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Dealers' Choice Awards

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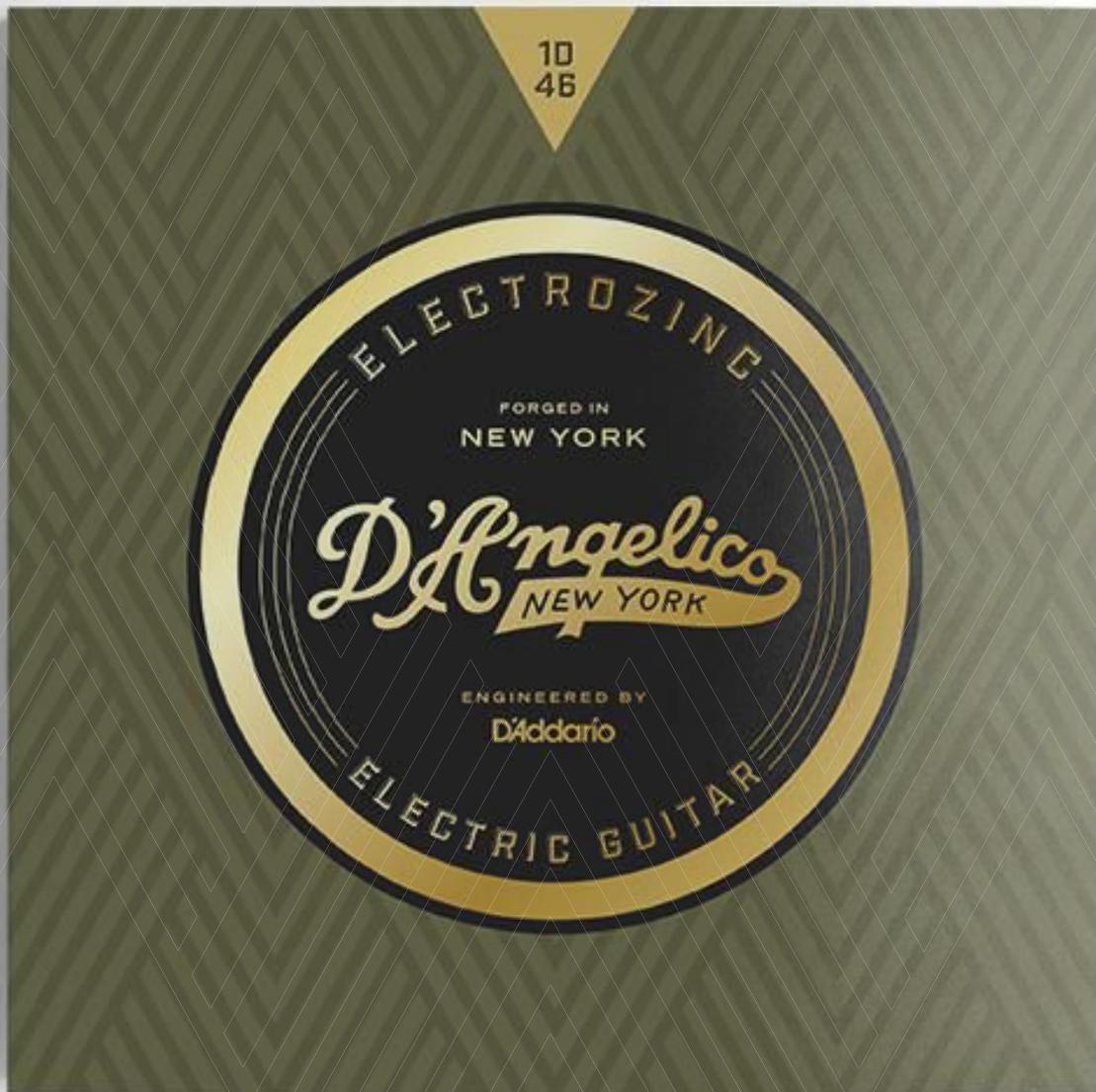
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So Long, 2016, and Thanks for all the... Um... Actually: Good Riddance



by Christian Wissmuller

So another year is in the books. This one will no doubt be remembered for one of the most divisive Presidential election campaigns in recent – heck, in the nation’s – history, and with the results of that process comes all attendant uncertainty, fear, hopefulness, or whatever else (depending on your own political leanings).

On top of that, the past 12 months have been absolutely brutal when it comes to the sheer number of musical icons who have passed. Whether your tastes lean towards Bowie, Cohen, Prince, Haggard, Katner, Frey, and/or all/some of the above (or others), it’s been a pretty rough trip around the sun.

I do my best to keep my ear to the ground with respect to all things MI and have some guesses as to what 2016 represented and what the coming months will hold for our industry, but as with recent years, I’m going to defer to those who *really* represent “boots on the ground” in musical instrument retail – the dealers, themselves.

Below are some of the observations and comments that didn’t make it into some of our other December 2016 features, but which are (very) worth noting, nonetheless. Best wishes for a safe and enjoyable holiday season to all, and here’s hoping for a profitable and positive 2017 and beyond!

“We are well positioned for the upcoming season and year as well. We have made many improvements to brick and mortar and web as well. Things are looking good.” – *Sammy Ash, Sam Ash Music Corp.*

“We have seen about a 17 percent increase in 2016. Taking the leap to start over in a suburban location with a fresh new look and still maintain our nearly 80-year, family-owned heritage. We are thrilled with how positive the community has responded.” – *Jim Hauer, Hauer Music*

“It looks like we will only get Mexican Strats if they are thrown over the wall! [pre-election comment re: Trump – Ed.]” – *Sal Barone, Mr. Music*

“[We are] a bit worried about all the reports on TV saying everyone is shopping for Christmas early and online.” – *Stephanie Howe, Ted Brown Music Company*

“I think the lack of a solid plan for internet sales tax is still an issue facing local communities and brick & mortar retailers.” – *Donovan Bankhead, Springfield Music*

“2016 is looking fantastic! We’re up in all categories and our end of year step-up push is remunerative.” – *Dennis Howren, Howren Music*

“2016 saw an increase in acoustic guitar sales and a slight decrease in amp sales compared to 2015. We focused on building our lesson & repair business, which has been incredibly beneficial in offsetting the unpredictability of merchandise sales.” – *Alex Sinclair, Westwood Music*

“So far Mississippi Music is up for 2016. We are celebrating MMI’s 70th anniversary this year. Our fiscal year ends in March, so we are optimistic that we will continue the trend and end March, 2017 on a good note!” – *Rosi K. Johnson, Mississippi Music*

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Industry News

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- MMR Global
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Samsung to Acquire HARMAN

Samsung Electronics and Harman International have announced that they have entered into a definitive agreement under which Samsung will acquire HARMAN for \$112.00 per share in cash, or total equity value of approximately \$8.0 billion.

Upon closing, the transaction will immediately give Samsung a significant presence in the large and rapidly growing market for connected technologies, particularly automotive electronics, which has been a strategic priority for Samsung, and is expected to grow to more than \$100 billion by 2025. HARMAN is the market leader in connected car solutions, with more than 30 million vehicles currently equipped with its connected car and audio systems, including embedded infotainment, telematics, connected safety and security. Approximately 65 percent of HARMAN's \$7.0 billion of reported sales during the 12 months ended September 30, 2016 are automotive-related, and its order backlog for this market at June 30, 2016 was approximately \$24 billion.

HARMAN's experience designing and integrating sophisticated in-vehicle technologies, as well as its long-term relationships with most of the world's largest automakers, will create significant growth opportunities for the combined business by enabling it to leverage Samsung's expertise in connected mobility, semiconductors, user experience, displays and its global distribution channels. In addition, the combination of HARMAN's brands and audio capabilities and Samsung's expertise in consumer electronics will deliver enhanced customer benefits and elevate user experiences across Samsung's complete portfolio of consumer and professional products and systems.

"HARMAN perfectly complements Samsung in terms of technologies, products and solutions, and joining forces is a natural extension of the automotive strategy we have been pursuing for some time," said Oh-Hyun Kwon, vice chairman and chief executive officer of Samsung Electronics. "As a Tier 1 automotive supplier with deep customer relationships, strong brands, leading technology and

SAMSUNG

a recognized portfolio of best-in-class products, HARMAN immediately establishes a strong foundation for Samsung to grow our automotive platform. Dinesh Paliwal is a proven global leader and, in our extensive discussions, we have developed deep respect for him, his strong

senior leadership team and HARMAN's talented employees. HARMAN's sustained track record of rapid growth fueled by technology leadership and an unmatched automotive order pipeline reflects its commitment to innovation and customers."

"The vehicle of tomorrow will be transformed by smart technology and connectivity in the same way that simple feature phones have become sophisticated smart devices over the past decade," added Young Sohn, president and chief strategy officer of Samsung Electronics. "We see substantial long-term growth opportunities in the auto technology market as demand for Samsung's specialized electronic components and solutions continues to grow. Working together, we are confident that HARMAN can become a new kind of Tier 1 provider to the OEMs by delivering end-to-end solutions across the connected ecosystem."

Dinesh Paliwal, HARMAN chairman, president and CEO, stated, "This compelling all-cash transaction will deliver significant and immediate value to our shareholders and provide new opportunities for our employees as part of a larger, more diversified company... We look forward to working together with Samsung to elevate experiences for consumers worldwide."

Operating Structure and Leadership

Upon closing, HARMAN will operate as a standalone Samsung subsidiary, and continue to be led by Dinesh Paliwal and HARMAN's current management team. Samsung is pursuing a long-term growth strategy in automotive electronics, and plans to retain HARMAN's work force, headquarters and facilities, as well as all of its consumer and professional audio brands. Samsung believes the combination will increase career develop-

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Samsung to Acquire HARMAN

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ment and advancement opportunities for the employees of both companies.

Samsung's Automotive Electronics Business Team, which was established in December of 2015 to identify opportunities for Samsung in the automotive sector, will work closely with the HARMAN management team to realize the full growth potential of the combination.

The purchase price represents a premium of 28 percent based on HARMAN's closing stock price on November 11, 2016 and a 37

percent premium to HARMAN's 30-calendar day volume weighted average price ending November 11, 2016. Samsung expects to use cash on hand to fund the transaction. The agreement has been unanimously approved by the boards of directors of both companies.

The transaction, which is subject to approval by HARMAN shareholders, regulatory approvals and other customary closing conditions, is expected to close in mid-2017.

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Fishman Moves To Expansive New Headquarters

Fishman has moved to significantly larger, high technology-driven company headquarters.

The 58,000 sq. ft. building at 3 Riverside Drive in Andover, Massachusetts represents a major expansion from the company's previous 32,000 sq. ft. site and provides more space for R&D, manufacturing, quality control, inventory, and finished goods.

It also includes a bigger, state-of-the-art Model and Machine shop with the latest in 3-D printing, laser and CNC machine technology as well as a Finish room for polishing, grinding and painting.

Two leading-edge conference rooms with LCD monitors and video conferencing are complemented by a fully outfitted recording studio and a special showroom adjoining the reception area that enables visitors to see and demo a range of the company's products along with a wall of Fishman-equipped guitars from some of Fishman's OEM partners.

COO Jason Cambra stated, "Our new facility provides us with a more efficient layout with an improved workflow in every department of the company, from Manufacturing and R&D to Sales and Engineering. The building also offers us room for expansion as Fishman continues to grow our business and moves into new technologies and product categories."



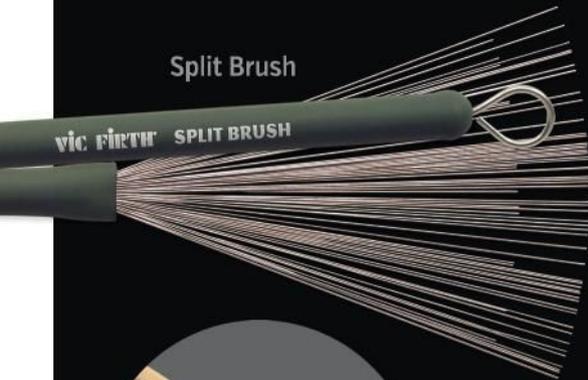
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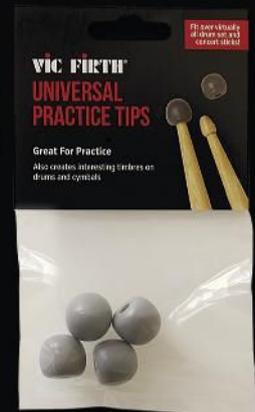


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Music & Arts Announces Semi-finalists for 2016 'Music Educator of the Year'

Earlier this year, leading school music retailer, Music & Arts, opened nominations for its annual Music Educator of the Year award. Applications poured in from across the country, and after an extensive review, 25 nominees were selected as semi-finalists for the 2016 honor.

The 2016 Music Educator of the Year semi-finalists are:

Alexander Scott, Anne Arundel County Public Schools, Catonsville, MD

Amy Delorge, Biddeford MS, Biddeford, ME

Andrew Hordichok, Taft HS, Gleneden Beach, OR

Angela Stefanini, Charlotte Preparatory School, Charlotte, NC

Braeden Kershner, Black Tie Music Academy, Summerville, SC

Brian Querry, Burrell School District, North Apollo, PA

Christine Cumberledge, Central Junior HS, Hurst, TX

Dan Trahey, BSO Orch Kids, Baltimore, MD

Dana Lamb, Flat Rock MS, Fayetteville, GA

Daniel Zeigner, Faith Lutheran HS, Las Vegas, NV

David Puckett, Indian Springs MS, Keller, TX

Diane Bacon, Mary Munford ES, Richmond, VA

Dorothy Riepenhoff, St. Peter and Paul School, Wellston, OH

Dustin O'Neil, Wedgewood MS, Columbus, OH

Edward Downs, Camden Academy Charter, Camden, NJ

Erin Stroup, Lower Moreland Township School District, Huntingdon, PA

George Hattendorf, Mountain Ridge HS, Glendale, AZ

Gloria Ramirez, Langham Creek HS, Houston, TX

Jeff Phillips, Hendersonville HS, Hendersonville, TN

Joseph Pompili, Cosgrove MS, Spencerport, NY

Joseph Santanello, Strayer MS, Quakertown, PA

Lucy Pascasio, Kennemer MS, Fort Worth, TX

Luis Piccinelli, Coral Springs MS, Coral Springs, FL

Melinda Wharton, Auburn Riverside HS, Auburn, WA

Steve Stevens, Union Academy, Charlotte, NC



Gordon Snyder from Kannapolis, N.C. received the 2015 Music Educator of the Year award.

Three finalists will be chosen from the list of 25 semi-finalists. The winner will be announced at the Midwest Clinic International Band and Orchestra Conference in Chicago on December 15. The prize includes \$1,000 to help support the winner's music program. There will be a second and third place award package.

For more information and to learn more about the semi-finalists, visit MusicArts.com/EducatoroftheYear.

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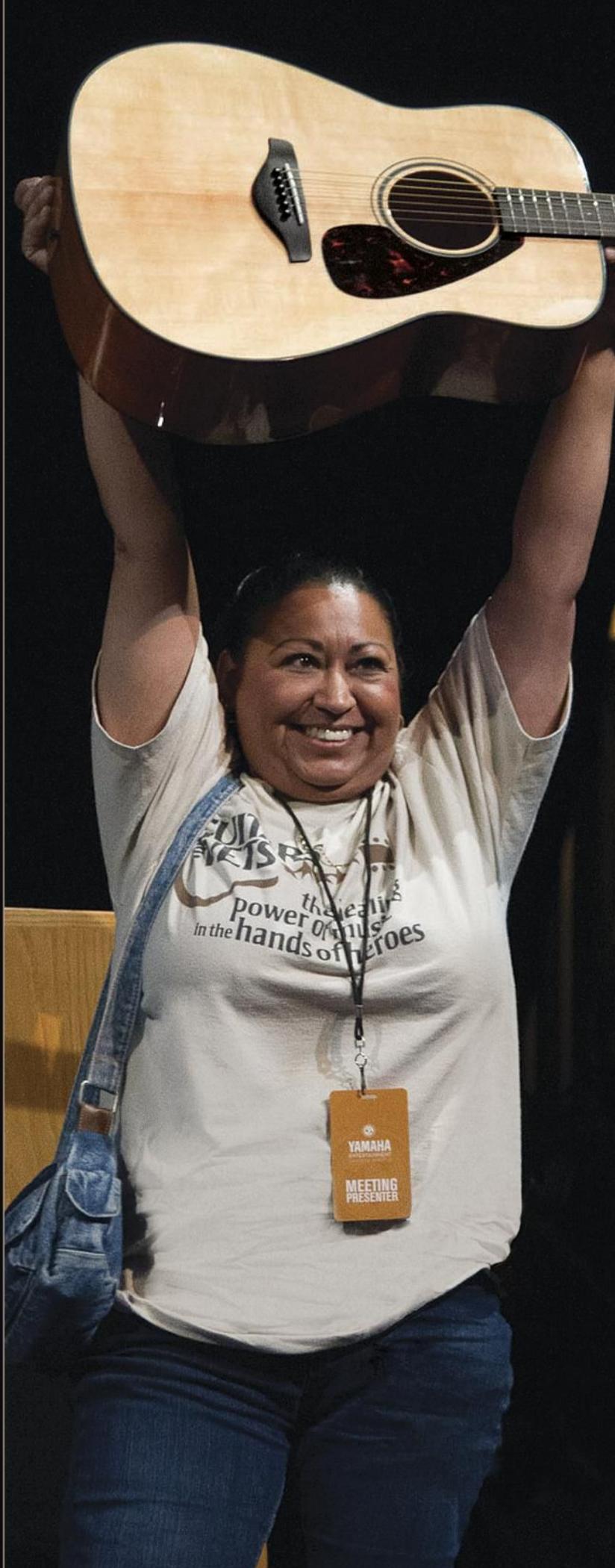
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Every society has members who face unfortunate circumstances. Yamaha employees are dedicated to helping them overcome their challenges, so we support organizations like Guitars for Vets, with its mission of spreading the healing power of music. Veteran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



SHARING PASSION & PERFORMANCE



KMC to Distribute Ashly Audio, Audix, and Ultimate Acoustics

KMC Music has been appointed by Ashly Audio, Audix, and Ultimate Acoustics to serve as their United States distribution partner.

