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# INSIDE



## 57 | 2016 FALL PRODUCT PREVIEW

A round up of the latest gear for Q4. Plus: Retailers share their insight on what to stock for the holidays.

## 40 | FROM THE TOP

St. Louis Music's CEO Mark Ragin shares his company's acquisition approach.

## 44 | RPMDA 2016

Highlights from the 40th anniversary of the Retail Print Music Dealers Association celebration in St. Louis.

## 52 | GENERATING CLEAN GROWTH

With a boom in the equipment care market, retailers have more add-on options than ever.



## ON THE COVER:

Background: the SABIAN Remastered HH Vanguard; Top down: Prestige Guitars' Troubadour; AKG's C7; Kyser's Quick-Clip capo; and Levy's Leathers' Harper strap.

## GEAR >

58 | GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES

66 | AUDIO & RECORDING

70 | DRUMS & PERCUSSION

74 | BAND & ORCHESTRA

76 | PIANOS & KEYBOARDS

78 | DJ & LIGHTING



## 82 | ASK THE RETAILER

× RPMDA attendees discuss how print music plays into their businesses

## »»» RETAIL

### PROFILE

14 | Music Go Round banks in on the used instrument market

16 | How The Upper Bout uses Craigslist transactions to get new customers in its store

### 17 | NEWS

× Uncle John's Music wins local business award

× Best In Music recovers stolen Martin John Lennon 75th anniversary signature

## SUPPLY <<<

### PROFILE

22 | Fender refocuses on acoustics with the Paramount series

24 | Switchcraft builds on a tradition of innovation through vertical integration

### 26 | NEWS

× Ernie Ball launches new Web series "String Theory"

× Alfred Music joins Peaksware Holdings' portfolio

## IDEAS >>>

### 31 | LESSONS LEARNED

× Rosenbloom talks protecting your business from internal theft

### 32 | THE TECH BEAT

× Harding on how to up your e-commerce game

### 34 | FROM THE TRENCHES

× Sisen shares the importance of buying U.S.-made instruments

### 36 | THE MARKETING MINUTE

× Whitmore discusses strategies to market your store online

### 38 | NEXT GEN RETAILING

× McQueary covers best practices for managing your social media



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# PERSPECTIVE

PERSPECTIVE | BY KATIE KAILUS

## SAVED BY SERVICE

Last weekend, while running errands, I found myself stopping by a local hardware store looking for a specific gardening tool. I researched the item online before getting to the store and found that Home Depot stocked it, but, decided against a big box purchase as I was looking for a more personalized experience from a smaller chain that boasts “helpful hardware folks.”

I called ahead to confirm they carried what I needed and made sure there was someone on staff who was knowledgeable and could help. However, when I arrived at the store, I was shocked by how cramped the showroom was with stock. It seemed as if they carried everything from kids toys to camping equipment, drill bits to candy. Product was literally stacked from floor to ceiling, with some boxes even stored up in the rafters.



I wandered around the store for about 10 minutes before finding what I was looking for, not because the store was large, but because the item I needed was displayed on the floor. Yes, that’s right, the floor. Directly out of any customer’s line of sight.

A bit shocked at how disorganized the showroom was, I contemplated if I had made the right choice by passing up the big box. The messy showroom sent a message that the store and its staff might not be on top of their game. But then, a salesman emerged from the back room. He apologized that he was

on the phone with a customer and didn’t hear me come in. I described what I needed, and he went on to explain all the different options that were available to me. While not the owner, he cared equally as much in helping me find exactly what I needed while not trying to upsell me on something erroneous.

In this store’s case, the service saved the sale. There is something to be said about a knowledgeable, friendly staff that doesn’t push customers, but instead educates them on its offerings. Your customers should learn something from your staff.

Add-on sales are ideal for any first-time buyer. But, when making them, sales staff should explain why a certain guitar strap, drum case or saxophone polish would enhance the player’s experience.

No one wants to feel pushed into buying — especially when making a large purchase such as that of a guitar or piano. While your showroom should always be on top of its game, if it’s not, you better make sure you have the right staff to make up for it. Customers are more likely to return if there is someone on your staff that they trust and can go to for advice. **MI**

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# LETTERS

## All In The Family

*Music Inc.* is a fantastic resource for the industry, and we are honored to have you feature Heid Music [on your June 2016 cover]. Thank you! We are blessed to be a part of a fun industry that lets people connect with their passions and allows us the opportunity to bring joy to many. We are grateful to have our strong foundation set from the generations prior to us and to have amazing mentors and friends in and outside of the industry to help guide and coach us. We have a strong team that is an extension of our family but that also realizes we have to be driven to focus on the business relationship, guided by our core values, and that we will continue to push to improve in many ways to stay relevant and be on the top of our game.

We love that our team also knows our kids and they are growing up “in the business.” Braelyn, Gianna and Otto are even NASMD attendees and at the stores with us frequently. Gianna likes to outline Heid Huddle and Sales Club conversations with us. Otto likes to help merchandise and, as you can imagine, a four-year-old is very helpful. Braelyn recently tried to tell us she was going to stop playing in her school orchestra, and we kindly explained that it was her job, that she needed to be an advocate and participate in school music, and we are confident she will thank us later. Every day the excitement and battle of educating others on the value of music remains for us, in more ways than one, as well as [the challenge of] educating people about why they should want to do business with those of us that are not just passionate about [music education], but walk the talk to do something about it, too.

We have several things we



are still working on fine-tuning, that is the fun and the challenge. We are continuing to build and strengthen the company to do more for our team and our community. Our team, our loyal customers and strong support network make it all completely possible. Back to working on the business!

*Todd & DeDe Heid  
President, Executive Vice President  
Heid Music  
Appleton, Wisconsin*

## More Than Just Middlemen

Thank you for showcasing our company, SFM, in the June 2016 issue. It's exciting for a Canadian-based business like ours to be recognized in such a prestigious publication with such a wide readership.

Though SFM may not just yet be a household name for all your U.S. readers, we're lucky to have the opportunity to introduce ourselves every day to new American customers, through these pages and beyond. There's an age-old (and not entirely undeserved) insult often reserved for companies in the distribution business: “middlemen.” Thanks to *Music Inc.* for giving us the opportunity to talk about the things we invest in and do at SFM that allow us to firmly belie that description — though our inherent Canadian modesty makes us ever so slightly uncomfortable bragging about it!

*Randal Tucker  
President & COO  
SFM  
Dorval, Quebec, Canada*

## A New Boost

I would like to thank *Music Inc.* for the story they published on Guitarras Manuel Rodríguez in the May 2016 edition; your confidence in us is the best proof of the great quality of our guitars!

A complete change in our look and feel, the improvement of our facilities in Toledo, Spain, and 100-percent Spanish manufacturing, have given a new boost to Manuel Rodríguez Guitars, which, unequivocally, has been embodied in international fairs, such as NAMM and Musikmesse.

*Manuel Rodriguez III  
Owner  
Manuel Rodriguez Guitars  
Toledo, Spain*

## A Personal Touch

I read James Harding's article [“That Personal Touch,” in the May 2016 issue of] *Music Inc.* I couldn't agree more that “modern technology has made communicating with other people so easy that many of us have forgotten how to do it well.” [I suggest] checking out the free app for Apple products: feltapp.com. It uses cutting-edge technology to make that personal touch even more personal.

While I am no longer in the piano business, the sale of a big ticket item deserves a hand written thank you note, and this app makes it so easy to be personal.

*Bill Everitt  
Universal Melody Services LLC  
d.b.a. Brook Mays Music/H&H Music  
Dallas*

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> **Uncle Jon's Music**

Wins local small business award  
PAGE 17

> **Carter Vintage Guitars**

Acquires historic sunburst Les Paul  
PAGE 18

> **Best In Music**

Recovers stolen \$12K guitar  
PAGE 19



# RETAIL

MUSIC GO ROUND | BY JOHN JANOWIAK

## USED GEAR BOOM



Music Go Round's Albuquerque, New Mexico, location

In the early 1990s, a company called Music Go Round announced ambitious plans to launch a national retail chain focusing on used instruments. The chain partnered with Grow Biz International (later renamed Winmark Corp.), known for its used-goods franchises, such as Play It Again Sports and Once Upon A Child.

At the time, some members of the music products industry expressed doubts. How could the stores acquire the inventory needed to serve their customers? Expertise was another concern. As some pointed out, selling musical instruments isn't the same as selling basketballs or baby clothes.

Tim Kletti remembers the skepticism well. In 1994, he joined the company's first store in Roseville,

Minnesota, and today he serves as brand manager for the entire chain under Winmark Corp.

"Not only did other retailers 20 years ago have questions about us, but a lot of vendors had concerns about us as well," he said.

### STRENGTH IN THE USED MARKET

After more than two decades, it's safe to say that Music Go Round has stood the test of time. From Stockton, California, to Boston, Massachusetts, the chain now has 27 franchisees who run 33 stores — with two more in development this year. In 2015, each store conducted an average of \$891,451 in sales, with total sales of \$28 million — an all-time high. Some 79 percent of those sales were used gear, with a strong emphasis on guitars.

**With the rise in sales in the used guitar market, Music Go Round has experienced strong growth**

Only 21 percent are new products, most of them accessories like strings and cables.

Over the years, Music Go Round has refined its business model to better execute its brand standards, ensuring a consistent experience no matter which location they visit.

"After years of trial and error, we defined what we consider to be our best practices for operating a business," Kletti said.

Especially in the past 10 years,

the company has prioritized staff development, buyer certification and sales certification. It has learned to attract franchisees who are passionate about owning and running a business of their own.

"The secondary part is they have a passion for the inventory that we sell," Kletti said. "People come to us because they want to own a musical instrument store, and they really understand our business model, how different it

is and how financially successful it can be.”

**CONSIGNMENT ROOTS**

The origins of Music Go Round go back to 1986, when Bill Shell and Lyle Vilhauer opened a used-instrument store called Hi-Tech Consignments in Minneapolis.

“In the very early ’90s, Bill Shell met with the executives of Grow Biz International, and they launched a plan to franchise this concept,” Kletti said.

The first three locations were corporate stores in the Minneapolis area, and the first franchisee was in Alpharetta, Georgia. More stores opened over the next decade, but being small, they couldn’t afford to compete with the advertising budgets of larger MI chains. Instead, they relied on word-of-mouth and

grassroots marketing.

“That was something we decided a long time ago: We don’t have the money to spend like some of our competitors,” Kletti said. “So, what are we going to do? Let’s provide the best possible customer experience and have our customers talk about us. And then with the evolution of the Internet and social media, it just snowballed.”

Initially, Music Go Round had a combination of corporate stores and franchises. Now, the corporate stores have been either sold off or converted to franchise locations.

“Ultimately we made the decision that we can’t be both,” Kletti said. “We can either be a retailer, or we can be a franchiser. And we made the right decision that we’re going to be a franchising company.”

Acquiring used instruments



Tim Kletti

was a challenge from the start.

“In all honesty, we struggled,” Kletti said. Although the business model called for 70 percent used instruments, in reality that figure was only up to 55 percent in 2006, when Kletti became brand manager. The company reviewed its priorities and decided it couldn’t compete with

the big chains on new gear; it had to stay focused on used.

“The first thing we did, it was more marketing than anything else. We just let everybody know that we want to buy their used gear. That’s who we are. We shifted our philosophy from being a place that sells stuff to a place that buys stuff.” **MI**

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THE UPPER BOUT | BY DAVID BALL

# PHILOSOPHICAL RETAIL

When Ricky Bright opened The Upper Bout in January 2013, the Champaign, Illinois-based retailer took his years of MI experience and set out with a difficult goal in mind: to build a community-oriented business based around his own personal philosophies and design aesthetics, and then translate those ideas to a national audience.

Having previously worked in managerial roles at two other area music stores, Bright had a good idea of what he didn't want in a music store.

"I found that every space I walked into was the same," Bright said. "An awful gray carpet, slatwall from the floor to the ceiling, and it's all congested because they're trying to get as much product in as possible. It stopped being about the community and the customer and started becoming more about gross profits."

So, after his former employer dissolved the company, Bright had to decide if he was going to stay in the industry.

"I started writing how I feel about my community and what I do for a living on a piece of paper," Bright explained. "Four hundred pages later I had a supporting document that said we should start a business."

## THE RIGHT SPACE

Inspired by a trip to Erfurt, Germany, in which he walked into a modern music store inside a centuries-old building, Bright chose a former laundry facility — built in 1923 and rehabbed



Ricky Bright

## By focusing on its local community, The Upper Bout has taken its founding principles to the national stage

by a local property owner — as the location for his music store.

"It's my responsibility as a citizen of my community to maintain any sort of historical element that's already there," Bright said.

"We're really trying to make this a good place for Champaign-Urbana," he continued, "while knowing that we have to get well beyond our borders."

To reach the national stage, Bright knew The Upper Bout's website had to reflect the vibe of the showroom floor.

"Everything that we photograph and document is in the store," he said. "We invite people into the space so that they can see and feel what's going on. Then, the dialogue that we exchange

with them — whether through email or text box or phone call — we're just ourselves."

So far, it's working. With the help of Reverb.com and the store's own online marketplace, Web-based sales surpassed 25-percent of total sales by the end of the store's second year.

## GEAR DROP

As part of The Upper Bout's business plan, Bright came up with an idea that raised a few eyebrows, called "Gear Drop."

"If you want to buy something on Craigslist, the deal for me is already gone," Bright explained. "I'm OK with that." So, with "Gear Drop," Bright opens his store as the place for those outside

transactions to occur.

"People come in every week, and they're totally freaked out at first," Bright said.

"But, if they need a second opinion, it's generally the seller who asks if we can take a look at it." If it turns out the instrument needs new strings or minor tweaks, The Upper Bout offers to service the instrument. Then, once the setup is complete, "the person says, 'Great, I'll buy this now.'"

"We lose a little money that way, but what we've done is create a dialogue with two people that otherwise never would have come into this store, and now they know who we are. We always get, 'Oh, I didn't even know you were here.'" **MI**





From left: Jon Kostal Jr., Heather Kostal, Joan Kostal and Jon Kostal, Sr.

UNCLE JON'S MUSIC | AWARD

## Uncle Jon's Music Receives Business of the Year Award

Westmont, Illinois-based Uncle Jon's Music received the 2016 Dick Busse Business of the Year Award at the Westmont Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau's annual awards dinner on April 25. The award recognizes a chamber business that has excelled in community service, business promotion and civic responsibility.

"We are honored and thrilled to have received the award," Jon Kostal, Jr., co-owner of Uncle Jon's Music, told *Music Inc.* "We love living and doing business in Westmont and hope to be involved in community events for years to come."

"Over 125 Westmont-area residents, business owners and civic leaders attended the Westmont Chamber Community Awards program to demonstrate support for our community," WCCTB President Al Carson told *The Bugle*, a local newspaper.

VIC'S DRUM SHOP | PERSONNEL

## SALAZAR LEAVES VIC'S DRUM SHOP

Victor Salazar, founder of Vic's Drum Shop in Chicago, is no longer affiliated with the drum store.

Salazar founded the 10,000-square-foot, drum-only shop in 2011 and during that time the store has become a fixture on the drum scene, attracting customers from around the globe, including a variety of famous drummers passing through Chicago. Known for its ambitious calendar of events, the shop has hosted over 50 drum clinics featuring prominent artists, such as Terry Bozzio, Steve Smith, Jojo Mayer, Billy Cobham and Dave Weckl.

The new manager of the store is Kevin Jensen, former operations manager.

"We are completely committed to continuing on the path we were always on which is serving drummers with an emphasis on quality," Jensen told *Music Inc.* "Our staff is as equally committed as they have ever been."

The only detail that could be taken as a hint to Salazar's departure was a Facebook post on May 17 where Frank Sinatra's "My Way," was selected as the "Drum Track of the Day."

