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MAY 2016
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IN A NAME?

BREAKING DOWN THE VALUE OF
THE SIGNATURE MODEL
PAGE 52

CREATING THE GUITAR BAR

How owner Jamie Faletti strayed away
from big box design to create the ultimate
hang for his customers

Page 40





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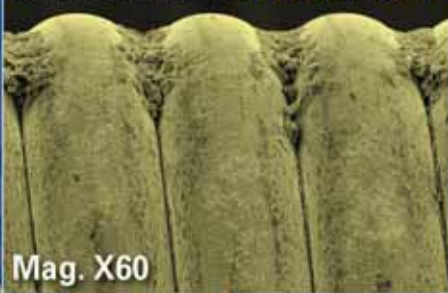


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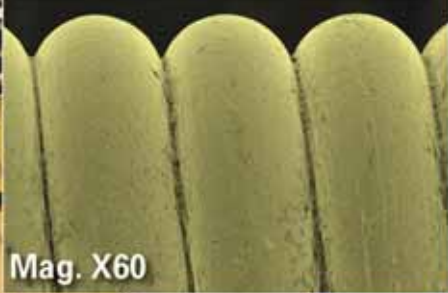
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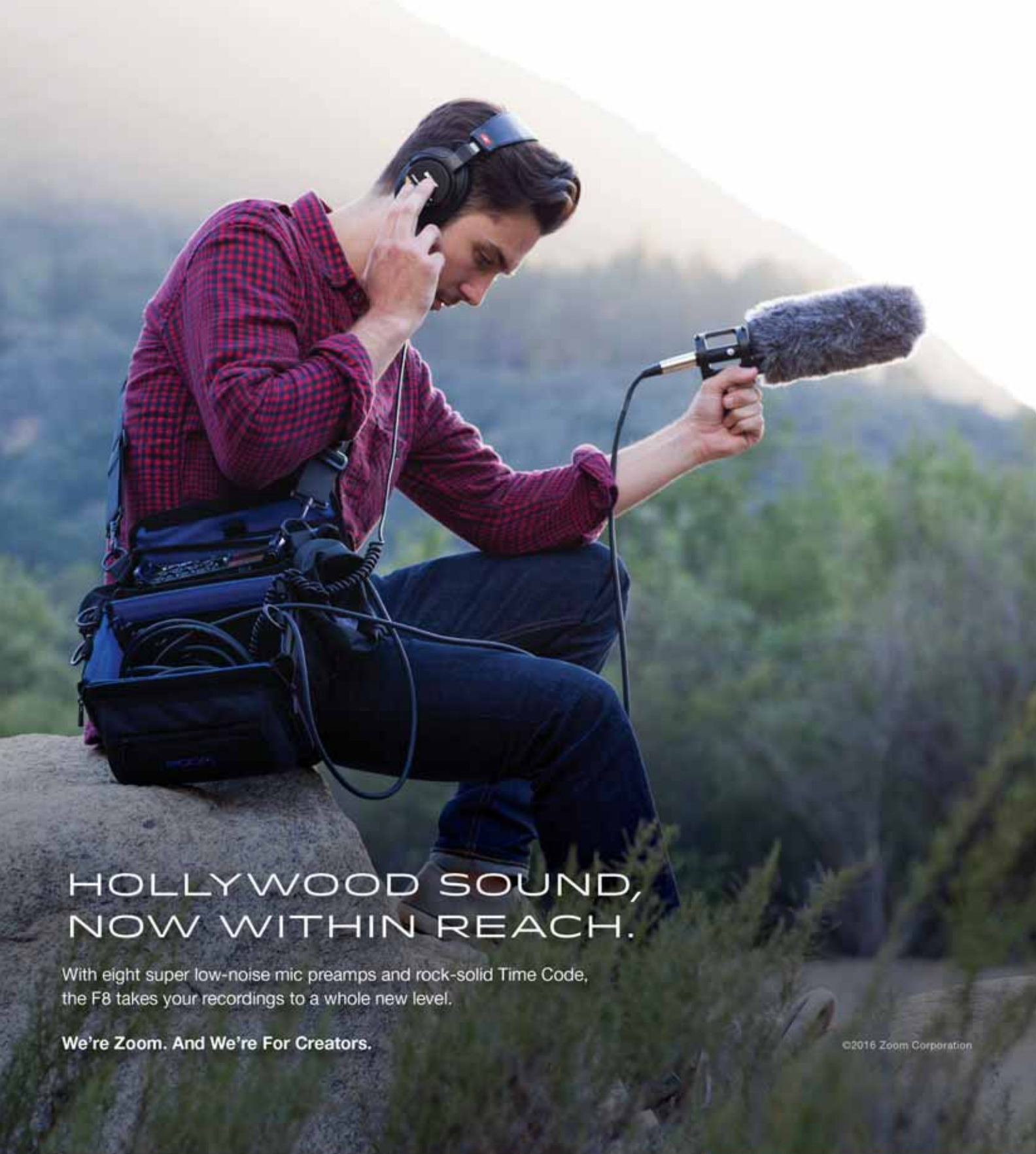
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INSIDE



Jamie Faletti

40 | CREATING THE GUITAR BAR

How Santa Barbara Guitar Bar's Jamie Faletti designed the ultimate guitar showroom and offered his customers a place to hang out.

36 | FROM THE TOP

Avid's Louis Hernandez, Jr. shares his vision for connecting musicians via cloud-based technology.

46 | THE FUTURE OF PRINT MUSIC

How the industry has adapted to digital and where it's headed next.



Hal Leonard's Larry Morton

Photo by Stephen Smith

51 | FOCUS: GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES

52 | THE NAME GAME

Why stocking artist models benefits both retailers and manufacturers.

PLUS: All the hottest new guitar gear.

GEAR >

56 | GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES

62 | BAND & ORCHESTRA

63 | DRUMS & PERCUSSION

66 | PIANOS & KEYBOARDS

68 | DJ & LIGHTING

69 | AUDIO & RECORDING



74 | ASK THE RETAILER

✕ Retailers discuss how they select which used and vintage guitars to stock

»»» RETAIL

PROFILE

12 | Buddy Roger's Music gives lonely instruments to needy kids

13 | NEWS

✕ Meyer Music raises \$60,000 to help music students
✕ Woodstock Music Shop opens Kingston, New York, location

SUPPLY ■■■■ <<<

PROFILE

20 | Manuel Rodriguez III does more than just manufacture guitars

21 | NEWS

✕ Universal Percussion files suit against Guitar Center
✕ SLM, Innovative Percussion sign licensing deal

IDEAS >>>

27 | THE TECH BEAT

✕ Harding on the importance of maintaining a personal touch

28 | THE RETAIL DOCTOR

✕ Cuthrell discusses the benefits of "gig economy" technology

30 | LESSONS LEARNED

✕ Rosenbloom breaks down the difference between fads and trends

32 | FROM THE TRENCHES

✕ Sislen talks the importance of keeping a clean bathroom

34 | NEXT GEN RETAILING

✕ Payne provides tips on how to effectively analyze sales situations

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PERSPECTIVE

PERSPECTIVE | BY KATIE KAILUS

UP YOUR INSTA-GAME

At the end of March, Instagram changed its content feed to use an algorithm instead of showing posts in reverse-chronological order. Following in the footsteps of Facebook and Twitter, an algorithmic feed means users are more likely to see posts Instagram thinks they want to see based on prior engagement, such as likes and comments. Since the announcement was made, the Internet has been abuzz. But what does this change mean for small business accounts?

Basically, now is the time to up your Insta-game. First and foremost, if your business isn't on Instagram, join now. The app is the fastest growing social media platform today with 400 million active users, which, according to CNBC, is substantially more than Twitter's 316 million. Not to mention

what you are selling — guitars, drums, saxophones — are visual works of art, ideal for a platform that focuses around photos, no?

If your business already has Instagram, now is the time to make the most of your feed. Start by finding out what kind of posts are working for your business and what aren't. A great way to do that is to use the free Instagram account checkup tool by Union Metrics on unionmetrics.com. This report analyzes your feed and provides you with specific details on your account and audience, such as the best time to post each week, which hashtags get the most engagement and even what kind of content you should post more of and what content doesn't work for you.

Once you have that information down, interact with your followers to get your brand's name out there. Engage on other people's accounts by posting a relevant comment on a photo from their recent gig or liking a photo of their gear setup. Get your name out there and let people know who you are and what you offer. Drive them back to your website.

Music Inc.'s 2015 Retailer of the Year, Russo — a two-location dealer based in New Jersey — currently has more than 2,900 followers on Instagram. Manager Scott Engel told us in December 2015 that Russo attracts new customers while satisfying its current ones by posting consistent and interesting content, as well as connecting with its users.

"We try to interact with customers and manufacturers to make our stores someplace a new customer would want to be, or want to buy from online," Engel said.

According to Pew Research, 59 percent of Instagram users are on the platform daily, including 35 percent who visit several times a day. Post relevant, high-quality content at least once a day and interact with your users as well as those outside of your followers. Post photos of the newest bass guitar you just got in stock or a drum kit that is on blow out sale. This platform is almost like having a second catalog or website through which to promote stock. Use Instagram to your advantage to get customers to your website and through your doors. **MI**



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LETTERS

A Big “Thanks”

I can't thank you enough for the wonderful piece on myself and my company [in the March/April issue of *Music Inc.*]. It's such a nice feeling to be recognized by an esteemed group of peers and the publications that report on them. *Music Inc.* continues to be one of my key resources to learn about the trade, and to be featured in it is an achievement for which I am most proud. You've made this boy from the sticks blush — and that's not easy to do!

Shane Kinney
Owner
Drum Center of Portsmouth
Portsmouth, New Hampshire

RPMDA Primer

On behalf of the Retail Print Music Dealers Association [RPMDA], I would like to thank *Music Inc.* magazine. We are so appreciative of and grateful for your constant support of our organization over the years, along with your un-failing convention coverage.

This year we are celebrating the 40th anniversary of RPMDA in St. Louis, where it all began! We have an incredible program of sessions geared toward all of us in the print industry — owners, managers and sales staff of both retailers and publishers.

The topics cover a vast array of subjects, including good old fashioned customer service, smart inventory usage, profit building, and the latest in marketing techniques. Some of our highlights are sure to be our “Not-So-Trivial-Pursuit” scavenger hunt planned for Thursday night and a trip down memory lane with our charter members. We're all looking forward to seeing old friends and making new ones April 27–30



— come join us!

Christie Smith
President
RPMDA
Vancouver

Senseney & TGW

Thank you for your recent feature “Get With The Program” [in the March/April issue] on the efforts and successes of Senseney Music to integrate guitar instruction into school music programs via Teaching Guitar Workshops.

In 1995, GAMA, NAMM and NAFME founded the Guitar Teacher Workshops to train music educators on starting guitar programs in their schools, and have since trained hundreds of teachers and introduced guitar to hundreds of thousands of students, growing the guitar commu-

nity and stimulating the industry.

As both a NAMM and GAMA board member, I would encourage more companies to join GAMA and be an active part of the investment to help shape a robust future for the guitar industry and grow programs that focus on guitar education.

Joe Castronovo
President
Korg USA, Inc.
Melville, New York

Going With GAMA

GAMA and its partners NAMM and NAFME designed the Teaching Guitar Workshops (TGW) to do a lot of things. Selfishly, we wanted guitar to become the most widely adopted school music instrument out there and sell more guitars. Like most things though, TGW

adhered to the law of unintended consequences.

For about 4,000 school music educators, teaching guitar became a means of expanding their offering and becoming a more valuable/less expendable employee. For over 1.5 million kids who were not already participating in school music, playing guitar became a gateway to making music and a means of expression. And the intended consequence: To GAMA members and to music dealers TGW became a new, sustainable source of revenue.

As *Music Inc.* pointed out [in the March/April issue], Jim Hill put Senseney at the center of the musical community when it hosted TGW. He garnered new sales opportunities and revenues that did not exist before! Senseney's success story is somewhat unique, but also easily replicated. Here's what happened: 1) Senseney, an independent dealer, opened its doors to GAMA and TGW; 2) GAMA promoted its TGW to area teachers and teachers came to learn to start guitar programs; 3) Those teachers started guitar programs; 4) Those teachers, their schools, and their students bought guitar products ... and guess where they bought them?

GAMA encourages all dealers to get involved in TGW — just shoot us an email: info@discov-erguitar.com

Robert Sulkow
Marketing Manager
GAMA
New York

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Est. 1968

- > **Woodstock Music Shop**
Opens Kingston, New York, location
PAGE 14
- > **Musical Innovations**
Receives U.S. Chamber award
PAGE 15
- > **Dollarhide's Muic**
Closes Pensacola, Florida, store
PAGE 16

»» ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ RETAIL

BUDDY ROGER'S MUSIC | BY DAVID BALL

LONELY INSTRUMENTS FIND HOMES IN NEED

Cincinnati-based Buddy Roger's Music has seen a fair share of B&O instruments go out its doors over the six decades that it's been in the school music business. But in the early '90s, during his days on the road, Buddy Roger's co-owner Bill Harvey began to wonder: Of all the instruments that hadn't come back — whether sold on the spot, or purchased through rent-to-own programs — how many were still being played?

"I was driving around and thinking [about how] thousands of kids play an instrument through high school and into college," Harvey said. "But where do [the instruments] all go? Some are sitting out there in closets and attics, collecting dust and doing nothing."

The idea came as a solution to a problem that Harvey had witnessed during his school visits.

"Every school had needy families that couldn't afford [to buy] an instrument and couldn't afford to rent an instrument," he said.

"I thought, if there was a way to get those [older instru-



Buddy Roger's Music owners Dave Miller (left) and Bill Harvey.

Buddy Roger's Music's LINKS program brings neglected instruments into the homes of underprivileged kids

ments] back in and put them to work again, we could do that."

BRINGING THEM HOME

As a member of the College of the Conservatory of Music's

alumni board at the University of Cincinnati, Harvey pitched the idea as a community outreach project that the board could take part in, and in 1994 the Lonely Instruments for Needy

Kids (LINKS) program was born.

"When people donate an instrument to LINKS, they get a [charitable contributions deduction] from the University of Cincinnati Foundation," Harvey

said. “Then, [Buddy Roger’s Music] processes the instrument for free. We go through, repair it, sanitize it and get it ready, just like a rental instrument.”

Buddy Roger’s also supplies cases when necessary and stores the instruments in its warehouse.

“Then, when a teacher recognizes a child that hasn’t been able to get an instrument, they fill out a simple one-page form online. [The request] comes to us, we match it up with an instrument and deliver it to the school with no strings attached.

“The teachers are the ‘gatekeepers,’ so if a student drops out, the teacher collects the instrument and returns it to the pool to be processed for the next student.”

A POSITIVE IMPACT

Since the program started, LINKS has donated over 3,000 band instruments to kids whose families could not otherwise afford the necessary equipment to be able to participate in school B&O programs.

Devoting time to the restoration of so many instruments isn’t cheap. “You could figure it costs us from \$10,000 to \$15,000 per year, between the time, the money, the repairs, the cases, etcetera,” Harvey said. “But we’re helping over 85 schools in our area and one to two families in each school.

“I think all local businesses need to put back into the community,” Harvey continued. “This our gift.”

HOUSEHOLD NAME

Buddy Roger’s Music’s gift to Cincinnati-area schools has not gone unrecognized. In preparation for the LINKS instrument drive this March, Harvey gave an interview on a local TV station’s community events program right before he spoke with *Music Inc.*

“I’ve [also] done multiple interviews at the local public radio station over the years,” Harvey said. “Then, we get newspaper clips. We’ll send the story out, and sometimes they’ll pick it up if they’ve got a blank spot on the page.

“We don’t lack for getting publicity on it,” Harvey continued. “But probably the biggest thing is the effect it has on the teachers, because they know that [Buddy Roger’s] is where they come to get the instruments. That’s the No. 1 goal for us, to solidify that relationship.

“And sometimes it gives us a foothold into a school that we don’t have a good relationship with, but they have a needy kid, and it gives our guy a reason to go in without trying to ask for a sale. It just gives you a little step in there, and then you try to make something of it.” **MI**



Music students at Olathe High School receive a visit from Yamaha saxophone Artist George Shelby.

MEYER MUSIC, YAMAHA | PHILANTHROPY

Meyer Music Helps Raise \$60K for Music Students

Yamaha saxophone artist George Shelby played to a sold out crowd at the annual Band of Angels (BOA) Heart Strings Gala at the Madrid Theatre in Kansas City, Missouri, raising \$60,000 to benefit area music students.

The BOA program provides musical instruments and summer music camp scholarships to young music students in financial need who want to join school band and orchestra programs.

