

THE LESSON ROOM | BY PETE GAMBER

# Lesson Program Evaluation, Part 2



Last month, I discussed how music retailers can evaluate the visibility of their lesson programs. I offered a checklist to help retailers and their staff identify what's going on at their stores. Since then, you've worked on those areas in your own store, and customers are signing up for lessons. Great!

But if things are still funky at this point, last month's checklist is meaningless. By "funky" I mean situations like the following: the student is booked for a time that doesn't exist, or the teacher doesn't know there's a new student and doesn't show up; the teacher is sick and there is no contact information to call the student; the teacher is playing a gig, and the store's personnel have no idea the teacher won't be coming in; or a staff member didn't follow procedure to write the new student into the lesson book, and now you have two students at 7 p.m. for the same teacher.

Sounds silly, but it happens, and this chaos can cause you to lose students, their families and future students. (Don't go there — it's terrible!) Remember, perception is reality. You may have the best teachers in town, but if students don't get their lessons, your edu-

cation program is useless. The lesson process needs to run smoothly to create more lesson signups.

This month, some new ideas are being added to the checklist. This checklist has less "quick fix"-type items on it and will require constant follow-up and follow through.

If you can't check an item on this list in good conscience, it needs attention. **MI**

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SPECIAL MUSIC LESSON CHECKLIST CUTOUT

## Music Lesson Checklist

FOR PROGRESSIVE MUSIC RETAILERS **music** inc.

PUT A CHECK NEXT TO EACH ITEM THAT APPLIES TO YOUR STORE.

### THE SCHEDULE

Does the lesson schedule have:

- Accurate and up-to-date information on each teacher?
- Easy accessibility, so staff members can book a new lesson?
- "Lesson Bible" status? (i.e. Its information is gospel.)
- A uniform procedure for the staff on adding/dropping students?
- A uniform procedure for teachers with make-up lessons?
- A uniform procedure for teachers to notify staff that they won't be teaching?

### REGISTRATION

Does your registration form include:

- Vital phone numbers, e-mail addresses, etc.?
- A prompting to find out if a student has an instrument or needs one?

### CANCELLATIONS

When a student needs to cancel:

- Is there a lesson cancellation book, so teachers know a student can't make it?
- Can parents leave a message for the teacher before the teacher gets to the store?
- Is contact information accessible to staff and teachers?

### START-UP/FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURE

When a new student starts lessons, are there:

- Calls or e-mails to the student the day before as a reminder?
- Calls to the teacher to remind him/her of the new student?
- Trained staff aware a new student is starting that day?
- Books and supplies cued up?
- Follow-up calls to the student/parent within the first 30 days?