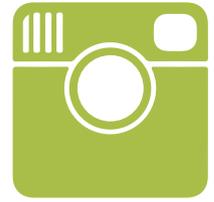


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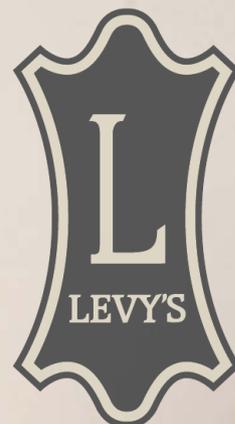
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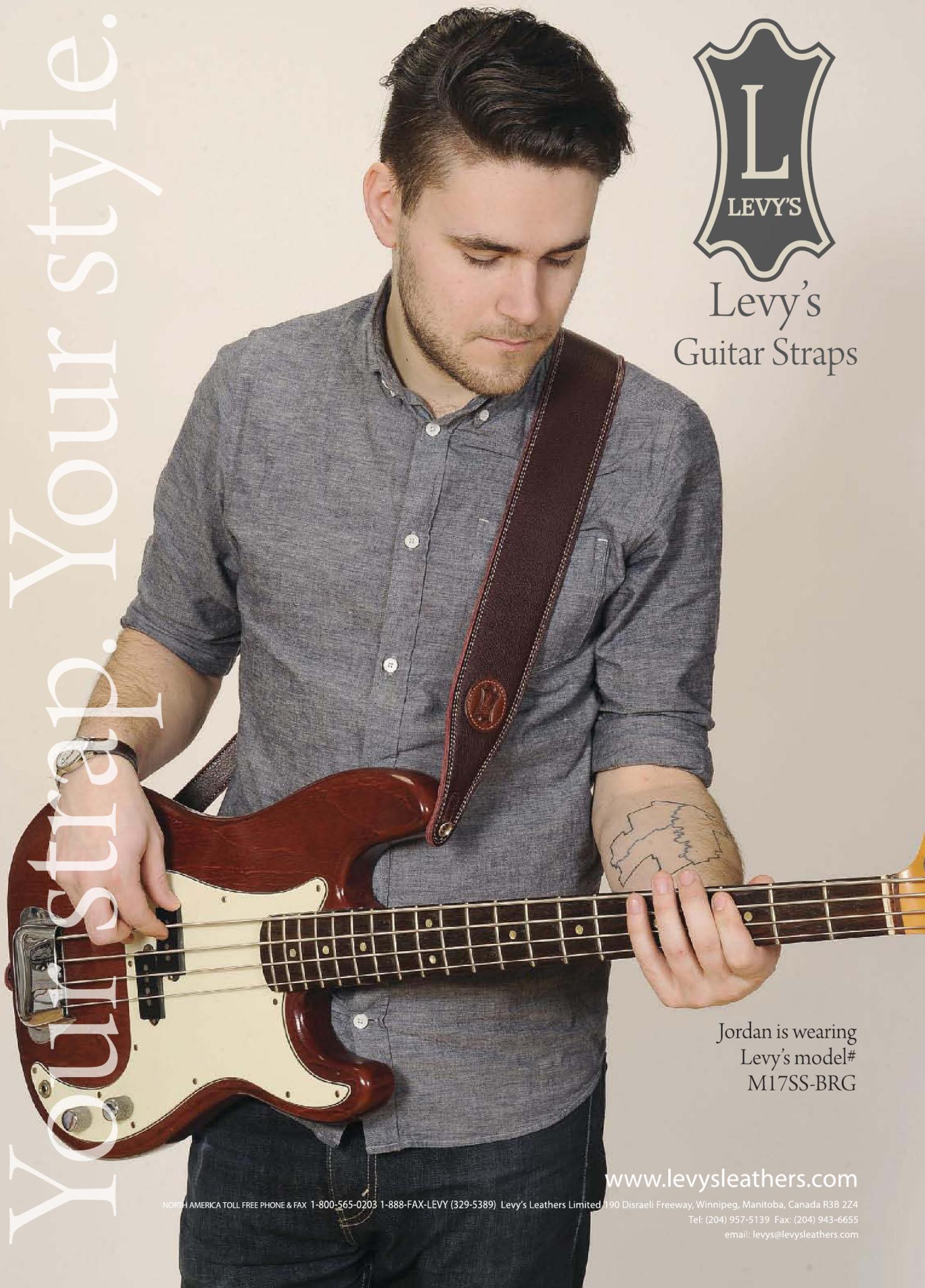
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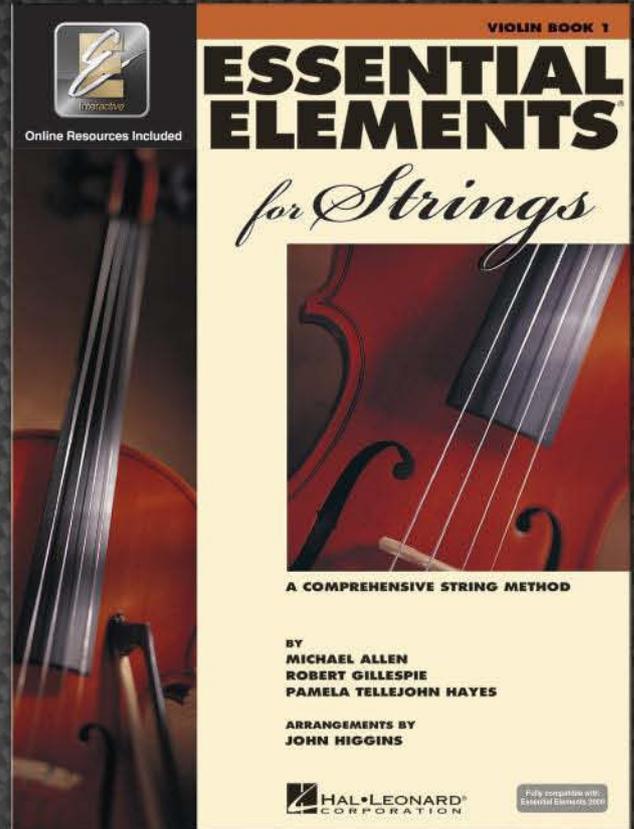
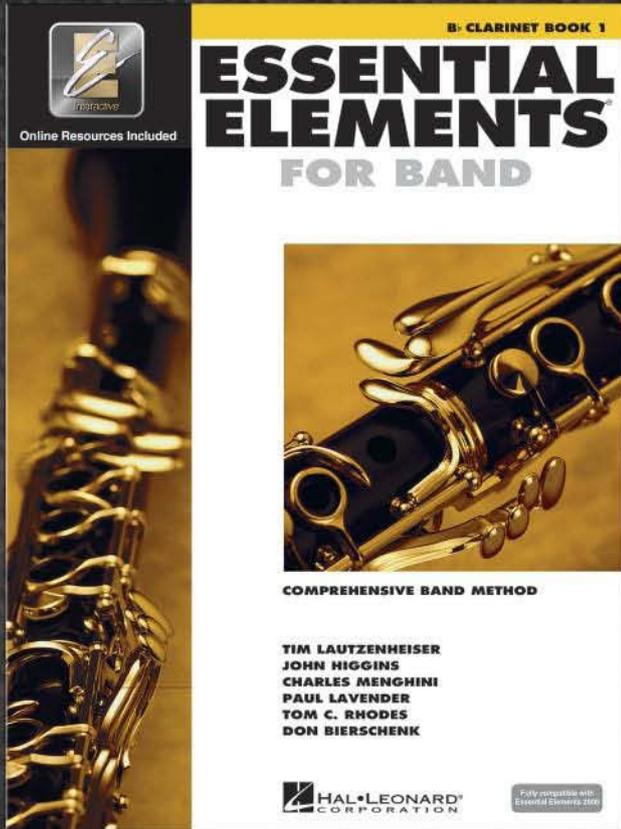
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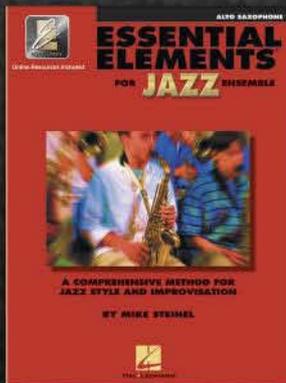
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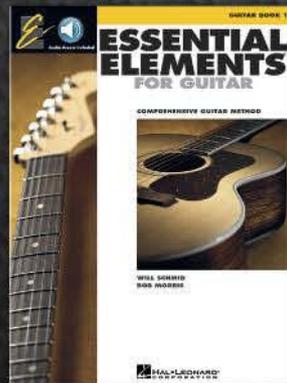
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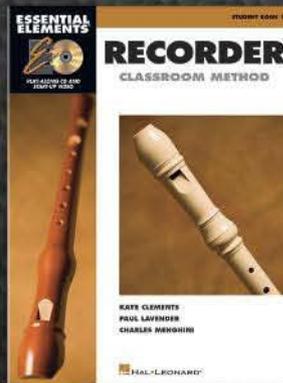
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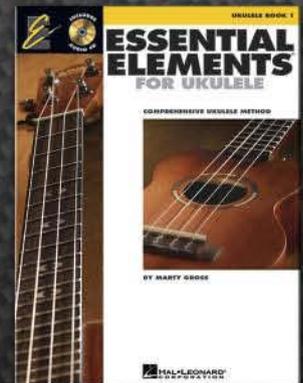
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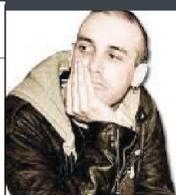


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# If it Matters to Them, Shouldn't it Matter to You?



by Christian Wissmuller

It became pretty clear, fairly early on in the process of compiling information for this year's "Green Issue," that the subjects of "environmentally sound business practices," "going green," "reducing one's carbon footprint" (all the neat little catch-phrases) elicit strong reactions from folks – in both directions.

Proponents who believe that embracing "environmentally wise" (there's another one!) actions is "the right thing to do" often assert that one person (or business) can truly make a difference, or that the actions of a few ultimately snowball and lead to positive change on a larger scale, with companies and politicians eventually enacting policies that can reverse ecological damage propagated by humans on our planet. In the other corner, those not on the green bandwagon often view the whole movement through a fairly jaded lens – companies only do it as a PR stunt; it's a meaningless exercise if countries such as China continue to pollute, unchecked; the damage to the environment has gone on for too long and at too great a scope and cannot be reversed (or, alternately, no damage has been done, global warming is a myth, et cetera).

Putting aside personal philosophy and politics, it seems to me the more important question is: Is "Going Green" Good for Business? If you enact green practices – whether you believe it'll save the earth or not, and whether you're all-in with the movement or if you think it's just a bunch of wacko hippie tree-huggers – will it positively affect your bottom line?

In its 2012 "goodpurpose" study, Edelman (the world's largest PR firm) found that 72 percent of consumers would recommend a brand that supports "good causes" over one that does not – an increase of 39 percent from only four years previous. In our own retailer survey for

this issue of *MMR*, a combined 81.2 percent of dealers characterized an MI supplier's involvement in "green" policies as being either "very important" or "somewhat important" when deciding whether to do business with that company.

"So what?" you may be asking. Does that mean it's worth it to change some light bulbs (for example)?

Aside from saving \$30 - \$80 over the lifetime of *each* individual bulb (quick math: if you have at least ten light fixtures in your store, that means you'd stand to be spending \$300 - \$800 less over the next three or four years. \$800 may not be life-changing, but I wouldn't kick a check for that amount out of bed), think of the positive spin you can squeeze out of such a small, easy move.

To those who think the "green movement" is silly, ineffectual, needless, et cetera – let's say you're 100 percent correct. Data overwhelmingly suggests that your customers feel differently. If the idea (even if it's *just* an idea) of protecting and preserving the environment matters to your customers, shouldn't it matter to you? You don't have to drink the Kool-Aid, but why turn your back on profits? Take advantage of the PR boost you could be getting, pocket that \$800 you're saving by using different bulbs (or whatever equivalent dollar amount is represented by other environmentally wise actions), and bite your lip until you get home and can vent about all the left-wing nutballs out there.

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## Sabian to Sell Direct to Retail in the U.S.

Sabian has announced that effective immediately, sales and distribution of Sabian cymbals and accessories in the U.S. will be handled exclusively by Sabian Ltd.

Sabian president and CEO Andy Zildjian comments: "This is absolutely the right time in our history to engage directly on all levels with our valued partners in the U.S. It allows us to take direct control of the message, relationships, and brand focus in our largest market. This is the beginning of a very exciting time for all of us in the Sabian family and we look forward to working closer with our retail partners for many years to come."



In 2013, Sabian implemented Lean as a corporate philosophy, and it has impacted the entire organization in many positive ways. The resulting increase in overall efficiency and effectiveness allowed for improvements in many areas, including customer service, warehousing, manufacturing processes, and the elimination of waste. Most importantly, it has allowed Sabian to take advantage of new opportunities, including servicing retailers in the U.S. direct from their corporate headquarters.

Sabian CFO and COO Mike Connell says: "Incorporating Lean into our daily lives has allowed us to remain competitive on a global basis while helping to change our culture for the better. This has resulted in our employees being better able to service the needs of our customers. Employees at Sabian are open-minded to change and have a genuine passion to do whatever it takes to position Sabian for a strong future. This strategic move to sell direct to retailers in the U.S. marks the start of a new era in Sabian's history."

Sabian Band & Orchestral instruments and accessories will continue to be sold and distributed by Pearl Corporation in the U.S.

## ESP and Takamine Announce U.S. Partnership



ESP Guitars senior vice president Jeff Moore, ESP Guitars president/CEO Matt Masciandaro, Takamine Guitars president Hayami Tahte, and Takamine Guitars director of U.S. Relations Mark Kasulen gather to finalize their partnership agreement.

ESP Guitars and Takamine Guitars have announced a partnership in which Takamine instruments will be available exclusively through ESP and selected dealers in the U.S. This new distribution partnership began in March 2015.

"This is a momentous leap forward for both ESP and Takamine," says Matt Masciandaro, president and CEO of the ESP Guitar Company. "The new agreement between ESP and Takamine allows ESP to offer one of the world's most respected acoustic guitar brands to our dealers and customers, and gives Takamine the kind of sales distribution and marketing support that this fine brand merits."

"We at Takamine Guitars are eager to establish our partnership with the ESP Guitar Company in the United States as we enjoy the symbiotic relationship of our two companies that know guitars, understand the global market, and share the same goals of great guitars and superior service. The legacy continues," says Mark Ka-

sulen, director of U.S. relations for Takamine Guitars.

For more than half a century, Takamine Guitars has been recognized as a leading acoustic guitar builder. Much like ESP, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2015, Takamine's origins are as a small guitar shop in Japan. Over the subsequent 52 years, Takamine has grown to being a world-renowned maker of premier-quality acoustic and acoustic-electric guitars, selected as a first choice by performing guitarists worldwide. Takamine's well-known signature artists include musicians such as Glenn Frey, Garth Brooks, Toby Keith, and Kenny Chesney. Takamine's product offerings span the entire market of acoustic guitars, with models designed for players at every level.

ESP and Takamine's new distribution arrangement allows for Takamine instruments to be sold exclusively at select dealers in the United States as of March 2015.



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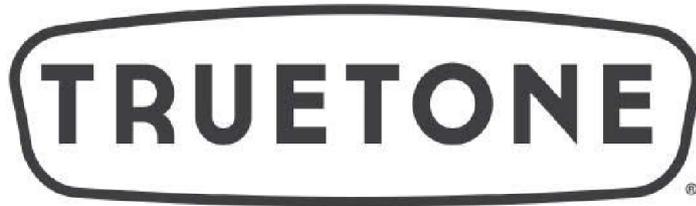
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# Visual Sound Changes Name to Truetone



## TRUETONE

After 20 years of innovation in the music products industry, Visual Sound is changing its name to Truetone. Company president and founder, Bob Weil, explains why:

"The name of the company was derived from the first product I invented, Visual Volume; the volume pedal with a 10 LED scale to indicate volume level. That was the product that launched Visual Sound at the beginning of 1995. While Visual Volume was the cornerstone of the company back then, it became a secondary product over the past 20-years. Now, we are best known for our effects pedals, including Jekyll & Hyde, Route 66, and H2O. In addition, our 1 SPOT power supplies and accessories have become the industry standard. Our company motto has always been "Real Tone for Real People," which underscores our approach to making reliable, high-quality products, at a fair price. With this in mind, we feel that our new name, Truetone, clearly states our vision in one word."

Weil continues, "Several years ago we began this process by acquiring the trademark for 'Truetone' and even created a pedal by that name, the Truetone Clean Boost, in 2008. We also were able to secure Truetone.com and other related URL's, clearing the way for us to make this move. Besides its great fit, the name also has a rich history, going back to the 1920's with vacuum tubes and the old tube radios. We actually have a 1946 Truetone console radio in our showroom at the office. I love the history of the name as well as how Truetone ties into the ethos and vision of Visual Sound."

The first Truetone branded products will be the new V3 version of the flagship Jekyll & Hyde pedal, along with two new 1 SPOT Pro power supplies. These will be the first Truetone products to appear in stores and on stages around the world. As with any change, there will be a time of transition as existing Visual Sound products are re-branded Truetone, and products with both names may be found on store shelves in the interim. Regardless, the same exemplary level of support and customer service that made Visual Sound famous will continue with Truetone.



