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Taking Root

Bluegrass Guitar Sales in 2016

"I expect the Bluegrass guitar and 6-string banjo market to continue to grow in the coming months."
- David Bandrowski, Deering Banjo Company



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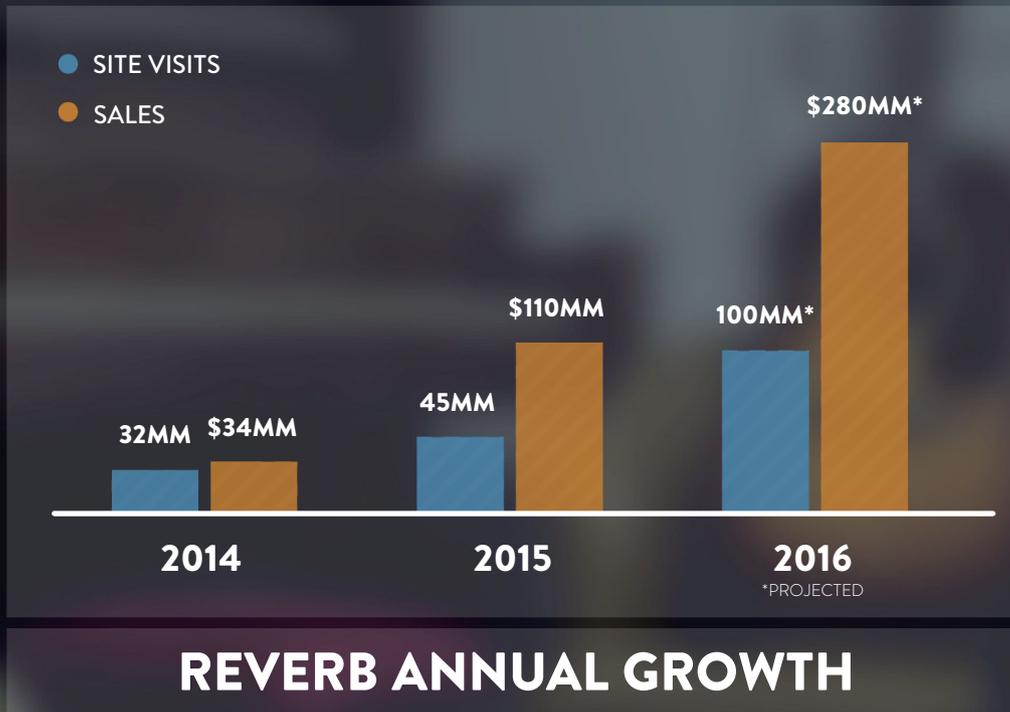
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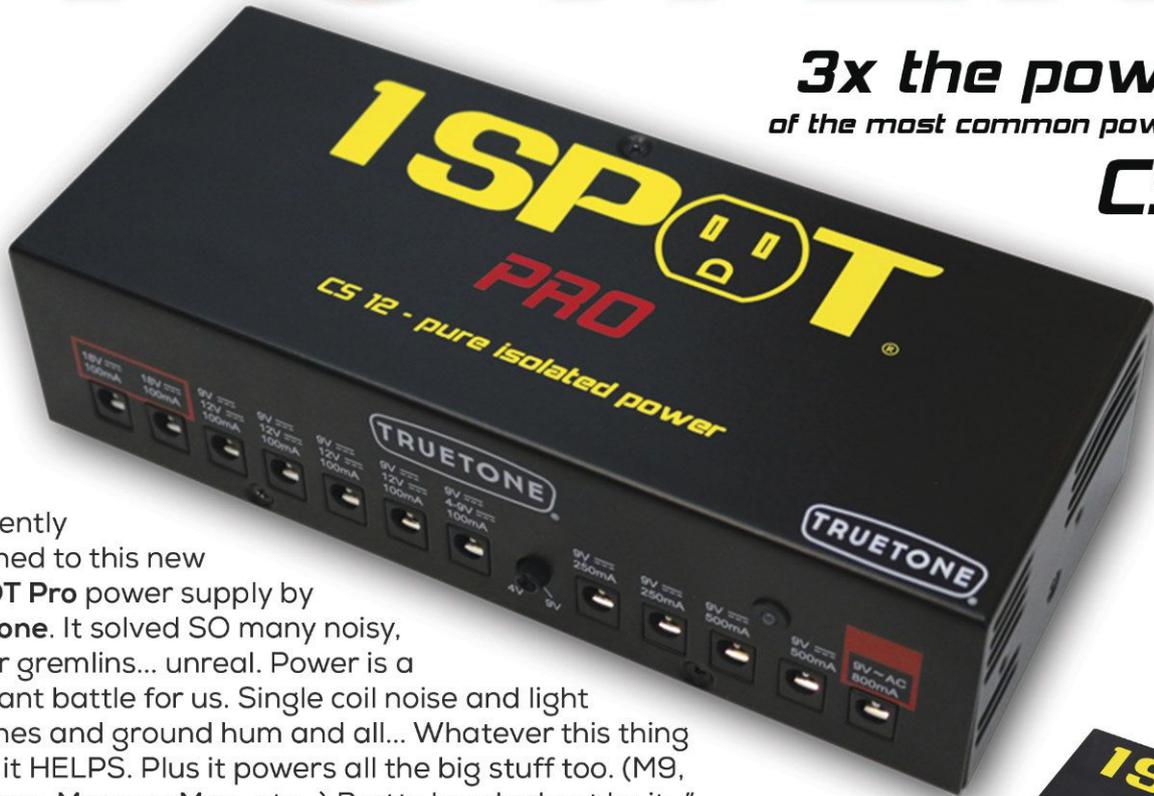
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MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

Vol.175 SEPTEMBER 2016 No.9

FEATURES

44 Upfront Q&A: Sabine Grubmüller of Bösendorfer

Sabine Grubmüller of Bösendorfer discusses the "DNA" of the brand, the impact that Yamaha has had on Bösendorfer since it's 2008 purchase of the company, and the overall health of the U.S. piano market from her perspective.

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64 In the Trenches: In Praise of Conn-Selmer

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66 Retail: Elements in the Evolution of Strait Music

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70 Small Business Matters: Make Each Customer's Experience Amazing – Part II

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"The bluegrass tradition has a gravitational pull on players and listeners, alike, who are bringing fresh influences with them."

- Andy Powers,
Taylor Guitars

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Cover photo courtesy of Washburn Guitars.

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The (not so) New Normal



by Christian Wissmuller

I can state with some authority (as much as helping *MMR* for a decade or so affords, anyway) that it is absolutely *not* news that Internet sales present a very real threat to traditional, brick-and-mortar MI retailers. Furthermore – and somewhat... surprisingly(?) – I can attest that, even though that reality has been established for well over a decade, many musical instrument dealers continue to bemoan the facts of their online competition as if the whole phenomenon is some ephemeral bully that can hopefully be banished by complaining loudly enough.

To be clear: I am absolutely, unabashedly, and unapologetically “on the side of” the brick-and-mortar folks. I appreciate this industry and, on a personal level, truly love walking into and shopping at actual, for-real music stores. Moreover, I believe that certain advantages (no sales tax, et cetera) are unfairly stacking the deck against MI stores.

At a certain point, though, it’s important to recognize that shaking one’s fist at present-day realities and wishing for years gone by is wasted energy.

As with many (most?) of our monthly retailer surveys, this issue’s poll regarding the upcoming “holiday buying season” found most participants complaining of the diminishing importance of that once-key time of year, largely due to Internet sellers.

And it’s not limited to musical instruments, of course. Last December *Internet Retailer* reported, “In a survey of 3,000 U.S. and U.K. consumers about their shopping habits over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend, 73 percent of U.S. and 80 percent of U.K. shoppers said they’d make a purchase on Amazon that weekend.”

So the facts are there to support your concerns and fears – yes, customers are going (and have been going) online for their purchases, more and more, every year.

But creative and successful dealers have been seeking out methods of making their case to potential customers. We all know that one-on-one, face-to-face customer service and the tangible act of actually *playing* an instrument before purchase (what a novel idea!) can’t be duplicated by a few mouse-clicks and a PayPal transaction.

As Greg Allen of Long Island Drum Center in Nyack, New York eloquently put it in his responses to this month’s survey, “A musical instrument is such a personal thing that needs to be seen, touched, and played before buying.” It’s on MI retailers to inform (and/or remind) customers of this simple fact. Rare (relatively) is the person who’d plunk down \$30,000 for a new car without a test drive and the promise of follow-up care. Just because it’s on a smaller scale, why would anyone fork over \$1,500 for a new bass or amplifier without ever laying hands on it?

Big-box stores, Internet behemoths like Amazon, sites such as Craigslist – all tough competition, to be sure, and, yes, there are some ways (aforementioned sales tax) in which “whining” might ultimately advance your cause if you can help spur change. But in the big picture, there’s no point in tilting at windmills: this is the “new normal” and we just have to deal with it.

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Industry News

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

Music China 2016

Music China, the largest trade fair in the Asian musical instrument industry, takes center stage from October 26 – 29 at the Shanghai New International Expo Centre. Featuring over 1,800 exhibitors from 30 countries and regions showcasing the latest products in 10 halls across 113,000 sqm, the show brings together the best of music appreciation, knowledge expansion and business networking to the profitable Chinese market, where the value of the imported musical instruments continued to grow in the first quarter of 2016.

According to official figures from China Customs, the total value of imported musical instruments between January and March this year was USD 74.32 million, up 7.3% compared to the same period in 2015. Among the importing regions, the share of the BRIC countries (excluding China) and the EU increased 17.7% and 16.5% respectively. As for categories, there was strong growth in the import value of various musical instruments: Electronic and electric instruments grew 140%, string instruments 87%, percussion instruments 48% and grand pianos 32%.

A full spectrum of exhibits is the very essence of what makes Music China the premium sourcing platform for the industry. This year is no exception as musical products from a complete panorama will be unveiled, including pianos and keyboards, bowed and stringed instru-

music CHINA

ments, electronic and electric instruments, woodwind and brass, percussion instruments, as well as Chinese and traditional instruments. There will also be a brand new zone for music education, and an enlarged area for bowed instruments and pianos. In addition, a stellar line-up of notable local and international brands, as well as long-standing international pavilions from Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain, Taiwan and the UK will congregate at this industry event, providing broad sourcing options for professional buyers.

Immersive Fringe Events

An all-encompassing schedule of concurrent events on business networking, music education and culture appreciation is fuelling increased enthusiasm for the upcoming edition. The highly acclaimed NAMM CMIA Forum and NAMM University Courses will return, offering attendees a chance to broaden their market knowledge and hear the best business strategies from MI industry experts. This year's program will also

feature a blend of inspirational forums and classes on traditional Chinese and Western music, as well as special zones for music education, global forums on traditional Chinese music, and seminars on technology and innovation. Master trial classes will also be conducted for music enthusiasts to cultivate their musical talents.

Live performances account for an enormous part of this musical celebration. Over 1,000 indoor and outdoor live concerts and demonstrations will be staged, covering a variety of music genres such as rock, jazz, folk, heavy metal, pop and classical music. Also taking place during the fair is SchoolJam, where a winning school-band team from Germany will perform. The Drum Circles will also allow participants to explore a diverse range of musical and rhythmic expressions.

Music China will open to the trade for four days from October 26 – 29, and end-users and the public are welcome to visit on the last two days. An admission fee has been introduced starting from this edition, but visitors who pre-register online on or before September 20 can enjoy free entry to the show. Entry will cost RMB 30 from September 21 – October 24, and RMB 50 from October 25 – 29.

For more details about Music China 2016, visit www.musikmesse-china.com or send an email to music@hongkong.messefrankfurt.com.



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GC To Promote Japinga to CEO

On August 9th, Guitar Center announced that Darrell Webb would retire from his positions with the company, effective upon the naming of his successor as Chief Executive Officer. Guitar Center expected to finalize the promotion of Ron Japinga quickly.

Japinga's promotion to CEO will follow his recent promotion to president of Guitar Center. In his new role, Japinga will expand his responsibilities to include the entire Guitar Center enterprise. Japinga's promotion will provide Guitar Center with the opportunity to continue building on the company's strategic initiatives.

"I've thoroughly enjoyed my time at Guitar Center and am proud of the financial and operational successes that we've achieved in the past year and a half," stated Webb. "The company is in a solid position and I have tremendous confidence in Ron's ability to guide the company. I look forward to seeing what Ron and the team will accomplish in the future."

Before joining the team at Guitar Center, Japinga had an eight-year career at West Marine where he was the executive vice president of Merchandising, Planning, and Logistics. Prior to that, Japinga was a VP-level executive with Kohl's Department Stores. At Guitar Center as executive vice president for Supply Chain and Private Brands, Japinga shared his vast knowledge of retailing throughout the company to positively influence Guitar Center's overall performance.

"I'm excited about this opportunity, on both a personal and professional level," said Japinga. "One of the key reasons I joined the team here at Guitar Center was due to its great prospects for success. We have accomplished so much since then, yet we have more to accomplish. I remain enthusiastic about the company and look forward to contributing to the strategic direction that we've established in order to continue that success."





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Roland Acquires V-MODA

Roland has announced the acquisition of majority stake in V-MODA, the maker of high-fidelity headphones and audio devices.

The strategic investment provides Roland and V-MODA with the resources to together develop the next breakthrough music products, accelerate product development and push the boundaries of audio innovation.

Mr. Jun-ichi Miki, CEO of Roland, said, "We're pleased V-MODA has joined the Roland family of brands. V-MODA revolutionized headphones and has pushed the envelope of personalization. Their Milano design, material research and professional DJ roots, along with their loyal customers, are incredible assets for Roland. It's an exciting time for



V-MODA's Val Kolton and Roland's Jun-ichi Miki

both companies, and we are eager for the talent at V-MODA and Roland to collaborate. This new team and the audience that the products are going to attract will definitely inspire the future of music."

Visionary and founder of V-MODA, Val Kolton, has worked for the last 12 years creating the vision for the V-MODA brand. Kolton will maintain his role with the company as V-MODA's CEO. Furthermore, he will also provide his expertise in product design for Roland's dance, DJ and electronic music division as a consultant.

According to the deal terms, Roland acquired 70 percent of V-MODA, becoming the majority stakeholder in the company, with Val Kolton, CEO and Founder of V-MODA, retaining 30 percent ownership. The financial details and terms of the agreement are confidential.

2016 NAMM Musikmesse Russia and Prolight+ Sound

NAMM Musikmesse Russia, and Prolight + Sound NAMM Russia, an international fair of technologies and services for entertainment, integrated systems, and creation will return to Moscow's Sokolniki Exhibition and Convention Centre, September 15-18, 2016.

Now in its fifth year, the 2016 exhibition will mix visitor favorite events such as The Theatre Forum, Piano Days, and The Rental Companies Forum with several exciting new forums focused on percussion, orchestral, choral and jazz, supported by world-class musicians, visitor participation and an attempt at setting a Russian sound record.

In addition to NAMM Musikmesse Russia, Prolight + Sound NAMM Russia will host a variety of industry forums focused on key segments of the lighting and sound industries.

Tickets are available to attend now through September 14, 2016. Register online at www.namm-musikmesse.ru and www.prolight-namm.ru.

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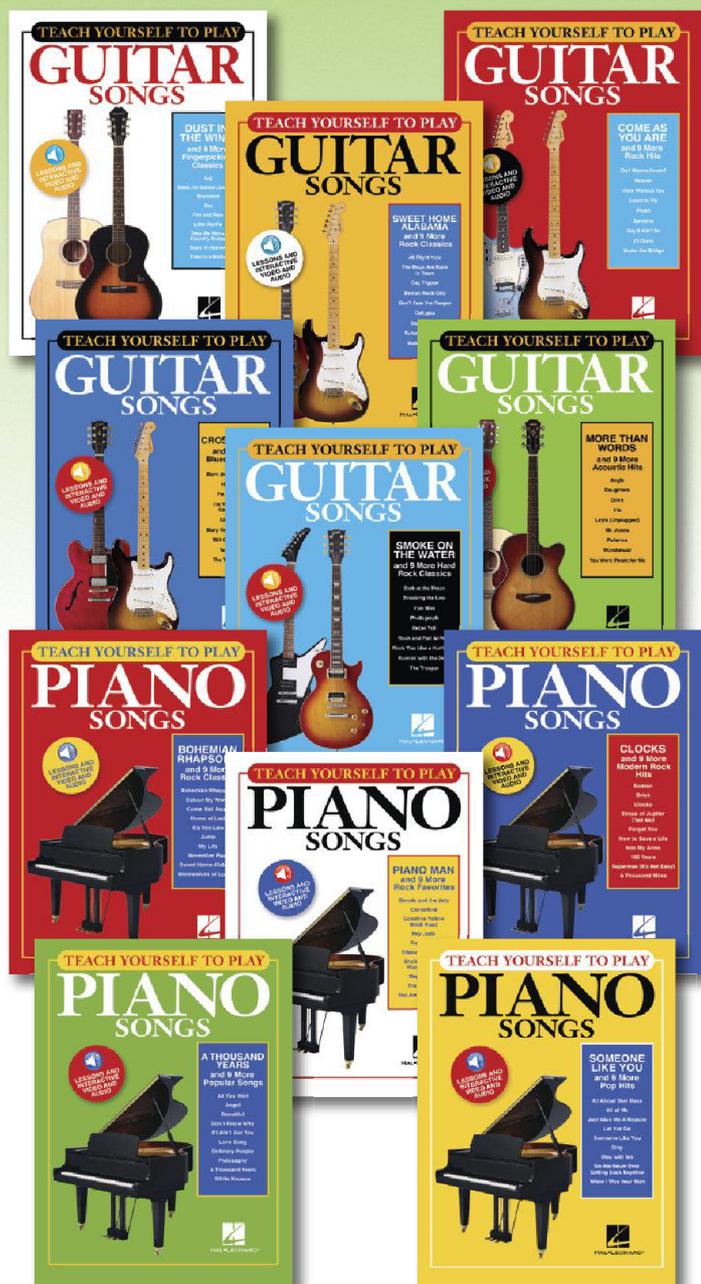
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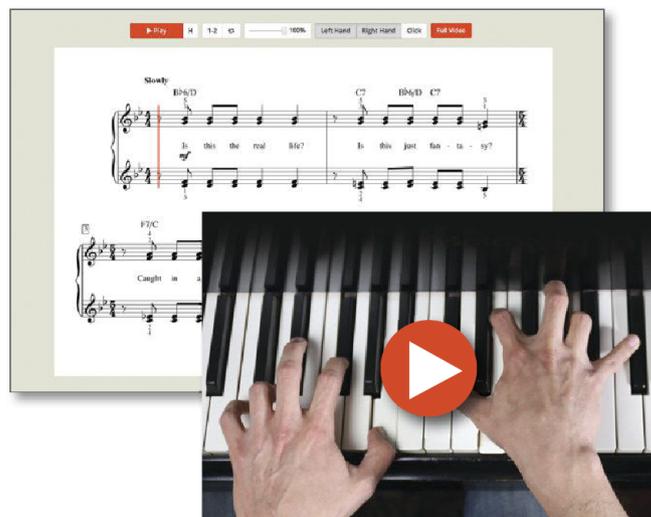
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Roland Electronic Percussion Patents Allegedly Infringed by Alesis

Roland Corporation Japan has alleged patent infringement by inMusic Brands, Inc. (d.b.a. Alesis) of eight U.S. patents relating to its electronic musical instruments. As a result, Roland has brought suit against the defendant (inMusic/Alesis) related to certain electronic drums and certain electronic cymbals as identified in the lawsuit details as filed on August 19, 2016.