According to KMC Music vice president of Merchandising Roger Hart, all three appointments are effective immediately.

"Product is in our warehouse and we are ready to immediately fulfill orders we receive," Hart emphasized. "The addition of these three in-demand product lines to our growing portfolio of Pro Audio brands means that we can meet a growing customer demand for a wider variety of offerings from more industry leaders."

The Ashly Audio products now distributed by KMC Music include the company's entire line of rack mixers and analog signal processing products in addition to digital mixers. The Audix products

include the company's entire line of instrument and vocal microphones as well as accessories. The Ultimate Acoustics products represent the company's entire line of acoustical room treatment products, including wall panels, absorption panels, bass traps, foam edging, studio bundles, ultimate isolators, and diffusors.

Looking ahead to NAMM 2017, Hart revealed that KMC's booth design for the show will feature clearly differentiated sections for Musical Instruments, Pro Audio, and Band & Orchestra.



Musical Innovations' Leenman Wins Duke Energy Service and Citizenship Award

Tracy E. Leenman, owner of Musical Innovations of Greenville, South Carolina, has been named winner of the 2016 Duke Energy Citizenship and Service Award.

The award was presented on November 17, 2016 by Emily Kaleui DeRoberts, district manager of Duke Energy's South Carolina Government and Community Relations Team, and Pat Pomeroy, executive director of the Mauldin Chamber of Commerce. South Carolina State Representative Garry Smith additionally

presented Leenman with a special certificate of Commendation and Congratulations from the South Carolina House of Representatives, "thanking her for her hard work, dedication and commitment, and honoring her for her accomplishments." The Duke Energy Citizenship and Service Award honors individuals or groups who make a difference in their communities or places of work by using their time, talents and compassion to positively impact the lives of others.



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To learn more about **Antigua** please visit www.antiguawinds.com or contact at info@antiguawinds.com

To learn more about **Allen Music** please visit www.allenmusic.ca or www.youtube.com/user/AllenMusic8

YouTube is not a sponsor of this contest.

Supplier Scene

Kyser To Donate All 'G4V Kyser Quick-Change Capo' Profits to Guitars For Vets

In honor of Veteran's Day, Kyser® Musical Products, Inc. announced the newest member of the Quick-Change® family: The G4V Kyser Quick-Change Capo. This uniquely American-styled Quick-Change capo features a white body with the Kyser and Guitars for Vets® (G4V) logo, and a rippled American flag handle which symbolizes a proud waving American flag. This Quick-Change capo is 100 percent made by hand in Texas, and all profits from sales of the G4V Kyser Quick-Change Capo will be donated by Kyser to the G4V mission.

G4V is a nonprofit organization that provides guitars and lessons at no cost to U.S. military veterans who suffer from PTSD and physical injuries. Founded by a Combat Marine and his guitar instructor in 2007, G4V now has more than 60 chapters nationwide and has gifted more than 2,500 guitars and 25,000 lessons to vets recovering from the effects of war. The G4V Kyser Quick-Change Capo is an essential accessory that every veteran receives upon graduation. Now available to the public, customers can show their support of veterans and know that their purchase will help put the healing power of music in the hands of heroes. Price: \$24.95

"Milton Kyser (1933-2014) was a proud US Army veteran and I know he'd be extremely proud of this partnership." – Meredith Hamlin, president / CEO Kyser Musical Products, Inc.

kysermusical.com
guitars4vets.org



Chauvet Wins Worship Technology Award

Chauvet Ovation E-260WW LED was presented a 2016 new product award by *Worship Facilities*, the official magazine of WFX. The warm white LED ellipsoidal, which has an output that exceeds that of an HPL 750W fixture, was the third product in the Ovation line to receive the *Worship Facilities* award since 2013.

The first LED ellipsoidal bright enough to serve as a true key light in large house of worship and theatrical applications, the Ovation E-260WW consumes far less power and generates far less heat than an incandescent fixture, while also offering a 50,000 hour LED source life.

chauvetlighting.com



GluBoost Partners with Marc Ingber and SCORE Mktg.

GluBoost announced a partnership with Marc Ingber and SCORE Mktg. as the manufacturers representative to MI dealers and repair stores.

As a developer of products for the instrument repair, build, and maintenance industry GluBoost products are designed to save time and increase store revenues differentiating stores from internet only retailers with an innovative quick repair program. "GluBoost makes products that truly save time and guarantee superior



lasting results for dealers and repair shops," says Rick Rosenberg owner of Gear Up Products, mfg.

the GluBoost family of products. "Marc's expertise and industry relationships allow him to guide their clients through GluBoost's line of specialty products, from the GluBoost Accelerator to the Fill n' Finish drop fill repair solutions.

gluboot.com

Bittree Redesigned Website



Bittree recently announced the launch of a newly redesigned website. The new web portal, Bittree.com, improves the user experience with enhanced technical data on all their products and real-time price quoting. Customers can now visit Bittree.com to view the available products ready for immediate shipping.

New benefits of the updated website include a real-time price quoting tool that provides international partners with precise and up-to-the-minute shipping quotes, a dynamic interface that changes to reflect user input, and a simplified ordering process. These features allow international purchasers in different time zones to bid more accurately without having to speak directly with a customer service representative.

Bittree.com

Joe Perry to Receive Les Paul Award

As part of its 32nd Annual NAMM Technical Excellence & Creativity Awards (NAMM TEC Awards), The NAMM Foundation has announced that Joe Perry will receive the Les Paul Award. The annual award is given on behalf of the Les Paul Foundation and honors individuals that have set the highest standards of excellence in the creative application of recording technology in the spirit of the famed audio pioneer, inventor and musician, Les Paul. The award will be presented at a January 21st ceremony being held in Anaheim, CA as part of The 2017 NAMM Show. Perry, who was included in Rolling Stone's list of "100 Greatest Guitarists of All Time," is also scheduled to perform live before an audience of pro audio and sound production inventors, musicians, and industry friends.

Along with Perry, famed Aerosmith engineer and producer Jack Douglas, will be inducted into the NAMM TEC Hall of Fame, which was created nearly thirty years ago to honor pioneers of audio technology, as well as the music industry's most accomplished producers and audio technicians. Douglas is associated with many of the band's most iconic releases and affectionately dubbed "the sixth member" of Aerosmith for having contributed lyrics to several tracks released from the band. He also engineered and produced many multi-platinum Aerosmith albums including *Toys in the Attic* and *Rocks*, both of

which ranked among Rolling Stone's list of the "500 Greatest Albums of All Time." Douglas rose to prominence when the Record Plant Studio opened its doors and eventually engineered John Lennon's *Imagine* and the Who's *Who's Next* EP.

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New C.G. Conn and King Websites

Conn-Selmer announced the launch of newly designed, mobile-friendly websites for two historic brands—C.G. Conn and King. The new sites provide superior user experiences while highlighting a portfolio of products, videos, artists and manufacturing processes, and detailed histories of each respective brand.

The new sites, which are integrated into the Conn-Selmer company website, provide visitors the opportunity to follow and engage in real time conversations from C.G. Conn and King's respective social communities.

The sites can be accessed directly or via the brand navigation at www.conn-selmer.com.

Iron Mountain Supports L.A.C.E.R. Afterschool Programs

Iron Mountain Incorporated® Entertainment Services has renewed its continued support of L.A.C.E.R. Afterschool Programs (Literacy, Arts, Culture, Education, and Recreation). For over twenty years, the award-winning L.A.C.E.R. Afterschool Programs have provided underserved middle and high school students in Los Angeles with free arts, athletics, and academic activities. By allowing young people the opportunity to expand their learning, improve their skills, and develop new ones in a safe, supportive setting, L.A.C.E.R. fosters scholastic achievement, self-confidence, and good citizenship. The programs provide nearly 4,000 students with free classes in music, art, basketball, soccer, tutoring and so much more. Iron Mountain has been an ongoing program sponsor for the past decade-plus, supporting L.A.C.E.R.'s work in the community financially and with opportunities and resources, and the company has pledged its continued support through 2017 and beyond.

Iron Mountain will play a key role in L.A.C.E.R.'s upcoming Outstanding Student Awards, taking place at the 21st Annual L.A.C.E.R. Brunch, presented by the Wilbur May Foundation, U.S. Bank, the Roy and Patricia Disney Family Foundation and Iron Mountain, on November 13, 2016 at Avalon Hollywood. Each year, L.A.C.E.R. students are nominated to win the Out-



standing Student Award by teacher-artists, tutors, coaches and instructors based on leadership, dedication, commitment, hard work, and their positive attitude. At the ceremony, six L.A.C.E.R. students will be honored with the award, along with the Sharon Stricker Award presented to Susan Phillips. From the stage, each student will tell his or her story in a short film, and receive a \$100 prize, a plaque and certificates from state and city officials, among other prizes. This year, L.A.C.E.R. board member Jeff Anthony (SVP/Business Unit Leader, Iron Mountain Entertainment Services) will present the award with Sessa Brown, a previous Outstanding Student Award recipient who is currently attending UCLA. L.A.C.E.R. students in dance and music will also perform live at the ceremony. Leading up to the event, Iron Mountain has proposed a "matching grant," as L.A.C.E.R. appeals to donors for contributions through November 13.

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Yamaha Partners with DonorsChoose.org

Yamaha Band and Orchestral division announced it will be partnering with DonorsChoose.org, an online nonprofit platform where teachers seek the resources their music students need most, to fund music education projects for the new school year. With often limited funding from schools and districts, teachers spend on average \$945 of their own money to equip classrooms with adequate supplies needed to bring music into the classroom. Yamaha's \$125,000 matching donation, which will generate \$250,000 worth of supplies, will help lessen the financial burden teachers are faced with and provide the best environment for students to learn and succeed.



Providing a well-rounded experience at schools with music education offerings will add to a higher-value workforce in the future that will pay dividends for years to come. Yamaha Artists violinist Lindsey Stirling and saxophonist Jeff Coffin have joined this effort, and are committed to helping ensure that young music students have the confidence, nurturing environment and music essentials they need to be successful.

In addition to this project, Yamaha is committed to serving young musicians everywhere, with other efforts and partnerships including Yamaha Young Performing Artists Competition, Music for All and hundreds more instrumental music organizations in the United States. To view qualifying Yamaha-matching classroom projects visit 4wrdr.it/musicessentials.

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by Ronnie
Dungan

Comment: An 'Expert' Writes

I've reported on another UK dealer closing this month, but I'm happy to say it isn't something I've had to do for a while.

Around 18 months ago, it was more commonplace to be reporting on yet another dealer going to the wall as the market continued to feel the reverberations of the financial crisis. I've always held the view that whilst a great many very good dealers have been lost, so have quite a few bad ones. Which is not to say it was ever a good thing, but perhaps a hastening of the inevitable.

And now that the UK has decided it wants... well, it's not entirely sure what it wants, to be honest, but it has something to do with leaving the European Union although no one is sure to what extent, how to do it, or what happens afterwards... the future looks less certain for retailers everywhere.

As the pound plummets and financial analysts are repeatedly told to stop telling people that we are careering headlong over an economic cliff-edge into an abyss marked Long Term Misery in case they spoil our glorious revolution, it all adds up to a massive amount of doubt and uncertainty. And that's before you get to what's going on with the US leadership. All I'll say about it is that the UK equivalency would be electing... Mike Ashley (Google him). But even that wouldn't be quite as bad. Shudder.

One thing we are repeatedly told (apart from to shut up and stop going against the will of (some of) 'the people') is that business does not like uncertainty. But that was probably said by an expert and we have also been told not to listen to experts anymore. With their expertise, knowledge and all that.

Although we haven't actually left the EU yet (and, whisper this... I don't think we actually will. I know! Mad, right?!) import prices have already increased and in a market such as this, dominated by U.S. brands, that has not been good news for dealers, who have had to pass on the price rise. Predictably, it makes it even harder for them to compete with the European online retail powerhouses.

So, maybe I'll be writing about the triumphant return of British musical instrument manufacturing soon or maybe it will be more store closures. I know what my rapidly devaluing money is on.

UK Loses Another Longtime Dealer

Spalding Music Services will be the latest UK retailer to call it a day, shutting up shop after 44 years in the game, early next year.

The shop, run by Bob Adams and his son Robert, will close in March having been serving the local music community since 1973. The duo blame increased competition from online sales for its demise.

Talking to local newspaper *Spalding Today*, Bob Adams said: "We had a big shop in Broad Street and the largest number of records we ever sold was 100 LPs (Long Play) by Sir Harry Secombe. "They were sold within a few weeks, but during the mid-1970s, we got rid of records and tapes when I bought in the first electronic organ which really changed the shape of our music shop. A chap came in and said 'I've got quite a heavy, two-keyboard electronic organ for sale.

"I've always been interested in electronic organs so I went to the chap's house, looked at the organ and thought 'I'd love to have that in the shop. But the only problem was that the organ was in the chap's bedroom upstairs and we couldn't get it down the stairs because it was too big.



"So we had to get the organ through the bedroom window and slide it down a ladder, into a pick-up truck. Anyway, we put the organ in the shop and sold it within a few days."

Robert Adams added: "At one stage, we had something like 40 to 50 electronic organs in the shop, if not more. But the only famous musician we've ever had in the shop was Gilson Lavis (Pinchbeck-based drummer and percussionist with the Jools Holland and His Rhythm & Blues Orchestra).

"Sadly, we've been forced out of business by the Internet and I don't think either of us can see a future in keeping the shop open. It's been a gradual decline and whilst we could probably struggle on for another year, the Internet has killed us."

The shop will close by the end of March 2017, and is holding a closing down sale.

Myall Adds Beaumont Accessories

Jonathan Myall Music has taken on distribution of Beaumont Music accessories in the UK.

The range includes cases, carrying bags and maintenance materials for woodwind and string instruments with more products added soon.

"Jonathan and his team have attained a fantastic reputation over the years and we are delighted to be partnering the Beaumont brand with such a distinguished member of the UK music industry," said Beaumont designer Thea Paraskevaides.

"We have always been about quality and service," added eponymous owner Jonathan Myall. "Altus & Azumi flutes and Bremner mutes are examples of the world leading products that we al-

ready represent and adding Beaumont Music accessories is an indication that we are keeping the bar at the highest level.

"These products have been selling well across the globe and we are thrilled to be representing them in the UK. We are sure that they will be greeted with enthusiasm by the public and dealers alike. These products are practical, high quality down to the smallest details, accessibly priced and they look terrific. That's a potent combination."



Products include cases and/or carry bags for flute, guitar, ukulele and clarinet/oboe, slings for saxophone and clarinet, music bags and a range of cleaning cloths for woodwind, brass and string instruments.

Roland Shuffles Euro Pack

Roland Europe has reorganized its European management, with moves for CEO Gordon Raison and former MD Tim Walter.

Raison, who joined as its founding CEO in 2013, moves to Roland Corporation as senior executive officer, in charge of sales and operations across Europe and the Pan-Pacific region.



Jun-ichi Miki

He will continue to report to Jun-ichi Miki, Roland Corporation's CEO. His expanded remit now also includes North America, Canada and Australia, in addition to Europe.

Walter, previously sales and operations director, has been named as the group's new CEO responsible for sales, marketing and operations within Europe, as well as Russia and South Africa. He will continue to report to Raison.

