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MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW



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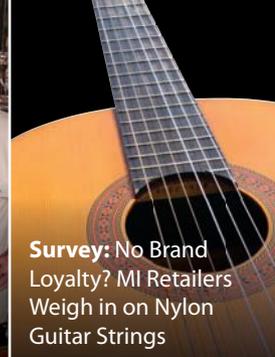
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INSIDE



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AC30

ROCK

BASS



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We've compiled an assortment of instruments and related gear for dealers to review before committing to what products will line stores' shelves and hang from the walls this fall and winter.



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In recent months, *MMR* has touched base with suppliers and dealers of electric and steel-string acoustic guitars, who have reported record sales. This month we shift the focus to classical guitars. Are these nylon 6-stringers also moving at a record pace?

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Participants in this month's poll frequently asserted that when it comes to classical guitar strings, price and availability drive sales far more than brand loyalty – and yet certain brands are consistently cited as the top-sellers.

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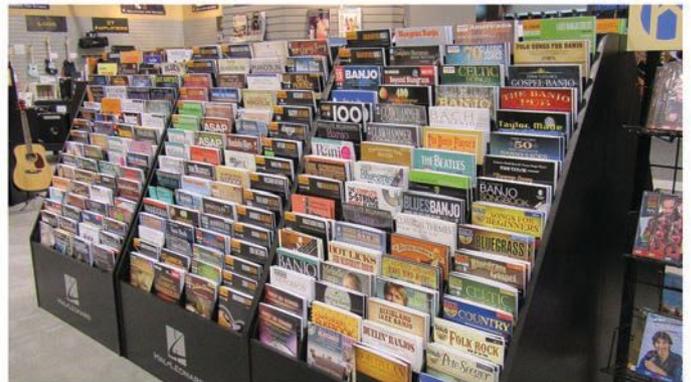
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Ebony

So, About that 'Light at the End of the Tunnel'...



By
**Christian
Wissmuller**

By late spring of this year, with distribution of largely effective vaccines and a sharp downturn in COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations, the live entertainment industry – a major source of income for the MI world – had good reason to hope for a vibrant rebound in the coming months. Tours that had been postponed in 2020 were rescheduled, local clubs that had been shuttered or at limited capacity began booking bands again, and an eager public started coming out in droves.

I don't need to tell you that the positivity we were all feeling just a few short months ago has, for many, been diminished by the rapidly spreading Delta variant, a return to restrictions and safety protocols, and a number of high-profile (and low-profile) artists falling ill.

In just the past week, KISS frontman Paul Stanley tested positive for the coronavirus, forcing the band to cancel and reschedule dates on its long-postponed "End of the Road" farewell tour. Just a week prior, Slipknot and Stone Sour singer Corey Taylor also became very ill with COVID-19, leading to cancellations of upcoming appearances.

On smaller stages – where the impact of such a disappointing turn of events are arguably felt far more severely – recent trends have led many to a return to "pandemic times" rules.

Whatever the scale of the performance, many are aggressively moving towards vaccine mandates for concertgoers, crew, performers, and staff. The Foo Fighters were one of the first major acts this summer to return to playing to full-capacity, large shows – with a proof of vaccination requirement. Upcoming tours by Harry Styles, Phish, Dead & Company, Maroon 5, The Killers, and many others will require fans to show proof of vaccination or a recent negative test. In my own neck of the woods, many clubs are making vaccination mandatory for patrons and performers, while those that have not yet made that leap are requiring that all who enter the premises wear a mask.

However, politicization of vaccines, mask-mandates, and the pandemic, itself, has added a multi-layered wrinkle to an already challenging and charged situation. Nationwide, there are a variety of often wildly conflicting state and local laws regarding what venues can and cannot require of their clientele.

Those differences in policy make booking national or even regional tours – even statewide, or *citywide* jaunts – difficult, to say the least.

Paul Lohr, president of New Frontier Touring, told the AP in late August: "Because of the variances state by state, it can all of a sudden leave a tour looking like Swiss cheese... it just torpedoed the whole thing."

Again, all the confusion and anger isn't reserved for the big venues. A close friend of mine who works the door at a club in Cambridge, Massachusetts was pushed and screamed at when she alerted a show-goer that the club requests folks wear masks once they enter. My own band's first show in over 20 months (longest such stretch for me since I was 18) was cancelled over disagreements amongst some of the bands on the bill regarding the lack of proof-of-vaccination policies at the club.

I absolutely do *not* want to use this space to "be political." It's my goal to at least appear to be agnostic within these Editorials. That said, until and unless we can agree upon some universally accepted lanes and rules, we run a very real risk of the live entertainment industry in the fall and winter of 2021 being all too similar to fall and winter 2020.

I get that all of this is a serious, nuanced, and complex problem about which nearly everyone has very strongly held beliefs and opinions. For my part, I'm pretty flexible. I'll happily follow whatever agreed-upon rules eventually are in place. I'm mostly concerned with being able to safely attend and play shows, go to clubs, attend the theater, eat indoors – all that good stuff. And I'm extremely concerned that the businesses and workers that depend on live entertainment to survive are able to make it through all this nonsense. Shouldn't we all be?

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Reverb Sellers See Continued Success in Q2 as Consumers Keep Shopping for Music Gear Online

Reverb recently announced that it continued to see growth in gross merchandise sales for Q2 2021 compared to the extremely strong growth in sales it reported a year ago. Reverb attributes its sellers' success to the company's continued focus on improving the seller experience and finding new ways to get sellers' inventory in front of Reverb's global community of approximately two million music makers.

"Even as stores reopen and restrictions ease, consumers are shopping for musical instruments online. Players have experienced firsthand not only how easy it is to shop for music gear online, but also how a marketplace like Reverb gives them access to music gear from shops all over the world," said David Mandelbrot, CEO at Reverb. "As these music makers return to Reverb, we're committed to continuing to evolve the platform to make it easier for buyers to find exactly what they're looking for from our sellers. My message to sellers is this: List all of your inventory on Reverb and we'll do everything we can to get it in front of the right buyers."

Over the past year, Reverb sellers have sold nearly 3 million pieces of gear. In Q2, music gear across categories remained in demand, with guitars, amps, and accessories among the most popular items. When comparing to pre-pandemic results of the second quarter of 2019, orders for brand new guitars and amps were up more than 135 percent, and orders for brand new drums, keyboards, synthesizers, and pro

audio were up 75-110 percent. Used gear was also popular, selling quickly – in the U.S., more than 50 percent of used gear sold within the first 30 days of being listed on Reverb, with a significant portion of that gear selling within seven days. Prices for vintage items remain high – as an example, the price for a Tascam Portastudio 414 MKII 4-Track Cassette Recorder has increased by nearly 50 percent since last year.

In Q2, Reverb launched a search filter that helps buyers find nearby sellers, with the goal of driving more local buyers to dealers. Reverb also continued to improve the shipping process, including helping sellers more easily estimate how much it will cost to ship an item. Throughout the quarter, Reverb promoted sellers' gear through marketing campaigns like "Maker May," which highlighted more than two dozen independent gear makers. Marketing campaigns like this are created to drive more high-quality buyers to Reverb sellers.

"The quality of buyers on Reverb is what sets it apart from other e-commerce platforms. Reverb is more than an online marketplace, it truly is a community of music makers," said Sharone Bechor from Rock & Soul in New York City. "Reverb has ultimately allowed us to reach the best possible buyer audience. We are now able to connect with passionate musicians and creatives all over the world."

If you're interested in helping shape the seller experience by testing out new features, join the Seller Soundcheck program.

Hal Leonard Announces Retailer Winners from Summer NAMM Colossal Giveaway

In late August, Hal Leonard announced eighteen retailer winners of over \$10,000 worth of prizes from their "Colossal Summer NAMM Giveaway."

"We wanted to welcome retailers back to a 'live' show with something special," said Brad Smith, vice president MI Products. "When we asked for prizes from our distribution partners, we got overwhelming support. Everyone wanted to show retailers how much we appreciate them and missed seeing them in person!"

Winning retailers include Absolute Music, All Country Music, Blues Angel Music, Brass Bell, Groth Music, Heid Music, Instrumental Music Company, Jeff Ryder's Drum Shop, Mike Risko Music, Mountain Music, Muga Music, Nick Rail Music, Sam Ash, Senseney Music, Skip's Music, White House of Music, and Willis Music.

Prizes were donated by Hal Leonard and 25 manufacturers that are distributed by Hal Leonard, including Avid, Axe Heaven, Blue Mics, Gibraltar, Gretsch, Heil Sound, Hotone Audio, IK Multimedia, Innovative Percussion, Levy's Leathers, Line 6, Loog, Morley, PreSonus, Red Panda, Samson, TASCAM, Tycoon, Vater, Vertex, and Warm Audio. Prizes were from categories including songbooks, audio, drums, guitar pedals, accessories, gift items, and more. Retailers had to enter in person at the Hal Leonard Summer NAMM booth.

Nominate a Deserving Staff Member for the Bernice Ash Memorial Award

The Bernice Ash Memorial Award honors the remarkable life and legacy of Bernice Ash, a music retail visionary who spearheaded the expansion of the Sam Ash family-owned music stores and generously guided the careers of so many in our music industry.

This new award program will recognize recipients with a one-time, \$5,000 grant for use in college-level or trade-related continuing studies. Recipients will also receive a travel stipend to attend The NAMM Show in Anaheim and a one-year mentorship through the NAMM Young Professionals organization.

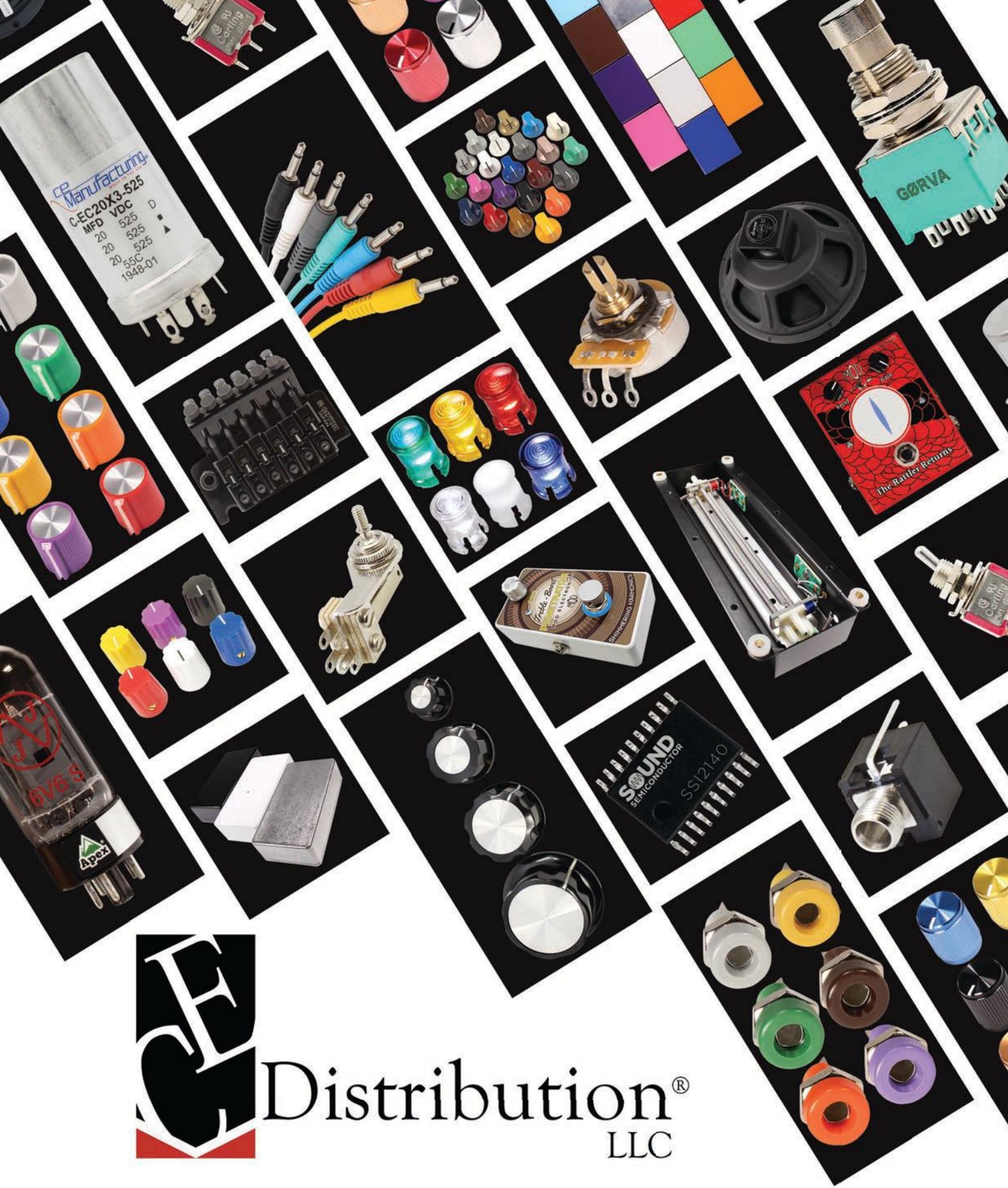


Bernice Ash

The application deadline is September 30, 2021. Recipients will be notified by November 1, 2021, in time to make plans to attend The NAMM Show, January 20-23, 2022. To be considered for the award grant, applicants

