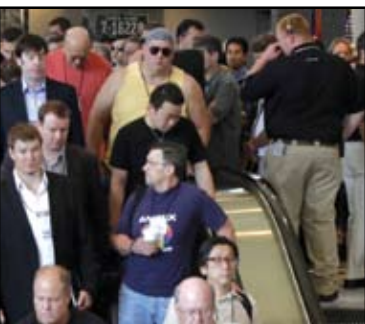


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Cover design by Laurie Chesna



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We check in with Brian Ball of Ernie Ball Inc., who dishes on some of the company's newest developments, in particular the new GigBag Amp: a top-shelf soft case for guitar with a built in two-channel Marshall amplifier boasting an aux input and offering users the ability to play along with their iPod/MP3 player.

28 Distribution: Hal Leonard

MMR speaks with Hal Leonard's Larry Morton and Brad Smith about the company's expanding distribution efforts, which finds them now handling an extensive array of software, music technology products, accessories, gifts, and more.

32 Report: Aftermarket Pickups

Interested in accessory sales that foster (a lot of) repeat business and offer good margins? Pickups may be the answer. We speak with some of the biggest names in the field to learn about who buys aftermarket pickups, what developments are on the horizon, and what trends have been affecting the market.

42 Show Report: Summer NAMM

Numbers were mostly even with last year and the tone was much the same, as well: positive, but not overwhelmingly so. Less foot-traffic equaled, for some, a greater opportunity to conduct business (good), but the generally "ho hum" vibe on the floor, coupled with – once again – some notably absent former exhibitors at the Summer get-together was a bit of a downer (bad). Sunday represented the first time "the public" was formally invited to visit the convention and feedback on the initiative seems almost universally mixed...

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An extensive listing of wholesalers in North America, including categories of product and principle brands carried by each.



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MMR Musical Merchandise Review® (ISSN 0027-4615) founded in 1879, is published monthly by Symphony Publishing, LLC, 21 Highland Circle, Suite 1, Needham, MA 02494 (781)453-9310, publisher of *School Band and Orchestra*, *Choral Director*, *Music Parents America* and *JazzEd*. All titles are federally registered trademarks and/or trademarks of Symphony Publishing, LLC. Subscription Rates: U.S.A., US possessions, one year \$32; two years \$40. Canada one year \$80; all other countries one year \$159. Single issues \$5 each. May Supplier Directory \$35. Periodical-Rate Postage Paid at Boston, MA and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER/SUBSCRIBERS: Send address change to *Musical Merchandise Review*, P.O. Box 8548, Lowell, MA 01853. Periodicals circulation is directed to music dealers and retailers, wholesalers and distributors, importers and exporters and manufacturers of all types of musical instruments and their accessories, related electronic sound equipment, general musical accessories, musical publications and teaching aides. The publishers of this magazine do not accept responsibility for statements made by their advertisers in business competition. No portion of this issue may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. Copyright ©2010 by Symphony Publishing, LLC, all rights reserved. Printed in USA.

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Spread the Word



Within this issue we mark a milestone: the tenth year of an essay scholarship program by our sister publication, *School Band and Orchestra*. Originally planned as an aid to our music educator audience, the initiative has developed from a simplistic approach, “My Favorite Instrument...,” to the more thought provoking, “I Believe Music Must Remain A Part Of The School Curriculum Because...” We have awarded \$100,000 in prize money and an equal dollar-amount of music products to the students’ school music programs. The first essay contest attracted 2,000 entries. Our largest response (12,000 entries) followed the theme, “What The National Anthem Means To You...” which was planned to coincide with MENC’s promotion of the National Anthem Project, a year-long event celebrating the battle of Fort McHenry and the restoration of the original battle flag by the Smithsonian (one respondent was a relative of Francis Scott Key).

During this decade-long span, with the support and encouragement of our charter co-sponsors Alfred Publishing and Yamaha Corporation of America, and the further financial contribution of the NAMM organization, we have been empowered to complete the circle from parent-student to educator and music dealer. Proudly, nine NAMM dealer members presented scholarship checks to the student winners (see page 12). Several of the presentations were made at school assemblies or within dealer stores with parents, students, and friends in attendance.

For our staff and other individuals working with us in reviewing the essays, it has been a consistently emotional experience. Many of the students are from single parent homes, many with fathers and mothers serving in the military, or first generation Americans, and several with physical and emotional disabilities who have benefited from their music education. The essays are submitted in many forms – hand-written, e-mails, presentation folders – and often as school projects intertwining with the English department. Jennifer Bayeri of the Phoenix Middle School in Delavan, Wis. commented, “I believe my students benefited by the introspection required in writing on a topic such as this...” and from Nina Karbacka, Washington Middle School, Jamestown, N.Y., “This was a wonderful activity for my orchestra and gave us an opportunity for a creative writing essay which is an initiative of our school.”

We are most grateful for our team of industry judges who make the final selections awarding ten \$1,000 prizes to students ranging from the fourth to the 12th grade. A heartfelt thank you to: Andrew Surmani, Alfred Publishing; Michael Skinner, DANSR; Joe Lamond and Sandra Jordan, NAMM; Earl Hurrey, MENC; Vic Firth, Vic Firth Inc.; and Roger Eaton and Jay Schreiber, Yamaha Corporation of America. Through the years their selections have included students from public and private schools in the U.S., children from Canada and Kosovo, home-schoolers, a pair of brothers, and multiple winners applying from the same school.

In the coming months we shall introduce our 11th Annual Music Student Scholarships, with the theme, “How My Music Teacher Has Influenced Me And My Goals In School.” Along with our charter co-sponsors, we are joined by Sabian Ltd. and Woodwind and Brasswind. They are welcome additions to the team.

You can help spread the word by displaying the contest poster within your store. E-mail mprescott@symphonypublishing.com for a poster and check out www.sbmagazine.com for additional information and a list of past winners, their schools, and prize winning essays.


sdavis@symphonypublishing.com

MMR[®]

MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

Volume 169, Number 8, August 2010

PUBLISHER

Sidney L. Davis
sdavis@symphonypublishing.com

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER

Rick Kessel
rkessel@symphonypublishing.com

EDITOR

Christian Wissmuller
cwissmuller@symphonypublishing.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Eliahu Sussman
esussman@symphonypublishing.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Denyce Neilson
dneilson@symphonypublishing.com

ADVERTISING SALES

Iris Fox
ifox@symphonypublishing.com

CLASSIFIED AD SALES

Maureen Johan
mjohan@symphonypublishing.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Laurie Guptill
lguptill@symphonypublishing.com

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

Andrew P. Ross
aross@symphonypublishing.com

Laurie Chesna
lchesna@symphonypublishing.com

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Melanie A. Prescott
mprescott@symphonypublishing.com

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Popi Galileos
pgalileos@symphonypublishing.com

SYMPHONY PUBLISHING, LLC

Xen Zapis • Chairman

Lee Zapis • President
lzapis@symphonypublishing.com

Rich Bongorno • Chief Financial Officer
rbongorno@symphonypublishing.com

Corporate Headquarters

26202 Detroit Road, Suite 300, Westlake, Ohio 44145
440-871-1300
www.symphonypublishing.com

PUBLISHING, SALES & EDITORIAL OFFICE:

21 Highland Circle, Suite 1, Needham, MA 02494
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Mendello Steps Down, Thomas Named CEO of Fender

After more than 30 years with Fender Musical Instruments Corporation, long-time chairman and CEO Bill Mendello announced that he would retire from his position later this year. A corporate succession plan has been in place for nearly a year in anticipation of this planned retirement and Mendello will remain on



Mendello

FMIC's Board of Directors.

"I have been uniquely privileged to call Fender my 'second family' for over 30 years. Now, after a 45-year career, I am looking forward to spending more

time with my family, traveling and pursuing personal interests," said Mendello. "I am very proud of the work I have accomplished and the people I have come to know in this industry and I am especially happy to be able to retire with a great amount of confidence in the company's future."

Fender announced the appointment of Larry Thomas to the position of CEO, effective August 1, 2010, following the previously announced retirement of Bill Mendello. Thomas was appointed to the FMIC Board of Directors in 2009 and brings nearly 40 years of music industry experience to FMIC, including his tenure (1996-2004) as chairman and CEO of Guitar Center, Inc.

The organizational move also names current FMIC Board members, Mark Fukunaga and Michael Lazarus as co-

chairmen, effective Aug. 1, 2010. Mark Fukunaga has served as a member of the FMIC Board of Directors since July 1993 and is currently the chairman and CEO of Servco



Thomas

Pacific Inc. Michael Lazarus has served as a member of the FMIC Board of Directors since December 2001. Lazarus co-founded Weston Presidio, a private equity firm and FMIC's largest shareholder, in 1991, where he currently serves as managing partner.

Monteverde Music Closes

Monteverde Music, the U. S. distributor of P. Mauriat instruments, has ceased operations. By the second week of July, the company's Web site read, in part: "After six years in operations, Monteverde Music will cease distributing P. Mauriat instruments, due to the company founder, Professor Roger Greenberg, retiring. Effective immediately, Albest Musical Instrument Co., Ltd., the parent company of P. Mauriat Musical Instruments, will handle all P. Mauriat business directly with all P. Mauriat dealers and end users. We thank you for everything you have done for us, and for being patient during the quick transition."

It was that quick transition that caught people by surprise, including Mark Overton, president of Saxquest, retailer for P. Mauriat saxophones. "We had no notice, just a phone call," says Overton. "Dan from Monteverde called last week and told me they were not longer in business. I guess the reasons are Roger is retiring and P. Mauriat is looking for a new U.S. distributor. Roger was great. They did a good job; you could always reach them. I've had a couple of email exchanges with Taiwan, but haven't worked out any details. I don't know how things will work with Taiwan."

Overton isn't sure exactly what happened with Monteverde. "It's total speculation, but I'm sure it came from Taiwan," he offers. "Maybe there were some disagreements between Monteverde and Taiwan about how things were running. They've been tight-lipped. My relationship with Roger and Monteverde was great. They put a great brand on the product; they were advertising everywhere. Roger's son Dan seemed to be ready to take over the business and take the bull by the horns."

Right now, Overton has eight P. Mauriat horns in stock, which he says will get him by for about a month or so. After a couple of e-mail exchanges with P. Mauriat, Mark is still not sure where things will go from here. Around the time that he received the phone call and was given the news from Monteverde, P. Mauriat posted the following on their Web site: "Independent Sales Rep Wanted Excellent Commission. Work anywhere in the USA. We are seeking motivated and experienced sales reps to present our complete line of woodwind instruments."

Sweetwater Files Suit Against Audiolines.com

It was reported in mid-July that Sweetwater Sound, Inc. is suing Chicago-based J2 Electronics Group, Ltd. – better known as Audiolines.com – for selling products under the Sweetwater name.

Sweetwater is seeking more than \$75,000 in damages in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Indiana in Fort Wayne. The lawsuit states that J2 Electronics had "intentional disregard to Sweetwater's rights" by advertising products under that name.

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Gibson Settles with 'Rock Band' Developers

According to recent court filings, Gibson Guitar Corp. has settled its patent-infringement claims against Viacom Inc., Electronic Arts Inc. and retailers over the "Rock Band" music-video game.

The original action was taken against Viacom, Harmonix and Electronic Arts in 2008. The case reportedly hinged on Gibson's filing of a patent in 1999 "for a way of



using a musical instrument to take part in a simulated concert."

Terms weren't disclosed. Also cited in the complaint were retail companies Target

Corp., Amazon.com Inc., and Wal-Mart Stores Inc. Gibson also had previously claimed the "Guitar Hero" games made by Activision Blizzard Inc. infringed its patent. That dispute was settled last year.

Zildjian Brings Steve Gadd Clinic Tour to Europe

Following the first leg of "Mission From Gadd Europe" in April 2010, drumming icon Steve Gadd will be returning to key European markets in September 2010 for "Mission From Gadd Europe – The Sequel" making ten stops in eight countries, beginning in Reading, England, including a special meet and greet at the London Drum Show, and finishing in Lisbon, Portugal.

Steve Gadd has played and recorded with artists such as Eric Clapton, Paul Simon, James Taylor, Steely Dan, Chick

Corea, and countless others. In 2003, Steve was the recipient of Zildjian's American Drummers Achievement Award. In 2004, Steve was instrumental in designing Zildjian's K Custom Session line of cymbals. He also received an honorary doctorate of music from Berklee College of Music and was inducted into the Percussive Arts Society Hall of Fame in 2005.

For more information visit: www.zildjian.com.

WD Music Products' Discount on Kent Armstrong Pickups

WD Music Products Inc. recently introduced volume pricing for many of the product lines on their dedicated wholesale Web site. Along with most electronics and select pickguard and neck models, Kent Armstrong pick-



ups appear to be the favorite. Dealers, OEMs, and repair shops can save up to 20 percent off Kent Armstrong pickups wholesale price when buying in volume. WD Music Products carries a full line of Kent Armstrong bass and guitar pickups.

To find out more, visit www.wdbiz.com.

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Supplier Directory Corrections:

M&A Sales has moved. The new address and information is:

PO Box 63366
North Charleston, SC 29419
Phone: (800) 323-6500
Fax: (800) 646-1950

The e-mail listed for **Rovner Products** (page 109) was incorrect. It should be: rporders@rovnerproducts.com

Drumskull Drums was inadvertently omitted from the Directory. The company's information is as follows:

Drumskull Drums
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NAMM Dealers Present *SBO* Music Student Scholarships

School Band and Orchestra, MMR's sister publication in the music education field, recently completed its tenth year of awarding scholarships to middle and high school music students.

Ten students each received a \$1,000 scholarship for their winning essays on the topic, "I believe music must remain a part of the school curriculum because..." The scholarship program, which is co-

sponsored by NAMM, Alfred Publishing, and Yamaha Corporation of America has awarded a total of \$200,000 in funds and matching music products to the students' school music programs in the past decade.

The scholarship money was distributed by NAMM dealer members, several of them at school assemblies or within their stores with school officials

and parents in attendance. The participating dealers included: Arts Music, Columbiana, Ala.; Capitol Music, Montgomery, Ala.; Blackerby Violin Shop, Austin, Tx.; Brook Mays, Dallas, Tx.; International House of Music, Los Angeles, Ca.; Skip's Music, Sacramento, Ca.; Bananas at Large, San Rafael, Ca.; Amro Music Store, Memphis, Tenn; and Willis Music, Florence, Ky.



Reshonda Brown (Jasmine's mother), Jasmine, Capitol Music owner James Houston Darby Jr., and Floyd Middle Magnet band director Coleman Woodson.



Karen Gonzalez of McClean Middle School, Page Trotter, and Betsy Taylor of Brook Mays Music.



Pat Averwater, Amro Music Stores, Inc.; Gabrielle Duran; and Dr. Reginald Houze, Watkins Overton High School.



Jeff Edon, Laguna Creek High School; Pete Rose, Skip's Music, Elk Grove; and Truc Pham.



Mark Peabody, Marin School of the Arts; Sam Hoffman; and Alan Rosen, Bananas At Large.



Oscar Naranjo, president of International House Of Music; Neydi's mother, Mrs. Mendez; Neydi Mendez; Neydi's father, Mr. Mendez; and William Barrett of Daniel Webster Middle School.



