

# MMR

MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

Business Matters:  
Showrooming

64

## Show Report:

Music China 2013

38



52

## Drum Center of Portsmouth

## Burkart Flutes & Piccolos

The 30-Year-Old  
Institution Continues  
to Innovate

66

40

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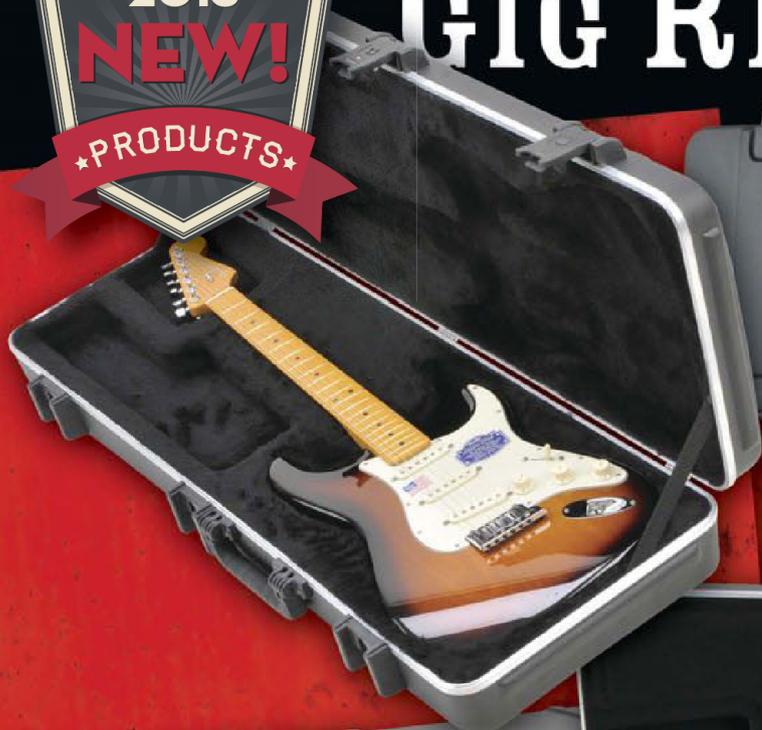
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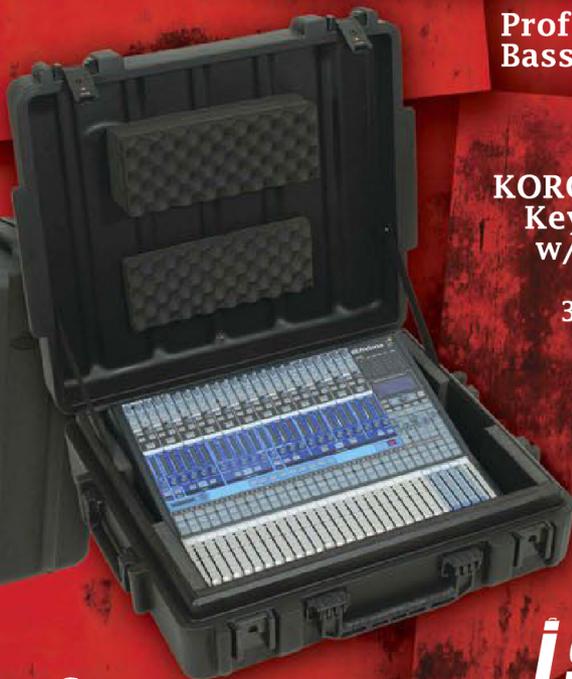
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# CONTENTS

# MMR

## MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

Vol.172  
No.11  
NOV.  
2013



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## Guitar Center

40

**"It's not even that we're too big to fail  
– we're too profitable to fail."**  
– Guitar Center CFO Tim Martin

## FEATURES

### 34 Guest Editorial: MI Intellectual Property Issues

Music industry attorney Ron S. Bienstock breaks down persistent myths about IP laws pertaining to musical product designs.

### 36 Online Print: Band Methods Embrace Technological Possibilities

The big hitters in print are taking their band methods online for a whole new world of customization options and interactive tools for teachers, parents, and students.

### 38 Show Report: Music China 2013

The trade show floor was buzzing in Shanghai as the MI industry descended upon the 2013 installment of Music China.

### 40 Spotlight: Guitar Center Opens Up

An in-depth talk with GC executives for the first time in years reveals a major shift in corporate attitude at the retail giant. Is it a new era for Guitar Center?

## FEATURES

### 52 Retail: Drum Center of Portsmouth

Shane Kinney built this upstart New Hampshire shop with an aggressive approach to boutique drums and quality online content. Now his shop is a leader in video demos and Internet sales, boasting an unmatched collection of exclusive imports, as well as meat-and-potatoes percussion lines.

### 60 Survey: Drums and Percussion Market

MMR surveys retailers across the country about the latest trends and challenges facing the drums and percussion segment.

### 62 MI Sales Trak

The story of how this group of hardcore number-crunchers got into the music business. The insights offered by their work are quickly informing more and more within the industry.

### 64 Small Business Matters: Showrooming

According to a new report from Columbia University's Columbia School of Business, showrooming is a more important part of retail than ever. How can a music retailer adapt?

### 66 Profile: Burkart Flutes and Piccolos

This standard bearer of the flute and piccolo world continues to be run by founders Lillian Burkart and Jim Phelan. We visit the Massachusetts headquarters for a look into their daily routines and some upcoming innovations.

## COLUMNS

4 Editorial

33 People

83 Ad Index

6 Upfront

68 New Products

84 The Last Word

24 Supplier Scene

77 Classifieds

Cover design by Garret Petrov.

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## Rules of Engagement

“Every day I feel like I have to come in here and reinvent myself,” Gordy Wilcher of Owensboro Music Center told me when I visited him this past spring. I think of that often, because it rings so true. And not just for retailers – for all of us.

There are no rules for succeeding these days, but there is a commonality, and in a word, it’s “engagement.” And it happens to be a theme in this issue (I wish we could say we brilliantly planned it – alas, sometimes serendipity is the best editor).

An independent drum store doing well with high-end products? Check out the feature on Drum Center of Portsmouth and meet Shane Kinney, who has built something out of nothing in five short years. I realized while writing this story that his success came not just because he provides “good customer service” – he *engages*. He’s excited about what he’s doing and it’s enticing to those other drummers who enter his sphere.

Matt Parish took on a heady topic: Showrooming. You’re a retailer. Someone is walking around with a smart phone obviously looking at something they want, but looking up a “better deal.” In this edition of Small Business Matters, we provide some answers, and the underlying key to this problem is going beyond “customer service” – but engaging that customer.

**“Hell, there are no rules here – we’re trying to accomplish something.” – Thomas Edison**

Then there’s Christian Wissmuller’s no-holds-barred cover story on Guitar Center. Long in an industry media shadow of their own choosing, they change course. In a follow-up to his exclusive Q&A with Gene Joly back in June, Christian went out to their HQ to return with a report of their reversal of industry relationship philosophy. Previously there was a vacuum, and filling it was rumors of misinformation. Now they are going to be more engaged, and the industry will be better off for it.

And speaking of Wilcher, he is “starting over after 40 years,” and his reinvention will involve rules of engagement learned at NAMM’s Retail Boot Camp.

Engagement is an exchange of mutual respect and enthusiasm that ends with a commitment from both parties. Do I believe a real engagement can allow us all to thrive, and reach our ultimate collective goal, which is be better at creating music makers?

I do. **MMR**

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## Korg USA Named Exclusive Distributor for Ashdown



Joe Castronovo and Mark Gooday.

Korg USA has taken on exclusive distribution for Ashdown Engineering in the U.S. and Canada. Korg USA will distribute Ashdown's bass amplification and effects products, acoustic amplification products, and the Dr. Green brand of guitar and bass effects pedals.

With global headquarters, engineering and a custom shop based in the U.K., Ashdown has developed a range of products that satisfy the tonal demands of a diverse array of bass players. In addition to the ABM range, Ashdown also offers bass amps for all situations and budgets, from 10-watt practice amps to 400-watt, all-valve rigs that are hand-crafted in the UK. The full line of Ashdown products will be on display at the Winter NAMM 2014 trade show.

Korg USA president Joe Castronovo noted, "Korg USA has a long and rich history of brand-building, and we're always looking to partner with companies whose product mix complements our existing brands. With Ashdown, we are not only able to draw upon our extensive experience in the amplification category, but we are also able to offer our dealers a complete solution for all the major product areas they are interested in, from Keys, to amps, acoustic guitar to PA. Ashdown is a world-class product line that we are proud to represent and will continue to grow in the U.S. and Canadian markets."

Mark Gooday, Ashdown founder and managing director, commented, "This is a fantastic moment in time for all of us here at Ashdown. After 16 years of Ashdown and 32 years of personally building bass amps, I am very proud to have Korg USA as our new U.S. and Canadian distributor as this will enable our brand to achieve the level of success in those markets that it enjoys in the rest of the world. We are 100 percent committed to giving Korg and our U.S. and Canadian customers exactly what they need in today's ever-changing market."

Interested dealers as well as existing Ashdown dealers should contact Korg USA to become an authorized Korg USA dealer at: [sales@korgusa.com](mailto:sales@korgusa.com) (in the U.S.) or [canadasales@korgusa.com](mailto:canadasales@korgusa.com) (in Canada).

## KHS America Announces Distributor Partnership with DANSR

KHS America, distributor of Jupiter Band Instruments, has announced that it will begin a partnership with DANSR, Inc. to distribute the full line of Vandoren Reeds and Accessories, Denis Wick Mutes and Brasswind Accessories, and Jones Double Reeds.

"For many years, all Jupiter clarinets and saxophones have included a Vandoren reed and so adding KHS-America as a distributor makes total sense," commented Gary Winder, executive VP with Dansr, Inc.

"Our experienced Inside and Outside

Sales Teams, along with our long-term dealer relationships, will allow us to create increased exposure throughout the marketplace for these fine products," stated Tabor Stamper, president of KHS America. "Just like the other 'Best in Class' brands we distribute, we will use our sales, marketing, and logistical strengths to move Vandoren, Denis Wick, and Jones forward."

KHS America will be supporting DANSR Products with both its Outside Sales Team and the Inside Sales Staff headquartered in Mt. Juliet, Tenn.



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

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## ADJ Reaches Legal Settlement With Neo-Neon and American Lighting



ADJ companies American DJ Supply and Elation Professional have reached an out of court settlement with American Lighting, Inc. and its Hong Kong-based parent company, Neo-Neon, involving a trademark infringement lawsuit. Under

terms of the agreement, American Lighting and Neo-Neon have agreed to stop selling special effects lighting products and distributing marketing material that use the names "American," "Revo" and "E-Pro" in the U.S. market.

The ADJ companies initiated legal action against American Lighting in 2012, charging it with trademark infringement and unfair competition under the Lanham Act. Neo-Neon was later added to ADJ's lawsuit, which centered on the use of the names "American," "Revo" and "E-Pro" on special effects and entertainment lighting products intended to compete with the ADJ Group's American DJ and Elation Professional lines.

"As a company, ADJ welcomes fair competition in a free and open market," said Toby Velazquez, president of the ADJ Group of Companies. "However, when any competitor contrives to create confusion in the market in an attempt to reap the benefits of the brand recognition and stellar reputation that ADJ has earned in its market, we're compelled to take legal action. We have invested a great deal of time, effort and money in establishing 'American DJ' and 'Elation Professional' as leading brands in special effects and entertainment lighting. We've also worked very hard to create some of the industry's most recognizable products, like the Revo Series."

"Given the fact that some competitors attempted to arrogate ADJ's highly regarded brands and names, it's very understandable that American DJ must seek legal recourse," added Ken Sherman of Sherman & Zarrabian LLP, the attorney who represented ADJ in the case.

As part of the settlement, American Lighting acknowledged "that American DJ owns all rights, title and interest, in and to the name, trademark and brand 'American,' and shall have the sole and exclusive right to advertise, market, sell, offer for sale, import for sale, any special effects lighting, entertainment lighting, audio products and entertainment lighting accessories bearing the American DJ®, American Audio® and American™ marks."

Neo-Neon and American Lighting have also agreed, effective immediately, to cease importing into the U.S. any special effect lighting, entertainment lighting, audio products and entertainment lighting accessories under any name including the word "American."

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## Fender to Begin Selling Direct



In a recent interview published on peHUB.com it was reported that starting in November, for the first time, customers will be able to order and buy Fender guitars directly from the company's website. This would include "custom configurable" guitars, with product shipped directly to the consumer in two to three months.

It remains unclear if this selling direct move would be reserved only for custom models or would also include standard Fender products.

William McGlashan, the founder and managing partner of TPG Growth, which took control of FMIC earlier this year, told peHUB, "We want to build the Fender brand and business to match its potential. The company is known for its exceptional instruments and equipment, but we have high aspirations for what the Fender brand can be, engaging music fans on many more levels and points of contact." Currently when visitors go to fender.com and want to buy an instrument, they are referred to online and local dealers.

Fender's official comment was: "We don't have anything to share at this time and will be happy to provide an update when we know more."

TPG partnered with Honolulu-based Servco Pacific, a company primarily invested in the automotive and insurance industries. When Fender unsuccessfully tried to go public last year, Servco, lead by chairman and CEO Mark Fukunaga, bought out San Francisco-based private equity firm Weston Presidio's 43 percent of the company. (Weston Presidio paid \$57.8 million for its stake in Fender in 2001. Interestingly, Guitar Center, a large Fender vendor, is in their portfolio of investments.)

Servco picked TPG to partner with because "of its experience in growing consumer brands like J. Crew," the article reported. TPG and Servco together now own the majority of Fender, and pumped more equity into the company in the first quarter. (McGlashan and Fukunaga both declined to put a dollar amount on that move.)

The article's reporter, Luisa Beltran, told MMR that TPG reached out to peHUB to get the word out about the strategy change – a change that in the world of private equity likely seems small if not insignificant, but would certainly be a game changer in the MI industry.

peHUB is written by Thomas Reuters Deals Group journalists, and covers the world of venture capitalists and global private equity community. (Source: <http://www.pehub.com/2013/09/30/with-control-tpg-growth-servco-make-fender-consumer-friendly/>)

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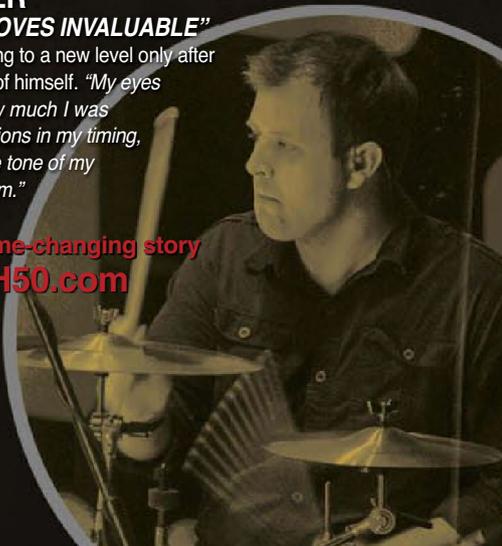


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*Check out [VICFIRTH50.com](http://VICFIRTH50.com) to see Steve tell the whole story.*

## Owensboro Music Center Rebrands, Starks Retires

Longtime co-owner of Owensboro Music Center Hank Starks has retired. His partner Gordy Wilcher will be assuming complete ownership of the Kentucky retail operation that recently celebrated its 40th anniversary in business. The store will now be known as "Gordy's Owensboro Music Center," and other changes are being implemented.

"After 33 1/2 years, Hank [Starks] has retired and moved to Florida, and we all wish him well," Wilcher says.

Starks' decision put Wilcher on a quest to determine what he would do next. He says he explored other career possibilities, but, "after much soul-searching, fretting, and long talks with my wife, family, and friends, I came to the realization I am where I am meant to be – in our fantastic industry! I even thought about selling out or downsizing, but research told me to stay in our present location, and look for ways to make it better."



He adds he's lucky to have a great staff that is "eager to help me recreate Owensboro Music Center," and he's added their first woman employee, Lacy Garrenton. "Garrenton is a violinist with both the Owensboro Symphony and Orchestra Kentucky, and also plays guitar, mandolin, keyboards, and is fluent in Spanish." Veteran staffers Ryan Clark and Louis Smith are staying on.

"Training will be the new norm, so we can offer the best possible shopping experience, and we'll be implementing many of the strategies and ideas we've learned from the Retail Boot Camp and NAMM U sessions I've attended," he says.

Starks was the "heart and soul" of the retailer's sound reinforcement and commercial installation divisions, but "we don't plan on missing a beat when it comes to serving our commercial and live sound customers.

"Yes, we are starting over at 40!" he adds.

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## Yamaha and *The Queen Latifah Show* Help Keep Music in the Schools

In conjunction with the premiere episode of the *The Queen Latifah Show*, which aired on September 16, 2013, Yamaha Entertainment Group donated \$45,000 worth of musical instruments to the James A. Foshay Learning Center in Los Angeles.

The donation came at an opportune time, since the school had experienced budget cuts that impacted the music program. The Foshay Learning Center serves students from Kindergarten to 12th Grade and is located in the city's South Los Angeles neighborhood.

"Music education is central to Yamaha's mission," said Yamaha Entertainment Group president Chris Gero. "When we heard about this opportunity to help out a school in need, in collaboration with Queen Latifah and Alicia Keys, artists who really care about improving the world, we jumped at the chance."



Students at the Foshay Learning Center play their new instruments. Left to right: Javier Salas, Juan Escalante, Donovan Brown, Mario Narciso, Oscar Sanabria.

During the episode, a group of young people from the inner-city school traveled to Sony studios, where special guest, Yamaha Artist Alicia Keys, surprised them with a performance. When the students returned to the school, they found the instruments awaiting their arrival. The array of instruments donated includes clarinets, flutes, trombones, sousaphones, bass clarinets, a drum set and a synthesizer.

"The Foshay Learning Center has been greatly enriched by the tremendous contributions made by The Queen Latifah Show and Yamaha," said Vince Womack, the school's band director. "The musical instruments from Yamaha are exciting additions to our program and it is wonderful to see such quality instruments in the hands of our students. It reminds them every day that what they do has value and that anything is possible."

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## Gibson Set to Acquire Cakewalk

Adding to a growing – and at this point sizable – list of recent acquisitions of MI operations outside of the guitar realm, Gibson Brands is poised to take control of Cakewalk, Inc.

It's been reported that Gibson Brands has entered into a letter of intent with Roland Corporation and Cakewalk, Inc. for Gibson to acquire Cakewalk pursuant to definitive acquisition agreements to be negotiated by the parties. According to Gibson Brands chairman and CEO Henry Juszkiewicz, "If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, Cakewalk must be very flattered that so many of their innovations have become industry standards. As an addition to the Gibson Pro Audio Group, Cakewalk will enhance their flagship professional products, pursue provocative R&D initiatives, and continue to serve the needs of musicians and producers world-wide."

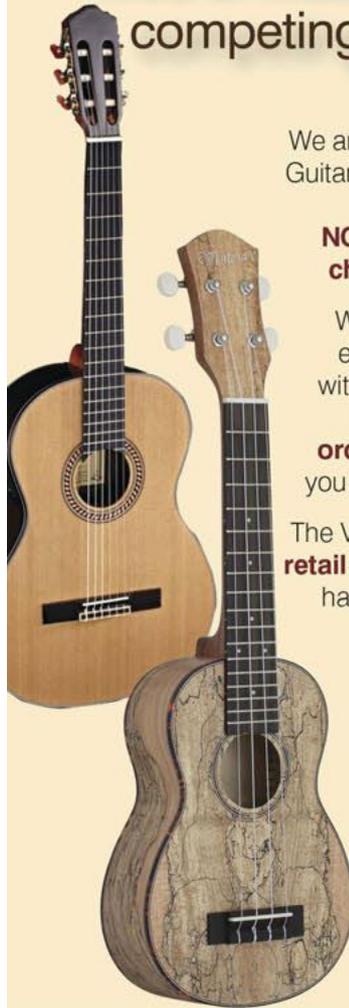
Following the closing of the proposed acquisition, a new brand, TASCAM Professional Software, will be created to support, promote, and publish Cakewalk's current and future professional products. Cakewalk president Michael Hoover notes "The world's most iconic guitar, Gibson's Les Paul, bears the name of the inventor of multitrack recording – and TASCAM launched a musical revolution by bringing multitrack recording to the masses. The combination will make a fitting home for products developed by Cakewalk." TASCAM president Yuji Hanabusa states "The future of recording is an intelligent, intuitive combination of both hardware and software. Cakewalk and TASCAM will have the power to realize this future."

