

# MMR

## MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

# MMR

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# C O N T E N T S

# MMMR

## MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

Vol.173 AUGUST 2014 No.08

BACK TO  
SCHOOL SALES

CONTACT BAND &  
ORCHESTRA DIRECTORS

★ BAND

★ ORCHESTRA

“ Despite all the odds against it, road reps continue to be the lifeblood for companies like ours dotted around the United States. ”

- George Quinlan, Jr., Quinlan & Fabish Music Co. and NASMD

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Cover design by Garret Petrov.

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# Sentiment & Reality

**I**t was announced on July 24th – and reported by *MMR* in this issue (see page 6) – that 16 guitar brands have filed for extensions in order to oppose Gibson Brands’ trademark application regarding the double-cutaway “335 [guitar] body shape.”

This may ring a bell for many, as back in November of 2000, Gibson brought suit against Paul Reed Smith over PRS’ line of single-cut guitars, claiming the shape was too similar to Gibson’s iconic Les Paul and would cause “market confusion.”

The case was much discussed within the industry, as well as amongst guitar players, many of whom took to the blogosphere and Internet bulletin boards to add their two cents – most of them clearly siding with whichever company produced “their guitar.”

Without rehashing the full details likely familiar to a good chunk of *MMR* readers, a federal district court sided with Gibson in 2004, a decision which was later reversed by the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. PRS once again began producing their single-cutaway guitars.

While the outcome of this current trademark dispute is yet to be determined, one element of the whole affair is consistent with events of a decade-plus ago. The interwebs are once again alive with the passionate reactions of six-stringers.

On Seymour Duncan’s User Group Forum, where Evan Skopp began the discussion by linking to *MMR*’s initial report, results ranged from “They [Gibson] probably just want that comfort of owning the patent [sic] and then charging the crap out of everyone to use it” to “Wow! It only took them 50+ years!” to responses explaining (to varying degrees of accuracy) the distinction between patents and trademarks.

I reached out to Ronald Bienstock, whose firm is representing 15 of the 17 brands involved in the current case, to get his take on what’s really at stake here.

“What is often misunderstood in terms of intellectual property (IP) law and the music instrument business, usually as to guitars, is that sentiment and reality are often two very different things,” he explains. “Guitar players, and to some extent bassists, often are loyal to a guitar body shape or style that they started with early in their lives.

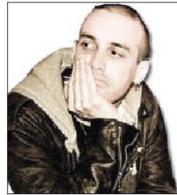
“For example, over 50 years ago, a company initiates, or claims to initiate, a design, but within a year of the introduction of that design, other companies begin to use and advertise that same, or a very similar, design. The number of companies using that design then grows exponentially over the next 50 years and that design is seen everywhere. Still, a few fans of that original company may think, ‘Well, they came up with it. Isn’t it theirs?’ That is sentiment, but it is not IP law.

“In order for these types of designs to be trademarks, and for one company to retain exclusive rights to use such designs, companies must treat these designs as trademarks.

“Since we are discussing IP law, we, as an industry, already have the leading case on this very issue: *Stuart Spector et. al. vs. FMIC* has clearly established what the law is, as it applies to a trademark application for a guitar body shape that has been in existence for over 50 years and has been copied directly or substantially: it is generic and cannot serve as an indicator of source. Many guitar body shapes can become ubiquitous throughout the MI industry, like that of a double cutaway body guitar or bass first designed in 1958. This is why 17 companies have reacted to Gibson’s attempt to claim ownership of a generic guitar shape.”

As this is an ongoing legal matter in which Bienstock is actively involved (Gibson has not yet responded to inquiries from *MMR*), it would be natural for those who side with Gibson to dismiss his arguments – and that’s fine. What’s worth remembering, though – and this is as true for MI dealers as it is end-users – is that just because you’re a “fan” of a brand, doesn’t mean that the organization behind that logo is always in the right.

It’s *MMR*’s – and my own – job to remain agnostic on all matters such as this trademark dispute (I am happy to own, or to have formerly owned, guitars from nearly all suppliers involved, so I can, personally, truly claim not be on anyone’s “side”), but we’ll certainly be watching this case and reporting on developments as things evolve. **MMR**



by Christian Wissmuller

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# It's All About Community

I am writing having just arrived back home from Nashville and the Summer NAMM Show. If you attended, I believe you will know what the headline above is about. Our industry felt more like a community the past few days down in Nashville. Of course there was plenty of time for business on the Show floor. However, Joe Lamond and his staff have to be commended for bringing a gathering together that provided inspiration, innovation, and opportunity to the attendees and exhibitors.

Of course NAMM always brings out optimism whether in Nashville or Anaheim. The difference is that in Anaheim everyone is hoping for a good year. By the time Nashville rolls around, everyone knows whether or not they are having a good year. From my conversations, everyone is pretty happy with what 2014 has delivered. I'm sure if the job reports remain steady, 2014 will be the rebound year we have all been looking for.

Winter NAMM takes the shape of its surroundings in the hustle and bustle of Southern California. It is a four-day sprint for attendees trying to reach as many booths as possible to see the latest offerings, while every exhibitor is on edge not wanting to miss the next most important customer that comes into their booth.

Summer NAMM, on the other hand, reflects the pace of a genteel southern city (well, maybe not that genteel around midnight walking along Broadway). The pace allows everyone to feel like they are developing relationships with their customers and vendors. There's time to have real conversations with all. Everyone can maintain eye

contact without looking to see who or what they may be missing, or having that aggressive someone come up and interrupt your conversation.

Beyond the tradeshow floor, there were so many opportunities to step back and remember why our industry is a community. There was no better example of this than the opening night reception. For those of you who missed it, it was an exceptional evening of music highlighted by Vince Gill's 40-minute chat reflecting on his career. He noted the thrill he had as child getting his first guitar and going to a music store. It was in a small city in Oklahoma where the local music store was the center of the area's music community.

That music store was one of his key inspirations. Like so many of you, your store is this beacon of music for your own community. Your livelihood is an inspiration for generations of aspiring players in your community, as well. These players/customers that walk through your door may never reach the level of a Vince Gill, but they do grow into having a lifelong appreciation for the arts which they will pass along to the next generation. Your store is one of the keys that keeps our society one worth living in. It is a very important role that you play.

Not everyone chooses to go to Nashville. Everyone should be grateful for this. It is nice to see the Show grow and attendance increase, but we hope it continues to keep its boutique charm. **MMA**



By Terry Lowe





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## Seventeen Brands Oppose Gibson's Quest to Trademark '335 Shape'

On July 24, seventeen companies filed for extensions to oppose the trademark application by Gibson Brands Inc. for the (two dimensional outline) of the 335 body shape. Peavey, Dean ( Armadillo), JHS, Suhr (JS Tech), Collings, Schecter, Westheimer, ESP, Washburn (U.S. Music), Roman Guitars, Trussart Guitars, Sadowsky, Warwick, Cordoba, Premier Builders, and Guild have filed together represented by Bienstock and Michael, P.C. Fender (FMIC) and Fred W. Gretsch Enterprises have filed separately.



## Hal Leonard to Exclusively Distribute Notion from PreSonus

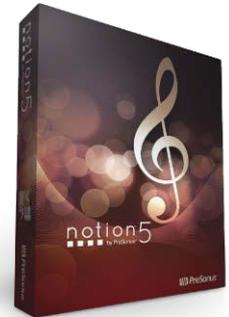
Hal Leonard is the exclusive U.S. distributor for Notion 5 which was launched at the NAMM show in Nashville. They will also exclusively represent the full array of Notion products beyond Notion 5, including the Notion Conducting Pack, Notion Site Licenses, and the Progression Guitar Notation program.

PreSonus acquired Notion in 2013 to expand its growing product line and add to its total solution ecosystem, especially in the education market. Designed to offer the finest playback quality of any music notation product, Notion features

orchestral samples recorded by the London Symphony Orchestra plus guitar, bass, and drum samples by Neil Zaza, Victor Wooten, and Roy "Futureman" Wooten.

Notion allows musicians to create a score on their Mac or Windows computer and transfer it to their iPad, where they can continue to edit. Notion offers tools for scoring to video and comes with three Native Effects™ plug-ins from PreSonus' award-winning Studio One® DAW for Mac and Windows. This will be the first edition of Notion that includes the notation program in five languages.

PreSonus products are used today by artists ranging from Steve Morse and Flying Colors to Derek Sherinian, Imogen Heap, Lincoln Brewster, and Victor Wooten; institutions such as SAE and Berklee College of Music; and a who's who of producers and engineers.



## The Music People to Distribute Denon and Marantz

TMP Pro has announced a distribution agreement with Denon Professional and Marantz Professional to be their exclusive national distributor in the U.S. TMP Pro Distribution has built an expansive line of 170 pro-audio brands and continues to grow. Since pro audio distribution was added to the business model in 1985, TMP Pro has consistently followed a formula of establishing strong partner relationships with vendors. The TMP Pro Team is recognized by manufacturers and customers alike for its in-depth knowledge of the products that they sell. Accordingly, the TMP Pro national sales team offers years of first-hand experience in the full line of products offered



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For over three decades, Denon Professional and Marantz Professional audio source and acquisition products have faithfully served the professional audio and video markets with forward-thinking, reliable solutions. With a longstanding

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Photo: Michael Corral

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# Fender Does Away with MSRP

As of July 7, FMIC has ceased the use of "Manufacturer Suggested Retail Prices" (MSRP) on any Fender-branded products in North America. A representative for the company stated, "In an effort to reduce confusion in the marketplace, FMIC has decided to eliminate the MSRP and use solely the advertised

price." Fender's stance is that MSRP has evolved to now exist in a "secondary role" to MAP and, as such, is "extraneous."

Though the company, itself, stopped referencing MSRP in July, Fender is working with its retailers to phase out MSRP references by the end of the year.



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## Young Chang to Distribute Fridolin in North America



YOUNG CHANG

The Schimmel Piano Company has selected Young Chang North America to manufacture the Fridolin piano exclusively for Schimmel dealers. The Fridolin is described as "an exceptional piano that maintains the fine tradition of the Schimmel Piano Company [that] will now replace the price point of the previous May Berlin piano."

The new Fridolin line will consist of a 48" and 52" vertical and a 5'2" and 6'1" Grand at very competitive price points. "At Young Chang we are proud that Schimmel has selected our company to produce this great addition to the Schimmel family of pianos," states Larry Fresch, COO Young Chang North America. The pianos feature AAA Solid Spruce Soundboards, German Roslau Wire, All Maple Action Parts, and Cold Pressed Hammers.

Brother to Wilhelm, the founder of Schimmel Piano in Germany, Fridolin Schimmel came to the United States and founded his own piano company in 1893. Fridolin's new home in Minnesota was ideal for piano manufacturing with its tradition of high-grade lumber. With the combination of piano designs and materials, the Fridolin piano developed an excellent reputation, as did his brother in Germany.

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## Steinway & Sons to Bring Signature Gallery to Charlotte

Steinway & Sons has announced the upcoming opening of Steinway Piano Gallery – Charlotte, the North Carolina Piedmont region's only exclusive Steinway showroom. The new gallery becomes one of a limited number of hand-selected dealerships offering The Family of Steinway-Designed Pianos to artists, students, retail consumers and institutions around the globe.

Steinway Piano Gallery – Charlotte is owned and operated by Mark and Katherine Love. The Loves are no strangers to the Steinway brand. As Senior Vice President of Development and Institutional Relationships for Steinway in the Philadelphia region, Mark worked closely with colleges and universities to ensure that Steinway pianos graced their recital halls and practice rooms, and he assisted many area colleges and

universities in their goal of attaining All-Steinway School status, including Rowan University, Moravian College, Immaculata University, Cairn University, and Chestnut Hill College. In addition, with many years of experience on the sales floor, Mark has provided consistent education and advice for customers, enabling

them to make an informed decision in their acquisition of a Steinway piano.

"Mark's long experience with Steinway gives him special knowledge of our brand that will be invaluable in launching this new presence in Charlotte," said Todd Sanders, vice president of Sales and Marketing for Steinway & Sons. "In partnership with his wife, Katherine, Mark is providing Steinway with an exciting entré into a region with a vibrant community of pianists and music lovers. We wish them every success."



## Mutec Mutes

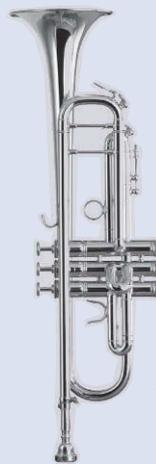


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## UpFront

**12** AUGUST 2014 • [mmrmagazine.com](http://mmrmagazine.com)

### Yorkville Sound's Jack Long Appointed to the Order of Canada

On June 30th, his Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, announced the 2014 appointments to the Order of Canada. Included on this list of



recipients is Yorkville Sound founder and chairman, Jack Long.

The Order of Canada, one of that nation's highest civilian honors, was established in 1967, during Canada's centennial year, to recognize outstanding achievement, dedication to the community and service to the nation.

Jack Long is being recognized for his engagement as a pioneer in Canada's music retail and manufacturing industries who is committed to musicians, customers, and employees across the country.

"Making music is a lifelong passion," says Long. "Music is something that can improve peoples' lives."

Long and McQuade was founded in 1956 when Jack had the idea of selling instruments to friends in the industry. Now, 58 years later, the chain has 65 Canadian locations serving musicians from coast to coast.

In addition to building Long & McQuade, Jack also established Yorkville Sound as a separate manufacturing and distribution company in 1963. Yorkville Sound continues to manufacture Yorkville Pro Audio, VTC ProAudio, and the Traynor guitar and bass amp brands at its facility in Pickering Ontario.



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# MMR Launches Online Supplier Directory

The recently launched online *MMR* Supplier Directory is a comprehensive database of companies and organizations within the MI industry. Every category of products and services relevant to the successful operation of an MI retail business is represented within the Directory. Dealers can use the site, free of charge, to

match service providers to whatever your needs may be.

Suppliers can register and add their company's basic info for free, with the option to run an enhanced listing at a minimal charge. From now on, the *only* way to ensure that your business will be listed in the annual print version of the *MMR* Sup-

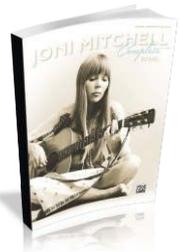


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## Alfred Receives Paul Revere Award for 'Joni Mitchell: Complete So Far'

Alfred Music received the Paul Revere Award for Graphic Excellence in the category of "Book Design in Popular Folios" for the recently released songbook *Joni Mitchell: Complete So Far*. This ceremony is held annually during the yearly meeting of the Music Publishers Association in New York City, New York.



"It is such an honor for this songbook to be recognized by our respected friends and colleagues," said Aaron Stang, the book's longtime editor. "This was such a special project for our team and we are so pleased with the finished product. I need to give credit to the book's graphic designer, Dana D'Elia, who designed the cover and interior art layouts for this songbook - I am thrilled that her hard work has been recognized by her peers. And, of course, this award is dedicated to the artist who spent a lifetime creating music that will be enjoyed for generations, Joni Mitchell!"

*Joni Mitchell: Complete So Far* features a cover image from Jack Robinson and includes over 40 classic images from the legendary classic rock-era photographer Henry Diltz. The book also incorporates an incisive foreword on her unique guitar style and a one-of-a-kind extensively cross-referenced Tuning Index for those in search of a deeper understanding of her approach to guitar.

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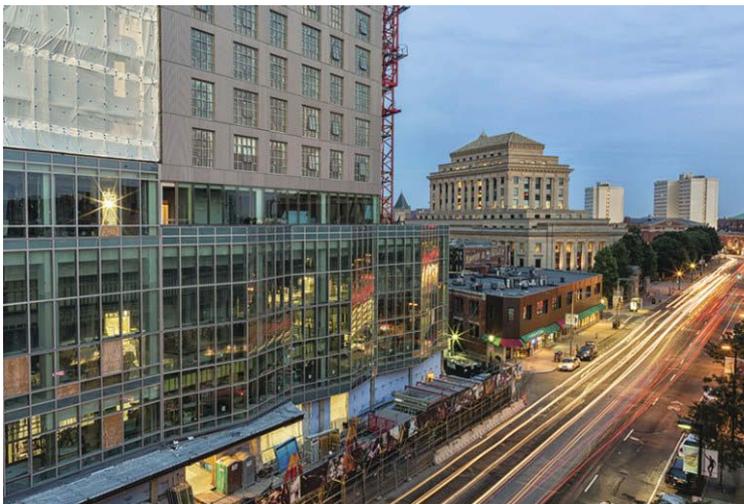
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## Berklee Teams with Avid for Groundbreaking Studio Complex

Berklee College of Music, the world's largest independent contemporary music college, has deployed Avid professional audio production solutions to enable real-time, high-definition collaborative workflows between its newly unveiled 16-story tower in Boston and its campus in Valencia, Spain. Showcasing the Avid Everywhere™ vision for connecting audio professionals more powerfully, collaboratively, and efficiently, the new workflow delivers seamless, faster global team working capabilities along with the strength of Avid's industry-standard audio production technologies.

