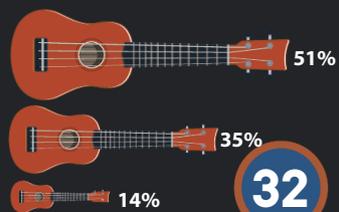


MMR

MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

Survey:
Ukulele Market



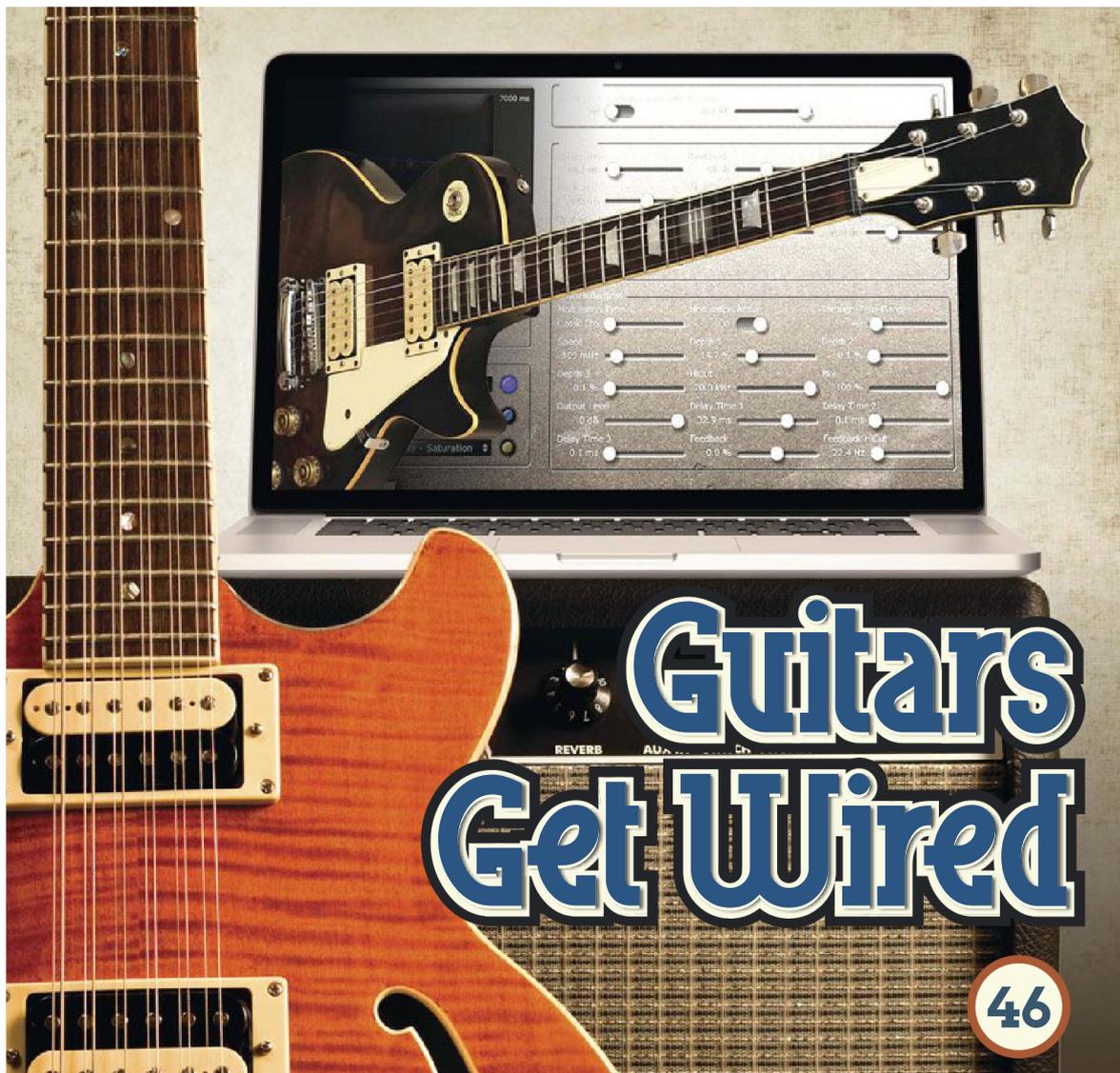
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NAMM 2014



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C O N T E N T S

MMR

MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

Vol.173

No.03

MARCH
2014



"There's always gear and product, but the NAMM Show is about people."

– Joe Lamond, NAMM president & CEO

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Cover design by Garret Petrov.

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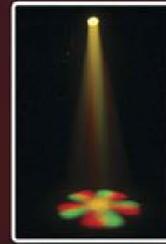
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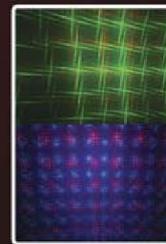
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Do Your Business Your Way



by Kevin M. Mitchell

In a post NAMM-Show exchange with Gabriel O'Brien, he told me he was excited about some of changes he's going to be making to the pair of stores he co-owns (Larry Music's Center, cover story *MMR* issue January 2013). "We're changing our corporate approach to supplier relationships," he told me. "One, we only want to do business with really good people who want our business and want us to grow; and two, we only want to carry really cool products that we love. It really changes the way we do a lot of things..."

It also changed the way he approached NAMM, he added.

At one time, The NAMM Shows were the only way to see, hear, and learn about new product. But video demonstrations for dealers are just a click away. Placing orders for the year? Not so much a "NAMM-exclusive" any more.

Now the ability for a dealer to get his or her hands on a new product and to sit down and make a dinner is still valuable. And NAMM continues to do a fantastic job with their workshops and training through the Idea Center, providing tools

““We only want to do business with really good people who want our business.””

that retailers need to be more successful, and that is increasingly the most important reason for a dealer to attend.

But one aspect of the show that will never change is that it is the best time to re-evaluate your business plan for the coming year. In talking to independent music store-owners, some are feeling downright bullied. Margins continue to shrink. MAP isn't policed as well as it could be. Products are showing up online priced less than what he or she can purchase it for. In at least one big instance, a noted guitar maker is going to start selling direct.

There are plenty of "good" people other there, thankfully. But in addition, on the edges of the show, and in the "basement," new companies with quality, cool products are actively seeking the relationship and partnership O'Brien is putting a priority on. As I talk to successful independents, having unique products and often trying new lines has been key to giving customers a reason to walk in the door. Having trustworthy relationships that allows both parties to be successful and grow together could be the best business plan to have these days.

Can it be that simple? Just do business with people you like? Just carry products you think are cool? It's crazy enough to work.

We'd be remiss not to mention the departure of Rick Kessel from the mast-head. Rick has been part of *MMR* for 30-plus years, and founded our sister publications *SBO*, *JAZZed*, and *Choral Director*. For 15 years he was there for me to answer any questions and maybe even gossip a little. (And I'm sure I'm not the only one impressed by his ability to talk clarinet reeds for 45 minutes at a stretch!) After all these years he wants to do something different, and we're excited for him. Rick, we wish you the best of luck in your new adventures!

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UpFront

Industry News

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

Sweetwater Defends Proprietary Web Content

Sweetwater Sound Inc. has taken a stand on defending itself against the misuse and misappropriation of its proprietary Web content.



Sweetwater founder and president Chuck Surac says, "We regret having to take action, but we believe that the integrity of the MI business is at stake. We are acting not only on our own behalf, but in the interest of all online retailers who invest in the creation of unique content."

For example, Sweetwater has informed Chicago Music Exchange of copyright infringement and the misuse of Sweetwater's proprietary web content. In return, Sweetwater has received a letter of apology from Chicago Music Exchange president David Kalt. The document includes assurances that all misused content has been removed from its website and that no Sweetwater content will be misappropriated in the future.

Sweetwater's VP of e-commerce Mike Clem said, "Other MI websites have been lifting our content for years, and typically they remove such content from their websites quickly after we bring it to their attention. It's typically caused by an employee taking a shortcut. Owners, who often aren't even aware of it, take immediate corrective measures. In this instance, we thought the misuse of our content was much more widespread, so we felt the need to take a more aggressive approach to solving the problem."

Senior VP of marketing Michael Ross said, "We're taking a stand because we feel that we're all in the music retail business together and we should all respect the content and innovations of our fellow retailers, in the same spirit that none of us would like someone stealing a piece of gear off our showroom floor."

Sweetwater.com is known throughout the industry for many innovations, including Guitar Gallery, inSync, Case Finder, Cable Finder, as well as the thousands of helpful, informational articles about music technology issues. Also, an enormous amount of work by Sweetwater writers goes into the product descriptions on every product page on Sweetwater's website.

Surac said, "For years, many companies have been copying the innovative, pioneering stuff we've created on the web. While 'imitation is the sincerest form of flattery,' lifting and copying our content verbatim is entirely different. Like any creative artist would, we need to protect our work and the extraordinary efforts of our employees."

In Chicago Music Exchange's written confirmation of compliance, the company recognizes Sweetwater as the "rightful owner of certain trademarks," is the "rightful owner of certain original works, including, for example, text and images," and that collectively these materials comprise Sweetwater's "intellectual property." Chicago Music Exchange also agrees not to "oppose or challenge any of Sweetwater's rights in the intellectual property."

Clem concluded, "Sweetwater has put in place a highly sophisticated search mechanism for finding our content on other websites. Our fervent hope is that the problem will soon go away and our searching will no longer turn up misuse."

ESP Distributing Hayden Amps in U.S.

Ashdown's Hayden amp brand has entered into a new US distribution deal with ESP.

The arrangement, covering the USA and Canadian markets, includes full service and dealer support, logistics handling, and use of ESP's extensive warehouse facilities.

The deal was announced at the recent NAMM Show in Anaheim and marks a first for ESP, having never distributed amps before while Hayden benefits from better representation in the USA.



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Tom Oliphant, Owner Ventura Guitars

Many of you may have seen me in your store already. I spend several weeks a year out in the field and from that perspective I understand the independent store operation, your problems, concerns and needs. You have told us what your customer wants and what they are willing to pay and Ventura Guitars are designed with the features and value to meet these requirements and allow you the reasonable profit your store needs to stay in business.



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Sabian Acquires Billdidit

Billdidit Inc. (Nova Scotia, Canada) is now part of the Sabian group of companies. Billdidit has built a solid reputation as forward-thinking designers of innovative and reliable drum hardware and accessories. The acquisition expands Sabian design capabilities and adds a significant portfolio of new music products.

"Billdidit has manufacturing and prototype capabilities designed specifically for the music industry," comments Sabian president Andy Zildjian. "In addition to their important contribution in developing new products, they are able to produce small volumes at very reasonable cost without the tooling charges, high volume commitment, and extremely long lead times that are typical of production overseas."

Billdidit hopes to spark innovation in the music products industry by offering one-stop shopping for design assistance, 3D printing, advanced CNC machining, and electroplating.

Zildjian Partners with LAN Music

The Avedis Zildjian Company has announced its partnership with LAN Music Corporation to represent the Company in South & Central America as well as the Caribbean.

LAN Music Corporation has over 30 years of experience within the music industry in various capacities including the worldwide sales and marketing of a variety of musical instruments. LAN Music's experience in Latin America is extensive, having established working relationships with major wholesale distributor, artists, and other key players throughout the region. Furthermore, the team at LAN Music has deep industry expertise in sales, artist relations, and marketing.

"We are honored to begin this new association with the most remarkable brand in the cymbal category and look forward to building upon the Company's already strong presence in Latin America and the Caribbean," said Richard Boveri, regional sales & marketing manager, LAN Music Corporation.

Andy Schlosser, Zildjian VP of Global Sales added, "Richard Boveri and his team bring a professional, 'can-do' attitude to the job. It's a great fit for Zildjian and its wide array of strongly positioned products."



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Hal Leonard and Tycoon Expand Distribution Deal

Hal Leonard is now the exclusive U.S. distributor for the entire Tycoon line, including hundreds of products from this highly regarded manufacturer of hand percussion.

Headquartered in Thailand with U.S. operations in Ontario, California, Tycoon Percussion produces bells, bongos, cajons, castanets, claves, congas, djembes, maracas, shakers, and more. It is the only hand percussion company that wholly owns and operates its manufacturing facility. The two companies have worked together since June of 2012, when Hal Leonard began distributing a few dozen of Tycoon's best-sellers to select MI accounts.

Ivy Yu, general manager of Tycoon, comments, "Hal Leonard has done an extraordinary job of getting our products into music stores, so we're broadening the scope of our relationship with them, both in terms of retailers and products. We're thrilled that they will exclusively handle our US distribution so we can concentrate on our core functions – R&D, artist relations, and worldwide marketing and branding."

She continues, "With their fantastic sales team, top-notch customer service, and centrally located warehouse, they are the best distributor in the MI industry, bar none."



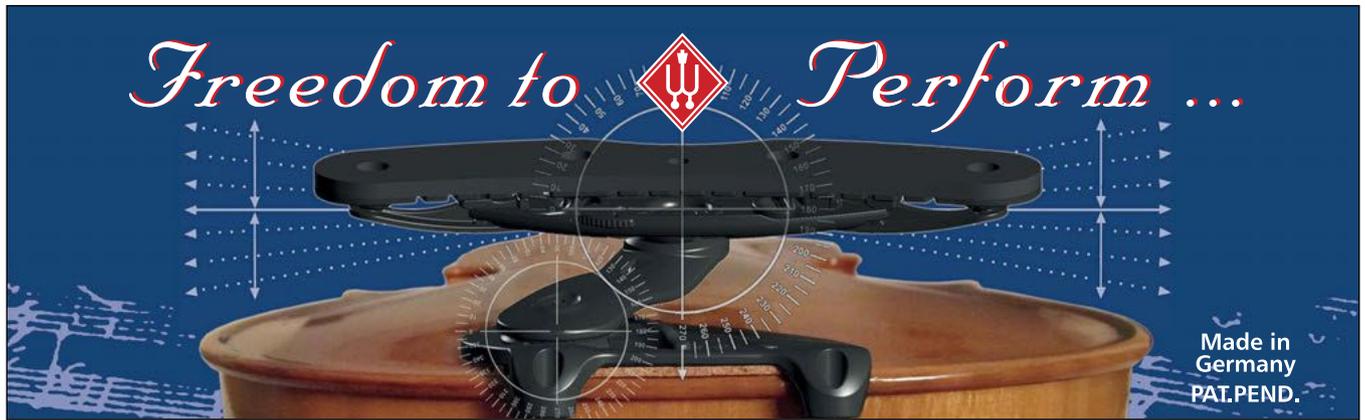
Ivan Martinez (far left) and Ivy Yu from Tycoon Percussion visit the Milwaukee headquarters of Hal Leonard to expand their distribution deal. (L-R) Ivan, Doug Lady, Brad Smith, Ivy, Randy Foat, Dave Cywinski.

In light of the Tycoon distribution expansion, Hal Leonard will be restructuring its sales staff, developing a new, dedicated group to handle drum and percussion accounts.

Doug Lady, Hal Leonard senior VP of sales, says, "Tycoon products provide both high quality and great value, thanks to their in-house manufacturing and factory-direct pricing. Best of all, they offer a variety of products to appeal to many types of customers – everything from an egg shaker that a kid can buy on impulse, to student-oriented percussion instruments, to a beautiful, authentic djembe or cajon that might catch the eye of gigging and professional percussionists looking to expand their palettes."

As interest in hand percussion continues to grow, so does the need for such instruments in schools, churches, studios and on stage. Hal Leonard has been ramping up its publishing of instructional books and DVDs for hand percussion players, educators and drum circle facilitators.

Lady comments, "Dealers can now merchandise Tycoon instruments alongside Hal Leonard how-to titles, and we're even planning bundle packs to capitalize on our partnership. This is a win-win for everyone involved, and a great way to reach a limitless new market of music enthusiasts."



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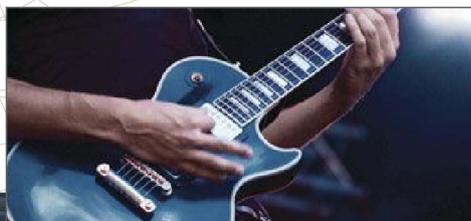
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Gibson's 'Government Series' Commemorates Fed's Raids

As presumably most everyone in the industry knows, back in August of 2011, agents from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service confiscated wood from Gibson's Tennessee facilities – the second such raid in two years.

Gibson has now released a new series of guitars commemorating the company's

struggles with the government. From the official press release:

Fight the Powers That Be with this powerful Les Paul!

Great Gibson electric guitars have long been a means of fighting the establishment, so when the powers that be confiscated stocks of tonewoods from the Gibson factory

in Nashville – only to return them once there was a resolution and the investigation ended – it was an event worth celebrating. Introducing the Government Series II [Les Paul, a striking new guitar from Gibson USA for 2014 that suitably marks this infamous time in Gibson's history.

A distinctive vintage-gloss Government Tan finish, complemented by black-chrome hardware and black plastics and trim, is topped by a pickguard that's hot-stamped in gold with the Government Series graphic – a bald eagle hoisting a Gibson guitar neck. Each Government Series II Les Paul also includes a genuine piece of Gibson U.S.A. history in its solid rosewood fingerboard, which is made from wood returned to Gibson by the U.S. government after the resolution.

Significantly, the release notes that the new guitars are made “from wood returned to Gibson by the US government after the resolution [to the charges],” but doesn't acknowledge that under the settlement reached between the government and the guitar-maker in early August of 2012, Gibson agreed to pay a \$300,000 fine for the ebony from Madagascar that was taken in the first raid. Gibson additionally agreed to make a \$50,000 donation to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to promote conservation work and forfeited the seized illegal wood, which was valued at \$261,844. Then-Assistant Attorney General Ignacia Moreno, further said that, “Gibson has acknowledged that it failed to act on information that the Madagascar ebony it was purchasing may have violated laws intended to limit overharvesting and conserve valuable wood species from Madagascar, a country which has been severely impacted by deforestation.” Reference of such acknowledgement is also absent in the PR for the new Les Pauls.



At the time of the settlement, CEO Henry Juskiewicz said that Gibson, “felt compelled to settle as the costs of proving our case at trial would have cost millions of dollars and taken a very long time to resolve.”

In the aftermath of the government raids, both Juskiewicz and Gibson became rallying points for many Republicans and the Tea Party.

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Dealer Inquiries Invited!

Music Sales Acquires Éditions Alphonse Leduc



The Music Sales Group has completed an acquisitions of family-run French publisher Éditions Alphonse Leduc.

Founded in 1842, Éditions Alphonse Leduc started by specialising in piano tutors then expanded to acquire operatic works by Rossini, Bellini, Weber and Meyerbeer, as well as pieces by Clémenti, Hummel, Weber, and Onslow and a famous piano tutor by Viguerie.

Later its acquisition of Éditions Hamelle added works by Brahms, Fauré, Lalo, Saint-Saëns, Mussorgsky, and Tchaikovsky, while a purchase of Éditions Heugel in the 1990s brought with it Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* and *Delibes' Coppélia*.

Significantly, Éditions Alphonse Leduc's acquired the Hartmann catalogue which features works by Massenet, Franck, Lalo and Reyer.

Under the fifth generation of the Leduc family, the company has more recently acquired works by Olivier Messiaen, Francis Poulenc, Jacques Ibert, Henri Dutilleux, and Joseph Canteloube. A flourishing range of instrumental tutors, notably those for flute by Marcel Moyse and Philippe Gaubert, reinforced Leduc's traditional strength in the educational print publishing sector.

Music Sales CEO Robert Wise said: "It is a source of great satisfaction for us to acquire such a prestigious and long-established publishing house as Éditions Alphonse Leduc. Its catalogue very well complements those we already own and, as the MD of an independent family company myself; I am particularly pleased to add what has been such a well-respected French family concern to our range of publishing houses."

Lowrey to Relocate

Lowrey Organ Company is moving from its current Elmhurst, Illinois location to a freestanding facility in nearby Wood Dale.



Located just west of O'Hare International airport and within minutes of four major interstates, the Wood Dale location takes full advantage of the Chicago area's transportation infrastructure.

"The Wood Dale facility is of an ideal type and size for Lowrey operations going forward," explains Lowrey executive vice president, Seijiro Imamura. "Wood Dale gives Lowrey the opportunity to best serve Lowrey Dealers and provides the foundation for future operational efficiencies."

Effective March 17, Lowrey's physical address will be 989 AEC Drive, Wood Dale, Ill. 60191. Lowrey's main telephone will remain (708) 352-3388.

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Letters

Christian,

The Last Word – ‘Wrong Direction? Sorry, Chief – No Direction Yet’ (MMR January 2014) was great! You, and by extension Sid Davis, were right on the mark. ‘On-the-charts’ music basically sucks nowadays and

the main reason is the types of people running the labels, the merch companies, the radio stations, touring, et cetera. It really is incumbent upon the MI industry to take things in their hands and shake things up. Make their stores centers where *real* music can be heard, made, born. If you can recall

my booths at past NAMMs, I sell a variety of gift/accessory items and apparel that can help do all that. I’ve had some “converts” won over, but most of the MI community still needs to be educated and take the next step up. We ALL need to figure ways to expand our market.

Informal stats say that 25 percent of the public play, or have played, a musical instrument. That leaves 75 percent that has not. Does that 75 percent hate music? Are they tone deaf? I highly doubt it. Why is the typical MI retailer, then, catering only to the 25 percent of people that play? Where are non-players going to go for a musical experience at retail? The friendly neighborhood record shop? Oh wait, make that the EXTINCT friendly neighborhood record shop... There are many ways to make an MI store more of a destination for all things musical — small stages for open mic events, a boutique area (the Harley Davidson dealers have this aspect down cold), and so on, in addition to their usual stock of instruments and accessories, lessons, sound systems and installation, et cetera. This might get more of the 75 percent non-players interested in becoming musicians themselves and when that happens, it will be at the friendly neighborhood MI dealer, rather than Wal-Mart, one hopes. Wal-Mart isn’t cultivating this... yet... but then, very few of us in MI are either!

