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INNOVATION IS AT THE CORE OF everything D'Addario Woodwinds does. From their cane fields, which have been redesigned to grow higher-quality cane in a more environmentally-sustainable way, to their factories, where D'Addario's state-of-the-art technology has refined their reed and mouthpiece manufacturing process, D'Addario Woodwinds creates the industry's most consistent products to redefine the word "craftsmanship" for the 21st century.

Now, they're applying this innovative approach to how they work with retailers and educators. The D'Addario Woodwinds Method Program helps bring their finest products to students and educators, while driving business to local retailers in a thoroughly modern way.

Led by D'Addario Clinicians, the Method Program is a series of workshops focused on creating an easier, more enjoyable music-making experience through exploring new equipment and teaching techniques. Clinicians prove the advantages of D'Addario's innovation, which eliminates inconsistencies in equipment and helps students play in a more fundamentally sound way. This not only motivates students to continue playing, but also connects schools to local retailers as clinicians make on-site sales on their behalf.

One of those retailers is Bell's Music Shop,

Inc. A family-owned-and-operated school music dealer, Bell's Music Shop, Inc. specializes in instrument and accessory sales as well as instrument rental and repair for both student and professional players. As they continue to thrive in Keller, Texas, they're thrilled to have D'Addario's support.

SINCE INTRODUCING THE D'ADDARIO LINE, WE NOW HAVE A GREATER DIVERSITY OF QUALITY PRODUCTS WE CAN OFFER CONSUMERS.

Store Manager of Bell's Music Shop Inc., David Charron says, "We are fortunate to have instructors in this area who recommend D'Addario products to their students. The most important thing is having Method Program professionals put on their clinics to help educate players about the D'Addario line. Players can see a big difference in sound and tone simply by changing their reed to a Reserve Classic or their mouthpiece to the Reserve X0... They are instant fans."

Currently available in 31 states for clarinet and saxophone, Method Program sessions are complementary and tailored to the needs of students and educators. Covering

everything from the fundamentals of playing to music entrepreneurship, these clinics supercharge musical growth.

D'Addario Woodwinds Product Specialist Josh Redman, who is one of the program's managers, believes that the best way to strengthen music education and the music industry at large is to better connect musicians with those who serve them. He explains, "The D'Addario Woodwinds Method Program was created to better weave educators, manufacturers, retailers, and individual players in a common community fabric."

The Method Program has already seen enormous success and Bell's Music Shop, Inc. is excited about its value. "Since introducing the D'Addario line, we now have a greater diversity of quality products we can offer consumers," explains Charron. "We sell more and more D'Addario products every day and see this trend continue to grow. Schools are recommending these products to their students and it translates to direct sales for us."

Through bold innovation, relationship building, and advocating for music education, D'Addario Woodwinds is creating an exciting vision for the future. To get on board with D'Addario and reap the retailer benefits of the Method Program, visit daddario.com/dwmp. ➤



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Cover photo by Scott Paulus



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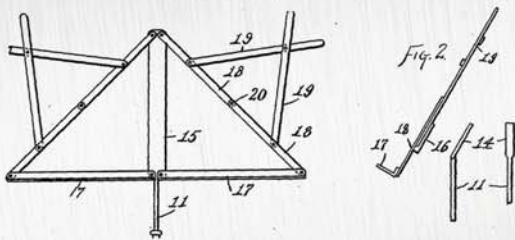
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■ PERSPECTIVE

PERSPECTIVE | BY KATIE KAILUS

JINGLE ALL THE WAY TO THE BANK

It's finally upon us — the most wonderful time of the year. And that last-minute push to boost 2016's sales figures. As this issue mails, we are about 10 weeks out from Christmas. If you are in dire need of some last-minute, tried-and-true items to stock up on this holiday selling season, check out our Stocking Guide beginning on page 54. It features some of MI retailing's best and brightest's selections, including the CME Xkey which Rick Thacker of Plum Grove Music said is ideal for kids learning to play piano and Meinl's Compact Foot Tambourine, which Brad Boynton of Rhythm Traders swears by as a solid add-on.



Gear aside, this month's columnists offer some valuable insight into ways you can improve your shoppers' experience at your store this holiday — and keep them coming back throughout the year.

James Harding of Gist Piano Center in Lexington, Kentucky, advises in his column (page 33) to take the time to continuously train your staff — even if they are seasoned vets.

"Most people I encounter in my private life can't sell," he said. "Make sure you and your team have the tools you need to give your clients the very best experience."

Zack Stanton, general manager of Ken Stanton Music in Marietta, Georgia, shared in this month's NAMM YP column (page 38) the success his company has seen by using a secret shopper service. In order to

get the most out of the experience, Stanton advocates using the right company and a clear and constructive set of parameters.

"Many have found it useful while others have not," he said. "Here at Ken Stanton Music, we have implemented a structured and basic checklist for our third-party shopper service to conduct."

Stanton said secret shoppers can be an important tool in both reinforcing training efforts and redirecting bad habits, as well as offering managers the opportunity to give sales staff a formal review of every aspect of the shopping report regardless of their score. For those who receive a 95–100 percent score, Ken Stanton Music rewards them with gift cards to local restaurants or shops.

"The secret shopping service has helped Ken Stanton Music immensely with raising the customer service standards and accountability through each and every level of customer interaction," Stanton said. "Remember, if you are not taking care of your customers, your competition will."

Whether you hold after-hours meetings to help your staff fine-tune their sales skills, or you enlist a third-party to review their performance, ensure your team is on top of their game this holiday season. Make this the most profitable holiday season yet. Here's to a strong December! **MI**

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LETTERS

Words of Wisdom

I wanted to say a very heartfelt and personal “thank you” to my fellow professionals in the music industry who have taken me under their wings and been a source of wisdom.

It’s intimidating to enter an entirely “new-to-me” industry — especially being female!

I am scrappy by nature, but having 30-plus year veterans (industry CPA Alan Friedman and industry lawyer Ron Bienstock) hold out their hands to give wise advice has been invaluable.

Additionally, as much as I love competition, I have enjoyed getting to know those in leadership positions at our competitor’s companies. It has been a particular source of pride and joy to be able to walk to the G7th booth at NAMM and have a beer with Nick and Noel — or play a prank on them, whichever comes first! And finally, thanks to Frank Alkyer [*Music Inc.* publisher], a fellow lover of all things rural, for suggesting Kyser for “From the Top.”

*Meredith Hamlin
President & CEO
Kyser Musical Products
Canton, Texas*

Emotional Journey

On behalf of the Noto family and the entire family at Music Land, I wanted to take a moment to thank you for featuring our story in your last issue.

It’s been an emotional journey and a wonderful challenge taking over Music Land after my father’s passing — one that I simply could not have done without the help and support of so many people, many of which I’ve known since I was a little kid.

Gary Linderborn has run



our repair shop for 35 years. He still has the wrench stained with red paint he used to help my dad and I build the car for my Cub Scout’s pinewood derby car competition. It was Gary and I — yes, Gary and Larry — who walked that Summer NAMM floor as we worked to piece together our vendor relationships.

There’s Vince Corsen, part of our teaching team for the last 30 years. Vince and I would be talking high-level strategy one minute, and then painting walls the next.

Adam Payne (10 years) stepped up and took on product ordering and kept our rental program going.

Then there were new guys, like Colin Ludwig, who stepped in and brought their knowledge

to the table.

The team and I were guided by great partners, including Frank Civaro at Fender, John Galice with RJ Marketing, Jeff Mullen at Shure, Al Maniscalco and Kurt at Buffet Crampon, Joe Kramer and Dan Brewer at Yamaha. The lists goes on and on. They were resourceful, helpful and supportive during a very difficult time.

But, the biggest thanks goes to our customers, who wrote letters, dropped off flowers, and sent words of encouragement through social media. Their support and appreciation for keeping the store going meant the world.

Finally, I’d like to thank my mom and my sister for trusting me to do this, for supporting me during this challenge, and for

their overwhelming love and belief in me.

*Larry Noto
Owner
Music Land
Bel Air, Maryland*

Reaching a Milestone

Thank you to the team at *Music Inc.* for your continued support of the NAMM Oral History program! Your recent article on our 3,000th interview perfectly demonstrated the goal of our program: to document the rich history of our passion — an industry driven by the very people who live and breathe it!

I’d like to offer a special “thank you” to some of the interviewees who have passed but were instrumental in establishing this collection, including Henry Steinway, Sandy Feldstein, Jimmy Saied, BR Wexler, Tsutomu Katoh, Bob and Kay McDowell, Jim Coffin, Karl Bruhn, Jimmy and Mac Johnson, Specs Powell, and all who have assisted us over the years — you made it possible!

In reflecting back on the 3,000 people we have interviewed, I can only say how blessed I am to be a part of this great industry — it really is more like a family.

I am so grateful to the many people who emailed me with ideas for future interviews. If you have any suggestions for future interviews, email me at dand@namm.org. Onward to number 4,000!

*Dan Del Fiorentino
NAMM Music Historian
Carlsbad, California*

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Celebrates grand opening
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RETAIL

UKULELE STATION AMERICA | BY KASIA FEJKLOWICZ

DOING MORE WITH LESS

One hundred and fifty ukuleles squeezed in a 250-square-foot space — Ukulele Station America is truly a small business. But only in size. Located in Oregon, Illinois, the specialty ukulele shop draws musicians ages 8–88 to its small stone building that has been deemed a local landmark.

“[The town of] Oregon is kind of blowing up right now,” said John Lindhorst, owner of Ukulele Station America. “[The city] is a definite tourist attraction for a variety of outdoor activities and its scenic beauty.”

Lindhorst purchased the one-acre property in 2014 — which was vacant for nearly three decades after serving as a Conoco Station in the 1930s and a beauty parlor in the mid-1980s — and completely remodeled the building in 2015.

His original plan was to start selling his own uke collection during his free time.

“I was just going to do it as a business hobby, but the restoration cost so much that I needed to generate a little extra income,” Lindhorst noted. “The more I sold, the more [stock] I added.”

Just 11 months after its grand opening, Ukulele Station America



John Lindhorst

By following trends, a retired music teacher turned his ukulele hobby into a business

was named a NAMM’s Top 100 Dealer during this past Summer NAMM.

“I knew ukuleles would be huge here because they were already huge on the West Coast,” Lindhorst said. “It follows like style: has to hit the West Coast first, then eventually hits the Midwest eight years later,” he joked. “I [also] knew little buildings are really popular.”

Lindhorst said that he’s been amazed by recent sales which are up nearly 200 percent in the last six months over last year.

“I guess my real retirement can wait a few years,” he said.

WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

In the mid-1980s and early ’90s, Lindhorst owned a music venue — Washington Street Mercantile & Coffeehouse — in Oregon.

When he closed the coffeehouse, he packed up his belongings and relocated to Hawaii without a job or place to live. He managed to find his way and spent the next six years teaching choir, guitar and piano lessons.

The cost of living on a beachfront neighborhood in Honolulu proved to be too expensive. So, when a teaching job offer came up in San Diego, Lindhorst didn’t think twice.

His students encouraged him to create a ukulele club, and that’s where Lindhorst’s passion for the instrument grew. But naturally, his love for the ukulele began on the island of O’ahu. Since then, he’s added more than a hundred ukuleles to his collection.

“I love the fact that the ukulele is so easy to play and the small size makes it easy to carry along,” Lindhorst said.

THE LITTLE STONE SHOP

Nearly two decades later, Lindhorst found himself back in Oregon — but this time it felt like home.

He spent a good portion of his retirement savings on restoring the little stone building and officially opened shop on July 11, 2015.

The store, which is open Wednesday–Saturday afternoons,

stocks a wide selection of ukuleles as well as uke amps and tuners, straps, cases, and songbooks. It also carries a selection of Deering banjos.

“My shop has become a ‘destination’ for visitors from as far away as 200 miles,” Lindhorst noted. “The shop draws them here in combination with the fact that Oregon, Illinois, and the Rock River Valley are tourist attractions.”

Once inside the store, shoppers find ukes ranging in price from \$50–\$1,500.

Lindhorst offers small-group lessons inside the tiny shop where students of all ages learn to play popular songs such as “You Are My Sunshine” and the uke classic “Somewhere Over The Rainbow.”

On weekends, some of his students, along with guests and friends, meet up at a local Italian restaurant to “eat, drink, sing and strum.”

Since Lindhorst is a one-man band, he closes the shop early on the Saturdays he performs. He plays the ukulele and sings songs from every era at learning and senior centers one to three times a month in a 50-mile radius of Oregon. These shows also offer Lindhorst the opportunity to boost ukulele sales.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Lindhorst attributes his shop’s success to the ukulele’s rise in popularity and the instrument’s versatility as well as his shop’s one-of-a-kind look.

“I [also] think the magic is specialty,” Lindhorst said. “It’s a niche market.”

Unlike big-box stores that have a dozen ukuleles, customers know they’re going to have a good selection of ukuleles and a knowledgeable person who can help them choose the perfect instrument.



FUTURE PLANS

When it comes to expansion plans, Lindhorst has none for the historical building. Instead, he envisions building a gazebo for extra space as well as an additional building to house a showroom and lesson room. But for now, Lindhorst wants to focus on maximizing the space he has.

“I’m having the time of my life, but so much for retirement — I’m working my butt off,” Lindhorst laughed. **MI**





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EVOLA MUSIC | PHILANTHROPY

Evola Music Center Donates 3,600 Music Books

When Michigan-based Evola Music Center was left with some overstock, owner Jim Evola searched for a way to put the music books into the hands of people who would love them. That's when he came upon the National Association for the Exchange of Industrial Resources (NAEIR), the largest gifts-in-kind nonprofit in the United States.

"We connect companies looking to donate products with nonprofits who can benefit from them," explained Gary C. Smith, president and CEO of NAEIR.

NAEIR's specialty is receiving donations of excess inventory and redistributing it to its member schools, churches and charities.

The corporations who donate receive a tax deduction equal to up to twice the products' cost. The nonprofits pay only shipping and handling, plus a modest membership fee.

For businesses like Evola, it's a smart way to put surplus inventory to good use, without discounting valuable product.

Plus, it lets those companies connect their products with people who can benefit from them.

"With the connections NAEIR has to churches, schools, civic and senior organizations, it seemed like a great way to get our music books into the hands of people who might appreciate learning to play or sharpening their skills on an instrument," Evola said.

The donation included a variety of instrumental method books and songbooks for band instruments, piano and strings for all levels of players.

The music books will appear on NAEIR's website, along with other product donations available to member nonprofits. To date, NAEIR has received donations of excess inventory from more than 8,000 U.S. corporations.

For Evola, the upside of donating its music books to NAEIR goes beyond the monetary benefit. "My company has deep family roots, so knowing products we put our heart into



NAEIR Vice President Paula DeJaynes is part of the Evola Music Center's donation.

could bring smiles to the faces of music lovers means the world to us," Evola said.

{evola.com; naeir.org}

BLUES ANGEL MUSIC | AWARD

Blues Angel Music Awarded by Chamber

Blues Angel Music has been named the Greater Pensacola Chamber's Small Business of the Month for September of this year. The title is given to businesses employing fewer than 50 people in recognition of outstanding achievement in the Pensacola business community and excelling in the areas of community involvement, economic growth, customer service, and building professional relationships.

Blues Angel Music was founded in 1997 by retired Navy Capt. and fighter pilot Jim DeStafney. Originally a one-man operation located in a small building on Navy Boulevard, Blues Angel Music has grown to fill a 15,000-square-foot showroom and employs more than 25 people. The store offers a variety of new, used and vintage instruments; from guitars and basses to pianos and organs, in addition to a broad selection of band and orchestral instruments.

As recipient of the chamber's monthly award, Blues Angel Music was presented with a crystal plaque and a banner to



The staff of Blues Angel Music.

display in the store for the duration of the month. Additionally, Blues Angel Music is now eligible for Small Business

of the Year, an award which will be presented at the chamber's annual meeting.

{bluesangelmusic.com}



Music Land's humidity-controlled acoustic room

MUSIC LAND | RENOVATION

Music Land Completes Interior Renovations

On Sept. 1, Music Land — a full-line dealer in Bel Air, Maryland — completed its two-month renovation project. Owner Larry Noto worked with an architect and a construction crew to design and build a 1,200-square-foot space called Music Land Live, along with an additional 500-square-foot classroom. In the main showroom, the walls were painted, new flooring and

LED track lighting was added, as well as a humidity-controlled acoustic room.

“I think beyond the design, people love that we are bringing live music, open mic nights and events into the store,” Noto said. He plans to start renovating the bathrooms and private lesson rooms at the end of 2016 and into early 2017.

{musiclandstore.com}

BOOGIE MAN MUSIC | PERSONNEL

New Owner for Boogie Man Music

Boogie Man Music welcomed new owner Ted Eastman to the Ellensburg, Washington, music store in late August.

When previous owner, Kevin Fairfield, decided to sell after 20-some years to spend more time with his family, Eastman “jumped in with both feet.” Eastman went from stacking produce to owning his own shop

nearly overnight.

