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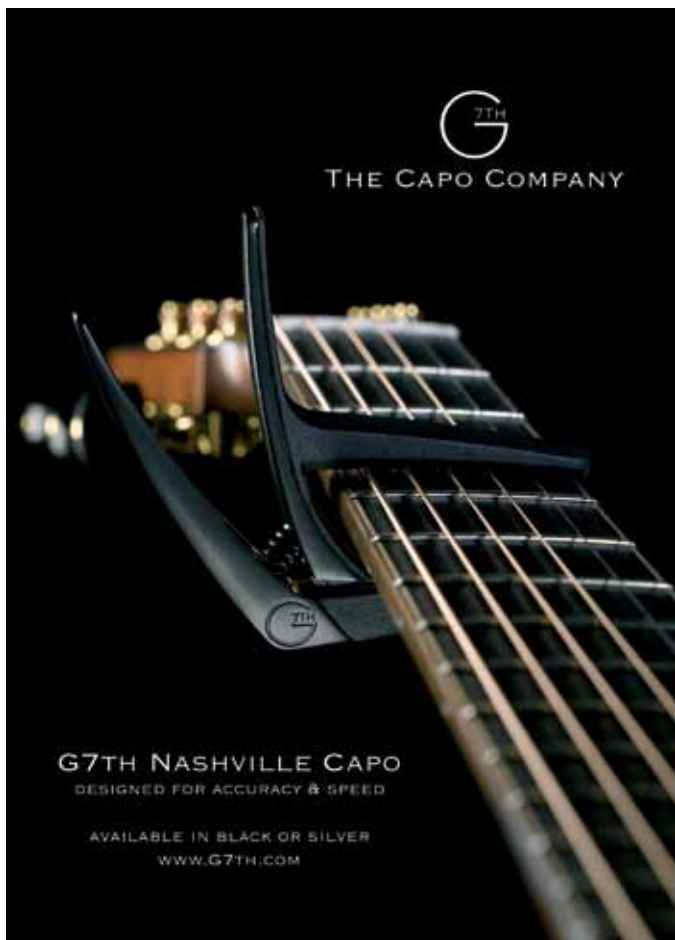
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 YOUR FIRST LOOK AT 2011'S NEW PRODUCTS
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Photo by Karen Solem

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 THE BELT**

Music retail accountant Alan Friedman looks at necessary expense cuts for surviving the downturn.

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PERSPECTIVE

PERSPECTIVE | BY ZACH PHILLIPS

DON'T CUT THIS COST!

It's been a full year since we've had music retail financial guru Alan Friedman write for this magazine. It was a year too long. Friedman's finally back this month with "Tightening the Belt," and it's a doozy. The feature story, which starts on page 44, looks at ways dealers can fight the downturn by making cuts to their business and personal spending. Sound painful? It is. But as Friedman points out, making cuts usually hurts once — on the day you decide to do it.

Not surprisingly, he encourages scaling back on travel, but with one major exception: conventions with educational opportunities. "That newfound education can deliver financial rewards far greater than its travel costs," he writes. And there's no better place to educate yourself on the business of music retail than The NAMM Show.

I'll go on the record and say this year's convention, held Jan. 13–16 in Anaheim, Calif., has one of the most impressive NAMM University lineups I've ever seen. Most of *Music Inc.*'s columnists are presenting, including Friedman, so to keep from playing favorites, I'm going to plug a few must-see sessions by non-writers. (All sessions will be held at The Idea Center.)

On the first day of the show, Thursday, NAMM has blocked off two hours for the "Guerilla Tactics Series," beginning at 2:30 p.m. Four savvy retailers will share their proven, bang-for-the-buck tactics for connecting with the community, reinstating school music programs and getting local press — each in half-hour blocks. One presenter, Cris Behrens of Summerhays Music, gave a version of his session at the 2010 National Association of School Music Dealers conference. It was a convention highlight.

At 4:00 on Friday afternoon, George Hines of George's Music will surround himself with members of the Alliance of Independent Music Merchants (AIMM) — some of the best minds in the business. Their one-hour panel discussion, "Lessons Learned: Best Practices for Success-Minded Retailers," will feature ideas for boosting profits and efficiency, as well as lowering operating costs. How does that sound right about now?

At 3:30 on Saturday afternoon, Myrna Sislen of Middle C Music will host "The New Face of Music Lessons: Teach the Entire Family." She plans to show how to grow a lessons program by tapping into all age groups. In a recent conversation, Sislen mentioned that 50 percent of her store's private-lessons students are adults, ages 45–85.

"It is a given money maker," Sislen said of lessons. "Adults [are] coming in needing permission and nurturing to fulfill lifelong dreams of playing a musical instrument, and that includes all instruments. Our last kid rock band class had an adult woman playing French horn — it was the best ever! Adults are the new face of music lessons, and our job is to make sure we are extremely responsive and sensitive to the needs of this growing market." **MI**



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LETTERS

From Recovery to Prosperity

Thank you so much for naming my business, Dayton, Ohio-based Wasson Music, as one of the 10 Retail Excellence Award winners in the December 2010 issue of *Music Inc.* I am quite humbled by this honor. The faith and assistance given to me by all the publishers and distributors has been amaz-

ing, and it's their support that has made my recovery possible. I give my biggest thanks to them.

The year 2010 was spent not only recovering from a car hitting my building and the subsequent reconstruction but also recovering from injuries I sustained in a fall six weeks after the building was finished. A shattered

wrist, broken ankle and torn tendons in my shoulder and ankle confined me to my home for about six months. By the time I returned in mid-January, there was not much left of my business.

I am especially grateful to Retail Up for turning over management of the old Mannerino's Sheet Music website to me. It has been a great partnership and helped provide me with business when my own store was not getting enough to survive. When this began, I was still confined to my home and could only type with one hand.

We are entering 2011 with most of our outstanding bills paid off, our business is up almost 10 percent from 2009 and more people are coming in for lessons. The community has heard about the great multieducational space we have. More and more artists are expressing interest in our gallery; parents want their children studying in a place with well-trained, caring teachers; and everyone enjoys the artistic environment, which sparks the creative talents of children.

Carol Wasson
Wasson Music
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See Jerry Cantrell and Victor Wooten at signings to be announced.

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Meaningful Information

Thank you for featuring my dealership, Willcutt Guitar, on the January 2011 cover. Every month, I look forward to reading *Music Inc.* to learn not only what other retailers are doing but to get a heads-up on what the manufacturers are promoting, even before the products hit the market. After reading it, I leave the copy out for employees and special customers to read and then discuss what we have learned from it. No other publication combines such meaningful information and high-quality graphics to help the music industry navigate these exciting times. Keep up the good work.

Bob Willcutt
Willcutt Guitar Shoppe
Lexington, Ky.

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Vestax introduces 4 new Pro DJ products including the PMC-05ProIV, VCI-300MkII, VCI-100MkII, and Typhoon Virtual DJ edition. Digital DJs like MIDI Mafia's DJ Dirty Swift lead the way using Vestax digital products.

nord



Nord launches the Stage 2 flagship keyboard at this year's NAMM show. Features include Nord's latest sound generation technology in the Piano, Organ and Synthesizer sections.

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- > **Manning Music**
Expands store, keyboard stock
PAGE 16
- > **Guitar Center**
Takes e-commerce international
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- > **Stu's Music Shop**
Arranges clinic with Bublê band
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- > **Good'nLoud Music**
Plans to shutter doors
PAGE 20



RETAIL

ALTO MUSIC | BY HILARY BROWN

THE AMEX POSTER BOY

He's starred in an American Express commercial. He's done a few national radio spots and even has an affiliated print campaign in the works. But Jon Haber is famous in his own right — at least among his customers.

During a recession that has sent many retailers packing, the owner of Alto Music has generated a following of studio owners, engineers and musicians as clients, while establishing a high-end pro audio showroom in midtown Manhattan. He's also quadrupled the size of his Wappingers Falls and Airmont, N.Y., locations — one of the reasons American Express picked the company for a commercial.

"They really wanted someone who believes in the product, and that was me," Haber said. "I have my business, and I use their product." He laughed. "And I'm somewhat put together."

THREE-DAY SHOOT

AmEx caught wind of Haber after he mentioned to his rep that he'd touted the card's benefits at a NAMM presentation.

"She asked if her boss could call me to discuss some potential promotional opportunities," Haber said. "I'm thinking a guy's coming up to the store with a

camera or something."

Instead, Haber found himself on an enormous set at Manhattan's Chelsea Piers for an all-day photo shoot at the hands of renowned photographer Michele Asselin, a wardrobe and set designer, and at least 50 crew members. The production would become the American Express print ad, but Haber's onset personality inspired AmEx bigwigs

to take it a step further.

"I grabbed a guitar and wrote this crazy American Express song," Haber said. "My guys were in the background. I couldn't see them, but they said all the directors and producers loved it."

The following Tuesday, he started getting calls from Hollywood directors about using Alto in a television commercial. The three-day shoot at the company's

Middletown, N.Y., store featured Haber, along several veteran customers, local rockers, high school band students and Haber's son.

ONLINE BOOM

Alto Music isn't the first music retailer to get national TV exposure. Miller High Life's 2010 Super Bowl ad put Phoenix's Bizarre Guitar on the national stage. And like Bizarre Guitar's ensuing success, Alto's online business has increased by two-and-a-half times since the AmEx commercial aired, according to Haber.

"We are becoming more heavily focused in e-commerce now," Haber said. "We're getting a lot more Web orders from all over the country on stuff that maybe we wouldn't get before."

And where Alto once boasted a modest social media presence, the commercial generated more than 7,000 YouTube hits within the first week, along with a major boost in Facebook friends.

"We've gotten people who say, 'I love your commercial, it's very inspiring,'" Haber said. "We're getting very good feedback."

Haber's 30- and 60-second radio spots, along with his print ad, are set to debut nationally early this year. In the meantime, he's grateful for the extra publicity.

"You couldn't pay for that kind of advertising." **MI**

EXPANSION

Royalton's New Digs

Royalton Music Center of North Royalton, Ohio, will move to a larger retail space in February. The new spot is located a mile from the company's current facility. Royalton Music has operated from the same shopping plaza since opening in 1964. It currently rents three of the plaza's four storefronts and a warehouse across the street.

To prepare for the move, Royalton Music hosted a holiday moving sale, offering 30-percent off all floor items and another 25-percent off the lowest-price instruments. The full-line business, which also offers music lessons and instrument rentals and repairs, is in its third generation of ownership, under Lauren Haas-Amanfoh.

PROMOTION

Tin for 10 Percent

Instrumental Music Center of Tucson, Ariz., hosted its "10 tin for 10-percent sale" this past holiday season. The promotion gives customers who donate 10 non-perishable food items 10-percent off their purchases — up to \$20 off. It ran through Jan. 1.

CLOSING

Burt's to Shutter Doors

Harold Burt, founder of Burt's Music in Cary, N.C., recently announced he'll be closing his store this year. The 23-year-old company specializes in music lessons. An article in *The Cary News* mentioned the sluggish economy, fierce big-box competition and online retail competition as reasons for the closure.

DESIGN

Winning Light Show

Darryl Rossi of Rossi Music in Canandaigua, N.Y., got into the holiday spirit this past year, installing 85 inflatable decorations in front of his store. The display, which featured snowmen and other winter creatures, earned him first place in the business category in 2010's Light Up Canandaigua! contest, which is hosted by the chamber of commerce.

"It took me the usual time, from Labor Day to the last week of November, to design, build and fix it," Rossi told *MPNnow*.



MANNING MUSIC | EXPANSION

**MANNING MUSIC
DOUBLES IN SIZE, UPS
KEYBOARD STOCK**

On Nov. 13, 2010, Manning Music in Topeka, Kan., celebrated 25 years in business with the grand opening of its new 6,220-square-foot store.

The event drew coverage from Topeka radio stations and television crews. Manning hosted live music from a community big band and local school jazz band, as well as performances by some of the store's loyal customers. Hoshino, Ernie Ball and Yamaha provided products for several drawings throughout the day, including an Ibanez acoustic-electric guitar.

While the previous Manning Music barely measured 2,800 square feet, the new facility features 15 lesson rooms and a small recital area, plus a large showroom, repair facility, offices and stockroom. Owners Todd and Deb Manning, who took over the company from Todd's parents in 1995, each spent more than 700 hours over five months renovating the building.

The expansion let the Mannings add Yamaha portable and digital keyboards to their inventory. Manning

Music sold three-quarters of its opening order within the first month, due to an influx of holiday customers and Topeka losing a keyboard and piano dealer during the summer.

EDUCATION EXPANSION

Prior to the move, the 15-year-old location had staffed 24 private music teachers and booked more than 300 lessons per week. Manning Music has increased its staff by two piano instructors and recently added 25 piano lessons, two days a week. Still, Todd Manning said he's purposely expanding his lessons program slowly.

"We have been stuffed into a smaller store for so long that I didn't want to get the wrong teacher and have the whole room set aside for no reason," he said.

Following the success of a pre-expansion Terry Warburton custom saxophone neck workshop, Todd said he hopes to support school music programs by offering additional clinics every nine weeks.

The Legend Continues

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- Progressive Harmonic Imaging
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- RH graded-hammer action
- New piano sounds
- New EPs with amp simulation
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- 256 sounds/256 user setups
- 4-zone MIDI control

MP6

The MP6 boasts new pianos, new EPs and a tone wheel organ generator. The new RH graded-hammer action also includes let-off and Ivory-feel keys. With 4-zone MIDI control, it's the perfect stage piano for the pro on the go.

KAWAI
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GUITAR CENTER | ONLINE

GC's E-commerce Biz Goes Global

Guitar Center recently partnered with e-commerce service provider FiftyOne, facilitating a global expansion of the chain music retailer's e-commerce operations into more than 90 countries. Gui-

tarcenter.com will also now accept payment in 42 currencies for all online merchandise.

"We are thrilled to have been able to extend the Guitar Center brand to consumers worldwide," said GC Vice President

Richie Pidanick. "We wanted to make sure that these consumers had a first-class customer experience from the moment they land on our website and start shopping, until the moment the order arrives at their door."

New York-based FiftyOne will manage all aspects of guitarcenter.com's online infrastructure, including multicurrency pricing, payment processing, landed cost calculations and international fraud management.

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From left: Michael Bubl 's band members Jake Saslow, Nick Vayenas, Josh Brown and Rob Wilkerson with Stu's Music Shop's Larry and Don Myers



STU'S MUSIC SHOP | EDUCATION

BUBL 'S BAND TAKES FIELD TRIP

Four musicians from Michael Bubl 's band recently visited Westminster High School in Westminster, Md., to conduct a music workshop for the school's jazz band. The workshop was arranged by Westminster, Md.-based Stu's Music Shop and T. J. Waiclul, a district manager for Conn-Selmer, which endorses the band.

The quartet of musicians stopped in Westminster following Bubl 's Madison Square Garden performance in New York and an appearance on NBC's "The Today Show." Jake Saslow, Nick Vayenas, Josh Brown and Rob Wilkerson offered one-on-one advice to the students, discussed their current careers and life on tour, and explained how they became musicians.

Larry Myers, assistant manager at Stu's Music and co-coordinator of the workshop, said the event was a huge success and inspired the kids for their own concert a week later.

"The kids were excited once the band got here and worked with them," Myers said.

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GOOD'NLOUD | CLOSING

GOOD'NLOUD TO CLOSE AFTER 35 YEARS

Good'nLoud Music of Madison, Wis., plans to close its doors in February after 35 years in business. The full-line dealership, which offers music lessons and instrument rentals, began

hosting a going-out-of-business sale in mid-December, according to *The Cap Times*.

Steve Liethen, who co-owns the business with his wife, Chris, cited the weak economy, Internet

competition and big-box retailers selling low-end guitars among the reasons for the closure. In May 2005, the company opened a second location, also in Madison, with 8,300 square feet of space.

During the going-out-of-business sale, Good'nLoud let customers gain credit toward gear purchases if they brought in items for distribution to area food pantries.

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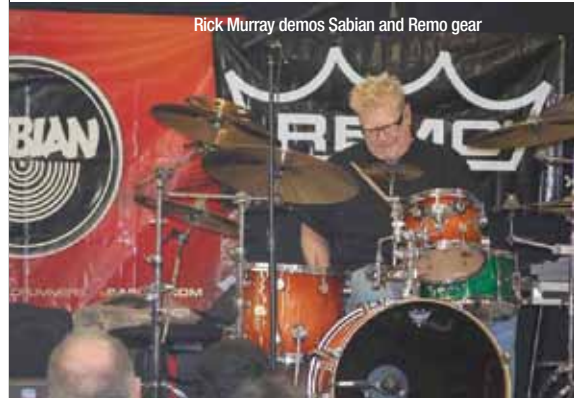
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Rick Murray demos Sabian and Remo gear

MUSICORP RETAILERS | EVENT

MUSICORP'S DRUM DAYS

Campbell's Morrell Music in Johnson City, Tenn., and Ye Olde Music Shop in Hanahan, S.C., each played host to Musiccorp percussion clinics this past November.

Rick Murray, percussionist and region manager for Musiccorp, dropped by the stores to educate attendees on Remo drumheads and Sabian cymbals. His presentation included product overviews, technical demonstrations, and a question-and-answer session on everything from cymbal choices and sounds to drumhead tuning and selection, as well as practice techniques. According to Musiccorp, the clinics enjoyed a significant turnout.

Remo and Sabian provided giveaways for the events, and two attendees from each store received a Sabian Xs20 crash cymbal and a set of Remo drumheads.

"We were extremely pleased with the response to the clinics, and it gives us a unique opportunity to demonstrate what these exceptional products can do while helping music retailers generate some additional sales," Murray said.



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Note from Joe

Thank you for being at the NAMM Show—your support fuels year-round music promotion and education!

By joining us at the 2011 NAMM Show, you're participating in the first step of NAMM's "Circle of Benefits" business model that funds our work to promote music making and the industry.

Each year, the revenue generated from this event is reinvested into market development programs, advocacy efforts and PR activities, all to accomplish the mission of creating more music makers. Our message is seen in homes everywhere on TV, online, in newspapers and in magazines—and even on Capitol Hill and in the White House. So while the global music and sound products industry gathers at the NAMM Show every January, the benefits to the industry are felt all year long.

Annually, the NAMM Show captures the world's attention, highlighting the important work of the industry. There are more than 1,000 media outlets covering the new product launches, new technologies, exciting events and prestigious awards. In addition, there are numerous celebrities visiting the show each year to see and endorse the latest products and graciously

agree to help us communicate the fun and many proven benefits of playing music for everyone.

Throughout the year, the reinvestment of NAMM Show revenue allows us to successfully execute our industry's *Wanna Play?* national public relations campaign, which motivates consumers to pick up a musical instrument and take music lessons. In total, all of our PR and marketing initiatives generated more than \$170 million in advertising value this past year, all to promote playing music! Our growing collection of PSAs features prominent musicians, actors, athletes, business leaders and politicians who attribute their successes to their love of making and playing music. Actors like Jack Black, Jeff Daniels and Robert Downey Jr. have contributed to the cause, helping us get the message out across the airwaves. The effort is paying off! We are seeing music making featured in TV shows, advertising campaigns and national news stories on a daily basis.

Whether it's reaching 20 million people reading about music making in *USA Today*, or seeing a *Wanna Play?* PSA airing during Monday Night Football, the NAMM Show provides the funding needed to promote music making on a large scale and grow the industry for everyone.