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## Alain Boublil Tours Hal Leonard Headquarters

Hal Leonard hosted famed lyricist and librettist Alain Boublil at its Milwaukee headquarters on March 6th.

The world's longest-running musical, "Les Miz" is an unforgettable story of heart-break, passion, and the resilience of the human spirit. The show made its debut in 1985, and Hal Leonard has represented it in print for nearly as long.

"Les Miz" is still breaking box office records everywhere in its 30th year. Thanks to the new productions on Broadway, in Sydney, Tokyo, Holland, and Spain; to the London production now in its 30th year; and to the 2012 Oscar-winning screen adaptation, the next generation is falling in love with its timeless songs – and buying lots of matching songbooks and sheet music.

Boublil met with Hal Leonard president Larry Morton and the editorial staff and production people who have brought to life more than 120 publications featuring Boublil and Schönberg's musicals. Hal Leonard publishes everything from easy piano collections; to instrumental play-alongs;

to pro vocal, orchestral and choral works; and even *The Musical World of Boublil and Schönberg*, a biography of Boublil and his longtime collaborator Claude-Michel Schönberg.

Boublil commented on the tour, "I enjoyed my first-time visit to Hal Leonard's headquarters. It's very impressive to see first-hand the ways in which they are making our music and lyrics available in so many innovative ways for such a wide variety of musicians and fans."

Morton added, "Alain Boublil is musical theatre royalty. We are so proud that he entrusts Hal Leonard to represent his and Claude-Michel's magnificent works in print. We look forward to many more years of working closely together."

That evening, with Boublil in atten-



Hal Leonard's Jeff Schroedl and Larry Morton flanking Alain Boublil.

dance, the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra performed "Do You Hear The People Sing?". He co-conceived and produces this touring symphonic production, which features songs from Boublil & Schönberg musicals performed by world-class vocalists – including his wife, soprano Marie Zamora. Hal Leonard sponsored the Milwaukee performances, which brought audiences to their feet.

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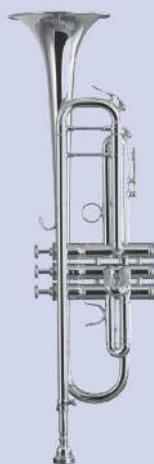
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# 2015 NAMM Top 100 Dealer Awards

NAMM invites music product retailers worldwide to stand up and take a bow as the fifth annual Top 100 Dealer Awards nominations open. Retailers can now enter in seven "Best of" categories, for Dealer of the Year and to be named one of the world's Top 100 Dealers. The Awards, which applaud excel-

lence and innovation in music products retailing will be presented Friday, July 10 during Summer NAMM in Nashville.

"Every morning when they open for business and 24 hours a day with their online and social media presence, NAMM retail members are creating amazing stories with their customers.

Through beautiful store fronts, amazing inventory selections, events, education, and trained staff, they separate themselves from their competition and provide real value to their communities," said Joe Lamond, NAMM president and CEO. "And by entering their stores into the Top 100 they can share that pride with their peers helping all dealers to improve, building a stronger industry for all."



Dealers are evaluated for their innovative approaches to retail and for employing effective strategies in marketing and customer engagement. An independent panel of judges carefully reviews entries to determine winners in each category and to select the Dealer of the Year. Top 100 Dealers are announced in early May. Category winners and the Dealer of the Year are announced during the Top 100 Dealer Awards gala on July 10.

Music retailers can submit their entry now through April 17. This year's categories include Best Store Design, Best Marketing and Sales Promotion, Best Online Engagement, Music Makes a Difference Award, and Best Emerging Dealer along with new categories Best Store Turnaround and Best Customer Service. By entering in any number of categories, Retailers are automatically entered for consideration as a Top 100 Dealer and Dealer of the Year.

Summer NAMM returns to Nashville's Music City Center July 9-11, bringing together thousands of buyers for a chance to preview the latest music products, gain valuable training, and network with peers. Registration for Summer NAMM opened March 25. Booth space is available now.

MMR

## Letters

Chris,

Just read your column about modern musicianship, Kanye, the Grammys, et cetera. My sentiments exactly. Well written, I'm glad you wrote it... In our own small way, we will continue to serve our local Michigan community with quality instruments, service, lessons... and possibly help develop the next great breakthrough true musician.

Incidentally, I was fortunate to see Beck perform, real close, in the early '90s at a hole-in-the-wall Austin club during SXSW. I've been a big fan ever since!

**Steve Lueders**  
Detroit Violin Company

Hi Chris,

I have just finished reading your excellent and direct editorial in [February 2015] *MMR*, "Dear Kanye, a Little Jolt of

Truth." It certainly is "right on" and represents the views of many of us who know, understand, and appreciate the true values of our music business!

**Bud DiFluri**  
Nyack College

While I always enjoy reading your editorials, this one [February 2015] was really a home run! Thanks for starting my Monday on such a joyful note (only one, since we're talking about Kanye)...!

**Carol Wilbur**  
Pender's Music/Carrollton

Well stated [Editorial, February 2015 *MMR*]. Thank you for speaking out!

**Rob Slayman**  
Schimmel Piano Corporation

Chris,

I just read your article in *MMR* – "Dear Kanye." Thanks for telling it the way it is! I only hope that Kanye sees it. Great article, good read!

**Jeff Kalec**  
Music & Arts

Loved your rant in the recent *MMR* issue about the relative talent level of Kanye West! Nicely played!

**Michael Carnes**  
Exponential Audio

Hey Christian,

I just wanted to say great job on the letter you wrote about Kanye in February's *MMR*. You expressed your thoughts on the issue really well.

**Michael Bradley**  
Avedis Zildjian Co.



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## MMR's Davis Contributes to *Who's on First*

Retired *MMR* publisher Sid Davis was a contributor to a recent book published by SABR (Society of American Baseball Research), *Who's on First: Replacement Players in World War II*, covering major league players who made their entrance into the league during the four seasons in which the U.S. was in the Second World War. Davis authored a biography of Butch Nieman, a hard-hitting outfielder for the Boston Braves during that period.

This is the third biography he has written, the first two having covered pitchers Red Barrett and Nelson Potter. Both Barrett and Potter played 12 years in the major leagues during the 1940s and '50s and both were members of the 1948 Boston Braves National League championship team. Barrett pitched and won the league's fastest game, throwing 58 pitches in a game that lasted 75 minutes. Nelson Potter was the first pitcher to be ejected for throwing what was then termed a "spitball."



## CORRECTIONS

On page 39 of our March 2015 issue, within the product description for Boulder Creek Guitars' new model EBR3-N4, we incorrectly noted, "There is need for a feedback buster," when the copy should have read, "There is no need for a feedback buster."

Additionally, on page 38 of the same issue, ESP Guitars' new BB-1004QM and BB-1005FL model basses were incorrectly attributed to "Klopmeier" with an invalid web address listed, as well. The correct website is: esp-guitars.com.

We regret the errors.

## Supplier Scene

### Renkus-Heinz Chooses GP Marketing For Pacific Northwest

Renkus-Heinz has announced the appointment of GP Marketing as the company's new representatives for the Pacific Northwest and Alaska.

Based in Redmond, Washington, GP Marketing was founded by industry veteran Gary Ponto, and specializes in the Professional Audio and Video, and Security and Data Communications sectors. The firm will represent Renkus-Heinz in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Western Montana, as well as Alaska.



GP Marketing's Gary Ponto and Chris Wehba with Renkus-Heinz's Ladd Temple.

"We are really happy to welcome Gary and the whole GP Marketing team to Renkus-Heinz," remarked Rik Kirby, Renkus-Heinz VP of Sales and Marketing. "They are consummate professionals with years of expertise behind them, and a great record of sales and service. We're looking forward to working with them."

"It's an honor to be working with one of professional audio's most legendary and innovative companies," added Ponto. "Renkus-Heinz is the undisputed leader in beam steering, and their service is second to none. We're excited to be bringing their technologies to more installations in the Pacific Northwest."

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

## Manhasset Speciality Receives Green Manufacturing Award

The Association of Washington Business (AWB), which serves as the state's Chamber of Commerce and the Manufacturing and Technology Association, announced their selections for manufacturing excellence for 2014 and Manhasset Specialty Company was awarded with the Green Manufacturing Award. Judges evaluated firms maximizing energy efficiency levels, going above and beyond regulatory requirements, minimizing waste from the production process, and reducing their carbon footprints.

In the AWB's press release, they state, "In 2002, Manhasset replaced its painting process with environmentally friendly powder coating. The process of cleaning and preparing metal music stands for powder coating did, however, create materials that needed to be disposed of. So Manhasset didn't stop working. This year, Manhasset became the first company in the northwest, and one of only 30 so far



in the nation, to adopt a new surface treatment process, which is completely waste-free. To prepare for installation of the PlafORIZATION system, Manhasset shut down production for more than a month. They began preparing last fall, building up an inventory of their high-end music stands to meet customer demand. In February and March, they removed old equipment and set up the PlafORIZATION line. It was the biggest upgrade of their manufacturing line in decades. The new process generates zero waste and is more efficient."

General manager Barry Heid adds, "All of the employee-owners at Manhasset have worked very hard to make the company's manufacturing processes better for the environment. Being 100 percent green is important to all of us!"

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

## Jersey Surf Drum Corps Chooses Yorkville for Sound Stadium PA

When Mount Holly, New Jersey's Jersey Surf needed to build a system for their drum corps, they looked to Yorkville Sound's Paraline Series cabinets for a solution, and along the way found ingenious ways to tailor the expandable system to their highly-specialized application. Jersey Surf's system had to be scalable to be adapted to the various venues and had to be reliable night after night in "far

less than controlled" environments. The system needed to be mobile, with time from set up to performance often less than five minutes including sound check. Above all, the system needed to deliver superior sound quality and seamless coverage in venues that often include NFL stadiums. When system designer and engineer Joe Costable looked at these challenges he found the solution in Yorkville Sound's Paraline Series PSA1 and PSA1S cabinets.

"The design of the Paraline system is a great fit for the marching audio world for its compact design, minimal power requirements, and built-in audio processing features such as level control and crossover

frequencies. Even coverage of the stadium seating front to back in both level and frequency response was achieved, as expected from a line array. Only an adjustment of

the level control on each box was needed to calibrate the output to each venue."

A major challenge they faced in the system design was remotely powering the system.

That was solved using a custom designed self-contained bat-

tery-powered AC solution that allows the system to be rolled on to the field already running, eliminating the need for cumbersome AC feeds to the stacks.

"While typical line array systems require more power than our self-contained system can provide, the Yorkville Paraline series at its core offered us a remarkably power-conscious solution. In order to keep things simple for a quick set up time, powered boxes with built-in processing are required, again, offered by the Paraline series." A detailed description of Jersey Surf's system can be found on Yorkville Sound's website.

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



# SSL Appoints Set Square to Lead Line Console Sales in UAE

Solid State Logic has announced the appointment of Set Square as its live console partner in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The company, owned and operated by Dave Lee, who has worked in the Dubai live industry for over 15 years, has purchased an SSL Live. L300 for rentals and will handle distribution of both the L300 and L500 throughout the UAE.

"Set Square is proud to become SSL's UAE partner for distribution of the SSL Live. L500 and L300 consoles," said Lee. "There has been an increasing buzz about the new SSL Live consoles in the Gulf, and it is exciting that we are now able to showcase these consoles in the region. With the growing live music scene and plans for new venues, it is perfect tim-

ing to introduce SSL Live. Additionally, our having an L300 available for rental in Dubai will make it possible for live engineers and system integrators to experience firsthand the full capabilities of the console. I'm eager for all of the prospective opportunities to educate customers about its great features."

"We were very selective when naming Set Square as the SSL UAE Distributor for live products as we needed a company that could provide potential clients with the very best purchasing experience," says Paul Lindsay, SSL vice president of sales for Middle East. "With Dave's exceptional experience and background in the region, we are certain that we can also offer the superior level of support and training expected by SSL clients. I'm very much looking forward to working with Set Square as we grow the market for SSL Live solutions."

[solid-state-logic.com](http://solid-state-logic.com)

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## Weintraub Wins ISSAC; Chooses P. Mauriat Master-97A

Out of a variety of first prize P. Mauriat saxophones to choose from, ISSAC competition winner Katherine Weintraub chose the new Master-97A.



The ISSAC competition was held in October of 2014, and the first prize included a cash award, a performance on Dan Trueman's next album, and the winner's pick of professional P. Mauriat saxophones.

Weintraub is a performer, educator, and doctoral candidate at the Eastman School of Music. She holds her bachelor and master of music degrees from the University of Michigan, where she studied with Professor Donald Sinta. While a student at Eastman in 2013, she was awarded first-prize in the International William C. Byrd Young Artist competition. The following year, she was invited to perform as a soloist with the Flint Symphony Orchestra and act as clinician for a master class at the Flint Institute of Music.

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

## Zildjian Presents 2014 Dealer Awards



Jerry Smith (Zildjian North American sales manager); Debbie Zildjian; Andy Schlosser (Zildjian VP, Global Sales); Tommy Coombs (American Musical Supply); Mark Sapienza (Zildjian COO); Al Marinaro (Zildjian sales rep.).



Andy Schlosser (Zildjian VP, Global Sales); Matt Duncan (Sweetwater Sound); Debbie Zildjian; Jerry Smith (Zildjian North American sales manager)

Avedis Zildjian Company presented their 2014 "Outstanding Dealer Award" to three top Zildjian dealers at the recent 2015 Winter NAMM show. American Musical Supply, Cascio Interstate Music, and Sweetwater Sound were recognized for their sales achievements in 2014.

Zildjian CEO, Craigie Zildjian, remarked, "Our company saw solid sales growth from 2013 to 2014 thanks to the combined efforts of all our valued dealers. A special thank you goes out to these three dealers who particularly achieved substantial, year-on-year sales growth with our brand." [zildjian.com](http://zildjian.com)



Jerry Smith (Zildjian North American sales manager), Craigie Zildjian; Scott Thayer (Cascio Interstate Music); Debbie Zildjian; Andy Schlosser (Zildjian VP, Global Sales)

## Hosa Names Audio Geer Rep of the Year

Hosa Technology is pleased to announce that it has named Audio Geer as its 2014 Rep of the Year award winner. This year's winner is recognized for exceptional performance with two of the company's core product lines: Hosa Technology and Mogan Microphones. The two awards were presented at one of the company's functions during the recent Winter NAMM Show.

Hosa Technology's Rep of the Year award is for "comprehensive excellence in sales." The company weighs numerous factors as part of its selection criteria, including having surpassed both monthly and yearly sales goals, exhibiting best-in-class communication skills, and regularly opening new market opportunities. The Mogan Microphones Rep of the Year award is focused solely on highest net sales.

Southern CA-based Audio Geer – which represents a variety of manufacturers spanning the MI, Pro Audio, Commercial AV, and Broadcast markets – was represented by company president Alan Geer during the awards presentation. In response to his firm's selection for both the Hosa and



Mogan awards, Geer offered the following comments, "We are so pleased to have won both of these prestigious awards from our friends at Hosa Technology. After many years of working closely together to grow our businesses, it's awesome to be recognized as being more effective now than ever. We are most appreciative of this recognition."

Jonathan Pusey, Hosa's vice president of Sales and Marketing, was equally enthusiastic. "We are delighted to be working with Alan and everyone else at Audio Geer," Pusey said. "I would also like to express my pride in bringing these awards back to SoCal, where we're all based. All of us at Hosa recognize the hard work and effort put forth by Alan's team and for their excellence in every facet of sales, not just the numbers. Their professionalism, enthusiasm, and integrity are impressive and all of us at Hosa look forward to a long and mutually beneficial business partnership. Congratulations to the entire Audio Geer team!"

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

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## Lanita Smith Wins Guitar Center's Singer-Songwriter Contest

Casio America, Inc. is proud to celebrate the winner of the fourth installment of Guitar Center's Singer-Songwriter artist discovery program. Lanita Smith of Memphis, Tenn. competed for the grand prize on Friday, March 6, 2015 at the Guitar Center Singer-Songwriter 4 Grand Finals at the Troubadour in West Hollywood along

with four other talented singer-songwriters. As a sponsor of this program, Casio awarded all five finalists a Casio Privia digital piano to further perfect their musical skills.

"The ability to help foster budding musicians is very important to Casio and we are eager to hear what all of the artists

in the Singer-Songwriter 4 Grand Finals will create using our Privia digital pianos," said Stephen Schmidt, vice president of Casio's electronic musical instrument division. "Guitar Center has done incredible work creating opportunities for aspiring musicians to not only get exposure for their craft, but also to help jump-start their careers. We are extremely excited to have been a part of this event."

# CASIO®

Guitar Center's Singer-Songwriter 4 launched in September 2014 and offers aspiring singer-songwriters across the country the chance to take their careers to the next level. Finalists performed in front of legendary Grammy-winning producer and program judge Don Was for their shot at the grand prize, which included a chance to record a 4-song EP with Was and mentorship from Grammy-winning singer-songwriter Colbie Caillat. Finalists also received a number of various prizes, opportunities, and products from numerous event partners and sponsors.