John Moon, St. Stephen's Episcopal School in Austin, Texas; Audrey Wozniak; and Blackerby Violin Shop owner Al Marabella.



Hebron Middle School band director Wendy Davidson, Jessica Roederer, and Kevin Cranley of Willis Music.

We thank *SBO* for supporting a national contest. This is a great way to involve directors, dealers, students, and parents in our fight to support music education in our schools. Jessica Roederer was thrilled to receive the check and it was nice to see the family support with her parents and siblings in attendance. The event was made even more special when her mother presented Jessica with flowers and the Hebron Middle School played "America The Beautiful." Willis Music

President Kevin Cranley gave a great talk about the importance of music in young people's lives.

Cindy Hicks
Willis Music

All of Page Trotter's teachers came to the school library for the presentation along with her parents and friends. Page read the winning essay to all in attendance. Sarah Weeks, the school principal was proud to tell us that the school enroll-

ment of 408 had 99 enrolled in the band program and 35 in the school orchestra.

Betsy Taylor
Brook Mays

We presented the check at our store and had a live band perform. In attendance with the recipient Neydi Mendez was her music teacher and pastor as well her parents and storeowner Agustin Acevado.

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Upfront

Gretsch and KMC 10th Anniversary

On June 11, The Gretsch Company hosted a 10th Anniversary barbeque picnic on the grounds of the KMC Music Corporation in Bloomfield, Conn. The family friendly event celebrated the partnership between the Gretsch Company and KMC Music. KMC Music is the exclusive distributor of Gretsch drums, worldwide.

Photos: Randal L. Struckus



Fred Gretsch mans the barbeque.



Fred and Dinah Gretsch address the ten year collaboration with KMC Music.



Don Mulligan, Delmar Products, Fred Gretsch, Dinah Gretsch, John DiMugno, president and owner, Delmar Products and Doug O'Leary, Delmar Products.



Paul Damiano presents the Gretsch Company with a snare drum signed by the KMC Music staff.



A timeline depicts the more than 125 years of Gretsch family history.



Paul Damiano, senior vice president, Sales and Marketing, KMC Music, accepts a plaque from the Gretsch Company.



Colin Schofield, Business Development Manager for the Gretsch Company, welcomes family and friends to the 10th Anniversary celebration.



The afternoon activities included balloon twisting animal creations for the children.



A portrait of three generations of Gretsch company presidents, Frederick Gretsch, his son Fred Gretsch Sr., and his two sons, Fred Gretsch Jr. and Bill Gretsch. The Gretsch Company was founded by Frederick Gretsch in 1883 in a small shop in Brooklyn. Current president Fred W. Gretsch is the son of Bill Gretsch.

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Photo by Jimmy Ienner, Jr.

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— Danny Elfman

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SF Marketing and AER bring Tommy Emmanuel to Cosmo Music

AER (Audio Electric Research), Canadian distributor SF Marketing, and FingerStyleGuitar.ca, brought acoustic guitar player, Tommy Emmanuel, to Cosmo Music in Richmond Hill, Ontario, where he conducted a guitar workshop on May 14th, before playing the second of two consecutive sold out shows at the Ryerson University in Toronto.

Over 60 attendees were on hand to enjoy the two-hour interactive workshop, during which Tommy shared stories, tips, and tricks, interspersed between performances. Following the performance, the artist participated in Cosmo's traditional plaster hand print molding, creating a memento of the visit that will hang on the retailer's Wall of Fame.

For more information, visit www.sfm.ca.

Hiscox Cases Appoints Musiquip as USA Distributor

Musiquip Inc, a distribution and marketing company serving the American MI market, has been appointed the exclusive U.S. distributor for Hiscox Cases.

Hiscox Cases, which are today sold in over 20 countries worldwide, are constructed of a leather textured high impact ABS (Acrylonitrile Butadiene Styrene) hard plastic outer shell, bonded directly to an inner molding made from



a blend of high tech cellular foam.

The brand offers cases for a wide variety of instruments, including numerous acoustic and electric guitar models, as well as alto and tenor saxophone, tenor horn, baritone, euphonium, violin, viola, cello, and mandolin.

For more information, visit www.hiscoxcases.com.

Wheaton College Selects Shigeru Kawai Concert Grand

In Wheaton, Illinois, Wheaton College selected a Shigeru Kawai concert grand for its primary performance venue, Edman Memorial Chapel. The selection in May of 2010, made possible by a generous alumni gift, is the capstone purchase in a series of piano acquisitions that has placed Wheaton College among an elite and growing group of music schools designated as Kawai EPIC Institutions.

In 2009, Wheaton College became a Kawai EPIC Institution when it added 23 Kawai and Shigeru Kawai pianos to its fleet of instruments at the Conservatory of Music. Institutions that earn the EPIC designation (EPIC is an acronym for Elite Performing Instrument Collection) have made a firm commitment to provide exceptional instruments for their students and faculty.

For more information, visit www.kawaius.com.

Trade Regrets:

'Fritzi' Frieda Kramer

"Fritzi" Frieda Hesse Kramer passed away on April 27, 2010 after a brief illness.

Many will remember Fritzi from numerous past NAMM shows and vintage guitar shows, having been in the music business since 1940. Along with her husband of 63 years, Duke Kramer – himself an industry veteran (notably with the Gretsch Company) – Fritzi owned and operated D&F Products in later years.

Memorials to: NE Florida Community Hospice, 4266 Sunbeam Rd., Jacksonville, Fla. 32257.



Michael D. Baker

On May 17th, David D. Baker passed away after a brief battle with cancer. Mike was a longtime employee of Wells Music in Denver until purchasing Graner Music in Colorado Springs about two years ago. His wife, Charlotte, is now running the day-to-day operations of Graner Music, along with Mike's brother, Randy.

Memorials may be made to the Batten Foundation at 166 Humphries Drive, Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068.

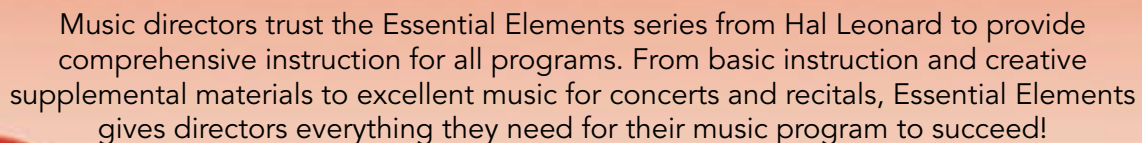


Koob Veneman

Koob Veneman, the owner and founder of Maryland's Veneman Music (acquired by Guitar Center in 2000), passed away on Sunday, June 13. Veneman also created and manufactured KAPA Guitars.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to either the American Cancer Society, 11331 Amherst Ave., Silver Spring, Md. 20902 or the Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center, 100 N. Charles St., Ste 234, Baltimore, Md. 21201.

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People

D'Addario & Company, Inc. has announced the hiring of two new senior artist relations managers, **Marco Soccoli** & **Frank Aresti**.

Marco Soccoli will be joining D'Addario as director of artist relations, responsible for all artist relations activities, and reporting directly to David Via, vice president of sales & marketing. Soccoli most recently served as director of worldwide artist relations for Vic Firth, Inc.



Soccoli

Frank Aresti will be joining the company as artist relations manager. Aresti was previously the merchandising/product manager for Kaman Music Corporation.



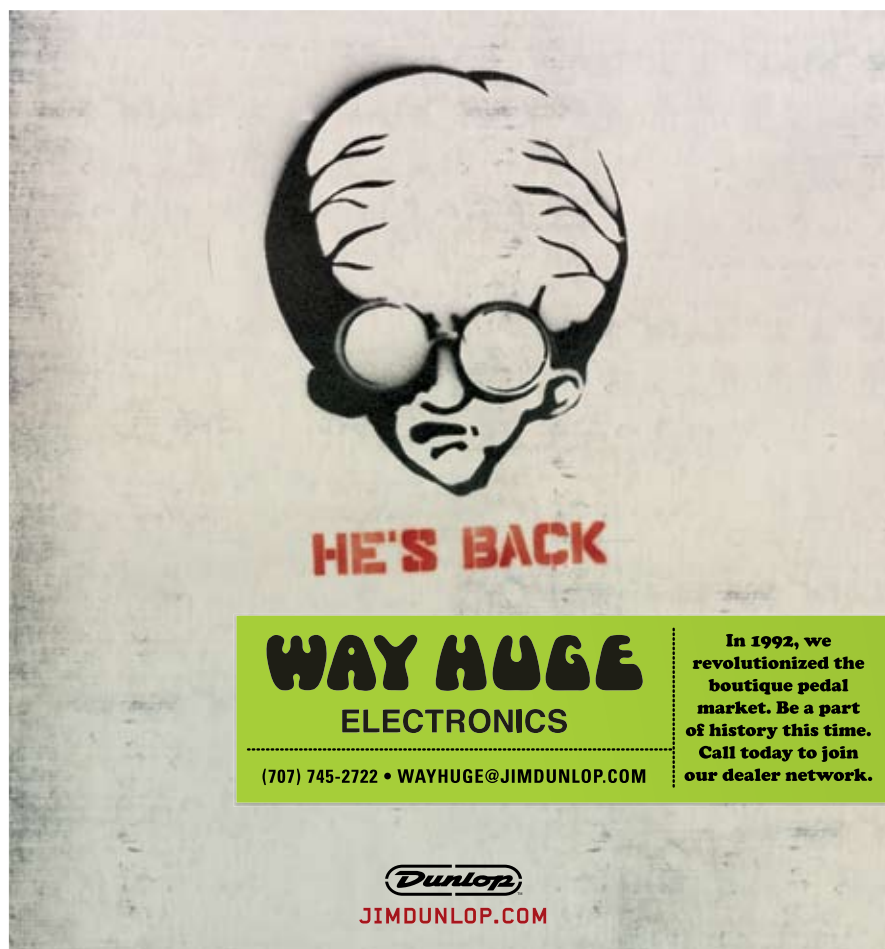
Aresti

Originally contracted in February of 2009 as a freelance artist relations representative to help fortify D'Addario's presence in the Nashville artist, backline, rehearsal & studio communities, Tom Spaulding has now been hired, full-time, "to play a heavy role in the development, publishing and management of guitar.com content, but will also contribute to D'Addario and Co., Inc. marketing, product development, events and artist relations."



Breaking News

Find it in the **Hot News** section of **MMR's Web site**, www.MMRmagazine.com



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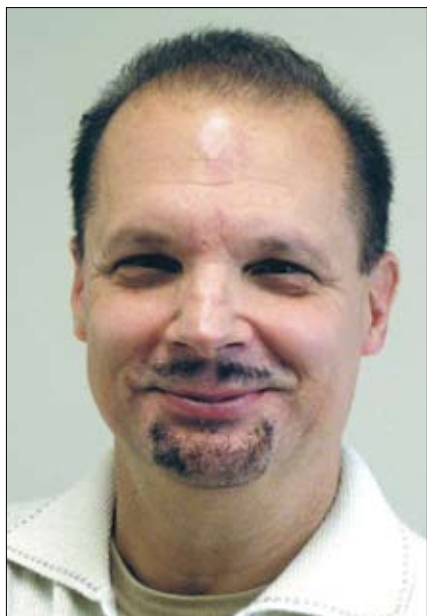
MUSIC KNOWS NO BOUNDARIES

You Are Your Own Advertising Platform When You Engage Customers Through Social Media

The Decline Of Traditional Advertising Means Your Company May Often Have To Turn Inward When Reaching Out To Music Lovers

By Joe Fucini

With the number of newspaper readers in the US declining by four percent a year, the broadcast radio industry down by roughly 13 percent over the past two years, and TV a shadow of its former self, many businesses are finding that it no longer “pays to advertise,” at least not in the traditional way. Small wonder, then, that advertising spending by businesses experienced its first two-year decline in 2008 and 2009.



Instead of relying on conventional forms of advertising, it may make more sense to turn inward, and implement an inside-out marketing strategy that uses your business as its own advertising platform to reach out to customers and generate an invaluable viral buzz on and off the Internet.

The most successful viral buzz-generating events aren't exotic “gimmicks” conjured up to create attention for attention's sake; instead, they're promotional ideas that come from within a business, growing directly out of its core identity to build its image with consumers.

The “Free” Market

For many companies outside the music industry, such as Dunkin' Donuts, Arby's, Baskin Robbins and others, this branding has involved running selective “free give-away” offers for limited periods of time. Although it may seem counter intuitive from a pre-Internet perspective, a free offer can be a cost effective way to raise customer awareness for any business.

After all, no word captures the consumer's attention as effectively as “free.” And few things will spur a social media buzz as quickly as the news that a company is offering its product or services at no charge. As far as the cost of giving away the free perk is concerned, the companies that have run these pro-

motions successfully consider their give-aways an advertising expense.

The money that, in the past, had gone to placing ads in traditional media outlets, is now being used to fund a new kind of viral/social media advertising. Instead of buying broadcast time or newspaper ad space, this money is used to pay for other things, such as products for give-aways, which spark interest in the social media. The social media then spreads the word about these things virally for little or no added cost. So, in the social media world, the advertising cost is not in disseminating the information, as it was in the traditional media world, it's in creating the event that starts the information ball rolling.

Denny's Free Grand Slam Breakfast promotion, which generated so much publicity for the company in February, 2010, provides a good example of how the process works. Although Denny's did advertise its free breakfast deal on the Super Bowl, the company relied mostly on social media buzz and extensive traditional media coverage to promote the offer. In 2009, Denny's served its free breakfast to two million people, averaging 130 Grand Slams per hour at each of its 1,500 restaurants. During the promotion, the restaurant chain ranked among the Top Ten Trend Twitter Topics. This year, even more breakfasts were served, and Denny's received 24 million hits on its Web

“The smart marketer will actively seek to engage customers in social media.”

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site in the four days surrounding the offer. The exposure Denny's receives from its free offer is well worth the cost of 2 million breakfasts. No wonder the company's stock rose 22 percent in the short term after it ran the promotion last year.

Free and Easy

You can run a variety of free promotions on your social media outlets. Here are just two examples:

- **Free Facebook Offers** – Want to create some buzz for a new product? Or pump up interest in an existing one? How about sending free strings or a gift card to the first 50 fans on your Facebook page who agree to write a review of your business? You can post the positive reviews on your Facebook page and Web site, and use the negative ones as feedback to enhance future strategies. Most people who earn a chance to participate in this project are going to message their friends about this activity, which generate viral buzz.
- **YouTube Contest** – If a picture is worth a thousand words, a video is probably equivalent to 100,000! You can harness the power of YouTube, by encouraging customers to make videos explaining

why they love your store. Here's one way to accomplish that goal: Offer a free sample product to the first 25 or 50 people who make a video and post the entry on YouTube. At the end of the contest period, the customer who created the best video as determined by your panel of judges wins a prize, such as \$100 gift card. The cost of the prizes and the free samples should be more than offset by the exposure you receive on YouTube. After all, you're getting these real pet lovers to make video commercials for you!

Making Your Brand Fun On The Social Media

People spend more money when and where they feel good, said Walt Disney, who went on to amass a fortune building "the happiest place on earth". You aren't going to turn your Facebook page or Web site into Disneyland, but you can create a game-like sense of excitement by randomly giving away prizes.