- Must be current employees of a NAMM member company
- Must be identified and nominated by that company's owner or a manager as an emerging industry leader who is seeking professional development to further their music industry careers
- Must be enrolled or have plans to enroll in professional development training (i.e. college degree or other certificate programs)

Opportunity is knocking! If there is someone working at your company who qualifies for and would benefit from receiving one of the first Bernice Ash Memorial Award grants, visit www.nammfoundation.org/berniceash and help open that door for a deserving employee.



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Surack Steps Down as Sweetwater CEO

Just weeks after Sweetwater Sound shared the news that a firm out of Providence, Rhode Island was investing in the company, founder and CEO Chuck Surack has announced that he's "stepping up" from his role. In a letter sent to employees in late July, Surack explained that he would be transitioning from his role as CEO and becoming chairman of the Sweetwater Board.

These changes were effective July 15. The new CEO is longtime executive vice president and C.O.O. John Hopkins.

Surack confirmed that Providence Equity Partners will now be the majority owner of Sweetwater Sound.



Dean Guitars Releases Statement Regarding 'Dimebag' Darrell Abbott and Recently Filed Lawsuit

The estate of "Dimebag" Darrell Abbott has filed a lawsuit against Dean Guitars, the brand with whom the Pantera guitarist had an endorsement deal for many years.

Dimebag's girlfriend and trustee of his estate, Rita Haney, shared the news on August 16 on social media, writing: "After much consideration, it is with great sadness that I announce the longstanding relationship between Dimebag and Dean Guitars is over. Unfortunately, we were forced to file a lawsuit against Dean Guitars on Monday, August 16th, for the reason set forth in the complaint that may be viewed at www.dimebagdarrell.com. It was necessary for us to end Dime's endorsement of Dean Guitars to continue to honor and celebrate his legacy the way he deserves, and in the way he had laid it out..."

On August 17, Evan Rubinson, CEO and president of Dean Guitars, issued the following statement: "We have always treated Dime and his brother Vinnie with the utmost respect and loyalty. We have enjoyed a long-standing, 17-year relationship with Dime and Vinnie, and continue that relationship with Vinnie's estate on the ddrum side. We are shocked and saddened to see the actions that Ms. Haney has taken after both the Abbott brothers have tragically passed away, and we wish her the best in her future endeavors.

"However, it is unfortunate that Ms. Haney has allowed her unrealistic demands and accusations to dictate the future of the Dimebag Darrell legacy in the absence of Dime's immediate family. Dean Guitars is proud to have played a role in ensuring Dime's legacy not only survived, but thrived over the past 17 years. We have stood by the estate through good and bad. Ms. Haney's claims – across the board – are baseless, without any merit, and not grounded in reality. We will allow the full truth to come out as the legal process takes its course."

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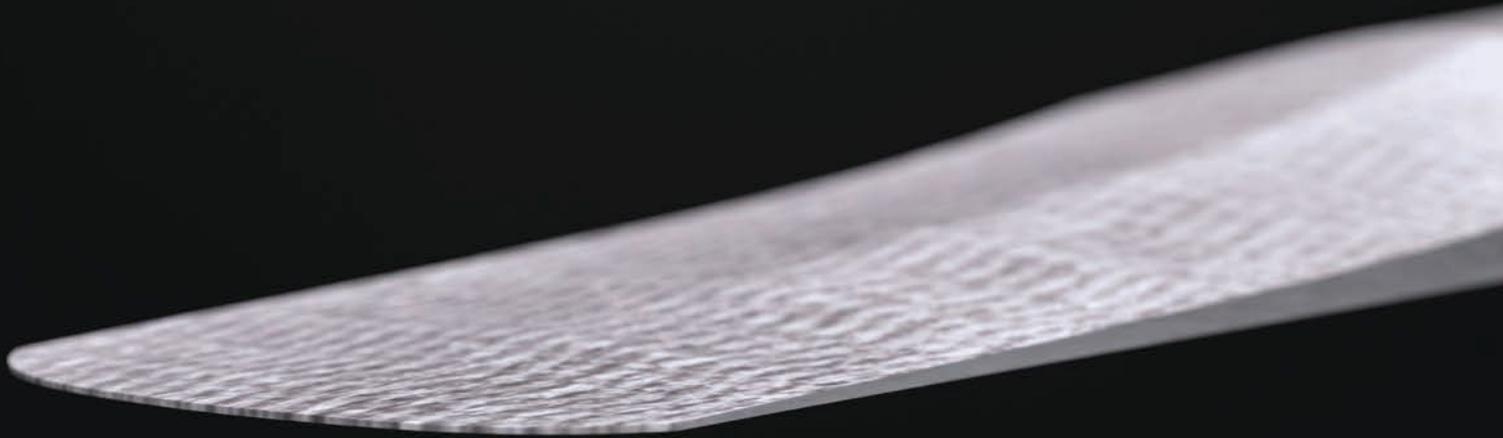


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By Christian **Wissmuller**

Armadillo Enterprises is the parent company of three much-beloved instrument brands – Dean Guitars, ddrum, and Luna Guitars. Helmed by president and CEO Evan Rubinson, who took the reins in December of 2016, mere months before his father Elliot “Dean” Rubinson passed in February 2017, the Tampa, Florida-based organization is notable not only for the innovative and popular instruments it fields, but also for the close relationships built with end-users and MI dealers.

We recently sat down with Rubinson to learn some of the history of the individual lines, what specific models are currently flying off the shelves, and what the future holds for Armadillo.

Can you briefly discuss how and when Armadillo Enterprises acquired each of the three current lines: Dean Guitars, ddrum, and Luna Guitars?

Armadillo Enterprises has been around since 1992, but had its start as a musical instrument case company up until 1995 when the Dean Guitars brand was acquired. From that point on, it's been off to the races for the Dean brand. ddrum was acquired just short of a decade later in late 2004, mainly as an electronic drum brand. By late 2005, the ddrum brand was broadened to the acoustic drum market and began to acquire some phenomenal artists. Luna, by contrast, was not acquired, but rather started in-house in 2005. We are very proud to be the 586 percent growth that we have experienced with the Luna Guitars brand over the last seven years.

Dean Guitars is notable not only for quality instruments, but also for the depth of fandom amongst users. Your father Elliott was widely recognized as a true pioneer and “musician’s musician” and you have continued that tradition. How important is the connection with players and high-profile artists (of which there are many) to the Dean Guitars brand?

I don't think this fact can be overstated: Dean Guitars is a family, above all else. We go to great lengths to support our own – whether that's artists, brand ambassadors, consumers, fans, or employees. We are not just a guitar company; we are a guitar family. I give every artist my personal cell number and many of us talk weekly. It's also invaluable to talk with fans and customers to hear their input on what we can do better, as well as show our support for them and their needs as players. It's hard to get into our fold and hard to leave it – we are tight-knit!

Speaking of endorsing artists, Dean particularly resonates with the metal community. How did/does the company cultivate relationships with the likes of Dave Mustaine, Kerry King, Dimebag, et cetera?

I'll give a lot of credit to my father Elliott here, as he had an unmistakable vision as to how to revitalize the Dean brand with iconic artists starting in the mid '90s all the way up to his untimely passing. Although Dean Guitars definitely caters to the hard rock and metal



communities, the Dean brand has come a long way, branching out into genres like country, alternative, and even rap with some of our artists. That being said, I think it's a combination of our ultra-accessible family vibe, top-notch handcrafted custom USA guitars, and the iconic shapes and tradition associated with the Dean Guitars brand that just mesh really well with artists like Kerry King, Dimebag Darrell, Eric Peterson, Michael Schenker, Leslie West, and Mike Amott.

With a number of popular models — ML, V, Z, et cetera — and signature series guitars and basses, what's currently the top-selling Dean Guitars model?

We have a few key shapes that do really well for Dean Guitars. We were founded in 1976, and by 1977, the Dean ML, V, Z, and Cadillac became synonymous with the Dean Guitars brand. These shapes remain part of our core foundation and historically do incredibly well due to their edginess and uniqueness. With the launch of our ultra-high-end import series in January of 2019 – the Dean Select Series – these core shapes have become even more prolific. In addition to our core shapes, the MD24s and Exile Satin Black with Fishman Fluence models – which lean a bit more to the traditional side than what people are used

to seeing from Dean Guitars – have been doing exceptionally well recently. We have also seen a 668 percent uptick in our Dean USA custom shop demand.

Can you talk about the relationship between Armadillo Enterprises and Dean dealers? How do interested retailers become partners with Dean?

I've always been a big proponent of not making ourselves difficult to do business with. We are in the music industry – things should be simple, fun, and easy. We aren't the type of company that cuts dealers off if they happen to have a bad year; we prefer to partner with them and collectively analyze how we can do things better next time. We live and die by our dealers and they are the most important thing for our business, bar none. During the coronavirus pandemic, I had a lot of personal calls with our dealers where I tried to better understand what specifically was/is affecting them and how we can best help them overcome those obstacles. For a lot of people, that was helping them become a little more savvy with their website presence, online selling opportunities, and social media outreach. Every good and sustainable relationship is a give and take, so we always try to give where we can, and we appreciate our dealers putting up with us in return. For any new, prospective dealers, all you need to do is ask!

Let's shift gears and talk about Luna Guitars.

Luna Guitars is the one outlier brand that we didn't acquire, but rather started from scratch, in-house in 2005. Launched from the mind of a professional stained-glass artist, Luna began as an acoustic guitar brand that fully embraced music and the arts and aimed to bring balance in the marketplace for female musicians in a predominantly male industry. With female musicians in mind, guitars

were built with slimmer necks and lighter bodies, offering a comfortable alternative to the competition. As the brand has grown, we now pride ourselves on providing uniquely specialized instruments for every gender, playing style, aesthetic, and genre. Many design concepts have symbolic meanings that empower people such as the dragon, phoenix, and various intricate henna patterns. Luna Guitars' instruments are designed around an intertwined vision of world culture, nature, and art.

The brand really seemed to come to prominence with the advent of the “ukulele craze” — a phenomenon that many, at the time, figured would be short-lived, but which continues unabated to the present-day. Can you talk a bit about how the uke market has impacted the Luna brand?