The remedies being sought include a permanent injunction in the United States against the defendant for the products subject to the alleged infringement, and an undisclosed amount of monetary damages.

The lawsuit was filed in the state of California in the District Court for the Central District of California. The relevant United States Roland patents are listed below:

- (1) U.S. Patent No. 7,385,135 (Title: Electronic Drums)
- (2) U.S. Patent No. 6,921,857 (Title: Electronic Drums)
- (3) U.S. Patent No. 6,756,535 (Title: Electronic Drums)
- (4) U.S. Patent No. 6,271,458 (Title: Electronic Drums)
- (5) U.S. Patent No. 6,121,538 (Title: Electronic Drums)
- (6) U.S. Patent No. 7,459,626 (Title: Electronic Cymbals)
- (7) U.S. Patent No. 6,881,885 (Title: Electronic Cymbals)
- (8) U.S. Patent No. 6,632,989 (Title: Electronic Cymbals)

RPMDA Board Plans 2017 Convention

This summer, the board of directors for the Retail Print Music Dealers Association (RPMDA) met to plan the organization's 2017 convention, which is scheduled for April 26–29, 2017 at the Hyatt Regency Peachtree in Atlanta, Georgia.

The RPMDA board includes president Don Langlie (Popplers Music), vice president - Program David Jahnke, vice president – secretary/treasurer Mike Watson (Remenyi House of Music), past president Christie Smith (Alfred Music), and members at large Amy Larkin (West Music) and Jenny VanPelt (Lorenz Corporation).

The convention will offer session tracks for novice print music employees, buyers, managers, and owners with presentations by industry leaders and professional speakers in areas ranging from merchandizing and marketing to training and technology. The 2017 convention promises to be a veritable who's who of the print music world and will include an event at J.W. Pepper's Georgia Distribution Center.



Standing: David Jahnke (Hal Leonard Corporation); Amy Larkin (West Music); Don Langlie (Poppler's Music); Christie Smith (Alfred Music); Mike Watson (Remenyi House of Music). Seated: Jenny VanPelt (Lorenz Corporation).

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GC Expands National Presence with Three Recent Openings

Guitar Center (GC) has been expanding its presence nationwide with recent store grand openings in Orem, Utah (June 30); Cary, North Carolina (July 14); and Norman, Oklahoma (August 11).

These three grand openings further underscore Guitar Center's ongoing expansion and its commitment to serving growing music communities across the country.

The Orem store, covering 8,843 square feet, can be found at 64 E. 1300 South, Orem, Utah 84058. The Cary store, a 10,000-square-foot facility, is located at 7123 O'Kelly Chapel Road, Cary, North Carolina 27519. The Norman store covers 8,000 square feet and is located at 2202 24th Ave., Norman, Oklahoma. To celebrate the new stores, GC recently held three Grand Opening weekend events.

All three stores feature modern showrooms equipped with the latest products for musicians – from guitars, amplifiers, percussion instruments and keyboards to live sound, DJ, lighting, and recording equipment. Customer services include Guitar Center Lessons, an in-house, state-of-the-art music academy for players of all ages and skill levels, GC Repairs, an on-site maintenance and repairs service, GC Rentals, easy rentals of instruments and other gear, and Guitar



The new Orem, Utah location

Center Workshops, offering free introductory classes and instruction on guitar, ukulele, and recording.

Shoppers at these locations are also able to enjoy Guitar Center's multi-channel "endless aisle," which gives customers the ability to combine in-store, online and phone options to purchase music equipment from anywhere.



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Metroplex Selected as Exclusive Bösendorfer Retailer for North Texas

Metroplex Piano Warehouse has been selected as the official Bösendorfer piano representative for the North Texas market. With this rare designation, Metroplex is transforming its Keller store location into a premium luxury piano hub, offering exceptional instruments and service to pianists, music connoisseurs, collectors, interior designers and leading artist organizations.

Taking its cue from high-end fashion retailers, the new, upscale store experience will feature separate retail “stores” and kiosks within the location, highlighting the brand essence of each of the individual instrument product lines. Beyond Bösendorfer, the center will also feature premium Yamaha pianos, including the company’s acclaimed CF series grands.

The new partnership will also bring a host of musical, retail and cultural events to the store in the coming months. These include concerts such as “A Night in Vienna,” celebrating Bösendorfer’s storied Austrian origins; music clinics, educational workshops and master classes; wine and piano “tasting” events; a Yamaha concert series; and an upcoming mystery celebration, known for now simply as “The Happening.”

Since its inception in 1990 as Cousin’s Piano, and continuing

with the purchase of Dallas Piano Warehouse in 2009, Metroplex Piano Warehouse is an established leader in piano sales, service and restoration in the North Texas market. Under the leadership of owner Darren Speir, a registered piano technician with the Piano Technician Guild, Metroplex has blossomed into a full-service retailer.



Bösendorfer artist Eduardo Rojas, Hale Ryan, director of marketing and sales; and Bob Riska, manager, Metroplex Piano Warehouse, Keller

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Supplier Scene

Line 6 Presents Icons of Tone Master Class

Line 6, Inc. will present Icons of Tone, a free master class that will explore iconic guitar rigs and teach how to recreate those tones. The class is the latest installment in the Line 6 Tone Made event series, which is designed to educate guitarists on the fundamentals of great guitar tone.

“More than 1,500 guitarists around the country have attended our Tone Made classes, and Line 6 is thrilled to continue educating and inspiring the next generation of guitarists to spend more time making music,” said Simon Jones, vice president of product marketing, Line 6. “The new Icons of Tone class will give guitarists a comprehensive overview of how some of the world’s most celebrated guitarists create their signature tones. They can then use their knowledge to recreate these tones, or use them as a starting point to create their own signature sounds.”

The class will specifically cover guitar, amp and effects groupings from a wide range of different genres and styles, including jazz, rockabilly, country, R&B, blues, metal, grunge, etc. The class will also explore the rigs of Jimmy Page, BB King, The Beatles, Red Hot Chili Peppers, AC/DC, Van Halen, and many more.

The Icons of Tone class is designed for players of all ability levels. Instructors will use the Line 6 Firehawk™ FX multi-effects as the teaching platform. Classes will be held at more than 35 participating Guitar Center locations throughout the United States. Each event will feature door prizes, and everyone who registers will receive a free on-line guitar lesson.

www.line6.com

Chauvet DJ Freedom Par Quad-5 Stars in ‘Ride Along 2’

Chauvet DJ Freedom Par Quad-5 was used in the movie “Ride Along 2,” in a scene that turned the second-floor rotunda of Georgia’s historic and stately capital building into an edgy Miami nightclub, complete with a well-stocked bar, chic guests, VIP sofas and mood lighting.



“You would have had a hard time recognizing the rotunda if you saw it during filming; the transformation was amazing,” said Noah Hammer, owner of Full Circle Lighting & Productions (Atlanta), which supplied the club lighting for the Ice Cube and Kevin Hart comedy. “The colorizing that was done with the Freedom Par Quad-5s was instrumental in creating the scene.”

Hammer, who has supplied lighting for numerous movie and TV projects, got involved in “Ride Along 2” after receiving a phone call from the film’s gaffer. “We’re known for the work we’ve done on film, so when they decided to do this in Atlanta, the gaffer called us,” he said. “When the

“Ride Along 2” team showed us their diagrams and explained what they wanted to do in the rotunda, the Freedom Pars immediately came to mind because of their color rendering capabilities and their battery-powered operation.”

A total of 111 Freedom Par Quad-5 fixtures were rented

to the production company for the Georgia capital filming. Most of these fixtures were used to light scenic elements in the Classic Renaissance-style capital building, accenting walls, staircases and the props used to create the bar. However, just before filming began, the production team also began using the fixture in key lighting applications.

In addition to the Freedom Par Quad-5s, Hammer provided the film crew with 24 Chauvet DJ LED Pinpoint 2 fixtures. These units were attached to metal columns in the rotunda to complete the glitzy Miami club look.

www.chauvetdj.com

Zildjian Releases New Gen16 Access Tool



Interface #1 – Kit Mode



Interface #2 – Editor Mode

The Avedis Zildjian Company released a new and improved Access Tool for the Zildjian Gen16 Acoustic Electric Cymbal System. The new Gen16 Access Tool improves the user experience by using “drummer friendly” terms and much simpler, easy to use controls – all on two screens. The Gen16 Access Tool is available to download for free at zildjian.com/campaign/gen16downloads.

The Access Tool can be used on a Mac or PC and the program enables drummers to create personalized sounds within the Digital Cymbal Processor. There are now 99 cymbal tone shape preset slots in each individual channel and 99 kit presets in the new “kit mode,” allowing drummers to mix and match their favorite cymbal presets or add their own customized presets. Additional improvements were made in the Editor Mode, using simplified graphics and language that enables the customizing of the DSP effects in the Digital Cymbal Processor.

www.zildjian.com

Inside Information

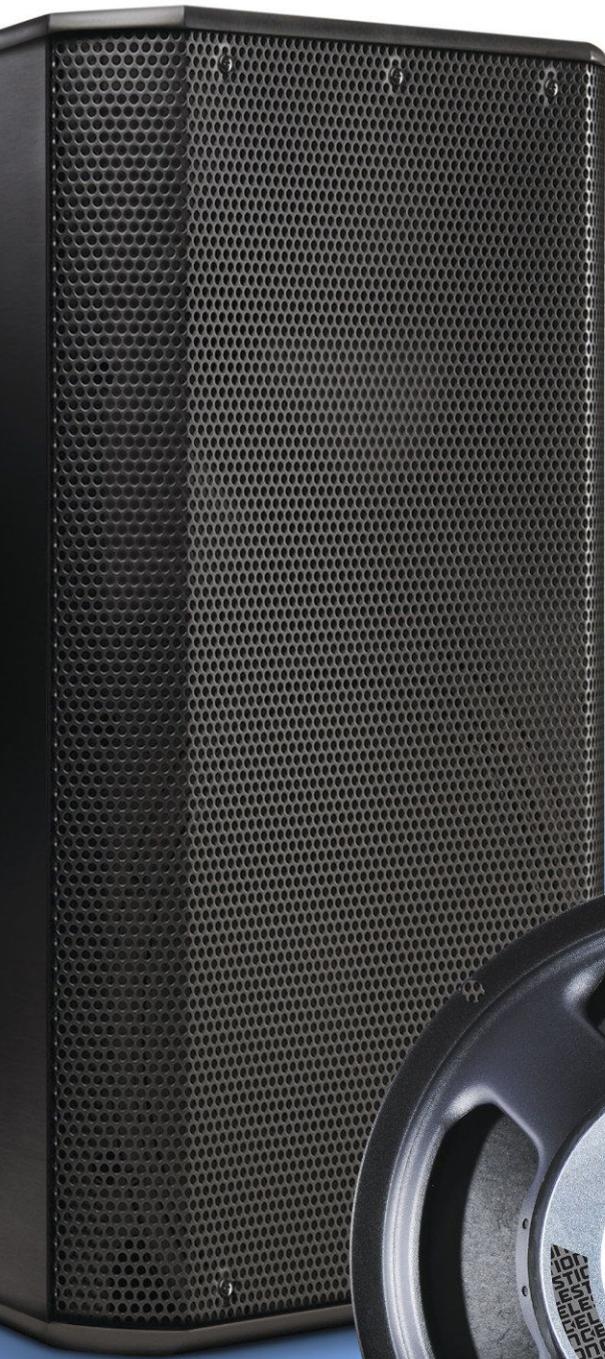
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CELESTION

D'Addario Woodwinds Rebrand Rico and Royal Product Lines

D'Addario Woodwinds announces the rebranding of their Rico and Royal woodwinds products to include the "by D'Addario" endorsement.

Rico, now Rico by D'Addario, reeds are unfiled, while Royal by D'Addario reeds are filed, and both feature a thinner profile and blank. Designed for ease of response, Rico by D'Addario is ideal for students, revered by educators worldwide, and are a favorite among jazz musicians. Royal by D'Addario is ideal for students and advancing players, and offer ease of response as well as increased clarity in sound.

Rico and Royal by D'Addario reeds are now manufactured on D'Addario reed making machinery, each reed is made with great consistency, yet still priced affordably for students and educators alike.

"This re-branding gives us the opportunity to tell the woodwinds community these reeds have been reborn with the tireless effort and technological advances only a company like D'Addario can achieve," Chris Scialfa says, product manager of D'Addario Woodwinds. "Not only has the branding changed, but the reeds, coveted by more educators than any other brand and some of the greatest musicians in the world, have been improved and never sounded better."

Rico and Royal by D'Addario will also feature new packaging to showcase a more unified, elevated appearance.



To celebrate this rebranding and the continuing improvement of the Rico and Royal by D'Addario reeds, D'Addario Woodwinds will be launching a direct mail campaign to over 8,000 elementary and middle school band directors. This campaign will announce the newly endorsed reeds as well as the loyalty programs for ways to retrieve a plethora of teaching resources designed by D'Addario Woodwinds with band directors in mind.

www.daddario.com/woodwinds

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Adam Zimmon, Guitarist / Composer

"I use TUSQ picks for the incredible range of tone they offer! An amazing advancement in flat-pick technology."

*Rock Clouser
Independent live, pit and session - string multi-instrumentalist*

"I never thought a pick could be so determinant to my tone. It really improves the way I hit and feel the strings."

Juan Cruz Masotta

"The harmonics sparkle!"

Dallas Sutherland

"Best pick for acoustics I have ever used!"

James Brill

"All I can say is WOW! They help deliver a clear, clean and vibrant tone that is hard to describe....Thanks!!!!!!!"

Jim White

"I have to say I am in love!"

Chris Sheriff

"Graph Tech hit a home run here with their TUSQ Picks"

*Chris Buono
TrueFire Artist, Hal Leonard/Cengage Learning PTR Author*

"I really like these picks and the articulation I get from them."

Joe Pinnaiva

"The material is lighter, harder, and comes off of the string faster so the sound just pops. They have their own tone and it is simply just amazing!"

Bobby Keller (Meka Nism)

"TUSQ Picks are very useful especially when I double my acoustic guitar track using different TUSQ Picks."

Takeshi Akimoto (Ziggy Marley Band)

"I finally have the sound I was looking for and [TUSQ Picks] will be all I use from here on out. Thanks so much!!"

Michael Flynn

"It's one of the best picks I have ever used! It may be the perfect pick."

Kim Young

"They are superior to my old picks in every way...tone, feel, and a new sense of authority against the string. Thanks!"

Stephen Kramer

"Harmonics out the ass and overall helped tone and feel."

Clayton Mark

"I'm extremely impressed by the harmonics...they're the best sounding and best playing picks I've tried."

Julien Bitoun

"These picks really impressed me and have become my favorite. Great tone, excellent attack and articulation."

YouTube User JPulido421



- ◆ Three Tones
- ◆ Three Shapes
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Prolight + Sound Guangzhou 2017

Prolight + Sound Guangzhou celebrates its 15th anniversary in 2017. The industry event, which takes place from 22 – 25 February 2017, will stage a full array of top-of-the-line products plus industry-focused events within 13 halls (130,000 sqm) plus the entire outdoor space in Area A of the China Import & Export Fair Complex in Guangzhou.

The last edition of the show was well-attended by 1,231 exhibitors and 68,441 visitors from China and abroad. The show will provide an all-encompassing marketplace covering various product sectors in distinctive halls and zones for better fluidity:

The signature Audio Brand Name Halls – a special showcase for key international audio brands (which has expanded from one hall in 2013 to four halls in 2016 and 2017)

- Pro Audio Halls
- Lighting Halls
- KTV Hall (Karaoke Television products)
- Enping Microphone Hall
- Product zones for microphones, conference systems and public address systems



This year, the show has partnered with The German Entertainment Technology Association (VPLT), ANAFIMA (National Association of Musical Instruments and Audio Manufacturers, Brazil), Japan Electronics Show Association, Taiwan Association of Theatre Technology and Thai Hotels Association to carry out extensive marketing campaigns, buyer invitations and delegation organisation in their respective regions. Industry professionals will also be invited to host

concurrent forums at the show, and to bring firsthand market trends and technology updates to the industry.

To offer the best services to top international buyers, Club Pro, the very first VIP buyers' club for Prolight + Sound Guangzhou has been launched. This prestigious membership will provide exclusive travel arrangements, instant industry information sharing, an incentive programme, and most important of all, networking and business match-making services that facilitate buyers to meet with their targeted suppliers under one roof in a time-effective manner.

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Gerald Albright at the 2016 Légère NAMM Jazz Jam

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- Gerald Albright

legere.com/freedom

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Peavey Adds DJ PonFetti to Artist Roster

Peavey Electronics announced the addition of DJ Michele Ponseti AKA "DJ PonFetti" to their artist roster. She was introduced to Peavey systems by her mentor, producer and DJ Keith Shocklee (Public Enemy, The Bomb Squad), and began mixing using the Peavey PV 118D sub and PV 115. She now relies on the Peavey Dark Matter series DM 115 Speakers and 115 Subs to give her mixes the power and fidelity they need.

A longtime mixing aficionado, DJ PonFetti began her career as a hip-hop DJ in Lynchburg, Virginia, in 2013. Now based in Virginia Beach, her mixes have diversified to include hip-hop, R&B, Top 40, and more. In addition to headline gigs, she mixes for nightclubs, schools, fashion shows, and music festivals. She was a featured performer for Peavey Electronics at the 2015 DJ Expo in Atlantic City, performing on the DJ Times main stage and at the Peavey Electronics booth.

The Dark Matter series enclosures are built with steel grilles and injection molded cabinets. Their design allows for use as floor monitors or pole-mounted speakers. The LCD display and associated selector knob allow users to choose various parameters of operation for the DSP-based EQ. This includes bass and treble control access, as well as multiple EQ presets for various applications or speaker positions and locations.

"I chose Peavey when I was first started out because they were one of the few systems I heard all positive feedback on and were still at a good price. I've been happy with their product and stuck with them when I upgraded and added onto my original set." – DJ Ponfetti



Michele Ponseti AKA "DJ PonFetti"

www.peavey.com

Roland Hybrid Experience Summer 2016

Roland announced The Roland Hybrid Experience Summer 2016 – an in-store experience that allows drummers to learn about, explore, and experience hybrid drumming firsthand. Roland U.S. worked in close conjunction with DW (Drum Workshop) and Sabian to place custom hybrid setups in 25 dealer locations across the U.S. For the next few months, drummers can visit any of the locations to sample hybrid drumming and ask questions.

