

# M M R

## MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

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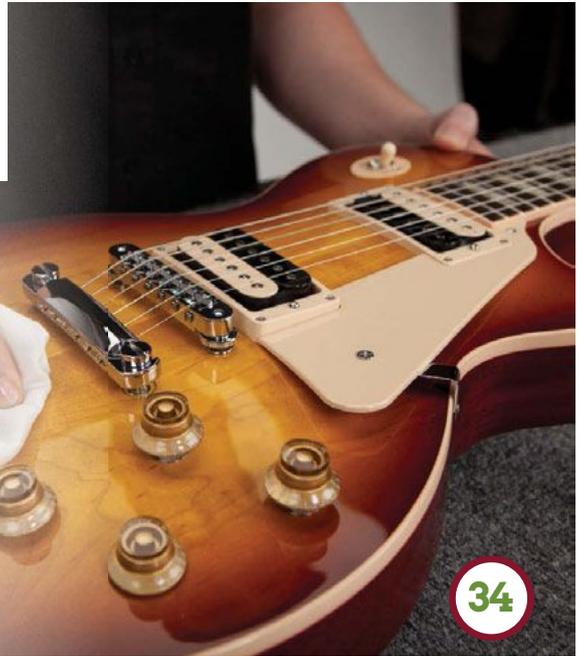


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– Don Lace, President of Lace Pickups

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Cover design by Garret Petrov.



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# Bring on the Weird

**W**hile in Nashville at Summer NAMM this year, I had a meeting with the folks at Zivix – makers of the jamstik guitar controller that allows the user to control various iOS apps or Mac software. It's a cool device that (based on my limited use) works really well and has a lot of potential. I hope jamstik does take off, but playing with this innovative wireless MIDI controller got me thinking about "new" instruments and MI gear and how difficult it seems to be for truly different products to take hold in the mainstream.

At each NAMM, Musikmesse, and Music China show there are the "Whoa, did you see *that*?" instruments of the season. Be it the AlphaSphere, Beamz, PianoArc, Aerodrums, DrumPants, AudioCubes, or any of a boatload of other pioneering instruments or peripherals in recent years – there's no shortage of creative advancement out there. What I'm finding curious (perhaps troubling?) is that, while the occasional big-name artist will be drawn to, and provide some exposure for, one of these new and quirky instruments, it's been a while since a truly new instrument has really entered the popular music dialogue. A *long* while.

Look at almost any mainstream act's stage setup – rock, hip-hop, R&B, EDM, electronica, folk, country – and you see some variation of the same basic components: electric guitar, electric bass, pedal-steel, acoustic guitars and basses, synthesizers, drum kits, percussion, electronic drums, pianos, and turntables. The most recent entries on that list would be electronic drums, synths, and turntables – all of which have been part of the musical landscape for well over 30 years.

Digital sampling, MIDI-driven instruments, and music technology have certainly helped create and define much of popular music for the past few decades (and, yes, are "on stage," too), but that's not compellingly represented by a single, tangible object – a "thing" that a person might be driven to in the same way as a saxophone or a guitar. A MacBook is a powerful,

“It's been a while since a truly new instrument has really entered the popular music dialogue.”

important tool, but it's not really a *musical instrument*, if you get my meaning.

In a 2012 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*, author William Weir explored this topic in his article, "Why is it So Hard for New Musical

Instruments to Catch On?" In the piece, he speaks with Aaron Andrew Hunt, inventor of the Tonal Plexus (one of those "wacky" products at the NAMM Show). Hunt offered the following: "The biggest barrier is the institutionalization of Western music and the mass marketing of all the instruments. The problem is that no one can break through this marketing barrier and this education barrier because it's become this machine." Weir then references how instruments that *did* represent a lasting entry in the market often did so with support from the very establishment that Hunt feels is, today, stifling new instrument innovation. The backing of RCA and major universities, he notes, were instrumental (Ha! Get it?) in the development of the synthesizer, while composers like Hector Berlioz helped boost the popularity of the saxophone, and acts like The Beatles brought electric guitars to the masses.

So is that the answer? If Taylor Swift came onstage wearing DrumPants or playing a jamstik, would that "break" those instruments? My guess is that, while it'd certainly help bring attention to the products, it wouldn't have quite the effect that The Beatles on *The Ed Sullivan Show* had on rock ensemble instruments.

I think, as much as anything, the challenge facing *any* new innovation – not just limited to musical instruments – is that we truly do live in a bigger, more connected world now, with more options for entertainment and diversion, coupled with less free time. There may never be another groundswell instrument that captures the imagination of huge portions of the population, but there is and will continue to be plenty of niche markets for many types of brand-new musical instruments to take hold.

So, I, for one, look forward to the next batch of "Did you see *that*?" gear at the next trade show. Bring on the weird, people.



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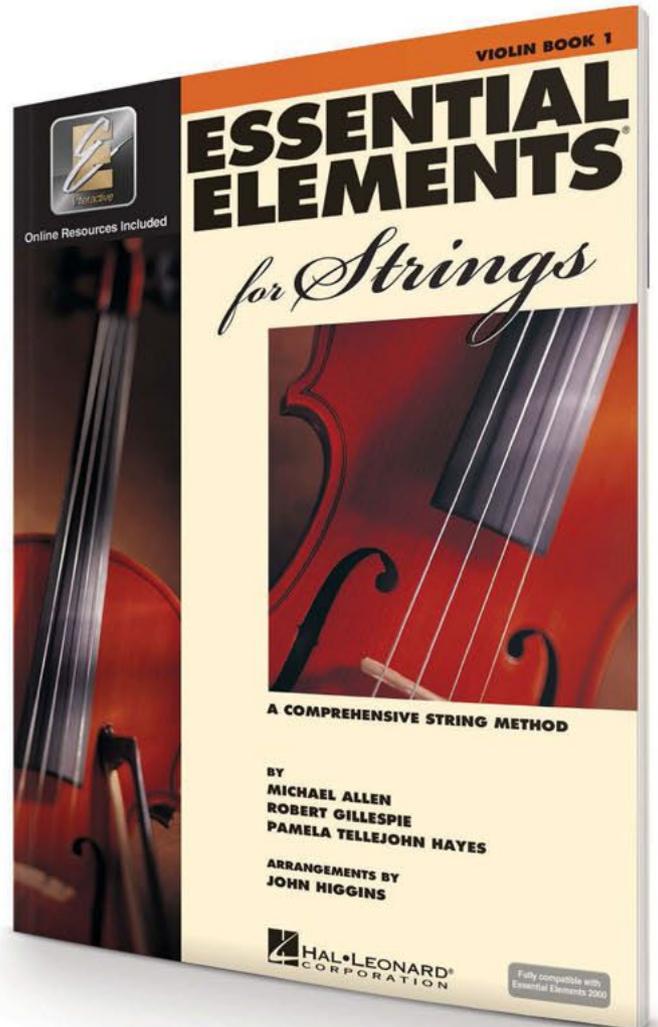
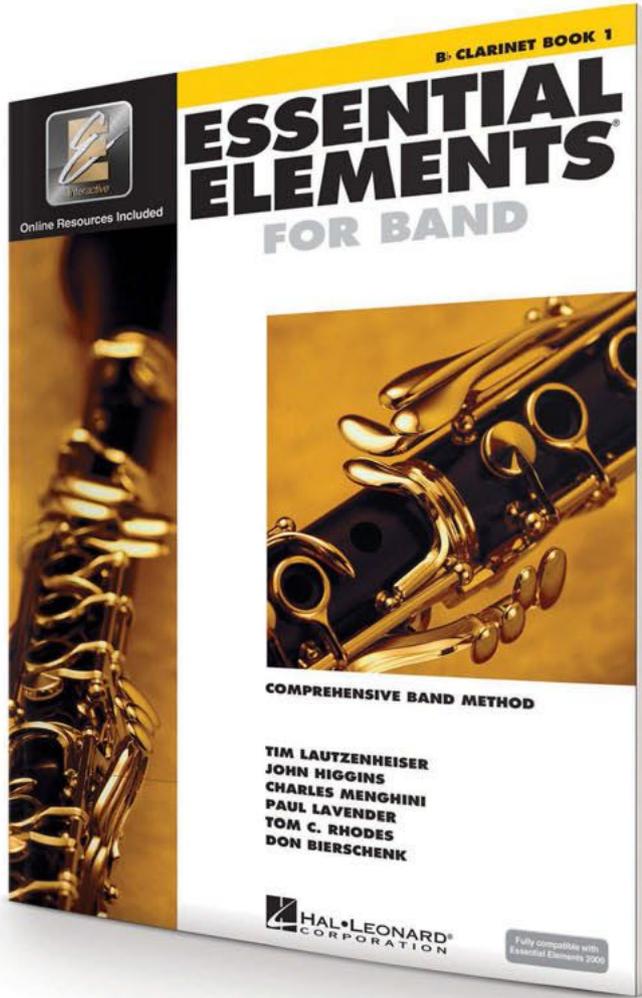
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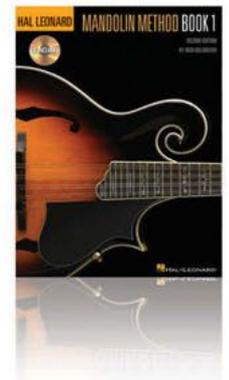
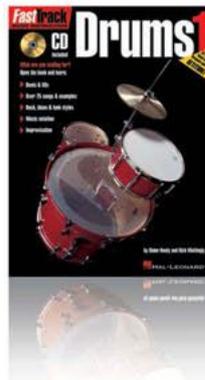
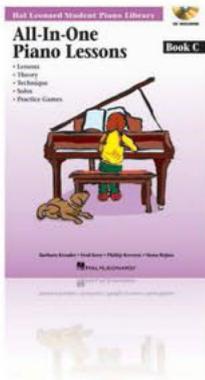
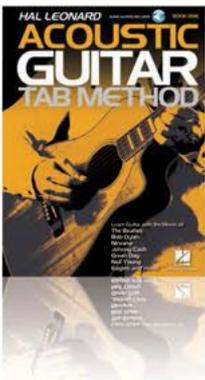
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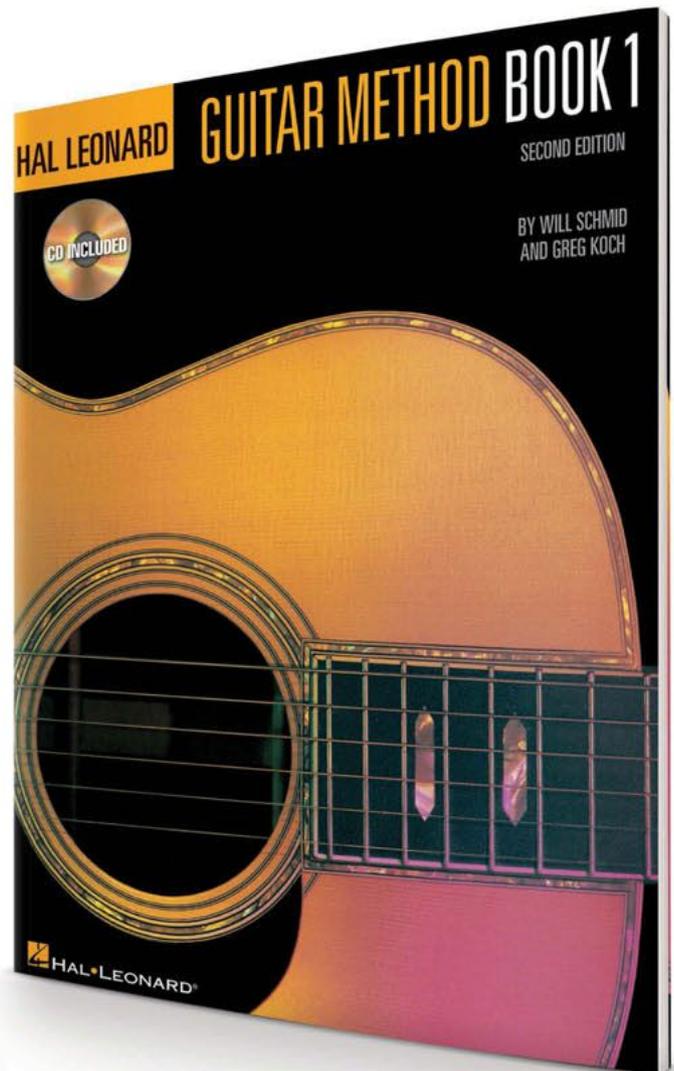
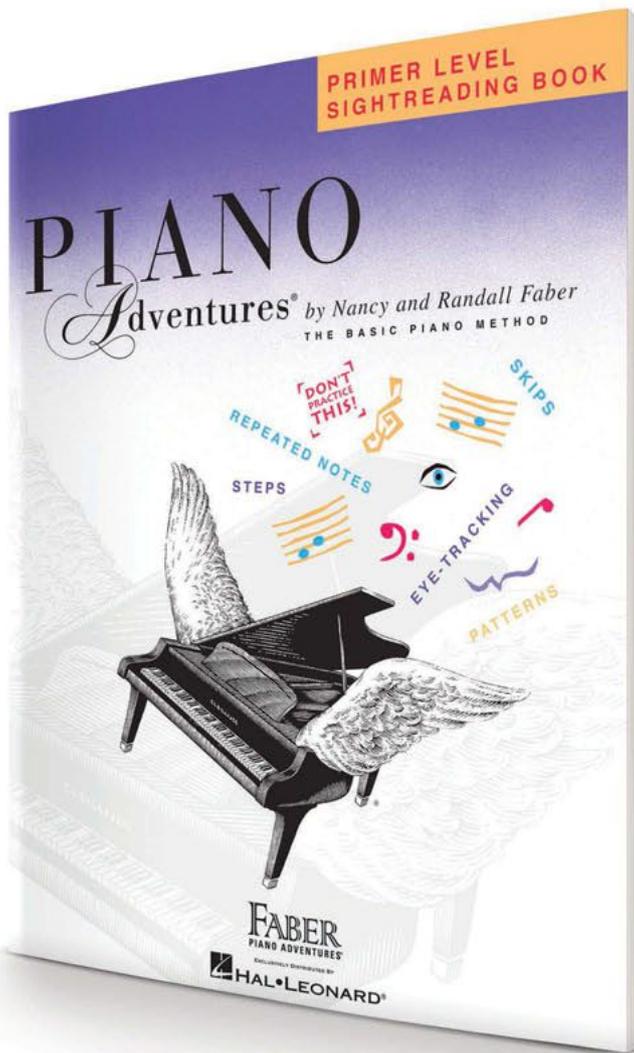


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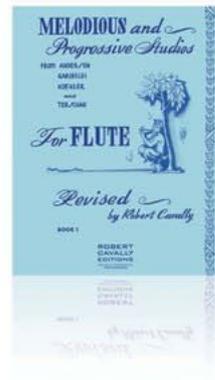
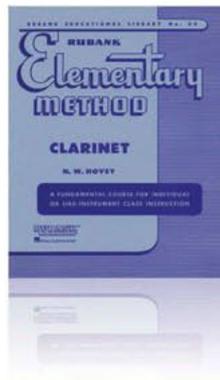
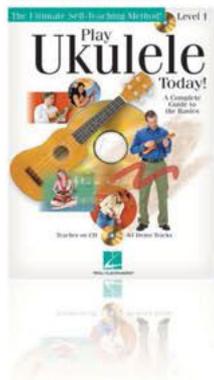


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## GC Opens New Flagship Store in Times Square

On August 7th, Guitar Center celebrated the grand opening of its newest retail location at 218 W. 44th Street, in the heart of NYC's Times Square.

The new store, GC's 262nd nationwide, is a 28,000 square-foot outlet featuring the expected (guitars, drums, keyboard, DJ and recording gear, live sound equipment, and more) as well as Guitar Center's "Platinum Club," a Fender Custom Shop, and a full DJ experimental department. The award-winning firm Eight Inc. (Apple, Nike) was hired to design the new store.

Guitar Center Professional (GC Pro) helped with the design of the store from an audio and video standpoint and was instrumental in the installation of the A/V gear throughout the facility. Through GC Pro's efforts, The Platinum Club, a custom designed room that houses a number of rare and vintage guitars, can also serve as a live performance space and recording studio.

Guitar Center Times Square features a number of programs such as in-house lessons through Guitar Center Lessons, free Recording Made Easy classes, an in-house

rental department, a hands-on electronic music department, and onsite guitar repair service GC Garage.

Grand opening festivities at the Times Square location included giveaways, exclusive savings, and a display featuring Eric Clapton's iconic "Blackie" Fender Strat and ES-335.

To mark the store's opening, Guitar Center hosted a free performance by hip-hop icons and current *Tonight Show* house band The Roots at the Best Buy Theater, across the street from the new store. GC had given tickets away at New York-based Guitar Center locations in the days leading up to the event.

"Joining the caliber of retailers that have established a presence in Times Square over the years is a huge accomplishment and a statement as to how far the brand has come," says Mike Pratt, Guitar Center CEO. "By opening a Guitar Center in such a visible, high-traffic area as Times Square, we are able to open more eyes to the inherent joy that comes from playing an instrument. The store is amazing, and we can't wait to share it with our custom-



ers. It's a proud moment for all of us at Guitar Center."

This newest opening coincides with another milestone for the retailer, as GC celebrates its 50th anniversary year.

## Fender Shares Strategic Initiatives, Including Plans to Sell Online

Fender Musical Instruments Corporation held a two-day business meeting the week of Aug. 4 with key North American dealers at the Fender Visitor Center in Corona, California. FMIC interim CEO Scott Gilbertson and other members of the executive management team discussed the company's strategic initiatives to elevate the Fender brand with consumers, including plans to sell FMIC product directly to consumers through the company's site.

"We are committed to growing our business in partnership with our dealers," Gilbertson said. "As an industry leader, we view it as our obligation to significantly invest in the consumer experience."

The company announced they are building capabilities to offer their full product catalog through their website in an effort to meet the demands, needs, and desires of the modern consumer. They also an-



Scott Gilbertson (FMIC Interim CEO), Jason Padgitt (SVP, Marketing & Communications), Layne Kurr (VP, Independent Sales U.S. & Canada) and Richard McDonald (EVP, Fender Brand) answer questions from key dealers at a two-day business meeting at the Fender Visitor Center in Corona, Calif.

nounced a series of digital initiatives focused on enhancing the dealer's customer relationship management capabilities and

sales effectiveness tools.

"By investing in digital capabilities and elevating our consumer experience around our brand, products and services, we expect to drive increased engagement, emotional affiliation and consumer demand," said Gilbertson. "We believe our strategy will accrue significant benefits across all aspects of our dealer base."

The discussion illustrated short and long term opportunities for the dealer network to benefit from Fender's shared technology, content capabilities and consumer insights.

The two-day interactive meeting focused on outlining Fender's underlying strategy for growing the brand in partnership with the dealers along with in-depth discussions on the state of the marketplace, product assortment planning, opportunities around consumer activations, visual merchandising and new-product campaigns.



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# Hal Leonard and Propellerhead Expand Distribution Deal into Canada

Hal Leonard Corporation has been selling Propellerhead Software products to the MI trade in the U.S. since 2011, and became an exclusive distributor last August. Because of this, the companies are expanding their distribution deal to now encompass Canada. Hal Leonard senior VP of Sales Doug Lady and Gerry Bassermann, director of North American markets for Propellerhead, reached the agreement, which took effect on August 1st.

A privately owned company based in Stockholm, Sweden, Propellerhead Software has created some of the world's most innovative music software products, including Reason and ReCycle. Musicians, producers, and the media have praised their products for being inspiring, great sounding, and easy to use.

Now in its seventh edition, Reason is a virtual studio rack with all the tools, instruments, and tracks musicians need to turn their ideas into music.

ReCycle helps musicians make the most of their grooves, allowing them to do with sampled loops what they can do with beats programmed from individual drum sounds: alter the tempo or pitch, or replace sounds and process them individually. This handy software lets users quickly edit sampled parts, chop up riffs, remix, and do mash ups.

Propellerhead field marketing specialist Terry Mask will continue to provide dealer support for music retailers. Mask lives in the Ottawa area, and supports the company's sales efforts throughout Canada.