Your Membership in NAMM and support of the NAMM trade shows can be viewed the same way—you're not only taking care of your business, you are part of an important cycle that's helping people all around the world to play music.

Joe Lamond • NAMM President/CEO



A Model for Industry Growth...

NAMM reinvests its trade show revenue back into the music products industry to increase active participation in music making and to grow the market for musical instruments and products.

Regardless of what is happening in the world, the NAMM Show is the one place where the industry gathers year after year to celebrate our accomplishments and strengthen our industry. It not only helps members kick their year off right but serves to benefit them all year long—and will continue to do so in the future.

NAME NAMM News February No. 2011

NAMM News is published by NAMM. To keep up-to-date on the latest breaking industry news, sign up for our PLAYBACK Digital e-newsletter at playbackdigital@namm.org



Don't Look Now..

but many of your favorite celebrities are playing music. NAMM's collection of *Wanna Play?* PSAs featuring prominent musicians, actors, athletes, business leaders and politicians continues to grow. They do it to relieve stress, have fun and express themselves—and many of them even attribute their successes to the creativity and discipline gained by playing music. Last year alone, The *Wanna Play?* campaign garnered more than 19,000 free airings on TV/radio, resulting in \$50 million of the overall \$170 million in free advertising value this year alone. Celebrity endorsement and support of this national public relations campaign motivates consumers to pick up a musical instrument themselves.

www.wannaplaymusic.com

LEFT TO RIGHT: Gene Simmons, Gary Sinise, Robert Downey Jr., Rob Bironas (NFL), Orianthi, Peter Frampton, John Legend, Nicole Sullivan, John Taylor, Jerry Spradlin (MLB), Mike Huckabee, Greg Grunberg, Jeff Daniels, Robert David Hall, Daniel Puder (UFC), Olesya Rulin, Jack Black, Gary Hoey

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- > **Pro-Mark, Vic Firth**
Merge with larger suppliers
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Cracks down on counterfeiters
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Completes high-tech facility
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Celebrates launch of new mixer
PAGE 30

SUPPLY

BLUE MICROPHONES | BY SARA FARR

STRADDLING MARKETS

Over the past two years, Southern California-based Blue Microphones has accomplished what few manufacturers have been able to pull off: significant growth in both the pro MI and consumer electronics market.

“When I came in, I wanted to build on Blue Microphones’ consumer product division, but I also wanted to show the pro market that we hadn’t lost our heritage and where we came from,” said Blue Microphones CEO John Maier, who joined the company in the summer of 2009.

While Blue had built an excellent pedigree since its establishment in 1995, Maier said the company hadn’t capitalized on it. His strategy was to expand Blue’s product offerings and, at the same time, increase its number and type of distribution channels. It worked. In 2009, Blue doubled its size. In 2010, the company was on target to grow by 50 percent.

ENFORCING FAIRNESS

Juggling the direct-to-consumer market and the pro market hasn’t been an entirely smooth road. The company’s popular Bluebird mic, for example, is sold direct to users on Amazon, which, at press time, was offering a \$50 discount on the model.



John Maier

“The consumer electronic side of the business can be a very big challenge when it comes to pricing and MAP [minimum advertised price] policies,” Maier said.

To address any concerns, Blue has been developing new strategies that it plans to unveil at The NAMM Show.

“Hopefully, we will be able to have a much cleaner and more enforceable policy,” Maier said. “In the end, we’re looking for a policy that’s based on common sense. We want to make sure we’re growing with the right partners and doing the right things.”

REACHING A WIDER AUDIENCE

Blue recently released Spark, a cardioid, solid-state condenser mic that has a custom-designed condenser capsule with class-A discrete electronics. Its Focus control lets users choose between a normal mode that provides increased low-frequency sensitivity and a focus mode for greater clarity and detail. At \$199, Spark addresses the pro market at a palatable price point.

Blue originally built its reputation with high-end pro recording mics, some of which reach into the thousands of dollars. With such products as Spark and the

new Encore series, geared toward live performance, Blue’s making a concerted effort to appeal to the MI dealer’s target market.

“We wanted to bring our quality of microphone on the pro recording side down to a much wider audience,” Maier said. “Before Spark, you had to spend about \$300 to get into a Blue microphone, and for the guy who’s buying a \$100 interface, I’m not sure his first mic is going to cost three times as much as his interface.”

At NAMM, Blue will introduce the Yeti Pro, a prosumer USB mic with XLR output, and Reactor, a higher-end recording mic.

“We’re excited about re-energizing a higher-end price point that’s been a little dormant with the economy and some of the challenges in the market,” Maier said. “Our goal is to make sure that the dealer knows we’ve come out with a product that would previously have been in the \$1,200–\$2,000 range during the early 2000s. For the dealers who’ve been in this market, it will be a no-brainer. But for the dealer who only dabbles in combo, we say, ‘Get ’em in the door with Spark, and use this as your sell-up’ — and it’s all still under \$500. This will allow them to get into the market and build their customer base along the way.” **MI**

CHARITY

Symetrix Plays Santa

Symetrix has participated in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program for the 23rd year. The program collects new, unwrapped toys each year to distribute as Christmas

gifts to needy children in the community.

“I love to imagine the joy of one small child opening a present on Christmas morning,” said Julie Ogden, Symetrix COO and

organizer of the campaign. “Christmas wouldn’t be Christmas without Toys for Tots for so many young people.” symetrixaudio.com



EVENT

AES Announces Dates

The Audio Engineering Society (AES) has announced the dates for its 130th and 131st Conventions. The 130th AES Convention will be held at the Novotel London West Convention Centre in London from May 13–16. The 131st annual convention will be held from Oct. 20–23 at the Jacob K. Javits Center in New York. aes.org

PROMOTION

Schimmel Flies High

Airline passengers at the Changi Airport in Singapore can now relax to the sound of a Schimmel concert grand K 230 (pictured)



in the center of Terminal 3. The grand piano can be used by any airline passenger who wants to recover from the strain of travel. schimmel-piano.de

CHARITY

Suppliers Donate to Good Cause

Charitable music product manufacturers recently gave a hand to NAMM-grantee Guitars in the Classroom and social media phenom Playing for Change Foundation. Both organizations teamed up with online auction company Bidding For Good to offer a selection of signed and unsigned instruments, CDs, celebrity sports memorabilia, and vacation packages to bidders. Paul Reed Smith, C.F. Martin and Luna Guitars all donated. guitarsintheclassroom.org

Zildjian's Craigie Zildjian and Vic Firth Co.'s Vic Firth



PRO-MARK, VIC FIRTH | MERGERS

DRUMSTICK GIANTS MERGE WITH LARGER SUPPLIERS

Drumstick companies Pro-Mark and Vic Firth have each merged with separate suppliers.

D’Addario and Pro-Mark recently announced they’re close to finalizing terms relating to D’Addario’s proposed purchase of the 53-year-old drumstick company. D’Addario CEO Jim D’Addario said the acquisition will further diversify D’Addario’s product offerings and expand the company’s manufacturing footprint.

“This is a key strategic add-on acquisition for us,” he said. “Pro-Mark’s brand would be a natural complement and extension to D’Addario’s line of products.”

“The sale of Pro-Mark, a family-owned business, to the D’Addario family is practical on both a personal and professional level,” said Maury Brochstein, Pro-Mark’s CEO. “I’m excited about the opportunity to assist D’Addario with the growth of the Pro-Mark brand.”

D’Addario President Rick Drumm added that D’Addario is “fortunate to have the opportunity to purchase a company with such a deep history and prominent position in our industry.”

He explained that D’Addario’s team of LEAN manufacturing experts will immediately begin a LEAN transformation at the company’s Houston facilities upon execution of the agreement.

ZILDJIAN, VIC FIRTH JOIN FORCES

On Dec. 20, 2010, New England-based companies Avedis Zildjian and Vic Firth announced they were merging, effective immediately. Zildjian CEO Craigie Zildjian said both companies will continue to run autonomously, and customers should notice no difference in the way business is conducted.

“Zildjian is honored to join forces with the Vic Firth Co., which has set the standard for drumsticks in the music industry,” she added. “Similarities in our cultures and business philosophies, coupled with a shared dedication to product and service excellence, provide a strong foundation for the union of our two companies.”

“I have the greatest respect for Zildjian,” said Vic Firth, president of Vic Firth Co. “Our businesses share common values, a passion for manufacturing and a similar approach to how we do business.” promark.com; vicfirth.com

FENDER | PARTNERSHIP

Fender Partnership Drives New VW System

Volkswagen has joined forces with Fender to equip select 2012 models with the new Fender premium audio system.

The nine-speaker system

features proprietary Panasonic speaker technology and covers the cabin with directional sound from front door speakers. Dual voice coil speakers cut through

distracting noise and offer extended range for all musical genres.

The design also includes lower intermodulation distortion and smooth midrange response to

eliminate harshness. The new Jetta GLI will be the first Volkswagen model in dealerships this spring to offer the new system.

fender.com

APPOINTMENTS

Hosa's Martinez Prepares to Take Reins

Hosa Technology recently hired Mayumi Martinez as the company's executive vice president. Martinez will assume the newly created position in preparation for Hosa's next generation of leadership as President Sho Sato transitions to retirement.



Mayumi Martinez

Three current Zildjian employees have assumed new roles in the company's sales department. John Sorenson will take on the newly created director of sales planning position, while Steve Pappone has been named sales planning manager. Former Business Development Coordinator Cady Zildjian has been appointed to associate product manager of apparel and novelties. Zildjian's new employees include Laura Rivera as director of marketing communications and David Gutierrez as customer service administrator.

Alan Wright has been promoted to quality and continuous improvement manager at Soundcraft Studer. The company has also recruited previous Xerox Program Manager Garry Blackmore to spearhead a wave of new product developments.

St. Louis Music recently hired former Conn-Selmer Marketing Director Craig Denny to represent the P. Mauriat brass line.

Sabian has appointed Luis Cardoso to the role of marketing manager.

Mark Oliver has been tapped as Chauvet's northern U.K. territory sales manager.

DigiTech has brought on Tiffany Feltenberger as its marketing manager.

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SUPPLY  



U.S. Sen. Charles
Schumer

D'ADDARIO | LEGAL

SENATOR CRACKS DOWN ON D'ADDARIO COUNTERFEITERS

U.S. Sen. Charles Schumer visited D'Addario's company headquarters in Farmingdale, N.Y., to commence the investigation of Chinese counterfeiters who manufacture and distribute D'Addario products.

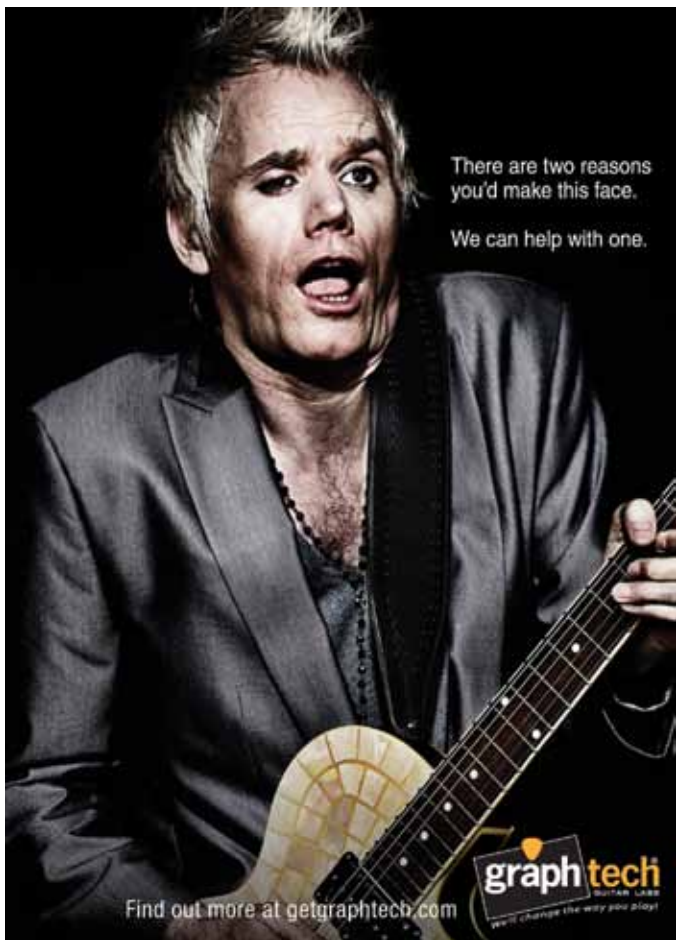
D'Addario recently discovered that several Chinese manufacturers are producing and selling counterfeit strings at or below market cost and that 70 percent of all D'Addario strings sold in mainland China are inauthentic. The company has not only lost millions of dollars in revenue as a result of Chinese counterfeiters but also sustained damage to the brand's equity.

"Not only are we missing out on opportunities to expand our market share and strengthen our brand's name throughout the globe, U.S. jobs are also at risk of being lost due to intellectual

'U.S. jobs are at risk of being lost due to intellectual property infringement.'

property infringement," said D'Addario CEO James D'Addario.

As a result of Sen. Schumer's visit, D'Addario will join the Department of Homeland Security's and Justice's "Operation in Our Sites" Web crackdown program, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement will shut down offending websites. Schumer also advocated that the United States Trade Representative press the Chinese government to shut down culprit factories. daddario.com



Find out more at getgraphtech.com





AUDIO-TECHNICA | FACILITY

AUDIO-TECHNICA CONSTRUCTS HIGH-TECH JAPANESE FACILITY

Audio-Technica (A-T) recently opened the doors on a new state-of-the-art facility, Technica Fukui.

Located in Echizen City, Fukuoka Prefecture, Japan, Technica Fukui has integrated the three pre-existing A-T Fukuoka branches into one location and streamlined design efforts. The new facility is equipped with a dedicated acoustic lab and an advanced-design anechoic chamber specially designed for audio testing.

"[Technica Fukui's] open design, from work areas to conference rooms, underscores the company's teamwork philosophy,"

said Greg Pinto, Audio-Technica U.S. vice president of marketing. "Add to that an impressive basketball court-sized wireless lab immune to outside RF energy and you can see how A-T will continue to create products that exceed expectations of wireless users."

Technica Fukui's improved wireless communication measurement tool lets A-T create wireless, spectrum-efficient products for professional and consumer markets. The company can also design and test a wider variety of wireless options under many communication protocols.

{audio-technica.com}

TONIC | EVENT

TONIC Explores Sustainable Instruments

The Tonal Innovation Center (TONIC) hosted the first annual International Musical Instruments Seminar in Joensuu, Finland, in an effort to explore sustainable alternatives for musical instrument production.

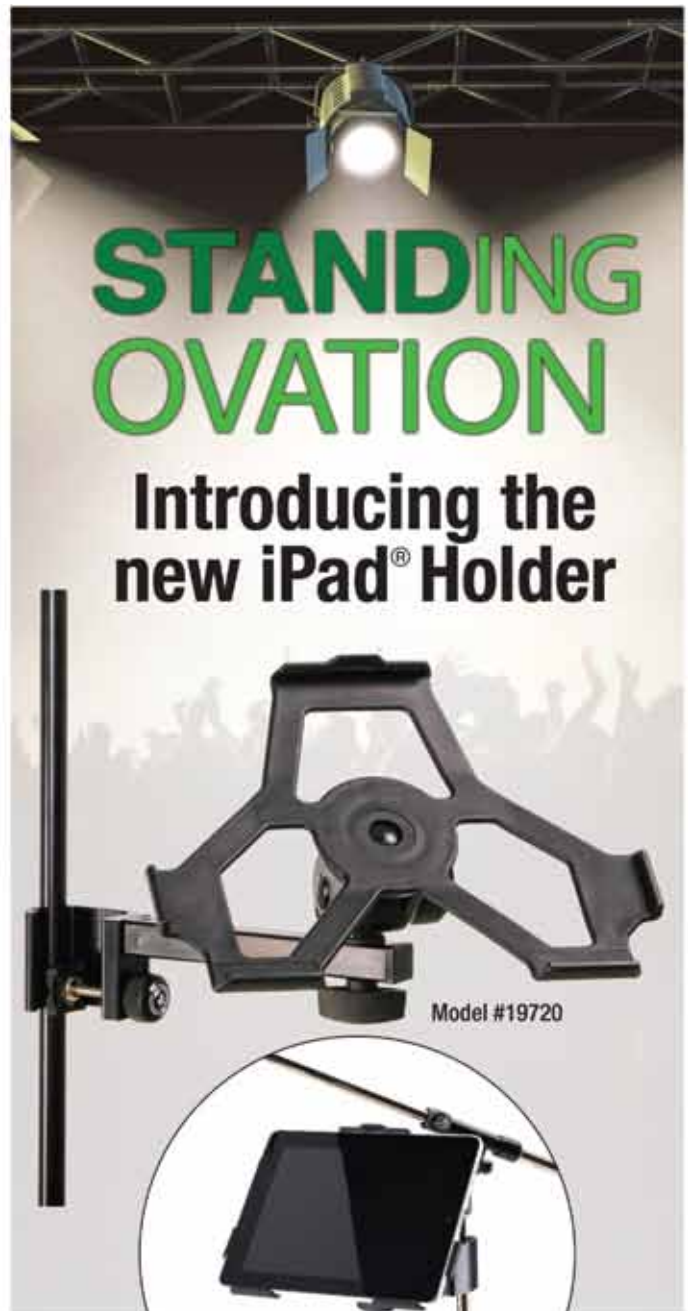
Held Nov. 18 and 19, 2010, the EU-funded project aimed to develop business opportunities with natural fiber composites and brought together numerous music industry representatives.

Tim Shaw, principle engineer at Fender, provided insight about the obstacles modern materials present for fretted instrument

manufacturing, such as market sizing and iconic brands.

Other speakers discussed environmentally friendly solutions, such as sustainable forestation and waste reduction.

Seminar leader Heikki Koivurova introduced the concept of using natural fiber alternatives and new production methods, such as injection molding, while Neil Lilien, sales and marketing director of RS Berkeley Musical Instruments, suggested that a music industry coalition be formed for conservation, cooperation and planning. {tonal.fi}



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HAL LEONARD | DISTRIBUTION

Hal Leonard Expands in Europe With EMI

Hal Leonard recently gained exclusive rights to represent the catalog of London-based EMI Music Publishing U.K. The deal enables the creation of many new

music publications and digital products for sale throughout Europe.

Under the terms of the agreement, Hal Leonard will oversee

licensing, editorial, production and administration of the EMI Music Publishing U.K. catalog via its new London office and Milwaukee headquarters. Distri-

bution will be handled by Hal Leonard Europe, a joint venture formed in 1996 by Hal Leonard and Music Sales.

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The Denon DJ crew with DJ Johnny Juice (center)

DENON DJ | BY ZACH PHILLIPS

Public Enemy DJ Unveils Denon Mixer

Public Enemy's DJ Johnny Juice blasted his mixes through Sky nightclub in Oak Brook, Ill., on Dec. 1, 2010, kicking off the release of Denon DJ's DN-MC6000.

The professional digital mixer and controller, which sells for around \$800, features four channels plus a MIDI interface and internal sound card. It has two balanced mic inputs and is optimized for Traktor and Virtual DJ users. According to Silvio Zepieri, Denon DJ's brand manager, the unit also distinguishes itself as a "real mixer."

"So regardless of a computer connection, it's always a mixer," he said. "If something happens — a computer goes down, you lose your power supply — it's still a mixer. That's really one of the big features."