...I play in a historical re-creation band, gigging usually at living history museums. In addition to my hurdy gurdy and harmonica, we have other multi-instrumentalists on all acoustic instruments from guitars, banjos, fiddles, mandolins, dulcimers (both hammer and lap), concertina, musical saw, psaltery, and other instruments that existed a century ago. If every MI dealer in the country saw the reaction kids (from toddler to teen) have when they watch us, they might realize this opportunity they are sitting on, but doing little about. Believe it or not, most kids know One Direction, Kanye West, Katie Perry, Lady Gaga, et cetera are just auto-tuned charlatans. These kids WILL react to real music, and way beyond just guitar. Here’s hoping that’s one of the things that will help us all improve in 2014!

Will Cornell
AMV Sales & Consultation LLC

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Trade Regrets



On the morning of February 6, we received the following message from Sammy Ash of Sam Ash Music:

It is with inexplicable sorrow that the Ash Family has to announce

*that **Paul Ash**, President of our Company he loved so much passed in the night from complications of a massive heart attack... He is gone but the man and his accomplishments will never be forgotten.*

Paul Ash had worked alongside his father - the company's founder - before taking over operation of the business with his older brother Jerry after Sam passed in the mid-'50s.

Former MMR publisher Sidney Davis offered the following in response to the news:

I was saddened to learn of the passing of Paul Ash. Although we had few personal encounters over the years, my vision was of a man of great integrity who loved the music business and took great pride in the accom-

plishments of the company and the Ash family. On 9/11 Don Johnson and I were scheduled to interview the Ash family. We were asked to arrive at 11 am, so that the family could hold their daily meetings and Paul would have time to "check the mail." When we arrived the gravity of the situation started to unfold and we witnessed the Ash family's quick reaction. Paul was among the first to man the phones, calling the Sam Ash stores in the tri-state area to determine that all employees were safe and to instruct them to go home to their families. An apartment in Manhattan was offered to any employee who could not get home. The interview was postponed, however we did have a quick lunch and Paul sat beside us eating a tuna fish sandwich he had prepared at home. As he related to me, "We never wanted to be the biggest, but we always wanted to be the best." Humble, hard working, and honest - this was the measure of the man.

Donald Wilson passed away on February 13th, just one month shy of his 93rd birthday.

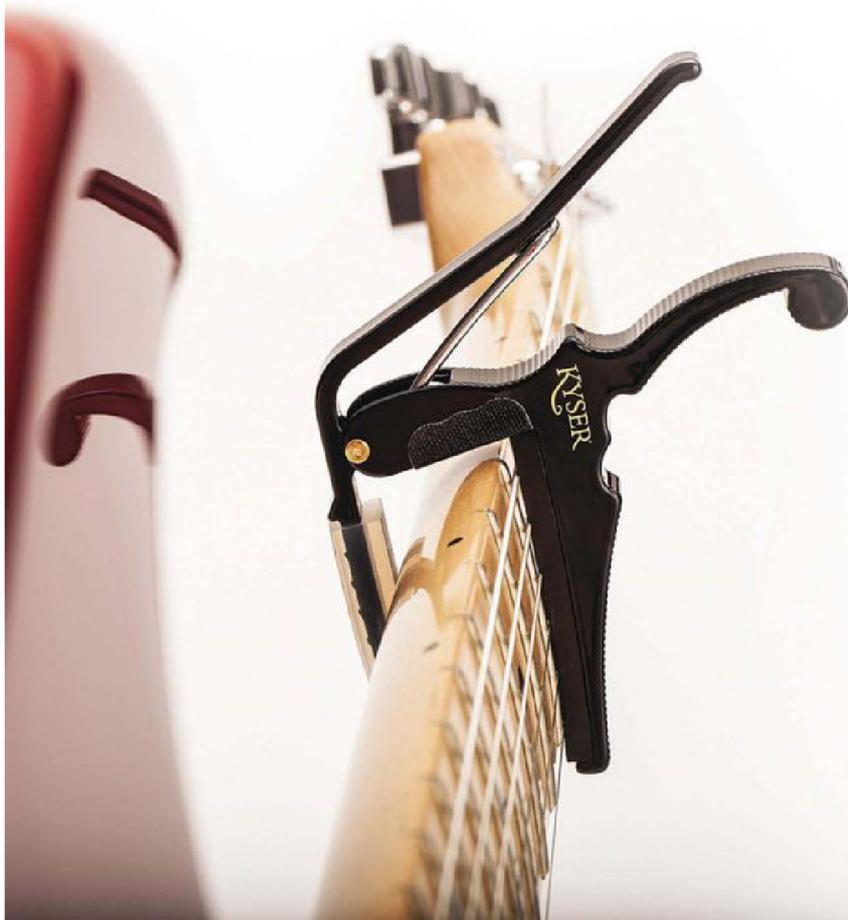


An accomplished musician, Wilson was a drum major in the U.S. Army during World War II. Following his stint in the army, Don and his wife Mary established the Don Wilson Music Company in Lexington, Ky. in 1956. Concurrent with his career as an MI retailer, Wilson continued to perform and teach music.



On January 10, **Stanley Lager** passed away. Lager founded Dale Electronics Corporation in 1956, growing the business over the years to the present-day Dale Pro Audio.

The Lager family welcomes donations to Meir Panim www.meirpanim.org/ and in-



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vites expressions of condolences and remembrances to be posted at www.facebook.com/daleproaudio/posts/10151988962991884

We at MMR were saddened to receive the following message from Jon Harris of Harris-Teller:

*I have some very sad news to share with you. **Tony Caschetta**, our longtime salesman and friend, passed away on January 17, 2014. Although Tony had been battling cancer for some time, the end was very fast. I can tell you that Tony's passing has literally rocked the entire Harris Teller family as well as many people who Tony has come into contact with over his 40 plus year tenure in the music industry of which 38 were spent here at Harris Teller. My earliest memories have included Tony, as I have known him since I was 5 years old. I was that pesky kid who was always playing jokes on and pestering the adults. During one party after a Chicago Summer NAMM show, I was bugging Tony and my father for a sip of alcohol. I was probably not even 14 years old and I would not leave them alone. Finally, Tony and my Dad got together and decided to show me the "error" of my ways. They ordered me some of what they were drinking, Sambuca, and let me have at it. After one or two sips of the strong anise flavored drink, I decided that maybe it was not such a good idea to start drinking. That story used to come up a lot as I started working full time here at Harris Teller and somehow every time we told it, I was younger in the story. At last retelling, I think I had become a 7-year-old boy who was given a drink by Tony.*

That was my first "NAMM Story" which involved Tony Caschetta but certainly not my last. Tony loved the Music Industry and one of

his favorite things was NAMM. He attended each and every year in Chicago, Atlanta, New Orleans, Los Angeles and of course Anaheim. He went out to see new products, meet with Vendors and see his customers but most importantly he went to spend time with his friends. Tony went to NAMM to build and strengthen his relationships with our vendors and customers who quite often became his good friends. It was during these trips to NAMM that some of my most memorable Music Industry stories occurred. I could not possibly share all of these stories in this letter, but rest assured that we at Harris Teller will never forget them or Tony...

He was a special man and we have truly lost a family member here at Harris Teller.



Former president of KMC Music Inc., **Ed Miller**, passed away on January 15 at the age of 66.

Starting in the finance department at Kaman Corp., Miller quickly rose through the ranks of the company's music division, eventually becoming president of Kaman Music Corp. in 2007. As president, Miller led KMC's transition to the Fender Musical Instruments Corporation (FMIC) and kept steady watch over the division until his retirement in December 2012. Highly respected for his knowledge, intelligence and integrity, Miller was known as a true statesman of the music products industry.

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Sabian.com

Deering Launches Banjo String Dealerships at NAMM

Deering has been working closely with Dunlop Strings to develop eight custom sets of strings made to Deering's own specifications. Dealers will be able to choose from 5-String light, 5-String medium, plectrum, tenor standard tuning, tenor Irish tuning, 6-String, Tenbrooks Series, and Terry Baucom Signature Set banjo strings, all presented in distinctive Deering branded



packaging. The minimum order to become a Deering String Dealer is four boxes (12 sets of strings per box) of Deering banjo strings, and two varieties out of eight must be ordered. Deering Banjo String Dealers need not to carry any banjos in stock and all Deering String Dealers will be featured on the Deering Banjos website.

deeringbanjos.com

Alfred Music Announces 2013 Dealer Awards

Alfred Music announced the winners of the 2013 Alfred Music Premier Dealer Awards at the annual NAMM Show held in Anaheim. The recipients of the awards were Long & McQuade, Musician's Friend, Inc., and Nick Rail Music. These awards honor the dealers for building strong relationships with Alfred Music over the past year and achieving excellence in the music products industry.

"Long & McQuade is an active partner and promoter of every product line Alfred Music produces," said Antonio Ferranti, Vice President of Sales. "From hosting piano workshops and clinics as well as band and choral reading sessions, to carrying all of our pop music songbooks and instructional media through new issues, they represent Alfred Music to the fullest extent."

Ferranti also praised Musician's Friend's willingness to improve their catalog and merchandising products with new vendor tools. He commended B&O dealer Nick Rail Music for their work in collaboration with Alfred on the new Alfred Music Dealer Road Rep Program.



Alfred's Antonio Ferranti and Ron Manus with Bob Kohl (center) of Long & McQuade

alfredmusic.com

Rush's Alex Lifeson Joins PRS Acoustic Signature Artist Family

PRS Guitars recently announced the new Private Stock Alex Lifeson Thinline acoustic guitar, new for 2014. The Alex Lifeson signature PRS acoustic is slightly thinner than the company's Angelus Cutaway and Tonare Grand and is constructed in such a way that it lends itself to louder stage volumes and the rigors of the road.

The Alex Lifeson signature acoustic is made in PRS Guitars' Maryland shop and features a bearclaw spruce top and koa back and sides with a mahogany neck and ebony bridge, fretboard, and headstock veneer. It is adorned with Mother of Pearl and Paua "Birds in Flight" inlays and Paua purfling along the top, fretboard, and headstock veneer.

prsguitars.com/lifeson



The PRS Private Stock Alex Lifeson Thinline

Yorkville Sound Moves Production of YX Series Loudspeakers Back to Canada

In a bid to re-shore as much production as possible, Yorkville Sound has moved the production of most of the active and passive loudspeakers in their popular YX Series back to the Canadian manufacturing facility in Pickering, Ontario.



Opting for Canadian production means the company can now offer improved quality and reliability for the same price as the previously overseas manufactured product.

"We're very happy re-shore this popular and cost-effective PA series for a variety of reasons," explains Yorkville Sound Vice President Jeff Cowling. "It keeps our North American facility busy, it provides us a improved time-to-market factor, and gives us more control over quality and performance. The YX series is still a budget-oriented series, but the sound and build quality we can provide is extraordinary."

All domestically built YX Series cabinets are now shipping, with plans for additional models to be brought back into the North American factory throughout 2014 and beyond.

yorkville.com

American Way Marketing Announces Sale of Company

Entering its 29th year in business, American Way Marketing LLC (AWM LLC) recently announced the sale of the Company to John Musselman, Kathy Donahoe, and Jakob von Wolff. This returns AWM to the status of a privately held USA Company.



John Musselman, Kathy Donahoe, and Jakob von Wolff.

The three member-partners have elected Kathy Donahoe as the company president and managing partner. AWM will continue to offer and build on the Superslick, Faxx, and 1st Lesson brand of products, along with a number of fine distribution brands, in support of school music dealers worldwide.

americanwaymktg.com

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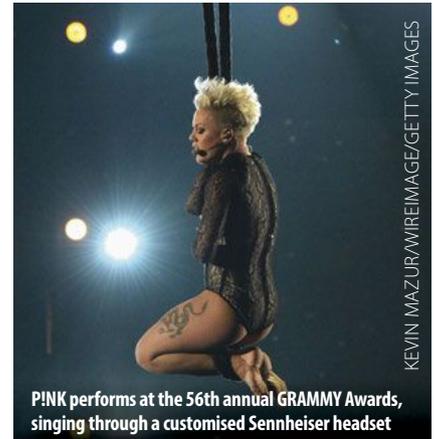


To order call 800.FISHMAN

Sennheiser and P!NK Team Up for Grammy Performance

At the 56th annual Grammy Awards one of the most dramatic performances came from P!NK. For the duration of her aerial segment, she used a custom earpiece with an integrated boom microphone built to specification by Sennheiser – the result of a highly collaborative project that helped her engineers achieve all the technical aspects required by the performance.

“There is so much physicality in P!NK’s show with her spinning and flying around that we needed a reliable microphone and IEM that sounded great and would be as unobtrusive as possible,” commented Jon Lewis, monitor engineer for P!NK. “So Sennheiser worked



P!NK performs at the 56th annual GRAMMY Awards, singing through a customised Sennheiser headset

KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES

with our engineer Horst Hartmann to create a custom design and integrate the microphone with the earpiece, providing both stability and stellar audio. The earpiece features a single driver which provides plenty of definition without any significant ear fatigue.” The microphone features a Sennheiser HSP 4 capsule with a cardioid polar pattern. Following the aerial performance, P!NK switched to a Sennheiser SKM 2000 transmitter coupled with a custom MD 9235 capsule.

sennheiser.com

RHC Redefines Targeted Marketing Strategies at 2014 NAMM Show

RHC Holdings recently announced its new targeted marketing strategies. Under this plan, RHC Holdings, comprised of well-known dependable brands including RapcoHorizon, Momentum, Pro Co, Pro Co Data, RAT, RoadHog, and StageMASTER, will target its brands to their specific markets.

This marketing strategy means that RHC Holdings offers comprehensive audio and cable solutions for a variety of budgets and projects, from 100,000-seat stadiums to single-room houses of worship and everything in between. RHC’s collection of brands affords users the options of low-, mid-, and high-grade instrument, speaker, or microphone cable options. Fans will also find solutions such as guitar pedals, digital snakes, personal audio interfaces, digital facility design software and personal monitor systems.

rapcohorizon.com

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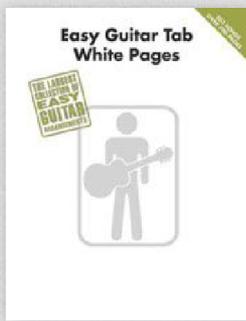
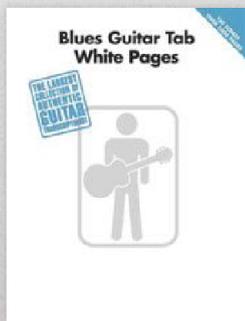
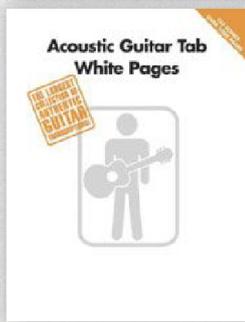
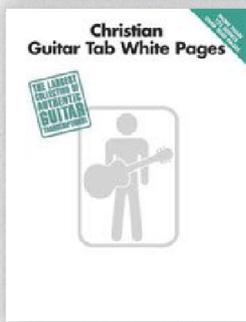
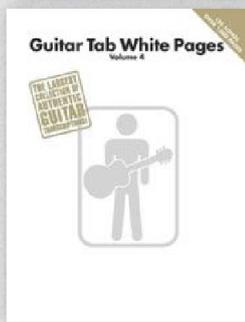
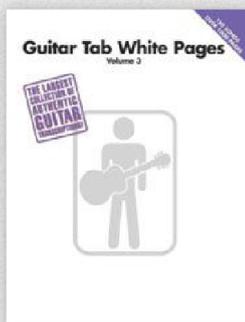
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U.S. Guitar Market in 2013

Fretted Sales Broken Down by Category

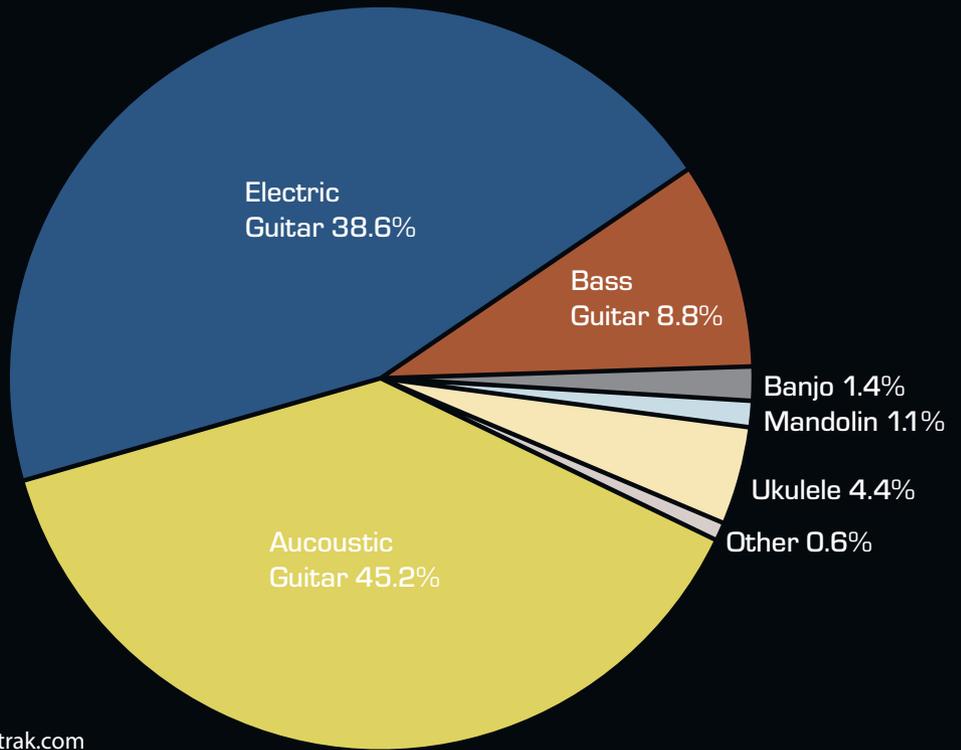
“Acoustic guitar sales continued to grow in 2013, but annual sales of electric guitars have not bounced back to their pre-recession level of 2007.

“Popular opinion tends to blame it on a lack of guitar heroes and the current popularity of electronic dance music. We did see some growth in electric guitars in December, though. It will be interesting to see if that continues.”

– Jim Hirschberg
MI SalesTrak

Source: MI SalesTrak®

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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

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Ryan Jones - Front of House Engineer - Galactic Funk

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Asterope Announces Pro Audio Initiative



Asterope has announced a strategic initiative to expand into the professional audio market, focusing on professional and home recording studios. A number of world-class recording studios and engineers have already begun implementing Asterope technology in their studio infrastructures, using Asterope's instrument cables, XLRs, and speaker solutions to dramatically improve their signal paths. Renowned Nashville audio engineer Bill Vorndick has standardized on Asterope cable technology for his recording work.

"I use Asterope in the recording studio because of the definition it gives me on both the low end and high end, giving me definition in frequencies I haven't heard before using other cables," said Vorndick.

asterope.com

Sabian and Cymbal Masters Team Up for Crescent Model Cymbals

To meet the demands of customers and artists for new cymbals, Cymbal Masters of Kenesaw, GA, will begin offering select Crescent models in North America, handmade to their exacting specifications by Sabian, LTD.

Sabian CEO, Andy Zildjian says, "I am very happy to be working with Cymbal Masters. I am impressed with their passion for and knowledge of cymbals. This is an opportunity to expand our tradition of hand hammering cymbals, originally brought to Sabian by Keroppe Zilcan."

Crescent CEO, Michael Vosbein adds, "This new relationship offers Crescent the chance to expand our sound palette with production on two continents, taking advantage of the best craftsmanship in both the old and new worlds."

crescentcymbals.com

Dream Theater's Mike Portnoy Joins Gator Artist Family



Notable Metal and Progressive Rock drummer Mike Portnoy has recently joined the Gator Cases family as an officially endorsed artist. Portnoy is a founding member of Dream Theater, with whom he spent 25 years. He's currently playing with his new rock super group, The Winery Dogs, featuring bassist Billy Sheehan and guitarist Richie Kotzen. Portnoy has received 26 *Modern Drummer Magazine* Readers Poll awards including Hall of Fame inductee (2004), MVP of the year (2010), and Best Progressive Rock Drummer 12 years in a row. Currently, he is using Gator's Protector Series hard shell drum and hardware cases.

gatorcases.com

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MMR Dealer's Choice
Kawai CA95 (2012)



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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.



ON THE
MOVE

Buffet Group has appointed **François Kloc** as president and CEO of Buffet Group USA. Kloc has served as Vice President of Buffet Group USA since January 2011 and has been in the North American market since 1995, previously serving as director of sales and marketing and woodwind product specialist. In addition to the duties and responsibilities associated with being president and CEO, Kloc will also serve on the COMEX, the Executive Committee for Buffet Group.



Buffet Group president and CEO Antoine Beaussant hailed the appointment, citing Kloc's "extraordinary influence" over the North American market and his growth into "the image of Buffet Group" in the United States and Canada. He went on to praise Kloc as being one of "the perfect defenders of (Buffet Group's) values and traditions." The promotion of Kloc to president and CEO was also necessary "to strengthen the governance structure of the group," according to Beaussant.

Fishman has appointed **Iain Wilson** as international sales manager.