"Guitar Center's Singer-Songwriter has been supporting undiscovered artists for the past 4 years now, and each year the program gets bigger and the talents gets better. We are so proud to be working with legendary producer Don Was, Grammy-winning artist Colbie Caillat, and the top MI brands to help emerging musicians catch their big break," said Jake Cheung, manager, music marketing & artist relations for Guitar Center.

All five finalists received the Casio PX-350MBK, which is part of Casio's Privia digital piano line and comes equipped with Casio's proprietary AiR (Acoustic and intelligent Resonator) technology. The keyboard features a combination of a new keyboard action and a powerful sound engine to provide an enhanced level of detail, nuance, and expression for a superior grand piano experience.

In addition, Lanita Smith, the Grand Prize Winner, received the Privia Pro PX-5S, a genuine stage piano, advanced MIDI controller, and performance instrument. Also equipped with AiR, the PX-5S delivers acoustic piano sounds.



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

## Chauvet DJ Works Magic with Penn Jillette

As the taller half of the superstar magic team of Penn & Teller, Penn Jillette is a master of illusion, but there was nothing chimerical about the magical lighting effects from Chauvet DJ that illuminated his performance at the Mobile Beat Show.

Rather than "catching bullets," escaping from helium bags or doing any of the other astounding and comedic tricks that have made him and his partner Raymond Teller world famous, Penn showed a more serious side to the Mobile Beat audience, recounting the journey that led him to become half of one of the longest running acts in Las Vegas history. Displaying the unique brand of humor that has made him beloved from Las Vegas to London, he shared his thoughts about music, magic, and the lessons both hold for DJs.

Penn appeared as part of The Entertainment Experience at the Mobile Beat Show in Las Vegas on a stage that was illuminated exclusively by CHAUVET DJ fixtures, including 12 Intimidator Spot 355Z IRC mov-



ing spots, 15 Intimidator Wash Zoom 350 IRC moving fixtures, 4 Intimidator Wave IRC fixtures, two Scorpion Dual aerial effect lasers, 2 Geyser RGB foggers, 4 Slim-PAR Hex 6 IRC LED pars, and 2 Hurricane Haze 3D haze machines.

"It was an honor to have our lights on stage with this legend," said Berenice Chauvet, vice president of Chauvet. "With the rich colors, rapid movements, sharp beams, and intense output, our fixtures provided the right mix of elegance and excitement to the stage and contributed to this being a stellar event."

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

## Kala to Feature Aquila Strings on All Models

Kala Brand Music Co. is now including Aquila strings on all ukuleles in the company's Makala and Ukadelic series. Aquila strings have been standard on the company's Kala ukuleles since 2005.

The Makala Brand is the entry-level ukulele series by Kala, which is now in its tenth year of production. The Makala series includes multi-color dolphin and shark bridge ukuleles, Ukadelic, Mahogany, Makala Packs, and the new Makala Waterman series.

Aquila Corde Armoniche SRL is a manufacturer of fine gut and synthetic musical strings and is based in Vicenza, Italy.

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

 An advertisement for the P. Mauriat PMXT-66R Tenor Saxophone. The main image shows Reggie Padilla, a P. Mauriat Artist, playing the saxophone. He is wearing a dark suit and glasses. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.
 

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[www.pmauriatmusic.com](http://www.pmauriatmusic.com)

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**Reggie Padilla**  
plays PMXT-66R Tenor Saxophone

*Hawaii-Based Saxophonist Reggie Padilla*  
**"They Come And They Go"**  
Available from Pass Out Records

*photo by Aaron Yoshino*

## European Beat

by Ronnie Dungan



### Music Sales Group Acquires Carisch

The Music Sales Group has bought Italian printed music business Carisch from the Monzino Group.

Carisch is an educational music publisher with a history dating back to 1887.

Before the acquisition MSG was already a distributor of the Carisch catalogue, having formed a joint venture in 2013 – Music Sales-Carisch Distribution – to exclusively distribute products throughout Europe, using Music Sales logistics and a combined sales force.



Previously acquired by the Italian Monzino Group in 2002, Carisch currently includes over 3,000 of its own titles in three languages (Italian, Spanish and French) ranging from music methods to local pop sheet music collections and classical titles. The firm also distributes the *Real Musical* catalogue of music books that form the cornerstone of primary music education in Spain.

"This is an important and prestigious acquisition for us and it builds our presence in southern Europe, particularly in Italy, Spain, and France, where Carisch has traditionally been strong," said David Holley, group managing director of Music Sales. "We look forward to working with the Carisch writers and continuing to develop the Carisch brand which we are now in a position to do globally."

[music-sales.com](http://music-sales.com)

### Dealers Out in Force for U.K. Play Day

U.K. trade body, the Music Industries Association, declared its annual Learn to Play Day its most successful to date, with more venues involved than ever.

This year, 129 venues, up more than ten percent from last year, gave more than twelve thousand free lessons, to members of the public, young and old, across the whole of the U.K..

The day also generated a huge amount of media coverage for the U.K. industry. Paul McManus, chief executive of the MIA and industry charity, Music for All, was interviewed on London Live TV, BBC Radio London and Sky Arts filmed Fender at the Royal Festival Hall. *Waitrose* and *Tesco* magazines, *Time Out*, *Parentish*, *Londonist*, and many other events listings featured LTPD as a recommended activity for the weekend.

Venues, including Yamaha Music London, Fender, and ACM, reported lessons on the day as fully booked with waiting lists for people hoping to take part.

Over two hundred families took part in the Bromley Youth Music Trust day, more than 100 children took part in music lessons at the Old Vinyl Factory, and other hugely popular events were Korg at the MK Dons soccer stadium before the kick-off and Spider Music at the Motorpoint Arena in Cardiff, running alongside a Comic Con event. On Sunday March 22nd 2015, Absolute Music in saw eight hundred people visit their store in Bournemouth.

McManus told *MMR*: "By any measure, this was our biggest and most successful Learn To Play Day to date. As always, this was a huge team effort between the shops, venues, suppliers and all our sponsoring partners. We are creating new musicians with the national Learn to Play Day and planning for 2016 is already underway.



"It has been interesting to see the types of venue involved changing and evolving and we've brought in some different venues this year. We're really pleased with the growth, and outside of all the fluffiness of giving away free music lessons, it is about selling more gear at the back end of it and creating more musicians and therefore customers.

"Like any industry initiative it has taken a while to percolate but businesses are realizing that it generates publicity on a different scale to that which they can achieve on their own. Suppliers are also starting to see it as a great way to wave their brands under the noses of the public.

"And, I've made the offer to several other trade associations around the world that, if they would like to know how we do it, it's not rocket science, but we would be happy to help in any way they like."

The initiative, which is only open to MIA members, has also been a useful recruiting tool for the trade body, added McManus. In addition, the association's recently launched Trusted Music Store scheme now has more than 200 dealers sporting the logo in their windows.

[mia.org.uk](http://mia.org.uk)

### Guild Brand Continues Expansion

After freeing itself from Fender following its purchase by Cordoba last year, the Guild guitar brand is continuing to find its own way in the trade with beefed up sales in Germany and Austria.

Dutch-based distributor Gitaarbizz handles the brand in Germany, Austria, and Benelux and has added sales agents to deliver sales in the two German-speaking territories.

Stefan Hettwer and agency Music-

bay, run by Alexander Sauff, will oversee different parts of the two countries. Hettwer oversees the regions South and South West Germany and Austria, while Sauff will be the contact for dealers in the North and East.

He said: "We are delighted to be able to add the Guild Guitars brand to the other well-known manufacturers in our portfolio. We are very excited that we will be able to sell these great instruments."

## Dave Black to Return to IAG U.K.?

*MRR* understands that Dave Black will be on his way back from China to head up IAG's U.K. operation.

Black, currently IAG's global sales chief, will drop into the role vacated by Tim Harris who has moved over to become the firm's financial director, with a replacement being sought for the vacant global sales position. An announcement is expected soon.

Former Peavey national sales manager, Rob Kerr has just joined the firm as pro-audio sales manager following the departure of long-serving Chris Fearn to German-owned audio and lighting company Adam Hall as key account manager.

IAG U.K. director, Tim Harris, commented on the appointment of Kerr, saying: "Following the departure of Chris Fearn to pastures new we are delighted to be joined by a sales professional of the caliber of Rob. We are looking forward to working with Rob to growing our business in all areas of pro audio and working closely with dealers and installers to provide support where needed."

Kerr adds: "I am extremely pleased to be working with a fantastic brand with great heritage that actually originates

from my part of the world (Yorkshire). With an enviable portfolio of existing products and some exciting new products just around the corner, this opportunity represents an exciting challenge to further expand and develop the business in the U.K. and Ireland."

Over at Adam Hall, Fearn's responsibilities will include the development and expansion of the firm's U.K. and Irish business and planning and executing initiatives to create greater market penetration of the company's core brands, LD Systems, Cameo Light, and Palmer.

"I am extremely excited to have the opportunity to work with the Adam Hall team. Having spent the best part of thirteen years supplying the MI, DJ, rental, and installation markets in the U.K. I am looking forward to continuing this with the Adam Hall core brands", says Fearn.



Chris Fearn



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# More Moves at Orange, But No New MD

Following the departure of long-serving MD Damon Waller towards the end of last year, Orange has made further changes to its internal mechanics, with a new head of European sales.

James Deacon has moved up to European sales manager from U.K. sales executive, while Marcus Mills joins the firm as U.K. sales executive.

Deacon has been working with Orange Amplification since 2011 when he joined as an internal U.K. sales executive. Just over a year later he was promoted to U.K. sales executive and now adopts a broader European role, while retaining full responsibility for U.K. sales.

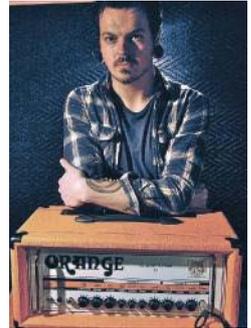
He said: "I am proud to have been offered the European sales manager role for Orange after nearly four years with the company. I'm really looking forward to helping grow the brand even further and ensure we deliver the best service possible to our partners worldwide."

Taking over the U.K. sales executive role, and reporting to James on a day-to-day basis is Marcus Mills. Mills comes to Orange with more than eight years experience in the music industry behind him, four years at the now defunct U.K. retailer Sound Control and four years with PMT, currently the U.K.'s biggest musical instrument retailer.

Cliff Cooper, founder and CEO of Orange Amplification said: "It is with great pleasure we can announce the growth of our European Sales team. With the introduction of Marcus we are



James Deacon



Marcus Mills

increasing our support to all of our U.K. based partners, this will in turn allow James more time to concentrate on his new role. Both of these positions carry a huge weight of responsibility, and we are delighted to have people of the caliber of James and Marcus as part of our great team."

The firm is expected to announce more new appointments in its marketing department shortly, however, it seems in no hurry to appoint a new managing director in the wake of Waller's departure. *MMR* understands that no approaches have been made to anyone regarding the role and it has not been advertised anywhere. Smart money says the firm may look outside of MI to fill what is increasingly becoming a systems management role as Orange continues its expansion in the U.K. and internationally.



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## Trade Regrets

**Layton V. Rawlins** was the founder of Rawlins Piano Company in Southern California and a veteran of the piano industry. Rawlins witnessed many of the biggest changes within the piano business over his 50 plus year career. Rawlins passed away on February 28, 2015 after an eight-month battle with renal cell cancer. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, daughter, Toni, and son, Ray.



On Sunday, March 8, *MMR* received the following from NAMM's Dan Del Fiorentino: *Our dear friend, Lennie DiMuzio, passed away yesterday. Already our industry seems a bit different. Lennie showcased what is most incredible about our industry - characters are allowed to be characters! While conducting business, Lennie was able to be himself, and as a result, his creativity soared. I can't name too many people who had more friends than Lennie. He was special – a treasure.*



**Lennie DiMuzio and Dan Del Fiorentino**

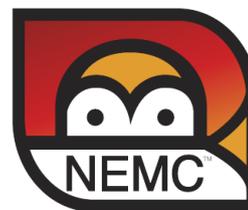
**Fred Dee Hoyt**, 71, passed away February 16, 2015 in Wichita Falls, Texas.

Dee, as he was known, was born in Dodge City, Kansas and attended Ford High School where he was an outstanding athlete (basketball and track) and also played low bass for the band. He attended Fort Hays State College where he continued his interest in music by playing bass guitar for the band The Tornadoes, cutting a record and touring. While making music and pursuing his college degree, he got the "call," like so many others, to put down his instrument and pick up the sales side of the music products business. It started at Hays Music Co. in 1963 where he was hired as guitar manager. This opportunity gave him the experience needed for things to come. Hoyt spent the next 50 years selling instruments, designing new products (guitars, amps, and accessories), building sales forces, and developing marketing strategies for the music industry. His innovations were industry changing and led to unprecedented success for each company he worked for including CMI, CBS, Tokai USA, Yamaha, Samick, and Kanstul Musical Instruments.



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## ON THE MOVE

**Music for All** has added **Kathryn Reinhardt** to its Indianapolis staff as marketing coordinator. Reinhardt joins Music for All having served as a media specialist for several globally recognized public relations firms and with a strong personal background in music.

As marketing coordinator, Reinhardt will provide support to Music for All's marketing and media efforts. Garnering interest from local, regional, and national press, this position's focus is on putting Music for All in the eye of the public and creating awareness of the organization's mission and purpose.

### American Music and Sound (AM&S)

has announced the promotion of **Kris McDougall** to the position of national sales manager, transducer products. McDougall is an accomplished sales professional with nearly a decade of hands-on technical sales experience and an extensive background in studio recording, video production, and audio engineering. McDougall's role will include the support of AM&S network of sales representatives and dealers nationally.



Additionally, AM&S has hired **Kristyn Fryrear** as social media & promotions manager, effective immediately. Fryrear comes to AM&S with seven years experience and multiple awards for her work in journalism and social media marketing. In her new position, Fryrear plans on successfully managing the reputations of individual brands by creating a voice and tone, which will be unique to each client she works with.



### Samick Music Corporation, Inc. (SMC)

has appointed **Mike Johnson** as Western sales manager of the company's Musical Instrument Division. In his new role, Johnson will have the responsibility of managing sales in the Western U.S. and will be directly involved in the development of new products, utilizing over 40 years of experience in the music industry.



Johnson arrives at SMC after recently working as a national sales manager with

Gold Tone. Mike returns to Samick after filling the role as a regional sales manager with the company between 1994 and 2003.

### LOUD Technologies

has announced the appointment of **Sean Humphries** to the position of sales director, APAC Region, and **Craig Lewis** to the position of sales director, U.S. National Accounts.



Lewis comes to LOUD after more than a decade with Music Group, where he held a number of sales and support positions. His career has also included positions with IK Multimedia, Steinberg, and Yamaha.

In his new position, Lewis will oversee national accounts for LOUD's Mackie and Ampeg brands. He will be based out of his office in San Diego, California.

Humphries joins LOUD after several successful years as APAC sales manager for Asia Pacific Music Marketing, where he represented such well-known brands as Native Instruments, Ableton, Universal Audio, Propellerheads, KRK, and Cerwin Vega. His resume also includes stints with Musiclink Australia, where he served as product manager for their Audio and DJ divisions, as well as Moore Music and Der-ringers Music.



In his new position, Humphries will handle sales and support for the entire Asia Pacific region. He will be based in Hong Kong, in close proximity to all key APAC markets.

### Full Compass Systems

has announced that **Michelle Grabel-Komar** has accepted the leadership role of vice president of sales, and will be overseeing the company's vertical sales channels. Grabel-Komar will take advantage of her years of knowledge both within Full Compass and in her industry experience by heading up the Sales Department along with our new Sales Management team.



Grabel-Komar most recently held the title of vice president product planning & procurement, a role where she oversaw the Purchasing, Product Management, and Merchandising departments.

**Legator Musical Inc.** has announced the appointment of **Mr. Jose Ferro** as the company's new vice president.

"Mr. Ferro has an extensive well-known

background in the wholesale, retail, and global market sales that Legator has been striving for," says Kennon Yi, president of Legator. "Mr. Ferro brings with him a wealth of experience spanning over 30 years dating back from his days on the famed 48th Street back in New York; Jose Ferro brings very important new perspectives and talents to Legator's ongoing quest to build brand exposure and continue with the excellence of quality, service, and dedication that we have always provided for our consumers, and dealers. We are excited and happy to have him join our team."

Mr. Ferro's duties will include the overseeing of all wholesale and global distribution channels along with branding and developing of new models for 2015.

### Roland Corporation U.S.

has announced three new personnel appointments that align with the company's current strategic business plan.

**Steve Spak** joins the Roland U.S. team as district sales manager (DSM) for the Mid-Atlantic District, spanning from New York City to Washington, D.C.



Spak comes to Roland most recently from KMC Music Inc., where he was a respected sales team member and consistent top performer. In his new role, he will develop and maintain dealer relationships and sales programs, offer dealer resources in support of Roland products, strategy and objectives, and provide product training, merchandising and promotions at the retail level.

**Daniel Lee** comes on board as local marketing specialist. Lee will augment Roland's marketing efforts to effectively partner with the dealer community as part of their local marketing initiative. An M.I. industry expert, he brings to Roland many years of experience in the local marketing field, having served as local & retail marketing administrator during his tenure at Guitar Center.