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Walter and Christie Carter with the first Les Paul to sport a sunburst finish

CARTER VINTAGE GUITAR | COMPANY

## First 'Burst Comes to Carter Vintage Guitars

Nashville, Tennessee-based Carter Vintage Guitars has acquired the earliest example of Gibson's iconic cherry sunburst Les Paul guitar, the model made famous by numerous influential rock guitarists, including Eric Clapton and Jimmy Page.

The Les Paul was introduced in 1952 with a gold finish on the top, but in 1958 Gibson began experimenting with cherry-stain finishes. After several trial runs, two guitars were shipped on May 28, 1958, to Gibson's parent company, Chicago Musical Instrument, for approval. In Gibson's daily shipping ledger, they were described as "LP Spec. Finish." They featured the yellow-to-red "sunburst" that became the standard finish on the model.

One of the guitars in the shipping entry, serial number 8 3096, has been known to Les Paul aficionados for more than a decade and is currently owned by Slash, former guitarist for the group Guns N' Roses. The guitar that now resides at Carter Vintage is serial number 8 3087.

## APPOINTMENT

### STEWART MOVES UP

Sweetwater has announced the appointment of David Stewart to the newly created position of executive vice president and chief marketing officer.



David Stewart

"With the exceptional growth of our company over the years and our plans for continued growth, I have decided to add a fourth senior executive position," said Chuck Surack, Sweetwater founder and president. "This new position reflects the vital importance of our marketing department to our growth and success. David Stewart, who will report directly to me — along with Chief Operating Officer John Hopkins, and Chief Sales Officer Jeff Radke — has impacted the company in so many ways it would be impossible to name them all. Simply put, he knows Sweetwater through and through, and I am very honored that he has agreed to take on this tremendous responsibility."

David Stewart joined Sweetwater in 1992 and became senior vice president of sales in 2013. He played a key role in the expansion of the department to more than 300 sales engineers.

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BEST IN MUSIC | THEFT

# BEST IN MUSIC RECOVERES STOLEN \$12K GUITAR

Best In Music has recovered its 75th Anniversary John Lennon Martin D-28, which was stolen from the store on April 28. The guitar was No. 35 out of 75 made and has a list price of \$12,000.

The Orem, Utah-based retailer won the opportunity to buy one of the 75 John Lennon signature guitars through a lottery of all Martin dealers worldwide this past January.

The thief, who had stolen a Fender American Strat worth \$1,300 from Murphy's Guitars in Bountiful, Utah, on April 27, came into the main Best In Music location the following day to look at guitars.

After being in the store for over 30 minutes, he asked to be let into the locked high-end acoustic room. Once the employee became involved with a customer at the sales counter, the culprit made a bee line to the front door with the John Lennon guitar in hand. When Marcus Hight, Best in Music general manager, noticed the guitar was missing, he reviewed the surveillance footage and, through the help of another employee, identified the thief as the same man who stole from Murphy's Guitars the day before.

Mike Murphy, owner of Murphy's Guitars, had posted images of the thief on Facebook and the Best In Music employee recognized him from the Facebook post. After notifying the police, Hight posted images of the thief on Facebook, sharing the post to various local musician Facebook groups. The post

went viral quickly, as musicians shared it nearly 600 times in 24 hours, allowing the it to reach over 25,000 people. The post from Murphy's Guitars, along with Best In Music's, alerted other local business owners to be on the lookout for the suspect.

The following day, the thief visited Per-

formance Audio in Salt Lake City, looking to buy guitar cases for the stolen items and was instantly recognized by employees. The employees were able to get the suspect's license plate number and called the police. Both guitars were in the trunk of the suspect's car at the time of his arrest.



Detective Joubert of the Bountiful Police Dept. (left) and Marcus Hight





## Note From Joe

# A Message to our Exhibiting Members: Four Days to Power Your Business in 2017

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As the definitive global gathering of the music products, sound and recording industries, NAMM provides a stable platform for exhibitors wanting to accomplish multiple goals in one dynamic and convenient location. The 2017 NAMM Show is where you can:

- Demonstrate and assess your position in the marketplace
- Connect directly with business partners
- Advance the sales process of obtaining leads and orders
- Conduct presentations and form strategic alliances
- Share your unique stories to media from around the world
- Amplify your message with social media outreach
- Create unique content to facilitate promotions

In addition, face-to-face is still the best way to build relationships, understand customer challenges and hear the kind of feedback that will help grow your business. Exhibiting at The NAMM Show also presents a unique management opportunity to not only determine emerging trends, gather competitive intelligence and understand the evolving business

landscape, but to also improve your team through industry education and interaction, and by establishing the right unified approach for working with customers, handling objections, promoting opportunities and closing the sale. Plus, engaging with the community of NAMM allows you to demonstrate your commitment to the industry, the people and its future.

The NAMM team is always working to find ways to enhance your ROI, and we look forward to exceeding expectations when The NAMM Show returns to Anaheim, January 21–24, 2017. If you have ideas on how we can make this show a more productive resource for your business, as well as our community, please let us know.

We look forward to seeing you in Anaheim!

**Joe Lamond**  
NAMM PRESIDENT AND CEO



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"Everything that's happening from a products point of view, frankly from the direction of the industry and, quite often, even the direction of music all happens here. I couldn't imagine being in business and not coming to The NAMM Show."

**Chuck Surack, Sweetwater Sound**



## The NAMM Show at a Glance



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### Global Community

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### Buying Businesses

Exhibitors benefit from exposure to a diverse base of buying businesses, defined as retail stores and non-exhibiting distributors.



### Buying Power

Collectively, the buying audience at The 2016 NAMM Show yielded more than \$10.7 billion in annual purchases, drawing \$600 million more in buying power compared to 2015.



### Buying Decisions

The majority of attendees state their purchase decisions are directly influenced by the products they see at The NAMM Show.



### Top 200 Buyers

In 2016, exhibitors had the chance to meet with the country's best retailers, with 87 percent of NAMM members within The Music Trades Top 200 in attendance.



### Trendspotting

Attendees use the show to spot trends, giving exhibitors the opportunity to tell their complex brand story.



### Media

No other trade show attracts an international media base like The NAMM Show, which draws major TV, radio, newspaper and digital media outlets.



### Social Media

Exhibitors have the opportunity to utilize NAMM's reach across social media, extending their brand messages to target customers and extended circles of families and friends.



### Content Creation

Exhibitors also can utilize The NAMM Show to create social media content that can be used in real time to reach a broader global audience in their yearlong sales and marketing efforts.

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- > **Ernie Ball**  
Launches new website  
PAGE 26
- > **Noteflight**  
Expands leadership team  
PAGE 28
- > **Alfred Music**  
Joins Peakware  
PAGE 29

# SUPPLY

FENDER | BY KATIE KAILUS

## RE-FOCUS ON ACOUSTICS

While they've been making acoustic guitars since the 1960s, the Fender brand has always been synonymous with Strats, Teles and West Coast style. However, in response to the recent surge in the acoustic guitar market, and in an effort to give their customers exactly what they're asking for, Fender has re-committed to the acoustic guitar, releasing its Paramount Acoustic Series at this past Winter NAMM Show.

"We have been making acoustics quietly in the background for over 50 years," said Billy Martinez, Fender's vice president of category management, acoustic division. "I looked back through some of the stuff that we have internally and in 1963 we launched a few acoustics at The NAMM Show, and that was really the start of Fender going in to a market that they hadn't really been involved in."

While the company offered plenty of entry-level and intermediate acoustic options, Fender didn't provide its players with many advanced models.

"There was no reason for our customers to stay within the brand and move up, but I think we are hitting that point in this recent surge of acoustics where our customers are asking



Billy Martinez

### With the introduction of the Paramount Acoustic Series, Fender announces its re-commitment to acoustic guitars

for that next logical aspirational step in their musical journey," Martinez said.

Enter the Paramount Acoustics line, all-solid wood instruments designed with elements of classic '60s models, including checkerboard purfling and rosettes.

"One of the staples of the story of Paramount is just being true to the traditional acoustic instrument, but really taking into

account what Fender is known for and trying to instill the pure sound of an acoustic and the easy playability of the instrument," Martinez said. "And then still tying in what Fender is really known for, which is that West Coast style."

#### CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

When creating the Paramount Acoustics Series, Fender

reached out to its player base to get their opinions on what they want to see in a Fender acoustic guitar.

"We were out there asking and listening to the dealers and listening to what their customers are telling them they need," Martinez said. "I think that's all part of it. A big portion is that customer intimacy. We are really making guitars that our customers are telling us they want."

Martinez said knowing that its dealers are having one-on-one engagement with Fender's customers played a large part in the making of the line.

"I think that has always been the focus with Fender in general — being really, really focused on the player and what that means for the core business."

But what does this re-focus on acoustics mean for the Fender brand?

"It means it is another avenue for our customers to become more inspired," Martinez said. "As far as the re-focus relates to the Fender brand, it doesn't just mean something for the customer. It means a lot for the dealer. What we are trying to accomplish here is to [provide] that well-rounded offering and give our dealers different avenues where they can take care of the customer and are engaged with what their needs are." **MI**

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SWITCHCRAFT | BY DAVID BALL

# VERTICALLY INNOVATIVE

Next time you're plugging a guitar in for a customer, look closely at the plug. Does it seem sturdy, like it will last a lifetime? Was it made in the United States using high-quality materials for its component parts? Does it have the name Switchcraft etched into the metal?

That's how Switchcraft likes to distinguish itself from other manufacturers. But they don't stop with guitar plugs. Since 1946, Switchcraft has manufactured the component parts for a wide variety of applications — from telecommunication, to military and medical — as well as a number of finished audio and video products, such as direct boxes and patch bays, all of which are made in Switchcraft's 185,000-square-foot facility in Chicago. On top of that, since its acquisition of Conxall in 1999, the company also specializes in making connectors for industrial harsh-environment applications at its 35,000-square-foot facility in Villa Park, Illinois.

## VERTICALLY INTEGRATED

Beginning with plugs and jacks for the telecommunications industry, Switchcraft built its catalog from the ground up.

"We still manufacture everything that we always made," said Jim Verrilli, sales manager at Switchcraft. "Very little product gets obsoleted, because we control all of our own tooling and we maintain it."

"We don't make a product that goes away because of technology," said Wendy Charack, sales and marketing manager for Switchcraft's broadcast and pro-audio division. "How long have people



Jim Verrilli and Wendy Charack

## Switchcraft continues a tradition of innovation to supply a wide variety of products to manufacturers and retailers alike

been using jacks and plugs and connectors for? And that's not going to go away anytime soon, at least not in our lifetime."

With such a broad product portfolio, one might wonder how the company can ensure quality for such a wide variety of product.

"The nice thing is, everything is under one roof," Verrilli said. "The vertical integration over the years has changed a lot. We've made a big investment in that with the automated equipment and the screw machining equipment."

Verrilli explained how, at one point, Switchcraft had a small facility in Mexico. "We closed

that down and brought everything that was being done [there] and automated it here. We were stamping the springs and molding the plastic, then shipping it 2,000 miles for assembly. Now it goes 500 feet."

## CONTINUED INNOVATION

If your store carries Conquest cables, you already stock some Switchcraft parts. But, building on its offering, Switchcraft has continued to develop innovative new products for the MI sector of its business, such as the Switchcraft 318BT AudioStix Bluetooth, which lets users plug Bluetooth 4.0 reception into any phantom powered XLR input.

"The hardest thing to do is to introduce new products out into the market, because you don't know how they'll be accepted," Verrilli said. "But you have to keep doing it."

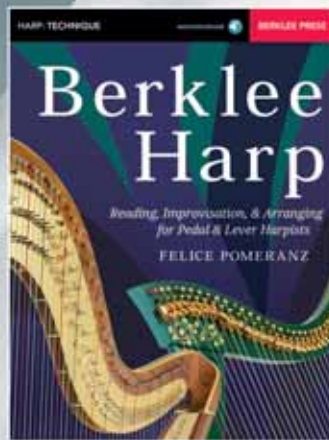
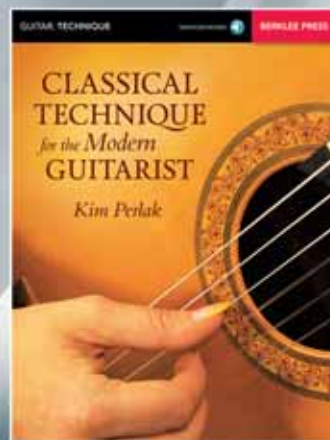
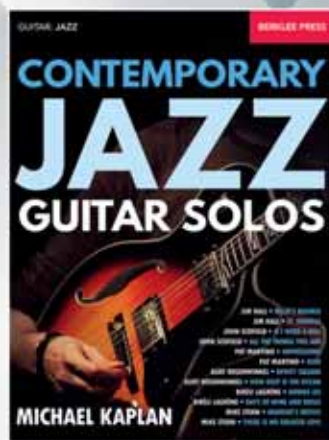
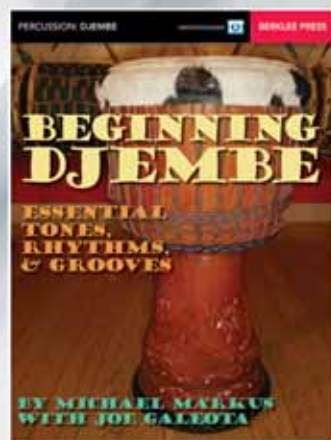
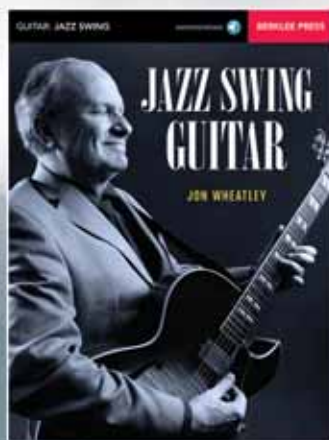
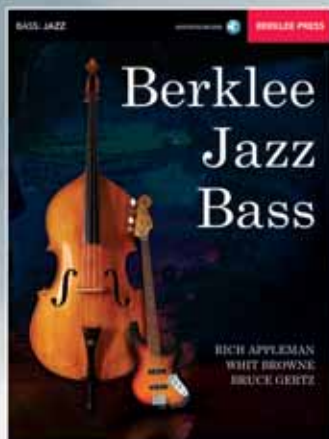
"Every product is a good product, but you're only going to have a handful of hits," Charack said. Lucky for Switchcraft, the 318BT was a hit at Summer NAMM, and the product has been picked up by Sweetwater.

"We do have some retailers that do not inventory our stuff, and they definitely need to," Charack continued. "It's not that people aren't asking for it — [some retailers] are just not stocking it." **MI**



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ERNIE BALL | WEB

## ERNIE BALL LAUNCHES NEW SITE, ‘STRING THEORY’

Ernie Ball has introduced a new artist Web series titled “Ernie Ball String Theory” as the cornerstone of its revamped website.

“Ernie Ball String Theory” features a selection of the company’s most innovative and influential brand ambassadors as they talk about the sonic origins of their tone and playing styles. Episodes currently on the site include Paul Gilbert (Racer X, Mr. Big), Josh Carter (Phantogram), Steve Stevens (Billy Idol), Bobb Bruno (Best Coast) and Joe Don Rooney (Rascal Flatts), among others. Created and produced by Ernie Ball, the series is filmed in the home studios where artists can pick up their guitars and demonstrate skills and tricks they’ve learned on their lifelong exploration of the guitar.

The new Ernie Ball website features a full online menu of product information on all of its products.

