

# MMR

MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

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# MMR

MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

“ New York City is one of the cultural capitals of the world, and definitely of the United States, so there is a sizable market for almost every niche imaginable. ”  
 - Karl Myers, Main Drag Music

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## The Harmony of Style and Sound



Beauty for the eye of the beholder and the ear of the music aficionado... The unique Chrome colored frame and beautifully lacquered interior of the elegant C2X Chrome create a refined understatement that will perfectly complement today's diverse tastes in décor. Now exclusively available with sleek Chrome hardware, this Special Edition from the Yamaha CX series features simple, elegant lines and an exterior finish that exudes attention to detail. In addition, the CX Series' signature sound and touch allows pianists to become one with their instrument—appealing to your inner designer and musician alike.

 **YAMAHA**  
NAMM Booth 644

# The Proposed Ivory Ban

**T**he Federal government and individual state governments have been cracking down on the commercial ivory trade of late. In June, the New York State Legislature passed a landmark ruling amending the state's environmental law to ban elephant ivory sales with only a few exceptions for antiques, certain musical instruments made before 1975, and transfers for educational or scientific purposes or through the distribution of estates. Governor Cuomo has not yet signed all of this into law, but he is expected to do so.

The Humane Society of the United States and The Wildlife Conservation Society have praised the move, actors Meryl Streep and Peter Dinklage have voiced their support for the legislation, and the piano man himself approves, as well. On June 18th, Billy Joel posted the following on his website:

*To whom it may concern: I wholeheartedly support the ivory sales ban bill pending in New York State. I am a piano player. And I realize that ivory piano keys are preferred by some pianists. But a preference for ivory keys does not justify the slaughter of 96 elephants every day. There are other materials which can be substituted for piano keys. But magnificent creatures like these can never be replaced. Music must never be used as an excuse to destroy an endangered species. Music should be a celebration of life – not an instrument of death.*

So there you have it – most people are against the needless slaughter of animals to harvest body parts (right?) and well-respected musicians are saying, "Hey, just find alternatives to ivory and deal with it – it's the right and moral thing to do." Seems pretty cut and dried, whether in the state of New York, or applied nation-wide.

Except...

"I think it's ridiculous," says famed violinist Itzhak Perlman. "The tip of the bow is going to save the African elephant? Why don't they go after the poachers? It's very terrible what's happening [in Africa], but why do you have to make a point on the backs of string players?"

What's got Perlman so upset?

Well, on May 31 U.S. customs seized seven violin bows belonging to Hungarian musicians set to play at NYC's Lincoln Center. The players had certificates stating that the bows contained no ivory, but customs disagreed, saying they weren't the right kind of certificates and that they couldn't be sure that the bows were ivory-free. Ultimately the bows were returned when the musicians left the U.S. – but not until after they had paid a fine of \$525.

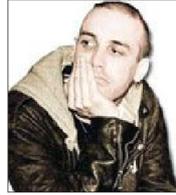
It's not that difficult (usually) to date, say, a guitar by referencing its serial number, but – to go back to Perlman's quote – how many violin bows have serial numbers or documentation? Can every violinist out there indisputably prove that the tip of his or her bow isn't crafted from ivory?

In a June *Forbes* article, author Doug Bandow wrote, "FWS [U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service] plans to prohibit the sale of any antique (100 year-old) ivory the age of which the owner cannot 'demonstrate' with 'documented evidence.' Even with 'documented evidence,' old though non-antique ivories could not be sold across state lines. Since 17th century carvers were not in the habit of providing certificates of authenticity, virtually no ivory owner has such documentation, which Washington never before required."

George Gruhn of Nashville's Gruhn Guitars is another vocal opponent to the restrictions being proposed (he's also this issue's "In the Trenches" author – see page 84) and he submitted a message to the Advisory Council on Wildlife Trafficking who met on June 9. An excerpt appears below:

*...I implore you to avoid setting unreasonable standards or putting overzealous regulations into place which would be counterproductive to trade and which would prevent the preservation of many truly fine vintage instruments without truly doing anything helpful for the conservation of living elephants or to stem the illegal ivory trade.*

It's possible – just possible – that Billy Joel, Meryl Streep and others in favor of the policies being considered in the halls of government haven't read the fine print. While it's doubtful that the day will come when government agents will march up to your home (or your store) demanding all your violin bows, vintage guitars, and pianos, this is an ongoing topic to pay attention to. **MMMR**



by Christian Wissmuller

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- Industry News
- Letters
- Supplier Scene
- Trade Regrets
- People on the Move

## Buffet Group Announces 'Juno' Select Student Reed Partnership with Vandoren

Buffet Group USA has entered into a partnership with Vandoren reeds to include a JUNO select reed in all student clarinet and saxophone products during the "Back to School" season for 2014. The products include the B10, B12, and the E11 B♭ student clarinets, as well as the 100 Series student alto and tenor saxophones. "We are very pleased to include these reeds in the cases of our instruments," commented Buffet Group USA president and CEO François Kloc. "Our instruments are a great way for young students to start and succeed right from the beginning. The JUNO reed – which is made by Vandoren – insures that our cus-



tomers have the best of both worlds – a great instrument and a great reed."

JUNO reeds are designed and manufactured by Vandoren in the same French factory as their other reeds. "The difference is in the cut," remarked Vandoren general manager Emmanuel Tonnelier. "JUNO is a high quality reed specially designed for students so they can produce a beautiful sound from the very beginning – and each reed is individually wrapped – a plus for parents and band directors. We think young students will have a wonderful experience at the beginning with a Buffet Crampon instrument and JUNO reed."

## Musikmesse Russia and Prolight + Sound NAMM Russia Unveil Expanded Events Program

NAMM Musikmesse Russia and Prolight + Sound NAMM Russia welcome the music industry to Moscow with an expanded roster of live music, competitions, and educational sessions. The shows will stage in a new location, The Sokolniki Exhibition and Convention Centre, September 11-14 and 11-13, respectively. Together, the events offer a complete musical instrument, music products, and entertainment technology experience for professionals and enthusiasts alike. Hundreds of distributors and brands from more than 15 countries are expected to debut new products at the event.

Filling three pavilions in the Sokolniki Centre September 11-14, NAMM Musikmesse Russia features a multi-faceted lineup of events for retailers, DJs, musicians, and instrument repair professionals. NAMM University presents a slate of essential sessions to help dealers grow sales using the most current online marketing technologies. Representatives from all corners of the international music products community gather for Coli-

sium's music business convention and roundtable discussion. Other roundtable discussions cover music cinematography and trends in digital music. In addition, the National Conference and Pedagogical Seminar will feature presentations by

musical instruments to master classes in making and repairing instruments, violin-making competitions, and stringed-instrument workshops for young musicians. Also featured in this pavilion is the celebrated children's music festival, 'Viva Music.'



renowned authors and professors in the field of contemporary music education.

In addition to highlighting new products and instruments, The Yamaha Music Pavilion showcases the winners of the 2013 Yamaha Band Contest, with autograph sessions and performances by the competition's top bands. The Pavilion Classique focuses on all aspects of classical and acoustic music, from traditional

Prolight + Sound NAMM Russia, held September 11-13, fills three dedicated pavilions with products and events geared toward performance technology professionals. Equipment rental pros can learn from an international panel of theater and venue experts at the rental and trussing forum. Sound engineers can choose from master classes and

demonstrations on topics ranging from online broadcasting of theater events to new technologies in audio programming. The Professional Conference for Radio Industry Specialists will host their first summit in conjunction with Colisium. A lighting design competition, and special performances by the renowned Bolshoi Theatre and Alexandrinsky Theatre round out the three-day show.

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**Tom & Lily Oliphant, Owners Ventura Guitars**

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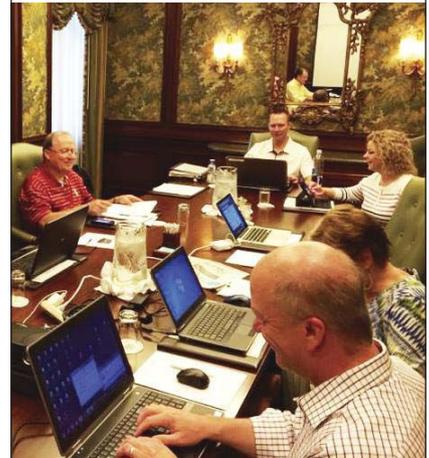
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**Warehouse:** Austin, Texas

**Office:** 4925 S. Meadow Ridge Cir., McKinney, Texas 75070

## NASMD Board Meeting In New Orleans



The Board of Directors for the National Association of School Music Dealers (NASMD) recently concluded a three-day planning meeting for the group's 2015 convention to be held March 18th-21st at the Hotel Monteleone in New Orleans, Louisiana.

The NASMD board includes (president) George Quinlan, Jr. of Quinlan & Fabish Music Co., (vice president) Rosi Johnson of Mississippi Music, (secretary/treasurer) Mike Meyer of Meyer Music, Beth Houlihan of Kidder Music, Greg Lyons of Royal Music, Ron Kuykendall of Saied Music, C.J. Averwater of Averwater Music, and Evan Jones of Blandland Music.

The educational program will include many peer-to-peer learning opportunities with panel discussions and roundtable sessions led by NASMD members as well as some top professional speakers on various topics relevant to operating a successful retail business.

The Hotel Monteleone is a fourth-generation, family-owned establishment on Royal Street in the French Quarter. It boasts an ideal location with many surrounding restaurants and outstanding meeting room facilities for educational programming.

## Sweetwater's GearFest 2014 Draws Record Crowds and Sales

Sweetwater Sound reports that its GearFest 2014 was a bigger success than ever, breaking every record established by previous GearFest events. Launched in 2002, Sweetwater's annual GearFest is the nation's largest end-user-oriented music and pro audio festival, featuring exhibits from more than 200 manufacturers; workshops, clinics, and seminars; live demos; special performances; a musician's flea market; and much more.

This year's two-day event, which took place June 6 and 7 at Sweetwater's campus in Fort Wayne, Indiana, provided even more opportunities for thousands of musicians, engineers, and producers to participate in the festivities, with customers traveling from all over the world to participate.

Attendance was record breaking, with more than 8,000 participants (up from 7,000 in 2013), with sales up by more than 25 percent over GearFest 2013.

GearFest hosted a multitude of musicians performing and in workshops continuously in six different venues. Featured guest drummer Jason Bonham (son of Led Zeppelin drummer John Bonham) and his Led Zeppelin Experience provided the finale to the festival. Other musicians performing and conducting clinics included bass player Billy Sheehan, drummer Kenny Aronoff, Jason Hook, Shaun Hopper, Don Carr, Devin Townsend, Emil Werstler, Carl Verheyen, and Brad Davis, keyboard player Larry Dunn, and many more.

The marquee event at GearFest '14 was Saturday's Producer's Panel, featuring a gathering of producer/engineers including Bruce



GearFest visitors crowd around the "DealZone."

Swedien (Michael Jackson, Paul McCartney, Count Basie), Bob Clearmountain (The Rolling Stones, David Bowie, Bruce Springsteen), Ed Cherney (Eric Clapton, Bonnie Raitt, The Fabulous Thunderbirds), and more. The panel held a lively discussion on a range of music recording and production topics moderated by Sweetwater's editorial director and noted author/journalist Mitch Gallagher.

In total, GearFest included 185 workshops and seminars in nine different venues. More than 200 manufacturers of musical instruments, music technology, and audio equipment were on hand to give GearFest attendees a look at the latest gear. In addition, hourly prizes were given away, totaling more than \$72,000 worth of music instruments and equipment.

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Booth #1008

# Eastman Music Acquires S.E. Shires Co.

Eastman Music Company has acquired renowned brass instrument maker S.E. Shires Co. S.E. Shires Co. will continue to maintain and operate its corporate headquarters and production facility in Hopedale, Massachusetts. Current president Steve Shires will remain in his executive role overseeing all day-to-day operations of the company.

"We are honored and excited to be able to give the support needed to Shires' talented team of craftspeople so they can continue their tradition of building some of the finest horns in the world," said Eastman's owner, Qian Ni. "Our company is committed to building the best sounding instruments in the world, and we believe that S.E. Shires

represents this in the products that they produce and the team that they have assembled under Steve's leadership."

S.E. Shires Co., founded in 1995, is one of the industry's foremost builders of custom trombones and trumpets. Recognized as a leader in brass instrument design, innovation, and construction, Shires maintains a commitment to unparalleled professional quality. S.E. Shires trumpets and trombones are played by many of the top musicians throughout the world.



S.E. Shires will join the 126-year-old custom flute maker Wm. S. Haynes Co. as the second Eastman-owned premier musical instrument manufacturer in the Boston area. The William S. Haynes Company was purchased by Eastman in 2004, and currently employs 20 artisan flute makers in their Acton, Massachusetts workshop.

## CORRECTIONS:

D'Addario recently announced a new OEM partnership with one of the world's leading guitar manufacturers, ESP Inc. Last month, we printed that ESP's E-II, and LTD lines are U.S.-made. These product lines are manufactured in Japan and Korea, respectively. As part of their new partnership, ESP Inc. is already using D'Addario strings on their imported LTD product line, and on their high-end U.S. production, they will use D'Addario's NYXL strings.

The information for Meisel Accessories that ran in our May issue's Supplier Directory was incorrect. The entry should have read as follows:

**Meisel Accessories LLC**

PO Box 7003

West Orange, NJ 07052

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

Neil Lilien

[info@meiselaccessories.com](mailto:info@meiselaccessories.com)

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## 26th Annual KMC Charity Golf Tournament

KMC Music held its 26th annual "Everett Porter Unintentional" Charity Golf Tournament on June 3rd in Avon, Connecticut. Proceeds from the event were presented to The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp, which was founded in 1988 by Paul Newman to serve children and their families coping with cancer, sickle cell anemia, and other serious illnesses. The annual tournament has raised over \$100,000 for The Hole In The Wall Gang and has helped send more than 40 children to the camp.



"We are very happy to continue our work with The Hole In The Wall Gang with our annual charitable golf tournament," said Roger Hart, vice president of merchandising for KMC Music. "The event is an amazing opportunity to bring high-profile companies from our industry together to help children attend this wonderful camp in Connecticut."

The Everett Porter Unintentional was founded in 1987 by Bill Kaman, president of Kaman Music. Kaman was approached by Ovation Guitars purchasing manager Everett Porter, who mentioned in passing that a golf tournament should be organized to bring together music industry vendors, dealers, and Kaman Music employees. To Porter's surprise, Bill Kaman agreed and immediately put plans in place for the tournament. Due to the serendipitous creation of the tournament, it was henceforth known as the Everett Porter Unintentional.

NAMM Booth 1516



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## Radial Takes On Int'l Sales and Distro for Jensen Iso-Max

Vancouver-based Radial Engineering Ltd. recently announced that it has taken on the global sales, marketing, and distribution of Jensen Transformers' Iso-Max range of products. Iso-Max is a range of isolators that provide ground isolation and noise abatement for audio and video in broadcast, home theater, and commercial AV integration.

Radial has a long history with Jensen. According to company president Peter Janis: "When Radial was founded in 1992, we started life as a distributor. One of our first product lines was Jensen. Back then, we sold raw transformers to sound companies and broadcasters who in turn built custom multi-channel snakes and splitters. As the market

for snakes matured, sound companies moved away from custom snakes and home-built isolators to buying off-the-shelf solutions. In 1996, we launched the Radial JDI (Jensen DI) which has become the most popular passive direct box in live concert touring and has been a cornerstone for Radial sales around the globe. Over the years, Radial has become Jensen's largest customer and, as we have grown, Radial and Jensen have become synonymous."

Janis continues: "Anyone who knows Jensen knows that the company is engineering based. In other words, since their inception over 40 years ago, they have never hired a sales team or had a marketing department. The commitment to building the world's finest transformers has created a huge following by those in the know. A few years ago, Jensen decided to take a similar

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**Eliot Lewis, Hammond Artist**

*Live from Daryl's House/Hall & Oates*

*Sk1 & Sk2*

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NAMM Booth 545



route to ours by producing a range of plug and play solutions under the Iso-Max range. Jensen recently came to the conclusion that unless there are feet on the street telling dealers and contractors that the product exists, Jensen would miss out on a huge opportunity. This led to discussions which culminated in Radial taking over the sales and marketing side of the business. Over the coming months, we will be setting up retail and contractor partners, independent reps in the United States and Canada and formalizing exclusive agreements with distributors around the globe."

Jensen's Iso-Max range includes ground isolators for baseband video, cable TV, balanced mic and line level signals, consumer devices such as laptops, and most recently, wall plates. Today, Jensen transformers are proudly made by hand in the United States and are supported with a 20 year factory warranty.

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Stacks beautifully on the new 1SKB-RCB Roto Caster Board. Designed and manufactured by SKB in Orange, CA. Protect your gear with the Original Molded Rack Case Company.

NAMM Booth 1102

## Hal Leonard Signs Distribution Deal with Samson

Hal Leonard Corporation has reached an agreement with Samson Technologies Corp. to exclusively distribute their consumer and professional audio products to music retailers throughout the U.S. Shipping on the Samson Audio, Samson Wireless, and Hartke brands began June 1.

Headquartered in Hauppauge, New York, Samson started as a two-person operation and introduced its first wireless microphone system in 1980. In the 1990s, the company expanded the reach of its audio products, developing power amplifiers, mixers, wired microphones, and signal processors. In 2005, Samson introduced the first professional USB microphones for musicians, broadcasters, and podcast enthusiasts.

Hartke entered the bass amplification world in 1985 with the creation of a unique aluminum cone driver that produced a bass tone with far broader dynamics than had ever been heard before. The company now offers a full line



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CORPORATION

of bass amps, cabinets and combos that are used by some of the best bassists in the world.

The 250 products in Samson's three notable brands are used by recording artists, performers, educators, and audio professionals throughout the world. Samson products are sold in more than 140 countries.

Samson head of sales Robert Caputo says, "The time is right for us to partner, and there's no better MI distributor than Hal Leonard. The job they've done in expanding their distribution services in the instrument and tech sectors is im-

pressive, and their commitment to dealers and knowledgeable sales team are well known and highly respected. We're excited about planning ways to leverage our mutual strengths and keep delivering great products through a dealer-friendly distributor like Hal Leonard."

Brad Smith, senior sales & marketing manager for Hal Leonard, says, "Samson is one of the leading audio technology companies in the world. They have not only a broad line of established products, but also a reputation as a value-rich and reliable manufacturer that's dedicated to developing new products."

He continues, "Samson is a outstanding complement to our growing catalog of MI products. With their quality products at various price points, we can provide dealers with solutions for all of their audio customers, and the bundling potential is huge. We're eager to offer our services to find new Samson customers, especially in the school and church markets."



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**Stephen Shaw - Front of House Engineer - Buckcherry**

"I've been using the i5 for several years now and it's become one of my first-choice mics on guitar cabs. Whether on 4x12s, 4x10s, 2x12s, single-12s or whatever — vintage or modern, the i5 delivers!"

**George Petersen - Editor - FRONT of HOUSE Magazine**

"Whether I'm expecting musical guests, brass bands or dancers sitting in, I know I can rely on the i5 with CabGrabber to sound great and keep my mic position secure."

**Ryan Jones - Front of House Engineer - Galactic Funk**

The CabGrabber microphone mounting system is a real problem solver that allows for precise and repeatable mic placement on flat and slant-front cabinets of nearly any size. With integrated cable clips and no floor stands to trip over, mics go where they are placed and stay there!

Add the industry standard Audix i5 dynamic instrument mic — 50 Hz to 16 kHz frequency response at up to 140dB without distortion — and you have a reliable, economical miking solution for any gig or session.

- CabGrabber in two sizes: 8 - 14" or 14 - 22"
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- Available with the i5 or affordable f5 dynamic microphone

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## New Ownership for Santa Rosa's Stanroy Music Center

Longtime downtown Santa Rosa, California music dealer, Stanroy Music Center, nearly closed up shop for good before veteran employee Steve Shirrell and friend Dustin Heald decided to step in.

"Tupper & Reed Music in Berkeley had purchased Stanroy Music Center from Stan Goldman around 1980 and presided over its best years," explains Shirrell. "However, they were not responsive to changes in the market, and presided over its decline until the last senior partner decided to close the store at the end of August 2013. Examining their taxes and P&Ls for the previous half decade, it was easy to see that if the debt service were taken out of the equation, Stanroy in its worst year with its least inventory was still in the black! Our obvious conclusion was that with no debt and plenty of product, we could only be better off. And allowing a 66-year hometown institution that was also the hub of private music instruction as well as instrument repair needlessly go out of business was not an option! So Dustin and I bought Stanroy, returning it to local ownership."

Changes for the operation include an upcoming move to a new location, also on 4th Street in Santa Rosa. "Our retail space will be about the same – 1,800 sq. ft. with the advantage of 16-foot walls instead of having wall displays stopped at 7-foot soffit that runs around our current store," Shirrell says. "But all of our individual teaching studios and our repair shop will be larger, and we'll have the space for a rock ensemble classroom. Customers are already looking forward to our free, off-street parking.

"We have just become the only Sonor drum dealer in the North Bay. After our move, we will be adding one of the Canadian guitar lines and we are in discussion with the Kawai rep about once again carrying their pianos. We'll also be flooring Crucial Audio's boutique vacuum tube analog pedals (Echo Nugget, Time Warp, and the new Apollo 18). Other additions include making our own mic, instrument, and speaker cables as well as less common DIY projects like theremins and our own line of propriety effect pedals.



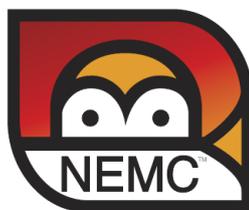
Steve Shirrell and Dustin Heald.

"Stanroy has a long tradition of supporting not only the local musicians and their families who frequent our store but also the local schools, individual teachers, and music venues. As its new owners, we have the opportunity to up the ante of that support (as we are currently donating a new sound system for the Arlene Francis Center) and remind us all that our community is the synergistic sum of its members, and its health is our faithfulness to those relationships... If we continue to listen to the needs of our community and respond faithfully, we will celebrate our centennial in 2047 and be blessed with the problems of piloting Stanroy Music Center into the 22nd century. Good work if you can get it!"



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NAMM Booth 525

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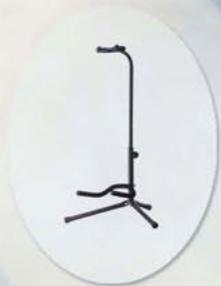
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## MONO Enters into Distribution Deal with KMC

MONO® and KMC Music, Inc. have entered into an agreement for joint U.S. distribution of MONO's line of accessories. As of June 1, KMC Music began offering MONO's full line of award-winning hybrid instrument cases and travel accessories to their vast U.S. dealer network. The joint distribution deal allows KMC Music to handle all new MONO retail business opportunities while MONO continues to service its current collection of U.S. based retail accounts and international distributors.

KMC Music will provide dealers with expert support of the MONO line. Placing MONO orders with KMC Music will offer dealers the availability and flexibility for which KMC's 1-Stop catalog is known.

"We've had our eye on MONO for quite some time," said Thomas Ricksgers, senior marketing manager for KMC Music. "Not only have they reinvented and reinvig-



orated their category, but the MONO team truly understands the way the modern musician's needs are changing. This is evident in their innovative product design and trend-setting marketing. By focusing on design, MONO has quickly created a loyal following of professional and aspiring musicians all over the world. The time is

right to include this incredible brand in our customer offerings as well."

"This a great honor for us – no other company has the history and reach of KMC," says MONO founder and CEO, Daniel Kushner. "In getting to know the KMC team, it was immediately clear to us that their passion and operational expertise would translate to a great service experience for MONO dealers everywhere. This partnership will allow us to focus on design, marketing and crafting the consumer experience as we continue to grow."

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The advertisement features a dark, textured background with a large footprint in the center. A TWA Mini Pedal is shown inside the footprint. Another pedal is shown in the foreground, held in a hand. The pedal has controls for Tone, Level, Gain, and a footswitch. The text is bold and white, with a rocket icon next to 'FLY BOYS'.

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## Shure Picks Henry W. Phillips Co. for Southeast U.S. Sales

Shure Incorporated announced that it has chosen Henry W. Phillips Company Incorporated (or HWPco) of Flowery Branch, Georgia, as its new sales representative for the Southeastern region of the United States. HWPco will manage sales for Shure's complete line of professional audio products to dealers and systems integrators in North Carolina; South Carolina; Mississippi; Atlanta, Georgia; and Eastern Tennessee.

"We are very excited for the energy and creativity we feel this company will bring to our sales and market development efforts in the region," said Jim Schanz, director, Pro/Systems Group Sales, U.S. and Canada for Shure.

"Partnering with Shure was a major objective for our company because of its ability to set worldwide industry standards for superior microphones and audio electronics," said Trey Gunter, Chief Executive Officer for HWPco. Shure is unique, like HWPco, in that we both are willing to explore new and effective ways of delivering products and solu-

tions to the marketplace, while resting on tried and true business practices. We look forward to the opportunity to champion the Shure brand and build on this incredible company's history and growth."

