

Musical Instruments

Peak-Season Promotions— What Retailers Are Doing

Last of four articles on how to make the most of the big fourth quarter.

CHICAGO — If you still haven't snapped out of the summer slump, could be your operation is promotion-starved. And if this is the case, this compendium is for you. Here are the pick of the promotional ideas tested by your peers in recent weeks. Read on. One of these paragraphs could pay off.

Ludwig in St. Louis has been holding clinics. Experts come in and demonstrate how to use mikes and other paraphernalia; help kids improve their sound. But they don't call them "clinics." They call them "group ins." "Clinics" drew about 30 people. "Group ins" pack the main floor of the main store with 300.

Myrtle Ackerman, who runs Ackerman Music Center in Midland Park, N.J., discovered that a suburban newspaper, the Ridgeview News, was "in" with the right people—her potential customers. She began placing low-cost ads in the paper. She gets inquiries from campuses all over the country. Parents mail these papers to the kids, it seems.

Imprints

Pass-on-type sales are being achieved by many dealers through store name imprinting on cork grease, instrument oil and guitar polish containers. Young musicians are always borrowing these from each other. McMillan Music is one supplier making such imprinting available.

Josef Friedman, president of Josef Friedman Musical Sales, passes on this tip: many lines of guitars come to the store enclosed in clear vinyl wraps, so why not tie up these wraps in red ribbon for store and window displays during the holidays.

E. E. Forbes in Birmingham, Ala. ran an 8-week drum clinic, charged \$48 tuition, and gave each student a pair of sticks, practice pad and practice book.

Frank's Drum Shop in Chicago runs as many free clinics as anybody around. During recent months they've had in Joe Cusatis. The clinics are advertised in neighborhood-type newspapers.

Clinic

House of Music in Salt Lake City recently ran a big ad in the paper inviting all rock musicians to bring in their amplifiers for a free clinic. The store promised, regardless where the amp was purchased, to test it for power output and distortion free of charge.

In Wichita, M. G. Wiley—Wiley Music Store—promoted his lines for two and one half years by backing an under-15 rock combo and buying time for them six days a week on television. "It was really effective," he said. "We discontinued it when the band broke up. I haven't started another one because television advertising costs have soared."

Sherman Clay in San Francisco has been having good success sponsoring band battles in shopping centers, particularly in centers where a Clay branch is located.

Grabowski Music Co. in Cleveland promotes its "in-ness." All ads carry the headline, "Grabowski Knows." They bring in artists like Frank Renault and Andy Nelson for clinics. And they pass out buttons that say, "Go home and practice."

One other thing about Grabowski's—and many other instrument retailers: they maintain a full-time band instrument repair shop, plus two electronics servicemen.

Windows

Of course, many dealers swear by the promotional value of rent-purchase plans. Neal Griffin, manager of Tillman's Music City in Charlotte, N. C., is one of these.

Window displays are standbys for many dealers, particularly during the holidays. Gene Gee, manager of Carry Gee Music, Richmond, Va., said, "I picked up several Christmas displays at a trade show in Chicago several years ago and they've become sort of a tradition for us. Every year people come in and comment on them."

Intown Music in Minneapolis draws the combo musician traffic by offering customers the opportunity to cut demo tapes in its basement studio. This gimmick is catching on widely.

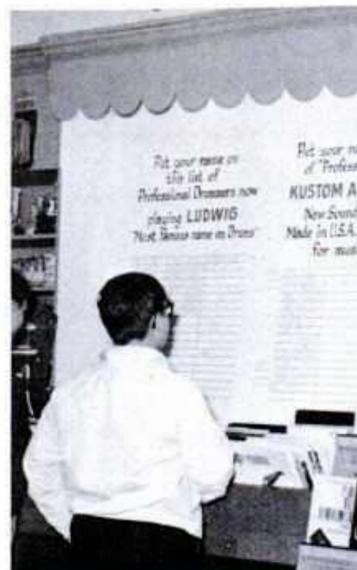
Grinnel Brothers, the Michigan giant, has backed off much-publicized store appearances by big-name artists—"They always result in bedlam."—in favor of clinics.

