
Prescription For Progress-- Attend Winter NAMM!

One of the few things that you can depend on in the music business is the relentless pace of change. Just consider the fact that: hundreds of millions of dollars worth of sales are being generated today with products, like portable keyboards and digital synthesizers, that did not even exist a decade ago; or, that in the last five years, guitars and pianos from Korea have secured a major market share; or that MIDI software has evolved from *nothing* into a multi-million dollar market in the past three years. These are but a few of the major changes that have rocked the industry recently. What the future holds is difficult to predict, however, it is safe to anticipate continued upheaval in terms of product types and sources of supply.

In the years ahead, the primary challenge facing music dealers is that of overcoming personal inertia to master new products and technologies. It is human nature to recoil from the new and unknown and hide retreat to familiar products and methods. To move forward in the next decade, music retailers have to learn to accept the uncertainties that accompany change and plunge into new market areas.

The bi-annual NAMM shows make it easier for retailers to take the plunge, and should be attended by everyone who is committed to growth and advancement. This year's Winter Market will have a record 600 exhibitors from over 30 countries. With virtually every musical product known to mankind on display, the Winter Market provides an unmatched opportunity to evaluate market trends. Where else can you make side-by-side comparisons of all the latest products, talk with supplier management, and take the pulse of the industry? What's more those who attend the show may witness the introduction of historic new products.

As an added benefit, NAMM sponsors a broad array of excellent educational sessions. Addressing topics ranging from inventory control to mastering MIDI, the sessions offer valuable information for

even the most seasoned and successful retailer. Specifically, this year's show features presentations by noted management consultants Gunther Klaus and Dick Outcalt.

Airfares to California are low, accommodations around the Anaheim Convention Center are reasonable, and Disneyland and the California weather are delightful in January. Dollar for dollar, attending the show represents one of the best investments in the future of your business.

Time is one of the precious commodities at the show; with only three days and nearly 600 exhibitors, it is hard to see everything. To make the most of the show, it helps to have a plan before you get to California. To make your show plans, review the ads and editorial content of this issue and note those companies and products that are of particular interest. Then, make appropriate notes on the exhibitor list which appears on page 64. With a little bit of advance thought, you should be able to see everything that is relevant to your business.

Overcome your inertia and prepare for the changes that lie ahead. Make your plans to attend the NAMM Winter Market today. For information on registration, contact: NAMM, 5140 Avenida Encinas, Carlsbad, California, 92008.

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