Visitors aren't going to expect to win anything valuable at your site, since the odds are slim, but the fun of having this contest should make a visit to your social media pages more exciting and memora-

ble, which will strengthen the bond between your business and its customers. By the same token, most of the people standing in line for hours at Denny's for a \$6 breakfast know that their actions don't make sense economically. For them, the free Grand Slam isn't about breakfast; it's about being a part of something fun!

Consider McDonald's, which has enjoyed great success with its long-standing October Monopoly Game. The quick serve restaurant chain has reenergized its brand, built customer loyalty and reached out to young consumers by tapping into the iconic name recognition of one of the world's most famous board games.

Initially, McDonald's Monopoly began as an in-store promotion, but the quick serve king continually innovated, taking the game online in 2004, bringing on digital partners to increase its prize pool and, in 2008, turning it into the world's first mobile collect and win game. Some 4 million players entered 70 million mobile codes in McDonald's Monopoly in 2008 and store sales increased by 5.5 percent during Monopoly Month. Last year, McDonald's added a Facebook app for its game, which attracted 500,000 users.



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The lesson McDonald's demonstrates is that customers want fun and color in their daily routines. They aren't going to get this from your advertising, but you can give it to them with a social media marketing platform that delivers an enjoyable experience.

Social Media Turns "Word Of Mouth" in WORLD of Mouth

As the McDonald's Monopoly experience also shows, when you create this enjoyable experience and marry it to social media, the viral buzz you create is going to spread like wildfire. The Internet has turned word of mouth advertising into a more powerful force than could ever have been imagined just a generation ago. If you use your store to create events and customer experiences that get people tweeting, blogging and emailing, you'll create a level of exposure for your business that would be all but impossible to match with traditional advertising.

Making It Meaningful

Making your brand fun is one way of generating exposure. Adding extra social meaning to your brand is another. Home

Depot offers a good example of this strategy. Beginning in June of 2009, the home improvement giant did something that would have been unimaginable at the start of the decade: it stopped giving customers plastic bags with their purchases. Ad material published by Home Depot explained the new policy this way:

"To encourage customers to reduce their use of plastic bags and protect the environment we will now charge 5 cents for each plastic bag. Please bring your own bag or purchase one of the Home Depot's reusable bags available in-store."

Home Depot's eco-bag policy is just one example of the steps companies are taking to their products, services and stores more meaningful to customers by connecting it to a larger cause. There's a good reason why so many companies from Wal-Mart to Starbucks have followed similar strategies. In one recent survey, 85 percent of Americans said they have a more positive image of companies that support causes they believe in, and 68 percent said they would pay more for a product that supported a good cause.

Doing things at your site that creates a positive impression on customers and gives

them greater awareness of your business is at the heart of inside-out marketing. Not long ago, a business could create this consumer awareness through advertising, but changes wrought by the Internet and social media have made that far less likely today.

Social Media Is For Listening Too

The social media is a great platform for spreading a positive image about your business, but its value certainly doesn't end there. Unlike traditional advertising, which sends information in one direction – from your company to its customers – social media is a two-way street. In addition to helping you send out your messages, it's an effective market research tool, providing you with instant feedback from your customers, potential customers and even former customers.

Even if you aren't engaged in the social media, you are on it, since people are Tweeting, blogging and commenting on your products or services all the time. Monitoring this feedback should be a key part of your business strategy.

The venerable toy maker, Lego also learned first hand about the power of social media as a market research tool. In 2004, the company's products seemed

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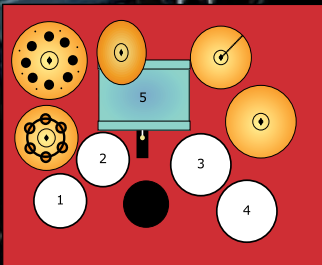
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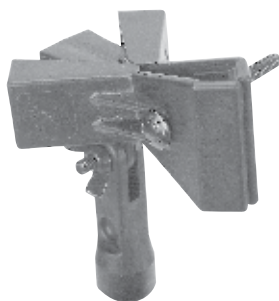
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outdated, and it was losing \$300 million a year. But by 2008, the company was posting double digit sales increases. In 2009, Lego enjoyed a 31percent US sales increase, gaining a full market share point to 3.9 percent, making it the fastest growing of the top 10 toy makers in this country.

What happened? Lego began a comprehensive customer listening program that relied increasingly more on social media as a market research tool. Delving into Facebook, Twitter and carefully monitoring consumer toy blogs, it took serious samples of popular culture, and processed it thoughtfully to make its product line more relevant to consumer tastes. For example, Lego placed much greater emphasis on movie-themed toys like its Star Wars and Indiana Jones offerings. Now these licensed products make up more than half of the company's sales.

At one time, it was thought that Lego toys were just for kids. Monitoring blogs and Tweets soon convinced Lego executives otherwise. By being attuned to social media they discovered an extensive network of adult fans that remained passionate about the toys and spent a good amount of money on them.

Once they became aware of this large adult market, Lego executives actively reached out to it, getting involved in the AFOL (Adult Fans Of Lego) community. Lego has sponsored adult oriented events and created a network of ambassadors who spread the word about Lego through the social media and share their input with the company about new products.

All of this networking has created even more momentum for Lego's growth machine, but of course none of this might have happened had not the company made a concerted effort to learn more about its customers. There's a lesson in this toy for all businesses that are looking for new ways to build customer loyalty. In today's market, when the impact of traditional advertising is limited and technology has changed the dynamics of the consumer-business relationship, the smart marketer will actively seek to engage customers in social media, not just by "talking" to them, but by listening too.

Joe Fucini is president of Fucini Productions, a marketing and public relations agency serving clients in several industries, including MI. He can be reached at joe@fucnipro.com.

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Upfront Q&A

Brian Ball

At the recent NAMM Show, *MMR* dropped by the Ernie Ball booth to chat with the family behind one of the marquee names in MI.

In addition to looking over and discussing the wide range of current Ernie Ball/Music Man product offerings, Brian Ball gave us a hands-on demonstration of the company's new product innovation, the GigBag Amp. As the name suggests, it's a quality soft case for guitar with a built in Marshall(!) two-channel amplifier boasting an impressive array of tonal features and an auxiliary input, opening up new worlds of mobility and versatility to electric guitar players of all types.



MMR: Where did the idea for the GigBag Amp originate?

Brian Ball: We felt like there was a tremendous opportunity to collaborate with an amp manufacturer and design a case that was multi-functional and tremendously portable. We really wanted to give guitarists the ability to plug & play on the go with a fantastic sounding amp.

We also wanted to provide an option for guitarists to play along with their favorite songs

through their iPod / MP3 player. The amp is equipped with stereo speakers which allows guitarists to play simultaneously with the MP3 player.

MMR: How has the initial reaction been to the amp?

BB: The reaction to the gig bag amp has been very positive. The gig bag is durable, extremely well padded, and attractive with embroidery and exclusive fabrics. The amp is lightweight, compact, yet surprisingly loud and powerful.

Marshall did a fantastic job with the design, and components used. We really worked hard at making sure the amp sounded great, while staying lightweight and compact in design.

Dealers have been very impressed with the pricing options and suggested street price of \$119.99. We've already received commitments from many family owned independent stores, national chains, and international distributors in over 20 markets

MMR: How did the collaboration with Marshall develop?

BB: We wanted to partner with an iconic brand, who spoke to the Rock and Roll audience. Marshall clearly fits that bill, and they've been nothing short of a fantastic partner to work with. Both of our companies share a lot of common

interests, goals, and coincidentally - both companies share the same 50 year anniversary in 2012.

MMR: Makes good sense. Switching gears to strings: how did you guys develop and design your new Element Shield Packaging?

BB: The new string packaging was a big undertaking, and something we are very proud of. Our strings are manufactured, packaged, and sealed within hours of testing and approving the raw materials we use. We want our strings to be the finest and freshest on the market, and the barrier we are providing our strings is second to none. We switched over in 2008, and have received a ton of positive feedback from consumers, dealers, and distributors.

MMR: Any other new developments on the horizon for Ernie Ball you can share?

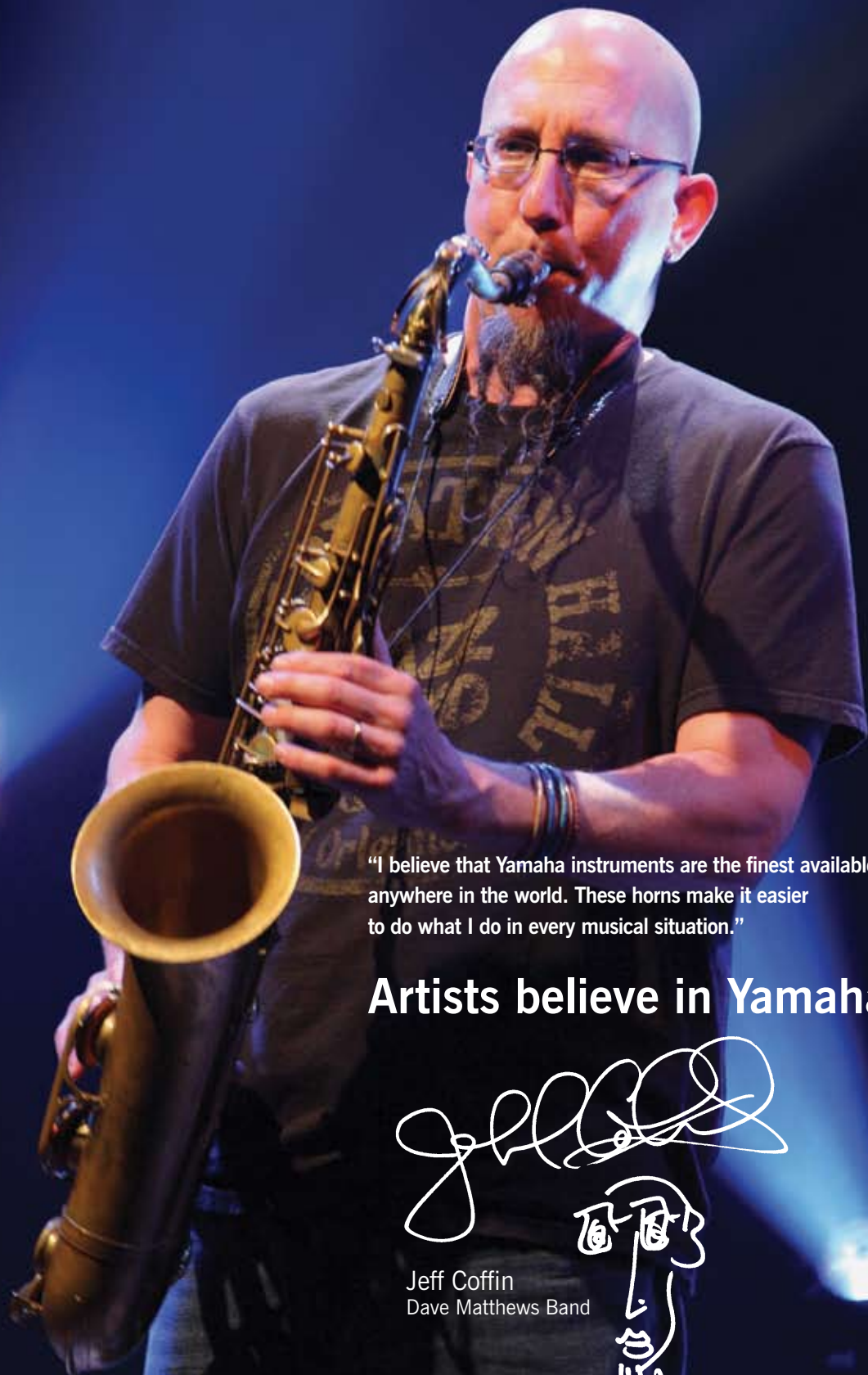
BB: We're placing a tremendous amount of energy on consistently improving the processes that go into manufacturing, quality control testing, and packaging of our core products. That's been a big focus of ours, and will continue to be in the future.

Product wise, we've got some exciting new developments both on the Ernie Ball and Music Man side that I can't quite divulge, but we are targeting at a 2011 launch.





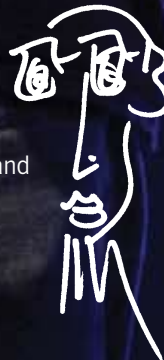
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"I believe that Yamaha instruments are the finest available anywhere in the world. These horns make it easier to do what I do in every musical situation."

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Jeff Coffin
Dave Matthews Band



Hal Leonard Expands Into Software, Accessories & Gifts Distribution

Also trumpets deals with Yamaha, Roland, and Korg

An MI retailer receiving a Hal Leonard catalog is not necessarily a big deal. Receiving two? Well, mistakes happen... wait. The second is *just* for gifts and accessories. As for their main catalog, the software section is getting bigger, too. So in addition to that ukulele folio, dealers can order little composer statues; band method for viola; pro audio recording software; and with that conga book and DVD, why not electronic tuners?

And during that slow period in the middle of the day, if you want to edit that soon-to-be Oscar winning feature film, Hal Leonard can help with that.

It's no secret that the print music company has been aggressively entering in distribution and partnerships with many other publishers large and small. But they've increasingly moved into other areas, and today offer Avid products, Yamaha B&O accessories, Hohner harmonicas, GigLights, Chop-Saver Lip Balm, Peterson and Korg tuners, Roland sound modules, Finale software, and IK Multimedia amp modeling software and interfaces, among others. [for a full list of brands carried, see page 79—Ed.]

Larry Morton, president of Hal Leonard, says it's been an evolution – albeit a carefully thought out one. “We publish

every kind of print music in every musical genre, therefore we deal with every kind of music store,” he explains. The gamut is run from the smallest folk shop, to the full line store; from the violin shop to the rock and roll combo operation. “We have this reach of 10,000 storefronts in North America. We have good knowledgeable sales people who are respected. So it's not a big leap.”

“We're musician-oriented, and we're very good at moving small goods,” notes Brad Smith, Senior Sales and Marketing Manager. “Our main strategy is to be able to offer more to people we're already talking to.”

Let's Make a Deal

The many big and small deals they've aggressively pursued in the print world include a joint venture with Music Sales, DrumFun, Shawnee Press, Rock House, Criterion, Stephen Sondheim music, Faber, and even products from Scott “the Piano Guy” Houston.

But add to those harmonicas – and yeah, that poster of the Washington Mall statue of Lincoln playing a steel guitar.



Larry Morton



Brad Smith

Morton says it started when they first stepped beyond products that were conveniently all pretty much 9" x 12" size. Once they started packaging recorders with songbooks successfully, it opened up a gate of possibilities – though he admits shipping was the biggest challenge in the process. “We traditionally had the advantage of selling a fairly uniform-sized product, and then we were selling music stands, Hohner harmonicas, tuners, lip balm, and gifts. We had to build into the distribution system a way for that to flow. But we had just built the new distribution center, so we weren't too concerned about it and it's worked out.”

With those details worked out in their new warehouse, they have “grown capable” of handling a growing list of non-print products, all of which have turned out to be a good fit, he says. But there are limits to where they are going.

“We didn't want to jump into the broad distribution of what's being done at Harris Teller, Chasbro, et cetera,” he says. “We're much more interested in unique products that are compatible with who we are.” He says the first notable deal down this path, with Peterson stands, was a perfect place to start: it holds the music that they publish, and is unique in that it's the only truly mobile collapsible music stand.