The ukulele “craze” has definitely had a huge impact on the entire industry, Luna included. I mean, I never thought that I would see so many companies jumping on the bandwagon – it’s obvious how big the ukulele movement was, and still is. At one point in time, ukuleles made up 30 percent of our total business, largely attributed to the fact that our mission statement was to reimagine the way ukuleles were designed and bring something totally new to the table as an industry leader. Our goal with Luna (especially ukuleles) has been to create an impressionable product that will inspire performers to excel in their craft and encourage individual uniqueness. Although ukuleles still remain an important aspect of the Luna Guitars brand, we know the hyperbolic demand is not sustainable forever, and have continued to diversify our Luna line accordingly. I do, however, believe our positioning in the marketplace as one of the preeminent ukulele brands who has continued to actively innovate, places us in a very appealing category for consumers and artists alike.

When I first became aware of ddrum, I — like many, I’d assume — knew the brand as a purveyor of electric drums and triggers, specifically, but these days ddrum is at least as notable for its acoustic kits. Please outline the evolution of the product line and how current sales break down (X% acoustic, X% electric, etc.).

Back in late 2004, Armadillo Enterprises acquired ddrum, which was recognized for decades as the authority in professional electronic percussion. Instruments like the ddrum3 module (predecessor to the ddrum4se) with the ability to assign 16 zones per pad, our Acoustic Pro Triggers which are still the go-to for professionals, a sample library ahead of its time, and the Cast Precision pads, put ddrum in an instrument class by itself. By mid-2005, the focus began to shift a bit more into the acoustic market, largely because we wanted more artists on stages behind the brand and felt the need to diversify.

ddrum’s acoustic product philosophy has been to offer instruments that have the performance features drummers are looking for without the unnecessary cost of the ones they don’t need. With

that in mind, ddrum has added modern finishes with aggressive shell sizes in a package that stands out for its unique value. At the same time, a USA handmade maple line is offered, allowing ddrum to cater to our exploding artist roster and other professionals that have specific drum size and finish needs. It’s proved to be a winning formula that has catapulted ddrum into being a true player in the acoustic drum game, while also maintaining our industry-leading electronics line.

As for the electronics side of things, we’ve taken a couple years now putting a lot of thought into the development of some incredible new additions to the ddrum e-line, but we can’t spill the beans until December at our annual AAA (Armadillo All Access) pre-NAMM event. Overall, we have a pretty even split between our acoustic and electronic sales, with acoustics slightly edging out their counterpart.

What are the most popular ddrum kits at the moment?

Some of our most popular kits include the Dominion Birch series, our long-standing D2 Series complete kit, and our flagship all-maple Dios series that comes standard with features like our Reso-Lift bass drum isolation lifts and BD claws that protect the wooden hoops with rubber bumpers when stacked on hard surfaces. On the electronics side, our red shot triggers, chrome elite triggers, and DDTI trigger interface are our top sellers, but expect that to change with our big 2022 ddrum electronics release!

As with Dean Guitars, ddrum has been especially embraced by the metal and hard rock community. Was that an organic evolution, or active outreach on the part of Armadillo Enterprises?

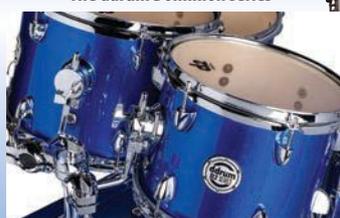
When the ddrum acoustic line was being launched, it was a natural fit to reach out to some of the drummers that played with the amazing artist roster that Dean Guitars had cultivated. Of course, many of the icons on the Dean Guitars’ roster have historically been deeply entrenched in the rock and metal scene, so ddrum organically found its footing here. In the beginning, there was definitely a degree of active outreach involved on our part, but as the brand has grown and come into its own, we now field a lot of incoming inquiries. Our products and mission statement have connected with many world-famous artists and local weekend warriors alike, and we take a lot of pride in our brand’s diversity. We have been fortunate enough to connect with some gospel, R&B, and country players as well.

While the past 18-plus months have been challenging for many industries, certain segments of MI actually reported record sales years in 2020. How did the pandemic and related lockdowns impact Armadillo’s brands?

Netflix, baking, walking the dogs, and having your kids beg for more video game or computer time becomes a bit monotonous after a while. As a company, we have been incredibly fortunate to have experienced exponential growth over the last couple of years during the coronavirus pandemic, but we recognize that this is not



The ddrum Dominion series



The ddrum D2 series



The ddrum Dios maple with exotic zebra wood veneer



Luna Wabi Sabi Folk Acoustic Electric



Luna Black Satin Vintage Series Ukulele



Luna Henna Dragon Ukulele



The Thoroughbred Select



The ML Select Multi-Scale



The V 79 Trans Cherry



Leslie West, guitarist for Mountain, shows off his Dean collection

Michael Amott, guitarist for Arch Enemy, has his very own line of Dean guitars

Pantera guitarist Dimebag Darrell

Kerry King, guitarist for Slayer

the story for many others. We have dedicated a lot of time and effort to providing our artists and dealers with outside-the-box opportunities to enable them to continue to grow their individual brands throughout the pandemic. Ultimately, it seems like a lot of people have gravitated toward the calming and inspirational influence that music provides, and have decided that guitars, ukuleles, drums, and cajons were a better way to fill their newly-found free time than TV, computer, and video games; and for that, we are not only appreciative, but truly inspired and invigorated by the forward-looking music culture.

What are your expectations — for Dean, Luna, and ddrum, but also for the MI industry as a whole — for the

coming months?

We are at an interesting place as an industry with demand higher than ever and supply scarcer than ever. I think this creates a lot of opportunity for the companies that are diligent, creative, and readily adaptive to market changes. Although I don't expect 40 percent+ annual growth rates to continue forever, I do expect the increases we have experienced thus far throughout the pandemic to persist near current levels as a new type of normal moving forward. On a separate note, coronavirus also served as an unintended (and unwanted) beta test, forcing companies to have to see what can actually be accomplished remotely and the level of productivity that can be sustained. I think this involuntary

beta test, although incredibly unfortunate, went much better than many management teams envisioned, and therefore, may have some lasting impacts on how we do business in MI.

For each of the three Armadillo Enterprises brands, do you have any significant upcoming or recent product introductions or developments you'd like to share with MMR readers?

Dean: Our not-yet-released (standby for Q4) Vengeance and Zero models are poised for massive success based on the initial market reception, consumer interest, and dealer preorders. We got a lot of smart people in a room and put countless hours into round-tableing these models top to bottom – they're spec'd to the nines. On a personal level, I couldn't be prouder and more excited for this project to get into people's hands this fall – it's going to blow your mind with the feature set and aesthetic.

ddrum: We are heavily revamping and re-innovating our electronics line, drawing on the best parts of past products that made us an industry leader, while also seeking to modernize the aesthetic and feature set to best fit the wants and needs of current drummers. We are adding a couple of new e-kits and another cool piece of electronic ddrum tech for 2022 – I can't say too much yet though. On the acoustic side, we are giving our Dios and Dominion series a little facelift with some cool, new upgrades for the upcoming year.

Luna: In 2021, Luna stepped into the world of higher-end ukuleles with the introduction of the Vineyard Series. With solid koa tops, Fishman electronics, and much more, this series has a bright future ahead with the potential for more instruments on the horizon. Another series that saw expansion was the Henna Series, adding Dragon ukuleles and an all-birch Dragon cajon. Henna instruments feature beautiful laser-etched patterns on a satin finish, making this series a must-have. Finally, for 2022, we will be adding on to the popular Luna Percussion line, in a dramatic way – stay tuned.

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Kirk Whalum plays the HR* Tenor 8



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Class Act

Classical Guitar Sales in 2021

By Christian **Wissmuller**

When discussing MI since the pandemic, certain subjects inevitably take center stage: voluntary or mandated store-closings or enforced capacity limits; supply-chain interruptions; mask mandates and enhanced safety and cleanliness protocols; curbside pickup and outside sales; remote lessons – the list of related topics is nearly endless, highly nuanced, and varies greatly depending on geographic location.

One bright spot amidst all of this has been, and continues to be, the fact that certain segments of the market are absolutely booming – and none more so than fretted instruments. Guitars and ukuleles have been flying off the shelves, with demand often exceeding supply.

MMR has already touched base with suppliers and dealers of electric and steel-string acoustic guitars, but this month we shift the focus to classical guitars. Are these nylon 6-stringers also selling at a record pace? We reached out to four vendors to get their take on the state of this market.

Much has been made of the spike in sales that the guitar market experienced during the pandemic, but how about for classical guitars, specifically?

Dave Pelletier: While we have a reverence for classical guitars in the traditional context, Taylor Guitars doesn't currently build a traditional classical guitar. We make nylon-string guitars with slimmer necks and a radiused fretboard to create a comfortable feel that provides a smooth crossover playing experience for steel-string players. If you broaden the definition to include modern-constructed nylon-string guitars, we've certainly seen an increase in velocity, especially as the nylon sound has been increasingly integrated into so many different contemporary music genres.

2020 was a complex year. We saw consumer demand like we'd never seen before, while also experiencing disruptions from temporarily closing both our factories. In addition, new manufacturing disciplines required social distancing as we ramped up production beyond pre-COVID rates. All that to say we haven't had the chance to find the top of the market yet. Demand remains very strong in 2021, and our nylon-string models are in lock-step with the growth we're seeing across all our models.

Taylor Guitar's Academy Series



Tom Watters: Takamine has a long history of classical guitar production (since 1962). As it has always been a large part of our DNA, we saw a very similar up-tick in our classical/nylon string business to our steel string business.

Skip Beltz: Classical guitars have seen a modest increase. The main growth in acoustic guitars has been in steel string guitars with electronics. Fortunately, most categories experienced positive movement and there is little inventory out there based on feedback we have been getting from our dealers. More people have picked up the guitar for the first time during this pandemic to learn and others that picked it up again could have gravitated to classical guitars for comfort. They are easier on the fingers for beginners.

Yoh Watanabe: The pandemic sales spike significantly lifted sales in all of Yamaha's guitar categories, which makes it difficult to say that classical guitars specifically benefitted from the sudden interest in guitars. Every category sold very well.

For your brand, what's currently the best-selling model (or models) of classical guitar?

TW: We make two levels of instruments – the Japan Premier models and the G-Series guitars. These are made in Japan and China, respectively. Within the Japan Premier models are our Hirade models, which are the highest level. From the Hirade Series, the best-selling model is the TH5C. From Japan Premier, it would be the legendary TC132SC. From the G Series, it would be the entry-level GC1.

YW: The Yamaha C40II is our best-selling classical guitar model. For an entry-level guitar, it's a fine instrument. It is very popular with schools and is highly recommended by guitar teachers, which contributes to its sales success.

SB: Our customers look for flat top, steel string acoustic and acoustic electric guitars from us. We can make them and have made many different models over the years. In fact, Willie Nelson's famous main guitar, named "Trigger" is a classical guitar. We currently produce only one nylon-string model in our product lineup

“Demand remains very strong in 2021, and our nylon-string models are in lock-step with the growth we're seeing across all our models.”

– Dave Pelletier, Director of Sales, Taylor Guitars



“Supporting the genre of classical guitar playing shows a willingness to provide for guitar players in all aspects and helps to build a stronger reputation.”

– Skip Beltz, Director of Product Management, C.F. Martin & Co.



C.F. Martin's 000C12-16E Nylon



(000C12-16E) and do very well with it, considering we are known more for steel stringed instruments.

DP: We make nylon-string guitars that range in price from U.S. \$599 for an Academy series model, to U.S. \$10,000 for a one-off, custom model that a customer recently ordered. That said, our Academy 12-N and 12e-N are our most popular models. They are the first Taylor nylon-string models to be fully, purposefully designed by our master guitar designer, Andy Powers. When you look at their design and features, their value is obvious to consumers.

While, in essence, the fundamental design of classical guitars goes back centuries, have there been any recent trends or developments with respect to design or manufacture?