Replacing him as sales director is Danny Jones, who joins from Harman Professional Solutions where he was working in retail business development and channel management throughout the EMEA region. Prior to this, he was at Fender Europe for over 10 years, most recently as European sales director.

New CFO Andrew Sheldon, joins Roland with significant experience across several multi-national businesses including in the video games sector.

Yamaha Half-Times Show Income Rise

Yamaha has released its second quarter results for the period ending March 31st 2017, showing the impact of exchange rate fluctuations on sales.

Although first half sales declined year-on-year, total group operating income increased for the fifth consecutive year. 1H operating income amounted to ¥24.6bn against ¥21bn in the same period 2016, with musical instruments and audio equipment both achieving record levels of income. The decline in sales was chiefly due to the impact of exchange rates (-¥22.4bn) and the transfer of music school operations (-¥4.2bn).

First half sales of musical instruments decreased from ¥110bn in the same period of the previous year, to ¥102.2bn, but operating income rose from ¥16.8bn to ¥18.8bn.

Operating income increased due to higher actual sales, sales price adjustments, cost reductions, and control of SG&A expenses including the decrease in amortization of goodwill.

Music net sales in Europe are expected to realize ¥46.6bn in the full financial year 2017 against ¥50.7bn in 2016.

Q2 European sales were down from ¥13.8bn in 2016 to ¥11.4bn in Q2 2017. First half net sales were down from ¥24.5bn to ¥23.3bn. The second half of 2017 is forecasted to generate net European sales of ¥23.3bn against ¥26.3bn in the previous second half period.

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Tin Pan Alley Campaign Fights On

The director behind a movie charting the history of Denmark's Street's Tin Pan Alley has started a crowdfunding campaign aiming to raise the £28,000 needed to get the film made.

"Tin Pan Alley Tales – The Documentary," produced and directed by Save Tin Pan Alley campaign founder and chairman Henry Scott-Irvine, is described as a "modern-day Canterbury Tales" that focuses on the street's history, including its importance to music business. Ten people with 10 different jobs will tell 10 stories across 10 decades.

Over 17 hours of interview footage has already been shot with the likes of Glen Matlock from the Sex Pistols, writer Will Self, skiffle pioneer and music agent Chas McDevitt.

Dave Davies from the Kinks has shot a short sequence of himself in Tin Pan Alley, exclusively for the film and there is also interview footage with composer and musician Patrick Campbell-Lyons, whose UK band Nirvana was the first British group to release an album on Island Records in the summer of 1967. A regular at the Gioconda Café at No.9 Denmark Street, he reminisces about his friendship with David Bowie who used to park his touring vehicle – a World War II U.S. military ambulance – outside the café.

Scott-Irvine is already half way towards his £28,000 target but is hoping that more backers will come forward over the next few weeks to enable him to complete the film.

He says: "I've had support from many music industry people – both for the film and for the original campaign to save Tin Pan Al-

ley. In the last few weeks alone we've been given rare and valuable original acetates that were donated by Suggs from Madness (pictured here with Henry Scott-Irvine). Producer Clive Langer has also given us a 12" white label master of a limited edition vinyl pressing of David Bowie's song Absolute Beginners, which topped the UK charts in 1986. These will be auctioned on Ebay to raise money for the film."

The importance of making the documentary cannot be underestimated, he adds. "Denmark Street was the epicenter of London's music scene for so long, but now, because of the development of the area, much of the history is being lost. We need to preserve and archive the story of Tin Pan Alley, as well as continue the fight for it to be protected with musical heritage zone status."

Tin Pan Alley's musical heritage dates to 1911 when it was the birthplace of sheet music publishing, and subsequently the birthplace of the music charts. The NME and The Melody Maker began life there, and for many years it was the place to have an office if you were a music publisher or an artist's manager.

The campaign to save Denmark Street from property developers has already had huge success, gaining Grade 2 listed status for various historically important buildings, including an 18th century Forge that was literally lifted by crane so that a pair of subterranean venues could be built beneath it. Eight music retail outlets and 11 music spaces above shops have also been protected and a Fair Rents scheme has been put in place to protect existing businesses.

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U.S. Deal for LunaStone

Danish guitar pedal brand LunaStone is being introduced in the U.S. by distributor Dedicated Musical Imports (DMI).

LunaStone has focused mainly on creating boutique overdrive pedals, but recently a clean boost pedal was also added to the product range that DMI will distribute across the US.

DMI is founded and headed by MI and pro audio veteran Ed Simeone who has served as CEO for TC Electronic US, as well as serving as production manager, FOH engineer and keyboard tech for artists, including Stevie Wonder, James Taylor, Journey, Charlie Sexton and Toto.

"I was made aware of the LunaStone pedals when my former colleague Allan Strand invested in the company and set out to take the brand to the next level," said Simeone. "Once I heard the pedals, I instantly knew this was a journey I wanted to join. Knowing Allan as a great colleague from the past, it was easy to make the decision and go all in on LunaStone."

Now available in the U.S. market are the three overdrive pedals Wise Guy, Big Fella and Three Stage Rocket. They all build on the same basic design, TrueOverDrive, that founder of LunaStone, Steen Grøntved, developed.

Rather than relying on clipping diodes, the pedals use cascaded gain stages to create the drive in order to get the dynamic response and transparency of a real tube amp being pushed hard. The latest LunaStone pedal, the clean booster named The Pusher, is now also available in the U.S.

Roli Launches 'Groundbreaking' Recording System

Bendy keyboard designer, Roli has launched a new product called Blocks, an ambitious attempt to create a new style of music creation and recording system.

Blocks is a modular music studio that connects together to create customizable kits that suit any budget, skill level, and musical style. Using the magnetic connectors, music-makers can now build their instruments as they go.

Artists including Grimes, Steve Aoki, and RZA are already making music on Blocks and creating signature soundpacks for Blocks musicians.

Three Blocks launch recently. The Lightpad Block features a tactile, glowing surface that lets people shape music through presses, glides, and other natural gestures. The Live Block and Loop Block have controls designed to make it easier to perform and produce in real time. The system is powered by Noise, a free music app for iPhone and iPad that is now available at the App Store. Noise connects to Blocks wirelessly over Bluetooth, becoming the system's sound engine as well as a standalone app.

The Lightpad Block, Live Block, and Loop Block are exclusively available at Roli.com, Apple.com, and Apple Stores around the world. Lightpad Block retails at \$179 (£169.95) and the Live Block and Loop Block at \$79 (£69.95).





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ON THE MOVE

Eastern Acoustic Works (EAW) has appointed **Jim Bobel** to the position of North U.S. sales engineer, effective immediately.



The announcement was made by Jim Newhouse, EAW's North American director of sales. In his new position, Bobel will be responsible for managing all EAW sales in the Northern U.S. states from the Dakotas to Kansas and across to the East Coast.

Bobel began his career working for Guitar Center where he climbed the ranks to general manager. Shortly thereafter he spent time as a manufacturers rep and in manufacturing sales.

Chauvet has named **Carlos Zamora de Martino** general manager of Chauvet Mexico.



Prior to joining Chauvet's rapidly growing Mexican operation, Zamora held senior executive positions at a number of global companies. He was

also the co-founder and CEO of Geo Lite LED Lighting. In his new position, he will be responsible for managing all facets of the CHAUVET Professional, CHAUVET DJ, ILUMINARC and Trusst business in Mexico.

"We're very excited to have someone of Carlos' caliber and experience join our team," said Albert Chauvet, CEO of Chauvet. "Although we have been selling products in Mexico for 25 years, our business in the country increased dramatically when we opened Chauvet Mexico in 2013 and began distributing directly. Our goal now is to build on this success, which is why we recently opened an expanded showroom in Lerma outside Mexico City, and why we are committed to taking our management to the next level by hiring accomplished professionals like Carlos."

St Louis Music (SLM) has announced that **Julie Baskin** has joined the SLM management team as director of purchasing.

Baskin comes to SLM from Sportsman's Supply, one of the nation's largest sporting goods and outdoor equipment distributors, where she managed the purchasing department and gained extensive experience in a high SKU count, high sales volume environment. She will be reporting to Dale Kroke, Senior vice president of Operations.

"I am excited to join St Louis Music," stated Baskin. "There is a great spirit of teamwork at SLM, and I look forward to helping SLM continue its aggressive growth plans. The sporting goods business from which I come from bears an amazing similarity to the music business in terms of best practices in Purchasing."

"We at SLM are happy to have Julie join the SLM team," said Mark Ragin, president and CEO of St. Louis Music. "Her depth of knowledge of the art of purchasing will greatly benefit SLM as we continue to work hard keeping up with our growth curve."

Bittree has appointed longtime industry veteran **Ari Baron** as general manager (GM). The news was announced by Glenn Garrard, CEO.



With over two decades of experience in the pro audio, broadcast, and MI community, Baron will be responsible for day-to-day operations at Bittree including future planning and growth, overseeing efficient manufacturing practices, introducing new products, and developing marketing and sales strategies, effective immediately.

Baron is currently based in Bittree's U.S. headquarters in Glendale, California and will report directly to Garrard.

Prior to his hire, Baron served as Eastman Music Company's vice president of Marketing where he managed all Marketing, Content, Artist Relations and Creative Operations for Eastman's global network of brands including Eastman Guitars & Mandolins, Eastman Strings, Andreas Eastman, Wm. S. Haynes Co. Flutes, S.E. Shires & Schertler Electronics. Baron also spent years with UCLA as their creative brand manager under the licensing and trademarks apparel division. He has launched accessory lines for West Coast Choppers, Von Dutch and Ed Hardy as well as served as the Marketing Manager for STA Travel where he managed the annual marketing plans for over 60 retail outlets.

Elation Professional has reached an agreement with industry professional **Chris Miller and Cascade Technical Sales** (CTS) to be



Elation's new independent sales representative for Northern California and Northern Nevada.

Miller, who has over 12 years of experience working in the AVL production and install industry, owns Cascade Technical Sales, based in Sacramento. He most recently ran his own sound production and installation company and still does broadcast production for the NBA's Sacramento Kings. Chris brings with him valuable experience working for a rep firm, representing lighting and audio companies, and also has years of experience working as a freelance engineer. Chris worked for the renowned music store Skips Music in Sacramento for years as an install manager.

Chris will be representing Elation Professional's entire line of lighting and video products and started the new sales rep relationship on August 1st.



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Trade Regrets

23 DECEMBER 2016 • mmmagazine.com

Milt Okun, founder of Cherry Lane Music Publishing, passed away on November 15th, at the age of 92.

Prior to entering music publishing, Okun found success in the 1950s and '60s as a performer and producer. His producing career continued after establishing Cherry Lane in 1960 – which eventually was known primarily for having publishing rights to the catalog of John Denver. Cherry Lane's portfolio grew to include works by the likes of Elvis Presley, Barbara Streisand, John Mayer, The White Stripes, Metallica, and Quincy Jones, among many others. BMG acquired Cherry Lane in 2010, for an estimated price somewhere between \$85 and 100 million.



Founder of Kanstul Music Instrument Co., **Ziggy Kanstul**, passed away on October 31.

Cutting his teeth at the FE Olds Company beginning back in the early '50s, Kanstul became an expert on all aspects of brass instrument manufacture and took – and expanded upon – that knowledge to the company that would bear his name when Kanstul Music Instrument Co. was founded in 1981. The expansive Kanstul line drew upon not only Ziggy's expertise, but also the input of those he successfully recruited for guidance: Doc Severinson, Bryon Autry, and Mudge Miller, among others.



On October 29th, we received the following message from NAMM's Dan Del Fiorentino:

Gary [Schireson] provided the sad news that his father passed away today. **Stanley Schireson** was a month shy of his 99th birthday. Stanley's father opened up a small music store in 1902 that would eventually branch out into manufacturing and distribution of musical instruments. The company began making ukuleles and acoustic guitars under the Hollywood brand name before developing the Volutone name. After the war and thanks to Stanley's leadership, a separate distribution company, called Volutone was created that expanded the product line around the world. As an electronic and pro-audio distributor, the company was the first in the United States to offer such brands as Sony and Yamaha electronics.



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Olympia's Yunki Bang.



Alpha Pianos' Chrisoph Koberger and Norbert Futschik.



Fei Yan of Kawai.



Harvey Levy of Levy's Leathers.

Music China and Prolight + Sound Shanghai

Asia's Largest MI Trade Show Continues to Grow – in Size and Significance

By Christian **Wissmuller**

The 15th annual Music China saw still more growth for a convention that was already mammoth in scale. 1,909 total exhibitors from over 30 countries set out to make an impression at the 2016 gathering (up from 1,782 last year) and 90,125 visitors (up 12 percent from 80,580 in 2015) were on hand to soak it all in. Exhibition space had been expanded to accommodate the growing numbers with 10 halls representing over 367,000 square feet.

Prolight + Sound Shanghai also saw steady increases in numbers, with 561 exhibiting companies from 22 countries (500 in 2015) and 26,527 visitors (25,455 last year).

The next Music China will take place October 10-14, 2017. For more details, visit www.musikmesse-china.com.



Saga Musical Instruments' David Gartland.



Michael Biber of Messe Frankfurt Exhibition GmbH.



Silvan Küng of Relish Guitars.



Backun Musical Services: Jeremy Backun and Joel Jaffe.



Reliance International Corp.'s Alan Yang.



D'Addario's Jack Jin.



Hannah Liuzzo and Matt Vance of Buffet Crampon.



Eastman's Zhang Rui and Doug Martin.



Scott Thompson of The Music Link.



Joel Lindberg, Jody Espina, and Colin Schofield of Jody-Jazz, Inc.



Morris Chang of Maxtone.



Rob Hanson and Indy Caufield of John Packer Musical Instruments.



Hannes Schimmel-Vogel of Schimmel Pianos.



Optima's André Schneider.



The show floor.

Voices from the Show Floor

"My only thought of this show is: LOUD! This show is changing as they all are, with more domestic business and less international. The landscape of 'where business is done' is ever-changing. Right now it seems Winter NAMM is the spot!"

Scott Thompson
AXL/The Music Link

"So, yes the show was very interesting for us. We caught many new eyes and made new contacts in the Asian market. Relish is fitting perfectly into the Asian market. I'm very glad that they like our design and new approach of manufacturing an electric guitar."

Silvan Küng
Relish Guitars Switzerland

"Music China was once again a fabulous and well attended event. A good mixture of trade and retail footfall combined which resulted in the booth being busy for the duration of the show. We were very happy to meet old and new dealers from the Asia Pacific region along with customers from Europe and the U.S. and we look forward to increased business as a result."

Rob Hanson
John Packer Musical Instruments

"The China market shows no signs of slowing down. The Music China show was busier than ever for us. The show continues to grow and we noticed an expansion of exhibitors both in the western instrument halls and the traditional Chinese instrument halls."

Voices from the Show Floor

We know that in the past few years there has been a formal government initiative to introduce expanded jazz education programs into the music school curriculum and we saw plenty of evidence of that with the various Jazz workshops and presentations that took place at the show. Certainly the demand for our products continues to grow and we are on track to finish 2016 not just with record sales numbers, but also with exponential increases from previous years.

"Another trend that was very apparent this year was the increasing number of our distributors and dealers from the major European markets who came to this show... We met with customers from many European markets including Italy, Spain, Germany, Poland and the UK and interestingly, just about all of them explained that they would now be attending this show instead of Musikmesse Frankfurt."

Colin Schofield
JodyJazz Inc

"Music China 2016 confirmed our judgment of the Chinese market. The volume is stable and it is by far the biggest market in the world. The demand for medium and high-end products in continuously growing, even though more than 95 percent of all units sold are still entry-level pianos. We are realizing a growing desire for quality and brands – and related to this an increasing confusion coming due to all of the fake or artificial brands. Private

customers want German products and with the BVK "Made in Germany" -Certificate there is a reconfirmation that is very helpful."

Hannes Schimmel-Vogel
Schimmel Piano

"This year was better than last year. Many buyers and musicians came to our booth and we had more meetings than last year. Especially, our CTS (coated strings) were getting more good feedback since last year. I think the overall Music China was more active than last year. Even though it was rainy during the show, many people came to visit. We hope to show new products to the public at the next Music China.

Yunki Bang
Olympia Strings

"We were happy to present the newest and latest innovation from D'Addario through this show to Chinese musicians and our business partners. We have been successfully attending the Music China show since we established the Chinese subsidiary in 2013 and we are looking forward to better serve the Chinese music community."

Jack Jin
D'Addario Shanghai Trading Co., Ltd.

Tune More Fun!