The Cakewalk staff and headquarters will remain in Boston as an independent division. Juszkiewicz concludes, "This isn't just about wanting to acquire Cakewalk's respected product line. We're equally excited about what Cakewalk's R&D labs are developing for current Cakewalk fans – as well as those who are about to become Cakewalk fans."



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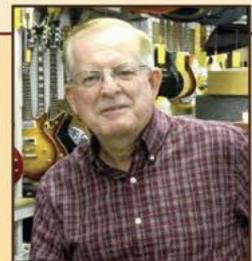
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### **Tom Oliphant, Owner Ventura Guitars**

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**Tom Oliphant** (817) 689-7732 or [venturaguitars@gmail.com](mailto:venturaguitars@gmail.com).  
**Check out our catalog at** [www.venturasoundideas.com](http://www.venturasoundideas.com)

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## Zildjian Announces 2013 Kerope Zildjian Scholarship Competition Winner



Scholarship winner Ethan Ahmed.

Ethan Ahmed from the University of Southern California is the winner of the 2013 Kerope Zildjian Scholarship. Ethan is a student of Jim Babor. Ethan will receive a \$5,000 tuition award, an all expense paid trip to the Zildjian factory, and cymbals of his choice.

The two runner-up winners – Wai Chi Tang from the Manhattan School of Music, a student of Duncan Patton and Michael Jopling from Carnegie Mellon University, a student of Jeremy Branson – will both receive a special cymbal package selected by them.

The first round of competition was judged by James Campbell from the University of Kentucky. Ten finalists were chosen and their unmarked CD's were sent to Cynthia Yeh, Principal Percussionist of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

### The other seven finalists were:

<b>Sean Van Winkle</b>
▶ New England Conservatory, a student of Frank Epstein
<b>Colin McCall</b>
▶ Eastman School of Music, a student of Michael Burritt
<b>Alison Chorn</b>
▶ Cleveland State University, a student of Tom Freer
<b>John Thomas III</b>
▶ Florida State University, a student of John Parks
<b>Bryn Lutek</b>
▶ McGill University, a student of Aiyun Huang
<b>Steven White</b>
▶ Northwestern University, a student of She-e Wu
<b>Robert Oldroyd</b>
▶ Boston Conservatory, a student of Nancy Zeltsman

The Kerope Zildjian scholarship is an opportunity for the Zildjian family to pay tribute to Kerope Zildjian, who presided over one of the most storied periods in Zildjian history. From 1865 until his death in 1909 in Constantinople, Kerope continued to develop the classic K. Zildjian sound. In memory of Kerope's deep commitment to the art of craftsmanship, the Zildjian family established this scholarship to encourage and reward percussionists in their pursuit of performing excellence.

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**Zildjian**  
SOUND LEGACY

## NAMM Musikmesse Russia and Prolight + Sound NAMM Russia Integrate the 'Music Moscow' Musical Instrument Fair

NAMM Musikmesse Russia and Prolight + Sound NAMM Russia have taken over "Music Moscow," bringing a complete musical instrument, music-products, and event technology experience to better serve the rapidly growing Russian market.

In future, there will be one unique event at one venue for all suppliers and users of musical instruments, sheet music and music production, encompassing manufacturers and users of technologies and services for events, installations and productions. Thus, Music Moscow and its product groups – musical instruments, professional sound, lighting, broadcasting and film equipment, as well as studio and stage technologies – will be integrated into the concept of NAMM Musikmesse Russia and Prolight + Sound NAMM Russia.

In order to provide the continuity of a strong Russia-based marketplace, the organizers of NAMM Musikmesse Russia and Prolight + Sound NAMM Russia have decided to change the venue dates for the 2014 edition of their shows and move to the former Music Moscow venue – Sokolniki Exhibition and Convention Centre in Moscow. With this move, both shows will take place earlier in September: NAMM Musikmesse Russia and Prolight + Sound NAMM Russia will now

be held at the Sokolniki Exhibition and Convention Centre in Moscow, from September 11-14 and September 11-13, respectively.

"The integration of the two shows makes it easier for our Members and non-Members alike to make a decision about participation in trade shows in the growing Russian market," said Joe Lamond, president and CEO of NAMM. "To be able to combine the strengths of NAMM and Messe Frankfurt with the long history of Music Moscow's standing in the market can only be a good thing for the industry and will help us serve the industry better and support market growth for everyone."

At the second edition of the fairs in May 2013, more than 130 manufacturers and dealers from 15 countries came together with 9,381 unique trade and private visitors. This represents an increase of 49 percent over the first event in 2012.

The complementary programmes of the fairs encompassed more than 90 events, ranging from seminars and conferences to a music festival for music lovers. For the coming year, the new concept of the fair also includes the opening of the fair for music lovers at the weekend and will give them the chance to take part in a variety of master classes, music festivals, and concerts.



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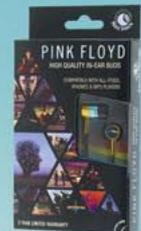
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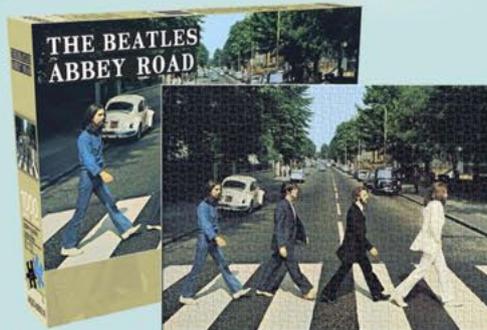
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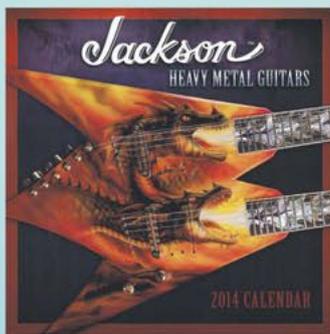
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# Harman International Acquires Duran Audio

Harman recently announced the acquisition of privately-held Duran Audio BV. The acquisition provides Harman with access to innovative electro-acoustic and software-based directivity control technologies including the successful AXYS® Intellivox line of “steerable” columns. The AXYS products and core technologies will become an integrated part of the Harman Professional audio product line.

“Today’s acquisition of Duran Audio BV bolsters Harman’s stated commitment to advance our technology leadership through both R&D and acquisitions,” said Dinesh C. Paliwal, Harman’s chairman, president, and CEO. “Over the years, Duran Audio has established a distinct and loyal customer base built on innovative technology. By leveraging Duran’s unique product lines with Harman’s global footprint and product synergies, our business is optimally positioned to serve new customers around the world with expanded audio solutions.”



The addition of Duran Audio to Harman’s portfolio of commercial audio and lighting technology companies underscores Harman’s strategy to complement continued growth through targeted acquisitions in adjacent technology and product areas across all geographic and vertical markets.

Founded in Zaltbommel, The Netherlands by Gerrit Duran in 1981, Duran Audio has earned a strong reputation for its AXYS range of professional audio products including

Loudspeakers, amplifiers, signal processors and network devices. Duran Audio pioneered modern loudspeaker “beam steering” and “beam shaping” which are essential to addressing demanding acoustic environments. The company has also established a leading position in audio solutions for European EN-54 safety applications and software technologies for audio design.

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Traditional straight saddles on any other fretted instrument are detrimental to good intonation. With nylon strings even "compensated saddles" are a complete fallacy. The issue is that nylon strings are by their nature, inconstant. The only way to improve on this is to create movable saddle technology to allow the player to adjust the compensation for each string. **No tools required!**

Have you ever tuned up your ukulele and played one chord in tune then switch to another chord and it plays out of tune?

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## Deering Raises Over \$25,000 for Charity

The Deering Banjo Company raised \$25,777.68 for charity this summer through the auctioning off of one of a kind Deering Goodtime Gentlemen of the Road banjos signed by Mumford and Sons. A different banjo was made for each Gentlemen of the Road Stopover date, five total, bearing the location's name as well as signatures from all four members of the band. The money from each auction was donated to a local charity, hand picked by the band for each concert location: Lewes, UK; Simcoe, Canada; Troy, Ohio; Guthrie, Okla.; and St. Augustine, Fla.



### The charities that were donated to were as follows:

- The Oyster Project – Lewes, UK
- Norfolk Association for Community Living – Simcoe, Canada
- Corner Cupboard Charities of Greater Dayton, Inc. of Dayton, Ohio
- Logan Community Services – Guthrie, Oklahoma
- Communities In Schools of St. John's County – St. Augustine, Fla.

Throughout the summer, the Deering Banjo Bus travelled across the country to all of these events and giving free banjo lessons.

## Berlin Announced as Location for 136th AES International Convention

The Audio Engineering Society (AES) has announced the dates and location for its upcoming 136th International Convention: Saturday, April 26, through Tuesday, April 29, 2014, in Berlin, Germany. The Convention's "Call for Papers" will be available in the coming months, and AES will be accepting proposals for abstract-precis-reviewed and peer-reviewed papers.



The 136th Convention will bring together audio engineers from around the world to share the latest knowledge in audio research, development and applications. More details will follow shortly, but meanwhile save the date and keep an eye on the convention website for the latest updates.

"We are excited to return to Berlin for the 136th Convention," stated Bob Moses, Audio Engineering Society executive director. "Berlin is a hub of technology and industry, with a vital and rich history in audio innovation. In addition, Germany is an extremely important marketplace for our business partners and sponsors to engage with pro audio customers. It is a more-than-fitting site for our next European convention."

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## St. Blues' Eric Gales Signature Guitar

Saint Blues Guitar Workshop recently announced the creation of the Eric Gales signature Blindsider guitar, "Ghost Notes." The release was celebrated at the company's Memphis headquarters in September, when Gales showed off the brand new axe's features for all in attendance.



The production model is a right-handed body, though Eric will play it reversed as a lefty version. This all-black guitar features an ebony fretboard, with "Eric Gales" in pearloid inlay from third fret to the 12th fret. It will feature a slab top, black Blade Runner bridge, three Fralin single coil pickups, black Sperzel locking tuners, black nitro finish and black pearl binding and pick guard. To keep with the all-black appearance, it even features black water buffalo horn for the nut.

"I have been playing a St. Blues Blindsider for years and, being from Memphis, I love working with folks from my home town, especially when they build some of the best sounding guitars in the world. With this new CD and upcoming gigs, it was time for me to get my dream guitar built and I wanted St. Blues to build it," said Eric Gales.

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

## Kawai Partners with Made In New York Jazz Competition

Kawai America Corporation recently announced its partnership with the Made In New York Jazz Competition. This new partnership is designed to promote and nurture the next generation of jazz musicians around the world. With Kawai's assistance, The Made In New York Jazz Competition (MINYJC) is helping jazz artists from around the globe achieve significant international exposure.

MINYJC is the world's first online jazz competition and boasts a Board of Members that includes Grammy Award-winning jazz musicians Lenny White, Joe Lovano, and Randy Brecker, who will personally choose the winners of the competition. Kawai will award the second and third-place winners an elegant Kawai ES7 Portable Digital Piano and a Powerful Kawai MP6 Professional Stage Piano. A cash prize, which grows as additional participants enter the competition, will be awarded by the Competition as the Grand Prize.

Harnessing advanced internet technologies and strategically employing social media initiatives, the innovative competition has generated over 12,000 registered users and participants from over 35 nations.



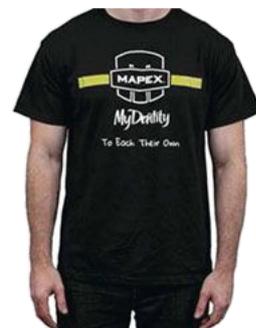
[madeinnyjazz.com](http://madeinnyjazz.com)

## Mapex Adds Bonus Benefits for MyDentity Drummers

Drummers who have created their dream drum kits via the Mapex MyDentity site just scored an extra bonus. Mapex is offering MyDentity a special edition T-shirt (while supplies last). Promotion details are available at the company's Facebook page.

"The MyDentity program represents the kind of player-focused thinking that will become the signature for the Mapex brand," said Michael Robinson, director of Marketing for Mapex. "While all drum companies love drums, at Mapex we love drummers and want to give them the type of sound, size, and finish options they want... not what we think they should want. The t-shirts are a small token of our appreciation to our earliest adopters."

Just over a year ago Mapex unveiled the award-winning MyDentity custom drum platform to give players options for having a custom drum kit made at a great price and delivered in a short amount of time.



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

## Chauvet Opens West Coast Branch & Showroom

Chauvet opened a California office and satellite distribution center in September. Technical support, training, and demo programs serving the U.S. western region will be handled from the California facility, which is expected to be fully operational this month; all main brands under the Chauvet umbrella are represented.

Chauvet is actively recruiting quality control technicians, lighting techs, and administrative personnel to complement an existing California-based team that includes John Dunn, western sales territory manager for the Chauvet Professional and Illuminarc brands and Todd Runkle, western sales territory manager for the Chauvet DJ and Trusst brands.

The state-of-the-art facility is strategically located at 7555 N. San Fernando Road, Sun Valley, Calif., offering immediate access to the 5, 134, 101, 170 and 118 freeways, and in close proximity to major studios and to Los Angeles.



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

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**-Keyboard Magazine**



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## Gillespie Switches to Vater Sticks



At only 14 years old, Aaron Gillespie received a call from Underoath asking him to play drums for the band. Aaron led Underoath for 10 years, including six albums, millions of records sold, two Grammy nominations, and countless world tours. After much consideration he stepped down as the drummer of Underoath in April of 2010. Gillespie now fronts his rock band, The

Almost, which he started in 2007, and who just released their newest album, *Fear Inside Our Bones* this past June. He released a solo album in 2011.

Gillespie is currently on tour, filling in on drums for Paramore and is now using the Vater 2B in Wood Tip. [vater.com](http://vater.com)

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## Pearl/Adams at the 2013 DCI World Championships



Pearl/Adams was very well represented at the 2013 Drum Corps International World Championships, hosted at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. Sponsored groups included DCI Champion Blue Devils, who received the DCI World Class Silver Medal, and The Phantom Regiment and Spirit of Atlanta, who both continued their finals appearance streaks. The season culminated on Saturday, August 10<sup>th</sup> at DCI Championships, with Pearl/Adams represented by three of 12 performing corps. Spirit's performance of their production *Speakeasy* placed them in 11<sup>th</sup> overall with a score of 86.40. The Phantom Regiment's show *A Triumphant Journey* earned the corps sixth place overall with a score of 93.25. The Blue Devils finished off their season with an amazing performance of their production *The Re:rite of Spring*, earning the DCI World Class Silver Medal and placing 2<sup>nd</sup> overall in percussion.

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

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## Carolina Crown Wins First Ever DCI Championship with Yamaha



Carolina Crown, a drum and bugle corps based in Fort Mill, South Carolina, won its first Drum Corps International (DCI) championship. In addition to its championship victory, the corps received the Jim Ott High Brass award for the third year in a row, scoring a perfect 20.00 (the first time a perfect score in brass has ever been achieved). Corps using Yamaha brass instruments have now won eight high brass awards since the activity switched from the key of G to B $\flat$  in the year 2000.

In 2007, Carolina Crown began playing Yamaha brass and percussion instruments. From 2008 on, the corps placed fourth or higher every year, finishing second two times. They are the first corps to ever win a DCI championship in the Open Class and the World Class levels.

Carolina Crown is the 16<sup>th</sup> drum and bugle corps to win a DCI championship using Yamaha products since 1985, the most wins for any brand over this time period.

<http://4wrd.it/winds> and <http://4wrd.it/MARCHPERC>

### Roland Announces U.S. V-Accordion Fest Winner

Sergei Teleshev of Eugene, Oregon was named the winner of the 2013 Roland U.S. V-Accordion Festival. As the U.S. champion, Sergei advanced to compete with regional winners from around the world during the 7th Roland International V-Accordion Festival. Sergei also received two prizes: a new FR-8x, Roland's latest flagship V-Accordion, and a trip to the international festival in Rome.



U.S. contestants entered the contest one of two ways: YouTube video submission or participation within the 66th Coupe Mondiale. Both amateurs and professionals were eligible and encouraged to participate. U.S. contestants chosen from the top U.S. video submissions and the top-placing U.S. contestants at the Coupe Mondiale then advanced into the "final selection round." \$300 individual scholarships were also awarded to the top U.S. contestants at the Coupe.

The U.S. finalists were loaned V-Accordions and required to use the instrument exclusively during this round. Roland V-Accordions combine the familiar nuances of a traditional accordion with the versatility of a modern digital musical instrument and faster response, higher sensitivity, and precision.

[RolandUS.com/V-AccordionFestival](http://RolandUS.com/V-AccordionFestival)

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## D'Addario Performance Series Returns to Carnegie Hall

The 2013-2014 season of the D'Addario Performance Series began in October at Carnegie Hall with a performance by two young performers named Junhong Kuang and Celil Refik Kaya. The concert was Kaya's Carnegie Hall debut, during



which he world-premiered a new piece written for him by famed Argentinian classical guitarist and composer Jorge Morel. The concert was Junhong Kuang's New York City debut.

The series will continue its tradition of delivering top classical guitar talent from all over the world to the hallowed New York City performance space. But this season, instead of solely acquiring the genre's best performers,

the D'Addario Foundation has also succeeded in finding some of its youngest.

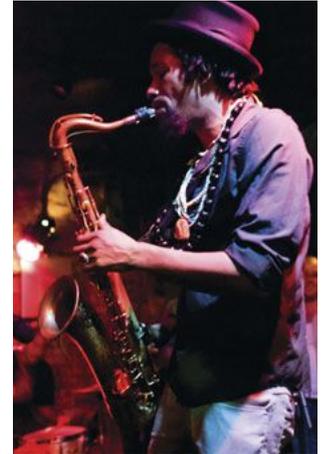
Since 1981, the D'Addario Foundation has been committed to inspiring and assisting the growth and appreciation of music throughout the world.

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

## Reunion Blues Adds Kebbi Williams as Endorsing Artist

Gig bag and instrument case maker Reunion Blues recently welcomed Grammy-winning saxophonist and composer Kebbi Williams to its growing family of artists. As a multi-instrumentalist, composer, producer, arranger, teacher, and innovator, Kebbi's unique experience brings fresh creative talent to the Reunion Blues roster.

Williams' work includes everything from avant-garde, jazz, hip-hop, Latin and Afro-beat to gospel, electronic, and classical. He has played with high profile artists such as Abbey Lincoln, Betty Carter, Donald Byrd, Branford Marsalis, Roy Hargrove, Jeff "Tain" Watts, Raphael Saadiq, Bilal, Me'Shell Ndegeocello, Outkast, Mos Def, and Susan Tedeschi. Williams is also a proud member of the multi-Grammy Award winning Tedeschi Trucks Band, led by the legendary Derek Trucks of Allman Brothers fame. Kebbi has also worked heavily with the Atlanta group Music In the Park, a non-profit organization dedicated to creating musical exposure for students.



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

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## Gold Star Banjo Pickers Nominated for IMBA Award



Gold Star banjo players Tom Adams and Russ Carson were recently nominated for a 2013 IBMA award in the category of "Instrumental Performance of the Year." Adams is featured on the tune "Foggy Mt. Rock" and is supported by an all-star cast of young musicians while Carson is playing on the Richard Underwood composition "Newton Grove," recorded with the band Audie Blaylock and Redline. Gold Star banjos has commented that they're "honored and pleased that these two virtuosos are spreading the word about Gold Star banjos through their music and wish them all the success in their musical careers." [sagamusic.com](http://sagamusic.com)

## Bootsy Collins Adds Radial Firefly to Studio Arsenal



Legendary bassist Bootsy Collins has recently added Radial's first tube DI to his gear collection. The box has been getting a lot of attention since its debut and Collins includes himself as a fan. "I am now using the Firefly in both my studios with my very new Warwick-Star-Space-bass," he says. "The Firefly is very pleasantly warm, while it can get very chunky and funky up, it also can be punchy and clean." Collins uses the DI box to accurately send signals to whatever recording systems he's using – whether clean and unadorned or affected with some of the tube warmth available in the Firefly. [radialeng.com](http://radialeng.com)

## Asterope National Dealer Tour



The Asterope crew visits First String Music in Steamboat Springs, Colo.

Asterope recently embarked on a nationwide tour to give music retailers the chance to experience first-hand the "Asterope difference" its audio cables make. Dealers across the U.S. had the opportunity to meet the compa-

ny's founder and president, Dariush Rad, and receive a personal demonstration of Asterope's audio cable technology.