YW: In 2019, we introduced a classical guitar with TransAcoustic technology, which allows guitarists to add reverb and chorus to the sound of the guitar without adding any type of attachment. Literally, you will hear reverb and chorus without an amp or a PA. The guitar itself is a traditional Yamaha classical, but the TransAcoustic technology adds a whole new layer of innovation to classical guitars with the touch of a button.

SB: I haven't seen anything that is groundbreaking in the world of classical bracing or structural design. Guitar makers are always tinkering with inventive ways to improve sound and maybe something is "right around the corner."

DP: Today's manufacturing capabilities mean customers can get more guitar for their money than ever before. For Taylor Guitars, the objectives of playability, comfort, tone, and longevity are the same with all our models, whether nylon- or steel-string. All our nylon-string models feature solid tops, genuine ebony fingerboards and bridges, a gig bag or case, and the patented Taylor Neck, which, after over 20 years, remains an invaluable innovation in achieving those objectives. The neck allows more wood-to-wood contact using no glue, and the neck angle, adjustable in micro-increments, is easily restored to factory spec or to a user-preferred spec. Our Academy Series models also have a beveled armrest. The Taylor Neck and a beveled armrest aren't remotely traditional features, and at U.S. \$599, it represents tremendous value for a player.

TW: Takamine has had great success making "hybrid" nylon

string guitars, which have more slender neck profiles and slimmer body shapes. Most recently we introduced a "thinline" nylon string model (TSP148NC) that has been met with tremendous success.

Any notable trends in the buying habits of end-users?

TW: Takamine has been very gratified by the success of their higher end models. Even though our instruments have always offered a great comparative value, we've been noting that end-users are willing to pay a premium for great quality and superior tone.

DP: The events of the past 17 months set the world on a new guitar-buying trajectory. People looked to music to find comfort and to guitars to make music. It's a type of renaissance we never expected. With it came an outflowing of creativity and expression, even if only at a very personal level. Our musical instruments – from across our entire industry – played a part in this. And naturally people found the charm of nylon-string guitars irresistible.

SB: More and more people have become comfortable with buying online. I wasn't sure how long it would take, or if someone ever would buy a very expensive guitar online and that has changed. People are comfortable with buying online from trusted retailers and the experience has improved greatly over the recent years. This trend is only going to continue to get stronger.

YW: At Yamaha, we're finding that classical guitars remain popular. Given how much tastes change in popular music, it is interesting to see that there is a segment of players who are consistently devoted to the art form.

What "best practices" have you observed particularly successful dealers of classical guitars to be relying upon?

DP: Brands and dealers who find ways to excite, inspire and cultivate customers are the ones who are successful. I look at these as the ultimate best practices in our aspiration-fueled industry. Playing guitar is fun. It makes our lives better in a number of ways. Show me how this can happen and you've got me. A recent example is a video one of our dealers (Music Villa in Bozeman, Montana) posted on YouTube about our Academy 12e-N nylon-string model. It turned up in my recommended videos. It's simple, authentic and makes me want to play that guitar.

SB: It is important to have someone who is classically trained available for sales and lessons. There are some significant differences in classical guitar construction that are important in the buying

Takamine's TC1325C Classical Guitar



“We've been noting that end-users are willing to pay a premium for great quality and superior tone.”

– Tom Watters,

Director of Product Development, Takamine Guitars



■ roundtable



“We’re finding that classical guitars remain popular. Given how much tastes change in popular music, it is interesting to see that there is a segment of players who are consistently devoted to the art form.”

– Yoh Watanabe,

Director of Marketing, Guitar, Yamaha Corporation of America

decision. An experienced representative can greatly improve that. The same is important for lessons. The technique and approach to classical guitar playing is different. It is important to learn from someone with the passion for the art of it. Supporting the genre of classical guitar playing shows a willingness to provide for guitar players in all aspects and helps to build a stronger reputation.

YW: We recently opened a classical guitar dealer on the west coast that specializes in classical guitars. There is something to be said about being hyper-focused and being a knowledgeable, trusted resource for customers. I am not suggesting that every dealer should do this, but where it makes sense, there appears to be an opportunity.

TW: Passion for the product is key to evangelizing any product, along with stocking a good selection. If you’re a longstanding, great Takamine dealer, then you already are aware of our commitment to this segment and also our market success.

Predictions for this market segment in the coming months?

YW: With schools opening back up, I believe that we will see demand for student model classical guitars increase significantly.

SB: I predict that we will continue to see modest growth in this area with new players being interested in classical guitars. They are fun, easy to play, and sound good. It is never too late to learn to play guitar!

TW: Takamine has always done well in the classical guitar market, but as nylon string guitars gain traction in the country, jazz, and pop markets, we anticipate continued growth. We are excited for the “hybrid” guitars and the creative luthiery in our greater industry.

DP: There are more people playing guitar, and more people devoting themselves to being better guitar players than I’ve ever seen in my MI career. That’s the great news. But we’re still not meeting demand. Once the dust settles and demand and production capacity intersect, the sky’s the limit.

PHOTOGRAPHY



Yamaha's C40II Classical Guitar

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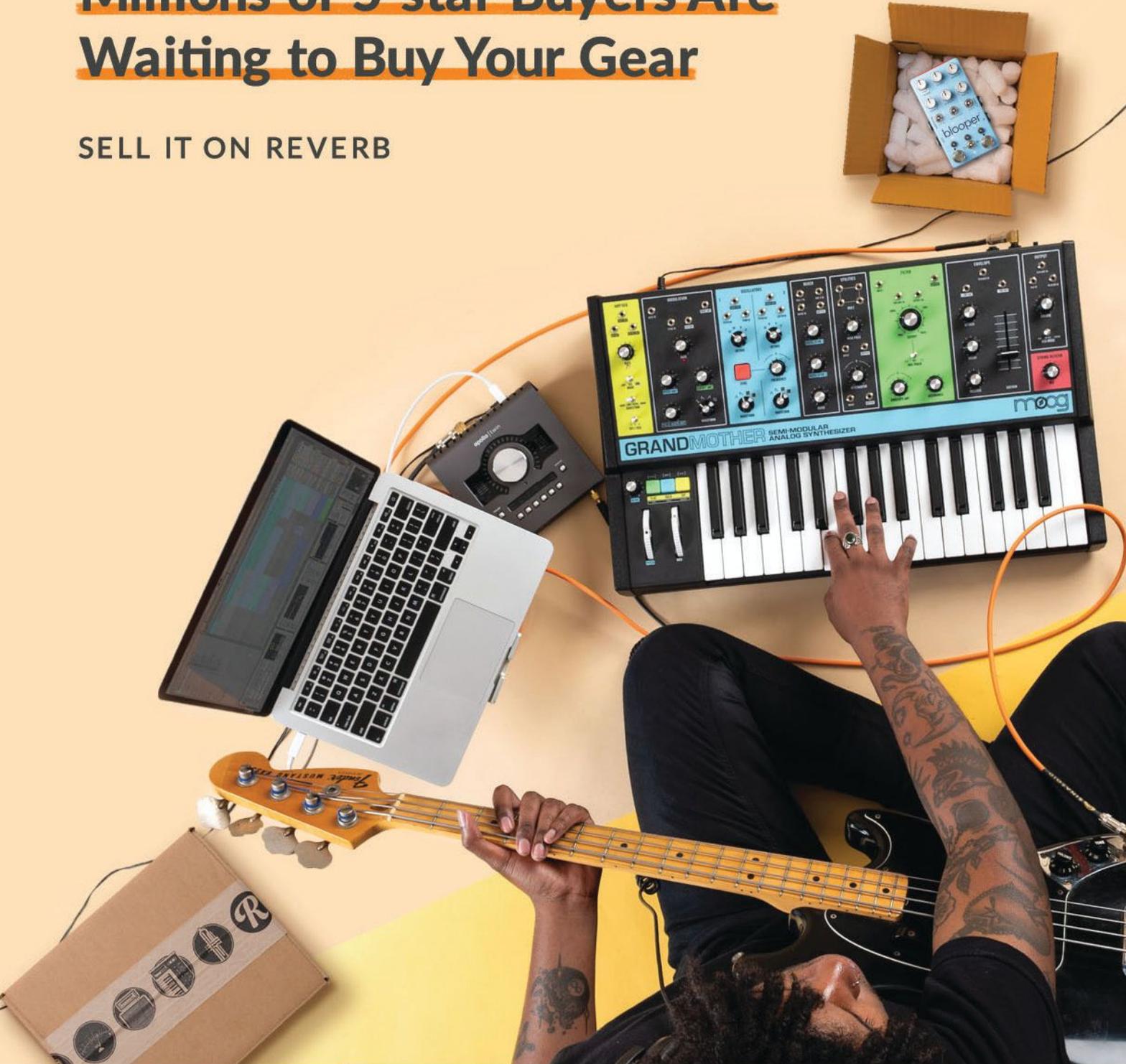
This studio centerpiece has plenty of space for your customers’ mixer, MIDI keyboard, computer peripherals, and studio monitors. Adding the matching extension puts more of their gear easily within reach. Visit On-Stage.com/mmr to learn more.

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2021 Holiday Buying Guide

By Christian Wissmuller

Uncertainty is still the name of the game for many small businesses in 2021, be it due to supply-chain interruptions, spiking local COVID-19 cases, ever-changing safety and health protocols, higher gasoline prices – heck, let's toss in wildfires, hurricanes, and "murder hornets" while we're at it.

One sure thing, however, is the upcoming holiday season, and *MMR* has compiled an assortment of instruments and related gear for you to review before you commit to what products will line your stores' shelves and hang from the walls this fall and winter.

Under \$50

Guitar Fret Mutes from Gator

To give guitarists an option for suppressing overtones and sympathetic resonance of open strings during certain guitar techniques, Gator has released new Guitar Fret Mutes. Gator's Guitar Fret Mutes deliver what precision players crave, a solution for silencing the buzzing sound encountered when utilizing advanced playing techniques, like two-handed finger tapping and similar approaches. As if lending you an extra hand to mute the open strings, the Fret Mute suppresses any unwanted overtones and resonance to keep your recordings and live performances sounding as clean as possible. The small and compact design of the fret mutes makes them the perfect accessory for your gig bag or guitar case accessory compartment. To attach the fret mute by wrapping it directly over the fretboard at any position on the neck or move it at or just above the nut. The stretchy fabric and hook-and-loop strap allow you to set and lock the preferred amount of dampening, giving you total control over placement and pressure. The Fret Mutes come in four different sizes and will fit an array of neck widths, from 4-string basses and 6-string electrics to 12-string basses and oversized stringed instruments. The fret mutes are available in small, medium, large and extra-large to fit various guitar necks. They come in a (1) pack or (3) pack. MAP: \$9.99(1)/\$24.99(3)

www.gatorcases.com



Gator Frameworks' Guitar Desk Clamp

Gator Frameworks helps prevent potential damage and keeps your instrument out of harm's way with the new Guitar Desk Clamp. The Gator Frameworks Guitar Desk Clamp mounts on directly to any tabletop or studio desk edge up to 1.7"/43mm-thick, giving you a perfectly convenient solution for temporarily storing your guitar in between takes. The guitar rest will accommodate neck widths up to a maximum of 2.5"/64mm-wide and provides dual pick slots for quick access to guitar picks. To prevent slippage or surface edge damage, the clamping area is lined with 5mm-thick EVA foam padding for safe mounting. Convenience is the unique feature with the Guitar Desk Clamp allowing you to keep your electric or acoustic guitar in close reach when your guitar stand is far away from your workstation. The Guitar Desk Clamp helps provide a safe alternative to temporarily leaning your guitar against a table or desk edge. MAP: \$19.99

www.gatorframeworks.com



Under \$100

Wide Butter Leather Guitar Strap Series from Levy's

Levy's launched a new series Wide Butter Leather Guitar Strap, PM32BH-BLK and PM32BH-BRN. The 3.25" PM32BH straps feature a fitted, comfortable layer of garment leather backing to keep you relaxed and focused on your performance. "At Levy's, we believe that 'Every guitar needs a strap.' Not only due to the obvious, but we take our time to make sure that our straps are matched with most of the common instrument styles out there," said Rob McCoy, Gator's product management director. "With the PM32's, we used the Fender



