

MMR

MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

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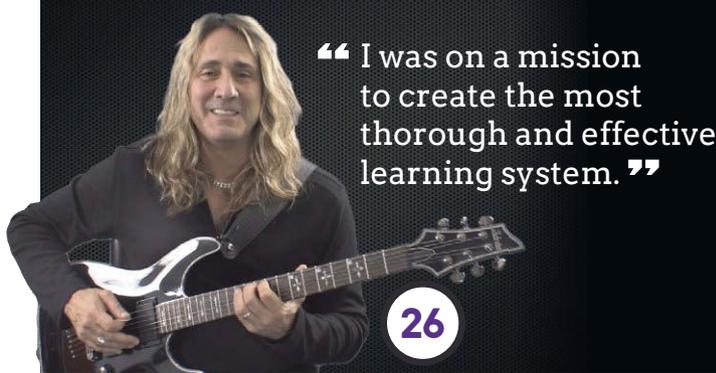
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MMR

MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

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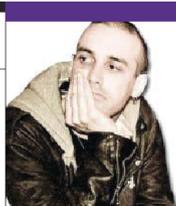
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Dear Kanye, 'A Little Jolt of Truth' – Love, Chris



by Christian
Wissmuller

In the years since Kanye West's storming of the 2009 MTV Video Music Awards stage to vocally protest everyone's favorite come-to-life My Little Pony doll, Taylor Swift's, win for Best Female Video over Beyoncé (among others), it's become standard fare in our "reality"-television, media-saturated world to witness musicians "acting up" in public. From diminutive Canadian halfwits egging their neighbors' houses to wanna-be R&B tough-guys taking their adopted persona too seriously and beating the crap out of their girlfriends, many perpetrators of popular music have been something less than... admirable in their personal lives of late.

Is poor behavior from pop stars a new thing? Of course not – nobody's going to hold up "classic-era" Keith Richards, Slash, Sid Vicious, Jim Morrison, et. al. as bastions of purity. What is new (or at least sort of new), however, about West's outbursts is that they challenge the notion of what defines "musician" in ways that haven't been quite so front-and-center in our culture since the '80s and the first cries of "Rap isn't *real* music!"

Veteran crooner Michael McDonald could be said to represent the exact opposite of the youth-dominated demographic that drives the bulk of recorded music sales. But many have been drawn to his eloquent comments after Kanye West once again semi-interrupted an award winner (this time, Beck, for winning the Grammy for Album of the Year over, among others, Beyoncé – see a trend here? What the heck, Kanye? Weirdly obsessed much?): "When Kanye gets to a point where he can actually put a couple notes together either vocally or two bars of valid music playing an instrument, then he might have a right to criticize someone else... Beck is obviously a consummate musician. He plays instruments, many instruments. He can

make his own record without having a fleet of computer operators on board."

For his part, West has backtracked somewhat (I guess?), saying he was just providing "a little jolt of truth," but then adding that "the Grammys sometimes give awards to people who you wouldn't think should win in the category."

We in MI want more "music makers" – it's what drives and sustains the industry. But wistfully longing for the days of piano or guitar virtuosos to come along and "save" the market is a pipe dream. So how do you distinguish between practitioners of new and evolving music forms from... well, just half-baked egotistical jackasses? The fact is there are plenty of *extremely* talented artists within hip-hop, EDM, and so much more. Evolving and emerging music forms are where the future of music and of the MI industry lies.

Unfortunately, there are also straight-up losers who make musicians and the whole music industry look terrible. As many have noted: "Kanye's most recent album: 49 songwriters and at least 25 producers. Beck's newest album: one songwriter and one producer."

I strongly advocate for acceptance of all musical styles, but that said: If you need nearly 50 songwriters to help create 10 songs, maybe you should at least stay the hell in your seat when the dude with a 25-plus-year career who managed to write, perform, and produce 13 acclaimed tracks without a team of helpers steps onstage to take what's his.

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- Jake Shimabukuro

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- John Gonzalez Del Sol, Fan Guitar & Ukulele, Richmond VA

"I find the TunaUke system to be a great innovation for uke players and I can't wait to see what Lanikai comes out with next."

- David Hutto Jr, Zen Ukes, Orangeburg, SC

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- Uke4U Review Blog

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- Shawn Steen, Jam Brothers Music, Walnut Creek CA

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Statement from Guitar Center Regarding Staff

MRR received the following from Guitar Center's recently appointed executive VP of Marketing, Michael Amkreutz, on January 29:

Dear colleagues, associates and friends in the industry

After a comprehensive evaluation of our staffing levels, including a detailed benchmarking of staffing levels by function and department compared to similar size specialty retailers, Guitar Center's leadership team made the difficult decision to reduce corporate and field supervision staff. The reduction included less than one percent of the overall workforce and consisted of reductions at the corporate offices in Westlake Village and field management positions. This action was designed to create a more effective and efficient organization and was based on functional area. Despite this reduction, we continue to actively recruit for a variety of positions in Westlake Village that are matched with the needs of our ongoing growth plans.

Guitar Center thanks these individuals for their dedicated service and we all wish them the best in their future endeavors. There are no plans to reduce staff at our 260+ stores. Our customer base is strong and for them business will continue as usual. Our store opening and remodeling program continues, as does our ongoing dedication to the opportunities we offer musicians -- unparalleled inventory and selection, clinics, lessons, repairs, our nationwide searches and competitions and unmatched service every day. In spite of how difficult these decisions were to make, and the challenges that these reductions present to some of our dedicated associates, this restructuring was made to put us in a more positive position to serve our customers and vendors. We look forward to continuing to work with you, and we thank you for your ongoing support.

*Sincerely,
Michael Amkreutz*

Fender Sells KMC Music Wholesale Distribution Business to Jam Industries

Fender Musical Instruments Corporation (FMIC) has announced that it has completed an asset sale of the KMC Music wholesale distribution business including the trade name B & J Music, and certain proprietary brands to JAM Industries, Ltd. JAM Industries is one of the largest global leaders in the MI, pro audio, and consumer electronics wholesale distribution business.

KMC Music is one of the largest independent distributors of musical instruments and accessories, and is a leading wholesaler of musical instruments, accessories and lighting equipment. FMIC will provide short-term transitional support as part of the transaction. Financial and other terms of the deal are not disclosed.

"We are extremely pleased to have found a company with ideal synergies for the KMC Music wholesale business in JAM Industries, Ltd.," said FMIC's interim CEO and board member Scott Gilbertson. "They possess great vision for the future

of their business and we believe this transaction will mutually benefit each of our strategic objectives."

"We are very excited about this acquisition – it adds greatly to the JAM family of companies in North America. KMC Music has a tremendous legacy and unique distribution abilities that will allow us to provide our current and expanded North American dealer base with the widest and best product offering anywhere," said

Martin Szpiro, president and CEO of JAM Industries, Ltd. "It has been a pleasure doing this transaction with FMIC and we look forward to completing the transition of key employees and operations shortly."

Earlier this year, FMIC announced that KMC Music sold its owned and licensed percussion brands, including Gretsch Drums, Latin Percussion, Toca Percussion, KAT Percussion and Gibraltar Hardware – as well as the Ovation guitar brand – to Drum Workshop, Inc., the manufacturer of DW drums, hardware, and accessories.



Brian Ball Named President of Ernie Ball

Ernie Ball, Inc. recently announced Brian Ball as its new president. Company CEO Sterling Ball made the announcement, representing the company's long-term plans for growth and expansion.

In his new position, Brian will be leading the company at a time of rapid growth, strengthening the company's market position within the guitar industry. He has been with Ernie Ball Inc. since 2000, working as a part of the tour staff before transitioning into marketing. Brian has a deep sense of history and respect for the family brand, giving him the tools to stay true to the company culture while also keeping things fresh and relevant. He has also been and will continue to be an integral, hands-on part of Ernie Ball's R&D team and artist relations.

As Brian notes, goals for the company moving forward under his leadership

include: carrying on the tradition of the family and business and preserving its legacy; the development and innovation of new instrument string capabilities; the continued support for undiscovered bands and artists; leveraging growth potential in strings, accessories and the Music Man division, specifically by engaging with emerging markets internationally; and the expansion of loyalty programs and digital marketing presence.

See the feature on Brian Ball's new role on page 38.



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Sweetwater Announces Record Year of Growth

Since 2010, Sweetwater's total sales have more than doubled. Total sales in 2014 were up 28 percent over 2013, which was also a record-breaking year. December 2014 sales were up 30 percent over December 2013. Black Friday and Cyber Monday both shattered previous records, and the company sold more than 71,500 guitars in 2015, up from just over 50,000 guitars in 2013. Drums and pro-audio were two more of the many product categories that saw growth.

Sweetwater founder and president Chuck Surack says, "With the uncertainty in some segments of the music products industry, our unique style of business, based on long-term personal relationships, expertise, and unparalleled customer service,



Sweetwater's distribution center was increased by 54,000 square feet.

is being embraced by our customers and driving our growth. This is all due to our incredible team of Sweetwater employees."

In May, Sweetwater completed a 132,000 square foot expansion, including room for 500 sales engineers, permanent offices for vendors, three new conference halls, and a 54,000 square foot expansion of its distribution center, essentially doubling its size.

In December, the company added 15,000 square feet to double its dining area, including a coffee bar called "The Crescendo Café," plus a lounge area and the campus's second performance stage. These amenities are in addition to a gaming area, free DVD and games lending library, fitness center with personal trainer, and a salon providing everything from hair and nail care to massage. The full-menu "Downbeat Diner" features "scratch-prepared" food and an amazing kitchen staff.

The Sweetwater campus will continue to grow in 2015, with the total redesign and expansion of Sweetwater's retail store, plus a major building expansion to house the marketing and merchandising staffs, as well as a new state-of-the-art video studio.

Backun Partners with Sodiam for Chinese Distribution

Backun Musical Services Ltd., manufacturer of clarinets and woodwind accessories has signed an agreement for the exclusive distribution of its products in China. The recent agreement caps a year of unprecedented growth for the company, based in Burnaby, BC, Canada.

Backun Musical has partnered with Sodiam Co. Ltd., based in Beijing, China. Previously the exclusive distributor of Buffet Crampon products in China, Sodiam will leverage its vast dealer, artist and educator network to bring Backun clarinets and accessories to its economically diverse and growing market.

"As the most professional woodwind instrument sales and marketing team in China, Sodiam has represented world famous brands for more than twenty years. With this new relationship, our company turns its attention to representing Backun's achievements in both extraordinary technical innovation of the clarinet, and its recognized commitment to artist engagement and music education. These have led to our cooperation in the coming years," says Yi Hu, CEO of Sodiam.

On the heels of the agreement, Sodiam has already taken stock of Backun clarinets and accessories, with Morrie Backun, president of Backun Musical, having personally visited China to engage artists and educators, as well as oversee the training of Sodiam's team.

Avid's Hernandez, Jr. to be Keynote Speaker at AES Conference

The AES has announced that Avid chairman, president, and CEO Louis Hernandez, Jr. will give the keynote speech at the 57th International Conference, taking place in Hollywood, California, March 6-8. The conference, being held at the world-famous TCL Chinese 6 Theatres on Hollywood Boulevard, will feature some of the best and brightest in the world of engineering for entertainment production, as the AES holds its first-ever dedicated event on The Future of Audio Entertainment Technology.



In his role at Avid, Hernandez served both as lead director and member of the Board of Directors for five years before taking on his current role as chairman, president, and chief executive officer. Hernandez also oversees Avid's strategic investments in product innovation, solutions, and services that help content creators and media organizations better connect with and inspire their audiences. Avid's sustaining membership and participation in the AES – combined with Hernandez's focus and passion for advancing technology initiatives that specifically enable the active collaboration and connection between individuals, teams, and businesses – will offer a unique perspective for the AES 57th Conference keynote address.

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Key Senior Management Appointments at Roland

Effective February 1, Jay Wanamaker assumed the role of president and CEO of Roland Corporation U.S., while Mr. Kim Nunney, former president and CEO, has been appointed to the newly created position of Executive VP, Global Business Development for Professional A/V of Roland Corporation.

Nunney became president of Roland Corporation U.S. in late 2012, and under his leadership, the company has returned to stable profitability and growth. Mr. Jun-ichi Miki, CEO of Roland Corporation, credits this to the outstanding efforts of the entire team at Roland U.S., Mr. Nunney's strong

leadership, numerous strategic and structural changes supported with steady investments in a stronger sales channel, and new products. "It's been an extreme honor to lead the team through a highly successful regrowth," said Nunney. "At the same time, the opportunity for Roland's video and audio technologies within the professional A/V space is incredible. With significant investments in our new M-5000 configurable live mixing console and numerous video technologies, the opportunity to bring a global focus to our overall sales and market development for the pro A/V space is very exciting."



Jay Wanamaker, Jun-ichi Miki, and Kim Nunney.

Wanamaker has served as a senior executive with Yamaha Pro Audio & Combo Division, Yamaha Band & Orchestral Division, Guitar Center, Music & Arts, Fender's KMC Music, Alfred Publishing, and Amati USA. He was also a member of the music faculty at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music, has authored numerous music publications, and composed music for the motion picture *Drumline*.

Wanamaker said, "I am really excited to lead this world-class corporation, which is an iconic brand known for creating truly innovative and compelling products. My deep background in wholesale and retail will be a tremendous asset as I dedicate myself to and focus on leading Roland U.S. into its next phase of growth." "We are very excited about the appointments of both Mr. Wanamaker and Mr. Nunney," said Jun-ichi Miki. "Building on his vast experience across different aspects of the musical instrument industry and the momentum of successes at Roland U.S., Mr. Wanamaker will lead the next chapter of Roland's development. The opportunity to further grow our MI business is very evident, while the development of our Professional A/V business is a fundamental key to the global growth of Roland Corporation."

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Music for All Announces 2015 Hall of Fame Inductees

Music for All has announced the industry leaders who will be inducted into the 2015 Bands of America Hall of Fame: Remo D. Belli, Richard Saucedo, Mark Jolesch, and Dr. Nicholas Valenziano.

The Bands of America Hall of Fame recognizes individuals who have had a positively life-changing impact on Music for All's Bands of America programs, participants, and music education. 2015 inductees were announced during the Finals of the 2014 Bands of America Grand National Championships, presented by Yamaha, Saturday, Nov. 15, at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

Remo D. Belli is the founder of Remo Percussion Products and a long-time BOA supporter and sponsor. Belli founded Remo, Inc. in 1957 and continues to serve as its CEO. Remo, Inc. offers drumheads and related products. Its products include drum sets, world percussion, ergo-drum systems, educational products, kids' instruments, sound shapes, crown percussion, and accessories. The company offers its products through dealers internationally. For over 50 years, Remo has constantly and consistently broken new ground when it comes to industry firsts.

Remo, Inc. and its founder and namesake have been a sponsor and supporter of Bands of America and music education for more than two decades. Beyond creation of the world's finest

drumheads and other percussion and rhythm accessories, Mr. Belli and his company to explore and lead the connection between human healing, wellness and therapeutic mind and body rhythm.

Richard L. Saucedo is director of Bands and Department chairman (Emeritus) at the William H. Duke Center for the Performing Arts at Carmel High School in Carmel, Indiana, having retired in 2013 after 31 years of public school teaching. Under his direction, Carmel bands received numerous state and national honors in the areas of concert band, jazz band and marching band. His Carmel Wind Symphony performed three times at Music for All's National Concert Band Festival, performed at the Midwest Clinic, and was named an Indiana State Champion. Under his direction, the Carmel Marching Band finished in the top ten at the Bands of America Grand National Championship for 15 consecutive years and was named BOA National Champions in the 2005 and 2012. His marching bands were Indiana Class A State Champions four times and he was named Indiana Bandmasters Association's "Bandmaster of the Year" for 1999 and "Outstanding Music Educator" for the state of Indiana, in 2010, by the Indiana Music Educators Association.

Mr. Saucedo remains active and engaged with Bands of America and Music for All serving as an Educational Consultant,



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Music for All (cont.)

Coordinator for MFA's jazz programming and a Chief Judge for Bands of America fall programs.

Mark Jolesch revolutionized the art of group and candid event photography for scholastic marching bands. As founder of Jolesch Photography and its successor Jolesch Enterprises, Mark and his companies have been the official photography company of Bands of America events since 1982. During that time, Jolesch's companies have captured more than a million group and candid images of Bands of America participants and events that literally "tell of

story" of scholastic band in America. His success at Bands of America events was the springboard that launched Jolesch photography services to be leaders in photography for band contest and festival across the country and marching organizations including Drum Corps International. Jolesch images have been featured in newspapers, music and arts trade publications, and Bands of America marketing and promotional materials for more than three decades.

Jolesch's contributions to Music for All go beyond the capturing and distribution of cherished photographic

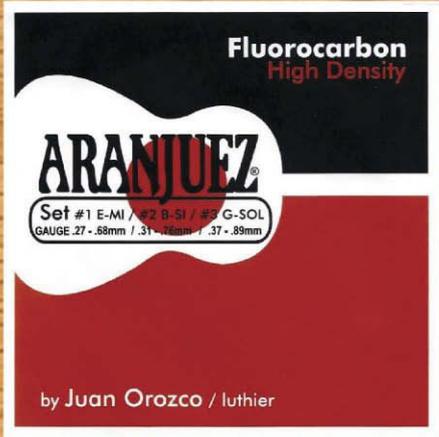
commemoratives. The Mark Jolesch Scholarship at Grand Nationals has meaningfully contributed to the education and training of young men and women who are today successful music educators. In addition to these contributions, Mark and his team have been fiscal, operational and strategic contributors to Music for All's and Bands of America growth and development as an organization.

Dr. Nicholas Valenziano is the former executive director and director of Education for Marching Bands of America and was instrumental in developing Bands of America presence in its early years.

In 1978, Dr. Nicholas Valenziano succeeded Gary Beckner, becoming (Marching) Bands of America's second executive director. Nick came to Marching Bands of America in 1975 as its first educational director and served in that role until his elevation to Executive Director, a position he held until 1981. A childhood friend and band mate of BOA founder Larry McCormick, Nick "bought into" Larry's dream that is Bands of America. His presence and engagement provided leadership, legitimacy and character to the vision, without which foundation might call into question Bands of America's and Music for All survival and evolution through the years.