Sky attendees were invited to give the DN-MC6000 a test-drive. The three-hour event, which was streamed live online, also featured product giveaways by Denon DJ and Chicago radio station WBBM-FM, or B96.

"The DN-MC6000 is a fantastic piece of gear," said DJ Johnny Juice. "It has a great feel, and you can use it with any type of DJ software." denondj.com



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WEBNEWS



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LATEST NEWS
New Website Launched
New Practice Pads for 2011
New Artist: Brad Morgan
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White Maple A Timeless Classic

Los Cabos Site Overhaul

Los Cabos Drumsticks recently launched its new website, which includes improved navigation, updated product photos, downloadable catalogs and a new look.

"We thought it would be nice to start 2011 with a fresh new appearance," said Matt Carter, Los Cabos' director of marketing. "We've got a lot of great Web ideas we plan to put into play as 2011 takes shape."

loscabosdrumsticks.com

AMERICAN DJ GETS SMART

The new American DJ and American Audio mobile-enabled part site gives customers access to replacement parts from their smartphones, iPads and other mobile devices. The site, mobileparts.americandj.com, is also accessible through Macs and PCs.

"A big part of our service philosophy has been to make sure that end-users always have ready access to replacement parts like lamps, fuses and anything else they needed," said Scott Davies, general manager of American DJ and American Audio.

HAL'S VIRAL VIDEO

John Jacobson's videos from Hal Leonard's *Music Express* magazine website, musicexpressmagazine.com, were recently downloaded by a site patron and reposted on YouTube. The instructional clip was renamed "Double Dream Hands" after one of Jacobson's dance moves and since being reposted has accumulated nearly 750,000 hits.

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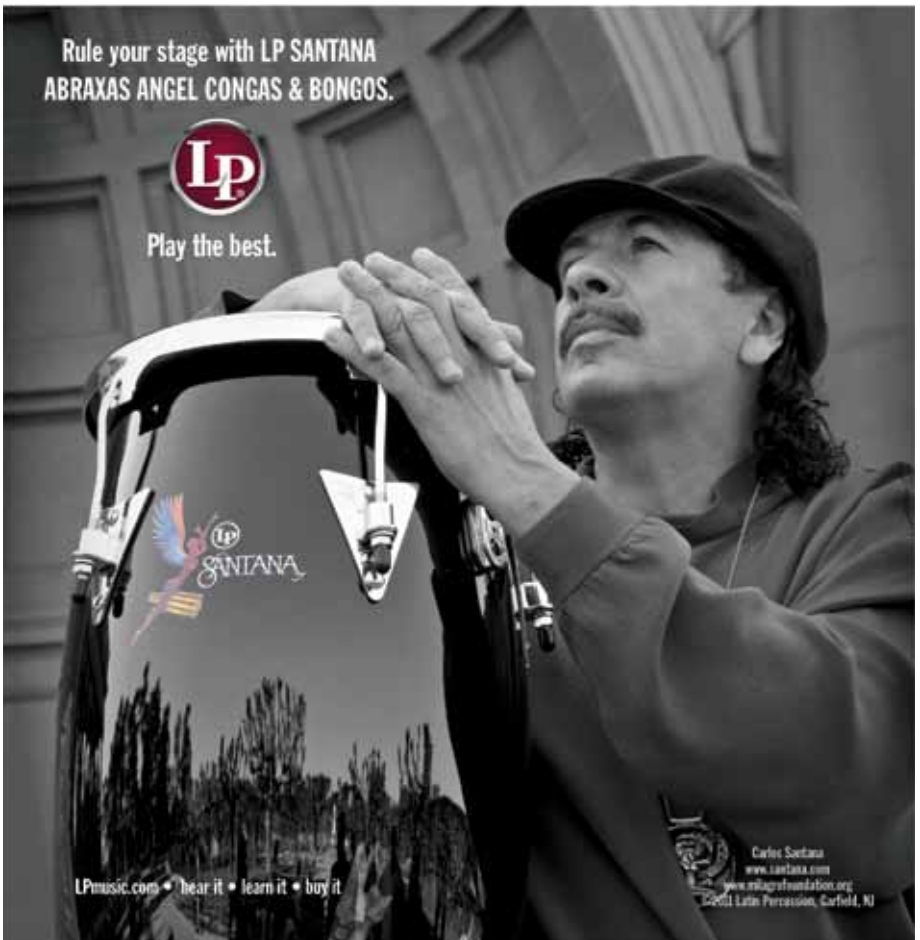
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IDEAS

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INDEPENDENT RETAIL | BY TED ESCHLIMAN

SELLING IN 3-D

What can we do to make our stores compelling to customers?

Top-tier retail establishments go to great lengths to make their selling spaces physically attractive, sparing no expense and remodeling often. Some in our industry understandably cut corners on design, focusing on hiring musically literate staff who are friendly and trainable. Some focus resources on advertising, running high-energy sales events, community performances, or partnering with vendors and local music organizations.

These are nice broad-based tactics, but there are easier ways to make shopping more appealing. Sometimes, it's as elementary as your sales team's body language.

As the local independent warriors, the sharpest weapon we carry is an opportunity for intimacy and personal interaction with our customers. You can't offer this with a computer mouse or two-dimensional computer screen, and in a big-box retail model, it's a losing battle.

That said, there are three essential concerns we little guys



Three body language essentials for every salesperson

need to take into account in the day-to-day interactions with our clientele — and especially our first-visit patrons.

Incongruence. When a customer asks for a product located at the other end of the store, the worst thing a clerk can do is barely lift a finger and say, "Over there." If an item is more than 5 feet away, the employee needs

to express interest in helping the customer, not with a larger pointing motion but a show of physical support by walking with him to the product (best) or simply moving with him at least two physical steps (acceptable). The body demonstrates a sincerity that can't be communicated with the voice.

Gestures. On an intuitive level, we're aware that pointing directly at someone, even casually, serves as a warning. An extended finger is a sword, and we have to be careful what subliminal signals we send with our hands and faces. Folks can be offended by tiny body gestures.

Personal space. In the unspoken rules of space and touch, we dance a delicate choreography in balancing a sense of territory with the desire for intimacy.

In her book, *The Power Of Body Language: How To Succeed In Every Business And Social Encounter*, Tonya Reiman outlines four levels of the space sphere. There's the *public space* at 12 feet, in which one is free to move around with little interaction. Shoppers who simply want to browse demand you respect this. If they are "just looking," they expect you to keep a pal-

pable distance, especially when they're auditioning instruments. Then there's the *social space* at 4 feet where they may wish to ask questions. The access to closer *personal space* is something that must be earned, developed with a certain level of trust, one that can never be imposed on without permission. Violating this prematurely has damaging effects. The final sphere, *intimacy*, from 2 feet away to actual touching is reserved for deeper bond and will only occur when mutual respect and confidence is achieved over time. Without a doubt, it's always best to err on the greater distance.

Every person is different, and that makes this a challenge. Some salespeople achieve maximum informality immediately, and others are exposed as buffoons when they rush. In conversation, it's a bad enough mistake, but when you add physical contact, or even a violation of personal space, it has devastating results on a potential relationship. This is something worth investing time into observing. **MI**

Ted Eschliman is a 30-year veteran of music retail and co-owner of Dietze Music in Southeast Nebraska. Mel Bay published his book, *Getting Into Jazz Mandolin*.

THE CUSTOMER WHISPERER | BY GREG BILLINGS

The Music Man

Zeb Billings passed away Dec. 6, 2010, in Naples, Fla., after a long struggle with congestive heart failure. He was 80. Too young to fight in WWII but very talented with the tenor saxophone, he formed a dance band and became a 13-year-old celebrity in his hometown of Milwaukee.

His first band had 11 pieces — 10 guys named Bob and him. By the time he was 30, he had a popular TV show and the largest piano and organ dealership in Wisconsin. By 35, he had established a successful music publishing company. He pioneered multimedia instruction by convincing Bell & Howell to produce a cassette player with pitch control and then persuaded leading organ manufacturers, including Hammond, Wurlitzer and Lowrey, to build them into their instruments. When organs acquired automatic chord features, he created the first big-note E-Z Play Speed Music books.



Remembering Zeb Billings — industry pioneer, father and ambassador of music making

As the organ industry faded, he changed his focus to creating interactive children's books that reproduced musical sounds. The first book had a color-coded keyboard mounted below easy transcriptions of children's songs. The second generation used synthesized barnyard animal sounds, and later versions used sampled sounds of cartoon characters under licenses from Warner Bros., Disney and Sesame Street. In the early 1990s, he sold his firm to industry giants Western Publishing (Golden Books) and Hal Leonard.

A fine musician, he chose the path of business rather than performance. While he wrote and arranged songs until the very end and loved to sit in with small jazz groups, he never worked as a musician after he opened his first piano store in 1956.

In retirement, he organized several jazz vocal groups and recorded two fine CDs, but it was more hobby than business, and many of the performances were for charity. Just weeks before his passing, he completed 25 vocal arrangements and recruited musicians for a new group.

This brief résumé, while chronicling his career, misses the essence of the man. Zeb Billings believed that everyone had a natural inclination to make music. Anyone who came near him

was encouraged to play or sing. If you couldn't do either, he would hand you a set of maracas or a tambourine. If he had just written a song, he would ask you to write lyrics. I probably became a bass player because Dad was always looking for sidemen.

When he decided to produce a hit TV show, he formed a house band from his buddies and the salesmen who worked for him. Guest artists were teachers and students from the store or any celebrity who happened to be passing through Milwaukee.

When he launched his publishing company, some of those same teachers became writers and arrangers. A few are still writing and arranging today. One of them, Keith Mardak, went on to make Hal Leonard the largest print music publisher in the world. Keith and Dad, though competitive rivals for a time, remained friends. Keith sent a wonderful condolence note that referred to Dad as his "mentor."

Keith wasn't the only industry titan to be touched by Dad's influence. In the days following his demise, I heard from Bob Jones and Dennis Houlihan, both of whom referred to Dad as their hero, and from Ikutaro Kakehashi, who praised Dad's creativity.

Many people who worked for Dad went on to great success, and all considered their time with him defining. Art Jensen

left to start Jensen Publications, Bob Zenoni started Uncle Bob's Music Center, Lane Zastrow formed Heritage Guitar and Chuck Faas went on to purchase Guild Guitar and Randall Amplifier.

And there were many others. When I bought back the retail store he had sold 18 years earlier, almost all my competitors had worked for Dad. They adored him but resented me (until I left town, of course).

There is a reason why even people he'd fired loved him and their time working with him. He was usually the best musician and the smartest, most creative guy in the room, but also the kindest, gentlest and most generous. He focused on giving the spotlight to others. Whether it was musicians, writers, salesmen, teachers or a guy he'd just met at the first tee, he was always praising and encouraging. I never heard him say a bad word about anyone.

He had an interesting duality to his music. Everything he wrote or arranged for his groups was complex, sophisticated and relatively difficult. But everything he produced for the public, from his original organ course to the first E-Z Play Speed Music books to the Sound Story books, was aimed at making music easy and accessible for everyone.

Here are two short stories no one knows that give a measure of the man.

I remember closing the store on a Saturday during Christmas season when I was about 12. Dad told me to go to the car, and he went back to talk with one of the teachers who was also leaving work. After a moment, Dad took out his wallet and gave the man a \$20 bill (about \$100 today). When I asked what happened, Dad said, "Oh, he's had a little trouble with drinking, but he is doing really good now." I learned years later the man had been his high school band teacher. He taught at the store for many more years.

The second story is about a girl singer. Parties at our house inevitably turned into jam sessions. When I was a teenager and gigging myself, I really started to appreciate them. One night, a young girl sat in and just bombed. The other musicians dissed her, and she moved off to a corner to become invisible. Dad discretely went to her and said, "Honey, you need to get a 3 by 5 card and write down your 10 best songs and your keys. Keep it in your purse, and when you

call your tune, also call your key. You have a great voice, but you were just in the wrong key tonight."

Being the son of celebrity has its own set of challenges. Doors open and opportunities present. But life in the shadow of a great man can make it hard for a young man to find his own identity. Only in later life do

we realize that we were not standing in his shadow. We are standing on his shoulders.

Rest in peace, Zeb Billings. The world is a better place, and has more music in it, because you were here. **MI**

Greg Billings whispers to customers at the Steinway Piano Gallery in Naples, Fla. He has set up a tribute to his father at zebbillings.shutterfly.com.

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THE LESSON ROOM | BY PETE GAMBER

Why Are You Waiting?

It's after the holidays, and I'm going to presume your store is really slow — or at least slower than you want it to be. Your website and YouTube, Twitter and Facebook pages are all up-to-date, and now you're waiting for those customers to call or come into your store to buy and sign up for lessons.

Well guess what? It isn't happening. Why? Because consumers on the Internet are voyeurs and peeping toms. They check your website, browse around and leave, and you don't know they were there, let alone who they are. This means you can't talk with them or sell them anything until they call you. That's right — you're waiting. And the more information you have on your website, the lesser the chances are they'll call. The big rule in selling is don't give too much info over the phone — get the customer in the store. But what about websites?

I'm not going to wait. I'm going to reach out and use that old marketing tool: the telephone. Here's who I'm going to call:

Holiday purchasers. “How is the guitar you purchased?” Double checking on purchases is a great way to start the new year with customers. During the holiday hustle and bustle, the customer may not have remembered the cool stuff your store does, so remind them about the free services you offer with a purchase. Lessons are always first in my discussions.

Also, route them to your YouTube channel or website, so they can see the fun stuff that goes on in your lessons program. I also mention that we have a Facebook page that they can check out and join. Double check to see if you have their e-mail addresses — this is a must.

Current students and parents. “How are the lessons going?” This is really important, especially for those new students who started in January. Make sure they're enjoying

their experience at your store, and let them know about upcoming student events.

Rental customers. “How's school band?” This may be a great source for music lessons prospects. Students either want to get ahead because they enjoy being in school band, or they're ready to quit band because it's boring. I always say that for every kid quitting

school band there's a potential guitarist or drummer. Most of these parents don't want their student to quit band, or music, so your call may provide musical avenues they hadn't considered.

Customers who haven't been in for a while. Have they left the state? Quit playing? Or, do they not want to come to your store anymore? Best bet is they may have forgotten about your store or have developed new shopping habits via the Internet.

Former students and recent quits. Stay in touch with these customers. Many may have quit because of money issues. Keep your store in their thoughts. They may now be back on their feet and ready to sign up. They may have friends who are looking for lessons. Or, there may be a student who quit because of sports who has a sister looking for lessons.

Yes, I'm fishing for business. I can either stand behind the counter waiting, or I can be calling customers. I'm paying for a phone, so why shouldn't I use it?

Once you get a conversation going, listen to what your customers say. Look for any and all opportunities from these conversations. This is old school stuff, but it's new school if you're the only one doing it. **MI**



You're paying to have a phone, so why not use it to your advantage?

Pete Gamber is the owner of Alta Loma Music in Rancho Cucamonga, Calif. He welcomes questions and comments at pete@altalomamusic.com.

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STREETWISE SELLING | BY KENNY SMITH

Webcast Selling

Your customers are using social media to make personal connections and share experiences. Webcasting is an excellent way to reach out to them. Some of the most successful entrepreneurs are now using webcasts to deliver messages, generate leads and grow market share.

Recently, I attended a DJ competition that drew roughly 80 people to a small venue. One guy upfront was hosting a webcast using a laptop with a camera. I logged in from my computer to watch it and was blown away to see 750 other viewers. They could converse during the webcast by using a chat function, and they had plenty of comments and questions, keeping the host busy.



GETTING STARTED

You can set up your own webcast channel using a computer and webcam. There are lots of websites that offer this service. (Currently, I'm using Ustream.tv.) Many charge for premium services, such as HD quality and ad-free broadcasting, but you can use the basic, free version and upgrade later. Just get started.

Build your audience by promoting your show on your website and in-store. Hang a poster, and invite all of your customers. Ask them to join your social media pages, if they haven't already. Along with e-mail blasts, Facebook and Twitter pages are excellent mediums for sending out invitations.

Advance scheduling lets you promote the show's air date. Also, send a reminder notice with an attached link on the day of the show. And add searchable tags to your webcast to elevate your page rankings online.

SET THE SCENE

Preview your broadcast before you go live. Lighting and camera placement is crucial, so spend some time arranging yourself and your set. Check the camera frame, and make sure everything you want to see is visible and distractions are removed. If you're using a fixed camera, tape some marks on the floor, and stay inside them. Also, sound quality is just as important as the video image. A mixer and microphones will vastly improve the sound over what you'll get from a webcam mic.

Before you go live, rehearse the show. Don't wing it. "Ums" and

pregnant pauses can lose an audience. Avoid reading from notes or cue cards — try setting up a monitor behind the camera. Not only will you relax and sound more confident and professional, you'll give your audience something real and entertaining.

Use a designated driver to monitor the show and incoming chat during the broadcast. The ability to interact with your audience is what makes hosting a webcast different from anything else. Lively chat makes the show more successful, so it's important to have a competent person at the helm.

Now, try embedding your logo or info, so it shows up on the screen continuously during the show. Or, create a 10- to 15-second flash ad to play at the end. You may have staff who already know how to do this.

GET AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION

With the growth of social media as a viable marketing platform, webcasting will only become more popular and sophisticated. Manufacturers are even offering webcasting tools, such as the Roland VR-5 AV mixer and recorder, as well as iPhone teleprompting apps. Don't miss a golden opportunity to promote your store, products and services like never before. **MI**

Kenny Smith is an industry veteran and consults both retailers and suppliers. Find him at kennysmithsalesguru.com.

Webcasting presents a unique opportunity to interact with clients, generate leads



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LESSONS LEARNED | BY GERSON ROSENBLOOM

Excuses Are Costly

I recently moved into a new home in a new state. It's always an adventure finding craftsmen to do work when you're starting anew, and I had to hire an electrician. The first guy to come out was a fascinating case study in what makes people tick. I needed a data line run to my office. He explained the problems in fishing the line. I had a light fixture in the basement I wanted to switch from upstairs, and again, he found the roadblocks to doing that. By the time he told me about the problems with installing an extra receptacle in the island, I knew this guy was more interested in finding excuses than solutions.



How do people become that negative? He was carrying a boat anchor through life and hurting any chances of success. The next guy to come out gave creative solutions, and he got the job.

Do negative thoughts dominate your day? Do you find yourself thinking more of what you can avoid instead of what you can tackle? As I've called on music retailers, I've realized that the modus operandi for many is to make excuses instead of taking action. Here's a common scenario:

Me: I see you sold that guitar almost immediately and made a bunch of money doing so. Good job! How's about another?

Dealer: Not now. It's the summer doldrums.

Me: Wow, you made it through. Fall is finally here. Are you ready for that guitar?

Dealer: I can't even think about it now. It's band rental season.

Me: How'd rental season go?

Dealer: Great. We were up 20 percent.

Me: Congratulations. Hey, I've got that order for the guitar I've been sitting on.

Dealer: We're doing inventory this weekend. Call me Monday for the order.

Me: How'd inventory go?

Dealer: All done. Would you mind calling back in November? I want to get that guitar in for Christmas.

Me: The season is right around the corner. Ready for that guitar?

Dealer: I'm waiting for The NAMM Show to do my buying.

Look, I get it: Business is tough. Caution is smart. That said, putting off cash-producing decisions causes bad things to get worse.

