



## National Association of School Music Dealers, Inc.

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### PRESIDENT'S LETTER



### NAMM Summit

Every three years NAMM hosts what is called the "International Summit," which essentially is a broad gathering of some very bright representatives of the music products industry. The Summit recently held in Carlsbad, California, saw attendance from people of 13 different countries, representing music product manufacturing, distribution, trades press, retail, and music product trade associations from all over the world. I had the opportunity and good fortune to represent NASMD at this International Summit.

This year's program theme was "Shaping the Next Decade—Strategies for 2017." The program kicked off with

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### STEVEN LITTLE ON BUSINESS GROWTH

Business experts are not exactly an endangered species these days, and even a superficial search online for business-related books will produce hundreds of titles. But next year's NASMD keynote speaker, Steven S. Little, author of *The Seven Irrefutable Rules of Small Business*



Steven Little

*Growth*, separates himself from the pack by focusing on just one facet of business.

"I've spent the last ten years studying business growth," says Little, a former president of three rapid-growth companies—FAME Inc., Erb Industries Inc. and The Queensboro Shirt Company.

"There aren't many business growth speakers. There's an awful lot of business speakers, but to focus so specifically on growth is a little corner of the world that I like to think I own. And what gives me the credibility is that I've actually done it."

What separates organizations that grow from those that do not? In his presentation at the NASMD convention in Orlando, Little will expand on these seven business-growth rules:

- Rule 1: Establishing and maintaining a strong sense of purpose.
- Rule 2: Thoroughly understanding the marketplace.
- Rule 3: Building an effective growth planning system.
- Rule 4: Developing customer-driven processes.
- Rule 5: Putting the power of technology

to work.

- Rule 6: Attracting/keeping the best and the brightest.
- Rule 7: Anticipating and predicting the future more clearly.

Little says that he likes keeping audiences on their toes by having them deeply question their current methods and convictions.

"My intent with an audience of independent, business-minded people, is to challenge their most closely held beliefs," Little explains. "I'm not there to be confrontational, but I am there to provoke, to be provocative. And to get people to really think about the things they hold near and dear: Are your rules still true? What things do you need to reexamine to get your organization to another level?"

Though he says his primary purpose at the convention will be to inform, Little adds that he's looking forward to meeting fellow music-lovers. In fact, it was partly his love of music—he's been in various bands since he was 13—that led him to the stage.

"The name of my first rock band was Buhner And The Vegetables," Little says. "Buhner wasn't actually in the band. He was a friend of ours—we just liked his name."

Don't expect a rock show, but what you can expect, says Little, is a candid, tell-it-like-it-is approach.

"Even if they don't agree, audiences seem to appreciate that I'm speaking my mind, rather than speaking in generalities and platitudes."

## ORLANDO OR BUST

Outside of Las Vegas, one would be hard pressed to find a city more densely-packed with all variety of entertainment, fine dining and first-rate amenities than Orlando, Florida.

"We're one giant theme park really," says Lois Choe, Rosen Shingle Creek



Cirque de Soliel in Orlando

Hotel's convention services manager. "We revolve around the three major parks: Universal, Sea World and Disney. Though we do have smaller parks, like Wet & Wild."

Outside of the hotel, the list of possible destinations is an impressive, though not surprising one given Orlando's reputation. Most famous is the Disney World complex, which comprises Disney's Animal Kingdom, Magic

Kingdom, Disney-MGM Studios and Epcot Center. Then there are the Sea World Adventure Park and Universal Studios Orlando.

"Close to the hotel, there's Citywalk at Universal," Choe says. "That's pretty much where our groups seem to go that are not family-oriented."

Outside of the big three, there are lesser-known stops like the Orlando Science Center—the largest of its kind in the Southeast—replete with must-haves for the science-curious, like an observatory and planetarium. Then there's Gatorland, a zoo and theme park for the lovers of giant lizards. It also features a variety of bird and snake exhibits.

To refuel, Choe recommends Sand Lake Road, also known as "Restaurant Row."

"We do have awesome restaurants," says Choe. "There's a lot of great seafood, steak houses, sushi. They look expensive from the outside, but they're pretty moderately priced."

Choe's personal favorite is Season 52—an eatery with a health-conscious menu and all entrees under 500 calories.

"Their food is good—a lot of flat breads, great salads, a lot of fish. More on the seafood side, but they have some basic filet and chicken and pork. But definitely go for the flat bread."

And the weather couldn't be more cooperative for March NASMD visitors.



Experience dolphins up close

Choe says Orlando spring weather is ideal.

"It's warm here in the spring," she says. "I would say it goes up to mid-70s, then at night it's perfect. You just need one long-sleeve shirt if you're a lady. Then the guys are in shorts and a T-shirt at night. It's not hot and you have a nice breeze."

For more information on Shingle Creek Resort and the surrounding area, visit [www.shinglecreekresort.com](http://www.shinglecreekresort.com)

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The National Association of School Music Dealers

## Your Partners in the School Music Business

### Who joins NASMD?

Membership is open to any retail dealer of school music instruments who:

- Maintains a permanent place of business open during regular daily business hours.
- Maintains an inventory of school music instruments and accessories.
- Sells and/or rents musical instruments for use in school music programs.
- Provides repair services for instruments used by students in school music programs.
- Makes regular sales calls on school music departments.
- Takes an active role in supporting local school music programs.