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A portion from every sale will go to a fund to help cancer patients and their families

33rd Annual

50 Dealer/50 State Review & Forecast

Nationwide Survey of MI Retailers Suggests Generally 'Mixed' Outlook, Although Many Remain Concerned About Effects of the Recent Election *(Note: some of the stores contacted responded just prior to the outcome of this year's Presidential race)*



ALABAMA

Tuscaloosa Music Service, Inc.
Tuscaloosa
James Stephen, Manager

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? Our fiscal year started much stronger with increased band instrument rentals. Acoustic, bass and keyboard sales are strong. Drums are about even with last year, but overall have been strong the last several years. This year we have started purchasing a lot more used instruments and gear for refurbishing and resale. We remain busy in the repair departments!



Development in the MI industry that you're most excited about? New technologies in the production of acoustic guitars. Ibanez's Thermo Aged acoustics sound phenomenal. Other companies are using similar techniques, but these are available for much less money. Customers looking for a first guitar or an upgrade can now consider instruments that have a sound of much more expensive time-aged acoustics, but at an affordable price.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Peavey Vypyr VIP 1 electric guitar/acoustic/bass amp.



ALASKA

Alaska Music & Sound/The Horn Doctor Music Store, Inc.
Anchorage
Barbara Kagerer, President

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? We held our own. It wasn't necessarily better financially, but I feel we were able to watch expenses and inventory levels to keep our business healthy.

Are there any new lines or brands you've taken on with success in the past year? Two new products for us that we love: the little "Merlin" or M-4 from Seagull and "EAR-asers" hearing protection. We will be proudly featuring the Merlin at the upcoming Anchorage Folk Festival in January. The "EAR-asers" ear plugs are an impulse buy for many customers, and combined with the colorful "StashCan" display, they're an easy sell.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? It's a tie between Cannonball saxophones and Seagull guitars. They are consistently top-notch, and our customers like the combination of beauty and quality.



ARIZONA

Boogie Music
Phoenix
Clint Diffie, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? 2016 has been consistently up a small percentage but it's still an uphill battle to get back to where we were prior to the downturn.

How do you feel that the incoming president and new administration will affect MI in the coming months? WOW, that's a loaded question! I'm not sure which candidate would be best for our industry. My gut tells me Hillary might be good for the school music programs and Donald might be good for retail in general, but I say this with tremendous skepticism if they don't both grow up!

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Taylor 562CE 12-fret, 12 string guitar.



ARKANSAS

Back Beat Music
Jonesboro
Greg Arnold, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? We are up three percent.

Development in the MI industry that you're most excited about? More affordable American-made guitars are coming around from small builders. Fender has really made some great limited models for independents lately that have sold well.

Most successful marketing strategy in 2016? It still has to be excellent customer service that leads to good ole "word of mouth" among friends.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Gretsch Streamliner Series



CALIFORNIA

Westwood Music
Los Angeles
Alex Sinclair, General Manager

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? 2016 saw an increase in acoustic guitar sales and a slight decrease in amp sales compared to 2015. We focused on building our Lesson & Repair business, which has been incredibly beneficial in offsetting the unpredictability of merchandise sales.

Are there any new lines or brands you've taken on with success in the past year? Rodriguez Classical Guitars: great quality instrument for an affordable price.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Collings Guitars.

**COLORADO****Music Gear Guys**

Denver

Gregory Decker, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? Sales in 2016 have been lower than 2015. More smaller sales and or trades. However, trades hope to turn into higher profits in the future.

How do you feel that the incoming president and new administration will affect MI in the coming months? I do feel that presidential elections do make a difference in the mi economy. Roughly six-to-nine months prior to elections I notice more customers wanted to trade older gear or fix their current gear rather than pony up for the latest mi craze. Regardless of outcomes of the elections historically I see sales open up again.

On a personal level, I see higher profits in repairs and potential higher profit margins reselling trading in gear. I also manufacture guitar and bass parts under Floyd Rose and Lok-N-Roll and see that parts upgrades selling in higher quantities and yielding higher returns of profits.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Mesa Boogie

**CONNECTICUT****A Sound Choice**

Branford

Ken Johnson, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? We're down from 2015.

Development in the MI industry that you're most excited about? New products that help drive the industry.

Most successful marketing strategy in 2016? Facebook posts and monthly newsletter.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Amahi ukuleles

**DELAWARE****Seaford Music**

Seaford

Edwin Santos, Store Manager

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? For the personal services that you can't get online (repairs, installs, & lessons), we consistently do well. It's no secret that retail storefronts are suffering to online sales. We offer personal experiences for our customers, unlike salespeople over the phone or in online chat boxes. There are some transactions you just can't do mail order and that's where we've done well both this year and last.

Are there any new lines or brands you've taken on with success in the past year? This year we took on Blackstar amps and it's been great. The Blackstar Club series amps are a great value for the working musician and the FLY series amps are an awesome accessory for both beginners and seasoned pros.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Powered speakers. We've done really well with the Yamaha DXRs & Mackie Thumps.

**FLORIDA****Lewis Music Store**

Kissimmee

Paul D. Lewis, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? 2016 was a little off from 15 but only about 10%.

What have you found to be your best Social Media strategies? Facebook rules the social media world! I put something out there and start getting responses in two minutes or less. It has been a great tool!

How do you feel that the incoming president and new administration will affect MI in the coming months? Election years are always slower than off years; when the new people get in, everything falls right back to where it was before.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Buy far my best sellers were Washburn acoustics (all models) and Snark tuners.

**GEORGIA****The Music Trader**

Tucker

Paul Allison, Owner/(Janitor!)

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? This year we will be flat, although net profit will be up.

Development in the MI industry that you're most excited about? I am most excited about direct selling to customers by manufacturers, although not for a good reason. How a distributor or manufacturer can expect loyalty from a retailer when they are selling direct on the internet is beyond me. It breeds an attitude of every man (or woman) for him or her-selves.

Most successful marketing strategy in 2016? Marketing strategy to me comes down to hard work and loyalty to one's customers. I find that a retailer's ratings and responses on sites like Yelp are huge in building a sense of trust with new customers. People are so busy now that these sites have become their form of filtering which business that they will go to. Get ready for an interesting 2017!

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Acoustic Guitars are still strong although for us. The leader is always our pre-owned gear.

**HAWAII****Bounty Music**

Kahului

Paul Weinstein, President

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? This year has been about the same.

Are there any new lines or brands you've taken on with success in the past year? Turbosound.

Highlights/lowlights of 2016? The presidential election has made everyone uncertain about the future.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Kamaka 100th Anniversary ukulele.

**IDAHO****Mike's Music**

Pocatello

Curt Doggett, Vice President

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? Total business has been relatively flat. Some categories have been up, while others have been down. PA business has been our best category.

Best Social Media Strategies? Try to stay on top of it and respond as quickly as possible.

How do you feel that the incoming president and new administration will affect MI in the coming months? I foresee difficult times for the MI business in general, and especially tough times for small retailers. Whoever is elected president will probably have little effect on the music business, good or bad. The main problem for small retailers is the continued erosion of their customer base and business by large internet retailers. I believe there will be a time in the not too distant future when the Mom and Pop shop can no longer remain viable, especially in smaller communities. Then we will all have to genuflect before the altar of Amazon if we want to buy anything.

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? Snark SN-8 Tuner.



ILLINOIS
PM Music Center
 Aurora
 Frank Pampanello, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? As of the end of October, our gross is up 12% over last year's numbers. We've seen most of our growth in instrument rentals and in accessory and instrument sales.

Which development in the MI industry are you most excited about? More and more, manufacturers are choosing to invest in their dealers, creating long-term partnerships and relationships in support of their network. In particular, Yamaha recently introduced its Shokunin select program, providing outstanding resources for dealers. Gemeinhardt has stopped selling direct to customers and now has an in-house sales team; Hal Leonard launched its new dealer portal, and hopefully more manufacturers will follow suit, realizing that the best way to increase sales on both sides is to assist and promote their growing dealer networks.

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? Our product of the year is the Schilke i32 trumpet. Although Schilke considers this to be an intermediate trumpet, most players would compare it to other brands' professional-level instruments.



INDIANA
Musicians' Repair & Sales
 Indianapolis
 Rick Oldham, President

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? Down considerably the first half, and rebounding in the 3rd quarter.

Are there any new lines or brands you've taken on with success in the past year? The B&S Trumpet, the Northbridge Flute, and D'Addario Reserve Reeds and Mouthpieces.

Highlights/lowlights of 2016? We find more small inter-city schools starting instrumental music. It has been difficult getting certain brands of saxophones, trumpets, and music stands. The same issue has happened with small goods order fill rates. The downsizing of KMC has made this problem worse.

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? Trumpet Silver Plated B&S BS3137-2-0.



IOWA
UpTempo Music
 Des Moines
 Dave Kouri, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? Business has increased every year for the last 14 years. 2016 is also up.

Best Social Media Strategies? Do more of it more often. We use Facebook and Twitter. I would like to use it more for awareness and local store promotions and events, as well as shows our customers are involved in.

How do you feel that the incoming president and new administration will affect MI in the coming months? I am writing this 11 days before election. So time will tell. I don't think it will have an immediate effect. How trade is dealt with will have the biggest effect.

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? Eastman 52nd St saxophones and Krutz violins.



KANSAS
R.E.W. Music
 Lenexa and Olathe
 Bob Woepfel, President

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? We found that 2016 treated us about the same as 2015 – there were not any significant up- or downswings.

Which development in the MI industry are you most excited about? I am most excited about the opportunities we are finding for bolstering music education and seeing fellow retailers also engage in support of music education in our schools. Music education is so important and an opportunity everyone should have available to them.

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? Without a doubt, our product of the year is the educational camps and clinics we offer to student musicians of all levels. From forming summer ensemble groups to play fun music that keeps students excited and playing throughout the break from school, to our highly anticipated Exploring Instruments Camp, which provides an opportunity to students who are thinking about playing an instrument to play and learn about each one in order to make a more informed decision what to play, based on actual experience of playing the instrument. The kids love it, the parents love it, and our local band and orchestra directors love it!



KENTUCKY
Mel Owen Music
 Louisville
 Melanie Dillman, Music Education Representative

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? We've seen an increase in rentals from last year. More customers are wanting to rent quality instruments as opposed to buying an inexpensive instrument that is more difficult to play and repair.

Are there any new lines or brands you've taken on with success in the past year? Eastman band instruments.

Highlights/lowlights of 2016? Sales and repair have gone up. Unfortunately, there are ever-increasing costs and lower margins.

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? Snark tuners.



LOUISIANA

Slidell Music Company

Slidell

Mike Romano, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? We are down eight percent.

Best Social Media Strategies? We send out specials and promotions or anything new and exciting via email blasts, Facebook, and our webpage: 1stmusicstore.com.

How do you feel that the incoming president and new administration will affect MI in the coming months? I'll be glad when this election is over. Early voted and still didn't like my choice. Elections always seem to affect business in a negative way. Also I pray everyday for my state of Louisiana to start charging sales tax, so we can be more competitive with the Internet companies. I wonder how much money our poor state is losing.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? JBL EON615.



MAINE

Northern Kingdom Music

Bangor

Darren Hope, Manager

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? We are running pretty much even.

Development in the MI industry that you're most excited about? For sure the interest in effects pedals and boards. Also uku-

les. Effects pedals bring people in all the time.

Most successful marketing strategy in 2016? Facebook and updating website – keeping it fresh with new pics of instruments and amps all the time.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Taylor GS Mini Koa.



MARYLAND

Chuck Levin's Washington Music Center

Wheaton

Alan Levin, Owner and President

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? It was a solid year. Business was up, both online and in store.

Are there any new lines or brands you've taken on with success in the past year? Aston microphones has been doing well since their launch at Winter NAMM 2016, and MIXARS DJ mixers have been solid since their summer launch.

Highlights/lowlights of 2016? Our website will be fully accessible to users with disabilities by the end of 2016, which we are hugely excited about. We have just completed construction on new office space where we will move many of our administrative personnel so that we can improve our showroom space for the Band Sales department.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? We have several: KORG Minilogue, Electro-Harmonix Mel9, Electro-Voice ZLX12P, Subpac M2, and Schagerl Apredato Mouthpieces.



TRAVEL TENOR

The tried-and-true Kala Travel Tenor ukulele is lightweight and slim—perfect for any gathering or adventure! This compact uke has a huge sound that must be heard to be believed, making it a dependable option for all situations. All models come with a durable travel gig bag.

SPECS

OVERALL LENGTH: **25.81"** (65.55 cm)
 BODY DEPTH: **1.81"** (4.59 cm)
 BODY WIDTH: **9.19"** (23.34 cm)
 WEIGHT: **16 oz** (0.45 kg)

KALABRAND.COM





MASSACHUSETTS

Mr. Music, Inc.

Allston

Sal Barone, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? A little better than last year.

Best Social Media Strategies? We use Facebook, which is also linked to Twitter. Especially on our high-end vintage guitars, we post them on Facebook, and they then get tweeted to our followers. Usually we get a quick response of interest, which helps with sales worldwide.

How do you feel that the incoming president and new administration will affect MI in the coming months? If Trump wins? It looks like we will only get Mexican Strats if they are thrown over the wall!

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? Snark Tuner.



MICHIGAN

Gordy’s Music

Ferndale

Gordy & Marcia Lupo, Owners

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? 2016 appears to be about the same as 2015, as far as total gross sales. The year is not over by far, so anything can happen and we are staying optimistic – as we do everyday when we come into our store.

Development in the MI industry that you’re most excited about? We are most excited about some of the fresh and recent surge in manufacturer products I am seeing in the “vintage re-issue” realm, such as Dan-Electro guitars, Ampeg combo & flip-top reissues, Supro, Gibson, Fender, vintage-style all-tube boutique amps, etc. I love having these products in our store, as they blend in so nice with the original vintage pieces. The more the merrier!

Most successful marketing strategy in 2016? The best marketing idea we have been using that works very well is throwing in free shipping on costly items sold in various ways on the internet. The shipping tends to be somewhat expensive with insurance and all, so we are finding that even if we don’t advertise that feature with the product description when the phone rings and you are haggling over price and how it’s being paid for, if you throw in free shipping, that usually wraps up the deal! Everybody ends up happy.

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? As far as new products go... our biggest seller this year has been the ‘Snark’ tuner and the ‘Tube Tech’ A frame fold-up heavy duty guitar stand that fits everything: acoustic, electric, and bass guitars.



MINNESOTA

My Music Store

Golden Valley

Nick Perna, Store Manager

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? Overall sales are about flat, but it seems electric guitar, bass, and amp sales have nudged up a bit compared to last year.

Are there any new lines or brands you’ve taken on with success in the past year? While not exactly new to us, we added a lot of Electro Harmonix effect pedals to our selection and experienced good sell-through.

Highlights/lowlights of 2016? A highlight for us was that we began utilizing Craigslist posts consistently and in larger volume, which created many sales and cool trades. A lowlight seems to be

a decline in beginning drum and percussion players, which continues to throttle sales and lesson traffic in those categories.

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? In terms of an instrument, the Yamaha FS800 acoustic guitar. The updated scalloped bracing improved the sound significantly, and at \$199 street price, we have to keep restocking them!



MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi Music, Inc.

Hattiesburg, Meridian, Flowood, Biloxi

Rosi K. Johnson, President

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? So far Mississippi Music is up for 2016. We are celebrating MMI’s 70th anniversary this year. Our fiscal year ends in March, so we are optimistic that we will continue the trend and end March, 2017 on a good note!

Best Social Media Strategies? We use Facebook mainly to communicate with our loyal fans. We have a main site for overall company news, sales events, and specials, as well as music advocacy and who we are. We also have a separate page for each location for more localized events and news.

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? The entire Yamaha Proline of Band and Orchestra Instruments.



MISSOURI

Mid Rivers Music

St. Peters

John Sherwin, President

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? We are holding our own. The business is getting more and more competitive and the number of musicians continues to decrease. Why? Well, yes the PlayStation/X-Box games are a reason, but I also attribute the attitude of the younger generation of people. Playing a song well takes practice and commitment – and this is something more and more people don’t have the intestinal fortitude to accomplish. It would be a big help to have more teachers that have the patience to bring more students together to form bands and teach them how to play songs and get the motivation to create something musical.

Development in the MI industry that you’re most excited about? New products and ideas are great reasons why we make this industry so successful. The new effects pedals have increased interest with guitar players. Snark Tuners have helped with accessory sale add-ons for all instruments. The digital market is always changing but the constant in our industry are the sounds created by the artists and the profound impact it carries on for the next one playing his/her instrument. Keep the motivation going – do the most you can to encourage the player to keep playing!

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? The Fender Squier Telecaster has been our top seller by far.



MONTANA

Morgenroth Music Centers

Missoula

Gary Bowman, President

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? Comparing 2016 to 2015 we are up this year 22.9 percent with the largest increase coming in on both digital pianos and acoustic pianos.