To see a list of participating dealers and watch an artist hybrid drumming video, please visit www.rolandus.com/hybrid.



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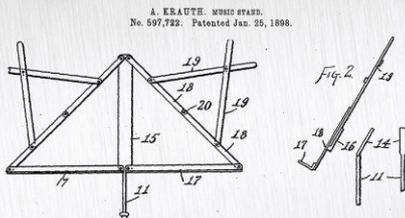
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Supplier Scene

26 SEPTEMBER 2016 • mmrmagazine.com

Museum of Making Music's Annual Play It Forward Gala

The National Association of Music Merchants' (NAMM) Museum of Making Music (MoMM) announces its Annual "Play it Forward" gala, which will take place Saturday, September 17, 6:30 – 10:30 p.m. Inspired by Memphis, Tennessee and its musically rich heritage, the evening's highlight will be special performances by award-winning, legendary musicians that have shaped the music scene for blues, soul, rhythm and blues, rock 'n roll, rockabilly, rap, hip-hop and more. Below is the complete lineup for the gala, which features some of the most influential performers to grace the museum's stage to date:

William Bell - legendary soul artist and songwriter for the world-famous STAX record label

Jerry Harrison - songwriter, musician, producer and longtime member of the groundbreaking band of the '70s and '80s, Talking Heads

Lawrence "Boo" Mitchell - award-winning audio engineer and producer and owner of Royal Studios as well as the musical director and one of the performers for the evening

Frayser Boy and Al Kapone - award-winning Memphis-born rappers

Hi Rhythm Section - 27 gold and platinum records in a row

The Memphis Horns - Memphis' horn duo appeared on virtually every STAX recording, backing Otis Redding, Sam & Dave, Eddie Floyd, Carla & Rufus Thomas and many more alumni from the STAX Music Academy

Leading up the gala, the museum will host an exclusive film screening and panel discussion of *Take Me to The River*, an award-winning full-length documentary film directed and produced by Martin Shore September 16 at 7 p.m.. The film brings multiple generations of award-winning Memphis and Mississippi Delta musicians together, following them through the creative process of recording a historic new album. It features Terrence Howard, William Bell, Snoop Dog, Mavis Staples and more. On Friday, September 16, Martin Shore, along with Jerry Harrison and Frayser Boy, will also visit a local school as part of their countrywide *Take Me to the River* Education Initiative. Students will be able to view the film and participate in an interactive discussion with these music legends.



Museum executive director Carolyn Grant says, "Music making has a profound and far reaching effect on all people in the world, and its benefits are tangible to each individual: cooperation, sharing, compromise, creativity, concentration, self-esteem and mental acuity are all enhanced by music and can be invaluable to us as we navigate life's challenges. This event will raise funds to help us do our part to make this world a better place through music."

Proceeds from the gala will help offset the \$100,000 annual operating cost of the museum's year-round music education programs that are crucial to thousands of children, adults and seniors in San Diego County. These efforts include the museum's Title One Fieldtrip Program, an annual venture that provides free access to the museum for low-income students from Carlsbad and the neighboring communities of Vista, Oceanside, San Marcos and Escondido and a scholarship program that enables fixed-income adults and seniors the opportunity to learn a musical instrument.

In addition to special musical performances, gala attendees will enjoy light bites, beer, wine, dancing and a lavish silent auction valued at \$17,000 with amazing wine deals, staycations, and trips to Tahoe, New York and Hawaii. Online bidding for live and silent auction items began August 15 at www.museumofmakingmusic.org/auction.

The recommended attire for the evening is casual elegance. Tickets can be purchased at www.museumofmakingmusic.org/playitforward. Below is the pricing for the different levels of tickets available:

General Seating - \$150 per person

Preferred Seating - \$200 per person

Front Row VIP seating - \$250 per person and includes champagne

Table Reservations (8 tickets total) receive a \$50 discount

www.museumofmakingmusic.com

ISC Announces Panel of Judges

The International Songwriting Competition has announced its panel of judges for the 2016 competition. Included on the panel are recording artists such as; Chris Cornell, Lorde, Tom Waits, Sara Evans, Bastille, Hardwell, India Arie, Joe Bonamassa, Ziggy Marley, Ricki Lee Jones, Donovan, and more.

Also included on the panel are presidents, CEOs and A&R reps from Atlantic, Warner Bros., Sire, RCA, Glassnote, Island, Razor & Tie, Sony Music Latin, Interscope, Concord Label Group, Warner Music Nashville, Alligator, Wind-Up, Provident, Capitol, Black River, New West, Virgin/EMI, and more.

Entries are open now via ISC's online platform or through the mail. ISC is open to both amateur and professional songwriters and offers 23 categories for artists to enter. A total of 71 winners share in more than \$150,000 in cash and prizes in-



cluding an overall grand prize of \$25,000 and much more in merchandise and services.

Past winners have included Vance Joy, Bastille, Gotye, Lindsey Stirling, The Band Perry, Andrew Bird, Passenger, Gin Wigmore, Missy Higgins, King Charles, For King and Country, and more.

ISC sponsors: Adam Professional Audio, Berklee College of Music, CAD Audio, Celebrity Access, D'Addario, Dark Horse Institute, Disc Makers, Gauge Precision Instruments, Gig Salad, LANDR, Lowden Guitars, Marshall, Musicians Institute, Sessions, and SongU.com.

www.songwritingcompetition.com

NAfME 2016 Lowell Mason Fellows

This past June, the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) honored five individuals as this year's Lowell Mason Fellows. This distinction is designed to recognize the accomplishments of music educators, music education advocates, political leaders, industry professionals, and others who have contributed to music education.

The 2016 Lowell Mason Fellows are: Jane Mell Balek, NAfME deputy executive director, and Give a Note Foundation executive director and CEO; Edwin E. Gordon (deceased), researcher, teacher, author, editor, and lecturer; Michele Holt, executive director of the Massachusetts Music Educators Association; David Waggoner, state executive of the Arizona Music Educators Association; and Christopher B. Woodside, NAfME deputy executive director.

bit.ly/LowellMason



Arizona state executive
David Waggoner



Massachusetts executive
director Michele Holt

PHOTOS BY MARK FINKENSTADT



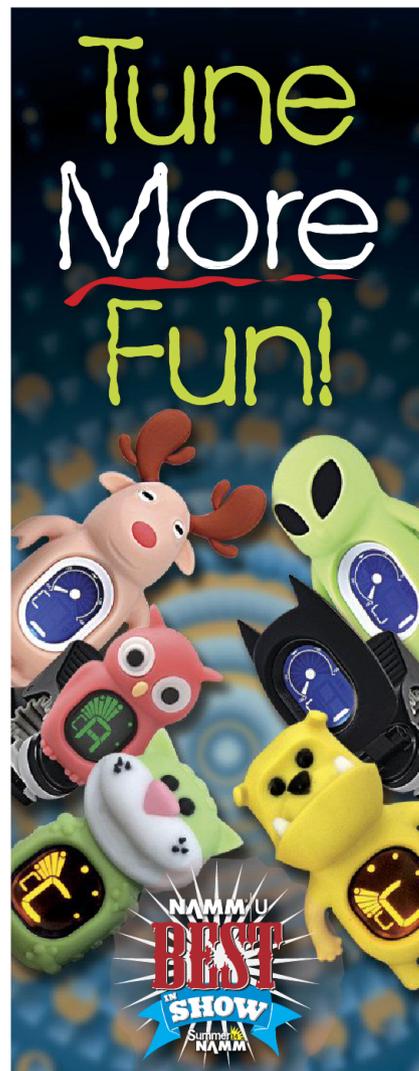
NAfME Deputy Executive Directors Jane Mell Balek and Christopher Woodside

2016 CD Baby DIY Musician Conference



CD Baby is holding a DIY Musician Conference September 30 to October 2 in support of indie artists with panels such as, "How to Find Success On Your Own Terms" with CD Baby jazz artist Nicholas Payton. They will be hosting an open mic for attendees at Chicago's Bottom Lounge.

www.diymusiciancon.com



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Documentary Series Chronicles 'Ernie Ball: The Pursuit of Tone'



Buddy Guy



The Cult's Billy Duffy



Social Distortion's Mike Ness

Ernie Ball has a hit in "Ernie Ball: The Pursuit of Tone," a documentary series focusing on the sonic journeys of today's most interesting and compelling guitarists. The series, co-developed with AT&T's Audience Network, was created by Dustin Hinz, Ernie Ball executive vice president of marketing, and is part of Ernie Ball's culture marketing initiative that also includes the web series "Ernie Ball String Theory" and other proprietary content across different media. Ernie Ball is the only musical instrument brand featuring original episodic TV programming, underscoring the company's com-

mitment to and ability to create innovative tools to support the musical art form and artists.

Episodes to date, each 60 minutes long, include in-depth features on blues legend Buddy Guy, Social Distortion's Mike Ness and The Cult's Billy Duffy, and an episode with country wunderkind and five-time Grammy-nominee Hunter Hayes premiered July 22. Several more episodes are planned through 2016, featuring such figures as Tom DeLonge (Angels & Airwaves, Blink 182), James Valentine (Maroon 5), Butch Walker and others. The Buddy Guy and Mike Ness episodes

were recently acknowledged with five Silver Telly Awards (the Tellys' highest honor) and 15 Bronze Telly Awards.

Hinz joined Ernie Ball in February 2015, as part of company president Brian Ball's strategic business plan. Hinz brought with him nearly two decades of experience producing broad-scale award-winning marketing campaigns, television series and digital programming, most notably as creator and executive producer of "Guitar Center Sessions" and the acclaimed documentary "Slash: Raised on the Sunset Strip." Hinz's longstanding partnership with DirecTV and Audience Network served as a springboard for "Ernie Ball: The Pursuit of Tone."

Hinz notes, "The Ball family is passionate about amplifying stories and artists that represent the endless creative drive that is core to who we all are as musicians. With 'Ernie Ball: The Pursuit of Tone,' we highlight the journeys, sonic origins and influences that shape the sound of today's most influential guitar players, while continuing to inspire music fans by inviting them into an often unseen world of their heroes' creative process."

DirecTV and U-verse customers can watch "Ernie Ball: The Pursuit of Tone" on AT&T's Audience Network on U-verse Channel 1114 and DirecTV Channel 239. They can also live stream it on the DirecTV app and U-verse app for smartphones and tablets, directv.com and uverse.com.

www.ernieball.com/thepursuitoftone



Dustin Hinz, executive vice president of marketing, on the set of "Ernie Ball: The Pursuit of Tone."

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Lee Oskar Harmonicas 'Meet Your New Best Friend' Campaign

Lee Oskar Harmonicas has recently expanded its marketing focus to reach a wider audience — including guitar and ukulele players, singer-songwriters, and many other types of instrumentalists, spanning all genres, styles and levels.

In support of this broadened marketing emphasis, Lee Oskar Harmonicas began its "Meet Your New Best Friend" campaign, which highlights how the harmonica serves as an ideal companion along the musical journey for all kinds of musicians.



www.leeoskar.com

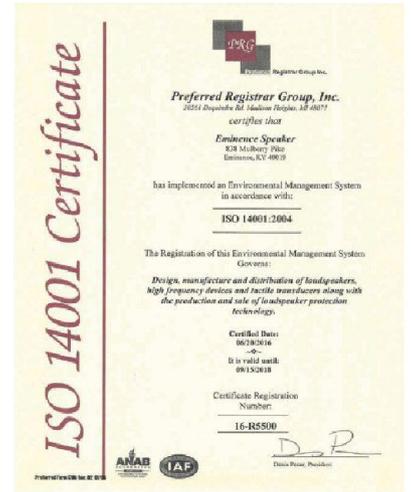
Eminence Achieves ISO 14001 Certification

Eminence announced the company has become ISO 14001 certified.

An ISO 14001 environmental management system is a systematic and process driven approach to controlling those aspects of a business that have a significant impact on the environment.

"This certification demonstrates to our customers, our community, and our team that Eminence Speaker is committed to protecting the environment through diligence and responsible environmental management practices," said Chris Rose, president. "We continually strive to be a good corporate citizen, and we're very proud to be doing our part."

The company expects to realize many benefits from this certification, including reducing operating costs, raising environmental protection awareness among employees, and ultimately minimizing their environmental footprint.

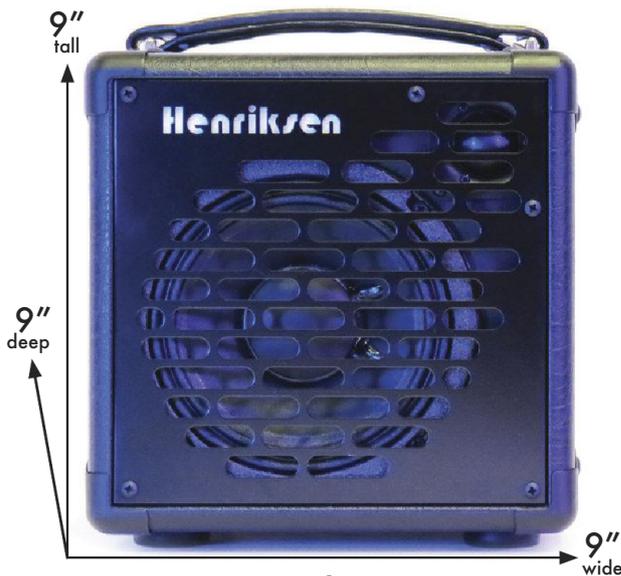


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Chauvet DJ at DJ Expo

Chauvet DJ attended DJ Expo this year. In addition to lighting the DJ Times Square Main Stage, the company sponsored a seminar by DJ Jeremy Brech, and introduced a host of new products.

DJ Expo took place at the Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City August 14-17. Chauvet DJ demonstrated the Intimidator Hybrid 140SR, the FXpar 9, and the EZpar T6 USB.

Chauvet DJ presented "Becoming a DJ Lighting Designer: The Power, Profit & Potential," a seminar by Jeremy Brech. The company also sponsored the "DJ of the Year" competition presented by DJ Times at the Black Box Cabaret at Scores Atlantic City.

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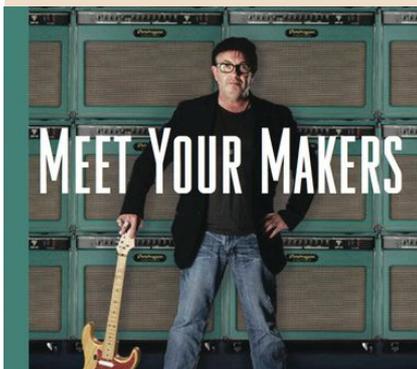
Grindrod Seeking Investment in New Project

Amp designer and manufacturer Steve Grindrod is hoping to raise money for his latest eponymous project through online crowdfunding.

Grindrod made his name as chief designer at Marshall through the seventies until he departed in 2000, creating iconic amps including the JCM800, Silver Jubilee, JCM900 and JCM2000. Following a joint venture with IAG in Albion Amps, of which he eventually became the sole owner, his latest project, Steve Grindrod Amps, needs investment and is looking to a campaign on crowdfunding portal Seedrs to provide it. To date, the 40-day campaign has raised £1,680 of the £150,000 it is seeking, with still more than 30 days to go.

The initial SGA range, the Pendragon series, was introduced at Music China in October 2015 and at NAMM in January 2016 and generated significant interest. Grindrod says sales channels have been opened and over 50 global distributors are ready to place orders as soon as the firm starts the planned global marketing campaign that will be funded in part by the Seedrs effort.

"By investing in SGA through this special Seedrs offer guitarists and all music lovers are helping me to help them. Together we can take British sound forward," said Grindrod.



Tin Pan Alley Campaign Calls for Support from Guitarists

The ongoing Save Tin Pan Alley campaign is opening a new front, calling for 17,000 guitarists to form the world's biggest band to raise awareness of the street's rapidly disappearing musical heart.

Also supported by Music Heritage UK, the objective is to get London's Mayor, Sadiq Khan, to make the street a protected music heritage zone. After continual redevelopment, connected to the Crossrail project, only eight guitars shop remain in the street, which was once the center of London's music business, playing host to shops, recording studios, songwriters and publishers.

The campaign is being led by journalist and film maker, Henry Scott-Irvine, who explained: "We have been calling for developers and the city authorities to make a pledge to keep music in Denmark Street, but the call is falling on deaf ears. So now we need to mount this big event to make the point in the hope that our new mayor will listen."

"We are calling on all of those guitarists and every other guitarist in the city, of all ages and abilities to come together to form the world's biggest band and make a stand for Denmark Street."

Scott-Irvine was inspired by a recent tribute to David Bowie in Italy, which saw 1,000 musicians getting together to play

the Bowie hit, "Rebel Rebel."

"It was a night of massed guitars and I thought, 'Let's do this for Denmark Street!'"

The current world record for the most guitarists performing together is held by the Polish town of Wroclaw, where 7,344 guitarists performed "Hey Joe," by Jimi Hendrix.



"The plan is to get thousands of guitarists to play three classic hits which were recorded in Denmark Street – The Kinks' 'You Really Got Me,' Black Sabbath's 'Paranoid' and 'Not Fade Away' by The Rolling Stones/Buddy Holly."

"We're going to ask the guitarists of those bands, plus many other star players to take part and we want guitarists from all over London, the UK and from anywhere in the world to join them. We need to make a big noise about keeping the music in Denmark Street. It's been the guitar center of rock and roll and we can't let it die." *(continued on page 34)*

JHS Adds Attitude Range of Cases

JHS has taken on distribution of the Attitude range of instrument bags and cases across a number of European territories.

Catering to electric, acoustic and bass guitars, keyboards, percussion and even a wide range of brass and woodwind instruments, Attitude bags are available in a plethora of designs and materials, from cost-conscious simple carry bags to luxury semi-hard cases.

Prices range from £14.99 for a simple music bag right up to £109 for a tuba soft case. There are 24 different guitar bags available, six keyboard cases, 19 brass/woodwind cases and three for percussion.



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A man with a beard and tattoos is playing an acoustic guitar on stage. He is wearing a black shirt and has a microphone in front of him. The background is decorated with string lights and a tree branch. A VOX amplifier is visible on the right side of the stage.

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Save the Alley

Two years ago, London's Tin Pan Alley, or Denmark Street as it's more commonly known, received one of those blue plaques they put on UK buildings of historical significance. Usually they signify that someone important or significant lived there at some point. More often than not it's a writer or a scientist. Occasionally a musician.

But the point is that the plaque only arrives when they're not there anymore. They are history. Hence the plaques.

Hopefully, it won't be the only remaining evidence that it was once the very epicenter of London's, the UK's and indeed the world's music scene. But, unless there's some significant change in policy it looks like it will itself become history. But it's not going without a fight.

The ongoing campaign to save the street from redevelopment has been bravely fought, not least of all by its chief protagonist Henry Scott-Irvine, but it has always been on the back foot. Understandably, it is difficult to make progress when all the planning applications are approved and the legal weight is behind the developers. That does tend to stack the deck somewhat.