Asterope teamed with Fishman, its exclusive worldwide distribution partner, to select participating dealers and execute the tour.

"Dealers and their sales representatives play a crucial role in helping customers learn about Asterope," said Dariush. "These are the people who define their local music scene. These meetings are giving us a clearer understanding of the market, both nationally and regionally. More importantly, they're helping us understand how to better partner with our dealers and customers to ensure we meet their needs." [asterope.com](http://asterope.com)

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## Orange Amplification Sponsors The Classic Rock Roll of Honour 2013



Orange Amplification recently presented Britain's "Classic Rock Roll of Honour 2013." This is the third time Orange have been headline sponsor for these awards, which will be held at leading arts venue, The Roundhouse, Camden, London, on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

Orange Amplifiers have been used for decades by many notable classic rock bands and this year's awards see many of its endorsees nominated in several categories. Longtime Orange Amplification fan Jimmy Page with Led Zeppelin are nominated for Best Film and Black Sabbath, who used Orange Amps during the '70s are in the Band of the Year section.

Orange Amplification have several endorsees nominated in the Album Of The Year category: Tim Salt (Clutch), Troy Van Leeuwen (Queens Of The Stone Age) and Scott Holiday of Rival Sons, last year's winners of the Breakthrough Act of the year. Up for the Reissue Of The Year award with *Generation Terrorists 20th Anniversary* are Welsh rock legends, Manic Street Preachers, with endorser James Dean Bradford.

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

## Guitarist Devon Allman Joins Breedlove Guitars

Singer-songwriter Devon Allman recently joined the Breedlove artist roster. Devon, a blues/rock guitarist and vocalist, was recently nominated for a Blues Music Award. His new album, *Turquoise*, debuted at #5 on the Billboard Blues Charts. He's the son of legendary musician and Rock and Roll Hall Of Fame inductee, Gregg Allman.



Allman was recently in Bend, Oregon when he discovered Breedlove. When Devon requested a loaner guitar from the Oxford concierge, Breedlove delivered a Northwest Classic model, and Devon says he fell in love with the instrument. He made a video in his hotel room and posted it on his Facebook page on with the caption, "Jamming on the hotel loaner. Hot damn it's a nice piece!" Allman is based in the St. Louis area.

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

## Sennheiser HD 25 Turns 25 with Star Studded Tribute

Owing to its widespread acclaim among the DJ community, Sennheiser's HD 25 headphone was recently honored by a collection of 25 notable DJs in a filmed tribute for the product's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. Star DJs including Qbert, Bob Sinclar, and Luciano describe how their HD 25s became an integral part of performance and the experience of music itself. They also share stories of their first DJ performances, describe the feeling of playing to an audience and the role their headphones play in delivering a great performance. To watch the Happy Birthday HD 25 video and exclusive DJ interviews, visit



Renowned DJ Luciano.

[sennheiser.com/dj](http://sennheiser.com/dj)

## Ian Bousfield Partners with Warwick Music

International trombone soloist Ian Bousfield has joined forces with instrument manufacturer and specialist brass and woodwind publisher Warwick Music. This new long-term partnership launches with the release of an exclusive new range of trombone mouthpieces, which Ian Bousfield has worked on along with the team at Warwick Music. The mouthpieces are available in stores as of September.

The initial range of Ian Bousfield Mouth-

pieces will be in S5, S4, and Signature sizes. The 4 and 5 sizes will be familiar to trombonists; however the Signature is a completely new custom size created by Ian.

Chris Fower of Warwick Music said: "The focus of the design concept has been to take the very best of traditional mouthpiece design, which produces a clear, bright, and centred timbre, and then make this comfortable, stable and accessible for the modern player." [ianbousfield.co.uk](http://ianbousfield.co.uk)

ON THE MOVE

**Fender Musical Instruments Corporation** (FMIC) has appointed **David Angress** to the position of senior vice president of Global Sales.



Angress has more than 30 years of music industry experience, including his own global consulting firm, executive vice president for Guitar Center, vice president of Sales and Marketing for Harman Pro North America, and vice president of Sales and Marketing for AKG Acoustics, Inc.

Angress brings a keen understanding of FMIC products, markets and customers, and will bring a new sense of accountability and leadership to the sales team. In addition, he will lead the development of a comprehensive and credible international sales growth strategy.

Angress will report to CEO Larry Thomas and will be based in the Scottsdale, Ariz. headquarters office.

**The Percussion Marketing Council** (PMC) Executive Committee has appointed **Stacey Montgomery-Clark** to its Executive Board.



As Sabian's vice president of Marketing, Montgomery-Clark has been an active member of the music industry for more than 19 years and has contributed to many of the internationally recognized marketing campaigns, events, and artist-relations developments during this period.

The Executive Committee currently consists of Brad Smith (Hal Leonard), Dave Jewell (Yamaha Corporation), Karl Dustman (Dustman & Associates), and now Stacey Montgomery-Clark fills the Board vacancy.

Montgomery-Clark is located in Sabian's New Brunswick, Canada manufacturing headquarters and actively participates in the many educational and promotional activities for the firm's global strategy and product development.

**Yamaha Corporation of America** (YCA) president Hitoshi Fukutome has announced the appointment of **Alan Macpherson** to the position of general manager of the company's Pro Audio & Combo (PAC) Division.



Macpherson, who had most recently served as director of Steinberg North America in the Customer Sales and Marketing Group at YCA, will now oversee all operations for the PAC Division, including daily administration, marketing and sales, reporting directly to Rick Young, senior vice president of YCA.

Macpherson began his career at Yamaha Canada Music Ltd. in 1987. In 1999, he was promoted to national sales and marketing manager of the Pro Music and Audio Division and, in 2001, he was named marketing manager, Combo and Music Production Division. His responsibilities were further broadened in 2006, when he was named manager of the Corporate Planning and Communications department at Yamaha Canada. He became director of Steinberg North America at YCA in 2008.

**TC Group** has named **Owen Xing** as managing director of its Chinese division, TC Group China. Owen Xing, 34, has held managing positions in the music and audio industries for more than a decade. The division operates out of Beijing in the MI, install, touring, broadcast, and production markets. Further, Owen Xing has a background as a guitar player and composer, which also ties in well with the core values of TC Group, rooted in the passion for sound in all forms.



TC Group China was established in 2002 and has been led by the former managing director, Robin Hu, right from the start. "I would like to thank Robin Hu for his great efforts in growing the Chinese market for us over the past 11 years. He virtually took it from being non-existing to becoming one of our most important markets. I wish him the best of luck in his future career," says Anders Fauerskov, CEO of TC Group.

**KMC Music, Inc.** has appointed **Bruce Wismer** to the position of merchandising manager. With more than 30 years of experience in the music industry, Wismer brings to KMC a strong sales background well suited to managing KMC's outside relationships, negotiating with vendors, and creating compelling programs and promotions.



A Berklee College of Music alum, Wismer was the principal of his own sales rep firm for 20 years, as well as the director of international sales for LOUD Technologies. His most recent post was director of international sales for Armadillo Enterprises.

**Korg USA** has announced new hires to its artist relations area. **Mike Bigel** has been hired as a Korg USA artist relations specialist. Bigel comes to Korg USA with extensive experience in label management and marketing, as well as ownership of an artist management company. He will be responsible for managing day-to-day artist relations activities and seeking out new artist-related opportunities, as well as liaising in-person with artists at events and shows.



Mike Bigel

**David Ungar** has also been hired as a Korg USA Artist Relations Specialist. He comes to Korg with many years of experience in club promotion, marketing and management, as well as being the proprietor of a consulting firm and a professional photographer. In his primary role, he'll serve the needs of bands on tour by liaising with management companies, techs and artists in-person. Additionally, he'll establish/develop new artist relationships. In addition to serving existing artists and developing new relationships and opportunities, Bigel and Ungar will also work closely with the rest of the Korg USA marketing team to incorporate artists into a variety of consumer-facing communications including social media, video, web, PR, and advertising.



David Ungar

**Harman Professional** has announced the appointment of **Brian Friborg** to lead US Sales, Group-Wide as USA vice president of Sales. Friborg, who previously held the position of president, Americas for Martin Professional, immediately assumes responsibility for sales and support of Harman Professional audio and lighting technologies in the United States. He will report directly to Scott Robbins, Harman Professional executive vice president, Worldwide Sales.





# MI Intellectual Property Issues

## – Setting the Record Straight

Copyrights, Trademarks, and the Big Four MI Myths

By Ron **Bienstock**

Over the last thirty years, there have been several major legal decisions involving intellectual property concerning guitars and basses. Having been a part of most of these cases, what still amazes me is the amount of misinformation and mythology that has arisen around these actions. Almost daily, I am asked about “lawsuit guitars” in one case or another, as the accounts of what actually happened in those cases become twisted and mangled. These mistaken interpretations require a re-set as to their practical meaning and importance to a builder or a fan.

The actual decisions in the cases (which are not as numerous as claimed or thought), have become fodder for conspiracy theorists, press spin by the losing company, incorrect assumptions by guitar collectors and fans, and subject to misinterpretation by the “players” on the blogs and chat rooms. Usually the first step down the slippery slope to myth is confusing the essential area of intellectual property that was in question in a particular case. Generally, it can only be one of the following: copyright, trademark, or patent. Copyright applies to written and visual works (yes, that includes songs and sound recordings), trademarks to the names, logos and/or product configurations (yes, it can be a color or even a sound), patents apply to the utility function of a device or a methodology (a utility patent, which lasts for 20 years) or an ornamental look or design (a design patent, which lasts for 14 years).

With that stated, copyright is almost *never* the issue – so, please stop saying, “copyrighted headstocks or body designs.” Headstocks and body shapes typically serve as trademarks. Alternatively however, one can have a design patent on a body shape and headstock *if* it is purely decorative (and, yes, this goes even for objects with some functional aspects). However, that design patent only lasts for 14 years, whereas trademarks may last indefinitely as long as they are renewed properly and continually used in commerce. Theoretically, one could have a trademark and a design patent run concurrently; however, this seldom occurs because of the duplicative boots, galoshes,

suspenders, and belts, and expense overkill theory. Therefore, when we are speaking about guitar body shapes and headstocks, we are usually speaking about trademarks.

So I would like to set the record straight on a few MI trademark myths...

**MI Myth #1.** “I can copy someone else’s headstock as long as I maintain a 5 – 10 percent difference.”

The legal standard is that a trademark may not be “confusingly similar” to another. Accordingly, this concept clearly cannot be accurate. If we had measurements involving calculators and calipers that could tell the difference between headstocks for us, then we would not need to engage the court system. Issues considered “confusingly similar,” along with theories that may apply to trademarks, are issues that come before a judge or jury if the parties cannot work out an resolution on their own. Most of the major headstock cases began in the 1980s and are public record. Many cases do not even lead to a decision because they are settled out of court. Thus ....

**MI Myth #2.** “I heard that XYZ company lost big on that case.”

I can say with great certainty that most cases settle. So precedential decisions (decisions that can later be used to support or undermine a position in a later case), are not issued by the courts in those situations. In Federal Court, 95-98 percent of all cases settle. Even if a case does not settle, it may still not result in a precedential decision. This can occur in the Trademark Trials and Appeals Board where the parties often go to fight it out over the registration and maintenance of trademarks.

One thing I must make clear: A settlement is not a win or a loss, but is rather the result of negotiation. Therefore, most parties in a lawsuit walk away with a practical business solution.

**MI Myth #3. "Well if he can get away with it, so can I!"**

Eventually there is a day of reckoning in the MI business. The wakeup call may come from something someone else notices in an ad, a display at a NAMM show, on a website, or even a press release photo. Sooner or later, some company, rightly or wrongly, is going to say, "Your headstock/body-shape/logo... looks like mine." While "looks like mine" is not a legal standard, it stands for the concept that if "Billy Joe Bob Guitars" is getting away with it, then why can't someone else be able to do so as well? This is consequently followed by "Why did they send me the cease-and-desist letter and not him?" Which leads us to...

**MI Myth #4. "I just got a letter from XYZ and I am being sued by those #%@\$&!..."**

Although a cease and desist letter from a third party or their attorney concerning a trademark matter should be taken most seriously, it is not a lawsuit. On the other hand, if someone serves you with a complaint, then that is different. You are then involved with some form of legal action with a third party.

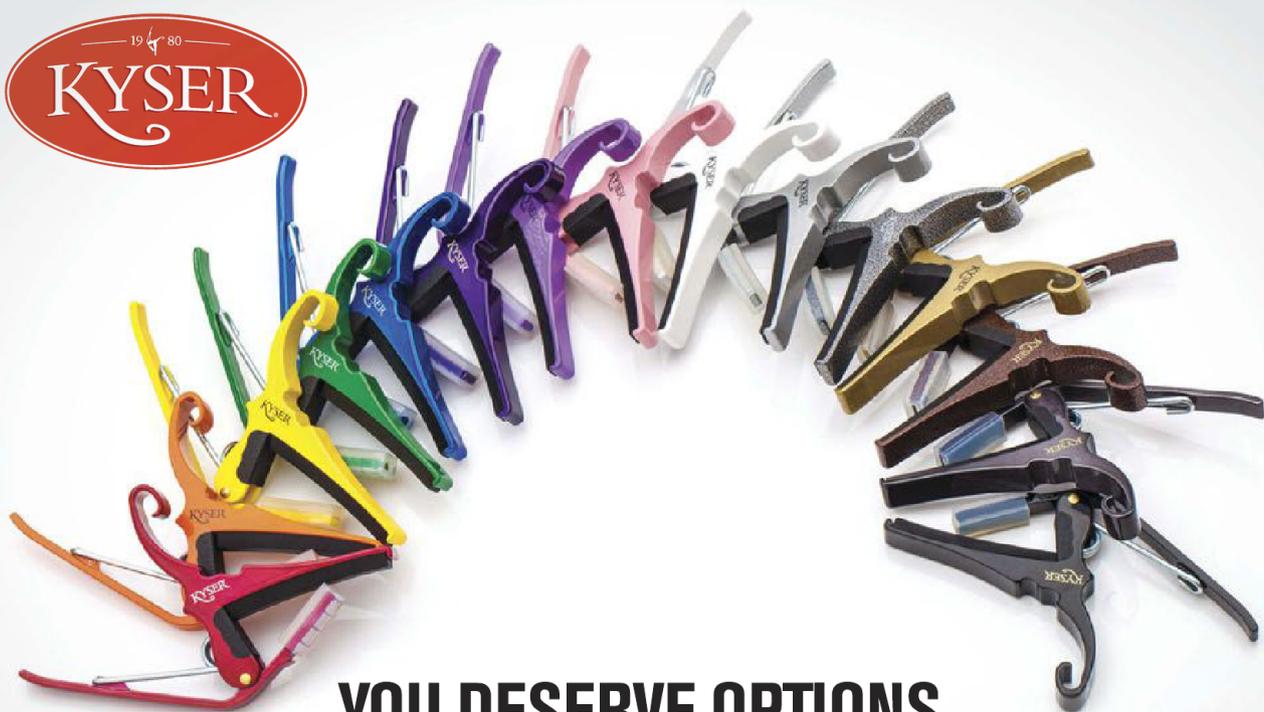
Almost anyone now can source guitars from an offshore factory. The days of having to purchase full container loads are for the most part a thing of the past. If you have a design in mind, someone can source it, and someone will build it for you. In addition, there are many fine builders working by themselves

or with one other person in shops in their garages and small workshops. This has given rise to a whole new series of guitar companies. However, before you start that line or build those guitars, it is imperative that you take the time to know if the designs (and names) are yours to use. Do the right and prudent thing and find someone on a professional level to help you ascertain if you are about to ask for a trouble-free order or just trouble. **MMR**



*Ronald S. Bienstock is the senior partner in the leading law firm Bienstock & Michael where he represents clients in the MI industry. He has been a part of all the major intellectual property cases in the music instrument business since 1985. He has been a guest lecturer, instructor, and panel moderator for BMI, ASCAP, CMJ, NEMO, SXSW, NAMM, PMA, RPMDA, Berklee College of Music, St. John's School of Law, Rutgers School of Law, Seton Hall Law School, Ithaca College, New Jersey City University, and many other organizations and universities.*

*Prior to forming Bienstock & Michael, P.C. in 1987, Ron was editor-in-chief and publisher of International Musician & Recording World and served as General Counsel to Hoshino, U.S.A. He teaches entertainment law at New York University. He's been a performing and recording musician since 1972.*



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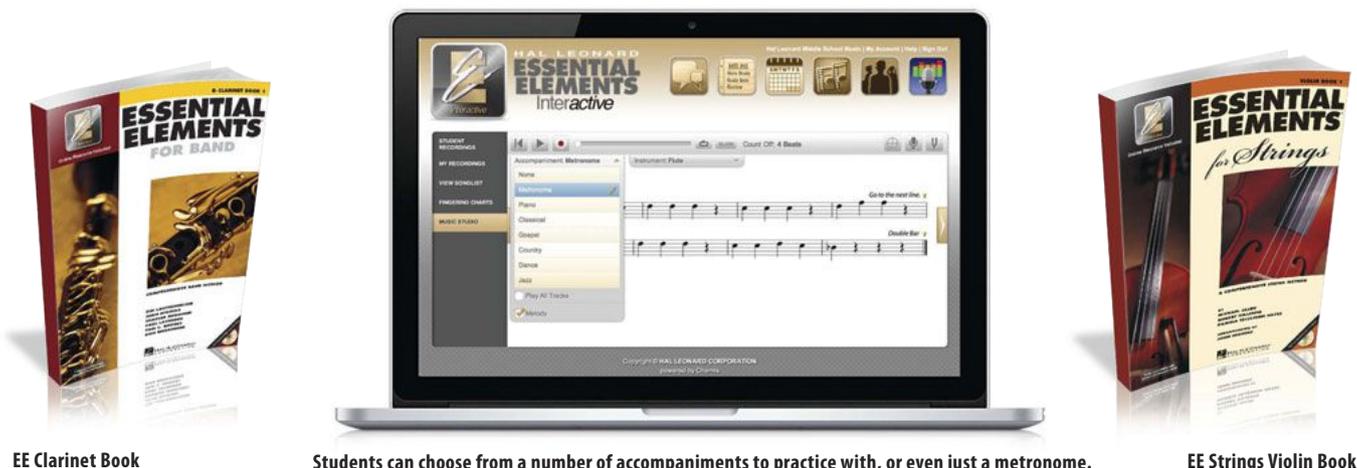
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# Band Methods Embrace Technological Possibilities

Hal Leonard Puts *Essential Elements* in the “Clouds” while Alfred continues advancements in customized *Sound Innovations*

## Hal Leonard’s *Essential Elements* Goes Interactive



EE Clarinet Book

Students can choose from a number of accompaniments to practice with, or even just a metronome.

EE Strings Violin Book

You could say Paul Lavender’s head is very much in the clouds, at least in regard to Hal Leonard’s new *Essential Elements Interactive* (EEi).

“EEi introduces powerful technology tools for online teaching, learning, assessment, and communication, all in a web-based, secure environment that users can access anytime, anywhere, and from any device,” says Lavender, VP of Instrumental Publications, explains. “There is no software to hassle with, and upgrades are automatic. And EEi features an incredible amount of additional web-based content that really complements and expands the printed books.”

The “cloud” aspect is the big news. It gets around the need to load software onto your computer and the complications of different platforms and versions and the like. “And we are expanding to tablets and mobile phones too.”

Hal Leonard is quick to trumpet the success of their *Essential Elements* methods launched in 1991 and 1994 (band and strings respectively). As EE’s managing editor and co-author, Lavender says they’ve been the leading methods in the market for decades, as in “the books are being used by thousands of music programs each year.” They’ve kept up with the evolving technology, enhancing their method first with CDs, then DVDs and CD-ROMs.

But EEi has moved *Essential Elements* to the next step – or rather maybe even beyond steps up into the cloud. In development

for several years and beta tested by education majors at the University of North Texas as well as selected teachers, EEi is now in its first full year of classroom use by teachers and their students and also features a connection for parents. Music programs everywhere are quickly learning about the ease, efficiency and unique benefits EEi has to offer.

Those benefits are many, such as allowing teachers pressed for time to have students continue the curriculum at home. “It really helps the teacher extend their teaching beyond the classroom. For example, the teacher might announce that he or she didn’t get through everything that day, and give an online assignment for page 17, which could include a learning video the teacher

has posted. The students could also be assigned to record themselves playing a particular exercise with their favorite background track. After uploading that recording to the

secure site, the teacher can listen to it later.”