Marcus Myers, Chief Operating Officer for HWPco, stated, "Shure Incorporated has been, and will continue to be, the model of trusted solutions in the professional audio industry. We at HWPco believe that our goals are similar, in that being trusted by our partners to bring them rock solid products and unmatched service is the key to our success. It is in these similarities that we expect to find true synergy and incredible success with Shure for many years to come."

HWPco was founded in 1970 with the goal of representing a variety of manufacturers in audio, video, infrastructure, and security. Other team members include David Pergantis, Paddy Steading, Norman Miller, Chris Adler, Tim Hunnicutt, Brian Pergantis, Todd Dunsmore, and Patrick Bradshaw.



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The product mixes are already determined and will be shipped out the first week of the month to ensure you have the maximum amount of time to sell the products.

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 June = Patriotic  
 September = Halloween  
 November = Christmas

## **F** ULLY

## **E** XCHANGEABLE:

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MMR  
MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

## Letters

***In response to 'GC Discontinues Relationship with Behringer' by Christian Wissmuller in our June 2014 issue:***

I've watched the controversy over this Guitar Center/Behringer event with some interest. I don't know what happened here from a business standpoint.

However, I can say that over the past few years, Sweetwater has developed a solid relationship with Behringer. We expect a lot from our manufacturing partners, and Behringer has delivered on every front, always honoring their promises and agreements to the letter. We've never experienced them changing agreements or making unreasonable demands on us.

I've also spent time with Uli Behringer personally, and as a passionate and driven person myself, I appreciate those qualities in him and in how he does business. He's a friendly, personable, and easy person to spend time with.

There are always two sides to every story, and we may

never know what really occurred between Behringer and Guitar Center. But I did want to try to give a bit of perspective through our dealings with Uli Behringer, both from a business and personal standpoint.

— Chuck Surack, president and founder, Sweetwater

***In response to 'Show Report: RPMDA' by Matt Parish in our June 2014 issue:***

Thanks for including me on your Best Ideas list "Six 'Best Ideas' for Print!" I always enjoy reading your report of the RPMDA Convention; great coverage, year after year!

— Becky Lightfoot, Art's Music Shop

Join the conversation, by emailing Christian Wissmuller at [cwismuller@timelesscom.com](mailto:cwismuller@timelesscom.com) or by adding your comments to any articles that have appeared in MMR – all of which are available for review at [www.mmmagazine.com](http://www.mmmagazine.com).

Visit us at the Summer NAMM  
Show Booth 512

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Exquisite sound, sustainable tonewoods... at an affordable price.



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GUITARS  
NAMM Booth 1214

## Trade Regrets

**Don Ravitch** and his brother-in-law Bern Schwartz purchased the Sherman Clay piano chain in 1959. For the next five decades, Ravitch guided the San Francisco-based organization and was a pioneer of piano retail practices, setting standards for excellence that reverberated throughout the industry. At its height, Sherman Clay fielded more than 60 retail outlets across the United States.



Ravitch was also an active supporter of classical, jazz, and popular music in the Bay Area, serving as a board member of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. He also served on the NAMM board and was active in numerous other music industry organizations.

Eric Schwartz, chairman/CEO of Sherman Clay, contacted *MMR* to share the sad news of Donald's passing on May 27th: "My uncle and mentor, Donald Ravitch, passed away. His was a long and distinguished career in the music business, spanning well over 50

years. I will miss him as my uncle, mentor, and close friend."

**John R. Chase, Jr.**, 56, of Palm Harbor, Florida passed away May 15 at Tampa General Hospital surrounded by his family.



Chase worked in the music industry for 40 years. He was on staff at Washington Music in Maryland, was a technician and traveled with the legendary Stevie Wonder, and was a field representative for Mainline Marketing, Line 6, and Korg. Chase also had his own business for several years – Music Lines, where he represented some of the top companies in the music industry.

On May 23, PreSonus announced the passing of **Bob Tudor**, the company's chief technology officer.



As one of the pioneers at Mackie Designs, he created the company's line of digital mixers, hard-disk recorders, and control surfaces. After leaving Mackie, he founded SaneWave, where he developed products for a wide assortment of pro audio manufacturers.

One of SaneWave's best clients was PreSonus, for which Tudor helped define and design the FaderPort and the StudioLive digital-mixer line. That led to his decision to join the company full-time in 2008. His products have garnered five TEC Awards, five MIPA Awards, and numerous other awards.

As CTO, Tudor oversaw all PreSonus advanced development activities and evaluated and implemented emerging technologies that have been utilized in many of the companies most successful products. Along with PreSonus CSO Jim Odom, he developed the strategic direction of the company's innovative products and technologies.



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NAMM Booth 728

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**NAMM Booth 216**

## Supplier Scene

### Gretsch Presents Grammy Signature Schools Enterprise Award to Savannah Arts Academy



Fred and Dinah Gretsch (president and CFO, respectively, of the Savannah-based Gretsch Company) recently appeared at the Savannah Arts Academy to present the school with a Grammy Signature Schools Enterprise Award. The Grammy Foundation Signature Schools program honors public high schools for outstanding commitment to their music education programs.

In addition to being key figures in the music industry for more than 30 years, Fred and Dinah Gretsch have been – and continue to be – tireless advocates of music education and outreach programs.

Twelve schools have been named Grammy Signature Schools for 2014, with seven receiving an Enterprise Award. This category recognizes efforts made by schools that are economically underserved. The Savannah Arts Academy is one of those seven outstanding schools, and received a grant of \$5,500.

[gretsch.com](http://gretsch.com) and  
[grammyintheschools.com](http://grammyintheschools.com)

## Cerwin-Vega! P Series at 2014 New Music Seminar

For the second year, Cerwin-Vega!, part of Gibson Brands Inc., and its P-Series Professional PA system played an integral part of the audio setup for the New Music Seminar (NMS) in New York. See Factor, the lighting and sound company for the conference, supplied a total of eight full P-Series setups – comprised of two P1500X Loudspeakers and a P1800SX Subwoofer each – for traditional PA arrangements, two additional P1500X Loudspeakers for monitor wedges and two 16-Channel CVM Mixers. “Before we moved to our current location at the iconic New Yorker Hotel, the entire conference was held at Webster Hall,” explains Dave Lory, musical director for the event. “Knowing about the change of location, my friends at Gibson approached me and recommended I try their Cerwin-Vega! P-Series.” With an average attendance of approximately 1,300 people each year, NMS is one of the most influential music conferences in the world.



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

## Vandoren Performing Artists in Full Force at ClarinetFest 2014

The International Clarinet Association’s ClarinetFest 2014’s August 3 date at Louisiana State University is rapidly approaching, and Vandoren and DANSR, Inc. have announced a few of the many Vandoren performing artists who will be performing and participating in the event. This year’s theme: “The Clarinetist as Entrepreneur – How to diversify and expand your skills for greater success as a musician in the 21st century,” is one that Vandoren’s artists are familiar with.

Caroline Hartig, professor of Clarinet at The Ohio State University and president-elect of the International Clarinet Association, will perform on the ICA Board Recital on the opening day of the convention. Many other master teachers will also be performing at this event, including Julianne Kirk Doyle, Nathan Williams, Jonathan Cohler, and more.

There will also be performances by other world-class performers, including Larry Combs (former principal clarinetist of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra), Stanley Drucker (former principal clarinetist of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra), and more.

Finally, Vandoren will be presenting a clarinet VandoJam (hosted by jazz clarinetists Harry Skoler and Felix Peikli) and the Vandoren Chamber Music Night, with performances by Piero Vincenti, Pascual Martinez-Forteza, and others.



[clarinet.org/clarinetFest2014](http://clarinet.org/clarinetFest2014)  
[dansr.com](http://dansr.com)

## John D’Addario, Jr. Accepts Koblenz Lifetime Achievement Award

John D’Addario Jr., vice chairman of D’Addario & Co., accepted the Koblenz Lifetime Achievement Award on behalf of himself, The D’Addario Foundation, and D’Addario & Company, Inc. for their dedication to promoting classical guitar. The ceremony took place during the 22nd Koblenz International Guitar Festival in June at the Electoral Castle of Koblenz, Germany. Savarez’s Bernard Maillot (former president of the French Association of Musical Instrument Manufacturers) was also awarded.

The Koblenz International Guitar Festival and Academy proactively raises the standards of artistry and scholarship for benefit of the guitar and its students and supporters. Past recipients of the Lifetime Achievement Award include Celín & Pepe Romero in 2009 and professor Konrad Ragossnig in 2010.

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



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- Juan Cruz Masotta  
**”**

**“**  
  
"I've tested them in the studio and live and am definitely considering making the move from the Wegen picks... They're the best sounding and best playing picks I've tried so far."  
- Julien Bitoun  
**”**

**“**  
  
"In forty years of playing guitar it's one of the best picks I have ever used! It may be the perfect pick and I plan on buying more immediately and telling my friends about it as well."  
- Kim Young  
**”**

Ordering Information



Tear Drop / Standard 6 pack - MSRP \$5.95  
72 bulk - MSRP \$56.95  
Bi Angle 4 pack - MSRP \$5.95  
48 bulk - MSRP \$56.95  
Mixed packs - MSRP \$5.95

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## Godin Selects 'Play This Ad' Contest Winner

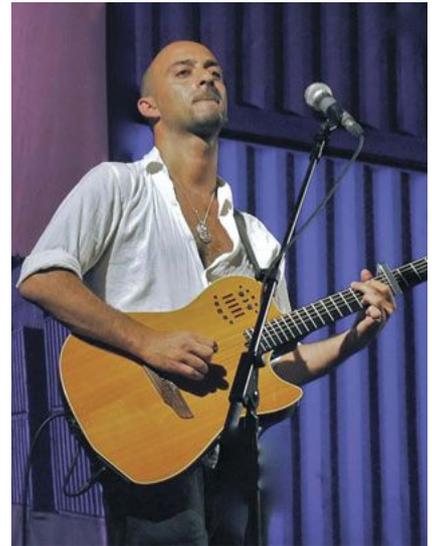
Godin Guitars congratulated guitarist and multi-instrumentalist Marc Kakon as the Grand Prize Winner of the "Godin Play This Ad Contest."

From Tel Aviv, Israel, Marc Kakon's winning video featured his interpretation of print AD#1, entitled "Store Window."

"We received hundreds of submissions from around the globe but Marc's really

stood out for his amazing arrangement, composition and overall performance, all of which were excellent," says Godin's Media & Artist Relations representative, Richard Bunze.

The "Godin Play This Ad Contest" was the company's most elaborate guitar contest to date, consisting of a print campaign in which guitar tabs were used to write three



songs. It was a harmonized international campaign that paired the agency's creative concept with Godin's own digital media efforts via the company's website & social media channels. Guitarists filmed themselves playing one of three ad versions featuring different chord progressions and then posted their performance on YouTube. Participants had the chance to win a collection of Godin guitars valued at over \$15,000.

[godinguitars.com/playthisad.htm](http://godinguitars.com/playthisad.htm)



## SJC Drums Creates DeLorean Drumkit



SJC Drums recently revealed the "first ever DeLorean drumkit."

"This is definitely one of the crazier requests that we've ever turned into a reality," says owner Mike Ciprari. "The kit was completely hand-fabricated in our shop here in Massachusetts for Danny Duncan of the band We The Kings. The kit has literally all the DeLorean features: Tires as hoops, a flux capacitor we made by hand, the time machine, and a Mr. Fusion drum. The sides of the kick drum even open up like the doors on the DeLorean." Zildjian made custom brushed aluminum cymbals to top the kit off.

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

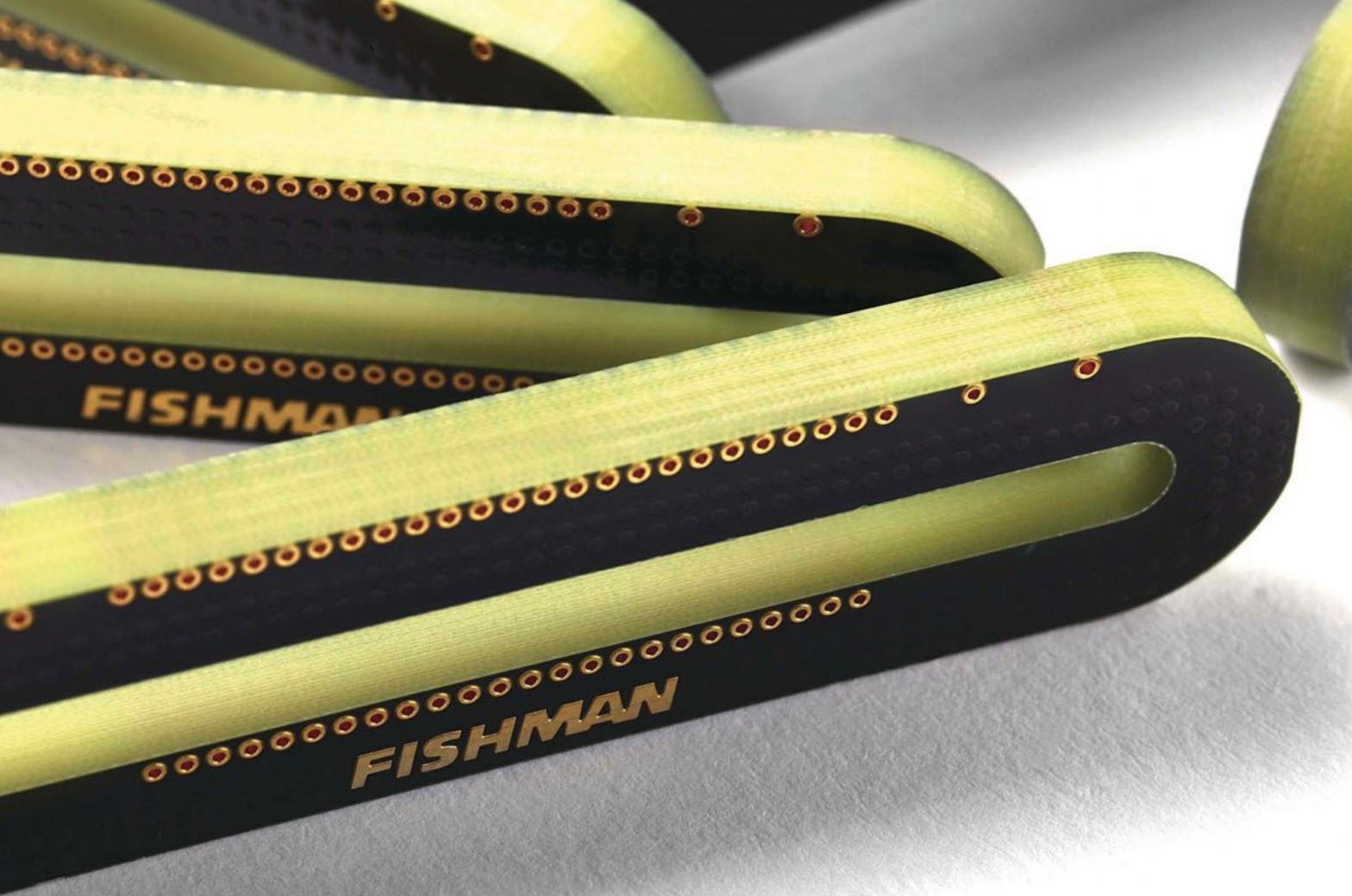
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## Tmbpartners Wins Summit Creative Gold for Fishman Campaign

Out of more than 5,000 submissions from 24 countries, Tmbpartners has been named a Gold Award winner in the 2014 Summit Creative Award® competition. The SCA Gold Award reflects tmbpartners' creative work integrating all aspects of the launch of Fishman Transducers' Fluence Multi-Voice elec-

tric guitar pickups. Tmbpartners' work on behalf of Fishman Fluence included: website, design, content, and programming; trade and consumer print advertising; video production and direction; trade and consumer collateral materials; assistance with product development; and more.



MI industry veteran and author, Ritchie Fliegler, who has held senior positions at Marshall Amplification and Fender Musical Instruments among others, joined "tmb" as a partner five years ago. He says, "Companies like Fishman used to be the norm in the MI industry – scrappy, creative and run by founders who are players themselves... It's an honor to work with these guys and to play a part in their continuing success.

"Oh, and the product? It's a true revolution. Not surprisingly though, when you consider that Fishman is the company that put acoustic sounds in Pete Townshend's Strat, sonic 'images' of studio mics in my J-45 acoustic, and batteries in bluegrass players' 70-year-old Martins! They are a massively disruptive group."

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

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Violin Viola Cello Omni Bass Upright Bass RADIUS Bass Guitar

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

Avid® announced that Hessischer Rundfunk, one of Germany's leading public broadcasters, has selected Avid solutions to power its post-production workflow. The upgrade empowers Hessischer Rundfunk to benefit from the Avid MediaCentral Platform through enhanced collaboration, accelerated production, and producing and distributing higher-quality content to millions of German citizens via four radio stations and one television channel.

"Hessischer Rundfunk's investment demonstrates the growing momentum Avid is building in the European market," said Jeff Rosica, senior vice president Worldwide Field Operations at Avid.

By implementing the industry's most open and tightly integrated workflows, including two System 5 Fusion digital audio mixing consoles and a Pro Tools®|H-



DX system with Interplay® integration, Hessischer Rundfunk has streamlined its production and distribution processes, greatly increasing efficiency.

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

## Dana B. Goods Exclusive U.S. Distributor for Bartolini Pickups



The Bartolini Pickup and Electronics company has named Dana B. Goods as its new exclusive U.S. distributor. Over the last year, Bartolini has doubled production capacity and increased its on-time delivery schedule to 99 percent. Dana B. Goods is known for its customer service, logistics, and technical expertise.

As president of Dana B. Goods, Dana Teague points out: "Bartolini is well known for the excellent tone and quality of its pickup and electronics design."

[bartolini.net](http://bartolini.net)

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Booth #937

## New YamahaDTX.com Website Helps Electronic Drummers

Yamaha recently announced the launch of [www.yamahadt.com](http://www.yamahadt.com), a new website devoted to the company's DTX electronic drum lineup.



The new site addresses the growing market for electronic drums and highlights the latest DTX product information, including detailed information and deep resources for end users and anyone interested in learning more about DTX electronic drums. In addition to demonstration videos, extra content, product manuals and how-to-guides, the site will contain updated artist news and videos that showcase how DTX electronic drums are being used in studios, on tours and on television.

The site will also include informative articles on using the training functions of DTX electronic drums in a teaching environment. Yamaha product specialists and artists will contribute news and events posts on a wide scope of topics, encouraging DTX drummers to stop by the page regularly. The brand new forum, DTX Community, will serve as a new hub for drummers to interact, chat, post pictures and share tips and stories.

[4wr.d.it/yamahadt.com](http://4wr.d.it/yamahadt.com)

## Sennheiser and Neumann Partner with Chelsea Music Fest

Sennheiser announced that it has partnered with the Chelsea Music Festival in its fifth year, celebrating Germany and Brazil through music, food and art. Over the course



of the eight-day event, Sennheiser will provide a full complement of Neumann microphones to be used at a variety of venues throughout New York's Chelsea neighborhood — as well as a dedicated "Momentum" headphone listening station at St. Paul's Lutheran Church on 22nd Street.

The Festival will feature musical artists from around the world, engaging audiences of all ages with programs inspired by composer anniversaries of Richard Strauss (150), Heitor Villa-Lobos (55) and C.P.E. Bach (300). "As the Chelsea Music Festival celebrates its fifth season and looks to capture more complex recordings, we knew that Sennheiser and Neumann would be the perfect complement," commented Brett Leonard, chief audio engineer for Chelsea Music Festival. "This year, we have everything from very traditional classical vocal ensembles, string quartets, jazz ensembles, Brazilian ensembles and many others so we looked to Sennheiser to help with the overall sound experience."

[chelseamusicfestival.org](http://chelseamusicfestival.org).

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ON THE MOVE

**Guitar Center, Inc.** (GCI) has promoted **Dustin Hinz** to vice president of brand experience and entertainment marketing.



Dustin is a 17-year veteran of the GC family with a background in marketing, content development, and entertainment relations. Since beginning his career at Guitar Center back in 1997, Hinz has been committed to developing the retailer into one of the most respected brands in the music space. From the creation of the award-winning music television series *Guitar Center Sessions* on DIRECTV and the brand's unparalleled artist empowerment programs, to his work on GC's recent re-branding initiative "All We Sell is the Greatest Feeling on Earth" – where beloved and iconic artists, such as The Roots' Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson, Metallica's James Hetfield, and EDM star Steve Aoki celebrate the simple joy they each get from the act of playing a musical instrument – Hinz's vision for consumer-facing marketing programs have become the lifeblood of the retailer's brand strategy.

In this new role, Hinz will be responsible for managing Guitar Center's brand ethos, creative and content strategies to influence sales, traffic, loyalty, and unparalleled brand awareness.

**Harman Professional** has appointed **Erik Tarkiainen** as vice president of global marketing and in doing so signaled its intent to advance its branding and communications with stronger understanding and engagement among partners and customers worldwide.



Effective immediately, Tarkiainen will lead global marketing strategy and execution across the professional division and will drive new initiatives in online marketing, social media, public relations, events marketing, and education. He will operate from Harman's Northridge, California facility and will report to Ralph Santana, Harman chief marketing officer, and Blake Augsburg, president, Harman Professional Division.

Effective immediately, Tarkiainen will lead global marketing strategy and execution across the professional division and will drive new initiatives in online marketing, social media, public relations, events marketing, and education. He will operate from Harman's Northridge, California facility and will report to Ralph Santana, Harman chief marketing officer, and Blake Augsburg, president, Harman Professional Division.

**Neutrik USA** has appointed **David Kuklinski** to the position of applications manager.



He will focus on the broadcast market and new solutions offered by Neutrik and their channel partners. Kuklinski will be based out of Neutrik USA's Charlotte, North Carolina offices.

In his new position, Kuklinski will oversee Neutrik USA's Certified optical-CON® Cable Assembler (COCA) program. He will also identify and participate in the sales and implementations of new opportunities for the Neutrik® fiber optic product line.

Kuklinski's prior positions include channel accounts manager (Southeast) for Lifesize Communications (a division of LogiTech), broadcast manager for Avid Technology, vice president of business development for Diversified Systems, and professional services manager for Sony Electronics, Inc.

**The Zildjian Company** has promoted **Sarah Hagan** to director of artist relations – world-wide, effective immediately.



Hagan assumes responsibility for planning and executing Zildjian's global Artist Relations Program, based out of its headquarters in Norwell, Massachusetts. Hagan will lead the AR team, continuing to build upon Zildjian's long history of helping artists find their unique sound.

A drummer and former teacher, Hagan joined Zildjian as a marketing and events coordinator and was promoted to artist relations manager-East Coast. In her 10 years with Zildjian, She has personally selected cymbals for top drumming luminaries such as Roy Haynes, Steve Gadd, and Carter Beauford, and managed clinic tours with greats such as Dennis Chambers, Gavin Harrison, and Marco Minnemann.

As a member of Zildjian's Sound Team, Hagan has worked closely with R&D and marketing on the successful development and launch of the re-designed A and new Kerope lines. Sarah currently represents Zildjian on the Percussion Marketing Council.

**Roland Corporation U.S.** has announced the appointments of **Brandon Ryan** as product and artist relations manager – dance, DJ, and media production, **Peter Brown** as product specialist – dance and DJ, and **Casey Bishop** as AIRA artist and customer relations. These three newly created positions will help

Roland grow and support the expanding AIRA product line and customers in the dance and DJ segment.

Brandon Ryan joined Roland in 2012 and has more than 20 years of musical instrument industry experience including extensive knowledge of sales, marketing, and artist relations. Complimentary to his MI experience, Brandon is also a classically trained multi-instrumentalist and has worked with professional artists, producers, and engineers. In his new role as the product and artist relations manager, Brandon will lead efforts to position the new AIRA line at the top of the segment by working closely with R&D and building artist relations and marketing support that define how AIRA meets the needs of today's evolving electronic musicians.

Peter Brown holds a bachelor of arts in music in electronic production and design from Berklee College of Music and recently served as a sound designer for the film *Fast and Furious 6*. His background in DJ/dance music creation is a valuable asset to Roland's growing DJ/dance segment, and to his primary responsibility of supporting AIRA's avid customer base.

Prior to being recruited by the dance and DJ team at Roland U.S., Casey Bishop served as a sales engineer for production, rental and live performance venues at the pro audio and video division of Roland, Roland Systems Group. His live production and artist relations experience as well as a background in electronic dance music production and performance ideally support Roland's reemergence into the dance and DJ market.

Originally from Denmark, **Peter Glinvad** has been working in China for 12 years. His in-depth knowledge of the Chinese culture and fluency in the language present distinct upside for **TC Group China** in his new position as managing director.



Further, TC Group China has recently been incorporated as a WFOE (Wholly Foreign-Owned Entity) and moved to a new, larger office facility in the Chaoyang District.