Dr. Nick Valenziano received his Bachelor of Music degree from DePaul University, a Master of Music degree from Northwestern University and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Missouri. In addition to his work at Bands of America, he spent more than 35 years as a music educator at the elementary, high school, and college levels and twelve years in the music industry, before he retired in 2001. A consummate musician, Nick remains active as a professional player and conductor in his "retirement" home of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Music for All will induct these newest members into the Bands of America Hall of Fame on Saturday, March 14, 2015 during the Music for All National Festival in Indianapolis. They will be permanently recognized in the Bands of America Hall of Fame at Music for All's Indianapolis headquarters, along with all the BOA Hall of Fame members inducted since the first in 2003.



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FLURO CARBON SET

Juan Orozco at the Fluorocarbon Strings:

These strings are brand new and is a totally different and heavy polymer 1.6 sg compared to 1.3 sp for nylon. The polymer is tough so the strings are smaller diameter. The sound is loud, lively, bright, and crisp, which makes the instrument really become assertive. Is a bit brighter than nylon, due to the string being slightly smaller than it's nylon counterpart. Fluorocarbon is also favored because like nylon, it's holds up well to humidity, and also is less susceptible to change in temper.



Set #1 E-MI / #2 B-SI / #3 G-SOL







by Juan Orozco / luthier

Juan Orozco LTD., Inc.
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 E-mail: aranjuez@juanorozcoltdinc.com

Hal Leonard Strikes Deal with G-Technology

At the AES Convention in November, G-Technology unveiled a \$5 million strategic partnership with Hal Leonard to exclusively distribute G-Technology external storage solutions replete with complimentary Gobbler subscriptions. The deal goes into effect immediately and covers the MI trade in the USA and Canada.

With a common goal of delivering innovative solutions for creative professionals, G-Technology and Gobbler are solving some of the most challenging issues in storage and collaboration by developing technology that improves security and efficiency, and simplifies pro audio workflow.

Thanks to this collaboration, recording musicians gain the accessibility of Gobbler's cloud service for simple online backups, file transfers, and data management combined with the speed and flexibility of G-Technology's reliable, high-performance external storage solutions for their digital audio workstations.

"I've been using Gobbler on recent projects including U2 and OneRepublic and my mind has been blown at the speed and ease of file transfers. I wouldn't trust any other company to handle my collaboration," said OneRepublic frontman and producer Ryan Tedder. "The partnership between Gobbler and G-Technology is going to be a game changer."

"With our deep history in delivering premium storage solutions for the profes-



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sional content creation market, we understand digital workflows, and there's a clear need for simple local and cloud-based solutions to free up the content creator's time," said Mike Williams, vice president and general manager, HGST Innovative Solutions Group. "Through our partnerships with music professionals like Steven Slate and Dave Pensado, it has become apparent that Gobbler is the go-to cloud solution for creative professionals. Together, we're taking an evolutionary approach in delivering world-class storage and online collaboration tools specifically designed to meet the changing needs of the professional audio market."

Williams continues, "Teaming with Hal Leonard to make these products and services available will help us reach a wider market of musicians than ever before, in areas that are largely untapped for us, including the education and church markets."

Brad Smith, senior sales and marketing manager for Hal Leonard, comments, "G-Technology products are some of the most reliable high-performance drives on the market. Offering these drives combined with the powerful resources of Gobbler provides artists and media creators with powerful, yet easy-to-use solutions for storing, sharing, editing, and protecting their digital assets, so they can focus on the creative process, not their gear."

halleonard.com

Gibson Brands Donates to Wounded Warrior Project, Hosts Scavenger Hunt

Gibson Brands hosted a Golden Ticket scavenger hunt on Friday, January 23, 2015 in conjunction with the NAMM Convention. The forty Golden Ticket prizes consisted of Gibson and Epiphone elec-

tric and acoustic guitars along with Gibson Brands Pro Audio equipment totaling over \$50,000 in value. With every ticket found, Gibson made a donation to Wounded Warrior Project with a guaranteed total of \$50,000. Clues as to the location of the items in The Great Gibson Grab were on



Twitter: @gibsonguitar #GibsonGrab @wwpinc #wounded-warriorproject.

The scavenger hunt took place in the four blocks surrounding the Convention Center from 10-3 p.m. on January 23. The

hunt was open to the general public and the attendees of the NAMM Convention.

"Do your part for Wounded Warriors Project," commented Henry Juszkiwicz, chairman/CEO of Gibson Brands. "You find the prize, we make the donation!"

gibson.com

Supplier Scene

Music Group Adds Full Compass as Full-Line Dealer

Music Group welcomes Full Compass as the newest full-line reseller for its Behringer- and Bugera-branded MI products. As a significant partner in Music Group's expanding dealer network, Full Compass will carry all of Behringer's and Bugera's 500+ products online.

Barry Mitchell, Music Group VP, Customer Management Prosumer Division commented, "We are extremely honored to have Full Compass join our growing family of full-line dealers. Behringer and Bugera is enjoying all-time record success in the U.S. market and we are thrilled that they have chosen to carry the



entire Behringer and Bugera catalog – every single SKU. It truly is a testament to the tremendous confidence our dealer partners have in all of our brands, quality and support."

Michelle Gabel-Komar, VP of Procurement and Purchasing for Full Compass said, "Full Compass has chosen to partner with Music Group because of the explosive growth of their Behringer and Bugera products driven by their economical "go-to" solutions for customers in a wide range of applications. With our continued expansion into musical instrument products, Full Compass is excited to also add Bugera to our inventory and have the entire catalog in stock and available for immediate delivery. Behringer products have been excellent and reliable performers and we look forward to promoting all that both these brands have to offer."

music-group.com

Driving Your Reed Business



George Quinlan, Jr.

Tell us a little about Quinlan & Fabish.

Quinlan & Fabish Music Company was founded in 1959 by my dad George Quinlan, Sr. and his business partner, Tom Fabish. Both he and Dr. Fabish were music educators at DePaul University who felt a responsibility to provide the best products and the most reliable service available to the community. Their idea to

help Chicagoland area schools build music programs, help young music teachers find educational opportunities, and put high quality instruments into students' hands led to the foundation of a family music store on the south side of Chicago. As music programs continued to grow and expanded into the suburbs, so did Quinlan and Fabish. Since then, a dedicated focus on quality and service has continued to set this family company apart from competitors. I joined the company in 1979 and serve as our President and CEO today. My dad held steadfastly to his philosophy through the years as he continued to guide our company until 2013.

Quinlan & Fabish is one of Vandoren's top dealers in the country. What do you attribute that to?

Well it goes back to my dad's responsibility when he started the company to provide the best products and the most reliable service. We carry the full line of Vandoren products, not just the Traditional reeds and popular mouthpieces, but the complete spectrum. Plus our prices are very competitive with the Internet. We don't want to give our customers a reason to go somewhere else to get Vandoren products whether it's the Traditional Blue Box or the Java Red.

As a retailer that carries the full line of Vandoren products, have you seen an impact from the Jazz Reeds Mix Cards on your overall reed sales?

Our buyer Ken Partyka is an outstanding saxophonist and plays in many jazz ensembles around Chicago including his own group. Ken was an early advocate of a 'sample' card so players could hear and feel the

difference between the different jazz cuts Vandoren offers. So when Vandoren launched this product at NAMM in 2013, it was a big hit. We carry them in all of our locations and it has really helped our overall reed business because customers find what they like and then return to buy a box. And once they found out our prices are competitive with the Internet, they continue to purchase from us.

“ We carry them in all of our locations and it has really helped our overall reed business... ”

What have you found to be the best way to promote the jazz reed mix cards?

We have the Vandoren wall graphics in all of our stores that really helps people find the Vandoren products, and so having the Mix Cards next to the display seems to be a good fit. This way when someone comes into the store to buy a box of reeds they see the Mix Cards that are really inexpensive in comparison to buying a whole box to try a new reed. Also, I think you guys did a great job with the design because it is retail ready with the hole punched out for the wall hook.



How important is the information on the back of the card that describes the characteristics of each reed?

That was also a very smart idea because it makes it easy for the customer to see what they are buying. With the Internet age, I think a lot of customers see something in a store, don't know too much about it, don't buy, do some research at home and then buy online. The cards have everything they need to know about each reed and how the strengths compare right there in the store.

What advice or recommendations would you give to other school music dealers about selling Vandoren products?

I think it's important with a legacy brand like Vandoren to represent it in a highly visible area. Accessory sales are what keep customers coming back to your stores on a regular basis. Reeds are like bread and milk in a grocery store. You always want to have them and make them easy to find. We love the slat wall graphics you supplied us along with the reed racks. I would encourage dealers to make sure they get them in all of their stores and see the sales grow.

For more on the Jazz Reed Mix Cards, visit bit.ly/jazzmix

For More on Quinlan and Fabish, visit qandf.com

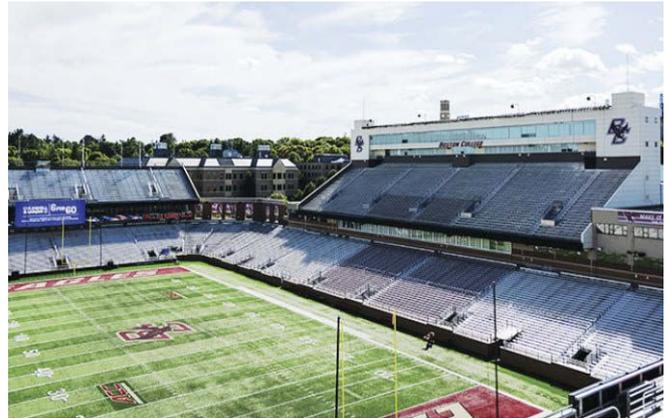
EAW Weathers The Weather At Boston College Alumni Stadium

Alumni Stadium, home to the Boston College Eagles football team, recently installed a new EAW sound reinforcement system to upgrade the game day experience for fans. Time, weather, and wind had taken their toll on the previous system making its replacement a necessity before the start of the 2014 season.

Boston College's Athletic department called upon Wrightson, Johnson, Haddon, & Williams (WJHW) to design a new upper deck sound reinforcement system that would "weather the weather" and upgrade the rest of the stadium at the same time. All Pro Sound, headquartered in Pensacola, Florida, handled the installation of the system.

"We decided to utilize a custom steerable column array loudspeaker solution from EAW," explains Kevin Day, WJHW. "We looked at active arrays, but given the weather, thought a passive solution would be a better fit. We had worked with Kenton Forsythe at EAW to create a passive steerable column array loudspeaker for another installation that we knew would be ideal for this situation – and it has been."

A total of 14 weatherized column array loudspeakers – each consisting of one LF and one HF multi-channel loudspeaker module – were installed on poles to cover the north and south end zones and west upper deck seating areas. All Pro Sound installed custom hardware for mounting the main loudspeakers to cover the upper seating areas. "The new column loudspeakers provide higher quality sound and more even coverage of the seating area while minimizing spillage to nearby neighborhoods during the



games," John Fuqua, vice president of All Pro Sound adds. "The steerable capability of the arrays allow the sound to be aimed to cover the desired seating without compromising adjacent areas."

Because the upper deck seating on the east side of the stadium did not require a pole mount loudspeaker solution, All Pro Sound refit new, custom mounts to the superstructure and installed five EAW QX364-WP to cover that area. During the renovation the lower deck loudspeakers were also upgraded. A distributed system of twenty-two EAW MK Series loudspeakers blanket the main seating area.

eaw.com

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Chauvet Honored with NAMM Milestone Award

NAMM recently honored Chauvet Lighting of Sunrise, Florida with the Milestone Award for 25 years of service in the music and entertainment products industry. The award recognizes retailers and manufacturers who have succeeded over the years through best practices and strong community standing to reach a landmark anniversary.

"Chauvet is honored to receive this recognition," said Berenice Chauvet, vice president of Chauvet. "The support we've received from the music and sound dealers who belong to NAMM has been essential to our success over the past 25 years. We value our association with these dealers and the personal relationships that we've been privileged to enjoy with many of them."

Founded in 1990 by Albert and Berenice Chauvet as a supplier of lights for mobile DJs, Chauvet has grown into a global leader in its field, making a comprehensive line of lighting and LED video wall products. The company has earned widespread acclaim in the lighting industry for being one of the leaders in bringing many new concepts to market, such as affordable LED color mixing fixtures.

"NAMM is proud to recognize Chauvet for their 25 years of service to their community, staff, and to the music and entertainment lighting products industry," said Joe Lamond, NAMM president and CEO.

chauvetlighting.com

Sennheiser and Apogee Form Partnership

At the NAMM Show in Anaheim, Apogee's Betty Bennett and Sennheiser's Peter Claussen jointly announced the cooperation of their companies. Peter Claussen, COO of Sennheiser, said that, "Apogee and Sennheiser are a perfect fit. We both operate in the demanding premium sector, serving professional and semi-professional audio customers across the globe. Our product portfolios perfectly complement each other, and I am looking forward to collaborating with a company that has truly pushed the boundaries of digital audio."

Betty Bennett, co-founder and CEO of Apogee, commented, "This is an exciting collaboration for us. Sennheiser is a highly respected brand with an incredible product portfolio and an extensive global reach. Our reputation for delivering premium products to the pro and prosumer markets are well aligned and our core competencies are very complementary. This collaboration will result in innovative, high-quality products that will truly inspire our customers."

apogeedigital.com, sennheiser.com



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KHS Awards \$1,000 Music Ed. Scholarship

For the past eight years, KHS America has provided the wind and percussion instruments for the members of the United States Army All American Marching Band under the brands of Jupiter, Mapex, and Majestic. Made up of 101 high school seniors from around the country, members of the band who wish to pursue a career in music education can apply for a \$1,000 College Scholarship from KHS America. There were 23 applicants this year and the winner, Chauncey Kleveland, received her award during a dress rehearsal in San Antonio, Texas on Friday, January 2.

Kleveland is 17 years old and plans on attending the University of Nebraska in Lincoln in the fall. Besides playing the clarinet as her main instrument, Chauncey plays the piano in the school's jazz band, sings in both her school's concert choir and a capella choir, and is a member of the school's wind ensemble. "I want to be a music educator because I am passionate about music and people. I want to share with others the joy that music brings me,"

stated Kleveland. "Band is a team where no one sits on the bench, teaching me to work with many personalities"

Kleveland's music director, Andrew Johnson stated: "Her character, compassion, and love for others outweigh her musical abilities. As a musician and a person she is constantly making herself and others around her better."



Tabor Stamper, president of KHS America, awards Chauncey Kleveland with a \$1,000 scholarship.

Sterling Ball Releases Debut Album

Sterling Ball, CEO of Ernie Ball, celebrated his 60th birthday in January by releasing his debut album — *Better Late Than Never*. A longtime musician, Ball has toured across the globe with acts including Albert Lee, Steve Morse, and more.

The album was recorded alongside longtime friends and fellow musicians Dave Marotta, Jimmy Cox, and John Ferraro. The country-tinged record marks a milestone for the CEO who, in addition to his role as musician, serves as a philanthropist with the Casey Lee Ball Foundation and as a professional BBQ chef.

"I thought about what I would play, and these songs are admittedly obscure and eclectic choices. Each song celebrates my musical roots from an exciting family – especially my father, Ernie," said Ball. "It seems kind of funny to record my first album at 59, but really my fifties have been great and full of different opportunities and experiences that inspired the songs. This experience was challenging, but ultimately one of my most rewarding to date."

ernieball.com



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ZimMusic to Distribute Impression Cymbals

ZimMusicInc., a distribution company founded by industry veteran Derek Zimmerman, has announced an agreement to become the exclusive North American distributor of Turkish cymbal manufacturers Impression Cymbals.

Established in 2010, Impression Cymbals offers a full line of completely hand-hammered, artisan-crafted cymbals produced in Istanbul, Turkey. Every Impression cymbal is a testament to the centuries-old craft of traditional cymbal smithing, perfected by generations of skilled masters.

Impression offers a wide range of cymbals including: Rock, Jazz, Dry Jazz, Traditional, Mixed, Smooth, Dark, Hard, and X-Hard. All cymbals are cast from Impression's exclusive B20 formula, and are hand-crafted, lathed, and hand-hammered by skilled artisans. Each cymbal bears a handwritten signature, along with its weight, under the bell as a confirmation of quality. With experienced drummers and percussionists managing every level of the company and production, Impression offers musical cymbals of the highest quality, made from the perspective of performing musicians.

"Impression has amazing products, a cadre of fantastic artists, and a host of accolades from the press, retailers, and end users," remarks Mr. Zimmerman. "We are thrilled to be able to bring Impression to the USA and build upon the solid foundation they have created."

zimmusicinc.com

D'Addario and Alvarez Boost Awareness About Guitar Humidification

For the duration of 2015, USA-based purchasers of select Alvarez guitars that come with hard-shell cases will receive a promo card in the case. The promo card has a unique code on it and directs the customer to the D'Addario-Alvarez website where they will receive a free D'Addario Two-Way Humidification System (\$35.70 value).

This pilot program between D'Addario and Alvarez is an attempt to educate dealers and end users about the importance of proper humidification of acoustic guitars.

"Proper humidification is so critical to an acoustic guitar, and D'Addario's Two-Way Humidification System is the best product for ensuring a guitar has the right relative humidity when it's in the case," says Chris Meikle, senior vice president, St. Louis Music.

Peter D'Addario, U.S. sales manager at D'Addario adds, "We are thrilled to offer a Two-Way Humidification System with select Alvarez guitars, our longtime partner. They are making some beautiful instruments today!"



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alvarezguitars.com

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DW Sticks with Gewa, Backs Ovation

DW's decision to appoint Germany's Gewa as European distribution partner for the brands it recently acquired from Fender will come as no surprise, given their existing 20-year business relationship, but what is the plan for the new ranges?" Gewa's size alone makes them the ideal candidate,"

DW's VP of international sales, Larry Winerman, told *MMR*, "as they are not only able to accommodate the ongoing inventory and warehousing needs, but also, with 12 offices throughout Europe, they have the reach to provide the necessary sales and service.

"Currently, Europe amounts to nearly 20 percent of our sales, but the importance of this market goes beyond this. Throughout Europe, there are high profile artists and music schools, as well as many pro shops focused on drums and percussion, so all of this has a global significance for us.