An ultra-high speed internet connection links Berklee's new state-of-the-art 10-studio audio production complex in Boston, which is among the largest of its kind in the United States, to its campus in Valencia, Spain, enabling real-time collaboration on a global level – now a standard practice

in many professional project workflows. For example, musicians playing on one campus can be recorded and mixed by students at the other campus.



The new Berklee Complex in Boston.

For both campuses, Berklee has chosen audio solutions that are integrated with the new Avid MediaCentral Platform, giving students access to an even wider range of tools and experts, from music creation to distribution. These include Pro Tools® | Software, Pro Tools|HD systems with Avid analog and digital HD interfaces, Sibelius® music notation software, and two System 5 digital audio mixing consoles. Berklee has also selected Pro Tools as the official digital audio workstation (DAW) on all laptops

distributed to every incoming student as part of its Berklee Bundle Licensing Program (BBLP), fulfilling its commitment to giving students unlimited access to industry-standard tools.

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## Cordoba & FMIC Finalize Sale of Guild Guitars



Cordoba Music Group (CMG), the manufacturer of Cordoba acoustic guitars, ukuleles, and accessories, has announced that it has finalized the sale of the Guild® guitar brand and related assets from Fender Musical Instruments Corporation (FMIC).

"We are thrilled to carry the torch for the Guild brand," said Cordoba Music Group's CEO, Tim Miklaucic. "Guild guitars have landed in the hands of so many legendary musicians throughout the course of history. Their unmistakable voices have led to some amazing songs and moments in music, and we can't wait to write the next chapter." CMG is expected to begin production in Oxnard, California, led by Guild alum Ren Ferguson as the VP of manufacturing and R&D.



## Letters

In reference to the "Step Up to the Plate" article in June 2014 *MMR*: Thank you for your focus on step-up and performance level instruments. We find, however, that this market has far from leveled off. We are experiencing enormous success, perhaps more than ever, in selling step-up, "performance," and pro instruments. The gentlemen interviewed all make great points, but there are several things that come to mind that might help us (retailers) even more in our common goal of increasing sales of these instruments:

1. The terms "step-up," "performance" and "pro" are just words. Be honest about that. If anything, those terms make our job more difficult. What one company calls "pro" another might consider merely a "step-up," even if the price point and materials/specs are identical. What matters most in choosing an instrument are the specs. What features will benefit the player most, and why. This is information that potentially means a lot to us, but can be hard to find. We make FAB cards for each step-up instrument (at Musical Innovations, we consider everything above student level a "step-up" and then go from there, to avoid the customer confusion that Roger Eaton mentions), indicating the instrument's specs, features, advantages, and benefits to the player, so that parents and students can easily differentiate. It also helps them to see the value behind the price. We believe

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in “selling through education,” that by giving customers the information they need to make an educated buying decision, they will choose an instrument that they will be happier with. Help us differentiate your instruments from others’ and help us give customers the information they truly need. What features give the player what benefits, and why. Where an instrument is made is not nearly as important as how it is made. Help your DMs help us by having this information at hand, in ready-to-use formats.

2. Giving customers a choice is paramount. While each of our wonderful manufacturing friends would like to be the supplier of 99.9 percent of what we stock, the truth is that – especially for higher-end instruments – people want a choice. Band directors have varying brand/model preferences, and we want to honor those preferences. Parents, too, like to see their students have a choice. We like to keep a good amount of step-up instruments in stock, from a number of suppliers, and when suppliers help us by allowing us terms, consignment, approval and so on, that means a lot. So, for example, when a student comes in for a step-up flute, we don’t simply hand them ONE flute, we hand them 6-8 and give them the ability to choose the one that suits them best. Please don’t fret if you see many different brands in our store, dear supplier friends; if your instruments are truly high quality, the variety will help them stand out even more.

3. Give us “little guys” a break. We are the ones that spend hours with the customer going over features, allowing them to try instruments, talking pricing with parents, working out financing, writing school bids and so on. When the customer then can turn around and get the very same instrument online for less than we pay for it, that hurts. It hurts us, and it hurts the customer as he may not have the availability of repair or warranty service if needed, or the availability of lessons to help the student play the new instrument to its fullest potential.

4. For those of you who do customer rebates (and salesperson spiffs), a HUGE “thank you!” This helps us more than you know. Customers feel they are getting more value without us having to play the “race to the bottom” (lowest price) game. Also to those who have allowed us to tour your factories and meet your craftsmen: kudos. This type of openness and sharing also means more than you know.

Overall, Musical Innovations is grateful for our suppliers, who work hard to

help us meet the needs of our customers. And we’re grateful for our DMs, who work hard to understand the unique needs of our company, our region of the country, and our customers. Thank you for all you do for us!!

Tracy E. Leenman  
Musical Innovations  
Greenville, S.C.

*“After playing the Sk1, it is now my number one instrument for everything keyboard I do. From the Hall & Oates tours to the award-winning Live From Daryl’s House show the Hammond Sk1 covers it all for me.”*



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## Trade Regrets

**Calvin R. Grafton**, age 83, passed away on July 11.

Born in Frackville, Pennsylvania, Grafton opened Calvin Grafton Electronics Sales & Service in 1963, later incorporated as Grafton Piano & Organ Co. Inc. It grew under his leadership from a small shop in Hatfield, Pennsylvania to at its present location in Souderton carrying a complete range of pianos, organs, and keyboards. The company has installed and services hundreds of Allen church organs in the tri-state area.

While at the Summer NAMM Show, we learned that much beloved industry veteran **Danny Rocks** had passed away. Danny was a tireless advocate for both music education and the music industry and he was a frequent contributor to *MMR* and our sister publication *SBO*.



On July 24<sup>th</sup>, Danny's wife Mary Grace sent *MMR* the following:

*Danny Rocks, An Unusual Kind of Conductor*

*It would surprise me if Danny had any idea of the magnitude of influence he had on so many in their lives in the music industry. In Danny's early years after leaving Temple University he played music on Broadway and worked as an assistant conductor. He told so many stories of his relationship with Zero Mostel and the power and command he had of his audience. I can say now that watching Danny in his career in the music industry he learned quite well from Zero. Danny had a most unusual impact on people. Looking at Danny's life, the song "If I Were A Rich Man" sings in my head. His fullness of life, his love of people, and desire to help others showed through the hundreds of warm, loving, and appreciative comments that his friends shared on Facebook about him.*

*Filled with his robust laugh, Danny loved sharing stories of his well travelled life, which was centered around the music business and of course some wonderful travels with me. With a list of accomplishments, from as early as eight years old, Danny was a TV personality playing accordion, the youngest person in the city of Philadelphia to have a*

*permit to work playing pianos in bars in his teens and of course having a paper route. He told many stories of his father sitting in the bar, having a beer and being very proud of his son. Danny was the older brother to two sisters and a brother.*

*Having worked for a company from the bottom up, as he always said, "doing every function that one could do in a company," groomed him for launching his business, The Company Rocks, in 2008. The company became his passion, a place to put his creative juice to serve others. He loved, researching, writing, and, most of all, teaching and mentoring others. No matter what the industry was, Danny was committed to helping others. For Danny, a check was nowhere near as important as knowing that he had served someone well, taught someone something, or just held someone up. I cannot tell you his excitement at hitting over a half million hits on one of his YouTube videos. He gave freely and abundantly. Looking back, I see that many times he did this with great self-sacrifice and at a high payback to him in self-satisfaction.*

*Slow to anger, always looking from the positive angle were traits he perfected. Very few people saw Danny angry, as he was careful of that. When something affected him he would mull it over and come to some reconciliation. It's probably surprising to many that he was a very solitary man. He looked at the people he interacted with in his business as his friends. Truly that was the case as evidenced by all the comments over the past few days.*

*As a shock to all who knew him, he married later in his life. We shared many wonderful years travelling, laughing, eating, and many times with taking care of sadder things in life like caring for elderly and helping me with burials. Although Danny had no children of his own he was so dearly loved by his nieces and nephews and his stepson. He loved both his blood family and his married family. Our life was rich and full in all those ways.*

*In 2012 Danny relocated to Palm Desert, a place we always thought of for retirement. He took a sooner option on that move, as clearly he was nowhere near retirement. It became very dangerous when he began thinking that he could be a "do it yourself" contender. Finally he promised he would*

*leave all handyman and construction work to the professionals and better enjoy his time swimming in the pool and soaking in the jacuzzi or doing some light gardening.*

*He worked hard and was very committed to his business. Danny was well loved and respected in business and continued to grow his company and work with his clients to the day he died. On his way to the Summer NAMM show, both tired and excited to see all his friends and colleagues and share a few more gems at the show, I am sure he checked his bank account in richness in life's relationships and experiences and closed the account thinking... Yes, I am a rich man. That huge heart of his gave until it gave out.*

*Danny died too early at 64 when there were still so many scores to conduct in his life. Rest in peace Danny Rocks. I love you, as do so many others.*

On July 14<sup>th</sup>, *MMR* was contacted by Chris Syllaba of Jordan Kitt's Music who shared the sad news of the passing of the company's former president, Clem D'Avella. The following is a tribute that Chris wrote in memory of Clem:

*A Tribute to Clement D'Avella 1931 - 2014*



*Today we celebrate the life of Clem D'Avella, a man who had a great impact on so many of us in the music industry.*

*Clem was born in Italy but spent most of his years in the Washington, D.C. area. He lived in Washington, D.C., Silver Spring, and eventually settled in Potomac, Maryland.*

*In 1956, Clem began his life-long career in the music industry at the original Arthur Jordan Piano Company store on 13th and G Streets in NW Washington, D.C. He was assigned to the piano department and quickly became a store manager, moving to the Silver Spring store. Moving steadily up the ranks, he eventually became executive vice president and ultimately, in 1988, president of Jordan Kitt's Music.*

*Clem remained in that position until his retirement in 1991. Even after retirement, however, Clem's dedication to the company and its employees remained as he was called back in 1993 to again lead the sales organi-*

zation. Even after his second retirement Clem was senior advisor to Jordan Kitt's until owner Bill McCormick's passing in 2007.

Clem was instrumental in so many ways to the company, including the period of expansion into the Baltimore and Richmond markets. He was a key figure in the acquisitions of Wells Music (Denver market) in 1981, Wilmington Piano Company (Philadelphia market) in 1988, and Temple of Music (Virginia Beach market) also in 1988.

Clem quickly became Mr. McCormick's right hand man, both in motivating the Jordan Kitt's sales force and during his vendor trips to Italy with Mr. McCormick's company, Georgetown Leather Design.

Giving back to the community and the industry was also a big part of Clem's life through his years of service on the NAMM Board. But his true contribution was his huge impact on so many lives within and outside of the industry. He worked very hard to ensure that his mother and father were well taken care of, participating in their care together with his sister. He was devoted to his family, including his wife Mary, both admiring what she accomplished in her career and cherishing their many years together, and his children, Mike and Frank.

According to friend and former Jordan Kitt's executive Dennis Houlihan, Clem was "a man with a huge heart – filled with love and compassion."

Clem. You were a truly great man. I will never forget the influence you had on my life and your unwavering guidance in my career. Thank you for the person you were and your invaluable contribution to this world.

Chris Syllaba, President & CEO, Jordan Kitts Music

Capital Music Center (Austin, Texas) co-owner and co-founder **Ron Edelman** died on June 1 when his heart failed unexpectedly after winning a six-month fight with cancer. He was 61. "Ron was an incredible man who forever enriched countless lives with the gift of music," offered James Harding of Gist piano, a friend and music business peer.



Making piano lessons more fun and acceptable was paramount to Edelman, and he believed that Capital Music could make this possible by becoming an education center with technology and group piano as its core. Longtime manager Britt Cawthon, education director Catherine Davis, and co-founder Cherrie Droutz are proud to carry on Edelman's musical vision and the Capital Music Center mantra, "People Making Music for Life."

Ron Edelman and Cherrie Droutz co-founded Capital Music Center (CMC) in 1988, initially concentrating on organ, keyboard, digital piano, and lessons. CMC became an authorized Roland piano dealer in 1989, a choice that forever changed the core focus of their business. Roland developed an easy way for students and teachers to utilize MIDI files to help students learn to play the piano called "Interactive Music Tutoring System." It was also the first system to focus on the specific challenges that caused students to give up. Edelman embraced the system wholeheartedly and grew CMC student enrollment exponentially.

In honor of Edelman's life and contribution to music education in Austin, his family created the Ron Edelman Scholarship for Piano Education at the University of Texas, a permanent endowment benefiting students attending the Sarah and Ernest Butler School of Music in the College of Fine Arts. Funds distributed from the endowment will support non-piano major freshmen participating in Butler School of Music's Group Piano program, and preference will be given to students with financial need.

Donations for The Ron Edelman Scholarship for Piano Education may be sent to:

The Ron Edelman Scholarship for Piano Education, University of Texas, Butler School of Music, 2406 Robert Dedman Drive, Stop E3100, Austin, TX 78712-1555.

**William Fritscher**, 75, passed away on July 5, 2014.

Born in Germany in 1939, son of the late Anna and Friedrich Fritscher, William com-



pleted his apprenticeship and earned a degree as a master craftsman of string instruments. He moved to the United States at the age of 21 and pursued his career in Philadelphia working for the Philadelphia Music Co.

He met his wife Jeanette at the Canstatter German Club, and they married in 1963.

Fritscher then worked for Kappa Guitar Co., in Maryland, before accepting a position as plant manager at Guild Music in Westerly in 1971. He held this position until his retirement. He took great pride in growing the company and considered his employees family. He was well known in our industry as an expert at his craft and made custom guitars for many famous musicians over the years.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the American Cancer Society, PO Box 22718, Oklahoma City, OK 73123-1718, in William's memory.

The family invites interested parties to leave an online condolence at [www.gaffneydolanfuneralhome.com](http://www.gaffneydolanfuneralhome.com)

**Alfredo Flores Sr.** was born in Mexico on August 10, 1908 and moved to San Antonio, Texas with his mother and grandmother when he was a small boy. Flores would eventually work at the Thomas Goggan piano company. His experience with the piano company provided Mr. Flores with the idea and contacts to open his own business.

Alamo Music Exchange was formed in 1929, just months before the stock market crash. The store was able to withstand the Great Depression due to Mr. Flores' dedication to customer service. Over the years the store grew in size and reputation, leading to expansion and a new building in the 1960s. That decade also saw his son, Alfredo Flores Jr., and his daughter join the business.

During his 2009 NAMM Oral History interview, when Mr. Flores was 100 years old, he remarked on how proud he was to have been in the music business and how proud he was of his family for keeping the family business running.

Alfredo Flores Sr. passed away on June 30th.

## Supplier Scene

### CAD Presents Headphones to Music Students



CAD Audio recently donated a number of MH510 studio headphones to music students in Cincinnati, Ohio. Aaron O'Keefe, a private music instructor and owner/co-owner of the Loveland, Maineville, and Lebanon music academies, says his students typically range from age six to 16 and he personally teaches piano, guitar, voice, drums, bass, double bass, vibraphone, mandolin and ukulele, to name a few.

"These CAD headphones are going to be used in countless studio recordings," Aaron continues. "The Sessions MH510s are perfect for the studio because they have a closed-back design and there isn't any bleed through into the microphones."

Knowing that his students' version of Tool's "46 and 2" on YouTube has had nearly six and a half million views to this point, appearing in their videos has added significance for supporting manufacturers such as Zildjian, Jackson, ESP, Dunlop, Kramer and CAD Audio.

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

### Ernie Ball Runs 'All Access with Slash' Contest



As part of Ernie Ball's new "All Access with Slash" contest, starting August 1, customers will find unique codes inside their purchased Ernie Ball string packages. These codes represent a chance to win an all-expense paid trip to Hollywood to attend a private rehearsal with iconic guitarist Slash and two tickets to Slash's World on Fire tour. Codes can be entered at [ernieball.com/slash](http://ernieball.com/slash) to enter the drawing for the grand prize.