In this capacity, Wilson's primary role will be the development of strategies to increase sales in each of Fishman's current export markets while seeking new business opportunities for the company.



Iain will also be managing the existing distribution network, carrying out a SWOT analysis of the distribution companies and their respective markets, and looking at constructive and effective ways to increase sales in each region.

In addition, Wilson will oversee Fishman's international clinic tours, workshops, sponsorships and other marketing events with the help of Fishman demo artist and clinician Steve Fairclough. He will also work with distributors in each market to maximize exposure in consumer and trade publications.

Sweetwater recently hired two new high-level employees, sales manager **Doug Hills**, and category manager for guitars **Jay Piccirillo**.

Doug Hills started with Guitar Center's store operations team in Seattle in 1999. Over the next 14 years he held numerous jobs including sales person, sales manager of multiple locations, operations manager, store manager of multiple locations, district manager of the Northwest, and for the last five years district manager of New York and Connecticut, including Guitar Center's flagship Manhattan store.



Jay Piccirillo is a lifelong musician and home studio owner. After serving in the Army (including being recalled in support of Desert Storm), he earned a Bachelors Degree in Music Performance w/ emphasis in Business from the University of Massachusetts, which included an internship with Yamaha Drums. He became the product manager at Yamaha guitars, then the buyer for amps & effects at Musician's Friend. As a writer, he reviewed products and CDs for *Bass Frontiers* magazine.



After discussing bass products during a trip with Fender, a new position was created and he became the first person in the company's history to focus solely on the bass category. In his 10 years as the senior product manager for bass amplification, his team developed successful products including the Rumble and Bassman lines. While in charge of bass guitars he revamped the American Standard and Deluxe lines along with the 50th Anniversary Jazz Bass and numerous artist models.

Jupiter Band instruments has announced the addition of **John Richardson** to their brand management team as their woodwind brand manager starting in mid-February. Richardson comes to KHS America from Miles Ahead Music in Kentucky where he helped grow a small specialty storefront business into a two-location school music retailer. His prior experience in the musical instrument industry was at Don Wilson Music in Lexington, Ky.



D'Addario has appointed **Brandon Medici** to the newly created position of D'Addario business development specialist. In his new role, Medici is responsible for leading B2B training for sales and product specialists of D'Addario Fretted and Planet Waves products with domestic and international distributors and dealers.



Yamaha Corporation of America (YCA) has announced three promotions. **Athan Billias** is the director of strategic product planning, a new corporate-wide position. **Dave Jewell** is the marketing communications manager in the Customer Sales & Marketing Group, also a new company-wide position. **Nate Tschetter** is named marketing manager, Music Production, Pro Audio & Combo Division.

In his new role, Billias will serve as a liaison between the market needs of YCA and product development at Yamaha Corporation, Japan, creating a new dialogue process for YCA with dealers, artists and customers. He will also investigate new business product areas in which Yamaha is not currently involved and manage relationships with third-party developers in the United States.



In his new position, Jewell will work closely with marketing managers from all divisions, including the Customer Experience Group, to develop comprehensive corporate and consumer marketing initiatives that help acquire new customers, manage partner alliances and enhance the overall brand experience.



Tschetter has been with YCA since 2010, serving most recently as product manager, Keyboard Division, where he executed successful marketing campaigns and developed engaging presentations for dealers, sales staff and customers.



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Ashdown Engineering is a bass and acoustic amplifier company offering everything from entry-level combos to hand-wired tube amps. Their designs are acclaimed by bassists around the world and endorsed by today's most recognizable players, including Grammy® Award-winners Arcade Fire, the Foo Fighters, Sir Paul McCartney and U2's Adam Clayton.

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ASHDOWNMUSIC.COM



Takuya Nakata, President of Yamaha Corporation

By Christian Wissmuller



Takuya Nakata

In May of 2013, Takuya “Tak” Nakata succeeded Mitsuru Umemura as president and representative director of Yamaha Corporation, Japan. Since 2010 Nakata had held the reigns of Yamaha Corporation of America (YCA) and was a driving force behind a period of considerable growth for the organization – this despite what could be described as having been (at best) a “challenging” financial climate in the U.S.

MMR recently sat down with Mr. Nakata to discuss his evolution within Yamaha, his designs for the future of the company, the recent acquisition of Line 6, and much more...

MMR: Let’s briefly discuss your own recent history with Yamaha. What adjustments and challenges came with transitioning from president of YCA to that of president of Yamaha Corporation?

Takuya Nakata: Working as the president of a sales company in such a giant market as America was a profound and extremely exciting experience, but considerably different than my current position. As president of Yamaha, it is my job to set the course of Yamaha as a whole, which has required me to expand my view from sales to an overall view of all aspects of the business, including development and production.

However, every job is about considering what we need to do for our customers now and in the future. I feel that all jobs are essentially the same in this respect. If my position changes, I simply work hard to adapt. It doesn’t mean that I myself have done anything special.

What’s your long-term, “grand vision” for Yamaha within the MI industry?

My aim is being an industry leader that continually creates innovative new products that will excite our customers. I want this company to be one that has dreams not only for our customers but also for our employees, too.

How has the recent volatility in exchange rates been impacting both Yamaha and its business partners?

With an increasing proportion of production and sales being conducted in countries other than Japan, the fluctuations in the exchange rates are not affecting our business as greatly as before. But some fluctuations, mainly in the Euro, have affected our profits.

At present, fluctuations in the Euro-yen exchange rate are affecting our profits by ¥370 million, while the rate of the US dollar has an effect of around ¥60 million.

The predicted exchange rate for the third quarter onward is around ¥95 to the US dollar and ¥130 to the Euro. Euro exchange reserve contracts have been made for the next three months. If the current exchange rate standard continues, our business is expected to improve.

Could you provide a better understanding of the most recent changes Yamaha has made to its business structure, the reasons for these changes, and the benefits they will generate for music dealers and end-user customers?

On August 1 of last year, we reorganized our six business divisions related to musical instruments and audio products into three groups according to function: production, development, and sales and marketing.

This business structure was created to handle current issues that we have become aware of.



In the harsh management environment from the Lehman Brothers crisis onward, Yamaha management has, over these years, been forced into the defensive, but I recognize that the time to sow the seeds of growth has finally come. But what is needed to produce those buds of new growth?

I believe there is an urgent need to create new customer value by leveraging Yamaha's diverse technologies, which are its primary strength, not only independently, but also in combination.

Both the product business division organization and the functional organization have their strong and weak points. But to create an ongoing series of products that have new value, like the hybrid piano, which amalgamated acoustics and electronics, it is better to have an organization along functional lines to enable each function to create synergies among our three business groups.

This will also allow us to harness Yamaha's full potential in sales, technology and manufacturing. We aim to meet dealers' and customers' expectations by providing revolutionary new products that meet users' needs at a reasonable price.

Could you give me an update on the effect of the recent strike in Indonesia?

Yamaha understands that this strike has caused problems for our dealers, and for consumers who wanted to purchase Yamaha guitars. We are sorry for this lack of supply. Now, Operations at the factory have resumed since [mid-February]. We expect to recover the production, having the target to reach the pre-strike period level at the end of March.

[The impact of the strike on the performance of Yamaha in this fiscal year is now under review and will be included in the announcement of the Q3 result. – Ed.]

What challenges come with leading an organization that fields product in such a wide variety of categories – B&O, guitars, sound reinforcement, pianos, et cetera?

I think Yamaha overcomes the challenges inherent in designing and crafting a wide variety of instruments because Yamaha has an environment in which our employees can use their specialist expertise. Delegating each product to an excellent employee allows one general instrument manufacturer to produce a large number of cutting-edge specialist products in a variety of domains.

My job is to find outstanding human resources and entrust work to them. I also take measures such as placing all of our products together several times a year and taking a look at them with my own eyes. When checking the quality of our instruments, the main thing I ask myself is "Who are the customers for this instrument?" The strengths and weaknesses of an instrument become clear to me when I think about who the customers are and look at the product through their eyes.

The concept of "going green" and operating in an environmentally conscious/friendly manner has been a hot-button topic for the past few years. What is Yamaha currently doing to be more "green" and what will the company be doing in the future to continue to be more environmentally friendly?

The Yamaha Group has various group-wide environmental policies. We have been working to reduce CO₂ emissions, lessen our environmental load through measures such as recycling materials, and re-

“ We aim to meet dealers' and customers' expectations by providing revolutionary new products that meet users' needs at a reasonable price. ”

duce risks through measures such as accident prevention.

In our main manufacturing bases in Japan, China, and Indonesia, we have built an environmental management system and obtained ISO14001 accreditation to further our environmental efforts. We are also working to prevent pollution, with Head Office employees conducting environmental risk audits to prevent environmentally destructive accidents.

Environmental efforts are the social responsibility of businesses, and have played a major role in helping the Yamaha brand to shine. It is important to view all of our work from an environmental perspective. For example, as a company that manufactures products made from wood, we need to be aware of how we are procuring our wood resources. We are currently involved in tree planting efforts in countries such as Indonesia and Japan to preserve local environments, as it is extremely important to actively further forest preservation in order to maintain our business of manufacturing musical instruments.

As an inhabitant of this planet and as a person, I believe that if we approach our work with the aim of passing on the planet to the next generation in a better condition than it is now, this is sure to make a positive difference not only to the planet but also to our own business, and lead to the creation of better products. I make sure to convey this message to all of our employees.

Yamaha purchased Line 6 in January of this year. What were the events leading up to the move?

One of the core business strategies in the Yamaha Management Plan 2016, the medium-term management plan that we announced last April, is to develop new businesses to promote rapid growth of the Yamaha Group. As a part of this, we set an M&A investment framework of 30 billion Japanese Yen over three years. Line 6 is a company that has created various innovations from the viewpoint of musicians, and we had already felt that many aspects of their corporate culture would mesh well with ours. We were confident that Line 6 would be an ideal partner to create new value for customers as we devise growth strategies that will benefit the next generation. My own personal dreams also played a part in this decision – as a guitarist myself, I was full of hope for the new possibilities that this acquisition might bring.

What are the company's plans with respect to integrating Line 6 into Yamaha?

We purchased Line 6, Inc. with the aim of strengthening our business in the guitar-related sector, so I believe that the expansion of our product portfolio will contribute to faster growth. At the same time, we aim for the amalgamation of both companies' brands, technical strength, and global market and customer knowledge to be a driving force for innovations for the next generation.

The Yamaha Group intends to respect the independence of Line 6 and the business culture it has created, and provide support so that the Line 6 brand can continue to grow. Line 6's management team will remain as it is, and we hope that they will make even more of their strengths as a member of the Yamaha Group. At the same time, we are considering the creation of a system to promote mutual idea sharing and innovative discussion on measures from product development to sales strategies to capitalize on the strengths of both the Line 6 brand and the Yamaha brand.



Marcus Ryle, co-founder and chief strategy officer, Line 6; Michel Doidic, co-founder and chief technology officer, Line 6; Paul Foeckler, President and CEO, Line 6; Takuya Nakata, president, Yamaha Corporation.

We have purchased several overseas companies in the past, including Steinberg (Germany), Bösendorfer (Austria), and Nexo (France), and learned a lot from those experiences. I firmly believe that our latest addition to the Yamaha Group will help the Yamaha Group provide even more unique value for even greater customer satisfaction.

What are your expectations for the MI market in the coming year?

Another of the core business strategies in YMP2016, our medium-term management plan, is to accelerate growth in China and other emerging countries, but from looking at the last few months of last year, I feel that we can expect greater recovery from mature

“ Every job is about considering what we need to do for our customers now and in the future. ”

markets like the USA. I do not think that rapid growth can be expected, of course, but it is clear that these markets are on the road to recovery, and we see them as attractive markets in which we can expect strong sales. As for markets in China and other emerging countries, while the state of the market varies depending on the region and the overall growth rate is sluggish, we can still expect growth in the medium term, particularly in China. Incomes are increasing rapidly, and the standard of living is improving as quickly as the transformation that Japan saw. I would like for us to continue focusing on this region so that we are not left behind by the speed of these economic advances. I am hopeful that by quickly supplying products that suit the needs of each region, including from a pricing perspective, we can steadily create new demand worldwide.

Any final thoughts related to the musical instrument sector?

I was very happy with the energetic feel of this year's NAMM show. Dealers were excited by our new products and were generally in a very good mood. I think that dealers' positive energy will translate to consumers, and make 2014 a great year for music and sound products. **MMR**

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The 'Craze' May Be Over, But Uke Sales Are Still Going Strong

By Christian Wissmuller

From "Tiny Bubbles" to "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" to "Hey, Soul Sister," the ukulele has been a mainstay in American popular music for decades. The recent ukulele resurgence was fueled both by hit songs from the likes of Train and Jason Mraz, as well as the diminutive size *and* price of the four-strings, which made them popular with consumers and retailers during the recent recession.

We at *MMR* have taken a handful of close looks at this burgeoning uke market as that newfound excitement for the instrument crested, but we were curious to see how things are faring now that the economy has (sort of? largely?) rebounded. In a recent survey sent out to over 1,000 domestic retailers, we sought to find out what trends are emerging amongst ukulele buyers, whether those who've stuck with the instrument are now returning to stores in order to purchase "step up" ukes, and whether dealers foresee continued growth, stagnation, or retraction within this subset of fretted MI retail.

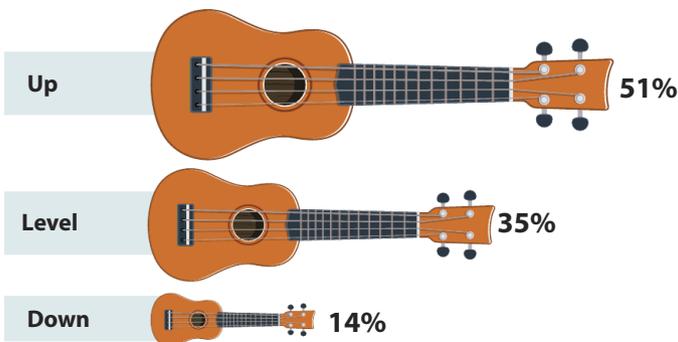
What did we learn? Some, such as Rusty Olson of Milwaukee, Wisconsin's Rockhaus feel that, "The trend of everybody wanting a uke has been over for about three years now for us. [There are] more products than people to buy them, I fear. They are everywhere and nobody sells at MAP anymore, from what I have found. First one at the bottom wins, again." But for every one respondent to this poll who shared Olson's overall sentiments, there were at least five others who felt quite the opposite: More than 50 percent of participants reported ukulele sales as being up from this same time in 2013 and a combined 92 percent (!) expect sales to either remain steady or to increase in the coming year. "I thought the uke craze had peaked about a year ago, but my sales are up 50 percent since then!" enthused Gary Traversy of Gary's Guitars in Portsmouth, N.H.

Read on for more reaction and speculation from ukulele dealers from across the U.S. **MMR**

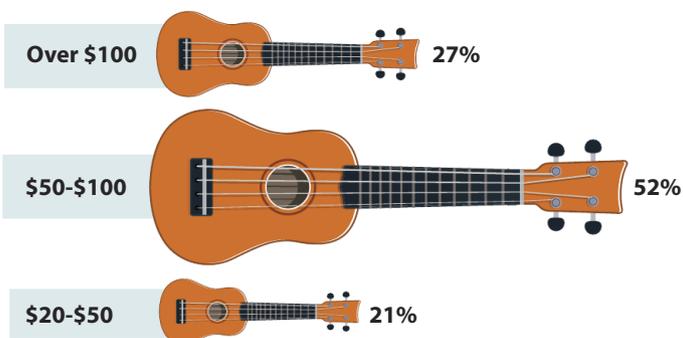
“ The \$30 uke is dead for us. We stock them and have them prominently displayed, but most of our ukulele customers are prepared to go to at least the next level. ”

— James Rawson, Rawson Music Company, Oklahoma City, Okla.

1 Compared to this time last year, ukulele sales for your operation are...



2 What price points are hottest?



3 What trends (if any) have you been noticing with respect to purchases of more expensive, "step up" ukuleles?

■ "We sell a few of the more expensive ones (\$200 to \$300 range) but \$50 to \$100 is still where the action is."

Jim Hill
Senseney Music, Inc.
Wichita, Kansas

■ "Many people are more willing to spend just a little more to get quality. Not a lot of people want to spend over \$200."

Leif Nelson
Riverton Music
Salt Lake City, Utah

■ “We have been at the uke craze for five-plus years and with a population base of about 45,000 people having sold over \$200,000 worth of them the market is maturing and we are seeing a bit more step up sales.”

*Greg Weast
Columbia River Music
The Dalles, Ore.*

■ “UAS (Ukulele Acquisition Syndrome) is definitely at play. As a player’s ear becomes more refined, they start noticing the subtle differences in wood, construction, et cetera.”

*Chris Rooney
Compass Music Sales
Madeira Beach, Fla.*

■ “We’ve always had a steady market for better instruments, both new and vintage. Most customers stepping up from a basic uke are more likely to prefer a new ukulele, but we still see customers who’ve recently been bitten by the uke bug appreciate older instruments.”

*Julie Luther
Spruce Tree Music & Repair, Inc.
Madison, Wis.*

■ “Even though we offer a variety of step up instruments, other than for a gift or a special occasion, most sales are still in the \$50-\$100 ‘better’ entry level [range].”

*Bill Sharrow
Fretz Music Center
Souderton, Pa.*

■ “We sell a ton of cheap ukes, but our more expensive ukes are going faster now.”

*Al Green
The Music Man
Anchorage, Alaska*

■ “Sales of mid-range and upper-level instruments are good. We believe that a large percentage of entry-level consumers are buying better instruments or at least more (uke players are collectors, of a sort). Additionally, numbers of ukes are decaling a bit, but the average dollar value per unit is increasing (making overall dollar value of sales hold steady).”

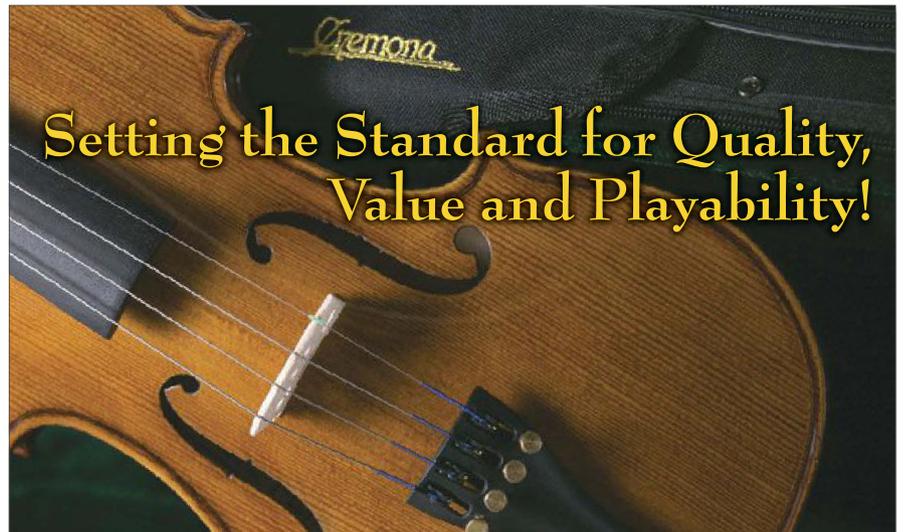
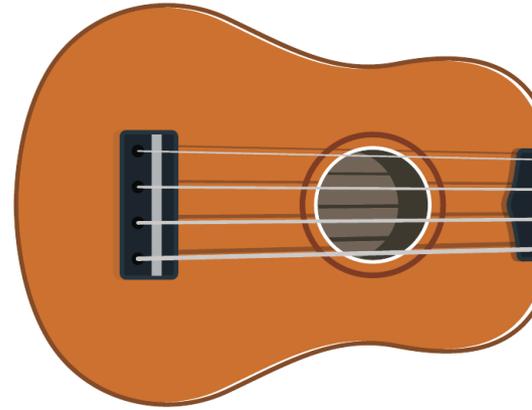
*Ray Aleshire
Elderly Instruments
Lansing, Mich.*

■ “For us, we’ve seen a slow, but steady uptick in higher priced ukuleles. We’re selling more of them over the \$100 price point now.”

*David St. John
Gard’s Music
Glendora, Calif.*

■ “We are gaining sales in higher end ukes.”