Although he has never worked in business before, Eastman’s love for music and help from longtime store manager, Brandon Brooks, has guided him thus far.

As of now, the only potential changes are incorporating music lessons and maybe replacing the carpet.

APPOINTMENT

TRUESDALE NAMED GC BOARD CHAIR

Guitar Center has added retail veteran Tony Truesdale as chairman of the board of directors. The current chairman, Norman Axelrod, will remain as a member of the board.

Truesdale was previously CEO of Vitamin Shoppe before his retirement in 2015. During his time at Vitamin Shoppe, Truesdale helped drive long-term growth, increase EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization) and grew the number of retail stores from 300 to 800 nationwide.

Preceding to his time at Vitamin Shoppe, Truesdale worked for PetSmart from 1999-2006 in various marketing and merchandising roles.

Prior to that, he served for 20 years in senior management, operating and merchandising roles at various supermarkets in England and the United States.

“We are pleased to have Tony as our new chairman,” said Ron Japinga, president and CEO of Guitar Center. “With his 30 years of experience in retail, we look forward to the major contributions Tony will make to help us achieve our goals and grow our business.”

“I am excited to assume the role of chairman of the board of directors for Guitar Center,” Truesdale said. “Guitar Center is well-positioned to continue its growth, and I am looking forward to working with the team as it continues to build the retail and online businesses.”

{guitarcenter.com}



HAWAIIAN UKULELE AND GUITAR | OPENING

Hawaiian Ukulele and Guitar Celebrates Grand Opening

In early October, Hawaiian Ukulele and Guitar celebrated its second store's grand opening in the Queens' MarketPlace Coronation Pavilion at the Waikoloa Beach Resort in Hawaii. Owner Robert Yates — also known as "Uncle Uke" — played a mixture of Hawaiian and contemporary music at the mini-concert celebration.

After opening the original location in 2012, Yates quickly expanded from a small marketplace stall to two larger locations in Kona and Waikoloa, respectively. Yates has been playing ukulele for the majority of his life, and views these expansions simply as a continuation of his love of music.

The store offers handcrafted Hawaiian-style ukuleles and guitars at various

price points, which are accessible for beginners, professionals and everyone in between. Earlier this year, Yates launched a line of custom-made ukuleles with Hawaiian-style tattoos on the solid wood, which will also be available in store.

{hawaiian-ukulele.com}



SPICER'S MUSIC | AWARD

SPICER'S MUSIC WINS LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS AWARD

Tim Spicer, co-owner of Spicer's Music in Auburn, Alabama, said he has dedicated his life to spreading love and positivity through the power of music. But that's only one of the reasons his music shop was awarded the Auburn Chamber of Commerce honor for Best of Small Businesses.

"It's an incredible honor, and we were just excited to be nominated," Spicer said. "We sure didn't expect to win, so it made it that much more of an honor for us. We were really blown away by it and are still blown away."

With a fully trained staff, 17 music in-

structors, and a community-oriented mission statement, Spicer said his family-owned and operated business engages and entertains the Auburn residents. Having a strong relationship with the chamber has also played an important role. "We won this award completely because of our team," Spicer said. "When everyone is together, that's what pushes us together as a company."

Lolly Steiner, president of the Auburn Chamber of Commerce, credits Spicer's award to the business's blend of community service and philanthropy. The emerging business is setting the standard for the community, she explained. "It's been phenomenal to watch how they've blended this small business into something that has so many different benefits for the community," Steiner said. "It's just been contagious."

The music shop is in the process of expanding, but Spicer has one ultimate goal: positively impact the community. "Everything comes back to our core belief of spreading love and the passion of music."

{spicersmusic.com}



The Spicer's Music showroom

IN MEMORIAM

FOUNDER OF 2112 PERCUSSION PASSES AWAY

Steven Michael Johnson, founder of 2112 Percussion in Raleigh, North Carolina, died on Sept. 1. He was 61 years old. Johnson started playing drums in 6th grade band at Holly Hill public school. After graduating high school, he worked as a computer operator for several years before realizing his dream

of opening a percussion specialty store in 1986. The store has won numerous awards, including a 1996 Retailing Excellence Award from *Music Inc.* This year marks the store's 30th anniversary, according to Tony Williams, manager of 2112 Percussion. "Steve built it up and came a long way from his first

location, which was just a storage bin out in the country," Williams said.

"He created a special place for the drums and music community around Raleigh and all of North Carolina. The family he created at 2112 will do our part to keep his legacy alive."

{2112online.com}

SWEETWATER | LEGAL

Sweetwater Settles With Hello Music

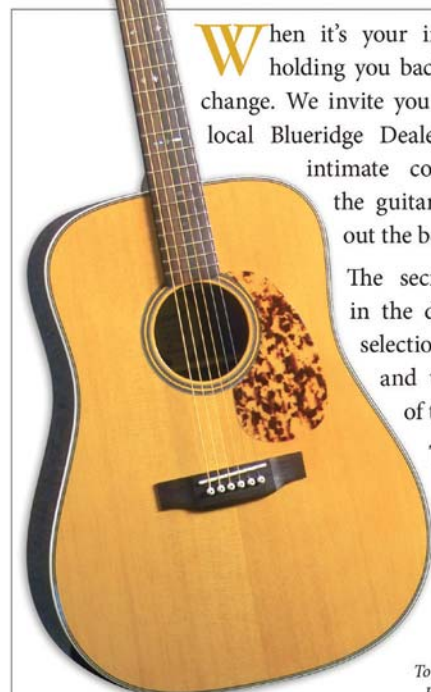
Sweetwater has settled its trademark infringement lawsuit against Hello Music that was filed earlier this year. Sweetwater alleged that Hello Music illegally copied Sweetwater's online product information and posted the details on Hello Music's website in order to promote sales.

"I regret having to take legal action, but the abuse was blatant," said Chuck Surack, founder and president of Sweetwater. "My hope is that others will now think twice before they attempt to infringe on our brand or make unauthorized use of our content."

In the settlement agreement, Hello Music acknowledges that: "Its online e-store contained select content, including but not limited to, approximately 50 product descriptions, that were displayed to the public." The agreement goes on to say, "Hello Music did so without permission or authorization from Sweetwater."

Hello Music agreed to pay monetary damages to Sweetwater for its acts of trademark infringement and admits that it "could have been, and will be in the future, more diligent about monitoring and protecting against unauthorized use of others' trademarked or copyrighted materials in content it posts to its website."

{sweetwater.com; hellomusic.com}



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Note From Dan

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Everyone Has a Story (and they are all fascinating)

The NAMM Oral History program is unique, unlike any other collection in the world. This library of video interviews, now 3,000 strong and always growing, contains the story of our industry told by those who helped to shape it and have watched it expand and develop through the years.

Since June 2000, we've interviewed company leaders, factory workers, engineers, retailers and wholesalers, as well as salesmen, road reps and publishers.

This is about our relationships and who we want to be. It's our story!

The heart of the collection is the depth of its narrative that covers innovative creations, the evolution of musical instruments, the ever-changing world of music retail, as well as our collective quest to improve music education around the globe. In capturing this history, we are also honoring those who paved the way, those who inspired us, and those who provided us with the foundation on which we currently stand.

What we have is a comprehensive reflection of who we are, what we stand for, and what we care about. Oral History participants have come from 46 different countries, 49 U.S. States and were born between 1903 and 1988. This collection is our journal, our own way of chronicling ourselves and our community—the community we so eagerly embrace at the NAMM shows and so proudly celebrate throughout the year.



What we have is a comprehensive reflection of who we are, what we stand for, and what we care about. This collection is our journal, our own way of chronicling ourselves and our community

I invite you to listen to and enjoy these personal histories for yourself. Thousands of them can be found in the Library section of namm.org. You can take a peek at our latest interviews, or click on the Oral History interview link to scroll through the interviews alphabetically. You can even type in the name of the individual whose interview you're most interested in seeing. Don't see them listed? This collection continues to grow because we listen to your ideas and seek to include the people most important to you. Simply drop us an email at dand@namm.org and tell us who you think we should interview next.

Thank you for your enthusiastic support of the NAMM Oral History Program.

Sincerely,
Dan Del Fiorentino • NAMM Music Historian

The Industry Speaks

NAMM Oral History Quotes

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preserving the history and the incredible stories of retail, innovation and life from industry luminaries



“Historical accounts in the first person are only available for gathering for a limited time, but they are a gift that can be preserved forever.”

Evan Brooks
Co-Founder Digidesign

“My grandparents lived above the store, which was open from 9 am until 11 pm. If they were eating dinner and the door opened, someone ran down to take care of them.”

Sammy Ash
President of Sam Ash Music



“Tom Oberheim, Dave Smith and others met and we discussed the need for an industry standard and all agreed. Implementing MIDI was easy once we met and agreed.”

Ikutaro Kakehashi
Founder of Roland Corporation

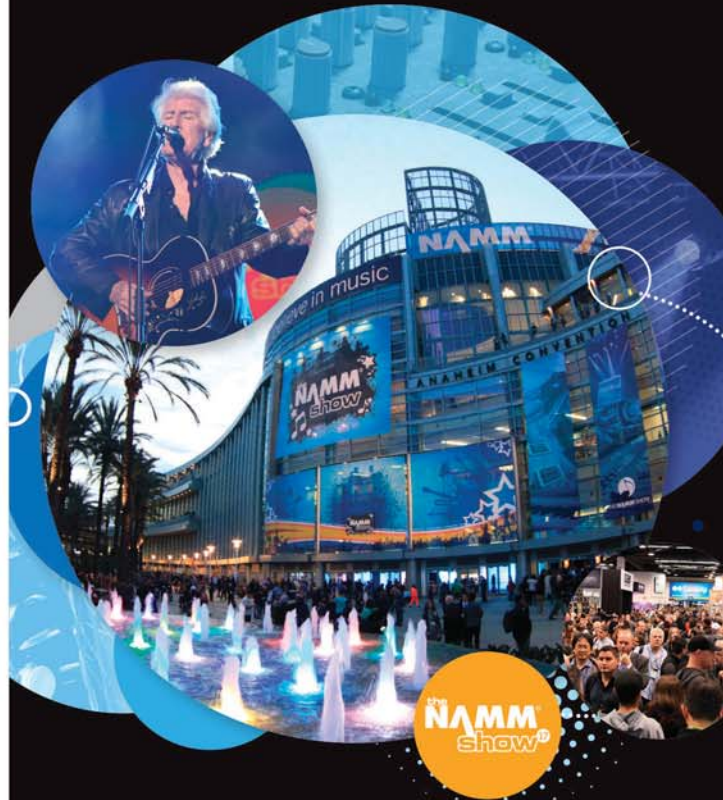


“The older I get the fewer notes I need”

Les Paul
Songwriter, Luthier, and Inventor



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SUPPLY

MANHASSET STANDS | BY KATIE KAILUS

INNOVATION AFTER 80

Even though the company has been making music stands for nearly a century, Manhasset Specialty Company still continues to find room for innovation in both its products and its processes.

“The industry grows more competitive every year and Manhasset understands that it has to get better in its performance every year to maintain and grow the company’s position in the marketplace,” said Dan Roberts, president of Manhasset Specialty Company, which was founded in Manhasset, New York, in 1935 by Otto Lagervall.

Now headquartered in Yakima, Washington, Manhasset continues to launch new products, providing the company with new market opportunities. In 2015, Manhasset introduced its Percussion Trap Tables, Universal Tablet Holders and the Clear Desk Symphony Stands. Chorale Microphone stands, the Music Stand Base Weight, Bandstand fronts and a repositioned line of band instrument holders were introduced earlier this year.

“In an effort to create more interchange and dialog with musicians, band directors and other purchasers of Manhasset products, we have undertaken marketing initiatives in the



Dan Roberts

After 80 years, Manhasset continues to develop its U.S. manufacturing processes and product offerings

last couple of years,” Roberts said. Such initiatives include a redesigned website, a web presence in the U.K., updated product packaging with QR codes and larger presence on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

MADE IN THE USA

Throughout its 80-year history, Manhasset has manufactured all of its stands in the U.S., and

while it does import some small component parts from outside of the States, there is an initiative underway to replace these parts with U.S. suppliers.

“Manhasset has worked hard over the years to develop manufacturing processes that have enabled the company to produce excellent quality products, affordably,” Roberts said. “In addition, [we] have

researched and introduced improved raw materials that are currently being used in the manufacturing of music stands, making sure that the parts that are produced run smoothly through the company’s production equipment and that the quality and ultimate performance of the finished product has been enhanced by any of these changes.”

In recent years, the company has worked more closely with its raw materials suppliers to make sure that Manhasset is buying as efficiently as possible, helping keep down the cost of manufacturing in the States.

“Commitments in raw material futures have been made with some suppliers that have enabled Manhasset to keep commodity raw material costs down,” Roberts said. “[We] have also invested in robotic operations in several areas of the production processes in the last few years to provide even greater consistency in plant operations as well as increasing the speed of production, increasing throughput.”

Roberts said that Manhasset will continue its commitment to upgrading production equipment, plant processes and workflow as the company drives toward continuous improvement in its operations over the next few years.

“Manhasset understands that today’s competitive environment requires manufacturers to step up their game in all phases of manufacturing operations and marketing activities to continue to operate successfully,” he said.

While it might cost the company a little extra, manufacturing its products in the United States is an important facet of Manhasset Specialty Company.

“Manhasset is employee-owned and all of the company’s employees are proud to be making music stands and accessories in the U.S., even though they know that almost every other music stand is made outside of the U.S.,” Roberts said. “There is a great competitive spirit at the company, and each employee knows they have to work hard every day to make great products as efficiently as possible to allow the company to compete and be successful in the music industry. There is a great feeling of accomplishment when employees see Manhasset stands being sold to a distributor in Poland or Australia, China or Germany. And each employee knows that when the company buys raw materials like steel and aluminum from American companies, they are helping to create and preserve jobs for other American families.”

While Roberts recognized that there are additional challenges that come with manufacturing in the U.S., such as government regulations and increased health care costs, Manhasset works hard to be a responsible producer — even going as far as becoming a 100-percent green manufacturer.

“A new PlafORIZATION pre-wash system [which washes the parts before they go to powder coating] was installed approximately two years ago which enabled [us] to become 100-percent green in our manufacturing processes,” Roberts said.

INTERNATIONAL GROWTH

Manhasset began its commitment to growing sales outside of the U.S. about 10 years ago, when the company’s export sales were only about 5 percent of total sales. According to Roberts, by working with the Export-Import Bank to ensure accounts receivables since that time, the company has been able to grow export sales to approximately 30 percent of total sales in 2015.

“And 2016 is forecasted to be above

that level based on YTD sales and order commitments in place for the balance of the year,” he said. “Currently, Manhasset has distributors on six of seven continents [excluding Antarctica]. Sales are strongest in Europe and Australia, after North America.”

Manhasset has also seen international growth by increasing its trade show efforts.

“Exhibiting at music shows in Frankfurt and Shanghai the last two years has helped bring new distributors on board for Europe. Clearly, musicians, band directors and music students around the world recognize the

quality and dependability of Manhasset stands and accessories and, as a result, our market share around the world is growing steadily.”

Roberts said Manhasset’s opportunity for growth outside the U.S. is significant.

“Manhasset’s value proposition is compelling both here and abroad,” Roberts added. “The ability to offer a lifetime warranty on a music stand gives the company a strong competitive advantage over other manufacturer/marketers whose products are only guaranteed for a year or two.” **MI**



ROLAND | EVENT

Roland's #909day Draws Big Names

On Sept. 9, more than 1,000 attendees joined Roland for the Los Angeles portion of its 24-hour online-streaming music festival dubbed, “The Future. Redefined.” Held at Six01 Studio in Burbank, California, Roland established #909day and chose Sept. 9 as the date of its event in celebration of the company’s iconic 909 drum machine.

Hundreds of thousands of people tuned in to watch as Roland debuted more than 30 new products during streaming video broadcasts from VIP events in eight major cities around the world, including the flagship Roland TD-50K/KV V-Drums; GP607 baby grand; and DJ-808 DJ controller, co-developed with Serato; as well as the BOSS Katana guitar amps, among others.

“Why do we research and develop new musical instruments and new ways to enjoy them? It is because we want all of you to unleash your unlimited creativity and potential with our unique Roland products,” said Jun-ichi Miki, Roland CEO. “Your passion is our passion.”

Each city featured artist performances, and the five-hour encore from Los Angeles featured three stages with diverse product and artist lineups, including Linda Perry, Saint Motel, DJ Pierre, DJ Trayze, Mike Garson, Judith Hill, Echosmith, Masego, MOON, Ric’key Pageot, SAARA, She



DJ Trayze performs during #909day.

Wants Revenge, Smallpools, Tal Wilkenfeld, Gregg Bissonette, Josh Stevens and Lola Astanova, and more. Performing artists also autographed a variety of Roland gear that will be auctioned at a later date to benefit MusiCares, the nonprofit organization established by The Recording Academy to help musicians in times of hardship.