At this year’s gala, 8th and 9th grade students Morgan and Connor Cravens shared the stage for two

songs with Shelby and his band. The music students from Desoto, Kansas, played along on instruments donated to them through the BOA program. While in Kansas City for the gala, Shelby also presented jazz band clinics for music students at two local schools.

BOA has provided over 1,000 used musical instruments to Kansas and Missouri students who want to participate in beginning band and orchestra programs. The non-profit organization has also given 60 full scholarships to students for attendance at summer music camps.

MUSIC & ARTS | ACQUISITION

Music & Arts Acquires Two Houston Locations

Music & Arts has announced the acquisition of two Houston metro area music stores: Band Central Station in Alvin, Texas, and Conroe Music Center in Conroe, Texas. These acquisitions bring the total count of Texas M&A locations to 21.

Music & Arts will add private music lesson studios inside the Alvin location. The Conroe store will continue offering its music lessons program; however, both programs will join M&A’s lesson network, The Lesson Studio at Music & Arts.

“This is a great new chapter for the Band Central Station family,” said Shari Bosch, owner of Band Central Station. “We’ll still be a part of helping musicians in the area with all their musical needs, but now we will be tied to greater resources with Music & Arts. It’s a really good thing for the music community here.”

“Joining ‘The Lesson Studios at Music & Arts’ is just one example of how we will be able to continue enriching lives through music, but in a bigger way,” said Bob Kindy, owner of Conroe Music Center.

WOODSTOCK MUSIC SHOP | OPENING

WOODSTOCK MUSIC SHOP OPENS SECOND LOCATION



Woodstock Music Shop owners Jenn and Jeff Harrigfeld at the store's Kingston, New York, location.

Woodstock Music Shop opened its second location in the Hudson Valley Mall in Kingston, New York. The store held a grand opening celebration on March 5, featuring performances by local musicians, as well as a prize wheel with a grand prize of a Fender guitar and amp.

Woodstock Music Shop owners Jenn and Jeff Harrigfeld told *Music Inc.* that the decision to open the Kingston location came this past January, when back-stock from the 500-square-foot Woodstock location began to pile up at the Harrigfeld's home.

"A lot of the majors are [leaving] the mall, so it was a good time for us to get in," Jenn said.

Now, with 4,500 square feet of additional space, Woodstock Music Shop has partnered with Music & Arts in order

to expand into the B&O rental market.

"Once September hits all the kids are going to music stores that offer band and orchestra rentals," Jenn said. "We were finding that we really needed something in September to bring traffic in."

"Another part of it is that we have a lot of customers who have to drive all the way to Kingston for B&O rentals. Now we'll be able to offer it in Woodstock as well."

The new location also features a performance stage, and Woodstock Music has partnered with the local rock school to attract additional clientele to the store.

"We're going to do the Paul Green Rock Academy Express here at the Kingston location," Jenn said. "They're going to offer private lessons, and they're also going to do all of our programming for the stage."



BACH TO ROCK | OPENING

Bach to Rock Announces Plans to Open Four Schools

Bach to Rock (B2R) has announced the signing of several franchise development agreements to launch four new schools in Connecticut, Georgia, New Jersey and New York. The announcement comes as part of the brand's plans to add 30 additional franchised locations between 2016 and 2017.

"I am proud to be opening the first Bach to Rock in Connecticut this fall and am eager to make our school a community hub for musicians of all ages to expand their talent," said franchisee Carl Giangrosso, who is developing the Ridgefield, Connecticut, location.

Carmen and Nancy Guinto, a husband and wife team, will open the Roswell, Georgia, B2R during fall 2016. "We want our Bach to Rock school to be a place that everyone enjoys, from our employees to our students," the Guintos said. "It's like creating a new extended musical family."

Eric Philo will head the Rockland County, New York, location, as well as the one in Ridgewood, New Jersey.

"Music is a way to teach the digital generation about interacting with other kids by playing music, talking, laughing and joking," Philo said.

MUSICAL INNOVATIONS | AWARD

Musical Innovations Receives U.S. Chamber Small Business Award

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has named Musical Innovations, located in Greenville, South Carolina, a winner of its annual Small Business DREAM BIG Blue Ribbon Awards, which recognize 100 companies for their success and contributions to America's economic growth and vitality.

Winners were selected from a record number of applicants from communities across the nation. They were judged in four key categories: strategic planning, employee development, customer service and community involvement.

"We were very honored to be included in this list of the Top 100 Small Businesses in America, and very grateful to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for this honor," Leenman said. "'Small Business — Dream Big' describes our company perfectly. This

has been an exciting year for us, first with the 2015 NAMM Dealer of the Year Award, and now the Blue Ribbon Award. We are thankful."

All of the year's winners will be honored at the 12th annual America's Small Business Summit, which will take place June 13-15 in Washington, D.C.

During the summit, one regional finalist will receive the DREAM BIG Small Business of the Year Award, sponsored by Sam's Club, and a \$10,000 cash prize courtesy of the U.S. Chamber.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than 3 million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations.



Musical Innovations' Tracy Leenman and Ellen Brown.



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DOLLARHIDE'S MUSIC | CLOSING

Dollarhide's Music Sounds its Final Note

After 28 years in the piano, keyboard and organ market, Pensacola, Florida-based Dollarhide's Music will close its doors for good when its lease is up on May 31.

Co-owners Bill Dollarhide and his wife Margaret, told the *Pensacola News Journal* that the decision to retire came not long after the couple received an offer from a

would-be buyer in 2014. They turned down the offer, but it got them thinking about the end of the business.

"I turned 70," Bill said. "It hit me like a brick. When you own a small business, you are there early and you are there late. Now the reality is coming close that maybe in a couple of months we might be able to

wake up and decide what to do."

As of press time, there are no plans for the 13,000 square feet of retail space located on the corner of Palafox and Romana Streets in downtown Pensacola.

"We tried to take people where they wanted to be and go further," Bill said. "It's been a fun business."

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APPOINTMENTS



ADAM, BEN ASH NAMED REGIONAL MANAGERS

Adam Ash and Ben Ash have been promoted to the positions of regional manager in Sam Ash Music's Northeast region. Adam's direct responsibility will be the Huntington, Queens, Paramus, Edison and Springfield locations. Ben will be overseeing the Brooklyn, Carle Place, White Plains and New Haven stores.

Both have a deep understanding and love of the music retail business, as both have spent many years in the stores as sales associates, sales managers and all other duties necessary to be seasoned and well-rounded members of the Sam Ash team. Adam is a graduate of Hofstra University and Ben is a graduate of Berklee College of Music. Both have taken business courses to help round out their education.

"The whole Ash family is thrilled that the fourth generation of Ash family members are working towards all of our futures," said Sammy Ash, COO of Sam Ash. "They are great, smart men who have and will continue to do us proud. My parents, Bernice and Jerry, built this company for their children, and now they can say 'for their grandchildren' as well."

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BEST MARKETING AND SALES PROMOTION



Note From Causby

NAMM's Top 100 Dealer Awards

ADVERTORIAL • APRIL 2016 • NAMM.ORG

Industry best retail education, where an awards show just happens to break out!

Watch an accomplished musician perform and sometimes it seems that they have an innate talent to create beautiful music. But we all know to be an expert in any discipline, it takes countless hours, trial and error, and for most of us, some good advice and education. Excelling in music retail is no different, especially if you want to stand out from the crowd.

A successful dealer does more than simply hang their wares on the wall...they host interesting events, immerse themselves in their local community, create an inviting atmosphere that keeps their customers coming back for more and are always looking for new ways to sell, market and merchandise.

This year's Summer NAMM theme is "The Inspiration Begins Here" . . . and you need to look no further than the Top 100 Dealer Awards, the premier Summer NAMM event celebrating passion, excellence and innovation in music retailing, to find a little inspiration and education of your own.

Now in its sixth year, The Top 100 Dealer Awards spotlights the very best industry retailers and shares their strategies for success. The Awards program focuses on seven "best of" categories, showing many of the submissions and demonstrating the elements that propelled these honorees to the top, along with techniques that worked to build their businesses and create more music makers.

The program is designed so all NAMM retail members are placed on an even playing field, as the awards are not judged on size, years in business, or location. Stores can be new, single store, online only, multiple stores, large city, small town or any location across the world, so the highlighted best practices can work for retailers of all types. NAMM retail

members often tell me how the Awards program is an excellent opportunity to improve their own businesses by gaining ideas in key subjects like marketing, connecting to the community, designing your store, excelling at customer service, and helping more people make music more often.

Recognizing NAMM retail members and their commitment to creating more music makers is the reason why the Top 100 Dealer Awards are so special. Winners tell me the recognition and press Top 100 Dealers receive in their community has been overwhelming and has made a real impact on their business. But all dealers can benefit from the program as a once a year opportunity to pick up some powerful ideas. And in the process enjoy a free meal with friends, and enjoy an amazing show. That's right...the Top 100 Dealer Awards is like a free professional education session, where an awards show just happens to break out!

We hope you'll join us for this evening of celebration, inspiration and fun. As always, the awards dinner is free to all NAMM Member companies (first come, first served so plan to arrive early!). The top retailers in the industry will all be there, sharing their tips for success, and making it a great opportunity to connect with them before and after the show to learn great ideas and develop new contacts. And, as one of the best educational opportunities available in our industry, this is one awards show where everyone comes out a winner.

Sincerely,

Causby Challacombe, CAE
NAMM Director, Membership



DISCOVER BEST PRACTICES, STRATEGIES, TIPS AND IDEAS FOR:

- Marketing your business
- Engaging your community
- Designing your store
- Offering customer service
- Managing events
- Promoting music making



Stan and Marianne Houston of ABC Music Store & Academy were stunned to receive the Best Store Turnaround Award from CMT's Cody Alan.



Larry Morton, former NAMM Chairman and Hal Leonard President congratulates 2015's 'Dealer of the Year,' Tracy Leenman of Musical Innovations.



"THE TOP 100 IS ONE OF THE BEST THINGS NAMM HAS EVER DONE FOR A SIMPLE REASON: IT MAKES US ALL BETTER AT WHAT WE DO. IN SHORT, IT RAISES THE BAR."

Jim DeStafney • Blues Angel Music

To learn more and register for 2016 Summer NAMM, visit: namm.org/summer/2016/top-dealer-awards



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NAMM

- > **Alfred Music**
Rep honored by West Music
PAGE 22
- > **Innovative Percussion**
Signs distribution deal with SLM
PAGE 22
- > **Ernie Ball**
Debuts television series
PAGE 24

SUPPLY

MANUEL RODRIGUEZ GUITARS | BY KATIE KAILUS

BUILT ON PASSION

For Manuel Rodriguez III, building authentic Spanish guitars in Toledo, Spain, is not just continuing his family's legacy — it's his passion.

The third-generation guitar luthier's enthusiasm is placed in building the finest instruments, but also in fostering music education and new music makers. Started in Madrid in 1905 by Rodriguez's grandfather Manuel Rodriguez Perez, the classical guitar company now exports to 122 countries and nearly 300 distributors worldwide.

In December 2015, Manuel Rodriguez Guitars signed a U.S. distribution deal with KMC Music, which will help spread the company's footprint even farther.

"We want to show U.S. dealers that we offer good, quality instruments with 111 years of experience," Rodriguez said. "Our instruments are rich in sound, rich in history and rich in beauty."

MUSIC EDUCATION ADVOCATES

Spreading the joy of making music is ingrained in Manuel Rodriguez Guitars — so much so that the company started its own "Music With World Leaders" program which puts them on the map when heads of state



Manuel Rodriguez III

Fresh off a newly inked distribution deal with KMC, Manuel Rodriguez III explains how his family's company is more than just a guitar maker

visit the country. In collaboration with King Juan Carlos I of Spain, the company hands out guitars to world leaders asking them to make music education a priority in their countries.

"We tell them to please teach music to kids. Get music into their education systems. It is a peaceful message. Music has no borders, it's a world language," Rodriguez said.

To date, the company has handed out guitars to some 55 world leaders, including the President of Mexico Enrique Peña Nieto, President of Estonia Toomas Hendrik Ilves and

the former Prime Minister of Tunisia Mohamed Ghannouchi.

“We are like peaceful warriors to change the system for the better,” Rodriguez said. “We want to motivate others to play music. Get more kids to play instruments. I don’t have \$100,000, but I have hands to make guitars to help humanity.”

SUSTAINABILITY SUPPORTERS

Another passion of Rodriguez and his company is running a sustainable business. The guitar manufacturer uses sun power during its manufacturing process, and also utilizes recycled woods on some of its guitar models, as well as ecological varnish.

“We are a very sustainable company, and we are very conscious when making our instruments,” Rodriguez said. “We are investing very highly on eco-guitars. I am very invested in the environment and aware that we are killing our planet. We need to invest in our planet. We are a very eco-friendly, green company.”

THE LEGACY CONTINUES

Over the 111-year history of Manuel Rodriguez Guitars, the company estimates that it has made somewhere near half a million guitars. Last year, the company produced 12,000 guitars and is on track to hit 14,000 this year. With a staff of 55 luthiers, Rodriguez said he believes the company is positioned for great growth.

“We will slowly be adding about 10 luthiers a year,” he said. “Because we are selling to so many more countries now, we need make a lot of good instruments and still maintain the same quality.”

Rodriguez said he believes producing high-quality instruments is one of the keys to keeping kids interested in making music.

“We are trying to make the best instruments to inspire more kids and more people to play music — guitars, or whatever they can,” he said. “A musical instrument is important to our society to make it more peaceful.” **MI**

UNIVERSAL PERCUSSION, GUITAR CENTER | LEGAL

Universal Percussion Files Lawsuit Against GC

Universal Percussion, Inc. has filed a lawsuit against Guitar Center accusing the company of engaging in bait-and-switch selling tactics that caused Universal Percussion to lose out on sales of its WUHAN-branded cymbals and gongs in Guitar Center stores.

Universal Percussion alleges that Guitar Center intentionally misled customers into believing that Guitar Center’s AGAZARIAN products were the same as Universal Percussion’s WUHAN products, such that customers who came to Guitar Center stores looking for WUHAN products were directed to purchase AGAZARIAN products instead. Among nine causes of action, the complaint alleges false advertising, unfair competition, and

trademark infringement in violation of the federal trademark statute. The civil action, which also requests a jury trial, an injunction restraining Guitar Center from engaging in any further unlawful selling tactics, and an unspecified amount of damages, was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio by plaintiff’s attorneys Thomas L. Holt, Caroline A. Teichner and Brandon M. White of Perkins Coie LLP.

Universal Percussion has owned exclusive rights to the WUHAN trademark for percussion instruments since the late 1980s.

Music Inc. reached out to Guitar Center, but they declined to comment. universalpercussion.com

NAMM | PHILANTHROPY

NAMM Foundation Boosts Music Education in High-Risk Schools

Opportunities for music education are expanding in 19 of the nation’s most high-risk schools and districts thanks in part to ongoing Turnaround Arts support from the NAMM Foundation. Grants to the tune of \$142,550 for musical instruments and music classroom materials support the current group of Turnaround Arts schools. The NAMM Foundation has awarded music education grants to all Turnaround Arts schools since its beginning in 2010. Turnaround Arts, a President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH) program, is a public-private partnership that uses the arts to help narrow the achievement gap, increase student engagement and improve the culture and climate in the country’s highest poverty schools.

“We are grateful for the dedication of the administrators, teachers and parents in the Turnaround Arts schools and their efforts to create a new and better learning for students,” said Mary

Luehrsen, NAMM Foundation director. “NAMM members are engaged with many of these schools, providing instruments and repairs, and the energy that results from the opportunities for these students to have music in their curriculum is overwhelmingly positive. We are honored to be involved in this important effort and are inspired to witness the schools’ ability to change and grow with music.”

Research, conducted with support from the NAMM Foundation, reveals that between 2011 and 2014, students at Turnaround Arts schools demonstrated significant progress in student achievement. Of the eight observed schools, seven improved their overall reading proficiency rates and six improved their math proficiency rates. Half of the observed schools improved their attendance rates significantly. And more than half of the schools dramatically reduced suspensions. namm.org

ALFRED MUSIC | AWARD

SMOLENSKI NAMED 'VENDOR REP OF THE YEAR' BY WEST MUSIC

West Music recently announced the recipient of its 2016 "Vendor Representative of the Year" was Alfred Music's Senior Sales Representative Danny Smolenski. This award was presented at the West Music Annual Celebration in February.

"All of our awards are nominated and determined by West Music associates, truly reflecting the hard work and recognized contributions everyone has made," said Ryan West, senior vice president of West Music. "These award winners have truly gone above and beyond in their commitment and efforts when they work with us and our associates."