**Ruby BC** (a.k.a. Ruby Biloskirka-Conley) also joins as social media and content specialist. She comes to Roland with a background in the music and entertainment business as a keyboard instructor at Musician's Institute (Hollywood), a touring keyboard player for the *American Idol* band, and also a keyboard clinician for Roland U.S.





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## Drum Workshop's Chris Lombardi

by Christian Wissmuller

One of the more significant events in the world of MI in 2015 was the announcement in early January that Fender's subsidiary, KMC Music, had sold its drum and percussion brands – Gretsch Drums, LP, Toca, KAT, and Gibraltar – as well as the Ovation guitar brand and exclusive U.S. distribution rights for Sabian Cymbals, to Drum Workshop, Inc.

*MMR* recently spoke with DW's president and CEO, Chris Lombardi, about the acquisition, the recent development which finds Sabian now selling direct to U.S. retailers, and Drum Workshop's plans for the future.

**Let's talk a little about DW's recent acquisition of KMC Music's percussion brands, as well as Ovation guitars.**

**Chris Lombardi:** Yes, it's been incredibly challenging, but also very exciting! We acquired a lot of great brands that I still can't believe we had the opportunity to purchase. I really feel that the story is not that we bought these brands, but that Fender wanted to sell them.

**That's a good point. What was the catalyst behind the move?**

The catalyst was that we knew they are great products, but I feel like they were a small part of a much bigger enterprise. Therefore, in some cases, it seemed that the brands didn't get the maximum opportunity to succeed.

**Interesting. How long had the deal been in negotiation?**

I first heard that Fender wanted to sell some, or all, of KMC before the Frankfurt Fair in 2014, so I've been working on it since then.

**Of the brands involved, was there one in particular that was most appealing to Drum Workshop?**

I think all of these brands have incredible history and potential. The common link, to me, with these products is that they are all great, prominent, American lines that I've had an opportunity to grow up with.



Chris Lombardi

**Part of the initial deal involved your company acquiring the U.S. distribution rights for Sabian cymbals. In early March, Sabian announced that it would be selling direct to retailers in the U.S. going forward. Was this disappointing to you, or was it a development you knew was on the horizon?**

I think it's fair to say that it was surprising. However, I knew that it was a possibility and accounted for that in my negotiations. I truly feel that we could have done a great job for Sabian, as we are putting together an incredible percussion-centric sales force, but either way, I wish Andy and the entire Sabian company good luck in all of their endeavors.

**DW appointed GEWA as the European distribution partner for the recently acquired brands. Can you discuss the reasoning behind the move and DW's history with GEWA?**

GEWA has been an incredible partner with DW throughout the years and we are very fortunate to be able to work with them on a broader scale. GEWA has made substantial investments into its in-



A DW craftsman assembling a kick drum.

frastructure to support Europe as a whole, rather than as individual countries. I believe, going forward, that all businesses will have to look for partners in Europe that have a similar long-term mission.

#### What's the current U.S. distribution model for the newly purchased brands?

Domestically, Drum Workshop will be the primary distributor for all of its percussion brands, with our own captive internal and external sales and customer service departments. Additionally, we'll be supported by domestic distributors to handle the stores that we don't have the ability to focus on, directly. Essentially, it's the same model we've used for years for DW hardware and PDP. For Ovation, we are potentially going to use independent outside sales representatives because we want to keep that brand separated from our percussion-oriented sales team.

#### Ovation sticks out, of course, as something of the "odd duck" amongst all the brands and might, at first glance, seem like a strange fit for DW. What are your plans for Ovation Guitars?

Initially, Ovation wasn't part of the brands that Fender/KMC was interested in selling. However, for me, growing up with Ovation and knowing the history of KMC, it was a name that I felt very strongly about. We're still working to figure out the specifics for the brand, and we have a lot of great ideas that have come from both internal and external advocates of the product.

#### Any other news or upcoming developments at DW that you'd like to share with our readers?

DW is predicated on innovation and furthering the art of drumming. From day one, our mission statement has dictated that we solve problems for drummers. It's at the core of everything we do at Drum Workshop. We're thrilled to

bring this sensibility to the brands that we've acquired. That said, we have a myriad of new product offerings on the drawing board across all of our brands. For example, we have a new line of LP

"street percussion" called RAW that's debuting in Frankfurt. We'll also be launching a new DW Collector's Series Custom Shop option and a brand new electronic set-up under the KAT banner. I think that drummers will appreciate the wide variety of products that we'll be debuting in the coming months.

#### A busy year! Speaking of, what are your expectations – both for Drum Workshop and the market, in general – for the coming months?

We're working on integration, we're working on understanding all of our new opportunities, we're working on fixing things that were previously broken, and we're working on new product development. **MMA**

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Juan Orozco at the Fluorocarbon Strings:

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# Is the Price RIGHT?



## MI Suppliers Confront the Fiscal Benefits and Challenges of “Going Green”

By Bryan Reesman

**D**o music instrument manufacturers sacrifice quality and profits by going green? This is a two-pronged question that is becoming imperative as more and more companies seek to become environmentally friendly with the products that they make and sell – especially now that recyclable and reusable materials are more commonplace.

“It does seem like the industry is making a push towards the green movement, which we think is great,” says Trevor Franchi, operations manager for Ernie Ball’s guitar and bass division, Music Man. “We have a few direct competitors who have launched significant marketing campaigns highlighting some of their efforts.” He offers two reasons why a green choice is not always logical for business: It is cost prohibitive and, as far as raw materials, one generally pays more for recycled materials and sustainably harvested woods.

“The other main reason is we have found no substitute for the tonal characteristics that we are looking for, yet,” admits Franchi. “One of our mantras here at Ernie Ball/Music Man is ‘We make tools for artists.’ Sacrificing quality is not an option. This is probably the biggest hurdle for eco-friendly options in our industry.” He adds that a more immediate eco-friendly option “is to focus on sustainable harvesting practices by some of our suppliers and re-purposing as much scrap as possible.”

“I think the biggest issue is materials from environmentally sustainable resources,” concurs Emmanuel Tonnelier, general manager of reed and mouthpiece manufacturer Vandoren. “For us, we grow most of our cane and so it’s easy for us to say, but for clarinets, guitars, pianos, and other natural-based products, I think this will be the biggest challenge.”

Customers are also a part of the environmental equation. Brian Vance, director of product management for D’Addario, says that his company has done some research into consumers’ environmental consciousness. While he notes that in most cases they will probably focus on features, brand, or price, for some the green side is a selling point. “It’s not like we’re saving a ton of money

by being environmentally conscious – a lot of times it costs more money to do that – but it is about aligning yourself with the sentiment and the spirit of your customer,” says Vance. “Being environmentally responsible doesn’t hurt anybody.”

Vance observes that some of their competitors have gone the opposite way, such as with packaging that resembles potato chip bags. “That stuff is not recyclable at your municipal recycling,” he says. “In some cases, there is no way to recycle it because they’re laminating different types of foil together, and once you laminate two materials like that together you generally can’t recycle it. That’s creating a lot of garbage that our industry is putting out there, and we’re trying to work around that. We’ve got a couple other recycling programs that are coming by the end of the year, even to take it to another level on the string side.”

Shaun Lee, chief product officer for Bohemian Guitars, sees change in the wind, even though he believes “the industry is pretty antiquated, overall. You’re coming across some brands now that are trying to use old-growth woods and reclaimed woods, which is nice to see. For the most part, though, I think there’s still this overarching idea that you have to have these expensive toned woods, and that you can’t use reclaimed or upcycled products to get a quality instrument. I think we’re proving that’s not the case.” His brother Adam, the company’s co-founder/CEO, sees a new take on traditional materials like carbon fiber and 3D printing and more openness to playing traditional with guitar design.

“We’ve figured out how we can use as many reclaimed and up-cycled products as possible and still maintain a competitive price, which is quite a hefty amount below the market average,” says Shaun Lee. “If you’re smart about it, take your time, and really try to make it work, there are always creative ways to keep your price points sound, so that everybody can afford your product.”

That sounds like the key to a greener future for the industry.

For the 2015 installment of our annual “Green Issue,” *MMR* spoke with just a few of the growing number of MI suppliers who are embracing environmentally sound business practices.

### Tycoon Percussion

According to Ivy Yu, general manager of Tycoon Percussion, the Siam Oak wood that makes up 80-90 percent of their drums is sustainably harvested from plantations in Thailand. "All of these are very carefully controlled forests," she explains. "There is no deforestation anywhere. With our cajóns, we do experiment a little bit with different types of exotic woods, but even with those we do make sure that they do come from environmentally controlled forests."

The Thailand-based Tycoon, which has a California office, has its own factory, which allows them to oversee recycling and reuse of their materials. According to Yu, the sawdust generated from drum creation is gathered daily, taken to processing mills, and turned into fuel for textile factories in Thailand. Leftover rawhide pieces from drumheads are given to manufacturing plants for dog toys. Their biggest leftover, plywood, is used to produce small instruments like shakers that are donated to Thai schools with impoverished children.

"Every time something happens in the factory where we think it's not being utilized in the best way that it can be, we will sit down and talk about different ways to be smarter about sustainability," explains Yu. "Every little thing that happens in our factory we take into consideration, so all the wood, all the skin heads, all the sawdust, everything is already being shipped off somewhere else or being renewed somehow. When we first started using exotic woods in the cajones, that was a big worry for us because you want to be different and want to be unique in the market and give people the chance to play [with] different sounds and different looks, but not at the price of the values that we've held for so long. We make sure that wherever we source the cajones that they come from super environmentally controlled forests. We would never cause deforestation anywhere in the world."



A craftsman at work in Tycoon's Thailand facility.

### Bohemian Guitars

Since launching their products with a Kickstarter campaign in January 2013, Bohemian Guitars are already available at Urban Outfitters and are coming to Sam Ash. Brothers Adam and Shaun Lee, co-founder/CEO and chief product officer respectively, offer a newer spin on traditional instruments by building guitars out of oil and shell cans, an idea inspired by street musicians in their hometown of Johannesburg,

South Africa, making striking instruments out of trash.

"We realized that in the process of making these guitars out of oil cans that it actually produces a really rich sound, so using reclaimed materials – whether it's woods or oil cans – is really important to everything we do," states Adam. "We've also started doing a lot of manufacturing where we are melting down scrap metals and forming our own bodies now, and the goal is to have bodies formed out of 100

percent reclaimed metal. The processes aren't necessarily in place right now, but we are doing our best to use as much as possible."

The company has made mandolins, basses, and ukuleles on a custom level, and they hope to expand those product lines this year. They also hope to release "everything from guitar straps made out of seatbelts to hopefully an amplifier of some kind with a metal body made out of recycled metals or a guitar with a Bluetooth amp built into it," says Shaun.

"Later this year, we're going to be launching an electric lunchbox ukulele, which is modeled after those metal lunch boxes," adds Adam. "It's going to have a built-in amplifier with eight hours of rechargeable battery life. That's something that we'll be launching on Indiegogo. It's really an instrument for someone who is on the go. It's very rugged, versatile, lightweight, and easy to transport."

Adam is based in San Francisco, while Shaun is overseeing their Atlanta facility, where they plan to build necks and internal structures from scratch using reclaimed woods, "hopefully with some sort of story behind them, whether it's Civil War related or whatever," explains Shaun. "We'd love to start doing that. Then going to get back into the vintage cans, those old Castrol and Shell cans. We also want to develop a program where people send us their old instruments, and we use those parts and up-cycle them and reclaim them for our own instruments, then give them some sort of a store credit."

The company plants trees for every guitar they sell to subsidize their use of new materials and have partnered with Trees For The Future, which plants trees in developing communities in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, allowing for residents to live off them and make a living off of them. Bohemian Guitars wants to increase such initiatives throughout the year.





### MJC Ironworks

Mike Connolly's three-year old guitar string company is "definitely green all the way," he declares. "We're the only company that has tins. We don't use envelopes at all. We just use little paper

tags to identify the strings. It turns back into dirt. You're not going to get away from the properties of ink. Some people use vegetable oil, if you can afford that kind of stuff. Tin is metal. There's nothing in there that isn't going to turn back into dirt."

RNPROTECTS is a system that MJC Ironworks uses to protect its strings. "I have a treatment in there that's a naturally occurring anti-corrosion inhibitor that emits a vapor that is charged by a static charge," explains Connolly. "I can put this tin and tape it to the side of a ship and ship it back and forth to Europe to where you couldn't even recognize the outside of it, and you could open it up and [the strings] will be as fresh as the day they were made. There are other companies that use bags and things like that, but I don't know how that stuff breaks down environmentally."

MJC Ironworks' next product in the RNPROTECTS line – which in the future should include other instruments like horns and keyboards and anything electronic like amps and mixers – a 1" x 1" square that musicians can toss in their instrument cases. "So you take your bass out, play it, and it wears off, and as soon as you put it back in the case and close the case, a static charge occurs and that vapor sticks to every-

thing metal," states Connolly. "It'll even permeate the pots. They use this stuff in government computers and space shuttles. They use it in thicker compounds to coat the strands of suspension bridges for its anti-corrosion properties. This little foam piece will last up to two years."

### D'Addario: Fretted and ProMark

Whether through their string, percussion, or woodwinds brands, Jim D'Addario and his company steadfastly remain green friendly. For over two decades, his company has sought to improve their packaging and be environmentally conscious. Back in the '90s, "strings were packaged in clear PVC pouches with a little fold over insert, and inside there you had six individual pieces of paper where all the strings fit in," recalls Brian Vance, director of product management for D'Addario. "You had eight pieces of packaging in there."

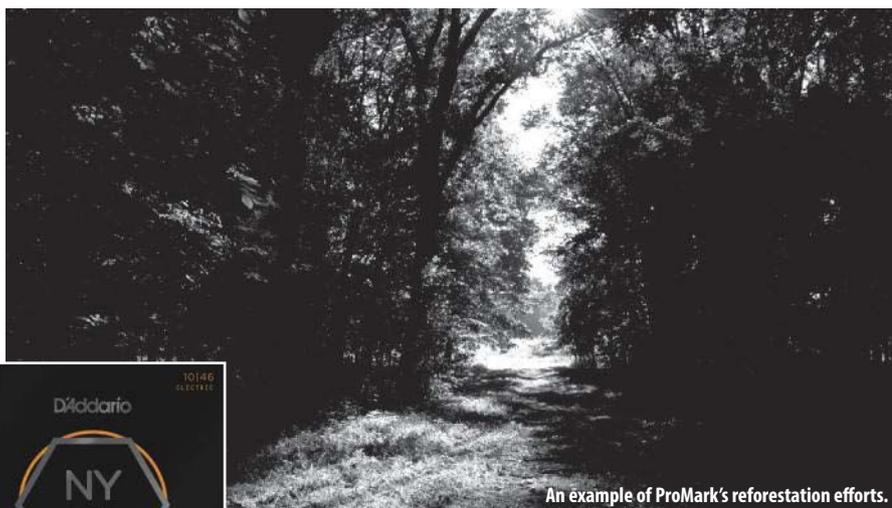
Inspired by companies packaging products without the PVC pouch, and the color ball end idea from a string company called Nashville Straits that they used to supply, D'Addario Fretted has gradually moved even the most rigid consumers (often through discounted pricing) from the old packaging to their newer packaging, which is a Vapor Corrosion Inhibitor (VCI) bag made of recyclable plastic. The packaging emits rust-inhibiting vapor molecules to protect strings from oxidation.

"A lot of the bluegrass instruments like banjo and oud have bends instead of ball ends and we never really had a way to identify the strings, but by the end of this year we will be 100 percent environmental friendly," says Vance. "We've been at about 80 to 90 percent with all of the environmental packages."

Vance says D'Addario wants to bring more awareness of the impact that printing 11 million sets of strings a year can have on the environment. He notes that while many of his industry counterparts are more socially conscious, others are going the other way, especially in manufacturing via China. His company's Planet Waves accessory arm stopped making unrecyclable blister packs years ago and has now "migrated to a blister card with just some plastic straps that hold the product in. We can't do that with every product, but with everything we can we're trying return to eliminate any plastic component in the packaging."

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An example of ProMark's reforestation efforts.



Two-thirds of Planet Waves accessories are made in America,

which gives the company more control. "We don't do any more clamshells and nothing in a blister pack except for a few things that are in a heat-sealed blister on a card," says Vance. "Another thing we're getting into now is all the recycled materials and repurposed materials that you can use for packaging."

On the ProMark side, D'Addario's drumstick division has started a program called, "Play. Plant. Preserve.," whereby they plant five trees for every one they use for making drumsticks, which adds up to an abundance trees. "Making drumsticks is super inefficient in that we can only use about 15 percent of the tree," explains Nick Gordon, percussion product manager for D'Addario. "We're the only one in the industry that has their own sawmill – we're able to completely utilize the entire tree and sell off the rest of the tree to furniture companies, to garden stores for bark, and essentially use every single piece of it, which is amazing. Play. Plant. Preserve. is a major initiative where we work with the Tennessee Board of Agriculture – that's where our sawmill is located and where all the hickory trees are – and they basically target farms that are locationally appropriate for hickory and hardwood trees. They help us find the farms, we buy the seedlings, and those seedlings are made available for free to all the farms that plant hickory. It's been a really successful program and a prototype that the Tennessee Board of Agricultural is working on extending to other industries."