He puts on product clinics and provides merchandising advice for stores. He is on hand for tech support – for both retailers and consumers – and will work closely with the Hal Leonard team.

Lady states, "Propellerhead Software products put powerful recording capabilities into the hands of even casual music makers, enabling them to create very cool and sophisticated recordings. You don't have to be a tech head to get the most out of these products." He continues, "Reason and ReCycle are the top choice of educators for their simplicity, and beloved by pros for all of their cutting-edge features and robust functionality. We are excited to now offer music retailers throughout Canada these outstanding recording tools."

Bassermann says, "Teaming with Hal Leonard was a natural fit for us, and we've been thrilled with their performance in the States. We're excited to now have them help us grow our Canadian distribution. They reach educators, small independents, and major chains effectively, making ordering easy and backing it up with their renowned customer service."



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### NAMM's Museum of Making Music Benefit Supports 'Access to Music'

The Museum of Making Music (MoMM), a division of the NAMM Foundation, raised more than \$42,000 at its annual gala benefit, which featured a performance by celebrated slide guitarist Sonny Landreth, as well as live and silent auctions. The funds raised during the August 16 event support the Museum's educational programs, which promote the industry's music making principles by providing access to music making for people of all ages. More than 160 attendees bid on musical instruments, lessons, art, jewelry, gourmet food, travel packages, and other items donated by NAMM members and members of the local business community.

"The generosity and enthusiasm that we see at this benefit reaffirms that the story our museum tells of the music-making process is perennially engaging and inspiring – not only to our own industry insiders, but to the public at large," said the museum's executive director Carolyn Grant. "The support we receive through this event enables the museum to continue to place active music making center stage against a backdrop of historic innovations and lasting legacies."

The sold-out crowd surveyed tables laden with silent auction items such as a Lake Arrowhead vacation, a spa getaway, a personal winery and vineyard tour, chef-prepared gourmet dinner parties, and musical instruments and lessons. Some of San Diego's favorite local eateries provided cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, and a variety of youth musicians serenaded attendees as they placed their bids. The event's highest bid went for a behind-the-scenes tour of Pixar Studios.

NAMM members including Alfred Music, The Blue Guitar, Buffalo Brothers, Cordoba Guitars, Daisy Rock, Deering Banjo Company, and TakeLessons.com made donations to make the event a success. Museum members, volunteers, and community patrons were instrumental in ensuring that the event met its fundraising goals.

Internet recording sensation and hip-hop violinist Paul Dateh got the evening's entertainment off to a start with his unique, upbeat sounds. Famed studio guitarist Sonny Landreth performed rock standards, demonstrating the innovative slide technique that inspired Eric Clapton to label him "one of the most advanced musicians on the planet." Blues Hall of Fame musician Darrell Mansfield accompanied Landreth on harmonica for an energetic, blues-heavy set later in the evening.

Grant presented the Museum's Inspiration Award to Peter Gordon, who has significantly contributed to the Museum's strategic visioning and was pivotal in its recent newsletter re-launch. Recently retired from the City of Carlsbad's Cultural Arts Office, Gordon is formerly the executive director of the Evanston Art Center, chief curator at the San Jose Museum of Art, and coordinator of special exhibitions at the New York State Museum. He now lends his expertise to special exhibition development and grant writing. Grant lauded Gordon's generous donation of time and expertise in sharing his lifetime of museum knowledge. "Peter has a depth of wisdom and experience that enables him to turn complex concepts into meaningful simplicity," Grant said. "He can ask the hard questions, provoking discussion and thought, and can lead people to make their own good decisions and conclusions without imposing his own. He is a mentor and a friend to all of us. The Museum is infinitely better thanks to him."



Paula Simmons and Kevin Smith, NAMM members and owners of The Violin Shop San Diego, with museum executive director Carolyn Grant.

The Museum of Making Music provides access to music and music making through a variety of educational outreach programs that impact thousands of adults, seniors, students and children from a variety of cultural and economic backgrounds. These efforts include in-school music lessons, adult programs such as the North Coastal New Horizons Band and the North Coast Strings Orchestra, scholarships, and educational programs.

## XVIVE Audio Now Distributed Exclusively by Dana B. Goods in the U.S.

Dana B. Goods is expanding its offerings of quality micro pedals and full sized pedals to its dealers and is now the exclusive U.S. distributor of XVIVE Audio.

XVIVE has relied on the engineering talent of several U.S. engineers who have decades of professional experience and are the names behind a number of today's top-selling effects. "The USA Design Team mission was simple: to design a product that delivered premium tone and a price second to none," says Nancy Lee, CEO of XVIVE. The team is headed by Howard Davis, who was responsible for many of the Electro-Harmonix designs. He is joined by Darius Mostowfi, who has 18 years of DSP and analog design experience, and Ray Heasman, who has 15 years of experience designing high-end audio systems.

Dana B. Goods is very excited to add the XVIVE line to its growing selection of effects pedals. "We had them in our Summer NAMM booth and the reception to them was excellent," says Dana Teague, president of Dana B. Goods.





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# TMP Pro to Distribute Westone in U.S.

TMP Pro Distribution has announced an agreement with Westone to distribute the full line of their professional and personal music products in the U.S. TMP celebrates its 35th anniversary this year, following a formula of establishing strong partner relationships with vendors.

John Hennessey, vice president of Operations for TMP Pro Distribution, explains, "Westone has been a pioneer in in-ear monitors and multi-driver ear-phones. The entire TMP Pro Distribution team is honored to have Westone as a partner.

"We have a great appreciation for



innovative products with strong brand recognition, and Westone's reputation fits into this very well. Our customers have relied on our knowledgeable staff to provide solutions for their needs since we established some of the industry's first distributor programs back in 1985. Westone is a welcome addition to our line of more than 170 top-notch brands."

"Westone is known as the absolute standard in the in-ear monitoring world, so it only made sense for us to team up with TMP Pro Distribution" notes Jeffery Fowler, national sales manager in Westone's Pro Division. "They signify the best in representation of our brand throughout the United States. We are really proud to have TMP as our partner, as we know we are in really good hands."

## Correction

In August's "Handheld Recorder's Get a Grip," we incorrectly referred to a B&H Music in California. The correct business was B&H Photo in New York, N.Y.

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# Sennheiser Updates Artist Relations Site

Audio specialist Sennheiser has announced a broad update to its artist relations site. The website [sennheiser.com/artists] is designed not only to be visually engaging for artists, music fans, and customers, but also rich with information on artists using Sennheiser microphones, wireless systems, and other products. Visitors can explore and gain relevant information on a wide range of Sennheiser artists and the equipment they use: from established acts such as Paramore to emerging artists like Katie Cole.

The updated site includes a wide range of information, including artists' favored equipment usage, as well as automatically updated content so music fans can stay up to date on artist news, tours, and television appearances. Website visitors can also access recent videos, press releases, and artists' social media platforms: all within a vibrant and easy to navigate web environment.

"By enhancing our artist relations site, we are able to bring yet another dimension of value to our artists and customers," says Tim Moore, Sennheiser artist relations manager. "We encourage every artist, musician, and music fan to access our site so they can learn more about the diverse artists who choose Sennheiser and their music. Visitors also will be able to learn about the tools the artists and their teams use to achieve the audio quality they demand."



"One of the driving factors in our site rebuild was to spotlight our emerging artists and bring their music to the forefront," Moore continues. "Sennheiser provides first-rate technical support not only to its internationally touring artists playing stadiums and arenas, but also to smaller yet very talented acts playing local clubs and theaters. On our new site, every artist is given an equal degree of spotlight."

"I truly value my friendship and business relationship with Sennheiser," says Katie Cole. "It's clear that the company and its entire artist relations team really love music and want to support what we do. Plus there is a respect for all artists, no matter where they are in their career. I'm not quite on the level of Miranda Lambert or Pink, but I am treated that way. This is amazing, and I'm thankful to be a Sennheiser artist."

She added, "Another thing I love about the artist relations team is that they fully understand what product should be used and how. I know I am getting quality feedback when I ask about various products and their applications."

To learn more about Sennheiser artists and to read about its relations program, visit [www.sennheiserusa.com/artists](http://www.sennheiserusa.com/artists).



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ON THE MOVE

**Amati USA** has announced that industry veteran **Jay Wanamaker** has been named president & COO. Wanamaker will oversee all Amati U.S. operations, including Amati Woodwind & Brass Instruments and V.F. Cerveny Brass Instruments, as well as overseeing the Strunal String Instrument brand. "Jay's vast experience in running world-class MI wholesale and retail companies, as well as his history as a highly revered music educator, makes him the perfect person to lead our U.S. operations," comments Vaclav Hnilicka, Amati CEO.



Wanamaker has served as a senior executive with Yamaha Band & Orchestral Division, Yamaha Pro Audio & Combo Division, Guitar Center, Music & Arts, Fender's KMC Music, and Alfred Publishing.

Jay has been a member of the music faculty at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music, authored numerous educational publications, composed music for the motion picture *DRUMLINE*, and instructed mass bands for events including the Olympics, Super Bowls, Special Olympics, Liberty Weekend, Pan Am Games, and the McDonald's All-American High School Band.

Wanamaker states, "I am really excited to get back to my roots of band instruments and music education. This is where it all began for me, and I feel that all of my experiences in wholesale, retail and education will be a tremendous asset as I dedicate myself to focusing on growing the Amati and Strunal brands in America."

**Jessica Bartoshesky** recently joined **KHS America** to fill the newly created role of educator relations coordinator. She will be working with the Marketing Department to help guide and spearhead marketing initiatives for music educators. By understanding music education trends, music education forums, and programs, Jessica will focus on creating and strengthening partnerships with the music education community.



Bartoshesky earned her Bachelor of Music in Saxophone Performance from

Bridgewater College (Bridgewater, Virginia) in 1998. She also studied for a jazz performance certificate at Berklee College of Music (Boston). While obtaining her degree, Jessica taught private saxophone, piano and music theory, and continued to do so through her tenure with Music & Arts.

During her tenure at Music & Arts she managed retail stores in the Northeast and then transitioned into the educational side of the business becoming an Educational Representative servicing school districts in those four states. During this time she helped develop and refine school recruitment techniques, as well as work with schools and districts in her territory that were threatened for cutbacks and dissolution.

To coincide with her passion for helping music programs in peril, Bartoshesky began working with the Light up the Queen Foundation, based in Wilmington, Delaware.

**D'Addario** has announced that **Nick Gordon** and **Chris Scialfa** have joined D'Addario's Product Management team as the Percussion Business unit manager and Woodwinds Business unit manager respectively.



As the company's new percussion product manager, Nick Gordon is responsible for leading the business management of all percussion products, including Evans, Promark, and Puresound. He manages the Marketing and Product Development vision and strategy for his assigned brands and develops supporting business plans and budgets according to brand goals and creative guidelines.

Product specialists Ben Smith and Elijah Navarro each report to Gordon, while he reports directly to Brian Vance, director of Product Management. Gordon was most recently employed as a client services executive with The Orchard, a digital music, film, and video distribution company founded to provide independent artists with the ability to sell their music to mainstream audiences. Gordon received his Bachelor of Science in Organizational Communication from the University of Kansas. While there, he also studied symphonic and marching percussion and jazz drumming. He is also an active drummer.

As D'Addario's new Woodwinds product manager, **Chris Scialfa** leads the business management of all woodwind-related products by collaborating closely with the creative team, sales, artist relations, product development, and the operations team. Moreover, he is tasked with assisting in the development of new rule-breaking marketing strategies to relaunch and rebrand all reed products under the D'Addario name, in an effort to increase market share in the advanced student and professional musician market segments. Scialfa also reports directly to Brian Vance, and manages the efforts of product specialists Josh Redman and Kristen McKeon. Previously, Scialfa worked with Carl Fischer for over 15 years and was instrumental in their rapid and initial growth. In his latest position, Scialfa managed a sales team responsible for national and international retail and distribution. Additionally, he worked with their creative department and product development group to capitalize on market opportunities and implemented a social media strategy to better promote the company's products and brands. Scialfa is a vocalist and plays the piano, clarinet, and guitar. He earned his Bachelor of Arts in Music from Rutgers University



**Zoom North America** has named **Micah Eberman** as its new vice president of Brand Engagement. Eberman, previously an agency strategist and creative director for the company, will lead Zoom's marketing efforts. Eberman has over 16 years of experience at agencies such as R/GA and Zoom's lead agency, GS Design. He has developed multi-channel campaigns for brands such as Verizon/Verizon Wireless, Sony Playstation, MillerCoors, and Harley-Davidson.



With his team at GS, Eberman brought his experience and personal passion for music and film to lead the development of Zoom's new "Creators" platform and revamped brand properties.

# Bethel Music Center Celebrates 30 Years

Bethel Music Center is celebrating its 30th birthday this year. On August 16, BMC held a party at the store (273 Greenwood Ave in Bethel, Conn.), which was open to the public. The event featured live music all day, in-store sales, new products, door prizes, light refreshments, and raffle drawings.

Thirty years after Bruce Treidel opened

the doors to Bethel Music Center in a tiny storefront, Bethel Music Center is still a flourishing, family-owned business in downtown Bethel. Since their move to 273 Greenwood Avenue in 2008, BMC has continued to provide music lessons, sales, rentals, school services, repairs, and more to the greater Danbury area. The staff has

worked hard at affiliating themselves with manufacturers of only the highest reputation for quality and service. BMC says that its "focus on great customer service and creating an enjoyable shopping experience has made them the premier source for all of your music needs."

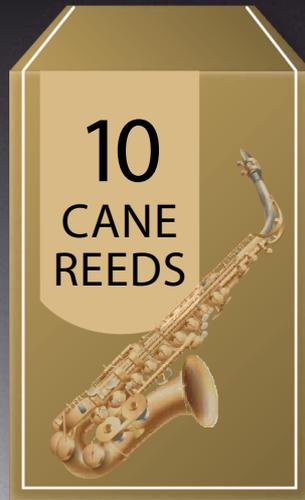


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## Trade Regrets

On Sunday, August 10th, MMR received the following from NAMM's Dan Del Fiorentino:

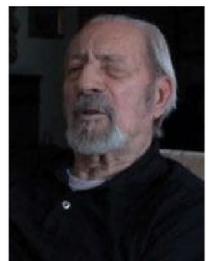
**Pat Hiatt** was among the leaders of band instrument repairmen in our industry who helped improve the training and education for his craft. His work spanned several decades and was vital in the formation of NAPBIRT, the National Association of Professional Band Instrument Repair Technicians. Pat served as president of the association beginning in 1979 and was involved in the growth and development of the programs and training sessions offered to repair techs around the world.

Our friend, Bill Matthew, the Executive Director of NAPBIRT, who suggested that we interview Pat for the NAMM Oral History years ago, announced that Pat passed away yesterday.



On August 10<sup>th</sup>, **Steno Giulini**, who served as the editor of the International Association magazine *Euro Piano* for well over 60 years, passed away. In the March 2011 issue of the magazine there

appeared a special wish for his 100th birthday and his Italian translation of a technical article about repair work on the piano. Mr. Giulini passed away at the age of 103.



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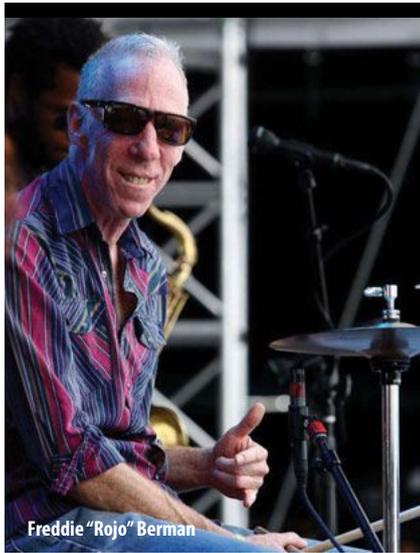
SKB has updated the Ultimate Series Roto-racks with a new Roto Rack design with a full stack—2U, 4U, 6U, 8U, 10U and 12U. The new Roto Racks are Roto-molded with impact resistant Polyethylene (LDPE) and feature threaded steel rails (front and back), flush mounted handles and secure fitting lids that feature an integrated rubber gasket for a tight seal. Stacking ribs for stable stacking with the Roto Racks or the new Shallow Roto Racks. A convenient cover design designates the size of the rack for easier load out when dealing with multiple size racks. All sizes are shipping now and available from your local dealer.



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

## Supplier Scene

### Moravian Percussion Redefines Brand



Freddie "Rojo" Berman

Moravian Percussion, maker of the BoxKit, has recently made aggressive moves to re-brand the company, including opening new product dealers and signing endorser Freddie "Rojo" Berman, according to Moravian Percussion president Josh Trask.

Trask recently hired industry veteran Mark Petrocelli as director of sales and marketing. Having a 20-year track record of success including positions at Guitar Center, Pro-Mark Drumsticks, KMC Music, and Hermes Music in Houston, Petrocelli's experience has already led to an expanded artist roster and three new partnerships with authorized dealers. "We recently signed Freddie 'Rojo' Berman, drummer for world-renowned singer / songwriter, Amos Lee," Petrocelli said.

New retail partnerships include Sam Ash, The Percussion Center (Houston), and Volkwein's Music in Pittsburgh. Trask's other rebranding strategies included moving manufacturing into a new 54,000 sq. ft. facility located in the foothills of Moravian Falls, N.C., and rebranding the original company name, logo, and website.

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

### Full Compass Systems Sponsors 13th Annual Opera in the Park

Full Compass Systems was a proud participant in the 13th annual "Opera in the Park" concert for the city of Madison, Wisconsin. This free annual concert has become a summer tradition for the community.

Many staff hours were donated by a team of Full Compass employees, including CEO and founder Jonathan Lipp, who provided his expertise at the front-of-house mixing console. Other staff members assisted with setup and equipment operation for the event. This year's performance had another record turnout with an estimated 16,000 people in attendance.

"This is one of many events we sponsor to promote music in our community," said



Jonathan Lipp. "It is so vitally important for people to experience the gift of music and we will do everything we can to make sure they have that opportunity."

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

### Casio Introduces New Artist Program Roster Members

Casio America has introduced singer-songwriter Jonah Smith and well-known keyboardist Steve Weingart as the latest additions to its Artist Program. Casio's Artist Program fosters budding musicians by providing multiple levels of support. Smith and Weingart will join the current roster of artists including The Crystal Method, Joe Sample, Jonatha Brooke, Josh Charles, Tom Brislin, Karmina, and Kyle Morrison among others.

Over the course of seven unique albums, Smith has pulled inspirations from a deep well of American blues and its offshoots, including soul, country, and folk. His songs have won Independent Music Awards and have been featured in many television shows, including *Good Morning America*.

Weingart is a talented keyboardist who has worked with such artists as Ran-



Steve Weingart

dy Brecker, Bill Evans, Vinnie Colaiuta, Robben Ford, Darryl Jones, Will Lee, and Keith Carlock. Weingart's latest project, the power jazz/rock group Protocol II, is currently touring in support of their CD, *Protocol II*. Weingart will be using an all Casio rig consisting of two Privia PX-5S digital pianos and a XW-P1 performance synthesizer.

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

### Pearl Artist Adrian Bent on Tour with Drake, Lil Wayne

Pearl artist Adrian Bent is pulling double-duty for the biggest hip-hop tour of 2014, the upcoming "Drake vs. Lil Wayne" North America tour. Adrian, who has been Drake's go-to drummer for the past several years, was also tapped to cover Lil Wayne's set for the 31-date trek that began on August 8 and ends at The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, in The Woodlands, Texas on September 27.

Bent will be displaying his grooves behind an eight-piece Reference Series drum set, which is surrounded and supported by Pearl's ICON Rack System.