This year's "Vendor Representative of the Year" Award was presented to Smolenski by Marcia Fuller, West Music print music and special order merchandise manager.

The award recognizes the individual who works closely with the West Music team, providing training, tools and the resources necessary to exceed their customers' needs. An effective vendor representative is thought of as a member of the West Music team, and has a clear vision when working together as partners, expanding the existing market by actively promoting products and participation in music.

From left: West Music's Steve West, Alfred Music's Danny Smolenski, and West Music's Marcia Fuller and Ryan West.



"Danny is a great rep who is enthusiastic about his job and you can hear how genuinely excited he is to share Alfred information with us," Fuller said. "Danny is a true asset to Alfred Music, and he exemplifies our West Music core values — he plays well with others, he is willing to seek out and try new promotional opportunities while making sure all parties get a 'good deal,' he is passionate about his products, he serves with integrity, and it's obvious from working with him

that building and maintaining meaningful relationships is at the heart of what he does."

"We are so proud of Danny," said Ron Manus, CEO of Alfred Music. "West Music is one of the finest retailers in the industry and to have them recognize Danny is a great honor. Danny does an amazing job of helping the world experience the joy of making music, and we couldn't be more proud of him and the great work he does." alfred.com

SLM, INNOVATIVE PERCUSSION | LICENSING

SLM, Innovative Percussion Sign Product Licensing Deal

SLM recently announced the signing of an exclusive product licensing deal with Innovative Percussion.

"Band and orchestra is still a hugely important part of our business," said Mark Ragin, president and CEO of SLM. "We're always looking for ways to offer our dealers something special, something compelling and exclusive to SLM. 2016 will see SLM offering our dealers percussion bell kits,

snare kits and combo kits under the Innovative Percussion brand name, which of course is recognized on a global scale as one of percussion's leading companies."

Established in 1993, Nashville, Tennessee-based Innovative Percussion offers a wide variety of mallets, drumsticks, beaters and percussion accessories.

"This deal with SLM comes at a great time for us," said Eric Johnson, president

and founder of Innovative Percussion. "Our range is very focused on quality, and expanding our products through SLM's incredible network will be a wonderful way to get them into the hands of new customers."

Delivery of these Innovative Percussion products is expected in time for the back-to-school season. stlouismusic.com; innovativepercussion.com

APPOINTMENTS

CAD PROMOTES BECK TO VP SALES



Jeff Beck

CAD Audio has promoted Jeff Beck to the position of vice president, sales. He is responsible for overseeing and driving domestic, international and Internet sales for the company and all of its sub-brands.

Beck started in the industry as a front-of-house engineer for several local clubs and churches in addition to working at Lentine's, a full-service five-store music and pro-audio chain in the Cleveland/Akron,

Ohio, area. Beginning as a cashier and quickly moving into sales, Beck worked his way up to managing three of the five stores and serving as guitars and accessories buyer for the whole chain.

In 2007, he joined CAD as an inside sales representative and was promoted to national sales manager in 2009, taking on the responsibility for international sales in 2013 before being appointed vice president, sales.

"I'm very excited to go to the next phase of my career at CAD Audio and move the company into a bigger and better place in the market," Beck said. "It is refreshing to work for a successful, progressive company with innovative products and an amazing team of people."

"Jeff is a very talented sales executive who brings tremendous energy and drive to the role of vice president, sales," said Brig Carr, president of CAD Audio. "We are delighted to have Jeff heading up CAD Audio's worldwide sales effort." cadaudio.com

Adam MacBlane has been appointed by **St. Louis Music** to the newly created position of communications director, band and orchestra. In his new role, MacBlane will be overseeing the print and online presence of several SLM brands and will play a key role in customer and artist relations, marketing and advertising.

Shure has promoted Ahren Hartman to associate vice president of engineering, and Scott Sullivan to associate vice president of global product management.

Janet Cosgrove has joined the accounting department of **Korg USA** as an accounts payable associate.



New for 2016, 3 Heads 6 Legs



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Sierra Marketing (972-521-6234) TX, OK, AR, LA
Strategy Sales, Inc. (651-225-9141) WI, IL, MO, IA, MN, ND, SD, NE, KS
Upscale Marketing (951-218-9304) southern California & southern Nevada
Southeast Sales (239-898-2988) FL, GA, south AL, east TN



ERNE BALL | PROMOTION

Ernie Ball Debuts TV Series

Ernie Ball has launched a new documentary series, “Ernie Ball: The Pursuit of Tone” on AT&T’s AUDIENCE Network, which kicked off March 25 with blues legend Buddy Guy. The series will focus on the sonic journeys of some of today’s most interesting and compelling guitarists, including Mike Ness of Social Distortion and Billy Duffy of The Cult.

In the debut episode of the series, Guy discussed a wide range of topics, including how he got his start with a 3-string guitar and Muddy Waters’ last words of advice.

Created and produced by Ernie Ball, the series profiles the world’s greatest guitar players and their lifelong search for their own unique sound. ernieball.com



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HAL LEONARD, ROLI | DISTRIBUTION

Hal Leonard Distributes ROLI

Hal Leonard has reached a strategic partnership with ROLI, the London-based music creation startup and inventor of Seaboard instruments.

The agreement is ROLI’s first direct distribution agreement in the U.S. musical instruments channel. It follows ROLI’s strategy of investing in its partner network. The distribution agreement will benefit ROLI’s U.S. channel partners, resellers and customers, as it creates efficiencies and improvements in back-end logistics, merchandising and partner training.

In 2013, ROLI debuted the Seaboard GRAND. The GRAND remodeled the keyboard interface as a soft, pressure-sensitive surface that lets musicians shape sound and make music through touch. In 2015, ROLI followed up with the Seaboard RISE, a MIDI controller that offers a similar touch-sensitive keyboard interface.

“Hal Leonard is excited to bring ROLI to our dealer network,” said Brad Smith, senior sales and marketing manager for Hal Leonard. “We already distribute a lot of complementary products that make ROLI’s products a good fit with our accounts. These instruments are so expressive that it will not only appeal to players who are looking for new sounds but also to musicians who will now create music that they never could create before the Seaboard. It’s a very important landmark creation.”

“ROLI is delighted to be working directly with Hal Leonard, a company that is the best in its class in delivering products to the broader musical instrument and professional audio community,” said Gregg Stein, head of ROLI global sales. “Hal Leonard brings the passion, reach and credibility to accelerate ROLI’s rollout across the United States.” halleonard.com; roli.com



IN MEMORIAM

CATALINBREAD EFFECTS FOUNDER PASSES AWAY

Nicholas Harris, founder of Catalinbread Effects, died on March 9 after a tree fell on his car. He was 37 years old.

Harris founded Catalinbread Effects in 2003. The company is known for pushing the sound envelope with its pedals and not following the marketplace.

“We’re not a market-driven company,” Harris told *Tone Report* in 2014. “We don’t feel compelled to offer every effect type in our line, just to be a ‘complete-line company.’ Our primary focus is to make what we want for ourselves — gear that gets us excited and inspires us to play.” catalinbread.com

YAMAHA | PHILANTHROPY

YAMAHA CARES TOPS \$95K MARK IN FUNDRAISING FOR CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

For the eighth consecutive year, Yamaha Cares participated in the Southern California Half Marathon and 5K races to raise money for Type 1 juvenile diabetes research at Children's Hospital of Orange County (CHOC Children's).

In January 2016, over a dozen Yamaha staff members and friends completed one of the two races and more than 150 individuals contributed donations, the highest number of participants since the program's inception. The money raised — more than \$18,000 with the help of Yamaha Cares — brings the grand total of overall donations to just over \$95,000.

"Thanks to the generous spirit of my colleagues at Yamaha and others from the community, this fundraising effort just gets bigger, broader and better each year," said Dave Jewell, marketing communications manager, Yamaha Corp. of America. "Whether it's running in one of the races, pledging financial support or both, year after year, participation rises to an even higher level in so many ways. What really touches and inspires me is that on top of the money raised for such an important cause, everyone who participates does so with a true attitude of caring, which attests to the spirit of giving at Yamaha and beyond."

Jewell began to raise funds and awareness for the hospital after doctors diagnosed his daughter, Katrina, with Type 1 juvenile diabetes in 2005. This year was particularly special for Katrina, now 23: not only did she complete the half marathon, but she's also employed as a CHOC Children's phlebotomist.

For the second consecutive year, Jewell created a CrowdRise campaign, KatrinaKures, to encourage online donations.

CHOC Children's diabetes program is the first in Southern California to be recognized for meeting and maintaining American Diabetes Association (ADA) standards of care guidelines.

Yamaha Cares is an employee-based initiative dedicated to charitable works to promote education, arts, health and human services, and community development in the areas where its employees live and work, as well as to spread the gift of music to people throughout the country.

yamaha.com/yamahacares



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From left: CHOC's Winnie Tran, Yamaha's Dave Jewell, his wife Beth, their daughter Katrina, and lead physician for the endocrine team at CHOC Dr. Mark Daniels.



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IDEAS

Inside **IDEAS** > **The Retail Doctor** Page 28 > **Lessons Learned** Page 30 > **From the Trenches** Page 32 > **Next Gen Retailing** Page 34

THE TECH BEAT | BY JAMES HARDING

THAT PERSONAL TOUCH

Modern technology has made communicating with people so easy that many of us have forgotten how to do it well. We've gotten so wrapped up in the "quick and easy" way of doing things that some of us have lost sight of our ultimate goal: building meaningful, long-term relationships with our clients.

This is not to say that we shouldn't use modern tools like social media, texting and email, but maybe we should take a minute to consider when those tools are most effective and when a simple phone call or personal letter might do more good.

I recently spoke with a client who tried contacting my store via our website. He was interested in purchasing a piano from us and was frustrated that nobody ever returned his message. Horrified at this breach in our customer service, I looked up his message and found that we had responded to it via an email that he either never got or accidentally deleted it. I apologized to him and made things right, but it made me rethink our communication plan and focus on a more "back to basics" approach.



In a tech-focused society, a phone call and handwritten note will make you stand out from the pack

VIP SERVICE

We need to respond to every customer with a courtesy call. Yes. People are busy, and we'll probably have to leave a voicemail, but at least the client will know we made an effort. If a client is looking to make a significant investment with us, we

need to provide them with our personal cell phone numbers so they can reach us whenever they might need help without having to navigate a computerized phone menu. After the phone call, we can send an email and leave it up to the client to communicate with us in the way he/she prefers. That "VIP" service demonstrates how important these folks are to us and how present we want to be in their instrument selection process.

This philosophy is doubly important when a prospective client tries to call our store. My biggest pet peeve in retail is watching an employee ignore their telephone. As part of our "back to basics" initiative, we are working to help our staff view each incoming phone call as a critical lifeline for our business. No matter what the client needs, he or she should be able to reach a human being quickly and reliably within three rings or fewer. To accomplish this with our limited staff, we have implemented a new phone system that offers a short, five-option menu. With the press of a single button, our clients will reach a human being without exception. We can even press a button at our desks and route incoming

calls to our cell phones if we're walking around our showroom, warehouse, etc. Our goal is to prevent clients from ever having to leave a voicemail. But, if we get overwhelmed and they do leave a message, that message goes to our cell phones, and we can return calls immediately.

OFFERING THAT PERSONAL TOUCH

We've also gotten into the habit of sending personal notes to our clients. Whether it's a quick "I miss you!" note or a "thank you for stopping in" card, we try to touch base with our best clients in a way that stands out from our competition and shows them how much we appreciate them. Many times, they tell us how nice it was to get something in the mail that wasn't a bill or junk mail.

We still use social media to help people learn to use their digital pianos. We use email to announce upcoming events, and we still text funny music photos to our friends in the business, but we've found that "the personal touch" is a powerful tool in today's impersonal society. **MI**

James Harding is a 15-year piano industry veteran, social media expert and swing pianist. Email him at atjharding@gistpiano.com.

THE RETAIL DOCTOR | BY BILLY CUTHRELL

Just a Click Away

For years I used a local graphic designer, Melanie, to create my shop's business cards, lesson collateral, rate sheets, flyers, window graphics, staff shirts and logos. Melanie's office was close by, so I could stop in and see how the progress was going and make revisions as needed. Although I sometimes considered her pricing a little expensive for certain jobs, Melanie did excellent work, so I thought it was well worth the costs. She would often do as many revisions as it took until I thought it was perfect.

I emailed Melanie one afternoon to discuss possible designs for our window posters, and she emailed back that her husband had taken another job and they would be moving to another state. Her husband's new gig would allow her to stay at home with her boys and not worry about opening another brick-and-mortar graphic design shop. She hoped to take on some clients online, although she hadn't really figured out how to set it up just yet.

While I was genuinely happy for Melanie and her family, it was terrible timing for me as we were entering the holiday season. I needed those new holiday window signs soon, and I had intentions of changing our rate cards for our lesson department as well. I like to freshen things up for our staff at the start of each year, so I even had a few ideas for some really cool t-shirt designs for our company shirts. Melanie did

have a few recommendations of other graphic designers that might work out until she could figure out her online business, and I tried a few of those designers she recommended, but I was not really impressed with their work.

A month or so passed, and then one afternoon I opened my email to find a message from Melanie with the subject line, "I'm Baaack." I was elated because we needed lots of design jobs completed, so I was eager to get

caught up on that backlog. However, Melanie hadn't moved back to town and reopened her brick-and-mortar studio. Melanie did what so many others in the "new economy" have done — she signed on as a freelance designer with Fiverr.com. Within a day we were back up and working on designs for new staff t-shirts and summer camp

flyer designs from four states away.

THE GOOD, THE BAD & YOUR \$5

While estimates vary from 600,000 to an astonishing 14.4 million workers, there's certainly thousands of folks now making some sort of revenue in the "gig economy" as anything from an Uber driver to a freelance graphic designer. Melanie's joining their ranks seemed like a win for me, even though she was no longer a block away but a click away.

Melanie's profile on Fiverr.com shows samples of her work for other clients and, as most others offering services on the site, her prices start at only \$5 for simple work. As you need more services, such as source files or various revisions, and many times you need those extra services, the gig extras start to add up. Even though, when I hired Melanie through Fiverr.com to do a simple update for my staff's shirts and paid for her gig extras, I still came out hundreds of dollars ahead of what I would have paid her when she had a physical location down the street from my shop.

What's more, as I looked around the site I started to find all sorts of freelancers offering different services I didn't realize I needed. At only \$5, plus maybe another \$10-\$15 for a few gig



Freelancers offer an affordable way to get exactly what you're looking for

extras, why not go for it? I hired another freelancer to design a few old school vintage logos to celebrate our 20th year in business. I then hired another person to work up a cartoon drawing of one of our long term staff members as a birthday gift, and I had another person I found on the site write and record a great little birthday song parody to go along with it. In all, I had paid under \$75 for the two logos, cartoon character and birthday song parody, and it was pro-level stuff at fast turnaround times.

While those experiences were good, I also found there are lots of folks that are not so good to deal with, no matter what their reviews say about them. I had to ask for a refund on a few orders because what was delivered was beyond bad and not at all what I ordered. The interesting thing about Fiverr.com is that if you post a negative review about the seller that door can swing both ways. The seller can also post reviews about the buyer, so keep that in mind if you decide to write something publicly unfavorable.

Luckily, all I had to do was ask the seller directly to cancel the order and refund my money, which they immediately did.

FROM CARTOON CHARACTERS TO COUCHES

While Fiverr has been great for my graphic design tasks, I use another option to find deals from freelancers in real estate. We've probably all heard of AirBnB, but for a few years now I've used another site, VRBO.com, to locate housing when attending both NAMM shows. Over the last few years I've rented amazing houses (with heated pools, full kitchens and theater rooms) directly from the owners that were located within blocks of the convention centers in both Anaheim and Nashville. Each property easily accommodated the five or more people in our group and at almost half the cost of what we used to pay for hotel rooms in those areas. Couple the housing with a few Uber rides and you'll realize some pretty significant savings over the course of your NAMM trips.

Our civilization is rapidly adapting to the new realities of what employment means and what technology can make of it. The good news is we are all recipients of the benefits. Cheaper services, and on-demand access to these services with faster delivery times is becoming a new normal. Those that may not have been successful finding employment in the last five years in what we consider traditional settings can now make money, and in many cases, lots of it in the new gig economy.

Look at Melanie for instance. Recently, we were discussing by email how her work on Fiverr.com has been going since she started, and she disclosed that she makes more money now than she did when she had a physical shop down the street from mine.