The updated site also features “Our Family of Artists,” an extensive photo gallery of



guitar players who play Ernie Ball strings; “Play Warped,” a rebranding of the Ernie Ball Battle of the Bands platform which gives bands a chance to win a slot to perform at the Warped Tour mainstage; the Ernie Ball blog, which provides updates on current Ernie Ball artist news as well as string buying guides; and links to episodes of “Ernie Ball: The Pursuit of Tone,” the singular documentary series created and produced in-house which airs on AT&T Audience Network.

“We’ve been a family-owned company for three generations, and we’re committed to being an American company,” said Brian Ball, president of Ernie Ball. “Since 1962, when we first started creating tools for musicians, it’s always been about artist relationships. Our new website lets us raise the bar even higher with superior product and an ongoing stream of award-winning creative content for and by musicians — all of it produced in-house.” [ernieball.com](http://ernieball.com)



HAL LEONARD | PURCHASE

## Hal Purchases Music Minus One

Hal Leonard has purchased Music Minus One. The Music Minus One company was founded in 1950 and, for the first time, offered hobbyists the ability to solo with a professional orchestra thanks to the high-quality recordings that accompanied each book.

Over the years, the library has grown to over 1,100 titles, all of which will now be exclusively available from Hal Leonard, which effective immediately has lowered the prices on all available editions.

The Music Minus One recordings feature world-class musicians and orchestras from the United States, Vienna, Bulgaria, and elsewhere in Europe. A variety of concerti, opera, lieder, and chamber music from composers, such as Bach, Beethoven, Chopin and others are available. In addition,

the library also includes jazz combo works from such famed players as Stan Getz and Jimmy Raney.

“We’ve been happy to distribute Music Minus One products for almost 10 years now, and we’re proud that Irv is entrusting us to continue caring for and developing this iconic brand that really set the standard for play-alongs in our industry,” said Keith Mardak, CEO of Hal Leonard. “We are sad to see Irv retire, but he deserves a rest after working so hard on this great series for so long.”

“I’m 90 years old and after 66 years in this business, I thought it was time to hang up my spurs,” said Irv Kratka, MMO owner. “I’m confident that Keith and his crew at Hal Leonard will take good care of this catalog and nurture it.” [halleonard.com](http://halleonard.com)

ELIXIR | PARTNERSHIP

## Elixir Partners With Journey Instruments

Elixir Strings has formalized an OEM relationship with Journey Instruments. Under terms of the new agreement, Journey Instruments will ship all new acoustic instruments with Elixir Strings as standard equipment.

Founded in 2011, Journey Instruments focuses on providing on-the-go musicians with quality travel instruments.

“We are very excited to announce this agreement,” said Joe Fallon, global marketing strategist for WL Gore & Associates, parent company of Elixir Strings. “This partnership reflects more than just two leading companies announcing an OEM relationship. It reflects both companies’ commitment to provide guitarists with the best strings for their unique playing style and instrument.”

“We are happy to be an official Elixir Strings OEM partner and look forward to a long relationship,” said James Brawner, partner and vice president of marketing at Journey Instruments. [elixirstings.com](http://elixirstings.com)

MANHASSET STANDS | EVENT

# Manhasset Stands Commemorates Cascade Symphony

The Cascade Symphony Orchestra (CSO) of Edmonds, Washington, celebrated the success of its Business Alliance initiative earlier this month with a reception held at Edmonds Center for the Arts (ECA) in Edmonds.

At the event, the Cascade Symphony Orchestra Business Alliance Charter Mem-

ber Plaque was unveiled. The music stand-inspired plaque was created in part by fellow Washington state-based company Manhasset Stands.

“Manhasset was very pleased to play a role in developing a special commemorative music stand to be used to honor Charter supporters of the Cascade Sym-

phony Orchestra from the local business community,” said Dan Roberts, president of Manhasset Specialty Company. “Our country is blessed to have many such orchestras across our land, providing inspiration to budding young musicians who attend their concerts.”

{[manhasset-specialty.com](http://manhasset-specialty.com)}



ST. LOUIS MUSIC | DISTRIBUTION

## SLM TEAMS WITH SOULDIER

St. Louis Music is now distributing Souldier straps. Handmade in Chicago, the guitar straps offer a wide variety of colors and patterns to fit any guitarist’s aesthetic palate.

“Working with Souldier is great because they’re inspired by musicians,” said Rich Dumstorff, vice president of SLM Marketplace. “Their products reflect their passion through awesome build quality and a stunning array of hip colors and designs. We’re also proud to work with an American-made, Chicago-based company.”

SLM will be distributing 12 Souldier guitar straps to the market in patterns that range from the flourishing greens of the Dresden Star to the subtle gradient of onyx featured in the company’s Madrid pattern. {[stlouismusic.com](http://stlouismusic.com)}

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MOUTHPIECES FOR ALL CLARINETS AND SAXOPHONES

NAFME | APPOINTMENT

# NAfME Announces New CEO Amid Controversy

The National Association for Music Education (NAfME) has appointed Michael Blakeslee its new executive director and CEO. Blakeslee has worked over 30 years at NAfME, serving as editor of NAfME's award-winning *Music Educators Journal* and *Teaching Music* magazine, in addition to many other NAfME publications.

Blakeslee will replace former Executive Director and CEO Michael Butera, who was dismissed of his duties in May after he made racially charged comments

during a National Endowment for the Arts meeting on April 26.

"We take this issue very seriously," NAfME said in a statement on its website. "Diversity, inclusion and equity in music and the arts are at the core of what we do at NAfME, and we are committed to taking the appropriate actions to ensure that remains true. We are currently conducting an objective investigation, which is nearing conclusion, into the matter." [nafme.org](http://nafme.org)

## APPOINTMENT

### SLM NAMES KROKE SENIOR VP OPERATIONS

St. Louis Music has named Dale Kroke senior vice president, operations.

A 26-year industry veteran, Kroke began at Kaman Music in international sales and served as general manager of the company's Canadian division, B&J Music, prior to its acquisition by JAM Industries. Since that time he has worked as an operations and IT consultant for SLM, focusing on its implementation of new enterprise software.

"I'm thrilled to be joining St. Louis Music in a permanent role," Kroke said. "This is an exciting time of rapid growth for the company, and I'm very proud to be a part of that."

"We are extremely glad to make this announcement," said Paul Damiano, executive vice president and COO. "I've worked with Dale for many years at Kaman Music and know he is the right person for this important position. It's another addition to the great team we are building here at St. Louis Music." [stlouismusic.com](http://stlouismusic.com)



Dale Kroke

**Noteflight** has expanded its leadership team. Rick Guardia, vice president of operations, will now assume responsibility for internal management and all day-to-day operations at Noteflight. John Mlynczak will assume the new title of vice president of sales and marketing. He will oversee Noteflight's customer and partner relationships, and expand sales and marketing initiatives. Founder and President Joe Berkovitz will focus on innovating products and technologies within the company and continuing his work with standards organizations, such as W3C.

**Korg USA** has promoted James Sajeva to director of technology brands for Korg USA. Most recently, Sajeva was brand manager for Korg technology products. The move is a planned component of Korg USA's aim to unify all aspects of their growth within this market segment.

Jamie Griffin has been named vice president of operations at **Shure**. Griffin was formerly director of operations in its global supply chain organization at Lenovo.

**LPD Music International** has added Lauren Hill as a new buyer.



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**AWM**




ALFRED | COMPANY

# Alfred Music Joins Peaksware

Alfred Music announced April 20 that it is joining the Peaksware Holdings, LLC portfolio of companies, which includes MakeMusic, bringing together two leaders in educational music publishing and music technology.

Alfred Music and MakeMusic will continue to operate independently while sharing resources within the Peaksware group to advance innovations, provide additional content, and leverage distribution channels. MakeMusic will remain steadfast in its long-standing commitment to work equally with all publishing partners to provide the highest level of quality content for musicians and educators within SmartMusic.

“Our long-term goal at Peaksware is to build an end-to-end ecosystem that connects composers, publishers, educators, directors and musicians,” said Gear Fisher, Peaksware CEO. “Alfred brings additional distribution opportunities for artists and composers while expanding the repertoire within SmartMusic for teachers and musicians.”

“We are excited about working with the Peaksware portfolio of companies and more closely with MakeMusic to significantly enhance Alfred Music’s mission since 1922 of helping the world experience the joy of making music,”



Gear Fisher



Ron Manus

said Ron Manus, Alfred Music’s CEO and chairman. “The combination of the industry’s leading music education publisher with the industry’s leading technology innovator will excite the entire music community. This is great news for our customers, publishing partners, composers, arrangers, and musicians who will benefit from working with both companies.”

Alfred Music’s customers and industry partners should expect business to continue as usual with no immediate changes. The main office will remain in Van Nuys, California, and additional offices will stay in their current New

York, Miami, UK, Singapore and Germany locations.

“We are very excited by the opportunity to work more closely with Alfred Music on many levels,” said Fred Flowerday, vice president of product strategy for MakeMusic. “Expanding the breadth and depth of content available in SmartMusic is exactly what our customers are requesting. Additionally, by combining our strengths, expertise, and experience, we are developing an ecosystem that paves the way forward for all publishing partners, composers, teachers and musicians.”

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

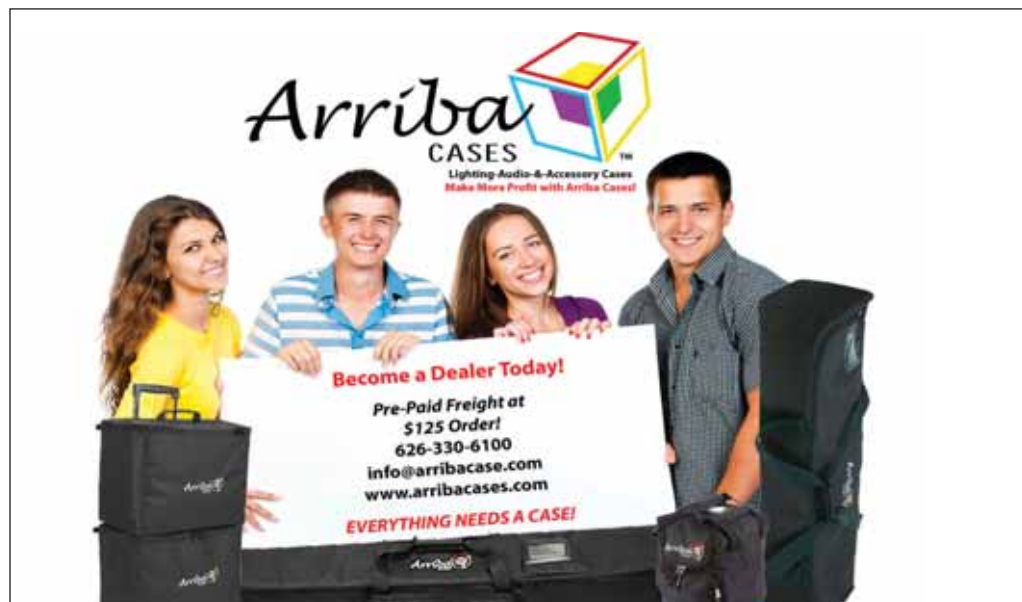
## TRIBUTE

### DICK KNAUB PASSES AWAY

Dick Knaub, the former president of Rico Reed Corp., passed away on April 1.

Knaub served as president of the Rico Reed Corp. during the 1970s, overseeing the reed manufacturer’s expansion into magazine advertisements and the company’s return to industry events, such as The NAMM Show.

Knaub was a supporter of the American Music Conference and served as president of the board in the 1990s when the NAMM Board agreed to oversee the main operation of AMC.



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# IDEAS

Inside**IDEAS** > The Tech Beat Page 32 > From the Trenches Page 34 > The Marketing Minute Page 36 > Next Gen Retailing Page 38

LESSONS LEARNED | BY GERSON ROSENBLUM

## CURBING INSIDE JOBS

// **T**he check is in the mail.” “I’m from the government, and I’m here to help you.” “Trust me.” These are all terrific lies, and most of us have probably had some experience with them at one time or another.

One mistruth that may not have been on your top 10 list of world-class lies, but probably should be, “I trust my employees completely.” Of course we do!

Particularly in smaller companies like the majority of music retailers, we all work closely together and our employees often become like members of our extended family. No one wants to believe that “family” would ever do anything to hurt them, but the simple truth is that in the United States, employee theft accounts for a higher percentage of shrinkage than shoplifting. A survey from the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners states that 75 percent of all U.S. retail employees have stolen from their employer at least once. And worse yet, the same survey shows that one-third of all U.S. retail bankruptcies can be traced to employee theft as a contributing cause.



**Walk the line  
between trusting  
employees  
and protecting  
your business  
carefully**

The various ways that employee theft happens are well documented. From under-ringing sales to leaving extra accessories in instrument cases to employees cooking the books — there are as many ways to steal as an ill-intentioned imagination can conjure.

### IDENTIFYING THE WARNING SIGNS

I experienced this at my own shop once. I started noticing

that some microphone and effects pedal boxes were coming out of the stock room and missing the actual item. It was terrible. Every employee became a potential suspect and that ruined morale. I couldn’t imagine any of my staff doing this, and yet I hated that every one of them suddenly seemed capable of doing it. In the end, my employees were all vindicated. We found ads in the local shopper paper for several of the items that had gone missing. It didn’t take much to connect the thievery to one of our guitar teachers, an independent contractor who had taught there for decades and had free access to all areas of the store. Lesson learned — don’t let familiarity lull you into a sense of security.

Only your own employees have a vested interest in the security of your business — if they’re bright enough to realize that! People not on your payroll (contractors, delivery people, customers) should not be afforded the same access as your employees.

Here’s a warning sign that could signal a problem: Do you know which of your employees play in bands or even play regularly in their own studio or for

their own enjoyment? If the answer is “no,” learn about them today. Then, you want to be sure that you require every employee sale to be documented. Putting these two pieces together, you want to quietly become aware of how much merchandise your gigging employees have purchased. If someone plays guitar regularly but has never purchased guitar strings from you, you’ve got a problem. A drummer that never buys sticks is equally suspect. There is one wrinkle that can change this dynamic: if you do not offer steep discounts, then there’s the chance that your own employees are buying their supplies elsewhere. For that reason alone, I always believed in selling to my employees at cost.

Lest it appear that I am advocating creating some sort of police state in your business, I really don’t believe in that at all. A pleasant workplace where employees are valued and treated fairly is one of the very best deterrents. Ultimately, I believe that the best policy is to trust and verify. **MI**

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

THE TECH BEAT | BY JAMES HARDING

# Making Money Online

A 2015 Redshift Research Survey (sponsored by GoDaddy) found that nearly 60 percent of small businesses don't have a website. When I first read this shocking statistic, I couldn't believe it. One in five small businesses consider themselves to be too small, too poor or too technically-inexperienced to have even the most basic Web presence. Unfortunately, these businesses are at a competitive disadvantage according to GE Capital Retail Bank — whose 2013 Major Purchase Shopper Study found that 81 percent of consumers research major purchases online before ever setting foot inside a retail store. But, it's not enough to just have a website. Your website should be a profit center in its own right, bringing in new customers, regularly engaging your loyal client base and paying for itself with a healthy e-commerce income. Does this sound like your experience on the Web?



**'Think of your website as an island — once you get people to it, you don't ever want to send them away.'**

amounts of traffic to our businesses. SEO strategies are constantly changing, so it's a good idea to find a local partner who can help you navigate the changes Google, Bing and other search programs implement over time. Just remember that good content is king. Make

sure your blog, paid advertising, social media sites, free listings and even your email all have links to your website.

**Planned Traffic Flow.** One of the biggest opportunities small businesses miss when they build websites relates to traffic flow. We all spend so much time and money bringing people to our websites ... and then once we get them there, we link to content on someone else's site and wave as our hard-earned Web traffic leaves our site for someone else's. Think of your website as an island — once you get people to it, you don't ever want to send them away. Build individual pages for the products you carry and use original photos, text and video to keep people interested in what you have to say. Always include a "contact us for more help" link so your visitors will have no trouble interacting with you online.