# UPFRONT Q&A: BRIAN BALL

The guitar market isn't what it used to be, but Ernie Ball vice president Brian Ball still likes what he sees.

By Matt Parish



**A**pproaching another big Summer NAMM Show this month in Nashville, this spring seemed like the perfect opportunity to check in with one of the industry's most recognizable companies – Ernie Ball. The California-based organization, now in its 52nd year in operation, has stayed ahead of the game through years of innovation and adaptation. We spoke with Ernie Ball VP Brian Ball about the changing state of the guitar industry, the resilience of the accessories market, and the importance of never rushing development on what could end up being a groundbreaking product.

“ We’ve got some pretty smart competitors out there and if we’re not aggressive and working hard to develop new products, then someone else will be. ”

**MMR: As always, the MI landscape has continued to change in recent years, shifting along with the economy (leaner approaches from almost everyone) and the evolving pop music culture (less focus than ever on guitar heroes). How has Ernie Ball’s place changed in that industry?**

**Brian Ball:** There’s no question popular music is almost guitar-free to a certain point if you refer to radio and iTunes charts. But, I don’t think guitar music is dead – people are just buying less music. The Apple acquisition of Beats Electronics is 100 percent a streaming play and talent acquisition with Jimmy Iovine. Apple knows that digital music sales are down substantially, and streaming services provide such a significantly cheaper and better discovery model that we’re going to see this more and more in years ahead.

From Ernie Ball’s standpoint, we really haven’t changed the way we’ve approached selling or marketing our products. Personally, I think we have a really great collection of bands that play guitar and I believe they influence guitarists the same way shredders did in the ‘80s, just differently. Great examples are Dave Grohl, Jack White, Black Keys, Kings of Leon. Then you have great acoustic players that play music that’s attainable to learn like Jason Mraz and Jack Johnson. Then we also have this really popular cult-like “djent” metal base with guys like Periphery, Born of Osiris, and Animals as Leaders. These artists are all influential in their own right.

**What is your assessment of the guitar market this year?**

I think the guitar market is at a really exciting time, but extremely competitive. Acoustics continue to be on fire, while electrics have been flat or down a little. One of the things I think we’ll see is more interesting body designs, and more innovation on the pickup side of things. Fishman’s new pickups, our Game Changer system, and Fender’s personal tone cards are good examples of that. 3D printing may also pave the way for some more unique designs with materials and shapes.

**What has Ernie Ball been working on developing for the string and accessory market?**

We’ve gotten a couple patents on string products recently – our Cobalt Slinky line and the M-Steel (“Maraging Steel Core”) line. Additionally, we recently came out with Aluminum Bronze Acoustic Strings, which give acoustic players more projection and clarity than traditional bronze strings.

**Are there market indicators you’re looking for when deciding when to aggressively go after patents and new technologies?**

It’s really not a timing thing. It’s a constant pursuit of innova-

tion. We’ve got some pretty smart competitors out there and if we’re not aggressive and working hard to develop new products, then someone else will be. So it’s a huge priority, not just personally for Sterling [Ball, president and CEO] and myself, but for the whole company.

I’ve learned that when you develop and design products based on a schedule, that’s when you’re going to be met with some adversity and potential failure. First and foremost, you have to make the product great. You can only market an average product so well. You’ve got to really develop and fine tune a product line. When it’s finished and you know it’s ready for market and you’ve gone through all the product development steps, then you know you’re ready. But if you think, “We’ve got to come out with something this year at NAMM...” that’s the quickest way to set yourself up to stub your toe.

**How much does customer and retailer feedback factor into your research?**

We definitely value input from our retailer partners. We want to know what’s working for them, what’s not, how we can help, and how we can continue making a profitable relationship with each other. We could sit around and pat ourselves on the back all day, but what

really matters is what value are we providing the consumers and artists. What needs are and aren’t being met, and how can we best fill those gaps?

**Do you get involved very much with how retailers are merchandising your product?**

Merchandising is a big component of getting your message out. Obviously, there are print ads, social media, PR, and other vehicles you can do directly, but at the point of sale, it’s really important to get some visual merchandising going. If you walk into a music store, especially on the accessories side, it’s pretty cluttered. Strings, straps, picks, cables, et cetera. Doing countertop displays and banners are things that we generally focus on.

**Given how the market has been, dealers have had to lean more heavily on accessory items. Has that strengthened Ernie Ball’s relationship with retailers?**

Without a doubt. It’s twofold – one, I don’t think people are playing less guitar. If anything, there are more and more macro drivers like YouTube nowadays that are really pushing people to play. The small accessory goods have been a great business for retailers and manufacturers. I also think that the retailers enjoy how much emphasis we place on the new product and the profit margins they come with, in addition to the promotions that we do. I’m really excited at how well the new string lines have been



**24<sup>th</sup>  
Annual**

# Profile of the American Music Dealer

Refined Data Collection Provides More Accurate State-by-State Analysis

By Christian **Wissmuller**

The 2014 edition of our annual summer dealer count and breakdown represents a major milestone in how *MMR* collects and verifies this type of information. The numbers presented reflect a far greater degree of accuracy, providing current store counts for each state and the country, overall, as well as a percentage breakdown of how many stores provide each type of MI product to consumers.

While the upsides to this revamped approach to data collection are obvious, it does present challenges when comparing today's numbers with those of previous years. By employing enhanced techniques to ensure that our store-counts do not include duplicate entries for the same business, and verifying that all retail outlets are in fact still in operation at the present time, the overall totals are (for most states) down from what was reported in 2013. A unit change of just a few digits doesn't mean much when considering a single state or district, but when considering all 50 states plus Washington D.C., the effect is more significant.

As a result, for the first time in a while, our official annual dealer count is below the 8,000 mark, with a 2014 mid-year total of 7,650. Though data for recent years is included in the graphs and charts below, in many ways this July's Profile could be considered "Year One" for a new and more accurate "Profile of the American Music Dealer." To be sure, a handful of music instrument stores opened across the country in the past 12 months and, unfortunately, a number of operations also closed their doors for good. Simply glancing through the pages of any issue of *MMR* or checking your email in-box for recent *MMR* Weekly Updates will provide ample evidence of that. But, when considering the reported "minus 364" stores in this year's Profile, it would have to be said that the decrease is more a reflection of our entirely retooled approach to compiling this report than to some massive industry implosion within the past 12 months.

Even factoring in such changes, some states saw a healthy uptick

in overall store operations since July 2013 – Illinois, Nevada, and Arkansas, in particular.

Additionally, "Percentage Shares by Product Type" has been rethought to be more exacting in how it presents the product lines carried by individual stores. For example, in previous years, a dealer who carries a few hand drums might not have responded "yes" when asked if their business carries "drums/percussion." Our belief is that, yes, if your store stocks a few castanets, djembes, and shekeres then you *are* a store that sells "drums/percussion" - hence the otherwise inexplicable jump from 47 percent of retail locations reported to carry that category of product in 2013 to the current 81 percent.

Among the notable openings, closings, and other developments in the past year... Sam Ash opened its second store in the Texas market with a mammoth 21,500 square-foot Dallas store last July. Longtime co-owner of Kentucky's Owensboro Music Center retired in October 2013 and the store was rebranded "Gordy's Owensboro Music Center" after Starks' previous partner and current sole owner Gordy Wilcher. New Canaan, Connecticut welcomed the new "one-stop music shop" New Canaan Music. Ricky Bright, former manager of both the Music Shoppe and Samuel Music in Champaign, Illinois, opened his own high-end guitar store in town (The Upper Bout). Guitar Center signed a 15-year lease for the former Daffy's (fashion retailer) space in the old New York Times building in Manhattan, while elsewhere around the country the chain's rate of new store openings remained at an impressive pace. After 71 years in business, Houston's Dowling Music closed in late January 2014. In Harlem, a March 12th explosion believed to be the result of a gas leak destroyed the Absolute Piano retail operation (happily, the store reopened in Downtown Brooklyn later this spring). In April, Music & Arts acquired six former Mills Music locations in Washington state. And guitar vets Paul Hvidsten and Brett Marcuson opened Flatland Guitar and Lutherie in Fargo, N.D.

## Percentage Shares By Product Type

SELLING CATEGORY	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
Sell Keyboard/Piano/Organ	55%	48%	48.7%	50.3%	54%
Sell Band & Orchestra Instruments	50%	43%	43%	41.9%	43%
Sell Drums/Percussion	81%	47%	47.1%	46.7%	47%
Sell Sound Reinf./Recording Equip.	53%	47%	49.4%	47.9%	46%
Sell Fretted Instruments	70%	63%	62.2%	60.5%	60%
Sell Print Music	51%	46%	46.5%	45.5%	47%

### 2013 State-By-State Breakdown

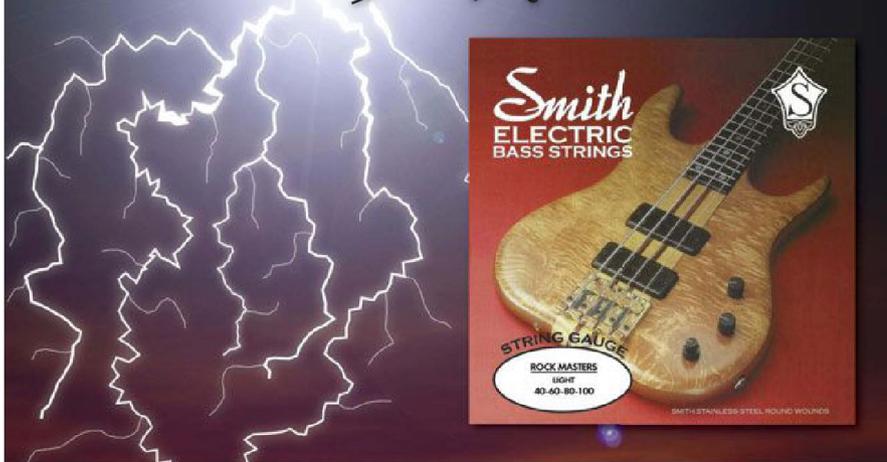
	Total Stores 2013	Total Stores 2014	Unit Change
Alabama	126	111	-15
Alaska	24	21	-3
Arizona	131	116	-15
Arkansas	79	88	+9
California	1053	1052	-1
Colorado	140	126	-14
Connecticut	123	104	-19
Delaware	24	14	-10
District of Columbia	4	3	-1
Florida	390	377	-13
Georgia	252	248	-4
Hawaii	42	37	-5
Idaho	56	54	-2
Illinois	328	341	+13
Indiana	190	175	-15
Iowa	97	86	-11
Kansas	91	86	-5
Kentucky	131	131	0
Louisiana	95	77	-18
Maine	37	36	-1
Maryland	127	108	-19
Massachusetts	188	184	-4
Michigan	236	208	-28
Minnesota	159	156	-3
Mississippi	63	62	-1
Missouri	157	164	+7

	Total Stores 2013	Total Stores 2014	Unit Change
Montana	35	35	0
Nebraska	64	54	-10
Nevada	48	58	+10
New Hampshire	54	52	-2
New Jersey	207	198	-9
New Mexico	44	46	+2
New York	488	488	0
North Carolina	225	217	-8
North Dakota	26	23	-3
Ohio	330	301	-29
Oklahoma	95	89	-6
Oregon	126	119	-7
Pennsylvania	375	345	-30
Rhode Island	25	24	-1
South Carolina	107	109	+2
South Dakota	17	18	+1
Tennessee	196	183	-13
Texas	460	453	-7
Utah	81	81	0
Vermont	29	26	-3
Virginia	196	191	-5
Washington	183	168	-15
West Virginia	53	50	-3
Wisconsin	172	141	-31
Wyoming	20	16	-4
		8004	7650

### Ten-Year State Count



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### State Gains

Biggest gains by number of units were Arkansas, Illinois, and Nevada.

### State Losses

Biggest losses by number of units were Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and Ohio.

### Gains (7)

Arkansas, Illinois, Missouri, Nevada, New Mexico, South Carolina, South Dakota.

### Gains (4)

Utah, New York, Montana, and Kentucky.

### Losses (40)

Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin.



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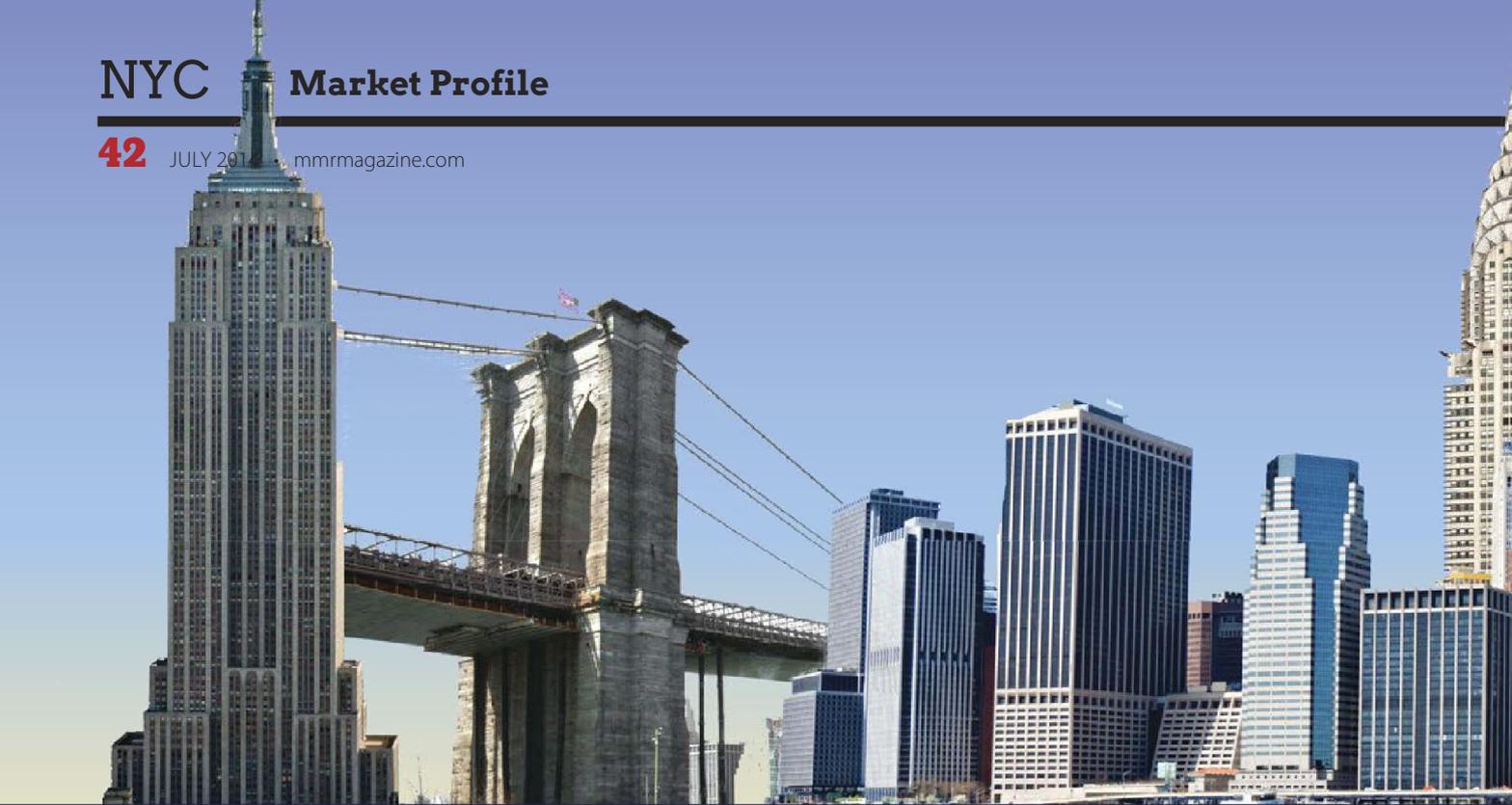
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# Take a Walk on

A look into the massive (and ultra-competitive) world of MI in New York City

By Matt Parish and Christian Wissmuller

**T**here's no place on Earth like New York City. A stacked mash-up of countless cultures and massive economic forces crammed into a dense corner of the coast, the City That Never Sleeps offers an almost unending variety of opportunities for business. And as one of the world's most important musical meccas, you can be sure that it's home to a vast amount of MI business.

The capitol city of New York is the second-largest regional economy in the entire world, behind only Tokyo. It leads the global stock trading market and is a powerful headquarters for many of the most powerful media companies on the globe. But it's the Big Apple's arts and music scene that captures the imagination. It's been the incubator for some of music's most important innovators (Thelonious Monk, Sonny Rollins, Bob Dylan, the Ramones, the Beastie Boys, and Jay-Z barely even get you started). It's home to some of the most revered venues in the world (Carnegie Hall, the Metropolitan Opera, Madison Square Garden) and is home base to incredible recording studios like Electric Lady, MSR, Platinum Sound, and Avatar. The world's most famous house bands – Paul Shaffer's "The World's Most Dangerous Band" and the Roots – clock in here every day. And, of course, it's a test lab for tens of thousands of musician hopefuls playing every genre imaginable in rock bars, jazz lounges, converted warehouses, and even their own little apartments – all forming the foundation of this sprawling regional music economy. *MMR* reached out to friends throughout the area to piece together a current picture of this one-of-a-kind market.

“ You really can't be very poor to live in a city where the average apartment cost is now over a million dollars, so we see people starting to spend again. ”

— Sammy Ash, Sam Ash Music Stores



# the Wild Side

**MAIN DRAG MUSIC**  
330 Wythe Ave., Brooklyn  
Karl Myers  
Founder and President

*Located a little off of Williamsburg's original hipster main drag, Bedford Ave., Main Drag Music has quickly established itself as one of the city's essential independent music stores. The staff are experts in vintage and new guitars, synths, and drums, and host a great collection of boutique pedals.*



## What are the financial challenges of operating a retail store in New York City?

Real estate values have driven taxes through the roof, which in turn drives rent. Commercial landlords are often taxed at a rate based on estimated market value as high as \$50/sqft. You have to sell a lot of guitar strings just to make rent. Labor, of course, is also very expensive.

## What are the cultural advantages?

New York City is one of the cultural capitals of the world, and definitely of the United States, so there is a sizable market for almost every niche imaginable. This allows creative retailers to follow what they're passionate about.

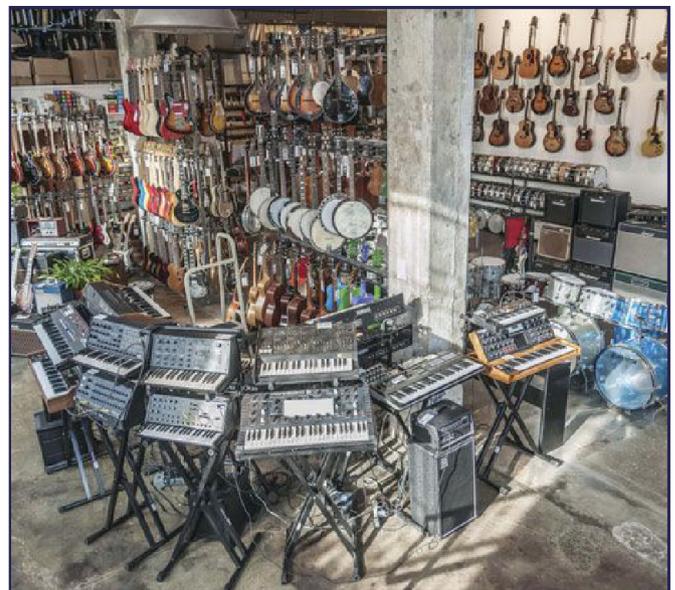
## Brooklyn has changed drastically in recent years. What has that meant for your business in recent years?

We have seen a huge increase in international clients. What's great is that they are still the kind of musicians we've always

served, just from farther away. Because of this, we've been able to maintain our identity while improving and increasing the scope of what we offer.

## Who is the typical NYC consumer?

I don't know that I'm qualified to comment on what the typical consumer in NYC is like. I can tell you our local clientele are die-hard music lovers who span the range from sanitation worker to MSG headliner. Some are native, some are transplants - every type of person imaginable!



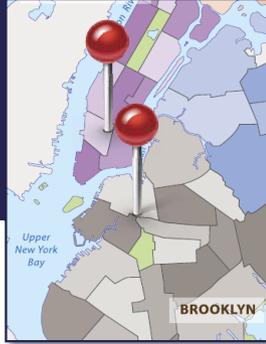
## GUITAR CENTER

25 W 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Manhattan;

139 Flatbush Ave, Brooklyn

Christopher Bennett

VP of Communications & Corporate Affairs



*The biggest MI chain in the world needs no introduction, but it is worth noting that GC has leveraged great locations in Manhattan and Brooklyn (not to mention the imminent arrival of a new Times Square store) to create one-of-a-kind event and product demo hubs with big-name musicians, establishing a unique connection to the city.*

### What are the financial challenges of operating a retail store in New York City?

The costs of real estate and staying in operation are obviously higher in NYC, so we account for those financial considerations. Moving beyond that, it's about creating and keeping a loyal customer base, just like anywhere. Of course, New York is an extremely competitive market, and everyone is always looking for the best price and a "deal."

### How have you managed to set yourself apart in this market?

New York is made up of neighborhoods that might lean towards a particular genre of music. For instance, our Brooklyn

store has a significant sector of its clientele from the hip-hop and EDM communities. We partnered with global Digital Music technology brand Serato to open an exclusive 2,500-square-foot in-store space offering a permanent home for DJs and aspiring music producers to demo and buy the latest products in Serato's product line. This has been such a huge success, we followed it with opening up a similar setup at our Hollywood location.

### The landscape of New York City is constantly changing – what has that meant for your business in recent years?

The New York market has been very good for us the past few years. As you know, we are on the eve of opening a new flagship location in the Times Square area. With the closing of many MI retail locations on the legendary 48th street, we feel our Times Square store will allow us not only to fill this void and service the midtown area, but also to expose the thousands of area visitors to making music and playing a musical instrument in whatever market they call home.



## ELECTRO-HARMONIX

55-01 2nd Street, Long Island City

Mike Matthews

Founder and President



*One of the most influential effects companies of all time got its start in New York City when an IBM salesman who was into rock'n'roll started distributing a fuzz pedal and a power boost pedal in 1968. Now an international force, Mike Matthews' Electro-Harmonix operates out of a new headquarters in Queens and continues releasing groundbreaking pedals like the brand new B9 Organ Machine, which convincingly transforms guitar signals into a variety of classic organ tones.*

### How's the new location in Long Island City?

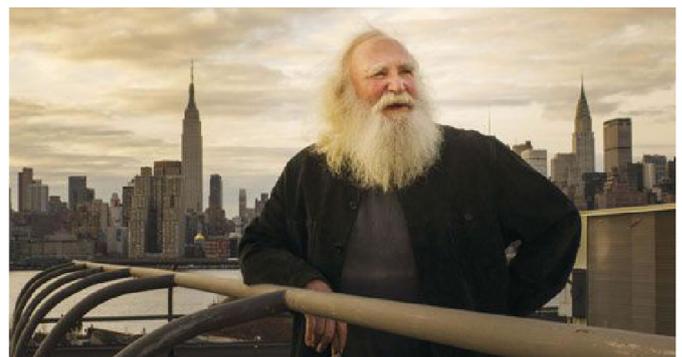
We've got a really big place - 89,000 square feet and plenty of room to expand. It's very comfortable and we love it. We have a huge parking lot, so anyone can drive to work but also play soccer during lunch breaks. The advantage of being in New York is that the city just has the biggest pool of labor and professionals that you could possibly ask for, probably in the world. Whenever we need somebody, we can add the right people promptly. Especially being in Queens, where we don't have the crowd of Manhattan, where I used to be for years. With the subway system, we have people who can get here from the Bronx, Manhattan, Brooklyn, and beyond. Even the Long Island Railroad stops a half a block from the factory. It's a tremendous advantage – even though the taxes in New York are terribly high, the people are the key.

### What operations happen in the Long Island City location?

We do all our final assembly here. We buy parts – chassis, printed circuit boards, jacks, and so on – from all over, but we do all the final assembly here. Doing that means quality control. If you run into a problem, you can solve it right away. Everything we assemble is immediately tested on the oscilloscopes. Once it's tested, it's sealed and then tested again with guitar. If there are any rejects, we know about them right away and can fix them right away. If they're assembled somewhere else, who knows what's happening.

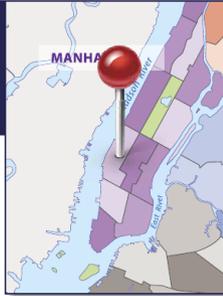
### Any new directions for Electro-Harmonix?

The B9 is taking off. In the first 36 hours that the demo video was up on YouTube, we had 86,000 views, which is amazing. We already have a very hot product that we're having difficulty keeping up with production – the Soul Food pedal, which is our version of the KLON Centaur. We sell thousands a month. But now the B9 is just taking off. It just has tremendous potential. It's a monster.