Most successful marketing strategy in 2016? At Christmas of 2015 all salespeople received iPads with a companywide data

plan in order to promote product, events, etc. on social media and our website. Also, so many products sold in our industry today have apps that customers love to see – which is a great closing tool. Customers as well as our salespeople love to utilize this tool and I think overall this has been a great influence on the bottom line. Also, our company Band and Orchestra sales representative always posts pictures of “directors in action” and video clips of the school band programs as he visits each school. We have found that our Facebook account and our website see more views than they have in the past.



Are there any new lines or brands you’ve taken on with success in the past year? We continue to be amazed by the Michael Kelly Guitar line. It’s a great product, built well, and so reasonably priced. When a customer sees and plays the guitar they immediately see apparent value and rarely every question pricing before purchasing.

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? The product of the year has to be the El Cajon by Roland. I do want to give a shout out, though, to Yamaha’s NU-1 Hybrid Piano. This is turning heads and causing serious re-thinking by many piano teachers.



NEBRASKA
Kittle’s Music
 North Platte
 Rob Kittle, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? So far business has been up a little, we tend to stay ahead of inflation a few points every year. We’ve had upward growth since I’ve owned it in 1999.

Most successful marketing strategy in 2016? I would say that it’s still ‘word-of-mouth’ as far as consistent business. We put very little money into marketing because we’re in a unique area. We have a small population and we’re the only store in the area. We do stay engaged with social media by continually posting but we don’t pay to boost posts, we rely on our community to share our posts.

Are there any new lines or brands you’ve taken on with success in the past year? Teton has been very successful. It’s not in the highest margin for us but customers are loving it.

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? I would say all of our clip-on tuners are still surprisingly huge sellers, we really weren’t expecting because of cell phone apps but cell phones don’t clip on to a guitar now do they? Planet Waves brand is at the top of our list.



NEVADA
Absolute Music
 Reno
 Steve Gibson, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? 2016 has been the strongest year in our history. Last year was a very good year, and we’re up another 10 percent this year.

Most successful marketing strategy? Direct contact within the school community remains our most important form of marketing. Both regular visits with educators as well as displays at as many festivals and competitions as we can fit in help us get the word out.

Are there any new lines or brands you’ve taken on with success in the past year? This year we became the Yamaha Band & Orchestra dealer in our area. This has been a very exciting addition for us. Adding Yamaha to our primarily Conn-Selmer offering, has made us a force to be reckoned with here in our local market. It took years to make this addition happen, and it has been worth it in every way!

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? Cannonball Saxophones.



NEW HAMPSHIRE
Manchester Music Mill
 Manchester
 Joe Lacerda, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? 2016 has been great for us. I think we are about 20-23 percent up over last year.

Most successful marketing strategy? Social media and paid advertising through social media is really the only way to get people notice what’s going on. We follow a model where we don’t post too often or too little and we will pay to boost posts to get our message out for sale promotions, new products, and any unique offerings.

Are there any new lines or brands you’ve taken on with success in the past year? Our top selling products based on dollars and quantity, not including accessories, are Mackie Thump12 powered speakers, Fishman Loudbox Mini Amplifiers for acoustics, Blackstar ID:Core amps for electrics, and Yamaha keyboard piano lines do very well for us.

ALLPARTS
www.allparts.com/ezkey

E-Z KEY™ Vintage Tuner Lube
 Multi-purpose mineral lubricant for tuners, bridges, and tremos.
 Safe for all metal finishes.

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? Martin D41Acoustic Guitar. We’ve sold more D41’s by dollar amount than any other acoustic, our customers really appreciate high-end quality.



NEW JERSEY
Ritchie’s Music Center
 Rockaway, New Jersey
 Jim Riccio, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business?

Worse this year, and so far, the holiday season sales are down compared to 2015.



Product of the Year for your store in 2016?

Fender and Taylor are tied for us.



NEW MEXICO
Baum’s Music
 Albuquerque
 Dan Louton

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? We saw a modest increase from 2015 and considering the economy here we are happy. We are excited to be celebrating our 70th year in business with the help of our loyal customers.



Most successful marketing strategy? Our most successful marketing comes from hosting concerts and recitals here at the store.

Best social media engagement strategy? We utilize Facebook as our social media strategy to keep our customer up to date on all of our activities

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? Luna Tribal Ukuleles.



NEW YORK
Rudy’s Music
 SoHo, New York City
 Rudy Pensa, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? 2016 was definitely much better for us, we had a great year. We closed one location and have focused on a new location. The past three months seemed to have slowed down a bit but now that the election is over the community seems to be relieved and things are picking up again, even our local restaurants seems busier.

Development in the MI industry that you’re most excited about? We are excited to find that there has been a change from customers wanting electric guitars to people looking for vintage acoustic guitars. We’ve sold a lot of vintage guitars.

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? Martin Guitars and Taylor, as well.



NORTH CAROLINA
Howren Music
 Charlotte
 Dennis Howren

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? 2016 is looking fantastic! We’re up in all categories and our end of year step-up push is remunerative.



Most successful marketing strategy in 2016? During the month of July our Summer Series, four-part introduction to instruments for kids was a huge hit. It was tight placing 70 youngsters plus their parents and grandparents in the back of the retail floor but we pulled it off and the moms can’t wait for their “musician” to get an instrument and begin to play.

We also received some excellent advice on our website concerning Google searches. We witnessed quick results with our website placement in search categories and it was FREE.

Online rentals have exploded. We promote this in schools, printed media, rental forms, social, business cards and we are blown away how successful it’s been.

Are there any new lines or brands you’ve taken on with success in the past year? Eastman Winds has been an extremely profitable line for us and they keep expanding their offerings via Hanes, Shires and Backun. We were thrilled Conn-Selmer developed a new line of Ludwig Marching percussion and expect them to put a large dent in that market.

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? Yamaha P45B digital piano.



NORTH DAKOTA
Jacobsen Music
 Minot
 Dennis Jacobsen, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? I would say it’s great, maybe down slightly because of the oil booming declining but still a great year.

Most successful marketing strategy? We’ve been increasing our Facebook and online activity some by transferring the budget that we used to spend on yellow page ads over to Internet advertising.

Are there any new lines or brands you’ve taken on with success in the past year? More Clavinovas and this year we brought on more Martin guitars.

“Product of the Year” for your store in 2016? An overall brand would be all of our Yamaha products including; band and orchestra, stringed, guitars, pro audio, acoustic pianos and Clavinovas.



OHIO
Hauer Music
 Centerville
 Jim Hauer, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? 2015 was our first year in our new location after 75 years being in Downtown Dayton. We have seen about a 17% increase in 2016. Taking the leap to start over in a suburban location with a fresh new look and still maintain our nearly 80-year, family-owned heritage. We are

thrilled with how positive the community has responded.

Development in the MI industry that you're most excited about? We love the ukulele craze. Though it's been going on for years, it just keeps getting bigger! What other instrument could you see put a smile on a four-year-old, a millennial, and a grandparent at the same time? It is absolutely rare in MI.

Are there any new lines or brands you've taken on with success in the past year? Amahi ukes hands down are the best value.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? All of our Yamaha products from pianos, digitals, guitars, drums, woodwinds, brass, strings and PA – everything sells well.



OKLAHOMA

Ada Music Center

Ada
Richie Vallandingham, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? We saw an increase in band rentals and we were pretty steady in all of our other departments.

Best community engagement strategy? Maintaining relationships with our schools is our best marketing strategy.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Buffet Crampon brings the most success overall.



OREGON

Portland Music Company

Portland
Mark Taylor, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? We should be up about seven percent this year with good luck.

Development in the MI industry that you're most excited about? Most excited about some indication of manufacturers increasing GP at map. Could be an acknowledgement that independent dealers need it to be viable long term.

Are there any new lines or brands you've taken on with success in the past year? New lines Rickenbacker and Breedlove are both doing very well.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Korg Mini-logue.



PENNSYLVANIA

Marty's Music

Annville
Marcus Sprecher, Music Business Specialist

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? Pretty much the same but the Fall of 2016 was not as good as 2015, we're not breaking any records but we're staying afloat.

Most successful marketing strategy? Are biggest marketing strategy is our use of Reverb, which is how we sell our gui-

tars. Facebook is our local community connection. We have a budget for boosting posts and with our local newspaper.

Development in the MI industry that you're most excited about? For the piano market we're most excited about our continued success with Roland's Bluetooth capabilities for iPhone and iPad - they're very popular with our customers. In the guitar market Martin is the most successful.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Guitar looping pedals. P45 Yamaha and RP401R Roland keyboards are tied in the piano department.



RHODE ISLAND

Rick's Musical Instruments, Inc.

Cumberland
Rick Verfaille, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? On the band instrument side, we noted an increase of sales, particularly in accessories. Rentals and sales of step-up and pro instruments remained strong, as did string instruments.

Development in the MI industry that you're most excited about? We have enjoyed the increase of step-up model band instruments from our manufacturer partners. Increased options have led to strong sales, particularly for players who either are not ready for or who cannot afford professional/advanced level instruments.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Légère Reeds have been a great hit, especially among the Signature and European Signature reeds.



SOUTH CAROLINA

Sims Music

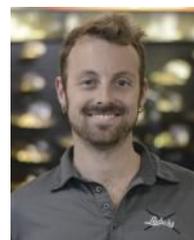
Columbia
Justin Sims, General Manager

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? 2016 business was pretty close to 2015. Maybe a little dip possibly due to an election year? Very strong percussion department sales and PA sales.

Most successful marketing strategy? As for marketing, we only use social media. No paid advertisement. We did partner with Freeway Music (South Carolina's leading music lesson studio with five locations) and we put a Freeway inside Sims Music. It took over our lesson department and we have more than doubled the amount of students who have taking lessons in the last year. Also, because of the five locations, we have 1,000 students we are connected to. It's an amazing partnership and worth more than any advertisement could have done for us.

Are there any new lines or brands you've taken on with success in the past year? We took on Strymon this year and have had a huge success with them. We have put a lot of attention on our pedal selection and this was a great upgrade!

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Our top selling product in the store, dollar wise, is the Yamaha MOXF8.





Note from Joe

ADVERTORIAL • DECEMBER 2016 • NAMM.ORG

The Case for Making a Gift to The NAMM Foundation Believe in Music Fund

During this holiday season as we look back and count our blessings that this wonderful industry has brought to our families, our communities and to the world, I would like to take a moment to share some news on The NAMM Foundation and why we'd like you to consider making a gift that would help bring musical opportunities to more children.

Since its inception just a few short years ago, The NAMM Foundation has been funded by NAMM and our 'Circle of Benefits' business model. This has given the Foundation a strong start and has helped achieve our vision of a more musical world, with particular success in building greater support for music education. We expect this will always be the bedrock of The NAMM Foundation's funding. But it was always our goal to create a fund where industry participants and all who believe and support our cause could donate, sort of like an 'industry community chest,' where gifts would be leveraged by NAMM's giving, thus multiplying the impact of every dollar.

This past year we launched the Believe in Music Fund and for the first time asked for support from our membership for The NAMM Foundation. The response exceeded our expectations and we achieved our goal and then some. I would like to personally give a special thanks to our Board of Directors, Executive Committee and past Chairman. They gave generously and we had 100% participation! The NAMM staff also got involved, as did many members who had heard about the fund.

You too have contributed by your membership and your support of The NAMM Show. But if you would like to make a charitable gift to the Believe in Music Fund, you will be demonstrating a particularly effective form of generosity, knowing that your donation will be multiplied many times over with NAMM's support and will be used 100% towards achieving our mission. So if you Believe in Music like we do, please consider making a gift through your business or individually. It is also a meaningful way to honor a loved one who shared our vision of a world where everyone has the chance to make music. The NAMM Foundation website has all the details; you can even call me personally! I'd welcome the opportunity to tell you more about the great work the Foundation is doing and see how it might fit into your charitable plans.

Thank you for your continued support, on behalf of our Board and staff we wish you and your families a very happy holiday. See you in Anaheim!


Joe Lamond
NAMM PRESIDENT AND CEO

The NAMM Foundation

The NAMM Foundation advances active participation in music making across the lifespan by supporting scientific research, philanthropic giving and public service programs. Since 2007, through the support of NAMM members, The NAMM Foundation has contributed nearly \$15 million to fund programs impacting people across a broad range of musical segments, genres and age demographics.



"Before I had music, I was having trouble; I didn't see the point in doing homework or paying attention at school. Now music has changed my life. It has given me a lot more confidence and also gives me hope that if I really want something, it can be done."

Bruno Bello
Participant in the San Diego Youth Symphony's Community Opus Project funded by The NAMM Foundation

Thank you to our donors

We are honored and deeply grateful for the generous donations given to The NAMM Foundation in 2016.

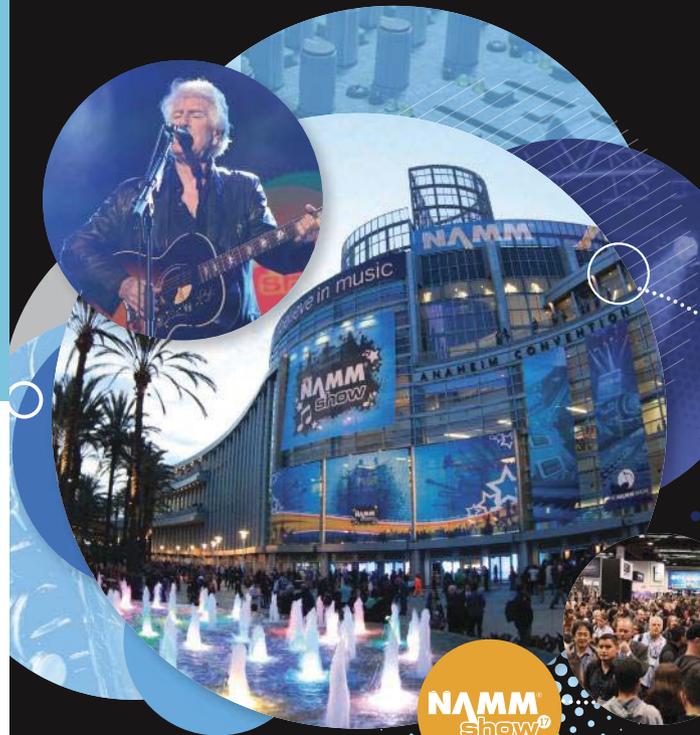
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SOUTH DAKOTA
Engel Music, Inc,
 Aberdeen
 Don Trebilcock, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? Better. We had a good year.

Are there any new lines or brands you've taken on with success in the past year? Yamaha guitars, Clavinovas, and pianos. And Taylor guitars are great to deal with and we've expanded both of those lines this year.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Yamaha Clavinova CVP 705



TENNESSEE
Corner Music
 Nashville
 Larry Garris, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? Better, we're up 10 percent gross and profit up 1.1 percent over last year.

Most successful marketing strategy? We constantly update our Facebook page as well as post on Reverb.

Developments in the MI industry that you're most excited about? Pat Quilter's amps, Audio Technica System 10 Pro Digital Wireless mics, MEE M6Pro In-Ears, Mackie TH12, and all the Analog Synths.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Audio Technica System 10 Pro Digital Wireless mics



TEXAS
Strait Music
 Austin
 Clint Strait, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? We were down a little. July 1 to June 30 is our fiscal year and we went slightly down due primarily to the piano market. Our combo business is down a bit off a banner year, other than that everything else was pretty flat.

Best social media engagement strategy? Our favorite one this year is our Blue Bonnets and Music Photo contest. We have a wildflower season every year around the same time and we encouraged our customers to take a picture with themselves and their instrument in a field of Blue Bonnets, we had tons of submissions. We asked our community to vote online for their favorite photo and the winner who received the most votes won \$500. It was a little girl who was able to buy her own violin. We also asked our customers to show us their photo on their FB page to receive 10 percent off in the store. Our customers were sharing their posts a lot.



UTAH
Summerhays Music
 Murray
 Scott Summerhays

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? We were up slightly over 2015

Development in the MI industry that you're most excited about? Yamaha CSG and SEV Clarinets have been a pleasant recent addition to the clarinet world that have been good for us.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Yamaha Pro Clarinets tied with Cannonball Vintage Reborn Saxophone.



VERMONT
Advance Music Center
 Burlington
 Jeff Wheel, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? 2016 is looking to be slightly up from 2015.

Most successful marketing strategy? We launched our long overdue online shopping cart earlier this year and although we don't see a huge volume of sales directly attributable to the cart, I do think that it is driving inquiries and foot traffic into the store.

Development in the MI industry that you're most excited about? We have found that more vendors are offering online sales and product training for our employees and that really makes a difference.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Products of the year are the Roland FP-30, Yamaha P45B, Taylor T5z and Martin L17 series.



VIRGINIA
Foxes Music Company
 Falls Church
 Kevin Landes, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015? Business was up over all in 2016. Most of this was due to our Band & Orchestra rentals and sales. We had a particularly successful rental season this fall. This seems to be one dept. where local brick and mortars have an advantage over the internet. Our guitar sales held steady with last year, and sheet music declined slightly.