Of course band rental season's a busy time. But while you're

renting toots and flutes, the world doesn't stand still for your combo business. Especially busy times call for more intense, focused effort. It would be lovely if tasks came to us in neat little packets, but it doesn't work that way. Sometimes, you'll have time on your hands, and sometimes, you'll have to leap buildings in a single bound.

I did the same stuff when I was in retail. I stubbornly refused to do so much as take phone calls from reps during the holidays, even when it wasn't that busy. I wonder what deals I'd passed up.

I recently called a dealer to tell him, literally, how to get money back on inventory he'd purchased. But the person answering the phone told me he was too busy to take calls and didn't need anything. Later, I saw the owner had posted on his personal Facebook page that afternoon.

When you constantly take a negative approach to daily challenges, you're often avoiding the confrontation that's part of the decision-making process. And avoiding decisions often leads to decisions being made for you — and not within your control. Like the electrician, you may be squandering opportunities. Why not try a yes-I-can attitude and see if you can't take control of your own destiny? **MI**

Gerson Rosenbloom is managing director of Wechter Guitars. He's former president of Medley Music and a past NAMM chairman. E-mail him at gersonmusicinc@gmail.com.

'Putting off cash-producing decisions causes bad things to get worse.'

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THE RETAIL DOCTOR | BY BILLY CUTHRELL

Finding Good Apples

Ever held a firm, ripe-looking apple in your hand, only to bite in and find it was sour? You'd picked through all the apples and thought you had the perfect one, but you'd been fooled by the outside. The same analogy can be made for employees who turn into sour apples after a few weeks or months on the job.

I recently interviewed prospective candidates for a front desk position, and it occurred to me that making sure people were enthusiastic was just as important as doing a background check. However, you can't background check character. So, I considered some shared characteristics of the really great people I hired in the past.



SPEAKING UP

Nothing — and I mean nothing — throws up a red flag faster than a prospective employee who sits in an interview and says little to nothing.

I like a more conversational interview where we can chat in a relaxed atmosphere. I remind prospects that they're not interviewing for a position at the Los Alamos National Lab, where they'd need top-secret clearance. I explain that we have a fun, laid-back environment where musicians, parents, kids and adults from all walks of life gather to make music and unwind, so employees need to be comfortable talking.

Can prospects enthusiastically approach strangers who walk in the shop and help them find what they're looking for, or will prospects sit behind the counter, mumble "hello" and stare at a computer screen? Rejection can be tough, and sometimes, customers want to be left alone to browse. Can prospects keep smiles on their faces when told, "I'm just looking," and politely say, "No problem. My name is Erin. Just let me know if I can help you with

anything." Will they say "hello" when people enter and "Have a great day" when people leave? Will prospects tell you when they see something that needs improvement and follow up with their ideas for improving it? Will they tell you if they see other employees steal or tell you who's doing a great job helping customers? Will they tell you they enjoy working in your shop, or will they say little, as

they did during the interview?

All of our great hires have said they enjoyed working in our shops. All have shared ideas for making our shops better. All have gotten compliments from customers for being helpful and friendly. I may not have acted on all of my great employees' ideas, but at least the really great employees spoke up and got involved.

GOING THE EXTRA MILE

A few weeks ago, I worked a Friday night to fill in for a teacher who had surgery earlier that week. I thought I was the last person in the shop, but when I went upfront to close down, I noticed our recent hire, an 18-year-old named Jade, sitting behind the front desk — not dabbling on Facebook, not playing games on the computer, but finishing her work. The afternoon had been busy, and Jade didn't get a chance to complete her work, so she stayed late. I was delighted to see her taking responsibility and not putting things off until Monday when she was scheduled to work again.

But I was even more pleased knowing Jade wasn't putting off her work on someone else to do the next day. In Jade's initial interview with us, she carried a conversation easily, was polite and said she was willing to work various hours as long as it didn't conflict with her school schedule. She was a team player,

How to avoid hiring seemingly good prospects who turn into sour apples on the job

but most important, Jade smiled. A lot. She could tune and restring a guitar but admitted she needed some practice and would like to brush up on her guitar repair skills. She also acknowledged, almost as if she were embarrassed, that she didn't know much about drums and keyboards, but we knew we could teach her the ropes. We also knew we couldn't make people naturally smile, but all of our really great hires smile. A lot.

TAKING OWNERSHIP

I see lots of excuses and lame attempts to pass the blame and make problems someone else's to fix. I can't stand it, but I can't completely blame people for doing this because it's the example they see and hear every day. From our government "leaders" to managers to business owners, everyone wants to assign guilt to someone else. I certainly don't expect people to take ownership of things they didn't do, but sometimes, you need to take ownership to solve problems, retain a customer and make the situation right.

One recent afternoon, I was behind our reception desk helping a customer when I overheard a tense conversation between my employee and an upset guitar student. The student's lesson had been canceled because his regular teacher was out. The teacher's wife had gone into labor and had to leave early. We'd called and left voice mails for all the afternoon students, asking if we could reschedule since a substitute teacher was unavailable on short notice. This student wasn't upset that his lesson had been canceled as much as that he wasn't notified.

When I finished with my customer, I made myself look busy while I waited to see if my employee could resolve the issue. She listened and repeatedly apologized for our teacher as the customer expressed his frustration. She said she understood his frustration since he drove in traffic, only to have no teacher and no lesson. She explained that all we had on file was his cell phone number — there was no work or home number listed. And she explained that, when we checked his registration form, we found he left all the contact spaces blank except for his cell phone number with a note that he "only accepts calls on his cell." There was no e-mail address on file either.

My employee's calm demeanor with a dif-

ficult customer was impressive. She pointed out the possibility that, even though we left a voice mail, technology isn't perfect and the message could've been lost by his service provider. She said she'd make it right and do whatever it took to resolve the issue. She also stressed that he knew we would work to find solutions for future issues if lessons needed to be canceled again on short notice.

She checked another teacher's schedule,

saw a cancellation and put the student in that spot. By the time she was done, the student had cooled off. Our contact information was updated to include all of his phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Plus, he got the lesson he paid for and thanked our employee for helping him so quickly. **MI**

Billy Cuthrell operates Progressive Music Center and askourmusicians.com. Contact him at billy@ppdsonline.com.

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Tightening the Belt

BY ALAN FRIEDMAN

**WANT TO SURVIVE THE
DOWNTURN? THEN IT'S
TIME TO GET REAL ABOUT
YOUR PERSONAL AND
BUSINESS SPENDING**



At last year's winter NAMM show, I had the good fortune to be part of a panel discussion on the fiscal state of the music products retailing industry. During the session, I was asked to predict when the recession would end. Frankly, I could have predicted next year's Super Bowl winner with more accuracy, and I know absolutely nothing about football. (I'm a guitar player, remember.) But I took a stab at it and said "the end of 2011," based on my recollection that most recessions seem to last about five years. I figured if our economic tumble started in early 2007, it theoretically should be over by the end of 2011 — a very scientific analysis even my dog could have done.

I was then asked to give one piece of advice from lessons learned by the recession. I politely answered, “Make sure you save some retained earnings in your business to get you through the next recession.” What I really wanted to do was jump up and down like a crazed lunatic and yell, “Tighten your belt — both at the store and at home — and stop whining about it!” And while I would have felt justified making this point, I’m confident I would’ve blown any chances for a slot on future NAMM show panels.

Thank heavens I took my meds that day.

Now, with the benefit of a full year behind me, I still hold that same notion. I believe we’ll start to see meaningful economic improvement after 2011. But in light of continued financial woes (see “How We Got Into This Mess,” page 50), music store owners still need to make some tough, often unpopular decisions by tightening their spending belts. They need to get over themselves and heed the important lessons taught by every bad recession.

Some music retailers will suck it up. They’ll learn from these invaluable lessons and survive and flourish in later months. Others will continue their bad spending habits, simply because they can’t bring themselves to downgrade their personal lifestyles. Unfortunately, this narrow-minded stubbornness and lack of fiscal discipline will cause further financial deterioration until their businesses and personal lives implode.

With that said, let’s look at what we can do to minimize the recession’s effect and take advantage of opportunities it will undoubtedly create, so we never have to be a casualty of future downturns.

IT’S JUST HUMAN NATURE

When business is booming, it’s all we can do to keep up with our work each day. But when business slows, two unexpected benefits arise: time and opportunities. These benefits give you a meaningful chance to examine your revenue-generating activities, improve them and reduce wasteful costs along the way. But before we discuss what you can do to improve your bottom line during a recession, you need to be aware of a couple things to avoid.

When business slows, there’s a tendency to start cleaning the store or spending a lot of time in “strategy” meetings with staff. In other words, you engage in housecleaning and esoteric conversation. There’s nothing wrong with staying organized and brainstorming, but too much of it can be a form of reality avoidance. You’re merely waiting for things to get better, rather than *making* things better.

But rest assured, things will improve. Unless your clairvoyant speculation of the world ending on Dec. 21, 2012, comes true (in which case, now would be a good time to sell your ’59 cherry sunburst Les Paul, ’72 Ludwig Vistalite four-piece Zep kit and Beanie Babies collection), things will get better. The key is to use this downtime to prepare yourself for the better times ahead and do what you can to accelerate that inevitable era. Think about it: When recessions hit and the media keeps pumping out bad news, your competition’s probably going to hunker down with the same old business model and wait for the good times to return. Given that short-sighted, fear-driven behavior, now’s a perfect time to make gains on them by trimming the fat and creating opportunities.

‘Even if you cut spending from every other overhead expense category, it may still be necessary to reduce your compensation.’

BUT IT HURTS

Here’s another cliché: No pain, no gain. Some belt-tightening decisions don’t feel good, so we avoid them. No one likes firing an employee, freezing or lowering compensation levels, cutting back on family vacations, or fixing the old clunker instead of buying a new car. But not making tough decisions puts you and everyone who relies on you in further financial jeopardy. Chances are you’re going to have to make these decisions at some later point in crisis mode. Making them now, along with seizing some unexpected opportunities, will make everything better a lot sooner.

This is a good time to first answer one important question: Do you really want to be in this business? If the answer is, “I love what I do, even during challenging times,” terrific. Become even more committed to achieving financial success, no matter what it takes to accomplish that goal. If, on the other hand, the answer is, “I’m not enjoying this anymore, and my heart’s no longer in it,” then it’s time to make some big changes. It’s important we assess the things we do routinely, so we don’t get to the end of our careers

with regrets that we didn’t pursue our real dreams. Lastly, if your answer is, “I still love what I do, but I need to make more money,” keep reading.

ANOTHER NOTCH IN THE BELT

Let’s take a closer look at the specific things we can do to put another notch in our spending belts and tighten them. Under the banner of “turning lemons into lemonade,” implementing these recession-driven tactics may be the best lessons in self-control for future ups and downs in your business.

There are generally four things you can do to get your business through tough times: increase revenues, decrease expenses, invest in your business and borrow money. Frankly, items No. 3 and 4 are nothing more than cash-flow Band-Aids. They help, but they don’t fix the real sources of poor cash flow — declining sales and/or rising costs. So let’s look at ways to increase revenues and, more germane to our expertise, cut operating expenses.

HOW TO GROW THE TOP LINE

In order to increase revenue, you need to gain a deeper understanding of your customers’ concerns when they’re making spending decisions. Customers are more hesitant than ever to spend these days, but they’re also more open to describing their spending concerns to you if you approach them the right way. During any conversation with customers, resist the initial temptation to sell to them — save that for later. Instead, get them to talk, so you can find out what they’re looking for and at what cost.

As an accountant, I lay no claim to wisdom in sales and marketing. But I am a consumer, and like all consumers, I want

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to feel connected to people I do business with, especially when I have a multitude of choices. The last thing most of us want is to be sold on some product we have no interest in or at a price we can't afford, so don't do that. Instead, connect by finding out who customers are, what they want, what dollar value they've attached to the product or service they're considering, and what value they'll receive for the price they're being asked to pay. In simple terms, be sweet, be engaging, educate customers and ask them to pay a fair price. If you accomplish that, customers will happily fork over their hard-earned cash over and over again. Or instead, be cranky, be disinterested, ignore customers and take unfair advantage of them, and they'll tell 100 of their closest friends why they should never shop at your store.

Seize the opportunity during slower times to look at the processes you're using to find new business, close each sale and generate associated paperwork. Examine the sales process from start to finish. Where do customers and leads come from? What happens to them when they come in? Are they assigned to a salesperson? How quickly do salespeople follow up? What questions do the customer and salesperson typically ask during the sales process? What clinches the sale? Is the customer thanked for his or her business? Is the customer asked for a testimonial or to refer others? No matter what's happening with the economy, knowing the answers to these questions — and making appropriate changes to get things running more smoothly — will boost revenue.

Lastly on the revenue side, take a look at what your competitors are doing, and implement



some of the things they're doing better than you. We can all learn from the competition. And what better place to find out what other retailing leaders are doing than the educational programs presented at the NAMM Idea Center and NAMM U Online? Much of this info is readily available 24/7 at NAMM's website, namm.org — and it's free to members.

TRIMMING THE FAT

Just like the 20 (okay, 30) extra pounds I'm carrying, overhead expenses can creep onto the income statement in the same way weight does — a day at a time. And just like fat and cholesterol, if you let expenses and operating losses go uncontrolled, they'll kill you.

Some expenses vary with revenue, such as sales commissions,

merchant credit card fees and store supplies. These expenses probably won't kill you because of their variable nature. But other expenses — rent, utilities, lease payments and administrative salaries — are fixed and occur every month whether you sell anything or not. These fixed expenses will quickly create losses and put you right out of business if not managed, especially during tougher economic times.

Business owners need to pay extra attention to operating expenses, as overhead grows one decision at a time. When you make the decision to hire extra office staff, add another cell phone or move your store to a higher-rent building, it all increases your monthly overhead. And with each dollar increase in overhead, you need to generate three to four times more revenue just to stay even. This recession should be your wake-up call to cut overhead or run the risk of damaging your business beyond repair.

There was a wonderful article by Greg Billings in the February 2009 issue of *Music Inc.*, titled "29 Ways to Cut Costs." Everyone should read and reread that article. It provided dozens of time-tested pearls of wisdom on where and how to cut overhead expenses and needless spending. The only spending topic Greg's article didn't address is the one that needs to be dealt with head-on during tough economic times: the need for owners to scale back their personal lifestyle spending and related compensation. Let's talk about why this cutback is so important yet is inherently avoided and often causes heated discussions at the store and at home.

BUT I CAN'T (= WON'T) DO IT

When examining overhead, don't forget that owner's compensation is an integral part

NEW

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The New TA-30™ offers all the same great tone, flexibility and simple control layout as the critically acclaimed TA-15™; 2 Channels containing 5 Modes.



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+ HOW WE GOT INTO THIS MESS

A depression is one of the worst things that can happen to our economy. It affects just about everyone in every industry in our country and other countries, given our globally interconnected economies. Recessions, on the other hand, tend to hit particular industry groups the hardest, with lesser ripple effects felt by others. But the worse the recession, the more people it will affect, and this one has been pretty bad. And the reason why this recession has felt like a depression is because lending institutions have practically stopped lending.

While some of our economic woes weren't our fault, many of them were. When we suffered an unprovoked attack on 9/11, our government immediately lowered interest rates to keep our stock markets and domestic economy from faltering. While this knee-jerk reaction worked, we inadvertently created another problem that grew into a huge financial bubble that ultimately burst: low interest rate mortgages. Many people were now able to afford high-priced homes, which drove real estate values up. But when the low rates on variable mortgages started rising again a few years later, these same people couldn't afford the increases in their mortgage payments. As they defaulted and abandoned their homes, values plummeted, often below the mortgage debts.

Worse, banks had sold off these mortgage assets to mortgage investment pools created by Wall Street. When homeowners couldn't pay their mortgages, investors in these pools found themselves with non-performing assets that ultimately imploded and failed — the media called this debacle the subprime lending crisis. As the real estate market went into the proverbial toilet, Wall Street firms, such as Lehman Brothers and Bear Stearns, began to fail, and major banks and financial institutions started posting annual losses in the hundreds of billions. This constant flow of bad economic news fueled corporate layoffs and cutbacks, causing our economy to crumble. As unemployment rose, people became extremely cautious about their spending and began postponing major spending decisions. It's no wonder the piano business has been hit the hardest by the decline in consumer spending. A depressed real estate market, high unemployment and a lack of consumer confidence will stop most people from buying an expensive discretionary item.

And when consumer spending declines, so does business-to-business spending. People who run businesses are consumers themselves and become more cautious about their personal and business spending. And when employees see their employers pull back, they often get the message to adjust their spending at home. This classic recessionary mass psychology affects everyone's pocketbook. —A.F.

of your operating expenses. Even if you cut spending from every other overhead expense category, it may still be necessary to reduce your compensation. Yes, cutting your compensation can be a traumatic decision that affects your psyche, motivation and commitment to the store, not to mention the negative affect it has on your family's mood and lifestyle. It hurts, but it usually only hurts once — on the day you decide to do it. Like a spoonful of nasty-tasting medicine, after you swallow hard and get used to the horrible taste, you're generally on the road to recovery.

Accordingly, here are the tough, distasteful but often necessary personal expense cuts you need to consider making in the store and at home:

1. Travel, meals and entertainment. Business meals and entertainment should be the first items on the chopping block. Let's get real: While some meals and entertainment have a business-generating purpose, most are just excuses to get out of the store, have a good time, enjoy an expensive meal or rock concert, and get a tax deduction. I love it when people say, "Oh, it's no big deal for you to pick up the tab for this meal because you can get a tax deduction." What a load of crap. If you're in the 25-percent tax bracket, the \$100 meal (which is only 50-percent deductible) will save you a whopping \$12.50. It still costs you \$87.50 after-tax! So say goodbye to needless meals and entertainment.

And with regard to travel, a \$75 webcam and free Skype account can often deliver the same benefits as airline tickets, hotels and rental cars. Think how little it costs to attend or host an online meeting or webinar. However, if you're going to spend money on travel, make sure you spend

it attending NAMM or some other industry event that has a meaningful and educational purpose. That newfound education can deliver financial rewards far greater than its travel costs. Just be smart. You know the difference between a worthwhile business trip and an escape from reality.

2. Personal auto expenses. When it comes down to it, the primary purpose of a personal vehicle is to provide a means of getting from point A to point B. Let's not lose sight of that when deciding whether it's worth the extra \$15,000 or more for an exclusive name-brand auto, heated seats, premium stereo and upgraded wheel trim. If you desperately need a new vehicle and cash flow is at a premium, consider leasing instead of buying. That said, I like buying (and financing) my cars because it forces me to buy something reasonably priced (as financing payments are usually higher than lease payments), and I avoid punitive charges on high-mileage leased vehicles. Irrespective of whether you buy or lease, the more reasonable the purchase price, the more affordable the monthly payment. Forget the heated seats. Your butt has enough padding to keep itself warm.

3. Employment perks. Some employee perks are critical, such as health and disability insurance. Some are valuable when times are good (i.e. pension plan contributions) but become burdensome when times are tough. Some are unnecessary and utterly ridiculous (i.e. airline and health club memberships) when cash flow is tight. Ask yourself, "Am I really going to be hurt by eliminating this perk?" If the answer is "no," get rid of it. And don't forget: Some valuable perks, such as pension contributions, can be reduced and/or halted for periods

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{TIGHTENINGTHEBELT}

of time and resumed when times get better.