Additionally, Red, Blue, and White guitar picks will be placed inside string packages, giving Ernie Ball fans the opportunity to win even more prizes, including Ernie Ball guitar strings, a Dunlop Slash Signature Wah pedal, and a Music Man Guitar.

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

### Hal Leonard Announces 'M4' Campaign at Summer NAMM

Print publisher and product distributor Hal Leonard unveiled its new "M4" campaign at Summer NAMM. It's a program designed to encourage dealers to get started in the Mobile Music Making Market. The company's campaign will involve a bundle with the bestselling products from industry heavy hitters such as IK Multimedia, Griffin, Alesis, Line 6, M-Audio, Samson, JamHub, and others. The campaign is designed to take the guesswork out of ordering while also provides eye-catching, space-saving merchandising.

Hal Leonard sales reps will offer tech support and recommend must-have apps for musicians that tie in to product sales. The M4 Campaign offers these perks and what they say are very flexible dealer terms.

Brad Smith, senior sales and marketing manager for Hal Leonard, comments,



"Our new M4 Campaign was created to encourage dealers to treat iOS devices as a bona fide product category – not just as an afterthought accessory."

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

### Vandoren Breaks Sales Records

DANSR, Inc., the U.S. importer for Vandoren woodwind products, has tied its all-time Vandoren sales record by month in the month of May 2014. "We are thrilled with this performance," remarks Andy Blanco, Vandoren Brand Manager. "Our products are the best on the market, and we have a sales staff that represents it very well. We have a strong commitment to serving music and music dealers and one of the ways we do that by supplying the community with world-class products and efficient and accurate fulfillment."

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

## Asterope Eyes Increasing Momentum for Audio Cables

Over the last 12 months, Asterope has reported increasing momentum among both dealers and online retailers for its premium instrument and XLR cable products. Dealers across the U.S., as well as online retailers, including Musician's Friend, Amazon, Sweetwater and SamAsh.com, have added As-

terope to their product portfolios over the last year.

The momentum is the result of a variety of initiatives the company has undertaken to broaden its distribution base, including the rollout of its worldwide retail distribution agreement with Fishman, a 70-city promotional deal-

er tour, and the initiation of the next phase of its global branding campaign featuring a host of renowned artists, engineers, and producers, designed to support its existing products as well as its expansion into the professional audio market.

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



### D'Addario Foundation and Harmony Program Celebrate First Season Together



The D'Addario Foundation and The Harmony Program united this year to provide underserved Long Island, New York third-graders of Deauville Gardens with free musical instruments and a uniquely intensive after-school music program.

The in-depth, after-school program is based on the renowned El Sistema model and provides 23 third-graders from Deauville Gardens East and West public elementary schools in Copiague, Long Island, with the stringed instrument of their choice and music instruction for two hours a day, three days a week. The Deauville elementary schools were selected as they have not had a stringed music program for 30 years.

The partnering foundations co-hosted an end-of-year recital on Monday, June 16, 2014 at the D'Addario headquarters, where the children demonstrated the skills that they learned this year.

[daddariofoundation.org](http://daddariofoundation.org) and  
[harmonyprogram.org](http://harmonyprogram.org)

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## Reunion Blues Welcomes The Crimson ProjeKt Guitarist Markus Reuter

Gig bag and instrument case manufacturer Reunion Blues has officially welcomed Touch Guitars® founder, virtuoso guitarist, composer, and record producer Markus Reuter to their artist roster. Markus' work has included collaborations with Ian Boddy, Robert Rich, King Crimson members Tony Levin, Pat Mastelotto, Adrian Belew, and producer Lee Fletcher, among numerous others. He is currently a member of the band Stick Men, as well as King Crimson offshoot The Crimson ProjeKt.

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



## Sony Creative's DoStudio Software Authors CSNY Blu-Ray



Sony Creative Software played a key role in the production of *CSNY 1974*, a high-profile Blu-ray Disc™ Pure Audio release of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young's most popular concerts across the country. DoStudio was selected by Duplitech for providing authoring technology that provides the best physical product for the fans.

Produced by Graham Nash and Joel Bernstein, the box set mirrors the electric/acoustic/electric format that the band followed on stage. *CSNY 1974* includes 40 previously-unreleased tracks recorded forty years ago in 192kHz/24-bit sound.

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

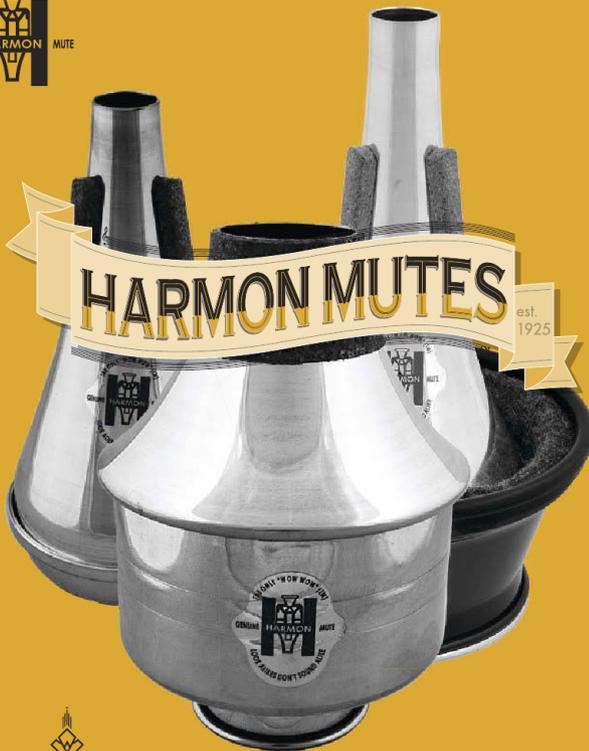
## Sabian Celebrates 20 Years of AAX

In 1993, an innovative Sabian design and technology propelled AAX cymbals to what the company says is the widest dynamic range ever achieved. Twenty years later AAX remains one of the top-selling cymbal series from any brand.

The Modern Bright tone of AAX cym-

bals is designed to stay clean, clear, and accurate at any volume. AAX offers an wide range of models with sounds for a variety of styles and tastes -X-Plosion Crashes, Fast Crashes, X-Celerator Hats, and Air Splashes.

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



## GET DOWN WITH SOME NEW SOUNDS

Poppa's not the only one with a new bag. Harmon is proud to introduce a new series of mutes with updated eye catching packaging. Spice up your sales with these new amazing sounds from an iconic brand. Available from major distributors. Learn more at [www.harmonmutecompany.com](http://www.harmonmutecompany.com)



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## DPA Microphones on Rising Star

When Daniel S. McCoy, CAS, scored the sound supervisor role for ABC's new live results singing show, *Rising Star*, he knew he would need an innovative miking solution to support the performances. In addition to his tried-and-trusted d:diccate™ 4017 Shotgun Mic from DPA Microphones, McCoy also relies on his new DPA d:screet™ 4061 Omnidirectional Miniature Mics with Wisycom wideband transmitters and receivers.

*Rising Star* incorporates significant moments of dialogue in addition to the performances. In order to account for the show's various ENG and reality needs, McCoy simultaneously uses the d:diccate 4017 and d:screet 4061s to give the post production team the ultimate choice in audio dynamics.

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



## Tommy Lee Debuts New Pearl Drum Set



With the kickoff of Motley Crue's monumental "All Bad Things Must Come to an End" final tour, Pearl endorser Tommy Lee unveiled his new Pearl E-Pro Live drum kit and rollercoaster rig – "The Crucifly." The E-Pro Live electronic drums offer Tommy the feel of an acoustic drum set – courtesy of Pearl's Tru Trac Drumheads - but with a surplus of options when it comes to sound.

Tommy's latest E-Pro Live drum set went through a rigorous series of tests before finally hitting the stage. Originally assembled at Pearl's headquarters in Nashville, Tenn., then shipped out to Pearl's West Coast Artist Relations Office in Los Angeles, "The Crucifly Kit" went through an exhausting series of tests and configurations in order to determine several necessary factors including width and length of the drums in proportion to the riser, weight distribution, playability and the reaction of the drums while upside down and traveling, and, Tommy's comfortably behind the kit.

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



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# Altus Flutes Launches New Consumer Website

The Altus team at KHS America has launched a new home for the Altus enthusiast. The site has been renovated, revamped, and updated with the primary focus on providing a simpler user experience.

The new home page gives the consumer a quick glance of all things Altus, showcasing the company's latest products, history, news, artists, and events. Altus has also

simplified their product navigation to be more intuitive and responsive to the way today's internet users prefer to search for information. Consumers will now be able to easily navigate through the site to find the available flutes, headjoints, tubings, and metallurgy, as well as other Altus events and offerings.

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



*Created by Master Flute Maker Shinichi Tsunaka, each Altus flute reflects his passion to combine the finest playing flutes with the finest materials and artistry.*



## JodyJazz's Espina Presents at TEDx

Jody Espina, President of JodyJazz Inc, was one of the featured speakers at the recent TEDx event in Savannah, Georgia. TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) is a global set of conferences owned by the private nonprofit Sapling Foundation, under the slogan "ideas worth spreading." Past presenters include Bill Clinton, Bill Gates, Jane Goodall, Malcolm Gladwell, and many Nobel Prize winners.

Combining elements of both his personal and business philosophies, Espina described his journey from musician and teacher to founder and President of JodyJazz Inc. Also a world-class Saxophone player, Espina began and closed his presentation with impressive demonstrations of his instrumental prowess.

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

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ON THE MOVE

**Orange Amplification** has promoted **Antony Gunter** to sales director with immediate effect. This new role includes global sales responsibilities and day-to-day management of U.K. and U.S.A. sales teams.



Antony joined Orange Amplification in June 2004 as U.K. sales manager. In the last ten years he has seen his role change and expand from European sales manager to International sales manager and now sales director. During this period he has played a significant part in the massive growth in international sales that has earned Orange Amplification three Queens Awards for Enterprise: International Trade in six years.

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**Shure Incorporated** has announced the promotions of four senior executives: **Ray Crawford**, **Mark Humrichouser**, **Meg Madison**, and **Tom Kundmann**.



Ray Crawford has been promoted to vice president of Strategic Planning and Integration. He will continue to lead the Corporate Strategy, Global Business Development, and Global Product Management functions. Ray has been with Shure since 2005, before which he was director of Strategy and Business Development at U.S. Robotics Corporation.



Mark Humrichouser has been named vice president of the Americas Business Unit. He will continue to lead the Sales, Marketing, and Customer Training and Support functions for North and South America. Before joining Shure in 2006, Mark worked for Sennheiser U.S. as Industry team manager, regional sales manager, and regional market development manager.



Meg Madison has been promoted to vice president of Human Resources. She will continue to lead the Global Human Resources function. Before Meg joined Shure in 2005, she worked for United Airlines, as a director at Destination Hotels and Resorts and Radisson/Hyatt hotel organizations, and as a manager at Automatic Data Processing (ADP).



Tom Kundmann has been named assistant vice president of Product Development and in this role he will continue to lead Digital Wireless Product Development. He has a Bachelor's Degree (BSEE) and a Master's Degree from the University of Illinois-Champaign and holds six U.S. patents in wireless technology.

Additionally, Shure has hired two new associates to the sales team of the Company's Americas Business Unit. **Tim Valley** has been named regional sales manager for the Pro Systems Group for the Western U.S. and **Christos Desalernos** has been named senior regional sales manager for the Retail Group for the Western U.S.



Tim Valley joins Shure from Anew CT, where he served as executive vice president for the last eight years and as a sales director for two years before that. As a regional sales manager for the Pro Systems Group, he will manage the installed AV, conferencing, and broadcast customers in the Western U.S.

**Christos Desalernos** has worked for the last 15 years at Furman Sound as an engineer technician, an account executive, and, for the past nine years, as director of Division Sales. In his new position as senior regional sales manager for the Retail Group, Christos will manage the retail business for Shure, including relationships with Guitar Center and Musician's Friend.



**Korg USA Inc.** congratulates **Charlie Bright** on his retirement from its Research and Development Division after thirty years of service. For the past twenty years, Bright has served as vice president and general manager of the Korg U.S.A. Research and Development Division at its facility in Milpitas, California, where he contributed to some of Korg's most well-known products such as the M1, T-Series, and the Wavestation.

With the retirement of Charlie Bright, Korg U.S.A. announces two promotions within the management of the Korg Research and Development division. **Andy Leary** will become the general manager of Operations, and will be responsible for the project management and overall operations of Korg Research and Development. Leary, who was previously Sr. DSP Engineer and Algorithm Designer, will also continue his engineering role within the company.

**Dan Philips**, who was previously a product manager, will become the division's manager of Product Development. In this new role, he will develop new products and research plans, and work with Korg's engineering teams to implement these innovative designs.

**Guitar Center** has announced the arrival of two new executives to the company leadership team. **Ron Japinga** will join the executive leadership team as the new executive vice president of Inventory Management and Supply Chain. Japinga joins the Guitar Center organization after an eight-year career at West Marine, where he was executive vice president of Merchandising, Planning and Logistics. Prior to that, Ron was a VP-level executive with Kohl's Department Stores. Joining Ron as part of the team is **Susan Starnes**, the new vice president of Services. Starnes joins Guitar Center after a 10-year career history with Lowe's, where she was responsible for Repair Services, Sales and Development. Prior to her work with Lowe's, Susan was a top consultant with Bain Capital in Boston.

GC has also confirmed the departure of John Bagan, executive vice president of Merchandising, effective August 1. Bagan was a member of the executive leadership team for more than six years at Guitar Center. Further, 25-year Guitar Center veteran Grant Sheffield was announced as the new vice president of Retail Transformation. In this role, Sheffield will oversee a host of new structural changes being implemented in stores across the country.

**Matthew Pennington** brings more than 20 years of marketing and business experience to the **Galaxy Audio** team. For the last 13 years Pennington served as an advisor, sales and marketing leader in a financial company and has an extensive background in business services.



In his role with Galaxy Audio, Pennington will be involved with sales support, communication, and account management with an emphasis on Independent Dealer Growth, as well as provide dealer resources through innovative campaigns and initiatives.

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# Larry Fishman of Fishman Transducers

by Christian Wissmuller



**F**or over thirty years, Fishman Transducers has been perhaps *the* go-to company in the realm of acoustic amplification. From pickups to preamps, cables to effects to pedals and beyond, Fishman has made a name for itself through constant innovation and commitment to the evolution of the acoustic experience. Brands that have incorporated Fishman technology into their own production instruments include the likes of C.F. Martin, Fender, Composite Acoustics, and Schecter, to name just a few.

In the past year or so, Fishman Transducers has introduced product that is widely considered to be amongst its most groundbreaking ever – the Fluence line of pickups and the TriplePlay MIDI guitar controller. Company president Larry Fishman, who holds over 30 patents in transducer and musical instrument engineering, recently took time out of his busy schedule (we snagged him just after Summer NAMM and just before a multi-week trip to China) to speak with *MMR* about his company's newly developed gear.

**MMR: One of the new products to make a big splash back at Winter NAMM was Fishman's Fluence pickup. Can you talk about the origins of the project – what was the process, what was the goal?**

**Larry Fishman:** Well, we've been in the acoustic instrument application business for, I guess, 33 years now. I hadn't gone in the direction of electric guitar pickups because I felt that the existing companies out there – you know, the DiMarzios, and [Seymour] Duncans, and EMGs and so forth – were doing a really good job and I didn't have a lot to add. So rather than going in there to have some market share without offering anything new, we just totally avoided it. But two years ago, I was made aware of a patent that a colleague had applied for involving stacked printed coils, based on printed circuit boards. It was his thought, because he was a guitar player as well, that maybe somebody could take this and turn it into something useful for electric guitar. I immediately saw tremendous benefits to consistency if you could use optical and modern printed circuit board techniques to print. I figured "Well, these solid stacks of very precise coils are going to make very, very matched coils and be very, very quiet."

**What happened next?**

We went ahead and invested some money in building prototype coils, and started playing around with the different magnetic field circuits and, lo and behold, we got something that worked pretty well right out of the gate.