"The economic data at the start of 2015 may not suggest a high growth rate [in Europe], therefore we know that success will come only through continued hard work. Over the past few years, we have developed several innovative products at the high end of the spectrum, which have been very well received, and at the same time, we've introduced products, which cover new price points and budgets. With an increased sales and marketing focus in place, we are anticipating a moderate growth in Europe."

The obvious standout from the deal is the acquisition of Ovation as well as the Gretsch drum brand and sundry other percussion lines. But Drum Workshop's VP of marketing Scott Donnell insists that the acoustic guitar range was no mere makeweight in the deal.

He told *MMR*: "Ovation may not be in our wheelhouse as a drum company, but we're an instrument manufacturer first and foremost. We'll make sure the right people are in place to take the Ovation brand to the next level. For us, it's all about passion; a passion for the instrument and making music. I feel confident that we can channel our excitement for building drums into this new venture.

"Ovation wasn't a prerequisite in any way. Our immediate plans are to get the company fully operational and begin designing, crafting, and innovating with a new perspective. Long term, we see this as an entrée into a segment of the MI that we hadn't occupied previously. It's the perfect way for us to grow and reach more musicians."

It's no secret that Gretsch drums is the jewel in the crown for the firm and Donnell is ready to give some much needed TLC to the former Fender-owned brand.

"It has been apparent that these brands have not been a core focus," said Donnell. "They hold tremendous value within the drum industry and we're excited about the possibilities going forward. It begins and ends with the product. DW has been predicated on innovation and quality and we plan to carry this over to the other brands.

"Gretsch is a heritage drum brand and we're honored to now be a part of such a long and celebrated story. At its core, the Gretsch brand is also about the Gretsch family, and DW has a lot in common with that sensibility. We're also a family owned and operated business and can appreciate the tradition and legacy that are inherent in this type of business. Sure, there is some customer overlap, but for the most part, Gretsch and DW are fairly unique. Gretsch has a very romantic connotation and appeals to vintage drum enthusiasts and drummers that truly appreciate "That Great Gretsch Sound". DW is a modern, highly custom drum company that isn't as much tied to the past. Both have their place and we'll make sure to play up the strengths of both brands.

The South Carolina manufacturing plant will continue to operate as usual, but Donnell hopes to improve some of the techniques involved.

"We hope to improve some of the processes and upgrade machinery in some areas such as sanding and buffing, but we don't want to disrupt what has worked so well in recent years. Our goal is always to exceed expectations when a drummer has chosen to purchase their dream kit; it's a responsibility we don't take lightly.

"Our goal is to have these brands be leaders in their individual product categories provide instruments that inspire. Everyone at DW is committed to making these companies the best that they can be."



European Beat

by Ronnie Dungan



New Chapter for Blackstar

British amp brand Blackstar has set up a new distribution division called Dist-X Distribution and has made the Alvarez guitar brand its first signing.

The firm has taken on exclusive UK distribution of the range from Go To Guitars and should be able to offer a much more robust distribution proposition than the smaller operation.

Blackstar's UK sales manager, Drew McDonald, commented: "Having spent the last six years helping to build the Blackstar brand in the UK, I am very excited to announce our new division DIST-X Distribution. This is an exciting new chapter for Blackstar and we are delighted to begin it with Alvarez guitars. Alvarez has a fantastic heritage and is celebrating their 50th anniversary this year. Their excellent guitars cover a wide range of price points making them a great line for retailers. They also have a very considered approach to the design of their products focusing on quality and innovation to make them stand out from the competition."



Chris Meikle, senior vice president of Marketing and Business Development of St. Louis Music and Alvarez Guitars added: "They're a fantastic sales and marketing company and we feel very lucky that Alvarez will be Blackstar's first distributed brand of guitars. The success they have achieved through innovation and design with their guitar amps is a testament to their commitment and abilities. We look forward to working with them closely."

Blackstar was of course founded by a gang of four ex-Marshall Amps staff in 2004 and has since grabbed a significant amount of market share away from their ex-employer. But the amp market has been tough in the UK, particularly over the last two years, and a move into distribution (something Marshall has also done) may be a canny piece of diversification.

Peavey Finds a Safe Pair of Hands

The answer to last month's quiz question as to whom, if anyone, would take on the Peavey brand in the UK was Barnes & Mullins, which revealed the exclusive deal at NAMM.

It is something of a departure from its current line-up, but it isn't the first time the distributor has been active in the audio market, having previously been a

sub-distributor for Line 6 in the UK.

"When that finished we didn't have an amplification line to sell," explained joint MD, Brian Cleary. "There seemed little point in trying to build our own brand in such a competitive and sophisticated market so we went without. When news started to circulate in the UK market that Peavey were making

changes in their European set up I was keen to let Peavey know of our interest.



Brian Cleary

"For me Peavey is about portable PA and backline first and foremost. They indeed have many other excellent products to offer but these amplification products are the bedrock of their success and a very easy sell in a stable market."

The Trace Elliot and Budda bass amp ranges were not part of the deal, but it seems to have been a decision based purely on logistics rather than anything else.

"I'd love to do both," added Cleary, "and perhaps we will have a structure in the future that allows for this. We can't start with all the brands, but if the opportunity still exists for us in the future, and we have the correct vehicle to market these lines, I would be very keen to look again."

Busy JHS Takes Two

UK distributor JHS has just taken on two very different lines.

French brass and woodwind accessories specialist BG has chosen it as its UK distributor. It has a range of more than 300 items, focusing mainly on mid-price and professional-level products.

"I am proud to associate BG with JHS for UK distribution - our mutual savoir-faire and experience will give us a truly larger exposure in the UK market," commented managing director for BG, Franck Bichon.

In addition, the firm will distribute the Pigtronix range of guitar and bass effects pedals throughout the UK and Ireland.

Long Island-based Pigtronix has a host of well known endorsers, including Andy Summers, Billy Sheehan, and Guthrie Govan, plus Aerosmith and Living Colour.



Dennis and Franck Bichon.

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We Already Knew This, Right?

A recent UK poll showed that women think musicians are the best in bed, beating models and personal trainers. Well, naturally.

The survey, carried out by Illicitencounters.com asked over 500 females across the UK what type of man, in their experience, is the best in bed. The top 'best in bed' group was musicians (39 percent), beating personal trainers (18 percent), models (11 percent), lawyers (7 percent) and bankers (0.5 percent).

"It's very obvious and quite simple why musicians top the Best in Bed poll," said Claire Page, spokesperson for Illicit Encounters, "Talent and creativity are extremely attractive. We get so many emails from women talking about their hot affairs with musicians, songwriters, and singers. The biggest sex symbols of all time, like Frank Sinatra, Justin Timberlake, and Elvis Presley are all musicians. There's something incredibly seductive about a man singing a love song. Every woman wants to think it's about her!"

The names that topped the 'fantasy sex partner' list were apparently:

- 1) Hozier
- 2) Harry Styles
- 3) Bruno Mars
- 4) Mick Jagger
- 5) David Bowie
- 6) John Legend
- 7) Jared Leto
- 8) David Grohl

The top three reasons women gave for musicians being great in bed are:

- 1) They are passionate
- 2) They have good rhythm
- 3) They know what they're doing with their hands



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Trade Regrets

Bob Cavanagh, former president of iconic Boston music retailer EU Wurlitzer, passed away on February 7.

Cavanagh's deep passion for music is traced to his own guitar playing, which was sufficiently impressive to lead Bob to play with Joe Pass, among others. His role at EU Wurlitzer began when the founder was still active and progressed in the eras of his sons and finally when Bob took charge. He left the company several years before it closed.



Carlo Greco was known throughout the world as one of the premier guitar luthiers. After a long association as chief designer for Guild Guitars, Carlo joined his dear friend, Alex Carozza, in New York's top repair shop, Alex Music, on 48th Street. Carlo created some of the world's most-loved string instruments and had an equal reputation as a repairman of world-class guitars.

Carlo passed away on January 15 at the age of 88. He was a special person who held a special role in the history of our industry.



Bob Gand opened Village Music in Deerfield, Illinois in the early 1960s, which impacted both the community, as well as his son, Gary. Gary went on to open his own successful retail business. Bob was drawn to folk music in the 1960s and formed the Gand Family Singers, which included his children Gary and (celebrity chef) Gale.

Gand passed away on December 31, 2014.



In early February, we received the following message from NAMM's Dan Del Fiorentino about **Hy Babit**, who passed away on January 27th:

Hy Babit played a special role in our industry and with NAMM throughout the years. When he passed away last month, in many ways, it was the end of an incredible era.

Hy can be viewed on the 1966 TV tour of the NAMM Show in Chicago, which highlighted several key exhibitors to the show that year. Hy provided a review of the art of piano roll arranging. At the time of the filming Hy was working for QRS. Fast forward to 2014, Hy was once again in front of cameras for NAMM, this time for the Oral History program. At the age of 97, Hy recounted his passion for music and some of the many adventures he had as a result of his very interesting life.

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ON THE MOVE

Ernie Ball, Inc. has announced the appointment of **Dustin Hinz** to the role of executive vice president of marketing.



Hinz represents a major addition to the Ernie Ball executive team and will lead marketing and brand strategies for the Ernie Ball and Music Man brands. A longtime Guitar Center executive, Hinz most recently held the position of vice president brand experience, marketing and media production.

In his new role at Ernie Ball, Hinz will develop and direct innovative marketing strategies to further the Ernie Ball brand experience. He will focus on content creation and entertainment programs designed to spotlight the Ernie Ball culture, dedicated fan-base, industry-leading product assortment and retail partnerships.

Levy's Leathers has appointed **Ted Burger** as Levy's international sales manager. Burger's MI career began at Costello's Music in Fredonia and since that time has worked for Samson Technologies for two years and six years at Korg USA. Most recently he has been working at The Hanser Music Group in Cincinnati.



Ted Burger will be responsible for all of Levy's distributors worldwide and will also manage Levy's international trade shows: NAMM, Frankfurt Musikmesse, Summer NAMM and Music China.

American Music & Sound has retained **Jeff Dunmire** to be its national sales manager as a part of AM&S' recent acquisition of the distribution for Kurzweil Home Pianos. Dunmire has been involved with the Kurzweil brand since 2014, and previously from 1994 to 2009. He has held sales and product management positions with brands such as Casio, Arp, Korg, and Behringer.



The Board of Directors of **Manhasset Specialty Company** recently announced the hiring of **Dan Roberts** as president and general manager to replace Barry Heid, who is retiring from that position after a very successful career of 16 years working with the company. Roberts, joins Manhasset with many years of experience in the music industry, notably with MusiCorp and KMC Music.



Jason Carter (Board Member), Mike Lizotte (Board Member), Paul Damiano (Board Member), Dan Roberts, Barry Heid, Jim McKenzie (Former Board Member) and Garry Griggs (Board Member).

Ashly Audio has announced that industry veteran **Scott Leslie** will join the company as executive vice president. In the newly-created position, Leslie reports to Ashly CEO and president Mark Wentling and oversees the R&D, marketing, and North American sales divisions.



Leslie's roots are deep in the audio industry; his father invented the Leslie rotating speaker, an essential component of electric organs. The younger Leslie earned his master's degree in acoustics from Georgia Tech and took a position as a loudspeaker engineer at Altec Lansing. From there, he pivoted to the computer and software industry with positions at Tektronix, Sun Microsystems, SeeBeyond, and others before starting his own analytics software company. He returned to the pro sound industry as vice president of Engineering at JBL Pro before launching his own consulting firm, PD Squared, which helped clients with strategy, product development, and product management.

Focusrite Novation Inc. has announced several new appointments.

Industry veteran **Michael Prager** has joined Focusrite Novation Inc. as Focusrite national sales manager. Prager was most recently with Adam Audio as their director of sales. Prior to that, Michael was the Guitar Center Recording category manager.



Additionally, **Nick De Friez** has been appointed Novation's sales manager. In his new role, Nick will be focusing on Novation sales and marketing, where he will help develop comprehensive dealer sales programs and improve Novation's customer engagement strategy.



Finally, **Jeremy Lumsden** is moving into the position of director of U.S. Marketing for both Focusrite and Novation brands. A veteran of the Focusrite Nova-

tion organization, Lumsden has helped advance the company with respect to sales and advertising policy, and his new role will build upon his prior experience at the company.



Wenger Corporation has named **Jeffrey L. Jollay** as vice president of Marketing and Product Development.

Since 2007, Jollay was vice president of Product Marketing with Masco Company, a leading manufacturer of home improvement and building products and provider of related services. Previously Jollay held executive or management roles with HNI Corporation, Brunswick Corporation and Whirlpool Corporation.

HARMAN Professional has appointed **David McKinney** as vice president and GM of HARMAN's Mixer Business Unit, where he will lead the global operations of the Soundcraft and Studer brands. Filling McKinney's previous position of senior director and general manager of China Operations for HARMAN Professional will be **Frank Xiao**, who brings more than 15 years experience in the professional AV industry.



Yamaha has appointed **Dave Gerhart** as product manager for the company's Percussion Department, Band & Orchestral Division. He will report to Troy Wollwage, marketing manager, Percussion Instruments. Previously, Gerhart held the position of director of Percussion Studies at Bob Cole Conservatory of Music at California State University.



US Music Corp. has hired **Jonathan Lee** as director of product design and development for guitars. Lee has more than 20 years of experience as a luthier of high quality acoustic guitars, combined with expertise of creating production facilities to manufacture acoustic guitars.





After nearly a lifetime of running a music studio and serving as a prominent guitar instructor in Connecticut, John McCarthy began recording and distributing his lessons in the 1990s. Having honed the presentation of his concepts and techniques to a unique pedagogy, McCarthy launched The Rock House Method, which has evolved to be

one of the most recognizable and respected names in musical instruction systems.

MMR recently sat down with McCarthy to learn more about his own background as a music educator, as well as new and upcoming projects and initiatives from his ever-ambitious and innovative company.

For those unfamiliar, can you provide some personal background: How did you first get involved in music education? What was the catalyst behind forming the Rock House Method?

John McCarthy: I started playing guitar at a very young age – six or seven – and by age 12 I was teaching guitar to neighborhood kids and parents, too. By the time I was 15, I had started my own school. I taught myself piano and was teaching both guitar and piano at the school and I hired other instructors to teach with me, as well. At this time I wasn't happy with any of the methods available, so I wrote my own lessons for myself and the other teachers. These hand-written lessons were the basis for my curriculum that I recently released.

At 19, I had a vision of a way to teach more than just the 60 private students I met with weekly. I shot and released the first complete video series available for learning guitar (on VHS & Beta tapes – very old school!) in my parents' living room and took out a full-page ad in *Guitar for the Practicing Musician*, spending my life's savings in a sink-or-swim launch. Luckily it was accepted well and Rock House Method was born. I called it Rock House because it was actually shot in my parents' house.

I have devoted my live to creating the best instruction programs and I get a high from seeing the results. I've always been hands-on and wanted to be in touch with as many teachers and students as possible, get their feedback, and continue to tweak and update to make the best programs.

The recession may finally be in the rearview mirror, but many are still dealing with the aftermath? Can you talk about the past few years for Rock House and how you manage to hang in there?

Rock House had a lot of success from the early 2000s through 2007, working with artists and releasing DVD programs. Most of these players were master musicians, but didn't have any experience

teaching, so I studied their style and wrote the complete program for them, while always getting their feedback along the way. Then I had them come to Rock House where I would teach them how to present the material in a cohesive manner before shooting the programs.

Around 2007, when the economy started to nosedive, the DVD market did as well. I had been working on writing my own curriculum and I was still using it in my music school, so I decided it was time to move in a new direction and put everything together to create my own learning system for guitar, bass guitar, piano/keyboard, and ukulele. It was already proven in my music school, so I knew that if I could put it all together and offer it to teachers and music schools around the world the system could be very successful. I spent the good part of eight years writing the new curriculum books. I also wrote teachers editions for each book that gave educators tips and tools to teach each lesson in every book effectively. I was on a mission to create the most thorough and effective learning system.

What are some recent or upcoming releases of note?

Over the past eight years I have been focused on writing the *Rock House Method* core curriculum and products that can be used with or accent the learning system. In December 2013 I released my multi-level curriculum book/CD series for guitar, piano, and bass guitar. Since then, to accent the learning system, I have released what I call enhanced book courses that have video elements delivered through DVD or streaming video, including *Modes Demystified*, *Fretboard Autopsy*, and *Master Rock Guitar*. A few titles that debuted at the recent NAMM Show include *The Only Chord Book You Will Ever Need – Guitar*, *The Only Chord Book You Will Ever Need – Keyboard/Piano*, *Rock House Method Learn Guitar – Master Edition*, and *Rock House Method Learn Ukulele – A Complete Course*.

You offer products and services that allow independent MI retailers to more easily offer lessons programs to their customers and community – can you discuss?

I have talked with many MI retailers and found that most need to have a successful lesson program in-store to accent their income and to help ensure that there is a steady flow of musicians coming into their store. The thing is, most don't know how to set up a music lesson program or have tried and not been successful. A light bulb went off in my head – I can offer a package to music stores that is basically a turnkey music school. I think of it like the Dunkin' Donuts shops: there are stand-alone shops and also there are smaller satellite shops in gas stations and other stores as well. In addition to the complete learning system these stores will get by working with us, they will also be able to advertise they have a Rock House School of Music in their store. This will give them a leg up on competitive stores in the area that may offer lesson programs. This School Lesson System is planned to launch at Summer NAMM.

The "Rock House School of Music MI School Module" will include: award-winning multi-level curriculum for guitar, piano/keyboard, bass, and ukulele; and online quiz system for each book; teachers editions for each book; backing tracks and worksheets; common songs for each instrument; new lessons sent to teachers bi-weekly; student referral service; backend software management; streaming video lessons that correspond with each lesson; eBook PDFs to practice with tablets or smartphones; use of the Rock House School of Music name to advertise; downloadable forms for everything from student registration to payment receipts; and much more.

What else is on the horizon for Rock House in the coming months?

I am always looking to the future to ride the waves of new technology and not get swallowed up by those waves. Streaming video and downloads are the future. Rock House has just launched a new learning platform called RockHouseU.com – think of us as the Netflix of music instruction. This is a guided learning system that takes a musician from the first time they see an instrument to the most advanced level. Featuring HD quality video, this comprehensive learning system is for electric or acoustic guitar and covers all genres of music. In addition to our core curriculum learning we also offer over 100 programs with popular artists such as David Ellefson, Gus G, Alex Skolnick, Jeff Loomis, Rusty Cooley, and many more. We are setting up channels on the Amazon Fire Stick, Roku, and other streaming platforms so players can access these lessons on their TVs, as well as any computer or tablet. Although we only have guitar at the moment we have plans to add piano/keyboard, bass guitar, and ukulele.