But it has raised a huge amount of awareness, reminding us of both the area's cultural legacy and the ongoing battle with developers who, because of the campaign, have promised to retain the street's musical heritage. The reality is, however, that it's mere lip service and dealers will be simply unable to survive in an area likely to command significant rents. So, the developers can tell the world

they want music to stay in Denmark Street, but shrug when those rents become too burdensome for those shops to remain.

The campaign has had the support of some notable bodies including The Musician's Union, UK Music, Music Heritage UK and Reclaim London, as well as an array of musician's wistfully recalling their early days recording, writing or simply buying gear (or equipment) on the street. Missing from the list of supporters on the campaign website is the Music Industries Association, which you would have thought would be someone closer to the campaign than any of the other bodies. But very little, if any, support has been forthcoming from the UK MI market's trade body. Which is a shame and, once again, might make members ponder what they pay their money for.

The campaign is not over, of course, and Scott-Irvine will continue to scrap until the very end. He is attempting to organize a band with 17,000 guitarists in it to put the spotlight on the street and increase public support. At the very least it will provide a hell of a send-off, but let's hope it can instead be the catalyst for a stay of execution. Google Save Tin Pan Alley and it will take you to the site so that you can add your support. If you know some properly famous guitarists or other musicians try and enlist their help.

Music and the music industry has changed beyond all recognition in recent years and maybe some of those old stores are out of step, but you will miss them when they're gone. Unless....

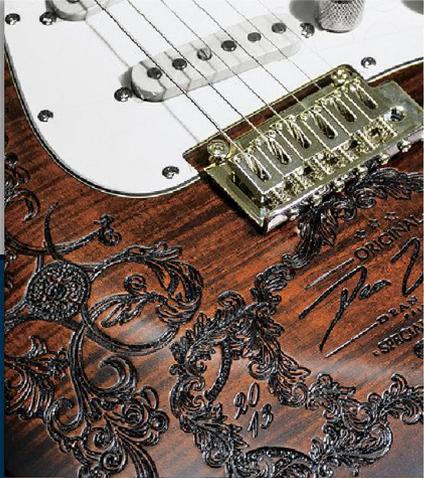
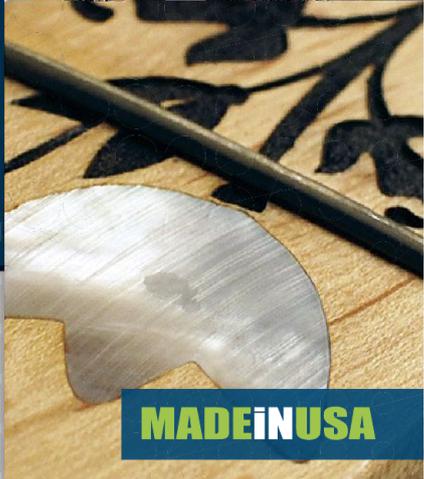
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Yamaha Promo Targets Upgrades

Yamaha has announced details of its 2016 Piano Upgrade promotion, designed to drive new customers in-store and existing owners to upgrade.

The promotion offers individuals, schools, colleges, and institutions up to an additional £1,250 part exchange on their current digital or acoustic piano when they purchase any of Yamaha's revolutionary TransAcoustic or Silent Grand and Upright instruments.

The pan-European campaign goes live on September 1 and will run until January 15, 2017. It will be supported by editorial, advertorial, online and print promotions and advertising across a range of specialist piano and lifestyle titles. In-Store point of sale will also be available, as will local press releases.

"We know many people aspire to own a Yamaha piano, so this season our Piano Upgrade promotion is the key campaign to reach and inspire new and existing customers to get a great part-exchange deal and invest in a new Yamaha Silent or TransAcoustic," said Yamaha's marketing and promotions manager, Leanne Barrell.

"Both these ranges are becoming extremely popular as customers recognize the practical and creative benefits of this new technology," she added. "We're seeing a real sea change as Quiet Technology in the home becomes a consideration. And, of course, Yamaha's Silent range are the only pianos to have been awarded the highly coveted and prestigious International 'Quiet Mark' by the Noise Abatement Society."

Turkish Delight for B&M

Barnes & Mullins has struck a new distribution deal which sees Ozdogan Music appointed as the official distributor of Faith Guitars in Turkey.

Founded five years ago as a distribution-only company, Ozdogan has developed a network of over 200 retailers and now also focuses on selling to end-users through its Istanbul store and web portal – www.ozdoganmuzik.com.

Ozdogan Music owner Ali Ozdogan commented: "We are extremely proud to represent Faith Guitars in Turkey. We believe every musician deserves to hear Faith Guitars' sound."

The new deal sees Faith Guitars available to Turkish customers for the very first time from Ozdogan's high end 'Custom Shop' in Istanbul. The new arrivals include the established Naked, Natural, Trembesi and Hi Gloss ranges as well as some signature models and one of the latest additions to the Faith family, the Venus Blood Moon.

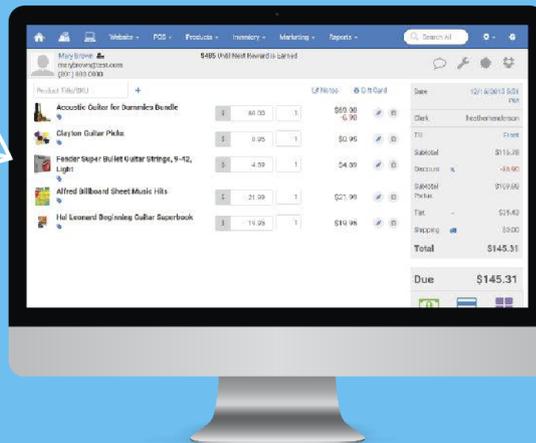
Alex Mew, Faith Guitars brand manager, added: "We're delighted to be working with Ozdogan Music. They have a reputation for quality and expertise in the acoustic market, and we look forward to a long and fruitful relationship."

The latest distribution deal adds to the brand's international availability which now includes the UK, USA, China, Australia, India, South Africa and much of Europe.

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PLASA Looks Forward at AGM

PLASA's recent UK AGM saw the audio and lighting body discussing its future direction under new MD Peter Heath, including a restructuring which would lead to the closing of its London office.

Ed Pagett, formerly managing director of Panalux Broadcast & Event and current Chairman of PLASA's Board outlined the many changes that have taken place over the last year in his speech, including bringing in a new managing director following the departure of former CEO Matthew Griffiths, and the demerge from PLASA North America (which has now returned to its former name of ESTA) after four years.

Pagett said although it was not a move the body had wanted, it had brought fresh clarity and new opportunities for PLASA, but had also resulted in financial fallout with the North American organization that has yet to be resolved.

He commented: "My role as chairman has been to navigate the Association back to a position of profitability, strength and, most importantly, into a future that will truly engage our members. A fundamental part of this organizational change has been improving PLASA's financial performance and we have made significant progress in this regard.

He added: "All this has only been possible with the unstinting support of vice-chair, Adam Blaxill of Stage Electrics, our treasurer Martin Hawthorn of Hawthorn, and John Simpson of White

Light, who was chair of PLASA's overarching governing body prior to the demerge."

These board members have now stepped back from the day-to-day running of the organization, although their commitment to guiding the Association will continue as before.

Peter Heath, PLASA's new managing director, who has been with the organization for three months, received unanimous support from members as he outlined his vision for PLASA as it moves from a time of change to a renewed and sustainable future.

Heath's key points related to creating "one PLASA" – which would include staff restructuring and closing the London office, increasing visibility through improved communication and marketing, and broadening availability through new and enhanced products.

He stressed that there would be renewed focus on the membership and on building relationships across the industry, beginning with an audio focus group to take place in early August. In the longer term, there would be much-needed reinvestment to strengthen PLASA's value to the membership.

"This was a really productive AGM for PLASA", said Heath, "and I was encouraged to see so many members taking the opportunity to actively participate in the day. I am looking forward to building on our heritage and core values in creating a new chapter for the association".

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Zoom Adds Pedals Designed by Metallica Guitarist

Zoom UK has taken on distribution of the KHDK range of pedals created by Metallica guitarist, Kirk Hammett.

The KHDK line-up was created by Hammett along with long term friend and industry veteran David Karon, and includes Hammett's signature multi-purpose overdrive, The Ghoul Screamer.

Other pedals include the No. 1 Overdrive pedal – a dynamic tube-like amp; the No. 2 Clean Boost Pedal which provides a warm, tube-like boost, and the brand new Scuzz Box - a germanium voiced fuzz, that features a switchable voicing between Fuzz, and Scuzz, which brings a dangerous, unique and biting sound. More pedals are planned for the range and players already include Gojira's Joe Duplantier, Disturbed's Dan Donegan, A Perfect Circle's Matt McJunkins and Volbeat's Rob Caggiano.

In addition, the firm also added Zvex pedals.

The range includes the Fuzz Factory line-up plus its Tremolo and Wah Probes.



"We are very excited about this appointment at Zoom UK, and we are delighted to be working with a company like Zvex," said Zoom boss, Anthony Bekesi.

"We have always been fans of these pedals and recognize the pedigree and quality of every Zvex product. We are looking forward to working closely with Zvex to further develop the brand in the UK and Ireland.

He added: "We want to ensure that this fantastic range of pedals gets the exposure to UK and Ireland guitarists which it deserves, and our aim is to put Zvex pedals at the feet of all discerning guitarists."

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Trade Regrets

On August 9th, we received the following message from NAMM's Dan Del Fiorentino:

John Craviotto, the founder of Craviotto Drum Company, passed away last month at the age of 69.

He helped pioneer the handcrafted solid-shell snare drums, a leading product for his company and a tool he sought as a young drummer in the 1960s. As a musician, John worked for a host of top artists such as Neil Young, Ry Cooder, Buffy St. Marie and Moby Grape. He studied the kits he loved and became a student of woods from around the world. He also spent many hours building and re-building snare drums to better understand what made the "sound" he sought. For about a decade beginning in the 1990's, John's snare drums were available as part of Drum Workshop's catalogs, which greatly expanded the brand name and resulted in a life-long friendship with Drum Workshop founder Don Lombardi. John worked hard on perfecting his products and listening to the needs of his customers.



Owen McPeek passed away on August 11th. Beginning in the late '60s, McPeek managed Rush's Music in Knoxville, Tennessee for over a decade. Rush's was a full-line MI retail operation that was notable for providing pro-audio gear.

After moving south to pursue jazz performance opportunities, Owen established the local chapter of the musician's union in Mississippi.



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Note From Mary

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Every Student Succeeds Act—What’s Next and How Your Local Schools Can Benefit

After years of music education advocacy efforts on Capitol Hill by NAMM and its members, last December President Obama signed into federal law the groundbreaking Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), adding music and the arts to the definition of a “well-rounded education” for school-aged children around the nation.

And while this was an enormous win for music education, moving us closer to a world in which all kids have the opportunity to learn music, the real work has just begun. To ensure that ESSA federal policy is implemented and funding is available to schools in your community, it’s important to be informed and prepared to take a proactive role in the implementation process by reaching out to state and local school district officials.

Time is of the essence. As U.S. Secretary of Education John B. King stated, “Meaningful stakeholder engagement starts at the beginning of the process, when initial planning is getting started; not at the end, when a plan is nearing completion.” And this process is starting NOW. All music education advocates need to come together and remind decision-makers about the joys of learning music for all children and the proven benefits that music education brings to a school setting, including

greater graduation rates, higher test scores and improved attendance. NAMM members can lead or participate in state and local music education advocacy efforts and organize meetings with state legislators, state department of education personnel and expanding advocacy networks. These efforts are vital to developing the opportunities available through ESSA.

Be a hero in your community by helping to ensure that all children have access to music as part of a well-rounded education.

Sincerely,

Mary Luehrsen

**NAMM DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS,
AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NAMM FOUNDATION**

“All music education advocates need to come together and remind decision-makers about the joys of learning music for all children and the proven benefits that music education brings to a school setting, including greater graduation rates, higher test scores and improved attendance.”



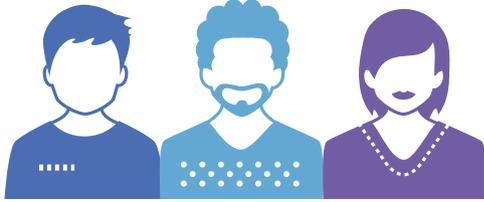
NAMM Music Education Advocacy DC Fly-In delegates at work.

L to R: Steve Fortunato, CEO, Fortch Unlimited; John Mlynszak, Vice President of Sales of Marketing, Noteflight; Bernie Williams, Baseball Legend and Music Advocate; U.S. Senator Jack Reed, Rhode Island; Scott Abrahamson, Director of Education & E-Commerce, Rick’s Musical Instruments; and Phyllis Webb, Owner, The Magic Fluke Co.

Music is part of “a well-rounded education.”

Strengthen a student’s connection to school!

Expand access to music education!



How You Can Help

Reinforce

Reinforce what’s in the law: inform local school district heads, administrators, state legislators and education leaders about the NEW language in the ESSA that includes music as part of “a well-rounded education.” Since a school’s curriculum is “determined by the state or local education agency,” local districts have the opportunity to act on the overwhelming belief of parents and teachers that music should be available to all students. This is your opportunity to show them the research that validates this.

Resource: Striking a Chord, The Public’s Hopes and Beliefs for K-12 Music Education

nammfoundation.org/striking-chord

Remind

We must remind school and community leaders, as well as other stakeholders, about the benefits of music education, its impact on school climate, and the many ways in which music can strengthen a student’s connection to school. There are numerous research studies and resources available to verify these claims:

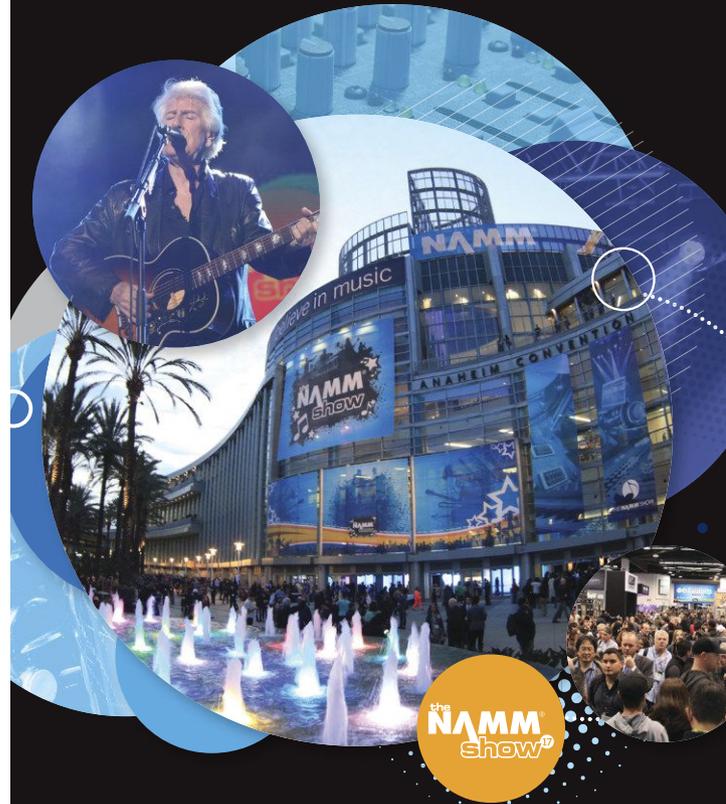
nammfoundation.org/why-learn

Request

Rally your school and community leaders to collaborate with the school district, which can ultimately work with the state to:

- Develop and expand music education programs for all students as part of school turnaround and reform objectives; encourage districts to assess if music education is available to ALL students and encourage use of Federal Title 1 and IV funds to expand music education—and its many benefits—for all students
- Expand access to music education in your school, assuring support for highly qualified teachers and educational materials
- Review the district’s opportunities to participate in the federal pre-school grant program that included the arts within the “Essential Domain of School Readiness” definition
- Work to assure that music education is part of school climate accountability and assessment measures that are reportable to both state and federal education agencies

To learn more about the ESSA and how you can support music education, visit www.nammfoundation.org.



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ON THE MOVE

Cosmic Truss

has announced the appointment of **Paul Saghbazarian** as their new sales manager, who will be working directly with Cosmic Truss brand director, David Park.



Paul will begin immediately working with existing customers, strengthening the level of support and service that Cosmic Truss offers. As the brand continues to grow, Paul will be a key link in expanding the Cosmic Truss Sales channels in areas where the company sees potential to expand.

Paul will be based out of the main Cosmic Truss location in Sun Valley, California.

Renkus-Heinz

has announced the appointment of **Alberto Mantovani** to the position of engineering manager.



Mantovani, a senior engineer with more than 30 years of expertise in the technology sector, began his career in Italy in the 1980s, developing complex embedded systems for factory automation. He held high-level sales and technical marketing positions with Rockwell Semiconductors Systems in Europe before moving to California in 1997, where he has co-founded two high-tech enterprises.

Mantovani is based at the company's headquarters in Foothill Ranch, California.

TASCAM

has named **Joe Stopka** to the position of director of business development. In his new position, Stopka will be responsible for pur-



suing and developing new business opportunities for the Tascam brand in both live and studio music production, as well as recorded sound for film and video.

Beginning his career as a commercial and industrial music studio guitarist, composer and producer, Stopka transitioned to Sales and Marketing of MI and Pro Audio technologies with a leading US AV Integration and Pro Audio rep firm and distributor. He brings extensive expertise to his new position, based on many years of working with brands including SONY Professional, MIPRO, Electro-Voice, Eventide and many others.

"Joe's history in selling and marketing Pro Audio and MI brands, as well as his musical performance and production experience, is a welcome addition to our sales and marketing teams," remarked Jim Mack, executive vice president for TASCAM and TEAC Consumer Audio. "TASCAM has always combined leading edge technology with innovative product design to help artists realize their vision, and we are excited to have Joe on board to help spread the word and dig deep into the many opportunities and applications for this iconic brand of recording gear."

Stopka added, "TASCAM is one of professional audio's legendary brands, with a legacy dating to the very foundations of personal recording. I'm truly honored and thrilled to be working with such a talented group of people, and am looking forward to being a part of the next generation of TASCAM."

Yamaha Corporation of America has appointed **Paul Winterhalter**

as its new percussion product specialist in the Band & Orchestral division.



In his role, Winterhalter will provide high-quality technical support and expertise to the percussion department and its clientele.

Winterhalter's musical journey

began in the fourth grade, where his first exposure to Yamaha came, "while using the student bell kit in my lessons." From there, his percussion education progressed through middle school and into high school, and culminated with a four-year career stint as member of two world-class drum and bugle corps.

Winterhalter served as a member of The Cadets Drum and Bugle Corps in 2010 and 2011 and the Carolina Crown in 2012 and 2013. For the summers of 2014 and 2015, he also served on the instructional staff for Crown. In addition, he served as a member of the instructional staff for Dartmouth High School from 2011 to 2015.

Fishman has appointed **Tom Ostrander** as vice president of Global Retail Sales and **Gary Lenaire** as director of New Product Marketing and Sales to maximize the company's sales effort.