Unique Products

As for software in general, and the recent deal with Avid, Hal Leonard backed into that business starting in 2001. “We've been distributing software since the early '90s, so

this is just a natural outgrowth,” explains Smith. “We got started with Sibelius music notation software and that was an easy natural fit because our sales people speak that language, the packaging of it similar to what we do, so that business grew.” Soon they added Finale to the mix. When Yamaha bought Steinberg in 2005 that pushed them in the pro audio business. Then Avid bought Sibelius and as Hal Leonard continue to distribute them, they noticed them reaching a segment of the market they weren’t, and that lead to the recent deal and the offshoot of going even deeper into software.

Morton addresses a potentially touchy issue – the fact that they are taking on products from companies who are in fact fierce competitors with each other. “We found that not to be a problem because we are careful to communicate discreetly and work independently with each company, and they trust us,” he explains. In marketing materials and catalogs, competing products aren’t placed on the same page, for example. “On the other hand, one plus one can equal three. Making competing products available from one source can lead to more sales for everyone.”

On the gift side, he acknowledges that some may “turn their noses” up stocking these products, but in many cases, it’s an opportunity missed.

“Gifts are challenging on a merchandising level,” he admits. “By their nature can just look so junky if they don’t get properly displayed. Retailers can order some, then get them in and open the box and go, ‘now what?’” The company is going to help retailers with that by offering displays.

“Right here in Milwaukee we have White House of Music, they have a beautiful store where there gifts and accessories have nice slat work, tagged nicely and neatly – that’s what it takes. Once you get past that challenge, retailers realize that all musicians like to buy them, usually on impulse, and they have healthy margins and they have no after market cost.”

Karen Cannon, the artist behind Art Strings gifts and cards, was another opportunity that made sense. From there G. Henle musical puzzles did as well. But not everyone need apply.

“Frankly, we turn down more people than we’ve brought in,” he says. What are the conditions that lead to thumbs up? A shared vision and philosophy and a realistic view of the market and what their products can do for starters. “Uniqueness and quality of the product are most important



– we want to be careful to what we attach the Hal Leonard name too. So with every situation, we have to do due diligence.”

That’s for the entrepreneurial-based companies. But for bigger deals with bigger companies like Yamaha, Roland, and Korg, the process is different. “These are high level organizations with top professional people with their own distribution and marketing in place – they certainly don’t need Hal Leonard to tell them what to do,” Morton says. But Hal Leonard is valuable because they get into the “nooks and crannies” of

the business, whereas these companies are appropriately focused on selling their main products – instruments. It’s much easier for a dealer who doesn’t sell Korg keyboards to add one or two of their tuners to an order already going to Hal Leonard. Minimum order issues are not an issue, either. As for the companies, Smith observes that, “they love the extension of their brand going beyond their franchised dealers into a whole subset of retailers. This all has been particularly good timing for the technology companies, well. We’re reaching a lot of storefronts.”

Hal Leonard Score Card for Non-Print Items

In case you haven’t been keeping track – and this list is by no means complete, but here’s notable notes of who Hal Leonard has partnered with in the near past:

- HL agrees to distribute IK Multimedia (IK) music production software and hardware to music stores in North America. This privately held music software company headquartered in Modena, Italy and is the software partner of choice for such iconic brands as Ampeg®, Fender® and Jimi Hendrix™.
- HL and Premier Guitar form Guitar Edge LLC, a new joint venture company created to expand and enhance Guitar Edge magazine as a multimedia resource for guitarists.
- HL partnered with Avid and all their software products which include Pro Tools, M-Audio Axiom Pro, and Sibelius.
- HL agrees to distribute Hohner harmonicas.
- HL exclusively distributes Art Strings products, which feature the artwork of Karen Cannon, and includes cards, posters, mugs, mouse pads, and more.
- HL exclusively distributes Yamaha’s Steinberg Software, which includes Cubase, WaveLab, and HALion. A second agreement with Yamaha to distribute their line of accessories including maintenance kits; mouthpieces and caps; cleaners, cloths, and oils; percussion practice pads; and Silent Brass systems.
- HL distributes Petersen Music Stands.



Note from Joe

Government Regulations and Their Impact on Your Business

For many NAMM Members, the term “government regulations” is shorthand for government-imposed requirements that place undue burdens on business. For others, it represents necessary restrictions on behavior or process to assure quality of life, a sustainable environment and access to opportunity for all.

While government's influence in business is not new, it's amazing how the landscape has changed in just 10 years. More issues than ever impact NAMM Members and knowledge about regulatory requirements is necessary for business success. The Federal Register, which is the government's principal tool for announcing regulations, grew nearly 20 percent from 2001 to 2008. Whether it's regulation that directly impacts NAMM member companies—such as Internet sales tax, credit card privacy issues, environmental issues, tariffs or consumer

finance—or more generalized regulation like health care, there's likely to be even more regulation in the coming years. The time for not paying attention is over—forever.

In addition to our primary lobbying effort in support of music and art education for all children, your association is active year-round advocating for legislative or regulatory reform with the goal of providing support and assistance to all NAMM Members. We work with a great team in Washington, other associations like the National Retail Federation and NAMM Members to make sure our voice is heard when these laws are being debated. We strive to educate and inform you about compliance with pertinent regulations, and we fight to achieve reasonable gains and outcomes for the entire industry. Like democracy, government regulations are grounded in discussion and compromises. On a daily basis, your \$195 annual dues help NAMM stay actively involved in representing your views and looking out for the best interests of our Members with your elected officials—and we encourage and welcome your continued input.

To stay up-to-date on current issues and NAMM's efforts to support the needs of small business, visit www.namm.org/publicaffairs and follow NAMM's Public Affairs blog updated regularly by Mary Luehrsen, Director of Public Affairs & Government Relations.

Joe Lamond • NAMM President/CEO

NAMM is working on and educating Members about the following issues:

International Trade and Regulation Issues

- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES); required documentation for use of wood and wildlife on restricted use lists
- Lacey Act implementation; new regulations on importation of illegally harvested wood and/or wood products
- White Spaces and broadband licensing and regulation
- Intellectual property and copyright protections

Environmental Issues

- California Air Resources Board (CARB) standards; amendment of deadlines for sale of non-complying products
- Potential Federal legislation to expand California requirements nationwide
- Consumer Product Safety Commission; rules on lead and other content in musical instruments and other products
- Hazardous waste disposal for electronic and other products with metals deemed hazardous

Financial Regulation

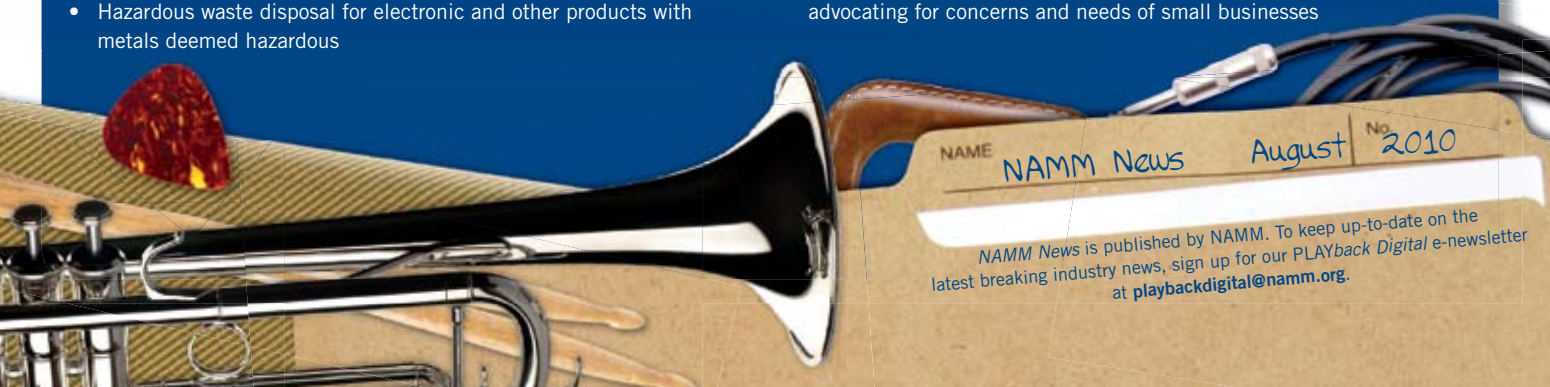
- Swipe fee amendment in financial regulatory reform legislation giving retailers more flexibility to accept debit cards
- Implementation of federal gift card legislation
- Payment card industry (PCI) compliance standards
- Federal and state rental-purchase legislation

Tax Issues

- Restrictions on use of last-in, first out (LIFO) inventory accounting
- Estate tax reform
- Internet sales tax and sales tax fairness; advocating for tax parity between storefront and online retail
- General small business tax issues

Healthcare Reform

- Healthcare reform regulation development and implementation; advocating for concerns and needs of small businesses





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Retailers - Pick Up the Pace!

In our last issue (July), *MMR* explored the opportunities presented – for both retailers and consumers – by replacement guitar cabinet speakers. It was noted that the tonal variations and potential for “customizing” that speakers offer are today being recognized in much the same manner which lead aftermarket pickups to first become a hot commodity back in the ‘70s. With that in mind, we decided to take the pulse of the pickup market in 2010 – what’s new, what’s popular, what’s the appeal for both MI storeowners and end-users?

Perhaps the biggest lesson to be taken away from both of these reports is the importance of creating a consumer who is, by nature, bound to represent repeat business. If you can successfully “hook” a musician on the possibilities (and downright fun) available through modifying their gear and individualizing their instruments and rigs, you’ve opened up

a can of worms that is likely to stay open for a long while. The kid who successfully swaps out the factory issue pickup on his entry level solidbody electric isn’t likely to stop there – expect that same customer to come back, over and over again, for: pickguards, machine heads and tuning machines, saddles, nuts, *more* pickups, et cetera.

So the upsides seem inarguable, especially in an economic climate in which a musician is much more likely to feel comfortable about multiple mid- and small-level purchases, dollar-wise, than big-ticket commitments, such as an entirely new instrument. How to really capitalize on this potential, then? Sure, the first step would be



Billy Pirie
Fender Musical Instruments Corp.



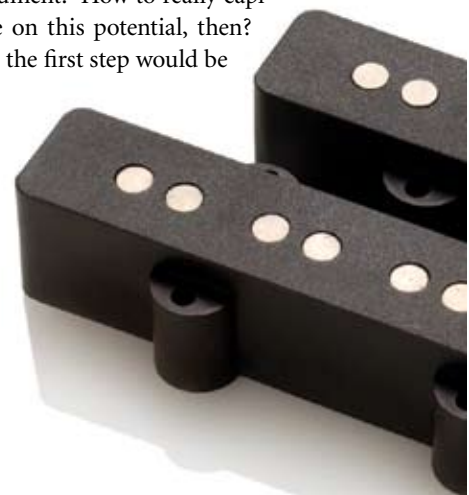
Frank Falbo
Seymour Duncan
/Basslines/D-TAR



Scott Wunschel
EMG, Inc.



Pekka Rintala
B-Band, Inc.



to make sure you actually *have* the product available, in-store. But to really make an impact, it takes more than just plopping a few pickups in a counter display. If you, or someone on your staff, can be knowledgeable enough to answer the nuts-and-bolts questions a customer may have about pickups, in general, or effectively outline the differences between specific options, it makes a world of difference. But going even further helps create that “lifer,” and guides that consumer into a culture which encourages and celebrates modification (and, consequently, more sales for you).

Don't just sell that kid a pickup for his entry-level solidbody – help him install it, tell him where to buy a soldering iron and other essential tools, show him the basics involved in the process. Maybe drop a few hints about all the other gear you have in stock right now that he might be interested in that would further individualize his instrument. And when that same kid comes in, a year later, asking about refinishing guitars, have some knowledge about nitro and poly finishes and be able to offer some leads as to where to go to get supplies. To make the most of this potential repeat business, become more than just the store that carries the product – be a mentor, a partner, a true resource.

Below are some observations and feedback from some of the key names in pickup design and manufacture today.

MMR: What trends have you been noticing in the pickup market?

Frank Falbo: As in most industries right now, the trend is: value. Most guitar

manufacturers have found ways to push value farther than ever, and pickups are no exception. For a company committed to USA manufacturing, the challenges are even greater. The average cost of a US-made replacement pickup has under-indexed the rate of inflation by 66 percent. Luckily for us, process and quality improvements have always been a priority, so many of the efficiencies we enjoy today were initiated during the high growth time of 2006-08. Now we reap the rewards, rather than playing catch up, or cutting corners, which is not in our vocabulary.

That job is never “done,” but we've been able to remain competitive, even with companies marketing Asian-made pickups for less, while still maintaining the integrity of our brand as more high cost boutique winders enter the field.

Billy Pirie: The trend in the market is that not everybody is out there spending tons of money on big-time products and such, however the boutique market is doing really well. Folks are looking for something that's very, very personal, but not necessarily super expensive. Lower priced goods that are branded with strong names associated with them are seeing a lift in the marketplace. Fender's enjoying that as well. We're noticing a good momentum in the pickup marketplace. Certain SKUs that are staples – the original P-Bass pickup, for example – are doing real well.

Scott Wunschel: We are seeing a growing demand for 7- and 8-string pickups from artists and consumers. We have a very good selection of 7- and 8-string pickups now and see the potential for a few more

“Every guitarist, if they stick with it long enough, will replace their pickups. It's just a matter of time.”

— Frank Falbo, Seymour-Duncan

in the near future. In fact, we are working with an internationally known guitar player on a brand new 7-string model for his signature guitar. This came out of a meeting at the Winter NAMM Show this year, so there is a current demand.

Pekka Rintala: Compared to previous years, more guitars sold in stores have pickups installed at the factory, so the OEM sales are bigger and aftermarket sales are not as big as they used to be. There are still some high-end brands that prefer not to install pickups; they will leave that option for the customer after they buy the guitar. There are also many players who will buy a guitar and decide to upgrade the pickups after playing it for some time.

Jason Lollar: Players seem to be moving back towards the “classic” tones. Less gain, more note clarity. Obviously, that's a generalization, but we get far more requests for pickups that are not really “hot.” You can find so many great, vintage-style amps these days... I think many players are re-discovering the beauty of a



Jason Lollar
Lollar Guitars



Kent Armstrong
Kent Armstrong Pickups/WD
Music Products, Inc.



Rod Rose
Schatten Design Acoustic
Pickups



Chris DeMaria
Fishman Acoustic
Amplification

responsive amp and a clear, dynamic pickup. These are tones we've always built towards... It's what I prefer to hear.

Kent Armstrong: Players are becoming more discerning and tone has trumped raw power as players' tastes have evolved. Note articulation/separation, touch sensitivity, and smooth response are more in demand with less attention to distortion. The trend toward smaller, low powered amplifiers has also helped bring our pickups' tonal qualities to the forefront. Players also like the no-mod necessary swaps. Retrofit pickups like our P-90 in humbucker size, Filtertron in humbucker size, and humbuckers in single coil configuration are attractive options for those who want to change the sound of their instrument without making major modifications.

Rod Rose: Players are looking for top quality pickups at more affordable prices. Most low priced instruments that are sold in stores are equipped with offshore electronics and they don't cut the mustard. Dealers all over the world are telling us that they are swapping these pickups for our handmade pickups and the customer walks away very happy.