**What had been your opinion of "traditional" electric guitar pickups prior to this whole project?**

We loved the sounds of the traditional pickups. That's what's behind the music I've listened to my whole life. But I knew that there were a lot of issues in consistency, noise, interactions with cable lengths, and so forth for the traditional approach. And I suspected that we could, more or less, reproduce the sounds of the classic pickups in a very consistent manner that didn't have all the baggage of the traditional pickups.

**To what extent did you and your team analyze existing pickups and pickup technology before going forward with the Fluence project?**

The big part of the picture or the puzzle that was sort of missing for us, and that we didn't have the 20 years of experience with, was

understanding and manipulating that magnetic field. So taking our analysis tools and things of that nature, we basically started measuring these really great sounding vintage pickups. We actually ended up building a three-dimensional magnetic field mapping machine. We calculated three-dimensional, colored graphical representations of the magnetic fields set or the magnetic circuit, that were present in those classic pickups that we really loved. That was an eye-opener. I am not going to name names, but one of the best-selling humbuckers in the marketplace today – I bought two of them, decided to measure them, and my God, I thought one was broken because it measured so differently than the other one. Then I went and bought another 10 and suddenly realized that out of that 10, three of them were reasonably close to one another and the others were just all over the map. These are good companies making these pickups. They're not doing shoddy work, but the difficulty of maintaining accuracy in a wire-wound coil with thousands of turns on it was really evident to me at that point. That just will not do, as far as I'm concerned. If you can't count on the pickup doing what it's supposed to do... it must drive guitarists crazy!

**That must've validated the notion that Fluence was worth pursuing.**

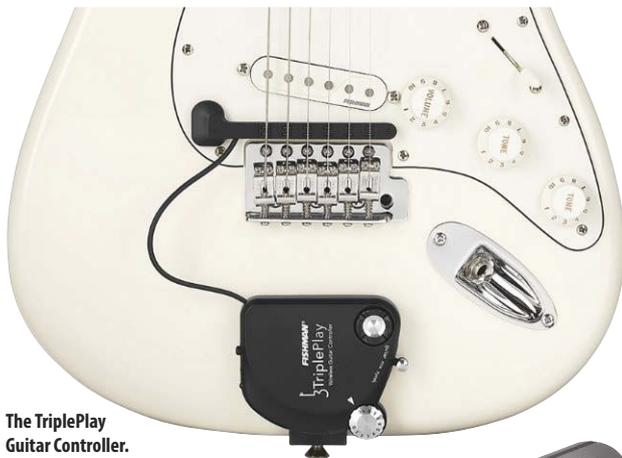
At that point I said, "All right – we are going for this" and we started building prototypes, and the product just started getting better and better and better. The results were really coming out just as we predicted. We could steer the response around, and at that point I made a critical decision for us to go with active pickups, and I did it for some really, really good engineering reasons. I knew that I would get some kickback from the market because active pickups seem to have been pigeonholed into a certain genre of music. But there was just too much benefit there to ignore.

We built a very powerful real-time, digital filtering prototyping setup that allowed us to take a pickup, get the magnetic field right, the electrical circuit correct, which for us starts off as a dead flat response, and then with our electronics we introduce the filtering characteristics that you find in a classic pickup which are high-pass, low-pass, and resonant type filters. Since our development system operates in real-time, we would target a response, put it on a guitar, do a lot of listening, and you can actually turn dials and hit the ab-

solute sweet-spot in real time. It allowed us to do maybe 15 years worth of development work in a matter of two years.

**Going back to the fact that these are active pickups – active pickups are a turnoff to some because they often require some modification to the guitar. How did you manage to have the Fluence line be active, but still fit into standard pickup cavities?**

We knew that we needed to come up with a retrofit-able power pack that could integrate into a standard guitar without having to drill a hole or put a cavity in the guitar. We came up with what I think are some pretty innovative approaches to that. We used very, very thin lithium-ion battery that, in the case of a Strat, is built into a thin, rectangular cover that's identical in size to the spring-cover on a Strat. In the case of Les Pauls and other guitars, they're control-cavity based modules. These are rechargeable with any standard cell phone, mini-USB type charger, which everyone has today, so it's very, very convenient and with each full charge you in the neighborhood of 200 hours of playing.



The TriplePlay  
Guitar Controller.



A Fluence humbucker  
in nickel finish.



A single-coil configuration  
Fluence pickup.

**Electric guitarists are notoriously “traditionalist” and often reluctant to embrace new technologies. What’s been the early reaction to Fluence from players?**

It's been universally positive. We've got pickups that reproduce the best sounds on the planet and we have taken all the negatives away. We can hand these to a player and we get instant, instant positive reaction on how they play, feel, how they articulate, and how they perform, and then they are astonished by the low-noise performance, and the dynamic range and so forth. They don't even ask about a battery. We bring it up afterwards, that Fluence pickups are active and that's how we got there, and players say, “Oh... That's cool. Why didn't someone do this before?”

**When will Fluence pickups be shipping to retailers?**

We are shipping single-coils already, and the humbucker sets are going to ship in mid-September.

**Both the ease of use and installation, as well as the relatively low price point has made the TriplePlay controller another significant release for Fishman – can you talk about that unit's development?**

We've worked with many companies that make MIDI converters. So I've seen or been involved in MIDI guitar for a long, long time and I've always seen the promise and also I've seen the broken hearts when the systems didn't deliver. I always knew if we could get the damn thing to work, there was excitement there. A lot of things have happened over the past 20 years and with the advancement of modern digital signal processing, we decided to take on this challenge. The processor on TriplePlay is really in the same family as the processors that we used when we did our Aura digital acoustic imaging, so we were very well versed in the use of that particular DSP chip, we knew that it high performance enough that we could do an onboard mounted pitch detection system that could run off of a rechargeable battery, so the fundamentals of that system were there. We developed the on-board processing and it was working really well, but I still didn't want to go to market. There's always the problem with all of the systems out there they're primarily used to trigger sounds that were in a separate piece of hardware and guitarists don't have the ability to add sounds or change sounds and they'd get bored. So when we sat around and tried to refine this product, we suddenly hit on the notion of being able to stream MIDI wirelessly off of the guitar and we did the math and we knew that we absolutely could do it without any hint of latency. Then the idea for the product really came alive. The cost reduction, by going wireless and going without a companion hardware-based module with limited sounds, along with the ability to process onboard without all types of expensive cables really lit it up. The original idea was to transmit these signals to a receiver that would plug into a keyboard or a hardware-based, rack-mounted synth module.

**But that's not what ultimately happened.**

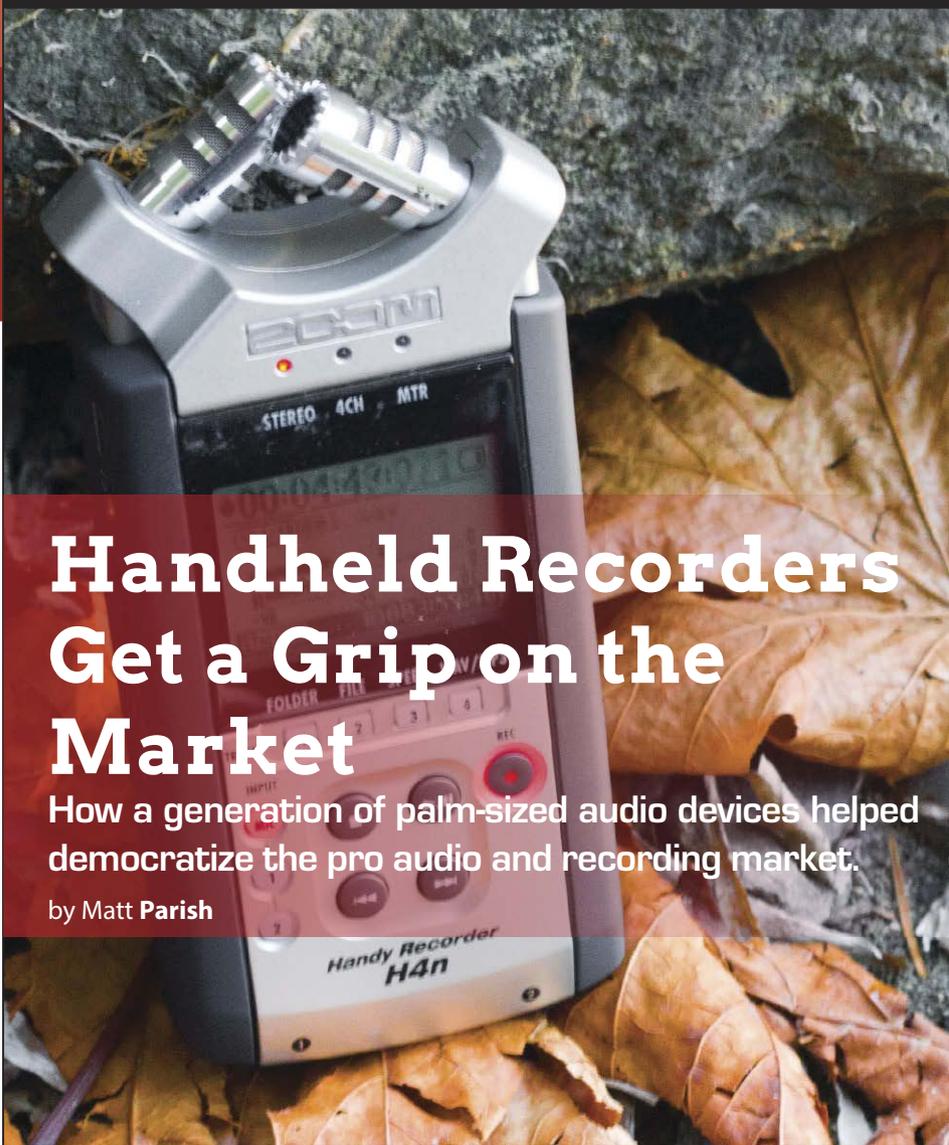
These things take a long time to develop and during the two-year period that we were actually refining this into a product, we realized that the rack-mount MIDI synth module market was dying. It virtually fell off the planet. We realized that everybody in the keyboard world had gone to soft sounds in computers because they're more affordable, more flexible, and you can do more artistic things with shaping the sounds and the samples. With that realization we said, “Ok, we're now in the software business, as well.” So we spent a year developing a software interface that resides in a computer or a tablet that runs on iOS or Windows that would manage the MIDI information and signals and allow it to drive any VST sound on the planet in your computer. That was the thing that got us and the world really excited. The pitch detection is just killer; it's the fastest MIDI system that I've seen to date. It allows guitarists to dive into that digital world in a much deeper way than ever before.

**What's been the reaction from dealers and players to TriplePlay since its introduction last year?**

We have been very, very successful. We really hit our targets and forecasts. We have actually exceeded them for the first year. Right now, our challenge is getting it into the hands of more of the independents. We are making it much, easier for them to have a demo set up in the store, and we've got specialists all over the country and they are doing training and so forth.

**Sounds great. Thanks for taking the time to chat, Larry.**

Thanks for your interest!



# Handheld Recorders Get a Grip on the Market

How a generation of palm-sized audio devices helped democratize the pro audio and recording market.

by Matt Parish

**I**n the old days, peering into the world of film and audio production could be an intimidating, exotic experience. There were big shoulder-strapped tape machines, strange-looking microphones, and audio techs following around with military-looking monitoring devices. Ambitious musicians, on the other hand, bought tabletop multi-track machines and scrounged together microphones to record practices. Most of them would simply find an old tape recorder like the ones their high school band director used for auditions. Even with the emergence of laptops and Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) software, users have often gravitated toward product downloads and online purchasing for products like audio interfaces.

The room for an MI dealer's influence wasn't great.



Handhelds are leading the MI market into welcome new territory.

### THE LITTLE ENGINE THAT COULD

Giving the masses the ability to record isn't a new thing, of course. Students once actually dragged reel-to-reels to college lectures, and budding engineers pack up laptops and interfaces in their car trunks to this day. But a few major technological leaps enabled handheld recorders to genuinely compete in the market.

Roland VP Paul Youngblood says that his company's R-09 product was able to take advantage of a leap forward in battery technology, an in-house approach to circuit design, and a good deal of institutional knowledge gained from their success with early hard disk units like the VS-880 and BR-8 multitrack recorders.

"Since we have custom VLSI and LSI circuits (which cost us a fortune to develop), we could contour our products to those," says Youngblood. "That's one of the reasons we were able to take that original VS technology and put it into a basically 2-inch by 5-inch format with a stereo recorder."

Youngblood notes that battery improvements were also important – what good was a portable device that you could only use for 30 minutes?

Zoom North America CEO Scott Goodman, points out a few other important changes in the evolution of Zoom's "Handy" series, which have come to dominate the market. "Improving noise floor, sound pressure level, our mic elements, and mic preamps – it's the integration of these improvements that define our latest recorders," he says. "We also have had a few 'eureka moments,' such as the idea of designing interchangeable mic capsules [beginning with last year's H6]."

But the one pivotal advance that everyone agrees on is the emergence of the SD card. Tascam, who had been making professional grade recorders that utilized tape media for years, jumped at the chance to use SD cards.

Marketing manager Jeff Laity describes it as a revelation. "The SD card made it possible to make a recorder that was possible to just keep in a backpack all the time in case you come across something that you want to record. They're small, they're reusable far beyond the ability of tape, and they're affordable."

### UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

Yet still, the type of success these diminutive products would enjoy was hard to foresee without paying close attention to another market – namely, digital video. At the same time as MI sector companies were perfecting their pocket-sized digital recording tech, camera manufacturers like Canon and Nikon were breaking new ground in quality consumer video technology with new DSLR cameras, which were allowing amateurs to record video with unprecedented resolution.

"Audio for video has been the number one factor," says Goodman. "Creators are demanding much better audio to define their video work."

Before manufacturers had caught on, inventive users had realized they could couple their new field recorders with those videos for remarkably good results.

"Some things are intentional, and others happen by accident," says Goodman. "But when good accidents happen, hopefully you recognize them quickly and you begin seeing opportunities. We introduced the original H4 about eight years

Nowadays, a new generation of recording devices that boast unprecedented levels of portability, features, and ease of use has opened up a range of consumers to both MI retailers and suppliers. Led by manufacturers like Zoom, Roland, and Tascam, these handheld digital recorders (or field recorders) have helped grow the Pro Audio market and solidified a healthy MI presence for groups of amateur filmmakers, podcasters, and music educators. Markets that used to seem worlds apart are now converging on the same shelf for dependable equipment.

The numbers look good. Sweetwater Sound's VP of merchandising, Phil Rich, says that growth in handheld recorders is outpacing growth in Sweetwater's overall pro audio market by nearly 30 percent. The reason is simple. "I'd look at that figure and say that people are making a choice," says Rich. "The quality is so good now. That's being recognized by customers and that accounts for its popularity."

Industry analysts MI SalesTrak concur. "When we look at the handheld market, we see growth in unit sales up 2.6 percent YTD over 2013," says SalesTrak president Jim Hirschberg.

That's all great news for MI, and retailers would be wise to look into the audience-expanding powers of this quick-evolving product.



## Note From Causby

# NAMM Membership: Customized to Your Success

During the last NAMM Show, the Member Center hosted a ukulele circle where people of all skill levels could play and learn together. I was fascinated by how this little instrument brought together so many different people from all over the world and I instantly wanted to join in the fun. I wondered whether I could really do it and, to my surprise, I actually learned something! I even played a song.

I was immediately hooked and began visiting a variety of Member stores and websites in search of ukuleles. As a consumer, I was overwhelmed by my own lack of knowledge and the multitude of sales experiences I encountered. Some offered too many choices, others not enough. Some had the time to speak with me, while others didn't. This got me thinking about how I could use my experience to help people get more from their Membership, knowing there are many untapped resources our Members aren't currently using or may not even know exist. Finding that right mix of sales training, inventory knowledge and customer service is crucial to retaining customers, and showing Members how to dial in that mix is even more important.

Members tell us that our trade shows are the number one benefit of belonging. Yet NAMM doesn't just work for its Members seven days a year—we're here to serve you year round. Are you taking advantage of your Membership the other 358 days?

If you're a retailer, have you ordered the new bilingual *Sesame Street* brochures to display in your store or lesson room?

They're an excellent way to drive young music makers and their parents into your store. NAMM has this and more brochures to help you grow your customer base and expand the market of potential music makers. Have you read NAMM U's monthly newsletter? It features a variety of articles and videos on sales, social media, customer service, inventory management and more as your industry peers share what works in their businesses. NAMM U Online is also a great way to provide your employees with quick, convenient industry training anytime.