**E-Commerce.** My company is a piano store, and we don't encourage folks to purchase pianos without playing them in person, so we're not expecting to make a killing on our website, but, thanks to Cart66, we are able to sell just enough online to pay for our website expenses each year. We also use our e-commerce solution to pull income from social media and even Craigslist. **MI**

James Harding is a 15-year piano industry veteran, social media expert and swing pianist. Email him at [jharding@gistpiano.com](mailto:jharding@gistpiano.com).



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FROM THE TRENCHES | BY MYRNA SISLEN

# Buying American

I have been renting out band and orchestra instruments for the past eight years, and like everyone else with a rental pool, I have been looking for the best, sturdiest, and least expensive instruments, with an emphasis on “least expensive.” It has never been particularly important to me where the instruments are made.

At least, that’s how I felt until I toured the Conn-Selmer factory in Elkhart, Indiana. I went to Elkhart to attend the Disney Summit sponsored by Conn-Selmer. The summit is two-and-a-half days of classes, factory tours, excellent meals and, of course, networking with colleagues.

As we walked into the Conn-Selmer factory, awaiting me was a true “Aha!” moment — one that would change the way I looked at my business.

We started the factory tour with the flutes, and the first thing that struck me was that most of the flute builders are women. They construct each part of the flute painstakingly, assembling them in what looked like 20 or 30 steps. From forming the body, to cutting the holes and smoothing the metal, making the mouthpiece parts and soldering them all together, the flute makers were taking such loving care to be sure the flutes were perfect.

I couldn’t help thinking: This is America and this is what we used to do — make things. And here are hard-working Americans still building great instruments. It’s a beautiful thing. Of course, the process has changed over time. Our guide explained that machines, especially those used in jewelry making, are streamlining the process somewhat and that helps to cut time and labor costs, in addition to making the parts stronger.

Then it was time to see clarinets being built. From the long block of wood that was fashioned into the body, to assembling the keys, the process was as painstaking and thorough as it was with the flutes.

Next we walked to the building where Bach trumpets and trombones were being made. They even let me bend part of the tubing on one of the trumpets. We were also invited to work on one of the trombones.

Although there wasn’t time to have much conversation with the instrument makers, each one described, with pride and in detail, what instrument part they were making and how long they had been working at Conn-Selmer. Most had been there 20 or more years and many were second- or third-generation instrument makers. You look at an instrument differently when you have met the people who made it. At least I do.

## GOING AMERICAN

I have to spend money on instruments anyway. Why not know where that money is going? Why not keep that money here supporting American workers? This is not a political statement. This is about a company that is making an excellent product, trying to do right for our industry and at the same time employing and nurturing American workers. I believe I have to support that effort.

Yes, I know: The instruments are a little more expensive. But you know what? I am going to spend the extra money. I have found that my customers are responding in a very positive way, especially when I tell them what I saw in Elkhart.

From now on, whenever I can, I’m buying American. Make that trip to Elkhart to and decide for yourself. **MI**

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



**‘I have to spend money on instruments anyway. Why not know where that money is going?’**



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THE MARKETING MINUTE | BY LAURA B. WHITMORE

# DIY MI Marketing

**M**arketing in the music biz is fast-paced and ever-changing. No sooner do we master one approach that the playing field changes and new technologies and options appear. It can be overwhelming at times, but also very exciting. There are endless possible avenues for creating awareness about your store, product or promotion. Not sure where to start? Here are a few strategies you can do yourself in your store today:

## SOCIAL MEDIA IS NOT OPTIONAL

Does social media take time? Yes, but it doesn't have to be all-consuming. Regularly check the insights that Facebook and Twitter have available. See which posts resonate most with your audience, and do more of those. Elements like time of day, frequency and tagging matter. Hire an intern or high school student to help with your social media and you'll see results.

## YOUR WEBSITE IS YOUR FACE TO THE WORLD

Template-based services can help you set up a great-looking site that you can update yourself. A few of these services include Squarespace and Wix. Make sure to incorporate essential elements like your contact information, a simple newsletter sign-up form, an "about us" section, event listings, directions to your location, special promotions for the month, links to your social media pages, and a blog with tips and ideas.

## BASIC PR

At the very least, you should build a relationship with your local media. Get to know the people at your local news-

paper, radio and TV station by carefully reading and listening to them, and then send your news to the folks that cover the kind of messaging you want to share. Craft a short and concise pitch that you can e-mail, or use as a guideline for a call. Say just enough to get them interested then e-mail more details. Make sure to submit online local event listings for any events you are hosting.

## YOUR MAILING LIST IS GOLD

If you're not collecting your customers' e-mail addresses, change that right now! Having a direct contact that you can add to your opt-in list is essential for any business. Use a mailing service, such as Mailchimp, which allows up to 2,000 names in your list for free. They have all kinds of templates you can use to make great looking newsletters and mailings. Send out news, special offers, info on events and more to your list at least once a month.

## ADVERTISING SECRETS

I have been an ad buyer for decades and, shhhh, here are a couple of secrets. First, make sure the outlet you are looking at is a good fit for your message. Read the media kit so you know the demographics of their readers, viewers and listeners. Look at the cost per thousand (CPM) so that you can compare the value for your dollar. Then never pay list price. Advertising is highly negotiable. Unless you are talking to an outlet that regularly sells out you can usually get a deal or an add-on with your purchase, like extra impressions online, extra mentions on air or social media posts. **MI**

Laura B. Whitmore owns and runs Mad Sun Marketing, an agency focused on the music industry. She is a journalist, singer/songwriter and the founder of the Women's International Music Network.



**'There are endless possible avenues for creating awareness about your store, product or promotion.'**

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NEXT GEN RETAILING | JEREMY MCQUEARY

# Be Social Media Mindful

Social media lets you tell people who you are, what you do and what you know. This is especially true in a business setting when using sites such as LinkedIn. When using Twitter and Facebook, you have the opportunity to express your personality more — you can talk about what you enjoy, your family and even your political or social views. It is great to be honest with others about who you are, but you want to make sure you do it wisely. We have all thrown out a quick update without re-reading it, but in the day of autocorrect, it is amazing how many people post statuses with typos or words that have been inserted incorrectly by our smart device.



## BEST PRACTICES

One of the primary rules to remember about social media is that what you say is out there forever. It doesn't matter if you delete it or not; once it has been seen, it can be found again. We see this all the time with celebrities. While we may not nearly have the reach of a celebrity, imagine if you were to say something that a customer or potential employer saw that turned them away from you. It can cost you and/or your company opportunities for sales and professional growth. A recent study by Carrerbuilder.com stated that of potential employers who research

candidates on social media, 51 percent stated that they found content that caused them to not hire candidate. This is up from 43 percent in 2013 and 34 percent in 2012. The bottom line is to make sure you are respectful with the content that you are posting. Be expressive, but before you go off on a tirade,

take a step back and try to read it from another perspective while remembering this information is public. Social media for your business is very similar. You need to make a plan. This could be as easy as stating how often you want to make posts or go as far as planning out what you are going to say and when. While

many businesses use this as a way to increase sales by talking about promotions, it can be used for so much more. Take the time to find out what your customers and followers will find interesting. Don't always try to sell them something. Talk about how they can care for their instrument, about new accessories and trends, or even talk about the successes of your customers. Take note of what content they like by the amount of feedback you get from the posts. Since this is an avenue that you are using to reach your customers, you also want to make sure that you have someone assigned to it. It is important not to let just anyone post your business's content because control can be lost quickly. Appoint a social media manager for consistency.

Ultimately, social media is a great tool that can be used for both individuals and business. However, if you don't use it wisely, it can ruin your reputation more quickly than you can build it. So, tell your story, promote your company and use social media to drive revenue. **MI**

Jeremy McQueary is the vice president of sales and marketing for Paige's Music in Indianapolis as well as the secretary for the NAMMYP Board. NAMMYP, 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 [nammyp.com](http://nammyp.com).

**Take time to find out what your customers and followers will find interesting. Don't always try to sell something**

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The 45000 is a 4-track powerhouse SUPER LOOPER with a console-style layout for intuitive control. Each loop features four tracks and it delivers unlimited standard, reverse and variable speed overdubbing, speed control, stereo loop recording and much more. This looping tour de force also syncs to MIDI clock and saves directly to SD Cards.

**Optional external Foot Controller.**



The 22500 Dual Stereo Looper's loops can be locked to each other or run independently in free form. It lets you do verse/chorus switching in Sequential mode, or two-loop simultaneous playback in Parallel mode. A phantom-powered mic input adds convenience. The compact 22500 also includes 16 Drum/Rhythm tracks, or import your own!

**Optional external Foot Controller.**

With 12 minutes of stereo loop recording on 10 banks that remain in memory until you erase them, plus unlimited Standard, Reverse and 1/2 Speed overdubbing and an adjustable Fade Out mode, the 720 Stereo Looper packs plenty of power in a compact pedalboard friendly design.



Boasting 6 minutes of looping time, the super-affordable 360 lets you record, store and recall 11 loops. Single footswitch control of record, erase, undo-redo and unlimited overdubbing, plus a compact size and easy-to-use functionality, complete the picture.



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# FROM THE TOP

INTERVIEWED BY KATIE KAILUS

## MARK RAGIN | ST. LOUIS MUSIC

### HOW DO YOU START YOUR DAY?

I'm definitely more a night owl than an early bird. I get to the office between 10–11 a.m., but my day will start with catching up on news and e-mail at home. Once I get to the office, it's usually non-stop face-to-face time with various people throughout the company. Then after 5:30 p.m. when the building gets quieter I concentrate more on my personal tasks. Very rarely do I leave the office before 8 p.m. I am often there until 10 p.m.

### WHEN DID YOU PURCHASE ST. LOUIS MUSIC (SLM)?

I purchased SLM in November 2008. I'd been in the business for 35 years prior to that and was the president of St. Ann Music before I bought their distribution division, Wolf Imports in 1998. As St. Anne was a school music retail chain, my expertise was in band and orchestra, and I turned Wolf Imports into U.S. Band & Orchestra Supplies Inc. and specialized in distributing B&O accessories.

### WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO PURCHASE THE COMPANY?

As I had come from that side of the business, I had friends and contacts that I could reach out to from day one. Plus, with having the powerhouse of St. Louis Music only three miles down the road, there was no way I was going to get any of the big combo brands they had been distributing successfully for many years.

Gene Kornblum sold SLM to LOUD Technologies in 2005, and as my accessory business for B&O had grown nicely, I wanted to get more involved in distributing instruments, so I contacted LOUD to inquire if there was any interest in selling Knilling violins to me. At the time, there didn't seem to be a lot of interest to offload Knilling, but then 6–8 months later they got in touch to say SLM, Knilling, Austin guitars and a mountain of accessories were going up for sale as they wanted to concentrate on their core brands. This was a perfect time and opportunity for us. We were literally three miles down the road from SLM, wanted to get into combo and wanted a leading brand name in B&O. We were successful in our bid for SLM and from the very first day of the purchase it has been a rollercoaster ride I could never have dreamed of.

### OVER THE LAST YEAR OR SO SLM HAS ACQUIRED QUITE A FEW BRANDS. WHAT DO YOU ATTRIBUTE THIS GROWTH TO?

I would attribute our growth to many things, including the great people I work with day in and day out. You can't do this alone. You need great help you can work with closely. Commercially, I would say that several things have played into our hands that have helped us.

First, there have been a lot of changes in the distribution side of the business in the States and that change and uncertainty has helped position SLM as one of the steady hands in the general distribution business. Not only to more customers, but also to more manufacturers who have trusted in us to distribute their brands. Over the past 12 months, we have added huge lines, such as SABIAN and Elixir as well as more niche offerings, such as Tomasi Flutes, GL Cases and Silverstein Works.

### WHAT IS YOUR APPROACH WHEN ACQUIRING BRANDS?

We've had an aggressive approach to acquiring brands, and this will continue in 2016. Our largest brand purchase to date is, of course, Alvarez guitars. Although we'd been running the brand for five years under license, we managed to purchase it outright from LOUD Technologies in April of this year.

We also recently purchased the Compass Ligature Brand, a genius engineering idea where one ligature can be dialed in to fit any mouthpiece, and we are always looking to add the correct brand to our lineup.

The process of how we bring a new brand or item into the company can vary. Obviously if dealers are asking for certain things then we of course try and bring them in; it's all about how best can we serve our customer. We also develop many of our own products and that process can come from an individual or team within the company looking for new opportunities within our assortment.

We want to give dealers a large selection of product and grow our inventory levels to get close to a 100-percent fill rate. SLM will continue to acquire more brands and product lines and keep the trajectory we have maintained for the past eight years, which has seen double-digit growth, year after year since 2008.





## THE DETAILS

**MARK RAGIN, PRESIDENT & CEO,  
ST. LOUIS MUSIC**

**HQ:** St. Louis

**Founded:** 1922

**Employees:** 58

**Best-selling product:** RD26 Alvarez Guitar

**Fun Fact:** Ragin started in the music business at 17 years old stocking shelves at a music store.

## DO YOU CONTINUE TO SEE SLM GROWING ITS DISTRIBUTION NETWORK IN THE FUTURE?

Absolutely. Our international network is growing every year with Alvarez, which is now distributed in 35 countries, and we are continuing to sub-distribute many of our products and brands in the States. This is certainly a part of the business we intend to grow quickly.

## HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR MANAGEMENT STYLE?

My management style [has] definitely changed over time. When you first start a company you want to put your finger on everything — check everyone's work and literally read everyone's email to a customer before they hit the "send." It doesn't take long before you realize you're suffocating the team as well as the company. Previous to the last year, each division — Alvarez, P. Mauriat, Knilling, Dixon — were all 100-percent handled by the product managers. They lived in a sink or swim world and all I asked for were positive results and a managers meeting once a week to hear what everyone was working on. With our major change in personnel and rapid growth, this had to change. Everyone came together as a team so we could develop long-range planning and company goals. My style is to put people in charge and give them the ability to make decisions.

## WHAT IS THE OVERALL VIBE AT ST. LOUIS MUSIC?

I would say the vibe at SLM is relaxed in terms of formalities, such as dress code and how we address one another. The majority of the sales team and many of the warehouse and marketing teams are made up of musicians from all types of musical genres and styles. I'm sure if we put together an SLM All-Star Band it would be incredibly talented.

What I also love about SLM is that many of the people here have been with the company for decades, some of them between 40–45 years and hearing about the history and some of the great stories is very enjoyable. You get a great sense of purpose from them, knowing we are continuing a legacy in its own right and building a company

that will go on for many more decades to come.

## ARE YOU A MUSICIAN YOURSELF?

My playing background is primarily from school. Even though I played clarinet and saxophone, I was the kid who raised his hand whenever the director needed a bassoon or oboe or baritone sax player that year to fill in. I also remember playing the marching tenor drum a few times for the water polo team. [Laughs.] Now that's rock 'n' roll.

## WHERE DO YOU HOPE TO SEE SLM FIVE YEARS FROM NOW?

We're becoming one of the largest distributors in the United States. If we stay on the trajectory we have been on over the past eight years, we'll be the largest "general" distributor, and I think our instrument brands will continue to grow both here and overseas. We will carry on hiring the best people we can to add to our world-class management team. We'll continue to acquire brands and companies we feel are appropriate to our customers, and we will continue to develop a service level and customer experience for our dealers which is second to none. We've just invested in one of the world's leading ERP systems in order to achieve this customer service goal. We went live May 2. When you're flying a rocket ship you need rocket fuel, and this system is exactly that.

'I WOULD ATTRIBUTE OUR GROWTH TO MANY THINGS, INCLUDING THE GREAT PEOPLE I WORK WITH DAY IN AND DAY OUT. YOU CAN'T DO THIS ALONE. YOU NEED GREAT HELP YOU CAN WORK WITH CLOSELY.'