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



# Award Winning Hybrids



MMR Dealer's Choice  
Kawai CA95 (2013)



MMR Dealer's Choice  
Kawai CA95 (2012)



Diapason Magazine  
Kawai CA95 (2012)



Music Inc. Magazine  
Kawai CA95 (2012)



Japan Institute of  
Design Promotion  
Kawai CA95 (2012)



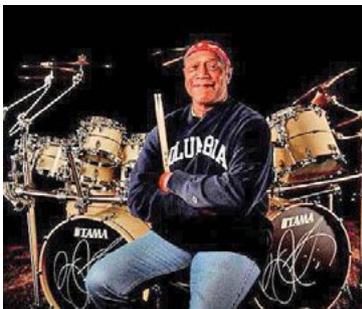
Music Inc. Magazine  
Kawai CS10 (2014)

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



# Billy Cobham Reunites with Tama Drums

"Father of jazz fusion drumming" Billy Cobham announced that he has again become an official endorser of Tama drums. In the early days of fusion, Cobham's intensity matched his extraordinary technical proficiency, while album cover photos of him playing his huge Tama kits stirred the imaginations of young drummers of all musical stripes.



Countless interactions with drummers in the '70s led Tama to rethink hardware and how it interacts with the drum shells or other aspects of the drum kit, resulting in products that far surpassed any existing solutions, particularly in terms of stability and durability. This tough, yet easily adjustable hardware allowed drummers to play harder than they ever had before, and Billy Cobham was pioneering in his generation of strong, hard-hitting players. Cobham's drums-of-choice these days are from Tama's recently introduced STAR line, in particular STAR Bubinga.

tama.com

# Epiphone and Graph Tech Partner



GraphTech will supply Epiphone with a NuBone XB nut and saddle for every Pro 1 Series Guitar. GraphTech, the world's largest nut and saddle manufacturer, is known in the music industry for such brands as, TUSQ, NuBone, and NuBone XB nuts, saddles, and bridge pins.

NuBone XB is Graph Tech's newest nut and saddle material, designed specifically to produce more volume and bass harmonics.

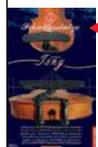
In a statement, Graph Tech said, "Epiphone has been around for over 140 years, and it is really nice to see an old company embracing new technologies. We are very honored to have the opportunity to work with Epiphone."

graphtech.com



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## Bedell Guitars Partners with REVERB

Bedell Guitars has teamed up with REVERB in support of their collaboration with Dave Matthews Band, the BamaGreen Project. Since 2005, REVERB has been making Dave Matthews Band's tours more sustainable, backstage and through fan engagement. The Farm-To-Family program collects fan donations to purchase local, organic farm products for donation to local food banks. In 2014, the program has thus far raised over \$77,000. Bedell Guitars has donated a Coffee House Dreadnought and 1964 Dreadnought signed by Dave Matthews which serve as grand prizes for those who participate in the Farm-To-Family program. [bedellguitars.com](http://bedellguitars.com) and [reverb.org](http://reverb.org)



## SJC Drums Release Virtual Kit Designer



SJC Drums released an iPad version of their Virtual Kit Designer™. "This app pushes the bar on any 'design your own drum' software ever released before, and we're so excited to see what drummers can come up with!" says SJC Drums CEO Mike Ciprari. "We worked on this app for the past three years and we're so excited to launch it." The company will release a full web version of the designer in early 2015.

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

## Reunion Blues Adds Conquering Dystopia Guitarist Jeff Loomis to Endorser List



Reunion Blues has welcomed metal guitarist Jeff Loomis to their artist lineup. Jeff Loomis' complex shredding has been a central part of the progressive but powerful and thrashy edge attributed to metal band Nevermore's trademark sound since the band's formation in 1992. Taking the classic techniques of Jason Becker and Yngwie Malmsteen and applying his own ingenuity, Loomis has carved out his own niche.

Recently, Loomis also formed the instrumental tech-metal supergroup Conquering Dystopia with guitarist Keith Merrow, Cannibal Corpse bassist Alex Webster, and The Faceless drummer Alex Rudinger.

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

While other overdrives go **green** with envy, we're seeing **red**.



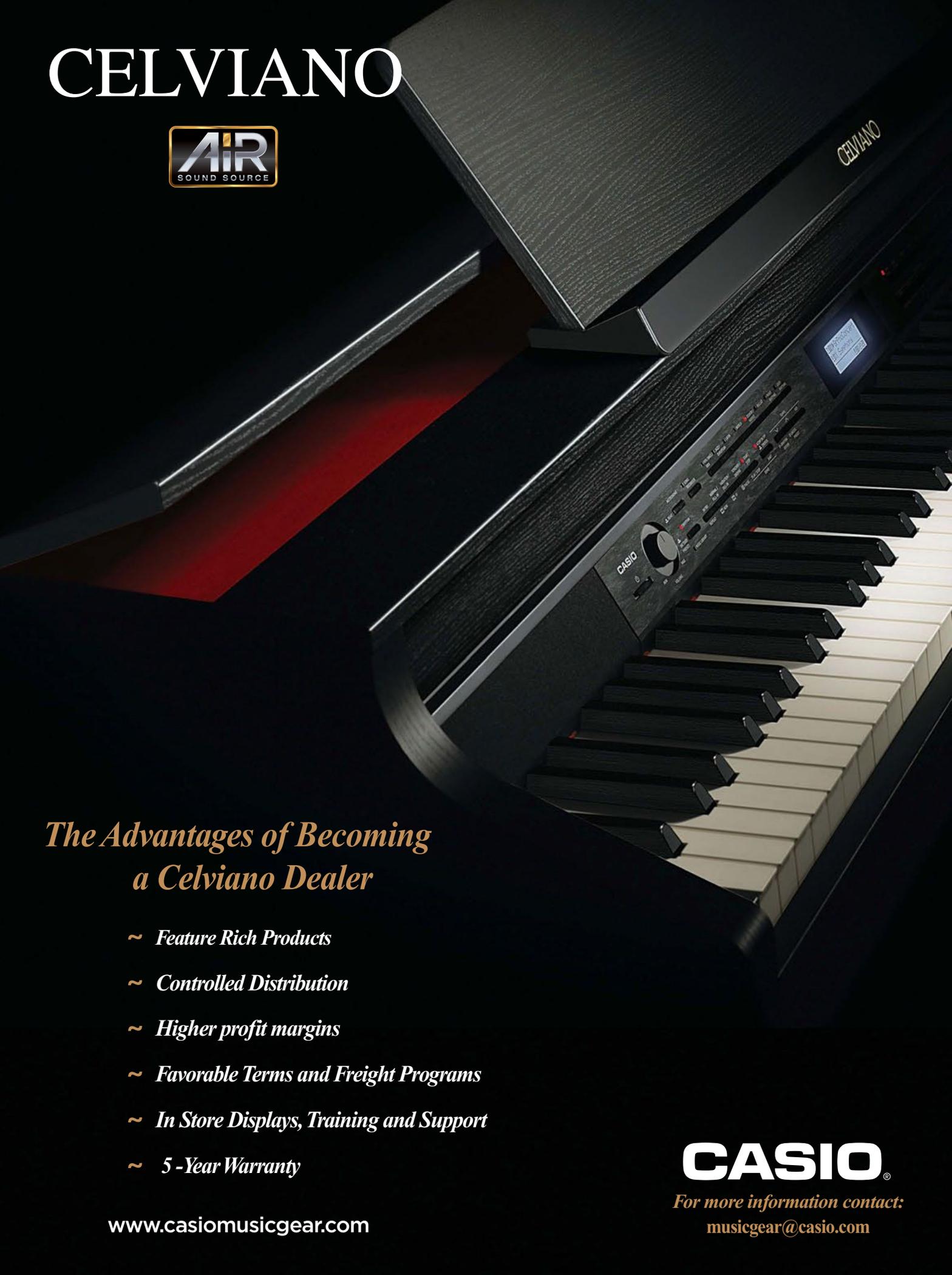
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# Zildjian Artists Choose Kerope Cymbal Models

Just six months after the line's launch at Winter NAMM 2014, top Zildjian artists have added the company's new Kerope cymbals to their drum setups. Zildjian artists now using Kerope include Daniel Platzman (Imagine Dragons), Steve Smith, Peter Erskine, Mark Colenburg, Ulysses Owens, JR., Kendrick Scott, Francois Comtois (Young the Giant), Marcus Gilmore

(Gary Burton Quartet), and Eric Harland.

"I like the sound of the flat bell (which transitions to the body of the cymbal nicely), the hammering in the bell, the dark tone, and the distinction and clarity of the sticking," Colenburg says.

The Zildjian Sound Lab collaborated with New York-based drummer Zach Danziger to design the new line of Kerope



cymbals. Exhaustive research into cymbals dating back to the 1950s and 1960s was critical in capturing the authentic look, feel, and sound of K Zildjian cymbals, renowned for their dark tones and old world appearance.

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

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## Mapex Drums Supports High School in Need



The Mapex Drum Company and three of Drum Corps International's elite World Class Drum and Bugle Corps, along with Columbus Pro Percussion based in Columbus, have banded together to support the Watkins Memorial High School Marching Band after it recently suffered a loss of thousands of dollars earmarked for new band instruments. Representatives from the band say that the group's financial issues have left them with several problems; including instruments so antiquated many are older than the students who play them.

When Bob Jacobs, executive director of the Jersey Surf, learned of the situation with the Watkins Memorial Band, he and several of his directorial colleagues along with DCI's Director of Global Business Development John DeNovi immediately reached out to Mapex and Columbus Pro Percussion to see what could be done to aid a marching band in need. The team was able to mobilize many in the marching community and made a special presentation in July when the DCI Tour visited Dublin, Ohio for the Emerald City Music Games at Dublin Coffman High School.

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

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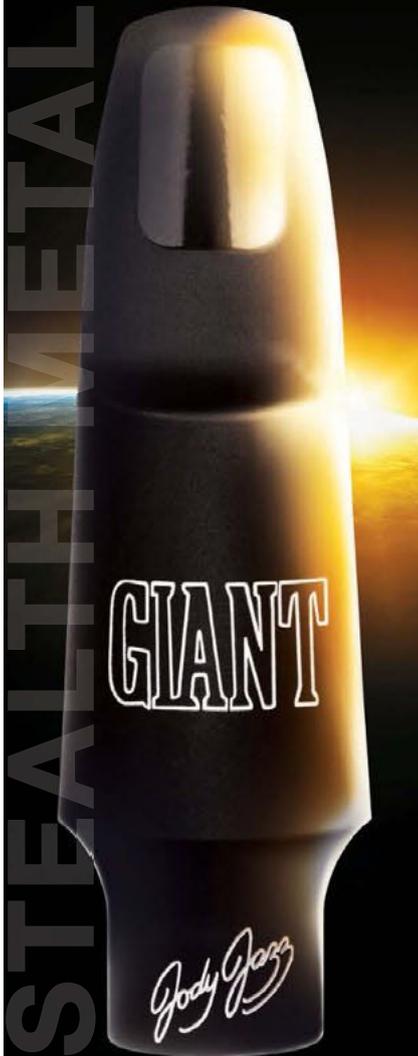


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## SupplierScene

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# PreSonus Helps Avengers S.T.A.T.I.O.N. Come Alive

Avengers S.T.A.T.I.O.N. (Scientific Training And Tactical Intelligence Operative Network), recently opened its doors in Manhattan's Discovery Times Square, in the home of what was once the famed New York Times building.

As the exhibition's audio supervisor, Mark Edward Lewis, explains, Avengers S.T.A.T.I.O.N., produced by Victory Hill Exhibitions in association with Marvel Entertainment, is "an amazing, interactive, multimedia integration of Marvel characters that we love, with cutting-edge audio and video technology."

Lewis and found the solution by bringing in a range of PreSonus® near-field monitors, including Eris™ E5 and E8 and Sceptre™ S6. To handle low frequencies, Lewis and Serafine chose the PreSonus Temblor™ T10 subwoofer. The T10 features a 10" glass-composite, low-frequency transducer and a front-firing bass-reflex acoustic port. The need for multiple tracks of audio playback was another area where PreSonus offered an ideal solution, with Lewis and Serafine opting for AudioBox™ 1818VSL and 22VSL multichannel interfaces.

"When you're running 220-plus speakers and 168 discrete channels in a 10,000 square foot exhibit, you've got to have DSP," Lewis observes. "What's great about the AudioBox VSL is that it's got more than enough DSP per channel – not just EQ, but compression, limiting, even some reverb. We've got discrete control of the sounds, which makes it a great alternative to using a lot of expensive DTS encoders."

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



## Arturia Marks 15th Anniversary with New Logo

Music software and hardware company Arturia is marking its 15th anniversary milestone with a new contemporary company logo. Arturia president Frédéric Brun, who co-founded the company in 1999, has made it the company's goal to pursue cutting-edge musical instruments and software, first from Grenoble and then later from West Lake Village, California. The company made its name with the Storm software, moving on to softsynths

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# Bösendorfer in 2014

A Conversation with Top Bösendorfer & Yamaha Officers About the Iconic Austrian Brand

By Christian Wismuller

At over 185 years old, Vienna-based Bösendorfer is one of the oldest piano manufacturers still producing instruments to this day. The brand boasts several key distinctions: it's been widely acclaimed as one of the top-built brands in the world, and several times has held the informal title of "world's most expensive piano" for several of its models. The Bösendorfer artist roster includes not only highly accomplished pianists of many genres, but also major concert halls around the world. Several 92- and 97-key models (offering more keys than nearly any other commercially available piano on the market) were created for specific performance scenarios requiring an expanded range.

The brand also collaborated with German manufacturer Audi to celebrate the automaker's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary by designing a sleek, modern, grand piano that paid homage to Audi's design aesthetic and was hand-constructed, like all other Bösendorfer models. In the U.S. market, Bösendorfer, now owned and distributed by Yamaha, continues to enjoy its reputation as a worldwide leader in the upper echelon of pianos.

MMR reached out to top officers at Bösendorfer and Yamaha to discuss the recent history of the brand, as well as plans for the future.

**Can you discuss the acquisition of Bösendorfer by Yamaha back in 2007? Why was the brand available, and why was Yamaha interested?**

**Brian Kemble:** Bösendorfer belonged to the Austrian bank Bawag until 2007. When Bawag itself was taken over by Cerberus, the decision was made that the bank should focus on its core business. At the same time, it had been obvious that a bank and private equity firm are not the ideal owners of a traditional musical instrument manufacturer like Bösendorfer.

Thus, Bawag made Bösendorfer available and out of many interested entities, Yamaha won the race. While Bösendorfer continues to handcraft its premium pianos according to the Viennese tradition of piano making exclusively in Austria, being part of Yamaha Corporation permits Bösendorfer to access the biggest



Brian Kemble MBE, managing director, Bösendorfer



Thomas Broukal, technical & manufacturing director, Bösendorfer



Simon Oss, premium piano marketing manager, Yamaha Corporation of America

and most professional distribution, service, and Artist Relation network in the music industry.

Yamaha has a very deep understanding of and appreciation for the uniqueness of the Viennese tradition of sound and instrument making – and not only from its involvement with Bösendorfer. Since the early 1970s, at the request of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Yamaha Corporation

assisted in the development of special Viennese instruments, the manufacture and supply of which continue to this day. For this effort, recently retired Yamaha Corporation director and managing executive officer Hiroo Okabe received in 2012 the Merit Award in Gold of the Province of Vienna. Consequently, Yamaha provides Bösendorfer the perfect environment to continue handcrafting our instruments in our traditional and unique way in Austria.

**It's been said that under Yamaha's stewardship, Bösendorfer instruments have, in fact, become *more* "Austrian" – do you agree?**

**Thomas Broukal:** Indeed, we are more Austrian now than before Yamaha purchased us. We transferred our plate manufacturing from Czech Republic to a company based in Austria. This company makes extremely high quality hand-molded castings using the traditional sand casting technique. I often get asked what changes Yamaha has made. My answer is that Yamaha has done exactly what Yamaha said they would do when they purchased our company – namely, to allow us to continue our traditional hand-crafted ways of building our instruments. At the same time, we strengthened our company's internal "continuous improvement

process" under Yamaha, by which all employees are asked to share their ideas for constantly reaching a new level of perfection. For example, we slightly changed the shape of the capo bar of our model 214, which has improved the tonal response of

the instrument in the lower treble. Interestingly, we went back to a more traditional shape, which had already been applied by Bösendorfer on other models in the early 20th century.

We also clearly state in our corporate philosophy that any production and development process must follow the art of Viennese

“Being part of Yamaha Corporation permits Bösendorfer to access the biggest and most professional distribution, service, and Artist Relation network in the music industry.”

– Brian Kemble, managing director, Bösendorfer

## Allegro Pianos' Buchai on Bösendorfer in the U.S. Market

Ori Buchai, founder and owner of N.Y.- and Connecticut-based Allegro Pianos, shared his impressions about how and why Bösendorfer has been gaining more traction in the U.S. market over the past dozen years. "A decade or two ago, the higher price range of the North American market was completely dominated by Steinway," says Buchai. "A rise in the amount of information available on the Internet gave consumers the knowledge to discover that there's more than one game in town, and so in the past few years, there's been a greater openness toward true high-end pianos coming from Europe. Bösendorfer has benefitted from this trend and it continues to grow."

Another major growth factor stems from a commitment to continual refinements and overall improvements in product build quality and sound. According to Buchai, Bösendorfer implemented major redesign aspects around the year 2000, resulting in marked improvements in the response and tone stability of the pianos produced since then. "As a major Bösendorfer dealer, we receive pianos of varied vintages routinely," he continues. "It's impressive to see the much greater level of refinement exhibited by new or newer production pianos produced over the past five to ten years over Bösendorfer pianos made in the 1990s and early 2000s even if the latter have been perfectly maintained and are in the best of condition. [To me] it seems that they took particular care over the past few years to ensure that every piano it produces not only lives up to the company's reputation, but also further enhances it."

These changes have enabled Bösendorfer to maintain its reputation as a prestigious brand among private buyers who are looking for "the best" in terms of musicality, design and craftsmanship. For a high-end dealer such as Allegro Pianos, current buyers attracted to those qualities consist of three main categories. "Some are very wealthy, discriminating buyers, who expect and get the

utmost in terms of quality and service," notes Buchai. "Others are individuals and families who come to our gallery looking for a mid-stream instrument, but during their visit realize that a higher-quality instrument will provide more pleasure and value over the many years they are likely to own it." The third type of private buyers are successful artists who, as Buchai explains, "have reached a level of success that allows them to focus on the musical merits of an instrument for their personal use rather than any commercial considerations offered by other manufacturers."

Beyond product merits, how are piano dealers faring with Bösendorfer's current corporate structure, with Yamaha at the helm? For high-end dealers such as Allegro Pianos, which is consistently recognized each year by Bösendorfer as a top dealer, the answer is, "very well," both in terms of sales and their relationship with the company. "Having been a Bösendorfer dealer both prior to, and after Yamaha's purchase of the brand, I can attest that it has been a very positive development," affirms Buchai. "Some of my best customers are very successful bankers who either play the piano or value piano lessons for their children. However, for a piano company, being owned by bankers or financial institutions is not an ideal situation. The transition of ownership from Bawag to Yamaha has definitely benefited Bösendorfer."

After the change in ownership, production has remained in Austria and was enhanced by investments not only in equipment, but in the dealer support network as well. And that included gathering dealer input that would help navigate the company's course of action under its new leadership. Buchai pleasantly recalls the numerous visits from multiple high-ranking Yamaha personnel inviting him to share his thoughts on the Bösendorfer brand and his needs. "It's clear that Yamaha studied the ground carefully after the purchase," he concludes.

piano making and sound culture traditions. Therefore, we are taking an extremely traditional approach.

### Can you discuss what makes Bösendorfer distinct from your competition?

**Simon Oss:** Founded in Vienna by Ignaz Bösendorfer in 1828, Bösendorfer is not only the oldest premium piano manufacturer in the world, but it is also one of the most exclusive, making only close to 300 instruments each year. In an age of mass production, uniformity and standardization, Bösendorfer takes great pride in being exclusive and original, following the Viennese tradition of piano making, with a strong focus on a wide range of tonal colors permitting unique artistic expression. This is also reflected in the brand slogan "Der Klang der berührt," which means "the sound that touches (your soul)." Influenced by all the major composers and pianists who lived and worked in Vienna, for centuries the classic music capital of the world, Ignaz and Ludwig Bösendorfer created and developed the finest pianos – a tradition that continues to this day. These instruments have inspired generations of musicians as diverse as Franz Liszt, Johannes Brahms, Johann Strauss, Ferruccio Busoni, Leonard Bernstein, Paul Badura-Skoda, Andrés Schiff, Valentina Lisitsa, Tori Amos, and Oscar Peterson. Bösendorfer has had a very close relationship with musicians since the earliest days of the company. For example, Franz Liszt wrote more than 40 letters and telegrams to Bösendorfer.