*Shane Hall
Uptown Music
Keizer, Ore.*



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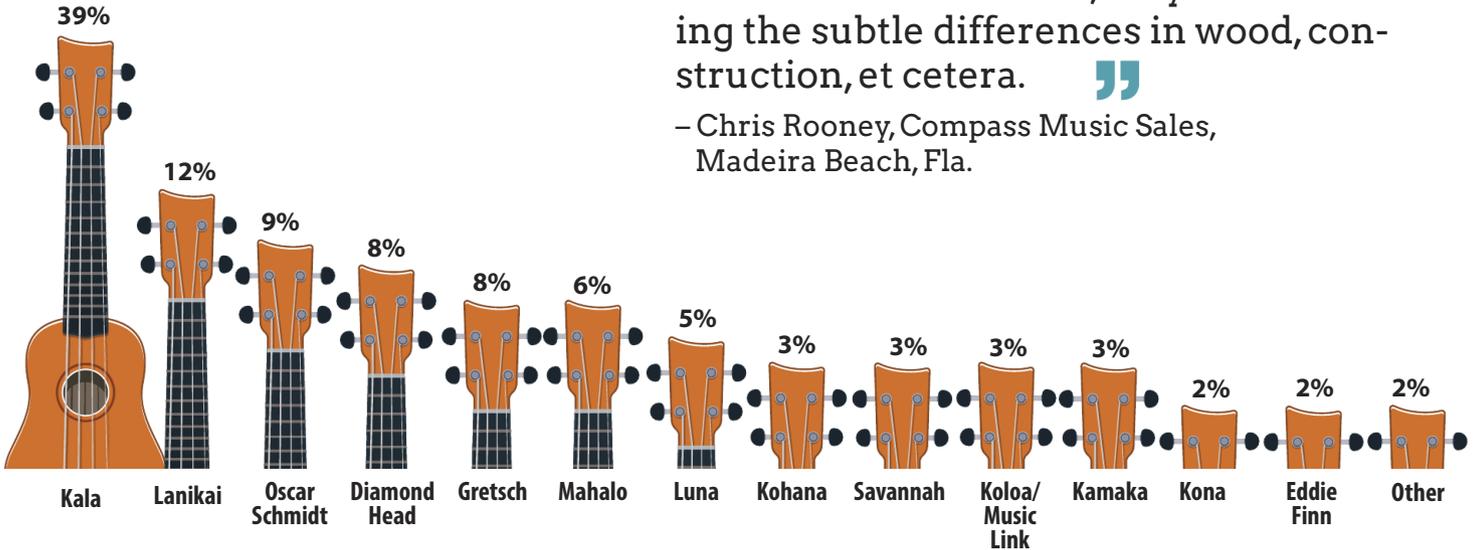
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4 What brand is selling best for your store?



“ UAS (Ukulele Acquisition Syndrome) is definitely at play. As a player’s ear becomes more refined, they start noticing the subtle differences in wood, construction, et cetera. ”

– Chris Rooney, Compass Music Sales, Madeira Beach, Fla.

5 What buying trends have you observed regarding “hybrid ukes” (six-string “guitar ukuleles,” “bass ukuleles,” et cetera)?

“Our best-sellers are standard entry level sopranos, but we do sell a lot of [Kala] U-Basses.”

Amy Ball Braswell
Capo’s Music Store
Abingdon, Va.

“Mostly tenor ukes [are selling]. We stock the bass and the six-string, but we don’t sell many of them.”

Mitchell Banks
Don Banks Music
Tampa, Fla.

“We sell a pretty good number of the Guitalele from Yamaha. At \$99 it’s almost an impulse buy for many people and crosses over from guitar quite nicely.”

Jeff Simons
Watermelon Music
Davis, Calif.

“[Sales of] bass ukes [are] slowing down. Yamaha Guitalele sales [are] increasing.”

Richard Gellis
Union Grove Music
Santa Cruz, Calif.

“[They are] mostly novelty items that customers like to look at but few sales.”

James Rawson
Rawson Music Company
Oklahoma City, Okla.

“They are ‘cool’ to have hanging on the wall to strike up interest and conversation, but not something I ever see us getting in too deep with.”

John Spinelli
Seminole Music & Sound
Seminole, Fla.

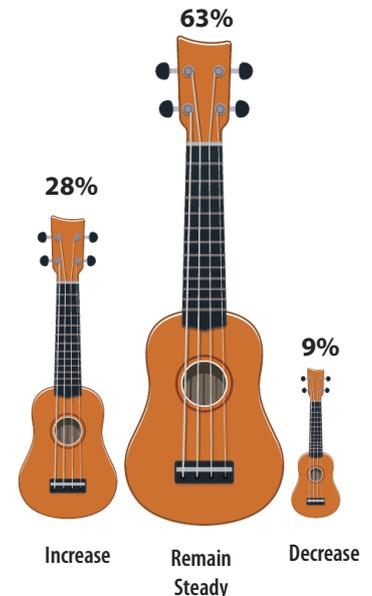
“Customers who purchased an ‘entry level’ uke are experimenting with hybrids after enjoying the original experience and looking to branch out.”

Jason Pitt
The Music Den
Randolph, N.J.

“[These instruments] create lots of interest although they don’t sell a lot.”

Richard Miller
Kudzu Music
Boone, N.C.

6 In the coming months you expect uke sales to...



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New & Notable Guitar-Related Products

Twice a year, we take a deep look into some of the best new releases in the world of guitars, basses, amps, and the long trail of goodies associated with them. Here's what we found notable so far this year.

Seagull Merlin Natural SG

Crafted in LaPatrie Quebec, Canada, and inspired by the dulcimer, the Seagull Merlin is a very portable and compact four-string diatonic acoustic instrument. The Seagull Merlin Natural SG is available with the option of a solid spruce top or solid mahogany top, both with satin oil finishes. It features a 'mustache' style Tusq bridge and compensated saddle by Graph Tech, a three-piece rock maple body with drive-through neck design and vintage style open-gear tuners. Street price: \$129.

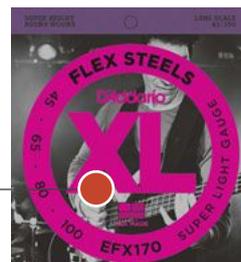
seagullguitars.com



D'Addario FlexSteels Bass Strings

FlexSteels are billed as D'Addario's most advanced strings, delivering the unique combination of flexible feel coupled with a deep, round tone and punch that's optimized for – but not limited to – slap and fingerstyle playing. The FlexSteels' recipe mixes a harmonic-rich steel alloy with precisely formulated core-to-wrap diameters wound to exact specifications. Available for 4-, 5- and 6-string basses, FlexSteels retail from \$44.90 – \$63.90.

daddario.com



LM Releases Cabin Fever Series Straps

LM "Cabin Fever" straps feature comfortable plaid flannel on one side with leather on the other, making for a stylish reversible strap. No wood fire needed.

lmstraps.com



Mod Kits DIY Wahtz Wah Pedal Kit

The Wahtz 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 effect is disengaged and a long life potentiometer manufactured specifically for use in Wah pedals is also. Point-to-point construction allows advanced kit builders to easily experiment with modifications to further tailor the tone to more individual tastes.

modkitsdiy.com



Kala Bakithi Kumalo Signature U-Bass

The new Bakithi Kumalo signature model solid body U-Bass is being manufactured by Kala in the U.S. Kumalo, the revered bassist for Paul Simon, has designed this U-Bass as a 21" scale solid body electric 4-string fretless bass strung with Kala's proprietary polyurethane strings. Other features include a select ash body with strong grain Espresso Brown finish, a black single-ply pickguard and Kumalo's signature on the headstock. Also included is a custom L.R. Baggs active EQ and pickup system developed in conjunction with Kala, a select maple neck, and lined fretless fingerboard. Retail price: \$1,099.

kalabrand.com



Yamaha TRBX304 Bass

The four-string TRBX304 and TRBX504, along with the five-string TRBX305 and TRBX505 feature a five-piece maple/mahogany neck along with balanced and light-weight solid Mahogany bodies. The 500-level basses are equipped with a 3-band Active EQ Control that can also be turned off for passive play. The 500 Series also includes new H5 dual-coil pickups and a Battery Alert LED. On the 300-level models, a Performance EQ Switch offers five performance-tuned full-spectrum EQ curves. Their newly designed M5 hum-bucking pickups also feature built-in thumb rests. Retail price: TRBX304 (\$550), TRBX305 (\$620), TRBX504 (\$790), and TRBX505 (\$860).

<http://4wrd.it/trbxonline>

Kanile Islander GL6 'Guitarlele'

The Islander GL6 features an Acacia front, back, and sides; rosewood fretboard and bridge; and open chrome tuners and is outfitted with custom GL6 string set. It's lightweight and portable with accurate intonation. Tuned ADGCEA, the GL6 offers players the familiarity of size and tuning of a ukulele but with the extra range of a guitar. Retail price: \$340.

kanileaukulele.com

Music Nomad String Fuel

MusicNomad String Fuel allows guitar players to clean and lubricate their strings in one swipe. The ergonomically shaped device includes a dense wool pad impregnated with a blend of refined natural oils and premium mineral oils. The proprietary blend cleans and protects strings for a longer life while conditioning unfinished fretboard wood. The cleaning/conditioning oil also enhances speed while reducing finger noise. Also included is a lint-free cloth that fits securely in the handle.

musicnomadcare.com

Electro-Harmonix Lumberjack Logarithmic Overdrive

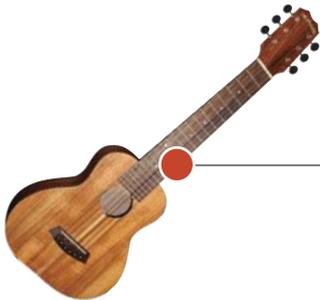
On a standard overdrive pedal, distortion goes up linearly in direct response to the guitarist's volume and playing dynamics. EHX's new Lumberjack's response is logarithmic and the change between two values is perceived as a ratio of those values. Therefore, a change from 1 to 2 (ratio 1:2) is perceived as the same as a change from 4 to 8 (ratio of 1:2). The resulting overdrive is very reactive to the player's volume and dynamics and its response ranges from a powerful clean boost to torn-speaker rasp and up to gritty distortion. The control layout includes Volume, Log Factor, and Boost knobs. Volume sets the overall output level of the pedal while Boost adjusts the input signal of the instrument. The Log Factor controls the amount of logarithmic distortion. List price: \$77.38.

ehx.com

Boss ME-80 Guitar Multi-Effects

The ME-80 Guitar Multiple Effects is a floor-based tone processor with a knob-driven interface for intuitive, stompbox-style control. Featuring a large selection of flagship-quality effects and COSM amps, eight multifunction footswitches, battery-powered operation, and much more, the compact ME-80 is perfect for performing guitarists of all levels. Via the Boss Tone Studio editor application, ME-80 users can easily customize sounds and enjoy direct access to free patches and other great content at the newly launched Boss Tone Central website.

RolandConnect.com





Note From Joe The Power of a Legacy

As many of you have experienced, each Thursday night at The NAMM Show thousands fill the Grand Plaza outside the Anaheim Convention Center for the Annual Tribute. This powerful event, set to the moving sounds of the L.A. Scots' bagpipes, gives us a moment of pause as we honor industry members, friends and peers who passed away in the last year.

As each face is recognized, we remember the conversations, experiences and laughter we shared with these people. We also reflect on their role in working toward our shared mission of creating more music makers . . . their contributions in the industry, their legacy.

No matter our place or position in the industry, we all are currently creating our own legacy, day by day—the one that will be remembered when our time comes to be in the Tribute. In some ways, the Tribute brings the sum total of how we spent our lives to a sharp point.

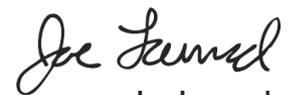
It sure makes you think, doesn't it? *What have I contributed in making the world a better and more musical place? What will I leave behind?* I'm reminded of a quote from Larry Morton's father who often told him that when all is said and done, "leave a little more wood on the pile."

Many, many NAMM Members are making a difference through their generosity, and it's great to read about these stories each month in the trade magazines. In fact just last month, there was an example of your association working in collaboration with a NAMM Member, without even realizing it! The D'Addario

Foundation supports the Harmony Project, a music program for inner-city kids in Los Angeles. Coincidentally, The NAMM Foundation had funded a scientific study with Northwestern University to understand the impact of music training on the learning skills of poor children using the Harmony Project as their subjects. Upon the study's conclusion, the research findings were widely publicized in the media, adding to the growing body of evidence that links music education with student success. Studies such as this also provide more advocacy ammunition for parents and policy makers, helping to strengthen programs around the country and resulting in more kids having access to music education.

These past few years have been tough for many NAMM Members, and having anything left over for charity hasn't always been possible. But creating a lasting legacy can occur in many ways—like mentoring a young person, participating in your local music education efforts, or even just helping a few of your students get free or reduced lessons in your store. We are truly blessed to live our lives in the music business, and opportunities to give back are all around us. And perhaps in one of the biggest paradoxes of all, it is absolutely true that the more you give, the more you get.

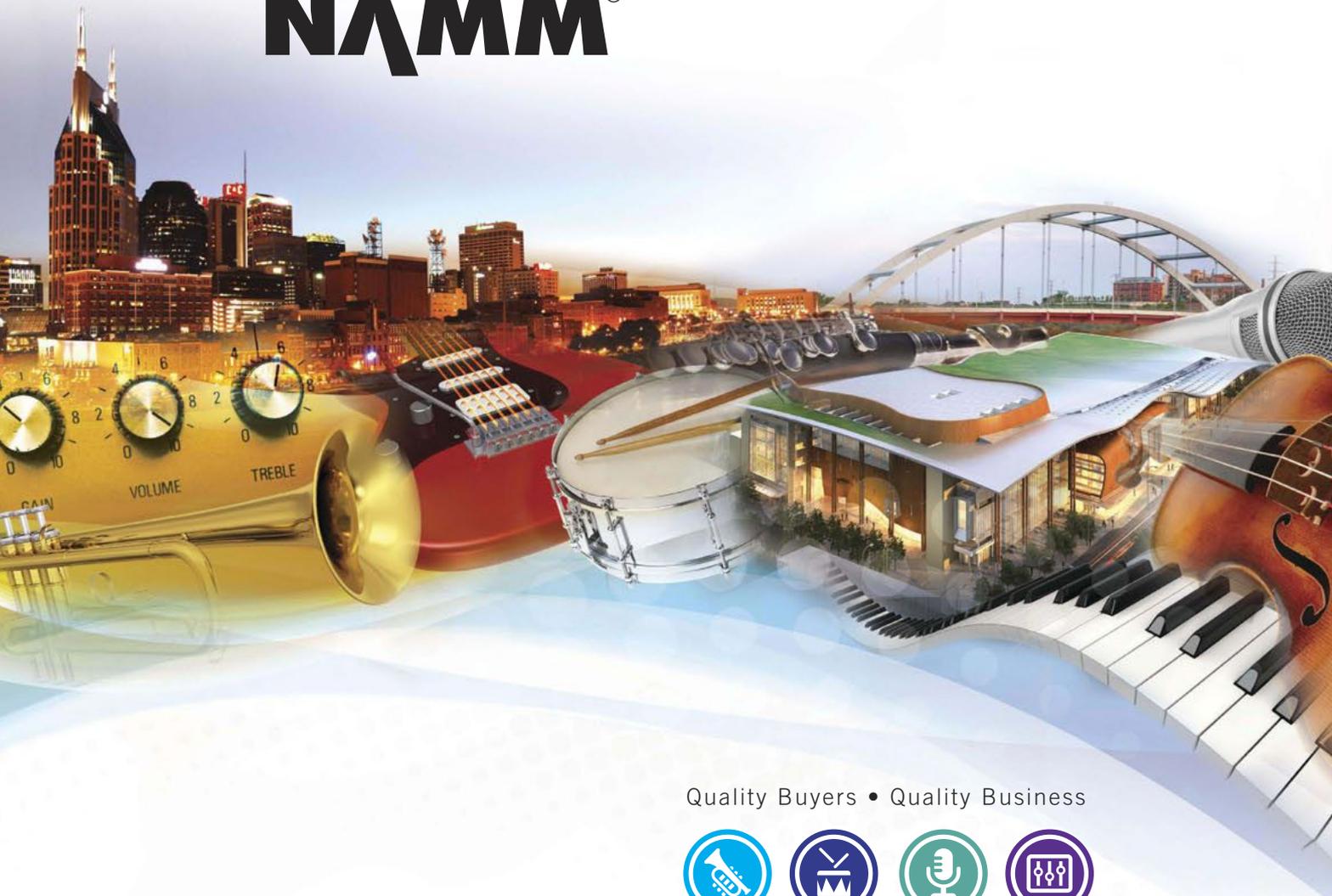
The life you lead now is creating your legacy, and building your woodpile—the contributions that loved ones and the industry will remember you for in that final Tribute.



Joe Lamond
NAMM PRESIDENT AND CEO



Summer¹⁴ NAMM[®]



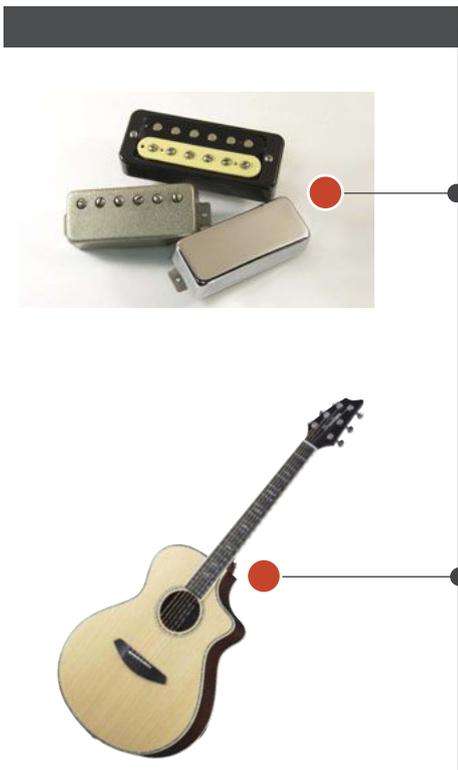
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Rio Grande Baby Texas and BBQ Humbuckers

With outputs of 10k and 12k respectively, the Baby Texas and BBQ also include oversized polepieces, a radiator baseplate, and a number of finishes including chrome, nickel, and toasted nickel. A “no holes” cover option is also available for applications where an historic look is required. Pickups are double wax-potted and two-conductor braided cable is standard. Muscle, output, and full-sized polepieces complete the package.

riograndepickups.com

Breedlove Stage Concert Series

Breedlove’s new acoustic-electric Concert guitar is built on the original Breedlove Concert body shape. Built-in electronics allow for a nuanced sound control, the neck comes with a Breedlove satin finish. The Concert shape offers a well-balanced and compact feel with an articulate range of tone, designed to work with fingerstyle, as vocal accompaniment, or at a full strum. The Breedlove Bridge Truss relieves stress on the top, allowing use of a thinner, graduated top, providing for greater sustain and balance. Retail price: \$999.

breedlovemusic.com

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Radial Headload Guitar Amplifier Attenuator

The Headload is a guitar amplifier attenuator that allows the artist to reduce the volume levels on stage while driving the amp hard for the desired tone. The 100 percent discrete fan-cooled design begins with a series of high power cement-encrusted epoxy-coated copper coil resistors that are used in conjunction with a six-position Gray-hill rotary switch to dissipate the power generated by the amplifier. A variable range control allows incremental power reduction at low levels if needed. Power going to the speakers may also be turned off for quiet recording or to eliminate the speaker cabinet on stage. A front-panel ¼" headphone jack with level control is included. In addition to the 8 ohm speaker cabinet outputs, the Headload comes with a built-in Radial JDX direct box. This is coupled with a six-position voicing switch with that lets you choose the desired amp and cabinet emulation, supplemented with a two-band EQ for fine tuning and a low pass filter to eliminate overly harsh harmonics that are produced by some amplifiers. Estimated retail price: \$600.

radialeng.com



Godlyke TWA Fly Boys Mini Pedals

TWA Fly Boys™ feature a lightweight, extruded aluminum chassis designed for crowded pedalboards or long-distance travel gigs. Quality components and a durable construction assure reliable performance with an included True Bypass switching. Current models include FB-01 Distortion (Marshall-style Distortion, List \$89), FB-02 Overdrive (Tube-amp overdrive, List \$89), FB-03 Echo (600 milliseconds delay time delay, List \$99), FB-04 Chorus (Vintage-style chorusing, List \$99), FB-05 Metal (high-gain distortion, List \$89).

godlyke.com

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Journey Instruments Overhead Carbon Fiber Acoustic

Journey's new Overhead Travel Guitars collapse down to carry-on luggage size. All of Journey Instruments models come with a patented removable neck, an extra deep Manzer wedge design, an under-bridge transducer pickup and a full-featured travel back-pack with TSA compliant laptop/tablet compartment. The Overhead Carbon Fiber Acoustic Model features a unidirectional carbon fiber radiused soundboard, beveled back rib-rest and Soundboard arm-rest, Scoopaway™ cutaway and access to all 20 frets, and more. Retail price \$1,499.

journeyinstruments.com

Supro Thunderbolt Amplifier

Redesigned and relaunched for 2014, the new Supro S6420 Thunderbolt is a USA-made, 50th anniversary reissue of the iconic 1964 Supro Thunderbolt 1x15 combo. True to vintage spec, this amp's cathode-biased 6L6 output section produces 35 watts of power in a "Blue Rhino Hide" tolex with a custom designed 15" Supro TB15 speaker. MAP: \$1,099.

suprousa.com

Line 6 AMPLIFi Amp

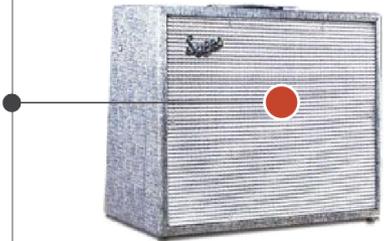
By combining a high-performance guitar amp, a streaming Bluetooth® speaker system, and a breakthrough iOS app into one powerful device, AMPLIFi is unlike any amplifier. The five-speaker stereo design delivers detailed guitar tones. Featuring two tweeters, two mid-bass drivers, and a custom guitar speaker, AMPLIFi covers a wide frequency spectrum. AMPLIFi is available in a 150-watt model or portable 75-watt version. AMPLIFi features streaming compatibility with Android, iOS, Mac, and PC devices. The AMPLIFi Remote app for iOS allows guitarists to control every aspect of their tones from an iOS device.

line6.com/amplifi

Lag T77PE Acoustic Guitar

The T77PE comes in a Traditional Parlor E style body (with a slot peg head) and offers a mahogany body with black and ivory radial edge binding. The bridge and fingerboard are made from Indonesian rosewood; the compensated saddle and nut are both black graphite. The Mahogany body and Dark Mahogany neck all feature a high quality, French Satin finish. A new preamp configuration, the DirectLag Plus, is featured in this series. Street price: \$329.99.

usa.lagguitars.com



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Rotosound Strings Foil Packs and Color Coding

The new Rotosound air-tight packaging is made from foil. It provides a moisture barrier ensuring strings will not tarnish or fade while in the packs, keeping them factory fresh until ready for use. The packaging has also been reduced by 90 percent making the new packets incredibly eco-friendly. All Rotosound strings now come with color-coded ball ends, and because they are British through and through, they are Red, White, and Blue. The strings, still made at the Rotosound factory in the UK, retain their pure British tone.

rotosound.com

Fender Squier 60th Anniversary Classic Vibe '50s Strat

The Squier's 60th Anniversary Classic Vibe '50s Stratocaster celebrates the Stratocaster's anniversary with an Aztec Gold gloss finish and gold hardware. Other features include a maple neck with a "modern C" profile, 9.5"-radius maple fingerboard with 21 medium jumbo frets, three custom vintage-style single-coil Stratocaster pickups with five-way switching, three-ply parchment pickguard, vintage-style synchronized tremolo bridge with six saddles, and vintage-style tuners.

squierguitars.com

Taylor Guitars T5z

Among the new compact T5z's design features are a 12" fretboard radius (compared to the T5's 15-inch radius) and jumbo frets, which make bending strings easier. Otherwise the T5z retains all the features of the original T5: a three-pickup configuration, five-way switching, tone controls that dial in a full-range of tonal flavors, and dual compatibility with acoustic and electric amps. Both the T5z and T5 will be released in a series of four models, each distinguished by the top wood: the Custom (koa top), the Pro (curly maple top), the Standard (Sitka spruce top), and the Classic (mahogany top).

taylorguitars.com



The Revolutionary Wi AudioStream Pro EL/SL

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The Wi AudioStream Pro 2.4GHz pocket portable stereo digital wireless microphone and audio monitoring system redefines the wireless experience for professionals who demand high quality audio for live performance, extreme portability and uncompromised universal audio connectivity to match today's digital gear. Equipped with premium cardioid and omnidirectional microphones, this wearable system quickly interchanges from an Ear-worn to Lavalier MIC or audio monitoring system with a simple swap of accessories.