Noticing this trend a few years back, we redesigned some of our pickups and jack assemblies to make them easier to manufacture and launched our Player Series of pickups. With this new series, musicians and players are getting the same great sound from our pickups that they always have in the past, and with a wide array of natural sounding pickups retailing under \$100, they are also getting great value. Interestingly, as well, it seems that more country and bluegrass players are starting to

plug in and use our pickups, as they find that most venues are so loud that they can't hear themselves play if they just use a mic.

Chris DeMaria: Things are definitely going the way of simpler, more elegantly designed systems that are non-intrusive, ergonomic, and intuitive. A lot of customers are willing to sacrifice some features for a system that is more elegant and discreet. Of course, we still want to offer the best in sound, performance, and features, so we developed the new F-1 Aura Series for Martin, which has been wildly popular.

Every once in a while something new and interesting comes along – usually pickup systems that combine multiple sources or attach somewhere differently, but customers – especially performing artists – still come back to the piezo-style undersaddle pickup systems. In demanding performance situations, especially at high volumes, the piezo undersaddle bridge pickup remains the most dependable, consistent and dynamic solution out there.

MMR: What technological innovations do you feel have had – or will soon have – significant impact re: pickups?

Pirie: That's an interesting topic, because in some respects we're still using essentially the same technology that was in place decades and decades ago. You can say, "These pickups are space-age!" but are we talking the Mercury Rocket or the Space Shuttle? You find a vintage PAF or a vintage pickup out of a '54 and there's something magical about it. Then again, we do have some truly technologically advanced pickups. I am seeing some companies out there that are doing more and more with active circuits that don't hit the front of the amp so hard. It's more about retaining that absolute vintage vibe. With active pickups you can get around some of the problems of longer cables or extensive pedal-boards. Some of the newer pickups retain that nice passive dynamic range, but boost the signal without affecting the tone.

Wunschel: Solderless installation. Rob Turner, our founder and president, developed our Solderless Install System™ for our active product and accessories that is revolutionary. It makes the process of installing pickups a less intimidating and time consuming process for players, techs, luthiers, and guitar manufacturers. Rob took his Quik-Connect™ system one step further by incorporating a main power-bus that pickups, pots, and switches connect into and then a cable slides on to the output jack. There are far too many different types of guitars and electronic configurations in guitars to simply assume one size fits all, so soldered components are still available on request. We see other pickup companies following our lead. Giving more control to the player is the future of pickup installation.

Lollar: Nothing really stands out. I've seen experiments with optical stuff, digital modeling, and custom switching... lots of ideas. In the end, it has to sound right. For the most part, players know what they want to hear. All the technology in the world won't help if they can't get the tones they're after.

Rose: We have very recently released a new Archtop Guitar Pickup, the AT-04. We found that most archtop guitar pickups shared similar design issues: they were hard to fit to the



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instrument, difficult to cut down if one had to match the required lower height of some older archtop instruments, and in many cases the pickups were not all that pleasant to listen to. With the new design of the AT-04, we've basically separated the two post areas of the lower part of the bridge from each other by employ-

as required after which the sensor is easily reinstalled.

A short while ago we introduced our latest generation of endpin jack preamp, the Artist II. This unit is significant in that it is the only endpin jack preamp in the world that can run from a 9-volt battery on board the instrument or be run from

technology, particularly in preamps, is to have the instrument sound as good live as it does in your living room or studio. Our focus has been to refine our pickup technology so that it delivers the best results with our Aura Acoustic Imaging technology. When it comes to innovation in preamps, it's not about re-creating the voice of what we think an acoustic instrument should sound like, but about getting that instrument to sound natural and transparent in every performance situation.

Armstrong: We've been very successful in coming up with new ways to cancel hum in vintage pickup designs without getting away from the classic tone. I'm currently pioneering new processes that allow winding pickup coils without using a conventional bobbin and addressing the traditional magnet structure in others designs. We don't want to give up any trade secrets but users will be pleasantly surprised at the tone that can be achieved.

Rintala: There are some new materials and new applications on old materials that have been used in the last few years to improve the sound of the instrument.

"I can't think of a better way to repay a customer than to say, 'Hey man — I've got a drawer full of pickups here and there's going to be a set that's going to make you love your guitar more.'"

— Billie Pirie, Fender

ing a much more resilient and flexible link between them. The upper saddle of the bridge now much more easily transmits string vibration down through the saddle to the pickup sensor than it was able to previously which gives us a better sounding pickup (and also makes an instrument sound better acoustically as well). The pickup sensor, which adheres to the underside of the saddle, is removable so that the saddle may be modified

phantom power (of up to 48 volts D.C.) supplied from a PA system or amp. The Artist II's are all 2-channel preamps with trim pots on the circuit board for setting maximum gain per channel and the preamps may be outfitted with thumbwheel volume controls for each channel.

DeMaria: When all is said and done, what Fishman is really striving for is transparency in tone. The best use of digital

LOLLAR GUITARS™

the Straight Truth About Pickups by Jason Lollar



The "magic" found in some (but not all) classic vintage pickups was created by accident. Don't let anyone tell you different. And over time, some pretty stellar accidents happened. The only way to recreate that magic is to study more than a few exceptional examples of all the classic pickup types, while acquiring a thorough understanding of exactly what materials were used and precisely how each pickup was constructed and wound. Only then is the "magic" repeatable, if you are willing to spend the time and money required to chase the dragon. I am.

I personally design and wind over 30 different pickup models, including all the vintage classics, many obscure works of art known only to lap and pedal steel players like Robert Randolph, and even a few of my own designs that never existed in the past.

I invite you to visit our website for sound clips, videos and current product information, or call us for a free product highlight brochure.



Lollar Guitars PO Box 2450 Vashon Island, WA 98070 (206) 463-9838 www.lollarguitars.com

There have been some developments on the pickup itself and also the electronics on the preamp are more sophisticated than just few years ago. Instead of using one sound source, combinations are used to get more natural sound, definition and nuances of the instrument.

Falbo: We've had quite a few in recent times. The Blackouts are lower noise/higher headroom active pickups made for today's amps and tones. Significant impact is an understatement. They have been a game-changer. P-Rails quickly became a top seller, which says a lot about the consumer's ability to embrace new concepts, but I believe a lot of that is rooted in the authenticity of the design. Rather than "voicing like" or "modeling"



a P90, there is a real P90 inside there. Our new Stack Plus designs are super low noise; each one is hand-calibrated to perfection. The patented design allows us to wind the top coil strictly for tone. That's been quite freeing.

Category-wide there have been significant advances in solderless installation, some good, and some proprietary. I think everyone would agree that solder is best. It's our challenge to produce something simple and reliable in spite of that. Every solderless junction introduces its own failure percentage. The more you have on one single instrument, the higher the risk for failure.

MMR: What types of product have been most successful of late?

Falbo: The artist pickups are turning out to be very successful right now, and I think that's partly due to the integrity of it. We don't just put someone's name on an existing product. These products are truly dialed in to deliver the artist that last five percent difference that makes things perfect.

Rintala: On OEM level our preamps with built-in tuner have been very successful. We have launched two different

style preamp systems, A and T series that both have a tuner built in.

Our single and dual input endpin preamps, B-Band A1.2 and A2.2 have been the biggest sellers on aftermarket sales. They require minimal modification to the guitar so they are easy to install and you don't need to cut into your guitar to install one of them. The preamp, battery and other parts are attached by Velcro or two-sided tape. They also offer volume and balance controls that are installed at the edge of the soundhole by two-sided adhesive.

Lollar: We consistently sell the big four: S&T-style single coils, P90s and humbuckers. Our P90s really put us on the map, but we're doing really well with our entire line.

Armstrong: Kent Armstrong hand wound and factory wound Jazz pickups have long been established as the industry standard with major archtop guitar manufactures as well as small boutique builders. The vintage market is very strong and newer, "hotter" pickups like my "Motherbuckers" are selling equally well. The DIY market



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is strong, so pre-wired pickupguard assemblies are hard to keep in stock.

Pirie: The basics. When we think about Texas Specials, which is our hot single-coil set, it's very mid-rangy, but it gives you that extra bite. '57s, '62s are always strong, Texas Specials are always strong. We're seeing good movement in the bread and butter selections of our line. Our burden and challenge is to consistently supply the market.

DeMaria: As far as pickups go, our magnetic soundhole pickups are still very popular – especially for players that want the option of taking it out when they're not performing – but our Matrix undersaddle pickup is still the flagship of our line and works flawlessly with Aura products.

Wunschel: We are primarily known as “The Active Pickup” company largely due to the number of high profile players such as Zakk Wylde, Kirk Hammett, and Kerry King that play our product. Twenty-five years ago active pickup technology was a crazy idea that never had a chance. Now going into our 35th year with dealers in 65 countries, and an artist roster of some of the greatest players in the world, developing the active pickup technology was clearly the right decision. Mind you, we have an excellent passive product line up that does very well for us and we continue to develop new product such as the SRO Series, tested by touring and recording artists.

Rose: Our Player series was introduced at the recent Winter NAMM show and has taken off. We currently feature 16 different hand made pickups that retail for under \$100. Outside of the Player line, the HFN series for guitar is our top selling pickup, closely followed by our banjo, resonator and our new RB series for upright bass.

MMR: What's the appeal of aftermarket pickups? Who tend to be the end-users?

Pirie: Not usually beginners, but somebody who wants to personalize a guitar that they enjoy playing – those are the people who buy aftermarket pickups.



There's a myriad of different options out there. The customer could be just about anybody. It's about changing the guitar without spending a grand, two grand, five grand on an entirely new instrument. There are so many different flavors and fun things that people

can do. What folks look for, especially in this strange economy, is brand. Brand is king right now. However, we are seeing more and more people making accessories and pickups and putting product into the marketplace. Since we started this [economic] mess, everyone's talking about how accessories can be the answer. The old adage is that everyone's got \$20 in his or her pockets. Every customer wants to walk out the door with something.

We're doing really well and that's because we're seeing accessories take off. We're seeing our dealers calling out for things that maybe were a little bit soft in the past because we had been seeing a huge upswing in guitars for a number of years and now that market is maybe a little soft due to a hard economy.

I can't think of a better way to repay a customer than to say, “Hey man – I've got a drawer full of pickups here and there's going to be a set that's going to make you love your guitar more.” It's fun, it's creative, and you're going to find something that works for you. What's really cool is the whole idea of exploration and, “I did this!”

Falbo: Every guitarist is an end-user. It will only be a matter of time. Even someone who purchases a guitar that comes stock with Seymour Duncans is our end-

user, because they have recognized that the pickup makes a difference. It was part of that purchase decision. They plugged it in and it sounded great. Every guitarist, if they stick with it long enough, will replace their pickups. It's just a matter of time.

Wunschel: The appeal is finding the tone you want as a player. Players are always looking and listening to what's out there. Players check out a forum, Blog, or YouTube of something and want to find out more. From beginning players to professional guitar builders, there is always the desire to look into new tone options. We believe in technology, empowerment, and performance, which I think translates to all end-users.

Rose: The appeal of after-market pickups is that the quality of sound of the after market units is much better than most factory installed equipment. We find that most factory installed pickups are lacking in realism, or have that famous piezo quack that scares the ‘you know what’ out of people. We strive to make an affordable pickup that brings out what your instrument has to offer.

A couple of years ago, we had a customer install our HFN-C-Artist into his classical guitar. He asked us what to expect and we told him he would get what his guitar produces, only louder (through his amp). At first he was ecstatic about it. After a few gigs he was told by various sound people that they didn't like the sound of his guitar. He phoned us up and asked if he could return the pickup and of course we said it would not be a problem. A few weeks later he called and thanked us for the great pickup. Confused we asked what had happened and he explained that we were correct in saying that the pickup would give him what his guitar produced and he realized he did not have a very good guitar. Once he swapped the pickup into a



better quality guitar, he started to receive the compliments he was hoping for and as a bonus started to get more gigs.

There seems to be a wide variety of end-users out there, from the person practicing in their basement, to students trying to make a buck to the band that tours for 200 shows a year. Everybody is looking for a natural sound, at an affordable price for his or her acoustic instruments.

Lollar: Working with builders has always been a very important area for us. They tend to be very picky about what goes into their instruments, and they can try everything. If we can make them happy, we know we're on to something. We also work with a wide variety of musicians: bedroom hobbyists, pro and semi-pro players, weekend warriors, etc. The common thread is they all have an idea of the tones they want. My job is to help them find those sounds. Ultimately, that's the appeal of a custom pickup. Finding the right tool for the job.

Armstrong: That's a good question, really if you look at my long history and the legacy of my father, Dan Armstrong, I feel I'm one of the originators of the aftermarket pickup. Back in the day you couldn't find aftermarket guitar parts so people like me had no other option than to wind their own. Kent Armstrong end-users run the full musical gamut, from Jazz to metal and with so many companies making aftermarket pickups it just comes down to what style music and personal taste.

DeMaria: Fishman supplies pickup and preamp systems to over 50 guitar makers around the world, so there are a lot of choices for instruments with factory-installed electronics at every price point. Some people are looking for an instrument "right out of the box" with an onboard system that gives them all of controls at their fingertips, while others may have an aversion to side-mounted electronics on an acoustic guitar. It's all a matter of personal choice.

Also, there are a lot of popular guitar models that don't come standard with any electronics at all. Our aftermarket pickup business serves those customers who bought a guitar without a factory-installed system but decided they wanted to add a pickup at some point afterwards. Again, it's a different customer. Our Matrix Infinity is still the best selling pickup & preamp system on the market – especially as an aftermarket add-on. Most of these customers

don't necessarily want to cut a hole in the shoulder of their instrument, so most of our aftermarket systems are more discreet and less intrusive – which is especially appealing to the person doing the installation!

The end-users for our aftermarket pickups are basically anyone looking to plug in their acoustic instrument.

Rintala: The appeal of aftermarket pickup is that the player gets to choose the right kind of a pickup to suit their playing style, playing situations and the right pickup to

fit their guitar. The end-users range from beginners to professionals. Professionals select a right guitar that plays well and sounds right acoustically. Then they will choose the right pickup that will work in this guitar and make it sound right plugged in as well. Also we get a lot of players that want to upgrade the electronics on their old guitars.

MMR: Compared to this time last year, are sales up, down, level?

Wunschel: It is a better year, to date. Much of that has to do with over the counter sales

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getting a boost with our lineup of new products and our transition to a solderless installation. We feel the year will remain strong and with all of the new products in development – we're not slowing down. We have re-branded, re-packaged, re-invented how installation is accomplished. There's so much more to come, and it's only mid-year.

DeMaria: Sales are up significantly from last year.

Falbo: Sales are up across the board. We've fared well in most economic times. If guitar sales are down, our OEM business will follow. But as we all know, OEM generally represents a smaller GM percentage. Our OTC business, however, tends to flourish during those very same times. Those same customers who are delaying that new guitar or amp purchase are still looking for ways to upgrade their tone. We provide exactly that, and perhaps to the broadest base of customers. This is important because even when different genres of music influence purchasing trends, we're right there with that product. We also released and continue to release a lot of innovative new products, which increases awareness.

Rintala: Sales are up.

Lollar: We've had steady increases since we started selling, and this year is no different.