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

Great question. Thirty years ago when I was working a special sale at a retail store, my good friend Steve Ridinger was selling Gorrilla Amplifiers. He sent me a full-sized gorilla suit that must have weighed 50 pounds. It was 100 degrees outside, and I was out there on the side of the highway in Independence, Missouri, with a guitar in my hand, waving people in. When I took the gorilla head off, it looked like I'd spent three days in a sauna. So, every time I drive by a tax accounting company where a person is dressed up like the Statue of Liberty, I say, "That could have been me." If I'd ever been fired from that job, then I would probably have been an accountant.



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St Louis Music is a division of U.S. Band & Orchestra Supplies, Inc.

by David Ball



# Meet Me In St. Louis (Again)

**RPMDA's 40th annual convention saw a host of familiar faces, from past presidents to future industry leaders, reunited in the city where it all began**

This year's convention for the Retail Print Music Dealers Association was one for the books. With 191 attendees, dealers and publishers alike reunited at the Chase Park Plaza Hotel in St. Louis's swanky Central West End for a three-day extravaganza jam-packed with tips, tricks and testimonials about how to run a better print music operation in your store, and how to more effectively work with industry suppliers.

Regular RPMDA-goers may have witnessed some familiar

faces from years past, including a few retired industry vets who returned to celebrate the convention's 40th anniversary in the same city where it all started, such as Senseney Music's Denny Senseney, Lorenz Publishing's Geoff Lorenz, Hal Leonard's Herman Knoll, Stanton Sheet Music's Jim Strouse and Alfred Music's Iris Manus.

While the overall atmosphere at the convention was jovial, the mood was balanced by somber remembrances of colleagues who've since passed, including

Alfred's Morty Manus. Following heartfelt reminiscences by Morty's widow, Iris, his son Ron discussed the future of Alfred Music and formally announced the company's acquisition by SmartMusic's parent company Peaksware to RPMDA attendees at the "Meet the Sponsors" breakfast presentation.

Using the updated organizational structure used at last year's convention, this year's "Breakout Sessions" were organized into three tracks to optimize the takeaway for all

attendees: 1) for print music specialists with three years experience or less; 2) for print music managers or buyers; 3) for owners and general managers.

"I think the quality of the sessions continues to be very high," said Lori Supinie, owner of Senseney Music, "and I like the track system that they have initiated the last few years. It's been spot on with what they've tried to do."

The 2017 RPMDA convention will be held April 26-29 in Atlanta. **MI**



1. David E. Smith Publications' Sue and David Smith. 2. From left: Hal Leonard's David Jahnke, Bruce Bush, Tim Cose, Maribeth Barrons, Chris Klinkhardt and Herman Knoll. 3. Willis Music's Kevin Cranley (center) with Best In Music's Ruby Beeston (left) and Sidney Hight (right). 4. Kendor Music's Craig Cornwall (center) with Separk Music's Drew and Marlene Parker. 5. The Alfred Music crew decked out for RPMDA's "Retro Prom" awards banquet. 6. Dealers and publishers share ideas at RPMDA's "Great Minds" session. 7. Riemann Music's Vanessa Maly with Long & McQuade's Bob Kohl. 8. Breitkopf & Härtel's Annekathrin Mascus. 9. Concordia Publishing's Pam Cunningham. 10. Alfred's Ron Manus (left) and Alan Friedman, CPA and *Music Inc.* columnist. 11. From left: Lorenz's Jenny VanPelt, Reiff Lorenz and Lisa Alger. 12. Poppler's Music's Don Langlie (left) throws up deuces with Steve's Music's Norman Zimmerman. 13. Sheet Music Now's Chaim Robinov (left) and Dave Olsen. 14. Schott Music's Bernhard Mueller. 15. Mel Bay's Debbie Overschmidt.



# Double Your Profits

## Three steps to doubling profits in six months or less (based “Double Your Profits” by Bob Fifer)

If your business doesn't generate a profit, it's not a business. Based on the book, *Double Your Profits*, by Bob Fifer, Joel Menchey, president of Menchey Music Service, highlighted some of Fifer's most salient points and explained how to apply those ideas to your store.

### CREATE A CULTURE OF PROFITABILITY

“In most employees' minds, they cannot possibly impact profits, so their benchmark for success is happy customers,” Menchey said. “There are many people in our organizations who have the aptitude to understand profits. Find those people and teach them, because they will make the difference in the bottom line.

“It's important to recognize the difference between strategic and non-strategic costs and time. Strategic costs are the costs that drive revenue. A non-strategic cost is any other cost required to run the business: rent, utilities, interest, freight. Outspend your competition in strategic costs in good times and bad, and ruthlessly cut all non-strategic costs to the bone, regularly and deeply.

“There is also strategic and non-strategic time. Strategic time is time spent producing profit. Non-strategic time is that which is busy and succumbs to the requirements of processes but doesn't add value to the bottom line. Make painfully clear that the former is rewarded, and the latter is not.”



### CUT COSTS

“Try to eliminate every cost possible. Every cost is up for grabs. You can always add back later. No cost is too small to cut. If you make a big deal about \$10 costs, employees assume that you're really concerned about \$100 and \$1,000 costs. Even if you really aren't concerned about the \$10, give the impression that you're concerned about it.

“Let your service providers know that any announcement of a price increase will trigger

an automatic evaluation of their services. Cut the use of products and services. Cut your coffee services, and look at the use of office supplies.

“Consider alternatives for meetings. GoToMeeting has saved us tens of thousands of dollars. We have GoToMeetings several times a day. We have multiple stores so we constantly connect. It's a huge opportunity [to cut costs]. Never invite people to a meeting just to be polite and make decisions with as few people in

the room as possible. Keep them short and never call a meeting to discuss, always call a meeting to decide.

“If you've never fired an employee, you can't have an excellent business. Never firing promotes the coasting of good people. If you make the bad people leave, the good people will get better.”

### INCREASE SALES

“We're selling a commodity. People are buying from you — someone they can trust, that understands the product. How we serve them, how we understand their emotions, how we present the product is an important part [of a business]. Good salespeople are worth their weight in gold.

“Compensate salespeople on profits, not on sales. Typically in this business, people pay commissions based on gross sales or gross profit. I'm a big fan of paying on gross profit, because it aligns the interest of the business and the salespeople. So, hire people who understand profit, not simply ones who know the product. Understanding the profitability of what they're selling is very important, and we reward them based on that profit.

“Good marketing is a cost. Outspend your competition in good times and bad. In a recession, the natural tendency is to cut marketing, because it's a lot less painful to cut marketing than it is to cut payroll; but this is exactly when you want to market.” **MI**

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# Best Ideas

## Retailers and publishers share their top suggestions for improving business

### SUMMER ROAD MAP

"Every summer we hand out a sheet of paper with a road map on it, and we hand it to every student, whether they are in school or they take private lessons — even adults as long as they have an instrument and they're going to play. They have goals along the map, whether it's 'Practice everyday this week' or 'Learn to play two scales.' As we go through those goals, we encourage them to come to the store, show us they accomplished one, and we give them a little prize. At the end of the summer, we have a social event at each of our stores. It's an ice cream social where all the students are encouraged to come and hang in our stores. If they've completed the roadmap, we like to give them a bigger prize, like a gift card to our store. It seems small, but the kids love it, and the parents love that we're encouraging them to play."

- Beth Korleski, West Music Company

### DONATION VETTING COMMITTEE

"This past year we formed the Senseney Music Cares committee. As a business owner, every day I'm asked for a donation, a grant, or a sponsorship. What I decided to do was make this more about the store than about me, so I asked five employees to serve on this committee. We initially met and decided what our criteria was. These are the three things we prioritized: 1) it has to be music related; 2) benefits kids; 3) benefits the community. Any requests for donations that come in go to the committee. It has formalized [the vetting process] and streamlined things."

-Lori Supinie, Senseney Music

### PERSONALIZE YOUR STAFF

"Create some type of [social media] campaign to show who your staff is and shows their musicianship. This is what will really separate you from Amazon. When your customers see this on social media, they'll like it, and they will share it, so their friends know about your business. On your website, as well, people could be talking about themselves as employees, which then could play into search engine optimization, and it would help with Google rankings. So, you could accomplish a lot by just filming your employees with an iPhone. It wouldn't even cost you anything."

-Alex Ordonez, Alfred Music

Now a staple of every RPMDA convention, the "Best Ideas" general session gives attendees a chance to compete for cash. Each speaker pays \$10 for two minutes at the podium, and the winner splits the pot with the Ed Adams Scholarship fund. Here are some of this year's ideas:

### WINNING IDEA

#### UKULELE LUNCH BREAKS

"My idea has to do with engaging other businesses in our local community. We just moved to a new location about a year ago, and we really needed to let [the community] know what we were doing, who we were again, and to just kind of refresh things. So, I came up with this idea that we implemented in January called the ukulele lunch break. Ukuleles are still huge. So, we'd come out to a local business, and we'd bring a bunch of ukuleles. We'd take 45 minutes to an hour — we'd either provide lunch or the employer would provide lunch — and for the employees that wanted to participate, we'd teach them three to four chords and two songs in that [timeframe]. What we noticed is that there are a lot of people who are just kind of afraid of picking up a musical instrument. After going out to businesses and allowing them to get their hands on a ukulele, we've noticed that we've had a big increase in uke sales."

- Damien Smith, Ward-Brodt Music



### DECLUTTER YOUR STORE

"This is the one thing we did this year that cost zero dollars and made the biggest difference in our business: decluttering. People are always asking me, 'Why does your store feel different?' After being in business long enough, you have piles of stuff you don't even see anymore. We all clean our store, but I'm talking about transforming your space to give it some soul. Literally go through every drawer, every closet, the repair room, every department and ask, 'Is this feeling good?'"

The magic happens when you clear out everything — whether it's product, or merchandising things, or Christmas decorations that are no longer serving a purpose. I picked up every single thing in my store and asked, 'What is my reaction to this?' It's magic, and it will change your whole attitude about your store."

- Gayle Beacock, Beacock Music

### APPEAR.IN

"We always have people that are offsite who like to participate [in meetings]. One of the things we like to do at Springfield Music is, we use remote technology to have remote interim meetings. Not all of you have remote locations, but you do have vendors that could do product training remotely. If you have a smartphone or tablet, go to Appear.in, and without having to log in or anything, you can start a video chatroom that will include eight people. You can invite people, and it will send the invite straight to their phone, and using their phone, they can do a video chat with you."

- Donovan Bankhead, Springfield Music

#### DIGITAL DOWNLOAD PUNCHCARD

"How many of you have ever bought a donut, a cup of coffee or a pizza? How about a punch card for digital downloads in store, where [customers] buy 10, or 12, or however you set it up, and then they get the next one free?"

- Marcia Fuller, Bookmark Music

### TRELLO.COM

"Probably the coolest thing we did this year was we got into this app called Trello.com. We have amazing repair technicians — amazing at repairing instruments, but not necessarily the best at communicating to the different customers and making sure workflow is going smoothly. Things would get lost. Someone would call at 7 p.m. when the repair techs were gone, we'd make a note to them, and it would disappear. With Trello, what you do is, you type into the computer, 'This customer called about their instrument.' Essentially, [Trello] sends a text message to the repair technicians, and it sits on a message board and stays there until the technician wipes it off. This way, we can make sure there's some accountability, and we can make sure that things are getting taken care of."

- Dan Lebn, Cadenza Music



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# Driving the Future of Marketing

## Trends to help maximize visibility for your store

If you're trying to navigate a business into the future, it's a good idea to have a map. When it comes to marketing in the present, the ever-evolving virtual landscape makes it even harder for business owners and managers to see what's on the horizon, and how best to drive business toward future goals.

With all of the avenues available to market businesses in the virtual world, brands have to stay up-to-date on the changes in the media landscape in order to continue engaging with customers.

Alex Ordonez, Alfred Music's vice president of marketing, gave a breakdown of the trends currently affecting ways in which businesses market themselves in the present, and how they can in years to come.

### MOBILE MARKETING

"Mobile marketing enables us to further the relationship with a consumer," Ordonez said. "We can track and follow our consumers, and make decisions based off of that, and marketers can start creating more meaningful interactions."

With mobile devices in the hands of nearly every potential customer, "Brands will blur the lines between apps, e-commerce and social [media]," Ordonez said. "That's not what social

media was intended for; but as companies started to integrate social media into their daily business model, it was a no-brainer."

### CONTROL THE CONVERSATION

"User-generated content is published information that an unpaid contributor has provided to a website. In essence — have your customers work for you. Get them to clock in. They'll do it for free."

Ordonez suggested encouraging customer-generated videos and blogs in which the business is mentioned.

"The goal is to always have your customers and consumers talking about you at all times," whether through reviews, social networking, or social bookmarking. "People want to share their opinions — mostly when they've had a bad experience — but, it gives an opportunity to respond to them and engage with them."

### BRAND TRANSPARENCY

"Transparency builds lifelong customers," Ordonez said. "It empowers the consumer to take control of their buying decisions unlike ever before. It tells consumers that they have nothing to hide, while sending a message that they care about the needs and wants of their customers.



"It also builds trust. When buyers make purchases, they want to make sure that their decision aligns with their personal and charitable interests.

"Companies that inspire advocacy amongst consumers have established a shared and genuine emotional connection with their consumers. Being transparent can help bring in those customers that believe in what you believe."

### SOCIAL MEDIA BASICS

"One of the great things about social media is, you get to see your target markets up close and personal. Take advantage

of that. You can read their tweets and status update about their daily lives, and based on that you might adjust your marketing strategy. And the advantage of social media is that it gives you an opportunity to respond immediately.

"Remember that your competition is on Twitter and Facebook. It behooves you to make sure that you're taking advantage of those opportunities. Social media marketing doesn't just keep your company's name in front of potential buyers. It also gives you the opportunity to constantly give them incentives to buy." **MI**

# Retrospective: 40 Years

## Industry veterans take a trip down memory lane to discuss how the RPMDA convention came to be

**D**enny Senseney, former owner of Senseney Music, hosted a panel of RPMDA veterans — including Herman Knoll, former senior VP of Hal Leonard, Geoff Lorenz, former president of Lorenz Publishing, and Jim Strouse, former president of Stanton's Music Service — to look back at RPMDA's early years.

"In December 1975 at the Midwest Clinic, there were several dealers who got together and said, 'We ought to put together some kind of group and meet so that we can learn how to [sell print music] better,'" Senseney

said. "The new organization held its first convention right here in St. Louis in 1976, and now 40 years later, here we are still trading ideas, trying to learn how to succeed."

"There was a lot of friction between publishers and dealers, and the main reason was that we had never talked to each other," Lorenz said. "One of the great things about RPMDA is it has created really good communication between supplier and customer. There was a huge misunderstanding that companies make all their profits on new issues that they

force down the dealers' throats. It took three or four years to get through all of that before we finally sat down together to figure out how to make it work better, and doing positive things to help each other. It's been a marvelous journey even though it was a very rocky start."

"The thing that I remember about [my] first convention," Knoll said, "I didn't even know what it was or who these people were, but they brought you in and made you feel comfortable."

"I think we had 21 founding members at the first con-

vention," Strouse said. "All of us were owner/operators of our business. In the beginning, a lot of the publishers were very concerned. They thought that we were going to be a rogue group of dealers that were interested strictly in dissing the publishers. Few thought that RPMDA would actually be a positive learning organization."