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The amazing Wi AudioStream Pro enables users to wirelessly connect a microphone and In-ear monitors to iPad®, Windows Surface®, MAC or PC for untethered 2-way simultaneous digital wireless studio audio quality connectivity.



Jackson Mark Morton Dominion Pro

The Mark Morton Dominion™ Pro's chambered mahogany body is bound and comes in Black and Ivory gloss finishes, and the two DiMarzio Mark Morton Dominion Signature humbucking pickups are wired in a dual-circuit design (lead, rhythm) with a two-way slider switch, three-way toggle pickup selector switch, and two coil-tap toggle switches (one for each pickup). Other premium features include a 24.75" scale length, three-piece quartersawn mahogany through-body neck with oiled back finish and graphite reinforcement, distinctive three-on-a-side Jackson Mark Morton Dominion headstock, compound-radius (12"-16") bound ebony fingerboard with 22 vintage-style frets and shark-eye block inlays, TonePros TP6 adjustable bridge with stop tailpiece, gold hardware and Jackson locking tuners with white pearloid buttons.

jacksonguitars.com

Vox Limited Edition AC15C1

The AC15C1VRD is available featuring a Celestion V-Type speaker and custom "British Garnet Red" tolex with Tygon grill cloth. The AC15C1VRD offers two channels: Normal and Top Boost. Each channel is equipped with its own Volume control, and the Top Boost channel offers interactive Treble and Bass tone controls. Both channels utilize the Tone Cut and Volume controls in the Master section. The Master Volume control works in conjunction with the individual volumes of each channel to create just the right degree of gain-staging. Begins shipping May 2014. Street price: \$649.99.

voxamps.com

Charvel Guthrie Govan Signature Model

The Guthrie Govan Signature guitar from Charvel's San Dimas body has a bird's-eye or flame maple top, with a thin clear matte finish and a specially contoured heel (sans neck plate). The bolt-on neck is quartersawn flame maple with a "caramelized" heat and drying treatment, with graphite reinforcement and a convenient truss rod adjustment wheel at the body end. Other features include three specially wound Charvel custom MFB pickups arranged in an HSH configuration with five-way switching, two notched control knobs (volume, tone), recessed original-style NOS Floyd Rose tremolo bridge with Tremol-No unit and oversized brass block, bone nut, chrome hardware, and 25.5" scale length. Hard-shell case included.

charvelguitars.com

Blackbird El Capitan

Blackbird's new El Capitan is made of Ekoa material and tuned for vintage tone. Ekoa is a plant fiber material developed by Blackbird for a truly eco-friendly construction that offers the stability of carbon fiber only with a vintage sound, look, and feel. From its patented hollow-neck design to its Ekoa eco-fabric and resin construction, El Capitan was designed to generate the acoustic quality and volume of an even larger instrument.

blackbirdguitar.com

Peavey Headliner 1000 Bass Head

The Headliner 1000 is a new rack-mountable bass amplifier head with matching enclosures, all in a 10-pound package. The Headliner 1000 features a seven-band graphic EQ spaced at optimized frequencies, with each slider providing 15 dB of cut and boost to provide comprehensive tone shaping frequencies optimized for bass guitar. Players can use the graphic EQ in conjunction with the low and high shelving-type tone controls or bypass the graphic EQ entirely. A built-in optical Compressor includes level control and bypass, while the Crunch feature adds a vintage tube effect. The Headliner features a built-in XLR direct interface and an active/passive pickup switch that compensates for active instrument inputs. Peavey's exclusive DDT speaker protection circuitry senses the onset of clipping and responds with slight limiting.

Peavey.com



Eventide H9 Core



The H9 Core delivers the sounds of Eventide's H910 and H949 Harmonizers, while all of Eventide's stompbox effects, including new H9 exclusives UltraTap Delay and Resonator, can be added. The H9 Core features a simple, one-knob user interface and is fully-featured as a standalone stompbox. Using H9 Core with the H9 Control app for Windows, OSX (via USB), or iOS (wirelessly via Bluetooth), makes creating and managing presets, live control, and in-app algorithm purchases easy. H9 owners can sync up to five H9s to a single Eventide.com account so their H9 algorithms can be used by five H9s simultaneously. All of Eventide's stompbox algorithms and their associated presets are available for audition and in-app purchase through the H9 Control app. Drag and drop presets into custom preset lists for your upcoming shows.

<http://bit.ly/1diY3Yd>

Audio-Technica System 10 Stompbox



Audio-Technica's System 10 Stompbox digital wireless system offers guitarists a 24-bit operation that's simple to set up. Operating in the 2.4 GHz range, System 10 Stompbox is a rugged, metal, pedal board-mountable receiver with foot switch, two switched TRS balanced 1/4" outputs, and an output mode selector. Musicians can toggle between outputs (e.g., for switching amps) or mute and unmute one output without muting the other (e.g., for convenient tuning). A single receiver can be paired with up to eight UniPak® body-pack transmitters.

System 10 wireless provides three levels of diversity assurance. Frequency Diversity sends the signal on two dynamically allocated frequencies for interference-free communication. Time Diversity sends the signal in multiple time slots. Space Diversity uses two antennas on each transmitter and receiver.

Each Stompbox system includes an ATW-R1500 Stompbox receiver, an ATW-T1001 UniPak body-pack transmitter with an AT-GcW guitar cable, and hook & loop strips for adding receiver to an effects pedal board.

audio-technica.com

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ROB BOUDON

Guitars ^{Get} Wired

By Matt **Parish**

The world of digital guitar playing and recording is reaching a critical mass of consumers, with more and more digital products focused on USB and online connectivity every year. Is it time for retailers to catch up?

The future once looked like a high tech playground for computer engineers and quick-witted space travelers. Spock and Chekov commanded spaceships with obscure, touch-sensitive control panels and NASA scientists navigated the surface of Mars via remote control. Maybe that's why futuristic guitar technology like MIDI, wireless transmitting, and computer interfacing has seemed a couple steps too complicated for many customers for so long.

But a funny thing has happened on the way to 2014: Everything has gotten simpler. Teenage indie bands have recorded honest-to-goodness hits on Apple's GarageBand. Fans upload cell phone videos of concert footage to YouTube with the touch of a button. And moms everywhere play endless hours of Candy Crush on Facebook with friends on the other side of the country.

Technology is not the thorny realm of pocket protectors and phone book-sized instruction manuals anymore. It's plug-and-play, compatible across as many platforms as possible, and highly adaptable.

For the guitar market, that could be a lifesaver. "The line between computer and music retailers is blurring," says Orange Amplifiers product developer Charlie Cooper. "You find more music retailers selling more recording equipment including computers, audio interfaces, and software."

While the grit and romance of old-school tubes and customized effects chains will never lose their luster for many, there's no denying that the times have changed. Retailers would be wise to take note. "Now there's a whole new generation of consumers that's come up over the past 10 to 15 years," says Pierre Abboud, chief operating and technology officer at Wi Digital Systems. "They want to plug in the guitar, plug in the app, play the songs, and be happy. It takes them two seconds to do that, whereas it took the other guys a lifetime to perfect their sound."

Abboud warns that holding onto the old guitar paradigm (and its aging practitioners) could be business suicide for MI retailers.

“But when musicians began to perform with instruments like the Rickenbacker Frying Pan, oh boy, the acoustic guitar traditional ‘purists’ mocked them. That kind of criticism is alive and well today.”

– Gary Lenaire, Roland/Boss

The New Frontier of Tech

Before you go scrambling for your reps’ phone numbers, though, maybe it would be best to simply sit back and enjoy the current state of achievement in six-string circuitry. As anyone who’s browsed the booths at recent NAMM Shows knows, the power and diversity that designers have managed to squeeze out of everyday devices like iPads and pedestrian-looking stompboxes would have been unimaginable a few years ago.

For those who’ve been hiding at the vintage shop for the last several years, there’s a lot to catch up on. Leading effects makers are operating straight off of tablets and even using cell phone apps, offering instant upgradability. Hardware like traditional stompboxes and pedals (like the Zoom MS and G series, TC Electronics TonePrint pedals, and the Boss ME-80) are offering the same connectivity via USB ports and cell phone apps in more traditional units floor units. Line 6 even offers a similar feature set in their brand new AMPLiFi amp, with an ever-expanding selection of amp models available online, beamed directly from both iOS and Android digital devices via Bluetooth (songs can be downloaded to the amp for play-a-long as well, while a remote app also allows amp controls to be toggled from your iPad).

Larry Fishman, longtime guitar scene vet with Fishman, has lately been turning expectations upside down with that company’s TriplePlay wireless MIDI controller. The device enables seamless signal processing, so that guitar signals can transform into organ sounds or even percussion sections, an ability that’s seemed like a pipe dream for decades (though many have tried). It can also become a trigger for samples and loops (pioneering guitarist Kaki King even uses it to manipulate video clips live). Fishman notes that the pace of improvement has quickened.

“Seven years ago, the fastest and best MIDI controller made was the Axon,” he says. “It had parallel processing transputer processing technology, which was the best of its time. Now, working off of a rechargeable battery, we have a processor that is 5,000 times faster.”

The TriplePlay is a notable step forward in MIDI processing, allowing musicians with little desire for complicated setup to get moving on guitar MIDI sounds in an easy, professional way. The

high processing speeds ensure accurate sound processing and can even track pitch bends and notes played on specific strings. Fishman was also able to develop a simple program for users to run standalone or as a VST plugin to parse the multi-channel signal, “without having to spend hours of programming to take care of all those things.”

Tech is king at the trade shows nowadays, as countless companies offer digital effects by way of plugins, effects pedal emulators, amp emulators, digital pedals, and more. But often the basic act of getting the analog guitar signal into the digital realm is the tricky part. Many companies (Line 6, IK Multimedia, Apogee, Peavey, SoundTech, Alesis, ESI, Behringer, and of course Fishman, for starters) offer methods to convert the signal with maybe the simplest method — direct USB jacks. Some guitar companies like Ibanez, Squier, Luna, and Godin offer guitars with the USB jack already installed, as natural as bridge saddles and tuning pegs.

Wi Digital’s flagship connectivity product (the new AudioLink Pro) even goes a step further, offering any instrument multiple two-way channels of connectivity over a digital wireless signal, meaning musicians can use the transceivers and receivers to send signals to a live mixer or recording device, or receive monitor signals for specially designed earbuds. The signals it produces are then 99 percent compatible with digital platforms, from pro DAW systems to tablets, cell phones, and mixing boards. It’s a long way from trailing long, coiled lines of cables into overheating amps.

Meanwhile, at the Orange Amplifiers booth at this year’s NAMM Show, a snaking line of visitors gawked at not only the company’s vintage-style amps but also a newer product that literally combines the amp and a personal computer into one package — the OPC (Orange Personal Computer).

Charlie Cooper, who is lead developer on the product, says the OPC is designed to take the awkward steps of interfacing analog signals to digital platforms out of the equation altogether.

“Rather than being forced to use a standard desktop computer and then modify that for a musician’s needs, we sat down and created our dream machine from the ground up,” he says. While guitarists plug straight into the same 1/4” jack they’re used to, the OPC includes a 24-bit interface with just one ms of latency. The



Zoom’s GS and MS-100 provide highly customizable multi-effects capability (through online apps) in different form factors, depending on a customer’s desire to stick with traditional stompbox aesthetics.

The Boss ME-80 provides powerful tone editing tools and the ability download effects and tones through Boss’s online hub, BossToneCentral.com.

cabinet holds two six-inch JBL studio reference speakers. It runs on an Intel Core i7 processor. "We've optimized the system with help of the supplied software and hardware manufacturers and we ship it, so it just works from boot."

The Maturity of Digital Interfacing

Needless to say, the industry has come a long way. But the question for retailers should really lie in how far the consumers have come. Is the market finally ready to take on this type of full-blown digital integration with their guitars?

Most insiders believe it is. The key factors: convenience and affordability.

Erich Barto, director of marketing for Zoom North America, is betting on the public's newfound comfort with tech. "I think it's reaching a point of viability, meaning that technology for awhile was sort of mystifying to a lot of people who weren't completely in tune with it," he says.

Cooper remembers that Orange was originally content to let early adopters do the heavy lifting. "We dismissed [computer modeled amps] because they couldn't get close to our valve amplifiers at all," he says. "Some people here were worried that if we ever entered the modelling market that customers would think that's close to how the real ones sounded and then dismiss our valve amplifiers. However, companies started modelling our sound anyway and some were getting closer as technology developed and matured." He says the company decided it was too risky to play catch-up, so they partnered with IK Multimedia to build the Amplitube 3 Orange, which is included on the OPC.

TC Electronics are relative veterans on the scene, having released the first of their TonePrint pedals in 2010. Managing director Anders Fauerskov is in the position to draw from that experience in the online market. "At the end of the day, it is not about apps as a technology," he says. "It is about giving the musician a better or easier way to work. We can see that most buyers of these pedals also go on to download TonePrints and use them, so from that perspective, I would say that the technology usage chasm has been crossed – it is no longer only the experimental guitarists who use apps. It has become widespread quite quickly."

When Orange first attempted a programmable amp in 1975 (what came to be known as the OMEC Digital), they instructed their R&D department to "construct a computerized amplifier."

Cooper says the product wasn't a success because the day's technology for affordable features wasn't up to par. It's a different story now.

"Guitarists are now carrying smartphones and devices that can be easily adapted to help out with music creation," Cooper says. "Now, more than ever, guitarists are experimenting with digital products and our view is that they are not out of phase with this technology. I would like to think we're using newer technologies to simplify tasks that used to be very complicated or otherwise expensive."

Gary Lenaire, who is group strategy manager for Boss and guitar products at Roland Corporation U.S., says the trend has fully entered the mainstream since Roland itself introduced guitar modeling in 1995 with its VG-8 V-Guitar System. "I think guitarists are experimenting with digital instruments more than ever," he says. "At the same time, many digital instruments are mainstream and those kinds of products are becoming more popular."

In turn, Boss's new ME-80 pedal uses a traditional multi-effects hardware scheme and beefs up its feature set with web connectivity. A USB port on the unit allows users to connect to BossToneCentral.com, a web resource with free "signature tones" from artists like Gus G. and Marty Friedman. The collection will continue to grow for the foreseeable future.

Generation Gap

Broad shifts in technology are nothing really new to an industry built around the electric guitar, one of the most significant technological leaps in music history. Take transistors. We uncovered a 1974 Orange ad that mocked companies making transistor amps. "No!" beams a proud representative. "And we won't until transistors have reaches a peak of perfection, sold at a reasonable price and are accepted by top guitarists." (The company was eventually impressed — they now run a large range of transistor amps in the Crush Pro series). "Leaps in research and development have made what seemed unlikely, become very real today."

That said, while one might expect a generation gap to unfold among buyers as guitar products become more and more digital, the trends don't seem to support that. Zoom's MS-100, a unit designed for multi-effects power and online connectivity that still retains the form factor of a classic stompbox, did perform best with younger customers immediately following its



The Wi Digital AudioLink Pro makes possible wireless transmission of digital signals from any instruments to any digital device – laptops, mixers, iPads, and more. It sends a two-way stereo signal over 2.4Ghz digital wireless channel.



A screenshot from TC Electronic's TonePrint Editor, which allows musicians to edit the tone of their pedals themselves on a computer and then transfer that setting to their own stompbox.



launch. But since then, Barto says the product has steadily won over older customers.

"I've talked to guitar players who have been playing for 40 years," he says. "Once you explain what the technology is and what you can do with it, they seem to take to it very quickly."

Some see different factions of the market being tougher than others. Abboud likes to target the eager-to-adapt "prosumer" market when it comes to Wi Digital. "The professional market – guitar players, keyboards – they're pros, but they don't move fast enough into consumer electronics to integrate easily," he says. "They're very traditional, very conservative in terms of adopting music technology. We're still using cables! I don't know how long since that was the first thing we used to connect instruments to speakers, but it's still being used. So we are trying to fill in the gap. We say, 'You do what you do best and we will link you.' They can concentrate on making new, better products while receiving the best sound they've ever received through our product wirelessly."

Lenaire is in a similar mindset. "Change isn't easy for many people," he says. "Guitarists tend to be very opinionated [laughs]. If you look at the history of electric guitar, change was brought about due to a practical problem — namely, guitars needed to be louder. In order to amplify the sound, innovators in the early 20th century found that electricity was the answer. But when musicians began to perform with instruments like the Rickenbacker Frying Pan, oh boy, the acoustic guitar traditional 'purists' mocked them. That kind of criticism is alive and well today."

Adapt or Die

In any case, the future of music seems unavoidably tied to digital devices. For a market that's long searched for a bulletproof new merchandising angle, that's not a bad thing. Fishman doesn't hold back: "If you look at the sales numbers in the electric guitar market, it's pretty damn flat," he says. "It's not going anywhere." It's no surprise a wide range of manufacturers from Ibanez guitars to Lanikai ukes are equipping themselves with Fishman products. Fender even presented their 60th anniversary "Stratocaster of the Future" this year complete with onboard Fishman TriplePlay.

That's not to say there aren't potential hurdles for retailers adapting to the digital market.

"Let's say a customer purchases an amplifier," says Cooper. "There is not much that can go wrong with it, but let's just say something does. Most guitar shops will know what the problem

is (valve failure, blown fuse, and so on) and be able to suggest a solution. It is all straightforward stuff.

"With digital and computer equipment it is different. Customers may discover the software or hardware they have bought is not compatible with the equipment they have at home and then they expect the store to be able to resolve this. In order to be able to deal with these scenarios, retailers need to stock products from reliable manufacturers with solid support systems in place." Many companies establishing products in this market, in turn, aim for full compatibility. Orange's OPC, for instance, keeps as many of the technologies together in its cabinet as possible. Effects pedal apps tend to lean toward Apple's iOS, which is far more standardized across products than that of Android products.

For some, it could be disturbing to ponder the idea that a customer can just purchase a piece of hardware once and then spend years upgrading online rather than coming back into the shop to browse the stompbox inventory. But the retailer who focuses on quality and innovation will continue to be first in customers' minds.

"The retailers probably need to think carefully about this trend, but I don't think there is any reason to be overly concerned," says Fauerskov. "The 'apps only' are not going to take away any significant hardware sales and the apps enabling hardware are making products easier to use, which drives further sales by the retailers."

If anything, generations of technological development around the world have taught us that moving forward is often the only way to go — the only business choice being to either lead the way or follow behind. "The emergence of the digital age promises us that change is not only possible but insistent," says Lenaire. "Cars and guitars are similar. There are many ways to drive to a market and many cars to choose from. Old cars, new cars, gas cars, electric cars... and we choose our path in the vehicle that suits us. The daring, inquisitive, and innovative driver tends to get there in the latest model, even if it is a classic issue."

Abboud is more fatalistic about the trend. "So many of the great guitarists of the past have created their identity by having their own incredible sound and making the path so obscure that not many people can replicate that," he says. "The issue is this: that generation is dying off. For retailers to continue to focus on products at that old pro level, the amount of sales is going to dwindle. These have been repeat customers for a long time, but they're disappearing." **MMA**



The Fishman TriplePlay Wireless MIDI Guitar Controller makes the use of guitars as effective MIDI controllers a reality, while offering out-of-the-box compatibility in many different digital environments.



Orange Amplifiers' OPC combines an amp, interface, and personal computer into one familiar package.



An Orange ad from 1974 that mocked manufacturers jumping into the transistor amp game too early.