Armstrong: Yes, demand for Kent Armstrong pickups has steadily grown in both the retail and OEM markets. My pickups have always had a strong following in the traditional blues and jazz circles, but more and more rock players are finding out just how much tone they can get out of Kent Armstrong pickups. I'm not big on hype, these are just great sounding pickups and word on the street is consistently good.

Rose: In dollar value we are about the same but if we factor in our lower prices this year our sales are up about 15 percent, so we are very excited about this and are hoping that we keep on moving forward.

MMR: Any closing thoughts, comments?

Falbo: There are lots of new and renewed pickup makers, from one-man winders to guitar manufacturers. It's no secret that

accessories can help float the boat during slower times, and I think everyone reacts to that and rushes to the marketplace. But in a neutral or growing economy, the best use of resources is generally to use experts in their respective fields to maximize your ROI, as well as capitalize on their brand recognition. That sentiment will return in time. And as the job market opens up, many with "garage chop shops" may trade in their full time experiments for steady work, relegating the chop shops to second jobs or hobbies.

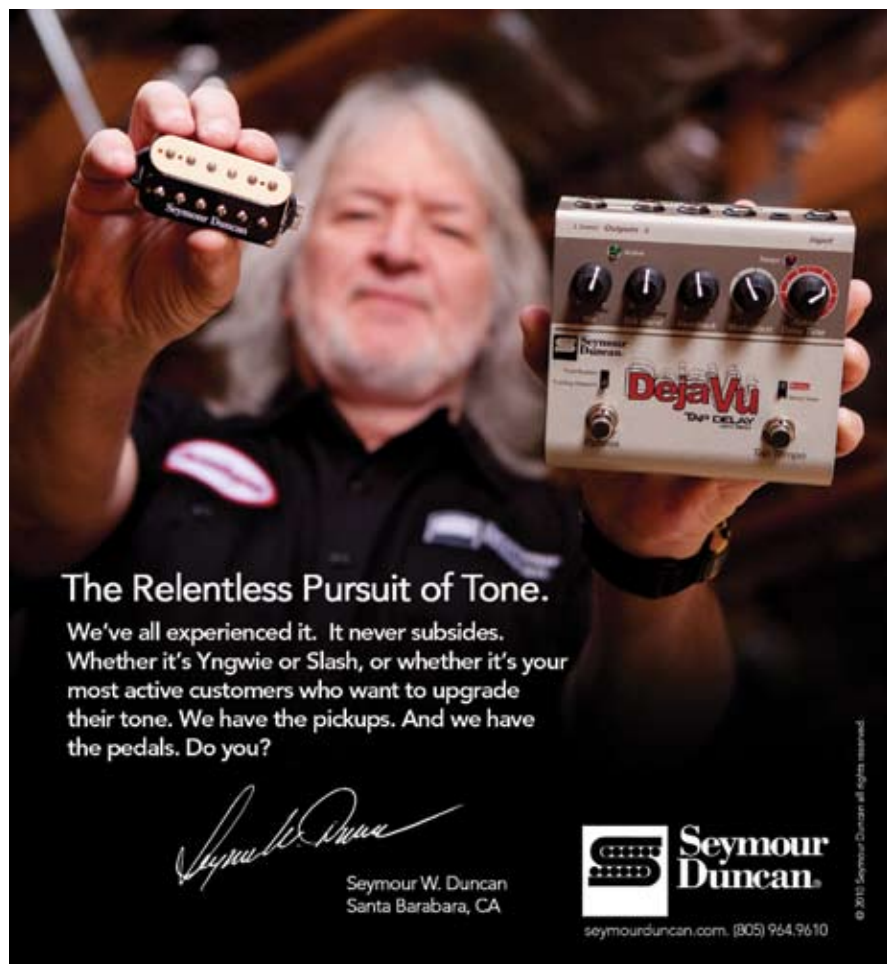
Lollar: There are a lot of great pickup builders working today, making really good sounding stuff. We're always trying to find ways to improve our products and stay ahead of the curve. Players have an amazing amount of choices and options, now more so than ever. No excuses for bad tone!

Rintala: In the past couple of years, the ukulele seems to have gained a lot of popularity. We just introduced a specific pickup and preamp systems made for ukulele. Ukulele is a small and light instrument so we designed a pickup system that is small and light, yet it amplifies the instrument truthfully. We have three different ukulele preamps, one endpin pre-amp and two sidemount preamps with a built-in tuner. They all use lithium disc battery.

Also we are expanding the B-Band product line this year. We introduced the new B-Band UROS Acoustic Amplifier and B-Band TUN-A desktop tuner. Both will be available this summer.

Armstrong: We have seen many recent designs of active pickups, active electronics, light beam pickups, piezos and capacitance driven pickups. All are technological wonders but none of these innovative designs seems to have the ability to dethrone the magnetic pickup. Some things just do not need to be improved upon.

Rose: As long as people are playing acoustic instruments, there will be an after market for pickups. Our biggest concerns are producing and manufacturing handmade pickups and preamps in Canada that are affordable for everybody, and still being able to pay the rent. There are a lot of options out there, but we think our quality and customer service makes a difference over a lot of the competition.



The Relentless Pursuit of Tone.

We've all experienced it. It never subsides. Whether it's Yngwie or Slash, or whether it's your most active customers who want to upgrade their tone. We have the pickups. And we have the pedals. Do you?

Seymour W. Duncan

Seymour W. Duncan
Santa Barbara, CA

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NAMM Summer Session 2010



In our September 2009 wrap-up of last summer's NAMM convention in Nashville, we bemoaned the absence of some of the "big name" exhibitors who'd had a presence in previous years and reported on declining numbers, while simultaneously noting a generally positive tone on the show floor.

This year, it was really more of the same – although with a few minor twists. While the 12,462 reported registrants for '10 represents a four percent decrease from last summer, it's perhaps a small victory when one considers that 2009 saw a 26 percent decrease in registration, compared to '08. The actual tally of exhibitors remained steady, with 383 on hand in Tennessee. As with last year, the general perception (with a few exceptions, of course) was that the lower attendance benefited newer and smaller companies, in particular, and that the less frantic and crowded pace allowed for more actual business to take place.

"In addition to some of our industry's largest manufacturers and distributors, Summer NAMM appeals to the new and emerging companies, and there were 70 brand new NAMM exhibitors this year," said NAMM president and CEO, Joe Lamond. "During the show, the independent dealers, along with the largest buying and marketing groups, were able to see exciting new products to stock in their stores for the fall and holiday selling seasons. We continue to hear Member feedback about how Summer NAMM is valuable to them, especially in this challenging economy."



1. Andy Strayer, Jason Kennedy, and Tabor Stamper of **KHS Musical Instruments**.
2. Joe Husak and Tim Pfouts of **SIT Strings**.

When it Rains, It...

Though in most respects the city had – at least in the areas directly near the convention center – seemingly recovered from the devastating and deadly floods of early May, there were those who suspected that lingering concerns related to the disaster might've deterred some potential attendees and exhibitors. "I would hope that they [the floods] didn't play a significant role," said Marshall Electronics' Jim Mona. "But I do know of quite a few people who stayed home due to concerns about the weather, thunderstorms and flooding."

Both prior to and during the show, NAMM made a point of addressing the recent disaster and making efforts to provide relief to the city that has so often been home to the Summer Show. In addition to the obvious boost to the local economy generated by the convention, NAMM's efforts in partnership with Next BIG Nashville, *American Songwriter* magazine, the Nashville Musicians Association and MusiCares were reported to have brought millions in aid to the city through events, a silent instrument auction, and donations from NAMM Members.

The Great Unwashed

Summer NAMM also represented a first: on Sunday, non-industry individuals (the "public" – gasp!) were officially welcomed to walk the show floor.

How to address the issue of these visitors has long been a topic of debate. It's safe to say that the lines of folks waiting to get whatever high profile endorsing artist's signature that snake around the larger booths and spill into adjacent aisles are not wholly (or even largely) comprised of MI dealers or industry figures, so there's no question that there is public interest in the NAMM get-togethers and that these people often manage to find a way to get in to the hall.

Some have long advocated making the Shows open to all – the NAMM conventions are well known by most serious, and even semi-serious, musicians. Allowing interested parties to attend, encouraging exhibitors to really pull out the stops and call upon their biggest artists to show up and perform, could not only lead to an up-tick in profit, but also increase visibility and help build the culture by making the Shows high-profile "events." Then there are those who feel the added foot traffic would make it even

"The consumers that were at the Show represented an opportunity to take our message directly to the end users."

– Gerson Rosenbloom,
Wechter Guitars



1. Zipbox Media's Paul Wright with artists Josh and Jason Pantana. 2. Joe Lamond of NAMM talks with Nashville Mayor Carl Dean about the impact of the floods on the city. 3. Kevin and Tom Dougherty of TKL Products Corp. 4. Alfred Publishing's Bryan Bradley, Daniel Frohnen and Holly Anzalone-McGinnis. 5. Ruben Lugo, Laurence Bell, and Steve Hendee; Yorkville Sound. 6. Elizabeth and Steven Lasko of JangleBox.



1. **Levy's Leathers:** (rear) Brett Marcus, Ben Myron, Larry Greene, (front) Garth Giesbrecht, Sylvie Talbot, Harvey Levy, (floor) Brayden Giesbrecht. 2. Don Oriolo of **Oriolo Guitars**. 3. Carolyn Bridges, **Deering Banjo Company**. 4. Steve McReary, **Collings Guitar, Inc.** 5. **Flavorreeds'** Walt Ostermeyer. 6. Mike Mulqueen and Kasey Konkus of **Major Music Supply**. 7. Mike and Irwin Berg of **Humes & Berg**. 8. Alan Poster of **Reunion Blues**. 9. **ToneRite's** Ryan Frankel and Hans Yeakel. 10. **IBC Trading's** Iain Wilson. 11. **Taylor Guitars'** Bob Taylor. 12. David Plugan with Jodi Ann Parker, **Players Music Accessories**.



more challenging for dealers and suppliers engage in meaningful conversation and broker deals. Also, many exhibitors – particularly those fielding smaller product – worry about increased theft at the shows, if the public were encouraged to attend.

This was the first NAMM-sanctioned arrangement, designed to accommodate both “outside” interest in the show, while respecting the concerns of exhibitors. “Wanna Play Music” Sunday allowed patrons to check out the heretofore industry-only event for \$20, or \$10 with a coupon from a participating music retailer. Many saw the initiative as a sort of half-measure that didn’t quite hit the mark, but perhaps a promising first step.

“The consumers that were there represented an opportunity to take our message directly to the end users,” said Gerson Rosenbloom of Wechter Guitars. “However, from our perspective, we felt that the consumer attendance was light. Regardless, we encourage NAMM to stay the course and give this new direction the opportunity to take hold.” Gator Cases’ Ken Fuente made similar points: “As you know, consumers always find their way into NAMM Shows and I noticed only a few more consumers than normal on Sunday in Nashville. We were hoping, and prepared, to be inundated with them. I heard from local musicians that they didn’t know anything about Sunday being open to the public... it was news to them. It’s obvious more should’ve been done to promote this. It’ll be interesting to see how NAMM addresses this.” Steven Savvides of Musical Distributors noted, “If NAMM advertised it more aggressively, I believe it could be a good thing, however I do not believe the word got out and the turnout was very weak.”

See You in Anaheim!

With the economy seemingly on the upswing (fingers crossed), hopes are high for this January’s get-together in California.

The 2011 NAMM Show will take place January 13-16 in Anaheim, Calif. For information about 2010 Summer NAMM or to learn more about the 2011 NAMM Show, interested parties can visit www.namm.org.

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1. Jack Thompson, Steven Savvides, Dwayne Rando and Wally Rando of **Musical Distributors Inc.** 2. Brian Wolfe and Leonard Wyeth of **AcousticMusic.Org** with **Bourgeois Guitars'** Bonni Lloyd. 3. Kimberly Lewis, Karrington Williams and Susie Merritt of **George L's Musical Products.** 4. John Strand and Lann Wang of **Cherub Technologies.** 5. Lorne Graham and Gene Garb, **NEMC.** 6. **H & F Technology's** Paula McNamee and Haw Renn Chen 7. Nancy and Vinni Smith of **V-Picks.**

Great Divide Songsmith: Get Amp'd

"I think the Show's going great," enthused Two Old Hippiess' Tom Bedell on Friday afternoon. "We're having a really good time, meeting new people and talking to old friends."

In addition to the wide array of Bedell Guitars, Tom was particularly excited about the single cutaway Great Divide Songsmith. "This is a fantastic guitar – a quality instrument with a solid Sitka spruce top and a Fishman Isys T system," he noted. "At under \$400, that's an incredible value. On top of that, during the fall [October 1 through December 31 – Ed.] we'll be including a Fishman ACG-20 amplifier, free. It's really an amazing deal."



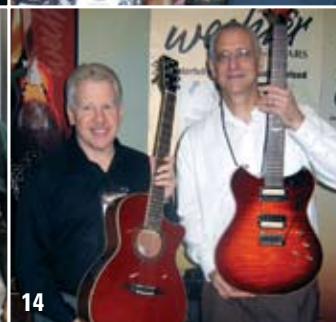
Tom Bedell of **Two Old Hippiess.**



In the middle of this year's Summer NAMM Show, **American Music & Sound** brought together some of the biggest names in the keyboard business into a single powerful booth display. For the first time, Show attendees could try out Nord's new Nord Piano, Kurzweil's PC3K workstation, and Studiologic's new Numa Piano and Numa Organ offerings all in one place.

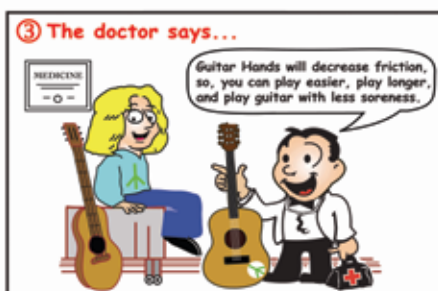


1. **Worldwide Music Services**; Nathan Ersig, Justin Wells, Phil Smith and Jeff Hansel. 2. Gil Soucy of **US Music Co.** 3. **D'Addario & Co.**'s Josh Touchton and Brian Vance, with Raymond McGlamery of **DMG Austin**. 4. **Marshall Electronics**' Jim Mona. 5. Sterling Ball with sons Brian and Scott, **Ernie Ball**. 6. Dan Barker, Penny Patton-Canada, and Anthony Armendautz of **EMD Music**. 7. Kate Yeager and Sharon Hennessey of **The Music People** with Paul Finke of **Willis Music**. 8. Robert Wilson from **Sound Technology** (UK) with **NAMM**'s Joe Lamond at Thursday night's 'The Hang' in Nashville. 9. Scott Fore and Dana Bourgeois, **Pantheon Guitars**, 10. Cindy Adkins and Dave Snyder of **Aurora Strings**. 11. **Retail Up**'s Gordon O'Hara and Bee Bantug. 12. Gabe Whyel and Tom Menrath, **American Music And Sound**. 13. Iain Wilson with Rick Nelson of **Flaxwood and G7th**. 14. Gerson Rosenbloom and Abraham Wechter of **Wechter Guitars**. 15. Steve Smith and Paul Chu of **Hunter Music Instrument**.





