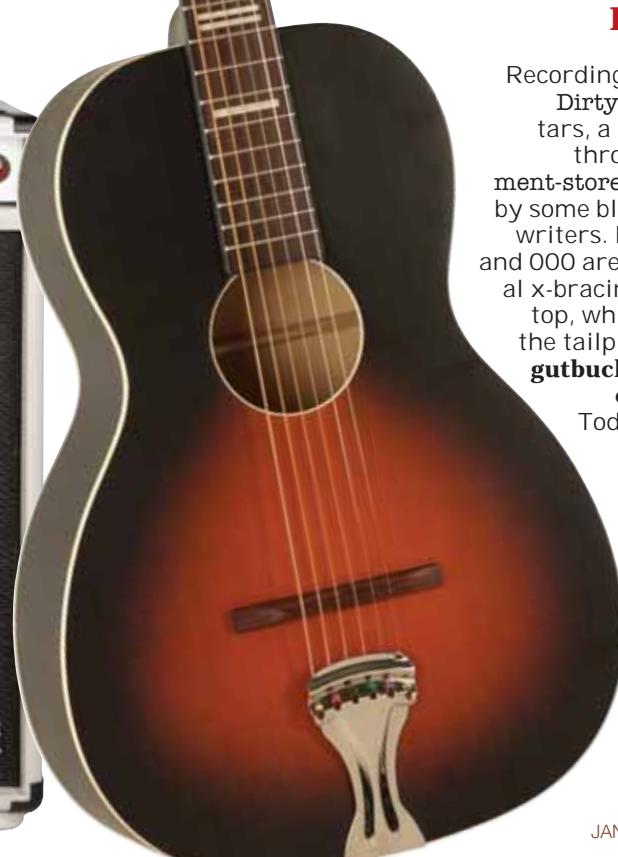
Aguilar Amplification has released the Chorusaurus bass chorus pedal, which uses analog, **bucket-brigade technology for lush, organic chorusing** and provides a warm, rich tone. The Chorusaurus gives bassists unparalleled control of their tone with an intuitive, four-knob layout. "Blend" controls the ratio of dry and wet signals, while the "Rate," "Intensity" and "Width" controls provide maximum tonal sculpting. {aguilaramp.com}

### Recording King HARMONELLA GUITARS

Recording King has introduced Dirty 30's Harmonella guitars, a throwback to the dry, throaty-sounding department-store instruments favored by some blues players and songwriters. Harmonella's single O and 000 are built using traditional x-bracing on the solid spruce top, which, when paired with the tailpiece **delivers vibrant gutbucket blues sound with enhanced overtones**.

Today's Harmonellas are built with traditional truss rods for easy neck adjustments.

{recordingking.com}



# GEAR >

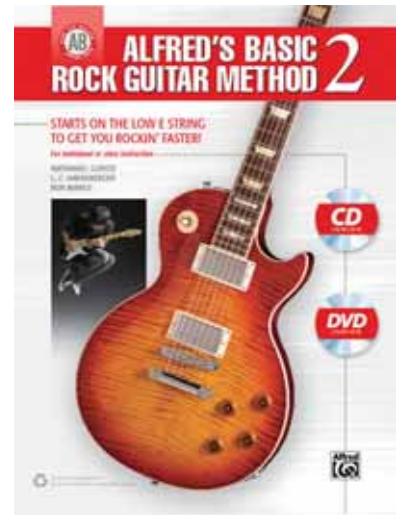
GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES



Knaggs Guitars

## Inlaid Stone Guitars

Joe Knaggs has developed a method to inlay precious stones into guitar tops leading to stunning effects and making every instrument a unique piece. The company is offering chrysocolla, turquoise, green malachite, onyx, pipe stone, balicoral and blue lapis inlays in any of its solid body Kenai, Keya, Choptank and Severn models. {[knagsguitars.com](http://knagsguitars.com)}



Alfred Music

## Basic Rock Guitar, Book 2

Alfred Music's *Alfred's Basic Rock Guitar, Book 2*, expands on the pedagogy taught in Book 1 and includes new techniques like hammer-ons, pull-offs, slides, and **teaches users barre chords, new scales, and how to improvise with pentatonic scales.**

The DVD includes video lessons for each example, plus MP3 play-along tracks for practice. {[alfred.com](http://alfred.com)}