“It’s kind of a dream to be able to see all the facets of live remix coming into one piece of hardware,” said DJ Trayze, who performed during the event. “We can play our DJ tracks and have drums and other samples, and it’s

all sequenced and sync’d into one unit.”

A highlight of the evening was when Linda Perry joined Six01 Studio owner and producer/musician Kerry Brown on stage for a compilation of Led Zeppelin songs.

“‘The Future. Redefined.’ surpassed our expectations in terms of global reach, market interest and attendance,” said Jay Wanamaker, Roland Corp. U.S. president and CEO. “I am so proud of the Roland team and am truly honored by the artists who joined us in making it a huge success.”

{rolandus.com}

FENDER | EVENT

FENDER OPENS NEW HOLLYWOOD OFFICES

On Sept. 22, Fender Musical Instruments Corporation celebrated the grand opening of its new Hollywood, California, location in Columbia Square with a night of cocktails, a hands-on gear experience and live performances by Bleached and Cold War Kids.

Guests received a first look into Fender’s office space including the Bungalow, which houses a variety of Fender electrics, acoustics, accessories and amplifiers. Attendees were also given the opportunity to check and test out products firsthand, including Fender’s latest acoustic and electric models and newly released ‘57

Custom Tweed amplifiers.

VIP attendees included TV star Mario Lopez, singer/songwriter Ryan Adams, Madden Brother’s Benji Madden and Guns N’ Roses bassist Andrew “Duff” McKagan.

“The relocation to Hollywood will only set Fender up for success,” said Andy Mooney, Fender CEO. “The move allows us to work more closely with the music industry at large and provide access to the creative talent and artists we need to enter our next chapter into digital learning and new product innovations. It doesn’t get any better than being based on Sunset Boulevard.” {fender.com}



Cold War Kids perform during Fender's Hollywood opening celebration.



KMC | COMPANY

KMC Adds Pro-Audio Bundles

KMC Music has introduced two new ways for dealers to create a more engaging in-store pro-audio department through its KMC Studio Bundle and KMC Solo Performer Bundle.

Available for immediate delivery, each bundle is custom designed to appeal to specific consumers in a practical and affordable way. The bundles, featuring such leading brands as JBL, AKG, Soundcraft, Stageline, Quiklok, Monster, DigiTech, and DOD, also include free added-value products that make them even more compelling and profitable for the dealer.

“Our commit to helping dealers create profitable in-store pro-audio departments is a total one,” said Roger Hart, KMC Music vice president of merchandising. “These two bundles, targeting the solo performer and the studio maven, are the first in a series of creative packages that will feature a broad range of pro-audio brands uniquely configured and backed with high value added incentives. KMC is unique in its ability to combine a broad range of MI and pro-audio products and brands into specific bundles that meet the needs of a variety of MI and pro-audio customers.” kmcmusic.com

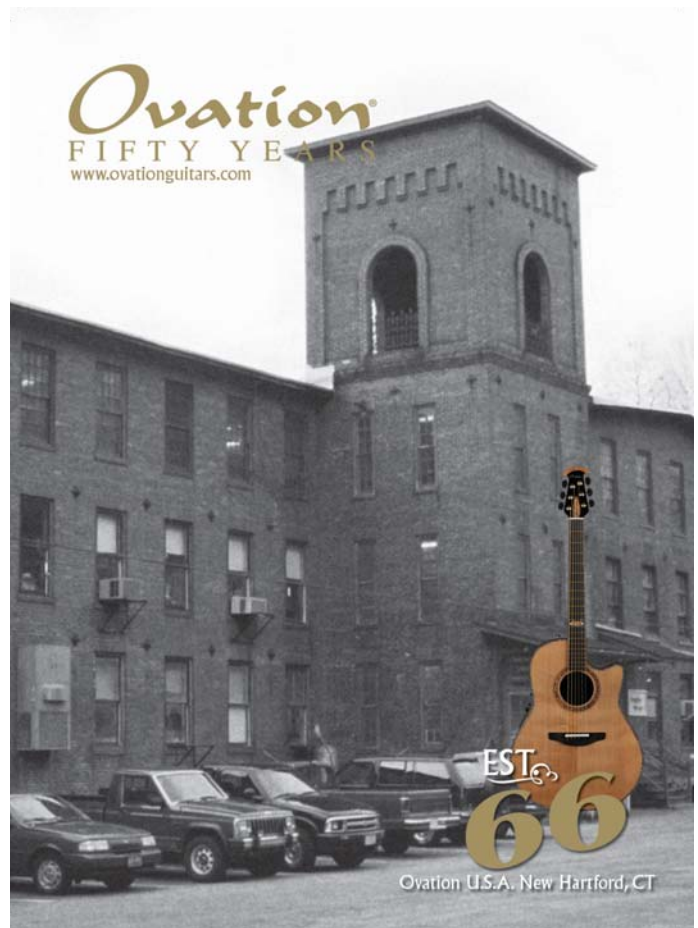
ZILDJIAN | EDUCATION

ZILDJIAN AWARDS SCHOLARSHIP

Zildjian recently announced that its 2016 Kerope Zildjian Scholarship winner is David Yoon of the Julliard School. Yoon will receive a \$5,000 tuition award, an expense-free trip to the Zildjian factory along with complimentary cymbals.

The runner-up was Austin Cernosek from the University of North Texas. He will receive a special complimentary cymbal package picked out at the Zildjian factory.

The Kerope Zildjian scholarship is an opportunity for the Zildjian family to pay tribute to Kerope, who presided over one of the most storied periods in Zildjian history. From 1865 until his death in 1909 in Constantinople, Kerope continued to develop the classic K. Zildjian sound coveted by the world’s greatest percussionists. In memory of Kerope’s commitment to the art of craftsmanship, the Zildjian family established the scholarship to encourage and reward percussionists in their pursuit of performing excellence. zildjian.com



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D'ADDARIO | REBRANDING

D'Addario Rebrands Rico, Royal

D'Addario Woodwinds has rebranded its Rico and Royal woodwinds products to include the “by D’Addario” endorsement.

Rico reeds, now Rico by D’Addario, are unfiled, while Royal by D’Addario reeds are filed, and both feature a thinner profile and blank. Designed for ease of response, Rico by D’Addario is ideal for students, educators and jazz musicians. Royal by D’Addario is ideal for students and advancing players, and offers ease of response as well as increased clarity.

D’Addario’s state-of-the-art machinery and reed-making process have resulted in unprecedented consistency in today’s Rico and Royal by D’Addario reeds. Now manufactured on the latest reed-making technology, each reed is made with greater consistency, yet still priced affordably for students and educators alike.

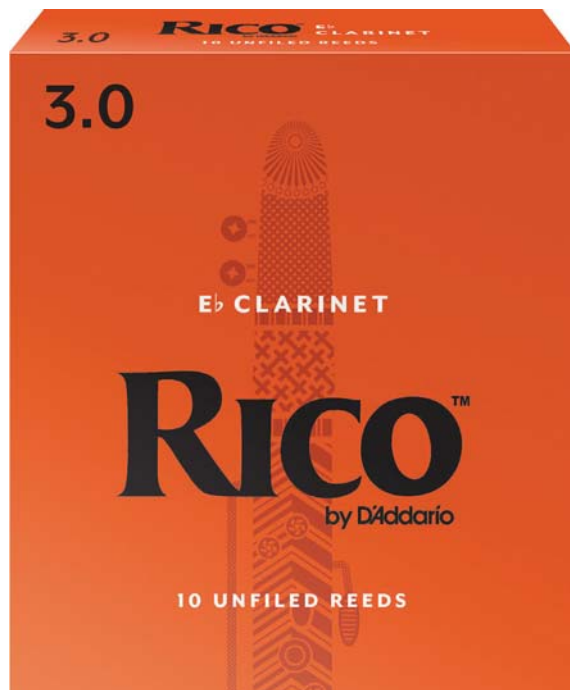
“This rebranding gives us the opportunity to tell the woodwinds community these reeds have been reborn

with the tireless effort and technological advances only a company like D’Addario can achieve,” said Chris Scialfa, product manager of D’Addario Woodwinds. “Not only has the branding changed, but the reeds, coveted by more educators than any other brand and some of the greatest musicians in the world, have been improved and never sounded better.”

Rico and Royal by D’Addario will also feature new packaging for all instruments to showcase a more unified, elevated appearance.

To celebrate the rebranding, D’Addario Woodwinds will be launching a direct-mail campaign to over 8,000 elementary and middle school band directors. This campaign will announce the newly endorsed reeds as well as the loyalty programs for ways to retrieve a plethora of teaching resources designed by D’Addario Woodwinds with band directors in mind.

daddario.com/woodwinds



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*Percussion instruments, mic clip and microphone not included

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ARMADILLO | COMPANY

Armadillo Brands on Display at TPA

Armadillo Enterprises has displayed its products at Tampa International Airport (TPA). On display, Armadillo unveiled a variety of instruments beginning with its ML guitar, a SE Flyer series drum set from ddrum and Luna acoustics and ukeleles. The display is located in front of the Marriott hotel, where thousands of passing travelers will be exposed to Armadillo’s instrumental display annually.

“Dean Guitars offers a variety of different guitar styles to meet each musician’s needs,” said John Palumbo, marketing and creative director at Dean Guitars. “This display is a great opportunity to showcase a few notable pieces.” armadilloent.com



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ROLI ACQUISITION

Roli Acquires FXpansion

Roli has acquired FXpansion, maker of software instruments. London-based FXpansion adds a vast collection of sounds and effects to Roli's growing ecosystem of music creation tools. The Seaboard, Roli's touch-responsive instrument, will now be developed alongside FXpansion's virtual instruments including BFD3, the world's largest collection of acoustic drum sounds, and Strobe2, the analog-modelled software synthesizer. The combined Roli team will integrate its technologies as Roli creates a new class of digital instruments that are more expressive and versatile.

"We are creating a connected music ecosystem of devices that will change the way people make and enjoy music," said Roland Lamb, founder and CEO of Roli. "Our leadership in music technology innovation — across both software and hardware — strengthens with every link we add to Roli's toolchain. We're excited to continue pushing the boundaries of musical expression and technological innovation with FXpansion, which has been at the forefront of audio software development for the past 15 years."

"This acquisition is a momentous opportunity for FXpansion," said Angus Hewlett, founder and CEO of FXpansion. "Together Roli and FXpansion can create best-in-class instruments, even as we continue to develop the FXpansion products our users know and love."

Roli will support and develop FXpansion's family of products which also includes Geist2, the beat production system, and a range of sound effect plug-ins, such as Maul and Bloom. FXpansion products will continue to be sold in their current form. All FXpansion team members will join Roli, where they will take on new roles as they continue to develop FXpansion's products. Hewlett will become head of sound synthesis and lead software engineer.

{roli.com}



APPOINTMENTS

MARTIN HIRES NOLLMAN

C.F. Martin & Co. has named Mitchell Nollman vice president, global sales. He will replace Steve Carletti who is retiring after more than 16 years of service.

In his new role, Nollman will oversee all domestic and international sales efforts and customer management of Martin Guitar and String divisions. He will report directly to Jackie Renner, president of Martin Guitar. "We are extremely excited to have Mitchell become part of our Martin Guitar family," Renner said. "Mitchell comes to us with an outstanding background



and experience in global sales and consumer technologies. We are looking forward to his leadership as we expand the company's growth even further." {martinguitar.com}

ZILDJIAN PROMOTES LARRIVEE TO VP OF EDUCATION

Zildjian promoted Neil Larrivee to vice president of education and drumstick product development.

In this new role, Larrivee will bring together both the Zildjian and Vic Firth education teams into a single, fully integrated department and will continue to lead product development for both Vic Firth as well as Zildjian-branded drumsticks.

"We are excited to have Neil take on this new responsibility which will allow both Zildjian and Vic Firth to better serve the educational community," said Craigie Zildjian, Zildjian CEO.

Over the past 30 years, Larrivee has played a role in the growth of the Vic Firth Company while coordinating the music industry's



leading education program. "I am honored to take on this new position that will serve an enhanced base of educators, artists and students," Larrivee said. "With the great staff we have in place, I know we will move forward to new heights of achievement." {zildjian.com}

SHURE APPOINTS BOWMAN

Shure has hired Sean Bowman as its new senior sales manager for the retail channel in the Midwest. In this position, he will be responsible for driving continued growth in the Midwest territory through retail channels — online and offline.

"Sean is a proven leader with

extensive market knowledge," said Abby Kaplan, Shure's director of sales and marketing for the U.S. and Canada. "He has a great awareness of the evolving channel landscape and has successfully worked with both brick-and-mortar and e-commerce retailers to drive growth." {shure.com}

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Sixty-Two	3i1813-7RNE
MP2014	3i1813-7RNE



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NAMM | EVENT

NAMM MUSIKMESSE RUSSIA SEES INCREASE IN ATTENDEES

Held Sept. 14–17, NAMM Musikmesse Russia and Prolight + Sound included events, demonstrations, meetings, professional development opportunities and exhibitions. Now in its fifth year, the annual exhibition took place at the Sokolniki Exhi-

bition and Conference Center in Moscow, and attracted 144 Russian and international manufacturers and distributors to present the latest in musical instruments, products and pro-lighting and audio technologies to a crowd of more than 16,000 visitors — an

11 percent increase from 2015.

Participants across both shows included manufacturers and distributors of musical instruments and accessories, light, audio and video equipment from Austria, Belarus, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Russia, Taiwan, Ukraine and the United States. Notable exhibitors included Sennheiser, Martin Professional, Okno-Audio, BAM, Pearl River and Salvi Harps as well as dozens of other leading brands.

“We’ve now been exhibiting for the last four years, and we can say the show is getting better every year; there’s continuous improvement in terms of quality and quantity of attendees,” said Christian Kaemmer, international sales manager of Koenig & Meyer. “We’re now positioned in the Prolight + Sound NAMM Russia area, however, we also get to see the MI folks who come to the show, both trade and public. We will definitely be back next year.”

A robust schedule of nearly 200 events was held over the course of four days. Highlights of the exhibition included The Grand Band Show where attendees experienced master classes and the loudest brass orchestra in Russia attempted to set a new sound record for the country.

Yamaha Music served as a strategic partner of NAMM Musikmesse Russia. During the shows, the company operated an educational center and welcomed popular artists, included performances from keyboardist Katsunori Ujiie and drummer Sean Browne.

“I’m so glad to say that we, Yamaha, could contribute to the success of the only international music trade show in Russia as an official strategic partner of NAMM Musikmesse Russia,” said Jiro Ohno, general director of Yamaha Music Russia. “Together, we created a lot of excitement and cultural inspiration through concerts, master classes, educational programs and other activities by showcasing the power of music for the public. I’m convinced, through NAMM Musikmesse Russia, we can further promote popular music and music market expansion in the country.”

namm.org





Jackson Browne (left) performs with Lucius.

D'ADDARIO FOUNDATION | EVENT

D'Addario Foundation Holds 'Music Makes You'

On Sept. 22, Grammy-nominated producer, songwriter and guitarist Blake Mills led an all-star cast of musicians in a night of music that raised \$160,000 in support of music education. One of the many highlights from "Music Makes You," the benefit concert put on by the D'Addario Foundation, included an impromptu performance by Jackson Browne, who joined Mills and Lucius for a special rendition of "Willin'." Jackson also joined Mills, Lucius, Smokey Hormel, Marc Ribot and Julian Lage for "Take It Easy."

One hundred percent of every dollar the D'Addario Foundation raised goes directly to programs on the frontlines, translating into thousands of children who have access to the impact of music education. daddariofoundation.org



Teri Cote from 247 Drums in Winchester, Massachusetts, teaches a basic drum lesson during the Vans Warped Tour stop in Mansfield.

PMC | EVENT

PMC Offers Lessons

The Percussion Marketing Council (PMC) and local music retailers once again provided free first-time five-minute drum lessons at Lesson Lab Tents in conjunction with the 2016 Vans Warped Tour. This summer tents were set up in: Atlanta; St. Petersburg, Florida; West Palm Beach, Florida; Wantagh, New York; Mansfield, Massachusetts; Auburn Hills, Michigan; and Milwaukee.

This marks the 7th year that PMC has worked with the Vans Warped Tour to provide the self-contained educational Play Drums tents. Together with local retailers, they taught about 100 first-time drummers during each stop. Tents were equipped with an acoustic and/or electronic drum set, including cymbals and sticks, to provide a positive and professional learning experience for beginning players. playdrums.com



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IDEAS

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THE TECH BEAT | BY JAMES HARDING

PLANNING TO SELL

Ever heard of John J. Beckley? Despite his many achievements in the primordial arena of 18th century American politics, his name might not ring a bell. Yet, you're probably far more familiar with his ideas than you might realize. Though the true origin of this axiom is lost to history, Beckley is most famous for his variant that "Most people don't plan to fail — they fail to plan."