Any final thoughts?

They say if you love what you do you never work a day in your life. I love what I do; I have a deep passion to teach music. My mission is to help people of all ages play music, especially children – they need to be exposed to instruments at a young age and build an appreciation for music. **MMR**

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NAMM SHOW

Optimism Translates Into Investment

Record-busting Numbers Reflect a Re-energized Industry

“

Trying to assess and sum up the collective experience of the global industry is difficult at best, but it sure seemed to me that the vast majority of those who came to the NAMM Show were glad they did,” observes NAMM president and CEO, Joe Lamond. “Whether measured in sales made, educational sessions attended, or just plain fun had during the hundreds of networking events and parties, our members went home inspired and better positioned for success in the year ahead.”

The actual data from the 2015 gathering in Anaheim backs up Lamond’s sunny assessment with longstanding attendance and exhibitor records for the NAMM Show having been broken in convincing fashion.

We’re Back: Testimonials from the Show Floor

Pretty much without exception, industry figures we spoke with were in agreement that this was an especially positive show. “NAMM was just great for us,” says Brian Ball, newly appointed president of Ernie Ball, Inc. “I am really excited about 2015 and you could feel that vibe at NAMM this year. Three years ago, when we sat down with customers the agendas included lists of things that we need to improve and issues to solve. This year, the agendas were full of opportunities and ideas for growth. Here’s to a great 2015 for our industry!”

Electro-Harmonix’s Kevin Jolly adds, “The overall positive response to our products, new and old, was overwhelming. We had very consistent traffic.”

“Fishman had an extremely productive NAMM Show,” reports company director of marketing, Chris DeMaria. “This year proved to be a great opportunity to meet with dealers, distributors, OEM partners, media, artists and of course, the general public.

Booth traffic was strong and we were booked solid with meetings. Our demo stage area was packed every day. We had a perfect mix of artists and clinicians that helped showcase a full range of Fishman products. It was a blast!”

Ken Youmans of Hoshino also spoke of a vibrant NAMM, telling me, “The fact that I was very busy with booth tours and, so, missed connecting with you and some other of my pals-in-the-trade speaks of the surprising intensity of the Show.” But Youmans did concede that the increasing presence of “the general public” at what still purports to be a “Trade Only” event can have downsides: “The sheer volume of folks checking out the gear seemed slightly higher than last year for Thursday, Friday, and Saturday,

1,621 exhibiting companies shared their best and newest products and services with the industry (a six percent increase over January 2014’s total of 1,533), while a reported total of 99,342 Show registrants were on-hand for the action (up from 96,129 last year). That number, though, is both suggestive of a re-energized and rebounding industry as well as the changing make-up of today’s NAMM attendee. While the bulk of show-goers are still exhibitors, buyers, and invited guests and performers, NAMM’s Music Education Day and Generation Next participants (along with an ever-growing media and “non-industry” presence) were a distinct and notable part of this year’s get-together. Increased international registration (up 11 percent from 2014) also added to the Show’s diversity.

but Saturday afternoon got a bit crazy in a bad way – the a__hole factor was off the charts, to the point that I had trouble conducting booth tours, and there were numerous instances where those tending the booth needed to police bad behavior.” But, again, the real goals of the gathering were met and then some with Ken adding, “Our sales manager tells me that dealer turnout improved [over 2014] and more business was written than last year.”

Basilios Strmec of Hailun Pianos was another exhibitor who walked away with positive impressions of the recent Show. “NAMM 2015 brought us much more relaxed customers who ordered liberally without signs of constant internal tabulations as they were signing their order forms,” he reports. “Another trend that continued at NAMM 2015 was new customers appearing without much notice and putting in testing orders. I believe this indicates many merchants are very interested at taking a fresh look at the acoustic piano landscape and are open to changing their product portfolio on their sales floor.”

Then Again, Maybe It’s Always Been About ‘Attitude’

Metrics and figures aside, Joe Lamond speculates that there may be something a little more primal and emotional at work behind a successful Show such as 2015 NAMM. “Perhaps it might be considered a ‘Sunshine Dividend’ for the industry,” he wonders. “The animal spirit unleashed when the global industry spends four days together in the Southern California sun. That optimism translates into investment, expansion, and innovation simply because people believe that tomorrow will be better than yesterday. And in my opinion, believing is more than half the battle.”

Amen to that.



1.) Roland CEO and representative director Jun-ichi Miki at the company’s press event, held the evening before Day-one of the Show. “Roland always designs the future, using the latest technology,” he noted. **2.)** Joy Reynoso, director of sales FMIC Custom Shop, rallies the troops at Fender’s pre-NAMM party on Wednesday evening. **3.)** Andy Zildjian of SABIAN. **4.)** Conn-Selmer, Inc.’s John Stoner and Mary Gentry. **5.)** American Way Marketing’s Kathy Donahoe, John Musselman, and Janice Klingler. **6.)** Saxophonist Jason Weber with Peter Ponzol and Grant Henry of Antigua Winds. **7.)** Alfred Music’s Ron Manus with Tish Ciravolo of Daisy Rock Guitars.



8.)Veritas Instrument Rental: Anthony Waicul, Heidi Haight, and Robert Troke.**9.)**Sennheiser’s Peter Claussen at Thursday’s press conference introducing the company’s evolution wireless DI microphone line.**10.)**Jam and Mike Wong of **Crossrock Cases** with Matt Huber of **MMR** (center).**11.)**Floyd Rose of **Floyd Rose Marketing**.**12.)**Harvey Levy of **Levy’s Leathers Limited**.**13.)**The **Levy’s Leathers** team (left to right) – SEATED: Mike Haskins, Suzy McDaniel, Amy Brennan, Amy Brennan, Todd Shetler, Jessica Lemieux, Corrine Hunt, Jeff Bard, Steve Wade; MIDDLE ROW: Dennis Levy, Dave Oliver, Randall Whitney, James Fox, Steve Trump, Ray Verrall, Gary Castelluccio, Frank Maglio, Mike Amos, Tony Riccobono, Ken Peveler, Gabe Williams, Glen Booth; BACK ROW: Scott Applegate, Don Heisler, Errol Joki, Zeke Carey, and Bill McDaniel.**14.)**Bassist James “Hutch” Hutchinson with **Fishman’s** Chris DeMaria.**15.)****Graph-Tech Guitar Labs’** Eric Gillespie.**16.)****MMR** president/publisher Terry Lowe presents the **NAMM Foundation’s** Mary Luehrs with the Don Johnson Industry Service Award.**17.)**Jacqueline Schear, Amanda Brock and Keith Maine of **Amahi Ukuleles**.**18.)**Anthony Livolsi and Tony Livolsi of **LOKNOB**.**19.)**Brad Landon, Mike Connolly, and Diana Wyllie of **MJC Ironworks**.**20.)**Chad Smith and Sean Williamson of **OptionKnob**.**21.)**Derek Campos and Jennifer Lewis of **KORG**.**22.)**Rafael Atijas of **Loog Guitars**.**23.)**Jorma Winkler of **IMUA Ukulele** and Leon Lewis of **Hohner**.**24.)**Colin Hilborne, Georgia Prentice, and Steve Lopinto of **Prentice Practice Pads**.**25.)**Darryl Hinshaw, Chris Labriola, Scott Peterson, and Marshall Johns of **Peterson Strobe Tuners**.**26.)**Luke Sigle and Ryan Kluttz of **QickPick**.**27.)**Raymond Hernandez, Hozen of **Maestro Guitars**.**28.)**Jorma Winkler, Michael Sowards, Shinji Takahashi, and Izi Holokahi of **IMUA Ukulele**.**29.)**Paul Beard and Denny Mickley of **Beard Guitars**.**30.)**Anne Tainter and Travis Thiemann of **String Swing**.**31.)**Jay Baldemor, Jeff Harrington, Peter Espartero and Steven Ankele of **Gruv Gear**.**32.)**Paul Chu of **Hunter Musical Instruments, Inc.****33.)**Ed Heisler of **Mad Hatter Guitar Products**.**34.)**Heather Campbell of **Earasers**.**35.)**Wendy Laplaca, Wayne Cobham, Deon Yates, and Peter Laplaca of **PJLA Music**.**36.)**Pieter Schutgen, Susan Glamore, Rand Rugngien, and Lisa Ziganti of **MusicNomad Equipment Care**.**37.)**Kim White, Naomi Con, and Guil Juliad of **Cordoba Guitars**.**38.)**Chuck Kirschling, Cory Berger, and Rich Berger of **Grover Musical Products**.**39.)**Tony Tucci, Anthony Perri, Nina Enwia and Jan Vicherek of **Perri’s Leathers**.**40.)**Matt King of **MMR** with Greg and Janet Deering of **Deering Banjo Co.**

Apple Co-Founder Steve Wozniak at NAMM Breakfast

Saturday morning at the Anaheim Hilton, Pacific Ballroom. The lights go out. A clip of *The Big Bang Theory*, Season 4, Episode 65, begins playing on every screen in the room. We see Sheldon, Penny, Leonard, all the usual suspects, but then lo and behold, Steve Wozniak himself is on screen. It’s a surreal moment, and the room is silent. The crowd laughs at his witty exchanges with the character, Sheldon, and before anyone knows it, Steve Wozniak materializes on stage next to NAMM CEO and president Joe Lamond. He is met with a standing ovation.

“There’s a saying in our business,” Lamond begins, “about how to make a small fortune in this business, and the answer is to start with a large one.” This leads into a little bit of back story about some of Wozniak’s early endeavors, one being the US Festivals, which were two music and culture festivals sponsored by Wozniak in the early 1980s. “The first year, it lost 10 million dollars; how’d that work?” Lamond asked Wozniak, to which Wozniak responded, “The intent was not to lose money... I figured if you make a good product – I was young, and my learnings had come from Apple – you make a good product, you’ll make money, and it didn’t make money, so I didn’t do it anymore.”

While Wozniak is most well known for being one of the co-founders of Apple Computer with Steve Jobs and Ronald Wayne, as well as a celebrated electrical engineer, he at a young age had ambitions of becoming a teacher, specifically a fifth grade teacher. “I wanted to teach. I was giving computers to schools, but giving a computer is like giving money, and money doesn’t have a lot of meaning. Give yourself. So I decided I’ll start teaching how to use the computer to get better grades, how to do better homework, every subject in school how can you apply it to a computer, and I started teaching fifth graders and I got up to teaching full time, seven days a week.”

“A lot of us in the room, our audience here, are involved with the music business, it’s easy to get overwhelmed with technology and music, but you do think this is moving us forward?”

Lamond asked Wozniak. Wozniak said he believed in his youth that technology was always moving us forward, and commented on how his experiences with young children and how they really took to computers made him think that all of this progress is good. “Progress has to be good,” said Wozniak, “we create it.”

“I am so lucky for everything that I did in my life that got me here tonight... the music is like a magic dust in my mind, bringing magic to people,” Wozniak said.



Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak and NAMM’s Joe Lamond



Note From Joe Thank You!

On behalf of the NAMM Board of Directors, Executive Committee and staff, I'd like to thank you for coming to The NAMM Show. It is our sincere

hope that your participation has left you inspired and better equipped to succeed in the year ahead. Your membership in NAMM and your involvement in NAMM events link you to a global family of industry professionals, and unifies the power and influence of our community to share our belief that music is a driving force for good in the world.

The NAMM Show is the engine that drives your association's yearlong work on behalf of your company and the industry. Revenues from the show enable us to execute our strategic plan. Our exhibiting members, and the buyers who come to meet with them, deserve heartfelt thanks from the industry, the music education community and, perhaps most important, the millions of people—especially kids in school—who will benefit from these efforts to bring music into their lives. Our

Vision, Mission and five strategic Objectives drive all these efforts with clarity and focus:

Trade Shows—As our world becomes more connected through technology, NAMM's trade shows are changing. The products and exhibits are still the stars of the show, but today, our members tell us that robust educational offerings and peer-to-peer networking opportunities make the trip to Anaheim a must. In addition to the traditional reasons our industry makes its annual pilgrimage, I believe an essential outcome from The NAMM Show is inspiration and passion, possibly the two most important ingredients for success.

Membership—Banding together is a critical element of success for any industry. Going back to the ancient Greek storyteller Aesop, the phrase "United we stand, divided we fall" has never been more true. This means working together to speak with one voice to lobby government leaders and regulators, to negotiate better rates on business services and to address important industry issues. And with annual dues



vision

We envision a world in which the joy of making music is a precious element of daily living for everyone; a world in which every child has a deep desire to learn music and a recognized right to be taught; and in which every adult is a passionate champion and defender of that right.

around 50 cents per day, using just one of our discounted business services makes this the best investment you'll make all year.

Professional Development—There is no better industry education available anywhere . . . and it comes free with your membership! Members have told us that the things they learned at NAMM U have not only helped them through the recession, but also made their businesses better than they had ever been. And by attending the morning sessions at the show, you get wisdom from guys like Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak and a free breakfast—I'm not sure where else you can find that.

Market Development—Creating more music makers of all ages; that is the "end zone" for this objective. If every member could experience the impact of NAMM's work in this area, they would be amazed. Grants, scholarships, innovative new music programs, kids getting new instruments and school music programs being restored and strengthened—they're what we live for, aren't they? NAMM is also the leader in funding music research and promoting the results and proven

benefits of music education to the world's media to influence government leaders, policy makers and parents. Music education is the key to student success; everybody knows that now!

Global Impact—NAMM has members in nearly 100 countries now and, if I had to guess, I'd bet half of our members do business outside their home country. And with our circle of benefits business model expanding, revenue generated from Music China and NAMM Russia is being reinvested to create more music makers globally without impacting the work we do on behalf of our U.S. members.

Thank you again for being a part of this wonderful work. Through your participation, music and music education will continue to reach more people around the world. And perhaps one day we can say we've achieved our vision of a world in which the joy of making music is a precious element of daily living for everyone!

Sincerely,



Joe Lamond

NAMM PRESIDENT AND CEO

mission

NAMM's mission is to strengthen the music products industry and promote the pleasures and benefits of making music.

objectives

Trade Show

- Produce successful trade shows that serve our members and the industry, thus ensuring the growth of NAMM's Circle of Benefits model

Membership

- Recruit and retain members by making NAMM services an invaluable tool for success
- Convene stakeholders around industry issues to provide tools and strategies to help members address challenges and pursue opportunities

Professional Development

- Provide relevant and high-value educational programs for NAMM members

Market Development

- Promote music education as a right for all children
- Create, fund and market programs, initiatives and public relations campaigns designed to encourage people of all ages to make music
- Promote and represent the shared interests of NAMM members to elected officials and policymakers in the United States

Global Impact

- Expand NAMM's Circle of Benefits model by pursuing new opportunities globally
- Increase global attendance at NAMM trade shows
- Convene a global coalition of stakeholders around industry issues



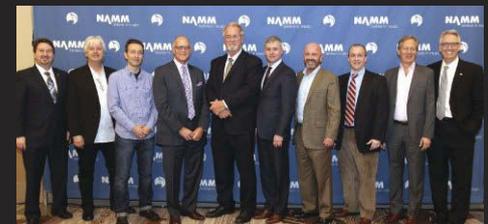
Dealers' Choice Awards Presentations

A.) The **Hal Leonard** team accepts the Dealers' Choice Award for Print Music Publisher of the Year from **MMR's** Terry Lowe (second from left). **B.)** **MMR** president/publisher Terry Lowe (left) and executive editor Christian Wissmuller (right) present **TAMA's** Terry Bisette and Charlie Hayashi with the 2014 Dealers' Choice Award for Percussion Line of the Year. **C.)** Terry Lowe presents **Fender's** Justin Norvell with the Dealers' Choice Award hardware for Electric Guitar of the Year. **D.)** Hartley Peavey of **Peavey Electronics** accepts the Dealers' Choice Award for Amplifier Line of the Year from **MMR** executive editor Christian Wissmuller. **E.)** **Taylor's** Kurt Listug, Andy Powers, and Keith Brawley with the Dealers' Choice Award for Acoustic Guitar of the Year. **F.)** The **Chauvet DJ** team with the company's trophies for two Dealers' Choice Award wins: Lighting Line of the Year and DJ Line of the Year. **G.)** **D'Addario and Company, Inc.'s** Jim D'Addario, Peter D'Addario, Ari Simon, and John D'Addario III receive D'Addario/Planet Waves' trophy as the Dealers' Choice Winner in the category of Accessory Line of the Year from **MMR's** Christian Wissmuller (second from right). **H.)** **Hailiun** won Dealers' Choice Awards in the Website of the Year category, as well as Acoustic Piano of the Year: Toni Hahm, Past Perfect Piano; Paul Rea, Head of Quality Control; **MMR's** Christian Wissmuller; Brian Schmidt, Pianogallery, Calgary, California; Basilios Strmec, CEO; Lauren Wallace, marketing manager Hailun USA; Chris Carranza, Past Perfect Piano; Lore Ruschiensky, DW Pianos, Regina, Canada; and Corinne Groff, DW Pianos, Canada. **I.)** **Yamaha** receives the Dealers' Choice Award for B&O Line of the Year from **MMR's** Terry Lowe. **J.)** Tom Sumner and Armando Vega of **Yamaha** and **MMR's** Christian Wissmuller with the Dealers' Choice Award for Electric Bass of the Year. **K.)** **Yamaha's** John Schauer, Nithin Charian, and Tom Sumner receive the Dealers' Choice Award for Sound Reinforcement Line of the Year from **MMR's** Christian Wissmuller. **L.)** **Shure's** Mike Lohman with the Dealers' Choice Award trophy for Microphone Line of the Year.