Bösendorfer celebrated its 185<sup>th</sup> anniversary with its 50,000<sup>th</sup> instrument, the "50000" model.

This unique history and position is also reflected in the construction of the pianos. For an outstanding richness of tone colors Bösendorfer applies – and is only piano manufacturer in the world to do so – the highly complex "resonance case principle." Instead of adopting a rather stiff laminated piano rim, Bösendorfer uses



The Bösendorfer Selection Center in Wiener Neustadt, Austria.

for the core of the rim quarter-sawn Austrian spruce tonewood, the ideal tonal material, which constitutes over 80 percent of the wood in every Bösendorfer grand piano. Thus, similar to a violin, the whole body, not just the soundboard, supports the sound formation. When a note is played, the integrated spruce components become acoustically active, forming a complete resonating body that gives the whole instrument an unparalleled resonance.

#### How many are currently on staff at Bösendorfer?

**Brian Kemble:** Bösendorfer has a total of about 120 staff members. Out of these, about 100 are craftsmen and technicians, so it still very much feels like a family company. Though we are part of Yamaha Corporation and we work closely with the subsidiaries around the world for Artist Relations, distribution, and service, there are no Yamaha employees within Bösendorfer Company itself. This reflects very well the large amount of autonomy that we have been given and the unique position Bösendorfer has.

#### What are the current production facilities like?

**Simon Oss:** Ignaz Bösendorfer opened his first factory directly in the center of Vienna. In the first year he produced four pianos there. In 1839, he received the gold medal at the Industrial Exhibition in Vienna and the title of "Imperial and Royal piano maker to the Court" granted by Emperor Ferdinand, an award that had never been given before to an Austrian piano maker.

Due to increased production, Bösendorfer has had to look for bigger facilities over time. After being located for many years in the Graf Starhemberg-Gasse in Vienna's 4th district, the company moved in 1973 to a bigger factory in Wiener Neustadt, which is located about 45 minutes south of Vienna's city center. All Bösendorfer pianos are made exclusively in this factory to this day. In 2010, Bösendorfer built an industry-leading piano selection center next to the factory, and in the same year the new Bösendorfer concert hall opened its doors in the Mozarthaus Vienna, located at Domgasse 5, just behind St. Stephan's Cathedral. Mozart himself lived in this house from 1784 to 1787, so the venue attracts as

many as 140,000 visitors a year, which creates an international flair and benefits artists who perform there.

The downtown showroom, the third of our corporate facilities in Vienna (the second is our rental and service center), has been located in Vienna's Musikverein since 1914 (so it is celebrating 100 years this year!). The Musikverein building is also the home of the "Golden Hall," famous for the New Year's Concert of the Vienna Philharmonic which is broadcast every year around the world, as well as for performances by the world's most renowned artists. The Bösendorfer showroom not only serves our customers but it also serves as a regular meeting place for artists, concert organizers, journalists, and friends of Bösendorfer from all around the world. Tori Amos visited us recently when her world tour stopped in Vienna.

#### If you had to narrow it down to one model, what's currently the best-selling console for Bösendorfer?

**Simon Oss:** It depends on the market. While the North American market has a tendency towards bigger models, Japan has a tendency towards smaller ones due to the limited space of most homes. Having said this, in Japan alone there are more than 280 halls that purchased Bösendorfer instruments.

At the global level, the model 200 (6'7") – also available in several limited edition series, such as the "Klimt" and the "Hummingbird" – is currently the most popular size. If we consider only the traditional ebony polished finish, the model 225 (7'4") is the most popular.

The 225 semi concert grand has 92 keys instead of the traditional 88 keys, which means 4 extra notes in the bass. The 290 Imperial concert grand even has 97 keys, going down to the sub-contra C. The original request for this invention had been made by Ferruccio Busoni, who wanted to have these extra notes for his Bach transcriptions. Certain works by Bartók, Busoni, and Ravel can only be performed on these models. But more importantly the extra bass strings guarantee additional harmonic resonance throughout the whole instrument, adding an almost orchestral dimension.



The Bösendorfer "Hummingbird" model.

**Are there any new or upcoming product introductions of note that you can share with us?**

**Brian Kemble:** At this year's Winter NAMM Show, Bösendorfer displayed its 50,000th fully handcrafted instrument. For the NAMM 2015 Show, we are working on a new limited edition model, with exquisite marquetry that was also used in the exotic design of our Hummingbird model.

**What else is on the horizon for the brand in the coming months?**

**Brian Kemble:** When I was appointed managing director of Bösendorfer in 2011, I found it a very humbling experience to be given the responsibility of managing such an iconic company.

Bösendorfer is a precious jewel. It has an extraordinary and fabulous history. We have our own unique inspiring sound, which has enchanted amateur and professional musicians for generations. Bösendorfer is very much a dynamic and living company and no matter how good our instruments are, we are always trying to improve on perfection – always want the most recent piano we make to be the best.

In answer to your question, on the horizon for the coming years will be a constant and continuous obsession with perfection, making without compromise the best handcrafted instruments in the world, and all in the continuing tradition of our founder Ignaz and his son Ludwig Bösendorfer. **MMP**

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# Greater Than the Sum of Your Parts

Aftermarket Parts and OEM Components are More Important Than Ever in MI



By Matt Parish

**A**s anyone who's been paying attention to the industry knows, music has been going through some growing pains. World-conquering guitar heroes aren't the norm. Number one albums sell less than ever. Things are fracturing into ever smaller niches.

"Across the board stuff doesn't work anymore," says Lace Pickups president Don Lace. "You've got to figure out where you want to go, specifically, and do that the best that you can."

That's not necessarily a bad thing. As the modern crop of guitar parts makers – purveyors of pickups, knobs, nuts, saddles, tuning pegs, and more – can attest, consumers' tastes are becoming more refined by the year. Chalk it up to the growing diversity in music, or maybe the unprecedented access to gear info for players across the country, but a pickier public is also one willing to tinker with the details until the sound is *just right*.

That's where you come in.

## Picking Up The Slack

The conventional wisdom among those in the guitar industry has long been that when the economy nosedives, guitarists head for the parts department. Funds become too low to buy instruments, but an upgrade here or there is still within reach. The accessories market therefore enjoys a little boom.

In the real world, it hasn't been that cut and dry. While some look at their balance sheets and notice the predictable bargain shopping explosion, other manufacturers and retailers report a dry spell all around.

Dave Dunwoodie, president of Graph Tech, noted a hit to everything from international aftermarket distribution to the company's extensive OEM market. "Where we really noticed it on aftermarket distribution was in Europe," he says. "A lot of places there got hit really hard – Italy, Ireland, Spain. Germany was OK. The U.K. was slow."

He also noticed a distinct canary in the coalmine effect from his premium guitar makers. "About six months before that recession hit, it hit the high end guitars and that was sort of a window into the future," he says. "Now, the high end guitars are getting really strong again, so if the last change was any indicator, I think things are about to really pick up."

Picking up is an understatement, really. Dunwoodie says that Graph Tech has enjoyed a several years of growth in distribution (boosted by new products like their NuBone XB nuts), including 15 percent over last year, with a few distributors who are up 40 percent. The company's OEM market has grown 20 percent per year since 2009. They're not the only ones. Grover Musical Products, makers of several lines of machine heads, say they've seen consistent growth of six to seven percent over the last several years.

Grover president Rich Berger says it's indeed the upgrade effect that's kept his business rising, citing an increase in cheaper instruments made overseas. "The basic quality of these instruments is good, but in many cases it's the hardware that keeps the price and quality low," he says. "Many consumers are upgrading their instruments with aftermarket accessories, which of course helps our business."

Pickup supplier EMG has also seen steady growth, including double digit gains this year, national sales manager Scott Wunschel reports. "The last five years have not been booming for anyone and let's face it – we deal mainly with hobbyists," he says. "But that's the great thing about guitar and bass players, whatever their level. They generally have multiple instruments and there's always one or two that they want to change. Pickups are a great place to start that change and we have seen a surge over the past few years."

### Niche-Oriented

An advantage of aftermarket and OEM parts is that it allows manufacturers to target specific niches with relatively low-cost products. Consumers can try on different tonal identities without worrying about their wallet too much. Lace Pickups has honed on a specific demographic – metal – and it has seen its figures continue to rise over the last few years. Don Lace attributes it to one thing: doubling down on an emerging market.

"Last year, we were up 25 percent," he says. "This year, we're already up about 18 percent on top of that. We definitely attribute it to working with artists a lot closer than we have in the past, especially with our new pickups with the Mastadon boys and stuff like that. It's been a full court press."

Lace – well-known for decades for its smooth-playing and

Strat-oriented Lace Sensor pickups – noticed its Aluminone pickups slowly gaining notoriety in certain segments of the market. Sensor pickups had a long history of big-name endorsements and steady sales, but maybe there was new ground to cover. After a bit of research, Lace says he and the company decided to double down on the emerging generation of metal players like Mastadon, Entombed, and High on Fire.

"It's been a daily trudge out into the trenches to find the right kind of players, just laying the groundwork," he says. "And it's definitely paying off. We're also trying to push the artists' ties with the products which we hadn't done in the past, other than resting on our laurels from like 20 years ago. [laughs] There's a whole new crowd of kids out there who aren't really Fender players and they aren't Gibson players. They're a different kind of thing. So we wanted to jump into that."

The youth market has its advantages, including the robust word-of-mouth channels that metal and hardcore bands have been building for years. "The festivals tied in with Facebook and the bands' own sites and how they do things is totally different from the other genres," says Lace. "Once you get in there and get their attention, word can kind of spread really quickly."

### Keeping It Familiar

There's room for other innovations within longtime consumers' comfort zones as well. Innovator Larry Fishman has been taking evolutionary steps with new tech like the Fluence pickups and the TriplePlay MIDI system. Not only is it providing growth among early adopters ready to go fully digital on their guitar processing, it's offering renewed inroads to long-trusted big names. At this Winter NAMM, Fender unveiled its 60th anniversary Stratocaster "Strat of the Future," complete with a Fishman TriplePlay on board. "We were thrilled by that," says Fishman. "I said, 'Right on.'"

Graph Tech's Dave Dunwoodie notes that, on some level, keeping products accessible isn't necessarily a bad thing. Though the company (possibly the biggest nut and saddle manufacturer in the world) makes over 300 different versions of nuts for its OEM operation, they limit the selection for retailers considerably. "It would just get confusing," he says. "We pick the ones that we feel would be most common and would fit guitars like Epiphones and Strats and Les Pauls, that kind of thing."

Dunwoodie goes on to explain that he tries not to stray too far from the conventional notions of what guitar equipment looks like when researching products. Graph Tech's new Ratio machine heads – which are innovatively geared so that every string takes the same amount of winding per interval – are a great example of innovation in a very plain guise.

"In developing guitar parts and components, you can't go too far off the beaten path as far as looks go," he says. "The two most popular electric guitars, the Les Paul and the Stratocaster, were designed in the '50s. The acoustic guitar was designed 300 years and still looks the same, you know? So the Ratio is something that



Seymour Duncan Pearly Gates Trembucker



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## Fully Loaded

A customer's guitar is endlessly customizable, and there are countless options for anyone looking to tweak their tone and upgrade some hardware. Here are just a few products to always keep in mind.



Graph Tech TUSQ Nut



EMG 81 Pickup



Planet Waves Elliptical End Pins



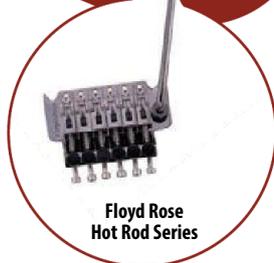
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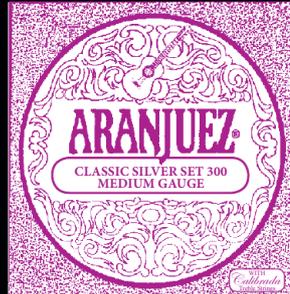
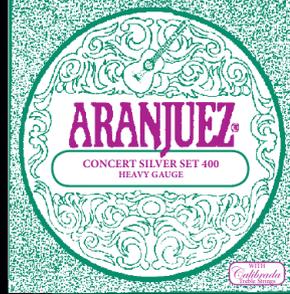


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really changes things but looks totally stock. You can't really tell if it's a Ratio or standard machine head."

EMG – for nearly 40 years the prototypical "black pickup" on shredder axes – is branching out into new colors, while Lace is experimenting with different metal finishes in an effort to be the "nice watch" of guitar gear. In short, whether you're aiming for conservative or splashy, appearances play a key role in this market.

### Educating The Customer

The main secret to success, though, may be in making sure the front lines of the aftermarket business are educated. Long & McQuade president Jeff Long observes that while the aftermarket segment has sometimes lagged, the difference is in sales floor know-how. "It really depends on the salespeople," he says. "We have 65 locations and the sales are stronger where we have a salesperson who is

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## Note From Joe Promoting Music Making!

Music is everywhere in our world—just try to picture even an hour of your day without it. But as an industry, we want more people to PLAY music themselves, right?! The end zone is clear: get more people to play music and fewer to quit. We all have a part in that, including your association. While you promote your brands and products, NAMM has the unique role of promoting the whole concept of music making. We reach out to the general public about the benefits of making music, whether it's fighting to keep music in schools or encouraging people of all ages to “just play” an instrument.

Through our “Circle of Benefits” business model, Membership dues and support of the NAMM trade shows go directly back into our industry through the NAMM Foundation, which works year-round to promote music and advocate for music education. These funds also support important music/brain research and public relations efforts that grow the pool of music makers. So far, 2014 has been an exciting year with national media spotlighting NAMM and the NAMM Foundation's growing list of activities.

In March, the NAMM Foundation unveiled its newest public service announcement in the “Just Play” campaign ([YouTube.com/NAMMorg](http://YouTube.com/NAMMorg)), focusing on the benefits of playing music for all people. This multi-media, international PSA campaign has already received \$10 million in free air time—spreading our universal message about the joy of making music through inspirational radio, TV, digital and billboard messages. Many NAMM Members are also using these messages in their stores and marketing efforts—and so should you.

Other recent examples include the Best Communities for Music Education in April, which resulted in more than 1,000 news articles and TV spots. We've heard dozens of times that

being named to this list has saved programs from the chopping block, meaning more kids had music this year because of this program and the resulting publicity.

You've probably heard a lot about our industry's Advocacy Fly-In in Washington, D.C., this past May promoting music education to our nation's leaders. And with a robust PR effort, *The Washington Post*, *Access Hollywood*, *People Magazine*, *CBS Evening News* and dozens of other media outlets covered the Fly-In and helped our message reach millions of parents, teachers and administrators nationwide.

Make Music Day on June 21 is becoming a very important date on the calendar as our global industry promotes the fun of playing a musical instrument. Here in the United States, dozens of major cities got in on the act, including New York City, Chicago, Boston, Denver, Philadelphia and Los Angeles. Events that showcase the power of music appeared in *Rolling Stone*, *Billboard* and other media outlets across the country. The event was a success—and our job was to ensure that the world heard the news.

March, April, May and June. The efforts during these four months are just a few examples of NAMM's relentless promotion of music that encourages more people to start playing and fewer people to stop. We are grateful to the NAMM Members who help to make these efforts a success, especially those who utilize and share these messages through their own networks. Together, we are making this a more musical world!



**Joe Lamond**  
NAMM PRESIDENT AND CEO



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really champions hardware and pick-ups. Stocking an assortment is important, but also challenging as there are thousands of options available for the customer."

Dunwoodie agrees, noting an oft-cited maxim from Steve Jobs: "The customer doesn't know what they want until you show it to them." Graph Tech is in the middle of a revamped repair program that's set to provide more information to sales staff and repair shops about how products like Ratio work, focusing on techniques like in-store visits and internet tools for retailers.

"I used to work in retail for five years and it's just natural – you sell what you know," says Dunwoodie. "If you know a lot about a product, you love to sell it. So that's why we want to get that message out. You have to understand it and believe in it."

D'Addario and Planet Waves product manager Rob Cunningham adds that attention to customers' own first impressions is of utmost importance on mechanical products like tuning pegs and endpins. "It's easy to forget, because a lot of us are very familiar with these products, but there are a lot of beginners out there," he says. "There may be parents of players going into these stores, and for them it can be confusing to just look at some of these products in their bags and figure out what they do."

"We don't want to take that for granted. It should be clear and simple." In turn, D'Addario has made it a point to make

their Planet Waves packaging as clear as possible for customers coming across the products anywhere in the store so that no one really has to ask, "What does this thing do?"

By that same token, simply battling for floor space can be a challenge for many miniature parts. "In some of these stores, they can get a little lost among all the other stuff," says Cunningham. "So product placement is a big deal. You're really competing for that space."

Grover Pro's Rich Berger agrees. "The best way to get small goods sales is to make sure these items are easily visible and accessible to the consumer," he says. "A set of machine heads can also be an impulse item, but only if the consumer can see and touch them. Also, a good salesperson will should always try to add additional small goods to each sale being made."

### The OEM Factor

The interesting thing about aftermarket parts, of course, is that many of your customers are already familiar with them as the pre-installed components on particular brands. In many cases, OEM relationships are the hard-earned bread and butter for many of these companies.

"Even with our mainstay – TUSQ, which we supply to so many manufacturers around the world – I was going to trade shows with that for five years and nobody would talk to me," says Dunwoodie. "Finally, one year, Taylor and Larrivee said they'd change to TUSQ. As soon as they did, all those guys



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"They have made a vast improvement to the guitars stability." - **Lachlan Hallam**

"I enjoy playing this guitar much more now that it stays in tune for days without needing adjustments. Gives me more time playing and less time tuning. Thanks for making a great product!" - **Jeremy Werner**

**Roger Fisher**  
[Founding guitarist of Heart]  
2013 Rock & Roll  
Hall of Fame inductee  
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who'd said 'No' for five years said they'd take another look."

Graph Tech nuts and saddles are standard issue on guitars from around the world now, and the company's Ratio tuners are picking up. An important aspect for manufacturers and retailers alike, though, is the way OEM works to strengthen the brand's identity throughout the market.

"It's like now when you go buy dish-washing soap with OxyClean in it, or window cleaner with Febreze in it," says Dunwoodie. "You buy a Toshiba computer and it's branded with Intel and Windows. That goes with guitar manufacturers, too – a customer will recognize Gibson acoustics and will see that there are TUSQ nut and saddles on them. Then you'll also see a music shop selling TUSQ nuts and saddles as an upgrade kit. So it's a good back-and-forth. You want to upgrade to the same parts that Godin and Gibson and Carvin are using."

Wunschel agrees that the OEM market works for brand growth and adds that the partnerships help push new ideas. "OEM has been important to the growth of EMG from the early days with Steinberger to today with the likes of Schecter, ESP Guitars, Ibanez, and many other major brands," he says. "Different EMG models get exposure by being in guitars and in some cases models are developed because a company will ask for a certain tone or look. It's definitely a brand partnership which brings us back to continuous innovation."

With a product like Fishman's, great OEM connections lead to market-wide acceptance of newer concepts. "It was always a novelty when we first start talking about it TriplePlay a few years ago and the acceptance has spread daily. You see it everywhere – Lanikai has it on their ukuleles, Ibanez is putting it on instruments, Fender, Martin, Tanglewood."

**Moving Forward**

As the economy shifts into a more proactive mode, retailers would be wise to keep the aftermarket parts segment on their radar for clues about moving forward. Though things are improving, all businesses are mindful to operate with caution and an eye toward the future, and with their relatively small products and lots of room for innovation and adaption, guitar parts

companies are incubators for pioneering strategies.

