

THE RETAIL DOCTOR | BY BILLY CUTHRELL

Just Show Up

During this past January's NAMM Show I attended many spectacular events, but two in general really stuck out. The first was the NAMM YP event with *Music Inc.*'s Publisher Frank Alkyer as keynote speaker. Alkyer gave a fantastic talk on the "7 Habits of Highly Effective Music Executives" to a standing-room-only crowd of mostly young, first-time NAMM attendees. The next day I had the honor of being a panelist on the "Generation Next" session presented by The Crane Institute for Music Business and NAMM. This round table discussion included a panel of industry icons, including Sammy Ash, COO of Sam Ash Music, and Mary Luehrsen, director of public affairs and government at NAMM. The common traits outlined in Alkyer's NAMM YP presentation and the "Generation Next" panel run deep through the fabric of many of today's MI executives.



'A large part of being successful is just showing up and being present.'

I chatted with some industry friends before the panel started. As I did so, I watched attendees, mostly students showing up to NAMM for the very first time, file into the ballroom. Watching them I thought of my last 23 years spent in this industry and how fast it's gone by.

When I was a little younger than most of the attendees at the panel I snuck my way into my first NAMM Show in Nashville as a "freelance writer." I was not sure what NAMM held for me at the time, but I knew it offered plenty of opportunity as long as I was willing to show up and look for it, taking action if the opportunity presented itself. I reminded the long-time friends I was talking with that I had known them for at least 15 years if not longer. Many of them I've known

from the first or second NAMM show I ever attended.

As I looked out at the crowd during the panel, it was great to see so many new faces, and I noticed several faces from the NAMM YP event from the day before. It reinforced a core belief for me that a large part of being successful is just showing up and being present. If you're not there, others don't know you, can't get to know you and can't see your potential.

MAKE THE EFFORT

As the panel concluded and we made our way to the lobby, I had several people from the audience approach me and as we talked they drew comparisons to what they took away from the NAMM YP speech.

I was inclined to add the trait of just showing up to their list. I reminded them that they were already working towards success in just being present for the NAMM YP event and the panel presentation. You could see the first-time NAMM experience on their faces. I could feel their exuberance even though many expressed concerns to me that they were unsure if they would find jobs as they graduated and ventured into the "real world." Nevertheless, they were undaunted and full of optimism.

If you are just entering the MI industry I implore you to attend the Summer NAMM Show, held July 17-19 in Nashville, Tennessee. Get involved and learn about the industry while helping it grow. There are plenty of programs that will help you connect the pieces of the puzzle and prepare you for work in the MI industry if you just show up and take advantage. **MI**

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