Melanie admitted that lower overhead was a big part of that equation, but she also disclosed that she gets on average 10-15 new gigs per day, seven days a week and almost all of those contain the gig extras. The average order for her work on Fiverr.com is \$55, and that adds up to some serious dollars, folks. **MI**

Billy Cuthrell owns and operates Progressive Music Center. He's a customer service, management and lessons expert.

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LESSONS LEARNED | BY GERSON ROSENBLOOM

Fads vs. Trends

In my last column, I wrote about the intersection of two technologies: smart devices (iPhones, etc.) and the MIDI gear that many of us carry in our stores. I wrote about the market opportunity created when these consumer devices find additional utility interfaced with the gear we sell. I got lots of positive feedback from people ready to embrace my recommendations to grow their businesses. But, I also heard from a few people who questioned whether this was just another passing fad where they'd get stuck with inventory they couldn't sell. So, in this column, I'd like to break down the differences between fads and trends.



The classic example of a fad is the Pet Rock. They hit quickly, had no particular long-lasting value to mankind and no likely follow-up product.

I learned the difference myself a few times too many when I failed to recognize that there is a difference between the two. Fad items hit quickly, and die the same way. Trends tend to build more organically, last much longer, and fall off naturally. The hard truth is, minus a few strong indicators, you never know for sure if a product (or even a demographic tendency) is a fad or a trend until well after launch.

Sometimes, a product can appear in the marketplace as a fad, all but disappear, and then return as a trend item. One such example is the ukulele. When Arthur

Godfrey introduced it to 1950s television audiences, it took the market by storm, selling millions of units. Then, without warning, it all but disappeared. After decades of being relegated as a secondary product everything changed. At first, people

naturally expected that this was, once again, a fad, grabbing hold because it was a less expensive version of a guitar being sold through troubled economic times. But the economy has improved, and sales have continued to prosper. Nearly a decade later, it's clear that the ukulele is not going anywhere anytime soon.

FIGURING IT ALL OUT

So, how is a dealer to predict when a spike in business is a fad, and when it's a trend? Here are few lessons that I've learned through

years that might help you better control your buying decisions:

1. NEVER BUY INTO A FAD LATE.

There's money to be made in selling fad products. But you have to be willing to commit early, make your money, and get out fast. How do you minimize your risks? Don't be greedy unless you really have a penchant for gambling. Buy conservatively so that the fad doesn't completely pass you buy, but not so heavily that you're looking at that inventory for decades to come. When the fad dies, be willing to get out quickly at any price.

2. BE WILLING TO CHANGE YOUR MIND.

If you buy in "safely" and then find that what you thought was a fad is turning into a trend, then realign your thinking and make the product part of your mix for the longer haul. But don't forget this next point ...

3. LIVE AND DIE BY THE NUMBERS.

While I don't dismiss the value of a good old-fashioned gut feeling, I will tell you that the numbers don't lie. If you watch them carefully, you'll see a product is trending — either direction — and you'll be able to adjust accordingly. **MI**

Gerson Rosenbloom is the vice president of strategic management at Sweetwater Sound, the former president of Medley Music, and a past NAMM chairman. Email him at: gersonmusicinc@gmail.com.

'Be willing to commit early, make your money and get out fast.'

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FROM THE TRENCHES | BY MYRNA SISLEN

Bathrooms Are People, Too

A few months ago I went to a tap recital at The Dance Place, a Washington, D.C. landmark dance venue since 1978. I hadn't been there for quite a while and when I had to use the bathroom during the intermission, I remembered how truly funky — and not in a good way — those bathrooms were. Much to my surprise, I opened the door to find a sleek and clean new facility. It certainly renewed my desire to return to The Dance Place soon.



Don't underestimate the importance of sprucing up your restroom

It's impossible to over-emphasize how important a beautiful, clean bathroom can be in reinforcing our customer's positive attitudes towards us. I know you might think I am overstating things a bit, but I don't think so. Remember, women — especially moms — make up the majority of our customers, which is not to say that men don't notice as well.

BATHROOM UPGRADE

I first experienced this reaction myself some years ago. When the RPMDA convention was held in Milwaukee, we all took a side trip to Hal Leonard's Corporate Headquarters in Winona, Minnesota. On the way we stopped to visit Ward Brodt Music. It was a wonderful store, but what impressed me most were their bathrooms: They had papered the walls with old sheet music. It made such an impression on me that I immediately stole the idea, went back to Middle C Music, and papered my bathroom walls with old choral print music. My customers loved it.

Fast forward to the present. I have to admit that I have not paid enough attention to my own public bathroom and over the years kids had peeled portions off a few of the music sheets, and there were places on the walls that had come unglued and worn away. The sink had stains that couldn't be removed and the floor was dingy.

Let me be clear: that bathroom is always clean. I have my entire store cleaned professionally three times a week, and have done so for many years. In addition, my staff makes sure the bathroom is clean every day. But, honestly, it had lost its sparkle. It wasn't inviting or classy anymore.

When one of my teachers mentioned the condition of the bathroom, I thought, now is the time to act. First I found a professional paper hanger. For years I have been collecting antique sheet music from the early 1900s, because the covers are so beautiful, but mostly because I was hoping that someday they would become very valuable. Unfortunately that hasn't happened, so I thought, what could possibly be better than to use those covers to fix and transform the Middle C Music bathroom.

It has worked beautifully. But, of course with the walls looking absolutely magnificent, everything else really looked terrible. So, I decided to replace the floor, and the sink and cabinet. And then I decided to paint the remaining wall cabinet to match the new sink and cabinet. I was able to find floor tiles and a sink/cabinet/faucet unit at Home Depot. Paint for the wall unit came from my local Ace Hardware. The entire job cost \$1,200 including all installation and labor.

What a difference! I now have customers lining up just to experience our bathroom. Yes, I probably should have fixed it a long time ago, but now my customers know just how serious we are about customer service. **MI**

Myrna Sislen owns and operates Middle C Music in Washington, D.C.

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NEXT GEN RETAILING | BY JEREMY PAYNE

Analysis Paralysis

As you make your way through your daily grind — be it at work or in your personal life — you do a significant amount of analyzing. “What shirt should I wear?” “Which customer should I call first?” The difference between being an effective analyzer and catching a case of analysis paralysis is a pretty thin line. I was fortunate enough to learn, early on in my career, that over- or under-analyzing as a salesperson can be detrimental to my success. By following some simple guidelines on how much analysis is enough or too much, you can become a much more effective business professional and person. Test out the steps below on your Summer NAMM planning to make sure you’re moving forward and not slipping into a state of paralysis.



‘A simple top down priority list can help you organize your days, weeks and months to maximize your efficiency.’

1. PRIORITIZE. Let’s get real: if you spend too much time sweating the little stuff in life, you’re missing out on the bigger picture. If you’ve only got an hour to cut purchase orders today, you had better commit the most time to your most significant vendors. Similarly, if you have a limited grocery budget this week, you had better pick-up some nutritionally valuable food and skip the candy aisle. A simple top down priority list can help you organize your days, weeks and months to maximize your efficiency.

2. PICK A VEHICLE. You need to choose the most effective tools when making decisions. Example: As

I plan for trade show meetings, there’s a few types of reports I can run. There is one report that I love; it gives me all the nerdy sales statistics that I long for (whose allure is only paralleled by a plate of chicken wings and beer). This report has a huge amount of data which is extremely helpful and makes sense for most of my large/existing customers. However, it would be too much for the new customer I’m just bringing on board. Instead, I opt for a simple top sellers report for new customers/prospects. To summarize, I choose the right tool for the job.

3. ANALYZE. This is where most people freeze. I have found that a lot of people get too caught up in trying to figure out the

right decision and never actually make any decisions. Going back to my trade show example, I book my appointments, pick the reporting vehicles and then I analyze those reports to come up with an action plan. I could sift through reports for hours finding the perfect list of items to pitch a customer, but I’ve got a lot of other things going on. (Remember the beer and chicken wings?) Rather than trying to reach planning perfection, I find a few things that at least can spark a conversation. Sometimes you just have to take what you’ve got and run with it.

4. FOLLOW UP. The follow-up is just as important as selling or buying a great product. If you’re not checking in to make sure that product is turning over and getting more inventory headed in the right direction, then you wasted your time with the initial sale/purchase. This approach can be carried over into anything you make a decision on. After you go through the above steps, reflect and determine if it was the right call. Look at what changes can be made to improve the impact of the decisions you’ve made. **MI**

Jeremy Payne is the On-Stage brand director/national accounts manager at The Music People and a current NAMM Young Professionals board member. NAMM YP, which consists of young professionals in the music industry, focuses on the betterment of future leaders by providing opportunities to connect, learn and grow from one another. Get involved by visiting nammp.com.

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FROM THE TOP

INTERVIEWED BY MICHAEL GALLANT

LOUIS HERNANDEZ, JR. | AVID

HOW DO YOU START YOUR DAY?

Since I travel 80-percent of the time for business, I try to have the same routine in every city I visit, no matter where in the world I am. This gives me some normalcy on the road and a predictable pattern that I can rely on. I don't sleep much and wake up early, grabbing my iPad to jot down new ideas and goals for the day, before catching up on industry news. In the mornings, I usually engage with clients around the world via email, phone and social media. Connecting with our customers on a regular basis helps me better understand how they're using our products and what business challenges they're facing. Also, like most people, music plays a role in my morning routine.

HOW SO?

My favorite playlist of the week is what gets me going each day and motivates me to start — and finish — my morning workout. I follow a slightly disciplined workout rotation every day to keep myself grounded and healthy.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR MANAGEMENT STYLE?

I'm a pretty direct and action-oriented leader, since I feel like that approach is the best way to accomplish goals. I try to make sure that our employees see the joy and inspiration of working together on a common goal, one that impacts something we collectively care about, like our MediaCentral Platform. The best employees need the creative freedom to find their own way, and I try to help them see how to define success in a way that's good for them, the company, and the community.

PRO TOOLS IS SUCH A POWERFUL AND WELL-KNOWN BRAND. HOW DO YOU APPROACH MAINTAINING AND GROWING IT?

Pro Tools and our consoles have a simple and narrow goal — to allow anyone in the world to create the best sound possible and be heard. With this beacon, helped by our community of incredible artists, we continue to lead.

IT'S EASY TO THINK OF AVID JUST AS "THAT COMPANY THAT MAKES PRO TOOLS." WHAT ELSE DO YOU WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION?

We're extremely proud of our heritage and success with Pro Tools. And, along with that, we have a rich history of leadership and innovation in video editing, as well as broadcast, newsroom and media management. Our participation across nearly every aspect of media creation, live events, broadcast, and distribution brings a huge value that's greater than the sum of our parts. We are dedicated to driving innovation in all of these markets, and providing a platform that enables collaboration and efficiencies across them.

AVID ANNOUNCED CLOUD COLLABORATION FOR PRO TOOLS AT NAMM. CAN YOU COMMENT?

It's breaking new ground in the industry. I know that sounds ambitious, but it's exactly right. The motivation behind it, like with everything we do, started with Avid Everywhere and our goal to enable artists and media pros to create, collaborate, and be heard. We continue to add new and improved workflows to Pro Tools to facilitate the creative process. But music is rarely made alone. Other people are almost always involved, whether it's another musician, producer or mixer. Up until now, there's been no elegant solution for collaborating with others, unless you were in the same room. We're addressing that challenge with Avid Cloud Collaboration.

AND THERE'S A COMMUNITY-FOCUSED ASPECT TO AVID CLOUD COLLABORATION AS WELL.

To enable artists' success, they need to get exposure for their work and find the right connections. That's why we've launched the Avid Artist Community, to connect our huge community of preeminent users across the globe. We believe that this is going to fundamentally change the way people work.

IN GENERAL, HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK CLOUD TECHNOLOGY WILL BE FOR MUSIC MAKING, AND THE MI INDUSTRY AS A WHOLE, MOVING FORWARD?

Cloud technology is already playing a very important role in music creation, and the industry is sure to rely on it even more in the future. There are a couple reasons for this that I'm sure everyone will relate to. We all love the freedom of being mobile, but have the desire to connect



THE DETAILS

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Founded: 1987

Employees: 2,292

Fun Fact: Before taking over his current role in 2013, Hernandez served as Chairman and CEO of Open Solutions, an organization dedicated to helping community-based financial institutions succeed through technology. His books like "Too Small to Fail" and "Saving the American Dream: Main Street's Last Stand" emphasize the importance and power of grassroots actions for sustaining financially healthy communities.

socially, at least on some level. Cloud technology enables both of these. Artists want to work when inspiration hits them, to have access to their work wherever they are, and to be able to share their work with the largest audience possible. Cloud technology gives them the power to do just that.

YOU ALSO RECENTLY SHIFTED PRO TOOLS TO A MODEL WHERE PURCHASERS CAN UPDATE, RATHER THAN BUY NEW VERSIONS. WHY THE CHANGE?

Previously, we would do a key Pro Tools release about once every 18 months. While those releases usually included a lot of new features, customers had to wait a long time to get anything new. Technology has accelerated the rate of change in our industry, so any requirements that we defined 18 months prior to a release may very well have changed by the time the product comes out. Now, as we complete new features, we can release them instantaneously, so customers get their hands on innovation much more quickly than before.

LOOKING FIVE OR 10 YEARS DOWN THE LINE, WHERE DO YOU WANT TO TAKE AVID?

Our goal is to connect everyone who wants to tell a story, be heard, and get paid — regardless of the medium or where they are in the world. And we want them to rely on Avid for inspiration. Over the next decade, we want to see our MediaCentral Platform transform the way the media community works, from students and aspiring pros to corporate broadcast organizations. We've created the platform for our customers and the industry as a whole, and it continues to evolve.

HOW SO?

It's built upon an open, extensible, and customizable foundation that streamlines and simplifies workflows by tightly integrating all Avid or third-party products and services that run on top of it — while also providing secure and protected access. I know it will create change in the industry for the better.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE ASPECT OF YOUR JOB?

Just one? [Laughs.] In that case, I'd say that I find it inspiring to have the privilege of working with the very best

employees, customers, and thought leaders in the industry and collaborating with them on what they love to do. Nothing feels better than bringing joy to others and knowing they are paying it forward to their customers, friends, and even family.

WHAT'S YOUR OWN MUSICAL BACKGROUND?

Music was a big part of my dad's life, which meant it was part of my life, too. He was a professor by day, but most nights he was either playing with his band or rehearsing at home. He played guitar and piano, sang lead vocals, and dabbled in music production on his personal recording equipment at home. This gave me quite a bit of exposure to a production workflow from concept to completion.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM HIS EXAMPLE?

One major takeaway was seeing that it takes a passionate love for music to bring your own melodies to life. Thanks to my dad and my own interest in music, I can play guitar at an intermediate level. But, unfortunately, I didn't inherit his talent when it comes to playing piano or singing in tune — just ask my kids [laughs] — but that doesn't stop me from buying more guitars.

'CLOUD TECHNOLOGY IS ALREADY PLAYING A VERY IMPORTANT ROLE IN MUSIC CREATION, AND THE INDUSTRY IS SURE TO RELY ON IT EVEN MORE IN THE FUTURE.'

WHAT DO YOU DO FOR FUN?

Like most leaders, my work is fun for me and is something I am involved in 24/7, but I do make time to enjoy life outside the office. When I have down time, I like reading books that are trending and staying creative by playing guitar, writing and getting out to photograph the world around me. Exercise is also a fun hobby for me, along with grabbing dinner with my family and friends to catch up on life.

IF NOT MUSIC, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING?

Math and technology were always a big part of my life and an influence for me growing up, along with religion. If I wasn't in the music or media industry, out of those three, I think math and technology would have won out — sorry Mom! I've always been interested in technological advancements that enable active collaboration and connection, whether it's between individuals, teams or businesses. So, I'd probably be working in another industry in which collaboration is critical, spearheading similar kinds of initiatives.

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By Katie Kailus

CREATING THE GUITAR BAR

WHEN OWNER JAMIE FALETTI OPENED SANTA BARBARA GUITAR BAR, HE SHUNNED THE LOOK OF BIG BOX STORES. INSTEAD, HE BUILT A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE FOR HIS CUSTOMERS THAT MADE THEM WANT TO WALK IN AND STAY A WHILE

Two guys walk into a bar ... Santa Barbara Guitar Bar that is. One's a touring musician and the other, a local luthier. They each pull up a barstool at the store's full-sized bar top and carry on a discussion about gear and the biz. The only things missing: two cold ones. This laid back atmosphere is exactly what owner Jamie Faletti dreamed of creating when he opened Santa Barbara Guitar Bar (SBGB) in 2013.

Fed up with what he calls "Guitar Center light" re-tailing operations, Faletti wanted to create a space where his customers felt like they could sit down, hang out and not be in a rush to leave — just like at their favorite watering hole.