Most exciting development in the MI industry? This is not limited to the MI industry, but the movement to support small local businesses with events such as Small Business Saturday are having some success in making customers aware of the importance of local brick and mortars.

Are there any new lines or brands you've taken on with success in the past year? The new Thomastik Alphayue violin strings have really taken off. The demand for Juno reeds continues to grow.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Kono Violins



WASHINGTON
Kennelly Keys Music, Inc.
 Lynnwood
 Jory Tindall, Visual Design and Marketing

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? We've seen a lot of changes in terms of store locations. We moved one of our locations to a new building with much more space for products, as well as teaching studios and a small recital area of clinics and workshops. In addition we opened up a new location much further North than any of our other stores, and have seen a high level of community involvement, partnership, and optimism exhibited so far in the area.

Best social media engagement strategy? This is also related to our outreach in the community. We've found success in promoting content from local school music programs and encouraging customers and educators to connect with us through that content and platform.

Development in the MI industry that you're most excited about? The resurgence of the synth market.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? The Yamaha P45 is always a consistent top performer for us.



WEST VIRGINIA
Kerr's Music World
Charleston
George Kerr, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? We have done well in 2016, even though the general economy and surrounding areas took a blow in the coal industry, we found that the parents continue to support their children and rent-to-purchase. West Virginians are hardy and we've worked together. We go to our customers and service a lot of instruments.

Most successful marketing strategy? The strength of our business is the service and the understanding of each different school program. We treat each one of them with the same attention to detail whether they are big or smaller programs. We visit schools often and keep the line of communication open always. We find that we are uniquely positioned to understand and meet the needs of our customers this way.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Band instruments across the board from all the manufacturers.



WISCONSIN
Jim's Music and
Teaching Center
Green Bay
EJ Dombrowski,
Store Manager

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? We celebrated 30 years in business this year, and 2016 has been a great year for us, we saw double digit growth in our MI Sales, as well as our largest year over year growth in our band rentals, compared to the last few years this has been a record year for us.

Most successful marketing strategy? In the past we focused on the traditional TV and Radio, this year we focused on Facebook, we also introduced a rewards program which has taken off, as well as, an uke club and clinics. In the past we marketed our store as though we could compete with the big box retailers on product options, however we realized for us to stay around we can't make it on 27 percent margins, so we are focusing on providing a better customer experience shopping our store, rather than having or doing everything.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Kala Uke's have been fast sellers.



WYOMING
The Hill Music Company
Casper
Kurt Gilbert, Owner

How did 2016 compare to 2015 for your business? Surprisingly, we were very consistent in 2016. Due to a downturn in the energy industry, which is Wyoming's major industry, we were expecting 2016 to show a large slump in sales. There was a dip, but not nearly as severe as we were expecting. That dip will most likely continue into 2017. Living and owning a business in a boom/bust economic cycle is partially about being strong enough to weather the busts, which we are doing right now.



Best social media engagement strategy? Expanding upon our community outreach by posting our sponsored events and projects creates excitement and participation in music, which is why we got into this business in the first place.

Are there any new lines or brands you've taken on with success in the past year? We added Teton guitars – affordable, great sound, and they stand up to our extremely dry climate.

"Product of the Year" for your store in 2016? Our biggest seller continues to be ukuleles – low end, high end, and everything in between.

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35th Annual America's Top Music Chains

PO	Piano/Organ
P	Piano
DP	Digital Piano
BO	Band & Orchestra
PC	Percussion
FA	Fretted Instruments/ Amplification
SR	Sound Reinforcement/ Recording Equipment
EK	Electronic Keyboard
PM	Print Music
DJ	DJ Equipment
LT	Lighting
IN	Installation

As the dealers represented in this report are privately held, the data being presented in "America's Top Chains" was supplied by the companies, themselves. In other instances, MMR made estimates based on data available to our research team.

Guitar Center

P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, IN, PM
(Including Music & Arts)
Total Units 423
Opened '16 11
Closed '16 1
Volume (est. '16) N/A, but often estimated to be in excess of \$2 billion.
5795 Lindero Canyon Rd., Westlake Village, Calif. 91362
(818) 735-8800
media@guitarcenter.com
www.guitarcenter.com
CEO: Ron Japinga

Sam Ash Music Corp.

DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, PM
Total Units 45
Opened '16 1
Closed '16 1
Volume (est. '16) N/A
P.O. Box 9047, Hicksville, N.Y. 11802
(516) 932-6400
sam.ash@samash.com
www.samash.com
CEO: Richard Ash

Music Go Round

DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, PM
Total Units 35
Opened '16 2
Closed '16 0
Volume (est. '16) \$30 MM
605 Hwy 169N #400, Minneapolis, Minn. 55441
(763) 520-8500
tkletti@musicgoround.com
www.musicgoround.com
CEO: Tim Kletti

Fletcher Music Centers

PO
Total Units 19
Opened '16 0
Closed '16 1
Volume (est. '16) \$11 MM
3966 Airway Circle, Clearwater, Fla. 33762
(727) 571-1088
jriley@fletchermusic.com
www.fletchermusic.com
CEO: John Riley

Schmitt Music Co.

P, DP, SR, EK, PC, BO, FA, PM
Total Units 16
Opened '16 1
Closed '16 0
Volume (est. '16) \$39 MM
Butler Square, 2400 Freeway Blvd., Brooklyn Center, Minn. 55430
(763) 566-4560
tom.schmitt@schmittmusic.com
www.schmittmusic.com
CEO: Tom Schmitt

Steinway Hall

P
Total Units 14
Opened '16 1
Closed '16 0
Volume (est. '16) \$56 MM
109 W. 57th St., New York, N.Y. 10019
(212) 246-1100
showrooms@steinway.com
www.steinwayshowrooms.com
CEO: Michael T. Sweeney

J.W. Pepper & Son

PM
Total Units 12
Opened '16 1
Closed '16 0
Volume (est. '16) \$51 MM
2480 Industrial Blvd., Paoli, Pa. 19301
(610) 648-0500
valleyforge@jwpepper.com
www.jwpepper.com
CEO: John Riley

Piano Distributors

PO, P, DP, EK, PM
Total Units 11
Opened '16 0
Closed '16 3
Volume (est. '16) N/A
1475 12th St. E., Palmetto, Fla. 34221
(941) 729-5047
sboyce@pianodistributors.com
www.pianodistributors.com

George's Music Stores

DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, PM
Total Units 8
Opened '16 0
Closed '16 1
Volume (est. '16) \$24 MM
650 W. Swedesford Rd., Berwyn, Pa. 19312
(610) 993-3110
www.georgesmusic.com
CEO: George Hines

Quinlan & Fabish Music

BO, PC, PM
Total Units 8
Opened '16 0
Closed '16 0
Volume (est. '16) N/A
166 Shore Dr., Burr Ridge, Ill. 60527
(630) 654-4111
gqjr@qandf.com
www.qandf.com
CEO: George Quinlan, Jr.

Brook Mays Music

BO, PC
Total Units 8
Opened '16 0
Closed '16 0
Volume (est. '16) \$15 MM

8605 Carpenter Frwy., Dallas, Texas 75247
 (214) 905-4950
 billeveritt@brookmays.com
 www.brookmays.com
 CEO: Bill Everitt

Menchey Music Service

P, DP, BO, FA, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 8
 Opened '16 1
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 80 Wetzel Dr., Hanover, Pa. 17331
 (717) 637-2185
 jmenchey@menchey.com
 www.mencheymusic.com
 CEO: Joel Menchey

Palen Music Center

DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 8
 Opened '16 2
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$11.1 MM
 1560 E. Raynell Pl., Springfield, Mo. 65804
 (417) 234-2524
 www.palenmusic.com
 CEO: Brett Palen

Marshall Music Co.

PO, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, PM
 Total Units 7
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$18.5 MM
 3240 E. Saginaw St., Lansing, Mich. 48912
 (517) 337-9700
 info@marshallmusic.com
 www.marshallmusic.com
 CEO: Dan Marshall

West Music Co.

P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, IN, PM
 Total Units 7
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$42 MM
 P.O. Box 5521, Coralville, Iowa 52241
 (319) 351-2000
 rwalenta@westmusic.com
 www.westmusic.com
 CEO: Robin Walenta

Jacobs Music

P, DP
 Total Units 7
 Opened '16 1
 Closed '16 0

Volume (est. '16) \$17 MM
 1718 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19103
 (215) 568-7800
 chris@jacobsmusiccompany.com
 www.jacobsmusic.com
 CEO: Chris Rinaldi

Kennelly Keys

DP, PC, BO, FA, SR, EK, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 4918 196th St., Lynwood, Wash. 98036
 (425) 771-7020
 info@kennellykeysmusic.com
 www.kennellykeysmusic.com
 CEO: William J. Kennelly

Nick Rail Music

DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$10 MM

2801 De La Vina St., Santa Barbara, Calif. 93105
 (805) 569-5353
 nickrail@nickrailmusic.com
 www.nickrailmusic.com
 CEO: Nick Rail

Ted Brown Music Co.

DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT IN, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$15 MM
 6228 Tacoma Mall Blvd., Tacoma, Wash. 98409
 (253) 272-3211
 stephanie@tedbrownmusic.com
 www.tedbrownmusic.com
 CEO: Whitney Brown Grisaffi

Saied Music

PO, DP, BO, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, LT, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '16 1
 Closed '16 0

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BAKITHI KUMALO
 Bakihi plays the NXT Upright Bass and the NXT Omni Bass (shown).

Volume (est. '16) N/A
 3259 S. Yale Ave., Tulsa, Okla. 74135
 (918) 742-5541
 info@saiedmusic.com
 www.saiedmusic.com
 CEO: Bob Saied

The Music Center, Inc. BO, FA, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 202 Harper Ave. NW, Lenoir, N.C. 28645
 (828) 758-5253
 www.themusiccenterinc.com

Eckroth Music Co. DP, BO, FA, PC
 Total Units 6
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$12 MM
 1655 N. Grandview Lane, Ste. 201, Bismark, N.D. 58503
 (701) 223-5320
 eckroth@eckroth.com
 www.eckroth.com
 CEO: Jeffrey Eckroth

Frank Rieman Music
 P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, IN, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$10 MM
 4420 E. Broadway, Des Moines, Iowa 50317
 (515) 262-0365
 davek@riemans.com
 www.riemansmusic.com
 CEO: Pam Donahue

White House of Music
 DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, LT, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '16 1
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 2101 N. Springdale Rd., Waukesha, Wis. 53186

(262) 798-9700
 chris@whitehouseofmusic.com
 www.whitehouseofmusic.com
 CEO: Christopher White

Rettig Music BO, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '16 1
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 6323 Sawmill Rd., Ohio 43017
 (614) 792-2100
 www.rettigmusic.com

Bertrand's Music DP, BO, FA, EK, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '16 1
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A MM
 13179-5 Black Mountain Rd., San Diego, Calif. 92129
 (888) 780-1812
 www.bertrandsmusic.com
 CEO: John Bertrand, Sr.

Piano Gallery O, P, DP, EK, PM
 Total Units 6
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$16 MM
 5478 South Green Street, Murray, Utah 84123
 (801) 266-9550
 info@pianogallery.com
 www.pianogallery.com
 CEO: Stan Beagley

Willis Music Co. P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, LT, IN, PM
 Total Units 5
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$6.9 MM
 7567 Mall Road, Florence, Ky. 41042
 (859) 283-2050
 kevin@willismusic.com
 www.willismusic.com
 CEO: Kevin Cranley

Music Exchange PO, P, DP
 Total Units 5
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 1501 N. Main St., Walnut Creek, Calif. 95696
 (925) 933-6310
 www.muex.com

Ken Stanton Music
 DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, IN, PM
 Total Units 5
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$12.6 MM
 119 Cobb Pkwy. N., Ste. A, Marietta, Ga. 30062
 (770) 427-2491
 kennys@kenstanton.com
 www.kenstanton.com
 CEO: Kenny Stanton

C&M Music Center
 DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, IN, PM
 Total Units 5
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 1
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 2515 Williams Blvd., Kenner, La. 70062
 (504) 468-8688
 cnail4cmmusic@yhoo.com
 www.candmmusic.com
 CEO: Chris Nail & Melvin Volz, Jr.

Heid Music P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, LT, PM
 Total Units 5
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$12 MM
 308 E. College Ave., Appleton, Wis. 54911
 (920) 734-1969
 todd.heid@heidmusic.com
 www.heidmusic.com
 CEO: Todd Heid

Springfield Music BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 5

“[We’ve seen] nice, steady growth – up slightly from the previous year. I’m concerned about keeping music education funded through a new administration.”

– Robin Walenta, West Music

“2016 was very strong for us. Increased investment and diversification are paying off. Online competition and changing consumer buying habits continue as a major concern.”

– Kevin Cranley, Willis Music

Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) 7.2 MM
 3100 S. Fremont Ave., Springfield, Missouri 65804
 (417) 832-1665
 donovan@springfield-music.com
 www.springfieldmusic.com
 CEO: Donovan Bankhead

Collins Music Center

PO, P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, IN, PM
 Total Units 5
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) 2 MM
 706 W. Jackson, El Campo, Texas 77437
 (979) 543-2928
 randy@connismusiccenter.com
 www.collinsmusiccenter.com
 CEO: Randy Collins

Hermes Music

BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, IN
 Total Units 5
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$21 MM
 409 S. Broadway St., McAllen, Texas 78501
 (956) 904-4400
 greg@hermes-music.com
 www.hermes-music.com
 CEO: Alberto Kreimerman

Robert M. Sides Family Music Centers

PO, P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, LT, IN, PM
 Total Units 5
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$8.9 MM
 201 Mullberry St., Williamsport, Pa. 17701
 (570) 326-2094
 psides@rmsides.com
 www.rmsides.com
 President: Peter Sides

Tarpley Music Co.

P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, LT, IN, PM

Total Units 5
 Opened '16 1
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$9 MM
 2420 Commerce, Amarillo, Texas 79109
 (806) 355-0795
 john@tarpleymusic.com
 www.tarpleymusic.com
 CEOs: David & John Tarpley

Dietze Music House

P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 4
 Opened '16 1
 Closed '16 2
 Volume (est. '16) \$7 MM
 6800 P. St., Lincoln, Neb. 68505
 (402) 476-6644
 tpratt@dietzemusic.com
 www.dietzemusic.com
 CEO: Tim Pratt

Keyboard Concepts P, DP, PM
 Total Units 4
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 1
 Volume (est. '16) \$12 MM
 5600 Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys, Calif. 91041
 (828) 787-0201
 Dennis.Hagerty@keyboardconcepts.com
 www.keyboardconcepts.com
 CEO: Dennis Hagerty

Portman's Music BO, PC, FA, SR, EK,
 Total Units 4
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$6.3 MM
 7650 Abercorn St., Savannah, Ga. 31406
 (912) 354-1500
 www.portmansmusic.com
 CEO: Jerry Portman

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“[2016 was] exceptional. Our investments into digital marketing and e-commerce have driven online sales, online visibility, and in-store traffic! Concerns: Current costs of health care and tax burdens against small businesses. It ties up a tremendous amount of profits that could be invested back into the business to sustain continued growth and technology.”

– Tim Kletti, Music Go Round

Portland Music Co.