Stratocaster as inspiration. The end of the strap marries perfectly with the horn of the Stratocaster. The contours were designed to mimic the classic body shape that has inspired millions of guitarists for more than 60 years. Of course, our straps will fit on whatever instrument inspires you." Since most things improve with age, the company has also included a smooth layer of Crazy Horse Leather on top to weather the typical scratches and scars acquired from general use, resulting in a distressed appearance that will surely attract attention from your admiring audience. The new straps are available from authorized Levy's dealers. Dealers can contact your account managers to place pre-orders now. MAP: \$59.99

www.levysleathers.com

G7th Performance 3 Capo with Adaptive Radius Technology

The Performance 3 capo continues to bring the most value to the accessory wall for G7th dealers. With the patented Adaptive Radius Technology (ART) string pad and Unique Tension Control system, the Performance 3 is perfect for virtually all steel 6 string acoustic, electric or hybrid nylon string guitars. The capo delivers maximum tuning stability with the minimum tension required, meaning players can focus on playing instead of constant retuning. The free lifetime warranty backs up the outstanding level of quality, making it the best capo money can buy. Available now from Davitt & Hanser and KMC. Prices from \$54.99.

www.g7th.com



Légère's European Cut and American Cut Reeds

What's in your reed section? The newly released European Cut for clarinet and the American Cut for saxophone have already become Légère's best-selling reeds. Highly responsive, colorful, and always consistent, these two new reeds represent the next generation of Légère reeds. This holiday season, stock the reeds your customers are asking for by name. Available from your preferred B&O distribution partner. Street price: \$29.99

www.legere.com



The Nano Metal Muff from Electro-Harmonix

Electro-Harmonix compact version of the award-winning Metal Muff distortion pedal features extensive EQ control and a built-in noise gate with dedicated LED. The Nano Metal Muff's EQ section: Bass +/- 14dB of cut or boost, Mid +/- 15dB and Treble +/- 10dB, equips the pedal to cover a broad tonal landscape and appeal to metal players who demand a wide array of high gain tones. Its VOL control sets the pedal's output level while its DIST knob adjusts the Nano Metal Muff's input gain and distortion. A newly designed noise gate removes unwanted hum when you stop playing. It utilizes an adjustable noise floor threshold and includes a dedicated LED which indicates when the output signal is muted. The Nano Metal Muff comes equipped with a 9 Volt battery and accepts a standard EHX 9.6DC200mA power supply. It features a USA street price of \$72.70.

www.ehx.com



Under \$250

VGH Headphones from VOX

The VOX VGH headphones – AC30, Bass, and Rock models – combine the popular amPlugs with headphones designed with Audio-Technica for easy and convenient practice. MSRP: \$169.99

www.voxamps.com



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www.blackstaramps.com



ddrum's Studio Class Isolation Headphones

Proudly made in the U.S., ddrum Studio Class Isolation Headphones offer high precision audio (HPA) through 40 mm closed back speakers that extend frequency response of 20 to 20,000 Hz with 32 ohm impedance, providing excellent definition from bass to treble. Further proving their capability, the headphone speakers deliver a thunderous 114 dB at 1 KHz 1 mW sensitivity when maxed out. They can also be hooked up to high-output rigs, with a 1000 mW input power rating. The detachable 8-foot cable extension affords players freedom where needed, whether in the studio or on stage. These ddrum Studio Class Isolation Headphones weigh a comfortable 11.5 ounces and adjust easily for size with a padded black cushion that wraps around the top of the headband. The ear cushions are also padded with soft, black foam and rotate freely away from the headband to fit snugly against the user's ears. The headphones are available in black or white with ddrum's red insignia on the closed back. Comes with an included one-year protection warranty. MAP: \$129.

www.ddrum.com



Luna Guitars' Safari Henna Paradise Travel Guitar Pack

Equip yourself with all the guitar essentials and keep the arts on at the forefront wherever you go with an authentic original Henna design. It's just the right size to stow away on the plane and practical for traveling. The Safari Henna Paradise is an acoustic-electric guitar built on a travel body design (3/4s the size of a regular dreadnought) and displays a beautiful laser-etched Henna Paradise design on a spruce top. The mahogany back and sides with the select spruce top create rich definition from note to note with plenty of presence and unique character when playing rhythmic chords. Each pack comes with a guitar strap, tuner, gigbag, and a guitar pick to keep you on track! "The pattern I chose for Luna's Henna Paradise guitar is based on the art of Medieval Spain. The culturally rich and diverse period is the only one in which Henna was grown and used as a cosmetic in Europe. The era also was historically important in development and growing popularity of the guitar." – UK Henna Artist Alex Morgan MAP: \$199

www.lunaguitars.com



Chedeville SAV Clarinet Mouthpiece

Named "SAV" in tribute to its Savannah birthplace, the new Chedeville SAV Clarinet Mouthpiece combines the best qualities of Chedeville's more expensive Umbra and Elite models. The new Chedeville SAV model has the beautiful dark warmth of the Umbra with the free blowing clean articulation of the Elite. Chedeville have taken everything they learned from their previous mouthpieces and rolled them into one amazing mouthpiece that is priced so that serious students can afford it. Like all the new Chedeville models, the new range of Chedeville SAV Clarinet mouthpieces are made at the JodyJazz factory in Savannah, GA. MSRP: \$189

www.chedeville.com



Polychrome Analog Flanger from Walrus Audio

Like the Iguana that's malleable to its environment, blending into its surroundings for harmonious balance or standing out with vibrant confidence, the Polychrome Flanger is a uniquely colorful tool for adding modulated textures to songs. The Polychrome is a true bypass, analog Flanger pulling in familiar layout controls from the Julia and Lillian. Dial in a wealth of colorful flange with the D-F-V (Dry, Flange, Vibrato) blend knob and the shape and voice switches. Like the other members of the Walrus Audio modulation family, the Polychrome has a blend knob. The D-F-V (Dry, Flange, Vibrato) knob lets you blend the dry and delayed signal from full dry at minimum (no effect), to traditional flange at noon to full pitch vibrato at maximum. Don't sleep on the vibrato sounds in the Polychrome. Set the D-F-V knob to maximum, feedback to a minimum, and the voice switch up for unique pitch vibrato. MSRP: \$199

www.walrusaudio.com



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www.audixusa.com



Celestion's Neo V-Type

Featuring a unique neodymium magnet assembly that provides pure Celestion tonality, the 12-inch Neo V-Type guitar speaker delivers the familiar and addictive modern vintage sound of the well-established V-Type, but with a weight reduction of almost 50%. This sweet-sounding speaker has a superbly balanced sonic signature that imparts a vintage musicality to your tone. Clean sounds have just the right amount of upper-mid chime and HF sparkle to add clarity and definition. Crank it up for a sizzling overdrive and some raw rhythmic grind, but expect a little extra definition and note separation for your searing, single-note lead lines thanks to some neodymium magnet magic. MSRP: \$149

www.celestion.com

Under \$500

Rare Earth from Fishman

Fine-tuned for smooth treble response and a warm, natural acoustic tone. Newly designed mounting system for easier installation with no alteration. Cutting-edge neodymium magnets and active electronics for a pure, clean sound and low noise output. Excellent string-to-string balance. Available in single coil, humbucking and mic/blend versions. MSRP: \$289.95 set



www.fishman.com

Audix's A131 Large Diaphragm Studio Condenser Microphone

The A131 is a large-diaphragm condenser microphone ideal for vocals, acoustic instruments and drum overheads. Featuring a contemporary, compact design, the A131 is the perfect choice for podcasting, professional audio production, studios, and live stage performances. With its 33 mm fixed-charge capsule and well-behaved cardioid polar pattern, the A131 has a wide, natural frequency response and faithfully captures the detail of the performance while rejecting unwanted room noises. An internal shock mount isolates the capsule from mechanical vibrations and touch noise, eliminating the need for a bulky external shock mount. MAP: \$399



www.audixusa.com



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The 105 Cedar Grand Concert is the perfect introduction to premium guitars. Hand built with a solid Western Red Cedar; musicians find true solid wood tone in a full-scale Grand Concert sized body. Featuring mahogany back and sides, a modern-D shaped mahogany neck, and a mahogany headstock, it makes a well-balanced, articulate guitar. Perfect for any style or setting, the 105 Cedar Grand Concert has appeared on stages and studios across the nation. MSRP: \$399



www.tetonguitars.com

Wabi Sabi Folk Acoustic-Electric from Luna Guitars

Commonly depicted using Japanese aesthetics, Wabi Sabi is a world view that embraces imperfection and appreciates beauty that is incomplete in nature. Like the philosophy, the Wabi Sabi Series is for players looking to improve their playing abilities and perfect their craft without worrying about errors. This guitar makes an excellent beginner guitar with an affordable price that includes a solid spruce top. Expect warm vibrant tone from the mahogany back and sides and comfortable Folk body shape. The Wabi Sabi Folk Acoustic-Electric offers a popular body shape that is comfortable around the arms and ready to plug-in and play at any given time with the Luna Preamp. When the mind is free, let the body create as the Zen brushstroke rosette represents! Join the Luna Tribe! MAP: \$299



www.lunaguitars.com

Allen & Heath Dante Breakout Boxes

Allen & Heath Dante Breakout Boxes Tap into the power of Dante with Allen & Heath's latest trio of portable and rugged Dante interfaces. The compact form factor, in conjunction with rugged aluminum casing, makes these 48kHz/96kHz units suitable for the rigors of portable AV hire, while surface and rackmount kits enable integration into more permanent installs.



DT20 (\$349 MSRP) enables convenient placement of two mic/line inputs wherever you need to get analog audio into a Dante network. DT02 (\$349 MSRP) is a cost-effective, straightforward interface enabling two XLR outputs. At \$449 MSRP, DT22 (two mic/line inputs and two line outputs via standard Phoenix/euroblock connectors) is uniquely designed for fixed installation and can be easily mounted under a meeting table in a breakout room or huddle space, under a podium for local mic/PC and speaker connection, or rack-mounted to interface with analog equipment such as an AV switcher.

www.allen-heath.com

Vinnie Paul Commemorative Snare Drum from ddrum

The new ddrum Vinnie Paul Commemorative snare takes a maple shell to its tonal extreme. This Limited-Edition snare drum features an eight-ply North American maple shell with a 45-degree inner bearing edge and 30-degree outer bearing edge with slight round-over. In addition, the drum features chrome hardware, a premium snare throw-off, 10 double-sided ddrum turret lugs, die-cast hoops for increased tuning stability and overall rim shot clarity and volume, and Evans drumheads. "I've spent years working on these snares for Vinnie," said Paul's longtime drum tech PKING. "This snare resonates on so many levels with me. It rings in my ears (literally and figuratively) and through my core. This snare is not just a snare. It's an extension of Vince. His sound. His heart. His legacy." The ddrum Vinnie Paul Limited Edition Commemorative Snare Drum includes a special synthetic leather bag and sells for \$499 at authorized ddrum dealers. MAP price is \$499.



www.ddrum.com

“

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PREMIER GUITAR MAGAZINE, AUGUST 2019