4. Funding outside investments. Over the years, I've seen store owners kill the proverbial golden goose of a financially healthy music store by stripping out vital operating cash to fund outside investments. And when these investments are made into business models outside of the owner's core expertise, they often end in total financial disaster. Not only do the investments fail but they put a world of hurt on the music store that's looked upon to fund a cash bail-out. When you consider the economic return a music retailer can earn from investing in a rental pool or a well-run music education program (in light of a lack of expertise to run other kinds of businesses), a music store owner should look no further than the four walls of the store for investment opportunities. The only exception I can think of is a bargain deal on a valuable piece of commercial real estate that can house the business. But beware: Unless you can forecast your space needs for the next decade, you're often better off renting to avoid becoming an empty building's landlord.

5. The bullsh*t expenses at home. My mom told me to never swear. It didn't work. And I'm hoping she'll forgive me if my flagrant potty-mouth startles at least one reader into "getting over it" on some of these nonsensical expenditures at home. Season tickets to the ball game? Get over it. Watch the game on TV from the comfort of your home with far more friends than you could ever bring to the stadium. Country club dues? Get over it. Go play miniature golf with the entire family, and enjoy a fun dinner at Denny's. Cell phones for every kid? Make them earn it by mowing the lawn, washing the car and doing meaningful, but safe, chores at home. That's how I bought my first guitar and amp, and I learned invaluable lessons in work ethic, independence and perseverance. And what better way to teach kids a sense of accomplishment than to lead by example? Leave the roofing and plumbing to the professionals. Have your kids clean and paint the garage.

NO LIMITS

People, if you're looking for a single huge, dollar-saving cut, you probably won't find it. Instead, view every dollar in expense

'Music store owners should look no further than the four walls of the store for investment opportunities.'

reduction as a new dollar in profit and cash flow for your store. Remember, at a 30-percent gross profit margin, you need \$1 less revenue for every 30 cents of expense you save, or \$100,000 less revenue for every \$30,000 you save. Actually, when you consider the variable nature of some overhead expenses, the amount of revenue relief is even greater. That's why expense cutting is so vital during revenue downturns.

Right now, you're asking, "How far do I have to go with these personal expense reductions and eliminations?" The answer is simple: Enough to get rid of the losses on your bottom line. Basically, don't spend a dollar more than you have to. Don't let your personal lifestyle dictate the amount of compensation you need to draw, whether you're earning it or not. And don't use the lame excuse that it's just a few dollars and it really won't matter if you spend it. When you add it all up, it does matter — a lot.

There's no easy fix to this economic crunch, and everyone's situation is different. The bottom line is to watch your spending and live within your means. Unfortunately, most vital expenditures have increased — groceries, utilities, medicine, health insurance and copayments, auto and property insurance, and postage. Since it's hard to live without these essentials, something else has to give. The only meaningful thing you can do during these tough times is tighten the belt. So goodbye premium cable channels, weekly lawn service, expensive restaurants. Hello packed lunches, gardening, Saturday-night family Scrabble. Embrace the new, frugal you. Trim the fat, breathe easier, get lean and mean, and eventually, you'll be able to loosen the belt without your pants — or your business — falling down. **MI**

Alan Friedman, CPA, provides accounting and financial services to music industry clients. He is a frequent speaker at NAMM U seminars and can be reached at 860-677-9191 or alan@fkco.com. Visit his Web site, fkco.com.

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THE GEAR GUIDE



GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES



MARTIN | PERFORMING SERIES

Performance-Driven

Following the successful debut of Martin's Performing Artist series of acoustic-electric guitars, the company has expanded the line with five new models that are available in limited quantities. The latest models consist of the GPCPA2, GPCPA Mahogany, GPCPA3, DCPA3 and OMCPA3. These stage-ready acoustic-electric models feature on-board Fishman F-1 Aura electronics. martinguitar.com



AUSTIN | AGL300

Making the Cut

The new AGL300 single-cutaway solid body from Austin features a maple set neck, rosewood fingerboard, two humbucking pickups, two volume controls and two tone controls. Also found on the guitar is a Tune-o-matic bridge. Other features include a mother of pearl Austin inlay and die-cast chrome machine and chrome-plated hardware. MSRP: \$319. austingtr.com

Photo by Karen Solem



JOHN HORNBY SKEWES | FRET-KING SUPER-MATIC

Automatic Tuner

John Hornby Skewes has unveiled the Fret-King Super-Matic self-tuning guitar. It's the first to feature the Wilkinson ATD HT440 self-tuning hardtail guitar bridge. Beginning in standard E tuning, players can switch to open G, DADGAD or open D and even create up to five of their own personal tunings. jhs.co.uk



OVATION | ADAMAS 2081WT

Woodsy Adamas

For the first time in roundback history, Ovation's carbon graphite Adamas is now available with a wood top. The 2081WT's top is fashioned from AAA-grade solid spruce, finished with an ultra-thin layer of satin urethane. Adamas Suspended Top (AST) technology lets the guitar top vibrate more freely than conventional top-to-body systems. The 2081WT's contour body is sculpted from fiberglass cloth. Other notable features include a carved vintage soft V Honduras mahogany and maple neck and select-grade walnut fingerboard and bridge. MSRP: \$3,549. ovationguitars.com



SCHECTER | GARY HOLT SIGNATURE V-1

Exodus Signature

The new Gary Holt Signature V-1 model reinvents Schecter's popular V-1 shape with a longer "wing" on top. A blood-red binding trims the guitar throughout, and exclusive EMG 81/89 active pickups deliver attack, sustain and power. The 24.75-inch scale mahogany neck offsets the V-shaped body with an Ultra Access neck joint. The red Exodus goat head inlay emblazons the rosewood fingerboard at the 12th fret. schecterguitars.com



BLACKSTAR | SERIES ONE

Three's Company

Blackstar recently expanded its Series One amp range with three new heads, standard-sized 4- by 12-inch cabinets and a 2- by 12-inch cabinet. The S1-50 parallels the S1-100 in a lower 50-watt format. Its DPR power reduction system delivers output from 50 watts down to 5 watts. The S1-50 is equipped with two channels and four footswitchable modes, as well as a series effects loop and MIDI switching. MSRP: \$949.99–\$2,499.99.

{blackstaramps.com}



Photo by Karen Solem



3RD POWER AMPS | SWITCHBACK 312

State & Switch

The new 3rd Power Amplification Switchback 312 amp houses three 12-inch Celestion Vintage 30 speakers that attain the same output volume as typical 4-by-12-inch designs. The Switchback 312 also includes 3rd Power's Switchback porting system on the back of the cabinet. MSRP: \$1,099. 3rdpoweramps.com

VHT | SPECIAL 6

Special Effects

The new hand-wired Special 6 from VHT gets its powerful tube tone from one 12AX7 pre-amp tube and one 6V6 output tube. The 6-watt combo or head-and-cab combo boasts a footswitchable gain boost that expands its range of tones. With the foot-switchable gain boost, players can instantly toggle between clean rhythm tones and overdriven leads, essentially duplicating the footswitchable functions of a two-channel amp in an all-tube two-knob package. The Special 6 head will be offered with a separate Special 1- by 12-inch speaker cabinet, featuring the player's choice of a VHT special design 12-inch speaker or a premium Celestion G12H30 speaker. MAP: \$164.99–\$229.99. vhtamp.com



ROLAND | CUBE-XL

Cube Control

Roland's newest CUBE-XL bass amplifiers — the CUBE-20XL Bass, CUBE-60XL Bass and CUBE-120XL Bass — range in power from 20–120 watts. Features include a high-performance DSP engine, multiple COSM amp models, updated drive and poly octave effects, on-board phrase looping and power squeezer, and solo functions. The amps boast custom-designed speakers. MSRP: \$299–\$749. rolandus.com



HAYDEN | MOFO 30

New & Approved

Hayden recently expanded its MoFo 30 tube guitar amp with a range of new heads and combos. In the tradition of the MoFo 100 head, MoFo 55 head and 1- by 12-inch combo, the new MoFos include two channels for greater tonal flexibility. The 100 head also totes a reverb option in front of the FX output. haydencustomshop.com

GEAR >

GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES

EDEN | WTDI PEDAL

Pedal Power

Eden has released the WTDI pedal. Small enough to fit in any gig bag, case or pedal board, the pedal can go direct into the power board. It can also go direct into the power amp section of any amp with direct inputs and can be used to add a second, third or solo/boost channel to a current rig. eden-electronics.com



GODLYKE | TK-01

Wycked Synth

The new true-bypass TK-01 Triskelion is Godlyke's second addition to the Totally Wycked Audio boutique line. The dedicated analog stompbox series uses vintage synthesizer technology to reshape the harmonic structure of the input signal for glassy clean tones and boosted midrange. The switchable amplitude control offers a healthy level boost to create massive amp sounds and infinite sustain at low volume levels. An expression pedal output lets the user vary the harmonic emphasis in real-time. godlyke.com



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PLUSH FX | JERSEY THUNDER

Jersey Special

Plush FX Pedals has launched Jersey Thunder, a new gain boost and EQ pedal for bass. Packaged in a small, pedal board-friendly box, Jersey Thunder features three modes of operation. The pedal has true bypass, a solid cast-aluminum case, oven-baked powder coating and silk screening, and premium passive components. MAP: \$199. fuchs.audio.com



DUNLOP | NOISE CLAMP

Noise Control

Dunlop's new Noise Clamp chomps down the unwanted noise from cranked amps. Dry signal bypasses a chain of effects and passes through a noise gate circuit at the end of the loop. A single sensitivity knob lets users set the volume threshold. The Noise Clamp is capable of reducing noise by up to 26 dB, maintaining riff definition at extreme gain level. jimdunlop.com



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EBS | FAFNER II

Swede Amp

The new EBS Fafner II bass amp offers dual balanced, floating XLR outputs — one post and one pre EQ signal — and separate effect loops connect different effects to the drive channel and clean channel. The common loop also features a mix-in control and dual channels. **{bass.se}**



The new Loudbox Mini comes loaded with 60 beefy watts of sparkling, clean Fishman sound for a mini price. Its two channels feature our legendary preamp and tone control designs, plus digital effects, an MP3 input and balanced XLR D.I. output (so you don't have to buy a separate DI box.) And at only 20 lbs. you'll have a lightweight amp that's powerful enough for open mic night, and clean enough for recording. Pick one up today.



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STUDIO DEVIL | iBOX, GUITAR AMP

Wicked Apps

Studio Devil has released iBox, a self-powered guitar and audio interface for Apple iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch devices. The iBox connects via a headphone connector using a four-conductor extension cable. Users can then connect their guitars and headphones or line outputs to the iBox's 1/4-inch input and output connectors. Studio Devil also released Guitar Amp, a guitar amp simulator app featuring Studio Devil's amp modeling algorithms for the ultimate in guitar tone. **{studiodevil.com}**





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Planet Waves' new Acoustic Quick Release straps boast patented technology and a built-in, easily detachable quick-release cord for the headstock. The patented design fit stays locked in place until the side pin is released. MSRP: \$9.99-\$32.99.

{planetwaves.com}



SAGA | GOLDEN GATE

Made by Hand

Saga's Golden Gate line of quality leather guitar straps recently debuted the Shelton guitar strap. Bluegrass guitarist James Allan Shelton created the hand-tooled leather straps, which are made of Norwegian saddle leather. {sagamusic.com}



RG-26



Revival

Acoustics



With the playability, versatility, and specs that you're looking for—including All Solid Construction, maple binding, scalloped X-bracing, dovetail neck joint and Grover Tuners. Onstage or in the studio, the RG-26 is perfect for the working musician looking for the perfect guitar.

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"If you're looking to get as close as possible to a boutique-grade guitar for minimal cash outlay, it hardly gets better than the RG-26."

-Art Thompson, Senior Editor -Guitar Player

"I like this guitar. I like the wood, and the craftsmanship, and the way it hugs my body. It plays real easy and it sounds damn good"

-Chuck Prophet, YEP Rock Recording artist-Revival Acoustics Endorsee

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G7TH | NASHVILLE BLACK

Man in Black

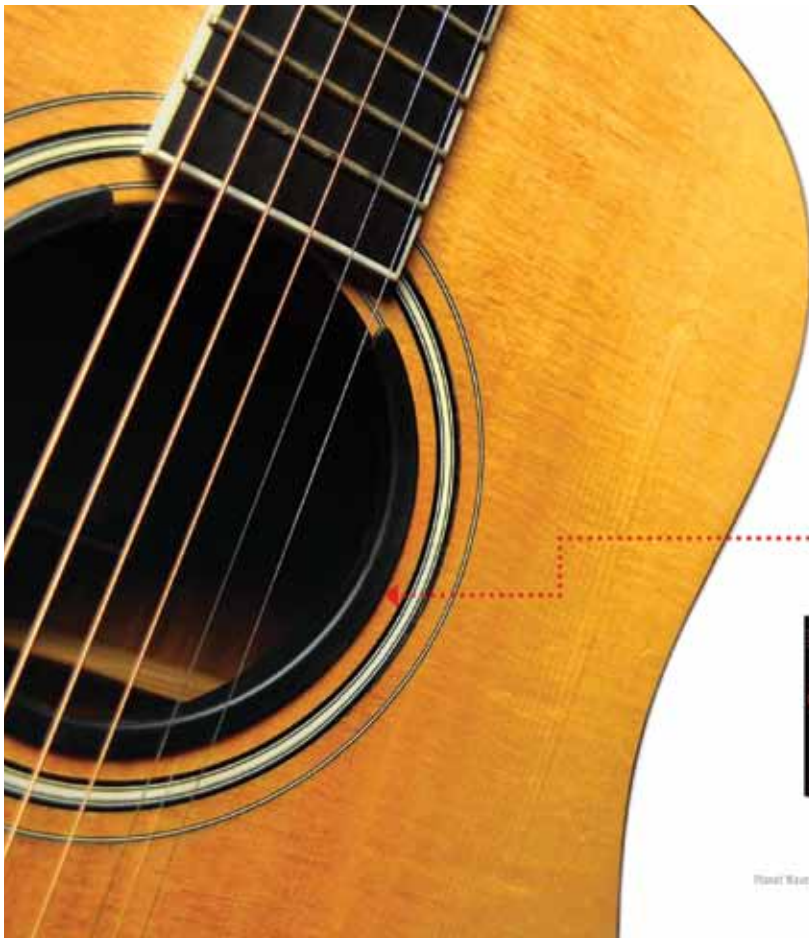
G7th's new Nashville Black capo is unlike other spring capos. It applies to a unique pivot point behind the guitar neck, rather than to the side, and the softer spring makes it more comfortable to use and eliminates tuning problems. {g7th.com}



LEVY'S LEATHERS | DENIM STRAPS

Denim Domination

Levy's has launched a line of denim doodle guitar straps. Straight out of a high school history class, each 2-inch strap is bleached and printed with an original doodle design. Pictured is model M12DD, available in six different designs. {levysleathers.com}



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GEAR >

GUITARS, AMPS & ACCESSORIES



CORDOBA | FOOTSTOOL

A Leg Up

Cordoba's new lightweight footstool can be used in the studio or on the road. The solid wood construction features a rosewood finish and four adjustable heights. The stool folds flat and fits into any guitar bag's pocket. MSRP: \$29.99. cordobaguitars.com

CHERUB | METRO-TUNERS

Tune-in Technology

Cherub Technology recently expanded its line of Metro-tuners with the release of four models, including the WMT-800, WMT-810, WMT-820 and WMT-830. The new, sleek design has both form and function. The WMT-800 and WMT-810 feature solar panels to keep the batteries charged, and the WMT-830 features a color LCD to make tuning and reading tempos more accurate. All units have extended the tuning range from A2–A6 and can be used with an optional wireless mic pickup. cherubtechnology.com



GIG-FX | QUIET CABLE

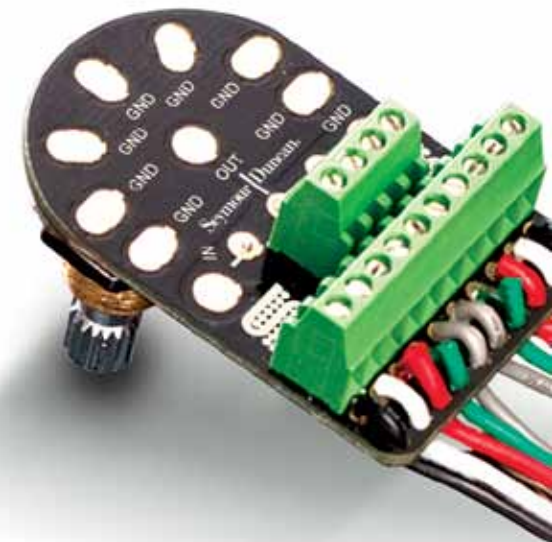
Quiet Time

Gig-Fx's new RoHS-compliant Quiet Cable features a quiet button that automatically turns the cable off when it's unplugged without magnetic fields. The cable's gold-plated jacks ensure low-resistance contact, and its oxygen-free copper conductors offer optimum signal transmission. The corrosion-proof switching mechanism and low-capacitance cable design maintain high harmonics and fast transients. MSRP: \$17.50–\$35. gig-fx.com

SEYMOUR DUNCAN | LIBERATOR

Pickup Power

Seymour Duncan has debuted the Liberator, its first universal solderless pickup change system for guitar and bass. The Liberator is a bare-wire lockdown system integrated with a high-quality volume pot. seymourduncan.com



"Elixirs are great. I don't have to change them all the time and they still sound fantastic."