"When you go to a bar you sit down and hang out for a little bit," Faletti said. "You don't think that you are going to go in, drink your beer and rush out the door. I wanted Santa Barbara Guitar Bar to be a good hang spot. And that's what we've created here. A place where you can kick back and talk about music, talk about guitars."







SBGB's showroom features plenty of windows for natural light, as well as grabs the eye of passers by.

CREATING A HANG SPOT

The Santa Barbara, California-based guitar shop is located in the city's trendy Funk Zone Arts District, which used to be home to construction warehouses and is now a cultural hotbed with a slew of wineries, art galleries and restaurants. The 1,600-square-foot space SBGB occupies is one of multiple storefronts housed in a refurbished warehouse known as the Anacapa Project. Each of the merchants in the building boasts a similar modern and trendy vibe — one that the Guitar Bar fits right into.

"Our complex [Anacapa Project] created an anchor for this whole area," Faletti said. "While one business is a wine bar, one's a brewery, one's a coffee shop — they all feature a similar vibe that fits with the neighborhood. We have to be on top of our design game."

With a vintage-esque seating area, full-sized bar top with stools and large windows lining two of the walls, SBGB creates an atmosphere that draws in customers who are wanting to hang out.

"The design came out of a metamorphosis," Faletti said. "I always knew that I wanted to get away from the super-packed, have-to-be-selling-something-in-every-square-foot-of-the-store, stacked-up-boxes type of look a lot music stores have. It just drove me crazy. It feels like Best Buy or something. I just didn't want to do it. I knew I wanted to have some comfortable

spaces where people are able to try out a guitar and not feel like they were uncomfortable or they were in someone's way."

Chic couches and armless chairs placed on top of a Persian rug create that comfortable space for those trying out a new instrument.

"We have the type of space that someone can just hang out with a guitar and fall in love with it," Faletti said. "I feel as a business you have to do more than just be like, 'Hey, we have great guitars.' Or 'Hey, we have low prices.' I wanted to create a sense of community here."

Faletti stressed that creating a comfortable atmosphere for customers is integral to success.

"Get rid of the bar stool that you got for free because you ordered six boxes of strings, and don't have people sitting on amplifiers," he said. "Get some actual furniture. It lasts a long time if you get good stuff. It's more comfortable, and it looks more pro."

DISTINCT DESIGN

Surrounding the windows and end-capping the bar are scraps of Koa wood left over from a run of Taylor guitars.

"When I first was putting the store together, I called Taylor and I asked if I could get some scrap wood to do some cool little wall treatments," Faletti said. "I wanted to do something different. The next week they called and said they had done a run of Koa

guitars because they had reintroduced the Koa series. It was the biggest run of Koa guitars they had ever done, and they had more Koa scrap than they had ever had. So, I drove down and loaded up."

Faletti then found a local wood worker and had him lay out the panels.

The store's amp room features a similar look with a diffusion wall that is made of scrap from Taylor guitar necks.

"It adds a little style to the soundproofing," Faletti said. "It looks cool, and someone can be sitting at the bar and have a conversation at not be at the mercy of someone trying out an amp."

The bar, which stands in front of the checkstand and the string wall, features an actual bar top and stools. When Faletti designed the store, he knew he wanted a counter where customers could interact more with staff.

"In a lot of music stores the checkout counter has a bunch of stuff at the bottom," Faletti said. "I hate that because, as the customer I am looking down at the bottom, which is awkward in the first place and it always gets messy. So, I knew I didn't want that. I wanted something someone could sit down at."

When it comes to the store's pedal display, Faletti strayed away from a glass case to make the customers feel, "less separated from the merchandise."

Instead he opted for an in-wall pedal cabinet with hog wire doors. A blackboard

material cut into strips lines the front of the shelves making descriptions and pricing easy to swap out.

While some retailers may not be able to redesign their entire showrooms from the ground up, Faletti said focusing on the smaller details and maintaining product displays can make a huge difference.

“Pay attention to aspects like whether or not the guitars look like a total mishmash and are all facing slightly different directions,” Faletti said. “It’s not very hard to angle the guitars so they are all angled the same way. Just taking a little bit of pride in that stuff is very important.”

PARTY CENTRAL

When designing the Guitar Bar, one of Faletti’s main goals was to create a space where people wanted to hang out and relax. And so far, it’s working. A few times a month, Faletti hosts private events — from birthdays to anniversaries and fundraisers.

“Four months after opening a friend of mine asked if they could have their anniversary party at the store. I thought, ‘OK, I’d be going to that party anyway. Why

not have it at my place?’” Faletti said. “It turned out really well. And the next month one of my friends asked if they could have their 50th birthday party here.”

To promote the store as an event space, Faletti adds “Hold your next party at Santa Barbara Guitar Bar” in its print ads and hosts event coordinator meetings at the store.

“[Coordinators] will see it and go, ‘Oh, this is cool, and I’ve got that wedding reception coming up,’” Faletti said. “We will also host a free fundraiser because a lot of times the people that will go to those types of events will see this and think it would be a cool place to hold a party. It has been an extra revenue stream that I hadn’t even thought of when I was first planning the store.”

THE HIGH-END VIBE

While SBGB does stock some beginner-level instruments — which helps feed a lesson program of about 150 students a week — the majority of the store’s selection focuses on the boutique mid- to high-end market — including guitar builders, such

as Fano, Echopark and Cole Clark, and pedal makers, such as Anasounds, Tone Candy and ZVex.

“I didn’t want to just be another store selling the same four or five brands,” Faletti said. “I didn’t want to just slug it out with a bunch of other retailers with a lot of super common stuff. I wanted to have [a selection] that was more exclusive.”

That exclusivity is also reflected in the store’s design.

“One thing that was really important to me for what I wanted here — a higher-end guitar shop — was that, when it comes to most luxury items, such as an expensive watch or handbag, you aren’t going to shop the jewelry counter at Target,” Faletti explained. “For the most part, the higher-end customer is used to going somewhere nice. When you go to buy a new car, it’s probably a pretty nice dealership. It’s not Larry’s Used Cars. I felt like this was more congruent with what we wanted to sell. If we were to sell this type of stuff in a more big-boxish environment, we would be putting ourselves at a disadvantage.” **MI**

The advertisement features three white plastic canisters of Kyser guitar care products, each with a different colored lid and a white wipe being pulled out. The canisters are arranged in a row against a white background. Above them is the Kyser logo, a red oval with the word 'KYSER' in white script. The canisters are labeled as follows: the left one is 'STRING CLEANING' with a blue lid, the middle one is 'POLISH' with a black lid, and the right one is 'LEM-OIL' with a yellow lid. Below the canisters, the text reads 'WIPE IT OFF' in large bold letters, followed by 'STRINGS. BODY. FRET BOARD.' in smaller bold letters. Underneath that, a smaller line of text says 'Kyser® guitar care products are now available as convenient wipes. At just 5" tall and 2" thick, you can throw the canister in your guitar case and go.' At the bottom of the ad, it says 'KEEP IT CLEAN. KYSER HANDLES IT®' in bold. In the bottom right corner, there are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram, with the text 'KYSER® MUSICAL PRODUCTS' below them.

WALK THROUGH >

Santa Barbara Guitar Bar's hip and modern feel fits right into its Funk Zone neighborhood. Here is a quick glance at the 1,600-square-foot showroom and what went into creating the guitar bar.

Chill zone ▶

When he designed the showroom, Faletti said he wanted to create a space where people wanted to hang and try out instruments. But also, he wanted to create a space that welcomed those that accompanied shoppers as well as lesson program parents.

"At some stores, you see parents sitting in their car for a half hour, or sitting on a Fender Frontman 25 box just biding time," he said. "Here,

I get parents coming in and the younger kids are doing homework and everyone is comfortable and happy. And sometimes the coolest interactions happen between the people that are waiting in this space."



◀ Pedal Cabinet

Straying away from glass cabinets, Faletti constructed his store's pedal display to feature framed doors with hog wire.

"I felt like this would make customers feel less separated from the merchandise," he said.

Blackboard material is cut into strips and attached to the front of each shelf so that product descriptions and pricing can be easily swapped out.

"It works great and is an upgrade from having P.O.S. printed labels," Faletti said.





▲ **Anacapa Project**

As one of nine merchants in a refurbished warehouse space, Santa Barbara Guitar Bar maintains a trendy vibe that coincides with the rest of the Funk Zone Art District. Vines wrap around the outside of the white building and three large windows offer pedestrians the opportunity to check out the store as they walk by. "I lost a lot of guitar space, but it looks amazing and people look in all night and are like, 'Woah,'" Faletti said. "I get people who come in and say, 'I never played guitar, but I always thought about it.' If the space didn't look inviting or cool, they wouldn't come in."



Lesson Rooms

SBGB features three lesson rooms with four teachers who see about 150 students a week on guitar and voice. The lesson program is currently an area of the business that Faletti intends to grow. "One of the major things for me is I want it to be quality over quantity," he said. "I want to be extremely proud of all the teachers that we have, instead of hiring whoever says, 'Oh yeah, I'm a really good guitar player, so I can do lessons.'" ▼



▲ **Amp Room**

The walls of the amp tryout room are lined with mahogany blocks that came from actual Taylor guitar necks. A local wood worker laid out the panels that double as a soundproofing system. "I had the guy lay them out in a completely random pattern," Faletti said. "They offer a good story and serve as sound deadening. Someone can be trying an amp out in this room with the door shut, and conversations can still be held at the bar."

THE FUTURE OF PRINT

Over the last decade, technology has made a major impact in the print music industry. And while the landscape may have changed, the industry has made it clear that physical print isn't going away anytime soon

BY KATIE KAILUS

The impact technology has had on the MI industry has been evident, but maybe not as evident as the impact it has made on the print music market.

Over the last decade, publishers have embraced technology and have utilized it to grow and expand their brands. Where CD-ROMs used to be, publishers have placed links to digital downloads. Online sheet music sites have expanded, and many dealers now have the option of gaining new customers through publishers' websites. But, what does all this technology mean for the print industry?

"We've been very aggressive pursuing technology over the years," said **Larry Morton**, president of Hal Leonard. "If you consider how music is created — at Hal Leonard especially — we use all kinds of software programs. Whether it's method books or transcriptions of a songbook or arrangements of a choral or orchestral piece, it all starts with using technology."

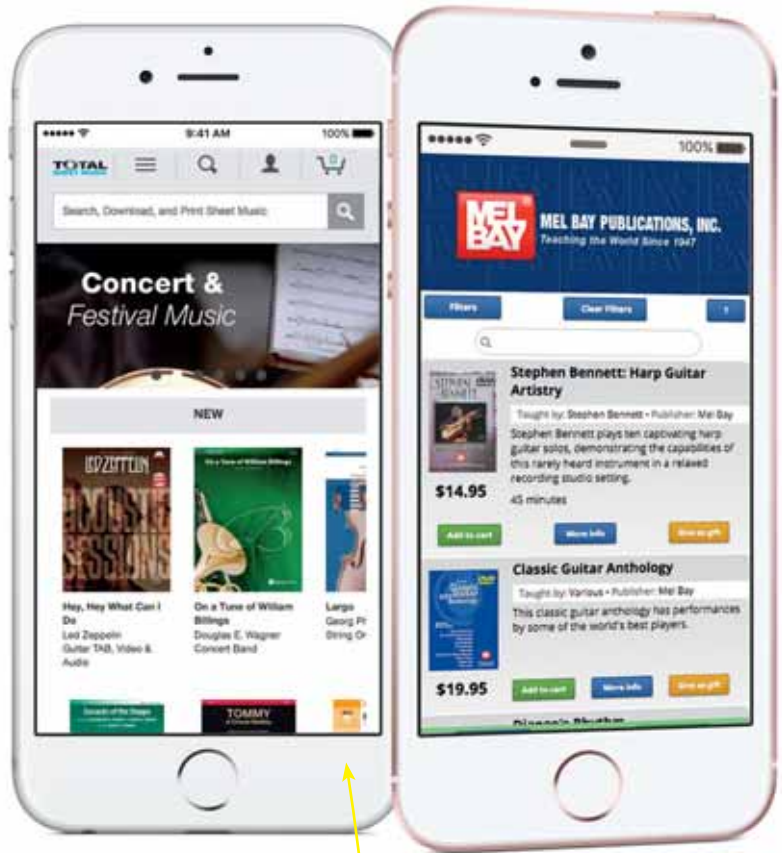
rolled out various digital retailer programs, which included in-store downloads of sheet music, online affiliates and, eventually, a full-on digital retailer program where the dealer could sell Hal Leonard's content through their own site. Today, the publisher has just over 2,000 physical retailers that are also a part of its digital retailer program.

In 2013, Hal Leonard launched MyLibrary, a cloud-based system that offers supplemental content for Hal Leonard publications. The system is a quick and easy way to access audio, video and other files that go along with the publisher's physical books and products.

"We sort of see this phase two that we are in as this notion of buying a physical product that is connected to the digital world," Morton said. "There have been companies in the past that have been digital only. And those have not really taken off to a large degree like they could have. A lot of traditional companies have their heads in the sand and are creating physical products with no thought to the digital world, but we see this as one common market — whether it is physical or digital."

MyLibrary features no direct selling, so there is no channel conflict and the additional content can be accessed from wherever the player is — at home, in a lesson studio or at school.

Mike Watson, manager of print music and



books at Toronto's Remenyi House of Music, said that he finds the system to be neat and a natural progression in the chain of "physical print plus added content" form factors.

"Cloud-based access to one's [Hal Leonard-supplied] backing tracks, in one location, with ability to download if desired, is about all you could ask of such a feature," Watson said. "I suspect that it's the type of feature that will really take hold as the concept of actually playing a CD becomes more and more foreign to upcoming generations."

Alfred Music has made similar steps in the digital realm. Beside running **TotalSheetMusic.com** — a completely responsive site optimizing on the fly and boasting 120,000 titles — the publisher has also developed a program to support dealer involvement with software downloads.

"This allows

dealers to take advantage of this technology without having to stock physical product," said Ron Manus, president of Alfred Music. "It's specific to Finale and Garrigan Virtual Instruments and Sound Libraries. These are just a few of the many ways we are using technology to help people learn, teach and play music."

THE NEXT STEPS

Hal Leonard's Morton said he believes the market will soon be heading into what he calls "phase three," which will continue to connect online learning with the local music retailer.

"Today, those worlds are separated," he said. "As a consumer you either go to the store and take lessons or you decide to go online and take lessons — particularly with guitar. And we see an opportunity to tie those two together where the dealer can sell online subscriptions or



Photo by Stephen Smith

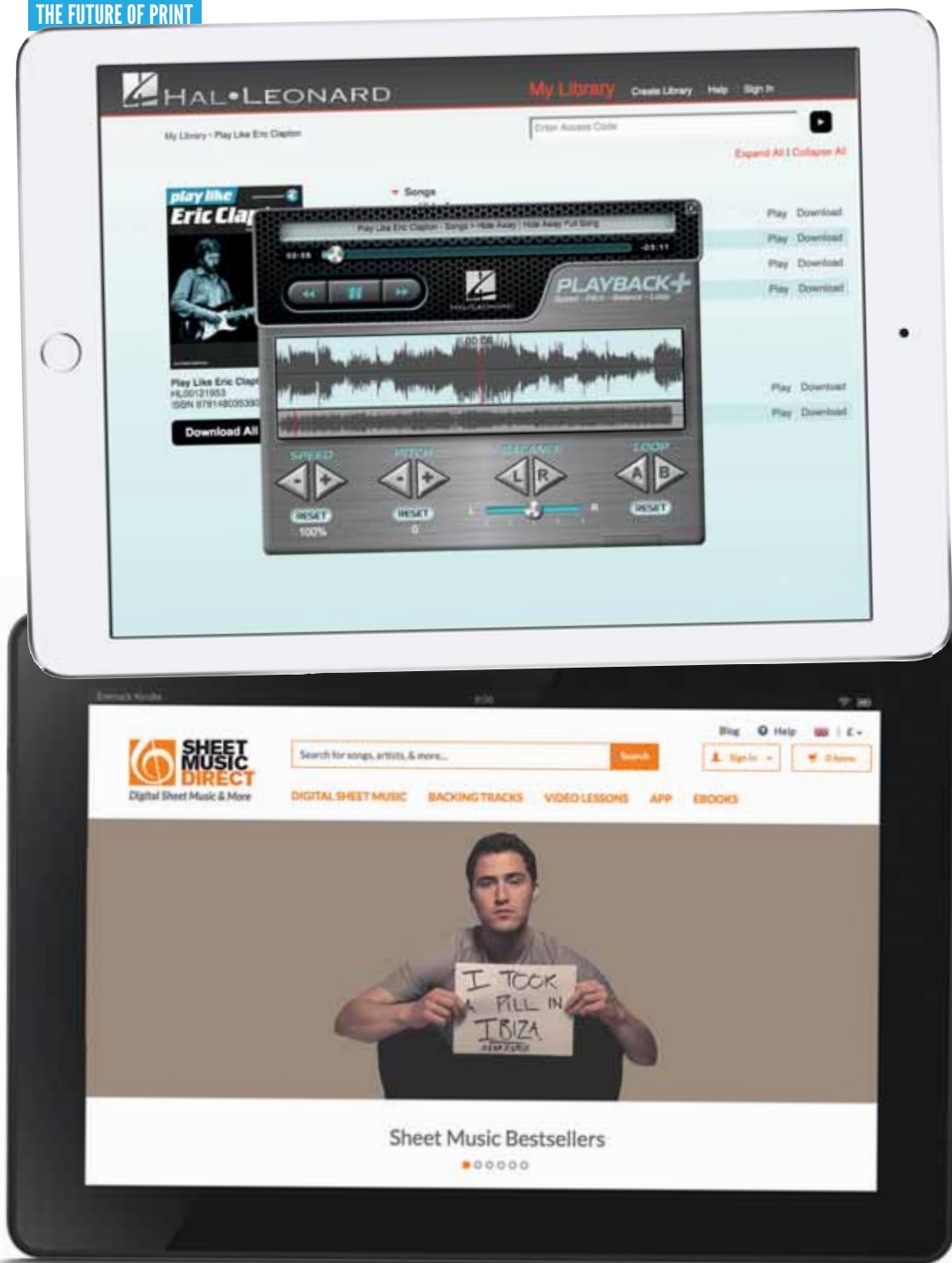
DIGITAL ADAPTATION

In 1997, five years before the introduction of iTunes, Hal Leonard launched the first downloadable sheet music website, SheetMusicDirect.com.