The online music studio aspect is something Lavender is especially excited about. A professional player performs each exercise, and students can choose from seven different background tracks, which provides additional incentive to practice. Recording is simple, and the student can record five takes, select their favorite, and save it to the EEi cloud. The teacher can then review student recordings on any device and give feedback. “It’s a powerful assessment tool.”

“EEi features an incredible amount of additional web-based content that really complements and expands the printed books.” – Paul Lavender

All this interactivity is essentially “free” with the purchase of an Essential Elements book from a music dealer. EEI and all this enhancement is only available if you own the printed book, so our retailers are thrilled about it.” The director book is \$34.99 (strings) or \$39.99 (band) and the student books are \$8.99. The books still include a CD-ROM with the core audio content, but it’s becoming clear that the ease and depth of EEI will change how audio, video, and other supplemental content is delivered in the future.

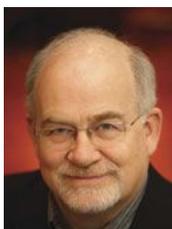
There’s also a lot more space up there in the “cloud:” “We already have ten times more audio and video in EEI than what was on the discs.” Another advantage is software-based programs require a lot of updating, and there can be kinks depending on what computer, what program, and what system you’re using. “We’re still at the mercy of what web browser is being used, but it’s a minimal problem.” The cloud-based nature of this site allows the EEI Development Team to add new content, videos, and tools for teachers and students, creating the first-ever constantly evolving method book. EEI also allows teachers to upload their own curricular materials to their EEI cloud, incorporating their personal “best practices” with the EEI-provided materials.

Another perk of EEI is the multitude of communication tools, connecting teachers, students, and parents. By incorporating technology and allowing the flow of information to happen intuitively, in a manner that kids today are comfortable with, Hal Leonard hopes to help music programs achieve higher retention rates.

For all their work (they’ve been beta testing for two years), Lavender still sees this as just the beginning. “This is just phase one, and we’ll always be adding new features.” And he sees this as giving them an edge, particularly with teachers and school systems who have invested heavily in technology and in many cases, have provided students with iPads.

Next in EEI’s line-up are *Essential Elements* books two, three, and four, as well as the *Essential Elements* series of jazz, guitar, and classroom recorder books.

Kids may not like one part of it, though: “They won’t be able to use the excuse, ‘my dog ate my homework,’ because now it’ll be always uploaded on the site!” he laughs.



Paul Lavender

## Alfred’s Customizable *Sound Innovations* Continues to Expand

- Step 1: Select a genre  
Step 2: Click on any tune in the playlist to see the Tune Preview  
Step 3: Click the  icon to substitute a Tune

### Playlist tunes

Genre:  

[View All Tunes](#) [View Substitute Tunes](#)

Title
<a href="#">Lightly Row</a>
<a href="#">Good King Wenceslas</a>
<a href="#">Sweetly Sings the Donkey (round)</a>
<a href="#">Dreydl, Dreydl</a>
<a href="#">Twinkling Stars</a>
<a href="#">London Bridge</a>

Please note that all **Substitute Tunes** are at the appropriate level for the location in which they appear in the book. If you prefer to see and substitute your tunes in a page-by-page view, access the [Editor](#).

**The band director can customize the playlist choosing the song and even the genre.**

Andrew Surmani, chief marketing officer of Alfred, first acknowledges what every band director knows: “No matter how much a band director loves a method, somebody is unhappy about *something*,” he laughs. He proceeds to shout out examples: Why start with *this* pitch? Why introduce *this* note value here? Why this song *here*? “They all think they can do at least a little bit better because, well, they can!”

With the novel ideal of providing a customized band method that allows every director to create and print his or her own version of a method, *Sound Innovations* was begat. Surmani says it took many years of research with an

“The director can even publish a personal note inside the book – words of encouragement or whatever they want.” – Andrew Surmani

outside research firm and included focus groups that involved Alfred executives viewing behind a one-way mirror observing educators work through the possibilities. The result is a method that is based on the work of four well-respected authors (Robert Sheldon, Bob Phillips, Peter Boonshaft, and Dave Black).

“*Sound Innovations* does come in a standard edition, which is the authors’ preferred version,” he explains. “But also available is the ability for the director to make decisions on their own. If you’re tired of some public domain songs, you can add pop songs [for an additional fee]. And you can work with

certain genres – we offer Christian, Patriotic, and others.” The full list of genres also includes African American, Alternative Strings America, Classical, Latino, Movie/Broadway, Pop/Rock, and those slanted to Canada and Texas. “The director can even publish a personal note inside the book – words of encouragement or whatever they want.”

The method is set up as a three-tier price point at \$9, \$11, and \$13, and the price is based on whether a director wants the “basic” with no or minimum customization, or wants more pop songs, and up to 32 additional enrichment pages. “In addition, there’s a free disk in every book, but instead of a CD it has mp3 files which allows us to put more music into the students’ hands – basically all the audio examples available.” There’s also a DVD that offers lessons and examples by expert teachers and musicians in a master class setting.

The book also includes technology from SmartMusic music practicing soft-



ware. After the band director has built the material to his or her liking on the *Sound Innovations* section of the Alfred website, it’s digitally printed. The director can then have it shipped through their favorite music store. Debuted in 2010, Books One through Three are now out, and Book Four will be revealed next month at the Midwest Band & Orchestra Clinic. A *Class Guitar Standard Edition* of *Sound Innovations* is also now available.



Andrew Surmani



# Music China 2013

The Shanghai Show Displays Steady Business and Expanded Diversity in its International Presence

By Rick Kessel

While the USA was in the throes of a debt limit crisis, the Music China show in Shanghai was proceeding with a steady flow of international traffic and business. The show, which took place from October 10-13, set a new record number of exhibitors at the Shanghai New International Expo Center. Over 1,680 exhibitors along with 500 others at the concurrent ProLight & Sound show make the event one of the largest in the world. It provided a worldwide view of some of the newest products, software, and trends in the market. There were 29 countries represented at the show, which included first time companies from Greece, Israel, and Pakistan. Countries with dedicated pavilions included Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Finland, Germany, and numerous others.

In a welcome speech by Mr. An Zhi, president of the China Musical Instrument Association, he indicated that the due to the still challenging world economic situation that the "export delivery value grew by 2.11 percent in 2012, and that it only increased to 2.21 percent in the first half of 2013." However, there are bright spots. In contrast to conventions in other parts of the world, there was a surprisingly large increase of nearly 50 percent in the number of keyboard exhibitors, which reflects the up and coming market for those products in Asia. Lothar Kiesche of Schimmel Pianofortefabrik, an exhibitor at the Fair, noted that the Asian markets present a strong growth opportunity especially compared to the challenging markets in many Western nations. Dr. Christian Bluthner of Bluthner Pianofortefabrik from Germany reflected a similar opinion: while countries like Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece and some other Euro nations are facing very difficult times, and Germany, the USA, and the UK are holding steady, so China may represent a significant upside for piano companies.

A broad number of international attendees come to the show in order to source OEM products for their lines, but more and more, there are North American and European companies exhibiting and selling into the Chinese market. Gary Mobley of Shubb Capos who was exhibiting at the show mentioned that the Chinese market is a growing segment of their business, and that they are, at this point, working with more large dealers rather than exclusive distributors. They are here to



develop their brand's exposure in the market and to show that their quality is superior to that of copies on the market, especially with their new patented roller capos. Terry Warburton of Warburton products showed a new plastic trumpet which has some unique opportunities in the market for younger students as well as marching bands and other applications. Levy's Leathers' Harvey Levy discussed the fact that he is able to stay connected with his major distributors from countries like Indonesia, Australia, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam as well as China and that there is tremendous growth ahead for these important markets.

At the NAMM CMIA Industry Forum, industry leaders from numerous companies and trade organizations discussed the important connections between musical instrument manufacturing, retailing and music education. The speakers included Larry Morton of Hal Leonard Corp, Betty Haywood of NAMM, Antoine Beaussant of Buffet Crampon, and numerous others. NAMM also held their NAMM University sessions on a variety of topics related to running a successful musical instrument business. A number of outdoor concerts took place during the four day conference and included highlights when Jody Espina of Jody Jazz performed his virtuosic sax licks, and also when Harvey Levy joined the band from Saga Musical Instruments to perform their signature bluegrass style music. **MMR**



1. David Gartland with Harvey Levy and the band from **Saga Musical Instruments** performing at the show.
2. Karl Kief of **Kief Music**, Canada, meets with Hap Kuffner and Gary Byers of **NS Designs**.
3. Jody Espina and Colin Schofield of **Jody Jazz**.
4. Jim Talty of **Direct Import Assistance** meets with Craig Denny and Chris Meikle of **St. Louis Music**.
5. Theo Wanne of **Theo Wanne Inc.**
6. Harvey and Nikki Levy of **Levy's Leathers**.
7. Iain Wilson of **G7th Inc.**
8. Arriba Cases' Scott Davies.
9. Florian Popa of **ClarSax Popa S.L.**
10. Kenny Lee and Alex Hsieh of **P. Mauriat Saxophones** with Tim Elvy of **Legere Reeds**.
11. Terry Warburton of **Warburton Co.** with Qiang Zhong of **Rheinsound Music**.
12. Paul Chu of **Hunter Musical Instruments**.
13. Backun Musical's Morrie Backun, Joel Jaffe, and Bryan Vance.
14. Peter LaPlaca of **PJLA Products**.
15. Neil Lilien of **R.S. Berkeley**.
16. Rick Kessel of **MMR, PianoDisc/Mason & Hamlin's** Gary Burgett, Tom Lagomarsino, and Kirk Burgett.
17. Dr. Christian Bluthner of **Bluthner Pianofortefabrik**.
18. Larry Morton of **Hal Leonard** and president of **NAMM**, with Chairman of NAMM Joe Lamond.
19. Linda Zheng and Gary Mobley of **Shubb Capos**.
20. David Gartland of **Saga Musical Instruments**.
21. Brian Jemelian, Tom Sumner, and Rick Young of **Yamaha Musical Instruments**.

# Guitar Center

## Inside THE Big Box

by Christian **Wissmuller**



Mike Pratt

**I**n recent years, the folks over at Guitar Center haven't been... overly chatty with *MMR*. It wasn't a policy directed solely at this publication – far from it. For a good while there, it just so happened that GC's de facto procedure when it came to trade media was: say little, or say nothing.

That all began to change earlier this year, though.

Almost immediately after the appointment of Mike Pratt as CEO this past March, Guitar Center's reps began (literally) returning calls, with high ranking officers making themselves available for comment on the issues of the day. Case(s) in point: when there began to be rumblings about the possible unionization of the NYC Guitar Center store, Gene Joly – then executive VP of stores – hopped on the phone for a detailed and frank interview (more on unionization and Joly later) which appeared in our June issue; When Standard & Poor's cut Guitar Center Holding Inc.'s credit rating from B- to CCC+ in early June, GC was quick to reach out and note that earlier that very same week, Moody's Investors Service considered Guitar Center to be "Stable" and their rating was "Unchanged."

In October, this shift towards open lines of communication took an even more meaningful and measurable step forward with GC making a number of key executives freely available for one-on-one, face-to-face conversations. No questions were "off limits" and the responses given were expansive and candid – sometimes surprisingly so. Read on to learn more about what's going on at Guitar Center these days and, for the hardline critics out there, to perhaps learn that "the big, bad big-box" isn't necessarily the enemy.



## “It’s a lot of speculation – a lot of people who have an agenda, who’d like to see Guitar Center go away.” – Tim Martin, Guitar Center CFO

### New Guy, New Ideas

So who is Mike Pratt? Prior to succeeding GC’s interim CEO, Marty Hanaka, this past spring, Pratt had been the president and COO of Best Buy Canada and Future Shop for nearly five years, though his career with Future Shop began more than 20 years prior, as an in-store sales associate. He has a well-earned reputation for being a forward thinking leader, especially with respect to opportunities brought about by emerging technologies (during his tenure at Best Buy Canada, the operation drastically expanded its e-commerce and online presence, and also grew from 165 to 275 retail outlets).

Guitar Center’s VP of Communications & Corporate Affairs, Christopher Ian Bennett, served under Pratt at Best Buy Canada and says, “Having worked with Mike Pratt for many years, I’ve become very familiar with his style of leadership and his approach to strategic planning. He’s probably put more air miles between him and our Support Center in LA in the last six months than most CEOs might do in two years. Mike’s a front-line leader, in that he started his own career in retail 20 years ago exactly where our GC associates are today – in the stores, helping our customers. They drive the business and he believes strongly that’s how we’re going to be successful in 2014 and beyond.”

“Since Mike Pratt joined, it’s just been really fresh and exciting around here,” agrees Kevin Kazubowski, GC’s senior vice presi-

dent for our employees. I’d like to improve the environment, so that we’re not just one of the top *MI places* to work, but one of the top places to work, period.”

“When you grow as fast as we did back in the ‘90s, it’s inevitable that the level of talent isn’t going to be the same at each location,” concedes Kazubowski. “We recognize that and we’re fixing it. What worked in the ‘80s doesn’t work in 2013. I want to turn [being a sales associate] from being a job into being a career. I’m trying to get belly-to-belly with our associates and create independent thinkers with benefits that cascade down to the customer. What can we do to get the associates excited? It’s about inspiration – not inspection.”

Sounds good. But if attention to employee satisfaction is so crucial to Guitar Center, what was that whole unionization thing about...?

### The ‘Unionization Thing’

“I think there were and are individuals out there spreading misinformation,” says Haffeman. “You look at Occupy Wall Street, organizing fast-food workers to strike – the message people get bombarded with is, ‘Join the union, you can make more money!’ It’s an appealing message. But after Manhattan *did* vote to unionize, look at the pushes to do the same elsewhere: Brooklyn, Queens – at



Tim Martin



Dennis Haffeman



Christopher Ian Bennett

dent of stores. “The overall attitude is that we need to examine every single thing we do at Guitar Center and if it’s not perfect, then let’s change it. It really is all about helping people make music.”

Of course, it’s easy to talk a good game. Is anything tangible actually *happening* to back up all the hype? In fact, yes.

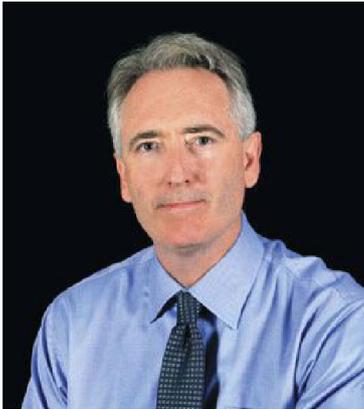
Most *MMR* readers are familiar with the stereotype of the know-nothing, late-teens GC sales clerk whose ineptitude frustrates legit customers for a few weeks until he or she quits/is fired and is then replaced by another, equally ephemeral hire. It’s a myth based in reality, but it turns out that “reality” is more than a little bit outdated. Employee turnover at Guitar Center stores has decreased nearly 40 percent since 2009 and GC continues to make significant investments into employee training and outreach. “It’s all about training, development, leadership, and an intense focus around people,” says Dennis Haffeman, executive vice president, HR. “We’re aligned around having oppor-

the end of the day, they all said ‘no.’ [Though efforts to unionize the Brooklyn and Queens GC stores failed earlier in the summer, employees at a Chicago GC did vote to form the company’s second-ever retail union in early August, 2013. – Ed.] I’m not – we’re not – ‘anti-union.’ I’m pro-associate.”

Ok, but... weren’t there complaints about sales quotas and employees not being able to make a living wage? “It’s absolutely *not* about metrics,” says Kazubowski. “It’s about behaviors. We’re not in the practice of docking commissions and when that has happened it’s not about not meeting a quota, it’s about not meeting service standards.”

“The RWDSU [Retail Wholesale and Department Store Union] has their own agenda – of course they do – and they’re a business,” says Haffeman. “It’s in their interest to try and attempt an organizing drive.”

Kazubowski points to improvements GC has already made specifically to make the employment experience better for



## Note From Joe

“A man always has two reasons for what he does  
—a good one, and the real one.”

—J.P. Morgan

It's hard to believe with the holidays still ahead of us that the NAMM Show is just around the corner. I saw the quote above and it really made me think about the many reasons that Winter NAMM has become the most important event on our industry's annual calendar.

There are so many “good” reasons to attend. We're all eager to see the latest innovations from our manufacturers—the new instruments, technological breakthroughs and cutting-edge designs, features and enhancements. We're “gear people” and, like you, I love to see what our Commercial Members have been working on all year. Our Retail Members come looking for that competitive edge in bringing all those great new products back to their customers and communities.

The educational offerings at the NAMM Show have also become a primary driver of attendance. In fact, many dealers tell me that NAMM U is the number one reason they come. I personally have a blast doing the opening “Breakfast of Champions” session and hope to see many of you there as we kick off the show.

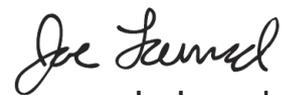
Nearly everyone who attends NAMM tells me that the show gives them a pulse on where the industry is going, a factor that's critical to their decision-making in the year ahead. Not to mention, all the peer-to-peer meetings, networking

and even casual conversations in the aisles and lobbies that serve to help drive Member success in the year ahead.

These are all good reasons, but are there more? Are there other “real” reasons people attend the show? I believe we go because we love what we do, we love this industry, and we know all of our friends will be there. This gathering of the musical tribes only happens once a year and, for many of us, it is the best trip (for some the only trip!) all year. We go because we're proud that our industry brings music to the world and we know that a successful show will help support music and music education around the world.

Our industry is full of fun, passionate and creative people who all chose to do what they loved most, knowing that doing that was more important than anything else. And when the global music products industry gathers each year in Anaheim, these truths are affirmed and we're once again reminded that we are the luckiest people in the world.

So no matter what motivates you to make the trip to the NAMM Show—the good reasons and the real ones—we'll look forward to seeing you soon.



**Joe Lamond**  
NAMM PRESIDENT AND CEO



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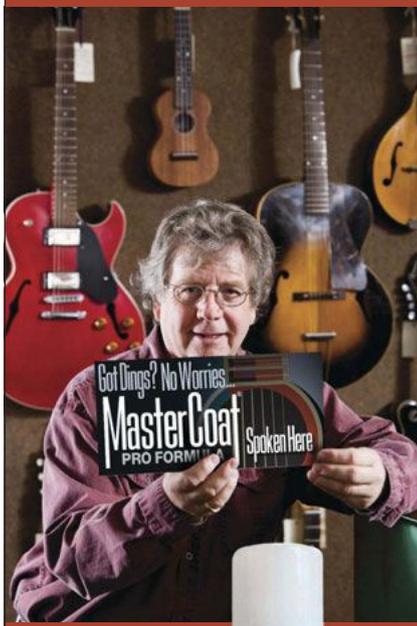
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associates – additional paid holidays, wage increases, hiring Global professional services firm Towers Watson as consultants – and says to any doubters out there (on Guitar Center’s payroll, or otherwise), “Hang back. Good stuff is going to happen!”

### Debt, Bain, & Profit

Unquestionably the primary driver of rumor and speculation regarding Guitar Center is the organization’s perceived debt and the fear that, if GC is losing money for Bain Capital (who

MARS’ top 20 unsecured creditors were MI vendors, with claims in excess of \$13.6 million, according to bankruptcy filings.

Any hiccup – real or perceived – regarding GC’s fiscal health sets the blogosphere a-twitter. Legitimate news sources and consumer message boards, alike, post ominous headlines such as, “Bain Capital’s Guitar Center Hits Rough Patch” (*Reuters*, June 12 2013) or, “Life Support: How Long Until They Pull the Plug on Guitar Center?” (*The Tone King*, November 5 2012).

### “If it’s not perfect, then let’s change it.”

– Kevin Kazubowski, Guitar Center executive vice president of stores

purchased Guitar Center Holdings, Inc. in 2007), then the whole chain could go the way of MARS Music. I write “fear” not because everyone out in MI Land is a big GC fan, but because – whether you like the company or not – if Guitar Center were to go under, we’d *all* be in for a world of trouble. MARS, at its peak, fielded 49 stores – a far cry from GC’s current tally of 253 – and when that business was liquidated, 19 of

“People unfortunately don’t do the research,” says Tim Martin, Guitar Center’s CFO. “Bain is a very smart group of investors.”

He says the firm knew what they were getting into. “Quite frankly, they bought Guitar Center at the height of the market, at the highest possible price they could, so it’s not going to be simple, but if they really wanted out, they could have gotten out years

ago. And I will tell you: if they were at all concerned about the future of the business, they would *not* let me spend over \$60 million a year on capital expenditures. That's not the way business is run. Anyone who tells you otherwise is crazy."