As the first American political campaign manager and the man that would later guide Thomas Jefferson into the White House, Beckley knew how important a structured plan was to success — especially at a time when nobody had a roadmap for winning an election. Arguably, winning a sale is much like winning an election. It requires likeability, trust, good communication and, above all, a solid plan for success. Since 2016 is almost over, it's time to begin building your 2017 marketing campaign. Here are a few suggestions:

PLAN YOUR ENTIRE YEAR IN ADVANCE. Of course, you will



'Having a direction is critical to building business momentum.'

refine your plan based on the successes or setbacks you face throughout the year, but having a direction is critical to building business momentum. Place your harvesting events on the calendar first and then plan to build prospects for those events with

marketing programs, institutional partnerships, centers of influence outreach and personal visits. Even if you're not in charge of your company, you should work with your supervisor to develop a set of goals and a personal plan to achieve those goals in 2017.

FOCUS ON PAST CLIENTS. It's easy to neglect folks who have already purchased from you, but these people are your best potential source for new business. Contact some of your "old" clients and ask them how they are doing. Make sure they are living their vision and invite them in for a free lesson as a small token of your appreciation. If they are happy with your service, ask them for a Google review or ask if they know anyone else who needs your help.

BUILD A SOLID INSTITUTIONAL PLAN. It's not enough to just show up and ask faculty members to buy something from you. The best relationships produce benefits for everyone involved. Write an article for their magazine, newspaper or blog. Give a speech to their class or host an

internship program. Follow them on social media and conduct a joint YouTube project. Don't neglect the churches in your area. Why not plan to do a praise band master class or a church music choral reading event in your store? Church members tend to be very loyal to the businesses that reach out to help them.

DO SOMETHING NEW. After a while, every business develops a menu of past events. It's OK to reuse the things that worked well before, but momentum requires constant innovation. Pepper in some new programs to keep your community interested in your business.

TAKE TIME TO TRAIN. Even the sharpest axe dulls with use. Take time to grind away the bad habits and revitalize your (and your staff's) interest in the products and programs you offer. Remember to include basic sales training — even for seasoned employees. **MI**

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

LESSONS LEARNED | BY GERSON ROSENBLOOM

How Do You Rate?

How do you set yourself apart from your competition? If you are like 90 percent of the specialty retailers in this country, somewhere high on your list of differentiators is customer service. As I randomly looked at websites across the country, “excellent,” “unbeatable” and “unsurpassed” are some of the superlatives I found attached to “customer service,” “friendly staff” and “knowledgeable musicians.” And why not say so? If you don’t think you’re good, who else will?



Customers who are just browsing are treasure troves of information about your company’s performance

But, the true reality is that 21st century businesses can’t survive without an absolute commitment to and delivery of impeccable customer service. Customers expect and demand a stellar experience each and every time they interact with your staff. And if you are unable to deliver that, there are countless other choices where they can take their business. Great customer service is just part of the cost of entry for being in business today.

So, how are you doing at that? That undeniably simple question is harder to answer accurately than it seems. Those blinders you and your staff wear make guessing at the answer a completely undependable method of evaluation. So, you’re going to have to do some work to get to the real answer. How do I

know this? Because I thought my own company’s customer service was superb. But if it was so good, why am I now working elsewhere?

ASK YOUR CUSTOMERS

With that lesson learned, here’s what I would have done with the benefit of 20/20 hindsight.

For starters, you need to ask your customers how you’re doing. Do not mistake the occasional rave reviews you hear in your store for an accurate picture of your performance. Most people have an opinion, but don’t go out of their way to share it. So, you need to survey each and every customer that visits your business. For people who make a purchase, that can include a bag stuffer or a follow-up email. Keep it simple so that

they’ll actually answer. You need to find a way to limit your survey to just a few questions so that it takes no more than a minute or two to answer. And then always leave some extra space to invite “additional comments.”

Clearly not everyone who shops at your store will make a purchase. It’s no less important to get their feedback (actually, it’s probably more important). So, pay careful attention to people leaving your store empty-handed. Besides your heartfelt thanks for visiting, you need to hand them a “how did we do today” survey. Do the same thing on your website if they’re about to leave without making a purchase. The “just shoppers” are a treasure trove of information about your company’s performance.

Finally, you need to make part of your job having a solid understanding of what people are saying about you online. You need to regularly Google your company to search through reviews and online discussions about your performance. Take the information you discover, thank the author, and use it to make your company the very best it can be. **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.



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THE MARKETING MINUTE | BY LAURA B. WHITMORE

The Newsletter Game

Let's face it — we get too much email. Regardless, this delivery method is still a useful tool to reach your customer base. How can you create a more effective email newsletter that's opened by a greater percentage of your mailing list? Here are some tips as you strive for maximum impact:

CHECK YOUR LENGTH. We're tempted to tell every story and piece of news, but resist! Hitting the main highlights with links for folks to click through and find out more will give readers a chance to get just the important facts. Shorter newsletters pass through spam filters more easily. Some email programs will truncate an email that's too long, requiring the reader to approve loading all the content. Make sure you remove barriers like this so that your content is delivered entirely.



CHANGE THE SUBJECT. It's a good idea to change the subject line from month to month, as readers get used to seeing the same subject and may overlook your new content. Highlight one item that stands out. Which would you be more inclined to open: "Newsletter December 2016" or "Holiday Highlights" and "Special Events for December?" By being a bit more varied and creative, you can create instant interest among your readers.

USE GRAPHICS WISELY. Can you illustrate your point with a small infographic? Show a photo of a guitar you have on special? Highlight a customer or employee each month with a photo? These elements add interest and visual appeal. Each image can also have a click-through link embedded. Just know that many readers don't load their images

automatically, so include interesting alternate text that gives the basics. Too many graphics can make your email file large in size, so be careful that you don't inhibit deliverability.

REVIEW YOUR RESULTS. How do you compare the success of your mailings? Is it your open rate — the percentage of readers that opened your mailing? Click-through on articles or images back to your site? Look at "Report" in your mail program to get an idea of what works and what doesn't and use that feedback to hone in on more effective content.

GET THE TIMING RIGHT. You will have a better chance of higher open rates if you consider which day of the week and the time of day that you mail it out. What's convenient for you may not be the best possible time to deploy. You can use the scheduling function in your email program to help you get it ready to go out at just the right time. Experiment and see what works best.

PERSONALIZE YOUR MESSAGE. Do you know your customer's first name? What product they bought? If you have key fields set up in your customer database, you can customize a greeting, include a promotion based on customer preferences, and more. Personalization has been shown to result in a higher click-through rate, so try it! **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.

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Jojo Mayer

NEXT GEN RETAILING | BY ZACK STANTON

Fine-tuning the Basics

In today's age of retail it can become more and more difficult to pinpoint "your market." Due to the constant growth of e-commerce, social media, and digital advertising, retailers are pushed to provide customers with a unique and satisfying level of service. Even though customers have been granted multiple new ways to shop, one thing hasn't changed: they want to be taken care of. Retailers across numerous industries can claim they provide good customer service, but when it's all said and done, do they really? Below are a few basic actions retailers can easily implement to better the customer's shopping experience:



'In an increasingly competitive landscape, being front-of-mind is key.'

START AT SQUARE ONE. It's often easy to default to thinking that the customer knows everything. The internet has, of course, given consumers access to tons of knowledge about gear, but what sets your store apart is how you do business. Our job is to convey the benefits of shopping with us, starting with the first contact. Sales associates should always stand if seated and offer their name upon engagement. As basic as it sounds, it doesn't always happen! Informing prospective buyers about sale items can open the door for conversation and assist with navigating the interaction, while also helping turn inventory and develop a reputation for deals.

FUMBLING AT THE GOAL LINE. I believe all managers can agree: How many times have you cringed while hearing an associate skillfully guide the customer to the point of purchase, only to fail to ask for the sale? Although this comes more naturally to some than others, I think it's fair to say that everyone can learn a healthy angle to utilize at this crucial moment.

CAPTURE, CAPTURE, CAPTURE. And then prospect, prospect, and prospect some more! Capturing customer information is the name of the game, even beyond its substantial beneficial impact on broader marketing and sales efforts. As an individual sales associate, it's nice to have some solid leads to lean on when new traffic slows down. Even if it means digging back through prospects from years

past, there's certainly no harm in calling up an old lead and seeing how he or she is doing. In an increasingly competitive landscape, being front-of-mind is key.

ENACT A SECRET SHOPPER. The concept of the "secret shopper" has come and gone throughout the years. Many have found it useful while others have not. Here at Ken Stanton Music, we have implemented a structured and basic checklist for our third-party shopper service to conduct. Our focus includes engaging the customer, mentioning clearance items, suggesting add-ons and asking for the sale. While skepticism about certain secret-shopper services may rightfully exist, using the right company and a clear, constructive set of parameters offers great insight into employee performance. Whether praise or rephension result, this can be an important tool in both reinforcement of successful training efforts and redirection in future mentoring. Regardless of score, every employee receives a formal seating and review of every aspect of the shopping report. **MI**

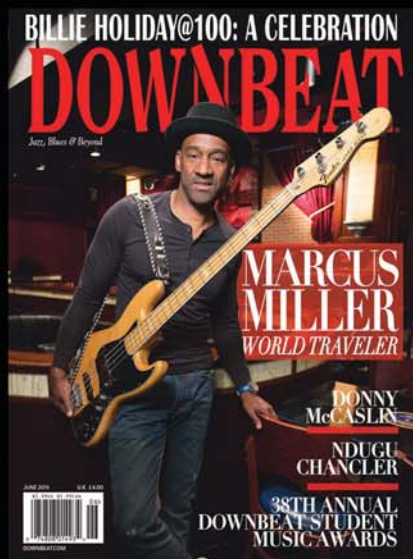
Zack Stanton is the district manager at Ken Stanton Music, headquartered in Marietta, Georgia, and a member of NAMM YP. NAMM Young Professionals focuses on the betterment of the future leaders of the MI industry by providing opportunities to connect, learn and grow from one another. Get involved by visiting nammy.com.



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SMART SUCCESSION | BY JAIMIE BLACKMAN

Masters of Change

Novelist and social critic James Baldwin once said, “We are responsible for the world in which we find ourselves, if only because we are the only sentient force which can change it.” This rings true when it comes to succession planning. I recently spoke with Liane Rockley, vice president of Rockley Music Center in Lakewood, Colorado, who owns the business with her husband Tobin Rockley. I asked Liane for her secret to success when it came to preparing the younger generation for ownership over Rockley’s 70-year history. Her response was somewhat surprising.



Embracing change has helped Rockley Music Center undergo successful successions

“It’s not so much preparation, as it is one generation prodding the other generation to change,” Liane said. “Some of it is ‘seat of the pants’ because some decisions have to be made for tax ramifications or health issues. Because I married into the family, I have a different perspective. I don’t have that sense of entitlement. I believe you are not entitled to anything in life, you have to work for it. In a multi-generational business, I think subsequent generations can assume a caretaker role and attitude toward the business.”

In 2003, Liane and Tobin took over the business from second-generation owners Bob and Nina Rockley — Tobin’s mother and father. When asked if there were any hiccups, Liane said that it took time and patience for them to adjust to their new roles.

“It was hard to get one generation to realize that they had to change, and move out of the role they had and move on,” she said. “I know the same was true of my husband’s grandparents when his parents were taking over the business.”

Despite this, Liane said Rockley Music has embraced change over the years. When Melvin and Mildred Rockley began the business in 1946, they sold some print music, washers and dryers, and other

appliances, record players, and band and orchestral instruments. Today, the business focuses on stringed instruments and pianos alone.

Other changes Rockley Music Center has gone through includes

closing the once profitable print department.

“As a result, we have been able to downsize our staff from 15 employees to five,” Liane said.

Even through all the change, there was one monkey wrench that even great succession planning could not have predicted. While it’s customary for the exiting parents to retain ownership of the store property to ensure a steady flow of retirement income, in the form of rent, the city of Lakewood had other plans. Exercising its right of eminent domain the city intends to expropriate the Rockley Music Education Center, the source for rental income.

To immediately solve the uncertainty of the status of the property, Bob and Nina were placed back on the payroll as consultants, so they could continue to be paid for their valuable advice.

Liane’s final words of wisdom? “If a family member doesn’t want the business then it’s important to make sure you have another person in place that’s treated [the same] in your succession [plan] as [your] child.” **MI**

Jaimie Blackman is president of BH Wealth Management, and creator of MoneyCapsules. Jaimie’s team offers creative solutions to help guide music retailers and manufacturers through the complexities of succession planning. To subscribe to Jaimie’s newsletter, Succession Success, visit moneycapsules.com.

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FROM THE TOP

INTERVIEWED BY MICHAEL GALLANT

JIM MACK | TASCAM, TEAC

HOW DO YOU START YOUR DAY?

We're not a centralized group here at all. I'm in the Midwest, and we have a couple of guys in the same area as well as a few on the West Coast, sales partners and reps on the East Coast, and our main office in Japan. Given that, the first thing I normally do each day is catch up on emails from the main office and then start touching base with people around different parts of the country, making sure everyone's focused on what needs to get done.

WITH YOUR TEAM SO SPREAD OUT, DO YOU WORK OUT OF A COMPANY OFFICE, OR DO YOU WORK FROM HOME?

I have a home office. It's a blessing and a curse. [Laughs.] My day starts as soon as the kids go to school, around 7:30 a.m., and that's when I get into the emails from Japan. Then it goes from there. Because of all of the time differences, conversations can go fairly late in the day. I like the flexibility of working from a home office and being able to get back to something quickly when it's on my mind, but it can be a challenge to get away from work and find the downtime necessary to clear your head.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR MANAGEMENT STYLE?

I like to empower the people I work with, especially in my current role. I have a couple of people responsible for sales in each product category, so I like to empower them to build their own teams. I would never go ahead and independently hire a sales rep to work for one of my sales managers — I want my managers to pick the reps who they feel will accomplish the goals that are ultimately the managers' responsibilities. So, I try to help everyone understand what the goals are and then encourage them to build the teams they need in order to accomplish those goals.

YOU WORK AS EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT FOR BOTH TASCAM AND TEAC IN THE AMERICAS, INCLUDING SOUTH AMERICA, MEXICO AND CANADA. HOW DO THOSE WORK TOGETHER?

They cover different sections of the market. TEAC America handles everything from data storage to floppy drives, CD drives, turntables, PC audio, iPod-related products, and more. We've even been getting into in-

flight entertainment. But the core for both brands has always been audio. TASCAM is the brand that covers professional audio — everything from recording hardware to mixers, microphones and speakers — and TEAC covers more of the consumer market.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITH BOTH COMPANIES?

I oversee overall strategy within the Americas, especially focusing on how to attack the market, engage customers, engage dealers, raise brand awareness and generally grow the business for both brands. A major part of my job has been to reinvigorate the marketing focus both on the TEAC and TASCAM side and try to elevate them as major product lines. TEAC and TASCAM both make incredible hardware — products that are super reliable. They really focus, from the design on up, on creating solid, reliable products that perform very well and give incredible bang for the buck.

SO YOU'VE BEEN TRYING TO RAISE THE PUBLIC VISIBILITY OF ALREADY-STRONG PRODUCTS.

Yes. By increasing our connection to customers, we get better movements through the market and better sell-through. We have a sales manager for both TEAC and TASCAM lines and a support group on the TASCAM side, given the nature of TASCAM serving more professional applications. When it comes to engaging the customer, we are really looking for users who want a better experience and higher-quality audio. We want to connect our company with those people.

YOU MENTIONED A SPREAD-OUT TEAM — HOW DOES THAT WORK WITH BOTH TEAC AND TASCAM?

Here in the U.S., we handle the back-end stuff like warehousing, order processing, and managing the overall infrastructure that supports operations within the Americas. For sales and marketing for both TEAC and TASCAM, we basically have seven people. On the marketing side, there's a product marketing director, and then an overall marketing director who handles all of the creative aspects of advertising, web marketing, and dealer relations and materials. We also have someone



THE DETAILS

**JIM MACK, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT,
TASCAM AND TEAC IN THE U.S.**

HQ: Montebello, California

Founded: 1971

Employees: 40

Best-selling Product: Tascam DR-05

Fun Fact: Mack has built an admirable career in the high-tech MI world. Prior to his leadership roles at TASCAM and TEAC, he has served as VP of sales and marketing for Alesis, partner and VP of sales and business development of SaneWave, and CEO of PreSonus.

who specializes in business development, building relationships with touring production companies, theme parks, museums, and such, where specific products from the TASCAM line can really help. It's a small group, and we all wear multiple hats.

WITH EASY-TO-ACCESS RECORDING SOFTWARE TOOLS LIKE SMARTPHONES AND GARAGEBAND, HOW DOES TASCAM KEEP ITS PRODUCTS COMPETITIVE?