DP, BO, PC, FA, SR, EK, PM
 Total Units 4
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$4.2 MM
 531 S.E. MLK Jr. Blvd., Portland, Ore. 97214
 (503) 226-3719
 mtaylor@spiritone.com
 www.portlandmusiccompany.com
 CEO: Mark Taylor

C.A. House Music

P, DP, BO, FA, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 4
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 3700 Cavalier Cir., Parkersburg, W. Va. 26104
 (304) 422-4676
 www.cahousemusic.com

Mississippi Music

PO, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, IN, PM
 Total Units 4
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$8.2MM
 222 Main St., Hattiesburg, Miss. 39401
 (601) 544-5821
 rosij@missmusic.com
 www.mississippimusic.com
 CEO: Rosi K. Johnson

Evola Music Center PO, P, DP, BO, PM

Total Units 4
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$8 MM
 2184 Telegraph Rd., Bloomfield Hills, Mich. 48302
 (248) 334-0566

www.evola.com
 CEO: Jim Evola
Griggs Music BO, PC, FA, SR, PM
 Total Units 4
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 3849 N. Brady St., Davenport, Iowa 52806
 (563) 391-9000
 school@griggsmusic.com
 www.griggsmusic.com
 CEO: Steve Judge

Piano & Organ Center

PO, P, DP, EK, PM
 Total Units 4
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 Box 2369 Great Northern Mall, Clay, N.Y. 13039
 (315) 622-3926
 www.pianoandorgancenter.com
 President: David Constantino

Jackson's Music

P, DP, BO, FA, PC, EK, SR
 Total Units 4
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 1409 S. Stratford Rd., Winston-Salem, N.C. 27103
 (336) 760-9635
 www.jacksonsmusic.com
 CEO: Douglas J. Dryden

Henderson Music Co. P, DP

Total Units 4
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 1
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 4359 Dixie Hwy., Elsemere, Ky. 41018
 (859) 431-2111
 www.hendersonmusic.com

CEO: Carl Henderson

Keyboard World PO, P, DP, FA, PM

Total Units 3
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 14701 National Hwy., LaVale, Md. 21502
 (301) 729-1817
 rkleintob@atlanticbb.net
 www.keyboardworld.com
 CEO: Ronald B. Klinetob

Alto Music

DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, PM
 Total Units 3
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$47 MM
 180 Carpenter Ave., Middletown, N.Y. 10940
 (845) 692-6922
 sales@altomusic.com
 www.altomusic.com
 CEO: John Haber

SoCal Pianos P, DP, EK

Total Units 3
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$9.5 MM
 307 E. Carmel St., San Marcos, Calif. 92078
 (760) 744-9320
 dennisj@socalpianos.com
 www.socalpianos.com
 CEO: Dennis James

Instrumental Music

BO, PC, FA, SR, EK, PM, LT,
 Total Units 3
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 1501 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks, Calif. 91362
 (805) 419-5055

www.instrumentalmusic.biz
 CEO: Brian McCann
White's Music Box
 P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 3
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 200 South Downtown Mall, Las Cruces,
 N.M. 88001
 (575) 526-6677
 www.whitesmusicbox.com
 CEO: Mike White

Pender's Music Co. PM
 Total Units 3
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 314 S. Elm St., Denton, Texas 76201
 (800) 772-5918
 info@penders.com
 www.penders.com
 CEO: Richard Gore

Riverton Music, Inc.
 DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, DJ, LT, IN, PM
 Total Units 3
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 4650 South 3740 West #2, West Valley
 City, Utah 84120
 (801) 969-4358
 leifn@rivertonmusic.com
 www.rivertonmusic.com
 CEO: Kevin Rindlisbacher

The Clavier Group, Steinway Hall – Dallas P
 Total Units 4
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 5301 N. Central Expressway, Dallas, Texas
 75205
 (214) 526-1853
 showrooms@steinwaypianos.com
 www.steinwaypianos.com
 CEO: Danny Saliba

Pecknel Music Co.
 DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, IN, PM
 Total Units 3
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0

Volume (est. '16) N/A
 1312 N. Pleasantburg Dr., Greenville, S.C.
 29607
 (864) 244-7881
 scott@pecknelmusic.com
 www.pecknelmusic.com
 CEO: Scott N. Peck

N-Tune Music & Sound
 PO, P, DP, BO, FA, SR, EK, PC, D, LT, IN, PM
 Total Units 3
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) \$5 MM
 1141 E. 42nd St., Odessa, Texas 79762
 (432) 550-2263
 ntune@ntunemusic.com
 www.ntunemusic.com
 CEO: Tim Jones

Dunkley Music P, DP
 Total Units 3
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 410 S. Capitol Blvd., Boise, Idaho 83702
 (208) 342-5549
 www.dunkleymusic.com

Meyer Music P, DP, BO, PM

Total Units 3
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 1512 W. Highway 40, Blue Springs, Mo.
 64015
 (816) 228-5656
 bettymeyer@meyermusic.com
 www.meyermusic.com
 CEOs: Ted Meyer, Betty Meyer

Kessler & Sons Music BO
 Total Units 3
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 3047 E. Charleston, Las Vegas, Nev. 89104
 (702) 385-2263
 music@kessler.com
 www.kesslermusic.com
 CEO: Charles Kessler

Art's Music Shop BO, FA, EK, PC, PM
 Total Units 3
 Opened '16 0
 Closed '16 0
 Volume (est. '16) N/A
 3030 East Blvd., Montgomery, Ala.
 (334) 271-2787
 www.artsmusicshop.com



24th

Annual Dealers' Choice Awards

The 2016 Dealers' Choice Awards (DCA) process represents "year two" of a far more comprehensive approach, resulting in enhanced participation and verifiability. This year, *MMR* readers were more actively involved than ever in the nomination process for brands and instruments/gear across all categories. Additionally, the safeguards put in place last year to ensure against multiple votes from the same party (the dreaded "ballot stuffing" of years gone by) have not only proven to be extremely successful, but also have actually lead to more reader participation in the entire voting and nomination process.

This year's voting represented an uptick even over 2015's record-setting levels of reader involvement which, when combined with improved authentication, makes the 24th DCAs the most meaningful yet.

Our thanks to all who participated in the nomination process this past summer and who then cast their votes this fall. Read on to learn more about the 2016 Dealers' Choice Award winners...



PRODUCT OF THE YEAR: KAWAI GL SERIES



KAWAI
THE FUTURE OF THE PIANO

Kawai America Corporation

Kawai set out to provide "exceptional touch and tone that endures" with their GL Series and dealers have confirmed that customers are "buying it." The third evolution of Kawai's Millennium ABS Action introduced carbon fiber, allowing the company to create a lighter system that remains sturdy. Combined with longer keys making the action more fluid, the repetition speed quicker, and dynamics more accurate across the board, Kawai has made waves in the market this past year in more ways than the just the shape of their beautiful solid spruce soundboards.



kawaius.com

THANK YOU



Roland

DEALERS' CHOICE AWARD

PRO DIGITAL PIANO LINE OF THE YEAR

Roland would like to thank the MI dealer community and MMR for honoring our digital pianos with the Pro Digital Piano Line of the Year Award.

ELECTRIC GUITAR OF THE YEAR: YAMAHA REVSTAR



Yamaha Corporation of America

The first major update to the classic Yamaha guitar body shape in a decade has proved profitable. Dealers are benefiting from the renascent interest in vintage guitars and the Revstar series design, hailing of classic cafe racer motorcycles, is right on the money. YGD pick-ups, Yamaha's proprietary Dry Switch, and comfortable body shape add to recipe for its success. For this 2016 winner, familiarity coincides with contemporary to create the perfect prescription for the old-school-meets-new-school bug.

usa.yamaha.com

ELECTRIC BASS OF THE YEAR: IBANEZ SRFF805



Hoshino Group

The Ibanez SRFF electric bass has succeeded in validating the engineering concept by offering it to the masses and the masses have spoken. Players are loving the ergonomic fret angles and the quality tone the SRFF805 5-string and SRFF806 6-string basses provide at an affordable price point. Ibanez was on target when they took the opportunity to apply Novax's expired patent design to their already popular SR series, this bass is a win-win-win for the customer, dealer, and supplier.

hoshinusa.com

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ONCE AGAIN, PEARL RIVER HAS BEEN NAMED MMR'S ACOUSTIC PIANO LINE OF THE YEAR.

That makes it two years in a row. MMR magazine readers have voted us the 2016 Acoustic Piano Line of the Year. We've dedicated our business to building pianos that are both high quality and an exceptional value. Thank you to everyone who voted for Pearl River. We are proud to be your favorite piano and look forward to seeing you at NAMM Booth 205A. To learn more, visit us at PearlRiverUSA.com.

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Kayserburg

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ACOUSTIC GUITAR OF THE YEAR: BREEDLOVE OREGON CONCERT E MYRTLEWOOD - MYRTLEWOOD



Breedlove



Two Old Hippiess, LLC

For the second year in a row Breedlove Oregon Concert took the top honors for acoustic guitar by a landslide. This year's win goes to the Breedlove Oregon Concert E Myrtlewood - Myrtlewood with its American Pacific Northwest-grown myrtlewood top, back, and sides. What makes the model unique, other than its stunning color and grain patterns, is the lively, crisp voice, and powerful projection achieved by this unusual choice of top wood.

breedlovesound.com

SOUND REINFORCEMENT LINE OF THE YEAR: QSC



QSC[™]



QSC, LLC

Our voters decided this year that QSC is delivering on their mission statement to be the "leading and most trusted provider of high quality professional audio/video systems." The company's "work hard/have fun" motto has trickled down to its buyers who are abundantly enjoying QSC mixers, power amplifiers, and loudspeakers as their favorite high-end sound systems.

qsc.com

Breedlove

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WINNER



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AMPLIFIER PRODUCT OF THE YEAR: BLACKSTAR



Blackstar[®]
AMPLIFICATION

Korg, Inc.

As predicted by MMR in last year's 2015 DCA announcement of KORG's big win in the same category, the Blackstar remains ahead of the pack and has firmly established itself as the "new classic" amp. Customers are singing the praises of Blackstar's high quality, feature rich amps at reasonable prices.



korgusa.com

MICROPHONE LINE OF THE YEAR: AUDIX



AUDIX[®]

Audix Corporation

Another back-to-back winner, Audix offers U.S.-made, quality engineered, and affordable microphones that are champions with live sound engineers, recording professionals, and home-studio enthusiasts, alike. Audix microphones have a reputation as workhorses that combine functional design with sturdy engineering — qualities that are resonating with dealers as well.



audixusa.com

HONORED

THANK YOU, MMR READERS, FOR YOUR VALUED SUPPORT.

KAWAI GL SERIES GRAND PIANOS



2016 PRODUCT OF THE YEAR



KAWAI CA/CS SERIES DIGITAL PIANOS



2016 HOME DIGITAL
KEYBOARD OF THE YEAR

KAWAI

THE FUTURE OF THE PIANO

RECORDING EQUIPMENT PRODUCT OF THE YEAR: PRESONUS



PreSonus Audio Electronics, Inc.

PreSonus' vast array of recording system offerings have taken another win, this year as the overall recording product of the year. From the Studio 192 USB Interfaces, to Audiobox Interfaces and Complete Recording Systems packages, PreSonus has every facet of recording covered to meet the growing demands of the ever-evolving recording market.



presonus.com

BAND & ORCHESTRA LINE OF THE YEAR: YAMAHA



Yamaha Corporation of America

With a resounding "amen," dealers have agreed that Yamaha Band & Orchestra instruments have aided in the way to a successful 2016 fiscal year. Yamaha's sturdy, high quality instruments and exceptional customer service remains a favorite among school programs throughout the country. From their affordable beginner models to their custom and pro instruments, Yamaha is the clear 2016 winner from schools to stages.

usa.yamaha.com

ACOUSTIC PIANO LINE OF THE YEAR: PEARL RIVER



PEARL RIVER

Pearl River Pianos

Pearl River, China's largest piano manufacturer, has firmly planted its feet on American soil. For the second year in a row they take the win in the category of "Acoustic Piano of the Year." Pearl River is covering entry-level through upper-tier and offering affordably priced instruments with the features of expensive pianos.



pearlriverusa.com



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Phone ++49-7562-7040 Fax ++49-7562-70414
wittner@wittner-gmbh.de www.wittner-gmbh.de

HOME DIGITAL KEYBOARD OF THE YEAR: KAWAI CA/CS SERIES



KAWAI
THE FUTURE OF THE PIANO

Kawai America Corporation

For the second time this year Kawai takes home a win, this time with their Kawai Concert Artist and Classic Series digital pianos. These digital keyboards have found many homes in churches, schools, and on stages this year due to their well-known durability and depth of tone.



kawaius.com

PRO DIGITAL PIANO LINE OF THE YEAR: ROLAND



Roland

Roland Corporation

Roland is winning the hearts of the digital keyboard market with their line of grands, uprights, stage, and specialty models. Equipped with their latest version of SuperNATURAL Piano Modeling technology, a great feel, and Bluetooth capabilities, Roland players appreciate having the options to connect to their smartphones and tablets to hear their music-making apps, or interact with online lessons.



roland.com

DJ LINE OF THE YEAR: CHAUVET DJ



Chauvet DJ

From blacklights, controllers, moving heads, and strobes to everything in between, Chauvet DJ has come up as the clear winner in the DJ Line of the Year category. Defining their presence in the DJ marketplace even further this year, Chauvet continues to deliver unique fixtures that meet the needs of mobile performers, DJ's, clubs, and the corporate events scene.

chauvetdj.com

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PERCUSSION LINE OF THE YEAR: MAPEX



KHS America

Mapex takes the throne this year as the Dealers' Choice Awards Percussion Line of the Year. The Taiwanese drum brand manufactured by KHS Musical Instruments Company were a big hit with dealers across the nation spanning the range of their affordable beginner kits all the way to their professional pieces.

mapexdrums.com/us

LIGHTING LINE OF THE YEAR: CHAUVET DJ



Chauvet DJ

Dealers have decided that Chauvet DJ is a sure winner. Making out with two awards this year, the Chauvet DJ line took the crown by a large margin.

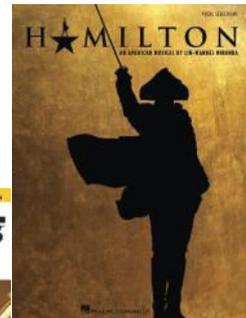
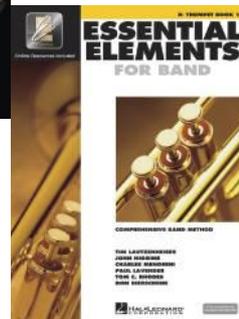
chauvetdj.com

PRINT MUSIC PUBLISHER OF THE YEAR: HAL LEONARD



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Hal Leonard Corporation

For the 24th year in a row Hal Leonard dominates this category. The only brand to win every single year since day-one of *MMR's* Dealers' Choice Awards, HL has continued to keep a pulse on the needs and desires of print music consumers and maintain superior relationships with it's dealer service network.


halleonard.com

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www.huntermusical.com

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ACCESSORY LINE OF THE YEAR: D'ADDARIO/PLANET WAVES



D'Addario & Co.

2016 has seen no takers to challenge the virtual lock on the accessories category that D'Addario holds. Once again their innovative and solid tuners, straps, strings, cables, and more have continued to evolve and please players. Reeds were rebranded and upgraded this year, drumsticks were given heat-activated coatings, and soundhole clips added to tuners. Planet Waves keeps coming up with more reasons for dealers to love them.



daddario.com

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PASIC 2016

41st Show

Returns to the Midwest

By Christian **Wissmuller**

The 41st annual Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC), held November 9-12, saw the Show return to the Midwest after having staged last year's gathering in San Antonio. Indianapolis, Indiana's Indiana Convention Center hosted 5,315 attendees (down somewhat from last year's "Anniversary Show" total of 6,100) to celebrate with fellow drum and percussion enthusiasts.

The exhibitor totals were up, though, with 112 on hand this year, compared to just under 100 exhibiting suppliers, companies, and organizations in November of 2015.

Social media was even further embraced at this year's PASIC with Snapchat being used for the first time, with over 41,100 views of custom PASIC-branded filters. The hashtag #PASIC16 was also strongly trending throughout the event.

The 2017 PASIC convention returns to Indianapolis, Indiana November 8-11, 2017. For more information, visit pas.org.



Steve Lobmeier, Marco Soccoli, Paul Pearl, Ben Smith of D'Addario.



Chris Crockarell and Chris Brooks of Row-Loft Productions.



Bob Sabellico, Shawn Lafrenz, Steve Armstrong, Matt Jordan and Kevin Geis of Pearl/Adams.



Michael Berg of Humes & Berg.



Craigie Zildjian of Zildjian.



Johnny Lee Lane and Brian Levan of Remo.



Don & Heather Campbell of Earasers.



Neil Larrivee of Vic Firth.



Chuck Moulton, Amber Fox of Vic Firth.



Gary Ingrassia of KHS America.



Colleen Harwood, Erich Barto of Zoom North America.



Luis Cardoso of Sabian/Gon Bops.



Scott Hunter, Mike Snyder, Christopher Hardy & Mark Tsuruta of ATV Corporation.



Marissa Wilhelm & Pete Asarisi of Tripstick Pro Instrument Expansion.

Three Keys to Understanding 'OVO' and its Important Role in Today's Business Environment

By Menzie Pittman

I first heard reference to the term OVO from Brendon Burchard, a high performance strategist and well respected business coach. I had been using the strategy for years, but I had never heard the acronym, "OVO." Let me take a minute to explain OVO and its important role in today's business climate. I will also give a few specific examples of how it works in my business. You can focus on any aspect of OVO at different times, and you will be best served by adding more Vs and Os along the way.

1. The first O in the acronym stands for **Opt In**.

Of the three letters, the first "O" may bring your business the toughest challenge.

The concept is simple: getting customers to opt in by collecting their e-mail addresses or getting them to interact on your social media pages. However, remember: asking and receiving are very different realities.

At one time or another, I'm sure you have been asked by a sales person, "Would you like your receipt emailed to you, or would you prefer a paper receipt?" I think by now most of us have figured out that no one who is asking that question is trying to save paper. The only agenda is to capture your email, and I am sure there are times that you choose not to give it. But let's say today our asking worked and our email list is continuing to grow nicely. Now that we have these email addresses, we must be careful not to spam our way into losing them. We should always remember most of us are boutique-style businesses, and we win mostly by being clever, not bombastic. We want the customers to opt in, not opt out.