Speaking of Bain, why are folks so suspicious of the group? "People love to bash Bain – Mitt Romney made that very simple," Martin asserts. "It's a nice headline and it gives people attention. I've never heard anything come out of Bain that would be detrimental to our employees or our customers. They're supportive of long-term growth and excited about the future of the business."

#### Not Too Big to Fail – Too Profitable to Fail

Here's the thing: Big business *can* be confusing. It's not surprising that to an outside observer it'd seem incongruous that GC is attached to an extremely large amount of debt (often assumed to be in the neighborhood of \$1.3 billion), while simultaneously opening up gleaming new retail stores at an impressive clip (15 in 2013, alone).

In the spirit of saving the best for last, Tim Martin's detailed explanations, reactions, and observations close out this look under the hood at Guitar Center:

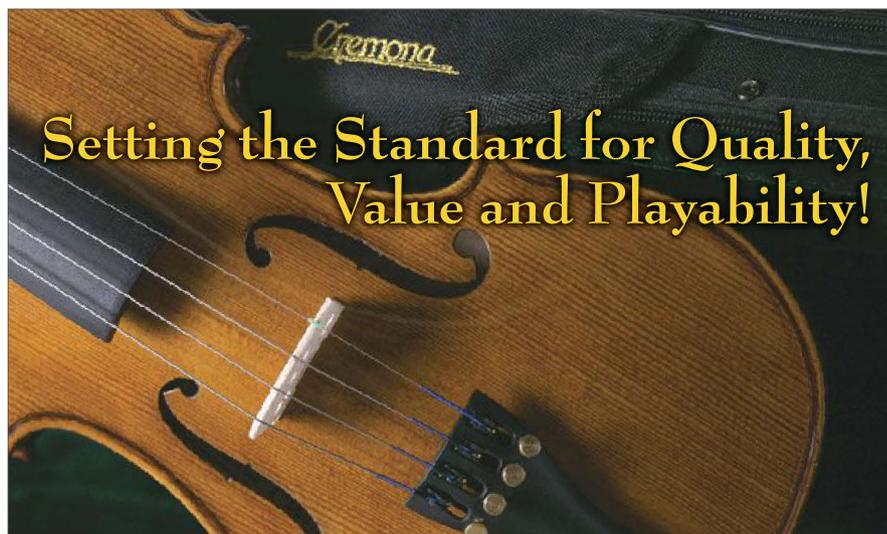
"I think that it's important to separate the business from the capital structure. That's a unique way to look at things, but I think it's really important. In looking at *the business* you have to realize that last year the business made over \$200 million dollars in EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, and Amortization). It's the operations of the business that generate positive returns on investment.

"When you look at the pure financials and people look at what we have to file with the Securities and Exchange Commission – which is absolutely right in accounting vernacular – it includes non-cash items like depreciation, amortization of intangibles, and it also includes a pretty sizable interest payment. If you own a house, you pay interest on that house. Well, the people who own the business also pay interest on the business. That doesn't mean that the house isn't worth a lot of money, or even generating positive returns

on investment if you're renting it. It just means you have a related cost with that investment.

"We have 253 stores, as of now, that are all cash flow positive. We have no stores, as of the last time I checked, that are not making money. That includes Music & Arts stores. There are very few retailers out there who can

say that sort of thing. So, the whole 'GC is going out of business' philosophy is flawed in many, many ways. At the end of the day, if you have stores that are making money, there's no way they're going out of business. You can separate the ownership from the operation and say that the operations of the business *aren't* going away. It's not like



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**“I’m not – we’re not – ‘anti-union.’ I’m pro-associate.”** – Dennis Haffeman, Guitar Center executive vice president HR

we’re going to disappear, it’s not like customers aren’t going to be able to shop at Guitar Center, because nobody in their right mind would close stores that are making money.

“There is a capital structure discus-

sion that’s on the other side of the coin. That’s ownership by Bain, that’s ownership of debt by one large entity who owns about \$830 million dollars [of GC] who are long-term investors and very good partners, and then there’s a con-

glomerate of 30 to 40 banks depending on the time of year that own about \$620 million dollars as well. Those are numbers that move around a little bit, based on interest payments.

“The reality is, if interest payments ever became a problem for the company and we were not able to make a payment to this entity, there is absolutely no way they would ever let something happen, because the guys who are above them in the capital structure, who own less of the debt than them, would get control. There’s no way they’re going to let that happen.

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“That’s the reality of what a leveraged buyout is. Somebody borrowed money to buy a business that’s going to generate cash flow. They do what they want to do with the business – dust it off, fix it up – and then you take it public again and you use those proceeds to pay off the money you borrowed before. You don’t use the operating proceeds to pay off the debt – you use the operating proceeds to pay off the interest on the debt. Nobody ever thought we would actually pay off our

*continued on page 50*

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**SOUND LEGACY**

# Gene Joly of Musician's Friend

In early September, Gene Joly – previously Guitar Center's executive vice president of stores – was named president of GC's Musician's Friend (MF) division. In the short weeks since, he's unquestionably hit the ground running, helping finalize the transition from MF's previous headquarters in Medford, Oregon to the new digs on the GC Campus in Westlake Village, California.

"We're moving pretty fast!" Joly laughs. "All the pieces are coming into place. We were also fortunate that some of the really great people in Medford did decide to make the move down here."

Though he's new to the title, Gene Joly is no stranger to the online MI realm.

"I spent three years in Medford learning catalog e-commerce after many, many years of brick and mortar," he explains. "With catalog e-commerce, the customer is the same, the gear is the same, the competition is mostly the same, but the go-to-market strategy is completely different and the economics are totally different. Inventory is a great example: A typical GC store will have 7,000 SKUs – we have over 70,000 SKUs and growing."

Expanding on the different rules that apply in MF's world, Joly observes, "When a brick and mortar merchant makes a decision to bring something into our stores, that could easily be 800 – 1,000 pieces, so you want to make damn sure you've figured out the risk-reward there, because if it's a mistake, it's an expensive mistake

and difficult to unwind. Whereas with e-commerce, I can sell one a month of something and get 6 turns a year. The industry average is something like 2.2 turns, so 6 turns is great."

Any move comes with growing pains and Joly concedes that "it's been a difficult transition and MF lost its brand voice a bit and has not been as fast to market as it needs to be" during the process.

When *MMR* spoke with him, Joly had only gotten his crew into



**"This is how industries move. Competition creates excellence."**

their new offices two weeks previous. "The main thing right now is to get the team in place and organized, get very clear definition about what we own and make sure that everybody knows how to work with one another," he notes. "Then, obviously, continuing to prepare for the holiday season, which we've been working on since day one."

The move to Westlake Village does come with some tangible upside for MF's overall business model. "We have way more access to vendors than we did in Medford," Joly says. "So we have vendors that are here every week – we have a lot of vendors who are here every week. Another great thing about the move is digital marketing – these are all the folks who do pay per click, SEO, social media, and all that. In Medford we had a very hard time attracting people with those skill-sets. It's a booming, cutting-edge field and these people are a younger demo, very tech-savvy, and they tend to want to live in major, urban areas like San Francisco, New York City, L.A., Boston, so getting them to consider moving to Oregon... Here we have a huge team of people dedicated to all that, so that's another definite advantage."

Joly knows there's work ahead and that the online world moves at lightning speed, but he's looking at the challenges ahead with the confidence that comes from 38 years of experience in the MI industry. "I am *not* lacking strong competition – which is good!" he says with a laugh. "This is how industries move. Competition creates excellence as we strive to outdo one another, and we all benefit as consumers."

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**“We’re going to be successful in 2014 and beyond.”** - Christopher Ian Bennett, Guitar Center VP of communications & corporate affairs

*continued on from page 46*

debt with operational proceeds. There are a lot of people who say, ‘They can’t service their debt load,’ Well, duh! We never *intended* to. The owners never bought Guitar Center thinking, ‘We’re going to use the \$200 million a year

to pay off the debt, they said, We’re going to use the \$200 million a year to reinvest in new stores, to grow the business.’

“I think the noise around our debt issue is overblown. At the end of the day,



I don’t have a material debt payment that we have to make for a number of years. The good news is it’s a lot of speculation, a lot of people who have an agenda, who’d like to see Guitar Center go away. The reality is, even if for some reason there was a financial distress scenario on the capital structure side of the house, the stores are all profitable. There’s no bankruptcy court in a million years that’s going to shut down profitable stores. That’s not how bankruptcy courts work. It’s not even that we’re too big to fail – we’re too profitable to fail.” **MMR**

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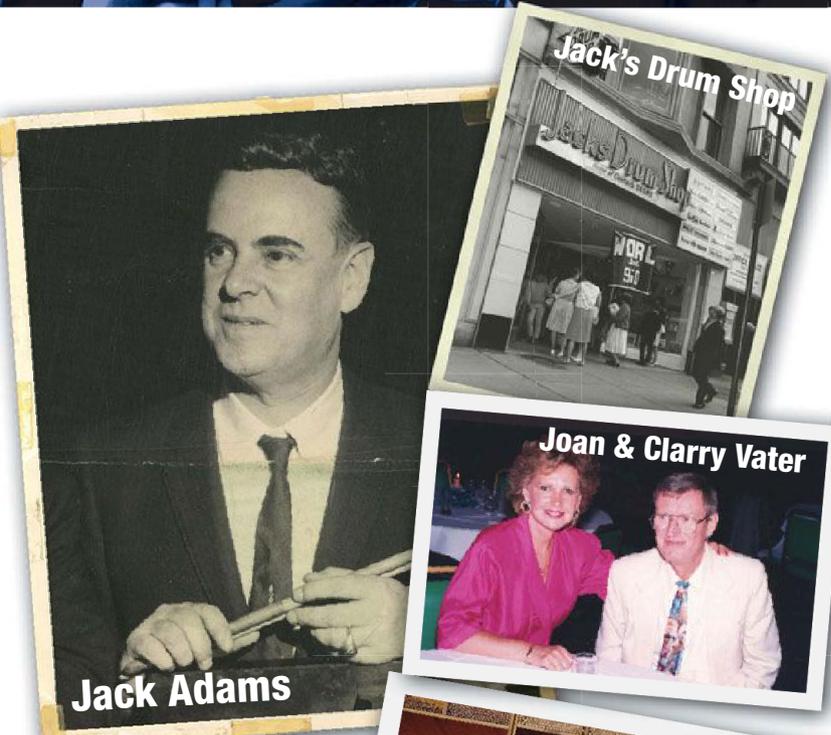
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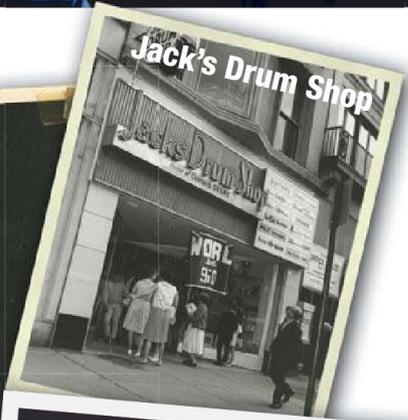
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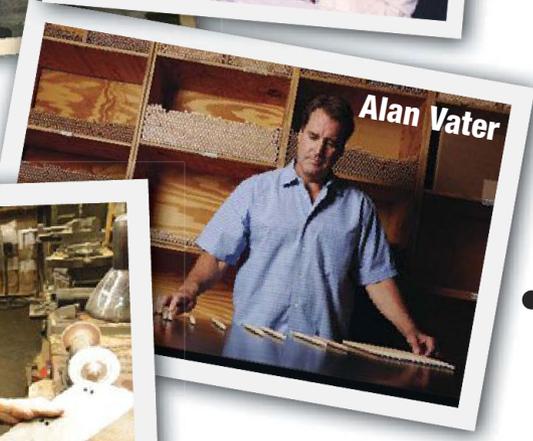
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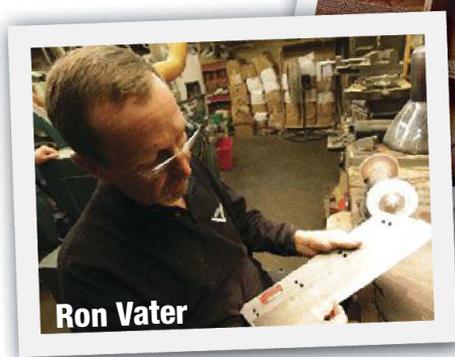
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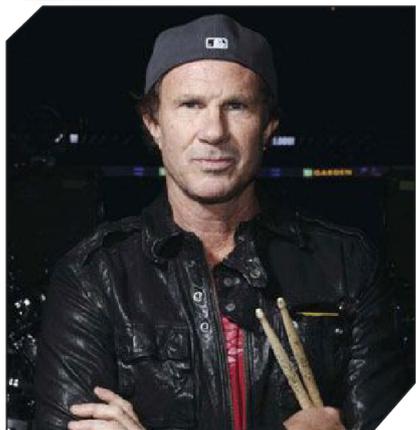
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*"I just love how it's still a family business, starting with grandpa Jack, then going to Clarry, and down to Alan and Ron. No corporate sell-outs here, folks...in fact, they're the only major stick company that isn't owned by a "parent company" now. Awesome right? These guys live, sleep, breathe, eat, and dream of drumsticks. They get good wood about good wood, and are totally obsessed with making the best sticks possible."*

**-Chad Smith [Red Hot Chili Peppers] A Proud Vater Artist for 20 years**



# Retail: Drum Center of Portsmouth

52

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“ I had an idea about the type of shop I wanted to create, and I felt it had not been done, so I went for it. ”

# Drum Center

## of Portsmouth Makes a Play for High End

By Kevin M. Mitchell

"The boutique area is our main focus, and that's where we do a lot of our business," Shane Kinney says of his Drum Center of Portsmouth.

It's that focus that has made Kinney something of a retailing star in a considerably short time. He opened his operation not even five years ago, and he already had to expand his brick and mortar operation. But that's just half of the story – or 22 percent of it, rather. Right along side of that he's built an impressive online operation where his reputation for high-end, quality, not-seen-just-anywhere products has earned him a noble following of drummers. How impressive? His online sales account for 78 percent of his total business.

"There is nothing that will replace that feeling of holding a guitar and strumming it, or holding a drum in your hand and hitting it with a stick, but people who think that's the *only* way to sell instruments will just go out of business eventually," he says. "This is the new reality."

Kinney started playing drums at 12, and his loitering in music stores eventually earned him a job at a drum store in Portland, Maine, where he worked for 10 years. His musical journey started in metal and spread into pop, jazz, and funk. "I also developed an interest in the sound of the drums and cymbals that were being

captured on recordings," he says. His obsession would develop into a never-ending quest for the "perfect" snare sound, which would serve him well when he opened his own store in 2009. "I had an idea about the type of shop I wanted to create, and I felt it had not been done, so I went for it. It was the best choice I ever made."

Drum Center has a laudable website. Kinney turned to colleague Andy Gulbrandson and made him a consultant for the first few years. "He still offers good feedback to me!" Kinney says. Also, one of his customers happened to be talented with a video camera, leading to a video presence that's sent the Drum Center to the forefront of YouTube demonstration videos – he's notched over five million views on his videos, which number over 2,500.

"I try to present everything the way I would like it presented," he says. "One thing I've found is that if you're sincere and enthusiastic, that will come across to the viewer."

To see an upstart do so well so fast is certainly an anomaly and one Kinney appreciates. "I know, I can't believe it either!" he laughs. "When I started, I had just my own dollars – I didn't borrow anything. The first 10 months, I was the only employee." Today he has a staff of five, and that staff covered for him while he sat down with *MMR* to talk the business of drums.

### "I LIKE TO TAKE RISKS"

**MMR:** It was risky opening a drum shop during the Great Recession ...

**Shane Kinney:** My joke about that is I'm a musician – so I'm always broke and it's *always* a recession! [*laughs*] So it didn't matter to me if times were good or not. I was used to not having money and I like to take risks. But it was just something I had to do.

I was living in Portland at the time, so it required me to relocate, and I'm technically in the Boston trade area.

### What was it like opening up lines?

**SK:** I did run into resistance with some of the major manufacturers despite the fact I met all the requirements. That was a big problem for me in the beginning! I had everything going against me that first year.

I did get to open up Mapex and Sonor, who make great drums, but weren't "market" names. Mapex and Sonor, are great partners, but if you want a drum customer to think you're serious you need to have those others. It's easier to sell a Mapex product if you have Pearl and Tama as well.

### What did you do?

**SK:** What that did was force me to go boutique, which was an opportunity I hung my hat on and it's a big part of my explosive growth. I'm very grateful that all happened! Otherwise I would have been forced to sell Yamaha and Pearl at the lowest price like everybody else.

### But today you carry Yamaha, Pearl, Gretsch, Ludwig, Tama.

**SK:** Yeah – we carry everything but DW now! What happened was those vendors needed me to "prove myself" and I did.

### Cymbals?

**SK:** The big guys: Zildjian, Sabian, Meinl, Paiste. Then UFIP, Istanbul Agop, Istanbul Mehmet, and Crescent ... it's an interesting time for cymbals, and a little challenging. What we're finding working for us are the boutique lines, the smaller lines. We do well with Meinl and UFIP. Zildjian is of course a good seller.

### And how about hardware?

**SK:** We do a lot of the hardware that comes from the manufacturers of the drums we carry. Otherwise, we sell a lot of Trick



and Axis products. Gibraltar thrones are big sellers!

#### Cases?

**SK:** We do a good amount of SKB and Protecstor.

#### Electronic Drums?

**SK:** Yeah we carry Yamaha but barely sell it because the people who are selling online bundle it and sell it so cheaply that it's not worth it to train my staff on it and put it on the floor for a customer to come in and ask us to match [an online price] and make \$15 on a \$700 sale.

**I've heard that the "problem" in the drum market is that the moderate sets at the \$1,500 level are so good it's harder to make that high end sale – true for you?**

**SK:** That's the issue. A lot of cus-

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tomers are getting hip to the fact that there are really great sets in the \$1,200 to \$1,500 range. These customers are your middle class guys and when they go to buy their first "high end" set they are looking at the Pearls, Tamas, and Yamahas in that range, kits that are as good as those twice that price. So the high-end drum market has suffered quite a bit. However, on the boutique side, there's lots of activity.

**I'm intrigued by your wall of 175 snare drums. I thought of a drummer I play with who has 42 snares, which is unusual, no? But like guitarists, it seems drummers should have more options...**

**SK:** You just nailed it. There's a different tool for every job. Just like guitarists have a lot of different guitars, drummers should have a lot of different snares. And I try to communicate that a high quality instrument gives you inspiration – it makes you a *better player*.

**That wall is in itself inspiring...**

**SK:** Thanks – and the majority of them are boutique. We are the only store in America that carries some of those brands. We have exotic ones, and people come for that. I have someone coming in from Hungary today to look at them!

What's funny about that wall is it really just came about by happenstance. When we moved into this new space, the shelving was already there. We were going to tear it down, but thought about trying to fill it with snares. We didn't know how we could get that many snares, though. Two months later, there we were, putting in two more shelves!

**What are the hot boutique snares?**

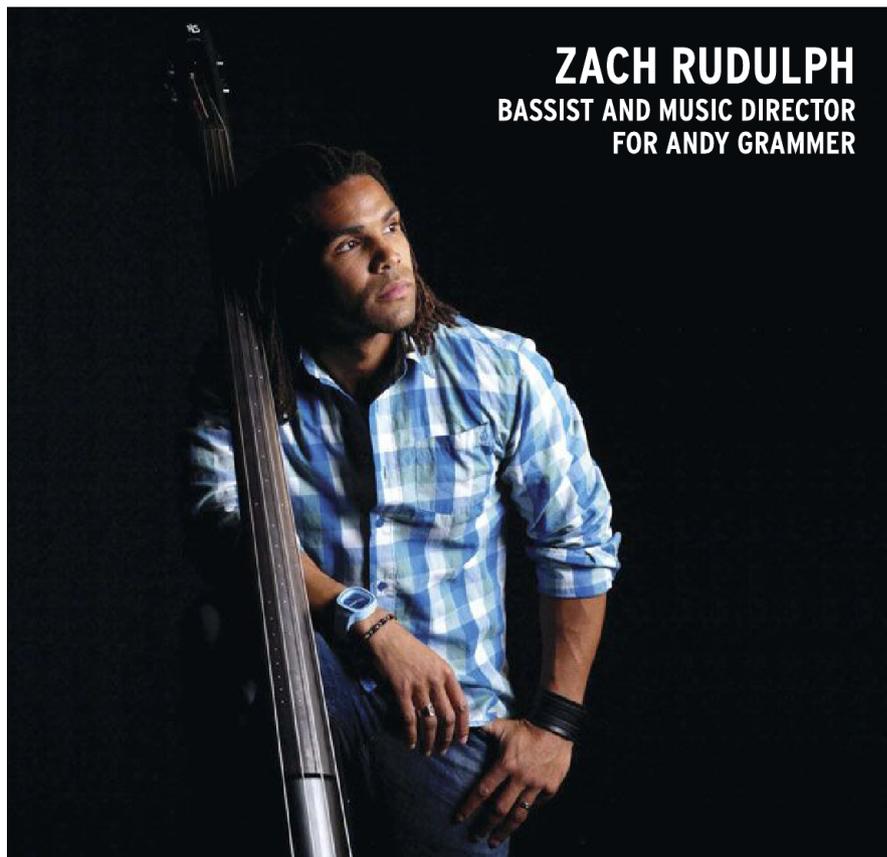
**SK:** Dunnett has been a consistent mover since day one. Canopus does well, as does Noble and Cooley.