- John Paul Jones



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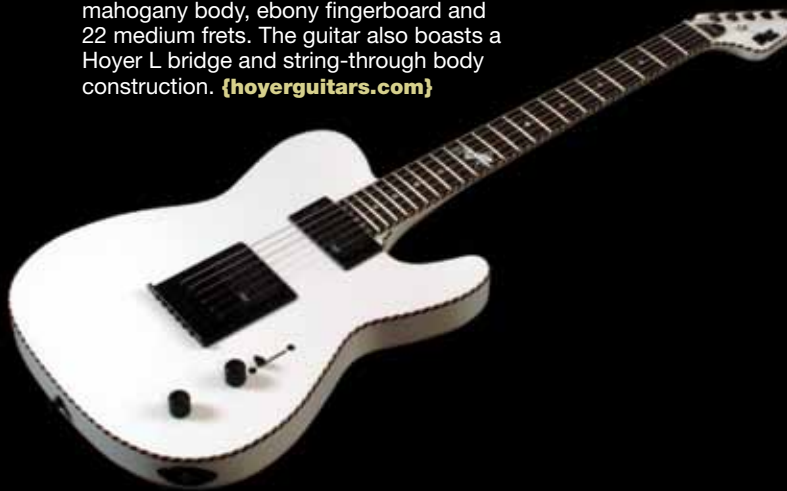
Hear more from John Paul Jones and find out why he loves his Elixir Strings:
www.elixirstrings.com/jpj



HOYER | LADY DELUXE

Ladies Night

The new Hoyer Lady Deluxe, available in black or white, is a reissue of the Hoyer Eagle White Lady and Black Lady, originally launched in the 1970s. The Lady Deluxe features Hoyer humbuckers, a mahogany body, ebony fingerboard and 22 medium frets. The guitar also boasts a Hoyer L bridge and string-through body construction. hoyerguitars.com



SHS INTERNATIONAL | EDDY FINN UKULELES

Make a Splash

SHS International's new line of Eddy Finn Ukuleles includes a unique fin-shaped sound hole and a traditional series that has a round sound hole. All models are available in soprano, concert and tenor sizes and are offered in a variety of wood choices, including mahogany, koa, spalted maple, black acacia, swamp ash and mango. shsint.net

IBANEZ | ATK200

Ibanez Reimagines

Ibanez recently reimagined its ATK200, the standard bass model of the ATK series. The new bass features a newly designed double humbucker pickup along with three-band EQ. Players can get three distinctive bass sounds: deep/warm, punchy/slap or smooth/gentle. These sounds fit any genre or playing style. ibanez.com

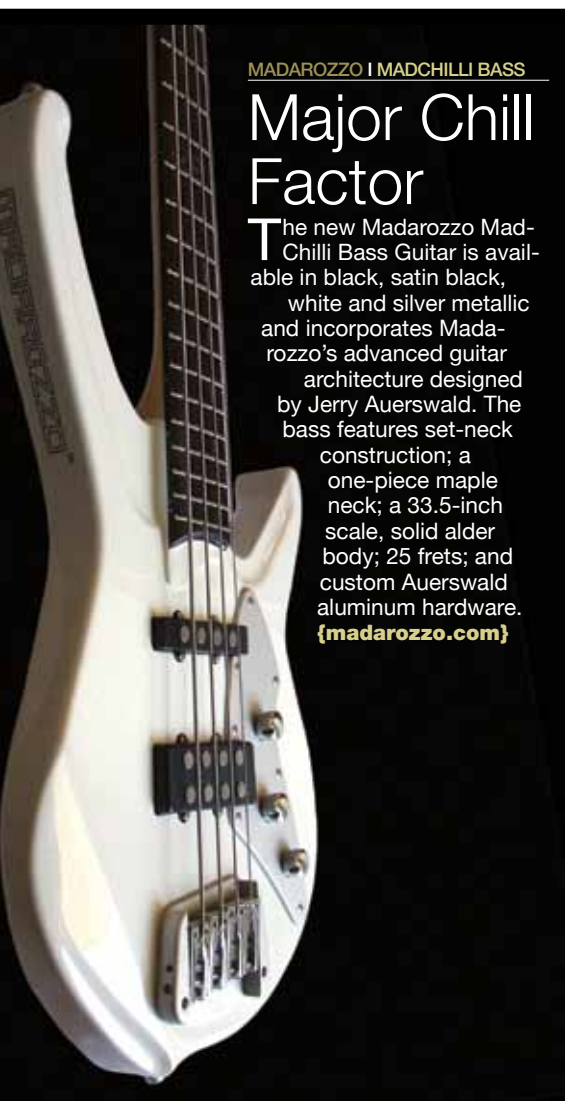




DAISY ROCK | REBEL ROCKIT

Rebel Yell

Daisy Rock's new Atomic Pink Rebel Rockit bass features a 22-fret, slimmer 32-inch rock maple neck and a sycamore body. It also includes a Daisy Rock P and J passive pickup, standard bridge, and custom tuners, along with volume and tone controls. MSRP: \$369. daisyrock.com



MADAROZZO | MADCHILLI BASS

Major Chill Factor

The new Madarozzo Mad-Chilli Bass Guitar is available in black, satin black, white and silver metallic and incorporates Madarozzo's advanced guitar architecture designed by Jerry Auerswald. The bass features set-neck construction; a one-piece maple neck; a 33.5-inch scale, solid alder body; 25 frets; and custom Auerswald aluminum hardware. madarozzo.com

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VOX | TONELAB EX

Tone Control

With 200 ready-to-play programs, the recently released Vox ToneLab EX offers more presets and effects than previous models. Players can capture the signature guitar tone of popular tunes with 50 song presets. ToneLab EX relies on a 12AX7 tube to capture the tone of a tube-driven amplifier. voxamps.com



CARL MARTIN | PROPOWER

Professional Power Pedal

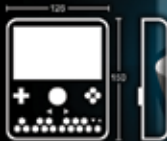
Carl Martin Pedals has released the ProPower, a high-quality professional DC power supply. The pedal offers 110/230 switchable input, and it has eight isolated outputs, each switchable between 9 and 12 volts. Outputs one through six have 150mA, while seven through eight have 350mA each. The ProPower comes with 16 different cables. carlmartin.com

KDJ-ONE

MOBILE AUDIO WORKSTATION

Meet KDJ-ONE

A first of its kind DAW touchscreen smartbook featuring an advanced synthesizer, sequencer, and multitrack audio editing with ACIDized WAV support. Built-in speakers, mic, WLAN, and lithium battery make KDJ-ONE a completely portable and wireless handheld production environment. Additionally, a high precision vibration system adds unique force feedback to your music creating experience.



HARDWARE SPECIFICATIONS:

- CPU: Intel ATOM E600 1.0GHz
- Display: 5.0" WVGA with multi-touch panel
- MEM: 512MBytes
- SSD: 4.0GBytes
- Battery: Lithium ion battery 2000mAh x 2
- Interface: USB 2.0, wireless LAN, microSD
- Audio I/O: Mic/Line In, Line out, Built-in Mic
- Case Size: 126mm x 150mm x 30mm
- Weight: 380g



FEATURES:

- Combination of multi-touch screen, keypad, and jog dial allows for a fluid and intuitive control system unlike that of any existing hardware or software
- Runs Intel MeeGo Handset Edition as its OS, and supports all of MeeGo's features including web browser, Skype, media player, and more
- Built-in KDJ2 Synth features 10 synthesis algorithms, 20 effects, 7 filters, and 4 modulation units
- Includes step modulation, an indispensable tool when creating electronic/club style tracks
- ACID formatted samples may be loaded directly into KDJ-ONE's audio tracks and time-stretched just as in ACID, creating a whole new world of possibilities; likewise, patterns created with the KDJ-ONE may be exported directly to ACIDized WAV format
- 6 track pattern sequencer includes automation/motion sequencing, loop recording, step recording, piano roll, and all other standard sequencer features
- Unique Song Mode allows DJ style mixing of two patterns in real time
- May be used as a VST via built-in wireless LAN; internal settings and data are also editable from the computer
- High precision "QW" vibration system sends vibrations from your music directly to your fingertips, adding a whole new element of force feedback to your music production experience; the vibration system even works with KDJ's built-in games



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VEILLETTE | DOUBLENECK

Double Down

The new 10-pound Veillette Doubleneck features necks that are rotated along their axis in opposite directions, allowing closer spacing without compromising access. The modern, open-face headpieces; light tuning machines; and heavily chambered body produce a double-neck that balances well. MSRP: \$5,900. veilletteguitars.com

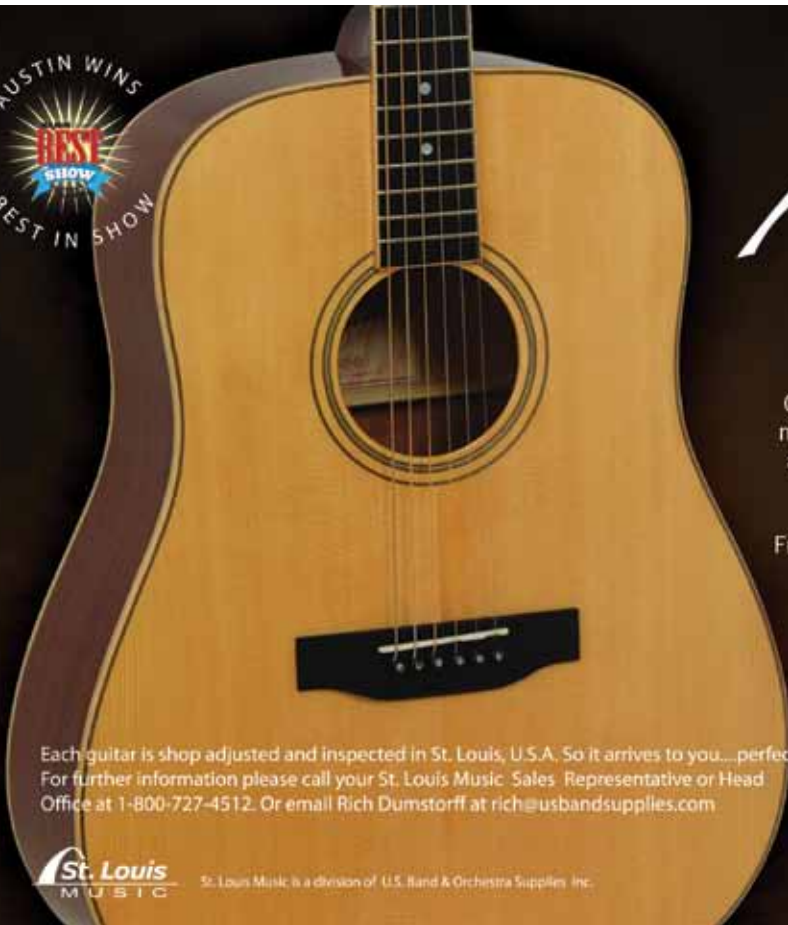


CELESTION | CDX1-1445

Front Seat Driver

Celestion's CDX1-1445 is a new 1-inch exit compression driver that features a 1.4-inch diameter voice coil. The device provides 20-watt power handling and delivers 106 dB sensitivity over a frequency range of 1,500–20,000 Hz.

Featuring a ferrite magnet and single-piece PETP diaphragm and surround, the CDX1-1445 has been optimized using Finite Element Analysis. celestion.com



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www.qscaudio.com

THE GEAR GUIDE

AUDIO & RECORDING



ELECTRO-VOICE | R300

Wireless Wonder

Electro-Voice recently launched the R300, a wireless microphone system designed for entry-level professionals. Its ClearScan system scans through 32 preset channels and selects the clearest one with a single button. A TA4 connector lets the unit be used with any Electro-Voice lavalier or head-worn microphone.

electrovoice.com

AVID | M-AUDIO GSR

Portable Players

Avid recently released the M-Audio GSR active sound reinforcement speaker series for small to midsized venues. The GSR series includes 10- and 12-inch full-range P.A. cabinets that deliver professional-quality sound and an 18-inch subwoofer that offers extended bass reproduction for larger venues. MSRP: \$499–\$999.

{avid.com}



JBL | PRX600

Portable Professionals

JBL Professional's new PRX600 series of active portable loudspeakers features four full-range speakers and two subwoofers. At the core of the PRX line is a fully integrated DSP input section, which provides mic/line level inputs, selectable system EQ and an A/D converter for maximum signal-to-noise ratio. The PRX600 series loudspeakers use new ultra-low-noise A/D converters that help reduce idle noise. {jbl.com}



WHARFEDALE | TITAN 8A MKII

Titanic Sound

Wharfedale Pro has released the Titan 8A MKII speaker. The compact 8A MKII model features the same two-band EQ as the 12A and 15A models. Added to the speaker is a rear-mounted horn LED defeat switch for use in situations where visual transparency is paramount. The Titan 8A MKII provides enough output and low-frequency extension to be a standalone vocal P.A., but combines with a subwoofer for portable setups. {wharfedale.co.uk}



ADAM | SX SERIES

SX Adds X-ART

The new ADAM Audio SX models include the A3X, ADAM's smallest monitor ever, and the A8X, a larger monitor that opens the door to midfield monitoring and is at the top of the AX line. The SX-Series models now include the X-ART tweeter, which replaces the ART tweeter in the new AX versions. The X-ART tweeter features higher efficiency, a maximum sound pressure level and a frequency response up to 50 kHz.

adam-audio.com



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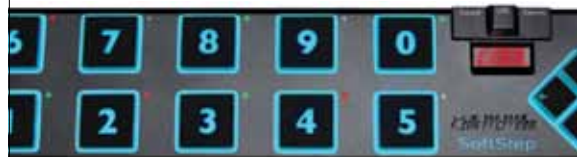
AUDIO & RECORDING



UNIVERSAL AUDIO | SSL E

Solid State of Mind

Universal Audio's new SSL E series channel strip plug-in for UAD-2 is the result of painstaking circuit emulation of the Solid State Logic SSL 4000 console. It includes the Type E black knob and brown knob four-band EQ. uaudio.com



KEITH MCMILLEN INSTRUMENTS |

SOFTSTEP

Soft Sells

Keith McMillen Instruments has released SoftStep, a universal multitouch USB/MIDI foot controller.

Weighing just over a pound, SoftStep can fit into most laptop and guitar cases. It has a four-direction navigation pedal, an alphanumeric LED display and backlit keys. SoftStep connects to a computer through USB and contains expansion and expression ports. With the MIDI expansion module, SoftStep can be used with or without a computer to connect to external MIDI hardware. MSRP: \$289.

keithmcmilleninstruments.com

15 New Products from TASCAM®



TA-1VP • Vocal Processor with Antares Auto-Tune Pitch Correction



DP-03 • 8-track Digital Portastudio



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US-600
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Audio/MIDI Interface



BD-R2000
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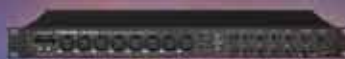
DR-03
Portable Digital Recorder



GB-10
Guitar/Bass
Trainer/Recorder



LR-10
Instrumental
Trainer/Recorder



US-1800
18-in/2-out USB 2.0
Audio/MIDI Interface



CD-200iB
CD Player / iPod Dock
with Balanced Outs



RC-F82
Fader Controller/
Communication for HD-P82



TG-7
Guitar/Bass Tuner



TC-8
Chromatic Instrumental Tuner



RC-3F
Multi Footswitch for DP-03,
GB-10, LR-10

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AURALEX | STUDIOFOAM PRO

Indestructible Foam

Auralex's new melamine-free Studiofoam Pro will not rot, crumble or suffer surface harm from normal use. Available in 1.5-inch-thick, 2- by 2-foot and 2- by 4-foot sizes, the foam features beveled edges and has a noise-reduction coefficient rating of 0. The A-class foam maintains the same cell structure with smaller cells and a thickly condensed panel. auralex.com



SOUNDCRAFT | SI COMPACT SERIES

Full Functions

The new Soundcraft Si Compact series is a power-packed range of digital consoles with full DSP functionality built into a small-footprint chassis. The Si Compact provides up to 40 inputs to mix in three frame sizes, the smallest of which is also rack-mountable. The unit features motorized faders with Soundcraft FaderGlow that operate on two layers and a full encoder set for all the functions on a channel, from input gain through EQ and dynamics to bus controls. soundcraft.com

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A-DESIGNS | J3001

Space Rack

A-Designs' recently released JM-3001 houses a versatile pre-amp, three-band equalizer and instrument input in a single rack space. The phantom-powered JM-3001's single-stage, transformer-coupled mic pre-amp with phase reverse comes equipped with high-low filters. MSRP: \$2,600. adesignsaudio.com



RADIAL ENGINEERING | POWERPRE

Power Line

Radial Engineering's new PowerPre mic pre-amp combines full-size discrete electronics with a vintage-style Hammond broadcast transformer. The PowerPre's new AccuState input gain circuit delivers smooth, linear control over the signal source while also eliminating background noise. A three-position vox control can fatten a track or add clarity and air, and the recessed 48-volt phantom control protects ribbon mics from accidental use. MSRP: \$499. radialeng.com

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AUDIO & RECORDING

CAKEWALK | SONAR X1

Speedier Sonar

Sonar X1's new user interface design speeds up workflow. Skylight, Sonar's next-generation workspace, includes an interface that controls all vital track and clip information, such as track notes, color, position and advanced MIDI functions.

{cakewalk.com}



FOSTEX | TH-5

Now Hear This

The Fostex T-5 and T-7 headphones have been reborn with all-new ear pads, headbands and adaptable cables.

Ultra-light TH-5 semi-open type drivers deliver well-defined highs. The TH-5 headphones also feature acoustic-designed diaphragms to maximize audio performance. {fostexinternational.com}



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API | CHANNEL STRIP

Strip Tease

The leaner, meaner new API Channel Strip includes a 512C mic pre, 550A EQ, 527 compressor and the 325 line driver. Each processing piece can be switched in or bypassed individually, and a flip switch lets the compressor be placed after the EQ if desired.

Additional features include an insert point, side chain input, multiple metering locations and the API 2520/transformer combination. MSRP: \$2,995. apiaudio.com

CAD | U9 MINIMIC

Plug 'n' Mic

CAD's new USB U9 MiniMic plugs directly into computers with a headphone out for playback monitoring and Skype. Its omnidirectional condenser capsule swivels 180 degrees for convenient positioning while delivering crisp, articulate audio. MSRP: \$39. cadaudio.com



Like Father, Like Son
Boulder Creek Guitars and "Riptide" Series Ukuleles

See all the new Boulder Creek Guitars and "Riptide" Ukuleles at the Anaheim NAMM Show, BOOTH # 3590, Hall D
www.bouldercreekguitars.com



TWO NOTES ENGINEERING | TORPEDO VB-101, VM-202

Torpedo Launch

Two Notes Engineering's Torpedo VB-101 and VM-202 emulate more than 30 cabs and eight mics with real-time variation of the virtual microphone positioning.

Torpedo VB-101 connects directly to any amp speaker output. The Torpedo VM-202 accepts a line input and features dual mono or stereo cabinet/miking emulations with optional power amp emulation for use with pre-amps. two-notes.com

SM PRO AUDIO | V2.0

Computer-Free

After 18 months of development, SM Pro Audio's new V2.0 software/firmware for its V-Machine standalone VSTi plug-in player has been released. The compact V-Machine lets musicians play VST plug-in instruments directly via a MIDI controller without the use of a computer. MSRP: \$599.99.

smproaudio.com





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BEYERDYNAMIC | RM 510

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The new beyerdynamic RM 510 interchangeable ribbon capsule for beyerdynamic's Opus 900 and Opus 600 brings a new dimension to live vocal performances.

The RM 510's ultra-light aluminum ribbon delivers high-frequency response and exceptional transient behavior. The capsule's

treble resonator protects against "plosives." Beyerdynamic employs advanced acoustic fabric and a sound labyrinth on the rear of the diaphragm. A subtle attenuation in the 6.5-kHz range suppresses sibilant sounds. beyerdynamic.com



MICRO TECH | M 1030

Studio-Ready

MicroTech's new M 1030 Studio Mic is a condenser with a cardioid

pattern, developed especially for studio users. It has a dynamic range of up to 142 dB and a low noise floor of 7 dB-A.

microtechgefell.de



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AUDIO-TECHNICA | ATW-CHG2

Wireless Charger

The AT2-CHG2 two-bay recharging station charges any combination of ATW-T220a handheld and ATW-T210a Uni-Pak transmitters. The unit monitors cell voltage and shuts off if damaged batteries are installed. The ATW-CHG2 has been enhanced with a second operating frequency band and charging contacts. MSRP: \$279. audio-technica.com



AKG | DRUMSET GROOVE PACK

Smooth Grooves

AKG's new Drumset Groove Pack combines the dynamic sound qualities of the P 2 and P 4 microphones with a rugged P 17 condenser mic, three mounting clamps and two stand adapters. It offers drummers an all-inclusive sound solution with six total mics for bass, drum and overhead positioning. The Pack's two overhead, small-diaphragm P 17 condenser cardioid microphones boast a 20 dB attenuation pad. akg.com

BLUE MICROPHONES | REACTOR

Reaction Time

Blue Microphones has released the Reactor, a multipattern, large diaphragm condenser microphone with a contemporary design. The Reactor unites a pattern selection method with a swiveling capsule head for ideal positioning. The mic's recording pattern selection features modern LED backlighting on the pattern indicators. Reactor also boasts Blue's premium condenser capsules and proprietary pre-amp, and it allows for noiseless live switching between patterns. bluemic.com



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The Amphenol T series SwitchPlug uses a unique 360 degree precision sliding ring contact design to quietly and accurately switch the signal circuit safely to ground during instrument changes under load, thereby avoiding annoying thumps, pops and squeals. The sliding ring contact self-cleans every time it is connected preventing excessive build up of oxidation and contamination. Activation is directly off the panels' full front face assuring a positive reference point every time, and as it works instantaneously on the main circuits there is no need for the use of magnets or other elaborate switching mechanisms.