2. The V in the acronym stands for **Value**.

This is where Burchard is a master. His trick, while seemingly simple, takes his customers by surprise: *He gives more than the customer expects*. So we ask ourselves, "In the race to zero, how can I possibly give more?" The answer is if you don't, your business won't seem special or unique, and in today's business climate of spam and My Pillow ads, small stores must stay unique.

Let me drill down on this and share some things that I personally do to bring an unexpected value to our customers. If I see a music student who is thriving, but perhaps is in need of some simple guidance (i.e. which music universities to consider.), I reach out to that family and offer to meet with them, and then I share personal time with them helping both the student and the parents decode the benefits and offerings of each music school. Our families know that as the owner of the business and a long time musician, I am networked to help them, and they have come to trust that *I give more than they expect*.

Another example: Since I am a drummer, if I see an advancing and curious bass student, I offer to help him develop a better understanding of the rhythm section's relationship. If I have a slot that's open in my schedule, I offer to meet with the student (gratis). We begin by dissecting bass lines and then play together. I take the time to send him musical examples that I

think can address the unique musical problems that may be plaguing the student at that moment.

Another consistent practice we incorporate as a business is to coordinate specialists for our performance groups. This "value add" not only ultimately helps the students, but also helps our clinicians gain additional exposure, and that way they have the opportunity to net additional clients. All they have to do is be willing to give the unexpected value of some of their time and expertise and be willing to share. That way everyone benefits tremendously.

3. The last O in the acronym stands for **Offer**.

Once you have executed steps one and two properly, there is a payoff. In the process of adding *unexpected value* as a business and brand, you have now built trust with your clients. You are now in a position to offer extra services, products, and opportunities for additional customer engagement. This is the way a good business develops a family relationship and a lifetime customer. When you offer an unexpected "value add," a customer is emotionally affected, and it is rare not to gain loyalty from good practices. When you make an offer to an engaged client, he will act on it more graciously because he trusts that you have his best interest in mind. Whatever business follows is conducted without a hard-sell; you are simply accommodating the customer's needs.

In closing:

OVO: Opt-in, Value, Offer is a sound business philosophy. It takes patience, nuance, and wisdom to grasp the concept. But for us, it is the difference... it is the difference of breeding better musicians. It is the difference of a community embracing its trust in you. It is the difference in longevity. Most of all, it is the difference in the quality of experience, and that, my friend, is bankable.



Menzie Pittman is the owner and director of education at Contemporary Music Center in Virginia (CMC). Following a performance and teaching career spanning more than 32 years, he founded CMC in 1989 and continues to perform, teach, and oversee daily operations. He has 50 years of musical experience as a drummer and drum instructor. Menzie is a frequent speaker at NAMM's Idea Center, and a freelance writer

for MMR's "Small Business Matters" column. He served on NAMM's Board of Directors from 2012 through 2015 and currently oversees the curriculum for CMC's performance venue @4410. In 2016 NAMM awarded Contemporary Music Center the "Dealer of the Year" award, the "Music Matters" award, and the "Best Sales and Promotion" award.

ACCESSORIES

Aquila Admira

Aquila launched a new co-branding packaged set for classical guitar with Spanish luthier, Enrique Keller, owner of the Admira brand. The new Aquila Admira classical guitar strings set is available in one unique tension, made with Aquila's special Supercrystal Nylon for the trebles and silver plated wound strings with NYLGUT multifilament core. The product will be available through the Admira/Enrique Keller distribution channel only.



www.aquilausa.com

Music Nomad Holiday Care Kit

Music Nomad has developed five Guitar and Drum Holiday Care Kits. The MN140 - Premium Guitar Care (3 pack), the MN108 - Premium Guitar Care System (5 pack), the MN207 - Premium Work Station, the MN141 - The Dream Guitar Care Pack (12 pack + Hat), and the MN112 - Premium Drum & Cymbal Care System. Retail price points from \$14.99-\$99.99.



www.musicnomad.com

StompLight DMX Pro

The StompLight DMX Pro can work as a stand-alone stage light and offers sound responsive effects directed by the tap of a foot. It can also be powered with the optional rechargeable StompLight Power Bank. It houses an internal microphone and instrument input/output jacks, each with adjustable gain. These work with a spectrum analyzer capable of producing lighting synched to the audio input or the ambient sound captured by the internal microphone. Effects include color organ, color wheel, and strobe. It also offers DMX connectivity and connects to StompLight Pal or other 3-channel DMX lights. StompLight can be selected as a controller or used as a slave.



www.stomplight.com

SoundSynergies BRITETone Wind Instruments

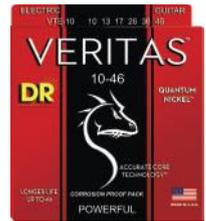
SoundSynergies BRITETone for Brass and Wind Instruments is a dry lubricant for brass and woodwinds. BRITETone is a non-oil based product formulated to remove old oil deposits, saliva, and other undesirable debris, leaving a protective dry lubricant for long-term protection from humidity and other environmental hazards. It is designed to prevent oxidation, corrosion, and tarnish. BRITETone is applied with a lint-free cloth, and designed to not harm plastics, cork, lacquer, wood, and vinyl finishes. BRITETone complies with all California "VOC" regulations. SoundSynergies BRITETone is available in a 2-fluid oz. aerosol, eco-friendly 4 oz. pump trigger, and 7 fluid oz. aerosol can. Available in convenient 12-pack retail display box.



www.soundsynergies.net

DR's Veritas Electric Guitar String Sets

DR Strings has started shipping new Veritas electric guitar strings to the global MI market. Veritas electric sets feature multiple new elements in guitar string construction with Accurate Core Technology and Quantum-Nickel wrap wire designed to last longer and have more power than ordinary nickel plated strings. An added bonus is the inclusion of three free extra Xenon power-plain strings to complement the higher output of the Veritas wounds. Veritas electric sets will be initially offered in standard 9-42, 10-46 and 11-50 gauged sets as well as two hybrid 9-46 and 10-52 gauged sets.



www.drstrings.com

FRETTED

**Ortega Student Ukes**

Ortega Student Series Ukes are made with a spruce top, catalpa back and sides, black ABS binding, Sonokelin fretboard & bridge, and Mahogany neck. The RST5 model is also available with 3/4 and 1/2 body size in four different finishes. Price: RST5: 139,00€, RST5m: 139,00€, RST5mbk: 149,00€, RST5mwr: 149,00€.



www.ortegaguitars.com

CASES & STANDS

Gravity Multi-Guitar Stands

Gravity expands its range of guitar stands with the new Vari-G-Series. Three models of the multi-guitar stand (design registered) are available to safely accommodate 3, 5 or 7 instruments. The modern guitar stands provide a safe location for acoustic and electric guitars as well as electric basses, both on stage and in the studio. Easily adjustable and detachable neck supports allow the multi-guitar stands to be tailored to individual requirements. Soft padding on all contact points protects instrument from scratches or nicks. Strong steel tubes and a black powder coating guarantee excellent stability and long-term durability. The stands can be easily assembled and dismantled, and folded to save space during transport. The Vari-G-Series can be personalised with different coloured G-Rings (available separately).



www.adamhall.com

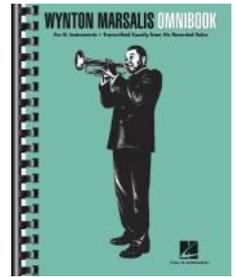
PRINT & DIGITAL

Hal Leonard Wynton Marsalis Omnibook

Hal Leonard released the *Wynton Marsalis Omnibook*, featuring 35 of his most popular tunes transcribed exactly from his recorded solos for all B-flat instruments, with solo analysis sections and a complete discography.

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www.lowrey.com

BAND & ORCHESTRA

Yamaha YX-230 Rental Xylophone

Yamaha Corporation of America announced the launch of the YX-230 xylophone, a step-up mallet percussion instrument that is ideal for beginning percussionists. Measuring 45.5" long in a compact, simple design, this 3-octave (C-to-C range) tabletop student xylophone is intended for 5th-7th graders who often use rented "student kits" before progressing to tabletop xylophones in middle school. The new xylophone's professionally tuned padauk wood bars provide quality of sound and the post, which is made of resin, will not bend and dampen bar resonance or cause unwanted noise. The YX-230 comes complete with a cover that protects the instrument from dust and scratches, as well as a pair of ME-103 mallets. The YGS-70 stand and PCS-YX230 soft case are sold separately.



usa.yamaha.com

FRETTED

Prestige Guitars Premier Zebra wood

Prestige Guitars announced the Premier Zebra wood, the latest addition to the Premier Series of guitars, which also includes the Premier Spalt, Premier Burl and Flame Maple Premier P90. The Zebra wood features a solid mahogany body with 3/4" solid carved Zebra wood top finished in natural gloss. The balance of the body is solid Mahogany. The neck is comprised of three pieces of solid mahogany, with the centre piece reverse-grained, for greater stability. The C-Shaped neck starts with a 1 11/16th TUSQ XL Nut and maintains a 14" radius throughout the length. This is topped off with an ebony fingerboard, featuring mother of pearl and abalone fret markers and modern jumbo, nickel silver frets. Standard hardware includes all-gold TonePros locking bridge and saddle and 18:1 Grover tuners. The Zebra wood will feature a set of Seymour Duncan Pearly Gates pickups, which are an Alnico 2 humbucker.



www.prestigeguitars.com

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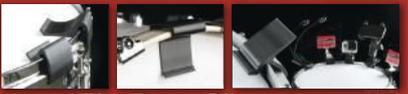
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Merry Christmas??



By Dan Daley

The period between Thanksgiving and Christmas has traditionally been retail's sweet spot. The dimly named but eagerly awaited Black Friday shopping phenomenon was, of course, named for the point on the calendar when red ink turns black. But this year is going to be different. In fact, it's been changing for a couple of years now. In 2014, Black Friday retail spending fell for the first time, 11 percent over the four-day Thanksgiving weekend that year, the National Retail Federation reported. Last year's big sales period was slightly better, up 1.7 percent for brick-and-mortar retail (and 13.4 percent for online stores but that's a different column), with 2016's retail fortunes expected to be about the same, predicts an eMarketer study highlighting data from the 2015 holiday sales season.

This year, a number of major retailers were getting out in front of the closing-on-T-Day trend. CBL & Associates, which oversees dozens of malls nationwide, announced in October that it's shutting down its shopping centers for Thanksgiving, re-opening the next morning at 6 a.m. According to NBC News, a list of major retailers staying shut on Thanksgiving this year includes the 262 locations nationwide of Guitar Center. (Which has still eluded the predictions of its own special Grinch, Eric Garland, who just after last Christmas reminded us that, "...musical instruments are a terrible business to be in. Constantly shrinking margin, shifting consumer tastes, working with musicians *in a business context*," though he concluded that, "...for those of us who love it, we couldn't care less.")

Changing Times

But if there's finally some durable cultural pushback against an ever-earlier start to the year-end sales season, it's coming at a time when retail in general has been having a slog of it. Retail has seen a stop-and-start year, but overall growth has been below one percent. Job numbers have increased and wages are slowly moving upward, a good omen for 2017, but this all still puts tremendous pressure on Christmas as the big retail payday. Retailers of all kinds have to be wary of how they present themselves during the holiday weeks. For instance, a study, reported in *Psychology Today* last year and based on an earlier experiment looking at the influence of Christmas music suggests that holiday music (music!) can actually work *against* sales. "Compared to... listening to pop songs, consumers who heard Christmas music provided lower evaluations of the store on every dimension, including their overall impression of the store, the quality of its merchandise, and even their likelihood of visiting the store when it opened," the study noted.

— *When we feel pressured by others to think or act a certain way — as we might when stores pressure us to get in the holiday spirit — we become motivated to reassert our freedom by doing the exact opposite —*

How that dynamic might play out in a music store is a meta type of question worthy of Bill Murray, but it underscores the fact that, in the wake of the Great Recession and its seemingly unending echoes — checked your Wells Fargo account(s) lately? — consumers are sensitive to feeling manipulated. As the *Psychology Today* article

concluded, "...when we feel pressured by others to think or act a certain way — as we might when stores pressure us to get in the holiday spirit — we become motivated to reassert our freedom by doing the exact opposite. Psychologists call it reactance, and it's a phenomenon that explains why pushy salesmen and micromanaging bosses are universally reviled. As humans, we desire the experience of autonomy in our lives, and when that autonomy feels restricted, we instinctively (and often unconsciously) look for ways of reclaiming our independence."

Strategies

MI retailers have developed their own holiday sales strategies. Doug Ponier, of Ponier Music in the Atlanta area, had his own Black Friday epiphany some years ago. "I'm all for keeping Thanksgiving being a holiday to close up shop and spend the day with family," he tells us, but add, "You wanna know the funny thing about Black Friday from the little guys perspective? The first few years it was like 'Wow! this is gonna be great! We're gonna be swamped!' The reality is, everyone goes to the mall and Target and the big stores to get the big deals." Ponier says he quickly lined up his Black Friday strategy with the rest of the world's, scheduling significant price reductions and using email and social-media to amplify them.

Rick Santos, owner of Rick's Music World in suburban Boston, uses an education angle to add a differentiating wrinkle, holding an annual Student Sale Black Friday event as a private sale just for its students and their parents. Some elements of that event are then extended to the general public after the holiday weekend. "We started this event because we noticed that on Black Friday, most customers would just go to the big box stores, and we had to figure out a way to get them to us," he says. "This was a way to do it."

Holidays bring out the best and the worst, in people and in institutions. But the disruptions in retail in recent years can also be a useful opportunity to reevaluate how to approach them. **MMF**

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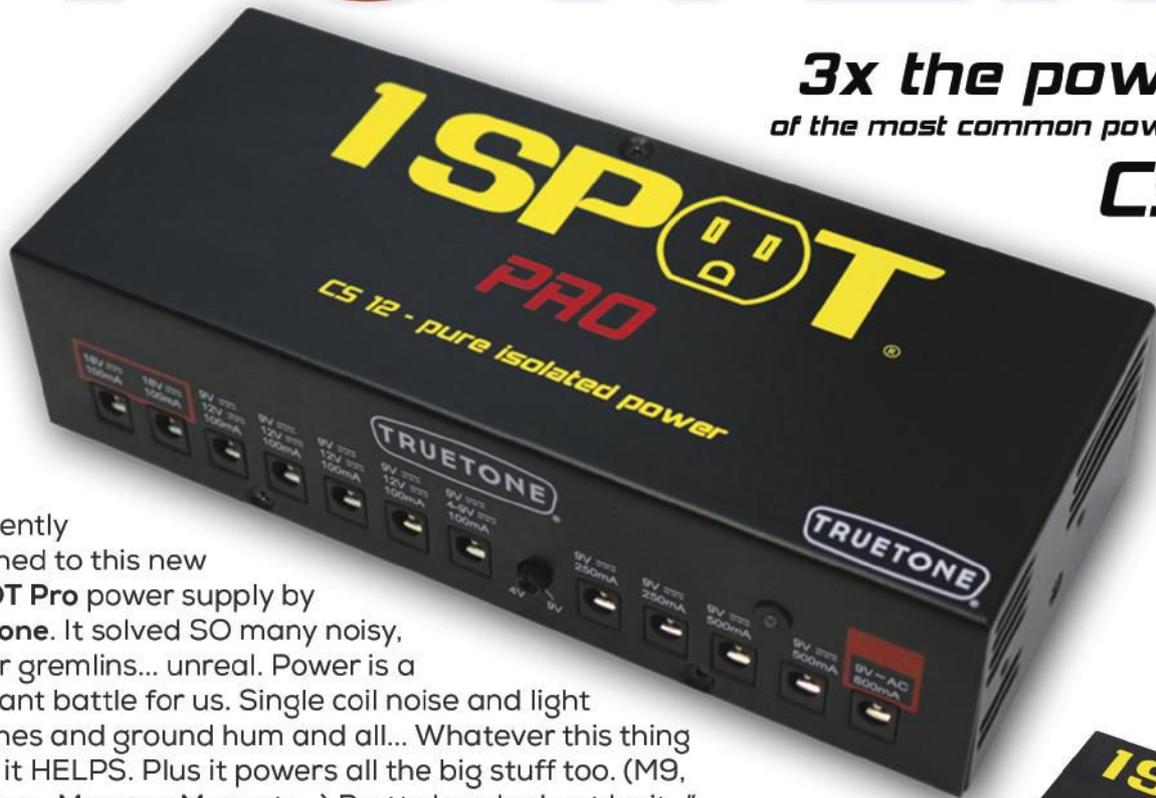
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