What TASCAM has done really well, and continues to do, is understand exactly what people are trying to accomplish and give them specific tools to do it — there are a lot of situations where, if you go into a generic device or application, you lose some of the specific capabilities that you need to do the job more effectively. If you're a small band that's recording, for example, there are specific advantages to using different software applications, so we create products that help people get audio in and out of their computers, for those applications, effectively. Price points for products like those have dropped and capabilities continue to become more powerful.

WHAT ABOUT THE FAMOUS PORTASTUDIOS?

We still sell a lot of them. As a musician, you could go into your computer, but it's not as intuitive as just taking a device, coming up with an idea, and going right to it. That's a big part of what we're still trying to solve — getting technology out of the way of creativity. We want the customer to get what he or she is trying for — faster. And a lot of times, that requires something that's application-specific.

WHAT'S YOUR MUSICAL BACKGROUND?

My father was a musician, and I got interested in music during high school. I played bass and I'm left-handed, so I started playing it upside down, wrong, and backwards. Finally, I went out and took lessons. I played in a few different bands in the Chicago area and got really interested in the technology part, even back then. I was always interested in the equipment and understanding the different speaker cabinets, gain stages and such. One of the bands I was in had the opportunity to record and we went to the engineer's garage — it turned out that he had been the

guy who recorded a bunch of really good stuff — including some classic Styx albums. I was fascinated and wanted to come back when he was working with other bands to learn about his mic placement and recording techniques. So, I was always in between the two — playing and being involved on the technology side of things.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

I love sales, marketing and distribution strategy. In my last position, working for PreSonus, I was also able to get more into the production flow and how products are conceived and brought to the market through the manufacturing processes in Asia.

The progression from initial concept to go-to-market strategy, and even end-of-life and replacing products, is something that I find really interesting. There's also a real beauty to working in this industry in that I'm a musician and very passionate about the product area.

WHICH TASCAM PRODUCTS ARE YOU EXCITED ABOUT RIGHT NOW?

One cool thing about TASCAM specifically is how focused the company has been on the recording process and how people are using TASCAM tools for different purposes and applications.

One exciting example right now is the emergence of people doing personal online broadcasting and podcasting. It's a whole new group of potential customers that we are able to approach with products. We have one product group called the Ministudio, which was designed specifically for use by that whole new group of people. It also bleeds into the gaming world, anything where people are broadcasting and creating their own online content. It's a whole new platform and we're doing some really interesting things to engage the customer.

IF NOT MUSIC, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING?

I love photography and woodworking. I try to do both as much as I can. Working with cameras would be great, and I also love the problem-solving and creativity of trying to make something out of wood that's strong, functional, and beautiful. Woodworking has a lot in common with creating a song, in fact. The process is different, but the end result is, ideally, something that attracts and moves people.

'I TRY TO HELP EVERYONE UNDERSTAND WHAT THE GOALS ARE AND THEN ENCOURAGE THEM TO BUILD THE TEAMS THEY NEED IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH THOSE GOALS.'

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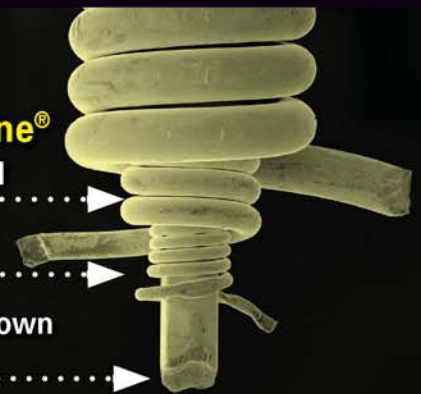
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FEAR NO CHANGE

How White House of Music manages acquisitions, reorganization and growth in the heartland of Wisconsin

By Kasia Fejklowicz | Photos by Scott Paulus

A LUXURY SUV LEAVES THE WHITE HOUSE

heading out toward the D.C. skyline. It's a black Audi sporting a head-turning license plate — WHM PREZ. But this isn't President Barack Obama, and this isn't the District of Columbia. This head of state is Chris White, president and CEO of White House of Music — a full-line music dealer in suburban Milwaukee that specializes in the school-music market. And the D.C. skyline? In this case, it stands for the company's new 10,000-square-foot distribution center, just one of many changes the White House

has embraced.

It's been as busy as an election year for Chris, his wife Tracy and the entire White House team. In August, the company acquired nearby Hartland Music's retail operations. In the months leading up to the company's fourth business acquisition, Chris hired two new directors, purchased the warehouse, and began a total restructuring of the company in preparation for the move. Looking ahead, carefully planning and seizing opportunities seems to come naturally to Chris. And it should. He grew up in this family



White House of Music's headquarters, located in Waukesha, Wisconsin, are easily recognizable and a successful marketing technique.

business and learned to manage change from his father Roger White, who's now retired but still serves as a trusted advisor, mentor and company board member.

ACQUIRING TASTE

By the time Chris acquired the remaining shares of White House of Music in 2001, the company had two stores, but the Whites were no strangers to acquisition and growth. White House merged with a friendly competitor, The Waukesha Music Center, in 1987, folding that inventory into its operation. In 1992, the Whites built a state-of-the-art, 19,986-square-foot headquarters that, yes, resembles the White House. And a month after he officially took over, Chris White led the company's purchase of nearby GW Music.

"Dad's always been super calculated on how we approach things, which is great, but I haven't been shy about looking for opportunities," Chris said. "I'm not afraid to reach out to fellow retailers in the area, if we think there's something that can be

"I'm not afraid to reach out to fellow retailers in the area, if we think there's something that can be combined there." – Chris White

combined there."

That attitude has paid off. In 2007, Chris became interested in another major competitor, Beihoff Music, which had a strong school presence with three locations.

One day, Chris called David Carter, Beihoff's owner, and said, "If you ever want to go back to the world of being an accountant rather than an entrepreneur, let's talk." Carter's immediate response was, "Let's do lunch!"

"It was just some timing that worked out well," Chris said.

Once the paperwork was signed, Chris

and Roger made the conscious decision to refrain from using the word "buyout." Instead, they used the term "merger." That careful word choice kept loyal customers coming back and helped prevent talented employees from leaving.

"Not only did the Beihoff locations give us some great staff and repair technicians, but it enhanced our ability to serve the southeast Wisconsin markets," Chris said.

"It's still strong up in Germantown, Madison and Sun Prairie," Roger added. "[It] really helped our business; it almost doubled our output."

We Take Full Responsibility

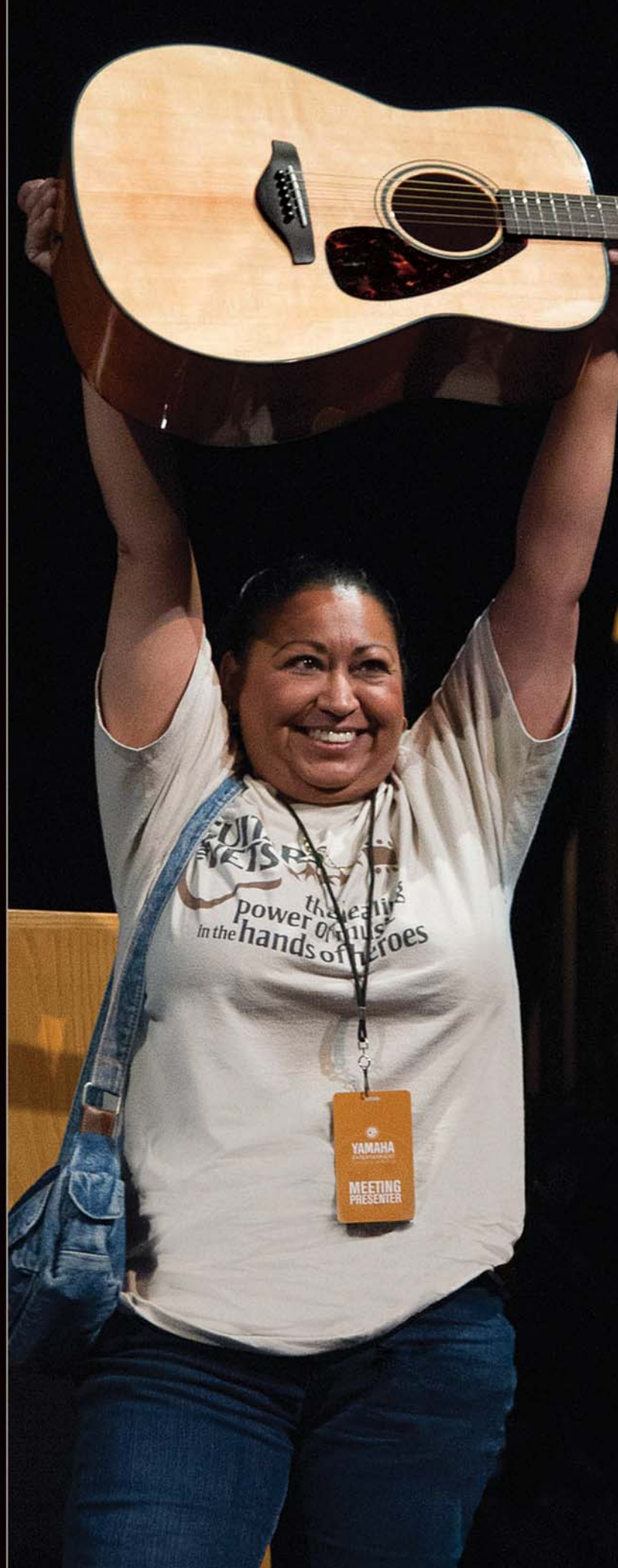
– For Community Involvement –

Every society has members who face unfortunate circumstances. Yamaha employees are dedicated to helping them overcome their challenges, so we support organizations like Guitars for Vets, with its mission of spreading the healing power of music. Veteran Nancy Ruiz (at right) has become an enthusiastic musician as a result. Since performing with other vets, despite knowing how to play only a G chord, her musical ability – and outlook on life – have improved immeasurably. She's even become a Guitars for Vets volunteer. Through our Yamaha Cares initiative, we hope to help and inspire people like Nancy and bring harmony to the world.



SHARING PASSION & PERFORMANCE

YamahaCorpUS





The showroom located inside the company's headquarters in Waukesha, Wisconsin, was originally designed by merchandising and marketing consultant Glen Ingles. It houses seven departments and allows customers a touch-and-feel retail experience.

HEADING TO THE "HARTLAND"

While past acquisitions have been rebranded under the White House banner, Chris White plans to keep Hartland Music's name, but has added "A Division of White House of Music."

"When we took over Biehoff, it was different because it had moved from the main people owning it, to somebody else, and [that ownership team] didn't have that strong of a punch in the area, so we put White House on it," Roger explained.

But Hartland Music has been a staple of Lake County, Wisconsin, making a name change a much more carefully considered decision. Also, White House didn't purchase all of Hartland Music, but did pick up its retail, rental and repair operations. Inside the 15,000-square-foot, multi-user facility, Hartland also houses

The Waukesha County Conservatory of Music, Backstage Cafe and performance stage, and a piano showroom as well as the 3,500-square-foot retail space. Those operations, outside of retail, will continue to be owned and operated by the owners, Larry and Ellen McDonald.

"Every store that we've acquired thus far has had a strong lessons component to it that we've usually been able to take over," Roger said. "That's not what we've done at Hartland, and that's [a key] point."

DEALMAKER'S GUIDE: AN EVALUATION METHOD

With four acquisitions under their belt, Chris and Roger know a thing or two about seeking out investments, and offered tips for others considering a purchase.

1) Your staff has to be similar. "If not,

it's going to be an uphill battle," Roger said.

2) Don't buy a shop that's too far away. In other words, make sure you can get from one location to the other without too much hassle. "We haven't crossed a border yet, and I can't imagine doing that," Chris said. "I know some of my friends in the industry have, but that seems real hard."

3) Ask yourself: What makes my store successful? What drives my business? For the White House of Music, it's school music, rentals, repairs and lessons. "[But] for us to go in and buy a piano gallery, that's another world," Roger admitted.

4) A relaxed merger is crucial for success. "I've always said, and this may be a kind of 'Roger-ism,' that it has to pay for itself within 2-3 years," he noted. "You have to look at their P&Ls (profit and



Top: The checkstand is featured in the center of the 6,000-square-foot showroom located inside the Waukesha, Wisconsin, store. Bottom: The Drum Stage sits directly above the White House String Shoppe.

loss statements), where they've been, where you can improve, and whether this can be paid off in 2–3 years. If you're looking at 5–6 years, then the price is too high."

5) Lower your expectations. While White House of Music has had success in its acquisition strategy, Chris warns fellow owners that they shouldn't anticipate similar results from additional locations. "One plus one doesn't equal two. Whatever you're doing in your first store, don't think you can absolutely duplicate it and get the same exact results in your second store."

TRANSFER OF POWER

Over the years, Roger has learned what

it takes to be successful in this business. To be able to share that knowledge and provide guidance, it was only natural for him to pass down the business to his son.

Not only did they have a close relationship, but Chris showed interest in running the company long before Roger planned to retire. The transition for the two was smooth. Roger was often asked how he managed to do it with such ease.

"The guy who owns it has to get [his] ego out of the way," Roger said. "If they ask for your advice, give it. If they don't ask for advice — shut up."

Once in a while, Chris' mother Lynn, who also serves on the company board, would ask her husband if he was going to

GAINING 'TRACTION'

Chris is a big fan of business books. But he said "Traction: Get A Grip On Your Business," by Gino Wickman, changed his life. Upon finishing the business strategy book, he immediately shared it with Bob Berlyn, White House of Music's CFO. From that point, his team worked with business coach, Rick Drumm, who studied the Entrepreneurial Operating System laid out in "Traction" to increase business efficiency and profits.

Chris said the book taught him valuable lessons. For example, limiting time that focused on everyday tasks and delegating those duties. "Too much information was flowing through me to rule on, when I may not be the best person to make the decision," he said. The book and the system have led to major changes. In May 2015, Chris began restructuring the business by implementing Wickman's system.

He hired a director of sales and a director of marketing who will also serve as the company's human resources coordinator. The moves have allowed him to focus on the company's broader vision — mission and goals. A five-member leadership team now comes together every week for a 90-minute meeting at the conference room in the warehouse. An hour of the meeting is spent on IDS — identifying, discussing and solving problems. The office and school-service teams also have their own meetings.

"It seems to have eliminated some of the complaining sessions," Roger laughed.

Drumm also pushed Chris to rethink how he views the critical role of the human resources department. As a result, he encouraged him to create a recruiting plan, on-boarding process as well as document employee performance with the help of Jenny Kosek, marketing director/HR coordinator.

"We have a more solid [hiring] process now more than ever," Chris said. The first person Kosek and the team trained using the new HR system became the manager of the company's biggest store within a year.

Chris admitted that he used to believe that it would be impossible for a one-year employee to manage a store. Now he sees the mistakes the team made and that they were actually "holding back" employees.

NEW MARKETING STRATEGY

“We’ve retreated from doing a lot of media buying,” Roger said. “We used to do TV, we used to do radio and all that, but it just didn’t seem to do it anymore.”

By applying the concepts learned in “Traction,” [see sidebar on page 51] and by hiring a full-time marketing director, White House of Music has been able to focus its target market, determining that the company’s core customers include household decision-makers ages 35–40 who have school-age children as well as private music instructors and school-music educators. Therefore, the company has become refocused on reaching schools, students and families.

“A lot of efforts in the past year have really been reaching those customers in family friendly publications, doing instrument petting zoos in libraries,” said Jenny Kosek, marketing director and HR coordinator.

To promote store events, Kosek creates flyers, posts information on social media platforms and in local newspapers as well as on the company’s website. But before posting on Facebook or attending any marketing-event opportunities, the team determines whether the message is consistent with the brand’s identity.

The White House team said the most important forms of advertising they have, however, are still through word-of-mouth and the company’s seven road representatives who go out and serve educators in more than 100 school districts.



Built in 2011, the White House String Shoppe is located within the Waukesha, Wisconsin, store. Musicians can choose from a variety of 75 instruments, including violins, violas, cellos and double basses.

step in when she saw that her son was headed in the wrong direction. Roger would say, “Wait a minute. Did I ever make any mistakes? Well, it’s his turn. If it doesn’t work out, that’s his problem.”

But Roger White is a father, first and foremost. He wanted his son to succeed. While Chris went from owning two stores to six, Roger became a trusted advisor and cheerleader.

“When a dad sells it to a son, there’s the nurturing factor; you want them to succeed,” Roger said. “When a sibling sells it to a sibling, that doesn’t exist. They are two totally different things.”

Looking back, Roger would do it all over again, and he recommends keeping businesses in the family. Throughout the entire succession process, Roger believed in Chris’ talent, even though some of his longtime employees weren’t always so sure.

“They would come up to me and say, ‘I was really worried when you sold it to Chris. I shouldn’t have been worried. It’s going great,’” Roger noted.