## KEEPING IT PERSONAL

**Your website is very slick ...**

**SK:** [laughs] It did not start out that way! But now all aspects of the operation are symbiotic. We kept the original store, and opened up a bigger storefront two doors down. The original store

“ One thing I've found is that if you're sincere and enthusiastic [on video], that will come across to the viewer. ”



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M. Parish

Shane Kinney in the extensive video production studio, where he's filmed over 2,500 demonstration videos for the shop's YouTube account.

is shipping and receiving, and lessons, plus that's where we shoot product pictures and video.

Everything is interconnected via cloud-based technology, and that took a while to set up. And now it doesn't matter how it sells, just so it sells!

**What other kind of conversations are you having with drummers?**

**SK:** We find drummers have an unquenchable search for tuning – it's really a black art. Even a lot of famous drummers are coming to us, insecure about how they are tuning drums. We like to help with that, teach them how tuning a snare drum different ways can create varying sounds.

**Videos and selling online are big for you, but what about the personal relationship part?**

**SK:** A lot of sales are to clients we have built relationships with. Actually, when I say I sell online, in many instances it's really selling over the phone! They see something online, then call and talk to us because they trust us. Our staff is extremely knowledgeable. We specialize in expertise.

**From your perch, what's trending?**

**SK:** There's continued interest in American brands – Ludwig and Gretsch are both enjoying a lot of interest. People want to buy U.S.A., but there's the "hip" factor too.

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**"I try to communicate that the high quality instrument gives you inspiration – it makes you a better player."**

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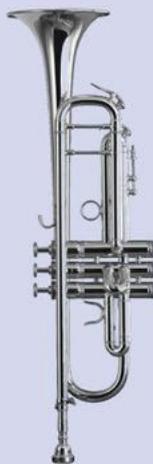


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We do a lot of Yamaha custom kits for recording but in general, people want to put their money in brands they trust. Ten years ago, people would buy anything from ABC drum company, but today people want the legacy names.

### How about drum sizes?

**SK:** We're seeing bass drum sizes get smaller, going back to the 14-inch or 16-inch by 22. We always suggest the smaller size because they sound better. While the first time buyer is going with the five or six piece, the pros tend toward the three or four piece. Also we're seeing hardware getting lighter! Drummers are tired of carrying it around!

### What's your goal going forward?

**SK:** Last year, we focused on efficiency, and now my new target is profitability. So the answer isn't getting another drum line – in fact we might trim a few. But the target is trying to continue new and better experiences. One thing I'm proud of is a lot of competitors are trying to adopt what we've done, and that motivates me to do more.

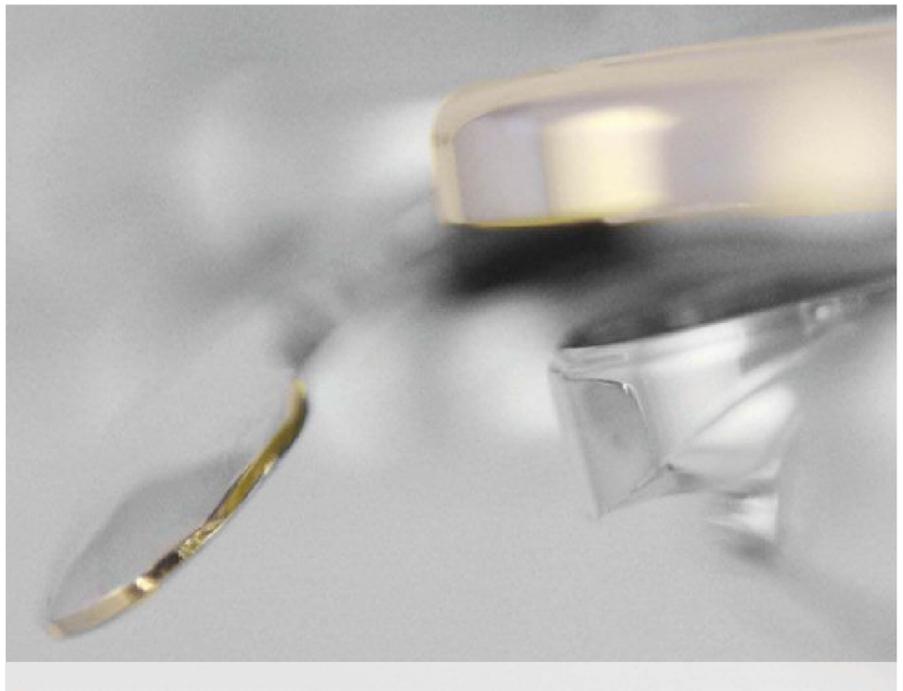
At this point, I think we as an industry need to know it's not about products, it's about how to create drummers. Let's create more drummers!

### Any idea on how to do that?

**SK:** No! [laughs]

### Sounds like you're having fun.

**SK:** I really am. I can't believe it. It's really a dream to walk around the most expensive, high-end drums in the world and talk to amazing drummers about them. A lot of times we'll be crazy-busy, and I think, "Boy, I could be selling insurance right now!"



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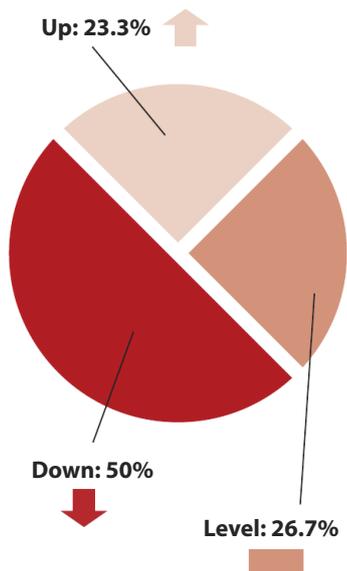
# Drum Dealers Take a Beatdown

## Drum & Percussion Market 2013

MMR recently sent out a survey to over 1,000 subscribers to get some feedback on the state of the drum and percussion retail market and... the results are not pretty. Half of the participants in this poll report that sales are down compared to 2013, with an equal percentage saying that low-end sales are where the motion is for their business. There are some regional differences played out in the responses we received regarding trends in the market, but overall it seems like times are tough for this segment. Or, as Larry Miller of Mansfield, Ohio's Metronome Music puts it: "What's to say? Drum sales stink."



### Compared to this time last year, your drum & percussion sales are...



Worst year ever for acoustic drums. Accessories do great. We won't be carrying kits anymore. They take up too much real estate that can go to keyboards. Keyboard sales are through the roof. Other dealers we work with pretty much say the same thing.

**Chris Carusos**  
Georgia Music Warehouse  
Savannah, Ga.

Craigslist has stolen most sales and profit margins are too low to stock enough to be a destination shop.

**David Chandler**  
Kentucky Music Co.  
Bowling Green, Ky.

What's to say? Drum sales stink. If I knew the answer, sales wouldn't be down.

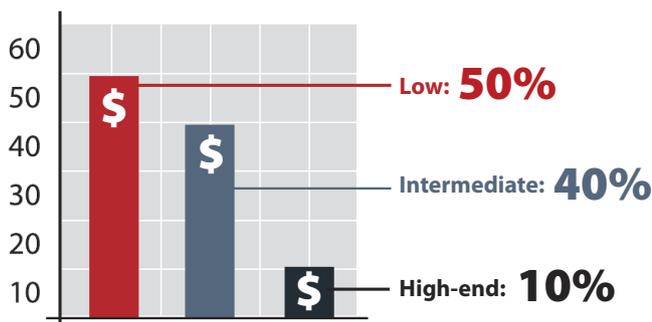
**Larry Miller**  
Metronome Music, Inc.  
Mansfield, Ohio

Our drum sales remain fairly consistent from year to year, although we would love to see more young players get involved in drumming. It's more costly on the average, than say... playing guitar, and a lot of parents shudder at the thought of their child playing percussion, so those are a couple things that keep more drummers from starting to play. With good, affordable digital drums on the market now, we try to suggest that [option] in hopes of encouraging more people to play drums. As we know, good drummers are hard to find anywhere in the country. And drummers aren't usually like guitarists, for instance, who may have six or seven of their given instrument at home, so that slows sales, and the pro guys save up and buy their dream kit and that's it!

**Jake Biggerstaff**  
Strings Attached Music  
West Plains, Mo.



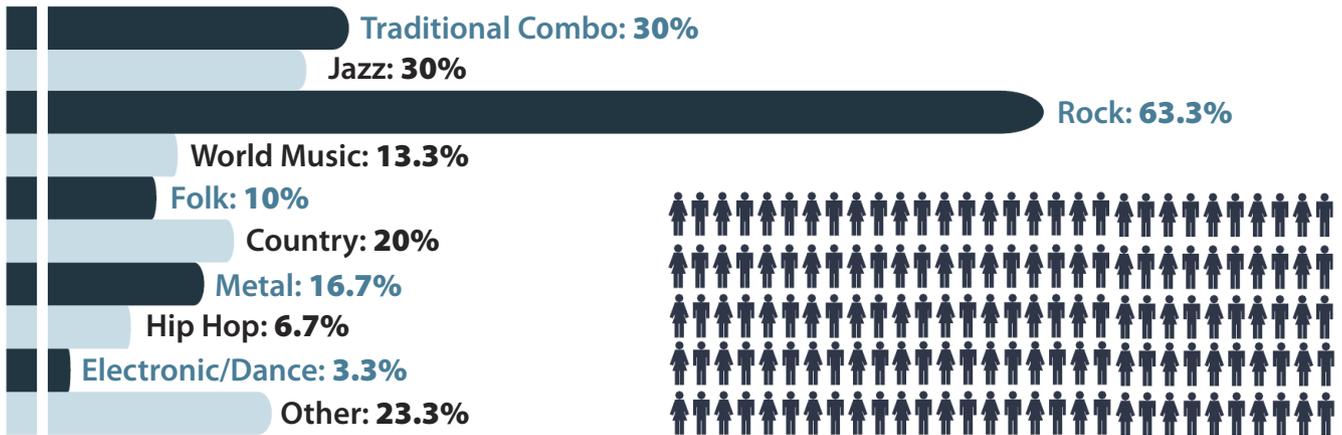
### What price points are doing best for your operation?



**"Overall, the drum business has been soft for a few years."**

**- Spidey Mulrooney**  
The Music Shop

## What genre of music is driving the most "new customer" traffic to your drums & percussion department in 2013?



## What larger trends have you been noticing in the market, with respect to drums and related gear?

I would have to say cymbals and cymbal companies. The O-Zone cymbal and other non-traditional type cymbals have sparked the interest of a lot of drummers to enhance and expand their sound sources while bringing attention to their setup. And the best part about it is that it can be done for for couple hundred dollars or less.

**John Spinelli**  
*Seminole Music & Sound • Seminole, Fla.*

[We're] doing well with used sets and cymbals. We see less foot traffic each year. Drum lessons holding steady. Overall, the drum business has been soft for a few years. Hand-held percussion and Latin percussion is also slowing down.

**Spidey Mulrooney**  
*The Music Shop • Southington, Conn.*

Cymbal buyers are looking for high quality and low price, [so] they're willing to try new brands. Gong buyers are looking for high-end and big.

**Andrew Borakove**  
*Gongs Unlimited • Lincoln, Neb.*

A vast majority of our drum set sales are to beginners. We have a lesson program with 50 drum students and encourage all to purchase electronic drum sets. And several independent drum teachers in our town feel the same way and refer their students to buy electronic kits from us.

**Britt Cawthon**  
*Capital Music Center • Austin, Texas*

Most percussion is going into the realm of MIDI triggering and beat machines.

**Santino Rumore**  
*Paragon Music • Tampa, Fla.*

Very small jazz kits or sets with large bass drums have been selling very well. Drum sets with a 22" or 24" bass drum has been slow unless it is a vintage set in a rare finish.

**Rusty Olson**  
*Rockhaus • Milwaukee, Wis.*

It seems like there is less excitement about new products. Maybe because big box stores have a big sale every other weekend, and continuously change which brands they throw their weight behind.

**Doug Maenhoudt**  
*Metro Music • Memphis, Tenn.*



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# MI SalesTrak Celebrates 10th Anniversary

## The Industry's True Number Crunchers

By Kevin M. **Mitchell**

Before Clark Johnson and Jim Hirschberg brought the practice of using objective retail sales data to the MI industry, decisions were ultimately just guesswork. But 10 years ago, the two launched MI SalesTrak, a retail sales reporting service based on decades' worth of experience tracking numbers in other industries. They studiously collect and organize real retail sales data from MI retailers for the betterment of the MI world.

"Back then, the music industry was going through another evolution of change," says Johnson. "Manufacturers were moving overseas, the big chains were expanding, and NAMM was calling on everyone to get more professional." Part of that striving for professionalism involved better numbers, key to better decision-making.

They saw an opportunity to use their experience gained at the NPD Group, a top-ten market research firm, and apply it to an industry they had a passion for (Johnson is a semi-pro bass player who still gets out and plays, and Hirschberg a long time

guitarist whose first job after college was at Studio Instrument Rentals). "NPD had a wonderful strategy of getting sales data from retailers and packaging it into reports, and they were doing it for industries like consumer electronics, car stereos, cameras, and appliances. We saw a need for that approach in an industry we care about."

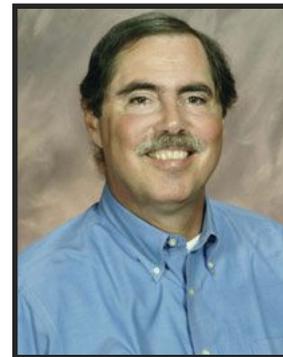
"At this point, the MI industry that we love is too small, too quirky for a major research company, so we took the opportunity to go out on our own and create a boutique business."



Jim Hirschberg with his custom made Ed Roman guitar.



Clark Johnson performing with his band at a local street fair.



Clark Johnson

Their launch proved that this industry was hungry for information: Within two years, eight of the top ten brands in the industry became clients. "Another key benchmark was in 2005," says Hirschberg. "We went to a NAMM Show and walked into several booths, and industry executives were showing us new products that were launched using our data."

### Real Data

"We don't offer opinions, we offer data," Johnson says. The first guitar report they ever ran charted monthly sales and inventory units, and held some surprises for them: they realized that unlike the consumer electronics industry, guitars took a lot longer to turn over, leading them to understand that retailers need to stock a lot of SKUs, and they don't all turn so fast.

"You could argue that there's too much stuff out there!" says Johnson. "But with our data, a manufacturer can cut through that."

"The inventory position that is revealed in our reports is helpful in production planning," Hirschberg says. "The vendors can have the right amount of product out at the right time, and minimize out-of-stock/overstock situations."

MI SalesTrak methodology takes all the guesswork out of figuring out what is selling and what is not. "We work exclusively with the item-level retail point-of-sale data," Hirschberg explains. The company has partnered with over 80 retailers representing more than 600 retail outlets throughout the nation. They track brands and models in 18 product categories.

In exchange for their participation, retailers get back a market

summary – specific, accurate brand and model-level sales data that they would otherwise not be able to afford.

“Retailers use the information to benchmark their performance,” Hirschberg says. “They can compare their product mix with what’s selling nationally, and determine what top sellers they should have.” They stress that all individual retailer information is kept confidential – no data that identifies an individual retailer is reported or released.

Their retail partner pool is diverse and varied, and runs from the smallest independents through to the largest chains, and includes online retailers as well. “And we are always looking for additional retailers to partner with,” says Johnson.

Hirschberg adds that another benefit to MI retailers participating in their program is that it actually helps their vendors to serve them better. “I was a manufacturer’s rep some years ago and retailers had all sorts of comments and suggestions on product features and prices. Those conversations are difficult for a vendor to quantify and act upon, but by participating in MI SalesTrak retailers, help the industry to create products that are better



Jim Hirschberg

for them to sell. It’s a win/win”

MI manufacturers use the data to spot trends and make more informed decisions. “The product planner can use our data as a tool to find the sweet spot of exactly where their new product should be positioned,” Hirschberg says. “And everybody will take the data and dig into it to the level that they want. Different manufacturers can key in on different market segments depending on where they want to position themselves – it’s that rich.”

MI SalesTrak are members of NAMM and have participated in NAMM tech

advisory committees on the developing industry standard categories. “There are sometimes different opinions on how to categorize a particular product and it helps to have industry-wide standard classifications,” Hirschberg says.

#### Expanding What is Tracked

From their perch, they get a good view of things. Hirschberg says that lately, “instead of stocking a dozen of a particular SKU, dealers are taking one each of every color/variation of product, so they merchandise a wide assortment rather than a deep backup.”

Johnson adds that during the recession, he was surprised that while product sales took a dip, he saw independent MI retailers were resourceful in other ways, expanding lesson programs, for example. “The Mom and Pop stores have proven to be very resilient, especially compared to the consumer electronics market. The smarter ones were bringing in boutique amps and effect pedals, venturing out and carrying things the big boxes weren’t.”

It’s a journey, not a destination at MI SalesTrak, as they continue to add new products to their database (currently over 88,000 SKUs, with over 500 new items added each month). And they are starting to track new categories – from Groove Production

Stations (technology-driven products) to Folk and Traditional Instruments. “My observation is the industry is moving in two opposite directions at the same time – one technology-driven, and one very traditional!” Hirschberg laughs.

Using inaccurate or incomplete data – can actually be worse data than using no data and going with your gut. “I got an email recently that declared a list of products as the hottest-selling Christmas items,” Hirschberg says. “And I was like, ‘Where is the data on that?’”

Johnson adds that when you see a chart that “shows” guitar sales are up three percent ... “well, what business decision could you make on that? You need details – brand, models, prices – otherwise there’s not enough information to take action on it.”

The instrument-loving duo admit to the hazards of a job where they spend all day looking at instruments of all kinds. “It can be dangerous if you’re prone to ‘GAS’ – Gear Acquisition Syndrome” Hirschberg says.

Assuming they do more studying of instrument sales than buying said instruments, they will continue to serve the industry as no one else can. “We look forward to the next ten years,” Hirschberg says.

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# New Trends in Consumer Showrooming Habits

## Increased mobile shopping finds retailers chasing moving targets

By Matt **Parish**

**I**t's probably been years since you first noticed customers wandering through your aisles with their eyes fixed on their smartphone, checking out alternate offers for merch that's sitting right there on your shelves.

"Showrooming," as this growing practice is known, has become an unavoidable pitfall of brick-and-mortar retail in pretty much every context, from national chains down to the mom and pops. The upcoming holiday season will likely see the practice at its peak – a report from the National Retail Federation last month found that the average U.S. consumer plans to do 40 percent of his or her holiday shopping online this year.

A major new study from the Columbia Business School's Center on Global Brand Leadership goes a long way toward breaking down this trend into a number of interesting findings at all levels of retail.

The study, called "Showrooming and the Rise of the Mobile-Assisted Shopper," took a big look at 3,000 shoppers in three markets (United States, Canada, and the U.K.). The results led researchers to categorize mobile shoppers into five groups.

### The Five Types of Mobile Shoppers

**Traditionalists** (30 percent) always prefer the in-store experience.

**Experience-Seekers** (32 percent) are actively searching for the best shopping experience.

**Price Sensitives** (19.4 percent) are always looking for deals wherever they may be.

**Savvys** (12.6 percent) are "calculating, but persuadable."

**Exploiters** (6.1 percent) go into a hunt focused only on the lowest price.

**“A strong emotional connection usually exists over the purchase of a musical instrument. Shop owners should do their best to amplify that experience and provide whatever added value they can.”**

– Matthew Quint, Center on Global Brand Leadership, Columbia University

For MI dealers, there's bad news and there's good news.