As part of its transition into a more pro-metal brand, Lace has gleefully adopted a more aggressive, metal-friendly approach, with self-censored slogans for its pickups boundary-pushing pickups. "We work in the metal business and they use preamps and batteries, so our mantra is 'No F\*%IN' BAT-

TERIES!," says Lace. "It's an in-your-face saying, but it makes sense. You can let your hair down with this product push and it makes people smile."

Asked if the attitude shift is a turn-off to any traditional retailers, Lace simply points to his steadily increasing sales figures. "It's only a problem for those who are planning on going down with a sinking ship," he says. **MIMR**

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# 2014 Summer NAMM

## Nashville Gathering Showcases Renewed Vitality



### SNAMM by the Numbers

**12,442** registered, up from last summer's total of 11,498

This year **438** exhibitors were on-hand, compared to the 422 who set up booths last year.

**103** suppliers were first-timers at Summer NAMM.

**1,510** brands were represented, up from 1,150 in 2013

An increase in exhibiting companies expanded the show to two full halls – half a hall larger than last year's Summer NAMM footprint

**1,860** were reported to have attended Music Industry Day, up from 1,700 in 2013.

“**S**eeing our members meeting on the show floor, attending NAMM U sessions, and enjoying themselves in the vibrant Nashville scene was gratifying, the optimism was palpable,” says NAMM president and CEO Joe Lamond. “This show is very different from Winter NAMM. It’s a unique opportunity to get a lot of business done in a very thoughtful and human manner.”

“In my opinion, there is a vital business imperative to connect with one’s business partners more regularly. This can be done in many ways, but for a NAMM member retailer or manufacturer, there is no way you could see over 1,000 companies in three days of normal business travel. Being able to do that at Summer NAMM just makes such economic sense. I believe that is why smart companies use this event to further their business goals.”

#### Taking Advantage of a Slower Pace

Many we spoke with – both dealers and suppliers – reinforced this notion of the Nashville gathering serving as a setting for more intimate, meaningful conversations and meetings, minus the often-frenzied backdrop of the Winter Show.

“Summer is indeed a lot slower [than Winter NAMM], but I see that as a bonus rather than a negative,” observes Sammy Ash of Sam Ash. “In the winter,

since we are a full-line dealer, four days is almost not enough. Between the signings, waiting in long lines for food, and wading through competitors to get answers to questions, it can be very time consuming. At Summer NAMM, I get to hang out and talk longer, and see exhibitors that couldn’t afford Winter NAMM.”

Ashley Atz of The Music Link says, “Summer NAMM has always been essential for us to connect with our dealers. Thanks to NAMM’s addition of the public day, now we’re also meeting in person lots of

folks who own our instruments, which is pretty exciting. It’s a great opportunity for growing brands like Recording King and The Loar to get the message out about the cool stuff we’re doing. Each year seems to be better than the last, which is good for manufacturers, dealers, players, and for music.”

“Many people in the industry refer to the Summer NAMM as a ‘regional’ show, using the word as some-

“**I think we have turned the corner and are committed again to Summer NAMM.”**”

— Tim Pfouts, S.I.T. Strings

thing negative,” says S.I.T. Strings’ Tim Pfouts. “We feel the

opposite, that the ‘regional’ part is what makes the show important for us. We have an opportunity to talk to a lot of dealers who either do not get the chance to attend Winter NAMM, or if they do, wind up not having time in their appointment calendar to really stop and talk.”

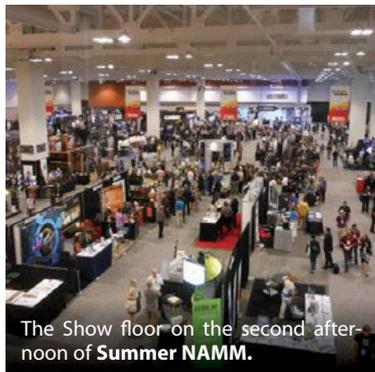
Official numbers bear out the notion the Summer NAMM represents a worthwhile investment of both time and money for many in our industry. There were 438 companies exhibiting in Nashville this July, rep-



1. Sean Paddock, drummer of Kenny Chesney's band, with Marco Soccoli, artist relations director for **D'Addario** at the company's pre-NAMM party. 2. **Loog Guitars'** Rafael Atijas. 3. Joe Husak and Tim Pfouts of **S.I.T. Strings Co.** 4. NAMM Young Professionals turned out a packed house for an evening of socializing and to hear from Chris Martin. 5. **C.F. Martin & Co.'s** Chris Martin. 6. Joe Castronovo of **Korg USA**. 7. Chris Heille and Eric Knutson of **Zivix**. 8. Amanda Pecora of **Casio**. 9. **Riversong Guitars'** Mike Miltimore. 10. Mary Luehrsen of **NAMM**. 11. Sammy Ash of **Sam Ash Music Corp.** with **MMR** publisher Terry Lowe. 12. Penn Edwards and Mike Guillot of **Mississippi Music**. 13. Jeff Mozingo of **Mozingo Music**, **D'Addario's** Pete D'Addario, and C.J. Averwater of **Amro Music Stores, Inc.** 14. **Hal Leonard's** David Jahnke, Larry Morton, and Brad Smith. 15. Harvey Levy of **Levy's Leathers**. 16. Andy Powers of **Taylor Guitars** with Gruhn Guitar's **George Gruhn**. 17. **Robertson Communication's** Scott Robertson with **GAMA's** Robert Sulkow at **GAMA's** 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Guitar Industry VIP Summer Party. 18. Hans Eichman of **Schecter Guitar Research**. 19. Heide Gross, Sid Tincher, Holly Tincher of **SwirlyGig**. 20. Mary Faith Rhodes-Lewis of **Breezy Ridge Instruments**. 21. **Roland Corp.:** Paul Youngblood and Kim Nunney. 22. **Digital Audio's** Brad Palmsa and Andy Swanson. 23. **Orange Amplifiers'** Derek and Wendy Carvotta, Luke Zollinger. 24. **Saga Musical Instruments:** David Gartland and Lloyd Stark. 25. **Kala Brand Music Co.:** Rick Carlson, Bakithi Kumalo, and Clark Rector. 26. **NAMM's** Dan Del Florentino. 27. Colin Carter and Mike Diaz of Ultimate Ears. 28. **PreSonus Audio Electronics'** John Mlynczak. 29. **Epilog Laser:** Randy Sharp, Casey Jordan and Amy Dallman. 30. **WD Music Products'** Dave Lewis and David Spurlock. 31. **Takumi Ukulele'** Hitomi Kato and Donna Loprinzi Chavis. 32. Samuel Austin of **Soldier Straps**. 33. **All Days Music's** James Hill. 34. **EarthQuaker Devices:** Joseph Golden, Aaron Rogers, Cory Juba, and Gavin Smith. 35. **Graph Tech Guitar Labs'** Niko Condonopoulos and Dave Dunwoodie. 36. **Franklin Strap's** Charlton Moore. 37. **PJLA Music Sales'** Jack Prybylski and Pete LaPlaca. 38. **Yamaha Corp.'s** Nithin Cherian.

resenting 1,510 brands – the most since the 2006 convention. Significantly, 112 companies, including some “big names” such as Orange Amplifiers, Pearl, and KHS, made the return to the Show floor after a hiatus. The total number of buyers was also up again (the number had increased by eight percent from 2012 to 2013) with an uptick of five percent over last year. All in all, 12,442 were registered to attend this summer’s Show, up from 11,498 in 2013.

Nashville’s bustling music business is a key difference in how the Show fits into the city’s geography. Local bands team with radio stations like Nashville’s Lightning 100 to play manufacturer get-togethers such as Casio’s after-party at the Pour House. Rehearsal studios open their doors for music pro-welcoming gear exhibits like the bustling Artists Relations Gear Preview. And the all-day, all-night hustle of Lower Broadway is never more than a few steps away.



The Show floor on the second afternoon of **Summer NAMM**.

The NAMM Young Professionals group continued to grow this year, with new board members and another crowded event capping off the summer gathering. This time, Chris Martin (CEO and chairman of C.F. Martin & Co.) was on hand for



Rand and Cindy Cook of Santa Fe, New Mexico’s **The Candyman Strings & Things** receive the 2014 Dealer of the Year award from NAMM chairman Larry Morton (**Hal Leonard Corporation**), as vice chairman Mark Goff (**WH Paige & Co., Inc.**) looks on. The July 18 awards presentation at Summer NAMM in Nashville was hosted by musician Ira Dean and recognized outstanding MI retailers across a number of categories.

an informal personal history of his family’s company’s long history of challenges and triumphs.

### Here to Stay

The doubt that many felt regarding Summer NAMM’s future a few years ago – a totally reasonable concern if you were one of the all-too-few roaming the comparatively barren halls of the old Convention Center in 2010 – seems to be a thing of the past.

“As NAMM chairman, the show was clearly a strong, positive step forward for the vitality of Summer NAMM for all NAMM Members,” says Larry Morton. “The value of being at Summer NAMM dwarfs

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the expense and time commitment to being there. It was also our second year in the beautiful new convention center, which really serves as a fantastic showcase for our industry. The Summer Show is strong and growing. We had several years of 'what ifs' that caused hesitancy, but we are now seeing more and more companies embrace the importance of being there. I believe Summer NAMM is here to stay and remains a critical part of gathering our industry together."

Mike Miltemore, whose Riversong Guitars first exhibited in Nashville last summer, shares Morton's enthusiasm, saying, "The future of Summer NAMM is bright in the Music City. The new trade center has been open for a year, the bugs from the first show [at Music City Center] seem to be worked out, the flow is excellent, and there is some serious business to be had from both the end consumer and with co-operating manufacturers. The Show was clearly larger than last year's and the overall feeling is positive and optimistic. Although Summer NAMM is not as big as the Winter NAMM show, we still met with distributors from many other countries and made good inroads with music stores that wouldn't normally come to Winter NAMM."

"I would be lying if I said there were not some tough years to work through with this show," says Pfouts. "Along with a lot of other manufactures, we had to annually re-examine whether or not it made financial sense for us to attend. But I think we have turned the corner and are committed again to Summer NAMM, knowing that it will be good for us every year to attend and not just hoping that it will."

**An Industry Defined by Ups and Downs**

While many are still monitoring the recovering economy with "cautious optimism" or still licking their wounds from financial beatings incurred during the worst of the recent recession, Joe Lamond offers this larger-picture view: "I've been in the MI industry since March of 1982, and there have been so many ups and downs since then. Many of our members have been in it for much longer than that. This industry has always been hard, it's always been fun,

and there have always been those who won, regardless of the external business conditions or what the pundits were saying. I expect more of the same!"

*The next Summer NAMM is scheduled to take place July 9-11, 2015.*

39. Jason Dorf of **Buckle-Down**. 40. Meir Goldberg of **Orion Guitar Gear**. 41. Dan Hagar, Jonathan Petrelli of **Cupit Music**. 42. **Zoom North America**: Erich Barto, Eric Battin, Samuel Greene, and Austin Greenfield. 43. Kevin Philbin and Mike Robinson of **KHS America**. 44. Allen Gatchell and Steve Crisafulli of **Gatchell Violins**.

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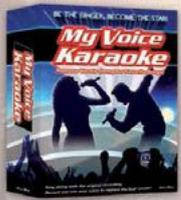
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45. Bill Carpenter, Bob Jespersen of **Hamilton Stands**. 46. **Metallin' Guitars**: Jeremy Tessaro, Ken Wolfert, and Dave Bast. 47. Anthony Perri of **Perri's Leathers**. 48. Warren McAlister of **MC Systems**. 49. Adrian O'Brien, Mike Kurkdjian of **Prestige Guitars**. 50. Courtney Brown, Lane White, Chris Mitchell, Ashlee Mitchell, Russell Jones of **Devilcat Amps/CMG Guitars**. 51. Jodi Head of **Jodi Head Guitar Wear**. 52. Tom Nicholson and Kevin Dougherty of **TKL Products Corp**. 53. **Pearl Corp**. Mike Zurlo, Pat Saunders, Steve Chaika, Joe Fant, Raymond Massey, and Glen Caruba. 54. Joey "Klops" **Dahlia of Klops**. 55. Jonah Murphy and Mike Ryan of **GuitarGrip**. 56. **Godin Guitars'** Mario Biferali. 57. Hayley Bingham, Andrew Bingham of **Decoboom** with Zachary Kordosky of **ElectroHorse**. 58. David Hall, Matt Smith, Bill Walzak of **Pro-Active Websites**. 59. Carolina Bridges, Barry Hunn of **Deering Banjos**.

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60. Jeremy Payne and Allison Honeyman of **The Music People**. 61. "Bohemian Guitars": Alex Korn, Parsa Behnamiri, Shaun Lee, and Kristen and Kelly Strawinski. Will Straughn, Leon Lewis, Scott Emmerman of **Hohner**. 63. Laura Garcia and Chris Hern of **Decibel Eleven**. 64. Fishman's Kevin White, Bob Valyou, Rayne Marden, and Chris DeMaria. 65. Heather Campbell of **Earasers**. 66. **OMG Music's** Chester Myron, Larry Green, Brett Marcus, Ben Myron, and Darren Roberts. 67. **Cordoba's** Kim White and Jonathan Thomas. 68. **Music Man's** Brian Martin and Josh Perez. 69. **TC Electronic's** Tore Mogensen. 70. Ashlee Mitchell, Lane White, Chris Mitchell, Courtney Brown, and Russell Jones of **Devilcat Amps**. 71. Tom Bedell of **Bedell Guitars**. 72. Scott May and Christian Cullen of **Hammond** with Carolyn Leslie. 73. Colin Schofield, Jody Espina of **Jody Jazz**. 74. Larry Klenc of **Kevin Michael Carbon Fiber**. 75. Ian Paul Morgan Hopfensperger of **Timbercraft Cabinets**.



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76. **Asterope:** Dean Kline, Dariush Rad, Scott Quinn, and Dustin Sears. 77. Kathy Galbreth, Brian Torres, and Jerry Andreas of **SKB**. 78. Mitch Bohannon, Meredith Hamlin, and Max Litner of **Kyser Musical Products**. 79. **Cannonball Music's** Tevis and Sheryl Laukat. 80. **Electronic Resources LTD's** Paul Shteremberg. 81. **Hosa Technology:** Kyle Lassegard and Hoyte Binder. 82. Paul Chu of **Hunter Music Instrument**. 83. Chuck Sikes, Bob Nicklin of **Rocklin Guitar**. 84. Georgia Prentice, Colin Hilborne of **Prentice Practice Pads**.



**Eastman Guitars:** Tim Nelson, Mark Herring, Paki Newell with the *MMR* plaque commemorating the company's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.



**Shubb Capos:** Gary Mobley, Rick Shubb, Dave Koontz and Gary Swallows with the commemorative *MMR* plaque honoring their 40 years in business.



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## BEST PRANK



Sean Murphy of **Hal Leonard** enjoyed **pretending to spill his “drink”** on unsuspecting passers-by. The beverage, however, was actually a prop/gag item used to promote the SwirlyGig line of drink holders which attach to music stands.

## WORST ABUSE OF PERSONAL HEALTH

While many visitors to Music City U.S.A. seek out the area’s much-beloved BBQ joints, Nashville is also something a mecca for chili dog aficionados. Between The Dog House in Printer’s Alley, Broadway’s Paradise Park, East Nashville’s I Dream of Weenie (seriously), and the much-beloved Springwater Supper Club, it turns out that **it’s entirely possible to only eat child dogs for five days straight.**



## BEST HAIRDO ON AN INANIMATE OBJECT, PART 1



## BEST MI-THEMED COUNTRY BALLAD



This song was written about the lean years of the post-recession economy, right? Things are finally looking up and a peppier tune is in order now, but countless trips around the Show often brought us back to this tribute to a **Buck Owens classic.**

## BEST MOTIVATIONAL APPROACH



This **inspirational shirt** was observed at a Group Ukulele session over at Music City Center.

## BEST SANTA CLAUS IMPERSONATION

The best (OK - the only) Santa Claus impersonation belonged to **Alfred Music’s Ron Manus** over at the company’s “Christmas in July” themed booth.



## WORST WAIT

**MMR** publisher Terry Lowe hadn’t yet made it over to Jack’s Bar-B-Que, so he endured the **line of 200-plus** like-minded diners on Friday night.



## BEST HAIRDO ON AN INANIMATE OBJECT, PT. 2



## BEST EFFECTS PEDAL HOUSING



Whoever designed the casing for these stompboxes injected some creative flair into the project. As **MMR** advertising director Matt King noted, **“Ogres are pretty awesome looking.”**

# Summer 14 NAMM Best & Worst of Show Awards

## WORST ‘SEASONAL’ WEATHER

Many complain about Nashville’s mid-July weather, with temperatures often near, or above, 100 degrees Fahrenheit, but some of us look forward to serious summer heat during the trip to Summer NAMM. Not this year, though – **temps barely snuck above the low ‘70s and there were a few serious downpours, to boot!**



## BEST INCENTIVE TO STAY IN SCHOOL, KIDS



This great street trio’s signature banter included, **“What do we look like, students? Give us some money!”**

## BEST HAIRDO ON AN INANIMATE OBJECT, PT. 3



# Getting a Fix on In-House Repairs

By Christian Wissmuller

MMR recently surveyed over 400 MI retailers who stock guitars, basses, amps, and related gear on the topic of in-store repair facilities. The response rate for this poll was significantly more robust than the norm and the replies reinforce the notion that this feature is no mere “add-on” for a guitar store – with 93 percent(!) of participants in our survey saying that they do offer repairs on-site, it’s a safe bet that if you’re a retailer of fretted gear and you don’t provide such services, you should look into it. Of those guitar dealers who don’t offer repairs to their customers, virtually all cited the same reason behind that decision: lack of space.

Many note that providing repairs and customization rep-

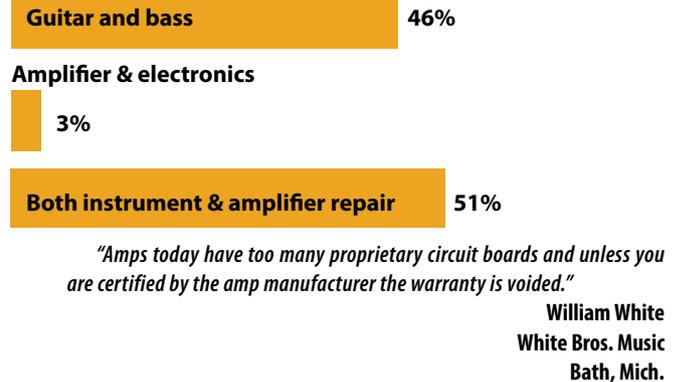
resents a next-tier level of customer service that fosters actual relationships with consumers. Interestingly, more than a few gave a shout-out to the bigger MI chains – specifically Guitar Center – and noted that in-house repairs are an area where smaller stores can distinguish themselves from the big-box competition. Given that GC is now offering repairs at more and more locations, it will be interesting to see how or if those feelings may evolve.

Read on to learn more about how and why the majority of guitar dealers in the U.S. choose to assist their customers with an in-store repair division.

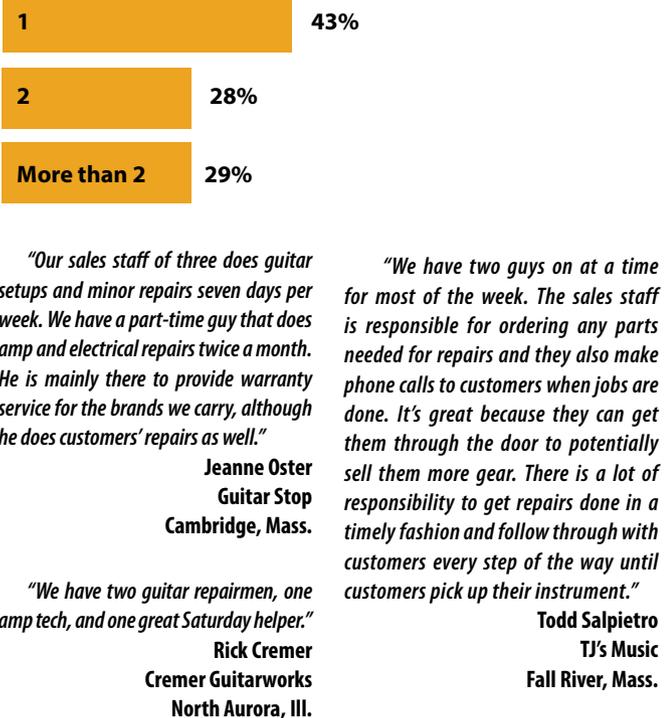
## Does your store have an on-site guitar and amp repair department?