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www.G7th.com

JodyJazz HR* CUSTOM DARK Alto

JodyJazz describe their new HR* CUSTOM DARK Alto model as the most beautiful sounding and playing Alto piece in their range and the darkest sounding of all their hard rubber mouthpieces. Their proprietary Chedeville Rubber imparts a rich warm sound and the rounded sidewalls add complexity on top of the core sound. A large round chamber puts the timbre in a warm dark zone and the inspired addition of the thick heavy gold-plated brass band on the shank boosts the amount of harmonics in the sound. MSRP: \$350

www.jodyjazz.com



Rovner's New AVATAR Sax Mouthpiece

Rovner Products introduces a patented baffle and chamber design with their groundbreaking Avatar saxophone mouthpieces, the first in their new Deep-V Collection. These unique mouthpieces reward players of any ability level with increased presence, playability and tonal color that must be experienced to be believed. With the Avatar, the player provides the "character" and Rovner provides the core. Supportive of the musician's pursuit of free and complete expression, the Avatar is another exciting example of Rovner innovation that you can recommend with confidence. Priced at just \$369 to \$399 (MSRP) it's an attractive holiday choice whether you're refreshing your own gear, or being an exceptional gift-giver. Available in sizes for alto and tenor sax, each Avatar mouthpiece is nicely packaged in a unique triangular case and includes a Rovner MK III ligature and cap for a complete Rovner playing experience. Best of all, the Avatar is available dealer direct! Contact dealersupport@rovnerproducts.com for more information.

www.rovnerproducts.com



Pigtronix Infinity 3

Infinity 3 is the world's most musical looping pedal. Simple to operate, yet tremendously powerful and flexible, the Infinity 3 guarantees latency-free looping. Our state-of-the-art platform provides instantaneous record, playback, dub, undo and redo, on two stereo loop pairs that can be played in series or parallel as well as synchronized and cued for automatic playback. On top of superior speed and a unique, performance-friendly feature set, Infinity 3 sounds downright incredible thanks to its discrete analog limiter stages, transparent analog pass-through and 24 bit HD recording engine with variable sample rate that can be incremented in semi-tones over two octaves. With approximately 3 hours of recording time on up to 50 loop pairs, the Infinity 3 was designed to inspire compositional depth and engaging performances. Comprehensive MIDI control and intelligent MIDI clock jitter correction provide the ability to link the Infinity 3 to a DAW, Drum Machine or other effects pedals. Infinity 3 is the ultimate tool for writing, rehearsing and performing. MAP: \$419

www.pigtronix.com



Walrus Audio's ACS1 Amp + Cab Simulator

The ACS1 is an amplifier and speaker cab simulator delivering the sound and feel of world-class amplifiers, complimentary speaker cabinets, and controllable room size. With the ACS1, players have expansive options to deliver their tone whether it's on stage, in the studio, or practicing at home. Simple controls, stereo in and out, onboard presets, and MIDI support make the ACS1 an immeasurable tool in a guitarist's arsenal. The ACS1 models three vintage amp styles crucial to music industry history designated by their places of origin. When running the ACS1 in stereo, one amp can be used through both channels or mix and match amps and cabinets on the left and right channels with the L + R switch. The ACS1 holds six high-quality cabinet impulse responses (IRs). Pre-loaded with custom cabinet IRs developed by Walrus Audio that sound great with each amp. Users also have the option to load their own IRs via walrusaudio.io. MSRP: \$399

www.walrusaudio.com



Fishman's Platinum Pro EQ

Pure analog tone shaping for the acoustic tone purist. Class-A analog universal preamp with pro-level components and construction means no sacrifice in sound. Features include 5-band EQ switchable for bass or other instruments, volume boost, XLR DI output, effects loop, built-in tuner, 9-Volt operation. Street price: \$319.95

www.fishman.com



ddrum's D2 Complete Drum Kit

ddrum's D2 Complete drum kits have been updated for 2021 and include everything you need to get started. The people at ddrum truly feel that an instrument that is designed for beginners should possess some of the same qualities of higher end drums. Keeping students engaged with practicing and playing could be adversely affected by a low-quality instrument. It is the reason why ddrum made upgrades to this kit, drastically improving its playability and sound. This does not look, feel, or sound like an entry level drum set. All D2 kits come with hardware, kick pedal, cymbals, and drum throne; Everything you need to begin playing right out of the box. With the addition of an updated fully adjustable double tom holder with memory locks, larger more sturdy bass drum spurs, and double braced hardware, the D2 Kit can also be an additional gigging kit for any drummer. The D2 comes with 8"x 10", 9"x 12", and 14x16" toms, an 18x22" bass drum and a 6.5"x 14" snare drum. The D2 is available in four colors: cobalt blue, midnight black, red sparkle, and white. MAP price is \$449.

www.ddrum.com



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Hyper Luminal Compressor from Darkglass

The Darkglass Hyper Luminal Compressor features the first hybrid design in a compressor pedal: an analog VCA controlled by a digital side-chain allows it to capture and include the characters of some of the most legendary compressors in history while keeping the signal path completely analog. MSRP: \$369.99
www.darkglass.com



Under \$1,000

Uke Vineyard Koa Bevel Tenor from Luna Guitars

The Vineyard Series embodies those same characteristics many seasoned musicians seek to hold true, including strength, determination, and the power to endure.



From the gorgeous vineyards in California to the acres rock and cobblestone in Italy, every vine starts somewhere and grows into something bigger than anticipated. The pearl Vine inlay design on the rosette and rosewood fretboard represents the always evolving thirst for growth and perseverance. Built with the musician in mind, the Uke Vineyard Koa is built on a 17" scale length traditional tenor cutaway body with Koa back & sides, Solid Koa Top that offers warm tone, with a bevel to rest the picking arm. For an extra added elegant touch, the open gear tuners rest on the slotted headstock with chrome tuning pegs - ready to be adjusted for success. With a Fishman Kula Preamp and onboard tuner, be ready to dial in your sound quickly, plug-in to an amp, and hit the stage ready to go. Whether your foundation is cemented in music or you're looking to make an artistic impression wherever you go, the Uke Vineyard Koa Tenor will be rooted to the foundation of your skillset and ready to ignite your passion when the moment is right. Padded gigbag included! MAP: \$529

www.lunaguitars.com



Korg B2

Korg's most affordable and portable home digital piano combines quality sounds and great feel with complete USB Audio and MIDI connectivity to take your playing, practicing, and creating further. MSRP: 799.99

www.korg.com

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www.suprousa.com



D'Angelico Premier Bedford SH

The Bedford SH features a sleek, modern f-hole design on the upper bout, and a warm acoustic element into a three-pickup electronics configuration that offers a bold variety of tones. The combination of two Duncan Designed single-coils in the neck and middle positions followed by a Duncan Designed mini-humbucker in the bridge creates a uniquely bold, but familiarly spanky tonal palette while a 5-way blade makes tone selection simple. Available in oxblood, black flake and sky blue with a six-point tremolo. MAP: \$799.99
www.dangelicoguitars.com



Fender's Tone Master Super Reverb

The Tone Master Super Reverb amplifier (\$1,099 USD) is the next addition to Fender's acclaimed series of legendary amplifiers. Featuring Fender's proprietary Tone Master modeling process, combined with player-centric features to maximize the utility of these amps, the Tone Master Super Reverb amplifier is a perfect replication of the legendary tube amplifier with modern features for today's most demanding professionals. The amplifier features four 10" Jensen speakers, as well as output power selector, balanced XLR line output with impulse response (IR) cabinet simulations, mute switch for silent stage or recording use and more. The Tone Master Super Reverb delivers an easily driven, beefy sound that you can now lift easily with the flexibility to set the volume to the venue without compromising tone.
www.fender.com



Under \$2,000

St. Augustine Series from Dean Guitars

The St. Augustine is back and redesigned for performance. The new Look has that real feel and aggression you would expect with a Dean. The new bracing and construction not only looks great but sounds more open and rich than ever before. Solid Spruce top and Sapele back and sides balances out the attack of the strings with true acoustic resonance. Rosewood fingerboard and bridge bring the warmth while the added Fishman Presys preamp adds the extra blend of tonal options for this legendary Dreadnaught body shape which you expect in guitars at much higher prices. MSRP: \$569
www.deanguitars.com



Dean Guitars' Exile Select Fluence

Taking Guitar to The Next Level. The Exile is a beast in playability and sonic flexibility. A high access heel joint on an Alder body offers the ability to reach every note. Equipped with a set of Fishman Fluence Modern series pickups, you can add additional sounds by utilizing their dual modes with the push/pull tone knob. An amazing feature that opens the gates of tone no matter what style you play. Floyd Rose 1000 series tremolo system, menacing black satin finish complimented with 3-piece maple neck, 24 fret ebony fingerboard, bound neck and headstock, plus a chrome foil logo tie it all together to bring the most out of your playing. MSRP: \$1,629
www.deanguitars.com



Over \$2,000

Dean Guitars' Zero Series

Dean brings performance, aggression, and class all together with the Newly designed Zero! This stunning guitar comes stacked with a mahogany body, flame maple top, 3pc maple set through neck with 24 stainless steel frets on an ebony fingerboard, and large glow in the dark side markers! To take it to the next level this model is loaded with dual Fishman Fluence Modern pickups and the one and only Evertune bridge system for the ultimate in tuning stability for the stage and/ or the studio. MSRP: \$2,299
www.deanguitars.com



Tony Iommi SG Special from Gibson

Tony Iommi's iconic riffs, heavy tones, and massively influential albums created the blueprint for heavy metal and many other genres to follow. His career, like the man himself, is universally loved and revered. And while his innovative tuning and playing styles were a major part of his monstrous tones, a heavily-modified 1964 Gibson SG was at the center of it all. Gibson USA proudly presents the Tony Iommi SG Special, based on his iconic original. It features a bound mahogany neck with a rounded profile, Indian rosewood fretboard with 22 frets, a Graph Tech nut, Grover Rotomatic tuners with contemporary style buttons, and chrome-covered P-90 pickups. A reproduction of Tony's "Monkey" sticker is included in the case. A left-handed version is also available. MSRP: \$2,399
www.gibson.com



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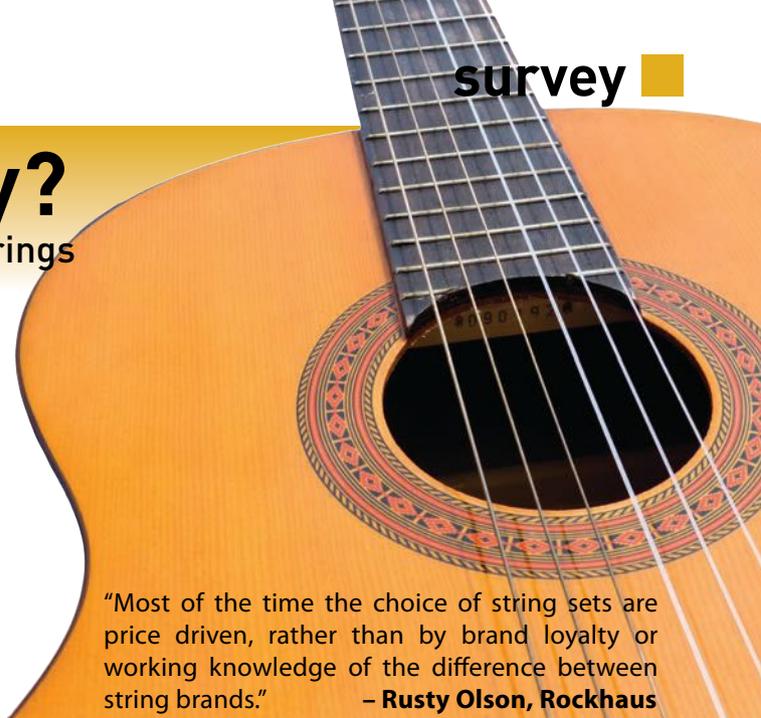
No Brand Loyalty?