2014 NAMM Show - the Global Ecosystem

Attendance and spirits are up. Signs of a rebounding Industry abound...

"There's always gear and product, but the NAMM Show is about people," says NAMM president and CEO Joe Lamond about this winter's annual gathering in Anaheim. **"The absolute diversity of the event is what really struck me this year. Diversity in the types of people who were there, who came from all over the world – anyone involved in the trade, buying and selling, was at the show. It is truly the global ecosystem."**

The numbers bear out Lamond's assertion, with this year's Show seeing a solid six percent increase in international attendees, compared to last year.

Overall attendance was up considerably, as well, with 96,129 music industry members officially registered for the 2014 Show, compared to 93,908 in 2013. Another "up" statistic: in total, there were 1,533 exhibiting companies on hand in Anaheim this January, fielding 5,010 brands – the second-highest number of exhibitors ever at Winter NAMM.

The numbers suggest a rebounding, active industry and so does the feedback from many key figures in MI.



Industry Figures React

"Yamaha felt as though this was the most successful show in some years," says Rick Young. "Orders were up, traffic was up, our launch products were very well received and maybe most importantly, our programs and direction for the future were not only accepted, but strongly supported by our dealers."

"This was one of our best NAMM shows ever," enthuses Alfred Music's Andrew Surmani. "It is looking like our sales are about 30 percent higher than they were for NAMM 2013. We really couldn't be happier with the results from this Show."

Fender's Larry Thomas says, "We were very satisfied with the excitement and layout of our new combined FMIC trade show booth. We were also very happy with the traffic, and sentiment of our dealers visiting the booth during the show. We were quite busy all four days of the Show."

Roland's Kim Nunney agrees: "We felt good about last year, and this year was even more successful. The response to the new Roland and BOSS products and programs was extremely positive, offering many new opportunities for growth over last year... There's a lot more to come from Roland in 2014, and we look forward to supporting our authorized retailers through an exciting year."

According to Keith Brawley, Taylor Guitars' vice president of sales, "Sales were brisk and we wrote a record amount of business, giving us a lot of confidence that 2014 would be another record year for Taylor Guitars."

D'Addario's David Via felt the Show was a reflection of the evolving international economic picture. "As for commercial activity, we felt a more relaxed presence to this year's Show," he says. "While

markets remain challenging, most dealers we spoke to felt that much of the volatility had subsided and dealers were eager to discuss ways to compete in the 21st marketplace. Internationally, the global cycle of previous economic adjustment periods remains in place. By that I mean the North Americans and Europeans see 2014 as being a year of continuous improvement over last year. Asia is stable with moderate growth overall, while Latin America seems to be the market that is slowing at this point. We remain optimistic that if you can show customers initiatives of value the market can be persuaded to engage"

Not Your Father's NAMM Show

However optimistic the analysis of this year's get-together, it seems clear that the nature of the Show has changed (see *MMR's* survey on purchasing habits at Winter NAMM in our February 2014 issue) – though its value remains undiminished. "NAMM is definitely the number one show, in my opinion," offers Hap Kuffner of Kuffner International, Inc. "If you're going to stay in the game you've got to be there – but you don't go to this show to write orders; You go to judge where the market is. If you go only to sit in a booth and write orders, you missed it by 20 years, pal. It's about how many people can you interface with in order to take your business to the next level? NAMM delivers immeasurable relationship potentials. We all need to be there."

Those Darn 'Yellow Badges'...

While the general perception of the 2014 gathering seems to be universally positive, that doesn't mean that folks don't feel there's

room for improvement. As with previous years, some wonder if there are yet better ways to arrange the NAMM Show's relationship with that pesky attendee segment: the general public. EMG's Scott Wunschel notes, "The consumer attendance seemed much higher this year than ever before which I am all for, but I would think starting [the Show] on Wednesday would see consumer traffic lighter the first two days (Wednesday and Thursday) giving more time for industry business. Then open it up on Friday and Saturday to consumers with artist signings, demos, live performances, and clinics. Our industry needs customers as we continue to compete with others such as fishing, golf, and video games, all of which have consumer shows and this show is the perfect showcase for playing music."

Sabian's Peter Stairs agrees that, whatever "nuisance" they may present, non-industry visitors to the Show do come with upside. "There definitely seemed to be a significant increase in floor traffic this year, which is en-

couraging," he observes. "No, they weren't all buyers, but they were interested parties and, and that's important, given there is a definite feeling the MI market is shrinking and we're not attracting new players as an industry like we used to. So seeing more people there this year kicking tires is definitely a good sign."

The New Chairman Weighs In

Hal Leonard's Larry Morton was able to reflect on the 2014 NAMM Show from the perspective of an exhibitor, as well as NAMM chairman, as this was his inaugural convention holding that title. "From the Hal Leonard side, we had a terrific show, finishing more than ten percent up over last year," he says. "We found that the general vibe of the show, especially from our dealers, was very upbeat and optimistic about the new year. There's a palpable sense that the market is doing better and good things are on the horizon."

"From the NAMM chairman point of view, it was a stellar show by any measurement.

There were more exhibits, more attendees, and more events. Above all that, however, it is yet another reinforcement of the importance of NAMM exhibitors and retailers coming together to help each other build the industry, and NAMM is the perfect place for that to happen. In fact, it is unique in that a successful NAMM Show means more revenue that can be reinvested into market development, thus creating more customers for all of us."

Onward, to Nashville

"There was a real spirit of growth in the industry in Anaheim this year," says Lamond. "There was real optimism. Looking to the Summer Show I'm hoping that we'll see that continue. If there's some growth coming – and that's what I saw this January – then the Summer Show is going to be an important stop and you'll want to do everything possible to be there."

The Summer NAMM Show will take place July 17-19 in Nashville, Tenn.

NAMM Board Welcomes Eight New Members at Annual Meeting

At its Annual Meeting of Members, held January 25 during the 2014 NAMM Show, the NAMM Board of Directors welcomes eight new industry pros. The NAMM Board of Directors guides and leads NAMM and NAMM Foundation and offers counsel to the music product industry.

The NAMM Board bids farewell with great appreciation for their service to the outgoing board members including Jake Connolly of Connolly Music Company, Sharon Hennessey of The Music People!, John Riley of Fletcher Music Centers, Inc., Michael Skinner of DANSR Inc., Kenny Stanton of Ken Stanton Music, Inc., Scott Summerhays of Summerhays Music Center, Lori Supinie of Senseney Music Inc., and Thomas Veerkamp of Casa Veerkamp.



The following NAMM Members were elected to serve on the incoming 2014 Board. Blake Augsburg – Harman Professional, Inc.; Pat Averwater – Amro Music Stores, Inc.; Peter Dods – Easy Music Center; Todd Held – Held Music; Gabriela Konig – König & Meyer GmbH & Co.; Sheryl Laukat – Cannonball Musical Instruments; Liz Reisman – Creative Music & Arts LLC; and Tom Sumner – Yamaha Corporation of America

Yamaha Unveils New Trumpets, Drums

"I hope that everyone can see the passion that Yamaha puts into every product we make," says Yamaha president Tom Sumner at the start of the Yamaha presser at the Show. "People ask me, 'how can Yamaha create so many quality products across so many categories?' I say it's because we really act like a collection of boutique manufacturers."

Saying that it may seem like just a "refresh" of the Xeno trumpet line, Sumner assured the crowd, "it's not." The pinnacle of their trumpet line, the horns hadn't been revisited since 2002. "The new Xeno brings even better response from *pianissimo* to *fortissimo*, with more control, and a clearer, warmer tone."

Trumpet great Allen Vizzutti then came out from the wings and blew the Xeno in a

brief demonstration. "This horn can handle a mired of styles – this horn can cross over," he said. As a session player, "I feel very comfortable," bringing it to any gig.

Next Sumner talked about the MG20 mixing console. "We call them road tough and studio ready, and the only mixer in its class that has balanced outputs on every model in the line." The USB mixers feature a range of MIDI sequencing capabilities, a suite of VST effect plug-ins, and a HALion One sample player.

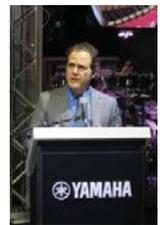
Dave Jewell, marketing manager for the drum division, came up next and introduce drummer Tommy Igoe. Igoe demoed the new Yamaha Stage Custom All Birch Shell kit. "This is by far the best entry-level instrument I have ever sat behind," he says.



Tommy Igoe demonstrating the new Yamaha Stage Custom All Birch Shell kit.



Trumpet player Allen Vizzutti on the revamped Xeno Trumpet.



Tom Sumner, senior VP at Yamaha.

"I can get a kid with an entry-level kit and get them playing, but what is hard is to keep them playing. One of the things I see is that they get tired of their instrument and quit. Those buying the Stage Custom All Birch will keep playing for a long time."

A three-minute drum solo ensued but there were no complaints.



1. Paul Francis of **Zildjian** demonstrates the company's new K Kerope line. 2. **Fishman**: Jack Flegler, Ritchie Flegler, and Bill Norton. 3. **American Music & Sound's** Evan Mackenzie. 4. At the **SupportMusic Coalition Webcast**, NAMM's Mary Luehrsen moderated a panel of celebrity advocates for music education that included Chad Smith of the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Todd Rundgren, and Bernie Williams. 5. **EMG's** Scott Wunschel. 6. John Kasha of **JamHub**. 7. Morty and Iris Manus of **Alfred** with Larry and Diana Morton of **Hal Leonard**. 8. Khristian Dentley of **Take 6**, NAMM past chairman Kevin Cranley of **Willis Music Co.**, and Michael Snyder of **Skip's Music** at the Chairman's Reception. 9. Skip Maggiora of **Skip's Music**. 10. **RPMDA's** Madeleine Crouch. 11. **Fender's** Allen Abbassi. 12. Guitarist Gus G. performs at a **Blackstar Amplification** pre-NAMM event. 13. Performer Scott Tibbs puts the **Roland RD-800** through its paces. 14. **Roland** CEO & representative director Jun-Ichi Miki addresses the audience at the press event where new products, including the ME-80 multi-effect processor and the OD-1X OverDrive, were introduced. 15. **The Gauntlet** – Set-up Day is an exercise in dodging forklifts, cherry-pickers, and harried personnel. 16. Jamie Deering of **Deering Banjo Company**. 17. Rachel Cheda, Leanne McClellow, Rick Carlson, and Annie Steendam of **Kala Guitars**. 18. Josh Jacobson of **Vikorian Guitars**. 19. **Epilog Laser's** John Doran, Mark Clements, and Steve Cortesy. 20. Barbara Ring of **Wood Violins**. 21. David Levine of **Full Circle**. 22. **Amptweaker's** James Brown and Mike Snow. 23. Cobi Stein of **Eminence Speakers**. 24. Dave Lewis and David Spurlock of **W.D. Music**. 25. Joseph Golden of **EarthQuaker Devices**. 26. David Benedetto, Lorne Graham, and Rick Dietrich of **National Education Music Company**. 27. Lily and Thomas Oliphant of **Ventura Guitars**. 28. **Radial's** Roc Bubel and Peter Janis. 29. Curse Mackey of **Dean Guitars**. 30. Mark Love, Sally Zildjian Teague, performing artist Ray Luzier, and Andy Zildjian show off the winning models of **Sabian's 2014 Cymbal Votek** contest. 31. **Vater Percussion's** Chad Brandolini, Alan Vater, James Harrison, and Mark Pozzo. 32. Michael Seiker, Ahmet Baykusak, and Dominick Gagliano of **Amedia Cymbals USA**. 33. Dave LaRue signs an autograph at the **Ernie Ball** booth. 34. Performing artist Jason Sutter shows off the new Signature Precision Heavy series from **Paiste**. 35. **Paiste** artists Gregory Hutchinson, Alex Gonzalez, and Jason Sutter help Erik Paiste (in back) unveil new products in three diverse lines: the Masters Dark, Signature "Precision" Heavy, and Rude Basher series. 36. Mick Olesh of **Waves, Inc.** 37. Paul Murphy of **M. Steinert & Sons** (center) with Diana and Larry Morton of **Hal Leonard**. 38. Hap and Karen Kuffner of **Kuffner International** with **MMR** editor Christian Wissmuller at the Chairman's Reception.



39. Former Governor Mike Huckabee speaks at the **Percussion Marketing Council's** annual meeting. 40. The **PMC's** Karl Dustman, Stacey Montgomery Clark, and Dave Jewell (right) present guest speaker Mike Huckabee with a custom bass guitar from **Yamaha**, along with a custom case by **SKB** cases. At the annual meeting, Huckabee spoke for about 20 minutes on the importance of engaging young would-be music makers. 41. Bob Jespersen and Bill Carpenter of **Hamilton Stands**. 42. Grant Henry and Angelika Ponzol of **Antigua Winds**. 43. Lynda and Tim Elvy of **Légère Reeds**. 44. Lisa Loeb signs at the **Daisy Rock Guitars** booth. 45. **Ernie Ball's** Brian, Sterling, and Scott Ball. 46. Dariush Rad and Dean Kline of **Asterope**. 47. Rocky Giglio and Jim Green of **JJ Babbitt**. 48. This quartet wowed passers-by with their stylish electric strings at the **Cecilio Musical Instruments** booth. 49. **The GoPro** team: Andrew Duafala, Barrie Dickinson, David Rodrick, Fong Tran, Jamie Oliver, Neil Dana, Katie Kilbride, Kris Jamieson, and Will Hoover. 50. Rob Ludwig, Ed Cheeseman, and Eric Loader from **Elation**. 51. The benefits of the **Theo Wanne** "power ring" and "true large chamber" create both a bigger and livelier sound. 52. **JBL's** David Scheiman introduced an avalanche of new products from the Harman family of brands, including the DigiTech Bass Whammy and RP360, the AKG K612 and K712 headphones, the dbx DriveRack PA2, and more.

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MDA's Madeline Couch and MDA president Ellen Cavaughn flanks the winner of the Martin "Guitar Giveaway".



The Percussion Marketing Council: Dr. Craig Woodson of Roots of Rhythm, Brad Smith (rear) of Hal Leonard, Brian "Brain" LaRue of Dream Cymbals and Gongs, Phil Hood of Drum!, Stacey Montgomery-Clark of Sabian, guest speaker Mike Huckabee, Billy Cuthrell of Progressive Music Center, Dave Jewell of Yamaha, and Karl Dustman of Dustman and Associates. At the annual meeting, Montgomery-Clark was also introduced as a new member of the PMC's Board of Directors.



Yamaha's Jeff Hawley speaking at the MDA.



Mike Robinson of **KHS America** demos the new Mapex Soniclear bearing edge, which was designed to improve drum sound and facilitate tuning by creating a more stable surface for the drum head. "The concept is to tune less, and play more," says Robinson. "When it comes down to it, most drummers don't know how to tune drums really well, so in the origins of this technology, we tried to really take that into account. This was designed for the average consumer – not the pro player or the drum tech or the guy who works in the repair shop – to help them get a much better sound out of their drums much more quickly."



There was a retirement party for **David Magagna**, which brought out many of his friends including Hap Kuffner, who introduced him. Magagna has worked with some of the greatest guitar companies, having started with CF Martin in 1972, and worked for Guild and Taylor before retiring from Paul Reed Smith this month. Smith, Bob Taylor, and Chris Martin were all in attendance, among many other friends and admirers.



Lilliana Urosevic of **Saga** and **MMR** publisher Terry Lowe at the MDA.



The Cavanaugh Company at the MDA: Todd Quincy; Ron Van Ostenbridge; and Jim, Ellen, and John Cavanaugh.



Taylor Guitars held a special dinner at Morton's to celebrate the partnership started by Bob Taylor and Kurt Listug in 1974. Listug spoke, and so did Taylor, who noted that the company has grown sales from \$34,000 to \$97.4 million. But the focus was on the present and future, particular lead luthier Andy Powers (whose middle name is "Taylor" Taylor was compelled to point out, followed by great laughs). Both discussed the audacious decision to change the 800 guitar series, which was already successful. "Bottom line is we asked ourselves whether we could make it a little better – that's the story behind the 800 series," Taylor said. Powers took over going into details and even performed for the dinner party with the new guitars.



Sabian president Andy Zildjian gave some brief remarks in memory of his father, company founder Robert "RZ" Zildjian, who passed away in 2013. "For everything that he brought to this industry – his joy his love of music, his passion, and his friendships – all of that lives on in every cymbal that we make, and everything that we do. It's part of the Sabian DNA. For everything that he's done to make us who we are, thank you RZ." Andy Zildjian also introduced three new Sabian partnerships at the NAMM Show: engineering firm Billdidit, an innovative manufacturer that works both in and outside of the MI industry; Crescent Cymbals, a custom line of hand-hammered cymbals manufactured by Sabian; and Big Fish Music Brands, who will be assisting with the new line of Sabian performance accessories.



51. Music advocate and former professional baseball player Bernie Williams with Chris Coppinger of the **Buffet Group**. 52. Sami Mulhern, Tom Bedell, and Chris Steele of **Bedell Guitars**. 53. Kanoë-Maile Nicola, Kristen Souza, and Joe Souza of **Kanile'a Ukulele**. 54. Chad Smith and Willie T Cole of **Option Knob**. 55. **RainSong's** Ashvin Coomar. 56. Daniel Radu, Elena Gamova, and Rich Shepherd of **Kremona North America**. 57. Brian Martin of **Sterling By Music Man**. 58. Christine Pesola and Joshua Berger of **The Music People, Inc.** 59. Monroe Grisman, Brett Zaldo, Randy Couvillon, and Frankie Norstad of **MONO**. 60. Colin Hilborne and Georgia Prentice, M.D. of **Prentice Practice Pads**. 61. Jeff Strametz of **Boulder Creek Guitars**. 62. Randy Kerns and Ron Kerns of **Panyard, Inc.** 63. Eric Granillo, Esteban Cortina and Jonny Coffin of **Gotham Stands**. 64. Peter La Placa, David Hayes, and Zdany Chisholm of **PJLA Music Sales**. 65. PowerFingers by **System5's** Monika Slawow and Camila Silva.

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66. Lisa Ziganti and Rand Rognlien of **Music Nomad Equipment Care**. 67. Bill Ray and Bernie Stone of **Stone Custom Drums**. 68. Joe Arias and Joey Arias of **Crafter Guitars**. 69. John Gibson and Pierre Abboud of **Wi Digital Systems**. 70. **Bohemian Guitars'** Mark Friedman. 71. Dave Muselman, Mike Kurkdjian, and Adrian O'Brien of **Prestige Guitars**. 72. Heather Campbell of **Earasers**. 73. Mike Mastropietro, Mike Newmiller, and Nick Costa of **MCD Percussion**. 74. Carl Hsu and Chris Liao of **Sunlite Industrial Corp.** 75. **Giannini USA's** Dennis Briefel. 76. **Lanikai Ukulele's** Leon Lewis. 77. **Hoshino USA's** Ken Youmans.



78. Gil Griffith of **Wave Distribution**. 79. James Brawner of **Journey Instruments**. 80. Rafael Atijas of **Loog Guitars**. 81. Dave Kurtiak of **eMedia Music**. 82. Mikhail Ioffe and Simona Ioffe of **Mi-Si Electronics**. 83. Jerry Amalfitano of **Amalfitano Pickups**. 84. Keith Roscoe of **Roscoe Guitars**. 85. Danny Poulin of **SJC Custom Drums**. 86. John Karp, Dana Bourgeois, and Scott Fore of **Bourgeois Guitars**. 87. Allen Gatchell and Steve Crisafulli of **Gatchell Violins**. 88. **OMG Music's** Darren Roberts, Chester Myron, Mark Blasko, Charlie Langrehr, Brett Marcus, Larry Greene, and Ben Myron. 89. Brian Trembley, Joe Husak, Eddie Speedy, and Tim Pfouts of **S.I.T. Strings**. 90. Tony Ko, Pam Edgar, Janie Gailor, Kelly McGrath, and Jason Hou of **VocoPro**. 91. Dave Schumacher and Neil Lilien of **RS Berkeley**. 92. **Legator Guitars'** Adam Romine. 93. Sid Tincher of **SwirlyGig**. 94. Product managers introduced a wide variety of **Roland** and **Boss** products at the Show, including the Roland FA-08 and 06 keyboards, the Boss ME-08 guitar multi-effects unit, the OD-1X/DS-1X guitar pedals, and the TM-2 drum trigger module.

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BEST ONSTAGE MELTDOWN

We'll save her the unwanted Google searches, but **this singer songwriter couldn't stop pondering greener pastures** (New York City, the Sundance Film Festival – anywhere but the Marriot lobby!) throughout her lunch-time set. "This is what's become of my career," she finally muttered while packing up her guitar. Chin up – you kind of opened for Sheila E!



WORST INSTRUMENT TO SNEAK THROUGH TSA

Good luck fitting this **giant Hohner accordion** into an x-ray bin.



WORST RENDITION OF A BELOVED SITCOM THEME

This dude's shtick rapidly went from funny to creepy. **Running around the Show floor all day, singing "C'mon Get Happy!"** while covered in body-paint and wearing a... skirt(?) – I guess he was having fun, at least.



WORST PLACE TO STAND...

...if you have an intense fear of being crushed by music books, that is: **Inside the Chesbro booth** (braving it here is Jed Robertson).



BEST BOOTH TEAM-UP

Deep in the basement lurked a workshop-flavored booth covered in cables and knobs and blinking lights, shared by modular synth companies like **Make Noise, Harvestman, Koma Elektronik, WMD, and 4MS** in a quest for the most sci-fi capophony in Anaheim.