Gordon adds that ProMark is the only drumstick company he knows of that is doing reforestation and the only company that owns a sawmill. "Having our own sawmill gives us the opportunity to extend our environmental practices all the way to the very beginning of the supply chain," he observes. The company is building a second sawmill from the ground up that will be double the size of its current one. "In doing so it will have even less waste. As far as I know, we're doing the best of all of our competitors."

### Music Man/Ernie Ball

"For the past four or five years Music Man/Ernie Ball has made huge strides towards energy conservation," says Trevor Franchi, the company's manufacturing operations analyst. "Since 2010, we've reduced usage by almost 35 percent. There are two sides to this movement. One is selfish. Going green does cost some money upfront, but in the long run it saves money. The other is doing the right thing by the environment."

California's notorious rolling blackouts were one of the factors inspiring changes at the instrument manufacturer, including replacing most of their lighting with LED or high efficiency fixtures. "We've modified and/or replaced some of our existing manufacturing equipment to be more energy wise," says Franchi. "We've diverted as many operations as possible to the off-hours when energy consumption is less taxing on the utility provider. This has been done through automation and crafty scheduling. These projects are awesome, challenging, and extremely rewarding. Because of the focus on energy, we now manufacture our products more intelligently than we did in the past. The environment and our bottom line both benefit from this."

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## Note From Lora

# A Holiday for Music! Celebrate Make Music Day on June 21

The first time I experienced Make Music Day, held annually on June 21, it was a blistering 98-degree summer day in New York City. I'd drummed with prisoners at Rikers Island, danced through a sea of Yamaha keyboards in Greenwich Village, seen bands of every genre play pages of Beck's "Song Reader," banged a gong in Herald Square and even played a (Hohner-donated) harmonica with then-Mayor Bloomberg in Central Park.

At five o'clock that day standing in the middle of Union Square with sore feet and a big smile, I watched as hundreds of guitar players poured from every corner. They emerged from subways and hopped out of cabs with guitars in hand. Despite the heat, the traffic and the many diversions that New York offers, these people decided to make the effort because it was Make Music Day. This was the day to come together and play.

NAMM members often ask us about creating a day when there's an opportunity to connect with new customers and create local news coverage about music. What I witnessed at a handful of New York's 1,000+ public events that day proved that we already have one. It's Make Music Day!

On June 21, more than 600 cities around the world will celebrate the summer solstice with music. Some of the events

are concerts where people listen to music, but increasingly they are hands-on events where people of all skill levels can join the original social network: playing music. Make Music Day is open to everyone, brought to life by passionate music makers (like you!) in parks, stores and other gathering places worldwide.

NAMM Foundation partners with the Make Music Alliance to create hands-on Mass Appeal events, designed to bring musicians and aspiring musicians together, often for the first time. Through this partnership, we'd like to help you create everything from a uke or drum circle in your store, to a creative headline-generating event in a Make Music city.

Are you ready to connect with more music makers? Prepare now to join the global celebration. It's our holiday. It needs your music. Mark your calendar for Make Music Day on Sunday, June 21.

I look forward to seeing you out there!

**LORA BODMER**  
Director of Public Relations and Social Media  
[lorab@namm.org](mailto:lorab@namm.org)



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“Going green does cost some money upfront, but in the long run it saves money.”

– Trevor Franchi,  
Ernie Ball/Music Man

Droughts are another major California concern, and Music Man has replaced some of their existing faucets and installed waterless urinals. Franchi estimates they have reduced over 400 gallons per production day.

Music Man/Ernie Ball has changed many of their packaging to recycled paper, and their engineering team regularly experiments with eco-friendly wood options. “In the instrument world there are only so many woods that give us the right tonal qualities,” says Franchi. “Wood chips are donated to local nurseries to use, and end cuts are donated to schools and other local manufacturers. When painting, VOCs [volatile organic compounds] are a concern. In the past five years, we’ve reduced our VOCs per instrument by over 30 percent. This has been done by material changes and more intelli-



Trevor Franchi on the Music Man factory floor.

gent manufacturing processes. Automation has allowed us to have more control of our processes, gaining better transfer efficiency which equates to less material usage. Another example of a win for us and a win for the environment.”

The company is close to installing a solar energy system that will offset 95 percent of its energy consumption. “We are constantly experimenting with finishes and woods that are eco-friendly and will continue to do so even after we find the perfect combination,” adds Franchi. “We are dealing more and more with wood suppliers who practice sustainable harvesting practices. A lot of these measures do not make sense with a short-term vision. The cost to implement is prohibitive and the environmental impact is not as tangible as most people want. But long term, we know it’s necessary and if nothing else, it’s the right thing to do.”

**Vandoren**

In creating its woodwind and brass reeds, mouthpieces, and accessories, French company Vandoren uses cane that is a 100 percent natural plant, according to general manager Emmanuel Tonnelier. They harvest all their own cane in the Mediterranean basin, but not all of it is cultivated; some of it is wild cane. “We use no fertilizer or pesticide during its growth and no chemical components during its transformation into reeds,” he says. “Any leftover cane resulting from reed manufacturing is completely reused as either compost in our plantations or fuel for the boiler that heats our factory.”

Tonnelier states that no other energy source is necessary for heating. The company’s high performance boiler was installed in 2006 and only gives off water vapor and CO<sup>2</sup> into the atmosphere. He stresses that because the CO<sup>2</sup> exhaust is of plant not fossil origin that it does contribute to the greenhouse effect. “The quantity evacuated during combustion is, in fact, completely compensated for by the quantity of atmospheric CO<sup>2</sup> absorbed by the plant during its two-year growth,” explains Tonnelier.

Vandoren is very concerned with environmentally friendly packaging. Their reed protector is made from 100 percent recyclable polypropylene and bears the triangular PP5 mark. “The Flow-Pack we use is a recoverable packaging in the form of energy recovery – the film has a high calorific ra-

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tio in incineration," explains Tonnelier. "The choice of our supplier was determined not only by their ability to meet our technical demands linked to Flow Pack performance in protecting the reed, but also with a regard for ecological considerations. The supplier of the film is an ISO 14001 certified company concerned with environmental management. Our cellophane on the outside of the box is of a very common type made from polypropylene. The thickness of the film we use effectively limits waste volume in comparison with other packaging solutions like airtight boxes, tubs, or other procedures for maintaining hygrometry."

MMR



Vandoren's reeds are 100-percent natural.

# Ventura

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# MI Retailers Give Environmentally Sound Business Practices the (Green) Thumbs Up

By Christian Wissmuller

**R**etailers responded in great number and with enthusiasm to this month's survey on the topic of "going green" and its impact within the world of MI.

As environmental issues are inexorably linked with politics and policy, some responses were fairly heated. Many went into great detail explaining the importance of adopting eco-friendly procedures and reducing one's carbon footprint, but a few found the very subject of this poll to be irrelevant to musical instrument retailers and suppliers – and perhaps even offensive. "If people want environmental news they can go watch CNN," one participant suggested. "Let's get the music trade magazines to stick to what's actually important: dealers, manufacturers and trends!"

A strongly held opinion, to be sure, but the metrics place such sentiment squarely in the minority: With a combined 81.2 percent of dealers describing an MI supplier's involvement in "green" policies as being either "very important" or "somewhat important" when deciding whether to do business with that company, it's clear that this topic is "actually important." **MMR**

## Have you taken any steps to reduce your own store's carbon footprint? If so, what?

*"All statements are sent via email. We have recently changed all of our fixtures to energy efficient LED bulbs. We are currently working on going paperless with all contracts and emailing receipts."*

**Matt Dixon**  
Playground Music Center  
Fort Walton Beach, Fla.

*"We recycle all cardboard, paper, glass, and plastics marked No's 1-5. We turn off any electrical appliances not being used (we don't leave display sound equipment, electric pianos, et cetera turned on unless they are being demonstrated to a customer). When we had to purchase a new company delivery van we bought a fuel-injected diesel. It cost more than petrol, but is cleaner, more efficient, and emits less greenhouse gases. We shred all our old invoices/receipts and give them to people to recycle into their compost heaps. Where possible we now try to use LED lights instead of traditional globes and bulbs."*



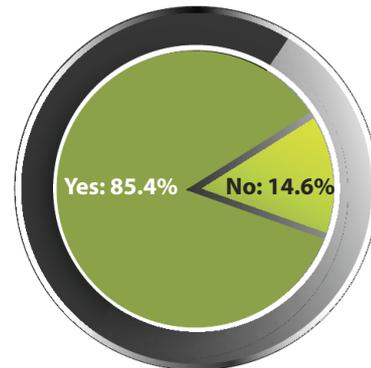
**Keith Broomfield**  
Magpie Music  
Bega NSW  
Australia

*"[We are] located on various public transportation options (train, bus hub, et cetera), we campaigned and finally got recycling for our building complex, we are using super-efficient lighting, and used building materials in recent remodel to reduce ongoing carbon footprint. Generally [we] try to be sensible and as environmentally responsible as practical. Our rental instruments are from VIR, probably the most 'green' provider."*

**Alice Alviani**  
Family Piano Co.  
Waukegan, Ill.

*"We recently partnered with PG&E and California Lighting Technology Center to upgrade our showroom lighting, and now have a state-of-the-art, computer controlled all-LED system that utilizes: Daylight Harvesting (varying showroom lighting levels based on the amount of sunlight*

## Do you consider enacting environmentally responsible business practices to be an important issue?



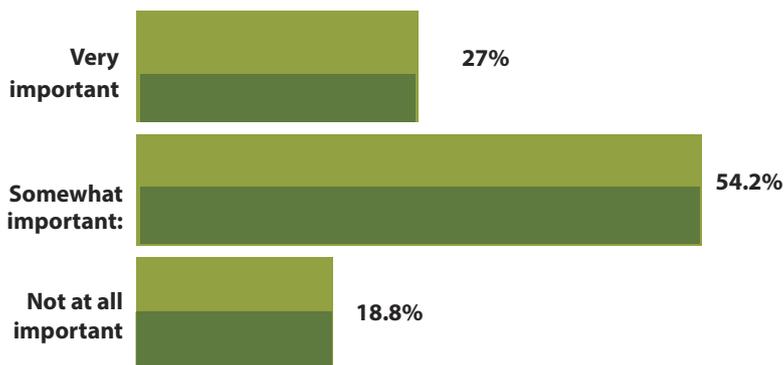
*coming in through windows); Occupancy Sensors (to lower or even turn off light levels in areas of the store when they are unoccupied); Scheduling (to turn lights on and off automatically with our business hours); and fixture-specific dimming to allow raising or lowering the light level of individual lamps as needed to illuminate dark areas of the store without over-lighting other areas. We have also switched to paper-free billing and online payments with manufacturers who offer these services, installed water-efficient components on our bathroom and shop fixtures, and encourage all of our employees to bicycle to work (We are located in downtown Davis, The Bicycle Capital of America). Our main signage is backlit, but only turns on once available daylight drops below a certain level."*

**Jeff Simons**  
Watermelon Music  
Davis, Calif.

*"We recycle and reuse everything we possibly can. We can't compost, because it's not readily available, but are working on it. Otherwise, we recycle all plastic, cardboard, glass, and metals. We even try really hard to not send things back to manufacturers (RMAs) because it burns twice the fuel, then they're stuck with the problem gizmo. We have installed an Energy Star compliant 'green' spray foam roof that delivers R12 to our exterior envelope. We installed 30kW of TenK Photovoltaic Solar Panels on our roof to generate our electricity. We retrofit a new storefront on the front of the shop two years ago, employing Low-E glass that has cut our heating and cooling by almost a third! We replaced all lighting in the building with compact LED – going from 80-watt halogen to 13-watt compact florescent to 10-watt compact LED. We even retrofit our T8s and are working on the very last T12s (6). We turn things off, close doors, and count on our NEST to control our HVAC to the best of its ability. We change out furnace/AC filters monthly, too. It's not just green; it's fiscally responsible."*

**Andrew Bell**  
Twin Town Guitars  
Minneapolis, Minn.

When dealing with MI suppliers and other service providers, how important do you consider it to be that those organizations are adopting "green" practices within their own businesses and product manufacture?



*"Adopting a green approach is similar to voting in an election, in that no one person will change the course of history, yet the outcome is the result of the sum total of each and every one of the individuals participating."*

**Nick Rail**  
Nick Rail Music  
Santa Barbara, Calif.

*"It's a bit ridiculous to talk about carbon footprints when China is the world's largest, most obnoxious polluter."*

**Anthony Mantova**  
Mantova's Two Street Music  
Eureka, Calif.

*"Things to look for: green materials used to make the product; green processes in the manufacture of the product; and green packaging materials in packaging and shipping the product. I like to see the packaging for products to be minimal and what there is should be recycled/recyclable."*

**Richard Frankel**  
Musical Offerings LLC  
Derby, Kans.

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*"Manufacturers should try to use biodegradable and recyclable packing materials, sustainable woods, and less environmentally harmful finishes. Also, widespread use of e-mailed rather than paper invoices, et cetera."*

**Claire Petsch**  
Maple Street Guitars  
Atlanta, Ga.

*"I have noticed many companies using excessive shipping and packing to send things like catalogs or a set of strings that didn't make the initial order. This is a waste all the way around."*

**Dustin Bryant**  
Planet Woodstock  
Kingston, N.Y.

*"I believe retailers and manufacturers could all benefit from sending PDFs or other electronic forms of shipment manifests, et cetera when shipping product. Nine out of ten stores do not file [those documents] and have no use for them. They tend to be immediately recycled or disposed of."*

**Tyler Yager**  
Sounds Cheap Music  
Pleasant Hill, Mo.

*"As far as this topic goes, I would like to remind people that this issue should not be an issue of politics. It is about doing the right thing and creating a better world for*

*everyone! One group of people is trying to save the Earth. The other group of people is trying to say that there is not a problem, even though you would have to be blind not to see it and it goes against the overwhelming consensus of 99 percent of the scientific community. The remaining one percent of scientists is probably paid off by companies that have a lot to lose should green initiatives actually gain momentum. Oil companies, coal companies, et cetera pay the few bad scientists without any scruples to say what they want them to say. Either that, or they lose their easy money. I have also been in debates with deniers who say that scientists do not know what they are talking about. To this pathetic argument I respond by saying that that is like a person who knows absolutely nothing about PA telling someone who has spent their entire life studying and learning about PA, running live events day in and day out for years and years, that that PA master knows nothing about PA. Would you rather get your advice about PA from a seasoned master with a lifetime of experience or from an idiot who doesn't even know what an XLR cable is?"*

**Aaron Bunn**  
PC Sound  
Greenville, N.C.

*"Environmentalists have cost the consumer billions of dollars over the last 40 years via government regulations and court rulings. The latest scheme is so-called man-made global warming. We never seem to hear about the thou-*

*sands of scientists with Ph.Ds that think it is a fraud via the media. How about a 'fair and balanced debate?'"*

**Jim Hallwyler**  
J&K Keyboards  
Eugene, Ore.

*"I feel like as an industry we need to embrace green practices. We are launching a guitar line that is made in our hometown, and uses local materials. There is far too much coming across the pond, and the only 'green' that covers is some corporate guy with a tie in this industry."*

**Aaron Rossmiller**  
Monument Music  
Sheboygan, Wis.

*"Good environmental business practices are not only the responsible thing to do, but with creativity manufactures can cut costs through more efficient packaging, and create amazing instruments. Just look at Taylor (using all ebony, not just 'black' ebony), and DW Drums who uses reclaimed logs and stumps to make beautiful instruments! On a smaller scale it can be as simple as just investing in more power efficient machinery or recycling packaging materials."*

**Matt Duncan**  
Sweetwater Sound, Inc.  
Fort Wayne, Ind.

**MMR**  
MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

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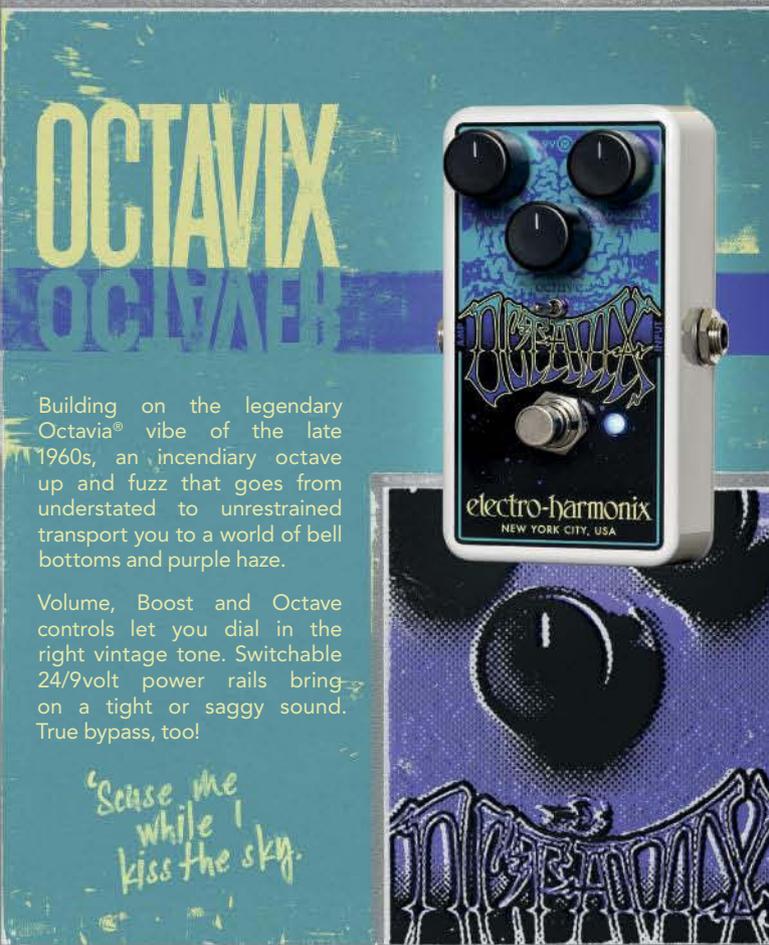
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**ESP Guitars**  
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**40**  
 YEARS

From a vintage reproduction shop in Tokyo to a mass-market distributor in over 50 countries, ESP looks back on 40 years in the business

By Paige Tutt

**I**n the 1970s, Japan had the world's third-largest gross national product. The country was experiencing an economic boom, driven by an increase in exports. Right around this time, Hisatake Shibuya was opening his shop, Electric Sound Products, or ESP as we now know it. "For the company's first 10 years, starting in 1975, ESP was only involved in the domestic Japanese market, starting with a single guitar shop and developing as a parts company and maker of mostly vintage reproduction models," says Matt Masciandaro, current president and CEO of ESP. In the mid to late 1980s, an increase in domestic demand drove the Japanese economy forward. By this time, ESP had already begun the process of introducing their replacement parts into the U.S.