GEAR

AUDIO & RECORDING



ROLAND | INTERFACE DUET

Grand Duet

Roland recently debuted its Tri-Capture UA-33 and Duo-Capture UA-11 USB audio interfaces. The new portable interfaces are compatible with either Windows or Mac OS platforms. The Tri-Capture UA-33 comes equipped with three kinds of inputs, an XLR mic input with phantom power and a quarter-inch input with a Hi-Z switch for direct guitar connection. The Duo-Capture UA-11 features a quarter-inch mic/guitar input with an impedance selector and an eighth-inch stereo input for connecting stereo devices. rolandus.com

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QSC | GX7

GX Addition

QSC Audio Products recently added the GX7 to its GX series of power amplifiers. The GX7 maintains all the key form and functional elements of the existing GX series while delivering more power in a lighter-weight package. Weighing in at 15.5 pounds, the GX7 features XLR, quarter-inch TRS and phono input connectors, Speakon and binding post outputs, built-in subwoofer/satellite crossover control, and detented gain knobs. MSRP: \$699. qscaudio.com

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GEAR

AUDIO & RECORDING



ALLEN & HEATH | xDR-16

Expansion Project

Allen & Heath's new xDR-16 expander satisfies the need for more inputs, more monitor mixes and more recording feeds in iLive systems. Up to two xDR-16s can be added to an iLive system and operate up to 120 meters from the parent MixRack over CAT5 cable using Allen & Heath's ACE Link. The expander provides access to the 64x32 DSP engine at the heart of all iLive MixRacks. The xDR-16 features 16 XLR analog inputs and eight XLR analog outputs. allen-heath.co.uk

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NUMARK | NPM100

Professional Premiere

Numark recently launched the NPM100 professional DJ monitors. The complete active speaker system comes equipped with built-in amplifiers suitable for small- to medium-sized setups. Its 100-watt RMS, 200-watt peak extended-range dual 5-inch drivers accurately reproduce music for DJs and musicians alike. NPM100 monitors work with virtually all music gear due to their standard stereo RCA line inputs. Built-in gain control allows for quick adjustments when used without a mixer. MSRP: \$249. numark.com



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- The "Game Changing" X32 Digital Live / Recording Console, which puts 32 channels of pure digital mixing magic within reach of even the most cash-strapped musician or venue.
- The "More Me Please" POWERPLAY P16 Digital Personal Monitoring System. The ideal 16-channel monitor mixing solution for recording studios, touring bands, nightclubs and houses of worship, P16 allows performers to custom-tailor their own independent monitor mixes—and is oh, so affordable.
- iNUKE Ultra-Lightweight High-Density Power Amplifiers pack up to 6,000 Watts into a single 12-pound, rack-mountable, roadworthy package; six models available with or without DSP control.
- NOX Series DJ Mixers provide five new ways to "NOX it Outta the Park!" Models range from 2 - 6 channels, all featuring the contact-free Infinium VCA-controlled optical crossfader, beat-syncable digital FX and much more—these bad boyz own the night!

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THE GEAR GUIDE

DJ & LIGHTING



VESTAX | PMC-05PROIV

Mixer Makeover

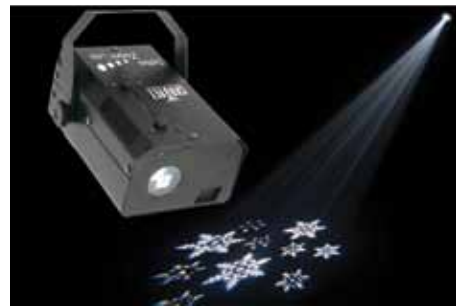
Vestax recently reinvented its PMC-05Pro series with advanced MIDI controls to create the PMC-05ProIV. The unit offers a DVS connection that's optimized to integrate digital vinyl systems. Its MIDI controls let DJs scroll and load songs, set cue points and fire off samples without touching their mouses. vestax.com



DJ TECH | USOLO FX

Hey, DJ!

DJ Tech's new flagship media player, the uSolo FX, plays MP3 and WAV files from USB flash drives, hard drives up to 250 GB and SD HC cards via the on-board USB and SD inputs. Navigating through tracks and playlists has been simplified through the use of the integrated Databox Software, which lets the user search for tracks by artist, album or folder. Two uSolo FX devices can be linked to share the same mass storage device. djtechpro.com



CHAUVET | GOBO ZOOM LED

Art on the Dancefloor

Chauvet recently unveiled the Gobo Zoom LED, a super-compact gobo projector featuring a unique manual zoom function that's ideal for short-throw or long-throw applications. The light is illuminated by one white 10-watt LED and runs cool. The Gobo Zoom LED comes with four color gels and eight metal gobos to complement a variety of events, or users can print their own custom gobos on transparency film. The eight included gobos are described as either text-based gobos, such as "Happy Birthday" and "Happy Holidays," or image-based gobos, such as hearts, musical notes and stars. chauvetlighting.com

DENON DJ | DN-S3700

Enhanced Turntable

Denon DJ has enhanced its DN-S3700 digital media turntable with the introduction of the new MIDI hybrid mode via a free firmware update. Users are able to use various supported DVS applications, such as Serato Scratch Live, for direct spinning platter control using the built-in relative mode time code signal generator, in conjunction with users' DVS-supported sound card or Denon DVS-supported mixer. MSRP: \$1,099.99. denondj.com





ELATION | TRI LED

Colorful Creations

Elation's new Tri LED System creates RGB colors within individual LED sources to result in shadow-free color mixes. A 42-watt fixture, the new LED Tri Par 56 delivers color performance with 14 3-watt RGB LEDs. Each of the 3-watt LEDs is a three-in-one lamp, comprised of three different-colored LEDs.

The Tri LED lets RGB colors be created within each individual lens, so that all 14 lamps remain on during the color-mixing process. MSRP: \$499.95. elationlighting.com



MBT LIGHTING | FAZER

Clear the Fog

MBT Lighting's new Fazer fog machine combines a subtle, lighter fog effect with an economical standard fog machine. A dispersing fan spreads the fog as it exits the unit, avoiding the thick cloud produced by traditional fog machines. The 450-watt heater produces 1,800 cubic feet of fog per minute and includes a timer remote for auto operation. MSRP: \$159. mbtlighting.com

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THE GEAR GUIDE

DRUMS & PERCUSSION



GRETSCH | CATALINA BIRCH SERIES

Gretsch Diamond Sparkles

Gretsch's Catalina birch series shines with a new diamond halogen sparkle finish. The material features a prismatic silver sparkle base that radiates a highly reflective shimmer in subtle green, blue, yellow and red hues. As durable as they are visually distinctive, the shells are tinted over the halogen material for further depth. MSRP: \$1,230. gretschdrums.com

GEAR >

DRUMS & PERCUSSION

JAMMIN PRO | iROCKER

iDevice Jam Tool

Jammin Pro's new iRocker iPod/iPhone embedded electronic drum kit configures with a kick pedal, snare, hi-hat, hi-hat pedal, tom pads and cymbals.

iRocker provides a variation button, volume knob, iPod volume meters, recording level, tempo knob and metronome with a tempo from 40–200. The program's 15 easy-to-use sound banks offer drum kits for styles ranging from rock to Latin.

{jamminpro.net}



GIBALTAR | ROLLING RACKS

Keep Rolling

Gibraltar has released rolling racks and mounting accessories designed specifically for drum corps. The modular rack design is ideal for drum corps' multi-instrument stations, providing unlimited mounting options directly to the Gibraltar rack system. A 9-inch regulation locking caster is mounted directly to the rack, making the entire station mobile.

{gibraltarhardware.com}

TAMA | NEW FINISHES

Sparkle Power

Tama recently added two new finishes to its flagship lines: in Starclassic Bubinga, Volcanic Red Burst, and in Starclassic Maple, Molten Satin Brown Burst.

The new finishing process creates flowing, organic color patterns that appear almost iridescent under normal stage lighting. Since each shell is individually treated and finished, no two are exactly alike, making each drum a unique work of art. {tama.com}





ROLAND | TD-9KX2, TD-9K2

High-Def TDs

Roland's V-Tour series V-Drums now feature the TD-9KX2 and TD-9K2, which includes an updated TD-9 percussion sound module with 30 new expressive sounds and 99 drum kits. The TD-9 also adds MP3 playback to WAV compatibility and 50 internal real audio songs. Ambience effects and EQ can be added. rolandus.com



YAMAHA | STAGE CUSTOM BIRCH BEBOP

Mini Jazz Kit

For jazz drummers and educators who need a compact kit, Yamaha's new Stage Custom Birch Bebop drum set fits the bill. Features include rugged hardware, 100-percent birch shells that offer a cutting low-end sound and a lacquer finish for ideal sustain. yamaha.com



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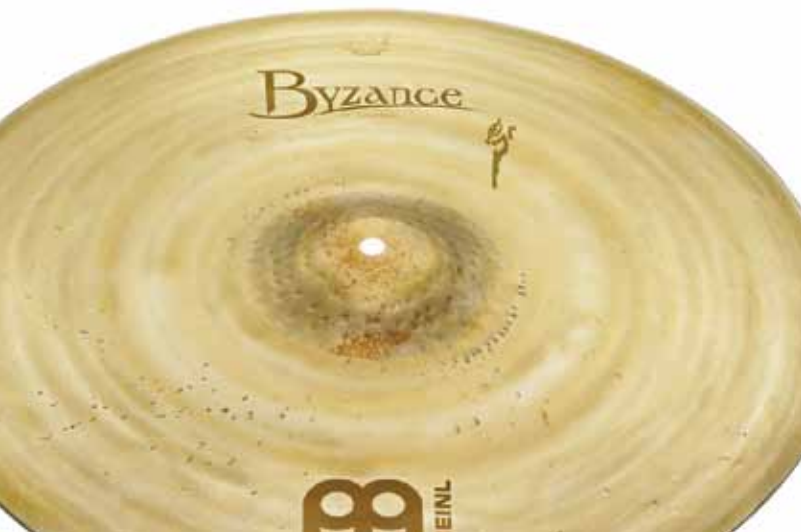
GEAR >

DRUMS & PERCUSSION

MEINL | BYZANCE

Meinl Hitches Ride

Meinl Cymbals and Benny Greb have introduced a 22-inch version of the 20-inch Byzance Vintage Sand ride cymbal. Byzance Vintage series cymbals feature unique sounds based on their composition. meinlcymbals.com



SABIAN | AAX OMNI

Seminal Cymbal

Developed for drummer Jojo Mayer, Sabian's new AAX OMNI features a medium-weight center in brilliant finish and an extra-thin, naturally finished edge. The tone structure and careful balance of frequency enable this "dynamically focused" cymbal to fit in any setup. sabian.com

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The HT-1 is the perfect studio and practice valve amp. This fun-sized 1 Watt is packed with all the great tone and innovative features of the award-winning HT-5 and enough balls to satisfy. With patent-applied-for ISF (Infinite Shape Feature), speaker emulated output, stereo MP3/Line Input, plus an 8Ω speaker output it's the perfect excuse to play your guitar.

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LP | FUTURELITE II CONGA STAND

Lighten Up

At only 5 1/2 pounds, LP's new Futurelite II conga stand is almost half the weight of standard steel stands, but its sturdy design and wide tripod stance let it hold congas securely. LP has fitted the stand with steel nuts, bolts and other hardware fittings. The Futurelite II folds compactly, and spring-loaded shell grippers are lined with a tacky material that keeps drums from sliding. latinpercussion.com



PEARL | MARACABASA

Twist & Shake

Pearl's new Maracabasa combines a maraca and a cabasa in one hand-held instrument. It features a ribbed fiberglass body wrapped in shekere-style beads and can be shaken for use as maracas or twisted for use as a cabasa. MSRP: \$29. pearldrums.com



MAPEX | DRUM THRONE

Royal Throne

Mapex has launched an adjustable-backrest throne that offers more strength and durability than traditional three-legged models. The company uses a threaded height adjustment for the seat and a height adjustment for the backrest. mapexdrums.com

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KICKPORT | CAJONPORT

South of the Border

KickPort has launched the CajonPort, a sound-enhancing device that significantly expands the presence and sonic range of virtually any cajon. The unit adds bottom and a fuller frequency spectrum, while also providing greater separation between the cajon's bass and snare sounds.

{kickport.com}



LOS CABOS | PRACTICE PAD

Canadian Original

Los Cabos Drumsticks has redesigned and expanded its line of practice pads. The all-natural, Canadian-made practice pads feature a quarter-inch gum rubber playing surface and a Baltic birch wood base. They're available in 6-, 8- and 10-inch models and feature an 8-mm brass thread for easy mounting. MSRP: 6-inch, \$25.99; 8-inch, \$29.99; 10-inch, \$39.99. {loscabosdrumsticks.com}

PEARL | ARTISAN II FINISHES

New Coat

Pearl Drums now offers Quilted Bubinga Sunburst #800 and Mocha Tamo #805 Artisan II lacquer finishes on its Masters MCX line. These kits feature 100-percent maple shells and bass drum hoops. MSRP: \$1,599. {pearl-drum.com}



REMO | TABLATONE FRAME DRUM

Tabla Tones

Remo has created the Tablatone Frame Drum, a new percussion instrument that uses loaded head technology found in the tabla drums of India. Skyndeeep drumheads, Acousticon drum shells and the Tablatone Dot deliver warm, focused fundamental tones and crisp edge tones. Tablatone Frame Drums are key-tunable and suitable for a wide variety of uses. {remo.com}



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Performer Series Timpani Mallet, Maple, Soft (PST1)



Performer Series Timpani Mallet, Maple, Medium Soft (PST2)



Performer Series Timpani Mallet, Maple, Medium/General (PST3)



Performer Series Timpani Mallet, Maple, Hard/Staccato (PST4)



Performer Series Timpani Mallet, Maple, Ultra Staccato (PST5)



Performer Series Teflon Mallet, Rattan (PSX50R)



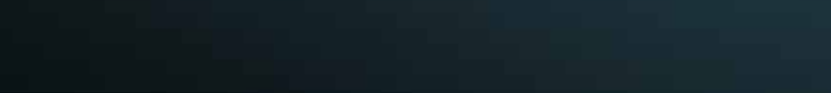
Marching Stick, Designed by Chris Retschulte (TXDC72W)



Scott Johnson System Blue Marching Stick, Hickory (TXDC17W)



Scott Johnson System Blue "ScoJo" Rubber-tipped Stick, Hickory (TXXB3)



Red Stick Rapp (SRRED)



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THE GEAR GUIDE



BAND & ORCHESTRA



AZUMI | WAVE-LINE

Making Waves

Azumi's new Wave-Line flute provides an alternate way to reduce the instrument's length while maintaining the same playing properties of a traditional model. This makes it easier for new students to use by reducing the hissing sounds and balancing issues of a conventional curved headjoint. The lighter design omits the trill keys and split E mechanism. azumiflutes.com

YAMAHA | Z SERIES SOPRANOS

Custom Saxes

Yamaha recently introduced the YSS-82Z (pictured) and YSS-82ZR Custom Z soprano saxophones, designed in collaboration with global Yamaha saxophone artists. The YSS-82Z and YSS-82ZR feature a one-piece neck through bell design. Boasting a direct, powerful sound, the Z series represents the next step in the evolution of Yamaha's custom series instruments. MSRP: \$5,545. yamaha.com



KNILLING | CAPRICCIO CELLO

Stringed Masterpiece

Knilling has released the Capriccio cello outfit. The laminated outfit comes with cover and bow and is available in full, three-quarter, half and quarter sizes. It has a fully laminated spruce top and maple back and ribs, amber varnish with red-brown shading, and solid ebony trim. The outfit comes complete with a padded, zippered cover and a wood bow with horsehair. MSRP: \$749. knilling.com



SCHILKE | ST20 HAGMANN

Well-Balanced

The newest addition to the Schilke trombone lineup, the ST20 Hagmann valve large bore symphonic tenor, provides a well-balanced flow in all registers and is easy to maintain. Available in yellow or rose brass, it features 8 1/2-inch hand-hammered bells. schilkemusic.com

ANTIGUA WINDS | PRO ONE

Truly Professional

Antigua Winds' new Pro One was created in collaboration with Peter Ponzol. Its neck is free-blowing and has quick response, precise intonation, balanced resistance and even tone quality from top to bottom. The saxophones are crafted from a special Vintage Reserve brass alloy material. antiguawinds.com



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P. MAURIAT | LE BRAVO

Bravo, Encore

P. Mauriat has introduced the Le Bravo 200 alto saxophone, a step-up instrument that will help players stand out from the crowd. The sax features a red brass body tube with matte lacquering and yellow brass keys and a solid nickel-silver neck. Blued steel springs come standard, and all P. Mauriat saxophones are padded with Pisoni professional pads containing metal resonators. MSRP: \$2,540. {pmauriatmusic.com}



HOHNER | BLUE MIDNIGHT HARMONICA

Midnight Madness

Hohner's Blue Midnight is the latest addition to the HMS series of 10-hole diatonic harmonicas. Named after the blues instrumental "Blue Midnight" by "Little Walter" Jacobs, this model offers a comfortable mouthpiece for ease of playing and a durable material that won't swell. MSRP: \$37. {hohnerusa.com}



D'ADDARIO | ROSIN

Rockin' Rosin

D'Addario's newest addition is the Kaplan Rosin Display Box, filled with Kaplan premium rosin. D'Addario designed the box to highlight the features of the rosin. It includes side brackets for one-handed opening, a bottom dial to ensure even wear and a protective hardshell case. The display box features 12 Kaplan rosins in a choice of light or dark. MSRP: \$191.88.