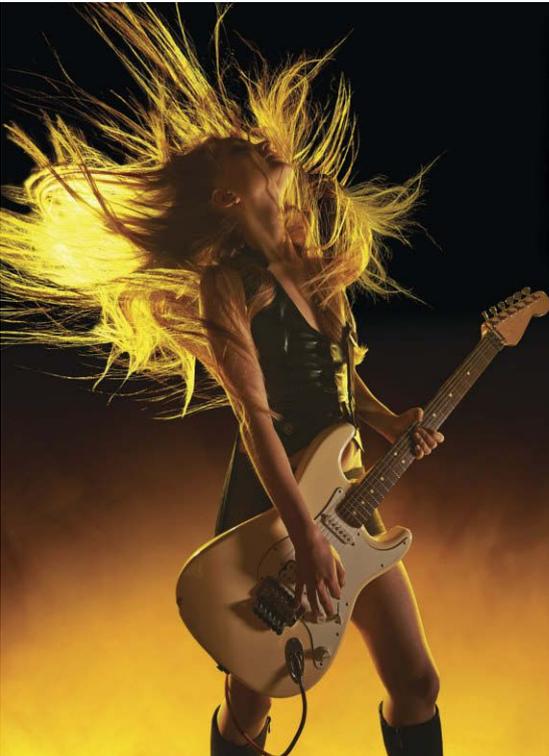
Eight new NAMM Board Members Elected

At its Annual Meeting of Members, held January 24 in Anaheim, NAMM named eight new music industry professionals to its board of directors. The NAMM Board provides leadership, counsel and direction to NAMM, the NAMM Foundation, and the global music products industry.

The following NAMM Members were elected to serve three-year terms on the incoming 2015 board:



- Joseph Castronovo** – Korg USA, Inc.
- Greg Deering** – Deering Banjo Company
- Ron Losby** – Steinway & Sons, Inc.
- Martin Szpiro** – Jam Industries Ltd.
- Paul Decker** – Music Villa
- Michael Doyle** – Guitar Center, Inc.
- Brian Reardon** – Monster Music
- Peter Sides** – Robert M. Sides Family Music Centers



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41.) Gil Griffith of Wave Distribution. 42.) Frank West, Jim Wieda, and Andy Cerone of Lowrey. 43.) Rob McCoy of Gator Cases Inc. 44.) Evan Vallis of LPD Music International. 45.) Dennis Bruegel of Gianni. 46.) Everett Porter, Stephanie Hensal, Tom Nicholson, Kevin Dougherty, Donna Dougherty, and Tom Dougherty of TKL Worldclass Cases. 47.) Brett Marcus, Larry Greene, Charlie Langrehr, Mark Blasko, Justin MCGowin, Chester Myron, Darren Roberts, and Ben Myron of OMG Music. 48.) Scott Fore and John Karp of Bourgeois Guitars. 49.) Kristen Souza and Joe Souza of Kanile'a Ukulele. 50.) MMR's Terry Lowe presents Pearl River's Jian Ning with a commemorative plaque in honor of the company's 30th anniversary. 51.) Protec: Ashley Jessup, Amber Williams-Morales, Andy Lutz, and Francis Camba. 52.) Eminence Speakers: Cobi Stein. 53.) Das Audio's Carlos Henao, Javier Navarro, and Darrin Young. 54.) Cole Clark Guitars: Miles Jackson. 55.) Rapco Horizon: Darius Seabaugh. 56.) MMR's Matt King presents ESP Guitars' Jeff Moore with a plaque commemorating the company's 40th Anniversary. 57.) Paul Reed Smith and Jim Cullen of PRS Guitars hoist the MMR plaque honoring the company's first 30 years. 58.) Matt King of MMR presenting the commemorative plaque in recognition of Randall Amplifiers' 45th Anniversary. 59.) Schechter Guitars: Hans Eichman. 60.) Graphic Tech Guitar Labs: Dave Dunwoodie & Eric Gillespie. 61.) Jason Carter, Barry Heid, and Daniel Roberts with the MMR plaque recognizing Manhasset Specialty Company's 80-year anniversary. 62.) Ohana Music: Ken Middleton & Louis Wu. 63.) Arriba Cases: Marlow Anthony, Jennifer Davies, Scott Davies, Sara Davies, Patricia Davies, and Aaron Uribe. 64.) Matt King of MMR with Erich Barto, Eric Battin, and Shun Kudoh of Zoom. 65.) Jes Vang and Robert Rinaldi of TC Electronic. 66.) Alan Gatchell, Steve Crisafulli of Gatchell Violins. 67.) Brian Martin of Sterling By Music Man. 68.) Rich Galime, Michael Skinner, Stephen Wick, Sean Packard, and Sylvain Carton of DANSR. 69.) Adam Romine of Legator Guitars. 70.) Katie Teague of Dana B. Goods. 71.) April Hart, Joe Husak, Tim Pfouts of Stay In Tune String Company. 72.) James Brawner, Rob Bailey of Journey Instruments. 73.) Joe Arias and InJae Park of Crafter Guitars. 74.) Chris & Ashley Mitchell of CMG Guitars. 75.) Mike Lipe of Lipe Guitars. 76.) Jordan Khajavpour, Adam Lee, Alex Korn of Bohemian Guitars. 77.) Colin Schofield, Jody Espina, and Danielle Walker of JodyJazz. 78.) Alfredo Munoz, Michael Martinez, Christina Cobas, Steve Allen, Bill Gibson, and Mary Griswold of Verne Q. Powell & Sonare Pro Brass. 79.) Matt Smith and David Hall of Pro-Active Websites. 80.) Jason Wyrwicz of Harmon Mutes. 81.) Sandy Brawley and Heather Brawley of Instrument Care Apparel. 82.) Vesna Jancic, Natalia Jancic of Jancic AG. 83.) Joey Allen and Dan McNally of Pearl Corp.

The NAMM Board bids farewell with great appreciation to the outgoing board members, including Tom Bedell of Two Old Hippies, Keith Brawley of Taylor-Listug, Inc., Tim Carroll of Avid Technology, Inc., Jon Haber of Alto Music, Inc., Crystal Morris of Gator Cases, Inc., Jeff Mazingo of Mazingo Music, Jyotindra (J.P.) Parekh of Rice Music House, Menzie Pittman of Contemporary Music Center.

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Thursday Morning's NAMM Breakfast of Champions

What was on the menu at the 2015 NAMM Breakfast of Champions? Pancakes with maple syrup, bacon, scalloped potatoes, sausage, scrambled eggs, and orange juice, along with interviews conducted by NAMM president and CEO Joe Lamond with industry leaders such as Tom Oberheim (warmly referred to as the “grandfather of synthesizers”). The main topic up for discussion was trends. “The theme of this NAMM show is ‘resonate,’” said Lamond. “We’re going to take a deep look at the products that are resonating with consumers right now.”

Lamond told a brief anecdote at the top of the hour about the unexpected success story of the ukulele. “I remember being told that the ukulele was going to be the next big thing,” said Lamond. He recalled hearing laughter when spreading the word that the ukulele would be the next MI trend, but the only people laughing now are the ones who listened.

Another rising trend in the market today that Lamond mentioned was synthesizers, noting a 20 percent increase in the purchase of synthesizers. Tom Oberheim mentioned he, himself, had a hard time securing a last minute space for his synthesizer booth. Tom was of course asked what his favorite synthesizer to date was, to which he replied, “the Two Voice.” His company has since revived and re-imagined the Two Voice, which was originally created in 1975.

If members of the MI community can catch on to the next big trend, the industry as a whole will benefit. “Deciding which trends to take advantage of,” said Lamond, “could be the most important decision your company makes.”



84.) Mark Ament and Jay Morrissey of **Casio**. 85.) Elizabeth Christenson of **Electro-Voice**. 86.) Roger Eaton of **Yamaha**. 87.) Cliff Castle of **Audix** and Chris Denogean of **Drum Workshop, Inc.** 88.) Randy Pratt of **Musician's Friend**, Jim Rupp of **Columbus Percussion**, Rob Andre of **Chicago Drums Exchange**, Shane Kinney of **Drum Center of Portsmouth**, Remo Belli of **Remo**, and Don Lombardi of **Drum Channel**. 89.) Karl Dustman of **Dustman & Associates**, David Jewell of **Yamaha**, Stacy Montgomery-Clark of **Sabian**, Brad Smith of **Hal Leonard**, and Billy Cuthrell of **Progressive Percussion**. 90.) David Jewell of **Yamaha**. 91.) Joe Lamond of **NAMM**. 92.) John Cerullo of **Hal Leonard**, Keith Mardak of **Hal Leonard**, author Jim Crockett, Mike Molondo of **Guitar Player Magazine**, and Larry Morton of **Hal Leonard**. 93.) Don Lombardi of **Drum Channel**, Cliff Castle of **Audix**, and Chris Denogean of **Drum Workshop, Inc.**

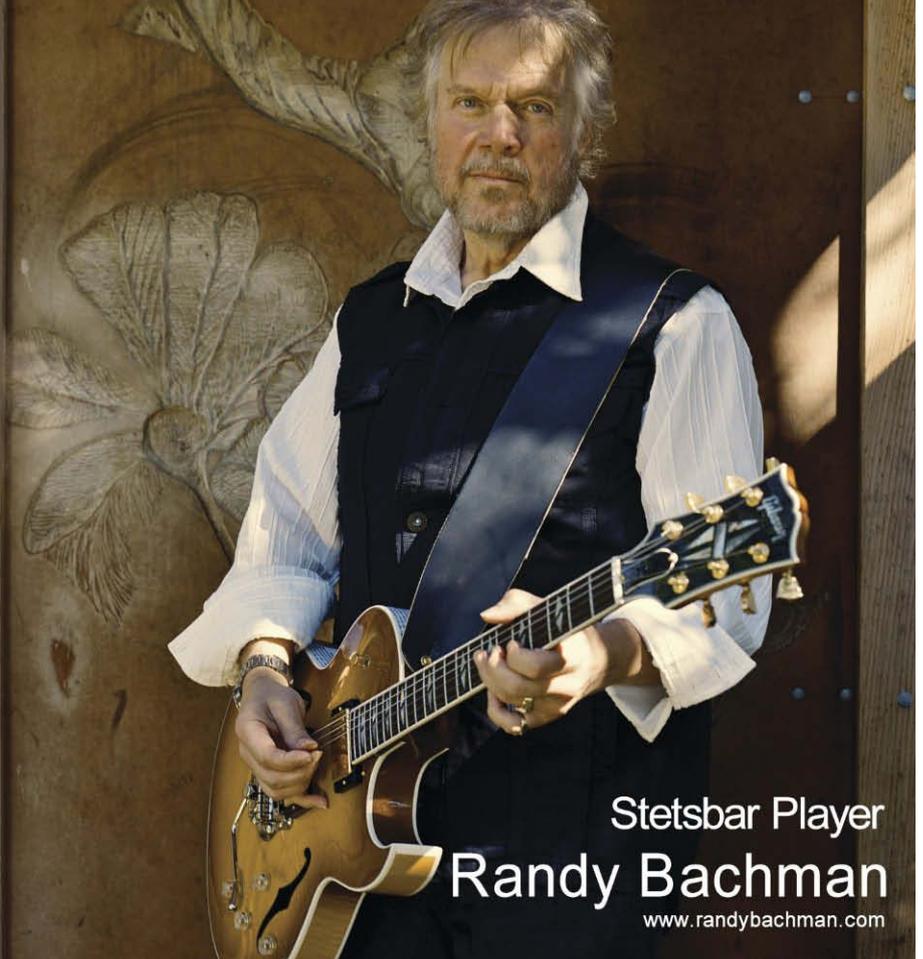
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of **Mi-Si.99.**Mark Frisbie, Giovanna Cruz, Leigh Kallestad, Sonia Bertek, Scott Yoho of **MakeMusic.100.**Marc Ingber of **SCORE Marketing.101.**Jeff Strametz of **Boulder Creek Guitars.102.** Ken Youmans of **Hoshino USA** at the **Ibanez** booth. **103.**Hap Kuffner, Corey Redonnett, Ned Steinberger, and Gary Byers of **NS Design.104.**David Koltai of **Supro** and **Pigtronix.105.**Scott Dunmire and Warren McAlister of **MC Systems.**

94.Robert Godin, Simon Godin and Kat Calder-Becker of **Godin Guitars.95.** Troy Parker, Tyler Mechem of **LM Products.96.**Lou Laurenti and David Laurenti of **Ken Smith Basses.97.**Esteban Cortina and Eric Granillo of **Gotham Stands.98.**Mikhail and Simona Ioffe

106.**SKB's** Kathy Galbraith.**107.**Kevin Philbin, Andy Strayer, John Richardson, and Brent Rosborough of **KHS America, Inc.** with the commemorative plaque from **MMR** in recognition of Jupiter's 35-year anniversary.**108.**Rocky and Johanna Giglio of **J.J. Babbitt Co., Inc.109.****Demeter Amplification's** James Demeter.**110.****MMR's** Terry Lowe presents **Hosa Technology's** Kyle Lassegard and Jonathan Pusey with a plaque in honor of the company's 30 years of service to the music industry.**111.****Kawai** proudly displays the many **MMR Dealers' Choice Award** trophies the company has earned over the years.**112.**The **ADJ Group** team with a **Timeless Communications** plaque in recognition of the organization's 30th Anniversary.**113.**Davide Luce of **Howard Core Company.114.****Mollard Conduction Batons'** Connie Mollard.**115.**Ann and Jim Hennessey of **The Music People, Inc.116.**Devin Percell, Tom Bedell, Erika Mohr, Colin Besancon, and Terri Hensley receive a commemorative plaque from **MMR's** Matt King in honor of **Breedlove Guitars'** 25th Anniversary.**117.****Buffet Group:** Raymond Baragary, Al Maniscalco, Marivel Lavoy, Warren Kus, Chris Coppinger, Matt Vance, and Don Reynolds.**118.**John Fullerton and Perry Pinto of **AIM Gifts.119.****Fishman Transducers:** Jason Cambra, Matt Schow, Chris DeMaria, Brad Townsend, Bob Valyos, and Rayne Dupaul.

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By Christian Wissmuller



Best Intimate Musical Gathering

To say that MMR president/publisher Terry Lowe enjoyed Wednesday night's **D'Addario-hosted Jackson Browne performance** at L.A.'s Swing House Studios might be an understatement: "Simply fantastic. To see an artist of his caliber in such an intimate setting... It was an amazing show and evening." Browne was joined that night by accomplished veterans Sean Watkins and Blake Mills for what all agreed was a very special event.

Best Unexpected 'Super Group' Sighting

MMR's Terry Lowe was pleasantly surprised when he stumbled upon **Carmine Appice, Bruce Jordahl, and Dave Widow** knocking out some Cajun funk during the show at the Calzone Case booth. "That was really something," enthused Terry at the time. "A definite 'Best' for the 'Best & Worst' report!"



Best 'Unexpectedly Cool Dude' Encounter

While studying Music Production & Engineering at Berklee College of Music way back when, my professors and fellow students frequently held up Don Was as someone who could essentially do no wrong. For my part, however, other than not particularly liking "Walk the Dinosaur" by his band, Was (Not Was), when I was in high school and feeling like Was-produced, modern-day Stones albums were fairly lackluster (in truth, not his or the production's fault), I didn't have much of an opinion about the guy. **A brief encounter with Don Was at the TEC Awards** showed him to be very friendly, quick-thinking, and articulate. I guess everyone else was right!



Christian Wissmuller with legendary producer Don Was.



NAMM's Mary Luehrsen and Bernie Williams



Worst 'Villain'

You're not supposed to be a Red Sox fan and simultaneously like someone like Bernie Williams. Even despite Boston's recent embarrassment of riches when it comes to World Series titles in the past decade, the guy will forever be THE ENEMY! But **Bernie Williams is such a passionate advocate for music education** (and such a genuinely sweet guy), I have to give him a pass and hope my hometown friends won't be too disappointed.



Best 'Sure... Why Not?' Display

In truth, I was in a hurry as I wandered by this **life-size astronaut wearing a Fender Tele at the FMIC suite** and perhaps there was some reasoning behind it (a Telecaster-related anniversary the coincides with the moon landing?), but whatever the case, it certainly caught the eye – and also made me nostalgic for the early days of MTV, when they actually played music videos!

Best Suprising Band Lineup

One might reasonably expect the last song of a Lynyrd Skynyrd set to be "Freebird." When it's, instead, "**Ain't Talkin Bout Love**" with guest musician **Michael Anthony absolutely killing it on vocals** and the whole band acing out every bit as well as classic-era Van Halen? That's something special. Thanks, Peavey 50th Anniversary bash!



Worst Homecoming

Those of us who comprise "The Boston team" contingent of *MMR's* staff made it home *just* under the wire before Logan Airport (and most major roadways, public transportation, et cetera) were shut down for the first of what, at this point, have been three significant blizzards (with more on the way...). In a mere 17 days I, associate editor Paige Tutt, and advertising director Matt King have been attempting to dig out (and re-dig out) of what, as we go to press, is officially measured as **74.9 inches of snow on the ground**. Oh, to be back in sunny Anaheim...



Best cheap, quick eats

I'm an East Coast boy and I've got serious Boston pride, but **SoCal has the upper hand when it comes to fast-food, no question**. From the near-to-the-Convention Center Alerto's Mexican Food (soooo good) to my happiest of "happy places," In-N-Out, quick and easy snack options in the O.C. are almost too good to be true.



Worst Shakedown

It's bad enough that Starbucks is charging \$3.94 for a small, black iced coffee, but \$3 for a bottle – and a tiny one, at that – of water? I expected more of you, Anaheim Convention Center... (Or did I?)



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BRIAN BALL

Steps Into the Role He Was Born For

Longtime Ernie Ball Executive Appointed Company President

by Paige Tutt

“ I love being involved on the creative side with marketing and artist relations, and our team has had some big wins over the last decade. ”

In life, few get to live their “ultimate dream job,” but Brian Ball can now count himself among the lucky ones. Company CEO Sterling Ball recently announced, on behalf of Ernie Ball, Inc., that Brian Ball has stepped into the presidency.

If you were to ask Brian, himself, what he thinks led to this moment, he’d say it was years in the making. “I’ve always known what I’ve wanted to do since I was a little boy,” says Ball. “I think what led to this was twofold: a natural progression of my career, and being given more responsibility at a time of tremendous growth and opportunities.” Brian’s grandfather, Ernie Ball, founded the company in 1962, and Brian will continue to build on Ernie Ball Inc.’s three-generation family legacy. “I’ve been incredibly blessed to learn through osmosis from my dad and grandpa, Ernie,” said Brian. His father, Sterling Ball remarked that he was “excited to see what another 50-plus years in the industry will bring under Brian’s leadership.”