Masciandaro joined the ESP team in the late 1980s. "I started with ESP in 1987, right after the first overseas division opened in New York City," he says. "Those vintage-style models soon began changing into different instruments that were unique and innovative in design and style. Many professional artists took notice, and word began to spread that ESP was the place to go to get a custom guitar built exactly how you wanted it, with the quality you need. During those early years, we focused exclusively on the high-end and custom shop market, which still remains an essential part of our business to this day."

Jump ahead a little bit to around 1995, when ESP introduced the LTD line, which offered mid-priced and more affordable versions of what Masciandaro calls "tried and true ESP designs." Skip ahead again to 2014, when ESP opened its first-ever U.S. production facility with the opening of ESP USA in North Hollywood. Even more recently, in February of 2015, ESP be-

came the exclusive U.S. distributor of Takamine. "We now sell ESP and LTD Instruments in over 50 countries around the world," says Masciandaro. "So from small beginnings in Tokyo to mass-market distribution in over 50 countries, ESP has grown and now celebrates 40 years in the industry."

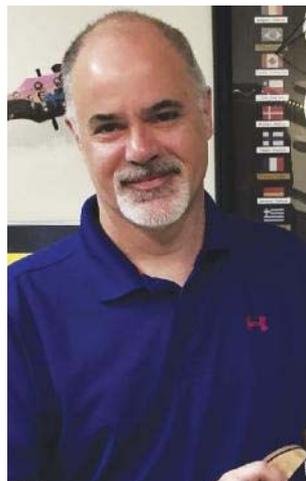
A commitment to high quality product has carried over from the initial ESP shop in Tokyo to the ESP of today. "As a company that started four decades ago as a group of guitar craftsmen who wanted to build better guitars, that desire to make the highest quality instruments we can is the underlying theme to how we approach our global business every day," says Jeff Moore, ESP senior vice president. "We simply do our best to create, build, and sell the best electric

guitars and basses we know how to make. And I believe our loyal artist and customer base is proof that we have succeeded in that quest. That being said, we still strive to keep up with the challenges of the constantly changing retail landscape, so we work hard to keep the brand relevant to our dealers and consumers. Having great products isn't solely enough to be successful today; it takes understanding the dealers' and consumers' needs, listening, and then executing a plan to deliver the whole package. We want to make it easy to do business with ESP!"

One way some companies aim to "keep their brand relevant" is by revamping their NAMM Show display – something ESP happened to do this year. "We did something very special this year at NAMM," says Masciandaro. "In addition to the usual product display, we showed over 80 guitars and basses called the '2015 Exhibition Limited' series. Each of these guitars were designed and then handcrafted by the master luthiers at ESP's



Jeff Moore, ESP senior vice president



Matt Masciandaro, president and CEO of ESP



James Hetfield, the frontman of Metallica, plays his ESP Iron Cross signature model during the band's anniversary celebration. Hatfield and his Metallica bandmate Kirk Hammett have both been ambassadors of ESP for over twenty years.

custom shop in Tokyo, Japan. Every model is a unique work of art... No two are alike." Even with the introduction of the new 2015 Exhibition Limited series, ESP still has those "tried and true" standbys to fall back on. "Currently, our best-selling shape is the single-cutaway Eclipse Series," remarks Masciandaro. "The leader right now is the Vintage Black Satin LTD EC-1000 model Eclipse. Signature Series models always rank among top sellers, and right now the James Hetfield Signature Series models are very strong. Our line of extended range 7- and 8-string models are hot. Our top-performing bass is the LTD B-206 6-string."

Maintaining a close relationship with consumers is something that's becoming increasingly more and more difficult in MI, especially with the rise of e-commerce. But Jeff Moore explains there is room for both online retailers and brick-and-mortar retailers. "More and more guitars are being sold online than I think anyone ever could have imagined," observes Moore. "And the retailers who understand what the consumer's expectations are when making that online purchase are the ones who are growing and continue to enhance the entire buying experience. On the flip side, we also continue to see brick-and-mortar retailers finding more creative ways and services to keep their loyal customers coming back as well as finding new ones. We are always interested to work with those dealers who approach the retailer/vendor relationship as a partnership." At the end of the day, whether it's a new display or a slew of artist endorsements from players in Metallica or Slayer, consumer loyalty still ranks supreme. "ESP is a brand with a proud 40-year history that boasts an unparalleled artist roster and consumer base," says Moore. "Yet, we are a relatively small company that operates and feels like a family-run business rather than a larger corporate structure that many would expect ESP to be. We are a company of musicians serving musicians, and that sets the stage for some great opportunities. And



These guitars and basses are part of ESP's "Exhibition Limited" series, which comprise about 80 instruments designed and hand-built by the ESP Custom Shop. Each model is one of a kind, and were introduced at the 2015 NAMM Show in commemoration of the company's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

we listen to our customers. I think that's really important in any business today."

What's next for ESP in light of these MI trends? "Simply put, we will keep doing our best to navigate the many challenges that our industry (and retail in general) face as technology and consumer buying

preferences evolve," remarks Moore. "Trying to stay ahead of the curve isn't always going to be easy, so we're working with experts and other companies who have a unique perspective on how these new trends are shaping our business models and strategies."

ESP has already marked this anniversary with the introduction of a number of commemorative, extremely limited edition ESP Custom Shop and LTD Series anniversary model guitars, but there is more to come. "Throughout 2015, we will continue to celebrate our 40th with ongoing contests, giveaways, performances, and special events," says Masciandaro. After 40 years in the business, ESP is especially thankful for their consumer loyalty. "In view of the fact that we're celebrating 40 years in business right now, this is a great opportunity to offer my sincere thanks to all our customers for many years of loyalty and belief in the ESP brand," says Masciandaro. **MMR**

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# 2015 NASMD Convention – Full STEAM Ahead

Annual Gathering Continues to Grow, Thrive

By Christian Wissmuller

It's great to see so many familiar faces each year," says outgoing NASMD president George Quinlan, Jr. "Almost like a family reunion for many of us! We also saw many new folks attending NASMD for the first time. They were delighted to learn that most of our educational sessions were provided by our members with a 'caring and sharing' attitude. I was proud that our 'newbies' told us they felt most welcome, of course, aided by our social events including several fantastic receptions, our golf outing, and the 'Band on the Run' scavenger hunt based on the 'Amazing Race.' We must thank our sponsors for their generosity allowing us to offer these events. History was made on Saturday night as our new president, Rosi Johnson was announced as the first woman president of NASMD."

Indeed the 2015 gathering was memorable for a number of reasons and, by any metric, a success. In addition to the announcement of Johnson as the organization's new president, a record-breaking attendance of 444 dealers, suppliers, representatives, and guests, this year's NASMD Convention continued the upwards trends established by the previous years. "Over the last several years, the leadership has tried to focus on growing our organization, mak-

ing the conference affordable, and strengthening our businesses through high quality educational sessions and, having some fun together too!" comments Quinlan. "I think we were able to accomplish all these objectives this year." Held at the fourth-generation, historic Hotel Monteleone in New Orleans, NASMD 2015 saw an unprecedented number of high profile, 'big name' speakers, including Bill Rancic [*the first winner of television's The Apprentice – Ed.*], Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser, and Ellis and Branford Marsalis. "They delivered inspiring presentations followed by a closing party which could only happen in NOLA," observes Quinlan.

The setting – the heart of New Orleans' historic French Quarter – was a hit, across the board. With daytime temperatures near 80 degrees for the duration, attendees from the Midwest and Northeast (who have suffered through a particularly brutal winter) were especially appreciative, plus the vibrant music scene and atmosphere of the city fit perfectly with the organization's overall themes and goals.

The 2016 NASMD Convention will be held March 30 – April 3 at the Grand Lakes Hotel & Resort in Florida.

## Voices from New Orleans, 2015

"I thought the NASMD board put together a first-class convention. There were very meaningful, informative, and varied sessions throughout the conference. I think everyone walked away with some valuable and tangible ideas: road reps, store owners, retail sales people, and vendors alike.

It seems to get better every year. I have been to many NASMD Conventions and I think this was the best one yet. The board seems to really listen to the membership, reading the session comment cards and reacting to what topics the attendees value. World class key-note speakers like Bill Rancic, the always inspiring and passionate Dr. Tim

Lautzenheiser, and the finale with New Orleans' own Ellis and Branford Marsalis made for a pretty stellar lineup this year. Also the many productive conversations we were able to have with our retail customers was invaluable. It ended up being a record NASMD, as far as attendance, which I think bodes well for the feeling that the school music business is healthy. I know the educational business at our company was up considerably over the previous year, and we feel the improving economy coupled with the continual message that kids in music do better in life, is resonating with parents and making a positive impact on our kids and our business."

*Doug Lady, Hal Leonard Corporation*



1: Yamaha's Garth Gilman, Roger Eaton, David Suter, and Joanie Barton. 2: Scott McCormick of National Association of Music Parents. 3: NAMM's Dan Del Fiorentino. 4: Tom and Laura Schmitt of Schmitt's Music. 5: Brook Mays Music's Bill Everitt. 6: Tracy Leenman and Ellen Leenman Brown of Musical Innovations with Lori Supinie of Senseney Music (center). 7: Alfred Music CEO Ron Manus with his parents, Iris and Morty Manus. 8: Joel Menchey of Menchey Music Service. 9: Mark Goff of Paige's Music with NAMM's Joe Lamond.

"I feel like the Board went overboard (no pun intended) getting us amazing speakers – the Marsalis', Dr. Tim, Bill Rancic – all of whom were very valuable and inspiring, and it's unusual for a convention to have three 'home run' general session speakers. Kudos to George and Rosi for sure! The breakouts – I really enjoyed the ones on company culture, and CJ's [*CJ Averwater – Ed.*] about generations. Very useful information for myself and my staff. Having 'experts' combined with colleagues leading sessions is always the most valuable for us.

This was a record attendance, giving us the best chance to network, share ideas, and learn from others in our industry, and also to spend one-on-one time with our manufacturers, publishers, and suppliers. Of course, the food was amazing, and having time to eat on our own and to sightsee helped everyone have a great time. The final parade and banquet was absolutely the best in NASMD history. As the piccolo player, I loved marching with the Storyville Stompers, and the band at the House of Blues (which Buffet just plain rented out in its entirety for us!) was great too – especially when Al Maniscalco joined them :-)

As for school music in 2015: Our county finally realized the need for quality instruments for the students, and did a \$1.9 million bid, but national companies won most of it, so that defeats the purpose, in a sense, as regular, on-site service after the sale is not really possible. But in general, I see two things: 1) more and more parents are suffering financially – we have seen credit scores so low I did not even know those scores existed; 2) school programs are holding their own despite scheduling and budgeting problems. People *do* realize the value of music education, and are slowly putting music in more of a priority. We are finally seeing 'STEAM' instead of 'STEM', in some cases (adding Arts to Science-Technology-Engineering-Math). That being said, our area is obsessed with marching band, so that makes a (negative) difference in our private lessons, step-up sales, et cetera. All in all, though, we are very optimistic. Our sales and rentals were up 15 percent in 2014 from the previous year, and for a new company (five years old) we feel pretty good about that!"

*Tracy Leenman, Musical Innovations*

"This year's convention was outstanding. The sessions were right on target and we walked away with some solid actionable ideas. George, Rosi, and the rest of the board did an outstanding job.

Our markets are very strong and we look forward to significant

growth in 2015. From the dealers I know around the country, I suspect the strength of B&O over the past several years will continue in 2015."

*Kevin Cranley, Willis Music*

"I thought it was one of the best NASMD conventions yet! The location was excellent, the events were fun, and the educational program was one of the strongest that I've ever attended. I think the health of the industry is stable. We all have issues that we are working through, but I'll take slow and steady any day."

*CJ Averwater, Amro Music*

"I thought this year's show was fantastic. The hotel was a bit tight at times, but the ambiance of New Orleans was wonderful. It was great to be in a musical city where music remains such a vital part of the culture. As always, there is enough diversity in the NASMD sessions that there is something for everyone, and often the sessions leave lasting impressions that shape our practices for years to come. Overall, I think the convention and its spirit reflects the resiliency of school music – often challenged, most often prevailing. These dealers have been able to weather the economic recession better than most.

Looking ahead to the school music market, I think we are at the cusp of an emerging trend that could be the next threat, or could be spun to be our next opportunity; an opportunity to once again reinforce the value of music education within the formal curriculum, not as "extra-curricular," but rather as a cornerstone of the educational experience. That opportunity resides in STEM. Much is being said about STEM education (science, technology, engineering, and math), and its necessity for remaining globally competitive. However, lost in STEM are the arts. Rather than STEM, we should be talking about STEAM. Adding the arts, centered around school music, will provide the necessary creative development that scientists, technologists, engineers, and mathematicians need in order to generate breakthrough discoveries. Science without creativity yields iterative improvements. Science, technology, engineering, and math with the arts will yield creative and innovative discoveries. So, rather than spending our time 'defending' music, we need to spend our time grabbing ahold of the STEM train that is rolling through higher education. For when the "A" is added to STEM, you have STEAM, and with STEAM you can indeed power locomotives."

*David Via, D'Addario & Co., Inc.*



10: The opening night reception at The Hotel Monteleone was packed. 11: Dukes of Dixieland provided the entertainment at Wednesday night's get-together. 12: Kevin and Debbi Cranley of Willis Music. 13: CJ Averwater of Amro Music with Ellen Brown Leenman of Musical Innovations. 14: Andy's Music's James Andrews. 15: John Stoner of Conn-Selmer, Inc. 16: David Via and John D'Addario III of D'Addario & Co. 17: NOLA's French Quarter provided a lively backdrop for this year's NASMD Convention. 18: New Orleans' streets were alive with music, making the city the ideal setting for the 2015 NASMD gathering.

**O**n OMG Music's homepage, the following is emblazoned in big, white, bold lettering: "Delivering the most respected names in music retail accessories, all at manufacturer direct pricing, since 1990." It seems that 25 years later, OMG is still working to achieve those same goals. "OMG started off as a manufacturer's rep firm in the U.S. – fast forward 25 years and we're now distributing and manufacturing for customers around the globe," says Mark Blasko, a partner at OMG Music. Who are some of those respected names? Rotosound, D'Addario, Hohner, Henry Heller, LOXX, Get'm Get'm, LM Products, Perri's, Coperpeace, Revo, Peter Schmidt, and D'Andrea. A few of those aforementioned brands will have a hand in helping OMG to celebrate their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. "We're working with our core partners Rotosound and D'Andrea to come up with an offering to help celebrate our anniversary with our dealers who made it possible," says Blasko.

Over the last quarter-century, OMG has grown and prospered while sticking to the ideals which have made them successful. "We've been fortunate with

**OMG Music**  
*Twenty-fifth*  
**ANNIVERSARY**

**25**  
**YEARS**

For the last quarter-century, OMG has proven that customization is key

By Paige Tutt

our growth, especially in the last five years," Blasko remarks. "We're going to continue to expand the depth of our offering to our dealers while sticking to our core competencies." Those "core competencies" are based around the idea that they, as a company, must capitalize off of the uniqueness of each dealer to forge a successful relationship: "OMG works tirelessly with both dealers and manufacturers to match product with dealer opportunity. Different clientele often means a different product mix. Best sellers in New Jersey may or may not equate to what will move quickly in Sacramento or Paducah. We take the time to get to know each dealer." It's this notion of

customization of services that allows OMG to cultivate a unique relationship with each client, as opposed to a "one size fits all" approach.