1. Hal Leonard Corporation: Chrissy Dzioba, Peter Carlson, Brad Smith, Maribeth Barrons, Tim Cose, and David Jahnke. **2. Jim Hall, Hall Crystal flutes.** **3. The Music Link's** Ashley Atz. **4. Ben Parker, Gary Bennett, and Cory Kerr of Chesbro Music Co.** **5. Ricardo and Renan Albuquerque with Luiz Yamashita and Milton Burbosa of Miami Audio Music.** **6. Mary Faith Rhoads-Lewis and Todd Newman of Breezy Ridge Instruments with Bryan Clark of The Recording Academy.** **7. Pete LaPlaca, PJLA Sales.** **8. Dave Lewis, WD Music.** **9. Penny Haas, Joe Naylor and Ken Haas of Reverend Musical Instruments.**





1. NAMM's Scott Robertson and Mary Leuhrsen with Governor Mike Huckabee. 2. Brad Smith and Larry Morton, **Hal Leonard Publishing** flank Dick Boak, **Martin guitars**. 3. John Maher, Alan Poster and Dave Andrus, **Reunion Blues**. 4. William Steppan and Ron Koppes of **Tri-Technical Systems**. 5. **Symphony Publishing's** Eliahu Sussman with Jason Kendall of **Harmonix**. 6. Derek Brocks and Brian Ball, **Ernie Ball**. 7. Mark Campfield and Jim Schmelzer, **Koozee Armor Products**.

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14

1. The team at **Oriolo Guitars** – Warren Hibbat, Mike Oriolo, Tony DiDamenico, Richard Cimarick, Felix the Cat, Laurie Ashire, Don Oriolo, Jurgen Thomas, and Donald Oriolo. 2. **CE Distribution**'s Orin Portnoy. 3. Mike Shellhammer of **Morgan Hill Music**. 4. Amber Slade, **Paige Capos**. 5. Bradley Weinholtz of **Bridgecraft USA, Inc.** 6. **St. Louis Music/U.S. Band & Orchestra Supply's** – Chris Meikle, Mark Ragin, and Stan Morgan. 7. Marc Ingber of **Score Mktg.** 8. Martin Ritter, **Ritter Europe Ltd.** 9. **Shubb Capos**' Gary Mobley, Rick Shubb, and Raul Reynoso. 10. **Kala Brand Music Co.**'s Phil Slight and Rick Carlson. 11. George Li and Sophy Wu, **Merano Musical Instruments**. 12. Richard Dron and Michael Lasota of **Mobineko**. 13. Guy McKeon, Bruce Sherman, Anthony Soriano, Lou Capece, and Peter Capece; **Lou Capece Music**. 14. The **EMG Pickups** team: Scott Wenschel, Karen and Rob Turner, Scott Ferrara and Andrew Farrell.



1



2



3



4



1. SHS's Rob Pugh, Guy Petty, and Doug Shepard. 2. Dennis Webster and John Schauer of **Yamaha**. 3. Roy Burns and Chris Brady of **Aquarian Drumheads**. 4. **Peak Musical's** Pamela Liu and Jonathan Tai.

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Best & Worst of Show Awards

Best Display

The **Chesbro Booth** was hand-made from actual timbers from an old barn, lending to the authenticity of the display's "down home," backwoods cabin appearance.

Best Analysis by a Show Exhibitor

"I opened three new distributors" – Lou Capece, **Lou Capece Music**



Worst Analysis by a Show Exhibitor

"Morgue on the Mountain..." – Anonymous (by request)

Best Dive Bar

Slightly sketchy, full of character, exceedingly inexpensive (\$5 pitchers and \$.50 pool table!) – **Springwater Supper Club & Lounge** offers a comfortable and relaxing way to wind down after a full day on the Show floor.



Best on-time delivery:

Travis Perry of Perry's Bluegrass Shops (Dothan, Ala.) and first-time NAMM exhibitor (**Chord Buddy**) left Nashville just in time to welcome a **6lb, 14oz baby boy** to the family. Travis reports the new arrival was, "playing a Chord Buddy within two minutes..."

Best Guy in One of Those "Put Your Head Inside This Larger, Fuzzy Head" Costumes

Putting most MLB mascots and your local Chuck E. Cheese "animated characters" staff to shame, **Oriolo Guitars' Felix the Cat** made his debut appearance at the Summer Show and was consistently spirited and engaging, throughout the three-day event.



Best Happy Hour

The **Hal Leonard booth at 4PM**. As Jimmy Buffet once said, "It's 5 o'clock somewhere!"

Worst "Industry Growth"

The huge (pun unintended, but it stays...) selection of **2XL T-shirts** for sale at the NAMM store. Either NAMM accidentally overstocked that one size or, as an industry, we all need to put the donuts down...



Best Informal Get-Together

The Bi-annual guitar jam session at the **Levy's Leathers** suite, with pizza and great music. We miss you Paul Specht!



Dana Teague with Harvey Levy.



Best BBQ

With all due (and well deserved) respect to Jack's on Broadway, after having made the trek over to the East Nashville/Inglewood area, *MMR*'s editorial staff have to say that **Bailey & Cato Family Restaurant** is hands-down the best BBQ in the city. Locals travel to the little cottage on McGavock Pike as much for the fried chicken and meatloaf as anything else (allegedly, on Sundays after church, the wait to get served is as long as two hours), but it's the barbecue ribs that really stand out: crisp red/brown skin, slightly fatty (adding tons of flavor), and a deliciously spicy rub. We've visited essentially all of the barbecue hotspots in the U.S. and I'm going to have to say Bailey & Cato does it better than anywhere in the country (address your irate "You don't know what you're talking about!" e-mails to: cwismuller@symphonypublishing.com...).

Best Deal

The silent auction for Nashville musicians yielded a **\$150 gift certificate to any Palm Restaurant, snagged for a bid of \$75** (claimed by *MMR*'s Sid Davis).



Worst No-Shows...

No single "winner" here, but as with last summer, it was pretty **disappointing to not see a number of heavy hitters at the Show**. The economy, the recent Nashville floods, picking and choosing where money is spent, bottom line, Xs and Os – we get it. We. All. Get. It. Still kind of a bummer...



Best Unusual In-Booth Entertainment

An actual hurdy gurdy being played at the **AMV Consulting Booth**.



Best Wake-Up

At the first day's **NAMM Breakfast**, the **Wooten Brothers** performed their signature brand of soul/funk/R&B to an appreciative audience.

Worst Arrival Time

Delays, delays, delays... The last members of the *MMR* team to depart Nashville **landed in Boston past 1AM**.

MMR Report: Best Tools for Schools



The 2010 Summer NAMM Show featured countless innovative musical products covering the entire spectrum of music making. *MMR's* sister publication, *School Band & Orchestra*, enlisted educators attending the Nashville trade show to seek out the best tools for use

in music classrooms, with the winning products being named at a special presentation on June 20th. The panel of educators helped select and introduce the following products in 12 widely varying categories, declaring them *SBO's* 2010 Summer NAMM Show Best Tools for Schools.



Best Elementary Tool

Jumbie Jam
Panyard, Inc.

www.panyard.com/jumbiejam



The Jumbie Jam is a colorful steel drum pan for young and beginning music students that comes with a height-adjustable, collapsible stand, mallets, a play-along CD, and educational materials.



Best Beginning Tool

The Chord Buddy
www.chordbuddy.com



The Chord Buddy is a capo that is configured to play the primary chords in the key of G on the guitar. Simply press one of the four colored buttons on the top of the Chord Buddy to change the chord while strumming.



Best Intermediate Tool

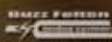
FT-88 Mini-clip Tuner
Shenzehn FZone Technology
www.fzonetechnology.com



The FT-88 mini-clip chromatic tuner from FZone is a colorful, fun-shaped clip-on tuner that uses vibration to determine pitch and is designed to work on both stringed and brass instruments.



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Best Advanced Tool

The Drum Wallet
www.thedrumwallet.com



The Drum Wallet is a small, simple, bean-bag-like device that can be attached to the lugs of a snare drum and then easily flipped onto the batter head in order to quickly muffle the drum, and just as quickly flipped back down when additional muffling is no longer wanted.



Best Percussion Tool

Power Wrist Builders
www.powerwristbuilders.com



Designed to build strength, agility and endurance in the wrists and forearms, Power Wrist Builders are solid aluminum and solid brass drumsticks weighted between two and 28 ounces.



Best Small Ensemble Tool

JamHub
www.jamhub.com



JamHub is a portable device with multiple segments that each have their own input and output jacks, each controlling its own mix. This tool enables a small ensemble to play electronic instruments together in relative silence.



Best Stringed/Fretted Instrument Tool

TunerGuard
www.tunerguard.com



Currently only for guitar but in the process of being adapted for other stringed instruments, the TunerGuard is a sturdy plastic sleeve that slides over tuning pegs to prevent them from moving if something should bump or brush against the headstock.



Best Marching Band Tool

BBS-1 Wireless Pulsating Metronome
Peterson Strobe Tuners
www.petersonstuners.com



Building on the original BodyBeat metronomes, the BBS-1 Wireless Pulsating Metronome allows an unlimited number of performers to feel or hear the same beat by wirelessly connecting and syncing pulsating metronomes.



Best Recording Tool

PCM-D50, Sony
pro.sony.com



The PCM-D50 is a rugged, lightweight recorder that uses AA batteries and is packed with useful features, including two-position stereo microphones, 4GB of internal memory, digital pitch control, and MP3 playback capability.



Best Independent Study Tool

**Trumpet Compact Practice Mute
Faxx Mutes**

www.AmericanWayMarketing.com



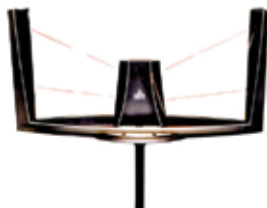
Faxx Mutes' lightweight and compact practice mute for trumpet is designed to allow players to practice at low volumes.



Most Innovative Tool

**Beamz Player
Beamz Interactive**

www.thebeamz.com



With the tag line of "Enabling people of all ages to play, create, and perform great music," the Beamz Player uses lasers and sensors, which, when interrupted, trigger musical cues. In addition to being fun for beginners, this device is also a great way to involve special ed students in music making.



Best Health & Hygiene Tool

Guitar Hands



The Guitar Hands Clinical Lipid Therapy Cleansing Lotion is, as the name suggests, designed to cleanse, nourish, heal, and toughen skin, making it ideal for use on hands that play stringed instruments.



Joe Allison



Jeremy Greenwood



Laura Verdone



Steven Nendza



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1. **School of Rock:** Christine Harrington, Jill Livick, and Rich Agar.
2. Hap Kuffner and Andrew Farrell, **EMG Pickups** and Mike Kropp, **NS Designs**.
3. **LM Products** Troy Parker, Pat O'Densws and Larry Mechem.
4. Allen Gatchell and Steve Crisafulli of **Gatchell Violins**.
5. Travis Perry and Clayton Jordan, **Chord Buddy**.
6. Michelle and Todd Stadler of **Grassroots Musical Distributor**.
7. **NAMM's** Joe Lamond and Kevin Johnstone.
8. **American Way Marketing:** Jim Klingler and John Musselman.
9. Governor Mike Huckabee with **NAMM's** Melanie Ripley.
10. Johnny Rabb presents a master class at Summer NAMM.

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Tools For Schools



1. Rick Kessel of *MMR* and *SBO* magazines introduces the panelists for the Best Tools for Schools presentation: Joe Allison of Eastern Kentucky University, Jeremy Greenwood of Tupelo (Miss.) High School, Steven Nendza of Hille Middle School in Oak Forest, Ill., and Laura Verdone, a music teacher in the Nashville (Tenn.) Public School System. **2.** Joe Allison **3.** Jeremy Greenwood **4.** Laura Verdone **5.** Steven Nendza

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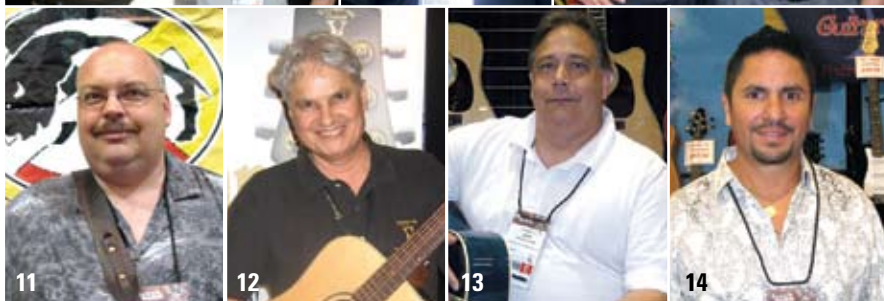
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1. Colin Schofield, **Gretsch Co.** and Joe Vasko, **LP Music**. 2. Lizabeth Gray and Rick Fagan, **Santa Cruz Guitars**. 3. Greg St. Peter and Niels Larsen of **Acorn Pianos**. 4. Monica Barton and Yule Jabara of **House Band Gear**. 5. **Sesame Street's Elmo** with NAMM friends Sandra Jordan and Eric Ebel. 6. Steph Maffei, Jerry Andreas and Dave Sanderson of **SKB Cases**. 7. **Samson Technologies**: James Tsaptsinos, David Hakim, Jack Knight, and Scott Goodman. 8. **Martin Guitar's** Dick Boak and Chris Martin. 9. Gerson Rosenblum, **Wechter Guitars**. 10. **Remo Inc's** Brian Levan and Bob Yerby. 11. Kenny Bohling of **Lakota Leathers**. 12. Michael Ferrucci of **Voyage-air Guitar**. 13. John Broemann, **Music Dealers Resource Group**. 14. **Tropical Music's** Joey Ojeda. 15. At the **Mel Bay Publications** booth: Paula Brown (L) and Jeff Ponte (R) with Bill Crook of **Crooks Music**, Hot Springs, AR (center). 16. Bonnie Spencer Swayze of **Alliance Rubber Co.** 17. **EMG's** Hap Kuffner. 18. Kay Depompeo and Tim Fisher, **Howard Core Company**. 19. **Koozee Armor Products'** Mark Campfield and Dave Phillips. 20. **Musiquip's** John Kelley and Jeff Sazant. 21. Sid Davis of **MMR** with Joe Fucini of **Fucini Productions**.



1. Ludwig Musser's Grant and Robert Henry and Kevin Packard. 2. Rotosound's Jason and Kathy How with Mark Blasko. 3. Access Case and Bags Marty Harrison, Kevin Leigh and Tom Walker. 4. Jack Westheimer of Cort USA. 5. Andy Morris of Dream Cymbals and Gongs. 6. Randall Williams of Kyser Musical Products Inc. 7. Sabian's Greg Zeller. 8. Bill Reim of Hoshino USA. 9. Ken Fuente of Gator Cases.