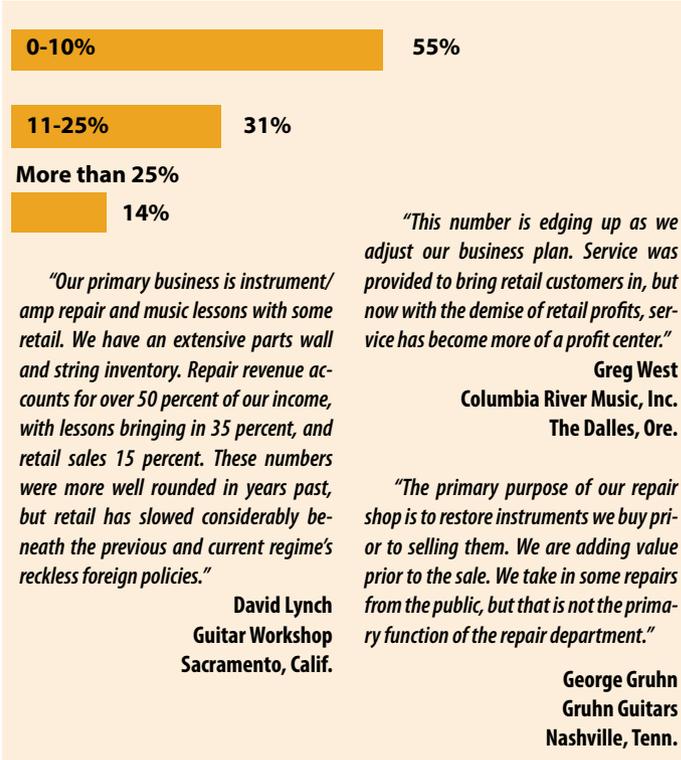
## If you offer repairs, what types of repair do you specialize in?



## How many employees staff your repair department?



## How much of your overall business/income is via the repair shop?



## Aside from income generated, what do you feel are the benefits of being able to offer repairs on-site?

"It adds perceived and actual value to any instrument purchased at our store. Customers are confident that we can help them with any problems they may have and that we know what we are talking about when we show them an instrument. They also see us inspect, clean, and set up all purchased instruments at the time of sale."

**Ken Cefalo**  
Main Street Music, Inc.  
Tracy, Calif.

"The retail music industry is based on service, not low prices – just ask the folks who just sold the chain of Guitar Centers!"

**Pete Van Alstyne**  
Pete's Music Center  
Yuba City, Calif.

"It is an essential service to offer for the instruments sold and traded here. It is not a real music store if repairs are not offered, but just a product reseller – no different from online merchandisers."

**William White**  
White Bros. Music  
Bath, Mich.

"It's easier to sell products when the customer knows they can get them fixed right here."

**Mike Johnson**  
Johnson Music  
Dracut, Mass.

"It means improved customer service and the ability to handle repairs of instruments taken in trade."

**Joseph Blumenthal**  
Downtown Sounds, Inc.  
Northampton, Mass.

"The benefits include customer retention, oral referrals, quick turnarounds, parts for DIYers, and a knowledgeable staff."

**Jim Lase**  
Universal Music Co.  
Thornton, Co.

"It's easier to sell used guitars and amps, and it brings people into the shop who otherwise would not have come."

**Antone Lourenco**  
Antone's Music  
Newark, Calif.

"Being able to offer repairs provides an added layer of customer service."

**Marcum Havens**  
Matt's Music  
Monroe, La.

"Having on-site repair allows us to maintain our inventory and adds an additional service to our customers."

**Paul Kirk**  
Guitar Center  
Tampa, Fla.

"It helps with sales, in that we are the local warranty repair center for several major brands, which also brings customers into the store who have purchased elsewhere or online. They then become 'part of our family.'"

**Mike Canady**  
American Music Co.  
Fresno, Calif.

"Musicians make gigs after emergency repairs. Audiences appreciate a properly intonated/tuned instrument that stays in tune."

**Alex Moring**  
Austin's Musical Exchange  
Austin, Texas

"The repair side allows me to maintain relationships with my customers after the sale. Having the ability to fine tune, customize, and personalize their instruments keeps them returning."

**Scott Elvins**  
A&Z Guitar Repair  
Eolia, Mo.

"It means I'm taking care of the customer, maintaining the customers' trust in my business."

**Randy Setty**  
Guitar Attention Center  
Springfield, Ohio

"Any service our store offers helps us stand out from web-based merchandise stores. Our repair department has a great reputation and consistently brings new customers in through word of mouth referrals. It also helps customers purchase guitars with confidence because they know we stand behind our products."

**Emily Kellerman**  
Modern Day Music  
West St. Paul, Minn.

"It means more sales, more relationships. Gives [us] a chance to really get to know the customers and their gear. It also lets us demonstrate our knowledge base. Being a service center is super valuable to a small independent. They send people into your shop, you fix their stuff, and you gain customers. Simple!"

**Todd Salpietro**  
TJ's Music  
Fall River, Mass.

"We can repair all of our customers good-deal finds they buy on eBay that turn out to be junk. It is also the only thing the chain stores haven't figured out how to do well or discount to death yet, so there is still a chance you can make money in this business."

**Rusty Olson**  
Rockhaus  
Milwaukee, Wis.

"[Having in-house repair facilities gives us] the ability to promptly and knowledgeably serve our customers, as well as others who have purchased MI products from retailers that do

not offer in-house service. (Thank you, GC!)"

**William Mundt**  
Mundt Piano & Organ Co.  
Burlington, Iowa

"We find that it's very reassuring for customers to experience the 'who, what, where, and how' of their repair; it's an easy way to build rapport with new customers and maintain relationships with existing customers."

**Nick DuBaldo**  
Beller's Music  
Manchester, Conn.

"We get a lot of foot traffic that we normally wouldn't have gotten. We bring in a customer who normally wouldn't have shopped with us."

**Patrick Sheridan**  
A Sound Education  
Brookfield, Ill.

"It adds value to purchases. Our customers feel more comfortable buying from us because we repair what we sell."

**Joe Cardenas**  
Marshall Music Co.  
Lansing, Mich.

"We support the local professional and recreational music community by keeping their equipment in the best possible performance condition. Our setups are second to none and we draw repeat customers from as far as the Bay Area, Redding, Fresno, Reno, and Carson City, over 100 miles away."

**Dave Lynch**  
Guitar Workshop  
Sacramento, Calif.

"Being able to tweak the setup on a new guitar helps close deals. Also, our techs perpetually maintain the condition of our guitar inventory on a rotating basis."

**Scott Walden**  
Guitar Center  
Fort Worth, Texas

"Repairing instruments and amps gives credence and legitimacy to your knowledge base about these products. When a customer knows that you understand the product inside and out, they have reason to trust your opinions on the quality of the product. When people buy high-end bikes, they buy them from the same shops that fix and maintain those same bicycles."

**John Justen**  
Eclipse Music  
West St. Paul, Minn.

"People love knowing they can get their guitars fixed and returned to them in 20 minutes or less. I have many pro players bring their guitars to me because I do it better, faster, and cheaper than they can do it."

**Paul Lewis**  
Lewis Music Store  
Kissimmee, Fla.

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## Survey: Repairs

"[It's] more of an added service to our customers. It also provides a station for any guitar instructors helping a student quickly fix their instrument or to teach them about guitar setup or string changes."

**Scott Moore**  
Moore Brothers Music  
Sammamish, Wash.

"It brings people into the store. It also brings people with problems looking for solutions. Repair is not always the best solution. Sometimes we offer replacement. Sometimes they just need some accessories and a few lessons."

**Brian Hansen**  
B's Music Shop  
Mount Pleasant, Mich.

"Repairs are integrated into the business as a whole, not a separate department. We can better present all instruments for sale since we've done thorough set-ups on them and can do adjustment follow-ups with customers. We also sell used and vintage instruments, which we can evaluate and represent because of the repair/restoration skills in our shop."

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

"Increased credibility with guitar customers. We use the fact that we have in-house, certified technicians as a closing

tool when selling guitars and other fretted instruments. [This] provides a huge advantage as compared to online purchase options for the customer."

**Marcus Hight**  
Best in Music  
Orem, Utah

"Service is what we are all about at C.A. House Music and we feel that offering restrings, repairs, setups, et cetera for our guitar customers is tantamount for us to be competitive in the ever-increasing pool of Internet sales venues. Our tech is also a wonderful player/performer and thus understands the quirks, problems, and demands of professional guitarists, as well as those just starting on the instrument."

**Michael Dotson**  
C.A. House Music  
Parkersburg, W.V.

"You create a customer that comes into the store and hopefully purchases other items. The internet is our biggest competitor when it comes to sales, so if we can get a customer into our store, we can explain to them that we can be competitive and hopefully they'll give us a try the next time they need something."

**Jamie Karst**  
Main Street Music & Electronics  
Elk River, Minn.

### If you do not currently offer in-house repairs, do you have a partnership with an independent repair technician whom you refer customers to?

Yes 55%

No 45%

"We send out acoustic guitars that need structural repair and some electronics that are beyond our capabilities."

**Dave McIntosh**  
Electronic Sound and Percussion  
Missoula, Mont.

"For repairs that are within our field, but outside of our specialty and training, we have other outside technicians which we happily refer people to. We would much rather have a customer do business with someone we know and trust than to have them choose blindly and/or unwisely."

**Nick DuBaldo**  
Beller's Music  
Manchester, Conn.

### If you do not offer repair services, have you ever considered incorporating a repair shop into your store?

Yes 64%

No 36%

"We do not have the size to house the equipment necessary for a repair facility."

**Bill Melanson**  
Northstar Music Center  
E. Hampstead, N.H.

"We currently don't have the room."

**Ellen Warmoth**  
Artisan Guitars, LLC  
Franklin, Tenn.

"I would like to, but I just don't have the space."

**Rich Frankel**  
Musical Offerings  
Derby, Kans.

"We don't have the room for a full electronic repair division, in-house."

**Tim Flaharty**  
Music Castle, Inc.  
Royal Oak, Mich.

# New 'Complete Starter Packs' from Alfred Music

Alfred Music's Complete Starter Packs series have been a certified hit for the music publisher over the last year, aligning with the current explosion in ukulele activities around the country and continued gains in acoustic guitars. This fall, the company introduces Complete Starter Packs for banjo, mandolin, classical guitar, and drums.

Alfred's Teach Yourself to Play Banjo Complete Starter Pack includes a high-quality, Firebrand™ five-string banjo with a Mylar resonating head for a full, rich soundboard, and a mahogany neck with a rosewood fretboard. Also included is the Alfred's *Teach Yourself to Play Banjo* (book, CD, and DVD) method, which begins by teaching the basics of learning to play the banjo, including how to hold and tune the instrument, and moves right along to teach users to play different chords, strums, and songs. This starter pack also contains accessories, including a custom-fit gig bag carrying case and strap, clip-on portable tuner with batteries, and a set of fingerpicks.

Alfred's Teach Yourself to Play Mandolin Complete Starter Pack contains a high-quality, full-size Firebrand spruce top mandolin. This mandolin includes light-gauge steel strings to make playing easier. Users will receive Alfred's *Teach Yourself to Play Mandolin* (book, CD, and DVD) method to begin learning to play their instrument, starting with how to use picks and an introduction to standard music notation. This method allows users to master important mandolin techniques such as tremolo, crosspicking, and more. This starter pack also contains accessories, including a custom-fit gig bag carrying case and strap, clip-on portable tuner with batteries, and a set of five picks.

Alfred's Teach Yourself to Play Classical Guitar Complete Starter Pack includes a high-quality, full-size Firebrand nylon-string acoustic guitar with deluxe accessories, including a custom-fit gig bag carrying case, clip-on portable tuner with batteries, a foot stool, and Alfred's *Teach Yourself to Play Classical Guitar* (book, CD, and DVD), the multimedia instruction series for beginners. Upon completion of the book, users will be able to read

music and play beautiful classical pieces by some of the great classical masters, including Bach, Vivaldi, Mozart, and Scott Joplin.

Alfred's Kid's Drum Course Complete Starter Pack contains high-quality percussion instruments, including a tambourine, set of maracas, woodblock, and mallets. The included method, Alfred's *Kid's Drum Course* (book and CD) uses plain language that's easy to understand to teach kids to play rhythms and songs on a variety of drums and sound sources. Children will learn from three irresistible drum experts – a clever classical dog, one cool jazz cat, and a friendly alligator that loves the blues – who guide students along by pointing out what's important on each page.

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



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



# 2014 Holiday Buying Guide

Full lines of electric guitars, racks of blinking new effects pedals, and walls full of shiny cymbals? Check. Now it's time to look into stocking up on products you might have missed out on earlier in the year.

While most of the country is just settling into some cooler fall weather and new school schedules, retailers nationwide know it's already time to start gearing up for the holidays. For this upcoming season, *MMR* has combed through this year's releases for a few key products that could lead to some sure turns and cash register magic.

We've broken down some of the year's important gift items into price categories to make it easy for you to make sure you've got your shelves stocked with attractive goods at every price point.



We'll start with the items really priced to move at \$25 or below. Holiday business begins with small impulse buys as customers work to finish off those shopping lists. These products fit the bill to a T.



Helping your musician customers replenish supplies is a safe place to start, meaning picks, strings, and drum sticks are always in play. **Vic Firth's** SHOGUN™ (MSRP: \$19.95) sticks feature the designs of the ever-popular American Classic® 5A and 5B – the hardness of the wood tip in oak should make for bright cymbals and intricate ride definition.

New for **Dean Markley** this year are the pure nickel guitar strings in their Helix line (\$18.99). Helix strings are made with a new patented hyper-elliptical winding technique, creating a tighter wrap, more mass, warmer tone, and extended life.

Meanwhile, restocking or upgrading an instrument care kit is never a bad idea.

**On-Stage Gear's** GK7000 Universal Guitar Care Kit (list \$16.99/MAP \$9.99) includes is a good holiday or all-year add-on sale and includes two soft microfiber cleaning cloths, one 4oz bottle of



eco-friendly guitar polish, a standard peg winder, and three celluloid picks (thin, medium, and heavy).

And for real winter holiday spirit, **AIM Gifts** Winter Ware line offers a large selection of musically themed scarves, knit hats, and gloves, all for under \$25.



For those shopping for woodwind players, **Vandoren's** Jazz Reed Mix (\$18.99 to \$59.99, depending on instrument) represent an attractive option: available for soprano, alto, tenor, or baritone sax, these sets offer one of each jazz reed Vandoren makes.

**On-Stage Stands** is now offering the Mighty UKE Stand (List \$29.99/MAP \$17.95). The A-Frame design of the lightweight Mighty UKE ensures stability while the entire stand folds up, making it compact and portable.





A smart retailer would never underestimate the value of good-looking apparel during the holiday season. **Zildjian** recently introduced its Fall 2014 Apparel Collection to its Z Gear line (\$21.95-\$49.95). Featuring soft, high-quality t-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies, and hats, Zildjian has added all-new designs inspired by the iconic "Vented K" logo, vintage family photography, and more.



In the woodwind world, **Légère Reeds** has added two new members to its Signature Family of reeds (\$39.39). The new B $\flat$  Bass Clarinet Signature and the Baritone Saxophone Signature reed are designed for heightened responsive and to have a depth and color not found in other synthetic reeds. As with other Legere reeds, these play right out of the box and do not need pre-moistening.

Popular with teachers in the B&O segment, the colorful and animal-shaped

**Things 4 Strings**® accessories shape and stabilize the fingers of the right hand, instantly moving beginning players to a flexible, functional bow hold. Products include Bow Hold Buddies® for violin/viola, CelloPhant® for cello/ (French-style bow) bass (\$29.95).

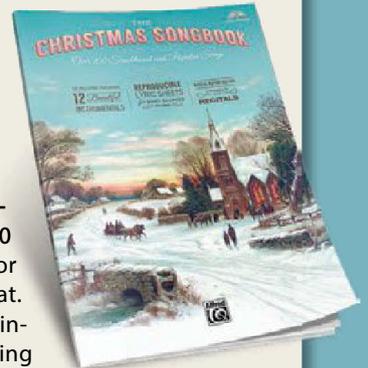
Another solid holiday buy is always guitar straps. **Henry Heller's** new Matador series (MSRP \$49.95/ MAP \$39.95) straps are A 2.5" wide that taper to a 2" with a metal tri-glide adjustable. The Matador straps are available in many South American Inca designs as well as black and blue denim.



If there's nothing else you've learned over the last several years, you probably know that ukes are the little engine that could. Solid offerings this year include **Amahi's** UK Series (MAP: \$49), which feature all-Mahogany bodies, Aquila strings, and an optional 10mm padded gig bag for an additional \$7.00. Their DDUK (or "D Ducks") (\$39) are soprano size with matching bag and come in eight distinct colorful designs.

And finally, it wouldn't be the holidays without songbooks.

**Alfred Music's** new *The Christmas Songbook* (\$29.99) is a hardcover compilation of more than 100 traditional and popular songs for guitar, printed in lead sheet format. It includes an eight-page color insert, an accompanying CD featuring performances of the 12 guitar instrumentals, and more, as well as access to printable lyric sheets for every song in the book.



As tablet devices continue to take over more aspects of our lives – media consumption, fitness, and an increasing amount of our music making activities – products like **On-Stage's** u-mount's Snap-On Covers (\$54.99 – \$69.99) are becoming more and more useful.

These units utilize a tough protective Snap-On back cover to secure the tablet to a choice of mounting systems.

**Kala Brand Music's** Makala Shark ukes (\$62.99), have debuted in six classic colors

matched to emulate 1950s classic cars that will include vintage shades of white, blue, pink, yellow, red, black, and green. The Shark bridge ukes are available in the soprano size and are the same body design as the Makala Dolphins.

For drummers, accessories are often the way to go during the holidays (plus the gift-giver doesn't have to worry about hearing any actual drumming after the present is opened). **Sabian's** Stick Flip (\$60) is a great choice here.

It starts out as a drumstick bag, then unzips, flips, and morphs into a drumstick holder. When in stand formation, it sits firmly on the floor. Folded up, the low profile bag provides a lightweight and secure way to transport drumsticks.





**Under \$100**  
*continued*

For retailers with DIY guitarists in their customer ranks, something like the **Yellow Jackets® NOS Tube Converter** (\$86) would be an option here. This is a limited edition converter made for use in most amplifiers under 100 watts and using 6L6, EL34, 7027 or 6V6 output tubes. The converter lowers the overall power in an amplifier to give it unique vintage tone. This NOS Yellow Jacket® is designed with an NOS 6AQ5 seven-pin miniature beam power tube, which is included with the converter.

Finally, woodwind departments might check the new **Rovner™ Rectangular Bore Clarinet Barrel** (\$99) designed to improve intonation and offer an increased clarity of throat tones and tonal dimension, more even scales, better articulation, and improved altissimo response. Players adjust the barrel to suit their needs, instead of struggling to make the adjustments themselves.



**Under \$250**

A product making waves this fall throughout the guitar market, **Fishman's** single coil Fluence pickups (\$142.79 List and \$109.95 Street) offer a new take on a whole range of magnetic pickup tones based on some of the classics and reflect years of research for improved consistency.

This price point also offers another level of ukulele quality, including **Amahi Snail Ukuleles** (MAP: \$159), with exotic woods, book-matched top and bottoms, and a second soundhole on the side that allows the player to better hear the music. These also feature gold, die-cast tuners.