What does Brian’s appointment to president mean for Ernie Ball, Inc.? “From a day to day standpoint, I like wearing a lot of hats, I like multitasking, and I like being involved in a lot of different departments,” says Brian. “I’ll probably multitask a little less, but really the biggest change of this will be around the flexibility of building a team even further and putting us in the best position to be competitive and successful long term.”

Working as a part of the tour staff before transitioning into marketing, Brian has been with Ernie Ball, Inc. since 2000, and he’s been quite busy. Ball and his team can claim numerous accomplishments, a few of which he is particularly proud of. “The product development side has been a highlight with two granted electric string patents, and one patent pending on the acoustic side,” said Brian. He’s talking about the Cobalt Instrument Strings, the M-Steel Core Wire Technology, and the patent-pending Aluminum Bronze.

Brian mentioned the growth of the Ernie Ball Battle of the Bands – which has become a humongous platform for artist discovery – as a big success, partnering with some of the world’s largest festivals including the Vans Warped Tour, SXSW, Eric Clapton’s Crossroads Guitar Festival, Rock on the Range, and more. But Brian also immerses himself in the marketing side. “I love being involved on the creative side with marketing and artist relations and our team has had some big wins over the last decade,” he says. He and his team have created a marketing approach that led to the success of such promotions as Cheers to 50 Years, The Golden Pick, and All Access with Slash. But Brian says the true highlight of his career is “being able to work with people I love, my family, my brothers – [that] is #1.”

Just coming off of a successful showing at the 2015 Winter NAMM Show, Ball couldn’t remember a more fruitful Anaheim gathering (and he’s been to quite a few). “This may have been the



ERNIE BALL®

most exciting Winter NAMM Show that we could remember,” Ball says. “We’ve adapted to what the NAMM show is all about now. Its changed from the days of hustle and bustle, of writing as many orders as you can in a day. It really is a great opportunity to connect with fans of your products, dealers, and distributors... Stemming from NAMM, we’ve got a lot of exciting balls in the air right now. This was the most fun, most rewarding NAMM that I can remember.”

With the annual industry get-together now behind him, Brian has his sights set on the future, whatever it may hold. “I definitely don’t claim to have all the answers,” said Brian, “and still want to learn more from my dad, but what I really hope to achieve is putting our team in the best position possible, so we continue to succeed. I look forward to traveling more, working on our international business, continuing to develop intellectual property, and working with our dealer base on a more intimate level.”

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Revisiting the Old Stomping Ground

An Ever-expanding Rotation of Stompbox Suppliers Coupled with Shifting Purchasing Trends are Dramatically Changing this Market Segment

By Christian Wissmuller

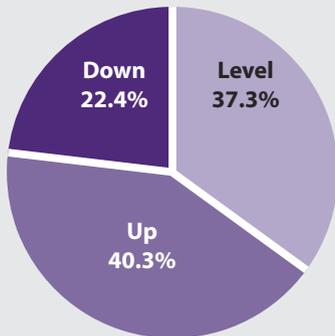
One thing was quickly apparent when analyzing the results of this poll of nearly 300 MI retailers on the topic of stompbox effects: opinions vary drastically on nearly every aspect of this market segment, but nearly all participants agree on one thing: change is in the air.

While there's disagreement as to the overall health of the sales of these floor-dwelling effects boxes (just look at the first two replies to our very first question below: "sales have been falling, quite drastically, for the last three years" versus "pedal sales are much better than in past years"), some major – though often contrasting, from store to store – themes got a lot of traction from retailers surveyed.

For some, the enhanced popularity of "boutique" effects over more traditional boxes and brands seems to be the trend. For others, a widespread move towards both smaller (physically) housings, and a virtual abandonment of large, multi-effect units in favor of individually crafted pedal setups dictated by individuals were hot-button topics. Many others complained about unfair and frustrating "show rooming" practices that lead to sales for the big online retailers. And, finally, quite a few expressed that the stompbox market is simply becoming all too oversaturated in 2015.

Read on to learn more about what this survey brought to light about this significant, potentially profitable, but sometimes hard-to-read sub-category.

Compared to this time in 2014, sales of stompbox effects pedals in your store are:



"Stompbox sales have been falling, quite dramatically, for the last three years. We are down about \$150k-200k in the last three years due to this change in the market."

Jack Phillips
Jax Music Supply, LLC
Midlothian, Va.

"Electric guitar and amp sales are down a bit, but pedal sales are much better than in past years."

Jeff Simons
Watermelon Music
Davis, Calif.

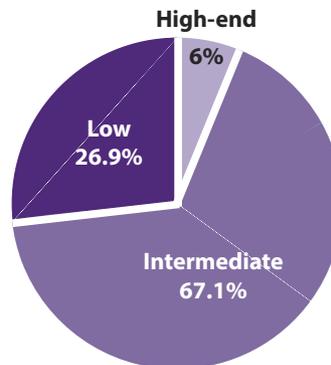
"We try to be the 'Un-Cola' and offer a wide selection of U.S.A.-made effects (one brand is Canadian-made). Our customers appreciate us giving them access to some of the 'better' pedals out there.... and they buy them!"

Tim Bascom
Morgan Music
Lebanon, Mo.

"There is lots of interest in non-DSP pedals, but strong showings for well used DSP-based devices too."

Andrew Bell
Twin Town Guitars
Minneapolis, Minn.

With respect to stompboxes, what price points are doing best for your operation?



"Sales ranging from \$129 to \$200 have grown, as well as more entry-level price points under \$100. [There's] not as much going on over \$200, but we are still selling those pedals, too."

Joe Chiappone
Northfield Music
Pittsford, N.Y.

"We specialize in the 'meat and potatoes' of the effects world. We're willing to incorporate boutique brands, but it must be done with our unique customers in mind."

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

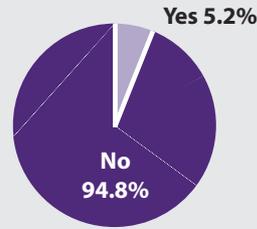
"In-store, it's mainly the \$150 and under pedals [that are selling]. Online, there are still people buying pedals in the \$250-\$300 range. It's rare to sell a pedal over \$300, though it does happen where there aren't a hundred places to get it from."

Steve Schwartz
Steve's Music Center
Rock Hill, N.Y.

What brands of stompboxes are the strongest sellers for your store in 2015?

47.8%	Boss	
44.8%	Electro-Harmonix	
40.3%	TC Electronic	
34.3%	Dunlop	
25.1%	DigiTech	
20.9%	Mooer	
19.4%	Ibanez	
11.9%	Fender	
10.5%	Pigtronix	
9.0%	Line 6	
9.0%	BBE	
9.0%	Morley	
8.9%	Keeley	
8.9%	Tech 21	
8.9%	Roland	<i>"EarthQuaker is being added to our stock to try and have relevant products in our store."</i>
8.8%	Maxon	
7.5%	JHS	Joe Gavin Carlton Music Center Lakeland, Fla.
6.0%	Behringer	<i>"Rockett Pedals took off like a rocket for us in 2013 and continue to be steady sellers."</i>
6.0%	VOX	Joe Chiappone Northfield Music Pittsford, N.Y.
5.9%	Mad Professor	
5.9%	Moog	<i>"Surprised not to see Strymon on this list! Although we don't carry them (yet), they are definitely a comer, big both with guitarists and synth/studio guys."</i>
4.5%	JOYO	
4.5%	Rocktron	
4.5%	ZVex	Joe Goelzer Nova Musik Milwaukee, Wis.
3.0%	T-Rex	
3.0%	Suhr	<i>"A new line for us is Outlaw Pedals, which have low to intermediate price points."</i>
3.0%	Guyatone	Don Middleton Don's Music Land, Ltd. Peoria, Ill.
1.6%	Pro Co	
1.5%	Hotone	<i>"Strymon is our number one pedal brand by far."</i>
1.5%	Bogner	Brian Meader The Guitar Sanctuary McKinney, Texas
1.4%	Budda	

Do you sell "stompbox kits" and/or components for users to build their own effects pedals?



"We don't, but we are looking into it."
Jerry Douglas
Upper Room Music, LLC
Owensboro, Ky.

What larger trends have you been noticing with respect to the stompbox market?

"As with the electric [guitar] market, it's been quiet for some time now. Everyone wants an acoustic or a uke!"

Neil McGrath
Upwey Music
Upwey, Victoria, Australia

"It seems like 'boutique' pedals are becoming more accessible. [The] prices are coming down and consumer's interest is becoming more mainstream."

Mark Fullerton
Ted Brown Music
Tacoma, Wash.

"People try them out in store and buy them on the Internet. Shipping is cheap enough because they are small."

Mark Scruari
Coconut Grove Music
Kailua, Hawaii

"Customers are moving away from the multi-effects pedals and returning to the days of single effect pedals and creating their own stompbox floor rig."

Ed Intagliata
Cassell's Music
San Fernando, Calif.

"The general move has been away from multi-effects units to single-use boxes."

Tony Harrison
The Cape Fear Music Center
Fayetteville, N.C.

"Handmade, boutique items are the trend, and makers are coming out of the woodwork. Unfortunately, few of them are willing to sell wholesale to shops, or do so at such slim margins that it doesn't make much sense to carry them. It's turned into a sort of 'Farm to Table' thing, with makers selling direct to consumers through sites like reverb.com and eBay."

Jeff Simons
Watermelon Music
Davis, Calif.

"It appears that boutique pedals are currently more sought after than the mass produced, mass marketed pedals of the past."

Joe Gavin
Carlton Music Center
Lakeland, Fla.

"The market is very fickle – whatever's hot on the forums [drives sales]. Modded pedals (putting correct chip in a reissue Tube Screamer, for example)"

Walter Carter
Carter Vintage Guitars
Nashville, Tenn.

"Definitely the easy add-on sale. A lot of guitarists find it to be an inexpensive way to change things up, whether it be tone expansion, or just something new and fun."

Jeremy Helbling
Mike's Music and Sound
Fond du Lac, Wis.

"The smaller footprint mini pedals are on fire. Higher end features, such as true bypass on cheaper pedals, are also hot right now."

Jason Kae
Drum City Guitarland
Wheat Ridge, Colo.

"Boutique'-type effects pedals are stronger sellers for us than the 'bigger' guys (with the exception of Electro-Harmonix, who make really interesting pedals at good price points)."

John Parker
The Music Loft of Greensboro
Greensboro, N.C.

STOMPBOXES

These Little Effects Units Could be a Powerful Profit Generator for Your Store

Audio-Technica System 10 Stompbox

Audio-Technica's System 10 Stompbox digital high-fidelity guitar wireless system combines the advanced 24-bit operation, easy setup and clear, natural sound quality of other System 10 configurations with unique functionality for guitarists, bassists and other instrumentalists. Operating in the 2.4 GHz range, far from TV and DTV interference, System 10 Stompbox offers a rugged, metal, pedal board-mountable receiver with foot switch, two switched TRS balanced 1/4" outputs and an output mode selector. With the tap of a foot, musicians can toggle between outputs (e.g., for switching amps) or mute and unmute one output without muting the other (e.g., for convenient tuning). And a single receiver can be paired with up to eight UniPak® body-pack transmitters, allowing users to easily switch between instruments without having to move a body-pack from one instrument to the next.



Each Stompbox system includes an ATW-R1500 Stompbox receiver, an ATW-T1001 UniPak body-pack transmitter with an AT-GcW guitar cable, and hook & loop strips for adding receiver to an effects pedal board. The ATW-R1500 is a digital receiver with sturdy, metal-body construction, easy-to-read digital ID and transmitter battery level displays, and AF Peak and Pair indicator lights.

eu.audio-technica.com

Electro-Harmonix Octavix

Electro-Harmonix introduces the Octavix, a pedal that delivers the definitive late 1960s fuzzed out, octave up sound together with modern enhancements that update the classic concept. Housed in EHX's rugged nano package, the Octavix features Volume, Boost, and Octave knobs. Volume regulates the output level of the pedal. Boost controls the amount of fuzz tone, and Octave adjusts the volume of the octave above. A mini-toggle lets the player select between 9 or 24 volt power rails and determines the power supply voltage for the entire circuit. At 9V the pedal behaves like the classic, saggy fuzz box. At 24V the Octavix delivers a tighter sound and a richer octave tone. True bypass ensures maximum signal path integrity. Octavix runs on a 9 volt battery or accepts a standard EHX9.6DC power supply, and carries a list price of \$117.15.



ehx.com

Randall Distortion and Gate Pedals

From the bench of Randall head engineer, Mike Fortin, here are two more pedals. Continuing the focus on tools for the discerning heavy player, Randall delivers both an incredibly useful NOISE GATE called the "BLOQ" and a classic FET distortion called the "RRED" based on the historic RG100ES Red Channel.



The RRED features Classic FET distortion pedal with Gain, Volume, and 3 band EQ. (True Bypass, powered by 9v battery or Randall PPS1 power supply not included.)

The BLOQ features Dynamic NOISE GATE pedal with threshold control and switchable input sensitivity for "loop" or "front-end" application. (True Bypass, powered by 9v battery or Randall PPS1 not included.)

randallamplifiers.com

Eventide H9 MAX

H9 MAX is a studio processor shrunk down to fit into a stompbox. It features a simple, one-knob user interface and is fully-featured as a standalone stompbox. Using H9 MAX with the included powerful H9 Control app wirelessly via Bluetooth, makes creating and managing presets, and live control of multiple H9s a snap. H9 MAX owners can share these algorithms with up to four additional H9s on a single Eventide.com account.



The H9 MAX comes pre-loaded with all the effects from each of Eventide's TimeFactor, ModFactor, PitchFactor, and Space stompboxes, including the new Looper, plus all H9 exclusive algorithms in perpetuity at no additional cost. H9 MAX comes bundled with 45 effect algorithms and over 500 factory presets. H9 MAX is chock full of Eventide's handpicked algorithms of effects.

eventide.com

Radial Engineering Bassbone V2

Second generation Bassbone features a dedicated effects loop, combination power booster-mute footswitch and piezo optimized input for upright bass. MAP: \$349.99.



radialeng.com

BOSS BB-1X Bass Driver

Crafted specifically for bass, the BB-1X offers a wide range of natural, expressive tones with an unmatched level of clarity and responsiveness. Low and high knobs provide expansive tone-shaping capability, while the blend knob allows users to freely mix their unprocessed bass sound with the overdrive tone. These controls not only shape the frequencies, but change the characteristics of the tone as well. The line out jack on the BB-1X goes beyond a standard DI out, providing a newly crafted and enhanced direct sound for reaching larger audiences through a PA system. The BB-1X is equipped with a standard output for driving a bass amplifier, as well as a 1/4-inch TRS line output for sending a balanced signal direct to a mixing console.



bossus.com

Digitech RP360XP and RP360 Guitar Pedals

The RP360 XP and RP360 are identical except the RP360XP includes an expression pedal. Both provide



state-of-the-art modeling of 82 stompboxes, 54 amplifiers, and 26 speaker cabinets. Along with the effects, the RP360 XP and RP360 offer 60 built-in drum patterns, a 40-second looper, and numerous additional features.

The RP360 XP and RP360 feature an all-new design with a large LCD display, simplified control layout, and three footswitches that let players easily access all the pedals' sounds, tweak them to their preferences, and save their own personalized guitar tones. Amps and pedals can be configured in any order in the signal chain and can even be removed to simplify setting up your tone by using only the effects that are needed. Three footswitch modes provide flexible control during live performance – Stompbox mode provides 3 effect on/off footswitches, preset mode gives the user preset up/down navigation

through all the RP's presets, and bank mode gives you direct access to 3 presets per bank. And the RP360XP's expression pedal lets players control any of the effects parameters on the fly.

Both pedals' USB streaming audio capability allow recording to a computer using GarageBand, Pro Tools, Ableton, Cubase, and others. In addition, DigiTech's Nexus free preset editor lets users create, manage, and load presets

on the RP360XP and RP360 from their computer. Both pedals offer a built-in tuner, headphone output, Sound Check that tests the settings of presets for the room's acoustics, and 1/4-inch inputs and outputs.

The DigiTech RP360 XP and RP360 multi-effects pedals will be available at suggested retail prices of \$199.95 and \$149.95 respectively.

digitech.com

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DigiTech

by Christian Wissmuller

Revamped, Re-focused, and Ready to Make History. Again.

In an issue where we turn the spotlight towards stompbox effects pedals, it made sense to check in with one of the organizations synonymous with such product, DigiTech.

Recently appointed market manager Tom Cram sat down with *MMR* to give us the scoop on what's new with the iconic brand, and discuss plans for the future...

Most of our readers are at least somewhat familiar with DigiTech's history, but can you briefly discuss the early years of the company and its evolution to the present day?

Tom Cram: DOD incorporated in 1973 and DigiTech started as the digital division of DOD Electronics in the late '80s. The early PDS Series of dual pedals, the IPS 33B, and the first RP1 MFX were a mixture of analog and digital circuits. There were some really interesting digitally controlled analog designs that DigiTech pioneered that some companies are just now starting to rediscover.

Of course the Whammy is the most iconic pedal to come out of that period. But the Vocalist and JamMan series of pedals have been just as influential. The first JamMan compact looper [*JamMan was originally a Lexicon pedal – Ed.*] invented an entirely new market of simplified song based loopers.

There is a lot of online commentary about Harman's "recent" purchase of DOD/DigiTech, but this talk ignores the fact the Harman actually bought DOD/DigiTech back in 1991! There have been a lot of shifts at DigiTech, the most dramatic has been recent. We moved out of the building that we had been in for 20-plus years to a much nicer facility and we have had a complete change of management.

This move and change of vision coincides with me becoming the DOD/DigiTech market manager. I've been working hard to take the company in a new direction and all of the new pedals we have introduced over the past year are direct evidence of that change.

Along those lines, can you talk more about the current setup over at DigiTech?

Right now DigiTech production is split between our manufacturing facility in Elkhart, Indiana and our manufacturing facility in China. The general split is that first runs are done in the US and once the process is bulletproof, we move it over to China. There are variations on this process, but that is the general rule. Our current location is a beautiful building in South Jordan, Utah and we have a fully functioning recording studio and state of the art testing rooms. It is much, much, nicer than our old building. Currently we are distributed domestically by US Music Corp.

DigiTech took a big and groundbreaking dive into iOS-interactive devices with the iStomp a few years ago. What was the overall reaction?