**SAM ASH MUSIC STORES**  
333 W 34<sup>th</sup> Street, Manhattan  
Sammy Ash  
COO

*Long a mainstay on the Midtown retail scene, Sam Ash's New York location offers a dizzying variety of instruments from every corner of the world and serves an audience that is truly international.*



**What makes NYC different than any other market?**

We have been a known quantity in Manhattan since 1970. Our European and South American customers have sought us out even though we have moved. We have had a lot of great in-store clinics and meet and greets. We hosted the Rock and Roll Fantasy camp kickoff party, clinics with Donovan, Mark Tremonti, Billy Sheehan, Gibson Custom Shops (all three at one time).

**How have you managed to set yourself apart in this market?**

We sell everything from bagpipes to authentic African and Latin percussion, herald trumpets, and of course the components that no one else does, full sheet music (most ethnic titles are in stock) in every style of brass, woodwinds, and orchestral. Our used and vintage sales are quite healthy and brisk.

Second would be the family and the staff who represent us in NYC. The guy who runs the outfit is Ian Goldrich, who has been serving the Manhattan and International market for over 40 years, first with Manny's and now with us for over 15 years.

**The landscape of New York City is constantly changing, in terms of economy, real estate, culture, and more. What has that meant for your business in recent years?**

Huge changes. There are no more frequent \$100,000 studio deals, there's new competition keeping us on our toes, making sure that we have individuals on staff who have specific language skills, and we've increased our service department since we see that people are keeping their instruments longer. Another significant change is the increase of electronic percussion – 99.9 percent of all Manhattanites live in an apartment and landlords do not allow the sound of an acoustic drum set. Also we sell in inordinate amount of headphones, compared to any other location.

In terms of economy, you really can't be very poor to live in a city where the average apartment cost is now over a million dollars, so we see people starting to spend again and many who are no longer embarrassed to show us the money.



**MATT UMANOV**  
273 Bleecker Street, Manhattan  
Matt Umanov, Owner

*Matt Umanov Guitars has evolved into a destination storefront and repair shop since its opening in 1965. Steadfastly focused on "guitars, and only guitars," this vintage powerhouse has built a reputation for honest sales and unmatched service.*



**What makes NYC different than any other market?**

Having been considered by many to be the crossroads of the business and the cultural world since the start of the industrial revolution in the early 19th century, we have at this point over 50 million visitors a year coming to New York. They are comprised of residents, business people, and tourists from as near as South Brooklyn and as far as South Africa, every single day, and a heck of a lot of them have a lot of shopping to do.

**What are the financial challenges of operating a retail store in New York City?**

Higher operating costs than in most other places in America; huge commercial rent in high-traffic areas, insurance of all types, myriad government fees – the list goes on.

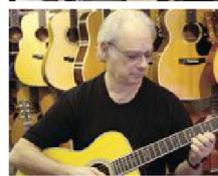
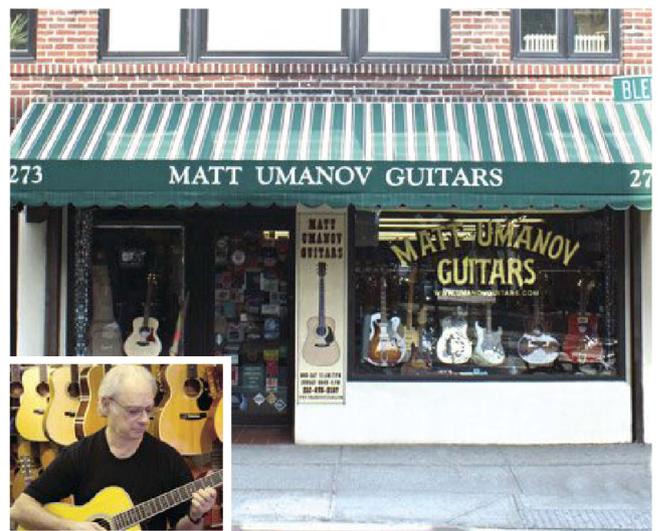
**What are the cultural advantages?**

The enormous ethnic diversity, the music, the shows, the mu-

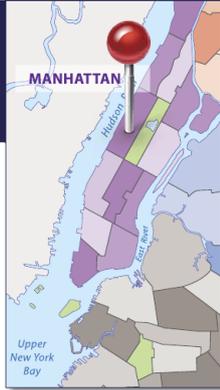
seums, the restaurants – more of it than anyone can possibly take in. It's a cultural paradise.

**How have you managed to set yourself apart in this market?**

We have a reputation for only having the very best of every category of fretted instruments, both new and old, and have what has been considered to be the finest in-house guitar repair and restoration service in New York since the 1960s. The combination is a winner, both for casual musicians and for professional musicians.



**LOOG GUITARS**  
 119 W 72nd St. #335, Manhattan  
 Rafael Atijas  
 Founder



*Growing out of founder Rafael Atijas' thesis at NYU, the Loog is a three-stringed instrument that consumers put together themselves using only a screwdriver. The company, launched in 2011, is unveiling the first Electric Loog Guitar at this year's Summer NAMM, as well as a few secret surprises in store for this fall.*

**Loog is a pretty fresh company, but you're still pushing forward with new products. What are you looking forward to in the second half of 2014?**

Right by the time of Summer NAMM, we'll be delivering our first line of Electric Loog Guitars, which we launched through Kickstarter last November. We are super excited about this and we can't wait for all the people and distributors who pre-ordered to have them in their hands. So, we are looking forward to the second semester when we'll have our complete line of acoustic and electric guitars in stock for the holiday season.



er came here might be surprised to learn – is that not everything is as big-scaled as you could suppose. We still have mom and pop shops and stores that have been around forever, still managed by the same families. I love being able to walk into these stores and speak directly to the owners. Some are big, some are small, but we feel we are all together trying to make it.

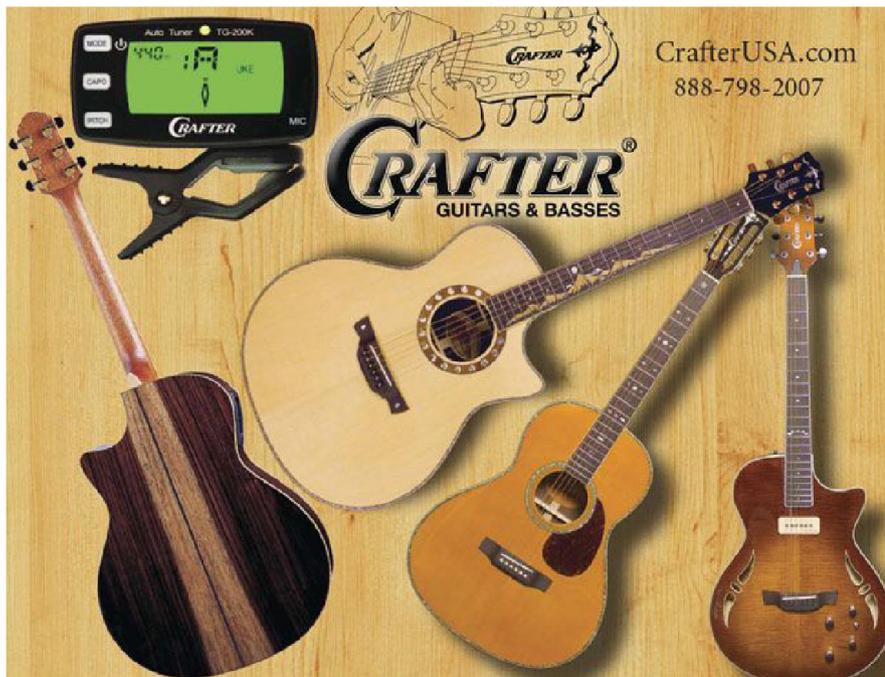
**How important is your geography to the identity of your brand?**

Our products were born in NYC and therefore I feel that this is their natural place. I am constantly inspired by the city and all the beauty, the energy, and the opportunities that seem to appear at every corner. For instance, a few weeks ago our guitars were selected to be at the MoMA Design Stores; we take that as a huge accomplishment and with great pride because we feel the MoMA is so NYC.



**What makes doing business as a supplier in NYC different?**

One thing I really like about NYC – and one that people who nev-



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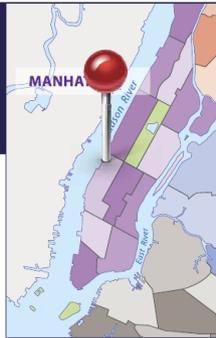
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“ Real estate values have driven taxes through the roof which in turn drives rent... You have to sell a lot of guitar strings just to make rent.

— Karl Myers, Main Drag Music ”

**PEEKAMOOSE GUITARS**  
251 West 30th St, Manhattan  
Paul Schwartz  
Owner/Master Luthier



The custom guitar and repair company Peekamoose has been around since 1983, building a reputation for classic American-style guitars and custom modifications. They've already released the brand new Model V guitar this year (a classy Les Paul-style axe) and are set to introduce a Model VI later this fall.

**What makes doing business as a supplier in NYC different?**

You are dealing with a very diverse client base. Lots of very different musical styles, instrument setups, personal preferences. But also we don't just do business in NYC – we have clients on almost every land mass except the polar caps.

**How important is your geography to the identity of your brand? Does it change how you're perceived or how you market yourself?**

The fact that we are a U.S. guitar manufacturing company matters. The fact that we are in NYC, I think in the large picture, is irrelevant. What matters most is how great our product line is.

**The guitar market has undergone several changes since Peekamoose began. How has the company evolved?**

The technology has advanced and so has the end user's expectation of what an instrument should deliver in terms of performance and value. We have had to adapt as best we can to the trends in the market without sacrificing our identity and what we know is important when sending an instrument out the door. Our key issues are responsiveness, ease of play, accuracy, dependability, creating highly adaptive instruments which can deliver the goods for any style of music a musician wants to explore.



# Guitar & Musical Instrument Repair Tags

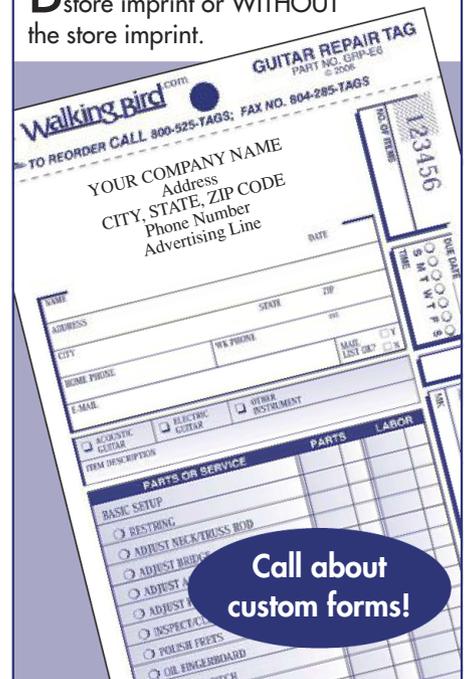


**Walking Bird**

Two Repair Forms for the Musical Instrument Industry. The first form (Part# GRP) is designed for technicians working primarily on guitars and other string instruments. It has services pre-listed in an organized and concise format.

The 2nd Repair Form (Part# MINP) has none of the services pre-listed. This is perfect for those who prefer to write in the work-to-be-done. It can be used, as well, for instruments other than guitars as there is more room to specify work-to-be-done. Carbonless paper, 3 full parts and 2 Product ID Stubs are included.

Both forms are available WITH your store imprint or WITHOUT the store imprint.



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## Note From Joe

# Lessons From the Past, Optimism for the Future

At our recent NAMM Board of Directors meeting, we reviewed a presentation of NAMM's 113-year history. It's pretty unbelievable really, when you consider all that our little industry has been through... Economic swings, great depressions, World Wars, technological breakthroughs, all told through the people and companies who lived through it, and set to the music that changed the world. Seeing the predictability (in hindsight of course) of the economic cycles not only added important historical context to our board discussions, it also made me think about our current situation as we work to emerge from the destabilizing period we now call "the great recession."

We hear more and more Members tell us they're doing better, selling more to existing customers and gaining new customers. There are always exceptions, but for the most part, optimism is the shared feeling in the industry. It seems we're coming out of "survival" mode. The latest numbers support this sentiment, as the *Music Trades* recently reported 3.8-percent growth in the first quarter. With this increase in sales, there is a palpable sense of an emerging "animal spirit," one that follows the economics of going from "fear to greed." In fact, one of the themes I hear often as I speak with Members is, "Joe, I'm sick of just trying to survive. I want to grow again!"

Coming out of the post-recession economy, perhaps this optimism is a good thing. It helps spur industry growth because it's when entrepreneurs get optimistic that things get interesting. It's when incredible breakthroughs and innovations start taking place: companies developing new products and technology, creating new promotional strategies and introducing programs to grow the market.

You'll hear a lot about growth at 2014 Summer NAMM, dubbed "Nashville 2.0." The show is all about taking your marketing, promotions and sales to the next level. You'll get specific examples during the annual "NAMM Retail Summit," where we'll show you businesses that are flourishing in the new normal—some experiencing double-digit growth—and what they're doing to get there. But even more important, we're going to inspire you to start growing again.

If the economic pendulum truly is swinging in our favor, will it eventually swing back the other way? Based on more than 100 years of well-documented industry history, I'd have to say yes. That's why we must make the most of this time while respecting the hard-earned lessons of the past—being frugal, saving for a rainy day and making careful decisions—while also leaving our comfort zone to embrace the opportunities in front of us at this moment. With the economy seemingly moving in the right direction, now is the time to position your business for growth, expansion and success. That means being bold, taking risks, venturing into new markets and creating new customers. Now is when entrepreneurs aggressively promote and grow their business. And, not trying to get all "Gordon Gecko," but perhaps there is a time for the animal spirit to be greedy, to be hungry for growth and success.

If we are entering the next phase of the economic cycle, then let's make the most of it—individually, in our own businesses and with a clear vision of helping everyone make music!



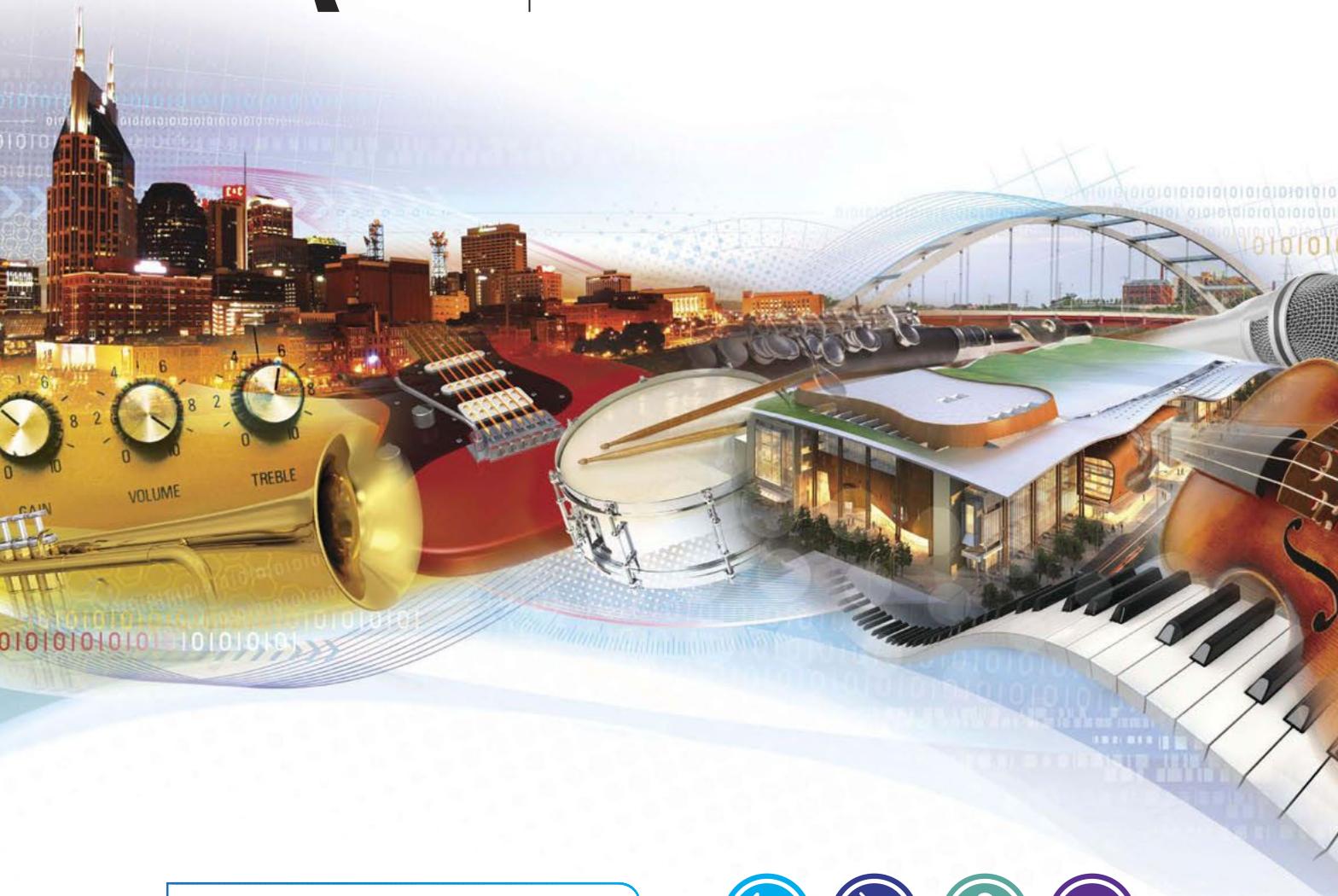
Joe Lamond

NAMM PRESIDENT AND CEO



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**AGUILAR AMPLIFICATION**  
599 Broadway, Manhattan  
Dave Boonshoft  
President

*Lifelong bassist Dave Boonshoft leads Aguilar Amplification, which manufactures all its electronics on the corner of Houston and Broadway in Manhattan and runs a unique Artist Loft in Chelsea.*

**What's new with Aguilar this year?**

We've expanded our pickup line to offer different sizes and different styles of pickups from P-Bass and Jazz Bass pickups to hum-cancelling soap bars, all for four, five, and six-string basses. We also have an OEM division, working with companies like ESP, Fodera, Roscoe Basses, Spector Basses, and F Basses. Also coming up in the next few months, we're going to have some new pedals.

**How is the Aguilar Artist Loft used?**

Not only can we do clinics and masterclasses there, we also have a full video and photo studio. The other half is a completely floated and tuned room. You can get about 60 people in there for clinics and the room sounds great.

**You're from the Midwest – how do you operate in the big city atmosphere?**

The energy is tremendous. It can invigorate you and it can slap you in the head, too. Whether you're trying to get home through traffic or any number of things. It does make you want to wake up in the morning and do something today. There's no slow attitude or, "We'll get it done next week."

**How have the city's financial challenges affected Aguilar's business?**

We used to sort of operate as a craft shop, but now we use what's called the "Toyota Production System," where we've learned to do single-piece flow manufacturing so things become more and more efficient. So in a sense, you could say that the fact that it's more expensive in New York City has been the impetus for us to make sure our manufacturing processes are really good.



Dave Boonshoft (left) with Anthony Wellington of the Victor Wooten band at the Aguilar Artist Loft.



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3-string guitars that make it  
fun and easy for kids to play music.

## Introducing the Electric Loog

For retail and distribution opportunities  
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or come say hi at 2014 Summer NAMM Show, booth #1625.



**DAVID GAGE STRING INSTRUMENTS**  
**36 Walker Street, Manhattan**  
**Sam Finlay**  
**Sales Director**



*David Gage String Instruments Repair has been in business downtown since 1978, performing top notch restoration, repair, and sales on violins, basses, and cellos. They sell a line of David Gage String Instrument products (the "Realist" line and more). Last year, they introduced the Realist LifeLine pickup, and are currently building the last of their e-Series violins (RV6e and RV5Pe).*

**First off, what's new with DGSi this year?**

We're expanding to the top floors of this building. Ours is a lot like the old Pearl Paint, in that it is an old textile building with no elevator. The expansion also gives us more space for our all of the in-house production we do. All of our Realist pickups are built here at 36 Walker Street. And we mount, set-up, and repair all of the Realist Violins here, too. We're dedicating an entire floor just to production, which should increase our efficiency and improve production in other ways.

On the retail side, we increasing our rental inventory a lot and focusing new attention to cello and violin. We have always repaired and serviced the higher strings, but now we have a new staff of luthiers who focus on non-bass instruments.

**Have any downward market trends in the arts affected your business?**

Musicians in general are spending less money. They are earning less money and, due to the pressures of the high cost of living here in NYC, they can't dig as deep. Also, because so much of our local customer-base is connected to the large musical groups

here, the troubles in that world are having an impact on our business. To compensate, we focus on editing our assortment so that we only offer the best for the price and we make sure that we have a good option at all price levels.

**What makes doing business as a supplier or retailer in NYC different?**

Since we are both retailers and wholesalers, NYC offers us lot of challenges. It is very expensive to ship in and out of the city, as shippers add service charges to all of our shipments. We occupy the whole building, but we're on a busy street and we don't have a loading dock. Also, the costs of living here are high, so we have to pay our staff more than the average shop might have to.

NYC offers us so many benefits, though. We are a niche business, even if you count all of the different sorts of work we do. Here, because of the density of population, niche is rewarded. Everyone wants to get things from those who focus on a specialty and do it well here.

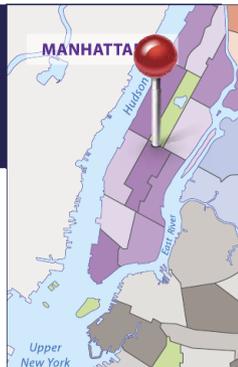


“ Here, because of the density of population, niche is rewarded. Everyone wants to get things from those who focus on a specialty and do it well.

— Sam Finlay, David Gage String Instruments



**STEINWAY HALL**  
**109 W 57th St., Manhattan**  
**Michael Sweeney**  
**President and CEO**



*Steinway announced it would be moving its legendary flagship showroom by the end of 2014, but the cultural cachet that this dominant name in pianos enjoys has not diminished. Steinway's president Michael Sweeney says the institution's place in music remains one of a kind.*

**What are some of the financial challenges in NYC?**

For Steinway Hall specifically, there is the issue of real estate being ungodly expensive. That's no surprise to anyone – it's one of the world's capital cities, so real estate has always been expensive, but it's become much more so.

**That being the case, what are the trade-offs for remaining in town?**

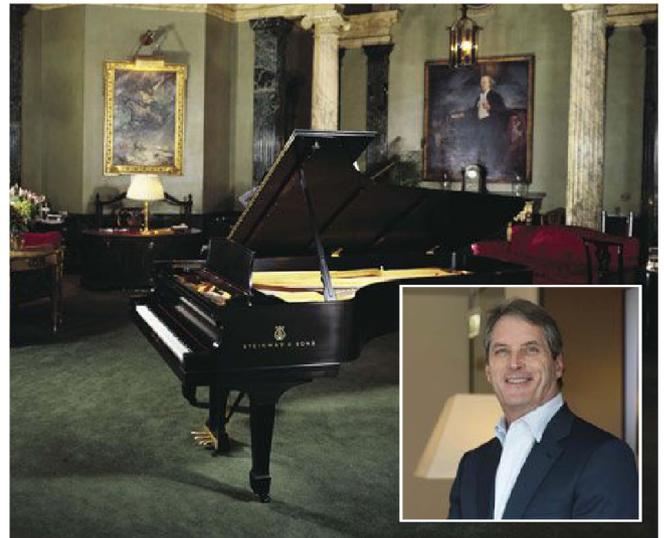
It's never been a question of "Will we?" or "Won't we remain in Manhattan?" – it's just "Where will that be?" We haven't made an announcement of where we're moving to, but I can tell you with confidence that we are staying in Manhattan and we expect to make an announcement in the next couple months.

**Historically, how has Steinway Hall set itself apart in New York City?**

It's been the clubhouse for the music community since the building opened almost 90 years ago. It's a remarkable place. Extraordinary music has happened here – we had Rachmaninoff teaching Horowitz how to play. Since then, we've had so many great artists of today - not just the classical artists but jazz artists and pop artists are here regularly as well. That's really the secret of Steinway – it's a community of people who are all aspiring to achieve the highest levels of music artistry. That crosses boundaries. Our new location will be a 21st century version of that same type of sensibility.

**Is there anything special that Steinway continues to do to facilitate that kind of involvement for artists?**

The core is always the instrument. We make the finest instrument of its kind in the world. I don't think there's really any debate – 97 percent of the concert halls in the world choose Steinway because the artists insist upon it.



**RETROFRET**  
 233 Butler Street, Brooklyn  
 Steve Uhrik  
 Owner



*Brooklyn's nondescript Retrofret has carved out a niche for itself as a go-to vintage guitar shop for players of all styles of music and it's been described as a "speakeasy for guitarists." Owner Steve Uhrik says Retrofret is gaining new customers every day as its corner of the city continues to boom.*

**What makes NYC different than any other market?**

There is an exceptionally large and diverse volume of musicians living in NYC, performing here, or visiting. A few Saturdays ago, we had a group of country musicians from Italy, a Japanese bebop guitarist, and a former dean of Guitar at Juilliard (who happens to live just a few streets over from the shop) trying instruments. Approximately one third of our U.S. clients are located outside of the NY/Metropolitan area. Another third are based overseas.