Tom Ostrander



Gary Lenaire

Ostrander brings a diverse sales background to Fishman and has spent the last eight years in telecommunications industry channel sales positions, most recently as president of Sales for the Americas at Snom Inc., a German-based company where he was responsible for all operations of the remote sales office, sales, marketing, and support.

Lenaire served as product & artist relations manager at BOSS for seven years, innovating many new products and successful sales/marketing strategies.

The Avedis Zildjian Company

has announced that **Victor Filonovich** has been appointed category manager, cymbals.



Filonovich joins Zildjian from Latin Percussion and brings over 25 years of experience working with artists, dealers, distributors and consumers on developing compelling drum/percussion products and successful sales programs.

Filonovich was recently the global director of product management for both Latin Percussion and Toca Percussion. Filonovich worked at LP for 24 years, managing and leading the development and implementation of numerous new products including five U.S. Patents. Prior to LP, Filonovich worked for Pearl Drums.

In his new role, Filonovich will manage the development of Zildjian's line of drum set, marching, and orchestral cymbals.

Filonovich is an avid drummer, speaks fluent Russian and has relocated to Norwell from New Jersey.

Dean Tassio has joined **TEAC** as the company's new director of U.S. sales. In his new position, Tassio will be responsible for overseeing sales of the TEAC USA Division of professional audio and audiophile products.



Tassio brings to TEAC over 35

years of experience in the consumer electronics industry, most notably at Vice President of Sales with Polk Audio, and as Executive Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Martin Logan. His lengthy expertise in Professional Audio and MI retail also includes executive positions with Triangle Loudspeakers and BAC Custom Musical Instruments in Overland Park, Kansas. Prior to working with BAC, he founded and ran the successful DD&L Vintage Guitars in Kansas City.

"Dean's wide and diverse expertise in the music and professional audio industries makes him an ideal fit for this position," observed Jim Mack, executive vice president of TASCAM and TEAC Consumer Audio. "He brings a keen understanding of analog and digital technologies, as well as a deep insight into the perspectives and priorities of our key user base. We're excited to welcome him to the TEAC team."

"As early as I can remember, the TEAC name has always been among the most renowned and respected in our industry," added Tassio. "I'm very excited to be joining with such a great organization, with so many wonderfully talented people, and I'm really looking forward to being a part of the company's next chapter."

Tassio will be based out of his office in Kansas City, Missouri.

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'A Perfect Fit'

Sabine Grubmüller of Bösendorfer

By Christian **Wissmuller**

A storied name in the design and craft of high quality and aesthetically refined pianos, Bösendorfer has been setting the standard for excellence since 1828. Innovative build techniques and meticulous attention to detail have made Bösendorfer pianos the instruments of choice for everyone from Liszt to Oscar Peterson and Stephen Schwartz.

In the fall of 2015, Sabine Grubmüller was named managing director of Bösendorfer, who has great pride in the brand's history, while keeping a keen eye on future opportunities: "Our team here in Vienna and Wiener Neustadt, Austria is dedicated to this very human element of life, and we are committed to live up to this diversity by offering artists a true choice – freedom of expression. Bösendorfer instruments are built for the broadest expression and sharing of pure human emotion, and aspiring as well as established artists choose our instruments for their sensitivity and nuance. We plan to continue our exclusive service of taking the personal time needed with each of our cherished pianists. Whether we are by an artist's side at our facility throughout the day-long selection of the piano or meeting with them at a concert hall, exclusivity cannot be measured in numerical terms but rather in only the most precious currency: time. We are dedicated to achieving and preserving both freedom of expression and personal attention for pianists throughout the world."



The 280 VC Vienna Concert model



Sabine Grubmüller

How do you strike a balance between Bösendorfer as a performance instrument versus being a design instrument for collectors?

Ultimately, Bösendorfer is and has been dearly dedicated to delivering a unique concert experience by living up to the highest expectations of today's artists and audience. A Bösendorfer concert grand is built for stage, however big or small that stage may be.

To some, this instrument not only has to live up to its signature and enchanting sound quality but to a customized appearance as well. By offering exclusive design instruments and limited collector's editions, Bösendorfer creates symbiosis, joining the brilliant Viennese sound with pleasing aesthetics.

Naturally, this is nothing new for Bösendorfer. Since the company's very beginning, Ignaz and Ludwig Bösendorfer took part in competitions that would show the mastery of the Viennese artisans. By offering these particularly shaped and styled instruments, Bösendorfer is remaining true to its roots and shows the audience what masterful craftsmanship creates: art.

What is at the "DNA" of Bösendorfer?

All Bösendorfer instruments are manufactured 100 percent in Austria, and each combines three important elements – uncompromising traditional handcrafting, beauty, and the Viennese soul. There is no standard Bösendorfer, and the moment you meet yours, you will recognize your Bösendorfer is, and always will be, one thing: unique. Our DNA is combining traditional Viennese piano manufacturing and exclusivity into the creation of your instrument.

The only constant in this world is change. Over the past 188 years, Bösendorfer has witnessed many changes, yet an ardent dedication to handcrafting the world's finest pianos has – without comparison – been the manifesto of this traditional Austrian manufacturer. Selecting the utmost precious materials and cultivating handcraftsmanship passed on by generations of artisans has always been the central basis of what is magically revealed as the famous Viennese sound.

Gustav Mahler, who was famous for radically changing the basic concepts of music composition in his time, once said, "Tradition is not to preserve the ashes but passing on the flame!" We build our instruments based upon Ludwig Bösendorfer's original designs and remain true to our very own sound character (warm and colorful, singing tone and glorious bass). And, we handcraft each of our instruments according to the resonance case principle.

Nevertheless, we are obliged to continuously prove that we can meet the demands of today's extremely sophisticated artists and highly selective audiences. To offer those discriminating pianists and music lovers a true and exciting alternative, we have embraced change and modern engineering in order to refine the traditional art of piano manufacturing.

You can either wait for change to happen or make change happen. At Bösendorfer, we prefer the latter. Anyone who is passionate about music – whether we're talking about professional musicians, spare-time enthusiasts, collectors and appreciators – will find the perfect combination of aesthetics and sound in our Bösendorfer instruments.

To what extent does Bösendorfer engage with its artists to gather input when piano design enhancements are underway?

Our artists are part of our Bösendorfer family and continuously provide valuable feedback to our technicians and artisans. We engage with artists after concerts – which is the most extreme setting for any instrument, its moment to shine – and at informal gatherings at our factory. We talk to our piano professors at universities, to artists of all genres, to conductors, and to specialists in the piano manufacturing industry. Their collective insights and great inspiration have allowed Bösendorfer artisans to remain ecstatic about creating the finest pianos for more than 188 years.

You've been with Bösendorfer since 2008 when Yamaha acquired the brand. How has the move affected the company?

Yamaha and Bösendorfer have each been dedicated to the music industry for more than a century.

Hence, Yamaha and Bösendorfer are a perfect fit to develop the global piano business further and to bring incomparable products to our customers. We are both united in the quest to find perfection in product design, production, quality and reliability. Similar to different languages, however, we are keenly aware of our different cultural backgrounds and we cherish those differences. Each of the two pianos, the Yamaha CFX Concert Grand and the Bösendorfer Vienna Concert Grand, has its unique construction and qualities. Taste and preferences depend upon personal favor, occasion, composer, genre, and mood. Our pianos are the means of communication, and the voice is expressed by the artist.

What's your take on the overall health of the U.S. piano market?

Contrary to the general economic situation, we are witnessing a fundamental shift in consumer interest towards digital and hybrid pianos. Yamaha certainly holds a leadership position in these product categories, but the company equally cherishes the Viennese tradition of Bösendorfer, and has remained true to its promise to preserve the integrity of our pianos and our 188-year legacy. At the same time, Bösendorfer has willingly embraced the benefits offered by technology-enhanced pianos. We have offered our proprietary player system, Ceus, for many years. Now, we integrate the Yamaha Disklavier technology into our Bösendorfer model 200 in the United States, and the Yamaha Silent SH system for some of our pianos designated for the European market. Further, in the U.S. market, we see a strong desire for customized pianos, like our Grand Bohemian model, which we consider to be the most opulent piano in the world. While the U.S. acoustic piano market, as a whole, might show slight slowing, Bösendorfer continues to grow, especially in the past year.

What, if any, significant product introductions or other developments are on the horizon for Bösendorfer in the coming months?

We just introduced our new 280VC concert grand piano and three design models at this year's NAMM show in Anaheim. There is currently no plan to introduce additional new models at this moment, but please visit us again at NAMM 2017 where we will raise the bar again for the finest Viennese piano craftsmanship. **MMR**



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Comments

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Taking Root

Bluegrass Guitar Sales in 2016

BLUEGRASS

by Christian Wissmuller

Drawing upon country, Appalachian, Irish, Scottish, and jazz influences, Bluegrass music represents a “big tent,” as they say. As deeply steeped in improvisation as jazz, but with a more “down home” and relatable aesthetic, the form of music has seen a resurgence in interest and has carved out a notable home in today’s pop culture.

While the banjo, fiddle, mandolin, and upright bass are some of the more uniquely identifiable instruments associated with Bluegrass, as with many (most, really) forms of American roots music, the common bedrock of the format is the guitar.

MMR recently sat down with representatives from five major suppliers of 6-strings geared towards the Bluegrass market to learn what’s driving sales in 2016, who’s buying, and what trends are making waves.

Is there any one factor – an artist, a particular song, a soundtrack, et cetera – that you’d point to as driving the current interest in bluegrass much and bluegrass guitars, in particular?

Andy Powers: I can’t point to a single source, since what appears to be driving the movement is a genuine appreciation and interest in an iconic form of American music. There are young players like Trey Hensley who are at the top of their game, putting out great performances using traditional bluegrass as a platform. As well, we are hearing from players like Sean Watkins or Chris Eldridge in the Punch Brothers putting out brilliant music that take the traditional bluegrass instrumentation and stylistic cues to tell new narratives within a wide musical umbrella. In the same way the jazz idiom is a living and breathing musical evolution, the bluegrass tradition has a gravitational pull on players and listeners, alike, who are bringing fresh influences with them.

David Bandrowski: While not technically Bluegrass, folk rock bands such as Mumford & Sons and the Avett Brothers are bringing acoustic music to a new generation. Steve Martin’s dedication to the banjo and his touring with the Steep Canyon Rangers has done a huge amount for bluegrass music that brings this style of music to a much wider audience. Bluegrass bands and musicians such as the Punch Brothers, Tony Rice, Bryan Sutton, and the Infamous Stringdusters have also done a huge amount by bringing bluegrass and bluegrass guitar to another level.

Chris Thomas: We believe the folk-rock revival sparked by Mumford and Sons, the Avett Brothers, and the general return of banjo to mainstream music a few years back has been a contributing factor to a heightened interest in Bluegrass from outside the Bluegrass genre. The trend has continued with the merger of bluegrass instruments into Americana and pop and the formation of bands that tie it all together.

Tom Watters: The origin of the resurgence of bluegrass popularity really goes back to the '90s, with groups like Alison Krauss and Union Station. But the big impact moment was the release of the Coen Brothers film, "O Brother, Where Art Thou?" in 2000, which kicked off a new "cool factor" to bluegrass. Artists who were already established and talented newcomers alike gained a huge amount of worldwide recognition as a result. It also established bluegrass as a style that was equally viable for younger artists as the older, more traditional players. It has since maintained both a traditional and a "hipster" appeal. There are a number of players on the Takamine roster who are hugely respected in the bluegrass realm, such as multi-Grammy winner John Jorgensen and flat picker extraordinaire Brad Davis.

“ The big impact moment was the release of the Coen Brothers film, 'O Brother, Where Art Thou?' in 2000, which kicked off a new 'cool factor' to bluegrass. ”
– Tom Watters, Takamine Guitars

Jonathan Lee: We can't point to any one specific factor, but many things have been building for years now. While not strictly Bluegrass, current popular Americana acts like Jason Isbell, The Avett Brothers, and The Lumineers, along with the elder statesmen of the genre like Steve Earl, Neil Young, Lucinda Williams, and Wilco utilize elements of bluegrass and acoustic music. "Nonstandard" instruments like mandolin, banjo and resonator as well as the old standby dreadnought are frequently heard in their music. Also, the continuing popularity of Cross-Genre fests like Bonnaroo and Coachella, Bluegrass fests like Telluride and MerleFest, and the Jam Band scene have kept the visibility of instruments associated with bluegrass in the spotlight. Frequent parking lot or campsite jams put the instruments up close for people to hear their natural tone. Some bluegrass stars like Alison Krauss, Chris Thile, and Sam Bush have also crossed over into various other styles of music bringing hints of bluegrass with them or inspiring musicians to check out their Bluegrass works.

In your experience, who do you feel is (generally speaking) the "typical" bluegrass guitar player and customer?

DB: The typical bluegrass guitar player is an older than 25 year-old male with a pretty basic level of guitar technique. The majority of "bluegrass guitar players" are strumming open I, IV, and V chords and not taking single note breaks.

TW: Historically, bluegrass had an appeal toward an older crowd of musicians who grew up listening to (and identified with) the original masters of the craft – players like Bill Monroe and Lester Flatt. However, over the past 15-20 years or so, the bluegrass customer base from an age perspective has grown younger. Bluegrass has been traditionally tilted toward male players with a few notable exceptions, but again, the more recent examples of great female players (including Alison Krauss and many others) have made women in the genre more prevalent than before. The skill level of bluegrass players is one thing that hasn't changed; much like jazz, it tends to draw exceptional musicians who are capable of the demanding techniques required by the style.

JL: If we are talking in generalities, I would say the typical bluegrass guitar player and customer is male, and striving to achieve a relatively high level of playing skill. Playing bluegrass is not easy with its complex picking patterns, syncopation, and fingering techniques. As such, it takes a while to master and I have seen players of all ages enjoying this style of music.

CT: Historically, our core customer has been the seasoned bluegrass player with decades of experience flatpicking on a Dreadnought. However, we have seen the obvious presence of youth (8-18) in the Bluegrass community at such gatherings as IBMA and SPBGMA. We contribute this to the generational passing of the traditional torch, as well as the blending of genres.

AP: Often, the recreational bluegrass guitarist has been a middle-aged male with a moderate amount of experience. I feel this stereotype is being disassembled as new players take up the torch of this music and bring a wider variety of influences into the mix.



David Bandrowski, director of marketing, Deering Banjo Company



With respect to bluegrass guitars, have you been noticing trends of late, in terms of materials used, size, features, specs?

JL: The guitar optimized for bluegrass as a very specific voice and prize specimens are very, very loud. When we hear that a guitar described as a "canon," in most cases we are talking about a guitar that would find a home in a bluegrass player's hands. In this respect, the design and materials are rather traditional with the Dreadnought being the dominant shape, and spruce/mahogany being the dominant soundboard and backside wood pairing. When it is available in good quality, Adirondack spruce is the primary soundboard and brace material



Chris Thomas, director of artist relations, Martin Guitar



choice. It's not particularly forgiving or even pleasant fingerpicked, but really comes alive when played with a pick hard. Insofar as trends are concerned, I'd anticipate seeing the use of soundboards that have undergone the Torrefaction drying process where the result is a light, stable, aged top that more easily achieves that dry, fundamental, loud voice so sought after by serious bluegrass players.

TW: Bluegrass is, by nature, a traditional musical style, and the basics of the instruments being employed haven't seen many drastic changes over the genre's history. Takamine first gained its reputation in the U.S. as a maker of great-sounding and reliable acoustic-electric guitars, and

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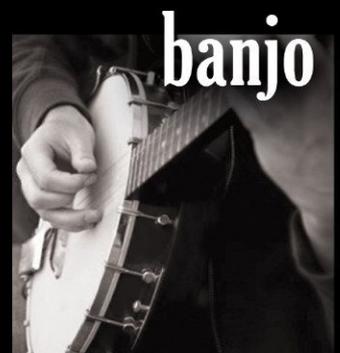
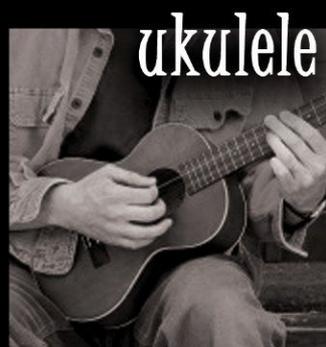
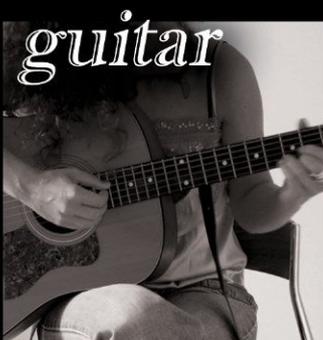
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“ Players are simply and honestly choosing instruments that work for the sounds they want to make. ” – Andy Powers, Taylor Guitars



Tom Watters, director of product development, Takamine Guitars



since so much of bluegrass music is based on the live performance environment, you'll see many Takamine models being used at bluegrass venues and festivals across the country and around the world, or in any setting where guitars require amplification. One highly regarded recent advancement was the introduction in 2015 of the Takamine TT Series. TT stands for "Thermal Top", and uses a technology where the solid spruce guitar tops are baked in an oxygen-free environment which allows the instrument to have a "played-in" vintage sound from the day it comes out of the box.

CT: Almost always a rosewood or mahogany dreadnought with a Sitka or Adirondack soundboard. There has been a trend toward slimmer faster neck tapers replacing the thicker, wider "V" shape necks popular since the onset of Bluegrass.

AP: While there is and should always be a taste for the classic components – mahogany- and rosewood-backed dreadnought guitars with spruce tops, we at Taylor are watching bluegrass players adopt instruments which simply best fit their approaches to playing. I feel it is a natural extension of the variety players are bringing to the genre. Players are simply and honestly choosing instruments that work for the sounds they want to make.

DB: The biggest change I've seen is that more and more bluegrass guitar players are playing smaller guitars and moving away from dreadnoughts which would be standard for a bluegrass guitarist.

For your own brand, what's the best selling bluegrass model?

DB: We make 6-string banjos that are tuned and played just like a guitar. Our most popular model has always been the Boston 6 banjo which is played by artists such as Keith Ur-

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Andy Powers, master guitar designer, Taylor Guitars



ban, Taylor Swift, John Fogerty, and more. We just launched our new Deering Goodtime Six banjo, which is a steel stringed 6-string banjo that is made in America and starts at less than \$650. We expect this banjo to quickly become the most popular 6-string banjo out there.

AP: Our dreadnought body guitars, such as the mahogany 510 and rosewood 710 and 810 models, are perennial favorites, although a growing number of players are adopting curvier, smaller body sizes to emphasize a vibrant pick attack, which works well in a band context.

CT: Generally the Martin HD-28 tops sales. For the Bluegrass enthusiast, our Authentic Series is the choice.

JL: Our Heritage Series HD10S is probably the best selling model for bluegrass. These solid Sitka spruce top guitars feature scalloped and cathedral shaped advanced-X Sitka spruce bracing and a mahogany body. They also have a Washburn pickguard so they can take a little extra beating that the pick provides. The Heritage D10S's exceptional affordability also allows the aspiring bluegrass guitarist to ease into the music as they dream of a hand made instrument.