The iPB-10 and the iStomp were both big experiments for DigiTech. We have a long history of trying new things and these two

pedals are part of that history. Unfortunately, the reaction from the market was not as strong as we anticipated and we have shifted gears away from tying functionality to third-party products.

DigiTech also fields some accessories and a couple of amps. What percentage of the brand's overall business is accounted for by these "non-effect" products?

Practice Amps and accessories are a very small part of our business, they are mostly to help us address specific regional sales and market needs.

The TRIO made a big splash at the recent NAMM Show. Can you talk about the pedal?

TRIO is an example of DigiTech experimenting again. Thanks to our Harman Canada team, we have cutting-edge pitch detection and beat detection technology that we implemented in the new Whammy, and there are many other musically interesting ways to implement this technology. TRIO is the culmination of many discussions

about the next step in the constant dance of technology and music creation. Our goal was to make TRIO as seamless as possible, to emulate that inspiration of playing with a real band. TRIO will be shipping toward middle of March.



Tom Cram

What are some other recent or upcoming product releases of note from DigiTech?

The return of DOD is pretty noteworthy, and part of that is the new DOD Boneshaker distortion. The Boneshaker is collaboration with Black Arts Toneworks, and it marks my new philosophy of trying new things and opening up possibilities that have previously been considered to be closed.

There have been occasional rumblings lately about personnel and perhaps even ownership shifts – do you care to comment?

We've had big personnel changes over the past few years, but those changes have all been positive in my opinion. It has enabled DigiTech to change dramatically in a short amount of time. There is a renewed sense of purpose and focus here that I haven't seen since the '90s. DOD/DigiTech feels like a nimble and ferocious little company again. I dig it.

What trends have you been noticing in the stompbox market?

The two main trends are quite contradictory in nature. I see a desire to have rack power in a stompbox format, but I also see a trend toward mini pedals. My focus has been to balance the features with size instead of compromising usability just to make something tiny.

There is a difference between smaller and tiny, one is a solution to a problem and the other is a solution in search of a problem.

Final thoughts, or expectations for the coming months?

We released more pedals last year than in any other year of our entire history, and this year will be more of the same. I'm moving fast and I have a ton of ideas that need to see the light of day. It is an exciting time to be DOD/DigiTech. Come along for the ride! **MMR**



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While Jupiter Band Instruments sails smoothly into 35 years of operation, parent company KHS is making waves

KHS was founded in 1930 and fifty years later, Jupiter Band Instruments was born. It has been 35 years since Jupiter Band Instruments' initial inception, and really the only thing Jupiter of 2015 shares with the organization of 1980 is the brand name. "Jupiter started as budget-level beginner instruments made in China that competed strictly on price and had a reputation for being difficult to service and maintain," says Andy Strayer, vice president of sales. "Today, Jupiter instruments are widely recognized as being very well-made, often best-in-class, although we still fight that 35-year-old stigma felt by many educators."

Though 2015 marks a significant milestone for Jupiter, they, surprisingly, aren't celebrating with loads of fanfare. "We feel it's more important to look forward and continue using our resources to serve the industry and music-makers and to tell the story of today's Jupiter rather than to celebrate our past," says Mike Robinson, director of marketing. There will, however, be new product releases on the horizon. "We'll continue to unveil additions to our 1100 Series," says Strayer. "To date, we've launched 1100 Series trumpets, a tenor and alto sax, a premium-grade granadilla wood clarinet, a flugelhorn, and a compensating euphonium. Still to come are soprano and baritone saxophones, and a trombone."

If you today were to visit the front page of the Jupiter website, you would see a tile for NAFME, an image of three children smiling and holding Waveline Series flutes, and a tweet from the brand's Twitter that reads, "Now that's a teacher! Never letting any child quit and teaching everyone the love of music." It's plain to see that Jupiter's priorities are still with the needs of the students and the educators who serve them. With many schools facing budget cuts, and others having to eliminate music education all together, Jupiter going into 2015 calls upon the collective community to help save music in our schools. "The most impactful social movements in history owe their success to the communities that participated in them rather than the individuals or organizations that represented them," says Robinson. "While organizations like NAFME,

NAMM, and others should be applauded for their efforts, the protection and/or revitalization of music education as a core value requires whole community involvement."

Not so long ago, the former governor of Arkansas, Mike Huckabee, shared his story about learning to play instruments at a young age as a part of Jupiter's new "Banded" campaign. The campaign reaffirms Jupiter's 35-year commitment to the music. "The message is about the importance of playing music... not the importance of playing Jupiter," says Robinson. "Banded" has since grown, evolved, and now found a permanent home on GetBanded.com. On the site, you can access numerous success stories in music from students, educators, and supporters of the arts. There is also a "Banded Resources" tab for educators, which offers tips on motivating students, recruitment and retention of new musicians, integrating technology into the classroom, and bandroom tips, among others.

While things carry on smoothly at Jupiter, their parent company KHS has been making a lot of noise this year. Taking over the North American distribution of Hercules was one big announcement. "Hercules is a KHS-owned brand and it simply makes the most sense to bring U.S. distribution and marketing of it under the same roof as the other KHS-owned brands," says Strayer. Then there was the acquisition of Hohner, another move that logically, according to Robinson, just made sense. "Hohner's strength in the Latino music market, due to the popularity of their accordions and their development of the H. Jimenez line of folk guitars will dovetail nicely with Jupiter brass and Mapex



Andy Strayer
vice president of Sales



Mike Robinson
Director of Marketing

percussion to give that market a connected family of brands that's eager to help them succeed," says Robinson. "Likewise, KHS America's offering within the school music market will expand across a wider age spectrum and new music categories with the addition of Sonor's line of Orff instruments, Hohner's recorders and A+ Series beginner guitars, Lanikai Ukuleles, and even harmonicas."

Winter NAMM season quickly came and went. Mike Robinson remarks that the show felt crowded, although pretty enthusiastic overall. He noticed an increase in consumer presence at this year's show, which he thought was positive. "Having a little consumer energy at the show is a good thing because that's who we all should be serving," he says. And that is what KHS is trying to do with their newest venture: serve the consumer. Robinson comments that the rumor mill was definitely in high gear this year. "The gossip machine was in full swing. It was pretty interesting. We were in the center of a lot of that in a positive way."

What was the word on everyone's lips within a fifty-foot radius of the KHS booth? What was all the gossip about? E-drums. What surprised a lot of people was the fact that KHS didn't release their new e-drums as a part of Mapex. "NFUZD Audio is an entirely new brand being marketed and distributed by KHS," says Robinson. "The NSPIRE Series e-drums were designed to empower user creativity. The system utilizes an Open Architecture that allows the module to be utilized as an I/O, with the purpose of connecting to a computer and triggering sounds through virtual studio technology (VST) software, or, easily porting sound banks and presets from the VST into the module using a thumb drive. Regardless of where the user chooses to trigger from the module or through BFD ECO NFUZD Edition (the VST software included), the sounds will all be uncompressed WAV files."

The drum trigger pads can be installed atop acoustic drums, which would allow a drummer to switch back and forth quickly, something that is unique to the NSPIRE system. "However, trigger pad mounts are also part of the offering for users who don't have acoustic drums or just want to create a stand-alone e-kit," says Robinson. "All trigger pads, mounts, and the module will also be sold individually for the player who wants to take a modular approach to creating an electro-acoustic hybrid kit."

The NSPIRE system is putting the power back into the hands of the consumers. "These tools, the combination of which is a first within the e-drum category, are designed to remove the limitations seen in other systems," says Robinson. "What the user does with those tools is restricted only by their imagination." The NFUZD development team, recognizing the potential of electronic drums and the growth trajectory, saw a void that needed to be filled in the category. They believed that no one had truly harnessed new technology to fulfill consumer needs. "In looking at the technology usage outside the music industry, we see that the end-user drives trends more than the brands do," he says. "The brands provide the devices... but the consumer ultimately defines how to apply the device in their daily lives. The technology companies experiencing the greatest success are the ones giving the consumer greater control and a better user experience... NFUZD Audio was developed with the same goals."

What's most surprising is how KHS was able to keep the development of the new NSPIRE system under wraps for as long as they did. "We've amazed ourselves in that regard," says Robinson. "Keeping a secret in this industry is about next to impossible, but we actually managed to

do it... we sort of dropped this bomb in one weekend and it took a lot of people by surprise." The new system will begin to ship to dealers at the end of March.

With the Winter NAMM Show in the rearview mirror, KHS America is getting back to business as usual, but they think 2015 is going to be a good year for all. "KHS America has experienced very good growth over the last four years and we see no sign of it slowing down," says Strayer. "January and early February orders have been strong, indicating that dealers are having a positive outlook to 2015, with money to spend for inventory. We see the same slow growth pattern in general for the categories we compete in, but believe the market will see overall growth in 2015."

In years to come, Jupiter and KHS will continue to advocate for the importance of music education, whether that's through product releases or their "Band-ed" campaign. "Think of Dr. Seuss' *Horton Hears a Who*," says Robinson. "It took every voice in Whoville to finally be heard. We all need to tell our stories of why music is important to us personally and what value its brought to our lives. Tell the stories to our kids, educators, and our legislators. If everyone participates, we'll be heard." **MMA**

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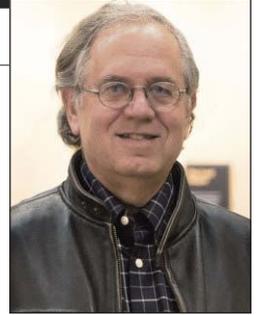


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In Ten Years, You'll Be Glad You Did

By Kurt Listug, CEO and co-founder of Taylor Guitars



We spent our early years in business just trying to stay alive and find our footing. If you've started a business from scratch, you know what I'm talking about. These are the years of building a solid foundation that can support a robust business in the future. These are the years where you're faced with tough choices, and the decisions you make will define your company's character. Do you treat people fairly and with respect? Do you give a customer great service and stand behind the sale, even in times when your finances are bleak? These early years were both our toughest times and some of our most rewarding times.

At one point in time, we had bills that were two years past due. We were young and learning, with every intent to pay, but we just didn't have the money. We eventually paid every penny we owed, even those debts that had been written off by the vendor. More than one vendor told us they'd written off the receivable years ago and we didn't need to pay it. We paid it anyway, because we felt it was only the right thing to do. Another time, we were very late in paying a printing bill and realized that the salesperson who had given us terrific service had likely lost his commission on the job due to our slow pay. We thought about what we could do to compensate him for his great service, and we offered to make him a guitar. He was blown away by our gesture, and told us he didn't know of another company that would do that.

Our tales of that time period could fill a book, in and of themselves. I know now, but don't think we realized at the time, that those were defining choices; choosing to do the right thing when we really couldn't afford to. By doing so, we were establishing the values of the company.

One of the hardest lessons during this period was learning how to best utilize our meager resources to advance the company. You always have the resources to take the next step; you just have to figure out the right next step to take. There were many times where we felt if we only had more money, or better equipment, or more of some other resource, that our problems would be solved. The truth of the matter is that we would have ended up in worse financial straits, because we hadn't yet learned how to use what we did have to generate additional resources. It's like compounding interest: if you can get a little bit ahead, and use that to get a little bit further ahead, and continue doing that, it will eventually compound into something much larger.

Bob and I were twelve years into Taylor Guitars before we finally had a regular cash flow, a good balance of sales and production, and could pay ourselves each week. We had to reach that very important milestone before we could try to go beyond it. With this foundation in place, we looked towards the future and saw that we would not be able to keep the status quo and grow into a larger more successful company; we would have to continually reinvent the business, in big ways.

Realizing this is where we got the saying, "In ten years we'll be glad we did," referring to projects we knew we needed to do, those that would have a huge impact on the company and our future success. The years would pass by whether we accomplished the big important projects or not. So why not look at where we wanted the

company to be in ten years and tackle the big important projects that would help us get there?

The big projects we took on did lead to transforming the company and led us to our present position as a market leader in guitars. We would not be here otherwise. Here are some of the big projects we tackled that brought us to this level of success:

In 1989, we bought our first CNC milling machine. Bob saw the potential for this tool, and we went out on a limb financially to purchase the first Fadal and software. We weren't the first guitar company to purchase a CNC mill; Tom Anderson was already using one, and sold Bob on the benefits. It helped us transform how we make guitars and our usage of this technology has led to our utilizing about 60 of these machines today in our production.

Early on, I had recognized the importance of brand recognition in the guitar business. I'd spent a lot of time on the road selling guitars, and was well aware of what we were up against with an unknown guitar brand. I formulated a vision for the Taylor brand that I wanted to create but had no idea how to go about it. In 1992, I was lucky to meet people from a local advertising agency who understood and shared my vision, and working together we created the branding and marketing campaigns that have helped make Taylor a well-known guitar brand.

Fifteen years ago we started a second factory in Tecate, Mexico. We started very small, just making guitar cases and processing wood. Bob knew in the future this could mature into a full-blown factory with the capability of making guitars, and that it could be our wholly owned version of an "off-shore" factory. Today we have nearly 400 employees working in Tecate, producing 500 guitars per day there, and are presently moving into a new, larger facility.

In 2010, we established our own company to import and distribute Taylor guitars throughout Europe. Most musical instrument manufacturers utilize independent distributors for this, and we had for many years, as well. But as a brand grows and matures, it needs the focus, attention, and resources that only its own distribution company can provide. Four years into creating and growing our own distribution company in Europe, we've become a much bigger brand in Europe with substantially higher sales.

Four years ago we took on our toughest project yet: co-owning an ebony mill in Cameroon, Africa. We did it not only for our own supply of ebony, but also so we could ensure ebony would be legally and sustainably harvested, and remain available to musical instrument builders. It's our toughest project yet, but one that had to be done for the industry, the forest, and the people of Cameroon.

These are tough projects – not without risk – and it would be easier to stick with the status quo rather than forge into the future. But, we choose to create the future we want, rather than sit back and have the future delivered to us by others. Yes, it's hard work, but it's just work. Hard work produces a better reward, and a better future.

I want to encourage you to dream big. Be in charge of your destiny. Build a solid foundation that will support your dreams. Don't skip any steps. Enjoy the process. And then feel free to dream as big as you can dream, and be willing to tackle the big, impossibly hard projects that will get you there. In ten years, you'll be glad you did. **MMR**

Inventory Management

Effective Inventory Control Leads to Increased Profits

By Ellen Leenman Brown

No matter the industry or the size of your store, inventory control is often an enormous struggle for retailers. If you are under-stocked, you may lose sales, but if you are overstocked, your cash flow will be tied up. Inventory management is essential for the knowledge of your financial worth. Crucial to every business is the maximizing of inventory investment and being organized and efficient in order to ultimately increase the profit of your business.

Here are six basic steps that are vital in turning the inventory guessing game into **educated predictions**:

1. Purchase minimums and order more often

Identify the minimum stock level that works best for you. Deciding how much stock to keep depends on the size and nature of your business. Track your sales to stock the right products and at the right time. Know what sells and what was a “flop.” Determine your return on amount invested in your inventory. Try to transfer from another location rather than buy more product.

2. Take physical inventory

Regular cycle counts help keep inventory information current and correct. The bigger your store, the more often you must do cycle counts. Try doing physical inventory on a day when you can actually close the store or at least during a very slow time, so you do not have customer distractions or a flux in inventory. This doesn't have to be a dreaded task. Make it fun! Cater in lunch, allow overtime, mix and match employees, have the print music specialist count guitar accessories, while the string teacher counts trumpets. These sorts of practices encourages expanded product knowledge, allows employees to work with those that they may not usually associate with, and provides a checks and balance system to keep people honest.

3. Compare what your computer says you have versus your physical count

Determine why your inventory may be off. Are purchase orders being entered correctly? Are you accurately checking off those packing slips and POs as inventory is received? Are your employees properly trained? Are they happy (Did you know that happy employees are far less likely to make mistakes)? Do you have a problem with theft in your store? Whether it's shoplifting or employee theft, would a camera system be a worthy investment for your store? Don't for one second think that you are the exception and that your employees aren't stealing from you. Employee theft constitutes an average of 42.7 percent of inventory shrinkage, while shoplifting only accounts for 35.6 percent. Educate employees on how to keep an eye out for and how to handle shoplifters. Did you know that making eye contact with and speaking to each customer who enters the store is one of the most effective ways to deter theft?

4. Empower your employees

Customer service should be the mainstay of your floor staff. A friendly smile from a knowledgeable employee will do more for your business than a fully stocked shelf. If an item is out of stock, have the employee offer a substitution of a similar item that *is* in stock. Or teach them to simply say, “We don't have that item at the moment, but I would be happy to order it for you.” Special orders maximize your turnover and take up absolutely no space on your show floor. Just remember: *you don't have to lose that sale just because you don't have that particular item in stock.* Face it, when customers order online, they have to wait for the items; if they will wait for an online order, they'll wait for you, too.

5. Clear out the junk

Sales, promotions, giveaways, donations, or even a trip to the dumpster... Get rid of old inventory and free up your cash flow. That cello that has been sitting in the corner for the last five years gathering dust is not benefiting you in any way. However, there is probably a local string teacher who would be happy to take it off your hands for the little bit of money she has left in her budget. Or that best seller from two years ago? It's not going to make a comeback. This is especially important when it comes to software or technology (which was probably outdated six months after you ordered it, anyway). Our store often takes new issues or outdated materials to conferences where we offer it at a substantially reduced price. The teachers appreciate a chance to pick up new material that they may not have previously been able to afford. And they might become loyal customers just because of your “generosity.”

6. Review and analyze your sales and stock reports regularly

Run reports. And run more reports. Know what you have, how often you're turning it, what time of year a particular item sells, how much you sold last year, et cetera. Set goals on how to improve inventory to benefit you financially. Open communication and sharing of information between all divisions of your store provides for a more accurate picture of your bottom line. While it is always necessary to delegate, it is much more advantageous that as the owner or manager, you are knowledgeable about your inventory, which is essentially *your money*. **MIMR**



Ellen Leenman Brown is the general manager of Musical Innovations in Greenville, S.C. She joined MI in 2012 after several years in restaurant management, and has become an active member of NAMM (and NAMM YP), NASMD, and RPMDA. She and her husband, Dan, live in Simpsonville, S.C. with their five children, ages three-and-a-half to 16. Their oldest two daughters are members of the Mauldin H.S. Maverick Band Flag Corps and performed at the Alamo Bowl this past December.