BEST MEAL

The **MMR** team that went to **Taylor Guitar's 40th Anniversary Party** were glad that prior to attending they read up on which fork does what...



BEST GADGET

A nifty new tool for guitarists, **The Roadie** quickly tunes by attaching the unit to any tuning peg. It also can help keep track of string quality and assist with winding and unwinding when it comes time to change strings. Technology!



BEST 'UNLIKELY TRIO'

Nothing like a **Taylor Guitar party** to bring together the "friendly competition:" **MS&R's** Dan Ferrisi, **Music Inc.'s** Frank Alkyer, and **MMR's** Kevin Mitchell.



BEST BUSINESS CARD

Doesn't get much nicer than **this card from Electronic Guitar Company, cut and etched in aluminum** (the preferred guitar building material of that company as well).



BEST (WORST?) INSTANCE OF 'TAKING THINGS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE'

Not a one-off, not a custom shop model, not a publicity stunt – the **Ibanez RG9** is the first 9-string production guitar. Even with a super-thin horizontal width, this instrument's neck profile would seem to be geared towards those out there with 10" long fingers.



Winter ¹⁴ NAMM Best & Worst of Show Awards

WORST REMINDER OF OUR AGE

We know we're getting old, Anaheim, but at a show where Lita Ford is still signing autographs, **do we really have to refer to the '90s as "history" already?**



BEST THREE-PEAT

In 2012 and 2013 **Madeleine Crouch's** fancy Western boots got the nod for "Best Footwear," but this year she mixed it up with some "out of this world" (ba-dum-pssshh!) **Star Trek themed flats.**



BEST SPOT FOR A QUICK BREAK

Lined with food trucks and boasting a large outdoor stage and fountain, **the mall between hotels on Convention Way** was the best place for a breath of fresh air and a quick bite.



MMR Award Presentations



1. Kicking off the Fender Strat's 60th Anniversary on a high note, VP of **Fender Guitars** Justin Norvell received the *MMR* Dealers' Choice Award for "Electric Guitar Line of the Year." 2. **Hal Leonard's** Larry Morton and David Jahnke with the Dealers' Choice Award for "Print Music Publisher of the Year." 3. Dean Steading of **Rane** receives the DCA for "DJ Line of the Year" from *MMR's* Christian Wissmuller. 4. Chris Martin with **Martin Guitars'** Dealers' Choice Award for "Acoustic Guitar Line of the Year." 5. Rich Shepherd and Elena Gamova of **Kremona** mark 90 years in the business. 6. The **Yamaha** team accepting the DCA for "Band & Orchestra Line of the Year": Rick Young, senior vice president; Makoto Tani, assistant general manager, B&O Division; Troy Wollwage, marketing manager, percussion; Garth Gilman, General Manager, B&O Division; Roger Eaton, director of marketing, B&O Division; Ken Dattmore, marketing manager, strings; Brian Petterson, assistant marketing manager, B&O Division. 7. With the Dealers' Choice Award for "Product of the Year" – The **Yamaha** Disklavier: Tom Sumner, sr. vice president, Yamaha Corporation of America; Jim Levesque, marketing manager, Disklavier products, Yamaha Corporation of America; Paul Calvin, VP and general manager, Keyboard Division, Yamaha Corporation of America. 8. The **TAMA** Team receiving the DCA for "Percussion Line of the Year": Terry Bissette, drum sales strategist, Hoshino USA; Mike Shimada, Tama division manager, Hoshino Gakki; and Shogo Hayashi, president, Hoshino USA. 9. The **Hailun** team with the DCA for "Acoustic Piano Line of the Year": Joe DeFio, VP Hailun USA; Hailun Chen; Basilio Strmec, president Hailun USA, Tina Jacobs, executive assistant. 10. **ZOOM's** Eric Battin with the Dealers' Choice Award for "Recording Equipment Line of the Year." 11. *MMR's* Christian Wissmuller presents **Shure Inc.'s** Mark Humrichouser with the Dealers' Choice Award for "Microphone Line of the Year." 12. **Chauvet's** Ana Jaramillo, Albert Chauvet, and Allen Reiss with the *MMR* Dealers' Choice Award for "Lighting Line of the Year." 13. John, Jr. and Jim D'Addario receiving the 2014 **Don Johnson Industry Service Award**. 14. *MMR's* Terry Lowe delivers a speech prior to the presentation of the 2014 Don Johnson Industry Service Award to John, Jr. and Jim D'Addario of **D'Addario**. 15. Hartley Peavey of **Peavey Electronics** with the Dealer's Choice Award for "Sound Reinforcement Line of the Year." 16. **D'Addario & Co.'s** Jim and John D'Addario III with the Dealers' Choice Award trophies for "Accessory Line of the Year" and "Website of the Year," respectively. 17. **Fender's** Justin Norvell with the Dealers' Choice Award trophy for "Electric Bass Line of the Year." 18. Kim Nunney, president & CEO of **Roland U.S.** accepts the Dealers' Choice Award for "Pro Digital Piano Line of the Year" (The Roland FP-80) from *MMR's* Christian Wissmuller. 19. **Hal Leonard's** Larry Morton and David Jahnke with the Dealers' Choice Award for "Print Music Publisher of the Year." 20. Kawai president Hirota Kawai receives the Dealers' Choice Award for "Home Digital Keyboard of the Year" from *MMR* publisher Terry Lowe. 21. Jenny and Jim Hall of **Hall Crystal Flutes** with their plaque from *MMR* honoring their 40-year anniversary. 22. Bob Taylor receives a plaque from *MMR's* Matt King in honor of **Taylor Guitars'** 40th anniversary. 23. Joe Vasko receives a plaque from *MMR's* Matt King in honor of **LP's** 50th anniversary. 24. Rick Heins, product manager for **Fender Guitar Amplifiers** with the DCA for "Amplifier Line of the Year." 25. Randal Tucker of SFM with Sharon and Jim Hennessey of **The Music People** celebrate 35 years in business. 26. *MMR's* Terry Lowe presents the 30th Anniversary plaque to Ivy Yu and Joel Knight of **Tycoon Percussion**. 27. *MMR's* Terry Lowe with George and Lynn Reeder of **Rovner Instruments**, celebrating 40 years in business. 28. **Hammond's** Gregg Gronowski with Shuji Suzuki from Suzuki and *MMR's* Terry Lowe, and the *MMR* plaque honoring the company's 80 years.

Yamaha's Annual NAMM Breakfast

Yamaha Corporation of America names Classic Pianos Dealer of the Year at the company's annual Keyboard Dealer Breakfast at the 2014 NAMM Show. This is the second time Classic has won the distinction, and the first time a Yamaha dealer has won the category twice. Pictured here from left to right is Bob Heller, Yamaha Keyboard Division, National Sales Manager; Tony Mastadonna, director, institutional sales of Classic Pianos; Cathy Unis; Maurice Unis, CEO of Classic Pianos; Bob Gallagher, sales administrator at Classic Pianos; Paul Calvin, Yamaha Keyboard Division, General Manager, VP and Tom Sumner, Yamaha Sr. Vice President.



The annual breakfast of Yamaha piano included many speakers, including national sales director Bob Heller who declared, "The days of just hanging out a shingle are long behind us, and we all need to acknowledge the shift and change."

The two-hour meeting featured the theme "Surfing the Tsunami," and included guest speaker Brian Wilkerson of Revolution Advisors. He spoke of the need for a seamless blending between a customer's online and offline experience, advising for all retailers to never forget "it's a buyer's market."



Brian Wilkerson



Bob Heller



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Kawai America Corp.	25	kawaius.com
Korg USA Inc.	27	korgusa.com
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Rovner Products at

40 Years

Rovner Products' Lynn Reeder, Phil Rovner, and George Reeder

By Matt Parish

“We don't want to make an exclusive product. We want to make a product that many people can benefit from.”

Decades ago, most horn players didn't consider a ligature to be a major factor of their sound. Phil Rovner changed all of that with his engineering savvy. Millions of ligatures later, the company looks to a bold new future.

It was Phil Rovner's background as an engineer that led him to a career in the MI business. An expert in engineering applications well outside of musical instruments, his passion as a saxophonist was leading him to seek new ways of improving his own sound. As a professional musician, he'd recently made the switch from alto to tenor and found it a bit challenging to find the right tone.

“Just as an experiment, I took some of the material we'd been using on this engineering project,” says Rovner. “I fashioned a ligature out of it that looks very similar to the Dark model that we currently make. Lo and behold, it enabled me to improve my performance on the horn.”

He went on to make a few more ligatures for players he knew in the local scene as well as send a few out to top players around the U.S. The reaction was great, and when Rovner began getting orders from dealers, and he soon realized he had a hit on his hands.

Today, the Maryland-based Rovner Products is known as the international leader in ligatures and has long since explored a variety of other products with significant success, including mouthpieces, maintenance products, and a brand new take on the clarinet barrel. They employ 14 staff members and have sold millions of ligatures worldwide.

Rovner recently passed the torch to George and Lynn Reeder (now president and vice president, respectively), selling the company to them in January while remaining onboard to devote himself to R&D. As George Reeder notes, the company maintains an important place in the market. “These Rovner ligatures are made 100 percent in the U.S.,” he says. “All of our vendors are U.S. vendors, so we have a ripple effect on helping out the U.S. economy.”

The company has plans for expansion in the near future.

'Next Generation' Ligatures from Rovner



The classic Rovner Dark nickel ligature.



Star Series



The Legacy



Platinum



VERSA-X

SELLING THEMSELVES

In the beginning, even after the ligatures began production, they weren't Rovner's primary focus. In the early days, he was putting the majority of his effort into a speaker company he'd started called Power Research Products, thinking he'd try his hand at the booming hi-fi market. Though his speakers were acclaimed in trade publications, Rovner didn't enjoy the sales dynamic of that world.

"In hi-fi, a lot of people are just attuned to whatever they grew up with – boom boxes, radios, whatever," he says. "It's hard for them to be perceptive enough to recognize true authentic sound. So everything ends up being sold purely on good salesmanship."

His ligatures, on the other hand, sold themselves. From his first marketing step (a tiny ad in the classified section of *International Musician* that read "Freedom for Your Reed"), the allure of a newly designed ligature piqued the industry's interest. As business picked up, Rovner was happy to move into MI full time.

NEW DIRECTIONS

Now the company is embarking on its next adventure, hoping to find new opportunities for Phil Rovner's ongoing innovations. The Reeders joined the company in 2009, when Rovner hired them as consultants for new products and marketing. George had been a fan of the ligatures since the '80s and became friends with Rovner at a jazz jam he had launched in Westminster, Md.

As new owners, the Reeders are looking for growth in a few directions, including a renewal of market education about useful products like Rovner's Boost Juice Sax & Pad Performance Enhancement Kit, the new Rectangular Bore clarinet barrels, and of course plenty of developing inventions from Rovner himself.

Reeder says after initially launching the clarinet barrel last year with the pro market in mind, they quickly reconfigured their approach when it seemed that the pros already

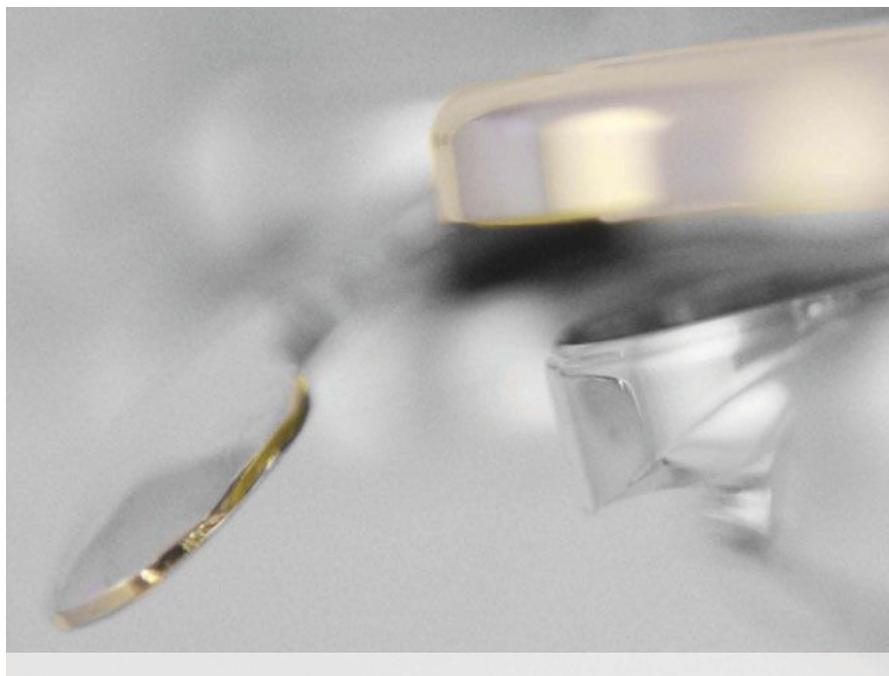
had plenty of barrel options. "We looked at what market wasn't really getting the benefit of this barrel, and it was right there in front of us: the bread and butter of our ligature market, the school band." The company re-engineered to build a barrel with pro-level features at an affordable price point. Reeder thinks of the barrel, which can be turned to adjust for intonation, as "training wheels for beginners."

He also sees a use for pro sax players who are called on to double in performances on a clarinet (or, as some saxophonists may know it, the "agony stick").

Expect Rovner to be churning out a handful of new products (especially mouthpieces, he says) in the very near future, all with that philosophy of affordable innovation in mind.

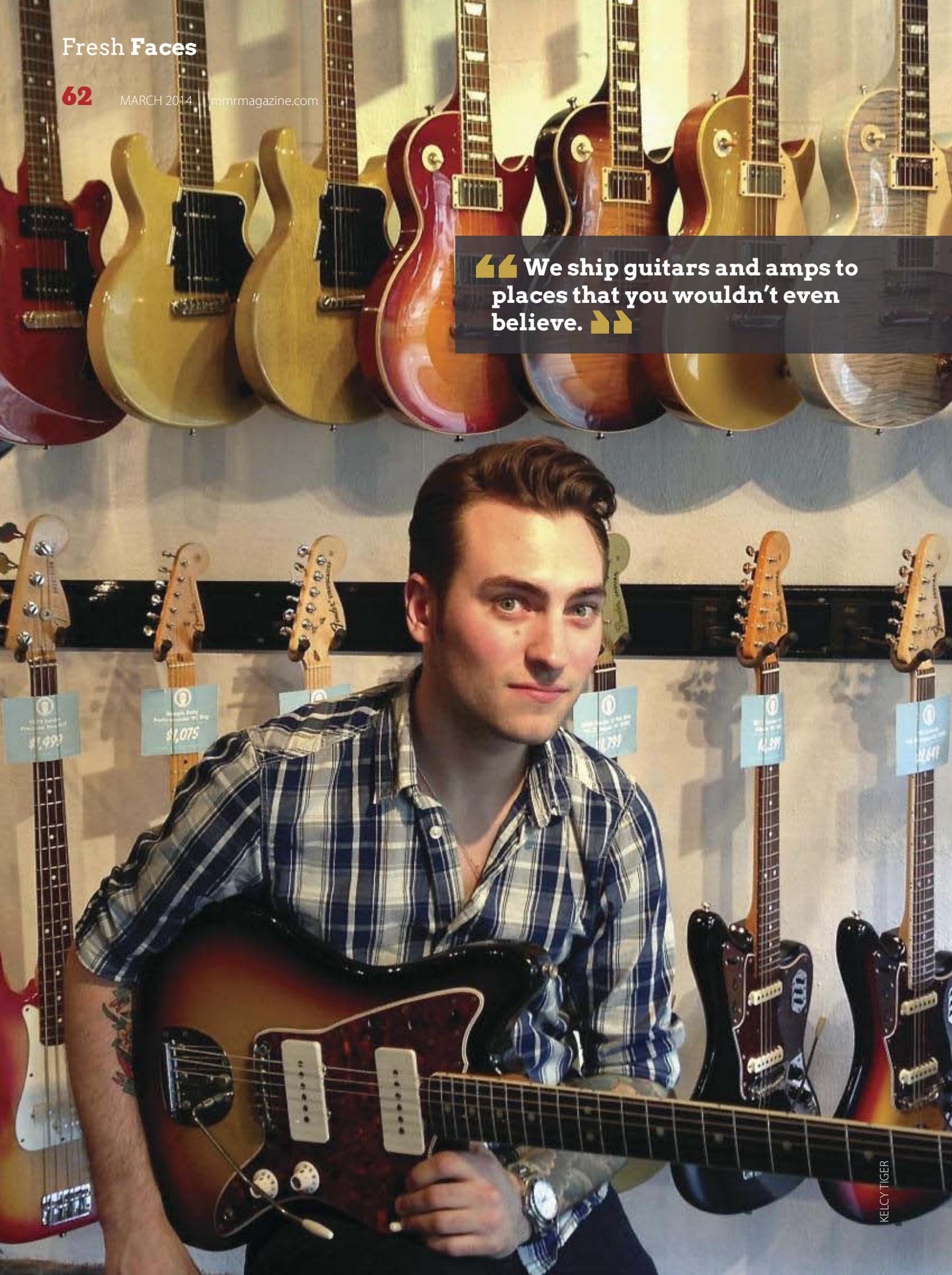
"We could make a really great mouthpiece right now that would be a \$1,000 mouthpiece, but we don't like that," says George. "We don't want to make an exclusive product. We want to make a product that many people can benefit from."

"That's where it takes a lot of creativity – to take those great ideas and incorporate them into something from which a lot of people can benefit." **MIMR**



Trevor James Flutes

“ We ship guitars and amps to places that you wouldn't even believe. ”



The New Face of Boutique

By Matt Parish

Frank Gross started his booming vintage shop Thunder Road Guitars as an online-only business in 2012. Now it's a year into life as a Seattle storefront and boasts customers from around the world.

In a market like today's guitar industry, sometimes starting small can be a newcomer's best move. Seattle musician and guitar collector Frank Gross opened his boutique, Thunder Road Guitars, with just a handful of choice guitars, a few amps, and no physical storefront. But thanks to some shrewd online branding and an eagerness to tap into the burgeoning online collectors' market for both high-end buyers and working musicians looking for unique instruments, Gross blew through that initial inventory and was able to just keep growing.

Now, with a spiffy year-old storefront in West Seattle, Thunder Road is thriving.

"Running a business is kind of an eight-days-a-week gig," says Gross. "But this is the kind of stuff I'm passionate about, so to do anything else wouldn't really make sense."

Gross, who spent most of his 20s as a professional musician, came up working at a few other music shops in the area, including the well-known Seattle vintage shop Emerald City Guitars. There, he noticed that online buyers for fine used instruments were steadily growing over the last five years. As orders seemed to reach a critical mass, Gross decided to end his touring career and get started with an online business of his own.

"When I started out, I took what you might see as the backwards approach," he says. "I slowly built it up online rather than starting out with a big bank loan and just crossing my fingers hoping it would work. I think that was a far better for us just starting out."

One of Gross's first orders of business was to talk with long-time friend and web designer Aaron Johnson (of boutique design company Pixel & Quill) about web functionality and brand identity. Key to Thunder Road's success would be a clean site with easy navigation and detailed, accurate descriptions of every product (along with great photos, of course).

The website (thunderroadguitars.com) came out beautifully and the shopping couldn't be easier. With a live website and no geographical limits to trade, Gross soon found himself achieving another goal – that of servicing customers around the globe.

"I wanted to provide cool and clean examples of vintage guitars and share them with customers all over the world," says Gross. "We ship guitars and amps to places that you wouldn't even believe."

There are of course challenges to doing business online, first and foremost being the increased scale of competition. There are hordes of sites (not to mention endless listings on eBay and Craigslist) offering similar services to Thunder Road, as well as the usual online megastore branches of chains like Guitar Center.

But Gross points to his website along with a growing reputation for good business as clear difference-makers. The shop's reputation is bolstered by upfront salesmanship and a three-day "no questions asked" return policy.

Though the staff remains small (Gross, a service tech, and a sales/web tech) Thunder Road has been able to hunt down some world-class instruments. A recent look through their inventory brought up a sleek '67 Fender Coronado II, a beautiful '52 Gibson Les Paul, and even some newer mid-range models like a 2009 G&L Legacy.

"I hate to say this but I'm usually pretty picky about what we carry," says Gross. "We get calls every day from people who are trying to sell X, Y, or Z Brand. I'm always looking for clean and original Fender, Gretsch, Gibson, and Marshall products. That's the stuff I'm passionate about and really like, and I think it would be kind of silly to sell stuff that I wasn't personally really interested in." Gross features brand new instruments only from Fastback Guitars, a small Seattle company who build great-looking twists on vintage Fender designs. The shop also carries a good deal of slightly more obscure brands like Danelectro, Kay, Silvertone, and Harmony, which have quietly become popular alternatives as the vintage pieces from Fender and Gibson climb into prices well beyond many would-be collectors' finances.

Reaching that middle-tier of vintage buyers is one other key part of the shop's identity. Gross caters to high-end buyers, even offering a Monday appointment-only day where buyers can have the whole inventory to themselves. But customer diversity is important. "I love being able to sell to different categories of buyers," says Gross, noting that great used instruments come in a variety of grades, from the mint condition to slightly hammered and refurbished. It's that flexibility that Gross tries to take advantage of.

"Guitars that have been refinished or have changed-out parts, guys are taking out on the road and using," he says. "I think that's great that we're able to sell to everyone from collectors to someone who's maybe doing his first tour and sleeping in a van." **MMA**



Employees as Bandmates? The Comparison Stands, Offering Insight

7 Ways to Get the Most Out of Your Workforce

By Kevin M. Mitchell



Eric Lunbohm

Having employee headaches? Think things aren't running quite as well as they should, but you can't quite put your finger on what's wrong? Maybe looking at your team in a band dynamic can help.