TW: On an overall basis, Takamine is perhaps best known as a manufacturer of dreadnoughts, and it's well known that the loud and full sound of the dreadnought body is a hallmark of bluegrass sounds. In our current lineup, guitars like the EF360S TT and EF340S TT are great choices for any bluegrass player who wants to take his or her great tone to the stage. Takamine has always offered great value in the "price versus performance" factor, so any number of our guitars get used in bluegrass at all levels.

What are your expectations for the bluegrass guitar market in the coming months?

AP: I imagine the market will continue to evolve and grow as more players find a musical home in a time-honored tradition. At the same time, I believe we'll see a less homogenous bluegrass landscape as more fresh players bring their uniqueness into the bluegrass world.

TW: Takamine has always embraced the bluegrass genre and the community behind it. Over our 50+ year history, our guitars have been put into use in every conceivable genre, and we expect that bluegrass players

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Jonathan Lee, director of design and development, guitars, Washburn Guitars



“ The guitar optimized for bluegrass as a very specific voice and prize specimens are very, very loud. ” – Jonathan Lee, Washburn Guitars

will continue to need a range of high-quality, great-sounding, and reliable solutions for songwriting, recording, and live performance. Ask any serious acoustic bluegrass player in Nashville, and they'll tell you that Takamine is more than capable of allowing them to deliver their best performances.

DB: I expect the bluegrass

guitar and 6-string banjo market to continue to grow in the coming months as more and more young bands are using these instruments in new ways and as the quality of these instruments continues to improve.

CT: Steady with an increased interest in adding our Dreadnought Junior to the arsenal for travel, camping, and younger players.

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'Tis the Season?

by Christian Wissmuller

Holiday Sales for MI Retail in 2016

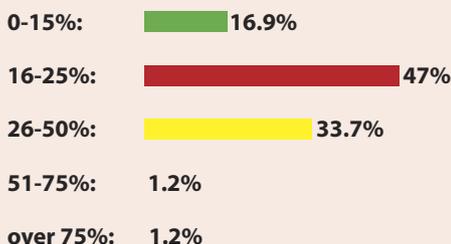
With over 80 percent of respondents in this month's dealer survey reporting that between 16-50 percent of their annual sales take place during the holiday season, you'd be hard pressed to characterize this time of year as being "unimportant."

However... the larger trends being reported are not quite so sunny as that figure might suggest. The vast majority not only cite declining holiday sales due to (wait for it...) competition from online and big-box retailers (shocking, no?), but beyond that, many note that the "season" which used to extend from late November into early January, is now barely longer than a week or two.

"Nothing happens on Black Friday," says Larry Gosch of Auburn, California's Encore Music Center. "Serious buying doesn't start until the middle of December."

Nonetheless, these weeks can represent a cornerstone for any MI dealer's business – this year and for months and years down the line. As Anthony Mantova of Mantova's Two Street Music in Eureka, California notes, "We have an obligation to capture the Christmas sale, because in some cases its the only opportunity to meet families that otherwise don't shop with you. If you save a persons' Christmas, you earn their business for years to come."

The Holiday Season accounts for what percentage of your store's annual sales?



"Our holiday rush doesn't start until mid December and only lasts two weeks. It seems most people are shopping on line up till then."

Richard Miller
Kudzu Music
Boone, North Carolina

"Getting smaller every year."

Dyke Corson
Corson Music
Champaign, Illinois

"If you live depending on Christmas sales you should look for another line of work. I am here all year long."

Robert Zinkan
Mike's Music Shop
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

"We're fortunate to not have to depend on December's business like so many other retailers do... It can be a 'do or die' situation for a lot of stores. We work hard every month to make sure we are not in a similar situation. Believe it or not, December is usually our fourth to fifth biggest month."

Tim Bascom
Morgan Music
Lebanon, Missouri

"Used to be 25%-30%. Now it's just an average month, if not worse."

Chip Coleman
Coleman Music
China Grove, North Carolina

The bulk of Holiday Season sales for your business tend to be...

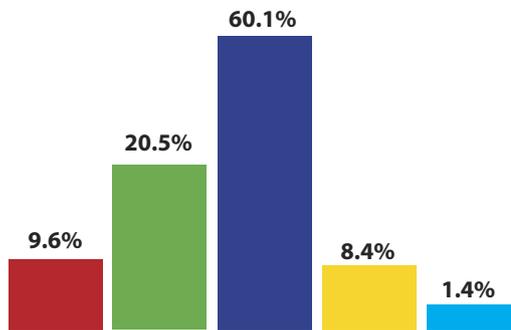
Big-ticket instrument or gear purchases (\$1,000 and over):

Products between \$200-\$999:

Items between \$50-199:

Accessories and lower-priced (under \$50) products:

An equal mix across the above four categories:



"Sales are naturally all over the place. Dollar-wise, accessories dominate."

David St. John
Gard's Music, LLC
Glendora, California

"In terms of volume, we sell far more small goods (under \$100) but large ticket instrument sales lead the way in total dollar volume."

Robert Christie
A&G Central Music
Madison Heights, Michigan

"We try to add value to even the small sales: discounts for the lesson program with a starter instrument; discounts for students on accessories; and upgrades on instruments."

Dan Patterson
Roger's Music
Fort Payne, Alabama

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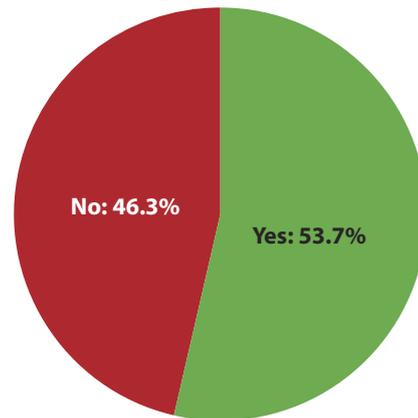


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Do you do any special promotional outreach or host any events related to the Holiday Season?



In recent years, have you noticed any emerging trends when it comes to the Holiday Buying Season and MI sales?

"Most often before the customer comes into our store they have researched the product and have searched for the lowest possible price. In order to make the sale it is necessary to match prices. Profit margin is down, while costs continue to rise."

Marie Fritz
Fritz Pianos & Organs, Inc.
St. Mary's, Pennsylvania

"They have been decreasing. The young people have so many choices available to them. Parents too often buy low-end pianos or digitals that don't inspire."

Richard Robitaille
Robitaille's Piano Sales Service
Turner, Maine

"Yes, people comparatively shop price on the Internet, and/or just outright buy on the Internet due to ease of use. That astounds me since a musical instrument is such a personal thing that needs to be seen, touched, and played before buying."

Greg Allen
Long Island Drum Center
Nyack, New York

"Box stores doing cheaper introductory items of not good quality makes it hard to compete with decent products. House brand guitars and keyboards, in particular."

Ed Magruder
Musician's Warehouse
Athens, Georgia

"Guitar Center and Amazon have sucked up the profitable items and turned them into very-low profit commodities."

Erik Lifchez
Musician Supply
Lexington, South Carolina

"Drum set sales have improved, Step-up Band sales have improved, Digital Keyboard sales have improved, Guitar packs (both electric and acoustic) have slowed, and higher priced acoustic guitars have improved."

Mike Guillot

Mississippi Music, Inc.
Flowood, Mississippi

"People ask for unusual items at the last moment. It seems like they exhaust all other methods of shopping, then think of something as a side note and call us. Most of the time if we don't have it, we can order and get it in by Christmas. More on-line shopping presses us to seek items that are more impulsive or specialized."

Jon Patton
Patton Music
Newburgh, Indiana

"More sales are concentrated into the few weeks before Christmas. Black Friday weekend is not what it once was, even with heavy promotion and sale events."

Ray Aleshire
Elderly Instruments
Lansing, Michigan

"Big purchases happen later and later each year. The 'holiday rush' has been compressed into the week leading up to the holiday."

Spidey Mulrooney
The Music Shop
Southington, Colorado

"The sales days around Thanksgiving have absolutely no effect on us whatsoever. We could be closed for Thanksgiving. Our holiday sales happen in December."

Drew Parker
Separk Music
Lewisville, North Carolina

"Emerging trend is not good. Guitar sales seem to be taking the biggest hit. Younger players seem to be more interested in computer equipment and video games than music."

Kevin Walters
Central Penn Music
Palmyra, Pennsylvania

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HOLIDAY

Buying Guide

With Summer NAMM disappearing farther and farther away in your rearview, it's time to look into stocking up on the products you might have missed out on earlier in the year. As retailers, you're in the midst of back to school season, but as any MI dealer knows, the time to gear up for the holidays is now.

We've broken down some of this year's must-have gift items into distinct pricing categories, making it easy for you to assure your shelves are stocked at every given price point. **By Sharon Paquette Lose**

Under \$25



Alfred's Easy Christmas for Guitar, Piano, and Ukulele

Alfred's Easy Christmas series is the fast track to developing a repertoire of well-known songs. This series is the debut of the "Easy Hits" guitar TAB, ukulele TAB, and piano arranging formats, which provide melody, chords, and lyrics—plus any integral "hook" parts—to songs.

Alfred's Easy Christmas for guitar, piano, and ukulele are available for \$16.99.



Alfred Music's Christmas Treats & Treasures, Books 1–3

Catherine Rollin's Christmas Treats & Treasures are collections of 9–11 piano arrangements of holiday favorites with optional duet accompaniments.

Christmas Treats & Treasures, Books 1–3 are available for \$7.99.

alfred.com

Kendor Music Contemporary Christmas Classics Clarinet Quartet

Kendor Music Contemporary Christmas Classics for Clarinet Quartet, arranged by Catherine McMichael, is a holiday collection that contains ten time-honored Christmas songs for clarinet quartet. Arranged for grade 3-5 clarinet quartets, it includes a mix of traditional, quirky and



cheerful styles in which each part has its moment to shine. Full score \$13.50, 1st B♭ Clarinet \$6.95, 2nd B♭ Clarinet \$6.95, 3rd B♭ Clarinet \$6.95, B♭ Bass Clarinet \$6.95.

kendor.com

Aquila Strings Guilele Red Series

The Guilele Red Series was designed to deliver a bright tone by adding metal powder rather than increasing a string's gauge to reach lower frequencies. But increasing the string's diameter also increases the internal dampening. This approach is utilized to change the specific weight of the material, increasing it progressively to leave the gauges almost unchanged. The strings are designed to maintain their intonation better and create powerful voicing across the full scale of the instrument. \$15 a set.

aquilacorde.com



Kyser Quick-Clip Magnetic & Chromatic Tuner

The Kyser Quick-Clip features an easy to use chromatic tuner which attaches to existing full-size Kyser Quick-Change capos magnetically. This combo eliminates the need to have multiple items clamped on a guitar. Residing on the capo's rear boot, the tuner sits hidden behind the guitar neck when the capo is in use or hidden behind the guitar's headstock when the capo is not in use. The Quick-Clip tuner is held in place by a powerful magnet and adjustable as the screen can flip to accommodate left-handed guitarists. Price: \$21.95.

kysermusical.com



The GloKnob

The Option Knob Classic enables you to manipulate your effects in real-time without having to take your hand away from your instrument or bend down. Tap the wings left and right with your toes to fine-tune any parameter you wish to have more



control over while playing live. Also featuring, the "GloKnob", a glow-in-the-dark version of our best-selling OKnob Classic. The GloKnob's lighter color allows easier visibility, and even on the darkest of stages it's glow properties illuminate your controls. MSRP: \$11.95

gloknob.com

Trophy Musical Fireballz Crash Light

Trophy Music's Fireballz, transform the typical cymbal nut into a brilliant light show. This patented invention allows a drummer an easy and innovative way to enhance a performance.



Fireballz contain vibration sensitive LEDs that pulse with each cymbal strike.

They include an on/off switch, three lithium ion batteries, brass threads, and fit cymbal stands with M8 x 1.25 thread type. Available in, blue, red, green, and white. \$15

grotro.com

Remo QuickTech Drum Key

The Remo QuickTech Drum Key features an internal high pull neodymium magnet to prevent tension rods from rattling or falling. The wide contoured face provides thumb and forefinger comfort and the extended height and large rubber grip knob allows for rapid spinning of the key with just two fingers. For maximum versatility, the QuickTech Drum Key also includes a hex stem for cordless drill attachment, eliminating the need to change drill bits and keys. \$8.95

remo.com



IMS Technologies Charactune Clip-On Tuners

Each have presets for chromatic (virtually any instrument), guitar, bass, violin, and ukulele, and work great with fretted, string, woodwind, and brass instruments. MSRP of \$19.99.



As with all IMS products, a portion of the proceeds will directly help cancer patients and their families.

imstechnologies.net

The Jambourine by Marlowe

The first soundhole tambourine for acoustic guitars, The Jambourine by Marlowe is designed to slide into the sound hole of acoustic guitars, stay out of the way while strumming, and only be activated when the player slaps or strums across the jingles. This percussion accessory expands the way guitarists play by turning an ordinary slap-to-the-beat while playing into something much more. Price: \$24.95.



marlowe-band.com

AIM Gifts Ornaments

AIM Gifts has over 100 different music-themed holiday ornaments. Styles include acrylic and vinyl magnet designs in addition to mini replica instruments that any music lover would enjoy. Quick selling and well received, everyone wins with these gifts. AIM Gifts has over 10,000 additional music gifts and a new music gift catalog.



aimgifts.com

D'Addario Accessories Eclipse Tuners

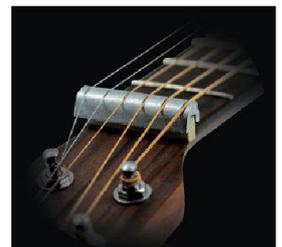


The modestly-priced product offers superior tuning with unparalleled performance. A clip-on headstock tuner that offers fast, accurate chromatic tuning, the Eclipse is unobtrusive in design yet accurate in tuning both on and off the stage. Featuring a discreet, compact design, the tuner has a full-color vertical display and automatic power-off to save battery life. It can be mounted in front of or behind the headstock on any right- and left-handed instruments, and the multi-swivel action allows for the perfect viewing at any angle. The tuners will be available in a variety of colors – black, yellow, blue, red, purple, and green.

daddario.com

Grover Musical Products Perfect Guitar Nut

Grover Musical Products has reintroduced the Perfect Guitar Nut for slide steel playing. Sold successfully for over 50 years under the Micro brand, the new Grover model is produced using a new, but exact reproduction die cast mold, which is designed to provide a much brighter, resonant sound than stamped steel versions. 1 7/8 inches in total length - 1 5/8 inches Center E to Center E, The Grover Perfect Nut will fit almost all six string guitars. \$7



grotro.com



Under \$100

Kahuna Ukuleles Felix the Cat Line

Kahuna Ukuleles Felix the Cat line will feature four designs of the cartoon cat in both soprano and concert ukulele sizes. Soprano sizes are \$58.02. Additionally, two new Oriollo-designed graphics will be released in tandem. The new ukuleles will be available in October 2016.

kahunaukes.com



Amahi Ukuleles New Mahogany Student Models



The NHP-01, will be branded Penguin to complement the existing Penguin solid color ukulele models. The other two will be branded Amahi. The Penguin mahogany ukulele will feature open gear tuning, Aquila strings, dressed nickel frets, ivory ABS bound body, rosewood fingerboard, and a gold thread embroidered gig bag. The new soprano Penguin model comes in three shapes, traditional, peanut, and pineapple. It is also available in Concert and Tenor.

The Amahi brand is introducing two distinct models. The first, UK217 features ivory ABS bound body, fingerboard and sound hole as well as sealed guitar style tuners, Aquila strings, a rosewood fingerboard with dressed nickel frets, and a deluxe gold thread embroidered gig bag, available in three sizes: soprano, concert, and

tenor. The second Amahi branded model, the UK210KK, features a thin body and arched back which focuses the sound toward the sound hole.

MAP starting at \$69 including the deluxe padded gig bag. All three of these new models will be ready to ship in the fourth quarter.

amahiukuleles.com

Ratio Machine Heads

Ratio Machine Heads from Graph Tech Guitar Labs are high performance heads that make tuning your guitar simple.

InvisoMatch Mounting Plates



Ratio Machine Heads (Standard)



The patented gear technology is designed to deliver tuning by giving each string its own unique gear, which means, One Turn = One Tone — no more back and forth twisting finding the right pitch. They are also designed to make drop tuning or alternate tuning easier.

Ratio Machine Heads are designed to fit most guitars and now come stock with InvisoMatch mounting plates so that installation is clean and no need to drill new holes for mounting. MSRP: \$99.99 (price varies with model)

graphtech.com

On-Stage Chromatic Tuner/Metronome/Tone Generator

The On-Stage GTA7000 is a chromatic tuner, metronome, and tone generator ideal for guitar, horns, strings, and many other instruments. All three features can be used simultaneously or individually. It features multiple rhythm variations, adjustable pitch/volume, wide tempo range, and a backlit LCD display with adjustable brightness.



\$32.99

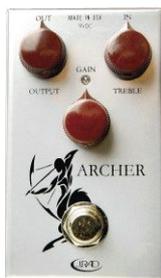
on-stage.com

Under \$250

J. Rockett Audio Designs Archer OD/Boost

The Archer OD/Boost is the first product release of "Tour Series" line. The Archer Boost/OD is designed to cut through the mix with a mid-range chime. It can be used as a clean boost or a thick OD. The Archer features three controls; output, treble and gain, and I/O jacks at the head of the pedal. It has a high headroom 18v circuit, 9V DC operation with standard - tip and + sleeve, approximately 4" x 2.30" in size, and buffered switching. The Archer Boost/OD carries a \$179 street price.

rockettpedals.com



Galaxy Audio MSPA5 Powered Micro Spot

Galaxy Audio MSPA5 Powered Micro Spot incorporates design features of both the PA6S Powered Hot Spot & Powered Nano Spot, with a compact design. The MSPA5 is powered by a 100-



watt amp and has a five-inch ceramic speaker. The MSPA5 will accept mic or line level with its XLR (+48V phantom power), 1/4 inch, or 1/8 inch input.

Volume and EQ controls are located on the front panel. Additionally, the built in compressor/limiter helps prevent signal clipping. The MSPA5 can be mounted to a mic stand or a wall/ceiling mounting bracket with the included hardware. The MSPA5 has a street price of \$199.99.

galaxyaudio.com

Zither Music Company Z-Stands

Zither offers Z-Stands that can accommodate electric and acoustic guitars, bass guitar, banjo, ukulele, mandolin, dulcimer, alto sax, tenor sax, cello, violin, and violas. These stands are built from solid premium wood, for stability utilizing a String Swing cradle, designed for easy assembly with the use of a Phillips head screwdriver. Z-Stands are American made. MSRP: \$149.99.



zitherusa.com

Under \$500

Electro-Harmonix MEL9 Tape Replay Machine

EHX MEL9 emulates classic Melotronsounds including: orchestra, cello, strings, flute, clarinet, saxophone, brass, low choir, and high choir.