MI Retailers Weigh in on Nylon Guitar Strings

By Christian Wissmuller

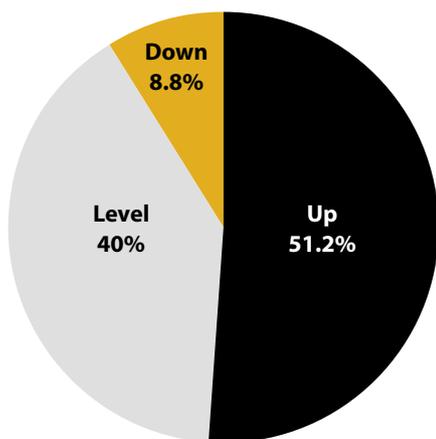
One of the more common refrains amongst the dealers who participated in this month's poll on the topic of classical guitar strings was that players don't seem to be especially devoted to any one, particular brand. As Todd Peery of Tacoma, Washington's Ted Brown Music puts it, "Customers seem to be more motivated by what's in stock, rather than brand loyalty."

It's an interesting observation when you then consider the results to the survey question, "What brands of nylon guitar strings are generating the most profit?" While a number of respected vendors got the nod from retailers, D'Addario – specifically their Pro-Arté classical strings – received nearly double as many votes as the nearest competitor. Is that wide disparity truly due solely to availability and price?

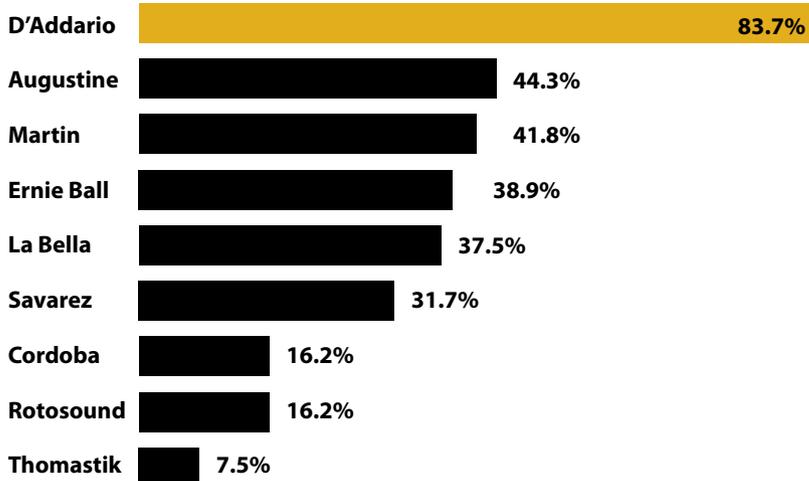


"Most of the time the choice of string sets are price driven, rather than by brand loyalty or working knowledge of the difference between string brands."
 – Rusty Olson, Rockhaus

Compared to the summer of 2020, sales of nylon acoustic guitar strings (classical guitar strings) are...



For your store, what brands of nylon guitar strings are generating the most profit?



Have you been noticing any significant trends with respect to this market segment – on either the vendor or end-user sides of the equation?

"One trend I've been noticing is that quite a few of our rock 'n roll customers also have a classical guitar, which means they are broadening their musical circle and tastes."

Ed Intagliata
 Cassell's Music
 San Fernando, California

"Customers seem to be more motivated by what's in stock, rather than brand loyalty."

Todd Peery
 Ted Brown Music
 Tacoma, Washington

"Just the long-time trend of small stores being generally unable to compete on price."

Jeff Firestone
 Retromusic
 Keene, New Hampshire

"Most of the time the choice of string sets are price driven, rather than by brand loyalty or working knowledge of the difference between string brands."

Rusty Olson
 Rockhaus
 Milwaukee, Wisconsin

"High Tension string sales are increasing."

Lisa Henson
 Henson's Music Center
 Oxnard, California

"Ball end strings are now more popular due to ease of fitting"

Thomas Graham
 The Music Centre
 Hamilton, South Lanarkshire, Scotland
 United Kingdom

Contagious Quitting

A Strategy to Clean up Your “C” Players?



By
Jaimie
Blackman

It's Friday afternoon, and Johnny walks into your office. He tells you that he is resigning, effective immediately. Your initial reaction is one of betrayal. How could he? After all the training and slack you've given him over the years. Then your higher self kicks in and you begin to smile. Wait a second, you're thinking. I don't have to deal with all his "stuff" anymore. From anger, you immediately find yourself on a mental conga line, singing "Halleluiah!"

This is kind of like when your daughter tells you Johnny broke up with her. First, anger. "How could he?" Then the light goes on... "I never did like Johnny," so you console her while you're back on the mental conga line, singing once again... Halleluiah.

As the pandemic recovery advances and America gets back to work, it's no surprise that there are labor shortages across many sectors of the economy. So it may sound counter-intuitive with the thought of losing employees to ask these two questions:

1. Why does Johnny quit? He is unhappy, unfulfilled, or feels unappreciated. Bottom line, Johnny just doesn't like working for you anymore. In essence, it's no longer a good fit.

2. Why would you want an employee on the books that feels this way? Remember Johnny's *donwanttobeheritis* could be contagious. Chances are Johnny is groaning and moaning and spreading negative energy to your "A" players. If you are one of the talented ones on your team, who do you want to be around? Other "A" players. So the contagion goes far beyond Johnny's dissatisfaction.

According to Sigal Barsade, professor of management at Wharton School, the transfer of negative energy is infectious. Here's what his research demonstrated:

Group emotional contagion, the transfer of moods among people in a group, and its influence on workgroup dynamics were examined in a laboratory study of managerial decision making using multiple, convergent measures of mood, individual attitudes, behavior, and group-level dynamics. As predicted, the positive emotional contagion group members experienced improved cooperation, decreased conflict, and increased perceived task performance. Theoretical implications and practical ramifications of emotional contagion in groups and organizations are discussed.

No surprise here. A culture of positive energy is a more pleasant place to work as well as being a more profitable business to own.

How does *donwanttobeheritis* play out for the world's largest companies? Consider Amazon.

Amazon's turnover among its hourly workforce is stunning, to say the least. In 2019 alone, Amazon hired more than 770,000 hourly workers but retained fewer than 150,000 of them. The employee exit has been so ferocious that behavioral science has a name for it: *Contagious quitting*.

At the surface, Amazon's 150 percent annual turnover would appear costly. After all, when employees leave there are several



negative consequences including lost productivity, retention costs, and replacement costs.

Still, while those costs can be substantial, behavioral science supports the theory that contagious quitting can actually be a net positive for an organization in three key ways:

1. New Advancement and Leadership Opportunities. According to ADP, on average, employers will promote 8.9 percent of their employees annually, and those employees will receive an average wage increase of 17.4 percent.

2. Increased Harmony Among Co-Workers- As previously mentioned, Barsade's research indicated that team members who worked with enthusiastic co-workers were happier and more productive. The reverse was true. A rotten apple spoils the bunch.

3. Attitude Tune-up. To resolve the dissonance, research has demonstrated that after co-workers leave, the decision to stay is justified by a change in beliefs and attitudes. Like a music cadence, co-workers yearn for resolution.

Employees in harmony with your culture will make a positive contribution to the four key business value drivers: Personal Wellness (wellbeing), Employee Capital, Customer Capital, and Structural Capital (information and process). The employees that are in dissonance with your culture will create inner stress and turmoil.

You simply can't afford to have someone who is not 100 percent committed to the success of the organization on your team.

Lesson learned? Recognize the opportunity before you and remember, when the dust settles, your most engaged and loyal employees remain.

To help your employees remember hang up a sign which says, "No Vamping Allowed."

Jaimie Blackman – a former music educator & retailer – is co-founder of BH Wealth Management. The organization offers 401(k), insurance, and succession planning services. Download your complimentary copy of End Your War With Money at .bhwealth.com/moneycapsules Registered Representative, First Allied Securities, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC

“You simply can't afford to have someone who is not 100 percent committed to the success of the organization on your team.”

NAMM Retail Roundtable



By
Menzie
Pittman

In a never-ending battle to find better ways to communicate “best practices” to music retailers across the globe, NAMM professionals are always in search of ways to inspire an engaged, open dialogue.

NAMM remains vigilant in their pursuit to give every music retailer the greatest fighting chance at achieving success, and one of the ways they do it is by reviewing best practices. NAMM encourages retailers to embrace these habits by designing programs that support that opportunity. This is how The Idea Center was born, and the success of The Idea Center then gave birth to TEC Tracks.

Zack Phillips and his team saw the need to expand the scope of the Idea Center and add to it some cutting-edge “tech sessions” that dealt with unique audio technologies and the innovators that brought the technology to prominence. So, NAMM developed TEC Tracks which focused more specifically on technology, but not just the gadgets. NAMM created very special sessions with behind-the-scenes masters who could share inside specialized knowledge and expertise on a plethora of tech topics.

When you attend a TEC Tracks session (especially in Nashville), you have the chance to hear speakers like Craig Alvin speak on mixing the Kacey Musgraves’ album *Golden Hour*. We musicians and audiophiles consider these sessions solid gold information of the highest order. The TEC Track sessions also allow us to hear inside studio tidbits from “pros in the know,” and that inside information makes for excellent stories on any retailer’s sales floor.

It’s not every day you can hear Chuck Ainlay speak on his career or John Oates share an hour of insight into songwriting. And it is that thought which brings us to one of NAMM’s newer initiatives: The Retail Roundtable. After attending my first Retail Roundtable Zoom session, I realized readers could benefit from an inside look into the program. That is when I reached out to Causby Challacombe, NAMM’s director of membership, and asked her if she would share the back-story and insight into what the program is all about. In true NAMM fashion she got right back to me with a helpful description and an inside look into how the program developed:

Menzie, here’s a little background on the Retail Roundtable. We heard from many of our retail members that they would like an opportunity to have an online open forum to discuss the latest issues in the music industry. In March of 2021, we launched the NAMM Retail Roundtable. It is hosted by the NAMM membership team the first Wednesday of each month for one hour. We also have guest member moderators. The Retail Roundtable has been an excellent opportunity to learn and network with peers and to share “tried and true” methods of in-store management, marketing, customer and employee engagement, and innovation. Retail companies and their employees have been able to get questions answered, meet with other music stores from around the world, share ideas and take away best practices to help them work smarter and more efficiently.

During each roundtable, we break into small breakout rooms

and discuss two topics. After each discussion, we come back to the main room and discuss the ideas and best practices discussed in the breakout rooms. Discussions are an excellent way to stay connected to other music stores. We record each session and have it and notes available [namm.org. https://www.namm.org/membership/retail-roundtable](https://www.namm.org/membership/retail-roundtable)

We also invite members to provide topic recommendations. On the web page is a form to submit a topic or issue that is challenging your store. So far, we have had five Retail Roundtable discussions on a variety of topics that have been recommended by members.

“Now, more than ever, we should take advantage of innovative peer thinking to revitalize our approach in serving the needs of our customers.”

I am very excited that you are talking about RR. It has been such a needed event for NAMM retail members. I hosted a similar event with a prior association and have been wanting to do it with NAMM members. It’s a great networking opportunity for members and the NAMM staff to learn about the pressing issues impacting the industry.

Challacombe says one “magic phrase” in her notes that should inspire everyone to attend a Retailer Roundtable: “Retail companies and their employees have been able to get questions answered, meet with other music stores from around the world, share ideas, and take away best practices to help them work smarter and more efficiently.”

36 words. Four simple statements that can change your understanding of the why’s and how’s of music stores from all over the world. That’s powerful!

One thing to note, and that is sometimes the take-aways are not always what you expect from the conversations. Some ideas that work in one region of the country may not work for you, but when you decide something doesn’t work for you, you also must think of what you believe does work. The important point here is that the sessions make you think.