**What are the financial challenges of operating a retail store in New York City?**

Costs for renovation, expansion, and build-out are undoubtedly more expensive and complicated in the Big Apple. Dealing with international logistics is going to be a challenging but necessary part of order fulfillment for any retail business in a city that attracts customers from around the globe. Likewise, the cost of labor is going to be higher - but there is also a super pool of talented and motivated workers, many of whom have already worked in MI.

**How have you managed to set yourself apart in this market?**

The repair shop is the backbone of what we offer. The original shop was just a couple of workbenches and tools with a handful of guitars for sale put away in cases. With the exception of instruments that are sold as artifacts (valued as collectibles or antiques), everything we offer is checked for structural issues and set-up to play its best.

**The landscape of New York City is rapidly shifting – how has your neighborhood fared?**

Brooklyn is no longer the little brother to Manhattan. Areas that were once undiscovered and strictly industrial have seen an expansion in artist space and residential population - in particular those with eclectic taste and disposable income.



Luthier Mark Dobbyn (left), Steve Uhrik, and senior technician Kristin Mueller (right).

# Courting Online Customer Reviews

By Matt Parish

**M**arketing and promotions could be a tricky game even in the old days of one-way mass communication. When all you had to worry about was commissioning a jingle to be written or mocking up a Yellow Pages ad, at least you had final say over the overall message.

These days, with the proliferation of social media and (more importantly) online review sites like Yelp, businesses have to deal with the complicating fact that the public is out there writing some of your most visible marketing material. Think about the last time you went out for dinner in a new part of town – unless you had a pretty strong recommendation already, chances are you checked restaurant ratings online. Booked a hotel on vacation? Hello, TripAdvisor.

It's no different for MI retailers. The key for you, then, is how to best harness the power of these reviews.

Rieva Lesonsky is an entrepreneurial expert who runs the



“ I think the biggest misconception is that business owners aren't aware of the impact reviews can have. ”

– Rieva Lesonsky of WeGrowBiz.com

online group WeGrowBiz.com. When *MMR* checked in with Lesonsky, she explained that it all starts with getting your customers involved. “It's really important that your customers post reviews of your business,” she said. “In fact a recent survey showed that consumers trust opinions of strangers on these sites just as much or more than the opinion of their friends and others they actually know!”

Lesonsky says that businesses which don't respect these reviews are missing out. “I think the biggest misconception is that business owners aren't aware of the impact reviews can have,” she says. “They don't pay attention to what's said about them, or they don't engage in the conversation and try to ‘make it better.’ Many are also unaware of the numerous niche review sites. It's not just Yelp and Google. TripAdvisor, for example, is key to travel industry. Angie's List is expanding from just covering contractors and Houzz is important if you're an interior designer or contractor.”

MI retailers likely face more passionate than usual commentary from customers, thanks to the personal, emotional nature of the music business. “If someone has a bad experience, it's not just a bad meal,” says Lesonsky. “They buy from

you because they have hopes and dreams and are counting on you to help them achieve them. So you're going to be rated on how you treat customers.”

“Given that, if someone has a negative experience, they're likely going to share it. They're going to be reacting emotionally. That makes it harder, but not impossible for you to fix the problem.”

It's not always foolproof, but monitoring your pages on these review sites gives you a chance to respond to customers. This, of course, starts with thanking customers who wrote positive reviews. But there are options for negative reviews as well. “If there's a negative review, publicly (on the review site) say something like, ‘I'm so sorry you had a bad experience. Let's talk about it and see how we can resolve the situation.’ Then take the discussion offline to ‘fix’ it.”

“Once the problem is resolved, if the customer is now happy, encourage them to post their ‘turnaround’ on the original site.”

There is etiquette involved - Yelp indeed frowns upon businesses blatantly telling their customers to go write Yelp reviews when they get home. They even

have a filter to check for and eliminate what they deem “solicited reviews,” in an attempt to keep their reviews honest and trustworthy. There are several red flags they look for, including reviewers who've only written one review and have no profile info, reviews written with strong slants (positive or negative), and reviews that don't seem to have many details about the business. The system isn't perfect, as real reviews are sometimes filtered out in the process.

Finally, don't write fake reviews. It pops into everyone's head at some point - “Why can't I just log in and post a glowing review and point out all of my shop's selling points?” Bad idea. Review sites are always on the lookout for fakers and will catch you.

“Customers will be alerted to how untrustworthy and dishonest you are – who wants to do business with ‘that’ kind of a business?” says Lesonsky. “Also, no one will believe you're an honest business owner if every one of your reviews are positive. It'll seem fake. That's not to say you should ignore negative reviews, you still need to ‘correct’ them. But faking reviews is a no-win game.” **MMR**

## Four Tips to Maximize Your Online Critics

1. Find ways to encourage your customers to post reviews.
2. Always pay close attention to your customer service – it's the stuff that fuels these reviews.
3. Thank customers who post positive feedback.
4. Engage negative commenters – express concern publicly, then try to resolve the issue with them directly.

# Award Winning Hybrids



MMR Dealer's Choice  
Kawai CA95 (2013)



MMR Dealer's Choice  
Kawai CA95 (2012)



Diapason Magazine  
Kawai CA95 (2012)



Music Inc. Magazine  
Kawai CA95 (2012)



Japan Institute of  
Design Promotion  
Kawai CA95 (2012)



Music Inc. Magazine  
Kawai CS10 (2014)

Having won six major international product awards, the Kawai CA95 and CS10, featuring the innovative Soundboard Speaker System and acclaimed GF wooden-key action, are the world's most decorated Hybrid Pianos.





Louis Wu, Ohana Music



Mike Upton, Kala Brand Music



Hitomi Kato, Takumi Ukcs



Leon Lewis, Hohner, Inc.



Michael Schear, Amahi Ukuleles



Naomi Con, Cordoba Music Group

# Ukulele Suppliers Discuss the State of the Market

By Christian Wismuller

A perfect storm of factors combined to create a “ukulele boom” a few years ago – in a down economy, the uke’s low price points appealed to people working with a limited budget, the relatively soft learning curve attracted non-musician/first-time customers, and mammoth hit songs with prominent ukulele lines from the likes of Train and Jason Mraz elevated the instrument’s visibility. Earlier this year, we surveyed dealers to try and get a fix on whether the uke phenomenon was holding strong.

This month, as a sort of companion piece to our March 2014 retailer survey, we check in with some prominent ukulele suppliers to see how things are looking from their side of the fence.

**MMR:** In a survey of retailers that appeared in our March 2014 issue, many retailers expressed a belief that the “uke craze” had leveled off somewhat. Nonetheless, over 50 percent of dealers who participated in that poll reported that their ukulele sales were up from the same time last year. What’s your take on the ukulele market: slowing down? Level? Stronger than ever? Down?

**Mike Upton:** For Kala, the magnetism of the ukulele is still stronger than ever. I estimate that 75 percent of the people discovering the instrument are first-time musicians of all ages. This is very exciting to me. It is a boon for the whole MI industry.

**Naomi Con:** Our ukuleles are as popular as ever, and show no signs of slowing down!

**Michael Schear:** When they say that the craze has cooled down, maybe it’s just a general comment on the market. Most people tell me, including others in this industry, that the first quarter of 2014 was off. If you’re flat, you’re actually up. My guess is when you asked dealers about the “ukulele craze” and whether it’s over, their response was based on the fact that business, in general, is soft. More specifically, I have dealers telling me, “The only thing that’s selling is ukuleles!” For us, sales are up compared to last year. Last year my most popular model was the Pink Flower, the second most popular was the Orange Flower, and third most popular was the Blue Bird. In the last 12 months, sales of the Snail Ukulele Ebony have taken off. The second most popular model we’ve got is the Snail Rosewood. These are more expensive instruments and it shows you that people are starting to explore beyond the norm.

**Hitomi Kato:** Here in this country, the inexpensive ukuleles are selling, but ours are generally more high-end ukuleles. We sell more to countries other than the U.S. Sales are kind of slow for us due to price point.

**Leon Lewis:** The ukulele market is strong. New players continue to purchase their first ukes, and more customers are returning for upgrades than ever before. However, retailers face the same challenges as brands [do], as the typical ukulele consumer becomes wiser and more discerning. If you think you’ll continue to see success by purchasing the next ukulele blowout from a generic uke brand and throwing them on your wall, I’m afraid it’s just not going to happen. Focused, relevant, and exciting ukulele assortments are the key to driving new customers to explore this fun, easy-to-learn instrument, as well as earning your place as the “hot spot” to buy ukes for hobbyist and pro players in your area.

**Louis Wu:** The market is strong, but slowing down. In addition, supply is plentiful these days and more stores are carrying the instruments. Hence stores may see lower or slower sales due to availability, but the interest is still there.

**Another observation that came to light in our retailer survey was that mid-level and high end ukes are doing well now, because folks who may have purchased an entry level instrument a few years ago have stuck with the instrument and they now want something nicer. What are you doing to target and effectively reach the “step-up” ukulele customers out there?**

**LL:** Our Lanikai brand has often been regarded as a “good beginner” ukulele brand that many will recommend as a first or second ukulele for the casual player. However, as we have seeded the world markets with hundreds of thousands of ukes, we have seen an increased call for finer products which we have met head on. Our exclusive TunaUke Technology elevates our basic ukuleles above all of the competition by offering a never-before-seen advancement in ukulele production.

Furthermore, we are the only major mainland ukulele brand with our own production of Hawaiian-made ukuleles. Being 100 percent made in the USA using the finest materials and meticulously developed construction methods, the Lanikai brand now offers a complete and innovative solution to anyone’s ukulele needs from top to bottom.

**LW:** Our focus has always been on quality mid- to high-end range of instruments, so it is a bit easier for Ohana to target sales with our existing customer base. We have also strengthened our step-up models to reach to end-users who are ready for their upgrade.

**HK:** Little by little, we’re noticing that. Still most U.S. [customers] are beginners. In this country, for the mid-level market I can’t really say. We make ukuleles that are over \$1,000, so it’s difficult for me to say. Our best-selling model is just under \$600, so if you consider that to be “mid-level,” then yes, those sales are strong.

**NC:** We agree and have addressed this with our 30 Series ukuleles. Designed by renowned luthier Pepe Romero, Jr., these ukuleles are built like small guitars, incorporating features often found on nylon string guitars such as a Spanish heel neck joint and all-solid woods. We offer four acoustic models and four cutaway electric versions of each featuring the L.R. Baggs Five.O pickup.

**MS:** There is no question that sales of our step-up ukuleles have gone up dramatically. As I said in response to your first question, higher priced instruments are doing really well for us this year. One of the things I’ve done is to run a promotion where with every intermediate or advanced Amahi ukulele purchased the customer receives a free Amahi t-shirt.

**MU:** I have seen a definite jump in the demand of step-up ukes. Since we started in 2005, Kala has always had mid-level solid wood ukuleles in the mix. Now there are a ton of players out there that are sophisticated and savvy and they are looking to get the best instrument they can for their money. Kala will introduce a ukulele handmade in the U.S. at our Petaluma, California shop at the 2015 NAMM Show. This is a great market situation for everyone.

**What models are hottest for you right now – both specific model type, and price-range?**

**MS:** The Snail Ebony, the Snail Rosewood Concert, Snail Mahogany, Snail Zebrawood Concert, and the Amahi Classic Koa are all doing really well.

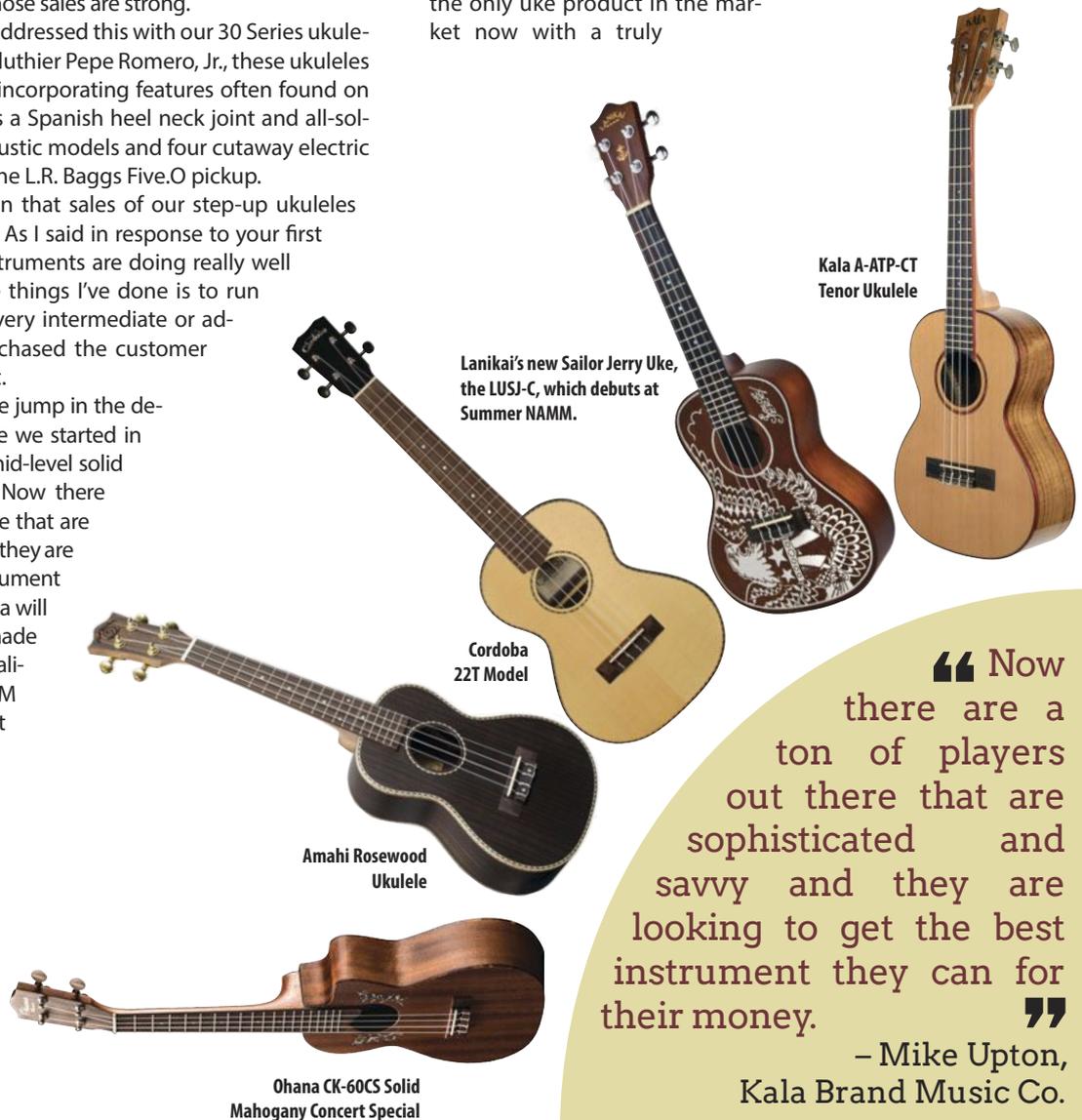
**MU:** Our Solid Cedar Top/Acacia ukes are super sellers right now. They run from \$250-\$370. Our Solid Spruce/Ovangkol models are hitting the streets now and doing great. They range from \$299-349. Our Solid Acacia Tenor is always a big seller at around \$399. Although we are seeing a surge of high-end uke sales, the KA-15S is a hot model that continues to be a top seller for us. New players are entering the market every month and the KA-15S is a great entry-level uke in the \$50 range.

**LW:** Our best-selling models are in the \$250 to \$300 street-price range. Models with solid-top and all-solid mahogany are still the hottest.

**NC:** Aside from the 30 Series, we’re really excited about the success of our newly launched 22 Series. The spruce/rosewood combination is often found on nylon string guitars, and lends a really clear, bright sound. The sleek look and high gloss finish also stand out in a retail space.

**HK:** Our top selling model is the Kiwaya KTS-4. It’s similar to old, vintage Martins. It has a reasonable price for that degree of quality – MSRP: \$585.

**LL:** Our LUTU-21S Mahogany Soprano TunaUkes are absolutely flying off the shelves, but really our entire line of TunaUke equipped ukes are doing great. Why? Because our TunaUkes are the only uke product in the market now with a truly



Kala A-ATP-CT Tenor Ukulele

Lanikai’s new Sailor Jerry Uke, the LUSJ-C, which debuts at Summer NAMM.

Cordoba 22T Model

Amahi Rosewood Ukulele

Ohana CK-60CS Solid Mahogany Concert Special

“ Now there are a ton of players out there that are sophisticated and savvy and they are looking to get the best instrument they can for their money. ”

– Mike Upton, Kala Brand Music Co.

innovative and differential feature – not just a rework of generic attributes available at any overseas factory.

**What are your expectations for the ukulele market in the coming months?**

**NC:** As summer approaches, we always notice an increase in interest in ukulele sales, across the board. In the coming months/years, I expect to see a lot of new ukulele-hybrid models as manufacturers diversify this category. We've created our own guitar-ukulele hybrid (the Guilele and Guilele CE) and I've seen other combinations like the ukulele-banjo that are interesting.

**MS:** I already project that our sales for this year will be 250 percent of what we sold last year. We have already put into production orders that represent two and a half times last year's sales. There are some items we cannot keep in stock. Right now I am well stocked in everything, but in 40 days that could change. We don't sell a lot of advanced ukuleles, but intermediate – those that are MAPing at between \$100 and \$200 – represent our strongest market right now, whereas in the past the customer was looking for something under \$100.

We're trying to find additional factories in China and getting



Ukuleles from Cordoba's new 30 series, developed by luthier Pepe Romero, Jr.

them up to speed so they can match the quality. The biggest issue is that production capacity has a hard time keeping up with demand. I had one factory tell me, "If we match your standards, we could only produce 30 ukuleles a day." I'd rather produce less at a higher quality than lower my standards and fill the orders faster.

**MU:** I see the uke enthusiasm and excitement continuing to build with no let-up. I have been in it since 1998, so after 16 years, I think the ukulele

has established itself as a go-to instrument that is here to stay. It is definitely not a "one hit wonder," but a modern cultural phenomenon.

**LW:** Sales will level off just because availability and selections are lot more these days than in the past. But player interest will still be strong, and so sales in ukulele will continue to sustain.

**HK:** I think it's stable. It's not going to go up, necessarily; it's going to stay about the same.

**LL:** We look forward to a few hands coming back out of the ukulele "honey jar" and a shift of focus away from price and towards quality and innovation. This, combined with sustained efforts by artists, groups, and educators to spread the word of the ukulele should bring about continued growth and the stabilization of the market as it continues to mature. **MIMR**

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# How Do You Promote Your MI Store?

By ChristianWissmuller

**H**iring knowledgeable staff, designing an inviting interior retail space, carrying in-demand instruments and products, developing a streamlined business model – these are all essential steps towards creating and maintaining a successful MI operation. But you still need to get customers actually walking through the door, and music stores have a variety of promotional strategies to choose from in order to achieve just that.

With rapidly changing technological options now at most business's disposal, *MMR* decided to ask dealers what avenues they're finding to be most successful in terms of "getting the word out" and driving sales.

Among other things, the results of our survey of over 4,000 retailers suggest that, while longstanding advertising and promotion-

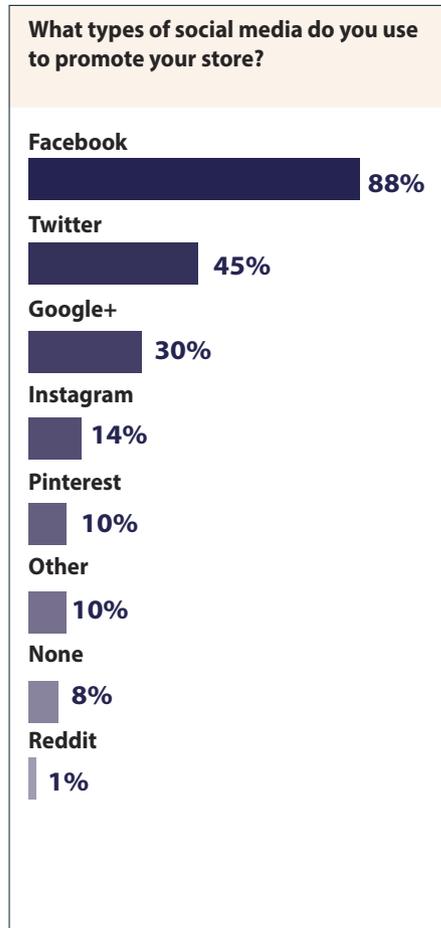
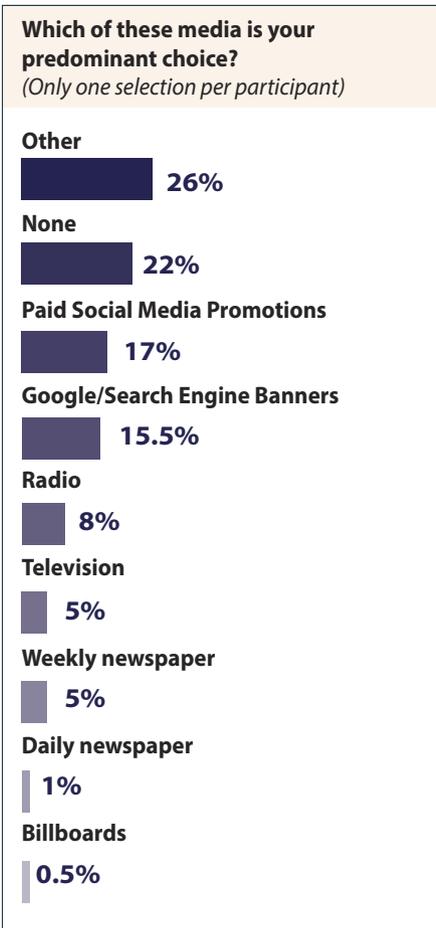
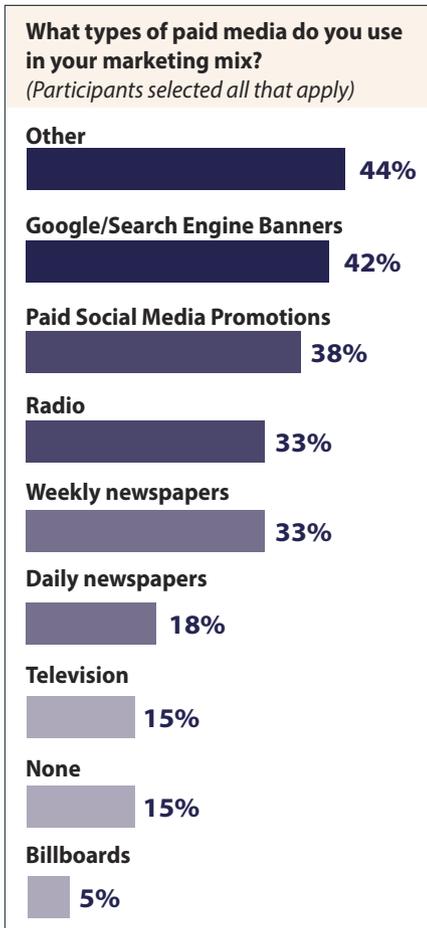
al staples such as newspaper and television ads are no longer the unchallenged kings in this category, such reliable methods do still have impact for many. Of those operations which do engage in paid promotional campaigns, a healthy 19.5 percent reported that "traditional" (print, radio, television, billboard) approaches were their preferred strategy, with 32.5 percent favoring online campaigns. Also worth noting, of those who selected "other" to the same question (26 percent),

a handful prefer an "old fashioned" promotional strategy which we had heard so many times was dead in the water that we didn't even offer it as an option on our survey form: The Yellow Pages.