First off, everyone is doing it. Far from a generational problem, the study found that 74 percent of mobile shoppers are over 29 years old. Simply put, there are no demographic blind spots in this trend. Store managers won't have to look hard – according to the study, one in five consumers is checking their mobile device for deals. Retailers must adapt to the growth of mobile shopping if they want to survive.

The good news, though, comes from several directions. A key point is that small retailers have the most to offer mobile shoppers in terms of customer engagement. So while chains like Wal-Mart and Target spend millions developing ways to funnel in-store m-shoppers to their own online equivalents, small retail stores can use tools at hand to best build lasting relationships with their customers.

Matthew Quint, the center's director and the author of the study (along with David Rogers and Rick Ferguson), explains: “For small business owners, the most important strategy is to be completely devoted to customer experience,” he told *MMR*. “The advantage in your category is that a strong emotional connection usually exists over the purchase of a musical instrument.”

“To combat showrooming, you've got to up your game,” says Jameson Stewart, a sales manager at Boston guitar shop Mr. Music. Stewart sees a lot of customers relying more and more on web services for research – not just price, but product details and user reviews as well. “That's what I'm here for, theoretically,” he says. “I have to make sure to go through the whole schpiel with them – ask them what they're curious about, if they'd like to take it out to try, and be a salesman for them.”

Scott Emmerman, the director of sales and marketing at Hohner, Inc., says the issue is serious. “Showrooming is kind of an epidemic,” he says. “The big box stores

really started the term and began dealing with it early, and music stores have some protections. For instance, there really are no two guitars that are exactly the same – there are lots of nuances you have to see in person.” He notes that several sectors of MI, though, are more in line with typical commodities – you're in competition with anyone else who's supplying them.

Emmerman recommends building communities akin to the one he found at a local Chicago music shop when he was growing up. He points to practices of maintaining expertise in particular product segments and genres, along with adding value to sales with lessons and services deals.

And maybe there's an even more proactive role for the manufacturers in this as well. Instruction-enhanced guitar company Fretlight Guitars' new “Fretlight Showroom” program provides retailers with an interactive POP display and demo guitar (the retailers are not required to stock Fretlight inventory). In return, the company will send incentive payments to the retailer for all mobile purchases of the guitar made within a 25-mile radius of the store.

Bill Abel, Fretlight's director of sales, says Fretlight developed the idea to help battle showrooming, as well as retailers' inventory risks. “Traveling from dealer to dealer, you see what they go through with manufacturers,” he said. “With this, we said to dealers, ‘We'll worry about selling the products, we just want you to display it. Hopefully, we'll drive some business to your store.’”

Abel says he's hoping to take advantage of the unique role that retail shops play in providing longevity to MI consumers, giving them a lifetime of reasons not to just leave their guitars under their bed and forget about them.

“Inevitably, after one of our customers buys a guitar from us online, they call us up to ask what to do about broken strings or where to find a guitar strap,”

says Abel. “I want them to go to the independent dealer so he can make that connection. He'll be able to take lessons there, he'll be able to buy accessories. The independent dealers take great interest in these consumers.”

Emmerman notes that part of the challenge is to simply figure out who the worthwhile customers are. “Some customers are just always going to be about the cheapest possible price – let them buy online,” he says. “Realistically, those folks can never be relied on for growing or even sustaining a profitable business.”

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Cofounder Lillian Burkart.

# Burkart

## Flutes and Piccolos

The 30-Year-Old Institution  
Continues to Innovate

**O**n many weekdays at Burkart Flutes and Piccolos' woodsy Western Massachusetts headquarters, founder Lillian Burkart will stay well past quitting time in the evening, when the workshop is quiet and empty. Still heavily involved in the flute and piccolo company's constant R&D and quality control, Burkart finds that the freedom of solitude at the end of day is just what she needs to get into the real gritty details. She checks over every completed instrument on the final shelves, inspects new details on product prototypes, and spends hours at the workbench.

By Matt **Parish**

“The number of amateur, serious flutists is growing, and the market is getting much more competitive.”

– Lillian Burkart

“I want to be in the shop all the time and have my hands on all the instruments,” she says.

Burkart Flutes and Piccolos holds a unique position among the big flute and piccolo manufacturers of this era – it's the only manufacturer still run by its original founders. Lillian Burkart and husband James Phelan started the company in 1982 after meeting in the employ of nearby Massachusetts flute-making operation Verne Q. Powell, Inc. To this day, both Burkart and Phelan maintain essential roles in every aspect of the company's operations.

The practice has paid off – the company's flagship Burkart-Phelan piccolo and Lillian Burkart Flute have served as gold standards for much of the industry, while the “pre-professional” Resona line of



PHOTOGRAPHY BY M. PARISH

flutes and piccolos have raised expectations for mid-level or step-up instruments. As the company prepares to unveil a new flute headjoint this winter – in many cases the most economical way for musicians to upgrade their sound – Burkart looks back on the steady evolution of reliable design and handmade manufacturing with pride.

The history of Burkart is full of subtle advancements in product design. The “Lillian Burkart Professional” and “Elite” piccolos, made of aged Grenadilla wood, are played in world-class ensembles from Slovenia to Vienna and San Francisco. The Professional and Elite flutes are also in action around the world. Meanwhile, their U.S.-sourced and Chinese-assembled “Resona” lines of flutes and piccolos (Burkart’s “Global” piccolo became the “Resona” piccolo in 2009) have established themselves as versatile instruments for a variety of musicians – from pros to advanced amateurs and accomplished students.

chure holes), a process of machining consistent shapes was developed.

“Then, the real magic happens when it comes out for that finish,” says Burkart. “The hand cut is where one little curl of the shaving can greatly affect the outcome in how the headjoint sounds. Players can then extract the nuances of a silver headjoint versus a gold headjoint versus a silver with a little platinum alloy in it. That’s pretty magical.”

Burkart says changes are gradual and not to expect anything drastic. The company spends years with “boots on the ground.” That includes “meeting the players, doing shows, and seeing what the overall trend is and using that to determine when it’s time for Burkart to make a change. It will not be a sea change – it will be an educated movement to something that’s not radically different, but will take on the competition.”

Burkart says the developments come as tastes change in different regions throughout the world, though she likes to end up with as few



The market for that sort of instrument seems to be expanding. “The number of orchestral performers are shrinking,” says Burkart. “But the number of amateur, serious flutists is growing, and the market is getting much more competitive.”

As an example, Burkart points to the growing population of middle-aged mothers in South Korea who recently launched children to college. “These mothers have followed [their children] through their lives and through further education and musical development, being involved in the lessons and the homework and that’s their job,” she says. “Now these women, who are in their mid-’40s and early ’50s and are looking for a hobby. There’s a growing flute choir involvement in South Korea that is certainly great for our Resona market and, in some cases, the wealthier amateurs are ready for the type of instrument we make in our high end.”

Burkart says the process of connecting with customers is changing as well, moving in the U.S. toward a handful of emerging flute specialty shops. “For our product, buyers used to come to Boston to make that pilgrimage to the flute capital of the world and visit all of us and try the instruments,” she says. “Now, buyers in many pockets of the country can walk into a flute specialty shop where they can compare everyone’s models, including flutes from around the world. We realized, as did the other Boston-area makers, that we have to be there.”

The company’s flute headjoints, which they’ll be revamping this winter, are a perfect bridge between the different flute models. The drawing and tapering of these tubes, which is proprietary, is all done by hand. Since casting the prefinish shapes of these tubes tended to result in irregularities (meaning differences of a few thousandths of an inch, though that can be significant in brass mouthpieces or flute embou-

options to meet those tastes as possible. The handiwork, though, all goes down in the company’s own workshop, which is staffed by a crack team of flutists who all hold master’s or doctorates in performance. “They’re active technicians and all work with us at the bench before moving to the testing room with the flutes,” says Burkart. “That’s our number one source of change and innovation.”

Lillian Burkart herself, along with Phelan’s engineering and manufacturing supervision prowess, provide the final keys to the process. From Burkart’s early days exploring exotic woods of the world for new piccolo materials (she always came back to Grenadilla) to recent work on instrument improvements, she’s made sure the company is one that benefits from intense her involvement.

“2006-2007 was when we last made major changes to the piccolo scale,” she says, telling of a particularly intense bout of solo R&D. “There are means of building automated blowing machines to generate a steady tone to replicate what the flute scale might be, but you can only do a steady feed of air. So those periods of working for the piccolo changes mean lots of hours of long tones in front of the tuner, which are like death tones to all my colleagues. So they wouldn’t even want this going on during their workday.” Burkart would stay late at night or come in on the weekends to get it done, in turn helping to revolutionize the piccolo market. In other words, nothing much has changed.

“We loved to make flutes when we were young,” says Burkart. “We really got into it. We sprung from another company to get into this and in fact my husband is currently in China. He’ll sit at the bench when workers go on vacation next week, working by himself every day. It’s still very exciting to be here training people, working hands-on.” **MIMR**

# New Products

## Amati MD324 Dreadnought

The Amati MD324 is a traditional Dreadnought with a Solid Spruce Top and Mahogany back and sides. Bound Rosewood fingerboard and Rosewood bridge. It includes padded gig bag and D'Addario Phosphor Bronze strings. Retail price: \$189.00.



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

## D'Addario Reserve Mouthpiece Patch

The Reserve Mouthpiece Patch is designed for clarinetists and saxophonists of all ages and abilities. The Reserve material adheres securely to the mouthpiece yet enables easy removal or transferal when needed. The Reserve Mouthpiece Patch prevents the teeth from sliding on the mouthpiece and can be a useful tool in promoting the correct development of embouchure and tone production, especially regarding how much mouthpiece to take and the prevention of biting.



Available in both black (.80mm thickness) and clear (.35mm thickness) options, each package contains five mouthpiece patches. Retail price: \$10.00.

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

## New Snares from SJC

Three new snare drums from SJC drums bring boutique style to percussionists. The Brick snare features 8x14-inch 10-ply maple with double 45 edges, custom black marble finish in brick formation with mortar, single tube lugs, 2.3mm hoops, and black chrome hardware.

The 8x14-inch steambent "hybrid" snare with outside round over and inside 45 is made from 3.25-inch hickory, 1.5-inch cocobolo, and 3.25-inch walnut with natural satin stain. It includes single tube lugs, diecast hoops, and brass hardware.

The 7x1-inch 10-ply maple snare with double 45 edges sports a dark Italian ebony veneer and aged white pearl barber shop stripes and pinstripes. It includes an inside ply of italian ebony veneer, single tube lugs, 2.3mm hoops, and black chrome hardware.



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

## Korg KR Mini Rhythm Machine

Designed for guitarists, bassists, pianists, or any musician looking for easy rhythm accompaniment, the KR Mini Rhythm Machine features nostalgic looks and a simple design focused on easy, push-button control. The KR mini is also lightweight, can run on batteries, and has a built-in speaker, allowing it to provide a backing rhythm pattern anywhere at any time.



A total of 60 diverse rhythm patterns are available to accompany any practice session or performance. A wide range of genres is included, such as eight-beat, 16-beat, rock, and pop, with six patterns for each genre. Alternatively, users can tap in their own beats via a simple record function. There are also eight song patterns containing drum parts that are several measures in length. In addition, a chain function allows the ability to arrange favorite rhythm patterns and fill-ins to create complete songs. Retail price: \$79.99.

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

## KSM Foundation Bass Bridge



The KSM Foundation™ bass bridge utilizes a patented ramp system that creates a bridge resembling one solid piece of metal that has been machined to a player's individual specifications. The entire system remains adjustable, though. All moving components lock into position with a clamping position to prevent any from vibrating loose. Its high-grade aircraft aluminum makes this resonant model resistant to corrosion and rust. Includes a "String-Through Body" or "Top Load" design.

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

## Yamaha CP4 Stage Piano



The CP4 Stage 88-key features a selection of 45 voices from Yamaha's premium hand-crafted grand pianos, including the CFX, CFIIIS and S6, 47 vintage electric pianos with Virtual Circuit Modeling effects and a wide variety of 321 sounds based on the flagship MOTIF synthesizer. The CP4 Stage's slim and lightweight design combines portability with style, with large lighted buttons for splits and layers. Retail price: \$2,999.

[4wrd.it/cp4dropbox](http://4wrd.it/cp4dropbox)

### Godlyke TWA GD-02 Great Divide® Analog Synth Octaver



The Great Divide® combines classic analog octave division with proprietary Synth technology for five independent voices that can be continuously blended, from classic “stompbox” octave division to multi-layered, supersonic Synth sounds. The Great Divide® features TWA’s proprietary S3™ “Shortest Send Switching” – a form of relay-based True Bypass that provides the most transparent bypass sound available and automatically reverts to bypass if power is lost. Other features include Dry voice with Level Fader, -1 and +1 Octave Down voice with Level Fader & LPF controls, +1 Octave Envelope Mode, SUB and SYN voice with Level Fader – selectable between -1, -1.5, -2 or -2.6 intervals, four selectable waveforms for SYN voice, a TRS Effects Loop to patch in external effects, and 12 internal controls to adjust various voice parameters. Direct price: \$399.

godlyke.com

### Pedal Stop

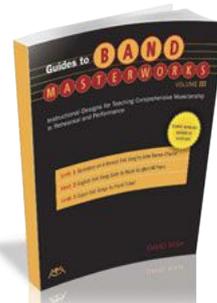


The Pedal Stop works to stop keyboards’ sustain pedal from shifting around on the floor, attaching discreetly to the base of any performer’s keyboard stand. The product is made of carbon steel, and is small enough to fit into any gig bag, and it adjusts to several different configurations to accommodate a sitting or standing musician. The Pedal Stop secures to most “X” and “Z” style keyboard stands, extends 6” to accommodate various foot positions.

pedalstop.com

### Guides to Band Masterworks, Vol. 3 from Meredith Music

This continuation of *Guides to Band Masterworks* volumes 1 and 2 provides band directors with a ready-made curriculum developed to incorporate comprehensive-musicianship training through quality band literature. This volume features *English Folk Song Suite*, *Variations On A Korean Folk Song*, and *Cajun Folk Songs*. Every unit study integrates technical skills, musical knowledge and creative projects that lead student musicians to an enlightened and expressive performance. Student workbooks for each of the featured works may be downloaded for use during rehearsals or as out-of-class enrichment. Retail price: \$24.99.



meredithmusic.com

### ADJ Mega GO Par64 and Jelly GO Par64

ADJ’s new cordless Mega GO Par64 RGBA and Jelly GO Par64 RGBA are Quad LED color-mixing Par 64 fixtures that run on a rechargeable lithium battery. Both the Mega GO Par64 RGBA and Jelly GO Par64 RGBA use 177 long-life 10mm LED – 36 Red, 54 Green, 53 Blue and 34 Amber – to create rich, smoothly blended colors and ultra-bright washes. With their amber LEDs, both fixtures are even capable of producing desirable but hard-to-create yellow, gold, and orange hues.



Designed to accommodate a variety of applications, the Mega GO Par64 RGBA and Jelly GO Par64 RGBA offer users numerous control options. They can be run in five operational modes: Auto (Program Run), Sound Active, RGBA Dimmer, Static Color, and DMX-512 (one, two, four, five, six, seven and eight channels). DMX addressing can easily be changed using the unit’s built-in four button LED display or via a standard DMX controller. In Auto and Sound Active modes, the Mega GO Par64 RGBA and Jelly GO Par64 RGBA will create their own lightshow via 47 built-in Color Macros. Retail price: \$349.95 (Mega GO Par64 RGBA), \$279.95 (Jelly GO Par64 RGBA).

adj.com

### MusicNomad Premium Drum & Cymbal Care Kit



This boxed set includes a complete care system for drum shells, throne, hardware, case and cymbal care. Each kit contains Drum Detailer, Cymbal Cleaner and a set of Microfiber Drum Detailing towels.

The acid-free Cymbal Cleaner is a proprietary formulation that cleans, polishes and protects cast and sheet bronze cymbals, as well as creating an invisible protective coating remains to resist tarnishing and oxidation. All purpose Drum Detailer is a quick and easy cleaner for the entire drum set. The Microfiber Drum Detailing Towel set contains two towels to reduce cross contaminating cleaners and polishes and to accommodate the larger task of cleaning a drum set. A special holiday display featuring these products sold individually or as the aforementioned kit, is available to retailers free of charge with purchase. Retail price: \$29.99 – \$35.99.

musicnomadcare.com

### Kyser and Fender Co-Brand Red Guitar Capo

Kyser Musical Products, Inc. and Fender Musical Instrument Corporation have teamed together to co-brand and introduce a Special Edition Quick-Change™ Capo, colored “candy apple red.” It was designed with electric guitar players in mind and is marketed in conjunction with the branding guidelines set by Fender®. For added emphasis, the Fender name is prominent and credibly displayed on the capo itself.



The musical instrument partnership will allow Fender to be an exclusive worldwide seller of the newly introduced “candy apple red electric guitar capo.”

kysermusical.com

### Hercules DJCONTROL AIR+ Mixer

The successor to the original model in this series (DJ Control AIR), the new DJ CONTROL AIR+ includes more comfortable space for mixing, jog wheels with more surface area for scratching, more creative functions thanks to eight velocity-sensitive pads, more AIR control, and more volume for its audio output. DJ CONTROL AIR+ is the largest controller in the Hercules DJing range (at 17.7 inches wide). It also features the largest jog wheels of any controller in the range: 5.9 inches in diameter (the same size as on CD turntables), with mechanical pressure detection and more than 750 steps per turn. Retail price: \$249.99.



hercules.com

### American Audio ELS15 BT Speaker

The ELS15 BT is a lightweight, multi-functional 15-inch active speaker that features both Bluetooth and a built-in MP3 player. The ELS15 BT comes with a 21-input ADJ AUD RC remote to control its rear-panel playback section from anywhere in the venue. For manual operation, the MP3 panel has six function buttons and a crystal-clear blue LCD screen that’s easy to read in low lighting conditions. Additional connections include XLR and quarter-inch mic inputs, XLR and RCA line inputs, and XLR and quarter-inch line outputs. One amp powers the 1-inch titanium driver, while the other powers the 15-inch woofer with 33 ounce magnet. Retail price: \$229.99.



adjaudio.com

### TC Electronic Hall of Fame Mini Reverb

Hall Of Fame Mini Reverb builds on the Ditto Looper and PolyTune Mini platform by delivering TC Electronic’s most famous reverbs to a miniature form factor. Hall Of Fame Mini’s default sound is TC Electronic’s famous Hall Reverb, but from there any of the tones of its Hall Of Fame Reverb can be loaded via the TonePrint App for iPhone. The Hall Of Fame Mini sports an ultra-small footprint, true bypass, and an Analog-Dry-Through design. MAP: \$109.



tcelectronic.com

### Ibanez TAM100 Tosin Abasi 8-String Signature Model

Initially inspired by the RG2228, Animals as Leaders’ Tosin Abasi collaborated on every aspect of this new guitar. Tosin’s selection of woods was influenced by his Ibanez Prestige bass. For the neck and fretboard, Wenge was chosen for its clarity and the frequencies it emphasizes. He also requested a thinner neck as well as a thinner body. The lower horn is designed to accommodate Abasi’s particular positioning of upper fretboard play. Tosin worked with DiMarzio to develop his own Ionizer8™ humbucker and single coil pickups incorporated with a five-way switch and a single coil tap switch. Retail price: \$5,333.32.



ibanez.com

### Knilling Master Violin from Constantin Sereny

Knilling’s #7KF Artist model violin, from the Romanian workshop of Constantin Sereny, features European materials, craftsmanship, and attention to detail. The new model #7KF has a hand-rubbed finish of warm brown oil varnish. Its specially selected spruce top wood comes from the clear mountain ranges of the Carpathians and has been naturally seasoned for close to 40 years. The complimentary maples are from the same area and are characterized by beautiful flame. Each is fully setup and adjusted with Thomastik Dominant strings, a maple bridge and English style ebony fittings. Available in 4/4 size only. Retail price: \$1,295.



knilling.com

# KHS America™

Need Another Distributor? No?  
Then How About A Partner?



KHS America is proud to be the new exclusive U.S. source for the fine line of wind accessories by BG Franck Bichon.