A Milwaukee dealer has started a guitar club.

And one other idea from Myrtle Ackerman in Midland Park, N. J. She has found that by tying red ribbons around the necks of her two poodles and placing them in her window, she stimulates extra traffic at Christmas.



IN-STORE STIMULATION is achieved by Ludwig in St. Louis with periodical 21-hour sales.



APPEAL TO THE EGO with an honor roll of owners such as this at the Music House in Des Moines. It sells Ludwig drums and Kustom amps.

IC Breakthrough In Combo Organs

CHICAGO — Successful installation of integrated circuits in an electronic organ has been achieved by Wurlitzer with its new combo organ.

Wurlitzer musical products engineering director Harold O. Schwartz disclosed at the 33rd annual meeting of the Audio Engineering Society in New York last week that the miniature integrated circuit system—more compact than the transistor-resistor units in regular combo organs—replaces 24 transistors and 32 resistors and comprises a package four inches high, 14 inches deep and 36 inches wide. The result, Schwartz said, is an organ console 15 pounds lighter "than comparable instruments."

Schwartz declared that the new Wurlitzer Combo, because of the new circuit system, will perform four times longer without service than existing combo organs.

"Combo organs are played not only by rock 'n' roll entertainers anywhere and everywhere the new generation makes the scene," Schwartz said, "but also by home amateurs who prefer more traditional music. This instrument must withstand considerable abuse: hauled from home to nightclub, stadium to theatre, cocktail lounge to gymnasium. The compactness of the new integrated circuit unit also resists

weather conditions—high humidity, sudden temperature shifts, etc."

He said that the new system was not affected by voltage changes, as well. He did not discuss production and distribution plans for the new instrument.



THE SANDPIPERS form the foundation for Baldwin's big fall promotional push on guitars, amps, combo organs, harpsichords, banjos and brasses. The group has signed a promotional contract with Baldwin and will be employed in a full-scale program of national and local campaigns, including a new set of radio commercials and special newspaper ad mats, posters, window banners, direct mail folders and instrument hang tags for dealers.



WONDERS can be worked with windows, such as this Hohner display created by Lyon & Healey, Chicago.

Imprint Service

HUNTINGTON, Pa.—Dealers or manufacturers who want their names imprinted on supplies of cork grease, instrument oils or guitar polish can now have it through McMillan Music Company, a manufacturer of all three accessories.

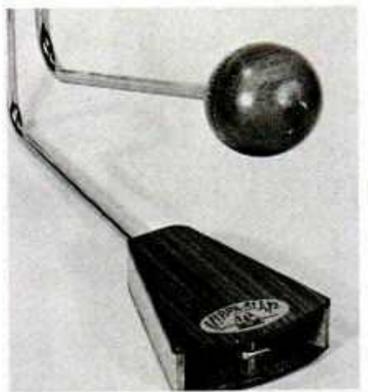
The firm recently completed their own imprinting department and can provide company name prints on all of their packaging. Presently, 70 firms and thousands of music stores are receiving the custom packaging. A stock of 100,000 containers are on hand to fill unexpected orders.



FLEXIBILITY is the forte of this new solid-state preamplifier, says builder Dynaco, Inc. It has headphone output, front panel input for electric guitar with mixing between channels and provision for simplified tape monitoring. And there is a "special" input permitting adjustment for a wide variety of additional functions. It's model PAT-4. Dynaco Inc., 3912 Powelton Avenue, Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.



HENRY MANCINI is doing a series of TV commercials on the Thomas Malibu Organ to be aired over the American Broadcasting Co. network.



LATIN PERCUSSION of Maywood, N. J., has introduced this new "Vibra Slap" percussion instrument. For recording purposes it is said to adequately replace the Latin American Jawbone, an instrument easily broken. The "Vibra Slap" has been used recently in recording sessions by Enoch Light, Tony Mottola, Dinah Shore, Dean Martin and Diahann Carroll.



JAN HOWARD, Decca Records country artist, and Columbia's Ron Underwood on stage at New York's Nashville Club. Underwood, who weaves some sitar numbers into his act, has been named Danelectro's New York sales representative. Shown is the company's new electric sitar.

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