New Products

PIANO & KEYBOARD

Lowrey Inspire



The EY400 'Inspire' is Lowrey's newest offering. A global collection of presets, numbering in the thousands, gives the Inspire the Lowrey 'touch and play' ease of operation. At the same time, the Inspire offers a collection of fully-customizable styles, sounds, and effects.

lowrey.com

Casio's New Celviano and Privia Models



Casio's Celviano AP-260 and AP-460, as well as the Privia PX-760 and PX-860 offer a number of new features including a Hall Simulator and Concert Play. The AP-260 will be available in black or brown for an MSRP of \$1,499.99; the AP-460 will be available in black or brown for an MSRP of \$1,899.99; the PX-760 will be available in black or brown for an MSRP of \$1,099.99; and the PX-860 will be available in black or brown for an MSRP of \$1,499.99.

casio.com

ACCESSORIES

Music Nomad Care Cradle Cube

MusicNomad Equipment Care introduces the Cradle Cube – a multi-sided, multi-angled, soft gel neck support cradle to securely hold all guitars, ukuleles, orchestral strings, and other instruments in place while repairing and maintaining them.

The Cradle Cube's soft gel is safe on all finishes, including nitrocellulose, and has five different angles to choose from. Flip it over and it acts as a caddy for tools and cleaning supplies. The Cradle Cube retails between \$19.99 and \$22.99.



musicnomadcare.com

Vic Firth High Tension Drum Key and Earplugs

The Vic Firth High Tension Drum Key provides the added leverage needed to tune drums in any high-tension environment. The plastic grip conforms to the hand. While a great choice for tuning high-tension marching drums, drum set players will also enjoy this for quick head changes.

The Vic Firth Earplugs are configured to replicate the natural response of the ear canal so that when sound enters the earplug, it is reproduced exactly as the ear would hear it, only quieter. Each package includes a neck cord with connectors to keep earplugs together. Available in two ready-fit sizes, they are reusable, and reduce sound by approximately 20 dB at all frequencies.



vicfirth.com

PERCUSSION

Sakae Stave Snares

Constructed using segments of compressed, sustainable Japanese Cypress, Sakae unveiled a stave drum. Sustainable Japanese Cypress is compressed and crafted into stave drum shells, and the compression process not only makes the cypress more durable, it also helps the drum produce a more controlled and tight sound. This compressed Japanese Cypress stave drum is unique to Sakae.

Stave drums are constructed using segments of solid wood rather than traditional plies. Staves are laid out in a circle, bound together, and shaped into a drum shell.



sakaedrums.com

Prentice Music Practice Pads

The Prentice Practice Pad has an 8mm cymbal stand attachment incorporated into the new base material. These improvements offer greater options for your practice pad placement with no change to feel, clarity of sound, or price. MSRP: \$59.99.



prenticepracticepads.com

AMPLIFIERS

Randall EOD88
"DOOM AMP"

Introducing the new EOD88 from Randall. There is a famous interview with Ozzy in which he talks about how Black Sabbath's sound evolved in the early days: "We were just a blues band and then it took on an ELEMENT OF DOOM..." So, in the spirit of that early pioneering of heavy metal, we have created the EOD88. With three switchable gain modes, an 88 watt all tube (12AX7/KT88), KT88 power design, and a built-in fuzz circuit, this amp personifies the old school with a modern approach.

randallamplifiers.com

BAND & ORCHESTRA

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Mouthpiece
Combination

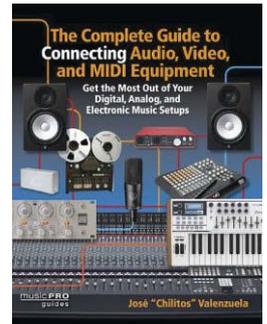
Nick Kuckmeir designed each piece as the perfect complement to Légère reeds. Each Inspiration combination for Bb clarinet and Alto saxophone includes one matte finish mouthpiece, one Rovner ligature (in North America) or BG Ligature (outside North America), one Légère reed (Signature or Classic), one mouthpiece cap, and one Inspiration mouthpiece cushion.

legere.com

PRINT

Hal Leonard's *The Complete Guide to Connecting Audio, Video, and MIDI Equipment*

This step-by-step guide reveals the best ways to correctly connect studio equipment with over 30 diagrams covering home, professional, post-production, electronic music, and DJ studios. Each section explains a number of studio configurations, highlighting useful applications in music recording and post-production. Readers will also be able to identify, purchase, and connect the specific A/V and MIDI equipment necessary for any creative job. This book is available in English and Spanish. (\$39.99 US)

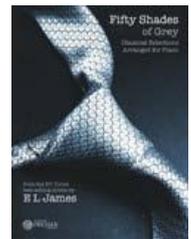


halleonard.com

Theodore Presser Company's *Official Fifty Shades of Grey Collection: Music from the Trilogy*

Theodore Presser Company announces the release of the official *Fifty Shades of Grey* collection for piano (410-41343 – Score - \$19.99). This collection includes arrangements of the 15 classical pieces featured in the bestselling *Fifty Shades* trilogy.

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PHOTOGRAPHY



FRETTED

Breedlove Signature 25th and the Brazilian Concert 25th

The first Breedlove ever built inspired the Kim Breedlove Signature 25th. With a sunken redwood cedar top and figured walnut back and sides, this guitar features the full Kim Breedlove commemorative inlay made of silver, mother of pearl, black pearl, gold pearl, and abalone. This model will be a series of ten. MSRP: \$13,332.

This non-cutaway concert body includes the Breedlove Bridge Truss system. The BBT reduces tension on the soundboard of the guitar so the top wood is able to vibrate more freely. This helps produce sustain, balance, and clarity. This guitar is built of fully legal Brazilian rosewood. MSRP: \$9,332.



breedlovemusic.com

Fishman Fluence 7-String Humbucker

The 7-String active Fluence Humbucker is available in Alnico and Ceramic models, each with two voices. The Alnico model's Voice 1 produces the full, round Alnico sound. The second voice offers crisp, clean sounds never before heard in an active Alnico Humbucker.



The ceramic model delivers a cutting attack with aggressive power. Voice 1 has the Ceramic Humbucker tone for sharp-edged crunch with extra clarity and definition. Voice 2 produces high output ceramic tones and superlative distortion characteristics enhanced with Fluence dynamics and response. Available in nickel, black, and brushed stainless finishes, the new Fluence Modern 7-String Humbuckers can be powered by a 9-volt battery or Fishman's optional rechargeable lithium-ion battery packs, available in three models to easily and seamlessly fit most electric guitars.

www.fishman.com

Aranjuez Fluorocarbon Strings

These strings are brand-new and constructed from heavy polymer (1.6 sg compared to 1.3 sp for nylon). The polymer is tough, and the strings have a smaller diameter. They sound brighter than nylon, due to the string being slightly smaller than its nylon counterpart. Fluorocarbon is also favored because, like nylon, it holds up well to humidity.



aranjuezstrings.com

DJ & LIGHTING

ADJ Inno Pocket Spot Twins



The Inno Pocket Spot Twins consists of two independently-controlled mini Moving Heads mounted on a single bracket, giving users a dual-beam effect that can be taken on the road as part of a mobile set-up, mounted in small spaces, and used to add lighting to small and medium-sized venues. With a pair of high-power 12-watt LED sources and separate color and GOGO wheels for each head, the Inno Pocket Spot Twins lets users create displays of double beam effects and GOGO projections. With seven colors (plus white) and seven GOGOs (plus spot), these independent wheels give users the flexibility to create combinations of distinctive patterns and vibrant colors, which can be enhanced further using the included GOGO scroll mode and GOGO shake effect.

adj.com

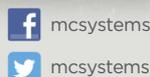
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DJ & LIGHTING

KORG KAOSS DJ, USB DJ Controller, Audio Interface, and ARP Odyssey

Korg introduces the KAOSS DJ, a USB and standalone DJ controller that features a built-in KAOSS PAD; Korg's touch pad-based effects control surface. The compact and light-weight design maintains all the functionality DJs command. Compatible with any MIDI-compatible DJ software, KAOSS DJ also integrates seamlessly with Serato DJ Intro software. Large LED level meters placed on both sides of the body provide visual feedback to the user, and cueing, hot cues, looping, A/B sync, touch platters, pitch controls, EQ, FX on/off control, powerful KAOSS effects, and more position the KAOSS DJ as a professional-level USB DJ controller that's built to perform. KAOSS DJ also includes two stereo inputs and a mic input, which can be used with the onboard USB Audio Interface. Away from the computer, KAOSS DJ can also function as a traditional multi-channel DJ mixer.



In conjunction with Arp Instruments Inc., Korg Inc. has revived the analog synthesizer, the ARP ODYSSEY. The new ODYSSEY has a compact body, highly operable sliders, and a 37 note slim keyboard. In addition, a DRIVE switch (new function) is provided and connectors include MIDI and headphone output as well as patch cables.



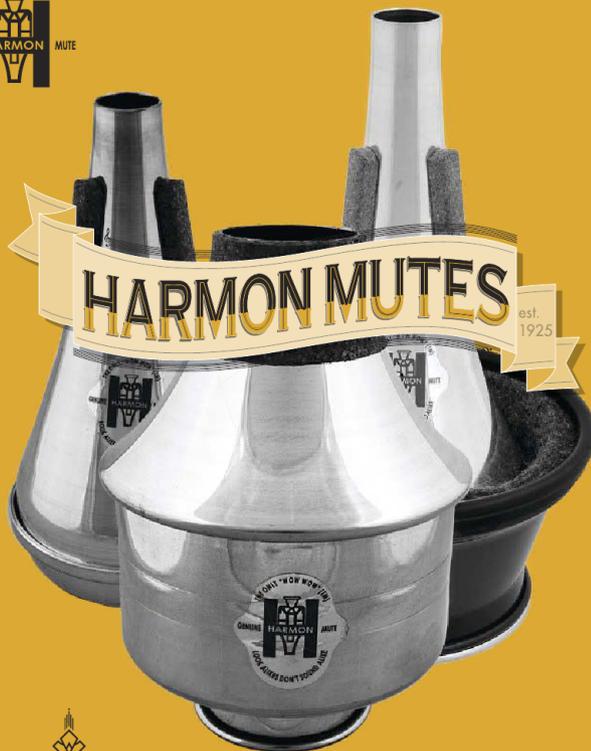
korg.com

Chauvet DJ's Firebird LED Multi-Color Flame Effect

Featuring a built-in flicker effect that imitates a real flame, which is colorized by RGBA LEDs, the Firebird LED creates authentic-looking "fire" with no heat. The blaze rises 6.5 feet high. The Firebird LED utilizes four 5-watt 50,000 hour Quad-Color RGBA LEDs, which emit an illuminance of 1,109 lux at two meters. It features a variable strobe effect (0 to 12 Hz) and includes 3-pin DMX connectors and a wireless remote. It weighs 22.2 pounds and measures 20.4 x 8.9 x 12.8 inches.



chauvetlighting.com



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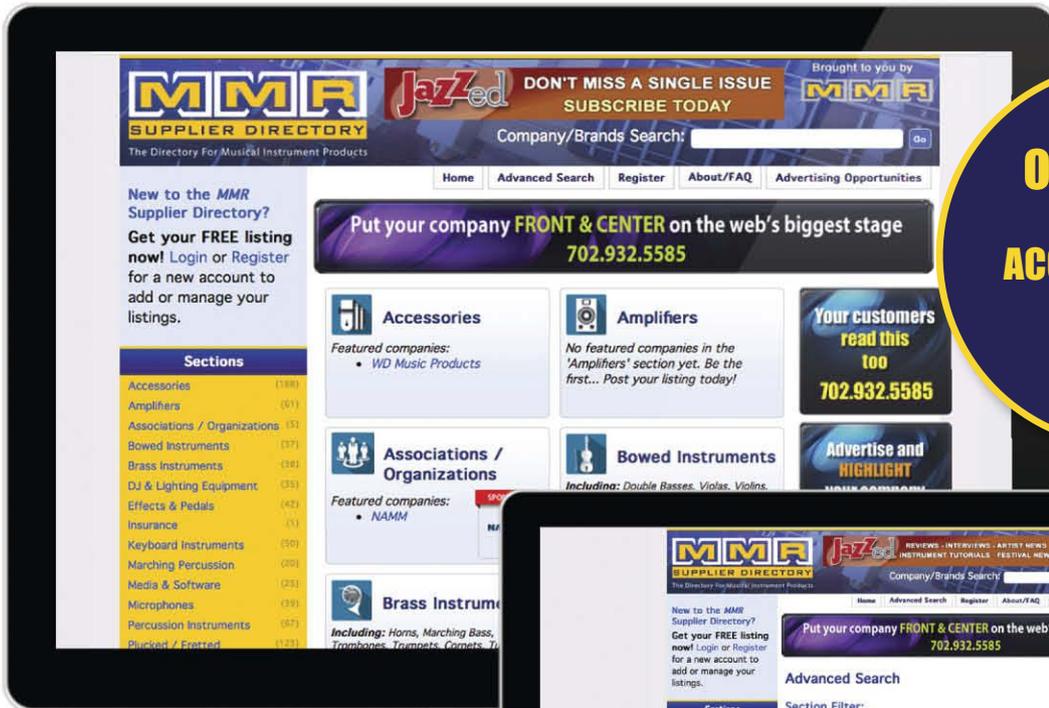
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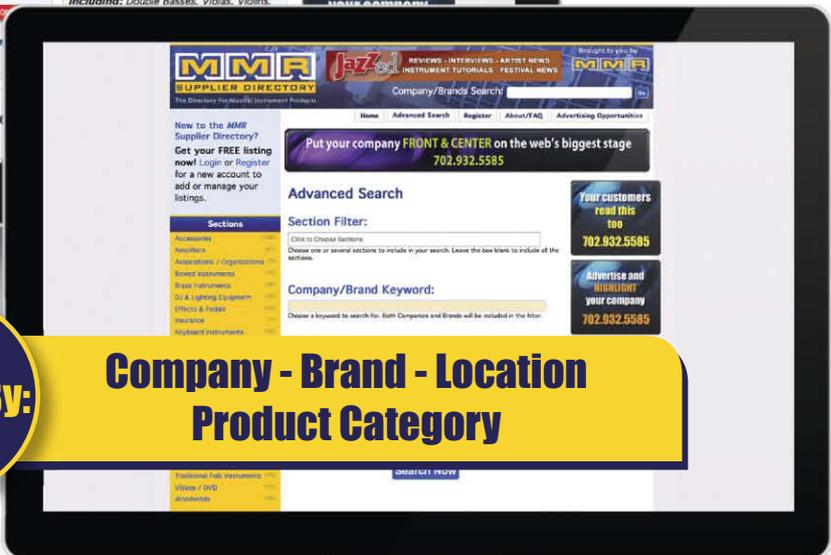
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By Dan Daley

Letting the Chips Fall Where They May

Staples, The Home Depot, Target, Bebe, K-Mart – they all have one thing in common: they are retailers whose customer credit and other personal information have been hacked and hacked big. The cost of these data breaches is massive – losses from credit and debit card fraud in the U.S. totaled \$11 billion, and 11.4 million Americans were victims in 2013, up from \$8 billion in losses affecting 7.5 million people in 2012, according to Javelin Strategy & Research, a California consulting firm that focuses on payments fraud and technology research. It's only going to continue to happen; the software and the expertise needed are ubiquitous at this point. Thus, it's only a matter of time before MI retail feels the impact of a major data breach.

While recent history has taught that criminal use of technology tends to be one or two steps ahead of solutions to it, there is one major step that is finally being taken, albeit

rather late. Credit and debit cards with embedded IC chips are finally being mandated for use in the U.S. The so-called EMV card (named for the major card companies backing the technology, Euro-Pay, MasterCard, and Visa) bypasses the outdated and easily accessed magnetic strip on credit cards and instead holds payment information on a thin computer chip embedded in the card itself.

The technology has been in use in Europe and elsewhere for well over a decade; it hasn't moved forward in this country because stakeholders in the existing magnetic-based POS infrastructure – and that's been pretty much everyone in the retail and supply chain – had complained about the costs, and each party – retailers, banks, card vendors – tended to point to the others to say they should take the lead (and the initial capital expense). Now, a series of massive hacks, and as importantly the costs of making good on fraudulent purchases and the waves of class-action litigation surging in the hacks' wakes, have propelled legislation to compel the adoption of EMV technology. American Express, Discover, Visa, and MasterCard plan to introduce chip technology in the next two to three years. As critically, however, all of them plan to hold merchants liable for fraudulent transactions if the merchant doesn't accept EMV technology beginning in 2015-2017, depending on the card network and the type of transaction.

“Act soon – you will have no choice but to accept EMV-enabled cards by October of this year.”

Large MI retailers are already moving forward on EMV implementation. Roger Hitzfield, vice president of customer order assurance at Sweetwater, says the online retailer is in the process of becoming EMV compliant and should have it in place sometime in the first quarter of 2015. It was a quick change after having watched the technology develop for over a decade, though. “Merchants need to be EMV compliant by October 2015,” Hitzfield says, noting further, “Visa/MC have postponed this deadline for the past many years, but with all of the recent breaches, they are expected to stand by this date.” However, he adds, “EMV will not change the way Sweetwater transacts business on the Internet.”

Other large MI retailers are in the process of updating their physical POS positions, which in brick and mortar is a more complex and expensive proposition. Target officials said

during their Senate hearing testimony that the cost of converting all of its POS machines to accept EMV cards will be about \$50 million dollars. After that, for small and mid-sized shops, it's a matter of scale. EMV card readers cost between \$1,000 and \$2,000 apiece, plus installation, although volume discounts are reportedly available. However, existing merchant bank accounts at most major banking institutions should already be able to accommodate EMV. In fact, some banks, including Chase, will act as a vendor for EMV POS readers and configure the terminals they sell for each customer, in this case through the bank's Chase Paymentech system, which handles Chase credit card processing. But keep in mind that not all credit card processing companies provide EMV-enabled point-of-sale terminals, so check with your bank and be prepared to shop around. But act soon – you will have no choice but to accept EMV-enabled cards by October of this year because merchants without the ability to handle EMV-equipped cards will be liable for credit card fraud.

The arrival of EVS credit cards is a long-overdue turning point in U.S. retail, and one that can only be good for all types of MI stores, by rendering transactional data that much more secure. And that goes for both consumers and storeowners, the ones who will be the most liable for paying for the losses of that information. **MMR**

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