That's one way in which OMG feels they differentiate themselves from other competitors. "By concentrating on a small but important part of a dealer's business that is an afterthought by many of our competitors we've been able to consistently build and grow relationships," says Blasko. "High quality product is where it starts, but our experience and depth of



Henry Heller's new HJQ25 25" Jacquard designs.

knowledge in how a specific dealer can leverage that product into a more profitable business is what really separates us." Those high quality products include guitar straps, Rotosound strings, and custom imprinted accessories like guitar picks and gig bags. OMG prides itself on being able to "turn any guitar strap rack or display into an exciting and profitable part of a business," as Blasko put it. "As straps are 'fashion' and ever-changing, many dealers trust us to manage their entire strap business, saving them time while allowing us to use our expertise in the category to help grow their overall market share," says Blasko. "Add to that the value a premium string like Rotosound brings, and solidifying our industry leading business with drea partnership, with a number OMG brings to unique to us."

OMG had a Show, which in- ing to a new lo- and increasing to 1,000 square sound and D'An- really showcase and it turned successful show Blasko. "We're al- on how to top it Besides aiming ter NAMM show- steady stream of the horizon. "As do is in the fash- change quickly, ue to see new on a regular basis to the Henry accessory line," search the world unique materials

our dealers offer the latest in trends while keeping in line with their overall business goals. Rotosound has just released new foil packaging, which not only extends the shelf life of the strings, but also is environmentally friendly. With our new D'Andrea partnership, look for our custom imprint offering to continue to expand."

When asked about trends OMG has noticed in the music industry as of late, Blasko touts the success of the independent dealer. "We've really learned from our dealers that to be successful you have to stick to what you are good at and offer something unique and different," Blasko observes. "The independent dealer will always be the backbone of this industry. Much like our own company, we see more successful specialty shops doing very well and expect that to continue." At the end of the day, OMG has committed 25 years to offering "unique and different" services, and it seems the next 25 years will be spent doing much of the same. "Thank you to our dealers for an amazing 25 years!" says Blasko. "We're very grateful for the opportunity to continue to serve you and do what we love – it's a privilege to be a part of this fantastic industry." **MMR**



New custom imprint picks available from D'Andrea.



The new Rotosound foil packaging.

custom imprint the new D'An- you come away of things that the table that are

fruitful NAMM cluded expansion- cation in Hall C their booth size feet. "Both Roto- drea came in to their offerings into our most to date," says ready planning for next year!" to top their Win- ing, OMG has a new releases on much of what we ion world, things so you'll contin- offerings from us when it comes Heller strap and says Blasko. "We for quality and that really help

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**I**t all began in 1915 with a Polish immigrant named Benjamin Bronen, his wife Rose Bronen, and their three sons – Murray, and twins Jack and Sidney. Benjamin Bronen opened what we now know as Bronen's Music in 1915. He was a violinist in a band orchestra pit, doing instrument repair on the side. It was those repairs that became the vessel through which Benjamin was able to open the first retail store. As the years passed, Bronen's Music survived blow after blow – from The Great Depression, a major fire, to World War II. The New York City blackout of 1977 and the subsequent looting cleaned out all but a piano and some sheet music, but Bronen's persevered and 100 years later still stands. The store was honored in 2000 by then-Bronx Borough president, Fernando Ferrer, who paid tribute to businesses that have been in the Bronx for 75 years or more. Fifteen years later, the Bronx Borough

president, Ruben Diaz Jr., awarded Bronen's Music a Citation of Merit to celebrate the occasion of 100 years in business.

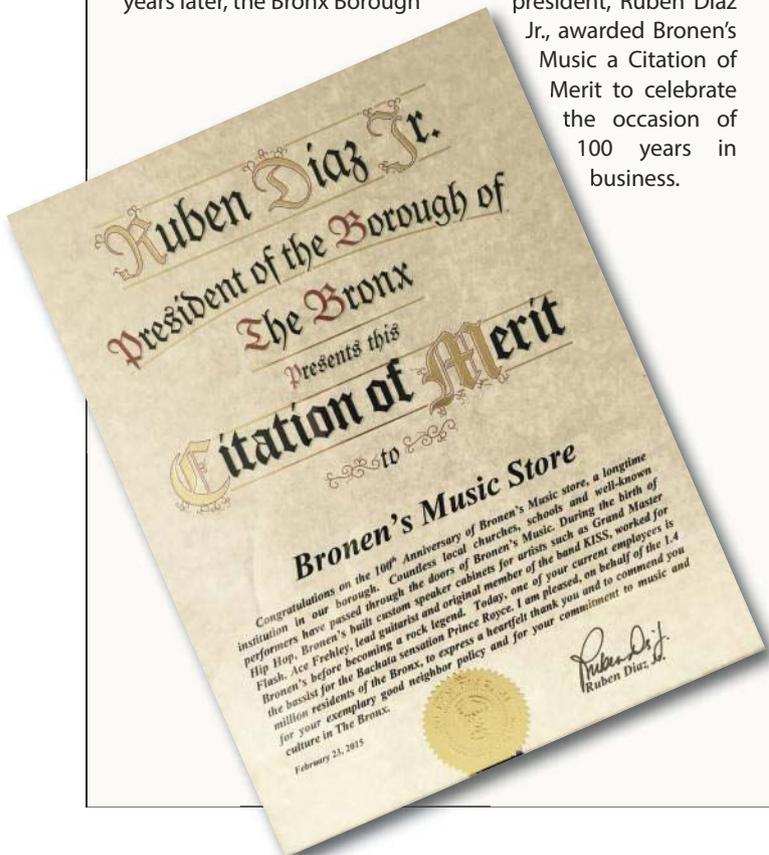
The store shifted locations multiple times over the years, and settled into its current location in the '80s. Located at 2462 Webster Ave. in the Bronx, NY, Bronen's Music buys, sells, and rents new and used instruments, while also offering instrument repair, one of the main services they believe differentiates them from other music retailers in New York. "Many music stores now do not have on-site repairs," says Janine Bronen, wife

of current owner Andrew Bronen. "We have a wonderful repair department that can repair almost any instrument, keyboard, et cetera. And we do so in a very timely fashion." The current sales floor is 3,000 square feet, with an additional 3,000 square feet consisting of stock area and music lesson rooms. "There is one large lesson room for a class as well as three smaller private lesson rooms. We teach piano, keyboard, guitar, bass, brass & woodwind, as well as voice lessons," says Janine. Between six employees, that's a lot of ground to cover, but music lessons are just one of many services offered. Bronen's Music carries Ibanez, Washburn, Peavey, Yamaha, Roland, ESP, Samson, Korg, Tama, LTC, LP, Selmer, Conn, and DW, among other lines. "If we don't have it, we'll get it," Janine says.

Andrew Bronen, began working alongside his father Sidney at the age of eight, continuing until Sidney's passing in 2003. Andrew, a third generation Bronen, and his wife Janine maintain the ideals that Andrew's grandfather instituted back in 1915. "Bronen's Music prides itself on our customer relations," says Janine. "We truly value our current and repeat customers and try very hard to accommodate them, and get them whatever they need if possible."

Family is something that is clearly very important to the Bronens, and the surrounding community has become an extension of that family. "Our family-owned business means we take the time, because we really care whether or not you will come again," says Janine. "You can't find this online or at a very large store."

The store's customers have been very loyal over the years. Recently, a customer came in who had purchased his first violin from Andrew's grandfather, Benjamin, 60 years prior. When water damage ruined the instrument, he returned to Bronen's Music to purchase a new one.



"Many of our customers are second, third, and fourth generation," says Janine. "We pride ourselves on serving our community with all of their musical needs." The Bronens have even had some notable clientele walking in and out of the store. "During the birth of hip-hop, Bronen's built custom speaker cabinets for artists such as Grand Master Flash," recalls Janine. "Ace Frehley, lead guitarist and original member of the band KISS, worked for Bronen's before becoming a rock legend. Skip to present day and one of our current employees is the bassist for the bachata-sensation Prince Royce."

After 100 years of service, it's time to celebrate what got Bronen's Music this far: family and community. "For our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary we will be having a party and inviting our entire Bronen's community," says Janine. "A date has not been decided upon yet because we have family scattered and we want to be able to include everyone. But it will definitely happen within this 100<sup>th</sup> year." **MMA**



Sons of founder Benjamin Bronen from left to right: Sidney Bronen, Jack Bronen, and Murray Bronen.



Current owner and third generation Bronen, Andrew Bronen.



Benjamin Bronen, founder of Bronen's Music, in front of the original store.

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# Five Things You Need to Know About Instagram

by Ben Blakesley

Instagram has exploded in popularity in recent years and can represent an amazing opportunity for your business. But before you jump on the bandwagon, there are some things you must know about the platform to make sure you're set up – not just for social media success, but for business success.

## #1: Links

Simple - they don't work.

There is one single place that you can put a clickable link on Instagram, and that's in the website field of your profile's bio. For this reason, it's *really* hard to get people out of Instagram. It's just not a good platform for a direct response social media program. Click to buy, click to convert, driving web traffic – these are just not things that Instagram is good at. Not to say you can't find ways to make it happen, but you need to know that posting your products with links to buy is simply not going to work. Got it? Great.

## #2: It's not shareable

In social media marketing, we've come to approach content creation with the mindset of "is it shareable?" We're constantly after those things that will "go viral" and spread across the Internet. Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and YouTube give us the chance to do this incredibly well, but Instagram doesn't make it easy. Your choice of actions on Instagram is to Like or Comment. There is no Retweet. There is no Share. So unless your content is Kardashian-esque enough to "break the Internet" and make people go out of their way to share, it's not going anywhere. So don't count on it.

## #3: It is discoverable

But what Instagram lacks in share-ability, it makes up for in discoverability. Remember how I noted that Instagram users are super active? Well, they're so engaged that they *love* discovering new content, regardless of who puts it out. To be as discoverable as possible, you'll want to make sure you're making the most of your opportunities: hashtags, locations, tagging, and engagement. That's how you can make sure as many people are seeing your content as possible.

Hashtags are highly prevalent on Instagram and are the primary way new people are going to come in contact with your content. It's totally acceptable to use multiple hashtags as long as they're relevant, so go for it!

Location tagging is the practice of marking your picture with where it was posted. You can name the location whatever you want, but you can also use what the rest of the community is using to get more exposure. For example, if you're posting from the NAMM show and you tag it with NAMM 2015, others who are posting or viewing content from that location may be exposed to your content. Cool, huh?

Tagging other users and getting users to tag their friends in your posts is as close to sharing as you get with Instagram. There are two ways to tag people: in the copy with an @mention, or Tag in Photo. Use this to pull in your followers, your vendors, your employees, and your partners.

Finally, engagement is the key to showing up on the Search/Navigate page. The more people like and comment on your content, the more likely it will be to show up on that page to people who aren't already following you.

## #4: Interact

Posting on social media, and Instagram in particular, is not a one-way endeavor. You're going to get the most out of your Instagram program (more followers, more likes, more comments) if you're not only posting content, but interacting with people on Instagram, as well. This means responding when people ask you questions, following other users, and liking/commenting on their content. Just be social (especially with your customers and with your vendors)!

## #5: Phone only

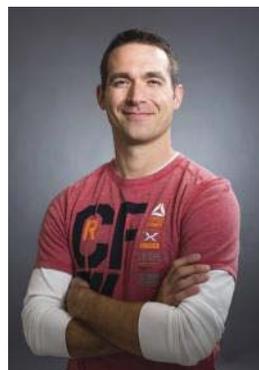
Other platforms allow you to use third party applications to post, monitor, and engage. Other platforms let you schedule posts so that you can plan ahead. Other platforms let you post from your computer. Not Instagram. That's part of what's kept it pure, real-time, and cool. But for a business, that's tough. Put together a plan for who will login and use the account and when. If you can, maybe dedicate a device for your store to be the "Instagram device," so that multiple people can use it without mistakenly posting something to your brand account that should have gone on their personal account. Yes, it's a limitation, but as we musicians know, sometimes technological limitations lead to creative revelations.

But wait. There's more!

## BONUS: Beautiful images

With all this planning, process, and technical discussion, let's not lose sight that Instagram is all about beautiful images. If you want to be awesome at Instagram, step up your photography game. Images of products on white backgrounds will not cut it. Get creative, get visual, make it memorable, and make it unique.

MMA



*Ben Blakesley, author of Get Social: A Practical Guide to Using Social Media for Business and co-founder of Community Manager Recharge social media conference, has been working in social for the better part of a decade, spanning industries from music to finance to sports apparel and many in between. One of those "I'll sleep when I'm dead" kind of guys, Ben lives and breathes social and thrives on making connections and making a difference. Now leading social media for Reebok,*

*he lives in the Boston suburbs with his wonderful and socially adept wife, Lauryn, and their three children.*

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Harvey Levy and Jerome MacPherson speak with visitors to their booth at Levy's Leathers' first convention, the 1986 MIAC trade show.

# Why Trade Shows Matter

By Harvey Levy, vice president, Levy's Leathers Limited

In the summer of 2013 the Music Industries Association of Canada (MIAC) canceled its scheduled September trade show and closed its doors. A forty-one year old fraternity of musical instrument manufacturers, distributors and dealers was no more. The recession of 2009 had taken its toll. Exhibitors could not justify the expense. MIAC was gone – and it was a sad day because twenty-nine years ago the 1986 MIAC show had set Levy's on the path to international success.

There is a sense of community that comes from being a part of a trade association, which is amplified at a trade show. When industry partners gather, business opportunities appear. Fresh from Nova Scotia, with hand-cut plywood guitar silhouettes fixed to pipe and drape, and cloth-covered plywood wedges sitting atop rented tables, Levy's joined the Canadian music instrument community and made its first guitar strap statement. For three days, with a modest 10' x 20' display in Toronto, Ontario, Levy's met fellow exhibitors and retail music customers from British Columbia all the way to Newfoundland. How cost effective is that?

The very next year, Levy's was exhibiting at NAMM and the following year at Frankfurt Musikmesse. In three short years, 1986 to 1988, we were able to put Levy's in the presence of the entire global musical instrument community.

For any manufacturing company looking to create a global brand, trade shows are the most economical way to do it. NAMM invites retailers, manufacturers, and distributors from around the world to join them, under one roof, every

January. Frankfurt Musikmesse does the same in Germany in April. Set up your booth or stand and, for four days in January and four in April, watch the world walk by and, perhaps, stop in for a while to see what you're selling: the mall experience on a global scale.

While not an essential, I would include Music China as an additional opportunity for brand exposure. Many North American and European distributors and manufacturers source product in China and will coordinate their trip to China around the Music China trade show to spend a day or two at the show: a third opportunity for the exhibitor to meet face to face with their international partners.

It is now commonplace to say that the world is becoming smaller, but this is specifically in the sense that modern communication technology and jet-age travel has shortened the time it takes to conduct business. But in terms of the cost of doing business, it is still a very large world and the cost of engaging with the world, on a personal level, quite an expensive proposition. That is what makes NAMM, Musikmesse, and Music China so important: it would be a very large world indeed if exhibitors had to visit each country every year. NAMM and Messe Frankfurt are to be congratulated for creating two shows that create an excitement and buzz that draws buyers from around the world. The



Harvey Levy

emergence of China as the country of choice for offshore manufacturing provides a third opportunity for exhibitors to meet face to face with their international partners. The timing of these shows in the first, second, and fourth quarters is a bonus in terms of strengthening these relationships.

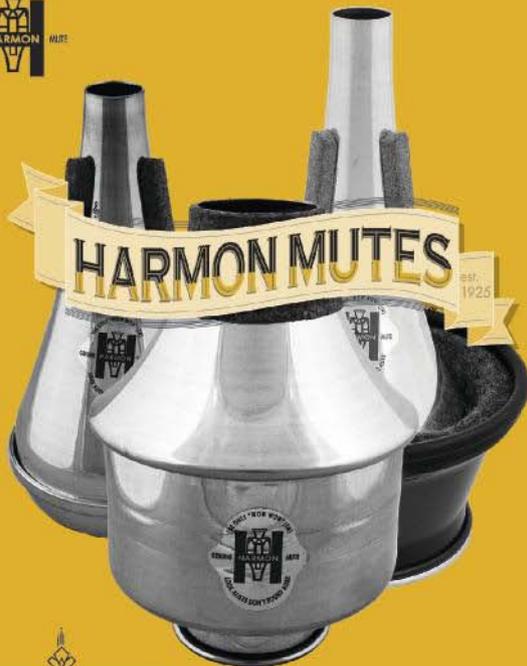
The productive exhibitor's trade show day typically starts at breakfast and continues long after the show closes. The number of industry people contact is made with is limited only by the willingness to engage in the many industry activities, both planned and serendipitous, on any given day. Oftentimes as much business can be cultivated in the bar as on the show floor.

You have to be there to benefit. There is no substitute for face to face. Your own eyes and ears process the visual clues you receive from facial expressions to body language. Both your eyes and ears are more panoramic than any device someone else might use to give you a picture of what is happening. It is a two-way street – you are both observer and observed. How a person walks, talks, looks, laughs, and who they associate with are all important clues to the person you are getting to know and who is getting to know you. This experience cannot be duplicated with the telephone, teleconference, Skype, Facebook, Twitter, or any other mode of remote communication. There is no substitute for being there.