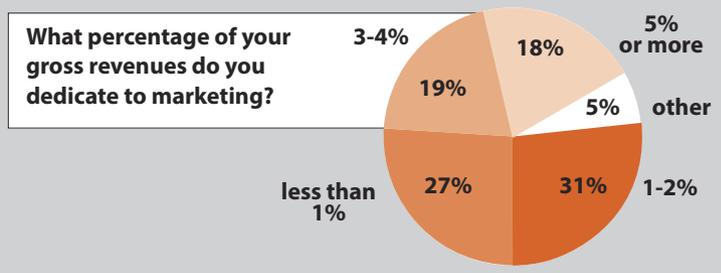
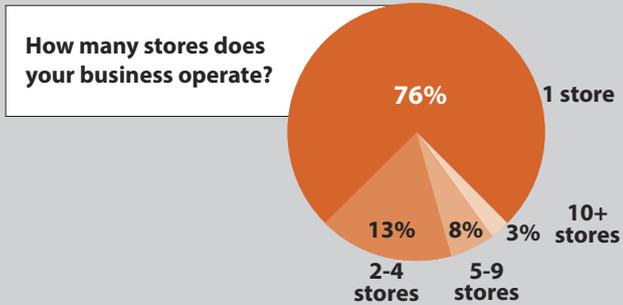
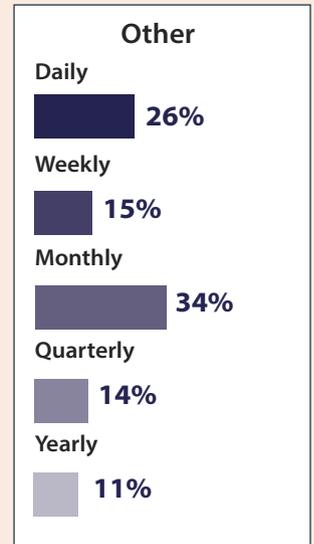
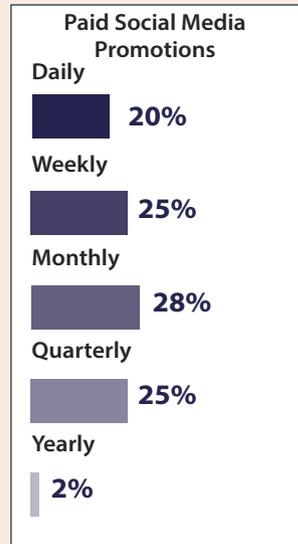
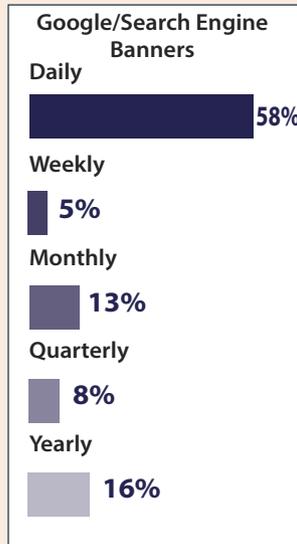
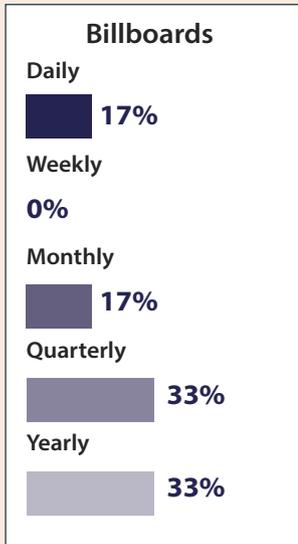
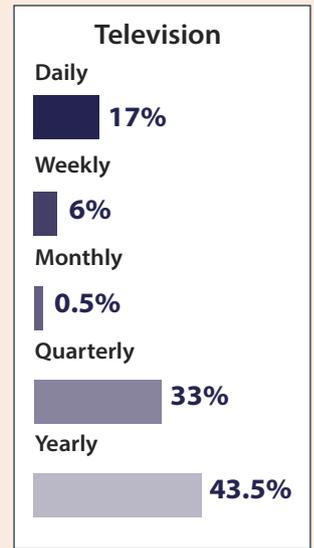
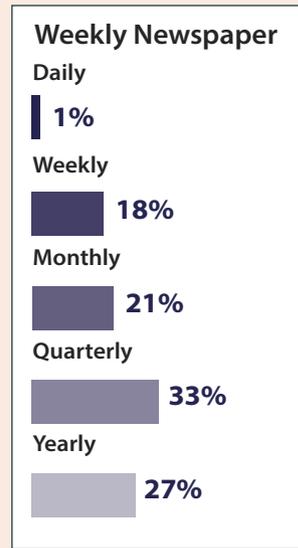
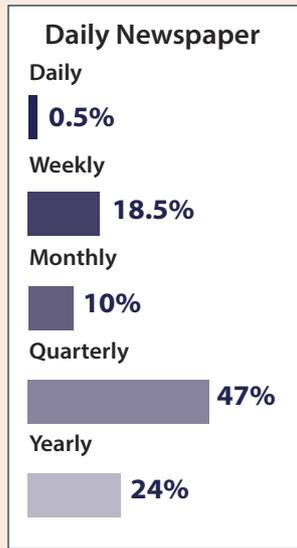
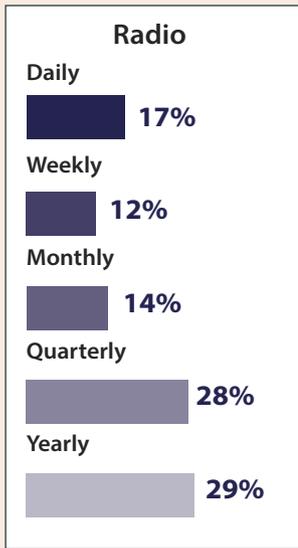
Read on to see how your fellow retailers are handling self-promotion in 2014 and maybe to get some ideas that could help your own business.

**“The most effective promotion my store has developed is positive word of mouth. My business is based on satisfied customers.”**

– Scott Eivins, A&Z Guitar Repair, Eolia, Mo.



With what frequency do you utilize these paid marketing opportunities?



## Please describe the most effective promotion your store has developed

**"I send thank-you cards to customers who make a purchase over \$200, and that seems to be appreciated."**

– Joseph Blumenthal  
Downtown Sounds  
Northampton, Mass.

**"Two to three times a year, we run an early payoff program where rental customers can pay off their instrument early with an additional discount. We promote solely through e-mail campaigns and make aware to our staff the need to constantly update e-mail addresses."**

– George Quinlan, Jr.  
Quinlan & Fabish Music Company  
Burr Ridge, Ill.

**"Promotion is annual just before school starts – August and September – with ads in the local e-paper, neighboring papers (weekly and bi-weekly) which feed into the community, and radio ads. The rest of the year is a matter of flyers, satisfied customers – referrals and repeat business – magnetic car signs, and general personal presence. This is a small town and it's easier to work with."**

– Richard Hannemann  
Hannemann Music  
Los Alamos, N.M.

**"The most effective promotion my store has developed is positive word of mouth. My business is based on satisfied customers."**

– Scott Eivins  
A&Z Guitar Repair  
Eolia, Mo.

**"An e-blast linked to a landing page that contains a searchable laundry list of sale items that includes the item's store location. Sales items are linked to a email form that has the details of the item in the subject line and goes into the inbox of the store manager. The item is also linked to the 'Buy Now' online shopping cart."**

– Dan Herbert  
Willis Music  
Florence, Ky.

**"We have a great little radio station in this area (WNCW, 88.7 FM) and everyone around here who is into acoustic music listens to it. We underwrite it for about \$400/month, for 10 announcements per week. Worth every penny!"**

– Stephanie Wilds  
Acoustic Corner  
Black Mountain, N.C.

**"Every August, our Back to School Bash, in conjunction with the local Chamber of Commerce [is our most effective promotion]. Sonic provides a hot dog bar, local musicians and a high school marching band perform, and all are welcome. We use Facebook, Twitter, email blasts, Chamber of Commerce email, co-marketing with Sonic, and more."**

– Tracy Leenman  
Musical Innovations  
Greenville, S.C.

**"We were the originator of the 'Strings for Food' promotion and it remains our biggest event of the year. Because it is a community benefit event, most of the local print (and even radio) media will carry information about the event for free as public [service] announcements. We push it on our Facebook sites, through our email newsletter, and with posters and flyers given to local educators and put up around town. The event usually happens the second weekend of November of each year."**

– Jeff Simons  
Watermelon Music  
Davis, Calif.

**"Boosting a Taylor Roadshow works because [Taylor Guitars] pays for a 1,000-piece mailing, and then we social media it [and target customers via] direct e-mail. It always brings in 40-plus serious customers, brings goodwill, and turns guitars."**

– Don Salomon  
Northern Lights Music  
Littleton, N.H.

**"The most effective promotion we do is every year on the Saturday before Thanksgiving. We use this as our 'anniversary sale' and do a lot of radio and TV ads the week of the sale. With the radio ads, we try to hit on all of the events going on for the one day – live bands, guitar throwing contest, free hot dogs, door prizes, hourly drawings for gear, and so on. Every year seems to get bigger and better."**

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

**"We recently mailed flyers to our current customer base for an in-store step-up event on May 31st. The store was packed with over 200 people."**

– Scott Abrahamson  
Rick's Musical Instruments, Inc.  
Cumberland, R.I.

# The 2014 Summer NAMM Buyer's Guide

All eyes are on the Summer NAMM Show floor this month as the industry rolls out its new mid-year products (and previews a few models coming in the fall). Here are some of this summer's must-see entries to the market.

## FRETTED

### Breedlove Basses

Breedlove has three acoustic basses in its 2014 product offerings: Studio Bass, Solo Bass, and Pursuit Bass. The Studio Bass offers equal balance and warmth, with sapele back and sides. Designed for singer-songwriters, the Solo Series models have a side sound hole monitor to allow users to hear the music as if standing in front of the instrument. The Pursuit Series was envisioned as a "step-up" guitar. All three basses are ready for amplification with Fishman ISYS+ electronics, and feature built-in USB ports. All basses are equipped with the Breedlove Bridge Truss.



Booth #1214

breedlovemusic.com

### Crafter MS 1000 Mandolin

This hand-crafted instrument features solid Engelmann spruce top, sapele back and sides, rosewood fingerboard and bridge, gold-plated oval tuners, dot position markers, satin finish, and scale of 13 & 13/16". The offering of this instrument is the culmination of years of R&D by Crafter Korea and is available in a natural or vintage finish. Includes hardshell case. Retail: \$995.



Booth #1001-A

crafterguitars.com



### Bedell Revere Series

The Bedell Revere pairs naturally seasoned Brazilian rosewood and hand-selected Adirondack, along with handcrafted koa inlay. Each set is paired with the stiffest Adirondack spruce soundboards. The Revere is equipped with the K&K Sound PowerMix Pure XT system, which has three components: the bridge plate transducers, the under-saddle piezo, and the external preamp. Retail: \$14,900.

Booth #1214

bedellguitars.com

### Cordoba Exotic Wood Ukuleles

Cordoba's 23 Series ukuleles are available in soprano, concert, tenor, tenor cutaway-electric, and baritone sizes. Each features a solid ovangkol top paired with ovangkol back and sides, rosewood bridge and fingerboard, mahogany neck, and ovangkol headstock veneer. Ovangkol ranges from rich orange to a darker brown in color, and is commonly streaked with gray, purple, or black. It's tonally similar to rosewood, with a slightly fuller mid-range. Retail: \$199 – \$249.



Booth #910

cordobaguitars.com

### Deering Goodtime 12" Rim Openback Banjo

This banjo is designed to be ideal for anyone to pick regardless of hand size. The 12" Goodtime also features an armrest, custom crafted Goodtime adjustable tailpiece, and full 22-fret scale. Its light weight makes it easy to travel with as well. Retail: \$599.



Booth #1014

deeringbanjos.com

### Godin Seagull Guitars

Inspired by the dulcimer, the Seagull Merlin is a portable and compact 4-string diatonic acoustic instrument. The Natural SG is available with the option of a solid spruce top or solid mahogany top, both with satin oil finishes, featuring a Tusq bridge and compensated Graph-tech saddle, a 3-piece rock maple body with drive-through neck design, and vintage style open-geared tuners.

The Seagull Excursion Walnut SG acoustic series features three models, including a dreadnaught, a Mini-Jumbo, and a 12-string model. All three feature a Canadian solid spruce tops and walnut back and sides made of a 3-layer lamination of real hardwood. Other features include a burn stamped rosette, semi-gloss Custom Polished finish, and Seagull Slim neck. Optional Fishman Isys+ electronics with built-in tuner and TRIC case also available. Retail: \$129 (Merlin), \$349 (Excursion).



Booth #1001-A

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

### MOD Kits DIY Wahz Wah Pedal Kit

The Wahz Wah Pedal Kit produces a classic wah tone with a hint of extra bite and growl. True bypass switching ensures no loss of signal when the wah effect is not engaged and a potentiometer manufactured specifically for use in wah pedals ensures a long life. Point to point construction allows advanced kit builders to experiment with modifications to further tailor the tone to more individual tastes.

MODTM Kits and Assemblies are designed to give novice and experienced musicians the opportunity to build or modify their own amps, effects pedals and guitars.



Booth #929

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

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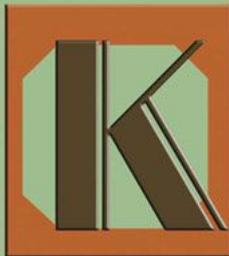
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[wdbiz.com/mmr](http://wdbiz.com/mmr)

NAMM Booth 1225



### Metalin' Guitars TOC QT Guitars

The TOC QT guitar features a full, solid billet aluminum body with a closed chambered system. Custom aluminum bridge, pick guard, and back plate also adorn the instrument, as well as a custom take on a quilt top pattern. The guitar also features specialty Moses graphite neck and Seymour Duncan pickups, and ultra thin clear coat anodizing. Street Price: \$2,749.00.

Booth #1231 [metalinguitars.com](http://metalinguitars.com)



### Cort MR600F Guitar

This new model is outfitted with the Fishman Isys Plus preamp and Sonico pickup. The dreadnought body with a Venetian cutaway includes mahogany back and sides, while the body is topped with a solid spruce top and advanced scalloped X-bracing for overall performance. The 25.3" mahogany neck features the traditional three-on-three headstock, rosewood fretboard, and dot inlays. Additional details include D'Addario USA EXP16 strings. Retail: \$225 (Satin finish), \$250 (Gloss finish).

Booth #1324 [cortguitars.com](http://cortguitars.com)

### Lanikai Sailor Jerry Ukulele and Hawaiian-Built Ukuleles

Bearing the artwork of Norman "Sailor Jerry" Collins, the LUSJ-C features an all-mahogany body with rosewood fingerboard, chrome tuners, and classic Sailor Jerry designs on the top, back, headstock, and fretboard. Retail: \$149.99, MAP \$99.99.

Meanwhile, Lanikai's new "Makau" line of solid koa ukuleles are made by hand in Honolulu, Hawaii. Each Makau Series ukulele features a solid Hawaiian koa body, a true rosewood fingerboard and bridge, abalone headstock inlay, hand rubbed oil and wax finish, koa spine, and Alaskan Sitka spruce bracing. The abalone inlay bears the traditional Hawaiian symbol of the Makau, which symbolizes "happiness, luck, and all things good." Retail: \$1,500 Retail, MAP: \$899.



Booth #1103

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

### Kala Spalted Maple Travel Uke

Kala Brand Music's new thinline travel ukuleles feature select solid spruce tops, precisely engineered arched backs, and thin bodies measuring 1 3/4" in depth. The spalted maple models include a cutaway design and are available in concert and tenor sizes. A padded gig bag with embroidered logo is included. Other features include mahogany neck with rosewood fingerboard and bridge, die-cast chrome tuners with black buttons, silver nickel frets, satin finish, Aquila strings, and GraphTech NuBone XB Nut and saddles.



Booth #1115

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

### Weber Gallatin Series

Weber's Gallatin Series is an entry-level series of mandolins featuring hand-carved solid spruce top and a back of solid maple. The two body styles, F and A, are also combined with five body sizes: Soprano, Mandolin, Mandola, Octave, and Mandocello. Finally, the Gallatin series also includes an archtop guitar. The bracing used on the F models is tone bars, while X-bracing is used on oval or D holes. The ribs and neck are both made of high quality maple. Beneath the radiused ebony fingerboard is a dual-action adjustable truss rod. The strings are anchored by Weber's proprietary adjustable bridge.



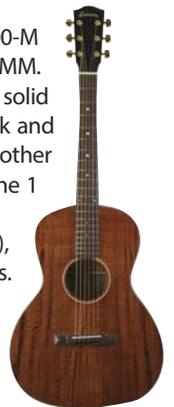
Booth #1214

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

### Eastman OO Series Guitars

Continuing to expand their OO Series, Eastman's all-mahogany E1000-M and the Red Spruce/Rosewood E2000 will be introduced at Summer NAMM. The all solid mahogany E1000-M is lightweight and strong, featuring a solid mahogany top with hand carved scalloped-X bracing, mahogany back and sides, and mahogany neck with ebony fingerboard adorned with mother of pearl dot inlays. The 12-fret acoustic has a 24.9" scale length from the 1 13/16" bone nut to bone saddle, atop the ebony pyramid bridge.

The E2000 features a solid Adirondack spruce top (aka red spruce), hand carved scalloped-X bracing, and solid rosewood back and sides. The guitar is fitted with a mahogany neck and ebony fingerboard adorned with pearl dot inlays. Includes a 12-fret reduced 24" scale length body, from the 1" bone nut to the ebony bridge with bone saddle. The slotted headstock is matched with a rosewood headplate and open-gear chrome ping tuners.



Booth #1016

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



### G&L Detroit Muscle Series: SS Collection

The G&L Detroit Muscle Series draws inspiration from American muscle cars of the 1960s, combining four historic GM colors with six G&L models. Colors include Daytona Yellow, Hugger Orange, Cranberry Red, and Marina Blue, all offered on the ASAT Special, ASAT Classic Bluesboy 90, Fallout, Legacy, Legacy HB and LB-100 Bass. Each model features a color-matched headstock and 1-ply black pickguard. Other features include a Leo Fender-designed Saddle Lock Bridge with chrome-plated brass saddles (ASAT Special/Fallout/LB-100), a Leo Fender-designed Dual Fulcrum vibrato with forged brass saddles (Legacy/Legacy HB), a heavy-duty Boxed Steel Bridge with individual brass saddles (ASAT Classic Bluesboy 90) for enhanced sustain and tuning stability.

glguitars.com

### Electro-Harmonix Deluxe Big Muff Pi



EHX's new Deluxe Big Muff is a re-imagined version of the classic Big Muff Pi. The new pedal features a foot-switchable MIDS Section that enables the user to tailor their midrange. Its Frequency knob allows users to vary the center frequency of the EQ, while the Level control sets the boost or cut amount. A High/Low Q switch selects a wider or narrower bandwidth around the boost or cut frequency. Other features: a Noise gate with an adjustable Gate control, an adjustable Attack control, an Expression Pedal input, and True Bypass. Retail: \$159.54.

ehx.com



### Ogre Tubeholic Overdrive Pedal

The Ogre Tubeholic utilizes a durable enclosure and a sliding cockpit head cover to protect the settings during use. Level, Tone, and Gain control knobs allow users simple clean boosts, crunchy guitar rhythms, or searing lead tones and everything in between. The Tubeholic utilizes PCB construction to help prevent external sound interference and insure a quality signal between the input, controls, and output. Also features true bypass.

ogreusa.com



### Electra Guitars Phoenix S Models

Based on the vintage Electra Phoenix X110 guitar, the new Phoenix S features an aggressively offset, double cutaway swamp ash body complimented by a 25.5" scale, maple C-shape bolt-on neck (with Electra SWC Neck Connection), a 12" radius maple fretboard, 22 jumbo frets, black dot inlays, and a GraphTech Tusq nut. The three Electra MagnaFlux SC single coil configuration teamed with the Electra Analog Tone Blend control allows for all combinations of the three pickups, in conjunction with the standard 5-way switch. The electronics are dialed in with a single volume and a single tone control. Finishing the instrument are Hipshot inline tuners, a vintage style tremolo bridge and large strap pins in chrome. Each guitar ships with the Electra MagnaFlex strings, an optional Electra gig bag and is available in either Trans Black or Sunburst. Retail: \$949, MAP: \$599.

electraguitar.com



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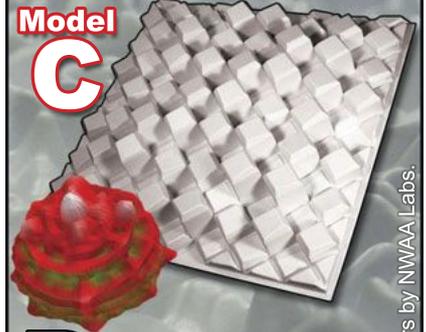
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ACCESSORIES



**AIM Gifts Musical Color Changing Cups**

With the new Color Changing Cups from AIM Gifts, users can fill the plastic cup with 14 ounces of any cold beverage and they go from their original color to a new color. Five designs are available.

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



**Rotosound Tru Bass RS88LD Black Nylon Strings**

Rotosound's Tru Bass RS88LD Black Nylon Strings have been re-engineered using a new manufacturing process designed to achieve a bass string that produces a deep warm double bass-like tone. The Tru Bass RS88LD Black Nylon Strings have been used over the decades by musicians like Paul McCartney (on Abbey Road) and Herbie Flowers (on Lou Reed's "Walk On the Wild Side").

The new production methods have resulted in a superior coating to protect the strings from perspiration, dirt, humidity and acid hands. The new Tru Bass RS88LD strings are available in 4 and 5-string sets and non-standard scale lengths.

Booth #1416 [rotosound.com](http://rotosound.com)

**NS Micro Universal and Violin Tuner**

The NS Micro Universal Tuner features a reversible, multi-color display and metronome in a small, compact design. The dual-swivel, clip-on mount maximizes viewing angles and quick application and removal on any instrument. The NS Micro Universal Tuner offers quick note response and tuning accuracy and also features calibration range of 410 – 480.

The NS Micro Violin Tuner features an easy-to-read, multi-color display and metronome in a compact design. A lever-lock clamp holds the tuner securely to the instrument while allowing for easy application and removal.



Booth #1002

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

**Grover Cable Junkies**

Cable Junkies are designed to easily snap onto almost any musical instrument cable, giving players a bit of individuality. Cable Junkies are available in five unique designs (Skull, Iron Cross, Devils Head, Star, and Alien Head) and multiple colors. Retail display includes a "cookie jar" container. Retail \$3.99



Booth #1225

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

**Levy's Leathers Cotton Banjo Strap**

The MC10 cotton banjo strap from Levy's is made from 100% slip-resistant cotton with leather ends and clip attachments. The tri-glide adjustment is adjustable to 57". Pictured here from left to right are: black (BLK); burgundy (BRG); navy (NAV); natural (NAT and red (RED).



Booth #1114

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

**Vandoren Jazz Reed Mix Sampler and Extended 'Masters' Clarinet Mouthpieces**

The Vandoren soprano saxophone sampler pack will include one reed of each of Vandoren jazz/commercial cuts: Java, Java Red, ZZ and V16. The baritone sampler will include one Traditional, Java, Java Red, and ZZ reed. With these new options, soprano and bari sax players will be able to try the different reed cuts without having to buy an entire box.



Also, Vandoren's Masters clarinet mouthpiece line has been expanded with the addition of the '13' series which is pitched at A=440. Previously available in two distinct models, Vandoren has also added the CL6 model to the '13' series as well as the standard A=442 series. The Masters line features a unique exterior shape and chamber design, allowing for a resonance and tone color unlike any other Vandoren mouthpiece. The CL6 is designed for clarinetists preferring a slightly more open mouthpiece. Vandoren has also added an entire line of 13 Series Masters mouthpieces, pitched at A=440 for American orchestral players and anyone seeking a slightly lower pitch.



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

### Henry Heller Mandolino Straps

Henry Heller's new Mandolino series straps are available in black and brown bolo braided leather with matching ends. These hand-crafted quality mandolin straps are made in the U.S.



omgmusic.com

Booth #1225

### Fishman Fluence Single Width Pickups

Fishman is now shipping the new Fluence Single Width pickups with humbucker models to follow soon after. Fluence are fully analog active pickups that are combined with Fluence Core printed "coils" and feature true Multi-Voice electronics to consistently create idealized versions of classic and customized guitar sounds. Fluence pickups are not susceptible to spurious noise, hum, cable capacitance problems, loss in tonal response and clarity due to small volume changes and other inductive issues. The Multi-Voice feature allows players to transform pickups from vintage to hot, or from hot to "line-in" clean with the right level, balance and gain for each voice.

When coupled with the Fluence rechargeable lithium-ion battery pack, time between battery charges is weeks instead of hours. Recharge with a standard USB charger for another 200+ hours of playing time. List Price: \$142.79 (Single), \$292.14 (Set of Three), \$133.27 (Rechargeable Battery Pack.)



fishman.com

Booth # 1034

### Asterope Premium Audio Cables

Asterope premium audio cables are designed to deliver pure, uncolored, high definition sound and include a number of product families. The Asterope Pro Stage Series is built for more demanding environments to ensure consistency, control, and durability. The Pro Studio Series is designed to provide a more dynamic, spatial, and superior sound, aimed at more intimate environments when clarity and harmonic response are critical. This series utilizes technology that delivers "high-definition" sound with a great bandwidth. Asterope products include proprietary wiring and production methods, patented "ultra-clarity" connectors, a limited lifetime warranty, and more.



asterope.com

Booth # 1034

### On-Stage Stands Bluetooth Products

The new BH4500 Dual-Mode Bluetooth Stereo Headphones include a built-in microphone for automatic call receiving. The latest Bluetooth 4.0 Wireless Technology transmits high quality stereo music playback. An adjustable headband and cushioned leather earmuff-style earpieces are included. They can be paired with a smartphone using NFC connectivity, which that prompts Bluetooth to connect automatically. (Retail: \$101.99; MAP: \$61.65).