If you're a manufacturer, are you participating in NAMM's Intellectual Property forums, reviewing the latest industry statistics in the *Global Report* or making your business more technology-efficient through NAMM Standards? These valuable benefits are included in your Membership. The association also pushes out industry news and content each day through its Facebook and Twitter pages—a great opportunity for suppliers and retailers alike to repurpose this content on their own social media accounts.

Ukuleles are not one-size-fits-all and, ultimately, I had to find the one that worked for me. NAMM Membership is also unique and can be customized to fit your company's individual needs and challenges. Whether you're a Member, a former Member or have never joined NAMM, we want to hear from you so we can set your business up with the tools and resources that will give you the best chance for continued success and sustainability.

Sincerely,

**Causby Challacombe**  
DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP, NAMM



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ago and we started seeing people use it in so many ways we never thought about. We said there's something here and this deserves laser focus."

Sweetwater's Rich agrees that the rise in the segments' popularity was, in a sense, crowdsourced. "People have really figured out that this recorder, which most people ten years ago thought were for meetings or recording someone's speech, now has changed to be all about high quality audio, period, really quickly and easily."



Chances are pretty good that not even your high school band director uses these anymore.

Machines like the Zoom H5, H6, and the Roland R-26 can attach to a DSLR via hot-shoe mount (or can be attached to a tripod). Tascam has similar functionality in its DR-40 unit, but also makes a more dedicated audio unit designed specifically with a DSLR's Line-In jack in mind: the DR-60D includes an attenuation control to adjust output levels, ensuring audio never overloads a camera's circuit, as well as "Slate" button that effectively marks both audio and video files, making syncing a snap in post-production.

**A MARKET OF CONTENT CREATORS**

The underlying driver here is that more people than ever are picking up tech gadgets and eagerly exploring media. Even for filmmakers who've never picked up a guitar, a selection of easy-to-use recording tools now makes the MI world an attractive destination.

"It's an all-in-one solution," says Laity. "There are no cables or jacks that you need to plug in and nothing you can do wrong. You just hit the record button twice and it starts recording with built-in mics. It's made to be simple for anyone to use whether it's a music teacher recording auditions, rehearsals, whatever."

The SD card, along with the adaptable file formatting options available, means that the tools are workable for pros and hobbyists of a variety of backgrounds. "It used to be that [the recorded audio] was on tape or some kind of removable drive and you had to somehow get it into the computer via some slow mechanism," says Rich. "Now you just pull out the SD card, put it in your Mac, and import it into Pro Tools and then, bam – you're working with it instantly. That side of it has gotten so much better."

At the same time, Laity notes that traditional MI consumers are finding this stuff essential, as well. Since videos aren't out of reach for bands anymore and YouTube emerges as the primary source for new music, they're becoming more important again. "I think that for the younger generation, it's gone from videos being really important in the '80s to nonexistent for awhile and back to where you really need a video to go with your song," he says. "Otherwise, how are you going to share it? Not on YouTube? Video is a big way of how bands interact with fans."

Camera companies have noticed the trend toward simplicity as well – on top of scads of lens accessories popping up for iPhones, everyone in most markets has noticed the success of GoPro cameras, which have infiltrated everything from MI and electronics shops to sporting goods. It's no coincidence that Zoom released a more feature-heavy version of the Go-Pro formula – the Q4 – last winter.



**FIELD RECORDER ALL-STARS**

**Zoom H5**

Building on the massive success of Zoom's "Handy Recorder" series that began with 2007's H2 model ("studio on a stick"), the H5 can employ a series of advanced interchangeable microphone capsules, from stereo pairs to a shotgun mic.



[www.zoom-na.com](http://www.zoom-na.com)

**Roland R-26**

Roland's handheld workhorse, the R-26 allows up to six tracks to record simultaneously, bi-directional stereo mics, and phantom power.



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

**THE PRICE WAR**

However, some worry about the growing momentum toward not just smaller devices but smaller price tags, too. The competition might be a little too steep. Although unit sales rose this year, SalesTrak notes a decrease in actual revenue. "The average price per unit is falling," says Hirschberg. "Which depresses dollar sales, which is actually lower YTD."

So while chasing lower price tags and beginner customers may provide growth in volume, some believe the smart money is on maintaining high audio standards.

## "Creators are demanding much better audio to define their video work."

– Scott Goodman,  
Zoom North America

"Our strength is in audio and that's where our unique talents are," says Laity. "So that's really what we're concentrating on – better audio products."

Roland also boasts a corporate culture focused on innovation, which explains in a way their loyalty to the R-26. "It's unfortunately become very price-conscious in the low-end of the market," says Youngblood. "You can buy handheld recorders for \$99 and up. That's very competitive. That's one of the reasons we came out with the R-26. We do fight the price fight with the R-05, but we talked and decided to come out with more of a professional recorder."

**NEW DIRECTIONS**

In any case, the merging of the audio and video markets (as well as the introduction of accessible, high quality audio to markets like education and podcasters) has resulted in

some genuinely new business. As the market for dedicated multitrack machines fades away, that's something both manufacturers and retailers can applaud.

"It does feel like new business," says Laity. Though the DAT market technically covered the same functional ground, Laity points out that it was never as accessible as the digital handhelds of today. "I think a lot of filmmakers who are doing the DSLR thing are coming into it for the first time. And there was never really a small, simple recorder like this for schools and musicians before."

Rich adds that "the field recorder stuff just merges so well with DAWs nowadays. The full DAW with hardware is becoming very rare now."

Goodman says he looks to MI retailers as well as his R&D departments for new innovations. "Our dealers have played a huge role in these products' success," he says. "B&H Music [Escondido, California] were the first to discover the potential with video users. Without them it would have taken much longer for that trend to develop. Many others have also recognized unique applications."

So while manufacturers introduce new features to this thriving market, customers and retailers are still pushing the limits of what can be done with less hardware. Just 15 years ago, it would have been tough to imagine a machine with multitrack capability, built-in guitar effects, and XLR inputs that fit in your hand. Today, that's old news, as even newer tech begins to sprout up that turns phones and tablets into a stereo recorder with one simple attachment. IK Multimedia, Rode, Apogee, Zoom, and even Tascam are on that already.

In short, the recording world is shifting fast, and retailers should expect to see an increased mixing of pro audio, film, and software markets in the future. The handheld market already seems positioned for that evolution, though. "I think handhelds are adding very nicely to the current DAW market and the tablet market already," says Rich. "You can drop any audio into anywhere these days, so I think field recorders are making all of those devices more fun to use." **MIMR**

**GoPro Hero 3+**

GoPro exploded onto the MI scene at this year's Winter NAMM Show. The Hero 3+ includes the camera's popular "Super View" wideangle lens and takes video at resolution up to 4K. A quality audio recorder is essential to compliment this camera's utilitarian built-in mic.



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

**Tascam 60D**

Tascam makes more standard field recorders (the DR-40) and even iOS hardware (the iM2), but for DSLR integration, it's hard to beat the 60D. A true tank, the 60D includes high-grade HDDA preamps, AD converters, three outputs, and fits underneath the camera.



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

# Making the Grade

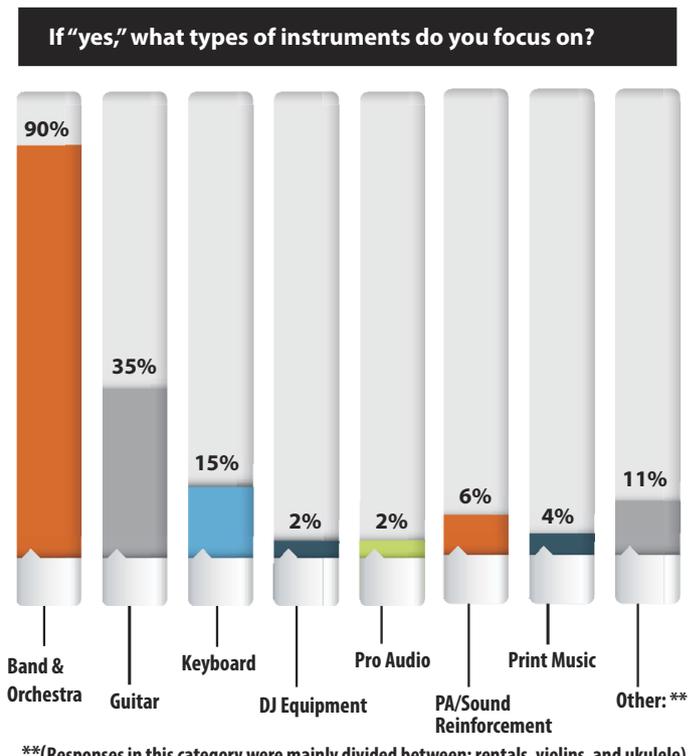
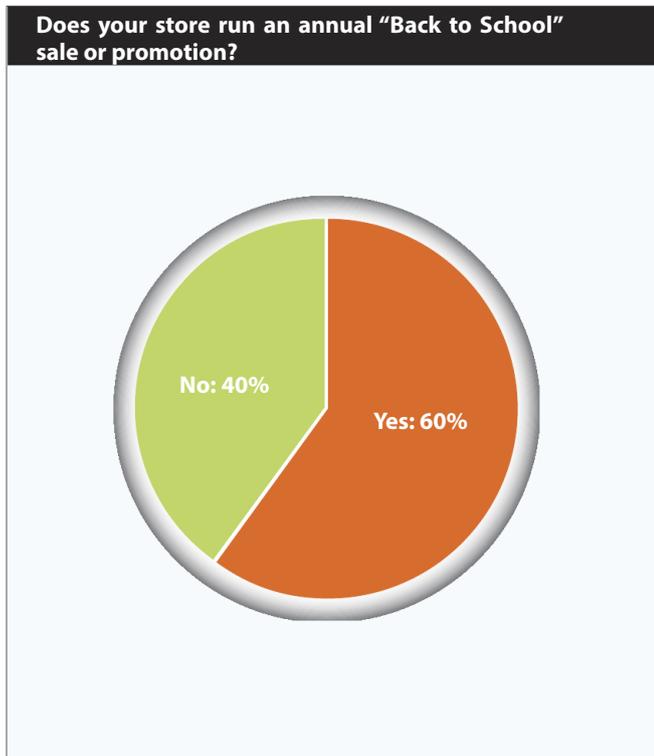
## Back to School Sales

By Christian Wissmuller

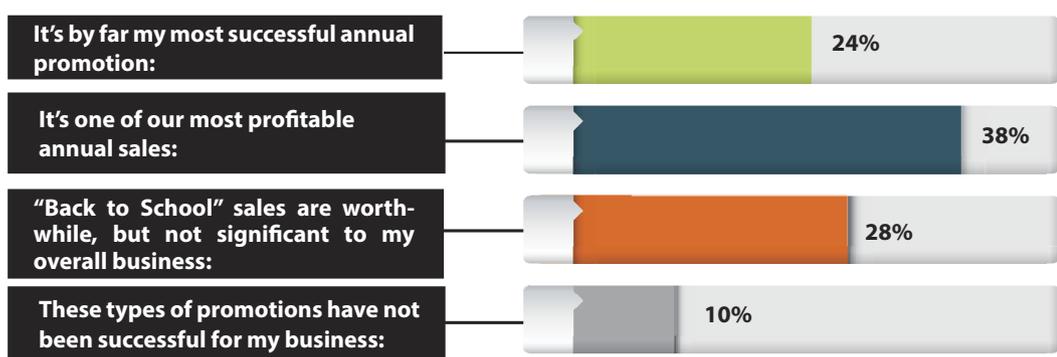
**B**y the time you receive this issue of *MMR*, your store likely already has in place plans to attract student and parent customers as kids return to school in September. Each new academic season brings with it first-time musicians, as well as student players looking to advance to that next-level instrument and children needing to stock up on sheet music, reeds, strings, mouthpieces, and so on. Sales of PA/sound reinforcement gear,

instructional and recording software, and other related products to instructors and administrators also commonly see a spike in the weeks and months leading up to the fall semester.

This month, *MMR* reached out to over 1,000 MI retailers to see what sorts of "Back to School" events are working for them, what types of product move the most during this season, and what trends are currently defining the season.



**If "yes," how does this type of promotion affect your total annual sales?**



*"Parents and students support our store because they say we make them feel like family when they come in."*

Sherrill Bull  
Olive Branch Pickers  
Olive Branch, Miss.

*"Rental business is so intense [at this time], creating the highest traffic of all seasons, therefore it's not considered [to be] the appropriate time to spend our marketing dollars."*

Tony Leonard  
Playground Music Center  
Ft. Walton Beach, Fla.

*"Christmas is more profitable, but 'Back to School' is a close second."*

Mark Johnson  
Welch Music  
Burley, Idaho

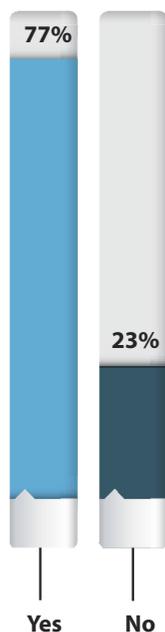
*"It's good to have positive relationships with schools, as teachers try to influence students to buy from the Internet if it's cheaper."*

Rod Lindner  
Lindner Music  
Watertown, S.D.

*"We hope to keep the schools aware we are here, rather than [having] them going online. Our after-sales service is extremely important."*

Keith Broomfield  
Magpie Music  
Bega, NSW Australia

### Do you work with local schools to help with your "Back to School" sales?



*"We work very closely with schools in our trade area. It is this cooperation that makes our 'Back to School' event so successful!"*

Robert Christie  
A&G Central Music  
Madison Heights, Mich.

*"We have been shut out of the majority of school districts in our area due to a larger chain store having exclusive rights to the students and their contact information."*

Dick Ward  
Music Unlimited  
Richland, Wash.

*"We give teachers quantities of contract forms to pass [out] to students. Contracts are for a starter plan – for example, buy a small violin, \$195 used/ \$255 new, trade up with 50 percent credit. [It's] more convenient, overall, than low monthly payments."*

Henry Strobel  
Henry Strobel & Son Violin Shop  
Aumsville (Salem), Ore.

*"We send emails to our band director list and the Bandmasters convention falls at the end of July, so we are able to get flyers into everyone's hands."*

Adam York  
The Music Store, Inc.  
Tulsa, Okla.

*"I always try to keep communications open and invite teachers to come in, look, and advise me."*

Rod Lindner  
Lindner Music  
Watertown, S.C.

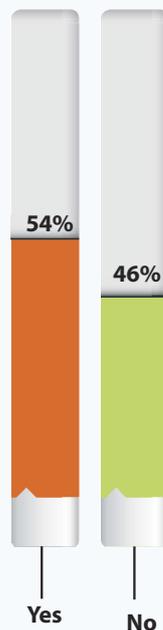
*"Personal contact with our local band and orchestra directors has proven much more powerful than running Back to School ads."*

Jim Nardi  
Uptown Music  
Keizer, Ore.

*"Our rentals and Summer Pre-Band Kick offs precede any Fall 'Back to School' event, so there is no need to boost sales (It's already the busiest time of the year for beginner band/marching band/summer lessons, et cetera)."*

Candice Girt-Stojkov  
Music 101 Ohio  
Fowler-Cortland, Ohio

### Do you run an instrument try-out or "petting zoo" during this season?



*"We sponsor a website, where customers (parents/students) can see the instruments and hear the instruments being played. Our in-store horns are sealed and sanitized, so we actually discourage 'petting.'"*

Candice Girt-Stojkov  
Music 101 Ohio  
Fowler-Cortland, Ohio

*"No, but thanks for a great idea to use next year during the local fair!"*

Eric Hanson  
Hanson Pro Music  
Port Huron, Mich.

*"We have a petting zoo that goes out regularly during the year to local festivals and charitable events."*

Stephanie Wilds  
Acoustic Corner  
Black Mountain, N.C.

*"Aauuggghh!!! Germ city!"*

Rudy Tichy  
Twin Village Music  
Lancaster, N.Y.

*"We have several afternoons set aside for various schools where we work with students from that school, decorate with school colors and mascot, et cetera."*

Tracy Leenman  
Musical Innovations  
Greenville, S.C.