Associate Membership is open to any business entity which manufactures or distributes school music instruments, related products, or services to retail dealers of school music instruments.

### How does NASMD benefit me?

• **A Wealth of Knowledge and Experience**

*You will learn from the combined knowledge and experiences of our membership, and enjoy networking with others who share your passion for school music.*

• **Advocacy**

*You will enjoy a strong collective voice in issues affecting school music programs.*

• **Communication**

*You'll have a venue for communication between retail members, manufacturers and suppliers; an opportunity to build relationships with others who specialize in school music.*

• **Professional Development**

*Our convention will offer you professional development sessions that can help grow your knowledge base, your selling skills and your profitability.*

• **Information**

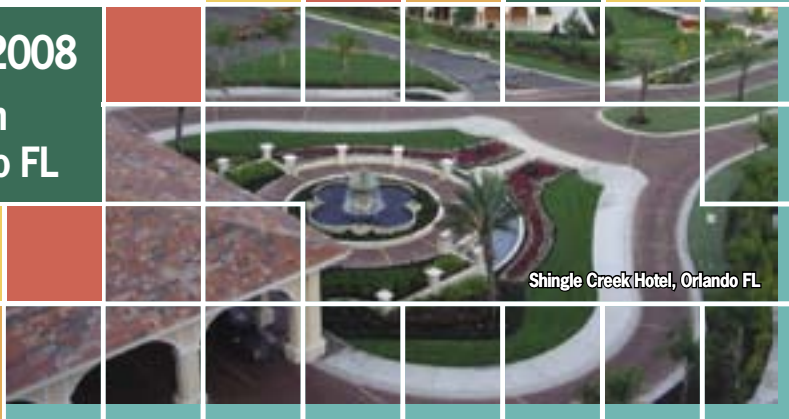
*You will have the opportunity to keep abreast of current trends and industry changes.*

Save the date: Mar 26th-29th, 2008

2008 NASMD Convention  
Shingle Creek Hotel, Orlando FL

[www.NASMD.com](http://www.NASMD.com)

(972) 233-9107



Shingle Creek Hotel, Orlando FL

## President's letter

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several strong keynote speakers who presented broad and far-reaching subjects. Dr. Michio Kaku, an internationally recognized physicist and technology futurist, presented his beliefs on the future of technology and how it will affect business, the economy, and specifically music and music education.

The program then moved on to presenters who covered increasingly specific topics. One speaker, Karl Bruhn, gave an excellent presentation on the aging demographics in many countries of the world, including the United States. He offered ideas on how the music products industry can and must adapt to the demographics.

Finally, the conference attendees broke into groups to brainstorm and develop ideas on how best the music products industry can achieve growth on both a demographical and geographical level.

During the conference it struck me that many of the speakers, no matter the main topic of their presentations, seemed to address the importance of *music education* (both public and private) as a critical aspect to the concept they were presenting. Informal discussions related to the subjects of the conference always seemed to include the importance of music educa-

tion as a key to market growth. And, during the group brainstorming sessions it continues to surprise how often the discussion would come full circle back to the importance of music education—no matter what the essence was of the original topic.

Of course, NASMD members are keenly aware of the critical ways music education can affect the music products industry in general. However, the conference gave me a new appreciation for how representatives from all areas of the music products industry, and people from many different countries, see the importance of music education in regards to the growth of the music products industry.

I mentioned these thoughts informally to Mary Lueherson, NAMM's director of public affairs and government relations. Mary graciously agreed with some of my contentions and graciously disagreed with some. But, one thing on which we both agreed was that, in Mary's words, "In many ways NASMD and the members of NASMD are ground zero for NAMM's music education advocacy efforts."

There is no question that NASMD members are in a position to help "bridge the gap" between the music products business and music education. I took away many ideas from this conference, but the most

emphatic for me was the necessity that NASMD and its members continue to participate in music education advocacy and, in fact, increase the level in which we participate.

I encourage the NASMD membership to tap into an excellent NAMM resource—SupportMusic.com—and to contact Mary ([maryl@namm.org](mailto:maryl@namm.org)) to affiliate your company with the SupportMusic.com coalition. If you do, you'll have the chance to network with coalition affiliates and learn about advocacy efforts and issues in your state or region.

You can also participate in monthly coalition conference calls that range from news about the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind to actions for music education in local communities. (A recent conference call featured a conversation with Gov. Bill Richardson, who is running for president on the Democratic ticket; planned for the months ahead is a series of candidates' conversations exploring their commitments to music and arts education.)

Also, check out a new resource on the NASMD Web site: [www.nasmd.com/members/resources.html](http://www.nasmd.com/members/resources.html). The user name is *nasmd* and the password is *orlando08*. This resource consolidates all the music advocacy Web sites and gives you a description of what each Web site offers.