"It helped when we started inviting people to come in, we talked about new issues, shipping problems, promotions that worked or didn't. We needed a publisher's perspective." **MI**

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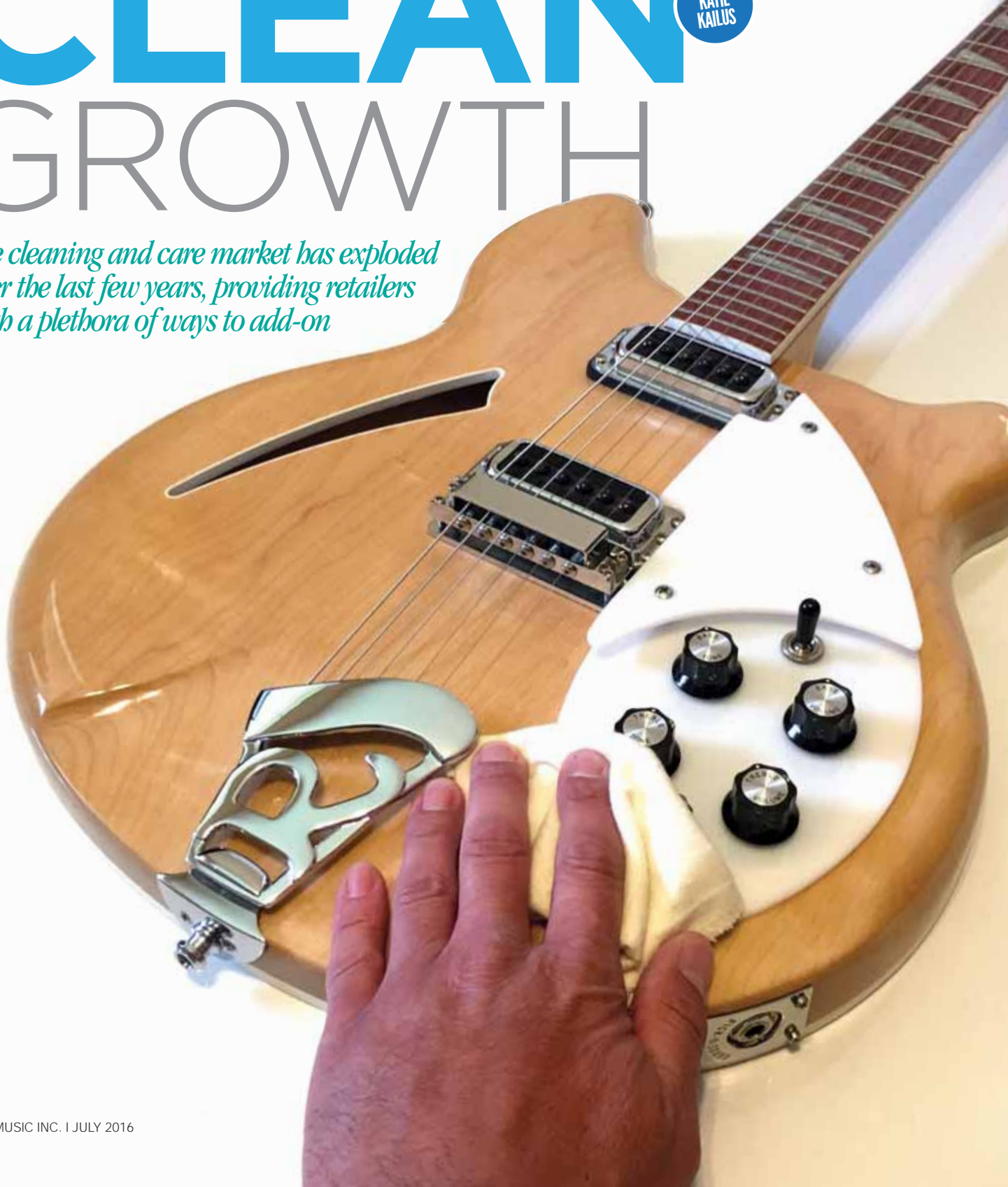
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# GENERATING CLEAN GROWTH

by  
KATIE  
KAILUS

*The cleaning and care market has exploded over the last few years, providing retailers with a plethora of ways to add-on*





Cleaning and care products have always been an important add-on for guitar, drum and B&O dealers. However, over the last few years, the market has exploded, providing retailers more options than ever to offer their customer base.

Max Lintner, executive manager of business development for Kyser, which first added cleaning products in 1998 but has amped up its offerings over the last few years, said he believes the increase is due in part to the growth of vintage and used instruments.

“I don’t know of any other industry where sales of used, old and vintage products continue to grow year after year,” Lintner said. “People truly like to take care of their instruments. I think customers really understand how caring for their instrument directly relates to their enjoyment of their instrument and also its value. Customers want to buy products from MI brands that they trust — brands that understand the unique needs of their gear, as opposed to using regular care and cleaning products from other industries.”

Kevin Damm, owner of Damm Music Center in Wichita, Kansas, said that he’s noticed his customers want to take care of their instruments and make sure they last.

“Care products are affordable, and an easy way to splurge on your axe,” Damm said. “Smart manufacturers are putting their products in good-looking packaging with retail display in mind.”

Music Nomad founder Rand Rognlien said the growth in the category has been a combination of several factors.

“There are new innovative products that have been developed to meet the need of the market,” Rognlien said. “Additionally, social media has increased awareness of the importance of taking care of your instruments, and dealers are pushing the category because they make healthy margins, and it is an easy add-on sale.”



KEVIN DAMM

#### ADDING ON

With the holiday selling season around the corner, cleaning and care products make for excellent stocking stuffers to add-on to all guitar purchases. Russel Read, vice president of SoundSynergies, suggests offering maintenance packages with all equipment sales and repairs.

“If you offer the how-to videos for maintenance products, you really begin the process of retaining and building customer loyalty,” Read said. “End users are not enthusiastic about maintenance until you show them the value of it, and how easy it can be with the right product.”

Damm Music Center’s Damm makes sure his team educates customers on maintenance products and what each one can offer that specific player.

“[Use] the power of suggestion ‘Would you like fries with that?’ he said. “That’s the first step, but then you need to follow up with a



# THE MAINTENANCE ROOM

A FEW CLEANING AND CARE ITEMS THAT MAKE GREAT ADD-ONS

## Planet Waves



fig.1 Three-Step System

The Three-Step System by Planet Waves ensures your instrument's finish maintains its luster and durability. Restore your instrument using the Deep Cleaning Cream Polish, which removes swirl marks and even light scratches from all clear-coated instruments. Protect your instrument with the Planet Waves' Liquid Carnauba Wax — a natural protectant and sealer for all clear-coated instruments, and maintain your instrument's shine with the Instant Spray Cleaner (pictured). [PLANETWAVES.COM](http://PLANETWAVES.COM)

## Kyser



fig.2 Lem-Oil

Kyser's Lem-Oil keeps fretboards from drying out, prolongs the life of instruments and keeps them looking shiny and new. Lem-Oil is available in a 4 oz. spray bottle or portable canister of 35 wipes. [KYSERMUSICAL.COM](http://KYSERMUSICAL.COM)

## MusicNomad



fig.3 The Guitar ONE

The Guitar ONE is a biodegradable, environmentally friendly solution to achieving a perfect shine. The Guitar ONE is infused with white Brazilian carnauba wax that delivers an acoustically transparent durable shield with a high gloss shine that protects an instrument's finish. It is safe on all lacquer finishes, including nitrocellulose. [MUSICNOMADCARE.COM](http://MUSICNOMADCARE.COM)

## Trick Drums



fig.4 Trick Drum Polish

Trick Drum Polish cleans, polishes and protects any drum shell finish, including paint, clear-coat, powder-coat, chrome and plastic. Trick Drum Polish won't scratch, streak or swirl while it removes dust, smoke residue, sawdust, fingerprints and spots. It revitalizes drums and leaves a slick protective shine without a waxy build-up. [TRICKDRUMS.COM](http://TRICKDRUMS.COM)

## SoundSynergies



fig.5 LECTRICare

LECTRICare kills static, cleans, conditions and protects all components in music electronic gear. The LECTRICare family includes LECTRICare Cine & Broadcast, which is ideal for the most sensitive electronics applications, and LECTRICare Stage/Lighting for general stage and backline applications. [SOUNDSYNERGIES.NET](http://SOUNDSYNERGIES.NET)

quick, simple explanation of what the care product is for and why the customer would enjoy it, such as ‘Keep your guitar looking new, have polish and a clean cloth in the case’ or ‘String winders are a life saver for turning the gears.’”

Paul Tobias of Tobias Music in Downers Grove, Illinois, has seen success with cleaning and care products by placing them near the check stand and letting customers know that you are using them on your stock.

“We work on many instruments throughout the day,” Tobias said. “We use the cleaning and care products right here in the store, and the customers see that. I think that’s pretty good marketing for the product, too.”

**THE FUTURE LOOKS CLEAN**

**W**ith many manufacturers continuing to debut new products, the category shows no signs of slowing down.

“We see this market becoming a major part of selling better and higher-end equipment,” said SoundSynergies’ Read. “We see maintenance as a way for end users to see more value in brick-and-mortar store visits for a multitude of reasons. Value is a loosely used term these days, but it really is true when it comes to store visits for information, instruction and care of a musician’s gear and equipment. That one-on-one experience with the retailer, sharing the same passion and love the customer has for their instrument and gear, these relationships are a priceless commodity for the customer as well as the dealer.”

MusicNomad’s Rognljen agreed that growth will continue in the maintenance market. “Also, the continued education to the marketplace by all the stakeholders, including instrument manufacturers, cleaning and care suppliers, and dealers, of the importance of proper instrument care creates increased awareness and demand in the market,” Rognljen added.

Assisting in that awareness is MusicNomad’s newly launched website which includes “Product Advisor,” an online tool that helps players choose the correct product for their instrument.

Kyser, recently launched its line of string cleaner wipes this year, and received a nomination for the 2016 Innovation Award by INDA (the Association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Industry).



“I see the MI cleaning product market heading into all sorts of new territories — ones that might already exist in other industries and are simply waiting for MI to finally pick them up and adapt them to their particular need,” said Kyser’s Lintner. **MI**



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A look at the hottest gear to stock for Q4

# FALL PRODUCT PREVIEW

**Guitars, Amps &  
Accessories**

Page 58

**Audio & Recording**

Page 66

**Drums & Percussion**

Page 70

**Band & Orchestra**

Page 74

**Pianos & Keyboards**

Page 76

**DJ & Lighting**

Page 78



# Fall Product Preview: Guitars Galore

A look at some six- and seven-string models that are sure to bring some variety to your store's guitar wall.



1.

## Riversong Silhouette

Riversong's Silhouette features a West Coast Sitka Spruce top, Chillakwisan maple back and sides and a walnut fretboard. The Silhouette boasts a composite neck, plus a new version of Riversong's patent-pending neck system, and is finished with a gloss ebony top and satin black back and sides. [riversongguitars.com](http://riversongguitars.com)



2.

## Fender PM-3 Deluxe Triple 0

Fender's Paramount Series Deluxe Triple-0 features East Indian rosewood back and sides with a grade "A" Sitka spruce top, plus a C-shaped mahogany neck, and ebony fingerboard with abalone mother-of-pearl "Concert Tone" fingerboard inlays. The PM-3 Deluxe boasts a balanced tone ideal for classical style and soloing, and is available in either a Sunburst or Natural finish. [fender.com](http://fender.com)

## Schecter Jeff Loomis Cygnus

Schecter's Jeff Loomis Cygnus JLX7 FR is built with the same quality and construction as its six-string counterpart, featuring a swamp ash/quilted maple body and set in maple/maple neck with 24 frets. The JLX7 FR boasts a 26 1/2-inch scale, a 16-inch radius and comes equipped with the signature "Jeff Loomis" Seymour Duncan pickups. MSRP: \$1,699. [schecterguitars.com](http://schecterguitars.com)



### Fret-King FKV3 'JE'

Fret King's Black Label Elise FKV3 "JE" artist guitar was designed in conjunction with jazz/rock virtuoso John Etheridge. Carved from solid mahogany, the Elise body has acoustically tuned chambers, a full-length center block and a double-carved solid maple top. Combined with the Fret-King long-tenon neck joint mated precisely to the body under the neck pickup this maximizes the retention and transmission of the Elise's acoustics. [fretking-vintage.com](http://fretking-vintage.com)

## What to Stock:



### Rand Cook The Candyman Strings & Things Santa Fe, New Mexico

#### Orange Crush Amplifiers

"Our perennial best sellers for the holidays are the Orange Crush series guitar and bass amplifiers (CR12, 20L, 35 BX25, BX50), as well as the new Yamaha FG800 acoustic guitars and the Yamaha C40 Classical Guitar. [Best-selling] accessories would be the Snark SN5 tuner and the Bolo Pick necklace.

"Electric guitars I had huge success with [were the] G&L Legacy series last holiday season, and we expect the same this year."

### Prestige Troubadour

Prestige Guitars has launched the Prestige Troubadour. The Prestige Troubadour is a single cutaway solid body guitar, boasting a combo of solid, carved Canadian maple top and solid mahogany body and neck. The guitar is finished in satin/matte black with cream 3-ply binding surrounding the body, and a cream bound neck and headstock, and comes loaded with a Seymour Duncan SH-1 '59 in the neck position and a SH-4 JB in the bridge. [prestigeguitars.com](http://prestigeguitars.com)

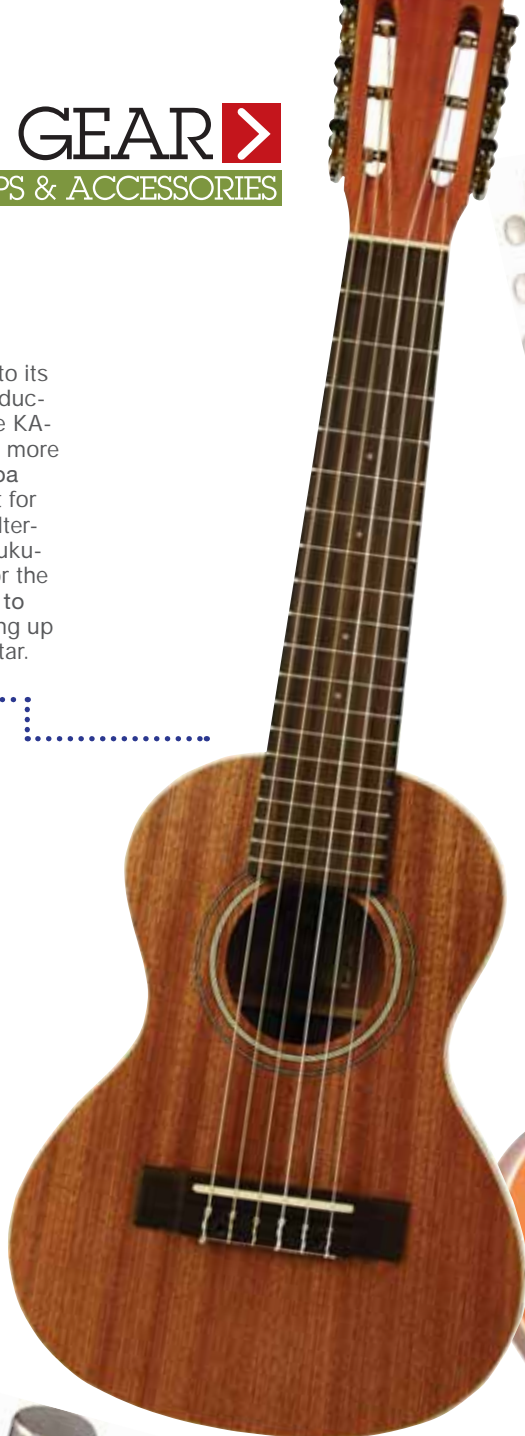
# GEAR >

## GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES

### **KALA** **KA-GL**

Kala has added a new model to its Guitarelele series with the introduction of a mahogany model, the KA-GL. The mahogany model is a more affordable version of Kala's Koa Guitarelele, a hybrid instrument for guitar players looking for an alternative travel guitar as well as ukulele players exploring guitar for the first time. The KA-GL is tuned to A-D-G-C-E-A similar to capoing up on the 5th fret of a regular guitar.