"You have to appreciate the timing here — it was right as the dot-com explosion was happening," Morton explained. "Culturally, we went to our dealers and said, 'Look, this technology is expanding, and we need to be part of it.'"

In response, Hal Leonard





options for dealers to participate. The first is its Affiliate Program in which a retailer puts the TotalSheetMusic.com link on their website. Each time a visitor clicks the link, they are taken to TotalSheetMusic.com and the dealer earns a percentage of all purchases that customer makes. The Dealer Access option allows retailers to print sheet music on demand in their stores while providing customers with receipts for purchases.

“Our third option is Full Integration, which allows retailers to sell Alfred Music digital sheet music on their website,” Manus continued. “In this scenario, Alfred Music provides the supported technology for retailers. The retailer controls everything about the customer experience, including the look and feel, search, page layout, eCommerce, etc. The customer never leaves their site.”

Hal Leonard’s FLIP (Full Line Internet Provider) program lets a retailer sign up with Hal Leonard for free and be linked to the company’s website. With this program, a consumer can check out at the local retailer or choose to pick up a purchase at a local retailer.

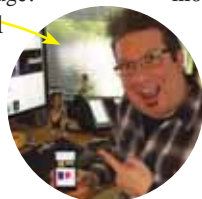
“In the first quarter of this year so far, we have handed over \$2 million worth of purchases to FLIP retailers,” Morton said. “This program is great because it gets the consumer into the retailer’s store. Maybe while they’re there they’ll look at that piano or maybe pick up a package of strings.”

Getting back to the always important basics, Mel Bay’s President William Bay advocates

incorporate online learning into their in-house teaching studios — kind of a learning management system if you will.”

So, how can dealers take the next steps and grow their print selection in the digital age?

Manus said Alfred offers its retailers many different avenues to participate in the evolving market.



“By partnering with Tri-Tech/AIMSI and SPS Commerce, as well as Alfred Music’s Web-based ordering system, retailers now have several options for automating their orders, creating a more streamlined, accurate and efficient process,” he said. “Alfred Music has also created many programs specific to retailers, such as our

Digital Video Retailer and TotalSheetMusic programs. The Digital Video Retailer program allows dealers to essentially have access to hundreds of Alfred Music video titles without having to stock the physical product. This means that money is not tied up in inventory, no invoices to pay and their income is 100-percent profit.”

TotalSheetMusic offers three

retailers get the word out communicating to their customers what they offer.

“I see many very strong music retailers who really know their niche and who build on it,” Bay said. “Make no question, it is hard work, but workshops, lectures and social media are needed today. It is no different from a writer trying to gain a market for his or her works. You have to be out there communicating what you do and you need to always [maintain] a sense of PR and buzz.”

PHYSICAL CONTENT'S STAYING POWER

While the digital platforms continue to grow, both publishers and dealers alike can't ignore the desire consumers still have for physical print.

“I think there will always be a place for physical books and publications,” Morton said. “I look at it positively that books have stayed so strong. There's something about that intimate connection — learning a piece, making the notes on the page, bending back the pages. There's this tactile relationship.”

Marcia Stearns, owner of Bookmark Music in Pacific Grove, California, agreed that physical print music isn't going anywhere — especially when it comes to schools.

“In 21 years in print music retail, I've seen the Internet come into existence and grow exponentially,” she said. “I've seen it open enormous possibilities, but also explode with meaningless output overload. I saw digital delivery evolve from a single-user kiosk to worldwide delivery to personal computers and devices. But, I've also seen no decrease in the use of hard copy materials for teaching and learning. The technology is available, but you still don't see the telltale glow of electronic tablets in most symphony orchestra pits. Until there is serious national — and even worldwide — music education reform, technology won't replace hard copy in schools. Until there is economic reform, there will always be a divide between the ‘haves’ and ‘have nots’ where home computers, personal devices and Internet access are luxuries only some can afford.”

Jeff Simons, owner of Watermelon Music

in Davis, California, said that while his customers appreciate the convenience and flexibility online sites offer those who need just one piece of music, he still finds that most people want a more tangible copy of sheet music.

“While instructional DVD sales are pretty well gone due to YouTube and other sites, sheet music has been much more resilient, at least in our community,” he said.

Regardless, the opportunities digital offers dealers and their customers can't be ignored.


“Technology is moving faster and faster, and it continues to open a whole new world of possibilities,” Manus said. “We are always looking for ways to use technology to make the experience of learning, teaching or playing music better and not just using technology for technology's sake. It has to be practical and useful and serve our customer. That's the most important thing. When we see those opportunities, we jump on them.” **MI**

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THE SIGNATURE ADVANTAGE

P.52

How knowing which
artist models to stock
can make the sale

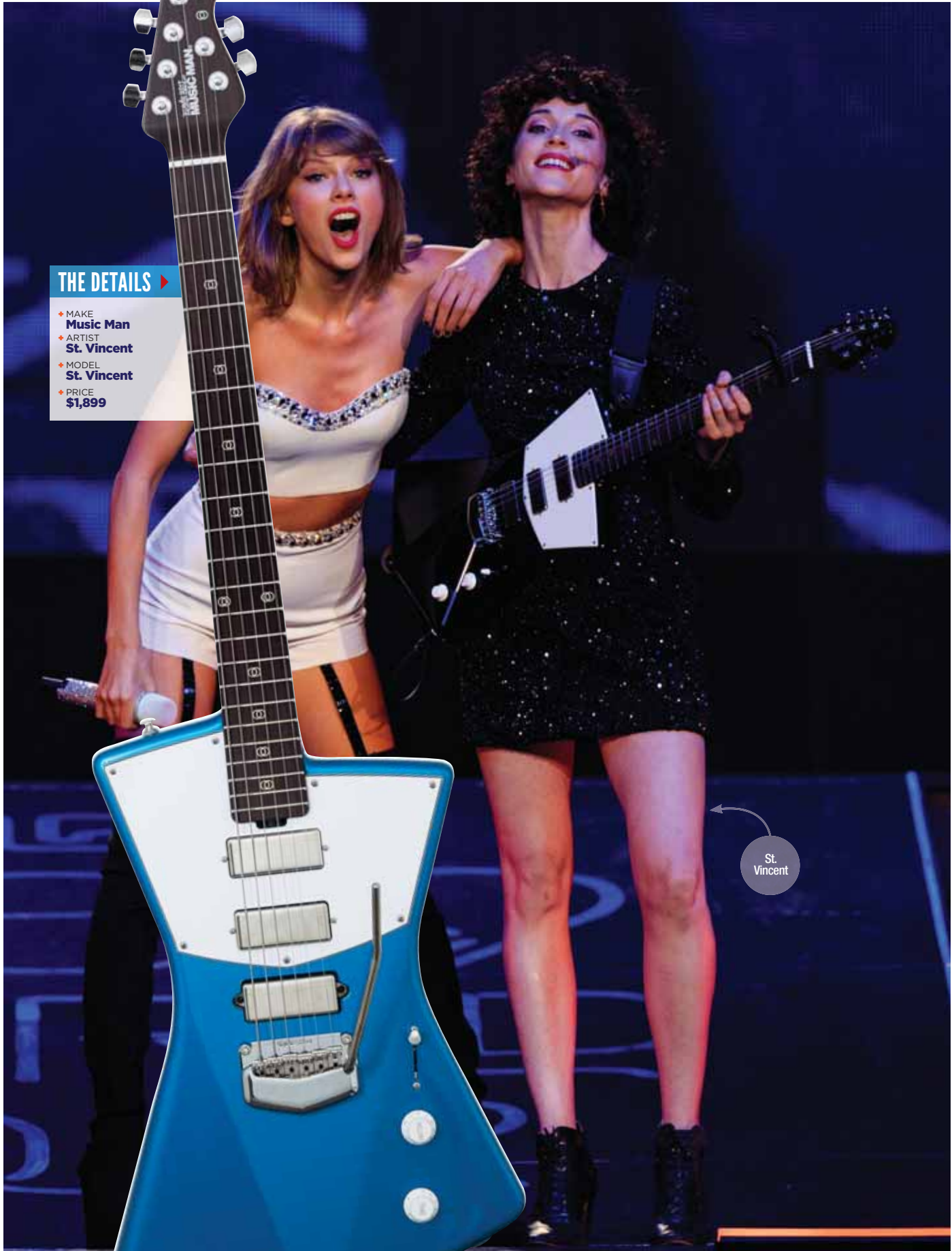
GUITARS GALORE

P.56

A look at the hottest
guitars, amps and
accessories available
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THE DETAILS ▶

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St. Vincent

THE NAME GAME

With more signature models on the market than ever before, retailers and manufacturers alike can benefit from partnerships with artists

by David Ball

Walking The NAMM Show floor this past January, you probably saw more artists' names than you could count — not just on name tags, but on the instruments themselves. From up-and-coming guitarists to pop icons, it seems that more and more manufacturers are partnering with professional players to develop signature models.

The results of this are threefold: the manufacturer's brand gains recognition amongst fans of the artist and aspiring players; the artist's name gets promoted to a wider audience; and — by staying up to date on signature models and the players who play them — retailers can regularly generate new talking points with with potential customers, and may even be able to take advantage of promotional opportunities with the artists themselves.

PLAYER'S CHOICE

For as long as American manufacturers have been building guitars to suit a particular player's needs, signature models have existed, whether or not they were formalized as such. One early example of a "signature model" was built by C.F. Martin

in 1842 for the Spanish virtuoso Madame Delores N. De Goni, whose model featured the first documented instance of an X-bracing pattern on an American guitar.

Fred Greene, chief product officer at Martin, also recalled the 00-44 made between 1913 and 1928 to the specifications of Vadah Olcott-Bickford, a prominent guitar teacher and concert performer of the era. "Those were 'signature models' before any of the other guitar manufacturers actually existed," Greene said.

MUTUAL PARTNERSHIPS

Until fairly recently, only a handful of well-known players had signature models. Produced in limited runs, these specialty instruments were often marketed as collector's items to high-end clients, and the instruments were generally the same guitars the artist had already been playing, but with the addition of the player's own personal appointments.

"Through the 1950s and '60s, you really didn't see [signature models]," Greene said. "We didn't have any at the time. It really started to get hot again in the '90s. For everybody — not just acoustic guitar manufacturers."

So, what happened? Of course, limited run high-end artist models are still produced — but why are there now so many signature models, across such a wide range of price points?

One theory is that, as the music industry evolved and niche genres began to proliferate via the Web and social media, manufacturers had to strengthen their ties with up-and-coming artists in order to increase brand awareness in new markets.

“Without MTV, there are no guitar heroes,” said Jason Kae, owner of Drum City Guitarland in Wheat Ridge, Colorado. “[Fans are finding out

with its signature models. “A signature model is your [brand’s] tie-in with the band,” said Marc LaCorte, executive vice president at Schecter. “You’re both hitching your carts together, and marketing as best as possible.”

Boasting an artist roster of certified shredders, such as Avenged Sevenfold’s Synyster Gates and Arch Enemy’s Jeff Loomis, Schecter has also partnered with artists, such as Keith Merrow — who developed an initial following on YouTube — in order to tap into the creative design concepts of active players.

“There are guys, like Keith Merrow, who come up with these unique concepts. And [the

model], where you have a very unique headstock with a design that is synonymous with somebody specific, and we sell thousands of them.”

Whereas Schecter has sought to tie themselves in with the contemporary hard-rock and heavy metal market, Richard Keldsen, president of Saga/Blueridge, used his connections to the bluegrass scene — which he’d developed as store owner of The 5th String in San Francisco during the 1970s — to provide a different milieu of artists with the specific types of instruments that they were seeking.

“Those early connections with players like Tony Rice, David Grisman and Béla Fleck set the momentum for the kinds of relationships we have with artists today,” said Saga’s David Gartland. “Because of our ability to talk the talk with these guys, and our desire to bring instruments to the market that were better than anything out there, that rekindled the spirit of the old prewar stuff. They understand that we’re talking about making instruments that make their jobs better.”

CROSSING GENRES

Another company that was ahead of the surge, Ernie Ball Music Man developed its first signature model for Steve Morse in 1986, and since then the company has striven to cater to artists needs over all other considerations.

“[Morse’s] concern was, when he was working with other companies, he would have an idea, and they would tell him why the public didn’t want it,” said Sterling Ball, CEO of Ernie Ball Music Man (EBMM). “I said, ‘I don’t care about the public. I’m making your guitar. If your guitar is right, somebody will buy it.’”

Ball was on to something. Since issuing Steve Morse No.1 of the initial run of 50 signature models, Morse has only recently retired that guitar, and the line has become one of EBMM’s staple signature models.

EBMM has added a few more artists to its roster this year, with the release of the St. Vincent Signature, as well as the James Valentine Signature, at The NAMM Show 2016. These were introduced alongside the newest iteration of its John Petrucci models — the company’s most successful signature line to date.

Ball attributes the company’s success with signature models to its ability to appeal to more than one type of audience.

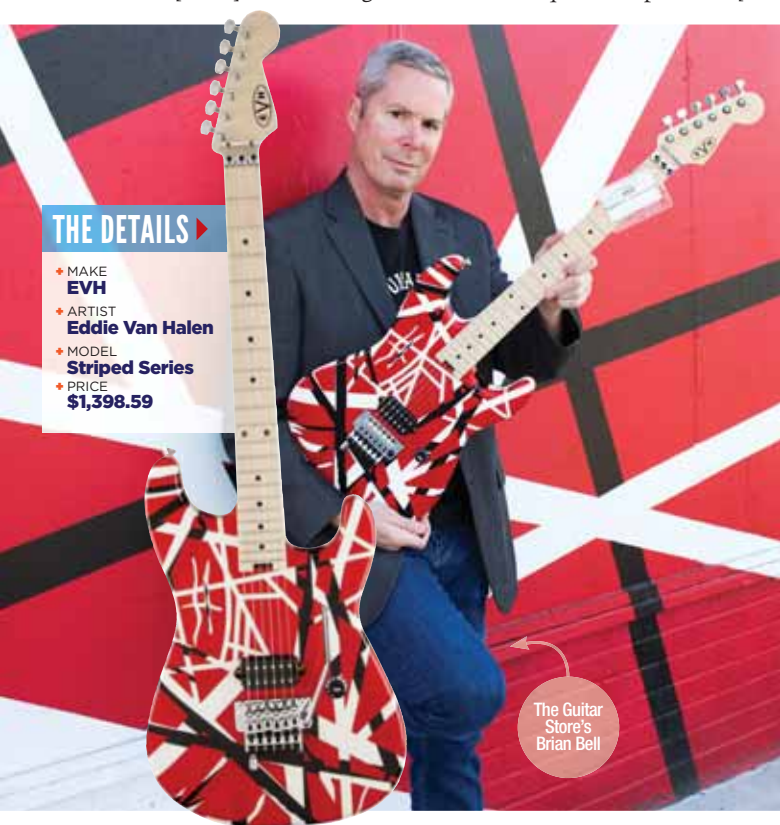
“The idea and the goal, hopefully, is that you’ve created a new choice for musicians,” Ball said. “The thing you hope for, once you’ve designed something where you didn’t consider the buying public — but then you want them to buy it — you hope that it has cross-genre appeal.”