KHS America is the proud distributor of the following leading brands:



### SKB Officially Licensed Zoom H6 Case

The 3i-0907-4-H6 and the 3i-1209-4-H6B cases include highly durable custom PE foam interiors developed in collaboration with Zoom North America. The iSeries Injection Molded cases are molded of ultra-high-strength polypropylene copolymer resin, and are water and dustproof. (MIL-C-4150J). The cases include a patented "trigger release" latch system, comfortable, snap-down rubber over-molded cushion grip handles and an automatic ambient pressure equalization valve (MIL-STD-648C). Each case includes the Zoom logo hot stamped on the lid. Both cases are completely manufactured in the United States. MAP: \$79.99 (3i-0907-4-H6) and \$94.99 (3i-1209-4-H6B).



skbcases.com

### Peavey DW Acoustic Guitar Series

The DW Series is available in three models: the entry-level DW-1, the DW-2 and the fully-featured DW-3. The DW-1 and DW-2 feature a dreadnought body, mahogany neck with a rosewood fingerboard, and a mahogany back and sides with a spruce laminate top. The DW-1 contains a passive piezo pickup, while the DW-2 and DW-3 implement active electronics and a built-in tuner. The deluxe DW-3 also includes a built-in mic with blend control, and features a rosewood back and sides, a solid spruce top, and a laser etched custom rosette.



peavey.com

### AMPEG SVT-112AV and 212AV Cabinets



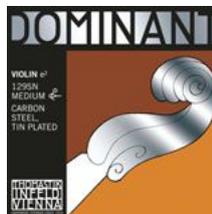
Ampeg's Classic Series cabinet line has expanded with two new models – the SVT-112AV and SVT-212AV. Both feature custom 12-inch drivers from Eminence and represent the first time Ampeg has offered a bass cabinet with 12-inch drivers in nearly a decade. Both new cabinets are built using 15mm poplar ply, featuring AV Tolex and grille cloth. The classic black grille is available separately from Ampeg for those that want to pair the cab with an SVT-CL or other Ampeg head.

With a choice of a single or dual 12-inch design, both with a one-inch compression driver, the new SVT cabs provide even more possibilities when building an Ampeg bass rig. Retail price: \$699.99 (SVT-112AV), \$979.99 (SVT-212AV).

ampeg.com

### Thomastik-Infeld Tin-Plated Dominant EString

This round, full-bodied, and "meaty" string boasts quick bow response, high dynamic range, and resistance to whistling, designed to produce significantly less "string noise" in higher positions. The new tin E blends well with the other Dominant strings to round out the set. The 129SN E string is a contemporary innovation designed to marry the 45-year-old Dominant formula seamlessly.



thomastik-infeld.com

### RS Berkely Legends Series Mouthpieces



Made in the USA, Legends Series mouthpieces are officially licensed mouthpiece reproductions modeled after the original mouthpieces used by iconic musicians like Stan Getz, Charlie Parker, Dexter Gordon, and James Moody. Mouthpieces are built from 3D scanning of the artists' original mouthpieces. Each model is available in two distinct tip openings, which includes the original Stan Getz tenor saxophone mouthpiece (.075-inch and .095-inch); Charlie Parker alto saxophone mouthpiece (.060-inch and .075-inch); Dexter Gordon tenor saxophone mouthpiece (.080-inch and .100-inch); and James Moody tenor saxophone mouthpiece (.105-inch and .115-inch).

RSBerkeley.com

### Toca Percussion Tambourine with Easy-Place Mount

The T-2603 tambourine goes from being a mounted tambourine to a hand-



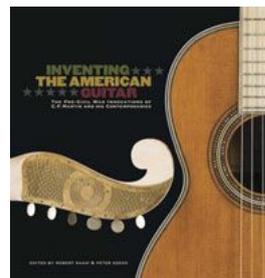
held in an instant. The bracket attaches to any stand in a drum set or percussion rig. The tambourine features bright and crisp nickel plated jingles, an easy-to-grip handle and a rugged ABS frame with a durable plastic edge.

tocapercussion.com

## Inventing the American Guitar: The Pre-Civil War Innovations of C. F. Martin and His Contemporaries from Hal Leonard

Hal Leonard Books' *Inventing the American Guitar* describes the early history of American guitar design in detail. With essays by prominent writers and spectacular color photographs of almost 50 guitars, many of which are newly discovered, this book tells the story of how a European instrument was transformed into one with all of the design and construction features that define the iconic American flat-top guitar – all within a mere 20 years.

*Inventing the American Guitar* traces C. F. Martin Sr., – America's first major guitar maker and the founder of the Martin Guitar Company – and his evolution as a craftsman and entrepreneur and explores the influences and experiments that led to his creation of the American guitar that is recognized and played around the world today. Retail price: \$50.



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

## Re-Launched Gretsch Renown Series

New design elements on the newly re-launched Renown Series drum sets include a contemporary low-mass GTS tom mounting system, Gretsch clam-style tom holder, redesigned Renown Round Badge in chrome-on-black and Remo® clear Emperor® batter heads. The Renown line is available in four poly lacquer finishes and two Delmar® wrap finishes. Individual snare drums, toms, and bass drums are also available.

The Renown line has three new configurations, along with an existing three-piece rock configuration. Two new lacquer finishes, Satin White and Gloss Natural, are now options alongside the existing Satin Black and Cherry Burst lacquer finishes. Two new wrap finishes, Silver Oyster Pearl and Blue Metallic, are also available for the first time.



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

## Gator Cases Custom Fit Zoom H6 Case

Gator Cases has expanded its popular line of water-proof injection molded utility cases with a new custom fit model for the Zoom H6 handheld recorder. The G-ZOOMH6-WP features a water-proof and dust-proof seal with IP 67 and MIL-STD-810F Immersion test certifications. A custom fit foam nest fills the interior and provides a snug fit for an H6 as well as dedicated drops for microphone attachment, windscreen, cables, batteries, and memory cards.

The outer shell is constructed of a tough impact-proof lightweight NK-7 resin material and comes with an ATA-300 flight safe rating. The case secures with the unique easy release Powerclaw™ latching system. The exterior features a soft-grip carry handle and can be pad-locked.



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

## Chauvet SlimPAR Hex 3 IRC



SlimPAR Hex 3 IRC generates a broad spectrum of colors and achieves natural looking color temperatures using three 9-watt, 6-color (RGBAW+UV) LEDs. Its new, "sit-flat" housing design hugs the floor and features power and DMX outlets on both sides of the unit. Control static colors and automated programs with simple point-and-shoot operation using the optional infrared remote control or create customized colors using the built-in LED display. Additional control options include DMX, master/slave, and sound-active mode. The unit fits inside TRUSST® totems and built-in dimming curves allow for smooth LED fading.

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

## LP CAJON THRONE

Designed to support up to 300 pounds, the 10"-diameter LP Cajon throne (LP1445) mounts quickly to the top of any cajon. The cajon throne rotates a full 360 degrees, allowing the player to transition between their entire percussion setup without moving the cajon. The padded seat on the cajon throne is covered with a removable and washable cover, and is mounted on a non-slip rubber base for added stability. Retail price: \$29.99.



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

### CruzTOOLS GrooveTech™ Drum Multi-Tool

The GrooveTech Drum Multi-Tool addresses needs for drum key tuning and drum set hardware adjustment in a compact fold-up unit. Central to the tool is a drum key with a thin-wall socket for easy access to any tension rod. Slotted and two Phillips screwdrivers are provided as well. Nine hex wrenches – four inch and five metric – are included to handle virtually all makes and models of pedals. Tools are professional-quality using a heat-treated S2 alloy and manufactured to precision tolerances. Components sport a polished-chrome finish. Retail price: \$18.95.



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

### Harman's DigiTech Vocalist Live FX

Harman's DigiTech today announced its Vocalist Live FX vocal effect processor is now available. The Vocalist Live FX features over 65 studio quality effects designed to give performers the ability to immediately adapt to queues in the room, a band, and the singer.



The Vocalist Live FX also features a new Live Adapt technology which utilizes a built-in microphone and adapts the noise gate threshold, the pitch effect key, and the modulation and delay effect tempo settings. A sound check button automatically tests the presets for current room acoustics and the built-in Mic Pre+ allows the singer to engage their channel strip with the press of a button so they can sound great almost instantly. The unit also offers phantom power for the addition of condenser microphones. Retail price: \$349.95.

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

### Fingerstyle Jazz Guitar Essentials from StringLetter

This 84-page book and audio package by Sean McGowan is a comprehensive course in learning the art of fingerstyle jazz guitar, taught by a world class jazz guitarist and instructor. From building chord vocabulary to separating bass and melody voices and to developing improvisation techniques, McGowan's approach will help readers learn to play a variety of dynamic solo fingerstyle arrangements. The book includes 12 lessons on chord voicings and inversions, building jazz arrangements, and more, with over 120 musical examples, exercises, and songs, with audio. Retail price: \$19.99.



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

### Famous & Fun Christmas Duet (Books 1, 2, and 3) from Alfred Music

*Famous & Fun Christmas Duets* have been arranged and balanced for two evenly-skilled players. This expansion of the popular *Famous & Fun* series contains carefully selected Christmas songs to supplement any piano method. Each piece has been arranged for early elementary to late elementary pianists, yet remains faithful to the sound of the original piece. Books 1 and 2 each contain seven carefully-graded early elementary Christmas-season favorites including "Angels We Have Heard on High," "Away in a Manger," and "Hallelujah Chorus." Book 3 includes six pieces for the late elementary pianist, including "Deck the Halls," "Silent Night," and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas."



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

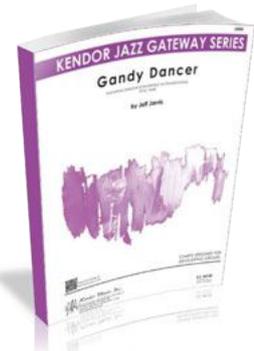
### Sonor Martini Kit



The Martini's compact poplar shells (bass drum 14" x 12," rack tom 8" x 8," floor tom 13" x 10" and a 12" x 5" steel snare) produce bright tone with full projection and a single tom holder is included to mount the rack tom. The drums include Sonor fittings and tuning lugs, featuring the TuneSafe system. Martini's shells are cross-laminated for strength and dependability, with Remo heads included. Retail price: \$612.

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

### Gandy Dancer by Jeff Jarvis, from Kendor



Named after a ski run in Vail, Colorado, this driving funk original sports a solid introduction, tuneful melody, and rich chord progression for developing groups. Written or ad lib solos are offered for all winds and the chart features Kendor Konvertible scoring for 9-17 players. It also includes a guitar chord chart by Jim Greeson and optional parts for flute, clarinet, horn in F, tuba and vibes. Duration 3:30. Retail price: \$45.00.

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

## PigHog Extra-Strength Cables In New & Improved Packaging



PigHog cable packaging has been revamped to maximize visibility, and improve merchandising. Each instrument, microphone, and speaker cable package hangs from virtually any type of display hook or holder, and the new look is designed to draw attention. PigHog cables are strategically overbuilt to withstand harsh conditions. All PigHog Cables feature extra-thick 8mm wire, performance quality connectors and tension-resistant stress relief for maximum durability. PigHog also adds a “no questions asked” lifetime guarantee.

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

## Yamaha MOXF Series



Yamaha's new MOXF Series models include the latest MOTIF XF sounds, effects, and the ability to add a flash board slot for further expandability options. The 88-key Graded Hammer Standard MOXF8 and 61-key semi-weighted action MOXF6 come with 741 MB Wave ROM, 3,977 waveforms and 128-note polyphony, with up to 1 GB of Flash board sample expansion. In addition to a 16-track Song and Pattern Sequencer with real time loop remix, MOXF Series synths come with built-in, four channel USB audio/MIDI interfacing and extensive DAW/VST controls. Bundled software includes the MOXF Editor for detailed editing of Voice and mixing parameters, MOXF Remote Editor for controlling VST templates, and Remote Tools, which simplifies integration with Cubase. Retail price: \$1,999 (MOXF8) and \$1,499 (MOXF6).

[4wrd.it/moxfdropbox](http://4wrd.it/moxfdropbox)

## DR Neon Multi Color Strings and Jamstar Mobile Tech

In NEON™ Multi Color guitar and bass string sets, each string is a different color and UV and Black Light-active. DR NEON™ Multi Color strings are super bright coated strings that will sound clear, bright and musical.

DR Strings has also partnered with music education technology platform Jamstar™ to present a new tool in aiding teachers and beginning guitar students alike. The Jamstar™ platform utilizes a unique, patent-pending polyphonic audio recognition engine that hears what the user plays via their device's microphone and gives real-time feedback while playing any acoustic or electric guitar. Combining the pioneering technology behind Jamstar™ with DR's new NEON™ Multi Color guitar sets, students will color coordinate the strings on their guitar with the lesson in the app for correct finger placement, strumming timing and fretting notes.



[jamstar.co/DR](http://jamstar.co/DR)

## VOX Night Train G2 Amplifiers

The new Night Train G2 series includes the 15 Watt NT15H-G2 and 50 Watt NT50H-2G amplifier heads, plus the 15 Watt NT15C1-G2 – the first ever combo amp with the Night Train name. Optional matching cabinets are also available. The overall sound has been enhanced, featuring full tube tone in a class AB design. The pre-amp is driven by with three 12AX7 tubes; the power amp boasts two EL84 tubes on the NT15H-G2/NT15C1-G2 and two EL34 tubes on the NT50H-G2.



The Night Train G2's two-channel design delivers not only classic VOX clean and crunch sounds, but also modern high-gain sounds as well. An FX loop is included, and a digital reverb designed exclusively by VOX for this series has been added to all models for road-ready reliability and studio-quality reverb sounds. Retail price: \$249.99 – \$699.99.

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

## Moog Minifooger Analog Effects



Each Minifooger is housed in a rugged cast aluminum enclosure and features a 100-percent analog signal path, true bypass design, optional battery power, and a single expression pedal input providing hands-free control of one specified parameter within each unit. There is also a dedicated expression pedal input.

Moog is launching The Minifooger Analog Effects family with five compact stomp boxes – the MF Drive, MF Boost, MF Delay, MF Ring, and MF Trem. Each pedal is 100-percent analog, designed and hand-assembled in Moog's factory in Asheville, North Carolina, and carries a US street price below \$200.

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

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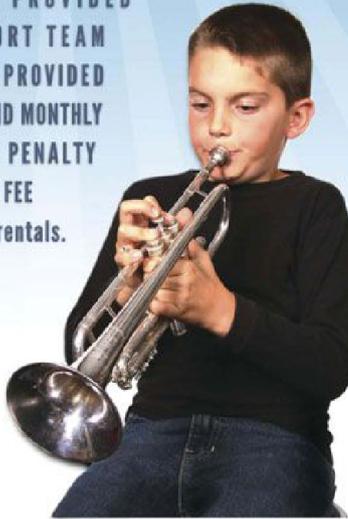
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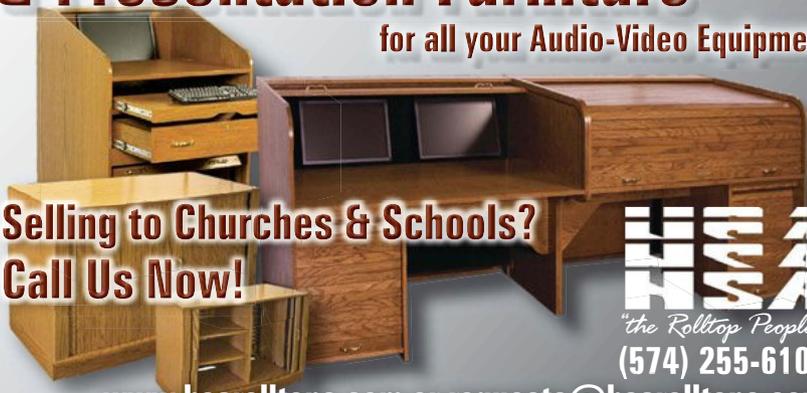
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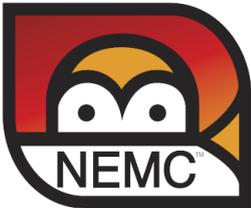
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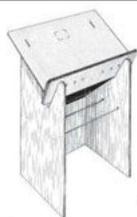


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# 'We Do the Internet Now?'

Back in the day (I feel like I should be lazily drawing from a corn-cob pipe while rocking slowly in a chair as I write this), it was standard operating procedure for me to ask MI retailers, "Does your store have a website?" when conducting an interview. Ten or 12 years ago, the odds of an affirmative or negative response to the question were pretty even. Sure, by the turn of the aughts, everyone *knew* about the Internet and most people and organizations had email addresses, but many – especially smaller independent businesses – still hadn't decided if a page was worth the expense, didn't know how to design a website themselves or who to go to for help, or were wary of online retailing.

I can't readily recall the last time I asked an MI business whether they had a website, but suffice to say: it's been a while. The assumption is that most stores have sites now – and those which do not probably at least

“The accessibility of instruments online and the preference to buy products online will increase during the forecast period.”

have a Facebook page, or some type of Internet presence. Add to that the suppliers that have commerce capabilities on their sites, and the many apps being fielded by any number of sources within the industry.

"So what?" you're likely asking. Am I seriously going to go on for roughly a page, treating "the Internet" like it's some topical subject?

Kind of, yeah.

While most (if not all) of us are so dependent on the Internet and the ability it affords us to pay bills, make purchases, conduct business, and so on that we take it as a given that functioning companies are *of course* at least as up to speed as ourselves, there are those who are still dragging their heels when it comes to online commerce and interaction. There are many, actually.

Data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau in May of 2012 showed that 75.2 percent of businesses surveyed did *not* have a website. Surprising, no? Sure, that info is a little outdated and the survey didn't target MI retailers, specifically, but a cursory Google search of instrument stores nearby to me (New England) would seem to provide at least some anecdotal confirmation that ours is not appreciably *that* much more tech-savvy than other industries.

On October 23 of this year, Research and Markets – "the leading source for international market research and market data" (if they do say so, themselves) – added the "Global Musical Instruments Market 2012-2016" report to their offerings. According to their findings, the Global Musical Instruments Market is expected to grow at a CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) of 2.64 percent over the period of time covered in the analysis. That's not bad – growth is better than stagnation or de-

cline. But... Overall Global Retail Sales were projected in July, 2012 (by a competing group, MarketResearch.com) to grow at *eight* percent during the same time period. 2.64 seems less exciting now, huh?

Research and Markets' summary names the likes of FMIC, Kawai, Roland, Yamaha, D'Addario, Gibson, QRS, Sennheiser, Shure, and Steinway as being "the key vendors dominating this [MI] space." No big surprises yet. Within the report, it's noted that, "one of the key drivers of the market is the rising income of the consumers which is leading to high disposable incomes. Consumers can therefore afford to spend money on musical instruments." That makes a decent amount of sense. All right – moving on...

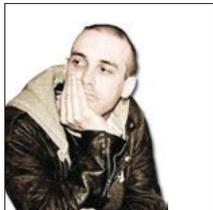
Of more interest – and of more relevance to this editorial – is this comment from an analyst on the team who speculates: "The method of retail shopping is changing rapidly and consumers are increasingly using the Internet to purchase a variety of goods which has led to numerous musical instruments companies providing their wide selection through the online space. Companies find the online shopping approach to be a convenient and cost-saving approach as it allows them to target consumers through the web rather than directly through other means. Some of the popular musical instruments websites include snapdeal.com, gibson.com, music123.com, and zzounds.com. The accessibility of instruments online and the preference to buy products online will increase during the forecast period with the increasing knowledge of the Internet. Hence, the rise in online retailing will have a positive impact on the market during the forecast period."

I'll let that sink in a bit.

I'm reminded of a campaign this past spring launched by gybo.com (Get Your Business Online) that received a good amount of media attention (check out the well done video on gybo.com's homepage). Gybo is (predictably) a Google initiative and can be looked at skeptically if being suspicious is your thing, but the message conveyed by the acronym is exactly what you should be taking away from the large-ish Research and Markets quote that I included above: Get. Your. Business. Online.

If you serve a niche market, if you're a specialty store, if you're doing fine without embracing the Internet for whatever other reasons – super! Consider yourselves lucky and part of a small minority.

For the rest of us: your customers will continue to conduct more business within the ever-increasingly familiar, safe, and comfortable terrain of the Internet. If you do *not* plant your flag on that virtual ground, you are going to lose sales. To maintain a willful ignorance of this reality in 2013 (as one – name withheld – retailer said to me, completely non-ironically, only a couple years ago: "We don't think we need to do the Internet at my store") is more than fiscal suicide – it's just dumb. **MMR**



By Christian Wissmuller

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