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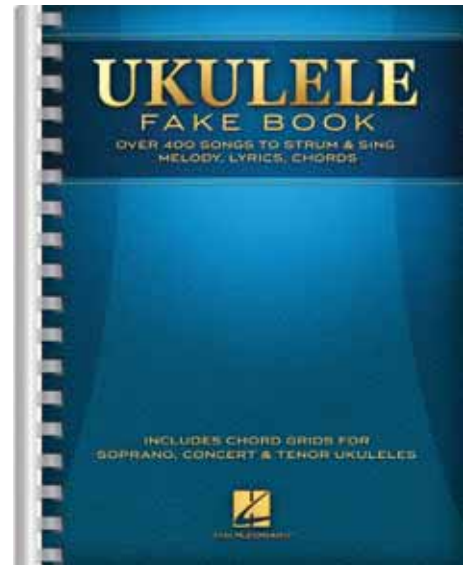
Introducing The Alnico P10R-F

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Jensentone.com

**Maxon  
OD808X**

Maxon has introduced the OD808X Overdrive Extreme. The OD808X offers a wider frequency response than a stock OD808, with an extended high-frequency tonal range that offers additional clarity without becoming harsh. It also features a harder clipping pattern than the standard model, creating a searing, full-bodied drive tone that helps chords ring and notes sing. An additional +5 dB of output level assures that the OD808X will punch through the densest of mixes. {[maxonfx.com](http://maxonfx.com)}



**Hal Leonard  
Ukelele Fake Book**

Hal Leonard's *Ukelele Fake Book* is the definitive songbook for uke players, featuring **more than 400 songs in all styles**. This convenient 5.5-inch by 8.5-inch songbook features the melody, lyrics and chords for pop favorites, including: "Ain't No Sunshine," "Dust In The Wind," "Rolling In The Deep," "What A Wonderful World," "Yesterday" and many more. {[halleonard.com](http://halleonard.com)}



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## DRUMS & PERCUSSION

DW

### True-Sonic Snare

Drum Workshop has released the True-Sonic, a snare drum that **pays tribute to an American classic, but also includes today's latest innovations and build-quality.** The True-Sonic features a pre-tensioned, highly adjustable snare bridge that provides orchestral-like sensitivity and articulation. {[dwdrums.com](http://dwdrums.com)}



TM LLC

### Cymgard

Cymgards deaden cymbal sound while still letting players maintain natural stick to cymbal feel, protect the edge of cymbals from damage and provide cymbal armoring for shipping and stacking. Manufactured by TM LLC, Cymgards are inexpensive, **durable rubber elastic edge protectors** that fit around and onto the cymbal's perimeter. {[cymgard.com](http://cymgard.com)}



Diamondback

### Engraved Drumsticks

Bringing modern technology to the classic drumstick, Diamondback Drumsticks offer drummers the quality and consistency of premium-grade, American-made, hickory drumsticks plus the advantages of a textured grip. The Diamondback laser-engraved handle is **less abrasive than a conventional, knurled finish** yet safer and more reliable than grip tapes and dips. {[diamondbackdrumsticks.com](http://diamondbackdrumsticks.com)}



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### Kendor **Clarinet Studies**

Kendor Music has announced a new edition of the well-known clarinet book. Now fully revised and edited, this collaboration of 18 solo etudes between composer Nathan Kaplan and solo artist/editor Lawrence Sobol **prepares grade 3-6 students for many of the challenges they will encounter** in contemporary music performance, with helpful commentaries preceding each piece in the set. [ikmultimedia.com](http://ikmultimedia.com)

### IK Multimedia **iKlip Stage**

IK Multimedia has released the iKlip Stage, a **free page turning and score management app for iPad**. It makes it easy to organize and perform with music scores, lyrics, tabs and more. Designed for use with IK's iKlip range of tablet holders and mounts — like the new iKlip Xpand, iKlip 2, iKlip Stand and iKlip Studio — it's an ideal tool for practicing at home, recording in the studio and performing on stage. [kendormusic.com](http://kendormusic.com)



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M-Audio  
**Oxygen Series**

M-Audio has updated its MIDI keyboard controller line, the Oxygen Series, to expand on playability and include a wide array of sounds. Available in 25-, 49-, and 61-key models, the Oxygen Series offers an expansive MIDI control surface for the modern studio setup. With Direct-link, **Oxygen series controls will automatically map to popular DAW's**, such as Ableton Live, Apple GarageBand, Apple Logic, Pro Tools and Steinberg Cubase. [m-audio.com](http://m-audio.com)