FUTURE PLANS FOR THE WHITE HOUSE

In looking toward the next generation, Chris’ two sons are still in high school and a long



way from making a decision on entering the family business. So, Chris simply focuses on the next business opportunity. He sees growth in the company’s lesson and rental programs, as well as areas where the company can offer a wider array of products and services. He views White House of Music as more of a face-to-face business, but is working on how to better serve his customers through e-commerce, too.

As for acquiring more stores, there are no plans, unless an opportunity presents itself.

“With the staff that we have, and the vision we have for the future, we’re still here and making improvements to be here tomorrow,” he said. **MI**

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Time to BUNDLE UP

By Alex Harrell

Guitar picks and drumsticks and string sets, oh my! So many accessories, so little time left in the holiday selling season. But creating product bundles is one key to a jingling register this holiday

The holidays can be as stressful for store owners as it is for shoppers. But one tried-and-true way to grab those extra holiday dollars is by creating your own custom-product bundles. These preassembled accessory kits come with all the trimmings, ideal for novices and professionals, students and teachers. Both supplier-produced and DIY bundles alike are an opportunity to upsell, gain customer trust, and keep your store buzzing with business all season long.

SANTA'S GOT A SIGMA

Senior Vice President of West Music, Ryan West, has developed a “build-your-own bundle” system. The Coralville, Iowa-based company’s core business focus is music education, and its clientele is mainly family members and parents investing in quality products for their children. By creating these bundles, West explained that he’s setting up his consumers for success.

“Making sure we are selling a complete solution makes the shopping experience a success for the customer and for our business,” he said. Here’s the kicker: When three or more accessories are purchased with an instrument, the entire purchase qualifies



Ryan West



A range of MusicNomad products.

for a 15 percent discount. “By allowing our customers to build their own pack, we [offer] the opportunity for them to create a bundle around a guitar that is not just at an entry price point,” he explained.

JOY TO THE WORLD, MY SAX IS CLEAN

Yamaha’s Care and Maintenance Kits are constructed with various players in mind, although price points remain steady.

“Our kits are designed to have the basic cleaning supplies and lubricants that a student — or any player, really — will need to perform the standard maintenance that an instrument needs,” said Matt Kerns, the marketing manager for band and orchestra accessories at Yamaha.

While these supplies are ideal for any level of player, Yamaha expects that these bundles will be primarily for beginners or students. These bundles differ from instrument to instrument, and include products for daily use as well as deep-cleaning tools.

“We also include a printed guide that gives some general care and maintenance tips,” Kerns said.

Summerhays Music Center in Murray, Utah, features Yamaha’s care kits in its Christmas catalog and distributes them to its network of schools.

“The whole idea is that Santa will come in and get [the child] a new step-up horn and add-on care kit,” said Cris Behrens, store manager.

Summerhays’ best-sellers are trumpet and trombone maintenance kits along with clarinet, flute and saxophone kits. The company starts stocking up on the kits starting with the back-to-school shopping season all the way through the holidays.

Instrument care company MusicNomad is also working toward getting an instrument care kit together in time for the holiday season.

“It’s all predicated on our Grip Winder,” said Lisa Ziganti, sales manager of MusicNomad. “When that hits the warehouse,

we’re hoping the bundle will be sold in retail [stores].”

MELE KALIKIMAKA IS THE THING TO PLAY

It’s true: ukuleles are still hot, and uke retailers have made sure to keep the revenue rolling in by designing DIY uke kits.

Andrew Kitakis, owner of the Ukulele Site in Haleiwa, Hawaii, crafts several bundles with tiered price points.

“Especially during the holidays, people don’t really know what to buy,” he said. “We put together a few different packs that combine strings, polish cloths and tuners — things like that.”

Consumers with a bit more pocket change or experience with ukuleles are encouraged to explore the upgraded bundle. The \$90 set includes a custom-made T-shirt with the Ukulele Site logo, a capo, and a book on ukulele fretboard roadmaps. Otherwise, Kitakis said sticking to the \$50 package is ideal.

FOR THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOYS (AND GIRLS!)

Instead of selling manufacturer’s pre-assembled stocking stuffers, Jim Rupp, owner of Rupp’s Drums in Denver, makes his own goodie bags.

“I’ll make a bundle pack and kind of put it all together — a practice pad, moon gels, extra sticks and a beginner drum DVD,” Rupp explained, adding that the idea is to have all the products one would need to complete a drum set purchase, and have the customer pick and choose from the mix.

“We do this around the holidays because you have a lot less time, you want to move from one sale to the next,” Rupp said. “You want to say, here’s the ‘wham bam thank you ma’am’ pack.” **MI**



Jim Rupp

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LAST-MINUTE STOCKING STUFFERS

The holidays are weeks away and it's time to start stocking up on those must-sell products. Here are a few products retailers make sure to stock

Brad Boynton, Owner
Rhythm Traders Drum Shop
Portland, Oregon

"Remo's Kids Percussion Floor Tom. This is the best drum for kids ages 1-5; it's short and squatty so it doesn't tip over and it's raised an inch off the ground so the sound resonates. They last so long. It'll get passed down from kid to kid. Trust me, mine outlasted three kids, and then I still passed it on!"

"Meini's Compact Foot Tambourine. Cajon products are hot, small and inexpensive. They can be used by anyone."

"Big Fat Snare [Drumhead], available through Big Bang. Unlike the name implies, this is actually an accessory that goes on top of the snare head. It'll transform any snare into that fat 1970's sound in 10 seconds for under \$30."



Shane Kinney, Owner
Drum Center of Portsmouth
Portsmouth, New Hampshire

"The Promark Cymbal Rattler and Sizzler are two real big [sellers], as are **Cympad's Chromatic cymbal washers** and **Zildjian HD Earplugs**. These are useful, unique, and not too costly [products]. These sell on their own, I just need to point them out [to shoppers]."

Patrick Buie, Accessories Manager
Summerhays Music
Murray, Utah

"Utah is a big saxophone state. Mouthpieces by JodyJazz are extremely popular for saxophone players. For us, the **HR* line** is really popular because they are on the lower price point. JodyJazz has two newer ones that have taken off — the **Jet** and the **Giant** — which are also on a slightly lower price-point than the **DV**. These are our bread and butter, guaranteed-to-sell items."



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Last Minute Stocking Stuffers



John Rosborough, Owner
Sound of Music
Kokomo, Indiana

"Fender's California series [clip-on] tuner is one of the first things that is always appreciated [having a lot of] during the holidays. **Kyser and Shubb** capos are great stocking stuffers."

Rick Thacker, Founder
Plum Grove Music
Hebron, Indiana

"The **CME Xkey** looks like a computer keyboard, but it's actually a little piano keyboard that comes in all the iPhone colors. They have an agreement with Apple and that's really cool because there's an App called Piano Maestro, and it's kind of like Guitar Hero with a purpose. It teaches kids to play piano."



Ray Kobayashi, Accessory Buyer
Alto Music
Middletown, New York

"String Swing guitar hangers are by far the most popular hanger, though other brands like **Gator** are starting to pick up. **Truetone 1 Spot** adapters for pedalboards do very well during the holiday season. We also sell a ton of our **Levy's Alto** guitar straps."

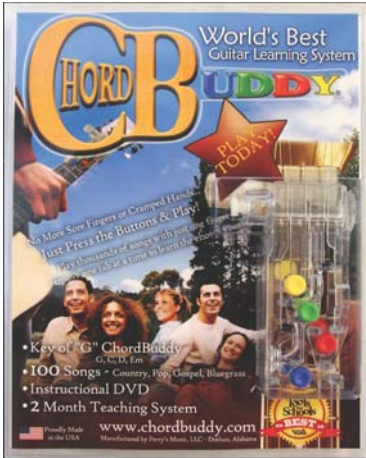


Kevin Crossett, Owner
GuitarSam
Montpelier, Vermont

"Korg and Snark clip-on tuners are essentials. We really like the **Korg PC-1** clip-on tuner. [They provide] better accuracy than some of the other popular tuners in the same price range. Also, the **Snark ST-8** for its very easy-to-read display."

Dick Reinlie, Owner
UpBeat Music
Crestview, Florida

“ChordBuddy — that’s the one thing that we know we have to stock. It’s a little device that you attach onto the end of a guitar and push buttons to play chords. [The product] was [featured] on “Shark Tank,” so everyone knows about it.”



Rick Thacker, Founder
Plum Grove Music
Hebron, Indiana

“The Snark SM-1 touch screen metronome. That’s probably the only metronome that a kid actually wants to use; it’s all touch screen — like an iPad. It has six different sounds, there’s a dog bark to a cricket chirp and traditional things. And, they give you different covers you can snap on. It’s a great metronome.”



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10

Basses You Should Stock Now!

Looking to add a few new models to your bass wall? Check out these must-stocks that are sure to grab any bass player's eye

By Katie Kailus



Ibanez SR300E Series

Yuichi Hirayama, Ibanez electric bass merchandiser

WHY STOCK 'EM: "It's an incredibly versatile bass with overall build quality that we feel is unmatched at its price point."

STANDOUT FEATURES: "The first feature that comes to mind is the electronics. The SR300E series features the Ibanez-developed PowerSpan Dual Coil pickups and custom 3-band EQ with Power tap switch. The PDC pickups have exposed pole pieces, which produce a stronger signal with enhanced presence. The 3-band EQ features a coil tap switch for access to a wide variety of professional bass tones. The Tap Mode (single coil) creates a punchy, dynamic sound with excellent articulation. Series Mode (humbucking) delivers a full, warm tone, and the Power Tap Mode provides the best of both worlds — combining the clarity of single coils with the fat bottom end of a humbucker. The second feature that makes it cool is its overall playability. The lightweight, smoothly contoured body and super slim neck are extremely comfortable and easy to play."

WHO'S THE PLAYER: "It is an excellent bass for beginners. It's affordable, comfortable and provides a wide variety of tonal options that make it adaptable to any genre you care to explore. It's a great bass for players in the process of discovering themselves. It's also a great option for mid-level players who play a variety of styles."

GET STOCKIN': Ed O'Donnell, 215-638-8670, ext. 163



Reverend Mercalli 4

Penny Haas, public relations for Reverend

WHY STOCK 'EM: “The Mercalli 4 is trending right now. The combination of the passive pickups’ vintage warmth with the modern punch and sustain of the five-piece neck and the lock down bridge create a tone that is very of-the-moment — unobstructed, woody and robust.”

STANDOUT FEATURES: “Like all Reverends, the Mercalli 4 has a Korina body. Korina is a key factor in producing our lively and responsive instruments that are rich in harmonics. The Mercalli 4 also has the Pickup Pan Control to blend between the two pickups so that the player can dial in their own particular tone, Hipshot Ultralight Tuners for a balanced bass that’s comfortable to play and a six-bolt neck plate for added stability. The model is also available in Metallic Copper Fire and Coffee Burst Flame Maple.”

WHO’S THE PLAYER: “Both modern rock and modern country players like this bass. It makes a statement visually and sonically.”

GET STOCKIN’: Zak Ward, 419-517-5317, zward@reverendguitars.com



Lakland Skyline Series 55-02

John Piruccello, Lakland president and owner

WHY STOCK 'EM: “It’s our most popular bass and contains the features that Lakland is best known for: fully hum-cancelling Lakland pickup array featuring a dual-coil neck pickup and a Quad Coil Bridge pickup with splitting capability. The system is shaped with our own onboard 3-band EQ making it both quiet and super versatile.”

STANDOUT FEATURES: “Our 35-inch scale 5-string neck is quite well known in the bass world as having the best sounding B-string because of the extra inch in scale length. The pickup system is all made in-house in the U.S. and all Skylines undergo a PLEK (computerized) fret-leveling procedure that makes them play exceptionally well.”

WHO’S THE PLAYER: “Targeted players range from young intermediates ready to take a step up in functionality and versatility, all the way through veteran professionals playing the biggest stages around the world.”

GET STOCKIN’: Brian Gingrich, 773-871-9650, brian@lakland.com



Godin Shifter Classic

Mario Biferali, Godin’s vice president of sales and marketing

WHY STOCK 'EM: “Dealers immediately ‘got’ what we were trying to accomplish with the Godin Shifter classic and thanks to their support and sell through, it has become our best-selling bass. For a retailer, it’s a fun bass to demo. There’s lots to talk about with the Godin Shifter Classic. It has a classic look, yet it is definitely pushing the sonic envelope. Thanks to the four-way pickup selector you can easily let a customer hear the sonic variations you can achieve with the Shifter Classic, and more importantly how quickly you can achieve them.”

STANDOUT FEATURES: “The four-way pickup selector and the possibility of having the pickups in series or Parallel is something that bass players have found to be very useful. Also, the fit and finish is second to none, and the weight distribution makes for an incredibly comfortable bass to play.”

WHO’S THE PLAYER: “Players who want a solid, consistent and great-sounding bass they can count on night after night.”

GET STOCKIN’: info@godinguitars.com

Willcox VL5 Fretless Transparent Natural Flame Maple

Paul Wilson, Willcox director of sales operations

WHY STOCK 'EM: "This is a well-made, feature-packed instrument for the price range. It features an acoustically chambered light ash body, ultra-stable Phenolic Graphite Composite fretboard (with maple lines in the lined fretless) and is hand assembled and hand fretted in our California Shop. [It's] truly a boutique-level instrument for under \$2,000."

STANDOUT FEATURES: "Our patented LightWave Optical Pickups are one feature that makes this model unique. Nearly every conceivable aspect of making music with an electric guitar has changed or advanced radically in the last 50–60 years, but not pickups. Pickups are the same today as

they were when guitars first became electric guitars. Few have ever considered what might be the inefficiencies or handicaps inherent in traditional magnetic pickups, because pickups are pickups, and there was nothing to compare them to — until now. Optical Pickups are the logical evolution of Electric Bass Technology.

"Also, apart from the 'wow' factor of stocking a bass materially different from literally everything else out there, there's the 'wow' factor of picking one up and realizing the quality of construction surpasses higher priced instruments."

WHO'S THE PLAYER: "Any player who is skilled and sensitive enough to want to hear the true sound of their expression."

GET STOCKIN': Paul Wilson, pwilson@willcoxguitars.com



Kala U-Bass EM-FSRW

Leanne McClellan, Kala Brand Music Co. sales manager

WHY STOCK 'EM: "The exotic mahogany used for the top, back and sides of this bass set it apart by virtue of the eye-catching grain pattern. It comes fully equipped with a built-in tuner, Shadow pickup and EQ system, but doesn't stop there. The exotic mahogany U-Bass can now be purchased and outfitted with metal round wound strings. Round wound strings offer a familiarity to those used to metal strings on their bass. They offer a booming sound while providing treble more in line with a traditional electric or acoustic bass."

STANDOUT FEATURES: "The original, best-selling U-Bass is an amalgam between a baritone ukulele and a bass guitar. The size may cause some pause, but the immense

low end keeps bassists coming back. The round wound strings are made in the U.S. which lets us offer them at an affordable price. The nylon-core wound in silver-plating string design provides the best of what both nylon and metal strings have to offer. The nylon-core lends to the booming sound that the U-Bass is known for, while the metal winding offers a clarity and top end not found in exclusively nylon strings."

WHO'S THE PLAYER: "The round wound strings lower tension offers a responsiveness and ease of playability that make the instrument perfect for someone just undertaking their musical journey, while the striking wood pattern and upgraded electronics make it gig-ready for any professional musician."

GET STOCKIN': order@kalabrand.com

Elrick Expat Series eVolution Models

John Files, marketing for Elrick Basses

WHY STOCK 'EM: "The Expat eVolution models have ProNet pricing designed to protect profit margins and eliminate price shopping for the best deal. The Elrick Expat basses are designed with a focus on quality and value, not simply price-point."

STANDOUT FEATURES: "Elrick Expat Series basses are a unique extension of our hand-carved USA series instruments. While they are produced in cooperation with partner craftsmen in the EU, all Expat Series basses feature the same quality materials and components found in our USA series basses. Unlike import lines

offered by many boutique manufacturers, Elrick Expat Series basses are not a 'secondary' product line, they are a high-quality extension of our USA series bass guitars, offered at street prices more approachable for many musicians."

WHO'S THE PLAYER: "The ideal player for this line would be the player that is ready to move up to a boutique-quality instrument, but whose budget restricts them from making the leap to a custom hand-carved bass guitar."

GET STOCKIN': John Files, jfiles@elrick.com, 512-922-8150





Music Man StingRay 4

Derek Brooks, director of artist relations

WHY STOCK 'EM: "The Ernie Ball/ Music Man StingRay features a robust construction with active EQ system allowing the user a wide array of usable tones for any musical environment."

STANDOUT FEATURES: "The StingRay 4 string bass features a 2 or 3-band active EQ system combined with humbucking pickups that give the bass its distinctive growl and mid-ranch punch, ideal for cutting through the mix, in a live performance or studio application."

WHO'S THE PLAYER: "All bass players including studio guitarists who don't want to spend hours adjusting frequencies in a recording environment."