(kalabrand.com)



### **THE LOAR** **LH-306T**

The Loar's LH-306T fully hollow archtop guitar boasts a clear, bright tone, making it an ideal guitar for surf-rock and rockabilly. The LH-306T features a maple top, back and sides, Loar-a-tron pickups and a Bigsby B70 tremolo, plus a Florentine cutaway for easy upper fret access and Kluson tuners.

(theloar.com)



### **MOD KITS DIY** **THE STEP LADDER**

MOD Kits DIY's The Step Ladder kit is a passive input attenuator using high-quality components for excellent reliability. The attenuator pot and two toggle switches allow for flexibility in the amount of signal attenuation when not in bypass mode. Treble bleed capacitors in the circuit let users retain crisp high frequencies even at maximum attenuation.

(modkitsdiy.com)



**LEVY'S LEATHERS  
HARPER STRAP**

Levy's Leathers has introduced its Harper strap, the M317HPR. The pull-up veg tan leather strap features a decorative ridge down the center of the strap accentuating the pull-up nature of the leather. Available in Rust, the Harper boasts a soft suede backing and is adjustable from 37 to 51 inches. (levysleathers.com)



**KYSER  
QUICK-CLIP**

Kyser's Quick-Clip features an easy-to-use chromatic tuner, which seamlessly attaches to existing full-size Kyser Quick-Change capos via a magnetic boot, eliminating the need to have multiple items clamped to the guitar. An all-in-one device, the Kyser Quick-Clip will keep players in tune whether using the capo on a fret or if it's simply parked on the headstock. (kysermusical.com)



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# GEAR

## GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES

### BOSS CE-2W

Boss has released the Waza Craft CE-2W Chorus. Introduced in 1976, the CE-1 Chorus Ensemble was the first BOSS effects pedal, and the world's first chorus effect in pedal form. Three years later, the CE-2 Chorus brought this original BOSS effect to the compact pedal lineup. The CE-2W's standard mode completely reproduces the original CE-2 sound, while CE-1 mode includes both chorus and vibrato to reproduce the original's distinctive sounds. (bossus.com)



### EHX MEL9

Using the same technology that powers the B9 and C9 Organ Machines, EHX's MEL9 Tape Replay Machine emulates classic Mellotron sounds, including orchestra, cello, strings, flute, clarinet, saxophone, brass, low choir and high choir. The MEL9 is designed to work on guitar without any modifications, special pickups or MIDI. (ehx.com)

### 3RD POWER CITIZEN GAIN CSR

3rd Power has unveiled the Citizen Gain CSR to its line of hand-built tube amplifiers. Featuring a pair of EL34 tubes, the Citizen Gain CSR pulls various design elements together from the Dual Citizen and Citizen Gain amp. It boasts an American-voiced clean channel with enough headroom to serve as a pedal platform, paired with scorching British tone capabilities on channel two. (3rdPower.com)





**PEAVEY**  
**6505 PIRANHA**

Peavey has added the 6505 Piranha micro head to its 6505 series of amplifiers. Powerful and portable, the 6505 Piranha packs high-gain tones into a 20-watt power amp head, and features a "bright" switch, along with a "scoop" control, for a wide array of tones with few controls. (peavey.com)

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# GEAR >

GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES

## DIGITECH WHAMMY RICOCHET

DigiTech by Harman has debuted the Whammy Ricochet guitar effect pedal. The Whammy Ricochet takes the Whammy pitch shifting effect and places it in a pedal with a small form factor. Instead of using a foot treadle to manipulate pitch bending rate, the Whammy Ricochet bends the pitch of the incoming note at a rate determined by shift and return controls. ([digitech.com](http://digitech.com))







**VOX**  
**AV SERIES**

VOX's AV series is an analog modeling amplifier, offering players a full pallet of sounds via eight, all-analog preamp circuits. The AV (Analog Valve) series features 12AX7 driven preamp and power amp sections with eight types of tube sound ranging from transparent cleans, crunchy chime and modern high-gain. The amp's "Valve Stage" section modifies the circuit to add, or reduce, brightness and bass response and lets users adjust bias and response.

(korgusa.com)



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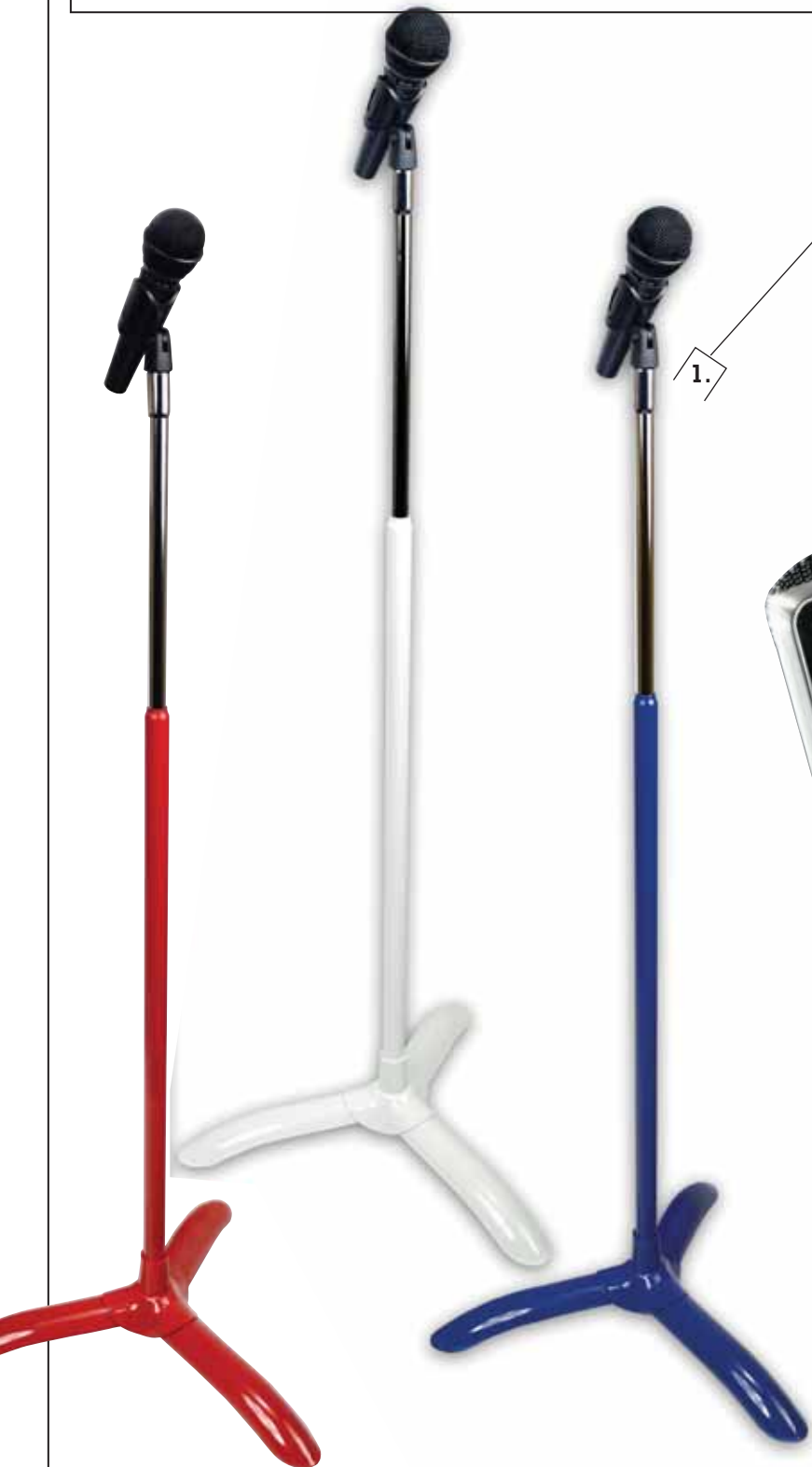


# Fall Product Preview: Speak Up!

Innovative new mics and accessories to up any musician's recording game

## Manhasset Stands Chorale Microphone Stands

Manhasset Specialty Company's Manhasset Chorale Microphone Stands are now available. The stands use the Manhasset Symphony shaft with Magic Finger Clutch and the Symphony base for great stability and support. The included mic adaptor has 5/8-inch threads to easily attach to almost any 5/8-inch mic clip to hold the microphone in place. [manhasset-specialty.com](http://manhasset-specialty.com)





### AKG C7

AKG's C7 reference condenser vocal microphone provides clear, powerful sound, while preventing feedback, handling noise and pop noise. The rugged enclosure is engineered to withstand the most demanding live performance environments. The C7 microphone is designed to solve many common problems musicians face on stage. The C7's protection system consists of three layers: the grill, a foam layer behind the grill and a layer of mesh atop the C7 capsule. This extensive system provides a clear, plusive-free vocal performance. [akg.com](http://akg.com)

### MXL DX-2

MXL's DX-2 Variable Dynamic Instrument microphone features a unique design and signature variable control for selecting or blending tone and pickup patterns with two distinctly different capsules. The DX-2 is flat-faced for side address pickup while the crossfade knob allows blending between two distinctly different capsules with complimentary characteristics. [mxlmics.com](http://mxlmics.com)



### Sennheiser MK 4

Sennheiser's new digital version of its MK 4 features high-quality Apogee A/D conversion and mic preamp technology. MK 4 digital connects directly to iOS devices, Mac and PC computers. The large-diaphragm MK 4 digital is the ideal partner for any mobile recording task requiring great sound quality with the typical warmth and detail of a true condenser microphone. The microphone is delivered complete with a USB cable and a Lightning iOS cable for connecting to iPad, iPhone or iPod Touch as well as a microphone clamp and a pouch. [sennheiser.com](http://sennheiser.com)

## YAMAHA EMX SERIES

Yamaha has unveiled the latest models in the company's EMX series powered mixer lineup, which incorporate new professional features as well as an updated look and interface. Like their predecessors, each of the new models – the EMX2, EMX5 and EMX7 – seamlessly integrate a mixer, a power amplifier and digital effects into a single chassis, requiring only speakers and microphones to realize a fully functioning sound system. The EMX5 and EMX7 feature Class-D Power Amps which offer lightweight, yet powerful sound reinforcement options for bands and mobile DJ performances in small- to mid-sized events, as well as for worship, nightclub or retail business applications. ([usa.yamaha.com](http://usa.yamaha.com))

## SHURE KSE1500

Shure's KSE1500 Electrostatic Earphone System features "Sound Isolating" electrostatic earphones and a matched digital-to-analog amplifier, providing high-fidelity portable audio. The system features the first electrostatic sound isolating earphones. Electrostatic technology provides the fastest, most accurate transient response available. Each earphone features a virtually weightless, massless diaphragm surrounded by an electrostatic field generated by back plates that manage charge oscillation. The result is clarity and detail with an extremely high correlation to the source audio. ([shure.com](http://shure.com))

## FOCUSRITE RED 4PRE

Focusrite has launched the Red 4Pre, the pinnacle of Focusrite's interface range. The 58-in/64-out Thunderbolt Red 4Pre interface combines four of Focusrite's specially-developed digitally-controlled mic preamps, plus high-headroom instrument inputs, with dual Pro Tools HD DigiLink and Dante network audio connectivity. Featuring Focusrite's most advanced low-noise conversion and robust design, the Red 4Pre interface is the ideal balance of form and function, delivering sound quality and versatility. ([focusrite.com](http://focusrite.com))





## FENDER PRO IN-EAR MONITORS

Fender has released the brand's first-ever line of audio hardware: Fender Pro In-Ear Monitors (IEM's). Designed and hand-assembled in Nashville, Tennessee, the Fender Pro In-Ear Monitor Series combines patented technology and design to offer clarity, precision and impact with five models (DXA1, FXA2, FXA5, FXA6 and FXA7). All models except the DXA1 boast 3D-printed digital hybrid technology housings, custom-designed drivers, and select models in the series feature a patented Hybrid-Dynamic tuned Balanced Armature Array (HDBA). The combination of features offers the comfort and feel of custom-molded monitors, plus rich, full-frequency response and substantial bass. ([fender.com](http://fender.com))



## DIRECT SOUND HPA EXW-37

Direct Sound's new HPA EXW-37 Wireless Extreme Isolation Headphones features a 300-foot line of sight range and 50 hours of playback at 90 percent volume. The HPA EXW-37 incorporates a patented new High Precision Audio (HPA) technology for superior audio quality. While HDA's maximum sampling rate is 6kHz to 192kHz, High Precision Audio (HPA) sampling technology starts at 48kHz and can go as high as 320kHz, supporting requirements in today's professional studio environment where the common range is 192kHz-320kHz. ([extremeheadphones.com](http://extremeheadphones.com))



# Fall Product Preview: All Set

Whether acoustic or electronic, these full kits will set the sales beat for the holiday season



## Yamaha Recording Custom Series

Yamaha has reintroduced its Recording Custom series in collaboration with longtime Yamaha artist Steve Gadd, retaining the best features of the previous Recording Custom kit while incorporating the latest innovations to produce optimized sound. The Recording Custom series snare drums include Gadd's signature 10-strand snare wires in the 14- by 5 ½-inch edition. [yamaha.com](http://yamaha.com)

## Pearl Decade Maple Series

Pearl's Decade Maple series has expanded to feature USA Galaxy Flake finishes which produce a dual-dimensional visual effect. Options include Ocean Galaxy Flake, Crimson Galaxy Flake, and Slate Galaxy Flake wraps made exclusively for Pearl by Delmar. The Decade Maple drums' cross-laminated six-ply SST all Maple shell projects with authority, reacting quickly with resonant highs and thundering lows. [pearldrums.com](http://pearldrums.com)

## What to Stock:



### Rob André Chicago Music Exchange Chicago

#### Drum Accessories

"There's a lot of cool new drum accessories. There's a company called Low Boy, and it's a bass drum beater company. [Its] products are all unique, wooden bass drum beater heads on a metal shaft. They make them in tie-dye, leather and custom ones with all different colors. For \$30–\$50, it's a good [gift idea]. We sold out of them last holiday season because, when you're buying a gift for a drummer, what do you buy them? You can't buy them a new snare drum for \$500.

"The Snareweight is another cool accessory. It's a weight that goes on your snare drum that has leather inserts to muffle the drum. It's a \$40–\$60 dampening system.

"For people that are buying cymbals and spending a little bit more money for the holidays, we always do really well with Istanbul Agop cymbals."



### Alesis Command Kit

Alesis has introduced the Command electronic drum kit featuring the company's patent-pending Mesh drum pads to deliver an authentic feel with a "real drum" sound. The Command kit includes two 9-inch dual-zone rack toms and an 11-inch dual-zone floor tom, plus Alesis's Advanced Drum Module that features 70 drum kits with over 600 sounds and 60 play-along tracks. [alesis.com](http://alesis.com)



3.

# GEAR

## DRUMS & PERCUSSION

### GROVER PRO PERCUSSION SHAKERZ

Grover Pro Percussion has introduced a line of modular shakers. Grover Pro's SHAKERZ provide a range of new and traditional sounds and serve as a vibrant addition for any percussionist's rig. SHAKERZ are available in three models: "Smooth" ideal for a gentle samba or relaxed New Age; "Groove" adds a light punch to jazz or pop; and "Accent" cuts through to complement more aggressive sounds. (groverpro.com)



### HAL LEONARD 'DRUMS FOR KIDS'

Hal Leonard has expanded its "For Kids" method series with the addition of *Drums for Kids* by Scott Schroedl.

Providing fun and easy instruction, the simple, easy-to-read page layouts ensure their attention remains focused on one concept at a time.