The BS4080 Mini Bluetooth Speaker with u-mount clamp provides a way to wirelessly amplify digital music. It connects to your device within a range of about 30 feet. The lithium battery can be recharged to keep the speaker running. A 3.5mm audio cable and power adapter are included. The u-mount mounting bracket makes the speaker mountable to any microphone stand or boom. (Retail: \$42.99; MAP: \$29.95).



on-stage.com

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## PERCUSSION



### Scymtek Cymbals Vented Series

Scymtek Cymbals' new Jingle feature jingles that can be removed so each drummer can customize the cymbal to their individual taste. The drill hole sizes are compatible with standard cymbal rivets so drummers can also use combinations of both jingles and rivets or nothing at all. Sizes offered are 16" 17" 18" and 19". Retail: \$240 – \$300.

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

### Yamaha Pro Drum Monitoring

Yamaha's DTX-Live Sound solutions include mono and stereo sound reinforcement packages with Rehearsal Monitoring and Stage Drum Monitoring configurations featuring DXR speakers and DXS subwoofers, along with the award-winning STAGE-PAS 400i and STAGEPAS 600i.

Booth #644 [4wrd.it/yamahadt](http://4wrd.it/yamahadt)

### Prentice Practice Pads

Prentice Patented Practice Pads are handmade in USA with a high quality MDF fiberboard. Imbedded gum rubber playing surface with 2 size options. Change Pad angle quickly for match grip or traditional grip, and choose from an assortment of colors and wood finish. Retail: \$59.99.



Booth #101C

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

### Mapex SONIClear Bearing-Enabled MyDentity Line

Mapex MyDentity Custom drums are now available with the award-winning SONIClear bearing edge, designed to help drummers tune less and play more. Adding the SONIClear(tm) bearing edge to all MyDentity Custom Drums helps drummers simplify the tuning process and improve their sound. The SONIClear bearing edge allows the drumhead to sit flatter and make better contact with the shell.



An accompanying "MyDentity PLAYMORE Promotion" runs from July 1 through August 31st, 2014 and Mapex will upgrade the Tom heads to Remo USA-made clear Emperor batter heads, a coated Ambassador on the snare, and a clear Powerstroke P3 on the bass drum. The upgraded Remo USA heads will come installed onto the consumers MyDentity set.

Booth #314

[mydentity.mapexdrums.com](http://mydentity.mapexdrums.com)

## KEYBOARDS

### New Digital Pianos from Yamaha

The Yamaha P-255 Portable Digital Piano boasts Pure CF Sampling from a Yamaha CFIIIS concert grand for its piano tone, responsive touch via Graded Hammer action, and Synthetic Ivory Keytops. The P-255 also offers the Live Music Toolbox with a Sound Boost button, Panel Lock mode, and internal speaker On/Off control for when the player wants to use only external amplification.

Available for free on the App Store, the new P-255 Controller app for iOS devices extends the instrument's interface by enabling musicians to customize their sound, save favorite settings for instant recall, and sort and organize song content via an iPad, iPhone, or iPod touch. The P-255 also features an internal capacity for 10 user songs and 2-track recording. Retail: \$2,199.

Yamaha's Clavinova CLP-500 Series digital pianos feature sounds from two distinct piano brands: the Yamaha CFX 9-foot concert grand and the Bösendorfer Imperial. Upper models in the series feature Yamaha's new Virtual Resonance Modeling (VRM) technology. Piano touch enhancements have also been added to every model in the line, which can include real wooden keys, a key action escapement feel, and Yamaha's Synthetic Ivory keytops. The six models of the Clavinova CLP-500 Series include the CLP-525, CLP-535, CLP-545, CLP-575, CLP-565GP baby grand and CLP-585. The Yamaha CFX and Bösendorfer Imperial Voices and key action escapement are available in models CLP-535 and above. Real wooden keys are featured in models CLP-545 and higher. The CLP-525 offers Clavinova technologies and cabinetry at a new, entry-level price point. Retail: \$2,199 – \$6,299



Booth #644

[4wrd.it/YAMAHA\\_P-SERIES](http://4wrd.it/YAMAHA_P-SERIES) and [4wrd.it/YAMAHA\\_CLAVINOVA](http://4wrd.it/YAMAHA_CLAVINOVA)

### Moog Theremini

The Theremini combines a sound engine derived from Moog's Animoog synthesizer with the traditional no-touch playing of a Theremin. The front panel features a multi function LCD screen, which displays a chromatic tuner. The Theremini also features a portable design with a bottom nesting pitch antenna and a built-in speaker.



The Theremini features controls for pitch correction, scale, and root note, which allow anyone to adjust the level of playing difficulty. At the maximum position, the Theremini will play every note in a selected scale perfectly. The Theremini features a stereo effects processor with two line level audio outputs, an assignable 1/4" CV output jack, and a mini USB jack. Retail: \$319.

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

Booth #1652

### PRO AUDIO

### Yellow Jackets NOS Tube Converter

The new Yellow Jackets® NOS (New Old Stock) Tube Converter is a limited edition converter made for use in most amplifiers under 100 watts and using 6L6, EL34, 7027 or 6V6 output tubes. The converter lowers the overall power in an amplifier to give it a unique vintage tone. This NOS Yellow Jacket is designed with an NOS 6AQ5 seven-pin miniature beam power tube, which is included with the converter. The 6AQ5 Yellow Jacket converter will operate in a Class-A self-adjusting cathode-bias circuit.



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

Booth #929

### Gator Rolling Injection Molded Utility Cases

Gator Cases has expanded its line of waterproof injection molded utility cases with two new extra deep models featuring a retractable tow handle and recessed wheels. Featuring a waterproof and dust-proof seal with IP 67 and MIL-STD-810F Immersion test certifications, these cases are constructed of NK-7 resin material and include a ATA-300 flight safe rating and secure with the Powerclaw latching system.



The GU-2015-10-WP features an interior size of 20.5" x 15.3" x 10.1" and the larger GU-2217-13-WP features a 22" x 17" x 12.9" interior. Both models include recessed wheels and a pull out tow handle. The exterior features a soft-grip carry handle and can be padlocked.

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

Booth #735

### SKB Roto Racks

SKB's redesigned Roto Racks are molded of Linear Medium Density Polyethylene (LMDPE) for strength and durability with a new exterior size bar design to signify rack size with interlocking capabilities. The new Roto Racks are shipping in 2U through 12U sizes with gasketed front and rear covers instead of rear panels for easy access, recessed steel, Mil-Spec black twist latches, and new heavy-duty flush handles. The Roto Racks have a 17.6" rack depth with front and rear rack rails and rackmount hardware for secure mounting of gear.



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

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### Galaxy Audio 'Ergomic' Microphone

Galaxy Audio's new ERGOMIC wired microphone body was designed with a thicker body, much like a wireless microphone. The body tapers to fit the natural flow of a hand gripping the microphone body. A finger/hand rest helps prevent hands from sliding over the microphone element. The solid metal construction provides durability. The microphone heads can also be switched between a Dynamic or Condenser element and uses the same mic elements from the HH64/HH64SC wireless mic transmitter. Retail: \$79.99.



galaxyaudio.com



### Kaces Redesigned Cello & Upright Bass Bag Series

Kaces' newly redesigned University Series bags for Cello and Upright Bass feature 12mm high density foam padding, a bow pocket, accessory compartments, and multiple double-stitched handles. All University Cello bags additionally include padded backpack straps.

Symphony Series Cello and Bass bags are constructed using extra-thick 20mm high density foam, a velour lining, and a rigid reinforced bridge panel for added stability. Symphony Series bags also feature an adjustable front handle, two bow pockets, three extra-large accessory compartments as well as multiple double-stitched handles. Both series include a one-year limited warranty, and models are available for 1/4, 1/2, and 3/4 sizes. The University Series also offers a 4/4 cello option.

Booth #919

kaces.com

### Zoom H5 Handy Recorder

Like Zoom's flagship H6, the H5 employs a system of interchangeable input capsules. The H5 also comes with a new X/Y stereo capsule, featuring extended signal capacity – up to 140 dB SPL and shock-mounted microphones for reduced handling noise. The H5 allows four tracks of simultaneous recording directly to SD cards up to 32 gigabytes in a variety of MP3 and BWF-compliant WAV file formats, including 24-bit / 96k high-resolution audio. With the use of an optional adapter, it can be mounted directly to a DSLR or camcorder and requires just two AA batteries for power, with alkaline battery life of more than 15 hours. Dual XLR/TRS combo jacks included. Retail: \$269.99.



zoom-na.com

Booth #524

### Zivix PUC Wireless MIDI Link

The PUC acts as a wireless link to connect MIDI compatible musical instruments with iOS devices. The PUC frees musicians from wires previously needed to connect all devices, which makes their setups stationary, and offers more options for mobility. Retail: \$129.99.

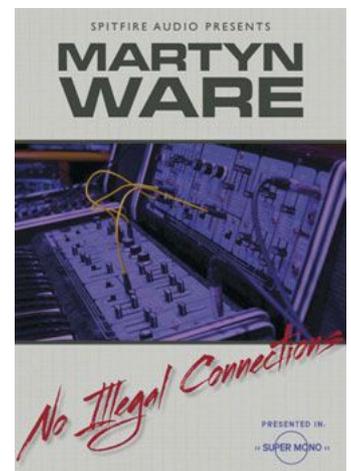


mipuc.com

Booth #450

### Spitfire's Martyn Ware – No Illegal Connections

No Illegal Connections is the latest addition to Spitfire's Signature Range of sample libraries (where well-known composers, producers, and sound-smiths curate sonic DNA for future music-makers) for Native Instruments' KONTAKT 4 or 5 (Mac OS X 10.7 or higher and Windows 7 or later). Ware – founding member The Human League and Heaven 17 – offers up an exclusive collection of favourite analogue synth and drum sounds from his collection. These include Korg's mid-Seventies-vintage Mini-KORG 700 'simple' analogue monosynth and the Roland System 100 semi-modular monophonic synth used on early Human League classics like "Being Boiled." All samples are presented in 'Super Mono' to provide a selection of channels processed via vintage Class-A analogue outboard. Over 270 piquant presets provide a total library size of 13.5 GB in compressed downloadable data from 25.1 GB of WAV files, totalling 11,016 samples.



spitfireaudio.com

## BAND &amp; ORCHESTRA

## New Reeds and Strings from D'Addario

The Reserve cut for clarinet is built on a standard thickness blank and features a shorter vamp, rounded tip corners, and a traditional tip thickness. Reserve B $\flat$  Clarinet reeds are offered in boxes of 10 and packs of two reeds in strengths from 2.0 – 4.5 with a special 3.0+ strength. Retail: \$43.

The Reserve Classic cut for clarinet is built on a thicker blank and offers a longer vamp, squared tip corners, and a thicker tip. Reserve Classic B $\flat$  Clarinet reeds will be available in half strengths, from 2.0 to 4.5, with special 3.5+ and 4.0+ strengths, and offered in boxes of 10 and packs of two reeds. Retail: \$56. Alto Saxophone Reserve reeds feature a traditional blank option, a heavy spine, a narrow rail slope, and a traditional tip thickness. Offered in boxes of 10 and packs of 2 reeds in half strengths from 2.0 – 4.5 with a special 3.0+ strength. Retail: \$53.00.

On the B&O side of things, D'Addario's Kaplan Vivo provides a robust, powerful tone designed for instruments with inherent warmth and sweetness. D'Addario's Kaplan Amo provides a powerful but more flexible tone and feel, designed for instruments with inherent brightness and openness. Both sets are designed to settle in quickly, have good bow response, and remain stable. They are also well-matched in diameter, which makes for more consistent feel and response across the set. Retail: \$168.



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

Booth #1002



## Verne Powell Ruby Aurumite Flute

The latest addition to Verne Q. Powell's Handmade Custom flute line, the Ruby Aurumite features body and head-joint tubing with an exterior layer of 14-karat rose gold and interior layer of sterling silver. Unlike any current Powell Custom model, the Ruby Aurumite has a 3.5mm ruby set into its sterling silver crown. Additional gold elements include a solid 14-karat rose gold lip plate and wall. Exterior silver components include sterling silver keys and soldered tone holes. The Ruby Aurumite also offers all of Powell's standard handmade custom features and options.

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



## Jupiter 1100 Series Trumpets

The 1100 Series Trumpets produce a wide range of tonal colors and come in three distinct models which give the player the freedom to choose from a variety of leadpipes and bell materials. Whether players are looking for a dynamic, classic or majestic sound, the 1100 Series offers versatility.

Booth #314

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

NAMM Booth 709

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## PRINT &amp; MEDIA

## Alfred Music: Three New Teach Yourself Titles; Complete Ukulele Method Mastering Ukulele

Alfred's *Teach Yourself to Play Classical Guitar* begins with the fundamentals of the classical guitar. Users start by learning the parts of the guitar, how to hold, tune, and care for their instrument, and reading standard music notation and TAB. Then, users will move on to playing new notes, scales, and essential classical guitar pieces. Users will be able to read music and play famous guitar repertoire pieces by some of the greatest classical masters, including J. S. Bach, Vivaldi, Mozart, and Scott Joplin.

The best-selling Alfred's *Teach Yourself to Play Mandolin* is now available with accompanying DVD and CD. This book, CD, and DVD package will teach users about the history of the mandolin, its unique parts, tuning the mandolin, how to play with a pick, and reading standard musical notation. Notes, scales, and songs are introduced lesson-by-lesson to gradually increase the users' mastery of the instrument. The book teaches important mandolin techniques like tremolo, cross picking, and more.

Alfred's *Teach Yourself to Play Banjo* starts with fundamentals, such as the history of the banjo, its components, how to hold tune and care for the instrument, and how to read standard musical notation. Included are fingering charts and a dictionary of chords in G and C tunings. All books include Alfred Music's TNT 2 Custom Mix software that lets users adjust the tempo and isolate parts. Retail: \$19.99 each.

Meanwhile, Alfred Music's *Complete Ukulele Method: Complete Edition* book and CD pack combines three books into one complete volume. The first section is perfect for beginning players, as well as more seasoned players who wish to enhance their knowledge. Beginning Ukulele teaches everything to get started on the instrument. Intermediate Ukulele takes users to the next level with detailed lessons on new grooves, the blues, melody and chord-melody playing, and jazz. Mastering Ukulele teaches how to arrange chord-melody solos using the entire ukulele fretboard, among many other advanced topics. It instructs the technique of triple strums, bursts, split strums, and fan strokes. Each section/book features fun songs in a variety of styles, including rock, blues, Hawaiian, and fiddle tunes.



alfred.com

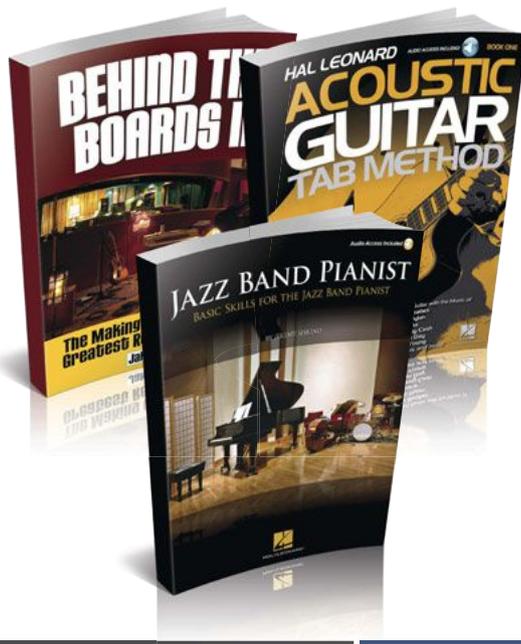
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# Shubb Capos Keeps a Firm Grip on the Fretted Market

2014 marks 40 years for Rick Shubb, Dave Coontz, and Co.

By Christian Wissmuller

**B**ack in 1974, banjo player Rick Shubb and Dave Coontz, a student of Rick's and an auto mechanic comfortable with metalworking and design, decided to make Shubb's unique concept for a fifth-string capo a reality.

Forty years later, Shubb Capos is one of the most respected names in the industry, with 16 employees, two office/design/warehouse/production facilities just outside the Bay Area in California, and a nearly endless list of string instrument players who wouldn't use anything else but a Shubb.

We recently checked in with Rick to learn in more detail about the past and present of the company he co-founded, as well as his thoughts on the future.



Rick Shubb



Dave Coontz (above) and Rick Shubb (below) in the '70s.



## **MMR: 40 years is quite an achievement. Can you talk about the very early days – the start of the company?**

**Rick Shubb:** Our first product was not the guitar capo, but our banjo fifth-string capo. I'd been carrying the idea around in my head for a long time. I preferred the functionality of a fifth-string capo over those miniature spikes that most people put in the fretboard, but I was not satisfied with the quality or design of fifth-string capos that were available. I envisioned one that used a lever to press the string, so you could get the pressure just right.

## **An innovative concept, no question.**

**RS:** Dave Coontz was one of my banjo students. At his lesson one night I began ranting about my idea for a better fifth-string capo, making sketches to illustrate the concept, and finally he said, "If nobody else will make you one, I will."

People will often offer to do things with the most genuine intention, but then fail to follow up, for whatever reasons. But when Dave arrived for his lesson the following week, he showed me what he had made, based on the concept I had explained. It was crude – made with a hacksaw from aluminum and scrounged up bolts and springs – and it was larger than it needed to be, but I was impressed with the fact that he'd actually made it. We installed it on my banjo, and it worked! Now we were both ex-

cited. I don't think he even got a lesson from me that night. We knew that this first attempt could be improved upon, and we discussed just how.

Dave worked as an auto mechanic. He and a partner ran their own two-man repair shop in the East Bay, about a 45-minute drive from where I lived in Mill Valley. He invited me to come out to his shop later that week and work together in the evening on refining our new gadget.

It turned out not to be a one-time thing; the sessions continued for several weeks, usually twice a week. I would arrive at 7:00 pm, when the rollup door was rolled down, and we'd work and brainstorm until well past midnight. We'd take a short dinner break at the local Denny's, the only place still open by the time we thought about eating. Dinner wasn't really a break, though, as we would scheme and sketch ideas on paper napkins. About once a week we'd produce a new prototype, which would replace the one from the previous week on my banjo, and I would then use it on a gig.

## **How long until you arrived at what you considered – for the time, anyway – a "final" version?**

**RS:** After a few weeks, with each prototype more closely resembling the last, we declared the product to be ready. Carrying two prototypes in a shoebox – one assembled and the other dis-

assembled – we ventured into the industrial neighborhoods of the S.F. Bay Area in search of a manufacturer.

#### Were there any takers?

**RS:** We struck out. For various reasons – the quantities were too small, the parts too unconventional, pricing too high, or they simply didn't take us seriously. We were having trouble finding anyone to make our product.

Finally Dave said, "Let's just make it ourselves." This idea seemed less daunting to him, being the tool guy that he was, than it did to me. But it only took a few minutes for him to convince me that we could handle it. We pooled most of the money we had and made two investments, each of which cost about \$2,000: a sturdy, 20-year-old Bridgeport milling machine, and a patent.

We made a hundred fifth-string capos. I signed each of them by hand with an engraving tool. It was nearly summer, and the plan was for me to go to bluegrass festivals in the South to sell them. Dave was already becoming a crackerjack machinist; now it was my turn to step up to the plate and try to learn to be a salesman, and eventually to run a company. Whether I ever made that transition is still open to debate.

#### You had a pretty high-profile early adopter of the product, no?

**RS:** Before I left, I called a few local banjo players and told them about my new product. Some were interested, and the first to buy one was my old housemate, Jerry Garcia.

Then I packed the rest of those hundred capos in that same shoebox, and hit the road. I went to five bluegrass festivals in five weeks, showing off my new fifth-string capo to the banjo players in the bands. I stayed at a friend's house in Nashville during the week, and went to a festival each weekend. About halfway into the trip, I got a job playing banjo with Buck White and the Down Home Folks, now known simply as The Whites. Besides being a great experience for me musically, this gave me added credibility in showing my new capo. Now I wasn't just some suspicious outsider from out West infiltrating the jams – I was Buck's banjo man.

By the time I got back home, the shoebox was more dog-eared, and it was not empty. But it wasn't full, either. I had sold four or five capos at each festival, and considering how novel the capo was, and the commitment required to install one, I was pleased with the result.

I placed a 1/6-page ad in *Bluegrass Unlimited*, and soon orders began arriving in the mail. The demand was moderate, and the business remained easily manageable part-time, while I continued to support myself playing gigs and teaching.

A few months after that, Dave moved back to the Midwest, and I moved to Oregon. We were able to keep the business going with Dave doing the machining in his garage in Iowa, me assembling the capos and running the business end of things from Portland, and my mother taking mail and phone orders, and shipping out the capos from her home in California. At the volume we were dealing with then, it worked out fine.

Once or twice each year I would visit Dave in Iowa, spending a couple of weeks or more brainstorming. It was during these visits that our little company would advance the most. We developed a second product; a compensated banjo bridge. It gave each of the five strings its proper scale length, reducing existing intonation problems.

It wasn't until 1979, five years after our company began, that we developed and introduced our guitar capo – the product that would push our business from part-time to full-time, and then some.

#### Let's discuss the original capo design and how the lever operated, over-center design differed from other models available at the time.

**RS:** On one of my trips to Iowa, I had brought with me a collection of every sort of capo I could find, old and new, and spread them out on Dave's kitchen table. They would remain there for the duration of my stay. We'd push them aside temporarily at meal times. The kitchen table served as our office where we spent many hours each day, picking up and handling the different capos, thinking about them, considering which features of each were good, if any, and which were not. We wanted to come up with something new, and neither of us felt that the answer lay in simply combining the best features from existing designs. So while the pile of capos on the table kept our heads in the game, it mainly served as a reference for what not to do.

What did all of these capos on the table have in common that ours would not? They all put the guitar out of tune, to varying degrees. Despite what some of them may have claimed in their advertising, they did. And why? In some cases because the material that pressed the strings was so hard that it stretched them over the fret. But also because of the manner in which they closed onto the guitar neck. All were modeled after some prior mechanical device that exerted pressure: a vise, a c-clamp, a belt, a clothespin, a rubber band, a pair of pliers, and so on, all of which pushed, pulled, or stretched the strings as the pressure was applied.

So was there a mechanical model we could use that did not have this flaw? Yes – that most marvelously versatile tool of all time, the human hand. The over-center closing and locking principle we employed mimics the human hand in many subtle ways, all of which serve to avoid the string stretching, pushing, pulling, or bending problems created by these other clamping methods.

#### How long have you been at the current Rohnert Park, California facility?

**RS:** We've been at the Rohnert Park facility for about six years. Before that, we were at Valley Ford for about 15 years. We've kept that facility, too, and use it for warehouse storage and for my own private office. The two places are about 20 minutes apart, and I split my time between them. Our buildings in Rohnert Park, Valley Ford, and Missouri are each in the neighborhood of 5,000 square feet.

#### Can you describe your current distribution model?

**RS:** Most of our sales are through wholesale distributors, and most of them international. But we remain accessible at all levels – dealers,



The product that started it all: The Shubb fifth-string capo.



The classic Shubb Capo – present-day model (above) and from 1980 (below).



teachers, and end users included. We don't undercut our distributors or dealers – we respect the sales structure and do our best to support it – but our main priority is that anyone who wants our products should be able to easily get them, and if that means coming to us, well, here we are.

Our online sales are relatively small and center mostly on products that are harder to find. We sell at list price on the web, and there are hundreds of websites selling our capos at a discount. But there are those people who prefer to buy from the manufacturer, in the same spirit that they like to buy a CD from a band at a show; they appreciate the contact and support. Plus, not all of our dealers and distributors carry our full line – and I don't blame them, it is pretty extensive – so for someone looking for a partial capo, or a certain color or finish, it can be simpler to get it from us.

**While a number of high profile, respected artists have a relationship with the**



The Shubb Capos team at Summer NAMM 2013. Left to right: Gary Mobley, Dave Coontz, Gary Swallows, Rick Shubb, and Raul Reynoso.

**company, Shubb doesn't go after musicians to be endorsing artists. Can you talk about the philosophy behind that?**

**RS:** A professional musician's choice of gear is a very personal thing, and I respect that. They're going to use the stuff they want to use, and that's it. They're not like famous athletes or movie stars who might get paid a fortune to pretend they prefer some brand of soda pop or underwear. When it comes to the tools of their trade, musicians' loyalty can't be bought. And I wouldn't want to. So when you see someone using a

Shubb capo, I guarantee you it's because that is his or her choice.

Now, I won't say that we don't give complimentary capos to famous players, but it's always when they are already Shubb users, or want to be. Many years ago, when our capo was still relatively new, I received an order in the mail for a 12-string guitar capo from Pete Seeger. I sent him a 12-string capo, a banjo capo, and his check, along with a note saying, "What kind of a son of a bitch would I be if I didn't give a capo to Pete Seeger?" He sent me back a note saying, "Thanks, I'll use 'em both!" And he did.