Ken Haas of Reverend Guitars has a similar approach to signature models.

“With Rick Vito’s signature model, there are people that really like the Art Deco vibe,” Haas said. “It’s cool that it’s a Rick Vito guitar, but we certainly don’t sell them on the strength of [Vito] alone. We sell it because Rick’s ideas for a guitar blended with our ideas for a guitar, and made something else that was an interesting statement in itself. Then, hopefully that statement appeals to a wider audience than just fans of Reverend and just fans of Rick.”

CONVERSATION PIECES

Whether or not your store sells very many, you should always have a few signature models in stock.

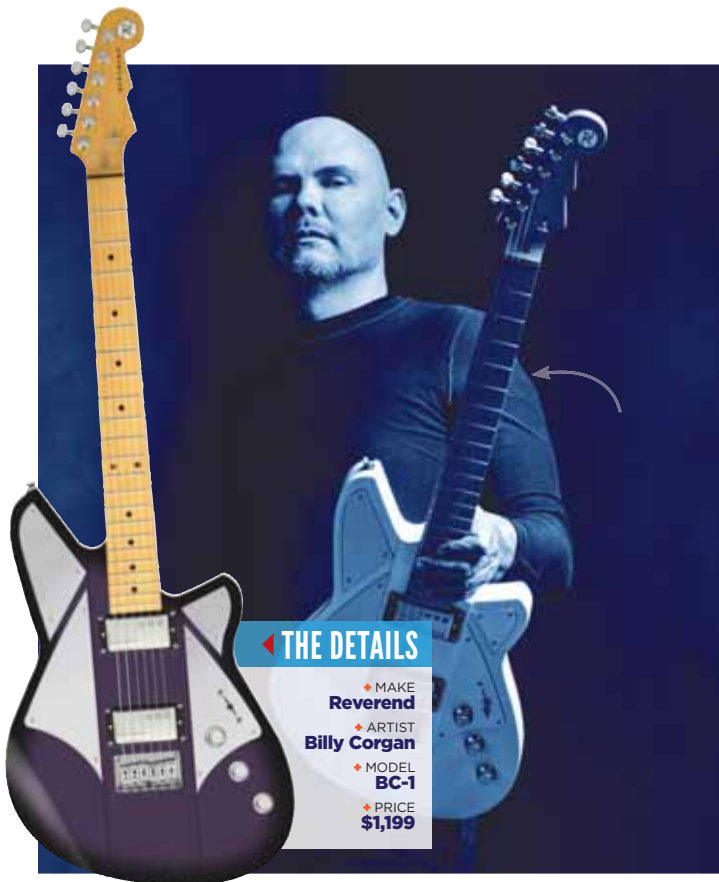


about them through Instagram and Facebook, and there are a couple of guys who have signature models and don’t even have record deals.”

Schecter is one company that’s keenly aware of the kind of audience it’s trying to attract

Keith Merrow signature] was a hit because it was a great guitar for that market,” Lacorte said. “It doesn’t really have anybody’s name all over it, and anybody can play it.

“Then, on the flip side, there’s the [Synyster Gates



“It creates a certain buzz,” said Brian Bell, manager at The Guitar Store in Seattle. “If you carry a brand that’s coming out with a model that people are seeking, it brings people in.”

“When we got the first wave of [Reverend] Billy Corgans, we sold two within the first couple of days to people who’d never shopped with us before. They checked Reverend’s website, and they saw that we were a local dealer. They’d heard the buzz from The NAMM Show and wanted to check them out, and they ended up buying [the guitars].”

Even if customers who come in to look at signature models don’t end up buying one, knowing about the artist and being able to talk about the guitar, as well as the artist’s music, is one more way to get to know the customer and to help them find what they’re looking for.

“You never want somebody to call you and ask, ‘What’s new?’ and you don’t have anything to talk about,” Haas advised. “Sig-

nature models are just another thing that a retail store employee can have in their arsenal of things to talk about with customers.”

Of all the benefits to carrying signature models, one of the most rewarding to dealers as well as fans is the potential to host promotional events in-store featuring the artists themselves.

“Artists that have signature models can actually have a relationship [with the store],” Bell said. He recounted how — after an on-stage incident in which Pete Anderson broke the headstock on his signature Reverend while playing in Seattle — The Guitar Store came to his aid, and he offered to return the favor sometime.

“When we expanded, [Anderson] came in and his three-piece band set up and played a full set to a packed house,” Bell said. “We’re able to then tell a story to our clients, that we have a personal relationship with this artist — and, yeah, we believe in this guitar, but we also believe in this guy or gal.” **MI**

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(sagamusic.com)



ERNIE BALL MUSIC MAN **JP16**

Ernie Ball Music Man's John Petrucci JP16 offers a combination of some of the best features from previous John Petrucci signature instruments. The JP16 retains the styling of the current JP15 and features a basswood body with original JP6 arm scoop, black Floyd Rose Pro series tremolo with matching black hardware, and two DiMarzio Illuminator humbucking pickups with a 20 decibel boost.

(music-man.com)



REVEREND **RICK VITO RT**

Reverend's Rick Vito RT features an Art Deco look with premium Reverend appointments, including an ebony fretboard, korina body, stair-step tuners, pickup pan knob and Reverend's Standard Two-Tone Teardrop case. The Rick Vito RT also includes Reverend's own Revtron pickups and a Bigsby tailpiece, ideal for punchy, twangy playing styles.

(reverendguitars.com)



**TWA
TRISKELION MK II**

Godlyke has released the TWA TK-02 Triskelion Mk II, a variable-state bandpass filter with adjustable gain. The Triskelion's specially designed filter can create glass clean tones, boost midrange for throaty solos, or tune a rig to any room to increase resonant feedback. The Triskelion circuit is based on the Systech Harmonic Energizer, which has been used by artists, including Joe Walsh, Greg Lake and Frank Zappa. MSRP: \$229. (godlyke.com)



**KYSER
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Kyser has introduced a line of disposable cleaning wipes. Available in an oval-wide canister, which can be tossed into a guitar case or gig bag, each canister contains 35 wipes. String cleaning will keep strings clean and fresh, polish will shine up any wooden instrument, and Lem-Oil will clean fretboards and bridges. (kysermusical.com)



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VERELLEN KALALOC

Verellen's Kalaloch is a 1,400-watt stereo hybrid amplifier for guitar and bass designed to give plenty of clean headroom for the pedal obsessed guitar player, as well as massive power and low end to bass players. The Kalaloch features a pair of hand-wired tube preamps to lend tube character to the circuit, while a pair of lightweight class D solid state power amps deliver distortionless sound to the speaker.

{verellenamplifiers.com}

EHX BASS PREACHER

Electro-Harmonix has debuted the Bass Preacher, a compact compressor/sustainer designed for the powerful low frequencies and dynamic range produced by a modern bass guitar. The Bass Preacher produces a maximum gain reduction of -21 dB and its Volume control lets the user adjust the amount of makeup gain to cut, match or boost the outgoing signal in relation to the incoming one. MSRP: \$105.50.

{ehx.com}



DOD LOOKING GLASS OVERDRIVE

DigiTech has introduced the Looking Glass Overdrive, a collaboration between DigiTech's DOD and the boutique pedal company SHOE pedals. The Looking Glass works well for any musical task: lead, rhythm, low-gain, high-gain or even as a tone-shaping boost. Dual gain ranges are selectable on toggle, so the player can control the intensity of overdrive and distortion.

{digitech.com}





SANTA CRUZ GUITAR CO.

GHOST OAK H/13

To celebrate its 40th anniversary of guitar making, Santa Cruz Guitar Company's founding luthier Richard Hoover has paired 8,000-year-old oak from the Czech Republic with a 3,000-year-old set of Ancient Sitka Spruce to create a stunning, one-of-a-kind H/13 model, nicknamed "The Ghost Oak." The guitar is adorned with Snakewood appointments, including Snakewood bindings, overlay and century blocks in the fingerboard to highlight the beauty of the natural wood. (santacruzguitar.com)



PEAVEY

HEADLINER 1000

Peavey's Headliner 1000 is a 1,000-watt rack-mountable bass amplifier head that packs power and tone into a lightweight 10-pound package. The Headliner 1000 features a seven-band graphic EQ spaced at optimized frequencies, with each slider offering 15 decibels of cut and boost to provide comprehensive tone shaping frequencies optimized for bass guitar. (peavey.com)



MUSIC NOMAD

STRING FUEL

Music Nomad Equipment Care has released its String Fuel string cleaner and lubricant in a point-of-sale display pack. String fuel is an efficient way for guitar players to clean and lubricate their strings in one swipe, with an ergonomically shaped device that fits comfortably into the user's hand, making it easy to cover all of a guitar's strings in one pass. MSRP: \$8.99. (musicnomadcare.com)



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JULIA ANALOG
CHORUS/VIBRATO

Walrus Audio's Julia is a fully analog chorus/vibrato packed with a wide array of tonal landscapes. Featuring controls for lag, dry-chorus-vibrato blend, and selectable analog LFO wave shapes, the Julia lets users dial in classic as well as unique chorus/vibrato not found on traditional chorus pedals. MSRP: \$199.

(walrusaudio.com)



JENSEN
TORNADO

The Jensen Tornado is designed to give a clean, articulate tone, with a classic full-bodied sound. Featuring neodymium magnet design and characteristics resembling Alnico magnets, the Tornado's frequency response is noticeably extended in the upper range, generating a sense of airy openness and definition, which is essential to deliver all the details and harmonic complexity of jazz chord play.

(jensentone.com)



GODIN
SUMMIT CLASSIC CT

Godin has redesigned its carved-top Summit Classic CT, which features a 24 3/4-inch scale, a chambered mahogany body and mahogany set neck. The Summit Classic CT also boasts a bound Richlite fingerboard and headstock, large dot inlays, the Godin High-Definition Revoicer system and Graph Tech ResoMax bridge.

(godinguitars.com)





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ALFRED MUSIC 'PLAYING LEAD TRUMPET'

Alfred Music has released *Playing Lead Trumpet*, an instructional DVD featuring studio musician Wayne Bergeron, in which the trumpet player discusses the essential aspects of lead trumpet playing for all levels and demonstrates a variety of concepts and techniques using tunes from the *Gordon Goodwin's Big Phat Band Play-Along Series: Trumpet, Vol. 2*. (alfred.com)

JUPITER

JHR1110

Jupiter's JHR1110 double horn features Geyer wrap configuration that offers reduced resistance for a more even tonality throughout the instrument range, plus a specially designed yellow brass bell and rose brass mouthpiece. Enhanced bracing throughout the instrument increases tonal resonance, providing more strength for better alignment and greater durability. (jupitermusic.com)



CONN-SELMER

50AF3

Conn-Selmer has added the Bach 50AF3 bass trombone to its line of Bach Stradivarius trombones. The 50AF3 features dual axial flow "Infinity" valves, which require little maintenance and provide the performer with an open response and feel. It is available with either yellow or gold brass bells, as well as with 9 1/2-inch and 10 1/2-inch bell sizes. (conn-selmer.com)

DDRUM 2RS RALLY SPORT

ddrum has added the 2RS Rally Sport to its Reflex line of acoustic drums kits. The 2RS Rally Sport features alder shells, giving the drums the warm and focused tone of the Reflex series. Its versatile functionality and hot rod looks make the 2RS Rally Sport the ideal kit for the gigging drummer. (ddrum.com)



STONE CUSTOM DRUMS HANDMADE DRUMS

Stone Custom Drums (SCD) has made its handmade wood-shell drums available to distributors and retailers around the world. Stone Custom Drums combine the response and sensitivity of traditional shells, with a choice of native and exotic woods, making them ideal for players seeking vintage looks and sounds, or who want a personalized design and sound. (stonecustomdrum.com)



SONOR RED ONYX PEARL

Sonor has resurrected one of the original "Teardrop" series finishes with the Red Onyx Pearl finish, which is available for all Vintage series configurations. The Vintage series combines modern drum building techniques with the look and sound of vintage drums to create an instrument that will hold up to today's modern playing. The Vintage series features hand-selected premium German Beech shells with rounded bearing edges. (sonorusa.com)



PEARL 3D CAJON

Pearl's 3D Cajon features a visually striking graphic element CNC cut through each side with contrasting wood inserts completing the design. Inside, the snare wires have been shortened and raised to create a larger bass strike zone so players no longer have to lean over as far to hit the "sweet spot." Plus, a clear lacquer is applied to the inside front faceplate to punch up snare response. (pearldrums.com)



VATER TACKY SACK

Vater's Tacky Sack contains a grip-enhancing rosin powder that absorbs moisture and provides added control of the player's drumsticks while performing in humid and sweaty conditions. Players need only to gently clap hands on the Tacky Sack to apply rosin powder to palms. (vater.com)



MAPEX STORM SERIES

Mapex's Storm series is an upper entry-level set that gives younger players a no-nonsense approach to tuning and playing. The Storm series offer shallow depth toms, 100-percent Poplar shells complete with SONIClear Bearing Edge, which increases the contact between the drumhead and shell, producing a stronger, more centered pitch that's easy to tune. All Storm series hardware features the new Mapex concave leg design for easier positioning. (mapexdrums.com)



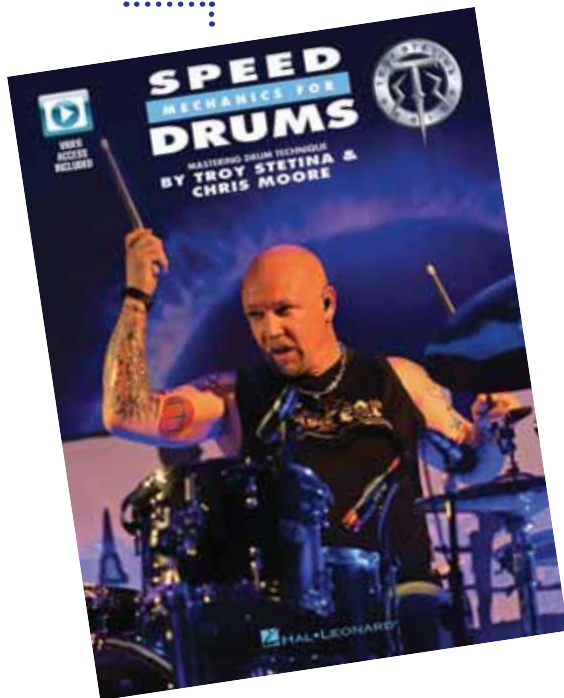
**YAMAHA
CSS-A SERIES**

Yamaha's CSS-1450A and CSS-1465A concert snare drum models are ideally suited for wind ensembles and a wide variety of musical genres. The CSS-A series models feature highly durable 1.2-millimeter chrome-plated steel shells. Other improvements include a 3-piece zinc/steel tubular lug tuning system to optimize shell vibration, as well as a Q-Type strainer that enables the snares to be tightened and released quickly and easily. (yamaha.com)



**HAL LEONARD
'SPEED MECHANICS FOR DRUMS'**

Written by professional studio drummer Chris Moore and music educator Troy Stetina, *Speed Mechanics for Drums* is a road map to mastering the many facets of playing today's faster styles. Part one addresses building speed and control, while part two looks at combining the hands and feet. The final section explores putting it all together. (halleonard.com)



A D V E R T I S E M E N T



CRX by TRX STACK PACKS

"Stack Packs" are a range of 10 pre-selected configurations that combine effects cymbals from CRX's 3 series to create a new palette of "trashy" yet musical sounds. The popular pairings offer a variety of pitches and sounds that are relevant for many contemporary styles and playing situations. Each super-affordable, specially-priced pack comes with a free "Stack Pack" cymbal bag. (www.crxcymbals.com)



**BASS PLATE
BASS DRUM PEDAL DOCK**

The Bass Plate quickly, safely and securely attaches directly to bass drums and provides lateral pedal positioning adjustment. It also improves the bass drum's sound, protects the hoop and increases its stability. (www.bass-plate.com)



**CYMPAD
MODERATOR
SUPER SET**

CYMPAD Moderator cymbal pads reduce cymbal volume and unwanted overtones; controlling sustain and increasing articulation. The new Moderator "Super Set" includes two each of five sizes to provide incremental tone control of cymbals in rehearsal, recording, lessons and performance. (www.cympad.com)

Bass Plate and Cympad are distributed by Big Bang Distribution • www.bigbangdist.com
TRX, Bass Plate and Cympad are represented by Full Circle Management



ALESIS VX49

Alesis has unveiled the VX49 MIDI controller. The VX49 keyboard provides advanced control of virtual instruments and DAWs via a full-color, high-resolution 4.3-inch screen, a 49-key keyboard with aftertouch and performance-friendly hardware controls. Powered by Virtual Instrument Player (VIP) software, the VX49 lets users intuitively access any VSTi virtual instrument in their computer directly from the keyboard.