*Drums for Kids* includes such songs as "Another One Bites The Dust," "Crazy Train," "Wild Thing" and more. (halleonard.com)



### EVANS '56 CALFTONE DRUMHEADS

Evans has debuted the Evans '56 series of vintage-style products, harkening back to the year the company was founded, with Calf-tone drumheads — a synthetic alternative to traditional calfskin. Calf-tone is made using a 12-mm Mylar base blended with unique materials to produce warm, full tones. (evansdrumheads.com)





**SABIAN**  
**REMASTERED HH VANGUARD**

Sabian has added Vanguard cymbals to its Remastered HH line. HH Vanguard models are fully hand hammered and employ pinpoint lathing, plus they are also thinner and lighter, with smaller bells and extended profiles. HH Vanguard cymbals are available in 16- or 18-inch crash, 20-, 21- or 22-inch ride, as well as 14-inch hats. (sabian.com)



**SOUND SYNERGIES**  
**PROCUSSIONCARE WEARBARRIER**

Sound Synergies's PROCUSSIONCARE WearBarrier is a conditioning and maintenance formula that preserves the "like-new" feel and sound of a drumhead for up to four times longer. The WearBarrier formula was created to prolong performance life, increase rebound and provide the ideal sonic response for drumheads, drumsticks and mallet tips. (soundsynergies.net)



**PROMARK**  
**MIKE PORTNOY ACTIVEGRIP 420X**

Promark has launched its patent-pending technology ActiveGrip, a heat-activated drumstick coating. ActiveGrip coating adds virtually no weight or diameter to the stick and offers drummers exceptional grip without sacrificing feel. The Mike Portnoy ActiveGrip 420X features a long narrow taper for fast and responsive feel, nylon tips and a black finish. (promark.com)

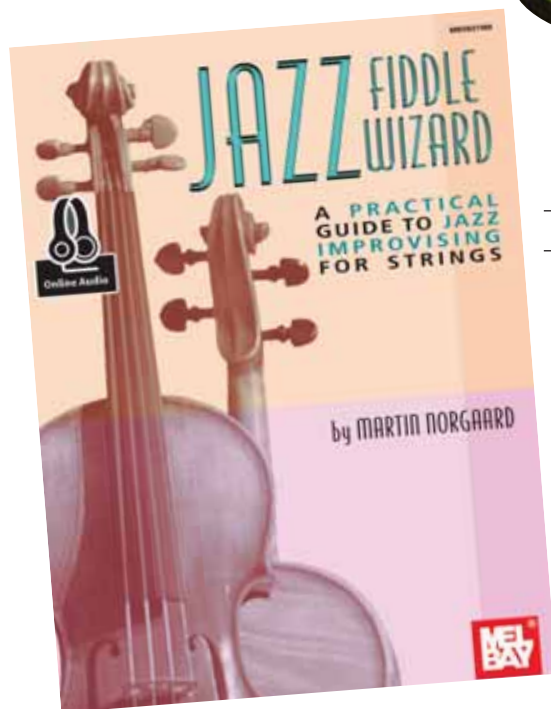
# Fall Product Preview: Accessorize

## B&O add-ons that make for surefire stocking stuffers

### Stravari Aria Rosin

Stravari has developed the Old Master Aria Hypoallergenic Rosin for violin, viola, and cello, as well as an Aria Hypoallergenic Bass Rosin. This rosin is ideal for players who are allergic to pollen. The Aria Rosin is made through a specialized patented process from tree resin, producing an amazing feel and superior sound quality.

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



3.

### Mel Bay 'Jazz Fiddle Wizard'

Mel Bay's new *Jazz Fiddle Wizard* is tailored for advanced violinists who are interested in learning to improvise in the jazz tradition. The book contains practical theory lessons, presenting rhythms and scales that users can immediately use. The concepts are introduced progressively, requiring comprehension of previously introduced techniques and terminology. Each lesson in the book includes a theory section and an exercise or performance section.

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

### Légère European Cut Signature Series

Légère has debuted the European Cut Signature Series of reeds for B flat Soprano. The reed is characterized by a slightly shorter and wider vamp that is comfortable in the embouchure. There is a band of extra material along the spine that provides rigidity without compromising the reed's free blowing nature or high register stability. The series is designed specifically for French mouthpieces and therefore won't work on most German mouthpieces.

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



2.

## What to Stock:



**Robert Christie**  
A&G Central Music  
Madison Heights, Michigan

### Mouthpieces

“One of the fastest and least expensive ways to improve a student’s tone on any instrument is helping them find a stepup mouthpiece that fits their embouchure. For clarinet, we like Vandoren. Our best sellers are the B45, 5RV and M15. We also do well with Vandoren for alto and tenor sax. The A28 for alto and TL4 for tenor seem to sell best. For the jazz-focused saxophone folks, try the JodyJazz hard rubber or newer “Jet” mouthpieces. They sell very well! Having a good supply of Bach mouthpieces for your brass players is always a sure bet. In our area, we see the 3C, 5C, and 1 1/2C selling the most for trumpet and the 5G topping the list for trombone. Try stocking a few gold-plated models. You’ll be pleasantly surprised how well they sell as an add-on to a new instrument, or just an upgrade for a serious student.”

## GEAR

### BAND & ORCHESTRA

#### CONN-SELMER

##### CONN 20K, KING 2350

Conn-Selmer has added several custom Conn 20K and King 2350 sousaphone models to its line of instruments. These new custom models are available with options, such as heavy-duty bracing, school logo engraving and black lacquering. New models with all combinations of these added options are available in both the Conn and King sousaphone lines.

(conn-selmer.com)



#### COOL WIND

##### PLASTIC WIND INSTRUMENTS

Cool Wind horns are the next generation of plastic wind instruments. These high-performance instruments offer all-metal high-precision valves, tonal fidelity and reliability at highly competitive price points. Cool Wind wind instruments are initially available in five different models, including a trombone with F attachment (F trigger), trumpet, euphonium, tuba and piccolo trumpet. Each model is available in five different colors.

(playersmusic.com)




**KAWAI**  
**CS11**

The new Kawai CS11 Hybrid Digital Piano blends traditional acoustic piano elements with modern digital ones. Replacing the award-winning CS10, the CS11 features Kawai's top Harmonic Imaging XL sound technology along with the latest version of its acclaimed wooden-key actions. The CS11 also utilizes the Soundboard Speaker System, a real wooden soundboard that further enhances the acoustic experience. The CS11 offers many powerful digital piano features including 80 total sounds, layer and split modes, USB to Host, and the ability to record both MP3 and WAV digital audio.

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

**ALFRED MUSIC**
**'THE LANG LANG PIANO METHOD'**

Alfred Music has debuted new piano method written by leading international pianist Lang Lang. Written for 5–10 year olds, *The Lang Lang Piano Method* is a series of five books that progresses from complete beginner to around grade 1 level. The books are accompanied by online audio tracks, including exclusive performances of the concert pieces by Lang Lang. *The Lang Lang Piano Method* is the next step in the Lang Lang Piano Academy, bringing an imaginative and contemporary approach to learning piano. Lang Lang's experience and expertise are distilled throughout the books, encouraging performance skills and self-expression from the start.

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





**AIM GIFTS**  
**MARBLEIZED MUGS**

AIM has released new marbled mugs featuring staff notes that are sure to satisfy any musician. The new marbled mugs are available in a brown or blue finish. AIM carries a large selection of mugs and glassware in addition to 10,000 music gift accessories. ([aimgifts.com](http://aimgifts.com))

**What to Stock:**



**Peter Sides**

Robert M. Sides  
Family Music Center  
State College, Pennsylvania

**Roland FP30**

“The Roland FP30 started shipping in March 2016, but I would think that this will be a big winner this coming holiday season. It has Bluetooth page-turn and midi, plenty of sounds, drumbeat tracks, a full-featured metronome, transpose, layer/split, twin piano mode with dual sustain pedals and optional legs and pedal unit for full functionality. I think this represents a big improvement in what a customer can get for under \$1,000 that they won’t grow out of too soon.”

**CASIO**  
**GP-400BK**

Casio’s GP-400BK is the newest model in its CELVIANO Grand Hybrid lineup. The CELVIANO Grand Hybrid pianos combine the advantages of both digital and acoustic pianos, while delivering the performance of a grand piano in tone, keyboard quality and playing comfort. The new GP-400BK comes with the three historically popular grand piano sounds featured in the GP-500BP and GP-300BK, as well as the same reliable key response and supple playing comfort. MSRP: \$4,999. ([casiomusicgear.com](http://casiomusicgear.com))



# Fall Product Preview: Light Up the Night

DMX-controlled lighting options to amp up all DJ setups



## StompLight International StompLight Professional

StompLight International has introduced a new version of its artist-controlled lighting effect pedals, the StompLight Professional, which includes DMX compatibility, improved brightness and simplified connectivity for expanding the light show. The StompLight Professional is designed for solo performers, DJs, bar bands, dancers and as part of any minimalist stage setup producing dozens of colorful lighting effects at the push of a button. [stomplight.com](http://stomplight.com)

## Chauvet DJ COLORband T3 USB

Chauvet DJ's COLORband T3 USB is a full-size LED strip that functions as a chase effect, blinder or wall washer and features three zones of control to create chasing effects. The COLORband T3 has high-power, tri-color LEDs that nearly eliminate multicolor shadows, plus convenient access to multiple pre-built programs with or without DMX, sound-activated programs and D-Fi USM compatibility for wireless Master/Slave or DMX control. [chauvetdj.com](http://chauvetdj.com)



## American DJ WiFLY Chameleon

American DJ's WiFLY Chameleon creates three beams from three lenses with offset colors for a one-of-a-kind effect. This unique wall-washing fixture is powered by three 18-watt RGBWA + UV (six-in-one) LEDs, a built-in rechargeable lithium battery, and includes ADJ's WiFLY EXR "Extend Range" wireless DMX up to 2,500 feet. The WiFLY Chameleon also features a multi-angle kickstand on the bottom for further adjustments. [adj.com](http://adj.com)





### PIONEER DJ DDJ-RB, DDJ-RR

Pioneer DJ has expanded its range of rekordbox dj controllers with the DDJ-RB and DDJ-RR. Both controllers feature two channels while the DDJ-RR also includes Deck Select so you can switch between all four rekordbox dj decks. The controllers introduce buttons for new features in the rekordbox 4.1.1 software update, including Sequence Call, which allows users to create and save sample sequences, then play them back without touching the computer. (pioneerdj.com)

### ARRIBA CASES LIFESTYLE SERIES

Arriba Cases's Lifestyle series is designed with the mobile DJ in mind, with the option of a backpack with separate pockets for a laptop and an iPad, a rolling backpack with emergency straps, and a 15-inch laptop case. All cases in the Lifestyle series boast a thick padded layer and protective feet on the bottom. (arribacases.com)



## BUYERSGUIDE

Alfred Music.....	33	Kala.....	19
Allparts.....	10	Kawai.....	13
American Way Marketing.....	28	Kyser.....	65
Arriba Cases.....	29	LPD Music International.....	15
Bass Plate.....	17	Music Nomad.....	55
Cannonball.....	37	NAMM.....	20-21
Casio.....	6-7	Ovation Guitars.....	61
Classified Ads.....	80-81	RBI Music.....	51
Conquest Sound.....	28	Reverb.com.....	56
Cympad.....	17	Roland.....	2
D'Addario.....	5	Sabian.....	49
D'Angelico Guitars.....	83	Samson.....	84
Dava Picks.....	10	Shubb Capos.....	64
Direct Sound.....	18	Sound Synergies.....	23
Dusty Strings.....	64	St. Louis Music.....	43
Electro-Harmonix.....	39	Stomplight.....	4
Fishman.....	35	The Music Link.....	3
Hal Leonard.....	25	TRX Cymbal Co.....	17
Hunter Musical Products.....	61	WD Music.....	18
IMS Technologies.....	63	Yamaha.....	11
Jazz Education Network.....	47	Yorkville.....	30
JJ Babbit.....	27	Zoom.....	9

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**Musical Innovations**  
Greenville, South Carolina

It's amazing: People can't find sheet music. I don't know how, but they can't find it, and they call us. We get it for them, and we're the heroes.

Print music is something that, even if they're not an instrumentalist, people will come in and buy a ukulele, and they need a book. Or, people come in who used to take piano lessons years ago, and now they need a book. So there's a lot more commonality, especially with the community at large.

We put a big focus on trying to get everybody in our community involved in music — not just the school kids, and not just the pros. And print is something that gives you a pathway to the average future customer. We get more uninitiated customers in for print music than for anything else we sell.



>>>  
**Gayle Beacock**

**Beacock Music**  
Vancouver, Washington

It's strange how, you can have nobody in the store, but there's always somebody in the print department. For us, [print] does a couple things: it supports all of our school accounts, and it supports our lesson program, but it also supports our retail environment. We're desperate for interesting things for our customers to look at, and that's what print does — it creates that activity.

If you ever have a sale, and you've got guitars out, and then you put out tables of print music on sale — where is everybody? At the print table.



>>>  
**Lori Supinie**  
Sensene Music  
Wichita, Kansas

## How does **print** music play into your business overall?\*

For us, 30 percent of our revenue is from print music sales, so it's a huge part [of the business]. It's a key piece to servicing school music, whether it's choirs, bands, orchestras, or guitar programs. From a print standpoint, we're also very much involved in the elementary schools through elementary classroom resources, and helping support that end of it.

Then, with ensemble music we do a lot of reading sessions and publisher workshops at our music education conference. That's another a key piece of our business. It's vibrant, and it keeps everybody going. We're preparing for a band reading session and some choral reading sessions now,

and everybody's always excited to get those new titles in front of the directors.

[Print] supports quite a bit of what we do, so without it, there would be a big hole. [Print sales] have stayed pretty steady. School budgets have definitely impacted what the teachers are able to spend, so over the years revenues have declined somewhat, but we have a lot of very loyal customers, and we're spend it with us.

I'm optimistic [for the future]. So much of what happens in Washington, D.C. is great, and I applaud all of those in NAMM and NAFME who have been working on helping to

get the current legislation passed, but down in the trenches, what matters is what's happening at the state level. That continues to be a challenge and something we all have to figure out how to address.

Print music builds traffic, and it keeps people coming in. It gives people something to talk about, whether in email marketing, or a workshop, or whatever it is — [new print music] is easy content to build around. With our email marketing, we have it targeted to the type of customer who we think might be interested. **MI**

\*Based on interviews moderated by Zach Phillips, NAMM's director of professional development, during the NAMM General Session at the RPDMA convention.

# D'Angelico

## NEW YORK



Brand new for 2016, we are proud to present the D'Angelico Deluxe Collection. For our six most popular Standard Series models, stunning upgraded Deluxe Editions are now available. Re-designed by our team in NYC, the Deluxe Collection features custom-made Seymour Duncan pick-ups, graphite nuts, Grover locking tuners, six-way switches, and new Dunlop frets. These Deluxe Editions are refined versions of the same masterful Standard Series guitars that D'Angelico customers have come to know in recent years and are available only in Midnight Matte, a finish that embodies their elegance.

Available September 2016



A man with dreadlocks, wearing a light blue button-down shirt and dark jeans, is playing a double bass. He is standing on a wooden floor in front of a wall with horizontal wood paneling. To his right is a black Hartke KB12 amplifier. The amplifier has a large speaker and a control panel on top with various knobs and switches. The Hartke logo and 'KB12' are visible on the front of the amp.

**Hartke**  
SERIOUS TONE™

## **KICKBACK®**

with James Genus

James Genus plays with some of the biggest names in music, and can be seen every week playing his Hartke rig on *Saturday Night Live*. When he's on the road, he brings his **Kickback KB12** combo with patented HyDrive Speaker Technology. At 500 watts, it has the power to play with any band, and weighs in at just 28 pounds.