The MEL9 was designed to work on guitar without any modifications. A rotary switch allows the user to select the sound of their choice while the pedal controls independent effect and dry volume. An attack control sets the volume swell speed. As it's turned clockwise, the volume swell time increases and notes fade in gradually. The sustain control adjusts the release time after a sound is stopped. MSRP of \$295.10.

ehx.com

Fishman Fluence Signature Series Pickup Sets

Fishman Fluence Signature series pickups have been created in collaboration with Greg Koch, Devin Townsend, and Stephen Carpenter.

Each set of Fluence Signature pickups incorporates two unique voices that each player had been searching for, and may have achieved across multiple instruments, but are now available at the flick of a switch.

The Devin Townsend Transcendence set allows Townsend to "record brutal heavy metal, followed by a new-age or country" song using the same equipment. \$279.95

The Greg Koch Gristle-Tone set has been created for the Telecaster. Due to the unique nature of the Tele, each Gristle-Tone set includes a full assembly that incorporates two pickups, volume and tone pots, and a 1/4 inch output jack with USB input for the integrated lithium-ion rechargeable battery pack. The set also includes a completely assembled, pre-wired, drop-in control plate with three-

way switch and push-push voice selector button. \$349

Stephen Carpenter's signature set is multi-voice. Voice 1 is "Like the original Modern Fluence sound that I love, but tweaked a bit in the midrange." About Voice 2, he states, "This is my custom voicing with some tone and gain tweaks to give it that extra heat and edge." \$259.95

fishman.com



Under \$1,000

Session Guitar Case Rack

The Session Guitar Rack is made of hardwood rails and wood-veneered sides. It protects up to seven guitars, banjos, or basses of any shape and size in a safe, soft environment, and enables players to quickly access any one of their instruments. The furniture-quality rack incorporates seven individually felt-lined cutouts and a cushioned base to safeguard the guitars at all contact points to avoid scratching while making the instruments quickly and easily accessible in a den, living room, or studio. The rack's open bottom design prevents contact of the end strap button with any material or hard surface. All racks include two special trays lined with soft felt to hold guitar accessories such as picks, slides, and tuners. MSRP: \$670

guitarstorage.com



Over \$1,000

Ovation Elite Plus

The Elite Plus features a AAA grade solid-spruce top with LX scalloped bracing, quilted maple veneer, abalone body/fretboard inlays, and a deluxe ebony fretboard and bridge. A Contour composite body maximizes acoustic output and is ergonomically designed for comfort in any playing position.

Laser cut, exotic wood epaulettes on the upper bout enhance string vibration and sustain by improving soundboard efficiency. A cutaway offers full access to the gloss-finished, five-piece mahogany/maple neck. The OP-Pro Studio preamp includes a compressor, a four band equalizer, and a 1/4" output jack that connects to any sound system, stage amp, or recording console. Price: \$1,199

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In Praise of

Conn & Selmer

No Substitute for Dedicated
Customer Service By **Drew Parker**

As a brick and mortar retailer, I am well aware of the value of the shopping experience and in-store customer service. It is my best edge against the Internet world in my market. But instances of great customer service from suppliers are rarely discussed in the music trade press and online discussion groups.

At one of our many instrument try-outs for beginning students, we met a young man named Garrett whose mom had concerns about the cleaner we used to disinfect mouthpieces. Garrett suffers from many food and related allergies to the point that, at his young age, he carries an Epi-Pen for emergency situations. If he inadvertently encounters something like food coloring, his face swells and his throat closes up, for example.

When he made a decision to play the clarinet after hearing other students try it, we discussed what it was in a clarinet that might pose a problem for him. One of our technicians, who also has many similar allergy issues suggested approaching our district manager at Conn-Selmer about the situation to see what solutions might be available from their production people who build the Vito clarinets we use for student rentals.

Our district manager, T.J. Waicul, working with quality engineer, Nancee Estes, and manufacturing manager, Brad Wolford, explored the dyes and polishes used, the cleaning cloths used in the plant, and even the latex gloves the staff wears in the assembly process. This became a customer service project for the eight line workers who custom built



a clarinet for Garrett. They eliminated chemicals, washed parts with deionized water, left the case open for days to eliminate lingering odors, and did all of this without their latex gloves. When the clarinet arrived in our store, each section carefully sealed in plastic, the package included a description of the manufacturing process and each technician individually explained their role and signed off on it.

When Garrett and his mom came to the store yesterday to get the new "special" clarinet, Garrett's eyes were huge and his mom's were full of tears. I'm sure they will tell all of their friends in person and on social media. Conn-Selmer made my company look like heroes by going far beyond what is normally expected of a supplier. They embraced Garrett's problem as their own and found a solution.

I have been a Conn-Selmer dealer for more than 20 years and can't say enough about how I am treated as their customer. They inspire me to do the same with my customers.



Drew Parker is president of Separk Music, Co. in Lewisville, North Carolina. www.separkmusic.com

TESTIMONIALS



"I felt stunned that they went this far and were so concerned with the allergies that I have. These by far are some of the only people other than my parents that really understand my dye and gluten allergies. This is one of the nicest things that anyone has done for me. When I heard that nine technicians worked on this one of a kind clarinet just for me, I felt really special. I really want to thank all of the people that felt like they needed to do this for my allergies. Now that Conn-Selmer has done this for me, I know that they can do it for other people in the future that have severe allergies like my brother, Ethan James. Thank you for making band class a really cool thing to participate in!" – **Garrett Sapp**

My husband and I just want to commend Separk Music Company for their communication with me and for their communication in relaying the concern about Garrett's allergies to the Conn-Selmer clarinet company, who personally constructed a one of a kind individual clarinet for Garrett. Truly this type of customer service is very rare and went above and beyond what we would have expected. As a mom of two children with severe allergies, it truly touched my heart to see what they had done for Garrett. The attention to detail in order to avoid chemicals and take into consideration Garrett's allergy to food coloring and gluten was phenomenal! Thank you all so much from the bottom of our hearts!" – **Heather Sapp**

"As his teacher, I am truly grateful that a business puts the needs of a future musician in such high regard. They should be commended for taking such tedious care in making my students clarinet to ensure he has no adverse reactions to chemicals that he is highly allergic to. Love and passion are evident in the Conn-Selmer Company. I am the owner of a Selmer Super Action 80 Alto Saxophone. It makes me proud to own an instrument and purchase more in the future because of their proactive efforts for music education." – **Adam Joiner, Garrett's band director**

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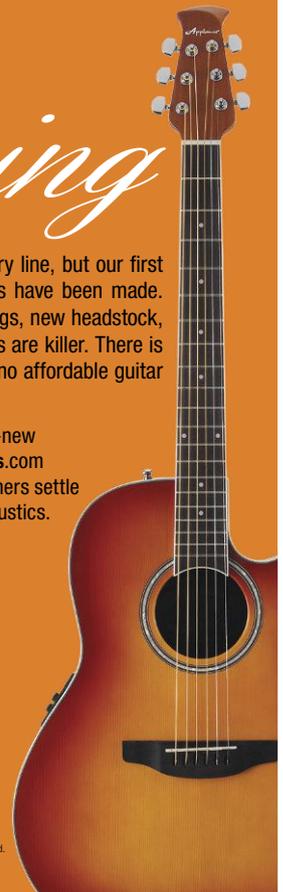
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Elements in the Evolution of Strait Music

By Sharon Paquette Lose

Clint Strait, vice president and third generation owner of Strait Music, explains how Baldwin Pianos, The Beatles, and best buddies were elemental in the evolution of his grandfathers' humble piano and organ franchise to what is today Austin's only full-line music store.

"We originally opened Strait Piano and Organ in 1963," Strait says, "My grandfather was a piano salesperson down in Houston at a place called Pace Piano Company and they became a Baldwin franchise. An opportunity arose for him to open a Baldwin Piano franchise in Austin and he moved the family up here. Austin was a much smaller town then - a little college town actually. I guess my dad was probably 9 years old. My grandfather opened Strait Piano and Organ with one grand, one upright, and one organ. He had a piano technician, he was the salesperson, and there was one bookkeeper. That was basically how we got started. That bookkeeper, Amy Falcone, actually retired about four years ago."

When Dan opened that first store in a downtown Austin shopping center, his motto was, "Where customers become friends" and those "friends" helped him to grow from a humble Baldwin Piano franchise to the incorporated, Strait Music Company, in only four years. "My grandfather and my grandmother always joked that every time my grandfather wanted to expand into a different line of business, my grandmother told him he was crazy," Clint chuckles, "but it worked out OK for him." Elaborating on the 1967 expansion Clint reveals, "The original impetus for expansion was Baldwin Pianos. I believe at the time they owned the Vox Amps line and The Beatles were playing Vox Amps. The Beatles just exploded in the music industry, so we started selling amps and guitars. It was easy for us to get the line because we were already a Baldwin store. We expanded to band and orchestra at some point after that."

The Flood

The evolution of the prosperous business has not been without struggle. In 1981, the elements proved fatal when Austin, suffered from a disastrous deluge. The Memorial Day flood claimed lives and caused ruin among many of the downtown businesses. As noted on Strait Music's website: "The catastrophic Memorial Day flood of 1981 claimed many lives in the area and nearly 'sank' the business and all of its inventory. There was over 7 feet of water in the piano department alone and pianos floated off down the street. We had no flood insurance either. Through help from our vendors and a lot of good loyal customers, the business stayed afloat. After those dark days, Dan decided it was time to turn the reigns over to his son Robert, who is still the company president today. Robert endured a second flood in the holiday season of 1991 as well."

Through the years Robert Strait, Clint's father, continued to expand the business and moved the location of the flagship store in 1995, and again in 2001, all within the Austin area. Currently Strait Music has two locations one in the south end of town and the other in the north. "Finally we got out of that building (the original store location) and bought our first piece of property," Clint says, "We were there for six years and then bought another piece of property that we're still in today. We certainly don't have any plans to move our bigger store. We have a second store in North Austin that we lease and it's been great for us. I think we opened that one up in '98. We are out of all flood plains."

Taking Care of Business

The main flagship store, located in South Austin, occupies 24,000 square feet. The store has eight departments; guitar and fretted,



David on the left (Piano Manager), Dan Strait, Clint Strait and Robert Strait



band and orchestra, pianos, pro audio and recording, keyboards, percussion and drums, amps and effects, and sheet music. In the tradition of Dan Straits' motto, "Where customers become friends," patrons are taken care of over the proverbial long haul. Strait Music has a shop on-site where they service everything they sell. They also lease space to a separately run school of music in their main South Austin location. "I've got seven full-time band techs, one electronics tech, three guitar techs, and a full piano shop that's capable of doing rebuilds. We do everything," says Strait. "If you got a keyboard, an amp, a speaker or a mixer that breaks, we do that. We make service calls to customers for their pianos, but we also can bring a piano in and do extensive work on it here on our shop."

As Austin's sole full-line MI retailer, Strait carries all of the "heavy hitters," according to Clint. "In the guitar department, we carry Taylor - we're a big Taylor dealer - Martin, Fender, Gibson, Gretsch, Ibanez, Cordoba, and Yamaha. With pianos, we are the exclusive Yamaha dealer

“My grandfather opened Strait Piano and Organ with one grand, one upright, and one organ.”

in the Austin market. We also sell some Pearl River and Cable-Nelson." Clint explains "On the band and orchestra side of things our biggest sellers are Yamaha, Conn-Selmer, and Buffet. In Pro Audio, it's Yamaha, Roland, Mackie, Presonus, Shure, Audio-Technica, and more. We also sell lighting, mostly Chauvet and a few others."

Online sales are available through the company's site, though they are not integral to the business. "We've made small strides on our own website, but I would say now that we've gotten more involved with Reverb, we are seeing a lot more of our gear move there. We use it as a way to sell things that 'had a birthday' as we like to say, or maybe 'multiple birthdays,'" Clint concedes, "You don't want stuff sitting around too long. So we've really been taking advantage of Reverb and we've certainly take advantage of tapping into that marketplace and being able to sell some of our stuff that way."

Community involvement and connection with people is a big part of the business. "We have three full-time road reps calling on local schools," says Strait. "In Texas, kids start band in the sixth grade so we sign up a whole heck of a lot of incoming sixth-graders to do band rentals. Certainly, right now we're at the time of the year where we're going out to the schools and we're signing up parents at recruiting nights and getting their instruments reserved for next fall. In July, August, and September is kind of our busy season (in the band and orchestra department), when tons of people are coming in for their kiddos for the following year."

Austin, known for its trendy music festivals and culturally rich environment, has served as the ideal home for this thriving music store. Clint describes Strait Music's appreciation and contribution to that culture: "We're really lucky to be in this town. Music is a part of our culture. Our identity as a city is rooted in music. I would say that Strait Music in particular has been a part of the music scene locally for a really long time and almost synonymous as the local music store in this town, we're lucky. That (reputation) was built by my father and grandfather before me, and hopefully I can maintain that. I can't tell you how many times I hear, 'Oh, your grandfather gave me this when I started to record my first album,' coming from famous musicians. My grandfather helped out Eric Johnson when he was getting started. We try to do everything and cater to everyone and I think we do a

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pretty good job of that. I mean, I see Jimmy Von in here and I see Eric Johnson in here and then I see right behind them, a family with two or three kids running around banging guitars against the wall!”

MI Market Musings

The future of Strait Music seems to lie in good hands. Strait says, “I’m curious as to what is next. I’m very young in this business and I’m learning that popular music tends to steer buying trends. Of course, there’s all of the EDM stuff going on right now, but I feel like the shelf life on that is probably not too far off. So, I’m wondering what the next thing is going to be? Before EDM, everybody was buying acoustic guitars and folk instruments. We were nicknaming the trend, ‘the Mumford and Sons effect.’ That’s tailed off a little bit. The ukulele is still going strong. It’s been...back in the ‘90s there would be guys telling me you couldn’t sell enough beginner guitar packs because it was all about grunge rock and Nirvana, but electric sales since then have gone down slightly. Is that the next thing? Of course, if we knew the answer that would be great! I’d prefer the EDM craze end because there’s not a lot of instruments involved there.”

From Baldwin Pianos, to the The Beatles with their Vox Amps, to Austin’s loyal best buddies, Strait Music seems to have flourished out of the perfect environment for success. They have not only survived difficult floods, a few big moves, and passing MI trends, they continue to thrive, with the support of the community they care for, just like the man who began it all. “My grandmother passed away not that long ago. But my grandfather just turned 90. He still plays golf two or three times a week, he’s doing great!” boasts Clint. **MIMR**



The 1981 Memorial Day flood



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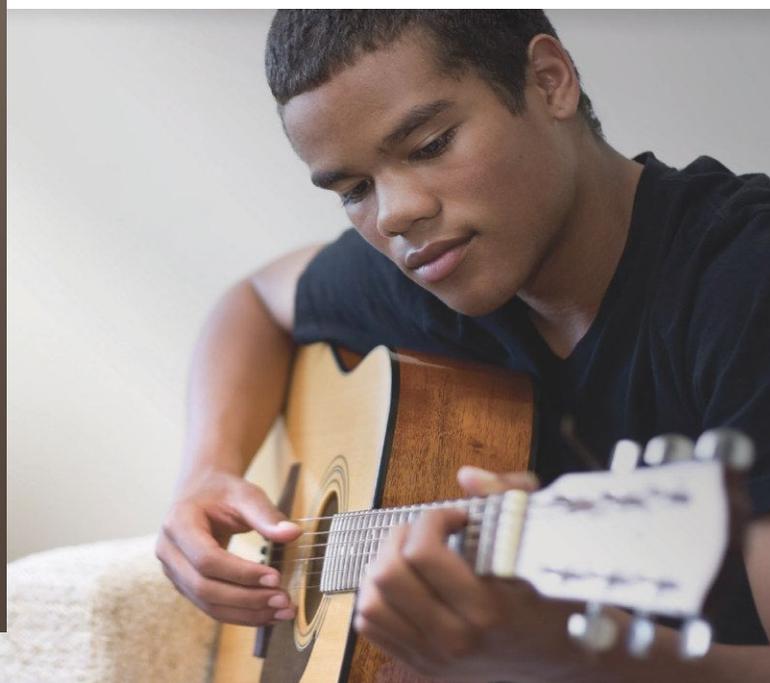
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cdf.wf.com/mmr

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* Source: 2002-2014 Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) government data.

Make Each Customer's Experience Amazing – Part II

By Tracy Leenman

In Part II of Tracy Leenman's guide to achieving higher levels of customer satisfaction, we pick up with "point 2" of her outline...

2) WOW! They were so helpful!

Corollary: *They really know their stuff!*

Price really *isn't* everything. I promise. If all people wanted was the lowest price, they'd do all their shopping on Amazon.com. Once they set foot into your store, you know they are looking for more. They may want information, they may want the touch-and-feel experience, and they may even just want reassurance. If your goal is not merely *selling* but *amazement*, you will find customers will pay a little more for what you have to offer.

Simon Sinek, in *Start with Why*, notes: "There's barely a product or service on the market today that customers can't buy from someone else for about the same price, about the same quality, about the same level of service and about the same features . . . For the seller, selling based on price is like heroin. The short-term gain is fantastic, but the more you do it, the harder it becomes to kick the habit. Once buyers get used to paying a lower-than-average price for a product or service, it is very hard to get them to pay more." (p. 17-18)

Create a comfortable atmosphere for your customers, especially for the first-time visitor to your store. A parent of a beginning band student or beginning guitarist may have many concerns, and should be able to have these addressed without being made to "feel stupid." During busy seasons, create an easy flow of traffic for your customers, so they don't have to wait too long and yet feel as though they were given the time they need to be comfortable with their buying decisions. Offer suggestions and add-ons in an educational context ("These are the things your child's strings teacher would like him to have in order to succeed"), rather than in a hard-sell approach.

Above all, treat each customer as though he or she were the only one you worked with that day – this may be the umpteenth rental contract you've done today, but it's probably your customer's first. Answer their questions and concerns (patiently, not pedantically). Realize that, while it's often the mother of a new band or strings student that comes into the store to get an instrument, that mother may have to go home and explain to her husband why she just rented a \$2,000 in-

strument for her child, when he's never played before (and he's already quit piano, karate, and Scouts). And why she bought "all that other stuff."

Merchandise for the uninitiated. Today's customers are used to negotiating Staples or WalMart without having to ask for help, so be sure they can find what they need in your store easily as well. Rather than displaying all your reeds together, place items together by instrument, so that a parent of a new clarinet player does not have to try to differentiate between clarinet, bass clarinet and sax reeds, but can find the reeds he needs easily - and find his care kit, cork grease and other items all right there too. We use a "good-better-best" approach

to our merchandising, to avoid the customer confusion that comes from unorganized or overwhelming displays.

Again, training is paramount. In addition to providing exemplary customer service, we expect our employees to be able to provide a high level of product knowledge. We strive to give customers all the knowledge they need to make an educated buying decision, a decision with which they can feel comfortable for a long time to come. Use your staff "specialists" – we have a tuba player, a French horn player, a trombonist and a bassoonist on our staff – and we often call them in to

provide additional information or to work with students selecting step-up instruments.