Keith McMillen Instruments  
**12 Step Version 2**

Keith McMillen Instruments has announced the new 12 Step Version 2, the chromatic keyboard controller for your feet. The new Editor Software was designed from the ground up, **optimized for speed and ease of use and is complemented by a new user interface**. Eight new tutorial videos and brand new templates for software – like Ableton Live – will help users get up and running with ease. [keithmcmillen.com](http://keithmcmillen.com)

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## EDITORIAL

Katie Kailus and Frank Alkyer:  
[editor@upbeatdaily.com](mailto:editor@upbeatdaily.com)

elektraLite

## Audience Blinder

elektraLite has debuted its Audience Blinder, which provides **balanced, bright white light in a variety of options at an unprecedented intensity level for its format.** Delivering its visual punch via 144 powerful, five-watt LEDs, the elektraLite Audience Blinder is available in two versions: "Warm White" and "Cool White." The brightest LED blinder on the market, elektraLite's new Audience Blinder consumes only 950 watts. {[myelektralite.com](http://myelektralite.com)}



## Pioneer DDJ-SX2

Pioneer Electronics has introduced its latest DDJ-SX2 controller for Serato DJ with "Serato Flip" functionality. The new DDJ-SX2 is **the industry's first controller to use Serato Flip**, which can record and playback a user's hot cue operations. In addition, the model features specially designed operation buttons, multi-colored performance pads, and improved JOG wheel reaction time. {[pioneerelectronics.com](http://pioneerelectronics.com)}

Chauvet DJ

## Scorpion Script

The newest addition to Chauvet DJ's Scorpion laser family, the Scorpion Script is a compact but powerful green laser that comes with its own detachable keyboard. In addition to producing text, the Scorpion Script's keyboard **can be used to create customized laser patterns and to apply stunning rotation effects to words and graphics.** {[chauvetlighting.com](http://chauvetlighting.com)}





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>>>  
**Paul Tobias**  
Tobias Music  
Downers Grove, Illinois

The No. 1 has to be our online exposure and the new website.

We did a lot of research, and found a [website building] company we were comfortable with. We're very close right now. We need to gain the online exposure that I think we're kind of deserving of. We're a classy shop, and we're very knowledgeable. We have some of the best inventory in the country. There's no reason to think we can't do well with the Internet.

We also ran into total renovation on the other half of the building, to which we added a very cool 80-seat concert room where we do live music now. The shows are selling out, and that's huge exposure for our store.

The website is going to help too with that concert room, by having a full events page loaded with photographs of the shows that we have done. The event calendar on the website will also draw more attention.

>>>  
**Leslie Faltin**  
Instrumental Music Center  
Tucson, Arizona

I am looking forward to improving my infrastructure in 2015.

I want to use more of the modules of the Aimsi software package. I'd like to start doing online rentals, download info from vendors and implement the [General Ledger] module. I want to streamline and update our business processes [and] learn how other companies do receiving, tracking of school repairs and online transactions.

I also want to strengthen our computer system — add more backup routines, secure our free Wi-Fi, etc.

These type of investments will put us in a great position to grow and continue to serve our customers.



>>>  
**DeDe Heid**  
Heid Music Co.  
Appleton, Wisconsin

## How do you plan to improve your business in 2015?

We are looking forward to fine tuning our operations, our team and our customer experience. We are taking time to focus on our structure, processes and strengthening our team. Updating the store environment and merchandising are also important initiatives. We want to work smarter [and] more consistently across all stores and departments and be more cohesive.

With hiring, we are still working to find the best method. However, we do have a very hands-on approach to how we are meeting candidates with Todd [Heid] or I meeting each one in addition to them first meeting with HR and the

hiring manager. We have to continue to push ourselves to set our own bar higher both on who comes on the team and also the way our current team is performing.

While we do have some [training] programs and plans in place, we are not at an optimal state, and that is something we are spending time to really work on with the new team members, but also with the seasoned ones. We all have to continue to be students and fine tune our skills.

2014 was a year of change for us on our structure with the addition of new players, and the loss of some, too. We are working on becoming a more structured team, and

in October we updated and rolled out our organizational chart, and it is something that we are still working on with the team to convey the importance of how it will help each team member to have accountability.

We are working on our stores' sales budgets and marketing plans. We love events and clinics. They are important to what we deliver in the customer experience and go beyond selling a product to truly believing in the music and music education experience. These will continue to be on the forefront of our 2015 campaigns. What we do in-store and in our communities are both important to us. **MI**

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