MacPherson and Levy at the 1987 NAMM Show.

Levy's is now a brand sold in more than 82 countries thanks to three annual shows: NAMM, Musikmesse, and Music China. Exhibiting at these three shows brings the world to our door in a cost-effective, exciting, personal, social, and business atmosphere that could not have been realized any other way. A unique opportunity to meet with our business partners, and share business experiences both good and bad, and to exploit or avoid the opportunities and pitfalls we might face. **MMR**



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## New Products

### BAND & ORCHESTRA

#### Boulder Creek ECRM6-N

The Boulder Creek ECRM6-N model is from the OM Body Series. It features a cutaway OM body style, a natural finish, as well as a Koa top, back, and sides. This model has the patented suspended bracing system, which improves sustain, balances the tonal range, and allows for strong projection because the "floating" top vibrates more freely. The side ported sound hole projects the sound to the player's ear. This instrument has dual output jacks – a 1/4" in – and an ABT-4 preamp and tuner.



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

### ACCESSORIES

#### OMG Henry Heller Picador Series

Henry Heller's new Picador series of guitar straps are comprised of 2" wide, traditionally hand-woven Peruvian fabric sewn to a thick, organic woven cotton backing. The Picador series also features smooth, metal tri-glide hardware and chocolate leather ends. Adjustable to 58".



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

#### eMedia MagicScore Notation Software

MagicScore is music notation software that allows users to compose, print, arrange, and convert notation to audio. Use it to write sheet music, guitar tabs, and chord charts. Included in this new line of notation software are MagicScore Maestro, MagicScore Guitar, MagicScore Notation for MS Word, MagicScore OneTouch Composer, and MagicScore School. With MagicScore Maestro you can create clean, engraver quality prints of your music with a minimum of effort and time. MagicScore Maestro is music notation software with extended editing capabilities. It features a variety of input methods – virtual keyboard, external MIDI devices, or an extended set of musical symbols.



MagicScore Notation for MS Word combines all of the power and features of the MagicScore Maestro software with the convenience of being able to place music notation into any MS Word document with a single mouse click. With most music notation programs in order to place a score into a word processing document the user must paste an image of the score into it. Once it is there the notes cannot be changed without deleting it and starting over. MagicScore Notation for MS Word solves this problem by allowing you to edit the notes on the page simply by clicking on them from within the word processor itself.

MagicScore OneTouch Composer is music composition and music notation software for Windows tablets. The program includes many of the features found in MagicScore Maestro. MagicScore OneTouch Composer allows musicians to compose and arrange music on their Windows tablet. MagicScore School is a special academic edition of the MagicScore music composition and notation software for students, teachers, and schools.

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

### DJ & LIGHTING

#### Chauvet DJ's SlimBEAM Quad IRC

Consisting of three tilting RGBA LED modules on a compact base, the new SlimBEAM Quad IRC can be used not only as a color accent for uplighting walls and room surfaces, but also to create beam effects. Featuring a 180° tilt range, the three-headed SlimBEAM Quad IRC can cover a large amount of wall space from a single fixture. Additionally, it can be linked in multiples master-slave to spread its colors and beam effects.

A virtually limitless palette of colors can be blended with the SlimBEAM Quad IRC's 4-in-1 (red, green, blue, amber) LEDs. Each of its 3-watt LEDs projects a 15° beam angle, while the unit itself has a coverage angle of 98°, emitting an output of 343 lux at 2 meters per section.

The SlimBEAM Quad IRC can be run manually without DMX. It features built-in automated programs. As another non-DMX option, the SlimBEAM Quad IRC can be operated with CHAUVET DJ's IRC-6 infrared controller (sold separately), which provides wireless command of

functions like program selection and color selection from distances up to 30 feet.

For those who prefer to use a DMX controller, the SlimBEAM Quad IRC offers the options of 4-, 9, or 16-channel profiles to accommodate varying degrees of programming complexity. The unit comes equipped with 3-pin XLR DMX connectors.

Featuring multi-voltage operation (100-240 VAC, 50/60 Hz), the SlimBEAM QUAD IRC can power link up to 18 units at 120V and 34 units at 230V, allowing users to save time running cables and extension cords when installing multiple units. With its LEDs rated at 50,000 hours, the SlimBEAM Quad IRC also offers the convenience of being maintenance-free. The entire unit weighs 5.2 pounds (2.4 kg) and measures 10.8 x 3.2 x 8.3 inches (273 x 80 x 212 mm). With no moving parts, the SlimBEAM Quad IRC is silent running.



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

AUDIO & VIDEO

Radial Engineering  
Trim-Two Isolator



Trim-Two is a passive stereo isolator designed to simplify the use of laptop computers by providing a ready access volume control for on-the-fly adjustments when performing on a live stage. Dual ¼" jacks, left and right RCAs, and a stereo 3.5mm input are wired in parallel to allow the signal to be split off to feed an alternate signal path such as monitors. Inside, two Eclipse transformers isolate and balance the signal. These "passive engines" deliver a linear frequency response from 20Hz to 18kHz and are capable of handling up to +15dB signal levels thus providing typical -10dB keyboards and consumer level devices with plenty of headroom. An easy access front panel stereo level control makes adjusting the volume a snap. Play your sound files using the Trim-Two by connecting it from the headphone output of your tablet to the 3.5mm input on the Trim-Two. Use the volume control to adjust the level and avoid distortion.

Transformers provide galvanic isolation between the source and the destination and are extremely effective at eliminating ground loops. One merely connects the source to the Trim-Two and then the male XLR outputs to the PA system. As the Trim-Two is completely passive, no power is required.

The Trim-Two features Radial's book-end design that creates protective zones around the connectors and controls. Inside, the I-beam frame protects the sensitive inner workings from potential damage that could torque the PC board and cause solder points to prematurely go cold. The steel casing also provides shielding against external magnetic fields. MAP is \$150.

radialeng.com

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FRETTED

### ZON Guitars Sonus BG4 Billy Gould Signature Bass

Designed in collaboration with Bill Gould, bassist for the band Faith No More, this bass features a tulip wood body, ZON's proprietary bolt-on, composite neck, and two custom-wound Bartolini pickups.

One of the unique features of this signature bass is the single master volume control on the face of the instrument and the location of the bass and treble controls for the active circuit on the rear cover plate. However, the most distinguishing feature of the BG4 is the on-board, touch-sensitive, distortion circuit, designed for this bass by Roy Zichri of Greenhouse Effects. When engaged, this circuit gives a grit and edge to the tone of the bass providing Bill's distinctive sound. The BG4 is the first bass on the market to incorporate this feature.

Completely handmade by ZON, the BG4 is finished in satin black and is appointed with black hardware and a Hipshot D-tuner. A limited number of these basses will be produced with the first 25 personally signed by Billy Gould. Street price for the BG4 is \$3,599, including gig bag.



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

### Weber Fine Instruments Bitterroot Aesthetic Package

Weber Fine Acoustic Instruments introduces the 2015 Bitterroot Aesthetic Package, available for all body styles of Weber's handcrafted mandolins, soprano lins, mandolas, octave mandolins, and mandocellos. The Bitterroot Series embodies tradition, with minimalist appointments and the highest attention to materials, construction, beauty, and tone while maintaining affordability for discerning players.



Bitterroot instruments boast a distinctive, traditional visual appearance that owes itself to the silky satin finish, ivory-bound top and Buckskin coloring that graces each model. Tone and playability are at the forefront of these instruments' ethos, with hand-graduated and -tuned solid Sitka spruce tops, radiused fingerboards, and tonebar bracing on select models for emphasized bluegrass muscle.

The Bitterroot Series is available now for all of Weber's mandolin-family instruments, along with the Bitterroot Archtop Guitar that mirrors many of the qualities of its mando brethren. Like all Weber instruments, these are handcrafted from carefully chosen domestic and exotic solid woods and built with attention to every aspect of each instrument.

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

### Fishman ToneDEQ

The new ToneDEQ Acoustic Preamp with effects from Fishman is the complete performance solution for acoustic musicians. ToneDEQ combines a high quality preamp, 4-band EQ, dual effects section, tone controls, a compressor, level booster, and a balanced DI in one device. End to end analog circuitry from preamp to output in the ToneDEQ provides a richer tonal quality. Digital effects are mixed in parallel to maintain signal purity. A low noise ¼ inch amplifier output and XLR DI output with automatic ground-lifting and selectable pre/post EQ settings are also included. A discrete Fishman Class A preamp ensures superior quality signal conditioning with a high impedance input that improves performance for any passive instrument pickup. Fishman's acclaimed 4-band equalizer design ensures superior tone control for any acoustic instrument with a low-cut filter to reduce sub-bass effects. Street Price: \$300.



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

### SpiderCapo XXL

The SpiderCapo XXL model can capo fingerboards as wide as 2<sup>11</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches, and up to eight strings simultaneously. It is fully adjustable and allows you to capo each string individually, making hundreds of open string tunings possible without de-tuning your instrument. It also functions as a full capo with fine-tuning per string.



The XXL is ideal for 5- and 6-string basses, allowing easy change from a tenor bass and back again by keeping a SpiderCapo at the 12<sup>th</sup> fret and just flipping the "fingers" on and off. Or create pedal tones high up the neck.

The XXL is also ideally suited for use with the companion add-on Harmonik Mutes. It can be applied at any fret because there is no strap behind the neck. This opens up possibilities for higher order harmonics on the 17<sup>th</sup> fret (for example).

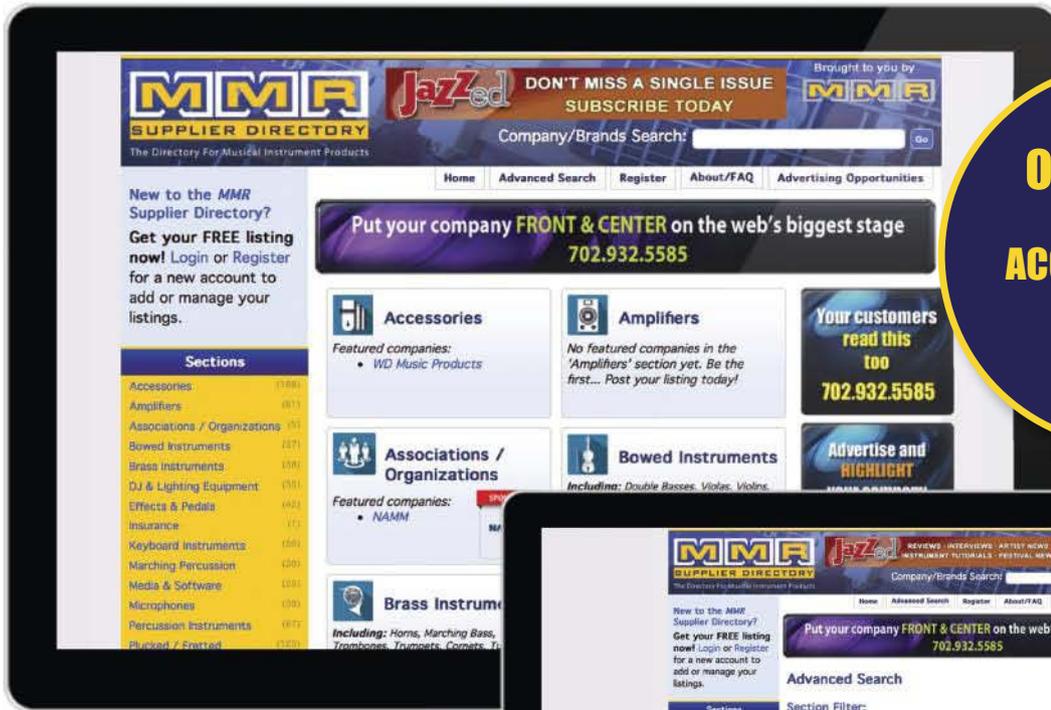
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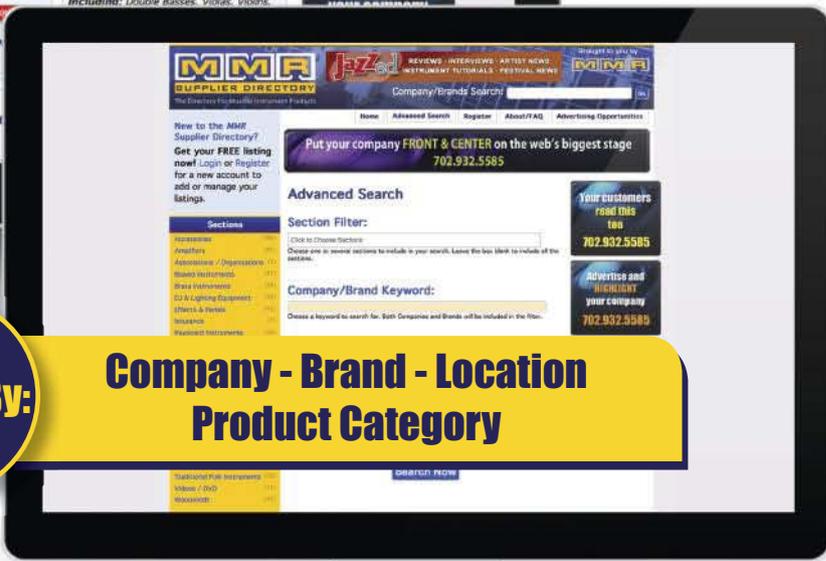
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By Dan Daley

## The Case for the Airline Case

**W**hat does the Federal Aviation Administration have to do with the MI business? More than you might think. Most times when I'm getting on a plane going to or coming from Nashville – which is very often – there's at least one, and usually a few, people bringing guitars into the cabin. Those musicians recently got some welcome news, in the form of some clearer guidelines from the FAA regarding carrying musical instruments on airplanes.

This isn't the first such set of guidelines for a process that has historically been traumatic for traveling musicians, but it is the most consistent batch that's arrived so far, and it's backed by actual legislation, in the form of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, which as the date in its title suggests has been around a while (it's one thing to pass a law, it's another to implement, which is what has now finally taken place). The fact is, traveling with musical instruments is complicated, both by the nature of the instruments themselves and by the realities of contemporary air travel. The former speaks for itself: guitars, the most popular instrument by far, are also some of the hardest to accommodate on a plane – they're inherently fragile, and their cases often contribute as much to making them harder to get into an overhead compartment as they do protecting them from damage. The latter has a lot in common with backstage access these days: the higher up in an airline's hierarchy you are, the better your chance of getting onto the aircraft earlier than everyone else, which increases your chances of getting your axe into the overhead. The newly updated rules, which went into effect on March 6 of this year, essentially guarantee that musical instruments are entitled to that airborne real estate – the Act allocates overhead bin space on a first come, first served basis; traveling musicians just have to find ways to get to the front of the line before they board. Section 403 of the Act states that carriers are required to allow passengers to stow their musical instruments in an approved stowage area in the cabin but – and the emphasis is mine – “only if at the time the passenger boards the aircraft such stowage space is available.”

Where MI retail comes into the picture here is that the store can be a wealth of information about how best to manage the daunting process of traveling with musical instruments. First, congratulate everyone who took up flute in band in high school, and maybe violin next. Those and other relatively compact instruments generally have no problems

either getting space on board or getting their instruments through security. And few keyboards or brass instruments, other than an alto sax, are going to fit, so they'll be riding underneath in cargo, in their proper cases. Guitars remain the most vulnerable link in the transportation chain.

Fortunately, you can point customers to a sizable array of information options they can access around this. For starters, use the link (via Cornell Law School: [www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/49/41724](http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/49/41724)) to the newly established guidelines for traveling with instruments. They'll get the conversation started. There are a number of websites that have grown up around the topic of how to keep instruments safe during travel, such as [flyingwithguitars.com](http://flyingwithguitars.com) and [www.bobbrozman.com/tip\\_packfly.html](http://www.bobbrozman.com/tip_packfly.html). One of the most interesting ones, though, is a blog by an actual Transportation Security Administration officer, who also happens to be a musician. Hosted by the TSA's on website, the prosaically titled blog – <http://blog.tsa.gov/2009/09/traveling-in-key-of-security-musical.html> – by “Blogger Bob” doesn't offer a lot of new insight, but it at least humanizes what has become an unpleasantly intimate aspect of travel.

However, Blogger Bob's effort also comes with a comments section, and there are some worthy points in it made by readers, including recommendations on how to pack a trombone to survive a six-foot drop out of the luggage hatch onto the tarmac. On any of these websites and blog, skim the comments sections for real-life examples of how other flying musicians are coping.

Some other recommendations I can offer from personal experience – I'm a guitar player with four million miles logged on American Airlines – is suggesting to customers that they sign up for the frequent flier programs of the airlines they fly regularly. Even if they don't fly enough to attain any of the elite status levels (the most basic tier on all of them is usually reached at 25,000 miles), anything that separates them from the rest of the pack angling to stake out storage space onboard will help. Several websites remind us that airlines are happy to sell musicians a second seat for their instruments, but for far less money you can buy enhanced access to the flight – a seat with slightly more legroom – that also comes with early boarding.

The MI retailer needs less to be a jack of all trades than a Swiss Army knife of a single trade, and how to get a guitar or a tuba from point A to point B by air is another way to provide the kind of truly useful service that makes customers for life. **MMR**

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