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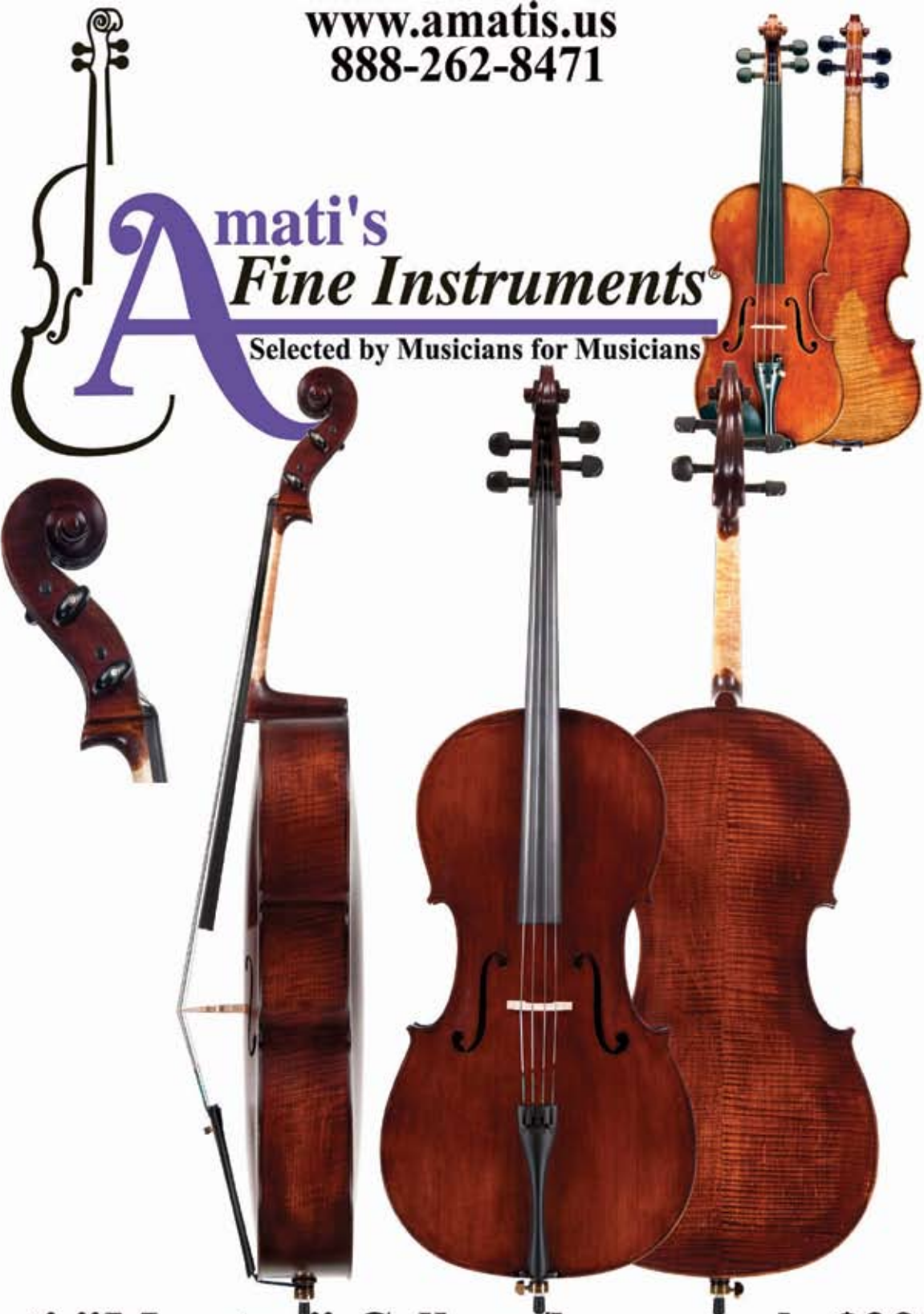
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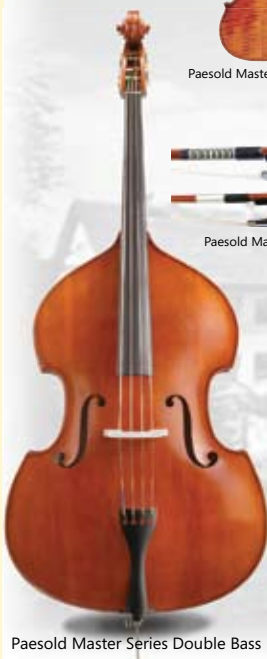



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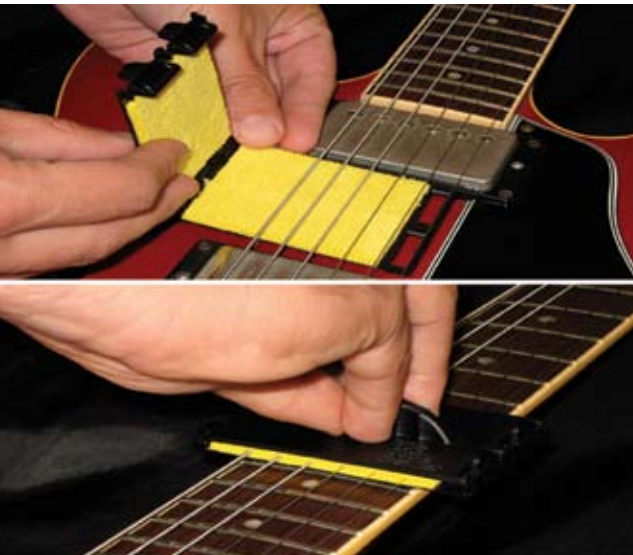
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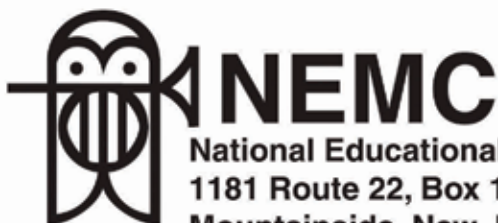
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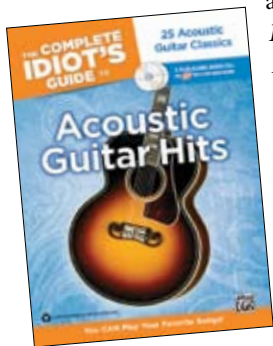
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New products

Alfred's Complete Idiot's Guide for Guitar

Alfred Music Publishing has released three new books for acoustic, classical, and rock guitar inside the *Complete Idiot's Guide* series: *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Playing Acoustic Guitar*, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Playing Classical Guitar*, and *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Playing Rock Guitar*.



The Complete Idiot's Guide series offers a short refresher course in the basics of music theory and simple arrangements of

popular songs. Using Alfred's exclusive TNT software, these guitar books allow for customized learning, allowing the user to loop sections for practice, slow tracks down or speed them up without changing the pitch, switch back and forth between the full-performance, and play-along tracks. Each song is presented with full music notation, TAB, and chord diagrams. The books retail for \$24.99.

www.alfred.com

The Zoom H1 Handy Recorder

Weighing in at about two ounces, Zoom's H1 recorder delivers clear 24-bit/96 kHz stereo recordings suitable for music, interviews, lectures, recitals, band practice, and more. The H1's two onboard microphones are configured in an X/Y pattern.



The H1 also features a newly designed user interface that places all its functions at the touch of a button. Zoom included

access to the track marker, auto record, low cut filter, level, and volume controls with onboard buttons and no menus.

The H1 can accommodate up to 32GB microSDHC memory cards, providing over 50 hours of recording time. The recorder is powered by a single AA size

battery, which provides up to 10 hours of continuous operation. H1 users can purchase an H1 accessory kit that includes a windscreen, AC adapter (USB type), USB cable, adjustable tripod stand, soft carrying pouch, and mic clip adapter. The Zoom H1 retails for \$99.

www.samsontech.com

Tycoon's Tables, Racks, and Drumset Hardware

Tycoon Percussion now offers a complete line of hardware that allows drummers and percussionists to position instruments within easy reach of their sticks and hands.

Tycoon's 2010 catalog features a variety of clamps and arms for mounting percussion effects on existing



stands, a bracket that connects percussion instruments to any standard bass drum pedal and accessory percussion racks, including a mountable model with a universal clamp that accommodates four accessories and a free-standing version that can hold a combination of up to a dozen mountable percussion instruments.

Tycoon's new percussion tables are available in large (TPT-L) and small (TPT-S) sizes and are recommended for all types of drummers and drumming situations. The trays are attached to height-adjustable, heavy-duty, double-braced stands, and feature padded surfaces that can accommodate multiple accessory percussion instruments, sticks, and mallets as well as electronic multi-pads and laptop computers.

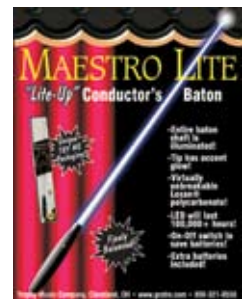
www.tycoonpercussion.com

Trophy Music's Maestro-Lite Baton

Designed to make it easier for musicians to see in dark situations and to create a visual effect on stage, Trophy Music's Maestro-Lite features a sturdy Lexan polycarbonate shaft and a textured easy grip handle. The

entire shaft is illuminated by LED's that will last 100,000+ hours. The light concentrates at the tip, further allowing musicians to better follow the tempo and includes extra batteries.

www.grotro.com



Levy's Grrls Rock Guitar Straps

Levy's expands its Urban Prints guitar strap line for 2010 with five original



printing designs for Grrls who Rock. This model uses a canvas of glossy, St-Tropez leather and a narrow, padded strap design.

www.levysleathers.com

Electro-Harmonix's 44 Magnum Amp & Germanium Pedal

Electro-Harmonix's 44 Magnum Power Amp, designed with guitar in mind, but is also suitable for bass, keyboards, or any electric instrument. The 44 Magnum offers a broad power range with plenty of headroom. It can



also be driven to a natural saturation as the volume is turned up. A tone switch lets the player select a neutral tone or a top-end boost.

Measuring 4.70 high x 3.70 wide x 1.18 deep, the portable 44 Magnum can be used as a primary or a backup amplifier. It comes complete with a 24DC-3000 power supply and is compatible with any speaker cabinet providing an eight or 16 Ohm load. The 44 Magnum Power Amp retails for \$193.



Electro-Harmonix's Germanium 4 Big Muff Pi pedal features two independent circuits, one overdrive and one distortion that

can be used individually or in series. The overdrive and distortion circuits each use a pair of N.O.S. NKT275 Germanium transistors.

The Overdrive section features independent controls for gain, bias, tone and volume, while distortion provides independent controls for gain, bias, volts, and volume. The bias controls adjust the tonal character of the distortion by changing the bias of the signal before it is distorted by the Germanium transistors. The volts control enables the player to dial back the amount of voltage supplied to the distortion side and create varying "dying battery" sounds.

Stack the overdrive and distortion in series and the player has two individual control sets that work in combination for a hybrid tonality that can be mixed and balanced. The Germanium 4 Big Muff Pi is compact, measuring 4.75" high x 5.75" wide, and 1.5" deep. It comes equipped with a battery. It also uses an optional 9DC-100 power supply. The retail price is \$193.

www.ehx.com

Gus G. HT-Blackfire Signature Pedal

Developed with guitarist Gus G., (Ozzy Osbourne, Firewind) Blackstar's HT-Blackfire is a two channel, valve-driven, metal distortion pedal. Gus G. began his relationship with Blackstar when he used the Series One 200 amplifier to record the latest Ozzy album. Since then, Gus has become a full Blackstar endorsee.

The pedal's channels are named after the Firewind track "The Fire and the Fury." The Fire channel delivers a high gain distortion, while the Fury channel takes you to leads and beyond. Other features include an ECC83 valve, patent-applied-for ISF control, independent gain and volume controls for each channel, and an industry-standard speaker emulated out. The Blackfire features a black finish, orange and red

LEDs, black grille, and Blackstar designed Gus G. logo. Limited to just 1,000 pieces worldwide, each pedal includes a certificate of authenticity signed by Gus G. and an exclusive Gus trading card.

www.blackstaramps.co.uk

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For larger venues additional subs can be added using the LF-15X, a self-powered 500 watt subwoofer, also with DSP processing and crossover.

www.pztronics.com



trols (gain, level, tone, and boost) and features the same boost function from the original pedal. With the Mudhoney II's range, players can switch between a clean tone by bypassing both channels and a thick warm distortion from the other channel.

The Octavius provides an octave-down and octave-up effect, which can be adjusted with the lo oct, high oct, master mix, and boost knobs. The tri-tone generator pedal also features an on/off footswitch and a boost footswitch.

www.t-rex-effects.com



Aim Gifts' Green Gifts & Musical Instrument Bands



T-Rex Engineering's Mudhoney II and Octavius Pedals

T-Rex Effects has added to their distortion/overdrive and modulation pedal lineups with the new Mudhoney II and the Octavius pedals.



T-Rex Effects has added a second distortion channel to its original Mudhoney to create the Mudhoney II. Each channel has four con-

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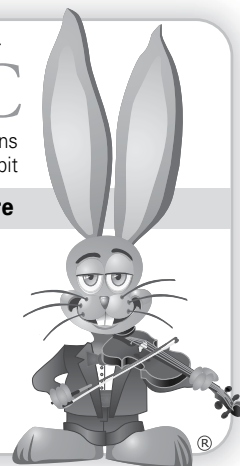
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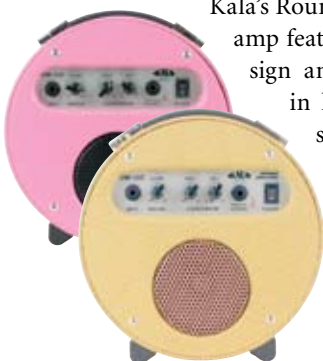
Lava Soar Cable

Lava Cable's Lava Soar guitar cable features dual 22 AWG 99.99 percent pure OFC solid copper conductors, dual layers of tailored shielding, a rugged outer braid, and low capacitance of 29 pF/ft. It comes with highly conductive Lava Silver Wire plugs standard as part of a complete matched plugs-to-cable design. Durability over flexibility was chosen in the solid-core design, and as a result the cable is slightly stiffer than an average stranded cable. The 20-foot Lava Soar cable retails for \$79.95.

www.lavacable.com

Kala's Round About Amp

Kala's Round About ukulele amp features a round design and measures 10" in height and from side to side. The amp has a power output of 10 watts and is equipped with a five inch speaker. Other



features include master volume, treble and bass tone controls, and a headphone jack. The Round About is designed to provide just the right amount of punch for the ukulele to be heard when playing in circumstances when a little boost in volume is needed. It is available in three colors: tweed, pink, and black.

www.kalaukulele.com

Pioneer DJ's Multi-Format Player

Pioneer DJ's CDJ-2000 multi-format player enables playback of MP3, AAC, WAV, and AIFF audio files on CD, DVD-ROM, SD card, and USB memory devices. You can also assign various buttons of the CDJ-2000 to trigger other devices, such as DJ effecters and software with MIDI mapping capability. With Pioneer's new Pro DJ Link you can connect up to four CDJ-2000's and share a single music source from just one player.

For displaying song titles, jacket art as well as detailed track information, the CDJ-2000 has a 6.1" full color LCD panel and graphic user interface. Shoreview Distribution is an exclusive distributor of Pioneer DJ Products.

www.shoreviewdistribution.com

Keystone's Product Supplement

Keystone's 16-page, multi-colored supplement details 125 new interconnects and hardware. It features coin cell and button cell retainers; standard battery holders, clips, and contacts; multi-use, auto-blade, mini and standard fuse holders and clips; insulated PTFE terminals, pins and jacks; and standard, mini and micro USB types A & B plugs and sockets in 2.0 and 3.0 formats for SMT & THM applications. The publication is complete with technical illustrations, mounting details, specifications, and color photographs.

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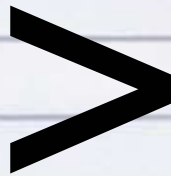
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