Eric Lunbohm thinks so.

Lunbohm is a musician who has played professionally, but today his "day job" is as a marketing professional and consultant. He's worked in the space and defense industry, and the auto industry, and today consults with CEOs and business heads. He considers helping smaller businesses be more profitable his specialty.

As he analyzed what works and what doesn't with many businesses through the years, Lunbohm couldn't help notice some striking similarities between a company and a band. He says he has learned a lot from music and playing in bands, much of which can be applied to business, manager, and perhaps especially, the smaller retail store-owner.

"In a band, whether it's three or 33 people, it's everyone's job to get together and execute a musical piece," he says. "In a work environment, it's very similar. With both, you're bringing a group of different people with different skill sets, personalities, and experience to be successful as you, the 'band leader,' define it."

As for Lunbohm, his journey will sound familiar. His devotion to being the next Eddie Van Halen was so intense he put off college until he was in his early 30s. Then he went to school and came out with two business degrees. Once in the business world, it all started coming together. "Understanding basic human behavior was key to managing a band, and those things stay with you," he says.



“ Understanding basic human behavior was key to managing a band, and those things stay with you. ”

I've learned to stroke those egos, praise them whenever I can, and it keeps them involved, engaged, and happy. I advise treating your employees as volunteers in the same manner. Be grateful they are there every day, and compliment and reinforce positive behavior. "You end up getting so much more out of them and it doesn't cost you anything."

1. Make Them Feel Like a Rock Star

For him (and many of us as well), you can play a song 40 or 400 times in front an audience and, as wonderful as that is, it's never as cool as that first time you're standing on stage and you pull it off. "So as a manager, I recognize and see when employees 'play that song for the first time,'" he says. This could be that first sale, the first time an eye-catching display was created, or the first time a successful day of giving lessons was completed. Lunbohm's theory is that you watch for that, and make sure he or she feels like a rock star. "They've taken the challenge, executed it, and there's tangible evidence of their success," so applaud that if not literally, figuratively. Call them out in front of the other employees, take them to lunch, and maybe even consider giving a little bonus. "Take advantage of that natural high."

2. Make It A Good Fit

Like good bandleaders, good managers learn to easily and quickly gauge people's talents. If you need a drummer, get a drummer – don't have the bass player try to cover on that even if he or she has dabbled or is even decent on it. This can be hard because it might mean making the difficult decision of letting someone go. But for the sake of the "band," you need to make sure that once you are clear that a specific skill set is needed for success, get the right person in that job.

This also goes for personalities. "In a small ensemble, the personality matters a lot. People have to fit in and get along beyond just playing well. Same with a store: If you only have five employees and one is dysfunctional in terms of working with others, that's 20 percent of your operation that is now dysfunctional!"

3. Treat Them As Volunteers

When you form a new band, you are essentially asking for volunteers to follow you on your musical journey. If you're a good leader, you treat whoever you manage to get to show up as much-appreciated volunteers. "One thing I've learned in running various bands, is that musicians have egos," Lunbohm says. "So over the years

4. Be a Leader/Create Leaders

Be a leader, and also find other leaders. "Somebody has to be in charge," he says. "Somebody has to pick the songs, put the setlist in order, and lead the way. Organizations arbore a vacuum, and a leader will eventually emerge whether you're guiding that process or not. Work teams that have no clear leader create conflict." Be able to spot a natural leader, and then mentor him or her to be the best they can be. Offer constructive criticism when necessary and give them the confidence they need to fully develop their potential.

5. Peer to Peer Feedback is the Best

"This is a personal observation, but as a musician, it's nice when audience members come up and compliment me on my playing, but it means much more to me when a fellow musician compliments me," he says. "When I was V.P., employees complimenting me was fine, but when another vice president said something to me, it meant a lot.

"So put employees in a position where they are recognized by their peers, and create a culture where feedback and recognition of each other is freely given."

6. Re-evaluate Your "Instrumentation"

And do right by your business – times changes, tastes changes, needs change. You don't hire for the needs you had three years ago, you hire for what you need now. Understand that the one bandmate whose laid back persona was actually an attribute years ago, but is a detriment today needs to go.

7. Lead by Example

Finally, like in a band, lead by example. Don't be late and then call one of your employees out for the same thing. You're being watched, so hold yourself up to the highest standards.

"All the skills that make for being a great leader are really the same as running a good business," Lunbohm adds. "That's my mantra." **MMR**

New Products

KEYBOARD



Physis Modeling Piano Technology

Physical modeling is different than “sample-based” technology, instead using advanced mathematical algorithms to reproduce the various physical properties of a given instrument – in this case, the piano.

Engineers, musicians, and scientists at Italian universities analyzed over 100 physical properties of the traditional acoustic grand piano. These properties were recreated and manipulated through mathematical models. Key advantages of this physical modeling technology versus “sampling” include unlimited polyphony, unlimited pedaling, organic real-time interaction of physical properties, and the ability to modify the physical characteristics and create unique piano sounds.

physispiano.com

PERCUSSION

Grover Pro Headless Tambourine

Grover Pro’s New Studio Pro Tambourines feature hand-hammered German Silver and Phosphor Bronze alloy jingles, dual-width staggered jingle slots (pioneered by Grover Pro), soft rubber comfort edging – protects your hands and the shell, a 10” diameter solid hardwood shell, and the Grover Pro guarantee of quality. Retail price: \$132.



groverpro.com

ProLogix 6-8 Pro Tenor Practice Pad

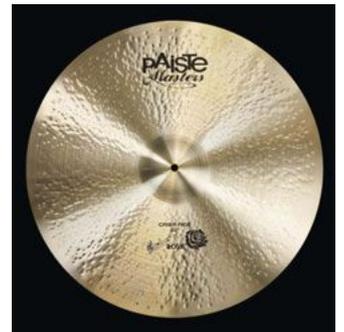
The ProLogix Full 6-8 Pro Tenor Practice Pad features full-sized laminated playing surfaces in sizes of 6”, 8”, 10”, 12”, 13”, and 14” surfaces, all completely surrounded by hard rubber rims to help work on avoiding rim clicks. The Baltic Birch cutaway design provides durability, true feel, and pitch reference while practicing, snare basket receiver holes allow for mounting of the instrument onto a snare stand. Retail price: \$350.



prologixpercussion.com

Paiste Master Dark Crash and Dark Hi-Hat Models

Three new crashes and two hi-hats join the Paiste Master series to expand the Masters sound atmosphere to additional cymbal types. The 16”, 18”, and 20” Dark Crash models are based on the Masters Dark Ride, designed for darkness, warmth, and a smoky vibe. The cymbals exhibit clarity and a soft feel, enabling fine dynamic nuances. The 20” crash is also suited for light ride patterns. The 14” and 15” Dark Hi-Hats radiate a similarly breathy timbre. They emanate a soft musical closed sound, and open up with a smoky wash.



paiste.com

ACCESSORIES

SwirlyGig SwirlyHook Solo

The SwirlyHook Solo is a single black hook that fits snugly on a standard mic stand to hold headphones, tambourines, cables, and more. Also fits on bird feeders, shelving or any vertical 1/2-inch tubing.

Made of resilient spring steel and coated in black PVC for grip and durability. Retail price: \$10.99.



swirlygig.com

PRO AUDIO

Decibel Eleven Loop Expander

The Decibel Eleven Loop Expander is a true bypass audio switcher that adds programmable effects loop switching to any MIDI-controlled setup. Use it to add loop switching to any existing system with a simple MIDI controller, or utilize it to expand the number of true bypass loops with a DB-11 Pedal Palette or Switch Dr. For larger rigs, connect multiple Loop Expanders in series to create additional loops. Street price: \$189.



[decibel11](http://decibel11.com)

Singular Sound BeatBuddy

The new Singular Sound BeatBuddy is billed as “the world’s first guitar pedal drum machine.” BeatBuddy comes preloaded with 10 drum kits, with over 200 verse/chorus beat progressions. Up to 32GB of additional content can be loaded on an SD card via the included PC/Mac interface software. It inserts fills, transitions from verse to chorus, and adds accent hits such as cymbal crashes and hand claps. Other features include hands-free song advance and tap tempo control, MIDI sync, and a headphone jack. Street price: \$350.



mybeatbuddy.com

Waves Audio Morgan Page EMP Toolbox

Waves EMP, the electronic music production division of Waves Audio, recently announced the availability of the Morgan Page EMP Toolbox plugin collection. Hand-picked by Page himself, the Morgan Page EMP Toolbox contains eight powerful Waves audio processors that Page uses most in his mixing and mastering sessions. The Morgan Page EMP Toolbox includes the following Waves plugins: Maserati VX1 Vocal Enhancer, Vocal Rider, TrueVerb, SoundShifter, NLS Non-Linear Summer, H-Delay Hybrid Delay, L3-LL Multimaximizer, and H-EQ Hybrid Equalizer. Retail price: \$599.



wavesaudio.com

DPA Microphones d:vote Rock Touring Kits

Included in the new 10-piece d:vote Rock Touring Kit are 10 high SPL d:votes, 10 microdot-XLR adapters, 10 heavy-duty mic cables and seven drum clips, five sax/trumpet clips, four universal clips, two for each guitar, violin, piano, cello and one for bass. The smaller four-piece kit includes four d:votes with two universal clips and four for each drum, sax and trumpet, as well as four mic cables and four microdot adapters. Both configurations are available in a convenient Peli case.



dpamicrophones.com



RCF Compact Ayra Four

The new ultra-compact Ayra Four follows the same design template as the Ayra Five, Ayra Six and Ayra Eight. The Ayra Four, available in black and white lacquer versions, houses a 4” composite fiberglass woofer and the same 1” soft dome tweeter that appears in all models. Other characteristics include: precision directivity tweeter waveguide; fully-featured input board; reflection free front cabinet design; and low distortion reflex port. The Ayra Four is an active monitor, powered by true active 35-watt and 20-watt Class AB design amplifiers. Frequency response measures 60 Hz-20 kHz.

rcf.it

CADLive D80, D82, and D84 Mics

The new CADLive D80 is a Large Diaphragm Moving Coil dynamic design that provides an updated sound profile for this category of microphone. It has a tight Super-Cardioid polar pattern that provides a high output. A Moving Ribbon design with a figure-eight pattern, the D82 combines true ribbon warmth with a new level of clarity. Its frequency response of 30Hz-20kHz and max SPL rating (140dB @ 100Hz) suit it for high volume environments. The D84 is a Large Diaphragm Condenser with an internal shock mounting to facilitate placement and positioning.



cadaudio.com

LIGHTING AND DJ

Gemini GMiX Media Controller System

With the GMiX, DJs can play back tracks from a single USB drive or from a laptop as a versatile software controller for Virtual DJ or another host application. The device includes eight large performance pads on each deck and newly designed touch-sensitive mechanical jog wheels. The high-resolution USB/MIDI data-stream contains 14-bits of continual control information. Direct playback from a USB memory device of MP3, WAV, AAC, and AIFF files allows the GMX to be unchained from the laptop. The GMiX also includes advanced tools like Hot Cues, a Loop section with Auto and Manual Loop, Reverse, and dedicated Filters on each deck. MAP: \$349.95.



geminisound.com



Alesis V and VI Series Keyboard/Pad Controllers

The performance-oriented V Series offers expressive hands-on control for the software musician. The step-up VI Series provides increased control for the keyboard performer. The V Series (V61, V49, V25) combine velocity-sensitive keys with eight drum/trigger pads, allowing virtual instruments to be played with dynamic expression. Blue LEDs illuminate the pads – as well as the four assignable knobs and buttons – for positive visibility. Assignments may be made quickly via the MIDI Learn feature. Octave shift keys provide access to the entire note range.

The VI Series (VI61, VI49, VI25) add semi-weighted keys and aftertouch. The pad count has been increased to 16, with multi-color illumination. This layout provides command over the clip trigger workflow of DAW and compositional software.

alesis.com

Pioneer DDJ-SZ

Pioneer's new Serato-compatible DDJ-SZ is 35 percent bigger than the DDJ-SX, sporting additional functionalities and features including extra large JOG wheels (the same size available on CDJ players), large performance pads with multi-color illumination, DJM style mixer, dual USB ports, and a MAGVEL cross fader.



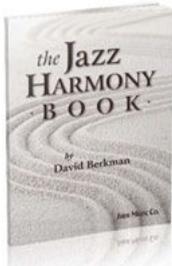
The DDJ-SZ's large 8.1-inch JOG wheels provide instantaneous response, while the center of each JOG wheel also features "ON JOG display" to illustrate playback status, cue points and position. Also included are four effects buttons – HOT CUE, ROLL, SLICER, and SAMPLER. Under the effects buttons are eight extra large velocity sensitive "performance pads" that DJs can quickly access to insert different modified effects to music playing.

pioneerdj.com

PRINT/DIGITAL

The Jazz Harmony Book from Sher Music

Sher Music presents *The Jazz Harmony Book* by New York pianist David Berkman. The book is a course in how to add chords to melodies, showing how a single melody can give rise to rich harmonic variations. Endorsed by Kenny Werner, Fred Hersch, Mark Levine, and others. 206 pages, with two CDs included. Retail price: \$32.



shermusic.com

eMedia Music Guitar Lab: 50 Hard Bop Blues, 50 Slow Blues and 50 Jazz Masters Licks You Must Know

In the *50 Hard Bop Blues Licks You Must Know* DVD, host Tom Wolfe presents an versatile vocabulary that not only celebrates Wes Montgomery's contributions, but also captures the stylings of the blues and jazz guitarists that he influenced. This collection is split into five groups representing the five most common styles of slow blues tunes and includes signature licks from these masters. Host Anthony Stauffer breaks it down for you note-by-note in *50 Slow Blues Licks You Must Know*.

Charlie Christian, Django Reinhardt, Wes Montgomery, Kenny Burrell, Tal Farlow, Barney Kessel, George Benson, Grant Green, Pat Martino, John Abercrombie, John Scofield, and Pat Metheny; are all masters of jazz guitar. With the *50 Jazz Masters Licks You Must Know* DVD, 50 highly versatile licks influenced by the music of these masters are presented. Retail price: \$24.95.



emedia.com

PRINT/DIGITAL

Alfred Music Sound Innovations for Guitar, Book 2

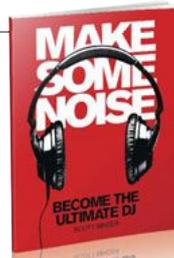
The second installment of *Sound Innovations for Guitar* introduces new concepts to students such as moving up the neck, sixteenth notes, speed picking, playing moveable power chords in higher positions, classic guitar riffs, barre chords (major, minor, and seventh), and much more. Students learn by playing in real world contexts, using full song demonstrations and performing with each other. The included DVD features full video lessons and song demonstrations plus MP3 recordings of all song examples can be loaded to your music player. Additional features include Alfred's exclusive TNT2 Custom Mix software, which lets students isolate tracks, excerpt the guitar for play-along, and slow tracks down and loop sections for continuous practice.



alfred.com

Make Some Noise from Hal Leonard

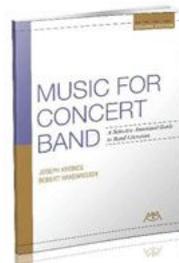
Make Some Noise is a complete DJ book unlike any current book on the subject. It teaches the basics and goes beyond the how-to, discussing DJ'ing while playing with a live instrument as well as goal-setting, marketing, and choosing a music genre. The book also features a collection of twenty-five spotlights on some of the biggest DJs in the world, providing you with the opportunity to learn from the best of the best. Some of the DJs included are Infected Mushroom, Judge Jules, Miss Nine, Todd Terry, Chus, Umek, Kissy Sell Out, and Format:B. Retail price: \$29.99.



halleonard.com

Meredith Music's Music for Concert Band – A Selective Guide to Band Literature Music for Concert Band

This book, by Joseph Kreines and Robert Hansbrough, is a comprehensive anthology of meticulously selected and graded literature for wind band. It contains hundreds of works appropriate for elementary through professional-level ensembles and will acquaint directors with a wide spectrum of quality literature both standard and new. Each recommended work contains pedagogical, stylistic, and form indicators. In addition, the text contains a section on recommended marches and optional concert material. Retail price: \$29.95.



meredithmusic.com

BAND AND ORCHESTRA

Conn-Selmer is '40 Series' Saxophones

The Selmer 40 Series Saxophone Line has grown with the addition of tenor saxophones to the line. Also, alto and tenor now have black nickel and silver-plated finishes. The 40 Series saxophones are a first-ever collaboration between Henri Selmer Paris and Selmer USA. All the horns feature a custom designed and manufactured Henri Selmer Paris neck and mouthpiece, along with a feature-filled body that responds at a top performance level. The black nickel and silver-plated versions both feature a silver-plated Henri Selmer Paris neck. Retail price: \$4,043 to \$4,750.



conn-selmer.com

Yamaha Neo Baritone Horn

Yamaha worked with renowned British brass band soloist Katrina Marzella to create this new design. In addition to achieving rich tonal character with added dynamic range, the YBH-831S is designed for optimal comfort and playing ergonomics. The new model, the first custom level Yamaha baritone horn with a 3-valve compensating system, represents the final addition to the Neo line of low brass instruments, a full range of horns intended to be played together to create a balanced tonal quality from cornet to tuba. Retail price: \$8,302.



<http://4wrd.it/YAMAHAUSA>

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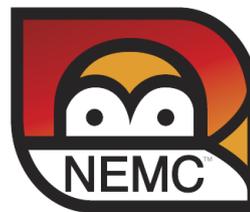
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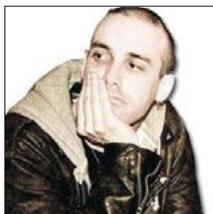
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It's Enough to Make You Wanna Uke



By Christian
Wissmuller

What a lot of noise – literal and figurative – from such a tiny instrument! Within the pages of *MMR* and elsewhere throughout the MI industry, one of the hot topics for the past decade-plus has been the humble ukulele. Affordably priced and tiny, with a manageable learning curve for beginning players, ukes have been singled out by many retailers as a golden ticket, especially in unstable economic times.

According to NAMM, ukulele sales nationwide went from a very respectable 581,000 in 2010 to over one million in 2012. That's some crazy market expansion right there. And there's no proof (yet) that the growth is slowing. As Gary Traversy of Portsmouth, N.H.'s Gary's Guitars says in this month's dealer survey on the state of the ukulele market (pg. 32), "I thought the uke craze had peaked about a year ago, but my sales are up 50 percent since then!"

“This ‘ukulele craze,’ and all good that’s come with it, has to end at some point.”

In a recent CNN feature on the ukulele (“The Booming Business of Ukuleles,” January 17, 2014) Musical Innovations’ Tracy Leenman (occasional *MMR* and *SBO* contributor) is quoted as saying of the uke, “In terms of getting people in the door and getting involved in music [who] haven’t been involved in music before, I’d say it’s the most effective tool we have.”

I reached out to Leenman while writing this editorial and she added, “We have elementary schools getting grants for whole classroom sets! And seniors love the ukulele as an accessible (key word) way to learn to play music.”

A relatively inexpensive instrument that is helping sustain MI retailers and which connects with young and old? The “most effective tool we have”? Pretty heady stuff.

So what’s the downside? Is there downside?

Well, if you believe that all good things must come to an end (just talk to any of the accordion dealers who could do no wrong in the ‘50s for more on that maxim), then this “ukulele craze,” and all good that’s come with it, has to end at some point.

But how will “the little four-string that could” be taken down?

I rarely venture to prognosticate, but I’ve stared into

the face of she who will be the uke’s demise and her name is... Zoëy Deschanel.

Let me clarify. First off, it’s not *just* Deschanel or *only* her. I just see the association of our diminutive fretted friend with perhaps the principal contemporary personification of all that is overly twee, cutesy, self-consciously ironic, and hipster – Zoëy, who plays the uke a lot, in case you didn’t know (in addition to being an actress, she’s also a musician) – to be an ominous sign for the future.

Secondly, I’m not being entirely serious about any of the above.

But as for the first (mostly joking) point, why is it a bad thing to be associated with the Brooklynite, bearded (not Deschanel. So far as I know), skinny-jeaned, bespectacled set? It has nothing to do with any qualitative judgments of that scene or its practitioners – the “problem” is: those scenes fade. How many 14 year-old boys do you

see nowadays dressing like malnourished loggers, in the grunge-era uniform of baggy flannel and ripped jeans?

Exactly.

So, part of me predicts – not hopes for, mind you – a relatively abrupt end to the seemingly still-going-strong uke phenomenon at some point. Quite frankly,

I’m surprised Eddie Vedder’s *Ukulele Songs* album didn’t kill it, outright, a few years ago. The next sub-generation of young adults will eventually come along, decide that growing beards and wearing non-prescription glasses is silly, and that painfully skinny jeans on dudes are, well... painful, and they’ll move on, leaving the ukulele to await the next cultural upheaval to make it relevant to a large swath of the populace once again.

And when that day of reckoning for the ukulele comes, let’s hope another “most effective tool” will already be in the wings to help prop up our industry’s dealers. Ride this wave while it lasts, folks, but start preparing!

Or, maybe I’m just being a jerk.

Elementary school kids and seniors are not, after all, typically classified as “hipsters.” Plus, I have it on good authority that plenty of “regular people” of all stripes buy, play, and enjoy ukuleles without a trace of overt cuteness or irony.

As Leenman says, “I know *no one* who thinks the uke is too cute!”

Fair enough. Time will tell.

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