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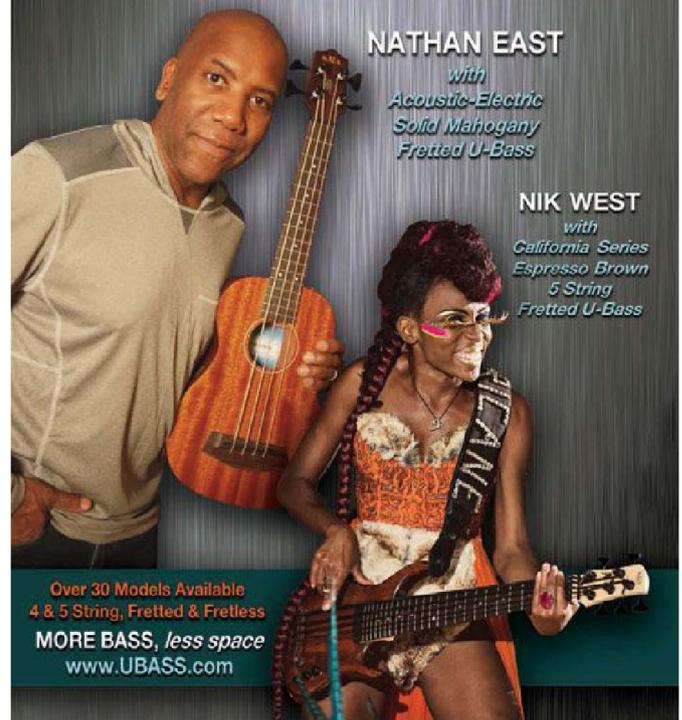
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Back in the drummer's accessory pile, we find **Drumfire's** DHB6500 Drum Hardware Bag w/Trolley (List \$180.99 MAP \$109.95) which can handle all the hardware from a standard five-piece kit. Up to eight stands or mounts fit into its large foam-lined main compartment, outfitted with tethered dual oversized zippers and a span of hook-and-loop closure to secure the main compartment.

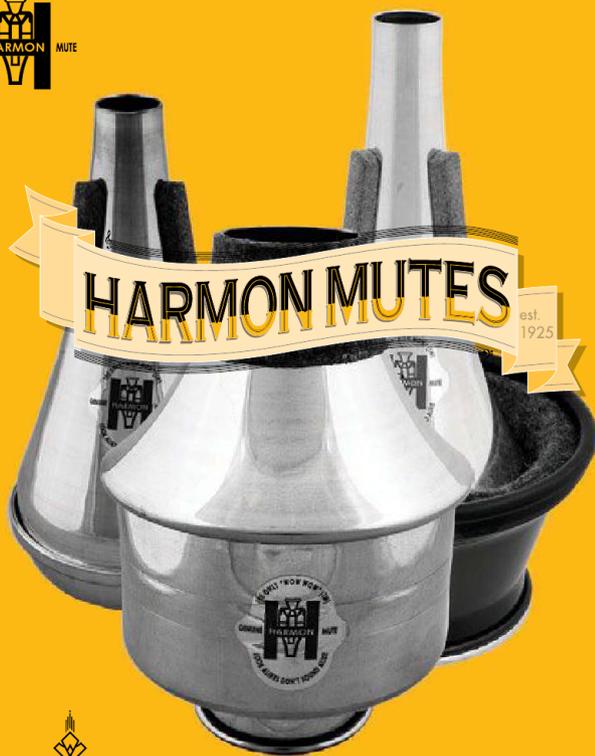
In the realm of affordable recording gear is the new **PreSonus AudioBox™** iOne 2x2 USB/iPad Recording System (iOne MAP: \$129, iTwo: \$159.95). This portable audio interface for Mac®, PC, and iPad® features one mic input and one



instrument input, offering the ability to record anywhere. With a high-performance Class A mic preamplifier, balanced TRS monitor outputs, and professional-quality, 24-bit/96 kHz converters, it's an impressive miniature studio tool.

If you know you've got customers looking for premium gifts, there's no harm in investing in bigger ticket items. For woodwind players looking to get more involved in their own reeds, **Vandoren's** new line of high-precision reed trimmers (\$249.99) for clarinet and alto saxophone make an interesting option.

The new trimmer is the first to exactly replicate the tip contours of various reed cuts designed by Vandoren.



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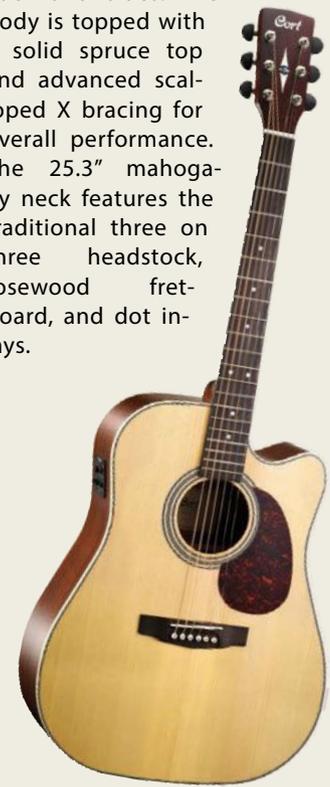
but for those who haven't – this pedal takes guitar signal (or any other instrument signal) and transforms it into a variety of vintage organ tones, complete with harmonic Click sounds and modulation speed control.



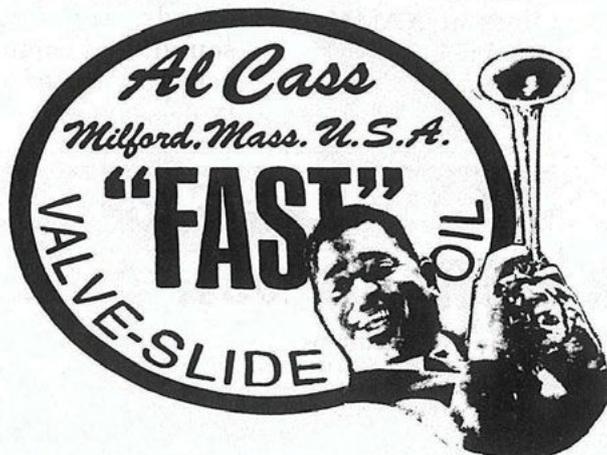
A novel new approach to the uke fad includes **Kala's** new hybrid instrument, the **Guitarlele** (\$429.99). This six stringed instrument is tuned to A-D-G-C-E-A and projects a bright full tone. A solid spruce top and Koa back and sides match its mahogany binding and rosette, slotted headstock with Koa cap, Grover Tuners, rosewood fingerboard, and satin finish.

Meanwhile, **Cort Guitars** is offering a new instrument in its "MR Series" of acoustic guitars -the **MR600F** (\$425). The new model is outfitted with the Fishman Isys Plus preamp and Soni-core pickup and features a dreadnought body

with a Venetian with mahogany back and sides. The body is topped with a solid spruce top and advanced scalloped X bracing for overall performance. The 25.3" mahogany neck features the traditional three on three headstock, rosewood fretboard, and dot inlays.



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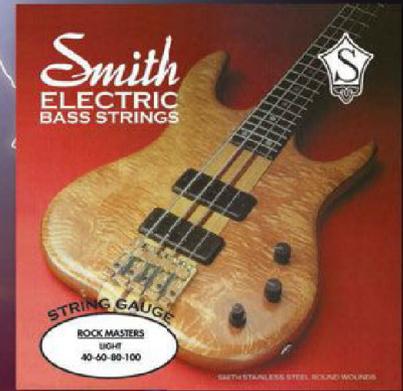


**KRK Systems'** new ROKIT Generation 3 Studio Monitor Series (ROKIT G3) (\$250-\$419) are available with 5", 6", or 8" drivers for these two-way active monitors which feature lightweight yellow composite woofers with a unique tuning process treats the woofer, cabinet and port as a single, integrated whole. The upgraded, 1" soft-dome tweeter provides response up to 35k Hz, while KRK's optimized, proprietary waveguide technology delivers superior stereo imaging with a wider "sweet spot."

Finally, if you're going big, you might as well think about your band and orchestra customers. Maybe it's time for parents to really consider that big step up. For brass departments, a choice for aspiring trumpet players is the professional grade Silver Plate with 18K Gold trim **Phaeton** B $\flat$  Trumpet (\$2,585), which is played by renowned artists worldwide.



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# Fretted Focus

Our semi-annual close-up look at some new and notable guitar products.

## GUITARS

### The Loar LH-204 Brownstone

Based on the award winning LH-200, the new Brownstone has a solid Sitka spruce top, mahogany back, sides and neck and a rosewood fretboard in a classic pre-war body style with a brown satin finish and a vintage-style bound soundhole. With a 1-11/16" bone nut, 25.4" scale and comfortable C profile neck, the tone and vibe of the LH-204 is an ode to a vintage blues style. Includes the Loar's industry-leading lifetime warranty. MAP: \$499.99.

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

### Cole Clark Californian Redwood Top Guitars

Cole Clark has introduced a range of Californian Redwood Sequoia top guitars, including Angel Grand Auditorium and Fat Lady dreadnought with Redwood top and Indian Rosewood back and sides and Redwood top and Tasmanian Blackwood back and sides.

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

### Alvarez 2014-15 RD26 and RD27

The Alvarez Regent Series RD26 and RD27 now come in upgraded versions for 2014. The new RD26 and RD27 versions have more attention paid to the quality of the frets and fretboard, better construction and finish, and utilize high quality laminates to get the most out of an affordable guitar. Other features include a rosewood fingerboard, a bi-level rosewood bridge, Spruce tops, and a standard scalloped X bracing system. Both models come with a duo-foam deluxe gig bag.

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

### Jackson Custom Select Series

The JCS Special Edition PC1 features a satin-black-finished mahogany body with a bolt-on, oiled, natural quartersawn carbonized maple neck, ebony or maple fingerboard with a 12" to 16" compound radius, and 24 jumbo frets. It also includes a DiMarzio Super 3 DP152 humbucking pickup (bridge), Sustainer Driver (middle) and DiMarzio HS-2 DP116 (neck), as well as a Floyd Rose Original double locking 2-point tremolo, a 5-position blade switch, two mini toggle switches, an 18-volt Jackson Sustainer System, master volume, master tone, intensity control, and black hardware.

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

### Gretsch Panther Center-Block

The Panther Center-Block features a 1 3/4"-deep double-cut-away three-ply maple body with a 16" lower bout, arched top and back, and elegant f-holes, and is now available in "Flagstaff Sunset" stain for a limited time. The centerpiece of the model is a long spruce center block, which minimizes body-resonant feedback and creates a more "high gain-friendly" performance, as well as producing a lively tone.

Other features: three-piece maple neck, 12"-radius bound rosewood fingerboard with 22 medium jumbo frets and pearloid Neo-Classic™ "thumbnail" inlays, and dual High Sensitive Filter™ Tron™ pickups.

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



### EVH Stripe Series 'Circles' Guitar

The EVH Stripe Series "Circles" guitar is the axe made famous by Van Halen's 1981 "Unchained" music video. With its black-and-white "circles" graphic gloss finish, this model has a Strat®-like basswood body, quartersawn maple neck with oiled finish, compound-radius maple fingerboard (12"-16") with rolled edges and 22 jumbo frets, an EVH direct-mount pickup, EVH Floyd Rose® with D-Tuna® bridge and locking nut, and EVH tuners.

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



### Cort CR230

The new CR230's single cut mahogany body features a black finish outfitted with EMG HZ SRO OC1 pickups, two coil taps operated by the two push/pull tone controls, two separate volumes, a traditional tune-o-matic bridge and stop tailpiece, nickel hardware and vintage cream colored pickguard and bezels. The mahogany set-in neck is topped with a rosewood fretboard and offers a 24.75" scale length for a classic feel with modern tones. Retail: \$565.

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



## AMPS

### Roland Blues Cube Artist and Blues Cube Stage

The Blues Cube series is designed to offer serious guitarists an evolved sound experience with the latest advancements in Roland guitar innovation. Roland's Tube Logic approach reproduces the inner workings of tweed-era tube amps, including preamp and output tube distortion characteristics, power supply compression, and much more. The Blues Cube Artist features 80 watts of power, while the Blues Cube Stage is equipped with 60 watts. Both have open-back cabinets of poplar plywood, which provides an acoustically vibrant tone. Each amp is outfitted with a custom 12" speaker specially designed for maximum tonal response with Tube Logic.

Both Blues Cube models offer two independent channels – one voiced for cleaner tones, and the other for crunch. Each channel has its own Boost and Tone switches to shape the character, and the Crunch channel has a variable gain control for setting subtle distortion and response in combination with the volume knobs. A unique Dual Tone mode lets players blend both channels together.

With Tube Logic, the amps accurately reproduce the complex output tube distortion characteristics of a tube amp when the volume is turned up. The Blues Cube's variable Power Control provides settings of 0.5 W, 15 W, 45 W, and Max, allowing this cranked-up tone at any volume. Both amps are equipped with a high-quality reverb effects, and a tremolo effect, as well as an effects loop for patching in an external device. Footswitch jacks are provided. The Blues Cube Artist and Blues Cube Stage also feature USB connectivity, making it simple for players to capture tones directly into their favorite computer recording applications.

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



**Devilcat 'Jimmy Junior' Amplifier**

Devilcat founder Chris Mitchell created the "Jimmy Junior" to achieve the maximum style range for a portable amplifier. The amp features 50 watts of all 6L6 tube power and tube preamp with an extra solid state "dirt" stage, Cascading Channel design with stackable gain system (with four channel combos – American clean, modern high gain, dirt, and stacked gain), galvanized steel chassis and corrosion proof hardware, Celestion™ Vintage 30 12" speaker, and more. Retail: \$1,299.

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

**VOX Special Edition AC41-12**

The iconic four-watt AC4 combo special edition features a 12" Celestion speaker (previous models were in 10" sizes). The model's diamond grille cloth and basket-weave vinyl exterior carries on the classic VOX looks, while the Class A tube amp features two 12AX7 preamp tubes and an EL84 power tube. Retail: \$349.99

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



**ACCESSORIES**

**DOD Bifet Boost 410 Reissue**

HARMAN's DigiTech has introduced this guitar volume boost/EQ pedal with a twist – the new Bifet Boost 410 features a Buffer On/Off switch that takes the built-in buffer in or out of the circuit. The selectable operation enables the Bifet Boost 410 to be used as the first pedal in the chain in front of a fuzz pedal – many fuzz pedals cause problems with a player's changes in guitar volume with a buffered pedal in front of the fuzz.

The DOD Bifet Boost 410's Volume control can deliver up to 20dB of clean boost, while its rotary EQ Tone control can tailor the sound from dark and sweet to bright and sparkling and everything in between. The Bifet Boost 410 also works well as an "always on" pedal to create a "bigger" tone with greater touch sensitivity. The DOD Bifet Boost 410 further improves on the original 410 Bi-Fet Preamp with the addition of its bright blue LED indicator and a nine-volt DC power supply input. Reflecting its vintage roots, the Bifet Boost 410 features DOD's classic retro-1980s graphics, easy-grip knobs, and road-tough metal enclosure. Retail: \$149.95.

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



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gearupproducts.com

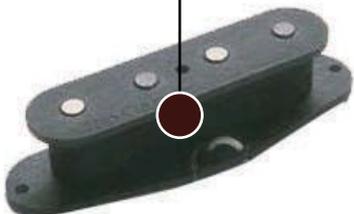


### Rio Grande Vintage P-Bass Style Pickups

The first Precision Basses were equipped with one single four-pole pickup. These P-Basses, later on in the '60s, became known as "Telecaster Basses" because they looked somewhat like the Telecaster with a squared off body. Rio Grande has introduced four new P-Bass style pickups to enhance and match individual fans' styles.

The Vintage '51-P looks the same as one from the '50s, but is a more beefed up version. This pickup has a lot more presence, body, and fidelity than the original. The Muy Grande ("very big" in Spanish) model takes that Vintage '51 model and adds more bass, driving force, and power. The P-Zazz pairs two magnets per string, similar to a Jazz Bass pickup. Finally, the Thundergrail pickup gives P-Bass users the option of a hum-bucker.

riograndepickups.com



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# 10 Key Strategies to Maximize Your eBay Sales and Profits

By Sierra Williams, Blues Angel Music

This July at Summer NAMM, Blues Angel Music owner, Jim DeStafney and I presented a NAMM U session on “Ten Key Strategies To Maximize eBay Sales and Profits.” We’ve found that listing platforms like eBay and Reverb.com, provide the small independent music store the capability to sell online with the same visibility and effectiveness as the industry’s retail giants. Here is an abbreviated summary of our NAMM session, that may well help you improve your eBay/Reverb sales results!



**#1 Pursue Used Gear and Musical Equipment:** In our store we emphasize the procurement of used musical gear. We buy it, trade for it, and solicit for it in every way we can. Buying used gear right equates to strong margins, even factoring in site selling fees. If you have repair shops, you can buy broken items for pennies on the dollar, repair them, and sell for huge margins.

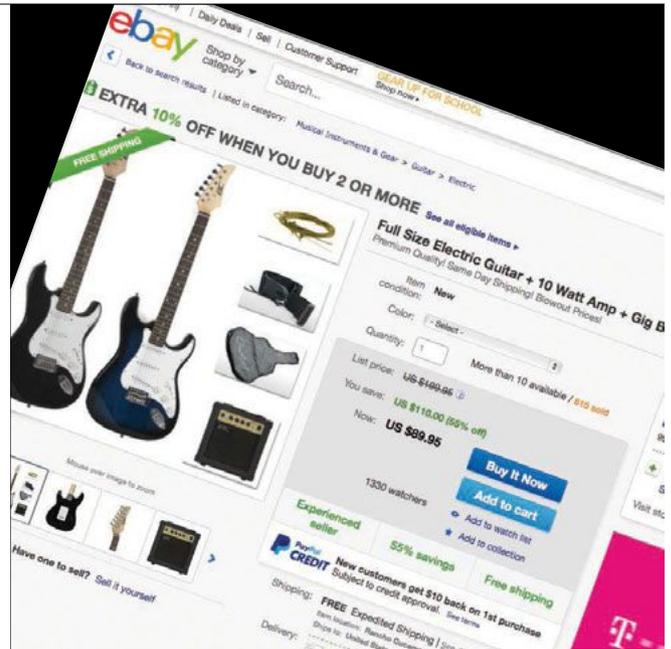
**#2 Provide World Class Customer Service:** Strive to meet or exceed your customers’ expectations from the start to finish of their buying experience with your store. We test, detail, setup, and thoroughly package every item we sell. I want my new customers to say “Wow!” when their purchase arrives. Turn that eBay/Reverb customer into *your* customer. Connect with each customer on a direct, personal level. Give them something free: Candy, a coupon towards subsequent purchase, a store brochure. Make them YOUR repeat customer!

**#3 Be a Great Communicator:** Starts with thorough item listings. Keep no secrets from your buyers. Good grammar is important. Keep the buyer informed during each and every step of the eBay/Reverb process.

**#4 Optimize Your Listing:** Keep listings accurate and honest. Avoid subjective descriptors (“perfect,” “mint,” “awesome.”) This will reduce returns and save money. Anticipate questions and include them in the write up (nut width, mouthpiece, case, et cetera) This will reduce emails and questions. Pitch your brick and mortar store! We include a picture of our logo, store, and store personnel to show our customer they are dealing with real people

**#5 Take Good Pictures:** Buy a good camera and learn how to use it. Picture quality is extremely important. Use all the pictures you’re allotted. A small “studio” set up in your store can really enhance your photo quality. “A picture paints a thousand words!”

**#6 Become a Top Rated Seller:** Being a Top Rated Seller im-



proves your bottom line by 20 percent. It moves your listings higher so customers see your listings first. That “Top Rated Seller” logo gives your customers assurance they’re buying from the best.

**#7 Pack and Ship with Pride:** Packing and shipping proficiency is critical. We have a tracking sheet that goes with the item from “Sale to Mail,” ensuring that all processes are completed (prep, test, detail) and no items forgotten (whammy bar, power supply, et cetera) Shipping materials are expensive, but don’t cut corners. Recycle all incoming materials you can. We use double-walled boxes, quality tape, and plenty of bubble wrap.