(alesis.com)

DAVE SMITH INSTRUMENTS PROPHET 12

Dave Smith Instruments has released a new operating system for the Prophet 12 hybrid digital/analog poly synth. The new version, OS 1.3, ships with newly purchased instruments, and is also available for download from the company's website. New features include: classic linear FM synthesis, support for up to 16 alternate tunings, MIDI note output from the arpeggiator and assignable voice stacking in unison mode.

(davesmithinstruments.com)



ROLAND LX-17

Roland's LX-17 digital piano features Roland's SuperNATURAL piano modeling technology, which reproduces the entire sound creation process of an acoustic piano and responds to the dynamics of a player's touch. The LX-17 also features Roland's Acoustic Projection System, which uses a powerful multi-channel amplifier and scattered speaker placement to recreate the rich sound field of an acoustic grand piano.

(rolandus.com)



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- www.PianoNet.com is your comprehensive guide to everything about pianos – their history, noted artists, pianos in the news and more. The piano may be 300 years young, but there's always more to learn about everyone's favorite instrument!
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GRUNDORF BEAT BOOTH

Grundorf's BB-48LSWB Beat Booth tabletop Lycra-front façade is designed for DJ's looking to visually enhance their onstage aesthetic. By combining the façade with a table, the new Beat Booth makes set up and break down quick and easy. The façade's two sides fold, after which the front folds back over the sides, plus the table is height adjustable so that performers can position their equipment exactly as they prefer. (grundorf.com)



CHAUVET DJ BEAMER 6 FX

Chauvet DJ's Beamer 6 FX is a multi-effect light that includes adjustable RGBW beams, a round SMD strobe and a red/green pattern laser that produces thousands of razor sharp beams. Large room coverage is possible by positioning each of the 6 RGBW beams independently. The ultra-bright LED strobe ring with built-in motion effects creates dynamic light shows. (chauvetlighting.com)

NUMARK CD MIX USB

Numark has introduced its CD Mix USB, a modern update on the CD Mix featuring dual USB drive playback capability. The CD Mix USB is essentially two complete CD/USB controllers in a single compact chassis. Each separate controller is a full-featured unit, complete with jog wheel, built-in effects, microphone input, aux input, balanced output, mixer, fader and cueing function, plus two headphone jacks for monitoring. (numark.com)



GEAR >

AUDIO & RECORDING

AUDIO-TECHNICA AE2300

Audio-Technica has unveiled the Artist Elite AE2300 dynamic cardioid instrument microphone. The AE2300 features Audio-Technica's proprietary double-dome diaphragm construction, giving it high-frequency and transient response. With a rugged, brass metal construction and low-profile design, the AE2300 is a versatile performer with the ability to capture sound from amps, to brass and woodwinds, to drums and percussion.

(audio-technica.com)

SENNHEISER HD 25

Sennheiser has streamlined its HD 25 pro headphone series to make product selection easier, with one classic HD 25 plus two sister models — the HD 25 LIGHT and HD 25 PLUS. The classic HD 25 comes with a split headband and flip-away ear cup, while the HD 25 LIGHT features a simpler headband for more cost-sensitive pro users. The PLUS version is identical to the HD 25 but also includes extra accessories and cables.

(sennheiser.com)

FOCUSRITE REDNET A16R

Focusrite has debuted its RedNet A16R 16-channel analog I/O. The A16R features 16 channels of network connected 24-bit 192 kHz A/D-D/A conversion and offers high-quality line-level analog audio in and out with full network and power supply redundancy. Front panel indicators include triple-color LED level indication along with sample rate, clock source, PSU and network status indicators.

(focusrite.com)

QSC E SERIES

QSC has introduced the E Series range of passive loudspeakers, designed for sound reinforcement in entertainment applications. The E Series line consists of four models incorporating QSC's DMT (Directivity Matched Transition) which delivers uniform frequency response across the entire coverage area. All four models are constructed of rugged plywood and coated in black, textured paint.

(qsc.com)



D.A.S. AERO 20A

D.A.S. has launched the Aero 20A compact powered line array system. The Aero 20A incorporates D.A.S.'s 12-inch loudspeaker optimized to provide high output and reliability. The system's high-frequency response relies on the M-75N compression driver and waveguide assembly developed specifically for the Aero 20A. The Aero 20A is DASnet capable, allowing for remote monitoring and control by way of DASnet. (dasaudio.com)



BLACK LION AUDIO AUTEUR MKII

Black Lion Audio has revamped its original Auteur design with the Auteur MKII, which boasts a revamped gain stage that results in higher gain, lower noise, lower distortion and an extended frequency response.

The redesigned Auteur MKII retains the sonic combination of clarity and warmth of the original, and is available in dual channel one-half rack and 500 series formats.

(blacklionaudio.com)



VOCO PRO UHF-5816

VocoPro has introduced the UHF-5816 wireless microphone and transmitter package with four available microphone channels.

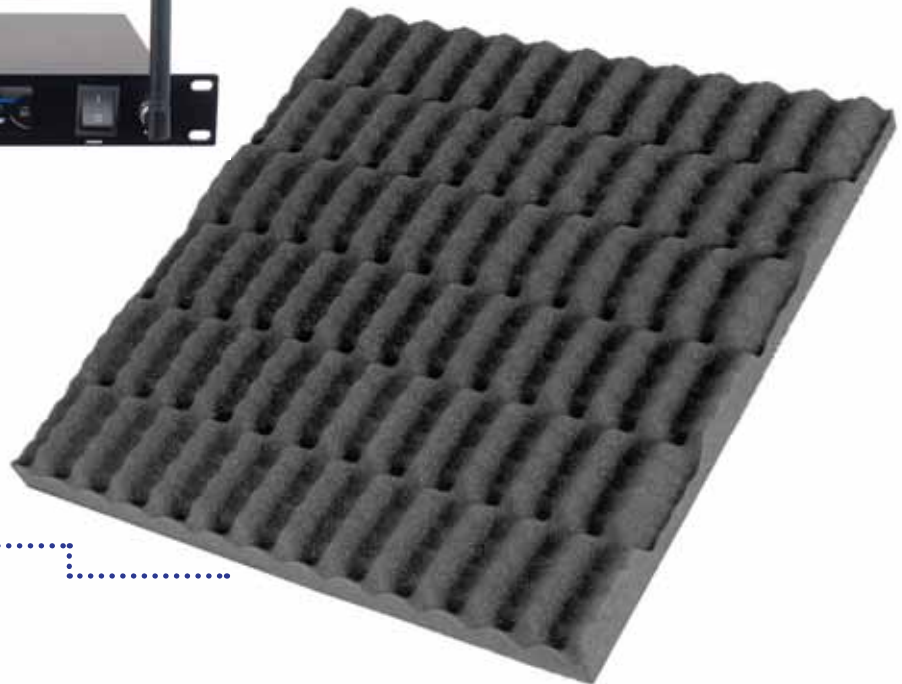
Featuring 16 adjustable frequencies on each channel, the UHF-5816 keeps local signal interference to a minimum. Plus, an intuitive dial lets users easily change between frequencies. MSRP: \$699.

(vocopro.com)

AURALEX SONOTECH

Auralex has introduced SonoTech, featuring the company's Studiofoam. SonoTech offers effective absorption treatment on a budget for home studios in need of a softer aesthetic than other Studiofoam products. The 2-inch thick profile is available in 2- by 2-foot panels. Studiofoam SonoTech panels include EZ-Stick Pro tabs for convenient mounting to most surfaces.

(auralex.com)



**M-AUDIO
M-TRACK**

M-Audio's M-Track recording/monitoring series of interfaces gives composers and musicians of any level the ability to participate in the world of computer-based recording. Of the five models in the series, the first four have full 24-bit studio quality audio performance, along with a rugged, all-metal chassis. The top model, the M-Track 1212 USB-C high speed audio interface, boasts 32-bit 192 kHz studio quality audio. (m-audio.com)



**CAD
GXL-EU**

CAD's GXL-EU wireless system is designed for easy, flexible use while providing exceptional wireless connectivity in a convenient dual-system configuration. The GXL-EU is designed to operate within the 863-865 MHz frequency band, making it an ideal system for use throughout Europe. The dual-channel GXL-EU receiver is outfitted with XLR and 1/4-inch connectors. (cadaudio.com)



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BUYERSGUIDE

AirTurn.....	29	Manhasset Specialty	29
Alfred.....	35	Music Inc.....	61
Allparts.....	8	Music Nomad.....	49
Audix.....	33	NAMM.....	18-19
Bass Plate.....	65	Paul Reed Smith	7
Boulder Creek Guitars.....	57	PMAI.....	67
Classifieds Ads.....	72-73	Roland.....	2
Conquest Sound.....	59	RPMDA.....	26
Cympad.....	65	Samson.....	76
D&A Stands.....	23	Shubb Capos.....	55
Dava Guitar Picks.....	8	Sound Synergies.....	4
Electro-Harmonix	11	Sperzel.....	71
Fishman.....	9	The Music Link.....	3
George L's.....	14	TRX Cymbal Co.....	65
Hal Leonard.....	31, 49	UpBeat Daily.....	50
Hunter Musical Products.....	24	Vic Firth	39
IMS Technologies.....	55	Washburn Guitars.....	75
JJ Babbit	16	WD Music	57
Kala Music.....	25, 45	Zildjian.....	15
KMC.....	17	Zoom.....	5
Kyser Musical.....	43		

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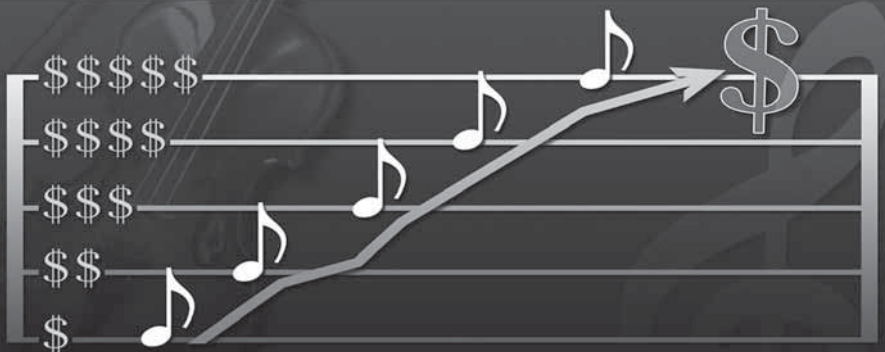


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Walter Carter

Carter Vintage Guitars
Nashville, Tennessee

There are a couple of theories: One is, you stock just the tried-and-true bestsellers. The other [theory] is that you just buy everything, assuming that there is someone out there who will eventually buy anything that you can acquire.

So, you have to find a happy medium. We started out buying almost everything that came in the door because we needed the inventory. Now that we're full, and out of space, we're a little more judicious for that reason. And also because we've discovered a few things that are just probably not going to be able to sell.

We have enough stuff coming in — just from people walking in, or calling, or emailing, because they've seen our website, or just know about us — that we have not actively gone out and sought instruments.

We get trade-ins probably about half the time. If it's something that we can sell as easily as what they're buying, then we're more liberal with the trade-in value.



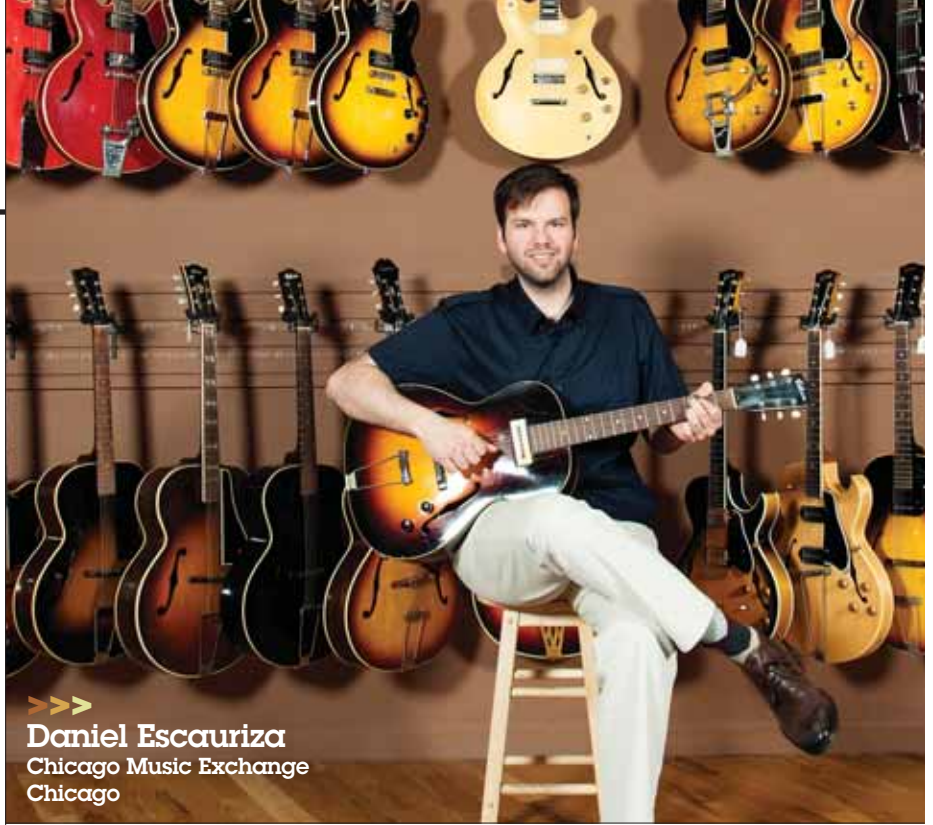
Mark Agnesi

Norman's Rare Guitars
Tarzana, California

We're always seeking out the best that we can offer. But also, what we've got people looking for is what we're normally chasing after. A lot of it is customer demand. When a guy is looking for a George Harrison SG, we're going out and trying to find a '64 SG. But then, a lot of stuff just walks through the door.

[Sometimes,] we go through auction sites. We go through other dealers that we're friends with that might have something in stock. We do a lot of sideways deals with other dealers. Whatever we've got to do to find good stuff.

The hot sellers has always been the classic American stuff — Gibsons and Fenders. They go through cycles, where sometimes we're selling 90-percent acoustic guitars, and then we'll go through a time where it's all electric guitars. But for the most part, the classic models in really great shape will always sell for us — Strats and Teles, Les Pauls, J-45s, J-200s, D-28s and D-18s — all the classic American models.



Daniel Escauriza

Chicago Music Exchange
Chicago

How do you **select** your inventory of used and vintage guitars?

The market can change so rapidly, and sometimes for totally bizarre and unknown reasons. So, you take chances on stuff, and you look at trends. We have data that shows us what kind of stuff is selling. For example: A couple of years ago, I couldn't keep enough Walnut '70s ES-335s on our hooks. So, I started buying more and more, and they did great for awhile. Then, all of a sudden that market dried up, and we had a little bit of a surplus.

One easy way of knowing what the market is hot for at the moment is when you quickly see that you just lost another auction on this guitar; or, when people keep buying these

guitars for more money than you were willing to pay. You learn a lot from what you lose while you're out there trying to hunt stuff — and then you step up your game and buy a little bit more.

We love trade-ins, because movement of inventory is important. That kind of movement is great because we're acquiring something, and we're moving something out. And more importantly, we're building a relationship with a client.

We encourage trades by giving people 10- to 15-percent more if they decide to trade instead of sell. The whole process is extremely transparent. People walk in here knowing that I'm going to buy something or take

something for trade and then sell it for profit. Obviously, we're a business, and that's the only way we can keep doing this. We show people, this [amount] is what this [instrument] is selling for. We need to make this much money, or else it doesn't really make sense for us to take it in. But we want to work with you, and we want to make sure that you walk out of here with something you love, too.

Ninety-eight percent of the time, we come to an agreement and find a number that works well for all parties involved. The whole point is to give people a really positive experience here whatever it is that they're doing. **MI**

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SAMSON

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