{daddariobowed.com}



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THE GEAR GUIDE

PIANOS & KEYBOARDS

KAWAI | MP10

Replaced & Renewed

Kawai's new MP10 (pictured) and MP6 will replace the MP5 and MP8II models in the company's MP series professional stage piano line. Both instruments feature new sound technology, new sounds and new actions. The MP6 follows in its predecessor's footsteps as an 88-note stage piano and four-zone controller. It features new concert grand piano sounds created using Kawai's Progressive Harmonic Imaging. The MP10 is a new take on Kawai's flagship stage piano, offering concert grand piano sounds in a stage instrument. {kawaius.com}



Photo by Karen Solem

GEAR >

PIANOS & KEYBOARDS

YAMAHA | CLAVINOVA CLP400

Upright Citizen

Sporting completely redesigned cabinetry, Yamaha's new Clavinova CLP400 digital piano models remove any signs of technology for a classic upright look. An acoustic control function automatically adjusts EQ tone, assuring that these instruments maintain full sounds. Each model offers Graded Hammer 3 action, but the CLP470 and CLP480's Graded Linear Hammer feature replicates 88 traditional gradation levels. yamaha.com



M-AUDIO | AXIOM USB MIDI KEYBOARD

Keyed In

Building on the features of the original Axiom line, the new M-Audio Axiom USB MIDI keyboard series highlights DirectLink technology and rotary encoders for dedicated control surface functionality that automatically maps keyboard controls to common mixer and virtual instrument parameters. Low-profile, mixer-style faders enable a hands-on mix experience. They come in 25-, 49- and 61-key sizes. MSRP: \$319.95-\$499.95. avid.com

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KACES | KEYBOARD STANDS

Sturdy Stands

Kaces has unveiled lighter, stronger aluminum double-braced keyboard stands. They feature a reinforced X-brace design and locking clutch with trigger for easy height adjustment. kaces.com



NORD | STAGE 2

Center Stage

The new Nord Keyboards' Stage 2 series piano sections boast string resonance, dynamic pedal noise and user-replaceable piano memory. The organs couple the tonewheel and transistor organ modeling of the C2 with a new rotary speaker model. Synths offer an arpeggiator and Nord sample playback functionality with a memory size that stores 120 sounds from the Nord Sample Library. nordkeyboards.com



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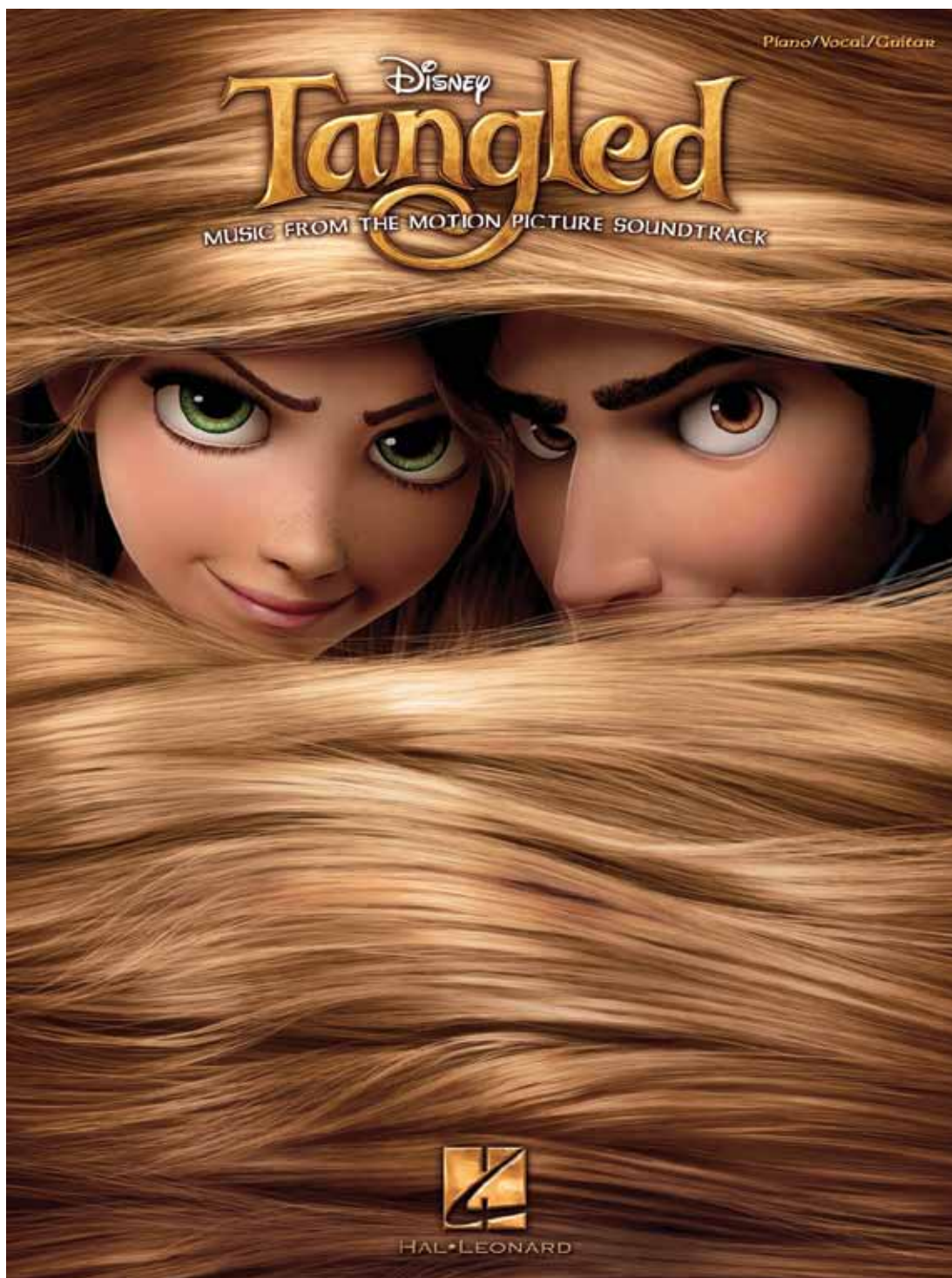
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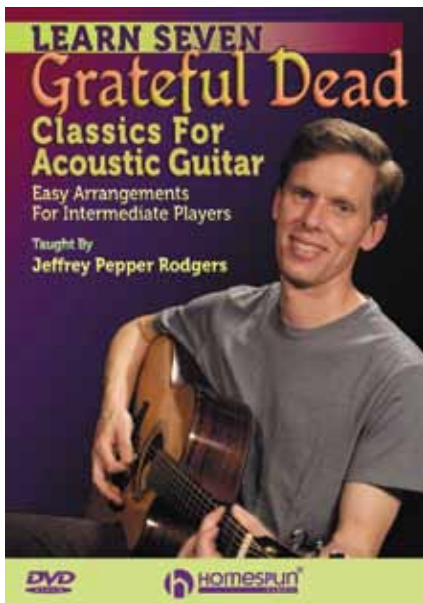
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HAL LEONARD | 'TANGLED'

Hal Gets Tangled

Hal Leonard has released the piano/vocal/guitar matching folio for Disney's latest animated feature, "Tangled." The soundtrack matches the fun and adventure of the film, with original songs and score from eight-time Academy award-winning composer Alan Menken and Tony and Grammy nominee Glenn Slater. The book includes "I See The Light," "I've Got A Dream," "Mother Knows Best," "When Will My Life Begin" and "You Are My Forever." halleonard.com



HOMESPUN | 'LEARN SEVEN GRATEFUL DEAD CLASSICS'

Back From the Dead

Homespun recently released *Learn Seven Grateful Dead Classics For Acoustic Guitar: Easy Arrangements For Intermediate Players*. The lessons are taught by songwriter, guitarist and music journalist Jeffrey Pepper Rodgers. Inspired by the Dead's studio and live albums, this instructional DVD deconstructs the arrangements that have made these songs classics. homespuntales.com



ALFRED | LED ZEPPELIN SONGBOOKS

Whole Lotta Love for Zep

Alfred has transcribed and assembled all nine of Led Zeppelin's studio albums into *Led Zeppelin Ultimate Play-Along*, a collection of songbooks for guitar, bass, drums, piano and voice.

These books let guitarists, bassists and drummers play along to Led Zeppelin classics without a full band. Each song is authentically transcribed and written in music notation and versions for the guitar and bass. alfred.com



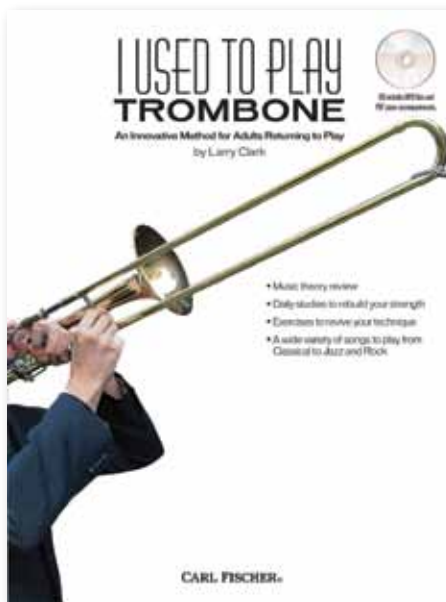
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Blast From the Past

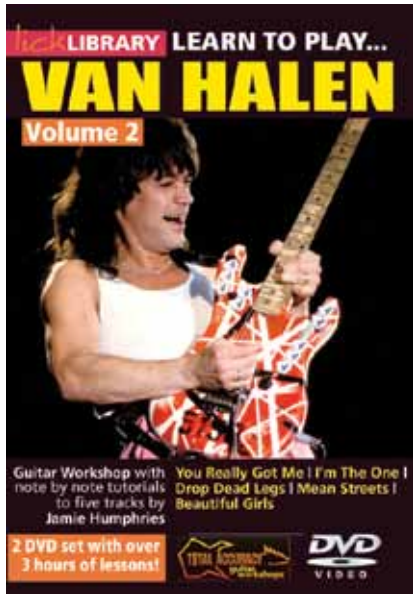
Carl Fischer has expanded its *I Used To Play* series to include *I Used To Play Clarinet*, *I Used To Play Alto Sax* and *I Used To Play Trombone* by Larry Clark and *I Used To Play Cello* by Doris Gazda and Larry Clark. This series is specifically for adults looking to get back into playing their instruments of yesteryear. Each book contains a CD with audio MP3 files of complete performances of most songs, plus accompaniment-only versions. MSRP: \$19.95 each. carlfischer.com



LICK LIBRARY | VAN HALEN VOLUME 2

Runnin' With Halen

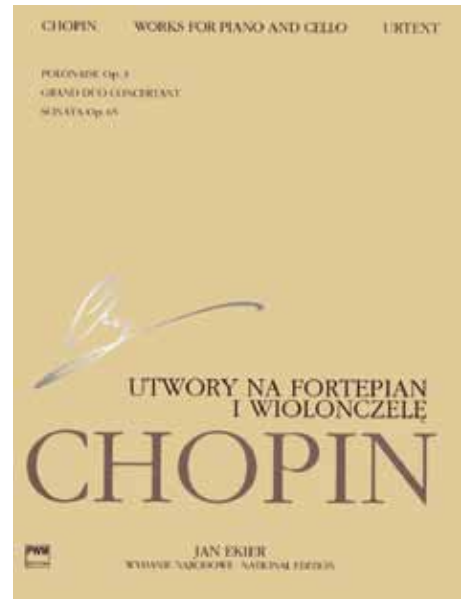
Lick Library has added *Learn To Play Van Halen Volume 2* to its catalog. With five new tracks, the two-DVD set features more than three hours of guitar lessons, including coverage of Eddie Van Halen's solo techniques and riffs. The DVD is presented by Jamie Humphries, who specializes in all things rock. licklibrary.com



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Happy 200th, Chopin

Theodore Presser has announced the completion of Polskie Wydawniczo Muzyczne's National Edition series, undertaken in celebration of Chopin's 200th birthday. The National Edition was an ongoing research project, gathering together all available source materials and producing definitive publications. Each volume includes an abridged source commentary. presser.com



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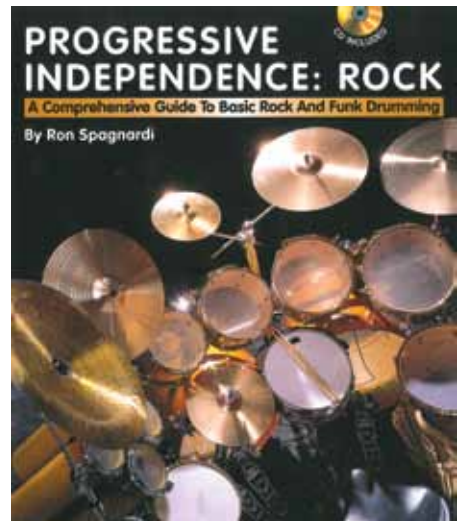
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Modern Drummer recently announced that four of its original drum method books are now available with newly produced audio CDs. The upgraded books include *Progressive Independence: Rock* (pictured), *Progressive Independence: Jazz*, *Cross-Sticking Studies* and *Building Bass Drum Technique*. {moderndrummer.com}



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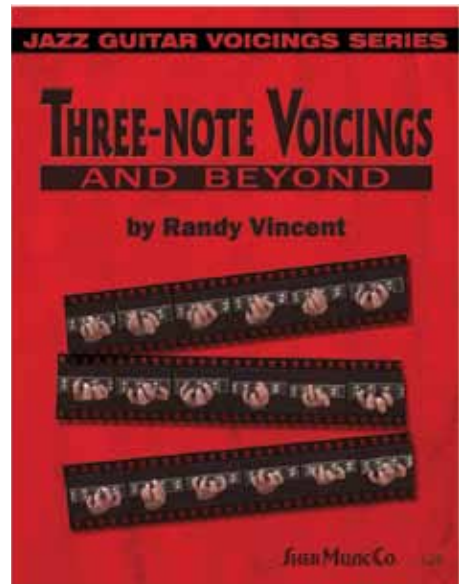
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>>>

John Litrenta

Midwest Percussion
Mokena, Ill.

After 26 years, can I still get excited about drum gear? There are a few things that have done really well.

One has been the KickPort. It has been a plus because it's relatively inexpensive and it gives everybody the opportunity to try it. It's a good product. It has done well for us.

New gear I am looking forward to is from Ludwig. I've heard that they are going to be moving in a direction that is more involved and more consumer-oriented. They're going to display a "drum building" type of unit, where customers can give their input to the music dealer and get what they want out of the set.

Right now, it seems like everybody is trying to come up with the perfect product. If something didn't work in 2009 or 2010, manufacturers are bagging it and coming out with something else for 2011.

I think there's going to be a pretty big change in the way everything is going to be done — how manufacturers are going to approach their lines and how their dealers are going to have to portray the product to the customers — because it's getting pretty competitive. There's a lot of that going on. I've gotten more discontinued SKUs than new SKUs coming out.

>>>

Justin Hoppe

Cadence Music
Rochester, N.Y.

In the past year, the DW 3-Position Butt Plate and MAG Throw Off have been interesting products. The MAG, as far as snares go, functions properly and it stays up securely, but it's really easy to throw off and it's got a long throw. When it's up, it stays up. And you can't accidentally knock it off.

I think the 3-Position Butt Plate that goes with it is an ingenious idea. The plate basically lets you have three different snare tensions without ever adjusting the tension knob. You can go from reggae to a sort of standard snare sound to a loose-balance snare.



>>>

Ken Daniels
TruTone Music
Santa Monica, Calif.

What new gear or gear technologies are you excited about for 2011?

We are so esoteric here, and we have a lot of mainstream products. However, we also offer a lot of boutique things that we're the only store — or one of three, four or five stores — that have it.

There's a company called Strymon, and they make an effects pedal called the El Capistan. That product has been off the hook for us.

They only have five dealers in the whole United States. That's all they can build for because it's a difficult pedal to create, so they can only get so many out.

It's a delay, and the world is saturated with delays, but this pedal is singularly unique because

it's designed to emulate an old tape Echoplex. There is a very sensual, liquid sound to a tape delay. It is very warm and impossible to saturate. No matter how hard you hit it, it never gets harsh like a digital does.

This machine is designed to emulate a tape echo, but it's capable of doing sound-on-sound, so you can build up your own layers a la Les Paul.

The El Capistan has been our hottest-selling item for about three months now. If there is one product that we get phone calls about every day and we're waiting for the next batch to come in, it has been the El Capistan.

We preordered as many

as we could. It doesn't matter if we order 1,000 — they will only ship 12 at a time. It took a long time for that slingshot effect to catch up, and I think it will have a second life. In fact, my understanding is that it will happen next year, if they're able to come out with a version that takes it one notch higher.

New technology I'm looking forward to would be the TC Electronic Polytune. I believe that there's supposed to be an updated and revised edition of that. The Polytune in and of itself really won't function if you're playing close voice chords up on the neck. So that's what the next revision is supposed to be.



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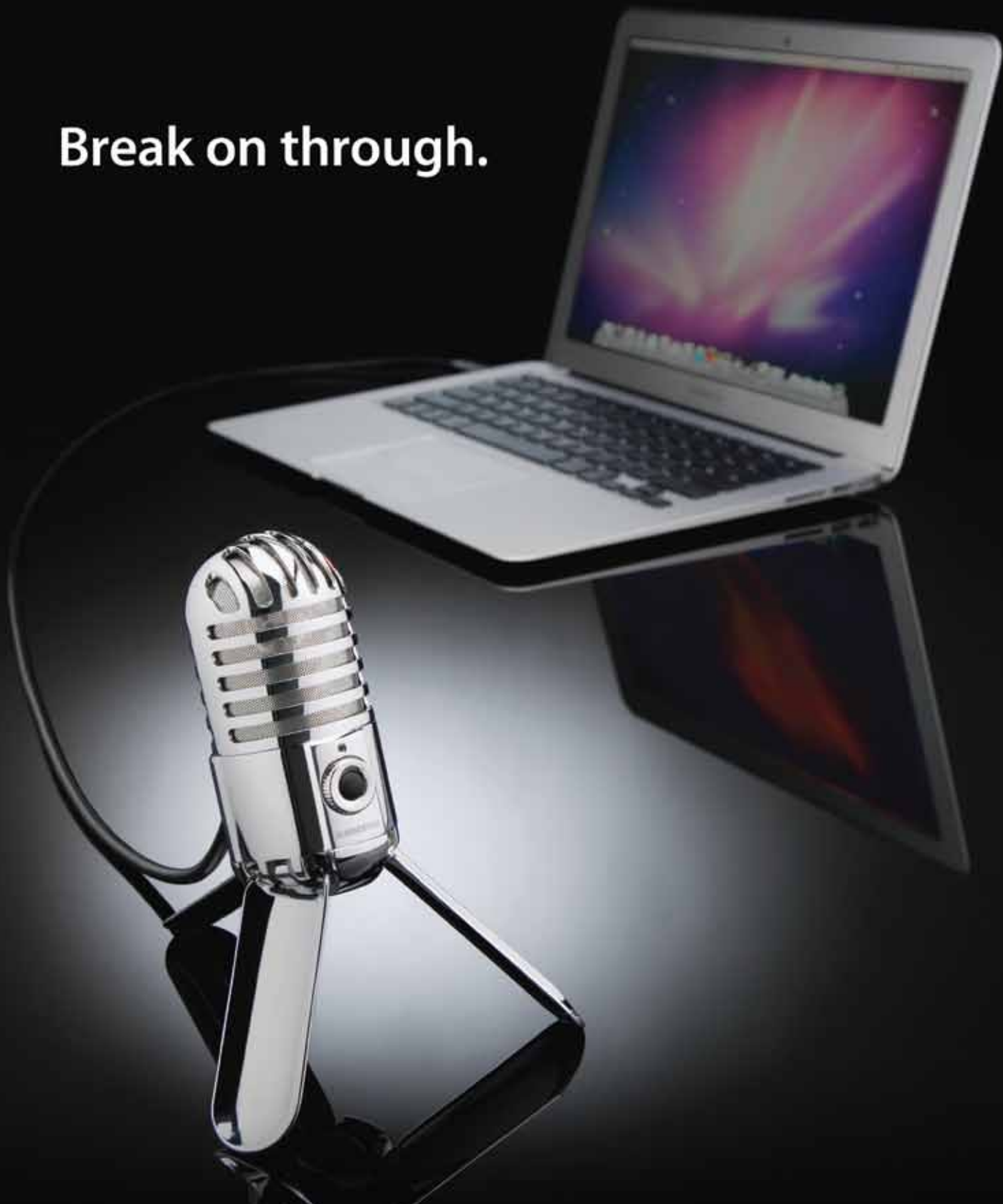
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