GET STOCKIN': AJ Bramen, 866-823-2255, ext. 124



Warwick Streamer Bass

Florence Wilfer, Warwick's vice president

WHY STOCK 'EM: "Customers like flamed maple wood for its spectacular grain patterns, and this model is [ideal] for every genre of music."

STANDOUT FEATURES: "Every Warwick Custom Shop Masterbuilt instrument is unique, but I would say that our most important features are our water-based UV laquering unique finishes, the wooden electronic compartment cover and machineheads, and the Invisible Fret Technology."

WHO'S THE PLAYER: "Players of all genres — from rock and funk to jazz and heavy metal."

GET STOCKIN': KMC Music, 855-417-8677, sales@kmcmusic.com



Vintage's Icon Bass

Rick Taylor, product manager for RBI Music

WHY STOCK 'EM: "Custom Shop Relic'd basses typically cost thousands of dollars, however, with the Vintage Icon bass, players can now have that same authentic tone and worn in feel for under \$450."

STANDOUT FEATURES: "Vintage Icon series basses feature top-quality Wilkinson hardware and pickups unheard of in this price range. Dealers can receive sustainable margins of 40 percent and more."

WHO'S THE PLAYER: "The professional or intermediate player who is looking for the authentic sound and feel of a vintage instrument."

GET STOCKIN': Rick Taylor, 817-335-2561, ext. 105, rick@fretking-vintage.com



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All About

IBANEZ GSR GIO

Ibanez has introduced two new models to its value-line bass series: the GSR200SDL, a Soda Blue four-string; and the GSR205DVM, Deep Violet Metallic five-string. Patterned on the company's SR series, the GSR GIO offers the same alternative approach to electric bass that all SR basses do. Light in weight, the guitar is heavy in tone, with a fast, thin neck that many players have found capable of fulfilling needs even beyond the beginning stages. Each features a solid mahogany body and a maple neck. A rosewood fingerboard, accented with medium-size white dot inlays, round out the visuals.

{ibanez.com}

ELRICK BASS GUITARS STEVE LAWSON CUSTOM SIGNATURE BASS

Elrick Bass Guitars has debuted the Steve Lawson Custom Signature Bass.

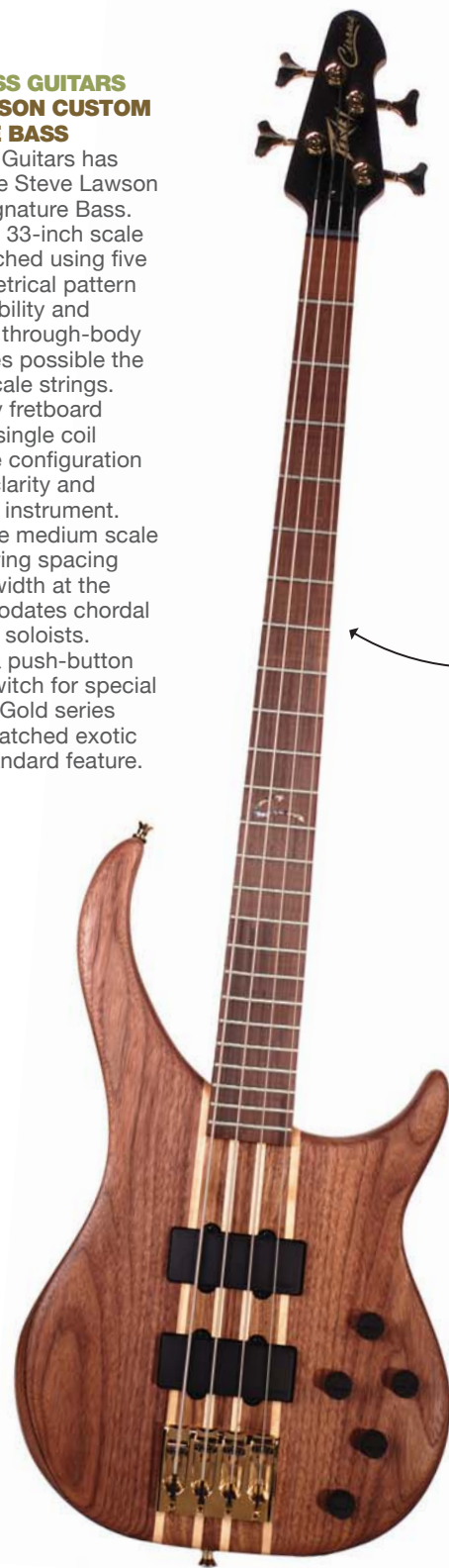
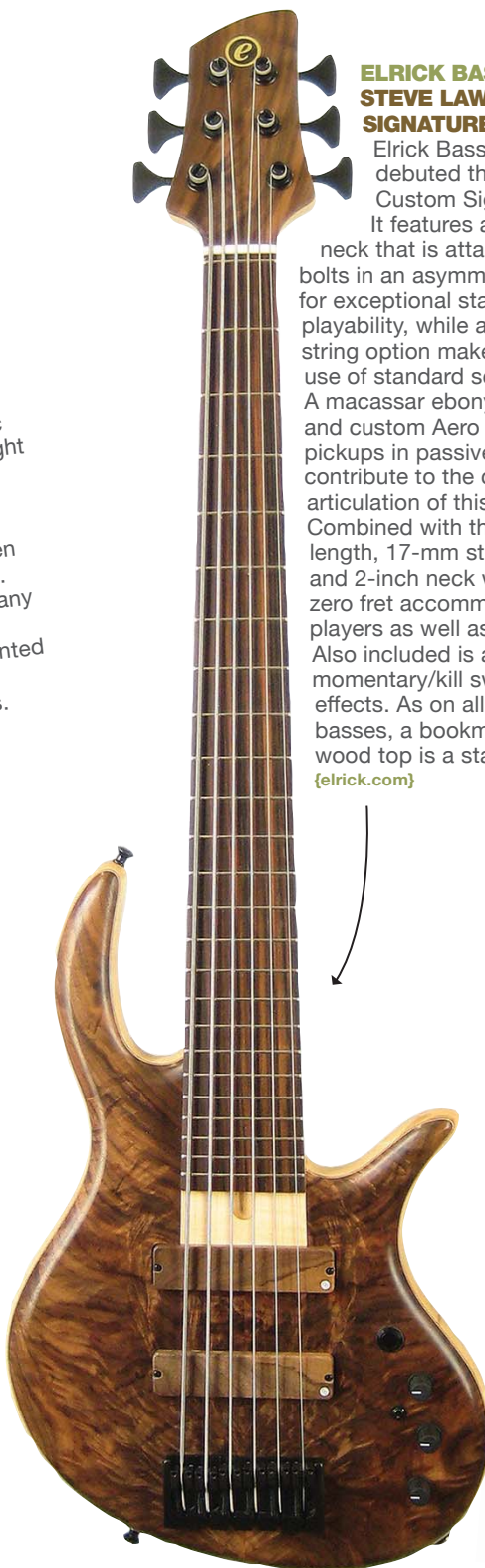
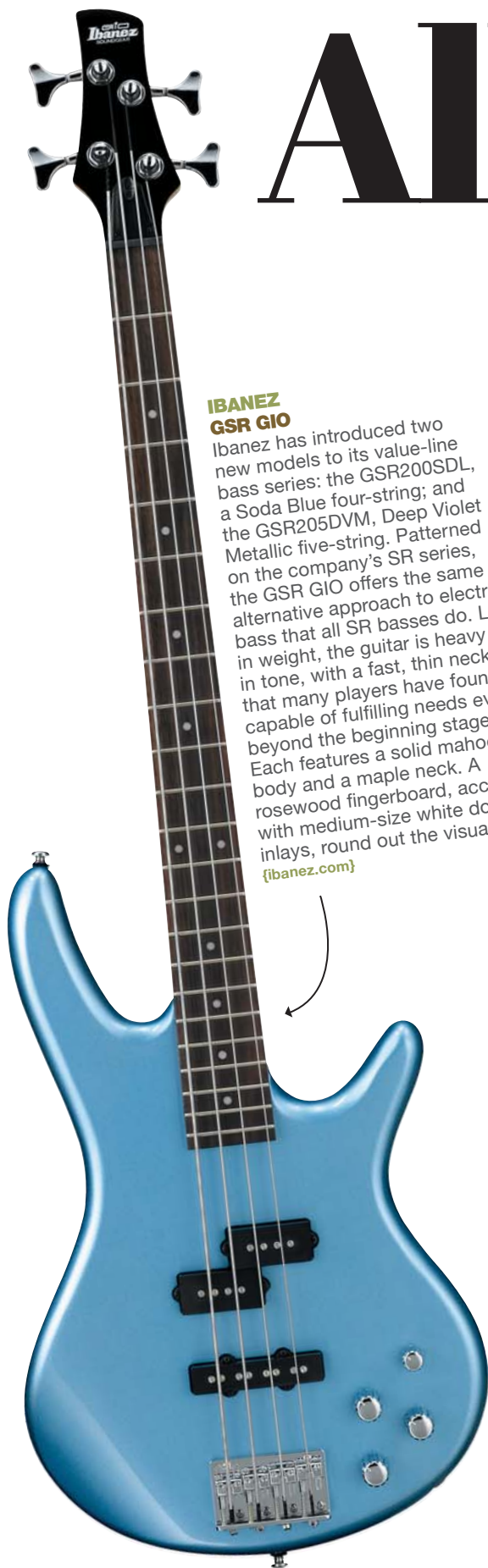
It features a 33-inch scale

neck that is attached using five bolts in an asymmetrical pattern for exceptional stability and playability, while a through-body string option makes possible the use of standard scale strings.

A macassar ebony fretboard and custom Aero single coil pickups in passive configuration contribute to the clarity and articulation of this instrument. Combined with the medium scale length, 17-mm string spacing and 2-inch neck width at the zero fret accommodates chordal players as well as soloists.

Also included is a push-button momentary/kill switch for special effects. As on all Gold series basses, a bookmatched exotic wood top is a standard feature.

{elrick.com}



That Bass

New bass gear to attract all players

PEAVEY CIRRUS 4

Peavey has reintroduced its Cirrus 4 bass guitar. The Cirrus was first released in 1997 as Peavey's flagship bass guitar line. Brought back due to high demand, customer satisfaction and reliability, this model features all of the original qualities that made it highly sought after in the first place. The 35-inch scale maple neck-thru bass with mahogany stringers features a rosewood or pau ferro fingerboard with 24 frets and a two-way, fully adjustable torsion rod. The Cirrus 4 bass guitar includes string-thru ferrules, 19-to-1 ratio Gotoh tuning machines, and a milled brass bridge giving players a choice of top loading the strings or stringing through the body. The electronics include volume, pickup blend, bass, mid and treble controls with 10 dB boost/cut, giving a mid sweep tone that can hone in with prodigious precision.

{peavey.com}

GENZLER BASS ARRAY12-3, MAGELLAN 800

Genzler launched its brand with the introduction of the Bass Array12-3 and the Magellan 800. Although the same size as many premium 12-inch and tweeter cabinets, the innovative design of the Bass Array12-3 blends the benefits of a 12-inch vented bass reflex enclosure with the performance and pattern control of a 4-by-3-inch neodymium driver line array element. The expanded feature set and output power level make the Magellan 800 bass instrument amplifier an essential tool on the global stage. With its universal power supply, the Magellan 800 can be used with any voltage around the world without modification.

{genzleramplification.com}

GODIN PASSION RG-4

Godin's Passion RG-4 Bass features a carved Swamp Ash top on a rounded, contoured body carved from lightweight mahogany. The ergonomic and vibrant lightweight body contains five tuned Synchronized Resonance Chambers that are interconnected inside the body, allowing for optimal air transfer and exceptional resonance. A set of Seymour Duncan Quarter-Pound PJ pickups provide a sonically full voice with plenty of low-end bite. The Passion RG-4 delivers tonal versatility with great sustain and sonic richness for any genre.

{godinguitars.com}



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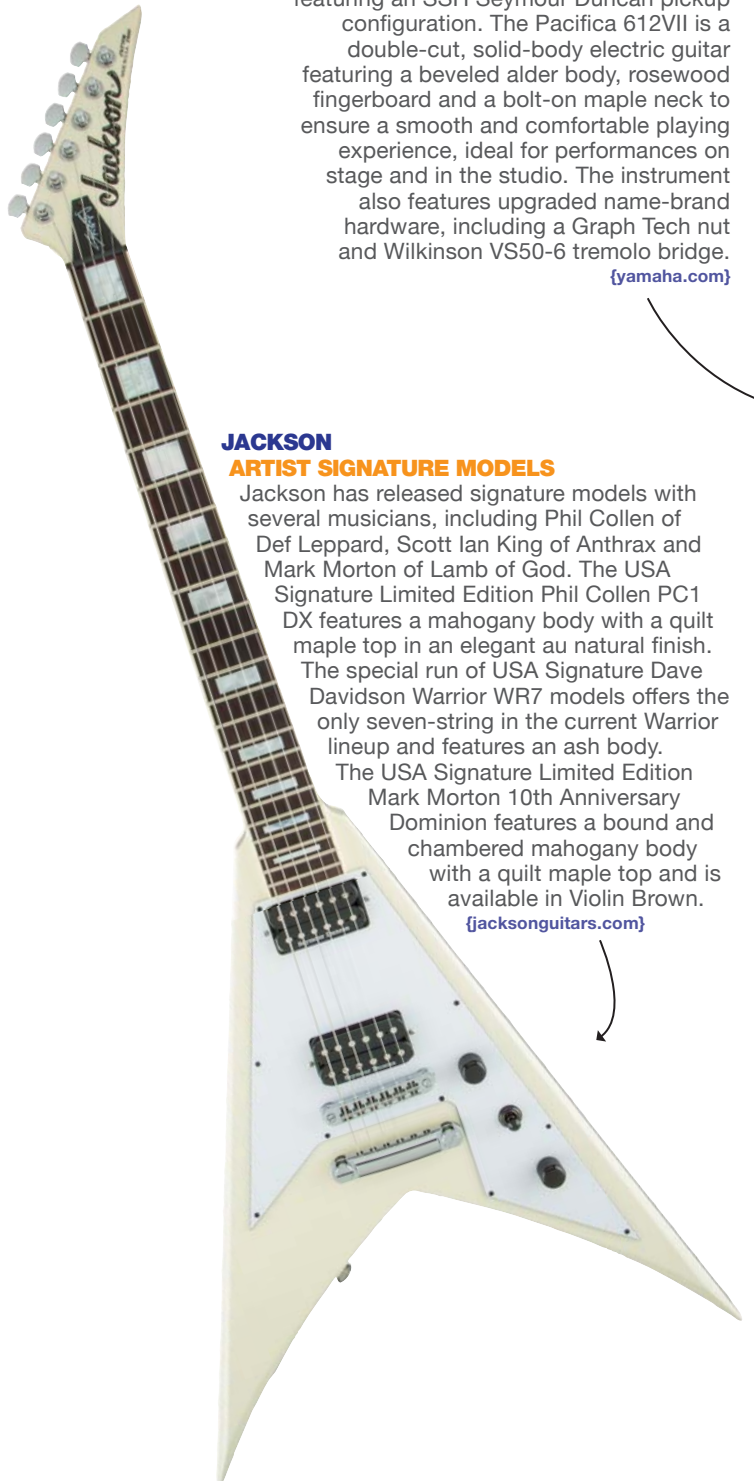
Yamaha has unveiled the Pacifica 612VII electric guitar, a limited edition model featuring an SSH Seymour Duncan pickup configuration. The Pacifica 612VII is a double-cut, solid-body electric guitar featuring a beveled alder body, rosewood fingerboard and a bolt-on maple neck to ensure a smooth and comfortable playing experience, ideal for performances on stage and in the studio. The instrument also features upgraded name-brand hardware, including a Graph Tech nut and Wilkinson VS50-6 tremolo bridge.

{yamaha.com}

JACKSON ARTIST SIGNATURE MODELS

Jackson has released signature models with several musicians, including Phil Collen of Def Leppard, Scott Ian King of Anthrax and Mark Morton of Lamb of God. The USA Signature Limited Edition Phil Collen PC1 DX features a mahogany body with a quilt maple top in an elegant au natural finish. The special run of USA Signature Dave Davidson Warrior WR7 models offers the only seven-string in the current Warrior lineup and features an ash body. The USA Signature Limited Edition Mark Morton 10th Anniversary Dominion features a bound and chambered mahogany body with a quilt maple top and is available in Violin Brown.

{jacksonguitars.com}





**FRET-KING
BLACK LABEL RANGE**

Fret-King's Black Label Range has added new finishes to two of its most popular models. Now available in an elegant gloss black, the JDD Jerry Donahue model has the string-bending King's signature Seymour Duncan pickups and five-way switching system. The semi-acoustic Elise model is available in Vintage White, which is complemented by the tortoiseshell binding. Carved from a solid mahogany block, the Elise body has acoustically tuned chambers, a full-length center block and a double carved solid maple top that creates a vibrant, responsive semi-acoustic tone.