There is no better time for NAMM to launch this program, as we are all Zoomed out; it’s a perfect format to enable this program. Now, more than ever, we should take advantage of innovative peer thinking to revitalize our approach in serving the needs of our customers. It’s true there have been some unexpected benefits of late with renewed interest in learning to play music, but what better time to revitalize sharing best practices, growing our businesses, and enabling us to strengthen our music communities. 🗣️

Menzie Pittman is the owner and director of education at Contemporary Music Center in Virginia (CMC). Following a performance and teaching career spanning more than 32 years, he founded CMC in 1989 and continues to perform, teach, and oversee daily operations. He has 50 years of musical experience as a drummer and drum instructor. Menzie is a frequent speaker at NAMM’s Idea Center, and a freelance writer for MMR’s “Small Business Matters”.

Reality Mentality

Know what I hate? Reality shows. Why? They're not real. Why call it "reality" when it's not? Oh, I tried to watch some – I mean, I get a kick out of "Shark Tank" sometimes and I thought "Undercover Bosses" was a good premise, but come on – who follows a new hire around with a TV camera and additional lighting crews? Get a clue, Sherlock.

But here is a haunting tale of intrigue and drama: there are "reality shows" playing out every day in the MI business world – and they are costly. These "costs" are a combination of oversights, outright mistakes, and dealer/owners that will keep wearing blinders as they walk into their own stores every day, not wanting to confront reality and holding on to the dreadful belief of, "wanting to do business the way we always have." Well, I'm sorry to say this – but someone has to – you are out of your mind! (note – if you stop reading here because I just made you mad, then you just made my point. You're not going to "pass GO" nor collect the hundreds or thousands of dollars that a customer may have been willing to spend with you because it's now being sent to another store in another territory). You are in the wrong lane, sir; there is another music store passing you on the right).

Still reading? I thank you. Who am I? I'm a "rep." Well, not really a "rep," but a sales manager of an international MI company. My job? To travel around the United States visiting and consulting with *a lot* of music stores; talking with *a lot* of owners, store managers, sales managers, IT managers, sales people, and buyers... to the point where I've seen enough retail to help put together a large piece of an interesting puzzle – the picture of which is elusive to some, but crystal clear to many! Do I have *all* the answers? Well, not 100 percent. It's akin to the age-old question on the value of advertising. Is advertising worth it? Well, the answer is (drumroll...) only 50 percent of advertising produces results. The problem is you don't know which 50 percent! (Sidetrack to prove my point: I recently sold a piece of personal gear. As a science experiment, I listed it on Facebook Marketplace for \$100 and Craigslist for \$150. (Yep – Craigslist! Who uses that anymore?) Anyway, I got a text stating that someone wanted to buy it and could they pick it up. We decided to meet at a local convenience store, and when the buyer pulled out his wallet, he handed me three crisp \$50 bills. I asked him where he saw my ad. He said Facebook. Alrighty then...)

OK, so what great words of wisdom do I have for you on this first introductory work of literary genius? Well, not really

words of wisdom, but an interesting tale – of a store owner in denial. Let's just listen in on an interesting conversation I had at the Summer NAMM show. A dealer friend was lamenting that the brick and mortar store was not doing well, and did I have any words of advice or thoughts. I said, "Let's start by looking at what you've done to communicate with your customers in the first 30 days of the pandemic and then fast forward and also peek at the last 90 days. Let's see – your website says nothing about any new hours, or your protocols, nothing on how to contact you. You haven't done any (ZERO) Facebook posts to engage your customers, your Instagram account shows no activity AT ALL, and the photos of your store are from last year. Does your store manager have access to all of these accounts?"

"Yes."

"So, why do you think there are no posts?"

"Umm... They were too busy."

"Busy doing WHAT? You said traffic was down. What could they possibly be doing except staring at their phones wondering where their customers are *while they are on social media!*?"

Alright, what is the real takeaway here? There are many, but let's break this down a little bit. This isn't the days of Yellow Page ads that you can't change for a year. This is the age of getting a message to *your* customers in an

instant, whether it is in an email or a social media post – and here is the beauty: for the most part, it's FREE! FREE, I tell you! But wait! There's more!

How long does a Facebook post take to highlight a cool piece of gear? Five minutes? I guarantee that if there was a funny meme, that thing would be posted in under 60 seconds, but "no time for a Facebook informational post"? Jeez – if I were to quote a famous reality show I'd say "You're Fired" (but in these days that's political suicide!).

Here's an interesting dose of reality, for the most part: your customers care about your success. They care about you. They want you to be successful. During the pandemic, they wanted to know if you were alright. Really, they did!! They would have *loved* to hear from you. And here is the best part: It's not too late to begin to engage with your customers all over again. Social media is your best friend right now. 30-second videos of you and your staff with a new piece of gear, or a great pic of you getting ready to open the box on a hot new item is exactly what you need to do to engage your customer to come and see you. Begin to put together *your* campaign of engagement. They might just say, "I'll be down!"



“This isn't the days of Yellow Page ads that you can't change for a year. This is the age of getting a message to your customers in an instant, whether it is in an email or a social media post – and here is the beauty: for the most part, it's FREE!”

I Believe in the Industry...

And the people who bring music to the world.



My favorite part of attending The NAMM Show is seeing all the people from dealers to suppliers to the NAMM Executive Committee.

The people on the NAMM Board, they're friends and family.

The love and support that you find at The NAMM Show is unreal, and I think it's indicative of our industry as a whole.

It just reminds you that we're so lucky to be in this industry.

Mark Hebert

President & CEO
Cosmo Music



The
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Show

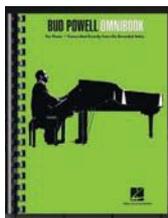
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PRINT & DIGITAL

Bud Powell Omnibook from Hal Leonard

Hal Leonard has announced the publication of the *Bud Powell Omnibook*, a collection of 35 full piano transcriptions of his most popular recordings. Hal Leonard Omnibooks have become the books to turn to when you want to master a particular artist. These comprehensive collections feature the most accurate note-for-note transcriptions, meticulous easy-to-read notation, chord symbols to facilitate analyzing the solos, rehearsal letters, transcription recording references, rhythmic styles and metronome marks, spiral comb-binding for easy usability, and more. The *Powell Omnibook* also includes an introductory biography.



This collection features the songs: All the Things You Are • April in Paris • Bags' Groove • Autumn in New York • Body and Soul • Cherokee (Indian Love Song) • 52nd Street Theme • Get Happy • Hallucinations • I'll Remember April • It Could Happen to You • Just One of Those Things • A Night in Tunisia • Ruby, My Dear • Satin Doll • Sweet Georgia Brown • Tea for Two • Un Poco Loco • and more.

Other books in the Hal Leonard Omnibook series include Bill Evans, Charlie Parker, Oscar Peterson, Joe Pass, Stan Getz, John Coltrane, and more. The *Bud Powell Omnibook* features 272 pages and retails for \$34.99.

www.halleonard.com

Adaptable Trios for Christmas Expands Popular Flexible Series with Holiday Release

Excelcia Music Publishing announces the holiday release of *Adaptable Trios for Christmas*, a timely expansion of its flexible instrumentation series, *Adaptable Ensemble Series*. The new flexible Christmas collection contains 27 new trio arrangements written at accessible 1.5 to 3 grade levels. Specifically designed for the needs of the modern music room, professional or at home families, *Adaptable Trios for Christmas* exponentially broadens holiday music options by providing genuine flexibility with winds, strings and percussion.



Designed to be used with any combination of wind instruments and/or percussion (in the wind series) or string instruments (in the strings series), *Adaptable Ensemble Series* has emerged as a leading resource in flexible instrumentation. Like all books in the *Adaptable Ensemble Series*, the line scoring arrangement in *Adaptable Trios for Christmas* not only facilitates the needs of the classroom, but also offers sound pedagogic progression from small chamber to full ensemble playing, making a class set a remarkably useful tool.

Adaptable Trios for Christmas is arranged by dedicated educators and composers Tyler Arcari and Matthew R. Putnam, along with percussion specialist Robert Clayton (in the percussion book) and strings specialist Diana Traietta (in the string books). New flexible trio arrangements include Hark! The Herald, Angel's Sing, Deck the Halls with Figgy Pudding, Auld Lang Syne, Away in a Manger, The Huron Carol, Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy from Op.71a The Nutcracker Suite, Greensleeves and many more. Books are available for flute, oboe, B \flat clarinet/bass clarinet/B \flat trumpet/baritone T.C., alto saxophone/baritone saxophone, tenor saxophone, horn in F, trombone/euphonium/bassoon, tuba, percussion, violin, viola, cello and bass instruments. Available for \$14.99 from music retailers everywhere and from the publisher.

www.excelciamusic.com

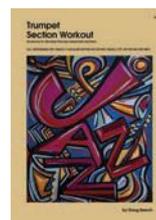
Kendor Music Announces New Innovative Collection For Jazz Ensemble: *Section Workouts*

Kendor Music, Inc. has announced the release of a new innovative collection for jazz groups:

Saxophone Section Workout by Andrew Neu

Trumpet Section Workout by Doug Beach

Trombone Section Workout by Bret Zvacek



These three innovative collections were conceived as a tool to help each jazz section refine their skills as a unit of the contemporary big band, including balance, blend, articulation and phrasing. Each collection includes 6 full performance pieces in a variety of styles. Optional rhythm section parts are included, along with written or ad lib solos for any player. Two downloadable MP3 tracks are included for each piece: a full performance with rhythm section, and a rhythm section only MP3 that can be used in rehearsals or performances without a rhythm section.

www.kendormusic.com

DJ & LIGHTING

Rogue Outcast 1 BeamWash from CHAUVET Professional

CHAUVET Professional's Outcast 1 BeamWash is a compact IP65 rated fixture, which weighs only 20.2 lbs. (9.16 kg.), throws preconceived notions aside, resulting in a beam/wash that doubles as an unparalleled eye-candy machine, courtesy of a unique, independent, pixel mappable LED outer ring.



Made up of 97 RGB LEDs, the pixel mappable outer ring features 12 zones of control and can be run independently from the center pixel beam/wash. A stealth filter hides the outer ring when it's not in use, so the fixture appears and works as a pure beam/wash.

Designers can control the background color and foreground effects independently on the outer rim. This allows them to create complex multi-colored looks on the rim whether they are pixel mapping or using the fixture's extensive library of built-in effects.

The center of the Rogue Outcast 1 BeamWash consists of seven bright 45-watt RGBW LEDs capable of producing a 4,073 lumens output. Advanced optics incorporated into the fixture's design result in excellent color blending and tight beam effects. (A 3.9° to 55° zoom range ensures maximum coverage.)

Extremely fast, with smooth 540° pan and 260° tilt movements, the Rogue Outcast 1 Beam Wash is loaded with high performance features. Among these are 16-bit dimming of the master dimmer and individual colors. There are six distinct dimming modes for advanced control.

Other standout features in the versatile fixture include emulated red shift, selectable PWM settings for broadcast applications, remote accessing via RDM, selectable calibrated white for 7,500K at full output, simple and complex DMX channel profiles, and pre-built programs for the outer LED rim.

The ruggedly built fixture helps expedite setup and reduce container costs. Its distinctive-looking black coated aluminum-magnesium alloy die-cast casing and IP65 rating make it well-suited for outdoor festivals and venues, as well as at sites, such as night clubs, with high maintenance needs.

Ideal for creating dynamic back wall visuals, audience washes, crossing patterns and back lighting, the Rogue Outcast 1 BeamWash will make a valuable addition to virtually any rig.

www.chauvetprofessional.com

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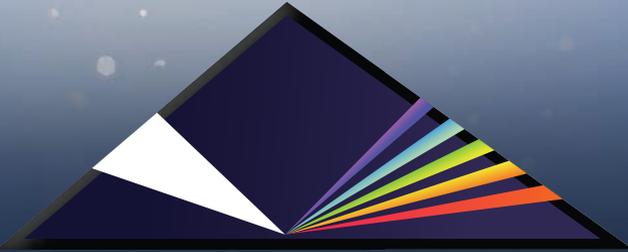
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