We've formed many wonderful lifetime friendships within the music community, and some of these players have honored us by performing for us at the trade shows. They do this as a token of that friendship. I can't think of another business I'd rather be in.

**Do you have any special events or projects lined up to celebrate the 40th Anniversary?**

**RS:** I've been holding contests on our Facebook page in which I give away free capos. And we have some 40th anniversary t-shirts and fancy embroidered jackets. At the Anaheim show we held two drawings each day and gave some of these away, along with some other swag, and we'll do that again in Nashville.

**Looking to the future, what are your hopes and expectations for the Shubb Company?**

**RS:** To just keep doing what we are doing, and to keep getting better at it. Honestly, that's it. A design this good never gets old, but it's up to me to stay on my toes and make sure we're doing the best job we can – as a company – so that people don't forget just how good our product is. That's why I came up with the catchphrase that we've been using lately: "Still the Best." Maybe not the newest, but...

When I first started exhibiting at NAMM shows I was blown away to meet people – in person – whose names were iconic in the music products trade; Leo Fender, Ernie Ball, Mel Bay, Jim Dunlop, and others. Those were brands, not people, right? But those guys were actually there. And then one day about ten years ago, I said to my dear friend, John Pearse, "You know what? People are thinking that about us now." **MMR**



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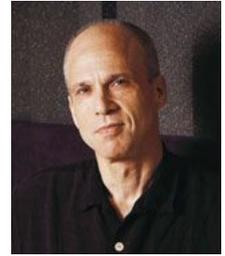
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# StuDiomaster in 2014

## Iconic Brand Taking Steps to Increase U.S. Market Presence, Dealer Service in the Coming Year

By Christian **Wissmuller**



Joey Wolpert, CEO of SCCS

**S**tudiomaster was founded in the mid '70s and first came to prominence later in that decade and in the early 1980s as the company's power amplifiers, mixing consoles, and speaker cabs became favorites of such notable acts as Phil Collins, Thin Lizzy's Phil Lynott, and Spandau Ballet.

Continued innovation throughout the ensuing years (and changes in ownership) and a consistently strong reputation within the industry led to the acquisition of the group by present-day owners Soundking. Soundking's four product lines – StuDiomaster, Carlsbro, CD, and Starr – have been consolidated in the U.S. under the moniker "SCCS," derived from the first initial of each of the brand names.

"As you may know, Soundking is one of the larger audio companies around," says Joey Wolpert, CEO of SCCS. "They have a huge global presence virtually everywhere, except the U.S., though their OEM On-Stage Stands are huge. Our mandate from HQ in China is to get North America humming. That task encompasses defining/developing/branding/marketing the four Soundking product lines: StuDiomaster (live sound), Carlsbro (guitar and bass amplification, including Sherwood acoustic guitar amps), CD (digital instruments, e.g., drums, electric pianos), and Starr (stage and DJ lighting, stands, and accessories)."

To that end, StuDiomaster is making use of their seven employees in the group's UK office, six U.S. team members working out of StuDiomaster's 5,000 sq. ft. Oregon facility, and three "dedicated" employees at Soundking headquarters in China. "Of course, the 2,300 factory employees in China are actively involved in multiple aspects of the brands, including design and manufacturing," Wolpert adds.

StuDiomaster's current domestic distribution model is designed to accommodate dealers of any stripe, though Wolpert notes the company is especially keen to foster relationships with indie dealers.

"SCCS works in close partnership with North American distributor MV Pro Audio, which handles order fulfillment and logistics out of their Oregon office," he explains. "Though dealers of all shapes and sizes are welcome, a number of sales programs and incentives have been developed with an eye toward supporting and nourishing independent dealers. Of particular note is that SCCS customizes their approach for each individual dealer – from product mix to pricing to freight options – so that dealers aren't forced to be a square peg in a round hole, or missing opportunities because of their size or financial strength. SCCS's mantra is 'Great Business Made Simple,' and we mean it. Everything we do is geared toward maximizing our dealers' financial return and incentivizing them to partner with us for the long haul."

While the group's product offerings are, in some respects, fairly diverse, when asked to name which specific category does the most business for StuDiomaster, Wolpert doesn't hesitate: "PA equipment, plain and simple."

As for what specific product is currently flying off the shelves, he says that, "StuDiomaster's Starlight Portable PA/LED Light Array/Monitor System is a clear winner, allowing DJs and small bands to be truly self-contained, with their PA, stage lights, and monitor system all built into a pair of low-priced, gig-ready cabinets. The response from working DJs has been stellar, with numerous comments from the field thanking us for delivering a product that solves many of their setup and reliability issues."

The company has big plans for the future that will see





The Studiomaster Horizon mixing console.

“ Everything we do is geared toward maximizing our dealers’ financial return and incentivising them to partner with us for the long haul. ”

changes across the entire spectrum of their product offerings and what Studiomaster will be able to offer retailers and end users. “Over the last several months, the Studiomaster teams have been actively refining and revamping the entire product line, with a focus on establishing and/or maintaining a competitive advantage in features, pricing, performance, value, et cetera,” Wolpert explains. “This means that certain legacy products, such as the VPX powered speakers, have been redesigned to be lighter, more powerful, lower cost, and so on. At the same time, new products such as the Starlight Portable PA/LED Light Array/Monitor System have been introduced to give retailers new and different avenues to approach their customers. Products in development include expanded offerings in PA speakers and mixers (analog and digital) for Studiomaster, next-generation guitar amps from Carlsbro, and an impres-

sive array of full-featured LED-based stage and DJ lighting products from Staar.”

With so many changes afoot, the coming months hold a lot of promise for SCCS and for its dealer partners. According to Wolpert, “We expect our presence in the pro audio market to expand significantly over the next 12 months as our new and refined product lines gain traction with dealers and end users. To further that goal, SCCS is aggressively courting dealers by offering high margins and generous freight programs (even free flooring). End users are being attracted with a strong combination of product features, reliability, and value pricing. We’re supporting this outreach with print and electronic advertising, POP materials, clinic tours, and more. We expect 2014 to be a great year for all four SCCS brands, with 2015 bringing both innovative products and multiple opportunities for our dealers’ success.” *MMA*



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# The Drum Shop North Shore

By Eliahu **Sussman**

**Who:**

Nate Morrison

**Where:**

Beverly, Mass.

**When:**

Founded in 2012  
with wife, Marissa

**What:**

Drum and percussion  
shop, with lessons

**The facilities:**

A typical triple-decker house:  
shop on the first floor; storage  
and lesson rooms on the second  
floor; shop owner's residence on  
the third floor.

**On the web:**

thedrumshopns.com



The Drum Shop North Shore in Beverly, Mass.



Nate Morrison, owner of the Drum Shop North Shore, with clinician Tony "Thunder" Smith.

**Secret to survival as a small, independent store:** Work your ass off. I work 80 hours a week!

**How to stand out:** In a world where online retailing is so important, sometimes people lose the local element. I'm trying to build a neighborhood shop when everyone else's local shop is dying.

**More than sales...** I don't only want to serve the drummers who are already here, although that's part of my goal; I want to create new drummers. There are people who played 20 years ago, but don't play anymore – I want to see them pick their sticks up again. And I want to build a community.

**Community outreach:** We have a "drum hang" once every month, a free event usually featuring a clinician. We also have clinics and other events in the store.

**Online retail:** I do the online thing – you have to. I just sold a snare to a customer on eBay who lives an hour away and drove in to come pick it up. So that can also help drive your local sales.

**Best customer feedback:** One of my customers told me, "Once you opened up the shop, I felt like I had blood in my veins again."

**Biggest reward:** Getting a sense that we're bringing a level of joy to our customers by doing something that I love is the most rewarding.

**Biggest challenge:** Profitability. Some people believe that I buy drum sets for \$10 and sell them for \$1,000.

**Personal touch:** I don't hang my hat on a product, so much as my personal relationship with people. I do my best to get to know what customers really like. I remember it, I write it down, and I think about it. If I get something in that will be right up someone's alley, I'll give that person a call and let them know before I start posting about it online.

**Lessons learned about manufacturers:** The smaller the company, the better they are to work with, as a retailer. I don't want to call anyone out, but some of the bigger companies have given me really bad customer service.

**Best brands:** I've really jumped on the Mapex bandwagon. I think they're the best drums in the world for the money. There might be better drums out there, but not for the price. And they have the best customer service. If anything comes in damaged, they replace it right away – there's not even a question. I also really get behind boutique companies like RBH Drums.

**Stocking inventory:** When I first opened up, I made big, blanket orders, in part because I didn't know what was going to sell. A year and a half in, there are some things I'm still sitting on. I've learned to be very careful about what I order for the shop, because [product sitting on the floor, unsold] costs me money.

**Best sellers:** Snares and cymbals. Those are comfort food for drummers. People will spend \$600 on a high-end snare drum three or four times in two or three years, but they won't buy a new drum set every two or three years.

**Inspirations:** Gary Forkum at Fork's Drum Closet: he has the most comfortable, warm, no-pressure vibe in his shop. Steve Maxwell: not that I want to be like him, because who possibly could be, but I love that he just went out and does what he wants. Who else has a 24-karat, gold-plated Louis Bellson kit? The final one is the Drum Shop in Portland, Maine, where I worked for several years before opening my own shop. That's the shop I grew up going to, and they had so much inventory and such a knowledgeable staff.

**What gets you out of bed:** This, every day. I live for the drum shop. I never oversleep, and I don't drink coffee. This shop just drives me, because I see results every day. I see happy customers and meet inspiring drummers every day, and I just don't want to miss a moment of that.

**Social media:** It's incredible. We have a huge fan base on Facebook, which



Morrison keeps the bulk of his stock out of sight on the second floor of the building, which also features several rooms equipped for drum lessons.



Behind the show room, the first floor has a dedicated room for making YouTube videos and demos of gear for sale.

is just awesome. Instagram, YouTube – those are huge. We're up to 650 videos on our YouTube channel. It also gives people a tangible way to be a part of the community we're building, even if they can't be right here.

**Plans for the future:** I see this not only being a local drum shop, but I see us expanding our teaching – maybe someday moving into a free-standing retail location with separate access to a music school and recording studio.

**Measuring success:** Profit is almost a byproduct of what I'm trying to build – it's not my goal. I have to make a profit, but I'd much rather see my vision fulfilled than just make a profit.

**And the vision is...** to build a community of drummers. And I think that's being accomplished. And the byproduct of making a profit, although it may be small, it's there!

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NAMM Booth 503

# The 2014 SBO Essay Contest Scholarship Winners

**A**mong the 10 scholarship winners of the essay contest organized and co-sponsored by *MMR* sister publication *SBO* magazine were two students each from Illinois and Virginia, with the other six from Colorado, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, Texas, and Wisconsin. Five winners from grades 4 to 8 and five students from grades 9 to 12 each received music scholarships of \$1,000, with their respective school music programs awarded a matching prize of musical products from co-sponsors NAMM, Alfred Music, Woodwind & Brasswind, Sabian, and Yamaha Corporation of America.

This year's theme, "Now more than ever, music education is important because..." generated contributions from every state in the U.S., as well as several foreign countries. The music students were presented their scholarship award by local music dealers representing NAMM, a major co-sponsor of the program. 2014 marks the 14th year for the essay contest, which has awarded

\$280,000 in scholarship funds and matching music products to more than 140 students and school music programs since its inception.

The winning school music programs and their music directors included: Danielle Johnson of Mountain Range High School, Westminster, Colorado; Robert Loughran of Princeton High School, Princeton, New Jersey; Jonathan Handman of Arlington High School, Lagrangeville, New York; Matthew Kurinsky of Hinsdale Central High School, Hinsdale, Illinois; and Donald Krudop from Salem High School, Virginia Beach, Virginia. Also, Toni Beaver of West Bridgewater Middle/Senior High School, West Bridgewater, Massachusetts; Sonia Alcorta of Anson Jones Middle School, San Antonio, Texas; Benjamin Leon, Wisconsin Hills Middle School, Brookfield, Wisconsin; Jeanne Johannesen of Longfellow Elementary School, Wheaton, Illinois; and Debbie Price, Marshall Middle School, The Plains, Virginia.



## Margaret Allen

Grade: 8 • Age: 13 • Music Teacher: Toni Beaver  
West Bridgewater Middle/Senior High School  
West Bridgewater, MA



West Bridgewater Middle/Senior High School principal Mark Bodwell, Rick Santos of Rick's Music World, essay contest winner Maggie Allen, music teacher Toni Beaver, and Christine Page, assistant principal.

## Sienna Cavazos

Grade: 7 • Age: 13 • Music Teacher: Sonia Alcorta  
Anson Jones Middle School  
San Antonio, Texas



Music & Arts school services DM Lance McAllister, contest winner Sienna Cavazos, and orchestra teacher Sonja Alcorta.

## Aparna Jayashankar

Grade: 8 • Age: 12 • Music Teacher: Benjamin Leon  
Wisconsin Hills Middle School • Brookfield, WI



Contest winner Aparna Jayashankar receives her scholarship check from Chris White of White House of Music at a school assembly in Wisconsin Hills Middle School in Brookfield, Wisconsin.

## Shaylee Kimmel

Grade: 5 • Age: 10 • Music Teacher: Jeanne Johannesen  
Longfellow Elementary School • Wheaton, IL



George Quinlan, Jr. of Quinlan and Fabish presents a check to scholarship winner Shaylee Kimmel, who is accompanied by Longfellow School principal Dianne Thornburg and orchestra director Jeanne Johannesen.

### Ember Skirsky

Grade: 6 • Age: 11 • Music Teacher: Debbie Price  
Marshall Middle School • The Plains, VA



Menzie Pittman of the Contemporary Music Center with scholarship winner Ember Skirsky, student at Marshall Middle School, The Plains, Virginia.

### Lucas Droste

Grade: 12 • Age: 17 • Music Teacher: Danielle Johnson  
Mountain Range High School • Westminster, CO



Music teacher Danielle Johnson, essay contest winner Lucas Droste, and Music & Arts educational rep James Barela.

### Amy Guan

Grade: 10 • Age: 15 • Music Teacher: Robert Loughran  
Princeton High School • Princeton, NJ



Music & Arts school services DM Dave Kaplan, contest winner Amy Guan, and Princeton High School orchestra director Robert Loughran.

### Bethany Hagin

Grade: 12 • Age: 17 • Music Teacher: Jonathan Handman  
Arlington High School • Lagrangeville, NY



Arlington High School orchestra director John Handman, contest winner Bethany Hagin, and Lou Varuzzo of Paul Effman Music.

### Kelly Hung

Grade: 12 • Age: 17 • Music Teacher: Matthew Kurinsky  
Hinsdale Central High School • Hinsdale, IL



Jon Kostal of Uncle Jon's Music, contest winner Kelly Hung, and music teacher Matthew Kurinsky.

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Essay contest winner Mackinjosh Zumarraga and school services DM Chris Davis.



# The Hidden Elephant in the Guitar Store

**By George Gruhn**  
Gruhn Guitars,  
Nashville, Tenn.

**T**he number of guitars made annually in the United States today is the highest in the history of the market. Companies such as Martin, Gibson, Fender, and Taylor are making more than ten times the number of instruments annually compared to the numbers produced in the mid-1980s. The elephant in the room is the incredible number of used instruments this brings into the marketplace and how this will affect the future market for new instruments. Unlike many other products, good quality guitars can last for hundreds of years with proper care, so in many ways the biggest competition for a new instrument manufacturer is their own vintage and used products. Guitars and other fretted instruments are also collected and traded in a manner unlike most other products and typically have high resale value.

While complete industry production statistics are not available, the growth of several major instrument manufacturers clearly illustrates the wealth of instruments available today. In the mid-1980s, Taylor made less than 1,000 guitars per year, whereas today they make over 40,000 in the U.S. and many more budget models in their Mexico factory. In 1985, Paul Reed Smith and a few employees debuted their handmade prototype guitars at the NAMM Show and Bill Collings was producing handmade instruments by himself, whereas today both companies have sizable factories and continue to grow.

More than two-thirds of all the Martin, Fender, and Gibson guitars ever made in the history of these companies have been made since 1990. While both Gibson and Fender are huge conglomerates today, during the mid-1980s, Gibson was on the brink of collapse and Fender's U.S. production was minuscule. But perhaps the most easily quantified production figures available are for Martin, utilizing their consecutive serial number system. From 1833 to 1898, Martin produced a total of 8,000 instruments. Their serial numbers hit 20,000 in 1924, 100,000 in 1947, 200,000 in 1965, 500,000 in 1990, 1,000,000 in 2004, and are at about 1.8 million today.

As evidenced by many popular acoustic and electric guitar designs, these instruments don't quickly go out of style or become obsolete. Most fretted instrument designs popular today have changed very little since their introduction. By the mid-1930s, acoustic fretted instrument designs were much the same as they are today and virtually every electric guitar harks back to the original designs of the 1950s. There is no stigma about having a guitar that looks used. In fact, some people pay extra for new Fender and Gibson instruments which have been "reliced" to look like a vintage instrument.

Some of the greatest acoustic instruments made in the history of American manufacturing were introduced during the Great Depression. Companies had to be creative and offer the

best quality possible because anything less would not entice people to part with their hard-earned cash when times were tough. During the 1930s, the finest quality materials (including air-seasoned, aged Brazilian rosewood, Adirondack spruce, and ebony) were affordable and readily available and companies such as Martin and Gibson employed skilled craftsmen, as many aspects of guitar building were done consistently by hand. Though instrument production eventually shifted to machine-oriented factory work, many processes continued to be done by hand and the quality of American-made fretted instruments remained very high through the mid-1960s.

“ In many ways, the biggest competition for a new instrument manufacturer is their own vintage and used products. ”

Many professional musicians of the late 1960s through the 1970s played what we now refer to as "vintage guitars," not so much because of their age or collector's item appeal, but because the new ones at that time were of very poor quality in comparison. Guitar companies were taken over during the mid-1960s through 1970 by big holding companies run by bean counters who knew little about the product or the market. CBS acquired Fender in 1965, Avnet acquired Guild in 1967, and Gibson changed company presidents in 1965 prior to Norlin purchasing CMI, the owner of Gibson, in 1970. Martin was the only major guitar company which remained independent during the 1970s, though this time period was a low point for that company as well. Though the instruments produced during this era were affordable, their inferior quality led educated consumers toward used products and helped create the vintage guitar market.

By contrast, today's new American-made fretted instruments are both affordable and well constructed. Though major U.S. instrument manufacturing companies are thriving, there are concerns as to whether this rate of production is sustainable in view of changing demographics and the fact that a well-made guitar with proper care can re-enter the marketplace countless times for hundreds of years. The commendable efforts of companies like Taylor Guitars to create sustainable and ecologically sound material sources will ensure it's possible to continue building guitars well into the future.

Regardless of whether a dealer sells used guitars, these instruments will impact their business. Based on over 50 years as a retailer, my experience is that, on average, instruments are resold about every 15 years. The inevitable conclusion is the number of used instruments sold annually is fully as great as, or more than, the number of new instruments sold. This is a very significant market which dealers and manufacturers can ill afford to ignore, but it remains to be seen at what point the supply of new instruments will exceed the market's demand. **MMM**

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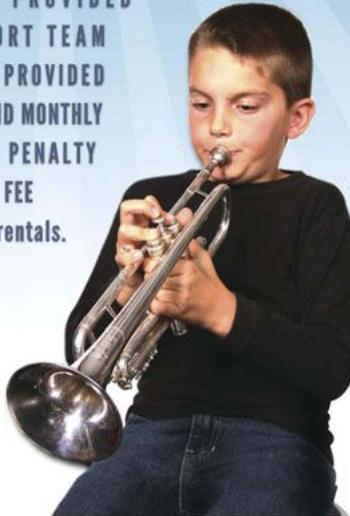
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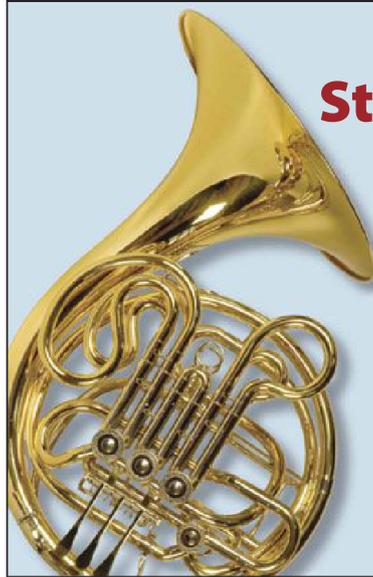
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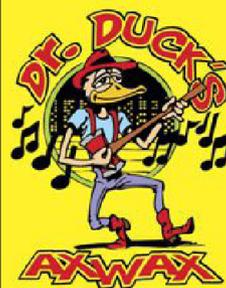


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By Dan Daley

# Summer NAMM Redux

It's July, it's insanely hot, Lower Broadway in Nashville is teeming with crowds in town for the Summer NAMM Show, and all is (reasonably) right with the world. At least, that's what we think people will be saying later this month, at the 2014 Summer NAMM Show.

After dissatisfaction with the show spurred a peregrination that took the summer show from Indianapolis in 2006 and to Austin in 2007, NAMM came back to Nashville in 2008, though concerns weren't really much abated. But it was also returning to Music City at the leading edge of what would turn out to be the worst economic recession in three-quarters of a century, at a time when recorded music sales had been plummeting for the better part of the decade, and MI sales themselves had been slipping – in 2009, they dropped over 17 percent according to NAMM's stats, the first double-digit drop since 1995 – a perfect storm that even a shot of Jack Daniels straight down at Tootsie's Orchid Lounge couldn't provide relief from.

Summer NAMM returns to Nashville this year for the second time in a row at the new Music City Center convention center. True, the new venue's massiveness tends to throw the show's already relatively small size – about a quarter that of the main show in Anaheim – into unflattering relief. But Summer NAMM may also be at its fighting weight, aptly scaled for the small and mid-sized independent retailers that have been its target demographic for years. As disposable income once again rises, so has both wholesale and retail MI purchasing, up 1.7 percent as an annualized rate over the last five years, according to IBIS-World's market research. After the finance and real estate meltdowns of the last six years, any figure without a negative sign in front of it is good news.

## The New Nashville

Summer NAMM and Nashville itself seem to be on a parallel course of sorts. The city has been expanding, reveling in the "It" city sobriquet bestowed on it by urban tastemakers and the mainstream media. While music actually accounts for a pretty small slice of Nashville's \$82 billion gross MSA product (as per Forbes) and nowhere near the \$20 billion of that the health-care industry generates there, that same music product is doing very well perceptually: Country sales are up over the five years through 2012, with a bit of a downturn last year, but with several very high-profile artists helping buoy the marquee, including Taylor Swift, Jason Aldean, Miranda Lambert, and Luke Bryan. And literally weeks before Summer NAMM's return, its

broadcast avatar, the ABC prime-time soap "Nashville" got its renewal from the network. (Almost as serpentine as the show's often-sketchy plots was the back-channel back-and-forth between the show's producers and a consortium of the city, the state's film & video commission, and Opryland parent Gaylord Entertainment, which had been subsidizing the program and which, after threats to move production from Nashville to either Texas or Louisiana, ultimately anted up \$8 million to keep the show in town.)

Summer NAMM attendees also come to Nashville to find that in the space of just a few years, its culinary landscape has been transformed from that of a meat-and-three wasteland to that of a legitimate food destination, with *USA Today* and *The New York Times* offering readers guided tours through the city's

increasingly dense thicket of actually good restaurants. Then there's the urban renewal angle – areas such as the once-aptly named Gulch have become mini-Manhattans of towering glass condos overlooking hip clubs and hipster clothing stores (including Tom Bedell's Two Old Hippies store on 12th Avenue South).

“ Summer NAMM may also be at its fighting weight, aptly scaled for the small and mid-sized independent retailers that have been its target demographic for years.”

”

## Nashville & NAMM: Together Again

Then there's the music itself in Music City. Country has become a hot format, regularly crossing over to the pop charts. In the process, country uses a lot more of the spectrum of what MI comprises. It's not just a Strat and Twin Reverb proposition anymore. The nests of pedalboards in front of guitarists on stage at the CMA Fest shows in early June looked as imposing as those at any rock show. Country is embracing more of MI's technology as its sound becomes broader. And Nashville is possibly the densest pro audio city in the world – it always had more recording studios per capita than anywhere else, but it certainly has more personal and project studios on that basis than even Williamsburg, Brooklyn. (However, the cancellation of the AES-sponsored 2014 Nashville Recording Workshop & Expo, scheduled to run concurrent with Summer NAMM, was a disappointment.) Nashville's music industry is a huge consumer of recording equipment and its local MI retail establishments see a brisk trade in pro audio gear.

There's no reason that Summer NAMM can't use some of the city's recent mojo to refurbish its own presence there. The second-biggest musical instrument show in the country taking place in the capital of live and recorded music is simply synergy waiting to happen. Again.

*Dan Daley is a veteran pro audio writer and journalist, as well as the author of several books. He is a recovering musician, but enjoys occasional relapses. MMR*

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