*"We offer it during the second quarter to pique their interest then, so that they think of our store in the third quarter when its time to rent or buy an instrument,"*

Lauren Haas Amanfoh  
Royalton Music Center  
North Royalton, Ohio

*"The 'Dog and Pony show' usually takes place at the end of the school year for us."*

Adam York  
The Music Store, Inc.  
Tulsa, Okla.

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## Survey

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### Please describe your most successful "Back to School" sale.

*"We invite all young and advancing musicians to spend time in the shop in the summertime to try out instruments and accessories, basically to just explore. It always translates to increased sales during September. In addition, we offer a significant discount to students who attend the city performing arts high schools. We mostly rely on word of mouth, which is fairly effective."*

Jay McMahon  
Jon Baltimore Music Company  
New York, N.Y.

*"Our Back to School Bash – an evening which the Chamber of Commerce co-sponsors, Sonic brings a hot dog bar, a local marching band plays in the parking lot, and families are encouraged to come in and get their instruments for fall."*

Tracy Leenman  
Musical Innovations  
Greenville, S.C.

*"We offer a tiered intro special for rentals, as well as 50 percent off stands and 25 percent off care kits, so they can get everything they need for school – and on sale!"*

Lauren Haas Amanfoh  
Royalton Music Center  
North Royalton, Ohio

*"We are big believers in 'bundling.' We work closely with the band directors in our trade area and build 'back to school' packages containing all the items directors require/desire for their students. By doing this, we become the 'easy button' for parents. Parents know that when they come to us they will receive exactly what they need, in one package, at a great price. The Directors know that by sending students our way they will have a classroom full of kids who are fully prepared to participate in class. The combination of the teachers driving in the traffic and the parents' trust in us makes for a very successful fall selling season!"*

Robert Christie  
A&G Central Music  
Madison Heights, Mich.

*"We do a lot of band displays in the local schools. We also attach store coupons to our band flyers. This helps us track sales and know that our ads are working."*

Karen Hatter  
Chords & Keys Music  
Colonial Heights, Va.

*"Our 'Back to School' promotions are store wide. We also have lesson studios and promote 'back to lessons' as well."*

Mike Guillot  
Mississippi Music, Inc.  
Flowood, Miss.

*"We don't do a 'Back to School' sale, as 99.9 percent of the customers want to rent and there's no point in putting rentals on sale. Recruiting and petting zoo events need to be done well in advance of back to school season as teachers and our staff are too busy with rental meetings and filling contracts to try to do effective student demos."*

Peter Sides  
Robert M. Sides Family  
Music Centers  
Williamsport, Pa.

*"Probably six or seven years ago when the handheld digital recorders were starting to come on strong, we put those on the back to school flyer saying, 'This is a tool no band director should be without!' We probably sold 40 units."*

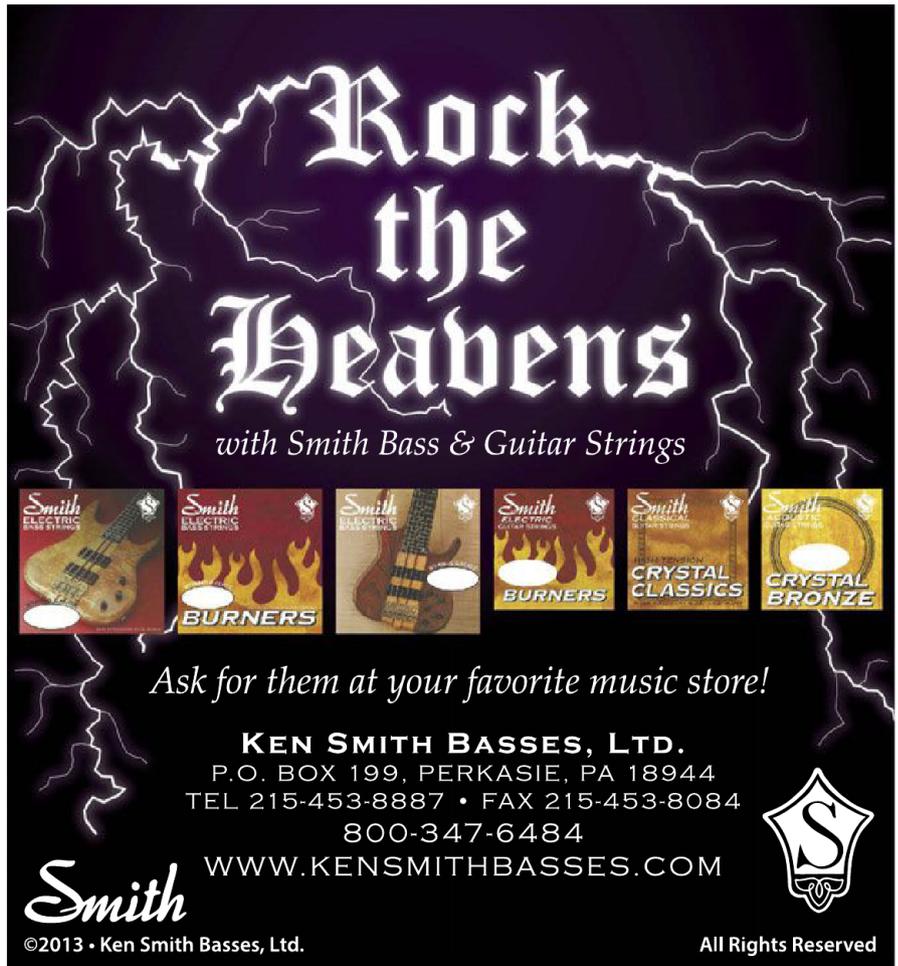
Adam York  
The Music Store, Inc.  
Tulsa, Okla.

*"Summer tent sale in July before back to school season really begins. [We have] lots of used instruments sold from our rental pool."*

Mick Faulhaber  
Ward-Brodt Music Company  
Madison, Wis.



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# WI Digital Emerges as a Wireless Pioneer

A high-quality wireless system that worked across all tech platforms seemed like an impossible mission, which is why WI Digital was so eager to take it on.

By Matt Parish

**W**hen WI Digital first introduced their breakthrough product, the AudioLink, they ran into a peculiar problem – customers didn't believe that the tiny units could actually work. The product, which was designed to reinvent the way musicians and engineers could approach wireless connectivity across platforms, was several factors smaller than the typical VHF/UHF products that dominated the market for years.

"Those older systems would come as basically a belt pack," says COO Pierre Abboud. "And that was just the transponders. There was also a big clunky receiver that you'd have to place somewhere onstage." Users had been trained to expect bulk with their wireless products.

Abboud and co-founder (and president/CEO) Dr. John Gibson founded WI Digital as a personal challenge to themselves. They'd gotten to know each other while playing music together, setting up charity events and performing for fundraisers for organizations like hospitals and the British American Business Council. Abboud says a problem they discovered quickly was that, even for gigs they'd only be playing for an hour, they were having to spend two hours

on set-up time.

"The cables were just too much," he said. "We wanted the convenience of not having cables to deal with as well as being completely compatible with all the different devices onstage – instruments, computers, tablets, and other digital devices."

They filed papers for the company in 2007 and used that to hold

“ I realized that the time would come when I would need to get those sounds that I had achieved at home onto a stage for performance that delivered the same quality. Inevitably, that would be true of anyone in MI. ”

themselves to their goals, which were ambitious. "We were to make no compromise when it came to the sound quality – clean, digital, pure. Yet it's eco-friendly. It's extremely portable and the whole system can fit in the palm of your hand. I mean this was serious list of challenges that had been impossible for other manufacturers."

Abboud and Gibson were uniquely suited to the project, both coming from strong computer engineering backgrounds. Abboud has 25 years of experience in the tech sector, helping develop portable USB mass storage peripherals, home digital media servers, and more. He's also served as a consultant for companies like Apple, Roland, Sony, Yamaha, and TEAC. Gibson ended an accomplished career in pharmacology to found WI Digital – by 2007, he'd worked in international product development with Allergan, Bristol-Myers Squibb, and Wellcome, getting product approvals across several fields. He helped develop Botox for therapeutic and cosmetic use.

All of which is to say both founders shared a history of innovation and effectiveness in bringing new products to market.

"We knew back then that the lines between the MI industry and the consumer electronics industry were getting blurred very quickly," says Abboud. "I love to use technology in my studio for recording – I was using Apple already to get my sounds to record and write music. I realized that the time would come when I would need to get those sounds that I had achieved at home onto a stage for performance that delivered the same quality.

"Inevitably, that would be true of anyone in MI."



An unexpected but successful market for the AudioLink was DSLR users, who found the product to be a step forward in connecting audio devices to their cameras.



Next up for Wi Digital – a new way of building quality in-ear monitors.

Enter the AudioLink. The new technology gave users, for the first time, the ability to convert from analog to digital and back again to analog in a way that provided nearly lossless quality of sound. Abboud says that, along with achieving the conversion in stereo, was major.

Almost at the same time, the company was able to cleanly translate getting USB to analog wireless, which allowed musicians to integrate computers onstage wirelessly. The combination of these two breakthroughs meant that Wi Digital had officially arrived.

Acceptance wasn't immediate, of course. The quality of a new audio system is a tough thing to convey without demonstrating it right there in front of customers, so that's eventually what Abboud and Gordon did.

"That took some time," says Abboud. "A lot of it was trade shows, though we also did a tremendous amount of traveling and visiting with dealers, potential distributors, artists." The approach has finally caught on, though, to the point where musicians of all genres are actively seeking out new ways to connect devices from previously disparate worlds. "The idea of a personal wireless system that can be transported easily and integrated across any setup they may find themselves in is a must."

Abboud says that the company's volume has increased dramatically, as Wi Digital products are now distributed across the U.S. as well as in the U.K., Germany, Spain, and South Africa. It's also showing the signs of any good tech product – it's wandering into other markets as users discover new uses for it. Camera users and DSLR filmmakers,

for instance, weren't anywhere near the company's target market, but the connectivity between digital devices is becoming popular among that segment, untangling remote connections between cameras and audio recorders. The company also counts television connections and personal in-ear monitors as areas where Wi Digital has proven successful. At the same time, digital wireless is slowly becoming the norm. "In the beginning, we were one of maybe two who were doing anything significant with digital wireless," says Abboud. "Today, you're seeing companies like AKG and Sennheiser coming into that field and validating that technology."

But now that the company seems to have found its moment, Abboud says that they only have plans to grow. They've just introduced a set of their own new in-ear monitors – the Micro In-Ear Monitors – that they hope will revolutionize the segment with their unique in-ear driver technology and high-end appointments. If they're anything like the AudioLink, other companies will eventually follow.

The main thing they want users and retailers to remember is that they're leading the way.

"Everything we do and everything we introduce, I can guarantee that it will be a completely different approach," says Abboud. "We don't do any 'me-too' products." **MMR**



Wi Digital's breakthrough AudioLink Pro system.

## DANSR



## Marks 10 Years in the Business

The U.S. distributor for the venerable Vandoren reeds brand has taken giant steps in its first decade

By Matt Parish

DANSR partners Bill Gray, Michael Skinner, Gary Winder, and Greg Grieme at the Vandoren office in Paris.

For a couple of decades now, one of the hottest spots for reed players to visit in New York City isn't a nightclub, bar, studio, or even university. It's Vandoren's Advisory Studio. Located on 54th Street just around the corner from the Ed Sullivan Theater, the studio provides a unique environment for musicians to meet up with each other, participate in masterclasses, relax with a fresh cup of espresso, and to try out new Vandoren products, which are always on hand.

"It's become a mecca in New York," says Michael Skinner, president of DANSR, which handles all of Vandoren's U.S. operations. "It's where we meet thousands of musicians on a yearly basis."

The studio is a prime example of a mission that DANSR has picked up from Vandoren president Bernard Van Doren – "Stay close to the musicians." Whether it's through the Advisory Studio, in-depth work scouting emerging talent through the "Generation Vandoren" program, or hosting the most freewheeling jazz jams of the year at various "Vando Jams," the industry-leading company always makes it a point to work directly with musicians.

"Be close to these musicians of all calibers – professionals, teachers, and students," says Skinner. "Understand them. That's a phrase I've never really forgotten. We try to communicate on that level and we try to problem solve on that level and it's really been a great model for us."

Skinner and the rest of DANSR – the company was co-founded by Skinner with colleagues Greg Grieme, and Bill Gray – are celebrating their tenth anniversary this year, while Vandoren celebrates its 110th. The company has battled through a tough economy – the 2008 recession was hardly on their radar when forming

in 2004 – and hits the 10-year-mark right on schedule for its original growth projections. In the process, they've picked up distribution for Denis Wick brass products and Jones double reeds as well as solidified a partnership with BGE Financial, while helping Vandoren expand into its two-year-old Juno student lines of reeds.

"All in all, we're in a great position," says Skinner.

### ROOTS

Vandoren's relationship with Skinner goes back well beyond the founding of DANSR. In the '80s, Skinner was working as a professional saxophonist in New York, eventually connecting with D'Addario and, through them, began picking up gigs as a clinician at Vandoren events. As he transitioned into a role as marketing manager for Vandoren products, he met Bernard Van Doren.

Skinner went on to work with Yamaha for ten years, during which he met newest partner, Gary Winder, as well as Grieme and Gray, who were working closely with Yamaha for financing instrument sales. He returned to D'Addario in 2001, where he served as educational director until forming DANSR as the sole conduit to the U.S. for Vandoren.

Since then, the partnership has been grounded in a unique trust.

"There are cultural differences between what sells in Europe and what sells in the U.S.," says Skinner. "Vandoren has been very open to suggestions and they've acted on many more of them than I would have anticipated."

Recent product developments with American spins on them are many, including sample packs of reeds (the Vandoren blue box

## Five Innovations of the DANSR Era

### Juno Reeds



### The V16 Tenor Saxophone Mouthpiece



### The AL3 Clarinet Mouthpiece



### The MjO Lite Ligature



### Three-Cards and Jazz Mix Cards



and traditional three-cards, as well as the newer Jazz Mix Card, which presents four different reeds), the free-blowing AL3 classical saxophone mouthpiece, and the equally popular V16 jazz mouthpieces designed to capture the open, round styles of '40s and '50s players.

But perhaps the most important and long-term adjustment has been the company's evolutionary steps toward the student market.

#### EMERGENCE OF JUNO REEDS

From the early days in his partnership with Van Doren, Skinner says he made it a point to advocate for more attention to beginners. "I drew a pyramid and said, 'Here's your market at the top of the pyramid, and the largest market is down here at the bottom in the United States. We have to get you to the bottom of the pyramid.'"

Van Doren was receptive but pragmatic. In jumping into a larger market, he wanted to make sure the company had the resources and research necessary to do it gracefully. "Vandoren competes in this market only on performance and quality," says Skinner. Nearly 20 years after Skinner first made the suggestion, Van Doren was finally satisfied enough with his access to Southern France cane and a fine-tuned reed-cutting process that he felt ready to begin student reed operations.

"Something I learned at Yamaha a long time ago is that they design their lines in what for me was a unique way," says Skinner. "They designed their professional instruments first. That called for vertical integration. The features that they developed for their

professional lines ultimately trickled down to some degree to the student line. That's basically what we did with going from Vandoren to Juno."

"The Vandoren reed provides a high level of performance in every aspect. What you learn in that whole process – how you cut a reed, how many nuanced angles you can cut with, using state of the art equipment, and tremendous design work from your staff – you can use on a student reed. You do that in a way that allows you to cut at an efficient rate so that the price point is good but still working with high quality reeds and good cuts that vibrate and sound beautiful."

#### FURTHER ADVANCES

Beyond the Juno line, which in its second year is poised for significant growth, the DANSR family has ushered in a variety of new changes. Denis Wick took control of its own factory two years ago, controlling all aspects of the production of its mouthpieces, mutes, and accessories. Skinner says the consolidated production means the company is enjoying unprecedented control over its precision, efficiency, and deliverability. "I think we're on the front end of a really nice growth spurt for Denis Wick, he notes. Meanwhile, the company sees its 2012 acquisition of Jones as completing its reed offerings for professional and student markets.

At the same time, outreach efforts of Vandoren continue to expand, constantly uncovering new talent and working to develop a new culture of music throughout the country. While a number of world-famous artists already call Vandoren home (Branford Marsalis, David Sanborn, Stanley Drucker, and Paquito D'Rivera, among



Emil Kudreyev, winner of the first VEW competition, performing at the Music for All National Festival.

many others), developing artists are highly sought after. The company's Vandoren Emerging Artists program receives audio auditions from across the country, involving a diverse group of judges to choose

the most promising jazz and classical talent between 18 and 23 years old.