Be resourceful, think "out of the box." Is a piece you don't have in stock available as a Print on Demand? Never say "*We don't have that in stock*," without adding immediately, "*but we can order it*," or "*but we do have this*." If the customer attends a school you visit, offer to deliver merchandise there in the future. Today's consumers are used to the convenience of shopping on line, so make shopping with you as convenient as possible.

Keep abreast of what's said online, and keep track of what your competition is doing. That being said, be proactive, not reactive. Share what differentiates your company (without speaking negatively of others, of course). And remember, the Internet is no longer the objective encyclopedia of information it was designed to be – it has become a source for far more advertisement and opinion than fact. Your level of product knowledge and your customer's level of trust have to be high enough to counteract the onslaught of contradictory information found online.

"Show your customers that you are not all about profit, but about helping people make music."



3) WOW! Something's always going on over there!
Corollary: *Wow, they're everywhere!*

Especially in smaller towns, community partnerships are paramount. We are members of the Mauldin Chamber of Commerce and the Small Business Development Council. We participate in community events and attend concerts and marching contests at area schools. We host receptions like Business After Hours evenings where local "celebrities" and our studio students help make the events special.

Industry partnerships are essential as well. Events such as NAMM's Make Music Day can help your store achieve high visibility in your community and bring new customers in. Manufacturers and publishers can help with clinicians, and with special events like String Change Day, to help make your store "the place to be" in your town.

If you've been to NAMM's Retail Boot Camp, you will remember Bob Negen mentioning that any day can be a "holiday." The website www.holidayinsights.com can give you great ideas for promotions.

Find ways to reach new customers. Your MEA is bursting with your target customers-to-be, who may much more open to a discussion than they would be to a cold call. Go where your customers are; don't wait for them to come to you; it's part of being customer-focused. We display at SCMEA, NCMEA, SC Trumpet

Guild, SC Flute Society, and a host of other events where we can meet potential customers. Just be careful not to grow so fast that you are not able to keep your promise of exemplary service to everyone you serve.

Be proactive. Be an advocate for music education in your community. Attend the NAMM Fly-In. Be a resource for parents and educators in your area who want to promote school music. Show your customers that you are not all about profit, but about helping people make music.

At Musical Innovations, we're out to build long-term customer relationships. We believe the sales will follow if we share our passion for making music, for finding innovative ways to make educators' lives easier and families enjoy playing music together. That passion energizes us and keeps us focused on our "Why," giving every customer a magical, "WOW" experience... every time. **MMR**



Tracy Leenman is the owner/CEO of Greenville, South Carolina's Musical Innovations – named NAMM's 2015 Dealer of the Year this past July. Leenman has over 40 years of experience as a music educator and over 15 years in the music industry. Tracy has been a longtime, valued contributor of articles and editorials to both MMR and our sister publication, SBO.

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FRETTED

Breedlove Concert Moon Light

This concert guitar is handcrafted in Bend, Oregon and designed as the lightest guitar body by Breedlove to-date. The Moon Light features an Alaska Sitka spruce top, made from wood salvaged from downed trees in the Tongass National Forest. The Honduran mahogany used for the back, sides and neck are harvested in the Custosel Concession in the Mayan Biosphere of Guatemala. The guitar is designed with thinner tops, thicker backs, and a smaller sound hole to create a textured big sound. Coming in at just 3.5 pounds, the Breedlove USA Concert is almost 25 percent lighter than the Breedlove Premier Concert Mahogany, which is crafted with the same wood pairings. Available for \$1,999 MSRP or \$2,132 MSRP with electronics.



breedlovemusic.com

Ibanez TMB310 Talman Basses

The TMB310 Talman basses combine a passive P/Double J pickup configuration with a retro Ibanez body design. Features include a mahogany body for a warm, punchy tone, a maple neck, and a Standard bridge. A bound rosewood fretboard with block inlays and a black pickguard complete the classic vibe with a stylish, finished look. Electronics consist of a Custom 2-band Active EQ with an Ibanez DXP neck pickup and a DJ2 double J bridge pickup for extra punch. A split coil switch provides a single coil sound option in the bridge position for heightened definition. Includes chrome hardware and comes in silver sparkle and turquoise sparkle. The list price is \$428.56.



ibanez.com

Charvel Guitars Limited Edition Guthrie Govan Signature Model

For fall 2016, Charvel is offering a limited run of the Guthrie Govan Signature model that shares many of the unique features of the original 2014 model, but in a handsome Britannica Red finish trimmed with a black burst.

The San Dimas body has a bird's-eye maple top with a thin clear matte finish and a specially contoured heel (sans neck plate) for easy access to the upper reaches of the fingerboard. The bolt-on neck is quarter sawn flame maple with a "caramelized" heat and drying treatment that makes it sound and feel much older, with graphite reinforcement, hand-rubbed urethane gel on the back of the neck and a convenient truss rod adjustment wheel at the body end. Most unusually for a San Dimas model, the compound-radius (12"-16") flame-maple fingerboard spans two octaves, with the same caramelized treatment as the neck, 24 jumbo stainless steel frets and special maple dot inlays with ebony borders.

Other premium features include three specially wound Charvel custom MF pickups arranged in a versatile HSH configuration with five-way switching for the expansive tonal openness and dynamic sensitivity that Govan demands, two domed control knobs (master volume, master tone), U.S.-made recessed Charvel locking tremolo bridge with Tremol-No™ unit and oversized brass block, bone nut, chrome hardware and 25.5" scale length.



charvelguitars.com

Ibanez SR300E Bass Series

The SR300E is a mahogany body designed to create a full, warm tone. Other features include a sturdy 5-piece maple/rosewood SR neck, a rosewood fretboard, and the Ibanez Accu-cast bridge for superior string vibration transfer and precise intonation. The SR300E also features the Ibanez custom three-band EQ w/Power Tap Switch, Ibanez PowerSpan dual coil pickups and cosmo black hardware. The list price is \$466.



ibanez.com



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We'd like to invite you to participate in the selection of the nominees for MMR's 24th Annual Dealers' Choice Awards.

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DRUMS & PERCUSSION



Promark ActiveGrip

ActiveGrip is a heat-activated grip coating that is formulated to become tackier as a player's hands sweat and their body temperature rises without restricting range of movement or technique. Forward Balance models feature a front-weighted feel designed to optimize power and speed. Rebound Balance models feature a rear-weighted feel designed to optimize finesse and agility. Available on Forward and Rebound 7A, 5A, and 5B Acorn models.

promark.com

SABIAN Big & Ugly Cymbals

SABIAN introduces crash-friendly and hi-hat sizes to the Big & Ugly line. The Big & Ugly line now includes 18" AA Sick Hats, designed to be thin, dry, and controllable. The 28 holes allow them to breathe with no airlock, you hear everything.

The line also includes 14" and 16" AA Apollo hats, 14" XSR Monarch Hats. Big & Ugly crash-friendly sizes include 18" and 20" AA Apollo and 18" and 20" XSR Monarch.



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CASES & STANDS

Carousel Multi-Guitar Stand



Carousel Multi-Guitar Stand enables guitar enthusiasts to store up to 12 guitars on one display/storage stand that occupies only three feet of space. The Carousel Stand features a rotating base which allows easy access to all the guitars while displaying them from all angles. It features nitrocellulose-safe wool felt at all contact points and soft supports for the guitar bodies to provide ultimate cushioning and protection for a wide variety of guitars.

The stand features ribbon-stripe sapele mahogany and herringbone wood inlay as well as solid maple support cradles with cushioned supports and soft wool felt at all contact points. The bottom tier (base unit) of the Carousel Deluxe Multi-Guitar Stand is 36" wide X 36" deep X 31 1/2" high and holds up to six guitars.

The optional Expansion Tier (which can hold six more guitars) is 36" wide X 36" deep and adds 46" to the total stand height. The Expansion Tier can be purchased along with the base unit, or it can be purchased at a later date as the customer's guitar collection expands.

guitarstorage.com

EHX Loopers

The 45000 is a 4-track powerhouse SUPER LOOPER with a console-style layout for intuitive control. Each loop features four tracks and it delivers unlimited standard, reverse and variable speed overdubbing, speed control, stereo loop recording and much more. This looping tour de force also syncs to MIDI clock and saves directly to SD Cards.

Optional external Foot Controller.



The 22500 Dual Stereo Looper's loops can be locked to each other or run independently in free form. It lets you do verse/chorus switching in Sequential mode, or two-loop simultaneous playback in Parallel mode. A phantom-powered mic input adds convenience. The compact 22500 also includes 16 Drum/Rhythm tracks, or import your own!

Optional external Foot Controller.



With 12 minutes of stereo loop recording on 10 banks that remain in memory until you erase them, plus unlimited Standard, Reverse and 1/2 Speed overdubbing and an adjustable Fade Out mode, the 720 Stereo Looper packs plenty of power in a compact pedalboard friendly design.



Boasting 6 minutes of looping time, the super-affordable 360 lets you record, store and recall 11 loops. Single footswitch control of record, erase, undo-redo and unlimited overdubbing, plus a compact size and easy-to-use functionality, complete the picture.



electro-harmonix

WWW.EHX.COM

DRUMS & PERCUSSION

D'Addario's Evans Drumheads UV1 Drumhead Series



D'Addario's Evans Drumheads have a newly patented UV-cured coating. The UV1 Series is designed for durability, warmer tonal characteristics, and resistance to stretching and denting. The drumheads include Evans Level 360 Technology and are designed with an increased surface texture to be responsive to brush playing. The UV1 series ranges from sizes 10 inches to 16 inches.

daddario.com

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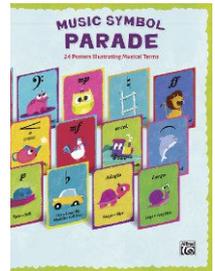
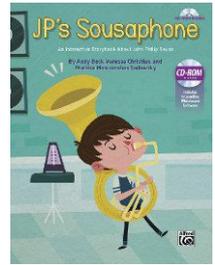
Alfred Music's JP's Sousaphone and Music Symbol Parade

Each resource is constructed to teach music concepts and history with colorful animation and characters.

JP's Sousaphone details the story of new band member, JP, and his journey to discover the sousaphone. Along the way, JP learns about America's most famous bandmaster, John Philip Sousa. This interactive software CD-ROM includes illustrations and age-appropriate vocabulary, which can be read from each screen and heard with each page turn. Professionally voiced narration guides users through JP's adventure while background music and sound effects immerse students in the story as they follow along. Utilizing flash technology compatible with individual computers and interactive whiteboards, the software lets you watch and listen by clicking the highlighted elements on each interactive page.

Watch *JP's Sousaphone* at: youtu.be/gSMIdeSIA0k

Music Symbol Parade is a set of 9" x 12" cardstock poster teaching tools. Illustrations depict music signs and symbols, while definitions clearly explain each term. Dynamics, articulations, tempo headings, clefs, accidentals, and more are included to help students understand complex musical terms in an easy-to-use format. Both *JP's Sousaphone* and *Music Symbol Parade* are available for \$29.99.



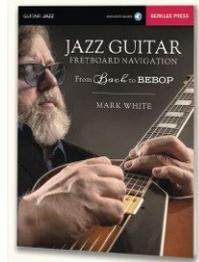
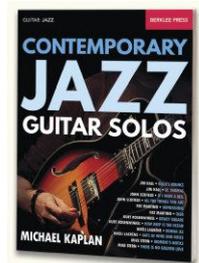
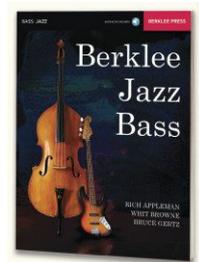
alfred.com

Berklee Press Announces New Jazz Guitar and Bass Titles

Berklee Jazz Bass is written by a team of past and present Berklee instructors. This new title will help students learn the intricacies of playing jazz by expanding basic technique to create interesting and grooving bass lines and melodically interesting solos. The book includes access to 166 online audio tracks of demonstrations and play-alongs, featuring a jazz combo playing bass lines and solos over standard jazz progressions. \$19.99

Contemporary Jazz Guitar Solos by Michael Kaplan teaches 12 contemporary jazz guitar solos from six great artists: Jim Hall, John Scofield, Pat Martino, Kurt Rosenwinkel, Biréli Lagrène and Mike Stern. Each solo includes a technical introduction with analytical insights and references to its classic recording. The transcribed solos include traditional notation and tablature. Songs include "All the Things You Are," "Days of Wine and Roses," "Oleo," "St. Thomas," and more. \$16.99

Jazz Guitar Fretboard Navigation - From Bach to Bebop by Mark White helps students develop a fingerboard facility that fuses the great navigational conception of the classical guitar tradition with the improvisational, on-the-fly, solo content/language of the modern jazz guitarist. The result is a comprehensive approach to the guitar fingerboard that combines vertical orientations mixed with side-to-side and diagonal phrasing. The accompanying online recordings include demonstration and play-along tracks, including guitar duets and jazz combos. \$19.99



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DJ & LIGHTING

Chauvet DJ Intimidator Hybrid 140SR

This Chauvet DJ three-in-one moving head fixture changes from spot to beam to wash. Fitted with an 140W light engine and motorized focus, it projects crisp beams and gobos. Two overlapping independently controlled prisms create beam effects. Dual gobo wheels allow for gobo morphing and mid-air projections. The motorized zoom works in beam, spot, and wash modes. Control is achieved with the full-color display, IRC-6 compatibility, totem mode and on-board memory for storing a scene.



chauvetdj.com

Chauvet DJ FXpar 9



The FXpar 9 is a compact multi-effect fixture. The fixture sports an outer ring of RGB+UV LEDs, a centre LED and SMD strobes, each featuring separate control. Mutable zones allow for effects via DMX. Sound activation, automated programs and control are available via the optional IRC-6 remote.

chauvetdj.com

ADJ Chameleon QBar Pro

The Chameleon QBar Pro from ADJ produces wall-washing effects and can also be used to generate mid-air beams. It features WiFLY DMX control, 64 color macros, 19 built-in programs and 6 operating modes. Powered by three 30W RGBA LEDs, positioned behind a separate angled lens, the Chameleon QBar Pro projects three separate beams of light in a fan-shaped pattern. Each LED can be individually controlled.



It is fitted with ADJ's WiFLY EXR 'Extend Range' wireless DMX which allows connectivity from up to 2,500 feet away. For lighting users who don't want to use DMX, the Chameleon QBar Pro is compatible with ADJ's separately sold LED RC2 and UC IR wireless remotes, which offer basic wireless control for color and mode selection. The fixture can also be controlled by ADJ's Airstream IR, the compact device that transforms an iOS phone or tablet into a lighting controller.

adj.com

Mega Lite Mega FX H1 Hazer



Mega FX H1 Hazer is designed to enhance the appearance of beams and lighting fixtures. At full intensity, it quickly fills up a space with haze at 9,000 cubic feet per minute. The H1 Hazer holds a quarter gallon of water-based haze fluid.

megasystemsinc.com

Blizzard Lighting Snake Eyes Mini

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stringswing.com

On-Stage Isolation Shield

The On-Stage Isolation Shield is a lightweight and portable shield that mounts onto most standard microphone stands designed to create a mini recording studio. Constructed from a vented aluminum surround panel, metal frame and 2" acoustic foam, the ASMS4730 blocks out unwanted background noise and improves the direct sound output when recording. Included mounting brackets attach the shield easily to most standard mic stands, and an included microphone mounting bar can position your mic as close as 2" from the screen, and as far as 7" away from the screen. Entire screen adjusts vertically up to 5-1/2". List price: \$163.99



on-stage.com

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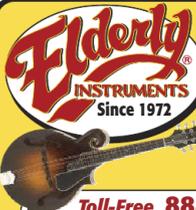
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By Dan Daley

Be Safe Out There

Music has been in the news a lot lately, often for all the wrong reasons. Working backwards through the year, we're still not really over the massacre in dance club in Orlando. That came less than a week after vocalist Christina Grimmie was shot and killed in the same Florida city. Orlando certainly doesn't have a lock on this kind of violence – the *Seattle Times* estimates that Americans now experience more than one mass shooting a day on average.

What does seem to be emerging is a trend towards these kinds of tragedies taking place in music venues. Clubs, theaters and other performance spaces have always been the site of various kinds of disasters, from the Coconut Grove nightclub fire in Boston in 1942 to The Station rock club fireworks blaze in West Warwick, Rhode Island, the two calamities about 60 years and 60 miles apart. More recently, the Bataclan theater in Paris was the scene of 89 deaths during a concert by the Eagles of Death Metal. Whenever you put a lot of people

into a confined space, add loud music (live or otherwise), and alcohol, it's a recipe for potential disaster. The fact that this happens tens of thousands

of times every weekend all over the world with few negative outcomes beyond a hangover or a romantic breakup reminds us that we're actually pretty good at figuring the logistics of this sort of thing out for ourselves. But what's changing is the world around us, and those changes are going to continue to impact musicians at a greater rate in the future. It's inevitable – those are the environments in which they dwell.

Part of Life Now

Ever since The Station I've never failed to take note of where the exits are in a club. I did exactly that at the Hi-Watt in Nashville the other night. It's become ingrained and instinctual, like buckling a seat belt in the car, and it doesn't diminish the experience of being there. But since Bataclan, I've also been watching out for other things: the guy with the furtive eyes near the edge of the stage, the hand reaching into the bag in the middle of the crowd. At some point, this, too, will become second nature. Well, maybe not completely.

“It used to be that when the club doors closed and the lights went down, the good stuff began. Now, that's no longer a given.”

In the wake of Bataclan, I talked earlier this year with some of the live sound mixers who work on the road with major artists. I was surprised the extent to which that tragedy in Paris and other events had changed their habits. “In a loud concert environment with pyro and special effects, tour personnel will likely recognize that something is wrong long before the crowd will,” observed Steve Cross, who mixes front of house for Kid Rock. “It will take the public a little time to realize that [certain] noises and flashes are not a part of the show. That puts a responsibility on me as a sound engineer to take some sort of action. That might include immediately muting the PA to highlight and reveal the other things that may be happening. Band members will need to recognize that things are happening and their exit would be an excellent visual warning for a crowd that is likely still focused on them. The bottom line is that crew will likely have the first opportunity to react because in many cases we

will recognize the problem first.”

His colleagues expressed similar concerns and strategies. A few, like Zito, the production manager for One Republic, and Ken “Pooch” Van Druten, FOH mixer for Linkin Park, have received certifications in CPR and first aid, and both have studied the Event Safety Alliance's *Event Safety Guide*. It's available for \$49.95 through the organization's website. A little less accessible, but definitely worth knowing about is the Secure Nightlife Venue certification program, from the International Nightlife Association (INA), intended to curb gun violence and avoid fire tragedies in music venues.

It used to be that when the club doors closed and the lights went down, the good stuff began. Now, that's no longer a given. Musicians on stage shouldn't have to think about this kind of thing 15 seconds before the downbeat, anymore than their fans should. But now they do. And the people who sell and repair their instruments ought to be aware of that, as well. Just as cops leaving to start a shift warn each other to “Be safe out there,” everyone in the ecosystem of live music, at every level, including where they shop, should consider doing the same. **MMM**

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