**#8 Sell to the World:** Don’t be afraid of international buyers. International purchases make up for about 15-20 percent of our online sales, and many of them are repeat customers. There are some countries to avoid, so be on the lookout. Shipping costs are one of the largest headaches international sales. The current eBay calculator is frequently inaccurate. We encourage international customers to contact us for a price quote before buying or making an offer. We can then provide them with accurate shipping estimates

**#9 Protect your Feedback, Love your Returns, Properly Handle Disputes:** We provide our buyers with positive feedback immediately upon purchase, and ask them to do the same. This has doubled the number of feedbacks we receive. Respond to problems quickly and be quick to accept returns but also offer assistance and solutions. Use eBay/Reverb Seller Support. They can be a great source of information when dealing with disputes. Returns are a part of doing business online. Accept the return and get back to the business of selling!

**#10 Keep Adding Listings:** If you want to grow your eBay site set daily, weekly, and monthly listing goals. Make them happen! The more you have listed the more you will sell.

In the eBay world – just as in your brick and mortar store – success requires attention to details. Strive for efficient processes, treat your customers like kings and queens, and *sell, sell, sell!*

“ In the eBay world – just as in your brick and mortar store – success requires attention to details. ”

# Technological Conveniences That Can Help Grow Your Business

By Joe **Castronovo**, President Korg USA

**T**echnology is all around us. Every day, we read about some new advancement – sometimes several in any given day. It's become a part of life for us, personally and professionally. As a dealer, there are many – let's call them "technological conveniences" – you can take advantage of to grow your business, streamline procedures, save time, and more, regardless of the size of your business. I'd like to share three good starting points.

## The NAMM Technology Board

The NAMM Technology board, which Korg USA's IT director chairs, has worked very closely with NAMM over the past few years to develop a set of standards within the industry that several companies, including our own, have had great success with. This is something all dealers and manufacturers should explore, because it offers money-saving, automated processes such as writing POs, advanced ship notices, and so forth. And to make this accessible to all dealers and manufacturers, the committee has created a suite of document standards that enable any company, regardless of size, to take advantage of the standards. NAMM and their volunteer Technology board, which is comprised of both manufacturers and retail owners, have invested many years of their time in the development of these standards because they believe it provides a great value to our entire industry. To learn more and get started, simply visit [NAMM.org/standards](http://NAMM.org/standards).

## Marketing & Promotion

Several manufacturers and distributors in our industry, including Korg USA, have private, dedicated websites for their dealers that contain sales and marketing materials such as product images, logos, price lists, product info, sales and marketing training, and other operations and sales support such as online invoices and so on. Some of the more in-depth sites, such as ours, also offer things like order tracking, delivery ETAs, and order entry. These sites can be accessed at any time of day or night, so dealers can use their downtime to take advantage of the convenience and efficiency these sites offer. As an example, Korg USA dealers can visit [Dealers.korgusa.com/get started](http://Dealers.korgusa.com/get started) to begin exploring.

Something else that may seem intimidating at first, or give the appearance of being expensive, is the variety of DIY online promotional and advertising vehicles available these days, all promising new customers or potential ways for new customers to discover and/or connect with your business. But in actuality, it's never been easier to promote your business online. For starters, social media activities such as a company Facebook page enable you to have informal conversations with your cus-

tomers and let them see "what's new." Do you have some employees who are great gear demonstrators? If so, why not make some videos and post them to an official YouTube page for your business. These days, many cell phones take high-quality video that you can use, and since people aren't necessarily expecting polished masterpieces on YouTube, a simple backdrop will do for your videos. Nothing elaborate needed.

## Online Advertising

If you haven't already explored it, consider running some Google ads either to publicize your business in general, or to highlight specific products you sell. They can be set up yourself, you can specify the length of time the ads run, and you determine the budget – even something as low cost as a few dollars a day. You can choose to either run text-based ads that appear on Google search pages, or run traditional banner ads on websites that contain conversations related to what you sell. And if one of your YouTube videos turns out to be well received and you'd

like to expand the number of views you receive, you can promote it further in a YouTube ad campaign. And best of all, for brick-and-mortar

stores, all of these campaigns can be geo-targeted to specify who will see your ad, based not only on relevant search terms, but also based on where they live.

These types of online ads also offer a way to gain additional exposure beyond our MI industry audience, reaching people who may not know where the local music store is, or the web address of any online dealers when they are ready to begin making music, so running your ad in the place these people visit online, may make the difference between them gravitating toward you vs. someone else.

You can visit [Google.com/adwords](http://Google.com/adwords) and click "learn more" to explore the options they offer (and no, Google did not pay us for this endorsement!).

Each of the offerings I've outlined above requires nothing more than a computer, an Internet connection, and a little bit of your time to learn and implement them. So if you haven't tried any of them yet, give it a shot. I think you'll be pleased with the results. And they will also prepare you to embrace the next technology advancement – whatever it may be – that's surely around the corner. **MMA**



*Joe Castronovo is president of Korg USA, Inc., an established brand builder in the MI industry, and exclusive U.S. distributor of the Korg, VOX, Blackstar, Lag, Ashdown, Sakae, and HK Audio brands.*

“It's never been easier to promote your business online.”

## New Products

### Fender Audio PS-512 Subwoofer

The Fender PS-512 is a full-bodied Class A/B powered subwoofer (500 Watts Peak, 250 Watts RMS) that pairs perfectly with all Fender Passport® (or other) PA systems that include the "sub out" feature. Featuring one 12" Fender Special Design Ferrite Magnet (3" Voice Coil), the PS-512 is designed to dramatically increase a system's bass frequency output and maximize the power sent to the mid- and high-frequency drivers. The subwoofer has a bass-reflex cabinet made of 15mm plywood with a front-firing shelf port system, integrated M20 threaded speaker pole mount, recessed multi-grip handles, "limit," "peak" and "signal" LED indicators and a low-frequency response down to 38 Hz.



fender.com

## PRO AUDIO

### Korg AudioGate DS-DAC

Korg's DS-DAC AudioGate USB Audio Playback system consists of Korg's proprietary and recently upgraded AudioGate 3 software, plus a choice of the DS-DAC-100 or DS-DAC-100m hardware interfaces. Both are USB digital-to-analog converters that will allow any Windows (ASIO) or Mac (Core Audio) user to play back audio with the highest possible fidelity (DSD 2.8 MHz or 5.6 MHz). With AudioGate software, the audio passes through without the hardware filtering or modulation present in other available D/A converters, thereby eliminating potential noise and distortion. In addition to a 1/4" stereo headphone output, XLR and gold-plated RCA outputs are included. Retail: \$599.99 and \$349.99.



korg.com

### Jensen P10R-F Speakers

The P10R-F is for those who desire the tone of a classic broken-in 10" Alnico speaker. The P10R-F was designed by the Jensen® factory with Fender® for the reissue of the Fender®'57 Bandmaster® and the 20th Anniversary Vibro King®. The P10R-F has a round top-end and a full-bodied low-end response; it distorts at lower levels while maintaining the Vintage tonalities of the P10R.



jensentone.com

## BAND & ORCHESTRA

### Grover Pro Aluminum Handle Bass Drum Mallets

Grover Pro Aluminum Handle Bass Drum Mallets feature a comfortable 5/8"-diameter aluminum shaft with an easy-grip finish. The weight of the handle is designed to add "punch" to any size bass drum.

Solid maple cores are covered with the finest woolen felt, which is hand-sewn over the core. The oblong heads produce a dense and rich sonority, yet provide focus when needed. Six models are available, from "Legato" to "Ultra Staccato." MSRP: \$44-\$70.



groverpro.com

### Zonda Single and Double Horns

Zonda horn models comes standard in yellow brass with mechanical linkage. The Single has a medium bell throat and a rose brass lead pipe, while the Double has a large bell throat, yellow brass lead pipe, and features a Kruspe wrap. Horns ship with an ABS hardshell case, premium oils, and Zonda cleaning cloths. Retail: \$1,435 (Single horn in F), \$2,435 (Double horn in F/B♭).



stlouismusic.com

### MusicNomad Band & Orchestra and Piano & Keyboard Care

MusicNomad's additions to its instrument care products include: Valve Oil, T-Slide Trombone Lubricant, Bore Oil, Silver Polish, Lacquer Polish, Polishing cloths for Piano/Keyboard, Brass and Woodwind, String Instrument, Piano ONE polish, Key ONE Key, and Keyboard cleaner. The formulations are proprietary and eco-friendly.



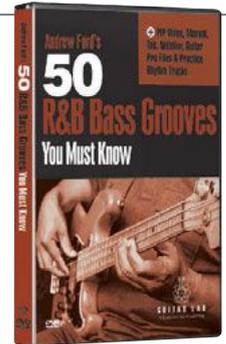
musicnomad.com

PRINT & DIGITAL

**eMedia Music *Ukulele For Guitar Players* and *50 R&B Bass Grooves You Must Know* DVDs**

Hosted by Marcy Marxer, *Ukulele For Guitar Players* takes players through a primer covering a variety of different types of ukuleles, tunings, and fingerings. Learn ukulele chords one at a time. The interactive video format allows users to follow along as Marcy demonstrates techniques in each lesson and then join in on a video play-along.

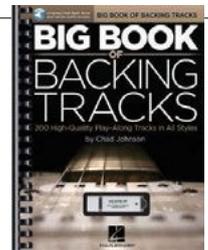
Meanwhile, *50 R&B Bass Grooves* host Andrew Ford passes on the fretboard genius of master bassists like Louis Johnson, Rocco Prestia, Verdine White, Kenny Burke, and more. Ford has also taught bass at the Musicians Institute in Hollywood (BIT), Citrus Community College, the Los Angeles Music Academy, and the University of La Verne. Retail: \$24.95.



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

***The Big Book of Backing Tracks* from Hal Leonard**

This collection assembled by Chad Johnson contains 200 chord progressions over which players can practice their licks, plus a USB flash drive of audio demos for every single one. The audio tracks range from approximately one minute for the short progressions to four minutes or more for the full-length "song" progressions. *The Big Book of Backing Tracks* covers numerous musical genres, keys, and tempos. *The Big Book of Backing Tracks* also includes access to audio files online at [www.halleonard.com/MyLibrary](http://www.halleonard.com/MyLibrary). Retail: \$24.99.



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

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## The Doors: Guitar TAB Anthology from Alfred Music

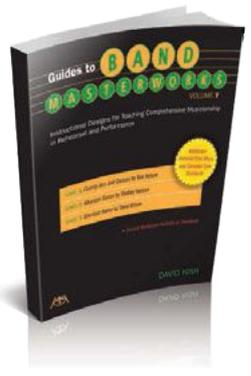
Alfred Music has announced the first of many titles to feature their new Doors catalog. *Guitar TAB Anthology* contains 20 of the band's classic songs, fully transcribed for guitar in both standard notation and TAB. Songs include "Break on Through (To the Other Side)," "The End," "L.A. Woman," "Light My Fire," "Riders on the Storm," and more.



alfred.com

## Guides to Band Masterworks, Vol. 5 from Meredith Music

This continuation of earlier volumes provides band directors with a ready-made curriculum developed to incorporate National Core Music Standards through quality band literature. This volume features "Courtly Airs and Dances" by Ron Nelson, "Albanian Dance" by Shelley Hanson, and "Shortcut Home" by Dana Wilson. Includes ear training, rhythm studies, rehearsal strategies, and more. Retail: \$24.99.



meredithmusic.com

## ACCESSORIES

### u-mount Snap-On Cover Series

The u-mount Snap-On cover series includes model variations that mount to either round or flat surfaces. The UM5003 works directly with the TCM9161, TCM9261, and TCA1066 round-mount models, allowing use on flat surfaces. Add the optional UM-99 Male to Male Adapter, and mount mic clips, goosenecks, boom arms, ball joints, and other accessories to any desktop or other flat surface. Pricing: UM5003 List \$27.99, MAP \$16.95; UM-99 List \$4.99, MAP \$2.95; UM5001 List \$27.99, MAP \$16.95; UM5007 List \$29.99, MAP \$17.95.



For permanent installations, the UM5006 establishes a secure base for the On-Stage u-mount® tablet case. The UM5006 is directly compatible with the threaded mounting posts of the TCM9161, TCM9261, TCM9163, and TCM9263. Four screws are included for mounting to wood. List \$13.99, MAP: \$7.95.

Continuing the line of u-mount accessories, the TCA917 Magnetic Cover is the perfect complement to the Snap-On series. It flips back out of the way while in use, but snaps into place to protect the screen when idle or in transport.

on-stage.com

### Kaces Hardshell Banjo Case

This latest expansion of the Kaces hardshell series offers a rugged five-ply wood exterior, a PVC outer covering, and reinforced outer valences stitched through the wood for maximum durability. The interior features soft padding and a storage compartment. Each case is finished with locking black-plated latches, hinges, and feet, and is backed by a one-year limited warranty.



kaces.com

### QickPick Caps with Pick Pocket-Visor

QickPick caps feature a patent-pending pick pocket built into the visor of the cap. The location of the pocket allows for easy access and prominent display of a guitar pick. QickPick caps are customized with a company logo through their stock or custom headwear programs. The stock cap program has four styles available in a variety of colors and is ready to ship with your embroidered logo.



qickpick.com

### Meisel Stringed Instrument Stands

Meisel Accessories now offers stands for most stringed instruments, including all guitars, electric bass, violin, viola, ukulele, and more. Made of 25mm aircraft grade tubular aluminum, the model GS76 is lightweight (15oz) and, when collapsed, will fit many cases. Cushioned silicon rubber slip resistant pads assure no finish damage while height and depth are adjustable allowing for almost any sized instrument. Available in black, silver, and metallic red. MAP: \$29.95



meiselaccessories.com

## Hamilton Stands KB3800G Ultra-Lock Guitar Stand

The Advanced Series KB3800G Ultra-Lock Guitar Stand is the first auto-locking guitar stand with a width-adjustable neck cradle. The Ultra-Lock is a neck-suspending stand, which was originally invented by Hamilton over 30 years ago. The unique width adjustment of the neck cradle is made with a serrated roller on top of the mechanism for easy changes. The locking security gates activate when an instrument is placed in the stand. The design allows custom fitting to a wide range of fretted instruments – from banjo to classical or five-string bass to “skinny-necked” electric. Additionally, the adjustable support mechanism folds back for compact storage and travel. The fretboard/headstock cushions include slots for pick storage. Retail: \$59.99.



hamiltonstands.com

## LIGHTING & DJ

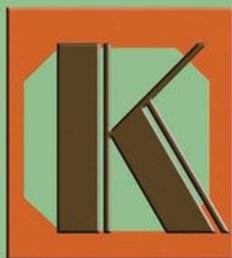
### Chauvet Freedom Series

Three new models have been added to the Freedom Series – Freedom Par Tri-6, Freedom Par Quad-4, and Freedom Par Hex-4 - all of which can be wirelessly-DMX-controlled with a familiar device you carry around every day: your smartphone or tablet.

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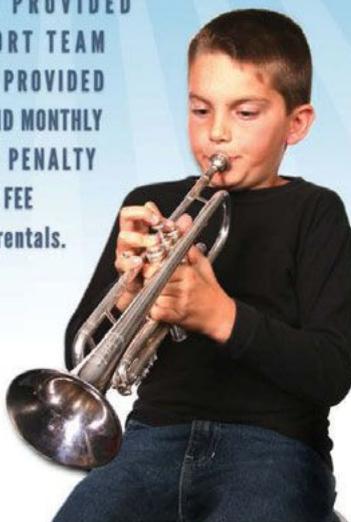
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Via email: [scottc@kenstanton.com](mailto:scottc@kenstanton.com)



MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

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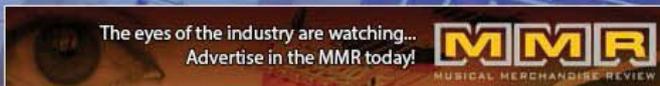


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By Dan Daley

# The Last Word

## Acknowledging pro audio's growing relationship with MI is simply good business

When MI retailers see guitar players or keyboardists as simply musicians in their stores, they're leaving money on the table. An industry that has long looked at its customer base as a set of vertical silos — musicians, composers who need automated musical instruments, home-recording producer/engineers — should be viewing them horizontally, as musicians who record the songs they write and as aspiring producers who recognize the economic and creative benefits of being a composer and a musician. Home recording, whether it's on an iPhone app or in a \$100,000 Pro Tools room with floated floor and walls, has become a unifying force in MI sales: guitarists want to be able to record their work and recordists are acquiring greater arrays of musical instruments to broaden the palette of what goes on in their high-tech caves.

Anyway, that was my small contribution during an informal focus group that NAMM president Joe Lamond brought together in Nashville during the

Summer NAMM Show that was intended to find ways to deepen the connection between MI and pro audio. There were about a dozen of us in the break-out room in the Music City Center, noshing on a more-than-passable Mexican buffet before it got down to brass tacks. We were a journalist, several Grammy-winning recording/mastering engineers/producers, and representatives of pro audio manufacturers, all with diverse points of view. We all agreed, though, that the distinctions between those who make music and those who record it, who used to operate on very different sides of the glass windows that in recording studios separate the tracking rooms from the control rooms, have essentially disappeared. In fact, the conventional recording studio itself has become something of an anachronism, a development taken nowhere more seriously than in Nashville, which prides itself on being the last bastion of ensemble live music production.

But reality is what it is, and where some of the old guard may once have viewed the so-called democratization of music recording skeptically, they now advocate for those on the front lines of pro audio to take the lead in making what gets produced sound as good as it can. A member of the Recording Academy's Producers & Engineers Wing present pointed out how the Audio Engineering Society (AES) chapter there has been regularly reaching out to a younger cohort, one for whom playing and recording music are inextricably linked, trying to raise the bar for sound and production quality.

Our taco-fueled summit occurred within a larger context. NAMM noted in a press release that the Summer NAMM

Show saw a 27-percent increase over 2013 in pro audio brands exhibiting at the show, continuing a trend that has seen the entire pro audio category grow by an average of 23 percent in the last five years. Yet it became clear in the conversation that many MI retailers still regard pro audio as an intimidating terra incognita, a rubric best left to the kids on *The Big Bang Theory*. The reality is, pro audio has become far more prosumer in nature than ever before. In the early days, you needed at least a general-aviation pilot's license to become expert on that classic cornerstone the home recording's tech pantheon, the Tascam Portastudio, the four-track cassette deck that essentially launched the category back in 1984. Today, USB-enabled microphones and instruments with iOS-compatible audio interfaces allow musicians to record nearly anywhere at the drop of their hipster hats.

According to NAMM data, sales of software products like plug-ins and loops (a key indicator of digital recording usage), increased 29 percent in 2013 over the previous year.

MI retail needn't reinvent itself as a high-tech showplace to draw in musician/songwriter recording technologists — they're coming into the stores anyway, to buy instruments and accessories. But if customers are not also walking out with a USB microphone or mic pre, it's a lost opportunity. In fact, the physical inventory of music production is so minimal in terms of cubic volume and shelf space, average-sized stores would barely notice it among scores of guitar amps and hundreds of stomp boxes.

What MI retailers do have to ramp up is their knowledge base when it comes to audio recording. And there are plenty of ways to do that. NAMM has been making a connection between this mushrooming trend of personal music recording with propositions like the "H.O.T. Zone," the "Hands-On Training" seminars it's been hosting at the Winter NAMM Show for the past five years. The proliferation of recording technology academies, like the ubiquitous SAE and Art Institutes schools, can also act as a resource for knowledgeable sales people.

The integration of pro audio with MI has always been an organic one, driven by musicians who see the benefit of taking control of the production aspect of their careers, and by recording professionals themselves, many of whom began their production and engineering careers as musicians, and it began a long time before we had tacos in the convention center. But it's good to see institutions like NAMM and the AES acknowledging that and becoming proactive — and possibly even collaborative — about accelerating and guiding it. At the end of the day, that's just good business. **MIMF**

“MI retail needn't reinvent itself as a high-tech showplace to draw in musician/songwriter recording technologists.”

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