{fret-king.com}



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LINE 6 SPIDER V SERIES

Line 6 has unveiled the Spider V guitar amp series, offering more than 200 amp and effects models, a clean and modern design, and a specialized full-range speaker system that's ideal for both electric and acoustic guitars. Over 100 handcrafted presets provide instant access to a large collection of professionally dialed-in sounds, including iconic rigs, artist-built tones, and Line 6 originals. Spider V is available in multiple configurations, from smaller practice models to gig-ready combos, enabling guitarists to choose the model that fits their performance needs. line6.com

ADD-ON SPOTLIGHT

MUSICNOMAD PREMIUM WORK STATION

MusicNomad has introduced the Premium Work Station kit, which contains the Cradle Cube and Instrument Work Mat. The Cradle Cube is a five-sided, multi-angled, soft gel covered neck support to securely hold all guitars, ukuleles, orchestral strings and other instruments in place while repairing and maintaining them. The Cradle Cube's innovative gel covering is safe on all finishes, including nitrocellulose and angles that support acoustic, bass and electric guitars. Flip it over and it acts as a caddy for tools and cleaning supplies. The Instrument Work Mat is ideal for guitar and other musical instrument maintenance tasks. The 36- by 17-inch biodegradable TPE material is safe on all finishes, is odorless, and contains no rubber, PVC, lead, latex, dioxins or chloride. musicnomadcare.com



BREEDLOVE USA CONCERT MOON LIGHT

The new Breedlove USA Concert Moon Light acoustic guitar delivers complex notes with the robust big-instrument sound of much larger guitar designs. Weighing in at just 3.5 pounds, the instrument is almost 25 percent lighter than the Premier Concert, which is crafted with the same wood pairings. The Moon Light features a rich Alaska Sitka spruce top and Honduran mahogany back, sides and neck. breedlovemusic.com



MEISEL
COM-150, COM-350

Meisel has introduced two new tuners, the COM-150 and COM-350. The COM-150 is calibrated for guitar, bass, ukulele, violin and the chromatic scale. The COM-350 tunes any instrument, and the full-screen LCD display changes colors to indicate whether in tune, flat or sharp.
[\[meisellaccessories.com\]](http://meisellaccessories.com)

JHS
THE CAVERN CLUB
UKULELE OUTFITS

JHS has introduced The Cavern Club Ukulele Outfits, which come in three different designs. "The Wall" features the names of the bands that have graced the stage in the past seven decades. "Fab Faces" includes close-up illustrations of The Beatles, and the "Cavern" shows iconic internal scenes and historic posters from one of the world's most famous venues. These ukes come with a carry bag, plectrum and pitch pipes for tuning.
[\[jhs.co.uk\]](http://jhs.co.uk)



ADD-ON
SPOTLIGHT

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Backbone's units are bolt-on replacements for the stock neckplates of Tele- and Strat-style guitars. With a five-minute, non-invasive install, Backbone forms a resonant, mechanical link between the neck, body, bridge and strings, instantly producing more volume, more sustain, more resonance, faster attack and overall improved tone.
[\[get-a-backbone.com\]](http://get-a-backbone.com)



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KORG
ELECTRIBE LINE

Korg has introduced the V2 electribe and electribe-Sampler. Both units offer 2.0 software, which provides user-requested features such as pattern chain, one-level undo and an onscreen original value indicator. As a nod to the best-selling ESX1 and EMX1, the electribe is offered in metallic blue and the electribe sampler in metallic red.

[\[korg.com\]](http://korg.com)



DENON DJ
MCX8000

Denon DJ has announced the MCX8000 DJ controller with its exclusive Engine software. The DJ can run Engine and Serato DJ at the same time — a major technological advance in both flexibility and creativity. With MCX8000, DJs looking for a complete, high-performance set up with flexible operation and freedom from computer-related restrictions will find an MCX8000 with Engine system fulfills all their requirements: four-deck Serato control and Engine-provided freedom from a computer, plus the ability to switch to local USB drives when using either Serato or Engine.

[\[denondj.com\]](http://denondj.com)



ADD-ON
SPOTLIGHT

CHAUVET
MK2 WASH

Part of Chauvet's Maverick series, the MK2 Wash is powered by 12 OSRAM 40-watt RGBW LEDs and features a custom-designed optical system, along with full-spectrum color mixing, to offer an impressive combination of performance capabilities. Any look created with the fixture is certain to be vivid and richly colored. The MK2 Wash can be controlled via DMX, WDMX, Art-Net, sACN and Kling-Net.

[\[chauvetprofessional.com\]](http://chauvetprofessional.com)



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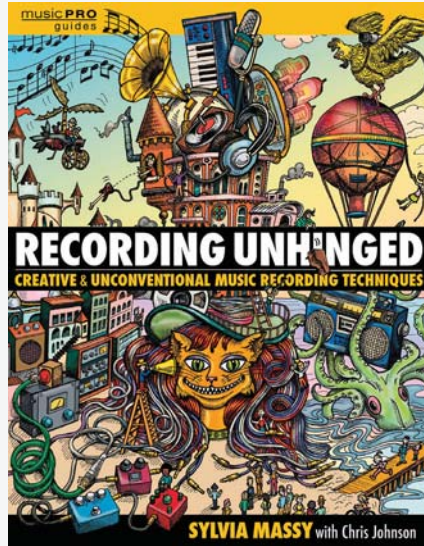


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ADD-ON SPOTLIGHT

SYLVIA MASSY RECORDING UNHINGED

In *Recording Unhinged*, Sylvia Massy and celebrity music industry producers, engineers and recording stars discard fixed notions about how music should be recorded. With commentary by Hans Zimmer, Al Schmitt, Bruce Swedien, Jack Joseph Puig, Dave Pensado, Tchad Blake, Bob Clearmountain, Linda Perry, Michael Franti, Michael Beinhorn, Bob Ezrin, Geoff Emerick and many others, this book includes the stories, tips and advice that you won't find in any other instructional manual. *Recording Unhinged* is also unique in its inclusion of exercises, diagrams, jokes, photos and other images all related to more adventurous recording techniques. sylviamassy.com



AUDIO-TECHNICA AT2020USB

The most recent iteration of Audio-Technica's AT2020USB features 24-bit/96 kHz recording and compatibility with iOS, Windows and Mac OS X. Combining the ability to capture high-resolution audio with increased connectivity options, the AT2020USBi cardioid condenser microphone offers enhanced sound quality and convenience. The integrated gain control adds to its convenience, letting users adjust the input level directly on the microphone. audio-technica.com

CAD AUDIO STAGESELECT 1600 SERIES UHF

CAD Audio has introduced the StageSelect 1600 series UHF high-performance wireless system. The StageSelect system features frequency agile UHF operation for maximum operating range, along with CAD ScanLink technology to precisely scan, select and link to the optimum channel in any RF environment. The system includes True Diversity operation to minimize multipath interference, along with CADLock Automatic Tone Encoded Squelch that eliminates unauthorized transmissions in the signal path. Handheld and body pack transmitters have soft touch multi-function On-Off/Mute/Low Battery/ScanLink status switches with multi-color LED indicators. High-quality alkaline double AA batteries provide more than 15 hours of transmitter battery life. cadaudio.com





BLUE MICROPHONES USB STUDIO SERIES

Blue Microphones recently released the USB Studio series all-in-one systems for recording music, professional podcasts, audio for YouTube and more. The USB Studio series features systems that include Blue's Snowball, Yeti or Yeti Pro mics, plus custom-recording software from PreSonus, advanced studio vocal effects from iZotope, and custom templates for voice, instruments and podcasting. Users can get started in seconds with handcrafted templates — including some from Grammy-Award winning engineers — and transform any creative space into a studio.

{bluemicom}

FLOYD ROSE FR-36BK

Floyd Rose's FR-36BK features Bluetooth, NFC and aptX technology with a built-in, hands-free microphone. On a full charge, the FR-36BK can perform for up to 14 hours. The quilted adjustable headband is ultra soft, and the supple memory foam cushions hug the contours of your ears without severe pressure. Tuned precision 40-mm drivers deliver a high-precision quality sound for truly captivating music enjoyment. The FR-36BK also includes a 3.5-mm audio cable for wired performance, 1/4-inch adapter, micro USB charging cable and soft carrying case.

{floydrose.com}

ELYSIA KARACTER

Elysia has launched the Karacter rack, which covers a complete spectrum that includes mastering-grade saturation, tube-inspired distortion and glorious destruction. This all-in-one solution offers two separate channels which can be set up for dual mono, linked stereo, or linked and unlinked M/S operation. Integrated mix stages for parallel signal processing and the unique Color Control add to its remarkable flexibility. The entire unit is designed with discrete class-A topology; even the most lo-fi sounds will benefit from the karacter's high-end touch.

{elysia.com}





REMO

POWERSTROKE 77

Remo's Powerstroke 77 snare drumhead consists of two free-floating plies of 7-mm film with a 7-mm inlay ring and a 5-mm top clear dot. This combination gives the drumhead excellent response and projection, combined with outstanding warm, full tones. The inlay ring reduces overtones, and the 5-mm top clear dot adds durability. The drumheads are available in coated or clear and in sizes 10, 12, 13 and 14 inches.

{remo.com}

EVANS UV1

Evans Drumhead has launched the UV1, a brand-new series of drumheads that's the first to market with a newly patented UV-cured coating. The UV1 features a new 10-mm film known for its warmer tonal characteristics while being resistant to stretching and denting. Combined with Evans Level 360 Technology — and debuting a new logo — the UV1 is the most versatile and durable 10-mm drumhead for the widest range of sonic possibilities and musical applications.

{evansdrumheads.com}



GROVER PRO

WILL JAMES SIGNATURE SNARE DRUM

Working closely with St. Louis Principal Percussionist, Will James, Grover Pro has released a 4- by 14-inch snare drum that's been designed to specifically target percussionists on the audition circuit. The performance profile of the Will James Signature Snare Drum exceeds its small size. Incredibly sensitive yet percussively powerful, this is one drum that possesses a range of musical expression far beyond the expectation of a single drum.

{groverpro.com}

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**SABIAN
CRESCENT CYMBALS**

Sabian has announced the relaunch of Crescent Cymbals — a series of traditionally crafted instruments that are thin, dark and complex. The new Crescent line will include Stanton Moore, Hammertone and Elements models.

{sabian.com}

**ADD-ON
SPOTLIGHT**

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Dixon's Precision Coil pedal features a specially-selected coil spring enclosed in a chamber with a direct connection to the axle/cam assembly. Fewer moving parts results in an extremely efficient transfer of energy from the pedalboard to the beater, providing a feel that smoothly and seamlessly shadows the motions of the playing foot.

{playdixon.com}



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{www.trxcymbals.com}

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{www.bass-plate.com}

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Through the merger with new parent company, Eastman Music, S.E. Shires has developed a more affordable class of professional brass instruments — the Q series trumpets, tenor and bass trombones. These instruments represent the philosophy of Eastman to produce the finest musical instruments at every price point and embody the reputation of Shires: to produce the highest quality handcrafted instruments for every player. seshires.com



JODYJAZZ POWER RING LIGATURE

JodyJazz's new Power Ring ligature upgrades the original Ring ligature with design that provides both a significant improvement in performance and greatly enhanced visual appeal. Like the original Ring ligature, the Power Ring's self-locking CNC machined taper touches on three points only; the left and right side of the reed and on top of the mouthpiece. There are no moving or added parts, thereby increasing the efficiency of vibration. The increased mass and greater wall thickness of the Power Ring ligature, combined with its more contoured shape, provides solid contact with the reed at the points where they touch. The taper of the Power Ring ligature is designed to be an exact fit with the DV, DV CHI and DV NY series mouthpieces. The Power Ring simply slides over the reed and becomes secure as it's pushed tightly over the reed. jodyjazz.com



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GUARDIAN CASES
CELLO CASES

Guardian Cases has released two new cello cases with extremely lightweight full-suspension shells, offering instrument protection and convenience. The Composite Cello Case features a shell made of fiber and carbon weave, resulting in a durable shell that weighs under 11 pounds. The interior fits most traditional full-size cellos in a full-suspension padding system that protects the instrument. The Fiberglass Cello Case features a lightweight fiberglass shell weighing just over 11 pounds. The Fiberglass Cello Case's full-suspension interior also features full support with a minimum of only six suspension pads. [\[guardiancases.com\]](http://guardiancases.com)

ADD-ON
SPOTLIGHT

TONEGEAR
THE STRING CLEANER

ToneGear is now shipping The String Cleaner for violin and viola. The String Cleaner is the only product that cleans 360 degrees of all strings at the same time while simultaneously cleaning and buffing the fretboard. Furthermore, it requires no chemicals or solutions and is a reusable item. [\[tonegear.com\]](http://tonegear.com)



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NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL MUSIC COMPANY

ROLAND FP-90

Roland has announced the FP-90, the latest-generation model in the FP series of portable digital pianos. With a no-compromise design based on customer feedback, the FP-90 provides top-level piano performance and easy portability in one instrument, making it equally suited for both home enjoyment and professional use by stage performers. Roland's advanced piano technologies deliver expressive tone and exceptional feel, while a newly developed onboard audio system provides rich, full sound for intimate performances and home playing. [\[roland.com\]](http://roland.com)



ADD-ON SPOTLIGHT



ALFRED EASY SERIES

Alfred has added three compilation songbooks to the *Easy* series — Christmas for guitar, piano and ukulele. For beginning musicians, the *Easy* series is the fast track to developing a repertoire of well-known and fun-to-play songs, while more experienced players will find an excellent resource of favorite hits. This series heralds the debut of the *Easy Hits* guitar tab, ukulele tab and piano arranging formats, which provide melody, chords and lyrics to songs spanning across the decades. The Christmas edition features timeless holiday staples “Silent Night” and “The Twelve Days of Christmas.” [\[alfred.com\]](http://alfred.com)

KORG MICROKORG-S

Korg's microKORG-S features a 2.1 speaker system with power that far exceeds its size, 64 all-new sounds (bank A) alongside the original 128 classic sounds (banks B and C) plus 64 user locations (bank D). In addition, the front panel features a new white panel and maple wood ends. MicroKORG-S offers all of the original microKORG's functionality, including the ease of selecting a program of a desired musical genre via its famous “Big Knob.” In true microKORG fashion, a four-band vocoder with an included miniature microphone, arpeggiator, five easy-edit knobs and optional battery operation are all part of the package. [\[korg.com\]](http://korg.com)

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>>>
Kevin Crossett
GuitarSam
Montpelier, Vermont

We have a green garland that gets draped outside and underneath the store's sign. Inside we'll often hang tree-type lights around a display. We try not to go overboard, but we try to pull the season throughout the store to keep the gift-giving-thing in mind.

If you're continuing a holiday theme, regardless whether it's Christmas or Valentine's Day, I think that it continually pops back into people's minds while they are in the store. Subliminally some kind of impact hopefully lends some enthusiasm to people who are potentially buying for others.



>>>
Tracy Leenman
Musical Innovations
Greenville, South Carolina

Santa hats and light-up necklaces are not unusual, and we also have a tree displayed where staff members can leave little gifts for each other. Does it help sales? There's no definite proof, but we are in what's referred to as the "Buckle of the Bible Belt," here in Greenville, and I believe boldly showing our faith does increase our sales. The music and the celebratory atmosphere certainly helps bring joy to our customers and staff.



>>>
John Rosborough
Sound of Music
Kokomo, Indiana

How do you **add a festive holiday touch** to your store?

Our store is located in the downtown area of Kokomo, Indiana, right across from the courthouse. We've had a revitalization of the area, so there are a lot of shops around us. Many retail stores also follow the same guidelines and make an effort to get into the holiday spirit. Santa also comes to town and visits; it's like an old-fashioned Christmas. It's a really, really neat environment. And, [decorations] put everybody in a good mood and thinking about gift buying, as well as a time in the past that they remember when they were a child that says, "I remember those times, and how great it was to get that special gift, and I can go into the Sound of

Music and get that special gift right now!" All of us here are big kids, so we decorate the store and go full blast. We decorate the windows with a variety of trees as well as hang guitars in the air and windows.

We have a theme every year, but we always make sure to have a manger scene. One year, we started having so much snow to start off with (we're about three hours south of Chicago) that we decided to do a "Surf Christmas." So, we brought in surfboards and things like that to make you feel like, "Hey, spring will be here eventually!"

Sometimes we do a modern Christmas, but it varies quite a bit every year.

We'll usually have

some kind of Santa in the window playing drums or maybe guitar.

We're contemplating a couple of different things, and we haven't finalized [the theme], but what I'd like to do this year is kind of like an old-fashioned Christmas with the old bubble lights, a lot of wreaths and cool instruments. We'll set up a train in the window that is constantly going around the tree and through a drum set. This year, we are going to try to recreate that scene from "A Christmas Story" where Ralphie looks out the window and sees that kind of vintage-looking scene. That's what we're going after. It's kind of like an old-fashioned Christmas. **MI**

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