"The whole idea is for us to identify emerging, young, strong performers that we'd like the opportunity to work with to

push their career forward," says Skinner. In that process, Vandoren commissions works that they perform at the Music For All Chamber Music National Festival in Indianapolis. "We commission a number of works a year to extend the repertoire," Skinner notes. "This year, Vandoren artist Jon Manasseis premiering a piece we commissioned and is composed by Vandoren artist Gordon Goodwin from the Big Phat Band. We've also done a couple with Paquito D'Rivera. We think expanding the literature is part of our responsibility to the music community."

The previously mentioned Generation Vandoren involves the brand's younger artist endorsees (those under 30) leading clinics and camps for high school students. The goal here is to give students face time with professionals they can relate to ("I'm just an old guy – I don't even tweet that much!" says Skinner, who believes exposure to young, high level performers is the most effective form of outreach there is).

It's all in line with Skinner's adherence to Van Doren's original dictate – "Stay close to the musicians." Whether it's listening closely to players' and retailers' suggestions and requests or continuing to grow the repertoire, DANSR has maintained a culture guided by its relationship to artists. **MMR**

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# Amahi Ukuleles Chart New Ground with Exotic Woods

By Matt Parish

The uke wing of Amati's Fine Instruments has ventured into new pricing territory with a new low-price series of instruments.

As with most fretted instruments, ukuleles sporting beautiful tone woods carry a distinct advantage in the market. Koa, Rosewood, Zebrawood, and Mahogany - the names and the rich grains that they lend instruments are instant attractions. But with those luxuries often come a jump in cost.

Amahi Ukuleles has recently introduced a way around that jump. The new "Exotic Wood" line of ukuleles now offer dealers a handsome series of instruments (with Aquila strings and a padded gig bag) with MAP prices starting under \$80. Amahi president Michael Schear says the instruments establish a new standard in what consumers can find with double digit price tags.

"We've hit a new price point here," he says. "We've got a Koa ukulele that's affordable for a child." In an increasingly crowded uke marketplace, that could prove to be a real advantage.

It's no secret that ukuleles have been the darling product of the MI world for several years now, combining portability, accessibility, and a relatively low price compared to most other instruments. Recently, though, customers have begun favoring more sophisticated lines and step-up models (for more, see *MMR's* recent March survey and July industry roundtable).

That's good news for dealers - not only has the uke fostered a boom in first-time musicians and an affordable product to maintain sales during the down economy, but it's now proving to inspire customer loyalty.

They're coming back for more.

“If you can improve your product incrementally and then add up all of those improvements, you might raise your cost by \$5 but increase the value by 300 percent.”



Products from the new Amahi Exotic Woods Series

Amahi is a branch of Amati's Fine Instruments, a 25-year-old Cincinnati-based strings supplier with diverse offerings of violins, violas, cellos, and basses (and accessories). Schear, who presides over both brands, says it was his wife who inspired the company's first ukulele prototype.

"My wife is a public school teacher whose school had begun using ukuleles instead of recorders as an entry-level instrument," he said. "She asked me if I thought I could source a model, so I checked in on it." Soon after, the company introduced its first beginner models – the UK-120, 140, and 150. These carried a MAP price under \$60.

After a bit more research, though (and a couple high-end, \$1,500 uke models), Schear came to the realization that demand was strong for more quality instruments. Amahi introduced the "Snail" line of intermediate ukuleles in 2013. They were a hit. Schear says, "There isn't a day in the week that we don't receive an order for our Snail Ebony ukuleles." A similar line of more conservatively designed "Classic" ukuleles followed.

But for this year, Schear decided to pursue a more aggressive price point. The work began with his manufacturing team in China, who were able to combine economies of scale with Schear's own expertise in manufacturing orchestral instruments to produce the Exotic Wood series of instruments.

"The process took over a year," says Schear, who describes a detailed collaboration in which everything from binding, tuning machines, veneers, laser designed soundholes, and the specially selected Aquila strings were all improved.

"We showed them how you'd install a violin neck, which are always dead center. So now they're done exactly the same we do the violins. That's one of the efficiencies we implemented with this new line."

"I'm a strong believer in incremental improvements," he says. "If you can improve your product incrementally and then add up all of those improvements, you might raise your cost by \$5 but increase the value by 300 percent." That was exactly his goal with the Exotic Woods series, which should bolster not only the Amahi uke brand, but boost the Amati's brand school string program sales.

To bring an old retail comparison, Schear compares ukes to eggs, bread, and milk of the Amahi's operation. "You come into the supermarket for eggs, bread, and milk and, while you're there, you might buy some ground beef, some steak, some chocolate chip cookies, some chips, some pop. In our case, we're selling ukuleles at a small margin so that dealers will give us a call and then maybe realize they need a violin or some bows."

Meanwhile, the development of Amahi ukuleles is helping to build Amati's Fine Instruments into a more complete supplier.

"In this economy, which is not ideal, we have to find more products that our customers can use and be profitable – we have to find things that can help them make a profit."

In the last decade, there's been no other instrument that's personified that approach better than the ukulele, which Schear points out hardly had a presence in the market not long ago. "Ukes allow so many people to get involved rather easily and it allows retailers chances to set up these great classes and everything," Schear says.

"Isn't it all about making music?" **MMR**



Michael Schear

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# How to Start Making Online Videos Work for You

By Matt Parish

The Internet is on the verge of being dominated by video media – it leads off online news and sports articles, it's shared on everyone's Facebook feeds, and it's searched by the millions daily on YouTube. Video content is everywhere.

Which means it *should* be a significant part of your business's website and online outreach.

"It's really an exciting era," says Shane Kinney, who owns the Drum Center of Portsmouth, one of the best examples of a retailer going all-out with promotional videos. "We are witnessing the most potent advance in retailing since the launch of the Web, and it's clear that the leaders of this movement are watching and learning from each other."

The Drum Center's YouTube page has well over six million views and over 6,000 subscribers thanks to hundreds of smartly produced promotional and demonstration videos. "It exposes the personality and culture of the staff which helps create brand identity," says Kinney. "It allows us to connect with the customer. The customer is able to see that we are actual drummers with a passion for the instruments as opposed to a 'store that sells items.'" By MI retail standards, online video is a superpower – something anyone with a cash register and an inventory of instruments should aspire to. But where to begin?

The first part is easy – a few basic pieces of equipment are essential. Any beginner or "prosumer" DSLR camera – a Cannon T5i or Nikon d5200 – would cover your bases, but you can also create video on equipment like a GoPro, a Zoom Q4, or simply your laptop or smartphone camera. Video software can be simple like iMovie or Movie Maker (or scores of other free software), or it can be more in-depth like Adobe Premiere or Final Cut. The key is to find something that works for you and your available time and budget, and start creating.

The aspiring retail filmmaker needs to keep a few things in mind. What are your goals? Larry DeMarco is the director of marketing at Electro-Harmonix, which has one of the most robust video programs in the business (a big help for a product lineup with as diverse features as their effects pedals). He says a good video can establish your store as a center of expertise. "If you have a website – and why wouldn't you? – it provides that most precious of currencies: good content. Include some 'B roll' of your store, perhaps an exterior shot, as well as some gear lust-inducing displays."

DeMarco says that a little preparation goes a long way. The EHX team always creates a tight script for its product demos, ensuring that every scene's benefit is weighed and outlined before anything is recorded and that any voiceover material is polished ahead of time. Staying on message is always important. "Attention spans seem to be getting shorter all the time," says DeMarco. "Distilling your presentation to its essential ingredients may make the difference between your video getting watched in its entirety or zapped somewhere along the way."

Another heavy hitter in MI video creation is Vic Firth, which was pioneering in its efforts to create comprehensive videos for its drum products. Marketing manager Andy Tamulynas recommends that retailers even bring in outside testimonials when possible. "The customer already knows you think the product is great," he says. "What do other drummers think?"

Kinney says that it's important to demonstrate products in ways that make sense. "Do it in a manner that is congruent with the instrument," he says. "In other words, don't do blast beats when demonstrating a jazz drum set."

The Drum Center Portsmouth uses other subtle tricks to make their mark – they fly the store logo at the beginning and end of the video and maintain a similar backdrop and the same camera angles on all videos to create a consistent experience. "Another thing we like to do is bring in all of the drums in one particular line. The Mapex Black Panther line is an example. We brought in all of the drums, allowing the viewer to compare our videos against the Mapex ones, which gave the viewer more options to form an opinion."

In fact, an in-depth product and brand review can change your business's entire perception. Tamulynas points to MyCymbal.com, the cymbal specialty site created by the Memphis Drum Shop. "Today, people flock to Mycymbal.com to do product research," he says. "Not all of them purchase a cymbal from Memphis Drum Shop, but they've created a resource that the consumer seeks out, spends time with, and returns to!"

In any case, whether you're trying to establish yourself as a go-to industry authority on a product segment or simply trying to assert your identity and create some personable, sharable content, it's never been easier. **MMR**

**“ We are witnessing the most potent advance in retailing since the launch of the Web. ”**  
– Shane Kinney, Drum Center of Portsmouth



# Brushmen & Bobbleheads

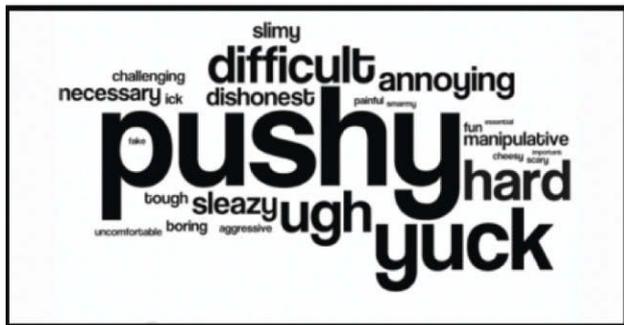
by George Quinlan, Jr., Quinlan & Fabish Music Co., NASMD president

Daniel Pink begins his book, *To Sell is Human*, with the story of Norman Hall, the last remaining Fuller Brush salesman - on Earth. At age 75, Norman routinely transverses the halls of modern office buildings in San Francisco, selling his wares to his longtime customers. An echo of days gone by. He is... The Last. One.

There were once 8,300 "Fuller Brush-men" making fifty million house calls annually selling cleaning supplies and housewares from a suitcase. I remember many house calls made by these door-to-door salesmen to my mother in the 1960-'70s. Who would believe in 2014 that an antiquated and inefficient distribution model that blossomed in the 1950s would still be in existence?

Believe it or not, there were once salesmen who, each morning, would load up their vehicles with musical supplies and travel from school to school offering repair services, free delivery ("I think I have one of those in my van"), and a helping hand to music educators in their area. Surely, this model has been rendered obsolete, replaced by the wonders of online ordering and free next day shipping! To survive, companies today must embrace the power of the Internet and vacate all the old, rustic rules of door-to-door salesmanship, right?

In chapter three, Daniel Pink also shares a "word cloud," a graphic representation of the most frequent responses to the word



"salesman." The most frequent responses are the largest in the cloud (pushy, yuck, ugh, difficult, et cetera), while the smallest are those least common responses (the least derogatory being important and essential).

Today's school music dealer realizes that we must embrace the "new world" of technology. We also realize there is still a need for some "old world," time-tested methods.

Our company has run a contest on Facebook each spring for the last four years. Contestants simply complete the following phrase: "I Like My QF Rep because..." Our customers, notably band & orchestra directors, take time from their busy lives to write poems, tributes, songs, and create clever videos to express their gratitude for their school rep to win a unique

prize - a tandem bobblehead of themselves WITH their QF Rep!!

Time is the most precious commodity we all have. Why would today's young B&O directors choose to allocate this valuable resource to express their appreciation for... a SALESMAN? After all, salesmen are to be loathed, not celebrated - right? Maybe, there's more to it. Maybe good salesmen go unnoticed. Bad salesmen are

remembered. Maybe the relationship between a band or orchestra director and a road rep transcends the typical buyer/seller relationship. Maybe it's an

opportunity to celebrate the work of that very special person...

- That person, much like Norman Hall, who provides much more than simple goods & services for them
- That person who is willing to offer help, move equipment, fix instruments on the spot, or maybe just *listen* when the "customer" has had a bad day
- That person who "shows up" at local concerts, festivals, and performances... often with the latest solution to an emergency
- That person willing to seek and share solutions learned from others to help solve a problem
- That person who cares more about them as a person than as a customer
- That person who loves his/her career and "suits-up" every day for the love of the game
- That person who knows the race they run is not a sprint, but a marathon
- That person who values the relationship knowing it is more important any transaction

This old, outdated, antiquated road rep distribution model continues to be the most effective model for the B&O sector of the music industry. Despite all the odds against it, road reps continue to be the lifeblood for companies like ours dotted around the United States.

Each year, the National Association of School Music Dealers (NASMD) meets for three days of educational opportunities sprinkled with some fun social events. Many of us are, deep down, road reps looking to share ideas, search for solutions, and improve our "game." We love to "talk shop" for three days and have some fun together too. "Road Rep Olympics" celebrates the mundane, yet *important* activities road reps encounter day-to-day. What better way to embrace this "new" art form of salesmanship?

Like the Fuller Brush Company, the school music sector has seen dramatic changes over the decades. Unlike the "brushmen," there are still hundreds of us still on the job - ready, willing, and able to learn more ways to better serve our customers. We urge you to join us in March 2015 in New Orleans by visiting [www.nasmd.com](http://www.nasmd.com).

(Note: "Salesman" is used throughout this article as an homage to those people - both men and women - who serve others through the art of sales.) **MIMR**

“Despite all the odds against it, road reps continue to be the lifeblood for companies like ours dotted around the United States.”

## New Products

### Zivix JamStik

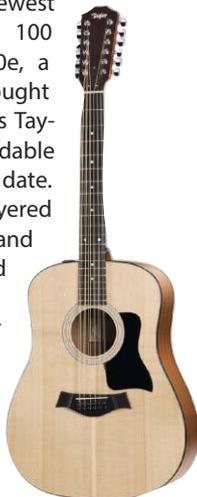
The Zivix JamStik digital guitar connects wirelessly to Apple devices, introducing a number of industry firsts in this compact instrument. The JamStik's first-to-market technology uses an infrared light-sensing fretboard that "sees" finger placement and provides real-time feedback on an iPad, iPhone, or Mac. The ultra-portable design features real strings and frets, but never needs tuning. With MIDI capabilities, users can generate the sound of virtually any instrument in addition to the guitar. Additionally, an assignable "D-Pad" provides real-time performance controls, including virtual capo, enhanced MIDI functions, and more. Custom apps include JamTutor, Arcade Mode, and JamMix. Retail: \$299.



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

### Taylor Guitars 150e

Taylor's newest addition to the 100 Series is the 150e, a 12-string Dreadnought guitar. The 150e is Taylor's most affordable 12-string guitar to date. Crafted from a layered sapele back and sides, and topped with solid Sitka spruce, the guitar features a 1 7/8" sapele neck, black binding and pickguard, a matte finish, and the company's award-winning Expression System® electronics for a great-sounding plug-and-play experience.



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

## FRETTED

### New PRS S2 Series Models

On the first anniversary of the S2 Series, PRS is adding three new models to the lineup: the S2 Mira Semi-Hollow, S2 Custom 22 Semi-Hollow, and the S2 Singlecut Semi-Hollow. The S2 Mira Semi-Hollow boasts a chambered all-mahogany body and low output pickups that create a smoky harmonic richness that can overdrive to classic rock tones. The S2 Custom 22 Semi-Hollow has been updated here with a chambered mahogany/maple body and f-hole. Appointments include the patented PRS tremolo system, #7 treble and bass pickups, and a push/pull coil tap on the tone control. The S2 Singlecut Semi-Hollow includes a classic control layout and added versatility of a push/pull coil tap on the tone controls.



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

### Kala Guitarlele

Kala Brand Music's new hybrid instrument, the Guitarlele, is a six-stringed instrument tuned to A-D-G-C-E-A, that projects a bright and full tone similar to capoing up on the fifth fret of a regular guitar. Features include a select solid spruce top, Koa back and sides, mahogany binding and rosette, slotted headstock with Koa cap, Grover Tuners, rosewood fingerboard, and satin finish. Retail: \$429.99.



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

### Recording King Torrefied Top RP1-16C Guitars

Recording King's new line of guitars feature torrefied Adirondack spruce tops, which undergo a specialized heating process in which the wood is heated at a low temperature in an oxygen-free environment. The end result is a lightweight, extra resonant top that produces similar tone to a vintage instrument.

The RP1-16C is a 12-fret single 0 cutaway with a dreadnought scale. The RP1-16C works well for fingerstyle players thanks to the cutaway and 1-3/4" nut, delivering even, vintage-style tone everywhere on the fretboard. Includes lifetime warranty. MAP: \$499.99.



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

### Eastman Guitars Thinline T486-RB Ray Benson

Eastman Guitars collaborated with guitarist Ray Benson on his signature Thinline T486-RB. The T486-RB is a double cutaway featuring deluxe laminate top, back and sides, with ivoroid binding throughout the body, neck, and headstock. The guitar is a 24" scale length between the 1" bone nut and nickel Gotoh tunomatic bridge. Handwound Lollar pickups include an El Rayo at the neck with a Low Wound Imperial at the bridge. D'Addario strings and hardshell case included.



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

ACCESSORIES

**Boss Waza Craft Pedals**

The Waza Craft series is a new line of special edition compact pedals that include the SD-1W Super Overdrive, BD-2W Blues Driver, and DM-2W Delay. All three pedals provide the classic sounds of the Boss pedals they're based on plus switchable modes for customized tones.

The Waza Craft SD-1W hot rods the original with a revised circuit design, all-discrete analog components, and switchable Standard and Custom sound modes. The BD-2W takes the original Blue Driver's grit to a new level. The DM-2W, based on the discontinued DM-2 Delay's warm, Bucket Brigade-style delays, uses all-analog circuitry and an authentic BBD delay line for a 20-300 ms delay range, while its custom mode changes the sound to a cleaner analog tone with over twice the delay time.



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

**Korg SDD-3000 Delay Pedal**

The original KORG SDD-3000 rack-mount digital delay from 1982 has been meticulously reproduced and is now available as the SDD-3000 Pedal. The pedal features eight distinct delay types (SSD-3000, Analog, Tape, Modern, Kosmic, Reverse, Pitch and Panning), with delay times ranging from 1 to 4,000 milliseconds, 80 programmable preset options, stereo in/out, MIDI operation, and interactive controls. Also included is an interactive modulation section with five different Waveforms, intensity and frequency controls, and the ability to create custom sounds. Street: \$399.99.



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

**MC Systems Dynamic Response Effects Pedals**

MC Systems introduces a unique and personalized approach to pedal control. Each of the eight models in the range feature the patent pending "V-Switch" dynamic true bypass V-switching, which lets users vary the amount of effect dependent on how hard the switch is stomped. A second footswitch allows for alternation between two preferred settings for a particular parameter.



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

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## ACCESSORIES

### Kaces Redesigned Percussion Line

Kaces percussion line includes a broad selection of everyday “bread and butter” profit-building items such as marching drum stick quivers, snare drum porters, bell kit porters, snare and bell kit duo porters, snare drum backpacks, and bell kit bags. All porters feature durable heavy-duty wheels, convenient telescoping double-handles, and either padded shoulder straps or built-in backpack straps. Kaces also offers a full line of graphic printed practice pads, and all Kaces percussion bags come with a 1 year limited warranty.



kaces.com

### Electro-Harmonix B9 Organ Machine

With nine finely-tuned presets emulating the legendary organs of the '60s and beyond, the B9 Organ Machine delivers definitive tonewheel and combo organ sounds. A nine-position switch allows the player to select among different organ types. The Organ volume knob controls the overall volume of the Organ preset while Dry volume controls the volume of the untreated instrument level at the Organ Output jack. A Mod control adjusts the modulation speed. A Click control was designed to simulate the harmonic percussion effect that is a sonic signature of many classic organs. List: \$293.73.



ehx.com

### Leslie 'G' Pedal for Guitar

Based on the Digital Leslie circuitry pioneered on Hammond “Sk” Stage Keyboards, the “G” features three classic hot-rodded cabinet styles Models 122, 147, and 18v (the Leslie model designation of the original vibratone single rotary speaker). New to the “G” Leslie Pedal, are “Dry” and “Wet” controls. Adjustment of the “Wet” determines the volume of the effected sound sent to the output, while the “Dry” permits the straight or unaffected sound of the guitar or instrument attached and blended with the effected tone. MAP: \$299.00.



hammondorganco.com

### On-Stage Stands U-Mount Accessories

The TCA1066 Accessory Kit includes a Presentation Grip, two additional Mounting Posts, and a Mounting Post End Cap. The Presentation Grip is a comfortable hard foam sleeve that slides over any u-mount post. The Mounting Post End Cap protects the threading and adds a finishing touch to the post, providing a non-slip contact point. The two additional mounting posts provide extra length with the 5" UM-42 or a lower profile with the 2-3/4" UM-41. Compatible with the Snap-On cover variants of the Quick Disconnect u-mount Tablet Mounting System. List: \$19.99. MAP: \$11.95.



onstagestands.com

### JazzDeck for NorCal Jazz



The JazzDeck™ “textbook in a box” is designed to help players of all levels build confidence and sharpen their chops as jazz soloists. Comprised of 54 high-grade playing cards color-coded by chord type, the JazzDeck systematically illustrates the ways to excel as a soloist. With its presentation and multi-dimensional, non-notation platform, the JazzDeck is especially suited to players of any stage. Retail: \$19.95

jazzdeck.com

### Seymour Duncan NYC Bass Pickups



The NYC pickups use a dual coil J-type pickup design with a double row of exposed Alnico pole pieces. The four-conductor cable allows for three wiring modes which provide a variety of tonal options: Wire the pickup in parallel mode for a slightly thickened, hum-canceling single coil sound. Wire it in series mode for high output with maximum punch and fullness. Or wire it in single coil mode for true vintage Jazz Bass® sound. This pickup is a direct retrofit replacement for either the 4-string EMG® 35 or 5-string EMG® 40.

seymourduncan.com

PRINT

**Serious Blues Series from Alfred Music**

Alfred Music's *Serious Blues* series features book and DVD packs for aspiring blues guitarists in search of an authentic sound. Each title features lessons from blues masters with licks and examples in both standard notation and TAB. For experienced beginners, *Scott A. Smith's Serious Blues: Essential Phrasing* teaches phrasing techniques and tricks like solo construction, phrasing over a 12-bar blues, the blues scale, pentatonic box patterns, and playing multiple scales over a single chord. *Mark Dziuba's Serious Blues: Expanding Grooves* helps intermediate guitarists expand their groove palette. Dziuba breaks down and explains shuffle and straight rhythms, 12/8 feel, triplets, blues forms, minor blues, and various blues rhythm tricks. Intended for late-intermediate players, *Eric Slone's Serious Blues: Expanding Lead & Rhythm* covers essential lead and rhythm topics like transposition, call-and-response, targeting chord tones, arpeggios, and more. Retail: \$16.99.



[alfred.com/guitar](http://alfred.com/guitar)

**Guitar Recorded Versions: Slash and Keith Urban from Hal Leonard**

*The Slash Guitar Anthology* (HL00691114 / \$24.99) presents 23 tunes by the Guns'n'Roses and Velvet Revolver superstar in notes and tab from throughout his career. Includes: "Anastasia," "Beggars and Hangers On," "November Rain," "Sweet Child O' Mine," and more.

Keith Urban went from Down Under to the top of the country charts, propelled by his playing on both electric and acoustic guitar. *The Keith Urban Guitar Anthology* (HL00124461 / \$19.99) brings together a baker's dozen from this multi-Grammy-winning hitmaker, including "Better Life," "Long Hot Summer," "Put You in a Song," and more.



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

**Intermediate Studies for Developing Artists for Woodwinds from Meredith Music**

Meredith Music's new Intermediate Studies for Developing Artists on the Flute, Intermediate Studies for Developing Artists on the Oboe and Intermediate Studies for Developing Artists on the Bassoon (by Shelley Jagow) cover all styles appropriate to intermediate methods for woodwinds. They include music from the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Twentieth Century eras while representing more than a dozen countries. Original compositions are included to strengthen young artist skills in developing both facility and tone.



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

**Backdraft by Jeff Jarvis from Kendor**

Alternating between 3/4 and 4/4 feels, this catchy funk tune for advancing groups features clever piano comping, punchy bass lines, and fun single-note guitar comping. Solos with accessible chord changes are provided for alto, tenor, bari, trumpet and trombone. Guitar or piano can also take solos if desired. A guitar chord chart by Jim Greeson is included in each set. Duration 4:50. Kendor Jazz Journey Series #61040. Retail: \$52.



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

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

### Keatona PD1 Interface

The Keatona PD1 is a pro audio interface with a built-in universal power supply, 1/4" unbalanced output and level control, and XLR-M transformer balanced output and level control. It's designed for stage and studio use by pro musicians and DJs.



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

### Audio-Technica SonicFuel AX Over-Ear Headphones

Audio-Technica's SonicFuel AX over-ear headphones offer three models with smartphone and iPhone® compatibility. The ATH-AX5iS, ATH-AX3iS and ATH-AX1iS have universal smartphone compatibility. These models have a built-in microphone and a cord-mounted remote, enabling users to answer calls and control music/video playback on compatible devices. All the headphones feature swiveling earcups and the ATH-AX5iS/ATH-AX5 and ATH-AX3iS/ATH-AX3 models have a padded headband.



[audio-technica.com](http://audio-technica.com)

## PERCUSSION

### Pearl Crystal Beat Acrylic



Pearl celebrates the return of the original seamless Acrylic drum shell with new Crystal Beat Acrylic drum sets and component drums. Their upgraded 7mm seamless Acrylic shell comes standard in four stock configurations starting at under \$900 MAP. Individual components are also available from 8" to 22" in UltraClear, Ruby Red, and Tangerine Glass transparent finishes for custom configuration.

Crystal Beat drums will begin shipping to USA dealers starting in early Q4, 2014.

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

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## LIGHTING &amp; DJ

**Chauvet FlareCON Air Interface**

The palm-sized FlareCON Air Interface device gives DJs, clubs, designers and other end-users the ability to control any of the company's battery-operated Freedom series fixtures directly from their smartphone or tablet. The FlareCON Air is compatible with both iOS® and Android™ operating systems. End-users simply have to download the FlareCON Air app to their phone or tablet. Then when they give a command on the mobile device, FlareCON Air will send the signal wirelessly to the fixtures, working reliably over unobstructed distances up to 600 feet (183 m). The FlareCON Air will work with all D-Fi™-ready lighting fixtures from CHAUVET DJ.



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

## BAND &amp; ORCHESTRA

**Vandoren M/O Lite Alto Sax Ligature**

The M|O LITE is made out of a synthetic material and offers the quick response and resonance of the standard line of M|O inverted ligatures at a lower price point.

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

**Stanton SCS.4DJ USB Mixstation**

The SCS.4DJ USB Mixstation provides DJ and performer functionality and performance without the need for a laptop. The model now includes Version 5.0 software, which means a DJ can plug in a storage device and start mixing using the built-in decks, mixer, and high-resolution color display.

V5's new features include enhanced analysis, time-rift mode, new effects, FLAC support, and a host of improvements, from an increased library size, which can now support up to 50,000 tracks loaded via an attached USB drive, and improved response times for large collections when navigating, browsing, searching, and sorting.

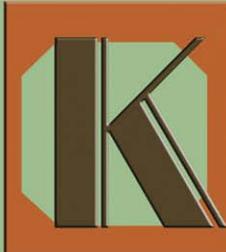
[stantondj.com](http://stantondj.com)

**Mackie CR4 Monitors**

Mackie's new Creative Reference™ Multimedia Monitor Series includes two models – the CR3 and CR4 – with 3" or 4" woofers and ¾" silk-dome tweeters. CR monitors also feature a curved high-frequency waveguide for wide dispersion of sound and stereo image. Also included are all-wood cabinets, custom-tuned rear ports, a left/right speaker placement switch allows users to locate the volume control on the left or right of their workstation, and a front-panel aux input for simple connection of a media device. Retail: \$129.99 (CR3); \$199.99 (CR4).



[cr.mackie.com](http://cr.mackie.com)



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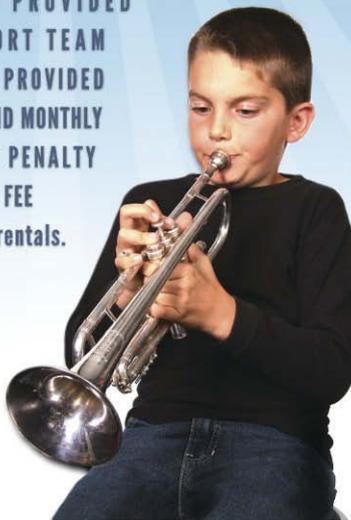
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MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

on the  
iPad



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By Dan Daley

# A Regulatory Nudge

**B**ack in April, a little-noticed decision by the Federal Trade Commission was released. It didn't make the *New York Times*, but it does have significant implications for MI retailers who rely on music education services as part

of their brand and revenue base. It's worth looking at what happened.

The FTC had been looking into allegations that the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) had violated Federal anti-trust regulations.

These alleged violations came in the form of the MTNA's Code of Ethics, which the FTC asserted encouraged the organization's 22,000 or so members "not to actively recruit students from another studio" and to "respect the integrity of other teachers' studios." This amounted, the FTC maintained, to restraint of trade, in the form of reduced competition for the services that the members provide.

There was more. According to the FTC, MTNA had further established a process for resolving disputes under its Code of Ethics that included private dispute resolution and sanctions for violations. The FTC also found that a number of MTNA affiliate organizations had adopted restrictions on advertising, charging less than the community average, or offering scholarships or free lessons.

## A Change of Codes

The settlement between the MTNA and the FTC, reached last December and formally issued in April in an FTC Decision and Order document, required the MTNA to change its Code of Ethics to eliminate the challenged provisions and to notify members or affiliate organizations of this action, as well as provide in-person antitrust compliance training for five years.

The MTNA settlement also prohibits it from affiliating with any organization that restricts student or job solicitations, advertising, or price competition, and further requires potential affiliates to certify its compliance.

The MTNA wasn't happy about the ruling, and stated that it agreed to it to avoid spending membership funds defending itself and compelling local and regional affiliates with far fewer resources than the national organization to do the same.

"Although MTNA demonstrated to the FTC that its code of ethics is voluntary and that the Association has never enforced the solicitation provision, the FTC offered MTNA the unappealing choice of entering into a settlement or spending hundreds of thousands of membership dues dollars fighting the federal government," the organization wrote on its website.

It later posted a revised Code of Ethics there, where it also

published an antitrust guide for members, reminding them of topics that they are prohibited from discussing amongst themselves, including current prices or hourly rates, plans to increase or decrease prices or hourly rates, agreements to allocate or divide territories or clients, and recommendations to members to implement unlawful tying arrangements such as requiring students to purchase sheet music exclusively from the teacher.

## Arguments Both Ways

What the FTC's actions revealed is something we already knew – that teaching guitar or piano is a huge industry of one-man bands, each trying to build a reputation and a following in a crowded field. It can be easy to forget that what looks like a cottage craft from ground level becomes industrial when looked at from above, which is the perch from which regulators scrutinize it.

It's of particular importance for retailers to keep this in mind for their own educational programs, which are largely made up of those freelance educators. It's a healthy symbiosis:

music teachers using the store's premises go a long way towards building lasting customer relationships for the store while the retailer lends the instructor credibility and an inviting environment in which to teach.

But while the process of teaching and scheduling students seems quotidian enough, what goes on between teachers

trying to better leverage their positions, or between teachers and store owners looking to solidify a territory, could have unintended consequences.

Music education is understandably a cornerstone for the larger music industry. It's where the musicians and the customers of the next generation come from. Music teachers, whether in an academy or the back of the shop, have to maintain standards across the board – musically, professionally, and economically – and store owners need to support them in that. It's also understandable that there is a view of regulatory overreach here, of governmental intrusion into an organically running market doing what comes naturally.

The issue was debated on Pianoworld.com under the rubric "Music teachers, beware - feds are on to you [!]" The *Wall Street Journal's* editorial, which contexted its comments on the matter with references to the Department of Justice's notorious pursuit of Gibson Guitars for its choice of wood sources, called the FTC's actions "ludicrous" and judged the consent decree "an abuse of power." That's the balance that is the hardest to achieve and maintain in a capitalist democracy, and that's not going to change anytime soon. **MMMA**

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